

BASS RIVER GAZETTE

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

Issue No. 8: September-December, 2000

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BASS RIVER'S CHURCHES

PART 1 - The Quakers

by Peter H. Stemmer

It seems strange to begin a history of Bass River's churches with the Quakers as there are no Quaker churches in Bass River Township today. There is, however, an old Friends Meeting House in Tuckerton that serves as a reminder of the Quaker presence in the area. Bass River Township was a part of Little Egg Harbor until 1864, thus the early history of these two townships are inevitably intertwined. The religious heritage of their inhabitants and their churches are no exception.

The earliest inhabitants of the area were Quakers, the most influential being Edward Andrews who settled on the east bank of Pohatcong Creek, now Tuckerton Creek, in the early 1700's. His brother Mordecai settled on the west bank. Together, they owned the land that is Tuckerton today.

It is believed that Edward started a Friends Meeting in 1704 which likely met in his home and others, until 1709 when a small Meeting House was built on a two acre parcel of land donated by Edward for a meeting house and graveyard. For well over a century it was the center of most aspects of life in the area- religious, social, political, civic, and economic. The Quakers were the overwhelming majority of the area's population and their religion was all pervasive, much like the Mormon experience in Utah. In 1863 the old building was dismantled and a new Meeting House was built which still stands.

The Great John Mathis, Robert Allen, Stephen Cramer, and many others of the early prominent Bass River families were a part of the Quaker society anchored to the Little Egg Harbor Friends Meeting and are buried in unmarked graves in its ancient graveyard. Their names can be found in the Friends Monthly Meeting minutes which start in 1715 and provide a valuable mirror of the times for historians and genealogists.

The first Quaker church within the boundaries of today's Bass River Township was built in Bass River Neck around 1803. A small group of Friends from the Little Egg Harbor Meeting requested permission to hold a first Day (Sunday) meeting and to operate a schoolhouse, the first documented school house in Bass River Township. Previous to this Meeting House they had to travel to Tuckerton to attend meetings, a long, tedious trip by horse, wagon, and/or by foot over sand trails and roads. The journey was longer then, as the present Bass River bridge location did not exist until the mid 1820's. Travelers had to use the northern route from the present day Pilgrim Lake Campground and Old Stage Road to get to Tuckerton.

The exact location of this Meeting House and school is not known; however, it probably was located across the street from the small Cramer family cemetery adjacent to Cramer's Recycling Center on Hammonton Road (Rt 542). Leah Blackman stated in her *A History of Little Egg Harbor Township* that it was "... on the lower main road from Bass river to Bridgeport, and opposite the Uriah Cranmer place." An 1809 Burlington County road survey laying out an earlier version of Hammonton Road states "... [from] a white oak tree Standing by Amasa Mathis fence thence (6) North forty eight degrees west forty seven chains and fifty links [3,135 feet] to the crossroads between the friends and Methodists Meeting House thence ..." Unfortunately the crossroad mentioned in the road survey no longer exists.

The Bass River Neck Meeting House held meetings under the supervision of the Little Egg Harbor Meeting from 1803 through 1825. Meetings were held once a month and increased over the years to every other week, and finally to every week. The Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting sent both men's and women's overseers to every meeting through this 22 year period. It is not known how or when the building disappeared.

By 1824, the location of the Meeting House in Bass River Neck was felt to be inconvenient as it was not centrally located for the members. A committee was appointed in January of that year to consider an alternate location. Over the next year a lot was purchased in Bridgeport and the new meeting house was completed by August, 1824 at a cost of \$385.17. The project ran over budget, and a \$14.00 one year, interest free note was obtained from Jesse Evans to pay all expenses. Jesse Evans was the manager at Martha Furnace and the husband of Lucy Evans, a popular and influential Quaker minister in the Little Egg Harbor Meeting. It is doubtful that Jesse was a Quaker, but he did occasionally join Lucy at a Friends Meeting as evidenced by this Nov. 23, 1813 entry in the Martha Furnace Diary: *Mr. & Mrs. Evans at Friends Meeting down in Bass River Neck.*

The Bridgeport Friends Meeting succeeded the Bass River Meeting under the continued supervision of the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting. In 1827 there was a split among Quakers resulting in a breakup into two groups- the Orthodox Friends and the more liberal Hicksites. Leah Blackman reported that the Bridgeport Meeting chose to follow the new Hicksite branch while the Little Egg Harbor Meeting remained Orthodox. *The Guide of the Records of Philadelphia*

(Continued on page 6)



The Friends Meeting House in Tuckerton, located behind the Shell gas station on Rt. 9, was the first church attended by the early settlers of Bass River Township. (Photo courtesy of Burrrel Adams)



The Friends Meeting House at Bridgeport, pre 1924, when a forest fire burned the delapidated building to the ground. (Photo courtesy of Burlington County Historical Society.)

ANOTHER THING I REMEMBER

by Almira Cramer Steele

SUMMERTIME FUN

Back in the 30's and 40's the main source of entertainment was mostly of our own making. However, during the summer there was a few more activities going on, and we took advantage of all of them. Summertime has always been the fun time of the year, so here are a few things I can remember we all enjoyed in Bass River back then.

