

# The Chester Historical Society's



## NEWS & VIEWS

We close an eventful 2016 with six stories that run the gamut from trains to cocktails. The first recounts how we once were able to commute by train from Chester, NJ to New York City. The second is another chapter in Jack Hyde's reminiscences about growing up in Chester. The third will catch the attention of soccer enthusiasts and involves Pelé. We continue our history series on the AT&T Bell Labs Chester Outdoor Research Facility, by recounting the events in the 1940's. An update from the Annual Meeting and Picnic brings back fond memories. Finally we are adding a new section highlighting the culinary and mixology prowess of CHS members, amply displayed at the recent CHS Picnic and Annual Meeting.

**Save the Date!** CHS members are invited to attend the **Holiday Party on Sunday, January 8, 2017, noon to 4pm at the Black River Playhouse, 54 Grove St.** (snow date of Jan. 15). An invitation will be sent to members with RSVP information and a request to bring an appetizer or dessert. Not a member and want to join? Go to <http://historicchesternj.com/home/membership.html>.

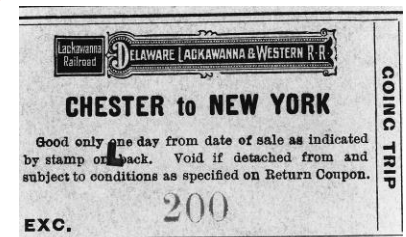
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### A Ticket to Ride – The Chester Railroad

By Edward Ng – Chester Historical Society

**Editor's Note:** This article was written for and placed at the new hiker's kiosk at the West Morris Greenway Trailhead on Pleasant Hill Rd., Chester NJ. Eagle Scout candidate Michael Servais designed, built, and installed the kiosk. There is also a companion article about the geology of the Black River area in the kiosk.



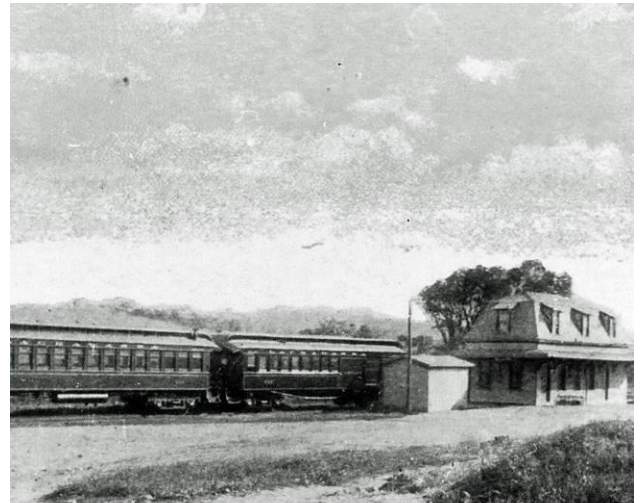


Kiosk at the West Morris Greenway Trailhead on Pleasant Hill Rd. Black River to the left - Trail to right. 11/16

The West Morris Greenway trailhead, where you are currently standing, is on the abandoned rail bed that was originally the Chester Railroad. Construction was started in 1867 and completed in 1868 as a branch of the Morris & Essex Railroad which was then immediately leased to the Delaware Lackawanna and Western Railroad (referred to as the DL&W or Lackawanna). After much political wrangling, the Chester train depot was situated in the "Muskrat" area, about a quarter mile west of the WMG Trailhead, but a mile north of town. In 1868, the depot was on what is now

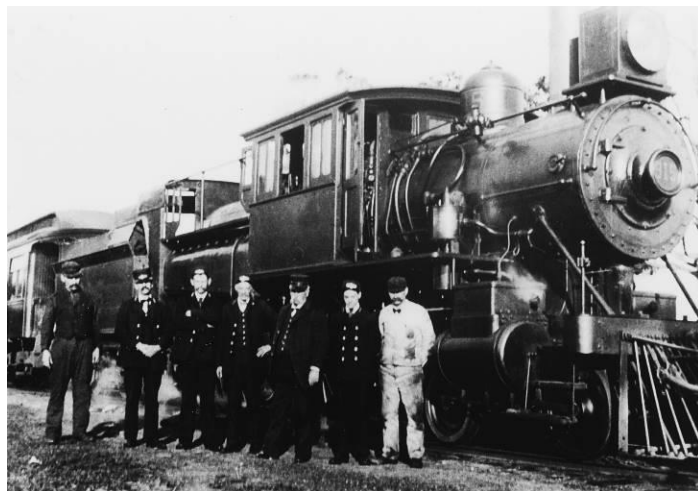
"Hillside Avenue" then it was appropriately named "Railroad Avenue". From the Chester Depot the train took a half hour to get to Dover, with stops in Horton, Ironia, Succasunna, Kenvil, and Port Oram. From Dover the traveler was scheduled to arrive in New York about 90 minutes later (wouldn't it be great to do that today from Chester!).

