

Hightstown



East Windsor

Historical Society News

Summer 2022

Forty Years of Spacecraft Assembly in East Windsor

by Ken Pickering



Bob Craig wrote an article concerning the RCA Space Center, a former landmark of East Windsor Township, in the Society newsletter of Winter 2017. He suggested that greater detail concerning the activities at this facility should be documented. This article attempts to provide further information on the important role the RCA Space Center played in the development of space technology.

The launch of the Sputnik satellite by the Soviet Union in October 1957 and the subsequent launch failure of the first US attempt to put a satellite in orbit later that year led the US government to rapidly pour money into the development of spacecraft and launch vehicles. Initially, the US Army Signal Corps at Ft. Monmouth, NJ was responsible for the design of satellites in the attempt to catch up to the Russians in the space race. Soon thereafter, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was founded in 1958. The Radio Corporation of America (RCA) quickly invested in space research, forming an ad hoc team of scientists and engineers for this purpose in 1957. RCA formed its Astro Electronic Products group in March 1958, and its name was soon changed to Astro Electronics Division (AED). This division was first housed at RCA's David Sarnoff Research Center in Princeton but moved to a building on Old Trenton Road (Route 535) just north of the Locust Corner intersection with the Princeton-Hightstown Road (Route 571) in East Windsor Township in April 1958.

RCA AED first leased two-thirds of the space in the existing building at this site that was owned by Applied Science Corporation of Princeton (ASCOP) and had been erected a year earlier. ASCOP had purchased this 150-acre farmland property in 1957 from Stanley and Raymond White. ASCOP had suffered a business slowdown in its field of electronic components for missiles and aircraft, leading to employee layoffs. Therefore, in August 1958, this building and 90 acres of land were sold by ASCOP to the US Steel and Carnegie Pension Fund, and RCA immediately signed a long-term lease for the property. ASCOP retained 60 acres of the original 150 acres, and also subleased one-third of the building from RCA. RCA's facility was devoted to the design and development of satellites and electronic systems for spacecraft. It became known as the RCA Space Center. The 1875 map of East Windsor Township shows this 150-acre property as being owned by A. M. Taylor. More research would be required to determine the history of ownership between 1875 and the 1957 sale to ASCOP by the Whites.

RCA's first satellite was launched in December 1958 from Cape Canaveral, Florida. This spacecraft, named SCORE (Signal Communications by Orbiting Relay Equipment) was the world's first communication satellite. SCORE, consisting of a receiver, tape recorder, and transmitter, was funded by the Signal Corps and

(cont. pg 3)

President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

I continue to be amazed and grateful to all of the HEWHS volunteers. The officers and committee members listed in each newsletter do a fantastic job. Many also serve in multiple capacities and always step up in time of need. They are listed on the masthead page. Special thanks to Curtis Crowell who has completed a few overdue repairs for us. Also, I was called out of town after making a commitment for a tour by the Monroe Township Senior Center. Shirley Olsen, Bev Mann, Jennifer Woringer, and Jane Cox bailed me out and I am told by Monroe that they did a great job. These four told me they enjoyed it too, especially in hearing all of the compliments from the 29 seniors that attended.

There are a number of activities and events scheduled for the Autumn. There will also likely be more walking tours over the next few months. Check Facebook and Downtown Hightstown page. Hopefully, the COVID restrictions have come to an end. Anyone who attends our activities, however, are always encouraged to wear a mask if they so desire.

Member Ken Pickering wrote another great article for us on RCA's groundbreaking research right here in East Windsor. It is gone but not forgotten. Bob Craig offers an article on a National Lead Chemist who worked with his father, Bill Craig. I include some tidbits from the Gazette and my personal/family files.

I encourage everyone of you to consider writing an article about our towns that you think would be of interest to our members, as has Pat Donahue. Additionally, there is no such thing as too many volunteers. We have many openings from helping Bev and Curtis on the buildings and grounds, to helping me, Cookie, Dale, and Bev with membership and dues payments. We also are looking forward to opening the Ely House and Freight Station for a few hours on a designated day each month. We need volunteer docents to assist. Don't think you need to know all the history. Most visitors are just enthralled with our exhibits thanks to our museum committee, Cookie Cummings, Robin Smith, and Sue Dilger. Always thanks to Greg Ciano who is finalizing a few

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programs for the Fall and pumps out these newsletters thrown at him by me with little time and not much guidance.

Reach out to me with any suggestions, questions, and how you might want to help. No pressure. I promise.

