



# Union Landing Historical Society

Quarterly Newsletter  
Volume 2 Issue 1  
Available at Brielle Borough Hall,  
the Curtis House and mailed to U.L.H.S.  
members each Jan/Apr/July/Oct

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[www.briellehistory.org](http://www.briellehistory.org)

Editor: Suzanne J. Shea

## From the Holmquist Files...

By Natalie R. Holmquist

### Rumrunning

The following excerpts are from an interview by Virginia Potter, a U.L.H.S. member, of Tom Donnelly:

“I remember the beginning of Prohibition around here, the rumrunners. I lived right on the River and saw the boats going in and out every day and heard them coming in at night. We lived near the Inlet in a big white house on Crescent Drive by Donnelly Place.”

“I knew there were bootleggers in town, but they weren’t running the boats. They were all from New York and the Highlands. They used to pick up the booze. They picked it up a couple of times next to our house, at the end of the lane. We would just sit at the window and watch all this going on. We weren’t frightened. They would unload the boats, even at Feuerbach and Hansen’s at times.”

“I think the Coast Guard was aware of everything, but so was the draw tender at the bridge. What happened one day was the rumrunners were coming up the River, chased by the Coast Guard. The draw tender put the bridge down, and the two rum boats went up the River near the island where they dumped all their booze overboard, and the Coast Guard couldn’t catch them. The local people came out and everybody who could find a boat went out to gather up the booze.”



**Pictured above is “the big white house” on the corner of Crescent Drive and Donnelly Place. I’m guessing the rumrunners would have been watched from windows such as these by children who were supposed to be in bed sleeping.**

**Submitted by Janice Wurfel**

“I remember one time, the Coast Guard did catch them unloading the booze at Feuerbach and Hansen’s. I used to hang around the boatyard all the time and knew most of the fellows. They weren’t local, and they’d change a lot. They’d come in all shot up. Sometimes the boat would be riddled with machine gun bullets, and they brought them up on the ways, and they had little blocks of wood to patch up the holes. People would come in with their arms in a sling. One guy would be missing. It was

rough.” “They went out to the twelve-mile limit. It would take them half an hour. The mother ship was waiting for them there.” “As boys living on the River we could hear the boats coming in at night. They had these Liberty engines that made a lot of noise. Real rumbling sound.”

*Helen Holmquist, author of The Brielle Story and mother of Richard Holmquist, had a great interest in local history, which inspired her daughter-in-law, Natalie Holmquist, to start collecting newspaper clippings, articles and notations from various sources about the early days in this vicinity.*

## U.L.H.S. Standing Committee Updates:

*Thanks to this issue’s contributors:  
John Belding, Raymond Shea, David DuPre, Natalie Holmquist and Janice Wurfel.*

### Historical Osborn Graveyard

By John E. Belding, Project Coordinator

A few years ago a man stopped at my house with a piece of marble, about 12” X 15”, and wondered if I had any idea what it could be or from whence it came. The initials WHBO were carved on it. I said I knew what it was and that we had been looking for it. It was the top half of the foot stone to the grave of William H(enry) B(ailey) Osborn, a youngster who died in 1852, just a couple of weeks short of his 6th birthday. We had previously uncovered the bottom half of that footstone. He told me the section he brought was found in someone’s garden in Manasquan. We were pleased to get it back, and it is now attached to the formerly buried bottom half. However, the top half of the headstone on this boy’s grave is still missing. At this point it appears it will not find its way back to us, if indeed it has previously not disintegrated into small pieces, even right there at the graveyard. That is the only headstone still missing. For a few hundred dollars it would be possible to have a new marble headstone made in the exact shape and with the exact wording as the original. Fortunately we do have that wording from an inventory taken by Ernest Reed in April 1945. The President wonders if it would please the membership to do that?

### 9-11 Memorial Garden

By E. David DuPre, Project Coordinator

The 9-11 site has been the scene of repeated vandalism over the last couple of months. In the early fall one of the bushes planted in the semi-circle around the flag pole was pulled out by the roots, turned upside down and stuck in the vacant hole with the roots exposed to the sun. Several weeks ago one of the arbor vitae shrubs which stands over six feet in height was also pulled out by the roots. It was replanted by Gary Pstrak. Again last week another arbor vitae was pulled out by the roots and had to be replanted. A couple of days after that the large planter which sets atop a pedestal directly in front of the necrology list was removed and smashed on one of the concrete benches and was utterly destroyed. This planter has been used by the family of one of the 9-11 victims who filled it with flowers which last all summer. Last year the large fall chrysanthemums interspersed among the shrubs were walked about deliberately by a vandal. These incidents were reported to the police who are attempting to locate whoever was responsible.