Some time during the Summer, when the moon was full, the churches or some civic organization would sponsor a "Moonlight Sail." The boats would leave from Allen's Dock, cruising down Bass River and on into Great Bay. There they would drop anchor fairly close together and once they were settled, someone would start singing, accompanied by a banjo or two strumming some old familiar tunes. One by one, everyone joined in, and the fun began. It was especially nice for the "young at heart," because it was kind of romantic out on the bay looking up at the moon while listening to the strumming of those beautiful banjo melodies.

Refreshments were always close at hand if anyone took the time between songs to snack a little. After an hour or two, and before the moon had lost its glow, the captains would pull up anchor and head back up the river making music all the way.

Among the Party Boat owners who made themselves and their boats available for these moonlight sails were Chester Allen and the *Valiant*, Rue Mizelle and the *Evelyn*, Les Allen and the *Alpat*, and Dan LeMunyon and the *Ruth V*.



Les Allen was a familiar site at Allen's Dock on the Bass River. He captained on many a "Moonlight Sail." (Photo courtesy of Earl & Sally Allen.)



Chet Allen (r), Captain of the *Valiant* and owner of Allen's Dock, poses in 1944 with Les Allen before heading down the Bass River to Great Bay. (Photo courtesy of Margaret Cramer McAnney)

They worked fast because they had picked out the ones they wanted before hand and almost never got caught in the act.

Sometimes we went to Fur Bridge or Harrisville, but the party I remember the most was the night we went to Lake Absagami with all those choice watermelons. We took them out to the lake, broke them open on the beach, and had a sumptuous feast. After the melons were eaten the guys caught the girls off guard and washed their faces with the leftovers. Now, the girls wouldn't let them get away with that, so before the party was over, the guys got their faces washed too. A dip in the lake was almost a must after all that hullabaloo.



Jim MacDonald (r) superintendent of Bass River State Park in the 1940s with his foreman, Zeb Mathis. (Photo courtesy of Catherine Mathis)

Jim MacDonald was the superintendent of Bass River State Forest at that time and when he went to the beach the next morning and saw all the debris we left, he made Bud Steele who was a life guard, clean up the mess. Bud wasn't in on the little get together the night before, but he was the one who had to do the dirty work, and we never heard the last of his complaints.

I'll tell you, if you've never been on a watermelon party, you don't know what you've missed. Fun! Fun! Fun!

We also had a Medicine Show come to town every summer. Everybody went to it out of curiosity, I believe, because those shows were so awful they were funny. The company had a flat bed truck which they pulled up between the old Knights of Pythias Hall and the little restaurant near the corner of Rt. 9 and South Maple Avenue. Both of these buildings have since been demolished.

The salesmen would stand on that truck and try to sell their medicine which would cure every ailment you had including backaches, bee stings, lumbago, toothaches – you name it. Intermittently, they would tell a joke or sing and dance a little, then go back into their

Straw rides were another thing we looked forward to. As a rule, one evening each summer someone with a big truck would volunteer to fill it with straw and take us to the beach on Long Beach Island. There in the sand, we would build a little campfire and roast hot dogs and marshmallows. We played games, took a stroll down the beach, or did whatever struck our fancy. We usually went to Surf City because there was a large pavilion right on the beach. We would go to the top of the pavilion and look out over the ocean and often see the lights of a ship off shore. The pavilion also provided shelter if it became chilly or started to rain, so we could still enjoy our night at the beach regardless of the weather. We spent a few hours doing the things we liked to do then looked forward to having a good time on the straw ride back home. All this might not sound too exciting to the young folks today, but we sure had fun.

Almost every family in New Gretna way back when had a garden. In that garden there was one spot where they usually had a watermelon patch. Now, all the guys in town knew where each and every watermelon patch was located. All summer long they would watch those watermelons until they were full grown and ripe. Then they planned their strategy. After dark, when the time was right, they would sneak into some of the patches where the biggest and best watermelons were and take a few for a good ole watermelon party.



Clarence "Bud" Steele was the first lifeguard assigned to the beach at Lake Absagami. (Photo courtesy of Almira Cramer Steele)

Mischief Night In Herrintown

A True Story

by the Herrintown Poet

From time to time echoes of the “outside world” arrived in Herrintown and that’s the way it was when Alden Bennett came to live with his Uncle Ashton and Aunt Anna Lamson in their home on Allentown Road. Alden had lived his early childhood years in his grandmother’s home in Collingswood, N.J., up close to the big city culture where young boys get pressed into the world’s mold. That’s where he learned a few of life’s seamier lessons.

Far From the World

In the dim years ago, Herrintown was far from the world and at ease in the privacy of the pines where news from the outside world hardly ever came in to disturb its peace. Herrintown was a paradise for young boys growing up. They were not pestered with schooling. Mainly they were trained to be upright and honest and to respect their elders above anything else. Beyond these rules, boys were not required to know much for too much knowledge would serve to make them discontented.

Hatching Plans

Along about the time school took up in the fall the boys were busy making plans. There was a considerable good deal of talk all the afternoon, and their imagination mill was hard at work. They enjoyed making mischief more than anything in the world. Mischief night would soon be here, and they planned to take advantage of the easy pranks this unholy night allowed them, such as privy tipping and putting soap on car windshields. While their plans were hatching, all they needed now was a leader with a little bit of confidence and boldness.

