

10964

The Palisades Newsletter

June 1994 • No. 142

## The Big House — and the Little House



*Listening to the recent discussion about the Historic Areas of Tappan and Palisades, some members of the 10964 staff wished they knew more about the historic houses in the village. In the hope that readers would share that wish, it was decided to run a series on the topic — beginning at the beginning, with the earliest house still standing.*

**T**he Big House, also known as the Old Library and, since the 911 renumbering, as 201 Route 9W, is the oldest house in Palisades. At first glance it does not look it: with its steeply pitched roof, sharply angled gables, clustered chimneys and spacious verandah, it seems to be a typically Victorian country dwelling. A second look, however, reveals a large pre-Revolutionary

sandstone house, remarkably intact behind the nineteenth-century camouflage.

The builder of the house was Henry Ludlow, whose father-in-law, Captain John Corbett, owned all the land for miles around — 3410 acres “more or lesse.” Ludlow built his house of the locally quarried red sandstone. He made it long and deep but only one story high. The main section had a central hall, with two rooms on each side. These rooms had handsome fireplaces and some fine white pine paneling. A wing to the east, with its own door, probably contained a kitchen with the great beehive oven that was standard equipment at the time.

The house faced the road to the river, close to the junction of that road with the road from Closter and the road

*Continued page 2*

## The Big House — and : *Continued*

to the Slote (Sparkill). The flagpole stands at the crossroads today. In 1870, a road was built running east from the Post Office to the Presbyterian Church and the old unpaved road to the river became the Big House's driveway. (In 1927 Route 9W came in from the south and completed the road map.)

A durable tradition in Palisades says that the Big House — or part of it — dates from 1684. Quite recently, however, the foundation beams were subjected to tree-ring analysis. The result: a firm date between 1735 and 1738. The seventeenth-century date, if there is anything at all to the tradition, must have belonged to another house on the same site, of which not a trace is left.

Another tradition — a much more believable one — has it that Washington, Lafayette and (perhaps) Von Steuben dined at the house during the Revolutionary War, as guests of the patriotic Lawrence family. Most likely this was in the summer of 1780. Washington, headquartered in Tappan, had ordered the construction of a blockhouse to guard the ferry route — and may well have ridden over to see how the work was getting on. (All that remains of this fortification is a heap of rocks on the east side of Woods Road.) A round table believed to be the one at which the generals dined stands now in the Library, carrying a selection of recent books.

Independence won, owners came and went at the Big House. The structure was not much changed until 1820, when a single-story wing was built on to the west end of the house, matching the earlier eastern one. Then came 1867 and radical changes in the very latest taste. The roof was raised three feet and gables were added, providing a full second floor. The necessary stairway was installed. Exterior shutters replaced the old inside folding ones and a verandah with grooved posts and "Gothic" braces was built along the whole ninety-two-foot-long southern facade. A neighbor lamented that the changes had destroyed "much of the quaint look the house had in early days."

In 1898, Lydia Lawrence (her husband was distantly related to the Lawrences who had entertained Washington) bought the house as a home for the Palisades Library. More changes were made: an archway was opened between two large downstairs rooms; windows were cut through the stone to bring more daylight to the eastern end. The Library remained at the Big House for 45 years, then moved twice: to the Old School (the Community Center) in 1944, and to the present location in 1951.

Today the house is the property of Lynne and Jeffrey Sandhaus. They moved in 1978 and began the arduous work of restoring and preserving the original structure. In all their renovations — and there have been many — they have tried to keep a sense of colonial history. Lynne says that "the truly remarkable thing about the Big House is that it has been a home for over three centuries. It is as comfortable and vital a dwelling now as we suspect it was then."

Across the narrow driveway that was once a busy road is the Little House. The eastern end — a small room with another room above it, once reached by a trap door — is said to have been built in 1729 for the hayman to the squire who lived in the Big House, but no signs remain of any construction that early. Rather, the house is a small Federal-style building, dating from 1810 or thereabouts, with the restrained detailing of the period. Behind the house and wrapping around one side of it is a grape arbor whose massive vines must be at least 150 years old.

Both the Big House and the Little House are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

My main source for this article was Alice Munro Haagensen's invaluable *Palisades and Snedens Landing* (Pilgrimage Publishing, 1986), "the Bible" on the early history of Palisades. I am grateful also to Liz Finck for letting me look through papers and photographs in the collection of the Palisades Historical Committee. The photograph of the Big House reproduced here is from that collection.

*Caroline Tapley*

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## High School Graduates

This year, we have a number of high school graduates from Palisades, who have great plans for the future.

**Theresa Capozzi** graduates from Tappan Zee High School in June, and will be going to Saint Thomas Aquinas College in the fall. This summer, she is looking forward to taking an orientation cruise to Mexico with STAC.

**Roy Eappen** is graduating from Tappan Zee High School, and will be attending Tufts University in September. **Carrie Horton** is also saying farewell to Tappan Zee High School and will be going on to Cornell to major in animal sciences.

**Katherine Kim** will be taking summer college courses in Korea after graduating from Tappan Zee. When she returns, she is off to Wellesley with a full scholarship! **Laura Kim** will be embarking on the long and challenging 7-year medical program at Boston University after leaving Tappan Zee High School in June.

Also graduating from Tappan Zee High School are **Stephanie Albin**, **Enrique Ortiz**, and **Reisha Roopchand** who, unfortunately, could not be reached for this article.

**Caroline Fallon** and **Tommy Isaacs** will also be finishing their high school careers this June. Caroline graduates from Holy Angel High School in New Jersey, and Tommy bids farewell to Don Bosco High School.

