

# Gem of the Mountains

Winter 2013 • Edition 2

The Boonton Historical Society & Museum



## A Century of Stage and Screen in Boonton.

**A** new exhibit opened on Boonton Day at the Boonton Museum! Come and see us, we are open every Sunday from noon until 4:00 pm.

This exhibit features silent movie shorts of Burns and Allen, in addition to penny candy, contemporary posters and theatre programs and props.

Over the years, Boonton has frequently been host to the entertainment industry. In the days of vaudeville and silent movies, Boonton's Main Street theatres welcomed such luminaries as Laurel and Hardy, Burns and Allen and a host of vaudeville acts and characters. In more recent years, Boonton was the venue for movie making, TV advertising and episodes of the well-known Sopranos TV series. Museum curator Daniel Clark and a volunteer team including

Jennifer Coultas & Mary Lynn Rago have consolidated fascinating images & articles from the museum's archives and objects on loan to give a glimpse of Boonton's Iron Town history's softer side – its love affair with vaudeville, the silver screen, and television.

Although the grand theatres of Main Street belong to a bygone era, live performances on Main Street are not a thing of the past. The recently opened Maxfield's on Main features live jazz performances and the Darress Theatre regularly shows vintage movies and sponsors live performances and musical events. Please stop by the Boonton Museum and experience a bit of Boonton's golden age of stage & screen. Unlike the venues highlighted in this exhibit ... no tickets are required for your very own 'front row seat'!

### A Century of Stage & Screen in Boonton



A new exhibit opening ...  
**Boonton Day  
Sunday  
Sept. 29th**  
12 to 4  
open every Sunday  
from then on, 1 to 4

Come by and see  
the softer side of this  
iron town at the historic  
**John Taylor House**  
210 Main Street

**Free Admission ... Always!**

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## A Century of Stage and Screen in Boonton.

“In the days of vaudeville and silent movies, Boonton’s Main Street theatres welcomed such luminaries as Laurel and Hardy, Burns and Allen and a host of vaudeville acts and characters.”



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# Small Town Back Yard

By Rick Wendt

Most memories of adventure first started in my back yard. My house sat on a hill overlooking the river. You could view a long expanse of the river they call the "Pond". It was made when they dammed up the river by Grace Lord Park and caused the river to widen and become a placid stretch of water. Filled with water lilies and alive with the creatures of the water. The Pond Bridge was also in view as it carried Main St. across the river on its downhill run through town.

When I say my adventures started there I mean my first memories of the outdoors. We had a large yard as my Grandparents lived next door. It gently sloped towards the river. Then in 3 cascading steps it ended in a line of trees and rocks at the water's edge.

As a young boy this yard was my world. From driveway to flag pole was my border. If I ventured beyond that the 'Wrath of Mom' would ensue!! But there was plenty there to bide my time. I would ride my tricycle back and forth on that driveway racing at Indy or flying with The Black Sheep. Forever in a struggle with villains or aiding our country against invaders both foreign and domestic. I saved the world many times. When I grew tired of that there was the Snow-Ball tree that I would climb and climb up to the clouds and sit amongst its branches watching the world far below.

Then there was a rock pile along the fence that I would clamber up and restack or tumble over crashing large avalanches down the side of a mountain and saving the villages' before destruction. I could be Hercules or Godzilla as I lifted and crashed those stones together.

When I was very young we had a garden there that covered most of our side of the yard. Corn and potatoes, beans and greens, pumpkins and peppers grew there

each year. We had apple trees and a grape arbor on Pop Pop and MeMa's side, a Butternut tree by the river and a Big Hickory tree at Mr. Pickett's that dropped its nuts on our side. At the end of our drive Mom would plant her Tomatoes. Every year I would turn that earth and those 'maters' would go in there. She would tend them each day and their bounty of bright red orbs would begin to grace our dinner table as heaping plates of slices covered in salt and pepper slathered with globs of Miracle Whip. Dad would relish these with comments of praise with each bite.



