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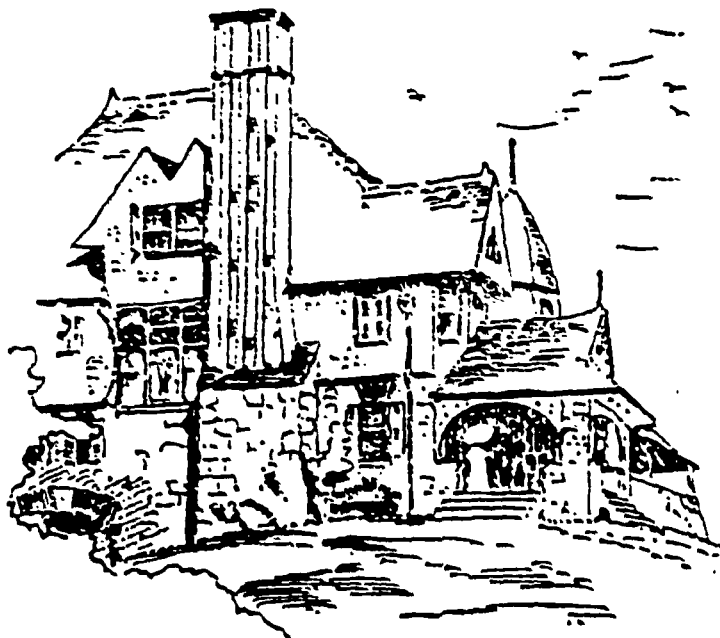


Vol. XXIII

November 1997

“The Dance in the Barn”

(From the October 1888 edition of The News Item)



•• REDSTONE ••

The barn-dance given on Thursday night, Sept. 20, by Mr. and Mrs. William I. Russell was a pleasant incident of the season in the charming little borough of Short Hills, N.J. Mr. Russell's horses are the fortunate possessors of a large home, the gable front having a width of sixty feet, and their owner's invitation to "come and dance in the barn" was a welcome one. Doubtless the horses shared the spirit of hospitality characteristic of their master, and joined in the invitation with all their hearts; certainly not one said "neigh". A band of five pieces furnished the musicians being stationed in the mow. Smilax surrounded the mow opening, twined every post and wreathed every window. Floral horse-shoes hung against each stall-post, and over the doorway was a ball of flowers three feet in diameter. The walls were hung with pictures of English hunting scenes, famous turf winners, etc.

Canvas covered the floors, and the stalls, fitted up with seats, rugs, lamps and flowers, formed cosy retreats for tired dancers. The guests were received in the house, the lower part of which contained solid banks of flowers on every mantel and in every nook, and an awning was stretched to the barn. Dancing began at 9:30, and supper was served in the house at midnight. The floral decorations of the table were as attractive as those of the ball-room, the centrepiece being a representation of a pony tandem, with dog cart and footman complete. The order of dances presented to each guest held a beautiful souvenir of the occasion in the shape of a horse's fore leg and hoof of solid silver, with a gold shoe, a gold pencil being concealed in the leg.

(Note: The grand home of Mr and Mrs Russell, known as Redstone, was at the corner of Knollwood and Wells Lane and was destroyed by a fire in 1934)

President's Message

As the new president of the Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society, I'd like to thank the entire membership for their enthusiastic support. Through your generosity, the society is finally able to assemble, organize, and preserve the artifacts of our town in one place.

I would like to recognize the tireless efforts of this and prior historical society boards, and especially former president, Valerie Bleier, who dedicated an enormous amount of time and energy to our community and to the acquisition of this museum. I would like to encourage all of you to visit our museum and learn more about our community through our collections.

It was a pleasure to meet so many of you last month at our fall members' open house, which was held at the beautiful home and estate of Andrew and Barbara Senchak. On behalf of all of us, we would like to thank

them for their generosity and hospitality at this especially enjoyable event.

On a personal note, let me say what a privilege it is to be president of this organization. Having grown up in Short Hills, I recognized early on the beauty and uniqueness of our town. As a child I appreciated the beautiful homes and landscape and remember walks to North Pond with my brother, to go fishing. I knew even then that this was a very special place in which to live.

As a young adult, I was introduced to the special activities that Millburn has to offer - the downtown, the Paper Mill (where I worked for many years), the reservation, the quaint homes, many of which are in the Wyoming historic district where I now live, and the interesting history of the town and community. I can't think of a better place in which to live!

Michelle Miller

Museum Update

Thanks to the vigilance of board advisor Owen Lampe, and the great generosity of Sebastian Cupo, owner of La Strada restaurant in Millburn, the historical society was able to salvage and install fantastic old, oak, built-in cabinets from the former Tiger Hardware store in Millburn. Mr. Cupo bought the building and, when approached by Owen, generously offered the society whatever was left in it. The "new" units have been brought over and some have already been carefully cleaned and retrofitted so as to maintain as much of their original appearance as possible. One fascinating feature of the units with doors on top is that the doors not only open in the conventional manner, they can also be pulled straight towards you and swiveled both left and right, to better display things mounted on the felt behind the glass. Please stop in to see how well these units have been fitted to the new site. We have been pleased to hear the nostalgic "I remember buying things from these shelves/drawers at Tiger's!"

