

ALLENDALE HISTORY AND HERITAGE

VOL. IV

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No. 1

NEXT MEETING: Monday, October 3, 1977, 8:30 p.m. at Allendale Municipal Building.

PROGRAM: Our program will be a 25-minute film, "Tales of New Jersey," provided by the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company. Among the subjects covered by the film will be the Indians of New Jersey, the Revolution, the Burr-Hamilton duel, and the first college football game.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: A hearty greeting to everyone who has made it possible for our Historical Society to enter its fourth year. This delightful Newsletter is one attribute. If it inspires you to be more active, a gift of your time, talent, or money would be sharing in our efforts to grow by achievement. Speaking frankly, the Society is proud of its past programs following each meeting. May we hear your comments at the October 3rd meeting?
---A. Marian Strangfeld

NEWS AND VIEWS: Our slide program, "Allendale Then and Now," continues to make its rounds; it was presented at the Allendale Nursing Home on June 15th and was most enthusiastically received.

In preparing the annual budget, the board members have included \$25 toward the beginning of a publications fund. This cumulative fund will grow, we hope, with the addition of donations and money raised through special events so that in the not-too-distant future we may look forward to publishing pamphlets, booklets, brochures, etc. about Allendale's history and heritage.

A special thank you goes to Dot Shuit, who donated the proceeds of a silent auction (held at our May meeting) of two of her own original paintings.

We are always looking for new members for our society, and each current member can help by suggesting the names of friends, neighbors, and former residents who might be interested in join-

ing our organization. We will be happy to send a sample newsletter and an invitation to join us to all those suggested.

To encourage new memberships, we are also asking for a volunteer to serve as Membership Chairman. If you might be interested, please call Marian Strangfeld.

The Allendale Bicentennial Committee began the very worthwhile project of preserving an oral history using tape recorders to record spoken conversations and reminiscences of long-time Allendale residents. We would like to continue this project and need volunteers to help. Call Marian Strangfeld (327-3510).

IN MEMORIAM: It is with very deep regret that we record the passing of one of our members, Mrs. Whiting Anthony (nee Ruth Taylor).

V. The Early Years of the Borough (continued)

On January 3, 1895, James A. Linkroum was appointed Marshall of Allendale. He was sworn in on January 10th and on January 24, the borough clerk was instructed by the Mayor and Council to secure a "proper badge" for the Marshall. On February 21 the Council resolved that the Borough Marshall be supplied with a pair of handcuffs and the borough clerk was instructed to purchase a pair. The salary of the Borough Marshall was set at \$25 per year.

From time to time in those early days of the borough, the council received bids for road repair work and authorized payment for road repairs. The finances involved seem amazing. On February 8, 1896, for instance, the Council voted to spend not more than \$25 to repair roads at the bridge near Mr. Burtis. Later in February, the Council authorized J. J. Vanderbeck to repair the road in front of his house and ordered the bill of F. S. Merrill for road work (\$1.25) to be paid. The Committee of Public Works was authorized to repair a washout on School House Hill.

Nearly two years after Allendale incorporated as a borough, ground was broken for a new school building. On April 24, 1896, The Ramsey Journal reported, "Plans for the new school building will be decided on this week. Size of the building will be about 50 by 60 feet, two stories high, two rooms on each floor, about 24 by 30 feet each. There are to be separate entrances and cloak rooms for the boys and girls." The new school was built by Stephen Van Blarcom at a cost of \$5,500. and occupied the same site that the 1862 school building had--today's Borough Hall site. In fact, this school, begun in June 1896 and formally opened at a dedication ceremony held on December 18, 1896, is in fact today's Municipal Building (today with the second story removed and much altered in appearance).

Early teachers at this school included a Miss Murdock, Sadie Salyer, Ella Appert, Alfred Ackerman, John B. Zabriskie, Marie C. Maloney, Mrs. Joseph Ware, and Anita Van Houten (Mrs. Stanley P. Fisher.) Principals of the school included John J. Ackerman, John B. Zabriskie, Adele Harris, a Mr. Johnson, and a Mr. Brinkerhoff. In 1907 Willard Alling was appointed Principal of the Allendale School, a position he held until his death on November 16, 1940.

