

Newsletter

Volume 9 Issue 1 January, 2011

WENONAH 1871 - 2011

About 140 years ago in February of 1871 a town was created along the right-of-way of the West Jersey Railroad Co. and named Wenonah.

A settlement located in and part of Deptford Township; Wenonah was lovingly and carefully nurtured by several of its creators until 1883 when the first formal government was established, a Commission.

By this time there were about 50 dwellings in existence and a permanent population of about 300 people living here.

The first members of the Commission were Dr. George W. Bailey (elected President), C.B. Johnson, Isaac Stevenson, Andrew Carey (WHS members the Laders live in his house across from the park), M.H. Perry, Thomas W. Synnott and J. Frank Shull.

The Commission government continued until April of 1896 when through the efforts of Dr. George W. Bailey a bill was approved by the Legislature of the State of New Jersey awarding "Borough" status to Wenonah. Charles M. Wilkins was the first elected Mayor of Wenonah.

Coming forward in time Wenonah has had 16 individuals elected to the position of mayor, recently sworn-in Mayor Tom Lombardo becoming the 17th.

Given the major financial problems facing our towns today, our continuing existence as a separate, community will be tested.

ABOUT FORMER WHS PRESIDENT DON RALSTON

For anyone who hasn't already heard, Don and Catherine Ralston were involved in a serious auto accident Christmas Eve afternoon on Route 45 near Woodbury Heights. Both suffered significant injuries but Catherine's were the worst. As of this writing she is in Cooper Hospital awaiting release to a rehabilitation facility. Meanwhile Don is at home.

labors here have resulted in great good to the church.

"You never miss the water till the spring runs dry" and you never know the importance of a barber shop until the establishment is closed. The tonsorial establishment at the Inn was a perfect boon to us all, the closing of the Inn deprived us of the tonsorial artist and now there is a premium offered for a good barber.

Mrs. Eliza Packer has recovered from her late illness.

Grocer Eldore Richmond was complimented with a visit from his brother George, who is a resident of Pittsburgh, Pa. Mr. Richmond holds quite a responsible position with the United States Biscuit Company.

Dr. Harry A. Stout is quite busy dispensing pills and plasters. This cold weather has caused a great deal of sickness, the prevailing disease or complaint being the common cold or la grippe.

The young people, with a goodly sprinkling of the older folks, calling themselves the Wenonah Assembly, met last Saturday night at Noblitt's Hall and indulged in the favorite winter pastime of a dance and progressive euchre.

Miss Wilson will spend the month of February at the capital of the nation, where she has quite a large circle of friends,

We regret to learn that good natured Blair Smith Is compelled to sit by the heater and nurse a very bad cold.

WHS OFFICERS 2010

President	Barbara Capelli
Vice President.	Charles Horan
Secretary	Vicki McCall
Treasurer	Carol Wiltsee
Trustee	Betty MacLeod
Trustee	Louis McCall

Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at the Train Station Community Center except June, July and August

JANUARY MEETING PROGRAM

Member Paul Lader will present a slide presentation on the Civil War.

WENONAH 137 YEARS AGO FEBRUARY, 1874

The Rev. James Burns, of the M. E. Church, has been assisting Pastor C. B. Ogden in the revival service* now in progress in the neighboring village of Mantua, Rev. James Burns is a very forceful speaker and his

The recently organized choir in the M E church, composed of the young people of the congregation, is meeting with gratifying success. Good singing and good preaching go hand in hand.

The Rev. A. P. Botsford of the Presbyterian Church gave two very interesting discourses on Sabbath last. In the morning he spoke of "The Gospel's production of holiness" and in the evening the subject was "The antidote to fear and sorrow, or Jesus and the ruler of the synagogue."

There are quite a number of Episcopalians in our borough. If they would encourage the work in the little mission chapel of St. Barnabas, over near Mantua, by their presence it would materially help the lay reader in charge of that work.

The anniversary service* of the society of the Y. P. S. C. E of the M. E. Church took place last Sunday and drew quite a large gathering of friends from the surrounding country. Mr. Hamilton Turner took charge of the services.

Boys and girls keep your eyes on next week's papers; there will be something in the Wenonah items that will interest you.

Woodbury Times

FROM THE INTERNET
ACTUAL CHURCH BULLETINS

Thank God for church ladies with typewriters. These sentences (with all the BLOOPERS) actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced during church services:

- The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.
- The sermon this morning: will be 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love.
- Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.
- Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.
- Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.
- Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.
- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered..
- The church will host an evening of dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.
- Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.
- The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
- This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.
- Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10 AM. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B. S. is done.
- The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.
- Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.
- The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

WHS NEWSLETTER NEWS

Except for one regrettably short period when Brenda Birkland took over as editor I have been producing the WHS Newsletter for eight years.

The time has come for a new person with new ideas. Therefore I have submitted my resignation and this is my last issue as editor.

Jack C. Sheppard Sr.

Frank Eggert Historic House Identification and Memorialization Project

Historical Society member Frank Eggert has nearly completed his long-term project to memorialize the historic older structures of Wenonah.



Andrew W. Carey 11 North Clinton Ave

Frank has spent many hours over a period of several years identifying, the oldest, most historic houses in Wenonah.

Once a residence is selected, Frank makes one or more trips to the Gloucester County Court House where he laboriously researches the birth and history of each property. Armed with this information he can recite the name of the original owner and/or builder, and the names of subsequent owners.



Henry Gilmour 7 E. Poplar

After the research and identification Frank contacts the homeowner(s) to determine if they are willing to sponsor a plaque with the builder name and date for mounting on the front wall of the structure. If so, he gives the information to Don Davis who makes the actual plaque, then to Chick Cowles who paints it.

Frank photographs the homes to illustrate the final record. He then contacts the current owner of the home and offers the information in exchange for purchase of an identifying plaque which is mounted in a prominent location on the front of the property.

Three of the selected homes are shown on this page to show what the houses with the plaques actually look like. All are prime examples of Victorian era styles.



E. A. Arnesbroug, 101 E. Poplar St

Our next objective is to create a digital slide show featuring Frank's collection that can be shown at our school, the library, or at group meetings. It may also be possible to access the collection on home computers by way of a computer "web site" we hope to create soon.

The Society owes a great debt of gratitude to Frank Eggert for the dedication and hard work he has provided to make this project a reality. Frank, a native of Wenonah, in addition to this project has been substantially responsible for the creation and maintenance of the Wenonah "nature trail" system.

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on
Friday, February 11, 2011

Volume 9, Issue 2, February 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Charles Horan

Dear Members,

As we begin our Spring season and look forward with great anticipation to warmer and more arid weather, I wish to acknowledge and thank Barbara Capelli for her dedicated service to the WHS. As you know, Barbara recently completed a 2-year term as President. Of course...many, many thanks to Jack Sheppard who has ended his long tenure as Editor-in-Chief of our newsletter. This heavy torch has been passed to Larry Smith. Also, kudos to our team of current officers as we move forward into a successful 2011.

Before I mention a few upcoming programs, I want to say that I am always open to any ideas for future WHS presentations. For example, I thought the talk given by Rich Heritage of Heritage Winery in Richwood, NJ was an excellent example of "thinking outside the box" for new ideas. Let us put our thinking caps on and come up with some innovative and interesting programs for future meetings!!

Our February meeting on February 11th will feature a recently updated PowerPoint presentation from the Gloucester County Historical Society on its collection of a variety of military artifacts from Gloucester County. It will focus primarily on the Revolutionary War era

and Red Bank Battlefield. Also, there will be a limited number of artifacts on display.

For the March meeting on March 11th, Professor Robert A. Emmons, Jr. from Rutgers University-Camden will be our guest speaker. He is a documentary maker who will show parts of and speak about "Deluxe: The Tale of the Blue Comet." It tells the captivating story of a passenger train that, from 1929 to 1941, transported New Jersey residents from Jersey City to Atlantic City. Mr. Emmons teaches film and media studies at Rutgers. His first feature length documentary is titled "Goodwill: The Flight of Emilio Carranza." It is the story of the Mexican pilot who crashed in the Pine Barrens in 1928 on the return leg of a goodwill mission to New York. Robert is very interested in New Jersey history and we look forward to his visit. DVDs of both documentaries will be available for purchase.

Both the February and March meetings look to be interesting and "close to home." Think about inviting a friend or neighbor as a prospective member of the Wenonah Historical Society.

See you there!

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GLOUCESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Don't forget to stop by the Wenonah School on a weekday and view the Gloucester County Historical Society exhibit.

SUNSHINE NEWS
Vicki McCall

Dorothy Diament continues her recovery. Please send cards to her home.

Kathryn Ralston is still recovering from injuries sustained in an accident. She can have visitors at Manor Care in Washington Township. Cards can be sent to her home.

Please forward any news of a member's illness or surgery to me at vmccallpc@comcast.net so we can send cards and well wishes. I will forward the information to the newsletter editor.

FEATURE HOUSE
The Stone House Tavern

The "Old Stone House" was built before 1763 as a tavern by Samuel Moffett. It originally faced west on Bark Bridge Road (Monroe Avenue today). It was an important location as it was the only crossing available before the bridge on Kings Highway in Mount Royal, and important to commerce and stage coach travel. Taverns were nerve centers in those days and people gathered here at the Stone House Tavern to hear the news of the day. In war time, it was also a recruiting center for the militia, who met here to practice, hold meetings and elect officers.

