



# Apgar Family Association Newsletter

Issue 40

Summer 2019

Price \$3.00 (Free to Members)

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## October 5 Reunion Schedule

- 10:00 Check-in: Coffee and Homemade Baked Goods
- 10:40 Opening Remarks
- 11:00 Genealogy Exchange, Show & Tell
- 11:30 Main Speaker
- 12:30 Annual Group Photo
- 12:45 Family Style Lunch
- 2:15 Entertainment
- 3:00 Business Meeting
- 4:00 Close: Safe Journey

## Celebrate the Family Apgar On October 5, 2019

The Annual Apgar Family Association Reunion is scheduled for **Saturday, October 5, 2019** at the Stanton Grange in Lebanon, NJ and we need your special DNA to be present for a day of fun, facts and family. There are new fascinating and noteworthy Apgar Family stories to be told, providing great incentive to participate in our special family day.

The acronym for REUNION spells out the reasons such an event is so special. It allows you to do the following:

- R= Reunite to Realize your Roots
- E= Explore new Events
- U= Utilize DNA to Unblock Origins
- N= Navigate Ancestral Data
- I= Ignite your Imagination
- O= Obtain new Friendships
- N= Network with Cousins

Our "We're Back" Reunion held on October 6, 2018 was a wonderful success. In attendance were over 70 AFA members who returned for a day of family genealogy, great conversations, tasty food and a fun auction.

The 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Apgar Family Reunion should be another great time for learning, sharing and bonding and we hope even more AFA members will be present this year. The 44<sup>th</sup> reunion will be held at the Stanton Grange Hall, 16 Route 618, Lebanon, NJ on Saturday October 5, 2019. The schedule of events will be similar to prior reunions. Check-in at 10:00am, followed by Genealogy Exchange plus Show and Tell, Main Speaker at 11:00am, Annual Photo at 12:30pm with our Family Style Lunch at 12:45pm. After lunch at 2:15, there will be entertainment and the annual business meeting. The cost for the reunion is \$15.00 (Lunch is only \$5.00 once the \$10.00 registration fee has been paid).

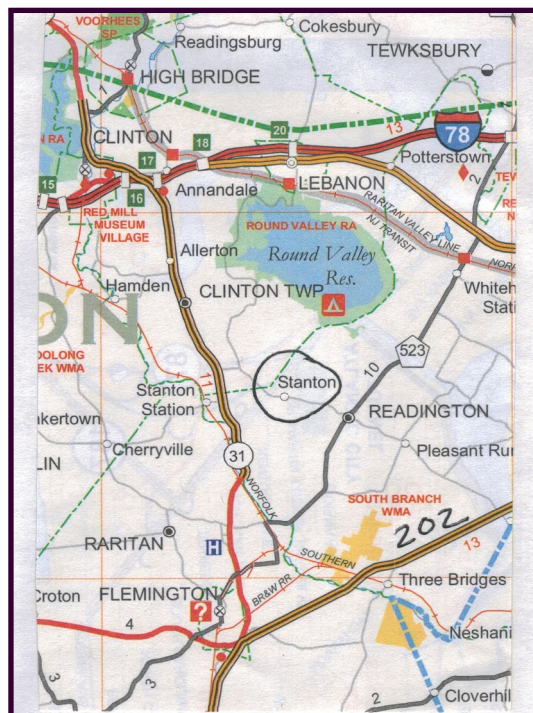
As with our past reunions, we will have a family style hot lunch, which will consist of tossed salad, rolls, roasted chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, string beans, and dessert.

Coordination for Apgar Family Reunion is made possible by a joint effort of your trustees, so it is important that we know who is coming on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Please complete the enclosed APGAR REUNION SIGN-UP FORM and mail it as soon as you can.**

We are looking forward to seeing more of our cousins at the 44<sup>th</sup> Apgar Reunion, together learning more about our Apgar history and having a great day together!

**GPS Address: 16 County Road  
618, Lebanon, NJ;  
(1/4 mile East of US 31)**



## A "Family" Church Cemetery? – by Carol Kinnaird



A walk of 1 hour and 7 minutes, according to google maps, from the family homestead in Cokesbury to the Old Lebanon Reform Church Cemetery (OLRCC) on Cherry Street in Lebanon Borough which may be our first church and family cemetery. Descendants of Fritz Eggert, including Conrad and Peter Apgar, Revolutionary War Veterans, and Apgars by birth and marriage, are 20% of those in this acre and a half site. We are outnumbered only by Alpaughs.

Burials began before 1769 and ended about 1918. The church was rebuilt twice more on this site. A log building was followed by a frame church and then a brick one on the same site. After the railroad was built, and horses in the sheds were frightened by the steam trains, the church moved to its present site on Brunswick Avenue. Apgars and others were interred at the new site beginning in 1859.

As a child I walked in the OLRCC which was then covered in grass. At that time, it was mowed by the church or "burned off" by the Lebanon Fire Department. On a visit in 2011, I was shocked at the overall condition of fallen, sinking and misplaced stones, numerous groundhog burrows,

20 or more large trees that had grown from seed, and brush and vines covering the walls. The cemetery, full of our family, had been minimally maintained for the last 50 years.

The church's membership and attendance has declined from its post-war peak in the 1950's and 1960's as have many small protestant churches. An inactive old cemetery is not a high priority with an aging and low membership, an old building, a part-time minister and a rented-out parsonage.

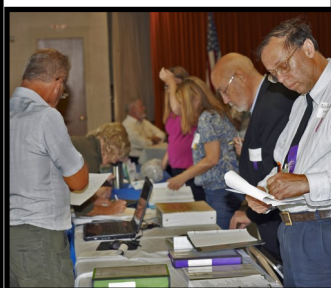
In 2017, I approached the church to encourage and aid restoration and clean up. Since then a friend and I have raised \$11,000 from family and friends to help the church pay for tree cutting, which is now complete. The next step will be leveling the ground, filling sunken graves and groundhog burrows and making it mower friendly. A local contractor is overseeing this work for the church. The next steps will be raising sagging, sinking stones, repair of broken stones, dry stone wall repair, and discovery of the correct location of misplaced stones.

*This year I am pleased to say that the Apgar Family Association has voted to donate \$1000 in support of this project. I will be seeking other grant opportunities which might support this second or third oldest church owned cemetery in Hunterdon County and I am committed to the complete restoration and clean-up of our "family" cemetery.*

**Carol**

### Meet with your Historian and Genealogist

Help keep our records (our Genealogy CDs) up to date. Bring items for show-and-tell such as **photographs, diaries, newspaper clippings, quilts and other family**



**Genealogy research is a common reason for attending the Apgar family reunions.**

### Apgar Family Store



Shop at our **Apgar Family Store** for Apgar pins and patches.

### Consult with your Webmaster

Not sure what family line you are from? Mary Carpenter will be happy to search through our electronic records to help you out. She can also scan any documents or updates you bring to the reunion, or can photograph family keepsakes, you'd like to put on display in our on-line Virtual Museum.



### Room Discount at Marriott Courtyard in Lebanon on Route 78

Carol Kinnaird has negotiated a room discount for any nights between October 2 and October 7 for \$129 per night. Call the hotel directly at (908) 236-8500 and request the Apgar Family discount. Cut-off date to reserve at this rate is September 10 as the room block expires after that date. Closest hotel to Grange Hall.





## Our Apgar Origins in Germany - by Mike Apgar

(Address presented at 2018 Apgar Family Reunion)

According to DNA tests, our very distant proto-Apgar ancestor was among the first modern humans to enter Europe. He and his tribe moved west from southwest Europe during the previous inter-glacial era about 35,000 years ago (give or take several millennia). They are now known as the Cro-Magnon people, who hunted game and painted in caves.

When the glaciers advanced again across northern Europe about 22,000 years ago, the whole group migrated south into Spain or Italy. They stayed in these warmer refuges until the climate warmed and the continental ice cover melted from northern Germany. By 10,000 years ago the climate was warm and stable enough to move back "home". The new more hospitable climate, which has prevailed with only relatively minor fluctuations, coincided with the development of agriculture and beginnings of "civilization" in the Middle East. Gradually this more rooted way of life spread to our homeland.

During Jesus' lifetime in Palestine, the relatively primitive German tribes were able to block the Roman Empire from north and east of the Rhine River. Many centuries passed before the fall of the Roman Empire and the slow expansion of Christianity throughout Germany.

Over the next millennium, ignorance and corruption among clergy created unrest in the Catholic Church. After invention of the printing press and efforts to translate the Bible into vernacular languages, the Protestant Reformation was sparked by Martin Luther in 1517. Religious and political turmoil resulted in foreign and internecine warfare, which wreaked havoc on the population of Germany. In 1555 the Peace of Augsburg officially recognized Lutheranism and authorized local princes and magnates to determine the religion of their subjects. Thus, for many people religion was determined by circumstance rather than personal choice.

