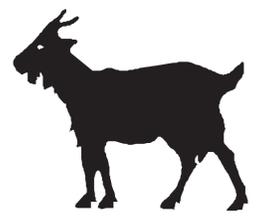


Nannygoats



Vol. 13, Issue 2

Newsletter of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society

Summer 2015

Historic cemeteries in Edison and Metuchen have been the focus of much study and volunteer effort this past year. Boy and Girl Scouts, gravestone preservation groups, fans of parks and open space, and historical groups have all been involved. Why preserve or protect cemeteries? We do so not only because they are memorials to the past, but because their existence adds much to our understanding of our history, culture, and way of life. As stated by Mark Nonestied and Richard Veit in their *New Jersey Cemeteries and Tombstones, History in the Landscape*

(Rivergate Books, 2008), there "is no better place to come face to face with the ideas and beliefs of New Jersey's first settlers than a burial ground. The names scratched into split field stones, or chiseled into brown sandstone and white sugar marble, remind us of early settlers – English, Dutch, Swedish, Scottish, African, and German – who made homes in a new land."

For decades, cemeteries have been a goldmine of information for genealogists, and graveyard preservation has often in turn been guided by those researching their family history. However, our historic cemeteries are also considered some of the best repositories of early American folk art. With the increasing ease of online genealogy research, art lovers and historians may become the new wave of guardians for these important places. Regardless of who takes on the mantle of stewardship, those efforts will benefit us all.

Continued on Page 4



One Kind Favor I'll Ask of You*



Top Right: Three stones in the Piscatawaytown Cemetery, Edison. *Top Left:* Samuel Kelly marker in the Old Colonial Cemetery, Metuchen. *Far Left:* Society member Richard Miller holds a stone steady while a preservation expert shows the methods for righting fallen stones. *Middle:* Girl Scouts help clean a stone, under careful guidance from the Association for Gravestone Studies, at a cleanup day this past Spring. *Far Right:* The Liantonios (Dominique, Lurleen, and Dave) work to remove lichen from marble stones during a workshop in July.

*As famously recorded by Blind Lemon Jefferson in 1927, "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean" is a traditional folk song that asks the listener to honor and maintain his final resting place.

The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society was founded in 1974 with the primary purpose of promoting an interest in and appreciation of the history of the Borough of Metuchen and of Edison Township.

Metuchen-Edison Historical Society Merchandise

Thanks to CafePress.com, the society sells a number of products with local history graphics on them, all online! Browse and buy from the comfort of your home or office any time... and, as with sales at the Country Fair and Local History Day, all net proceeds go to support the society's mission. .

1876 Plan of Metuchen Shower Curtain - \$44.99



Baby Onesies with Society Logo White, Pink, Blue, Green \$16.99 each



For more details about these items, and to place your order, visit www.cafepress.com/mehs

1928 Directory of Metuchen, Column 16

Below is the sixteenth and *FINAL* column of entries from a 1928 Directory of Metuchen that includes both addresses and telephone numbers of local residents. The small "r" after the name indicates the entry is for a "residence." The Society began reprinting the entirety of this directory in the Winter/Spring 2010 issue.

Whitney L F r 47 High.....Metuchen-473-J
 Whittier E A Miss r 59 Home..Metuchen-116-W
 Wickberg A L r 46 Plainfield av..Metuchen-304
 Wight H F r 207 Amboy av.....Metuchen-35
 Wilbert A E Mrs r 37 Highland av..Metuchen-135
 Wilbert Coal Co The Christol....Metuchen-190
 Wilbert H J coal Christol.....Metuchen-190
 Wiley S Capt r 335 Woodbdg av...Metuchen-137
 Will Otto W Cedar Lodge Amboy av
 Metuchen-313
 Williams H B r Plainfield av...Metuchen-118-J
 Williams W Mrs r Plainfield rd..Metuchen-118-W
 Willmont R H r 29 Walnut pl....Metuchen-458
 Wilson C E r 31 Newman.....Metuchen-562
 Wilson Howard S r 376 Middlesex av
 Metuchen-652
 Wilson Theodore r 104 Hghlnd av
 Metuchen-153-M
 Winkler A L r Oak Tree.....Metuchen-556-M-1
 Winter Thos W r 24 Henry.....Metuchen-775
 Wittnebert B r 561 Middlesex av..Metuchen-3-M
 Wittnebert H F r Amboy av...Metuchen-331-J
 Wittnebert L H r Amboy av.....Metuchen-146
 Wittnebert Wm F r Amboy av..Metuchen-173-J
 Wolf Edw r 12 Sylvan av.....Metuchen-480
 Wolff J r 55 Maple.....Metuchen-755
 Woll Robt r Bonhamtown.....Metuchen-535-M
 Wolmelsdorff S Miss r Amboy av..Metuchen-278-R
 Wood Brook Farms Plainfield av.*Metuchen-360
 Woodbridge Township of—
 School No 15 Iselin.....Metuchen-697
 Woodcock Geo C r 587 Main.....Metuchen-659
 Woolever D L r 28 Charles.....Metuchen-323-W
 Wright Clarence H r 62 Oak av..Metuchen-303
 Wuethrich Adolph G r Maplewood av
 Metuchen-261
 Yeager J Mrs r Main.....Metuchen-21-M-1
 Yea's E C garage 287 Amboy av..Metuchen-791
 Residence 291 Amboy av.....Metuchen-348
 Yepson-V L r 387 Middlesex av...Metuchen-321
 Y M C A ThomasMetuchen-195
 Young Wm A r 268 Durham av...Metuchen-505
 Yourstone G butcher 170 Main.....Metuchen-22
 Zack P H r Fords.....Metuchen-437-J
 Zahanek J r 238 Cntrl av.....Metuchen-155-J
 Zahn J S r Newman.....Metuchen-337
 Zimmerman F Rev r 319 Amboy av..Metuchen-200
 Zippel T r Jefferson av.....Metuchen-156-M
 Zyfers N C r 328 Amboy av.....Metuchen-503

