

TANDEM TRAILERS BARRED FROM OAK TREE RD.

The Palisades Civic Association scored its first victory with a Jan. 3rd state ruling denying Consolidated Freightways' request to operate tandem trailer rigs on Oak Tree Rd. and Rte. 303. The Association invites all members and would-be members to a victory celebration at the regular meeting of the P.C.A. at the Community Center, 8 pm, Monday, Jan. 21st.

Word of the decision was telephoned by Department of Transportation staff on Jan. 4th to Supervisor Joseph Colello and Patrick Brady, manager of C.F.'s Palisades terminal. Both immediately called P.C.A. president Eileen Larkin to congratulate the P.C.A.

"Our decision involves the physical inadequacy of Oak Tree Road to handle the larger trucks and the degree of local concern that the tandem trailers would have a negative impact on highway safety along Oak Tree Road," D.O.T. Regional Director Albert E. Dickson wrote to Colello. "In addition, the overwhelming opinion expressed by yourself, other elected officials, the Orangetown Police, and the Orangetown residents was against the use of tandem trailers." The information contained in letters from "many officials and citizens...was an important consideration which was used in making our final determination."

"We obviously could not have won without organized and outspoken community participation," Larkin commented. "That got us the support of all the local officials, and we certainly want to thank them for their help which was crucial. Most of all, the people of Palisades should be proud of themselves for standing up and making themselves heard. That really did it."

The fight began last June when the P.C.A. sent a petition with over 400 signatures to D.O.T. A large turnout of protesters was organized to counter a "demonstration" of tandems on site in August, and several hundred Palisades

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MY VIEW FROM THE DESK

by Mildred Post Rippey

Conclusion

One of my library friends especially dear to me was Bill Miles, a theatre person, in stock companies, I believe. He too helped choose books for our library shelves. He and his wife, Helen, and their two daughters were an important part of our community for many years. Bill was a happy man, light-hearted and full of the joy of living. After I became a desk-librarian on the 5-7 shift, I looked forward to hearing his cheery whistle and his step on the stairs. What pleased me most was that he said he came at that particular time because he knew I would be there. When the Mileses left Palisades, I wept. My girls were baby-sitters for Mousie and Elizabeth, and they were as much a part of my life as the library.

We all loved the Kenisons, too-- Alphonse, Rosie (sister of Buckminster Fuller), and their children who grew up in Palisades. Rosie worked in the library hours on end. She was indefatigable and accomplished so much--typing catalog cards, working on the library history, weeding books, helping at library parties and plant sales with Jo Walden and Margaret Anderson. She was on the library board for several years, especially around the time when the new wing was added. The wing "built with loving care because Heath and Thomsen had been there." (That was part of a verse I wrote at that time.) We had a lovely nostalgic farewell party for the Kenisons when they left for New England as we had for the Mileses. Now Rosie and Helen are "walking tall in the fields of the Lord."

Over the years I have watched the children grow up and up, from little ones whose heads I could barely see above the desk to young teenagers and young mothers and fathers with children of their own. I have many cherished memories of these dear ones. One little guy, Jim Eberle.

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always kissed my hand. Another, Sara Tapley, dragged a chair all the way up from downstairs so she could sit beside me. A beautiful baby, Kim Agnew sat on the floor beside my desk with her chin quivering while her mama looked for books downstairs. I helped one desperate child write a story about the first black woman to ride the bus.

Many pleasant things happened to me during my 35-year desk-sit. I won't enumerate them all, heaven forbid, but recently I came across a book in my home library called *Half the Fun* by Bill Plage-mann. He had written some of it in my house while his own house was being built. On the fly leaf are these words: "For Mildred Post Rippey in whose house much of this novel was written--a quiet refuge from carpenters and plumbers and other slings and arrows of outrageous fortune--with all kinds of love, including love--Bill 1961." I also have an autographed copy of Horace Gregory's *The House on Jefferson Street* in which he has written in his shaky hand: "For Mildred with the good wishes of Spring." I had a feeling of kinship for Mary Ellen Chase who wrote *The White Gate*; and when I saw that the book was about to go the way of all flesh, I shed a tear or two. The next day, to my joy, I found *The White Gate* on my door-step inscribed "For darling Mildred."