Originally this building was part of a 1,300-acre plantation comprising most all of Wenonah, large sections of Sewell and Woodbury Heights, and four tenant farms. The

main house and out-buildings are not standing today. The property was constructed by Samuel Moffett some time between 1742 and 1763, when it was deeded to Jeffery Chew, who transferred the title to his son Jonathan Chew. He continued to procure the whole 1,300-acre plantation. Jonathan Chew was the grandson of Nathaniel Chew, one of the oldest pioneers in Gloucester County, having his homestead in Mantua Township.

The front entrance of the house now faces east and the original front door has been moved to the south end to provide a family room.

In the early days of the New Jersey colony, the Mantua Creek valley was quickly found to be one of the most fertile and attractive localities in Gloucester County, and was speedily settled. The creek itself was the main avenue of transportation and communication with other settlements along the river and creeks.

The western portion of the attractive village of Wenonah stands on a farm of 180 acres, which, for a century or more, was known as the "Stone



House Farm." It remained a farm until Wenonah was plotted and successfully promoted in 1871.

Mantua Creek forms the southwestern boundary of the farm, and before the coming of the railroad, there were numerous wharves or landing places along its banks, each identified by the name of its owner. On the north side were Hennissey's Landing on the Stone House Farm, with extensive warehouses, and Chew's Landing (where the Woodbury-Mullica Hill road now crosses the bridge). On the south side were Smith's Landing near the foot of the present Norris Street, Carpenter's Landing and others, and also thriving shipyards, including Eastlack's and Norris's, where small sailing vessels called flats and shallops were built to carry to Philadelphia cordwood, produce, and glassware from the Stanger Glass Works at Glassboro, and from its successors, Heston and Carpenter, and the Whitney Glass Works.

Prior to the closing of the eighteenth century there was no bridge across the creek in the vicinity of the present Mantua and Wenonah. The nearest bridge was that of the King's Highway, near the present village of Mount Royal. Beyond that point, the creek could be crossed only by a ford located on the Stone House Farm., about a half mile southeast of the present bridge from Wenonah to Mantua.

Nathaniel Chew was one of the earliest settlers in Gloucester County. He died in 1731, and lies buried in the old Chew Burying Ground, near the late famous Mantua Oak. In his will, Nathaniel Chew left land to his sons, Richard, Jeffery and Nathaniel.

His son Jeffery Chew (1714-1774) became a large owner of additional land along Mantua Creek, which he distributed among his sons. To his son Jonathan he gave 100 acres, "being part of the land I bought of Hannah Rowlinson, along

the line of Abraham Dilks, son of James Cooper." Jonathan Chew added 80 acres to this tract. This tract of 180 acres, later known as the Stone House Farm, was purchased by Robert Sparks, for \$2,000.

On January 1, 1855, Joseph Saunders, executor of Joseph Dilks, conveyed the Stone House Farm of 180 acres in two parts: 75.5 acres to Isaac Stevenson for \$3,510.75, and the other 100.5 acres to Hiram Morgan for \$5,700.

The deed mentions "the contemplated West Jersey Railroad." There are doubtless many who may not know that the course of the railroad through Wenonah was originally much nearer to Mantua Creek than it is now. It crossed the creek at a point much closer to the present Mantua Creek Bridge, and a station, called Mantua Station was located on the south side of the creek for the convenience of that village. Extensive remains of the original embankments may be seen both north and south of Wenonah.

The railroad may have benefited some residents from Mantua, but it caused the immediate decline of the shipping and the shipbuilding business on Mantua Creek. One of the leading shipbuilders, John C. Eastlack, closed his plant soon after, and engaged in the manufacture of pumps.

The late Mr. Howard C. Hendrickson, who lived in Wenonah, and then at the ripe age of eighty-eight, told that 5 acres of ground is mentioned as being the occupation of his grandfather Jonathan Hendrickson (1784-1875) and that his father was born in the old stone house in 1825. He stated that the house was built as a tavern in 1773 by Samuel Moffett, and that it was long known as Samuel Moffett house. It was then on the main road leading to the ford, near its junction with the road leading down to Hennissey's Landing and provided

accommodations for travelers north and south.

It is possible that this 5-acre tract may have been separate from the rest of the farm at the time of its traditional occupancy by Samuel Moffett, and subsequently, reincorporated in the farm.

Henry Roe in his pension papers stated that the militia met in a field here in 1777 to practice, hold meetings and elect officers at the Stone House. The papers also stated the house was kept by a Mr. Sparks.

In later years, the house was the home of Mr. Richard C. Ballinger, from 1891 until his death in 1934, when it passed to his son Edwin. The latter sold it in 1939 to Mr. and Mrs. William E. Manners, who restored it to its original condition. It is now known as 100 South West Avenue.

The following summarizes the succession of ownership of the Stone House Tavern property from 1681 to 1967:

- Samuel Groom purchased from Edward Bylling, Proprietor: November 16, 1681.
- Thomas Budd by deed: February 10, 1689.
- William Chester by deed: December 3, 1695.
- Samuel Moffett by deed: 1742.
- Jeffrey Chew by deed: 1763.
- Jonathan Chew by grant or will.
- Robert Sparks by Sheriff sale: May 2, 1779.
- Robert Sparks, Jr. and Thomas Ure Sparks by will.
- Robert Sparks, Jr. by deed: 1813.
- Joseph C. Dilks acquired 5.5 acres by deed separately: 1814.
- James Matlack acquired 5.5 acres separately

by deed: 1825.

- James Matlack by Sheriff sale: 1822.
- Joseph Dilks by deed: 1827 (180 acres bought from Sheriff sale on November 20, 1822 sold as property of Thomas S. Sparks).
- Hiram Morgan by will: 1855.
- George See by deed: 1864.
- George Manger by deed: August 4, 1864.
- Charles P. Ramsden by deed: November 26, 1864.
- Mary Cockran by deed: July 26, 1865.
- James Ramsden by deed: August 22, 1865.
- Samuel See by deed: August 28, 1866.
- Tobias A. Durney by deed: May 1, 1866.
- Mehitable Ann Ramsden by Sheriff sale: March 2, 1867.
- Daniel A. Young by deed, March 25, 1867.
- Peter Kier by deed: March 30, 1867.
- Mantua Land and Improvement Company by deed: March 24, 1871.
- Mahlon Hutchinson by deed: December 5, 1877.
- Mantua Land and Improvement Company by deed: April 17, 1888.
- Ida Leddell by deed: April 27, 1888.
- Harriet M. Ballinger by deed: August 20, 1892.
- Richard C. Ballinger and Edwin H. Ballinger by will: August 24, 1913.
- Woodbury Trust Company, Trustee, by deed: May 26, 1939.
- William E. and Rosa T. Manners by deed: December 15, 1939.
- Webster S. and Audrey Shinn by deed: July 17, 1964.
- Churchill L. and Gretchen W. Blakey by deed: November 28, 1967.

Researched and prepared by Jean C. Ehlers, past President Wenonah Historical Society, March 1994. Provided by Frank Eggert.

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on
Friday, March 11, 2011

Volume 9, Issue 3, March 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

Dear Members,

Once again, I want to thank Larry Smith for stepping up and taking the reins as Editor of this newsletter. Jack Sheppard got a bit "religious" in his expression of gratitude to Larry for assuming this task at the February meeting.

The topic of last month's newsletter was fabulous in its detailing of the history of the Stone House Farm and Tavern. When I first moved to Wenonah, I was surprised and confused by the juxtaposition of this structure and its date of construction (1763). Since then, I have become better versed in its background as well as the history of Wenonah and the surrounding area. The history of the Stone House is reflective of the dynamics of transportation over the years. Stage coaches and shallops for shipping goods and people were giving way to railroads just as Wenonah was being "born."

Thanks go out to Vicki McCall and Lynne Carey for the special Valentines Day themed refreshments last month especially the cascading chocolate "tower." WOW!!!

Also, kudos to Eileen Shanahan and Patty Hrynenko of the Gloucester Historical Society

for their most interesting presentation at our February meeting.

The upcoming March meeting will feature the parts of and discussion on a documentary on the Blue Comet passenger train that ran from Jersey City to Atlantic City during a bygone era. The presenter will be Rutgers professor Roberts A. Emmons, Jr. This should be especially interest to "train enthusiasts" (Lou McCall) of all ages so think about inviting a friend.

Reminder: try to keep the morning of Saturday, May 7, 2011 clear. This is Clean Communities Day and the WHS can receive a grant in the neighborhood of \$300 if we can field of team of 10 volunteers. Last year, we mulched the flower beds around the Community Center/ Train Station. Registration for all groups takes place at 8:30 AM at the Train Station.

See everyone Friday, March 11th at 7:30 PM.

2011 WHS OFFICERS

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SUNSHINE NEWS
by Vicki McCall

Please forward any news of a member's illness or surgery to me at vmccallpc@comcast.net so we can send cards and well wishes. I will forward the information to the newsletter editor.