Cappy Stults, President

cstults@allenstults.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

- Regular Meetings** 2nd Monday of the Month | 7pm - 8:30pm
- Children's Theater Short Film** June 21st 7 pm @ Old Hights Brewery
- Hightstown Harvest Fair** October 1
- Annual Meeting: William Trent House, Trenton** Date TBA
- Antique Appraisal Show: Gene Pescucci - Empire Antiques** Date TBA
- Paper & Coin Appraisal Show: Chris Gould** Date TBA

Forty Years of Spacecraft (cont.)

was used to receive and store a message and play it back to a distant geographic location. Since SCORE was a defense project, it required extensive security, which RCA was reluctant to implement at their commercial research lab in Princeton. This was one of the reasons for establishing a separate facility devoted to spacecraft in East Windsor. SCORE was the first of over 70 communications satellites assembled at the East Windsor facility over the following decades. On December 18, 1958, SCORE sent a Christmas message of peace from President Eisenhower around the world. SCORE was followed by Relay-1 in 1962 and Relay-2 in 1964, which used similar systems as SCORE, and were contracted through NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. Early in the RCA Space Center's history, the communications satellites were primarily defense and NASA funded, but the organization entered the lucrative commercial communications satellite business with the launch of SATCOM-1 and -2 in December 1975 and March 1976, respectively. In December 1978, RCA developed the first communications satellite employing two microwave bands, and many RCA communications satellites built through the 1980s employed this dual-band technology. The first RCA communications satellite launch from the Space Shuttle occurred in August 1985. As of 1985, RCA had more domestic communications satellites under contract than any other company in the world. In 1986, RCA AED senior engineer and former East Windsor resident, Robert Cenker, flew on the NASA Space Shuttle Columbia as a payload specialist. The RCA-built SATCOM Ku-1 communications satellite, which Cenker helped develop, was launched from the shuttle during this flight. Another important development was INMARSAT, which provided a critical means of marine mobile communications. The RCA expertise in this line of business led to the assembly of satellites to provide communications for a variety of European and Asian countries.

The RCA Space Center was best known for the design and assembly of a long series of weather satellites, which began with TIROS-1 (Television and Infrared Observation Satellite), launched in April 1960. RCA described this first weather satellite as "perhaps the most elaborate electronics package yet sent into orbit around the earth, containing specially-designed miniature television cameras, videotape recorders, transmitters, solar cells and rechargeable battery power supplies and an array of control and communications equipment." TIROS-1 transmitted cloud photographs from over much of the planet to ground stations, for which RCA was also responsible. TIROS scanned the entire globe every 12 hours. The thousands of images of the development and distribution of clouds quickly revolutionized weather analysis and forecasting. TIROS-1 was initiated under contract from the US Army Signal Corps, but contract management was transferred to NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. The TIROS-1 satellite built by RCA in East Windsor was well-publicized in the local press, and a 15-minute documentary produced by RCA illustrating the function of the satellite and its design and construction was shown as a short-subject film prior to the main feature movie at the Hights Theater on Main Street in Hightstown. The film was also shown at the Princeton Playhouse. RCA went on to build nine more similar satellites (TIROS-II through TIROS-X), launched between November 1960 and July 1965. TIROS-II achieved a major "first" in space by employing a new system that allowed ground operators to shift the tilt of the satellite remotely to obtain improved television picture and infrared sensor coverage of cloud systems around the earth. Particular care was taken to provide early warning of tropical storm development and movement. TIROS-III carried two wide-angle television cameras allowing images to be taken of clouds over a much wider swath. In February 1963, NASA awarded the RCA Space Center an \$11 million contract for the completion of the TIROS series, including more operational satellites, research, and development models with advanced instrumentation, as well as backup models. The TIROS series of satellites demonstrated the feasibility of observation of weather features from space.

The TIROS series led to the need for expansion of the RCA Space Center facilities. In March 1961 RCA broke ground for a new laboratory on the existing space center site. The groundbreaking was conducted by the detonation of an explosive charge in the ground by a signal sent from a transmitter on TIROS-II in space as it passed within range of the tracking antennas and ground station at the space center. The eight-story building constructed on the site contained a thermal vacuum chamber for testing satellites. In addition, one- and two-story control rooms and office facilities were projected to be completed by late 1961. The thermal vacuum chamber test facility was 32 feet high and 29 feet in diameter, and was capable of replicating the vacuum and temperature conditions that satellites would experience in

space. This chamber was the world's largest such facility.

