

In Memoriam

Ira Dorian



Cranford mourns the passing of one of the community's most distinguished citizens, Ira Dorian. Ira died on December 31, 2011.

The son of Dikran and Helen Diradourian, Ira was born in Freehold, N.J., but he arrived in Cranford with his mother and father in 1823. A graduate of Cranford High School, he attended Princeton University, receiving a BA degree in 1937, and Harvard Law School, receiving a LLB degree in 1940.

During World War II, Dorian served in the Army Air Corps for four years, and in the years following the war he served in the Air Force Reserve, retiring in 1976 with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

In the post-war era, Dorian pursued a highly successful career in law. But it was his involvement in community activities and public service that made him so well known locally. He was chairman of the Cranford Heart Fund, Chairman of the Cranford Planning Board, member of the Township Recreation Committee, Chairman Cranford Days, President Rotary Club, Trustee of the Public Library, member of Trinity Episcopal Church and an active participant in many other groups.

Dorian firmly believed that a lawyer should dress more formally than others. In the 1980's, the *Cranford Chronicle* commented that he was "one of the best dressed layers in the county." His attire? "In court and out," the paper said, "he wears conservative suits, a white shirt and a bow tie."

Dorian served on the Cranford Township Committee for six years, 1954-1960, the last two years as Mayor. During his term as Mayor, the Committee enacted ordinances for a new municipal building and a new public library.

He was also a long-time trustee of the Cranford Historical Society and served as the Society's President from 1965 to 1968. Under his leadership, the Society embarked on a number of new areas "to preserve and perpetuate."

Probably the largest and most visible new effort was the "oral history" program. Ira was a firm believer in oral history and inaugurated and actively participated in dozens of the interviews. According to a newspaper report, the Historical Society and Princeton University had the only two oral history programs in New Jersey and drew considerable attention for their efforts.

Ira's Air Force officer's uniform is preserved in the Historical Society's extensive uniform collection and was recently a featured display at a costume exhibit at the Crane-Phillips House Museum.

Ira Dorian was 95 years old. He is survived by Lillian, his wife of 59 years. He will be remembered. He will be missed.