

10964

THE
PALISADES
NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 1997 NUMBER 155

Twenty Years and Onward!

10964 Palisades Newsletter:
1977 to 1997

10964
MARCH 1977 NUMBER 1

This community newsletter is an attempt to centralize and publicize information, events, problems and concerns effecting the people of Palisades. We must present a unified effort as threats develop against our hamlet such as environmental and traffic concerns, school and post office closings. This first newsletter can grow into a valuable community publication but not without your support. Please send a check, large or small, for 10964 to Lois McCoy, Box 201, Palisades, NY 10964.

In the winter of 1976-1977, Palisades residents were concerned: traffic was increasing on local roads, the Palisades School was to be emptied and perhaps sold by the School District, and there were serious rumors about the Post Office. Lois McCoy, a writer whose mind spewed ideas without cease, decided a Newsletter was the answer; people must be informed and there was no Civic Association. Others agreed and Lois undertook to organize the project and act as editor, Johanna Lo joined in by naming the newsletter (after many meetings and much agonizing: "Let's just call it 10964") and preparing it for the printer, and Jane Bernick acted as treasurer and fund raiser to get it going. With contributions from Palisades residents and local business owners and three months free printing, publication began—one page, both sides. It was mailed to each household every month except July and August.

Although the 10964 Newsletter began in response to a specific situation, when looking over the last 20 years of publication what emerges is something more like a record of life in Palisades—a profile of its residents and their interests, activities and concerns. The

men and women of Palisades, for example, have published books—fiction and non-fiction, biography and poetry—and articles in scholarly journals. They have exhibited their paintings, sculptures and photographs; have directed and appeared in plays and movies; given concerts; cut records; produced television documentaries. They have received scientific awards, founded organizations, made inventions, been honored for civic contributions, and lived long and fruitful lives. The community's young people have distinguished themselves in school, on the sports field, on the stage and in the concert hall. The Newsletter has kept up as best it could with all these happenings. It has also tracked the changing population of the village: the arrivals and departures, the births, deaths and marriages.

In this anniversary issue of 10964, today's editors revisit the past two decades of publication in the following articles: Features and Essays (page 2), History and Memoirs (page 3), Issues and Concerns (page 5), Announcements and Reports (page 15).

PALISADES FREE LIBRARY

Features and Essays

The extraordinary variety of matters of interest to the community is reflected in the feature articles and essays. Some examples:

Commuter Blues by Leslie Hayes. "Sometimes driving with some of my favorite Palisadians is more than ample compensation for the dismal drudgery of the daily commute. Jerry Silverman, for example, provides endless excitement. One day at 7:10 in the morning, 9W is backed up and we take the old river road from Alpine by going around a "Road Closed" sign and driving at 50-60 mph right down the middle of the narrow pavement until we get all the way to Fort Lee, where we encounter another "Road Closed" sign on an impassable gate; with a shrug of his shoulders and a smile Jerry gets back in the car and we retrace our steps and go back to Rockland. ...Ask John Kriz. He and Jerry have been out of gas at night at Broadway and 95th—three times—and John has skidded with Jerry around the turns from the GW Bridge onto the West Side Highway. Driving with Jerry is pitting oneself against time, traffic, and the laws of nature, and hoping you'll get to your office alive. ...You know about Jan Stark? One day, Jan was riding home on the West Side Highway, minding her own business, when a tire appeared from out of the sky and crashed through her hood. Right out of the sky!" *Dec. 1985*

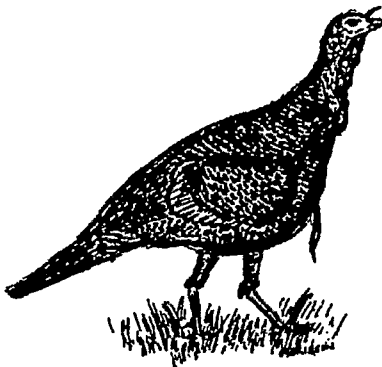
Holiday Observances in Other Countries and Here. Palisades residents relate holiday observances in countries in which they were born and raised: Japan, Ukraine, England, Spain, and France. New Jersey and Georgia U.S.A. thrown in for good measure. *Dec. 1986*

