

# WENONAH

## Historical Society Newsletter



February 2002  
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Historical Society of  
Wenonah, NJ

### President's Letter

It was great to see such a wonderful turn out at the January meeting. It seems everyone enjoyed the Antique Road Show. We certainly seem to have some unique hidden treasures in our town! Much thanks to Crossroads Antiques!

The upcoming year promises to bring some interesting and unique programs. This month our program will be about archaeology and digs.

Next month we will be presented with an hour video presentation by South Jersey Ghost Research! Be sure to see their website!

Thank you to all of you who have helped bring these to fruition!

Thank you to all who have volunteered to continue with the various parts of our newsletter that we have all come to appreciate. This month's article on the Military Academy was put together by Eileen Caraker. Be sure to go to the Wenonah School in February to see the display of the Wenonah military Academy Artifacts. This should be up by Valentine's Day.

May the month of February find you all in good health and in the spirit of the season—filled with LOVE!

Happy Valentine's Day!

-Vicki McCall

### A Reader's Submission

The picture of the old Railway Station in the October Newsletter made me think of the little gentleman that used to lower and raise the crossing gates when the trains came through town. He had a little shack on the S.E. corner of the railroad crossing where he could sit and wait for their arrival. At one time I lived at 5 E. Mantua Avenue. It had been my Grandfather Stout's home when he was the country doctor on Wenonah. It was either Sunday or Saturday that the Wenonah Military Academy would have their weekly parade down Mantua Avenue to the corner of the park where they would then turn south to their drill field. It was fun to watch. our phone number in those days was #1. I remember when the phone company changed it to #200 and my Grandfather Stout was upset. All calls went through the switchboard that was located on

the second floor of the building across the street from the station. When we went to Woodbury High School we could take the Wood Bus or the train. The cost was 10¢ on the train or the bus, but you could get 50 trips for \$4.50 on the train if you purchased a block ticket. Therefore, the Wenonah School Board would give us \$4.50 to cover 50 trips to Woodbury. That represented 25 school days. I can remember walking up Clinton to Wenonah Elementary School in the early 30s when there were several homes in those two blocks that were boarded up because they had been lost to the mortgage holder. They didn't get used until the war years brought in people to work in industry in our area. The Woodbury Times cost 3¢. As a paperboy, I got 2/3 of a cent per paper to deliver it. Wenonah was a great place to grow up in.

-Bob Sundt, Tucson, AZ

# WENONAH

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM • 2001-2002

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Amount Paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed  Cash Enclosed

Please bring this form with your payment to any meeting or mail. Thank you!

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Monthly newsletter mailed to your home
- Monthly meetings with informative programs
- Access to various archives and memorabilia
- Network of knowledgeable historians
- Historical field trips

COST: \$10 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

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# The Wenonah Military Academy

1904-1934

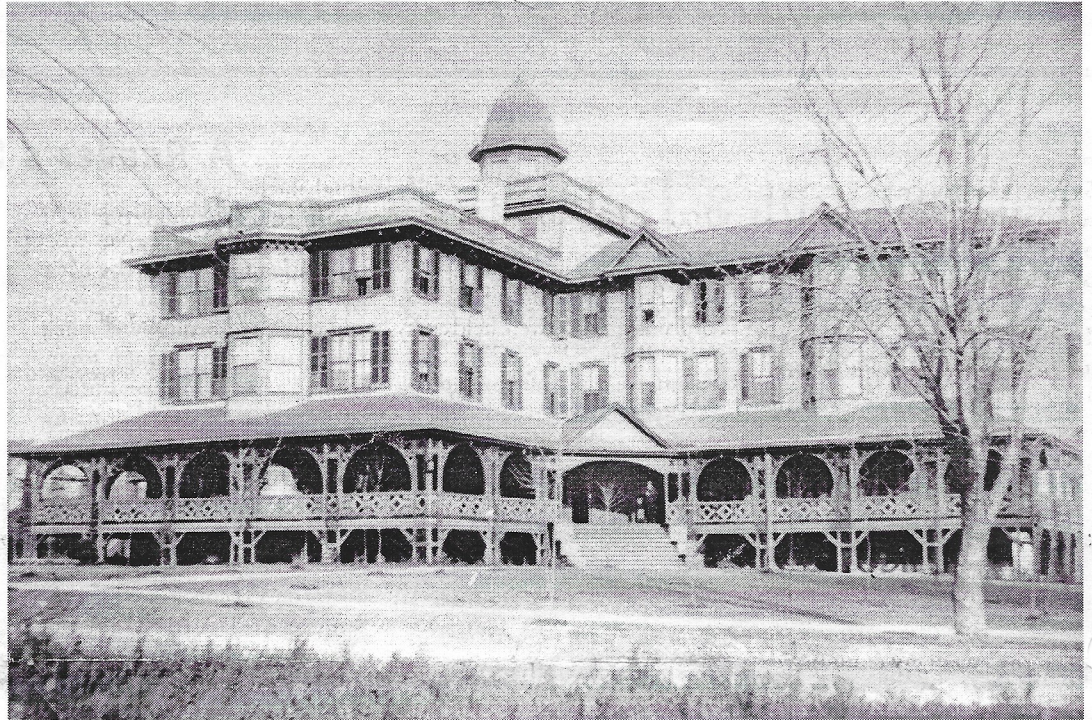
Fifth in a series of articles of some of Wenonah's more notable structures (series started by Milton Webb in February 2001)  
Excerpts from Marge Lentz's book, *A History of Wenonah*

