

## SADDLE BROOK FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

### SADDLE BROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY – JULY 2015

#### PASSAIC JUNCTION STATION

The word serendipity was first coined by British author Horace Walpole in a letter to Horace Mann in 1754. It related to three Persian Princes in a fairytale who discovered an island laden with silk, a valuable commodity. They named it Serindip. It was actually former Ceylon, and is now called Sri Lanka. Serendipity became an equivalent of a “lucky find.” It is what I encounter when someone unexpectedly donates information or materials related to our township’s past.

My most recent serendipity came in the way of a telephone call from an interesting, giving guy named Pete Lundell. Pete lived in our township during the 1940’s and 1950’s and attended Coolidge, Lincoln and Washington schools. He pursued a career in printing. Before he left during the 1960’s he had begun to collect postcards and took pictures of many of the buildings, bridges and railroads in old Saddle Brook. Pete emailed these to me, and they will be presented in this and future newsletters. The first are photographs of the Passaic Junction Railroad Station which was located on the southeast section of the Susquehanna track and Midland Avenue intersection.



Why was it called Passaic Junction, I do not know. It was most probably built in the 1880’s when the railroad was named the Midland Railroad and was definitely removed by 1966 when, according to Peter LoDico, passenger service had been terminated. A fence bearing an old sign for Weir Welding is located at the sight. The station is noted on the Bromely Bergen County Map of 1912. One of the old automobiles shown in the photographs is a 1955 Ford which helps to establish a timeline. I had difficulty locating the exact station site because the old pictures show two tracks, not one. I walked the area and found that a second track had existed, and its rails were almost buried under macadam. A strip of old shops can still be seen on the southwest side of Midland Ave. They are still in use. We thank Peter Lundell for his generosity.

Township Historian: Jack Wasdyke

