

VOL. II

FEBRUARY 1976

NEXT MEETING: Monday, March 1, 1976, 8:30 P.M. at the Allendale Municipal Building. (Please note: the date of the March meeting as listed in the 1975-1976 Membership Handbook--"March 2"--is an error; we must have overcompensated for leap year when we compiled the handbook.)

PROGRAM: "Allendale's Changing Scene," a slide program comparing old and new views of Allendale, compiled from slides and photographs donated to the Society within the past year. Similar to the slide program presented last year, this program will make use of two projectors, but will feature newly acquired pictures.

NEWS AND VIEWS: The members of the board have for some time felt the need for a broader base of opinion at the board meetings where, as in other organizations like ours, most of the business of the Society is initiated or carried out. To provide more members for the executive committee, and in accordance with Article XI of the Allendale Historical Society By-Laws, the following amendments to said By-Laws are proposed, to be voted on at the next regular meeting of the Society.

[Please note: There are no deletions except punctuation in the proposed amendments; additions are indicated by <u>under-</u> lining.]

Article V.--Government of the Society. Section 1.--Government. The elected officers of the Society shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Trustees.

Article VI.--Officers and Committees. Section 1.--Officers.

All officers except Trustees as listed shall be elected for a term of one (1) year. Trustees shall be elected for two (2) years.

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Trustees	shall	not	serve	more	than	two
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No. 3

The By-Law governing amendments (Article XI) reads as follows: "These By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting by a 2/3 vote, a quorum being present, provided the proposed amendment has been read by the Secretary at the previous regular meeting or shall have been sent by mail to each member at least five (5) days before such a vote."

This newsletter will serve as mail notice; the amendments will be read, and discussion and voting will take place at our March 1st meeting.

Our first slide program, "Allendale

Then and Now," is still "touring." It was last presented to the Woman's Evening Club of Allendale early this month, and we still receive periodic requests for it.

Our new slide program, described above, will be available to other groups after our March meeting.

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ALLENDALE: BACKGROUND OF A BOROUGH.....by Pat Wardell

II. The Railroad Comes to Allendale--1840-1870.

On March 10, 1841 the Paterson and Ramapo Railroad Company was incorporated by the New Jersey State Legislature. The incorporators were authorized to construct a railroad from a suitable place in or near the town of Paterson to some suitable point or points in or near the division line between Franklin Township and New York State. Joseph Warner Allen was sent to survey the course of the railroad and supervise its construction, which was completed by October 1848. When a small depot was built here about 1850, the station was named "Allendale" after Allen.

Local newspapers in the fall of 1848 announced: "The Paterson and Ramapo Railroad being finished, the cars will commence running regularly on Wednesday, the 1st of November."

In 1852, the New York and Erie Railroad Company leased the Paterson and Ramapo Railroad, and a Time Table of December 20, 1852 shows that trains made 12 stops a day at Allendale, 6 eastbound and 6 westbound.

On July 2, 1859 the <u>Bergen County Journal</u> reported, "The Depot at Allendale having by neglect been allowed to run down, the Erie Company finally suspended stoppage at the station some two years ago. A new spirit has recently invaded that section and the people are determined to have a depot. Mr. Mallinson has lately fitted up a little station, which he keeps faithfully and in good order. The cars now stop there again as formerly."

While the farmers of the area undoubtedly realized the imporatnce of the railroad in transporting their crops, one wonders whether the full impact the railroad would have on Allendale was understood. For the railroad, before too long, was to bring a boom to land values, turn farmland into building plots, and transpose a rural community into a vacation paradise.

With the railroad came Smith Roswell, who served as Allendale's Station Agent, in the employ of the Erie, for over 50 years. In about 1850 he opened what may have been Allendale's first store, which he operated for about 8 years, in or near the depot. Before 1869 two other stores flourished in Allendale: one, run by Charlie May in a corner of the hotel, and the other, operated by Morris S. Ackerman, also in the hotel.

By 1861, J. Smith had erected a saw mill near present-day Lake San Jacinto, for this mill is clearly marked on an 1861 map. This map also shows a Blacksmith and Wagon Shop labelled "H. Mallinson" at the southeast corner of the intersection of Franklin Turnpike and Allendale Avenue, on the property now owned by the Guardian Angel Church.

