

Special Research Project:

History of Postal Service in Brielle

Jim Ham, Brielle Town Historian

INTRODUCTION

When one looks back at the history of a town, the post office and its service was always central to this history. The origins of early postal service date back to the early days of the 19th century when stage coach lines ferried the mail from point to point, usually from a local port or large town to the interior of the country. So the postal service was a key communication vehicle and conduit for our emerging nation in its earliest days.

The other notable aspect of the history of a town's postal service is the unique social role that the post office used to play in a local community. Throughout the early days of postal service, mail was not home delivered. Everyone traveled to the post office to pick up their mail. This made the post office a central location where people naturally gathered to discuss the events of the day and for children to gravitate to for fun and games. Home delivery of the mail and the emergence of the automobile dramatically changed this after World War II.

One of the most interesting by-products of my research into Brielle's postal history, was the emerging realization of the significant role that Ananette Love Kroh played over the nearly 70 years of her involvement in Brielle's postal service. It began when she was a young girl pitching in at Brielle's first Post Office in the Union House's General Store and then at the Green Avenue Post Office. This was followed by her 32 years as Brielle's Postmaster culminating in her retirement in 1959. She truly is the unsung hero of Brielle's postal service and the bedrock upon which our current postal service stands.

Introduction: The Formation of Postal Service in U.S.

The position of Postmaster General was created by the Second Continental Congress, July 26, 1775, and continued by the Confederation Congress, following ratification of the Articles of Confederation, March 1, 1781. A temporary Office of Postmaster General was established in the Federal Government by the Post Office Act (1 Stat. 70), September 22, 1789, and the permanent Post Office Department was established by the Post Office Act (1 Stat. 232), February 20, 1792. The Postmaster General was made a Cabinet member in 1829, and the Post Office Department was elevated to Cabinet status by the Post Office Act (17 Stat. 283) of June 8, 1872. The Post Office Department was abolished, effective July 1, 1971, by the Postal Reorganization Act (84 Stat. 719) of August 12, 1970, and its functions were transferred to the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

From 1775 to 1836, all postmasters were appointed by the Postmaster General. Beginning in 1836, postmasters whose annual compensation exceeded \$1,000 were appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, while all other postmasters continued to be appointed by the Postmaster General (6 Stat. 80). Post offices were divided into five classes by an act of July 1, 1864 (13 Stat. 335), with the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes appointed by the President and the 4th and 5th classes appointed by the Postmaster General.

The Pendleton Act of March 3, 1883 (22 Stat. 600) divided post offices into four classes based on their gross receipts:

CLASS / GROSS RECEIPTS / POSTMASTER SALARY

First / \$40,000 or more / \$3,000 – \$6,000
Second / \$8,000 – \$40,000 / \$2,000 – \$2,900
Third / \$1,900 – \$8,000 / \$1,000 – \$1,900
Fourth / under \$1,900 / under \$1,000

Compensation for fourth-class postmasters consisted of “the whole of box rents” plus commissions on postage-due stamps, postage stamps, official stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and newspaper and periodical stamps, and waste paper sales, according to the following formula: 100 percent of the first \$50; 60 percent of the next \$100; 50 percent of the next \$200; and 40 percent of the remainder. Postmasters also received a commission on money orders. Each post office’s class rank and postmaster’s compensation was readjusted annually based on the gross receipts for the four quarters ending March 31st.

Early Postal Service in Brielle

Postal service in Brielle goes back to the earliest days of our country. A mail route for central New Jersey was established by act of Congress on April 20th, 1818. The weekly mail route ran between Freehold and Tuckerton, by way of Squankum, Manasquan, Toms River, Cedar Creek and Manahawkin. The post office initially was on Old Bridge Road at the Old Squan Bridge on the Manasquan River (close to the current Route 70 Freedom Bridge). Captain Samuel F. Allen was the postmaster. The post office's location, the Osborn homestead, was a main stagecoach terminus for the area. Many years later, this property was owned by Charles Height, who married an Osborn. This post office serviced the entire area surrounding Manasquan, including Brielle and Point Pleasant. The post office subsequently was moved to Union Landing and then back to the bridge location over the next 20 years. During this period Conover Osborn and Allen Osborn were the postmasters.

Ananette Kroh, future postmaster of Brielle, wrote in 1956 the following about the early days of postal service for the Brielle/Manasquan area:

“There are evidences, and many, that the residents of the Union Landing area, as well as a wide surrounding territory, enjoyed postal services, albeit primitive and slow moving ones, through an office known successively as Squam Village, Squan Village and Manasquan Village. It is evident too, that the office or offices so named accommodated the residents of a large area, possibly south as far on the seafront as Barnegat Inlet. Certainly, the Point Pleasant area was served thusly. Mail was handled through a postal station located at the junction of Old Bridge Road and the Manasquan River at the site of Robert's Inn (present day Harpoon Willie's). The old building which reputedly housed this historic early post office was torn down when Counsellor William Blair of Point Pleasant purchased the old Charles Height property on which it stood. This location was an important center of early history hereabouts, with a cider mill, blacksmith shop and other village institutions, including the stones from an old schoolhouse, in the area.”

