

CUMBERLAND PATRIOT

**Cumberland County Historical Society
Greenwich, NJ**



Articles

"The Crisis of the 'Mormon Menace': 'Anti-Mormon' Sentiment in Bridgeton, NJ 1905-1911 Part 1"

By Brittney Ingersoll
p. 1-3

"Jailbreak!"

By Theodore Ritter
p. 3-6

Oral History: "Memories Of A Forgotten Bridgeton"

By Joseph DeLuca
p. 6-9

Dallas Lore Sharp and the 2016 documentary film "Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War"

By Joseph Mathews
p. 9-11

"Looking for the 'Nordic' Oyster Boat"

By Warren Adams
p. 11

Contact Information

Mail: Po Box 16

Greenwich, NJ 08323

Phone: 856-455-8580

Email: cchistsoc@verizon.net

Website: cchistsoc.org

CUMBERLAND PATRIOT COMMITTEE

Richard Adamczyk
 Taylor Carter
 Andrew Ingersoll
 Brittney Ingersoll
 Joe Mathews
 Thomas Sheppard

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Thomas Sheppard, President
 Linda S. Hruza-Jones, Vice President
 Ian Hughes, Secretary
 Jacqueline Gates, Treasurer

2021 – 2023	2023 – 2026	2022 – 2024
Richard Adamczyk	Joe DeLuca	Robert Francois
Jacqueline Gates	Linda S. Hruza-Jones	Brittney Ingersoll
John Butterfield	Ian Hughes	Michele Mazzeo
Ruth Ann Fox	Ken Miller	Paul H. Ritter, III
Andrew Ingersoll	Thomas Sheppard	Robert Brewer
Charles Reinhart	Judith Uber	Charles Viel
Theodore H. Ritter	Dr. Charles Valentine	Taylor Carter
Robert A. Woodruff, Sr.		

Freeholder Douglas Albrecht, Liaison
 Freeholder Donna M. Pearson, Alternate

Warren & Reba Lummis Genealogical & Historical Library
 856-455-8580
 Wednesday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 Sunday 1 to 4 p.m.
 Closed mid-December to first week in January

c. 1730 Gibbon House
 856-455-4055
 Tuesday through Sunday 1 to 4 p.m.
 Closed mid-December, January, February and March

The Alan Ewing Carman Museum of Prehistory of Cumberland County
 856-455-8141
 Saturday and Sunday 1 to 4 p.m.
 Closed mid-December, January, February and March

1852 John DuBois Maritime Museum
 856-455-1774

Due to maintenance repair, the Maritime Museum is temporarily closed and will reopen in April of 2023

The Crisis of the "Mormon Menace": "Anti-Mormon" Sentiment in Bridgeton, NJ 1905-1911 Part I

By Brittney Ingersoll

Religious fervor during the Second Great Awakening in the western part of New York State caused the area to become known as the "Burned Over District." Many different religious groups formed in this area, and arguably one of the most well-known was the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, also known as the Mormons. (1) The Church was founded by Joseph Smith, Jr. on April 6, 1830, in Fayette, NY. The organization became highly known, feared, and criticized for practicing polygamy, which ended in 1890 yet it was rumored to have continued. In addition to polygamy, the group was also known for their missionaries and proselytizing measures. The fear of polygamy spreading throughout their communities caused many to become hostile toward the members, with some individuals (particularly in the south) reacting with violence. This hostility, although it did not

result in bloodshed, existed in Cumberland County. The Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union and other local reform organizations held "Anti-Mormon" meetings between c. 1905-1916. Though the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints formed in the Burned Over District, its flames spread throughout the country. (2)

Joseph Smith, Jr. claimed that between 1823 and 1829, he was visited by an angel named Moroni who told him of buried gold plates inscribed with ancient writing in a mountain near his home. The angel Moroni then bestowed Smith with the ability to translate the plates. From these plates, it is believed that Smith wrote the Book of Mormon, which was published in March 1830. In 1835, Smith published more of his revelations in a book titled *Doctrine & Covenants*. Smith and his wife, Emma, relocated to Kirtland, Ohio in 1831. The construction of the Erie Canal made this an easy move. Seven years later in 1838, Smith moved again, this time to Far West, Missouri. Smith and the Church's time in Missouri only lasted a year, and the state expelled them. From Missouri they moved to Nauvoo, Illinois. In 1842, Smith became the mayor of Nauvoo. In 1844, using new libel laws, Smith approved the removal of the newspaper, *Nauvoo Expositor*. The paper was

(1) Sarah Jane Weaver, "Mormon" Is Out: Church Releases Statement on How to Refer to the Organization," *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, (August 16, 2018), <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/mormon-is-out-church-releases-statement-on-how-to-refer-to-the-organization?lang=eng> The church has renounced the use of the term "Mormon." I will refrain from using this term throughout the article except for direct quotes.