The Public Servant — A Fable by Geraldine Miras. Palisades' long-time school board representative reminisces about how she came to serve on the board almost by accident, but went on to become its president. *Sept. 1987*

Gardening by Galinsky. Tips on the best ways to manage an organic vegetable garden in the Palisades area, using the French intensive/biodynamic method. *May 1987*

Has Life Become Exceedingly Complex For You in the 1980's? by Joan Bracken, Carol Elevitch and Karen Jefferies. A survey about the stresses of modern life sent to 10964 readers: the majority of Palisadians who responded (2 1/2%) felt life was simpler before they got married; that 100% of women who worked got satisfaction from their jobs while only 60% of the men could say the same. Zero % of the men said they did all the cleaning in their houses; 75% of the women said it was their task alone. *May & June 1988*

Jerry Lee Lewis and The Roller Coaster. Essay by Jack Jefferies looking back at the 1950's and 1960's and ahead to the 1990's. *April 1990*



Take a Hike; A Local Delight. Descriptions of hiking paths in our area by J. T. Farley. *April 1990*

Aconcagua Expedition. Cristina Biaggi, David Green and Laura Harrison recount their climbing of a 22,834 foot mountain in Argentina. *April 1991*

Choosing A School by Alice Gerard. A listing, with descriptions, of what the South Orangetown Elementary

Schools offer as well as private schools in the area. *Feb. 1992*

Impressions of the Earth Summit in Rio—June 1992 by Cristina Biaggi. Accounts from meetings of the Global Forum (3000 Non-Governmental Organizations) concerning environmental problems from all over the world, how they began, and success and failure in solving them. *Oct. 1992.*

What's New in Music: Dave Green and The Grinders by Milbry Polk. *Oct. 1993*

The National Study of the Changing Workforce. Findings from a recent study by the Families and Work Institute (Co-President and Founder, Palisadian Ellen Galinsky); based on interviews from 3400 workers and covering work and home environment. *April 1994*

Features and Essays: Continued bottom of page 12

History and Memoirs

A continuing interest has been the history of Palisades, from the days of the first known inhabitants, the Tappan Indians, to the hamlet's commercial heyday after the Revolutionary War, when large sloops were launched from the shipyard at the foot of Washington Spring Road, and on to more recent times. The Newsletter has featured brief histories of the Presbyterian Church (founded 1864) and the Post Office (1855); descriptions of the old roads and paths and some of the older houses; an account of the community at Skunk Hollow. Notable people of past years have not been forgotten either, from the legendary Mollie Sneden, who died in 1810 aged 101 years and 18 days, to Mary Lawrence Tonetti, who established the first Free Library in 1891.

First-hand accounts of "the way things were" have come from several residents, most memorably from Mildred Post Rippey, who was born in Palisades at the turn of the century and lived to the age of 95.

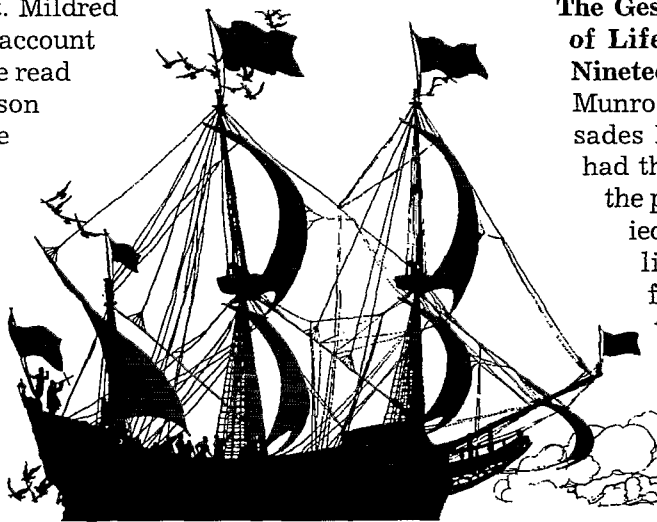
"Spring would arrive at its appointed time around March 21st. The air became balmy, the mud gooeey, and the birds came back to Palisades. This was known as the "mud season." Cars (when they came on the scene) got stuck in the mud on spring Sundays on the so-called "Boulevard" (now 9W) and my Uncle and cousins pulled them out with their great team of horses and block and tackle. We all watched and as the cars drove off we shouted 'Get a horse'."

