

Thistle



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Spring 2004

The Four Corners

by Hope Henshaw

The April 1942 edition of the *Short Hills Junior Service League News* magazine featured the following article by then league member Hope Henshaw. This copy of the league magazine was donated to the historical society by resident Rosalie Farber.

Millburn may look like a typical sleepy little New Jersey town, but lots of life goes on behind its decorous Main Street façade; especially at the intersection where Main and Millburn Avenues cross. On the corner where the United Drug Company now stands (Editor's note: That is the corner where Starbucks is now) was the pièce de resistance of Millburn, -- Smith's Hotel, -- famous for its milk punch and its chicken dinners. Many a jury was picked there and many a politician was nominated for future greatness in New Jersey's politics by the men who gathered there from all over the state. Millburn was a "nice drive" from Newark on a Sunday afternoon, as well as being the half-way point between Bernardsville and Newark for the tallyho, and for farmers who were bringing their cattle and produce to market.

There would often be a "stylish turnout" of horses and buggies in the front yard of the hotel while a herd of cattle milled around in

the back yard. (The horses in the picture belonged to C.T. Russel and were the center of admiration wherever they went, as they were coal black with white feet and were driven by a proud old Negro looking equally resplendent with his black coat and white britches.) (Editor's note: The horses belonged to W. I. Russell, of Sunnyside, then Redstone, in Short Hills).



On the opposite corner from the hotel was Munday (Editor's note: The author means Mundy as can barely be seen in the photo above. This is the corner that now houses Gito.) and Roberts' General Store with its long low porch where the farm wagons used to back in to be loaded up with supplies.

(continued on page 3)

Recent Acquisitions

The historical society is very grateful for donations of local artifacts and memorabilia from generous residents and/or members. We are happy to be able to preserve, share, and use for reference these relics of Millburn-Short Hills history.

Because of the increasing number of donations, often made outside of the museum, we may have neglected to recognize every donation here. Please help us maintain accurate records on these donations, by alerting us if we neglected to include your donation here. In addition to making sure we don't forget to thank you, we need to confirm that the information is properly recorded in our database. Our sincerest thanks to the following people for enriching the lives of all residents by their donations:

From Karen Eastman Bigos, a framed print of the Short Hills train station museum, from art by resident Marilyn White

From Bill Swinson, a framed document commending Ernest Smithers for his township committee service from 1908-1914

From Bill Carlough, hardcover Canoe Brook Country Club centennial book

From Rosalie Farber, a May 1941 Item, a June 1964 Breck's store gift certificate, a May 1942 Junior Service League booklet

From Anonymous, MHS 1928 yearbook, MHS class of 1928 commencement invitation, small Investor's Savings penny bank, glass paperweight from Geyer Reaktor (525 Millburn Ave), Tepper's hat box, 1890s letter from a Short Hills business, 1907 St. Stephen's How to Cook book, 1917 D,L,&W commuter ticket for Thos J Watson (founder of IBM), metal A&S (of Short Hills) charge plate, 1917 letter from E.N. Todd of Old Short Hills Rd, 1976 Erie Lackawanna Short Hills-Newark train schedule

From Marilyn Pfeifer Mackenzie, an April 1963 Easter Day booklet from Christ Church

From Phil Marshall, an August Wittkop beer bottle (blue)

From Nancy Bauer Boucher, MHS yearbooks for 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, and 1956

From Nancy Matthews, 1908 and 1912 savings/bank books -- found in the walls of her house

From Ivy Bernstein, a brown man's hat and the original receipt for it, for C.P. Snow -- found in her attic

From Jim Morrison, a 1928 social register, 1977 platform tennis championship tribute book (some local residents)

From John Murray, 1937 and 1938 Millburn NJ 'Private Scavenger' license-type plates, "Fireplace in Lobby" Paper Mill Playhouse postcard, several 'after' photos, to accompany the 'before' photos for the Item

From Vic Benes, a celluloid-handled bottle opener -- found on his (early) property

From Linda Hanwacker, a size nine dress form

From Leigh Gifford, This is Millburn
Township LWV paperback book, 1970 May
Fair calendar, 1998 Christ Church profile,
Spring 2003 Millburn-Short Hills magazine,
1957 softcover Millburn centennial book

*Note: Will the donor of the local-politics
scrapbook please contact us! The scrapbook
became separated from the donor paperwork
and needs to be properly recorded.*



(The Four Corners, cont'd from pg. 1)

Part of that original structure is still standing for it was jacked up to become the second story of Kaiser's Drugstore. Behind Munday's (*sic*) was Lighthipe's hat factory which reached from the corner to where the Kemmerer stables now stand. This was the big industry of the town; the hat makers made three and four times what other workers made and their wives made a nice little sum of money by trimming them, (the hats, I mean!)

