



UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



October Meeting

The regular meeting of the Union County Historical Society was held on October 4, 2015, in the Hanson House. The annual election of officers resulted with the office of president going to Charles Shallcross, with that of 1st vice-president going to Joanne Rajoppi, and 2nd vice-president going to Bob Zkluge. Linda Daubner remains as secretary and Bill Frolich as treasurer.

After a few pleasant remarks about our recent picnic, the president thanked everyone who had assisted in making it a success, with our special thanks to Steve Yeats, who spent most of the afternoon working over a hot grill.

The program for the day was presented by our new member, John Mazurkiewicz. He put on a slide show about the hospitals in Elizabeth, which are now combined as Trinitas. John had done considerable research about this subject, and had made use of the information that he had gleaned from the archives in our office.

Refreshments were served after the meeting.

Annual Picnic

On Sunday, September 13, we held our annual picnic in the back yard of the Hanson House. Contrary to the latest weather predictions, it was a beautiful blue sky day with a gentle breeze, although late in

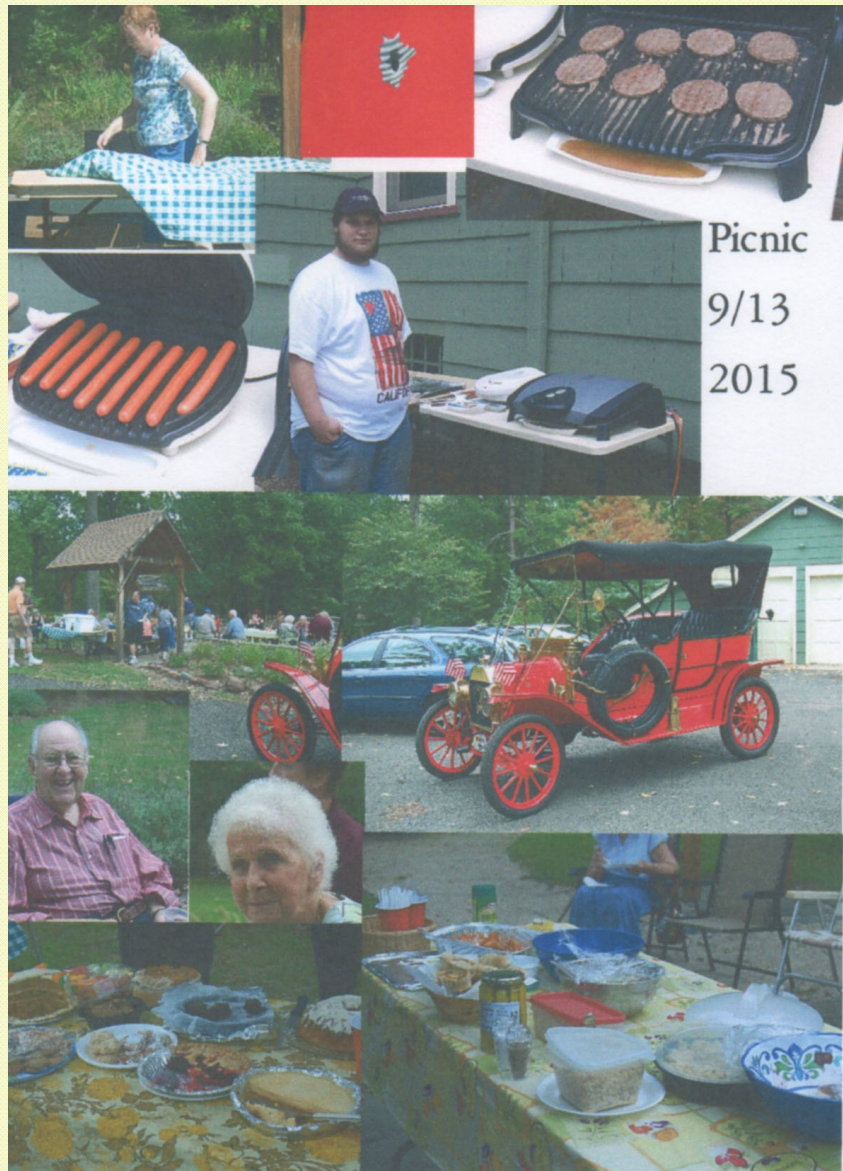
the day clouds appeared and a few drops of rain fell, but by then it was time to pack up and go home.

At least forty members and guests attended the affair and brought a great variety of food. Steve Yeats was the chef this year, and grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for the pleasure of everyone. He was kept busy all afternoon, and we thank him for his work.

As this day was also our

scheduled meeting date, a brief meeting was held, which did not interfere with the picnic. Our president announced a proposed slate of officers for the election in October, and other members reported on their activities and coming events of other societies.

