

Wenonah Historical Society

PO Box 32
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090-0032

Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 6 October 2004

RESIGNATION OF FORMER PRESIDENT ROCCO DOTO

Dear Members,

As most of you know I have enjoyed being the President of this organization for the last 18 months. I enjoyed every minute of it and I am confident that we accomplished many things together. One of the most important accomplishments was achieving a sense of status with the Mayor and Town Council, as an important and vital organization in our Town. Nothing pleases me more than the recognition of the Wenonah Historical Society as the authority on historical events, documentation and artifacts of Wenonah's past.

Most importantly the sense of being the "unofficial curator" of the Town Treasure, the Train Depot.

I no longer feel that I can achieve my ambition of creating the Museum in our Historical Train Station and lead our Organization. In no way is my decision based on any negative WHS event. It is based on personal issues that include a new business, my well-being, and my family. I will continue to be a cheerleader and supporter for the WHS but cannot serve as President or in any other officer or trustee position.

According to our Bylaws the Vice President shall in the absence of the President have all the Powers and prerogatives of the President.

New elections are to be held in January with a nominating committee chosen in November.

OCTOBER 8TH PROGRAM

The October meeting of the Society will be held starting at 7:30 p.m. in the train station community center at Mantua Avenue at the railroad tracks.

WHS OFFICERS 2004

| | |
|------------|-------------------|
| Vice Pres. | Jack Sheppard Sr. |
| Secretary | Eileen Caraker |
| Treasurer | Carol Wiltsee |
| Corr. Sec. | Betty MacLeod |
| Trustee | Vicki McCall |
| Trustee | Macy Pedersen |
| Trustee | Lucy Schuiz |

Meetings second Friday of the month at the Wenonah Community Center except June, July and August

Following a brief business meeting we will be entertained by Wenonah resident Arnold Karp. Arnold is a Master Sergeant in the NJ National Guard serving in the 177th fighter wing.

He will present a slide program relating to the Civil War entitled "Three Days that Changed a Nation". Light refreshments will be provided.

Please bring or send your dues, which are \$15.00 per year. For information call (856) 468-6981.

HISTORICAL AFGHANS

The Wenonah Fire Company Auxiliary has asked us to mention that Wenonah Coverlets are available again this year. These 50 X 70 inch Afghans of red, white & blue Jacquard depict historical Wenonah buildings and scenes.

The price for them is \$50.00 and they make lovely Christmas gifts. Order forms will be available at this meeting. For more information call (856) 468-5345.

HISTORICAL TIDBIT

The Myers, Don and Cecelia and their daughters have left Wenonah for a new home out West. Those of you who knew them were aware they lived, as we say in Wenonah, in the historic "Peddle House" at the corner of Mantua and N. Clinton Aves.

The handsome dwelling was actually built by Mr. J. Frank Shull, one of the original members of the first formal Wenonah government established April 10, 1883. He served for two years. Apparently bad feelings occurred between the Commission members and Mr. Shull when Shull constructed a "small, cheap and undesirable building" east of the railroad tracks. This resulted in a Commission Resolution restricting the construction of buildings under \$2,000 east of the railroad and \$1,000 west of the railroad. The Shull residence was eventually occupied by Harry G. Peddle, a relative, who served on Borough Council from 1899 through 1910.

The Wenonah Military Academy, a Brief History

By Linda Haegele

During the 1920's, military academies were held in high esteem as an institution of learning. Even though World War I ended during 1918, patriotism still ran high in the country, and as a result, military academies flourished (Jay Scott, personal communication, March 7, 1989). One academy in particular was a roaring success, as demonstrated by the loyalty and love its alumni hold for it; namely the Wenonah Military Academy (WMA).

Fortunately, some of the former cadets of the WMA were willing to share some memories they have of life at the Academy. Edward Bayuk, Richard S. Beebe, Edgar W. Holton, and Robert Q. Hinckle attended the Academy during the early 1920's, and Percy Wise, Jay Scott and Joseph A. DiLemmo were students during the later 1920's. Even the wife of one of the teachers, Kathryn Knight, supplied invaluable information on life at the Academy. They each provided a deep insight into the loyalty and affection that developed there, as a result of the rural surroundings, the military training, the faculty and schooling, sports events and the various social activities in which the cadets vigorously participated.