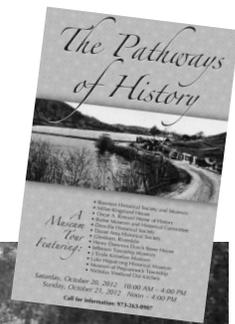
I think it was around 1960 I went with Dad up to Uncle Joe's house up on the hill. We went out in the wood behind his house and dug up a Maple. We brought it home and planted it out between the Snow Ball bushes and Pop Pop's Picnic Patio. There it took hold and grew. Each spring stretching higher and higher towards the sun. Making more and

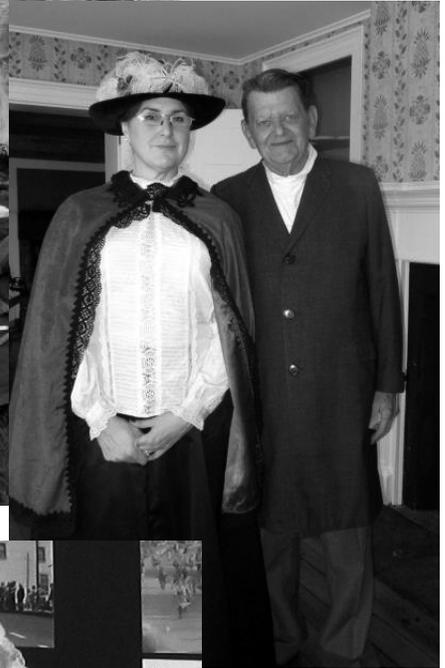
more shade each year as its canopy spread ever further and fuller. And every fall adding a bright splash of color to nature's pallet of joyful explosion. A reminder of times passing and the growth of those in its life.

As I aged I would then set up tents down towards the river. We would spend nights frogging and firefly hunting. Watching the skies at night dreaming of times past and times yet to come. The stars bright in that pitch black of night that now is so hard to find. Snuggled deep into our sleeping bags. No fears other than our own demons of the mind.

When I grew and went away I always looked forward to the sight of my home as I came toward the Pond Bridge I would look across the river and you could see the house. The sentry of my youth standing on that hill. Watching for me. And Mom and Dad sitting under that Maple looking over, but mostly back, on the what had become of their family. And all the dreams viewed from a Small Town Back Yard...

# Pathways of History 2013







# FACEBOOK News

Join us at [facebook.com/groups/BoontonHistoricalSociety/](https://facebook.com/groups/BoontonHistoricalSociety/)

Our readers will recall that Rick Wendt has been a frequent contributor to our Facebook group and to our articles in Gem of the Mountains. With more than 700 members and growing daily, our Facebook group is very active with news, photographs, and historical facts from Boontonites at home and abroad. For those of you who haven't caught the social media bug, we have included some posts from our Facebook

group. We hope you'll join us on Facebook to catch up with old friends and chat about old times. For those of you who are Facebook friends, we love hearing from you. By the way, we're also on Pinterest at [pinterest.com/bntnhistsoc](https://pinterest.com/bntnhistsoc) and Twitter @BntnHistSoc. and we had a dedicated Facebook page for this year's Pathways Museum Tour event, [facebook.com/2013PathwaysMuseumTourNJ](https://facebook.com/2013PathwaysMuseumTourNJ).

## From postings by Ryan Dawson:

*E. B. Dawson, my great, great grandfather was a Civil War veteran. He lived on Dixon Avenue.*



*Ray Dawson Boonton Bike Champ and my great-grandfather. (see Gem of the Mountains – Winter 2012)*

*Ray in the 1940's. Bike Champ to trial attorney*

## J. H. DAWSON Practical Embamer & Funeral Director

Graduate of Taylor's New York School for Embalming.

All calls Day and Night Promptly attended to.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.



Telephone Call, 9 B., BOONTON, N. J.

*J. Herbert Dawson, owner, with his father David Dawson of Dawson Funeral Home on Main Street.*

**E. B. DAWSON CO.**  
Headquarters for  
**Household and Kitchen Supplies,**  
**Farm Tools and Supplies,**  
**Garden Seeds,**  
In fact, everything in a first-class Hardware Store.

