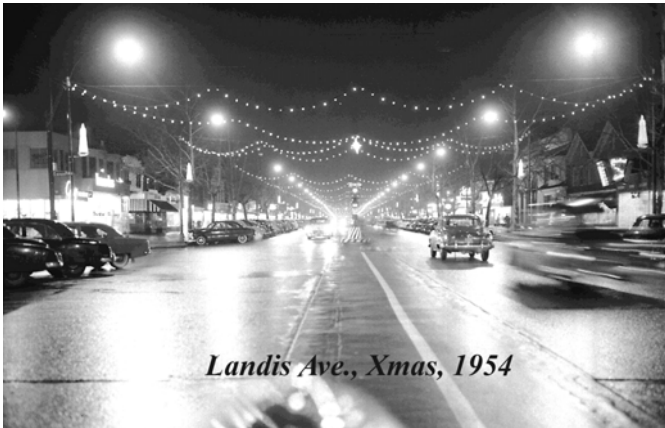


FRIENDS OF HISTORIC VINELAND

Holiday Greetings



Landis Ave., Xmas, 1954

A tale of two cities at Christmas time-- From Landisville to Landis Ave.

By: Frank De Maio, M.D.

Although Landis had planned Landisville to be the center piece of a new county--Landis County, by 1944, Landisville had become a shadow of what it was supposed to be. At the turn of the century, the town had something like 100 stores, several livery stables, and trains going back and forth to New York and Philadelphia twice a day. Unfortunately, by 1940, the

town was withering in the shadow of the nearby "megalith" Vineland. The stake was finally driven into the heart of Landisville when World War II was over, and cars and gas again flowed to the civilian population. Vineland had a growth spurt and people could again easily go to Vineland to shop!

All things are measured in comparison. We, from Landisville, thought that Vineland was a metropolis. Even though all the stores on Landis Ave., if placed together would probably fill only a fraction of Boscov's department store today,

when the stores of Vineland were compared to the homes-turned-stores of Landisville, they were huge!!

One might go to a hardware store in Landisville, and NOT find an iron to be used for ironing, whereas it was available in the "large" stores such as Caterina's Hardware Store in Vineland on Landis Ave. Now, we must keep in mind that the store was considered a cornucopia of goods because it sold such "unusual" items as irons. Today, if we went for an iron, we would seek a store that had at least 25 choices. Even though the store was small, every inch of space was packed with items. The aisles were so narrow that Santa himself would not have been able to walk down one of them without knocking over half the merchandize. But, that was no problem—People from Landisville were still skinny!!

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This Month's Articles

***From Landisville to
Landis Ave.,
A Christmas story.***

***More about our
favorite character—
Charles K. Landis***

***And our wishes for a
happy and healthy holi-
day season, and a great
year 2003, from all of
us in the Friends of
Historic Vineland***



This is in contrast to the stores today, where, for example, the aisles at Home Depot are big enough to allow a fork lift truck to ride up and down the aisles.

Despite this small inconvenience, when Christmas time rolled around, the place to shop was *Vineland*. You always shopped far enough in advance to try to beat the crowd and in those simple days it meant going at least one week before Christmas. You naturally took enough money to pay for all those items you intended to buy--5 dollars was just about right. To get to Vineland from Landisville you would of course take the Annelo bus which left from Katie's corner in Landisville every half hour. As I recall, it cost 10 cents but later they did raise the price to 25 cents--wartime inflation, I believe.

The bus was nothing like those of today. The noise level was unreal. You could hear every one of those 25 horse powers in the motor working away. The bus would go tearing along at least 40 miles per hour. Wheat road was banked pretty sharply, so you kind of rode at an angle most of the way when you were in the seat. The road was not silky smooth like today, so you spent just about as much time in the air as you did sitting.

After a half hour of the most exciting of

rides, you reached East and Landis Ave., made a right and there you were--in the winter wonderland. There was laurel strung all over, Christmas lights, and Christmas music. It seemed like there was always snow on the ground, so naturally you made sure you were dressed warmly and were wearing boots.

Once you turned the corner, the big decision which had to be made quickly, involved deciding which street corner to exit the bus. Ye who hesitated was lost, and you would end up getting off at the end of the line and walking all the way from the Boulevard to the shopping part of Landis Ave.

