

BASS RIVER GAZETTE

A newsletter from the Bass River Community Library History Committee and the Great John Mathis Foundation

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donations appreciated

BASS RIVER GARAGES AND GAS STATIONS

by Almira Cramer Steele

Garages and gas stations were so plentiful in Bass River during the 1940's and 1950's. It seemed as though there were no restrictions about installing a couple of gas pumps in front of your business, whatever your business might have been. Several of the small business owners took advantage of that situation. They pumped gas for the convenience of their customers, and it was also a little extra income for the business owners as well.

Along with the couple of gas pumps scattered here and there throughout New Gretna, there were three or four auto repair garages that sold gas too. Whatever part of town you were in at the moment you could pull up and have your car filled up with gas, except in the Leektown section of town. There were no gas pumps up there.



Sam Merchant and his wife, Martha, and stepdaughter, Martina Adams (center), at their gas station on the Wading River. The station is now the home of Martina's son, Lee Eichinger, and his wife June. (Photo courtesy of Lee and June Eichinger)

Driving on Hammonton Road in the Wading River-Marygold area, Sam Merchant had two gas pumps in front of his small station along the Wading River where Lee Eichinger and his wife, June, now live. Just down the road a piece, across from Vorhees farm in the Marygold section, was another two pump station. The pumps from both of these places were removed many years ago.

Along Route 9, in Mathistown, there were two places where you could buy gas. Joe Brees, who was our Justice of the Peace at the time, had his office in his home and operated two gas pumps out front. A couple of doors south, the Wigwam (now the site of Delleport's Heating and Cooling) sold Mobile gas at the sign of the Flying Red Horse. They also did repair work for many years. Today there are no gas stations or repair garages operating in the Mathistown section.

As you cross west over the Bass River bridge, Clarence Steele, Sr. who previously leased the Wigwam garage and gas station, bought the Lutz property in 1945. It consisted of four acres of land and a two story house. He cleared the land, built a garage and gas station, and operated the business until he retired. My husband, Clarence Steele, Jr., known as "Bud", and I took over the business and built a more modern garage in 1961. We sold Atlantic Richfield gas whose motto



Clarence Steele, Sr. and his wife Carrie, to his left, pose with their granddaughters Marjorie (l) and Janet Allen out front of their Mathistown Gas Station on Route 9 adjacent to the Wigwam. Carrie's sister-in-law, Helen Dresh, is on Clarence's right. (Photo courtesy of Robert and Janet Brown)

was "Keeps Your Car On The Go" and operated it for the next sixteen years. We sold the station which now sold Arco gasoline to Joe and Janet Lippincott, Jr. in 1977. They ran the business for about ten years and sold it to the present owners, Bernie and Paula Zarembo. The Zarembos have made many changes and improvements since they have owned the Service Center, some of which were required and others of their own choosing. Their station now sells Coastal gasoline.

Between the Knights of Pythias Hall which was torn down in 1994 and a restaurant that used to be on the south-east corner of South Maple Avenue and Rt. 9, there was a small gas station operated for a short time by two young fellows whose names were Bill and Bob. The station was sold, the pumps removed, and the building was turned into a barber shop operated by Mr. Azarano. The building was demolished after the barbershop closed its doors.

Across Route 9, Joe and Geraldine French, who owned a variety store where Sandy's Magic Shears Beauty Shop is today, had one gas pump out front. Just a little way south on Route 9 at the north-east corner of North Maple Avenue the Rustic Inn, operated by Frank and Rejessa Cramer, also had a couple gas pumps in front of their business. Neither place sold gas for too long before the pumps were taken out.

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Clarence Steele, Sr. moved his business from Mathistown across the Bass River bridge into New Gretna. It is presently a Coastal station owned by Bernie and Paula Zarembo. The posted price in 1947 (above) was 19 9/10 cents per gallon for regular and 21 9/10 for Hi Arc. (Photo courtesy of Almira Cramer Steele)

ALONG THE BASS RIVER . . . THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

by Michael Allen

Growing up, I took a lot for granted, as most folks do now-a-days. "Where did that come from?" . . . "How did it get there?" and . . . "Where has it gone?" are all things that never really entered my mind. As with most young boys, we were always exploring and sometimes getting into things and places, that looking back on now, just plain scares me, but we were young and fearless in those days. I could probably have told you more about the underside of Ben Broom's and Russy Adams' sawmill than I could have told you what it looked like from the top, having crawled under it numerous times, burying ourselves in the mountainous piles of sawdust. Never once did I wonder about how important to the town these sawmills were or the great cedar swamps and pine forests that the logs came from that this mill turned into lumber for homes and boats of their time. I remember several places we explored as boys

right close to our home, so I decided to ask my Dad, Ben Allen, what these same places were like when he was a boy and young man. He grew up in the 20's and 30's. They were hard times, and dollars were hard to come by, but with fond memories of people and places, he told me what he saw and knew of the area as a young man. These places, all within a quarter mile of where he lives to this day on Adams Avenue, are all gone with hardly a trace.