Nevertheless, new religious leaders began other unsanctioned Protestant religions, notably Calvinism, the forerunner of the German Reformed Church of our immigrant ancestors. Catholics and Calvinists in France (called Huguenots) continued to battle each other until the end of the century. Finally, in 1598 the Edict of Nantes ended that conflict and provided tolerance for Huguenots.

Intriguingly two men with the surname Epgert appear in records from about this time: Martin Epgert was a resident listed in the 1607 census of Wallendorf; and Johannes Epgert had a son baptized as his namesake in 1599 in the Catholic church in Winnigen. Unfortunately, there is no way to link these people as to our ancestors. These and the other places where Epgert records exist are all in the German Rhineland. (See locations on Google Maps)

By 1618 disputes in Bohemia triggered the 30 Years War. Soon religious intolerance flavored by political calculation, brought mercenary armies, living off the land, marching through Germany. The combination of military plunder and sadism, local feuds, famines and witch hunts was calamitous. Before the Peace of Westphalia officially ended the war in 1648, half to a third of the people in the German Palatinate and Rhineland had died of fighting, executions, famine and sadistic atrocities.

The new peace arrangement recognized Calvinism

throughout Europe, granted the Netherlands freedom from Spain and restored the status quo of religious determination by local rulers. Germany was a hodge-podge of small states contending with each other for status and hegemony.

The small village of Epgert in the German Westerwald was in an area that was traditionally Catholic. In 1640, there had been a significant fire in Epgert. Perhaps this was the result of a French incursion, marauding mercenaries or local animosity. In any case, this may have displaced families sur-named Epgert to flee eastward into Protestant territory. According to a 1663 census, Johannes Ebgerodt (dialect for Epgert) was living with his family, including son Johann Adam, in the hamlet of Daufenbach, 2 kilometers west of Puderbach.

However, in 1685 Louis XIV of France revoked the Edict of Nantes. This resulted in flight of more persecuted Protestants into the German Rhineland and Palatinate. French armies transgressed across the Rhine at intervals and in 1704, the French occupied the Palatinate for a whole year. These French incursions triggered the refugee wave to America (although only about a quarter of these "German Palatines" actually came from the Rhineland).

That same year (1704) Johann Adam Epgert's son Fritz was born in Daufenbach and baptized in Puderbach. Friedrich "Fritz" Epgert was destined to become the immigrant ancestor of the Apgar family in America.

Records of the Reformed Church in Puderbach indicate that in 1731 Fritz married Anna Julianna Haag of Niederdreis a hamlet 1 kilometer southeast of Puderbach. Fritz moved into his bride's home, where the couple had 3 sons and a daughter (of whom 2 sons, Johannes Herbert and Johannes Peter, survived) before Julianna died in February 1739. In November Fritz married Anna Sophia Schaefer. The following summer the couple, with Herbert and Johann Peter, sailed to Philadelphia...and the rest was our history in America.

**Related Story on page 16:** Jim Apgar receives local history book from Epgert mayor Werner Eul In April 2019.



## Minutes from 2018 Reunion Business Meeting

Submitted by Lynn Conley, Recording Secretary

Present: Trustees - Mike Apgar, Hank Apgar, Debbie Apgar, David Rich, Lynn Conley, Carol Kinnaird, Lois Pfeffer, Historian Judy Beck plus 68 members of the Apgar Association.

Absent: Mary Carpenter

The Meeting was called to Order by Mike Apgar at 2:15pm on October 6, 2018.

Mike thanked everyone for coming and made a brief statement on the restart of the Apgar Family Association Reunion. Mike outlined the special board of Trustees Meeting which was held by telephone conference on July 15, 2018. Mike stated as per the by-laws, vacancies can be filled by a majority vote of the remaining trustees, so trustees, Mike Apgar, Hank Apgar, Debbie Apgar and David Rich all voted yes for Lynn Conley becoming a trustee again. Officers were selected by the group, all voting for Mike Apgar as President, Hank Apgar as Vice President, David Rich as Treasurer, Debbie Apgar as Corresponding Secretary and Lynn Conley as Recording Secretary. The meeting in July thus made planning for a 2018 Reunion and Newsletter a reality.

Mike then called for the Treasurer's Report, the Membership/Corresponding Secretary Report and Recording Secretary Report.

David Rich, Treasurer, reported as of 8/31/2018 the A.F.A. checking account balance was \$8,384.81. The certificate of deposit balance was \$8,137.51 for a total balance of \$16,462.32. The certificate of deposit matures every 9 months and the next maturity date is March 2, 2019. A hand-out of the Financial Statement was available for review.

Debbie Apgar, Corresponding Secretary, stated, as per her membership report, we have between 150 to 175 paying members. Debbie also asked if members when sending in their dues could make sure they include their email addresses. The membership chair also reported that 72 persons were in attendance at the 2018 reunion.

Lynn Conley, Recording Secretary, asked if the minutes from the 2016 Reunion could be voted, "read and accepted", since they were printed in the 2017 Apgar Newsletter. A vote was taken, all accepted the motion. Lynn read the secretary's report: On September 17, 2016, at the Stanton Grange, the Apgar Family Association, Inc. held its Annual Reunion. At the reunion, 55 members were present. At the afternoon business meeting, minutes were taken and posted in the Fall 2017 Apgar Newsletter. On July 15, 2018, a Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees was held by telephone conference, which complied with the Apgar By-laws provision 4.8. The reason for the special meeting was to restart/renew the Apgar Family Association. The trustees present were Mike Apgar, Hank Apgar, Debbie Apgar, David Rich, and members Lynn Conley and Carol Kinnaird. As a result of the meeting, Lynn Conley was appointed a Trustee, an election of officers was also held concluding with Mike Apgar as President, Hank Apgar as Vice President, David Rich as Treasure, Debbie Apgar as Corresponding Secretary and Lynn Conley as Recording Secretary. In addition, one trustee was removed from the board. A summary of the meeting was posted in the 2018 Newsletter. Since the last Apgar Reunion Meeting, the 2017 and 2018 newsletters were produced. In 2018, 147

newsletters were sent to past paid members. A letter about the 2018 Reunion was sent to 355 additional members. Also produced were the event programs, name tags and sign-ups sheets for the 2018 Reunion.

Judy Beck, Historian, was called on by President Mike Apgar for her report. Judy reported it was important that members send to her updates on marriages, births and deaths along with any noteworthy events to any of the trustees. As the Apgar Family we need to keep our data updated for future generations.

Hank Apgar, Vice President and Newsletter Editor, reminded members that we always need help with the newsletter especially articles and interesting family stories.

George Apgar, a former trustee, asked if he could speak based on his long-term participation with the Apgar Family Association. George proceeded to talk about his Haag, Schaefer, Apgar family group and his efforts to change the direction of the Apgar Family Association, Inc. The former trustee then recited a lengthy list of personal grievances and abjured that his allotted time had concluded. The President, Mike Apgar, left the podium so the business meeting could proceed with Lynn Conley, Secretary, continuing with the next item on the agenda, Old Business.

### Old Business:

Under Old Business, Lynn spoke about the Reunion and how the Google Doodle, honoring our famous ancestor Virginia Apgar make everyone realize how important it was for the family to continue coming together once a year for a reunion. The "We're Back" theme became the motivating force for the 2018 Apgar Family Reunion.

President Mike Apgar returned from making phone calls and the meeting was able to proceed. Before beginning the awarding prizes for most senior male, most senior female, newest member/first time at reunion, youngest member, who traveled the farthest, longest marriage and largest family, Mike apologized for the delay in the meeting and began the awarding of prizes.

### New Business:

Mike announced that we could use articles for next years newsletter as well as volunteers for the 2019 reunion. He also stated that we needed to make some changes to the Apgar Family Association, and By-laws which were adopted in 1986. The few changes that need revision deal mostly with modern technology such as emails, telephone conferencing and simple wording corrections. Such changes will be in newsletter for a vote at next year's 2019 reunion.

Mike stated that we needed to fill two vacant trustee positions and asked for volunteers, Judy Hankinson and Robert Mettler raised their hands to be new trustees. Lois Pfeffer and Carol Kinnaird would also be trustees. Mike asked for any other new business, since there was no response, Lynn made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Hank Apgar. The Meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm. Immediately following the business meeting, an Old Fashion Yankee Auction was held by auctioneer Matthew Krainski to raise money for the Apgar Family Association.



