

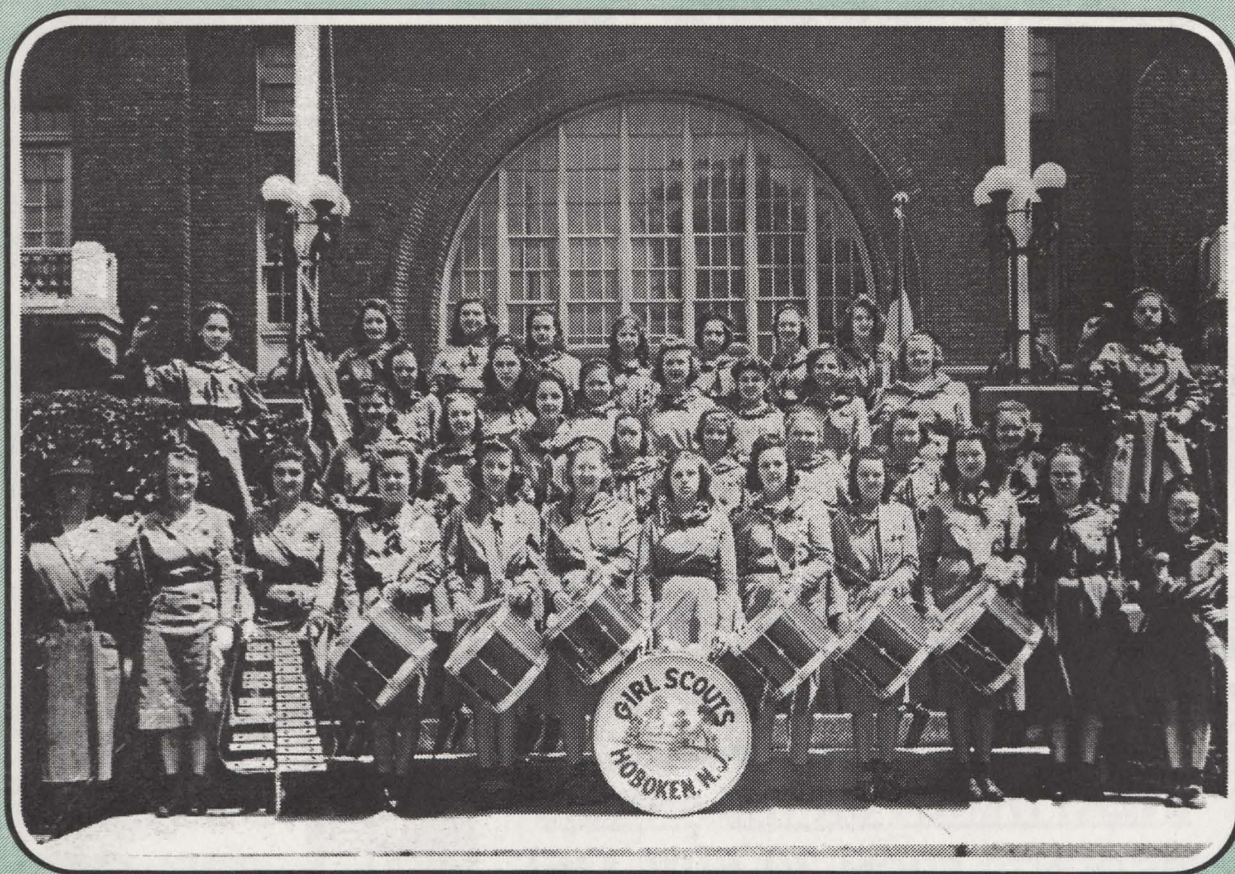
HOBOKEN HISTORY

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HOBOKEN MEMORIES II • YOUR HISTORY IN CITY DIRECTORIES

BRING THE BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY TO HOBOKEN

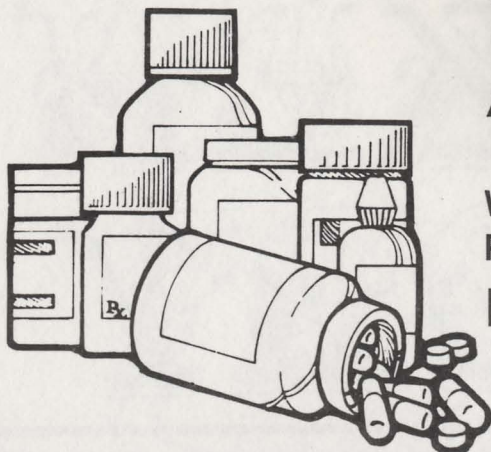
GIRL SCOUTING IN HOBOKEN • GEORGE BURNS AT 200!



The Story of Girl Scouting in Hoboken

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Issue No. 15 - 1996



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Letter from the President

Dear reader,

Welcome to issue 15 of Hoboken History. We are proud to bring you this quality publication and hope you appreciate the time and hours spent in making this publication a reality. My thanks to all those involved and a reminder to the reader that we are actively looking for stories and advertisers to include in our next issue. If you would like to submit material to the magazine, please call Leonard Luizzi, Sr. at (201) 420-1803. To receive a copy of our advertising rate schedule please call our museum number at (201) 656-2240 or write to us at:

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Enjoy the read,

Robert Foster
President/Director
Hoboken Historical Museum

On The Cover

The Hoboken Girl Scouts taken on the steps of the Walker Gymnasium of the Stevens Institute of Technology. (Photo circa 1930s.)

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HOBOKEN

MEMORIES II:

1940s PLAYGROUND

by Edward M. Stuart



To a boy growing up in the 1940s, Hoboken offered a variety of playtime activities far richer than any of his suburban or rural contemporaries could ever dream of experiencing. The unique proximity of the city pulsing with business and industry, the magnificent Stevens campus and the bustling waterfront made Hoboken an unparalleled treasure-trove of opportunities for childhood fun and adventure.

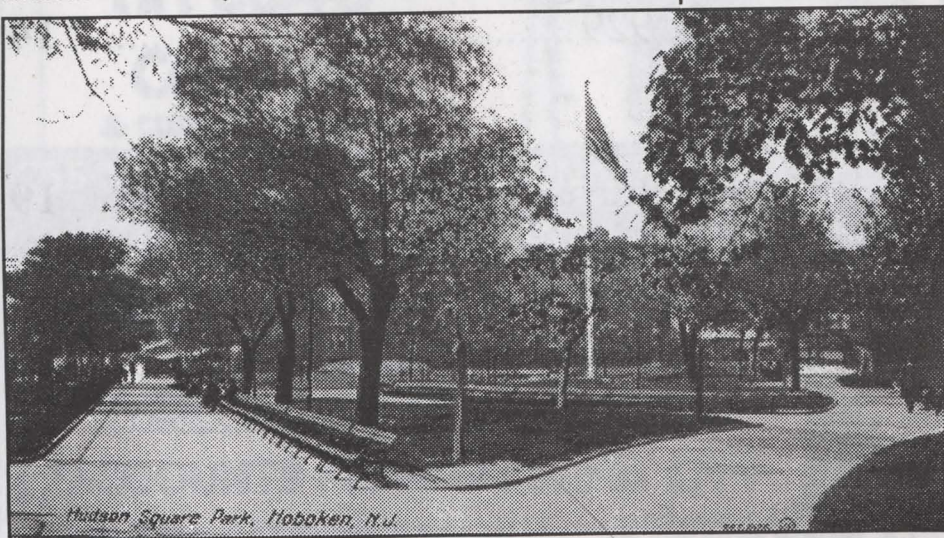
My play area included Church Square Park where, as a grammar school student at Stevens Hoboken Academy, I spent innumerable recesses, and Stevens Park, which was directly

across from my home at 422 Hudson Street. From there, my area extended north to Elysian Park, and its eastern boundary was the Hudson River.

