Glen Ridge Historical Society

THE GASLAMP

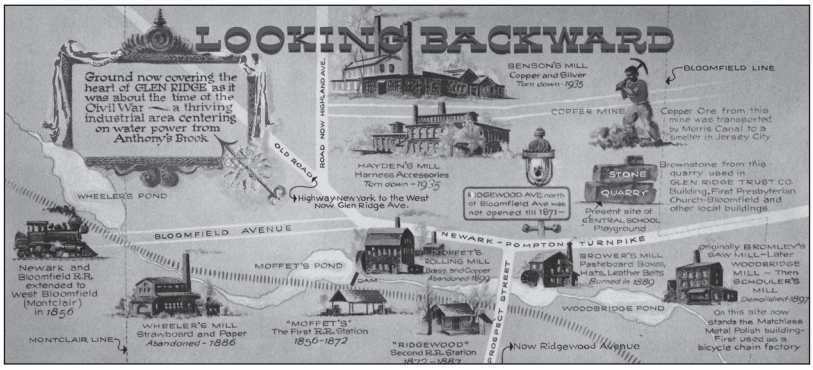
Illuminating Our Past

September 2017 Vol. XXXX No. 1

President's Letter

Just the Working Life

Summer days are over, but the arrival of fall brings plans for our next walking tour. On Sunday, October 22, the Historical Society will reprise an outing from 2008 called "Industrial Glen Ridge." During the 19th century, Glen Ridge was home to a number of noisy and bustling enterprises that included a copper mine, a brownstone quarry, brass rolling mills, dye works, paper-box and harness factories, and a commercial printing press. Early business owners along the Glen and across Bloomfield Avenue were James Moffat, Samuel Brower, William Bromley, Samuel Benson, and one Thomas Edison, who attempted to produce a car battery in a factory on Hurrell Field. Edison also had a so-called torpedo factory on Midland Avenue, which manufactured railroad flares.



Painting by local artist Stephen Ozslewski in 1957 for use in a booklet, The Glen Ridge Story, *published by the Glen Ridge Trust Company*

The tour is open to all ages and free of charge. It will begin at the Glen Ridge Community Pool at 1:30 p.m. and conclude with refreshments at the Terry S. Webster Museum on the second floor of the Boiling Springs Savings Bank.

Last April we celebrated the 40th anniversary of our founding. The Board of Trustees decided to spread the news by hand-delivering copies of the April issue of *The Gaslamp* to every residence in town. The results were most affirmative, with lots of personal feedback and an impressive number of new memberships. My thanks to the members of the board, who covered their assigned routes with good cheer!

Last April also marked the 100th anniversary of America's entry into World War I. Two hundred fifteen Glen Ridge men went off to war and seven lost their lives. The wartime efforts on the homefront in Glen Ridge from April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918, were remarkable for a community of only 4,000 residents. The four Liberty Loan drives and one Victory Loan drive were all oversubscribed—at times the quota was quadrupled—for a total contribution of over $4 million, which amounts to roughly $50 million in 2017 dollars. The initial donation of $1,400 to the American Red Cross during the opening weeks of the war (reportedly the first Red Cross fundraiser in the country) eventually increased to $79,195. Patriotic fever ran especially high in the five volunteer committees that facilitated communications, practiced military maneuvers, oversaw the use of public property, determined the availability of automobiles, and sought out enemy espionage.

If you would like to learn more about the role of Glen Ridge in World War I or any other period in our history, I invite you to visit our archives. They are an informational treasure trove for inquiring minds, with an impressive collection of personal reminiscences, maps, photographs, news clips, local history books, and assorted ephemera.