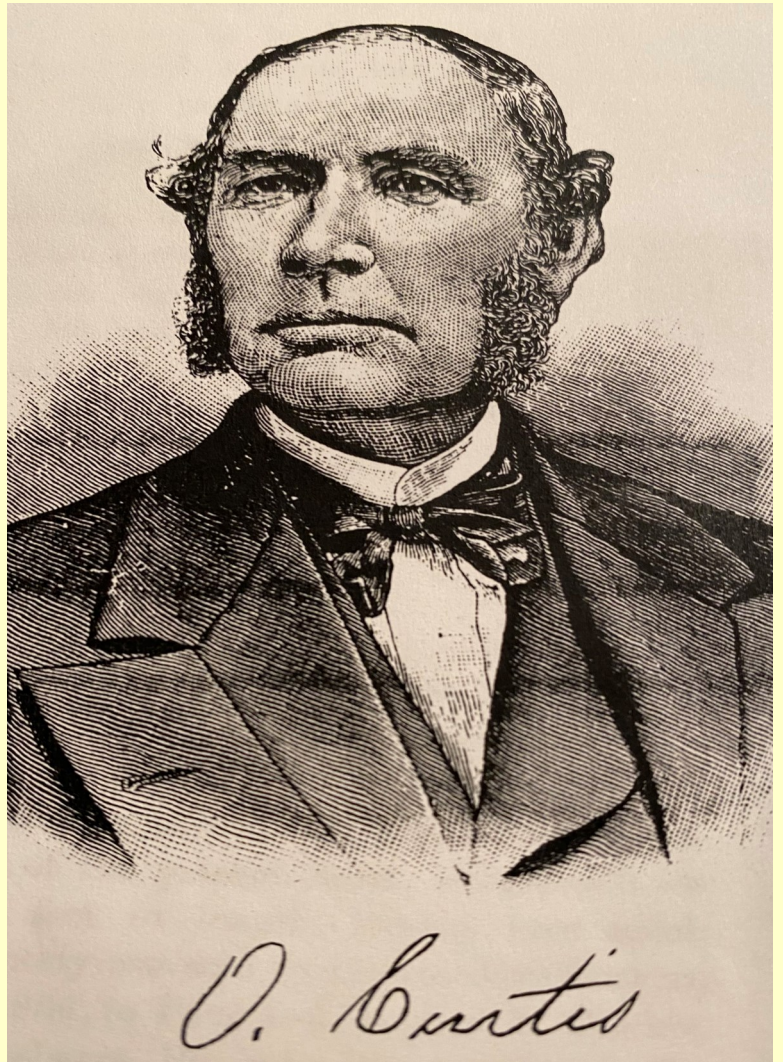
Early Postal Service in Brielle

In 1840, the post office was moved again, this time to Squan Village, as a mail route was established between Red Bank and Squan. Elias Haight (later changed to Height) operated a stagecoach line between these two towns and undoubtedly carried the mail transported from boats arriving from New York City that berthed in Red Bank.

As Ananette Kroh wrote in 1956,

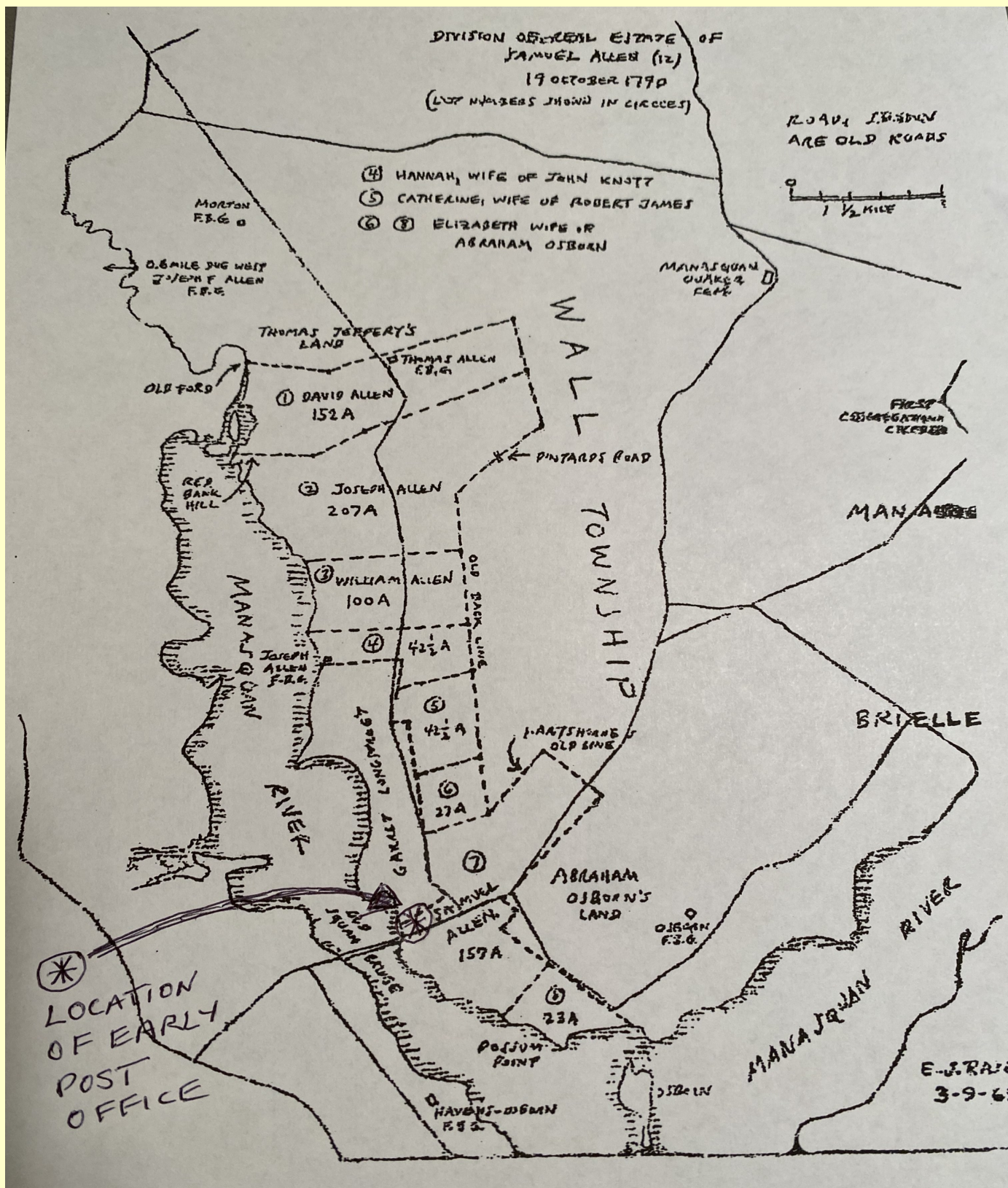
“Elias R. Haight (later Height) was the operator of the stage line via which passengers and mail were carried from Red Bank to Squan Village. There are those living today who can recall his son Charlie, recounting tales of these stage journeys through the Monmouth County countryside. The Squan Village postal facility became an exchange point for another stage line, established around 1818, that carried passengers and mail between Freehold, Squan Village and Tuckerton. It was to accommodate the Haight stage line that the first bridge to span the Manasquan River was constructed in 1816, according to records held by Borough Clerk of Manasquan.”

Upon the move to Squan Village, Osborn Curtis (picture to the right) was appointed postmaster. The following men held the office of postmaster in the following years: Eugene Hyde, David Riddle, William S. Moore, Benjamin B. Pearce, Henry Curtis, James P. VanSchuick and Marcellus Parker.



