

WILDWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

GEORGE F. BOYER MUSEUM



Our mission is to gather, preserve & present the history & memories of The Wildwoods.

609.523.0277

WildwoodHistoricalMuseum.com

3907 Pacific Avenue Wildwood, NJ 08260

Issue #37

Summer 2016

WILDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Five Mile Island students attended schools in Holly Beach, Wildwood and Anglesea (North Wildwood). The Boards of Education expressed a concern for high school classes, and in 1906 'post-graduate' work began as a 3 year course, extending to 4 years the following year.

Holly Beach began its own high school in 1907, and when Holly Beach and Wildwood consolidated in 1912 the two high schools merged. Classes were conducted at the public school building at Glenwood & New York Avenues.

For several years the Boards of education talked about building their own centralized high school but bickering ensued. Citizens questioned the expensive outlay for the small enrollment. There were only two graduates in 1907! Twice, the townspeople voted down the proposition. In 1909, only 24 approved of the measure versus 104 opposed. Another vote denied the request in 1912. How could they justify spending one hundred thousand dollars for a graduating class of about 10 students? The Commissioners, ever mindful of their jobs, delayed making a decision.

Overcrowding was problematic though with all grade levels in the single building. Classes were held in every available space, including closets and the basement. City Commissioners stalled while the arguing continued. Finally, the County Superintendent of Schools forced an ultimatum. An ordinance was passed in October of 1915 to raise \$100,000.00 in bonds for the construction.

On May 20, 1916, Grand Lodge Masons laid the cornerstone upon which the high school was built. (Notice the Masons, wearing aprons, standing on the platform in the photo above.)

Encapsulated were carefully chosen items representing life in Wildwood:

Laying the Cornerstone for Wildwood High School May 20, 1916



- the latest copy of 3 local newspapers
- the Masonic notice of the ceremony
- a Program for the dedication
- Masonic records
- List of Secret & Civil Societies of the City of Wildwood (secret groups?)
- List of Board of Education members
- School Records
- City booklet
- Pictures of all of the Schoolhouses on 5 Mile Beach
- Last statements of local banks
- Coins dated 1916

The artifacts, except the coins, are basically papers and are hopefully well preserved. Maybe there will be a big reveal at a Wildwood High School centennial event.

Shortly after the onset of construction, the contractor had financial problems. Employees complained about not being paid. Construction was halted until new contracts were awarded. The school was finally completed in time for classes in September 1917 with an enrollment of 239 children. Both high school and elementary grades were conducted at the new facility. Eleven students graduated in May 1917.

The state-of-the-art high school was a source of pride to the town and the county administrators. At the November 16, 1918 dedication ceremony, the new auditorium and gallery which were built to seat about 800 people, was standing

room only. Many community groups also utilized the facility for a variety of purposes- school functions, fund raising for the war effort and community events.

Population increased in the next decades and again expansion was considered. A solution contemplated was to exclude North Wildwood students. North Wildwood built its own senior high school in response, which they utilized 1924 to 1934. When an agreement was reached for the North Wildwood students to remain at Wildwood the building was transformed to a junior high and later converted to the North Wildwood Community Center at 900 Central Avenue.

Renovations, restoration and an expansion were completed in 1969. A new library, gymnasium and lockers were added on the first floor. On the second floor, offices were constructed for the board of education, superintendent, the athletic directors and coaches.

Updating is a constant, with rapidly changing technology and curriculum reform. Wildwood High School continues to strive for the best education to prepare its students for the next century.

(Information for this article was derived from the 5 Mile Journal newspapers at The Wildwood Historical Museum.)