Joseph Russel "Russy" Adams and his wife, Lettie, lived on the northeast corner of North Maple Avenue and Adams Avenue. Russy ran a saw mill with Ben Broome. (Photo courtesy of John Milton Adams)

THE ADAMS FARM

The Adams' Farm, owned by Walter and Edna Adams, was located just up at the end of Adams Avenue. There was the old house, a root cellar, old open well, and the big barn. Edna was still living and came to stay there during the summer months. I explored and played in the old barn, where full of dust and cobwebs was an old stage coach with leather roll up windows, surrey and not much more. Well, in Dad's day things were quite different. It was a working dairy and livery stable. Dad worked

there milking and tending cows for 50 cents a week, plus he got paid 2 cent per bottle for delivering the milk to the local town folk. As he remembers, the farm's big barn housed four cows (for milk), a bull, four or more horses, a stage coach, a sled, several wagons for hauling hay, wood and other supplies. The stage coach was used to take town folks to and from Tuckerton. Tuckerton was where you could catch the train to New York and other points along the way.

Walter Adams was a very busy man with several men working for him gathering salt hay, tending live stock, driving wagons and the stage coach, and many more operations related to the farm. Overseeing all of this and making sure everything was bedded down for the evening meant that he never ate supper until 9:00 p.m. at night. Getting a haircut was something

special, and Sundays were that special day when Harry Allen, my Grandfather, would cut his hair as he didn't have the time to go to a proper barber.

There was no electricity, so lanterns were used in the barn, with each having a special place to hang to keep from starting a fire. The only refrigeration came from hanging milk and other items in the open well beside the house. The temperature inside the well stayed at about 52 degrees year round. This is where Edna kept the butter she churned and the bottled milk for sale.

One of Walter's brighter ideas to keep the hand pump for the cows and horses from freezing in the winter, was to pack horse manure around the old wooden pump housing. It didn't help the smell any, but it did keep the area warm, and the water flowing into a huge cedar wooden trough, which was about the size of a coffin. Them cows could drink almost as fast as you could pump.

Walter also had a "curtain car," a model T, which required towing by a horse or two to get it started in the winter, but during the summer time, you could get it started without the horses.

THE TOWNSHIP DOCK

The township dock was located at the end of Souders' Lane, now named Miller's Lane. This was a small dock, being about 15 feet long and 5 feet wide on a small creek (no known name) and was used for off loading oysters. The creek was so shallow that you could only come and go at high tide, so Ben Loveland got Charlie Kupple from Manahawkin to bring dynamite and blow out the mud and stumps. Gosh, he sure made the mud fly, but when he finished, you could come and go even at low tide. There was another dock just to the north that extended out over the marsh to the channel of Bass River, and here is where Ben Loveland's dredge boat and an oyster float were kept. Most of the motors for these dredge boats were Palmer 2 cylinder engines. Ben Loveland, Dow Robbins, Earl (Crow) Cramer and Chet Allen all used and had one of these boats. Booter Mathis used "Crow's" boat quite often, also. Each of these boats had a dredge rig winder, which worked right off the fly wheel of the Palmer Engine. On the smaller garvies hand dredges were used. They were real, and they were fun, but not "real fun," especially when they had some mud in them.



Souders' Lane was named after Robert & Marian Souders who lived at the end of the lane just up river from the old Township dock. (Photo courtesy of Marian C. Broome)

Once Ben Loveland had the oysters, he placed them in the float where they would stay at least through one complete tide cycle. This was so they could get as he called it, a "good drink", which allowed the oyster to clean himself out and plump up in the fresh water. This float was designed so you could stand in it and use a narrow tined pitchfork (they called them an oyster fork) to sack up the oysters for shipment. It was hard enough work in the summer months, but during the winter, you first had to break the ice. After the oysters were sacked, a row garvey was used to take the oysters to the township dock and picked up by a Mr. Swain from Tuckerton. He had a 1½ ton closed truck, which held 90 bushels of oysters and delivered them to Bill Conover in Atlantic City. Ben got 75 cents per bushel of which he had to pay 10 cents a bushel to Swain for hauling fees. In those days, oysters were plentiful, and many as big as your hand. You could cull 50 bushels and not have three wheel barrows of shells, red beard and trash to discard.