So many people have been involved in the life of the Palisades Free Library, far too many to mention. Whenever I look out of the east windows I think of Ricard Brooks (Brooksie) putting on the screens a few days before he died of a heart attack. I remember Geddes Smith bringing in the wood for the fireplace on the stormy day of the opening of the new library. I can still hear the strong bass voice of Everett Martine addressing a Board meeting. Then there were Sally Nafe and her Young Adults shelf, Ann Thomas in the children's corner, Connie Price at the desk. All the pet projects of the dedicated workers. Alice Haagen-sen and her historical research, finding the long-lost Verplanck Map, then leaving it at home and having to retrace her steps. Marion Grey and her delightful lace stories. Donald Tapley at the helm, Standard Cat. in hand. Mary Louise Powell, Margaret Ewing, Carol Elevitch, each doing her important thing. Beryl and Lewis Thomas (Dr. Thomas's books are best sel-

lers.); Charles and Lael Wertenbaker (and their Pierce Arrow); the Lloyd Lowndes; the Morley Safers (Morley of the 60 Minutes show); Gert Macy; and by all means, the Gerald Murphys, impeccable Gerald with his gloves, his homburg, and his stick; the Wallaces, Lorraine and Mike; Ted Yates; Harry and Dorothy Davis; Andy and Helen Norman; and so on *ad infinitum*. Then Beatrice became Library Director; and in the words of Isaiah, "All the rough places were made smooth" under her aegis.

Now I, Mildred Post Rippey, must close this long talk with much love; but-- "Never let it be forgot, for one brief shining moment this was my Camelot."

So be it.

PALISADES CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The P.C.A. has raised just over \$5,100 since Thanksgiving. This represents about two-thirds of the budget for the legal war-chest to fight the proposed condominiums at Oak Tree Road and Rte. 340. While the total is impressive, funds have come from fewer than 100 contributors. The P.C.A. is acting in this matter for the benefit of all Palisades residents and property owners and asks those who have not yet done so to help themselves by pitching in. \$50 appears to be the median contribution; but owners of valuable properties are giving \$100 or more, and contributions of \$25 and under are welcomed as both material and spiritual support.

Checks should be mailed to Palisades Civic Association, P. O. Box 222, Palisades.

NEW YORK PHILOMUSICA CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

The second concert of the 1984-85 season is planned for Sat., Feb. 9th at 8 pm at the Naurausaun Presbyterian Church, Sickletown Rd., Pearl River, N. Y.

This concert will present the Tremont String Quartet as guest artists, playing:

Beethoven - String Quartet in F, Op. 135
Mendelssohn - String Quartet in E Flat Major, Op. 12

Robert Palmer - String Quartet #3 (1955)

The 1984-85 season marks the fourteenth year since the founding of New York Philomusica and its sixth year in Rockland County.

PALISADES FREE LIBRARY

Over the past year the library has been host to a series of informal reminiscences about life in Palisades. 10964 has published a written version of one by Mildred Rippey. In December, Dick Salmon, who built and lived in a series of unique houses in Palisades for more than thirty years and who now lives in Grandview, delighted a gathering at the library with his portraits of some of his early neighbors. There was Walter Simmons, "Simmy," the postmaster of Palisades who also ran the general store and who refused to stock anything that moved off the shelves too fast. Other characters included an enormous dog, an abandoned Countess and her exotic household of three or four maids, grooms, and horses, and the cast of an hilarious musical that was also its own audience. Taking their cue, those present chimed in with their own memories. A tape recording of the event may be heard at the library.