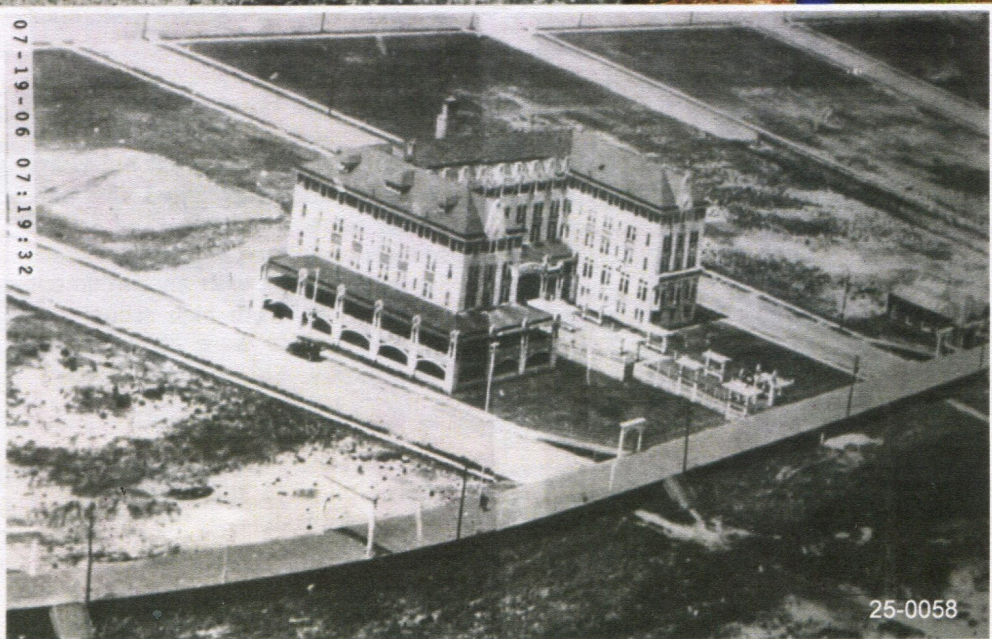
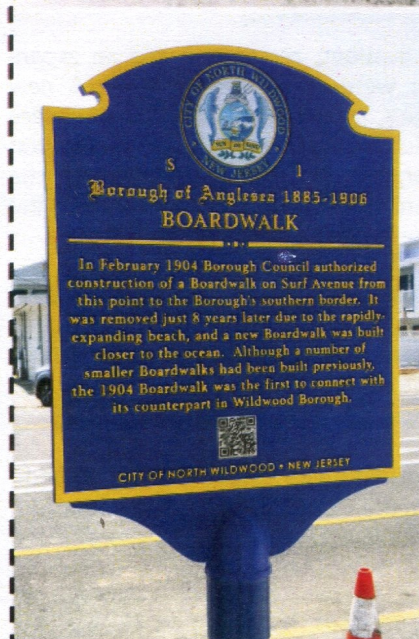
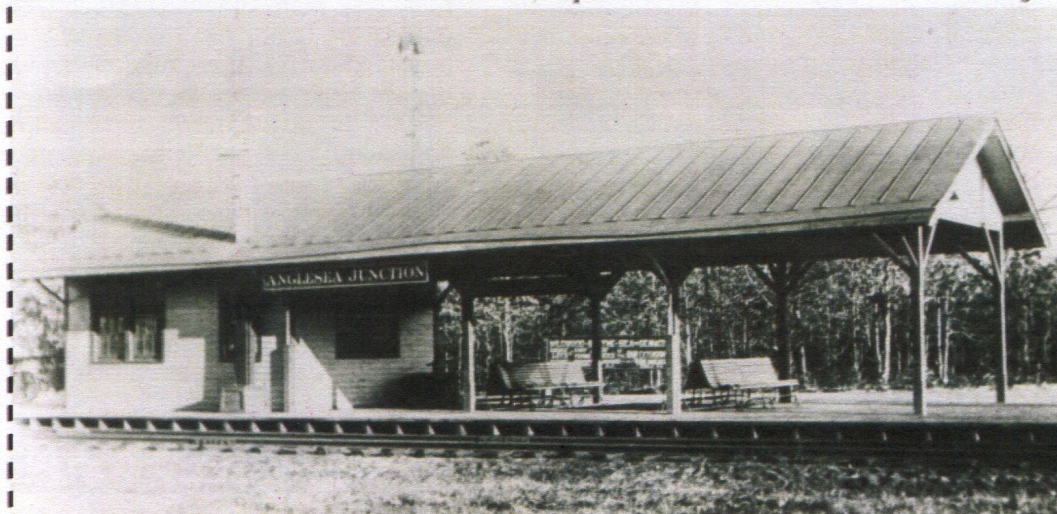
Wildwood High School Class of 1916

Top: L-R Harold Nickerson, Mildred D. Schellinger [Hutchinson], Alice J. Hendee, Edwin Laurence Chalmers, Tekla Gloeckler, Helen Steelman, Clayton Harris

Center: Cora Butterfield, Warren Yenney, Edith Mounts, Jessie G. Eldridge [McWilliams]

Front: Marguerite Coleman, Preston L. Ware, Thomas B. Russell, Joy Bright [Little Hancock Oistie] *[married names]

Bright blue historical markers are cropping up in North Wildwood. Each sign identifies a significant element of Anglesea history. Here are the first two of the planned twenty five sites. N-1 indicates the Original Terminus of the Anglesea Railroad. It's a bit off the beaten path, installed in a grassy field at the northwest end of Allen Drive. S-1, at the southwest corner of 16th & Surf Ave, represents the first boardwalk built to join with a Wildwood boardwalk..