2011 WHS DUES ARE DUE

Just a reminder that the 2011 WHS dues are due and are still a bargain at \$15 per family. The dues can be given to any of the WHS officers.

FEATURE HOUSE
Samuel M. Jordan House
by Larry Smith

Many of you know that Sue and I renovated the house at 110 South Clinton Avenue, across the street from the Wenonah Methodist Church. What you may not know ...

- On January 28, 1878, Thomas W. Synnott purchased the lot where the house now stands at the northwest corner of South Clinton Avenue and East Willow Street from the Mantua Land and Improvement Company.
- Twenty-five years later on June 19, 1903, Synnott sold the

lot to Samuel Monroe Jordan, my great-grandfather, for \$700.

- Within a year, Samuel Jordan hired Isaac Pursell, a Philadelphia architect, to design a home for the Jordan family and entered into an agreement with Charles H. Nicholson of Pitman to construct his new house in Wenonah.
- In December 1904, construction of the Samuel M. Jordan house was completed, and 17 craftsmen, suppliers, and tradesmen documented its completion by signing a final release of liens. The cost of the new house was \$3,542.
- Samuel Jordan then moved his family from Alloway Township to 110 South Clinton Avenue. The family and the first five to call the house "home" were Samuel, his wife Anna, and their three teenage daughters—Ada, Olive and Ellen. Shortly thereafter, Samuel's sister Bessie Jordan joined the five, moving from Philadelphia into a room on



the third floor.

- Ada Jordan later married a recently widowed Fred Smith. Fred and his two daughters—Anna and Irene—joined the five members of the Jordan family in Wenonah, increasing the number of occupants of the house to eight. (Samuel Jordan’s wife Anna had died prior to the marriage of Ada Jordan and Fred Smith.)
 - The two sons of Ada and Fred Smith—Frederick Laurenson (my father, Larry) and Orville Duffield Smith—were born in the house and named after pastors of the Wenonah Methodist Church.
 - Olive and Ellen Jordan later taught at Wenonah Elementary School and continued to live in the house until their deaths in 1951 and 1960, respectively.
 - Orville Smith called the house “home” for more than 80 years. All toll, members of my family have spent more than 400 years (and counting) of their lives in the house.
 - My father, Larry Smith married Helen Wilkins (my mother) of Woodbury and lived on the third floor of the South Clinton house from 1940 to after World War II.
 - Three families eventually returned to Wenonah and lived in the South Clinton house:
 - Helen Smith and her children—Larry (me), Linda and Ronald—from California after my father Larry died In 1961.
 - Linda (Smith) and her husband Kevin Todd and their children Jacquelyn, Sarah and Cassie from West Virginia in 1982.
 - Sue and I from Texas in 2004.
 - Nine family members died while living in the house.
 - The renovation of the house by Sue and I took approximately 5 years to design, demolish, construct and refurbish, compared to the single year it took Samuel Jordan to design and construct the house originally.
 - In addition to the work that Sue and I did, 11 artists, craftsmen, and suppliers in Wenonah contributed to finishing the renovated house.
 - The house has been in the Jordan/Smith family since it was built by Samuel M. Jordan in 1903-1904. Sue is the 20th family member to live in the house. In addition to Sue and myself, its occupants have been:
 - My great-grandfather and great-grandmother (Samuel and Anna Jordan)
 - My grandfather and grandmother (Fred and Ada Jordan Smith)
 - Two grandaunts (Olive and Ellen Jordan)
 - A great-grandaunt (Bessie Jordan)
 - Two step-aunts (Anna and Irene Smith)
 - My father and mother (Larry and Helen Smith)
 - An uncle (Orville Smith)
 - My brother (Ronald Smith), and sister and brother-in-law (Linda Smith Todd and Kevin Todd)
 - Three nieces (Jacquelyn, Sarah and Cassie Todd)
- I wonder how many of the other wonderful houses in Wenonah have remained in the same family for over 100 years.

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on
Friday, April 8, 2011

Volume 9, Issue 4, April 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

Dear Members,

I hope those members attending our March meeting enjoyed the excellent presentation by Robert Emmons of Rutgers University. He highlighted two of his documentaries about the Blue Comet and Emilio Carranza. I have both DVDs if anyone is interested. In thanks, I sent Robert a copy of Marjorie Lentz's book on the history of Wenonah and hinted that it could possibly be the subject of a future documentary. Time will tell.

This month our program features Karl Anderson, a local botanist, who will speak about the natural places of Gloucester County. He is well known in New Jersey as a field naturalist, writer and speaker with special expertise in

and Pennsylvania.

Remember to keep the morning of Saturday, May 7, 2011 clear. It is Wenonah's Clean Communities Day and the Wenonah Historical Society will receive a grant in the neighborhood of \$300 if we can field a team of 10 volunteers. Last year we mulched and planted flowers in the beds around the Train Station Community Center and our Borough Hall. Registration for all groups takes place at 8:30 AM at the Train Station.

Also, I became aware of an organization that may be of interest to the Wenonah Historical Society. It is the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey. Their web site is: www.lhsnj.org. I will be asking if we might benefit by membership in this organization at this month's meeting.

See everyone Friday, April 8th at 7:30 PM!

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botany. In the past 30 years, Karl has addressed hundreds of audiences, taught field botany on a college level, worked as a wetland delineator, and has led hundreds of field trips for general nature and botanical study in New Jersey

KATHRYN RALSTON A WENONAH LEGEND *by Vicki McCall*

Our condolences go out to the Ralston Family. Kathryn was called home to the Lord on March 14, 2011.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of such a wonderful woman. She has been an inspiration to so many of us. She was active in the Historical Society and the American Legion.



Mrs. Ralston taught 4th grade at Wenonah Elementary School for 25 years and was recognized as Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America in 1975—the first ever from Wenonah School. She was instrumental in turning many children into upstanding citizens. She led not only by word, but by example. In 2009, she and her husband Don were recognized as “Wenonah Legends.”

Kathryn Ralston will be missed...

SUNSHINE NEWS
by Vicki McCall

Please forward any news of a member’s illness or surgery to me at vmccallpc@comcast.net so we can send cards and well wishes. I will forward the information to the newsletter editor.

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* * * * *

The following house photos and information have been provided by Frank Eggert.

FEATURE HOUSE 7 West Mantua Avenue—Howard-Wentzell Building

The construction of “Howard’s Hall” started in December of 1872 and was completed in 1873. The third floor was laid out for a public hall. This was the site of the first public school in Wenonah. In 1877, the YMCA organized and met there. On several occasions, the Deptford Township Republican party had meetings in the public hall. One of the most significant uses of the building was the general store of Walter and Elizabeth Wentzell. The merchandise of the store included feed for horses, ice and newspapers. Abutting the building to the east, the Wentzell’s had an ice cream pavilion.



FEATURE HOUSE

406 West Mantua Avenue—Tenant House on Stone House Farm

Oral history indicates and suggests that this house was a tenant building on the Stone House Farm, before it was moved from the north side of Mantua Avenue and the creek to its present location. If this is the case, the house predates 1800. It was recorded that the house was used by Daniel Brown as a carpenter and sash shop, and as an office building for the Duell and Perry Canning Factory.



FEATURE HOUSE

111 North Lincoln Avenue—Stone House Tenant Farm



Colonel Stephen Greene of Philadelphia purchased this “Old Farmhouse” from the Mantua Land and Improvement Company in 1891. Although its actual age is unknown, the house is known to be one of the oldest farm houses here before the formation of Wenonah and a tenant farm house on the Stone House Farm “Plantation.” The house was moved to its present location when the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad was built in 1871. The deed from the Mantua Land and Improvement Company states “No malt

vinous, spiritous or intoxicating liquors shall be manufactured or sold on said premises; that no soap bone boiling, lamp black, varnish, slaughter house, piggery or other offensive trade or business be carried out on said premises.”

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on
Friday, May 13, 2011

Volume 9, Issue 5, May 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

Dear Members,

Welcome Spring. Finally !!! What a joy to see all varieties of dogwoods, azaleas, iris and many other trees and plants all around town in their Spring plumage. Our program for this Friday's meeting features our very own Dean Polk. Dean and his wife Christine and their two children, Jeremy and Carly (24 and 21), have been living in Wenonah for many years. Dean is an entomologist with Rutgers Cooperative Extension. His topic will be: Blueberries and the history of their cultivation in southern New Jersey. This fruit has advanced from growing in the wild to become a major component of New Jersey agricultural production. Also, as an added attraction, the topic of our new friends the "brown marmorated stink bug" will be addressed in detail if there exists sufficient interest.

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

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

Next month is our annual June Picnic. We will have a sign-up sheet at the meeting for volunteers to bring various culinary items for all to enjoy. Please remember to keep the time and date open: 5:00 PM (not 7:30 PM) Friday, June 10th.

Unfortunately neither our May meeting nor our June picnic will conflict with a Flyers playoff game.

See everyone Friday, May 13th at 7:30 PM!

SUNSHINE NEWS

by Vicki McCall

Please forward any news of a member's illness or surgery to me at vmccallpc@comcast.net so we can send cards and well wishes. I will forward the information to the newsletter editor.

2011 WHS DUES ARE DUE

Just a reminder that the 2011 WHS dues are due and are still a bargain at \$15 per family. The dues can be given to any of the WHS officers.

