

THE STORY OF MIDDLESEX

"The air is healthful, the soil fruitful..."

"It is the handsomest and pleasantest country that man can behold..."

So wrote two of the very earliest visitors to the lands in the Raritan River valley---a territory which many, many years later was to yield numerous bustling, thriving towns and villages, including the Borough of Middlesex.

Middlesex is a sibling of Piscataway Township, from which the borough separated in 1913, just 50 years ago. But the history of Middlesex actually goes back many years, and is entwined in the history of Piscataway Township.

Piscataway originally included an immense tract of land across the Raritan River as well as on the northeast. The territory was bought from the Indians in 1664, according to the earliest authentic history gathered from public records. The purchasers were John Bailey, Daniel Denton, Luke Watson and others, who obtained a patent from Governor Nicolls, acting under the Duke of York, afterward James II of England.

The Indians living along the Raritan River at that time were a peaceful group known as the Naraticons or Raritangs, later identified as the Raritan Indians.

A Dutch official, Cornelius van Tierhoven, spoke of the Raritan Valley in a letter dated March 4, 1650.

"The district inhabited by a nation called the Raritangs is situated on a fresh water river that flows through the center of the lowland which the Indians cultivated...It is the handsomest and pleasantest country that man can behold...Through this valley pass large numbers of all sorts of tribes on their way north or east; This land is, therefore, not only adapted for raising grain and rearing cattle, but also very convenient for agriculture and trade."

Piscataway was settled about 1665. The early associates of Piscataway came principally from the region watered by the Piscataqua River, which now is a portion of the boundary line of Maine and New Hampshire. Piscataqua also was the name of an Indian

tribe in Maine.

The original grantees were Hugh Dunn, Hopewell and Benjamin
->Hull, Charles and John ^GFilman, Robert Dennis, John Smith and John
Martin, who came from Piscataqua. These men were granted the right
as associates on December 18, 1666, and they conferred upon the
township the name of their former home. This area was known as
Piscataqua for a considerable period after its settlement.

Part of the township was settled by the Pilgrims and Puritans
from Piscataqua, New England, and much of the land was settled by
the Dutch, who came principally from Long Island in the early
1680's. There also came Quakers from Pennsylvania and Baptists in
search of new homesteads in an undeveloped territory filled with
promise.

The condition of affairs was well illustrated in a Scotchman's
letter to his brother in Edinburgh. Extracts from the letter ^{as}
-> retold in the "History of Middlesex County, New Jersey," Volume
I, follows:

"He writes that the Indians are nothing to fear, the country
being as peaceable as anywhere else. There are no bears, nor
ravenous beasts except wolves, which are harmless; snakes are not
to be noticed, as they give timely warning of an attack by the
rattling of their tails.

"Oxen are so well taught they go sometimes in a plough or
cart without horse or without a gad-man. Horses are as cheap as
in Scotland. The air, he writes, is healthful, the soil fruitful,
Indian corn yielding commonly two or three hundred fold and oats
twenty fold.

"He informs his brother that there were several reasonably
good towns in the province of more than eighty families each, that
they were no poor people, and the liquor they used was cider, as
there was a great store of fruit. The old inhabitants, he states,
are a most careful and infrugal people, their profession most
part Protestants, a few Quakers, and some Ana-baptists, but there
was a lack of preachers and he hoped his brother would be
instrumental in filling this want."

THE INDIAN 'HIGHWAY'

The first "highways" in the area were the product of Indian labors. Long before the white man settled here, the Indians were using River road as a main trade route.

This river trail is described in old deeds as Indian Path. Over this road, the Indians carried their furs to trade with the Dutch in New York. The trail later became the dividing line between Middlesex and Somerset counties.

The historic Raritan River also was given its name by the Indians. Raritan means "forked rivers."

A DEED IS DRAWN

Piscataway's early records date back to June 25, 1675. They are a miscellaneous collection of land grants, surveys, deeds, marks of sheep and cattle, the first town officers, plans for laying out highways and building cart bridges, a list of early settlers and records of prices paid for the killing of wild animals.

The first land grant was registered for Judiah Higgins on January 1, 1682. The original document, with all its odd legal language and spelling, reads:

"By the Towne of Piscataway and was layed out to ye said Higgins the 24th of ye monthe by John Longstaff, Benjamin Hull and Godferry Mannin, and was bound as followeth.

"Beginning N. pole marked on four sides by ye fill by ye side of ye Mr. Smalleys house from thence downed the swamps 20 rod to a stake marked on four sides from thence runnings. East sixteen rod to a small bush marked on four sides and from thence runnings Northly thence running south west sixteen
→ rod nod to ye stake where they first begun in all two acres---

"June 25th 168 2/3 Regestered

"Lieut Edward Slather

"Towne Clarke."

FENCES CAME LATER

Cattle rustlin' and horse thievery apparently weren't the concern only of ranchers in the old West. Way back in the late 1600's and early 1700's, when Middlesex still was a part of Piscataway Township, farmers in the area kept a joint log in which they registered their stock.

This log, which can be found among Piscataway's ancient township records, is filled with the "ear marks" of cattle. Each owner's name and the ear mark of his stock were recorded in the book to prevent mistakes that might arise in identifying the stock. Such means of identification were necessary, since, at that time, there were no inclosures for stock. Horses, cattle and swine fed at will upon hundreds of acres.

Registered along with the farmer's name was a rough drawing of the head of his animal. These drawings showed the creature's ears to be slit, clipped or bored, whatever the marking happened to be.

Notice of an authentic registration filing, as served upon one of the former town clerks, follows:

"Came to the Plantation of the Subscriber about the first of November a black calf, one white spot on the Belley, no certificates, mark supposed to be coming two years old, but small for that age, the towne clerk will please to mark it."

"Isac Brown."

Other stock registrations, recorded in the log by two other clerks in Piscataway, follows:

"Timothy Chandler his mark for cattel and hogges ass a cross on the off Ear and a Slit on the under side of Noarse cam entered this 21st of February 168 7/8

"Isaac Smalley Towne Clarke."

' "Thomas fitzrandell Junior his mark for catel, Hōrsese, and
hogges a half Penny on the uper sides of ech ear. "The 27th Agust
1712

John Melle n Clarke."

TO PROTECT FROM GOUGERS

The poorer folk of early Piscataway were watched over protectively by their town leaders. Prices of food staples were recorded in a book "for the poor of ye town." The following shows the prices on November 15, 1759:

	(pound)	(shilling)	(pence)
2 Waggon Load of Wood.....	0	6s.	0d.
1 Bushel of Rie.....	0	3	6
14 lbs. of Flower.....	0	2	6
One-half Gallon of Mollasses.....	0	2	0
1½ lbs. of Butter.....	0	1	4"

"COCKPIT OF THE REVOLUTION"

The earth rumbled and quaked under the roar of cannons and the tramping of soldiers' heavy boots. Skies blazed red from ravaging fires, while raiding parties swooped down on farms. Fear, suspicion and daring patriotism mingled among the villagers. These were the days of the War for Independence.

Although Middlesex had yet to be recognized as a borough, its early residents lived through this historic era. During the Revolutionary War, the nearby terrain was the scene of fierce battles. Historians called this area the "cockpit of the Revolution."

General Howe's pillaging British Army came in the Spring of 1777 in an unsuccessful attempt to lure Washington's Revolutionary Army out of the Watchung Mountains. Cornwallis and Howe encamped to the south in New Brunswick, while General Washington dug in at Middlebrook, north of Middlesex, throughout the months of May and June.

From atop Washington Rock, Washington used to watch New York Harbor to see in which direction Lord Howe and his troops would be sailing.

The march of the British soldiers and their hired abettors, the Hessians, through Piscataway to New Brunswick and their later retreat were marked by devastation. The soldiers of the Crown overran villages and plundered farms without mercy. According to early records, about 130 farm houses were plundered and 30 homes, mills and barns burned in Piscataway.

THE STAGE PASSED THROUGH

Always famous as the highway of trade and travel has been Bound Brook Road and Union Avenue, or Route 28, which runs the length of Middlesex Borough. In Colonial days, stage coaches ran across it from Philadelphia to New York.

"Before the era of railroads," reports an old journal, "traveling between New York and Philadelphia increased to such an extent that 32 stages were frequently run each way per day to carry passengers."

A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

A crowd of local residents flocked to the Lincoln railroad station back in 1893 to glimpse a distinguished passenger.

Passing through the village of Lincoln on March 2, 70 year ago, was a train carrying President Grover Cleveland, then President-elect. Newspaper accounts related that the scheduled train drew crowds to the railroad stations in Bound Brook and Lincoln, which were decorated with flags "in honor of the event."

But, alas, "no stop was made and the cars moved too swiftly for anyone to catch more than the merest glimpse," reported a local news journal.

ONE MAN'S DREAM

The bustling industrial strip along Lincoln Boulevard is the fulfillment of an ambitious dream of one Silas Dewey Drake, a far-sighted industrialist and aggressive real estate developer who idolized Abraham Lincoln.

Just before the turn of the century, Drake, a Civil War veteran from Elizabeth, organized the New Jersey Mutual Realty Company and purchased two farms from John D. Voorhees. Drake sectioned his land into streets and lots for industry.

On Memorial Day, May 30, 1898, Drake officially named this southern section of the borough Lincoln, in honor of the man he greatly admired. On this day, Drake and other business and civic leaders unveiled a bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln in the railroad park on Lincoln Boulevard.

The industrial potentials of Lincoln were advertised by Drake in a real estate journal, which sold for two cents a copy. Drake erected the first building which contained his office. This building now is part of the present railroad station in Lincoln. Three factories which followed were the Hollingshead, Wirtz and Grauert Company, Franklin Paint Works, and Star Incubator and Brooder Company.

To foster development of this industrial section, convenient mailing facilities were necessary. In 1889 a Post Office was opened in Lincoln, as a result of the efforts of Drake, prominent builder Daniel Whitlock, Congressman Benjamin F. Howell and U.S. Senator John Kean.

The postal facilities were established in a grocery store owned by Whitlock, who became the first postmaster. Also a stockholder in the New Jersey Mutual Realty Company, Whitlock built many of the original buildings in Lincoln.

The Post Office changed locations and postmasters many times during the succeeding years. In 1915, Michael Eganey, the railroad station master in Lincoln, was named postmaster. The Post Office then was moved to a corner of the railroad station.

