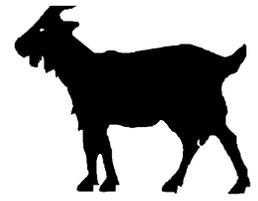


Nannygoats



The church was originally organized as a Baptist Bible School on December 14, 1902 with 21 members. It was the first such school in Middlesex County. It was through discussions between Mr. William A Crowell, a Metuchen resident and owner of a local feed store on Main Street, and local pastors and members of the State Sunday School Committee that it was decided that there was a need for such a school in Metuchen. They rented the Royal Arcanum Hall on the 2nd floor of the new Burroughs Building (across from the train station) on Pennsylvania Avenue for \$140 a year, which included heat and furnishings.

They had doubled their members by the end of the year and set aside their first Thanksgiving offering of \$30.00 as a Nest Egg Fund for the future purchase of a church building. Their pulpit was filled by various local, student, and visiting pastors when preaching services were held. Mr. Crowell passed away suddenly in May, 1937 and was greatly missed. The church minute books states, "For almost 35 years, he had labored faithfully, and more than anyone else, he had guided the establishment of the Sunday School and the founding of the church."

Reverend Lewis C. Hylbert was called as their first pastor in 1907, and he served in this position until April 23, 1908, when the church was officially incorporated as the "First Baptist Church of Metuchen, New Jersey." The 21 charter members were members in good standing of seven local churches. Mr. & Mrs. Howard Stelle, Mrs. C. H. Brown, Mr. William Compton, Mrs. Daniel LaForge, Mrs. Howard Smalley, and Mrs. Victor Swain came from the

Piscataway Baptist Church of Stelton (now called the Stelton Baptist Church). Mr. & Mrs. William Crowell and their son, Reginald, and Mrs. Sarah Drake came from the First Baptist Church of New Brunswick. Mr. & Mrs. Charles Mundy came from the First Baptist Church of Newark. Mr. Lewis Campbell and Mrs. Jane TenBroeck came from the South Plainfield Baptist Church. Mrs. Emilie Atkinson came from the Livingston Avenue Baptist Church of New Brunswick. Mrs. Maggie Herron from the South Baptist Church of Newark, and Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Loblein, and George and Helen Loblein

History of the First Baptist Church of Metuchen

by Marilyn Langhoff

came from the Baptist Church of the Redeemer at Flatbush Avenue, in Brooklyn, New York.

In 1909, the church moved their meetings to the new Bank Building on Main Street and later moved to quarters over the Burroughs Pharmacy. They used the Sunday School Nest Egg Fund, which had grown to \$1,250.00, to purchase their first property on the corner of Carlton Road and Clinton Place, and immediately formed a building committee which oversaw the completion of their

first church building, which was dedicated on September 26, 1911. The Trustee report of 1912 states, "We have tried to build a building that would be a credit to the denomination, and an ornament to our town. We have provided for the worship of God first, the Sabbath School work of the church, secondly, and also for the social part of church work, so important."

Continued on Page 4.

An early photograph of the first church building, which still stands on Clinton Place. Photograph on file at the First Baptist Church of Metuchen.



Memories from the Mailbox...

The Society is indeed fortunate to frequently receive letters and donations of local history ephemera from former residents who have fond memories of the Metuchen and Edison area. These letters are wonderful additions to our collection not only for the facts they contain, but because they in turn inspire similar remembrances for our current readers and residents.

The following correspondence and the photograph at right were sent to us by Jean Baldauf, who now resides in Bayonne. The 1940 photograph she references as having seen in a previous issue of *Nannygoats* (shown again below) was donated by Bill and Linda Farley.



I grew up in Metuchen, attended the Dutch Reformed Church all of my young life; went to Franklin School from kindergarten, where my teacher was Miss Brewster; and graduated from MHS in the same building in 1945. It is the one public school I attended for 13 years. My sister Alice broke a tooth when she accidentally ran into the flagpole in front of the school. My brother Charles and I are the still living children of Charles and Alida Pascall, who lived at 952 Middlesex Avenue, the second house past Knox's Tavern, and the last house in Metuchen.