LOCAL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY FOR METUCHEN, N. J.

SUMMER ISSUE
1928

PUBLISHED BY THE
ATLANTIC PUBLISHING COMPANY
517 LEVY BUILDING
ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY

(continued from Page 1)

Piscatawaytown Burial Ground

In November 2014 the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society began a survey and study of the Piscatawaytown Burial Ground at St. James Church (2136 Woodbridge Avenue) in Edison. The cemetery was established in the 1690s and over the years there have been various surveys and records to document the graves, but none since 1978.

Using GPS technology, every grave existing in 2014 has now been recorded and mapped. In addition, the various lists of graves have been combined into one database that will be placed on the MEHS website and a record of Veteran burials has been created. This research project, conducted by Michael Gall with grant funding provided by the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, has shed new light on who is buried there, the history of the burial ground, has provided new maps to find graves.

In May, the results of project were shared with the public at a program in St. James church, followed by a walking tour of the cemetery led by Walter R. Stochel, Jr. and Michael Gall.



Dr. & Mrs. Ainslie in attendance at the program on May 9, 2015.

Old Colonial Cemetery

The cemetery on Main Street at the foot of Woodbridge Avenue in Metuchen has recently received much needed attention from Girl Scout Dominique Liantonio as part of her Silver Award project. In April she organized a cleanup, which John O'Brien from the NJ Chapter for the Association for Gravestone Studies attended, and during which he provided information about proper stone cleaning methods.

As follow-up, a day-long workshop was organized in July. Presented by Rob Myers, owner of Gravekeepers of Pennsylvania, the techniques taught to the 25 participants were in accordance with the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) guidelines and "Best Practices." These standards were then put into use at the cemetery during hands-on training throughout the day. Several stones were cleaned, and many broken stones were repaired and up-righted, such as the LaForge stone shown below.

Metuchen's Councilman Muldoon attended the workshop in order to learn more about maintaining this important site (which is owned by the Borough; it was deeded over by the First Presbyterian Church in the 1970s). Since then he's taken steps towards having additional work done at the site, including shoring up the embankment along Main Street and tree trimming.

We are always looking for ways to share this wonderful site, and are working on a brief guide to the motifs found on the stones there, as well as a photo-inventory the extant stones.



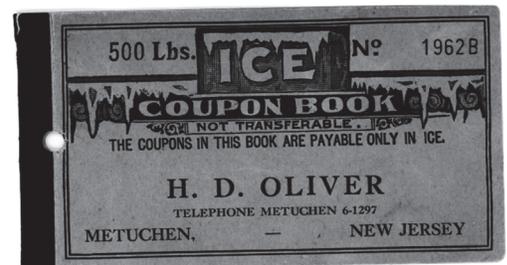
The symbolism [the grave markers] employ – death's heads, hourglasses, cross- bones, and later cherubs or soul effigies and monograms – reflects the Puritan origins of so many of northern New Jersey's first settlers. Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Baptists all employed similar gravemarkers. They tell us something of the attitudes of these people toward death and also high light the incredible artisanship of local stone carvers, such as Ebenezer Price and Uzal Ward. *- New Jersey Cemeteries and Tombstones, History in the Landscape (Rivergate Books, 2008).*

(continued from Page 2)

Grimstead Brothers Ice Company Coupon Book

H.D. Oliver is a Grimstead cousin named Henry D. Oliver. He was in the ice business with James and Frank Grimstead. Pencil notes inside the front cover indicate the coupon book belonged to Mrs. Grimstead in August 1933.

