

THE ALLEN HISTORIAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 31, Allen, MD 21810

Web Address: allenhistoricalsociety.org

Friend Us on Facebook!

VOLUME 25, NO. 2, February 2019

George Shivers, Editor

Community Calendar

Saturday, August 10, AHS 2nd Annual Crab Feast, 1–4 PM, at the Allen Community Hall, Collins Wharf Rd. Adults \$30, Children 6-12 \$20, Children under 6 \$5. All-you-can-eat crabs, fried chicken, hot dogs, corn, watermelon, soda, tea and more. For info. and tickets, call John at 410-546-2043. Limited no. of tickets.

Sunday, August 18, 3 PM – meeting of the Allen Historical Society

Tuesday, August 27 – free photos taken for village directory. Contact Rev. Joe Burris: josephburris53@gmail.com

Saturday, August 31, Allen Volunteer Fire Co., Barbecued chicken at the Fire House, 9:00 AM until sold out.

Saturday, September 7, the Lions Club Paddle Poker, canoes and kayaks on Wicomico Creek, 11:00 AM.

Sunday, September 15, Bishop Peggy Johnson in the pulpit at Asbury Allen United Methodist Church, 11:00 AM.

Sunday, September 29, 190th Anniversary celebration of the Allen Asbury United Methodist Church, founded in 1829. Service at 11:00 AM, traditional Homecoming Turkey dinner at the Community Hall follows with a brief narrative of the church's history and an exhibit.

Thursday, October 10, 6:00 PM, Chicken Pickin' at the Allen Community Hall in preparation for the Asbury Fall Bazaar.

Saturday, October 12, Asbury Fall Bazaar, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Allen Community Hall

Sunday, November 20, Allen Lions Club Beef Dinner, 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Saturday, December 7, Allen Historical Society Breakfast with Santa, Allen Community Hall, 7:30 AM – 10 AM

Thursday, December 19, 6:30 PM, Allen Lions Club Community Dinner, the Allen Community Hall

In Memoriam

Levin Franklin Cooper
April 21, 1940 – July 21, 2019



Franklin's parents were the late Levin Taylor Cooper and Ellen Payne Cooper. He graduated from Wicomico High School in 1958 and from Cornell University in 1963. For a number of years, he worked for the *Daily Times* in Salisbury as a reporter. He loved to travel, and in his later years enjoyed books, movies and music. He had a life-long

love of art and built an impressive collection of paintings and prints.

Franklin was a member of Allen Asbury United Methodist Church and of the Allen Historical Society. He was very committed to his community and his family and friends.

Franklin is survived by his brother Clifford Cooper and wife Jan; a sister, Mary Ellen Shupe and husband Denny; two nephews, Aaron Cooper and wife Betsy and Nathan Shupe and wife Julia Renn; and by a niece, Ellen Joseph and husband Justin. He is also survived by two great-nephews, Thomas and Peyton Cooper and a great-niece, Claire Cooper. In addition to his parents, he was preceded death by his step-mother, Florence-Byrd Allen Cooper.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Salisbury Wicomico Arts Council, the Wicomico County Library, Allen Asbury United Methodist Church and/or Maryland Public Television.

The Women of Allen
Part II
by George Shivers

Part I was published in the February 2019 edition of the Historian. Most of the women we will consider in this edition all struggled against great odds and achieved success in one way or another. Mary Whittington Allen, Elizabeth Ellen Twilley, Hester Ann Twilley, Eleanor Messick Drury, and Elizabeth Dennis were all widowed at an early age with children to support. Helen Porter received a college education and became a successful professional when that was not typical for women. All could be considered inspirational. We will consider other Allen women in the next edition of the Historian.

Mary Whittington Allen



Mary Whittington Allen was born in 1802 and married a cousin, William Whittington Allen in 1819 at the age of 17. Three years later she purchased property in what was then Upper Trappe, now Allen, from Stephen Drury and had a house built there. Her husband died sometime prior to 1838, leaving her with eight children to raise! To support her large family, at a time when there was no public school in the village, she established a school in her own home, teaching the children around her dining room table, according to family oral tradition. Additionally, according to the Federal Census of 1850, she worked as a clerk in the Dashiell store, which once stood at the corner of Allen Road and what is now Cottman Road. Mrs. Allen was also known as an excellent seamstress, and was well known in and around the village for the fine pin tucks on the front of the shirts she made.

Mrs. Allen's home burned prior to 1860, and she had a new house built on the same lot. That house, named by the Lentz family in the 20th century "Whittington Hall," still stands.

During the Civil War, according to her descendant, the late Loula Allen Lentz, she hid deserters and draft dodgers in the potato hole under her kitchen floor and in the small compartment under the dormer windows on the second floor of her kitchen. (The kitchen at that time was a story and a half with dormers. Later the roof was raised to create a full second floor.)

Mrs. Allen continued to teach for some time after a one-room school house was built on

the church lot (prior to 1860). She died in 1882.