In addition to taking passengers eastward to Dover, Morristown, and New York, the DL&W was a major transporter of iron ore – heading west. A rich vein of iron ore was discovered by Perry Skellenger in his backyard and other discoveries soon followed just behind the houses and shops on the north side of



DL&W Passenger Cars stopping at the Chester-Muskrat Depot in 1915.

Main St. in the middle of Chester in 1867. The Samson, Skellenger, Cromwell, Hotel, and Collis Farm mines sprang up along Main St. As can be seen in the map below, the DL&W could service some mines near the Black River, but was not ideally located for most mines. From 1869 to 1879, most of the iron ore from Chester mines went west to High Bridge or to other locations for



On Jan 2, 1869 the first train left the Chester Depot, conducted by Marshall Sayre (3rd from the right). Image from Chester Township

processing. Trains could use the consolidated DL&W and the Central of New Jersey (CNJ) tracks to transport iron ore to High Bridge after the 1873 and 1876 CNJ portions were completed. Also completed in 1873 was the Chester Hill Branch of the CNJ which ran to a depot on the southwest corner of Main St. and Rt. 206. CNJ's Chester Hill Branch and the 1881 Chester Extension provided much better access to High Bridge and the

**LACKAWANNA RAILROAD**  
**TIME TABLE.**  
 IN EFFECT NOV. 3, 1901.

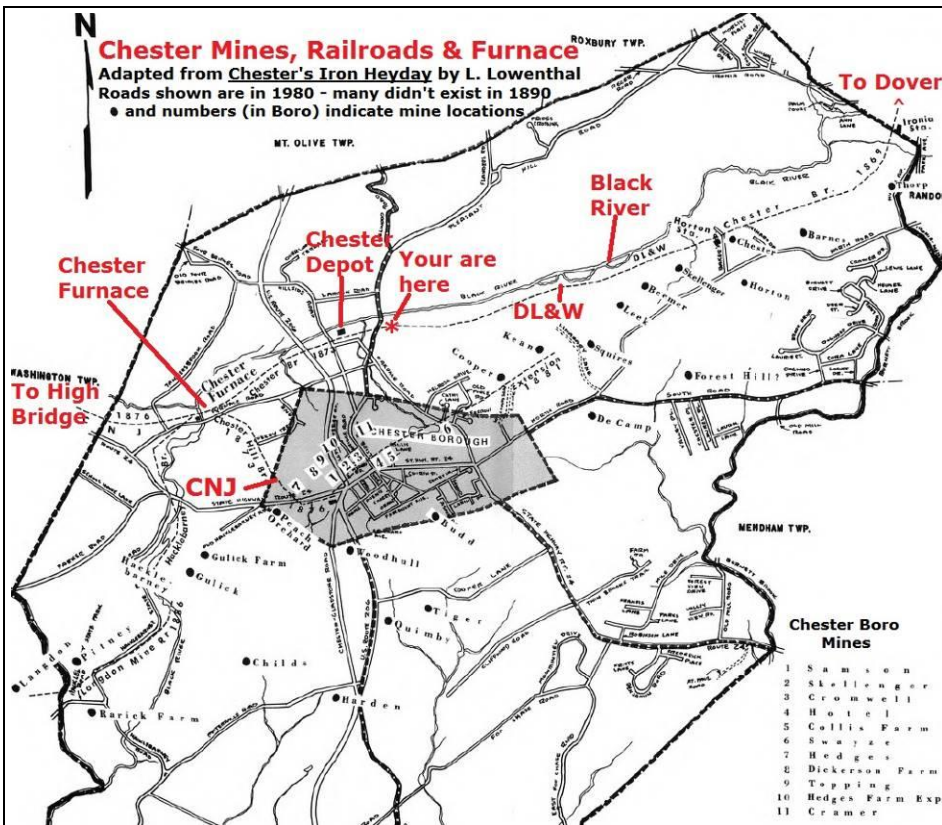
TRAINS BETWEEN DOVER AND NEW YORK

Leave Dover	Arrive New York	Leave New York	Arrive Dover
A. M.	A. M.	A. M.	A. M.
4:40	7:20	7:10	9:10
d 5:15*	6:50	8:00*	9:57
d 6:35*	7:50	8:10	10:07*
6:45	8:30		
7:05*	8:20	d 12:00 m	1:35*
7:23	9:10	P. M.	
8:03*	9:20	d 1:40	3:30
d 8:43	10:30	1:50*	3:35
d 9:13*	10:50	d 2:40	4:32*
		P. M.	
		3:20	5:05
11:14*	12:30	4:00*	5:24
d 11:40*	1:20	4:30	6:25*
P. M.		5:10*	6:40
12:45	2:50	5:30	7:17
d 1:45	3:35	6:05	7:55
d 2:44	4:40	d 6:10*	7:48
3:27*	5:10	d 6:30	8:54
4:35	7:55	d 8:45*	10:55
d 6:32*	7:35	† Trip ends here.	
d 6:40*	8:15	d Daily.	
d 8:50	8:40		
d 8:13*	10:10		

\* Boonton Branch.

**CHESTER BRANCH**

EAST.		WEST.	
Station	A.M.	Station	P.M.
Chester	6:35	Port Oram	4:55
Horton	6:41	Kenvil	4:58
Ironia	6:44	Succasunna	5:01
Succasunna	6:48	Kenvil	5:04
Kenvil	6:53	Port Oram	5:07