Labels in the advertisement include: Roller Scales, Carving Sets, Electric Irons, Bissell's Vacuum Sweepers, Kitchen Ware, Washing Machines, Dish Brushes, Ice Cream Freezers, Electrically Carpet Sweepers, Household Scales, Coaster Washboards, and Calico Grinders.

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## From postings by Peter Wendt:

This old postcard picture was taken from the first Pond Bridge, looking over towards Lake Avenue. The barn on the river's edge on the left burned down. That was at the Looker's property. Flooring from that barn was later used to make some of the dock that we all remember at Sikoras. The canoe is adjacent to what became the public beach. Many memories created on the river, learned to swim there, learned to skate there, learned to fall through the ice there, row a boat, skip a



stone, catch a fish, paddle a canoe, catch a frog, turtle, snake, etc., or just float away lazily in a tube. We were a combination Mark Twain on the Mississippi and the Little Rascals. It was our river and it gave us all character exploring its reaches, however limited. I miss those days.....

In addition to 14 people who "liked" Peter's post, this beautiful old postcard promoted the following conversation:

**Allen Voorhees (from Florida)** spent many hours on the river myself..great memories

**Ed Duffield (from North Carolina)** I've never seen this one. Looking at the ramp from the barn, I wonder what they hauled in and out of there.

**Peter Wendt** That ramp was for boats to go in and out. There was a beach there for a while and certain winters they were able to cut ice from the river to distribute and store there. The cove area the way that we all remember it became laden with silt and debris. It was never cleaned out to this day. I was told that swimming there was great and the Hornick property had bath houses and a concession....back in the day.

**Allen Voorhees** I vividly remember my grandfather pulling lilly pads from the river so he could fish

**Ed Duffield** Yeah, I would have guessed ice house. It's neat to see the old buildings along the river down this way that were used as ice houses, and to think of what an industry that was. Cutting ice way up north, hauling it to the deep south, to store in thick-walled buildings for use year-round. Talk about logistics...

**Allen Voorhees** I vividly remember my grandfather pulling lilly pads from the river so he could fish

**Peter Wendt** Yes Allen, so do I. I even remember him breaking up the early ice freeze so that he could fish too. We used to give him heck from our back yards. He did spend countless hours weeding and de-mucking that area. It was always briefly better for his efforts.

**Allen Voorhees** great memories and we would some times fish off the shore behind Boutons

**Allen Voorhees** believe you caught a five pound bass back there

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## From postings by Steve Stross:

**Steve Stross (Boonton)** Boonton ice skating rink. where the town hall building is now.I used to ice skate there.

**Neil Donovan** Me too...

**Stephen Weeks (North Carolina)** i loved skating there i still have the scar from a fall

**Peter S. Hubert** I loved it... lived right around the corner...



**Harold Reese (Las Vegas)** in the spring and summer it doubled a baseball field

**Allen Voorhees** wonderful memories

**Thomas McDonald (Butler)** wow the ice skating rink at the 'old tennis courts'

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## FACEBOOK News

### From postings by Peter Wendt:

20 people “liked” this post and we also received the following comments:



**Gil Schnabel (Colorado)** This is great, Peter! I can't remember who built the original, but I think he ended up building others for towns around the country.

**Carolyn L. Piscitello** Ernie's uncle, Joe Marcello, drove the trolley for a while.

**Brian Lawn** I think it might still be down at the Town garage

**Tracy Keane Andre'** They should break it out for the parade!

**Sue Lewis Oldham (Florida)** My neighbor, Elaine Dubarry was the driver.

**Janet M Bennett** It was a lot of fun when whoever was driving responded to any and all waves en route by ringing the bell. It was particularly nice for me because with Elaine Dubarry driving I felt comfortable letting my daughter Kathryn take the run from Riverside to ShopRite and back - and once in a while even arrange for her to be dropped off at State Pharmacy to pick up a prescription or something. I'd pick her up after that. It gave her a good taste of independence and freedom.

