



ALLENDALE HISTORY AND HERITAGE

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NEXT MEETING: Monday, March 3, 1986 at 8:00 p.m. at the Allendale Municipal Building, West Crescent Avenue, Allendale (Second Floor).

PROGRAM: Elise Baranowski of the Bergen County Office of Cultural and Historic Affairs will give a slide presentation of "Architecture in Bergen County," featuring sites of historic and architectural significance. The Bergen County Office of Cultural and Historic Affairs conducted a Bergen County Historic Sites Survey between 1979 and 1985, covering each of the county's 70 municipalities. Copies of each municipality's report are available at its municipal building and at its public library.

ALLENDALE HISTORIC SITES WATCH: Two of Allendale's oldest houses have recently been threatened--one with demolition and one with conversion to condominiums. The houses are:

- The house at 70 Franklin Turnpike, commonly known as the Rozmus House, and
- The house at 475 Franklin Turnpike, known as The Fell-Ackerman-Cable House, later occupied by the Taylor family, and most recently known as the Pfister house.

The oldest section of The Rozmus House at 70 Franklin Turnpike is thought to be more than 200 years old. The Bergen County Stone House Survey lists it as the A. C. Ackerman House, built pre-1800, and probably before the Revolution. It is Allendale's last existing stone house, although its original stone walls are hidden by the stucco and wood frame exteriors of later additions. The house was threatened with

demolition to make way for a proposed 11-house subdivision by Lebel Development Corp. At the December 19, 1985 Allendale Planning Board meeting, Lebel Corporation proposed to save the original stone structure by incorporating its walls into a new home proposed for the site. Marsha Stoltz, reporting in The Town Journal, January 9, 1986, wrote: "...Lebel Vice President Michael Ritchie expressed hope that the 2-ft. thick walls could be retained during a careful demolition of the remaining house and out-buildings and later serve as the westernmost room of a new house on the corner lot.

A tour of the house in November by the developer and county officials found that alterations, state of repair and landscaping made the wood part of the structure difficult to restore to any historical integrity. At first, the county suggested moving the stone base. Lebel suggested

the incorporation of walls into a new structure, and made its presentation at the Planning Board's Dec. 19 meeting.

While cautioning against a tendency to view a building 'as blocks with different values' rather than a whole structure that evolves as a unit, Bergen County Assistant Historic Preservation Officer Elise Baranowski termed the action by Lebel 'one of the better things that has happened in historic preservation in the county in the past few months. It was the best we could make of a situation as far as economics and preservation go.' ..."

The second threatened house, The Fell-Ackerman-Cable house at 475 Franklin Turnpike sits on property which was rezoned from single family to townhouse use to allow the construction in 1983 of Allison Village, a condominium complex, on 5-1/2 acres behind the historic house. Now, after 8 months of attempting to sell the historic house as a single-family dwelling (it is listed at \$850,000.), the owners, Jean and Janet Pfister, are proposing construction of 10 additional condominium units on the remaining 2.8 acre site. The 240-year old house would be divided internally into two condominium units, a barn at the north end of the property would also be divided into two units, and three additional two-unit structures would be built.

The house is historically significant to Bergen County and to Allendale because it was the home of John Fell, a New Jersey delegate to the Constitutional Congress in 1778 and later a member of the New Jersey Legislative Council. As a Bergen County delegate, Fell was among those who ratified our nation's Constitution in 1787. (For more about John Fell, see the February 1975 issue of Allendale History and Heritage, pp. 1-3.)

During the 1840s, the house was occupied by the John G. Ackerman family, and when Joseph Warner Allen (for whom Allendale station was named) was in this area surveying the route of the Paterson and Ramapo Railroad, he stayed with the Ackerman family in this house.

On January 9, 1866, the house and "about 14 acres more or less" was sold to Emma Cable, wife of Stephen Cable (Recorded Bergen County D6; 542).

Mrs. Cable and her daughter, Mrs. Reading, in 1872 organized a Sunday School in their parlors. This grew into what is today the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany of Allendale (see the November 1984 and February 1985 issues of Allendale History and Heritage for more information and photographs of the early church history.)

The Joseph B. Taylor family moved into the house about 1912, and Frederick W. Pfister and Rose M. Pfister, his wife, bought the house in October 1951.

The Allendale Board of Adjustment heard subdivision plans for this property at a special session on January 27, 1986. The hearing was continued to the Board's regular meeting to be held on February 26. We encourage interested residents to attend.
--Pat Wardell

ALLENDALE NOTES...