Today the modern, efficient Post Office is housed in a new, modern building at Marlboro and Hawthorne Avenues.

Lincoln once was the most concentrated section in an area composed principally of farmland. Other sections developed before Middlesex became a borough were Dewey Park, Beechwood Heights and East Bound Brook, which was developed by H. C. Pierce and was later know as Pierce Estates.

A TOWN IS FORMED

The voting had been declared ended. Official counters were nearing the bottom of their tally sheets, while a crowd of onlookers waited anxiously.

Here was the overwhelming result---"aye," 100; "nay", . The people of the district had made it decisively clear. They wanted independence and the opportunity to form a separate and autonomous borough.

This was the first cry from an infant village. This was the preface in the story of the Borough of Middlesex a half century ago.

The area now known as Middlesex Borough was at that time a portion of Piscataway Township. Piscataway was governed by a three-man Township Committee. This area's representative to that governing body was the late Mayor George W. Harris, who lived in Lincoln.

During the years of 1910 to 1912, disagreements arose between members of the Piscataway Township Committee regarding improvements such as sidewalks, street lights and fire hydrants, which Mr. Harris wanted established in the industrial area of Lincoln. Piscataway was then principally an agricultural township.

Because of these disagreements, Mr. Harris organized a group of residents in the Lincoln area who initiated a movement to form a separate municipality.

An area newspaper, The Chronicle, told of the plan in this page one story February 28, 1913:

"Borough of Middlesex Proposed."

"A movement is underway to form a borough of the district lying east of that of Bound Brook and extending to Dunellen. Notices of intention are now being published in the Middlesex County papers, and ex-Senator Silzer has been engaged to draw up the necessary papers. If the new borough is formed it is proposed to call it Middlesex.

"The proposed new borough takes in practically all the built-up territory bordering on the Green brook, the Public Service trolley and the Central Railroad of New Jersey. The proposed borough is

about three miles long with a population of about 2,000."

A bill subsequently was passed in the State Legislature creating the boundaries of the Borough of Middlesex. This was approved officially by the residents in a special referendum May 6, 1913.

Results of the balloting were reported in The Chronicle Friday, May 9, 1913:

"The citizens within the proposed district...had a chance to express their views, for or against the question, on Tuesday. One hundred and eight votes were cast, one hundred being in favor of the proposition and three voted against it. Five votes were rejected."

The next step was to choose officials to govern the new town. In a spirited contest June 10, 1913, Mr. Harris was elected as the borough's first mayor by a margin of almost 2 to 1. Elected to form a six-man Borough Council were Max S. Bernstein, John J. Campbell, Louis V. Poulson, T. Walter Sisty, Israel W. Stout and Ludwig Wild. The office of tax collector was filled by Nelson M. Giles, and the post of tax assessor went to William D. Voorhees. Winning two constable jobs were Jesse Leone and Thomas J. Reidy.

The Chronicle carried this account of the balloting, conducted in the Lincoln Firehouse:

"George W. Harris, Mayor.

"The first election in the new Borough of Middlesex was conducted at Lincoln on Tuesday, when its first officers were chosen. The contest was exciting from start to finish. George W. Harris received the nomination for Mayor on both the Republican and Democratic tickets, and M.F. Wirtz, of Beechwood Heights, contested honors with him, the latter having been placed on a Citizen's ticket. This fight and that for all six Councilmen for out nearly all the voters in the district, 172 votes being cast with 12 rejected. When they were counted the following result was announced:

"For Mayor---

George W. Harris, R and D.....99

Max F. Wirtz, C.....56

For Collector---

Nelson M. Giles, R and D.....120

For Assessor---

W.D. Voorhees, R and C.....109

F. H. Stephenson, D.....52

For Councilmen---

John J. Campbell, D.....125

Ludwig Wild, R.....116

L. V. Poulson, D.....110

T. W. Sisty, D.....110

I. W. Stout, R.....106

M. S. Bernstein, R.....95

W. G. Hetsch, C.....67

G. H. C. Sours, C.....52

For Constables---

Jesse Leone, C.....83

Thomas J. Reidy, D.....81

"The first six Councilmen were elected."

THE JOB BEGINS

"After the oath of office had been administered to the Mayor and Council, the Mayor called the meeting of Mayor and Council to order and stated that this meeting was called according to law for the purpose of organized the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Middlesex and to make such appointments as were necessary and essential and to transact such other business as might legally come before the meeting, and stated that the first thing in order should be the appointment of a clerk pro-tem to take down the minutes of the meeting..."

So reads page one of the half-century-old minutes book in which is recorded the first meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council.

The officials gathered in the Lincoln Firehouse at 8:00 P.M. on June 16, 1913, to begin their part in the history making of Middlesex as a borough. They were sworn into office by William A. Coddington, "Master in Chancery of New Jersey."

In accordance with their first order of business, the Mayor and Council appointed Mr. Coddington as clerk pro-tem and directed him to record the minutes of the meeting.

The Council then elected Councilman John J. Campbell to serve as president.

Appointments of the Mayor were as follows: Clerk, Stewart C. Crouse; recorder, Fred R. Stephenson; street commissioner, John H. Sebring; attorney, Mr. Coddington, and overseer-of-poor, Augustus C. Ramsey, who, at a later meeting, was voted \$25.00 by the Council as his yearly compensation. Mr. Ramsey's appointment was for five years, while the other appointees were to serve until January 1, 1914.

Councilmanic committees formed by Mayor George W. Harris were "auditing and finance; streets and sidewalks; police, light and license; fire and water; law and ordinance taxation; and printing, stationery and supplies."

The first borough engineer, who was appointed by Mayor Harris two months later, was T. W. G. Davidson. Mayor Harris also appointed a Board of Health during that initial year. Members

were William B. Kurtz, W. Ed Smith, Charles P. Hoagland and William F. Wiedenhauff.

At the third meeting of the Mayor and Council on June 26, 1913, in Lincoln Firehouse, Mayor Harris appointed a three-man committee to confer with members of the Piscataway Township Committee on the adjustment of municipal funds between Piscataway and Middlesex.

Named to serve on this committee were Councilmen Louis V. Poulson, Israel W. Stout and Campbell.

Clerk Crouse wrote that the purpose of the joint meeting was for "alotting and dividing between the Borough of Middlesex and the Township of Piscataway all the moneys on hand, property assets and liens of every kind and all the indebtedness of said borough and township in proportion that the taxable property within the portion of said Borough of Middlesex so taken shall bear to the whole of said Piscataway Township as the same was before said portion of said Borough was so taken in accordance with the law made and provided for this purpose and that said joint committee meet for the purposes aforesaid at Sullivan's Hotel, New Market, N.J., on the 11th day of July, 1913, at 8 p.m...."

A statement of liabilities and assets of Piscataway in the adjustment between the township and borough was received by the Mayor and Council on December 17, 1913. This report showed the
→ total assessed value of township ratables to be \$3,489,817.00 and the total value of ratables "set apart as the Borough" to be \$882,063.00. Established as the final "rate of percentage of Borough portion" was .2897.

Taxes came first. And this was what the "Town Fathers" of 1913 turned their attention to when they drew up "Ordinance No. 1" for the Borough of Middlesex.

The municipality's first ordinance, adopted by the Mayor and Borough Council on September 8, 1913, fixed the compensation of the assessor and collector of taxes so these officials could begin their work. The collector was paid \$300.00 for the year, and the assessor received an annual salary of \$200.00.

PROTECTED TOWN'S MORALS

Middlesex Borough's first governing body was in no hurry to draft a conglomeration of laws and ordinances which, the officials felt, might prove confusing during early stages of the town's growth.

As former Borough Clerk Stewart C. Crouse wrote on July 9, 1913, in a careful hand:

"The Law and Ordinance Committee came to the conclusion that only such ordinance ought to be enacted at the beginning as were needed to protect the Morals and Public Safety of the Municipality and that other ordinances should follow when the need thereof was felt. In other words," Crouse explained, "this Borough should work out its own destiny and not follow other municipalities blindly. The conditions of our Borough may turn out entirely different from those of our neighbors."

But concerned with protecting the "morals and public safety" of its people, the Mayor and Borough Council chose to adopt a pertinent law. Sections of this ordinance, now 50-years-old, read:

"An Ordinance Relating to the Morals and Good Order of the Borough of Middlesex,

"Section 1. That no person shall disturb the quiet of the Borough...by any unnecessary noise with kettles, drums, bells, horns or other articles or instruments...or by using any profane, indecent or obscene language, or by quarrelling, or by otherwise offensively disturbing the quiet.

"Section 3. No person shall set off any firecracker, or squib or other fireworks in any street or public place...except on the fourth day of July, neither shall any person make any bonfire in any public street or place between sundown and sunrise.

"Section 4. That no person shall keep, or cause to be kept, any house...in which any kind of noise or disorder is made...to the alarm of disturbance of the neighborhood, or which place is injurious to the public health, public quiet or public morals, or in which is kept any table or devise of any kind upon which...any game of chance or hazard shall be played.

FIRST MAYOR

Mayor George W. Harris was a man who held the respect of Democrats and Republicans alike, and who won the esteem of his colleagues in government and of the citizens who continued to reelect him to office for nearly a quarter of a century.

The first Chief Executive of the Borough of Middlesex, Mr. Harris, a Republican, was nominated as Mayor in 1913 by a unanimous acclamation from both the GOP and Democratic parties. This honor undoubtedly was a tribute to his efforts in having Middlesex established as an independent borough.

Mr. Harris was a member and treasurer of the Piscataway Township Committee at the time Middlesex still was governmentally subservient to Piscataway. He and a group of civic leaders in Middlesex, including Mr. Louis V. Poulson, Mr. Max Wirtz and Mr. T. Walter Sisty, initiated the movement to have Middlesex incorporated as a separate borough.

Although Mr. Harris received the first mayoralty nomination of both political parties, he met opposition on the ballot by a "Citizen's Party" candidate, Mr. Max Wirtz.

Excitement mounted on the morning of election day, June 10, 1913, as election officials placed ballot boxes in the Lincoln Firehouse for the approximate 200 voters of the infant municipality. By the end of the day, there was no question as to the people's choice. The vote was clear and decisive. By a margin of almost 2 to 1, Mr. Harris was elected to the town's highest office. His candidacy was not opposed in the next election.

