



Union Landing Historical Society

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

April 1st, 2008

www.briellehistory.org

Editor: Suzanne J. Shea

From the Holmquist Files...

By Natalie R. Holmquist

A Questionable Visitor

According to a local story, Brielle had a questionable visitor during Prohibition. Irish-American gangster Jack "Legs" Diamond was said to have stayed at a house here in Brielle. Rumor even had it that he had a torture chamber in the basement!

"Legs" was a member of the Lucky Luciano-Meyer Lansky gang. He was a favorite of gambler Arnold Rothstein, who was the founder of the gang. He was a snappy dresser and quite the ladies' man. Some said that his nickname came from the fact that he was a good dancer. Others said that he was called "Legs" because he had been able to escape from his enemies many times.

His main enemy was Dutch Schultz, the leader of a rival Manhattan bootleg gang. Diamond was shot and wounded many times, but always survived until December 18th, 1931. He was killed by gunfire in a hideout in Albany, New York. It has not been definitely determined who was responsible for his death. Diamond was 34 years old when he died.

Just exactly what "Legs" Diamond was doing in Brielle is open to speculation. As we saw in the last U.L.H.S. Newsletter there was a lot of bootleg liquor being brought into this area.

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.



Notorious bootlegger and Brielle visitor Jack "Legs" Diamond became known as the "Clay Pigeon of the Underworld" after surviving numerous attempts on his life.

Submitted by Janice Wurfel

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

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

Historical Osborn Graveyard

By John E. Belding, Project Coordinator

There is some more "good news" regarding our ongoing work at the Osborn Burial Ground. You will recall that I had previously mentioned it would be very helpful if we could get a source of water at that site. Lugging buckets of water from neighboring houses gets wearying when planting new shrubs, trees or flowers. Especially for the senior citizen, even though fully acknowledging the graciousness of our neighbors in being willing to accommodate us. As Graveyard Director I had suggested to the folks at our Department of Public Works that a water line to the site would be very helpful. It pleases me to inform you that they have seen to it that a pipe is now installed up to the fence. And these good folks are also willing to take on the added responsibility of installing a sprinkler system that will enable us to keep the grass in front of the graveyard looking nice, plus facilities to be able to water the myrtle inside the fence, and several new trees that have been planted which you may have noticed. We are ever grateful for this assistance. In addition, on the subject of trees, the Shade Tree Commission is anxious to present us with a specimen tree to add to the beauty of the burial ground. We have a few varieties in mind, but would be anxious to hear from our members if there are specific cultivars that may be a favorite of yours, or which you think would be particularly appropriate at this historic site. In addition to the evergreen trees planted outside the fence, did you recognize a Japanese maple and a copper beech planted by us?

P.S. Don't forget our Third Annual Decoration Day commemorative exercise to be held at the graveyard.

History Book Committee

By Raymond F. Shea, Chairman

Book Committee Meetings:

April 8th, 15th, 29th - 10 am Boro Hall;

April 21st - 7:30 pm Boro Hall

May 6th, 13th, 27th - 10 am Boro Hall;

May 19th - 7:30 pm Boro Hall

June 3rd, 10th, 24th - 10 am Boro Hall;

June 16th - 7:30 pm Boro Hall

All are welcome. We are now working toward the re-edition of the Society's first book Union Landing Revisited. This will be a comprehensive history of Brielle from the earliest settlements in the area to the present. We are targeting Brielle Day 2009 for release to coincide with the 90th anniversary of the incorporation of Brielle.

According to our publisher Arcadia Press, nearly all of the first printing of 1800 copies is sold out. We also received our first royalty check from the publisher in the amount of \$1049.60. Thanks to all who contributed to make our publication a success.

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 gift. Free gift wrap is available for the asking! Call 732.528.1079 or go online to www.briellehistory.org to order! We can ship your purchase or local pick-up at Boro Hall is available. Thank you for your support!

9-11 Memorial Garden

By E. David DuPre, Project Coordinator

The Route 70 bridge over the Manasquan River had been rededicated as the 9/11 Memorial Bridge to remember those from the South Monmouth area who lost their lives in the terrorist attacks. Now that the bridge is in the process of being replaced, George Harms, the contractor for the new bridge, a resident of Brielle, has saved a rail section from the old bridge and presented it to John Belding, historian for the Borough of Brielle.

