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CAPE MAY
GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Seventh Annual Bulletin

JUNE 1953

CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

Cape May Geographic Society

Seventh Annual Bulletin — June 1953

ACTIVITIES OF LAST SUMMER

During the 1952 summer season the Society sponsored ten nature walks which took place every Saturday morning from June 28 to August 30 inclusive. Three were to observe the birds of Cape May Point and the salt marshes between Cape May and Wildwood led by Dr. Ernest A. Choate; two to study the plants of Bennett Bog, the first led by Mr. Richard B. Chillas, Jr., and the second by Mr. Louis E. Hand; one to observe noteworthy trees of the vicinity, led by Mr. Robert C. Alexander; one to study the shells and marine life on the beach and one the fossil shells along the Canal Bank, led by Dr. Horace G. Richards; a general trip to Higbee's Beach to observe plants, trees, and marine life, led by Dr. Choate, Mr. Alexander, and Dr. Richards; and a trip to the oyster grounds at Pierce's Point where Dr. Thurlow C. Nelson described the scientific investigations carried out at the Oyster Research Laboratory there.

The following series of lectures was presented on Friday evenings, all at the Cape May High School Auditorium with the exception of the second which was held at the Cape May Point Fire Hall.

July 18. Richard B. Chillas, Jr. "From Beach to Bog in Cape May County"

Horace G. Richards. "Grand Cayman—The Island Time Forgot"

August 1. George Woodruff. "Indians Of South Jersey"

F. Russell Lyons. "Old Architecture of Cape May"

August 8. I. M. Levitt. "Adventures in Space Travel"

August 22. Horace G. Richards, Ernest A. Choate, and Robert C. Alexander. "Nature's Round Table"

August 29. Ernest A. Choate. "More About Birds of Cape May"

The New Jersey Audubon Society

At the request of the New Jersey Audubon Society, the Cape May Geographic Society appointed a committee, consisting of Dr. Ernest A. Choate and Mr. Robert C. Alexander, to cooperate

in the preservation of Bennett Bog which was purchased by the Audubon Society several years ago.

In further cooperation with the New Jersey Audubon Society, the Cape May Geographic Society, together with the Witmer Stone Club, of Stone Harbor, assisted in making plans for their annual Cape May Weekend, October 10-11, 1952. Mr. Alexander arranged the program of activities on that occasion.

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BIRD WATCHING

Toward the end of April, 1952, two cattle egrets appeared in the pasture at McPherson's farm on Higoee's Beach Road. A single bird of this species was seen at the same time in Massachusetts. These are the first records of this species on the North American Continent. The birds are native to Africa but a colony of them has been established for some time in the Guianas in South America. How they got there appears to be as much a mystery as how they got here. The bird in Massachusetts was shot and now reposes, I understand, as a scientific specimen in some museum.

The birds here escaped that fate. The two were constantly seen together from April till about the middle of June. I was able to see only one during July and thought the other had perished, but it put in an appearance again before the middle of August. I have no record of the birds at all after September.

They liked the wet pastures and appeared to feed on insects which they and the cattle stirred up. They generally stayed in a small area on either side of Higbee's Beach Road during the day. At dusk they flew off to the south. Where they spent the night is not known.

The two birds were somewhat different in appearance. Both were white with red bills, feet, and legs. One had more of a light chocolate colored crown and plumes on its back. They were a star attraction for bird watchers from far and wide.

In the fall of 1952 Lily Lake in Cape May Point developed into one of the best bird watching sites. Early in September a flock of 15 blue-winged teal was seen feeding daily. A black duck, three pied-billed grebes, and four Canada geese appeared shortly afterward. By the 20th a red-headed duck and a canvasback had joined the others, and by Thanksgiving an immature whistling

swan and a gadwall had added to the variety. On Sunday, December 28, although the lake was half frozen, the Canada geese, whistling swan, gadwall, grebes, red-head, canvasback, and black duck were still there. There was also a hooded merganser and three ring-necked ducks.

Every year since 1927, and six years previously at irregular intervals, there has been a bird count in the Cape May area on a Sunday near Christmas. This was the first time such a variety and number of birds have been seen on Lily Lake and the first time either a gadwall or whistling swan was ever seen on a Christmas bird census.

The birds were attracted to the lake by the Sago pond weed whose fruit made excellent food. This weed, which spoils the appearance of the lake in summer, settles to the bottom in the fall. Its abundance in Lily Lake is due to the hurricane of November 25, 1950, when the water from the ocean, blown by high winds, ripped up the matty mass of vegetation composed to a large extent of water lily roots and old plants, and deposited this material on the north shore. As a result, the cleared bottom formed an excellent habitat for the pond weed which soon dominated the flora of the whole lake. So what appeared so obnoxious in July and August paid off in the autumn by supporting so many interesting water fowl.