Sally Meyer

News and Goings-On

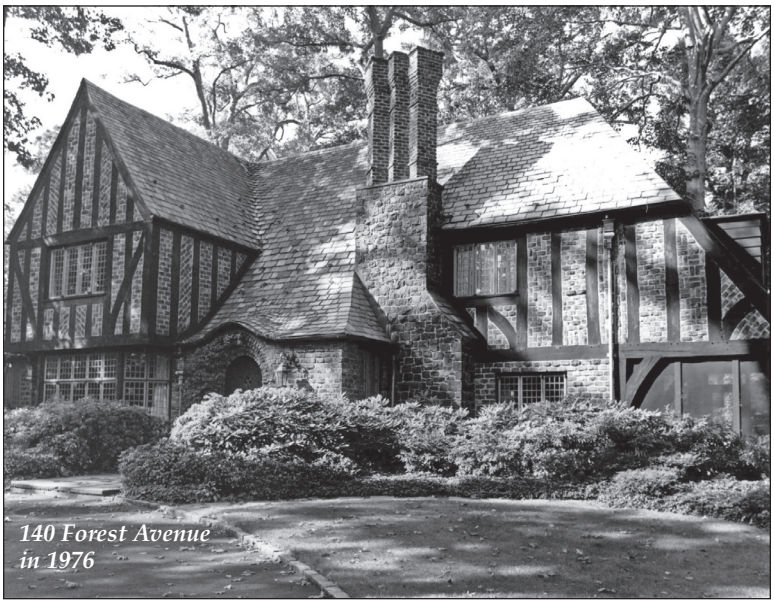
Clothing exhibit. We're planning a clothing exhibit for next February with some of the many vintage items in our collection. The exact date will be announced in the November issue of *The Gaslamp*. New board member Jennifer Janofsky has offered to chair the event and would be delighted with offers of help. You can contact her at jenjanofsky@gmail.com.

Museum hours. Located above Boiling Springs Savings Bank, the Terry S. Webster Museum is open the second Saturday of every month from 9 a.m. to noon or by appointment with Sally Meyer at (973) 239-2674. It maintains an architectural and historical file on every house in town, including old documents and photographs. The museum also features exhibits of town history.

Our Favorite Houses

A Tudor Fit for a Stockbroker

Although 140 Forest Avenue falls within the category of "Stockbroker Tudor"—known as such because this type was favored by successful investors in affluent suburbs in the 1920s—it is unique among the many such houses in Glen Ridge. It has the typical half-timbered walls, but many of its other characteristics are rare and particularly beautiful.



140 Forest Avenue in 1976

Tudor-style houses in the U.S. were designed to evoke the architecture of 16th-century England. Whereas the originals relied on true timber construction, the modern versions had the timbers applied as a veneer over a stud-wall structure. The timbers on the exterior of 140 Forest may not be structural, but the detailing of the rest of the house is very close to that of traditional Tudor buildings. It is that detailing that makes the design of the house so impressive.

The most prominent detail is the brick used between the timbers. The typical infill found in both medieval England and 20-century America is stucco; the use of brick is rare because of the added expense. The size and weight of the brick also meant that the timbers had to be substantial in size to support them—no veneer here. The panels are laid out in a variety of patterns, including squares and diagonals. It's a lively and extravagant use of brick.

The roof is magnificent. The slates drape down from the top ridge to the first floor. They curve up and over the front door. They fold around the valley between the two wings. They slope up slightly at the gable ends to mimic a sagging ridge beam that might be found on a very old house. And the slates decrease in size from the eaves up to the ridge, creating an optical illusion of greater height.

The design of the windows is remarkable. Such tiny panes on windows throughout the house are rare. As in most Tudor houses, each window is vertical, but at the same time they are installed in horizontal groups.

The enormous central chimney is true to Tudor traditions. Here it has the added detail of brick upper chimneys turned on an angle, which makes it especially grand. The screened porch—obviously not part of an actual Tudor house—is constructed of true timbers. They are hefty and splitting with implied age, protected by the enormous roof sloping. It is this porch that appeals to me most—a modern amenity reimagined for the Tudor era. **Karin Robinson**

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Newton C. Marshall's Story of Survival (Part 1 of 2)

The Crash of SCADTA C-46

Former town resident Bill Marshall has shared a remarkable story with us. His father, Newton, had been a mining engineer in Colombia. In 1934 he was flying on a Sikorsky S-38 float plane operated by the local Pan Am affiliate, SCADTA, when it crashed in the thickly forested mountains north of Cali. He was the only one of five to make it out alive. Afterwards he, his wife, Pauline, and their four kids moved to 276 Ridgewood Avenue. His journal has never been published before. This abridged version will conclude in the next issue of The Gaslamp. *Special thanks to Bill Marshall's brother James, brother-in-law Don Kidder, and daughter Jenny Weisburger, as well as aviation historian Mauricio Umana, who is writing a book on the incident,* El Vuelo de "la Guaca".