25-0058

2016 Museum Hours

April 14-May 7 Th/Fr/Sat

May 9 - Oct 1 Mon-Sat

Oct 6- Oct 29 Th/Fr/Sat

9 AM to 2 PM

Oh Yes! IT'S
FREE

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At the Museum

Welcome to our summer manager, Pam Bross, who will cheerfully greet you and help you find what you are looking for.

We welcome a new volunteer, Kathi Johnson who is assisting with organizing, collecting and identifying our collections.

Our scanning volunteers: Judy Carr, Inge Laine, Vicki Bundschu & Joan Husband continue preserving our historic photos. These gals are very knowledgeable & share great stories about Wildwood's history. Over 30 books of photos have been uploaded to our guest computer. Stop in and take a look.

Al Alven manages our **Facebook** postings and also the **Weekly Highlights** on our website. "Like" us on Facebook & visit our website.

Anne Vinci wrote our column for *The Sun*, helps with research and many museum tasks.

Thanks for extending your helping hands to make the Wildwood Historical Museum amazing!

THANKS
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!



The Wildwood News

Letters to the Editors

Dear Sir:

It was with interest that I noted a photograph and description of: "Castle Reagh" the family home of the Brights, in June 12 article by Glenn W. Dye.

This home was built in Holly Beach, in 1880 by Mr. Edgerton, who had a seat on the New York Stock Exchange. He was born on the Estate of Lord Castle Reagh, in Northern Ireland. When he "made his position" in New York City, he built this summer home, copied after Castle Reagh in County Tyrone, Ireland.

The property was purchased in 1904 by William H. Bright, my father. It was improved and enlarged and became the family homestead for many years.

The round observatory, was used by the daughter of the first owner, who studied Astronomy at Bryn Mawr, in 1882. During

some of the later renovations this "round dome" was removed because it was not possible to make it "waterproof".

The trees surrounding the house, were native growth and contained Holly, Cedar, Pine, Magnolia and Persimmon trees. This wooded plot was maintained in its natural condition for more than 50 years after it was purchased by William E. Bright.

The house was painted dark red, which was an accepted color for frame houses at the seashore resorts. The roof was replaced with red slate shingles during the renovation period. The first floor contained three large fireplaces, each extending to the ceiling. These were always kept in general use even after a central heating system was installed in 1907.

Originally, there were three cisterns to supply the required water for the kitchen, two bath rooms and the grounds. This

was before any municipal water supply was available. The first water supply "tank" was erected at Wildwood and New Jersey aves., so it was several years before the water pipes were extended as far as Taylor ave., probably about 1900.

Several of the larger homes in this general location erected "windmills" with storage tanks for their water supply.

The Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, was built on these grounds facing Rio Grande ave.

Probably some of these detailed facts might be of interest.

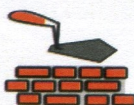
Yours truly,

-undated newspaper article from
George F. Boyer Museum files

Learn what became
of Castle Reagh in the
Winter 2016 newsletter!

Eloise Bright

Thank you to our
recent brick donors:



George Harry
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Thomas Connelly

Buy A Brick Today- Your Support Makes a Difference

The Wildwood Historical Society and the George F. Boyer Museum are supported by memberships and donations. We are a 501(c)(3) and receive no financial help from the City of Wildwood. Our **Buy A Brick** Program provides an opportunity to have a brick engraved in honor of a loved one or to commemorate fond Wildwoods memories. Visitors will view your personalized message at the Museum entrance.

4" X 8" Bricks may contain three lines with a maximum of 18 characters per line for \$100.00.

8" x 8" Bricks may contain six lines with a maximum of 18 characters per line for \$250.00.

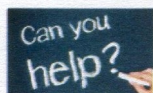


MEMBERSHIP

Please renew your membership. If you have done so already, **thank you**. Donations are welcome, too! Membership donations help cover the costs of newsletters, mailings & notices of special events.

www.WildwoodHistoricalMuseum.com
WildwoodHistoricalSociety@hotmail.com

The Wildwood Historical Society, Inc. & The George F. Boyer Museum are made possible through the contributions of many individuals. The gifts you make today help preserve the memories of the past. Please consider the Historical Society in your will.



We are always looking for new active Board Members

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Wildwood Historical Society, Inc.
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