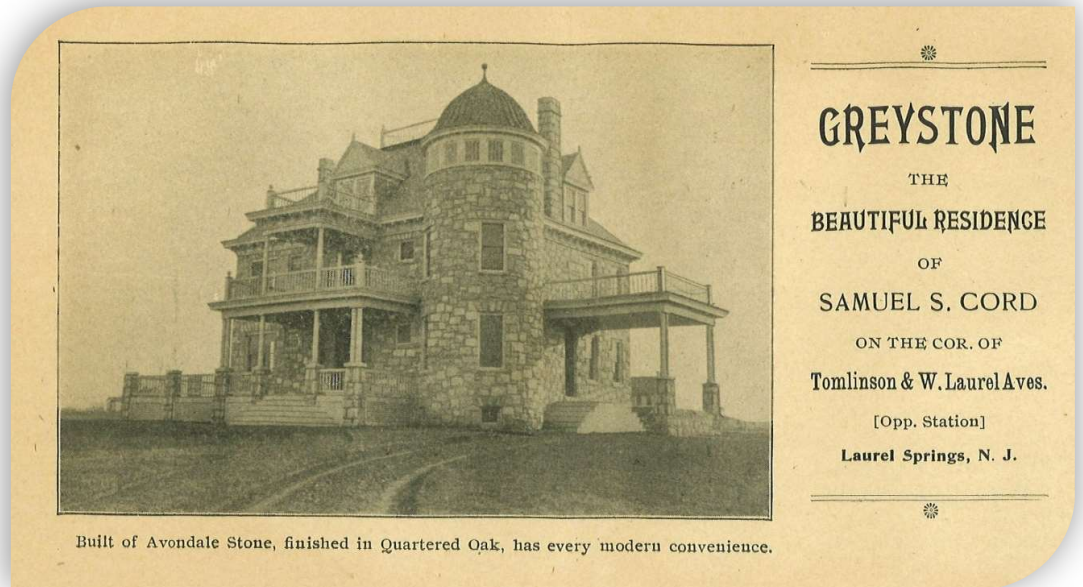


BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CORD MANSION

In 1889, after the construction of Reading's Atlantic City Railroad, Samuel S. Cord purchased the Stafford Farm and developed it into "homesites" at Laurel Springs, "the prettiest of all rural towns". Just a glance from the railroad station, he built "Greystone" completely of Avondale Stone quarried in Avondale, Pennsylvania. His "mansion" would serve as his home and real estate office. Cord was appointed Postmaster for Laurel Springs, and he was Editor and Publisher of the "*Laurel Springs Courier*".

August 30, 1915, Samuel Cord's body was found in a ditch along River Road in Pennsauken, he had been shot 5 times. The murder, widely publicized, was never solved.



During the Great Depression, the Borough filed foreclosure on the Cord Mansion and received ownership on April 23, 1935. On May 17, 1937 the WPA was granted permission to use the property as an area supervisor's office. Many large and small WPA projects were conducted in Laurel Springs' vicinity.

Borough Councilman Millard Allen spearheaded efforts to turn the "Mansion" into the first Borough Hall. Councilman Allen served from 1930 to 1938, followed by two years in the New Jersey State Assembly, and then returned to Borough Council until 1950. The first council meeting in the new Borough Hall took place on January 18, 1943.

The first floor of Borough Hall was the municipal office and council room, and the second floor was the fire department meeting and social hall. In the early 1950's the basement was finished to include an additional municipal office and two rooms for the police.

In 1955 the Interboro Monitoring System was introduced on the first floor. This system dispatched police and fire calls for seventeen towns from 1956 to 1975.

January 1, 1976, the Camden County Communications Center opened, and monitoring and dispatch was moved there. Also, in 1976 Borough Offices and Municipal Court became located at the old Bell Telephone building, 135 Broadway; the police department was moved to the first floor; and the fire department offices and classroom were moved into the basement. Many Camden County Fire Classes were taught in these basement classrooms before the Camden County Fire Academy in Lakeland was opened.

Grassroots restoration efforts began in the late 1980's since which time the "green" in front has become the focal point for regional events due to its proximity to the Town Center and the Borough continues to work with Camden County Historic Preservation to preserve the exterior integrity of the structure.

A very successful Municipal Court Shared Service allowed the return to a smaller municipal footprint, and gratefully, the Camden County Improvement Authority found a developer for the old Borough Hall (135 Broadway) now a 12-unit over-55 senior housing project.

Borough Offices were vacated into an office trailer on the Cord Mansion Green for 3 years, due to significant project delays and considerable cost increases attributable to COVID-19. Phase 1 of the project, a stair tower, elevator, and ADA bathroom addition, however, was completed and makeshift Borough Offices are now fitted into that space. Phases 2 and 3 will be the renovation of second and third floor to house the municipal offices and council chambers. It is very enjoyable to have the Laurel Springs Borough Hall repositioned to its original, sensible and convenient location in the Laurel Springs' Town Center.