

## ALLENDALE HISTORY AND HERITAGE

VOL. III

APRIL 1986

No. 4

**NEHT MEETING:** Monday, May 5, 1986 at 8:00 p.m. at the Allendale Municipal Building, West Crescent Avenue, Allendale (Second Floor).

**PROGRAM:** Claire Tholl, member of the Bergen County Historic Sites Advisory Board, will present a slide program, "Stone Houses of Northwest Bergen County." The program will feature stone houses built prior to 1840. Mrs. Tholl is active in the Bergen County Historical Society as well as several local historical societies. She was the delineator of the map "Early Days of Allendale," first printed in 1974 and still available for purchase through our Society (copies are available at Eva Schmitt's "Country Shop" in Allendale. Don't miss this interesting program.

### **SOCIETY NEWS:**

The proposed slate of officers for the year 1986-1987 is as follows:

President: Pat Wardell

Vice President: Eva Schmitt

Treasurer: Marge Mowerson

Secretary: Bonnie McKenzie

Trustees: Annette Baum, Marian Strangfeld,  
Harriett Grosman, Volunteer Needed

Publicity Chairman: Paulette From

Librarian: Shirley Cross

Program Chairman: Harriett Grosman

Newsletter Editor: Pat Wardell

As you can see, we need a volunteer for the position of Trustee. If you live locally and could spare a minimal amount of time, please consider volunteering for this position. Our society can only be as active as its members--we know everyone's time is limited, but if you can help in some small way

it should be a satisfaction to you to know that you are helping to preserve a heritage that day by day would erode without someone helping to "write it down," organize it, and speak out to preserve it.

We can always use help--volunteers are needed to chair and be part of:

- committees to watch the status of our older homes and to work to preserve our architectural heritage

- committees to seek out and preserve oral history by interviewing and taping discussions with our long-time residents who have valuable memories to share

- committees to organize and catalog our collection of books, booklets, photographs, maps, and other Allendale historical source material.

- our out-of-state members can help by jotting down their memories of Allendale as it was when they lived here. Our readers indicate that

these reminiscences are one of their favorite features in the society's newsletters.

The slate of officers will be read at the May meeting and the floor will be opened for further nominations, after which election of officers will take place.

Please also note that annual dues are payable again. Dues may be paid at the May meeting or you may mail them if you are unable to be at the May meeting. It will be helpful if you will complete and enclose the membership renewal form on the last page (page 8) of this newsletter. Thank you.

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## ALLENDALE NOTES...

### BITS AND PIECES OF ALLENDALE HISTORY

COMPILED BY PAT WARDELL

(Continued from the February 1986 issue)

#### Movies

The first motion pictures shown in Allendale (of which we have record) were projected in the old firehouse in 1915. An item from The Ramsey Journal, April 9, 1915 noted that "The Overland Entertainment Club, musicians, soloists, elocutionists will give an evening entertainment including 6 reels of moving pictures, featuring Chas. Chaplin and other stars. Fireman's Hall, Thursday, April 15. Admission 25 cents, children 15." Julia Morris recalled that about 1917 her father, Leonard Marsh, ran the showing of movies in the firehouse, and Ida Mensching played the piano to accompany the silent movies.

A bit of excitement erupted in September 1916 when a group of movie actors passed through Allendale. According to The Ramsey Journal of Sept. 14, 1916: "Fifty-two actors of the Vitagraph Motion Picture Company came to town on Saturday morning and caused much excitement in our usually quiet borough. The company went to Wyckoff by auto bus, where a five-reel picture was taken. The director who accompanied the actors said that they intended to return again during

the middle of the fall.

Later, in 1918-1919, the Allendale Board of Trade appointed a committee to obtain and project moving pictures. On the committee were Mr. Potter, Mr. Parigot, Mr. Darken, Mr. Arlt, and Mr. Whittaker. Among piano accompanists for these silents were Charlotte Scholz (early 1919) and Ethel Braun (May 1919.)