We are proud of all of our graduating seniors, and we wish them all the best of luck!

*Diana Green*

# Palisades Historical Committee

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The story of the Palisades Historical Committee begins rightly when Winthrop Sargent Gilman came to Palisades in 1861. He was a committee in himself, collecting deeds, maps, genealogies, photographs, and a valuable nineteenth century diary, talking and writing to old inhabitants, and photographing and sketching everything of interest to the village.

After he died in 1925 his material was stored faithfully in the library, but there was little use made of it until, in 1943, it all came to light when the library was moved from the Big House to the Old School. Interest began to build up, and with the encouragement of Anna Gilman Hill, Mr. Gilman's daughter, all sorts of activities were launched.

Tyler Grey started to make a historical map of Palisades, but stopped to paint a mural of Palisades history in the Community Center (later covered over). Muriel Thompson, William Agnew and Ruth Smith collected photographs, the Archer Stansburys worked on the cemetery records, Evelyn Angell and Charlotte Shimizu began copying Mr. Gilman's Local History, Gerald Murphy did research on Snedens history in connection with the history of his house, which was then thought to be the original Cheer Hall, the Herbert Kelloggs re-discovered the old Gesner burying ground on the county Road, Mrs. Hill wrote a lively account of the Palisades of her young days and Mrs. Van Blarcom also shared her memories of early days in Palisades on paper and in interviews.

In 1957 the "Palisades Historical Committee" made its first report to the Library Board. The first chairman was Alice Haagensen, from 1957 to 1959, then Rosie Kenison until 1961. The group continued its collecting and investigating and formed working parties to study and index Mr.

Gilman's voluminous material. They persuaded the Rare Book Department of the New York Public Library to make copies of the nineteenth century Gesner Diary, and one of the members, Dorothy Worzel, bound the copies in four handsome volumes. Elizabeth Finck became chairman in 1961 and she was so satisfactory that, in spite of her frequent protests, she was kept on as chairman for twenty-five years.

The committee was always informal. Members came and went as their home circumstances permitted. If supplies were needed, members bought them with their own money.

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## "Setting up a new tombstone for Molly Sneden"

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But a lot got done, because everyone who came was interested and wanted to work. In 1962 members of the committee became involved in other affairs and the meetings were discontinued. From 1966 to 1968 the committee met again with mostly new members. They worked on various aspects of Palisades history and then recessed again.

The group was called together once in 1972 to authorize Mildred Rippey and Alice Haagensen to work on a map of the older part of Palisades, with definitive numbers for the houses. In 1973 the group was brought together again with the Bicentennial in mind, and it became a real committee, with a secretary who took minutes and a treasurer who kept the funds needed for the work

being done.

Mr. Gilman's *Story of the Ferry*, copied in a limited edition of 100 copies, sold as fast as members could fill the orders. Then facsimile copies of his other manuscripts were made so they could be more accessible, and the originals were placed in a safe. Other activities were the setting up of a new tombstone for Molly Sneden and the engagement of an archivist to catalogue the valuable historical material and to put it in the best possible condition for survival.

Elizabeth Finck resigned from the committee in 1985, and Mary Chamberlin was elected chairman pro tem. In 1987 the group began another recess. Recently there has been new interest in Palisades history and it was decided to revive the committee. There are three former members, Helene Stansbury, Tina Kister, and Alice Haagensen, and six new ones, Milbry Polk, Ann Tonetti, Alice Gerard, Nina Prusinowski, Diana Green, and Annie Gerard, who, being also a member of the library board, serves as liaison. Elizabeth Finck, who has done valuable work on the old houses in Palisades, will be a consultant. Alice Haagensen and Alice Gerard are serving as co-chairmen. The group hopes to continue collecting material but also to concentrate on new methods of reproducing what they have, particularly their accounts of life in Palisades at various times, in order to make these accessible to anyone interested.

If you have material you think might be of interest to the committee, (photographs, videos, documents, letters, maps or deeds) please call Alice Haagensen (359-0097) or Alice Gerard (359-4338). The historical collection in Palisades is outstanding and deserves to be publicized and made available to the community.

Alice Haagensen

# Jawonio Center Prepares for Opening

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**“We see the  
residents  
as human  
beings, as  
individuals”**

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After one of the toughest winters of the century, we are all happy and relieved to see spring arrive with its pastel flowers, temperate evenings and fresh verdant growth. But, there may be people who are even happier about the improved weather conditions — people who have been waiting to move to Palisades, as soon as the weather lets up enough to allow reconstruction of their house to be completed.

The Jawonio group home on Oak Tree Road was slated for an April 1st opening, but was still recovering from the effects of 15 snow storms. The opening date has been rescheduled for May 31st. According to Paul Tendler, Executive Director of Jawonio Inc., “All the major renovations are done. We’re now working on the outside siding and on finishing the interior.” Additional steps have been taken to assure the privacy of neighbors as well as the residents, including the building of an extra-high fence on the shared property line. “Everyone’s so excited,” Mr. Tendler continues. “The residents have been riding by with their aides every couple of weeks, just to see the home’s progress.”

“That’s true,” adds Barbara Bold, who has worked at Letchworth with our soon-to-be neighbors for over 20 years. “Keith, one of the more vocal residents, stops by my office every day to ask when the home will be ready.”