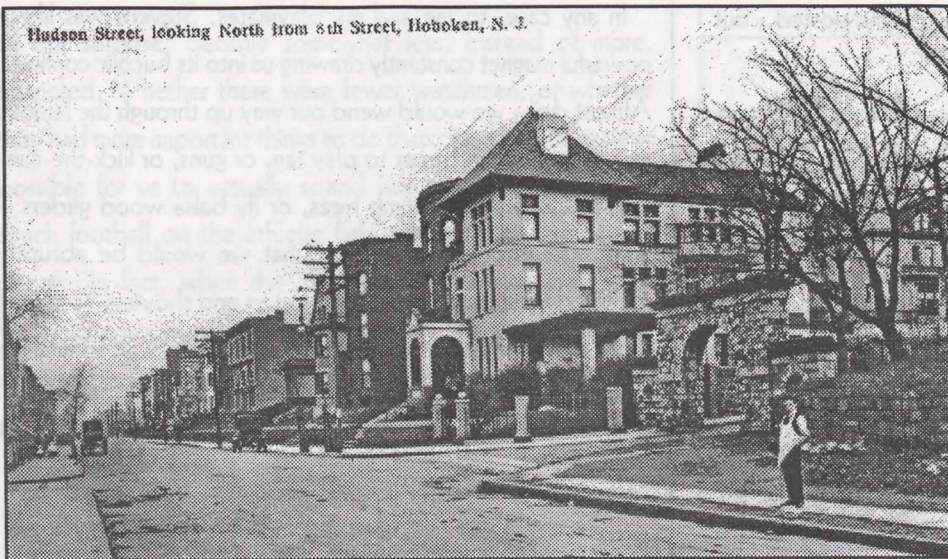
A primary activity at Stevens Park was roller-skating on a section of Fifth Street that ran along the park's northern border. The one block between Hudson and River Street was level, very lightly trafficked and paved with extremely smooth tar in those days; and you could not mistake its principal use because on the street's surface, drawn with white, pink, green, and blue chalk, there was always a hodgepodge of imaginary obstacles, goals, and pathways for skaters to either aim at, avoid, or follow.

Our skates, of course, were the type that had straps that buckled over your insteps and clamps that gripped (never for very long in my case) the soles of your shoes on either side of the toe. The clamps were tightened by a special key that, after repeated, desperate searching, could usually be found in the bottom of a shoe box full of junk.

Another attraction on that block in the spring and summer was the Italian Ice vendor with his white, two-wheeled cart decorated with painted oranges, lemons, and limes depicting the available flavors. I will always remember that the little paper cups, in which you purchased the ice, would turn an unappetizing grey from your normally grimy fingers by



Hudson Sq. Park (Stevens Park) looking north from 4th and Hudson. (Postcard courtesy of Lenny Luizzi, Sr.)



Entrance to Stevens Campus at 8th St. and Hudson. (Postcard courtesy of Lenny Luizzi, Sr.)

the time you squeezed out the last, practically melted, traces of that delicious treat.

Hoboken's Steepest Hill

When the snows of winter came, as very small children we would sleigh-ride down the hill that was then at the northwest corner of the Stevens Park athletic field. A snack bar now stands at what had been the top of that hill. As we grew slightly older, we progressed to the run down Sixth Street from River to Hudson; but it wasn't too long before we discovered what is surely the steepest hill in Hoboken, a few blocks to the north at Ninth Street. From then on, after a snowstorm, we would trudge up Hudson Street pulling our Flexible Flyers along behind us on short lengths of clothesline. Starting at the Stevens gate at the top of Ninth Street, we would belly whoop down a short incline, cross Castle Point Terrace and then rocket down the longer, steeper section to Hudson Street. Children starting on their way back up the hill could always be relied upon (or so we convinced our parents) to shout a warning about any oncoming auto traffic on Hudson Street; but traffic was usually light then and, after a snow-storm, practically non-existent.

The nucleus of my play area became the 600-block of River Street which dead-ends at the Stevens campus. This had normally been a very quiet block with residences running

only along its west side. Most of the houses faced across the street at a wall of large, dark grey stone blocks that was approximately eight feet high.

Above the wall, a grassy embankment angled steeply up to a large fenced-in area containing Stevens tennis courts. The only building on the Stevens side of River Street was the Chemistry Building on the corner of Sixth Street. On the northern end of the block, the

wall turned ninety degrees to the west and ran out to Hudson Street. Over that segment, the grassy slope led up to the Stevens athletic field.

The quiet seclusion of this neighborhood was shattered in the early forties when the block rang with our shouts and laughter as we played stick ball on the street, stoop ball on the steps of the Chemistry Building or shot baskets in the front yard of 612 River Street where the older brother of one of my playmates had hung a backboard and rim between the second floor living-room windows of his house.

The Lure of the Stevens Campus

Then, because its boundary was so nearby, there was the compelling lure of the Stevens campus itself. To some, Stevens might have appeared to be an impenetrable bastion. There were the imposing gates, made of blocks of green serpentine rock, at the head of Ninth Street, at Eighth and Hudson Streets, and at the head of Sixth Street. There was the continuation of the aforementioned eight-foot stone wall that stretched from just north of 619 Hudson Street all the way up to the corner of Eighth Street. In addition, all along the face of this wall on Hudson Street, there was a ten-foot high fence composed of vertical iron bars, the tops of which were pointed and bent alternately inward and outward. Probably

there were dozens of "No Trespassing" signs posted...but I don't remember seeing any.

Despite these formidable barriers, from the time I first started school at the then new Stevens Hoboken Academy Kindergarten, I felt that I had the right to traverse the campus on a daily basis. The kindergarten, which, to my knowledge, had no connection — other than the Stevens name — with Stevens Institute, was located adjacent to the northeastern corner of the campus in a building that had been part of the Hoboken Tennis Club. The regular entrance to the school was a gate in Elysian Park. Since, at the time, I resided at 518 Hudson Street, however, it quickly became apparent that the more direct route to school was right through the campus. With its rolling lawns, its huge trees and its spectacular and ever-changing view of the Hudson, Stevens also provided a far more scenic route. And, as a dividend, it was a route that offered a taste of adventure because of the likelihood of an encounter with campus watchmen whose sole purpose seemed to be to chase me.

After a year of either evading, or being pursued by, watchmen while en route to and from kindergarten, I became a first grader at Stevens Hoboken Academy which was at Fifth Street and Willow Avenue. With this transition, I extended what I had considered to be a right of passage to an overall entree to the campus based on the fact that, once again, "Stevens" appeared in my school's name.



An aerial view of the Hoboken waterfront with Stevens Campus from center to right. (Photo from the late 1940s)

In any case, to me and my playmates, Stevens was like a powerful magnet constantly drawing us into its bucolic confines. Almost daily, we would wend our way up through the famous main gate at Sixth Street to play tag, or guns, or kick-the-can, or one-O-cat, or to climb trees, or fly balsa wood gliders — always alert to the probability that we would be abruptly scattered by a watchman charging at us and shouting horrifying threats involving the hitherto unthinkable things he would do to us if he caught us.

