

Bridgeville Historical Society

102 S. William Street, P. O. Box 306, Bridgeville, DE 19933

December 2011



Christmas in Bridgeville— Dec. 3

The Society's 36th Annual Christmas in Bridgeville craft show will be held at Woodbridge High School on Laws Street this Saturday, December 3. Shopping hours are from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.



Co-Chairmen, Mike and Joanne Collison, report that over 60 spaces have been filled and there will be several new vendors this year in addition to perennial favorites.

A 42" Sanyo LCD 1080p high definition television will be given away at 3:00 p.m. to the lucky chance buyer. There will also be a 50-50 drawing at the end of the day. You do not have to be present to win either. **Members, please don't forget to get your chance money in.**

Santa's elf, Tom Wimbrow, has been busy this year hand-crafting those delightful wooden banks and will have four wooden trains for sale this year. Those wooden items will be at Society's booth in the gym. Stop by and purchase a copy of the **Bridgeville, a Community History of the Nineteenth Century** book or a small Bridgeville banner. They make great gifts for your family.

BHS Auction-Social

The 33rd annual auction-social was held at Heritage Shores Clubhouse in Bridgeville on September 9th. Chairman Eleanor and her committee did an outstanding job and this major fundraiser netted over \$7000. Attendance also broke a record with 120 members and guests there to enjoy the food, fellowship and lively bidding.



Auctioneer Frank McCraghan pushed for higher bids and entertained the crowd with his delightful commentaries.



W. Allen Jones, Ann W. Jones, and Jayne W. Smith

The highest bid of the evening was for a diamond ring donated by O'Neal's Antiques of Laurel, DE.

The Society appreciates the support and generosity of its members, friends, and the many local businesses that donated items and money for this event. All funds help with the maintenance of the Society's museum and park.

RESERVE THE DATE: Next year's auction will be on Friday, September 14, 2012

The Bridgeville Post Office—Since 1915

By George F. "Sonny" Hardesty



This brick two-story structure was built in May 1915 by its original owners and leased to the U. S. Post Office until 1961. The original owners were: John C. Thawley, Mame Jones (John's sister-in-law,) Harry C. Layton and O. E. Wiley. After the death of John C. Thawley and Harry C. Layton, Edwin L. Layton and George Tuck became shareholders.

This building had a second floor which was leased for several years to the Bell Telephone Co. as a central office for the Bridgeville area. A local lady, Miss Nettie Benson, was the manager and worked for the phone company until she retired.



After the telephone company left, this second floor was used for many years as an apartment. Those that I can remember residing there were Bill and Margaret Shockley, Fillmore and Mabel Clifton, John and Susie Wingate. Somewhere along in time, it is also rumored to have been a "red-light" house.

This building also had a basement with a walk-down entrance off Market Street. Mr. Frank Rapp operated a paper store here for many years until he moved the store next to the old pool room. He remained there until the mid 1940s. The Bridgeville Building and Loan Association

also used the basement for their office during the 1940s and 1950s. Mr. F. Joseph Willey was the Building and Loan Association secretary/treasurer.

Postal service in this building

This building was used primarily as the Bridgeville Post Office. Delivery of mail for Bridgeville patrons included use of post office boxes and two rural delivery routes.

By 1953, a 14-mile walking regular city delivery route was placed into service and by 1955, an auxiliary city route were placed into service.

The post office dispatched mail via Railway Mail Service with six Pennsylvania Railroad trains traveling south and six going north. Every hour, the post office had to change the time on their letter cancelling machine. By 1959, trains were removed from service, and trucks took over moving and delivering the mail.

The Bridgeville Post Office also handled mail for seven Star Routes that served our community well for 46 years. It was one of a few locations in town where people could daily meet and greet one another as friends and neighbors and catch up with local news, some good, some not so good, and it was also a place where one could stop by and warm themselves on a cold windy day. This was a favorite spot for town kids to warm themselves while "hooking cars" during the winter months when snow was in abundance.

In the early 1960s, the Bridgeville Volunteer Fire Co., Inc. purchased this building, demolished it, and built an addition to their existing fire house.

The Bridgeville Post Office moved to the NE corner of



Walnut and Laws Streets and leased a new building, built by the Facciollia Construction Co. of Wilmington, DE, and remains today as the post office for Bridgeville.

Bridgeville Historical Society

Officers

President Howard E. Hardesty
1st V. President Tom Wimbrow
2nd V. President . . Phyllis A. Jones
Secretary Diana Chaney
Treasurer Pam Slater

Directors

Eleanor Bennett
Michael Collison
Byron C. Lewis
Bill Nennstiehl
John M. Shockley
Robert D. Slater

Welcome New Members

Skip and Carol Jones

Memorial Donations

Remembering their parents,

Leon and Elizabeth Smith

Margaret Kennedy (\$25)
Virginia Stokes (\$50)

Next Meeting

The next general meeting of the Society will be on Wed. Jan. 11, at St. Mary's Parish-House on William Street.

Guest speakers are reenactors who will present the "History of the 2nd Delaware Volunteer Infantry.

Desserts and Beverages will be served before the meeting.

