

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

Community Calendar

(Editor's Note: I encourage members to copy or cut out this calendar and put it on your refrigerator door to remind you later, when the Newsletter has been long ago put away!)

By March 1, 2014 - Payment of 2014 Allen Historical Society dues.

Saturday, March 29, 7:00am-10:00am, Allen Historical Society breakfast at the Community Hall on Collins Wharf Road. \$8 for adults; \$4 children under 12.

Saturday, April 5, Annual Village Roadside Clean-up, Allen Historical Society, Allen Lions Club and Allen Volunteer Fire Dept. All volunteers are welcome. Meet at the Allen Community Hall at 9:00am.

Saturday, April 12, 9:00am - 2:00pm, Allen-Asbury UM Church Spring Bazaar. Oyster fritters, chicken salad, hotdogs, baked goods, plants, handicrafts and more.

Friday, July 4, Annual Allen Lions Club Independence Day celebration at the Allen Community Hall.

January 27-March 14, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 1:00-4:00pm, Native Americans: First Contact on Lower Delmarva, An exhibit at the Nabb Gallery, Salisbury University.

January 27 - May 16, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 1:00-4:00pm, Delmarvans at War: The Civil War. Exhibit at the Nabb Gallery, Salisbury University.

In Memoriam

Our community has in recent months lost three persons whose own history was closely intertwined with the history of our village. Julia A. (Betsy) Hancock was a member of the Allen family, a direct descendant of Mary Whittington Allen, the village's first school teacher.

Mary Lee Pollitt Kolb's ancestry included the Pollitt, Malone and Huffington families whose roots in this community go back centuries. Her great-grandfather Caleb Twilley built Asbury Methodist Church in 1848. Her grandfather, Peter Malone, along with Benjamin Franklin Messick added the steeple to the church in 1885.

Zella Polk Holden came from a long line of Polks, beginning with Frederick Polk, who came as a slave from Africa at the end of the 18th century and served the Polk family of White Hall.

Their obituaries are below.

Julia A. (Betsy) Hancock



Julia Elizabeth Allen Hancock, a long-time member of our Society and a descendant of the Allen family, who gave our village its name, died on September 28, 2013. Known to us and many others as "Betsy," she was born on November 30, 1925, the daughter of the late Fulton White Allen and Lois Jennings Allen. Her paternal grandparents were William Francis Allen and Martha P. Taylor Allen.

Betsy graduated from Wicomico High School in 1942, and in 1947 received a degree in sociology from Hood College in Frederick, MD. She worked for over 19 years as a social worker with the Wicomico County Department of Social Services, retiring in 1984.

She loved square dancing and was president of the Ocean Waves Square Dance Club in 1990, 1995 and 1999. She attended National Square Dance Conventions in the United States and in Canada.

Betsy was a long-time member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church and sang in St. Cecelia's Choir as a child and in the Senior Choir for many years. She later attended St. Thomas Anglican Church. She worked as a volunteer, teaching English to Korean children and their families. In addition to her membership in the Allen Historical Society, she served on the board of the Preservation Trust of Wicomico County. She was also a member of Writer's Bloc and had her short stories published. Besides square dancing and local history, her interests included needlework, canoeing, gardening and hosting friends and family in her home. She also regularly attended concerts and plays. Her keen interest in local affairs led her to attend City and County Council meetings regularly and expressing her views in letters to the editor.

Betsy is survived by three daughters, Susan Van Duyne and her husband, Ron, of Atlanta; Mary Ellen Bradley and her husband, Andrew, of Snow Hill; and Cindy Weller and her husband, Ken, of Frederick,

MD. She is also survived by a brother, Walter Kendall Allen II of Salisbury; a cousin, William Francis Allen II, of Merritt Island, FL; two grandchildren, Hope Van Duyne and Joseph Weller; as well as by several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by two sisters, Dorothy Brittingham and Ruth Buck, and by her companion of 27 years, Edward Fooks.

A memorial service was held on October 22 at Holloway Funeral Home.

Zella Polk Holden



Zella Polk Holden died on December 7, 2013 at the age of 102. Born on December 3, 1911, she was the daughter of Henry and Martha Polk. She attended schools in Wicomico County, first in Allen and then in Salisbury. As a young woman she moved to New York, where she worked first as a nanny, but eventually in the fur trade as a skilled seamstress. She retired in 1976 and returned to Allen.

She continued to use her sewing skills in retirement, and also enjoyed working in her yard. She could be seen there well into her nineties!

Zella felt a strong connection to her family's rich history, and always showed interest in the Allen Historical Society, although she never joined. In 1998 she agreed to an oral history interview by your editor, and the results of that interview were published in the *Historian* in August of 2005. During that interview she expressed her love for this community in which she grew up: "You know Allen has always been beautiful. That's why we come back. We go away, but Allen is just a big old family, you know."