Ben Loveland owned the property adjoining the south side of the township dock, where he built a small railway for pulling his boats out for overhaul, using narrow gauge railroad iron for the tracks. He pulled the boats with block and tackle system, using a model "T"



Harry Allen, in 1939, lived on Adams Avenue just a stone's throw from the Walter Adams farm. (Photo courtesy of Ben & Elaine Allen)

ALICE MATHIS' CLAM RECIPES



Walter and Alice Mathis' three children (l-r): Georgine, Robert, and Elvin. (Photo courtesy of Robert and Elaine Mathis)

Many of the readers of this column will remember **Walter and Alice Mathis**. Walter worked as janitor at the Bass River School, was Road Foreman for the Burlington County Highway Department, and also worked in the bay. Alice was active in the Presbyterian Church, was a member of the Ladies Auxiliary, sang in the choir and taught Sunday School. Walter and Alice had three children: Georgine, Elvin and Robert.

Georgine Mathis Bartlett, wife of Walter Bartlett from West Creek, is sharing some clam recipes that her Mother used to make for their family. You can bet that the clams always came fresh from the bay. Georgine and Walter, who presently live on North Maple Avenue in New Gretna, have four children- Edward, Lawrence, Patricia and James.



Walter (l) and Alice Mathis (seated) with their three children (r-l): Georgine, Elvin, and Robert in 1991 (Photo courtesy of Robert and Elaine Mathis)

DEVILED CLAMS WITH WHITE SAUCE

DEVILED CLAMS

- 26 Large Clams, ground, cooked and drained
- 2 stalks celery, ground
- ¼ onion, ground
- 1 sprig parsley, chopped fine
- 2 slices bread, broken in small pieces
- 1 pint of white sauce

HINT: While grinding celery, & onion, put paper towel in a colander to soak up the juice from veggies.

Mix together well: Ground clams, prepared veggies, & bread into the white sauce. Put prepared mixture into clean, scrubbed shells and top each with bread crumbs and dot with butter. Bake 350 degrees for 30 minutes until warm and browned on top. Makes about 4 (4" Artificial Shells) or 10 Large Clam Shells.

WHITE SAUCE

- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 8 Tbsp. flour
- 2 cups milk
- salt & pepper as desired

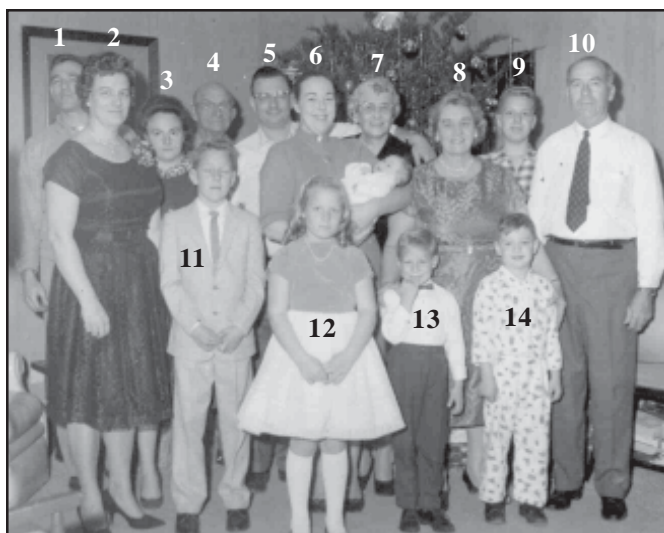
Melt butter in pan. Blend in flour. Cook on low heat for about 1 minute. Slowly add milk, and seasonings stirring until rue is thick. Makes one pint.



Georgine (r) and her mother, Alice Mathis. (Photo courtesy of Robert and Elaine Mathis)

THE MATHIS AND BARTLETT FAMILY • CHRISTMAS EVE • 1964

1- Elvin Mathis; 2- Georgine Mathis Bartlett; 3- Edna Mathis; 4- Walter Roy Mathis; 5- Robert Mathis; 6- Elaine Weber Mathis holding daughter, Karen ; 7- Laura Page; 8- Alice Mathis; 9- Eddie Bartlett; 10- Walter Mathis; 11- Larry Bartlett; 12- Patty Bartlett; 13- Jimmy Bartlett; 14- Bobby Mathis. (Photo courtesy of Walt & Georgine Bartlett)



CLAM FRITTERS

- 12 Medium Clams, cut-up or ground
- 1 egg
- Flour to thicken
- Add 1 tsp. Baking powder to each cup flour

Thicken clams and egg until you can drop mixture by tablespoons into lightly oiled frying pan. (use extra clam juice to thin the batter if needed) Makes about 7-8 fritters.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

[From 1003 Household Hints and Time Savers-1941]

- **To open hardshell clams** easily, pour boiling water over them and let stand for a few minutes.
- Onions will not make the eyes water if scalding water is poured over them before they are peeled.
- For onion seasonings, plant a few sprouting onions in a pot of good mold. The shoots which appear can be removed for seasoning, etc. Other shoots quickly take their place.

If you would like your family featured in a future "Yesterday's Recipes" column, please send a few recipes to Elaine Mathis c/o Bass River Community Library, P.O. Box 256, New Gretna, N.J. 08224.

