

BASS RIVER GAZETTE

A newsletter from the History Committee of the Bass River Community Library

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donations appreciated

BASS RIVER'S TWO LARGEST CEMETERIES

by Peter H. Stemmer

[This is the second part of an article which began in the Oct-Dec, 1999 edition and dealt with the 4 smaller cemeteries in Bass River Township: Cramer Cemetery, Adams-Leek-McKean Cemetery, Bridgeport Quaker Cemetery & the French Cemetery]



memorial plaque

The memorial plaque and flagpole at Hillside Cemetery mark the location of the first Methodist Church in Bass River. The plaque reads "Original Site First Methodist Episcopal Church Erected in Bass River about 1800 AD Continued As A Church to 1852 And Used As School House To About 1870." (Photo courtesy of Steve Eichinger)

Hillside and Miller cemeteries are the two largest cemeteries in Bass River Township. Both of their histories are steeped in the present day Methodist and Presbyterian churches. This is not immediately apparent as the two cemeteries are not physically adjacent to the present day church buildings, although Miller Cemetery is only a stones throw from the Presbyterian Church on North Maple Avenue.

Hillside Cemetery

Hillside Cemetery, located on Hillside Avenue in the Frogtown section of Bass River, is about one half mile from the present St. Paul's United Methodist Church located on Route 9 in downtown New Gretna. This was not always the case; however, as the original Methodist Church was built on the site of the present cemetery. The exact date of it's construction is unknown. A memorial plaque, erected in 1940 by the New Gretna Old Home Society, dates the church to about 1800.

The earliest documentation that I have seen regarding the church is a 1809 road survey that states a section of road went from "... Amasa Mathis fence thence ... North forty eight degrees west forty seven chains and fifty links [3,135 feet] to the crossroads between the friends and Methodists Meeting House." The existence of the Methodists Meeting House in 1809 supports the 1800 date on the memorial plaque. It also documents the existence of a very early Quaker church somewhere in the vicinity of Cramer's Auto Recycling on Hammontown Road, but that's another story.

The deed that the Methodist church holds for the property should give a good indication of the age of the church, but that is not the case. Surprisingly, the property was not deeded to the church until January 22, 1848 when Enoch Adams sold a one half acre parcel to the Methodist Episcopal Church of Bass River Neck for the consideration of \$1.00. The church building existed for about 47 years with the church apparently claiming ownership of the building but not the land. That situation certainly would not exist in today's legal climate.

The date of the cemetery's origin is even more uncertain. One might logically think that it started about the same time as the church, but this may not be the case. The 1809 road survey and the 1849 Otley & Whiteford map (above right) mention a Meeting House but not a graveyard. An examination of the inscriptions on the existing tombstones shows the earliest readable death date to be 1835 followed by a great many dates from the 1850's through the 1890's. This would indicate that the cemetery became active shortly after the church obtained title to the property in 1848. The presence of 15 known unmarked graves and unreadable dates on some stones makes a conclusion regarding the cemetery's actual date of origin impossible. Leah Blackman in her classic *History of Little Egg Harbor Township* does not mention a Methodist cemetery in Bass River Township. This must be an oversight on her part as the cemetery clearly existed in 1880 when her work was published.

Use of the cemetery continued after the new Methodist church was built in 1852 at its present Rt. 9 location. The old



The 1849 Otley & Whiteford map of Burlington County, while incorrectly identifying New Gretna as Harmony, shows 1- the Methodist Meeting House at the location of the present day Hillside Cemetery and 2- a burial ground that was to later become Miller Cemetery. The present day Methodist and Presbyterian churches, Hillside Avenue and Amasas Landing Road were not in existence at this time. Note that a burial ground is not located by the ME Meeting House.



The *Combination Atlas Map of Burlington County, N.J.* by J.D. Scott shows New Gretna in 1876: 1- Hillside Cemetery; 2- the old Methodist Church moved across the road from the cemetery and used as the Frogtown school house; 3- the "new" Methodist Church on present day Rt. 9; and 4- the First Presbyterian Church of New Gretna on Allentown Road, now North Maple Avenue. Miller Cemetery would be just off the map to the northwest of A. Cramer's house. Note that Amasas Landing Road (5) & Hillside Avenue (6) appear on the map.

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ANOTHER THING I REMEMBER

by Almira Cramer Steele

HUCKSTERS, PEDDLERS AND LOCAL VENDORS

During the 1920's, public transportation was not available to a lot of the small town country folks and very few of them were able to afford a car. Since the people were unable to come to them, the hucksters, the peddlers and the local vendors came to the people by way of the door to door salesman.

The peddler was a gifted salesman. He would always strike up a little conversation with the lady of the house, flatter her a bit, then present some of the items he had on his truck for her inspection. He demonstrated how some of the gadgets worked and often convinced her into buying several before his sales pitch was over. If she asked for something he didn't have, you could bet your life he would have it on his truck the next time around. He carried almost every small household item you could think of, a few personal things, and now and then, some often requested articles of clothing. The peddler would come to town several times a year, but no one ever knew exactly when he would arrive. However, when he did make his appearance, his customers were very glad to see him. The two peddlers I remember coming to town were someone we called "Cohen" and the other one was known as "Cheap John".