Our property (about 3 acres) extended from the Lincoln Highway back to the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks. There was a milestone on the streetside saying 18 miles to Newark. It looked like a tombstone; when my Mom and Dad sold the property, they donated the milestone to the town of Metuchen. I believe it is now located in front of the Borough Improvement League building or across the street on the property of the municipal building.

Across the street from our home was the elegant home and property of Mr. Arnold, who I believe was an attorney. Going toward Metuchen from his home was a wooded area, then came the home of Daisy Thomall, who lived there with her three sons: Worthington, Orville, and Bill. Mrs. Thomall was a widow and ran a boarding house. In the early 1930s, it was the location of a barracks of the N.J. State Police. Bill Thomall, the youngest of her boys, died in 1945 when he was in military training in (I think) Louisiana. On a night training event, he was on a bus which collided with a train and died as a result. Bill was an MHS football star before going into the military in WWII.

My Dad, Charles Pascall, was a newspaper reporter, first for the *Perth Amboy Evening News*, and then for the *Daily Home News*, as well as a "foreign correspondent" (for Middlesex County county news) for the now defunct *Newark Evening News*. His "beat" was court house square in New Brunswick; my Mother, Alida, wrote personal columns for the then *Metuchen Recorder*.

I have so many wonderful memories of Metuchen, which I still think was the best town ever in which to grow up. I remember when the post office was a little store front on Station Place; when Roosevelt Park and the hospital were built during the depression; when carnivals used to come to the empty lot across from Franklin School.

I remember when the kids called Gus Anderson 'Dick Tracy.' I remember when the library was on the second floor of that beautiful municipal building. I remember ice skating on Tommy's Pond; Coed Nights at the YMCA; and so much more.

My sister, Alice Pascall Cox (deceased) worked at the Kiddie Keepwell Camp for several summers. The Volume 6, Issue 3 of *Nannygoats* showed a staff picture on page 2. I think the person in the middle row, 3rd from the right, is my sister Alice. If not, it's her double.

Enclosed is a sideview picture of the house where I grew up, 952 Middlesex Avenue, two houses past Knox's Tavern (once known as Beech Tree Inn) and the last house in Metuchen. The No. 134 bus stopped for us even though it wasn't a bus stop. It cost 15 cents to ride to New Brunswick from there and 10 cents if we walked to Vineyard Road. This picture was taken about 1933 on a hot summer day. You can see a hose hanging over the tree and the puddles in front of the bathing suit crews. That is how we kept cool in those days.

When I was a teenager, I babysat for a while for Colonel Frank Slaughter, who was the chief surgeon at Camp Kilmer. He and his wife and two little boys lived in a garden apartment unit on the corner of Amboy Avenue and the first street past Main Street going towards Perth Amboy (I just can't remember the name of the Street). Dr. Slaughter was also a fictional author.

I graduated from Metuchen High School in 1945. We have yearly luncheon reunions at the Metuchen Country Club and more formal ones every five years.



Local History Mystery? Solve it with a visit to the Archives!

The Society's Grimstead Room archives, containing thousands of local history images and documents, are located in the basement of the Metuchen Public Library and guided access to the collections is available from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on the following upcoming: March 7, April 4, and May 2. For more information, contact Tyreen Reuter at 732-452-1381 or ayersallenhouse@msn.com.

A Letter from the President...

Dear Members and Friends,

I would like to congratulate the officers of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society who were elected at our Annual Meeting of January 17, 2009:

Walter Stochel, President
Russ Gehrum, Vice President
Tyreen Reuter, Corresponding Secretary
Kevin Hale, Recording Secretary
Andy Kupersmit, Treasurer

I would also like to welcome Dr. Fred Primich to the Board of Trustees of the Society.