Another area resident has also generously donated a "new" piece of furniture to the museum - a curved-glass, curio cabinet that will be used to display objects better kept in a safe, dirt-free environment.

In addition to these kind donations, we are equally grateful to the visitors who have come in almost daily to generously donate items for the education and enjoyment of all visitors to the museum (see the donation list elsewhere in this newsletter).

The historical society's new museum has made clearer the path that lies ahead for future boards. We can now begin to carefully plan exhibits, programs, and activities around our collections and furniture. To this point it has been difficult to plan exhibits without furniture with which to display the collection, but as memorabilia and furniture are being acquired, we can begin to arrange what will eventually be, we hope, monthly exhibitions or programs. If you have ideas, needs, or suggestions, please call us at the museum at 564-9519 and share them with us.

The museum is presently open on Tuesdays from 10:00-1:00 and Thursdays from 2:30-5:30. After January, we anticipate being open in the afternoon of the first Sunday of the month. Visitors are always welcome to browse or to jump in and share the pleasure in unearthing (and frequently stopping to read) marvelous items that still need to be filed, sorted, labeled, etc.

Although we have generally been able to adhere to this schedule, modest staffing has meant an occasional divergence from these hours, so if you are planning a special trip here, please consider calling the museum first. We look forward to seeing you!

(Note: The museum will not be open on Tuesday and Thursday of Thanksgiving week, but will be open on Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, from 10:00-1:00)

Have you noticed the new message board mounted on the track-side, outside wall of the museum?

It is meant to replicate the original train-schedule board. Funds for its purchase were generously provided by the Garden Study Club of Short Hills

Recent Acquisitions

The society is very grateful to receive artifacts from generous residents and/or members. We are happy to be able to preserve, share and use for reference, these relics of Millburn-Short Hills history.

Our sincerest thanks to the following people for enriching the lives of all residents by their donations:

- From Mr and Mrs Thomas Noone, an 1890 map of Short Hills
- From Beatrice P. Smith, a Millburn centennial book and "Mayfair" calendar
- From Gail Engelschjon, an ancient Oliver typewriter and clipboard, numerous bits of ephemera
- From (Retired) US Navy Rear Admiral Clarence Hill, a beautifully framed photo of and testimonial to his father, Clarence Hill, a former Millburn mayor
- From Kathy Schermerhorn, from her mother Mrs C.F. Schermerhorn, courtesy of Joan Daeschler, a marvelous photo album of early Short Hills homes and buildings; circa 1909 maps of Brantwood and Glenwood
- From Estelle Urquhart, White Oak Ridge Civic Assoc memorabilia, WWII air raid manual, early cookbook belonging to Julia Denman, thermometer from a local bank, & more ephemera.
- From Mr and Mrs Harold Shapiro, storage shelving for the society's collection
- From Mr Howard Wiseman, a handblown apothecary bottle from Campbell's pharmacy
- From Tom Schaefer (Short Hills Cigo), a "Charles Wittkop Coal Co" ash

receptacle, "Wittkop's Motor Service" stock certificates and stock transfer ledger

- From Sebastian Cupo, built-ins, floor plans, crates, etc from Tiger Hardware
- From the Garden Study Club of Short Hills, a new, outdoor, glass-covered message board
- From Mrs. Emily Baer, a photo of an early Millburn marching band
- From Mrs Jurofsky, curved-glass curio cabinet
- From the NJ Law Association, books on and by former resident and Supreme Court Justice Arthur T Vanderbilt
- From Exxon International, three computer work stations
- From Mr and Mrs Eric Stockholm, the millstone table and stone seats on the green opposite the museum
- From Dr and Mrs David Plotkin, a section of bench rescued from the former Millburn train station
- From Mrs Ridgway, a 1975-76 Millburn calendar
- From Mr and Mrs Harry C. Nissen, of Pulaski, VA., a photo album of never-before-seen photos of early Millburn, postcards, and numerous other items of early Millburn memorabilia, from the estate of Mr Nissen's cousin, Louise Lord
- From Mr and Mrs Stuart Hotchkiss, postcards and booklets from Mr Hotchkiss' father's estate
- From Daniel J Canizzo, a license for Christins Wittkop's inn and tavern - framed for the historical society by Mr and Mrs Vaclav Benes

If your gift was not acknowledged here, PLEASE contact us at 564-9519.