The huckster, a fruit and vegetable man, came through town in the summer when the crops were ripe and plentiful. Like the peddler, you never knew exactly when he would show up but he was always a welcome sight for the housewife whenever he came. He would have a variety of produce to choose from, freshly picked from his garden. As a rule, he would throw in an extra ear of corn, a tomato or whatever for good measure with every purchase.

There was also the huckster who sold only one kind of produce. He might have a truckload of peaches or apples or tomatoes or whatever was plentiful, selling them by the basketful. Most housewives would buy several baskets to preserve for winter eating. Shelves in basements and pantries were stacked high with all kinds of delectable canned fruits and vegetables.

Most hucksters sold homegrown produce but the more sophisticated ones came around with oranges, bananas, grapefruit and produce that wasn't grown locally, but was bought from big farmers markets. He had a lot more to choose from, but was a little more expensive too. He always sold by pounds and ounces and you very seldom ever got that extra ear of corn or banana thrown in by him. If, by chance, you forgot to get something you really wanted from the door to door huckster, there were a couple of small produce markets in town. Eben Voorhis had one on Hammonton Road and Cliff Allen had one on Route 9 in the Mathistown section of New Gretna. Eben and Cliff also huckstered to communities on Long Beach Island every summer.



Delwin Downs delivered groceries for Clarence Mathis for many years. (Photo courtesy of Eleanor & Doug Cowperthwaite)

Then we had the local vendor. Unlike the peddler and the huckster, you knew what days the vendor would be around. Delwin Downs, who worked for C. G. Mathis General Store, made his calls every Saturday morning, taking your grocery order for the week, and in the afternoon he delivered it. At our house, my sister and I always looked forward to the box of animal crackers our Mom had ordered for each of us as one of our weekly treats. They always tasted so good.

Roland Mathis, who was disabled and on crutches, was our iceman. He would get out of his truck at every stop, take his ice pick, cut the block of ice to fit the ice box and a helper would tong the ice and take it inside. That chunk of ice would last three or four days before you needed another supply. I always admired Mr. Mathis because, despite his handicap, he was a faithful and dependable iceman. Another thing I remember about him was each time he cut the ice, he would chip off a nice big piece for each one of the kids that was there. We would wrap it in paper so we could hold it and enjoy the cool refreshment until it was gone.

Bill Cramer was our butcher. He came around once a week and he always had his dog on the front seat of the truck with him. The head of the house would go out to the truck and select the cuts of meat he or she wanted, while all the neighborhood kids waited around for a free hot dog from "Bill Butcher." That was another treat we enjoyed from our friendly local vendor.

We had a variety of breadmen that delivered door to door everyday. I remember some of the baking companies like – Bond, Dugan, Fischers and Friehoffers. The only salesman that I remember was John Barnes. John was a local resident, the husband of Hazel Lindsley Barnes and the father of four daughters, Jackie, Babs, Jeanette and Lynn. Three of the daughters live elsewhere now, but Jeanette still lives in New Gretna on the property owned by her parents on West Greenbush Road.

Our milkman, who delivered for Kligerman Dairies, came every day. He was not a local resident but a very necessary vendor for our community.

The only vendor, as I remember, who wasn't on schedule was the ice cream man from Lower Bank. He came through town now and then during the summer. Harold Maxwell made his own ice cream and when we heard the familiar sound of his bell, we all grabbed our nickels and ran after his truck. When all the kids in our group were taken care of, he was



Cliff Allen (r) and his brother Winnie at Cliff's Mathistown produce stand on Rt. 9 not far from Job's Creek. (Photo courtesy of Donna Allen Cirillo)



Eben Voorhis sold vegetables from his Hammonton Road farm stand South of Merrygodd Creek. (Photo courtesy of Regina DeBaise, Eben's great granddaughter)

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Cassie & George Heinrichs shortly after their marriage in 1947. (Photo courtesy of Catherine Heinrichs)

Catherine "Cassie" Wiseman Heinrich's Family Recipes

Our thanks go to Catherine Wiseman Heinrichs for this month's recipes. Catherine is a very sweet lady who is the widow of George Heinrichs and daughter of John "Jack" and Olive Wiseman. The Wiseman Family have lived in New Gretna for many generations. The following recipes that are being shared by Catherine come from the files of the Wiseman Family that are tried and true and still in use today. They are real winners. I'm sure that you will agree when you try them.

Most of the vegetables that are used in the recipes were raised in Catherine's garden. Catherine said that she loves to work in the garden. Try her **Pepper Relish** served on a hamburger or with any meat. It is a family favorite. After you have tried it, it will be your favorite too.

Bread and Butter Pickles always taste good no matter what they are served with. Here is an old Wiseman Family recipe for Bread and Butter Pickles that Catherine still makes every year.