I look forward to working with the Board and our members in the year ahead to continue to add to our collection and make it accessible to the general public through Local History Day, the Grimstead Room open hours, *Nannygoats*, and our website.

We are also planning a number of interesting programs for 2009, including an updated walking tour of Metuchen. In these challenging times we are dedicated to keeping the Society a vital institution in the community. Thank you for your support in 2009!

Walter R. Stochel, Jr.



More from the Mailbox

The following information and the

photograph at above were sent to us by former resident David Hutchinson of Warwick, New York. His family moved to Metuchen in 1950 from New York City. His father, George Hutchinson, was a former DPW Superintendent.

This photograph of the Metuchen Coal & Oil Company siding off the Port Reading Branch in Metuchen was taken in 1963 by Mr. Hutchinson. The company was located next to the bridge at Clive Street, now the site of Olmezer Park, and this view is looking west across the site towards St. Joseph's. The Metuchen Coal & Oil Company was owned by a Mr. Wilburt, who lived in the "big house" immediately across the street [Editor: possibly 6 Plainfield Avenue]. This photograph also shows the office that Mr.

Wilburt let his son, a CPA, use and a portion of the Mobil Gas Station formerly on the corner of Christol Street. Mr. Hutchinson doesn't remember ever seeing a coal hopper being placed there by the Reading Railroad, but according to his letter, "did see coal being loaded into delivery trucks in around 1956... this was coal that was already under this trestle. A hopper car was placed on the siding around 1961 when the Reading had a pretty big wreck down at the track

I do not remember when the gas station was built, but I remember going there every day for a 10 cent coke out of their machine. Sometimes, the owner would buy me one. The earliest memory would be about 1954-5. The station was still there during the late 1970's. One of the employees tried to clean the floor in the garage with gasoline and started a fire. We also used to go to the Geary's store, which was at the end of Plainfield Avenue where it joins Central Avenue. It was an old gas station converted to, for lack of a better word, convenience store. You could get anything there, including liquor. We would go down with empty soda bottles, cash them in (2 cents for a small bottle and 5 cents for a big one) and spend the money on penny candy. There was a small baseball field next to the store which also had a garage. I think the Dessel family bought the building for it's liquor license and then used it at a new store they had built on Central Avenue. It's still there as a store and (I think) dry cleaners. The building on the corner of Central and Liberty used to be a Costa Cottage. This was a restaurant/ ice cream place.

Editor: for more on Costa's Ice Cream, see Volume 5, Issue 1 of *Nannygoats* (Winter 2007).

that went to Camp Kilmer. The car probably had something wrong with it and it was placed on Mr. Wilburt's siding." Mr. Hutchinson recalls that there was another business in Metuchen that also had a railroad siding off the Port Reading Branch: George Kelly sold ash and feed out of a building where the house now is at 88 Christol Street, at the intersection with Ross Avenue. At left are some more of Mr. Hutchinson's memories of the area.

Interested in reading previous issues of *Nannygoats*? All of our back issues are available online at the Society's website at www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org.

History of the First Baptist Church, *continued...*

A parsonage was built adjacent to the church in 1923. The church continued to grow over the years, so they completed an addition in 1952. They purchased their current lot at 225 Middlesex Avenue for \$22,500 in 1960, as they had outgrown their existing church, and developed plans to build a much larger church. Reverend Tarr, the pastor at the time, said the cost of the structure "is a large undertaking for members of the congregation, but the Lord has helped us and supplied every need and we know that He will continue to do so as we trust Him." The new church was dedicated on September 18, 1966 and an addition was added in 1990. Over the years, they have purchased four of the houses adjacent the church (1968, 1979, 2004, and 2006) for use as parsonages and a Missions House.