Most of the seven residents are in their 20’s (one is 53), and all are wheelchair-bound with severe cerebral palsy. They need help in every aspect of living their life. Ms. Gold has worked with them for so many years, she can remember the residents in their cribs. “It’s wonderful that they can live in a real home,” she says. “No matter how personalized we try to make an institution, it’s still an institution. This way, they can choose their menus, their activities ... they can sit in their backyard.”

“We see the residents as human beings, as individuals,” adds Tendler, “as sons and daughters of people who live in this community. We’re asking that they have an opportunity at life that’s safe, productive and rooted in community.”

Ms. Gold is strongly supportive of the residents. “They happen to be very

nice people who are severely handicapped. They are charming, and they do have distinct personalities. Mentally, the residents can comprehend language quite well. Speech is problematic for them, though. But that’s one of the effects of cerebral palsy.”

Jill Warner, Director of Resident Services at Jawonio, has been in charge of hiring and training the group home’s staff. The hiring process began early, in order to produce a staff that would be solidly trained even before the home opened. Warner feels strongly that staff and supplies “should be in place prior to the residents moving in.”

Palisades residents should know that great pains have been taken in the hiring of the home’s staff. Applicants have routinely gone through three interviews and extensive reference checks. “We don’t take things lightly here,” says Warner. “We want to make sure that the residents get the best care possible, the same care you would want for your brothers and sisters.” There will be no more than four staff members on the premises at any time. To ensure top-quality care, the staff will include a Licensed Practical Nurse, a House Manager, and an Assistant House Manager. Staff have also been trained in additional skills, including administration and CPR.

Some Palisades residents have expressed an interest in welcoming the residents when they arrive. But Mr. Tendler discouraged that, suggesting instead that we first allow the residents some time to move in and get acclimated. “We’ll go a little bit at a time,” explained Gold. “We don’t want the residents to be overwhelmed. Later, we’ll have an open house for the dedication of the home, and everyone is welcome to attend.”

What’s important right now is that the residents move into their long-awaited home. “They know each other very well,” says Gold. “They’ve lived together since childhood. They’re like a family. And they’re moving into this house together, as a family.”

*Carole Pierson*

# South Orangetown School News

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## Summer Programs Planned

The South Orangetown School District is offering 2 exciting summer programs for Rockland County students. The first, **South Orangetown Summerstage '94 (SOS)** presents workshops in theatre. For older students entering grades 5,6,7,8,9 and 10, sessions will cover acting, singing, dancing, improvisation, lyric writing and Shakespeare. Students entering grades 2,3 and 4 will have music, movement, theatre games, puppet shows and playlets. The 5 week sessions run from July 5 to August 5, and are: Grades 2-4, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., \$275; and grades 5-10, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., \$375. Call 359-6439 for more information about **SOS**.

A second summer program, **Linking Learning and Play**, is also planned. This program, for children entering grades 1 through 6, is offered on weekday mornings from 9-12, and will hopefully link with the afternoon **SOS** and Orangetown recreation programs for children. Applications are available at school offices. Call 365-4271 for details.

## Aftercare Program

Many parents have been interested in whether South Orangetown will have an afterschool, aftercare program available for kindergarten students. At the May 9 Board of Education meeting, the Board, while hoping to institute such a program in September, agreed to table implementation plans until a number of specific questions could be investigated. The Board is committed to a self-sustaining aftercare program, reflecting the responses of some 37% of parents of incoming kindergarteners who participated in a survey. A variety of details remain outstanding, however. The kindergarten committee made recommendations to the Board about how to structure the aftercare program, and will reconvene to answer the



questions raised. Issues to be resolved cover time schedules, fee structures, enrollment caps, participant selection criteria, district transportation costs, and sources, other than the district budget, for start-up financing.

## Budget

The South Orangetown Schools proposed budget for school year 1994-1995 was approved by voters on May 4.

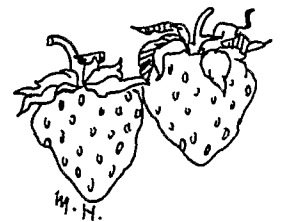
*Ellen Chayet Kidd*



## Palisades Presbyterian Church News

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The Annual Strawberry Festival of the Palisades Presbyterian Church will take place Saturday, June 11, 3:00 - 7:00 p.m., on the lawn of the Manse on Washington Spring Road. Rain date is June 12. The event features strawberry shortcake, ice cream cones, tea, coffee, lemonade, a pocket lady with toys, a specialty table, flowers, and music. Come and enjoy.



# Palisades Bulletin Board

*In the last issue of 10964 staff introduced the Bulletin Board so that people could communicate and speak to each other directly. We were pleased with your responses to our call for information. If you wish to participate, please write to 10964 Newsletter at P.O. Box 201 or call any staff member. In particular, we would like the names of Palisades children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall of 1994, so we can include an article and a photograph. Deadline for the October issue is September 10. Have a great summer!*

**Ray Douglas**, who graduated from the Medical College of Pennsylvania, will be doing his residency in Family Practice at the Williamsport Hospital and Medical Center in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Ray was married to Pamela Weinstein in May of 1994. The couple is at home in Williamsport after a honeymoon in Hawaii.

**Brenda and Eli Josephs**, and their 4 year old daughter **Sarah**, recently moved to Snedens Landing from Upper Grandview. Brenda is an attorney for children at the Legal Aid Society of Rockland County, and husband Joseph is a partner in a property management firm.

**Franny Breer's** daughter, **Emmy**, has been awarded a Guggenheim grant and a Jerome Foundation grant for a project in film animation.

