



GLEN RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

November 2012 Vol. XXXV No. 2

THE GASLAMP

Illuminating Our Past

www.glenridgehistory.org



President's Letter



Throughout the summer we have been watching the progress of the Glen Ridge Hall renovation with interest. Despite some earlier delays, work is proceeding quickly now and we hope to have access to our new space on the second floor before the end of the year. The new entry portico on Darwin Place, which will serve as the entrance to the Historical Society's Museum Room and its archive spaces, has been framed out. A new heating and air conditioning system serving the second floor is in place. Soon the new electrical and lighting systems will be installed.

I am very pleased to announce that the new space will be named the Eleanor S. "Terry" Webster Museum Room. Terry was one of the founders of the Glen Ridge Historical Society and its most ardent advocate. She worked with several others to gather, organize and maintain information and artifacts from the past to create our town archive. She has inspired many others to continue the historical research that will help us all in the preservation of Glen Ridge. The

expanded presence of the Historical Society is indebted to her vision and hard work.

Karin Robinson

Save the Date

Holiday Party



170 Ridgewood Avenue

Thursday, December 6, 2012

7:30 pm

Upcoming Next Year

A Lego Event

Sunday, January 27, 2013

What's a Lego Event?

Fifty buildings in Glen Ridge are chosen and fifty families attend and are randomly assigned to construct replicas of each building out of Lego pieces. It's been very successful in nearby towns and is great family fun (and learning).

Watch local papers for more details.

The Glen Ridge Historical Society is Born

News from the Town Historian



The Glen Ridge Historical Society turned 35 this year. Did you know that its roots can be found in America's Bicentennial celebration in 1976? The themes for the country's observances were Heritage, Festival, and Horizons. Glen Ridge set up its own Bicentennial Committee using these themes with the goal of commemorating the past, enjoying the present, and planning for the future.

Mayor John Van Zoeren appointed Pat Johnson as chairwoman. She and a group of creative and hard working citizens planned a yearlong calendar of events that offered something of interest to everyone. Percy Wilson as town historian chaired the Heritage Committee. Joan Hayes headed the Festival Committee. Joann Dixon led the Horizon Committee. And Ron Travisano chaired the Creative Committee.

The Festival Committee brought the celebration to life. Special events included a

formal dinner dance, a craft demonstration exhibit, the original village arts festival, a concert by the Duelman Master Choir, and a Bicentennial fair. The Memorial Day parade had a float of Washington Crossing the Delaware. And on July 4th a five foot long birthday cake served picnickers in the Glen.

The schools participated at every grade level. There were poster contests, music concerts, writing projects, and special field days with games from the Colonial period. Fathers especially enjoyed playing an 1896 style baseball game between Rudd's Red Stockings and the Glen Ridge Highlanders.

But it was the Heritage, Horizon, and Creative Committees that fostered our beginnings. The Heritage Committee gathered information on the oldest homes, set up an exhibit of early maps and photographs at the arts festival, and developed a walking tour brochure. The Horizon Committee promoted an open space initiative, created a vest pocket park at Highland Avenue, and promoted the idea of establishing a historic district. And the Creative Committee researched and produced the *Glen Ridge Heritage* book. The establishment of the Glen Ridge Historical Society in April 1977 was a natural outcome of these projects.

Sally Meyer

The Museum of the Glen Ridge Historical Society is located in the Glen Ridge Congregational Church. It is open by appointment. Please call Sally Meyer at (973) 239-2674.

Officers and Trustees

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		Ex-officio - Delegate LHSNJ	Gerry Addison

Editor's Note... This issue of *The Gaslamp* was delayed by Hurricane Sandy. It was imprisoned in your editor's computer - all ready to send to the printer - when we lost power for almost ten days. This issue is also the last that your editor will publish as sole editor. Sometime in late December or early January we expect to move to Pennsylvania to be closer to our two sons who live there. The future editorship of the newsletter is being discussed by the trustees and the next issue, February 2013, will announce a new editorial structure.

Herb Addison -- herb.addison@verizon.net

Growing up on Hamilton Road (Without a Car) - III in a Series

In 1938 we moved from an apartment in Montclair to 14 Hamilton Road, a foreclosed house purchased from the Glen Ridge Trust Company. We had no automobile, which made it of great importance to Mom that local merchants provide delivery services.

One was the Little Falls Laundry, whose big green truck came by periodically (weekly?) to pick up dirty clothes and linens, returning them at the next trip. Equally desired were the food delivery services. These included Dugan's bakery whose products included breads, coffee cakes and doughnuts. There were also dairy deliverers, Borden's and Becker Farms. The latter came by with a horse drawn wagon. The milk was pasteurized with heavy cream visible at the top two inches of each quart, requiring a good shake before pouring, unless Mom was making whipped cream for some tasty dessert.

Another necessity was coal for the 14 Hamilton Road furnace. This was delivered by the John Blondell & Sons coal company. They would back into the driveway, then install a right angle chute entering our house through a basement window. What a racket the coal made as it exited the dump truck. Coal dust in the house kept Mom busy as well. She was happy when we moved to number 19 Hamilton that had a gas furnace!!

