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FROM THE FRONT PORCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF MOORESTOWN



House Tours and Gift Shop Hours:

Sunday 1-3 PM
Tuesdays 1-3 PM

Research Library Hours:

Tuesday 1-4 PM
Second Sunday of
each Month 1-3 PM

Address

Historical Society of
Moorestown
Smith-Cadbury Mansion
12 High St.
Moorestown, NJ 08057

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Facebook

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*Published by
The Historical Society
of Moorestown*

View From the Porch

The Historical Society has been a busy place since the last publication of our newsletter. On April 10th we held our annual meeting at the Moorestown Community House. The event was really well attended and filled the large banquet room to near capacity. Those in attendance were treated to an interesting presentation by Dr. Ilene Grossman-Bailey, senior archaeologist for Richard Grubb & Associates. Dr. Grossman-Bailey discussed her findings at the Madeira I Native American archaeological site off of Oldershaw Avenue. Required by state law, the archaeological survey yielded over 500 artifacts from small bands of Native Americans that occupied the area over a period of time dating back about 5,000 years. Dr. Grossman-Bailey discussed the site, local archaeology, and displayed some of the discovered items. At the conclusion of her remarks, she also announced that the State of New Jersey, based on her recommendation, had decided to place all of the discovered artifacts in the care of the Historical Society of Moorestown. The collection will be used in a future exhibit.

Our second big event of the spring was the *Cinco de Mayo Fiesta* fundraiser on May 10th. Over 160 people attended the event which was held at the home of Paul and Jamie Martin on East Oak Ave. A great time was had by all and the proceeds will serve to kick start our fundraising effort for the *Pathway to History*, our project to make Smith-Cadbury fully accessible to all of our members and friends. Many thanks to the excellent committee that put together such a terrific event: Julie Maravich, Lynne Brill, Mary Berardi, Jill Weiss, Sara Homer and Cathy Hartley.

The Historical Society also found itself front and center at the town's annual Memorial Day ceremony. The Memorial Day Committee made the decision to make the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War a major focus of this year's event, and given that the topic is also the subject of our current exhibit, we were able to give the committee a great deal of assistance. In conjunction with the Memorial Day events, the Smith-Cadbury Mansion was open in the hours immediately following the conclusion of the ceremony to accommodate those in attendance who wanted to learn more about the role Moorestonians played during the Civil War.

The news was not all good for us this spring however, as we were all deeply saddened by the loss of friend, colleague, and long time Treasurer, Harry Koons. The great Harry Koons, a legendary figure, not only of our board, but in the entire town, passed away suddenly on April 22nd. Harry had served with distinction on our board and as our Treasurer for the past 17 years. He did an excellent job handling our affairs, and was always willing to volunteer for whatever we were doing. We will all miss him very much. The board elected Cathy Hartley to replace Harry as Treasurer.

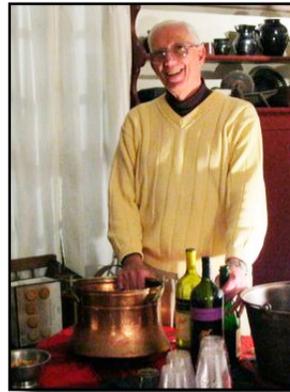
Lenny Wagner, President

JUNE 2014



Harry Koons served as the HSM Treasurer for 17 years; we'll miss him and his smile

On April 22nd, we got the sad news that our good friend and fellow board member, Harry Koons, had passed away. He was passionate about his town and always willing to give his time. Harry was a fixture at all the HSM events: always helpful and good-natured. It was a pleasure to be associated with him over the years and we will all miss him very much, as will the entire town.



I particularly appreciated Harry for his efficiency and promptness. Any time Acquisitions' expenses were submitted to him, he re-imbursed the very next day. In fact, he hand-delivered the checks to my front door. His was always a professional performance. (Ann Condon)

The Interesting History of Moorestown Homes

417 East Second Street

As we research house histories for the house plaque program, we learn many interesting details about these Moorestown homes and the lives of the people who lived in them. We'll be sharing a few of the highlights.

