



# UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Anniversary Dinner

It was back in April of 1869 that a group of prominent members of Union County felt that there was a need for the history of this area to be recorded and preserved for the future residents of Union County and anyone else. A few of these persons were veterans of the Civil War, a war that had ended only four years before, and was fresh in their minds.

Their action resulted in the birth of the Union County Historical Society, and on April 12, 2015 this society celebrated on hundred forty six years of existence with our annual anniversary dinner at the Garden Restaurant on Magie Avenue near the Union/Elizabeth boundary line.

Over fifty members and guests gathered for this event which was also a business meeting, where a modest amount of business was discussed. A review of the activities of the past years was read, and several new members were introduced.

A plaque in honor of the late Sheriff Ralph Froehlich had been added by the Society to the wall beneath his portrait in the lobby, and his widow was a guest of the Society. Chris Bollwage, the mayor of the City of Elizabeth, appeared briefly, with a few comments and a handshake for all.

A program was presented by Walter Boright, a member of



the society and a former Freeholder of Union County, whose topic was the "Governors of Union County", illustrated by a powerpoint slide show. He surprised us with details of the short terms of office of the many acting governors through the years since 1776.

## Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Society will be held on May 17, 2015 at 2 PM in the Hanson House. The main event of the afternoon will be the awarding of our annual donations to a few qualifying students of Union County high schools. All of the schools are notified of the possibility of an award and the final selection from the nominated students is made by the society's award committee, which then informs the winners.

In addition, a program will be presented concerning the 350 years of history of the City

of Elizabeth and of the State of New Jersey.

## In Memoriam

It is with deep regret that we must report the passing of our long-time member, Kick Koles, who left us on the 26th of February, 2015.



Dick had served twice as the president of the Society, and was responsible for most of the organization of the files and artifacts in our office. He provided file-draws of pictures with complete information

about their many subjects.

As a newspaper photographer he had met and filmed many prominent people, including politicians and judges and we have many copies of those photos.

In his 42 years behind the camera Dick had won many awards for his work, and had been a president of the New Jersey Press Photographers Association.

Working with the late Jean-Rae Turner, he had co-authored several pictorial books about the history of our local towns and cities.

With his death the Society has suffered a great loss and he will be missed.

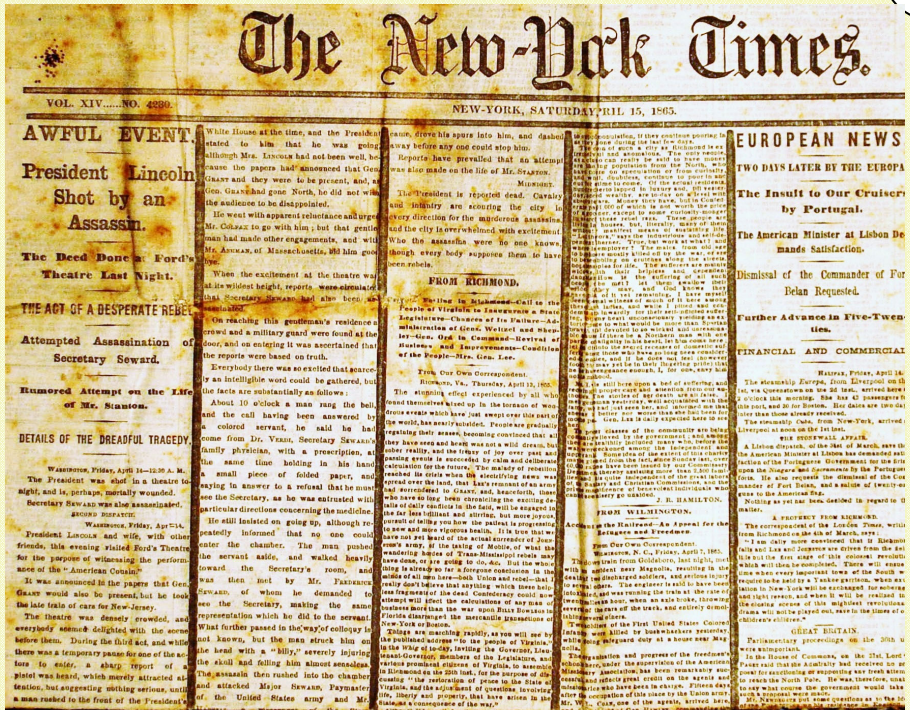
### Pictures From Our Files

Just over one hundred fifty years ago the American Civil War came to its end, after four years of bloody fighting between the North and the South. Tragically, one more casualty was added to the list when the president, Abraham Lincoln, was assassinated on April 14, 1865 in Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C.

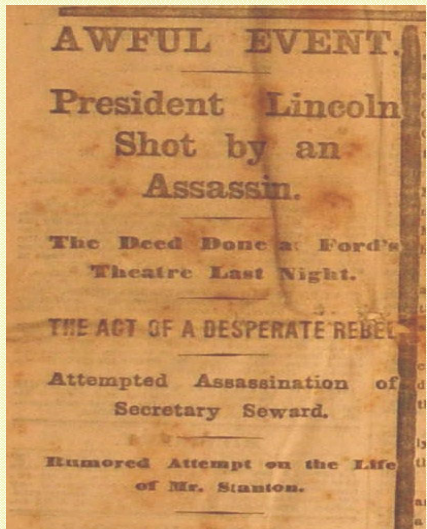
One of the Society's prized possessions is an original copy of the New York Times dated April 15, 1865, which carries some of the first reports of that "Awful Event". As the paper is old and very fragile, we carefully copied it photographically, hence these pictures.

By today's standards, the articles in the paper are rather un-impressive, with no full-page headlines announcing the deed. Instead, the news is tucked away onto only a small portion of the front page while the rest of the page is used to cover foreign events, ship arrivals, and personal reports from correspondents.

However, the paper does



report the sketchy news as it was available, when all of the details were not yet clearly known. At press time it was not certain that Lincoln had died, although it was to be true. It did correctly report the attempt to kill Secretary of State Seward, who survived the attack.



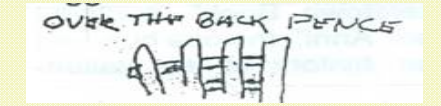
It was Secretary Seward who in 1867 arranged the purchase and acquisition of Alaska from Russia, causing our future forty-ninth state to be known as "Seward's Ice-box", until large quantities of gold were discovered there, and a gold rush was on.



Scenes from our dinner



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Our president, Charles Shallcross, has been very busy inspiring many persons to become members of the Society,— —and Bill Frolich has been forced to re-work his mailing list.