

Madison Historical Society

Madison, N.J



*April 2021
Newsletter 4th edition
2020-2021*

**The Madison Historical Society
Presents**

Meridoc “Doc” Burkhardt “The Battle of Connecticut Farms and the Death of Hannah Caldwell”



May 20, 2021

7:00 pm

Via Zoom

If you are interested in joining this presentation, please contact the Madison Historical Society at historicalsociety@rosenet.org or Box 148, Madison, N.J. 07940. We will need your email address to send you an appropriate link to join the Zoom presentation.

Read more about “Doc” Burkhardt on page 3

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Message from President Susan Simon

I would like to use this, my last column as president of the society, to note some of the things we have been doing during this fiscal year. Currently, we are in discussions with borough officials to enter into a partnership for the renovation and restoration of the east wing of the Hartley Dodge Memorial. The ultimate goal of these talks is to find a home for a Madison Historical Society Museum.

The new and updated book on the history of Madison, *Portrait of the Rose City: A History of Madison New Jersey*, is looking like it will be completed sometime next year. This has been a joint project between the Society and the Madison Public Library. The book is being authored by Dr. Frank Esposito supported by a consulting research group of incredible volunteers

On the society's ever growing official web site, check out our latest feature, the "Then and Now" photo project. You can find the slide show under the "What's New" page of the web site found at madisonnjhistoricalsociety.org

As you walk around town you should see plaques on about 100 houses that were built before 1901. Our oldest houses are on Ridgedale Ave., but there are old houses all over town. The plaque project was one way that the society could celebrate the rich history of the borough.

If you are interested in more borough history, the historical society has been supplying articles to the *Madison Living* magazine. Beginning soon, the magazine will start featuring articles written by some of the members of the research group that have been working on the *Portrait of the Rose City* book.

Finally, a big thank you to all the volunteers who work so hard to make the Madison Historical Society a success. This includes not only those who lead and work on special projects, but also those who work tirelessly processing historical donations to the society, clipping news articles, filing photographs, and all the other day to day work that contributes to the preservation of Madison history.

About Meridoc "Doc" Burkhardt

Meridoc "Doc" Burkhardt is a professional actor with a wide background in television, film, Off-Broadway and regional theatre. Among other things he has worked with Spike Lee in *A Miracle at St. Ana* and the Universal film *American Gangster*. He has appeared on Saturday Night Live and several productions at the School of Visual Arts. Off Broadway he appeared in *Tony n' Tinas Wedding*, *Vaya Con Dios Las Vegas*, *Psychos*, *Sickos & Strangers* and *Guy Pride*. His regional theatre and stock work includes the Papermill Playhouse, Snug Harbor, Sundog Theatre, Wagner Mainstage, Union Performing Arts Center, Plays in the Park, Hanover Players and Mystic Vision Players. Meridoc holds a BA in Theatre and Speech from Wagner College and has studied acting, dance and voice.



Remembering Dan Seidel



Members of the Madison Historical Society were saddened by the news that Dan Seidel had recently passed away. Dan joined the society in 2003 and was a LIFE member. He worked tirelessly as a volunteer in the society's office at the Madison Public Library. Among other things, he and his good friend Zigmund Kaminski took on the huge job of cataloging and housing all the maps from the Kelton Evan's donation, hundreds of them. Dan was a frequent donor of historical items that helped to tell the story of Madison and he was a regular attendee at society meetings and other events.

In addition to his work with the Madison Historical Society, Dan was very active in the local and regional communities. He was a Board Member of the Madison Arts and Culture Alliance (MACA) and the Madison Parks Commission. He volunteered at the Liberty Science Center as well as the soup kitchen at Saint John's Church in Newark. Dan Seidel was widely known among Historical Society members as a kind and gentle man and will be greatly missed.

