

Bleak House — By day, **Jack Gordon**, managing partner of New York's **Kent Beatty & Gordon**, litigates complex commercial cases and gives advice on executive compensation. But for the past five years, his nights and weekends have been spent making an historical documentary about the former occupant of his 245-year-old Roseland House.

The Bond Force Legacy, released on DVD June 5, chronicles the lives of two families from Roseland and Livingston from the 1760s to the 1990s. It is a racy tale, whose central figure, Jonathan Force III, was excommunicated by his church for bigamy in 1882 and whose abandoned children from his first marriage had an incestuous relationship while living in Gordon's house.

The project was a natural for Gordon, a history buff with a degree in film-making. He used his legal research skills to piece the story together from sources such as a 1927 court opinion and affidavits filed in estate proceedings, as well as letters, deeds, photos, ledgers and banking records.

He tapped his law partners and other colleagues for voiceovers and **George Flammer Jr.**, 92, Roseland's magistrate for 20 years, is interviewed in the film about his acquaintance with the family. The film will have a limited film festival run as well as limited screenings in New York and New Jersey.

— *By Henry Gottlieb, Charles Toutant,
Lisa Brennan and Mary P. Gallagher*