Peat was mined in 1866 and 1867 by John J. Zabriskie on the meadows in Allendale which were later known as the Celery Farm. A narrow guage railroad ran several feet into this peat bog, and cars pulled by horses carried the peat along the tracks to a loading station opposite the site on which Archer Hall now stands, where it was loaded onto the wagons used to haul it to the market. It is said that for many years subterranean peat fires burned in this bog. The old peat bog was later used to grow onions, and it is said that one section of the bog carried the hazard of quicksand. The <u>Hackensack Republican</u> on October 6, 1887 reported: "Our neighbor Mr. Sterling was out in the Onion Bed the other day prospecting to learn the prospects of the crop, when suddenly he began to sink and would have entirely disappeared if aid had not promptly been given. Some are so unkind as to remark that he was going down to ascertain what has become of the horse railroad track and cars, or a pair of horses that disappeared a few years ago. It was a narrow escape."

John J. ("Griddlegreaser") Van Horn ran a blacksmith shop on Franklin Turnpike and was famous locally for his inventive genius and mechanical talents. His nickname was the antithesis of his physical appearance, for he is said to have been over six feet tall and exceedingly thin, with long hair falling about his neck. Somewhat of an eccentric, with a reputation as a local "character," Van Horn in 1859 delivered a series of rousing lectures at Allendale's old schoolhouse on the north corner of Chestnut Street and Franklin Turnpike. He much preferred devising mechanical gadgets to farming, and is said to have turned out many an inventive contraption, including a shotgun which one old resident claimed was better than any made by an arms factory. One profitable contraption was mentioned in the Bergen County Democrat of June 19, 1874: "John Van Horn is rigging up a cider mill to be run by goat power." It was apparently successful, for more than 3 years later, on October 6, 1887, the Hackensack Republican was to report: "John Van Horn's cider presses are in full operation."

On February 5, 1849 Hohokus Township (containing Allendale) was formed and set off from Franklin Township by act of the State Legislature. The Township included present Saddle River, Upper Saddle River, Ramsey, Mahwah, and Waldwick as well as Allendale. Township meetings were to be held at the house of John W. Ramsey of Mount Prospect (Ramsey).

Within a decade of the opening of the railroad, city folks were finding the area's country atmosphere appealing. On July 2, 1859 the <u>Bergen County Journal wrote</u>: "Several New Yorkers have recently purchased places for residences in Hohokus vicinity. Property there is increasing very much. The Railroad Co. have the necessary trains to stop there, and other strangers are coming. Hohokus is looking up and will soon be thickly dotted with wealthy residences." This item foreshadowed the real estate boom that Allendale and her neighbors soon experienced. Once again, the railroad's importance cannot be underestimated: many of the New Yorkers who purchased land and built magnificent summer residences in Allendale were in one way or another connected with the Erie. One of the first Erie magnates to come to Allendale was Oliver Hazard Perry Archer, who by 1869 was living part of the year in Allendale.

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By the time of the Federal Census in 1850, the following householders were living in or near Allendale: Aaron Ackerman, Aaron C. Ackerman, Abraham G. Ackerman, John G. Ackerman, Albert Alyea, Joseph Christopher, William Christopher, Isaac Courter, Anthony Crouter, John A. Garrison, John Lawbach, Henry Mallinson, Joseph Mallinson, Charles May, Henry Powell, Abram Quackenbush, Corinus Quackenbush, Martin Quackenbush, Albert Smith, Garret Smith, Jacob Smith, Isaac Storms, John L. Van Blarcom, Lewis Van Blarcom, John R. Vanderbeck, Paul Van Houten, Peter Van Zile, William Wilson, Samuel H. Winter, and Albert J. A. Zabriskie.

In 1862, Allendale's second schoolhouse was built at a cost of \$2000. It was located one quarter of a mile from the depot on the site of the present Allendale Municipal Building. This school was 25 by 35 feet in dimension, adorned with a belfry and blinds, and was surrounded by shade trees. Early teachers in the first, as well as this second schoolhouse included Henry H. Vanderbeck, John Binder, and Mary Geroe. James Alfred Ackerman, who had also attended the Allendale School as a pupil, first taught here in 1875.

The coming of the railroad in 1848 turned Allendale and Ramsey into the strawberry center of the east. Farmers no longer had to ship their strawberries and other crops to market by wagon; they had merely to drive their wagons to the station, load their produce on the train, find themselves a comfortable seat, and sit back and enjoy the ride to market. Chester A. Smeltzer, in <u>The Birth of Ramsey</u>, tells of long lines of wagons extending westward along the Wyckoff Road and eastward as far back as what is now Lake Street, waiting their turn to check in their berries in the cars at the siding at Ramsey's station. The scene at Allendale's station was no doubt similar, for in June 1865 the <u>Bergen County Democrat</u> conceded that those unacquainted with the nature of the strawberry business might find the figures listed incredible, but then went on to give the amounts shipped daily from four major points on the Erie Railroad:

This article goes on to state that in the preceding year or two, production of the strawberry from these points had "largely fallen off." In addition, the paper reported, not less than 50,000 baskets daily were shipped through Hackensack by plank road and by Hackensack Railroad to New York.