The c. 1890 large Victorian house at 417 East Second Street, with its unique cupola, is one of the more distinguished and recognizable homes in Moorestown. It was the personal home of contractor John S. Rogers (1857 -1908), one of the town's most prominent and upstanding citizens. According to his obituary in the NJ Mirror,

"He was born on a farm at Fellowship and his early life was spent in agricultural pursuits. Later he entered the employ of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, rapidly rising until he became chief clerk for W. N. Bannard, who at that time was superintendent of the Amboy Division. About eighteen years ago he embarked as a contractor and builder and he succeeded in establishing a very extensive business. Mr. Rogers was prominent in Masonic matters, as much interested in the firemen of the State, at the time of his death having been president of Relief Fire Company, and was a member of Mount Holly Lodge of Elks. The funeral held on Saturday (presumably a reference to March 7, 1908) was largely attended."

Rogers was a Quaker and active in civic affairs. He was on the Board of Directors of the Moorestown Electric Light, Heat and Power Co in 1889. He served on the Moorestown Board of Health (1891), was the Commissioner of Deeds (1893), and the Supervisor for the building of Bridgeboro, Stanwick and Mt. Laurel Roads. In 1905 he was on a special MIA committee to ensure the purity of the water supply. He owned a lumber and coal yard off of Third St. near the Stanwick Station. As the owner of the J S Rogers Building and Construction Company, he built the North Pemberton Railroad Station (now on the National Register of Historic Places), the row houses on Beech St. (since burned down), and 6 twin houses on Linden Ave. His company also built parts of Moorestown Friends High School, Our Lady of Good Counsel School and the sidewalks on Chester Ave.

— Stephanie Herz

The Historical Society of Moorestown

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EVERYONE READING THIS PIECE “DIGS”

Moorestown, but Dr. Ilene Grossman-Bailey does it literally. At the April 10, 2014 meeting of the Historical Society of Moorestown, she shared the details of her 2011 – 2012 archaeological excavation of the area around Oldershaw Avenue. Dr. Grossman-Bailey currently serves as the Senior Archaeologist at Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc. She enlightened the group on the finer details of archaeological surveying.



For the Society’s benefit she concentrated on the digs at the Madeira I and II sites; both of which took place in our own back yard, literally.

Dr. Grossman-Bailey commenced her remarks with a brief tutorial on archaeology. She defined the field as “the study of past cultures through material remains.” Three items that they investigate are sites of past human activities, artifacts and features. She defined a feature as an artifact that’s located in the ground. Some examples would include building foundations and outhouses. She explained that many interesting items have been extracted from the latter. The criticality of understanding the context of different artifacts came up during the course of her lecture.

Dr. Grossman-Bailey explicated the nomenclature for archaeological projects. She used the Madeira I Site, number 28BU740, as an example. The “28” means the dig took place in New Jersey. The “BU” indicates the county, in this case, Burlington. The last three characters mean that this is the 740th registered site in the state. To date the New Jersey State Museum has registered over 6,000 of them.

We’ve all heard the tales of Indian sounds coming from the bottom of Stokes Hill on dark nights. Now we’ve got the proof these hunter-gatherers spent time in our present day neighborhood. Dr. Grossman-Bailey displayed some of the artifacts recovered. They included hammer stones, which ancient people used for making stone tools. In addition the team found two ceramic pieces. They dated one at 2000 years old. The other was a relative newcomer at only 500 years. Some of these objects showed signs of being heated in a fire. This proved that early inhabitants of the area used them for cooking.

The objects she spent the most time discussing were the small pipe fragments. Some of the ones she unearthed had the appearance of wood grain. They tend to be popular finds at archaeological digs. Interestingly, historians can’t agree on why ancients used them. Some speculate the pipes served as musical instruments. Others hypothesize archaic societies used them as part of a ritual. There are even some researchers who suspect the pipes might have even been used for smoking. (Imagine that.)

Someone at the HSM Meeting asked Dr. Grossman-Bailey if anyone knew what the ancients smoked. Regrettably, the current testing method (called FTIR) hasn’t been able to identify the substances. This explained why the artifacts she brought to the meeting hadn’t been cleaned. With the way that technology advances, the hope is that future scientists will have more advanced testing systems to determine the contents of the pipes.