Mayor Harris guided the borough through its early trials and tribulations, through the trying days of World War I and the Stock Market crash and initial years of the depression. He served in office for 20 years, from 1913 to 1933.

Mayor Harris' successor was John J. Rafferty, a Democrat, who later became the Judge of the New Jersey Court of Errors and Appeals. Mayor Rafferty held office from 1933 to 1936.

Nine other mayors have served the borough---Chester A. Lydecker, Democrat, from 1936 to 1938; James J. Marsh, Republican, from 1938 to 1941; George E. Lincoln, Republican, from June to December of

of 1941; Justin Shearn, Republican, 1942 to 1945; Louis Staffelli, Republican, 1946 to 1953; William H. Klein, Democrat, 1954 to 1955; Joseph P. Zuccarelli, Republican, 1956 to 1957; Walter Rafferty, Democrat, 1958 to 1961, and the incumbent Chief Executive Jasper Correnti.

THE TAXES WERE SMALL

One reason folks pine for the "good 'ole days" is their tax bills. The borough budget of 50 years ago would be a delight to today's taxpayers.

Middlesex's first budget for current expenses amounted to \$3,190.00. The sum of \$3,000.00 was fixed by the "Borough Fathers" in 1913 as the amount to be raised by taxation for local purposes.

A breakdown of the budget follows:

Lights	\$1,200.00
Hydrants	150.00
Poor	100.00
Board of Health	100.00
Salaries	350.00
Election	500.00
Books	40.00
Engineer	150.00
Counsel	500.00
Advertising ordinances	100.00

BUT SO WAS THE PAY

Fond memories of years gone by are pleasant to recall. But surely no one would yearn for the return on one standard of 50 years ago---the rate of pay for the working man.

The borough's first salary scale for its work crews, which maintained the streets and lighting facilities, was established at a meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council on October 1, 1913.

The hourly pay for work teams was set at 55½¢, the hourly rate for laborers, 22½¢, and the salary for the street commissioner was 28¢ per hour.

The first "vital statistics" of this borough, recorded from June 16, 1913, when the municipality was born, to December 31, 1913, were 16 births, 7 deaths and 2 marriages.

BALLOTS WENT INTO BOXES

Ballot boxes were set up for Democratic, Republican and Progressive Party candidates in the Primary and General Elections of 1913.

Middlesex voters cast ballots in the November 4 General Election 50 years ago for a governor, three members of the General Assembly, five members of the Board of Freeholders, a mayor, six councilmen, an assessor, a collector, justice of the peace and constable. Polling hours were from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

There were no contests on the local level. Voters reelected a slate of officials headed by Mayor George W. Harris which had been chosen less than five months prior in a special election. The only changes in the borough line-up were the addition of the office of justice of the peace, which was filled by S.A. Dutcher, and the elimination of one constable post, which had been held by Thomas J. Reidy.

The gubernatorial vote here was:

Stokes (Republican).....	63
Fielder (Democrat).....	61
Colby (Progressive).....	11

FILLERS

Until 1921, a single polling place was used by voters in Middlesex Borough. The center for activity on election days was the Lincoln Firehouse. In 1921, a population increase warranted the addition of a second voting district. This polling place was established in the Beechwood Heights Firehouse.

Voters in the borough 50 years ago numbered approximately 245, according to a report supplied to the Middlesex County clerk's office by former Borough Clerk Stewart Crouse on October 3, 1913.

ELECTION TOOLS COST \$1.21

This expense account imposed little hardship on the county treasury. Sent to the Middlesex County Board of Freeholders by former Borough Clerk Simeon A. Dutcher, the account was listed as a bill of expense for Primary Election duties in this municipality in April of 1920.

The clerk requested a check totaling \$1.21 as reimbursement for the following election items:

"12 lead pencils	30
1 bottle mucilage	10
1 bottle ink	15
Car fare to New Brunswick twice (keys)	56
Telephone	<u>10</u>

\$1.21"

FIRE BRIGADES OF THE PAST

Glorious and colorful adventures of the old volunteer firefighters fill the annals of the Middlesex Fire Department.

These were the days when the loud, vibrating sound of a steel rim fire alarm brought the members of the force scurrying to each firehouse to beat the other companies to the blaze. The friendly rivalry among the companies was a part of the strong spirit these men shared.

The Fire Department was in existence before Middlesex was incorporated as a borough. In 1905 the men of Lincoln organized the first volunteer fire company, which was a unit of the Piscataway Fire Department. Middlesex firemen, who now proudly boast of four fine companies, celebrated the 50th anniversary of their department in 1955. The department includes Lincoln, Beechwood, Pierce and Parker companies.

Earliest fire apparatus of the volunteer organization consisted of a hand-drawn pumper, which was merely two wheels on an axle with a water hose wrapped around the axle. The fire alarm was given by striking the steel rim of a locomotive engine wheel, hung from a wooden frame, with a light-weight sledge hammer. Although the hammer was never removed or stolen, it proved a delight to mischievous boys. Occasionally, some scamps would give the rim a mighty blow, then run from the scene lest they be punished for their false alarm.

When an alarm was sounded, the firefighters would grasp a rope that was attached to the pumper, and run along the road pulling their equipment to the blaze.

Middlesex's worst fires occurred years ago. Today, modern, efficient equipment handled by expertly trained firemen can cope with any blaze. And with the addition in 1941 of a comparatively new volunteer organization, the Rescue Squad, a complete and vital emergency service is provided in this borough's residents.

The most disastrous fires in this borough were in the industrial strip along Lincoln Boulevard.

During World War I, two workers were killed in an explosion in a powder mill at the present site of Eastern Steel Barrel Company. Torpedoes and other war explosives were made and stored in the mill. One of the victims of the tragedy was a Bound Brook lad who was working in the factory during a Summer vacation from school.

Major fires have occurred in other factories, including the former Metal Disintegrating Company plant, which was destroyed by flames during the time of World War I.

Middlesex's dedicated firefighters felt a great personal loss at the death of one of their own men in 1928. The late Richard Ambrose of Beechwood Heights was the first and only fireman killed while on duty. An elderly man, Fireman Ambrose was aboard Beechwood Company's shiny, new 1928 model truck enroute to its first blaze, when the truck overturned while entering Fisher Avenue from Harris Avenue. Ambrose was crushed beneath the vehicle.

The oldest of the active firemen can recall an unusual blaze at the old Pathe Film Company, a pioneer in the movie film industry. During this fire, intense heat which generated from burning celluloid stored in the factory, blistered the rubber raincoats of the firemen, who were forced to fight the blaze a half block away. The heat also melted metal on nearby parked vehicles.

However, barn fires were most common in those days, when the borough was principally a rural area. Many farm buildings were ignited by lightning.

But firemen weren't always running off to fight fires. The fire companies also formed the nucleus for social activities during the early 1900's. An annual Summer event was the firemen's carnival, where ladies brought embroidery and other handmade articles to be "chanced off." An orchestra provided music for dancing on an outdoor platform, which was constructed of rough boards and sprinkled with cornmeal.

An occasional minstrel also helped bring in much needed revenue to keep the fire trucks rolling.

THE CRIMES AND PUNISHMENT

Stocks and whipping posts were not oddities in this territory during the 17th century, when Middlesex was but a section of Piscataway.

Persons convicted of criminal acts in those early days frequently were punished by whipping, or by suffering public humiliation in the stocks. Incarceration of criminals was not possible, as no jails existed. Defendants found guilty to theft usually were punished by fines double the value of goods stolen.

Piscataway was the setting of the first Middlesex County court session on June 19, 1683. The county later built its first courthouse and jail in Perth Amboy.

The trial docket in town courts was filled with disorderly complaints which were filed by neighbors. Included among Piscataway's early records is the following disposition of a court case:

"Nov. 15, 1759, Recd from Heune Runyon, Esq., the fine of Wm. Classon, son of Conl. & his wife for profane Swearing, the sum of 1 6s. Od. (One pound, six shillings, and no pence)."

When Middlesex became a borough in 1913, a police court judge, designated as a recorder, was appointed by Mayor George Harris. Named to this post was Mr. Fred R. Stephenson. Four justices of the peace also later were elected.

The value of these court offices proved rather dubious. Since neither the recorder nor a justice received a net salary, he was rather dependent for his pay on court costs collected from defendants. Thus existed the inducement to find a person guilty in order to collect the court fees. Wide powers were given these justices, who often were not fully qualified individuals experienced in law.

Middlesex then had no police station, jail or courthouse. Defendants were lodged in the Dunellen jail, or occasionally in the Bound Brook lock-up. In case of a serious offense, the accused was held in the county jail in New Brunswick. Trial usually were held in the recorder's home.

In the early 1930's, the recorder was given an annual salary of \$300.00. This was raised to \$600.00 in 1938. A regular weekly court session was scheduled. Court was conducted in Parker Firehouse, then in Beechwood Firehouse, and later in a small rented building on Union Avenue which served as police headquarters.

The offices of recorder and justice of the peace, which were inherited from the early Colonial days, were abolished in 1949 by the new state Constitution, which revised the court system. Qualified magistrates now serve in the local courts.

MARSHALL UPHELD THE LAW

Two constable badges, six marshall badges and a pair of handcuffs---these items constituted the first equipment purchased for the police force of 50 years ago.

The first two law enforcement officers, Constables Jesse Leone and Thomas J. Jeidy, were selected by the voters in a special election June 10, 1913. Two months later, the Mayor and Borough Council appointed five marshalls. These men were Mr. Bayard Nayb.r.c., to serve as marshall for the East Bound Brook district; Mr. Augustus C. Ramsey, for the Beechwood Heights section; Mr. David Jones, for the Greenbrook district; Mr. Robert McDonald, for the Lincoln area, and Councilman T. Walter Sisty, to serve at-large.

To better equip the force, the council later authorized the purchase of "32 calibre Harrington and Richardson revolvers and Rosewood clubs."

Appointed as marshalls on January 21, 1921, were the present Police Chief Gurdon Fuller and his predecessor, former Chief William C. Fellows. Fellows at that time also was named a constable and the unofficial chief of police.

The 12-man force in 1921 used Fellow's home on Prospect Place as its headquarters. Members of the department patrolled the borough on bicycles and motorcycles.

An ordinance establishing a more official police department was adopted on December 15, 1933. Fellows then became chief, and Fuller was appointed as captain, both serving on a part-time basis. This form of police department was abolished in February of 1935.

