

A large, solid red balloon is positioned at the top of the page. A thin, brown string extends downwards from the bottom of the balloon. At the end of the string is a rag doll. The doll has a round, brown head with two small, dark eyes and a simple mouth. It has two pigtails, each tied with a red bow. The doll is wearing a red dress with a white collar and white cuffs. Its legs are thin and black, with small black shoes. The doll is holding onto the string with its right hand. The background is a plain, light gray.

Sally The Rag Doll's Adventure

Story and Illustrations by: Margaret Gerlach

Photos of Cranford: Courtesy of the Cranford Historical Society

INTRODUCTION

The story of “Sally the Rag Doll’s Adventure” through the town today shows how this small towns barren land, without plumbing and electricity years ago, developed from farmland and mills to a suburb which became a big town. The town in the beginning had several names: Cranes Mill, Cranesville, Cranes Ford and on March 14, 1871, the town was formally organized and named CRANFORD. This year, 2021, the town celebrates its 150th Anniversary.

This story is an imaginary celebration of the 150th Anniversary through the eyes of a Rag Doll.

Happy 150th Anniversary Cranford

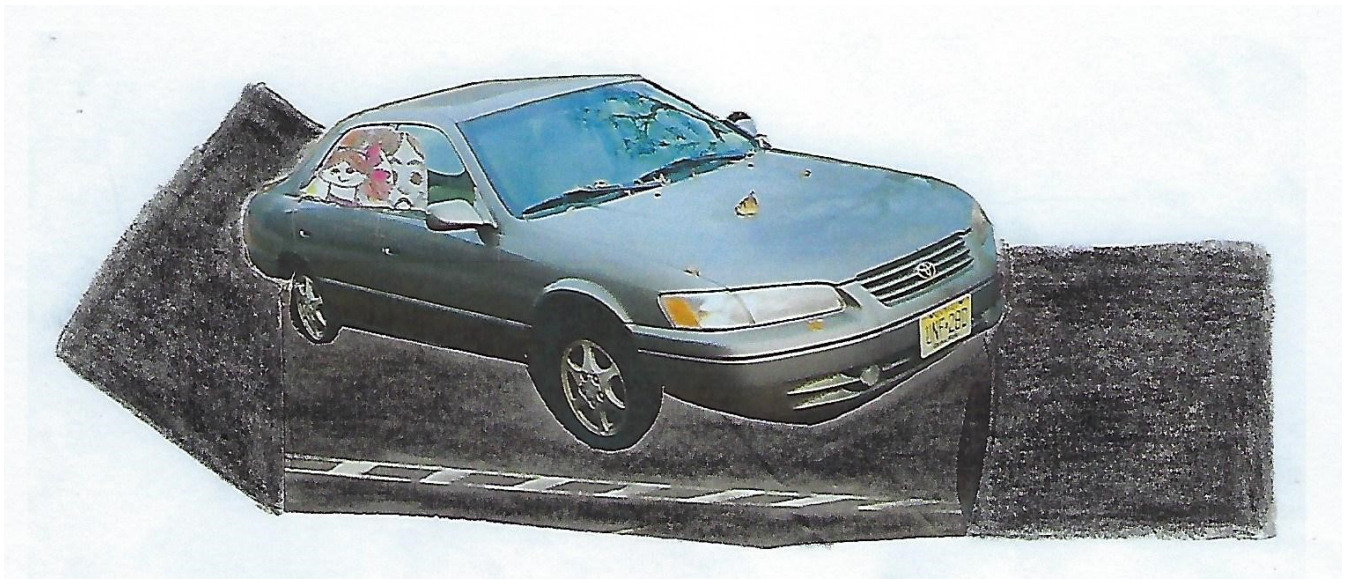
DEDICATION

This story is dedicated to all the children in the Township of Cranford.



Once upon a time a circus was coming to Cranford, New Jersey. It was invited by the mayor and town council to celebrate Cranford's 150th Anniversary. Everyone was so excited, especially the children.

Jane was eight years old, and loved the circus. When the day arrived, she and her parents drove to the field where the circus had set up. Jane brought her rag doll named Sally, who went everywhere with her.





At the circus, Daddy bought Jane a big red balloon, which she tied on Sally's arm.

Crowds of people started gathering. Jane saw a real live clown and got so excited that she let go of Sally. The red balloon took Sally HIGHER and HIGHER to the sky. Jane started to cry.



"Don't cry, Jane," said Mother.

"We will buy you another rag doll, " said Daddy.

"I only want Sally," cried Jane. "We have to follow the balloon! Please!"

Daddy shook his head. "Jane, it's too high and far away. We can't catch it."

Jane became very sad.

"I want to go home, Daddy," said Jane.



As they left for home, Jane looked at the sky with tears in her eyes. Jane could see the red balloon taking Sally HIGHER and HIGHER.

