

# THE ALLEN HISTORIAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 31, Allen, MD 21810

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George Shivers, Editor

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## Community Calendar

Saturday, March 19 – Asbury United Methodist Church Spring Bazaar, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM at the Allen Community Hall.

Saturday, April 2 – Allen Historical Society Breakfast, 7:00 AM - 10:00AM at the Allen Community Hall. Price \$8.00. Menu: regular pancakes, buckwheat pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, fruit, orange juice, coffee.

Saturday, April 9, 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM, Community Roadside Clean-up. Meet at the Allen Community Hall. Everyone in the community is invited to this annual spring event to make our community more attractive.

Monday, July 4, 2:00 PM - Allen Lions Club Independence Day celebration with the annual parade. Hot dogs, hamburgers and homemade ice cream at the Community Hall.

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## Progress on the Huffington-Pollitt House

During the past year we have made considerable progress in the renovation of the Huffington-Pollitt House. Stage one of the work is being done out by Gladden Contracting Co. and includes stabilizing the foundation of the front room, digging out the soil to provide ample crawl space for future work, repairing the brick work in the front steps, and replacing wood where there was structural damage due to fire or termites.

Legacies from members Captain Lindley Allen Lentz and James Trader have made it

possible to do this work. We would like to maintain the forward momentum, however, we must save enough of the legacies and other funds raised to have matching funds for future grant applications. Therefore, we continue our fundraising activities and we encourage our members and friends to consider making tax-deductible donations for the project. As always gifts may be made in honor of or in memory of friends or family members. A suitable plaque dedicated to these gifts will be displayed prominently in the completed building.

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## Allen History on Stage



Cast members take a bow and answer questions from the audience

In October our Society presented an original play titled *Allen, a Village "Trapped" in the Civil War*. The script, which consisted of five scenes, each of which focused on Allen residents affected by the war, was written by Althea Chandler, John Culp, George Shivers and Sharon Walsh. Sharon Walsh directed the play, which was staged in the sanctuary of Asbury United Methodist Church, a building that was standing at the time of the Civil War.

Scene 1 portrayed Thornton Phoebus and his wife Mary, who supported the Union and housed Union soldiers stationed in the village to arrest smugglers and draft dodgers. One of the young soldiers was also portrayed. The cast was Tracy Wright, a resident of Salisbury and graduate of Salisbury University, William Murray, a student at Salisbury University, and George Shivers.

Scene 2 presented a Union sentry and another Union soldier bringing a message. They converse about life back home and the vicissitudes of the war. The cast members were John Culp and Mark Apolenis.

Scene 3 portrays a slave family belonging to James Dashiell of Allen and his wife. Son Joe and his friend Ham speak with Joe's mother about their plan to join the Union Army and thereby gain their freedom. The cast members were Althea Chandler, Tracy Wright, Thomas Whitney and Fred Whitney, Jr.

Scene 4 deals with the Allen family, Mary W., who harbors draft dodgers in her home, her son Joseph and his wife Mary Phoebus Allen. The cast members were Melissa Bright, Alison Sahler and Andrew Johanson.

Scene 5 takes place in Hester Twilley's store, where she speaks with her brother, William Huffington about the plight of his fiancée, Clara Gunby, jailed and exiled for treason. The cast members were Aleta Davis, K. Alan Musser and Tracy Wright.

We played to a full house, and the audience was enthusiastic in their response. Following the play there was a reception in the church's Great Room, featuring a number of desserts from the Civil War period.

We are especially grateful for the generous participation of cast members Aleta Davis, K. Alan Musser, Alison Sahler, Andrew Johanson, Thomas Whitney and Fred Whitney, Jr., who are not members of our Society or even residents of Allen in some cases. We are also grateful to member Kathy

Simms who filmed the entire play and to member Joe Ballou who transferred it to DVD.

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### **Looking Forward: Plans for Another Cemetery Walk in the Fall**

We are just beginning to plan for our main fall fundraiser, a Cemetery Walk. This will be the sixth time that we are offering this ever popular program, which began in 2008, and once again all the visiting spirits will be new ones! There will be more word on this program in the August *Historian*.