March 10, 1934. The pilot kept his two engines idling just enough to keep the plane heading up river against the current, while the launch came up behind, and the passengers, baggage, and mail were transferred to the cabin of the plane. About an hour after leaving Quibdó the plane started flying in a large circle and I realized that we were probably over Cartago and the pilot was looking for landing. Although we were flying in bright sunlight, nothing but clouds could be seen below. Finally the pilot seemed to come to some decision, as he straightened the course of the plane towards the south, reducing the speed of the engines, and we started planing down through the clouds. At any minute I expected to see the flat valley land below, but everything about us was white fog.

My first recollection was that of an enormous silence, black darkness, a sensation of choking, my mouth full of something indistinguishable. I rubbed my eyes. Strange, it wasn't dark; now I could see. That was blood all over my hands, blood that I was rubbing out of my eyes, blood all over my coat and shirt. I tried to spit out what was in my mouth; I pushed it out with my tongue. Only then did I realize that it was my upper lip.

Poor don Julio, it was plain to see that he was dead. The pilot shook the other passenger. The only reply was groans; at least he was not dead. The pilot did not seem to be hurt badly. He explained that the mechanic had gone out to look around. We were on a steep hillside, with the cabin of the plane pointing uphill and tipped over a little to the left. The pilot brought some bandages and helped me bind up my mouth. The wounds were still bleeding and the bandage was soon soaked with blood. Someone handed me a coat for cover, as it was getting chilly. I passed a most uncomfortable night, half reclining, half sitting up against one of the chair backs.

Newton Marshall in the mining town of Andagoya, Colombia, in 1932. From Jenny Weisburger

March 11. At daylight the pilot told me that they were going for help. He asked me if I could walk, but I shook my head. The mechanic had a machete and a small hand axe, but left the latter, taking only the machete. Now there were only two of us left, neither of whom could move about. My companion talked a lot, but in German. However, two words were plain enough, *agua* and *comida*. I remembered regretfully a small package of lunch which I had carelessly left in the gasoline launch when getting on the plane yesterday morning. However, the problem of getting water to drink should be easy enough, as a light rain had begun to fall. There were plenty of conical paper cups laying around. I began to inch myself up to the front of the cabin, still laying on my back until I could reach out with a cup in my hand to catch the dripping water. Finally one cup was full and I began inching my way back to where my companion lay. I did not drink any myself as the bandage was on tightly over my mouth and I did not wish to disturb it until I had to. He was glad to get the water and called for more.

Sikorsky S-38 twin-engine float plane that Marshall flew on his ill-fated trip. Christened the von Krohn *after a local pilot, it could carry eight passengers and two crew. Image from scadta.co and reprinted with permission of Mauricio Umana*

March 12. My companion was carrying on a conversation with himself as usual, when suddenly he stopped. I could hear a small humming noise. The noise was getting louder, the hum of an airplane's engines. The sound became louder but not exactly overhead, off to one side, then began to