The Leader



Alden Bennett (l) & Jim Toser, still pals a few years after the “Mischief Night” caper. (Photo courtesy of Floyd & Betty Lamson West)

This is where Alden, a lanky outdoors loving teenager, comes in. Alden knew the roads and woods throughout the village as well as the birds, for he was always roaming around through them when he was not swimming or fishing. Herrintown’s Huck Finn for sure. From the time he was a child he never left a stone unturned. He was relentless in everything he pursued. He had absolutely no fear of the elders in town and a disregard for authority in general. This inherited streak in his makeup set him apart as a leader among his peers, and with all that, he had a touch of humor that made him popular. There was an air of confidence and boldness about him that caused his school chums, without exception, to hold him in fearful

respect. Alden was drawn into the tight circle of school boys doing the planning- “Wa’na have fun, huh?” he said with a grin on his wrinkled face. He had a habit of talking in a manner of one who talks to himself. His ruddy confidence was contagious. Yes sir, where Alden was headed, they were ready to follow .

The Unholy Night

The unholy night in October finally arrived. The night they had anxiously waited on and under the leadership of Alden had meticulously planned for. It was the night that tradition granted them a license to make mischief, and they were ready to make their first score when darkness fell. Along about the time it got dark, the little knot of boys were seen as they slinked around the back side of Levi’s barber shop. They ducked down as they passed under the

part opened window that Levi left open to let out the surplus tobacco smoke and profanity. Levi thought he heard something shuffling around outside and put his head out the door, glanced up and down the road, warily, then closed the door and locked it.

Alden led the little gang across a small clearing behind the barber shop, partly hidden by a patch of wild raspberry bushes growing in a large pile of old bottles, empty tin cans, bits of rusty metal, rusted out and leaky buckets, and useless junk or all kinds. They continued with great care not to trip over some obstacle that would make a noise and give their plot away . On they went, through the backyard of the school house, stepping quietly through the patch of woods behind the manse. They stopped for a while in a clearing in back of the church and loafed around rehearsing their plan. The night was dark and chilled by a nor -east breeze that was rising. Everything was silent except the leaves on the trees which were stirred by the wind.

Road to Hez’s Farm

On the maple lined road that ran down to Hez’s farm along the Bass River, a white clapboard house setting close to the road was the homestead of Govey Cramer. It had a tidy vegetable garden in the back and a nice little fenced in yard for chickens. Along with the garden and chicken house there was a cow barn with weather blackened clapboards and a leaning door. In this small barn is where Emma Govey kept her prized golden Guernsey milk cow she called “Pet.” Beyond these farm buildings, a way on the backside, was the hog pen. There was no way for Emma to know that, in her backyard, the prank the boys had planned with such cunning was to take place

The boys, with Alden in the lead, crossed over Allentown Road, being ever so careful to stay in the deep, dark shadows of the maples to avoid being seen. They had come up from the church yard undetected. They stood around the gate a while, ready to run at the first alarm. Everything was dead quiet. A dog howled in the yard a couple of times. Not making the least noise, they slipped quietly through the fence in single file. They went on tip-toeing along the path amongst the fruit trees toward the end of Emma Govey’s garden. Stooping down so as not to let the branches scrape their heads, they circled around the lilacs that grew tall behind the out house.



Levi’s Barbershop on Old New York Road (Rt 9), adjacent to the New Gretna House, was a hangout for many an old timer. If walls could talk!(Photo courtesy of Helen Sears Carty)



Emma Broome Cramer (1878-1959), widowed in 1931, ran the family farm raising hogs and selling milk. She inherited the nickname “Govey” from her husband. (Photo courtesy of Marian C. Broome, Emma Govey’s niece)



The Govey Cramer children (l-r) Townsend, Mary, and Mahlon in front of the outhouse and tall lilacs that provided cover for Alden and his gang on their way to the hog lot. (Photo courtesy of Marian C. Broome)

(Continued on page 8)

LIZZIE GEREW'S BREAD PUDDING & HOT MILK CAKES

It is so fascinating to me when I think about how our families and friends might remember us when our 'mission on earth has ended'. Will thoughts of us be for our talents of kindness to our friends and neighbors, our sense of humor, our love of children, our keen mind, or perhaps for being a great cook?



Harold "Huddle" Gerew (1920-2000) with his grandmother, May Adams Allen (r), Lizzie's mother, and great aunt, Rene Adams Odell. No doubt Lizzie got some of her recipes from her mom and aunt. (Photo courtesy of Harold Gerew, Jr.)

Elizabeth Gerew is remembered as being a great cook. 'Lizzie', as most people affectionately called her, loved to make and decorate birthday cakes for people in the neighborhood. I've been told that neighbor children would drop in to 'help' her bake or more likely to 'lick the bowls clean' of cake batter and cake frosting. Lizzie must have liked kids since she allowed them to help her with her baking.

Elizabeth Allen Gerew was the daughter of Samuel 'Poppy Sam' and Ida May Adams Allen. She was the wife of Harold Gerew Sr. and mother of Harold Jr., 'Huddle' as he was known to his friends. Huddle just died on August 14, 2000 and was laid to rest in Miller Cemetery with his parents. I'm sorry that he didn't get to read this article that honored his mother and featured two of her well known and loved recipes - Bread Pudding and Hot Milk Cake.