But all this was ended with the big fire of 1906. On July the eighth at ten minutes of six, everyone who could was out watching the baseball game, for Millburn had been undefeated all season and there was great interest in the results. So when the factory whistle blew a little bit early no one thought anything of it, and when they finally *did* get into action it was too late; the building was destroyed and Millburn lost its only game of the season!

Many of the people who had worked in the hat factory went to work in a billiard ball and dice factory which also burned down not long afterward. In fact so many of the mills burned that there is a popular theory that that is how Millburn got its name. Although it also

means "mill by the stream," so you can take your choice. (*Editor's note: The latter meaning is the authentic one.*)

But fire wasn't the only thing that raged around these four corners. Millburn had a flood, too, the same year as the Johnstown catastrophe and the people along Millburn Avenue and Taylor Street had to take to boats. The store which was hardest hit was the bakery which literally "cast its bread upon the waters"; loaves of bread turned up in the oddest places for some time afterwards.

To get back to our four corners; where the bank is now (*Editor's note: This is the tall brick building at the intersection of Millburn and Main, which houses the ice cream store today*) was formerly an open lot which afforded a lovely view for the hotel guests; of the pond a little further down, and the nearest building was Lonergan's store on the other side of the stream. Originally there was a blacksmith shop there owned by the same family, then came the butcher shop, and twenty-two years ago the hardware store.

McCollum's General Store stood on the remaining corner and the descendants of the original family still own that site, too. McCollum's was the first store of its day that delivered and their wagon was a familiar sight as it lumbered around the countryside.

The big event of the year was the twenty-five mile bicycle race from Irvington to Millburn on Decoration Day when Millburn's population would increase overnight to twice its normal size. And if the present trend towards bicycle riding continues, Millburn may soon be treated to the daily spectacle of the great "two-mile bicycle race for Short Hills women" - hurrying to get to market and back before lunch.

Know Your Neighbors

(from the April 1942 Junior League publication)

City dwellers never have neighbors; the family in apartment 6B can live and die and the occupants of 6A will be sublimely unconscious of it all. In the country our neighbors are an integral part of our daily life, for better, for worse, till the moving van do us part. Here are pertinent facts about some of your neighbors; do you know the answers?

1. What generous neighbor, born on Millburn Avenue, has done more than anyone else to beautify our surroundings?
2. Which neighbor has been a famous composer and instructor in the Scottish art of baggiping?
3. What prominent Short Hills resident should feel most at home on Fifth Avenue and 50th Street?
4. What Short Hills physicist has been honored with the Nobel Prize?
5. Among the eleven or twelve thousand residents in Millburn Township, who is the least affected by the present tire shortage?
6. What outstanding neighbor has been decorated by the Emperor of Japan?
7. Which of our neighbors is editor of a nationally known magazine?
8. What prominent Millburn businessman studied under Gutzon Borglum (*Mt Rushmore sculptor*)?
9. Who has recently had more fun on the Newark Dumps than any other Township dweller?
10. Which family owns the only farm in Millburn Township?
11. Which of our neighbors invented a "sounding board" which enables a singer to hear his voice exactly as it sounds to his audience?
12. Who won more honors annually during the third week of March than any one else in town?
13. Who has been responsible for the wearing of more clean white gloves than any one else?
14. To which one of us are our feathered friends most indebted?
15. Which two neighbors have been most honored by the legal profession?