**Emma Jane Hilton-Klingener** I think Dunham on Division St. built it.

**Peter Wendt** He would be a likely suspect...

**Will DeRoberts** I still have the original schedule from that trolley somewhere

**Lloyd Wisdom** It was a Les Dunham build

**Lilaine Hartmann Freeman (California)** Awesome pic! Thx for posting!

**Joanne Tweed Pace** I liked the trolley it gave the town character.

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### From postings by Ernie Piscitello:



**Chris Voorhees (Rhode Island)** where is this looks lokes church street

**Bill Edwards** Very strange that I count 54 stars on that flag ...

**Charles Hopkins (Indiana)** I count 54 too? looks

like Martanciks to me.

**Kathy Creatura Rodriguez (Boonton)** Definitely Mechanic St but almost looks like Church St

**Janet M Bennett (Boonton)** The flag looks like a drawing, not a manufactured cloth one.

**Ernie Piscitello (North Carolina)** I hadn't noticed, but I count 54 stars, too. Also, it looks like the flag is on a rope between a column on the upper porch and the tree.

**Janet M Bennett** Look at the shape and style of the stars though - looks as though somebody drew them by hand - maybe a kid?

**Ernie Piscitello** Comparing the City Hotel shown on the postcard above with the present day building, it would appear that the main building, including the roof, was extended in brick to include the porch area. Possibly by Mr Zucker?

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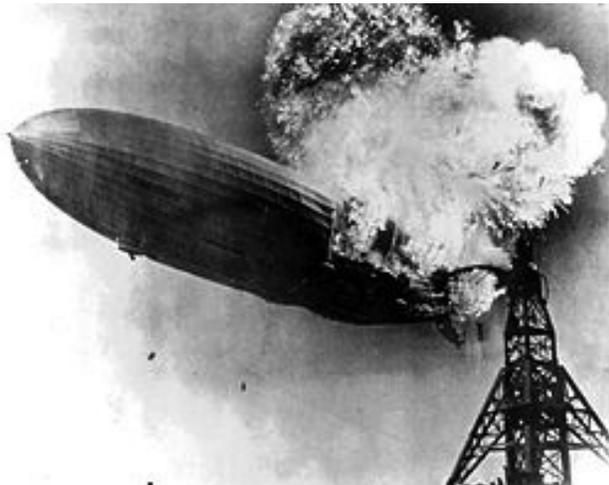
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# Looking Back

Researching old newspapers and photographs allows us to step back in time to discover the tenor and mores of years gone by: the comings and goings of social Boonton; trade and commerce; entertainment and education. We see buildings razed and buildings erected, the recording of local, national and world events, all woven into the historical fabric of our town as it has grown and developed into the vibrant community it is today. Here, spanning some 60 years in our local papers, are some items and pictures that made the news.

**10-9-1936**

## HINDENBURG GLIDED OVER BOONTON THIS MORNING



The Hindenburg glided over Boonton this morning at about 8 o'clock, passing directly over the old Silk Mill in the direction of the Jersey City Reservoir and proceeding toward Bloomfield Avenue. This route was not scheduled, for latest reports indicated that it would not be in this vicinity. The Zeppelin is making a 618 mile cruise over New Jersey, New York and New England with a group of oil Company officials. The Hindenburg had landed on Wednesday night at Lakehurst after a 55½ - hour trip from Europe, and it is planned it will leave tonight for its home port at Frankfort-on-Main, Germany.

*Editor's Note:* The Hindenburg was destroyed by fire 7 months later on May 6, 1937

**7-27-1900**

## HAD TO LEAVE CHINA

During the past week, Mr. & Mrs. H. C. Jenkins, of this place, have received letters from their daughter, Mrs. James B. Cochran, who with her husband has been engaged in missionary work there, saying that on account of the troubles in that country they had to take a hurried departure, leaving all their household effects behind on account of poor transportation facilities. They went to Kobe, Japan, where they were warmly welcomed by U.S. Consul S. S. Lyon, formerly of Boonton. They expect to stay there for the present.