Postmaster Osborn Curtis

Early Map with the Location of Initial Post Office Servicing the Brielle & Manasquan Area



Brielle's First Post Office

The first Brielle post office was established on May 5th, 1888, during the administration of Grover Cleveland. The post office was located in a general store that was adjacent to the historic Union House Hotel. Both buildings were located at the Manasquan River end of Union Lane on the west side of the street.

Ananette Kroh wrote the following in 1956:

“After the United States Post Office Department established the Brielle Post Office in 1888, the first Postmaster was appointed by President Cleveland in the person of the late Henry Wainwright. The “office” was set up in a little corner of the unique general store operated by the Wainwrights in conjunction with the historic Union House Hotel of which they were the owners. It was at this famous river shore inn that Robert Louis Stevenson sojourned and started the nucleus of the colony of artists, writers, musicians and other famous persons from this era that frequented the area.”

The local newspaper, the *Crestdale Scribblings*, reported the following concerning the new post office:

May 18th, 1888, “Only a few more preliminaries must be attended to before the carpenters will prepare the boxes, etc. of the new Brielle post office”.

June 8th, 1888, “The mercantile department of the Union House is getting a new piazza, which will be quite an attraction. When duly christened as the Brielle post office, this will doubtless prove a favorite lounging place”.

June 29th, 1888, “The new Brielle post office is ready for use and is neatly arranged. The boxes run from one to seventy-eight. Mails close at 6:40 and 10:10 am and 3:35 pm. At present, Master Clarence Marsh, so well and favorable known heretofore as mail carrier, is on duty”.

Following the death of Henry Wainwright in 1911, the role of postmaster was handed down to his son, Stanley B. Wainwright. Stanley served as postmaster until shortly after the destruction of the Union House Hotel by fire in early 1914.

Pictures of Brielle's First Post Office (Circa 1903)



Picture of the front porch of the General Store on Union Lane with the Post Office tucked away inside in a corner of the store.

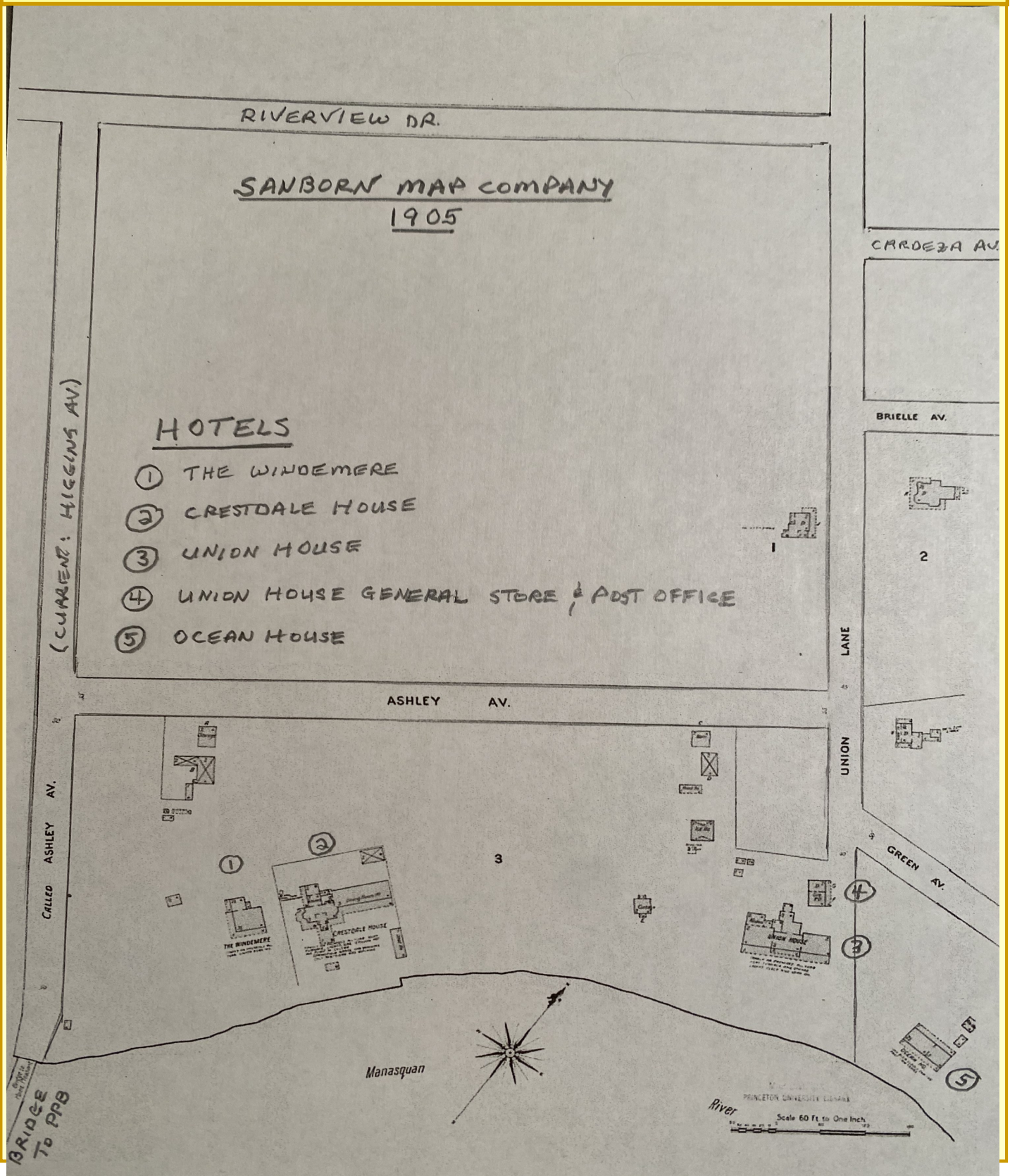


Picture of the front of the General Store looking towards the Manasquan River. Note the Union House Hotel in the background and the Union Landing docks faintly visible in the distance on the left of the buggy.



Picture of the front of the General Store looking up Union Lane towards current day Rt. 71. Note the horse and buggy in the distance.

Map with the Location of Brielle's First Post Office Next to the Union House Hotel



The Post Office on Green Avenue

On April 1st, 1914, shortly following the resignation of Stanley Wainwright as Brielle's Postmaster, President Woodrow Wilson designated Henry K. Kroh to be acting postmaster. After the demise by fire of the Union House Hotel in early 1914, Stanley Wainwright handed the general store operation over to Henry Kroh and sold the building that housed the store in early 1914 to a third party. With the Wainwright's general store building being sold, a new post office location was quickly needed. The property selected was close by and was part of the Green estate on the corner of Green and Leslie Avenues. The new post office was built in less than 60 days by S. Bartley Pearce, Myron Pearce, his nephew, and Ralph Pearce, a son of Bartley. The building opened as a Fourth-Class Post Office.