Catherine's recipe for **Candied Sweet Potatoes** was served at the New Gretna Presbyterian Church Christmas Dinner and was a big hit. The dish was empty in no time at all. It was wonderful. Try this winner at your next dinner party.



John & Olive Cramer Wiseman (Photo courtesy of Myrtle Falkenburg)

PEPPER RELISH

12 Green Bell Peppers - 4 Red Bell Peppers - 12 Onions

Medium grind the peppers and onions together. Cover with boiling water and let stand 5 minutes, then drain. ADD:

2 Tbs. Mustard Seed	1 cup Water
3 cups Sugar	2 tsp. Salt
	3 cups Vinegar

Boil together for 25 minutes – stir often. Fill hot sterilized jars and seal tight.

BREAD & BUTTER PICKLES

25 to 30 Medium Size Cucumbers
 8 large White Onions
 2 large Sweet Peppers
 ½ cup Salt
 5 cups Cider Vinegar
 5 cups Sugar
 2 Tbs. Mustard Seed
 1 tsp. Tumeric
 ½ tsp. Ground Cloves

Wash cucumbers and slice them as thin as possible. Grind the onions and peppers together and combine with cucumbers and salt. Let stand for 3 hours and drain. Put a plate upside down on top to weigh them down.

Combine vinegar, sugar and spices in a large kettle and bring to boil. Add drained cucumbers. Heat thoroughly, but **DO NOT BOIL**. Stir often so they don't get soft or stick to bottom of kettle. Have jars and lids hot. Put pickles into hot sterilized jars and seal at once. Recipe makes a large batch, so cut it in half if desired.

CANDIED SWEET POTATOES

Scrub all dirt from medium size potatoes. Boil in water until tender. Drain and remove skins. Cut in half lengthwise and place in greased shallow pan.

Make syrup by boiling for 5 minutes: 2/3 cup Brown Sugar, 1/3 cup Orange Juice, 2 Tbs. Butter.

Pour over potatoes and sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake in hot oven, 400 degrees, for 20 minutes or until nicely browned – basting occasionally with syrup. Allow 1 potato for 2 people.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

[From 1003 Household Hints and Time Savers-1941]

- Onions will not make the eyes water if scalding water is poured over them before they are peeled.
- Onion odor can be removed from the hands by rubbing them with dry salt.



John & Olive Wiseman with their children (l-r) Renard, Ethel, and baby Myrtle in front of the Knights of Pythias Hall, circa 1922. (Photo courtesy of Catherine Heinrichs)



John & Olive Wiseman at their 40th anniversary celebration (Photo courtesy of Myrtle Falkenburg)



Cassie Wiseman Heinrichs at her father's sawmill on West Road. (Photo courtesy of Catherine Heinrichs)



A newly married George had a lot of Cassie's delicious meals to look forward to. (Photo courtesy of Catherine Heinrichs)

The stained glass memorial windows of the First Presbyterian Church of New Gretna were installed over seventy years ago in 1928. Today they continue to beautify and light the sanctuary and are admired by everyone. The money for the windows was raised by subscription from the congregation. Many members of the old families of New Gretna were among those who donated money in memory of their loved ones, whose names were then inscribed on the windows. The family names of Mathis, French, Adams, Cramer, and Loveland are very well represented, and the windows furnish an interesting sidelight on the history of the early Presbyterians in Bass River.



Fourteen 8' x 3'4" windows, two 10' x 3'4" arched windows, and two 8' x 2'4" arched windows adorn the church. The names of those memorialized appear in a panel in each of the windows. (Photo by Elaine Weber Mathis)

The first window to attract our attention has the names of two Cramer sisters, Mary Ella Mathis and Anna F. Loveland. They are two of the eight children of John Franklin and Mary Ann (French) Cramer. Mary Ella was born in 1856 and married Rollin Ashley Mathis in 1895 as his second wife, his first wife having died in 1893. Rollin was the son of Zebulon Montgomery Pike and Achsah (Cale) Mathis. Mary Ella's sister, Anna (Cramer) Loveland, born in 1863, married in 1893 Caleb C. Loveland, son of Charles L. and Anna (Young) Loveland. She died in 1895, just two years after her marriage. Another sister was Nellie/Ellen M. Cramer, born 1865, who married Chalkley C. Sears in 1887. Chalkley and Nellie were the parents of Eugene H. Sears, born 1893, the father of Helen (Sears) Carty, one of the present-day members of the church. Thus Mary Ella and Anna were the sisters of Helen's grandmother and so were both her great-aunts.

The second window is inscribed with the name Maja Berry Mathis. Maja is the son of Ellis and Mabel (Mathis) Mathis and was born in 1823, died 1891. He married Phoebe Sooy in 1846. They had five children. Their grandson was Maja Cowperthwaite Mathis, who was a teacher in the Mathistown School and later was the principal at New Gretna.