(Please turn to page 7 for the answers)

BUDGET.	
MILLBURN, JAN. 8, 1942	
NOTICES.	
Dogs are being poisoned in Springfield, but so far nothing but worthless cases have resulted.	
The week of League is being observed in all churches by Services every evening Saturday excepted.	
Leave your names at Honey Overst for job Printing. Done in first class style and at low prices.	
Whitney & Overstreet have secured largesse in Great Falls in Millburn, Springfield, and vicinity.	
The excellent R. H. Wade Post Office, A. D. will install offices for another year. A full attendance is requested.	
Mr. Clark Thomas is the happy recipient of a New Year's present in the shape of a baby daughter born Wednesday last.	
Which night services were held in the R. C. Church Springfield on Tuesday consisting of singing at 7:30 and lasting until 10:30 P. M.	
The new factory on the site of the old Morgan mill destroyed by fire 11 years ago is almost completed and will be ready for business in a few weeks.	
Henry Whitehead of Short Hills, received per Adams Express from Helen, Missouri, a new pair which is a top one, and deserves the long ride in its first class condition.	
Clubs had a shooting took place at Wyoming, on Friday. A large number of sportsmen participated. Some very remarkable scores were made. Hot fire went of since we missed also news.	
George Bunnell Kamp, formerly proprietor of Springfield Hotel and later of site at Spring Lake, finally has leased the B. L. & W. R. B. Hotel at South Orange for 20 years from April 1st next.	
Mr. C. Thompson has returned from his visit to Connecticut. And returns a very pleasant time through the Thermometer was below zero during his stay.	
Messrs. W. McCullum and David Deegan, Proprietors from Millburn have received notice of meeting of the Trustees at their home in Newark to take action about the Ayrton fire.	
The sensational reports which ap-	
Revival Meetings.	
Messrs. Eaborn, Wolfe and others from Marlborough will be in attendance and Sunday, at the General services now in progress at the R. C. Church in Springfield.	
Wedding.	
Mr. Raythi V. Wilson and Miss Rose Johnson have had and consisted of Mrs. Rose of Lane Church, Mr. Father George George officiating. A large company of friends and relatives witnessed the happy couple united forever.	
Societies.	
On Thursday evening speakers who held at the residence of Mr. Freeman Kent, on Melrose street, Millburn, and at Mr. Campbell on Springfield avenue, Springfield. Both were very largely attended, festivities lasting late up until ten o'clock hour in the New Year.	
Mad Dog.	
A Sheplard Dog belonging to Mr. Johnson of Springfield, was taken on Sunday and Monday several miles in Springfield cause around Millburn and left the rest in the hands of his owner. The dog was taken to Mr. C. H. Holt, Iron, Chemist, and on the side of William Church. The animal was held while passing through Short Hills.	
Fire at Whittier Bridge.	
On Friday morning about three o'clock the building manufactured by a Leather Board industry by Mr. H. E. H. and later by a representative by Mr. H. H. H. in that portion of Millburn known as the "Hill" was discovered to be on fire and was totally consumed together with its contents. The fire which was of an incendiary origin caused a loss of about \$2,500 on which there was no insurance.	
New Year's Reception.	
On New Year's day the ladies of Short Hills, had a reception at Music Hall which was very largely attended by the able of Short Hills and vicinity. After the reception a dinner was indulged until a very late hour. The Hall, which was very tastefully decorated with plants from the generosity of Messrs. J. H. Fisher and Edward Hartburn, and the elegant costumes of the ladies made a scene which will long be remembered by all who were so fortunate as to be there.	
Fire on Springfield.	
On Monday of last week Mrs. An-	

The 1886 Budget was an early local paper that will shortly be available online at the library Web site. This column is a sample of the news of that era. The online files will be searchable and available to anyone with Internet access, thanks to the library (see page 11 of this Thistle).

IT WAS ALL WOODS AND LAND

In May 1983, historical society volunteer Julie Bohn interviewed Johanna Marcantonio Gill, who was then just shy of 92 years of age and who had been born in Millburn. Johanna's daughter, Louise Gill, still lives in Millburn and has graciously given us permission to reprint her mother's oral history interview.

Mrs. Gill: (I am) Johanna Marcantonio Gill. My maiden name was Marcantonio and I was born in Millburn and lived here all my life and I will be 92 next month, on June the 22nd.

Julie: You were telling me about your dad coming here.

Mrs. Gill: My dad came here. He landed in Orange but he got a job on the railroad, timekeeping for the railroaders. At the time very few people could read and write.

Julie: You mentioned that your sister was the first born ...

Mrs. Gill: Then my dad and mother came over and they settled in Millburn and my oldest sister was the first Italian baby born in Millburn. There were so few houses and no other Italians. Later another family came in. I can only remember about 12-15 houses. It was all woods ... land.

Julie: Were there farmers here?