The WMA opened its doors in 1904, and grew in popularity until, due to the Depression, it was forced to close in 1935. It was founded by Stephen Greene, a wealthy printer from Philadelphia who, while driving through Wenonah, saw the potential in the old Wenonah Inn for a military academy (Richard S. Beebe, personal communication, March 31, 1989). In the early 1900's, Wenonah was a small town with only one thousand people, according to Jay Scott (1989). He says that the town was surrounded on all sides by woods. Warner's Lake, used for swimming and skating, added to the peaceful, secluded setting (1989). To Stephen t Greene, it was the perfect place for a military academy (Beebe, 1989).

The Academy was situated on the block opposite Wenonah Park. It consisted of a main building, gymnasium, two cottages, two athletic fields, and stables for their horses. The main building, three stories high, contained the lobby, a large dining hall, a kitchen and bakery, a library and reading room, the Science Hall, an infirmary

with six beds, and sixty rooms which made up the dormitory section and classrooms (Joseph A. DiLemmo, personal communication, February 22, 1989). Next to the main building was the gymnasium, which was considered to be the largest gymnasium of a New Jersey school at that time (Quigley, 1986). This building was used as a drill hall, shooting range, during Commencement exercises at year end, and for the Mid-Year Drill and Spring Dance (DiLemmo, 1989). The two cottages, Charles H. Lorence cottage and the Clayton A. Snyder cottage were used by the junior and senior class, and officers of the class (O'Neill, 1963). Situated nearby was a five acre athletic field, which was used for football, baseball and track, and a twelve acre field used for lacross and polo (Pituk, 1976).

The cadets who attended the WMA were, for the most part, from wealthy families (Kathryn Knight, personal communication, February 13, 1989). They came from Delaware, Pennsylvania, NY, Ohio, NJ, and from as far away as South America, Mexico, and Puerto Rico (Scott, 1989). They comprised grades five through twelve, with the junior grades (five through eight) kept separate from the older boys (Hansen, 1954). The student body enrollment averaged about 125 students during the peak years of the Academy (Scott, 1989).

Sources for this article;

Linda Haegele, a Gloucester County College student wrote this piece in 1989 as a research paper with help from members of the Academy Alumni Association.

According to Mr. Joe DiLemmo, then President of the Association, "Everyone was most cooperative and as a result she received an A+ for a grade."

The "Junior House" (S.W Cor. Marion and Mantua Aves.) photo on the next page was contributed by relatives of former Wenonah resident Clifford S. Greenig who was a cadet at the Wenonah Military Academy during the final class in 1934.

A military atmosphere pervaded every aspect of life at the Academy. Military training was under ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) regulations, and under the supervision of a U.S. Army Officer (Edgar W. Hoiton, personal communication, March 2, 1989). It was taught in accordance with the U.S. Army Infantry Drill Regulations (Beebe, 1989). According to Edward Bayuk (Personal communication, 1989), "all formations were in a military manner," and cadets were expected to stand erect at all times, and salute their officers. "Proper arrangement of all articles" were also required, says Mr. Bayuk. Rooms were inspected every day for dust and dirt, and properly made beds (1989). The U.S. Army assigned guns, ammunition, and equipment to the cadets, which had to be returned at the end of the school year (Beebe 1989).

Each cadet was therefore responsible for the maintenance of his equipment (1989). 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 (Bayuk, 1989).

Extra duty consisted of walking guard duty at 128 steps per minute in the cadet's spare time (Scott, 1989), polishing the Civil War cannons at the campus entrance (Bayuk, 1989), or walking around the track in the athletic field with rifle in hand (1989). Several violations earned extra duty in addition to dirty equipment; insubordination, visiting friend's rooms without permission, fighting, and smoking in your room (1989). Smoking was considered the worst offense; it earned fifty hours of extra duty, and a two week suspension (1989).

Clothing was also regulated by military rules. The cadets wore uniforms that alternated between the khaki of the U.S. Army, and the grey of West Point Academy, until the late 1920's (DiLemmo, 1989, Bayuk, 1989). After that, the uniforms stayed the same as the ones that the U.S. Army wore in WWI; khaki puttees, high laced shoes, jackets that buttoned at the neck, and overseas caps (a tall, neat cap worn by French soldiers)" (Scott, 1989).