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### **Allen's Post Offices**

Allen, then known as Upper Trappe, had a post office at least as early as 1849, when Thomas W. Dashiell was appointed postmaster. He owned a store at the corner of Allen Rd. and Cottman Rd. and no doubt that was where the post office was located. Unfortunately we have no photograph of that building. There were a number of appointments and changes of location between Mr. Dashiell's service and 1884, when Joseph S.C. Allen was appointed just in time to have the village named for him that year! He operated the post office out of his store, pictured below.



The photograph below shows the original building that housed Asbury M.E. Church from 1829 until 1848. It was then moved and became the store of Mrs. Hester Twilley. The sign over the door says post office. It is likely that the photograph was taken some time

after the building had been abandoned. Simeon Malone, who lived nearby, probably served as postmaster here from 1892 until 1924, and that was probably when the post office was housed there.



**Lulu Nichols**



The post office was later moved to the building pictured below, where it remains today. It was an addition to the Kolb's Peninsula Farm Market. Mrs. Kolb was the last postmaster to date to be a resident of the village.



Herschel Wallace served as postmaster from 1924 until 1946. The building pictured just above was the post office during his tenure. Mr. Wallace also served from that location as the village's telephone operator for many years. The building itself probably dated to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it served as a store for Stephen Drura and later for Benjamin Franklin Messick.



**Mary Lee Kolb**

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**Obituary of Mrs. Elihu Phippin**

(Editor's Note: Mrs. Phippin resided for many years in Passerdyke Cottage, current

headquarters of the Allen Historical Society. The news clipping was not dated, but Rev. Connoly served at Asbury from 1950-1954.)

Mrs. Annie Rachael Phippin, 87, a resident of Allen, died yesterday afternoon after a long illness.

She was the wife of the late Elihu Phippin, and the daughter of the late William W. and Martha Phillips Mills.

Mrs. Phippin was a member of the Allen Methodist Church for many years.

She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. W. Walter Stowman of Allen and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held at the Hill and Johnson Funeral Home tomorrow at 2:30 PM with the Rev. O.H. Connoly officiating. Interment will be in the Allen Methodist Church cemetery. Friends may call at the funeral home tonight from 7:30 to 9.

Lucas, S.E. – Minister  
 Malone, A.R. – Residence  
 Messick, B.F. and Son – Farmers



Taken in 1935 or 1936, this photo shows William Tull and Jack Shivers. It was taken in the garden beside the Phillips/Shivers store (the house next door to the Huffington-Pollitt House. Mr. Tull lived on the Upper Ferry Road and worked widely in the communit.

### Telephones in Allen in 1910



The above photograph shows page 55 of a 1910 telephone directory, which includes Allen. The following persons were those who had hones in 1910:

- Jones, J.W. & Son – Farmers
- Long, J. I.T – Physician

### The Johnson-Puckham Story

As far as we know, the first free African Americans to settle in the Allen area were Anthony and Mary Johnson. They emigrated from North Hampton County (Eastern Shore of Virginia) in 1665, bringing with them another Black person as a slave. His name was John Casor. Johnson had first served in Virginia as an indentured servant of Richard Bennett. It was there that he married his wife Mary, who was also an indentured servant. They had two sons and two daughters.

The Johnson's farm was on the south side of Wicomico Creek and was leased for 20 years from Stephen Horsey. They named the tract "Tonies Vineyard. After he died, his wife renewed the lease for 99 years in 1670. Mary Johnson left the farm to her sons, John and Richard, in her 1672 will.

One of Anthony and Mary Johnson's granddaughters, Jone (Joan) Johnson, married a Monie Indian by the name of John Puckham in 1682. The ceremony was performed by John Huett, first priest of Stepney Parish. In the record John's race was recorded as "mulatto." Their marriage was recorded in Stepney Parish on January 25 of that year. John Puckham was born in 1660. Walter W. Black records that "Clayton Torrence surmised that John may have been from Monie Indian Town, which was not far from the house of Joan Johnson's likely father, John Johnson of Wicomico Creek." Black then cites Thomas Davidson, who suggested that the Puckham name may have been derived from the Nanticoke Indian village of Puckamee, which then existed in northern Somerset County.

John and Joan Puckham had the following children:

1. Abraham, born about 1685
2. John, born December 1, 1686
3. Susannah, born about 1688
4. Richard, born March 10, 1689/90

In 1699 Joan Puckham bound out her sons, John, age 13, and Richard, age 10, to serve a white planter by the name of Benjamin Cottman until both reached the age of 21. The terms were that they were to be taught a trade.