Among the early trustees of the school were Stephen Van Houten, C. W. Stocker, William C. Tallman, J. E. Van Horn, J. W. Griffiths, Albert Pulis, and Harry Shearman.

Graduation exercises were held first at the school, later at Archer Hall, and still later at the Fire House. In June 1900, the largest number (to that date) ever graduated at once from the Allendale school attended commencement exercises. The seven graduates were Bertha Mallinson, Edna Storms, Arthur Appert, Willie Yeomans, Archer Asten, Bertie Smith, and Fred Willard.

In the early years of the twentieth century the schoolhouse was composed of four rooms. Two rooms downstairs accommodated two classes (one of grades K-2, and one of grades 3 and 4). Upstairs, the one large room could be divided by an accordion-type door to make two rooms (one for grades 5 and 6, the other for grades 7 and 8). Morning exercises for the whole school were held upstairs in

the large room, which served as an auditorium. Children either went home for lunch or brought lunches in Scotch plaid folding lunchboxes which were kept in lockers at the school. There was a pump outdoors with a ladle for drinking water, but after parents complained about their children drinking from a "community" dipper, all students were required to bring their own collapsible drinking cups to school. On stormy days when pupils could not go home for lunch, some of the students gathered in the belfry to tell ghost stories.

In 1911, a new storm door was built for the schoolhouse and extensive repairs and improvements were made to both the windows and the heating system. In 1914 an addition to the school was built at a cost of \$24,000.

Allendale's public library had its beginnings in December 1900 on the second floor of the school building on Franklin Turnpike. On its opening day the library was stocked with 600 volumes loaned by the State Library at Trenton. The State also sent a trained librarian to Allendale to teach the volunteers in charge how to catalog, shelve, and supervise circulation of the books.

The library was organized under the auspices of the Village Improvement Association. In 1900, the V.I.A. created a library committee comprised of Mrs. E. W. Spring, chairman, Mrs. Wallace E. Carver, Mrs. Stephen Van Houten, Mrs. Frank Merrill, and Mrs. Frank Drummond. The library was supported by private funds, including membership dues and donations.

In 1910, the school needed the library space for a cloak room, and so the library made its first of several subsequent moves, to a store owned by John Ackerman. In 1915 the library was moved to the second floor of the recently constructed Fire House and in 1919 it was moved again--to the Braun Building in the center of the business section. On April 7, 1919 the library committee disbanded (its sponsor, the V.I.A., had been defunct since about 1903). In its place, the Allendale Library Association was formed, with its goal being "the perpetuation of the Allendale Public Library and the extension of its work in the community." The secondary goal of the Association was to establish a building fund, to solicit donations to the fund, and to find and purchase a suitable site for the construction of a permanent home for the library. In the following busy years, a site was located and purchased from William H. and John A. Mallinson; the Library Association was incorporated (in November 1923) and architect William Dewsnap (who had also designed the Fire House) began to draw up plans for the long-awaited building. By June 7, 1926, the foundation had been completed. December 18, 1926 was the big day for the library--a public reception and open house was held in the newly completed building. Years of hopes and dreams had finally become reality: Allendale's library at last had a permanent home.

Over the years, Allendale had suffered many disastrous fires. As early as the mid 1800's newspapers were reporting on such tragic fires as the one that took place at 11 p.m. on January 25, 1857 when the home of Abraham G. Ackerman burned. According to The Paterson Daily Guardian, "The fire originated in the garret, and the whole upper part of the house was all on fire before any of the family were aware of it. Mr. A. and family are left destitute of food and raiment at this inclement season, he having stored his grain, potatoes, etc., in said house." Mr. Ackerman, reported The

Guardian, was awakened by the noise of the fire and succeeded in arousing his wife and children, who were quickly ushered out into the snow dressed just as they had jumped from their beds. The family went to the house of a neighbor, J. Finch, and later stayed with the J. Vanderbeek family.

In September 1896 a house belonging to Benjamin Ackerman burned to the ground. The tenants, Mr. and Mrs. Parks, were away at the time of the blaze, but neighbors broke down the front door and managed to save some furniture, including a piano.

Later in the same year, in December, the home of Henry J. Appert was totally destroyed by fire, and his family escaped with only the clothing they were wearing.