In 1920, the Allendale Firemen themselves took over the showing of movies in Allendale. The Ramsey Journal of May 27, 1920 reported: "The Allendale Fire Department has received their moving picture machine which they recently purchased. They intend giving pictures in Borough Hall beginning next Tuesday night." [At this time, the Allendale Fire House also served as Borough Hall.]

Herbert Winter noted in his diary under the date of June 29, 1920 that the "First movies in Allendale [were] shown at the firehouse." These actually were not the first movies shown in Allendale (as we have seen), but were the first shown by the Allendale Fire Department. Mr. Winter also recalled that usually at the most interesting point in the movie a fuse would blow or a chair would collapse!

Movies sponsored by the fire department continued until at least 1925 (and probably later.) On May 29, 1925 The Allendale Argus reported that the features to be shown by the firemen that week (on Saturday, Decoration Day) were "The Side Show of Life," "The Montebank," and a comedy, "High Society."



### Municipal Building (Borough Hall)

Allendale's first elections, in November 1894, at which citizens of the area voted to incorporate as a borough and elected a Mayor and Council, took place at Archer Hall on Franklin Turnpike.

In the very early days of Allendale's history as a borough, Borough Council meetings were held in private homes and in the public school building.

The very first council meeting of record, held December 18, 1894, was, according to the council minutes, "held in Councilman [Walter] Dewsnap's home." One of the items on the agenda for that meeting was the appointment, by Mayor Rapelje, of Councilmen Doty and Hatch to call on School Board President J. B. Willard "in reference to holding council meetings in the school house."

The second borough council meeting, on December 27, 1894, took place in the old school house on Franklin Turnpike, permission having been granted by the school board.

In February 1895, the Borough Clerk was authorized to secure the basement of Archer Hall for spring elections.

In December 1895, a contract was made to rent Linkroum's Hall for elections and borough meetings at \$35. per year.

At the January 21, 1897 meeting of the Mayor and Council, it was resolved to accept the offer of the Allendale Board of Education of a room in the newly built school house on Franklin Turnpike in which to hold council meetings. Mr. J. M. Southwick was employed to take care of the council room in the school house. This new school house was built just behind the old school on the same site on Franklin Turnpike. This "new" school is the same building that today houses Allendale's Police Headquarters. The building has

undergone numerous changes, including the removal of its second story.

Apparently the borough council continued to meet in the school house until 1913, when the first firehouse was built. Plans for the building were discussed as early as 1910, soon after the formation of the Allendale Fire Department. The Ramsey Journal on April 1, 1910 reported: "At a recent meeting of the Borough Council the subject of erecting a Borough Hall came up for consideration. At first some opposition was expressed, but the good business sense which backed up the movement for improvement was ably argued and the resolution to erect such a building was passed...The idea of the Hall, as we gather from the promoters of the idea, is that a two-story building will be erected on a plot of ground to be purchased for the purpose...The recently organized Fire Department will be given quarters on the first floor, in which to hold their meetings and house their apparatus. On the second floor will be the council chambers and a large hall which can be rented out for assembly gatherings and all public uses, and this is expected to bring in a revenue..."

In June of 1912, Mrs. Margaret Yeomans donated a 25' x 50' plot of land on which to build the firehouse. In October 1912, John Yeomans offered to increase the former plot to a larger lot (50' x 100') and William Dewsnap, an Allendale resident and prominent architect, offered to draw up plans for the building without charge. A contract was awarded to S. T. Van Houten Jr. to erect the building for a sum of \$6212.00. A well was dug by Mr. LeBarron, plumbing by L. E. Rossner, and on April 5, 1913, the cornerstone was laid with

ceremonies at which Mayor John Winter officiated, assisted by John Yeomans, Margaret Yeomans, and Dr. Harry Archer.

This first fire house/borough hall housed the Fire Department, the Borough Council, the courtroom for the Municipal Judge, served as polling place on election day, and in its early years also served as a drill hall for the Bergen Guard.

