

THE ALLEN HISTORIAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 31, Allen, MD 21810

Web Address: allenhistoricalsociety.org

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George Shivers, Editor

Coming Events

Saturday, March 14, 5:00pm - 7:00pm, Chicken and Dumpling Dinner, Allen Lions Club, at the Community Hall.

Saturday, April 4, 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. Spring Bazaar of the United Methodist Women of Asbury United Methodist Church. Vegetable soup, chicken salad sandwiches, hotdogs and fried oyster sandwiches, soft drinks, as well as baked goods, plants, etc. available for purchase.

Saturday, April 4 - The Allen Volunteer Fire Department and Asbury United Methodist Church are sponsoring a yard sale. Table rental fee: \$10

Saturday, May 2, Historical bus tour of Allen and environs with lunch at Asbury United Methodist Church. Contact Melissa Bright at 410-742-4085 or George Shivers at 410-778-3696 (or email at gshivers2@washcoll.edu) for further information about itinerary. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are \$30 per person.

Sunday, May 3, Annual Spring Tea, United Methodist Women, Asbury United Methodist Church, Allen Community Hall, 4:00pm.

Saturday, July 4, the annual Independence Day celebration in Allen,

sponsored by the Allen Lions Club. Parade begins in front of Friendship Church on the Upper Ferry Road and continues through the village to the Allen Community Hall. Hotdogs, hamburgers and homemade ice cream available for sale. Activities for children and adults. Parade begins at 2:00pm.

Friday, Aug. 7 - Sunday, Aug. 9 - The descendants of James Morris Polk and Rebecca Caroline Black Polk will hold a reunion, inviting family members both locally and around the country. The occasion is the 200th anniversary of freedom from slavery. Their ancestor, James Morris Polk, was granted his freedom by the will of Mrs. Nancy Morris, written in 1809. While her death did not occur until 20 years later, the writing of the will two hundred years ago is a landmark date in the history of the Polk family.

The reunion will include a number of activities, including a bus tour of sites in the Allen vicinity connected to the family's history. These include the White Hall farm (more recently known as Chantry House, and before that as the Harcum farm). It was there that James Morris Polk's parents Frederick and Sarah were held in slavery. Other sites are Asbury United Methodist Church, where slaves worshipped in the balcony, and Dashiell's Lott, also known as the Bob Jones farm. Mr. Jones allowed enslaved and free African Americans to worship in his sheep barn prior to the

building of Friendship United Methodist Church in 1864. Those present for the reunion will worship at that church on Sunday, Aug. 9.

Saturday, Sept. 19 - The Second Annual Cemetery Walk, sponsored by the Historical Society. More information to come in the next newsletter.

Mrs. Gerald Celebrates 100 Years

by Velmar Morris

Mrs. Malinda Jane Polk Gerald recently celebrated her 100th Birthday with a party given by members of Friendship United Methodist Church and relatives in Allen, Maryland.

Mrs. Gerald was born November 3, 1908 in Allen as the daughter of John Polk and Naomi King Polk. She was the seventh oldest of eleven siblings. Her late husband was Rev. Charles D. Gerald, Sr. a Methodist minister.

Her two sons, Lloyd Kelvin Gerald and Charles Gerald, Jr., her grand children, and great-grand children along with members of Friendship United Methodist Church, friends and relatives attended the party given on Saturday, November 1st. at the Allen Friendship Educational Center. Others who attended the celebration were her pastor, Rev. Anna Foster, a former pastor, Rev. Ronald Bell, and County Executive Rick Pollitt.

Mrs. Gerald is a graduate of the Frederick Douglas High School in Baltimore, and received her Bachelor of

Science Degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C. Graduate work was done at Morgan State College, Temple University and Salisbury State College. She is a retired school teacher.

Mrs. Gerald was serenaded at her party with solos, reflections, cards, resolutions, recognitions, and presentations from family, friends, state Governor, Martin O'Malley, and our national U.S. President, George W. Bush and his wife, Laurel.

She continues to attend church and other activities in the community and is the Church Mother at Friendship U.M. Church.



Mrs. Malinda Jane Polk Gerald

Correction to December, 2008 Newsletter

The editor would like to correct an error from the December, 2008 *Historian*. In reporting the welcoming of members into the 1702 Society, I mistakenly inserted the resolution for Dr. Gladys Allen under the picture of Mrs. Carolyn Ballou. My apologies to Mrs. Ballou! Here at last is her resolution!