The TIROS series of weather satellites were considered to be "experimental" to prove the ability to make useful observations of weather features from space. This was proven beyond a doubt, and RCA was awarded contracts for the assembly of a series of "operational" weather satellites with a heritage from TIROS. This series began with the February 1966 launch of ESSA-1, the world's first truly operational weather satellite. The Earth Science Service Administration (ESSA) was at that time the parent organization of the U. S. Weather Bureau. Improvements followed with ESSA-2 capable of automatic picture transmission, and ESSA-3 with the Advanced Vidicon Camera System. There were a total of nine ESSA satellites, with the last launched in February 1969. Beginning with ESSA-1 in 1966, no major storm system anywhere on the globe went undetected. A government reorganization took place in 1970, with ESSA replaced by NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), which led to the next series of operational weather satellites, the NOAA series. NOAA-1 was launched in December 1970, and the Space Center was responsible for this series through NOAA-14, launched in December 1995. In the 1970s, my first job was with NOAA's Meteorological Satellite Laboratory in Camp Springs, Maryland. In this position, I worked with temperature profile data coming from the Vertical Temperature Profile Radiometers on NOAA-3 and NOAA-4. Beginning with NOAA-6 in 1979 (part of what was also known as the TIROS-N series), the NOAA satellites provided sea surface temperature data and water vapor soundings in addition to cloud imagery and temperature profiles. Beginning with NOAA-8 in 1983, the satellites in the series were designated as Advanced TIROS-N (ATN), which had the capability to aid in search and rescue missions by providing data for identifying and locating downed aircraft and ships in distress. The ATN series of NOAA satellites also carried instruments for mapping atmospheric ozone and monitoring the earth radiation budget. For many years the US Defense Department had its own weather satellite program, separate from that of ESSA or NOAA. RCA Space Center was responsible for the development and assembly of 31 satellites in the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP). DMSP-1 was launched in September 1966 and DMSP-31 was launched in March 1995.

The RCA AED began with 57 employees in 1958 and had grown to a staff of 530 by June 1961. At that time further expansion to 1400 employees was expected by 1962 because of the division's additional satellite projects (e.g., Relay discussed above, and Nimbus and Ranger discussed below). Because of the rapid expansion, RCA AED immediately required more space. In July 1961, RCA entered into a 3-year lease of 37,400 square feet of space from the Hightstown Rug Company on Bank Street. Initially, RCA's machine and wiring shops were moved into the Rug

Company building, followed by engineering activities. Two hundred employees were expected to be working at this facility by the end of 1961. In late December 1961, RCA announced that construction had begun on a new wing of the Space Center on Old Trenton Road that would house an additional 200 employees in laboratory and shop facilities. A week later, RCA announced that they would also be leasing space to accommodate 30-40 employees in a building on Bank Street owned by Jersey Central Power and Light, across the street from the rug mill. This building had been vacated by JCP&L after their new building on Mercer Street was completed. In early March 1962, when the RCA Space Center was delivering on average two satellites per month, they announced that an additional 100,000 square feet of office space in two buildings were to be added to the Space Center's existing 200,000 square feet to house administrative and engineering functions. These new buildings became the front of the overall facility. At that point, the total number of employees at the Space Center was approaching 1500. The Hightstown Gazette reported in early 1985 that the RCA Space Center then had over 2200 employees, had 44 satellites in design or construction, and expected 11 satellite launches in 1985. In 1984 RCA put into operation a worldwide launch control network consisting of a Satellite Operations Control Center at the East Windsor facility and a Tracking,

Telemetry and Control (TT&C) station on the island of Guam. The network was used for tracking, monitoring, and control of communications satellites as they orbit the earth prior to being placed into equatorial orbits where they maintained a constant position relative to the surface of the rotating earth.

In addition to weather satellites, the RCA Space Center designed and assembled various research satellites. One notable series of research spacecraft was the Nimbus series (Nimbus-1 through Nimbus-7)

of earth science satellites. RCA provided cameras and recording systems, as well as the assembly of instruments from other firms onto the spacecraft. Nimbus-1 was launched in August 1964, and the others followed in 1966, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1975, and 1978. Nimbus-7 carried the most advanced payload consisting of eight instruments, providing observations of coastal ocean water quality, the radiation budget of the earth, particles in the stratosphere, trace gas, temperature and humidity profiles in the atmosphere, and the distribution of ozone. Ozone was monitored by the Total Ozone Mapping Spectrometer (TOMS), which played a large role in the discovery, mapping, and assessment of the severity of the Antarctic Ozone Hole in the stratosphere. Data from this instrument was an important component of the scientific evidence that led to the international agreement to phase out the use of chlorofluorocarbon compounds in refrigerators and air conditioners. Colleagues in the group in which I worked at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center were the primary people who developed the software to retrieve useful ozone data from the TOMS instrument and perform analyses of stratospheric ozone trends. I was fortunate to use the Nimbus-7 TOMS ozone data from the lower atmosphere in my own research concerning large-scale polluted air masses. Another research satellite assembled by the RCA Space Center was the Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite (UARS), launched in September 1991 from the Space Shuttle Discovery. The laboratory at NASA Goddard managed the scientific research conducted with the UARS data. This platform contained 10 instruments, measuring ozone and other chemical compounds found in the ozone layer which affects ozone chemistry and processes. RCA developed cameras and recorders for the first five Landsat missions launched between 1972 and 1984. Landsat imagery has had a multitude of uses in agriculture, forestry, studies of wetland loss, and growth of urbanization, among others. RCA, in conjunction with NASA's


Jet Propulsion Laboratory, built the Mars Observer spacecraft for orbital studies of Mars surface and atmosphere. It was designed based on the reliable subsystems of TIROS and DMSP. One of the last research satellites produced by the Space Center was the Mars Global Surveyor, a Mars weather satellite, launched in November 1996.