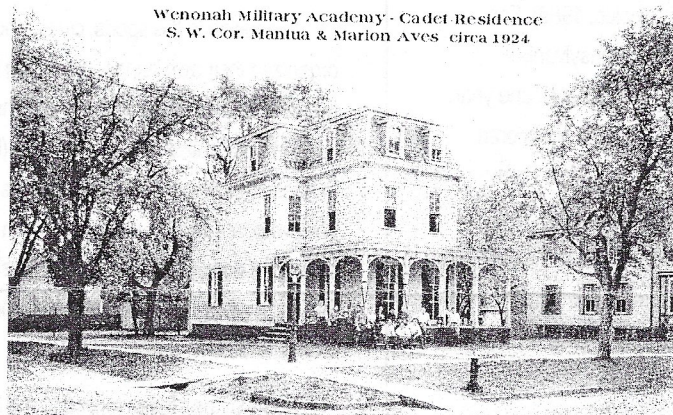
A typical day for the cadets was militarily structured from morning to night. At 6:00 am, reveille was called, signaling raising of the flag and setting up exercises (Beebe, 1989). Exercises consisted of calisthenics, which developed muscles and lungs, and the Butt's Manual, which developed shoulders and back muscles (The Sabre, 1922). After exercises, cadets dressed for breakfast and ate in the dining hall (Percy Wise, personal communication, April 3, 1989).

Classes started at 8:00 am, with a twenty-five word spelling test (Bayuk, 1989), and finished at around 2:00. From 2:00 until 4:00, drills took place out in the park or in the field, practicing field maneuvers (Wise, 1989). At 4:00, some of the cadets had sports practice (1989), while the other cadets were allowed to socialize

around the local drug store, or on the Academy steps (Beebe, 1989).

Formal assemblies were held every evening before dinner (Scott, 1989). According to Bayuk, "the cadets assembled in front of the Academy, and with the band playing, marched in parade formation for Retreat- the lowering of the flag" (1989).

Dinner, at 6:00, was held in the Mess Hall (Beebe, 1989). After dinner, until 9:00 pm, cadets studied in their quarters (1989). From 9-9:30, cadets who had permission from their parents were allowed to go to the smoking room (1989). At 9:30, there was a call to quarters, when the cadets prepared for bed (1989). Final room check was called at 10:00, and taps was sounded to signal the end of the day (1989).



This strict military regimentation at the academy extended into the scholastic atmosphere. The curriculum was also strictly regimented, as the "Secretary of War directed that the WMA" was permitted "to devote 1 ½ hours daily in instruction in branches not devoted to the military department of the Academy"

(War Department, Adjutant General's Office, KMA Washington, D.C., Letter to WMA, February 24, 1913).

Classes were small, with only eight to twelve students in each class (Wise, 1989). The former cadets considered the faculty excellent. Teachers were expected to stay close to the cadets; for example, "each faculty member had his own group of boys. Officers lived with his group, and ate in the Mess Hall with his group" (Pituk, 1976). During study hours, the faculty members were close at hand for any help that the students might need (Beebe, 1989).

The cadets did not receive letter grades (Pituk, 1976). Instead they were divided into four classifications (1976). These classifications, Distinguished, Honor, Proficient, and Unclassified, were based on the cadets averages in conduct and scholastics, with added emphasis on Military Science and Tactics (The Sabre, 1922). Grades were posted quarterly and decorations awarded, to be worn only while the class standing was maintained (1922).

In addition to decorations, cadets maintaining a B average with no infractions were placed on the Honor Roll, which allowed them certain privileges, including the privilege of reporting in late on Saturday night (Bayuk, 1989).

In addition to maintaining the full, rigidly structured day of military drills and classes, the cadets of the WMA found time for extracurricular activities, such as sports, social events, and clubs. For instance, sporting events were essential to the boys, and they excelled in more than their share. WMA was referred to as the West Point of New Jersey, because of their consistently superior polo team (Robert Q. Hinckle, personal communication, 1989). In fact, in 1927 the WMA polo team traveled to West Point to play their freshman team, and won (Wise, 1989)! The WMA played other preparatory schools and some college freshman teams in baseball, basketball, and football, as well (Hinckle, 1989). For instance, in 1923, they won the University of Pennsylvania Scholastic Basketball Tournament (Bayuk, 1989). Also, "one year, the football team was undefeated and untied. It was not scored upon until the final season game against National State Farm School, who blocked a kick behind a goal" (Scott, 1989). And, on November 22, 1930, President Herbert Hoover met the cadets at a White House Reception for the Football team in Washington, D.C. Naturally, there were many first place banners hanging on the assembly room walls at the WMA (Beebe, 1989).

