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# Newsletter of the Middletown Township Historical Society

VOL. II NO. 3

JUNE, 1986

## Thanks

The Society thanks the following for their generous donations:

ELLEN BROANDER - for a wall-version of the 1960 Middletown Township map.

FAIR VIEW CEMETERY ASSOCIATION - for a rules and bylaws booklet and several aerial photographs.

OLGA BOECKEL - for a framed photograph of an historic house.

FIRST FIDELITY BANCORPORATION - for a copy of "Gems of New Jersey".

ED GILLESPIE - for several old photographs, including an early snapshot of the Camp Coles area and circa 1920 Lincroft School photographs.

ANN MORFORD - for a 1938 250th anniversary booklet of the First Baptist Church (now Old First Church), a program of its anniversary events, several early Middletown Township publications, most notably five of the first seven Handbooks.

ROBERT SCHOEFFLING - for a sheet of All Saints Memorial Church note paper and a cabinet card photograph of Rev. William V. Wilson.

Lenders and donors for the "Maps of Middletown" exhibit not previously listed: Elaine Anderson, Randall Gabrielan, Middletown Area Chamber of Commerce, Robert Schoeffling and the Shrewsbury Historical Society.

An early Handbook indicated that Mrs. Morford, then Ann Hendrickson, was the High School's first winner of a citizenship medal. It was the 1922 Alumni Association Medal, the only medal awarded then. Mrs. Morford excelled in academics and athletics, in addition to possessing exemplary citizenship qualities.

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Meetings - June 23 (4th Monday) & July 28.

Flea market - June 21 at Croydon Hall.

## Charles Foxwell, Photographer

Charles Foxwell conducted a photography business during the post card era in the Register Building in Red Bank, Monmouth County. He was a major post card publisher whose name is readily recognized by Red Bank area collectors. Foxwell's activities were reported by the Register and he advertised there, too. The recent discovery of Foxwell articles and advertisements give a revealing source and insight into the post card era.

Foxwell opened for business in 1896. He conducted a studio photography business, but this article looks at the post card aspect of his work. The post card era years are approximately 1905-1915. The period was characterized by a high quality product with a wide-spread collector interest. It is extremely well-preserved pictorially due solely to the extensive picture taking of the post card publishers.



QUIGLEYS BRIDGE - The view is north on Hubbard Avenue. Man-made Shadow Lake is now on the left. The surrounding ground was formerly very marshy and the bridge was longer than the present span. The two houses are still there.

Foxwell's photographs were probably published by the Register. This is a stylistic judgement as the paper gave no photography credits then. His pictures were successful competitively. He was a second prize winner in a contest by a Philadelphia magazine in 1904. Foxwell also took a third prize in a Kodak dealers advertising competition. Foxwell is best known for introducing the picture post card to the Red Bank area.

The Register wrote extensively about post cards on November 18, 1903. The date and headlines reflect the timing and early perspective of the picture trade that was soon to become a national collecting mania. Then, however, it was only "The Souvenir Postal Card Fad". Although millions of the cards would soon be purchased for personal collections, the focus then on the postal

card was on "What It Is Doing To Bring Red Bank To The Attention Of The Outside World.". The Register explained that the post card "fad" originated in large cities from purchases by visitors who wanted friends at home to know of their travels. The fad spread by 1903 so by then there was "scarcely a town of any importance at which souvenir post cards, containing views of the town, cannot be bought". Little did readers realize that a few years hence cards would be available picturing localities whose names are remembered by little other than their brief postal existence. Foxwell realized the growing interest in cards and introduced them to Red Bank in the spring of 1902.

Visitors were the primary purchasers. A surprisingly large number were purchased by "drummers", the then current term for travelling salesmen. Foxwell claimed drummers often sought postal card sources as soon as they arrived in town. The collector purchaser was noticeable, but not predominant.

