

# Newsletter

Volume 8 Issue 6 September, 2010

## GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT BARBARA CAPELLI

Hello All,

This month's meeting is our "Meet and Greet Return from Summer Soiree". Friday, September 10th at 7:30 pm. Please be sure to bring a friend who may be interested in a membership.

For many years members brought appetizers and/or beverages to the McCall's porch. This year we will meet at the Train Station Community Center where we can enjoy the outside train platform, weather permitting and still have the comforts of the indoors. Huge thanks go to Vicki and Lou McCall for so graciously hosting our September porch party for those many years.

We are asking members to bring a favorite side dish, snack, appetizer or beverage for all to share. We also are hoping to have photos of past displays from Betty Rose, Frank Eggert's House Plaque book, and Jack's photos and postcards. And as usual, Historical Society merchandise for sale.

Our goals for this season include as always increasing our membership, and providing thoughtful, informative, and historically relevant Wenonah programs. For instance, in our October meeting we will have a presentation from the Harts, Dominys, and Cowles about the Fire Company.

October is Fire Prevention month and we are sure to enjoy a historically interesting program by former and current Fire Company members.

We continue to work on archiving our memorabilia, photos, maps, and writings. If you would like to volunteer please contact Barb Capelli (856 364 1306) or Vicki McCall (856 468 9555).

Thank you.

## WHS OFFICERS 2010

President	Barbara Capelli
Vice President.	Charles Horan
Secretary	Vicki McCall
Treasurer	Carol Wiltsee
Trustee	Betty MacLeod
Trustee	Louis McCall

Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at the Community Center (Train Station) except June, July and August

## WENONAH MUSEUM

Progress on the Museum during the summer of 2010 can best be described as slow, to stopped. However this is to be expected as the Military Academy artifacts are relatively easy to catalog and stow, while photos, written materials, historic documents and such are much more difficult.

Member and author Marjorie Lentz has contributed much time and talent assisting with the narrative for the "Origins of Wenonah" slide

show. When this is completed a slide presentation of Wenonah history can be made with substantial information for each slide, some of which has come from Marjorie's files and hasn't been seen or heard before.

Hopefully now that fall is here there will be more time for this worthwhile project.

## WENONAH HISTORICAL MUSINGS

Shown below is the actual cover design for Wenonah's Fourth of July program for the year 1910.



An enigma encountered while researching and cataloging our program collection is that although we have the program for the first celebration in 1872, we have none going forward until 1897 and then another gap until 1909. Should anyone have any of those please let us add them to the collection or at least make a copy.

Jack C. Sheppard Sr.

GROWING UP IN "LITTLEGRANGE"  
RECOLLECTIONS OF EDITH URSULA FARR

This is the last part of a three part series describing what it was like being a child of Edward Lincoln Farr and living in the family mansion while growing up in Wenonah. These are remembrances of Farr daughter Edith (1861 – 1924) which she related to her daughter Candace Elizabeth who married Dr. William Ridington in 1936.

The first episode of the series in the April news-letter described the layout of Littlegrange and what some of the rooms, especially the cellar were like.

In the second part she described what life around the holidays, especially Christmas.

In this final part of her recollections she describes the physical amenities of Littlegrange, both inside and outside in exquisite detail.

Robin and Maurie, close in age, played many games together. But I was quite awed, as a child, by my cousin Maurie, five years older than I, who seemed so terribly grown up and self-assured and who cut quite a figure with her blonde hair.

I coveted everything she owned. I remember coloring happily in my own book, one with large pictures of balls and toys and animals, until I saw her book, one with fairies and elves and stars. I lost all interest in my own book and instead, dreamed of one like hers.

Maurie has always been a great story teller, and even when she was a child, she used to spin out endless engaging tales for Robin and me,

illustrating them by drawing on a magic slate, the kind you can instantly erase with a flick of the plastic page. Characters appeared before our eyes while Maurie created adventure after adventure for them. Today, Maurie continues to write, and has succeeded in publishing stories while also maintaining a journal hundreds of pages long by now.

Later, Maurie visited Littlegrange with a "grownup" pocketbook which dominated all my thinking. I was probably not yet ten, but I felt grownup enough to have such a pocketbook. My wishes were fulfilled when my parents let me choose such a pocketbook, a red shoulder bag

which I prized and can still picture perfectly today.

Other outdoor games at Littlegrange included croquet and badminton. I'm glad I can lay claim to having participated in such an old fashioned and wonderfully Jamesian game as croquet.