BITS AND PIECES OF ALLENDALE HISTORY

COMPILED BY PAT WARDELL

(Continued from the November 1985 issue)

Mills-Cider Mills

The first cider mill that we have evidence of in Allendale was that of John Van Horn, who was operating his mill (run by goat power, according to The Bergen County Democrat) by June of 1874. This cider mill was probably on the grounds of his farmhouse on Franklin Turnpike, south of the intersection with Crescent Avenue.

A saw & cider mill on the body of water later known as Mallinson's Pond, and still later known as Crestwood Lake, is shown on the 1876 Walker's Atlas Map of Allendale.

Sometime around 1890, Joseph Henry Mallinson ran a cider mill in the building just across Franklin Turnpike from Archer Hall. Previously Joseph Mallinson, Henry Mallinson, and J. J. Pulis had operated a paint, wheelwright, and blacksmith shop on this site. The Ramsey Journal in its issue of September 18, 1896, described the procedure at the mill: "Mr. Mallinson has one of the best equipped cider presses in Bergen County. A load of apples is driven up to the mill, shoveled into a chute, from which they fall in buckets attached to an endless chain, which

carries them up to the grater. After being reduced to a pulp they descend through a telescopic tube to the press where they are rapidly formed in layers. Layer after layer is put up and then the press is swung around by the screws. This is also run by steam and has three speeds, which run the press down in a few moments. A steam pump then takes the juice to a tank above, where it is strained, and from there runs in the barrels in your wagon by means of a hose. In less than a half hour a load of apples is converted into cider and is on your wagon ready to take home."

Mallinson's Cider Mill became known as a favorite gathering place, and children on their way home from school would often stop in for a free taste.

Another cider mill was in operation beginning about 1893--Burtis's Mill, formerly Lydecker's Mill. This was primarily a grist mill, but about the end of August, the mill also turned out cider. The Ramsey Journal on August 31, 1894 reported: "The cider press has been started at Burtis' Mills. Mr. Burtis attained reputation last summer for good cider making and he will certainly give you satisfaction this year.

Mills--Grist Mills

Richard Christopher started a combination saw mill and grist mill on the Hohokus Brook near West Crescent Avenue in 1879. The mill burned down in 1908.

Albert Lydecker's grist mill was built in 1880 on Hohokus Brook near the intersection of Crescent Avenue and Brookside Avenue about across the street from Christopher's Mill. The site was known in later years as San Jacinto Swim Club. During the flood of 1945, the sluice at San Jacinto is said to have washed out and the foundation of the mill could be

seen. Lydecker ran the mill from 1880 until 1892. The Hackensack Republican of June 14, 1883 reported "Al Lydecker has received and unloaded about 60 tons of grain in the past week. He is running his mill night and day to supply orders."

In 1892 Lydecker sold the mill and 30 acres of land to Edward E. Burtis, who moved to Allendale from Rutherford. Burtis operated the mill as both a grist and cider mill. The Ramsey Journal, November 2, 1893 reported: "Times can't be very bad when a bbl. of the very best flour can be bought for \$4.75. That's what they are selling it for at the Allendale Mill." Burtis placed an advertisement in The Souvenir, (a newspaper published on at least two occasions by the Archer Memorial Methodist Church,) in the premier issue of November 5, 1894: "EDWARD E. BURTIS, PROPRIETOR, ALLENDALE MILLS (on the Hohokus), Allendale, N.J. FLOUR, GRAIN, HAY, Received direct from producer. SPECIALTIES: Graham Flour, Buckwheat Flour, Fine Yellow Meal, Combination Chicken Feed and Pure Ground Horse Feed. We carry in stock everything in the line of Horse Feed, Chicken Feed, etc."

In April 1897, Burtis's Mill burned to the ground along with an ice house which had been filled with ice by Mr. Goodyear.

At some time before 1911, the mill site was sold to Benjamin F. Hutches, Jr. who named his estate "San Jacinto" and later operated the San Jacinto Swim Club on the property.

Mills-Saw Mills

Sawmills were no doubt operated in the area that became Allendale even before the Revolution, but the earliest known sawmill of record was that of

John Smith, cited in a deed dated September 7, 1840 conveying about 35 acres of land from William Shannon and his wife, Leah, to Isaac I. Storms and Martin C. Blauvelt. Cited were "the lands of Abraham I. Storms on the public road leading from John Smith's Mills to Paterson." This mill would have been on the Hohokus Brook in the vicinity of Crescent Avenue (the road to Paterson) and today's Brookside Avenue, perhaps near the site of what later became Lydecker's grist mill. The 1861 Hopkins Corey Map shows "J. Smith Saw Mill" at about that site.

