



MANTUA TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION QUARTERLY BULLETIN

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Carl's Market

At the Corner of Main and Union Streets in Mantua

Circa 1950's

Carl's Market

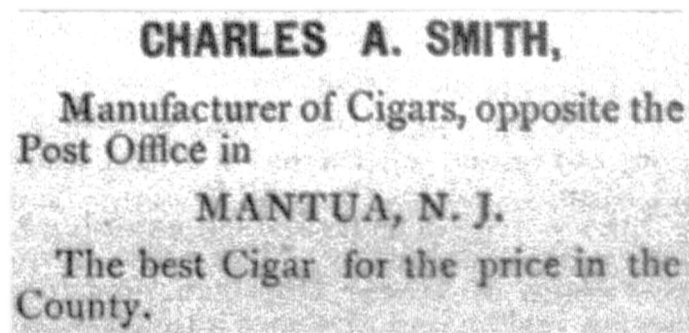
By Herb Hood

Decades before Carlton Francis Loudon Sr. operated his grocery/deli business in Mantua, the location was used by others for the same purpose.

A neighborhood grocery store existed on the corner of Main and Union Streets for nearly a century. During that time, it has had several owners and was once part of a chain store company that operated thousands of neighborhood grocery stores in several states.

Charles Augustus Smith was born on November 24, 1859, in Carpenter's Landing, Mantua Township, Gloucester County, New Jersey. He is the son of Charles Augustus Smith (born 1840 in Germany) and Elizabeth (born 1842 in Germany). Charles, who could read and write, did not go beyond a second-grade education as a child growing up in Mantua. On June 15, 1881, he married Mary G. Ferrel. Mary was born in August of 1861 and died on November 20, 1954. Charles and Mary had five children, Susannah (born 1881), Winfield L. (August 20, 1887 - 1966), Walter S. (August 3, 1889 - 1957), Charles Augustus, III (November 23, 1895 - January 1978) and Mary D. (January 1, 1897 - October 8, 1977). Susannah died in 1918.)

The U.S. Federal Census of 1880 lists Charles as a cigar manufacturer.

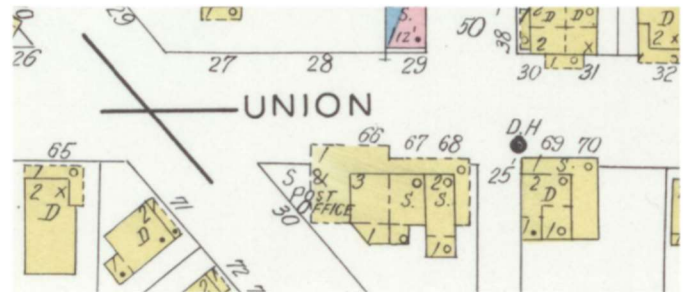


The preceding is from the Gloucester County Democrat, September 2, 1879

The U.S. Federal Census of 1900 shows that Charles' occupation was a "tobacchist".

The first store that Charles A. Smith operated was at Union and Main on the right side as one would travel going to Barnsboro. Charles moved across the street and rented his old store to a barber before tearing it down and having two homes built there. The store he moved to was the store formerly operated by the Truncer family.

On the 1905 New Jersey State Census, Charles is living in Mantua and is the postmaster. On that same census, his daughter Susannah is a clerk in the Post Office while his son Winfield is a grocery clerk.



The above is from the Sanborn Map Collection in the Library of Congress for the year 1933. On the map, Union Street is the present-day street of Mantua Boulevard. The crossing street, unmarked on the map, is the present-day street of Main Street. The map clearly indicates a post office at the corner of Main and Union Streets, though Federal Census records for 1930 (year closest to 1933) would be after the census records that show Charles A. Smith as a postmaster.

The Federal Census of 1910 shows that Charles A. Smith was a storekeeper at this location. He owns the store, but it is mortgaged. On that same census, Charles' sons, Winfield, and Walter, are listed as grocery store clerks. Presumably, based on their ages of 22 and 20 respectively, they were probably working in their father's store. At this time, they were living with their father as indicated on this census.

On the 1915 New Jersey State Census, Charles is still listed as a storekeeper. On this census, his sons, Walter, age 25, and Charles Jr, age 19, are listed as clerks. The U.S. Federal Census of 1920 shows that Charles was a “retail dealer” in groceries.

On the right corner, coming up Union Street at Main Street, August Smith and others before him had a grocery store; finally he bought the Truncer Store across the street and rented his place to a barber and then tore down the old place and put up two houses.

By this time, the post office was in the general store. In the old Truncer store, across Main Street, several had the store including George Freshcoln and Rainier until Smith took it over with the P.O.

Mr. Smith’s sons, Walt and Win, took the business over after Mr. Smith’s death and managed the store until the P.O. went to Daniel’s store; then they gave up the property.

The above is from *Mantua Township 1900-2000 “The People’s Story”* by Mantua Township Historical Commission, page 45.



1892
Original Mantua store corner of Main & Union Streets (now Mantua Blvd.)
Left to Right: Thomas Cooper, John Truncer (died 1904), Mrs. Cardine Arend Truncer and daughter, Travilla Thurman Truncer (born October 22, 1888, now Mrs. Joseph Kelley), Elisabeth Adams Price (born January 11, 1877, now Mrs. William Hannold deceased 1971), Esther Carey Truncer (born March 13, 1884).



Above is the C. A. Smith grocery store, Mantua, New Jersey, very early 1900’s

Mantua Township Historical Commission photograph

The above is from *Mantua Township 1900-2000 “The People’s Story”* by Mantua Township Historical Commission, front cover.

While operating his store, Charles went head-to-head with a competing store on Turner Street. That store was an A&P.



The corner of Main and Union Streets, Mantua,
New Jersey, early 1900s

Mantua Township Historical Commission
photograph

When Charles Smith retired, his sons took over the operations of the store. They are listed in a 1931 business directory as the store's operators. They would have the store until its next tenant came along.

Charles died on May 6, 1940. He is buried in the Mantua Methodist Church Cemetery. His wife, Mary, is also buried in the Mantua Methodist Church Cemetery.

By the time of the passing of Charles A. Smith, a new era for this store had begun in the location where Charles had his store. That era belonged to the American Stores Company or ASCO. This company would become known as Acme Markets.

This new store at Main and Union Streets would pit the two behemoths of the time period against one another in not only pricing of goods but also customer service. The question became, who would come out on top. The answer, the American Stores Company store would.

