

# Newsletter

Volume 5 Issue 8 November 2007

MESSAGE FROM  
PRESIDENT  
LOU MCCALL

Dear Members;

The Return of South Jersey Ghost Research to the Community Center on November 9th!

Well after an outstanding presentation by Paul Stankard last month that included insight to his book "No Green Berries or Leaves, The Creative Journey of an Artist in Glass" (copies still available- please see any officer), we now look forward to next Friday's 7:30 pm meeting in the Community Center where we again welcome Dave Juliano, Director of South Jersey Ghost Research and his team for what is always a very interesting and unique presentation.

Dave and his team's main goal is to assist anyone who is in fear of spirit activity in their everyday surroundings. Dave is also director of "The Shadowlands: Ghost and Hauntings" and author of "Positive Energy for Haunted Homes, Ghost Research 101: Investigating Haunted Homes" and "Armor of God" and "Ghost Hunting 101."

Dave has been researching paranormal activities for over 20 years and has consulted on thousands of cases. He lived in a haunted house himself for over 29 years and his current residence also keeps him practicing. Dave majored in History and World religions in College and is a police academy graduate.

The appearance by SJGR of the 9th will include video and audio presentations, photos and electronic voice recordings ("EVPs") from actual cases, photo displays, equipment displays, demos and the often-surprising Q&A session with the audience. Please bring your questions and stories.

## WHS OFFICERS 2007

|                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| <b>President</b>    | <b>Louis McCall</b>    |
| <b>Vice Pres.</b>   | <b>Barbara Capelli</b> |
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| <b>Treasurer</b>    | <b>Carol Wiltsee</b>   |
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| <b>Trustee</b>      | <b>Vicki McCall</b>    |
| <b>Hon. Trustee</b> | <b>Lucy Schulz</b>     |

**Meetings second Friday of the month at the Community Center except June, July and August**

If you have a chance, please also check out SJGR's website at: [www.southjerseyghostresearch.org](http://www.southjerseyghostresearch.org), click on "cases" and the scroll down to "Wenonah Train Station" to see the picture results of their last investigation of the Community Center on December 13, 2002.

Christmas and the Wenonah Family Album

Folks please keep in mind our responsibility to help preserve Wenonah memories when you are up in the attic looking for holiday decorations and you come across those treasured pictures from days gone by in Wenonah. Please remember to compile your family

pictures and little quips to help us forever memorialize those Wenonah Memories and submit them to Barb Capelli or myself. Thanks!

Notice!! Executive Meeting of officers, trustees and anyone interested 6.00 pm prior to general meeting at Community Center.

Please remember to find time for writing and compiling your pictures for the Wenonah Album! See you on Friday!

## UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

NOVEMBER 9<sup>th</sup>: South Jersey Ghost Research ~they're ba-ack!

DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Party!

## REMINISCENCES OF WENONAH HISTORY BY J.C. SHEPPARD SR

Andrew W. Carey was one of a handful of men instrumental in the founding of Wenonah.

Mr. Carey served on the original group of Commissioners when Wenonah was first organized commencing in 1883 and was Mayor of Wenonah during the years 1897 and 1898. He died in 1905.

Andy's son James W. Carey served on Borough Council from 1900 through 1908. James was the father of Josiah Allen Carey who was our Borough Clerk when I joined Borough Council in 1962. He conducted the Clerks activities from his home.

The Carey homestead was the handsome dwelling on the S.W. corner of South Clinton and Cherry Streets opposite the Wenonah Park.

## COUNTY VITAL TO BEGINNING OF RAILROADS

South Jersey had role in development

By GLENN KOPPELMAN, Staff Writer, Gloucester County Times 5/28/95

(Second in a three-part series.)

Over the years, the West Jersey Railroad bought and incorporated several smaller area rail lines. It consolidated the Swedesboro Railroad in the 1880s, and soon added the Salem Railroad, the Salem Branch Railroad Company, the Woodstown and Swedesboro Railroad Company, the West Jersey Terminal Railroad Company and the Maurice River Rail Road Company. When it acquired the Delaware River Railroad in 1900, the West Jersey & Seashore Railroad, as it was then known, had a virtual maze of tracks reaching into all corners of Gloucester County.

But finding a way across the Delaware to securely link the county with Philadelphia remained an elusive goal. The plan to build a passenger rail bridge to South Philadelphia ran out of cash between 1910 and 1920. Wentzel notes that a railroad bridge was already in place — in the Delair section of Pennsauken — but he points out that reaching the bridge would add another 30 minutes to the average train trip and thus remove one of the big selling points of passenger rail.

Meanwhile, another project to benefit passenger rail was hitting snags. Around 1905, West Jersey & Seashore embarked on a project to build a cutoff between Westville and Haddon Township to link two lines and ease freight traffic on the system. The link was about 70 percent complete when tight finances caused work to be halted, and the cutoff was never finished.

Then, in 1926, the area's passenger train service was dealt a more serious blow. "When the Ben Franklin Bridge was built, that was the death knell," says Wentzel.

From there, it was mostly downhill. The West Jersey & Seashore Railroad became the Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines in 1933, but by then passenger service was already on the decline. Two years earlier, the electric line from Newfield to Atlantic City was torn out, limiting passenger service to only as far as Millville. The South Jersey passenger rail network was starting to shrink.