Gifts to the Society



Every year, residents and friends of Madison donate gifts to the Madison Historical Society. We are most grateful for these kind gestures. These donations will be particularly meaningful as the society continues its efforts to secure space for a Madison Historical Museum. We thought it might be interesting to present a sampling of some of the items received during the year 2020. Unfortunately, the list is much too long to print in its entirety in the newsletter. But here are some of the items:

- A 19th century German Nassau Bottle of clay with impressed markings of a circle enclosing a standing crowned lion with the word "Selters." Utilized as a water bottle.
- Two 16 mm black and white films of the Delaware Lackawana and Western Railroad commuter line.
- A one page document, an Act to Establish Common School, February 24, 1829. The purpose of the Act was the establishment of a public school system.
- A reprint of a 1688 map, "A New Map of New Jarsey and Pensilvania" (A New Map of New Jersey and Pennsylvania) with an accompanying discussion of the map.
- A mounted black and white photograph of "The Ridgedale in Madison, N.J." about 1906.
- Two videos. The Mead Hall Fire, August 24, 1989 and President George Bush Campaign Speech, Madison, N.J. November 2, 1992.
- A framed print of a drawing of The Tuttle Oak.
- A set of maps of the Upper Pawwaic River from the Upper Passaic River Environmental Council dated January 1976.
- A framed photo of the original clubhouse of the Madison Golf Club.
- Vol 1 No 1 of Freeways – The Literary Magazine of Madison High School, Winter 1974
- A scrapbook titled, "In Whose Memory We Dedicate Ourselves", containing photographs clipped from newspapers of service men and women who served in World War II, annotated to show those killed in action.

New Slate of Officers for 2021-2022 Need to be Voted On

Normally a new slate of officers and trustees for the Historical Society is voted on at the Annual Dinner Meeting. Since the event is not being held this May, we have decided to call upon members to cast their votes on the slate via the newsletter in either of two methods. All votes should be received by April 30th.

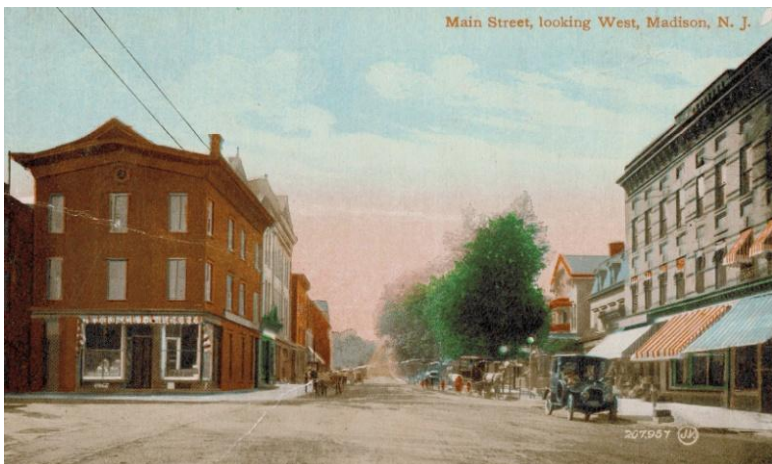
Method 1: If you receive the newsletter via email, please email your vote for or against the slate at the following email address: historicalsociety@rosenet.org

Method 2: If you receive a hard copy of the newsletter by U.S. Mail, please fill out the ballot enclosed in the newsletter and send it to the following address: Madison Historical Society, P.O. Box 148, Madison 07940. Be sure and put your name on the ballot. If you would rather just email us, you certainly may do so at: historicalsociety@rosenet.org

President	Virginia Laughlin
Recording Secretary	Anne Meyer
Trustee	Susan Simon
Trustee	Robert Dunne
Trustee Reelected	Laurie Hagerich
Trustee Reelected	Johanna Glazewski

The “Then and Now Project” On the Society Web Site

A new project is now appearing on the Madison Historical Society web page that can be found at <http://www.madisonnjhistoricalsociety.org/>. Hit the What’s New page. The “Then and Now” project consists of sets of images of Madison, each set consisting of two photographs, one taken decades ago, as far back as the late 19th century, and a second image taken in late 2020 and early 2021. A short description of the site and where appropriate its historic relevance, accompanies most pages of the project.



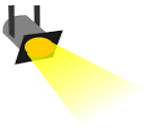
cc. Early 20th Century

Main Street Looking West



2020

The team that produced the show consisted of Nikolina Uzicanin, Herm Huber, Kate Malcolm, and Doug Simon.