RCA was also a major subcontractor on spacecraft other than earth-orbiting satellites. These activities included the development of television cameras for the Ranger lunar probes, the first of which (Ranger 7) took the first pictures of the moon's surface at close range in July 1964. Ranger-8 and -9 followed in 1965. These images provided important topographic information for the forthcoming Apollo missions. RCA's work on lunar missions continued with the award of a subcontract from Boeing for communications and power subsystems for the series of five unmanned Lunar Orbiters launched between August 1966 and August 1967. An ultrasensitive television camera was developed by RCA to fly on the TIGRIS (Televised Image of Gaseous Regions in Interplanetary Space) spacecraft, designed to monitor gaseous clouds emanating from the sun that lead to magnetic storms affecting the earth. The RCA Space Center developed communications equipment for the Viking Mars probes, which orbited and landed on Mars in 1976. For the NASA Gemini manned missions, RCA produced telemetry transmitters and recorders. RCA scientists and engineers also developed cameras and other equipment for the NASA Apollo manned moon landing program in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A slow-scan black and white television camera was used in the earlier Apollo missions, and a more sensitive color camera flew on later missions. Rendezvous radars from RCA were used on six of the Apollo missions. RCA also contributed closed-circuit television equipment to the NASA Space Shuttle flights.

Another category of a satellite built by the RCA Space Center was for navigation. The NAVSAT series (for the US Navy) was launched between 1968 and 1979, followed by the NOVA and OSCAR series from 1981 through 1988. These satellites provided precise navigation data to Navy and civilian ships around the world. The first commercial spacecraft for accurate geolocation capability was built by the RCA Space Center for Geostar Corporation beginning in 1987 for launch in 1991 and 1992. Thus began the commercial Global Positioning System (GPS) technology, now available to the typical consumer through cell phones and GPS systems in automobiles. The company predicted in 1987 that these satellites "may well revolutionize our lives to the same extent as the telephone and personal computer".

After General Electric acquired RCA in June 1986, it combined the RCA AED with the Spacecraft Operations of its Space Systems Division in Valley Forge, PA to form the GE Astro Space Division. The entire division was sold to Martin Marietta in 1993, which

in turn merged with Lockheed to form Lockheed Martin in 1995. Soon after the merger, Lockheed Martin announced that they would be closing the former AED facility, and moving the engineering organization to Sunnyvale, CA, and Reston, VA to focus primarily on satellite communications. The remaining civil satellite projects were moved to a Lockheed Martin facility in Denver. In 1998, forty years after its establishment, the former RCA Space Center in East Windsor was permanently closed, a victim of corporate mergers. There were as many as 3,100 employees in July 1995 when it was announced they would be closing.

The buildings were dismantled in the Summer of 1999. It is now the site of Windsor Corporate Park. 

Otto Konig: Refugee Chemist at National Lead

by Robert W. Craig

For nearly two decades until 1980, the National Lead Company, headquartered in New York City, operated its principal research laboratories in East Windsor Township. In the summer of 1962, it moved its research division out of Brooklyn, New York to a new building on the north side of Wyckoff Mills Road, occupying a site chosen for its visibility from the New Jersey Turnpike, a ready billboard to millions of motorists, of the company's importance and ambitions. That September the company showed off its new "Hightstown Laboratories" to the public.

One of the company's senior chemists was a gruff, no-nonsense Austrian emigre named Otto Konig (1904-1985), a 5-foot-9, stockily-built man, a former athlete who loved the outdoors and hiking in the mountains. Konig was Jewish, and his very presence in Hightstown was the result of an odyssey brought on by World War II. That this story can now be told is the result of a friendship that developed between Konig and my father, William Craig (1918-2006), who was another of National Lead's research chemists. The sweep of the story comes from what my father told me, but some of its details have already been backed up by contemporary documents that are now available online.

My father's story, as I now recall it—since I never wrote it down at the time, nor recorded it—is that Otto told my father that he was born and grew up in Austria, and that he studied chemistry as a young man (I suppose in Vienna but possibly in Germany), and that during the Hitler years he was forced to flee. Father said that Konig went first to Germany, then back to Austria, then to Germany again, then to France, then Denmark, then to Norway. These moves were made, my father said, under the knowledge or understanding that Gestapo investigators were on his trail and seeking his arrest. In other words, he, his wife, and I later learned his parents, were refugees of the Holocaust.

