

Friends of Historic Vineland

Summer Edition



At the Booksmith, at the Mall, the weekend before Founder's Day. From left to right: Rosanne Hughes with granddaughter, Frank De Maio, Ed Ross, Kathy Ross, Carol Paterson, Matt Jordon

Then on Saturday, the event started with a grand march, with our bag pipers leading the parade. There were all kinds of re-enactors as before, plus plenty of entertainment for the kids. This year, Mr. Newcomb (Ed Ross) showed up (you know, the lawyer who gave all the money to the New Hospital in 1921 and then had the hospital named after him) and helped out with the kid's games. There was the usually drilling of the kids by the army folks, free northern soldier caps for the kids, pony rides, and all sorts of other entertainment. The fun things were all free, which I am sure made them all the more fun for the parents.

The Saturday before Founder's Day, a bunch of re-enactors were at the Booksmith at the Mall to talk about the history of Vineland. A continuous slide show with pictures of old Vineland was also presented.

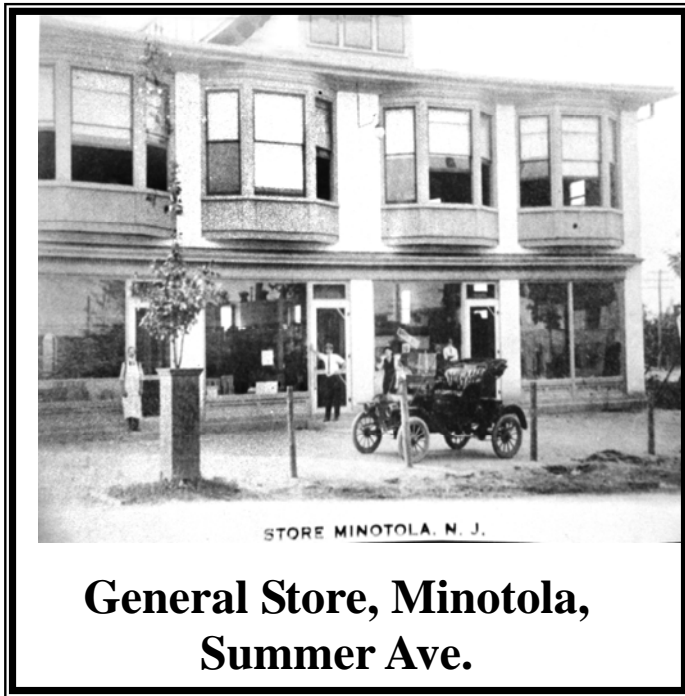
Of course we plan to continue the event, and if things go well, it will be bigger and better next year. But, ya all gotta pray for good weather.

Well, we did it. We asked for good weather and we got it. After that, it was all peaches and cream. Founder's Day went off without a hitch. The School kids came on Friday, we had camp by candle light Friday night. The weather cooperated and we were not rained out. The civil war re-enactors were as gracious as always and showed people around and even had refreshments, no charge! sang a few songs and told us all about the Jersey Devil (had a head like a horse and a long beard—etc., etc.!)



Joe Proffetta standing in the middle of the model train set for the kids

The History Of Landisville, By Mr. Renzulli, Continued:



**General Store, Minotola,
Summer Ave.**

Peddlers also frequently came to our town selling a variety of products, usually cloth for making children's clothing, dresses, curtains etc. Peddlers usually carried their wares on their backs. Besides peddlers Barbaccia's meat truck came to town with a variety of fresh meats. Frank DeMaio Sr. had a mobile grocery store on his covered truck and served many of the farmers in scattered areas. And the Hokey Pokey wagon came from Vineland almost every evening in the summer time selling ice cream in cones or in a small block which was called 'hokey pokey' A cone cost 3 cents and a hokey pokey cost 5 cents. Mrs. Katie Luchesi ran an ice cream parlor in the Luchesi building. It was a very popular spot on hot summer days. The Ferrara Family also ran an ice cream parlor next to the Lyric Theater.

