



# UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Four Centuries in a Weekend

Back near the end of October the county celebrated its twenty-fifth production of its Four Centuries in a Weekend program, and although this society has no historical site to display, many of our members are also members of some others that do.

stands today as the home and museum of the Connecticut Farms Historical Society.

In Roselle the Abraham Clark Memorial House was open. Owned and operated by the Sons of the American Revolution, the replica House featured Clark's signing of the Declaration of Independence

historic sites. Each card had an appropriate picture and a brief history and reason for the existence of the site.

Although the cards were designed as gifts for children, many adults also requested and received them.

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## Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the society will be on the fourth day of March in 2018. This date is later than it used to be in February, because of the probability of foul weather in that month. Previous years storms and snows had forced the cancellation or postponing of many of those earlier meetings.

On some of those earlier meetings it was even necessary for some of our members to clear the snow or ice from the walks or steps.



In Hillside there is the old Woodruff House, that dates back to 1735. It also has the Eaton Store front, added in 1900 to sell its excess farm produce.

On display this year was its brand-new wood-shingled roof, as well as an antique automobile. As the farm had once been famous for its apples and apple-orchard, the sale of apple items was a feature of the week-end.

In Union Township was the Caldwell Parsonage, where Hannah Caldwell was shot by a red-coated British soldier during the June 7, 1780 Battle of Connecticut Farms. Burnt by the enemy as it retreated, the house was rebuilt in 1782. on its original foundation and

in 1776 as well as his life and times in what is now Roselle, New Jersey.



A new addition this year to the program was trading cards provided by the county to each of the more than thirty

This meeting will be in the Hanson House at 2PM, with the Executive Board meeting at 1:30 PM.





**Pictures From Our Files**

It was back in July of 1990 and the new owners of the old lumberyard on the corner of West First Avenue and Locust Street in Roselle decided that they needed to replace some of the old buildings that they had acquired. Parts of some of them were more than one hundred years old, including the office and lumber-shed.

Through the years this shed had adjusted itself to the contours of the land on which it rested, and appeared as though it might collapse at any moment. It had replaced an earlier building once used by the Roselle Facing Works, which had made a powder used to separate the halves of a sand mold used in a cast iron foundry.

A portion of the office had formerly stood about fifty feet away as the small office of Peter Shangle's Lumberyard, and had been moved to its present location after the end of the generating station. An addition was made later, as well as a vehicle platform scale just next to the building. This site had once been the location of Thomas Edison's Plant For Isolated Lighting, an experiment to prove that it was possible to light an entire village by electricity from a single source, using incandescent light bulbs. This successful experiment

provided electric lighting to about 150 street lamps, 40 houses, and a store and the railroad station.

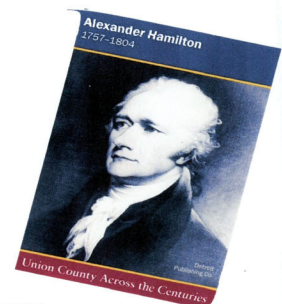
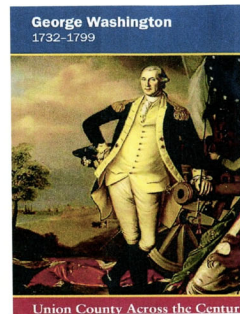
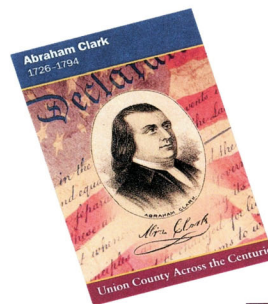
Later the First Presbyterian Church of Roselle was added to the list, and the church and village became the first in the world to be so lighted.

After ten years of use the generator went out of use, as other larger generators from

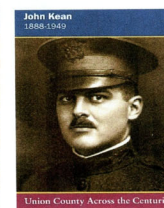
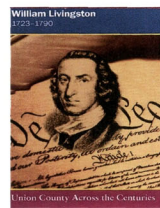
nearby cities took over the task of supplying electric power to much larger areas.

With the site now available, the lumberyard moved in and soon became known as the Bachman-Veghte Lumber Co. It continued in business for many years, with Elliot Dill as its last operator. Now the new owners, Twin Borough Lumber Company took over, and replaced some buildings

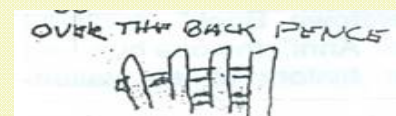
There were some people who objected, thinking that historic Edison work was to be destroyed, but there was nothing left there connected to Edison. However, there was one objector who made known his thoughts about the loss of his home. During the demolition a small skunk crawled out from under the debris and made known most emphatically his opinion.



*Some of the Trading Cards used in "Four Centuries"*



*They are still available at the historic sites*



A comment in our last newsletter brought forth an answer from Ethan in Florida. Apparently storm damage there forced him to use his hundred year old candlestick telephone for communication.