Somehow, the story goes, the Konigs were admitted into Britain, and then later shipped off to New Zealand. From there, my father said the Konigs' journey continued to the United States,

although I understood that he meant after the war when many displaced persons were admitted. Konig ended up at National Lead in Brooklyn, after a nearly round-the-world odyssey, pushed by Hitlerism in Europe and by the Allies' responses to it.

One of the first pieces of independent information about Konig came from my father's papers. Craig had been president of the local chapter of National Lead's "25-Year Club," and records of the club survived among his papers. They revealed that Konig had joined the company on November 9, 1942, which meant that his arrival in the U.S. must have come either during or before the war, not afterward. This item temporarily cast some doubt on the truth of the overall story, but it also showed that even if the story still were generally true, the timeline of Konig's travels must have been compressed.

I didn't ferret out much more of Konig's story until this year. This past spring, I consulted the Social Security Death Index. This provided several very helpful kernels of information. It provided his birth date as January 18, 1904, a fact that helped to distinguish the Otto Konig who was the target of my inquiries from the many other Otto Konigs that populate the historical record. It gave his birthplace as Austria, confirming a point that my father made, and gave his death date as some time during the month of September 1985, long after he had retired from National Lead and my father lost track of him. This document also identified Otto's wife as Olga Konig, and that they lived in Queens, New York at the time of his death.

Although little is remembered of Konig's work for National Lead, he completed a federally-sponsored survey in 1954 intended to identify persons who possessed technical expertise. This record, now available online, identified him as the holder of a Ph.D. degree in chemistry, with expertise in both organic and inorganic chemistry and chemical engineering; that he was a fluent speaker and reader of the German

language; and that the most recent period in which he had established that fluency was the 1930s. So he must still have been in Austria or Germany during the early Hitler years.

Within the past few months, more of König's past and his travels have come into focus. The record of his marriage to Olga is also available online, which provides their wedding date as June 23, 1935, and the place as Bruen, Czechoslovakia. Otto and Olga also both filed declarations of intention to become naturalized citizens upon their arrival in the United States. These reveal that the Königs were both born in Vienna, Austria and that they arrived at Rouses Point, New York, just below the Canadian border, coming from Montreal, on February 25, 1941. These declarations confirm their 1935 marriage in Czechoslovakia. Although photographs of Otto have thus far proved elusive, his declaration describes him as having a medium complexion and brown hair, and with no other visible, distinctive, identifying marks. Olga's declaration describes her as three years older than Otto, five feet, four inches in height, and 129 pounds, and noted that she bore a scar on her neck. The declaration gave her full, formal name as Olga Koch Fessler König, evidently meaning that Koch was her maiden surname. The Königs had no children. These declarations were made on May 14 and 15, 1941 in Los Angeles, California, where the Königs were living at the time.

A 1942 military draft registration card for Otto is also preserved online, which identifies his Los Angeles address, and reveals that he was working at that time for a company called Gaspar Color, Inc., in Los Angeles, prior to his National Lead employment. This company employed a German-developed process to colorize motion picture film. How long Otto continued to work there is unknown, but he began at National Lead (as noted above) that November. How long the Königs continued to live in Los Angeles is unknown.

The National Lead Company of California (National Lead's West Coast subsidiary) advertised at least three facilities in that state, including one in Los Angeles (which focused on lead-acid battery recycling). It had a West Coast headquarters in San Francisco and a research facility somewhere nearby. According to an on-line record, Otto earned a Ph.D. degree at a California university in 1947, but that institution has not yet been identified.

A big break in the research came when Otto's name turned up on a passenger list for the S.S. Mariposa, which sailed from Auckland, New Zealand on January 13, 1941, and reached Los Angeles, California on January 25, 1941. This compressed the Königs' timeline by a further month, showing that their actual first arrival in the U.S. was in January 1941. It shows that they must have afterward traveled to Montreal, Canada, for reasons yet unknown, re-entering the U.S. into New York. They would then, by necessity, have had to cross the country westbound by train, to get to where they made their residence in Los Angeles. The list shows that the Königs' last place of residence before their arrival had been Wellington, New Zealand.

Most exciting, however, this document shows that Otto and Olga were traveling with two other family members: Berthold and Anna König, who turned out to be Otto's parents. Berthold filed his own declaration of intention on May 14, 1941, identifying Otto as his only child, and confirming Otto's birthdate. The document gives Berthold's own birthdate as June 21, 1875, and described him as being five feet, six inches tall, and 170 pounds, with gray hair and a "broken nose bone." It states that he and Anna were married in Vienna on July 20, 1902, and it gives Anna's birthdate as July 9, 1867, at Nickolsburg, Czechoslovakia. Berthold and Anna were at that time living at the same Los Angeles address with Otto and Olga.

