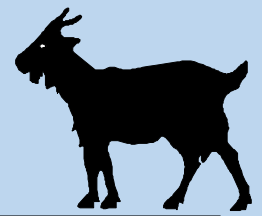


# Nannygoats



Vol. 20, Issue 4

Newsletter of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society

Fall/Winter 2022

*In October of last year, the Society was delighted to receive a very special donation from Edison resident Claudia Campbell-Matland; two boxes of artifacts and informational binders related to the International Technidyne Corporation (ITC), a company founded in Edison that produced high-technology medical products. Campbell-Matland worked for ITC from 1994 to 2014 and, understanding the importance of the company's founder and technological developments, presented them to the Society to ensure their preservation. We sincerely thank Campbell-Matland for her foresight and generosity, and are pleased to share here a summary document developed by the Society's Archivist, Jennifer Warren, that provides an excellent context for understanding the donation's importance.*

The International Technidyne Corporation (ITC) is a company that was founded in 1969 by Michael Mintz from his garage on Dale Drive in North Edison, and it is an important part of Edison history. Mintz is one of many great inventors who have emerged from Edison. In fact, Thomas Edison is the only person from Edison that holds more patents than Michael Mintz. A native of Chicago, Michael Mintz graduated with a degree in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He eventually settled in Edison and worked at the Purolator Company in Rahway, but he decided to quit this job because he was dissatisfied with corporate business.

In need of some income, Mintz began speaking to his neighbor Joseph Sherber, who was the administrator of the John F.

Kennedy Medical Center, and he introduced Mintz in 1967 to two of his chief pathologists: Dr. Stefan Epstein and Dr. Henry Schriever. Both doctors were in need of a modern medical measuring device that could test the time it took for

blood to coagulate or clot during surgery. Heparin, a blood thinner, is typically used before surgical procedures to prevent blood clots. But before 1967, the only way to measure the amount of heparin in the blood was through a hand-held procedure called the Lee-White method that was both time-consuming and prone to error, which could be

potentially fatal for the patient. The doctors thought that if the time could be shortened and the measurements could be more accurate, it would save valuable time in open-heart surgery.

After meeting with Dr. Epstein and Dr.

## Michael Mintz: Edison's Other Inventor



Courier-News photo by George R. Smith  
International Technidyne Corp.'s main product is the Hemochron, a portable device that measures blood clotting ability. It was invented 21 years ago by chairman Michael Mintz, right. At left is Gerald Feldman, president of International Technidyne.

*Continued on Page 4*

The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society was founded in 1974 with the primary purpose of promoting an interest in and appreciation of the history of the Borough of Metuchen and the Township of Edison.



# Fall Cleanups & Tours

Thanks to a cadre of volunteers and dedicated leadership, fall cleanups were held at both the Piscatawaytown Burial Ground in Edison and the Colonial Cemetery in Metuchen this past October. On October 22, 2022, volunteers gathered at the Piscatawaytown Burial Ground on Woodbridge Avenue in Edison, adjacent to the St. James Episcopal Church, gathering and bagging branches and trash. At the end of the cleanup, Walter Stochel led a tour of this significant historic site, established ca. 1695. The cleanup and tour were organized by the Edison Greenways, a non-profit group that has

played a major role in the preservation of open space in the Edison area.

On November 12 and 13, an Archaeology Open House at the Piscatawaytown Burial Ground was hosted by the Edison Greenways Group and the Archaeological Society of New Jersey, with the cooperation of Edison Township. Visitors toured the site and observed field work conducted by professional archaeologists. The weekend of events was free of charge, and able to happen through grant funding provided by the Middlesex County Board of Commissioners through a grant from the Middlesex County Cultural and Arts Trust Fund. See the back page for more information about presentation of findings on December 17 at the Edison Main Library.

On October 29, the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society organized a cleanup at the Metuchen Colonial Cemetery. The weather was splendid and volunteers amassed a huge pile of leaves to be carted away by Public Works. Many thanks to Charlie Leckenby for his leadership in organizing, to Walter Stochel for providing a tour following the cleanup, and to the Reuter Family for providing goody bags for the volunteers.



