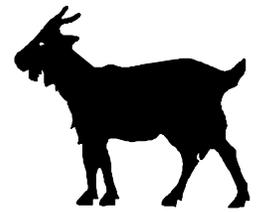


Nannygoats



Vol. 19, Issue 2

Newsletter of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society

Summer 2021

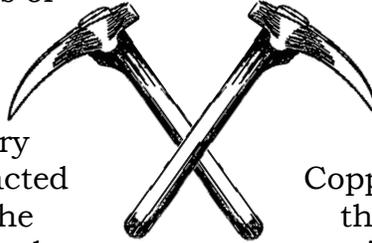
One of the overlooked aspects of Thomas Edison's activities in Menlo Park was his exploration of an abandoned copper mine located northeast of the laboratory complex. Copper had been extracted from the hill along what is now the Coppermine Brook since 1784, and the mine was reopened in 1812.

However, the amount and quality of ore was not that good.

In the 1870s Thomas Edison moved to Menlo Park, and built his "invention factory"

where he developed the phonograph and perfected the incandescent light. All these items needed copper wire, and with a source of copper nearby, Edison decided to reopen the mine, and see if there was enough there to be usable. So, he reopened the mine, pumped out the water, and found the tools that were used in 1812 at the bottom of the mine. To reach the mine from the laboratory, Edison built an experimental electric railroad.

Edison mined some copper ore, but it was not of good quality nor enough to profitably mine, so he closed it down.



Then, in the 1880s, Edison closed his laboratory and moved to New York City, then to West Orange.

In 1900, the New Jersey Copper Mining Company reopened the mine. They dug a 120' shaft with numerous galleries and built a

mill to process the ore. To give you an idea how deep the shaft was, the Edison Tower is 131' and if placed in the shaft only the bulb would stick out. These efforts ended around 1906, and the mine was abandoned again.



In Search Of: Edison's Copper Mine

By Walter R. Stochel, Jr.

The location of the mine was well known in the early 20th century, with groups from Metuchen going out to Mine Gully to have chicken roasts. Girl Scouts would hike to the mine from the Scout camp in Roosevelt Park. In the 1970s, teenagers who hiked

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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- *Guess who's having a 99th Birthday? (Page 2)*
- *Gold Award Walking Tour (Page 3)*
- *Annual Meeting Recap (Page 3)*
- *1870 History of Metuchen (Pages 5 & 6)*
- *Mini Golf and Metal Detecting (Rear Cover)*

The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society was founded in 1974 with the primary purpose of promoting an interest in and appreciation of the history of the Borough of Metuchen and the Township of Edison.

President's Message...

It goes without saying that the past year has been challenging; not being able to hold our Annual Local History Day or host a booth at the Country Fair has made connecting with members difficult, but luckily our newsletter, Facebook page, and virtual annual meeting have helped compensate, and we're looking forward to having in-person programs and events again soon. Many thanks to past-president Kathleen Carlucci for her leadership through the tumults of 2020 and to our loyal membership for hanging in there with us as we continue our work to "Save the Past for the Future."

I am very pleased to announce that joining us in that work will be Scott Zederbaum and Deborah Finley, who are coming onto the Board of Directors in 2021. They join both long-time Board Members and those who have more recently joined, like Dan Granato. I know I speak for everyone when I say how much we are looking to working with them.

Lastly, congratulations to Board Member Dom Walker on his 99th Birthday (on June 11). Here's to many more!

-Steve Reuter

Happy 99th Birthday, Dom Walker!



Long-time Society Board Member and past Vice-President & Membership Chairperson Dominic Walker celebrated his 99th Birthday on June 11, 2021.

Nannygoats

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Walter R. Stochel, Jr, *Corresponding Secretary*

Debbie Finley	Russell Gehrum
Daniel Granato	Gerry Rice
Dominic Walker	Scott Zederbaum

The name of the newsletter, "**Nannygoats**," is taken from the title of a collection of **anecdotes**, articles, reminiscences, and letters compiled by photographer J. Lloyd Grimstead. He took more than 2,800 photographs of the Metuchen-Edison area, mostly during the 1930s, and make up 80 percent of the Society's photographic collection. The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society dedicates this publication to Lloyd Grimstead, as a way of honoring him for preserving so much of our local history.

The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt charitable organization.



Show your support for Local History by sporting one of the Society's new magnets! Full Color, 5" High, 8" Wide
Only \$8 each! Visit the "Local History Store" on our website.



HISTORY MYSTERY?