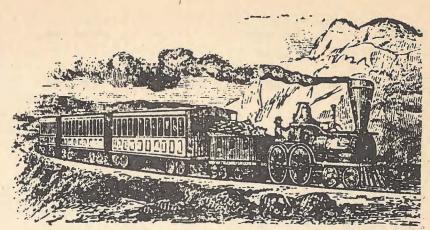
On July 14, 1865 the <u>Bergen County Democrat</u> wrote that John Y. Dater, Erie Railway Agent at Ramsey's had reported that from the first to the twentieth of June 1865, 1,051,210 baskets of strawberries had been shipped from that station alone.

According to Smeltzer, the freight rate in the 1850's was twelve and a half cents per crate of berries; the cost of picking the berries was a cent a basket plus board for the pickers during the season. The selling price averaged from 2 to 5 cents per half-pint basket; it was a poor season that brought a return of \$500 for a farmer--some cleared as much as \$2000 in a season.

If the farmer had neither the time nor the inclination to market his berries himself, he could contract with a commission agent to market his berries for him. John J. Storms, who lived in Park Ridge, was a commission agent from 1854 to 1884. He and John H. Osborne of Saddle River, another local commission merchant, shipped their goods to the

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city from Allendale. James B. H. Storms, son of John J. Storms, wrote that his father "went to Allendale on Monday afternoons, making the four-mile journey by horse and wagon. He met his customers, saw that their produce was properly loaded, discussed the market outlook and possibilities, and gave advice when needed." Among the farmers who consigned their strawberries to John J. Storms in 1856 are these Allendale-and-vicinity farmers: Jacob Bamper, W. Christopher, Isaac Courter,



ROUNDING THE CURVE AT HOHOKUS ON THE PATERSON AND RAMAPO R. R.

Henry Mallinson, Henry Powell, Peter Powell, A. Quackenbush, M. Quackenbush, Jacob Smith, G. A. Smith, and Albert J. Zabriskie.

(Next issue: Allendale's First Real Estate Boom--the 1870's.)

Sources:

Hopkins-Corey Map of Bergen County, 1861.
Edward Harold Mott, <u>Between the Ocean and the Lakes; the Story of the Erie</u>.
Bergen County Historical Society 1970 Annual, <u>Bergen County History</u>.
J. M. Van Valen, <u>History of Bergen County</u>, <u>New Jersey</u>.
Walter Arndt Lucas, <u>From the Hills to the Hudson: a History of the Paterson and Hudson River Railroad and its Associates the Paterson and Ramapo, and the Union Railroads</u>.
W.P.A., Federal Writer's Project, <u>Allendale and Its Fire Fighters</u>.
W. Woodford Clayton and William Nelson, <u>History of Bergen and Passaic Counties</u>.
United States Federal Census, Bergen County, Hohokus Township, 1850.
Chester A. Smeltzer, <u>The Birth of Ramsey</u>.
James B. H. Storms, "The New York Markets and the Jersey Farmer," in <u>Relics</u>, Jan. 1965.
Newspapers: Paterson Weekly Guardian; Paterson Daily Guardian; Bergen County Journal; Hackensack Republican; Bergen County Democrat; The Landscape; Ramsey Journal.

THE STRAWBERRY SCENE IN AND NEAR ALLENDALE NEARLY 120 YEARS AGO.....

Since writing "Allendale: Background of a Borough" more than a year ago, we have found some other information in old Paterson newspapers which adds to the picture of what must have been a colorful, if hectic, seasonal part of Allendale's history. The following quotes are from The Paterson Weekly Guardian between 1857 and 1859.

STRAWBERRIES.--Of the growths that have come under our notice this season all must yield the palm to a mess left us by Messrs. James Van Houten and John G. Snyder of the Ponds, Franklin Township--The critters will average two inches in circumference and as long in proportion. One at a time is the utmost that any ordinary mouth can admit; while the flavor is, if possible, superior to their size. Pent up all day in a dull dingy office, we rather envy the owners of such strawberry patches their rich treasures.