A very interesting feature of the day was the presence of two antique Model T Ford



automobiles, each at least one hundred years old, and in mint condition. One was a beautiful red 1909 Ford driven in under its own power from Hillside by Herb Singe, and the other was a 1915 model in the standard black paint of early Fords. His one was driven by Bob Abbott, curator of the Singe Museum. The 1909 Ford may have been used at one time as a get-away car, as it appears to have a bullet hole in the rear.

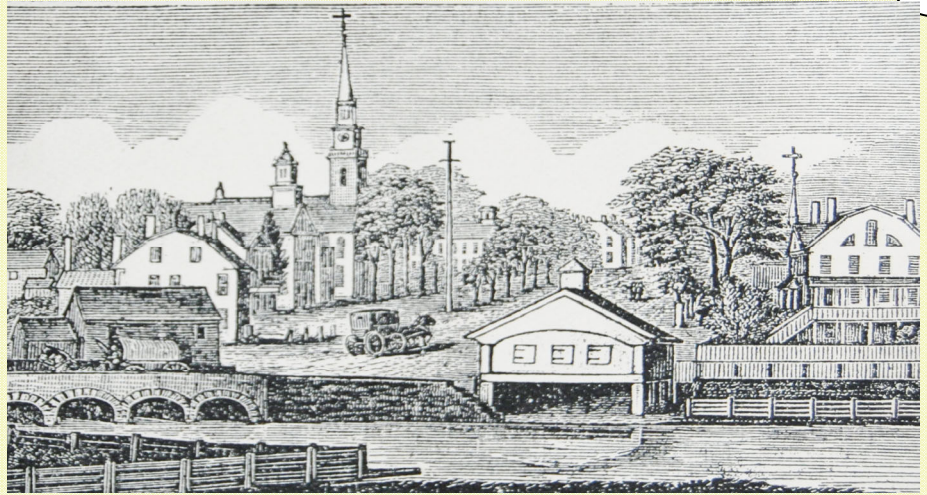
Pictures From Our Files

Here is an interesting picture showing the center of Elizabeth about 1840. It is an artist's drawing, of course, as photography was still in its experimental stage, and very few people had a "black box" or a "camera obscura" as it was known in those days.

However, the artist did a fine job, and there are many details revealed in the picture. In the lower left corner is the glebe, a plot of ground for a vegetable garden, set aside for the preacher of St. John's Church. This was next to the parsonage, not shown here as the view is from behind the building, looking north across the river.

Directly above is shown the old stone bridge, with its four arches. A horse-drawn covered wagon is on the bridge, and behind it is the sawmill built by John Ogden about 1665 to supply wooden material for the homes of the new settlers. In 1940 when a new store was being built the workers uncovered the old foundations of this mill.

A slight distance behind the mill are the buildings of the Red Lion Inn, its site now covered by the Public Library. The inn was a favorite resting place for travelers going to or



coming from the west. It was also the terminal of the Old York Road for stage coaches.

Next are the steeples of the Court House and the First Presbyterian Church, both built after the American Revolution to replace those burned by the British and Loyalists during the war. A plot of land, forty feet wide, in front of the church, is all that remains of the original town "common", a space reserved for public use.

Across the wide but still unpaved Broad Street is the freight terminal for any vessel coming up the Elizabeth River to unload its cargo. This point was the head of navigation for that river until 1952, when the construction of the New Jersey Turnpike caused the elimination of the requirement that all bridges up to Broad Street had to be of some sort of draw-span.

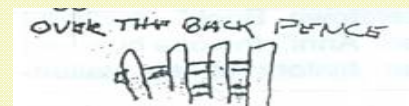
To the right in the picture can be seen the top of the steeple of St. John's Church, but plainly visible is Carteret Arms, the white hip-roofed building with the elevated porch. Built about 1790 as a tavern, in later years it also served as the Free Public Library until 1912, and existed until 1940, when it was torn down to make room for stores. No railroads are shown, as they were too new.

Lester Sargent, 1943-2015

It is with deep regret that we must report the death of friend and long-time member Lester Sargent, who died on Sunday, August 23, 2015. Les was a familiar figure in county police activities, and in our Society. He was the author of several books, and had been our chef cooking up very tasty hamburgers and hot dogs at our annual picnic. He will be missed.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Society will be at 2:00 P.M. on December 13, 2015 in the Hanson House. It will be a combined meeting with the Cranford Historical Society, with a party celebrating the coming Holiday Season. Any necessary business will be conducted as briefly as possible.



Our president, Charles Shallcross, has been working hard to encourage people to join the society, and we welcome our new members, Peter and Joyce Puglese.