*Editor's Note:* The Boxer Rebellion took place in China between 1899 and 1901. The movement opposed foreign imperialism and christianity

## PROCLAMATION

As mayor of the Town of Boonton, I, William R. Booth, do hereby proclaim that commencing with April 21, 1921, at 9 o'clock P.M. The official time of the Town shall be advanced one hour, and said Town shall be on

**FOR SERVICE ! APPEARANCE ! LOW PRICE !**  
**1911 MODELS.**

<p><b>E-M-F 30</b> 5 Passenger Touring Car, <b>\$1,000.00</b> F. O. B. Factory.</p>	<p><b>Flanders 20</b> Racy Roadster, <b>\$700.00</b> F. O. B. Factory.</p>
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**Agents, . . . Boonton Auto Garage,**  
Myrtle Avenue, opposite D., L. & W. Depot,  
Telephone 152-L. 4-20-1911 **BOONTON, N. J.**

*The model to have in 1911*

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# Looking Back



Removing trolley lines on Main Street, c 1951

so-called Daylight Saving Time to correspond with the time to become operative in the City of New York on said day.

Said Daylight Saving Time shall continue to be operative from said date until further Proclamation or Resolution of the Board of Aldermen.

W. R. BOOTH, Mayor  
Dated April 18th, 1921



The original gazebo.

2-28-1878

As on offset to the winter of 1829-1830, which sur-

passed this in mildness, they are now telling of the year 1816, known as :the year without Summer;” the winter that year was unusually mild but ice and snow were common in May and June, and ice formed in New York, July 5th, to the thickness of a window pane. In August ice formed half an inch thick and in September a quarter inch. October was cold and ice, and in November was good sleighing. There were no crops worth speaking of in the Middle or New England states and farmers paid \$5 a bushel for seed corn the next spring.”

8-1-1889

## A Poetical Glance at Two of Our Business Places

A. Kingsland, cor. Brook 7 & Birch Streets Choice Meats and Poultry

### FIRST-CLASS HARNESS

—AT THE—  
NEW HARNESS STORE,

IN KITCHEL'S BUILDING,  
NEXT TO P. O.

PRICES REASONABLE!

Also, all Articles Usually Kept in a  
HARNESS STORE.

Repairing in a Durable Manner.

When in need of anything, or any work  
in this line, give me a call.

**R. D. HEATH.**

September 19th, 1889.

Fresh steaks, chops and cutlets,  
Nice roasts of beef and veal,  
Are at Abraham Kingsland's Market  
To serve each daily meal;  
Kept by Mr. Kingsland  
In vaults both clean and new,  
Everything ice cold and sweet  
In readiness for you.  
He keeps on hand the choicest  
Of mutton, pork and lamb;  
And fine corned beef and sausage,  
And sugar coated hams;  
He buys the best stock only,  
Right from the country yards,  
And to all who meat desires  
He sends his kind regards.

R. D. Heath, Main Street, Harness Manufacturer, Bridles, Bankets And Whips

Mr. Heath is willing  
And ready to explain  
His devices for harness straps  
And for bckling the rein.  
And that his fine harness,  
Either single o double,  
He'll fit to your animal  
Without the least trouble.  
He gives special attention  
To fine repairing,  
Such as collars and harness  
That are constantly wearing.  
And our readers are all  
Thusly invited  
For the intention is  
Than none shall be slighted.

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**The Boonton Weekly Bulletin October 7, 1915**

- Work has begun on Samuel Taylor's residence in Church Street.
- Fashionable clothing for men and young men at Ben Greenman's.
- Excavation has been started for the building to be built by Howell and Kimbal adjoining the Harris Lyceum.
- First-class moulders wanted. Apply to M. Hoagland's Sons Co., Rockaway, NJ.
- The interior of the Bijou Theater of this place will be changed for the gymnasium of the Y.M.C.A.

**12-19-1930**

**Citizen's attention !**

In order to avoid the duplication of work and at the same time have one central place where those seeking employment might leave their names and those who seek employ might go, Mr. Samuel G. Harris, treasurer of the Town of Boonton, has very kindly consented to conduct this office, which might be called a clearing house for the unemployed, both male and female. From this date on all those desiring to place their names on the list of those seeking employment will kindly call at the office of the Town of Boonton, 714 Main Street, Boonton, N.J.