Mrs. Gill: Well, this was sort of a farm. It belonged to Whittingham. Whittingham used to live where Lord and Taylor's is now.

(Editor's note: Lord & Taylor's was on the northeast corner of Millburn Ave and Wyoming Ave - in the Whole Foods shopping area) And all of the South Mountain Estates belonged to Whittingham.

Julie: Did they farm it or was it summer estates?

Mrs. Gill: No, they had a part of it farmed ... they had cows. There was a man who used to live on the estate and his name was Tighe.

Julie: Oh, I see. The same Tighe family that used to live here?

Mrs. Gill: That's right.

Julie: Had most of the people lived in this country a long time? You said your parents came from Italy, but had most of the other people in this community been here?



(The Marcantonio family in front of their Main Street home and store. Prosper and Maria Donato, and Maria's mother Bridget Laurino, are seen here with four of the Marcantonios' daughters.)

Mrs. Gill: Well, some were. There were Irish and German. That's about it. Of course some were old-timers ... some Americans. They called them Americans, you know. That's about all that was here.

Then we went to Italy. We were there about a year and a half or so. Then we came back and we settled at the corner of Main and Taylor Street. My father had an Italian-American grocery store. It was a tavern and a hotel, because anyone that came along could sleep there. He also had a banker's license later on. He was quite a businessman. He was very intellectual.

Julie: Was it then that there were five of you?

Mrs. Gill: About that time I think there were six.

Julie: Were all the families here quite large families? Six isn't large you know, but ...

Mrs. Gill: The American people, they all had four or five children those days.

We had two big stores in the center (of town). One was Mr. Mundy and the other was McCollum Brothers. Those were the two big stores ... and my father's. There were three big stores in town.

Julie: What did they sell?

Mrs. Gill: Everything. General stores sold everything. They even had a little yard goods ... two or three pieces of material.

Julie: Amazing that three people could stay in business. The town was growing.

Mrs. Gill: Well, at the time you didn't go to New York or Newark.

Julie: The railroad was here.

Mrs. Gill: Oh, yes, the railroad was here. They were still working on it further out.

Julie: Well, someone was saying that there were a couple of butcher shops in town.

Mrs. Gill: Oh, yes, there was a butcher there. There was a Waechter ... Mr. Waechter the butcher and ...



(The Waechters in their store at 67 Main St, circa 1920. Photo courtesy of Nancy Wyckoff, from the collection of Sydney Wyckoff.)

Julie: Well, I don't know if it was that Mr. Early I heard about before. He might have been a butcher, too. He had a lot of enterprises too.

Mrs. Gill: I don't remember Mr. Early.

Julie: Then there was a man named Reeves here, too ... apparently where Reeves Circle is. I don't know whether he just owned land ... or what?

Mrs. Gill: I think they owned the land ... Mr. Reeves did. We were young children and we didn't go very far from home at that time.

Julie: What was school like then?

Mrs. Gill: Well, when I was little we went to school over at the firehouse, just for a short time, and then they built the Millburn school across the way. The Millburn Avenue school is now the Schoolhouse Plaza. That's where I went to school.

Julie: And those grades ... they went up to eighth grade? Or to high school?

Mrs. Gill: No, they went up to the fourth grade. It wasn't as big as it is now; there was a small building. And then from there fifth and sixth and the high school was up near where it is now. That's where I went to school. I went to the Millburn Washington School and then from there we went up to the Hobart Avenue School.

Julie: And did you walk?

Mrs. Gill: Oh, sure ... back and forth every day. We took our lunch and we had 45 minutes for lunch.

Julie: And did many people go on further to school or did they just get work?

Mrs. Gill: Well, a very few went on to graduate from high school, then went to college, but very few. I went to business school when I graduated from eighth grade. I didn't go to high school, I went to eighth grade and then I went to business school. And I worked as a bookkeeper.

Julie: Where did you go to business school?

Mrs. Gili: In Newark. They called it Coleridge Business School.

Julie: How did you get to Newark? By train?

Mrs. Gili: Train. Millburn here, then got off at Newark and walked up to school. But my sisters all graduated. Susie and I didn't graduate from high school, but my other sisters all graduated from high school. And Elizabeth took up sewing and Wallace did, too, and then Marie was going to college. She went to college in Trenton and then she got so homesick she couldn't stay.

I don't remember who the people were who got together, but as I say, I was born here. We had our first Catholic church at the corner where the school is now. That's where our first Catholic church was.

