

ATLANTIC HERITAGE

Newsletter of the Atlantic County Historical Society

FALL 2023

GLASSMAKING IN ATLANTIC COUNTY

By Michael Connor

A fortunate coincidence of location and natural resources led to the establishment of glassmaking in New Jersey. An abundance of fine silica sand which constitutes 70% of the material needed to make glass could be easily mined in South Jersey. Lime was obtained from oyster shells. Plentiful wood provided heat for the furnaces and the burnt residue provided potash also necessary for the glassmaking process. Salt hay provided cushioning for transportation. Markets in Philadelphia and New York were conveniently accessible by water. Boats were much more able to carry heavy and breakable glass than wagons on poor roads.

The prized silica sand yielded an aquamarine color for which South Jersey glass is noted. The glass appears clear in thin sheets and can be made more clear with the addition of manganese. South Jersey glass readily takes color - iron oxide yields a green glass and a heavier hand with the manganese yields purple.

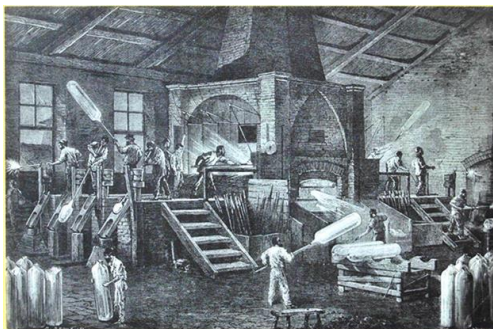
Immigrants have consistently enriched us. The economic aftermath of the Thirty Years War in Europe brought the entrepreneurial Caspar Wistar from the German Palatinate to Philadelphia. After success in the ironmaking business he saw that the resources necessary for glassmaking could be found in what is now Alloway in Salem County. He summoned skilled craftsmen from the Palatinate and in partnership with them in 1739 founded the United Glass Company. Among those arriving were members of the prolific Stenger clan [Anglicized to Stanger] who designed and founded glass factories throughout Southern New Jersey and elsewhere. A skilled workforce could now be found locally.

Atlantic County glassmaking began when the Estell family hired John H. Scott to build a glass factory in what was then called Estellville. The ruins can be seen in the Atlantic County Park at what is now Estell Manor. Construction began in 1825 and production began in 1826. It produced both window glass and bottles. The Estell family owned and operated this business until 1858. Subsequent owners closed the glassworks in 1877.

This was a substantial industrial enterprise. In addition to the melting furnace, there was a pothouse, flattening house, cutting house, and lime kilns as well as worker housing with a company store. Workers were partially paid in company scrip, a practice not outlawed until the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

Hollow ware such as bottles were blown into a mold. Interestingly, window glass was started by the skilled blowing of a 5 foot cylinder 1/8 inch thick which was then taken to the flattening house to be rolled flat, annealed and then cut to size.

The following illustrations show the creation of the window glass cylinders and the ruins of the glassworks as they exist today. The site images are from an Atlantic County Parks and Recreation webpage.



Continued on
page 4

Events and Happenings

Program Logistics

Program Description

RISLEY HOMESTEAD

8 Virginia Avenue
(near 400 block of Shore Rd)
Northfield, NJ



Saturdays & Sundays, 11am – 4pm

The [Risley Homestead](#) is one of two 18th century houses in Atlantic County individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was home to many generations of Risley oystermen. The ACHS received the Homestead and its furnishings by bequest from Virginia Risley Stout in 1989. The Homestead is open Saturday & Sunday for individual and small group guided tours. Contact ACHS for details about large groups.

THE CRAB TRAP

2 Broadway, Somers Point

October 21st @11:30am
Cost: \$32.00

Members and the general public are invited. Following the installation of the nominees to the governing Board, “The “Bringing History to Life Award” will be presented. Speaker will be Gene Peterson- “*Shipwrecks Along the Jersey Shore*” For ticket information call Sheryl Collins at 609-646-7355 or contact ACHS. **Members will vote on nominees to the 2024-2025 Governing Board at this time. Please check Facebook and/or the ACHS website for more information.**

BOSCOV'S DEPT. STORE

6725 Black Horse Pike
Egg Harbor Twp., NJ

Wednesday, October 18th 8am -11pm
Contact ACHS for Tickets

BOSCOV'S FRIENDS & FAMILY DAY

Tickets sell for \$5 each. Boscov's will give 25% off each store purchase to the buyer; even on sale prices. Tickets may be purchased from any Program Committee Member ahead of time or from their table set up in Boscov's that day. The ACHS is the recipient of the purchase price of each ticket.

