

Lodi History: 1930's Highlights

By Artie Maglionico

The 1930's were a time of change for the growing town of Lodi. The days of the trolley car had come to an end and steps were being taken by town officials to remove the tracks on Nicholson, Arnot and Charles streets. The superintendent of the street department was a man by the name of Daniel Cody whose efforts helped shape Lodi's future. The removal of the trolley tracks paved the way for a modern means of public transportation such as cars, buses and taxi cabs.

Mr. Cody was also instrumental in cleaning and repairing the drain pipe system on Main Street between the railroad tracks {now gone} and Union Street. Cody spearheaded a plan to erect a bridge that would connect Home Place to South Main Street. The bridge was eventually constructed, not on Home Place as originally planned, but rather on the East end of Terrace Avenue. That same bridge was dedicated in memory of Lodi resident Victor Scozzaro in June of 2002.

In 1934, new officers for the fast growing Lodi Fire Department were being elected and were ready to come to the aid of their community. David Dowson replaced Joseph Stark as Fire Chief while James Ferrara assumed the role as assistant. A young man by the name of Ben Brunooge took over as Captain. Other newly chosen Officers were: President William Jones, Vice President John Paladino and Treasurer Abe De Wilde. Delegates to the New Jersey and New York Volunteer Fire Departments were Robert McGuire, Benjamin Dansen and Richard DeGrasse. Chief Dowsen organized and raised funds for the Firemen's Association Convention which was held in Lodi in July of 1934. To further defray the cost of the affair ,the Fire Department sponsored a barn dance at the Columbus auditorium on Nicholson Street{ no longer on the map}. Mr. Morris Sorbello served as chairman of the entertainment committee. Performing at the affair was a musical group who called themselves The HillBilly Orchestra. The dance was a huge success and so, in fact, was the convention.

In February of 1934, Mr. Angelo J. Mancuso was appointed Lodi Library Trustee. During that year, head Librarian Miss Susan Hunderman recorded that the circulation of books during 1933 had risen to 29,631. Of that number 16,164 books were taken out by juveniles and 13,467 by adults. Total Library membership was 2,563. In January of 1934, the year Lodi High School opened, The Lodi Library housed 3,817 books. Miss Hunderman's report showed a cash balance of \$ 714.34 after expenditures of \$1,495.52. Fine collections totaled \$102.48. Here's an interesting side bar. In that year, the Lodi Library President Jacob Kuipers sent a note of thanks to the Police Dept. for keeping order in the Library and for collecting fines for damages done to the books. Don't mess around with the Lodi Library or the Police Dept. will throw the book at you.