In terms of actual excavation methods, Dr. Grossman-Bailey explained that archaeologists will perform a Phase I Survey which she defined as a general search over a wide area. From there a Phase II Survey will focus on a precise range where the team discovers artifacts. Afterwards, data recovery, or a Phase III Survey will commence. At the Madeira I and II sites in Moorestown, they recovered 500 artifacts. In terms of digging a team will go two to three feet down. Should they discover artifacts or features, they’ll excavate another foot.

Dr. Grossman-Bailey is the latest in a distinguished line of people interested in Moorestown’s ancient past. She discussed how local resident Dorothy Middleton collected and displayed archaeological finds from the surrounding area, spending fifty years digging into our history and displaying the items from the 1920s through the 1970s. According to Dr. O. Kirk Spurr, Ms. Middleton “compiled the fourth largest collection of its type in North America” at her Thunderbird Museum. (This is from the advertisement for his book *Dorothy’s Dream: Dorothy Middleton and Her Indian Artifact Museum*. For those interested, it’s for sale on the American Society for Amateur Archaeology’s web site.) Unfortunately, her collection was sold off following her passing.

Dr. Grossman-Bailey dug up a lot of interesting pieces of Moorestown’s past. She shared them with the society both literally and figuratively. Interestingly, she suspects that her team didn’t excavate the entire site. Who knows? Some lucky Moorestown residents may soon discover the archaeological find of this century in his or her back yard. We can all dig that.

— Kevin Stephany

Library News

As we wrap up another year filled with providing research assistance, processing new acquisitions, maintaining the library and archives, and cataloging the historical society's extensive collection, I'd like to recognize the contributions of our dedicated volunteers whose expertise is vital to the furthering of the Historical Society's mission. Many thanks to Bill Archer, Jill Weiss and our newest volunteer, Barbara Friedman for all their help.

Third-Grade Tours of Smith-Cadbury Made Possible by Dedicated Volunteers

Every spring, the Moorestown 3rd grade public school curriculum focuses on local history. The Historical Society conducts guided tours of the Smith-Cadbury mansion with each of the 3rd grade classes from each of the three elementary schools in town. This year, 13 third grade classes with over 300 students will have toured the mansion, guided by our inspiring and enthusiastic school tour docents. We recognize, with great appreciation, school tour organizer and docent, Cathy Ruff, Lynne Brill, Lisa Hammell, Julie Maravich, Edmund Moore, Diane Matisoff, and Barbara Rabinovich. Thank you for bringing history to life for the next generation!

— Stephanie Herz



Moorestown During the Civil War Exhibit Common Men of Valor

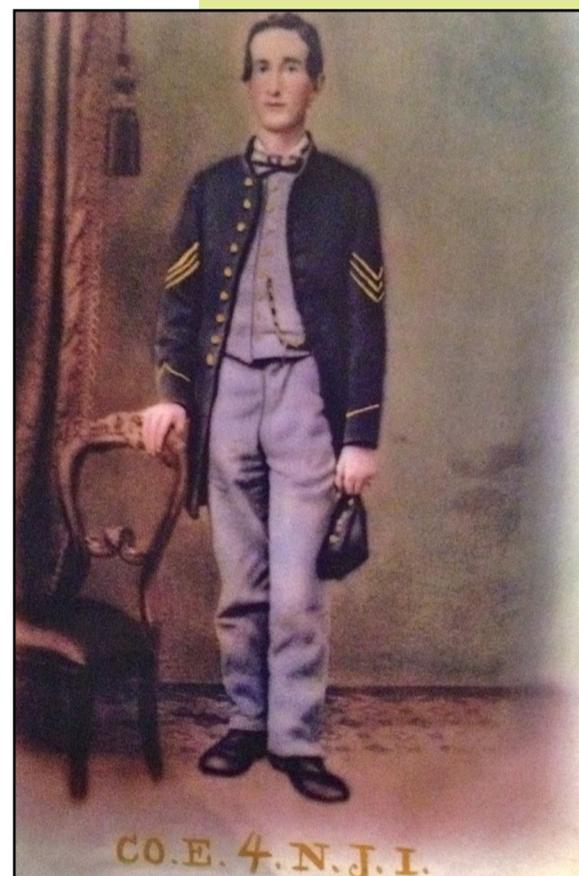
Those of us who believe history helps define the character of a country, have probably spent a fair amount of time acquiring what we hope is a clearer understanding of what our country has stood for and what it has stood against. With the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War, we continue to learn about the events that led our country to this turning point in our nation's history. We are familiar with the politics involved that resulted in a civil war rather than more conflict resolution. We are aware of the moral, religious and cultural positions offering how a just outcome brings a war to its close, so this study of war is all very intriguing.