Yard Sale

Saturday, September 16th
8:00am – 2:00pm
(Rain Date: Sept. 17th)

Many items for sale,
including extra Library books.
All proceeds benefit the ACHS

Risley Homestead
8 Virginia Avenue
(near 400 block-Shore Rd)
Northfield, NJ

Do you belong to a group that meets at a restaurant while enjoying a meal? We respectfully request that you consider visiting the Shore Diner, 6710 Tilton Road, in Egg Harbor Township. When customers present the pictured voucher at the time of payment, the diner gives us a donation. After a recent visit by a group from the Absecon United Methodist Church, we received a check for \$45.56. It was a win/win situation for all! Thanking you, in advance!



HOLIDAY SWEET SALE

Monday
December 18th
3:00 – 6:00pm
@ACHS 908 Shore Road
Somers Point

The Atlantic County Historical Society will be closed on the following Saturdays:

September 16th, October 21st & November 23rd, 24th and 25th

NOTE: OUR REGULAR HOURS:
Thursday – Saturday: 10:00 – 3:30pm

Need to Contact Us?

Phone: (609) 927-5218 or

Email: ACHSinfo@comcast.net

Follow us on Instagram, Facebook or on our website www.AtlanticCountyHistoricalSocietynj.org

Newsletter Editor, Layout & Graphics : Ellen Hyatt
Contributors to this Issue:

Sid Parker, Mike Connor, Diane Miller,
Lynn Wood, Brittani Mazzone,

The Atlantic County Historical Society received an operating grant from the Atlantic County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs.

Member News



DONATIONS

FRIEND \$1 - \$49

Elizabeth Naylor,
Sheryl Collins –

IHO marriage of Kyle R. Collins & Candice DiCiano
Norma Higbee *IMO* Virginia Dehn,
Barbara Kroger *IMO* Edwin L. Kroger,
MarySue Lovett *IHO* Dale Lonkart

PATRON \$50 - \$249

Wayne & Megan Ernst, Jeff & Debbie MacNeill, Steve
Jasiecki, Joan Frankel, Lois & Walt Gregory, Donald
K. Shupp, Kathy & Bill Fritz, Anonymous,
Paul & Joy Tucci, Lee Ellenberg, Michael Connor,
June Sheridan, Charles Birnstiel, Mary J. Peterson,
Judith LaDrew Bayer, Judy Braddock Smith,
Bruce & Barbara Aydelotte, *IHO* Edward Stephenson,
Dale Lonkart *IHO* All Volunteers,
Elinor A. Veit *IMO* Richard F. Veit,
Richard E. Squires *IMO* Winifred F. Squires,
Robert D. Warrington-
IMO James & Dorothy Warrington,
Charlene Canale *IMO* Edward Canale,
Diane Bassetti *IMO* Thomas T. Pogue,
Babs Perry Silva *IMO* Carolyn Perry,
George & Carol Guiliano-
IMO Pat Parker and *IHO* Sid Parker,
Debbie & Lewis Barrett-
IMO Lewis & Martha Barrett,
Carol Zepfel-
IMO Deceased Zepfel & Brodrick members,
Randall Richards-
in appreciation of museum tour by Dale Lonkart,
Sid Parker- *IMO* Carol L. Gaffney,
neighbor & friend of 52 years

SPONSOR \$250 - \$1000

Michael O'Brien,
Sid Parker *IMO* Pat Parker,
General Lafayette Chapter, NSDAR

Welcome

New Members

MaryAnn Trail, *Galloway, NJ*
Eugene Arnone, *Northfield, NJ*
Matthew H. Ward, *Huntingdon Valley, PA*
Wendy M. Johnson, *Perris, CA*
Arleen Simmons, *West Orange, NJ*
Brian, Christine & Nikki Lihou, *Ocean City, NJ*

Returning Members

Stephen Christides, *Audubon, NJ*

IN MEMORIAM



Jerry Gordon, Volunteer
Ruth Newsome

ANNUAL ELECTIONS

At the August Meeting of the Governing Board, the report of the Nominating Committee was presented and accepted. Members will vote for the nominees at the Annual Luncheon which will be held on Saturday, October 21, 2023 @11:30pm at the Crab Trap Restaurant in Somers Point. New Board Members will be installed at that time.