Three years later, on May 4, 1938, the Borough Council approved an ordinance again creating the offices of marshalls to serve on the call of a councilmanic police committee. This system was continued until 1939, when the governing body established a full-time paid police department, as it presently is organized. Fuller was appointed as the borough's first full-time police chief at that time.

A dedicated, veteran law enforcement officer, Chief Fuller who

has served since the borough's first police force was created, this year is relinquishing his office, having reached the mandatory retirement age of 65.

WHAT MADE NEWS 70 YEARS AGO

Nothing can contrast the changing scene quite so well as perusing copies of old newspapers, brown-stained, tattered and time-worn by the long years.

Many fascinating "news stories" are found by a search into the oldest available copies of The Chronicle, a Bound Brook publication which was billed by its editor and publisher, W. B. R. Mason, as a "weekly journal of local news and home reading."

Here's a front page story relating a special holiday event in the Middlesex-Bound Brook area in December of 1892. The item is reprinted verbatim:

COLORED FESTIVITIES.

Christmas eve one of the swellest colored balls ever given in Bound Brook took place in Cook's Hall. All the grace and beauty for many miles around about were there. They came in the cars, in coaches and on foot. It was quite late in the evening when

"A shriek was hear in the orchestra
As the leader drew across
The intestine of the agile cat
The tail of the nobel horse."

And then how everybody did dance! But soon a halt was called and the long-talked-of "cake walk" took place. It was won by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Peterson, of Plainfield, who were the most graceful in their movements and striking in appearance. Mrs. Peterson was gowned in pink and white en train, while her escort wore the conventional black relieved by a white vest and a pink necktie. After the cake had been presented the orchestra struck up a dreamy
→ Strauss waltz and soon the floor was again filled with merry feet tripping away the midnight hours. There were many handsome costumes displayed. One of the belles of the evening, who was too modest to give her name, wore a gorgeous gown of white silk, with feather trimming and cut decollete. An immense white fur boa circled her neck and floated gracefully out as she danced. Nothing occurred to mar the pleasure of the evening with the exception that a young lady slipped down and had her finger trod on. At half-past five

"Home Sweet Home" was played and the Christmas ball was over.

Other page one news items printed for your great-grandma and pa follow:

January 1, 1892---

CELLAR THIEVES ABOUT.

There has been a great deal of cellar thieving of late, and something ought to be done to catch the rascals. Nothing of very great value has as yet been taken but it is very provoking to wake up and find Sunday's dinner gone or the Winter's supply of canned fruit stolen. Everything to the fact that the thefts have all been committed by the same parties.

January 8, 1892---

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Dr. C. R. P. Fisher met, on New Year's Day, with what he calls a "fortunate accident," in that no one was seriously hurt. He was driving rapidly from Mr. LaMonte's place and in turning the corner his horse shied and stumbled, upsetting the carriage and throwing out the doctor and his boy. It is remarkable that both were not killed, but aside from a bad shaking up no injury was done. The carriage was slightly broken.

January 29, 1892---

GREENBROOK GLEANINGS.

Some malicious persons, undoubtedly the same ones who put up a printed sign on one of our neighbor's farms last Fall, tore down and destroyed the transparency in front of the Harris Lane school house some time ago. This is certainly very poor satisfaction, destroying church property, and should the offenders be caught they will be dealt with according to law.

The old Harris Lane Church School in Middlesex frequently is mentioned in these newspapers of yesteryear. Children's Day exercises at the school 70 years ago rated this amusing news article on June 9, 1893:

CHILDREN'S DAY AT HARRIS LANE.

The little school house at Harris Lane was filled to overflowing last Sunday afternoon when the Children's Day exercises of the Sunday School were held. The afternoon was warm but amid the sweet perfume of flowers and during the rendering of an interesting program this was forgotten. The exercises consisted of singing, responsive reading, recitations and three excellent addresses. Miss Emma Giddes sang a sweet solo, the school joining in the chorus. A quartette, composed of Mrs. Albert Brokaw, Miss Emma Giddes and Ruland and William Randolph, also sang well.

Superintendent Charles McNabb stated that he had procured three farmer's to deliver addresses and he first called on Farmer (Rev.) J. B. Cleaver. The speaker prefaced his remarks by saying that the farmers had their corn in, their "taters" plowed, and would now turn their attention to something of less importance--- the children. His address was highly pleasing to all, especially the little folks.

Farmer William Henry Ayres, of South Bound Brook, followed Mr. Cleaver in a short reminiscent address, full of humor and object lessons.

Farmer George La Monte was the third speaker. He took a yoke for his subject and that it was well handled attested by the close attention paid him.

The efforts of the little ones in reciting were applauded.

It is no wonder that proper young ladies in Granny's day feared to walk the streets unescorted. One damsel who suffered quite a fright, had her unfortunate incident related in a front page story in an 1892 issue of The Chronicle.

AN ATTEMPTED ASSAULT

While Miss Isidora Hoagland was returning home from a visit to relatives in New Brunswick last Friday afternoon a criminal assault was attempted upon her by one of New Brunswick's toughs, Barney McElroy. Miss Hoagland had decided to walk home but took the street car as far as the line runs. McElroy was also a passenger on the same car and as Miss Hoagland had met him before

she exchanged his friendly greeting. When she left the car McElroy did the same and he accompanied her a short distance on her journey when he made indecent proposals to her. As these were properly rejected the villain sulked in the rear and followed her at a distance. He caught up with her after awhile and, grabbing her by the throat, violently attempted to carry out his intentions. Miss Hoagland, however, fought desperately and finally freed herself from the villain's grasp. She ran to a neighboring house where she related her unpleasant experience, and was afterwards driven to the police station. As the attempted assault had taken place in Somerset County the authorities there could do nothing. Friends brought her home and a complaint was made on Tuesday morning to Justice Brampton for the arrest of the culprit. The charge has since been withdrawn.

Dr. R. V. Pierce, an early developer in Middlesex, had an interesting sideline. A dispenser of "wonder tonics," Dr. Pierce in 1892 placed this advertisement in area newspapers:

Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery (for the Liver, Blood and Lungs), \$1.00. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription (for woman's weaknesses and ailments), \$1.00. Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets (for the Liver, Stomach and Bowels), 25 cents.

Refuse all medicines purporting to be Dr. Pierce's offered at any other prices. Suspicion naturally and rightfully attaches to them.

A year later, in 1893, Dr. Pierce began advertising his realty interests.

DR. PIERCE'S
GREAT OFFER.

To each of the first six applicants, who will begin within three months, and complete within a year, a residence to cost not less than \$5,000.00, I will present a lot 50 X 150 feet, located on paved and sewerred street; sidewalks built and water in. These lots, with all street improvements in, are cheap at \$1,000.00. A 35 foot lot is given if \$400.00 house is built. These lots are located in best part of New Bound Brook.

Also ~~six~~ beautiful new cottages for sale AT COST, on easy terms, and lots thrown in free. Call and examine them.

A new factory to employ a large number of men is soon to be erected; other are likely soon to follow.

The Central R. R. has promised a beautiful passenger station.

All these, with the new road to connect old and New Bound Brook are sure to give the new town a good start.

Don't delay, or you may lose this rare opportunity to get a \$1000.00 lot absolutely free of cost. Call on or address,

R. V. Pierce
Bound Brook, N.J.

FILLERS

ADVERTISEMENTS---1893

CERTASANATIO

For Rheumatism, Neuralgia and Gout. No cure, No pay. Price
50 cents.

Isaac N. Brokaw, Druggist.

THE NEWEST.

Look at C. E. Dunham's Gasoline Stoves. \$4, \$5, \$6, \$8 and
upwards.

STAGE LINE BETWEEN

BOUND BROOK AND NEW BRUNSWICK

Leave Bound Brook at 8:45 a.m. Leave New Brunswick Whitehall
Hotel, 2:30 ; Railroad Depot 3 p.m. daily, except Sunday. Stages
for Pic-nics and Parties. Orders promptly attended to.

David Taylor, Prop'r.

All who call at Miss Susie Fisher's News Stand will be glad
to go again.

ADVERTISEMENTS---1913

Dancing in Bound Brook Hall every Saturday night. Admission, 25 cents. Good music. Best of order maintained.

If you want a nice carriage drive on Sunday, consult John Hoagland, phone 169-R.

First class, up-to-date barbers at Frank Chiaravalli's tonsorial parlors.

\$1.50
Children 75¢

EXCURSION
TO GREAT

ALLENTOWN FAIR
via
NEW JERSEY CENTRAL

The BIG DAY, THURSDAY, SEPT. 25. Special train leaves Dunellen 7:53 a.m.; Lincoln 7:56 a.m.; Bound Brook 8:01 a.m. Manville, 8:06 a.m.

REALTY ADVERTISEMENT---1913

FOR SALE

BEECHWOOD HEIGHTS strictly residential. No stores permitted. Twenty new houses built within the past two years. Several on way now. Lots 100 x 200 on Union avenue, Beechwood avenue, Grant avenue, Sherman avenue and Hazelwood avenue. Restricted one house to a lot which fulfills the suburban idea to the letter. Gas, electricity, water and trolley. Prices \$5 to \$9 per front foot. Terms to suit. Will pay to buy now for investment or otherwise.

DAVID HASTINGS

"Buy or Sell"

Real Estate

ADVERTISEMENT---1913

DON'T MISS IT!

BOUND BROOK

PALACE THEATRE SCHOOL

is open every afternoon and evening all the year 'round. A modern up-to-date institution of learning for all classes and ages. An endless chain of variety, culture and enlightenment. Where wisdom, high morals and laughter go hand in hand.

Motion Picture Courses
in Geography, History, Industry, Botany, Surgery,
Thought, Laughter and Morals.

ADMISSION

5¢ and 10¢

RECIPE---1893

PICKLING BEEF

Take six pounds of salt, two pounds of brown sugar, one-quarter pound of salt-peter and six gallons of water. Boil and skim as long as any scum rises. Cut your beef in suitable pieces; salt highly; lay out separately to cool. When cool wipe with a dry towel and pack very closely in a clean vessel; pour over it the above mixture, which is enough for a hundred pounds of beef.

Put a weight on it to hold it under the pickle. This recipe will make an excellent quality of corned beef, but for long keeping in a warm climate more salt may be necessary. The package containing the meat should stand in a cool and dry place.