In October of 1898, a barn belonging to Corines Quackenbush was completely destroyed by fire, and the blaze consumed the barn's contents as well--the complete summer crop of hay.

On August 2, 1903 a fire broke out in Ackerman's General Store and among the articles damaged in the fire was the borough safe, which had been stored in the building. This fire had a "pretty sequel" according to a newspaper of the time: the marriage of R. V. Ackerman's daughter Myra to Charter Mallinson. "The young people had been engaged for some time," reported The Ramsey Journal. "No date was set for the wedding, but the circumstances of the fire, and Miss Ackerman's peril brought the young people to realize they should be married at once."

Another fire occurred in Allendale in August 1903 when the W. Jaeger home was totally destroyed. According to The Hackensack Republican, "Nearby a ball game was in progress when some of the small boys present noticed smoke off to the west. Attention was called to it, but it was thought to be from a brush fire. Some of the boys who had gone to investigate raised the alarm, and immediately a large number of citizens were hurrying to the scene and assisted in saving some of the personal property, but by the time the first delegation arrived the fire had nearly full possession of the building. Those who did good work were George Parigot, "Fritz" O'Neill, Dr. Archer, who had his coat burned, and Mr. Dewsnap.... John Mallinson and David Mowerson with pails of water wet down the roofs of surrounding property in the direction the sparks were flying."

For a number of years there had been talk of the need for a local fire-fighting organization, and that suggestion was renewed after the Jaeger fire. "The fire emphasizes again," wrote the Republican reporter, "the suggestion of this column last week that a fire company should be organized. Property owners have to face higher insurance if this keeps up, and by a well organized fire company lower rates can be secured. Dr. Archer has been connected with the New York fire department for many years, and would make a capable instructor, and there is plenty of material here to make an excellent department."

Despite The Republican's timely suggestion, it would be another seven years before a fire fighting company would be organized in Allendale.

It happened when the usual Sunday morning quiet was broken on the day after Christmas, December 26, 1909, by the sounds of many

voices calling the alarm of "Fire!" The building formerly housing the Kornhoff Bakery, in the center of the Allendale Business section, was aflame, and despite efforts of many volunteers, the tenant family occupying the house lost all of their belongings to the fire. The building housing the barber shop of Max Scholz, located about 25 feet away from the Kornhoff building, soon caught fire and was also destroyed. A strong wind was blowing that morning and there was a great deal of concern that the fire would spread to other nearby buildings for sparks were being blown as far as the livery stable and the nearby Winter building. Seven or eight smaller fires were extinguished before they did substantial damage, but the fear remained that if the Winter store caught fire, almost every building on the Avenue would be endangered. Volunteers mounted ladders and poured snow and water on the roof of the Winter building to prevent the spread of the fire.

Ramsey firemen were summoned to the scene by telephone and Winter & Christopher sent a team of horses, driven by Richard Christopher and Arthur Appert, to help bring the apparatus. By the time the flames were completely out, all that remained of the two buildings was the tall chimney of the bakery.

For Allendale, this disastrous fire was to have long-lasting consequences, for the tragedy of this fire inspired the quick formation of the Allendale Fire Company. On New Year's Eve, December 31, 1909, a general meeting was held in Archer Hall, and a committee of seven was appointed to investigate the organization of a permanent fire department. This first meeting, held on New Year's Eve, was attended by fifty-four men (a number later estimated to be almost a third of Allendale's male population in 1909). Five meetings were held within the next twenty days, during which a constitution and by-laws were prepared and plans for a full working organization were established.

On January 24, 1910 a unanimous vote approved the constitution, it was adopted, and the Allendale Fire Association was formally in existence. Charter membership totalled 57 men. The charter officers elected were: President, William Dewsnap; Vice-President, William C. Talman; Treasurer, J. M. Christopher; Secretary, C. N. Elliott, Jr.; Chief, R. W. Steele; Foreman, Valentine J. Braun; Assistant Foreman, Max Scholz; Second Assistant Foreman, Arthur Dathe. Serving on the Board of Trustees were John W. Winter, R. W. Rodman, R. Moelhausen, S. J. Van Blarcom, and William C. Lee.