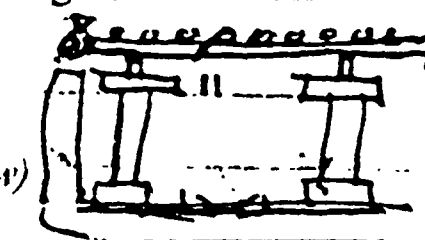
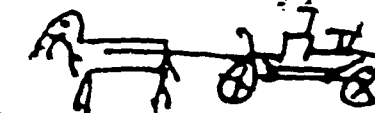
A 1921-1926 Short Hills Diary

(The following excerpts are taken from the 1921-26 diary of Edward Layng, son of Edward Layng, builder and architect of some of Stewart Hartshorn's historic homes. The Layngs lived at 28 Forest Drive and the author here chronicled his efforts to assist in the remodeling of the family home, which was built in 1881. At that time, Layng lived in the house with his father - the "Boss" - his mother, and his sisters Gertrude, Josephine, and Marjorie - also often referred to as G, J, and M. Josephine was apparently a hat maker and had a small building on the property for her use in that occupation. The "shade rollers" often referred to in the diary are the wooden dowels - and flat wooden slat at the bottom - used in roller window shades. The roller window shade mechanism was invented by Stewart Hartshorn and the wooden parts of the shade were used by the Layngs to panel the lower half of the living room, dining room, and hallway walls.)

Aug. 25, 1921 Up (at) 9 A.M. Clear & cool. Helped C. W. Holliday survey J.P. Day's drive - correcting levels. Took no lunch and had to find eats there; i.e., several more-or-less green peaches & a pear & much water. Went over terraces - rather beautiful - Chinese dragons in porcelain - elephants - gold fish, etc. A Mr. Doyle in charge of the plan. Learned that J.P. Day paid \$40,000 income tax - had most prosperous year last & is economizing.

Rode up in taxi = \$1 & back in carriage as

Met M.W. Renwick who planned place and grounds - a country type of gentleman of the old type. Very large sunflowers in garden - over 14 ft. high. Pergola effect very beautiful



(Editor's note: J.P. Day's remarkable estate was where Short Hills Park is now)

Sept. 6, 1921 Tuesday - 11:33 to Newark, thence to Passaic where I help C.W. Holliday stake out for a new building. Item of interest: a lunch for 10¢ in a delicatessen store, consisting of 1 pint of milk @ 7¢ and 3¢ worth of biscuits like Uneedas, only round.

Feb. 21, 1926 The Ford had a flat tire. We found it out just after embarking and I managed to fix it by putting on the spare.

Feb. 22, 1926 Make new furnace fire. Clean my room by putting snow on the floor and sweeping it up. Burn scrap paper in the yard. Boss completes laying floor felt in living room and blocks off draft in fire place (to keep room warmer) with floor felt. Boss & Jo at piano in living room.

Feb. 23, 1926 Skipper does not show up for work until 9:30. It seems that his elder brother was injured the day before by a fall from a ladder of about 14 feet - could not talk for 2 hours & is unable to raise himself up in bed. Had to take him to All Souls Hospital in Morristown.

Kept wood fire in dining room all day. New bread boxes came from Macy's - N.Y. Sift some wood ashes to be used for fertilizer.

See movies in Summit. Ma, Jo, G & I. Tire comes rolling off by Kitchen's old house & we walk home from there. Ford arrives in garage safely. See Jackie Coogan in a continuation of The Rag Man. He's growing older & seems to imitate D. Fairbanks & some of C. Chaplin. Also saw a H. Lloyd comedy on taking care of baby.

John Wesley Hyatt and the Invention of Celluloid

by Julie Robinson

Mar. 1, 1926 Jean Vander Laucken gets hair bobbed - It really looks fine.

Mar 2, 1926 Spend day sandpapering shade rollers - do 42, ready for nailing. I take Jo to station in Ford & Sandy (the dog) breaks away, follows us. Big stock market falling of prices - NY NH&H is down to 37.

Mar 3, 1926 Very cold - wind - snow flurries. I sand about 35 rollers.

Mar 4, 1926 Thursday: Took road test & written exam of 15 questions at town hall in Summit, N.J. Passed with mark of 78, so received a 1926 driver's license for \$3. Had some slight trouble at first - starting too quickly & the wheels "shimmeying"

Mar 6, 1926 Talk with Mr. Lonergan about houses. He owns 5 lots next street beyond Blaine St & thinks he can put em up for \$4500 to sell to make \$1000 on.

Mar 20, 1926 I change tire on Ford - Marge gets puncture

Mar 21, 1926 And a real spring day. Took Boss for what he called his first ride in Ford with me piloting. Went in Livingston direction & returned through Chatham. Very pleasant. Neighbors - Lauderdales - out measuring their premises with string. Large trees are going to Patterson's - old Davidge house.

April 4, 1926 Sunday: Up fairly early. Took Boss for short ride over same old route - Chatham & Northfield & back & around Short Hills to look at houses. First we get gas at Jo Miller's & visited his new garage. Says that he is making a living at it now & hopes for more in the future.