Since there were no refrigerators and not everyone had an "ice box" to keep food from spoiling most customers shopped every day. (The general store owners had "ice boxes") Also since pay days occurred either weekly or biweekly most shoppers needed credit. Each customer had a small book in which purchases made on credit were recorded and on "pay-day" all bills were paid. Ice was delivered

semi-weekly by wagon to those who had an 'ice box'. The ice-man only served the main part of town and did not go into the rural area farms.

In the early 20's the Santagata family established a macaroni factory in which all types of pasta were made. Joseph Santagata operated the macaroni factory for many years. The Sciaretta family established another macaroni factory on Flower Street. The coming of super-markets eventually brought an end to the general stores. And the establishment of larger macaroni factories with more modern equipment and with the ability of producing a product cheaper and improved delivery facilities brought about the doom of the macaroni factories in My Town.

It should be remembered that there was a Landisville and a Minotola before the Italian 'invasion' of the late 1800's and early 1900's. The Methodist Church at the intersection of Weymouth and Friendship Roads was built in 1808 an indication that there were enough people living in the area to form a congregation. A walk through the cemetery behind the church will reveal the names of many of the early families that lived here as will be noted by names appearing on tombstones. In a pamphlet prepared by Edward Bauman and Rev. Howard Cassaday in 1998 entitled The History of Methodism and Friendship Methodist Church will be found many names of families and individuals who lived in our area in the late 1700's and 1800's. Some of the descendants of those early families still live in south Jersey; a few still live in our area. As will be noted the names are mostly of Anglo-Saxon ancestry with a few German names interspersed. The Braun, Baker, Crowell, Irick, Bauman, Lafferty, Long, Trout, Kaineth, O. J. Hamilton, J. B. Henderson and Pancoast families are some of the early families that settled in our area. And there was Billy Brooks, a fun loving bachelor, a good drinker and everyone's friend. Some of the descendants of these families have remained in this area.

The United Methodist Church in Minotola, built in the middle 1800's also had a fairly large congregation. The members were also active in community activities. A Catholic Church was built in Minotola in the late 1800's. Among the early families of the area were the Norton, Crowell, Lafferty. Howe,

Wray, Morris, Trout, Hoover, Downs, Campbell, Cook, Reed, Clevenger, Smith, Green, Rush, Long, Ralph, Cake, Kaineth, Fisher, Richard, Propst, Vicinus and Oliver; these come to mind as well as those mentioned previously.

Some of the people who served in the governing capacity for Buena Vista Township in the early years of the last century were: Charles Wray, Douglas Reed, a Mr. Morris, Oscar Weigand, Squire Sims, James Cimino, Daniel Conway, Joseph Oliver Sr., and Josephine Bernero. Mr. Cimino and Mr. Conway each was elected to serve as sheriff of Atlantic County. Charles Sanguinetti and Cosmo Giovinazzi served on the township committee during the early thirties and during the great depression. Peter Capizola served as Justice of the Peace for many years. Douglas Reed served as township clerk for many years in the early part of the last century.

Mr. Reed also helped many of the early settlers with legal problems such as securing deeds to properties, obtaining citizenship and filling out papers to bring relatives to America and helped with many other problems that would arise. He was the one many immigrants went to when they needed advice of a legal nature.

Mr. Howard Comer, who lived in Downtown, was road supervisor. He had several teams of horses and wagons that were used to haul sand from pits located in many parts of the township to fill ruts and holes in the roads. (One sand-pit was located on Weymouth Road a few hundred feet east of Clara Street.) All shoveling was done by hand. Mr. Comer did a good job taking care of the township roads. All roads in the township were dirt roads. With the cars and trucks becoming more common it was necessary for roads to be improved. Macadamized roads began to appear due to the increased use of motor vehicles. Most of the roads in the township and borough were black topped shortly after World War II.