The Grimstead Room at the Metuchen Public Library contains a wealth of local history information, including thousands of photographs, maps, oral histories, manuscript & subject files, postcards, and ephemera. We have endeavored to share as much of this information as possible through our website (metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org).

If you have a specific interest in a particular area of Metuchen or Edison history that is not answered by searching through these pages, please contact us at info@metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org with as many details as possible.

Although our archives are not conducive to browsing, if we have any relevant information we will be pleased to arrange, by appointment, for one of our Board members to assist you with your search. Please refer to our Archives Policy on our website for more information.

2021 Annual Meeting – A Zooming Success!

by Andy Kupersmit

The Society's 2021 Annual transpired via Zoom on April 15 at 7:30pm. For those of us still in the workforce, Zoom has become a large part of our work day, but this was the first time our society conducted its meeting via Zoom, and the first time the speaker, Todd DeFeo, had given his talk on Zoom. Everything ran exceptionally well.

Our accomplishments were outlined very well by membership chair Walter R. Stochel, Jr. in his annual renewal letter, so they will not be restated here. The 2020 Treasurer's and Membership reports reflected our society's solid financial and organizational foundation.

A new slate of officers was elected with Steve Reuter as President, Kathleen Carlucci as Vice President, Tyreen Reuter as Treasurer, myself as Recording Secretary, and Walter R. Stochel, Jr. as Corresponding Secretary and Membership Chair. Other Directors are Russ Gehrum, Daniel Granato, Gerry Rice, Byron Sondergard (also Archives Chair), and we

are all thrilled that our 99-year old treasure Dominic Walker is willing and able to remain as a Director for another two-year term. We are also incredibly grateful that Tyreen Reuter has chosen to remain as *Nannygoats* editor.

As mentioned earlier, this was the first time our speaker, Todd DeFeo, had given his talk about the Northeast Corridor on Zoom. His talk was extremely informative, and he patiently answered the many questions that attendees posed. DeFeo graciously allowed us to record the meeting, and a link to the video can be accessed via the archives section of our website, or at this address: <https://youtu.be/n6JkO2nKSB0>. Copies of DeFeo's book, *The Northeast Corridor*, are available for sale on our website with all proceeds benefiting the Society. It includes several images of from Edison and Metuchen.

We look forward to an outstanding second half of 2021 and beyond, and thank all who attended our annual meeting and program.



Metuchen High School Junior's Gold Award Project

The weather this past May 16th was perfect for Girl Scout Gold Award Candidate Kate McNamara's Historic Architecture Walking Tours around Thomas Park/Tommy's Pond. Although the in-person tours only took place during that one day, it was the culmination of a year of the Metuchen High School Junior's hard work. Luckily for those that couldn't attend, this work will live on in the on-line guide she created in the form of a website visitors can use to take the tour, self-guided at any time (see the "Walking Tours" page on the Society's website).

The Society served as advisor for her project, but Kate coordinated with area homeowners and the Borough as well, and in the course of her research she gathered a great deal of new information about the homes in the area.

We have benefitted greatly from Kate's project, thank her for all her hard work and dedication to our local history, and wish her the very best in what we are sure will be a very bright future. Also, many thanks to Kate's Mom, pictured above with her on the day of the tours, for sharing with us so much of Kate's time and energy during these last several months of the project.



Continued from Page 1

the Coppermine Brook remembered a metal door covering a hole in the north embankment. In the 1980s, the Hidden Valley Apartments were built on the site, covering up any remains of the mine.

In 2021, the Society decided to look once and for all to see if the mine still is visible.



In early morning of April 25, 2021 several members of the Board hiked the Coppermine Brook. Despite the cold rain and turbulent waters of the brook, the mine search party was able to explore this area. Most of the property on the south side of the brook is owned by Edison Township, and is accessed at the end of Cedar Street.

Using GPS technology to pin-point the mine location, no evidence of the mine was visible. While nothing was seen on the surface, there is a possibility that the shafts and galleries are still located in that hill.



Images

Page 1: Dan Granato, Gerry Rice, Ben Kupersmit, Andy Kupersmit, Walter Stochel, Scott Zederbaum, Steve Reuter, Kathleen Carlucci, Patrick Carlucci (from left to right).

Above Left: David Trumbull Marshall and the Edison Lamp Works Associates at a Chicken Roast in Mine Gully, 1911.

