



Newtown Square Hotel 1913



Manoa Inn - Havertown

## Two of County's Principal Houses **RAIDED**

### Manoa Inn and Newtown Square Hotel Get Visit From State Troopers Alleged Proprietors and More Than 100 Patrons Are Held for Hearings

By: Newtown Square writer **Doug Humes**

Manoa Inn and Newtown Square Hotel Get Visit From State Troopers  
11-26- 1923: *Chester Times*

*[Editor's Note: I can't improve on this newspaper account of a Prohibition Era raid and arrests in Newtown Square and nearby Havertown. "I'm giving it to you straight" as they say. But some historical background for those who don't know: the sale of alcohol was prohibited in the United States from January 17, 1920, until December 5, 1933, the period now referred to as "Prohibition". And yet, people found ways to continue to drink and to continue to gather together in relatively public places to do so. The enforcement effort was half-hearted, as you will see in this tale of woe.]*

Details of State police, assisted by members of the Haverford township police force, conducted two successful raids late Saturday night, swooping down on the Manoa Inn, famous roadhouse on the West Chester pike at Eagle, and on the Newtown Square Hotel, at Newtown Square. The alleged proprietors, William C. Boyd, of the Inn and Edward J. Henry of the Hotel were each held in \$1,000 bail, their bartenders, Charles Otler and George Jansen were each held in \$500 bail, and each of the more than one hundred patrons, including many young women, required to furnish \$15 security for their appearance at a hearing before Magistrate W.S. Swartley, of Oakmont, next Wednesday night. Two truckloads of alleged high powered whiskey, beers champagne and wines, one from each place were seized – the Sewer department truck of Haverford Township being the vehicle used to convey the evidence from the scene of the raids to the Oakmont police station.

The Saturday night gaiety was at its height when State troopers simultaneously entered each hostelry and ordered proprietors,

bartenders, patrons and members of the jazz orchestras to prepare for an unexpected ride to the police station. At Manoa, women screamed and for a few minutes the greatest excitement prevailed. A rush was made for the doors and windows by the women and their escorts, which brought the announcement from Captain Charles Smith, recently appointed head of the Haverford Township police and who directed the raids that he had all exits guarded by a sufficient number of men to handle all in the place. After warning them to desist from starting trouble, he ordered them to enter cars and go to the police station.

Some of the male prisoners did not have the necessary \$15 cash security and were permitted to leave watches, rings and in some case overcoats to ensure their presence at Wednesday's hearing. Six men were committed to jail in default of security. Five of the ten young women caught in the Manoa Inn raid were without funds and were permitted to post wristwatches and rings as security.

According to Captain Smith, State policemen have been gathering evidence against the inn and the hotel in Newtown Square for several weeks after repeatedly purchasing high powered liquor. Warrants were sworn out before Magistrate Blackburn, the proprietors being charged with selling liquor and conducting disorderly houses.

The station house was crowded. The women were sent to a second-floor room where the Township commissioners usually meet to await their hearings while the police went back to bring in more loads of prisoners. The raids on the two hotels were the result of local agitation against "conditions along the West





Bartenders circa 1914

Chester Pike” brought before recent meetings of the commissioners of Haverford township.

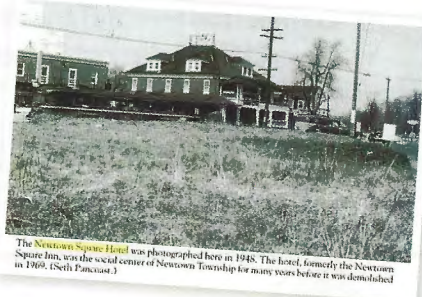
Several serious automobile accidents in which intoxicated persons figured aroused the anger of the commissioners. In a number of these cases persons implicated informed the police they had obtained intoxicating liquors at the hotels.

*PS: At this time, General Smedley Butler, later to make his home in Newtown Square, was the Director of Public Safety in Philadelphia – and was conducting what was reported the next month as a “vigorous clean-up campaign” against the gin joints in Philadelphia. A little over a month after the raid described above, the Manoa Inn was raided again. A woman’s group showed up at the owner’s trial and told the judge that Boyd had been heard bragging that his political pull would keep him from being convicted. In June of 1924, a jury acquitted he and his three bartenders of all charges! I have not found how the owner at Newtown Square fared.*

*Periodically through the 1920s and into the 1930s, several locations were raided repeatedly in Newtown Square – including raids that uncovered lewd floor shows and dancing girls. It was a difficult decision to pick just one – they were all fairly colorful. I will post up a chronology and more links to articles at our website. Go to this page for more on Prohibition in Newtown Square: <http://www.historicnewtownsquare.org/newtown-square-history/events-prohibition/>.*

*After Prohibition, the Newtown Square Hotel resumed its place as the main watering hotel in Newtown until it was demolished in 1969. However, the building that was the Manoa Inn lives on – later called the Del Rio Inn and then L&M Caterers on 1254 West Chester Pike in Havertown, it is now the L&M Professional Building. The last time I was there, it was in an upstairs bar. Every time I pass it, I imagine that night, the building surrounded, the screaming inside. And I smile at the thought.*

Doug Humes is a board member of the Newtown Square Historical Society. Visit our website at [www.historicnewtownsquare.org](http://www.historicnewtownsquare.org) for more information on membership and local history.



Right: Newtown Square Hotel 1948

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