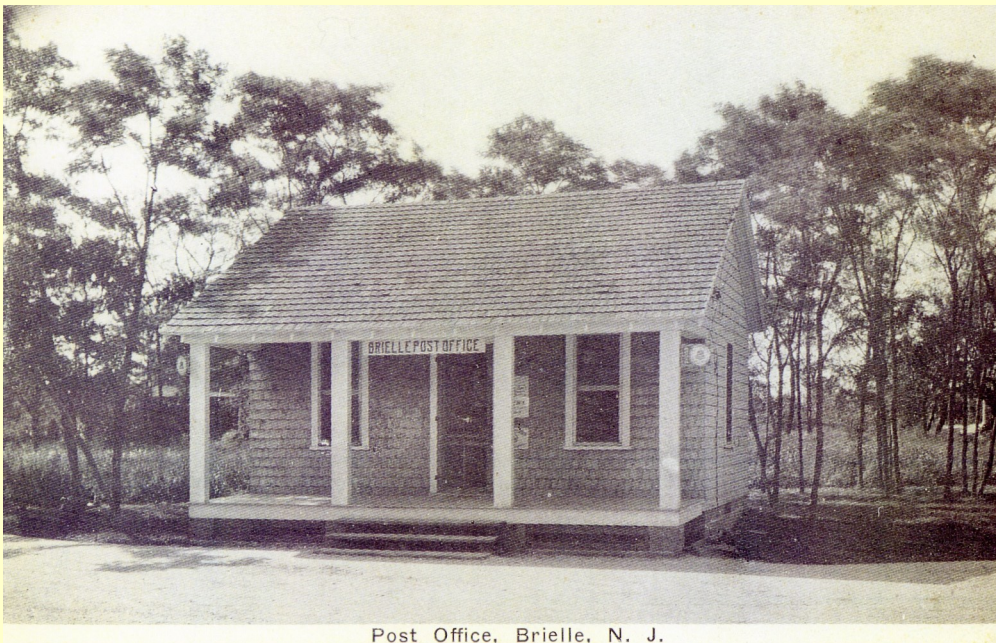


Early picture of the Post Office on the corner of Green and Leslie Avenues. We believe the gentleman on the left is Postmaster Henry Kroh. Note Leslie Avenue in the background on the right of the building.

The Post Office on Green Avenue

Henry's daughter, Ananette, then an apprentice in the old post office, recalls, July 1st, 1914 was moving day.

“Ms. Kroh recalled the hectic, hasty vacating of the premises when the Wainwright house was sold and within a month new quarters were constructed by Bartley Pearce at the corner of Green and Leslie Avenues. When moving day arrived, July 1, 1914, there were just four walls, a floor, and a roof, but no windows, doors, nor lights. . . . and it was the night for compiling the quarterly reports. The store merchandise was moved first, and when the precious locked mail sack was transferred and mail distributed to the boxes, Postmaster Henry Kroh spent the night guarding the premises and working on the reports. When the sun rose over the “Three Bridges”, Ananette Kroh reported for duty and carried on the business of the day.”



Post Office, Brielle, N. J.

Picture of the Green Avenue Post Office circa 1920.

The Post Office on Green Avenue

Once again, the new post office building on Green Avenue was a combination postal facility and general store. During his tenure as Postmaster, Henry Kroh administered the postal affairs and the general store was operated by his daughter, Ananette Kroh. She was named acting Postmaster immediately following the death of her father and was given a permanent appointment on September 22, 1927. After her appointment, Ananette continued to sell general merchandise such as canned goods, crackers, and bread at the post office facility. Later, she added a candy counter, much to the delight of the youngsters in town.

Mail delivery was rather primitive during this period. As Patricia Hendricks wrote in “The History of Brielle – Union Landing Revisited”,

“Twice daily postal deliveries were bagged and thrown at the Green Avenue railroad crossing from two trains heading south from New York City. The bags were then loaded onto a wheelbarrow to be pushed past Dr. Macy’s cornfield, now a borough park, to the post office a block away. This chore was done regardless of the weather. Outgoing mail was picked up by a US Mail employee riding in the baggage car of a train heading north from Bay Head Junction. The bagged mail was placed on a white platform at the end of Leslie Avenue, close to the northbound track and fastened with light string to a “hangman” structure. The locked grey bag dangled, waiting to be snatched by a long pole with a hook on the end as the train reduced speed and the baggage man leaned far out with the pole in hand. This system was modernized later, eliminating the use of the hooked pole and replacing it with a metal arm attached to the baggage car. John Geiges, who handled the duties of receiving and dispatching the outgoing mail on this structure, recalls “in the many, many times I stood aside as the train passed, the steel arm famously never missed once”.

The Post Office on Green Avenue

Those who served as clerks at the Green Avenue site were: Louis Brewer, Lucy Magee, Irene Sauer, Winnie Eccheveria, Evelyn Peabody, Barbara Gray, Don Roberts, Lydia Lewis and Eleanor Belting. Mail carriers were Jim Mills (who served and died during WW II), John Geiges and others.

Like many post offices in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the new Brielle post office on Green Avenue also served as a general meeting place for all, where local politicians and their constituents discussed and debated local developments in town. In addition, as Patricia Hendricks wrote in “The History of Brielle – Union Landing Revisited”,

“Most community minded residents were in accord when they selected the little building as a perfect site to hold functions that would benefit the town. On Friday afternoons after school, under the supervision of Ananette Kroh, the Camp Fire Girls held their weekly meetings. On Wednesdays, Irene Packer and Ananette would meet at the Post Office to plan the Sabbath program for the first non-denominational Sunday school. After a sizeable snowstorm, the warmth of the stove attracted and became a mecca for youngsters in the area during the trek for home from sledding expeditions at the golf course. During the summer months, when children idled in the warm sun, marble tournaments were held on the bare ground beside the building. Annual Needlecraft Guild sales were conducted at the post office with items displayed on a green table in front of the curved glass candy cases. Perhaps the most eagerly awaited event held each year was the PTA bake sale. With anticipation, the public lined up beforehand outside the post office door waiting for the cakes, rolls and bread to arrive.”

