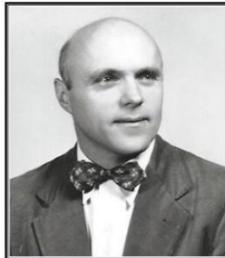


R. Kennedy Carpenter

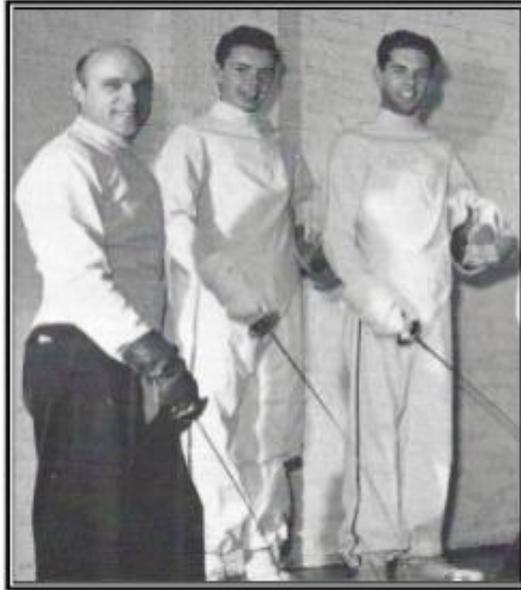


Russell Kennedy Carpenter and his twin sister, Eleanor, were born in Westfield, New Jersey in 1913. His family moved to Easton, Pennsylvania, and then to Allentown, where he graduated with honors from Allentown High School in 1931. Ken attended Lafayette College where he graduated magna cum laude in 1935 with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry. In 1942, he earned a Master of Arts in science education from Columbia University. R. Kennedy Carpenter married Ann Ranney on Oct 2, 1953. They had one son, Drake.

His first teaching position was at Atlantic Highlands High School in Monmouth County, NJ. In 1943, Mr. Carpenter became a member of the science department of Butler High School, a position he held for thirty-two years until his retirement in 1975. Ken was recognized by a number of organizations for his outstanding teaching. He received three National Science Foundation grants that enabled him to attend summer institutes at Princeton University, Rutgers University and Clarkson College. The North Jersey Chapter of the American Chemical Society presented Ken with a bronze plaque for his work in developing creative chemistry subject matter. In 1958 and 1959, he was named to the STAR Program (Science Teacher Achievement Recognition) of the National Science Teachers Association.

In 1969, Mr. Carpenter was the recipient of the prestigious Princeton Prize for Distinguished Secondary School Teaching in New Jersey. In addition to \$1,000 for the teacher, Butler High received \$250 for the purchase of books.

Mr. Carpenter initiated the first high school science fair in the state of New Jersey and continued to supervise the event for seventeen years. He sponsored a number of student activities and advised numerous clubs at BHS, but he is best remembered not only as an excellent teacher, but also as the school's fencing coach, a position he held for twenty years. Ken was a four-year varsity fencer at Lafayette College and his love for the sport prompted him to start a fencing club at Butler High. Under his guidance, fencing became a varsity sport in 1947. Almost single handedly Ken was responsible for the development of fencing as a high school sport in Northern New Jersey.



Mr. Carpenter was very active in community affairs. He was a member of the local civil defense committee and served as its director from 1959 to 1965. After state training, he became a member of the North Jersey Radiological Monitoring Team. The Butler Beta Radiological Monitoring Station was located in the basement of his home, which also contained one of Butler's first fallout shelters. It was the height of the Cold War and radioactive nuclear fallout was on everyone's mind. Ken wrote the federally mandated Operational Survival Plan for the borough.

Ken was a long-time member of the Butler Methodist Church where he served as an usher for many years. He was an advisor to the Methodist Youth Fellowship, a lay delegate to the North Jersey Methodist Conference, and an elder on the church's administrative board.

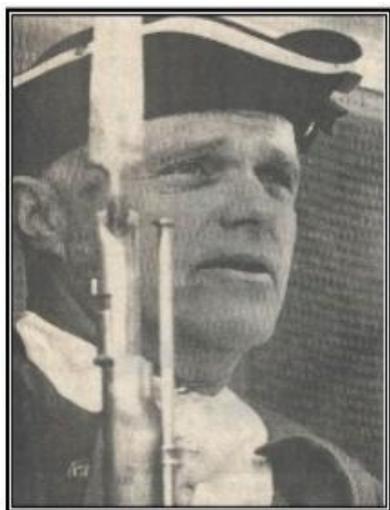
Scouting was also important to Ken, especially Sea Scouting. He was an Eagle Scout and helped establish Sea Scout troops at Atlantic Highlands High School where he first taught and at Butler High. He also served as a merit badge counselor for many years.

Another of Ken's major interests was history, especially local history. In 1958, he coordinated the formation of the Butler Historical Society and served as its director for several years. He also served as official town historian. Mayor Lawrence Brinster appointed him to head the Butler Tercentenary Committee, whose purpose was to plan activities to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the founding of the State of New Jersey. As part of this program Mr. Carpenter designed the Butler Borough Coat of Arms and flag, arranged for visits of the state history-mobile, established the borough's first museum in the basement of the old town library, as well as other activities. In 1963, the committee was awarded the state tercentenary medallion for the quality and extent of its programs.

Mr. Carpenter was named Butler Citizen of the Year by V.F.W. Post 8096 in 1983.

With the U.S. Bicentennial on the horizon, Mayor William Monahan appointed Ken co-chairman of the town's Bicentennial Committee. The highlight of the Butler's bicentennial celebration was the ceremony opening the town's new museum. Ken Carpenter was the prime mover behind the borough's purchase of the old Susquehanna Railroad Station and its development into the permanent home of the town's museum. More than any other individual, R. Kennedy Carpenter is responsible for the creation of the museum that exists today.

The town mourned when R. Kennedy Carpenter died on November 9, 1987. Our teacher, mentor, coach, scout leader, town historian, and friend was buried in Mount Rest Cemetery.



Sources: Herald News Oct. 3, 1953, Paterson News May 21, 1957, Herald News Dec. 3, 1963, Herald News June 10, 1969, Record Nov. 11, 1987, R. Kennedy Carpenter Biography 1969, Butler in Story and Pictures 2001