Teasing the Watchmen

As we got a bit older and more daring (and had become faster runners), we would venture up into Stevens for the sole purpose of "teasing the watchmen." This pastime, usually initiated by the outright taunting of our adversaries from a respectful distance, offered the sheer excitement of being chased, hiding, being discovered and chased again. It went on for years — obviously providing the "watchmen" with some diversion — and, happily, we were never caught.

Another Stevens activity, which was repeated winter after winter, involved spending the better part of an afternoon ensconced on a pathway that ran along the eastern edge of the campus on top of the rock cliffs that dropped down to the Shore Road (now Sinatra Drive). A high chain-link fence separated the path from the cliff-tops and we would wait on the campus side of the fence, making and stockpiling snowballs, until a train would come rumbling slowly by far below. Then we would throw snowball after snowball, mortar-like, over the fence. Sometimes there would be fifteen or twenty missiles in the air before the first one landed, and it is impossible to describe the glorious satisfaction we felt hearing the booming, kettledrum-like sounds of direct hits on the top of a freight car.

Early in World War II, when the Navy V-12 program was established at Stevens, the campus,

to our surprise, became somewhat less, instead of more, restricted. Whether there were fewer watchmen, or whether they had more important things to do than chase kids, it became possible for us to actually spend hours playing baseball or touch football on the athletic field without being forced to depart. In fact, when the V-12 midshipman paraded each Friday afternoon in their weekly military review, we, having donned pea jackets and war surplus sailor hats, would march right along behind them.

Tag and Barge Tag

Also early in the war, Stevens started construction of its Towing Tank building on Hudson Street. For months and months, this site offered a luxurious array of deep excavations, steel girders, wooden scaffolding, and mazes of cinder-block walls for us to range over in somewhat dangerous, but always exciting, games of tag.

The ultimate game of tag, however, was played off campus at a railway pier just south of the Maxwell House plant. There, usually on Sundays, a long line of barges, tied side-to-side, extended well out into the Hudson River. Some of the barges were open and filled with coal or crushed stone; but most were the enclosed, roofed variety some of which had a cabin at one end that housed a man, or a man and wife, who served as the crew. And this was where "barge tag" originated.

After the intricate flashing of fingers that determined who would be "it" first, we would bound out over the barges, scampering from one to another, leaping from roof to roof where possible and sneaking furtively around the narrow decks in an effort to elude our pursuer. Periodically, in the heat of the chase, a barge man, enraged by this extraordinary disturbance of his peaceful Sunday afternoon, would erupt from his quarters, shaking his fist and bellowing in an often unintelligible tongue. They quickly realized, however, that they could not deter us, and they would retreat into their cabins. Miraculously, no one ever got seriously injured or fell into the river during one of these games.



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The Sensual Tapestry of Hoboken

Inextricably woven into the tapestry of diverse and thrilling amusements that Hoboken offered me as a youth are the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of the city: the yellow shafts of sunlight angling down through the pungent, grey smoke of burning leaves on an autumn afternoon in Church Square Park, and the sound of children's laughter mingling with the squeaking of the swings; the pulsing, blue-white lightning from scores of acetylene torches illuminating the night sky over the Bethlehem Steel shipyards during World War II; the awesome spectacle of a dry-docked aircraft carrier looming over the end of Fourteenth Street; the throngs of longshoremen walking to and from the piers each morning and evening; the heavy aroma of Maxwell House coffee that invariably signaled the onset of rain; and the unforgettable taste of Scotch Balls — hard candies that looked like large, dark brown and tan marbles and were presumably a blend of mint and molasses flavors. They were made and sold in a tiny shop on Washington Street, and when the store went out of business they apparently disappeared forever.

These recollected bits and pieces from the distant past will hopefully stimulate similar memories in others who grew up in Hoboken. For those readers who spent their childhood elsewhere, I can only wish that they have enjoyed sharing these nostalgic rumblings and that they will appreciate the fact that among my most cherished remembrances will always be those of the Hoboken of my youth.



Do you have memories of old Hoboken or an interesting story you would like to share with our readers? Write in and tell us all about them! Include some photos and a SASE and send to:

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Links in Time

Your History in City Directories

by Bob Murgittroyd

"We have had to encounter this year more than usual difficulty in procuring the names of our citizens. Our canvassers received special instructions to ask for the head of every family; but this small privilege was in many cases denied them, and the information was of necessity procured from ignorant and impertinent domestics." Preface to the City Directory of Jersey City & Hoboken for 1856-7, compiled and published by James & William Gopsill.

City directories offer a rich source of genealogical information for people researching their urban ancestors. I often do city directory research for people searching their family history in which I trace an ancestor through a series of consecutive directories. In this way a person can be pinpointed for the time period he may have lived in a certain area. This time period can then be searched for vital records of the family such as births, deaths and marriages.

Publication of city directories flourished in the mid-1800s to early 1900s in the United States. The purpose of the directories was to be a listing of the residents of an urban area containing each one's home and business addresses and occupation. The books were financed by their sale to individuals and businesses and by advertising revenue. Because of their business emphasis the early directories mainly contained names of individuals with some business connection but later a far larger segment of the population was included. The remark in the quote from the preface reveals much about the problems encountered by compilers of early city directories and also some of the attitudes those publishers brought to their enterprise. It is doubtful that James & William Gopsill ever included the names of the "ignorant and impertinent domestics" they mention.

THE FOLLOWING LIST OF FAMILY, AND
OTHER PERSONS RESIDING IN THE TOWN OF
BALTIMORE, WAS TAKEN IN THE YEAR 1752,
BY A LADY OF RESPECTABILITY.

This was the long title of the first known American city directory, published between 1830 and 1840 by Joseph Townsend from the original manuscript in the Maryland Historical Society. Two separate directories of Philadelphia were published in 1785, first MacPherson's Directory for the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia and then the Philadelphia Directory. New York City followed Philadelphia with The New-York Directory of 1786 by David Franks. Other American cities quickly followed suit.

The early directories were often compiled as a side line, to help letter carriers, teachers, county constables, and newspaper offices. Later, well known publishers became involved. Some of these firms were: George Adams and Damrell & Moore of Boston; C.S. Williams of Cincinnati; John F. Trow and John Doggett of New York; and William H. Boyd of New York and Philadelphia. Later, R.L. Polk of New York and Detroit became the largest publisher of directories, as they still are.