Perhaps even more intriguing, however, is the inquiry into what makes the citizenry, the baker, the tanner, the grocer, and farmer find within themselves to do whatever it takes to implement the decisions of the senator, the lawyer, the landowner and other "influentials" who have been unable to resolve the conflicts. Our Men from Moorestown did just that. These common men had character and that character provided them with the strength to leave their pleasant provincial lives and volunteer to transform themselves into soldiers—not of fortune, but rather soldiers of faith and fortitude.

"The genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors;—but always most in the common people." [Walt Whitman]

Well, that describes George Wiltshire and all the Georges, and Thomases, Roberts, and Johns in the Civil War and, for that matter, all wars. This transformation of common ("common: belonging to, or affecting the whole of a community or the public") men to become inspirations to other men is one that defies the conventions they thought they were going to live by. This is not by any means representative of only the Civil War, but of all wars in all eras and in all corners of the globe fighting to preserve, protect, or promulgate belief systems.

Somehow these common men do it. They volunteer and dig deep to find the courage, relinquish comfortable lives and endure sacrifice for a principle. Youthful optimism and a sense of invincibility may contribute, but very early on, that unrealistic image is fleeting when faced with the harsh reality. These common men persisted until victory was attained.



George
Wiltshire



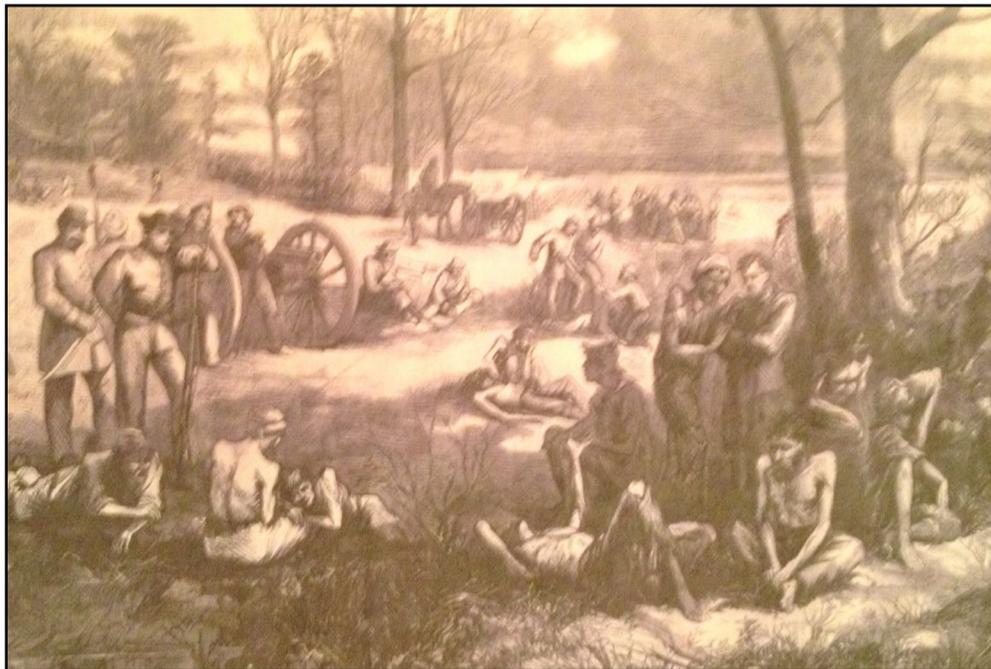
One of these common, ordinary, average men was George Wiltshire. George was born in 1842, lived on Second Street in Moorestown and was 19 years old when he joined the Army in 1861. He was part of the 1st New Jersey Infantry serving in the unit's 4th Regiment Company E. He listed his occupation as "farmer."