John R. Vanderbeck around 1874 was operating a sawmill on the brook on his property in what later became known as the Fardale section of Mahwah, just over the western border of Allendale near Forest Road.

On West Crescent Avenue, approximately across from Lydecker's grist mill, Richard Christopher started a combination saw mill and grist mill in 1879. The structure had two wheels--an overshot wheel for a grist mill, and an undershot wheel for a sawmill, all in one building. This mill is said to have burned down in 1908. An item in The Souvenir, December 15, 1894 reported: "A pickerel twenty-one inches in length was found in Mr. R. Christopher's lake a few days since. What a shame, that he wasn't caught by pole and line instead of getting fast in the mud!"

Richard Christopher's son, Richard J. Christopher, ran a portable sawmill in Allendale beginning about 1908 (probably after the above mill burned). In 1928, he opened a sawmill on West Crescent Avenue near the Erie Railroad tracks. He operated this business with his son, J. George Christopher, and it was known as the R. J. Christopher & Son Lumber Company.

SOME EARLY HISTORY OF THE NEW PROSPECT (WALDWICK) METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The New Prospect Methodist Episcopal Church was the "mother church" of all the Methodist churches in our area. Until the Archer Memorial Methodist Church was built at Allendale in 1876, many of Allendale's residents attended the New Prospect Church. This account of The New Prospect (Waldwick) Church's early history was written by Mr. W. E. Bates and was printed, probably in a souvenir booklet, about 1935. (The copy we are referring to has been torn from the original booklet, so the date and occasion of its publication are not known.)

Before the Revolutionary War, John Wesley had come to America, and had begun activities in the formation of a Church in this country. With the revolution of 1776 coming on, he could make little progress--he being an Englishman. The ending of the revolution brought about the formation of a separate Church in America. Francis Asbury, a leader in this country since 1771, called on Wesley to appoint a superintendent or bishop, and Doctor Thomas Coke was selected. At the Baltimore Christmas Conference, so named because it was held on December 24, 1784, the preachers confirmed the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and elected Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury as bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

As our Church Records date from 1797, they indicate that the Waldwick Methodist Episcopal Church has been in existence as an organization since thirteen years following the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

The first record of a regularly organized body of Methodist worshippers here is in the year 1797. On March first

of that year an election of Trustees for "PARAMUS METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH" was held. The Church as a body was really in existence before that time. To prove this, there is the record of the baptism of a child, William Sixton, in 1791, by Richard Watcot, or Richard Whatcoat, the third bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. Whatcoat was sent over by John Wesley to America in 1784, accompanying Doctor Thomas Coke. Up to at least 1826 as near as can be determined, this charge came under the Philadelphia Conference (formed 1784) East Jersey District. The preaching and other ministerial duties were performed by traveling itinerant preachers, who made their long and arduous rounds on horseback. The second Methodist minister recorded as visiting here was the Reverend John Fountain. The date is April 23, 1797. In that year Fountain was located, and apparently did not return to the ranks of the itinerants. The next minister was the Reverend John Clark who came in December, 1797, and following him came the Reverend John Seward in the same month and year.

The original Church building was located, as far as can be found, in the hollow back of the Hermitage owned by the Rosencrantz family. We believe it was by the pond, somewhere near where the dam now is. The road by which the Church was reached is mentioned in a property deed dated February 24, 1817, in the possession of Mr. L. M. Babcock. It is the road still in existence which runs out of Wyckoff Avenue, to the left, by Mrs. Viney's property. We quote from the deed "along the line of said mill to the road used by the Methodist congregation to and from their Church." The situation will be made clearer to you by stating that in 1817 the

land ran without interruption down to the pond. The Erie Railroad was built about 1849.

On December 18, 1819, action was taken to build "a new meeting house." It was to be erected on A. Ackerman's lot, near Larews Tavern (now the Bamber House). That building we knew as "the old Church house", and you will likely recall the old house standing by the trolley crossing on Franklin Turnpike. It was burned down a few years ago. The territory of "Paramus M. E. Church" is referred to in an old book as covering "FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP" (of which Waldwick formerly was a part) and included parts of Rockland County, N.Y. A later record shows Camp Gaw, Godwinville, Saddle River and New Prospect (Waldwick) as covered by our Church, which in course of time came to be known as New Prospect M. E. Church, and later, following political changes as the Waldwick Methodist Episcopal Church.