In February iron tires, to be used as alarms, were purchased from the Erie Railroad and R. J. and J. M. Christopher donated lumber used to build frames from which to hang the iron tires. There were eleven of these iron tire alarms and they were located throughout Allendale at the following sites: (1) Park and Brookside Avenues, (2) Franklin Turnpike near the Ilsley residence, (3) at the Railroad crossing near the Hotel, (4) at Allendale Avenue and Franklin Turnpike, (5) at the intersection of Myrtle and West Crescent Avenues, (6) at Hillside and West Crescent Avenues, (7) on Hillside Avenue near the Gousset residence, (8) on Brookside Avenue near the Smith residence, (9) at Park and Crescent Avenues near the Lee residence, (10) on Franklin Turnpike near the old Tollgate house, and (11) on East Allendale Avenue near the

Zabriskie residence.

In March 1910 a new hook and ladder truck was ordered at a cost of \$995. from the Combination Ladder Co. The truck arrived in August and was stored in V. J. Braun's barn next to the Allendale Hotel.

Allendale firemen marched in the 4th of July and Labor Day parades in 1910, dressed in dapper uniforms of white duck trousers; white shirts; black belts, shoes, and ties; and white cotton gloves. Each man carried a cane with a flag attached. These striking uniforms earned Allendale's firemen the nickname "the silk-stocking boys." In 1970, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Fire Department, Allendale's firemen were to duplicate this parade uniform for their anniversary celebration.

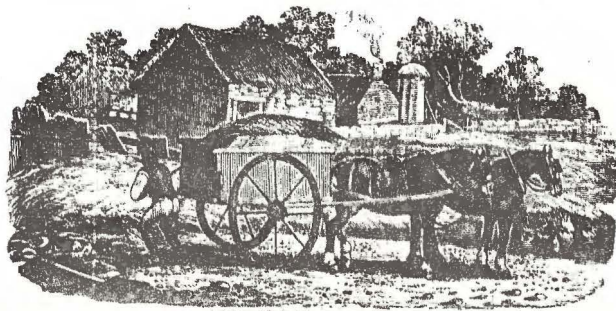
In 1912 Mr. Braun sold the land on which the barn housing the fire truck was located, and a building committee began to formulate plans for a permanent fire house. William Dewsnap drew up plans for a building, and work began on construction early in 1913. On April 5, 1913 the cornerstone of the firehouse was laid at ceremonies at which a brass band played. Over the next few years the building became more than just a fire house--it became a community center of sorts, for here were held all sorts of civic and social community events. The building served as polling place on election day, drill hall for the Bergen Guards, office of the Building and Loan Association, and meeting place for Mayor and Council. In this building, during the twenties, you might have seen movies run by the Fire Association or plays produced by the Allendale Players. You might have gone to a dance at the Fire House, or played cards there at a card party. Maybe your graduation exercises were held in the Fire House. Flower Shows, Dog Shows, Radio Shows, and Pet Shows--all took place at the old Fire House. When the 50-year-old building burned in 1963, Allendale lost more than just a building--a part of her heritage was gone forever.

(to be continued)

Sources:

Allendale Borough Council Minutes, 1894-1903.
Allendale Library Association Minutes.
Fiftieth Anniversary Souvenir Booklet, Allendale Fire Department.
Interviews with Ella Appert, Ethel Borger, and Maytie Sparling.
W.P.A., Federal Writer's Project, Allendale and Its Fire Fighters.

Newspapers: Allendale Picture Press, The Paterson Daily Guardian, The Ramsey Journal, The Hackensack Republican, The Bergen County Democrat, The (Ridgewood) Sunday News, The Archer Church Souvenir.



-NOTES FROM MEMBERS NEAR AND FAR.....

April 21, 1977.....I enjoy your Allendale History and Heritage so much; it takes me back to my boyhood days. I was born and lived in the corner house (Franklin Turnpike & Allendale Avenue) now Steve Van Houten Realty Co. I knew all the people you spoke about in your leaflet when Allendale was being organized, as the Mallinson family had a part in it.....---Russell Mallinson

May 4, 1977.....I used to live on Brookside Avenue from 1922 to 1942. In 1942 I married Ruth E. Johnson who lived on Forest Avenue from 1913 to 1942. We then in 1942 moved to Glen Rock until 1959 when we moved to Clearwater, Florida.....---Royal M. Anderson