## Directory of Association Officers and Trustees (2019)

### Current Officers and Trustees

(showing years as officer/trustee)

**Mike Apgar** (Trustee, President)  
114 S. Fairfield Dr.  
Dover, DE 19901  
(302) 698-1865  
maapgar@comcast.net  
(1998-2020)

**Henry Apgar, Jr.** (Trustee, Vice President)  
776 Silver Cloud St.  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360  
(805) 402-4132  
hapgar@mcricri.com  
(1999-2019)

**Lynn Conley** (Trustee, Recording Secretary)  
51 High St.  
E. Rutherford, NJ 07073  
(201) 460-9202  
(2002-2020)

**David Rich** (Trustee, Treasurer)  
P O Box 52  
Hatboro, PA 19040  
(215) 674-0244  
treasurer@apgarfamily.org  
(2003-2020)

**Debbie Apgar** (Trustee, Membership)  
416 Runyon Ave  
Middlesex, NJ 08806  
(732) 968-3065  
membership@apgarfamily.org  
(2003-2019)

**Judy Hankinson** (Trustee)  
108 Arrowhead Court, Apt D-2  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865  
(908) 777-3764  
Judyghs@yahoo.com  
(2018-2020, 1996-2003)

**Carol Kinnaird** (Trustee)  
216 Crest Lake Dr.  
Hoover, AL 35244  
carolkinnaird@gmail.com  
(2018-2020)

**Lois Pfeiffer** (Trustee)  
343 Lincoln St.  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865  
scrapbook@joimail.com  
(2010-2019)

**Robert Mettler** (Trustee)  
rmettler2217@gmail.com  
(2018-2020)

**Mary Carpenter** (Webmaster)  
webmaster.mary@apgarfamily.org  
(2006-2020)

**Judy Beck** (Historian)  
3 Fernwood Ct.  
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889  
(908) 823-0413  
historian@apgarfamily.org  
(2001-2020)

### Former Living Trustees

(showing years as trustee)

Cassie Apgar (1999-2002)

Chris Apgar (1999-2003)

George Apgar Jr. (1986-2018)

Howard Apgar (1999-2004)

John Apgar III (1996-2002)

John S. Apgar (1997-1998)

Laurence D. Apgar (1999)

Mary Apgar (1988-1997)

Richard Apgar (1986-1990)

Robert Apgar (2012-2017)

Wayne Apgar (1988-1995)

Judy Beck (2001-2005)

Lisa Berman (2015-2016)

Mary Carpenter (2006-2017)

Dolorita Cronk (2006-2007)

Lois Dege (2001-2004)

Wayne Dilts (1994-2003)

Roger Flartey (2003-2009)

Jeanette Lesinski (2007-2015)

Mary Reilly (2015-2017)

Wendy Rumhill (2006-2008)

John W. Shuster, Jr. (1990-1996)

Karen Prince-Steinberg 2002-2017)

Al Tiger (1986-1997)

Stephen Tiger (1997-1999)

Brenda Zimmerman (1991-1997)

### Deceased Trustees

(showing years of life)

Barbara Apgar (1929-2001)

Dorothy Apgar (1923-2005)

George M. Apgar Sr. (1921-2004)

Helen Apgar (unknown-2010)

Henry E. Apgar Sr. (1907-1998)

Louanna Rich (1946-2010)

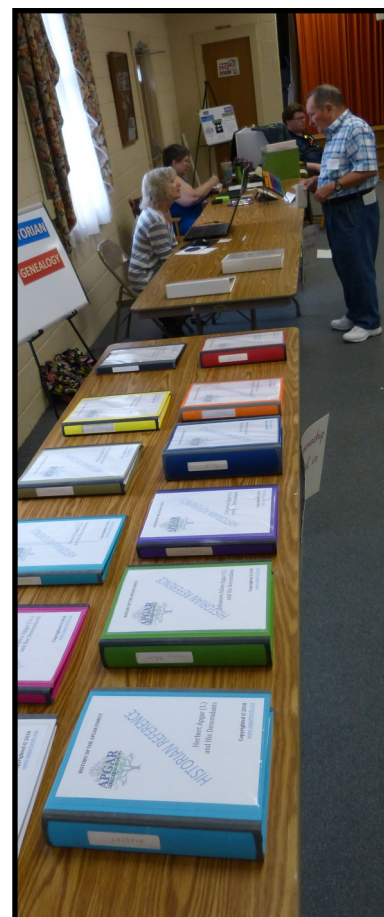
Robert O. Apgar (1919-1995)

Ronald F. Apgar (1940-1998)

Phyllis Apgar (1928-2009)

Ruth Apgar (1915-2008)

Reba Bloom (1986-1990)





## Historical Happenings by Judy Beck, Historian; [judithbeck0612@gmail.com](mailto:judithbeck0612@gmail.com); 908-823-0413

Please forward marriages, births, deaths and noteworthy events to Judy or to a trustee; new and updated information is much appreciated. If you know something about a person listed as "unknown" below, it would be great to hear from you.

### DEATHS:

**APGAR**, Anna R. "Nancy" (w/o 9.6.2.10.5.4.), 87, died 10/19/18. Res: Hamilton, NJ  
**APGAR**, Bertha M. (unknown line; w/o William G. Sr), 81, died 3/5/19. Res: Altmar, NY  
**APGAR**, Charles R. (3.7.1.7.5.4.4.), 81, died 9/4/18. Res: Orange City, FL  
**APGAR**, Dolores E. (unknown line; w/o Neal, Sr), 90, died 12/14/18. Res: Bethlehem, PA  
**APGAR**, Eleanor C. (w/o 3.7.7.2.1.7.2.), 88, died 4/12/19. Res: York, ME  
**APGAR**, Janet L. (w/o 3.5.3.4.14.2.1.), 76, died 2/12/19. Res: North Plainfield, NJ  
**APGAR**, John F. Jr. (6.2.3.1.9.4.1.), 82, died 11/23/18. Res: Mendham, NJ  
**APGAR**, John W. (6.2.2.2.2.1.3.3.), 84, died 12/19/18. Res: Readington Township, NJ  
**APGAR**, Judy Lynn (unknown line), 50, died 12/22/18. Res: Jacksonville, FL  
**APGAR**, Margaret C. (unknown line; w/o William O.), 81, died 1/4/19. Res: Dover, FL  
**APGAR**, Marjorie L. (w/o 2.3.1.7.1.2.), 97, died 11/18/18. Res: Pittstown, NJ  
**APGAR**, Michelle (unknown line; w/o Robert), 59, died 8/21/18. Res: Hope, NJ  
**APGAR-AJAMIAN**, Pauline (w/o 6.7.6.1.4.2.), 89, died 10/18/18. Res: Raritan Township, NJ  
**APGAR**, Richard "Spike" (3.5.3.1.3.3.2.), 88, died 9/21/18. Res: Clinton, NJ  
**APGAR**, Ronald Fredrick (unknown line; s/o Russell), 76, died 12/26/18. Res: Lexington, NC  
**APGAR**, Ross Patton (7.1.7.3.1.1.3.), 96, died 4/25/19. Res: Marshalltown, IA  
**APGAR**, Scott Kenneth (unknown line, s/o Stephen), 55, died 4/9/19. Res: W. Richland, WA  
**APGAR**, Walter Martin (3.7.1.9.2.2.1.2.), 87, died 4/2/19. Res: Ormond Beach, FL

**APKER**, Thomas (10.1.1.8.2.1.8.), 82, died 8/13/18. Res: Cleveland, OK  
**COVERDELL**, Helen (Peter Line; descendant of 7.1.7.9.3.), 92, died 3/27/19. Res: Eugene, OR  
**DILTS**, Evelyn W. (w/o 9.5.9.9.2.1.), 102, died 5/6/19. Res: Allentown, PA  
**DUNCAN**, Victoria (unknown line; d/o Barbara Apgar Knauss), 72, died 5/4/19. Res: Loves Pk, IL  
**FISHER**, Julie Apgar (unknown line; d/o Vernon L.), 74, died 11/8/18. Res: Washington, LA



**FREIBERGS**, Voldemars Daniel (3.5.3.2.6.1.1.5.), 58, died 3/6/19. Res: Califon, NJ  
**HASENAUER**, John William (4.1.2.2.3.3.2.1.3.), 58, died 10/3/17. Res: Nicholson, GA  
**LEE**, Robert Willard (4.1.2.2.5.2.5.1.), 87, died 4/16/19. Res: High Bridge, NJ  
**LOTT**, Betty Ann Apgar (7.3.5.1.4.5.2.), 82, died 4/29/19. Res: Pocono Pines, PA  
**LUEGER**, Robert (h/o 1.8.8.5.1.1.1.2.), 62, died 6/16/15. Res: Califon, NJ  
**McGIFFIN**, Dorothy L. Apgar (3.7.7.2.7.7.2.), 86, died 4/12/19. Res: Summit, NJ  
**MILLER**, Elaine T. Apgar (unknown line; d/o William), 94, died 2/23/19. Res: Hamburg, PA  
**ROSS**, Samuel D. Jr (h/o 3.5.10.2.1.2.1.), 85, died 11/23/18. Res: Carlisle, PA  
**SILK**, Thomas (unknown line; s/o Marie Apgar Silk), 71, died 4/8/19. Res: Marshalltown, IA  
**THORNE**, Robert C. (former h/o 3.7.11.1.2.2.1.1.), 84, died 3/27/19. Res: Bangor, PA  
**WACK**, George Norman (1.2.3.6.8.3.4.), 94, died 1/29/19. Res: Nazareth, PA

**Note:** The following abbreviations are used in reporting historical happenings: d/o-daughter of; h/o-husband of; s/o-son of; w/o-wife of.