Also held in the old fire house: movies, plays by the Borough Dramatic Company (later the Allendale Players), dances, card parties, flower shows, radio shows, pet shows, and even graduation exercises for the school.

Council meetings were held in the fire house until about 1929, when, in September, the new Brookside School on Brookside Avenue was dedicated. Sometime after this date, the borough council took over the old school building on Franklin Turnpike as its official meeting place. Council meetings were apparently held here until February 1939, when in an austerity measure to save expenses, the borough council under Mayor Louis A. Keidel, voted to transfer meetings of the council and its committees back to the fire house. Mayor Keidel announced that the former municipal building would remain open, but that each organization wishing to use it would have to furnish their own light, heat, and janitor service.

In 1947, the old schoolhouse and former municipal building on Franklin Turnpike was leased by the borough to American Legion Post 204. The Legion later purchased the lot and building for \$1. The Legion Post renovated the building, and it is probable that the second story was removed during this period. At about this time the building became known as the "War Memorial Building." The Ramsey Journal of March 2, 1950 reported: "The

Allendale Borough Council unanimously approved of changing their meeting place to the new War Memorial Building on Franklin Turnpike at the Thursday night meeting in the fire house...[Mayor Frederick J. Burnett] recommended the change citing the fact that they have a vault located in the building, the improvement of the location, larger quarters with the added advantage of an ante room which opens off the main room for recess purposes, regulated heat and screens..."

By 1960 the membership of American Legion Post 204 had dwindled to about 22 and the members were no longer able to maintain the building. At this point ownership of the property reverted to the Board of Education, which in turn deeded the property back to the borough. In September 1960 the council, under the leadership of Mayor Robert Newman, agreed to assume \$700 in outstanding maintenance debts and pay \$1. for the property.

The Borough Council set aside \$15,000. for renovation work and in June 1961 the "new" municipal building was dedicated.

Today's combination municipal building and public library, on West Crescent Avenue, was formerly the building housing the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany. The Episcopal congregation purchased the 10-acre tract in April/May 1959, sold its old buildings on the northeastcorner of Franklin Turnpike and East Orchard Street to the Presbyterian church, and built a combination church/educational building on the newly purchased site. In the 1970's the Church of the Epiphany sold its facilities to the borough.

## Do You Remember?

Test your memory of Allendale "Trivia." How many of these questions can you answer?

1. When was the grandstand in Recreation Park built?

2. A group called "Citizens for Allendale" was organized in 1956. For what purpose was the group organized?

3. What is unusual about the occupants (since 1879) of the home at 232 Franklin Turnpike, now occupied by L. Schultz?

Give up? Then peek at the answers on page 6.

### BUSINESSES IN ALLENDALE

Compiled by Pat Wardell

*Some bits and pieces about some of Allendale's businesses--past and present. We know that this list is incomplete and hope that some of our readers can add information. What businesses do you remember?*

#### A & P (Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co.)

An A & P store located in Allendale in 1917. The Ramsey Journal of March 8, 1917 reported, "The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company will soon open a store in our Borough, in the Guatelli Building. Business will be started some time next week." Perhaps this opening was slightly delayed, because Herbert Winter recorded in his diary, under date of June 6, 1917, "A & P opened grocery store." The first manager of the store was said to have been a Mr. Yearling.

Soon afterward the A & P was located in the Kornhoff Building, on Allendale Avenue. In March of 1926 a fire broke out "in the extension in the rear of the new Post Office and Atlantic and Pacific store, situated in the Kornhoff Building. The fire was discovered by Mrs. Kornhoff and the alarm was turned in by her son [Leon Kornhoff.]" According to a report in The

Ramsey Journal of March 18, 1926, "Mrs. Donahue, telephone operator, was of great assistance...the firemen were on the job at once and within fifteen minutes of the time the call was sent in had the flames under control. The extension, which was almost completed, was badly damaged, but, fortunately, the two stores in front of the building escaped unscathed...The damage is estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$2,500.