In 1920 the Bethlehem Steel Company was looking for good quality sand to use in making patterns for metal parts of various shapes made in the steel manufacturing process. This type of sand was



*Old Home Week, 1911, Landis Ave.
Parade*

found on the Sisto Goffredi farm. The steel company contracted with Mr. Goffredi to purchase the sand from him. In front of the Catholic Church, along the railroad siding, a ramp was built so that dump trucks could go up the ramp and dump the sand into gondola cars. At the land site a steam shovel dug the sand and filled the truck bodies. Upon arrival at the ramp the trucks had to go up the ramp in reverse since there was no way at the top for the truck to turn around to empty its load of sand. The depression caused many steel mills to close thereby reducing the quantity of sand needed. Eventually other methods for making patterns were found and this too further reduced the need for sand. After the steel mills ceased buying the sand Atlantic County and Buena Vista Township bought the sand for road-beds for those roads that were being macadamized. As the town grew digging in the pit stopped. The ramp was demolished and removed. The sand-pit remains.

For several years every spring ‘Peg Leg Pete’ as we called him, came to town. He never explained how he lost his leg but he got around very well with his artificial wooden substitute. Every one knew him and they all looked forward to his coming.

Folks, there is a lot more of this amazing story by this amazing man. More in the next issue!!

So What's So Great About History??

The first thing to consider is that most people have a distorted opinion of what one means by *history*. How often one hears people say that they "hate history" or how they cannot "remember all those dates." Well, if that really represented history, few of us would be interested either. History is really much more. For example, when grandma tells her grandchild that he "looks just like uncle Harry that died last year" she is really teaching history. Remembering your birthday, your anniversary, or when your grandparents immigrated from, say, Poland, is all history. And it can be fascinating.

The real reason for the fascination of history is the universal trait of humans to know and understand who they are, what they are, where they came from, and what is expected of them. This has been true over the ages from an individual point of view and from the point of view of nations and races. The telling of the heroic tales of the Greeks such as the Iliad and the Odyssey takes the telling of history back to antiquity and to people with great culture. But the Viking sagas told over and over again by the Scandinavians and of the great ex-

ploits of their Godlike heroes, tells us that such activity also took place among people with little culture.

We might not appreciate it, but the telling of the story of the first Thanksgiving, the tall tale of George Washington and the cherry tree, and reading about Thomas Jefferson not only relate to who we are as Americans, but also who we want to be.

When does this all start?? Actually, at a young age. Have you not heard kids ask: "Why is the sky blue? What makes the wind? Where did I come from?" Well, I had similar thoughts, but coming from Landisville, I wondered why Landisville had the same name as Landis Ave., why Landis Ave. was so wide, why there were only Italians in Landisville and why a part of Vineland was named "Nuova Italia" and the streets had such names as Venezia and Dante Ave.

I wondered for a long time. And then I got involved in the history of Vineland—I started to acquire old postcards of Vineland showing what the old town looked like, read the biography of Charles K. Landis and why and how he started Vineland, and read as many of the available books on the history of Vineland that I could find. Soon everything started to make sense.

Now you might still say: "So What!! What real good will that do?" Well, again, going back through the ages and considering that people have not really changed, just the technology has changed, it makes a lot of sense to see how successful civilizations, and successful people have used the past to both learn and to shape their character and destiny. We all know such sayings like, "If you don't know where you've been, you don't know where you are going." Or, "People who don't know the past are destined to repeat it!" But there is more. Going back to grandma, think of how important it becomes in the destiny of a young person when she tells such stories like: "You know, your grandpa was a great man. He worked hard, raised a big family, never lied or cheated and was really appreciated by his neighbors!" Now, that tells you where you came from and what is expected of you, or at least what is a desirable goal.

So, history can be a great shaper of character, and a great way to have fun!

So, hope you enjoy it!

Frank De Maio, M.D.

DO YOU WANT TO JOIN??

TO BE A MEMBER

BENEFACTOR.....	\$100
SPONSOR.....	\$50
FAMILY.....	\$35
INDIVIDUAL.....	\$30
STUDENT.....	\$5

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO THE:
"FRIENDS OF HISTORIC VINELAND"

The Friends have no connections with the Vineland Historical Society or any other society!

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