TRAIN AND TROLLEY LINES

The arrival of the railroad in the tiny village of Lincoln in 1839 was the most meaningful single event in the history of this bustling industrial center.

The Elizabethtown & Somerville Railroad Company in 1831 received a charter for the line from Elizabethtown to Somerville. The line was to pass through Plainfield, Dunellen, Lincoln and Bound Brook. Construction was started five years after the charter was granted. Men in the area who were looking for employment were hired to help build the railroad bed and lay track. By 1839 the line had reached Lincoln, and by 1841, trains were running all the way to Somerville.

However, financial conditions of the Elizabethtown & Somerville Railroad Company were far from sound. In 1847 the road was sold. The new company ripped up the original track and replaced it with heavier rails. Eventually the line was consolidated with the Central Railroad of New Jersey. By 1852 there was train service to Phillipsburg and the Lehigh Valley area.

Another chief mode of travel in the early 1900's was the trolley. Since train service was very infrequent, the trolley lines prospered.

Middlesex was served by two trolley lines. The Brunswick Traction line, put into operation here on October 29, 1898, ran between Newark and Bound Brook, cutting through the heart of Middlesex. This company's car barns, or yards, were located off Route 28 in Middlesex, near the Dunellen boundary.

Serving the River Road area was an express trolley line, owned by Edward Radel. This line, later taken over by Public Service Railway Company, ran from New Brunswick along River Road to Raritan, through Bound Brook and Somerville. Passengers on the Traction line from Newark who wished to travel on to Somerville, were required to change trolley cars in Bound Brook.

Cars on the Traction line passed through Middlesex enroute to Bound Brook every half hour, and entered or left the car barns in Middlesex at 15 minute intervals. Local ladies bound for a day of shopping in Newark, would board a trolley in Middlesex and ride

for two and a quarter hours to the big city.

The route of the line through Middlesex was west along Route 28 from Dunellen to "Conover's Corner," then left to Lincoln Boulevard and continuing along the boulevard to Harris Avenue and into Bound Brook. The last trolley car left the Middlesex barns on September 14, 1935.

COST OF EDUCATION

Voters in 1914 elected nine men to the borough's first Board of Education, and gave them a budget of \$4,732.00 to operate the school system.

Chosen for the school board in a March election were Everett A. Gowdy, John H. Sebring and Bayard Naylor for three-year terms, Augustus C. Ramsey, Louis V. Poulson and John L. Douglass for two-year terms, and Stewart C. Crouse, Max. F. Wirtz and W. Edward Smith, to serve for one year each. However, Mr. Smith resigned his post a month after election and was replaced by Clinton M. Carey.

The first budget included \$4,232.00 for current expenses, plus \$500.00 for "buildings and repairs." The school system consisted of two elementary schools, the old Pierce and Parker buildings.

At the board's organization meeting April 6, 1914, in the Beechwood Heights Firehouse, Mr. Poulson was selected to serve as president, and Mr. Douglass was named as vice-president.

THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE

Middlesex was yet sprawling, undeveloped countryside dotted with occasional farms when a handful of early families joined together to establish a school.

The oldest schoolhouse in the borough, the one-room Harris Lane School, is believed to be the oldest existing school building in the County of Middlesex. The exact age of the now deteriorating frame structure, which stands at the corner of Shepherd Avenue and Route 28, is unknown. However, it is estimated at more than 140-years-old.

Funds for the erection of Harris Lane School were raised by public subscription. Teachers were paid by the parents of pupils attending. The land on which the school was built was donated to the community by the late Mr. Hendrick Smock, with the stipulation that the land revert back to the Smock family when the building no longer was used as a public school. Present owner of the land and building is Walter Ryan.

The one-room schoolhouse of almost a century and a half ago, when a single teacher taught several classes simultaneously, is a far cry from today's comprehensive system with four elementary schools and a modern high school.

In 1902 the first four-room Pierce School, which has since been demolished, was constructed on the west side of Raritan Avenue to replace the Harris Lane School and a one-room schoolhouse on Drake Avenue in Lincoln. The original Pierce School was condemned as a fire hazard and abandoned in 1920 when the present Pierce School was built on Walnut Street at a cost of \$118,000.00.

Pierce School was named in honor of Mr. H. C. Pierce, who continued the work of his father, Dr. R. V. Pierce, in developing East Bound Brook. The younger Pierce donated a tract of land for the school.

The old Pierce School housed classes through the tenth grade for many years. The foundation of the building can still be found in an overgrown meadow along Raritan Avenue.

A contemporary of the original Pierce School was the old Parker Schoolhouse. Both these schools were being used when

Middlesex seceded from Piscataway in 1913. The original Parker School, which has been converted into a two-family dwelling on North Lincoln Avenue, was abandoned when the five-room Watchung School was built in 1917 at a cost of \$24,000.00.

Watchung School was destroyed by fire in 1921 and later rebuilt. An \$80,000.00 addition, containing eight rooms and auditorium, was built in 1926.

The present Parker School was built in 1920 at a cost of \$50,000.00. A \$35,000.00 annex was added to Parker in 1926. Another addition, containing eight rooms, was constructed in 1961 at a cost of \$196,730.00.

Central School, containing twelve classrooms, cafeteria and office, was constructed in 1953 at a cost of \$517,410.00. An addition was built at Central in 1961 for \$659,380.00.

Middlesex High School, which last year graduated its first class, was built in 1959 at a cost of \$1,975,000.00.

Also located in the borough is a parochial school, Our Lady of Mount Virgin School, on Drake Avenue. The school and auditorium annex were constructed in 1955. The school is staffed by the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy, South Carolina.

In 1913 a total of 263 children were enrolled in Pierce and Parker Schools. The faculty consisted of nine teachers, including a principal for the two schools. The salary of the supervising principal was \$1,000.00 and the teacher's pay ranged from \$525.00 to \$625.00. Enrollment in the borough schools today is 3,087. Of this total, 2,251 are elementary pupils, and 836 are high school students.

In 1921, when the school system included only Pierce, Watchung and Parker elementary schools, Middlesex was lauded in a volume of the "History of Middlesex County, New Jersey." The author of this historical book also commended Mr. William Love, supervising principal, for 23 years of dedicated service in the school system, and Miss Nora B. Henderson, veteran teacher who was called a "household name in the community."

The author wrote of Middlesex 42 years ago: "For its age, this young borough is exceedingly promising in educational matters."

PATRIOTIC FERVOR

The coming of World War I made a significant change in the tempo of life for Middlesex residents.

Factories along Lincoln Boulevard operated at a greater volume of production to meet the demands of the economy for wartime materials. A unique occurrence at that time was the scheduling of night shifts in the factories.

Social activities became of secondary importance. The most frequent and well attended community gatherings were patriotic rallies, usually held at the railroad park in Lincoln. Here the presence of the statue of the great Abraham Lincoln lent a more intense spirit to the meeting.

Highlight of a typical rally was a patriotic address by a prominent military person, followed by group singing of patriotic songs. A band supplied music. Excited youngsters tagged along with the moms and dads, older brothers and sisters; for a rally was a family affair.

The was years were but one historic era in the fastly changing times.

THE TOWN ACQUIRED FIREARMS

Middlesex residents of 1917 were always ready and willing to contribute to the war effort, both in moral and funds.

One community act was to purchase \$500.00 worth of firearms, which were kept in the Dunellen Armory for the use of the home guards.

The Home Defense League sought this contribution when they appeared before the Mayor and Borough Council on June 6, 1917, asking assistance to equip guards with uniforms, firearms and ammunition. For each \$100.00 the home guards raised on their own, they were told, the council would appropriate an equal sum, which, it was stipulated, would be used for firearms and would remain the property of Middlesex taxpayers. Maximum appropriation was set at \$500.00.

Three months later, representatives of the league returned to the council for their \$500.00 after raising \$600.00 themselves.

A GREEN HAVEN

From the troubled, cloudy days of the depression blossomed a serene, living picture of beauty---the Victor Crowell Memorial Parklands.

The 15-acre borough park, once a swampy lowland area with a small, sleepy brook meandering through the middle, was developed with funds obtained through the Federal Work Project Administration. During those unprosperous years of the depression, the borough's unemployed were given the work clearing the land along Ambrose Creek, building a dam and skating rink, and erecting outdoor fireplaces and a shelter for skaters. The trickling brook was transformed into a wide, rambling lake, stocked with trout and other fish.

The project was begun under the administration of former Mayor John J. Rafferty in the early 1930's and continued under former Mayor Chester Lydecker. The finished product was greatly admired by neighboring towns.

Naming of the park was a community affair. A contest was held, and a young school girl who suggested the name of "Willow Park," was declared the winner. The park later was renamed to honor the late Victor Crowell, a hometown boy who was the first soldier from Middlesex killed in action during World War II.

More fields of green parklands are envisioned for Middlesex. The borough now is in the process of purchasing approximately 73 acres of land near the High School for development of parks and playgrounds under the state's Green Acres Program. The future parklands are bordered by the waters of the Green Brook and the Bound Brook.

LANDMARKS MEAN HOME

Much of the history of the borough is linked to the history of its charming, quaint old homes.

Two of the oldest buildings in Middlesex were once homes. Both well-known landmarks, they are the Colonial House restaurant and the old Borough Hall, or Conover home.

The Colonial House, at the corner of Route 28 and Hazelwood Avenue, was once part of the DeGroot estate. Although its exact age is unknown, it is thought to predate the Conover home, which was built in 1837.

The 126-year-old Conover homestead was erected on a 135-acre farm. The 15-room dwelling, reportedly designed by renowned cabinet maker Duncan Phyfe, was the home Peter V. Conover brought his bride to in 1837. Located at Bound Brook Road and Lincoln Avenue, the home became the municipality's Borough Hall in 1948.

Another of the borough's earliest dwellings is the Lydecker home on Orchard Road. This 11-room house is believed to have been built about 1832 on the former Sebring estate, which consisted of about 50 acres of land.

Two of the original homes in the Beechwood Heights section are the Klein house and the former Bourke-White home, built by the parents of famous photographer Margaret Bourke-White. Both dwellings were built about 1900-1901.