Mr. Hartshorn goes by, stops & I talk with him some time. Likes house - says he is planning one to keep busy & thinks limonite powder rubbed in cement block would obscure them.

April 7, 1926 Jo loses front wheel on Short Hills Rd. Louis Caparn takes car & returns it next day. Go to movies in Millburn to see Adolph Menjou in The Dutchess & the Waiter. Good. Walk each way

April 11, 1926 Sunday: Short ride around park to look at houses. Play victrola & oil & repair clarinet.

April 16, 1926 Miss Cora Hartshorn comes & evidently likes what we've done to the house - thinks we have improved it.

April 19, 1926 Collins (Miss Hartshorn's driver) calls for her hat. Leaves money for it. Thinks house great improvement & shakes hands. Much bull. Sees all first floor. Talk about age. Mr. H. Must be 87 & he 3 years younger than Ma.

April 21, 1926 Large brush fire in White Oak Ridge region. Up near ash dump.

(The following article is excerpted from an article that appeared in the June 19, 1995 edition of AntiqueWeek. According to author Julie Robinson, John Wesley Hyatt was a "mechanical genius" who bought a house in Short Hills circa 1873 on Windemere and died there in 1920. She has spent many years researching Hyatt and his inventions and would welcome any information readers may have about this "feather in the cap of Short Hills". If you have any information, photos, stories, Ms. Robinson can be contacted through the society.)

Celluloid. The mere mention of the word conjures up visions of ivory-colored dresser sets and small hollow animals. Pieces of this early plastic can be found in nearly every antique mall in the nation, yet little is known about its development and the impact it had on society as the first commercially successful plastic substitute for expensive luxury materials.

Today Celluloid is widely collected in a variety of forms, rather than as a material itself. Given the fact that in 1927 the Celluloid Company listed 3,000 uses for its material, it is no wonder that so many collecting interests are related in one way or another to this unique plastic material.

The story of Celluloid begins during the 1860s, when the English billiards master Michael Phelan became concerned about the rising cost of elephant ivory used in billiard balls. Ivory was becoming an increasingly expensive commodity as approximately 12,000 elephants were slaughtered each year to make billiard balls and herds were decreasing at a rapid rate. In addition, it was a dangerous occupation - for every two elephants killed, it was reported that one man lost his life in the hunt.

In his book Game of Billiards, Phelan wrote (that) ivory from Ceylon was by far the best for making billiard balls and is quoted as saying "they are dreadfully dear, however, and if any inventive genius could discover a substitute for ivory, he would make a handsome fortune for himself."

It was in 1863 that Phelan and Collander,

America's largest billiard supply company, added incentive to the search by offering the handsome reward of \$10,000 to the first inventor who could successfully produce an imitation ivory substitute for use in billiard balls. John Wesley Hyatt, an ambitious 26-year-old printer from Albany, NY, saw the advertisement and accepted the challenge.

Working in the print shop by day and experimenting evenings and weekends, he worked diligently in hopes of inventing the first successful ivory substitute and winning the cash prize. At first Hyatt tried combining common substances like sawdust, paper flock, shellac, and varnish, but none of the compositions he developed was suitable for producing billiard balls. In 1866, however, Hyatt successfully developed a fiber-based material that, though it lacked the characteristics and density of ivory, had moldable potential. Shortly thereafter he began to manufacture composition core pool balls of paper pulp and gum shellac at a small factory he called The Hyatt Billiard Ball Co.

Hyatt also conceived of a second idea to exploit his moldable composition substance and, along with his younger brother Charles, started a small checker manufacturing business using the new material.

By 1871 The Embossing Co. was firmly established as a reputable manufacturer of boxed dominoes and checkers. By 1884 Embossing Co. Products were gaining rapidly in popularity thanks to the charisma of Edward C. Schoonmaker, a 27-year-old salesman for the firm.

The colorful and educational games

manufactured by the Embossing Co during the early part of the 20th century are highly collectible. Dominoes, checkers, block puzzles, anagrams, and Color Cubes were just a few of the items mass produced between 1920 and the early 1940s, which can be easily found by collectors today. Embossing Co. products were carried by Sears, Roebuck & Co, making games and toys plentiful throughout the United States.

Throughout the formative years of 1868-1869, John Wesley Hyatt remained with his printing job and continually experimented with various substances in hopes of improving the Hyatt Billiard Ball, as he had not yet won the \$10,000 prize money. Isaiah, John's older brother, moved east from Rockford, Ill., to rejoin the family and help with the operation of the newly established business.

It was an unexpected discovery in the print shop one morning that gave Hyatt the keys to his eventual success in developing an ivory substitute. In those days printers used a bottled liquid solution of pyroxylin (nitrocellulose and alcohol) called "Colloidion", that when brushed on the hands, dried into an elastic waterproof film. The dried Colloidion formed a protective barrier against paper cuts and inks and was essential in protecting the hands of printers.