THE OLD TUCKERTON STATE POLICE STATION

by Peter Dunn

On the first day of July, 1952, I reported to the Tuckerton State Police station for duty, having recently graduated from the training academy at West Trenton as a member of the 41st State Police Recruit Class, badge # 1092. It was my first duty station and the Station Commander, Sgt. Stanley Austin, greeted me and made me welcome.

The station was a large two story home occupied by a Mrs. Gear and her husband, Elias, who was a minister. The Gears had the first floor with the exception of a room converted for the State Police office while we had the second floor which consisted of three bedrooms and a bath. The Station was on Main Street, approximately where the First Union Bank now stands. Station personnel pretty much lived at the station with six days off a month plus ten additional night passes which lasted from 5 p.m. one day until 8 a.m. on the following morning. A day pass consisted of twenty four hours leave. This amounted to over one hundred duty hours per week not counting any special details or court you might be required to attend. Patrols usually worked as follows: if you reported for duty at 8



a.m. you would be assigned a patrol area and usually remain out until around 5 p.m. when you would normally return to the station and do whatever reports you

Peter Dunn as a rookie was assigned to motorcycle patrol in the Bass River area in the early 1950's. (Photo courtesy of Peter and Marian Dunn)

might owe - ie. accident, general police or whatever. Then you might go to a diner for supper, return to the station and, if you were assigned to an evening patrol, you would go back out until midnight. If you had a late patrol, you would go to bed, getting up around 11:30 p.m., and leave on patrol with your partner, staying out until around 6 a.m. You would then go to bed until noon, get up and go back out on patrol. If there was no late patrol, the sergeant or senior man, who slept with the phone, would get you up to handle any calls that came in. I remember well being dead tired after a long day on the road, in bed and hoping to stay there, hearing the phone ring followed by footsteps heading for my door and the dreaded words "saddle up", you've got a call.

One thing I especially recall was that Elias would spend an inordinate amount of time in the downstairs bathtub which caused either minimal water pressure or none at all in our upstairs bathroom when he was so occupied, which seemed to be, on some very warm days, most of the time. Our uniform of the day being boots & britches plus a heavy woolen shirt and no air conditioning in the cars could add up to rather severe personal hygiene problems on a hot summers day when coming off long hours on the road. I found, however, that there were advantages to the uniform. For one thing you never had to press your pants, the boots were great in bad weather, if you were assigned to a cycle, or found yourself tramping around in the woods or in mud at an accident scene.

As I recall there were seven men assigned to the Tuckerton Station during my tenure there: Sgt. Stanley Austin, Troopers Harry Headley, Adam Szatkowski, Joe Gribbin, Bob Giberson, Al Ferrigno and myself. Our area of responsibility extended from Nacote Creek in Galloway Township on the south to and including Barnegat to the north. To the west we handled Rte 72 to the Four Mile Circle including Chatsworth, Warren Grove, Batsto, Bulltown and whatever else was in between. At that time such towns as Tuckerton, Manahawkin and Barnegat did not have organized police departments but did have special officers they would call out from time to time for special details or events such as parades.

The town of Tuckerton at that time was a quiet little place with not much happening. The great radio tower in Mystic was still standing, and Mystic Island itself was not much more than Radio Road, the tower, and lots of salt marsh. The citizens and business people would routinely stop in at the station to pass the time of day, while the town ladies would often favor us with pies, cakes and all sorts of great things to eat. Tuckerton Station was a good place to work.



Circa 1920's postcard showing the private home (12) that was used as the Tuckerton State Police Station in the early 1950's. The First Union Bank is now on the property. Other buildings, looking east on Main Street (Rt. 9), are presently *Frankly Flowers* at the corner of Wood Street (2) which was the Town Hall at the time of the photo; site of the Tuckerton Post Office (3); *Port of Entry* Antique Shop (4); and the *J.D. Thompson Inn* Bed and Breakfast (5). (Photo courtesy of June LeMunyon)

For transportation we had three cars and a Harley motorcycle to which I, as the recruit, was assigned. I felt comfortable with this since I personally owned a cycle at that time. Our station cycle carried no radio but there was an arrangement whereby certain places of business would be called by the station if you were wanted and would hang a small flag out front which would be your signal to stop and call the station. The cycle was used mainly to patrol the more rural areas where traffic would be lighter than on or around Rt. 9 and not much would be happening.

The use of motorcycles for traffic work was discontinued I believe, in 1954, for good reason I might add. Trying to catch up with a speeding motorist, on a cycle, possibly in traffic, was quite an experience. I recall visiting Division Headquarters in Trenton one day and noted an inordinate number of men with casts, bandages, etc. Inquiring, I was told most were the result of motorcycle accidents and that it was standard procedure to assign such men to headquarters duty while they recovered. Notwithstanding, the Harley was kept in active service as long as the roads were clear and dry. In those days the typical preparation for cold weather patrol consisted of wearing your overcoat with newspapers or other material stuffed inside, down your front, heavy gauntlet gloves and a leather helmet with goggles which much reminded me of a World War I aviator's equipment and which, in fact, may have come from that era. It could be very chilly duty indeed.