Elsewhere in the area, while making the Christmas census, 51 individuals in nine parties, using Rio Grande as the center of a circle with a 7 1/2-mile radius, recorded an estimated total of 52,777 birds of 128 different species. This bettered by 5 the previous high of 123 made in 1951. There were five new birds recorded. In addition to the gadwall and whistling swan already mentioned, the dowitcher, common tern, and orange-crowned warbler were seen for the first time. A dickcissel was seen at the feeding station of Miss Helen Kruger in Cape May Court House—the eighth record for the bird this year in Cape May County. If it continues to be so evident it will be removed from the rarity list.

ERNEST A. CHOATE

"TIDAL WAVES" IN NEW JERSEY

Tidal waves are usually associated with earthquakes and occur from time to time in various parts of the world. Lisbon

(1755), Japan (1703, 1896), and Peru (1868) have all suffered from extensive tidal waves, or tsunamis, set into motion by submarine earthquakes some distance from the shore attacked by the great waves. These waves may measure more than 100 miles from crest to crest and may be as much as 40 feet in height, although they are usually smaller.

In 1946 a tidal wave set into motion by a submarine earthquake near the Aleutian Islands caused considerable damage on the Hawaiian Islands, some 2,000 miles away. In November of the past year (1952) earthquakes near Kamchatka produced 13-foot tidal waves that were felt in the Hawaiian Islands.

While technically true tidal waves are caused by earthquakes, various kinds of large sea waves go by the general name "tidal wave."

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Although no records of earthquake tidal waves are known from New Jersey, one strange occurrence that took place a little more than twenty years ago might deserve review at this time.

The ocean was moderately rough on August 19, 1931. About noon a series of huge waves began rolling into the beach at Atlantic City causing at least one death and some hundred or more people to be swept out to sea by the undertow. Other large waves, although of less intensity, were felt later in the same day. The maximum effect of these waves seems to have been very local, the first and largest waves being felt only near the foot of South Carolina Avenue; bathers a few squares away were not aware of the phenomenon.

The size of the waves was variously estimated from 4 to 10 feet, although according to Dr. W. L. Day, meteorologist of Atlantic City, 5 feet would be a close estimate. The tide records at Atlantic City showed nothing unusual except a strong surf. The wind was slight southwest between 7 A. M. and 9 A. M., south 11 to 13 miles per hour between 9 A. M. and noon, and south 17 miles per hour between noon and 2 P. M. The barometer was 29.93 at 8 A. M. falling to 29.84 at 8 P. M.

A series of large waves, although of less intensity than the Atlantic City waves, was reported at Wildwood, Cape May, Cape May Point, N. J., and Ocean City, Md. At the time that the waves were felt, the writer was in a boat operated by the United States Bureau of Fisheries making dredgings a few miles off Atlantic

City, but aside from the usual waves of a choppy sea, no unusual waves were felt.

Various explanations have been offered for the phenomenon. Contrary to certain newspaper reports at the time, no records of earthquakes were reported on the seismographs at New York or Washington. One possible explanation is that the waves were caused by a landslide or crumbling on the continental shelf some distance off Atlantic City. This might have caused the greatest effect to have been felt immediately opposite, and milder disturbances to have been felt in adjacent regions. Such a local disturbance would not necessarily be recorded on a seismograph. There is, however, no confirmation of this theory.

Several other possible explanations were offered by authorities at the time, either in newspapers or in personal letters to the writer. Dr. W. L. Day expressed the belief that the waves were caused by a tropical disturbance reported that morning in latitude 24° longitude 72° (near the Bahamas) apparently moving northwestward, and that these waves moved in advance

of the rest of the storm. (A northeast gale occurred along the New Jersey coast between August 21 and 23.)

Mr. E. P. Henderson, of the United States National Museum, stated that the large waves might have been caused by the meeting of two large storm waves uniting in the same phase to form one unusually large wave equal to the two smaller waves. Huge "tidal" waves of this kind were felt at Cape May during the hurricanes of 1944 and 1950.

It is well known that the sea beaches of New Jersey are occasionally and rather suddenly covered with tremendous quantities of surf clams or mussels. Perhaps these were uprooted from their normal habitat by small local submarine landslides, or possibly by storm "tidal waves." It is worthy of note that a few weeks prior to the Atlantic City waves, an unusually large number of mussels rather suddenly were washed onto a six-block stretch of beach in Ocean City, N. J. (Ocean City Sentinel Ledger and News, July 10, 1931).