The Post Office on Green Avenue

From the time of its first establishment in 1888 until 1938, the Brielle Post Office was designated as “Fourth Class”. But the tide of development and civic progress set in and the creation of what has developed into the world’s largest sport fishing center, resulted in an upgrading of the post office. On July 1, 1938 it was officially raised to “Third Class” status. The tremendous increase in postal service activities necessitated the abandonment of the last of the general store operations in 1946 and in that year the Post Office Department took over the entire building for the servicing of mails in the rapidly expanding community of Brielle. That expansion continued and on July 1, 1954 the post office was given a “Second Class” designation.



Picture of the Green Avenue Post Office, circa 1956, just before it was replaced by the Higgins Avenue facility.

The Current Post Office on Higgins Avenue

With the rising popularity of the automobile after World War I, longer distance travel became much more accessible to the average resident of New Jersey. The shore area of New Jersey was no longer limited mainly to the rich and wealthy residents of New Jersey and the Philadelphia area. Brielle became a very popular summer vacation destination and also became the sport fishing capital of the US during the 1920's and 1930's. The result was that Brielle started to experience rapid growth. When Brielle's Post Office was first established in 1888, it was a small facility that was designated "Fourth Class". Due to the growth in town, in 1938 Brielle's Post Office on Green Avenue was designated "Third Class".

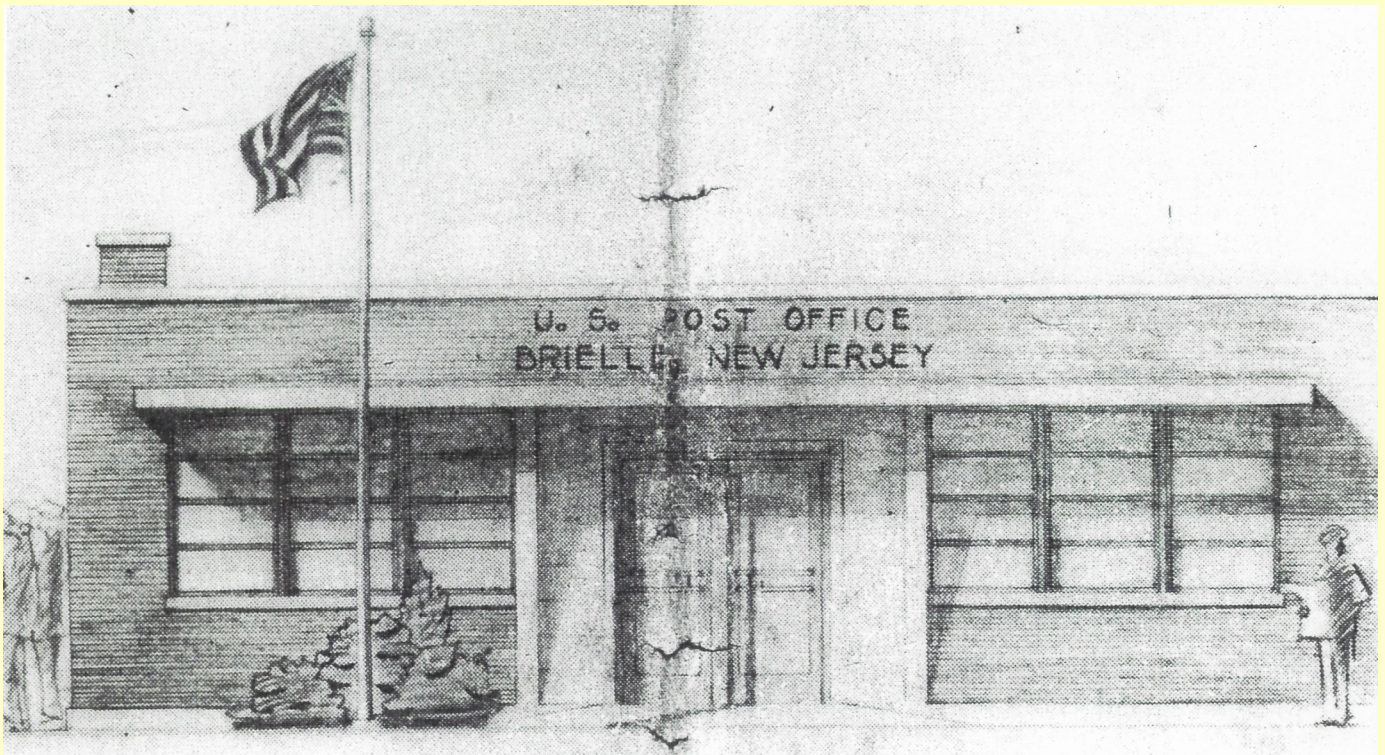
With the completion of the Garden State Parkway in the 1950's, the rich job market in north New Jersey became accessible to residents of the Jersey Shore and Brielle. The result of this is that Brielle's population continued to experience the explosive post-World War II growth during the 1950's. As a result, on July 1, 1954, the Post Office was given a "Second Class" designation. The continued growth in demand for postal services during the 1950's, driven by the town's civic growth and home delivery, couldn't be handled by the postal facilities in the small building on Green Avenue.



**Brielle's Post Office on Higgins Avenue
During the Centennial Celebration**

The Current Post Office on Higgins Avenue

So, in March 1955, the US Post Office Department announced that it would be soliciting bids for a new postal facility to be located on land that runs from Higgins Avenue to Euclid Avenue between Riverview Drive and Ashley Avenue. In early 1956 work commenced on building a much larger, expanded postal facility at the site on Higgins Avenue.



**Architectural Drawing of the
New Post Office on Higgins Avenue**

The Current Post Office on Higgins Avenue

The new facility on Higgins Avenue was completed by mid-1956 and was dedicated and opened to the public on July 29th, 1956, with Ananette Kroh continuing in her long-standing role as Brielle's Postmaster. It is noteworthy that at the time of the dedication of the new postal facility on Higgins Avenue in 1956, only four people from two families had served as Brielle's Postmaster since the service's official inception 68 years earlier in 1888 at the Union House Hotel: Henry (1888 – 1911) and Stanley (1911 – 1914) Wainwright and Henry (1914 – 1927) and Ananette (1927 – 1959) Kroh. Brielle continued its rapid growth well into the 1960s. The postal service required to support this growth couldn't be handled by the Higgins Avenue facility. As a result, the Post Office on Higgins Avenue was expanded and officially rededicated on Saturday, July 29, 1967.