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ALONG THE BASS RIVER

(Continued from page 2)



Ben Loveland (l) was a bayman who was a supervisor at the old fish factory in Great Bay for a few years. Like all of the old timers, he knew the rivers and bay like the back of his hand (Photo courtesy of Marian C. Broome, Ben's niece)

because someone was pilfering it. Well, Ben Loveland decided to find the culprit, so he put ether in one can and left it. The next morning when the culprit, who shall remain nameless, tried to start his engine, the ether caused his engine to blow both heads right off it! After that, there was very little stealing around the docks. Justice came swift and sure.

THE HAY LANDING

Just to the south of the township dock and behind the Walter Adams' Farm was an area along the river that was bulkheaded with small posts where Walter Adams and others unloaded their barges of marsh grasses. Having been cut on the marshes between New Gretna and Great Bay, it was then loaded onto barges and transported back to New Gretna. There was a small creek (another with no known name), located in this area that came back up toward Walter's barn and livery stable, which was also used for the unloading of hay. Walter stored and used some of this marsh hay, while part of it he sold, and often had Harry Allen drive a truck load of hay to the Medford area for him.

Marsh grass came in two very different types. The first being the finer of the two and was known as "salt hay". Salt hay was used as feed for the live stock, while the second, being much coarser was called "three square hay" and used for bedding in the barn. Additionally, when U.S. 9 was built, these hays were used to cover and protect the newly poured concrete while it was setting up and curing. The only remains, now-a-days are a few bulkhead posts along the river bank that can be seen at low tide. As for the creek, this one, once again, has also long since filled in with silt and mud.

The mowing and transporting of these grasses to New Gretna was no easy feat, but these same men probably dug "Long Ditch" and "Big Ditch", through which they moved their barges loaded with their teams of horses and mowing equipment. In "Long Ditch", there are still some of the same type of bulkhead stobs as found along Bass River.

COAL LANDING

Just about ¼ mile north of the township dock was an area known as Coal Landing, where charcoal, made from trees cut and burnt in the Allen Road area, was then brought down by wagon for loading and shipment to other areas on boats/ships. Today nothing remains, but about 50 years ago when Dad was plowing Ruy Allen's field to plant a blueberry patch, he unearthed large amounts of charcoal residue.

Each of these above sites were linked together by a road which ran parallel along the river; and this also, with passing of time, has been gobbled up by woods and yards alike, until nothing remains.

Dad, thanks for your memories . . . This really shows how important and busy the river was just between the Bass River and Fur bridges.

pick-up truck to provide the power. This was for his personal use mostly, but he did pull Bill and Frank Gray's big boat "Shenandoah" at least once, so there use to be plenty of water in the creek.

There are no remaining tell tale signs of this railway or docks and the creek, which had been blasted out. Over the years all have been reclaimed by the marsh and filled in.

Thieves beware! Gas in 5 gallon cans had to be hauled by wheel barrow, back and forth everyday from Ben Loveland's house on Adams Avenue to the dock for the 1 and 2 lungner (cylinder) power boats. Gas couldn't be left overnight at the dock though,

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 - January 4, 1879

A number of our young men are now at home from their season's cruise and are puzzling their brains to find how to make the time slip by. It is too cold to play ball or other out-door sports. A favorite pastime just now is dice-throwing "for fun" and the latest improvement is a half barrel for the shaker and dice of a proportionate size. It is safe to say that these dice are not loaded.

MT. HOLLY HERALD - July 25, 1891

A severe storm of thunder and lightning visited here on Tuesday afternoon. The Methodist Episcopal church was struck. The steeple was injured so badly that it will have to be taken down. Other damage was done to the building to the extent of \$1000. It is a handsome church and cost \$5,000.

MT. HOLLY HERALD - January 29, 1898

Benjamin Giberson, of New Gretna, was arrested by fish warden Mathis last week and fined \$20 for fishing with a larger net than the law allows. Giberson says he will do it again when the fish get thick.

MT. HOLLY HERALD - April 28, 1900

Joseph B. Allen has built a new dock and road leading thereto and is now shipping all the oysters he can get. The demand is beyond the supply and prices range from 90 cents to \$1.00 per bushel.

MT. HOLLY HERALD - April 1, 1911

Several of our young men have taken up the telephone system to do their courting and they find it cheaper than traveling, especially when they make the girls pay the toll.

WHO WE ARE

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 our two guest columnists, Mike Allen and Pete Dunn, for their stories and hope that others are motivated to send a story to us. **We are sorry to report that our Web Site is no longer on the internet** due to our server site closing. We will try to post it again on another server.

