



# Essex County Parks Archives

Essex County Department of Parks,  
Recreation, and Cultural Affairs

NOVEMBER 2018

ISSUE 11

## News:

### Military in the Essex County Parks Brochure

In anticipation of Veterans Day, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the WWI armistice, archival assistant Frank Short utilized the Parks Archives and records from other sources to create a brochure about the Essex County Park System's historic and deep connections to the military, spanning from a skirmish on Mill Street in present day Branch Brook Park during the Revolutionary War, to the recent development of Veterans Memorial Park.

## Upcoming:

### Eagle Rock History Lesson for Scouts

Archival assistant Alexis Mohrey is creating an on-site exploration of the lookout at Eagle Rock Reservation through various time periods for a local Brownie troop. The goal is to have the scouts imagine how someone in 1776, 1865, 1895, 1918, 1980 or 2001 would have experienced the site differently.



Essex County Executive  
Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.  
and the Board of Chosen Freeholders

## Experiments at Eagle Rock: New Information Discovered

While researching the history of the Parks' connections with the military through the Essex County Parks Archives, an enlightening discovery was uncovered suggesting that Thomas Edison was not the only scientist conducting government tests at Eagle Rock Reservation during World War I. In the Park Commission's minutes (see excerpt below), it is noted that permission was given to the renowned and accomplished optical physicist Perley G. Nutting, who was then working for Westinghouse Electric as director of research. Nutting was also the founder of the Optical Society of America and would have brought great expertise to these experiments for the government in association with the First World War.

A letter was presented from the Westinghouse Lamp Co. requesting permission to use the portico of the Eagle Rock Casino for some Government tests; also a letter from Mr. Nutting stating his willingness to have this permission granted. This permission was granted.

Excerpt from Park Commission Minutes, Sep. 11, 1917

This finding exemplifies the wealth of insights that can be uncovered in the Essex County Parks Archives. The Commission Minutes are available for research, along with Annual Reports, thousands of maps and plans, photographs, correspondence, and newsletters. Call 973-735-6231 or email [archives@parks.essexcountynj.org](mailto:archives@parks.essexcountynj.org) for an appointment at the Parks Archives across from Branch Brook Park in Newark.

115 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104

[www.essex-countynj.org](http://www.essex-countynj.org)

Putting Essex County First