Resolution in Honor of Carolyn Waller Ballou

Whereas Carolyn Waller Ballou is a long-standing member of the Allen Historical Society and serves on our Board,

Whereas, she has generously given of her time in support of the goals and activities of our Society,

Whereas she is a descendant of the Waller family, a founding family of our community,

Whereas she has demonstrated her love of history through her extensive research into the genealogy of the Waller family, and has contributed the fruits of that research to our newsletter, The Allen Historian, as well as to the Cemetery Walk held in 2008,

Whereas she is an active member of the Lower Delmarva Genealogy Society and has served as an officer in that body,

Whereas she is a regular volunteer at the Edward G. Nabb Center at Salisbury University, which is devoted to the history and culture of the Delmarva Peninsula,

Be it therefore resolved that the members of the Allen Historical Society in honor of her long and faithful service to our community and of her work on behalf of the goals and activities of our Society, do hereby receive her into the 1702 Society of Honor on this 25th day of October in the year 2008.



Carolyn Waller Ballou

The Huffington-Pollitt Property is Now Ours

On January 8 of this year we became the owners of the Huffington-Pollitt House. We were able to purchase the property thanks to a loan from Sun Trust Bank of Salisbury. Purchase price was \$70,000. The house itself was donated to us by the owners, Howard and Shirley Spielman, and we are truly grateful for their generous gift. We are also grateful to those members of the extended Pollitt family who have already made contributions for the restoration of the fire-damaged house. We are still a long way from our goal of \$100,000 and continue to seek donations and grants. There will be further reports on our progress in future newsletters.

Allen in Ebony and Ivory

Last summer, thanks to the leadership of Historical Society member, Deborah Scott, a member of the Polk family of Allen, Public Access Channel 14 produced a program titled "Allen in Ebony and Ivory." We are grateful to Tom Taylor for his excellent work in filming and editing the program. It is based upon interviews with Mrs. Malinda Gerald, Mrs. Velmar Morris, Mrs. Melissa Bright and the editor. Most of the filming was done in the sanctuary of Asbury United Methodist Church, while a short segment was filmed in the Society's museum in Passerdyke Cottage. We discussed a wide range of topics focusing on our village's history, including race relations during that history, and reminiscences of growing up in the village. Vintage photographs were scanned and inserted at appropriate places in the discussion.

The program was broadcast on PAC 14 many times during the past weeks. Response from viewers has been very positive, even from some who have no association with Allen. The program can also be viewed on the PAC 14 website. That address is <http://www.delmarvaheritageandtraditions.org/video/>. Scroll down to "Allen" and click to view the program. The program is also available on DVD from PAC 14. Contact us if you would like a copy.

News from Upper Trappe in 1870s

The following items are taken from *The Salisbury Advertiser* on the dates indicated. I have maintained spelling, punctuation and paragraphing exactly as they appeared in the newspaper.

Saturday, April 29, 1871

Shocking Accident - A little Girl burned to death - On Sunday afternoon, the 22d instant, as a little daughter of Mr. Thomas Murray, at the Trappe, was lifting a kettle from the fire, her dress ignited, and in a few minutes she was completely enveloped in flames. The body of the unfortunate child was burned in a horrible manner, causing death in about two and a half hours after the accident. This is really a sad accident and we sympathize with the afflicted parents.

Saturday, May 13, 1871

Upper Trappe, May 8th, 1871

Messrs. Editors - The first crate of strawberries was shipped from this Depot by I.H.A. Dulany on Friday the 5th inst., since which time, a number of

crates have been shipped daily to Philadelphia and New York. Garden peas will be in the market ere this is in print. Some of our neighbors boast of having potatoes as large as hen eggs. We can have early peas and potatoes for dinner this week - a rare luxury for the 10th day of May.

Saturday, February 8th 1872

PROPERTY SALES - Lemuel Malone, esqr., has sold his farm at the Upper Trappe, containing 160 acres, to Mrs. Sallie Malone for the sum of \$1800.

Mr. Malone has also sold one half of the "Marshfield" farm, situated on the Wicomico River about four miles from Salisbury, to Capt. Thomas W.H. White for \$1700. This farm contains 124 acres, and has valuable fisheries attached.

Mr. Malone has also disposed of his property situated at the Five Points, this town, to Capt. Thomas W.H. White for \$3,500.

