

Akshaya Karanam
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Woodbridge Township is almost 350 years old, let's look back to see what our beloved town looked like on her 300th birthday. The year 1969 marked 300 years since King Charles II of England imparted a royal charter for the establishment of Woodbridge. Fairs, carnivals, and more exciting events took place in 1969 to pay homage for our safe home. Woodbridge received her name from Reverend John W. Woodbridge. She is a beautiful, suburban township that provides education for children, and jobs for adults. Woodbridge has done a remarkable job taking care of all of her citizens.

Mr. Jorgensen was kind enough to answer some of my questions about that grand event. He was the perfect source as he has lived in Woodbridge for over 60 years, was an elected official of the Woodbridge Board of education, and was even a Municipal Court judge for fifteen years. In the eyes of a twelve-year-old boy, he could correlate to the themes of solidarity, honor, and pride for his flourishing township. The active member now believes Woodbridge is a haven for families, a place where children learn to fly, and where the government serves justice for all.

Education, especially of the history of our township, has been a long-term interest for Mr. Jorgensen and his family. He hopes to educate the fertile history of Woodbridge to this generation's youth, the same way his grammar school teacher enlightened him with a sense

of passion. Another ambition is, “To see more of a connection between the various parts of the township, with people identifying themselves as more of a Woodbridge person”, he believes that the triumphant 300th Anniversary of Woodbridge had molded and enriched him. In specific, he enjoyed viewing the entirety of Woodbridge to come to Merrill Park for a ceremonial fair. It can remind young citizens of how they are a part of something much more vast than themselves, how people can come together despite their own hectic lives. Mr. Jorgensen and many other proud citizens of Woodbridge, New Jersey hopes that the next anniversary will continue and exceed to enrich the public with an active celebration for all who partake.

The best part of a fair isn't the rides or games, in my opinion, the people who are present can be more pleasant. To realize the perspective, here is a segment from the June 11, 1969 issue of the Leader Press, “For on Saturday and Sunday, the 300th Anniversary Fair will be held at Merrill Park from noon until 11:30 at night. It is expected that 100,000 will attend.”(Leader-Press, June 11, 1969). Think about all of those citizens filled dignity and contentment that their township has survived for 300 years with all her peaks and valleys. People from completely different coasts, backgrounds, race, and nationalities all come together, however one thing binds them together, their home. This also sends a message to the youth that sacrificing one day to spend with your fellow citizens is a better alternative to playing video games. I know that Woodbridge, with all of her glory, will continue to grow, but will ultimately retain her roots.

Woodbridge, New Jersey, only a township, is a part of the United States of America. She is home to over 101,000 people, which does contribute to the 325 million people in the

US. It is very important to stay true to and honor your roots. This imperative message is represented by the beginning of the 300th Anniversary of Woodbridge, New Jersey. "A flag will be raised by the Mayor's Colonial Guard directed by Herbert Blich and made up of a representative of each veteran's post in the Township. The national anthem will be played and then the fun will begin."(Leader-Press, June 4, 1969). This excerpt shows how the creators of this event made sure to show solidarity to our country. Today's youth suffers from racial discrimination all over the world. I believe that the DNA that runs through your blood has much more power than your social hierarchy. Never forget your roots, without them, you will inevitably fall over. Honor who you are, and where you come from, only then will others recognize you.

Coins as tokens of the 300th Woodbridge Anniversary were also created for \$2.50 each. Citizens were extremely anxious to receive their own, some people from various states even wanted to get their hands on one. According to Leader Press, "I (a seller) received a call from a young man, who seemed quite breathless. He wanted to know if he could obtain one (coin)."(Leader-Press, April 16, 1969). The extraordinary fact was that the man had run all the way to the office by foot, just to get a coin. It represents all those who wish to keep a symbol of their home close to them. Also the outrageous lengths they go to, in order to have something to represent that day that will go down in history.

The citizens of Woodbridge, New Jersey had such great spirits, they wouldn't let rain to rain on their parade. As it says, "Whenever it rained, particularly on Saturday when the showers were not lengthy, the crowds sought refuge in the tents and as soon as the rain stopped they sauntered out again, patronizing booths and games as if nothing

happened.”(Leader-Press, June 25, 1969). Even Mother Nature couldn’t stop the patriotic hearts of the citizens of Woodbridge, New Jersey, on her 300th birthday. This is a reminder that your life is in your control. Eleanor Roosevelt said it best, “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”

Woodbridge, New Jersey has been and will continue to be, a home for everyone. I firmly believe that she takes care of her family, we are all her family, she doesn’t discriminate based on who you are. Her love is unconditionally eternal. We hope to develop upon the near perfection of our township. In the year 1969, Woodbridge celebrated her 300th birthday, now 50 years later her roots are still implanted in our hearts and soul.