

The Horse & Carriage

Lakewood's Vehicle of Historical Expression



LAKEWOOD HERITAGE COMMISSION and HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Serving the unique
history of Lakewood

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Stan Liptzin, Ph.D.
Barry Seigel
Barry Sokol
Robin Taylor-Wellet
Edith Wolpin
Richard Wolpin
Natalie Silverman

Come Visit Us!

**The Museum is open from
1-4pm Saturday, Sunday,
and Monday.**

President's Message - Dr. Stan Liptzin Lakewood Historical Society

It is with great pleasure that we open the 2023 season with much more pleasant aplomb than in the past few years. The Sheldon Wolpin Lakewood Historical Museum opened on March 11th of this year. Because of the fact that we opened on time and that we are no longer victims of disease and official restrictions, the Lakewood Heritage Commission and Lakewood Historical Society are anticipating a revival in the history of our wonderful town. I must reiterate this last sentence as Lakewood has an impressive and rich history and our goal is to proffer his vivid past, apply it to the present, and continually educate and inform not only the residents of Lakewood, but all of Ocean County along with everyone who has had some kind of relationship with Lakewood.

It is poignant to mention that Lakewood has touched many people. If you went to Lakewood High School, you were from Lakewood. I have two examples to emphasize this point. When the Heritage Commission and Historical Society petitioned the Lakewood Township to name the roadway in Pine Park, "Gene Hendrickson Way," and when we held the ceremony dedicating this thoroughfare, Gene Hendrickson, who graduated from Lakewood High School and lived in Cassville in Jackson Township, stated to us in his peroration that upon his discharge from the United States Marines, he went to school on the GI Bill. When he returned, he decided to open a photography and sports shop which became a mainstay of successful businesses on Clifton Avenue in Lakewood. Gene stated in his peroration, "Where was I going to open a business—in Freehold?" Lakewood emphatically was his town of choice. It is important to note that Gene Hendrickson, in 1986, was responsible for influencing the Lakewood Township Committee to establish the Lakewood Heritage Commission. The Lakewood Historical Society is an outgrowth of this organization dedicated to the preservation of Lakewood history and whose purpose is to support the Museum.



Back row, left to right: Armen Hagopian, Natalie Silverman, Robin Taylor-Wellet, Richard Wolpin, Barry Sokol, Steve Wexler, William Brown, Richard Johnson, Nancy Johnson

Front row, left to right: Edith Wolpin, Gabby Evergreen, Jimmy Esposito, Eileen Liptzin, Stan Liptzin, Barry Seigel, Jani Kristbergs



President's Message (cont.)

In essence, no matter which sending district one came from—be it Jackson, Howell, Lakehurst, or Manchester—you were from Lakewood. The impact that growing up in Lakewood had on its youth can best be described by the comments of numerous inductees into the Lakewood Alumni Hall of Fame. Virtually every one of the inductees proudly expressed their thanks for having the opportunity to spend their formative years growing up in Lakewood. Both my wife Eileen, who was born in Lakewood, and I feel the same way.

We are pleased to announce that we have a new Collections Manager, Gabriella Evergreen, who is working with us in organizing the plethora of memorabilia that the Museum is constantly receiving and revisiting our display cases/exhibits and is making new and appropriate changes. She moved into the position with energy and verve, took to her tasks with alacrity, and is demonstrating creativity, initiative, and the appropriate cheerfulness and personality to complement her position. Additionally, given her multiple abilities, Gabby has offered to assist with publishing this newsletter, "The Horse and Carriage!" She succeeds Christina Romano in this position. Christina left the position at the Museum to become an Assistant Curator in a Museum in Illinois. We gave her the highest recommendations possible. Hopefully, she is doing well in her new position.

One of the most beneficial events that we held last year was in setting up a memorial wall in one of our galleries honoring Lakewood Police Officers who died while in uniform. This program was developed by our own Retired Detective Steve Wexler who is serves as the Chairman of the Lakewood Heritage Commission and is the Vice-President of the Lakewood Historical Society. Steve worked very closely with Detective Sergeant Jeannette Shimanovich, Chief Gregory Meyers, and retired Police Chief Rob Lawson in developing an outstanding program. We also have to recognize the work of the two Police Officers, Jason Yahr and Kevin Small working assiduously with Steve Wexler to build this display.

