

American Legion Post 372

REMEMBER AND HONOR

MEMORIAL DAY



Cherry Hill MEMORIAL DAY Services

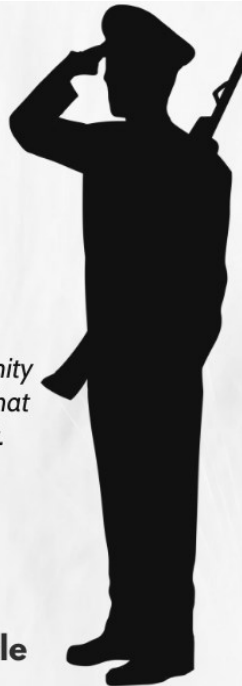
HONOR & REMEMBER - Join veterans and residents of the community in remembering those that made the ultimate sacrifice and those that have passed away since serving this great nation. Lest we Forget.

Monday, May 27, 2024

9:00am - American Legion Cherry Hill
(1532 Martin Ave, Cherry Hill, NJ)

9:30am - Locustwood Cemetery @ Flagpole

10:00am - Cherry Hill Township Bldg



Annual FLAGGING of our VETERANS

Graves



COLESTOWN CEMETERY

100 Kings Hwy N, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Boy Scouts Troop 70, American Legion Post 372
& Invited Guests to Meet At Cemetery at 6:00pm

COLESTOWN CEMETERY HISTORY

Colestown was a small village founded in the late 1600s near the present-day intersection of King's Highway and Church Road. It was named after Samuel Coles, who purchased 1,000 acres there in 1685.

The village, which contained two stores, a blacksmith shop, several dwellings, a church and a cemetery, grew with the popularity of the Fountain Hotels resort in the 1800s.

Its main attraction was a mineral spring thought to have medicinal value. The owner reportedly had the water tested, and a record of the analysis was cut into a marble slab, set up beside the spring. A subsequent owner of the property dismantled the hotel, used the materials for a farmhouse and installed the marble slab as a doorstep.

The Colestown Cemetery, where the earliest burial was recorded in 1746, is the only remnant of this long vanished hamlet. The familiar stone gatehouse, constructed in 1858, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.



The Colestown Cemetery gatehouse still stands (above) at the corner of King's Hwy & Church Rd. The pre-Civil War structure is all that remains of the village of Colestown and once shared the site with St Mary's Church (below, courtesy Mike Mathis), c. 1751, which burned in 1899.