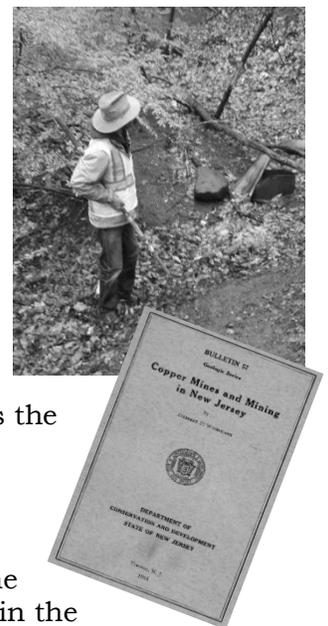
Top Right: Mine Gully, 1906.

Middle Right: The partially snow-covered 120' open shaft of the mine in January of 1929.

Right: Intrepid Board Member Gerry Rice considers the gully in April, 2021.

Left: The Coppermine Brook on April 25, 2021, swollen from several days of rain.

Below Right: Cover of the 1904 "Copper Mines and Mining in New Jersey" by Herbert P. Woodward. The relevant pages about this Copper Mine are located in the Archives section of the Society's website.



METUCHEN AND HER HISTORY, 1870 (XV)

The following is the fifteenth installment of Dr. Ezra Mundy Hunt's "Metuchen and Her History," written in 1870, which we began reprinting serially in most issues of *Nannygoats* beginning with the Winter/Spring 2015 edition. Many thanks to Former Society President and current Board Member Dominic T. Walker for transcribing this document.

The beginning of the present decade, from 1860 to 1870, found us a prosperous and growing community. The spirit of improvement was more general, and although, by reason of depression connected with the beginning of the war, there was little extension of building or business, yet some property changed ownership, and lands and streets and buildings were improved. Mr. D.G. Thomas opened the street on which he now resides, and other avenues were projected.

A few of our number joined the Great Army of the Republic and did what they could to secure victory and peace. A company was raised from this township, and many others joined different regiments, while those that remained at home for the most part took earnest interest in sustaining the Government.

The stones of the Cemetery bear evidence as to some of our losses, while the well-known record as to most that survive, shows that they zealously and faithfully performed their duty.

The great union meeting at the beginning of the war; the rally for promoting enlistments; the big wagon drumming up recruits for Captain Inslee's Company; the drilling of Home-Guards; the anxieties of that beautiful, solemn Sabbath day, when we were all in suspense over the latest news of the night before, that the confederates had cut off access to Washington; the stunning tidings of the Manassas defeat, when all were expectant of victory--these are among the early home memories of the war. Then for many a month there was the hurrying of crowded soldier-trains; the keen appetite for news, so that even the Sunday postman must supply the mail; the reverses and successes, and at last the dreaded but necessary draft that hastened on the victories. Anon comes the glad return of joyful regiments; the veteran parade of thankful victors, and ere the first flush of joy had passed, that strange tragedy of Presidential death,

and that funeral car, with solemn escort, bearing along the remains of the "Great Executive" to his distant home. These are scenes so fresh and vivid, that I need not dwell upon them; but what your ears have heard, and your eyes have seen, is a whole era and epoch of history condensed in a few short years, and many a father will, in the days of his age, recount to his children these sights and sounds of his own times, and cultivate a true national patriotism by the rehearsal.

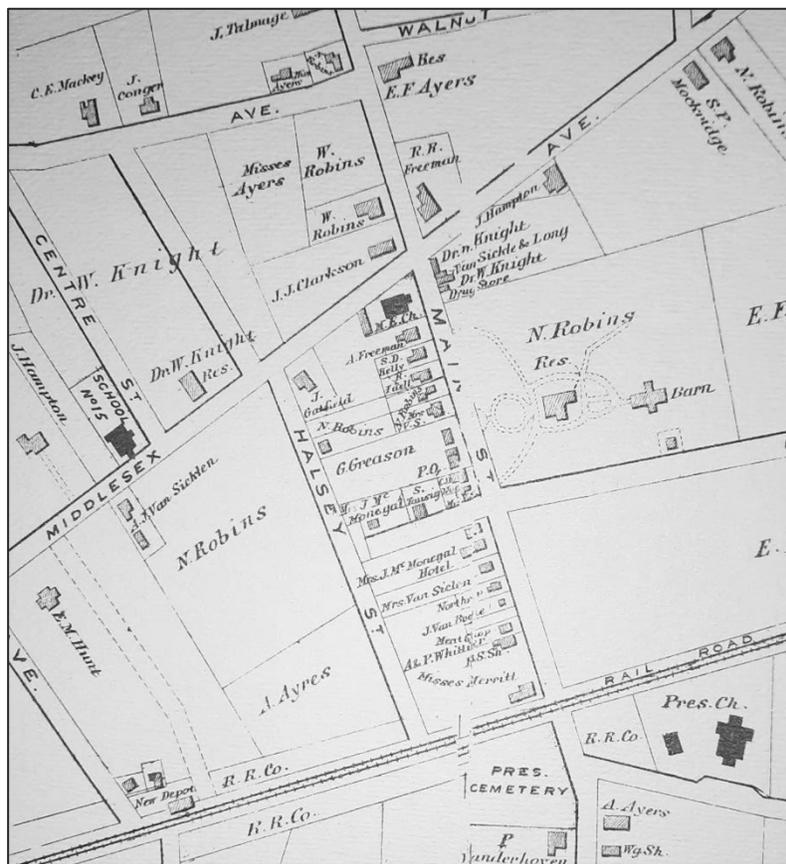
And now we are brought to the more recent five years of our history. It is especially within these that most of the development of the place has occurred. During this period