Harold & Lizzie Gerew lived on the south-east corner of Allentown Road (Now No. Maple Ave.) and Hillside Lane (Now Riverside Drive). (Photo courtesy of Harold Gerew, Jr.)

Lizzie Gerew's Bread Pudding

1 Quart whole milk	¼ cup sugar
2 tablespoons butter	1 teaspoon vanilla
4 eggs separated	4 cups bread cut into squares

- Heat milk and butter just short of boiling. Place in a bowl & add the bread cubes.
- In a separate bowl, beat 4 egg yolks until fluffy, then add sugar and vanilla.
- Combine the milk & bread mixture with the egg yolk mixture. Pour into a buttered baking dish that has been set in a pan of water. Bake at 375-400 degrees until the pudding sets (About 1¼ hour).
- Remove from oven.
- While pudding is baking, beat 4 egg whites until stiff, add ½ cup sugar, and beat in well until mixture is very stiff. Place the meringue on top of the baked pudding; return to oven and bake until golden brown. (10-15 minutes)



Harold "Huddle" Gerew coming home from the service to enjoy his mother's home cooking. (Photo courtesy of Harold Gerew, Jr.)

Lizzie Gerew's Hot Milk Cake

4 eggs	3 tsp. baking powder
2 c. sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
2 c. cake flour	1 c. milk with 2 Thsp. Unsalted Butter

- Heat the milk and butter just until the butter melts. (Do not boil) Beat each whole egg separately in a small bowl until real light.
- Put into a larger bowl until all 4 eggs are beaten. Now in the large bowl, slowly add 2 cups sugar. Continue beating.
- Sift flour. Measure 2 cups and take 1/4 cup of flour and add the 3-tsp. baking powder. Add the other 1 3/4 cup of flour. Alternate with hot milk and butter in last. Add the 1/4 c. of flour and the baking powder and 1 tsp. vanilla.
- Bake in a greased and floured large, deep baking pan or two 9 inch layer cake pans at 350 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour. (Do not over bake)

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

[From 1003 Household Hints and Time Savers. 1 941]

- Cake will be perfectly flat on top if you pour the batter into the corners of the pan first, then around the sides and leave a slight depression in the center
- An easy way to separate whites from yolks of eggs- break them over a funnel. The whites pass through and the yolk remains.



Harold Gerew, Sr. (r) with Gerald "Skeets" Hickman, New Gretna's only one armed painter. They probably enjoyed many a slice of Lizzie's delicious cakes during their lunch breaks. (Photo courtesy of Harold Gerew, Jr.)

WADING RIVER LANDINGS

by Steve Eichinger

Much has been written on the trade along the Mullica River but little has been documented regarding the smaller Wading River. Trade there must have been substantial as I can account for eight landings on the Wading River from the mid 1700's thru the late 1800's. Traveling upriver from its mouth:

The **first landing** is Loveland's Landing on Loveland's Thoroughfare, a creek that empties into the Wading River. It was located on land originally settled by Charles Loveland and was probably used by hay scows and small fishing boats.

The **second landing** is the only one located on the west (Washington Township) side of the Wading River, a short distance down river from the present Wading River bridge, out from the old Down's farm, and across the river from where the Ives branch runs into the Wading River. There is very little known about this landing. Mrs. Mildred Leek Honeker, who was born and grew up in Wading River and was a distant relative and friend to my Aunt Alice Adams Weber, used to tell of a road that led past her house and went to an old landing down river. Her old homestead, the first house on the right over the Wading River bridge, is now owned by the Quigley family. The old road mentioned by Mrs. Honeker is long gone. This was on deep water and could accommodate large ships that unloaded ballast stones at this point to lighten their crafts so they could go further up river. Today, at low tide, one can see signs of old pilings and ballast stones remaining from this old wharf.

The **third, and by far the largest landing**, was Leek's Wharf at the site of the present Wading River bridge. At this point the river was still deep enough to handle large ships including two masted schooners. The Leeks were the first to control trade up the Wading River and appear to have had a monopoly from the mid 1700's through the early 1800's. A store was added next to the wharf. They operated two sawmills on the Ives Branch that were purchased by the French family and later the Cramer family, and they had a partnership in the sawmill located on the Bass River at the present site of Pilgrim Lake. Timber for the mills was cut from the many parcels of cedar swamp and upland that they owned in the area. As time went on, their business declined and John Leek III sold all his land holdings in the area in 1817.

The **fourth landing** was just up river from Bridgeport at a place called Goldecker [See Gazette Issue #3 for an article on Goldecker]. My uncle, Burrel Adams, and my aunt, Alice Adams Weber, told me that when they were kids they used to play on the large piles of cord wood that were stacked at Goldeckers to be shipped out to other areas.

The exact location of the **fifth landing** is speculation at this point. Pete Stemmer and I found a 1762 deed that mentions a Mathis Landing at the "Wide Place" on Wading River. As near as we can figure, it probably was where Chips Folly is today.