Julie: Now, which school?

Mrs. Gili: The Catholic school.

Julie: Oh, the Catholic school. Oh, I didn't realize it was that far up.

Mrs. Gili: Oh, yes. See, we didn't go to Catholic school ... it was too far up to walk. That's why we went to this school. And that's where our little Catholic church was. I was born here and I was baptized in that church and made my first holy communion here. My older sister was married in that church. After that, we had Father Brown and he built the church where it is now. But they call it the old church because it has been renovated and made larger. So, when they built the new church, I was married in the new church in 1912. Then they renovated the church. They made it longer and put the side wings on it. I'm the oldest parishioner; there might be older people than me there, but they haven't been born and lived here all their life and gone to that church all the time.

Later on my father had a horse and carriage. My father was very good to us.

Julie: I was going to say he was quite an entrepreneur.

Mrs. Gili: We had a horse and carriage to get around in.

Julie: Did your mother ever get homesick again and want to go back?

Mrs. Gili: No. After that, she was settled then. After going back she got it out of her system and was settled.

Julie: And I suppose she had her children here.

Mrs. Gili: And then my father being in business ... she helped along, too, you see.

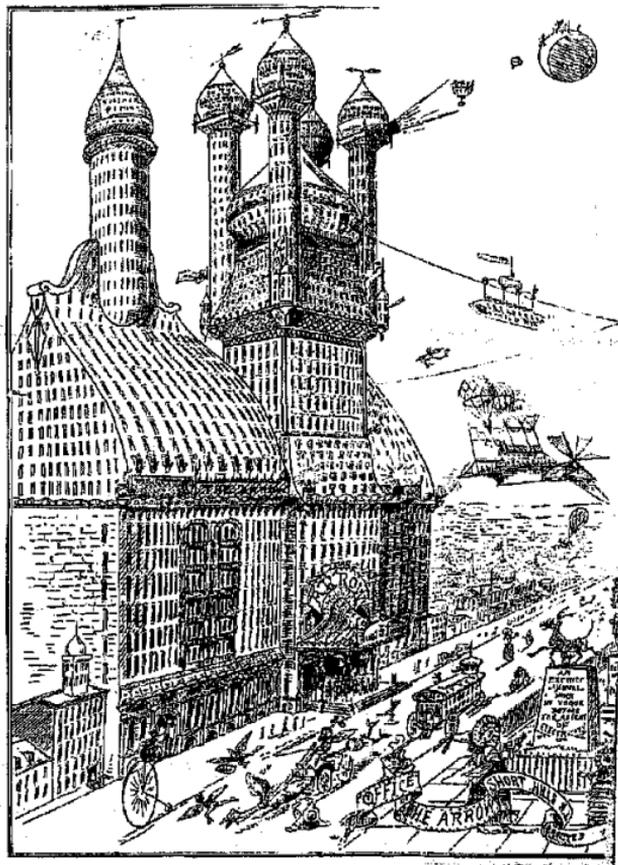
*Answers to
Know Your Neighbors:*

1. Edward S. Pettigrew, of Hillside Avenue
2. James MacDougal
3. J. Andre Foulhoux, architect of Radlo City
4. Clinton J. Davisson of Campbell Road
5. Miss Jane Durand, who walks everywhere
6. Frank B. Jewett
7. Mrs. Harold A. Littledale, editor of Parents Magazine
8. Paul H. Waase
9. Artist Van Dearing Perrine, of Wyoming
10. The MacDougal family of Canoe Brook Farm
11. Harold Burris Meyer of Tulip Lane
12. Mrs. Walter S. Hine, at the annual International Flower Show
13. Miss Emma Florence at her dancing classes
14. To Miss Cora Hartshorn, for her Bird Sanctuary
15. Arthur T. Vanderbilt, Past President American Bar Association and Frederick R. Colie, Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New Jersey.

Back to the Future

This image appeared in the April Fool's edition of *The Arrow*, a short-lived Short Hills newspaper. Although the paper in which this sketch appeared is dated April 1983, it was actually published in

April 1883 and was intended to be representative of what Millburn and Short Hills would be like in 1983.



The wildly popular artist Palmer Cox's imagination ran wild with fantastic things such as an electric railroad car, an elevated railroad, and trips to the North Pole, the moon and even the sun.