Dick Salmon took the occasion to present the library with an extraordinary prize: *Trout Flies*, of which he is the author. "Author" is too limited a term, for the book is an exquisite production. Each of the 589 copies describes how individual flies should be tied and includes the actual fur and feather materials required. These come from all over the globe, and many are now unavailable as a result of conservation measures. The text is handwritten and tells a story about each fly. The limited edition took five years to produce and was published in 1975 by Sportsman's Edge Press, New York. The original price was \$95 but now fetches \$250--when it can be found.

* * *

The Annual General Meeting of the library will be on Sun., Jan. 20th, at 2 pm. Members are invited to come and vote for two new Trustees (nominees to be announced) and to hear the featured speaker, Corliss Lamont. His father, Thomas H. Lamont, built Lamont Hall in 1929. Dr. Lamont, famous civil libertarian activist, poet, philosopher, editor, author, and local benefactor, will describe his memories of an earlier Palisades.

ROGER JELLINEK

INTRODUCING: THE SHAHS

New to Palisades are Chandresh Shah and his wife, Uma. In July of '84 the Shahs bought the house previously owned by the Gilmans on Iroquois Ave. The young couple are from India, he from Bombay and she from Bangalore. They have lived in the United States for about ten years.

An even more recent member of the Shah family is their son, Vivek, who was born Oct. 9th. Uma's mother has come from India to help out with the new baby for a few months.

Uma was export manager for a synthetic materials trading house in the city before Vivek was born.

Chandresh is a partner in Mayer-Shah Associates, financial consultants, of New York City, who specialize in insurance, pensions, and retirement planning. He also conducts seminars and classes in the financial field.

"Most of the time, people work to make money," says Chandresh. "We help make the money work for people." Mayer-Shah Associates provide services to all economic levels; most clients of the company come in through referral. The partners donate a number of hours each week to assist those who cannot afford to pay but need the services badly.

We are happy to welcome the Shah family to the Palisades community.

NANCY HALL

IN MEMORIAM

Sidney Hertzberg of Iroquois Avenue died of lung cancer on Dec. 14, 1984, at the Rockland County Medical Center in Pomona, N. Y. A memorial service was held by the family at the Palisades Church Hall on Dec. 23rd.

During a long and varied career, Mr. Hertzberg was a journalist for the *New York Times* and in India, a political activist and writer. Active in community affairs, he served as a trustee for the Palisades Library.

He leaves his wife, Dr. Hazel Whitman Hertzberg, a son, daughter, two grandsons, two brothers, and a sister.

THE GESNER DIARY

*A Glimpse of Life in Palisades
in the Nineteenth Century*
by Alice Munro Haagensen

One of the treasures left by Winthrop Sargent Gilman in the Palisades Library is the diary kept by Nicholas Gesner from 1829 to 1850. It is not complete; Mrs. Abram Post stopped his granddaughter, Mary Sparks, from burning parts of it and later gave what she had rescued--four boxes full--to Mr. Gilman. The Historical Committee had these copied in 1958 by the New York Public Library, and they were bound in four handsome volumes by Mrs. John Worzell. A few years ago the Historical Committee had them put on microfilm.

Historical researchers such as Carl Nordstrom and Reginald McMahon have used parts of the diary, but it has never been completely transcribed. Occasionally, someone has tried to copy it but has been put off by the many abbreviations and cryptic sentences.

If one persists, however, and begins to understand what Gesner is saying, one reads on and on. Suddenly, there is a jolt; and one finds oneself in a Victorian novel, full of intense feeling, jealousy, and dramatic scenes. Gesner's obsessive interest in his widowed niece by marriage, Mary Quidor Concklin ("Pol. Conck"), filled his life for the first two years of the diary and caused quarrels with their respective children, not to mention occasional flare-ups with "Polly" herself.

Eventually, Mary Concklin found the scenes, "jawing, jawing, jawing" as she put it, too much for her so she moved in with her daughter, Phebe Van Wickel, leaving Gesner to the companionship of his wife, Gracie.