HORACE G. RICHARDS

THE BATTLE AT TURTLE GUT INLET

On the southern coast of New Jersey, a long line of island beaches, separated from each other by ocean inlets and from the mainland by wide salt marshes and a system of waterways, forms a barrier protecting the mainland from the ocean. The barrier beach between Hereford Inlet and Cold Spring Inlet, on which Wildwood and its adjacent communities are located, used to be two distinct beaches, Five Mile Beach to the north and Two Mile Beach to the south, with Turtle Gut Inlet between them. In 1922 this inlet was filled in artificially and closed so that the two beaches became one large beach. During the Revolutionary War, a battle was fought at Turtle Gut Inlet. Scattered records provide an authentic account of it.



On Friday, June 28, 1776, a series of showers accompanied by light breezes brought an end to a succession of clear days, and a haze appeared over the ocean. Two British warships were blockading the mouth of Delaware Bay—His Majesty's 14-gun sloop Kingfisher, Captain Alexander Graeme in command, off Cape May and His Majesty's frigate Orpheus, Captain Charles Hudson in command, off Cape Henlopen, and each had fitted out an armed tender. Some fifteen merchant vessels had gathered in the roadstead under Cape May where they were awaiting an opportunity to slip out of the bay past the British warships into the open ocean. The shoals here protected them from the larger warships; and a small squadron of Continental privateers guarded them against the tenders and cutting out parties. The squadron consisted of the ship Reprisal armed with 18 six-pounders, Captain Lambert Wickes in command, the brigantine Lexington with 16 four-pounders, Captain John Barry in command, and the schooner Wasp with eight guns, Lieutenant John Baldwin in command. A fourth privateer, the 10-gun sloop Hornet, commanded by Captain William Hallock, had been ordered up the river to Philadelphia for repairs.

At five o'clock in the afternoon, the lookout on the Kingfisher sighted a sail "standing in for Cape May." Captain Graeme, of the Kingfisher, signaled the Orpheus and sailed out to intercept the unknown vessel. At seven-thirty, the Orpheus weighed anchor and followed. With the coming of twilight, a fog settled over the ocean and the stranger was lost to view. However, the British warships were certain they had cut her off from entering the bay and, around ten o'clock, they dropped anchor in several fathoms off Cape May for the night, while the tender from each ship and an armed boat from the Orpheus went in search of their quarry. When they located her sometime later, she was heading toward shore near Turtle Gut Inlet, about seven miles north of the tip of the cape. The tenders and the armed boat were closing in to board her when suddenly the vessel, a brigantine, fired a broadside at them. At this

unexpected show of resistance, the tenders withdrew to a greater distance from which they kept up a harassing fire, while the armed boat returned to the Orpheus to report.

The brigantine Nancy, under Captain James Montgomery, had been chartered from her Wilmington, Delaware, owners in the winter of 1775 by the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety. The ensuing March, she sailed for Puerto Rico, under English colors, and landed Don Antonio Seronia to procure arms and ammunition by a contract previously made with the Spanish government. Sailing to different islands to allay suspicion, the brigantine reached St. Croix and St. Thomas, neutral Danish islands, where she took in produce by day and munitions of war shipped in small boats from St. Eustatius, a Dutch possession, by night. When her cargo was nearly complete, word was received that the Colonies had virtually renounced allegiance to the Crown. Believing there was no longer any need to act clandestinely, Captain Montgomery increased the number of his crew, armed the vessel for defense and put everything in readiness to sail. Thomas Mendenhall, a young man on board, made a flag to fly from the brigantine's mast. The day she sailed, the governor and his suite with twenty other gentlemen were invited to dine on board. A sumptuous dinner was prepared, a sea-turtle being cooked gave it the usual name of a turtle feast. As the customhouse barges with the distinguished company approached, the rowers were ordered to rest on their oars while a salute of thirteen guns was fired. At the same time, Thomas Mendenhall hauled down the English flag and raised the flag he had made—probably the flag of the Grand Union with thirteen alternating red and white stripes and the Union Jack in the upper corner next to the staff, used prior to the adoption of the Stars and Stripes. It was said to be the first American flag ever raised in a foreign port.