NOMINATIONS FOR OCTOBER 2023 to OCTOBER 2024

OFFICERS:

President- Sid Parker
Recording Secretary- Babs Perry-Silva
Assistant Curator- Kevin Little
Librarian- Norman Goos
Assistant Treasurer- No one Available

TRUSTEES:

Mike Connor, Jim Mason, Heather Perez
Tom Kinsella, Dana Shupp, Judy Schwartz
Michael O'Brien

GLASSMAKING IN ATLANTIC COUNTY *continued...*

The Hammonton area had multiple glassworks. At least two were located within the town limits. The Town of Hammonton actually got its name from one of the glassmaking families. William Coffin originally partnered with John Coates to build a glassworks which opened in 1817. Coates was succeeded by a Coffin son-in-law Andrew K. Hay. The business was then named Coffin & Hay. Coffin left his business to his sons John Hammond Coffin and Edward Winslow Coffin. Hammonton was originally named Hammondton after son John. The “d” was dropped and we now have “Hammonton.” Interestingly, Edward’s middle name was used for what is now Winslow Township in adjoining Camden County.



Coffin & Hay produced window glass and bottles in Hammonton until the plant was destroyed by fire. Various accounts date the fire between 1838 and 1840. Suspecting arson by disgruntled employees, the Hammonton plant was not rebuilt. Operations were moved to Winslow and became Winslow Glass Company. Coffin & Hay were noted for their bottles. *To the left is an example.*

William Skinner arrived in Hammonton in 1899 and founded the W. Skinner & Son Glass Company. The glassworks was constructed across from the Pennsylvania Railroad station.

Skinner produced high end glassware noted for its clarity. Skilled glass cutters produced cut glass vases, pitchers, decanters, punchbowls, sugar and creamer sets and stemware. These products travelled by railroad to upscale Philadelphia retailers and elsewhere. *Below is a postcard image of the factory:*

World War I impacted the market for cut glass and skilled labor became scarce. Production was changed to black glass desk sets for fountain pen makers such as Schaeffer and Waterman. We have all seen these desk sets in offices, hotel desks and bank lobbies. Also produced were cut and mirrored picture frames and table tops.

Thomas Skinner III continued the family business until he retired in 1995. An avid racing enthusiast, he converted parts of the building for stock car work. The factory closed in 1995 and the abandoned building was destroyed by a suspicious fire in 2011.



W. Skinner and Sons Cut Glass factory in Hammonton about 1908

Industrial glass making has ended in South Jersey although some artisanal and specialty production continues. The fine silica sand remains. Highly skilled glass artisans may still be seen working at the Wheaton Arts Center in Millville. It is well worth a trip.

Atlantic County Historical Society Governing Board

President: Sid Parker

Vice-President: Cindy Mason-Purdie

Recording Secy: Barbara Perry-Silva

Treasurer: Charlene Canale

Asst. Treasurer:

Financial Secretary: Ellen Hyatt

Librarian: Rev. Norman Goos

Assistant Librarian: Kathy Fritz

Curator: Joan Frankel

Asst. Curator: Kevin Little

Chaplain: Rev. Norman Goos

Historian: Diane Bassetti

Trustees: Ben Brenner, Mike Connor,

Megan Ernst, Tom Kinsella,

James H. Mason, V, Mike O'Brien,

Heather Perez, Will Rozell,

Judith Schwartz, Dana Shupp,

Lynn Wood

Looking Back through the Files.....