In May 1955 the A & P applied to the Mayor and Council for a Plenary Retail Distribution License (for the sale of liquor?) for its premises situated at 77 Allendale Avenue.

In the early 1960's the A & P moved to its new 15,000-square-foot building in the new shopping center on the corner of West Allendale Ave. and Memorial Dr., officially opening in October 1962. The store later moved to its present location slightly south of its former building in the same shopping center. The old site today houses "Hit or Miss Clothes Barn" and a health spa. About a year or so ago the A & P was completely renovated.

#### Ackerman, Morris S.--General Store

According to J. M. Van Valen, in his History of Bergen County, published in 1900, "Morris S. Ackerman began selling goods in a part of the hotel" at Allendale. The Bergen County Democrat reported on May 7, 1869, "The new store of Mr. Ackerman, at Allendale, is in full operation."

Morris S. Ackerman was born October 23, 1839, the son of Aaron Ackerman and Margaret Hopper. He married, on October 22, 1859 at New Prospect M. E. Church, Elizabeth Ramsey.

The 1860 Federal Census lists Morris

S. Ackerman, age 20, as a farmer, his wife, Elizabeth, age 18, and their child, Aaron Ackerman, age 3 months.

In the 1870 Federal Census, Morris S. Ackerman's occupation is listed as "grocer," his real estate is valued at \$4,000. and his personal property at \$1,000. In addition to son Aaron (by then aged 10), he and his wife, Elizabeth, are shown as having three other children: Rachel E. Ackerman, age 5 in 1870; Margaret Ackerman, age 3 in 1870; and Carrie Ackerman, age 4 months in 1870.

In April 1872, W. J. Ramsey (perhaps a relative of Morris's wife, Elizabeth Ramsey) sold to M. Ackerman, 1 lot on Allendale Avenue, for \$100. Also in April 1872, Morris S. Ackerman sold to R. V. Ackerman, 34/100 of an acre, on the Erie Railroad, for \$2,500.

Richard V. Ackerman succeeded Morris S. Ackerman in his general store business about 1872.

(This series to be continued next issue)

## Did You Remember?

1. When was the grandstand in Recreation park built?

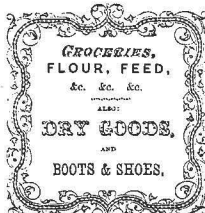
The grandstand in existence today is apparently the second grandstand built on the site. The first was built in the spring of 1915 with lumber donated by Mr. John D. Walsh. In The Ramsey Journal of May 27, 1915, Charles F. Smith, manager of the baseball club, publicly thanked Mr. Walsh for his donation of lumber, and also thanked others who donated funds for the erection of the grandstand: Mr. Knack, Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Pittis,, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Braun, Mr. Tomalin, Mr. Art, Mr. Wm. Dewsnap, Mr. Sturchler, Guatelli Bros., Mr. Strunk, Mr. Wm. McGill, Mr. Lang, Mr. Hudson, Mr. P. W. Critchley, Mr. Jos. M. Steele, Mr. Cy Gousset, Mr. Rouse, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Robt. Shamback, and Mr. W. Merrill. This grandstand was built by John W. Rudolph.

By about the fall of 1934, the old grandstand was declared unsafe and was ordered torn down. In the spring of 1935 a new grandstand was constructed from money raised by public contributions and a donation from the Allendale Borough Council. Construction costs jumped \$275. however, and in March 1936 Councilman William

Spiegelberger, chairman of parks, and Elwood T. Critchley, representing the Allendale "A's" baseball club, appealed to the public for contributions to pay the outstanding debt of \$275.