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.

GARAGES AND GAS STATIONS

(Continued from page 1)

Clarence G. Mathis, owner and operator of the General Store on the southwest corner of Rt. 9 and South Maple Avenue, also had a couple of Gulf gas pumps in front of his store as long as he owned it. The pumps were removed after he sold the store. The building has recently been repaired and now stands unoccupied.



Frank Cramer (l) had two Sunoco gas pumps in front of his Lunch Room and Grill at the northwest corner of North Maple Avenue and Route 9. Norman L. Mathis (r) was an employee. The posted price was 17 9/10 cents per gallon. The building, which later became the Rustic Inn, now stands vacant. (Photo courtesy of Winfield Allen)

Just across from Clarence's General Store on Rt. 9, Walter "Ditty" Loveland, who was our mayor at the time, owned and operated an auto repair shop. He also owned a home in front of the shop. In time, both buildings were removed and the property was later used as a parking lot for the New Gretna House while the hotel was still in business.

Two doors south, the Esso garage and gas station which was also equipped with living quarters, was owned and operated by several different families. Among the families I remember were Harriet and Charles Lang and their son Charlie, who drove the one and only school bus that we had in Bass River at the time; Albert and Louise Block; followed by Harvey and Sylvia Houck, their daughter and son in law. The last owners were James and Evelyn Belk and children Jim, Diane and David. The property is still in the Belk family, but the business has not been in operation for a number of years.

At the fork of Hammonton Road and Rt. 9, Walter and Margaret Roberts owned and operated the Sunoco gas station. Inside they sold ice cream, candy, and soda until they retired in 1978. Their daughter and son-in-law, Barbara and Joseph Schmutz, took over after the Roberts retired. As of August 1, 2001, the station has



Robert's Sunoco Station at the intersection of Route 9 and Hammonton Road, circa 1948. (Photo courtesy of Barbara Roberts Schmutz)

been leased to new operators and renamed New Gretna Gas.

Right before you approached the Meadow Road, or old Rt. 9, William and Freda Knockston operated a small restaurant with a couple of gas pumps out front. The restaurant is now a dwelling and the pumps were removed a long time ago.

The last garage and gas station going south along old Rt. 9 was owned and operated by Alfred Freeland. It was later operated by Walter "Ditty" Loveland before he moved uptown and opened his own repair shop just south of the New Gretna House. The Freeland garage and gas station was a good spot for selling gas because tourists, approaching the Meadow Road, didn't know when the next gas station would be available, so they usually filled up with gas before traveling further south to the shore points. Also, this station sold three different brands of gas, so the customers had their pick. The station was very busy until the Garden State Parkway was built thus cutting off direct access to this place of business. After being unoccupied for years, the State Highway Department opened shop on this site, but several years later moved on to another destination. Today the Freeland building is still standing and is opened and operating as a collision clinic, but no gas is being sold there anymore.

It's ironic how times have changed. Travelers today have only two places to buy gas in Bass River – Bernie's Coastal Service Center and the recently leased New Gretna Gas. As strange as it may seem, there is so much more traffic going through town now than there ever was in the 1940's, yet there are fewer places for them to fill up with gas or have their car serviced. However, I believe this is progress because, even though we have only two stations in operation today as opposed to a dozen of two pump gas stations years ago, the present ones are well managed and maintained and are very efficient. They are a real asset to our community.

These are the repair shops and gas stations, or filling stations as they were sometimes called, that I remember. I hope I haven't missed any, but if I have, please refresh my memory, and I will try to make amends in a later edition of the Gazette.

GAS STATIONS REVISITED

Here's a gas station that Almira doesn't recall. It was located on New York Road (Route 9) just west of the Bass River bridge and was owned and operated by Albert and Addie Hilaman. The station had a one room store and ice cream parlor in addition to selling Blue Sunoco gasoline. It is not surprising that Almira does not remember the station as she was just a young teenager who lived up on Allentown Road (North Maple Avenue) at the time. In those days that was considered a great distance. Allentown Road children just didn't get down to Route 9 very often. Today the building is a private residence.



Addie Hilaman stands at the gas pump as her grandson, William Maxwell, pumps a quart of motor oil sometime in the mid 1930's. (Photo courtesy of William and Dee Maxwell)

GENEALOGY CORNER

by Jean and Murray Harris

RESEARCHING OUR QUAKER ANCESTORS

Many of the early ancestors of Little Egg Harbor families were of the Quaker persuasion. The meeting house in Tuckerton is still in use, and there were two meeting houses in Bass River as described in a former Gazette article by Peter Stemmer. The Quakers kept better records than other religions, as record keeping was one of their stated requirements. These records date back to the early 1700's when there were no census figures and few other vital statistics collected. The Quaker records are thus a very valuable source of early information.