C. A. SMITH DIES AT 80; EX-MANTUA P. O. HEAD

Mantua, May 7.—Charles A. Smith, 80, former postmaster here, and the oldest native of this town, died last night at his home, Main and Union streets.

Mr. Smith served four terms as postmaster, operating the post-office in conjunction with a grocery store which he conducted for 20 years. Before that he was in the retail and wholesale cigar and tobacco business here for 20 years. He retired 17 years ago. He spent all his life in Mantua.

Long active in county and local civic affairs, Mr. Smith was at one time chief of the Mantua Fire Company and an active member of the company up to his death. He was married 58 years.

He is survived by his widow, Mary G.; three sons and a daughter, and a sister, Mrs. Mary Davies, Audubon. His children are Winfield, Walter and Mrs. Mary Mumford, all of Mantua, and Charles A., Jr., Camden.

Funeral services will be held Friday at 2.30 p. m., with burial in Mantua Cemetery.

The roots of Acme Markets go back to 1891 in Philadelphia where two Irish immigrants, Samuel Robinson and Robert Crawford opened a grocery store which they called "The House That Quality Built". Little did they know that one day their company would have a store in Mantua. Soon after the opening of their store in Philadelphia, Robinson and Crawford changed the name of their company to Robinson and Crawford.



Several years later, 5 grocery store chains merged and created the American Stores Company. Those five companies were Robinson and Crawford, the Acme tea Company, the Bell Company, the Childs Company, and the George M. Dunlap Company, which was based in Camden, New Jersey.

**5 STORE CHAINS
MERGE IN HUGE
GROCERY AGENCY**

Philadelphia Firms
Have Biggest Food
Distribution Plan
in the World

Companies' Business
Totals \$50,000,000,
With 1223 Stands in
District

Consolidation Will
Cut Prices Thru
Eastern Penna., Is
Belief



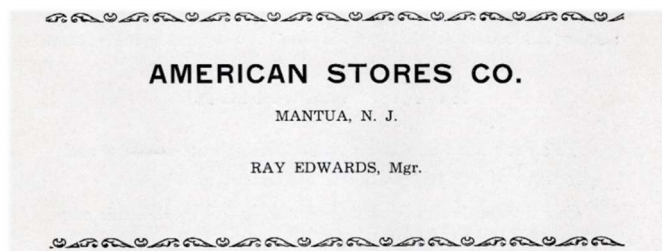
HEADS BIG GROCERY CHAIN
Samuel Robinson, president of the new American Stores Company and senior partner of Robinson & Crawford, Mr. Robinson has been a leader in the negotiations just closed by formation of the American Stores Company to take over the five grocery chain systems operating in this city.

The new company became known as the American Stores Company or ASCO. Samuel Robinson became its president. After the merger, the company began to expand into the surrounding areas. By 1927 they were operating 2,700 stores in New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania. Stores, warehouses, bakeries, truck

depots and horse stables were numerous. This expansion included Mantua and the building that housed the Charles A. Smith store was perfect for ASCO's expansion plans.

The ASCO store in Mantua continued with serving Mantua just like its predecessor, the Charles A. Smith Grocery store, had done. Mantua had a substantial number of dwellings in the area so that people could walk to the store and do their grocery shopping. Additionally, Mantua's population was exploding. Its economy was growing in leaps and bounds. New housing was being built.

The ASCO store in Mantua not only served the community as a grocery store but it also became a community partner. In 1947, Mantua hosted its first annual "Halloween Parade and Frolic." The list of businesses that supported that event lists the ASCO store in Mantua.



Note the name of the manager of the store from above. Ray Edwards came to Mantua in early 1940 to manage the American Stores Company store. When World War II came, he went off to serve in the war. Afterwards, he returned to the same store. In 1945 he married Emma Bodine. They lived in an apartment over the American Stores Company store. They later moved to Summit Avenue and in 1960 built a house on Mantua Boulevard.

As for Ray's community service, he was a charter member of the Mantua Lions Club and an original member of the Clearview Board of Education. He was elected to the Township Committee in the 1960s and served as Mayor in 1960, 1961, 1963 and from 1966-1970. Ray was the chairman of the Planning Board from 1989 until his death in 1992.

Ray and his wife were active members of the Mantua Methodist Church where Ray served as a

Sunday School teacher, Lay Leader, and Lay Speaker for the Methodist Conference. He retired from Acme Markets as Vice President of Sales. He had worked for the American Stores Company/Acme Markets for 42 years.

The ASCO stores of the 1930s and 1940s, which the Mantua ASCO was one of, varied in layout and style depending on their location and the buildings they occupied. They were not “cookie cutter” copies of each other. Many communities in the area had an Asco store. For example, Mullica Hill had one. So did Wenonah. Woodbury had three. Westville had one. In 1927, Camden had 48 stores plus four warehouses, two bakeries, two stables and one garage for its trucks.

These warehouses and bakeries were needed in New Jersey. The Ben Franklin Bridge did not open until July 1, 1926. With no bridge prior to that ASCO had to rely on localized warehouses and bakeries. The stables were needed as many of the streets in larger communities were too narrow for motorized delivery trucks to go down.



American Stores Company truck, making a delivery to an ASCO store, 1942, photo courtesy of the Laura Ristine Collection

Much of the company’s success was dependent on the store managers and their relationship with the people of the community which they served. In the days of the ASCO stores, customer service was a high priority as was the concept of helping out the community which they were a part of.

In 1936, the Johnstown Flood, also known as the St. Patrick’s Day Flood, occurred. It started raining on March 9, 1936, and continued to rain until March 22, 1936, thirteen days later. The area was devastated. Twenty-five people lost their lives. Damages were in the tens of millions of dollars. Hopelessness and despair permeated the area. Area residents needed food. They needed groceries. Simply put, help was needed in no uncertain terms.

True to their company beliefs, ASCO responded. The following appeared in newspapers.



ASCO kept that promise of “no increase in prices”. It was simply an illustration of the company’s belief in serving the community and helping out in community affairs whenever they could. That belief came from the founders of the

company, particularly Samuel Robinson who never forgot where he came from. He even sent money back to Ireland to build a hospital which is still in operation today.

returned, he had a job waiting for him. He eventually became the manager of the old Woodstown Acme until his retirement.