The story goes that while preparing for work one morning, Hyatt reached for the Colloidion bottle, only to find that it had tipped over and spilled. Expecting to clean up a mess, what he discovered instead was a dried hunk of solid pyroxylin, about the size and thickness of his thumbnail. The substance was hard yet pliable and resembled the density of the ivory he had so earnestly been trying to duplicate. It is said that Hyatt exclaimed "Eureka" upon realizing the potential of this accidental discovery and from that moment on began to experiment with solid forms of pyroxylin/Colloidion.

Shortly after this incident, Hyatt incorporated the use of liquid pyroxylin as a coating for the composition billiard balls being manufactured in his Albany factory. With the smell of success

in the air, John relocated the Hyatt Billiard Ball Co in the city's south end and changed the name to The Albany Billiard Ball Co.

Though the new technique seemed quite successful, there were serious hazards associated with the use of the nitrocellulose-based coating. It was highly flammable and closely related to the explosive form of nitrocellulose called "gun cotton". On several occasions, a lit cigar had come in contact with the balls, causing them to burst into flames, which resulted in serious fires.

Another common occurrence, as related to Hyatt in a letter from a Colorado saloon operator, was that the gentle "click" of pool balls during play was often replaced with a loud "BANG", similar to that of a percussion gun cap. The proprietor relayed that it didn't bother him so much, but instantly every man in the place would draw his gun.

In addition, the balls formed an annoying dull film that attracted dirt like a magnet, making them difficult to keep clean and shiny. In spite of these problems, Hyatt Pool Balls were much less expensive than ivory balls and readily available. The game of billiards, once played exclusively in the parlors of the social elite, became a popular recreational game played by the general population. By the turn of the 20th century, even members of the clergy endorsed the game in a home setting.

By 1869, John, assisted by his brother Isaiah, had perfected a method of making a plastic material from solid Colloidion by adding camphor as a solvent and applying heat and pressure. It was Isaiah who named the material Celluloid. Two different versions of the explanation exist. One is that the word is a contraction for "colloid of cellulose" and the other states that it is a combination of the words "cellulose and oid" (a Greek word meaning "like"). Regardless of its origin, the material was christened "Celluloid" by 1870. The Hyatt brothers had succeeded in inventing the world's first thermoplastic.

Their first commercial venture was to establish The Albany Dental Plate Co. And use Celluloid as a replacement for expensive Vulcanite (hardened rubber) in dentures. In 1872 Isaiah convinced several wealthy capitalists to invest in the new plastic and with their financial aid and business expertise, the Hyatts left Albany for Newark, N.J., setting up a shop in a five-story brick structure on Mechanics Street.

It was here that the Celluloid Manufacturing Co produced raw plastic material for fabrication in dentures, billiard balls, and eventually utensil handles, truss pads and harness trimmings.

A method of casting billiard balls was devised using solid Celluloid and the "New Improved Hyatt Billiard Ball" hit the market. The old problems of explosive flammability, banging and a dull finish were solved, but still no prize money was awarded to Hyatt.

The uses for Celluloid expanded so that by the 1890s a wide variety of fashion accessories resembling expensive luxury materials were available to the working classes. Imitation amber, coral, ivory, jet and tortoise were molded into items that appealed to even those with discriminating tastes.

Even the apparel trade was affected by the introduction of Celluloid waterproof collars and cuffs. These items became the company's most successful product as they put an end to the drudgery associated with scrubbing and starching the traditional detachable linen items. One style was actually called the "Eureka" brand - a title resurrected from Hyatt's discovery of solid Colloidion in the print shop. Furthermore, corsets became rustproof and more comfortable as manufacturers replaced rigid metal and brittle bone stays with those made of flexible, moisture-resistant Celluloid.

By the turn of the century, nearly every modern home in America used Celluloid in one form or another. Household goods, novelty items, toys, eyeglasses, advertising premiums, combs, brushes and even photographic film,

which gave birth to the motion picture industry, were all part of daily living.

In spite of its dangerously flammable nature, the success of Celluloid as a quality imitation material spawned a tremendous growth within the infant plastics industry. By the turn of the century, several rival companies had established successful businesses, producing semisynthetic pyroxylin thermoplastics identical in composition to Celluloid, but bearing trade names like Pyralin, Fiberloid, and Viscoloid. Today the word Celluloid is used as a generic term to describe all forms of this early plastic, however most manufacturers branded their goods with different trade names. Close inspection of dresser set items and toys will reveal an embossed trademark.

Throughout the early years of the 20th century, Hyatt continued to develop machinery and methods to advance industry. In 1914 the Society of Chemical Industry recognized 77-year-old Hyatt for his inventions of Celluloid and a sugar cane mill by awarding him the prestigious gold Perkin medal for outstanding work in the field of applied chemistry. This was a distinguished honor since Hyatt was, in reality, an inventor and not a scientist with an understanding of chemical theory.