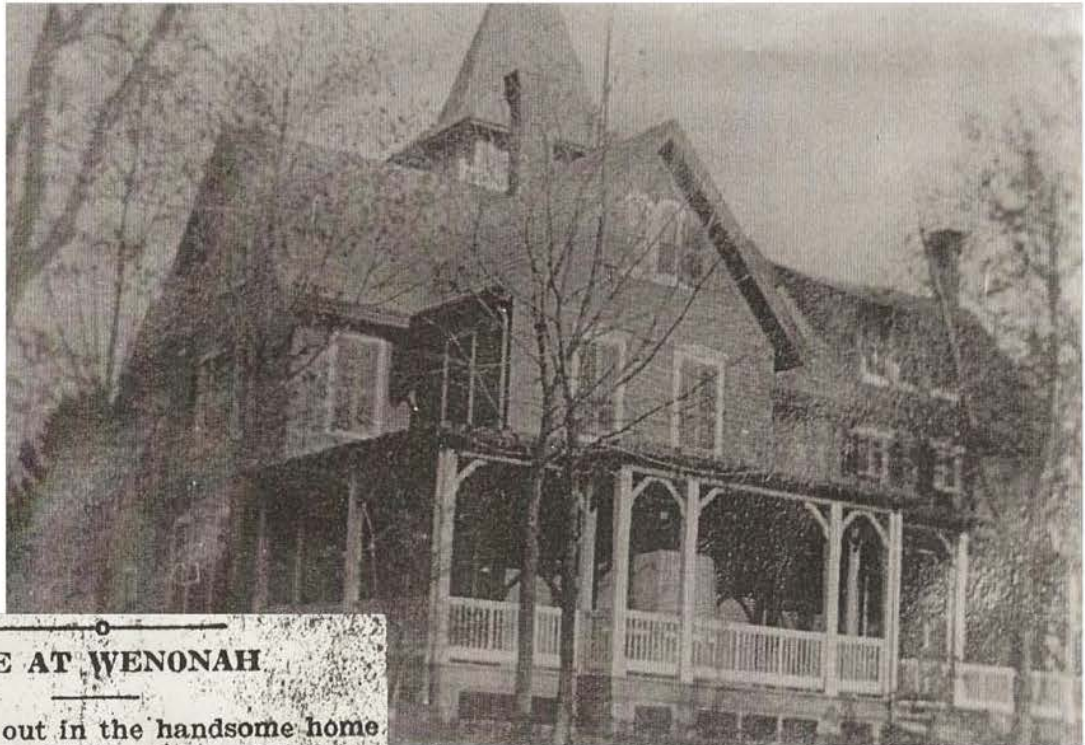
DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER ELECTRONICALLY?

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The following house photos and information have been provided by Frank Eggert.

FEATURE HOUSE
201 South Clinton Avenue—Stephen Greene House

I know many of you will recognize this house, but some of you will not. Perhaps, coverage from the local newspapers on October 17, 1923 will help.



FIRE AT WENONAH

Fire broke out in the handsome home of the Stephen Green estate last evening about 10 o'clock. Flames were seen inside of the building from the front door, and the firemen were summoned. Good work was done and the men were about ready to leave, when the flames were again seen coming from the third story. After pumping again for a short time, the engine refused to work properly, and help from Mantua, Barnsboro and Woodbury was summoned.

The companies made a rush and soon had the fire under control, but there is a heavy damage in the way of badly soaked furniture. The house has not been occupied for two years, but there was a large quantity of valuable furniture stored, most of which is damaged beyond repair. The fire started in the living room, and is believed to be the work of an incendiary.

**WENONAH HOME
DAMAGED BY FIRE**

Property of Stephen Greene Estate Suffers From Fire and Water—Though to be of Incendiary Origin

“Fire, thought to be of incendiary origin, was discovered last night in the the house of the Stephen Greene Estate, corner of Clinton and Marion avenues, Wenonah, and before it was

extinguished considerable damage had been done to the house and contents by fire and water.

It is said to have been one of the worst that the borough has experienced.

The fire was discovered by Joseph Truncer before 10 o'clock, who was on his way home, and seeing a light in the house and knowing that the place had not been occupied as a dwelling for past eight years, he began an investigation and found it to be a fire at the foot of the stairway on the first floor. An alarm was sounded and the Wenonah Fire Department quickly responded and did excellent service although they were greatly handicapped by bursting hose. Students from the military

academy rendered service and assisted in carrying some of the furniture from the first floor to a place of safety.

The flames were confined to the building and swept up the winding stairway to to the third floor cupola and roof. Fearing that the fire would get beyond control of the local department and spread to nearby buildings a call went to Woodbury and Good Will's three in one and a number of firemen from our (Woodbury's) department went down and they with the Mantua fire company assisted Wenonah ...”



This is the house (or at least half of the house) as it stands today. The other half is right next door at 203 South Clinton Avenue.

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on
Friday, September 9, 2011

Volume 9, Issue 6, September 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

Greetings fellow members. I trust you have enjoyed this wet and wonderful summer and have survived recent calamities (earthquake and hurricane) in fine fashion. We now look forward to the 2011 - 2012 Wenonah Historical Society season. The October and November meeting programs are planned (details in the next newsletter). But first things first.

Our September "Meet and Greet Kickoff Classic" is scheduled for Friday, September 9 at 6:00 PM. Sue and Larry Smith have generously offered to open their home at 110 S. Clinton Ave. for this annual event. I ask that attendees bring appetizers and desserts based on the first letter of your last name:

- A through M - please bring an appetizer.
- N through Z - please bring a dessert.

Beverages will be provided.

This event is an excellent opportunity to invite a friend or neighbor who may be a prospective new member of the WHS.

I look forward to meeting again and reuniting after our "Summer Break."

See everyone on Friday, September 9th at 6.00 PM at the Smiths!!!

Thank you.



WENONAH MEMORIES ON FACEBOOK

There are lots of nostalgic memories being shared on Facebook by the group "You know you are from Wenonah if . . ." There are more than 390 members in the group. Some nice photos have been posted, including one of Margie's, as well as interesting recollections of G. Wayne Post, The Wenonah Swim Club, Wenonah School, The Military Academy, and of course, the July 4th parade. Dave Brangan even came up with this idea for July 4, 2012:

"OK all of you Wenonah folks still living in Wenonah, here is a project for you. At the next Fourth of July, set up a couple of tables in the park, or better yet, in front of the Fire Station, with a big sign: 'Facebook Reunion.' We can all gather there and exchange stories in person!"

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SUNSHINE NEWS
by Vicki McCall

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HISTORY OF POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY IN WENONAH
by Jack C. Sheppard Sr.

During the formative years following Wenonah's creation in 1871 there was little need or funds available for a formal police department. From old newspaper reports it is apparent most residents had guns for hunting and for personal protection and did not hesitate to use them whenever a threat, perceived or real, manifested itself.

At most there was one person who acted as a law officer or constable. For many years our lawman was John Drummer who later, in 1914, was elected to serve on Borough Council. During the early years before the turn of the century there was very little crime reported in Wenonah. Gloucester County towns were fewer then, separated by considerable open space, and travel was by train, horse or on foot. What crime there was seemed to be caused by hobos arriving and departing on the numerous freight trains passing through town or just walking the rails (proposed DRPA High-Speed Line extension to Glassboro?).

Strangers were viewed with suspicion, usually being called upon to furnish an acceptable reason for being in Wenonah. One report had it that Constable Drummer didn't accept the reason provided by a stranger so he locked him in a boxcar on the rail siding in the center of town with the intent to question him further

when he had time. He apparently forgot about the man until the next day when he returned to the siding and the freight car was gone, along with his lock and the stranger.

One or two people on call seemed to provide all of the police protection necessary until sometime in the 1930's when E. J. Truncer was hired by Council with the title "Borough Marshall." About 1934/35 he was replaced by George Bowker Sr. To assist him, Council took on George Eggert (member Frank Eggert's father) as a patrolman. Patrolman Eggert was eventually replaced by Donald Fiske in that position. Then in 1954 Marshall Bowker retired and was replaced by Walter Hain with the title "Chief" thereby becoming Wenonah's first "Chief of Police". Chief Hain continued to handle Wenonah's formal policing needs utilizing assistance from volunteers when necessary.

On May 14, 1954, Borough Council approved the creation of a volunteer group with the name "Wenonah Police Reserves." State laws at the time permitted such groups to carry weapons and perform public safety functions. The Reserves were trained in the legal aspects and handling of firearms by Jim Conway (father of WHS member Barbara Conway), firearms instructor for the Gloucester County Sheriff's

office. The Police Reserves assisted the chief and his volunteers when called upon to do so, especially during special occasions such as the 4th of July and Memorial Day.

This arrangement seemingly satisfied the policing needs of the town until after WWII when the part-time patrolman James Miller was hired full-time to assist Chief Hain. When I moved into Wenonah in the early 1950's all of the policing was provided by the Chief, patrolman Jim Miller and the Reserves. The photograph below shows Chief Hain and the members of the Police Reserve organization at a meeting in Tom Synnott's barn where annual meetings of the Reserve were held.