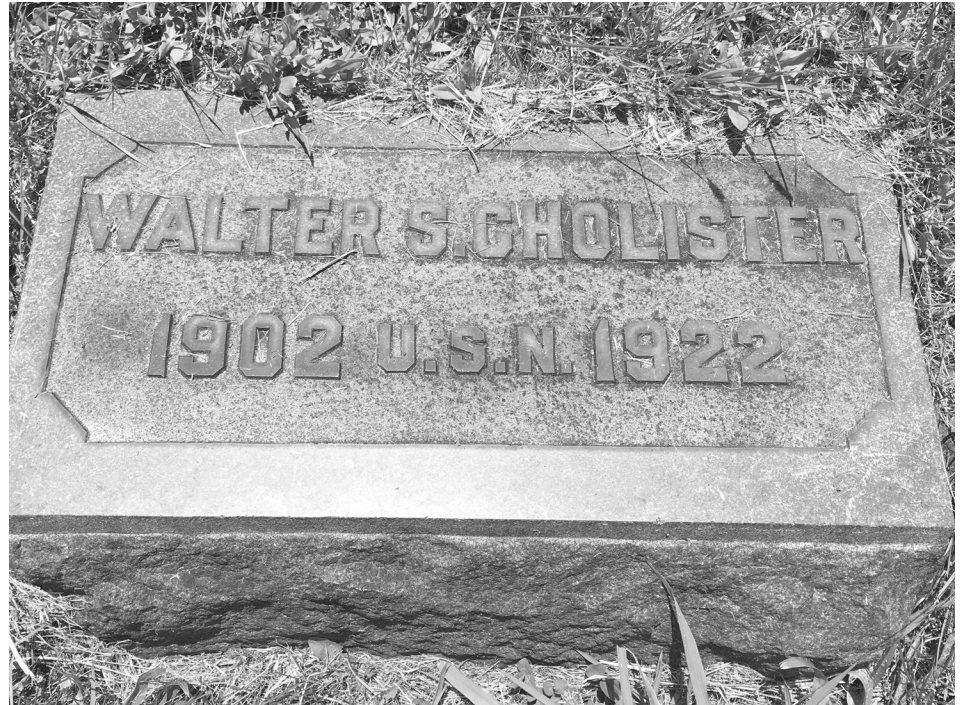
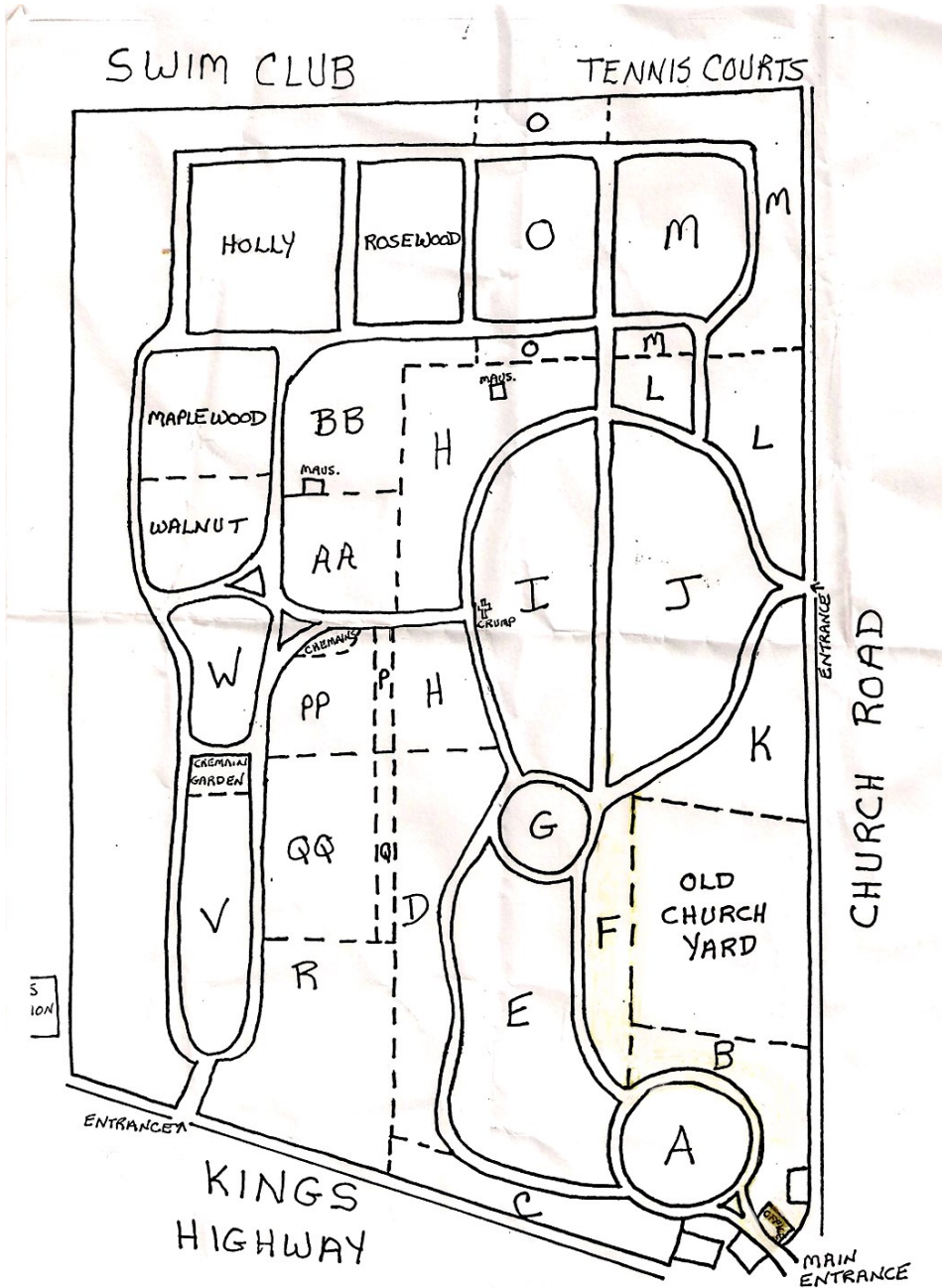


One side of the gatehouse was used as a chapel for funeral services, and the other side was the living quarters for the superintendent of the cemetery (Harry Cholister, who was the father of MEDAL of HONOR Recipient GEORGE R CHOLISTER). Below the chapel is a vault once used as a winter holding room for bodies that could not be buried in the frozen ground.

St Mary's Church, one of the first Episcopal churches in West Jersey, stood inside the cemetery gates from 1751 to 1899, when it was destroyed by fire. Legend has it that Unami Indians were buried behind the Church. George Washington is said to have taken communion at the Church, and the brick path over which he might have walked is still visible.