Recent Donations to the Society

Kevin Patterson—Delaware Sketch Book- (author signed)

Lou Reynolds—1959 Union United Church Bulletin

Eleanor Bennett— Photo of Myrna in colonial attire

Sandy Rementer— Collection of papers, ledgers, bulletins, booklets from the News Print Shop in the 50s

Sharon Hawk—Collection of misc. news articles on Bridgeville

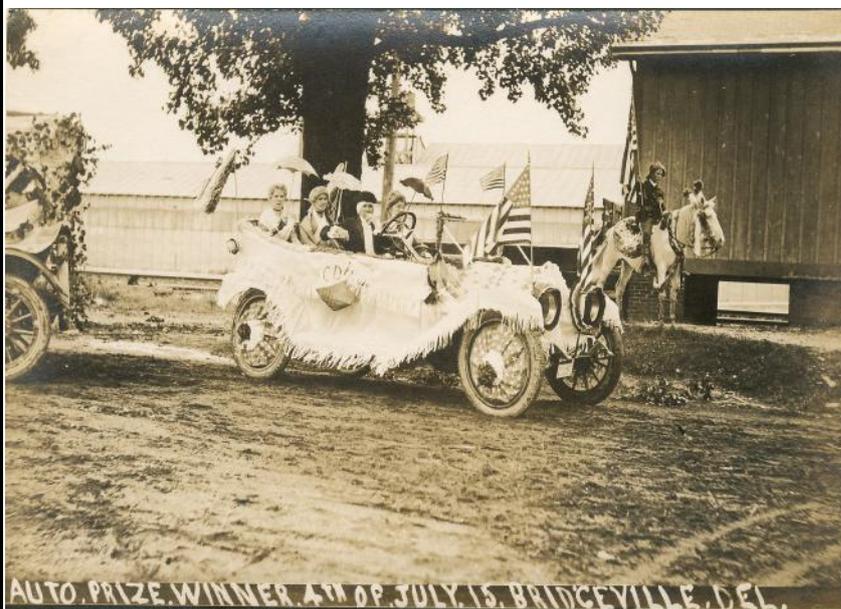
Thurman (Doc) Adams—Barn and Plantation Books; 1950 Kiwanis Calendar page

Louise Schoonover Smith— Frank E. Schoonover Catalogue Raisonne

This 2-volume boxed set embodies Schoonover's entire *oeuvre* from his earliest sketches to his last easel painting. This well-known artist and illustrator was born in New Jersey in 1877 then settled in Wilmington in 1900.

Phyllis Jones—Dress that belonged to Dr. Catherine Gray; 2 C.C. Brown 1909 billheads, 2 Red Cross pins (1929, 1936)

Carol Shaw—21 real picture postcards of the 1915 Fourth of July parade in Bridgeville, 2 printed postcards of Bridgeville. About half of



the postcards were some that we have never seen before. They came from the estate of William T. Carter of Federalsburg. He was the grandson of William T. and Cordelia Carter who managed the Columbia Hotel in the early 1900s.

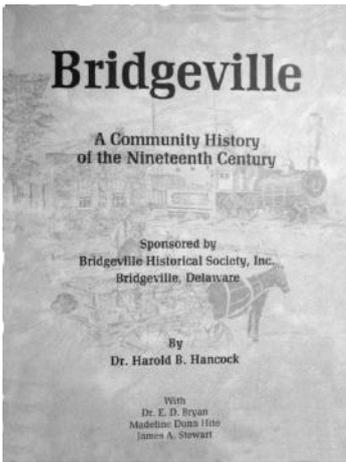
"The '62 Storm" Booklets for Sale

Thanks to a generous donation from **Star Ayers**, the Society now has 110 copies of this booklet published by the Sussex Guide about the famous storm of 1962 in Delmarva. The booklets will be sold for \$5.00 each and will be available at Christmas in Bridgeville.

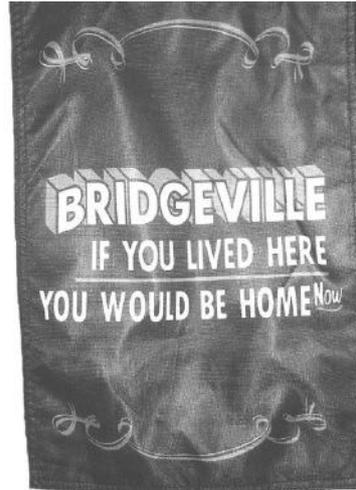
Next year will be the fiftieth anniversary of this event and now is a good time to share that bit of history with your children and grandchildren.

Thanks to Dave Brumbly and Tom Wimbrow for arranging this donation.

Looking for a gift for the one on your list that has everything . . .



Reprints of our 1983 book, **Bridgeville-a Community History of the Nineteenth Century** by Dr. Harold B. Hancock are still available. Cost is \$35.00 + \$9.00 S/H. Copies can also be purchased locally at the Bridgeville Public Library or by calling 337-8595



Small Banners

Each banner sells for \$10.00 and may be purchased at RFJL Insurance , the Bridgeville Public Library or by calling 337-8595.

Banners can be mailed by adding \$2.00 for S/H.

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Dates to Remember

Dec. 3 Christmas in Bridgeville

9:00 a.m.— 3:00 p.m.
Woodbridge High School
307 Laws Street

Dec. 18 Caroling in the Park

6:30 p.m.—Cahall Park
Delaware Ave. & Mechanic St.
(Sponsored by - Bridgeville Mustangs 4-H Club)

Jan. 11 BHS -General Meeting

Wed - 6:30 p.m.
St. Mary's Parish House
William St.—Bridgeville, DE

*"History of Delaware's
2nd Infantry"*