August 30, 1977.....Thank you for the copy of the Allendale History and Heritage bulletin of April 1977. Having been a resident of Allendale from 1909 to 1968, the names and places brought back many memories.....---Gertrude (Arlt) Fox

August 30, 1977.....Reading the newsletter really did take us back. Bill's family used to come to Saddle River a few years before they actually moved to Allendale in 1912. My family didn't arrive until 1924...We will always hold the memories of our lives in Allendale very dear.....---Helen Hanson

September 10, 1977.....I appreciated the April 1977 newsletter. Our family moved from Brooklyn to Allendale in the summer of 1917 and I was graduated from the Allendale School in 1922 (25 in the class as I recall) and from Ramsey High School in 1926. Thus a major portion of my youth was as an Allendale resident. We lived on West Orchard Street (on S. E. corner of Dale Avenue). I understand the apple tree in our back yard which appeared on the verge of collapse from a rotting trunk in 1917 is still bearing apples--there must be some sort of a lesson here.....---Lawrence S. Darken

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TIME CAPSULES

35 YEARS AGO IN ALLENDALE---"Complete details for the dedication of Allendale's World War 2 Honor Roll on Sunday afternoon were released today by Howard Elschner, president of the Holiday Observers, sponsors. The affair will be held at 2:30 p.m. and will be attended by Gold Star Mothers, the families of Allendale's 98 men in service, and by local civic organizations and the general public. Speakers will be Mayor Louis A. Keidel, Allendale Draft Board Chairman Charles V. Bacon and Major John G. Hubbard of Washington D.C., formerly of Allendale..."---The Ramsey Journal, October 15, 1942.

30 YEARS AGO IN ALLENDALE---"Allendale voters in the November General election will have the opportunity of voting on the question of whether or not they want the Allendale Municipal pool restored at an approximate cost to the Borough of \$8,000....The Pool Committee was formed in January of this year and is comprised of members representing more than a dozen different organizations in the town..."
---The Ramsey Journal, October 2, 1947.

TIME CAPSULES

20 YEARS AGO IN ALLENDALE---"Celebrating the eighty-fifth anniversary of its founding, the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany will have an evening prayer service at 5 p.m. Sunday with Rt. Rev. Benjamin M. Washburn, bishop of the Newark Diocese, as preacher. An anniversary dinner will follow the service, with Bishop Washburn, Canon William O. Leslie, Jr., other visiting clergy and leaders of the local congregation as speakers..."---The Ramsey Journal, October 3, 1957.

20 YEARS AGO IN ALLENDALE---"Archer Memorial Methodist Church dedicated a set of organ chimes on Sunday in memory of Mrs. Frank (Elizabeth) Berdan. Mrs. Berdan was home demonstration agent of Bergen County for many years. She was known for her activities in many welfare enterprises in the county, as a speaker on interesting historical facts about the county, and as an illustrator of floral decorations..."---The Ramsey Journal, October 3, 1957.

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New Members

We welcome the following new members:

- Mr. & Mrs. Royal M. Anderson of Clearwater, Florida
- Mr. Lawrence S. Darken of Boalsburg, Pennsylvania
- Mr. & Mrs. Harold H. Fox of Brandon, Vermont
- Mr. & Mrs. William B. Hanson of Sarasota, Florida
- Mrs. Paul O'Connor of Sarasota, Florida

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? Send us the name and address, or give it to any board member, and we will be happy to send a sample newsletter.

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Accessions

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

- Allendale Fire Department Fiftieth Anniversary (1960) souvenir booklet, donated by Mr. & Mrs. Harold H. Fox.
- Several issues of The Haverstraw Republican circa 1888; The Story of Erie by Edward Harold Mott, 1908, donated by Mr. & Mrs. Walter Wardell, Jr.

Additions to, corrections of, and just plain comments on the articles and items printed in the newsletter are always welcome. In addition, anyone who would like to contribute an article, story, or reminiscence for publication in our newsletter is hereby encouraged to do so!

More appreciation...

To Margaret McNelley for loaning numerous photographs, old tax bills, Erie railroad time tables, etc. to be copied for the society's collection.

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

Membership Categories: (Annual Dues)
Family Membership.....\$5.00
Individual Membership.....\$3.00

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.