The Museum honored our fallen heroes and the Lakewood Police Department on June 16, 2022. Chief Gregory Meyers and Mayor Raymond Coles respectively gave the introductory remarks and provided a background for the purpose of this event. Other speakers on this program were Ocean County Prosecutor Bradley B. Billhimmer, Gary Quinn, Director of the Ocean County Board of Commissioners, Dr. Stan Liptzin, President of the Lakewood Historical Society, Bill Curtis, Mayor of Bayhead, Steve Wexler, Chairman of the Lakewood Heritage Commission, and a retired Detective, retired Chief Robert Lawson and the closing remarks were given by Chief Gregory Meyer.

On March 23, 2023, Mayor Raymond Coles came to the Museum in recognition of that date as the "birthday of Lakewood." This proclamation of March 23, 1892, proclaimed that what was once a part of Brick, NJ, would now be the Township of Lakewood. Also in attendance were Dr. Stan Liptzin, James Esposito, representing Lakewood Public Works, and Shmuel Binder from the Lakewood News Network.

We are excited to announce some events that will help to bring Lakewood residents—past and present—together to welcome each other, refresh acquaintances, and be entertained by a worthwhile program. Again, I wish to thank everyone who continues to support the Sheldon Wolpin Lakewood Historical Museum.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Speaker Series - Ruth Ann McClelland

Location: Sheldon Wolpin Lakewood Historical Museum, 500 Country Club Dr, Lakewood NJ 08701
Suggested \$10 donation

Ruth Ann McClelland has a love of history that was fostered as a 40 year member of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. She is also the Past Regent of the Governor William Livingston Chapter of the DAR in Spring Lake, New Jersey. Ruth has a Master of Science in Nursing and has worked as a nurse in New Jersey and Virginia.

Saturday September 9, 1:00pm - 2:00pm

A History of Medicine in America and Women in NJ During the American Revolution

Medicine wasn't the same in colonial America as it is today. We'll take a look back to colonial America and see how the war impacted medical practices and brought us advancements in medical treatment, as well as how instrumental women in New Jersey were during the American Revolution.

Sunday October 1st, 1:00pm - 2:00pm

History of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Story of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence



President Grover Cleveland in Lakewood - Pt. 1 by Dr. Stanley Liptzin

We know that Long Branch, NJ is renowned for the seven United States Presidents who, at one time or another, resided in that shore town. Lakewood, NJ cannot make claim to that large number, although many Presidents have visited here over the years. Our claim to fame, if you wish, is that Grover Cleveland did domicile in Lakewood for a period in between his two terms of office. His residency in Lakewood fortunately embellishes our halcyon past. This two-part article will tell the story of his short time in Lakewood and its effect on the residents of this small town. The first part, published in this issue, will describe his sojourn to Lakewood and the environs in which he lived. We will publish the second half of the article in the next edition of the Horse and Carriage. By researching Cleveland in the local newspapers of the time, we found several references to Cleveland in Lakewood. I wish to give credit to Richard Wolpin who gained access to some turn of the 20th Century newspaper articles to provide relevant information on Cleveland's residence in Lakewood and for photo copying and enlarging some of the articles.

Henry Graff, a Columbia University historian, and Cleveland biographer, has written, "Grover Cleveland is the best unknown President." Most Americans only remember him for having served two non-consecutive terms as President of the United States: 1885-1889 and 1893-1897. He received the majority of the popular vote in the three elections of 1884, 1888, and 1892. Only Franklin D. Roosevelt, elected as President four times, exceeded this record. We do have some interesting facts related to Cleveland and New Jersey. He was born in Caldwell, N J on March 18, 1837, his birth home is an official historical State Historical Site, and he died in Princeton on June 4, 1908.