Still more important, the passenger list shows the truth of a central element of my father's story about Otto's travels as a refugee. His presence and that of his family members in New Zealand could only have occurred if he had previously been in Britain, where as an Austrian national he would have been interned by the British. Britain was facing serious food shortages due to the Battle for the Atlantic and the cutoff of trade with Europe and feeding the many thousand European refugees who reached Britain was straining food sources further. Britain had enlisted the armies of Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand into the fight against Germany and Italy, and ships from New Zealand bringing soldiers to the fighting presumably would have had space to take refugees away on their return voyages. (There is extensive literature about the British handling of European refugees during the war, but no need to summarize it here.) At some point prior to their departure from New Zealand, the Königs must have arranged to come to the United States.

Precisely how the Konigs spent the war years in the United States is not yet known. If he remained at work for National Lead through that period, as the 25-Year Club records imply that he did, it seems evident that he must have become attached with National Lead's West Coast research headquarters. The National Lead Company of California was also known as early as the 1920s as the company's ammunition "department," and its work was evidently supported by its West Coast research facility. However, this raises an unexplored new line of inquiry. The notion that Otto, as an Austrian, would have been hired by a company that was in the business of improving the design of explosive ordnance, and which was manufacturing munitions for the U.S. government, should have triggered an FBI background check.


After the war the National Lead Company apparently centralized its research facilities in Brooklyn, bringing the California researchers to the East Coast. That seems the most likely way to explain Otto Konig's subsequent presence in Brooklyn. It is also circumstantially supported by a comment made to me, by a former employee at the Hightstown Labs, that the library there included a very large number of "old books" about ammunition and explosives. It would have been at that point that my father's acquaintance with Konig began.

During vacations away from the Lab, Konig would sometimes write postcards or letters back to William Craig, and he kept a few of these pieces. In June 1960, for example, he wrote a postcard from Austria that depicts the Vienna Opera House, in which he reported "hectic days of seeing old hunting grounds and many friends." He also reported that he went back to his birthplace and to his old school. "A girl who was my classmate is now its headmistress."

He and Olga were traveling again in July 1967 when he wrote "There is no end of nice things our friends do for us." On July 28 they made a 200-mile tour "through regions of dear memories." A week later, on August 4th, he reported that half of his vacation was gone. "... Today we arrived ... to inspect a few of the 'unclimbed' mountains of Oberwalden." Three days later, Otto wrote again, reporting that they visited the village of Engelberg in Switzerland, where he found the church organ "overpowering." "We hike a lot but not enough for our taste." Later during the same vacation, he added this further thought about hiking: "We have seen wonderful sights, hiked for hours every day and enjoyed even rainy days." Then he admitted to "getting fatter by the hour in spite of the exercise."

Still in Switzerland, Konig wrote again to William Craig on August 12th. This letter provides the clearest evidence that Craig and Konig were in a close working relationship at the lab. He said he appreciated receiving from my father news of goings-on at the Lab. He then wrote, "I am convinced that I shall find my desk so


clean of work that even the scratches on the Formica have disappeared"

The surviving correspondence does not include copies of Craig's replies, nor any later items from Konig. Konig became eligible to join the 25-Year Club by the end of 1967, and he evidently did so, although he does not seem to have been very active in it. His name appears in its records in 1969, where his 1942 start date with the company is revealed, but by early in 1970 he had evidently retired and was no longer living at the New Brunswick address from which he had commuted to the Lab. His name did not appear again in the club's minute book. 

Memories of Disbrow Hill

Long time reader Ben Zaitz, writes:

"Again I really enjoyed the Historical Society News. I remember very clearly becoming old enough to bicycle out to Crematory Hill with my North Main Street friends when we were 8 or 10 years old. To our surprise the place actually existed, it looked like a bomb had hit it. As I recall it was made out of large hand-cut stone with signs of a fire on the walls. There was a basement that we crawled into. Nobody ever explained to us why it was there or what ultimately happened to it, so our imaginations ran wild with all sorts of horror stories. Every trip out there was an adventure and the bicycle ride from the top of the hill through the woods down to the dirt road might as well have been an Olympic ski run. The area was heavily wooded so even in the summertime it certainly had a "spooky" ambiance that energized the scary-fun nature of our trips there. Crematory Hill had a special place in the imagination of many local kids, my children certainly heard some of the stories, with a few embellishments, as part of their evening storytelling. Last of all I never heard Max or Dave talk about protecting Hightstown from German Luftwaffe airplanes from the top of Memorial Hall. Apparently, they weren't too good at the job. Nevertheless, I'm sure the local guys enjoyed themselves while on duty."