An incident in 1949 effectively put an end to the rest of the network. In Vineland, a fuel oil truck was hit by a passenger train of wooden cars carrying school children from Newfield. There were no fatalities, but, as Wentzel puts it, the state said that's

it," and cracked down on the use of wooden passenger cars. Lacking enough metal cars, Pennsylvania-Reading couldn't keep the service alive.

But Wentzel still sees reason for hope in the future. He notes that there seems to be renewed interest in freight rail as a cheaper way to move products, and adds that there appears to be a similar spark in reviving passenger service. Wentzel says he personally would like to see the PATCO High-Speed Line eventually expand south to Glassboro. "We seem to be turning around

Many great ideas don't work at first. Such was the case with the first railroad in Gloucester County.

Incorporated in 1836, the Camden and Woodbury Railroad was the first to be built south of Camden, but its rails were torn up just 14 years later.

The railroad was a victim of too much vision, doomed to failure because it was ahead of its time, says Paul Schopp, a historical consultant who specializes in rail history.

The idea was sound, Schopp says. In a time of terrible road conditions, create a reliable means of travel to link two budding towns. In a time when stagecoaches and wagons were the chief modes of transit, create a network suitable for passenger as well as freight travel.

This was the thinking when a group of businessmen, merchants, builders and attorneys gathered in the Woodbury courthouse in January 1836 with the goal of establishing the railroad.

The railroad would serve many purposes, the planners reasoned. It was a means of transporting citizens from Camden to the county seat of Woodbury where court business was conducted.

It would also provide a way to get goods from the farms and markets of Swedesboro and other rural locations to Camden where they could be sold or shipped across the river via ferry to Philadelphia for sale.

The Camden and Woodbury line became official on March 1, 1836 after it was incorporated by an act of the state Legislature, according to court papers.

After two years of surveys, purchasing and track construction, the railroad was ready for service. Private stockholders picked up the total cost of \$87,301.28.

The line's maiden journey was conducted Saturday, Jan. 20, 1838. The steam locomotive "Fire Fly," pulling a 40-foot passenger car filled with dignitaries covered the nine miles of track between Camden and Woodbury in about 20 minutes with a short stop in Westville. Fifteen-year-old Camden resident Isaac Mickle was on hand as the Fire Fly rumbled back after its trip that day.

"We gave her (the locomotive) nine cheers when she returned," wrote Mickle, who eventually became a lawyer and later chronicled Gloucester County history in "Reminiscences of Old Gloucester," published in 1845.

Initial interest in the fledgling line was great.

To many, railroads were "a new age, a new way to communicate with the outside world," Schopp said from his home in Riverton.

The Industrial Revolution arrived pulled by locomotives," he says.

Some were frightened by the new experience.

"People thought riding the train caused epilepsy. Others thought it was demonic to travel at those speeds of 10 to 12 mph. It was the fear of the unknown," says Schopp, who is an active member of the West Jersey Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

Others may have been too fearless. Several pedestrians were killed during the first years of the Camden and Woodbury line, according to published reports.

The speed a train could travel was subsequently reduced to the pace of a walker. But that wasn't enough. Railroads were ordered to have a man walk 50 to 100 yards ahead of the train waving a flag by daylight, and a lantern by night to warn unsuspecting pedestrians.

Nonetheless, the impact of this new mode of travel was great.

#### WENONAH MUSEUM CREATION INFORMATION BY JACK SHEPPARD

As I have pointed out many times recently the creation of the WHS museum is slow, but reasonably steady. The volunteers who have assisted since the effort started have been great. Unfortunately we have not had enough of them.

But forgetting that for the moment, I want to take this opportunity to tell the membership about where this project appears to be heading.

It is doubtful we can have a museum such as is usually envisioned, spaces with shelves, showcases, filing cabinets accessible by the members and/or the general public, open for any and all contributions.

This cannot happen for several reasons.

First and foremost, we do not have the necessary amount or right kind of space for the purpose. The three small rooms on the second floor of the former train station are accessible by only one means, a narrow, steep and winding stairway. In the event of fire an exodus from the upstairs would be difficult and maybe even impossible depending on the location of the conflagration.

Secondly, in order to preserve the artifacts for the long-term, especially the military uniforms and other items of clothing it is necessary to store them in special containers and packing materials making access difficult and requiring similar efforts to place them back in storage each time they are exposed.

For these reasons I have proposed to the Executive Board that the best practical approach is create a "virtual museum" in the following manner.

All historic materials will be photographed, photos and paper materials scanned, and stored electronically on digital hard-drives and other suitable storage media before being packed away in conventional storage facilities. Utilizing a computer program named "Microsoft Power Point" the digital images can be scripted into presentations suitable for different audiences. One program might be just about the Military Academy, another on historical buildings, etc. I have been advised that each program can be saved in a unique separate file and then shown repeatedly if it is desired to do so.

The equipment components necessary for a virtual museum are relatively few, a laptop computer with a large-capacity hard drive for photograph storage and a digital projector. Although not cheap, probably near \$2,500.00, this is still a lot less costly than glass-enclosed display cabinets and quite likely a lot more practical.

If any member is conversant with Microsoft Power Point I would like to talk to him or her.

WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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Here

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# WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2007

### Membership Benefits

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER MAILED TO YOUR HOME

MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH INTERESTING PROGRAMS

ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AND MEMORABILIA

INFORMATION BY KNOWLEDGEABLE WENONAHIANS

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

AMOUNT PAID \$

CHECK \_\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_\_

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

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

WHS PO Box 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090

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