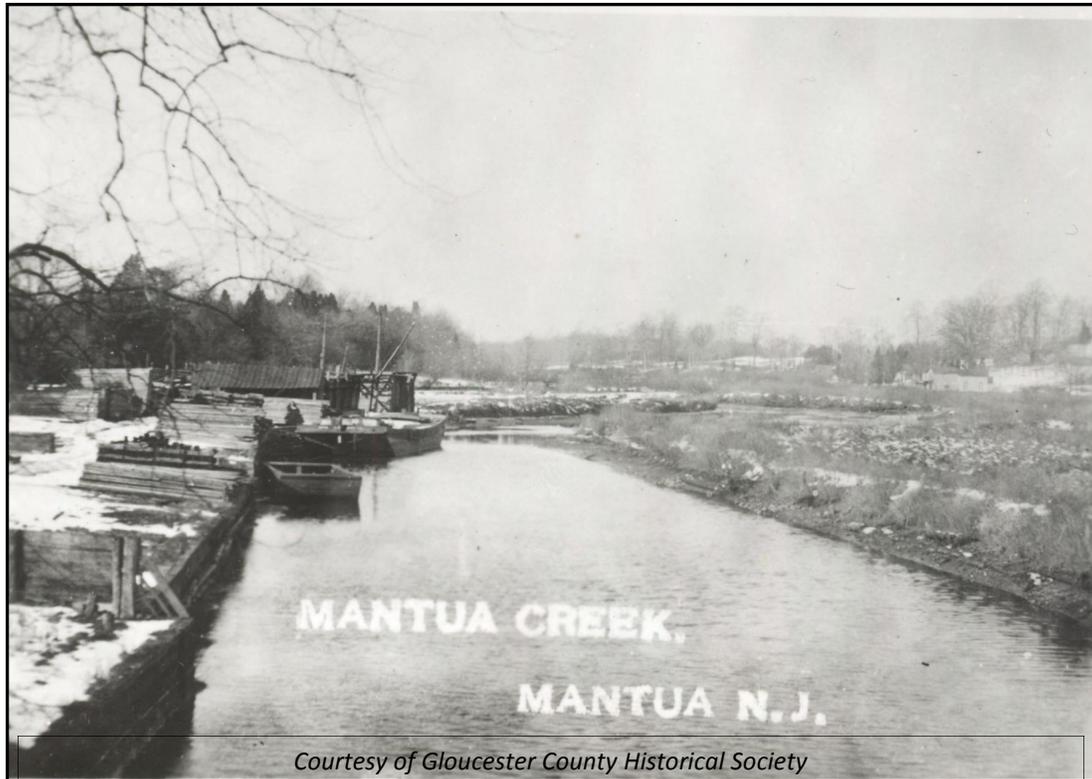


# Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M.

Friday, April 11, 2014  
Volume 12, Issue 4, April 2014



## Reminiscences of Mantua Creek

In the early days of Gloucester County, the waterways were used for navigation. Boats carried lumber and produce up and down the creeks, out to the Delaware River and into the port of Philadelphia. The South Jersey glass industry relied on boats to deliver glass and return with supplies. Farmers also used the creek to ship their produce to market.

In Thomas R. Gordon's *Gazetteer of the State of New Jersey* (1834), Mantua Creek is described as follows "rises on and forms the line between Deptford and Greenwich townships and flows N.W. by a course of 15 miles to the Delaware River, above Maiden Island. It is navigable for sloops 7 or 8 miles to Carpenter's Landing, above which it gives motion to several mills." At that time, Wenonah was part of Deptford Township and Mantua was part of Greenwich Township. As it does today, the creek formed the border between Mantua and Wenonah.

Gordon described Carpenter's Landing (present-day Mantua) as "the post-town of Greenwich township upon Mantua Creek at the head of sloop navigation...a place of considerable trade of lumber, cord wood &c and contains 1 tavern, 2 stores, 30 dwellings and 1 Methodist church." Carpenter's Landing was named for boat builder, Thomas Carpenter. The south branch of the Mantua Creek was called Chestnut Branch and the crossing over it was known as the Old Ford. The east branch was called Cedar Branch and the crossing called Spark's Ford.

In the *Gloucester County Democrat* of May 31, 1900, the reminiscences of the late Hugh A. Long were published. Mr. Long recalled many of the early boat and sloop builders.

Nathaniel Chew built one vessel near the forks of the creek on Chestnut Branch and named her "Eight

## 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

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan



### GREETINGS TO ALL!

Spring has sprung and the winter of our discontent appears to be over. Many thanks to all who contributed over the past three months to our home grown "How I Came to Live in Wenonah" series. This month's program continues with the "home grown" theme in that our very talented fellow member Karen Heller will be the presenter. Her topic will be: Life and Death at the Whitall House--midwifery and yellow fever.

