



# Union Landing Historical Society

Quarterly Newsletter  
Volume 3 Issue 2  
Available at Brielle Borough Hall,  
the Curtis House and mailed to U.L.H.S.  
members each Feb/May/Aug/Nov

May 1st, 2009

www.briellehistory.org

Editor: Suzanne J. Shea

## From the Holmquist Files...

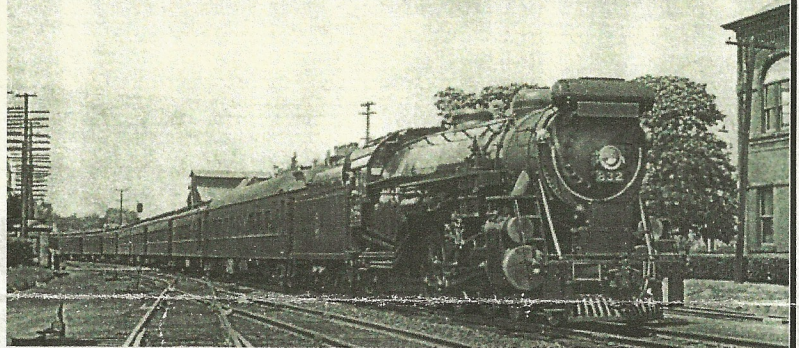
By Natalie R. Holmquist

The Blue Comet made its inaugural run on February 21, 1929. The pride of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, its route was from Jersey City through the Pine Barrens to Atlantic City. Although the Blue Comet was a huge success at the start, it eventually started to fade. The competition from the Pennsylvania Railroad's Nellie Bly, which ran directly from Manhattan, caused the Blue Comet to lose some riders. The Depression and the increased use of automobiles on New Jersey's expanding highway system added to the decline.

The Blue Comet's whistle had a very distinctive sound which was once described as a cross between a fog horn and a cathedral organ. Long-time Brielle residents remember hearing the whistle as the youngsters ran to the track calling out "The Blue Comet is coming!" A large blue locomotive would come thundering by.

In later years when several residents told this story to some railroad "experts," they said it could not possibly have been the Blue Comet, since Brielle was not along its scheduled route. They were right about it not being the Comet's route, but they were wrong to say that the Blue Comet's locomotives and some of its cars never came down the track crossing the Manasquan River to Bay Head.

## BRIELLE'S MYSTERY TRAIN



In *The Seashore's Finest Train*, by Joel Rosenblum and Tom Gallo, there is a photograph with the caption "In the late 1930's, as traffic dwindled on the Blue Comet, surplus Blue Comet Pacifics were assigned other chores." The Blue Comet coaches and observation cars were also used on other routes in later years. So the Brielle residents and others in the area who looked forward to hearing the whistle and seeing the big blue locomotive and the blue cars with the cream stripe passing by were seeing part of the famous Blue Comet train.

*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.*

*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

The news is not so nice this time, but you should know. About the end of February, some person or persons, got into our graveyard, and broke off the small headstone of Josephene Osborn who died in 1845, age ten months. The stone was then stolen. The police were notified and an article appeared in *The Coast Star*. To date it has not been returned and I rather suspect it will not be. The Graveyard Committee is of the opinion it should be replaced. If we do ignore this act, others may think it's OK to continue to vandalize as apparently nobody really cares or is even aware. H. T. Hall Monument Company will sell us at cost an exact replica replacement for \$795. We have money in our trust fund, plus a couple of folks have indicated they would also be pleased to contribute. The Graveyard Committee will move forward on this. We hate to report this most distressful situation to you.

### History Book Committee

By Raymond F. Shea, Chairman

Last week the book committee wrapped up work on the society's latest book *Brielle: Saltworks to Suburb*. Published by the History Press of Charleston, SC this volume is a revamped edition of the society's first book *Union Landing Revisited*, published in 1989. Since the publication of the first book new photographs, archival materials, stories of Brielle and anecdotes have been presented to the society and the borough historian. It has been our effort over the last 4 years to compile an updated history of Brielle using this new unpublished material and building upon the story of *Union Landing Revisited*.

*Brielle: Saltworks to Suburb* is scheduled for release this coming Brielle Day, September 12, 2009. The new book is 160 pages in length and contains over 85 images, many of which have never been published before. The year 2009 also marks the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Borough of Brielle. The story of how the Borough of Brielle came to be, also not documented in any previous Brielle history book, is featured in the new history book.

*Brielle: Saltworks to Suburb* is priced at \$21.99 plus tax and a pre-sale order form is included in this mailing.