According to David Trumbull Marshall's book, *Boyhood Days in Old Metuchen* (reprints of which are available from the Historical Society), for "many years the Grimstead Brothers (James and Frank) and their cousin Henry were in the ice business. Ice was cut from the mill pond in Bonhamtown and stored in an ice house near the pond. All summer long, as long ago as I can remember, the Grimstead ice wagons went through Metuchen while Henry and Frank delivered ice." The 500 pounds of ice cost Mrs. Grimstead \$300! Was this a nice family discount or full retail?



The Brainy Borough?

The Borough of Metuchen's Historic Preservation Committee recently completed an informational booklet about why Metuchen is called "The Brainy Borough," and free copies (while supplies last) will be available soon at the Metuchen Public Library and at Borough Hall.

With the assistance of grants from the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, the committee has studied Metuchen's history and historic neighborhoods to evaluate the potential for one or more historic districts. These studies have resulted in additional historical information, especially related to the battle for the title of "the Brainy Borough." Research uncovered information previously unavailable in Metuchen.

The Society contributed greatly to the creation of the booklet by providing images and background information and we look forward to the booklet's distribution.



Middlesex County History Fair

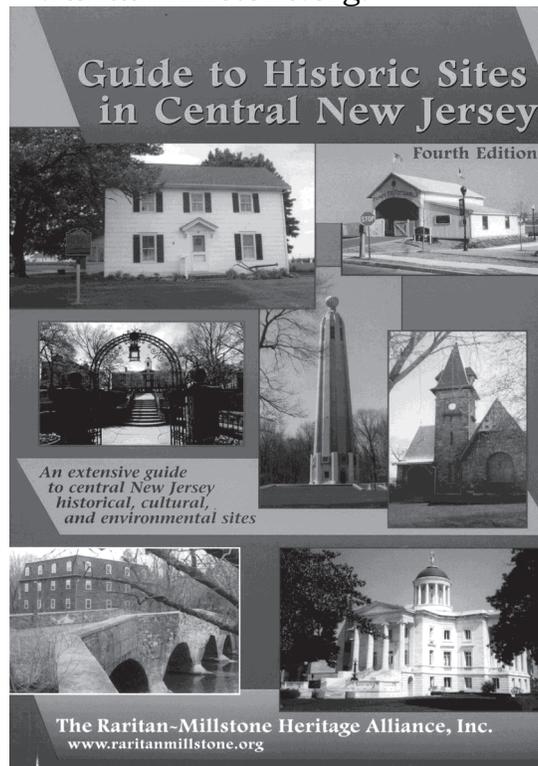
The Society was pleased to be able to participate in the first ever Middlesex County History Fair this past spring. Held at East Jersey Olde Towne on Sunday, May 31, the fair featured a wide range of history and preservation organizations from our area.

Happily situated next to our good friends at the Edison Memorial Tower Corporation, we greeted the many visitors with issues of our newsletters, copies of our walking tour, and information about the Battle of the Short Hills.

Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance

The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance (RMHA) is a group of historic sites in Middlesex, Somerset, and Mercer counties, nestled along the Raritan and Millstone Rivers. These sites have a rich, eventful past and a promising future. The RMHA also includes adjacent corridors which support these sites. The mission of the Alliance is to promote preservation and understanding of the rich eventful and cultural heritage of significant historical, educational, and cultural sites located in this region.

One of the ways the RMHA does this is through its *Guide To Historic Sites In Central New Jersey*, available free online and in print. The guide is being updated and will include Metuchen sites in addition to the Edison Memorial Tower at Menlo Park (which has been included in the last few editions). The RMHA always welcomes new members, so consider joining today! More about the organization can be found at www.raritanmillstone.org.



METUCHEN AND HER HISTORY, 1870 (II)

The following is the second installment of a transcription of Dr. E.M. Hunt's "Metuchen and Her History," written in 1870, which we have begun reprinting serially in issues of *Nannygoats*. Many thanks to Society Vice President Dominic T. Walker for his work transcribing this document.

Among those for whom land was surveyed in Piscataway up to 1690, we find the familiar names of Bonham, Dunn, Dunham, Fitz-Randolph, Giles, Martin, Maning and Mundaye. Of these the Bonhams, Dunns, Dunhams, Martins and Manings were from New England. Luther Martin, the famous lawyer of Maryland, and one of the founders of Clio Hall, College of New Jersey, was of this ancestry.