The most popular views then were the river scenes. This was quite contrary to current taste. Collectors now have a greater interest in street views and the general look of a town. However, the older preference is understandable on reflection. The river was an important sporting and transportation site, a source of municipal pride. Transportation was slower and difficult and less of the population was near streams of such beauty and activity. Streets and buildings, however, were commonplace locales of daily activity. The cards were a form of indirect advertising, drawing attention to the river and its surrounding towns to those who might not otherwise have become aware of them.

Cards were sold in 1903 at news stands, drug stores and other retail outlets. The price was six for 15¢ or 25¢ for a dozen. The early Foxwell cards were a black monochrome and dull compared with his later efforts. Demand was greater in the summer months. Foxwell seemed proud of a two "season" sales total of 15,000, probably not aware of how sales would boom. For example, a brief note in 1910 indicated that nearly 10,000 cards were sold over a holiday weekend in nearby Highlands. Post card improvement would be stimulated by competition. It became a simple process for any merchant with an interesting photograph to become a post card publisher. He could send his pictures to Germany where high quality lithography printing would produce post cards superior to the local product. Two excellent photographers were also nearby. Joseph Dickopf was a Red Bank rival, while Frank Yarnall largely limited his activities to north of the Navesink River in Middletown Township communities, primarily Belford and Port Monmouth. The photographer had a qualitative competitive edge, the photographic post card. An original photograph processed on paper with a post card backing resulted in a product of great clarity and sharpness. They would become the collecting rage of the 1980's.

Post card lists have also obtained a current popularity. Of greater fascination is a list issued during the post card era. Foxwell's April 11, 1906 Register advertisement claimed his role as the originator of souvenir postal cards in Red Bank. He noted he had been "in the business long enough to get together one of the finest collections of post cards in Monmouth County" and published the following list:

Broad street, from Front street, looking south.  
South Broad street.  
Second national bank and postoffice.  
Front street, looking east.  
Front street, looking west.  
Throckmorton's Bridge, Front street.  
Hubbard's Bridge.  
Cooper's Bridge.  
Tramp Hollow.  
The Winding Stream at Tramp Hollow.  
Quigley's Bridge.  
Jones' Bridge.  
Tinton Falls Bridge.  
View of Newman Spring Bridge.  
Looking up the shore from Newman Springs.  
Looking down the river from Newman Springs.  
Tinton Falls Dam.  
The Lily Pond near Swimming River.  
Deep Cut Curve at Middletown.  
Deep Cut road.

King's Highway at Middletown.  
Corner Store at Shrewsbury.  
Friends or Quaker Meeting House at Shrewsbury.  
Presbyterian Church at Shrewsbury.  
Sycamore avenue at Shrewsbury.  
Middletown, from Bowne's hill.  
A Country Road.  
Irving Place at Red Bank.  
Broad street, from Leroy Place.  
Fishermen Landing at Seabright.  
Fishermen's Debate.  
A Good Haul.  
Christ Church at Shrewsbury.  
A Rumson Gateway.  
Moonlight on the Shrewsbury River.  
Cove east of Red Bank Steamboat Dock.  
In the Cockpit of the Iceyacht George.  
Iceyacht Daisy.  
Iceyacht In the Air.  
Start of an Iceyacht race.  
Fishermen's Fleet at Seabright.  
Seabright Drawbridge.  
A Thoroughbred.  
Yachting on the Shrewsbury River.  
Iceyacht George.  
Creek at Belford.  
Red Bank Railroad Station.  
Cutting Ice on the Shrewsbury River.  
Front street from Hubbard's bridge.  
Lake on the Fair Haven road.  
The Point House.  
The bend at Newman Springs.  
Maple avenue at Red Bank.  
Iceyacht Tyro.  
Iceyacht Gull.

Identification is not complete. The streets without towns are Red Bank. Some sites are Middletown, including Tramp Hollow and Quigleys Bridge. Some are bridges between Red Bank and Middletown, such as Coopers and Hubbards Bridges, while the Newman Springs Bridge connects Middletown with both Red Bank and Shrewsbury.