The Klein house, a 14-room Tudor dwelling, was built by the late Mr. Edward Grauert, father of Mrs. Charolette Grauert Klein, who, was born in the house. Mr. Grauert, a consulting engineer and an owner of one of the original factories in Lincoln, designed his own "castle in the woods," as he called it. He also did much of the carving of old woodwork in the home. The house has been occupied by members of the original family since it was built at the turn of the century.

FLICKS, FOLLIES AND FUN

Aside from Grange card parties and the volunteer firemen's occasional social affairs, residents of Middlesex had very little special entertainment during the early 1900's.

"You could sit on the porch and watch the world go by, and it didn't take long to go," muses one long-time resident.

Folks here had to travel to nearby towns for their entertainment. Dancing was offered every Saturday night in the old Bound Brook Hall, where "good order" was pledged to patrons. The Palace Theatre in Bound Brook and Somerville's Bijou Theatre were glamorous attractions to the fans of the "flicks." Somerville also featured the old Somerset Hall Playhouse, where many famous shows and burlesques were billed. And always popular were the carriage drives, moonlight bicycle rides, and fishing in the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

Middlesex today boasts of its own widely acclaimed community theatre, Foothill Playhouse. Located at the north end of Beechwood Avenue, the renovated barn theatre is the fulfillment of a long-time dream for its originator, Mrs. Charolette Grauert Klein.

Mrs. Klein, a native of Middlesex, formed a dramatic guild in 1931 with the aid of Mrs. Laura Townsend Davis of Plainfield. This group of earnest amateurs staged their first production, "Enter Madame," in Bound Brook High School. In 1933 they acquired Honeyman's Garage in Bound Brook, where Mrs. Klein managed and directed a Little Theatre workshop. During the following year, the guild toured neighboring towns with a production of Ibsen's "A Doll House."

The players disbanded in 1934 due to the sale of their garage workshop. In 1938 the guild was reorganized. However, with the impending World War, the Little Theatre projects again were laid aside.

The dramatic guild was revived by Mrs. Klein and her husband, Stanley, in 1946, with a company of 20 members. Seeking a permanent home, the guild discovered a barn in Bridgewater, which the players reconverted into a theatre. Two seasons later, the playhouse was destroyed in a fire.

Hard luck continued to follow the guild. In 1949 a season's booking was cancelled at Finderne School in Bridgewater, after vandals had destroyed school property and furniture that had been borrowed

for the theatrical sets. Later that year, a five-week season at the Newark Opera House ended with the management of the house disappearing with the build's box office receipts.

In 1950 the players won third place honors in the New Jersey Theatre League Tournament of one-act plays, with their production of "The Demands of Society," directed by Stanley Klein. In the 1951 tournament, the players captured second place with "Papers," directed by Charlotte Klein.

The Beechwood Avenue barn now occupied by the Foothill Players was purchased in 1951 from Dr. Gerald Gessner. The structure was built in 1911 by the late Mr. Joseph Johnson, who was Fire Commissioner of New York City.

The troupe had a late opening in 1952 and presented four plays. The first production was "O Mistress Mine," starring Mrs. Conrad Alexander of Martinsville and Mr. Allen Whitney of Cranford. The guild also opened a children's theatre that year and presented a puppet show for the youngsters.

Other early productions at the barn theatre were "High Ground," featured Mrs. Alma Rankin of Middlesex, and "The Mollusc," starring Mrs. Gladys Lincoln of Middlesex.

The summer theatre seats 150 patrons downstairs on slipcovered seats donated by a movie theatre, and 20 patrons upstairs in a hay loft balcony. Dressing rooms for the players are reconverted animal stalls, and a patio in which the audience gathers during intermissions was once a milk shed.

The stage was designed by Mrs. Jane Inge, former dean of dramatics at Douglass College. A front curtain was made by Mrs. Klein in patchwork quilt style.

Foothill Playhouse has been incorporated in the state as a non-profit educational and cultural organization. Besides its activity as a play-producing group, the theatre also offers to the community courses in theatre arts during the summer season and children's classes in ballet and creative art.

The lines penned by Goethe best describe the great gift of Little Theatre offers its community:

"Anyone who is sufficiently young and who is not quite spoiled could not easily find any place that would suit him so well as a

theatre. No one asks you any questions; you need not open your mouth unless you choose; on the contrary, you sit at ease like a king, and let everything pass before you, and recreate your mind and senses to your heart's content...But even when part is bad, and part is good, it is still better than looking out of the window, or playing a game of whist in a close party amidst the smoke of cigars."

A NATIVE CELEBRITY

Middlesex gave one famous personality to the world of celebrities--- photographer Margaret Bourke-White.

Miss Bourke-White, who today lives in Darien, Conn., as a child attended the original four-room Pierce School on Raritan Avenue. At graduation exercises, she was presented with four awards.

The adventurous and daring photographer has written a biography, "Portrait of Myself." Excerpts from the book, along with exciting photographs taken by Miss Bourke-White, recently appeared in Life magazine.

The Bourke-White family in 1900 built one of the original homes in Beechwood Heights, where they resided for many years. The house, located on Hazelwood Avenue, was bought in 1925 by the George Lincoln family, and 37 years later by the Bruce McCreary family, the present owners.

The mother of Miss Bourke-White was a charter member and first president of the Middlesex Borough Parents and Teachers Association. Active in both educational and civic affairs, Mrs. White served as PTA president for two terms, from 1915 to 1917. Mr. White was an inventor.

OF MANY FAITHS

Middlesex's achievements and progress during its half century of growth are deeply rooted in the faith and religious conviction of its people.

The earliest settlers of this area worshipped God in the humblest surroundings---in crude cabin meeting-houses or beneath sheltering trees. Today, there stands four church buildings in the borough, with the promise of more to come; all monuments of a proud people's faith and gratitude.

Being a sprawling, largely rural municipality, the residents of Middlesex for many years attended the easily accessible churches in the more developed neighboring towns of Bound Brook, Dunellen, Plainfield and Somerville.

The oldest church building in this borough is the 38-year-old Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Mount Virgin, located on Harris Avenue. Construction of this church was completed in 1925 on land which was donated. The parish, which originally consisted of about 40 families, was formed from St. Joseph's Parish in Bound Brook and St. John's in Dunellen.

First mass was celebrated in Our Lady of Mount Virgin Church in February of 1926 by the Rev. Thomas Rudden, then pastor of St. Joseph's and who directed construction of the Middlesex edifice.

The parish was canonically established in June of 1943, and the Rev. James J. Harding was appointed as first resident pastor. The present pastor, Rev. Emanuel Gausi, was appointed in 1944. However, Monsignor Charles E. McGee now is acting as administrator until Rev. Gausi regains his health.

A permanent rectory was constructed adjacent to the church in 1947. A year later, the regional convent was purchased and staffed by the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Victory. To accomodate an increase in parishioners, a wing was added to the church in 1949.

Assigned as assistant priest in 1951 was the Rev. Vincent Nebus. He was succeeded by the Rev. James Thompson, the Rev. David Delzell, the Rev. Edward Hughes and presently, the Rev. Charles R. Valentine, who was assigned in 1960.

The parish, which now numbers more than 1,500 families, has outgrown the church building. Sunday mass is heard in the auditorium

of Our Lady of Mount Virgin School, while the church is used for daily mass, funerals and weddings. Expansion of the church is being planned at the present time.

A Chapel Is Erected

Founders of the undemoninational Middlesex Protestant Church began religious activities in the borough 35 years ago, when they organized and conducted a Sunday School in Parker Firehouse.

The first season of the Sunday School was held on February 12, 1928, in the firehouse, with 36 children attending. Members of the Parker Engine & Hose Company had invited Mr. R. Graham Carver and the late Mr. A. Herman Armerding to form the religious classes. Mrs. Armerding helped with the first class session. Since there was no Protestant church in the borough at that time, the Sunday School soon formed the nucleus of a church.

The present site of Middlesex Chapel on Fairfield Avenue was purchased in the Summer of 1931. Three years later, building operations were started by volunteer workers, under the direction of Mr. James W. Carver, Plainfield builder. By July of 1936 the building was occupied.

Middlesex Chapel was a pioneer in the establishment of a daily vacation Bible school, which was initiated here in 1939.

Additional property was purchased in 1950, and a wing was added to the Chapel. The annex housed an additional auditorium, six classrooms and other facilities. Tower chimes were installed in 1952. The roof of the new wing was raised in 1959, making a second floor room for the nursery and beginners department. Last year a "baby room," containing cribs and a playpen was added.

Others active in the founding of Middlesex Chapel were Mrs. R. C. Carver, Mr. and Mrs. William Schuder, Mr. and Mrs. W. Howard Taylor. The present Sunday School superintendent, Mr. Franklin Dentz, has attended the Chapel since a child. Mrs. Minnie Crawford, who now resides in Dunellen, was a charter member of the Chapel Sunday School.

Witnesses Build A Hall

A newer edifice, the modern-designed Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, was built in 1959 at William Street and Blackford Avenue.

The Middlesex congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, which was

formed in December of 1956, was separated from the large Plainfield congregation. For several years, the local congregation continued to meet in the Plainfield Kingdom Hall and was known as the Plainfield West Unit.

Early in 1958, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel F. Squire of Middlesex donated four lots to the congregation, composed principally of borough residents, for the construction of a Kingdom Hall. A fifth lot later was purchased from the borough to complete a square tract of 125 feet.

Plans for the building were drawn by Milton Grew of Waterbury, Conn., to the specifications of the congregation, and ground was broken on March 15, 1959. The building which has an auditorium seating capacity of 200, was completed in less than eight months. All the construction work was done by volunteer laborers, who spent weekends and evenings on the project. Most of the workers were local residents, members of the congregation. From start to finish, not a penny was spent for labor.

The congregation moved into the Kingdom Hall on November 8, 1959, and held dedication services on December 12 of that year.

Final cost of the building, which measures 34 feet by 65 feet, was approximately \$13,500.00 for materials. The Kingdom Hall is a wooden structure which houses an auditorium with speaker's platform, a lobby, library, coat room, rest rooms and utility rooms. The building is dedicated as an educational center for the community. Presiding minister is Mr. Charles W. Erlenmeyer.

Youngest Member

The borough's newest church building is the trim, modern one-story white frame structure at the corner of Howard and Union Avenues, which is the home of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Middlesex, formerly known as the Grace Gospel Church.

Dedication of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church on April 29, of last year, realized a dream of 20 years for the original congregation.