The ASCO store in Mantua was in operation until at least 1947. By this time, ASCO was closing its smaller, full-service stores and began opening new, self-service stores which were called Acme Markets. When the ASCO store in Mantua closed another era began for that location. This new era would usher in a new tenant for the store at Main and Union Streets, but it would not entirely sever the ties to the American Stores Company.

For this new era that was dawning for the people of Mantua, the question of whether the level of customer service and community support could continue or not since there would be no major company to support these concepts. This new era for Mantua, in the same location that the community had relied on for decades to serve their daily needs, was going to fall on the shoulders of just one man. Could he survive and grow in an era of national and regional supermarkets like A & P and Acme Markets. Could he make it in a building well over 50 years of age, with wooden floors and wooden shelves. This new era was the beginning of arguably Mantua's greatest grocer of all time. Enter, Carl Francis Loudon, Sr.

Carlton Francis Loudon, Sr. was born on October 1, 1914, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is the son of Carlton Stiles Loudon and Lydia (Lena, Lydie) A. Barton. Carlton Stiles Loudon was born in Philadelphia on November 30, 1893. He died in Camden County, NJ on November 27, 1952. He is buried in the Arlington Cemetery in Pennsauken, Camden County, NJ. Lydia was born on December 13, 1893, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She died on October 20, 1925, in Camden, Camden, NJ. In January of 1927 Carlton Stiles Loudon married Elizabeth D. (Elsie) Reustle who was born in Pennsylvania on September 11, 1892, and died in Camden, Camden, NJ in March of 1973.



American Stores Ad, post WW II

During World War II, ASCO made a promise that any of its employees who went off to war would have a job waiting for them when they returned. They kept that promise also.

One such man was from Wenonah. His name was Walter Shinkle. He went off to war and served on an 8th Army Air Force base in England. When he



Carlton Stiles Loudon

On March 7, 1942, Carlton Francis Loudon married Marguerite McHenry (Marge) Seidelmann in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the Prince of Peace Chapel.

Carlton was growing up and living in Philadelphia through at least 1920. When his mother died in Camden, Camden, NJ on October 20, 1925, he, and his family were living in Camden, NJ. The 1930 Federal Census lists him and his family as living at 1028 32nd Street in Camden, NJ. By the 1940 Federal Census he and his family were living at 924 26th Street in Camden, NJ. Carlton enlisted in the US Army in WW II.

APT. 179-306 BEIDEMAN AVE CAMDEN N.J

SERIAL NUMBER 1031	1. NAME (Print) Carlton Francis Loudon	ORDER NUMBER 2706
2. ADDRESS (Print) 1029 North Twenty Sixth Camden New Jersey	3. TELEPHONE Reed's Drug Store Camden 9518	4. AGE IN YEARS 26
5. PLACE OF BIRTH Philadelphia Penna.	6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP U.S.A.	7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS Mrs. Elizabeth Dorothea Loudon
8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON Mother	9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON 1029 North Twenty Sixth Camden Camden New Jersey	10. EMPLOYER'S NAME American Stores Co. (Manager)
11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS Ninth and Pine Sts. Camden Camden New Jersey	I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.	
REGISTRATION CARD D. S. Form 1	Carlton Francis Loudon (Inspector's signature)	

After he was discharged from military service he eventually moved to Mantua, Gloucester, NJ. Carlton died on November 30, 1990, in Mantua, NJ.



Carlton Francis Loudon, Sr.

LOUDON
Carlton F. of Mantua, N.J. On November 30, 1990, age 76 years. Husband of Marguerite M. (nee Seidelmann). Father of Carol A. Leach of Pitman, John J. Loudon of Sitka, KY, and Carlton F. Loudon, Jr. of Haddonfield. Also survived by a sister Kathryn Galbraith of Westville, half-sister Elizabeth Storer of Pennsauken, six grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, and two step great grandchildren. Relatives and friends are invited to attend the funeral services 11AM Wednesday at SMITH FUNERAL HOME, 47 Main St., Mantua. Int. Eglington Cem. Friends may call Tuesday 7-9PM.

His wife passed away on August 8, 2007. They are buried in the Eglington Cemetery in Clarksboro, Gloucester, NJ.

The following is obituary information from Find a Grave.

Marguerite M. Loudon (nee Seidelmann), age 84, of Pitman, NJ passed away on August 8, 2007. Formerly of Mantua. Mrs. Loudon and her late husband operated Carl's Market in Mantua from 1956 to 1979, she also worked for Tyco Industries and American Greeting Co. Marge attended Mantua.

Wife of the late Carlton Loudon, she is survived by one daughter, Carol A. Leach, and her husband, John; 2 sons, John J. Loudon and his wife, Nancy, Carlton F. Loudon, Jr. and his wife, Diane; 9 grandchildren, Jeff Leach and wife Jennifer, Jennifer Strockbine and husband Keith, Mark and John Loudon, Jr. and George Whittaker and wife Anna, Melissa, Elizabeth, and Carli Loudon; 12 great-grandchildren; and her sister-in-law, Lillian Seidelmann.

As stated in the obituaries, Carl Loudon operated a business in Mantua from 1956 to 1979 called Carl's Market. What about Carl's background in this business? How did he learn his trade? What made him so good at customer service?

The 1940 Federal Census lists the occupation of Carl Loudon as a clerk in a retail grocery store in Camden, NJ. His WW II enlistment card says that he was a manager for the American Stores Company located at 9th and Pine Streets in Camden, NJ.

As you can tell, Carl Loudon was well qualified to run a neighborhood grocery store. The fact that he worked as a manager for the American Stores Company should be proof enough.

During this time period, store holdups were rising dramatically. John Park, president of American Stores, offered the sum of 1,000 dollars for information leading to the arrest of holdup men. The chief of police in the city, town, or township, etc. to

whose department this information was given had the authority to determine who received the reward.

Unfortunately, Carl, while working for American Stores was not immune to holdups.

Earlier, at 2d and Butler sts., Joseph Daniliewicz, 30, of 4225 Disston st., was forced out of his cab and robbed of \$5 by two fares he had stopped for at Memphis st. and Lehigh ave. The cab was taken by the robbers and later found abandoned at 3d and Westmoreland sts.

In Camden, a lone bandit, unperturbed by one of two women customers who warned him, "I'm not afraid of you," forced Carlton Loudon, 31, of 306 Beidemann ave., Camden, the manager, to turn over the contents of the store safe and cash register.