Nicholas Bonham, from whom Bonhamtown has its name, died in 1683.

We are not to overlook another source from which a large immigration to our own immediate section was derived at an early period. In Scotland, and among Protestants and dissenters in Ireland, these were days that tried men's souls. Many were banished, or thought it wise to seek refuge in a land of larger liberty, and Amboy was at this period a prominent landing point.

We know that a Protestant company from Tipperary, in Ireland, settled in Piscataway in 1683. It is not possible to determine with exactness the particular party of immigrants to which each of the earlier names belonged. I think from circumstantial evidence that the names Mundaye, Payne, Kelly, Laing, Morris, Noe, Daniels, Freeman, Ross, Talmage, Foard and Thornal, were of this descent or of those who, impelled by similar motives, arrived with other bands of Scotch and Scotch-Irish refugees.

The name of Nicholas Mundaye appears as an owner of land in Piscataway in 1686, and one of the same name appears as a pewholder of the Presbyterian church here in 1794. This family probably lived on the Vineyard Road, not far from the New Brunswick Turnpike. Moses Martin, who died several years since at an age of past ninety, told me that the first of the Mundy name here was said to have come from the West Indies. If so, this would trace

him as of those exported thither by the English Government for so-called treason in matters of religion, and in holding "conventicles." Scot, who chartered the "Henry and Francis," which arrived at Amboy in 1685, asked the transfer to him of a large number of persons who had been banished to Jamaica, and twelve were granted him, and others probably came before and afterward.

The name Martin occurs both in the colony which came from New Hampshire and also among the passengers of the "Henry and Francis." The name as occurring in Woodbridge was probably that of a settler from Amboy, while most of those in Piscataway are of the New Hampshire descent, John Martin being the first one named in the original grant. The farm, at present owned by Wm. H. Martin, on the Turnpike, and near the Vineyard Road, has been in possession of the family for about two hundred years. Before this the Parkers had settled in Woodbridge from Staten Island, and the Rowlands from Long Island. The farm quite near here, until recently sold, had been in possession of that family over two hundred years.

In a pamphlet published in Edinburgh in 1683, by the "Scots proprietors" having interests here, "for the information of such as may have a desire to transport themselves or their families hither", seven towns are mentioned as already established, namely, Shrewsbury, Middletown, Bergen, Newark, Elizabethtown, Woodbridge and Piscataway. They are declared to "well inhabited by a sober and industrious people, who have necessary provision for themselves and families, and for the comfortable entertainment of travelers and strangers."

Lord Neil Campbell, brother of the Earl of Argyle, and like him obnoxious to the English Government, was obliged to flee from Scotland and embarked for East Jersey, and landed at Perth Amboy about December, 1685. Many of the Campbells came about the same time or accompanied him, as is shown by a list of the passengers of the "Henry and Francis," and some settled in this neighborhood. John Campbell, son of Lord Neil Campbell, died at Amboy 1689, leaving two daughters and one son, named John Campbell, "of whose descendants," says Whitehead, "I have no knowledge." The oldest stone in the old graveyard here, so far as I know, is that of John Campbell, who died in 1733, aged seventy-two years. Next to his is the grave of Neil Campbell, who died in 1777, aged forty-three. The name here is of this stock and kin. The present Duke of Argyle, so eminent in statesmanship, in philosophy, and exemplary character, is of this lineage.

To be continued in the next issue.

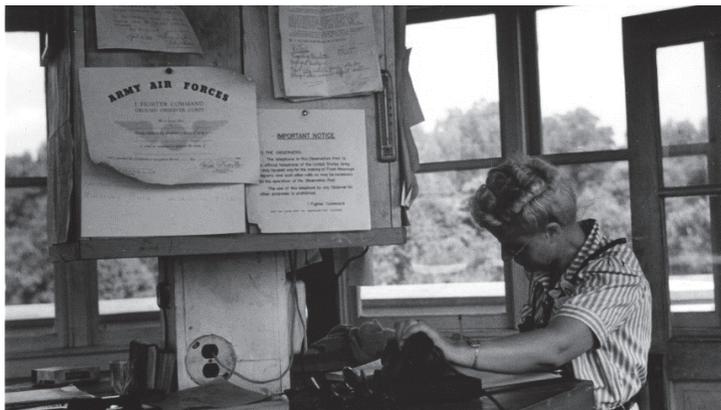


"Vineyard Road- looking South" from Nicholas Mundy & His Descendants, 1907.

New In The Archives

Following are some of the items that have recently been donated to the Society's archives.