Now the Nuncu was homeward bound and in her hold she carried 386 barrels of gunpowder, 101 hogsheds

of rum, 62 hogsheads of sugar, 50 firelocks, and a quantity of dry goods, a cargo of great value to the patriots who were desperately in need of supplies. Off the capes of the Delaware, Captain Montgomery saw the British warships sailing out to intercept him. Finding himself cut off from the bay, he determined to head north along the coast toward Turtle Gut Inlet, anchor as close to the shore as he dared and land the cargo on the beach. The fog settling over the ocean enabled him to carry out the first part of his plan unobserved. The respite was brief. Before long, the tenders and the armed boat discovered the brigantine at anchor off the inlet. As they closed in to take her, she raked them with a broadside. But the eleven men on the Nancy were not enough to transport the cargo across the stretch of water between the vessel and the beach and fight the enemy too. All hands were needed to man the guns. Even so, how long could eleven men with 6 three-pounders hold off two British men-of-war?

The guard on Cape May had sighted the brigantine some four or five miles eastward of the cape that afternoon. The information had been relayed to the commanders of the Continental squadron in the roadstead who received it at dusk. Without knowing she was the Nancy bringing supplies for the patriots but well aware that the vessel might soon fall into the hands of the enemy unless something was done immediately, they resolved to go to her assistance. The Lexington and the Wasp put out to assist her; but the vessel was soon lost in the fog settling over the ocean so the ships dropped anchor three or four miles off Cape May for the night. Toward morning, the fog lifted and, in the light of an early dawn, they saw the brigantine about three miles off with the British warships and the tenders preparing to engage her. Finding it impossible to be of any service, the Lexington and the Wasp turned back to the roadstead. But already the Reprisal's barge commanded by Lieutenant Richard Wickes, brother of Lambert Wickes, had put out and was heading north along the coast toward Turtle Gut Inlet. Soon

the Lexington's barge under Captain Barry and the Wasp's barge under Lieutenant Joshua Barney rounded the cape and followed in the wake of the other barge. Defying the fire from the tenders, Richard Wickes and his men reached the Nancy and went aboard. A hasty conference was held with Captain Montgomery and it was decided to cut the brigantine's cable and run her ashore to facilitate landing the cargo. Within half an hour, she was hard aground on a shoal in the inlet. Shortly afterward, the barges from the Lexington and the Wasp arrived, and John Barry took command. The men from the Lexington manned the Nancy's guns while all of the others set to work to transport the cargo to the beach. According to one chronicler, "Lt. Weeks (Wickes) and men were placed on shore to protect the stores, when landed, for the Tories infested these places." The numbers of the patriots were soon augmented by the inhabitants of that vicinity who had been aroused by the firing and had come to find out what was happening.

In the meantime, the Kingfisher, of lighter draft than the Orpheus, had ventured nearer and was keeping up a heavy fire, many of the shots passing far over the Nancy. Seeing that the patriots continued to unload the cargo as fast as possible notwithstanding the gunfire, the Kingfisher sent out a party of four boats to board the brigantine; but the fire from the Nancy was so effective that the boats returned to the warship after only a half-hearted attempt. The Kingfisher moved to within three or four hundred yards of the brigantine; and the Orpheus sailed in and anchored off the inlet abreast of the Nancy in six and one-half fathoms of water with her nine-pounders bearing directly upon the unfortunate vessel. The fury of the gunfire redoubled. Once the British guns got the range, the Nancy was blasted from stem to stern—her hull riddled, her spars and sails shot away, her bulwarks shattered, a mast shot off just above the deck, her caboose demolished—and, under cover of this bombardment, the warships sent out another boarding party consisting of three boats from the Kingfisher and two from the Orpheus. Barry knew the

Nancy must be abandoned—it had been a miracle that no one on board had been killed already—but before leaving her he resolved to make certain her cargo did not fall into the hands of the British. The tops were removed from a number of the barrels of gunpowder left in the hold, a train of powder dumped from the hold to the deck, and fifty pounds of it wrapped in the folds of the mainsail were laid across the open hatchway. The captain and four of the crew, the last to quit the vessel, set the sail afire as they left. As their boat pulled away, John Hancock, one of the seamen, noticed the flag still flying from the remaining mast. Jumping to the deck, he ran across to the mast, hauled the flag down and plunged into the ocean with it. They pulled him into the boat and rowed for the beach.