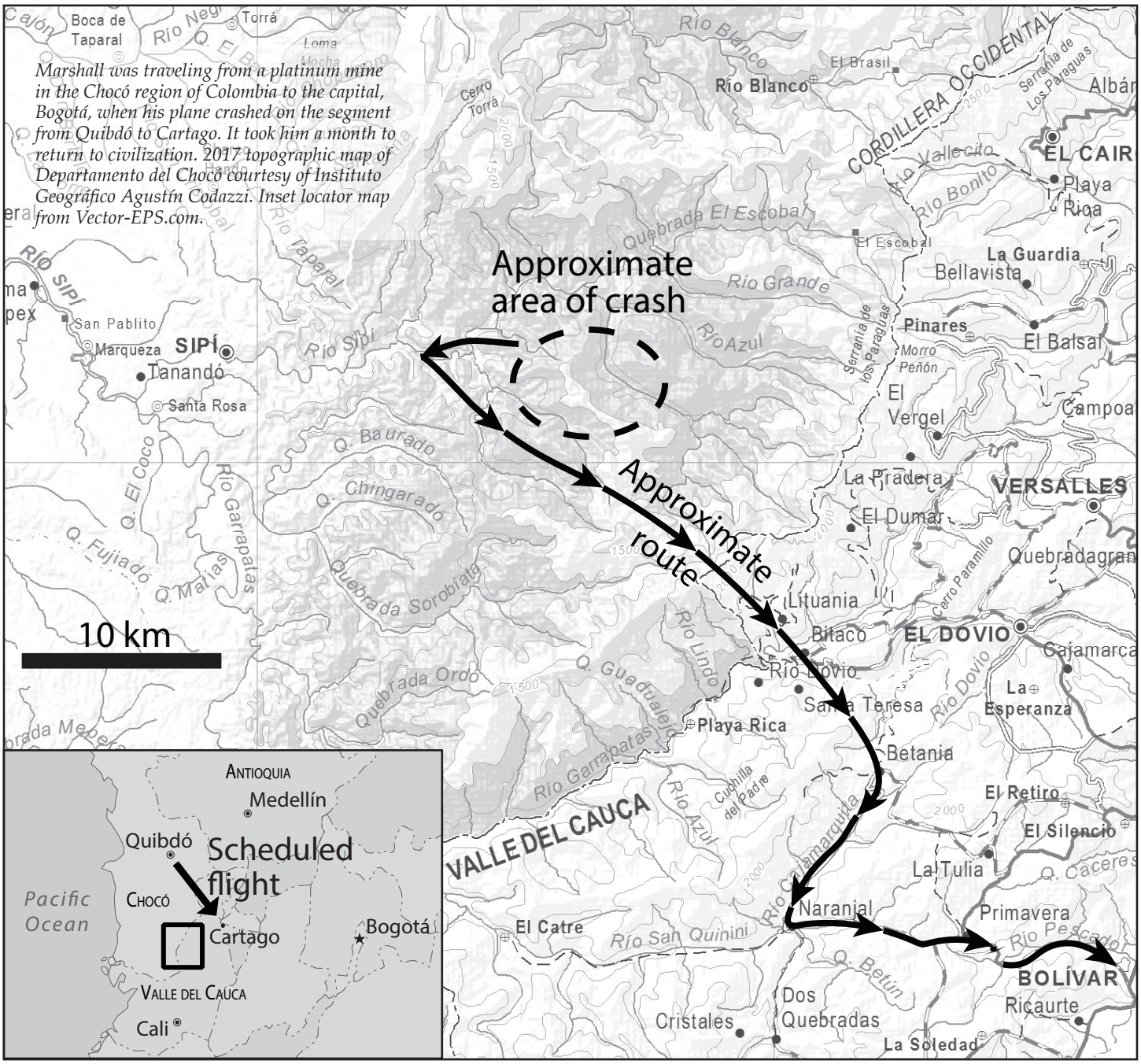
get less and we knew that the plane had passed over. In a few minutes the sound became loud again; the plane had turned and was coming back. It sounded very close and then less and less and disappeared in the direction from which it had come.

March 13. I could move around a little easier today, even managed to sit up. I was so thirsty by this time that I had to have a drink, but instead of taking off the bandage, I cut a small slit in it with the scissors to make an opening into my mouth. Using one of the conical paper cups, I made a funnel. By laying on my back I could pour water into my mouth.

March 14. I finally managed to pull myself up until I was standing with my head and shoulders through the hatch opening and just under the wing. To this operation my companion was an interested spectator. It was the first time I had been able to stand up since the accident and it was not done without a few grunts and groans. I made my way to the forward end of the cabin. I saw that the cushions had been removed from the seats of the pilot and mechanic. As the seats were made of aluminum, they each held about a gallon of water. My companion called for more water than usual and luckily there was plenty of it. He seemed to be as cheerful as ever, but I suspected that he had fever.

March 15. This morning there was not the usual call for water from my companion and, when I sat up, I found that he was dead. The silence was oppressive.

March 16. I had visions of fixing the radio and sending out a call for help, but I soon saw that this would be impossible. The forward part of the fuselage in front of the mechanic's seat was badly damaged and open to the rain, but



the left-hand side offered some protection from the weather and I decided to clear it out to make a place for me to sleep.

March 17. The day dawned clear and bright and I started to work immediately. I collected all the cushions I could find and put them through the window into the forward compartment, then made the rounds of the cabin to see if there was anything else I could use. I found a shaving outfit complete with razor, soap, and mirror.

I climbed up onto the wing over the cabin to get a better view. Directly northwest I recognized Torra mountain, which is a landmark in the Chocó. I had supposed that we had crashed somewhere in the Cauca valley near Cartago. I was looking across the valley of the Sipí river or its tributaries; there could be no doubt of it.

Luckily my matches were still dry and soon I had a fire burning a short distance from the wrecked plane. After it was going good I added some green leaves and damp sticks to make more smoke.