Many of the members and officials of the early days are buried in the old "Union Cemetery," located opposite the Waldwick water reservoir in Wyckoff. On May 30, 1848, steps were taken to officially incorporate as "The Methodist Church of New Prospect." Final action, however, seems to have been deferred until April 30, 1863, when the legal papers were recorded in the County Clerk's office, Mr. C. L. Blauvelt being the County Clerk at that time.

The next and present Church building was erected on Franklin Turnpike where we are now located, the land being purchased from Henry Ackerman. The land was purchased about June, 1866. On July 14, 1866, it was decided to erect an Eight Thousand Dollar building, the size

being forty-five by seventy feet. On November 11, 1866, the corner stone was laid. The building was dedicated on December 15, 1867. The bell was installed about June 1867. The Reverend J. E. Switzer was pastor during that period. We might state here that a new bell was installed in the belfry on July 4, 1894. It replaced the old bell which had become cracked. The 1894 bell is the one we hear at the present time. It is of bronze and bears on one side this inscription:

"Erected to the memory of Peter D. Bush, July 4, 1894." On the other side is shown the following. "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another--Jesus." The bell is fitted in addition to the usual clapper, with a toller for funerals and other occasions. Peter D. Bush was one of our very efficient laymen of the old days.

The present parsonage was built about April, 1892, and a little later in the same year the Sunday School building, known as "the hall" was erected. The Church building was renovated and the interior re-arranged in 1908, under the pastorate of Reverend V. A. Wood. In 1923 the beautiful pipe organ was obtained and installed due to the efforts of Reverend W. C. Timbrell.

In former days the New Prospect Camp Meetings were held annually, somewhere back in the woods from where the present parsonage now stands. The camp meetings were famous for miles around. The early Church accounts are shown in pounds, shillings, and pence. The records show that every form of illuminant has been used in lighting our Church gatherings, commencing with candles, many of which were purchased or made in the early days, passing on to whale oil, camphene, coal oil or kerosene, and the present electric lights. In the old books many of the

entries show the cramped, awkward writing and misspelled words of the almost illiterate times.

A previous parsonage would seem to have been located on the old Frost property at the four corners at Wyckoff Avenue. Likely it was the same house still in use, on the south east corner owned by Mr. Sherer. The next parsonage was the house just north of our public school owned by Hollis Barnes; then came the present parsonage located on Franklin Turnpike. While a Sunday School existed here for years previously, yet 1844 is the earliest year of which we can find a written record. The teachers of that year were Peter Bush, Samuel Coe, James Van Blarcom, Stephen Hammond, Aaron Ackerman, Henry Mallinson, Horace Holcomb, Ann Kinsey, Ann Bell, Catherine Crouter, Rebeckah Coe, Eliza Ann Everson, Harriet Duer and Lavina Ackerman. In 1845 Peter D. Bush was Superintendent and the school had a good library. In the old days the classes were known as "New Testament Classes" and "Spelling Book Classes." The spelling book classes were needed to teach the children to read, due to the lack of schools and facilities for learning. There were no printed lesson papers and the older scholars studied the New Testament, committing large portions to memory. Money for the preacher was collected by the stewards and class leaders, and paid to him at quarterly conferences. Some of our members served in the Civil War, several being recorded as dying on the field of battle. The ancient brown leather-covered Bible used in the old Church house is in our possession. It was printed abroad.

This account is of necessity brief;

therefore no mention can be made of the faithful, persistent sacrifice and work of the pastors, officials, and the men and women of the rank and file, who under the leadership of God, have caused our Church to exist until the present time. The Almighty has a definite record and He will reward. From old New Prospect M. E. sprang the churches at Allendale, Arcola, Camp Gaw, Midland Park, Ridgewood and Saddle River. There is one more item to mention and that is the old Methodist Class Meetings. They were in existence we know as early as 1798. The class leaders then were Brother Cuddy, Brother Springer, Brother Dodds, Brother Sharp and Brother Van Blarcom.