Believing the lowering of the flag to be a sign of surrender, the boats from the warships raced to board their prize. The first to reach her was one of the boats from the Kingfisher commanded by the master's mate with a crew of six. Outdistancing the other boats, they pulled alongside and started to board her. By the time they reached the deck, the powder train had caught fire and the ship blew up with a roar that was reported to have been "heard forty miles above Philadelphia." The men from the Kingfisher were blown to bits leaving only such gruesome relics, it is said, as "two laced hats and a leg with a garter." Nothing was left of the Nancy but a battered hull and broken timbers and scattered remnants of the cargo rising and falling in the gentle swell of the ocean flowing in the inlet. After the Nancy blew up, the four remaining boats, in a shattered condition and weakly manned because several of the party had been wounded or killed, made off as fast as they could to the Kingfisher and the Orpheus. After the boats returned, the warships directed their batteries toward the beach where the patriots had mounted a cannon and were shooting at them defiantly if ineffectually— but the battle was over!

The engagement lasted from eight o'clock in the morning to midday and, in that comparatively short length of time, 265 barrels of gunpowder, 50 firelocks, 2 three-

pounders, 3 swivels and a large quantity of dry goods were saved. These stores were carted across the cape to the bayside where they were put on board the Wasp and taken up the bay to Philadelphia. Richard Wickes was shot through the arm and body shortly before the action ended and died soon afterwards. The only other casualty among the patriots was Joshua Griffin, a member of the Nancy's crew, who was seriously wounded in the thigh. It was discovered after he had been taken to his home in Wilmington that a piece of his check shirt had been shot into the wound. The British were estimated to have lost between forty and fifty men at least.

Lambert Wickes wrote of the death of his brother Richard in a letter to Samuel Wickes, another brother, "I arrived just at the close of the action. Time enough to see him expire, after a noble contest, in the arms of victory. He was buried very decently ye 30th June in the Meeting House yard at Cape May where the clergyman preached a very decent sermon."

In 1718 the Presbyterians Of Cape May County erected a small log building at Cold Spring to use for a place of worship. They called it the Meeting House. In 1762 the log building was replaced by a frame building which, like the former one, was called the Meeting House. This frame building was used until the Old Brick Church was built on the property in 1823. At the time of the Revolutionary War, there was no other Meeting House in this part of the county. It must have been in the graveyard here that Lieutenant Richard Wickes was buried, though no marker is there to indicate his grave. The clergyman who "preached a very decent sermon" was most likely the Reverend James Watt who served as pastor from 1770 to 1789.

R eferences

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ROBERT C. ALEXANDER

NOT A SHIPWRECK

Many visitors, when they see the half sunken hulk of the concrete ship "Atlantus" in the shallow waters of Delaware Bay at the foot of Sunset Boulevard, ask, "When was the shipwreck?" However, this was not a shipwreck in the usual sense of the word. The "Atlantus" was not brought to its end as it returned from a long voyage to distant lands, laden with cargo and crew. It has a quite different story.

For years it has been the dream of many people to have a ferry cross Delaware Bay from Cape May to Cape Henlopen in Delaware, a distance of about fourteen miles over water that is often rough and treacherous. In 1926 a stock company was created by Colonel Jesse Rosenfeld of Baltimore for the purpose of establishing such a ferry line. It was proposed to obtain three concrete ships which had been built during World War I but never used because their weight made them impracticable. These were to be run ashore at the end of Sunset Boulevard to form a Y-shaped wharf. Accordingly, the "Atlantus," built by the Liberty Shipbuilding Corporation of Brunswick, Georgia, in 1918, was purchased from H. P. Etheridge, Inc., and brought from the mud flats of Virginia to Delaware Bay. Unfortunately, before the ship could be located in a strategic position for the construction of the wharf, the heavy seas of a northeaster broke it from its moorings. The awkward ship ran aground on a shoal and has remained there ever since, immovable because of its great weight. Buffeted by waves until it has nearly split in two, it is gradually sinking into the sand, its superstructure almost entirely destroyed.

In the meantime a wharf had been built in Lewes, Del., and a steamship company in Baltimore had agreed to undertake to operate a ferry line within thirty days after the completion of the wharf on the New Jersey side of the bay. This agreement, reached after years of negotiation, was

announced at the time of the opening of "Sunset Boulevard" in August, 1925, the last link but one in the highway system of New Jersey to connect that state with Delaware and Maryland—the final link to be the construction of a wharf at Cape May Point.