*Judy*

Balance 09/01/18 \$8,324.81

### Receipts

\$ 93.00 - Store Sales  
 206.00 - Raffle Sales  
 1,390.00 - Luncheon Registration and Donations  
 \$ 1,689.00 - Total Receipts

### Disbursements

\$ 491.70 - 2018 Family Newsletter  
 910.00 - Reunion Luncheon  
 \$ 1,401.70 - Total Disbursements

Balance 05/31/19 \$8,612.11

## 2019 Treasurer's Report

by David Rich, Treasurer

The current balance in the C.D. is **\$8,139.94**, bringing the total balance of all

Assets of the Apgar Family Association to **\$16,752.05**. The C.D. will mature on

12/02/19. Currently the A.F.A. has no outstanding checks.



*Dave*

## Fun Facts from One Hundred Years Ago-1919 by Megan Krainski

**Jan 1** Edsel Ford succeeds his father, Henry Ford, as president of the Ford Motor Company.



**Jan 15** Two million gallons of molasses flood Boston Massachusetts in the "Great Molasses Flood" when a storage tank burst, drowning 21 and injuring 150

**Jan 16** Prohibition ratified

by 3/4 of US states; Nebraska is 36<sup>th</sup>

**Feb 14** United Parcel Service forms

**Feb 23** Fascist Party formed in Italy by Benito Mussolini

**Feb 25** Oregon is 1st state to tax gasoline (1 cent per gallon)

**Feb 26** Acadia National Park forms (as Lafayette N P), Maine Acadia was initially designated Sieur de Mont's National Monument by proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson in 1916. Sieur de Mont's was renamed and re-designated Lafayette National Park by Congress in 1919—the first national park in the United States east of the Mississippi River and the only one in the Northeastern United States.

**Feb 26** Congress forms Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona.

**Mar 18** Order of DeMolay forms in Kansas City.

**Apr 19** 23rd Boston Marathon won by Carl Linder of Mass in 2:29:13.4.

**Apr 19** Leslie Irvin of US makes first premeditated free-fall parachute jump.

**May 4** 1st legal Sunday baseball game in NYC, 35,000 watch the Phillies beat the NY Giants 4-3

**May 8** 1st transatlantic flight take-off by a navy seaplane

**May 8** Edward George Honey first proposes the idea of a moment of silence to commemorate The Armistice of World War I, leads to the creation of Remembrance Day. The armistice on 11/11/1918 was not a formal surrender - this would come later with the Treaty of Versailles - but it ended all the active fighting. Celebrations occurred across the world after its announcement as the "war to end all wars" had finally come to an end.

**May 22** A. E. Douglass - establishes the relative dates of two archaeological sites using ancient wood samples, marking a major step forward in the dating of archaeological sites.

**May 27** 1st transatlantic flight ends; US Navy flying boat takes 11 days

**May 29** Charles Strite files patent for the pop-up toaster

**May 29** Albert Einstein's light-bending prediction confirmed by Arthur Eddington

**Jun 2** Pulitzer prize awarded to Carl Sandburg (Cornhuskers)

**Jun 4** US Congress passes the Women's Suffrage Bill, the 19th Amendment

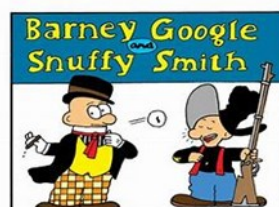
**Jun 11** 51st Belmont: J Loftus riding Sir Barton wins in 2:17.6 & Trip Crown

**Jun 14** 1st nonstop air crossing of Atlantic (Alcock & Brown) leaves Newfoundland

**Jun 15** 1st nonstop Atlantic flight (Alcock & Brown) lands in Ireland

**Jun 17** "Barney Google" cartoon strip, by Billy De Beck, premieres

**Jun 20** Philipp Scheidemann resigns as chancellor of the new German Republic, which he helped establish, refusing to sign the Treaty of Versailles



**Jun 25** 1st advanced monoplane airliner flight (Junkers F13) The Junkers F 13 was the world's first all-metal transport aircraft, developed in Germany at the end of World War I.

**Jun 28** Treaty of Versailles, ending WWI

and establishing the League of Nations, is signed in France

**Jul 1** US 1st class postage drops from 3 cents to 2 cents

**Jul 4** Jack Dempsey beats champion Jess Willard, retired in 3rd round in Toledo, Ohio for world heavyweight championship

**Jul 21** Dirigible crashes through bank skylight killing 13 in Chicago, Illinois-A dirigible owned by Wingfoot Air Express, crashes into the Illinois Trust and Savings Building, killing 13. The dirigible caught fire while in flight. When it was clear the dirigible could not be saved, the 3 crew members and 2 passengers parachuted from the craft. Two of the crew were able to reach the ground safely. However, the third member of the crew died when his parachute caught fire, one passenger's parachute tangled with the dirigible and was killed when it crashed, and the other passenger broke his legs while parachuting and later died in the hospital.

**Aug 4** Rodin Museum opens in Paris in The Hôtel Biron containing works left to the state by the sculptor

**Aug 11** Green Bay Packers football club founded by George Calhoun and named after sponsor Indian Packing Company

**Aug 24** Cleveland pitcher Ray Caldwell is flattened by a bolt of lightning only to "shake it off" and complete the game.

**Aug 25** 1st scheduled passenger service by airplane (Paris-London) The plane was a converted bomber, a leftover from World War One, flying now for Imperial Airways.



**Continued on page 15**



## Views of our 2018 Reunion



Senior Male –  
Arthur Koenig



Senior Female – Olga Lanning



First Timers - Jeanne Denes, John Nagle, Sandra Nagle, Kim Costa, Ken Costa



Youngest -  
Emily Apgar



Married Longest – Harry & Dolorita Wright



Traveled  
Farthest  
(Ohio) –  
Johnnie,  
John, Jacob  
Apgar

Largest Family (7) - Mike Apgar Family



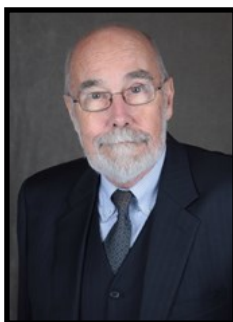
Attendees at our 43rd Reunion posed for this group photo at the Stanton Grange Hall, Lebanon, NJ. Photo by Jim Pickell







New Trustees Judy Hankinson, Carol Kinnaird, Lois Pfeffer, and Robert Mettler



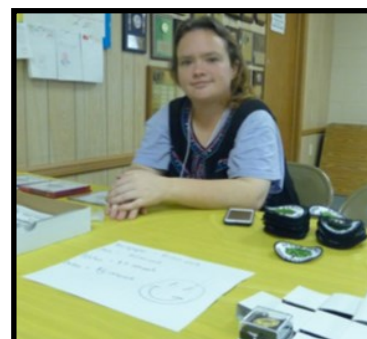
Matt Krainski, Auctioneer



Darlene Sidie & Judy Beck at Genealogy Table



Dave Rich, Treasurer



Megan Krainski, Storekeeper



Do you know where this street sign is located?



## Jacob Apgar and the California Gold Rush 1849 - by Lynn Conley

Jacob Apgar, (6.4.4.) and grandson of Friedrich "Fritz" Eggert, left on February 6 or 9, 1849, for the gold fields of California. Thanks to newspapers.com we now know the how, however we may never know the why for Jacob's trip to California. On the marriage of his daughter, Maria C. Apgar, to Stephen Ransom in 1845, Jacob is described as a merchant, so going to California might have provided Jacob with an economic opportunity as a store owner. Jacob may have been motivated by sorrow from the loss of his only son, who died on January 18, 1848 at only 11 months. However, it just might have been his DNA, with the gene for risk-taking. The same gene that motivated Fritz Apgar in 1740 to immigrate from Germany to the new land called America.

