

100 YEARS AGO MARCH 1924

URGES SOMERSET COUNTY TO PROTEST WATER RIGHTS *Bernardsville News, 20 March 1924, p 1*

The City of Elizabeth proposes to erect a dam 130 feet high across Somerset Street in the Township of North Plainfield and for its own uses to fill a large part of Washington Valley behind this dam with water pumped from the Passaic River. As the population and needs of Elizabeth grow the idea seems to be to put another dam at Chimney Rock and by tapping the Raritan and other streams in the northwestern part of the State flood practically the whole of Washington Valley. This means that Elizabeth proposes eventually to split Somerset County for some 15 miles from Watchung to Pluckemin with an impassable wall of water. Such a scheme means ruin to Somerset County. And unless the people of Somerset County take immediate steps to protect themselves and their property against this scheme disaster will surely overtake them. ... The Board of Freeholders of Somerset County have instructed their counsel to take steps to protect the interests of the county, but we must back up our Freeholders in this fight by putting behind them the whole population of Somerset County. ... Now is the time for the people of Somerset County to go on record for all time against this or any other attempt to rob us of our property and shut us out from sharing in the increased prosperity that is bound to come to this whole section in the near future.

INJURED IN RARITAN MILL *Courier-News, 5 March 1924, p 13*

Miss Mildred Desanbis, of this place, was injured about the head yesterday afternoon while at her work at the **Raritan Woolen Mills**. Miss Desanbis is a weaver, and when her loom stopped from some unknown cause, she looked under to find the reason. The machine started while she was beneath it and her head was caught, inflicting numerous injuries... She was taken to the Somerset Hospital, where X-ray pictures were taken to determine the extent of her injuries.

WILL SHOW WAR PICTURES *Courier-News, 24 March 1924, p 7*

Somerville. The war pictures, which are to be shown by Harold Normal Holstead Post, Veterans of Foreign Wars, at the **Cort Theatre**, April 22, promise to give theatre-goers a thrill. They were all taken in France by the U.S. Signal Corps, and have been assembled so that they form the complete history of America's part in the World War. Every division that saw real service in France is shown in action against the Germans. Many of our local boys, who were with the Twenty-ninth and Seventy-eight Divisions, are clearly seen doing their bit in the fight for freedom of the world.

MARTINSVILLE FORMS FIRE COMPANY *Bernardsville News, 27 March 1924, p 1*

The historic community of Martinsville, which was almost entirely wiped out by a fire a couple of years ago, is on its feet again and has organized a fire department for the protection of property in that section. When the fire broke out which destroyed the village, two years ago, Martinsville was without a fire company and therefore much time was lost in fighting the blaze for it was necessary to send a call for help to Somerville and Bound Brook fire departments ... Martinsville has ... now organized the **Martinsville Engine Co. No. 1**, with these officers: President, William S. Lyng; secretary, Franklin E. Bartle; assistant secretary, William B. Lyng; treasurer, William S. Van Nest; foreman, Arthur C. Waldron and assistant foreman, W. S. Lyng. Besides these, twenty-five other residents have enrolled as volunteer firemen ... A list of alarms is being worked out. The school bell will be utilized for the present in broadcasting them. ... The new equipment is intended for the protection of the entire valley, including Warrentonville and to Pluckemin in the other direction.

1924 LOOKS BACK TO 1841

IMPROVEMENT RECALLS RAILROAD HISTORY

1841-1856 *Courier-News, 17 March 1924, p 11*

Image: Somerville Train Station, Unionist Gazette, December 1924 supplement

The improvements being made through Somerville by the New Jersey Central creates much interest in the early history of the road. When the **railroad was extended to Somerville in 1841** there was a brick engine house, a turn-table and a frame passenger depot built. John O. Stearns, superintendent, and Colonel Jas. Moore, the chief engineer. One made the mortar and carried it; one carried the brick, and the others laid them. This was in consequence of the low conditions of the treasury. The same persons constructed the turn-table, and James Castner, of Somerville, did the wood work of the engine house, and built the small passenger depot, costing about \$500. The passenger station was located about where the present one stands, except that it extended to the end of the street (*ed. note: Division Street*), where the newsstand is located. The street at that time was opened from the depot to Main street. There was a projection on the east end of the depot, near the roof, where a bell was hung, which it was customary to ring a few minutes before time for trains to start. ... The turntable was a wooden affair with a truss on top, the entire circle boarded over and turned by a double crank with cogwheels. It took two to four men to turn the table when loaded, and they rode around on the platform while they turned the handles. When the railroad was extended to Dunellen in **1852**, the **second depot was built** between the tracks ... with men's and women's waiting rooms, and a ticket office between, and stairs leading to the living rooms above. ... There was a freight house for east-bound freight and one for west-bound. These buildings were **completed and occupied November 28, 1856**. The old depot was taken down and the bell taken to the fair grounds, and used to start the races for several years.

note: Somerville train station interior was refurbished in 1924



CENTRAL RAILROAD OF NEW JERSEY STATION.