In anticipation of the establishment of the ferry line, the old, dirt Cape Island Turnpike, which had been built between 1846 and 1848 to run between Cape May and Cape May Point, was paved with concrete. This was completed and dedicated, with much ceremony, in the summer of 1925. On Saturday, August 22, of that year a parade of decorated automobiles, accompanied by the Pennsylvania Railroad Band, proceeded from Broadway in West Cape May down the road to the bay where a platform had been erected. Officials from the state, county, and nearby towns, as well as from Delaware and Maryland, were present and many speeches were made. City Manager Volcker Of Cape May acted as chairman and Colonel Jesse Rosenfeld, who later formed the stock company responsible for obtaining the "Atlantus," gave a brief account of what the ferry would mean to New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. The little girls from the Lankenau School sang "It Ain't A-goin' to Bump No More"— a sentiment much appreciated by all former travelers over the old Turnpike. Prizes were awarded for the most appropriately decorated automobiles to Mrs. William Straine and Miss Katherine Schmucker, both of Cape May Point. "Miss West Cape May" presented a bottle of salt water taken from the ocean and the bay to "Miss Cape May Point," who officially christened the Turnpike "Sunset Boulevard."

In spite of the enthusiasm shown on this occasion and the many conferences which were later held and the plans made, a ferry line across Delaware Bay was never established. After the failure of Colonel Rosenfeld's project all proposals gained little encouragement and the idea was abandoned, to be revived from time to time but thus far without result. The dismal hulk of the "Atlantus" is a sad

reminder of a dream which never came true. Perhaps someday, somehow, this dream may be realized.

MARIE A. RICHARDS

THE TAMARISKS

We awoke this hot July morning to the sound of the foghorn, mournful to most landlubbers, but to us a forecast that once again, provided the fog cleared, which it generally does about ten o'clock, we would be privileged to witness that "thing of beauty" which "is a joy forever"—our tamarisks shimmering in the sunlight. For in this little seaside village of Cape May Point a fog blowing in from the sea will deposit thousands of drops of moisture on the foliage of the tamarisks and when the fog lifts they glisten and sparkle like so many diamonds.

Tamarisks are particularly suited for this display for their leaves and blossoms are light and feathery, albeit full and thick, and the slightest breeze will set them swaying. In spite of their appearance of frailty they have a tenacious quality which, in a strong wind of even hurricane force, allows them to bend and dip, sometimes touching their branches to the ground, without breaking.

I first saw tamarisks in 1910 when my parents rented a cottage in Cape May Point. At that time the Floral Villa, now the Bell-May Apartments, had a row of them across the entire front of the grounds separating the lawn from the gravel sidewalk. Other properties both at the Point and in Cape May employed the bush in their landscaping. When my husband and I built our summer home in 1928 we set out three tamarisks, one Indicus and two Africanus, each about three feet high. They developed rapidly and from the fall trimmings we grew others, and so we called our place "The Tamarisks."

I learned how the tamarisk was introduced into Cape May County from Miss Agnes Blackburne, summer resident of Cape May Point. Many years ago Miss Blackburne's grandfather, returning home from a visit in Bermuda, met on board ship a nurseryman from Long

Island, who told him that he was bringing back several tamarisk plants for experimentation. Her grandfather promised that he would be the first customer if the plants grew successfully in America. Subsequently tamarisks were planted all around the Blackburne property when it was located on Beach Drive in Cape May Point and from them came many of the bushes we see in this vicinity today. Because of the encroachment of the sea, the Blackburne home, which also was named "The Tamarisks," was later moved three blocks inland and a few of the tamarisks were transplanted there.

Tamarisks differ in their development, some grow tall and slender, some wide and bushy. The low branches and thick foliage are attractive to birds which fly up from the lawn into this refuge on the approach of passersby. They bloom two or three times a season—once in late May, sometimes sparingly in early July, and in August in a profusion of pale pink, although I have one bush, purchased from Steele's Nurseries in Riverton, N. J., which bears a deep pink almost magenta flower. The soft, pastel blossoms and the light green foliage against the blue of a "Point" sky cause the summer visitor to stop and gaze and then inquire, "What are these lovely bushes?"

EDITH B. D. MATHER

NOTEWORTHY TREES

The following is a supplement to the book *Noteworthy Trees of Cape May County, N. J.*, by Robert C. Alexander, published by the Society in 1949. Circumference of tree trunk is measured 4 1/2 feet above the ground unless stated otherwise ; height of tree and spread of branches are estimated. Road mileage is given to the nearest tenth of a mile. Nominators of these trees are Mrs. George M. Brooks, Joseph A. Cuza, Mrs. Helena Way Fitzpatrick, and Miss Sarah A. Thomas.

Kentucky Coffee-Tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*)—Central United States. Rare in county. Male and female flowers bloom on separate

trees. Early settlers in Kentucky used its bitter seeds as a substitute for coffee.