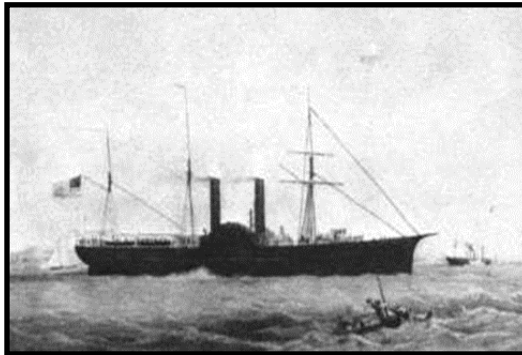
The how of Jacob's journey to California begins with an article in *The Evening Post of New York* written on February 3, 1849 called "THE CALIFORNIA EXODUS". "It is idle to attempt any longer to give any complete record of the emigration to this new Canaan on the Pacific. There is scarcely a city, town or village in the Union but will have its representatives in California within a half year, and we might easier attempt to keep a

record of all the expeditions set on foot to visit our metropolis for purposes of business or amusement, than to chronicle the enlistments in that unhallowed crusade for gold. There is no class of people so exalted as to be beyond its allurements—none too obscure or too poor to share its promises."

"For example, our quiet and rather steady neighbors of New Jersey, have not been so moved since the revolution.... Besides those that have already sailed from Newark, Elizabethtown, Jersey City, New Brunswick, Amboy &c." the same paper states that "another considerable company in Newark is now nearly ready, having a fine vessel of their own in New York. The California Association of New Brunswick will start for Chagres (Panama) on Monday in the (ship) *Crescent City*. We subjoin the list: James C. Zabriskie, President; J.C. Potter, Secretary; C.B. Lane, Treasurer; John M. Simpson, C.A. Richmond, James Orchard, **Jacob Apgar**, J.K. Manning, Wm. Fisher, A.F. Arnold, John S. Steward, A. Solomon, D.M. Simonson, Thomas Waller, James Forman, Phillip Randall, Mr. Livingston; besides whom there are eight from New York in the association including C.B. & E.B. Zabriskie...."

Expeditions of similar character, without numbers have been fitted out from every state in the Union, and there is scarcely a county in the United States that has not already invested in them from ten to twenty thousand dollars, while in our larger cities as many hundred thousand have gone in the same direction. It is to be regretted that all this enterprise has not objects a little more worthy of it, and in its processes a more elevating influence."

*New York Herald-New York City*, New York-February 6, 1849 :



SAILING OF THE STEAMSHIP CRES-  
CENT CITY – GREAT EXCITEMENT

"The fine steamship *Crescent City*, Captain Stoddard, took her departure for Chagres yesterday afternoon, at a few minutes before two o'clock, amidst the firing of cannon, and vociferous cheers from an immense multitude. (Numerous paragraphs from article not transcribed.) It will be seen by the annexed list, that she takes out 305 passengers, among whom is William H. Sidell, Esq.; he goes out as Chief Engineer of the Panama section, for the location and survey of the proposed Chagres and Panama railroad. Onboard: C.E. Abbott, Thomas Andrews, James Annett, **Jacob Apgar**, A.F. Arnold, Martin Ashley, Dr. T.A. Austin."

<http://www.sfgenealogy.org/californiabound/cb052.htm>

The ship *Crescent City* was 1291 tons, length 233.6ft x beam 33.9ft, wooden hull, side paddle wheels, three masts. It was built in 1848 by William H. Brown of New York for service between New York and New Orleans. She entered the New York - Chagres route of service for J. Howard & Sons on 23rd Dec.1848.

An article from the *Brooklyn Evening Star* written on March 5, 1849 states.

"The steamship *Crescent City*, Captain Stoddard, left New York for Chagres direct 9<sup>th</sup> of February with 306 passengers and after a pleasant voyage of nine

days arrived in Chagres on the 11<sup>th</sup> and left that place on the 17<sup>th</sup>...The steamship *Falcon* also arrived at Chagres on the 11<sup>th</sup> with 317 passengers and left on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February. When the *Crescent* left Chagres there was no sickness of any kin in that place and over one half of the passengers had started for Panama."

In 1848, the cost of a typical passage from New York to Chagres, was \$150 first class, and \$120 for second class. Once the gold rush was in full swing, first class passage did not change, while second class dropped to \$100. The passengers in first class, were doubled in number, by adding an extra berth in the cabins. In second class, they added a berth where ever they could find room, making it almost impossible to move around. The trips would take between one and two weeks, depending on how many stops it made in route. The trip after arriving at Chagres would now present another ordeal.

"At the mouth of the Chagres River, there were reefs and sand bars, that prevented deep hulled ships from entering the river. They had to anchor off the coast, and passengers had to pay for native boatmen to shuttle them between the *Falcon/Crescent City* and the town of Chagres. Some of the crew abandoned the ship and 212 rowdy Gringos upset the tranquility of the sleepy town, demanding transportation up the river. The mad rush was on to cross the Isthmus, to board the first ship to San Francisco. At the time, there were not enough native *cayucas* (canoes) called bungos for the

**Continued on next page**



## Continued from previous page

Yankees, which provided transport for all the travelers to the town of *Las Cruces*, 45 miles upriver. These cayucas were constructed of a large, single, hollowed out log, averaged about 25 feet long and 3 feet wide. Since these cayucas were normally used to bring bananas down river for trade, they were all equipped with a palm leaf canopy to protect them from the hot tropical sun. These boats were able to carry about four to six passengers, and a crew of three to four boatmen. The going rate was about \$1 per passenger plus tips, for fastest boats. During the *Rainy Season*, May to December, the Chagres River was full, and the boats could make the trip all the way up to Cruces, some 45 miles away. From there, the mule ride to Panamá was 18 miles, and was accomplished on a highway, paved by the Spaniards during colonial times. During the *Dry Season*, the river would be shallow, and there was a set of rapids between the town of Gorgona and Cruces, that did not permit passage of the cayucas. The town of Gorgona was only 40 miles from the town of Chagres and 20 miles from Panamá. Initially, the preferred trip was to disembark at Gorgona and walk the last 5 miles to Cruces. The bad part of the Gorgona - Panamá route was the first 10 miles of the unpaved trail through the jungle. After those initial 10 miles, the road merged with the old paved Las Cruces Trail, and the going became easier. The Gorgona Trail was virtually impassable during the Rainy Season. Eventually, it became the most common route taken by the gold seekers, that were in a rush to cross the isthmus. The boat fare, going up river, did not change whether you traveled to Gorgona or Cruces, it all cost the same.

Two days after the arrival of the *Falcon*, the *Crescent City* arrived at Chagres. Within a couple of days, all the other ships were arriving at Chagres, adding to the confusion and impatient Gringos. By then, there were over one thousand angry gold seekers, waiting for transportation up the river. Since it was a three to four-day journey, up river, they made stops to eat, sleep and rest. They normally stopped in the towns along the bank of the Chagres, which were not prepared for the large mass of travelers. Every bohio in town was converted into a hotel, adding extra hammocks to accommodate the travelers, and all the food stuff was consumed in the towns. This only served to anger the late arrivers, since the quality of the food to be purchased became worse and less. Eventually the inhabitants of these town, became better prepared for the need of the travelers, but the prices went sky high. The trip across Panama to Cruces would take about seven to eight days and at the port a steamship would arrive to take them to San Francisco.

When the *California* arrived in Callao, instead of her last passengers disembarking, the news of the California gold strike had already reached Peru, and one hundred Peruvians had purchased tickets for the trip to California. Most of the passengers destined for Callao, decided not to get off there, but continue to California, also. The *California* reached Panamá on January 17, 1849, and anchored off the coast, next to the island of Taboga, since Panamá lacked a deep-water port. Part of the defenses of the city, was the fact that at low tide, the water would recede into the bay, laying bare all the reefs. During high tide, the water would reach the city walls,

but it was shallow enough that you needed a shallow draft ship, to get near it. By then, the passengers from the *Falcon*, and *Crescent City*, had been in Panamá close to three weeks, waiting for transportation to California.

All hell broke loose when the close to one thousand passengers waiting for a trip to California realized that there were only berths for 250 passengers. The company agent proceeded to allow the passengers with through passage to board. He then proposed to put everybody else's name in a hat and draw names for the remaining berths. When they learned that there was only space for 150 passengers on the *California* because of the Peruvians on board, riots broke out. They insisted that the Peruvians be kicked off the ship. They insisted that as US citizens, they had priority on all travel on US ships, and they did not want the Peruvians competing against them for the gold in the California gold fields. Some of the few passengers that had the foresight to book passage straight through from New York to San Francisco or who had their names drawn in the lottery, were selling their Panamá - San Francisco portion of their tickets for up to \$1,000, making a handsome profit. They then booked passage on the next steamer scheduled to depart Panamá, the *Philadelphia* for \$75.

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company's office in Panamá was besieged by angry Gringos, threatening *William Nelson*, the Agent and US Consul in Panamá. Nelson refused to remove the Peruvians from the ship, since they had paid for their fare, legally. In Panamá at the time, also waiting for passage to California, was *Major General Persifor Smith*, of the US Army, that was being garrisoned there. He demanded and ordered Nelson to remove the Peruvians; but Nelson knew the law, since he was a diplomat and told the General, that he had no authority in Panamá, and the Peruvians stayed on the ship. The Peruvians scared that if they got off the ship, they would be refused re-boarding, or murdered on land, refuse to leave the ship during the 2 weeks it was anchored off the coast.