The Puckham family has continued for many generations and there are still descendants today. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a marriage connected the Puckham family with the Black family of Fruitland. Thanks to the generosity of the late Walter W. Black of Marlborough, MA we have an extensive account of the Black family genealogy (which includes the Puckham and Polk families) in our library. Those interested in further detail may consult it there.

"On Saturday evening last at ten o'clock Capt. James Morris, on his way home from Eden station, stopped at the residence of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Twilley, at the Trappe, seeming as well as usual except under the influence of liquor, took a chair in the yard and after conversing a while took from his pocket a bottle of whiskey, inviting Mr. John Huffington, who was present, to take a drink with him. On Mr. Huffington refusing to drink, telling him he did not desire to, he said, 'No, you are all too good to drink whiskey, but I intend to drink it as long as I live.' Soon after he took another drink, reversing his position in the chair so as to lean his head upon his hands which were clasped on the back of the chair. As the family were about to retire for the night, Mrs. Twilley called him, but receiving no answer, she requested Mr. Huffington to wake him, when he was found to be dead. He had passed away without a sigh or a struggle, his sister-in-law and his daughter being near to him all the while and observed nothing unusual until they were informed of his death. Capt. Morris had been a man of a powerful constitution and great physical strength. He is about sixty years old and leaves a widow and daughter to mourn his sad end."

**Editor's Note:** *Captain James Morris was born on November 1, 1811 and died on July 3, 1875. He married Sally Huffington on June 16, 1834. She was the daughter of Jonathan Huffington, Jr. and Henrietta Adams and was born on October 25, 1817. She died on February 7, 1874, thus her husband was a widower at the time of his death. Mrs. Twilley was Hester Ann Huffington (1824-1893), whose husband, Caleb Twilley was the carpenter who built the church in 1848. After his death in 1855, Mrs. Twilley continued to operate their store in what had been the old church building. (See photo on page 3.) The only child of James and Sally Morris was a daughter, Annie, who was born in 1853 and died in 1936. She married Frank Waller (1852-1931).*

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### **Death of Captain James Morris**

*Salisbury Advertiser*  
Saturday, July 10, 1875



Annie Morris Waller

### Politics Allen Style -1900

This being a presidential election year, I thought it might be of interest to Allenites to see what was being said in the village about the 1900 election in which the Democratic candidate was William Jennings Bryan and the Republican candidate was William McKinley. It becomes immediately apparent that the writer of the Allen news at that time was a Democrat. It probably was Dr. J.I.T. Long, the village physician. Unfortunately the accuracy of his predictions did not reach the level of his enthusiasm! William McKinley won the presidency, but was assassinated six months later.

*Salisbury Advertiser*, September 1, 1900

“It must be alarming from a Republican view of the situation seeing so many representative men, the majority of whom have been life-long Republicans, coming out on public occasions and announcing their determination to support W.J. Bryan for the presidency. If the Republicans do not find a way to stop the wholesale desertion from the ranks of the Republican Party McKinley will be the worst defeated man that ever ran for the presidency. It is apparent that the people know when they have had enough. The masses have become thoroughly aroused and indignant and the political cyclone which is now moving will result in the election of a Democratic Congress and a Democratic President in November. The leaders of the Republican Party are amazed and dazed at the

outlook, and well they may be. The most sagacious of both political parties now predict the overwhelming election of Bryan and Stevenson.

“The Democratic Club of Allen is in first-class working order now and expects to do some first-class work between now and the 6<sup>th</sup> day of November. Democrats are falling all over themselves in order to have their names enrolled in this, the first Democratic Club ever organized in Trappe District. They all seem very anxious to do something for the Democratic Party this fall and they intend that Trappe District shall take her old place this year as the banner district of the County. Here is the official family of the Club: President, Roscoe Jones; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, O. P. Jones; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, P. A. Malone; Secretary, Raymond Allen; Treasurer J. Walter Huffington; Sergeant-at-Arms, Wm. S. Williams. The Club meets every Thursday evening at 7:30 o’clock.

“The Republicans are vigorously whistling in regard to this district, but it is known that they are doing it largely for the reason that actuated the traditional boy as he wandered through the graveyard after dark. Whistle on boys, it will help to stave off that lonely