A female tree stands at the south side of the front entrance at the home of Mrs. J. Clarence Gallaher, southeast corner of Stockton Place and Hughes Street, Cape May. This property was formerly a nursery belonging to William A. Knott, a landscape gardener. Examined October 14, 1952. Cir: 4 ft. 5% in. Ht: 40 ft. sp: 30 ft.

A female (?) tree stands at the south end of the front porch at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Horace Wood, 2nd, northeast corner of Main Street and Hereford Avenue, Cape May Court House. The house was built for Dr. John Wiley about 1854. Two seedlings grow near the tree. Examined September 24, 1952. Cir: 3 ft. 11 in. Ht: 55 ft. Sp: 25 ft.

American Linden (*Tilia americana*)—Introduced. Clusters Of fragrant, cream-colored, honey-laden flowers blooming in June and early July attract swarms Of bees. Trees at Cape May, Cape May Court House, Cold Spring, Dennisville, South Seaville, and West Cape May.

Two large, spreading trees grow on the lawn at the home of Dr. and Mrs. George M. Brooks, 21 Hereford Avenue, Cape May Court House. The house was built for Dr. Coleman Leaming by Daniel Hand in 1866. Examined September 10, 1952. Tree at west side of front lawn—Cir: 8 ft. in. Ht: 65 ft. Sp: 70 ft. Tree on back lawn beside driveway—Cir: 9 ft. 6 in. Ht: 65 ft. sp: 70 ft.

A large, spreading tree grows by the roadside in front of the home of Mr. anti Mrs. Charles P. Foster on the west side Of Old Shore Road, Cold Spring, 1/10 mile north of the Cape May Canal. It is believed to have been brought from the banks of the St. Joseph River about 75 years ago by Mrs. Abram Huntsinger of Mishawaka, Indiana, whose sister and her husband, Mary and John Soffe, owned this property. Their grandson and his wife are the present owners. One big bough has been cut Off by linesmen. Examined July, 1952. Cir: 9 ft. in. (at 3 ft.) Ht: 60 ft. sp: 60 ft.

Pignut (*Carya glabra*)—Native. Fairly common in county. Early settlers in this country, disappointed in the size Of the nuts, considered them fit only to feed to pigs. A handsome tree stands by the roadside on property owned by John C. and Helen L. Sheppard on the west •side Of DennisvilleWoodbine Road, Dennisville, 1/10 mile north of Delsea Drive. Overhead wires passing through its branches have been covered protectively and the tree has not been mutilated by linesmen. A solitary tree conspicuous from Delsea Drive, covered with changing autumn foliage when examined October 10, 1952. Produces abundant nuts. Cir: 7 ft. 8% in. Ht: 65 ft. Sp: 45 ft.

American Plane-Tree (*Platanus occidentalis*)—Introduced. Few large trees in county. Commonly called sycamore and buttonwood. Trees planted along streets are usually the London Plane-Tree, *Platanus acerifolia*, a hybrid. A tall massive tree stands on the front

lawn just inside the fence at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Wayne Stewart on the west side of Delsea Drive, South Dennis, 4/10 mile north of Sluice Creek. A second large plane-tree 9 ft. 4 in. in circumference stands five yards behind it. Examined September 10, 1952. Cir: 11 ft. 7 in. Ht: 50 ft. sp: 100 ft.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM

Nature notes and items of historic interest relating to Cape May County

A Rare Sponge

During the spring of 1951 a large number of specimens of an unusual sponge were washed onto the beach of Delaware Bay near Bowers, Delaware. These have recently been identified by M. W. de Laubenfels as *Croniellu crania* (Muller).

Early Nature Groups

While Cape May County is very nature conscious with its Geographic Society and other similar organizations, it has not only been within recent years that naturalists have gathered along the South Jersey shore. In 1891, a Laboratory of Marine Biology was established at Sea Isle City by the University of Pennsylvania. A laboratory building was erected that year and classes in zoology and botany were conducted during the summer of 1892. The site was selected by Dr. Joseph Leidy and Dr. Charles S. Dolley was the first director. A series of salt water aquaria was open to the public and collecting trips were made both out to sea and inland. The laboratory was abandoned a few years later.

Also, as long ago as 1884, a group of amateur naturalists known as the "Agassiz Association" was formed at Longport, and a Natural Science Hall was maintained; and by 1888 there had been established at Anglesea a naturalists' organization called the Anglesea Floral and Botanical Society.