How to Start a Search

Nowadays the value of city directories to someone researching a family history is in placing a person at a certain time and place to identify a source of additional information. If you trace the appearances of an individual name through a number of years, you will obtain a number of areas for further research. The most important years to check for during a city directory search are census years. Those are years in which either a Federal or State census was taken of the city you are researching. Federal censuses have been taken every

CHAMBERLIN CHARLES, BUTCHER, Market square, h cor
 Bloomfield and First
 Chamberlin John M. clerk, N. Y. bds 19 Hudson terrace
 Chancellor James, salesman, N. Y. h 119 Bloomfield
 Chandler Louis, 109 Garden
 Chandler Martin, ferrymaster, h 111 Garden
 Chapman James, accountant, 61 Garden
 Chappelli Jacob, engineer, 130 Washington
 Charbet Victor, jeweller, 60 Read, N. Y. h 64 Garden
 Chariton John C. book keeper, 16 Bloomfield place
 Charles Edmund, supt. public schools, 15 Washington terrace
 Chase John J. pilot, steamer Atlas, h 126 Washington
 Chase Philip, collector, h Third s. side w. of Bloomfield
 Cherloh Mr. segar dealer, N. Y. h 16 Meadow
 Cherry William, painter, 196 Bloomfield
 Child Henry C. printer, 4 Marion place
 Child William H. book keeper, cor Ferry and Washington, h
 7 Union place
 Chilton Mary, private boarding house, 5 Franklin terrace
 Clarence, Mrs. widow, 12 Union place
 Clark Charles, lithographer, N. Y. h 21 First
 Clark Edmond, carpenter, 92 Meadow
CLARK THOMAS P. FERRY AGENT, 21 First
 Clayton Peter, grocer, 90 Meadow cor Third
CLICKENER CORNELIUS V. MAYOR, office 35 Washington, h
 13 Hudson terrace
 Clickener C. V. & Co. drugs and medicines, 35 Washington cor
 Clinch, Michael, laborer, r 225 Washington [Newark
 Clinton Charles, land agent, 132 Garden
 Cloyd James, baths, foot of Fourth, h 59 Garden
 Cloyd John P., H. & N. Y. Express, 5 Third n Bloomfield
 Cluckman Fritz, fringe maker, 411 Broadway, N. Y. h 125
 Hudson
 Coblentz William, confectioner, 48 Nassau, N. Y. h 10 Newark
 Cohen Moses O. importer, 124 Water, N. Y. h 16 Franklin ter.
 Cole Richard, mason, 212 Bloomfield
 Coligan Mary, widow, 156 Bloomfield
 Colley Henry D. vinegar manufactory, cor Garden and Fourth,
 h 130 Meadow
 Colley Henry D. & Co. vinegar manufactory, 139 Garden, cor
 Fourth
 Collins Hiram J. contractor, h 214 Bloomfield
 Collins Michael, cartman, h 95 Meadow, cor Third
 Compton William H. faucet manuf. h 109 Bloomfield
 Condit Peter, laborer, 97 Washington
 Condor Mrs. washerwoman, 160 Washington
 Conk Josiah, mason, h r 225 Washington [dow
 Conklin Matthew, musician, Dodsworth's b'd, h Newark w Mea-

Sample page of the 1856-7 Gopsill directory for Jersey City and Hoboken

ten years since 1790. Records of those censuses exist for every one except 1890 since those records were severely damaged in a fire and subsequently destroyed. If you find an ancestor in the Hoboken city directory for 1880, you have a good idea that you will be able to find the entire family group in your census research for that year.

One helpful feature of the directories in this regard is that they usually will list a man's widow in subsequent directories after his death. The year prior to the appearance of the widow's name is the best place to search for death information. (See Clarence, Mrs., widow and Coligan Mary, widow, on the sample page.)

Since the directories list people at their home address, individuals researching the history of their homes often consider city directory research as a good way to develop information about the former residents of their current homes. Unfortunately, the names in the directories are listed alphabetically by surname, so a search for a particular street address in any one directory is usually formidable, with a search of a number of directories immense. For this reason I recommend that people researching their house histories first start at a deed search then come back to city directories to discover information about former residents. (I will address house histories in a later article.)

Fun in the Hoboken Directory

Besides offering insights into genealogical research, city directories can be fun to read. On the attached sample page of the 1856-7 Gopsill directory for Jersey City and Hoboken the then Mayor of Hoboken, Cornelius V. Clickener with offices at 35 Washington Street and home of 13

Hudson Terrace shares the same page with Mrs. Condor, a washerwoman of 160 Washington Street. William Coblentz, a confectioner of 48 Nassau Street in New York City, lived at 10 Newark Street just a short walk from the ferry. Advertisements from the directories can be just as entertaining. The 1893 directory for Harrison, NJ has a ad for Hanks Dental Association on almost every page. Hanks advertises no more than \$8.00 for their best set of Teeth, gas and extraction included.

City directories for Hoboken and Jersey City are available for the period from about 1852 through 1924 in both the Hoboken Public Library at Park Avenue and 5th Street, and the New Jersey Room of the Jersey City Public Library at 472 Jersey Avenue in Jersey City. The New Jersey Room also has city directories for many other cities in New Jersey. And the Newark Business Library at 34 Commerce Street in Newark has more than 2,000 New Jersey city directories.

Indeed, city directories should be available to the public for browsing more easily than when they were first published, as indicated by another quote from the preface to the 1856-7 Hoboken directory: "We are equitably entitled to receive pay from every one who avails himself of our labor. Yet we know that much the largest portion of the citizens expect to, and do, avail themselves of our labor, by abusing the courtesy of their neighbors and other honorable citizens, under the false name of borrowing, when in fact Directories, in the usual sense of lending a book, are not lent. Our subscribers would just as willingly purchase umbrellas for the express purpose of lending to citizens who never supply themselves in any other way, as they would Directories, for the class we have named, (both classes belong to the same family.)"



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BRING THE

BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY TO HOBOKEN

BY DICK BOZZONE

Twenty years ago, in 1976, under the leadership of this writer, together with several local citizens including Len Luizzi and George Giordano, a monumental goal was envisioned.

That goal was to bring the Battleship USS New Jersey, the nation's most decorated warship, to Hoboken, to serve as a memorial and museum. Launched in 1942 and commissioned in 1943, "THE BIG J" as the New Jersey was known, ultimately served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and in 1983 it saw action off the shores of Lebanon.

In 1976 the New Jersey was moored in Washington State, however the "Big J's" sister ship the Iowa, was at the now defunct Philadelphia naval base. The late former Business Administrator Ed Chius and I were given a tour of the Iowa by the US Navy. This was some years before the Intrepid Sea and Air Floating Museum opened in New York City.

The idea was simple, or so it seemed, if not somewhat naive! First business was to choose a site for our floating museum. The "Hoboken Battleship Memorial Committee" the official name of our group, agreed on a location near the old Lackawanna Terminal, that we felt would be appropriate for berthing a 45,000-ton vessel.

Our first few meetings were

held in the Bloomfield St. home of Len and Marie Luizzi. As our group began to grow we moved our meetings to the offices of Mayo, Lynch and Assoc. at 68 Washington St. Later after several other prominent citizens and activists joined us, we held our meetings at the Hoboken Public Library.

The committee developed a rousing PR Campaign for Hoboken. All the favorable publicity came as a gift to the city, at the time Hoboken was beginning to evolve through its so called "Renaissance" and such notoriety was an added gift to this endeavor.