**Dorothy Davis** has been traveling. She spent a weekend in Washington recently as the guest of honor at a convention of mystery writers and fans, hosted by an organization called Malice Domestic, whose motto is "Not everybody's cup of tea." Six hundred people attended the convention. Dorothy has also just returned from a two-week Italian Elderhostel trip to Perugia, Assisi and Siena, sponsored by the Art Department of Trinity College. She travelled with **Joanne Bentley**, Helen Norman's sister.

**Janet Coombs** and **Kenneth Carbone** are new residents of Palisades, having bought the Sanders-McGiverny house recently. They are the parents of one child, **James**, age 3. Kenneth and Palisades resident, **Leslie Smolan**, are business partners of 17 years in a graphic arts company, Carbone-Smolan Associates, and Janet is chair of Chapman, a direct mail advertising agency.

**Elisabeth Anderberg**, who is in the fashion business, has bought **Bill Hurt's** little house.

**Jacob Angus Lawrence** was awarded the OpWhite Prize in Geology, given to the outstanding senior in geology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Welcome to **Marki and Daniel Flannery** who moved

to 403 White Oak Road from Spring Valley last September. Marki, originally from Brooklyn, is vice president of a home care agency in New York City. Daniel grew up in Tappan and is a business analyst for Toys-R-Us. They have two boys, **Joseph**, who is 20 months old, and **Daniel**, who is 8 months old.

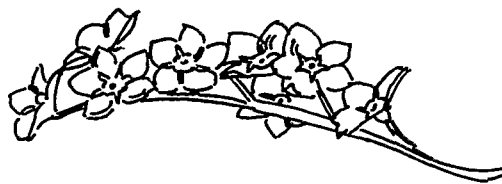
**Shelly and Chuck Cohen** moved to 403 Red Oak Road, two houses down from the Flannerys, from Valley Cottage last September. Chuck is from Spring Valley and owns a small company, C Tech, which provides products for the blind. Shelly hails from Long Island and is employed as an architect in New York City. They have one daughter, **Meagan**, who is 23 months old.

**Katherine McIntyre**, a 1988 Tappan Zee High School graduate, is currently finishing her Ph.D. in isotope chemistry at the University of Southern California, Santa Cruz, School of Oceanography. Katherine's most recent grant-study project has been with the Norwegian government in the North Atlantic.

**Holly and David Seeger's** current television project centers on ABC's production of home videos of daytime soap operas. They have just completed selections from and interviews with the actors of *All My Children*, *One Life to Live*, *General Hospital*, and *ABC's Romantic Men*. David directs and edits the project, and Holly produces and handles the computer graphics. At this writing they are interviewing Susan Lucci about her Erica Kane character.

**Barbara Eberle**, who moved upstate from Palisades, continues her participation in swimming meets across New York State. Now 65, Barbara has captured 43 medals at the Empire State games during her 17 years of pursuing her "hobby." "It's just exercise, it's also relaxing and it just makes you feel good," Barbara says.

A member of the Masters Program, a national sports organization divided into districts, Barbara also participates in the Senior Games, a national program with more





than 100 locations across the country hosting seniors in multi-sports events. It is estimated that 150,000 seniors compete nationwide.

**Mickey Kelley**, proprietor of *Whispering Pines* in Piermont, has produced a new catalogue. For those of you who can't make it to Piermont, there is a toll-free, 800 number to order the intriguing north country items she discovered and displays in her store. Mickey opened a second store in Piermont that features furniture.

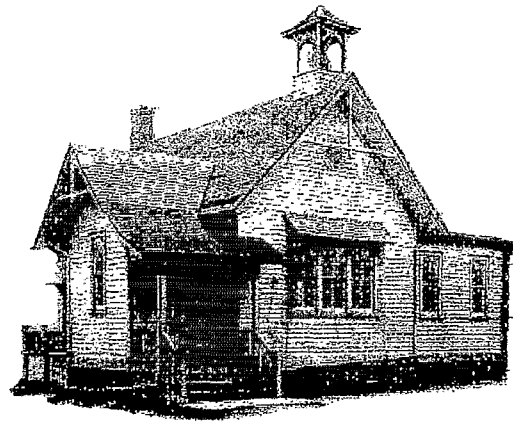
**Mitchell and Alice Kriz Warren** now live in South Africa where Mitchell works for PSI on their AIDS intervention program. This past week they joined friends to help perform over 100 interviews using Muppet-like puppets at polling centers in Soweto and other places. They interviewed, among others, a 105-year-old-woman and the Rev. Al Sharpton! They also attended the Mandela inauguration. Alice's baby is due in July. **Oriel and John** plan to visit her this summer. **Michael** is moving back to America from Paris. **Jennifer** is moving to Prague on a Masaryk Foundation Fellowship to teach English during the summer. **Lucy** is graduating from Eckard College in St. Petersburg, Florida. Oriel said, "I'm glad to have at least two in this country!"

**Dave, Diana, Savannah, and Dakota Green** have taken up their new residence on Closter Road in the old Zinnel House.

**Bill and Sue Walther** were awarded the 1994 County Executive's Merit Award for Historic Preservation by the Rockland Historical Society. This was in honor of the incredible work they have done on the original house and the appropriateness of the addition. The house is known as the Jesse Trenchard 1780. He was the first recorded owner and the first village blacksmith.

**Murray-Jellinek News:** They moved again to 980 Kaahue, Honolulu, HI 96825, (808) 395-5972. They are up on Mariners Ridge overlooking Diamond Head. **Eden** has been busy directing plays (including Jean Brock's *Macbeth*) at the high school, teaching drama in the local schools, and she has been invited onto the Hawaiian state Theater Council and is up for a major drama award. **Roger** is working on several projects including one involving computer mapping of the islands.