Nelson was able to pacify most of the travelers and General Smith, when the Peruvians decided to be doubled and tripled up in the state rooms and more bunks were added. The compromise allowed one extra American for each foreigner on board. Thus, the *California* finally steamed out of Panamá on January 31, 1849, with 365 passengers, 165 more than what she was designed for. On February 28th, the *California* passed through the Golden Gates, and became the first ship to disembark the first ship load of Gold Seekers in California. When she docked in San Francisco, and discharged her passengers, every crew member on board also left the ship to go and seek their fortune in the gold fields. This left *Captain Marshall* without a single crew member, and it took him three months before he had enough of a crew to steam back to Panamá.

On February 23rd, the second Pacific Mail Steamer, the *Oregon*, a sister ship to the *California*, arrived in Panamá. The transients besieged the offices of *The Pacific Mail Steamship Company*, demanding that they be allowed to board the ship. Nelson reached another compromise with the most vocal of the passengers, by allowing 50 more passen-

## Continued on next page

## Continuation of Jacob Apgar story from previous page

gers than the 250 the ship was rated for. The *Oregon* left Panamá on March 12th, arriving in San Francisco three weeks later.

The *Oregon* dropped anchor, right beside the *California*, and saw the plight of that steamer without a crew to return to Panamá. Captain Pearson, of the *Oregon*, quickly announced to his crew that all wages for the mariners were being raised by a factor of 10. He simply added a zero to the end of all posted wages. This way, only a small number of his crew left for the gold fields, but there were enough remaining to return to Panamá. When the *Oregon* arrived in Panamá, he found the third sister ship, the *Panama*, taking on more frantic passengers. It took the three side-wheelers of *The Pacific Mail Steamship Company* another four months before it developed a steady routine between the steamers." [http://www.bruceruiz.net/PanamaHistory/isthmus\\_crossing.htm](http://www.bruceruiz.net/PanamaHistory/isthmus_crossing.htm)

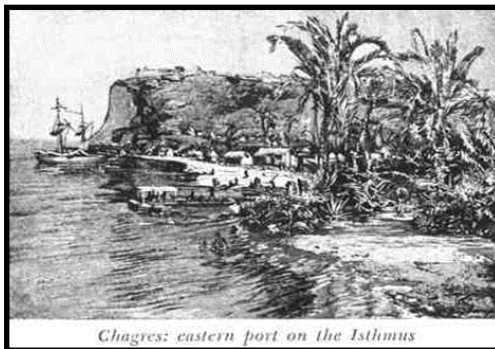
We can speculate that Jacob Apgar and the News Brunswick group made it to San Francisco by at least the end of March 1849. In San Francisco, between January 1, 1849 and June of 1849, the population of 800 increased by 15,000 people, the majority men. Once in San Francisco the next part of Jacobs journey would have been getting to Sacramento some 88 miles away and then to the gold fields which were located on the bank of the South Fork American River in Coloma, California—an additional 50 miles. The most practical way of getting to Sacramento might have been by taking the steamboat *Washington*. The *George Washington*, in 1849 became the first steamboat on the 382-mile-long Sacramento River, providing service between Sacramento and San Francisco. Or, he and his New Brunswick 49ers might have taken a passage on one of small schooners available for the new miners. Once arriving in Sacramento, supplies could be purchased at Samuel Brannon's store or shopped at one of the other two stores. Once equipped, it may have been a stagecoach ride on the Coloma Road or they could have hired a guide with a mule to reach the gold fields, where life began and ended in a tent.

We do not know if Jacob Apgar found any gold, however we do know he survived in the Sacramento area until November 1, 1850. On October 8, 1850 a passenger on the *New World*, a ship docked in Sacramento, emerged and collapsed on the wharf, sparking an epidemic that killed 800-1000 people in less than three weeks. It was one of the worst epidemics of Asiatic Cholera anywhere. At that time, no one knew what caused cholera or how it was transferred, but there was no mistaking what it was. A victim would be well, then collapse with abrupt onset of profuse watery diarrhea followed by death in a few hours from dehydration and

acidosis. Cholera is a disease that thrives in conditions of urban filth. The bacterium can be transmitted from one host to another through unwashed hands or raw sewage. When raw sewage containing the bacteria finds its way into the public water supply, cholera spreads rapidly. Of the nearly

40 physicians practicing here at the time, 17 died, making this the highest mortality on record for physicians caring for victims of an epidemic. By the end of the first week of November 1850, 80% of the population was either dead or had fled the city.

Jacob Apgar contracted cholera and died on November 1, 1850. His name was published in the *New York Tribune* article called, "Further California News" which listed all the deaths from the Sacramento area. Burials for the dead took place in the



Chagres: eastern port on the Isthmus

Old Cemetery. "The cemetery was established in 1849 when Sacramento founder John Augustus Sutter, Jr. donated 10 acres (4.0 ha) to the city for this purpose. The grounds were landscaped in the Victorian Garden style popular at the time. In 1850, 600 victims of the Cholera epidemic that swept the city were buried in mass graves in City Cemetery. The remainder of the 800 to 1000 victims claimed by the epidemic were buried in the nearby New Helvetia Cemetery, also in mass graves. Because the New Helvetia Cemetery was prone to flooding, these graves were later transferred to City Cemetery." In an article in the *New York Herald*, dated Sat. Dec. 21, 1850, it reads. "Sacramento City, List of Deaths in Sacramento City from the 20<sup>th</sup> of October to the 13<sup>th</sup> of November—both days included. (From the SACRAMENTO TRIBUNE, Nov.13) For the information of the friends of the deceased and other we re-published in our weekly and steamer paper of to-day, the list of deaths occurring in this city since the 20<sup>th</sup> of October last. The list has been carefully transcribed from the books of the various undertakers and is believed to be as correct as circumstances would permit—few deaths occurring but what came under their notice. In every instance, coffins have been furnished by their friends or the city, and the last funeral rites paid to each departed stranger. It will be a consolation to their friends to know that in a large majority of cases, neat head and foot boards mark their last resting place."

The final piece of information regarding Jacob Apgar is the probate record filed on January 23, 1851. It calls for the Executor, his brother Conrad P.C. Apgar., to have \$6925.00 as a bond. A bond is usually 10% of a person estate, therefore Jacob's estate might have been in 1850, in excess of \$69,250.00. Jacob Apgar just may have found gold in the hills of California and sent it back to New Jersey, however we know for sure he found his way to the Lord.



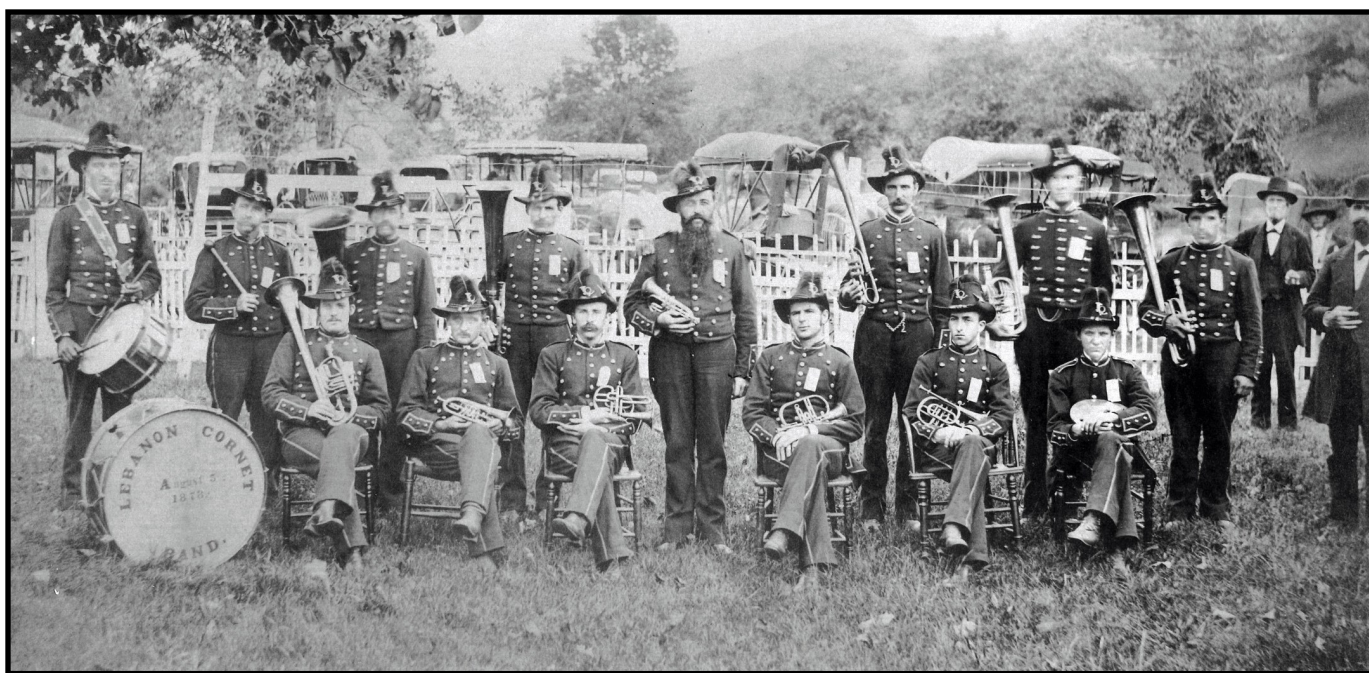
## Our Very Own "Music Man" by Carol Kinnaird

On a hot summer day *circa* 1880, R. L. Apgar positioned his Lebanon Cornet Band for an official photo. The band was his pride and joy. Members were nephews, cousins, and neighbors, a few read music, but most were beginners. R. L. sold instruments and gave music lessons, an interesting business model. He titled himself Professor R. L. Apgar.