As an aside and a tribute to relevance and remembrance of my generation, there was a relationship of President Cleveland with our 32nd President, Franklin D. Roosevelt who was elected four times to this prestigious office. In early 1887 Franklin D. Roosevelt accompanied his parents on their visit to Washington DC. James Roosevelt, his father, brought him to the White House to meet President Cleveland. As they prepared to leave, the president heaved his considerable bulk out of his chair, walked over to the boy, patted him on his head, and said in what must have been a weary voice, "My little man, I am making a strange wish for you. It is that you never be President of the United States."

The majority of us look for any historical references between Grover Cleveland and Lakewood. We always allude to the fact that Cleveland lived in Lakewood—our town. Before we delve into his actual residence in Lakewood, we should qualify that there is very little written history concerning his life in Lakewood. As we probe into his life in Lakewood, we have to ask a number of questions relative to his residence here. Often times, each question begs a prior question. During which periods of his life did he entertain living in Lakewood? What were the circumstances involved with his moving here? How long did he reside here? Did he decide to retire in Lakewood? In order to find out and gather this information, we had to search, find, collate this information, and then read with the aid of a magnifying glass, the few varied articles referencing both President Cleveland and Lakewood, NJ.

After all this, you might ask, when did he live in Lakewood? Henry Graff wrote, "On March 2, the Clevelands, who had been living in a cottage in Lakewood, NJ owned by Nathan Strauss, the philanthropist and co-owner of R. H. Macy and Company, departed for Washington and Cleveland's second term inauguration."

The Lakewood Times and Journal in Saturday, December 5, 1891 reported on the Cleveland Cottage. "We are informed that Ex-President Cleveland had rented for the season and is now occupying with his family the Strauss cottage on Lexington Avenue near Twelfth Street." Cleveland had moved from his house on Madison Avenue in New York which "is closed" and he is to "rent furnished until the remainder of the lease until May 1892." The quietude of Lakewood provided the opportune environment for "rest, quiet, and out-door life" recommended by the doctor for Baby Ruth. "Nowhere can Baby Ruth and Mrs. Cleveland...obtain such a good advantage as in our little pine surrounded village." (Oh, how I long for the pine trees in Lakewood that were an integral part of my youth).



In 1886-1887, a Miss Bunker built the cottage, which we know as the Cleveland Cottage. She later sold it and the surrounding property to Nathan Strauss. Written records describe the house as a square frame house with a mansard roof and dormer windows. The cottage painted in a “dull yellowish green with dark green trimmings,” had a piazza across its front. This was an ideal location of a “retreat located a half-block back from the main road with an open space of two or three acres.” Woods, pine trees, and some clearing virtually surrounded the house. If one looked out the second story window, he could catch a partial glimpse of downtown Lakewood as the woods blocked the complete view of the town. From the cupola, “away from the extend of dark green pines, the glistening Atlantic can be seen with its white sailed ships.”

We know very little how Mrs. Cleveland decorated the interior of the “Cottage.” The Cleverlands did add some furniture to some of the already decorated rooms. Visitors would enter the house through a broad entrance hall with two rooms on each side, a dining room, a smoking room with “a library and parlor to the south.” The kitchen was located below the first floor. The bedrooms “located on the second floor facing the South were dedicated to the President and Mrs. Cleveland and Baby Ruth’s bedroom and sitting room.” The nurse used the back bedroom. The servants occupied the third floor.

The house decorations included “flowering plants and palms from the Lakewood Hotel and Mac Beans” which gave a “honey air” to the rooms. A modern furnace and an open fireplace in every room heated the house. Electricity from “the Lakewood dynamo” provided light and the village water supplied the house. Lakewood newspapers described the home as a “thoroughly comfortable house no more stylish or elegant than half of our modern farmhouses.”

Former President Cleveland, while living in Lakewood would commute to his law office in New York City via the “Lakewood Special” and return each evening on the same train. Newspapers would report that everyday Baby Ruth “may be seen in her silver and rattan carriage in the woods and on the plank walk” dressed in “creamy wool lace and fur.” Lakewood residents followed an unwritten request to respect Mrs. Cleveland’s desire for rest and quiet. Often times, Mrs. Cleveland wheeled the carriage herself.