BRING THE 'BIG J'
TO HOBOKEN



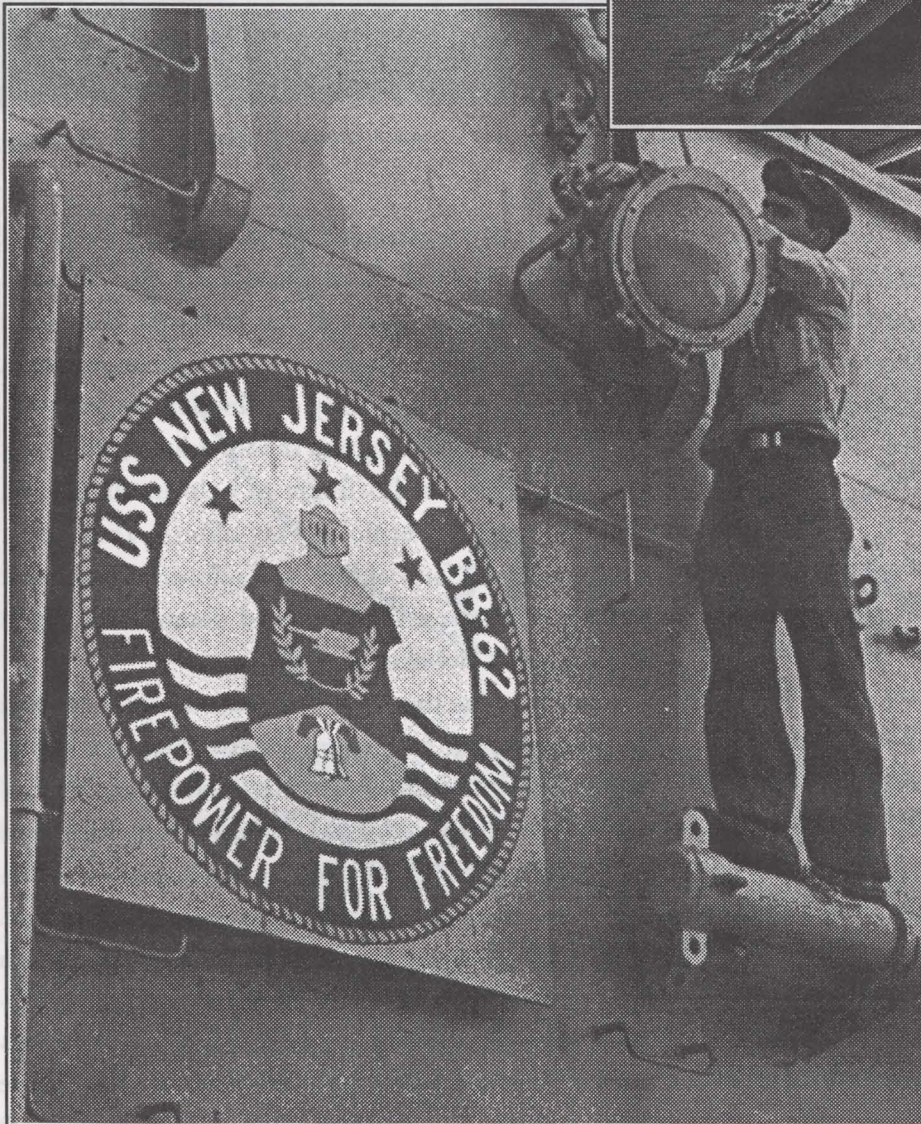
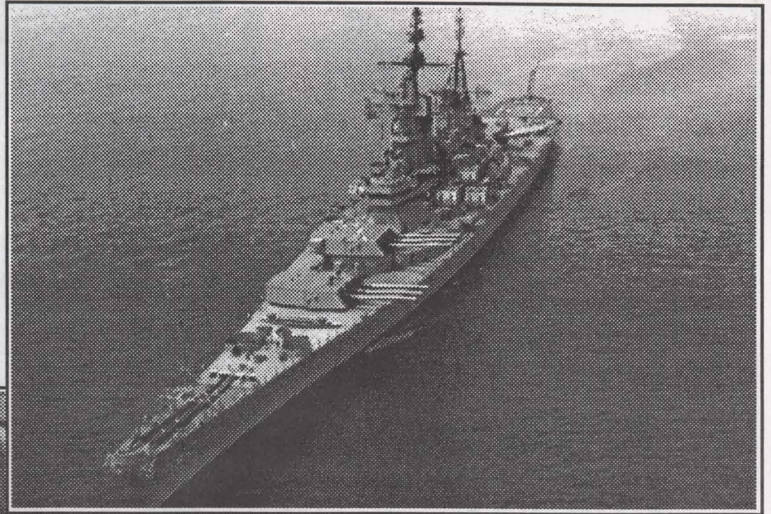
To focus on our campaign, we initiated a staggering effort to raise funds to help promote our cause. I might point out that other than personal funds from myself, and the time and work of the members, the committee received no support from the city at all.

A Memorable Gala Night

Two local businessmen Joe Caporinno, committee treasurer, along with the now deceased Nicholas Damiono decided to sponsor a Gala Night of Stars. The date was to be Saturday April 30, 1977; the place the old Stanley Theater in Jersey City, a grand and opulent old theater. Great effort went into this event: a little over 2000 tickets were sold throughout the state. The evening started with

a pre-show cocktail hour, and a program which included a large orchestra, headliners Lou Monte, Enzo Staurati, and several other acts. The night was a huge success. In fact, it was one of the most memorable local events of 1977.

Through the efforts of our committee, Hoboken suddenly became one of the sites that the New Jersey



(All photos courtesy of Dick Bozzone)

Far left: commemorative two-color bumper sticker used as a fundraiser by the "Hoboken Battleship Memorial Committee."

Left: a member of the crew provides scale next to the painted crest of the USS New Jersey.

Above: an elevated port bow view of the battleship USS New Jersey (BB-62) in the waters of the Pacific Ocean.



Navy man turned fly boy fits neatly inside the barrel of the New Jersey's arsenal of 21 guns. (Photo courtesy of Dick Bozzone)

State Battleship Museum commission looked at. One of the state commissioners was a Hoboken resident, Professor Richard Iversen of Stevens Institute of Technology. Later I would be named by two governors of New Jersey to serve on that commission.