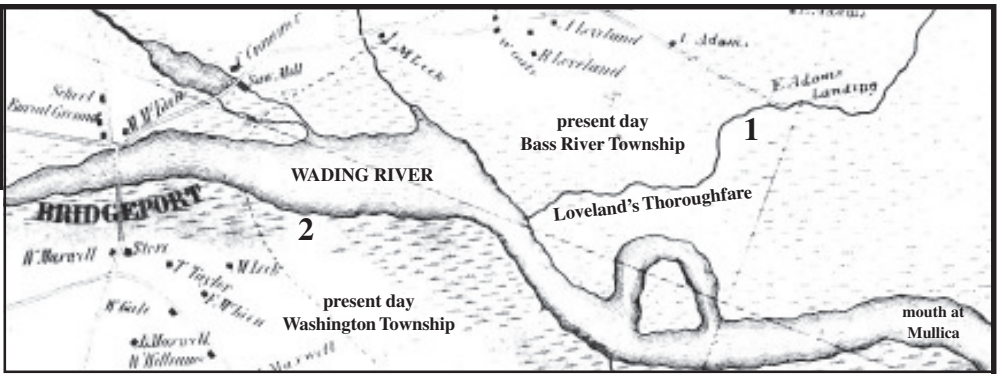
The **sixth landing** is Coal Landing upriver from Chips Folly and beyond the Smith Place. At this point you can no longer get sailing craft up the shallow and very crooked channels. Cargo would have to be transported upriver on scows using poles.

The **seventh landing**, known as the Hay Landing, was located just down river from the bridge at Bodine's Tavern where the Beaver Branch, named by the State of N.J. in 1959, flows into the Wading River. John Leek's name is recorded in deeds related to this property. It is referred to as Leek's upper wharf in earlier accounts. Goods were carried overland from this wharf to and from McCartyville and Martha Furnace.

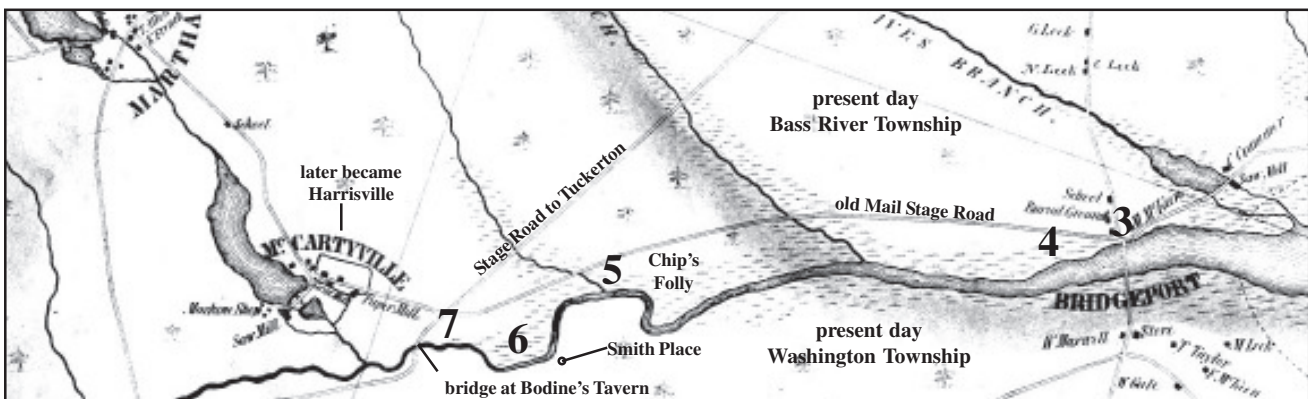
The **eighth landing**, Scott's Landing, is somewhat of a mystery. My Aunt Alice used to mention this landing by name, but I can't remember where she said it was located. It may even be a second name for one of the other upriver landings previously mentioned. Further research is needed to clear up the mystery.

These landings played a big part in the sizable river trade from the late 1700's through the late 1800's from Old Martha Furnace and the papermill town of McCartyville, which later became Harrisville, to and from the various landings along the Wading River.

[Continued in next issue with shipping on the Wading River by the McKean & Taggart who followed the Leeks.]



Modified 1849 Otley-Whiteford map showing the Wading River from it's mouth at the Mullica River upriver to Bridgeport with the lower landing: (1) Loveland's Landing and (2) Unknown.



Modified 1849 Otley-Whiteford map showing the upper Wading River landings from Bridgeport to Harrisville: (3) Leek's Wharf; (4) Goldecker Landing; (5) Mathis Landing; (6) Coal Landing; and (7) Hay Landing. The location of the 8th landing, Scott's Landing, is unknown.

SUMMERTIME FUN

(Continued from page 2)



Ann Carr, above in a 1936 school play costume, once won the *Medicine Show Beauty Queen of New Gretna* contest. (Photo courtesy of Thomas & Judy Cramer)

sales pitch again. They also sold tickets to select the prettiest girl in town. The girl who had the most tickets bought for her was crowned the Beauty Queen of New Gretna. I remember Ann Carr winning the crown one year.

I don't think anyone was ever cured of their ailments by taking the medicine, but we all liked to be part of anything that came to town. We didn't want to miss anything that went on, so we all went to those outlandish medicine shows for the excitement. The crowd would heckle them, a rotten tomato was thrown a time or two but, all in all, we did have a lot of laughs and something to talk about after they left town.