Welcome to **Judy O'Neil Castagna** and **Vincent Castagna**, who recently moved into the Chester Post house on Route 9W. Vinnie is manager of the Tappan Service Center at Oak Tree Road and Route 303, and is well known to many residents of the area. Judy is employed as an administrative assistant with the Hertz Corporation in Park Ridge. Vinne and Judy have been actively involved in efforts to halt tandem trucking on Oak Tree Road, and with the Coalition for Route 303.



## Palisades Civic Association News

In April, the Orangetown Town Board voted 3-2 not to reappoint Danforth Toan to the Historic Areas Board of Review (HABR), a disappointment for the Palisades Civic Association (PCA) which had joined others in the effort to retain Toan on the Board. The PCA had reached its position based on Toan's qualifications as an architect who had long specialized in local history and on his more than 25 years of distinguished leadership on the HABR.

The controversy that ignited organized opposition to Toan concerned the use of vinyl siding on non-historic houses located in the Tappan Historic District. Although the law is clear that only traditional materials may be used on exteriors in the district, and although the seven-member HABR had been unanimous in every decision on the subject, a majority of the Town Board was persuaded that the rulings were rigid, restrictive, and caused by Toan's arbitrary and subjective leadership.

Despite a large and vocal turnout of PCA members, Supervisor Jack Cassidy and Councilmen Robert Bergman and Niel O'Sullivan voted to replace Toan with Margaret Raso, also of Tappan. Councilwoman Eileen Larkin's impassioned support for Toan was seconded by Councilman Edward Fisher.

A second seat on the HABR was also given to the anti-Toan group. Ralph DeLorenzo of Van Wardt Place was named to the final two years of the term of Palisadian William Beaty, who resigned last winter. De Lorenzo's appointment fulfills a recently ignored requirement in the law that at least one member of the HABR must be a resident of the Tappan Historic District.

Supervisor Cassidy made a public commitment to appoint a citizens advisory committee to review the Historic Areas ordinances for Tappan and Palisades, with one representative of the Palisades Civic Association to be included. As of this issue's deadline, no action had been taken to establish the committee.

*Andrew E. Norman*

# Arts News

## ACOR

The *Arts Council of Rockland*, a nonprofit organization committed to keeping the arts alive in our area, is currently conducting its annual membership drive. ACOR promotes arts exhibits, performances, workshops, cultural festivals, and other activities. It also supports and provides arts education in Rockland County schools, public arts information, an arts newspaper, arts opportunities, senior programs, advocacy and arts grants. For membership information, call 426-3660. ACOR is a member of the Alliance of New York State Arts Councils and operates under the auspices of the New York State Council on the Arts.

## EXHIBIT

The 24th Annual Juried Arts and Crafts Show will be held at Bear Mountain State Park during three weekends in October. For artists wishing to enter this exhibit, please contact ACOR at 426-3660.

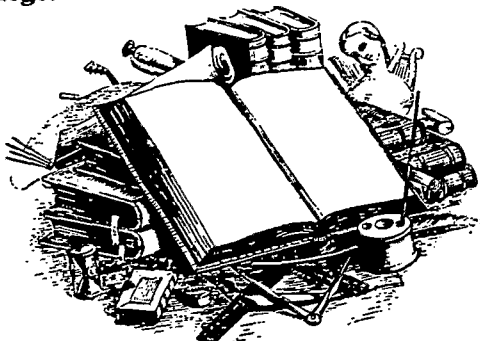
## MUSIC AT RCC

June 5: Young People's Concert at the Cultural Arts Center, Rockland Community College, Suffern, at 3:00 p.m. General public, \$12; children and seniors, \$6. Call 358-6470 for tickets and additional information.

June 11: County Choral Society, (Philip Hagemann, Conductor); 8:00 p.m. Celebrating Cecilia (The Patron Saint of Music). Featured works: Charles Gounod's "St Cecilia Mass," Philip Hagemann's "Cecilia's Triumph."

June 17: Rockland County Concert Band, (Lawrence Keith Zaidan, Music Director and Principal Conductor); 8:00 p.m., a program of music from the Broadway stage, light classical music, marches, and popular music. The band often features prominent guests soloists and singers from the Rockland County area as a part of their programs.

The two performances above will be held in the Theater of the Cultural Arts Center on the main campus of Rockland Community College. For ticket information call 429-1096. Tickets are not available at Rockland Community College.



## THEATRE

Elmwood Playhouse in Nyack continues its production of the musical *Cabaret* on June 3, 4, 10, and 11. Call 353-1313 for reservations and information.

Penguin Rep will present the comedy/drama *Love Letters* by A.R. Surney Thursdays through Sundays from June 2 to 26.

*The Wound of Love*, a drama by Kathryn Grant, opens on August 4 and continues to August 28.

*Gangster Apparel*, a new comedy by Richard Vetere, begins its run at Penguin Rep on September 22, ending October 16.

For Penguin Rep reservations call 786-2873.

## CHILDRENS' THEATRE STUDY

A *Performing Arts Summer Day Camp* for children ages 11 to 14 will be held on the main campus of Rockland Community College, July 5 through 30. The program will include daily classes in acting, movement, and voice production, workshops in stage make-up, and performing for television. There will be guest speakers with television and Broadway experience. The cost of the program is \$275, and enrollment is limited. Brochures are available from Helen Ackerly, 574-4471.