Transcribed by Diane J. Miller

Editor's Note: The following article is a shortened version of a 7-page typescript found in the Sarah Ewing Collection, CB 6, folder 44u. Handwritten above the typescript's title are the words, "written for South Jersey Magazine c. 1976." An inspection of this magazine collection at ACHS (call no. 608.1, 1972-1975), however, shows that it actually appeared in the Fall 1973 edition, 2-6, Sarah W. R. Ewing author. In the same hand below the title is written, "(healing spring)," followed by another line which reads, "(Dr. Smith discovered curative waters in Egg Harbor City in 1859.)" Alternate years are given in the article. While reading, please keep in mind that this was published in 1973. Words in brackets were added by this editor.

The Remarkable Dr. Charles Smith and his Neutral Water Health Resort

The old 1903 photograph in the superintendent's office of Atlantic County's juvenile detention home in Egg Harbor City, New Jersey showed Dr. Smith "taking the waters" of his own spa. He was surrounded by fifteen admiring patients. All of them, waist-deep in the water of Landing Creek, were enveloped in the same turn-of-the-century black wool bathing suits, yet the doctor's figure stood out far beyond the others.ⁱ

Stocky and only medium height, with an almost military bearing, he might have been a Prussian general. Shrewd gray eyes, almost hidden beneath a wide-brimmed straw hat, stared at me, demanding attention, and a long, luxuriantly curly, white beard hung below his waist, its point floating gently on the stream. Father Abraham, I thought.

Seconds later I was sure of it. A 1906 newspaper article from the Philadelphia Inquirer informed me that Dr. Smith was born in 1776, the year our Declaration of Independence was signed.

"I'm a hundred and thirty years old today," Dr. Smith told the reporter on September 2, 1906, and, according to him, his longevity was due to "mystic powers from the distillation of cedar water [not the usual mineral spring] in the creek" which ran through his health resort. This was his "liquid power for restoring youth to the aged and health to the invalid," and he, himself, was its shining example....

He was a canny promotor, not only for the resort which he built at the site of his miracle, where Landing Creek crosses London Avenue in Egg Harbor City, but for himself. In 1908, a booklet, published by the "Deutsche Tag Feier" of Egg Harbor City informed everyone in German that:

Among the rare wonders of nature one can, without doubt, also count nature's healing spring of Egg Harbor City. It was discovered in 1859 by Dr. Charles Smith. The water had the special quality that it did not contain minerals and therefore has wonderful healing powers in that it extracts the illness causing materials from the body of the bather. Even in winter, when other water freezes in ice, it remains in a warm state. To let the sick benefit from the advantages of these waters Dr. Smith built a beautifully furnished sanatorium, and many people regained their health there which they were not able to find anywhere else....

In 1905, the year Egg Harbor City celebrated its fiftieth birthday, Dr. Smith....gave a more realistic date, 1897, for his own first use of the water....ⁱⁱ

The resort was incorporated in 1905, and the new company "deepened and improved the grounds situated along the stream of Neutral Water...by excavating new Channels for bathing and the erection of new buildings *** including an enclosed pool, sun-parlor, mud, sand and vapor baths for medical and curative purposes."....^{iii iv}

After Dr. Smith's death, the resort survived almost intact because Atlantic County's Board of Chosen Freeholders used it as a juvenile detention home. [Beginning in 1927] the small, separate sleeping quarters, used long ago by Dr. Smith's patients, [housed] Atlantic County boys and girls, and its large recreation area [became] a haven for rehabilitation.

Today, in the summer of 1973, Atlantic County is building a new detention home, Harborfields, and [the curiosity of] Richard Cohen, its director of Educational and Psychological Services...about one of the buildings, Mr. Smith's Vapor Baths, led us directly into this fascinating bit of South Jersey history.

"We call it the Carousel Building," Mr. Cohen explained, pointing to the small almost round building on the west side of London Avenue, "and it's going to make a splendid art gallery."

Not over thirty feet in diameter, this unusual building has actually sixteen sides at ground level, each with its own large double-hung window, while the second floor, one-half the size, has eight sides with eight large windows. Above, this, a cupola, constructed of the same fancy fish-scale shingles as the rest of the building, rises to a gentle point...