Organized in 1942, the small congregation then met in private homes in South Bound Brook. Later the church members gathered at the railroad park in Lincoln for their meetings, or, in case of inclement weather, met in Middlesex homes. Years later, services were conducted

in a vacant store on Maiden Lane in Bound Brook.

Land for the church building was purchased about 1957. Construction began early in 1962. The building includes an auditorium with a seating capacity of about 100, basement Sunday School rooms and the minister's study, and a four-room parsonage.

Originally, Mr. James Bechtle led the congregation as a lay preacher. In 1958 the Rev. George McDaniel became the pastor.

New Church Planned

The community will soon be enriched by the addition of another edifice, the Middlesex Presbyterian Church. Now meeting in Middlesex High School on Sunday mornings, the congregation plans construction of a new church on a five-acre site on Mountain Avenue, south of the new Borough Hall.

The Presbyterian congregation was organized May 27, 1962, by the Presbytery of Elizabeth. Active in the movement to form a church were Mrs. Ralph Chamberlin and Mrs. James Ewing, both of Middlesex, who personally organized a telephone survey in the borough in 1960 to determine the heed and desire for a major Protestant church here.

Worship services were started in the high school cafeteria, with the Rev. Chester Davis, a retired minister, serving as interim pastor. The present organizing pastor is the Rev. Henry L. Jacobs.

A church school and youth work already are underway. Neighboring churches have aided the congregation with such gifts as hymnbooks and choir robes. Charter members of the Presbyterian Church number 127.

INVESTED IN A BOROUGH

With the 50th anniversary of the Borough of Middlesex, the Middlesex Building and Loan Association celebrates 50 years of service.

Founded in 1913, the establishment was cited in newspapers of that year as a large investment in a new, struggling municipality which showed much promise.

The founders, all prominent, energetic businessmen, were Nelson N. Giles, who served as first president; Max. F. Wirtz; William D. Voorhees, and former Mayor George W. Harris. The first directors were N. S. Nichlaysen, J. V. N. Polhemus, O. A. LaPointe and William G. Betsch. Edward S. Fisher served as counsel for the first five years. Succeeding Mr. Fisher was John P. Cullen, who served until his death in 1945.

Present officers of the Building and Loan Association are: President, William G. Cramer, Jr.; vice president, Charles Bernstein; secretary, William F. Minor, Jr.; treasurer, Serring B. Baker. Directors are George Reitze, John H. Hoffman, James Chisholm, James Brandon and William H. Clark. Counsel is former Judge John J. Rafferty.

AN EARLY HEADACHE

The first major controversy the borough suffered waged for many years.

Early in the summer of 1913, when the governing body was organizing affairs of the borough, officials learned that the Plainfield Joint Meeting planned to build a sewage disposal plant on the Darling farm here.

Clerk Stewart C. Crouse noted in the Council's minute book on April 15, 1913:

"The mayor brings up the subject of the disposal plant...He thinks the matter should be taken up and opposed vigorously and desires a special meeting of the Council be called shortly or as soon as it could be arranged to have Counsel Coddington present. He also wishes each member of the Council to consider himself a committee of one to oppose the location of said plant within the Borough limits."

After long discussion of the issue, the Mayor and Council authorized Attorney William Coddington to "take whatever legal measures deemed necessary to prevent the location of the sewage disposal plant ~~within the limits of the Borough.~~"

The legal fight continued for years. In April of 1914, Crouse wrote that Attorney Coddington "made no secret of his having a good stiff battle before him." The Clerk added: "He does not hesitate in telling the Council that he feels sure of the outcome."

Recorded in the Council's minute books the following year was Coddington's report to the governing body that his engineers claimed it "impossible for any system to prevent this sewer bed from being obnoxious, render the water unfit for use a detriment to health..." The Attorney added he had "lots of faith in the case" and would do his "level best to secure an injunction against their using these sewer beds."

But despite all efforts of the governing body and its attorney, the disposal plant was built by the Joint Meeting on a tract of land in back of the present High School. Members of the Joint Meeting were Plainfield, North Plainfield and Dunellen.

The controversy continued through the years when the Mayor and

Borough Council were deluged with complaints from residents about odors allegedly from the disposal plant.

The dispute was climaxed about 1935, when the Borough of Middlesex filed a legal suit against the Joint Meeting. Officials of the three neighboring boroughs were brought before the Middlesex magistrate and fined for allowing the . Later, the sewage disposal plant was modernized to eliminate much of the alleged nuisances.

Middlesex built its own sewage treatment plant in 1937-38 on River Road. This plant and the Joint Meeting's disposal plant both were abandoned in 1957, when the boroughs contracted for the Raritan Valley truck sewer system, operated by the Middlesex County Sewerage Authority.

MIDDLESEX TODAY

Modern-day Middlesex is a warm, friendly and energetic municipality with diverse interests; where the old and the new blend harmoniously. It is a charming, residential suburbia; a thriving industrial strip; a healthy economic center with a bustling shopping area, and new professional buildings rising up, and a borough well-known for its picturesque fields of flowers and numerous florist greenhouses.

A municipality of about four square miles with an estimated population of nearly 12,000, Middlesex is the fourth largest of Middlesex County's twelve boroughs.

Situated in the northwest corner of the county, the borough fronts on the Raritan River for about a half mile and is touched by the flowing waters of Victor Crowell Lake on the west; the Bound Brook, which winds through the center of the borough; the Green Brook, meandering along the northern boundary line, and Bonneugt Brook on the east. ←

Lying south of the Watchung Mountains, the borough is bordered on the east by Dunellen and on the west by Bound Brook. It is situated in one of the fastest growing areas in New Jersey, about 30 miles from New York City and 60 miles from Philadelphia. Principal highways---Route 22, 28 and a new freeway---make it one of the state's main travel centers.

A Mayor and six members of the Borough Council administer the local government.

Manufacturing activities are diversified in the approximate 50 small industrial plants located principally along Lincoln Boulevard. Among the numerous industries are the Wood Newspaper Machinery Company, Fischer Casting Company, Borden Chemical Company, R. Hoe & Company, American Velour Mills, Inter-Chemical Company, Vita-safe Pharmaceutical Corporation, Union Carbide Research Center, Air Reduction Company, Chipman Chemical Company and General American Tank Corporation.

Four major railroads---the Central of New Jersey, the Lehigh Valley, the Baltimore & Ohio and the Port Reading---serve the industrial area. Trains also carry many commuters into New York and other nearby cities daily.

The borough's drinking water is supplied by the Elizabethtown

Water Company and Bound Brook Water Company.

A prosperous and rapidly growing municipality, Middlesex had its first official census taken in 1920. The census showed a population of 1,852. In the following decade, the population jumped to 3,504, more than an 80 per cent increase. The 1940 census showed a population of 3,763. Ten years later, the population had mounted to 5,933 and by 1960 it had almost doubled, rising to 10,520. The present population is estimatelly at nearly 12,000 and is expected to reach 17,000 by 1975.

APPENDIX

MIDDLESEX ELEMENTARY PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Almost as old as the borough is the Elementary Parent and Teachers Association, which was organized by 42 charter members in the old Pierce School on November 18, 1915.

The first president was the late Mrs. Joseph White, mother of famous photographer Margaret Bourke-White. Mrs. White served in office from November of 1915 to April, 1917. First vice presidents were Supervising Principal William Love and Mrs. J. F. Maudsley. Mrs. I. M. Harris served as secretary-treasurer.

Among the projects undertaken by the PTA during those early years were the purchase of a basketball for Pierce School; purchase of shrubbery for Watchung School grounds; donation of \$14.54 to the ambulance fund, and collection was taken at each session to meet expenses. The young PTA also voted to join the National Congress of Mothers, later renamed the National Congress of Parents and Teachers; held a special fathers' night program, and sponsored a reception for teachers.

In 1921, the Middlesex PTA was reorganized. In place of the former basket collections, the members now paid dues. Soon after its reorganization, the PTA purchased for the schools a "pathoscope moving picture machine" for \$477.00, two electric stoves and \$104.00 worth of books for the school libraries. The library books were bought with receipts from a vaudeville show staged by the PTA.

During its 48 years, the Elementary PTA has completed numerous projects and compiled a long list of achievements. The association continues to successfully meet its original objective---"To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education."

Charter members of the PTA were: Mrs. R. F. Campbell, Mrs. F. J. Maudsley, Mrs. Ida M. Harris, Mrs. George W. Littell, Mrs. William G. Betsch, Mrs. T. J. Brown, Mrs. R. M. Bixby, Mrs. Charles Freuler, Mrs. P. E. Maul, Mrs. J. J. Maloy, Mrs. K. D. duPuy, Mrs. John H. Kohl, Mrs. J. Elmer Judson, Mrs. G. E. Rumble, Mrs. M. F. Wirtz,

Mrs. D. J. Perrine, Mrs. Margaret Duf, Mrs. Thomas Ambrose, Mrs. E. B. Church, Mrs. John Huizing, Mrs. N. Yonkman.

And, Mrs. Y. D. Bakker, Mrs. Mary Kashticky, Mrs. George C. Sours, Mrs. Joseph White, Mrs. T. F. Petit, Mrs. B. Oppenheim, Mrs. John Campbell, Mrs. Morrell LaForge King, Mrs. Lillian Blauvelt, Mrs. A. G. Scott, Miss C. Osborn, Miss Elizabeth Sprague, Miss Iva Castner, Miss H. M. Shively, Miss N. E. Henderson, Miss G. L. Ort, Miss S. M. Fleming, Miss A. F. Bugen, Miss C. A. W. Petit, Miss E. Lincoln and Mr. William Love.

MIDDLESEX HIGH SCHOOL PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

A new organization, the Middlesex High School PTA was established in the late fall of 1959 and held its first meeting on February 18, 1960.

A few of the aims of this student-centered organization are to investigate any studies available to the students; to study current state legislature; provide scholarship funds and post-graduate opportunities.

For the past two years, the PTA has awarded two \$100.00 scholarships to a boy and girl of outstanding qualifications.

First president of the High School PTA was Mrs. W. E. Bayansan, who was succeeded by Mrs. Robert Wilson. The present president is Mr. Bruce McCreary.

MIDDLESEX TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION

An active organization for more than 20 years, the Middlesex Teacher's Association was founded under the name of the Middlesex Teacher's Club.