Robert Lantus Apgar was born in 1842 in Alexandria Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey to Isaac and Ann Wilson Apgar. Isaac was a small farmer of modest income, and Robert was the oldest of Isaac's seven children, the only boy. The 1860 census lists Robert as a farm laborer, living with his parents and sisters. By 1870, he is married to Laura Hoffman Apgar, teaching music and owns real estate valued at \$2000 and per-

chestral selections, and a grand finale piece for organ, piano, orchestra, and choir.

From 1895 until his death in 1920, R. L. continued as a music teacher. His parents, Isaac and Ann, who preceded him in death, are interred in the New Lebanon Reform Church cemetery. The church record of his mother's death in 1899, lists her as the mother of Professor R. L. Apgar rather than the widow of Isaac. This may be because she lived with her son and his family. Laura, his wife, died in 1915. After this, R. L. lived in his home with his son and a housekeeper, and later a widowed sister. Robert Lantus Apgar rests with Laura Hoffman Apgar in the New Lebanon Reform Church cemetery near his parents, siblings, and cousins.



sonal property of \$400, in Clinton Township, present day Annandale. Several photos of R. L. and the Apgar House are on the Historic Annandale page\* where he is listed among the influential citizens of Annandale. His house remains a residence at 20 Main Street, Annandale. Joseph, his only child, was born in 1887, and lived until 1949.

As a professor of music, R. L. was a busy man. He gave lessons, sold instruments, lead and sang in a church choir, established and lead the Lebanon Cornet Band in 1878, directed musical programs, and composed and published at least 4 pieces of music for piano. The Library of Congress lists: **Friendship Galop** (similar to a polka) - 1877, **Midnight Dream Waltz** - 1882, **The Hero of Manila** - 1898, and **Just Over There** - 1918.

On the evening of Wednesday, February 27, 1895, R. L. directed what may have been a new achievement in his musical career, a celebration of the "Reopening of the Reformed Church of Lebanon, New Jersey." The church had completed a major refurbishing, including a new organ, installation of steam heat, and added horse sheds. This extravaganza featured 6 ministers, 6 piano and voice solos, a vocal quartet, organ and

*My interest in R. L. began with the band photo. My great grandfather, Oscar Apgar is seated in the front row, - 1st left of R. L. This photo came from Oscar's son, Theodore Apgar, a life time resident of Lebanon, and life time member of Lebanon Reform Church. Research established the likelihood that R. L.'s father and Oscar's father (George A. Apgar) were brothers. Undoubtedly there is more information to be found on R. L. Apgar.*

*Information for this article is from: Find-a-Grave, the Federal Census, Library of Congress, the Lebanon Reform Church 250th Anniversary booklet written by Linda Young Kennedy and based on research by her mother, Helen B. Young, and material from Joe Hauck, town historian of Lebanon.*

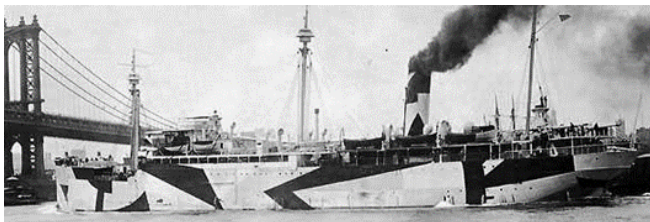
**Carol**

\* see [www.annandalevillage.com](http://www.annandalevillage.com). Influential People in Annandale's History, and Picture Gallery

## AND WE WON'T COME BACK TILL IT'S OVER, OVER THERE –

by Lynn Conley

Up until November 11, 1918, when the Armistice with Germany was declared, all efforts were made to send troops to Europe. Once hostilities ceased, the United States faced a huge logistical problem of returning over 600,000 troops home again. The large number of troops meant that most soldiers would not get home until 1919. As they endured the



USS Wilhelmina (ID-2168) underway in New York Harbor-1918

wait for a seat on a ship home, the Allies established training centers using French factories and encouraged men to pursue trades and further education. Hospitals were also established in France to care for the wounded who had been held by the Germans in their prisons.

One of these returning dough boys was Lieutenant George Leland Apgar who surprised his parents, John S. Apgar and Josephine Wagner Apgar and wife Florence Bilyeu Apgar, returning unexpectedly on March 5, 2019 from France to Plainfield, New Jersey. George's life had been saved by a Fountain Pen he carried in his upper left side pocket, which deflected a bullet from his chest, however another bullet hit his elbow during the Argonne Forest Battle. His injury resulted in being captured by the Germans and held as a prisoner for nearly two months at Treves. George nevertheless speaks well of the treatment given him by an aged German women nurse and the physicians at the prison camp, however he is "Glad to get back to God's County."

George's story began on May 15, 1918 when he was shipped out on the *USS Wilhelmina* as part of Company "H" 114<sup>th</sup> Infantry United States National Guard. In 1918, the unit was in Haute-Alsace, France and was part of the final battle of WWI, the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, aka Battle of the Argonne Forest (1918-09-26 to 1918-11-11); this offensive is known for being the biggest operation and victory for the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in World War I. This battle was part of the Grand Offensive (aka Hundred Days Offensive), the latter being credited with leading directly to the Armistice on 11 November 1918.

George Leland Apgar ordeal is as follows, "he was charging forward with Company H. of the 114th, when he and several men bagged seven German prisoners. He was given two guards to take them to the rear and was on the way back when a machine gun nest opened fire on them. The lieutenant and his men fought gallantly, but were no match for the concealed weapons. They were busy trying to locate the gunners when a whole company of German infantrymen swarmed out of a supposedly empty trench. The enemy could not open fire at once because of their own men held prisoners, but as the Americans attempted to meet the

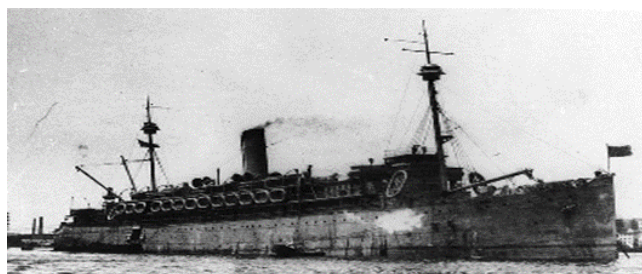
advance, the machine guns began blazing anew.

One of the machine gun bullets struck Lieutenant Apgar in the chest, but it was at such an angle that the fountain pen in his pocket was sufficient to deviate the course. It passed through his clothing, just barely grazing his skin on the left side, but leaving the fountain pen smashed to pieces. The force of the bullet was enough to throw the lieutenant to the ground and as he was rising, another bullet



tore away a portion of his elbow. It destroyed what is commonly known as the "funny bone" and the arm has since been in a semi-paralyzed condition. The Plainfielder was taken to a German prison hospital at Trier, where he was located when the victorious American army advanced late in November 1918.

Because of his injury and lack of food he became very



USS Sierra in port 1919,

ill and dropped from 178 pounds in weight to 100 pounds. In one letter to his wife he asserts that all he got to eat was black bread and cabbage, but he adds, "the Germans did not do it purposely, because that was all they had, not only for the American prisoners, but for their own men. I was treated kindly although not receiving proper medical attention for the simple reason that the doctors did not have sufficient medicinal supplies. An aged German nursed him while he was at the camp, giving him every care and attention and when the orders came suddenly calling for his release, Lieutenant Apgar says that his nurse cried like a baby when she realized that he was going away. George really believed he would have starved to death if it had not been for blessed American Red Cross, which sent in food for the wounded. It was given to us just as it came, although the men who delivered the bundles were nearly famished themselves."