While her life was not always easy, Zella was invariably cheerful, and shared that cheer with all who came in contact with her with her winning smile and optimism.

She was a member of St. Francis De Sales Catholic Church in Salisbury. She was preceded in death by her only son, Joseph Polk, in 1962, and by her siblings John Tull, Agnes Johnson, Dare Polk Gunther, Ira Polk, Willie Polk, Pennock Polk, Bernadine Jones, and Jacob Polk, as well as by nieces, nephews and cousins. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery of Calvary Methodist Church in Fruitland on December 16, 2013.

Mary Lee Pollitt Kolb



Mary Lee Pollitt Kolb died Tuesday, January 21, 2014 at her home in Allen. She was born on May 14, 1918, the daughter of Jesse M. Pollitt and Agnes Malone Pollitt.

"Miss" Mary Lee, as she was known to your editor, was a charter member and strong supporter of this Society and was welcomed into our 1702 Society in 2008 in recognition of her long and faithful service to our mission. Her spirit of community service expressed itself in numerous other areas. She served as organist at Asbury United Methodist Church in Allen for over 70 years. She was also devoted to the Allen Volunteer Fire Department, having served as a lifetime member of their Auxiliary. When the fire department decided to retire its first fire truck, she insisted on purchasing it, and it has continued to be

an important part of the village's July 4th parades. She was a Past President of the Elks Auxiliary in Salisbury, and was a member of the Somerset County Historical Society. She was also a member of the United Methodist Women of Asbury UMC.

Mary Lee attended the village school in Allen and high school in Salisbury. After graduation she attended St. Mary's Female Seminary (now St. Mary's College) for two years.

She was preceded in death by her husband, David W. Kolb, Sr. and her son David W. "Butch" Kolb. She is survived by her daughter, Agnes Culp, and son-in-law John Culp, by her grandchildren David and Kiwako Culp of Tokyo, Japan; Andrew and Brandy Culp of Warwick, R.I., their sons Chase and Caleb; and Lea and Aaron Knarr and their daughter Marielle of Thorndale, PA. She is also survived by many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Mary Lee and her husband David and later son Butch operated the Peninsula Farm Market in this village for 50 years. Your editor was privileged to work there between college and graduate school and enjoyed the general good humor that prevailed there! She also served as the village postmaster for 35 years, appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. She retired from that position at the age of 84!

Mary Lee was devoted to her family and to her many friends, who responded to that devotion with their love and respect. She lived a life of gentle dignity, yet exceptional strength, maintaining her infectious humor and optimism even when she faced life's most difficult trials.

She set a high standard for all of us, and we will cherish her memory always!

Revolutionary Patriots of Allen

(Editor's Note: The following information was taken from *Revolutionary Patriots of Worcester and Somerset Counties, Maryland 1775-1783* by Henry C. Peden, Jr. Published in Westminster, MD by Willow Bend Books in 2000. My book *Changing Times...* was an additional source.)

James Adams was a Private in the Somerset Militia, the Wicomico Creek Company, 1778/1780. He was a grandson of Rev. Alexander Adams, rector of Stepney Parish and son of Stephen Adams. His home was situated on Passerdyke Creek about one and one-half miles from the mill. According to the 1798 MD Assessment his farm contained 438 acres and was valued at \$877.

William Adams was born in 1735. He attended the Maryland Convention in 1775-1776 and served in the Lower House of the Maryland legislature from 1762 until 1770 and from 1785 until 1788. His plantation on Wicomico Creek included a two-story brick dwelling, described as follows in the 1798 Maryland Assessment: "...with a valuable cellar also a Portico the whole length of building, Forty feet by Twenty feet... the whole finish'd in high order and annex to it a room of wood, One Story, Twenty feet by Sixteen feet in plain Order and old, cook room adjoining Eighteen by Sixteen feet of wood..." The outbuildings on his plantation included a carriage house, meat house, dairy, smoke house, barn, slave quarter and two small dwellings. His grave and that of his son, William Adams, Jr., are located on the property. The house was razed several decades ago, but was still standing in 1961, when your editor was able to walk through it with the permission of the owner, Mrs. Edna Muir. Although much deteriorated by reason of long abandonment, it was still an impressive structure at that time. William Adams died in 1795. The epitaph on his

grave stone states: "Sacred to the memory of William Adams, A valuable citizen and eminent for honor, integrity, and benevolence. Highly esteemed through life and universally lamented in death. Which happened on the 14th of December, 1795, in the seventieth year of his life."