THREE CAR LOADS of strawberries went down from Allendale, Bergen Co., on Monday night. One freighter had 25,000 baskets.

---June 24, 1857.

STRAWBERRIES--ATTENTION BATTALION:--Mr. Samuel Smith, agent of the Erie Co. at Ramsey's, writes us that from the 12th to the 30th of June he forwarded from that station 707,677 baskets of strawberries, on which the freight amounted to \$850.60. From the 1st of July to the 7th, 385,816 baskets, paying for freight \$382.25. Total baskets shipped, from June 12th to July 7th, 1,093,493, paying \$1,232.85. Passenger receipts for the first period, \$350.00; other freight \$570.93. Four cars were required. The number of wagon loads of strawberries which arrived every evening averaged 113.

---July 11, 1857.

(Letter to the Editor) Saddle River, June 9th, 1858. Messrs. Editors: For the space of three or four weeks after date, the people hereabout will think, talk, and dream more about strawberries than anything else. As usual among us at this season of the year, the young, old, and middle-aged, the lazy and the un-lazy--all that can work will be required to take part in the performance. And when, as is often the case, the demand for pickers is greater than the home supply, additional hands are usually sought among the surplus population of Paterson or New York. Although the work is not easy and the pickers every morning go to the field feeling stiff and sore as spavined horses, yet many who would look upon other work with scorn, take pleasure in gathering the blushing berries. Before the sun has advanced far in his daily course, the stiffened backbone is made flexible, and the soreness removed from the limbs by the work that was their cause; and thus, day after day, the strawberry field is slowly marched over by a set of delighted beings, who, while attending to their duties, make the air ring with shouts of joy and gladness. Nevertheless, to tell the whole truth, depraved human nature will sometimes lead to the dishonest act of filling the baskets partly with leaves or clusters of the green fruit. But, as it is in the interest of the employer to guard against such deceptions, berries picked in this manner seldom reach the market. His sly watchfulness and the certainty of their being discharged, if detected in the act, are, however, generally sufficient to enforce honesty, even among the dishonest.

Although some of the berries faised here are sold in Paterson and Newark, the greater part goes to the New York market. A few persons still adhere to the old fashioned mode of conveying them thither with their own teams, whilst the rest take advantage of the facilities afforded by the Rail Road, and have their fruit sold by commission dealers. The large quantities raised have made such a class of dealers necessary and each producer employs the one he thinks least likely to make "clerical" or other errors in the returns. The late litigation between the "Squire" and Rranlet has been watched with much interest, and will doubtless lead both producers and dealers to a better conception of their rights and duties.

The size of strawberry baskets is sometimes a source of complaint with city folks, who, especially if their digestion is good, ridicule and curse their smallness without stint. Yet the size of the baskets is but very little smaller than the usual market price of the berries they contain; and until they, the leaders in every beneficial movement, set a better example by selling us longer yards of ribbon, larger quarts of peanuts, and bigger sticks of candy, their country cousins

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may be expected to remain firm "Non-Extentionists." If the interest on the land and the cost of fertilizers and labor, the amount paid to the commission dealers and the losses resulting from the losing of baskets and crates were correctly ascertained it might probably be shown that the profits of strawberry culture are not as large as is commonly supposed. In conclusion, the people of Paterson are exhorted to abstain from meat, and to eat strawberries instead. --ARGUS

---June 15, 1858.

STRAWBERRIES are nearly out of date.--This week will probably witness the last of them brought to market, unless the second picking should turn out better than is expected. They brought from 2-1/2 to 3 cents a basket yesterday.

STRAWBERRIES.--Some idea of the quantity of this kind of fruit raised in Bergen Co., may be formed from the fact that one night last week 60,000 baskets were sent from Allendale, while from Ramsey's about 160,000 were sent in the same evening. The whole of them were raised within three or four miles of the places mentioned. To pick them must have required the labor of not less than a thousand persons from morning till night.

---June 28, 1859.

(Letter to the Editor) ALLENDALE CORRESPONDENCE June 24th, 1859. Messrs. Editors: The lively scenes presented at this place every afternoon and evening are peculiar to a strawberry producing country, though any attempt to describe them properly would probably result in a total failure. Men and boys, horses, oxen and vehicles, empty crates and crates filled with berries, all strangely mixed together continually present a series of kaleidoscopic views that every consumer of berries should see before he dies of old age.