### 9-11 Memorial Garden

By E. David DuPre, Project Coordinator

From time to time during the past couple of years I have been approached by residents of Brielle seeking my opinion on a proposal to relocate the World War II monument from its location outside of Borough Hall possibly to the 9/11 Memorial Site. They express the opinion that the present location can no longer be considered a desirable location since it is on a busy highway with a traffic light, monitored by a school crossing guard when school is opening and closing and next to a flashing electronic sign board advertising community events.

I must admit I share their point of view but since the proposal comes up by one individual at a time, maybe three or four times a year, it appears that a coordinated approach could be made. I would be willing to study its feasibility with those who share this goal. Anyone interested in this project please call me at 732.528.5833, or leave a message on the answering machine.



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

## YOUR HISTORY QUESTION ANSWERED

**Your History Question Answered** Have your question answered! E-mail to info@briellehistory.org and watch for your answer in an upcoming U.L.H.S. Newsletter!  
by John Belding, Borough Historian

**Q** Is it true that at one time Riverview Drive ran all the way through to Union Lane?

**A** Yes, up until 1950. When Route 35 was realigned with the construction of the new bridge, a "Chinese Wall" was built through our town to carry the new road. The only two openings made were Route 71 and Ashley Avenue. Riverview Drive was cut off at the "wall". The remaining block long end of Riverview Drive on the other side of that "wall" is now named Evergreen Avenue.

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

## U.L.H.S. CALENDAR

**April 25, 2009** - 10th Annual Antique Road Show 2-4 pm at the Curtis House.

**May 24, 2009** - Fourth Annual Decoration Day Observance Program, Historical Osborn Graveyard, Holly Hill Road at 2pm - Details TBA

**June 12, 2009** - Second Annual Flag Day Ceremony with Cub Scout Pack 63, 6 pm at the 9-11 Memorial Garden, Riverview Drive

**August 30, 2009** - General Meeting, 2 pm at the Curtis House - Brielle Day preparation

**September 9th, 2009** - Squan Village Historical Society's picnic in their 1813 Barn! Bring a food item!

**September 12th, 2009** - Brielle Day, Annual Sarsaparilla Sale, Visit the Brielle Museum & Book Release

**September 2009** - 9-11 Memorial Observance, 9-11 Memorial Garden, Riverview Drive, Date/Time TBA

**October 10th, 2009** - Archives/History Day at 125 Symmes Drive, Manalapan 10 am - 3 pm. Free & open to all. Plan on attending!

**October 18th, 2009** - General Membership Meeting and Annual Harvest Home Dinner covered dish social 4 pm at the Curtis House

**November 22, 2009** - Special Program/Details TBA

### **UPDATE:** by John Belding

For those who did not make our field trip on March 22, you missed a great afternoon. We journeyed to Camp Evans and enjoyed a personal tour of the New Jersey Historical Divers Association Museum with inspiring and exciting narration by Dan Lieb. The stories regarding ships floundering during brutal storms are astounding. He related some fascinating tales. These folks have recovered many artifacts from the ocean floor. We also visited the American Museum of Radio Nostalgia in the next building. This segment of the tour added to our knowledge and understanding of early wireless telegraphy and radio.

Welcome to the new U.L.H.S. members:  
Edith Nowels, Gale Quist, Ed McManus

CERAMICS - CLOCKS - FOLK ART - FURNITURE - GLASS - JEWELRY &

UNION LANDING HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S  
TENTH ANNUAL

## ANTIQUES...COLLECTIBLES...TREASURES ROAD SHOW

SATURDAY, APRIL 25th, 2009 from 2 to 4:00 pm

CURTIS HOUSE, 644 UNION LANE, BRIELLE, NEW JERSEY

Three knowledgeable appraisers will be present:

Clara Johnson

Point Pleasant Antique Emporium  
Point Pleasant Beach

Col. Bob Randolph  
Randolph Galleries  
Manasquan

John Weaver  
Antiques Consultant  
Wall Township

*Bring in antiques to be appraised or just come to listen!*

*Hear the stories of the antiques brought in!*

*Donation: \$5 per item to benefit the Union Landing Historical Society.*

*Bring seven items and enjoy a ride in a 1931 Model A Ford Roadster with rumble seat!*

For more information visit [www.briellehistory.org](http://www.briellehistory.org) or call 732.528.5867

Bring your antiques, collectibles and treasures to see what they may be worth!

ART - ARMS, ARMOR & MILITIA - BOOKS, MANUSCRIPTS & MAPS

WATCHES - LIGHTING - NEEDLEWORK - RUGS - TAPESTRIES - GOLD

SILVER, METAL - TOYS & BANKS - FRAMES - PRINTS - SCULPTURE