

On April 2, 2014, there was a presentation at the Senior Center on the history of Oakland from 1694 to 1902, the official year of our founding as a borough. It was very well attended and well received. Over the next few weeks I will provide a recap of the presentation via a series of installments here on The Oakland Journal.

The intent of the presentation was to share my research and information about Oakland and its history. In the course of its development, more than a few notions of our history came under scrutiny and indeed were found to be very wanting in terms of factual documentation. Said another way, the presentation clarified if not disputed many of the current notions of the founding of this valley and this town.

For example, was this valley really settled in 1694 by 10 Dutch families, did the Arent Schuyler patent of 1694 really have any role in the settlement, did the Dutch really have warm relations with the Indians, was slavery a pivotal factor here in the development of Oakland, did Washington really stay at the Van Allen house, what was the single most important event in Oakland's history and why did we secede from Franklin Township in the first place. And many more. You might be quite surprised at the findings.

The first of these presentation recap installments will begin next week in which new light will be shed upon the families that first came here, their motivations and their methods. There will even be an attempt to identify them by name.

My advice is to simply be prepared to reconsider what you think that you know about the history of Oakland.