Port Oram	6:59	Chester	5:13
Dover	7:04		



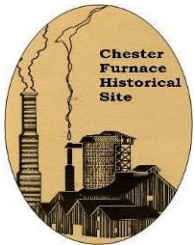
Chester Furnace for most mines in Chester.

The Chester Furnace, about a mile west of the Chester Depot, was dedicated on July 4, 1879. Much of the ore transported on the DL&W was processed there. The brainchild of genius engineer William J. Taylor, the Chester Furnace was one of the most advanced pig iron operations in the USA. In 1881, pig iron output was about 300 tons a week. However, success was short lived. By 1891, most mines in Chester and the Chester Furnace had closed. Iron ore from the Lake Superior region and cheap coal from

western Pennsylvania, tipped the economic balance in favor of Pittsburgh, PA rather than Chester NJ. The DL&W would continue, moving agricultural products and people, but it too ceased operation in 1934. The CNJ Chester trains ceased operation in 1961 and the tracks were removed in 1962 –the end of an era.



For more information, visit the Chester Furnace Historical Site which has 2 informational kiosks about making pig iron, William J.



Taylor, and research by Chester Historian Len Taylor. Unfortunately it is not advised to hike from the WMG Kiosk directly to the site, due to a dangerous crossing of Rt. 206. There is a small parking lot near the roadside informational kiosk on Furnace Rd. about a mile west of Rt. 206. There is a larger parking lot on Furnace Rd. and Tanners Brook Rd. Look for the Patriots' Path signs. You can also hike from Chubb Park to the Chester Furnace Historical Site on Patriots' Path.

**For further information about Chester history, railroads, iron mining, iron production, and notable personalities, the following helpful references are available for sale from the Chester Historical Society ([chester.historical.society@gmail.com](mailto:chester.historical.society@gmail.com) Phone 908 866 6717):**

**Chester's Iron Heyday by Larry Lowenthal. Chester, New Jersey – A Scrapbook of History by Frances Greenidge. CHS News and Views Fall 2015 & Winter 2016 "William J. Taylor and the Chester Furnace" by Edward Ng**

# Jack Hyde DQ

By Jack Hyde and adapted by Meryl Carmel – Chester Historical Society



Jack Hyde in 1953 at the start of his memoirs.