Another prominent Adams brother was John, born in 1723. Like his brother, William, he attended the Maryland Convention in 1776 as a delegate from Somerset County. He also served as a Justice of the Orphans Court. He was commissioned on June 4, 1777 as Judge of the Court of Appeals for Somerset County. He supplied pork to Somerset County for the use of the military on June 4, 1781. Both John and William were businessmen as well. They, along with their younger brother Andrew, were the owners of the grist and saw mills in 1763 and of other local businesses, a store and a tavern, all located at the Trappe (later Allen). John Adams married Sarah Piper Dashiell, widow of Clement Dashiell and the daughter of Captain William Piper and his wife, Sarah Nutter Piper. John Adams died prior to 1792.

William Davis Allen (born August 21, 1749 - died c. 1800) served in the Somerset Militia in Captain Josiah Dashiell's Wicomico Creek Company, 1778/1780. He served as Quartermaster for Somerset from September, 1781 until February, 1782. He married Mary Jane Polk Whittington Strawbridge and died sometime prior to 1800.

George Bailey, Sr. served as a Private in the Wicomico Creek Company of the Somerset Militia, 1778/1780. Bailey patented a tract known as "Bailey's Chance" in 1742. That property is across the road from the current Asbury United Methodist Church.

John Christopher was a Private in the Somerset Militia, also the Wicomico Creek Company, 1778/1780. He took the Oath of Allegiance in Somerset County on February 27, 1778 before the Honorable Joseph

Venables. He was no doubt a descendent of the John Christopher who patented a tract called "Monsham" on July 3, 1683. The John Christopher under consideration here married Sarah Stanford on February 26, 1759. According to the 1783 assessment he was the owner of "Monsham," which consisted of 95 acres. Much of what is Allen today is on that original land patent.

William Christopher also served as a Private in the Wicomico Creek Company, 1778/1780. He may well have been John's brother, but I haven't been able to confirm that. His will was probated on December 28, 1789.

Joshua Disharoon (born in 1749) was a Private in the Wicomico Creek Company, 1778/1780. At the time of the 1798 Maryland Assessment he was living in the vicinity of the Trappe in a house described as a wooden dwelling measuring 32' X 16' and "unfinish'd inside." His property also included a log kitchen, a log smoke house, and a lumber house.

Isaac White served as Corporal in the Wicomico Creek Company of the Somerset County Militia, 1778/1800. He took the Oath of Allegiance on February 28, 1778 before the Honorable Joseph Venables. He was drafted from Somerset County on July 30, 1781 to serve in the Continental Army, but was subsequently excused. Isaac White married Elizabeth Christopher, the sister of William Christopher. He died prior to 1798. At the time of the 1798 Maryland Assessment, his widow, Elizabeth, was living at the Trappe on a property consisting of 47 acres, described as "situated at the Trap near the Wicomico Creek Mill." Her residence measured 20' by 16'. On November 16, 1791 she purchased additional property named "Mallone's Lott" from Peter Malone. The deed states that it bordered a tract called "Monsham," that belonged to the heirs of John Christopher (Somerset County Deeds, Liber I, folio 279).

Reminiscences of the Phillips Store in Allen in the 1930s

Louise Figgs

Editor's Note: Louise Horsman Figgs grew up at Trinity near Allen. She wrote me in March of 2013 some reminiscences, which, with her permission I am including here. She is remembering my grandfather, George Phillip's store. My grandfather had died in 1933, but my mother, Lillian Phillips Shivers, continued to operate the store until 1946.

Reading the Historical Society newsletter brought back several memories for me. First, helping your mother in the store during the summer of 1936 or 1937. The field hands were brought in at lunch time. They would get a snack, a soda and a few cents worth of cheese. Then they would take their food out to the porch and have lunch before returning to the fields.

I also remember having to crank the handle on the molasses barrel to fill the jar which the customer had brought in.

Also Miss Helen Porter would bring in some eggs and trade for groceries. Good Ole Days! *(Editor's Note: Helen Porter was my mother's first cousin and at the time lived with her father, Lee Porter, on a farm on the Allen Road in Somerset County. She taught typing and shorthand at Wicomico High School (later Senior High School) for many years. She died in 1982 at the age of 87.)*

I also remember the Siloam Camp Ground and parading around the circle. My brother Walter and I were there in June, 1945, when we heard that the Japanese had surrendered. We then went into Salisbury and joined the celebration on Main St.

It does a person good to remember some things.

(Editor's Note: Later, in April, 2013, Louise wrote some further memories.)

You have my permission to use my letter, if you think your readers would appreciate it. So few left to remember how the village was in the 30s.

I seem to remember a man that we called Uncle Sammy Williams. If my memory is right, he would dig graves with a shovel. Also he rang the church bell. Sometimes he would let some of the children go up in the belfry and watch him.

As for Miss Helen Porter, I was in her homeroom in High School.