Over the years the state Legislature imposed more rules, regulations and training requirements on the police volunteers rendering such volunteer police activity nearly impossible. More trained and licensed policemen (and ultimately women) had to be hired. By the time I stepped down as mayor after 1990 the force consisted of Chief Miller, four patrolmen and two police cars. This amount of staffing and equipment was entirely adequate for our police needs satisfying shift-staffing, illness, holidays and vacations as long as the policing was confined to Wenonah. Chief Miller issued standing orders that patrolmen were not to leave town, even disciplining one who did. It was the Chief's belief that



Wenonah Police Reserve ca 1954. Front row left to right: Bill Queale, Walt Hain, Charles Frederick, George Bowker Sr., Tom Synnott; back row left to right: Paul Sargent, Barney Lorence, Jerry Hammond, Donald Fiske, Porter Fay, Jim Conway, Tom Shearer, Joseph Toce, George Bowker Jr.

Wenonah's tax base was insufficient to afford the additional costs that would result from "regional" policing. I concurred. Apparently that thinking has now changed as Wenonah's force is considerably larger, routinely responding to calls for assistance from police in adjoining towns. Obviously such outside activity imposes significant additional manpower and equipment costs plus added danger to our officers and increased insurance liability exposure.

Research into past newspaper reports on Wenonah law enforcement activities provide the following items of interest and historic curiosity;

February 1889 – "A meeting of citizens was held on Thursday night to devise means of protecting against burglars."

June 1900 – "The question of a lockup is now agitating the public mind. Offenders when arrested at night should not be chained to a post until taken to Woodbury in the morning."

July 1900 – "Council has taken steps toward establishing a lockup and Mrs. Lashley's barn is to be leased and refitted to that use."

August 9, 1900 – A report in the *Woodbury Daily Times* advised the construction of a "lockup" in Wenonah saying ". . . it has had a very salutary effect as it has not yet had an occupant. But our evil doers – of which we have very few – will have to keep a sharp lookout for Drummer as he is a determined sleuth."

June 1901 – "Officer Drummer still keeps his eye on tramps and locks them up overnight if they have any suspicious looks."

December 1901 – *Woodbury Times* report – Watchman J. J. Drummer "was kindly remembered by the townspeople in the gift of a handsome Smith & Wesson revolver to show that his work is appreciated."

December 1903 – "Four boys ranging in age from 10 to 14 years were discovered in town by officers Drummer and Chew begging for their supper. They were charged with vagrancy and Mayor Lorence committed them to the county jail for ten days. (Talk about tough love). They claim to have homes in New York."

March 17, 1904 – *Woodbury Times* – "Officers Drummer and Chew received word to arrest two men who had stolen a gun near Glassboro and were walking up the railroad tracks. Drummer fired several revolver shots at two men who started to run as soon as the officers made known their business. They were arrested and taken before Mayor Lorence who bound one over for the Grand Jury and gave the other ninety days in the county jail."

March 1904 – "Constable Drummer found a couple suspicious characters loitering around McCormick's grocery about 2 o'clock this morning. They said they were looking for work. Mr. Drummer put them in the lockup until daylight knowing they could not find much work in the dark."

September 1904 – *Woodbury Times* – ". . . four men were seen attempting to force entrance into the R. C. Ballinger residence. Word was sent to Watchman Drummer. They saw him coming and the only thing he could do was to shoot at them as the rogues fled."

March 1938 – A delegation of women from the local Woman's Club and the Parent-Teacher Association attended Borough Council with a plea that a daytime traffic officer be assigned to the borough to halt speeding and reckless driving.

February 1954 – Wenonah Council took steps to provide more adequate police protection with the appointment of a second regular officer.

November 1954 – Wenonah officials, police and police reserves joined in ceremonies Saturday when the borough’s new police car was placed in service. Attending were Thomas Synnott, president of the Police Reserves, Police Chief George Bowker, Councilman Charles Fredrick, Mayor William Conway, Roland Fay, Assistant Chief Walter Hain, Jerry Hammond, Paul Sargent, George Bowker Jr., Tom Shearer and James Conway.

February 1958 – Councilman Charles Fredrick announced the Wenonah police headquarters has been set up in the original West Jersey RR ticket office on N. West Avenue. It was used previously as our tax office, Shuster’s Barber Shop and more recently as the Wild Iris flower shop.

LETTER OF THANKS TO THE
WENONAH POLICE FORCE

Take a close look around you...at your own home and those surrounding it.... at the beautiful woods and nature trails that surround this town. Wenonah truly represents one of the few towns that can still boast a sense of community, a spirit of camaraderie, and a commitment to the town and its people. Let us NEVER lose sight of that and let us renew our own promises to enrich this town.

It is in this spirit that I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Wenonah Police Force. Their presence in this wonderful place we call home is as integral to its essence as the surrounding woods, trails, and homes.

In the 35 plus years we have called this place home, the police have played an integral role in shaping our town, and our children. As a child, I remember the police being not just authority figures, but our neighbors and friends. There was a sense of safety that we have taken for granted.

As parents raising our children here, we are thankful for their presence at the Easter egg hunts, the Fourth of July, at Halloween, as part of the DARE program, as educators for our scouts, and as behind the scene officers who patrol and make sure we sleep safely at night.

For anyone who is not familiar with the Haunted House fundraisers the police department did, they were truly events to be seen! These events raised over \$30,000 for programs to benefit our children.

They are the unsung heroes of our town and we thank them for all they do and trust that they will be able to continue to be an integral part not just of Wenonah’s history, but of its future.

Lou and Vicki McCall and Family

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on
Friday, October 14, 2011

Volume 9, Issue 7, October 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

Dear Members,

The hot, humid, and very wet summer season has given way to the cool, crisp autumn weather that makes living in Southern New Jersey such a joy. I would like to again thank our members Sue and Larry Smith for opening their beautiful home for our September Meet and Greet. Although I was unable to attend in person, I was certainly there in spirit.

Our program this month features local botanist Karl Anderson, who presented "Natural Places of Gloucester County" at our April 2011 meeting. Karl has prepared a new program on the history of iron mining in New Jersey will debut it at our October meeting. A glimpse of Karl Anderson's "Iron" follows:

Iron was the Great Equalizer of the ancient world, and it formed the basis of our civilization today. Traces of the New Jersey iron industry are well known to historians and industrial archaeologists. But what led up to that? This program will present a little of the history, a little about the chemistry, and something about the production of this metal, from its earliest uses in the Near East about three thousand years ago, to the two hundred years or so when its mining and manufacture played a prominent part in the economy of New Jersey.

There also will be a surprise donation made to the WHS of an artifact that dates back to the old Wenonah Inn. The donors, who are related to original proprietor of the Inn, will be present at our October meeting so that we may recognize and thank them.

I look forward to seeing you Friday, October 14th at 7:30 P.M.

RECORDING THE HISTORY OF WENONAH

Wenonah is called home by current and many former residents. Two of those former residents Cara DeHart Lewis and Gerard McGarrity have been discussing plans to create a video on Wenonah's rich history as well as the people that have made it into a wonderful town. Cara owns a video production company in Florida and Gerard is a producer in Washington, D.C. for C-SPAN. This past July they interviewed Majorie Lentz about her book and her recollections of the town. On October 14th, they plan on talking with former mayor and local historian Jack Sheppard Sr. about the town.

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The long-term project is in the beginning research and planning stages. They are looking for old film or video footage and plan on continuing to talk with present as well as past citizens. If you have old film/video of the town or parade or questions, please contact them at: gerard_mcgarrity@yahoo.com or cardehlew@yahoo.com.

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SUNSHINE NEWS
by Vicki McCall

Marjorie Lentz will soon be moving from Manor Care to Pitman Manor. Her main complaints? She does not like getting old and claims she has a lot of work yet to do at home.

Please forward any news of a member's illness or surgery to me at vmccallpc@comcast.net so we can send cards and well wishes. I will forward the information to the newsletter editor, Larry Smith.

WENONAH
Provided by Jack C. Sheppard Sr.

This [Wenonah] is the name adopted for the new village at Mantua Station, about two and a half miles below Woodbury. The directors have gone to work and in a very short time a surprising change will be seen by those who remember the "truck patches" of that locality. We hear that about 100 acres have been laid out into building lots, 75 x 150 feet each.

The two central avenues, West Jersey and Mantua, are each 100 feet wide. On West Jersey Avenue the railroad company reserves 100 feet in the center and on each side of their reservation will be avenues for carriages and driving of 75 feet width, with sidewalks of 15 feet.

An imposing hotel is now in process of erection. It is to be 45 x 52 feet in dimensions, three stories high with back buildings 26 by 40 feet, and the whole surrounded by a verandah 12 feet wide. Each room is to contain water and gas and be furnished in elegant style.

The hotel is to be on the Doric style of architecture, and surmounted with a splendid

cupola. This hotel is contracted to be finished in June next, at a cost of \$15,000. During the summer about twelve other elegant cottages are to be completed. All the streets, except the two main avenues, are to be 66 feet wide.

The location of this piece of ground is peculiarly adapted for the building up of a suburban village, being high and healthful with pure and cool wells of water for all domestic purposes. It is 65 feet above Mantua Creek and from its summit can be seen the steeples of Swedesboro and many prominent points in the surrounding country.