The Town of Orangetown's Summer Recreation Program is sponsoring a *Theatre Arts Program* for boys and girls ages 7-16. This will include an introduction to acting techniques, scene study, and improvisation. Sessions will be held on Tuesday and Thursday at the South Orangetown Middle School auditorium, starting July 5 through August 11, and will cost \$20. Registration is on June 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., June 6 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Office of Recreation and Parks on Greenbush Road, Orangeburg.





# Heyhoe Woods Road Through the Ages



**T**he first thing asked about Heyhoe Woods Road by postal workers, catalogue order takers, friends on other coasts and continents is, "Ho Ho what? Where did they come up with that name?" Fortunately, Alice Munro Haagensen has preserved detailed information on this point in her book about Palisades and Snedens Landing.

Heyhoe Woods Road is located on the grounds of an old estate called Heyhoe built by Winthrop S. Gilman, Sr. around 1871, fronting on what was then called Rockland Road (roughly now 9W). One of Gilman's daughters chose the name Heyhoe to commemorate an ancestor, Frances Heyhoe, who married into the Gilman family in 1740. Even in 1871, the choice of name was deemed "whimsical." I know that this name really exists since I met a woman named Ruth Heyhoe at a conference in Newfoundland, Canada in 1992.

Gilman was a wealthy banker and a friend of Andrew Carnegie. He was also a supporter of the cause of abolition. In 1837, he let a warehouse he owned in Alton, Illinois to the abolitionist newspaper, *The Alton Observer*, for its presses. The building was soon burned down by an angry pro-slavery mob. Gilman escaped with his life, but

was later put on trial for the crime of riot.

The original Heyhoe was huge, housing 13 children, servants, and visitors in legendary grandeur. According to Mrs. Haagensen, the doorknobs were said to be of solid silver, and the house had 26 marble fireplaces. A 1874 map of Rockland County shows a road about where Heyhoe Woods Road is now. This road was called Forest Avenue with no houses on it and connected at a right angle to a now vanished road called Heyhoe Road. This road passed the side of the Gilmans' house to Rockland Road.

Sadly, the abandoned house burned to the ground in the 1930s about the time 9W was built. Mr. Kennell's house now stands on the site opposite the gas station on 9W, and he has plowed up marble fragments and other artifacts while gardening in his orchard.

In 1939, Theodora Abel, a psychologist, and her husband, Theodore Abel, a sociology professor at Columbia University, decided to move from New York City along with her aged parents, Robert and Elsie Mead. Since Theodora's mother was a great friend of Nannie Gilman Hill, who lived in the house that Andy Norman now lives

*Continued on page 11*

## Palisades Free Library News



### **Library Receives Grant!**

The Palisades Free Library's expansion program recently received a boost with the notification by the New York State Education Department that it has received approval for a \$27,300 construction grant. Funded in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Federal Library Services and Construction Act, the grant will be used to install an elevator in the library, as part of the overall expansion program. Librarian Beatrice Agnew is very pleased to say that, with this grant, the library will be completely accessible to all community residents!

### **Your Thrift Helps Us in the Future!**

As you prepare for Summer and take one final look at your worn out winter clothing, please consider donating your old clothes to the Tappan Zee Thrift Shop in Piermont. The Palisades Free Library receives a portion

of all sales that come from clothes and other articles donated by Palisades residents. Your donation today will help us to build a library that can serve your needs tomorrow!

### **Congratulations Plant Sale Raffle Winners!**

The Spring Plant Sale was a great success and our thanks go to everyone who worked so hard to bring it together. As has become tradition at the Plant Sales, a number of fun audio systems were raffled. This year's winners included: B. Green, tee shirt designed by Marika Hahn; Johanna Lo, headphone stereo; the Davidson family, compact CD player and AM/FM radio; and Patricia

*Continued on page 10*

## Library News: *Continued from page 9*

Haugh, grand prize winner of the CD mini-system. Congratulations to each winner and good luck to everyone else at the next raffle in the Fall!

### Summer Programs for Children at Palisades Library

In conjunction with other libraries throughout New York State, Palisades Free Library will be sponsoring a summer reading program. This year the theme is time: "Read Around the Clock." All readers are welcome and encouraged to join. New this year is the Read-to-Me Club for preschoolers and kindergarteners.

Details for both will be available in the library in mid-June. The beginning date for both is Monday, June 27th.

There will also be preschool-kindergarten storytime - based on the theme of time and other timely programs. A calendar follows.

#### Monday, June 27th, 3 p.m.

Read Around the Clock, 1994 New York State Summer Reading Program, begins at 3 p.m. Come in and start the fun!

Read-to-Me Club for preschoolers/non-readers begins.

#### Tuesday, June 28th, 4:15 p.m.

"Many Moons," a program given by Barbara Wegren, the Leni Lenape Indians expert, for children who have completed grades 1, 2 and 3. Children will learn about the native lunar calendar as opposed to the Roman calendar we use. They will learn what a relatively short time people other than Native Americans have lived here. They will execute an Indian logo for their birth month. A question/answer period or Indian story will follow. PLEASE REGISTER.

#### Wednesday, June 29th, 1:30 p.m.

Storytime for preschool and kindergarten children. Children must be at least 3 to attend.

#### Tuesday, July 5th, 4:15 p.m.

A craft program for ages 4 to 7. Time to make a happy sun to hang up where they'll see it when they rise and shine. PLEASE REGISTER.

#### Wednesday, July 6

1:30 p.m. Storytime.

4:15 p.m. Craft time. Good Night mobiles for ages 4-7. PLEASE REGISTER.

