



Essex County Parks Archives

Essex County Department of Parks,
Recreation, and Cultural Affairs

FEBRUARY 2019

ISSUE 13

Upcoming:

Approach of Anniversary

As the 125th anniversary of the Essex County Park System approaches, the Parks Archives is undertaking a series of newsletters and Facebook posts to tell the park system's story.

News:

We're on Facebook!

Follow us on Facebook over the next two years as we document the history of the very first county park system. In addition to recounting the process leading up to its establishment, we plan to highlight many other events throughout the history of the ECPS.

Look up the Archives of the Essex County Park System on Facebook and be sure to like the page!



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

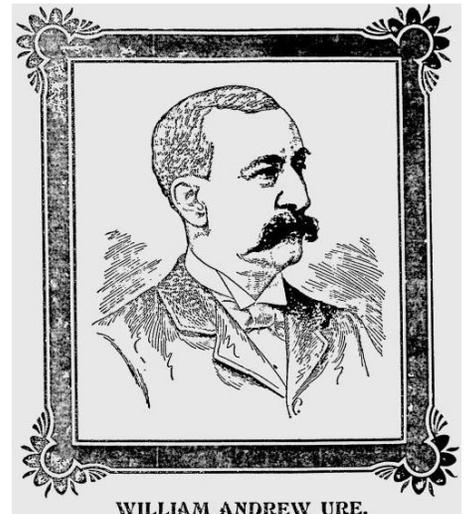
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Putting Essex County First

Newspaperman Calls for County Park System

William A. Ure, president of the Newark Board of Trade, was present at the January 1894 meeting of the Orange Board of Trade (see Issue 12) and became particularly interested in advancing the idea of a county park system for Essex County. As proprietor of the *Sunday Call*, a Newark newspaper which ran from 1882 to 1946, Ure published an editorial on January 21, 1894 which both endorsed this county-wide notion and demanded urgent action. The article specifically suggested the acquisition of "the slope and crown of Orange Mountain," because the land was desirable and being sold at a reasonable price. Large tracts of the Orange Mountain, part of the Watchung Mountains and also referred to locally as First Mountain, are preserved to this day in the Essex County Eagle Rock and South Mountain Reservations.

The *Newark Sunday Call* continued to provide updates on the development of the park idea. One year later on March 3, 1895, in an editorial entitled "The Park Law," it was noted: "The SUNDAY CALL has urged the park question upon the public attention for years ..." Just before the public referendum on a permanent commission for county parks on April 7, 1895, the paper listed eight reasons why county residents should vote "yes." Within this list they mentioned that Newark had only 25 acres of parkland, that parks were beneficial to the health of all citizens, and that Prospect Park in Brooklyn paid for itself through increased land values within three years.



WILLIAM ANDREW URE.

Because of his influence as a proprietor for the *Sunday Call* and his role as the president of the Newark Board of Trade, William A. Ure played a crucial part in establishing the Essex County Parks. Unfortunately, he would not live to see the park system developed. He died on June 9, 1896, just over a year after the Essex County Park Commission's founding.