Remember Jack Hyde? We shared some of his memories of Chester in the June 2016 Newsletter. There he commented on his experiences as a student at the Williamson School in the 1950s. His amusing antics made some members wonder, "Where in the world is Jack?" Jack has been found! He lives in the mid-west with his family and says that he has happy memories of his Chester days. Our article inspired him to write additional stories about his former home town. In this edition of the CHS newsletter we present Jack Hyde's memories of The Chester "DQ".



Jack Hyde 2015 Holland MI

The Chester Dairy Queen opened in its newly-built little square about 1959. Located a bit west of where it stands today it was surrounded by enough parking to allow people to approach the walk-up windows to order their treats. The original owners were the Wormans. They were a rather formal couple—Mr. Worman had a little pencil mustache and white hair that perfectly matched his DQ "uniform."

I was hired at the age of sixteen for the 1960-61 season. My pay? One dollar per hour delivered in cash in a little brown envelope each week, minus all the required deductions of taxes and social security. I worked the window and learned the ins and outs of serving the public. I also made their treats taking care to properly draw a cone with the trademark curl on top. In contrast to 2016 we ran only chocolate and vanilla mix, purchased from nearby Welsh Farms. It was delivered in big metal milk cans – the kind that people seek out at flea markets. We made our own milk base for shakes with a powdered milk and water mix.

Prices have certainly changed over the years: Cones cost ten-cents for a small, fifteen cents for a medium and thirty-five cents for a large which was a whopping seven ounces of ice cream. Shakes were thirty-five cents and the addition of malt was a nickel more. Sundaes cost the same as a plain milkshake. The perk of my job was that I could eat all the ice cream I wanted! I'm sure the Wormans lost money on me.



Chester Dairy Queen Mid 1970's - Tom Byrne

I also worked behind the scenes when the store was closed. We made our own sherbet which we hand dipped. It was a secret recipe and Worman sold it to the next owner, Howard Van Brunt who lived in Morris Plains where he

owned another Dairy Queen.

Mr. Van Brunt was my all-time favorite boss. He and his wife Phyllis took a liking to me and I to them. Howard was a real mentor and he trusted me to prep the store for opening each day. This involved arriving on time to clean, sanitize and re-fill the machines with fresh mix. The morning store prep took a few hours of time. On many summer days I was there from 8 a.m. until closing at 10 p.m. with an hour for lunch and an hour for dinner. On days off, I'd take a girlfriend to the shore (Sandy Hook State Park) for a day on the beach.

I recall a farm couple who came in every Friday night: I think it was their big night out on the town. The man was tall and skinny and his wife looked to me like the quintessential farmer's wife. She stood quietly by his side as he stepped up to the window to order "Two ten-cent cones, one chocolate, one vanilla." Sunday nights were busy as ice-cream buying people poured down Route 206 on their way home from the lakes. Business was good. However, I'll always remember a boy from a large family in town. I realized that he did not have money for ice cream, so I'd quietly pass him a free cone for a treat.

Of course, there were hijinks at the DQ – when the boss was gone we'd have some fun. Making dilly bars during lulls in foot traffic – would often spur ice cream fights that might involve putting a 3-oz dollop of frozen mix down the back of a co-worker's shirt and then slapping him or her on the back.

I did occasionally "mess up" at work as illustrated by the following incident: One fine morning I left a 5-gallon stainless steel bucket of unfrozen ice cream mix on the shelf near the mixing machine which would shimmy and shake when turned on. I had forgotten about the bucket of mix so when the machine kicked-in, the bucket vibrated right off the shelf, spilling 5 gallons of mix all over the floor. I managed to clean it up and thought no one was the wiser...until...until...Howard tallied up the week's revenue and noted a sharp dip. "Jack, did anything happen that would cause this dip in profits last week?" he asked. I fessed up and told him of the bucket mishap. He was really great about it, "If something like that happens again, just tell me, so I know what to expect." That was it. I worked for Howard and Phyllis until I was married in 1967. Later my wife and I moved to Illinois and whenever we were back in town, we'd stop by DQ for a visit with our kids. I am still a big fan of DQ! ◼

**Editor's Note:** Dairy Queen was founded in 1940 in Joliet, IL. There are over 6400 DQ's in more than 27 countries. The current Chester DQ, 30 Main St., is located in the western half of what used to be American Auto Parts. In 1868 Perry Skellenger ran a livery service and harness shop there. In 1912 the current structure was built as Chamberlain's Garage. Chester resident George Apgar claimed that early Ford Model T's were shipped here in crates and assembled on-site. A surprising (to me) factoid: DQ is owned by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway! If you have old pictures or stories to share, please let us know.