"Peter Rabbit"

Did you ever read the story of Peter Rabbit? A charming little story written fifty years ago by Beatrix Potter, long before the days of "Hop-A-Long." Well, Peter was a self-willed little rabbit who did not obey his mother to keep out of Mr. McGregor's garden, so Mr. McGregor became his bitter enemy and spent most of his time chasing Peter. At last, Peter, after many mishaps, learned his lesson and ran home to his mother for safety.

Cape May Point had hundreds of little Peters during the past summer. The bushes concealed them until they peeked out and rushed for their lives across the roads. The Mr. McGregors were very busy but often the solemn little faces with the big round eyes would appeal to the hasty automobile driver causing him to check his speed.

Some Recent Publications Dealing with New Jersey

Record of the Rocks. By Horace G. Richards. N. Y., Ronald Press. 1953. 413 pp., 294 figs. \$6.00.

This new book by Our president is a coherent, readable account for laymen and advanced students of the fascinating story Of our planet, its origin, its inhabitants and development through geologic ages to the present time. Particular emphasis is given to eastern North America. Nearly 300 unusually satisfactory maps and illustrations supplement the text.

"A List of the Fishes of New Jersey, with Off-shore Species." By Henry W. Fowler. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. Vol. 104, pp 89-151, Oct. 1952. \$1.80.

This article by the Curator of Fishes at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia records and gives notes on some 491 species Of fresh and salt water fish from the waters of New Jersey.

"The Pine Barrens of New Jersey." *Bartonia*, No. 26, pp. 19-60, Dec. 1952. \$1.00 (Phila. Botanical Soc., care of Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila.)

A symposium of eight papers presented at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement Of Science in Philadelphia in December, 1951. The papers cover such subjects as the ecology, geology, water resources, soils, and controlled burning Of the Pine Barrens.

"Barnea truncatc at South Cape May, New Jersey." "Check List of New Jersey Land Snails." By Robert C. Alexander. Nautilus, vol. 65, pp. 73-74; vol. 66, pp. 54-59, 1952.

The first of these two articles deals with the presence of the Truncated Angel Wing shell in the peat along the beach at South Cape May. The second paper discusses the distribution of various species of land snails from the State of New Jersey. Various Cape May County records are mentioned. Down the Long-a—coming Trail. By Kathryn H. Chalmers. 1951. 206 pp., 39 figs. \$3.75. (Distributed by M. Ethel Chalmers, R.3, Hammonton, N. J.)

An interesting book containing information on the history, natural history and folk lore of Southern New Jersey, especially along the Old trail from Camden to Somers Point. One chapter discusses Cape May.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The annual business meeting took place immediately following the concluding lecture Of the season On Friday, August 29, 1952.

Reports on the activities of the past season were presented and the biennial election of officers was held. The President, Vice President, and Secretary were reelected and Mrs. G. Norman Acker was elected Treasurer, for 1952-1954. A resolution was adopted in appreciation of the services of the retiring Treasurer, Mrs. Samuel M. Schellenger.

FINANCIAL REPORT

September 1, 1951 — August 31, 1952

RECEIPTS

DISBURSEMENTS

cash on hand sept. 1, 1951	\$264.06	Printing: CMGS Bulletin	\$129.90
Dues	280.00	Membership List	11.20
Sale of books, maps	174.75	Map of Old cape May	59.20
Lectures	64.00	Lecturers	-----
-----	105.00		
Total Receipts	- \$782.81	Hall expenses	30.00
78.00		Supplies, postage, etc.	- -
August 31, 1952, Balance	\$370.11	Total Disbursements	- - \$412.70

OFFICERS

President! Dr. Horace G. Richards Treasurer, Mrs. G. Norman Acker

Vice-president, Mr. F. Russell Lyons Secretary, Miss Marie A. Richards

COMMITTEES

Advisory, Mrs. Glen Sefton Hiers	Lecture, Mr. F. Russell Lyons
Mr. M. Albert Linton	Membership, Mrs. J. Sidney Mather
Mrs. Thomas Shea	Nature Walks, Mr. Joseph A. Cuza
Miss Sarah A. Thomas	Dr. Ernest A. Choate
Auditing, Mr. Jcxseph Irish	Publications, Mr. Robert Alexander
Mrs. Joseph Irish	Miss Marie A. Richards
Mrs. Samuel M. Schellenger	Publicity, Mr, Eugene T. Dutten
Historians, Mr. Walter F. Young Mrs.	Miss Evelyn Dutten
Walter F. Young	

Membership in the Cape May Geographic Society
includes subscription to the Bulletin. Annual dues one
dollar.