The church has had many pastors throughout their 100 year history. The first five pastors were students from Crozier Seminary: Rev. L. C. Hylbert, Pastor John J. Cook, Pastor Fred Allen, Pastor B. L. Lewis, and Pastor Howard Johnson. The first full-time pastor, Rev. W. L. Wardell, was called in 1913 and was followed by Rev. L. W. Barnard, Rev. Dr. Calvin A. Hare, Rev. Dr. S. B. Hiley, Rev. S. B. Hofer, Rev. P. A. Cunningham, Rev. John Gannon, Rev. F. J. Honesco, Rev. Samuel G. Graham, Pastor John E. Geil, Rev. Thomas J. Bell, Rev. James E. Naylor, Rev. William R. Tarr, and Rev. Robert B. Lytle. Reverend Dr. James G. Miller, the current pastor, became the pastor in March, 1977. They have also had various Assistant, Youth, Worship, and Outreach Pastors throughout the years.

The church has been active in our community throughout its history. They formed a Ladies Aid Society and began taking collections for missions within their first year and have established several branches of their Sunday School; a Hungarian Branch in 1916 and, in 1929, a branch in Menlo Park. The Sarang Baptist Church (Korean) has met in their facilities since 1988, and, in 2002, as part of their 100th Anniversary of the Sunday School they helped support a new church plant in Patterson (Spanish), NJ. In 1933, the Women's Missionary Society held a Pageant and Health Motion Picture with the Middlesex County Tuberculosis League. They have

New in the Collection...

In addition to the items donated by Jean Baldauf and David Warwick mentioned on Pages 2 and 3, some of the other items the Society has recently received include transcriptions from the Diaries of Dr. Joseph Stennett Martin (1829-1877), a nephew of Uzal Ogden Mundy. The information was supplied by Nicholas Mundy Sanborn, Sr., a great-great-grandson of Uzal Mundy. An article about these diaries is planned for a future issue of *Nannygoats*.

held Vacation Bible School every summer for many years, serving over 200 children each year. Over the years, they have also hosted many other events including: picnics, box socials, plays and productions, Christmas and Easter pageants, a magic show, nursing home visits, car washes, a bicycle safety day, visits to the NJ Veterans Home, 100% off clothing sales, and Easter Eggstravaganzas. They have also participated for many years in the Metuchen Holiday Parade and the Metuchen Country Fair. Their 100th Anniversary events included a Neighborhood Fun Day in July, a joint event with the Metuchen/Edison Historical Society on the history of the church in September, and a Christmas Carol Sing-In in December. They will conclude their year's events with a Ministry Appreciation Dinner in April 2009.



Over the years, they have transported people to their church by many means. In 1913 they used some kind of conveyance, possibly a wagon. Church members from the Menlo Park area were transported to church by stage in July 1921. Mr. Clarkson, the owner of the stage, was paid \$2.00 each Sunday for the trip. A bus was used to transport people from the Menlo Park area in 1935 and, in 1961, it picked up students from Traylor Harbor, Nixon Park, Washington Park, and the Koster Apartments. Several buses were also used many years to pick up students for Vacation Bible School.

The church has quite an extensive archive of church records, documents, and memorabilia. It includes: the original 1908 lease for rental of the Royal Arcanum Hall, Incorporation documents and Church Constitutions, Minute Books of business meetings beginning from their incorporation, original membership cards and records, written histories, Annual Reports, building proposals, mortgages and contracts, programs, bulletins, pictures, newspaper articles, and many other items.





*Centennial Event at the First Baptist Church, April, 2008.
Photograph taken by Jennifer Spatz.*

The church today is a culturally diverse congregation, made up of people who speak 14 different tongues and come from 23 different countries. They have two Sunday morning services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. with Sunday School between at 9:45 a.m. and an evening service at 6:00 p.m. Other activities include Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups and a Prayer Meeting on Wednesday evenings, Ladies Bible Study on Thursdays, Pioneer Girls (grades 1-6) and Boys Stockade (grades 3-6) on Friday evenings, Mission-aies on Saturdays, and Saving Stitches meets Tuesdays and Wednesdays. "Our mission is to be a diverse, caring community that is passionate about reaching, connecting, and mobilizing the next generation for Christ's mission."

