



# UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Meeting of May 19

The meeting of May 19 was held as scheduled in the Hanson House at 2:00 pm, with the Executive Board meeting at 1:30 pm. Routine matters were quickly disposed of and an offer to add new features to our website was discussed and decided to be unnecessary to the activities of the society.

As this was our annual student award meeting, we were honored with the presence of friends and family members of the winners.

The awards committee had selected five winners from the many applicants from the Union County high schools. Four were present, while the fifth, Amy E. Diaz, un-able to attend, instead was represented by her mother.

The winners were:

Michael Cao, of the Academy of Allied Health Sciences,  
Amy E. Diaz, of Union High School,

Emma Herber, Westfield High School,

Simeranjit Kaur, Mother Seton Regional High School,

Asiyah Muhammad, of the Academy of Allied Health Sciences.

Each winner received a framed certificate, a large poster of the Court House, two books of local history, and a financial gift.

Upon being interviewed, each student expressed an intention of attending a college, after graduation from high school.

Refreshments were served at the conclusion of the meeting.



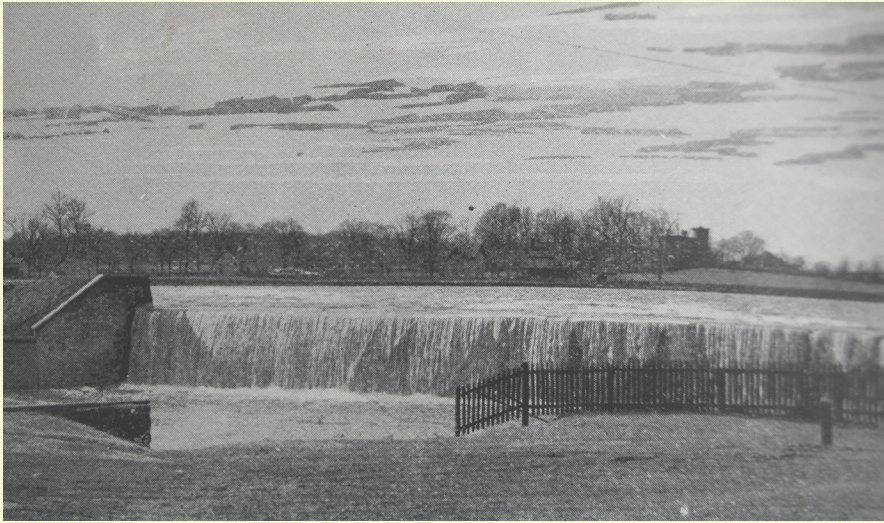
*Emma Herber, Simeranjit Kaur, Asiyah Muhammad, Michael Cao*



## Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on September 8, 2019 at the Hanson House at 2:00 pm. This will be our annual picnic meeting to be held outdoors weather permitting but indoors if necessary.





Pictures From Our Files

Here is a picture of the old dam that once created Ursino Lake from the Elizabeth River at North Avenue close to the junction of Elizabeth, Union, and Hillside. Once known as the reservoir, it provided drinking water for the city until 1929, when the river became too contaminated for such use. The stone dam is still there, but the lake has been filled in, and the open floodgate holds back no water from the river.

Many years ago a mill-race was split off just above North Avenue to provide water power for Trotter's Mill at that road. The mill disappeared long ago, but the miller's house is still standing on North Avenue and a road nearby is still named Trotter's Lane.

Water usually deep enough for a few strokes of that activity. No

swimming was permitted in the lake, but on a hot summer day a number of the neighbors could be found cooling off in the water just below the dam.

In the years before the invention of refrigerators, ice was always cut from the lake and stored in the large ice-house on its eastern shore, for use in the home ice-boxes during the year. Delivered by a man and his horse and wagon, a fifty-cent block of ice could last as long as three days, if no one chipped it for drinks.

In the background of the picture can be seen the tower of Liberty Hall, home of the first governor of the State of New Jersey. The miller's house is almost invisible behind the trees on North Avenue.

#### Memories

Here are comments that may revive memories of years ago within the minds of some of our

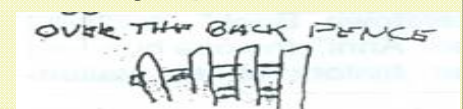
older readers.

Does anyone remember the old recreation pier that used to stand at the shore of the Staten Island Sound at the end of East Jersey Street in Elizabeth? This was the double-decked, roofed-over pier where a person could sit in comfort all day and watch all the marine traffic on the busy waterway.

There were times when an excursion had been arranged, and the steamer tied up to the pier to load up. Trips were made to West Point, Playland at Rye Beach, Rockaway and even to Connecticut.

For a couple of summer seasons the boat company ran moonlight cruises every Wednesday evening through New York harbor, returning to the pier about 11 pm.

Perhaps someone can recall the little Staten Island ferry boat that was next to it, the one that was sunk when an eighteen-wheeled tank truck tried to come aboard. The tractor and one end of the boat were pushed to the bottom of the ferryslip.



Words of wisdom from Florida. Ethan says, "If you keep your mouth closed, you can't put your foot in it."