To search the Quaker records one must do a little studying of Quaker history. Their migration down the East Coast, then to the Carolinas, Virginia and west to Ohio and beyond, can be followed. We must also understand a little of their organization and the kinds of data listed in the minutes of their various meetings. The monthly meeting records are the most valuable to the genealogist.

After this background work it is necessary to find the location of the appropriate records including those which have been abstracted and indexed, as well as the original records copied on microfilm.

Some fifty-six microfilms of the original records of New Jersey meetings are available at the library of the Burlington County College in Pemberton. Box 56 contains the film with the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting births and burials, marriages, and certificates of removal. Many more of these original records on microfilm are available from LDS Church libraries. Most historical libraries have copies of the records abstracted by William Wade Hinshaw and published as "Encyclopedia of Quaker Genealogy." Volume II includes both the Burlington and Salem Monthly Meetings. The Chesterfield, Evesham and Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting abstracts, in the text "Early Church Records of Burlington County, New Jersey", Volume II, by Charlotte D. Meldrum, are available in many libraries or may be purchased from Family Line Publications at Rear 63 East Main St., Westminster, MD 21157.

Samples of the records abstracted by Meldrum follow:

Little Egg Harbor Births and Deaths

Children of Edward and Sarah Andrews: Elizabeth Andrews, b. 4th da, 7th mo, 1703; Samuel Andrews, b. 7th da, 11th mo, 1697; Hannah Andrews, b. 11th da, 5th mo, 1700; Sarah Andrews, b. 8th da, 9th mo, 1702; Jacob Andrews, b. 26th da, 12th mo, 1704; Peter Andrews, b. 20th da, 9th mo, 1707; Nehemiah Andrews, b. 4th da, 7th mo, 1712.

Certificates of Removal for Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting

9th da, 11th mo, 1786 for Ann Gaunt, dau of Joseph Gaunt from Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting to Haddonfield Monthly Meeting.

Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting Marriages

Caleb Cramer, son of Stephen Cramer of Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting, and Phebe Mathis, widow of Job Mathis, m. 16th da, 8th mo, 1792.

Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting Minutes

10th da, 9th mo, 1715. James Willits married contrary to discipline, disowned.

13th da, 3rd mo, 1725. Mary Embree requested a certificate for her removal into Pennsylvania with her husband.

The original records are more complete and more interesting, but more difficult to read. They are, of course, hand written, with a different style of writing than is used today and sometimes faded



The Friends Meeting House in Tuckerton is surrounded by the graves of the ancient Quaker ancestors from the Little Egg Harbor and Bass River area. Unfortunately for today's genealogists, the older graves do not have tombstones and the written burial records have been lost. (Photo courtesy of Burrell Adams)

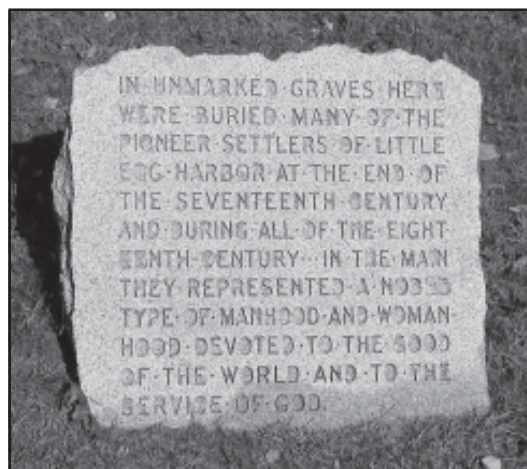
and faint. Often the originals do not have an index so you have to read everything, but you will learn a lot more. For example, at a wedding everyone present signs the book, and often family connections can be determined by examining these names.

You may be confused by the Quakers' way of recording dates with no mention of the "heathen" names of the days or months. Before 1752 the years ended on March 25 and so March was the first month. There is a system to convert the dates from the old Quaker records to our more common modern usage, but conversion is scarcely ever of sufficient importance to be necessary to the beginning genealogist.

An easy place to begin searching the Quaker records is the Hinshaw text. A small problem here is that it uses a great number of abbreviations such as mcd= married contrary to discipline [was not married at a Quaker meeting, but by a JP or Priest etc.], or mou= married out of unity [married a non-Quaker}. These take a little patience to get past, but when you see the quantity of typing saved you will understand why Hinshaw did it that way.

If this sounds discouraging then you have never tried to get information about your ancestors earlier than 1800 by reading deeds and court records. Now that is discouraging.

An excellent guide to finding your ancestors in Quaker Records is that of Ellen Thompson and David Allen Berry, "Our Quaker Ancestors", published in 1987 by Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, MD 21202.