On May 10, 1920, John Wesley Hyatt died of heart failure at his home in Short Hills, N.J. He was 82 years old and left behind two sons, Ralph and Charles, and his wife, Anna Taft Hyatt. In all, Hyatt had over 238 patents issued in his name, 77 of those directly related to the manufacture of Celluloid.

It remains a mystery as to whether he ever received the \$10,000 reward money that challenged him so long ago. There is no documented proof that Phelan and Colander ever compensated him for his contribution to the billiards industry. Brunswick states in the book One Hundred Years of Recreation that Hyatt received the prize money. All other sources are clear that Hyatt never received the promised reward.

The Telephone (Old and New) In and About Millburn

(This excerpt, from an article published in 1938 by the NJ Bell Telephone Company, was found among the papers being processed in our collection)

The story of the telephone in Millburn, Short Hills and Springfield goes back to the early 1880s when a line was run out from the Newark switchboard to a public telephone in George Campbell's drug store on Millburn Avenue (where the Millburn Theater now stands). For a considerable period it was the only telephone for miles around.

If somewhat later - in 1884 - you had visited this spot when the first small switchboard was installed to serve (according to the Feb. 20, 1884 directory) nine subscribers, you would have reached it first by walking back through the store, then through the little office occupied by Dr. Campbell and Dr. Stamford, finally arriving at a room about ten feet square, which was the entire central office

In it was a public telephone in a booth, with the small one-position magneto switchboard...a striking contrast to the modern office with its four-thousand-line switchboard which has just been opened in Millburn.

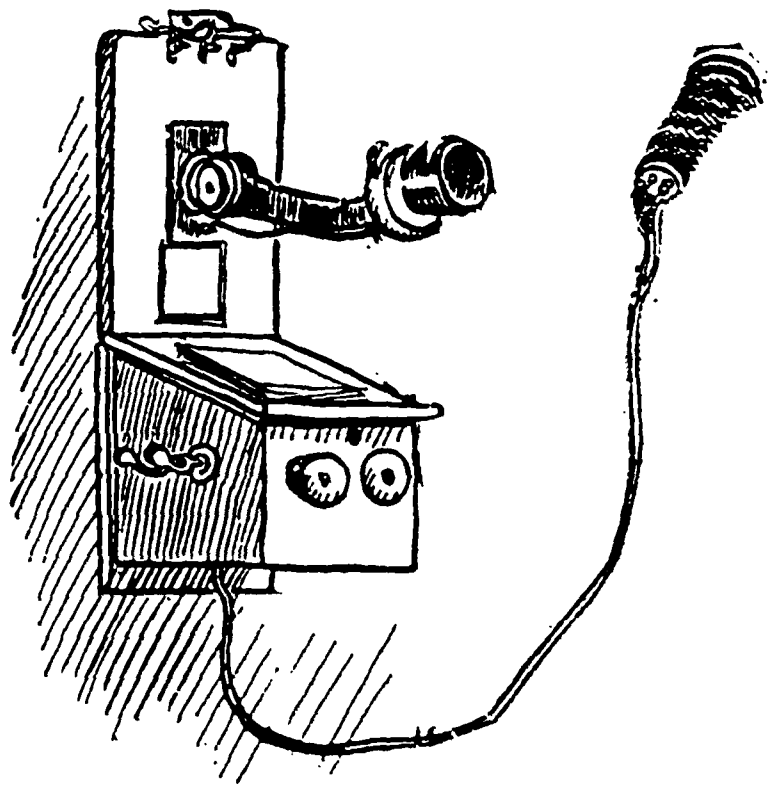
The directory of Dec. 1, 1898 included the following listings: George H. Burr, George S. Campbell, B. Einetti, C. Wittkop in Millburn; John J. Carey, Mfrs. Florence Harrot, Stewart Hartshorne, Short Hills Casino and Henry P. Toler in Short Hills; and Baltusrol Golf Club, Celluloid Zapon Company, Herdelberg Hotel, Springfield Hotel and Beverly Ward in Springfield.

To use the telephone, the subscriber had to turn a crank on his telephone, which would cause a small shutter on the switchboard to swing down. The operator would note which "drop" had fallen and "plug in" to find out what number was wanted. She would then make the connection, place a little lever operated

like a miniature automobile gear shift in the right position to ring the desired party, A, B, F, or I, and turn a small crank to ring the subscriber's bell. Subscribers had to "ring off", too, to let the operator know when the conversation was finished. Old timers will never forget the telephone number of Dr. Sutton, an eye specialist, who was appropriately, if accidentally, given the number I.