Many thanks to Society Board Member Marilyn Langhoff for her work documenting the church's history and contributing this article & photographs.

Above Left: First meeting place, the Royal Arcanum Hall on the second floor of the Burroughs Building on Pennsylvania Avenue (on file in the Grimstead Archives). Left: Second meeting place, the bank building on Main Street (on file in the Grimstead Archives). Above: Current church building, without addition, on Middlesex Avenue (on file at the First Baptist Church). Right: Sanctuary of first church at Clinton Place (on file at the First Baptist Church).



The First Baptist Church of Metuchen celebrated their 100th Anniversary this year with a program, a dinner and other activities throughout the year. They chose Psalms 78:4 as their theme verse for the year: "We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done." The 100th Anniversary Committee's goal was to make sure they did not forget the vision of the founding members and all those who continued the work throughout the years.

As William Crowell, one of the founding members of the church, once wrote, "In every good work that God does, there are beginnings, and they are usually small beginnings, and this work was no exception. It is strange how people despise, or forget, the small beginnings of a work like this. Let me say, we did not do it, but that the good Lord did it, and we helped." Pastor Miller, the current pastor, states, "The vision has always been to reach the next generation and train them in the Word of God. We're the generation that they envisioned, and we will continue the vision."

Interested in Becoming a *Nannygoats* Contributor?

Do you have an interesting story, fact, or image that you think would make a good addition to a future issue of *Nannygoats*? If so, please contact the Editor... If your submission is published, we'll send you a complimentary copy of the 1888 "Crumbs of Comfort" history and cookbook! The submission deadline for the Summer 2009 issue is May 31, 2009.

Nannygoats Editor
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Class of 1931 History

The following text is continued from the Class of 1931's *History of Metuchen*, which is being reprinted in *Nannygoats* serially (beginning with Volume 5, Issue 2, Summer 2007). Please note that there are several known factual and grammatical errors, but the document is reproduced exactly as originally written.

Another man prominent in magazine work was William Coleman, who lived here years ago. Mr. Coleman was connected with the staff of "The Country Gentleman" in the 1880's.

One of the most outstanding of Metuchen's noted residents was S.S. Carvalho who had a brilliant newspaper career. He started out as a member of the staff of the New York Sun, on which he stayed for nine years. Then he spent the following nine years on the staff of the New York World. In 1896 he became General Manager of all the Hearst newspapers, which position he held until 1918. He was later president of the executive council of all the Hearst newspapers. In 1927 he retired and at the present time resides in Plainfield.

One of the last literary notables is Dr. Theodore Whitfield Hunt, a former professor of English at Princeton University. By delving into a little deeply into various sources much interesting information, not only about Professor Hunt but also about other members of his family, may be found.

The Hunt family has proved itself in the last hundred years, one of the most distinguished of all Metuchen families. A great many members of the family have become prominent in various professions. The ministry and the study of medicine seem to attract the greatest number of them (this not referring to the local branch of the hunt family particularly but to the entire Hunt family in the United States, by which this time must be distributed all over the country). This is also true of the local Hunts, for glancing over various prominent members of the family one finds two doctors, one minister, and another ordained minister (T.W. Hunt) who, however, never did any actual preaching.

Holloway W. Hunt, the founder of his line in Metuchen, came here in the early 1880s as a preacher in the Presbyterian Church. Reverend Hunt, once settled down, married Henrietta Mundy, the daughter of Ezra Mundy, but his life in Metuchen was irregular, being broken up by changes to other churches. However, he never separated from Metuchen for any long period and was quite prominently connected with the social and moral life of the community. He lived a long life and died in 1882.

Two of H.W.'s sons who became prominent were Theodore Whitfield Hunt and Ezra M. Hunt. Dr. Theodore W. Hunt was the more noted of the two in fact he is the most famous of all the members of the family from H.W. Hunt down to the present day.