The Final Decision

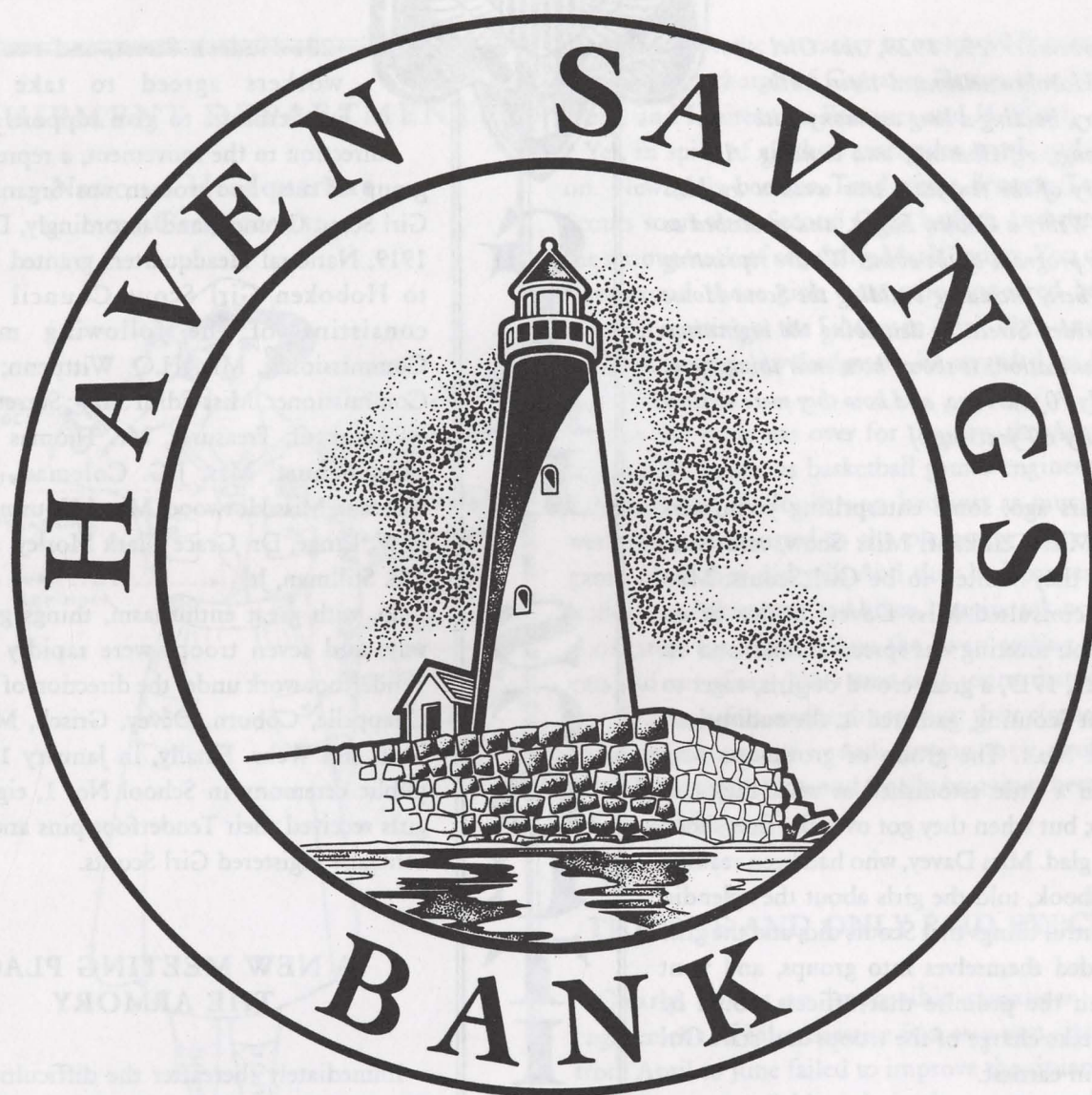
Unfortunately, Hoboken, because of problems related to the financial needs to rehabilitate the site, along with a multitude of lesser negatives, was finally deemed unsuitable for our plans. Recognizing this, and also relocating back to Jersey City shortly after, I was named by that City's Mayor to try and do for that community what had proven impossible to do for Hoboken.

In 1978, while Chairman of Jersey City's Battleship Commission, I was able to have the state selection commission name a site near Liberty State Park as the hoped for home of the vessel. However, the ship was later reactivated again under President Ronald Reagan's administration and the Navy has still not released it.

These plans counteracted the success at having had Jersey City selected. To my knowledge that decision still stands. To the credit of the Hoboken Battleship Committee members, this decision was never resented, and reason for Jersey City's selection understood. Unfortunately, a small group of individuals, ironically who had never lifted a finger to help in our efforts, took umbrage and criticized my efforts. They never recognized the "facts of life" and refused to think that so long as Hudson County could obtain the ship, it would benefit Hoboken as well.

In wrapping up this story, it is interesting to note that the initial estimate for bringing the vessel east and developing plans and facilities was \$2 million dollars. Then, it was considered a daunting task. Now, estimates from some people who would be hard placed to describe what a battleship is, put a price of \$20 million to accomplish the task.

Even though these latter-day plans may never reach fruition, the efforts, initiatives, hard work, and camaraderie developed by the Hoboken committee, will always remain a bright chapter in the History of the Mile Square City. ♦



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THE STORY OF

HONOR THE PAST

SERVE THE FUTURE

[On November 29, 1929, the Girl Scouts of Hoboken celebrated their tenth anniversary, holding a long ceremony with speeches, songs, refreshments, and dancing. A long history of the ten years was written by Miss Elizabeth Wehr, a Golden Eaglet, and published as part of the program of the event. We are reprinting some of it here, including building the Scout House at 916 Garden Street. In describing the beginnings of the organization, it shows how such things were done nearly 70 years ago, and how they were written about nearly 60 years ago.]

Ten years ago, some enterprising youngsters told Miss Leinkauf, Miss Shaw, and Mrs. Wittpenn they wanted to be Girl Scouts. Miss Leinkauf consulted Miss Davey; notice of an organization meeting was spread abroad; and on October 29, 1919, a great crowd of girls, eager to hear about Scouting, gathered in the auditorium of School No.1. The group of grown-ups were more than a little astonished at what they had stirred up; but when they got over the first shock they were glad. Miss Davey, who had been reading the Handbook, told the girls about the splendid and delightful things that Scouts did; and the girls then divided themselves into groups, and went home with the promise that officers would be found to take charge of the troops and start Girl Scouting in earnest.

So Miss Davey hurried around to her friends and acquaintances inquiring whether they wouldn't like to give one hour a week to a most interesting work with girls. Poor thing! She herself didn't yet know that one is a Scout Captain eight days a week and twenty-five hours a day; but some of her friends haven't yet forgiven her for what she led them into...

Meanwhile Miss Leinkauf was interviewing the powers that be; and she succeeded in getting permission from the War Camp Community Service for the girls to meet in the basement of their headquarters at



GIRL SCOUTING

IN

HOBOKEN

1919 - 1929

201 Hudson Street, and two of their workers agreed to take troops. Furthermore, to give support and wise direction to the movement, a representative group of men and women was organized as a Girl Scout Council; and accordingly, December 1919, National Headquarters granted a charter to Hoboken Girl Scout Council No. 94, consisting of the following members: Commissioner, Mrs. H.O. Wittpenn; Deputy-Commissioner, Miss Edith Shaw; Secretary, Miss S.F. Leinkauf; Treasurer, Mr. Thomas Hatfield; Miss Bennet, Mrs. J.G. Coleman, Mrs. H. Geismar, Miss Horwood, Miss I. Housman, Judge H.W. Lange, Dr. Grace Clark Morley, and Mrs. T.B. Stillman, Jr.

So, with great enthusiasm, things got under way; and seven troops were rapidly learning Tenderfoot work under the direction of Captains Chappelle, Coburn, Davey, Grisch, McGinnis, Roll, and Wehr. Finally, in January 1920, at a public ceremony in School No. 1, eighty-eight girls received their Tenderfoot pins and became officially registered Girl Scouts.