Karen is very involved with the Whitall House at Red Bank Battlefield where she is a docent and conducts tours of the house and battlefield. They have an excellent web site at: <http://www.whitall.org>. Please make an effort to attend this Friday evening for some interesting local history, camaraderie and light refreshments. Our season finale will be our annual picnic on May 9th at 5 PM. There will be a sign-up sheet for appetizers/ sides and desserts.

Jno. Pierson, Esq. of Swedesboro has been awarded the contract for furnishing the lumber and building the bridge over Mantua Creek, on the road from Mantua to Wenonah. The bridge is to be completed about the first of October next. The contract was for \$1,850

*Woodbury Constitution, Aug. 16, 1871*

Brothers" in honor of his eight sons. Thomas Sparks built a 45 to 50 ton sloop on Spark's Ford on Cedar Branch. The ground where she was built was much higher than the water in the creek and when trying to launch her, she became stuck in mud and it took several tides before she could float.

Frances A. Campbell built a vessel on the north side of the creek close to a small bridge. In order to get her into the water, a canal had to be dug behind her.

Between 1820 and 1825, Isaac Durmot, a sawyer at Ellis Mill on the stream about two miles south of Richwood, built a sloop, the "Woodranger," to carry 20 to 25 cords of wood and when loaded would draw four feet of water. After she was built, Durmot encountered difficulty in moving her. He paid James Jessup \$350 to convey her to the Mantua Creek. Mr.

Jessup used four wagons two abreast with teams of up to sixty horses. She was hauled as far as the Em-len School in Barnsboro when an axle broke. The axle was repaired and the journey continued. After three or four days for a trip of seven miles, the sloop arrived at Mantua where she was calked, finished and put in the water.

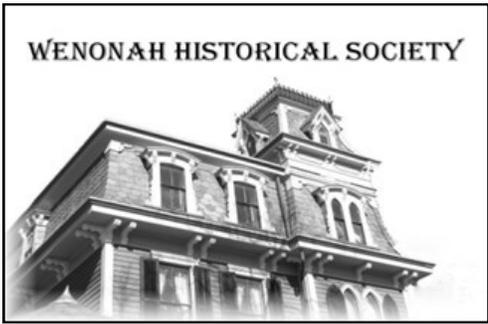
At the foot of present-day Turner Street in Mantua, there was a quarter-mile wharf where scows and sloops were set in the water. These vessels carried cordwood and tanned hides down to the Delaware River.

In its heyday, Mantua was a trade and shipping destination. With the advent of automobiles and improved roads, the era of commerce on the Mantua Creek ended.

## WENONAH

APRIL 1914

- ◇ George Randall, former resident of our borough, moved from Philadelphia on Thursday to Harry C. Vierick's house, corner of Jefferson Avenue and Cherry Street.
- ◇ Cadet LeRoy Hodges, from Woodbury, has received his appointment to West Point.
- ◇ The cellar door of George Dilks' was forced open and the rooms entered by a seemingly hungry individual, who left the house with all the edibles in the cellar.
- ◇ The work on the boulevard is progressing in a satisfactory manner.
- ◇ The Wenonah Country Club is having the tennis courts entirely renovated.
- ◇ Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Ogden have moved from Mt. Ephraim to Mrs. Ogden's home on Monroe Avenue.
- ◇ The dance given by the Tall Cedars of Lebanon in the W.M.A. gymnasium on Saturday evening was attended by a large number of Masons from far and near. The exhibition drill given by the Rangers was fine. An orchestra of sixteen pieces furnished the music.
- ◇ Mr. Robert Reeban has opened a first-class harness and shoe maker shop in Mrs. D.W. Brown's double house on Mantua Avenue.
- ◇ The Wenonah Improvement Association held a special meeting on Wednesday evening and settled on Saturday, April 25, as Wenonah's cleaning up day.
- ◇
- ◇ Harry S. Downs has opened a barber shop in the house formerly occupied by Joseph Souder.
- ◇ Chalkley Lyons, our former milkman, has again started up a route.
- ◇ Mr. John Nelson is very low at this writing with pneumonia and is not expected to recover. He and his wife expected to move into their new home the first of the month.
- ◇ Mrs. Edward Knight entertained at an At Home on Tuesday afternoon.
- ◇ Miss Cecelia Sargent who has been home from Bryn Mawr College for the holidays, and her mother Mrs. H.A. Sargent, attended the dinner of the Margareta M. Haig Teacher Training Class at Philadelphia on Monday. Miss Sargent made the address of the evening.
- ◇ Nathan Straddock, who lives just outside of Wenonah, was found guilty by Justice Mankin of North Woodbury last week of not giving proper care and feed to his stock. The charges were preferred by agents of the S.P.C.A. and the evidence showed that even when Shaddock had feed for his animals, he did not feed them enough. The justice imposed a fine of \$10 and costs.
- ◇ Invitations have been issued for the wedding of Miss Rena Ogden and Mr. Frank Burdsall both of our borough.
- ◇ The minstrel show to be given on Saturday evening next, May 2, by the Senior Group of the Y.M.C.A. promises to be one of the best ever given here.



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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