Some Early Marriages in Allen & Environs

William Kibble married Hannah Stevens, 20 April 1736

William Anderson married Margaret Surman, 11 July 1748

Richard Stevens Bounds married Mary Stevens, 10 Aug. 1752

Andrew Adams married Mary Whittingham, 25 Feb. 1759

John Jones married Sarah Moore, 6 Sept. 1797

Lee Harcum married Elizabeth Polk, 17 Feb. 1801

Tubman Lowes married Sarah Dashiell, 30 April 1816

William Turner married Sally Disharoon, 4 June 1822

Robert Pollitt married Drucilla Hayman, 16 Jan. 1827

Stephen Drura married Lurena Fields, 22 July 1829

Elisha B. Harcum married Mary Hitch, 8 Dec. 1829

James Morris married Sally Huffington, 16 Jan. 1834

William J. Stewart married Martha E. Mezzick, 16 Nov. 1841

George Porter married Isabella A. Twilley, 18 May 1841

William Waller married Elizabeth A. Phoebus, 26 Oct. 1843

Henry L. Harcum married Elizabeth A. Allen, 20 Nov. 1844

Caleb Twilley married Esther (Hester) Huffington, 25 Jan. 1848

Stephen Drura married Mary (Eleanor) Mezzick, 19 Feb. 1850

Anthony Pollitt married Henrietta Huffington, 15 Jan. 1856

Robert J. Hitch married Sarah A. Phoebus, 11 Jan. 1865

Alpheus Porter married Letitia Fooks, 31 Jan. 1865

Benjamin F. Mezzick married Mary E. Porter, 19 April 1865

William Francis Allen married Eleanora Disharoon, 10 Oct. 1867

Anthony Pollitt married Mary V. Anderson, 11 March 1868

Simeon F. Malone married Annie L. Porter, 10 Nov. 1875

Ashland Francis Malone married Amy Brewington, 23 Aug. 1903

Allen News from the *Salisbury Advertiser*

April 2, 1936

Miss Francis Stout is home from Western Maryland College to spend her spring vacation with her parents, Mr. & Mrs. John Stout.

Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Bell and Miss Thelma Leigh Bell of Norfolk spent the weekend with Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Smith.

Mrs. Elizabeth Goldsmith, after a visit of several weeks with her parents, Mr. & Mrs. Jay Shivers, has returned to Washington, DC.

After spending a week with Mrs. Clifford Smith, Miss Eleanor Maddox has returned to her home in Centerville.

Mrs. Herbert Elzey was the hostess to the Monday Night Sewing Circle.

Frank Malone, a student at Western Maryland College, is spending the spring vacation with his father, W. Twilley Malone.

Mrs. Henry Waller of Salisbury is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Nichols.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. William H. Cooper, and Miss Helen Cooper spent Sunday with relatives in Templeville.

Mr. Paul Huffington of Trappe was a visitor here last week.

Miss Kathryn Pollitt spent the weekend in Salisbury with Miss Rachel Green. On Saturday night she was a guest at a party given by Miss Phyllis Williams.

Miss Alice Elzey of New York is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Elzey. The Elzeys had as supper guests on Wednesday Mr. and Mrs. Albert Hayman of Fruitland.

Mrs. Twilley C. Porter is visiting her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. George Bounds in Pocomoke.

Mr. E.K. Gunby has returned home after spending the winter in Florida.

Miss Mary Lee Pollitt will arrive from St. Mary's Seminary on Sunday to spend her spring vacation with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Pollitt. Mr. and Mrs. Pollitt will meet her in Washington.

Mrs. Virgil Adkins and five ladies from the Baptist Home for the Aged in Salisbury spent Monday afternoon with Miss Annie Robertson. Miss Robertson will celebrate her 90th birthday next Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Harlan Robertson of Pocomoke were Friday evening guests of Miss Annie Robertson and Miss Addie Griffith.

April 30, 1936

Mrs. L.F. Martin and Mrs. Reetta Wendt were joint hostesses to the Monday Night Sewing Circle.

The final meeting for the year of the P.T.A. was held at the schoolhouse on Tuesday night.

Elder and Mrs. H.C. Ker of Delmar and Mrs. Estelle Collier of Quantico were visitors to Miss Annie Robertson on Sunday afternoon.

Mrs. Gerald Taylor of Bloxom spent the weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Hartman.

A.F. Malone spent a part of the week in Penns Grove, NJ.

Jesse Pollitt was in Philadelphia and Trenton last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Slocum, Miss Julia Newhouse, Miss Pauline Phillips, Miss Martha Huffington, J. Walter Huffington of Baltimore were visitors here Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Elzey had as Sunday night supper guests, Mrs. L.F. Martin, Mrs. Reetta Wendt, Misses Sadie Waller, Mildred Whayland, Pauline Whayland and Mr. L.A. Whayland.

Miss Ethel Malone and W. Twilley Malone entertained at a birthday dinner for their sister, Mrs. Jesse Pollitt on Sunday. Covers were laid for ten.

The Ladies Aid Society will be entertained at the home of Mrs. Clifford Huffington on Friday night.