From the Editor – readers are encouraged to email me memories such as the above. We also invite any articles you might draft from your memories, stories from your ancestors, or your own research. 

This and That

Not enough to be a full story, but interesting nonetheless!

This Old Bill

This old five-dollar bill from 1890 measures 3.1875 x 7.54 (24.03) inches compared to modern bills that are 2.625 x 6.125 (16.08). Meaning the older bills were nearly 50% larger.

These were collected by either C. Stanley Stults or his sister, Ella Stults Ely. Later this year Society member Chris Gould, who is a very knowledgeable collector of banknotes, paper money, and coins will be giving a program about collectible money. You will be able to bring yours for him to look at, explain and estimate a value.



Hightstown's Bicentennial

Look at all those people eagerly awaiting the bicentennial parade! I think it's all of Hightstown and East Windsor!

This was the start of a three-day celebration that included speeches, musical performances, a theatrical performance highlighting the history of the borough, more parades, prizes, a Peddie freshman football game, and special services from the various churches.

Incidentally, Grace Norton Rogers (who was just Grace Norton at the time) was the Spirit of Religion in the first parade.



Owner of the Hightstown Gazette

The lady on the right is Kathryn Dennis, owner and operator of the Hightstown Gazette. It looks like she's getting the papers ready for delivery.

The photo was taken by Curtis Crowell who helped her out at the paper.



Wordsearch

by Gregory Ciano

This wordsearch is sponsored by our student film All Aboard! The Story of the John Bull. Our film premieres on Wednesday, June 21 at the Old Hights Brewery on Ward Street. Come enjoy a night out. Bring dinner, sample what Old Hights Brewery has on tap, and see what how the first passenger train in the country shaped Hightstown and East Windsor. Doors open at 7:00 pm. Show starts at 8:30 pm.

Starring: *Susie Borg, Lexi Brown, Liv Brown, Nicholas Ciano, Marty Hayward, Helena LeCompte, Catalina Lorien-Rivera, Sryia Om, and Lily Rivenburgh*

Find these street names:

ACADEMY	DEY	GRANT	HUTCHINSON	MERCER	PROSPECT	SUMMIT
ALLISON	DUTCH NECK	GREELEY	JOSEPH	MORRISON	RAILROAD	SUNSET
BANK	FIRST	HAGE-	LINCOLN	OAK	REED	WILSON
BENNETT	GERALDINE	MOUNT	MAIN	OUTCALT	ROGERS	
CENTER	GILMAN	HARRON	MAPLE	PARK	SECOND	
CHAMBERLIN	GLEN BROOK	HAUSSER	MECHANIC	PARK WAY	STOCKTON	

C	H	A	M	B	E	R	L	I	N	Q	M	W	E	R	T	G	Y	U	I	O	P	A	S	P	D
F	G	H	J	K	L	Z	X	C	V	B	E	N	M	Q	G	R	E	E	L	E	Y	W	E	A	R
T	Y	D	U	T	C	H	N	E	C	K	C	U	I	O	P	A	A	S	D	F	G	H	J	R	K
L	Z	X	C	B	E	N	N	E	T	T	H	V	B	N	M	N	Q	W	E	R	T	Y	U	K	I
O	P	A	S	D	N	F	G	H	J	K	A	L	Z	X	C	T	V	B	N	M	Q	W	E	W	R
T	Y	U	I	S	T	O	C	K	T	O	N	O	P	A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	L	Z	A	X
C	V	B	N	M	E	Q	W	E	R	A	I	T	Y	P	R	O	S	P	E	C	T	U	I	Y	O
B	H	P	Z	X	R	C	P	A	R	K	C	V	B	N	M	Q	W	J	O	S	E	P	H	E	R
T	A	Y	U	I	O	P	A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	L	Z	X	C	V	U	B	N	M	Q	S
W	R	N	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	R	O	G	E	R	S	A	S	D	F	T	G	H	J	U
K	R	L	K	M	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	Q	W	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	C	A	S	N
D	O	F	G	H	A	J	K	L	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	Q	W	E	R	T	W	Y	A	U	S
I	N	O	P	A	S	P	D	F	G	H	G	L	E	N	B	R	O	O	K	H	I	J	K	L	E
L	Z	X	C	V	B	N	L	M	Q	A	I	W	E	R	T	Y	U	M	I	O	L	P	A	S	T
G	E	R	A	L	D	I	N	E	D	G	L	F	G	H	J	K	L	A	Z	X	S	C	V	B	N
M	Q	A	Z	W	S	X	E	D	C	E	M	R	F	V	T	G	L	I	N	C	O	L	N	B	Y
U	I	O	P	Q	A	Z	W	S	X	M	A	E	D	C	R	F	V	N	T	G	N	B	Y	H	N
U	J	H	U	T	C	H	I	N	S	O	N	M	I	K	O	L	P	Q	A	Z	W	S	X	E	D
C	R	F	R	V	T	G	B	Y	H	U	N	U	J	M	I	K	O	L	P	Z	A	Q	X	S	W
C	D	E	A	V	F	R	B	G	T	N	N	H	T	M	A	L	L	I	S	O	N	J	U	K	H
I	L	O	I	P	S	U	M	M	I	T	Q	A	Z	W	E	C	D	C	R	F	V	T	Y	U	A
I	O	P	L	J	K	L	N	M	R	P	O	I	U	Y	T	R	A	E	W	Q	L	K	J	H	U
G	F	I	R	S	T	F	D	S	A	E	M	N	S	E	C	O	N	D	B	V	C	X	Z	Q	S
W	E	R	O	T	Y	U	I	O	P	A	E	S	D	F	G	H	J	M	E	R	C	E	R	K	S
L	Z	X	A	C	V	B	N	M	Q	W	E	D	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	M	A	S	D	F	E
G	H	J	D	K	L	M	O	R	R	I	S	O	N	Z	X	C	V	B	D	E	Y	N	M	Q	R