High in the sky, Sally looked down and saw Jane crying and walking away from the circus with her parents. Oh, no, they were leaving!

Farther and farther Sally floated. She was afraid at first to be flying, but soon the adventure became too exciting to ignore.



"Whee! Look at me!" shouted Sally as an airplane flew by.



Sally looked down as she passed the Centennial Avenue village stores and Lincoln School.



The wind took Sally and the red balloon passed the Cranford Township Municipal Building and Fire Department.



Sally drifted through Cranford and saw all the stores, shops, restaurants, office buildings, banks, movie theater, post office, gas stations, The Cranford Hotel, houses, railroad station, churches, library, the Crane-Phillips House Museum and more.



She passed over the railroad overpass where trains carry passengers back and forth into town.



Then Sally saw a long road with fast moving trucks and cars. She thought this must be Springfield Avenue. Sally then passed by the Cranford Historical Society, founded In 1927, to preserve the history of Cranford.



The wind continued to take Sally and the red balloon HIGHER and HIGHER, right into big fluffy clouds. She couldn't see anything.



Once the clouds passed Sally found herself flying over Nomahegan Park. Looking down, Sally could see ducks paddling in the water.

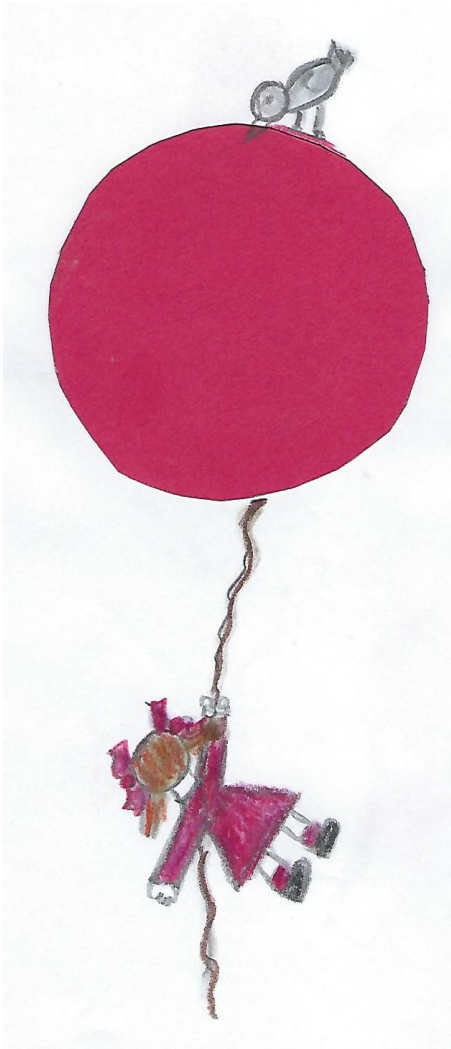


Sally loved having an adventure, but wished she could share it with Jane.

"I wonder where the red balloon will take me? I wish I were back home with Jane," said Sally.

The red balloon took Sally across the busy road with trucks and cars whizzing by when a flock of birds appeared and swooped across the sky.

"They look so pretty flying all in a row," thought Sally.