Spotlight on History

Four Houses of Enos Wilder

By Susan L. Simon, Madison Historical Society

Enos Wilder was the founder and president of a well known mercantile and commission firm in New York City, a borough councilman and somewhat of a property magnate in Madison during the latter part of the 19th century. He moved to Madison in 1878, with his wife and three children. They lived in a house on Madison Ave. across from the end of Treadwell Ave. In 1869 he married his brother George's widow Emmeline Vinal and they had three daughters; Nellie Vinal, Madge Vinal and Ena Vinal. All three daughters received their mother's maiden name as part of their name. After moving to Madison, Enos and Emmeline's family grew with the addition of two sons, Enos Jr. and George Harris.

Upon moving to Madison, Enos started buying up property and building houses. By 1910 he owned over 100 acres, consisting of all the property on the east side of Loantaka Way from Woodland to Madison Ave. and along Madison Ave to Lancaster Drive. He also owned land at 300 Madison Ave. as well as the original property he owned on Madison Ave where he lived with his family.

After graduating from Harvard University in 1865, Enos was employed in a mercantile house in Boston that sent him to Buenos Ayres, Argentina as its representative. While in Argentina he also served as the United States Consul handling both jobs at the same time. After moving back to the states in 1870, he set up a mercantile and commission firm in New York City in his own name, Carter, Wilder & Co., to which he remained connected until his death. He also served as President of the Franklin Bank Company.

On the home front in Madison he was active in business and civil activities of the Borough. He was elected to the first Borough Council as a Councilman in 1890. Madison had just severed its relationship to Chatham Township to become a municipality electing its first Mayor and Council members. Enos Wilder served two terms on the council.

Enos hired the architectural firm of "Boring & Tilton" to build his home at 300 Madison Ave. not long after the firm had formed a partnership in 1890. It was here that Wilder and his wife, Emmeline, raised their children. It is one of the few estates with "purple puddingstone" on the exterior of the building. The estate built in 1892 still stands directly across from Fairleigh Dickinson University, although the outside is all that remains of the original house.



Tilghman House



Madge Wilder Home

It is believed that Boring & Tilton also designed the three houses Enos Wilder had built for his three daughters. Two of the houses on Madison Ave. are presently owned by Drew University. The most well known and named house is Tilghman on the corner of Madison Ave. and Lancaster Drive. It was built for his oldest daughter Nella Vinal. She later married Dr. Jean Eduard Cerisole of Switzerland in December of 1898. The 1910 map shows the owner as Nella Ceresole although the couple never lived in the house. Sidell Tilghman bought the house after 1910. He married Leonie Callmeyer in 1915. The house remained in the Tilghman family until Leonie's death in 1963. A year later it became part of Drew University.

Madge, the second daughter received the house on the western corner of Vinal Place (named after Emmeline's maiden name) and Madison Ave. She married Stephen Haines Plum in 1897. On the 1910, map the owner of the house is Madge Plum but on the 1921 map the owner had changed to Wm. Davies. The family appeared to stay in Madison living on either Loantaka Way or Glenwild Road. Drew University owned the house until recently when it was sold.

The third daughter, Ena was given what is known as "Madison House", situated between Nella's and Madge's houses on Madison Ave. The author of this article moved to Madison with her family in the fall of 1971 and lived in the carriage house which was part of Ena Wilder's estate. The carriage house is now the Alumni House on the Drew campus. Ena married Henry Mason Hewitt in 1915. In 1921 the house was owned by A.E. M^cAlpin.



Madison House

Enos Wilder died the 27th of February in 1915. The funeral services were held in the oak room of the Hotel Marie Antoinette located at 68th Street and Broadway in Manhattan. The hotel had been the winter home of the Wilders for several years and it is where he died. Two Rectors of Grace Episcopal Church in Madison conducted the service. The Madison Mayor and Council attended along with former council members, many of his business associates and friends.

By 1960 most of the Wilder property along Loantaka Way from Woodland to Madison Ave. to Lancaster Drive was acquired by either Mrs. Dodge or Drew University. Although Madge Wilder Plum's property was occupied by Lee Haven Nursing Home, it was the last of the three Wilder houses to become part of Drew University sometime during the 1980s.

The three houses on the Drew property, the 300 Madison Ave building and the "Chalet" located on Loantaka Way are the only houses we know of that can be attributed to the Wilder Family that are still in existence. There are other Wilder buildings in Madison, residential houses and carriage houses. But the four featured in this article were the only ones we know to have been designed by the architectural firm of Boring & Tilton.