A modern stone monument commemorates the pioneer settlers in the Little Egg Harbor area who were buried in unmarked graves at the Tuckerton Friends graveyard which surrounds the Meeting House. (Photo by Peter H. Stemmer)

TUCKERTON STATE POLICE STATION

(Continued from page 4)

In 1952 New Gretna was quite a busy town, at least along the Rt. 9 corridor. Construction on the Garden State Parkway was in full swing in the area and crews of workers were coming and going almost continuously. A small railroad car type diner located on the east side of the highway between the parkway overpass and Bowers Lane, did a brisk business. Atlantic City was a destination location with its beaches, hotels, Steel Pier, diving horse and other attractions. This was also the era of the Big Bands who were playing the resort. The Atlantic City Race Course was also running full bore. In order to get to get to these locations, motorists from north Jersey or points further north would normally use Rt. 9. The consequence of this was a good deal of traffic moving through New Gretna. Racetrack enthusiasts, who seemingly were always late and in a hurry to make post time or the "daily double," seemed especially oblivious of posted residential and business area speed limits through town, which resulted in complaints from residents



John Martin's Diner at the corner of Rt. 9 and Bower's Lane was a favorite stop for Pete Dunn as he patrolled Bass River Township in the early 1950's. The diner was destroyed in a 1965 fire (above). (Photo courtesy of Franklin W. Gray)

and business people to the State Police and I'm sure to the town fathers as well.

At this time municipal court judges were not required to be attorneys and were appointed by the municipality usually wherein they lived. Bass River at that time was handled by Judge Russell Montgomery who resided in Green Bank. He would set up court in the old New Gretna firehouse on certain days and at appropriate hours, after notifying the station and making sure sufficient personnel



Judge Russell Montgomery (r) was sworn in on June 6, 1951 as Judge at the Chatsworth firehouse. Judge Montgomery served Washington, Woodland, and Bass River Townships. Harry Adams stands to the judge's right. (Photo courtesy of Russell Montgomery, Jr.)

were available. New Jersey at that time did not have reciprocity agreements with states north of here. This required that out of state motorists, when stopped for traffic violations would have to be brought before a court clerk or municipal judge where they would have the choice of pleading guilty to the offense charged, paying a fine and going on their way or posting bail and returning to court to dispute the charge. Very few chose the latter option.

On court days the fire trucks would be moved outside. Judge Montgomery had a platform about 4 ft. square which he then would move out onto the floor, cover it with a blanket, set up a large chair on the platform, put his robe on, and declare court in



The New Gretna Firehouse was used by Judge Montgomery for traffic court in the early 1950's. It is now used as the Township Municipal Building. (Photo courtesy of Lee Eichinger)

session. I thought he took his job very seriously but, he could be a little long winded at times. Violators would be fidgeting, anxious to be on their way while the judge would lecture at length on the dangers of violating our motor vehicle laws.

During my six month duty tour at Tuckerton Station, I only recall responding to a disorderly persons complaint in New Gretna on one occasion, and that did not involve local residents, but I do remember it well. I think that then, as now, residents were for the most part, honest, hard working, independent and pretty much took care of their own problems. On one occasion, returning from Hammonton on Rt. 542, riding the cycle, I lost my wallet from my back pocket containing my State Police ID, license etc. The following day a local resident returned it to the station intact, saying she had found it on the road. I don't recall her name, but I have not forgotten her honesty. At any rate, the call I speak of above involved a man and woman who stopped at the service station at the intersection of Rte. 9 and Hammonton Road late one evening. The woman who appeared to be seriously drunk was doing all the talking, claiming that her companion had given the station attendant a twenty dollar bill for gas and had been given change for only a ten. Both he and the station attendant denied this but it made no difference at all to the woman. My arrival on the scene did nothing to help, but only drew more abuse from the lady, now directed mainly at me. My options did not seem particularly attractive. If I arrested her, I would have to transport her to an overnight lockup at Mt. Holly, plus have a witness accompany me. Her companion's attempts to get her in the car were fruitless. She was not planning on going anywhere until the problem, in her mind, was resolved. Speaking to her companion, it was finally decided that he would get behind the wheel of their car and slowly start to move out while I would open the back door and shove her in. This worked OK until I got her inside the car and slammed the door, at which time I heard a god awful howl followed by a mighty stream of expletives to the effect that I had smashed her finger in the door. Nonetheless, the driver continued southbound, and I still recall being very happy to see his taillights disappear around the southbound curve. The attendant suggested that he close the station and that we both leave. I most heartily agreed. Thankfully, I never heard from either of them again.

Over my twenty seven years service in the State Police I experienced both good and bad times, a large part of the good times being my days at the old Tuckerton Station, the worst of times being the racial problems of the sixties in which the State Police were always heavily involved. In 1979 I retired at the mandatory age of 55 as a Captain in the Criminal Investigation Section, Division Headquarters. As I look back on my career, I remember my early days in New Gretna fondly, and today I am glad to call New Gretna my home.