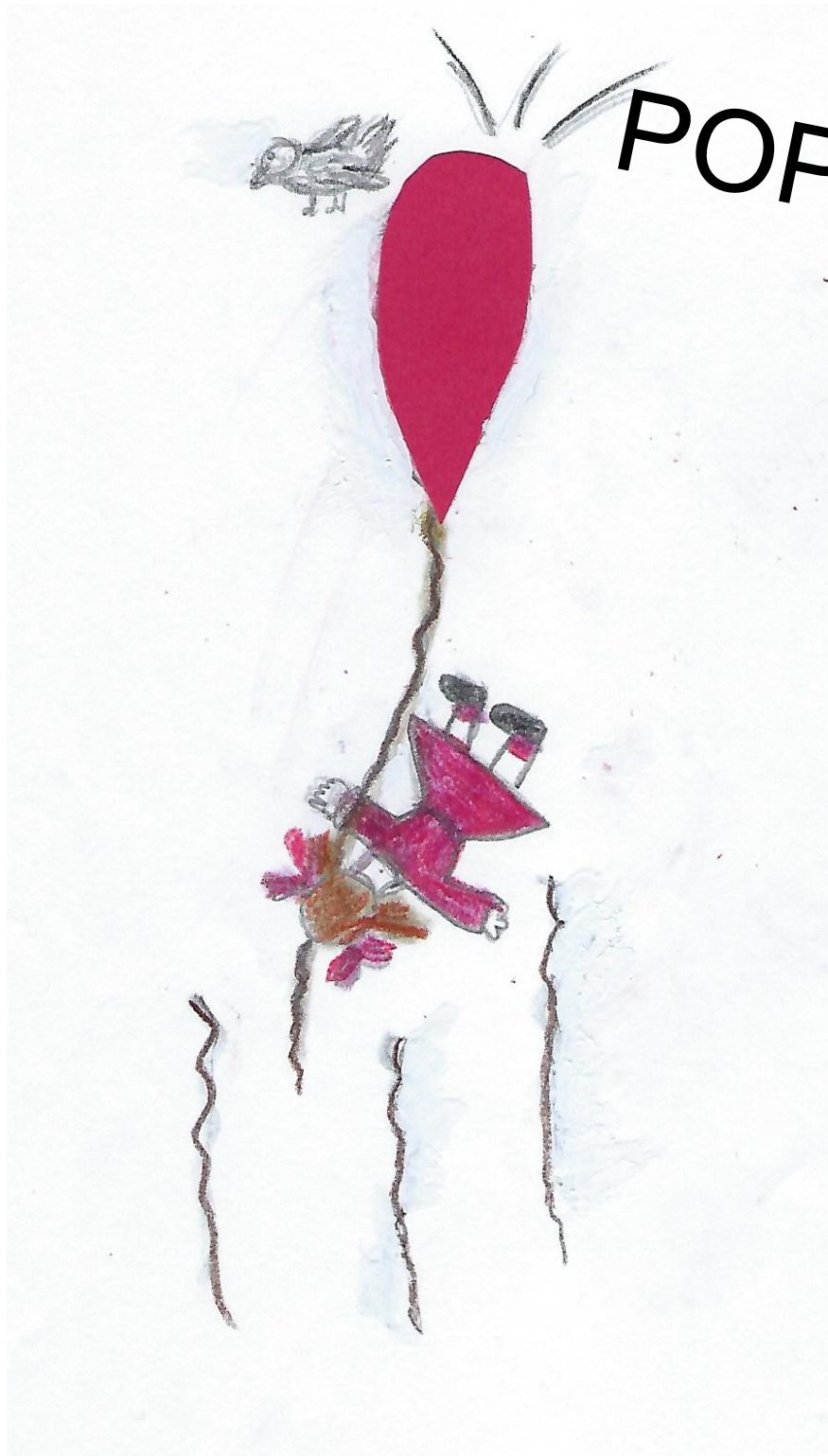


Just then, one of the birds flew back towards Sally and landed on the red balloon.

Sally became frightened. "Oh no, I hope the bird doesn't break the balloon. It's a long fall from up here," cried Sally.

The bird pecked and pecked at the balloon.

"Go away! Go away!" shouted Sally.



The bird broke the red balloon, frightened by the sound, and suddenly flew away.

Sally started to fall doing cartwheels, the wind blowing her up, then down, as she fell faster and faster.



“What is going to happen to me?” cried Sally.

THUD!!!

Sally landed on a haystack at Dreyer Farms.

She recognized it as the place where Jane’s family bought flowers, fruits, and vegetables. Dreyer’s is the last of the farms in Cranford serving the community for over 100 years.

“I’m glad I landed on something soft,” thought Sally.



Just then a little girl came walking by with her mother.

“Oh, a rag doll! Just what I always wanted,” explained the little girl, pulling her mother towards the haystack.

The mother picked Sally up and looked her over. She noticed a name tag and address on the inside of Sally’s dress.

“Can I keep her, mommy?” asked the little girl.

“I am sorry, dear, she belongs to another little girl who must be very sad because she lost her.”

The mother showed the little girl the name tag. “Here’s the name of the doll’s owner. Let’s bring this rag doll home to Jane Smith.”

“Finally! I am going home to Jane!” sighed Sally.



The mother and little girl arrived at Jane's house and rang the doorbell.

Jane ran to the door to answer it.

"Are you Jane Smith?" asked the mother.

"Yes, I am," said Jane.

"Then this rag doll must belong to you!"

"Thank you! Thank you!" said Jane happily, while holding Sally tightly.

Jane called for her mother.

"Mommy! Mommy! Come quickly!" shouted Jane. "Sally's home!"

Jane's mother hurried to the door and was stunned to see Sally.

"Oh, my goodness! I never thought we'd see Sally again! Thank you so much!" she said to the mother and the little girl.

They all laughed and were amazed by Sally's unexpected adventure that day. Sally was so happy to be back home from her adventure flying around the Township of Cranford.



Sally and Jane continued to live In Cranford for many years. A town that had grown from farmland and mills to a suburb and community of many types of people, houses, stores, memories and histories. It was a special place where people cared and helped each other.

When Jane grew up and became a mother, she introduced Sally to her children, who never tired of hearing the story of the red balloon, Cranford's 150th Anniversary and how rag doll's can fly!

Happy 150th Anniversary Cranford

THE END