I decided to shave. I used some chlorine tablets from the emergency kit for disinfecting the water. After soaking the bandage for some time I managed to get it off. Only then could I see what had happened to my mouth. The upper lip, which had been nearly cut away, had grown together but about half an inch farther west than it should be, making the biggest hare lip I had ever seen. I put on a clean bandage, fastened it up as well as I could, and felt a whole lot better.

March 18. I had hardly gotten out and looked around before I heard an airplane, and hastened to get my fire going. I put paint, varnish, and oil on the fire in an effort to make a black smoke; the white smoke looked too much like a fog or clouds to attract attention. The sound of the aircraft came no closer and after about two hours disappeared altogether. I climbed up the steep hillside to the ridge about a hundred feet above the wrecked plane. The woods were so thick that I could not see out in any direction. The ridge sloped up to the west to a higher hill. I found the trail taken by the pilot and mechanic, which was easy to follow, due to the branches and vines which had been cut with a machete.

Crash site in 1934. Top image from scadta.co, lower from Jenny Weisburger

March 19. Rain all day.

March 20. I discovered two cigars in my coat pocket. I thought it would be great to enjoy a smoke. A cigar is all right after a good dinner, but when one has not eaten anything for 10 days—well, I decided I would quit smoking until I had had something to eat.

March 21. I took my little axe and went up the ridge to clear a trail. The hand axe was almost useless. The easiest to cut were some weeds with enormous leaves, like elephant ears; the most difficult was a variety of bamboo with long trailing branches, covered with thorns. By afternoon I was too tired to keep on any longer, and so returned downhill to my hotel.

March 22. I went up the trail on the ridge to where I had left off work the day before. Usually a ridge is the easiest place to travel in the woods, but this one was so narrow, descending steeply on each side, that whenever I encountered a fallen tree or a cane brake, I had to cut my way through it.

March 23. I felt my best hopes slipping away. If the pilot and mechanic were ever coming back they should be here by this time. From my experience cutting a trail up the ridge I realized that I would not get very far that way. I could follow the trail of the pilot and mechanic, but did not like the direction they had taken.

While looking around I discovered a small tin box, which I lost no time in opening. Stenciled on one side of the tin were these words: "Emergency Ration–8 oz.–Will sustain a normal person for 24 hours." It proved to be sweet chocolate and only then did I realize how hungry I was. The finding of the tin seemed to decide me on leaving.

March 24. I went over just what I was going to do: travel downhill and downstream until I came to a house. Surely there would be one somewhere along the banks of the Sipí.

(to be continued)

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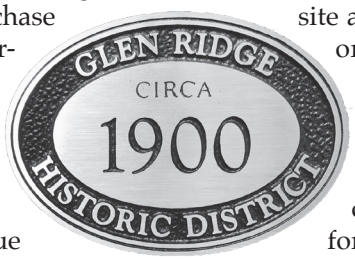
Glen Ridge Historical Society Catalog

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT for Glen Ridge history by making a purchase from our catalog of Historical Society items.



Historic District house plaque. Celebrate your home's history with a custom cast-bronze plaque denoting the Historic District of Glen Ridge and your home's circa construction date. The order form is available on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/GRHistoricalSociety. Plaques take approximately six weeks for delivery. Member price $180

Holiday ornaments. A beautiful custom brass ornament featuring the iconic image of the Glen Ridge gas lamp is available for $15. Each ornament comes in a red presentation box and includes a brief town history. The order form can be found on our website at www.glenridgehistory.org/glen-ridge-gas-lamp-ornament/. Ornaments may also be purchased at the Glen Ridge Public Library. We offer the older gazebo ornament for $15 as well.

1906 maps. Reprints of the famous A.H. Mueller Atlas of Essex County are available for both the north and the south ends of town. Member price $80

Glen Ridge Memory and Matching Game. A classic handcrafted memory game with 48 tiles showing historic sites and buildings in Glen Ridge. The storage box includes a description of each image. Suitable for all ages. $15

Gas-lamp postcards. Full-color 4x6 postcards showing a Glen Ridge gas lamp in spring, summer, or autumn. 50¢ each

To make a purchase, email us at glenridgehs@gmail.com or mail your order and payment to P.O. Box 164, Glen Ridge, NJ 07028-0164. Purchases may also be made by visiting our museum during open hours on the second Saturday of each month. It is located above Boiling Springs Savings Bank at 222 Ridgewood Avenue.