Continued on page 6

Looking Back through the Files.....continued

There is no other building like it in all South Jersey...Guests, fresh from the Serpentine Waters and a brisk walk on the grounds to stir circulation, were required to sit in its sun-filled rooms.^v

Across the street, in the old-fashioned kitchen of the sanatorium, kettles of plain, hearty foods were cooked atop a huge, black coal stove, and at mealtimes patients were required to eat only one food at a time, that is meat only until meat was gone, then each vegetable, and so on. All food was eaten without salt.

There was an elixir, too, which Dr. Smith concocted from indigenous roots, perhaps an old Indian remedy....

Mrs. Kitty Holendorf of Egg Harbor City remembers the resort well, even the original sanatorium which burned around the time of World War I. The present one [1973] was built immediately on the site of the first....

A long, wide cement walk led directly from the front entrance to the stream, ending in four cement steps where patients began their trek through Dr. Smith's "Fountain of Youth," wading slowly against the current around the entire "S" curve twice a day, winter or summer. To make it more effective, the clever doctor devised a way to provide a greater flow; locks were placed under the Claudia Avenue bridge, where the stream left his grounds^{vi}, while a pump and water wheel were installed in a small frame building at the beginning of the "S" curve. They were worked by hand.

Mrs. Holdendorf often waded through its four-foot depth....

As his resort on London Avenue prospered...He [Dr. Smith] began to invest his profits in land, and records of the County Clerk's office in Mays Landing show that he accumulated more than six hundred lots within Egg Harbor City within the first two decades of this century....

...on October 6, 1913 Egg Harbor City leased the "City Park," including Gloucester Lake,^{vii} to Dr. Smith for a period of fifty years. He was to have complete jurisdiction over the entire lake and park until October 6, 1963!....

On October 10, 1918, Dr. Smith leased "the premises known as the Bungalo Hotel situate in the City Park" to Charles Regensberg for ten years at an annual rent of \$216.00. It was to be used for a hotel business only, nor could there be gaming or selling intoxicating liquors on Sunday....

His "Fountain of Youth" failed him soon after this, for on September 1, 1921, he sold "all this real estate owned by him or by the Neutral Water Health Resort Company to Henry Wimberg of Egg Harbor City," reserving only a room for himself and a nurse in the sanatorium and the privilege of eating in its dining room.

There were two exceptions contained within this deed. One was his lease with the city for the city park, and the other was a property at Washington and Campe Streets which he sold fifteen days later to Florence Davison of Egg Harbor City.

The following year, on October 1, 1922, Dr. Smith's last paper is recorded in the County Clerk's office. He released Henry Wimberg from the 1921 agreement for the consideration of \$1500.00.

Sometime between this release and February 15, 1926, Dr. Smith died.^{viii} On this date, "Albert E. Smith and Emma A. Smith, wife, of the City of Philadelphia *** heirs at law of Dr. Charles Smith deceased" sold seven lots of Garden Block No. 4 to Henry and Anna Wimberg...

[The sanitarium site has been placed on the state and federal registers of historic places – Barbara Butterhof Rheault, "The Legacy of Dr. Charles Smith's Neutral Walter Health Resort."]

ⁱ [It is interesting to note that Union Creek was used in place of Landing Creek throughout the *South Jersey Magazine* article.]

ⁱⁱ George F. Breder, publisher, 1855–1905, *Golden Jubilee, Official Souvenir of Egg Harbor City, New Jersey, Its Past and Present*, is housed in ACHS Vertical File, Egg Harbor City #3.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Another pamphlet, *The Fountain of Youth*, Atlantic City, NJ: Daily Union Job Print, no date (ACHS Vertical File, Egg Harbor City) says that Dr. Smith discovered the Fountain of Youth at Egg Harbor City as early as Nov. 17, 1836, while traveling with a gunning party of six. Tired and thirsty, they came upon a "brook of fresh water." Dr. Smith disrobed, took a bath and persuaded the others to fill their canteens with water. All were refreshed. They marked the place with stakes beside the brook, remarking that none felt tired on their walk back to Salem. In 1858, Dr. Smith confirmed the location of the brook while viewing a map of the newly developed Egg Harbor City. After 1870, he "decided to take up the water in Egg Harbor City...Since then he has used it once a week, and has become thirty years younger in looks and ability." The pamphlet's Preface states, "We have Dr. Smith's sanction to publish this pamphlet."