Despite being wounded twice he served for the entire duration of the Civil War. After serving for two years, George reenlisted in 1863. At the *Moorestown During the Civil War* Exhibit at Smith-Cadbury, you can actually see George's reenlistment papers:

"And I, George Wiltshire, here in Moorestown in the state of New Jersey aged twenty one and by occupation of farmer (his name, town, state, age, occupation written in his own hand) do hereby acknowledge to have volunteered... to serve as a soldier in the Army of the United States of America for the period of three years solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America ...and I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies and opposers whomsoever and I will observe and obey the President of the United States and the orders of the officers according to the Rules and Articles of War... on this day of December 21st, 1863."

Two years earlier George was a farmer, now a soldier of fortitude.

The men from Company E saw their first real action during the Battle of Gaines' Mill in the early hours of June 27, 1862, the third of the Seven Day Battles, when Union troops established a new defensive line north of Chickahominy River in Virginia. Anxious to renew his assaults from the day before, Confederate General Robert E. Lee sent the bulk of his force forward driving the Union troops, with Company E among them, across the Chickahominy River (map on display at Smith-Cadbury). Company E fought back successive waves of Lee's attacks but George Wiltshire and 400 members of the 4th Regiment from Moorestown's Company E were surrounded and eventually captured by Lee's troops.



Artist's sketch of Belle Isle Prison published in the December 5, 1863 edition of Harper's Weekly

capture and everything connected with their antecedent history. They resemble, in many respect, patients laboring under cretinism. They were filthy in the extreme, covered in vermin ... all were extremely emaciated..."

What devastation for those surviving and for the many that succumbed. George and others in Company E were imprisoned as POWs for two months and released as part of a prisoner release program. Despite being wounded twice, it was his time in Belle Isle Prison that had a lasting effect on George's life. It was said that he was never able to eat a normal diet for the remainder of his life. Soon after their release, they found themselves back in the fight and by the end of the war, Company E had participated in 32 different engagements.



Reunion photo of New Jersey 4th Regiment Company E

At the Battle of Gaines' Mill, Robert E. Lee's soldiers had made a number of attacks against Porter's lines. At 7pm, with additional Confederate forces now in position, Lee unleashed upwards of 32,000 men—sixteen brigades—in a powerful assault against the Federal lines.

George Wiltshire, along with Company E, was in the midst of the general scene and they were sent to the notorious Belle Isle Prison camp in Richmond, Va. Between 1862 and 1865, Belle Isle was home to 30,000 POWs and as many as 1000 died. After examining some soldiers released from the prison in 1864, Surgeon Peter Dewitt observed men "laboring under such diseases as chronic diarrhoea, phthisis, pulmonalis (tuberculosis), scurvy, frost bites, general debility, caused

by starvation, neglect and exposure. Many of them had partially lost their reason, forgetting even the date of their

Common Men of Valor (continued on next page)

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A very big thank-you to all our members who sent in their renewal forms and dues!

Your continued support of the Historical Society is noteworthy! Also, it was exciting to see a good number of our members expressing an interest in volunteering at the Historical Society; we will be in contact!

At this time, the Society extends a warm welcome and thanks to our newest members and donors:

New Members:

Caroline Rose Muccifori

Contributor Level & Above:

Mrs. Janis Granger-Sparacio • Alyce Klaus • Linda & Louis Vizi • Gerald & Toni Lord • Ms. Ann Condon • Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Garza • Marlise & Bob Bickel • Mark & Carolyn Nachmias • Thomas T. Wittmann • Alfred & Ann Driscoll • Samuel E. Lippincott • Julie & Nick Maravich • Brian & Maureen Deam • Mrs. Darby Fleetwood-Shelley • Mr. & Mrs. Baird Foster • Robert & Sally Hartman • Susan & John Coleman • Sarah Powers Kirn • Ms. LaVonne Camp • Mrs. Audrey L. Shinn • Mike & Ann Ramage • Randolph & Karen Binter • Mrs. Elizabeth O. Volckening

If you did not receive a renewal form in the mail or have misplaced it, you can use the form below.