The name selected for this young village is Wenonah, (Daughter of the West Wind) from Longfellow's "Hiawatha".

The prices of lots have been fixed from \$200 to \$400 and the extensive improvements contemplated by the company have already given to the place an impetus which cannot fail to make it one of the most desirable points along the West Jersey railroad.

Over 600 trees, mostly maples, have already been set out along the avenues. The creek in the vicinity affords grand water power for

manufacturing purposes, which will be at once taken advantage of and converted into use.

From *"The Constitution"* April 19, 1871.

THE STONE POND GARDEN
Information and photos provided by Frank Eggert and Richard Dilks

The Stone Pond was built in 1912, as part of an extensive garden in an apple orchard owned by Dr. William H. Greene, son of Stephen Greene. The elder Greene was a prominent resident of early Wenonah and an original director of the Mantua Land and Improvement Co. The Greene estate included the land between S. Clinton Ave. and S. Marion Ave., extending south from Willow St. to then Greene's Lake along the Monongahela branch. Also included on the estate were the Greene's residence on the southeast corner of S. Clinton Ave. and E. Willow St., a caretaker's house (106 E. Willow St.), gardens, a greenhouse, a peacock walk, a pleasure lake, and a two-story boathouse.

The Stone Pond was "discovered" by the Wenonah Environmental Commission in about 2000, obscured and covered with debris. Supported by a donation from the Women's Club of Wenonah, the Environmental Commission created the first Stone Pond Garden (below) that same year. In 2010-11, the Environmental Commission, again supported by the Women's Club, further improved the pond

and garden (below) by adding a low stone wall, steps, a bench, and numerous plantings of bushes, ferns and perennial wildflowers.



Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on
Friday, November 11, 2011

Volume 9, Issue 8, November 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Charles Horan*

Dear Members,

I hope our members found last months presentation by Karl Anderson on the history of metals and mining interesting and informative. Our program for this month stems from an article by Bob Shryock in the Gloucester County Times on October 24, 2011

(http://www.nj.com/gloucester/voices/index.ssf/2011/10/bob_shryock_glass_book_a_hefty.html). He wrote about Tom C. Haunton, a Pitman native who has written a 438-page book (800+

photos) on the Clevenger Brothers of Clayton and their unique glass

products produced from 1930 to 1999. Mr. Haunton will feature a 30-minute slide show and a "show and tell" of some unique glass artifacts. His book—*Last Links to the Past: 20th Century South Jersey Glass*—will be available for purchase (\$110 for hardbound; \$80 for softbound; plus NJ sales tax). Tom lives in Massachusetts. As luck would have it, he will be in the area next weekend for a presentation at the

Heritage Glass Museum in Glassboro and has agreed to visit our group this coming Friday evening.

I look forward to seeing you Friday, November 11th at 7:30 PM. We should have a good turnout and an interesting presentation.

MARJORIE LENTZ AND RACHEL KNISSEL

Marjorie Lentz has joined Rachel Knissel at Pitman Manor. Their address is:

Pitman Manor
535 N. Oak Ave.
Pitman, NJ 08071

Marjorie is in Room #314-C. Rachel is in Room #HC-304-B.

CHRISTMAS PARTY DECEMBER 9, 2011

Pat Sole is again organizing the WHS Christmas Party. This popular event will be held the evening of Friday, December 9th. Social hour will be from 5 to 6 PM, and dinner will start at 6 PM. As in previous years, the Telford Inn will cater and we will have an optional gift exchange. The cost remains at \$20 per person. Pat needs to know who will be attending by the middle of November. Please let her know this Friday at our November meeting or call her at 856-468-6661.

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WENONAH AND THE MILITARY ACADEMY

By Marjorie Lentz

It all started with a meeting of businessmen at the "New Mantua Station" of the West Jersey Railroad Company.

This station was built about 1866 when the railroad company straightened the tracks which at that time were on a track bed running past Wenonah Lake, south on what is now Jefferson Avenue, crossing the Mantua Creek on a bridge at a point now known by most kids in town as "Clay Hill".

At a meeting during 1869 in the New Mantua Station the men agreed to pool their money and buy 5 farms surrounding the station. These are the lands on which they intended to build a town. The Historical Society has a scrap of paper dated 1869 on which it is noted "we will name the town "Winona". That name is crossed out and the word "Wenonah" substituted for it. For those who may not know, Wenonah is a Santee Indian name meaning a first-born daughter.

The men formed a company named the "Mantua Land and Improvement Company" which was authorized to lay out streets and roads, build a hotel and start selling building lots.

The first building constructed was the Wenonah Inn hotel, built in 1870-71 and opened in the spring of 1872. From that time forward many people from Camden and Philadelphia came to the hotel by train and Wenonah was considered to be a summer resort.

In the interests of time I will skip ahead about 30 years to the year 1903. By this time Wenonah was able to exist on its own with a fairly sizable population, a permanent government, stores, a school, and the hotel. But the hotel was having financial trouble and was forced to close. Some said it was the automobile that allowed people to go where they wanted to, much more conveniently than on the train.

Though the automobile forced the closing of the Wenonah Inn, a new era opened in Wenonah. Major J. R. Jones, former head of the drill team sponsored by the John Wanamaker Store, Philadelphia, riding past the vacant Wenonah Inn, conceived an idea for the use of the facility. He quickly relayed his plan to owner Stephen Greene.

On September 20, 1904 the Wenonah Military Academy opened.

In the rooms that formerly accommodated hotel guests who were mainly interested in dances and fine food, the rooms now accommodated cadets interested in horsemanship and higher education. Hotel rooms were converted to classrooms, dormitories, a library, a chapel and an infirmary, although a communication to parents hinted the infirmary would rarely be used.

The first officers of the Wenonah Military Academy were Stephen Greene, President and owner, Dr. William H. Greene, Vice-President, son of Stephen Greene and known internationally as a scientist, Dr. H.A. Stout, treasurer and Major J.R. Jones, secretary. On the Board of Counsel were the Rev. Raymond H. Gage and Thomas W. Synnott. Captain Percy C. Jones was commander of the cadets.

Although Wenonah was accustomed to the social activities of the Wenonah Inn during the summer, the Wenonah Military Academy kept the town hopping during the school term. The first month the Academy was opened, there were a reception and dance for two hundred people, a skating carnival on Warner's Lake with hundreds of lighted lanterns, a minstrel show, a house party and numerous football games. This was the beginning of a social whirl that kept Wenonah spinning for the next thirty years. Wenonah residents were invited to band concerts, glee club performances, drama productions, and horsemanship exhibitions. Local girls vied for invitations to dances and on Sunday the whole town turned out for full-dress parades and cadet drill demonstrations.

During the presidency of Dr. Charles H. Lorence, the Wenonah Military Academy reached its peak with an enrollment of 200 cadets who came from as far away as California and Cuba. Upon the death of Dr. Lorence, Major Clayton A. Snyder assumed the presidency. For 23 years Major Lloyd L. Lammert was headmaster and athletic director. Other key members of the faculty included Captain Thomas A. Clingan, instructor in mathematics and Mary Bilderback, instructor in instrumental music. Dr. Thomas J. Mulvey was director of advertising. Cadets enrolled in the classical, Latin-scientific, or English-commercial courses. Military science included instruction in rifle practice, infantry drills,

horsemanship and military discipline. Horsemanship instruction was \$100 extra, but it included the rental of the horse.

In an advertising brochure, the Wenonah Military Academy emphasized that it had “. . . established as its guiding principle the formation of moral character, the teaching of respect for authority and the strict adherence to the fundamentals of a sound academic and business education.” The brochure emphasized also that Wenonah has a “quiet seclusion” and is “sufficiently removed from the dangerous enticements of the city” and yet is “within easy reach of Camden and Philadelphia on the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad.”

Also “Wenonah is an entirely residential town with no factories. It has its own entirely independent sanitary drainage system.”

And especially directed to parents the Academy advised that “the sale of intoxicants within a mile of the Academy is absolutely prohibited by law” and “the town has a marked freedom from sickness and disease.”

In 1913 the annual charges of \$600 included “tuition, board, heat light, twelve pieces of laundry and mending of underclothing.” Tuition doubled during the years but included “table linen, pressing and use of firearms.” However this charge did not include the \$250 cost for a uniform. During the 30 years of Academy existence the uniforms changed from time to time but typically the cadet wore a uniform of grey with various kinds of adornments. The dress uniform worn by cadet Le Grand Reeves was the first style as he was in the first graduating class in 1906. Another style was worn by the school teaching staff and they were similar to U.S. Army uniforms. The cadet officers’ full dress uniform included a sword, sash and shako. By 1916 there was a waiting list as every available space is filled.”

Although military discipline soon earned the Academy the name of “The West Point of South Jersey,” athletics brought fame to the school. On Stephen Greene’s athletic field where the

grandstand held 500 spectators, cadets ran a quarter-mile cinder track, played football with prep schools like Malvern, Seton Hall and Pennington, played baseball and practiced horsemanship and military tactics. A twelve-acre field along Glassboro Road was used for polo and lacrosse. Golf was played at the Oak Valley Country Club, sometimes referred to as the Wenonah Country Club or, originally Altwald Golf Links, which was situated in a wooded area off Ogden Road. The word “ogden” is derived from the Swedish word meaning “valley of oaks.”

