

SADDLE BROOK FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY
SADDLE BROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY – JANUARY 2015
ALVIN YHLEN

History is an ongoing process. It is happening now. Often, we do not realize the significance of what is happening today; and the prominent events and people related to them go unrecorded. This was true of events and people that were part of Saddle Brook's past. Before publication of *Saddle Brook: A Portrait of Our Past* in 2013, little had been written and recorded. The book was the result of years of work devoted to retrieving, organizing and writing the story of our township.

One of the key missions of our Historical Society is to continue the process of digging into our past and to record those people and events which helped to shape modern Saddle Brook. Bruce Johnson, a longtime resident and an active member of the society, has developed the following account of Alvin Yhlen and his valuable contributions to our township and county.

Jack Wasdyke: Township Historian

During the 1950's and 60's Alvin G. Yhlen was instrumental in creating and establishing the Saddle Brook Public Library as we know it today. In addition, he was actively involved in numerous local and county civic affairs.

Alvin G. Yhlen resided in Saddle Brook with his wife Jane, and children Carol and Robert. In 1942 he worked as a renewal underwriter for Fidelity and Casualty Insurance Company. In 1953 he transferred to Continental Insurance Company as a special agent. Mr. Yhlen served as a Trustee for the Saddle Brook Republican Club and was founder of the Saddle Brook Art Association. When construction began on the present site of the Saddle Brook Public Library located on Mayhill Street, Yhlen was president of the Library Board and helped to break ground in March 1962. He served as chairman of the local March of Dimes committee and was District Vice Chairman of Finance for the Oritani District of the Boy Scouts of America. On February 1, 1972 he was publicly commended by the Township Council through a resolution for "Many Years of Outstanding Civic Dedication". The following provides details of his numerous achievements on both the local and county levels.



LOCAL

- Member of the Saddle Brook Board of Education for 18 years starting in 1951, serving as president for 15 years
- Library Board trustee from 1953 to 1971, serving as president for 15 years
- Chairman of the New Library Building Commission
- Chairman of the Saddle Brook High School Planning and Building Committee from 1953 to 1955

COUNTY

- Advisor to Bergen County Park Commission from 1956 to 1961, serving as chairman of the Building Commission
- Appointed trustee of Bergen County Vocational and Technical High School from 1962 to 1965, serving as vice president from 1964 to 1965
- Elected to Bergen County Charter Commission in 1960
- Member of the Bergen County Grand Jurors Association in 1965

Bruce Johnson: Member of the Saddle Brook Historical Society

