



UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



April Meeting

The one-hundred--forty--eighth anniversary meeting of the Union County Historical Society was held in the Garden Restaurant on April 2, with more than thirty persons in attendance.

During the course of the dinner various matters were discussed, and a report was given of the Society's activities through the past twelve months.

old trowel, but one with a history. It appears to have been an ordinary bricklayer's trowel, but now silver-plated with a diamond-shaped plate added to its upper surface. An inscription on it states that this trowel was used by then-mayor John F. Kenah to lay the cornerstone of the new Alexander Hamilton Junior High School on Tuesday, April 23, 1924.

Built on the corner of Cherry Street and Westfield

Society was held as scheduled in the Hanson House on the fifth day of that month. Among the small amount of business that was transacted was a certificate of life membership given to Victor A. Bary and several announcements and a few comments from the floor.

The program for the day was given by Dean Poulsen, who entertained us with a number of songs from the period of the World War, of one hundred years ago.

Along with an explanation of how some songs came to be written were his slide shows of words and music with the "bouncing ball" that enabled our members to sing along with his keyboard accompaniment.

A very popular song was Irving Berlin's "Oh, How I Hate To Get Up In The Morning" with a slide showing the composer himself actually singing the song, dressed in a World War uniform. The song had been part of a camp show, "Yip, Yip, Yaphank."



The program for the day was given by our member Joanne Rajoppi, who spoke about the times and troubles of the women left to take care of things at home after the men had gone to the Civil War. She has written a new book about those women, based on her research and family information.

Artifacts

A recent addition to our collection of artifacts has been a trowel. Not just any

Avenue, this was the second junior high built in Elizabeth, with the downtown Grover



Cleveland Junior High having been the first.

March Meeting

The March meeting of the

Pictures From Our Files

"Twas the eighteenth of April in '75" and Paul Revere waited for the agreed signal from the Old North Church to

start his ride of warning that the British were coming and on the nineteenth of April the Battles of Lexington and of Concord started the American Revolution

The news spread quickly throughout the Colonies, and in Elizabethtown, New Jersey Abraham Clark received the news with interest. He was well aware of the injustices of the British Parliament on its subjects in America. He had been born on February 15, 1726 in the family homestead on his father's farm in an area that many years later became Roselle, N. J. As a youth he had studied surveying and law, and now was well-respected by his neighbors and known as "the poor man's counselor" for his ability to settle disputes among them.

In May of 1776 when the Second Continental Congress was formed in Philadelphia, he was sent by his neighbors as a representative from New Jersey. As such, he voted for the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, pledging with the other fifty-five members their lives, liberty and sacred honor. His signature can still be seen on that document.

Pictured above is his farm house as it stood on the road to Wheatsheaf of about 1880. Owned then by members of the Crane family, it was completely destroyed by fire in 1900. Only a few nails and the front door key are known to still exist.

On February 3, 1873, a large portion of the farmland was advertised for sale for the sum of \$7, 000, a fair amount of money at that time. That area along Chestnut Street now contains several houses and a couple of side streets. In 1940, a replica Memorial Clark House was erected on a part



of that land at the corner of Ninth and Chestnut, about a thousand feet from the original location.

Based on this photograph and on the memories of some people once familiar with the house, it was built in memory of Abraham Clark and as a meeting place for the Sons of the American Revolution and

for the Daughters of the American Revolution and contains within it a small museum.

For more than twenty years this house has been a part of the Union County program known as "Four Centuries in a Week" and has been visited by hundreds.



OVER THE BACK FENCE

Joanne Rajoppi is getting to be quite an author, as she has now written three books about her family in the days of the Civil War.

This time the office staff beat the snows of a late winter storm by moving up a day their scheduled activities. Coming on the exact 129th anniversary of the famous "Blizzard of '88", this new storm tied up all travel.

Irving Berlin's Immortal Song
OH! HOW I HATE TO GET UP IN THE MORNING