by Eileen Caraker

The Wenonah Military Academy opened its doors September 20, 1904 in what was previously known as The Wenonah Inn. The Academy was situated on the block east of Wenonah Park. The rooms that formerly accommodated hotel guests who were interested in dances and the cuisine now accommodated cadets interested in horsemanship and the highest standard of academic and military education. Hotel rooms were converted to classrooms, dormitories, a library, a chapel and an infirmary. The Academy consisted of a main building, a gymnasium, two cottages, two athletic fields, and stables for the horses. The main building, three stories high, contained the lobby, a large dining hall, a kitchen and bakery, a library, reading room, science hall, an infirmary with six beds, and sixty rooms which made up the dormitory and classrooms.

The first officers of the Wenonah Military Academy were Stephen Greene, president and owner, his son and vice-president Dr. William H. Greene, who was an internationally known scientist, local doctor H. A. Stout, treasurer and Major J. R. Jones secretary. It was Major Jones who originally conceived the idea of a military academy. On the Board of Counsel were the Rev. Raymond H. Gage and Thomas W. Synnott. Captain Percy C. Jones was commander of the cadets.

Although Wenonah was accus-



tomed to social activities at the Wenonah Inn during the summer months, the Wenonah Military Academy kept the town hopping during the school term. The first month the Academy was opened, there were several activities including, a reception and dance for two hundred people, a skating carnival on Warner's Lake with hundreds of lighted lanterns, a minstrel show, a house party and numerous football games. This was in fact the beginning of a social whirl that

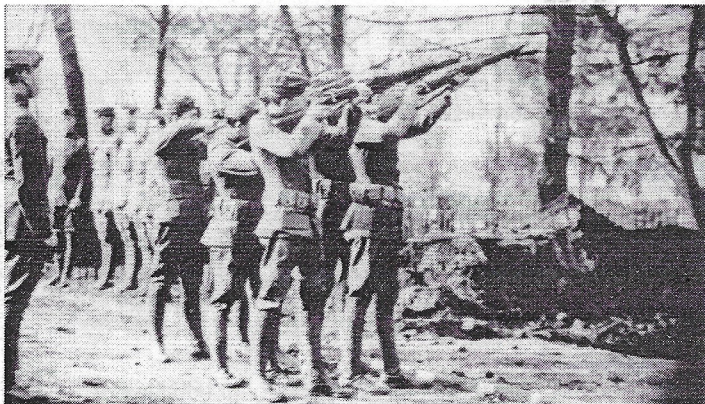
kept Wenonah spinning for the next thirty years. Wenonah residents were invited to band concerts, glee club performances, drama productions, declamation contests and horsemanship exhibitions. Local girls were invited to dances and on Sunday the whole town turned out for the dress parade and drill demonstrations. The big annual events were two gala dances, the Mid-Year Drill and Dance, and the Senior Prom at the end of the year. The Cadets wore full dress uniform with white cotton gloves and the girls wore full-length gowns. Dance etiquette at the time ensured that partners danced with six inches of space between them.