Now that the section has been saved from destruction and presented to our borough historian, the question arose as to where it could be suitably erected. John, displayed his revered historical reasoning, proposed that there would be no site more appropriate than the South Monmouth 9/11 Memorial Garden on the bend of Riverview Drive at Birch Drive. Accordingly, as Spring progresses, we shall await the actualization of this patriotic dream!

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

YOUR HISTORY QUESTION ANSWERED

Your History Question Answered

by John Belding, Borough Historian

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

A number of folks have raised a two-part question on the status of the historic Glimmer Glass bascule drawbridge. First, will that grand old bridge be preserved and properly maintained. Second, is it safe to use?

There is good news on both counts. The two questions were addressed at the Board of Chosen Freeholders meeting convened at Manasquan Borough Hall on Thursday, March 27th. Freeholder Director Lillian Burry addressed these concerns at the beginning of the meeting, acknowledging that the room was crowded with citizens intending to speak on this issue. In her opening statement (which is in writing, copy of same is in the ULHS President's office), she acknowledged the bridge has been placed on the NJ State Register of Historic sites, and the application is now on the way to the National Register in Washington. This is the last bridge of its kind in the nation and "certainly is an important part of the area's charm." She further states that the Board of Chosen Freeholders is aware of the two public meetings of the previous week and "aware of the fact that many of those who attended those meetings have expressed support for the rehabilitation of the existing bridge rather than replacing it!". The Freeholder Director has requested the County Engineer "to consider a plan that would repair the existing bascule span bridge portion just as it is today along with upgrading the approaches". She further states, "we do not want to build a bridge that you do not want". She also avers that she feels "strongly that safety must be the determinable factor." It is currently rated as safe for three tons. With the rehabilitation, the plan is to upgrade it to 14 tons. The ULHS President has the full text of the Freeholder Director's letter and will be pleased to share it with any who wish. Borough Historian's "It Was Only Yesterday" collection of historical vignettes: <http://www.briellehistory.org/archive.htm>

Special thanks to Mr. Doug King, Mr. Carl Jablonski and Mr. Rick Zitarosa for their Hindenburg Presentations which took place March 2nd, 2008. The knowledge they shared was enjoyed by over 100 attendees to this special program. Thanks to Brielle Elementary School for the use of their facility for this community event. The Society was also very happy to have so many students in the audience!

ULHS' 2008 EVENTS

April 19th, 2008 - 9th Annual Antique Roadshow 2-4 pm at the Curtis House. New format this year! Hear the stories of the antiques brought in!

May 25th, 2008 - Third Annual Decoration Day Observance - Parade at 1:30pm followed by Memorial Program, Historical Osborn Graveyard, Holly Hill Road, Brielle at 2pm

June 13th, 2008 - First Annual Flag Day Ceremony, at dusk at the 9-11 Memorial Garden on Riverview Drive. Cub Scout Pack 63 will be helping us to present this new program.

August 17th, 2008 - General Meeting, 2pm at the Curtis House - Brielle Day preparation

September 6th, 2008 - Brielle Day, Annual Sarsaparilla Sale and Brielle Museum

September 10th, 2008 - We have been invited to Squan Village Historical Society's Annual Picnic at the Bailey-Reed House, South Street, Manasquan

September 13th, 2008 - 9-11 Memorial Observance at the 9-11 Memorial Garden on Riverview Drive, 10am

October 11th, 2008 - Archives/History Day at 125 Symmes Drive, Manalapan 10am - 3pm. Free & open to all. Plan on attending!

October 19th, 2008 - General Membership Meeting and Annual Harvest Home Dinner covered dish social 4:30pm at the Curtis House

November 23rd, 2008 - Special Program - details to be announced, 2pm at the Curtis House

2008 DUES ARE NOW DUE!



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.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: Student.....\$7.00 Individual.....\$10.00 Family.....\$35.00 Sponsor.....\$100.00 Corporate.....\$300.00 Life Membership.....\$500.00 www.briellehistory.org	NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____ CREDIT CARD #: _____ EXP _____ SEC CODE _____ Mail along with your check or credit card information to: Union Landing Historical Society, Inc. P.O. Box 473 Brielle, NJ 08730	MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 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!	