The Lakewood Community always welcomed the Cleverlands’ arrival in Lakewood as an epic event. The residents exhibited so much enthusiasm whenever they saw the ex-President, that every sighting of him and his family became a happening. Oftentimes many townspeople and at least one time “virtually the entire town – parents and children conglomerated” around the railroad to get a glimpse of the “famous baby.” The station platform brimmed with these visitors. On this occasion, Cleveland did not arrive on this particularly scheduled train. He had called Nathan Strauss to inform him of the postponement of his arrival later in the day. As each train arrived during the course of the day, the sightseers continued to be upset and dispirited as Cleveland failed to arrive and “they all returned to their homes disappointed.”

When Cleveland and his family arrived on Monday, only a few spectators appeared when “the flyer whizzed into the station.” Mr. Nathan Strauss was there to receive the Cleverlands with his “herdies.” Mr. Strauss assisted the nurse who was carrying the baby into the carriage. “Mrs. Cleveland, wearing a long fur coat followed, and the ex-President greeted Mr. Strauss with a “brief hello and a hearty handshake.” Accompanying the family were the baby’s crib and carriage, numerous barrels, boxes and packages, and five trunks. Their two servants followed them in another vehicle to the cottage.

Cleveland’s arrival in Lakewood did have an impact on the residents of this small town. One story articulates the Cleverlands’ impact on the people who had the opportunity to be in Lakewood while the family lived here. An article entitled “Lakewood as Others See It” gives the proud feelings felt by his presence. During a train ride from New York to Lakewood, a newsboy went through the cars with the cry, “the Lakewood Times and Journal contains all the hotel and cottage arrivals.” (Remember, Lakewood was the home of the rich and famous during the Gilded Age.) A young woman purchased the newspaper and excitedly mentioned to her mother, “Why mother did you know that Cleveland had a cottage in Lakewood?... We must get a peep at Baby Ruth.”

Henry Graff commented starkly “Ruth was destined not to reach the age of thirteen, dying of diphtheria in 1904.” She lives in the national memory as Baby Ruth, the name the newspapers bestowed on her and in 1921 the Curtiss Company decided to assign to a candy bar, still sold today. The candy bar— Baby Ruth— did not receive its name from the famous baseball player Babe Ruth, but for Cleveland’s daughter Baby Ruth.

President Cleveland and his wife and daughter domiciled in Lakewood during his inter-term years. Cleveland ran again for the presidency in 1892 and won a second term. He served as President from 1893-1897. After he left office, he did return on occasion to Lakewood, living here, commuting to work in New York, purchasing a home in Princeton, NJ, and becoming ill and spending some time recuperating in Lakewood. Sadly, he spent the last few days of his life here in Lakewood. The Horse and Carriage will elaborate further on his life in Lakewood, his convalescence here and his return to his home in Princeton prior to his death in its next edition.



Did You Know? by Richard B. Wolpin



HIGH SCHOOL-IN-THE-PINES

How Lakewood High School got its 'Piners' nickname, the origins of the school colors, 'The Blue and White', school logo, the letter 'L' to the 'Pine Tree' and to our 'Lumberjack' mascot.

Early Lakewood History & First High School

In 1786, the Three Skidmore brothers; John, George and Henry established a lumber and saw mill, 'Three Partners Mill', by constructing a dam at the confluence of Watering Place Branch and the South Branch of the Metedeconk River (between what is now Lakes Carasaljo and Manetta). The first industry in the area, hence the 'Lumberjack'? Lakewood Township was incorporated on March 28, 1892, breaking away from Brick Township.

There is some historical discrepancy on when Lakewood High School was established. According to the 1893 Annual Report of the Board of Education for New Jersey, the High School was organized in 1893, however the 1947 School Pennant indicates its founding in 1894. Whichever date is correct, Lakewood High School students used dedicated rooms in the newly built (1892) Central School #1. It was located on the north side of 3rd Street, between Clifton and Lexington Aves, the current site of the Lakewood Township Municipal Building.