Social events were also greeted with enthusiasm by the cadets. There was an informal dance in the gym every Friday night, with music provided by an orchestra made up of cadets (Beebe, 1989). These dances were attended by girls from Wenonah and surrounding towns (1989). But the big events were the two gala dances - the Mid-Year Drill and Dance, and the Senior Prom at the end of the year. Cadets spent a week cleaning, dusting, shining, and decorating the gym with real trees and plants (Hoiton, 1989), and draping the room with flags. They wore white cotton gloves with their uniforms (Bayuk, 1989), and the girls wore floor length formal gowns (Knight, 1989). Propriety ensured that partners danced with at least six inches between them (Bayuk, 1989). There was no charge for these galas, but the guests had to be invited by a cadet to attend (1989).

To start the affair, the gymnasium doors, which took up an entire wall, were fully opened (Knight, 1989). It was an impressive sight, as the Cadet Drill Team then came out onto the floor and went through their drill, with the sounds of gun butts resounding as

they hit the floor when the cadets came to attention (Scott, 1989). For the Senior Prom, the final event was "always a military parade or exhibition, or sometimes a sham battle on the athletic field" (Hinckle, 1989).

Cadets also actively participated in several clubs at the Academy, such as the Dramatic Society, the Adelpic Literary Society, and the Radio Club which worked on the theory and building of radio receiving sets (The Sabre, June, 1923). Another club, the Sabre Club, put on plays, such as "Nothing But the Truth" (Scott, 1989), "That's That", a musical comedy, and even staged a scene with cadets performing a Tango (1989). The cadets also published their own yearbook, The Sabre, complete with a Class Poem, Class Prophecy, Last Will and Testament, Y's Cracks (humor), and highlights of the year's sporting events.

In addition to the sports, clubs, and dances, the cadets organized their own bands. According to a letter by Win Shewell, two cadets, Minor McGeorge and Henry LeCour, organized a jazz band in 1932 called the "Wenonians" (May 13, 1974, private letter to anonymous person). This band was made up of eight talented boys who, amazingly, played eighteen instruments; two trombones, a baritone horn, piano, two trumpets, slide cornet, two clarinets, three alto saxophones, tenor sax, C-melody sax, musette, piccolo, drums, and bass horn (1974).

Some of the stories related to me by former cadets help to illustrate the camaraderie of the boys at the WMA. For example, Edward Bayuk said that the "cadets living on the second floor would climb out through their window, and walk along the roof to visit other cadets" thereby risking disciplinary action. Mr. Bayuk explained that it wasn't really dangerous but that it was considered adventurous by the boys (1989). Also, Richard S. Beebe said that some of the cadets who wanted to sneak a cigarette in their rooms would pry up the wood planks in the floor, to provide a draft that would dissipate the smoke (1989). According to Beebe, cadets managed to keep this secret from their superiors, and so didn't get caught very often (1989).

The cadets also liked to band together to pull pranks on their teachers and each other. For example, Robert Q. Hinckle told of the time that Captain Gulden, the English teacher, found his false teeth posted on the bulletin board (1989). Another time, at night after the lights were out, one of the boys closed the two gates of the driveway after one of the teachers drove into town (1989).

When the unsuspecting teacher "returned, he made a wide sweep to come through the stone pillars" on either side of the driveway, and was surprised "when the head lights picked up the black iron gates. It left quite an impression on his front bumper" (1989).

Even the rigidity of the Military Drills wasn't immune to the imagination of the cadets. The Military Drills were a formal display, held at graduation, and judged by a Marine Officer from Philadelphia (Scott, 1989). One year, Captain Swartz of South America was in charge of the drill (1989). That year, one of Capt. Swartz's cadets always went right when he was supposed to go left, and went left when the order was to go right. For the drill, the captain locked this cadet in his room, and told the rest of his group, "We're now going to win!", and they did (1989)!