1956 Dedication Plaque for the New Higgins Ave Post Office



After 32 years as Brielle's Postmaster, Ananette Kroh decided to retire. So, on September 30, 1959 she turned over her Postmaster role to her apprentice, Michael Tornillo. This culminated in well over 50 years of service that Ananette dedicated to the postal service in Brielle. Since Ananette's retirement in 1959, over 20 people have succeeded her as either the Postmaster or Officer-in-Charge of Brielle's postal service. Jane Van Eerde currently serves as Brielle's Postmaster, having been appointed on October 29, 2016. Jane and her team continue the long tradition of postal service excellence established by Ananette over so many years.

Expanding the Post Office on Higgins Avenue During Late 1966 & 1967



Dedication of Expanded Higgins Avenue Post Office: July 29, 1967

DEDICATION PROGRAM



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

Brielle, New Jersey 08730

Noon, Saturday, July 29, 1967

BRIELLE POST OFFICE

STAFF

Michael Tournillo	Evelyn Peabody
Melvin Travis	Robert Collinson
I. H. Milligan	David Nelson
Gerald Somerville	James Lynch
Edward Keller	Melvin Price

Wallace Doman Custodian

Paul W. Peabody Assistant to the Postmaster

John B. White Postmaster

PROGRAM

MUSICAL PRELUDES Brielle Elementary School Band
Mr. Robert Carver - Conductor

WELCOME Hon. J. B. White, Postmaster

MASTER OF CEREMONIES Dr. Frank S. Moran, D.D.S.

INVOCATION Rev. Randall Bosch
The Church in Brielle

INTRODUCTION OF HONORED GUESTS Dr. Frank Moran

REMARKS Hon. Wm. F. Crowley, Mayor of Brielle

DEDICATION ADDRESS Hon. James J. Delaney,
Assistant to Regional Director, P.O.D.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

PRESENTATION OF FLAG Hon. James J. Howard,
Representative, 3rd Congress District

FLAG RAISING Boy Scouts of America
Brielle Troop No. 63

BENEDICTION

SPONSORED BY

BRIELLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHAIRMAN Dr. Frank S. Moran

COMMITTEE:

- Mr. John Bogan, III
- Mrs. Walter Brill
- Mrs. Charles Byrnes
- Mr. Frank Bower
- Mr. Alfred Lange
- Mr. Jesse Collinson



The Current Post Office on Higgins Avenue



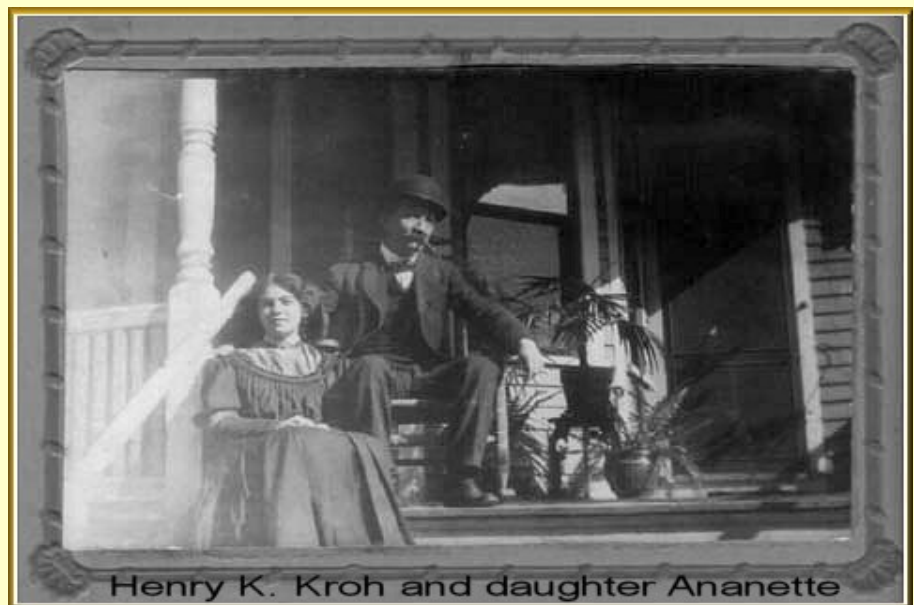
Brielle's Current Postmaster, Jane Van Eerde

Ananette Love Kroh Brielle's Postmaster: 1927—1959

No one has come close to the service and dedication of Ananette Love Kroh to Brielle's postal service. This is her story, which spans the time from the earliest days of dedicated postal service in Brielle in the late 1880s to her retirement in 1959.

Brielle's first Post Office was established in 1888 and was tucked away in a small corner of the General Store adjacent to the Union House hotel. When Brielle's first Postmaster, Henry Wainwright, passed away in 1911, his son Stanley became Postmaster. Stanley decided to hand over the operations of the General Store to Henry Kroh and his daughter Ananette. Subsequently, in early 1914, he relinquished his role as Postmaster to Henry, who was ably assisted in his new role by Ananette. This began the long association of the Kroh family with postal service in Brielle, and it was when Ananette's postal apprenticeship started.

When Henry Kroh first assumed the role of Brielle's Postmaster, the Post Office was still located in a corner of the Union House's General Store. When the Union House was destroyed by fire in early (May?) 1914, Stanley Wainwright decided to sell the adjacent building housing the General Store and the Post Office. As a result, Henry Kroh needed to find a new location for the Post Office quickly. He had Bart Pearce quickly build a new Post Office on Green Avenue. Ananette, as she had at the Union House, set up a small merchandise section at this new location and also assisted her father with his postal responsibilities.



Henry K. Kroh and daughter Ananette

at

Ananette Love Kroh **Brielle's Postmaster: 1927—1959** **(Cont'd)**

In the late 1800's and early 1900's, there was no local mail delivery except "special delivery". Small post offices not only provided mail service, but acted as a general meeting place for all where local politics and developments in the town were often discussed and debated. So, the Post Office became the natural central location for many local social, civic and religious activities.