Quality was costly. The cards were five cents each or six for a quarter. If the price seems modest today, it was double the typical two for five cents price of the German imports. Also, the price of a set of six could approach 10% of a worker's daily wage. The product was superlative, though. Foxwell could retain modesty even while asserting in the advertisement "They are beautiful." Foxwell was rightfully proud of his skill. He sent President Theodore Roosevelt in 1905 a framed picture of about thirty scenes on the Navesink River, including winter sports. We do not know if the picture hung in the White House, but the President's secretary's letter of thanks was published in the Register.

The cards are scarce today. It is not likely that many of the fifty-five are in one collection. Foxwell's pictures continued to appear on printed cards, so it is likely that the same view appears in both photographic and printed versions.

Foxwell's pictures also appeared in other forms. His early work included stereopticons, or lantern slides, of Red Bank and vicinity made in the 1890's. Each was likely unique. Their subject matter included human interest activities including a bicycle race and a church entertainment. There were also the expected river scenes and historic sites. Foxwell made 1908 calendars embellished with pictures of Red Bank and vicinity. He gave buyers the option of changing the views to their local favorites.

Charles R. D. Foxwell had a rich and varied photographic career. It is fortunate we can still trace much of it through post cards. The Society would like to preserve more of it in its collections and welcomes donations of Foxwell or other cards. If you would like to keep yours, we would appreciate the opportunity to make copies of them. Please write (address page 4) or call Randall Gabrielan, 671-2645.

## New Members

Bonnie L. Andrews -	Belford
Leonard G. Bianchi -	Harmony
Henrietta A. Chittick -	Old Bridge
Marion B. Dunlevy -	Middletown
Mr & Mrs Dock Edwards -	Lincroft

Robert J. Fenner -	Edison
Evelyn S. Hartmann -	Middletown
Mary Linder -	Oak Hill
Mr & Mrs Louis W. Rissland, Jr -	Oak Hill
Helen Roberts -	New Monmouth
Robert A. Roth -	Leonardo
Mr & Mrs John E. Scott -	Middletown
Mr & Mrs Owen Wozencroft -	New Monmouth

## Maps of Middletown

(Continued from April, 1986)

We conclude our observations on the Beers 1873 Monmouth County Atlas with Fair View Cemetery. It was incorporated in 1855 with a requirement for exclusive use as a cemetery.

It's attractive physical layout was motivated by the mid-nineteenth century idea that cemeteries should be beautiful parks. At the time there were few public parks and some cemeteries were thought to have potential for quiet recreational visits. Fair View remains a beautiful setting for the living to commemorate the deceased. A comparative view was obtained by a modern mapping technique, aerial photography (Item EE). The old section is in the center. The section numbers make comparison easy.

Woolman and Rose of Philadelphia published a monumental work in 1878. Their "Historical and Biographical Atlas of the New Jersey Coast" combined maps, history, statistics, biographical sketches and many lithographs of well known persons and sites. Included are a plan of Middletown village (Item L), the greenhouses of E. T. Field's Oak Hill Nurseries, once on Hill Road, smaller pictures of the Lyster House and the old Beekman House, which later burned, and a double page view of Col. E. W. Conover's Hamiltonian Stock Farm with six of his horses. The farm was located on both sides of Route 35 (then the Middletown-Red Bank Turnpike) around the site of the Applebrook development (near the Navy Road). The atlas mapped the entire coast to Cape May.

The "county atlas period" ended in the first decade of the 20th century. The last Monmouth work was Chester Wolverton's "Atlas of Monmouth County" published in 1889. He was once a member of the New Jersey Senate from Hunterdon County. The atlas was sold by subscription and Wolverton appeared before the County's freeholders board in December 1888 to solicit one from the County for \$25. The volume was of unequal beauty. Use of color, sizable 15" x 20 1/2" pages and large scales showed the County in great detail and clarity. Most of the Township was shown on a double plate (Item M), with part printed separately (Item N). Two town plans were included Middletown village (Item O) and Navesink (Item P). New reprints are available for \$25.00 at the Museum or \$26.50 by mail.