## Membership Renewal Season is Here

Watch your mailbox for your annual membership renewal letter! Dues provide the primary support for the work of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society, and therefore are extremely critical to the Society's operations. Members receive our quarterly newsletter by mail, and advance notice of events and programs, and the satisfaction of knowing they are helping to "Save the Past for the Future.". Not yet a member? Visit our website for more info and an online link to join!

### Membership Levels

|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Active: \$30            | Couples: \$50     |
| Supporting/Family: \$60 | Patron: \$125.00  |
| Sponsor: \$250          | Benefactor: \$500 |

### Shop Our Local History Store

In addition to reprinting historic photographs from our archives, the Society has created a number of original items for sale, including books, postcards, magnets, research guides, coloring books, reproduction maps, tee shirts, and prints.



#### Published by

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The name of the newsletter, "**Nannygoats**," is taken from the title of a collection of **anecdotes**, articles, reminiscences, and letters compiled by photographer J. Lloyd Grimstead. He took more than 2,800 photographs of the Metuchen-Edison area, mostly during the 1930s, and make up 80 percent of the Society's photographic collection. The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society dedicates this publication to Lloyd Grimstead, as a way of honoring him for preserving so much of our local history.

*The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt charitable organization.*

## ***New in the Archives***

Listed here are just *some* of the many recent acquisitions. While we cannot accept historic items that are unrelated to our local history, we are always interested in acquiring originals and/or copies of photographs, ephemera, books, etc. relevant to our collective past. If you don't want to part with an original item, we'd be delighted to either photograph or scan it. Contact us at [info@metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org](mailto:info@metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org) with any questions.

- Two digital photographs of 6 Voorhees Place, Metuchen, ca. 1930s (donated by Byron Sondergard).
- Boyhood Days in Old Metuchen (2nd ed.) by Dr. Trumbull Marshall, © 1930, reprinted 1977; Guide to Historic Sites in Central New Jersey by the Raritan Millstone Heritage Alliance, Inc.; Images of America: The Delaware and Raritan Canal by Linda J. Barth, © 2022; Uncommon Clay: New Jersey's Architectural Terra Cotta Industry Cornelius Low House/Middlesex County Museum, text by Hillary Murtha, © 2004-2006; Edison: A Life of Invention by Paul Israel, © 1998; photograph of the "Indians," the 1959 Metuchen Little League Champions; program for Legion Varieties: A Presentation of Fugle-Hummer Post No. 65, April 1954 (anonymous donations).
- Copy of Metuchen Recorder, vol. 89-49 [12-08-1982] (donated by Carol Kolbus).
- Baseball cap for the Arnolt Bros., Inc.: The Diligent Diggers of Dignified Dirt (donated by Nancy Jessen).
- Photograph of horse-drawn carriage along Main Street with Metuchen Railroad Station and Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge in background, no date (from the Joseph Perrino Collection via Daniel Granato).
- Collage of 8th Grade photographs for Linda Hume, Gary Harris, Ray Black, Jack Williams, Eddie Pochick, and Bob Belluscio, 1960; glass drink stirrer and postcard for the Montagna's Tavern and Restaurant / Metuchen Recreation Centre, Metuchen, ca. 1950s-1960s (donated by Lynn LaBrecque-Milano).
- First Day envelopes and postcards celebrating New Jersey State Tercentenary [10-03-1964], First Day of Issue, Metuchen, NJ (The Brainy Boro) celebrating 65 years of progress (1900-1965) Country Fair Day [10-02-1965], and Fifth Annual Metuchen Country Fair [09-28-1968] (donated by Gwen Roseman).
- Scrapbook, ledger with meeting minutes, and constitution and by-laws for the Friends of the Library of Edison, 340 Plainfield Avenue [1960s]; invitation to children's room opening of the Edison Free Public Library [03-16-1967]; library labels and "The Case of the Famished Bookworm" booklet produced by the Edison Friends of the Library [ca. 1964]; program of dedication for the North Edison Branch of Edison Township Free Public Library, 77 Grove Avenue [10-24-1971]; photographs from the Friends of the Edison Public Library Annual Book Sale, North Edison Branch [05-07-1994] (donated by Lynne Leitner).

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## ***Martin Spritzer Collection***



Martin Spritzer (1927-2019) was a lifelong civil rights activist, community advocate, and pillar of the Metuchen area community. A generous bequest from his family to the Metuchen Public Library has been used to create a special collection of books and DVDs focused on equity, civil rights, and anti-racism.