The place was crowded. Now I mean crowded. You actually had to elbow your way through crowds, sloshing through snow all the way. You went from store to store, buying your gifts for the family.

Walking by Morvay's store was usually the treat of the day. There was always some big guy with a loud voice standing in front of the store who would call out to people with some funny comments and invite them to come in and buy some of the special items of Morvay's. "Come on lady, you don't expect me to eat all these chestnuts. We got them for you to buy! They ain't got no worms

either. We sold all of them last week." And so forth.

Well, being Italian like everybody else in Landisville, I naturally ate chestnuts at Christmas, but we had our own in Landisville, and did not need to buy them from Morvay's. Figs, nuts, dates, fava beans, cod fish, and all that other dried stuff from Turkey, Greece, and Italy--we had it all. But, what we did need was fresh fruit--and Morvay's had that--grapes and tangerines. It was like a miracle--fruit in the middle of winter! Where did it come from?? Who knows, but you got as much of it as you could.

When all the shopping was done, you walked from Landis Ave. to the Boulevard to take the bus back home. There was no station. Just a sign. There was also a diner. If you had to wait, you could always go in and get a cup of hot coffee or chocolate for a nickel, if you had a nickel. Paying for the bus was no problem. If you had spent all your money, you just told John, the driver, and he would let you pay another day.

And so, tired but happy, back to Landisville you went, hanging on to the shopping bags, rattling all the way, all your shopping done, great memories dancing in your head. You had shopped at that wonderful great place--*Vineland*.

I was recently made aware of a book that had some interesting things to say about one of our "favorite guys" Charles K. Landis. I modified it a bit to include what I thought would be of the greatest interest to you, the reader. The book is the *Biographical Review*, Published in 1896 in Boston by Biographical Review Publishing Company. Hope you enjoy reading it!!

Charles Kline Landis of Vineland is the founder of the charming town in which he resides. At one time both the town and its founder had a world-wide celebrity. By its establishment he has been credited with having solved many problems of social science. However this may be, several of the principles put into execution

by the settlement of Vineland were quickly adopted by other communities, and now find general acceptance in civilized countries.

Mr. Landis was born in Philadelphia, March 16, 1833, son of Michael G. and Mary Lewis (Quinn) Landis. The original name was Landi, last borne in the sixteenth century by ancestors of his whom political troubles caused to emigrate from Italy to Switzerland. Here they bought land, and in the course of their efforts to settle amicably among the people their name was Germanized to Landis. About the year 1600 John Landis, who had been converted to Prot-

estantism, was found guilty of heresy by the Inquisition at Zurich, and, on refusing to recant, was beheaded. Thereupon his three sons, John, Felix, and Benjamin, came to America. They arrived in Pennsylvania, either at the same time of William Penn's coming or a little before, and bought land in Bucks and Lancaster Counties. The descendants of John Landis, who settled in Lancaster, number among the thousands to-day, and own a large part of the county; while the towns of Landisburg and Landisville perpetuate their name.



Charles K. Landis

Michael G. Landis and his wife had four children: namely, Mary, Charles Kline, Beulah, and Matilda Tyson who remained a spinster. The mother died February 14, 1896, at the home of her son, Charles K., in her eighty-eighth year. The father died in 1882, at the age of seventy-eight years. Charles Kline Landis lived with his parents for various periods of his early life in Philadelphia, Macon and Atlanta, Georgia, and Lancaster, Penn., and was under the instruction of private tutors. At the age of fifteen he began to study law in the office off Carroll Brewster, afterward Judge Brewster. Admitted to the bar in October, 1852, he immediately opened an office in Philadelphia, and entered on the practice of his profession. Soon after he organized five or six building and loan associations, all of which were successful, and naturally gave him charge of their legal business.

In 1854, becoming interested through a client in several extensive real estate transactions, he discovered that he had an aptitude for that line of business, and thereafter gave it more attention than his legal work. Three years later, in company with Richard J. Byrnes, using the firm name of Landis & Byrnes, he founded the town of Hammonton, N.J. His experience with Hammonton made obvious to

him what he could accomplish on a larger scale, and he conceived the idea of starting a settlement near the great seaboard markets of America. This was, in his own words, "to afford the widest and most certain scope for individual success, alike on account of the markets and of the opportunities for skilled labor in farming, gardening, and mechanics."