COLESTOWN CEMETERY MAP



CAPTAIN GREGORY DALESSIO

KIA



Another hero, Army Cpt Greg Dalessio, who grew up in the Knollwood Section of Cherry Hill, is buried in Colestown Cemetery.

Cpt Dalessio was fatally shot on June 23, 2008 as he emerged from a weekly reconstruction meeting with Iraqi officials in the city of Salman Pak. The gunman in that attack also killed another American soldier and wounded three others. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and was on his second tour.

Since his death in 2008, his family has held an Annual Cpt Greg Dalessio 5K Run/Walk on the 1st Saturday in December.

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MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

GEORGE R. CHOLISTER

George Robert Cholister was born in Camden NJ to Harold (Harry) and Hannah Albertha Glandon Cholister on December 18, 1898. He was the fourth of eight children.

George was educated in Ellisburg School (Delaware Twp/Cherry Hill) His father was a police officer in the town of Stockton and then later the Superintendent of Colestown Cemetery (Delaware Twp/Cherry Hill) for over 30 years.

George enlisted in the Navy on April 11, 1916 and was in the eighth year of his enlistment when he sustained the injuries which resulted in his death.

During the World War, George served on a submarine in the North Sea and was later transferred to the US Destroyer Fanning, which was officially credited with sinking 3 German submarines.

George Cholister did well in the Navy, and in the and one half years



had been promoted to the rank of Boatswain's Mate First Class. When the light cruiser USS Trenton CL-11 was commissioned on April 19, 1924, George Cholister was part of the crew.

The USS Trenton had been laid down on August 18, 1920 at Philadelphia, Pa., at the William Cramp Sons shipyard. She was launched on April 16, 1923, sponsored by Miss Katherine E. Donnelly. When she was commissioned on April 19, 1924, Capt. Edward C. Kalbfus was in command.

On May 24, the light cruiser stood out of New York harbor for her shakedown cruise in the Mediterranean Sea. On August 14, while in transit from Port Said Egypt; to Aden, Arabia; Trenton was ordered to Bushire, Persia (Basra in present-day Iraq). She arrived on the 25th and took on board the remains of Vice Consul Major Robert Whitney Imbrie. She received and returned the gun salute to the late vice consul and departed the same day. Following stops at Suez and Port Said, Egypt, and at Villefranche France; Trenton arrived at the Washington Navy Yard on September 29.

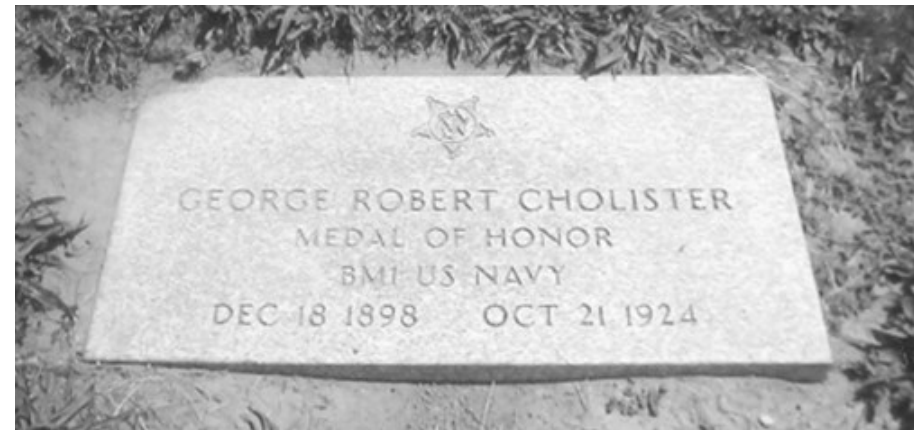
In mid-October, while Trenton was conducting gunnery drills in the Norfolk area, powder bags in her forward turret exploded, killing or injuring every member of the gun crew. During the ensuing fire Ensign Henry Clay Drexler and Boatswain's Mate First Class George Cholister attempted to dump powder charges into the immersion tank before they detonated but failed. Ensign Drexler was killed when the charge exploded, and Boatswain's Mate Cholister was overcome by fire and fumes before he could reach his objective. He died the following day.

Both men were awarded the Medal of Honor, posthumously.

George Cholister was brought home to New Jersey. His father was at that time the yard superintendent at Colestown Cemetery at Church Road and Kings Highway in what was then Delaware Township (present day Cherry Hill) NJ.

George Cholister is buried here, and rests near his parents, brother Walter, and other family members.

His brother, Walter, died in the Naval service at Guantanamo Bay in January 1922.



Today, there are over 400 veterans graves in Colestown Cemetery.

Every year, prior to Memorial Day, members of the American Legion Post 372, the Boys Scouts and community members flag their graves to honor their service.