Elizabeth Ellen Twilley Allen

Elizabeth Ellen Twilley was the daughter of John Washington Twilley and Leah Caroline Taylor. She was born on November 27, 1846 and died on September 27, 1922. She married Albert James Allen, a son of William Whittington Allen and grandson of Mary Whittington Allen. Their courtship is recorded in a series of letters which she wrote to her beau during 1865 and 1866, copies of which are in the Society's collection in Passerdyke Cottage. In addition, a number of Mrs. Allen's household items are displayed in our museum.

Hester Ann Huffington Twilley

Mrs. Twilley was the daughter of Jonathan Huffington and Henrietta Adams. She was born in 1824. In 1848, she married Caleb Twilley, who was well-known as a carpenter in the village of Upper Trappe. It was he who built the 2nd sanctuary of Asbury M.E. Church in the same year of his marriage to Miss Huffington. He also built their home, which stood across from the church until it burned in 1970.

Like many women at that time Mrs. Twilley was widowed at an early age, when Caleb Twilley died in 1875, leaving her with three children. After completing the new sanctuary for the church, Mr. Twilley had moved the old sanctuary across what is now Post Office Rd. from their home. There they had established a store, which Mrs. Twilley continued to run after her husband's death.

When the Civil War began, the Upper Trappe community was divided between supporters of the Union and confederate sympathizers. Mrs. Twilley, like the rest of the Huffington family supported the Confederacy. According to a story handed down in the family, the Twilley house had a secret room where confederate sympathizers were hidden from the Union soldiers who often camped on

part of the church yard and bought eggs and other items from Mrs. Twilley's store.

Eleanor (Ellen) Disharoon Messick Drury

Eleanor Disharoon Messick Drury was born on Nov. 15, 1808, the daughter of John Disharoon. She died in 1887. Unfortunately, we don't know her parentage or her family name. She married Philip Messick on July 2, 1839. He owned much of the property in the village, including the land on which the Asbury parsonage sits. Mr. Messick was born in 1790. The Messicks had two sons, Benjamin Franklin Messick (born in 1840; died in 1931) and Philip Messick, Jr. (born in 1843; died in 1895).

Mr. Messick died prior to 1850, and on Feb. 19, 1850, Eleanor Messick married Stephen Drury, who owned a store at the south end of the village next to the home that currently belongs to Norris and Barbara Howard. Mr. Drury was significantly older than she was, born in 1776, and had been married twice before. In addition to his store, Mr. Drury was actively involved in real estate transactions in the village during the mid-19th century. He died in 1859. Interestingly, there is a Drury family graveyard on a property adjacent to the Huffington-Pollitt house property, suggesting that the family must have lived nearby.

In his will Stephen Drury left his wife all the property "real, personal and mixed, which she had or was in any way entitled to" at the time of their marriage. with the provision that she "renounce all her dower interest in the rest of his estate." After his death, Eleanor Drury lived

Helen Porter



Helen Porter was born on August 30, 1895 in Loretto, south of Allen in Somerset County. Her father was Lee Porter and her mother Hester Ellen Huffington Porter (known as Ella).

She attended Western Maryland Prep School and College in Westminster, MD, traveling back and forth by steamboat or train. Later she attended Beacom Business College and became a teacher of commercial subjects. For many years she lived on the Loretto farm, caring for her father, while pursuing her career. After his death in 1947, she sold the farm and moved into an apartment in Salisbury. Later she had a home built on Pinehurst Ave. in Salisbury.

During a teaching career that spanned 42 years, she was employed in Queen Anne's, Somerset and Wicomico County schools. During much of that time she was head of the Commercial Department at Wicomico Senior High School in Salisbury.

Although she lived outside Allen most of her adult life, she remained close to the village in sentiment and continued to be a member of Asbury United Methodist Church in the village. She died in December 1982 at the age of 87 and is buried in the Allen Cemetery.

Elizabeth (Lizzie) Dennis



Elizabeth Dennis was born a slave in 1862 on the farm of Captain Tom White in Shad Point. She died just prior to her 100th birthday in 1961. She married William (Bill) Dennis and they lived in a house on the Upper Ferry Road. He had been born a slave on Captain White's farm as well. Her husband died early in the 20th century, leaving her alone to raise several children.

After her husband's death she made an arrangement with George Phillips, a storekeeper in Allen to grow vegetables on his vacant lot. When the vegetables were harvested, Mr. Phillips would drive her into Salisbury to huckster them there. Through her hard work she was able to provide for her children. One son, Herman, went to college in Virginia, where he played football. He became a teacher in the Wicomico County school system during segregation. Elizabeth and William Dennis are buried in the cemetery of Friendship United Methodist Church on the Upper Ferry Road in Allen.

Notes from *A Goodly Heritage*

From the editor: A Chestertown friend, Tom Timberman, loaned me a book that related the history of the Broughton and related families. The title of the book is A Goodly Heritage. Tom suggested that since there were many references to the Lower Eastern Shore and the Eastern Shore of Virginia, it might be of interest to me. To my surprise, I found references to a number of families with connections to Allen. Below are some of those references.