Objectives of the Teacher's Association are to maintain and further the high standards of public education in Middlesex; to acquaint residents of the community with the work of the schools and teaching corps, and to promote professional spirit and welfare of the teachers by welding them into a unified body.

In 1913 the school faculty consisted of nine teachers. Today the faculty, including nurses and principals, numbers 151.

Present officers of the teacher's organization are: President, Mrs. Jean Olson,; recording secretary, Miss Barbara Beitzel;

corresponding secretary, Mrs. Betty Ord, and treasurer, Mrs. Audrey Zuccarelli.

MIDDLESEX LIBRARY BOARD

As a result of a public referendum, the Mayor and Borough Council last year appointed a Board of Public Library Trustees.

This board, organized in accordance with state law, plans to begin public library service in Middlesex Borough before the end of the current year.

Middlesex has been without any public library facilities since 1947, when a small association library in operation more than 20 years in Watchung School was disbanded and its book stock redirected toward student use. To investigate the reestablishment of library service, former Mayor Walter Rafferty in 1961 appointed Mrs. E. Gaar T. Lund to head a citizen's committee. Volunteer members of the committee included Stephen W. Bitow, Edward Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Johnson, Jr., Mrs. Charles Judson, Councilman Everett Landers, Mrs. Richard Lommel, Mr. and Mrs. George Mason, Mr. LeRoy Moore, Mrs. Leo Rascher and Mrs. Ernest Haase.

Following the committee's report of July, 1962, the Borough Council placed on the November ballot a special referendum on the library question. The referendum was approved by a substantial majority of voters.

A Library Board was subsequently appointed, and members were sworn into office in January of this year. The board rented library quarters, began a Friend of the Library Association, and hired a certified librarian, Mrs. Lund, and an assistant, Miss Olivia Verbeck, on a part-time basis.

The present Library Board includes William Howes, president; Edward J. Johnson, Jr., vice-president; Bruce McCreary, secretary; Francis Zupko, treasurer, and members Walter Bezanson, Mayor Jasper Correnti and Superintendent of Schools Von Mauger.

TRI-BORO LIONS CLUB

Chartered on February 25, 1949, the Tri-Boro Lions Club includes members from Middlesex, Bound Brook and South Bound Brook.

Chief aim of the service club is to aid the blind and handicapped. The club also contributes funds to local organizations, such as the Rescue Squad and Fire Department; awards U. S. Savings Bonds to outstanding graduates of Middlesex and Bound Brook high schools, and sponsors a Little League baseball team in Bound Brook. A banquet for high school football teams is held by the Lions at the end of the season.

Charter members of the club, who number 38, are: Nathan Bampe, Everest L. Belli, Kenneth N. Burton, James J. Capano, Herbert H. Clausen, Joseph A. Colallilo, Vernon P. Corby, William W. Crouse, Peter J. DePhillips, William Gardziel, John Giardino, Philip Goldberg, Joseph Iacono, George Janney, Albert Jannone, David S. Koggan, Max Kruse, the Rev. Edmund N. Kreger.

Also, Bohumir Larys, John Lasko, Jr., Pat Mangino, Ramond C. Marra, William H. Mount Jr., Thomas Mullen, Clifford Ness, Samuel E. Oliver, Anthony Oliver, Anthony Pannone, Charles A. Plummer, Marcel G. Roseaux, James B. Ritter, Jr., Patsy Santumen, Dr. Paul Schild, Wilmer L. Stoaks, Archie Wahl, Thomas H. Warwick and John J. Zuccarelli.

AMERICAN LEGION, MIDDLESEX UNIT 306

A 19-year-old service organization, the Middlesex Post of the American Legion was formed in 1944 by about 70 original members.

Post members are vitally interested in child welfare and rehabilitation work. Most of their projects are in these fields.

The Post also annually sponsors a delegate to the Jersey Boy's State Convention at Rutgers University, where youths learn fundamentals of government during a one-week session.

The first Post Commander was Frank Moran. Two of the early organizers of the American Legion unit were Samuel Frank and former Magistrate Charles Bradley.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, MIDDLESEX UNIT 306

The American Legion Auxiliary, which has a membership of 47, shares in activities and projects of the Legion Post.

Formed in October of 1944, the original members elected as first president Mrs. Ann Bauman. Others named as officers were: Vice presidents, Mrs. John Dinkelo and Mrs. Gladys Staake; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Harriet Frank; chaplain, Mrs. Marie Engels; historian, Mrs. Barbara Gerrity, and sergeant-at-arms, Mrs. Helen Thompson. Now serving as president is Mrs. John Dinkelo.

Child welfare has become an extensive activity of the auxiliary. Donations are given to the Betty Bacharach Home for crippled children at Longport, the Cerebral Palsy Center at Roosevelt Park, Metuchen, and the Walter B. Matheny School in Far Hills for children afflicted with cerebral palsy.

The unit has three adopted veterans at the Old Soldiers Home in Menlo Park who are remembered with gifts on birthdays and holidays. Bingo and other entertainment are provided for veterans at Lyons and Menlo Park hospitals.

One of the auxiliary's major projects is the annual Poppy Sale, conducted before Memorial Day. Proceeds are used for rehabilitation of veterans in the community and in veterans hospitals. The unit also presents food baskets to needy families of veterans in the borough during holidays.

MIDDLESEX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber of Commerce was organized in February of 1952 with only 10 members. Membership since that time has increased to 55.

The original chamber elected Paul W. Faust, Jr., as its president. In May of 1952 the group was recognized by the National Chamber of Commerce and accepted into full membership by them.

First project undertaken by the chamber was perpetual care of the Veterans Roll at Mountain Avenue and Lincoln Boulevard. In October of 1952, the members also voted to place signs at each end

of town on Route 28, identifying the Borough of Middlesex.

The Chamber of Commerce also has been active in movements to build a modern Post Office facility, to bring banking facilities into the borough, and to improve the Green Brook and Mountain Avenue bridges.

In July of 1959, the chamber published the first complete map of the borough.

MIDDLESEX JUNIOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Middlesex Jaycees, a service organization aimed primarily at young men between the ages of 21 and 36, was chartered in November of 1962 with a membership of 35.

A chapter formerly had been in existence in the borough, but was dissolved when interest wained.

The local chapter now consists of about 40 members. The Middlesex Jaycees are affiliated with 7,000 membership New Jersey Jaycees and also with the national and international Jaycee organizations.

Since receiving their charter, the Jaycees have engaged in twenty projects. Among these were sponsorship of the "Miss Flowertown U.S.A. Pageant" in June, "Hometown Day" on July 4, and the Jaycee Football Classic in September. The group currently is planning to conduct a community survey.

Other projects will center around the November elections and the Christmas holidays. Santa Claus will again be brought to the borough this year by helicopter as a project of the Jaycees.

MIDDLESEX JAYCEE-ETTES

Organized late last year, the Middlesex Jaycee-ettes is an auxiliary branch of the Middlesex Jaycees.

Officers of the 19-member organization are: President, Mrs. Frank Barna; vice-president, Mrs. Albert Edwards; secretary, Mrs. Ralph May; treasurer, Mrs. Jack Zakresky, and director, Mrs. Michael Feldman.

Chief objective of the Jaycee-ettes is to assist in the various Jaycee projects. A recent undertaking of the auxiliary sponsorship of a baby sitting school, started in September.

MIDDLESEX LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

A nonpartisan organization, the League of Women Voters was established to promote political responsibility through informal and active participation of citizens in government.

The Middlesex league, after completing the required "Know Your Town" study, was granted recognition by the state and national League of Women Voters in 1950. Membership in the local group is open to all women of voting age.

The league sponsors a candidates' night program prior to each regular and school election. Last year league members published the informative "Know Your Schools" booklet.

MIDDLESEX WOMAN'S CLUB

The Woman's Club was organized 27 years ago by 11 local women who met in the library of Watchung School. Five months later the club affiliated with the world-wide organization.

Today the Middlesex Woman's Club has more than 70 members. The club's program includes study of international relations and current legislation and work in public welfare.

Elected as the club's first president in 1936 was Mrs. Roy Allen. Other original officers were: Vice-president, Mrs. William Hulse; treasurer, Mrs. Stanley Gobel, and secretary, Mrs. Edna Hill. Appointed as the first program chairman was Miss Katherine Mannion.

Also in the original group were Mrs. Maude S. Arnold, Mrs. Virginia McLaughlin, Mrs. Marjorie Anderson, Mrs. Grace Rothemich and Miss Clementine A. M. Petit.

During World War II, club members participated in Bundles for Britain, conserved and salvaged fats, tin and silk stockings served as canteen workers. They folded bandages for the Red Cross.

Since the war, activities were greatly expanded and membership increased considerably. Departments of the club were formed to study art, literature, American home and drama.

JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB OF MIDDLESEX

The Junior Woman's Club was organized on March 19, 1962, in the Middlesex home of Mrs. Fred Bendler, Fourth District advisor. By June the club had a membership of 12.

The organization's constitution was prepared with the aid of Miss Kay Spear, southern vice chairman.

At the Junior District Fall Conference, the Middlesex club was presented with an attendance award given to the Junior Woman's Club with the largest percentage of its membership present. By December, the club's membership had grown to 17.

Three departments were formed by the club. These are welfare, drama and art. The club will hold a fashion show next year. The drama department will also enter the state drama tournament next March.

President of the junior club is Mrs. Gwelda Thorpe.

PATROLMEN'S BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION, LOCAL 146

The Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, formerly associated with PBA Local 93 of Piscataway, Dunellen and Middlesex, organized as a separate unit three years ago. Members of new Local 146 are police officers from Middlesex, Dunellen and Green Brook.

An active supporter of the Police Athletic League, the local PBA presently is seeking funds to build a recreation center for children of the three municipalities. The policemen also sponsor a Little League baseball team as part of the PAL program.

Membership in Local 146 now numbers 31. First president of the association was Patrolman Edward Meyers of Middlesex. Currently serving his second term as president is Patrolman Joseph Pirone of Middlesex.

Other officers are: Vice-president, Patrolman Joseph DiBiase of Dunellen; secretary, Patrolman Joseph Erb of Middlesex; treasurer, Patrolman Augusta Conrad of Middlesex; financial secretary, Patrolman William Becker of Dunellen, and sergeant-at-arms, Patrolman James Dugan of Dunellen.