Edwin S. Meyers, 37, one of the owners of the 2d st. place, told police that he was alone in the store when the two men entered. They wore khaki trousers and jackets. One of the men ordered a package of cigarets.

Philadelphia Inquirer Wednesday, October 30, 1946, page 25

As you can see, Carl got a lot of experience and training in the operation of a retail food store with his tenure at American Stores Company. He, undoubtedly, was well prepared to operate his own business and make a success of it in Mantua, NJ starting in 1956. His customer service level is something that every supermarket in America today craves for their managers and employees. Carl would have made an excellent role model in today's supermarket industry.

Carl was a man that possessed many skills, all in one package. He was a grocer, a butcher, a merchandiser, a manager, a delivery person and a produce specialist.

If you were housebound and needed groceries, all you needed to do was call Carl, give him your order over the phone and he would get it together and

deliver it to you. The cost, nothing. Getting that same service today from a supermarket and most likely you will have to pay for it. It is a service from the past that was embraced by Carl Loudon and widely absent in today's society.



Carl Loudon, at work in his store. Photo courtesy of Carl Loudon, Jr.

Carl's Market sold meats, luncheon meats, produce, frozen foods and groceries. He got his groceries from a distributor in Camden. In his store, the checkout counter ran parallel to Union Street. Frozen Food ran parallel to Main Street. Meat and produce were in the back of the store with the produce display being nearest to Main Street. There was a door at the back corner of the store that led into a storage room. Compressors for the refrigeration equipment were part of the refrigeration cases. There were two aisles of groceries in the center of the store. During the holidays, Carl would display for sale, large toys on the top of his displays.

What the community of Mantua thought of Carl Loudon can best be summed up by the words of Helen Damming Kramer.

"I remember Carl's Market where Carl Loudon and his wife Marge always had a smile and would always trust you if you didn't have enough money with you." ...Helen Damming Kramer (from the book, Mantua Township 1900-2000 "The People's Story")

CARL'S FOOD MARKET
 MAIN and UNION STREETS TELEPHONE: UL 7-9869 MANTUA, N. J.

Be Sure!  **Shop KELLOGG**

January 13 - 18

for FRESHNESS QUALITY...VALUE!

KELLOGG Fruit Cocktail 16 oz. can 27c	KELLOGG Prune Juice qt. bot. 33c
KELLOGG Lg. Blenheim Apricots ^{12 oz. pkg.} 59c	KELLOGG Pancake Syrup 12 oz. bot. 29c
Anglo Corned Beef 12 oz. can 45c	Tartan Pure Black Pepper 4 oz. can 29c
Miller's Sliced Dried Beef 16 oz. 45c	Burk's Smo-kee Links 12 oz. pkg. 65c
Miller's Lebanon Bologna 16 oz. 41c	Burk's Skinless Knockwurst 12 oz. pkg. 65c
Morton Salt PLAIN 26 oz. pkg. 13c	Nabisco Chiparoons 16 oz. pkg. 49c
Vermont Maid Syrup 12 oz. bot. 31c	Sunshine Krispy Crackers 16 oz. pkg. 27c
Del Monte ^{PINEAPPLE} GRAPEFRUIT Drink 16 oz. can 30c	Ovaltine CHOCOLATE FLAVORED small jar 43c
KELLOGG Coffee 1 lb. bag 99c	Lawndale Coffee 1 lb. bag 83c

TARTAN INSTANT COFFEE 5 oz. jar 89c

- **KELLOGG GOLDEN CORN** Whole or Crushed 2 ^{16 oz. can} 33c
- **KELLOGG Jumbo Peas** 2 ^{16 oz. can} 39c
- **KELLOGG Apple Sauce** 2 ^{17 oz. jar} 35c
- **KELLOGG Grapefruit Sections** SWEET 2 ^{16 oz. can} 43c

FROZEN FOODS	KELLOGG Bleach 15 qt. bot. 33c
BIRDS EYE COD 10 oz. pkg. 42c	Ivory Snow 12 oz. bot. 36c
TARTAN WAFFLES 2 pkgs. of 6 29c	Spic & Span 12 oz. bot. 28c
TARTAN VEGETABLES ^{MIX} 2 ^{16 oz. can} 39c	A1-Po Cubed Beef Dog Food 14 oz. can 25c
TARTAN STRAWBERRIES ^{MIX} 12 oz. pkg. 33c	

ALL PRICES IN QUANTITY. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS.

Ad for Carl's Market, courtesy of Carl Loudon, Jr

On a personal note, growing up my sister and I would spend one week each staying with our great aunt, Ethel Turner. She lived in the duplex next to the Mantua Township Historical Commission Museum. One day she made out a shopping list and sent me off to Carl's Market. When I entered the store, it felt strange to me being in a place that I had never been to before. I saw a man working in one of the aisles. It turned out to be Carl Loudon. He looked up from his work, saw me and immediately came over and introduced himself and I did the same. He told me that he had never seen me before and asked what he could do for me. I gave him my great aunt's list to which he replied that he knew exactly how my great aunt liked her lunch meat cut and proceeded to fill her order. The following summer, I was once again visiting Ethel Turner for a week and again she sent

me off to Carl's Market for her shopping order. Even though a year had passed, Carl remembered me by name. That is customer service with a capital "C".

When the community needed support, Carl was there for them.

52 Union St. Mantua, N. J.

CARL'S MARKET

Fresh Meats Cold Cuts
Frozen Foods Fresh Vegetables

Free Delivery 468-2658

Mon., Thurs., 8:30-6.
Fri. & Sat. 8:30-7.

Ad in Clearview Regional High School Yearbook for 1970

Note the days of operation for Carl's Market, those being Monday through Saturday. This was typical of small grocery stores and supermarkets of this time period. Supermarkets being widely open on Sundays was a decade or so away into the future. The extended hours on Friday and Saturday were a holdover from back in the day when shoppers did most of their shopping on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. In this time period, a lot of smaller supermarkets actually closed at 6 o'clock on Saturdays and would continue to do so for about a decade.

After Carl's Market closed, others tried their hand at continuing to serve in the capacity of a hometown, small grocer, in the same building as Carl used. One such business was called Debbie's Deli. Unfortunately for Debbie's Deli, the old magic of Carl Loudon was gone. The mystique of Carl's Market had evaporated. Mantua's greatest grocer of all time "had left the building".