The 1890 decade brought several major developments in transportation. New directions in mapping followed. The production of the "safety" bicycle and the invention of the pneumatic tire in the 1880s made bicycling a major recreational activity in the 1890s. Roads, however, were generally in poor condition. The League of American Wheelmen, organized in 1880 through consolidation of local cycling clubs, was a strong advocate of improving roads. The country's first law for providing state financial aid for permanent improvement of highways approved in New Jersey in 1891 and became operative in 1892.

Maps for bicycle use were published. Item DD is a local example published by county atlas publisher Beers, "The Cyclists' Road Book of New Jersey". Part of Section (map) 3 is exhibited. The copy shows shading reflecting folds in the original, which was designed to fit in the cycle's bag. The atlas contains eight sectional maps of New Jersey, legal information regarding bicycles, a list



fig. 5



fig. 6

of hotels and consuls for the New Jersey division of the League. Henry A. Benedict was the compiler.

Automobiles were invented in the early 1890s. An effective one was road tested by Frank Duryea in 1893. It took several years to make the invention commercially viable. Automobiles were still not a major factor in transportation by the turn of the century, but the industry made great strides in the decade following. State maps in the 1890s primarily portrayed railroad lines. Some were specifically for railroads, such as the 1894-95 map by John T. Van Cleef and J. Brognard Betts. It is not in the exhibit, but the Middletown area has a resemblance to a spider web created by the intersection of the three railroads crossing the Township. That effect was still evident in 1913 when C. S. Hammond & Co. published the New Jersey map shown in the Middletown excerpt as fig. 5.

An example from the era is exhibited as Item JJ, with a part of it also on the exhibit brochure's cover. The small section shown as fig. 6 is noteworthy as it shows Kings Highway continuous with Red Hill Road on the west and the future Highway 35 on the east. The latter was known as the Middletown-Red Bank Turnpike then. Its source is not recorded, but it was probably from a guidebook. This map contains a key to road quality. Most roads were shown as double lines or "ordinary" roads. Broken lines (the aforesaid turnpike) were "fair" roads, whole solid lines were "good" roads. The only good roads in the Township were on the Cooper and Oceanic Bridges leaving it (or entering, depending on your perspective). It is sad commentary on road conditions noting that the standard was less than fair, or poor, as reference to contemporary reports will verify.

Automobile clubs were also active promoting the need for good roads and advising motorists how to travel them. Guidebooks incorporating maps and detailed directions became popular. The "Official 1910 Automobile Blue Book" included a route from Asbury Park

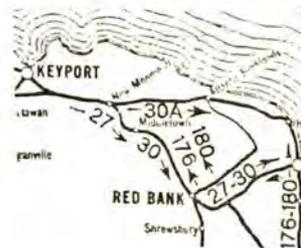


fig. 7



fig. 8

to the Staten Island ferry with Middletown in the map excerpted as fig. 7. Directions through Middletown were simply "straight through small village", but other instructions were more interesting, such as "turn left across dangerous RR" and "jog left and immediately right - downgrade between coal storage piles".

The major map makers became quite prolific producing for the automotive trade. Rand McNally published its first country-wide road atlas in 1924. They also published state maps inside guidebooks. That year twenty-two Official Auto Trail Maps covered the United States and Canada. New Jersey was combined with New York with not one Township place listed. The title became Official Auto Road Map by 1927 and New Jersey was

covered in a separate booklet which listed Belford and Navesink. Free distribution of maps through gas stations became wide-spread on the 1930s. These maps, necessarily small scale, rarely showed Middletown Township in detail. One notable exception is the Northeast New Jersey map of General Drafting Co., Item V. It shows most major Township streets and can be of major usefulness to the visitor. General Drafting Co. was founded in 1909 by Otto Gustave Lindberg, a Finnish immigrant. Their maps of exceptional quality are produced for a major oil company and the A.A.A., among other customers.