Our favorite delivery service was, of course, the Good Humor man. His box truck with an open "cockpit" would creep slowly up the street as he pulled the rope attached to a series of bells above the windshield. Boy, were his products good! There was the traditional "good humor" on a stick, vanilla ice cream that had been dipped in chocolate, for 10 cents. Ice pops, orange and raspberry, were also available as were Dixie cups with a combination of vanilla and chocolate. They came with a little wooden spoon. All these were less expensive at 5 cents apiece.

For eating out, one couldn't beat Bond's on Valley Road in Upper Montclair. They had wonderful hamburgers served with a side of cold slaw and a little cup of lime ice, to cleanse one's palate? Bond's most famous treat was their "Awful Awful", a very thick milk shake that seemed to be nearly a quart. They would give you another one free if you finished 3 in a single

sitting. This was a feat I never accomplished. Sadly, Bond's has been gone for decades.

Food shopping for five before Pop bought the Ford was done by telephone. Mom would phone in her order to the South End Market on Orange Road in nearby Montclair. They would deliver! Even after we had wheels, Mom shopped there. The proprietors were brothers, Lou and Nelson, who maintained the shop into the early 1950s. We also shopped at the A & P market on Herman Street, just past the Glen Ridge Police Station. A counter on the left as



one entered had shelving behind it with cereals, canned goods, and household items. Mr. Maxwell, the manager, had a 4 or 5 foot "gripper" so that he could pick items from the shelves that were out of his reach. Cereal boxes were just tumbled down and caught with dexterity. Across the store was fresh produce, and a butcher beyond that towards the rear. During the war, Mom meticulously counted out the ration stamps for hard to get items. Costs were totaled in pencil on a brown paper bag. As to Mr. Maxwell, always hoping for a promotion to a larger venue, he was relegated to this location even after it was turned into a liquor store before its demise in the early 1960s. The building still exists, having morphed into restaurant after restaurant, finally in 2009 as Fitzgerald's 1928 pub. The original metal ceiling, though painted over, still exists.

While these establishments were key to our existence, as teenagers we gravitated to a soda shop named Brady's on Herman Street across the street from the A & P. All the sweets that we wanted, and a juke box that wouldn't quit!

In a later post script I'll describe the significant changes in Glen Ridge since I was a boy – but also make the case for the town's timeless qualities. **Tom Meeker**

Protecting the Glen Ridge Arboreal Canopy

On Valentine's Day, February 14, 1910, the Glen Ridge Borough Council showed its affection for the Borough's trees by creating a Shade Tree Commission. The three-man body consisted of residents M.T. Baldwin, M.B. Colson and H.E. Davis. The Council also allocated \$250 for tree trimming. A century later, in November 2010, the Borough's second Shade Tree Commission was created to assume and expand the original body's mission. The new Commission is larger, with five commissioners, and includes two women, something that might not have met with universal approval back in 1910.

The first Commission came into being largely in response to the Nolen Report, a comprehensive series of recommendations on Borough affairs, commissioned by the Council and released in 1909. The Nolen recommendation read as follows:

(11) That the Shade Tree Commission (the formation of which is advocated) be requested to take up in a broad and efficient way, much after the manner of East Orange, for example, the whole question of planting and maintaining street trees.

At around the same time, the Glen Ridge's trees faced an ominous threat. Dutch Elm Disease, borne by beetles, was killing the stately Elms that lined many streets. At the Valentine's Day meeting, David H. Standish of the North Side Association, made an impassioned plea to the Council to "save the Elm trees from the ravages of the beetle." The Council elected not to wait and created the Commission the same night.

The new Commission's first job was to create a Shade Tree Ordinance, which was proposed in March 1911 and approved in May of the same year. The Ordinance set forth terms and conditions for the planting, care and maintenance of street trees and also covered the use of the Borough's public parks. A century later, many of its provisions are still applicable, though the vast majority of Glen Ridge residents no longer need worry about incurring penalties for tying horses to public trees!

Concern about Dutch Elm Disease was

evident in the 1911 ordinance. A Special Notice on the front of the document read as follows:

"The Elm trees need spraying. Owners of Elm trees on PRIVATE PROPERTY are requested to communicate at once with the Commission, who will arrange to have the work properly done at a reasonable charge."

The Commission moved forward with its work. In 1912, 324 trees were planted in Glen Ridge and existing trees were pruned. A 1914 tree census revealed that the Borough contained 3,738 public trees, valued at \$30.00 each, amounting to a total value of \$120,000. Mr. Alfred Gaskill, State Forester, wrote in his summary, "It appears that you have an unusually large number of trees that can be considered thoroughly established and of effective development. The total valuation is the highest rate of any community for which figures have been submitted. The fact should cause much satisfaction to your people."

By the 1920's, the Borough had its own Forester and a Shade Tree Department to tend to the trees. During the 1930's, as the Depression continued to envelope the



Shade Tree truck in the 1930s (flaw in original)

nation, Dutch Elm Disease seemed to be under control. A 1935 government report stated that no trees in the Borough were affected with the disease.