#### Tuesday, July 12th, 4:15 p.m.

Picnic time for teddy bears and their owners. Children ages 3 to 6 are invited to bring their teddy bears or special stuffed toys to this annual summer event with an emphasis on time this time. Be sure

to REGISTER in a timely fashion for this all-time favorite program.

#### Wednesday, July 13th,

1:30 p.m. Storytime

#### Thursday, July 14th

4:15 p.m. Craft/game time for ages 4 to 7.

Make a clock face game. PLEASE REGISTER.

Reading game continues throughout the summer.

### New Books

Amis	<i>Russian Girl</i>
Archer	<i>Twelve Red Herrings</i>
Benchley	<i>White Shark</i>
Boll	<i>Silent Angel</i>
Brown.	<i>Dolley</i>
Burton	<i>Leonard Bernstein</i>
Clair	<i>Rattlebone</i>
Collier.	<i>Roosevelts</i>
Doctorow	<i>Waterworks</i>
Gash	<i>Sin Within Her Smile</i>
Grisham	<i>Chamber</i>
Hamilton.	<i>Map of the World</i>
Naipaul	<i>Way in the World</i>
Nossiter	<i>Of Long Memory</i>
Paretsky.	<i>Tunnel of Vision</i>
Sanford	<i>Night Prey</i>
Schiller	<i>Quiet Room</i>
Siddons.	<i>Downtown</i>
Taylor	<i>Necessary End</i>
Wolitzer	<i>Tunnels of Love</i>

### New Reference Books

*Atlas of Historical County Boundaries of N.Y.*  
*Encyclopedia of the Confederacy*  
*Encyclopedia of Gemstones and Minerals*  
*Encyclopedia of the American President*

### Summer Schedule

During the summer, the Library will be open during the following hours:

Monday to Wednesday	3 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. - Noon; 3 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Friday	3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday	2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Sundays  
Closed from June 19th through September



## Heyhoe Woods: *Continued from page 9*

in, and had brought her daughter to visit Palisades in the past, they looked for a place in Palisades. Together with another Columbia sociologist, Professor Robert MacIver, a physicist from NYU, Jean Cooley, and one of Abel's former students, George Weiss, they purchased 24 acres on Oak Tree Road which was subdivided and became Heyhoe Woods Road. Each party was supposed to own four acres; but the math does not come out right, and it is likely that Weiss, being quite wealthy, owned a larger portion. During World War II no buyers could be found for the other lots.

At the beginning, the town tried to insist that the road for the new subdivision be extended to connect with 9W, roughly following the old right-angled pattern shown on the 1874 map. The new owners, however, stopped this plan and went their own way, trading regular civic road services and through traffic for potholes and wildflowers on a privately maintained dirt road.

The Abels, Cooleys, and MacIvers hired the same architect, an Armenian/Swiss fellow named Hagopian who produced British Colombian cedar to blend their geometric outlines into the woodland setting, and the interiors made use of all the "latest glamorous" 1940's materials, such as fluorescent lighting, linoleum, plywood and sheet rock. The Cooleys' house, today owned by Paul Kessler, reflects a number of subsequent additions and renovations. Both Cooleys were musicians, and together with Theodora Abel, who was a fine violinist, and another cello player from New York City, played quartets once a week at their house. When the cellist suddenly died, Edith Cooley learned the cello so they could continue as a string trio.

After the war in the early 1950's, Jo Chamberlin, another Columbia professor and his wife, Mary, bought the lot next to the Abels. John Ewing, an oceanographer and the brother of the director of Lamont built a house at the end of the road. The Cooley house was later sold to Sandy and Tinka Vanderbilt. He was an editor at *The New Yorker* and quite a city slicker when he first arrived. One evening he shouted to his wife from the yard that there was a God Damned Cocker Spaniel up in the tree howling at him. It proved on closer inspection by more sober observers to be an owl.

All the children on the road attended the Palisades School which went through the eighth grade. They walked to school on the path which cut directly through the woods. Zita Abel had a dog named Tony with a mysteriously accurate sense of time. Every day at around two o'clock, he jumped up from the floor, barked, and rushed out the door through the woods. The two Chamberlin girls were sometimes invited to tea by Mrs. MacIver; she considered the caffeine in tea to be dangerous to their health and gave the third and fourth graders sherry instead! She also used to write them notes in Latin and leave the notes pinned to a tree.

Two evening wedding receptions have been held in the yard of the Abel/Lalire house, 30 years apart. Both were decorated by Pierre Lalire with luminous white Japanese paper lanterns hung in the trees. At the first reception it rained, and guests padded through the mud. At the second, a beautiful, riderless white horse appeared at a gallop, weaving through the trees in the twilight. One could imagine that it had been sent onto the scene by one of Fellini's stage directors, although it was later corralled by its frantic owners and sent back to its paddock on the other side of Oak Tree Road.

Since that time more subdivisions have accumulated gradually, and some of the houses have changed hands several times. Among the newer houses, the Friels now live next to the Tilstons, and the Schmidts live across the road from them. The Wolks are in the old MacIver house, and the Kwaks live in what was formerly the Ewing's house. Rex Lalire, who is Theodore and Theodora Abel's grandson lives in their former house with his wife, the author of this article, and two children. We are the fifth generation to live here.