Have a wonderful summer!

Jill Weiss, Membership Chair

Common Men of Valor (continued)

In the 1900 reunion photo of Company E, we are unable to identify each of the Men from Moorestown. In 1900, George would have been 58 years old. Perhaps you will note some similarity to George Wiltshire's photo at age 21 to the 1900 photo? George died in 1925 at the age of 83 and is buried in Colestown Cemetery. George lived long enough to see his son Roland serve in World War I.

I hope your interest is piqued now, as ours was, and you will visit the exhibit to see the actual trunk George Wiltshire used in the war, the Prisoner of War record from his time in Belle Isle Prison, and his Civil War Pension Application of 1907—written in his own hand! There are also maps of the Gaines' Mill Battle and artist renditions of POWS in prison camps as well as many other interesting things.

—Mary Berardi

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW
RENEWAL

NAME(S):

ADDRESS:

DATE:

TELEPHONE #:

EMAIL:

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY:

BASIC MEMBERSHIP:

Student \$10 ____

Individual/Family \$35 ____

DONOR LEVELS:

Contributor \$100-499 ____

Patron \$500-999 ____

Benefactor \$1,000+ ____

Make check payable to:

Historical Society of Moorestown

Mail to: Jill Weiss,

Membership Chair

440 E. Main St. Moorestown,

NJ 08057

New members are always welcome. If you have a friend or neighbor who might be interested in joining the Historical Society, please encourage them to contact Jill Weiss via email (jill@thewio.com).

We are always in need of volunteers... Thank you!

Jobs — big and small — that we need help with:

Activities/Events: Helps plan, organize and hold Society events.

Docents: Museum and special exhibit guides.

Exhibits: Helps create interesting displays.

Fund Raising: Helps plan and hold income-generating events.

Museum: Helps with maintaining collection.

Oral History: Collects oral histories and oversees written work.

Photography: Attends events and take digital photos for our archives and publicity.

Programs: Helps select programs and speakers, coordinates meetings.

Publicity/News/Web:

Helps get Society information to the members and public.

If you can help out, call the Society at 856-235-0353 or email Jill Weiss

jill@thewio.com



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 2014

Ongoing exhibit *Moorestown During the Civil War*

- 1 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 3 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours 1-4
- 7 Moorestown Day: come visit our booth on Main St.
- 8 *Smith-Cadbury* tours & research library, 1-3
- 10 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours 1-4
- 15 *Smith-Cadbury* closed for Father's Day
- 17 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours 1-4
- 22 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 24 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours 1-4
- 29 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3

JULY/AUGUST 2014

Smith-Cadbury CLOSED for the summer



Bill Archer on Main Street

SEPTEMBER 2014

Ongoing exhibit *Moorestown During the Civil War*

- 7 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3

Call for Docents

We are seeking docents for the 2014-15 season that starts in September. If you love sharing our local history and can offer a few hours to conduct Sunday afternoon tours from 1 to 3 pm, please contact Edmund E. Moore at 856-662-6757 or email the Society at moorestownhistory@verizon.net



A Pathway to History

Thanks to everyone who helped make our *Cinco de Mayo Fiesta* such a success. It was a fun night with great music and food in a lovely setting. The profits from this fundraiser will help us install an ADA-accessible bricked path to the historic Smith-Cadbury Mansion.

The event was held at "Robinwood" the home of Jamie and Paul Martin on East Oak Avenue. Here is a history of the house and some of its early occupants:

Samuel Allen (1841-1918) was an inventor and manufacturer of agricultural equipment and held almost 300 patents for various farm implements. Since farming is a warm weather activity, Samuel wished to devise something that could be used during the winter. This led to what is probably the best known of all of Allen's inventions: the *Flexible Flyer* — the first steerable runner sled.