## Americanization of Erik Lassen in Chester 1979

By Len Taylor – Chester Historical Society

*Before Len passed away in 2013, he penned this story and Lois Taylor kindly brought it to CHS' attention. Thank you.* Editor's Note: I am only a casual soccer fanatic, but two names I do know are Pelé and Franz Beckenbauer, the Brazilian and German superstars. What is the connection to Chester? UNESCO proclaimed 1979 as the International Year of the Child. The proclamation was intended to draw attention to problems that affected children throughout the world, including malnutrition and lack of access to education. Pelé and Beckenbauer served as honorary co-chairman of the Year of the Child International Soccer Tournament involving 13 and 14 year old players from 10 countries and USA. They presided at the opening ceremonies in Denville. Chester and seven other towns hosted the international teams. The finale of the tournament was held at Giants Stadium in the Meadowlands between the USA and European All Stars preceding a game between the Cosmos and Seattle.

As time progresses in the Chesters, this is a revelatory recent event. In 1979, during the "Year of the Child", Morris County sponsored several European adolescent soccer teams to come to the U.S.A. and compete with our local adolescents. Chester hosted a team from Taastrup, Denmark. Coaches and players were spread around the community to stay with various families. This story is about the "Americanization" of one of the coaches, sixteen year old Erik who stayed with the Taylors. Erik's father stayed with a family on State Park Road.

Erik is 6'-5", tall, an impressive height compared to the other teenagers who came with the group. It was July.....warm by Danish standards where the weather is usually damp and chilly, and the North Sea and the Baltic Sea are cold year round. That particular July was cold, though. Sweaters were the dress of the day.



Erik arrived at our house and immediately filled the whole place. As with his teammates, he was physically fit and really into exercise. Every morning for the first few days he would get up and run. He ran from Furnace Road to Hillside Rd. on Route 206, a distance of a few miles, and then came in and had a huge Danish style breakfast of cold cuts, cheese and bread or cereal or both. The soccer teams would spend the day at locations around Morris County playing whatever teams the communities could send their way, and then in the evening

**Erik Lassen (holding flag) marching with Danish Soccer Team July 1979**

go somewhere for a social event centered around a huge dinner.

By the third or fourth day, Erik was running every morning on the abandoned railroad right-of-way that went from the back of the Taylor's home to Long Valley and beyond. The run was shorter and he always returned soaking wet from the morning dew on the brush along the way. He would shower and dress, and eat that huge breakfast. In the evening, he would lounge around in comfortable clothes and catch up on T.V.

By the fifth day, enchanted with the sheer number of non-government television stations available, Erik was sleeping a little later and running a little less so he could watch T.V. for a while before leaving for the day. By the end of the first week, breakfast had changed from Danish fare of cheese and cold cuts without fruit to eggs, bacon, toast, potatoes and a quart of orange juice. But most American of all, the running had given way to sleeping late and then lounging in bed to watch re-runs of "The Love Boat."

The last few days that Erik spent with us were very "American adolescent": Wake-up to watch television. Shower. Eat breakfast of meat, eggs, potatoes, fruit or orange juice and often cereal on the side. Soccer and lunch. Television. Shower. Huge dinner, often at a social gathering. Television. Bedtime and a little more television. No cold cuts, cheese and bread. No running.

Two weeks after the soccer groups arrived, we took Erik and his companions to the buses at Black River Middle School to send them off to JFK Airport and Denmark. It had been a terrific two weeks and the experience had been wonderful for the local teenagers. There was some sadness in the realization that we would probably never see any of these people again.

That was twenty-eight years ago and Erik is now an executive with Skibskredit A/S which has mortgages totaling \$35 billion dollars on 600 vessels worldwide. Is that American or what!

And, oh yes! Erik did not fly away never to be seen again. He has been back to visit almost every year since 1979 and sometimes twice a year. He has attended our family reunions, vacationed with us and been to our weddings and significant birthdays. Erik is an "American in Denmark" thanks largely to just two weeks here in 1979.