SHORT HILLS – A RURAL RETREAT

Joseph J. Felcone, antiquarian bookseller at PO Box 366 in Princeton, NJ 08542, kindly copied and donated a couple of pages for the society's archives, from an 1899 book he is selling, titled Then and Now, a Work of History and Every Day Science, compiled and edited by the Ladies of the Springfield Presbyterian Church. The following article came from the book and was simply titled Short Hills:

"Situated eighteen miles from New York we find one of the prettiest of suburban villages, Short Hills, a rural retreat possessing scenic splendors unsurpassed by any of the numerous pretty places along the line of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad. Comprises at present about eighty modern dwellings, occupied chiefly by New York and Newark business men. It has its own independent water supply and sewerage system, two fine schools, churches, a picturesque casino, a field club, and several small lakes for boating and skating.

Short Hills is situated on the high lands where the Orange Mountains are broken up into a succession of beautiful hills, thus the name, Short Hills. Some two hundred years ago the Indians called this place Little Hills. The natural rolling condition of the country has been preserved, and now if the redman could see the place over which he once held full sway, he would find on each of these little hills a charming modern country home, surrounded by large sloping lawns and beautiful shade trees.



Short Hills and its vicinity are full of Revolutionary traditions. Not far from here the Americans won the two brilliant victories of Springfield over the English and Hessians, and Washington's reserves were thrown forward from Morristown into "the Short Hills." At the foot of one of the noble trees in the place there is a fine spring, at which the American outposts are known to have refreshed themselves. On the rising ground between Short Hills and Summit, the American outposts commanded a view of not only the plain between Short Hills and Elizabeth, but also the valley of the Passaic to the North, so that this outpost could signal up to Morristown any movement of the British forces from Elizabeth. Through Short Hills ran also the old Indian trail from the Highlands of New Jersey to the coast, over which the Indians traveled in summer and fall on their way to the oyster beds and fishing grounds and back. A part of this trail has been preserved and is known as Mimistink Path. (Railroad Employee)"

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2003-2004

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Note: Museum hours are:
Tuesdays from 5:30-7:30,
Wednesdays from 3:30-5:30
& the first Sunday of the month,
from 2:00-4:00

Poking Through

the Archives

Would you like to dig through boxes of some of the seldom-seen photos or acquisitions at the museum? Would you like to learn how to care for some of your family heirlooms? Even if you have only a couple of hours free once in a while, the historical society can use your help conserving or accessioning (adding to the collection) items in the museum. Please call the society at 973-564-9519 and leave a message with your name and number and we will call you back.

Some of the areas that desperately need attention are:

- ❖ oral histories
- ❖ conservation of photos
- ❖ conservation of maps
- ❖ conservation of landscape plans
- ❖ list of plans in collection
- ❖ and much more

Please help
AND
please browse!

Local History Through the Internet

Vic Benes of the historical society board built a wonderful new Web site for the society and in addition to much-needed general information (such as museum hours and parking), he added exciting features that continue to change and grow. Those features include a slide show of images from the archives and a map room with scans of some of the maps in the society's collection.

Please visit the new site at:

www.MSFHistSoc.org

Researchers, readers, and residents may continue to contact the society through the society's e-mail address at:

MSHHS2002@cs.com

The Millburn Free Public Library's director, Bill Swinson, has devoted valuable energy and resources to bringing the history of Millburn and Short Hills to residents and researchers. New and exciting additions will soon be online and searchable at the library Web site, as Mr. Swinson is having a bound volume of *The Budget*, a rare 1886 Millburn newspaper, scanned and digitized. Mr. Swinson will also add searchable digital files of the society's collection of the Township Tattle, a newsletter that went to local WWII servicemen and their families. Visitors to the museum seldom see these newsletters because of their fragile condition, but those who do see them are captivated by the news of Millburn Township's servicemen and servicewomen.

The most popular local-history feature of the library Web site continues to be Marian Meisner's hefty and exhaustive study on the subject. If you have questions or are just curious about the history of Millburn and Short Hills, you can read Ms. Meisner's complete book at the Millburn library's Web site by going to:

<http://www.millburn.lib.nj.us/about.htm>

and clicking on: "View the eBook!"

Please use the e-mail directory at the library's Web site ("Department Telephone & E-mail Directory" near the bottom of the page above) to let Mr. Swinson know if you enjoyed or used these new services!

