



UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Next Meeting Date

Don't forget the next meeting date of September 9 which will be our picnic in the rear yard of the Hanson House, starting at 2 pm. All are invited, and bring a guest if you wish.

The Society will provide the hot dogs and hamburgers and the members are asked to bring other picnic-type food for the picnic, which will begin at 2 pm. During the afternoon our president will conduct a brief meeting that will include an announcement of the new slate of officers for the coming election in October. This slate has been worked out at the August meeting of the Executive Board.

Requests For Information

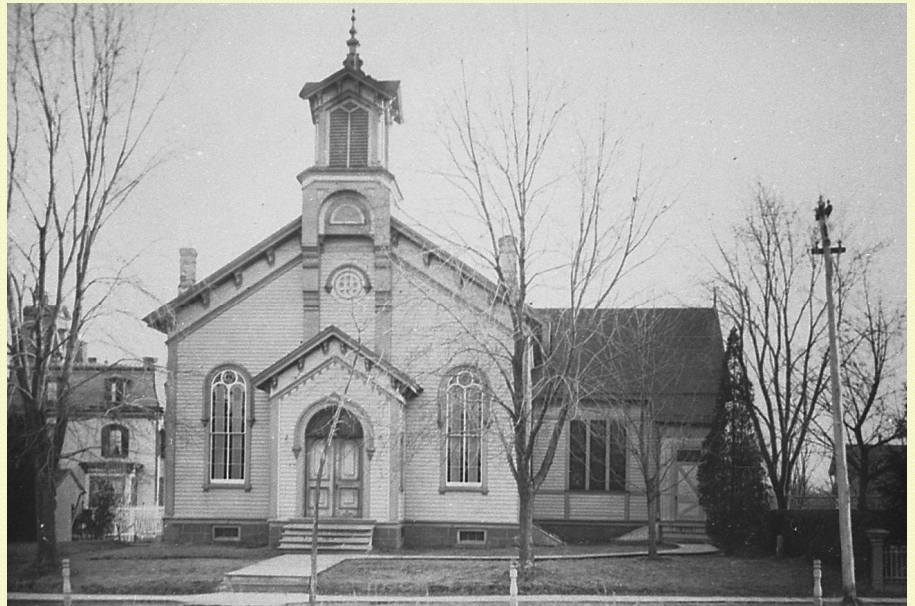
Occasionally we get email requests for any information we may be able to provide about history or ancestry. It is rare that we can help with any family history, but sometimes we can answer a historical request.

One recent question asked for information about a piece of property on Woodside Avenue in Linden, N.J. back in 1882. The writer's research in Linden's city hall claimed no such street or address in that city. We told the writer to investigate in the Borough of Roselle, as that town had a Woodside Avenue and that back in 1882 it had been a part of Linden, and did not become an independent bouough until

December 20 1894. We have not heard anything in answer.

Roselle, New Jersey. Is the

in 1964 was restored and placed in the connecting passageway between the church of 1892 and the

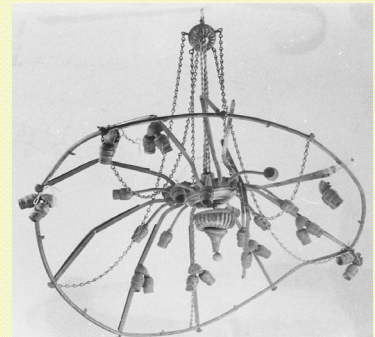


scene of another bit of history. In the month of September of 2018 the First Presbyterian Church will celebrate its one hundred fiftieth anniversary of life , as it was organized it 1868. Its first building was soon erected on West Fifth Avenue, about one hundred feet from unpaved Chestnut Street, in the new Village of Roselle, a part of Linden.

When electric lighting was introduced to the world in 1883 in Roselle, the church became the first church in the world to be lighted by Thomas Edison's incandescent light bulb, using a thirty bulb "electrolier", hanging from the ceiling.

Although badly damaged when this building was destroyed by fire in 1949, the electrolier was salvaged and

replacement chapel. It is still in use and may be seen today.



Fire-damaged electrolier



as it is today



Pictures From Our Files

The picture above is of the Boudinot Mansion, of about 1889. As shown, it was the Old Ladies Home, at 1073 East Jersey Street in Elizabeth, New Jersey, but it has a far greater history than that.

It was built in 1750 before the American Revolution as the home of Samuel Woodruff, and sold in 1772 to Elias Boudinot, an ardent patriot, and later a president of the Continental Congress of the United States. As such, he received the Treaty of Paris, that ended the revolution. In 1795 it became the home of Jonathan Dayton, the youngest signer of the United States constitution.

As originally built it was a two story Georgian style house with two wings and an attic under a peaked roof and surrounded by extensive grounds and out-buildings. Shrubbery around it gave it the name of "Boxwood Hall", a name still in use today.

Through the years it lost the two wings and the surrounding grounds to other development, but acquired a third and fourth story with a changed roof-line

For many years it was known as The Old Ladies Home, until that organization moved into its new building

on West Jersey Street. To avoid its destruction, the house was purchased by a patriotic group of citizens and given to the State of New Jersey. In 1939 restoration of the house was underway, including the removal of the two upper stories and the re-building of the roof. During this work some of the original beams



Restored Boudinot Mansion

of that roof were found to be still in place in the side-walls.

In April of 1789, George Washington stopped and had lunch in this house as he was on his way to New York to be sworn in as the first president of the recently constitutionally created United States of America.

In 1889 President Benjamin Harrison, acting as George Washington, re-created this event, which was duplicated in 1939 by an actor for the opening of the New York World's Fair.

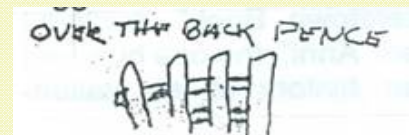
Another re-creation of this mile stone of history took place in April of 1989, when in Union County a two-day celebration took place, with actor William Summerfield playing the part of President-elect George Washington.

Many of the members celebrated the Fourth of July

in the customary way with cookouts, picnics, and seeing displays of fire-works, but on the evening of July 3, Mother Nature put on a spectacular display of loud thunder and brilliant lightning of her own. So violent was this display that many of us lost electrical power and even telephone service for a few hours. It all seems back to normal, now.

These days everyone seems to have a camera, even if it is disguised as a telephone. How many people understand why it is called a camera?

That term goes way back to long before photography was invented when some people had what was called a *camera obscura*, Latin for "black box". This was a room in a building with black walls, except for one white wall opposite a small hole in an opposing wall. This was a full-size version of what we know as a pin-hole camera, made from a shoe-box. In use, this camera obscura would project a moving image on the white wall of whatever was in range of its small-hole "lens". This image provided entertainment for an audience seated within the dark room.



Bill Frolich claims that half of 8 is 3 or 0, depending on whether you slice it vertically or horizontally.