The Hudson River by Lida Post. Mildred Post Rippey finds a 1945 written account of her mother's reflections as she read about the history of the Hudson River, her wonderment at the forces of evolution and her sadness at the story of the early people of the area as the explorers came through.

"The story of the people of the Hudson shores is not a happy one. The first inhabitants were the Indians. No one knows their origin. The stronger tribes from the north periodically came down to harass and plunder the simple Algonquins

in the Hudson Valley. Then, 85 years later came our historic hero, Henry Hudson, and the good old *Half Moon* in 1609. Hudson, hoping for a passage to China, tasted the water at intervals, and finally finding fresh water knew that this was not a way to China. He had sad encounters with Indians and some pleasant experiences. On his second visit to the river, Henry Hudson claimed the high-walled valley for the Dutch since he had been sent out by the Dutch East India Company. Then began the struggle for profit by aggression—the weak against the strong, the rich against the poor." *April 1985*

My View from the Desk by Mildred Rippey. After 35 years as librarian at the Palisades Free Library, Mildred Post Rippey retired in May 1984. She wrote up some of her treasured reminiscences in a four-part article for 10964. Among her many anecdotes, she tells of typing up the drafts of Edgar Snow's biography *Journey to the Beginning* and being told by him that Joe McCarthy would call her "a parlour pink" which didn't worry Mildred in the least; of trying without success to hear what the soft-spoken Aaron Copeland was asking for at the check-out desk; and of being invited by Lewis Nichols, drama critic for the New York Times, to go down to the Rainbow Inn for a drink because "it's so dull in here" and closing the library and going! *Oct. 1984- Jan. 1985*



The Gesner Diary: A Glimpse of Life in Palisades in the Nineteenth Century by Alice Munro Haagensen. The Palisades Historical Committee had the Diary, which covers the period 1829-1859, copied by the New York Public Library, bound in four volumes and also transferred to microfilm. The Diary is now in the Palisades Library in the Local History Collection. *Jan. 1985*

The Half Moon

History and Memoirs Cont. page 4

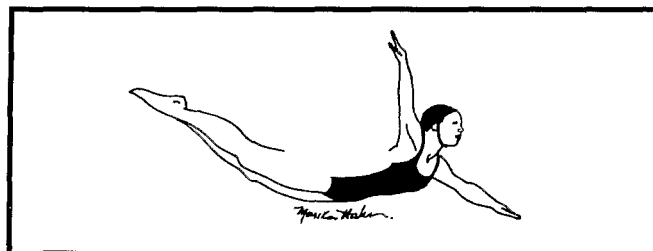
History and Memoirs: *Continued from p. 3*

Horne Tooke Road, Part II by Gene Landriau. In response to Eileen Larkin's discovery that John Horne Tooke was the name of an English Radical politician and philologist who died in 1812, Gene writes that the name Horne Tooke Road was selected by secret ballot by the members of the Rockleigh Woods Cooperative in 1953, and the losing choices included Giuseppe Garibaldi Road, Albion Volk Memorial Highway, Easy Street, and Queer Street. The 11 members of the cooperative were World War II G.I.'s then living in the converted army barracks of Camp Shanks that were being used by Columbia University as temporary housing for married students. The group purchased the 16-acre area around Indian Hill Lane for \$6,400. Ray Calt, one of the members, was reading Horne Tooke's book *The Diversions of Purley* at the time of the naming. *May 1986*

A New History of Palisades by Alice Haagensen. A detailed history of early Palisades is published based on extensive research by the author using the document collection left to the Palisades Free Library by Winthrop Gilman. *Oct. 1986*