Last but not least, I remember Donkey Baseball played on the baseball diamond beside the old school where the new school addition is now located. Some of the young men would get on the donkeys and try to run the three bases. Well, they hardly made first base before they were bucked off and landed on the ground. The men tried hard to stay on, but it was almost impossible. It was hilarious to watch, especially if you had someone on the donkey you knew. I remember the night Calvin Wilson was on one of the donkeys, and he put on such a good show that his wife, Georgie, said Calvin made his debut the night of the donkey baseball game.



When not playing Donkey Baseball, Cal Wilson (above 1951) ran the party boat *Silver Hawk* out of Oyster Creek. (Photo courtesy of Calvin & Georgia Wilson)

All these shows, rides, and parties were a part of our summertime fun if you lived in Bass River at that time. I can truly say that I am glad I was part of some of it. We know none of that old time entertainment will never be recaptured because it's long gone, and everything changes with time. Yet, we did have a lot of fun while it lasted, and it's nice to reminisce about the good times and about all the hometown folks we shared it with. It was great entertainment and left us with a whole lot of happy memories about growing up in our little town of Bass River.

GAZETTE SUBSCRIPTIONS

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A special thank you to Harold Jernigan, Clerk of the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting, for his encouragement and assistance in the writing of the Bass River Quaker's article.

Bass River Churches, Part 2, The Presbyterians, will continue in the January - April, 2001 issue.

BASS RIVER'S QUAKERS

(Continued from page 1)

Yearly Meeting indicates that the Hicksite branch of the Bridgeport Meeting was transferred from the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting to the Mount Holly Monthly Meeting in 1828. Its transfer to Mt. Holly is not surprising as the Orthodox Little Egg harbor Monthly Meeting would not be involved in the caring of a Hicksite Meeting. It was finally discontinued in 1840.

Lucy Evans and most of the Little Egg Harbor Meeting ministers chose the Hicksite path and attended the Bridgeport Meeting. Membership dwindled over the next few years, and Lucy Evans, the once renowned Friends minister, worshiped silently by herself until her death in 1834. Her tombstone can be found to-day in the quiet wooded area behind what was once the Bridgeport Meeting House on Leektown Road just west of the present day Chips Folly Road.



Lucy Evans tombstone stands as a sentinel guarding the old cellar hole that was once the Bridgeport Friends Meeting House. (Photo by Elaine Weber Mathis.)

There is no mention of the Hicksites in the Little Egg Harbor Friends minutes during this time and no indication that the Bridgeport Friends chose to follow in its path. The only hint that something must have been terribly wrong is an August 14, 1828 notation which simply states "Whereas Luci ann Evans hath had a Right in Membership amongst friends but hath so far Diviated as to join a seperate meeting set up contrary to Discipline for which she has been tenderly treated with but Neglects our Religious joining making satisfaction for which we Disown her from being a Membership untill she becomes sencible of her Error and Condemns the same to the satisfaction of this meeting which that she may is our Desire." It is obvious that they were sorrowful regarding what they had to do and were hopeful that she might come back to the fold.

A month after Lucy Evan's disownment John and Lydia Hallock, who had also chosen the Hicksite path at Bridgeport, were likewise disowned by the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting. There were,



Lydia Hallock's small grave marker may be found neqar the site of the old Bridgeport Meeting House, close by the resting place of Lucy Evans. One wonders if Lydia's husband John is nearby in an unmarked grave. (Photo by Elaine Weber Mathis.)

however, no comments of regret in the minute book concerning their disownment. Ironically, Lucy Evans and both Hallocks were appointed to oversee the Bridgeport Meeting and to report back to the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting to ensure that the Bridgeport Meeting was following the proper path.

Lydia Hallock died August 20, 1830, and Lucy Evans died September 18, 1834 after which the Bridgeport Meeting House ceased to function as a Friends Meeting House. It was later used

by the Methodist may be found near the site of the old Church and as a schoolhouse. Bridgeport Meeting House, close by It eventually fell into disrepair and burned to the ground in a 1924 forest fire.

The only sign of its existence today is a shallow depression in the woods that a casual observer would not notice. Thus, 30 years before the creation of Bass River Township, all physical evidence of the Quaker heritage within its present boundaries was gone.

GENEALOGY CORNER

by Jean and Murray Harris

THE EVI ADAMS FAMILY OF BASS RIVER

There are apparently two different branches of Adamases in New Gretna. One line is descended from Hezekiah Adams, who was born around 1745, and whose seven children married into such well-known Bass River families as Cramer, Jenkins, and Robbins. Many of their descendants still live in the area. This family will be considered in a future issue of the Gazette.

A second line of the Adams family doesn't seem to be connected to Hezekiah's line, but migrated here from across the Mullica River. There have been a large number of family members in Port Republic in Galloway Township, and one of these, Evi Adams, moved to New Gretna (then Bass River) around 1835.



Sara Adams, granddaughter of Evi, married John Q. Post in 1917, a few years after he came to Bass River as a young Methodist minister. (Photo courtesy of Naomi Post Maurer.)