The third window is credited to the Ladies Mite Society, a missionary society formed by the women of the church. Its name was derived from the "widow's mite" in the story told by Jesus in Mark 12:42. A mite was a small Hebrew coin worth only half a farthing. Records are found of organizations called "Mite Societies" going back as far as the early 1800s. They existed in Baptist and Methodist congregations as well as Presbyterian. It is not known when the

New Gretna Presbyterian Mite Society was founded, but it is mentioned in the Mt. Holly Herald in 1888 as giving an oyster supper in the church, and it was still active at least until 1932.

The fourth window memorializes Abigail Woolstan Mathis, who was the daughter of Maja B. Mathis, named on the second window. Abigail was born in 1851 and died in 1898, unmarried.

The fifth window has the name of Ernst Kretschmer, who was born in Germany in 1856. He was a sailor who sailed to New Gretna several times on the schooner Lizzie Belle and who decided to settle in our town when he left the sea. He became sexton of the Presbyterian Church, and truant officer and janitor at the New Gretna School. At one



The First Presbyterian Church of New Gretna on North Maple Avenue, circa 1928, shortly after the installation of the stained glass windows. (Photo from church files)

time in his career he tried to have six-year-old Walter Mathis put in the infamous Mount Holly Jail for truancy, but Walter got off with a reprimand. Ernst died in 1931 and is buried in Miller Cemetery. Unlike most of the people whose names are on the windows, Ernst was still alive when the windows were installed in the church.

Window number six is dedicated to Francis and Anna M. French. Francis, born in 1802, died 1852, was the son of Thomas and Hannah (Johnson) French. His wife Anna Maria was born in 1804, died 1878, and was the daughter of Daniel and Phoebe (Smith) Mathis. Francis and Anna had eleven children, one of whom was Levi French, whose name appears on window twelve and also on the church bell.

The seventh window contains the name of the fourth pastor of the church, Reverend S. G. Webb. He was installed in 1888 by the Monmouth Presbytery and served until 1896. Rev. Webb increased the size of the congregation and the Sunday School, and during his leadership the manse was built.



The First Presbyterian Church of New Gretna prior to the installation of the stained glass windows in 1928. (Photo courtesy of Tuckerton Historical Society)



Ernst Kretschmer (foreground) at a Presbyterian Church picnic. (Photo courtesy of Marian Broome)

A Fish Called "Remember" by the Herrintown Poet

The following poem was written in 1996 when a piece of an old wooden beam was found in the dirt crawl space under the New Gretna First Presbyterian Church. The wood resembled a fish and the Herrintown Poet got to thinking of all the things the fish may have heard over the years. Give a listen!

The Presbyterians in our town - They go a-way back.
To the preacher - John Brainard riding horse-back.
Riding and preaching was his calling back then.
He preached to the Piney and La-Nop-eee Indian.

He formed up a group humble and meek.
And they gathered each Sunday the Sabbath to keep
Now- Presbyterians are known for keeping it simple.
So the little bunch didn't need a big temple.

They just built a log house, kind-a looked like a fort.
On the bank of the Wading there in Bridge Port.
A well suited lot, the elders they found.
They measured and marked it as new "Holy Ground."

Then - They all got together with lumber and stone
Determined to build a proper house of their own.
The carpenter that built the church-house's frame
Don't know the man - We don't know his name.

But while he was building, he sawed off a beam . . .
And the chunk - - It fell where it couldn't be seen.
150 years it lay neath the old church floor.
It got covered with dust and spiders and more.

Just a bit of old wood, didn't look like much.
But - there was something about it I wanted to touch.
I looked it all over and turned it around.
That old piece of wood was lost but now found.

Then I saw something . . . just on the inside.
It was a fish! . . . In there trying to hide.
Now - - This fish is not like the others that swim - -
No! This fish was singing a Presbyterian hymn.

Its not just another piece of old timber
It's a fish - - - Who's name is "REMEMBER."

All through the years he lay in that spot.
Silently - - - Listening, and he heard quite-a-lot.
For more than a century he soaked up the sound.
Of folks at church here in our town.

Now, let me tell you again, so you'll know it's all true.
This fish can remember the folks in the pew.
Put your ear close and if your listening is keen
When you hear the old sounds, you'll know what I mean.



Zeb & Bess Mathis outside the Presbyterian Church in 1946. (Photo courtesy of Betty & Floyd West)

Yes - - He can remember when all in our town
Listened, on Sunday, to hear the bell sound.
The bell in the tower rang across the roof tops.
Sunday morning - - - And all the work stops.

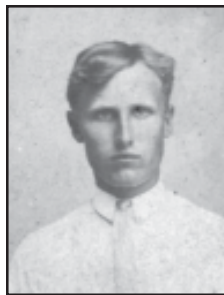
The best of the clothes were brought out and pressed,
Everybody's handsome - - all Sunday dressed.
They're filing in now by ones and by twos
What's that I hear squeaking? A new pair of shoes.

The elders are friendly, greeting all at the door.
Lots of warm smiles, and handshakes galore.
There's **Zeb** handing out "the Hymn Book" and fan,
And **Bess** at Piano playing Beulah-Land.

They're all in now and taken their seat.
The preacher's about ready to get to his feet.
Yes - - I see him look at the clock's second hand.
He's right on time . . . "Lets everyone stand."



