

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M.

Friday, November 14, 2014
Volume 12, Issue 8, November 2014

Wenonah's First Automobile

by Bob Thomas

What did people do with their spare time in 1900? Imagine, no computers, no internet, no radio, no television. You could read a book or a newspaper, but if you wanted something more interactive, what was available?

Some newspapers offered puzzles in a serial format over a number of editions with prizes for those who were able to solve the puzzles. On May 27, 1900, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* newspaper announced a new contest, the Captain Kidd Hidden Picture Series with some fantastic prizes. Captain Kidd was convicted of piracy and hung in 1701. You had to pore over a drawing and find six hidden objects. One of the objects could possibly have once been in the pirate's chest. The other five that you had identified could be listed in any order.

The contest was announced on the front page with a photograph of the grand prize, a 1900 Locomobile worth \$750. The name of the vehicle was derived from combining the words locomotive and automobile. An acceptable minimum wage at that time was about \$8 per week. If you could somehow manage to put \$1 a week away to buy the car you could expect to be driving in 15 years! Another way to consider the value of the prize was that houses built on the west side of the railroad tracks in Wenonah were supposed to be worth a minimum of \$1,000 and houses on the east side \$2,000. The top 20 contestants would get an expense paid trip to At-



From *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. 57
December 31, 1899

lantic City.

Mrs. Frances Bossler, a 23-year old Wenonah woman, who at that time had no children, and her 26-year old husband, Frank, put some effort into solving the puzzles. He worked as a telegraph operator at the Pennsylvania Railroad's Wenonah station. Frances was tied with six other people for coming up with the correct solution on all nine installments of the puzzle. All seven were summoned to the *Inquirer's*

office for a drawing to decide the winner. But cell phones not being invented, only five could be located in time to appear for the drawing; the missing two were represented by proxy.

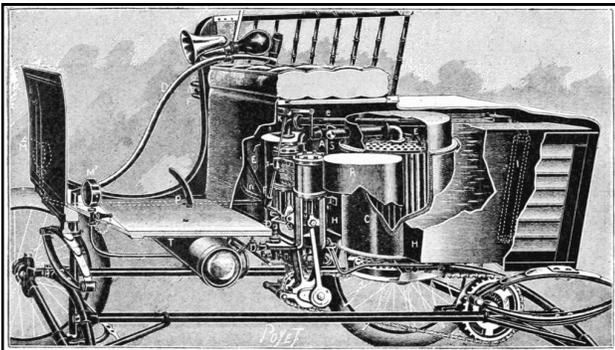
The drawing followed an interesting double blind drawing format and at first Mrs. F. J. Bossler had no idea that she had won. Soon, however, it was reported that she was the happiest woman within 300 miles of the newspaper office. The other contestants graciously congratulated her. Mrs. Bossler had never ridden in any automobile prior to the contest. She was taken out for a test drive in the vehicle and thoroughly enjoyed her ride. She was even allowed to take the controls, I would say "the wheel," but the vehicle had no steering wheel.

She won the drawing on Sunday and on Monday she went to bring it back to Wenonah. She met her instructor at the *Inquirer* office and drove with him to the ferry which took them to Camden. Ignoring

2014 WHS OFFICERS

President	Charles Horan
Vice President	Paul Lader
Secretary	Vicki McCall
Treasurer	Carol Wiltsee
Trustee	Betty MacLeod
Trustee	Louis McCall

Meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month
(except June, July and August)
at the Train Station Community Center



Sectional view showing part details
From *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. 57
December 31, 1899

the summer rain, Mrs. Bossler drove the locomobile home to Wenonah where she was met with an ovation. The steam powered two cylinder vehicle was the first automobile to be owned by a Wenonah resident.

By the time of the 1910 census, the couple had relocated to the New Haven, CT area. In 1918, when Frank registered for the World War I draft, he was working as a wire chief for the New York and Connecticut News Bureau. They had one son, Franklin. Frances passed away in 1960, followed by Frank in 1961. Both were buried in Montowese Cemetery in North Haven, CT.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

Dear Members:

We had a great turnout for the October 2014 meeting. Nick Frankunas gave a detailed history of the development of railroads in southern New Jersey. As if on cue, a northbound train whistled past in the middle of his presentation. How appropriate!

This month our presenter will be Eileen Shanahan and Pat Hensinger from the Gloucester County Historical Society. Their topic will be: A PEEK INTO GLOUCESTER COUNTY'S PAST. Our meeting is Friday, November 14th at 7:30 PM. Please try to attend and, as always, think about bringing along a friend, neighbor, relative, etc. The Gloucester County Historical Society always provides excellent Power Point presentations.