Postscript from Lois: Erik returned to Chester in November of 2013. Erik brought Len a lovely notebook containing copies of all of the letters that Len had written to him over the years (before email). This visit was the last visit Erik had with Len. This year, we asked Erik to write a short memoir of his trip. He also provided the photos in this article. Most of his memories mirrored Len's, though with less emphasis on "Americanization". Erik did have an explanation for the development of his TV and fast food habits, he writes in his letter:

*And what was so special about the TV? Bear in mind, that in 1979 there was only one Danish (state run, advertising free) TV channel in Denmark. And living near Sweden we were close enough also to be able to watch the two Swedish TV state channels. In those days they would broadcast from late afternoon until midnight. And here I was – alone with a TV in my bedroom and with TV shows on in*

the morning! Amazing! And yes, Love Boat was my favorite show at the time... We did not have soaps or the like in Denmark at that time.

Also, we did not have fast food restaurants. They began to appear in Denmark around 1980, and for us it was a great thing. We had snacks at Burger King and Dairy Queen on the corner of Main Street and 206 many times during the two weeks... Erik I. Lassen, Denmark, October 2016 ■

## Bell Labs Chester Outdoor Laboratory – 1940's

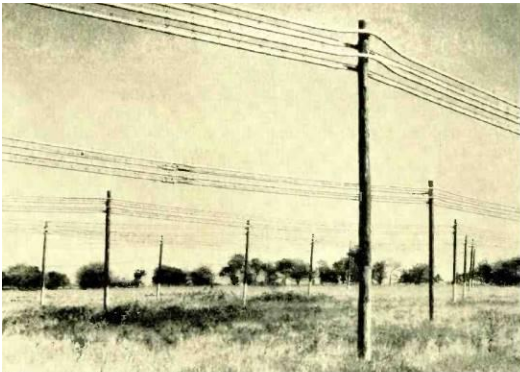
By Edward Ng – Chester Historical Society

We continue exposition of the posters on the Chester Outdoor Lab displayed at Chester Township's Highland's Ridge Barn. It has been more than 10 years since the founding of the Outdoor Laboratory. In March of 1940, C.A Chase, resident engineer wrote an article about the Laboratory in the "Bell Labs Record". Here is an excerpt:

**For a number of years a field laboratory has been maintained by the Laboratories at Chester, New Jersey. A varied terrain of some one hundred acres makes it possible to provide for a considerable range of ground conditions. Standard methods and equipment are used and a small general machine shop is provided. A wide range of work is undertaken including development problems on aerial plant in the form of cables, open wire, drop wire, insulators and poles. Underground work is represented by manholes, conduits and cables. Tests of hardware and tools are made for both aerial and underground plant.**

Of course a lot would change in a short time following Chase's article. World War II would put to test many of the developments from Bell Labs. Though not affecting the Chester Laboratory directly, poles and cables would be critical to the war effort. ■

### #2 - 1940's Poster



Chester Outside Plant Field Laboratory testing of cables, open wires, drop wires, insulators, and poles. 1940



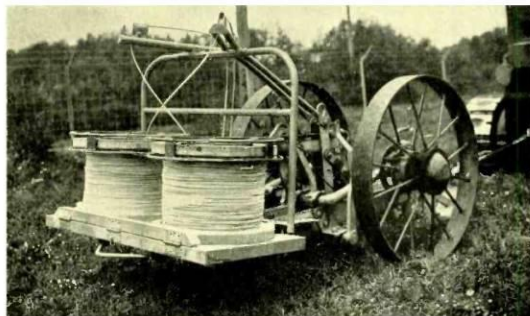
Life tests of telephone poles. 1940



Experimental conduit joints are made with a plastic cement mortar saturated bandage.



Copper wires separated by an insulating spreader being swung in a tie test to simulate the action of the wind. 1940



Plow for laying telephone wire underground in rural district. The wire is fed into a furrow made by a narrow plowshare. 1940



Brick hung on open wires to simulate ice load in line wire tie tests



Tests of drop wire tree guards. 1940



US Troops raising a telephone pole in Iceland 1944.