One imagines Gracie to be a faithful, dumpy little woman but a poor cook and not very bright. The poor woman suffered from an "animal which sat in her stomach, and now and then flew up in her throat" (a hiatus hernia?). Doctors tried their best, pouring large doses of turpentine down her throat; but couldn't "kill the animal." It was enough to addle her wits.

All this has been drawn from the first two or three years of the diary. The rest of Gesner's life can hardly be

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so full of emotion; but by now he is a real person, surrounded by identifiable characters, much of whose background one knows. One can still immerse oneself in the past, as in a leisurely novel.

The trouble is, to transcribe the whole diary will take years and should be undertaken by someone with plenty of time ahead--hardly a description of the present writer.

ROCKLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS

* Noted director Joseph Strick will be on hand for a post-screening discussion when his film *Ulysses* is shown at the Center on Sat., Jan. 19th at 8 pm.

Tickets for the film are \$3 general admission and \$2 for Center members, students, and senior citizens.

* Registration is under way at the Center for Spring classes which begin the week of Jan. 21st.

Classes and workshops are being offered for everyone from ages 3 through adult in dance and movement, drama, literary arts, music, calligraphy, ceramics, etching, jewelry, painting and drawing, papermaking, stained glass, and graphic design.

The Center will offer a large number of art scholarships to both adults and children and will be granted on the basis of both talent and need. Applications and catalogue of courses can be obtained by calling or writing the Center. The scholarships are being made available by the trustees of the Martha Ryther Building and Scholarship Fund.

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HARRY DAVIS TO PERFORM LOCALLY

Our own well known Harry Davis will enact a "One man Show" on Sun., Jan. 20th, at 3 pm in the Palisades Presbyterian Church Parish House. Harry will perform a series of autobiographical sketches of various roles reminiscent of his long acting career.

A donation will be taken for Central America Refugees. The public is cordially invited.

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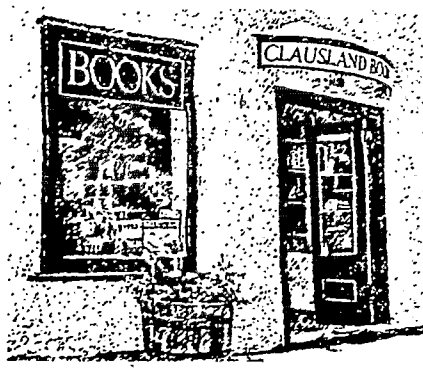
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PROFILE: BENTZ PLAGEMANN

Bentz "Bill" Plagemann was an established novelist and a contributor of many short stories to *Harper's*, *McCall's*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and the *Ladies Home Journal* when he, his wife, Kitty, and young stepson, Brent, moved into the old grey house on Rte. 9W in 1949. Today, thirty-six years later, Bill can't imagine living anywhere else.

Bill was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. He is proud of his pioneer heritage and speaks with great pride about the sod house of his maternal great-grandparents in Madison, Wisconsin and the log house in which his paternal great-grandparents lived in the wilderness of Ohio.

Growing up on an isolated farm, Bill read to entertain himself. When he entered high school, he found he had already completed the reading requirements for all four years. At age fourteen, he decided to become a writer and began sending off his short stories; but he had to wait another fourteen years before his first story was accepted by *Story Magazine*. During those lean years Bill worked in bookstores in Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, and at Brentano's in New York.

World War II interrupted his career, and he joined the Navy. Bill said he felt sorry for the men he met who did not know what to do with their lives because he knew he could write. Assigned to a hospital ship in North Africa as First Petty Officer, he was the only man to go ashore, arranging for medical supplies for the wounded, where--in one of those twists of fate--he developed polio. He was first flown to Naples for treatment and then to Warm Springs, Arkansas. His experiences in the navy and with polio are recounted in his books, *The Steel Cocoon* and *My Place to Stand*.

Bill's writing continued to flourish; he laughingly admits to writing about 35 love stories. One of his first novels, *All For The Best*, which he describes as a contemporary version of *Candide*, was received with critical acclaim.