To learn more about Martin Spritzer and view a portion of the collection, visit [www.metuchenlibrary.org/spritzer](http://www.metuchenlibrary.org/spritzer). The collection is also currently on display at the library.

*Continued from Page 1*

Schriever, Michael Mintz immediately starting working on a new device called the hemochronometer (later shortened to Hemochron), which was the first automated blood coagulation timer that could properly monitor blood clotting during surgery. According to Michael Mintz, he had created a working model within a couple of weeks that could mechanically test how much heparin is in the patient's blood more rapidly and accurately than could be done by hand. He spent the next couple of years perfecting this portable device. The Hemochron works by mixing blood with various substances, exposing it to surface areas in a glass or plastic tube, and causing it to clot. The time this process takes is measured and indicated on a digital display: the more heparin in the blood, the longer the clotting takes. This invention proved revolutionary for the medical field.

Joel Mintz, the brother of Michael Mintz, had moved to Edison in the late 1960s to help his brother improve the Hemochron machine and set up their own company called the International Technidyne Corporation (ITC). After they developed a marketable model of the Hemochron, the brothers began selling this device by entertaining hospital officials and surgeons from all over the world at Mintz's residence on Dale Drive. The device has become an intrinsic part of surgical operations, particularly open-heart surgery, as well as used for kidney patients on dialysis machines. It is now used by numerous hospitals worldwide.

When the company outgrew Mintz's

garage, it was moved to a small building at 138 Forrest Street in Metuchen around 1971. The company's continued growth resulted in a move to a new plant constructed at 23 Nevsky Street in Edison in 1981. They then expanded to another nearby addition on Olsen Avenue. Over the years, the ITC grew from a two-man operation to become a medium-sized company of over 500 employees based in Edison and Piscataway. The ITC plant in



Edison included facilities for research and development, machining, manufacturing, marketing, and distribution. Michael Mintz played a large role in the ITC's creation and manufacture of several other medical devices, including finger and heel blood-sampling incision devices. These devices included the Tenderfoot (heel incision), the Tenderlett (finger incision), and the Surgicutt (measuring bleeding times for pre-surgical screens). The company also upgraded their Hemochron system

with a portable, battery-operated device called the Hemochron Jr.. Even the plastic test tube caps were manufactured at the Edison plant using their own injection molding machines that ran 24 hours a day and were monitored by phone at night. The ITC has been recognized as one of the worldwide leaders in blood testing and monitoring.

Michael Mintz sold the company in 1991 to the Thermo Electric Corporation in Waltham, Massachusetts for \$32 million. In 1993, he and his family retired to Boca Raton, Florida where he pursued his passion for flying. Michael Mintz was

inducted into the New Jersey Congress and Inventors Hall of Fame in Newark as the Independent Inventor of the Year in 1995. Tragically, Michael Mintz, his wife Enid, and his brother Joel died in small-plane crash near Delray Beach, Florida in January 1998 during rough weather. According to Dr. Henry Schriever, Michael Mintz was “more than just an inventor. He’s a multi-talented person. If you wanted to pick somebody able to create a company based on his own intellect and talents, it would be Mike. He’s one of the ‘one-in-a-million’-type people.”

Following Mintz’s sale of the ITC, the company went through a series of buyouts over the years. It was acquired by Warburg Pincus and merged with Nexus Dx, Inc. in 2010, and then later merged with a California-based company in 2013 to form a new entity called Accriva Diagnostics.



According to Campbell-Matland, the Edison plant was closed in 2015 and the ITC moved to San Diego where it was integrated into Accriva, which has since been sold to a large medical device company.

Although the company has closed, the early contributions of Michael Mintz and the ITC are now preserved in the Society’s archives because of Campbell-Matland’s generous donation. The collection consists of three early versions of the Hemochron device, the Hemrochron Jr., test tubes with Edison-manufactured caps, and other incision devices including Tenderfoot, Tenderlett, and Surgicutt. Also included in the collection are four informational binders of pictures, newspaper articles, letters, scientific/medical publications on the devices, and product literature from the early 1970s through the mid-2000s.

*Images*

Page 1: Photograph and caption from a 1990 *Courier News* article.