*Greta Nettleton*

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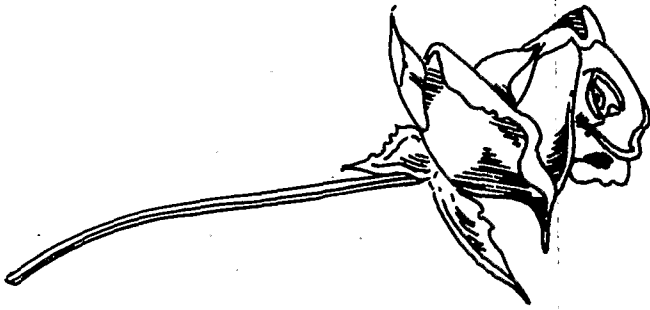
## Getting Involved in the Schools

"How can I find out about our local schools?" is a question often heard from new residents and from the mothers of young children. One good way is to get involved with elementary school activities, and the South Orangetown School District offers many opportunities to do this.

Things have really changed from the days when helping at school meant running a P.T.A. bake sale. Today's choices include assisting students with a school store, selling flowers at a plant sale, sharing a particular talent with children at the district's after-school program, or serving on a committee for RIF (Reading Is Fundamental). The RIF committee selects, orders and distributes paperback books to children three times a year as part of the district's effort to instill an appreciation of reading in its students.

There are other interesting ways to get involved. Linda Ewig is a parent volunteer who runs the publishing center for the school district. This means that she supervises and assists volunteers who work in one of the local elementary schools to prepare hand-made books. The books are used by students to record stories considered worthy of "publication". Volunteers type stories in large print and then bind them. They also make a "big book" for each class. The children value their "published"

*Continued on page 16*



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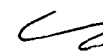
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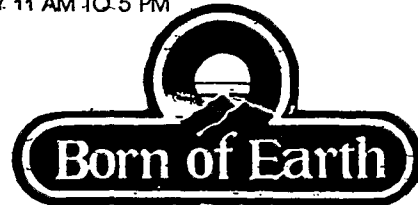
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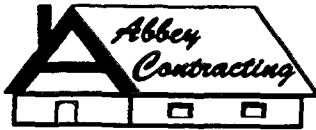
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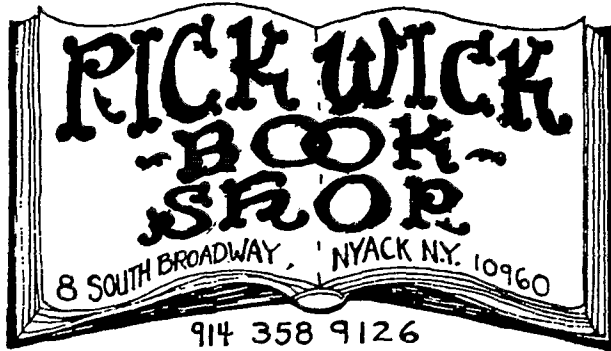
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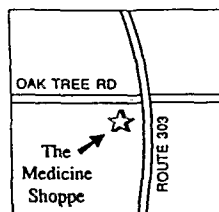
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### Contributions:

We are most grateful to Jackie and Dan Martin for their generous contribution to 10964.

## About 10964

This community newsletter publishes news and information of interest to the people of Palisades. 10964 needs your moral and financial support! Please send a contribution to 10964, Post Office Box 201, Palisades, New York. With your help we'll be able to put 10964 in your mailbox six times this year from October through June.

*The following staff members worked on this issue:*

Jocelyn DeCrescenzo, Carol Elevitch,  
Alice Gerard, Diana Green,  
Ellen Chayet Kidd,  
Boyce Leni, Greta Nettleton, Milbry Polk,  
Caroline Tapley, Gina Vermandel.  
Drawings by Marika Hahn.  
Page Design by Alice Gerard

### Getting Involved: *Continued from page 11*

books and the parents who work with Linda enjoy producing the books. If this appeals to you, call Linda at 359-1344.

Some parents have particular interests they would like to share with the schools. Alice Gerard, who is interested in local history, spoke to Bob Hendricksen, principal at Cottage Lane, about her wish to help the schools in this area. At his suggestion she met with the fourth grade teachers at Cottage Lane and offered them her services as a source of information on past history. She has been writing stories about real children who lived here long ago and has now read one of these stories in three classrooms. One of the fourth grade teachers used Alice's story about Maritje Haring, who moved to Tappan in 1687, as the springboard for an integrated social studies-language arts unit on writing historical fiction. Alice hopes eventually to offer the schools printed material which includes her stories and original source documents.

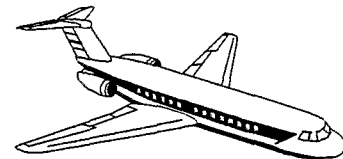
There are many possibilities, things you can do which inform you about the local schools and enrich the lives of the children in them. If you need advice about how to volunteer, call Andrea Schaeffer, co-president of the William O. Schaeffer School P.T.A., at 359-3997.

*Alice Gerard*

### Wanted!

Material for Kid's Corner: Poems, drawings, stories, etc. Please submit your work to 10964, PO Box 201.

## Kid's Corner



### France

I went to France with my cousin and my aunt. My trip included stops in Paris and Normandie. My aunt wanted to give me a cultural and social tour of Paris, so that I would develop a love for the city that she grew up in.

We drove to Normandie in less than two hours because people drive too fast. My aunt's family owns a house in Glanville. The House is a little quaint farm house that is in the middle of a cow pasture.

The food is great, especially the wonderful breads and cheeses. The one thing that troubled me was that wherever we went everybody smoked, especially the teenagers.

My trip was too short, but wonderful.

*Brooke Scher, age 10 1/2*