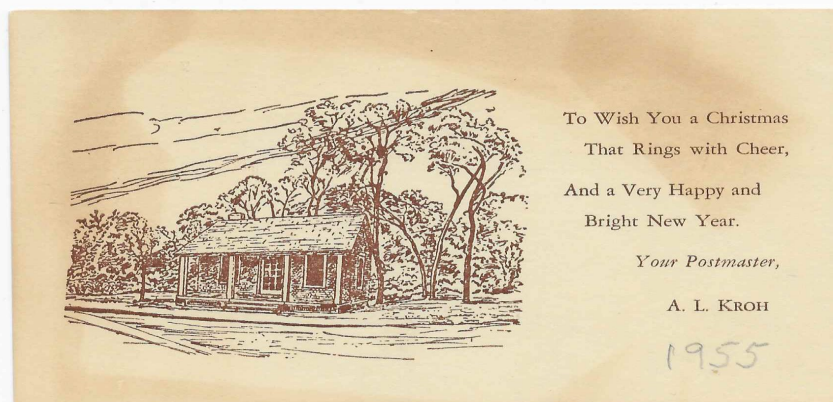
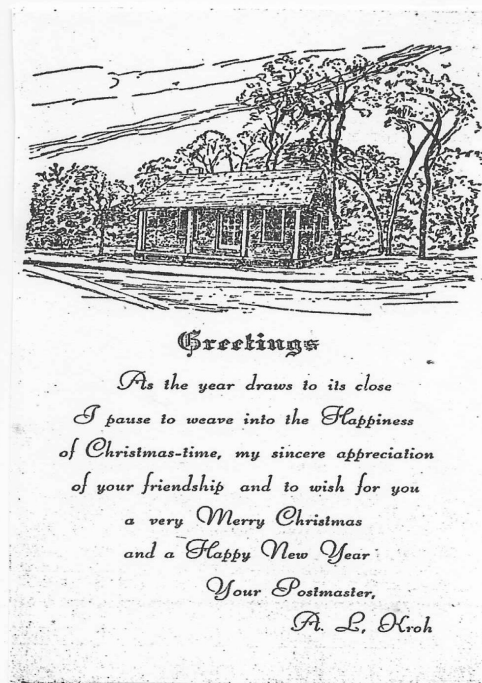
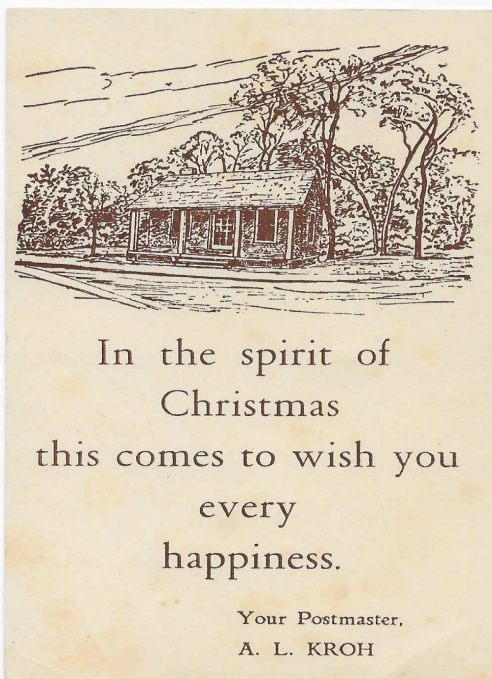
As related by Patricia Kroh Hendricks in her article on the Green Avenue Post Office:

On Friday afternoons after school, the Camp Fire Girls, under the supervision of Ananette, held their weekly meeting in the Green Avenue Post Office. On Wednesday afternoons, Miss Irene Packer met with Ananette to schedule the Sabbath program for the first non-denominational Sunday School, which Ananette ran for fourteen years. During the summer months, marble tournaments were held on the bare ground beside the building, under the watchful eye of Miss Kroh. The Annual Needlecraft Guild Sale and the PTA Bake Sale were also held in the Green Avenue Post Office and coordinated by Ananette.

Upon the death of her father in April 1927, Ananette first became Acting Postmaster and then Postmaster on August 17th, 1927. During her tenure as Brielle's Postmaster, Brielle went through a period of tremendous growth. Brielle's population grew from 392 in 1920 to 2,619 in 1960, a year after Ananette's retirement. This growth, and the initiation of local mail delivery, necessitated the abandonment of the general store operations in 1946 and the building of a new expanded Post Office on Higgins Avenue in 1956.



Ananette Love Kroh
Brielle's Postmaster: 1927—1959
(Cont'd)



Christmas Post Cards that Ananette Kroh sent to all the Post Office Boxes in Brielle

Ananette Love Kroh **Brielle's Postmaster: 1927—1959** **(Cont'd)**

When Ananette retired in September, 1959, her involvement in Brielle's postal service spanned all three Post Office locations in Brielle...the first Post Office in the Union House's General Store, the old Post Office on Green Avenue and the current Post Office on Higgins Avenue. She could also feel a sense of accomplishment, when Michael Tornillo, who served his apprenticeship under Ananette became Acting Postmaster of Brielle on September 30, 1959.

In addition to being Brielle's Postmaster for over thirty years, Ananette was also very active in local civic activities. She was a Trustee of the Brielle Scholarship Program, was a charter member of the Church In Brielle, and was a member of the League of Postmaster of the United States. She also received the Outstanding Citizen Award from the Brielle Post Veterans of Foreign Wars. In addition, she gave a bouquet to each girl in the graduating class of Brielle Elementary School.

Looking back through the years, one can see the unique role that Ananette played in Brielle's postal service. Her apprenticeship started in the General Store adjacent to the Union House, next through the years on Green Avenue, finally onto the current Post Office on Higgins Avenue. Ananette was Brielle's Postmaster for thirty-two years, during a time when Brielle transitioned from a small rural farming community to the thriving suburban community that it is today. Ananette very successfully guided Brielle's postal service during a time of tremendous change, as it transitioned to a modern postal operation serving a vibrant suburban community. In addition to these contributions, Ananette was also very active in many social, civic and religious activities in town. She was truly a unique, multitalented woman who made a substantial impact on her home-town, Brielle, that has been felt over the years.



A Flapper at the Jersey Shore

During my first days as Brielle's Town Historian, I was rummaging around the office and bumped into a most interesting surprise.....a series of short stories about growing up in Manasquan and Brielle by Helen Winters Leven called, "A Flapper at the Jersey Shore". These short stories chronicle Helen's summers spent growing up with her family and friends first in Manasquan and then Brielle.

Helen's family lived in Newark. Her father traveled to Manasquan on business and fell in love with the area. So, in the summer of 1906, when she was only 9 months old, Helen and her family spent their first summer at the shore renting a small home on Fletcher Avenue in Manasquan. Eight years later in 1914, the family decided to rent a larger home on the river in Brielle, on the corner of Ocean and Green Avenues (the home immediately adjacent and to the right of Janice Wurfel's home). Helen spent the following twelve years, until she was 21 years old, spending her summers in Brielle and growing up in this home.