The sled was put to the test at the Westtown School in Pennsylvania and at Ivystone, the ancestral farm of the Allen family in what is now Cinnaminson, New Jersey. *Breidenhart*, the eventual home of the Allen family in Moorestown, was built in 1894 — five years after the invention of the *Flexible Flyer* and directly across Main Street from Stokes Hill. It was the ideal place to put the *Flexible Flyer* to good use.

The children of Samuel Leeds Allen and Sarah Hooton Roberts, who would benefit from such a happy invention were: Elizabeth Roberts Allen, Henry Gibbons Allen, Anna W. Roberts Allen, Susan Janney Allen, Charles Jackson Allen, and Emily Hooton Allen.

Charles J. Allen was born in 1878. He was a bicycle racer and attended Haverford College. In 1903, he married Henrietta Griswold Benson, a graduate of Brown University. Henrietta was a teacher and taught for several years at the Moorestown Friends School. Like his father, Charles was also an inventor and manufacturer of farm implements. He received a number of patents for his inventions, some involving tractors. Charles and Henrietta had four children: Samuel, Esther, Rodman, and John.

The family first lived at 56 East Main Street. On April 1, 1914, Charles purchased a lot at 321 East Oak Avenue from Martha A. French and Beulah & John Haines and built a large house. Henrietta was a member of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and this association, no doubt, led to the fine landscaping of this beautiful property on East Oak Avenue.



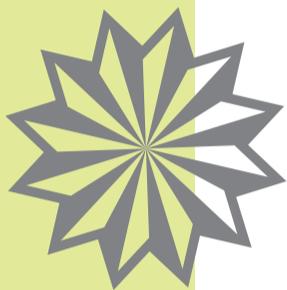
(House Rendering by Midge Ingersoll; House Research by Lisa Hammell)



Historical Society of Moorestown

Smith-Cadbury Mansion
12 High Street, Box 477
Moorestown, NJ 08057

Return Service requested



JUNE 2014

Moorestown, N. J.—The **Moorestown** Electric Light, Heat and Power Company; capital, \$50,000; divided into 2,000 shares at a par value of \$25 each. Of the total amount of stock but one half, or \$25,000, is to be issued unless absolutely necessary. The incorporators subscribed for 52 shares, or \$1,300. It is proposed to purchase two compound condensing engines of 50 horse-power each, and two dynamos of 500 lights each.

Moorestown, N. J.—The **Moorestown**, N. J., Electric Light, Heat and Power Company has elected the following directors: Rev. J. H. Lamb, E. W. Perkins, Geo. W. Heaton, John S. Rogers, Rufus Hill, Albert C. Heulings, J. S. Riehle, William H. Roberts and Dr. P. Wilson. President, Rev. J. H. Lamb; vice-president, E. W. Perkins; treasurer, Albert C. Heulings; secretary, J. S. Rogers.

SOURCE: ELECTRIC POWER. A Monthly Journal devoted to the interests of the ELECTRIC RAILWAY and the TRANSMISSION OF POWER, LIGHT AND HEAT BY ELECTRICITY (VOL. I, January to December, 1889)

The plant of the **Moorestown** Electric Light Company, of **Moorestown**, N. J., is now in operation, but no charge for lights will be made until December 1st. Subscriptions have already been received for lamps aggregating about 21,000 c. p., the full capacity of the present plant, and no more orders will be received until the plant can be increased.

SOURCE: LIGHT, HEAT AND POWER, The Independent Gas Journal of America (VOL. VI-VII, 1889)

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Moorestown Electric Light, Heat and Power Company

John S. Rogers, whose house is described on page 2, was on the Board of Directors of the *Moorestown Electric Light, Heat and Power Company*. In 1889 the company had \$50,000 worth of capital and were proposing to “purchase two compound condensing engines of 50 horse-power each, and two dynamos of 500 lights each.”

The Annual Report of the State Board of Assessors of the State of New Jersey reported that the company had Gross Receipts of \$8763.35 in 1899.

According to the NJ State Library (http://slic.njstatelib.org/slic_files/searchable_publications/corp/NJCORPn440.html), the company was incorporated in 1889 and in existence until 1939.