The establishment of this service to the unemployed is in furtherance of the good work started by the College Club of Mountain Lakes and Boonton, however I feel this is a condition which the Town should be called to administer and not its citizens.

To all of our citizens who feel that they can in any way give employment to those out of work, I earnestly request that you call first at our Town offices and see if someone who has registered there might be able to serve you in the manner you desire.

OSCAR P. MYERS - Mayor



**3-22-1932**

**Chief Vanderhoof Asks Cooperation in Locating Lindergh Baby**

As Chief of Police, I am asking the cooperation of every man, woman and child in an effort to help locate the Lindbergh child. Any information that you may ave or hear about please get in touch with the Police.

I doubt very much if there is a person in this community that would do such a low down thing as to steal a baby.

I feel that every effort should be mae to restore the infant to its parents.

All information will be treated as Confidentially, if so desired.

ELI VANDERHOOF - Chief of Police, Boonton, N. J.

**5-5-1939**

**"Thousands" View Industrial Exhibit Sponsored by Boonton B. & L. Ass'n**

"Boontree" and "Boontex", both named for Boonton, the town in which they are manufactured by Wecoline Products, Inc., are featured in this company's exhibition in the Industrial Exhibit held through May 13th in the Charles E. Estler Store at 507 Main Street, Boonton. Noticeable on the Wecoline Products, Inc., Boontree, a vegetable salad oil, and Boontex, a standard cooking shortening, a further references are the labels on the cans reading: "Factory at Boonton, New Jersey."

Other products manufactured by Wecoline in Boonton are Jersey, a bread and rolls shortening; Hyscor, a cake shortening and various oils, utilized in numerous ways - one makes popcorn yellow; also Cobee hard butter, which is used, among others, in Baby Ruth candy. Baby Ruth bars were first introduced in 1921.

Naphtholene exhibits its soap powder, dishwashing powder, among which is Naphtholene and Mar-Vin; also Blulone, a laundry bluing.

*Continued on back page.*



# The Boonton Historical Society & Museum

210 Main Street, Boonton, New Jersey 07005  
Phone: (973) 402-8840 • Web site: [www.boonton.org](http://www.boonton.org)  
E-mail address: [Boontonhistory@boonton.org](mailto:Boontonhistory@boonton.org)

Open Sundays from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
and by appointment.

Andy Barlak	.....	Museum Building
Jennifer Coultas	.....	Editor, Gem of the Mountains
Daniel Clark	.....	Exhibit Coordinator
Jenny Darlington	.....	Recording Secretary
Candace Grant	.....	Social Media Coordinator
Tammie Holloway	.....	Gift Shop Manager
Jayne Januszanis	.....	Walking Tour Coordinator
James Kuhnert	.....	Graphic Design
Anne McDonald	.....	Publicity
Mary Lynn Rago	.....	Special Events
Gary Rintz	.....	Special Events
Ian Rolston	.....	Special Events
Emily Thompson-Schweer	.....	Volunteer Coordinator
Monica Scozzafava	.....	Archivist
Eric Wallin	.....	Membership



*Opinions expressed in the Gem of the Mountains are not necessarily those of the society.*

*Continued from page 11:*

## Looking Back

Boonton Moulding – few would believe that so many articles are actually produced in Boonton Moulding Company’s plant, but, see the display and you will be convinced. Among the articles shown are pen holders, towel racks, ash trays, bottle caps, cosmetic boxes, thermometers, toasters, small radios, men’s toilet sets, medicine cabinets, tops for carbonated bottles, etc.

**The Boonton Building & Loan Association**  
**Boonton, N. J.**

The Oldest Financial Institution in Boonton. It was organized May 17th, 1889. During the past Twenty years the Association has financed and made it possible for its members to own over Four Hundred Homes. The amount of capital used for the building of these homes was over \$1,500,000.

<b>N. L. BRIGGS</b> <i>Pres.</i>	<b>CHARLES A. NORRIS</b> <i>Treas.</i>
<b>E. A. FISHER</b> <i>Secy.</i>	<b>GEORGE E. FISHER</b> <i>Asst. Secy.</i>

Some items produced by Boonton Moulding.