Over the course of the next forty years, trees were planted, pruned and removed under the aegis of the Commission. But Dutch Elm Disease continued to ravage trees in Glen Ridge and throughout the country. A newspaper article from 1955 mentioned the 224 red oaks planted along Ridgewood Avenue, "north of Bay" some forty-five years earlier. These may well have been some of the first trees planted after the establishment of the Commission.

The original Glen Ridge Shade Tree Commission was eliminated during the 1960's. According to local

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newspaper accounts, this was done “in an economy move.” The Council assumed direct responsibility for the town’s trees, continuing in that capacity until the second Commission came into being in 2010.

The 1990’s brought a renewed focus on trees. In 1996 the town began “a planned program of tree maintenance,” felling 160 old and diseased specimens and replacing them “one for one.” The Arbor Day Foundation recognized the Borough’s efforts in 1998 by designating Glen Ridge as a member of its “Tree City U.S.A.” program, a designation the town has held ever since.

Now, Shade Tree Commissioners Tim Delorm (Chair), Sally Ellyson (Vice Chair), Elizabeth Baker, Larry Stauffer and Elisabeth Ginsburg continue the work of their predecessors on the original Commission. Borough Arborist Rich Wolowicz has completed a new tree census

and the Commission has drafted a revised ordinance, currently under consideration by the Borough Council. The “600 Tree Campaign” seeks to fund the purchase of new trees to restore and enlarge the tree canopy. To date donations of \$20,465 have been provided through the generous support of the Borough’s civic organizations and private citizens and 80 trees have been planted. A new Shade Tree Conservancy has been formed to help with public relations and outreach and public education about the importance of the Borough’s urban forest

The Commission and the Borough have set the stage for the second century of shade tree stewardship. If you would like to join the Shade Tree Conservancy or make a donation, please e-mail trees@glenridgenj.org or contact the Glen Ridge Shade Tree Commission, PO Box 66, Glen Ridge NJ 07028. **Elizabeth Ginsburg**

Glen Ridge Historical Society Shop

Great gifts for yourself and your friends

Item	Members	Nonmembers
Glen Ridge Centennial Book 1895-1995	\$18.00	\$20.00
Illustrated history of Glen Ridge published in 1996 in connection with its Centennial		
Glen Ridge Centennial DVD 1895-1995	\$13.00	\$15.00
Videos and stills from GR history with Town Historian, Sally Meyer, teaching school children		
Glen Ridge Historic District Brochure	\$1.00	\$2.00
Guide to the historic district with text, map and pictures of historic buildings past and present		
Note Cards of Vintage Post Cards (12)	\$13.00	\$15.00
Scenes of the train station, Moffett Mill, Glen and early gazebo, GR School, GR Hall, Men’s Club		
Prints of 1906 Maps (framed) Price of each of two	\$225.00*	\$250.00*
Map of North end and map of South end showing lots and owners (from 1906 Mueller Atlas)		
Prints of 1906 Maps (unframed) Price of each of two	\$80.00	\$100.00
Map of North end and map of South end showing lots and owners (from 1906 Mueller Atlas)		

To purchase any of these items please send a check with your order to:

Glen Ridge Historical Society
 P.O. Box 164
 Glen Ridge, NJ 07028

*Please contact Sally Meyer about about delivery arrangements for the framed maps: (973) 239-2674



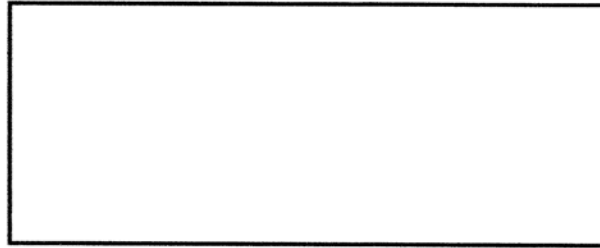
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***HOLIDAY PARTY
DECEMBER 6, 2012***

Current and Coming Events

Continuing through January 6, 2013 – Metropolitan Museum of Art – Chinese Gardens: Pavilions, Studios, Retreats – This exhibition explores the rich interactions between pictorial and garden arts in China across more than one thousand years. In the densely populated urban centers of China, enclosed gardens have long been an integral part of residential and palace architecture, serving as an extension of the living quarters.

The South Street Seaport Museum is now operating under the auspices of the Museum of the City of New York – Its inaugural installation OPENING: A WORK IN PROGRESS presents 16 galleries interweaving the city and the sea, then and now, through photography, video, historic artifacts, and contemporary design. The offerings point toward a future for the museum as a cultural oasis that is as lively, dynamic, and varied as this seaport city itself has always been.

A Rare Louis I. Kahn Work in New York City

In the late 1960s Mayor John Lindsay and Governor Nelson Rockefeller announced a plan to develop Welfare Island into a vibrant residential community. Included with the name change was a plan to have Louis I. Kahn design a memorial to President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the southern tip. The Roosevelt Island project sputtered to a start with New York City facing bankruptcy. Kahn's sudden death in 1974 stalled the memorial project until interest in it was revived by the 2005 exhibition of the project at The Cooper Union. Based on Kahn's surviving drawings, construction began in early 2010. The Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park opened to the public on October 24.