The first operator at this switchboard was Miss Mary Walsh, with the drug clerk, Jimmie Hand, serving as relief operator. Other early operators were Miss Rose Hand, Miss May De Voe (now Mrs Joseph Luby of Newark), Miss Margaret Geddis (now Mrs Charles J Wittkop of Short Hills), and Miss Rachel Snow, who became Millburn's first Chief Operator.

At night the switchboard was operated by a boy. Probably the first night operator was Joseph Coan of Short Hills (now manager of the Big Chief Market in Union). To pass away the night hours, the boys would frequently stage impromptu concerts by wire for other boys (and girls) in nearby exchanges, by bringing phonographs into the office and putting on a program of records.



Good Taste in Millburn and Short Hills

From the March 1889 edition of The News Item we have learned that:

"Home-Made Ice Cream and Candies" is the title of a very neat little collection of recipes, useful to every housekeeper, recently published by Miss Gertrude B. Henry of Short-Hills.

With an eye to a related open house at the museum one Sunday afternoon, the historical society is looking for that book and any other cookbooks from Millburn/Short Hills and/or by Millburn/Short Hills authors. Presently we have the following in our collection: *Christ Church Cook's Book: Favorite Recipes to Share - Drexel Club of Short Hills, NJ; St. Rose of Lima Cook Book: A Taste of Love - White Oak Ridge Chapel; What's Cooking at Short Hills School; and Culinary Treasures (Wyoming Presbyterian Church)* and the recently-donated 1924 "Calendar of Dinners" cook book that belonged to Julia Denman.

The society would like to add local cook books to our collections for their historical value, both for lifestyle information and information on residents and their affiliated institutions. When our collection has grown to a such a degree as to enable us, we would like to share them with our members - and some dishes made from those recipes - at an open house. Do you have an extra copy of a local cook book that you can share (from your church, club, children's school, or that you authored) or can you tell us about one that you have, that we can add it to our "wish list"? Please call the society at 564-9519 if you can help with our search for "a good thing"!

From The News Item - a Reminder of Earlier Times

(July 1889) Social life in Short Hills is at a stand-still except on moonlight evenings. Darkness prevails in some parts of the village. Persons attempting to return from a dinner company to their house near by lost the way, and with difficulty got back to their host and borrowed a lantern. When no lights are to be seen outside a house, it is now understood to mean that no callers are expected there.

(October 1888) The Old Trees of Short Hills

There are many old trees standing in Short Hills that are picturesque objects in the landscape. Conspicuous among them is the great oak which stands on Mountain Drive, near Inglewood Cottage. Further up the drive, behind the Anchorage, is an old chestnut which annually drops nuts, although its heart was burned years ago when it stood in the forest, and boys kindled fires in its hollows to smoke out the opossums.

The oldest chestnut tree is probably that venerable one which stands at the west side of Greystone Cottage. An old gentleman, now living in Springfield, tells us that he was born in a house that stood near this tree, and when he was a boy, eighty years ago, the tree was as large and venerable in its appearance as it is now. Its hollow trunk was then, as now, occupied by colonies of squirrels. Near its roots, in the primæval forest, was a small pocket of water filled with leaves. When the Short Hills workmen cleared and drained the land, they found in the bottom of this pool the bones of a bear - a reminder of times before the earliest settlement in New Jersey.

(The News Item cont'd)...

(February 1889) The large and venerable chestnut tree on our principal roadside, which was recently cut down, has been a prominent feature in the picturesque scenery of our village. Not many years ago it was standing in the forest - for Short Hills had not then been thought of - and its hollow trunk was scarred by fires built to smoke out opossums that made their home in it year after year. Did the vandals who cut it down realize that it is easier to destroy the venerable tree than to cause another to grow to fill its place? It had withstood the fury of many a blizzard and was, in the opinion of those who knew it well, good for another century of life. **Its destruction reminds us that Short-Hills needs a forester to take care of its old trees.**

(Jan 1889) On account of the obscure condition, at night, of Park Place, in which there is not a street lamp, it is sometimes spoken of as Dark Place; and it is said that it is a very difficult place even for a resident to get into after one o'clock of a moonless morning.

(January 1889) Caleb Van Wert is the Superintendent of the town's poor. Citizens who are annoyed by town beggars should write to him stating the facts, and request him to take such paupers to the poor-house. *(Editor's note: Ah-h-h. if only I could turn over those annoying phone calls to Mr. Van Wert!)*

(February 1981) On Monday evening of last week, the community lost by death one of its oldest citizens, Mr. Lewis C Smith, who was born at what is now the village of Short Hills on March 30th 1814, and lived nearly all his life in this neighborhood. His grandfather, Wm. Smith, owned and occupied for most of his life, a large farm which included all of what is now Short Hills village. His house

stood near to where Mr. Hartshorn's mansion now stands, and it is from the springs that determined same pioneer to make this "clearing" that Short Hills now draws its water supply. William Smith was twice married and left sixteen children, several of whom settled down near the old homestead. Among the grand-children was the subject of this sketch, Theo. Smith, recently deceased, and Betsey, the mother of the late Chas, Collee, Chas, II Smith, the popular proprietor of the Millburn Hotel, Robert and William of Newark, Mrs. Fred'k S. Pratt, and Mrs. Mary Barnrad, the children of Elijah W Smith; Wm H Smith, Mrs James Roll and Mrs Dalrymple (of Walnut Grove), Moses P Smith of South Orange and Aaron G Smith of Hilton.