Thomas Pollitt (c 1660-1708). Thomas Pollitt married Margaret Polk on 27 December 1687 in Somerset County, Maryland. They had four sons. On 28 November 1689 he was one of the signers of the “Address of the Inhabitants of the County of Somerset,” pledging loyalty to King William and Queen Mary and to the Protestant faith (pp. 107-108)

Thomas Pollitt II (1690-1744), the son of Thomas and Margaret Pollitt, was born in Somerset County, Maryland on 28 September 1690. . . By his will, signed 23 November 1743, Pollitt bequeathed to his oldest son, Thomas, the land and plantation “where he now liveth.” Also mentioned 9 other children in the will (p. 108).

John Pollitt (c1724-1808) was the son of Thomas (II) and Sarah Pollitt, and was born in Somerset County, MD on 14 September 1724. He was listed in the household of his mother in Wicomico Hundred in 1744, but later in 1745 appeared in Pocomoke Hundred. He died on 14 February 1808 (p. 108).

Cited by the author is Loula Allen Lentz’s genealogy of the Allen family, *Our Heritage*, which we have in our library. the author cites it in reference to Margaret Polk, the wife of Thomas Pollitt. She was the daughter of Robert Bruce Polk (c. 1625-1703), who settled in Dame’s Quarter in Somerset County. Later a connection was established between the Polk and Allen families, which the late Loula Lentz detailed in her book.

All references are from: Levin B. Broughton, *A Goodly Heritage*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1997.

Progress on the Huffington-Pollitt House

Much work on the Society’s future home has been completed. The exterior is now in tip-top condition. The only thing remaining to do

there is to add a handicapped access ramp to the side entrance. The interior of the ground floor is also taking shape. Windows and dry wall are in, as well as the sub-floor, and painting is complete. The public powder room and the small kitchen still have to be equipped.



View from living room into dining room. Stairway on the right. Main entrance from former porch area on the left. The powder room opens off the entrance porch.



Former living room with exposed chimney

The Society has been fortunate to find a renter for the garage and a small apartment in the hyphen added to the house in the mid-20th century. The photo below shows what will be the living-room/bedroom of the apartment with the flooring installed. This is the same flooring that will go into the museum area of the house. There is also a small kitchen and a bathroom in the apartment and a private entrance through the garage. We expect that that rental added to continued rental of Passerdyke Cottage will help us maintain the buildings.



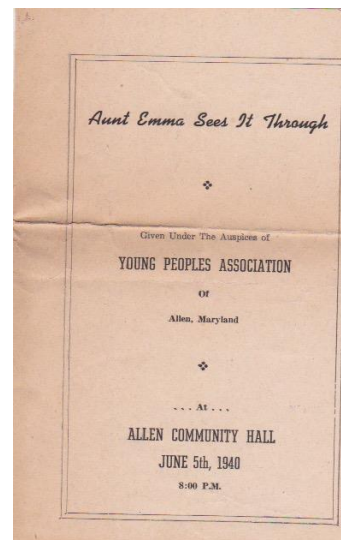
We are grateful for the grantsmanship of our president, John Culp, and the expertise and many hours of labor of our vice-president, as well as for the support all our members and friends have given us in working for or attending our fundraisers!

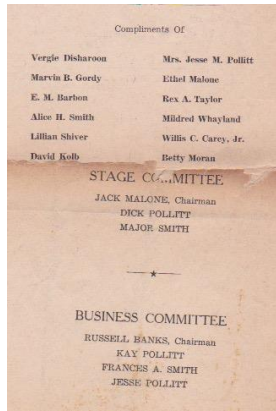
190th Anniversary of Asbury Allen United Methodist Church

Pictured below is the original building, constructed in 1829, for the congregation of Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church in what was then the village of Upper Trappe. This photo was taken after the church building was moved in 1848 to a site on what is now Post Office Road, to become first the Twilley store and later the village post office. The church will celebrate this anniversary at Homecoming on Sunday, September 29th at 11:00 am.

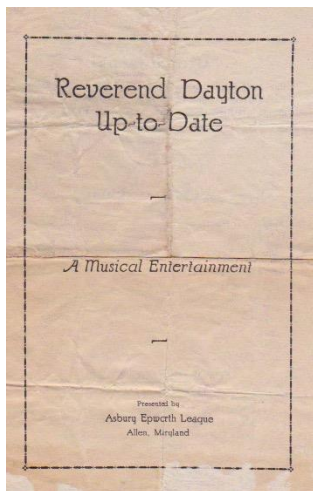


Theatre in the Village of Allen





Obituary of Alice Satchell Polk



Allen – Alice Satchell Polk, 93, died Tuesday, April 10, 1912, in the home of her daughter in Allen.

Born in Belle Haven, VA, she was the daughter of the late Robert and Mabel (Reid) Satchell. Her late husband, Mayhew Polk, died in 1997.

She retired from the Food Service Dept. of Salisbury University. She was a member of Friendship United Methodist Church, where she was a member of the United Methodist Women, former pianist, former Sunday School teacher and former youth choir director.

Her survivors include two children, Violet (James) Williams of Allen and Lawrence (Beatrice) Polk of Salisbury; five grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; two sisters, Mary Jones and Lucy Hull, both of Salisbury; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Two brothers, Amos and Bernard Satchell; and three sisters, Gladys Jones, Mable Cisco and Naomi Bivans, preceded her in death.