Having decided for himself that the project was feasible, he resolved to carry it into effect untrammelled by a partner. In 1861, being then but twenty-eight years old, he selected a tract of land containing about forty-eight square miles, situated in the wildest part of New Jersey, on the line of a new railroad that was then doing a very little business. He obtained possession of twenty-two thousand acres of this land by purchase from Richard D. Wood, of Philadelphia. The rest he bought from other parties, making in all about thirty-two thousand acres. "It was in the center of this place, upon a mile square of land," to quote his own words again, "that I proposed to build a city, which would be filled with manufactories, shops and stores for mercantile purposes, schools and halls for public recreation, and private residences, and surround this mile square of city, as far as the boundaries of the land would reach, with farms, gardens, orchards, and vineyards." So unpromising was the site, and so great were the obvious difficulties in the way, that some people seemed justified in characterizing the plan as the dream of a lunatic. Nevertheless, on August 8, 1861, in the highest part of the center of the tract, Mr. Landis himself cut down the first tree by way of starting the construction of an avenue ten and a half miles long and one hundred feet wide, that was soon after completed by a

large force of workmen. He continued the work until at his own expense he had made two hundred and twenty miles of roads and twenty miles of ditches, besides building a railroad that connected his settlement directly with New York.

By 1875 his dream was so far realized he was able to state in Fraser's (London) Magazine "that the settlement had twenty fine school-houses, ten churches, fifteen manufacturing establishment, and four post-offices, and continued to say: "Out of seventy-seven townships in that State, by the census of 1869, Landis township (the entire settlement) ranked the fourth in value of its agricultural productions. There are seventeen miles of railway upon the tract, embracing six railway stations. There is more fruit raised in Vineland than anywhere else in the United States upon the same amount of land. To drive through the place over the smooth and beautiful roads, lined with shade trees and bordered with green, and past her thousands of orchards and vineyards, is like driving through the loveliest of parks. Her citizens are gathered together from the Far West, from the Middle and New England States, from Germany, France, England, Ireland, and Scotland, even from sunny Italy." It does not come within the scope of this sketch to describe Vineland as it is to-day; but it may be mentioned that the Italian colony, started in the township by Mr. Landis in 1870, now occupies five thousand acres, and is composed of sober, industrious farmers, well skilled in the various branches of agriculture followed in this country as well as in Italy.

Sea Isle City, Cape May County, was also founded by Mr. Landis. His attention was first drawn to Ludlum Island in 1879; and on inquiry into the matter he found that the island was owned in undivided interests by two families named Ludlam and Smith, numbering about five hundred persons, scattered all over the country. This was discouraging; but on considering that, if it had been easy to buy the property, somebody else would have had it before then, he decided to make the attempt to get it. Employing five or six agents, he succeeded in purchasing the entire title within two years. He then organized the Sea Isle City Improvement Company, and held the first sale at the offices of Thomas & Sons, Philadelphia, on May 2, 1881. The first railroad connecting the island with the mainland was built in the following year. The place has now two railroads, and about three

hundred buildings, with excellent prospects of future development.

In 1874 Mr. Landis traveled for about ten months in Europe, visiting England, Ireland, Scotland, France, and Germany, mainly in the interests of Vineland. He went again to Europe in 1889, staying nine months, during which he made a study of the sea defenses of Holland, and subsequently visited Germany, Italy, Sicily, Greece, and Egypt.

He still owns or controls about five thousand acres of the Vineland tract. and about six hundred lots in Vineland. In 1868, October 14, he married Clara F. Meade, daughter of Captain Richard W. Meade, and niece of General George G. Meade. They had four children, as follows: Henry Meigs Landis, who died in infancy; Charles K. Landis, Jr., counselor-at-law, who married

Mary Rosenbaum, daughter of Robert A. Rosenbaum and granddaughter of the former proprietor of Malaga, N.J.; Richard Worsen Meade Landis, who is engaged in studying art; and James Monteverte Landis, who is pursuing a course in scientific and mechanical electricity.

Although New Jersey is strewn with the beneficial results of his enterprises, and the world at large is indebted to him for some most useful ideas, Mr. Landis has always declined to be regarded as a philanthropist. He claims that in all his undertakings he has had no other motive than self-interest, which, he has always held, is best served by serving the best interests of others. The persons come rarely who put this utilitarian principle into practice as consistently as Mr. Landis has done.



It's not too late to make Santa's list and be a member of the Friends!!!

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