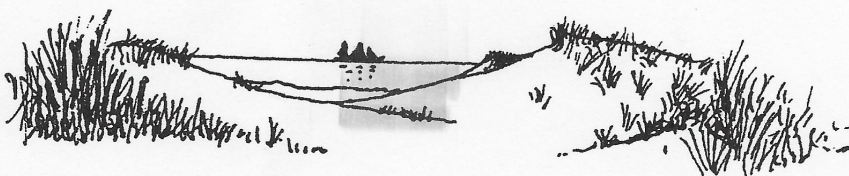
In her retirement, Helen decided that she wanted to chronicle her fond memories of her childhood years spent summering in Manasquan and Brielle. "A Flapper at the Jersey Shore" is based on these recollections. I've included the short story from the book that highlights Helen's memories of Brielle's new Post Office on the corner of Green and Leslie Avenues, just a short walk across the railroad tracks from Helen's summer home. I hope you enjoy the story....I know I did! If interested, stop by my office in Town Hall to read Helen's other childhood memories in her book....you wouldn't be disappointed.

A Flapper at the Jersey Shore

LEWIS
HELEN WINTERS
941 S. Collier Blvd.
Marco-Island, Fla. 33937

A Flapper At The Jersey Shore

-1-



The Lure of the Shore

Down at Manasquan beach there's a saying: "Once you git New Jersey sand in your shoes, you may go away, but the shore's goin' to call you back." That's what happened to me. I stopped spending summers there when I was 21 and stayed away for more than 20 years.

Three quarters of a century have passed since my first shore summer, yet those formative years have colored my entire life. Waterways, boats and seashore have always held irresistible fascination for me.

Now, during less active years, I rejoice that retirement to Marco Island brings me daily exposure to sand and sky and sea. It's as if my veins run more with salt water than with blood. I'm a seashore person and lucky to live where Caxambas Sound meets the Gulf of Mexico.

In gratitude for years enhanced by love for the sea, here's a memory search to recall a little girl's growing-up summers at the Jersey shore.

A Flapper at the Jersey Shore

HELEN WINTERS
941 S. Collier Blvd.
Marco Island, Fla. 33937



Diagonally across the street from Cap'n Bart's was a small shingled building, the Post Office. Mr. Kroh was postmaster, but his sanctum sanctorum behind the stamp window was shared by his daughter. Ananette, a no less capable letter-sorter than her father. If Brielle can be said to have had a store then, the Post Office was it. In addition to her responsibilities to the United States Mail, Miss Kroh presided over the penny candy counter. She also sold cigarettes and lemon soda.

Candy in hand, we sometimes trailed Mr. Kroh as he tramped up the road to dispatch the outgoing mail. He was a little, bent-over man with a walrus mustache that gave him a ferocious look. We were always half afraid of him, but fascinated too. Beside the north-

A Flapper at the Jersey Shore

941 S. Collier Blvd.
Marco Island, Fla. 33937

A Flapper At The Jersey Shore -78-

bound track was a white wood scaffolding with an arm extending toward the rails. The mail sack was suspended from the arm; and as the mail car whizzed by, the trainman swung out a metal bar that scooped the mail bag off the arm and into the baggage car. All this happened without the train seeming to slacken pace. To me, it was a wonder that the operation was always successfully accomplished.

Sorting of the incoming mail, especially in the evening, was a ritual. A few minutes before the mail train from New York was due, Mr. Kroh walked up to meet it. For him, those dirty gray bags were a sacred responsibility. He wouldn't think of leaving one beside the track unattended once it had been tossed off the mail car. With the sack hung over his shoulder, he trudged back to the Post Office. There, as soon as he was behind the counter, he snapped shut the frosted glass window. For the next 20 minutes or so, he and Miss Kroh busied themselves sliding letters into slots. We

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never dared speak when they were sorting for fear of being grumpily rebuked.

The stamp window was flanked by about 50 boxes on each side. Those close to the grating opened only from the back; boxholders had to ask at the window for their mail. Outer boxes opened by combinations. We made it a rule never to open ours during the sorting. Perhaps we didn't want to risk having Mr. Kroh flip a letter through to the floor. Maybe we thought it was more sporting to wait until the window was opened and everyone could get his mail.

Brielle's Post Office Leaders Over the Years

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date Appointed</u>
Henry Wainwright	Postmaster	05/05/1888
Stanley Wainwright	Postmaster	1911
Henry K. Kroh	Acting Postmaster	04/01/1914
Henry K. Kroh	Postmaster	~1915
Ananette L. Kroh (Miss)	Acting Postmaster	04/18/1927
Ananette L. Kroh (Miss)	Postmaster	08/17/1927
Michael C. Tornillo	Acting Postmaster	09/30/1959
John B. White	Acting Postmaster	08/10/1962
John B. White	Postmaster	10/01/1964
Paul W. Peabody Jr.	Officer-In-Charge	08/16/1974
Paul W. Peabody Jr.	Postmaster	11/23/1974
Melvin Price	Officer-In-Charge	09/26/1992
Robert F. Weldon	Postmaster	01/09/1993
Arlene Farrell	Officer-In-Charge	04/30/1997
Steve Ritter	Officer-In-Charge	10/29/1997
Arlene (Farrell) Masterson	Officer-In-Charge	12/04/1997
Constance M. Kinder	Postmaster	02/13/1999
Donna M. Colby	Officer-In-Charge	
Donna M. Colby	Postmaster	10/19/2002
Michael Ioli	Officer-In-Charge	04/03/2003
Robert Smith	Officer-In-Charge	01/21/2004
John M. Galatro	Postmaster	02/05/2005
Angelo J. Imperiale	Officer-In-Charge	09/27/2006
Angelo J. Imperiale	Postmaster	05/10/2008
Ewa Furs	Officer-In-Charge	08/16/2011
Jamie Foltz	Officer-In-Charge	11/08/2011
Arthur J. Kieffer	Postmaster	01/14/2012
Anthony Smith	Officer-In-Charge	07/27/2012
Richard P. Micallef Jr.	Postmaster	10/06/2012
Jamie S. Foltz	Postmaster	06/29/2013
Richard K. Bauman	Postmaster	10/05/2013
Jane E. Van Eerde	Officer-In-Charge	09/02/2016
Jane E. Van Eerde	Postmaster	10/29/2016