Remembering the faded colors of the

worn balls and mallets, and the feel of the wickets, I half confuse myself with Isabel Archer or some other turn of the century figure. But play croquet we did, on ground tunneled by moles, so that I could imagine the cute furry creatures beneath me as I played. I don't remember the adults playing much with us, though they probably played sometimes. Badminton was even more fun, and in later years, I continued to play badminton with my friend Anna Miller in Westminster.

The equipment for all these games and more I never played, like tennis, waited for us in the hall closet which held its own special musty sporty



odor. This closet was situated near one of the side porches, "by which one could reach the back garden where we held Easter egg hunts. All the porches were magnificent deep stone structures from which one could hole up in a wicker chair or, more frequently, perch on the stone sides, miniature walls, really, and survey the world. We used to walk around the house as far as we could on those stone walls, inching carefully around the pillars. Often, the family sat on the front porch, and there are pictures of us there: Mother, in a striped seersucker skirt, flanked "by Jeanie and me, sucking our thumbs; Mumph with John, Maurie's brother; Aunt Jeanie, grinning; me, with a corsage pinned to my dress for my tenth birthday later on. Those were casual, pleasant moments.

Toward the front of the house was a stone gazebo, the "summer house", where I especially loved to sit. It was surrounded by enormous evergreen trees, which particularly attracted me. It was there I think I began to be consciously aware of trees' beauty, though I'm not sure from this vantage point how strong that consciousness was. I used to climb part way up one or two, but was content mostly to touch them and gaze upward into them as I stood below and within, sheltered in their circle of branches which reached the ground and formed a cozy room around me. Sometimes I fantasized about what it would be like to live there under the branches. That lawn, and the lawn at Bryn Mawr, were my favorites in all the world, and I have yet to find another lawn which measures up.

The Littlegrange lawn and facade were majestic and prominent. I wonder now, with all the valuable items inside the house, did the Farrs worry much about robbery? They were, indeed, robbed once when my mother was six, on the night before her sister Jeanie was born. In the morning, it was discovered that all the flat silverware had been stolen, along, with some large cut glass bowls which were found later, discarded. My mother and Aunt Dol were most astonished, however, to learn the thieves had dumped all the

sugar from the silver sugar bowls. The two girls reasoned that if they were thieves, they would have stolen the sugar, a more valuable item in their minds, and in point of fact, a rationed item too in 1918.

Littlegrange days are far from my daily milieu, and have been for years and years—since I was ten, in fact. It amazes me how deeply the place touched me, in a mythical way. I guess the house and my associations with it are mythical to me, a symbol of golden rich days and of imagination, because everything there was so spacious, so unbounded. I knew it all was, even at the time, and so didn't take it entirely for granted, although I was only a child. Possibly, too, because my access to the place was cut off so abruptly, I was left with a sense of mystery and irreparable loss. It was as though Littlegrange had disappeared. Thus, I began to dream that I'd miraculously found it again, and with rejoicing and wonder, wandered its halls and rooms again. Sometimes, I dreamed of other large houses, in which I discovered more and more rooms, reminiscent of Littlegrange, or I'd dream that our Westminster house, or the one I was currently living in, was physically connected to Littlegrange or to rooms like its rooms. As recently as last year, 1983, I dreamed that Jack and I moved to Princeton, where he had, in reality, applied for a job, and settled into our house. In the dream, I awoke next morning to look out the back window and discover that Littlegrange lay right next door, quiet, majestic, and unchanged, to keep us company. I was overjoyed and felt I'd come home again. In truth, Littlegrange and all it represents will remain forever unchanged for me, a little like figures on Keats' Grecian urn, unconsummated but intact in the precious care of my memory.

PLEASE NOTE: Many thanks to Vicki and Lou McCall who have spent a great deal of time and effort seeking out and recording the history of their home known as Littlegrange. By doing so they have preserved a grand part of Wenonah history.

J. Sheppard Sr



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PO Box 32  
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090

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# WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2010

### Membership Benefits

- MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
- MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH INTERESTING PROGRAMS
- ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AND MEMORABILIA
- INFORMATION BY KNOWLEDGEABLE WENONAHIANs

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

RECEIVE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL: YES OR NO

AMOUNT PAID \$ \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK \_\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_\_

BRING FORM AND PAYMENT TO MEETING, OR MAIL. THANK YOU

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

WHS PO BOX 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090

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