During the Presidency of Dr. Charles H. Lorence, the Wenonah Military Academy reached its peak with of 200 cadets who came from as far away as California and Cuba. The average student enrollment was 125 cadets. Cadets enrolled in the classical, Latin-scientific, or English-commercial courses. Military science included instruction

in rifle practice, infantry drills, horsemanship and military discipline. Horsemanship instruction was \$100 extra; this included the rental of the horse.

In its advertising the Wenonah Military Academy emphasized the following: "Established as its guiding principle the formation of moral character, the teaching of respect for authority and the adherence to the fundamentals of a sound academic and business education". It went on to say "Wenonah has a quiet seclusion and is sufficiently removed from the dangerous enticements of the city and yet is within easy reach of the city streets on the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad. Wenonah is an entirely residential town with no factories. It has its own entirely independent sanitary drainage system. The sale of intoxicants within a mile of the Academy is absolutely prohibited by law and the town has a marked freedom from sickness and disease."

In 1913 the annual charges of \$600 include: tuition, board, heat,

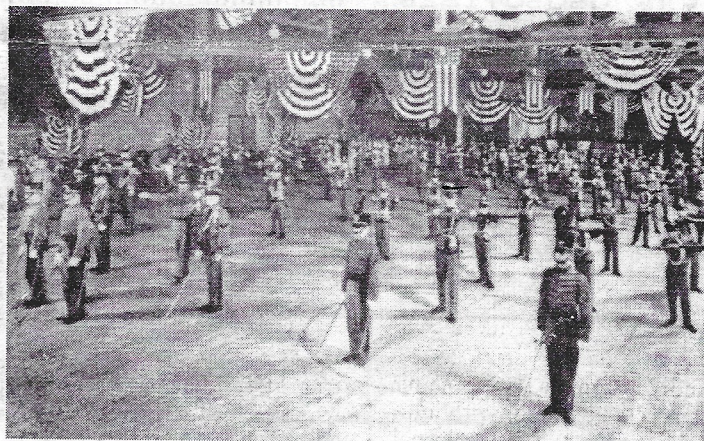




light, twelve pieces of laundry and mending of underclothing. Tuition doubled during the years while adding to its services, table lined, pressing and use of firearms. However, this tuition did not include the \$250 cost for a uniform. The cadet wore a uniform of gray with a white belt and white crisscross straps both in front and back of the jacket and a chinstrap held the hat. The officers' full dress uniform included a sword, sash and a shako. The uniforms alternated between the khaki of the U.S. Army and the gray of West Point Academy. After the 1920's the uniforms stayed the same as the U.S. Army consisting of khaki puttees, high-laced shoes, jackets that buttoned at the neck, and overseas caps (a tall, neat cap worn by French soldiers). By 1916 the Academy announced that there is "now a waiting list: every available space is filled." Military training was under ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) regulations. Lessons were taught in accordance with U.S. Army Infantry Drill Regulations. All formations were in a military manner, cadets were expected to stand erect at all time and salute their officers. Rooms were inspected every day for dust or dirt, and properly made beds. The U.S. government assigned guns, ammunition, and equipment to the cadets, which had to be returned at the end of the year. To ensure that the cadets were on their toes an inspection of rifles, bayonets, uniforms and shoes was performed every week, and dirty equipment earned extra duty for the offending cadet. Extra duty consisted of walking guard duty at 128 steps per minute in the cadet's spare time, polishing the Civil War cannons at the campus entrance, or walking around the track in the athletic field with rifle in hand. Smoking was considered the worst offence; it earned fifty hours of extra duty, and a two-week suspension.