Saturday, February 14th 1872

Messrs. Editors -

We are having severe winter weather. Ice, snow, hail, sleet and rain by turns. We are probably entering a group of hard winters. If so, it is to be hoped that none of them will equal this in severity. All sorts of out-door labor has been suspended for some time. Skating has been the favorite pastime for several days past, and the young men and boys have indulged in it to their hearts content, keeping up the sport till a late hour at night. The weather has softened some now, and pedestrians suffer much difficulty in getting about, for the slightest walk here is but a weary trudge through mud and water. Colds and

coughs prevail here to a considerable extent. A dead man was brought here yesterday from Somerset County to be interred. Being a stranger and no one knowing the manner of his death, some wag contrived to get a report in circulation that he died with small pox. This put a period to the obsequies for awhile, but on being assured by the individual who came up with the corps that his disease was pneumonia, the public school turned out, and with the aid of three or four citizens, gave him a decent interment. The public schools in this part of the district have been very crowded all winter, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. I saw a notice in the *Bachelor* a few days ago, from the Examiner of Public Schools, in relation to the payment of teachers' salaries for the summer term of 1871. The notice had the right ring about it. There was no ambiguity or equivocation about the premises. It was come up on a certain day and get your money, for I will be ready to "shell out." Teachers will understand and know how to appreciate notices of that sort

Saturday, May 24, 1873

CASE OF SMALL POX - A case of small pox occurred near the Upper Trappe a few days ago. Frank Dorman, colored, contracted the disease in Somerset County at the house of Frost Dorman, lingered for eight or ten days and died. He was attended by Dr. G. Paul Jones, of Princess Anne. No other cases are reported.

Saturday, August 16, 1873

UPPER TRAPPE, Aug. 13, '73
MESSRS EDITORS - It was thought by many persons that the long and severe

drought of nine or ten weeks had made the corn crop and all other crops here almost a total failure, but the recent rains have so much revived the crops and the drooping spirits of the farmers that all are ready to admit now that early corn, which was thought to be beyond recovery, will yield a fair crop, and that late corn will be much better than it was last year. The crop of wheat and oats was probably very short. Very little grain has been threshed out yet, but so far as I have heard the yield of wheat has been only seven and eight bushels to the bushel of seed, and that of oats five or six. Whortleberries [EDITOR'S NOTE: My dictionary defines these as "huckleberries" or wild blue berries.] are plentiful yet, but few are being shipped now, owing to the fact that the swamps are full of ticks, and pickers have abandoned them for the more comfortable and remunerative business of picking peaches. Peaches are abundant and have been selling from one to ten dollars per crate. Mr. Geo. J. Porter has been shipping over two hundred crates a day, and Mr. J.T. Fooks over one hundred per day. Capt. J.M. Goslee has also been shipping large quantities oat good prices. Rev. W.E. Mitchell of the Virginia Conference resigned his charge here some weeks ago, and returned to his home in Virginia. His place was supplied a few days ago by Rev. Mr. Wortenbaker of the Baltimore Conference. As a pulpit orator he is above mediocrity, and will no doubt be well received by those under his pastoral care.

Base Ball matters are getting lively here. We have two clubs, the Trappe club composed of young men, and a club of juveniles who are out practicing in full regalia once a week. The Trappe club and Somerset club played a game this

afternoon on the grounds of the former, the Trappe club coming out the victors by a score of four runs. This is the fourth game played by those clubs, the Somerset boys succeeding in the first and second, and Trappe boys coming out best by a small score in the third and fourth.

Saturday, October 10, 1874

The friends of the M.E. Church, South at the Trappe will have a supper on the evening of the 21st inst. for the benefit of the parsonage there. The public are requested to attend. Supper, fifty cents. All profanity and drinking of intoxicating drinks on the premises prohibited under penalty of arrest.

Saturday, January 23, 1875

The dedication at Siloam on Sunday the 17th inst. was well attended, not withstanding the extreme cold. The church was crowded; the dedicatory services were performed by the Rev. N.M. Browne, of Salisbury, assisted by the Rev. T.R. Creamer, pastor of the Circuit, and John H. Brinkley, the founder of the church. Rev. A. Stengle, of Quantico, preached in the forenoon from Luke 9: 28-36, the Transfiguration. His discourse was very appropriate and impressive, and elicited marked attention from the audience. The collections were very good, subscriptions amounting to \$200.00, over one-third of which was cash paid down. Prof. E.F. Porter, from the South, was present with a small choir of singers and participated in the services, which added much to the interest of the occasion. The services were closed at 2 ½ o'clock. Benediction by Rev. Mr. Wortenbaker.

Saturday, February 20, 1875

Peter Kibble, Colored, departed this life a few days ago. He was about 100 years old, we suppose, as he was an old man thirty years ago. He was a native of the Trappe district.

Saturday, April 17, 1875

The singing school at the Upper Trappe, under the tutorship of Prof. Porter, is again in a flourishing condition, the Professor having taken that class for two more quarters. "Music hath charms," and to be caught in a trap (Trappe) by it is superb.