WHS Holiday Party: as announced at last month's meeting, our Holiday Dinner will begin at 6:00 PM (not 5:00) on Friday December 12th at the Community Center/Train Station. Once again, the Telford Inn will be catering this festive annual WHS event. The cost is \$22.00 per person. We need to have a number to give the Telford in advance so please send your payment ASAP to Pat Sole, 9 Lenape Trail. Her phone number is (856) 468-6661. Social hour is 6:00 - 7:00 with dinner to follow. Guests are welcome

Also you can bring your payment to our meeting this Friday.

I hope to see you this Friday evening at the train station.

Newsletter Contributions

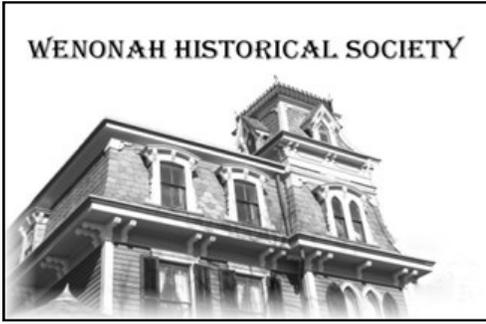
If you are interested in contributing an article for this newsletter, please contact newsletter editor, Barbara Price, at b.price111@comcast.net.



WENONAH

November 1914

- State Treasurer Edward Grosscup and Mrs. Grosscup entertained Governor Fielder at dinner on Wednesday evening.
- The Methodist parsonage was visited by the stork on Saturday who left Rev. and Mrs. Harry Relyea an eleven pound baby girl.
- Mrs. Potter entertained the Camp Fire Girls and their friends at a Halloween party on Friday evening at her home on So. Mantua Avenue.
- Mr. and Mrs. Ward Heritage entertained a number of their friends at their beautiful tea house at a good old fashioned Halloween party on Wednesday evening. The decorations were perfect, even to the witch with her hat and broom complete. After learning the identity of the various those and that's, the fun started in earnest and after refreshments were served which consisted of all Halloween dainties such as cakes, cider, nuts and candy, the party sojourned much pleasant with the evening and their hostesses.
- Owing to the Lyceum Festival and the big parade in Woodbury coming on Halloween, the mysterious visitors as a whole appeared Monday evening instead. It is learned that they received a hearty reception at each house entered and that several gates, chairs, etc. were missing the next morning.
- Wenonah was well represented at the parade in Woodbury on Saturday evening. Five of our citizens were with the Tall Cedars of Lebanon, who received a silver cup.
- Mr. Edwin H. Ballinger and Miss Anna Bishop of Tioga were married on Wednesday, November 11th. They are now living in an apartment at Overbrook, PA.
- Mr. Edward Holt has secured a position on the passenger trains between Philadelphia and points in Florida.
- The instruments for the YMCA band are now here and practice will be gotten under way in a short time.
- The Boy Scouts defeated the Pitman Boy Scouts on Saturday at football by the score of 42 to 0.
- State Treasurer, Edward E. Grosscup and Mrs. Grosscup, are at Atlantic City for two weeks recreation, after the strenuous campaign season.
- The stork left a baby girl at the home of Grocer Walter Wentzell on Friday last.
- Robert H. Comey is having extensive interior decorations made in his home.
- It is rumored that two new houses will be built shortly in our borough, one by John Nelson and the other by A.H. Everhard of Philadelphia.
- Mr. Chew of Camden has moved into one of Mrs. D.W. Brown's houses on Willow Street, formerly occupied by Edward Brownholts.
- The Wenonah Military cadets will give a dance on Nov. 14 for the benefit of the athletic association. Subscription \$1.00 per couple.
- The Wenonah Public School will give their Thanksgiving play and entertainment in the YMCA hall on Wednesday evening, November 25.
- Mrs. Charles Fredericks has returned home from a month's sojourn in Danville, PA.
- The YMCA purchased a new motion picture machine, which was put in operation for the first time on Saturday evening. The pictures were excellent.



Stamp
Here

PO Box 32
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090

WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2014

Membership Benefits

- MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
- MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH INTERESTING PROGRAMS
- ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AND MEMORABILIA
- INFORMATION BY KNOWLEDGEABLE WENONAHIANS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

RECEIVE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL: YES OR NO

AMOUNT PAID \$ CHECK _____ CASH _____

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

BRING FORM AND PAYMENT TO MEETING, OR MAIL. THANK YOU

WHS PO BOX 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090