Evi Adams' ancestors are known back to the early 1600s due to the work of an Arthur Adams who compiled a book entitled "The Adams Family of Great Egg Harbor, Atlantic County". The earliest ancestor whom Arthur could document was one Jeremy Adams who came to Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1632. He came with a company influenced by Reverend Thomas Hooker, a prominent minister in the Puritan movement in the Church of England. Jeremy, along with the company led by Rev. Hooker moved to Hartford, Connecticut in 1636. There he married Rebecca (Baseden) Greenhill, widow of Samuel Greenhill/Grinnel. Jeremy was one of the original proprietors of Hartford. He was made official innkeeper of the Colony in 1662 and kept an inn on Main Street in Hartford, in which the General Court, the legislative body of the Colony, met.

Jeremy's oldest son, John, married Abigail Smith in 1657 when he was twenty years old. They had seven children, but John died when he was only thirty-three and Abigail remarried two years later to John Betts of Wethersfield, Connecticut. John and Abigail Betts then moved to Huntington, Long Island, together with both the Betts and the Adams children. It was a son of John and Abigail Adams, also named John Adams, who eventually moved to Great Egg Harbor in what was then Gloucester County, New Jersey. He owned land in Chestnut Neck before 1750. John and his wife Phebe were the great-grandparents of Evi Adams. Their son Jeremiah had a son also named John, and this John and his wife Sarah were Evi's parents.

Evi, born in 1792, was about forty years old when he moved from Port Republic to Bass River. He bought 160 acres of land in Bass River Neck (present day "Frogtown" area of New Gretna) from Nicholas and Mary Van Sant. In 1815 Evi had married Amy Leeds, daughter of Daniel and Ann Leeds, and they had ten children before Amy died in 1848. He married again in 1850, this time to Elizabeth Gifford, daughter of Joshua and Elizabeth (Mott) Gifford. Evi was a prominent Methodist, one of the first Trustees of the M.E. Church in Bass River, and a local preacher and an exhorter in the church.

The ten children of Evi and Amy Adams are: Rebecca Ann, who married Ellis Mathis; Enoch, who married Lydia Adams; Mary who married Jonathan McCollum; Eliza, who died in infancy; Thomas J., who married first Maria Lovina French and second Fanny Cranmer; Joseph D., who married Emeline Leeds; Daniel L. Adams; Sarah, who married John W. Johnson; James; and John Edward Adams.



Young Naomi Post, great granddaughter of Evi Adams, grew up in the family tradition of church service. She now serves as Secretary to the Pastor and Administrative Council of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in New Gretna (Photo courtesy of Naomi Post Maurer.)

At least two of Evi's sons were Methodist ministers. Daniel L. Adams was born 3 January 1828 and died in Cranbury, New Jersey, 15 May 1873. He married Lucy A. Reynolds, daughter of Britton C. and Louisa Reynolds. In 1870 he and Lucy were living in South Brunswick Township, Middlesex County and the census of that year gives his occupation as "Methodist Clergyman." His younger brother, John Edward Adams D.D., was born 26 February 1841 and died 25 October 1921. He married first a Miss Thompson of Bordentown and after her death married her sister.

Many of Evi's children moved away and their descendants do not live in this area. One son who remained in New Gretna and was a farmer here was James Adams. In 1875 he married Annie Holloway daughter of Charles and Elizabeth (Stackhouse) Holloway. They had children Charles, Mary Ella, Margaret Ceola, and Sara. The first two died in infancy, but Margaret, born in 1879, was to become a teacher and principal in the New Gretna Grammar School for over forty years, and was known to two generations of schoolchildren as "Miss Margaret." She died in 1965 and was buried in Hillside Cemetery. Her sister, Sara Adams, born in 1881, married John Q. Post. He had come to New Gretna as a minister in the Methodist Church for the years 1915 and 1916. Sara and John were married in 1917 and had children James Clarence, Newlyn H. who died in infancy and Naomi Margaret Post. Sara died in 1945. John died in 1995 at the exceptional age of 111 years.

Carrying on the family tradition, Sara and John's daughter, Naomi (Post) Maurer is known to all as one of the mainstays of the Methodist Church today.

Any one interested in tracing your family roots in the Little Egg Harbor/Bass River area is invited to visit the Bass River Township Community Library located in the Bass River Elementary School. Community Library hours are Monday 9:00 AM-noon; Wednesday, 12:30-3:30 PM & 6:00-9:00 PM; Thursday, 12:30-3:30 PM; and Friday, 6:00-9:00 PM. Someone will be available to assist you if you come during evening hours.



A young John Q. Post came to New Gretna in 1915 to become the minister in the local Methodist church. He was to marry into the Evi Adams family and become a part of the Methodist tradition in Bass River Township (Photo courtesy of Naomi Post Maurer.)



Sara Adams (l) and her sister Margaret who was known as "Miss Margaret" to 2 generations of students who passed through the New Gretna School when she was a teacher and principal. Sara & Margaret were granddaughters of Evi Adams. (Photo courtesy of Naomi Post Maurer.)

MISCHIEF NIGHT

(Continued from page 3)

They continued on slowly past the chicken house. They heard the rooster's low, deep voice clucking to alert the hens that something was moving around outside. They went on past the cow shed. By now, they reckoned they were out of danger of being seen and sat down on the wood pile to talk. They could hear the sounds of hogs grunting.