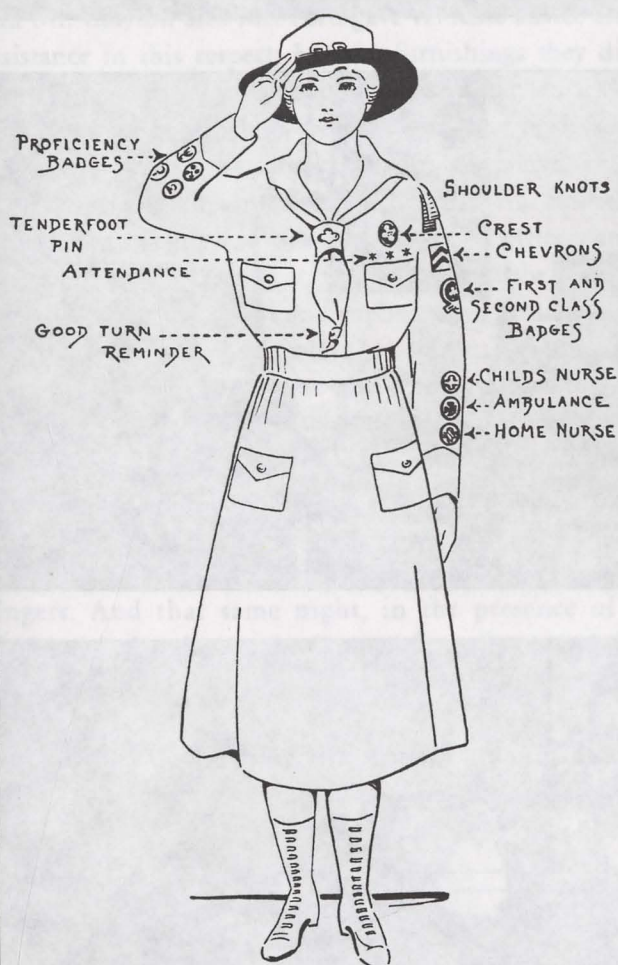
A NEW MEETING PLACE: THE ARMORY

Immediately thereafter the difficulties began. The War Camp Community Service disbanded, closing their headquarters, and three Scout officers left. The Girl Scouts had to find a new meeting place and additional officers. The former problem was solved for a time when the Council secured from Commissioner Schmulling

permission for the troops to meet Saturday afternoons in the Armory; the latter hasn't yet been solved. Officers continue to marry, move out of town, become ill, or lose interest; and appointments follow resignations with amazing celerity. So, by the time Scouts were one

EQUIPMENT DEPARTMENT

National Headquarters of Girl Scouts



The figure shows the official uniform and insignia.

(Diagram from 1917)

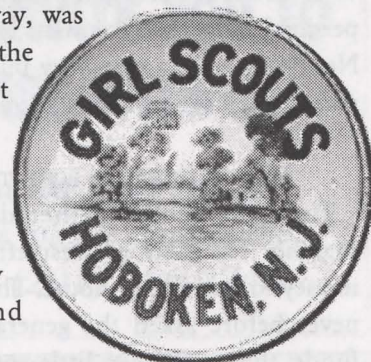
year old, it became necessary to merge all Scouts into one big group in charge of Captains Davey, Van Twisk, and Wehr, and Lieutenants Falconer and H. Wehr.

Yet, in spite of all the vicissitudes, work and fun went on. New girls became Tenderfoot Scouts; Tenderfoot Scouts soon wore Second Class badges, and then started the serious work of acquiring Merit Badges. You can imagine how proud those girls were who appeared before the Council meeting at the Library in April 1921, and received the first proficiency badges to be awarded to Hoboken Girl Scouts.

After the work was over for the day, the Armory rang with wildly hilarious basketball games engineered by Lt. Falconer; and the lookers-on had just as much fun and were just as exhausted as the players by the end of the game. How they did yell! And they had parties on every holiday, and they even had hikes. Imagine taking 150 lively youngsters for a hike along the river: getting them into cars and out of cars [*that's street cars*]; seeing that they didn't lose their transfers, or their money, or their clothes; keeping them together on the road; getting their cooking fires started; playing games; and finally bringing them all home whole and happy.

THE ONE AND ONLY PAID EXECUTIVE

Clearly, it was an impossible situation. Even the engagement of Miss Beatrice Fox as a part time director from April to June failed to improve the situation much. Miss Fox was available only in the morning when it was impossible for either officers or Scouts to get in touch with her. This, by the way, was the only experience of the Hoboken Girl Scout organization with a paid executive; ever since then, the work has been directed and carried on through the voluntary service of officers and Council.



Finally, at the beginning of the next Scout year, October 1921, the girls were once again divided into six troops of thirty-two girls each. And, as the Armory was no longer available on Saturday afternoons, the need for a meeting place was once more acute. Troops met for a time at all sorts of possible and impossible places: the homes of officers and girls, the basement and attic of the Library, the Turn Hall, even the Elks Club and the Republican Club: until, finally, the Board of Education was good enough to grant the Girl Scouts the privilege of meeting in the auditorium and basement of Schools No.1 and 2 on Monday and Thursday.

Through all the changes the work went on and was even extended. In the beginning of 1923 a band was organized. New troops were formed and a Brownie Pack was begun. At the beginning of 1926 a second Brownie Pack was started and another troop, No. 10, was organized at the Jefferson Street Playground. By this time, fortunately, the Phillip Waldheim-Stevens Forum had been built; and, through the good offices of Commissioner Leinkauf, the Board of Directors permitted four Girl Scout troops to meet there Friday evenings. This privilege came at a critical time; for some of the officers were at work during the day, and the schools were no longer available in the evening.

THE SCOUT HOUSE

Then, at last, after long years of knocking about from pillar to post, the Girl Scouts got a home of their own. In November 1926, the Board of Directors of the Forum, granted permission to Hoboken Girl Scout Council No. 94 to erect a one-story building in the rear of the Forum [at 916 Garden Street].

RAISING MONEY TO BUILD THE HOUSE

Then the Scouts gathered themselves together for their greatest effort; to raise money to build their house. The Scouts had never before asked the general public for funds; they had given little entertainments,



Troop I of the Hoboken Girl Scouts inside the Hoboken Girl Scout House at 916 Garden Street. Photos taken on April 13, 1942 show the scouts assembled for a group picture, singing from the song books, and learning about first aid.

patronized chiefly by their families and public for funds; they had scraped along on a little more than nothing a year. But they couldn't build a house on that; not even a very simple one. So they gave a play, and a dance, and a dinner, and a card party; and they earned money, and saved money, and begged money of their families and friends; and the Council, with Mrs. Broeser and Mrs. Immen as finance committee, solicited subscriptions from the public-spirited citizens of Hoboken; and eventually they had enough money to pay for the house and something to put in it.

MAKING FURNITURE AND CURTAINS

The house, of course, they had to have built for them, and Mr. Clayton and Mr. Ford gave valuable advice and assistance in this respect; but the furnishings they did mostly themselves. They bought the lumber, and Mr. Branton of the High School Department turned the boards into chests that served as seats and storage places. Then they got simple unpainted furniture, and Mrs. Hatfield worked out designs and color schemes, and officers and Council worked furiously in the basement of the Library painting tables and chairs and cupboards in brilliant and very splendid colors. Meanwhile Mr. Immen was painting the house inside and out as the contribution of Mrs. Immen and himself. Then they brought yards and yards of cheese-cloth, and cut it into lengths, and stitched it in colored wools, and hemmed it; and all one thundering hot June afternoon they hung these curtains to the accompaniment of smashed brackets and hammered fingers. And that same night, in the presence of a distinguished audience, the Council formally opened the House.

USING THE HOUSE

The House was now carefully put away in camphor for the summer, and in the fall of 1927 all Scout troops began

to meet in their own House; so that every afternoon and evening there was first a deep stillness of hard work, and then the wild hilarity of games. On Saturdays the troops took turns in giving the House a thorough cleaning after its hard usage during the week, and on Sundays it was allowed to rest.

But as the fall wore on to winter, it began to be cold in the House, even for madly capering girls. So a heating plant had to be installed, which, naturally, cost still more money. But, after having managed to pay for a House, the Girl Scouts felt that a mere boiler and radiators were fairly simple matters. They scraped out what was left in their own pockets, and then organized another grand entertainment to make up the balance; and so they kept warm through the winter.