On the positive side, it was decided to decorated the site with Christmas lights, something conservative and appropriate for the memorial ... We Remember!

### History Book Committee

By Raymond F. Shea, Chairman

Since Brielle Day, sales of our new book *Images of America - Brielle* have been brisk. Besides being offered in select local stores, the society has organized three additional sales events. Books were offered for sale at our November General meeting, the Brielle PTO Candy Cane Cafe and Holiday Shoppe and at the Tree lighting in Brielle Park. In addition to being a sales opportunity, these events were great public relations events for the society as well. We had a lot of positive feedback from readers about the book, not to mention a few new facts and ideas for the next edition. In addition at the PTO event the ULHS donated a portion of the proceeds from the book sales back to the PTO. The book committee’s weekly meetings have been suspended for the month of December, but we will resume on Tuesday, January 8th, 10 am at Borough Hall. On the third week of each month we meet on Monday night at 7:30 pm also at Borough Hall. All are welcome. On the subject of purchasing books, direct purchase from the Society helps us raise money to fund our continuing programs and events. *Images of America - Brielle* makes a great holiday gift. Free gift wrap is available for the asking! Call 732.528.1079 or go online to [www.briellehistory.org](http://www.briellehistory.org) to order! We can ship your purchase or local pick-up at Boro Hall is available. Thank you for your support!

Union Landing Historical Society  
P.O. Box 473, Brielle, NJ 08730

## CONGRATULATIONS TO JOHN BELDING!

Brielle Chamber of Commerce has chosen our very own Union Landing Historical Society President and Borough Historian, John Belding, as the 2008 Pride of Brielle honoree. Members are welcome to attend the award ceremony January 16th, 2008 at the Manasquan Golf Club as per the enclosed invitation. The cost is \$55/person. Contact Heidi Wittenberg 732.528.7666 for more details.

### HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

#### Your History Question Answered by John Belding, Borough Historian

Have your question answered! E-mail to [info@briellehistory.org](mailto:info@briellehistory.org) and watch for your answer in an upcoming U.L.H.S. Newsletter!

#### What is the oldest currently standing house in Brielle?

For some time the "Boxwood Cottage" on Union Lane was thought to be the oldest. However in 1990 your Society engaged Gail Hunton, Historian/Preservation Specialist, Monmouth County Park System to determine age. Her best-researched estimate is 1810-1830, not pre-Revolutionary War as previously thought. Abraham Osborn's house, now part of the MRGC was not the original structure, but a later brick dwelling built by him in 1822. The house now regarded as the oldest is the middle section, constructed circa 1800, of the Ernish home at 405 South Street. The front section is about 1840, and the rear section newer than that.

Borough Historian's "It Was Only Yesterday" collection of historical vignettes: <http://www.briellehistory.org/archive.htm>

## ULHS' 2008 EVENTS

All executive board members and ULHS general members that would like to attend are requested to be at a brief meeting Tuesday morning, January 8th at 10 am to create a slate of nominees for our ULHS 2008 officers and trustees. This special meeting will take place at Boro Hall in conjunction with our first weekly book committee meeting.

Plans for our 2008 meetings and events will be announced shortly. Have a suggestion for a 2008 program or event? Please contact Mr. Belding at 732.528.5867.

**2008 DUES ARE NOW DUE!**

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!



**RENEW Your Membership or JOIN the Union Landing Historical Society**



Yes! I would like to assist the Union Landing Historical Society, Inc., a non-profit educational corporation, with its programs and events by becoming a member. Enclosed is my check to the Union Landing Historical Society, Inc. for \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Your contribution is tax deductible. Membership includes a quarterly newsletter and membership card.

<b>ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:</b> Student.....\$7.00 Individual.....\$10.00 Family.....\$35.00 Sponsor.....\$100.00 Corporate.....\$300.00 Life Membership.....\$500.00  <a href="http://www.briellehistory.org">www.briellehistory.org</a>	NAME _____
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	<b>MEMBERSHIP DRIVE</b> ULHS is doing a lot of great projects for our community. Please ask your family, friends and neighbors to join today! We need your support to continue and grow our programs!

**Thank You!**