While on a trip home to Cleveland, he met his future wife, Kitty, who was visiting from New York with her young son. Bill was invited to teach a course on short story writing at New York University. He said it was an offer he couldn't refuse because he could continue his courtship of Kitty at the same time.

When they moved here, Palisades could truly be called a hamlet. Bill became actively involved with the library and the Presbyterian Church. He described his experiences in our small town in a series of short stories for *McCall's*, which were later published in the book, *This Happy Place*.

Those were the days when there were so few children around to play with young Brent, when Mr. Soutar taught one combined class for the 1st to 3rd graders, and hot lunches were served by the mothers in the old schoolhouse across the street. There were not enough boys to make up a baseball team; they allowed the girls to play but were too embarrassed to play other schools for fear they would be found out. The Little League was thought to be somehow connected with the United Nations! When Palisades started to grow with new houses being built, Bill says things changed for the better. More people meant more involvement in community affairs, more money to get things done, more children for Brent, and a resident minister for the Presbyterian Church.

Bill began writing a series about the Wallace family, starting with *This Is Goggle*, based on life with his stepson and wife. He says he had one brush with the theatrical world when Charles Laughton and Paul Gregory wanted to produce a play about Goggle. Bill recalls that it was a disaster from beginning to end. Although the play did open in Princeton and Washington, D. C., it never made it to Broadway.

Bill now lives in a delightful one-story house close to his old home. He, Kitty, and Wally Heath designed it to make his life easier and more comfortable as he spent more time in a wheelchair. His beloved Kitty died nine years ago, and Bill has since found it more difficult to publish. He is still writing, however, on subjects that intrigue him and about episodes in his life. I would love to see them published, for Bentz Plagemann is a wonderful storyteller and social commentator.

Many of his books are in the Palisades Library and the Tappan Library, including *This Happy Place* and *This Is Goggle*. Unfortunately, some are now out of print. If you have not yet had the pleasure of reading them, I recommend that you do. You will have an enjoyable time.

KAREN JEFFERIES

Tandems - continued from page 1

and Tappan residents attended a D.O.T. "informational hearing" in October. P.C.A. spokespersons gave detailed arguments at the hearing and followed up with letters to State Transportation Commissioner James Larocca.

ANDREW E. NORMAN

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Do you know a beer can collector? 50+ rare and different cans going into garbage unless new home found soon. Call Algert, 359-1196.

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Deadline for all material is the 5th of each month. Issues will be in your mailbox on the 15th of each month.

The size of 10964, Inc. Newsletter will vary from time to time depending on the timeliness of articles and the amount of material submitted.

Donations were received this month from Albon and Yolanda Man, Bill and Nellie Knudson, John and Barbara Algert, and Bob and Lois Burcaw. Many, many thanks!

PALISADES-SPARKILL BASEBALL LEAGUE

The Palisades-Sparkill Baseball League will hold registration for the 1985 season at the John M. Perry American Legion Post on Rte. 340 at the following times:

Sat., Jan. 19th, 10 am to noon

Wed., Jan 23rd, 7 pm to 9 pm

Sat., Jan. 26th, 10 am to noon

The league is completely co-ed in all three divisions: Peewee (kindergarten through 2nd grade), Junior (3rd through 5th grade), and Senior (6th through 8th grade). The league is independent, a community group not affiliated with any other league. No experience is necessary, and first-time children are encouraged in all three divisions.

The cost to register is \$20 per child but no more than \$30 per family. The season opens April 20th and closes June 22nd.

The youngsters in the Peewee Division hit a rubber ball from a stand as they learn the fundamentals of the game (like running to first base, not third). In the Junior and Senior Divisions, the boys and girls play hardball together--and the girls often surprise the boys!

For more information, call Kevin Driscoll, President, at 359-6034. PHOTO TIP: We'll gladly pose any of the smaller children with equipment at any of the sign-ups.

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