Following Debbie's Deli was Loretta's Deli. Judging from their flyer, the store was more like Louie G's in Sewell. However, as noted in their flyer, they did "carry a full line of groceries, candy and ice cream". They offered taking of orders over

the phone but no delivery service. Their flyer indicated that parking was not an issue.

LORETTA'S DELI

52 UNION ST. MANTUA

SUBS	SANDWICHES
AMERICAN.....1.67	AM. CHEESE.....1.25
ITALIAN.....1.95	BOLOGNA.....1.20
CHEESE.....1.65	CAPPACOLLO.....1.65
PROVOLONE CH.....1.75	CORNED BEEF.....1.75
HAM + CHEESE.....1.90	TURKEY.....1.60
ROAST BEEF.....2.20	LIVERWURST.....1.20
CORNED BEEF.....2.15	LUNCH ROLL.....1.45
TURKEY.....1.95	ROAST BEEF.....1.80
TUNA.....2.20	LEBANON Bolo.....1.70
	TUNA.....1.80
	AMERICAN CHEESE 10" XTRA
	SWISS CHEESE 10" XTRA
	PROVOLONE CHEESE 10" XTRA
	SAVE TIME
	CALL 468-2658
SCHOOL SUBS	
AMERICAN.....1.30	
CHEESE.....1.25	
ITALIAN.....1.35	
HOT SANDWICHES	
MEAT BALLS.....1.80	TOPP ROLL w/2 M. BALLS
Lg. MEAT BALL.....2.20	SUB ROLL w/3 M. BALLS
ROAST BEEF + GRAVY...1.85	
HOT ROAST BEEF SUB	2.25

ANNOUNCEMENT

STARTING SEPT. 13TH

LORETTA'S DELI (FORMERLY DEBBIE'S)
MAIN + UNION STS. MANTUA, (ACROSS FROM BANK)
468-2658

NEW HOURS FOR YOUR SHOPPING CONVENIENCE

MONDAY THRU FRIDAY 8:00 A.M. TILL 10:00 P.M.
SATURDAY 9:00 A.M TILL 6:00 P.M.
SUNDAY 10:00 A.M TILL 4:00 P.M.

STOP IN FOR THE FINEST SANDWICHES + COLD CUTS
IN THE AREA.
TRY A HOT ROAST BEEF SUB (DIFFERENT + DELICIOUS)

NEW JERSEY INSTANT LOTTERY

WE CARRY A FULL LINE OF GROCERIES, CANDY + ICE CREAM
CIGARETTES 7.73 + 7.95 A CARTON

AVOID THE WAIT. CALL 468-2658 AND YOUR ORDER WILL
BE READY WHEN YOU ARRIVE.

WE WILL BE GLAD TO HEAR YOUR COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS
ABOUT OUR NEW HOURS.

FAST, FRIENDLY SERVICE
PLENTY OF PARKING FRONT SIDE + REAR OF BUILDING

What Carl brought to Mantua may be gone forever, but those who knew him might never forget the smiling faces of Carl and his wife and the personal conversations they had with their customers which they knew by name or the fact that he paid personal attention to their needs.

Back in the day, people were more likely to say, “I need some groceries. I have to go to Carl’s today” and not “I need some groceries. I have to go to the store today”.

THE MANTUA DINER

By Herb Hood

As an introduction to the Mantua Diner, the following comes from a Business Insider article by Erin McDowell dated August 17, 2023. By reading this article one can get an understating of why someone would open a diner in Mantua and why it is now gone. The competition at the time might be considered suicidal in today’s world. The Telford Inn was the Mantua Diner’s neighbor. A luncheonette was just up the street next to Carl’s Market. Also, since there are no known pictures of the interior of the Mantua Diner, looking at the pictures in the article can provide a glimpse of what it might have been like in the Mantua Diner. Depicted in those pictures are waitresses who wore similar style uniforms as the waitresses in the Mantua Diner. The cars in the Business Insider news article pictures look very much like the cars in the Mantua Diner pictures.

Nothing is more quintessentially American than ‘50s-style diners. Diners, which were originally referred to as “lunch cars,” first emerged in the 1920s. By the ‘50s, they had grown in popularity due to their low prices, large menus, and extended hours.

Once the go-to hangout spot for American teens and a symbol of opportunity for small business owners, diners are one of the most beloved remnants of mid-century America.

Scattered across the country, diners came in many shapes and forms, from roadside railcar-style establishments to tiny hole-in-the-wall restaurants in the country’s biggest cities.

Here’s what diners looked like during their heyday, and why they are still such a strong symbol of American life.

The first rail-car style diners popped up in New Jersey in the early 1900s.



Interior of a railcar-style dinner in the 1950s.
Debrocke/Classic Stock/Getty Images

As the *Telegraph* reported, railcar-style diners were modeled after dining cars or sometimes converted from original train cars into stand-alone eateries. Diners were constructed in factories and then shipped to their destinations, much like mobile homes, and were relatively affordable to purchase at just \$1,000.

Once they arrived, the utilities simply had to be connected. Since diners, or “lunch cars,” had to be shipped using a truck or railcar, they were purposely designed to be narrow, the *Telegraph* reported.

New Jersey essentially became “ground zero” for diners.



A short-order cook at the Sunset Diner, United States. Ralph Morse/The Life Picture Collection/Getty Images

At one point, nearly 95% of the shippable restaurants were manufactured in New Jersey. **Curbed reported.** The state was well-positioned for the task because of its “working-class population and transportation network,” Curbed wrote.

New Jersey’s oldest diner, The Summit Diner, opened in 1928, was rebuilt in 1939, and is still open today.

Until the Great Depression, most diners could be found in the Northeast.



Teenagers eating at a diner circa 1950. H. Armstrong Roberts/Classic Stock/Getty Images

However, after World War II ended and the suburbs began to boom, more and more people began opening diners nationwide.

The small businesses could prove profitable for owners.

TRIVIA QUESTION

What does the number 43 have to do in the world of diners?

The answer appears on page 24.

Since the restaurants themselves were so small, and the kitchens so narrow, not many employees were required, which kept costs down and profits up.

With the implementation of cross-country highways in the 1960s, diners continued to grow in popularity.



Interior view of an empty roadside diner in Wendover, Utah, circa 1950. Bettman/Getty Images

Travelers along the new highways could stop off and grab a quick bite at the roadside establishments.

Many Diners featured a row of bar stools along a counter, allowing many people to be served without much effort from the dinner staff.