John Costas was pastor of the New Gretna First Presbyterian Church from 1958-1964. (Photo courtesy of Naomi Post Maurer)



Doughty Cramer (1892-1962) shortly after his marriage to Alberta Cramer. (Photo courtesy of Margaret Cramer McAnney)



Eugene "Booter" Mathis (1888-1970), bayman, tonged and raked many an oyster and clam in his day. (Photo courtesy of Howard Ware)

The Apostle's Creed is repeated by rote.
Hear Harry Kidd clearing his throat.
Hear Thelma play - - She's pulled all the stops.
For music in church she's got to be tops.

Hear **Otto** singing "Rock of Ages - Cleft for Me,"
And **John Costas** praying and making his plea.
Doughty and **Boot** taking up the collections.
They're all in the fish, these found recollections.

Hear them all sing the Dox-OI-A-Gee.
When finished with that the Gloria Pat-Tree.
It's a Presbyterian sermon - - It's short but it's pointed.
Tells about a man that God has anointed.

To lead a people - - Make them a nation.
From out of which will come our salvation.
Hear them all sing the last hymn with conviction.
Then bow their heads to receive ben-e-diction.

When they hear the ah-men and sure there's no more.
They fill up the aisle and press toward the door.
"Good sermon Pastor" hear them all say.
"See you at Prayer meeting this coming Winds-day."

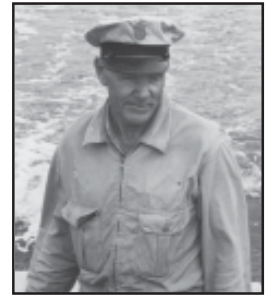
Outside on the steps hear talk of weather and bay.
"Oyster season" starts the next day.
Garvey and tongs ready as ever -
"I'll be there early" at the mouth of the river.

Now **Ashton** - - closes the church, it's his pride and joy.
He's been sexton here since he was a boy.
The folks are all gone, now it's silent and still.
The names - - are on stones up there on "the hill."

So thank you Mr. Fish for your scale and fin.
You stored up the past, just under your skin.
Yes, the past is stored up in thee Mr. Fish,
And I can recall it whenever I wish.

To help me keep partnership with the past,
And slow me down so I won't go too fast.
And break all the ties that hold us so strong.
To kin-folk and friend that have been here and gone.

The fish started talking . . . and I heard him to say . . .
"KEEP THE TIES TO YESTER-DAY . . ."
"KEEP THE TIES TO YESTER-DAY . . ."



Otto Kalm (1898-1989), a N.J. Shellfish Warden, on patrol in Little Thoroughfare in 1954. (Photo courtesy of Claire & Alston Allen)



Ash Lamson (1869-1947) owned a restaurant on the north east corner of Rt 9 & Maple Avenue and was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. (Photo courtesy of Floyd & Betty Lamson West)

Cutting Cedar in Mathistown

by Steve Eichinger as told by Howard Ware

Howard Bozarth of Egg Harbor City had a saw mill and a lumber business at Egg Harbor City in the 1920's. He would buy lumber rights in various places to add more lumber to his inventory. Lumber rights would be purchased in various ways. Trees would be bought from private land



Howard Ware (Jan. 2000) by fly wheel from Rum Hallow saw mill owned by Sam Garrett, now the North Maple Avenue home of Richard & Patricia Ireton. (Photo by Elaine Mathis)

owners by the stump or by the cord, or tax liens would be purchased from the Township on land containing desirable trees. These liens would give the purchaser the right to cut lumber off the property. While the lumber was being cut, the taxes would be paid by the saw mill owner. After the lumber was depleted he would usually let the lien go back into the Township's tax sale, tear down the mill, and move it to another swamp to start the same process over again.

Saw mill operators would go to the swamp and locate a suitable site

where the high ground met the swamp and erect a saw mill. After they set up the mill, they built a causeway from the mill down the middle of the swamp. They would cut and trim the trees, carry or drag them out to the causeway, load them on a horse drawn wagon or truck and bring them to the mill. If the trees were big and plentiful enough they would set up a log carriage at the mill site and make siding or boat lumber. If there were only a few large cedars, they would take them to another mill rather than setting up a log carriage on site.

One of Howard Bozarth's saw mills was set up in a cedar swamp in Mathistown called "Pepperage Swamp," located south of Route 9, east of Job's Creek, and down the road that goes out to the meadows. The mill was run and managed by Joe Ware, Howard Ware's father. They cut and sawed cedar to make shingles, shingle lath, and plaster lath. The mill was run by a big 20 HP Fairbanks Morse "one lugger" (only one cylinder) kerosene engine which was started with gasoline. Machines, which ran off a common line shaft from the engine, included the American log carriage and the Chanledler horizontal shingle machine. Homemade machines served a variety of purposes such as squaring off blocks of wood for shingle cutting and cutting uniform lengths of wood.