^v Today, this building, called the Roundhouse Museum, is home to the Egg Harbor City Historical Society, 533 London Ave., Egg Harbor City; *Egg Harbor City Historical Society Roundhouse Museum Dedication, October 6, 1993*, ACHS Vertical File, Egg Harbor City #2.

^{vi} Sarah Ewing probably meant Claudius St. According to Barbara Butterhof Rheault, "The Legacy of Dr. Charles Smith's Neutral Walter Health Resort," *Roundhouse Museum Dedication, Oct. 6, 1993*, the facilities were located along London Avenue between Claudius and Campe Streets.

Looking Back through the Files.....continued

vii Gloucester Lake was created by a dam for water power at Gloucester Furnace, an iron furnace which operated from 1785 to 1848. When the furnace was active, about 600 people lived nearby in “fine houses along one side of the reservoir (Gloucester Lake). Today it looks inhospitable!” Dick Colby, *Historic Walks In and Around Egg Harbor City*, Egg Harbor City Historical Society, May 2017, (ACHS Vertical File, Egg Harbor City #3).

viii The following death notice, which could be that of the subject Dr. Smith, was found in the ACHS Obituary Collection, Scrapbook #4, Joseph Moore Clippings, 1902-1933. It reads: “SMITH – At Egg Harbor, N.J. on Mar. 30, 1923. Dr. Charles Smith. Relatives and friends, also members of Newark Lodge of Elks, 21, are invited to attend funeral services from his late residence, 67 Thomas street, Newark, N.J. on Tuesday morning at 11 o'clock. Interment at Fresh Ponds, N.J.” While various sources cite different residences for Dr. Smith, further investigation is needed to determine if this is indeed the correct Dr. Smith.



L-R: Roundhouse, Egg Harbor City, ACHS photo file #1929; Dr. Smith's Hospital, Egg Harbor City, ACHS photo file #1929; Smith's Fountain of Youth, ACHS photo file #2358



Spotlight on the Shelves

a treasure hiding in plain sight... by Brittani Mazzone

Located in our vertical files, within the 1972 edition of *Partners Police and Public*, you will find an advertisement for the gone, but not forgotten, Galletta's Market on Black Horse Pike at Cardiff Circle. From 1953 to the early 1980s, Tony Galetta and his sons, Natale and Frank, operated the popular market in Egg Harbor Township. They specialized in sandwiches and homemade sausage, according to the March 13, 2018 issue of *The Press of Atlantic City*. The market was originally a fruit stand, but became a full-service market when Nate and Frank came back from serving in the Army during WWII and Korea. The Galletta's helped many families in need through their grocery business and personal endeavors. After the store closed, they built a butcher shop behind their house where Frank continued to make sausage and to butcher meats for friends and relatives. The market is remembered fondly by longtime residents of Egg Harbor Township and was the main source for those who otherwise may not have had access to food. Pictured is the original Galletta's analog clock which can still be visited at Fricano's Storybook Land, one of the Township's most unique and beloved attractions. The Atlantic County Veterans Museum in Estell Manor recently received a donation from Cpt. Frank Galletta, consisting of his photo album from Germany, service items, and course certificates from his storied military and civilian career as a cook.



Then & Now!

Then & Now is a regular feature in our Newsletter, showcasing some of the photos in the ACHS collection.

Early Bargaintown had a small one room school house 18'x16', that was located along Patcong Creek on what is today called Mill Road. The teacher taught all eight grades and the room was heated with a pot belly stove in the center of the room, with outside bathroom and water pump. Students sat on benches and used hand held slates and chalk to do their work. The older boys had to keep the fire burning in the cold winter months.

The location of this early school is now the entrance to Lakeside Condominiums. Patcong Creek was diverted when the Garden State Parkway was built.



**ATLANTIC COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**



907 Shore Road
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**MEMBERSHIP
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**ATLANTIC COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**



Where Atlantic County History Comes to Life



Our Mission:

- To collect and preserve historical materials exemplifying the events, places, and lifestyles of the people of Atlantic County and southern New Jersey.
- To encourage the study of history and genealogy.
- To provide historical and genealogical information to our membership and the general public.