A view of people eating at a lunch counter circa 1950 in downtown Nashville Tennessee. Bob Grannis/Getty Images

Diners typically operated around the clock, allowing patrons to stop by at any time for a meal.

Diners became popular due to their large menus featuring American food staples like hamburgers, fries, and club sandwiches.



A waitress serves customers at a diner in the 1950s. H. Armstrong Roberts/Classic Stock/Getty Images

Most diners had galley kitchens that made it easier for cooks to move from one dish to another, making service quicker than in a traditional restaurant, the *Telegraph* reported.

As well as being quicker to make, dishes served at diners were cheaper, too.

Items like pancakes, sausages, meatloaf, burgers, and sandwiches were standard on diner menus, and still are today.

The meals were low-priced, making diners popular even before their rise in the 1950s. During the Great Depression, diners provided an inexpensive way for families to go out to eat, the *Telegraph* reported.

However, diners were also a romantic, affordable date spot for young people.

DO YOU KNOW

How many area diners can you name that either operate as a diner, started out as a diner but are now more like a restaurant or operate an eating establishment that was a former diner. A list of at least 20 twenty is good.



Two couples sit at a table in a diner in 1955. Ed Feingersh/Pix/Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

Young couples could stop at a diner for a couple of burgers, hang around the jukebox, and meet up with friends in a casual, public setting.

Diners have appeared in pop-culture favorites like “Grease,” “Seinfeld,” “Gilmore Girls,” and “Twin Peaks.”

“In the movies, the diner is a special kind of space, a mythic place, a zone of escape,” film critic John Patterson told the BBC in a 2011 interview.

Suzanne Vega, who wrote the “80s hit song” “Tom’s Diner,” added, “The attraction of the diner is that it’s a sort of midway point between the street and home.”

Michael C. Gabriele, who wrote **“The History of Diners in New Jersey,”** told the *Telegraph* that “diners are the state’s ultimate gathering places – at any moment, high school students, CEOs, construction workers, and tourists might be found at a counter chatting with the waitresses and line cooks.”

Railcar-style diners are still manufactured in factories today, but they’re much more expensive to purchase and ship.

Curbed reported in 2017 that new diners can cost more than \$1 million to produce, and restoring or renovating old ones can be extremely pricey as well. Many ‘50s-style diners in operation today are built on-site to cut shipping costs.

By the 1970s, the rise in fast-food restaurants led to a decline in the popularity of traditional diners.

As McDonald’s, Wendy’s, and Burger King restaurants continue to pop up nationwide, it became difficult for small business owners to compete with the huge corporations also selling cheap, convenient food.

While there were reportedly 1,000 diners in New York City around 30 years ago, just 398 remained in 2015, Crain’s New York Business reported, citing the city’s Department of Health records at that time.

Diners today face an uncertain future.

NEWS FLASH – FEBRUARY 11, 2024

It was announced today that the 45-year-old diner, the Medport Diner in Medford, New Jersey would be closing. The diner was located on Route 70. It will be torn down and replaced by a Chipotle restaurant.

In 2022, Time Out reported that two notable New York diners, Good Stuff Diner in Chelsea and Meme’s Diner in Crown Heights, had closed their doors in the previous two years. The New York Times also reported that between 2014 and 2019, 15 diners were sold across four of New York City’s five boroughs: six sales in Queens, six in Brooklyn, two in the Bronx, and one in Staten Island.

However, a recent embracing of nostalgia – think, the increased popularity of speakeasies, as reported by USA Today – has also revitalized the typical American diner.

A recent addition to New York’s Soho neighborhood is trendy ‘50s-style Soho Diner, part of the Soho Grand Hotel. Other New York diners, like the Waverly Diner and the Empire Diner, have managed to keep their doors open despite changing tastes.

The above excerpts from Business Insider should provide the reader with some insight for the Mantua Diner, such as the cost to set it up, the probable menu and pricing, the contribution it made to the local economy, its rise and eventual closing due to a changing economic climate, how it was one many such establishments in the area, county, state and across the country.

With that being said, its time to talk about Mantua’s contribution to American Culture, the Mantua Diner.



The Mantua Diner in 1946



The Mantua Diner on April 20, 1955, located on Main Street near the Telford Inn

The Mantua Diner was established by Gus Georgiadis. Gus was born in Greece on April 27, 1895. His wife's name was Rachelle. She was born in Greece on March 15, 1903. Gus and Rachelle came to America on the SS Normandie which sailed from La Havre, France. The passenger manifest listed Gus' occupation as "Restaurateer".

After coming to America, Gus filed a petition for naturalization. Gus's father came to America before Gus and most likely he later sent for his son. Gus' father's name was Konstantine. He also became a naturalized citizen.

On the Federal Census of 1940, Gus was living on Main Street in Mantua. His occupation was Restaurant Owner.



The Mantua Diner in the snow, date is unknown.

In the pictures of the Mantua Diner, there is a structure attached to the diner on the left. That structure has an entrance door with a sign above it that says, "Ladies Dining Room". It would appear that this may have been Gus' attempt to allow women the opportunity to dine in a quieter environment than what the main diner had.



Mantua Diner, May 16, 1955, the Telford Inn is in the background.



Gus and waitress Lillian Davenport outside of the Mantua Diner



Mantua Diner, date unknown



Two waitresses of the Mantua Diner, a woman called Snoke and Lillian Davenport.

The following are four photos of the same car parked at the Mantua Diner; the date is unknown.



In the above photo are some structures visible in the background that may help with understanding where the Mantua Diner was situated. The tower in the upper left showing a bell in it belongs to the Mantua Fire House. According to the Mantua Fire and EMS museum, the Mantua Fire House did have a bell at one time, but the bell no longer exists. The two houses in the background are located along George's Alley.





By the Federal Census of 1950, Gus no longer operated the Mantua Diner. Instead, he had moved to Union Street and operated a drug store. At that time, Gus and Rachelle had two sons, George, age 10 and Richard, age 6. Most likely both of these sons attended J. Mason Tomlin Elementary School.

About three years later Gus and his family moved to Tarpon Springs in Pinellas County, Florida. From there, Gus opened a drug store. Rachelle died on May 14, 1968 in Florida. Sometime later, Gus married Evangeline Hanson from Canton, Ohio.

Nobody seems to know when the Mantua Diner actually closed or even if it continued to operate under another owner for a period of time. Nobody seems to know when the diner was torn down or removed. However, there are two newspaper articles that suggest that the diner was still standing as late as 1962 or 1963.