- *45 Zeli-bration! Congregation Neve Shalom Honors Rabbi Gerald L. Zelizer, May 3, 2015.* This book was compiled to celebrate the retirement of their Rabbi after forty-five years of service at the temple.
- *The Fiscal Impact of Land Development in the Borough of Metuchen* (by Dorothy M. Winhold, December 10, 1979) and *Ordinances of the Borough of Metuchen* (1927). Douglass College thesis and municipal code booklet both donated Dorothy M. Winhold.
- Special Christmas advertising editions of *The Recorder* from 1967 and 1968. Donated by Rosalie Littlefield.
- Anniversary and special program booklets for the Dutch Reformed Church, early 1900s to 1980s, donated by the Borough Improvement League.
- Photograph (see below) of Helen Williams Dana volunteering at the Airplane Spotting Tower in Metuchen. Donated by Audrey Dana.



PFC Zederbaum Honored in Edison

On Memorial Day of this year, Oliver Avenue in Edison was dedicated to PFC Herman “Zeke” Zederbaum. *Nannygoats* subscribers may remember reading about Zederbaum and his experiences in World War II in the Fall 2008 edition (Volume 6, Issue 3). His son, Scott, contributed the article in 2008 and both he and his own son were on hand at the dedication ceremony in May and provided the following remembrance

My dad, Zeke Zederbaum, was born in the Bronx on May 7, 1921. When he was 18, he married my mother, Ida Lipschitz, and they had one daughter before he was drafted into the Army.

After the war, the Zederbaums had four more children and moved to the Fords section of Woodbridge, where Zeke began a career as a welder. He was badly injured in a fire at his workplace, Aula Chemicals, Inc. of Elizabeth, in March, 1954.

After a lengthy recovery, he went to a technical school to become a licensed electrician and contractor. He and his family moved to Oliver Avenue in Edison in 1964, and he started the Fix-It Electric Company in Edison.

He was also active as a past president for the Middlesex County Chapter of the NJ State Electrical Contractors Association, and served as a Leader for the Cub Scout Webelos, Pack 71.

He remained an Edison resident until his death at age 54 in June, 1975.

Many congratulations to the Zederbaum family on this wonderful honor.



On Facebook? Join the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society's Facebook Group and keep informed about history-related news, participate in our weekly "Grimstead Guesser," and connect with other local history fans.

Published by
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The name of the newsletter, “Nannygoats,” is taken from the title of a collection of anecdotes, articles, reminiscences, and letters compiled by photographer J. Lloyd Grimstead. He took more than 2,800 photographs of the Metuchen-Edison area, mostly during the 1930s, which make up 80 percent of the Historical Society's photographic collection. The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society dedicates this publication to Lloyd Grimstead, as a way of honoring him for collecting and recording so much of our local history.

The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Note: The Society published two issues in 2014 as a double issue; Volume 12, Issues 1 & 2. Generally the Society publishes three issues per year.



Metuchen-Edison Historical Society
P.O. Box 61
Metuchen, NJ 08840

Want to write an article for Nannygoats? Have a History Mystery you need help with? An interesting photo or memory to share? Contact the editor... we love submissions from our members and readers!

Upcoming Programs and Events

Metuchen Country Fair **Saturday, October 3, 2015** **10am to 4pm - FREE**

The Society will be participating in the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce's annual Country Fair along Main and New Streets in Metuchen. This year's fair theme is "The Boardwalk" and once again we'll have special displays and new merchandise for sale.

FAIR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to help setup, staff, and breakdown the booth. If you can lend a hand, contact Steve Reuter at 732-713-9080 or metuchenedisonhistory@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE

The Edison Memorial Tower will reopen this year, after being closed for 77 years! Don't miss the big celebration planned at the Menlo Park Museum & Tower on Saturday, October 24, 2015. Visit their website for more information about plans for the day.
www.menloparkmuseum.org

"The Wreck of the Broker" **Presented by Gordon Bond** **Sunday, November 8, 2015** **Metuchen Public Library** **2pm - FREE**

On the drizzly evening of February 6, 1951, the Pennsylvania Railroad commuter train known as "The Broker" derailed in Woodbridge, New Jersey, killing 85 and injuring hundreds in what remains the deadliest railroad accident in the state's history and among the top five in the United States. What happened is reasonably well-understood. Why it happened, however, is an area of controversy that few (if any) histories have fully explored.

Author Gordon Bond has been researching the wreck of The Broker for an upcoming book (due out tentatively in early 2017) and will be giving a summary of his research to date in this presentation.

Local History Day – Sunday, February 14, 2016

~ photographs ~ maps ~ **Metuchen Public Library** ~ ephemera ~ merchandise ~