(2) Whitney Cross, "The Great Revival, "The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850 (Michigan: University of Michigan, 1950), 3-13; "Joseph Smith," *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/joseph-smith?lang=eng>; "The Manifesto and the End of Plural Marriage," *Church History: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/the-manifesto-and-the-end-of-plural-marriage?lang=eng>;

Patrick Mason, "Introduction," *The Mormon Menace: Violence and Anti-Mormonism in the Postbellum South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 3-21

outspoken against Smith and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The decision led to a riot and Smith enacting martial law. Smith and his brother, Hyrum, fled the state. Charged with inciting a riot, Smith and Hyrum turned themselves in to the authorities in Carthage, Illinois. While being held in Carthage jail, the brothers were shot and killed by a mob who attacked the jail. After Joseph Smith's death, Brigham Young took over as the leader of the Church. Young moved and established the new Church settlements in Utah. (3)

During the Victorian period, the general public was fearful of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints because of their polygamist practices. Victorians had strict social roles in which they deeply valued the family unit and used the family to display their status within society. Men showed their manhood by their ability to have a wife and children and being able to financially support them, so wives did not have to work and were responsible for caring

for the home. Wives and children were considered possessions of their husbands and father. Plural marriages threatened the Victorian family, which ultimately threatened their way of life. Men were fearful that their wives would be taken from them and become one of the many wives of LDS men. This fear was magnified in publications, especially in erotic literature, in which Latter-Day Saints men were presented with dominant characteristics and women were portrayed as passive. Non-LDS society viewed polygamy as licentious and disrespectful to women. This fear and ultimately anger led Church missionaries to experience hostility and violence during their mission trips. (4)

After growing tensions, laws, and the Edmunds-Tucker Act from the U.S. Congress, the Church renounced polygamy in 1890. The Edmunds-Tucker Act "...dissolved the corporation of the Church and directed that all Church property over \$50,000 be forfeited to the government." (5) Although the Church

- (3) Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2007), p. 144-145; "Angel Moroni," *Church History: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/angel-moroni>; "Book of Mormon First Edition (1830)," *Church History: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/content/library/book-of-mormon>; "Introduction," *Doctrine and Covenants*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/dc-testament/introduction>; "Chapter Four: Establishing Zion in Missouri," *Our Heritage: A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1996), 37–53; Alexander L. Baugh, "Joseph Smith in Northern Missouri," in *Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer*, ed. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Kent P. Jackson (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2010), 291–346.; "Joseph Smith: The Murder of the Mormon Prophet and the Subsequent Trial," *Illinois History & Lincoln Collections*, (October 11, 2018), <https://publish.illinois.edu/ihlc-blog/2018/10/11/joseph-smith-the-murder-of-the-mormon-prophet-and-subsequent-trial/>; "Joseph Smith: Prophet and City Leader," *Church History: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/content/museum/joseph-smith-office-sign>; "Succession of Church Leadership," *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/succession-of-church-leadership>; "Brigham Young, Second President of the Church," *Church History: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/landing/prophets-of-the-restoration/brigham-young>
- (4) Patrick Mason, "Introduction," *The Mormon Menace: Violence and Anti-Mormonism in the Postbellum South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 3-21; Craig L. Foster, "Victorian Pornographic Imagery in Anti-Mormon Literature," *Journal of Mormon History* 19 (Spring 1993), p. 115–32
- (5) "The Manifesto and the End of Plural Marriage," *Church History: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/the-manifesto-and-the-end-of-plural-marriage>

claimed it was done practicing polygamy, rumors persisted and the Church's reputation as polygamists continued. This continuing resentment led many organizations to hold "anti-Mormon" meetings where they discussed what they called the "Mormon menace." In Bridgeton, these meetings tended to be held by the Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union (YWCTU) and at local churches. In October 1905, the YWCTU held a meeting at the MP Church where they signed a petition to remove Senator Reed Smoot, who was a member of the Church, from Congress. After many similar efforts targeted the Senator, Smoot still retained his position and served five terms. Several other "anti-Mormon" meetings were held in Bridgeton between 1905-1916. In February 1909, people were particularly excited about Hans P. Freece's lecture at the West Church with the Fayette Street Friends. Freece was a former member of the Church who gave talks titled "Mormonism in Politics" and "The Inside of Mormonism." The year prior, Freece published a book titled *The Letters of an Apostate Mormon to His Son*. (6)

The "anti-Mormon" sentiment in Bridgeton stemmed from a larger concern and fear that existed throughout the country. Victorians viewed polygamist practices as a threat to manhood, womanhood, and the family structure. These fears inspired hostility toward members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints from society and the

government.

--

Brittney Ingersoll is the Curator of CCHS. She received her MA in American History with a Certificate in Public History from Rutgers University-Camden.

Jailbreak!

By Theodore H Ritter

The following article was initially published in the 2012 Cumberland County Bar Association newsletter. Reprinting with permission.

We routinely take for granted the difficult and often unpleasant work performed by the officers of the Cumberland County Department of Corrections. Reconsider that as we look at an incident brought to mind by the recent passing of William P. Doherty, Jr. It occurred near the end of Bill's tenure as County Prosecutor.

The series of tumultuous events began at 6:50 a.m., on Saturday, June 2, 1979.

The five-story jail building facing Atlantic Street had not yet been constructed. The structure next to Rudolphi's, on Broad Street, was known as "the new jail", and is connected to the 1909 Cumberland County Court House by a wing which, in 1979, contained the main entrance to the Jail as well as the offices

(6) "The Manifesto and the End of Plural Marriage," Church History: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/the-manifesto-and-the-end-of-plural-marriage?lang=eng>; "Members of Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union Will Hold Anti-Mormon Meeting," Bridgeton Evening News, (October 28, 1905); "Ex-Mormon Coming to West Church," Bridgeton Evening News, (September 3, 1909) ; "Reed Owen Smoot: A Featured Biography," United States Senate, https://www.senate.gov/senators/FeaturedBios/Featured_Bio_Smoot.htm

of the Cumberland County Sheriff's Department.

Correction Officers Frank Hudnall, age 21 and Anthony D'Argenzio, age 22, were nearing the end of their midnight shift. While retrieving breakfast trays, on the second floor, D'Argenzio was attacked by several inmates. He was overpowered and his keys were taken.

Hudnall saw what had happened to his partner and ran to the safety of the second-floor guardroom where he locked the door behind him and alerted his superiors.

Two of the inmates who had taken D'Argenzio hostage tried to break into the guardroom door but were unsuccessful.

Inmate Jerome Harvey, already serving a double life sentence for two murders, was the ringleader of the prisoner uprising. He had been transferred from maximum security custody at Trenton State Prison to the Cumberland County Jail where he was on trial, before the Honorable Paul R. Porreca and a jury, for an escape from Leesburg State Prison.

Harvey threatened to execute D'Argenzio if Hudnall did not open the guardroom door. Hudnall relented, at which point, the inmates had two hostages and began bargaining their planned escape from the Jail.

Meanwhile, all law enforcement agencies were notified and the jail emergency management plan was implemented. Bridgeton Police Chief, Richard Gaunt, arrived at the scene and assumed command.

Gaunt positioned his department's S.W.A.T. team sniper sharpshooters in the Court House Clock Tower and in the second-floor windows of the Hillcrest Tavern building above the Coach Room Restaurant.

Other officers sealed off Route 49 and all traffic was re-routed.

County Prosecutor Doherty also arrived on the scene where he conferred with Sheriff George Castellini, Sheriff's Lieutenant Dennis Flukey, and Police Chief Gaunt.

Although Bill was technically the highest-ranking law enforcement official on the scene, he wisely chose to leave the trained police professional - Gaunt - in charge of the tactical operation aimed at regaining control of the jail.

Jerome Harvey was demanding that the officers outside be removed and that cars be provided for Harvey and his confederates' escape.

Two of Harvey's accomplices in the plot were Dennis Elton Hughes, age 24, of East Orange and Jerome Sheppard, a/k/a Tommie Jones, age 30, of Irvington. The latter two had been apprehended, in Salem, while fleeing the April 30, 1979, armed robbery of the Hopewell Branch of the Cumberland National/United Jersey Bank.

Many prisoners were now loose, though some chose to stay in their cells and not get involved. The marauding inmates, armed with a variety of homemade weapons, roamed the halls of the new jail causing brazen damage and destruction.

Negotiations with Harvey were handled by Lieutenant Flukey, assisted by Sheriff's Lieutenant George Lopez. Flukey had been permitted to speak with Hudnall and D'Argenzio and he had concluded that the prisoners' repeated threats to kill their hostages were genuine.

Gaunt realized that deadly force was ultimately going to be necessary.

The decision was made to storm the jail upon issuance of the command from Gaunt.

In response to one of Harvey's demands, Chief Gaunt had a marked Bridgeton Police car parked in front of the jail for Harvey, Hughes, and Sheppard's escape. The vehicle only had about a gallon of gas in it but Gaunt had the fuel gauge rigged to read "full".

Harvey and Hughes were given a key and allowed to come down to the first floor of the jail building where they failed to see the concealed Sheriffs and Bridgeton Police officers. Hughes exited the building, went to the waiting police car, got in it and drove it around the block and back. He then re-entered the jail building.

A short time later, at 9:45 a.m., the three inmates appeared on the ground floor with their two hostages. Hughes came out first and went back out to the waiting getaway car. Then Sheppard appeared at the door with Officer Hudnall, whose hands were tied behind him with telephone cord. Sheppard was using Hudnall as a human shield and was holding a shank to the guard's throat. Sheppard forced Hudnall to walk out the door and down the grass toward the getaway car on Broad Street where Hughes was waiting. When Sheppard and his hostage, Hudnall, were about half way between the jail and the car, Harvey began to exit the jail holding Officer D'Argenzio as Harvey's own human shield. When Sheppard and Hudnall paused momentarily at the retaining wall adjacent to the Broad Street sidewalk, Gaunt gave the order and one sniper's shot rang out striking Sheppard. Hudnall quickly jumped down onto the sidewalk, three feet below. This movement left Sheppard fully exposed

to the S.W.A.T. team sniper marksmen whose salvo killed Sheppard on the spot.

The local newspaper reported that Sheppard was struck by ten bullets.

Hudnall ran across the street to safety, suffering only minor cuts to his neck and face from Sheppard's shank.

When Harvey heard the shots, he began to drag hostage D'Argenzio back into the jail vestibule. A Sheriff's Officer fired his rifle at Harvey but missed the inmate. The ricochet struck D'Argenzio in the ankle. Leaving his wounded hostage on the floor, Harvey bolted up the steps and back into the cellblock with Sheriff's Officers in pursuit.

By now, law enforcement's assault to reclaim control of the jail was in full operation. On the second floor, one Sheriff's Officer encountered armed inmate Louis Alberto Rodriguez Rosario, of Bridgeton. Rosario, who was carrying a heavy wooden chair leg, had been arrested only hours earlier on a Warrant charging assault with a deadly weapon. The inmate refused the command to drop the weapon but, instead, advanced on the officer who discharged his shotgun. Rosario was killed instantly and a second inmate behind Rosario was wounded.

Harvey was found hiding in one of the cellblocks. He was handcuffed and the incident was over.

That afternoon, the unflappable Bill Doherty calmly and professionally conducted a press conference respecting the attempted jailbreak.

On Monday, two days later, a mistrial was granted by Judge Porreca ending the trial in progress involving Harvey's earlier escape from Leesburg.

For his lead role in the jailbreak, Jerome Harvey was eventually sentenced to an additional 18 years in prison.

The subsequent New Jersey State Police Major Crimes Unit investigation into the events of June 2, 1979, concluded that the fatal shootings of Sheppard and Rosario were fully justified. (1)

--

Theodore H. Ritter has served on our Society's Board of Trustees since 1991. He is a graduate of Vineland Senior High School (1966), Marietta College (1970) and Washington and Lee University School of Law (1973). He has been practicing law, in Bridgeton, since 1973. Ted is an antique automobile lover and a dedicated, rain-or-shine jogger. Ted and his wife, Jean, live in Upper Deerfield.

Oral History*: Memories Of A Forgotten Bridgeton

By Joseph DeLuca

INTRODUCTION:

What follows are my personal recollections of growing up in Bridgeton, in the 1950' and 1960s.

I was born into a middle-class post-World War II family. I am what has been called a "Baby Boomer." The generation born soon after the Second World War. My father, Joe, was the manager of the restaurant "The Sweet Shop" in downtown. My mother, Janie, worked in retail in the downtown and later at Major Clothing on Bridgeton Avenue. My Sister, Brenda, who was four years older, was plagued with having a pesky younger brother.

LIFE EXPERIENCES:

Except for the threat of nuclear mass destruction at the hands of The Soviet Union, life was pretty calm. We did have total protection from the bomb blast by hiding under our school desks by practicing "Duck and Cover" drills at Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic School. Most of the neighborhood children went to the Catholic school on Pearl Street. Our neighborhood was abundant with small family grocery stores. Within a four-block area, there were at least six stores. My favorite was Lou Ciccio's Market on Chestnut Avenue. Many lazy summer days were spent hanging out in front of Lou's store collecting baseball cards that would end up in the spokes of our bicycles and drinking Coca-Cola financed by patrolling the neighborhood collecting bottles and

(1) The above information was drawn from accounts of Sheriff's Officers, from *Bridgeton Evening News* reports and from this author's personal recollections from being present that day.

-

*What is oral history? Oral history is the collection of people's memories that historians interpret and analyze to write histories. Oral histories are not historical facts but are sources that historians put into conversation with other types of sources to learn about the past. Oral histories like all sources possess biases that can be shaped by class, gender, race, etc. Lived experiences are personal and uniquely different for each individual. CCHS is excited to adopt a regular oral history column to *The Cumberland Patriot*.

receiving the deposit money when returned to the store for recycling.

I would ride my bicycle around Bridgeton to secure the latest copies of Batman, The Fantastic Four and other superhero comic books. Our entertainment consisted of riding our bikes to explore the unknown outside of town. The wooded trails of the city park near Stoney Point and Piney Point were particular favorites. We would hike along the stream of Cornwell's Run that would lead up to the rear of Scribner and Lewis Chevrolet dealership on Pearl Street. We would end our adventure with shopping at "Mr. Big" the discount department store. Favorites of the warmer days were Kick-The-Can, playing army and driving make-believe tanks made from discarded large boxes from Major Clothing. Again, imagination was the key. I did play sandlot baseball at the field behind Major Clothing and had a short career in Farm League (the minor league of Little League in Bridgeton) playing for JM Elwell appliance store.

Winter saw ice skating at the small pond located near Bridgeton Avenue and Old Deerfield Pike. Another favorite was the pond at Cubby Hollow Road. A giant bonfire lit the night sky as dozens of skaters would traverse the pond or hung out for the evening. Later at night, the Bridgeton Fire Department would spray the pond to insure even ice for the next day.

TELEVISION:

In the early days we only had three TV stations to watch. WRCV, Channel 3-NBC, WFIL, Channel 6-ABC and WCAU, Channel 10-CBS from Philadelphia. A bit later, Public Broadcasting was available from WHYI, Channel 12. At midnight, stations would sign off with the National

Anthem and resume broadcasting the next morning. Our first TV, in the 1950's had a cabinet the size of a chest of drawers. A picture tube of about 12 inches and was viewed in glorious black and white. It took a few moments for the tubes to warm up before the picture would magically appear.

The local TV icons of the children of the Philadelphia area included Chief Halftown with his "Tribal Members", Sally Starr with Popeye Theater and Gene London at his Cartoon Corners General Store. The news icon was John Facenda and Channel 3's Wally Kinnan the weatherman. Every school-aged youth rushed home from school to watch "Bandstand" with Dick Clark when it was from Philadelphia. Local kids would be dancing on the program and some friends could to recognized in the crowd. A few years later, kids rushed home from school to watch "Dark Shadows."

In the late 1960s cable television came to Bridgeton. Garden State TV Cable Company brought a whopping twelve channels to our homes! Now we could get news and sports from New York City. The NY Mets on channel 9 (WOR) and the NY Yankees on Channel 11 (WPIX). On the TV set were two dials, one for VHF (channels 2 to 13) and UHF (channels above 13). Little by little stations began to appear on UHF. A new show, on the UHF dial was Georgie Woods "The Guy With The Goods" replaced Bandstand which had moved on to California as the Philadelphia dance party show.

THE "IN CROWD"

The teen hangout in town was "The Sweet Shop." A restaurant on Commerce Street. On Friday evenings, after the movie let out

at The Laurel Theater, the Sweet Shop was packed with teens and many of them had to stand out on the sidewalk. The main draw inside was the pinball machine. High school-aged teens would line up their quarters on the glass in order to play. I as an elementary school student was allowed to join the older teens to play, probably because my father was the restaurant manager.

On Saturday afternoons, after the Bridgeton High School home football games, everyone would gather at the Sweet Shop for burgers and sodas. The place would be so busy that I was enlisted to draw sodas for all the orders.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT:

School day memories involve my father driving me to school at Immaculate Conception on Pearl Street. In the mornings on his way to work, the radio in the car always had Dean Edie, "The Bystander" on with the local news of the day. I can still hear his theme music to this day. This ritual continued until I got my driver's license.

In High School, I was one block short of riding the bus to school. A bus was provided by Bridgeton transit for students to return home in the afternoon. The bus would park in line with the yellow school buses. Students would board the bus which would take them to downtown Bridgeton to the bus stop at the corner of Commerce and Laurel Streets. A transfer was given (free of charge) for either the North-South Bus or the East-West Bus. I took the North-South Bus north to the bus stop at Bridgeton and Chestnut Avenues. Only one block from home!

THE BEST SEASON OF ALL:

The best season of all was that period of time after the Thanksgiving Holiday. Downtown Bridgeton and all the stores would be decorated for Christmas. Christmas music would be heard all over the downtown via loudspeakers mounted at the main intersection, the hub of commerce in the city. As my father worked downtown, it was always hard to surprise him with a gift as the shopkeepers would try to give away my secrets. Traffic would be so heavy at this time that the police would put a sign out in the intersection not allowing left turns just to keep the traffic flowing. In those days Bridgeton had beat cops in the downtown. The police knew almost everyone in town. They would patrol the shopping areas keeping everyone safe. They patrolled at night checking the locked doors on the shops and insuring that all was well. There was a real sense of safety and security then.

WORK:

Sharps Wallpaper Co. was my first job experience. A major supplier of wallpaper nationwide, their store was on Commerce Street but the assembly room was above a garage on Atlantic Street between West Commerce and Broad Streets. We would begin the assembly of wallpaper sample books shortly after Thanksgiving and continue into January. There was a large pot belly coal stove to provide heat on those cold days and nights. Work was afternoons after school on weekdays and all day Saturdays. That job lasted until I got my driver's license.

When that job ended, I was employed at Stanley's Delicatessen. I worked alongside

Charles Mulford, who was known to all as “Uncle Chad.” The Deli was owned by Frank Stanley. That store was located at the corner of North Laurel and Washington Streets. I would work 6 evenings a week, Friday nights off and every other Saturday night off. What a great man to work for! I worked there until my junior year at Glassboro State College. I also worked for Keele Birdsall at his Gulf gas station on Route 49 in Hopewell. That part-time job lasted until the start of my teaching career and marriage. A short time later, Gulf Oil Company closed the station. Another great man to work for! By then, I was teaching school and building a career in the National Guard and the memories of my youth were replaced by more important day-to-day matters. As I think back to those days, what a great time it was to be growing up. The freedoms we had, the safety and security we took for granted, and a sense of a tight-knit and caring community. Life was great!

--

Joseph DeLuca is a Bridgeton native, lifetime area resident, retired educator, and U.S. Air Force retired Master Sergeant. He has served on many elected and appointed boards in the community. He is also an author, sports and lifestyles columnist, and a writer.

Dallas Lore Sharp and the 2016 Documentary Film “Defying the Nazis: The Sharps’ War”

By Joseph Mathews

Last year at the Lummis Library we had an exhibit showing some items selected from the Dallas Lore Sharp Nature Club collection. The Club had recently disbanded after a long and successful run. One of the items shown in the exhibit was a carefully assembled scrapbook with many newspaper articles covering the Club's meetings and special events over the years. Also in the exhibit were around a dozen of Sharp's books from the library. Most of his books were published between 1900 and 1930. He was born in Haleyville, moved to Bridgeton as a boy, then moved to New England for college, and remained there--a professor of English at Boston University--until his death in 1929. He was always a popular author and is still beloved by many locally for his depictions of the nature of South Jersey.

After seeing the exhibit, a friend of the library, Penny Watson, lent me a copy of the 2016 Ken Burns 80-minute documentary titled “Defying the Nazis: The Sharps’ War.” This film is about the humanitarian work carried on against the Nazis by Dallas Lore Sharp's son, Waitstill, and his wife Martha. In January 1939, Waitstill was a 36-year-old Unitarian minister serving in Wellesey, Massachusetts. Martha was 34 and helped with church affairs. They were

an attractive couple with two children, Waitstill Hastings, 7, and Martha Content, 3. With Europe on the verge of war, the couple quickly decided to heed the call of the Unitarian Service Committee to help with the acute refugee problem in the Sudetenland, the part of Czechoslovakia historically settled by the ethnic Germans that Hitler wanted to reclaim. They left immediately for Europe and, like missionaries, they entrusted their children to caregivers at home.

On February 3, 1939 they sailed to London where they took a crash course in how to work in secret and to avoid spies. On February 23rd, on the Orient Express, they arrived at their destination, Prague, where desperate intellectuals, journalists, editors, professors, clergymen, and social workers--all compromised by their writings-- needed to escape abroad. Working with the Czech Unitarian Church, they scanned lists of thousands of people and worked at securing visas, jobs, and places to live for them. Once, while delivering secret mail at the airport, Martha witnesses a Kindertransport scene: children being flown out of danger to England while their parents tearfully wave goodbye. The pathos of the scene transforms Martha. Much later she will lead the first group in the children's immigration project to safety in the U.S.

On March 15th, the German army invades all of Czechoslovakia and the danger to all relief workers, including the Sharps, rises exponentially. Because she speaks English, Martha is chosen to lead a Mr. X, an anti-Nazi Czech political figure now in great danger, through the streets to the British Embassy, all the while evading Gestapo agents.

In another extremely suspenseful scene, Martha alone--under threat of prison or death--smuggles a group of Jewish refugees by train through the whole of Germany to the Dutch border and on to London. Several from this group gratefully describe their deliverance at Martha's hands. Later in a similar action Waitstill will lead a group of refugees through occupied France to Spain and Portugal and then ultimately to New York. Scenes involving Waitstill and Martha are narrated from passages in their memoirs. Waitstill's words are narrated by Tom Hanks, Martha's by Marina Goldman.

In Prague the couple had to separate for the first time in their married lives, Waitstill going abroad to change money for the refugees in the black market and Martha staying in Prague to work on individual cases. Eventually the Nazis shut down their office and the couple were forced to leave on the Queen Mary for home on August 20th, 1939, chased on the way by German U-boats after war was declared on September 1st. Back at home, normalcy returned to their lives and they believed their harrowing adventure was over and their family whole again. However, by June 1940, with wartime Europe in maximum crisis, the church insisted they return to Europe to help. With the Nazi occupation of France causing a mass migration of refugees, the Sharps' new base of operations would be Lisbon, Portugal.

Ultimately, Waitstill and Martha would divorce with Martha pursuing a life in politics and humanitarian endeavors. Waitstill had written in a letter to her in 1946, "I want to go on for what there is of

left of life with you," but that was not to be. He later remarried. Interviews in the film of their children as adults would give a sense of the impact of all of this on them. I felt a sympathy for the plight that befell all of them as a result of the chaos in Europe.

After I had watched the video, I didn't immediately understand what relevance it had to Cumberland County since its action took place in New England and Europe. Then I watched "The U.S. and the Holocaust," now a much better-known Ken Burns documentary which covers the same period as the earlier film, but with a much broader perspective. I decided we really need to know about Dallas Lore Sharp's son Waitstill and his wife Martha. Honesty and decency are admirable qualities. Just as we draw strength from reading Dallas Lore Sharp's nature stories, we can draw strength from learning about the heroic struggles of his son and his son's wife.

--

Joseph Mathews has been working at Lummis Library for years. He has a BA (La Salle College) and MA (U. of Toledo, Ohio) in English and an "ABD" (all but dissertation) in English and History (Temple U.). He's currently Governor of The Swedish Colonial Society.

Looking for the "Nordic" Oyster Boat

By Warren Q. Adams

On April 19, 1926, the largest oyster boat, The Nordic, ever to be built in Greenwich was launched at Greenwich Piers with 1000 people in attendance. The Nordic was 100 feet long with a beam of 23 feet and a draught of 6 feet. The boat could accommodate 18 men and was commanded by Captain Elmer Tarburton.

The Nordic was built by a Greenwich Shipbuilder named Captain William H. Parsons. Parsons had built mainly oyster schooners for 35 years, building a total of 60 boats in Greenwich.

His last two boats were launched in the Spring of 1929. His last two boats were the end of the shipbuilding industry on the Cohansey. (1)

Further evidence of what happened to the Nordic has yet to be uncovered. If you know anything of The Nordic, please email us at cchistsoc@verizon.net



--

Warren Q. Adams started researching at the Lummis Library in 1997. Due to Warren & Reba Lummis, he became Director of the Library in 1998 for an interesting second career.

(1) Sherman L. Ricards, *Into Her Destined Element Ship Building on the Cohansey*, (Greenwich, 1987)

ACQUISITION

Carolyn L. Warden (Charlottesville, VA) Two photos, interior Campbell & Stanger Millinery Shop/women (owners Gertrude Campbell & Aurelia Stanger (Garrison), one, exterior Bridgeton; 49 Photos of the Franklin Campbell & Capt. Lewis M. Campbell Family, Post Cards 3ea. Sunset Lake, Piney Point, Raceway, Souvenir Book & Program Guide-Bridgeton 1936, Historic Bridgeton 1936, Ledge Light House Post Card, Post Cards Bridgeton 11 each, Program Bridgeton Historic Pageant 1936, Bridgeton Events Book 1936, The Story of the Cohansey River, Tri-Centennial Brochure 1936, 8 Photos Taylor & Marts Family- Photo Samuel Buck Taylor (son of John Newton Taylor and Mary Ann Marts Taylor) - photo David Marts brother of Mary Ann Marts Taylor, lighthouse keeper Ship John Light House, Post Card Ship John lighthouse
William Chestnut (Bridgeton, NJ) Chestnut Family Genealogy

CCHS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The John DuBois Maritime Museum, The Gibbon House, and The Alan Ewing Carman Museum of Prehistory in Cumberland County are currently closed for the season and will reopen on Saturday, April 1, 2023.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

CCHS has organized an internship committee to begin creating a formal internship program for the Spring semester of 2024. We would like to compensate our interns and are welcoming donations to go towards the program.

If you would like to make a donation, please mail a check payable to CCHS with "intern" in the memo to CCHS Po Box 16 Greenwich, NJ 08323

Thank you for your support!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Speaker Series

Separate Paths: Lenapes and Colonists in West New Jersey by Jean R. Sodurland
 March 26th, 2023 at 2pm at the Lummis Library
 Available to attend in person or virtually.
 Please email britt48@gmail.com by March 25th if you would like to attend via zoom.

Archive Workshop

Members \$10/Nonmembers \$15
 April 29th, 2023 1-4pm
 Lummis Library
 Call 856-455-8580 to register

CCHS BLOG

For additional historical articles and CCHS updates check out our blog at:
<https://cchistsoc.org/blog/>

CCHS YOUTUBE CHANNEL

If you missed our last Speaker Series or want to re-watch them, check out our YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNbd72gbS71jc0OhIrpMbRg>

Don't forget to
 Like Us,
 Follow Us,
 and Share Us.



Membership Application - Share with a Friend!

If you are interested in the preservation of your community's history, then we invite you to become a member of the Cumberland County Historical Society. Your membership helps the Society in fulfilling its mission "to preserve and promote the history and heritage of the county through acquisitions, collections, exhibits and research, educational programs and publications for the benefit of current and future generations."

Your membership is valid for one year and is up for renewal every January. The fees for the membership are tax deductible. Those who join late in the year will receive past copies of the Cumberland Patriot newsletter of that year. Letters and emails will go out notifying you when your membership needs to be renewed.

Benefits:

- *Member must present membership card
- Periodic issues of The Cumberland Patriot newsletter
- Free photocopies at the Lummis Library
- Discount for Hearthside Dinners (Except January)
- Members receive Hearthside Dinner dates prior to non-members
- \$2.00 discount to Annual Craft Faire admission
- Discount for the Annual Dinner
- Member-only events with 1 Free Pass for a non-member
- 10% discount on merchandise (books/t-shirts, etc.)
- Discount on workshops (3 workshops per year)

Membership Fees:

Individual \$25
Couple \$35
College Student (w/ID) \$20
Under 18 years of age \$10
Digital Membership \$10

*Digital membership gives members access to digital copies of the Cumberland Patriot newsletter; no other membership benefits are included in the digital membership

CUT HERE

*Please Print

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: : _____ Email: _____

Please contact me. I wish to volunteer.

Cumberland County Historical Society
PO Box 16 - 981 Ye Greate Street
Greenwich NJ 08323

Return Service Requested



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Officers and Trustees of CCHS
Hours of Local Museums
“The Crisis of the ‘Mormon Menace’: ‘Anti-Mormon’ Sentiment in
Bridgeton, NJ 1905-1911 Part 1” 1
“Jailbreak!” 3
Oral History: “Memories Of A Forgotten Bridgeton” 6
Dallas Lore Sharp and the 2016 documentary film “Defying the Nazis: The
Sharps’ War” 9
Looking for the ‘Nordic’ Oyster Boat 11
Aquisitions 12
Announcements & Upcoming Events 12
Membership Application 13