The first article, from 1962, is above a fatal assault that ended in murder charges. The significance of the news article is that it states that the crime occurred outside of the Mantua Diner, and it gives the location of the diner.

The second article, from 1963, appears to list some of the contents of the Mantua Diner, namely tables and chairs. This would lead to the belief that the Mantua Diner may have had tables along the windows off the diner which faced Main Street. It could also mean that these tables and chairs could have been in the ladies' dining section of the diner. The phrase "Sac. \$400" might be a clue that the diner had closed and was getting ready to be torn down or

moved. In any event, what became of the structure remains a mystery.

Man Released in \$5,000 Bail In Slaying Outside N. J. Diner

A South Jersey man was released in \$5,000 bail on a manslaughter charge last night following a fight outside the Mantua Diner, Route 45 and Main St., Mantua.

Magistrate John Weatherby set the bail for Edward R. Jones, 21, of Bridgeton Pike, Mantua, after Robert Kimmerley, 22, of Breakneck Rd., also Mantua, was pronounced dead on arrival at Underwood Hospital, Woodbury, Saturday night.

STATE POLICE said Jones admitted quarreling with Kimmerley over a remark made by Kimmerley about a girl who accompanied Jones to the diner.

Trooper Stephen Holmes said Jones told of following

the other man to a parked car outside the diner and of reaching inside the car to pull Kimmerley out.

Witnesses said Kimmerley's head struck the metal door frame. He collapsed after being struck by Jones and died without regaining consciousness.

POLICE SAID Kimmerley apparently died of a cerebral hemorrhage, but the cause of death had not yet been established.

Kimmerley was the father of an infant boy. His wife is expecting another child.

FOR THE F

The Philadelphia Daily News
Monday, December 1, 1962

CHAIRS—Tables, 10 formica tables, 36"x36", 36 maple captain chairs. Like new, perf. cond. Sac. \$400. Mantua Diner, Rt. 45, Mantua.

Courier Post
Wednesday, May 1, 1963

Gus passed away in Tarpon Springs on April 20, 1975.

* * *

GEORGIADIS, GUS G.,
79, of 323 Spring Blvd., Tarpon Springs, died Sunday (April 20, 1975). A native of New Jersey, he moved here 23 years ago from Martin, N.J. A retired drug store owner in Tarpon Springs, he was a member of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and the George Washington Ahepa Chapter 16, Tarpon Springs. Survived by his wife Evangeline; three sons, George of Tarpon Springs, Alex of New Jersey and Richard of Atlanta, Ga.; three brothers, and a sister. North Funeral Home, Tarpon Springs.

* * *

Gus and Rachelle are buried in the Cycadia Cemetery, in plot F, in Tarpon Springs, Florida.



DO YOU KNOW LIST

How many readers listed the following:

The Monarch Diner

The Paulsboro Diner

Harrison House

P & B Diner

Olga's Diner

The Glassboro Diner

The Swedesboro Diner

The Liberty Diner

Point 40 Diner

New Berlin Diner

Hollywood Café

Nifty Fifties

Lamp Post Diner

Stratford Diner

Club Diner

7 Stars Diner

Meadows Diner

Colonial Diner

Whitman Diner

Sakana Oriental

Falcon Diner

Emil Jacob Ratz - Mantua Printer

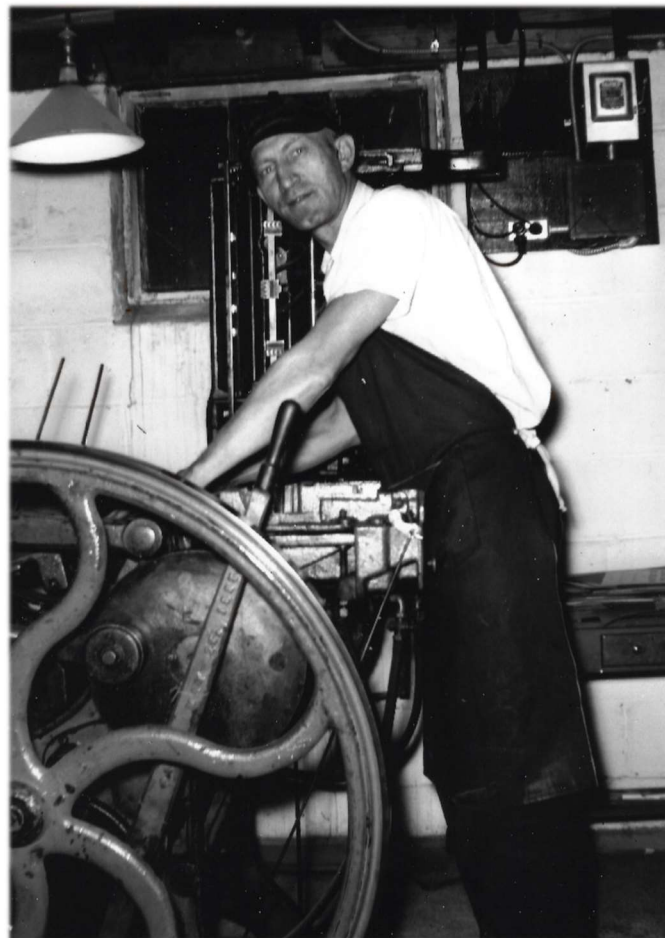
By Michael DiGiamberardino

Emil Jacob Ratz was the youngest child born to Samuel and Elizabeth in Woodbury, NJ on June 5th, 1908. His parents were immigrants from Slovakia and Austria, respectively. He grew up living in Philadelphia, PA and Woodbury, NJ completing school through the eighth grade. In the 1920's, he began apprenticing for William Albright at the Constitution Printers in Woodbury and later the Woodbury Times. In 1930 he married Theresa DeCesari at her parent's home on Berkley Rd in Mantua. They moved from Woodbury to Mantua after the birth of their daughter Theresa. Their first home in Mantua was at 80 Union St, they later moved to Clinton Ave before finally settling at their home on Summit Ave.

When WWII started Emil began working at the New York Shipyard in Camden, he supplied his own tools while working at the Shipyard. When the war ended on September 2, 1945, Emil walked out of the shipyard, leaving his tools behind, never to return to that line of work.