After his release from the German prison, he was sent to a hospital which is "just wonderful", George stated. "It is a French health resort and the town is composed entirely of large hotels. The hospital that contains the officers is called

**Continued on next page**



the Hotel Lorraine. The town is situated in the heart of the Vosges Mountains and from this place they get the famous Vittel Water that is sold all through France and it is also exported to the United States and other countries and sold at a big price, but we are drinking it and it does not cost us a single penny. This hospital that we are staying in seems to be run more as a hotel than a hospital. There are a lot of partly convalescent officers and they seem to come and go and they are always here for meal. Nelson, Kendall and myself are still together, it is pretty nice that they have kept us together all the times." He thought he would be leaving in January however he was not sure of any departure date. The Lieutenant departed Bordeaux, France for America on February 19, 1919, sailing on the USS Sierra.

George's return proved a great surprise to all since he

did not know when he would be released from the hospital. He was delight to think that he was finally back in what he called "God Country."

George L. Apgar (1879-1970) of the Jacob line, lived a long and productive life. Mr. Apgar was superintendent of mail when he retired from the Plainfield Post Office in 1943, beginning his career there in 1902 as a substitute carrier and walking 15 miles each day on 2 ½ delivery trips. He was the first commander of Ball-Kirch Post 265 American Legion and the New Jersey Department of the Purple Heart Association. George also organized the Somerset County Chapters #40, #8 and #7-Disabled Veterans of American and was one of the chapters first commander. George was also a Free and Accented Mason.

## Continued from Page 7—Fun Facts from One Hundred Years Ago

**Sep 3** President Woodrow Wilson set out on a tour of the USA to rouse public opinion behind the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations

**Sep 8** Babe Ruth hits his 26th HR off Jack Quinn in NY, breaking Buck Freeman's 1899 HR mark of 25



**Sep 10** NYC welcomes home General John J. Pershing & 25,000 WW I soldiers  
**Sep 16** American Legion incorporated

by an act of US Congress

**Sep 20** Babe Ruth ties Ned Williamson's major league mark of 27 HRs

**Sep 20** Booth Tarkington's "Clarence," premieres in NYC

**Sep 22** -Steel strike in the US last until January 20, 1920

**Sep 27** Democratic National Committee votes to allow female members

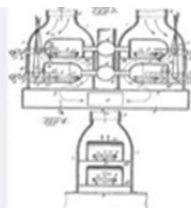
**Oct 1** Infamous 'Black Sox' Baseball World Series begins with Cincinnati Reds' Dutch Ruether pitching a 6-hitter and hitting 3 RBI on 2 triples and a single for a 9-1 rout of White Sox

**Oct 2** US President Woodrow Wilson has a stroke, leaving him partially paralyzed



**Oct 17** Radio Corporation of America (RCA) is created as a subsidiary of General Electric

**Oct 19** 1st US Distinguished Service Medal awarded to a living female recipient, Anna Howard Shaw. Anna was a leader of the women's suffrage movement in the United States. She was also a physician and one of the first ordained female Methodist ministers in the United States.



**Oct 19** Reds beat White Sox, 5 games to 3 in 16th World Series. This series is known as black sox scandal as 8 White Sox throw series

**Oct 28** Volstead Act passed by US Congress, establishing prohibition, despite President Woodrow Wilson's veto

**Oct 30** Baseball league presidents call for abolishment of spitball

**Nov 10** 1st observance of National Book Week

**Nov 19** US Senate rejects (55-39) Treaty of Versailles & League of Nations

**Nov 20** 1st municipally owned airport in US opens (Tucson Az)

**Nov 22** Labor conference committee in US urges 8-hour work day and 48-hour weekauthor of Winnie-the- Pooh.

**Nov 28** US-born Lady Astor elected first female member of British House of Commons

**Dec 1** AA Milne's "Mr. Pim Passes By" premieres in Manchester, father to be of Christopher Robin Milne, and future author of Winnie-the- Pooh.

**Dec 19** American Meteorological Society founded  
**Dec 20** Canadian National Railways established (N America's longest, 50,000 KM)

**Dec 22** US deports 250 alien radicals, including anarchist Emma Goldman

**Dec 23** 1st hospital ship built to move wounded naval personnel launched

**Dec 26** Yankees & Red Sox reach agreement trade Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees



## Visit to Westerwald - by Jim Apgar

On a fine spring Sunday last April, three Apgars toured the Westerwald area of Germany from where our patriarch, Friedrich 'Fritz' Epgert immigrated roughly 279 years ago. Having attended many of the Apgar reunions over the last 10 years, my wife, Lesley, and oldest daughter, Kristie, started planning our trip in January – after Kristie convinced her mother she had to see the tulips at Keukenhof, Netherlands (Lesley is a big flower fan). I told my brother, Mike (who enlightened us with the family historical background from Germany at the reunion last year) of our interest to visit Puderbach on this trip. He graciously offered to e-mail Bernhard 'Berndt' Schmidt a resident of Puderbach who had assisted him when he attended the 750<sup>th</sup> town reunion in 2006 with his wife Carol and Hank Apgar. With some prayers and patience everything just fell into place.

Berndt collected the three of us at the train station in Neuwied the town on the Rhine River, from which Fritz and his family most likely departed with his family for America. We first drove us to Epgert (a small village with our namesake, although we're unsure whether our surname derives

from the village or vice versa). There Berndt had arranged for the mayor Werner Eul to give us a tour. Mayor Werner, a retired teacher was thrilled to share stories about and show us around the community he has lived all his life. We stopped at an interpretative site recently completed that depicted the geological origins of the area (this is right up Mike's alley) and an old schoolhouse. He proudly presented me with a book of records (all in German) from their community school dating 1836 – 1970. It is now a day care center. The first of May is the village's annual homecoming and he showed us the well-kept park where families would gather around a big bonfire to celebrate.

Many of the men from the Epgert had worked in local underground iron mines, including Werner's father. This, he said was his incentive for getting an education. Today the mines have closed, but the rolling rural landscape of forest and fields appears much the same as in the past. It reminded me of northern Hunterdon County, especially High Bridge with its old iron mines which supplied the Taylor Wharton Iron Works (where both my grandparents worked).

After being treated to lunch by Mayor Eul at a local tavern, Herr Schmidt drove us to his home in Puderbach, which he had helped his father build in the 1960s. There Frau Schmidt (Adelheid) had prepared a wonderful spread of cheesecake and strudel with a very tasty cream topping. Sitting at together at their table we enjoyed a warm family gathering reminiscing about Mike, Carol, and Hank's visit. Adelheid even retrieved their gift Apgar Family baseball

cap.

The Schmidt's son Thomas was at home, and he joined his father in showing us the area. Was very fluent in English and facilitated our conversation. They took us to the beautiful old Evangelical (German Reformed) church in Puderbach, which the Schmidts attend and which can be seen from their porch. This is the church that Fritz Epgert and his family attended. Their births, baptisms, marriages and burials are recorded in its old church books. The church itself was re-built in 1885, but the bells in its tower had been in the older structure. They were cast in 1509 and 1696.



**Thomas, Bernhardt & Adelheid Schmidt with Lesley, Jim & Kristie Apgar in front of the Schmidts' home in Puderbach.**

We also visited an older (mid-1600s) church in the nearby village of Niederwambach. According to its church books, another Epgert family attended there in the early 1700s, although we know of no links with Fritz's family.

As we passed a forest camp used for family outings above Puderbach, an amazing rainbow formed spanning the town in the valley below. I asked Berndt how he had arranged for that!

Next, Thomas gave us a tour of the volunteer fire station where he is the captain. The

equipment was very impressive and was very clean.

Later back at the Schmidt's home we met daughter Verena (who lives at the edge of town). Then they treated us to pizza at the only restaurant in town, just a short walk from their house. It had been recently was remodeled by a Kurdish family new to the area. I tried my best to express our appreciation for the wonderful warm hospitality and to let them know how the close family feeling they gave us was the highlight of my trip.

I'm sure Fritz would also have been pleased that we made it back to his old stomping grounds. It gave us a vivid appreciation of his roots in Germany and what had become of the area he and his family left behind to build a new life in America.

We assured the Schmidts that we still hold deeply to the faith of our fathers. They seemed very pleased we had come. With that we walked back to the house and Thomas and his father drove us through the countryside to Koblenz and dropped us off by nightfall at a hotel near the train station. From there we got an early train the next day to Amsterdam. I look forward to sharing some of the many pictures we all took on that day at the next Apgar Reunion and hope I can convey the wonderful home-coming experience we enjoyed with the Schmidts in the villages of the Westerwald. They were very gracious hosts and genuinely take pride in showing the descendants of emigrants from their area the vibrant communities they enjoy today.