

May 2025

MAY 1903 122 YEARS AGO

RUN DOWN BY A BICYCLIST *Bernardsville News, 15 May 1903, p.1*

Bernardsville. While playing in the street in front of her home on Tuesday evening [May12], Edith, the nine year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Berrell, was struck and seriously injured by a bicycle ridden by Walter DeCline of Basking Ridge. The child was carried into the house by C. D. Smith and Louis Ballentine, who happened to be near at the time, and Dr. Meigh was immediately summoned. It was found that in addition to being severely bruised about the head, arms, and body, a bone in her ankle was badly fractured. DeCline, who was riding rapidly, was thrown to the ground, but was uninjured. He picked up his wheel, and without waiting to learn the extent of the child's injury, proceeded to Bernardsville. He was met in the village by Mr. Berrell who....compelled DeCline, under threat of arrest, to return and explain his action. DeCline claimed that he gave the children playing in the street due warning by ringing his bell several times, but that the warning was unheeded. It is said that DeCline was riding without a light. Mr. Berrell is undecided what action he will take in the matter.

SOMERSET INN OPENS FOR 1903 *Bernardsville News, 22 May 1903, p.1*

Somerset Inn, the popular and exclusive summer resort at Bernardsville, was opened for the season of 1903 on Saturday, May 16. Each train brought in its stage-load of enthusiastic supporters of the house, and it was a gay crowd which sat down to the first luncheon of the season. Immediately after luncheon a stage was found waiting at the door to convey the men of the party to the golf links, where they enjoyed their first round of golf on one of the best equipped golf courses in the country. The ladies, who chose the quieter comforts of the inn, gathered on the wide verandas and made a merry scene as they sat visiting and chatting together. When the guests were again assembled at seven o'clock in the dining room, they were served with a sumptuous "Entre Nous" dinner, one of the sort which has proved so popular for two years past. ... so many of the old patrons of the house were present that the event seemed more like a large house party than the formal opening of a hotel.



Image: Somerset Inn Entrance ca 1900, cf: <https://www.mrllocalhistory.org/retrospective-bernardsvilles-historic-somerset-inn-hotel/>

MAY 1925 100 YEARS AGO

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MOVEMENT IS NOW WELL UNDERWAY *The Courier-News, 1 May 1925, p 15*

The Bound Brook Chamber of Commerce now has a membership of almost 100 business men and citizens of Bound Brook, South Bound Brook, and Middlesex Borough. ... The three municipalities included in the jurisdiction of the new organization have much in common and have long cooperated in matters concerning the community. The Chamber of Commerce will bring them more closely together and all three are well represented on the Board of Directors. ... The three municipalities have been strongly united in manufacturing interests. With better railroad facilities than almost any central New Jersey community, the Bound Brook vicinity has developed into one of the busiest manufacturing centers of the State. ... The efforts of the new Chamber of Commerce will be guided in this direction also.

FEDERAL AGENTS IN SOMERVILLE *The Courier-News, 20 May 1925, p. 13*

Federal Prohibition Agents are apparently fond of the scenery and activities in Somerset County. Yesterday seven of them paid a second visit within a period of ten days. This time, however, there was little need of the trucks that figured so auspiciously in the raids of last week. The agents made a number of stops in Bound Brook, among other places calling at the Bound Brook Hotel opposite the battle monument, where they found much hospitality on the previous visit. They then proceeded to the West End, made a number of stops, and then proceeded to Somerville. Calls were made at several stores on Hamilton and Franklin streets, at the Somerset Hotel on Court House Square, at the Commercial Hotel on Depot Square, and at a store on Davenport street. No evidence was secured at any of the Somerville places, it is stated.

KLAN GATHERS AT PLUCKEMIN *Bernardsville News, 21 May 1925, p. 9*

Male and female members of the Ku Klux Klan held a gathering at Owanamassie Club, Pluckemin, last Friday night, marching to the grounds in regalia. ... The occasion was the opening of the new Klan home of Somerset County. The evening was taken up with the initiating of seventy-five new members and the burning of three gigantic crosses. ...

[NOTE: For information on the KKK in New Jersey, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Ku_Klux_Klan_in_New_Jersey, and/or The Rise and Fall of the Klan in New Jersey (2019) by J. Bilby and H. Ziegler. https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/products/9781467142625_srsItd=AfmBOopxoLzDUZPGVIF5JmIGPHeChncDTsH63B54q_VI3NT8MUbKJxr0 and <https://scarletandblack.rutgers.edu/archive/exhibits/show/klan>]