### A Day in the Life of a Wenonah Military Academy Cadet

- 6:00 a.m. Reveille was called, signaling rising of the calisthenics. Breakfast in the dining hall
  - 8:00 a.m. Classes start until 2:00 p.m.
  - 2:00-4:00 p.m. Drills took place in the park or in the field
  - 4:00 p.m. Sports Practice
- Formal assemblies were held every evening before dinner. The cadets assembled in front of the Academy, and the band played and marched in parade formation for Retreat-the lowering of the flag.
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner in the Mess Hall
  - 7:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m. Cadets studied in their quarters



- 9:00-9:30 p.m. Cadets were allowed to socialize
  - 9:30 p.m. Call to the quarters preparation for bed
  - 10:00 p.m. Final room check Taps sounded to signal the end of the day
- Academics were rated in four classifications, distinguished, Honor, Profaning, and Unclassified. Classes were posted quarterly, and decorations were awarded. The Honor role allowed for certain privileges such as reporting late on Saturday night. The classes were small, with eight to twelve students. Teachers were expected to stay close to their

students, each faculty member had his own group, and they lived with their group and ate in the mess hall. The school motto was "Send us your boys and we will return to you the man". The Academy focused high intellectual achievement, but with equal consideration to the development of a sound body and superior ideas.

The military discipline soon earned the Academy the name of "The West Point of South Jersey" and athletics brought fame to the school. Stephen Greene's athletic field boasted a grandstand that held 500 spectators. Cadets ran a quarter-mile cinder track, played football with prep schools like Malvern, Seton Hall and Pennington, played

baseball and practiced horsemanship and military tactics. A twelve-acre field along Woodbury-Glassboro Road was used for polo and lacrosse. Golf was played in the Oak Valley Country Club or, originally Altwald Golf Links, which was situated in a wooded area off Ogden Road. The word "ogden" is derived from the Swedish word meaning "valley of the oaks."

During the summer the polo ponies were taken to the Pocono area where Camp Wenonah was established for a number of years. On the Wenonah polo field one polo team defeated a West Point team. Many

graduating cadets gained recognition on college teams and Herbert J. Pennock, who became a major leagues pitcher, is named in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y.

In addition to the Wenonah Inn, the Military Academy occupied the Charles H. Lorence Cottage which housed senior cadets, currently known as 11 S. Clinton Ave and owned by Joe and Diane Magarelli. The Clayton A. Snyder Cottage which housed junior cadets is located on the corner of Mantua and Clinton Avenues. A drill hall was built behind the Academy along Cherry Street and it was claimed to have the largest floor space of any gymnasium in South Jersey. It was large enough to drill an entire battalion, and of course, to accommodate dances attended by as many as six hundred people. A stone wall was added fronting the Academy and in 1916. The building formerly housing Wenonah Inn's bowling alley was converted to a science laboratory.

At the start of the 1935 school year Dr. Charles H. Lorence announced the Wenonah Military Academy would close "because of economic reasons." The closing of the Wenonah Military Academy ended an era. The main building of the Academy was demolished in 1938 leaving its gray stonewall to mark its former location. The Academy's drill hall was declared unsafe and it along with the Cedar field grandstand was demolished. The fabric of Wenonah had been enriched by the presence of this great academy. As dogwood trees in the park were maturing into full grown beautiful trees, so was the Borough maturing. Although the Academy was gone, never to return again, Wenonah had gained a rich legacy from the Academy along with new residents and a strong sense of patriotism.



# February Meeting

Friday, February 8, 2002 • 7:30pm  
Wenonah Community Center (Train Station)



Our February meeting will be a program of interest about archaeology and archaeological digs. For a more detailed description of the program, please contact Jane Ramsay.

## March's meeting

Come next month to see an hour-long video presentation by South Jersey Ghost Research. To find out about SJGR, visit their web site at [www.sjgr.org](http://www.sjgr.org)

## How to Contact Us

**Mail:** WHS · P.O. Box 32 · Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032  
**E-mail:** temporarily unavailable due to the demise of @home

## THE MISSION OF THE WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The objectives of this Society shall be:

1. To acquire and preserve historic documents, records, artifacts and memorabilia of the Borough of Wenonah.
2. To locate and acquire a suitable place for the storage and display of such materials.
3. To encourage the protection and preservation of historical landmarks and points of interest within the Borough of Wenonah.
4. To encourage historical and genealogical research, and publication of its results.
5. To encourage interest in history generally, and in Wenonah history in particular, among the youth of Wenonah.
6. To make all information and acquisitions of the Society available to the public.

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