Hightstown East Windsor Historical Society

Founded 1971 to educate while preserving for future generations, our people and our community's history.



Officers for 2020-2021

President: Charles "Cappy" Stults
609.448.0110 - cstults@allenstults.com

Vice President: Robin Smith

Recording Secretary: Shirley Olsen
609-448-8388

Treasurer: Robert Szychowski
609-448-9490

Committee Chairs

Finance: Robert Szychowski
609-448-9490

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Curtis Crowell

Library: Joe Louderback
Robert Craig
609-584-1806

Website: Eileen Couturier
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609-469-1860

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Museum: Cookie Cummings
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Sue Dilger

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Membership Application

Support us this year at the following rates:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual\$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family.....\$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Booster\$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining.....\$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life (Individual)\$200 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life (Family).....\$275 |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email 1: _____

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Where did you hear about membership?

Please mail the completed application along with a check made payable to:

HEW Historical Society

Membership Committee

164 North Main Street
Hightstown, NJ 08520

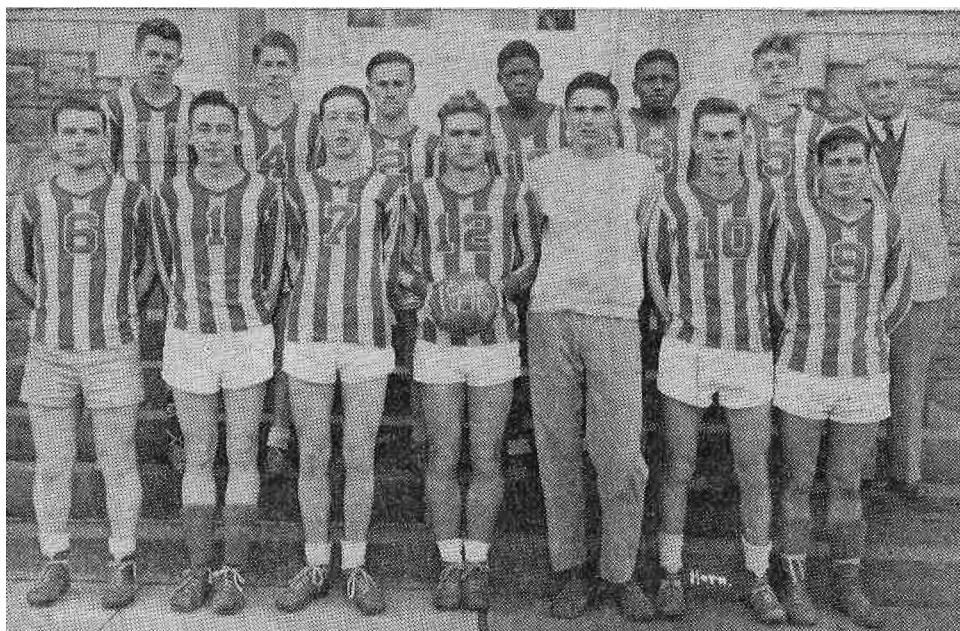
Or pay online by clicking "Become a Member Today" on our website: hewhs.com

☐ I would not like to be part of the New Member Spotlight.

Volunteer Opportunities

I would like to volunteer to help out with the following committee(s):

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Property & Grounds | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Docent |



Hightstown High School 1946 Soccer Squad

Front Row: Russell Beaulieu, Vincent Byrne, Sherwood McChesney, Fred Broadhurst (captain), Kenneth Eiker, William West, William Bunting.

Second Row: John Carduner, Martin Sutphin, Fred Nurko, John Walker, Curtis Williams, John Septak, Coach Harold J. Hunt

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