Joe Ware, in 1935, by vertical cut off saw used to square off ends of logs prior to sawing. Trough where log was placed is in foreground. (Photo courtesy of Nelson Ware)

Wood choppers were paid about fifty cents an hour. Without a doubt, they earned every penny, because there were no chain saws in those days. They used only axes and hand saws. After the lumber was sawed, bundled, stacked, and counted, it was loaded on a horse drawn wagon or truck and taken to Egg Harbor City where it would be sold at the Bozarth Lumber Yard.

Saw mills like the one that Joe Ware ran in Pepperage Swamp mill in Mathistown, once so common in our area, are now largely a thing of the past. Howard Ware and his brother Nelson recorded some 60 mill sites that they recall within a 12 mile radius of New Gretna, some of which were operated by water power or steam. Today there are no operating mills in Bass River or Washington Townships. The last operating mill

in Bass River was the Charlie Kauflin Mill on South Maple Avenue which is still standing. The last mill in Washington Township was Joe Ware's Mill in Green Bank which was torn down in 1997 after sitting idle for many years.

Howard and Nelson Ware can account for the following eleven sawmills that

operated in Bass River Township: Howard Bozarth's mill run by Joe Ware in back of Jim MacDonald's house in Pepperage Swamp about which this article is written; 2 mills on the Mink Path by the duck pond; Sam Garrett's mill on North Maple Avenue by Rum Hallow; Sam Ireland's mill run by Charlie Kauflin in back of Jack Budd's farm; James Howard Bozarth's mill in Leektown; Russie Adams' mill in back of Marian Broome's house on North Maple Avenue; Jack Wiseman's mill on West Road; Charles Kauflin's mill on South Maple Avenue; Tom Watson Mill



Joe Ware (l) and brother-in-law, Eddie Weber, cutting cedar on the horizontal saw to be used for blueberry boxes. Circa 1944. (Photo courtesy of William Augustine Collection, Rutgers University)

in Frogtown near Hill-side Cemetery; the Leek-French-Cramer water power mill on Hammonton Road at Ives Branch; and the Baker-Tucker water power mill at the present Pilgrim Lake. [See the Gazette's web site at <http://members.xoom.com/bassriver/> for a list of over 60 saw mills in Bass River and surrounding communities.]



Charlie Kauflin at his South Maple Avenue sawmill, circa 1953. Charlie passed the mill on to his son, Milton (Mutt), who ran the mill until the late 1960's. It is still standing behind the Kauflin South Maple Avenue homestead. (Photo courtesy of Carol Kauflin Nicklow)

Saw Mill Products:

1. Shingles were cut 4 inches wide, 1/2 inch thick tapered to 1/16 inch, and 18 to 28 inches long, and were packed in bundles of 50. To saw shingles they would need logs with few knots, fairly straight, and 6 or 8 inches in diameter as to be blocked at 4 inches with squared ends, 18-28 inches in length.
2. Plaster lath was cut 1 1/2 inches wide, 5/16 inches thick, and 48 inches long, and was packed in bundles of 100.
3. Shingles lath was cut 2 inches wide, 1 inch thick, and 12 feet long, and was packed in bundles of 12.
4. Boat boards would be cut in various lengths and thickness so as to satisfy any kind of boat being built. These were cut through and through leaving bark on both sides. To saw boat board lumber, they would need logs with few knots, fairly straight, and larger than 16-18 inches in diameter, and 26 feet long. Bottom boards were cut 1 1/2 (5/4) inches thick.
5. Siding for houses was cut 5 inches wide, 1/2 inches thick, 12 feet long, and planed on one side.
6. Excelsior, called "dog hair", used as a packing material and furniture stuffing.

Steam mills burned all of the by products of the milling process that couldn't be sold including slabs, saw dust, excelsior, and butts to heat the boiler.

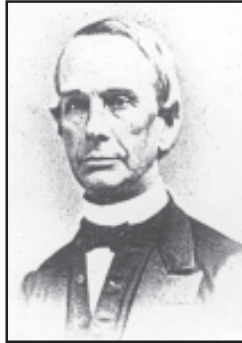
BASS RIVER CEMETERIES

(Continued from page 1)

church building was moved across the road and became the Frogtown school house until its abandonment in 1900 when a new graded school opened on Allentown Road, now North Maple Avenue. The old church-schoolhouse burned down in a 1915 fire.

Miller Cemetery

Stephen Cramer settled in the Bass River section of Little Egg Harbor Township in 1729 and started a small family graveyard on a hill at the center of his farm. Evidence of the early Cramer burials, including Stephen, cannot be found; however, it is likely that bog iron stones on the hill are the remnants of these early burials. The graveyard remained in the hands of Stephen's heirs until 1861 when the property was purchased for \$300.00 by Samuel Miller, a founder and pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New Gretna. Miller dedicated the cemetery, named in his honor, as a public burying place in 1861. Leah Blackman (p 304) states that "... many of the dead were taken up from other burying places in Bass River and re-interred . . . and now it is the principal graveyard in Bass River." Parishioners loaned Miller the money to make the purchase, and he maintained ownership until his death in 1883. This unusual arrangement was necessary because the church was not legally able to purchase the cemetery as it was not properly incorporated at that time. Miller willed the cemetery to the Monmouth Presbytery, the organization responsible for overseeing the New Gretna church, who held the title until 1888 when the 4.49 acre cemetery property was given to the New Gretna First Presbyterian Church.