(December 1888) Thanksgiving Day was neither sunny nor snowy. It was a home-staying day, and in the homes of Short Hills it was celebrated with the usual social festivities. There was a savory sense of turkeys browning in the ovens, of chickens crusted with hot pastry, of mince pies steaming with spices and cider, of custard puddings, roasting apples and crispy ginger-breads. The fathers and mothers and children did, we have no doubt of it, aver that there is nothing more enjoyable than a home-made Thanksgiving.

(The News Item cont'd)...

(December 1888) Mr. Charles E Young, professor of astronomy in Princeton College, has been engaged to deliver a lecture before the Short Hills Club, on Tuesday evening, December the 18th. The subject of the lecture is to be The Sun. It will be illustrated by a stereopticon, and there is no doubt that it will be unusually interesting.

(December 1888) The catalogue of Americana issued by Messrs. Dodd, Mead, & Co. in November, classifies the new book "Colonial Times on Buzzard's Bay," as a book of much historical value, and readable from beginning to end. It announces a large paper edition of only 25 copies, each one of which is numbered and signed, at \$10 per copy. **We believe this to be the first book ever published whose preface is dated at Short Hills.**

(July 1889) "Colonial Times on Buzzard's Bay," which was written in Short-Hills, and was published last December, has proved to be a successful book. The publishers, Mess. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. of Boston, report that the entire edition has been sold. A second edition considerably enlarged, and with new illustrations, is now in the printer's hands.

Mr. Kobbe's book, the "New Jersey Coast and Pines," has also proved to be a success, and will have a second edition.

(March 1889) The renovation of the Baptist Church edifice in Milburn, at an expense of about three thousand dollars, is finished. The money was voluntarily contributed by residents in all parts of our township, and the result must be very gratifying to the society.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES 1997-1998

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The historical society has an opening on the board. If you would like to be a member of the board at this exciting time, please contact us at 564-9519.

Looking Ahead

Through generous donations and careful shopping, the historical society has been able to slowly acquire storage/display pieces for the museum and items for our collections. Many exciting projects still remain, including:

- refurbishing the remaining units from Tiger Hardware - to be used for storage/display in the museum and for a desk/work surface in the office area
- installation of a tiny kitchen facility - for convenience for groups using the site for meetings and for use at members' meetings
- publication of a book of old photos of Millburn and Short Hills
- monthly exhibits; lecture series; school tours; member programs; etc.

If you have not yet renewed your dues (our dues year is July 1-June 30), or if you can help sponsor some of the upcoming projects, you can do so by tearing off the form below and sending it to: **The Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society, PO Box 243, Short Hills, NJ 07078**. If you aren't sure if your dues need to be renewed, check your mailing label on this Thistle and note the (approximate) date when we last received your last dues renewal.

Searching for Great Grandmother...

The historical society regularly gets letters requesting help with genealogical searches for information on early residents of Millburn and Short Hills. While we search, perhaps some of our readers have information about the "missing people". If you do, please call us at 564-9519 and we'll pass on the information...

Heaney - Joseph M. Heaney is seeking information on his father, Joseph Patrick Heaney, and his grandfather, Joseph Heaney. His father was born in Short Hills on Nov. 10, 1896 and his father's parents were Joseph Heaney and Elizabeth Quinn. His father had two sisters: Mary and Sadie. His grandfather, Joseph, "was the manager of the Short Hills Country Club" when Joseph Patrick Heaney was born. Family letters suggest that the grandfather died in 1898.

Kenworthy/Baker - Candace Bailey is seeking information about her grandmother, Teresa Veronica Kenworthy, born in England circa 1890-1892. She came to America as an orphan at about age 6 and lived with an aunt (name unknown) in Millburn until she was married in 1909 (in Newark) to Henry Baker

Ranieri - Larry Ranieri, from Portland, OR, (and no relation to the Barry Ranieris) called looking for information about relatives who may have been an earlier Ranieri family from Short Hills. Names may be Jack and Nina; Jack may have been a doctor.

Name _____

Address _____
(City/State/Zip)

Phone _____

| <u>Annual Dues</u> | <u>Museum Restoration</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| _____ \$10 (Individual) | _____ \$50 (Donor) |
| _____ \$15 (Family) | _____ \$100 (Sponsor) |
| _____ \$25 Patron) | _____ \$250 (Patron) |
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