In 1944, while working at the shipyard, Emil saved money and began his own printing business purchasing equipment as he could. The home on Summit lent itself well to a business as it had a side door. Customers would use the side door to access the print shop in the basement. The basement contained 3 different printing presses, cabinets of type characters and images that were used in the printing process. Emil would follow the customer's provided copy "even if it flew out the window", allowing the customers to have final approval.

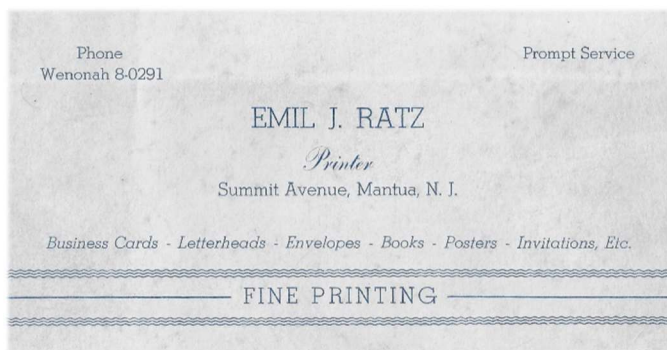
Emil was involved in many service organizations, including the Mantua Fire Department, Mantua Lodge No. 95 Free and Accepted Masons and the Tall Cedars of Glassboro.



His wife Theresa managed all the paperwork and billing for the business. Over the years the majority of their customers were repeat customers. Customers included Mantua Board of Education, Incarnation Church, Mantua United Methodist Church, and the Migrant Farmers Breaux in Clayton to mention a few.

In 1971, Emil and Theresa retired and moved to Avalon, NJ full time. During some of his retirement years he worked at the Cape May Gazette part time. Emil passed away in December 1997 and his wife Theresa passed away in October 1999. They were married for 63 years.

Michael DiGiamberardino (grandson)



THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Each day that passes immediately becomes part of history.

The members and friends of the Mantua Township Historical Commission often dig deep into the past, recovering stories, articles, pictures and more that give us a clearer picture of our past. We are also charged with recording events and happenings of our time. We are fortunate that many people from long ago kept diaries, saved artifacts, preserved landmarks, and passed their stories onto the next generation. Without this process, we would have very little true history to share. There is an intense amount of work involved in recreating important moments, understanding who the prominent people were, retracing lost locations, and maintaining historical places. Across the Country and around the World, governments, organizations, and individuals are performing this important work regularly. Here in Mantua Township, there is the Historical Commission. Like so many around the world, we strive to find the missing pieces, to fill in the blanks, to dispel rumors and hearsay, and to tell our Township's story as accurately as possible. We encourage you to help in our efforts to celebrate our past and to remember the moments and events that make us the unique community that we are.



RECENT NEWS

Jeff and Debbie Gellenthin re-opened the path to the Jesse Chew Cemetery which had been blocked by a downed tree from an earlier rain and windstorm. In addition to removing the downed tree, vines had been pulled onto the path to the cemetery and they, too, were cleared away. When they were done, an even larger path to the cemetery was created to facilitate a larger crowd for future tours held at this cemetery.



Jeff Gellenthin and Herb Hood conducted a two-hour interview at the Mantua Township Historical Commission Museum with Carl Loudon, Jr. Notes from that interview, and others, are available for reading in the Delores Allen Memorial Library and Research Area at the Union Center.



RECENT DONATIONS

Kathy and Karen Allen – a vintage Barnsboro Baseball uniform worn by their father.



From the Estate of Janet E. Davis, care of Kenneth and Francis Gregg, and Deanna and Charlie Kyser – Student Abacus, Guide to the N.Y. Fare- 1964-65, Collection of public school’s directory and Gloucester County Directories 1954-66, family photos, class pictures and school library books, report cards, and miscellaneous postcards.

Walter Taggart – Vintage can openers from the Bank of Mantua and the Telford Inn, Booklets – Wenonah Fire Company 100th Anniversary, Barnsboro Fire Company 11th Annual Supper, pages from The Past of Rural New Jersey, Ledden’s Catalog-1989, Official Race Program (copy) Alcyon Track, Pitman, NJ May 30, 1935, Newspaper-Remember When - a Special Section of the Gloucester County Times Sunday, August 28, 2005, Pitman High School Yearbook-1955 of Don Ledden, Woodbury Public Schools report cards 1932-33 with sponsored sleeve by G.R. Wood, Inc.

Herb Hood – Britannica Encyclopedias/Year Books



Michael DiGiamberardino – a vintage children’s Sunny Suzy Washing Machine, a vintage children’s Roster Rocker, various vintage domestic items including an ice cream scoop, can opener, etc.



Russell Stevenson (Sewell Fire Company) – Three boxes of financial records, Booklet “Engine! Engine! - A Story of Fire Protection – 1939

Jeff and Debbie Gellenthin – a new museum/library pushcart, various vintage books associated with local and state history, a newly framed The Old Oak at Mantua poem display.

Albert Bower – a monetary donation as a thank you.

TRIVIA ANSWER

43 is the number of diners in America that are listed on the National Registry of Historical Places.

THANK YOU

Mayor Robert Zimmerman and the members of the Mantua Township Committee, for their continued support.

Glen deMers - superintendent of the Mantua Township Public Works Department and his hard-working staff for removing storm debris from the entrance to the Jesse Chew Family Cemetery.

Barbara Heitman – A special thank you to Barbara who has recently resigned from the Mantua Township Historical Commission. The commission thanks you for your years of service, your meeting attendance, and your support for our events. We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mantua Township Historic Commission

Location: 145 Mantua Boulevard

Mantua, New Jersey 08051

Mailing address: 401 Main Street

Mantua, New Jersey 08051

Hours are every Saturday from 10 AM to Noon or by appointment

856-630-9704

mthc1977@gmail.com

Our mission is to preserve and share the rich history of Mantua Township

Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/MantuaTownshipHistoricalCommission

MEMBERS

Jeff Gellenthin – Chairman

Herb Hood – Vice Chairman

Debbie Gellenthin - Secretary

Kathy MacGregor

Carolyn Harris

Tom Downing

Carolyn Olsen

Art Olsen

Contributors, Authors, and Editors of this Bulletin

Jeff Gellenthin

Herb Hood

Michael DiGiamberardino

Debbie Gellenthin, photographer

Carl Loudon, Jr.

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The Mantua Township Historical Commission is always accepting donations of pictures, documents and stories concerning the Township’s history.