Pages 4 and 5, Top to Bottom, all taken by Campbell-Matland: An early Hemochron device from the 1970s with a corresponding test tube, view of three early Hemochron monitors and test tubes with Edison-manufactured plastic caps, and view of the Tenderfoot heel-stick incision device for premature babies and corresponding instructions.



# HISTORY IN A MINUTE

Most local residents are aware that the legendary illusionist David Copperfield (born David Seth Kotkin) grew up in Metuchen. Not as many know that his family owned a clothing shop at 451 Main Street (where the Jewelry Doctor is now located). Hyman Kotkin, David's father, was the proprietor of "Korby's Shop for the Man" from around the time the building was constructed in 1955 until 1962, when the shop was moved to Warren, New Jersey and operated for many more years under the name "Korby's Mens & Boys Shop."

The Kotkins remained living in the Brainy Borough despite the shop's move, and David graduated from Metuchen High School in 1974. He was already on his way to international fame and was very soon after a household name.

Using the digitized copies of the *Metuchen Recorder*, you can read more about David's early career (including shows he performed at Metuchen High School) and see advertisements from Korby's (such as the one below from 1955).

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## James J. Florio

(1937-2022)

Former Governor James J. Florio, age 85, passed away in September of this year following a long career in public service. Society members may remember him and his wife, Lucinda, who lived on Linden Avenue for nearly twenty-five years starting in the mid-1990s. They were often seen at fundraisers, volunteer events, or walking in the neighborhood.

Born in Brooklyn, Florio became a New Jerseyan after 20 years of service in the United States Navy, having achieved the rank of Lt. Commander.

Florio served in the New Jersey Assembly from 1969-1975, the U.S. House of Representatives from 1975-1990, and as Governor of New Jersey from 1990-1994.

Florio is known for writing the 1980 law that created the Superfund program, requiring corporate polluters to fund toxic site cleanups, and had a role in preserving New Jersey's Pinelands by developing the amendment that created the Pinelands National Reserve.

Florio is one of two former New Jersey Governors to live in Metuchen, the other being George Sebastian Silzer (1870-1940). Silzer lived on Graham Avenue for many years following his term from 1923-1926.

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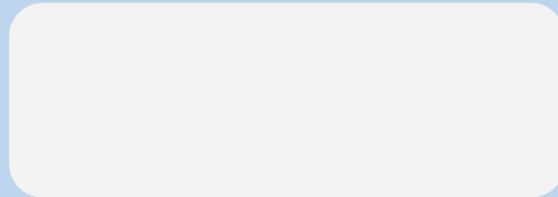
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**Holiday Shopping? Stop by the Historical Society's table at the St. Luke's Christmas Fair on Saturday, December 3 from 10am to 4pm at 17 Oak Avenue in Metuchen.**

**Piscatawaytown Archaeological Findings**  
**Saturday, December 17, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.**  
**Edison Main Library, 340 Plainfield Avenue, Edison**

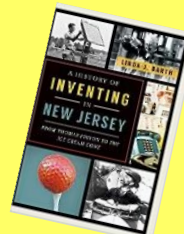
All are welcome to the Presentation of Findings from the November 2022 Archaeology Open House and Dig on Saturday, December 17, 2022, hosted by the Edison Greenways Group and the Archaeological Society of New Jersey hosted by the Edison Greenways Group and the Archaeological Society of NJ.

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**A History of Inventing in NJ**

**JANUARY 14, 2023 AT 1PM**

Join the Society for its 2023 Annual Meeting at the Edison First Aid Squad #2 (848 New Dover Road in Edison) on Saturday, January 14, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. Following a brief meeting of elections and updates, Author Linda Barth will present a program exploring the groundbreaking, useful, fun, and even silly inventions with New Jersey roots. Copies of Barth's book, *A History of Inventing in New Jersey, from Thomas Edison to the Ice Cream Cone*, will be available for purchase. Light refreshments will be served at this free program.



**LOCAL HISTORY DAY**

**FEBRUARY 19, 2023**

**1PM TO 4PM**

Come view our photo albums and special exhibits, order reprints, purchase Society merchandise, and commune with fellow history fans at the Metuchen Public Library (480 Middlesex Avenue) on Sunday, February 19, 2023.