The cadets of the WMA were close knit, motivated, highly competitive, active, and imaginative. How did the Academy achieve these goals in its student body? The emblem associated with the Academy, "Vincit Qui Se Vincit," which means "He conquers, who conquers self" (Beebe, 1989) gives an idea of the type of school this was. The school gave its cadets not only an excellent education in scholastics, but also an education in themselves. The school motto "Send us the boy and we will return to you the man" (Beebe, 1989) illustrates that one of the primary motives of the school encompassed the education of the whole boy. It pushed them to their limits, both physically and mentally. In 1921, when Dr. Charles H. Lorence became president of the Academy, he expressed that "the purpose of education was to teach the pupil how to live" (O'Neill, 1963). The "Academy placed great emphasis on training for high intellectual achievement, but with equal consideration to the development of a sound body and superior ideals" (1963).

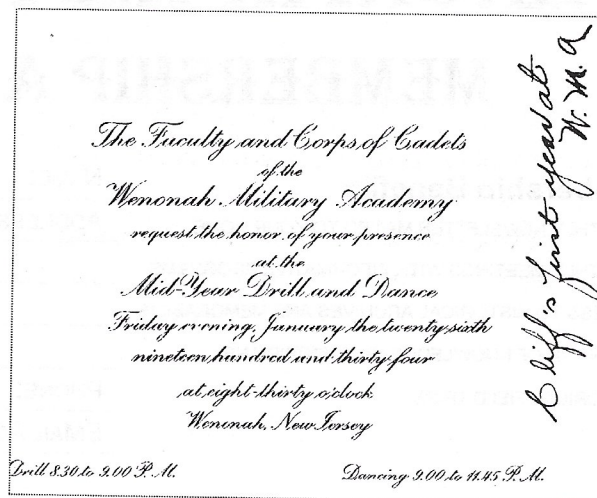
The WMA was successful in achieving these ideals, in that all aspects of life at the Academy seemed to encourage development of high physical and mental standards. For example, the Academy being in a secluded community, and the typically busy day, left no room for socializing outside of the Academy. As a result, the cadets turned to each other for friendship, and healthy competition. Further, the military training, and the military form of self-government also helped the cadets develop a respect for each other, along with authority figures. In addition to learning Math, Science and English, the boys learned the value of discipline, obedience, leadership, and judgment (Beebe, 1989). Also, the

highly respected faculty and grading system made the cadets competitive, yet respectful of each other. Last, the high activity level in sports, clubs, and social activities, which indicates the strong bonds felt by the cadets for each other, was effective in developing high standards.

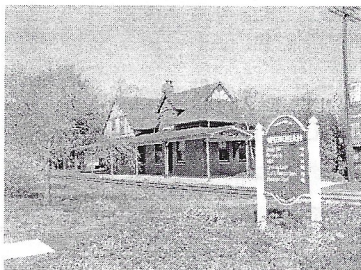
After graduating, many cadets went on to various universities (Bayuk, 1989, Scott, 1989). Some cadets were inducted into the U.S. Army, where they excelled as Commissioned Officers (DiLemmo, 1989). Other cadets went on to become influential, successful businessmen (Bayuk, 1989).

Life at the Academy clearly made a profound impact on the cadets' lives, and successfully prepared them for their place in society.

All that is left of this fine institution is a part of the stone wall that once surrounded the campus, and the vivid memories that the former cadets cherish of their days at the Academy. Since 1954, when the Wenonah Military Academy Alumni Association first met to honor Captain Lammert on his 70th birthday, some of the former cadets have met to reminisce about those days, and to catch up on the events going on in their lives now. They have never missed a year, and "although the troops are thinning, there is always an enthusiastic turn-out" (DiLemmo, 1989). These men are proud to have attended the Wenonah Military Academy and although the buildings are long gone, the institution continues to live on in their hearts and minds.



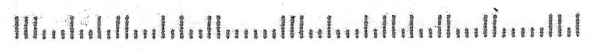
Apparently Cliff Greenig's first year at WMA was his last as the institution closed at the end of the year, never to reopen.



Wenonah Historical Society
PO Box 32
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090

Ralph & Rachel Knisell
100 W. Mantua Ave.
Wenonah, NJ 08090

08090+1829 06



WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2004

Membership Benefits

- MONTHLY NEWSLETTER MAILED TO YOUR HOME
- MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH INFORMATIVE PROGRAMS
- ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AND MEMORABILIA
- NETWORK OF KNOWLEDGEABLE HISTORIANS
- HISTORICAL FIELD TRIPS

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

AMOUNT PAID \$ CHECK _____ CASH _____

BRING FORM AND PAYMENT TO MEETING, OR MAIL. THANK YOU
WHS PO Box 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR
