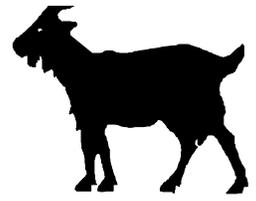


# Nannygoats



Vol. 4 Issue 1

Newsletter of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society

Winter 2006

## Grimstead Room Offers View of the Past

The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society's Grimstead Room, located in the Metuchen Public Library, contains a multitude of resources that can assist Metuchen and Edison area homeowners research the histories of their houses. Some of these resources include historic maps, thousands of early photographs, telephone and address directories, real estate prospectus booklets from the turn of the century, and local history research subject files. Shown here and on Page 3 are samples of the available resources. Fund raising efforts are currently underway to assist with making these resources more accessible, and plans are in progress to utilize them in a workshop to be held this spring (see below).



Detailed views of the 1876 W.C. Dripps Map of Metuchen (left) and a mid-twentieth century development map of the Oak Hills Association in Edison (right). The 1932 Grimstead photograph at center is of the northwest corner of Main Street and Amboy Avenue.

Von Hartz C r 307 Lake av.....	Metuchen-237
Vreeland Anna Mrs r Nixons.....	Metuchen-241-R-2
Wachter E r Iselin.....	Metuchen-288-M
Wagoner J W r 259 Main.....	Metuchen-394-W
Wanwright M B r Lafayette rd.....	Metuchen-1-M
Waldmann M Mrs r Dartmouth.....	Metuchen-537-R-1
Wale J M r 16 Durham av.....	Metuchen-291-J
Walker S r Menlo PK.....	Metuchen-400
Walsh A r 23 Hillside av.....	Metuchen-512
Walton H H r Newman.....	Metuchen-531-R
Waring D H Mrs r 419 Grove.....	Metuchen-416-R
Watne Thos r Fords.....	Metuchen-432-R
Watson Geo C r Oak Tree.....	Metuchen-39-J
Watson L Du B r 4th av.....	Metuchen-29-R
Watson S P r 59 High.....	Metuchen-45-M
Watson Shonberg C r Thomas.....	Metuchen-196-M
Weber Chas C r 61 Hillside av.....	Metuchen-550
Wedin Anna J Mrs r 156 Plainfield av.....	Metuchen-41-W
Weeks E J r 251 Woodbridge av.....	Metuchen-413-W
Weigle E r New Durham rd.....	Metuchen-157-W
Welker A C r Albourne.....	Metuchen-345-J
Wendover J Miss r 315 Main.....	Metuchen-224-W
Wernik A P drgst 412 Main.....	Metuchen-123
Residence 55 Highland av.....	Metuchen-786
Westcott W dentist 52 Linden av.....	Metuchen-180

Excerpt of the Local Telephone Directory for Metuchen, NJ, Summer Issue, 1928.

### 1916 Real Estate Offerings

The following are excerpts from a real estate prospectus booklet, on file in the Grimstead Room, entitled "Why METUCHEN is a Desirable Residence" issued by C.C. Campbell Real Estate and Insurance in 1916.

**A Colonial House 2 1-2 stories high, 9 rooms, size of house is 30 by 50 feet, and is situated on lot 100 by 193 feet located on Oak Avenue, opposite Maple Ave. The improvements are steam heat, hot and cold water, laundry tubs, bath-room with extra W.C. in the basement, Electric Light, maple floor and a range. The lot is planted with trees, etc. Price \$7,000.**

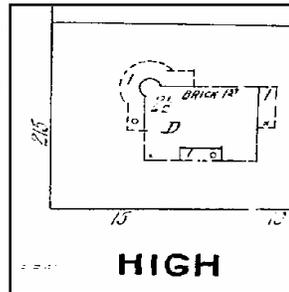
**A two and 1-2 story house with 12 rooms; other building Barn, Cow Shed and Poultry house; situated on Clive St, near end of trolley line. Price \$4,000; \$2,100 to remain on mortgage.**

**A 2-story dwelling; with eight rooms, City water, Hot-air Furnace. Lot 50 by 150 feet; corner of Graham Avenue and Spring street. Price, \$3,000.**

**11 rooms Dwelling, all improvements. 2 baths, 5 open fire-places, screened porch with awnings, all windows and doors screened; every room heated and lighted; high, light. concrete cellar, cold store room, high attic. All in good condition. Fully curbed and graded. Price, \$12,000. Corner Graham Ave. and High Street.**

## Spring Workshop to feature Archive's Wealth of Research Material

In cooperation with the Metuchen Savings Bank, the Society is hosting a workshop on Sunday, May 7, 2006 which will cover various aspects of historic research and focus on assisting individual homeowners in the Metuchen area with researching the history of their homes. The keynote speakers will be author Janet Foster, Assistant Director of Columbia University's Historic Preservation Program, and local title searcher Ann Sardone. Participants will learn about architectural styles, conducting deed research, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, and census records. When combined with the Society's extensive resources, these research tools can provide a complete building history which is not only informative but can often guide in the restoration of a building's historic characteristics. The workshop will take place at 2:00 p.m in the Community Room of St. Luke's Church in Metuchen. A nominal registration fee (\$5 for members, \$10 for non-members) will cover the program materials. For more information see the enclosed flyer, log onto the Society's website, or contact Nancy Zerbe at either 732-906-8203 or via email at [nzerbe@arch2inc.com](mailto:nzerbe@arch2inc.com).



Detailed view of a 1920 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Metuchen, showing the corner of Graham and High Street. This is likely the 11-room home described at right.

The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society was founded in 1974 with the primary purpose of promoting an interest in and appreciation of the history of the Borough of Metuchen and of Edison Township.

## On-line Store Launched

The Society is proud to announce that it has opened an on-line store to make available a variety of merchandise which features historic photos of Metuchen and Edison, as well as items such as hats and t-shirts which proudly display the Society's name and logo. Go to our web site at [www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org](http://www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org) for the link.

While there are currently many items for sale, new items are being added on a regular basis. Customers can choose from a wide variety of postcards, greeting cards, tote bags, maps, refrigerator magnets, clothing items, and more. These products make great gifts, and they show your pride in your community. The entire net proceeds go directly to the Society, so every purchase you make will help us improve the condition of - and access to - our archives.

Ordering a product is easy, and the item is usually delivered to your door within a week. If you have any problems with your order, the customer service department is ready to respond quickly and efficiently.

If you have an old photograph that you think would make an interesting addition to our product line, and you would be willing to donate the image to the society, please let us know.

Support the historical society's efforts by shopping at our online store and check back often for new product offerings and money-saving coupons listed on our web site. And remember, each item you buy helps us to "Save the Past for the Future."

*Many thanks to member Jim Halpin for his work in launching the Society's on-line store.*



### *CURATOR RETIRING*

Marie Vajo, who has served as the Society's Curator for many years, is retiring as of February 18, 2006. After being honored for her contributions at a special program last Spring, Marie has been transitioning out of the position's responsibilities, which have included photo reproductions, cataloguing the archives, creating event displays, and managing acquisitions. These functions will be assumed by others in the Society until a replacement is found. All future Edison-related inquiries to the Curator should be directed to Walter Stochel at 732-906-0529, while Metuchen-related inquiries should contact Phyllis Boeddinghaus at 732-548-1391. Email inquiries should be addressed to [curator@metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org](mailto:curator@metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org).

### **Did You Know...**

...that on May 28, 1952, Willie Mays swapped his spikes for combat boots at Camp Kilmer after being drafted into the Army?

...that a couple of years later Camp Kilmer was the site of Johnny Cash's honorable discharge from the US Air Force, on July 3, 1954?

— Steve Reuter



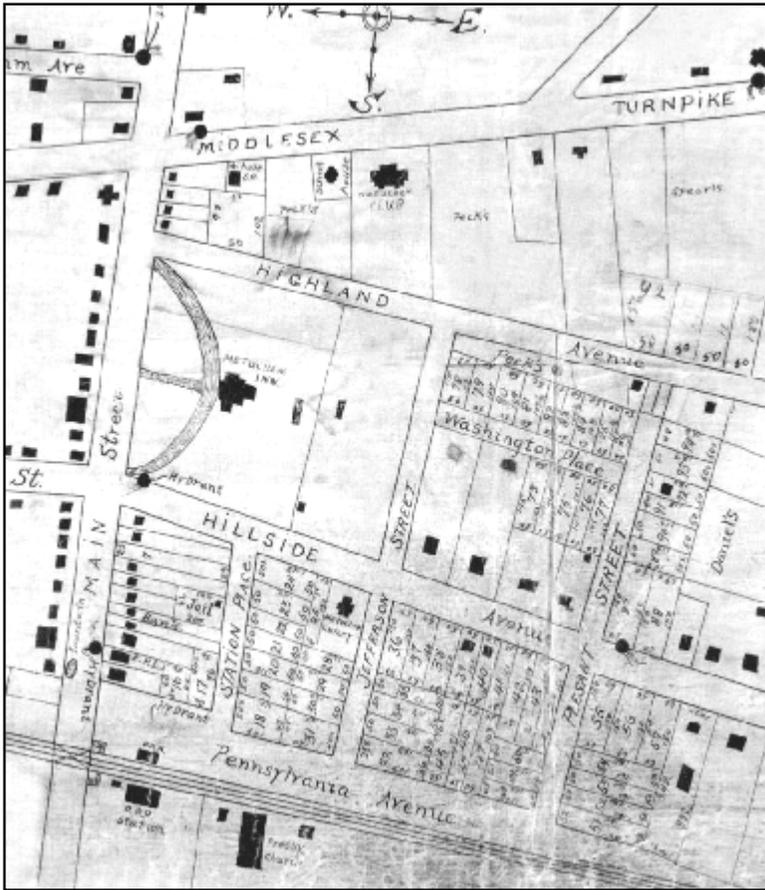
### **Society's Country Fair Booth a Winner**

Not only did the Society's booth win second prize for Execution of Theme in this past October's Country Fair, but it also attracted the attention of then-Senator Jon Corzine, who was in Metuchen campaigning for his successful bid for the New Jersey governorship. Governor Corzine particularly admired the football-themed displays, adding that he had played quarterback in Illinois during the late 1960s. The governor is pictured here with Society members Marie Vajo, Marge Viquerat, Steve Reuter, and the youngest Society member, Samuel John Strummer Reuter.

### **FYI...**

Our end of the year appeal for the **Grimstead Fund** has exceeded its goal of \$1500 due to generous donations from members and friends of the Society. Thank you!

We now have a "cooperative" sales arrangement with Boyt Drugs and the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen, both of whom will be selling Society merchandise.



Ca. 1890 R.J. Eggert Map of North-East Metuchen

This map, on file in the Society's Grimstead Room, is one of the many which can assist with researching your house's history.

## Elections Held at Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society was held on Sunday, January 15, 2006 at the Metuchen Public Library. President Nancy Zerbe reported on the progress the Society has made towards its goals during the past year, and presented the slate of members for election and/or re-election to the Board of Directors. Two new board members were elected: Lynne Braine of Edison and Virginia Weber of Metuchen. When added to the recent election of Mike Kaplonski of Edison, the Board

of Directors now numbers fifteen.

Following the business meeting, vocalist and guitarist Richard Roden presented "American History and Song, Part 1," a selection of songs from American history interspersed with commentary on the their historical and cultural significance.

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P.O. Box 61, Metuchen, NJ 08840  
Tyreen A. Reuter, Editor  
[ayersallenhouse@msn.com](mailto:ayersallenhouse@msn.com)

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

## Thank You to Our Supporters



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Metuchen Public Library  
480 Middlesex Avenue • Metuchen, New Jersey 08840  
(732) 632-8526 • Fax (732) 632-8535  
[mkokola@lmxac.org](mailto:mkokola@lmxac.org)

STEPHEN P. STEMPINSKI, C.P.A.

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195 Main Street  
2nd Floor, Suite 201  
Metuchen, NJ 08840

Tel. (732) 549-1116 FAX (732) 549-6421  
e-mail: [sstempinski@hlbcpas.com](mailto:sstempinski@hlbcpas.com)

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If you are interested in becoming one of Nannygoat's Supporters, please contact the Editor at 732-452-1381 or via email at "[ayersallenhouse@msn.com](mailto:ayersallenhouse@msn.com)".

The name of the newsletter, "Nannygoats," is taken from the title of a collection of anecdotes, reminiscences, articles, 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.

## *In the Archives...*

Thanks to the generosity of long-time member Donald J. Kahn, the Society is now in possession of a growing collection of research and primary resource materials relating to Jewish local history in the Metuchen area.

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The Society has recently shared a number of of its transcribed oral histories with the Jewish Historical Society of Central New Jersey, as part of their project to document the "history and interesting stories of various Jewish communities, people, and organizations of New Jersey."

## **Upcoming Programs & Events**

In addition to the **Research Workshop on May 7, 2006** (see the cover page), the Society's Spring schedule of events includes the following programs, which will feature text, images, and audio from our extensive oral history collection:

**African-American Members of our Community**  
Sunday, March 5, 2006 at 1:30 p.m.  
Metuchen Public Library

**Jewish Members of our Community**  
Sunday, March 26, 2006 at 1:30 p.m.  
Metuchen Public Library

These programs are free and open to the public. Complimentary refreshments will be served and Society merchandise will be available for sale. Please contact Steve Reuter at 732-452-1381 for additional information.

For on-line access to Metuchen-Edison Historical Society newsletters, membership information, program announcements, historic photographs, and merchandise, visit [www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org](http://www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org)

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P.O. Box 61  
Metuchen, NJ 08840