PLANTING A GARDEN

When the Forum had first been built, the Girl Scouts had planted fourteen trees around it: one for each troop, one for the Council, and three in memory of Council members who had died - Mrs. McGovern, Mr. Hatfield, and Mr. Crawford. But trees alone are not a garden. So they dug with shovels and pickaxes, and they took out enough rocks and chunks of concrete to pave all Hoboken. This may be slightly exaggerated, but that is how they felt



Hoboken Girl Scouts First Prize Garden Award medal from 1939



Photo: Bob Foster

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by the time they finished. Then they were given several loads of topsoil which they spread and raked; and a very dear friend sent them shrubs and flowers from her own lovely garden; and Miss Ethel Leinkauf gave them a bird-bath; and a great many other friends and neighbors gave money and plants. Then a little group of Girl Scouts did the work of setting out and tending the young growing things; and the earth and rain and sunshine brought forth the Girl Scout Garden.

OBEYING THE SCOUT LAW

A GIRL SCOUT IS A FRIEND TO ALL AND A SISTER TO EVERY OTHER GIRL SCOUT. At the Christmas festival held on Christmas Eve at the Forum, the Girl Scouts act as hostesses to all the children's organizations in town. Toys, some made by the Scouts during the year, some bought or donated, are also distributed by Santa Claus. The troops and the Band welcome the invitations from neighboring communities which make it possible for them to parade, attend rallies and outdoor demonstrations and further the success of Scouting activities in Jersey City and North Hudson. And International Week brings Hoboken Girl Scouts into closer relationship with Girl Guides and Girl Scouts of all the world.

A GIRL SCOUT'S DUTY IS TO BE USEFUL AND TO HELP OTHERS and there are dozens of ways in which the Scouts of Hoboken try to obey this law. Girls who have the Hostess Badge put their knowledge to practical use by serving at the teas of the Masons, Eastern Star, Mary Hammond Home, Day Nursery, Zonta Club, Needlework Guild, and many others. When the National Fruit and Flower Guild wanted workers to distribute fruit and flowers to shut-ins, the Girl Scouts volunteered their services. During the War, they pasted labels in books to be sent overseas; they take part in patriotic parades and exercises of all sorts; they bring color and reverend attention to Decoration Day services in church and the unveiling of war memorials; they serve refreshments at Legion and Veterans Conventions.

A GIRL SCOUT IS A FRIEND TO ANIMALS and is interested, besides, in every living thing. Turtles, snakes, fish frogs, even earthworms have been known to create an eager excitement at meetings; and dogs, cats, canaries, and parrots are much-loved family pets. In 1923 the Girl

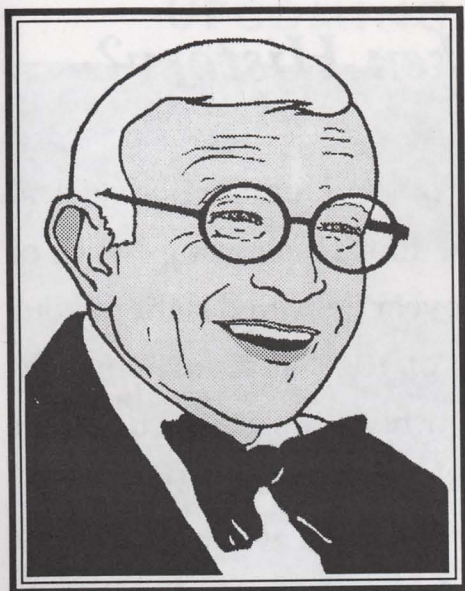
Scouts put up their first Birds' Christmas Tree in one of the public parks, and every year since there have been others; the last two having been placed in the Girl Scout Garden. To be sure, the suet bags and the strings of seeds, cranberries, corn, and raisins attracted only English sparrows, starlings, and pigeons: but the Scouts learned much from the visits of even these common feathered friends.

A GIRL SCOUT IS THRIFTY. In the early days of Scouting when the war was still on, the girls vied with each other in working to buy Thrift and War Savings Stamps; and afterwards, having formed the habit, they had all kinds of saving funds; for Christmas Clubs, for Camp, for the House, for uniforms, and even for permanent banking accounts.

A GIRL SCOUT IS CHEERFUL. It's hard to see how Hoboken Girl Scouts could be otherwise; what with movies [*silent movies*], rallies, holiday parties, ice-skating and nature hikes, treasure hunts, indoor and outdoor track meets, candy-pulls, basketball, archery, tennis tournaments, visits to zoos and museums, the annual officers' dinner and theater party, the annual outing for everybody, and the occasional week-end parties spent in the wilds when the snow lies on the ground and the wind howls down the chimney and the fire becomes a wood-eating giant. Seven times they produced plays. And they even had the fun of getting out their own little newspaper, *The Trefoil*, until it grew too large to be mimeographed each week, and was given up in favor of the Scout Page in the local newspaper.

But the story of their work and play goes on forever. This account gives merely little glimpses along those pathways which the Girl Scouts of Hoboken have opened up in the ten years from 1919 to 1929.





George Burns at 200!

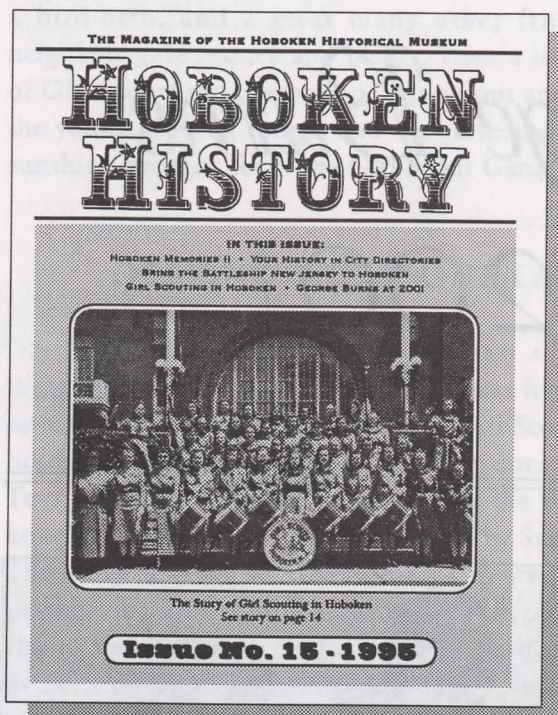
Comedian George Burns always said he would live to be a hundred, and he was true to his word. Though he passed away last month, Mr. Burns celebrated another centennial right here in the mile-square city some fifty years ago. On June 19th, 1946, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the first game of organized baseball, Hoboken officials hosted a gala parade and unveiled a bronze plaque proclaiming Elsyian Fields the birthplace of modern baseball. Numerous celebrities were in attendance including radio personalities George Burns and his wife Gracie Allen.

The Hoboken Historical Museum invites you to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first organized game of baseball with the museum's upcoming annual exhibition, this year entitled "Play Ball! The Making of a National Pastime." (See the inside back cover of this issue for details.)



George Burns with Gracie Allen at the reviewing stand on 11th and Hudson Streets, June 19th, 1946. (Courtesy of the Hoboken Public Library Picture Collection)

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UPCOMING ANNUAL MUSEUM EXHIBITION



Detail of Currier & Ives print. Hoboken's Elysian Fields, site of the first organized game of baseball—June 19th, 1846.

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