

2022-2023 WHS OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

President, Charles Horan
Vice-President, Nora Taylor
Secretary, Jennie McQuaide
Treasurer, Scott Barnes
Trustee, Lou McCall
Trustee, Paul Lader

Message from WHS President

Hello all. Although our February meeting was virtual, we are optimistic that the WHS March 11th meeting will be "in person." Talk about cabin fever!

Our Holiday dinner in early December was a great success. There are many new people in town and some have already attended WHS events. This bodes well for our organization.

Be well friends and I hope to see you soon.

Best,
Charlie Horan
President, WHS

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

- ◆ March 11, 2022 - *G. G. Green's Opera House presented by Gloucester County Historical Society*
- ◆ April 8, 2022 - *History of Wenonah Elementary School presented by Lou McCall*
- ◆ May 13, 2022 - WHS Picnic at the Community Center with *Show and Tell Program* presented by members. Details about the picnic will be announced at a later date.

The WHS Board of Trustees will make a decision regarding the meeting location about one week prior to the event. While we are hopeful that we will be able to resume in-person meetings, we will make the decision based on the best available information about COVID at that time. We will notify all members via email.

SHOUT OUT!

Thanks to Gustavo DeMaio for raising over \$1,675 for the Wenonah Historical Society! We are so grateful.



WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOUSE PLAQUE PROGRAM

The WHS House Plaque Program remains quite active. All houses in the borough that are at least 90 years old are eligible for a plaque. If you are interested in purchasing a plaque for your home or have any questions about the program, please contact Larry Smith at larrysmith01@comcast.net. The cost is \$75 and includes all necessary research of deeds, maps, census information, and WHS archives. The WHS would like to see every eligible house in Wenonah with a plaque!



Wenonah Lake Association

A Brief History

Compiled by Duke Braun



Wenonah Lake, circa 1930

The Wenonah Lake Association stems from the original Wenonah Playground Association which was formed in 1933 (later incorporated in 1940). Representatives from most of the existing Borough organizations met to consider the formation. Milton Webb, who was a Councilman and Parks Chairman at the time, was instrumental in organizing and making this happen. He was elected the first President of the WPA and his efforts for a new park in Wenonah began in 1931. Other founding members included Mrs. Myron Gallup (Woman's Club), Maxwell Allen (American Legion), Mrs. J. L. Glass (American Legion Auxiliary), Ms. Fanonda Mulvey (Junior Woman's Club), Ms. Alice Shearer (Camp Fire Girls), Mrs. Charles Allen (Mothers' Circle), Buell Snyder (Boy Scouts) and Harold Alexander (Fire Dept).

The founding group leased the lake from the Borough for \$1 per year and offered swimming instruction as well as arts & crafts activities at the Lake. A covered sandbox and several game courts were erected, including a volleyball court and the Association offered supervised swimming and play for children. The original playground was dedicated June 16, 1934.

Throughout many decades, Wenonah Lake was a major feature of the town and served as a significant community gathering venue. In 1982, some restructuring had occurred with new by-laws and the Weno

nah Playground Association henceforth became known as the Wenonah Lake Association.

During the 90s, many community fundraising events were established and were very popular. These included the Haunted Trail, Cluck & Claw (crab boil), a Giant Flea Market, Grand Openings, Kids Kamp, Garden Fair & Tour, and most iconically - One Night Of Song and Dance. One Night of Song and Dance originally was started by former resident Dave O'Keefe who approached the Wenonah Lake Association with an idea to hold a live concert at the lake just after the end of the season. It included one night full of great songs and performances that kept the crowd entertained and dancing. It was thought to be the perfect way for the adults to wrap up their summer before the start of school and traditional holidays kept schedules busy. It continues to this day as an epic local event and currently acts as the Lake Association's biggest fundraiser touting dozens of musicians and hundreds of attendees annually. The event celebrates its 25th anniversary this year.

A lot of changes also took place in the 90's. In 1998, plans to erect the bath house quickly became a reality. Local artist Lance Peters led a team of youth to paint a lake mural which paid historic homage to another local painter by the name of Woody Platt. This mural is still on display today.



At the tail end of 1998, Borough Council moved to end the Lake Association's lease and take over operations. In 1999, this became official. The Wenonah Playground/Lake Association's operation of the Lake had come to an end after 65 years of service. According to Association members at the time, this was heartbreaking but also somewhat of a relief to those who dedicated and volunteered more than full-time hours to the cherished community recreation area. As a result of the Borough taking control of operations, this allowed the Lake Association to begin focusing more heavily on fundraising events and community affairs.

Today, Wenonah Lake Association still acts as an all-volunteer support organization in fundraising for advocacy, improvements, miscellaneous equipment, events and activities at the lake. We are proud to serve the community of Wenonah and continue the long-standing tradition of Wenonah Lake. There has been a recent revival as families seek reconnection with nature and a beach experience without the drive. If you have not been to the lake in some time or are newer to town, please come visit. We encourage you to show your support by purchasing a membership.

Wenonah 2021 Tornado History Project

A new Wenonah Historical Society project is underway! A volunteer task force has been formed to document the (hopefully) one-of-a-kind event that impacted the entire Borough – the tornado of September 1, 2021. The project, which will include both fact-gathering and story-collecting, aligns with the mission of the Wenonah Historical Society to preserve our Borough's unique history. No doubt the final product will be of interest not only to current and former Borough residents, but also to future generations.

The task force intends to interview Borough leaders and first responders to the tornado devastation and prepare a questionnaire to help collect information from others. Currently, the task force is looking for stories, news articles, photographs, and videos to document the tornado.

If you have a story to share or something else that would help the task force to preserve Wenonah's history, please contact KiKi L'Italien at dckiki@gmail.com.

Wenonah a Century Ago

From the pages of the *Woodbury Daily Times*

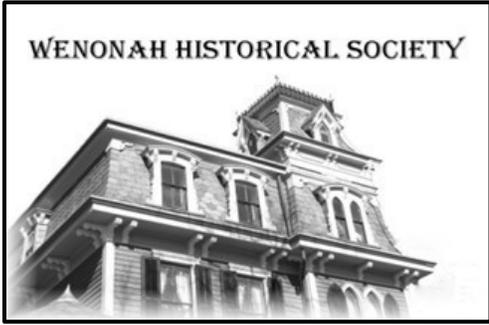
January thru March 1922

Over four hundred attended the grand Bal Masque given by the American Legion in the Academy gymnasium on Saturday evening, ninety percent of whom were in costume. The hall was tastefully decorated, the color scheme being black and white. The music was furnished by Fisher's Orchestra of Philadelphia.

The meeting of the Wenonah Building and Loan Association will be held in the fire house instead of the American Legion building owing to the fact that the Legion has given up its former quarters and taken over the YMCA building.

Wenonah has a very efficient police department. They now have a force of six men looking over the safety of the Borough. There isn't any borough of this size in Jersey that has better protection.

Attention should be given to our shade trees and every tree removed should be replaced.



PO Box 32
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090

WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership Benefits

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

BRING FORM AND PAYMENT TO MEETING, OR MAIL.

WHS PO Box 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

RECEIVE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL: YES OR NO

AMOUNT PAID \$ CHECK _____ CASH _____

Any information you would like to see presented in future programs or newsletters?