Rev. Samuel Miller (1817-1883) was a founder of the First Presbyterian Church of New Gretna and was instrumental in the development of Miller Cemetery. (Photo courtesy of Burlington County Historical Society)

Miller Cemetery grew over the years. The roadway from North Maple Avenue was purchased from Arthur H. Cramer and his wife, Mary Jane in 1866; a .92 acre parcel adjacent to the original hill section of the cemetery was purchased from Mary French in 1947; a 2.7 acre parcel to the north, known as the Crate tract, was donated by Mary Crate in 1975; and a 2.1 acre parcel to the east-northeast of the Crate tract was purchased from the Southern Ocean State Bank in 1985.

Records of Hillside and Miller cemeteries were either not kept or have been lost. The only list of burials presently available is a 1989 census that was made of the existing tombstones. This census omitted those who have been buried without a stone and those whose stone is unreadable. Today the census shows just over 1,200 burials in Miller Cemetery and 379 burials in Hillside Cemetery. It is available for historical and genealogical research.

The following chart lists some of the old Bass River families and the numbers of

Family	Cemetery	
	Miller	Hillside
Adams	58	32
Allen	95	0
Cale	18	0
Cramer	177	46
Darby	24	2
French	48	0
Gale	13	0
Gaskill	14	6
Hickman	9	5
Lamson	13	0
Leek	14	3
Loveland	46	41
Mathis	135	31
Sears	36	2
Sooy	13	3

family members buried in the two cemeteries.

The Old Home Society

The Methodist and Presbyterian churches maintained Hillside and Miller Cemeteries until 1927 when a group representing many of the old New Gretna families became concerned about the deteriorating condition of the cemeteries and formed an organization dedicated to properly maintaining them. It was named the *New Gretna Old Home Society* because New Gretna was the "old home" to the founding members, many of whom no longer lived in New Gretna, but had deep family roots in the community. The founding members were Leonard D. Algar, Kirk Loveland, Lela Hillard, Hiram Mathis, J.H. Leek, Arnold Cramer, John H. Cramer, John S. Mathis, Samuel H. Headley, C. Stanley French, Thos. A. Mathis, Harry T. Headley, Jos. Cramer,

CHURCH WINDOWS

(Continued from page 4)

Window eight memorializes six former elders of the Church: Joseph P. Adams, Robert C. Blow M.D., Charles P. Cramer, Benjamin C. Mathis, Daniel E. Mathis and Ellis Mathis.

- Joseph Perkins Adams joined the church, coming from the Bass River M.E. Church, on 14 March 1875 and died in 1891.
- Doctor Blow was admitted to the church in 1897 by letter from a church in Beverly, N.J. He died in 1898.
- Charles Pitman Cramer, born in New Gretna in 1850, died 1923, married first Ann Eliza McCollum. He then married Jerusha/Rusha L. (Gale), widow of Watson W. Cramer. Charles and Anna had two children, Samuel P. and Ida. Ida married Mark Endicott of Port Republic.
- Benjamin Churchwood Mathis, born 1837 at New Gretna, died 1913, was the son of Daniel and Elizabeth (White) Mathis, and the grandson of the Daniel Mathis discussed under window #6 above. Benjamin married Mary Walton. They are buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Tuckerton. They had nine children.
- Daniel Edward Mathis born 1840, died 1913, was the brother of Benjamin Churchwood Mathis. He married first Charlotte A. Cramer and second Lois H. Eldridge. Daniel and Charlotte are buried in Miller Cemetery.
- Ellis Mathis was the son of Maja Berry Mathis discussed under window #2. He married Jane Mathis and they had Maja Cowperthwaite Mathis. Maja C. married Marietta Loveland, daughter of Marshall Loveland named in window #16.

(To be continued in next issue)

Amasa Mathis, Norris Sears, Augustus Cramer, Maja C. Mathis, and J. Pratt Cramer. The churches, finding it increasingly more difficult to maintain the cemeteries in a suitable fashion, were pleased to accept the services of the Old Home Society and relinquished the maintenance chores in the cemeteries while maintaining ownership.

Today, the *New Gretna Old Home Society* owns and maintains Hillside and Miller cemeteries. The Presbyterian Church deeded Miller Cemetery to the Society in 1972, and the Methodist Church did the same for Hillside Cemetery in 1992. The Society holds an annual Memorial Day dinner and church service honoring the memory of the veterans buried in Bass River's cemeteries and those New Gretna residents and extended families who died in the previous

(Continued on page 8)



Owen Carty, Francis Sears and Frank Gray (l-r), members of the New Gretna Old Home Society, oiling the paths at Hillside Cemetery, in 1958, to keep the dust down. (Photo courtesy of John Milton Adams)

HUCKSTERS & PEDDLERS

(Continued from page 2)

on his way down the street to the next bunch who were waiting their turn for the ice cream vendor's tasty treats. Schedule or not, we were always happy to welcome the ice cream man on a hot summer day.