The first annual graduation commencement of Lakewood High School was on May 20, 1896, with one student, Frank Winters Todd.

What is a 'Piner' - The Etymology

'Piner' is a derivative form of the word 'Piney'. 'Piney' is historically is a derogatory term for those who live in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. Lakewood is situated at the most northern edge of the Pine Barrens, hence the 'Piners'. Although not school related, the earliest mention of the term 'Piners', appeared in these newspapers: New Jersey Courier, Toms River, March 22, 1871; from the Monmouth Democrat, Freehold, May 1874: "THE PINERS -- Such is the epithet applied to certain improvident residents of the regions called the Pines." Mrs. John Hays Hammond, a Lakewood resident referred to the locals as "Piners", Boston Home Journal, March 26, 1904.

The Piners are Christened

The earliest mention of the school nickname, "the team from the Pines" was pinned on the LHS Baseball Team (The Daily Record, Long Branch, April 17, 1907). The term the 'Piners' is referenced again to the Baseball Team. (New Jersey Courier, Oct. 3, 1907). Other monikers would be placed upon the school, such as the 'Pineneedle' baseball team in June 1911 and the 'Pine Wooders' for the Baseball team in August 1908, the Basketball team in March 1910 and the Football team in November 1911.

Not LHS sport related; The George J. Gould Lakewood Polo team was referred as the 'Piners', beating the Polo team from Philadelphia in June 1899.



Our School Colors

The Blue and White was not the first choice. At the High Schools second Graduation Commencement of three graduates in June 1898, 'Light Blue' and 'Gold' were the colors of choice. In the proceeding years, no other colors were referenced in the local newspapers until the June 1901 Graduation that the color scheme would be 'Palms and Flowers', 'Daisies set in a background of green.' It was at the June 1902 Graduation that our school colors, the 'Blue and White' were mentioned in the Lakewood Times and Journal newspaper, also at the June 1904 and May 1907 graduation. The Senior class of '07 would print the first monthly newsletter called the 'Blue and White', replacing the Junior class 'E-Gull' newsletter. As we know now, it's the 'Pine Needle Monthly'. 'Blue and White' flags first appeared at a football game in November 1907. Newspapers would the refer to the High School sports teams as the "Piners" and "The Blue and White" and become the standard going forward.

The Letter 'L' For Excellence, Origins of the School Logo and Mascot

The letter 'L', may have been the first school logo, first appearing on the uniforms of the 1911 Football team and on senior sweaters for those who attained high academic standards as early as the 1910's. As the school male population grew and new boys sports teams were added, the letter 'L' was presented to those achieving sport excellence. During the 1920's those who earned the letter 'L' in the sports field would be part of the 'L' Club.

In January 1940, High School student Beryl Dabney was the winner for designing the first School Flag. Description: "The name Lakewood is spelled out in white pine logs against a blue background. The left hand corner has a lone pine tree rearing its branches in a light blue sky. The entire flag is trimmed with a white fringe."

During the 1940's, a "Pine Tree" logo was used on the Baseball team uniforms, school sweaters and on the face of the high school band bass drum.

In March 1947, a new School pennant, "a triangular flag of royal blue background, featuring the words "Lakewood H. S." and the school seal with its central design of the traditional pine tree." (see picture above)

The introduction of the 'Lumberjack Logo' decal appeared in the late 1960's first on the LHS Football Helmets. In 1962, a new school 'Piner' banner was designed by Senior Anne Beszley of the Student Council. A 1965 Lumberjack Lakewood pennant was produced (see picture below). The introduction of a human 'Lumberjack Mascot' was in 1971 by John Meyer and followed by Tim Hankins in 1975. Do you remember him running onto the football field, planting his axe in the ground in front of Toms River team bench before the Thanksgiving Day Game? The current full suited Lakewood High School Limberjack Mascot, 'Woody-the-Piner' was introduced in the 2009.

"GO PINERS"