On the Wenonah polo field along Woodbury-Glassboro Road one polo team defeated a team from the West Point Military Academy. Many graduating cadets gained recognition on college teams and Herbert J. Pennock, who became a major league pitcher, is named in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y.

In addition to the former Wenonah Inn, the Wenonah Military Academy occupied the Charles H. Lorence Cottage which housed senior cadets and the Clayton A. Snyder Cottage which housed junior cadets. A drill hall was built behind the Academy



and it was claimed to have the largest floor space of any gymnasium in South Jersey. It was large enough to drill an entire battalion, and of course, to accommodate the dances. At one mid-term reception six hundred people attended and danced. A stone wall was added

fronting the academy (still there) and in 1916 the building formerly housing the Wenonah Inn’s bowling alley was converted to a science laboratory.

After the games and dances the cadets escorted their guests to the Wenonah Drug Store and to Walter Wentzell’s store for sandwiches and ice cream.

In September 1935 Dr. Charles H. Lorence announced that the Wenonah Military Academy would not be open “because of economic reasons.”

And now all we have are written records, photographs, some uniforms and swords, and many fond memories.

Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Regular Meeting at 7:30 P.M. on
Friday, January 13, 2012

Volume 9, Issue 9, December 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

Dear Members,

Happy Holidays to all! To those who have reserved a seat at our Christmas dinner and gift exchange, I look forward to seeing you on Friday, December 9th (5:00 P.M. social hour; 6:00 P.M. dinner). To those who are not attending the dinner, I hope to see you at our first meeting of 2012, which will be on Friday, January 13th at the Train Station Community Center. Our presentation will be "Wenonah before it was Wenonah."

If you need that special holiday gift, consider one from the Wenonah Historical Society. Selections include Wenonah canvas carry-all bags, Wenonah Christmas tree ornaments, and beautiful framed photos of local landmarks such as the Train Station. Please call Pat Sole (468-6661) to purchase or inquire about an item from the WHS store.

And, if you need a New Year's resolution, why not resolve to bring a neighbor to one of our meetings in 2012. That should be a easy resolution to achieve.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER?

If you would like to receive an electronic version of the newsletter instead of a copy delivered by the U.S. Postal Service, let me know at smithlr@att.net. The newsletter will arrive sooner, reduce our printing and postage costs, and if there is something in color (such as the photo below), you will be able to see the colors.

2011 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
second Friday of each
month
(except June, July and
August)



Charlie Horan rings the bell from the Wenonah Inn.

Wenonah's Water (1885–1945)

by Larry Smith

The following chronology provide's a glimpse of the history of Wenonah's water, which began with the organization of the Wenonah Water Company in 1885. The initial water system included galvanized pipes, a single well, and an experimental fire hydrant at the corner of East Mantua Avenue and North Clinton Avenue (Marjorie K. Lentz, *Wenonah*, 2009). Water conservation was documented as early as 1891, with restrictions on lawn watering. Wenonah's first water tower---a 100-foot standpipe--- was constructed in 1894. Meters were

installed in 1909, and the "rent" on water was raised from \$15 to \$21 per year in 1913. By 1936, the water system reached all but 22 of the 368 potential customers in the Borough.

For the most part, the chronology has been compiled verbatim from newspaper articles contained in the archives of the Wenonah Historical Society and the official records of the Borough's government (Jack C. Sheppard, Sr., *Information about Wenonah*, 1991).

April 15, 1885 – “The movement to secure a water supply for the Borough has been revived.”

July 1, 1885 – “In the opinion of the best informed our town will before long enjoy the luxury and advantage of water works. A preliminary meeting has been held at which the matter was fully discussed. It is proposed, if sufficient ‘water takers’ can be got, to go on with the organization, buy the land and water supply, procure estimates as to cost of reservoir construction and machinery, and make the basis of business a capital stock of \$25,000.”

July 15, 1885 – “Water works are among the early probabilities. Last Thursday the ‘Wenonah Water Company’ bought 21 acres of land included in which are the ponds from which will be drawn the water for supplying the Borough. One of the conditions of the sale was that the purchaser should carry out the project of water works.”

August 19, 1885 – “The Wenonah Water Supply Company has organized by electing Stephen Greene, President and Dr. Geo. W. Bailey, Secretary and Treasurer. Plans and specifications have been prepared and the work will at once be proceeded with.

December 1st is the time to which the Wenonah people look forward for an unlimited supply of pure and wholesome water, which they will take plain. And yes, if Woodbury gets its water supply, as it is confident it will, our Wenonah neighbors would not be doing a bad thing to draw from a common supply.”

June 4, 1891 – “The water company has issued a circular to our many citizens containing new rules and regulations governing the use of water. The circulars read---no lawns to be watered either with sprinklers or by hand except between the hours of 4 to 8 in the morning and from 4 to 8 in the evening.”

March 21, 1894 – “The Wenonah Water Company intend on increasing their water supply and are erecting a stand

pipe to be 100 feet and to be situated at the north end of the borough.”

June 5, 1894 – “The first carload of iron (plates) for the new stand pipe in Wenonah arrived last Saturday.”

June 27, 1894 – “Nine sections of the new Wenonah Water Company stand pipe have been put up, the men not stopping even in the very hot weather of last week.”

July 25, 1894 – “The new stand pipe of the Wenonah Water Co. has been completed and has been filled with

water. We anticipate a test on Wenonah plumbing when the water shall be turned on with the added force over the old service.”

November 14, 1894 – “The West Jersey Railroad Co. have purchased of the Wenonah Water Co. their old tanks and are moving them to Elmer.”

December 6, 1894 – “The Wenonah Water Company are boring several artesian wells, and erecting a large pumping and engine house in the glen near the lake.”

June 6, 1903 – “The Water Company is drawing off the lake at the pumping station, as a precaution, that in case the drouth keeps up, and the seven 8-inch artesian wells should become insufficient to supply the demand, fresh

water could be gotten from the lake. It seems that this is very unlikely, as they never have as yet, but the precaution is a wise one.”

January 10, 1906 – “Water superintendant Price reports that 16,000,000 gallons of water have been used here the past year, making over 200 gallons to each of the 600 inhabitants. There are now being pumped about 1500 gallons each 24 hours.”

May 16, 1906 – “The Bond Committee, composed of the following gentlemen, T.W. Synnott, E.A. Smith, H.A. Stout, W.P. Cox, R.C. Ballinger, H.S. Leap and J.M. Colbert, appointed by Borough Council to investigate and report as to the advisability of bonding the Borough to purchase the water works and establish an electric light plant in connection therewith, met in council chamber last evening, and, the sentiment of the committee was



Wenonah's 100-foot high standpipe.

strongly against such action. Dr. Stout was made chairman, and stated that the matter should be thoroughly investigated as it had been brought up at different times for several years past and that he had heard several taxpayers express themselves as favoring it and several who did not, and presented figures to show the present income from the water plant.

"T.W. Synnott stated that the plant today stood the water company in \$44,000.00 but that they would sell for \$30,000.00 and as a stock holder he would be glad to dispose of his stock at those figures, but as a member of the committee, he was not in favor of the town buying.

"The probable expenses of operating the plant were found to exceed the income from it.

"R.C. Ballinger stated that he thought the purchase inadvisable unless the principal could be reduced at least five per cent, per annum, and offered the following resolution, which was carried without a dissenting vote.

"That the committee deem it inadvisable to bond the Borough for the purchase of the water plant and establishing an electric light plant in connection, at the present time."

July 13, 1906 – "The pure artesian water which has always been an attractive feature to home seekers and residents here has been so bad for the last two weeks that it is unfit for any use, and pumps around town are having runs upon them like a bank in time of panic. Just what the trouble is seems to be a mystery to those in charge and the stand pipe is being emptied today to see if the new coat of paint recently applied to the inside is responsible. One of the most plausible theories yet advanced is, that one of the iron well pipes has a crack in it large enough to admit the sulphur water from the marl beds through which the wells are driven, as the odor of the water is identical to that of the marl taken out of the wells at the time they were dug. It is reasonable to presume that the Water Company will make every effort to speedily locate and remedy the cause, whatever it may be, as their service has always been of the best in the past, and as management has had a practical demonstration that virtue, patience, has about become exhausted on the part of several residents, an improvement may soon be expected."

November 5, 1909 – "In order to make an equitable charge for water, the Wenonah Water Company will place water meters on the premises of all water takers, charging according to amount used upon a minimum basis. The installing of the meters will be done during the present month and the meter rates will commence January 1st, 1910."

July 3, 1910 – "No one need go dry now as our public fountain is in order and has received a new coat of paint and looked fine on the '4th.' We also see that there is a cup placed there for all persons wishing to drink of Wenonah's cool artesian well water."

March 31, 1911 – "The Wenonah Water Company offers to rent its plant to the Borough of Wenonah for the sum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per annum, payable semi-annually for the period of ninety-nine years, the Borough to operate the plant and pay all expenses, including taxes, extensions, etc."

April 20, 1912 – "A sample of the Wenonah artesian water, can be seen in the Times window. It was drawn from a faucet in the kitchen of Postmaster English's house and has not been filtered.