Dr. [T.W.] Hunt was born in Metuchen in 1844. In 1861 he became a student at Princeton (from which his father had graduated in 1818). There he took an active part in social, mental, and athletic activities, and was graduated in 1865. At that time he had not decided whether he would go into teaching, and so he continued with graduate work in theology, at the same time tutoring in English. After being ordained a minister he decided to teach and studied abroad. In 1873 he became connected with teaching staff at Princeton University and eight years later he became a full professor. He remained at Princeton for the rest of his life and was an active teacher until 1918 when he retired.

Sporting History

Did you know that the 2008 St. Joseph's Volleyball Team won the state title by winning 43 matches, the most wins by a New Jersey High School in any sport in the state's history?

Future issues of *Nannygoats* will continue reprinting the Class of 1931's *History of Metuchen*, including more about the Hunt Family from *Prominent People* and several successive chapters.

New On the Bookshelf

New Jersey Cemeteries and Tombstones: History in the Landscape by Richard F. Veit and Mark Nonestied.

Published in 2008 by Rutgers University Press, this thorough and fascinating study of New Jersey's burial sites from the seventeenth century to present includes cemeteries in both Metuchen and Edison. A must-read for all NJ history buffs!



Grimstead Archives' photograph of Dr. Ezra M. Hunt.

Borough Improvement League

Founded in 1901, the "BIL" is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, affiliated with the GFWC and NJSFWC Womens' Clubs, devoted to community service & preserving the ca. 1807 Old Franklin School on Middlesex Avenue in Metuchen.



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The News From Menlo Park...

Students in Edison Township's two high schools are working on projects to promote public pride in Thomas Edison's historic Menlo Park site. Edison High students are working with the Edison Memorial Tower Corporation (EMTC), the Edison Arts Society, and the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society to organize a photography exhibit focused on the Edison Memorial Tower.

The photographs, which are being solicited from Metuchen-Edison area high school students, will be exhibited this spring in Edison Township Council Chamber. J. P. Stevens High School students are developing an educational program for seniors at J. P. Stevens to work with 4th graders in Edison Township, teaching them about Thomas Alva Edison and the importance of the Menlo Park site and the Edison Memorial Tower.

Both programs are being organized by the schools' Civics & Justice courses. For more information about either program, contact the EMTC at 732-494-4194.

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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, which make up 80 percent of the Historical Society's photographic collection. The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society dedicates this publication to Lloyd Grimstead, as a way of honoring him for collecting and recording so much of our local history.

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

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Upcoming Programs & Events

THE GRIMSTEAD ROOM'S NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS

**Sunday, April 19, 2009
2:00 p.m.**

Co-sponsored by the Friends of the Metuchen Library, this program will feature Dr. Richard Veit, a well-known archaeologist and New Jersey historian. Dr. Veit will present his findings on the collection of Native American artifacts in the Grimstead Archives.

The program will take place at the Metuchen Public Library at 480 Middlesex Avenue in Metuchen, and will be followed by a reception of light refreshments.

*These programs are free and open to the public, and guests are welcome.
For more information, please call Steve at 732-452-1381.*

MAY IS NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH!

In honor of National Historic Preservation Month, the Society will host a Walking Tour of Metuchen architecture in May, 2009 (exact date and time to be announced). Self-guided tours will also be available through an updated guide to be issued by the Society.

In addition, the Society will be participating in a historic preservation day on Sunday, May 17, 2009. The event is being sponsored by the Borough of Metuchen, with funding in part provided by the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission/Board of Chosen Freeholders, and the New Jersey Historical Commission, a Division of Cultural Affairs in the Department of State. More details to follow as plans are confirmed.



**Metuchen-Edison Historical Society
P.O. Box 61
Metuchen, NJ 08840**

Have you renewed your membership in the Society for 2009? It's never too late! Renew now and receive program notices, information about special events, and a continued subscription to this newsletter. Visit www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org or contact 732-906-0529 for more information.