all but one of the new streets, now numbering fifteen or more, have been opened, and more than half the houses within a mile from the East Station have been built or remodeled. Messrs. T.W. Strong, L. & D.G. Thomas, E.F. Ayres, E.M. Hunt, C.C. Campbell, M. Daniels, A.W. Marshall and C.O. Poole have opened avenues or streets, and most of them, as well as G. Greason, Homer Jones and N. Robins built more houses or stores than they needed for their own accommodation. Mr. Greason's new block of stores, the sign boards of streets, and some private lamp-posts, are hints as to a future city.

The Public School is well conducted by J. Newton Smith, although a new building is much needed; and Mr. L.P. Cowles has opened a

select school under encouraging auspices. A reading-room and library (1870) have just been opened to the public, and the Order of the Sons of Temperance, organized about two years since, and who initiated this movement, are doing what they can to promote mental culture and good morals.

In the past we owe much to the fact that those who have been able among us, have shown a disposition to improve their properties and to develop the town. New



Excerpt of the 1868 Map of Metuchen. High quality reproductions of the full map, 17" by 23", are available for sale through the Society for only \$3.00 (plus shipping and handling if applicable).

families have been welcomed, and in many instances have readily co-operated in plans for future progress.

Within a year a new Methodist and a new Episcopal church have been occupied, and Roman Catholic service is held in a small chapel on ground secured for a church.

A Building Loan Association has recently been organized, and mechanics and laborers are striving to secure homes of their own. The fitness of the location for trade and manufacturers is attracting the attention of capitalists, while the recent clay developments near to us at Bonhamtown have already commanded large investments from experienced dealers.

An Act of Incorporation, passed 1869, was viewed by our people as premature, and although there is much that can be done to advantage in the way of public improvement, we hope the spirit and liberality of our citizens will be found equal to a wise and judicious expenditure, and that they will, with good degree of unanimity, cooperate in such plans as wise policy, no less than public spirit, dictates.

The Railroad Company are this year to build a permanent Central Station, with such improvements and facilities as they believe will greatly appreciate the interests and value of this whole section.

The access to large adjacent cities is so ready, the society so good, and the remarkable healthfulness of the place so well authenticated, that it presents the best inducements for business and for suburban residence, while its natural drainage, its undulating landscape, its fertility of soil, its equability of climate, midway between river and mountain, all conjoin to render it a popular and attractive home.

Most of those who have settled here find their purchases a pecuniary advantage, while social and moral attractions of a high order give the promise of continued and accelerated growth. While large additions have been made of new residents, the branches of our older families cling with fondness to their early homes, and after years of absence not a few return to locate here. Among those native born, who by professional position, have helped to reflect honor on their early home, we may name Ezra Mundy, long a teacher in St. Louis; O. Van Derhoven, Esq., editor of the Paterson "Guardian"; C.S. Titsworth, Prosecuting Attorney, Newark; Rev. W. Randolph, of Boston, and Rev. Ezekiel Mundy, of Syracuse, both Baptist ministers; General Ezra A. Carman, and D.B. Hunt, M.D., a recent graduate of Columbia Medical College, N.Y.

Just now, as we enter upon a new decade of our History, the Legislature has assigned us new boundaries. By Act of March, 1870, parts of Woodbridge and Piscataway adjacent to the river, and extending some three miles back therefrom, have been formed into a new township, with the name of Raritan, and Metuchen becomes the natural centre of this rich and important district. The name of Raritan, like Metuchen, is an Indian name, and means "the forked river," in allusion to the two chief streams from which it is formed. The head waters of one of these, now known as Raritan brook, is in our village, and we most properly appropriate this as the name of our new township.