"Wenonah has six wells about 128 feet deep, and the machinery is as good today as it was 17 years ago. All the wells have a splendid flow. Wenonah water has brought many people to that place as residents."

September 3, 1912 – "Now that we own our own water plant it's right that we have an efficient one, and to get this it takes money, but it will pay in the long run. It will take at least \$10,000. We should take up all the mains less than four inches, take out all dead ends, put in a new eight inch well and change our plant so it can be run cheaper by installing an oil burning engine. This is a matter for the citizens to take up; not Council, as the citizens bought the plant. But no doubt Council will help, as they are up-to-date and will be ready and willing to have an up-to-date water plant. We regret Council is hampered by the lack of money, in making these extensions. It is also wrong for Council in making extensions by following after the old water company. If they continue to do this in later years it will take thousands of dollars to put things in shape."

May 15, 1913 – "It is reported that an ordinance regulating the operation of the Borough's water plant has been introduced in Council and was passed first and second reading at the meeting of May 8th. It is understood that if this ordinance becomes effective the water rent will be raised from the present rate of \$15 per year minimum to \$20 per year minimum and that the allowance of 50,000 gallons per year will remain the same. In addition to this it is said that \$1 per year will be charged each year for the use of the meter, making the total rental per year \$21 in place of the old rate of \$15.

"If this ordinance is passed at the next meeting of Council it will undoubtedly become effective at once, in which case it is presumed that bills for an additional quarter will be received by the consumers this year.

"It is not thought that this increase will be extremely popular as one of the chief arguments advanced in favor of the Borough purchasing the plant was that the citizens should secure the plant themselves and thereby protect from any increase in the yearly rentals. It seems to be the general impression however that this increase cannot become effective until sanctioned by the State Board of Public Utilities Commissioners."

August 4, 1913 – "The stand pipe, after being painted, looks much better and increases in a way the beauty of the town. The color, as it is now a dark green within five feet of the top, and the other five feet being white, harmonizes with the surroundings."

January 6, 1916 – "The new pumping station was opened for inspection on January 1st, from 2 to 4 p.m."

January 7, 1916 – "According to the Engineer's reports there was 20,601,440 gallons of water pumped during the year (1915), an average of 1,716,786 gallons per month and 56,442 gallons a day. Based on our census of 1915 which gives our population as 840, this would mean that the average consumption of water per capita would be 67 gallons per day or 24,455 gallons per year."

August 13, 1916 – "The inspector from the State Department of Health was down Friday morning to inspect the new artesian well, which has a depth of two hundred and sixteen feet. He filled a bottle with water from the well, sealed it, and shipped it to Trenton."

February 16, 1920 – "Sealed proposals for painting the stand pipe 15 feet diameter by 100 feet high at Wenonah, N.J., will be received by the Water Committee of the Council of the Borough of Wenonah, in the Council Chamber at the Fire House in said Borough on Tuesday, March 2, 1920, at 7:30 p.m."

The outside and inside of the stand pipe to be scraped and wire brushed, removing all scale and rust therefrom, after which there shall be applied one coat of paint or iron coating on the inside of the stand pipe and two coats of paint on the outside of the stand pipe."

May 26, 1923 – "A special session of the Wenonah Borough Council was held last evening and action was taken whereby the borough will supply Mantua with water for domestic purposes. The matter will be referred to the Public Utility Commission for approval but the borough under the circumstances has anticipated their approval, and a pipe has been laid, above ground, connecting the Wenonah water service with Mantua service pipe."

May 31, 1923 – "Until further notice water for household purpose may be used without restriction."

"Water for sprinkling and other use may be used from 7 A.M. to 12 noon daylight saving time. You are urged to use water for real need only."

August 15, 1925 – "George S. Miller & Co., of Pitman, were awarded the contract for laying of water mains for the Borough of Wenonah by the Borough Council of that place and the solicitor was authorized to draw up the contract."

"The work to be done on Mantua avenue consists of laying 6-inch water mains from Clinton avenue to a point 75 feet west of West Jersey avenue, and from Princeton avenue to Woodbury avenue. A 4-inch main will be laid from Garfield avenue to Hayes avenue."

May 15, 1926 – "Steps to relieve the present condition of the Wenonah water plant and the low pumpage of the artesian wells were taken at the regular meeting of the borough council last night. Council was told of the present needs of the plant by Mr. Kauffman, an expert engineer in that line."

"Mr. Kaufmann, who has made a preliminary survey of the water system in the borough, said that the most important thing to be done was to have the wells blown as they were exceedingly dirty, this being the cause of the shortage of pumping. He said that some of the wells were twenty-five years old and that they had not been cleaned, according to records for seventeen years."

"Another cause of the hard pumpage encountered is the fact that the water strata throughout the state has lowered because of the demand for artesian well water. Mr. Kaufmann said that he felt if they were properly cleaned it would solve the problem. In relation to the fact that the water is of a rather milky nature, Mr. Kaufmann said that this also was probably due to the dirty wells."

"He also recommended placing of a water meter at the water plant to measure the water pumped, as well as suggesting several minor remedies that would result in the lowering of the cost of pumping."

"Councilman Morrell reported that he had received a price from Reidpath and Potter for the blowing of the wells. The price quoted was \$3.50 an hour for two men and equipment, borough to furnish fuel and water. Minor details will raise this cost somewhat."

"A motion was then carried that the Water Committee let the contract for the blowing of the wells and to employ engineer Kaufmann to supervise the work and to make further changes."

August 10, 1928 – "Water Committee advised Council of the serious condition of the water pumping facilities, one

steam boiler is broken down and useless, and advise in their opinion Council should replace the old steam boiler with a diesel motor and new pump."

Council authorized an emergency purchase of a 40 horsepower diesel engine and 500 gallon per minute pump.

May 9, 1931 – "An offer of \$500 for the purchase of a privately owned water main on Maple avenue was authorized in a resolution adopted last night by Wenonah council. It was adopted on the recommendation of Councilman Knollin Cox, chairman of the committee that has been investigating the purchase.

"The four inch main is approximately 1400 feet in length and serves nine properties at the present time. It is owned by T.W. Synnott and T.W. Townsend.

"The borough desires its purchase in order to provide fire protection to residents in that section of the borough. The installation of 110 feet of main to connect with the section it is proposed to purchase was also authorized by council."

June 10, 1933 – "The borough of Wenonah will fight against compliance with an order issued by the State Board of Health for the installation of a chlorinator at their water pumping station.

"This decision was reached last night by council, after Councilman Knollin Cox, water committee chairman, reported receipt of the state order, which requires installation of the apparatus by July 15 in order to improve the water supply.

"The order, together with all previous correspondence between the borough and the state department, was referred to Borough Solicitor Oscar B. Redrow.

"I don't know what to make of it,' Cox said. 'Their laboratory reports on samples of water taken from our system show the water to be free of contamination, and then they send us this resolution ordering a treatment for purification of the supply, declaring the water not fit for consumption. It's all d _ _ _ poppycock.'

Tests of water made recently by chemists hired by the borough water department have shown the water to be free of contamination agreeing with last state analysis received by the borough.

"According to Cox, he was told last January by representatives of the state department that 85 per cent of the water supply in the state was chlorinated and that it was the department's aim to have all water given such treatment.

"Test taken at that time showed no contamination and the regular April quarterly report was also satisfactory."

July 11, 1936 – "Only 22 water services in the entire borough are not connected and Wenonah has reached a new high in water customers with a total of 346, Councilman Knollin B. Cox, chairman of the water committee, reported at the regular meeting of council last night."

March 5, 1945 – "Wenonah dedicated its new 12-inch well Saturday with appropriate ceremonies.

"Councilman Knollin B. Cox, chairman of the water committee, called on Rev. Carlton N. Nelson, pastor of the Wenonah Methodist Church, for the invocation. Mr. Cox then introduced A.C. Schultes, the contractor, and Charles Mickle, who did the electrical work, and called on Mr. Mickle to unlock the pumping house and turn the key over to the borough clerk, Charles M. Hobson.

"Mr. Cox then addressed the councilmen and citizens present, explaining the many steps taken from the time of the well's inception, first securing the permission of the State Water Policy Commission for the right to drill the well; then the numerous details necessary to be submitted to the State Board of Health as to plans and specifications drawn up by Borough Engineer Wm C. Cattell and County Engineer Wm H. Baum.

"Then the final approval of the State Board of Health as to equipment and careful analysis of the water supply. All of which passed the test and on February 13, 1945 the State Board of Health notified the borough of their full approval as to plans and specifications and that the water was free from contamination of any kind.

"Mr. Cox then called on Joseph E. Truncer, who started the wheels in motion of the original steam pump of the old Wenonah Water Co. on July 5, 1896, to throw the electric switch of the new electric pump controlling the 12-inch well, 320 feet deep and capable of pumping 600 gallons per minute.

"Mayor William I. Conway and ex-mayor H. Lake Gilmour then threw the electric motor controls and the citizens of Wenonah began to receive the first water from the new well.

"The borough is now in a safe position as to quality and volume of water for years to come. And the well is completely paid for from accumulated funds of the water department without any additional expense to our taxpayers."