All of those Hucksters, Peddlers and Vendors were a real convenience for the people in our little community at that time. Their wares, their conversations and their performances have left lasting memories for all of us who benefited from their services. Most everyone likes to reminisce about happenings in the past that are nonexistent today and the door to door salesman is among those unforgettable memories. Even though life was a lot more difficult to cope with, in so many ways back then, the pace was so much easier going. The people were a more neighborly and friendly lot, and life was much simpler and a lot less complicated than it is today. So we win a few and we lose a few, and time marches on.

BASS RIVER CEMETERIES

(Continued from page 7)

year. [See our web site at <http://www.members.xoom.com/bassriver> for a list of veterans in Bass River's cemeteries.]

The present officers in the Old Home Society are Marian C. Broome, President; Brian L. Maxwell, Vice President; and Peter H. Stemmer, Secretary-Treasurer. The Maintenance Committee chairmen are Franklin W. Gray and John Sears, and the Plot Sales and Burials Committee chairmen are Robert Conover and Murray T. Harris.



Franklin A. Gray (1896-1986), at a 1976 dinner honoring his service to the community, with Marian Broome, the current President of the *New Gretna Old Home Society*. Franklin, known simply as "F.A." to his friends, supervised the operation and maintenance of Hillside and Miller cemeteries for over 20 years. Marian has been involved with the *Old Home Society* for over 70 years, having attended the annual dinners as a child with her parents, Ben & Lizzie Broome. (Photo courtesy of Franklin W. Gray)

Gazette Subscriptions

A yearly subscription (3 issues) of the Gazette is available for anyone who sends 3 business size, 4" x 9 1/2", stamped, self addressed envelopes to Gazette Subscriptions c/o Bass River Township Community Library, P.O. Box 256, New Gretna, NJ 08224. There is no charge for the subscription; however, donations are appreciated. The subscription will start with the next issue unless otherwise specified and will expire after the 3 envelopes are used. It may then be renewed by sending 3 additional envelopes.

The Bass River Community Library History Committee members are Harry DeVerter, Steve Eichinger, Jean & Murray Harris, Elaine Mathis, Almira Steele, and Pete Stemmer. If you have any information such as photos, letters, documents, maps, local recipes, newspaper clippings, etc. related to Bass River Township that may be helpful to us, please contact us individually; write us c/o **The Bass River Community Library, P.O. Box 256, New Gretna, N.J. 08224**; or call Pete Stemmer at 296-6748. We thank the Herrintown Poet for his contribution to this issue. Readers who are interested in Bass River Township area history are encouraged to submit comments to our columnists and/or an article for publication. We hope to include a "Letters to the Editor" column in the future, so let's hear from you.

NEWS FROM THE PAST

by Harry DeVerter

The following are actual news articles transcribed from the Bass River section of issues of old newspapers.

MT. HOLLY HERALD

February 21, 1880

At a three hours eat-as-you-please eating match at Bass River, held recently, one of the contestants carried off the prize by devouring 60 clams, 1 peck of oysters, 10 terrapin, and 4 black ducks. The winner is a very modest person and declines to give his name for fear of being challenged by some imaginary champion, but signifies his willingness to perform the job again at any time.

MT. HOLLY HERALD

January 22, 1887

The ice crop has been excellent, and all of the ice houses in this town are filled. The New Gretna house has about 200 tons stored for the coming summer.

MT. HOLLY HERALD

January 7, 1893

There are just three things we are badly in need of in this place, a police officer, lawyer and a lockup and unless we make some effort to obtain them there will no doubt be war around here and it will not only visit our neighborhood, but will also strike over in Green Bush as there are two certain parties over in Bucto who are called indiscreet mischief makers. They have always made it their business to travel from place to place, sneaking around houses after night, breaking off their door knobs, talking about their neighbors and pastor and insulting everyone they can. Not only this but they tell stories about people that are perfect ladies and gentlemen. If this work is carried on much longer we will show them what the result will be.

MT. HOLLY HERALD

April 23, 1904

A rat wearing around its neck a gold ring set with a solitaire diamond was killed at the barn of Uriah J. Allen of New Gretna, recently. The family cat was the fortunate ratter and so proud was she of her prey that she brought it into the house where it was about to be brushed out when the glitter of the diamond was noticed. An examination showed that it was the ring of Mrs. Maggie Adams, lost two years ago. It was fitted so tight about the neck that the rat must have nearly strangled. It is supposed that the rat, when young, had slipped its head through the ring and had never been able to get it off.

MT. HOLLY HERALD

August 20, 1904

An effort is being made to have a trolley road built from here to Egg Harbor City, passing through New Gretna and a number of small towns. Many business men believe the road will pay and will encourage the project in every way. [In the Tuckerton section]

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<http://members.xoom.com/bassriver/>

for copies of Gazette back issues, a history of Bass River Township, and other goodies.