Local street maps were long published by developers and tax authorities. Development maps were consciously omitted from the exhibit as they merit separate study and display. The Hagstrom Map Company publishes a Monmouth County street and road atlas. Their maps from circa 1943 and 1984, Items R and S respectively, show startling contrast and reflect markedly the Township's growth. One can compare the "white space" in the earlier map, representing cultivated or otherwise undeveloped land, with the same areas showing streets in 1984, to get an instant impression of Middletown's change. However, the Township long lacked a separate street map. The first was published by the Middletown Area Chamber of Commerce in 1960. Member Charles Toop was president then. A small excerpt, shown reduced as fig. 8, shows change in the Society's neighborhood. Croydon Hall is no longer an Academy, the railroad is gone and the post office moved. While the map was not beautiful, it was Middletown's own.

Concluded in August

## Membership & Mailing Lists

The newsletter is our one tangible benefit of membership. It has also been sent gratis to others as an effort to build membership. We have re-organized our mailing list. The label now indicates mailing status. Members are indicated by an "M". Other societies and libraries are marked by an "I". We shall continue to mail gratis to certain individuals close to or helpful to our Society and have marked theirs "C". They may join, of course, if they wish. Other labels have no designations. They have obviously received one more sample copy, this one. We hope those interested join. Membership also has the intangible benefit of helping the Society's work. Dues are only \$5.00 individual or \$10.00 family for each calendar year. The following blank is a convenience, but need not be used if you wish to keep your newsletter intact.

Encl. \$5.00 Indiv. \$10.00 Family - Dues

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

### Raymond G. Boeckel

Raymond G. Boeckel died May 5, 1986. He was born in Locust Point, a decendent of a long line of Middletown Township Boeckels. Mr. Boeckel owned Sleepy Hollow Horse Farm and was the husband of Middletown mayor and long time Society activist, Olga Boeckel.

Ray's lengthy relationship with the Society will be remembered as cooperative, helpful and reliable. Though less active in recent months due to his wife's political role, Ray could still be called on for his special skills. His cheerful conviviality and warm demeanor will be missed.

## Society Honors E. Kavanagh

The Board of Trustees elected Esther Kavanagh an Honorary Life Member in recognition of her generosity to the Society and her long association with our Museum. Mrs. Kavanagh donated to the Society numerous records and artifacts of Croydon Hall Academy including the heraldic painting, subject of the newsletter's February, 1986 lead article. The material will help us preserve the past of this once fine school.

Esther Kavanagh is a sister of the late Dr. John M. Carr, founder of Croydon Hall. She was the organization's treasurer, but also part of the guiding spirit that gave this school it's special qualities. Her relationship to the Society is fondly regarded and deeply appreciated.

P.O. BOX 434

MIDDLETOWN, NJ 07748

PHONE: 291-8739 during museum hours.

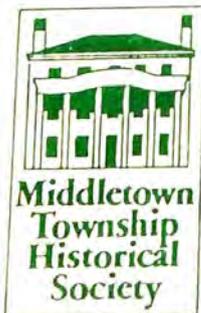
EDITOR: RANDALL GABRIELAN

DEDICATED TO RESEARCHING, COLLECTING AND EXHIBITING THE HISTORY OF MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP.

Museum: In the main building at Croydon Hall on Leonardville Rd. between Chamone and Bellevue Aves. in the township's Leonardo section. Open Saturdays & Sundays.

Meetings: 8:00 PM at the museum, generally on the fourth Monday with occasional exceptions for major holidays.

Donations of historical materials: Please see a museum guide or write to the Society.



#### MEMBERSHIP DUES PER CALENDAR YR.

Individual — \$5.00

Family — \$10.00

Dues for new members joining after Oct. 1 include following year.