More recently the Church has been served by Reverend W. C. Brewer, Reverend E. C. Van Tilburg, Reverend James Jamieson, Reverend N. R. Van Loon, and now by the Reverend W. Fallis Hunter. Just think, the Waldwick M. E. Church has been doing business for God in this community for nearly one hundred and forty years. It is older than our oldest inhabitant. It was in existence here while George Washington was still president of the United States, and while John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and other 1776 notables were living. Waldwick M. E. Church was going strong in the year the ship "Constitution" was launched, 1797. Think of all the good influences which have come from this institution from the date of its organization, yet there are some who never give it a thought, or put their foot upon its threshold.

In the little neglected cemetery referred to above, known as Union School House Cemetery, upon the hill as you go to Wyckoff, lie buried many of the men and women who poured out the very best they could render in service for the building up

of the kingdom of God in this locality. All honor to their blessed memory, and may their behavior act as a spiritual stimulus upon those of our day who have the opportunity of helping to build for God now.

The Civil War record of our Church is interesting and we give below items copied from the records of 1861-65, the notation being made at that time. "Abram Blauvelt, U. S. Army, nine months, answered to Lincoln's first call. John Thompson, Volunteer in U. S. Army, James Thompson, died February, 1863, in Virginia U. S. Army, Theodore Terhune, Volunteer U. S. Army, Probationer 1862, Ackerson Thompson, Volunteer, U. S. Army, John J. Thompson, died in the Union Army in Virginia, February 1863, buried in Godwinville, N.J., Cornelius Baker, Gone to the Army, Michael Winters, Volunteer U. S. Army, Died in the faith." This noble company of men served faithfully in defense of their country. We rejoice in the record which they have left behind them.

Some years ago our far seeing Ladies' Aid Society took out shares in our local Building and Loan Society. Upon maturity this investment brought them One Thousand Dollars. This sum, not so long ago, they devoted to the thorough renovation and repair of the interior of the Church. Under the leadership of the president of the society, Mrs. Delbert Ball, we now have the beautiful place in which we worship each Sabbath. We have a Sunday School which "never closes" the records of which date back to at least 1844. Connected with it is the famous class for men and women known as "The Class In The Corner." This class was organized in 1915 by W. E. Bates, who gathered around him some

earnest people, many of whom are still in the class. This class will celebrate its twentieth anniversary in November 1935. This class has had many faithful leaders, and among them shines out the name of F. W. MacEwan, the assistant superintendent. We have two local preachers, W. E. Bates, who is also the superintendent of the Sunday School, and Doctor S. E. Robinson, and the present pastor rejoices that in these two men he has able and also willing helpers. Thus the work goes on, and our Church continues to be as "a city set upon a hill," in which all who desire may find solace for their souls, and strength to pursue the interests of the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our Church was first built by the brook,
The second next a tavern;
The third is near the turnpike's crook,
But they all direct to Heaven.

(W.E.B.)

Allendale Fire Department...Records of Early Calls to Fires (Abstracted)

(continued from November 1985 issue)

March 10, 1930--4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m.; Powell Road; Brush; Post, owner; cause--unknown; no loss.

March 15, 1930--1:15-1:30 p.m.; Heights Road; Brush; res.; Winnie, owner; cause unknown; no loss.

March 15, 1930--10:45 a.m.-11:15 a.m.; Firehouse; Brush; Boro, owner; cause--RR; no loss.

March 18, 1930--2:30 p.m.-2:50 p.m.; Turnpike; residence; J. E. Simpson, owner & occupant; cause--unknown; no loss.

March 22, 1930--11:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; Crescent Avenue; house; residence; Lee, owner; cause--dirty chimney; no loss.

March 30, 1930--10:50 a.m.-11:15 a.m.; E. Allendale Avenue; Field; residence; Post, occupant; cause--unknown; no loss.

March 31, 1930--10:20 a.m.-11 a.m.; Allen Street; Brush; cause--RR; no loss.

April 1, 1930--4 p.m.-5 p.m.; Homewood Ave.; woods; cause--unknown; no loss.

April 1, 1930--10:30 a.m.-12 noon; Orchard & Turnpike; field; cause unknown; no loss.

(to be continued)

Correspondence Received: from Mrs. Charles (Julia) Morris of St. Petersburg, Florida: ...I enjoy your newsletter so much...I lived in Allendale for many years and know a great many of the people.

My grandmother lived in the old Garrison farm house where the A & P is now. My father had movies every Saturday night in the old fire house--Ida Mensching played the piano. That was in 1917. My father, Leonard Marsh, was active in the town so you see I have a lot of memories...

Allendale Historical Society
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