Even Sundays form only a partial exception to the rule, many sending theirs to market with the milk train on Sunday evening. In this manner the more pious portion of the community have been greatly shocked, and it is thought that "putting in the papers" may do some good. This, however, is questionable. Says auld Scotia's national poet:

"The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,

To hand the wretch in order."

Now, if this fear of becoming a permanent resident of a place where the temperature is always up to the boiling point cannot restrain the offenders, probably no chastisement we can administer will have that effect. Not only, though, has fruit been sent to market on that day, but it is reported that <u>somewhere</u> it was picked on Sunday too. These facts call loudly for action, and it is hoped that as soon as he is able Griddle-greaser will favor us with his "remarks" on the "Immoral Tendencies of Strawberries."

With all our faults, however, we Bergen Jerseymen are benevolent souls, sometimes feeding the proud, upstart Yorkers without money and without price. A leaf from the mental account we keep of public transactions, will abundantly prove the truth of this strange assertion. Strawberries Dr. To labor in cultivating them, a snug little sum; To pickers from 65 cents to \$1.00 per hundred baskets; To board for pickers, from 25 cts. to \$1.00 per day; To Commission Dealers from 40 to 50 cts. per hundred. Per contra., Strawberries Cr. By Cash from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per hundred, during the fourth week in June. Result: The producer seriously injured with no prospect of recovering anything for damages. Yours, ALLENDALE.

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---June 28, 1859.

New Members

We welcome the following new members:

- Ms. Ronne Bernstein of Allendale
- Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bogardus of Del Ray Beach, Florida
- The Franklin Family of Allendale
- Mr. and Mrs. Walter H. Hillman of Long Beach, California

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Kievit of Ho-Ho-Kus

- Miss Mae H. Selfridge of Ramsey
- Mr. and Mrs. Bertram Sneden of Clearwater, Florida
- Mr. and Mrs. J. Wilbur Vanderbeek of Lauderhill, Florida
- Mr. Robert Wilson of Sherburne, New York

Accessions

We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts to the Society's collections:

Eight scrapbooks of newspaper clippings concerning Allendale and the Allendale Police Department, 1958-1967; numerous photographs of Allendale scenes; small booklet--"Guardians of Your Property and Welfare--Allendale Police," circa 1950; booklet published by Allendale Chamber of Commerce, 1951, "This Is Allendale"; program of the Allendale Firemen Minstrels of 1951; copy of the <u>Allendale</u> <u>Press</u>, Vol. 1, No. 41, January 11, 1952, all donated by Robert Wilson.

Two photographs of the Quackenbush-Rudolph House on Myrtle Avenue, donated by Mrs. Albert Day.

Allendale Public School class photograph, grade 2, 1942; program of the Annual Commencement, Allendale Public School, June 23rd, 1915 (held at Archer Hall); Church bulletin of Highlands United Presbyterian Church, January 11, 1976, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the church building, all donated by William B. Buhlman.

36 slides of Allendale scenes, past and present, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Wardell.

Do you know of someone in Allendale, or perhaps a former resident who has moved away, who would enjoy receiving a sample copy of our newsletter? If you would forward the name and address to the Society or the editor, we would be happy to send a sample newsletter. STRAWBERRY BASKETS .-- The Raising of strawberries in Bergen Co., has given rise to another business, the making of baskets, which furnishes employment for a large number of hands every winter. Formerly these baskets were made of ash, the splints being pounded from the log in the primitive, Indian fashion. But at length the ash became rather scarce, and a few years ago hickory was substituted, and is now altogether used, in preference to any other wood. The splints are now made by a planing machine, bone and muscle or water furnishing the motive power. As usual, the demand for baskets is quite large, and as usual dozens of families are engaged in making them. The average price of the small, thimble-sized baskets appears to be about \$1 per hundred, or a cent apiece. Raspberry baskets, a degree larger than the others, are sold at from \$1.50 to \$1.75 per hundred.

---The Paterson Weekly Guardian, February 28, 1860.



Allendale Historical Society P.O. Box 294, Allendale, N.J. 07401

Membership Categories (Annual Dues)

Family Membership.....\$5.00 Regular (Individual Membership)....\$3.00 Junior Membership (under 18).....\$1.00

Dues are not required, but are voluntary for those members over 65.

Allendale History and Heritage is published four times a year in September, November, February, and April, and is mailed to members of the Allendale Historical Society.

Editor: Pat Wardell

Memberships to the Society (which include subscriptions to <u>Allendale</u> <u>History</u> and <u>Heri</u> <u>tage</u>) make wonderful gifts and help to support the Society.