Piscataway and Woodbridge, so allied in early history and settlement, thus have a part of each joined as one, and, as the two fountain-sources of the Raritan commingle into one grand river, so that none can distinguish the drops of the one from the other as they flow pleasantly on in one undivided stream, so it is hoped and believed that our people, with unit of sentiment and of interest, will co-operate together in the promotion of our mutual, moral and material prosperity.

The township thus formed is one of the very best in our State, and as to Metuchen, the locality is appreciated by visitors as well as by those who are residents. Its pleasant diversity of hill and valley, meadow and wood, its central and slightly position, commanding views from points here and there of Plainfield, Westfield, New Brunswick, Amboy, Staten Island, Rahway, Elizabeth, Newark and New York, render its elevation and scenery desirable and inviting. There is only need that by the adornments of art, and in the spirit of public improvement, we take grand advantage of natural adaptations.

We have thus traced the past in order that we may have some adequate appreciation of those who have preceded us, and of the successive steps in our development, and that the future historian may have an authentic source from which to glean an introduction when grander events and more inciting progress demand a more extended notice.

The record, though unpretending, has been substantial and honorable, with names and history unmarred by any blot or blur inimical to fairness and respectability of fame; the present is with us to plan and enjoy, the future is before us to execute and unfold.

Let us see to it that in every respect a wise and broad policy governs us; that we lay out for the future what the next generation will approve; that we so combine the beautiful and the useful as to season the substantial with the attractiveness of taste, and do nothing so meagre on the one hand, or so extravagant on the other, as to stint or overburden the coming population.

In our care for so-called material interests, let us ever remember that the demands of religion and education are more material than all else, and that he builds for himself and for his posterity on a flimsy foundation who does not see to it that means for moral and mental elevation are provided and sustained with hearty and munificent patronage. While physical energy and business foresight are commendable, these must not be parted from such wisdom as revelation, reason and experience alike attest.

In this, our goodly home and pleasant heritage, let us do our parts in laying concrete foundations, like those of cemented jasper and amethyst, on which those who come after us may build as wise master-builders, feeling that the basis is a good one to work on, and such that even great expansion and lofty workmanship will never at all imperil it. Thus will our memories be cherished, and thus, even better than that, our words, our acts, our deeds, will have abundant fruitage in the happiness and elevation of society.

Next Installment: "Churches"

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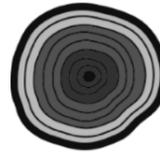
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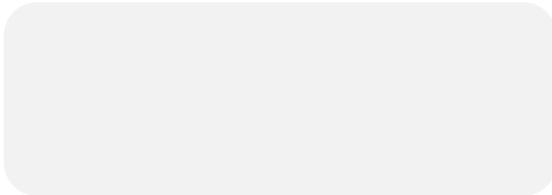


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Metuchen, NJ 08840



Help the Society Save the Past for the Future by becoming a member! Visit www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org to download a membership form or join online.

Watch out for the Windmill!

Mini golf was all the rage during the Summer of 1930, when the first National Tom Thumb Open Miniature Golf Tournament was organized with a \$10,000 cash purse; just the thing to quell Depression blues.

There were more than 25,000 courses in the United States in 1930. Today, it is estimated there are around 3000.

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TEN EYCK TO ENTER COURSE IN TOURNEY

METUCHEN, Aug. 21.—Russell Ten Eyck, miniature golf pioneer of Metuchen, is planning to enter his course in the weekly cooperative tournaments sponsored by the Daily Home News and Sunday Times. The hundreds of regular devotees who flock to the Ten Eyck course should make the tournament more interesting and provide keener competition for the valuable prizes offered each week by the Daily Home News and Sunday Times.

The Ten Eyck course, on Main street, opposite the borough hall, is recognized as one of the best of its type in the state.

The popularity of its owner has much to do with the success attained thus far.

Attention All Detectorists!

The Society is working with locally-based Deep Search Metal Detecting Club (DSMDC) to arrange a Metal Detecting Event over the summer. The Club's Detectorists will be invited to search a selection of local historic properties and share their process and finds.

Details are still being finalized, but if you have an older property, especially one near an old road and want to participate, please contact us at metuchenedisonhistory@gmail.com or at info@metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org Stay tuned for more details!



"Discovering The Past"