## Annual Meeting and Picnic 2016

By Edward Ng – Chester Historical Society

The CHS Annual Meeting and Picnic was held at the Barn at Highlands Ridge Park on Sep. 25, 2016. A modified and updated Constitution and By-Laws were officially passed. You should have received a copy in August, but if you would like another copy, please contact CHS. Re-elected to another two year term were Edward Ng, President, and Elaine Hanington, Recording Secretary. Elected to the Board of Trustees were Meryl Carmel, Alison Dahl, Ed Hanington, Marla Jackson, and James Whelpley. Congratulations! Lunch and dessert were followed by a short video, "A Matter of Time", about equipment testing (well actually torture) at the Bell Labs Chester Outdoor Laboratory. Thanks to all who helped.



The Highlands Ridge Barn



Lovely Food



The Barn – great venue for a video

## Yummy Recipes from Picnics Past and Present!

By Marla Jackson – Chester Historical Society

It isn't just photographs and artifacts that turn up in the Archive. Sometimes, good recipes turn up too. Lois Taylor appeared one Friday not long ago with a little booklet she found at home and is donating to the society. The booklet was a program for the Chester Historical Society Bicentennial Dinner on March 27, 1976 and it included a very interesting recipe for a festive libation, "New Jersey Stone Fence Punch" that was served at the event. I thought it would be a nice addition to the 2016 picnic. After examining the recipe, Ed, our fearless (or is that "fearful"?) President, decided it needed, how shall I describe it, an "adjustment." Well, we thought it might be a bit strong for our present-day picnic. Here is the original 1976 punch recipe:

### **New Jersey Stone Fence Punch - Makes 30 servings**

**1 quart apple jack      1 quart hard apple cider      1 quart sparkling water**

Make an ice ring, including fruit to decorate. Pour all of the above over the ice ring in a large punch bowl. Garnish with lemon and orange slices studded with cloves.

As you can probably tell, this was a very alcoholic punch, because the hard cider is 6% or 7% alcohol and the applejack is 80% alcohol! We did have work to do that day, voting on the revised constitution & by laws and electing trustees, so we adapted the punch accordingly:

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## 2016 Stone Fence Punch “Light”

4 bottles (500ml) Melick’s Hard Semi-dry Cider

1 quart sparkling water    1 quart apple cider    1 ½ cups Laird’s Applejack



I made one large and 3 small ice rings, decorated with lemon slices, blueberries and raspberries. I poured everything into a large punch bowl and mixed it slightly. This punch was probably a bit sweeter than the original, since the applejack is quite dry (as well as alcoholic!). The hard apple cider came from Oldwick, NJ and the Laird’s applejack came from Scobeyville, NJ. All in all, a local and delightful product!

Several members have requested the recipe for the lovely chicken salad we’ve enjoyed at CHS events. Marilyn Guerin was kind enough to pass on her recipe:

### Chicken Cashew Salad

- 4 cups cooked chicken breast, cut into cubes (or use Perdue Short Cuts—honey roasted)
  - 2 cups salted cashews
  - 1 cup Hellman’s mayonnaise
  - 3 cups seedless grapes (cut in half, leave small ones whole)
  - 2 cups celery, large dice
  - ½ tsp salt (omit if using prepared strips)
- Mix together and enjoy.

In the next Newsletter we will have Marie Eberhardt’s delicious Reduced Fat Cream Cheesecake recipe. So be on the lookout for other recipes from CHS events, past and present. If we find some in the Archives, we might just share them at future events.

## Acknowledgments and Contact Information

**CHS Trustees and Officers:** President – Edward Ng    Vice President – John Pfaff  
Treasurer – Anita Rhodes    Corresponding Secretary – Lois Taylor    Recording  
Secretary- Elaine Hanington    Archives – Edward Ng    Programs – Alison Dahl  
Membership – Marla Jackson    Historian – Ed Hanington    Meryl Carmel and Jim Whelpley

**CHS Newsletter Editor:** - Edward Ng

We thank Lois Taylor for providing Len’s article and Erik’s letter. Thanks to Jack Hyde for sharing his memoirs. Thanks to members for sharing their recipes. Historical photos and maps are usually from the CHS archives. Modern photos are by Ed Ng except as noted.

If you would like to join CHS or if you have stories or pictures to share, please talk to a Board member or contact us at (908) 844-6717 or [chester.historical.society@gmail.com](mailto:chester.historical.society@gmail.com), or CHS Box 376 Chester NJ 07930. Membership information and a downloadable membership form are available at <http://historicchesternj.com/home/membership.html> .