

Merchantville Historical Society

January 27, 2010 Minutes (Annual Meeting)

This year's Annual Meeting was an interesting presentation regarding Wellwood Park and a proposed development called "Merchantville Park". Once again, President Maureen McLoone prepared a very informative slide presentation that encouraged interaction with the attendees.

Patrick Cunningham's family settled in Merchantville in the mid 1850's. Their "Wellwood cottage" formerly stood at 508 West Maple. Patrick *walked* to the ferry in Camden every day to get to his publishing establishment in Philadelphia! The original steps of their grand home remain in place in Wellwood Park. St. Peter's Catholic Church was named in honor of Patrick's brother, Peter, who followed Patrick to Merchantville.

The Merchantville Park presentation sparked a number of interesting conversations. Copies of the sales brochures for Merchantville Park included homes we recognized on North Centre. Most of the boundaries of the proposed development lie in present day Pennsauken (but was called "North Merchantville"). The brochure boasted of three trolleys running through the area; these tracks are still visible in the area.

Did you know there was once an Oyster Market on Centre Street owned by Charles Pidgeon? A small cannon from the ship *Augusta* that sailed in 1777 stood in front of this market. William McFarlan salvaged that cannon 98 years after the *Augusta* sank and placed it in front of the market. The Pidgeon's Market closed and in 1935 the cannon was given to the Camden County Historical Society. Maureen tracked down and visited "our" cannon at the Camden County Historical Society located on Park Avenue.

Refreshments and conversation ended another enjoyable Annual Meeting.

Thank you to those who have already paid their 2010 dues. Your support is appreciated. The membership envelope was included in your January mailing of the Society's News. If possible we prefer to email our information to your home. Please email your current home email address and I'll update the records.

Our next meeting is Thursday, February 25th at 8 pm at the Community Center. Feel free to join us.

Questions/comments: Marge Disch (856) 663-4855/mmdisch@comcast.net
Maureen McLoone (856) 665-6271/mrsmerch@aol.com