Saturday, July 10, 1875

DIED SUDDENLY - 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, he took a chair in the yard and after conversing a little while took from his pocket a bottle of whiskey and took a drink, 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 over 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 has been a man of a powerful constitution and great physical strength. He is about sixty years old and leaves a widow and the daughter to mourn his sad end.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Capt. James Morris was born in 1811 and, as noted here, died in 1875, making him, in fact, 64 at the time of his death. He married Sally Huffington, the second child of Jonathan Huffington, Jr., on June 16, 1834. Mrs. Morris was born on October 25, 1817. In writing my genealogy of the Huffington family I found her date of death as February 7, 1874. The above article casts serious doubt on that date, unless Capt. Morris had remarried following Sally Morris's death. The couple had one daughter, Annie, who was born in 1853 and died in 1936. The family lived on a farm on Upper Ferry Road, not far from the ferry. That farm had been purchased by Sally H. Morris's father in 1816.]

**Selected Items from the Allen
News Column of the Wicomico
News in 1899**

Thursday, March 30, 1899

Our local fishermen all making preparation for chasing herring and shad, the outlook is good for a profitable season.

The vaccination question is causing us some uneasiness as it is reported that all berry pickers must be vaccinated before going into the fields. There will be some dark work in such an undertaking.

Farmers in this part of the county are very much behind in their work; continued heavy rains have made it impossible to do any plowing and the only crop in sight is a crop of frogs.

R. G. Parsons, our well known blacksmith, has served his apprenticeship and goes to seek his fortune in foreign lands. We regret very much to lose Mr. Parsons and wish him success in his new venue.

Thursday, April 27, 1899

Our people had a curiosity Sunday in the shape of a boiling spring that was discovered a short distance from Allen on the main county road. The water from the spring is so warm that it will almost burn one's hands. Maybe Allen will become famous now that it has a hot spring.

Our farmers are making extensive preparations for spring planting. A larger acreage of white potatoes and tomatoes will be planted this year than for several years past. Mr. Goodall of the "Motherton" farm is preparing land for tomatoes. He will have a field of 80 acres in tomatoes, the product of which will be packed at his cannery, as will also a large acreage of sweet potatoes. Mr. Goodall has also contracted to can about 50,000 quarts of strawberries this season. The berries will be packed in five-gallon cans. Mr. Goodall has imported the first Hollanders to Wicomico, a colony of five arriving at

the farm last week. He seems pleased with them; they are reliable workers and will no doubt make good citizens.

Thursday, May 18, 1899

Strawberries have come at last, and in a few days the village will be overcrowded with the pickers. Every one will be so busy that they won't have time to gossip. Perhaps the berries will be a blessing, if they are not much profit financially.

There will be an entertainment given at the school house next Thursday evening, May 18. Admission ten cents. Proceeds for the benefit of the public school. All are invited. You will be entertained, as the children have been well trained by their able instructress, Miss Grace Allen.

Thursday, June 29, 1899

Blackberries are very plentiful now. Large quantities are shipped daily from this point.

The Children's Day service of Asbury Church will be held next Sunday evening, July 2.

The Literary Department of the Epworth League will give an entertainment at the church on Friday evening, June 30. Rev. Mr. Potts, of Salisbury, is expected to deliver a lecture. All are invited.

There will be a festival at Trinity Church, Collins Wharf, Thursday, June 29. Proceeds for benefit of the church.

The festival of Allen will be held will be held on Wednesday, July 19, instead of July 4, as before announced.

Thursday, July 6, 1899

The Children's Day service which was held last Sunday evening was a great

success. The children did unusually well and the church was crowded.

The Ladies Aid Society will meet at the parsonage next Thursday, July 6.

August 31, 1899

Herschel, the little son of Capt. W. A. Wallace, who has been so ill with spinal meningitis, we are happy to say is improving, and we hope will soon be out. [EDITOR'S NOTE: Sadly, Herschel Wallace did not recover fully from the disease. He was confined to a wheel chair for the rest of his life. He served as postmaster in Allen from 1926 until his death in 1946, and was an important presence in the village. He was also the first telephone operator in the village.]

Miss Elizabeth Collins, of Dover, is visiting her aunt, Mrs. O. L. Martin.

While Mr. and Mrs. Martin's daughter Vaughn was taking a spin Monday on her wheel, she had the misfortune to fall under a wagon loaded with wood. The mules and wagon passed over her, but fortunately she escaped with a few bruises, while her new "bike" was completely demolished.

The republican nominee for county commissioner of our town is doing quite a good bit of electioneering. But most of his "stumping" of evenings is done around the delightful "Everglades." [Editor's Note: I have no idea what this is referring to!]

Hurrah! for the democrats and the gallant fight they will make this fall.

2009 Membership

I would like to thank those who have already renewed their membership for this year. I invite those of you who have not done so to take the step. Your membership is important to us. You are our reason for being, and we need your support!

Individual Membership: \$15
Family Membership: \$20
Patron Membership: \$40
Sustaining Membership \$250

**THANK YOU AND BEST WISHES
FOR 2009!**