2. A group called "Citizens for Allendale was organized in 1956. For what purpose was the group organized?

Citizens for Allendale, Inc. was formed in August 1956 as a "non-profit organization to preserve the Berdan property on West Orchard Street for a civic center." The site of "the Berdan property" is today's A & P Shopping Center on West Allendale Avenue and DeMercurio Drive. The organization proposed to acquire the five acres comprising the Berdan property "and hold it until the Borough decides to purchase it or decides against purchase in a period of six years." Shares of stock in the corporation were sold at \$100., paying 4 per cent annually. The group issued the following statement in October 1956:

Allendale, N. J.		187	
			
<p>Mr. <i>Wm. J. Faber</i>            Bought of <b>M. S. ACKERMAN,</b>            DEALER IN            GROCERIES and PROVISIONS, FLOUR, FEED, Etc. Etc.</p>			
Apr	16	15 lb nails	80
	17	7 " lath nails	49
	"	10 " "	45
	22	11 " "	55
	"	43 " hair	2 58
	23	10 " lath nails	70
Oct	2	1 lb plaster Paris	2 25
	6	2 lbs lime	2 30
	"	3 lb hair	38
	8	1 lb lime	1 15
	12	1 " plaster Paris	2 25
	20	" " " "	1 13
Dec	20	1 bush " "	25
			\$15.28
<p>Jan 3 1876 Paid Payment  <i>R. V. Ackerman</i></p>			

"With its present firehouse and the Veteran's Memorial Building available for meetings, the Borough does not yet face the immediate need for any additional public buildings. Its firehouse, however is a wooden structure about 40 years old. Looking to the future the time will come when a municipal building, however modest, and a new firehouse, centrally located and easily accessible to both sides of town, will be needed...."

The borough did not acquire the property, and it was eventually sold to the developers of the shopping center.

3. What is unusual about the occupants (since 1879) of the home at 232 Franklin Turnpike, now occupied by L. Schultz?

Many of the occupants after 1879 have been

doctors. The house's earliest section is believed to have been built by William Folly about 1811, and enlarged to its present size in the mid-1800's. Aaron Ackerman bought it about 1861 and sold it to Dr. Charles W. Badeau in 1879.

Dr. Badeau owned the house until 1901, when he moved to Passaic. He spent his winters in Dunedin, Florida, and died there in January 1918.

Dr. Robert W. Rodman lived in the house until about 1921. He was a charter member of the Board of Trustees of the Allendale Fire Association in 1910. He served in World War I and returned to his Allendale practice in August 1919.

Dr. Leo P. Schultz was listed at this address in the 1947-48 Bergen-Passaic Telephone directory and currently lives in the house.

TELEPHONE 445 L 1 ALLENDALE	ALLENDALE, N. J., <u>Oct 1</u> 19 <u>01</u>
<u>Geo Webb</u>	
TO ROBERT W. RODMAN, M. D., DR.	
Professional services from _____ to _____	\$ <u>25.00</u>
Medicine .. .. .	\$ _____
	Total \$ _____
OFFICE HOURS 8-9 A. M. 1-2 P. M. 6-7 P. M.	Received Payment, <u>R. W. Rodman</u>

Allendale Historical Society  
Officers and Chairmen, 1985-1986

President--Bonnie McKenzie  
Vice President--Eva Schmitt  
Treasurer--Marge Mowerson  
Secretary--Jeanne Cotz  
Trustees--Annette Baum, Marian Strangfeld, Harriett Grosman  
Publicity Chairman--Paulette From  
Librarian--Shirley Cross  
Program Chairman--Harriett Grosman  
Newsletter Editor--Pat Wardell

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

Membership Categories:	(Annual Dues)
Family Membership	\$6.00
Individual Membership	\$4.00

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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.

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MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOW PAYABLE.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Please renew my membership for 1986-1987 (check one:)

- Family membership.....\$6.00
- Individual membership.....\$4.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street	Town	State	Zip Code
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Please send to: Allendale Historical Society  
P.O. Box 294, Allendale, N.J. 07401

(or bring your payment and this renewal form to our May meeting.) **Thank you!**