The Hog Lot

The fence that closed in the hog lot was made of different kinds of boards nailed on tilted posts at different times, and they leaned every which way. The gate didn't have but one hinge. The culprits crept along, and when they got to the hog lot fence with the low board railings, Alden gave the bottom plank a swift kick. The board flew off and startled the hogs. In an instant pigs of all size and color began pouring through the gap in the fence. In a jumbled rush to get-away and out of sight, the little mob ran pell-mell across the back field and quickly vanished over the cemetery hill.

Loose Pigs

During the night the loose pigs enjoyed their new found freedom. One pig, as it crossed Allentown Road, picked up the scent of apples on Russie Adam's back porch and veered toward the house. The animal climbed the steps and sampled from the basket that had been left outside, and when it finished eating was satisfied to lay down on the porch blocking the back door. Russy couldn't get the hog to move. Finally, he went out the front door and rushed over to Govey's to tell her to come get her pig off his porch.

Another pig helped himself to a row of turnips in Booter's garden over on Frenchs Lane. Ike Bowers awoke to three pigs thrashing and grunting in his asparagus patch. Captain Potty lost a row of carrots to one of the beasts, Harold Gerew's onions were trampled down, and one of Lizzie's clothes poles was knocked over. And so it went all around town.

The Next Morning

Next morning the news of the mischief done during the night was all over town in two minutes. You could see folks tearing down the road on the run from every which way, joining in the chase to round up pigs from backyards everywhere. It was early morning in Levi's barber shop, but by now they had all the facts in detail and a great many more they received from several young boys on their way to school. They seemed to know all about the mischief done last night over at Govey's place. When Alden entered the school house a crowd of young boys ringed around him. One of them was heard to say in his excitement, "The fame of it will travel everywhere!" Alden, unconscious of the eyes fastened upon him, stood plowing his hand through his hair. For the next three days the hog roundup continued until all but two of the pigs were back in Govey's hog lot, and the town, finally, got back to every day normal.

Last Words

Late in December all the talk in Levi's barber shop was about Tom Mick and how he had shot two wild hogs out on the East Plains somewhere around Sim's Place. . . . Well, that's the way it was in Herrintown back then. Every day had its own story. Oh, by the by, all the young boys did grow up, they did obey the rules laid down by the elders, and Alden went on to build a legend.



George A. "Govey" Cramer shows a prize pig in the backyard hog lot. (Photo courtesy of Marian C. Broome.)

NEWS FROM THE PAST

by Harry DeVerter

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

MT. HOLLY HERALD

circa 1881

Dr. Atkinson's prescription of salt petre, brick dust and kerosene is a specific for all sorts of internal diseases of the horse, but as a chirurgeon the Doctor is not very successful. Recently he operated on a horse that was suffering from a cancerous affection, but the knife slipped and severed the animal's jugular vein.

[From the Wading River section]

MT. HOLLY HERALD

October 24, 1892

This town is delighted to become as famous as did the home of the famous inventor, Thomas A. Edison, and it is all on account of the wonderful invention of Steelman Mick, which has fairly stirred the town from centre to circumference [sic] Everybody is talking about it, and a majority of the people believe that it is destined to revolutionize business throughout the world. A stock company will soon be formed and it will probably be no trouble to secure subscriptions to all the stock right here in Bass River. Naturally there has been a good deal of mystery about the invention, which is a sort of perpetual motion arrangement by which a certain amount of power can be secured, and communicated to other machines. It is a sort of a revolving wheel so arranged that it will keep on moving forever after it has once been started. It is just as easy as rolling off a log, although the attempt to solve the mystery of perpetual motion has often been made, in fact, it has been puzzling the heads of inventors for centuries. Inventor Mick has succeeded in getting a patent for his invention from the Patent office at Washington, and is justly proud of it, as he has a right to be. And the townspeople are also proud of the fact that the greatest mystery of the christian era has been solved right here in Bass River! Just think of it! After all these years the name of Bass River and Mr. Mick will occupy to top most position on the Temple of Fame. This is glory enough for one year.

In addition to furnishing power, the invention will be supplied with an additional arrangement which will enable a person to tell at once the exact latitude and longitude of the place he may happen to be; it will also give the exact depth of water at any point in the ocean. This will give the invention a value that can hardly be computed. Those who are interested in it in a financial way are James R. Cramer, Mark Adams and John Gaskill. If this power is applied to boats sails will be done away with and every sneak box, garvey and other craft in this vicinity will be fit to dup with the Mick power generator, thereby revolutionizing business among the clammers and oystermen. The menhaden fishermen will then be able to have things their own way.

Street cars can also be run all over town, and small ones can be used to propel wheelbarrows, tongs for oysters, run a baby coach or a sewing machine, catch crabs, wash dishes, sweep off the front porch and prevent a boat from swamping in heavy seas. Any one can see at a glance that such an invention would be invaluable after it has been in use a short time. There ought to be a fortune in it, not only for the inventor, who has been at work on it for seven years, but for the stockholders as well. So confident are the townspeople that it will be a success that they are willing to go their whole length financially on it, and the chances are the stock will be taken as fast as it is offered.