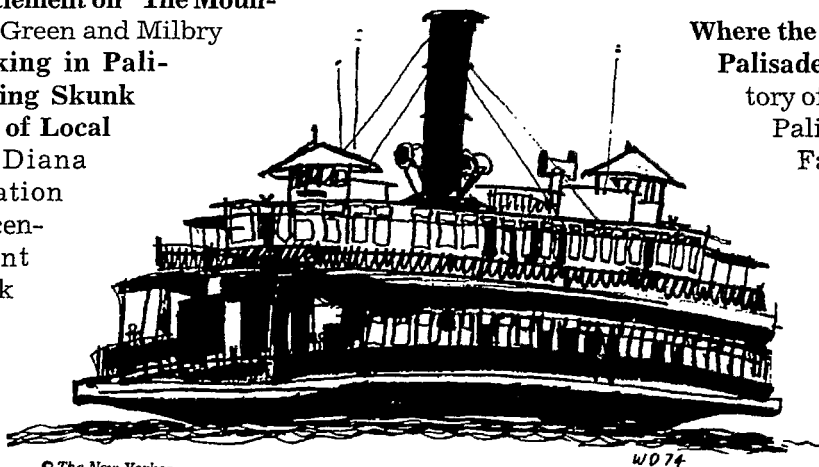
Skunk Hollow by Bill Eberle. "Anyone interested in spending an afternoon walking while at the same time making a brief study of local history and archaeology should consider a trip to 'the mountain.'" For nearly 100 years a black community of ex-slaves, some possibly intermarried with Indians, existed on the Palisades in New Jersey near the New York border. Called Skunk Hollow for reasons sometimes attributed to lush stands of skunk cabbage near there in the early spring, the community boasted a church and as many as 20 structures, including dwellings and barns." Books to read and where to find a map included in the article. *Nov. 1986* See also **Skunk Hollow: The Settlement on "The Mountain."** by Diana Green and Milbry Polk; and **Walking in Palisades: Discovering Skunk Hollow, a Piece of Local History** by Diana Green. Information about the 19th century settlement called Skunk Hollow which was located where the Palisades Parkway

and Route 9W now intersect. Map and directions included. *June 1992*



Brief History of the Palisades Swim Club by Edith and Jack Ryan. Started by a group of 150 families in Palisades, the club opened for the first time on July 4, 1965. "It must be said that Nellie Knudsen was the driving force behind the concept. A swim team was formed, and in 1972, we reached the top of the swimming world here in Rockland County. Many say that Palisades has the most attractive facility in the county, and we agree." *June 1987*

Remembrances of Winters Past by Skip Vezzetti. "Wintertime in Palisades has always held great memories for me. The construction of the Palisades Interstate Parkway provided the greatest thrill. For at least two years during its construction we would walk or be driven to the top of the hill in Alpine and begin a wondrous ride down the icy PIP to the flat area below Oak Tree Road. Any such evening would find Jim Doyle, Harry Ludas, Jim Fitzgerald, Bob Johnson, and dozens of assorted brothers and sisters bundled up against the cold. I have no idea how fast we were able to go, but I do remember the incredible sense of speed on those bone chilling evenings as wind, ice and snow blew into our faces at blinding speed." *Jan. 1988*



© The New Yorker

Where the Boys (and Girls) Are: The Palisades-Sparkill League. A history of Little League baseball in Palisades/Sparkill by James Farley. *April 1990*

Summer Block Party. First annual Horne Tooke Road-Iroquois Avenue-Sioux Court-Indian Hill Lane block party on July 14. *Oct. 1990*

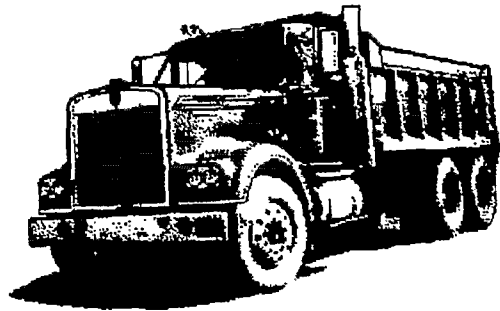
Continued page 13

Issues and Concerns

Trucks/Traffic: The first issue of 10964 notes that "Within the last few years our community has had a major increase in traffic along Route 340, Oak Tree Road and Closter Road." The theme of traffic and the threats posed by traffic has sounded in almost every issue since. Groups such as the Palisades Civic Association and the West Hudson Environmental Association alerted residents to questions of truck size and weight limits, road use, speed limits, sidewalks, traffic lights, school bus safety, and the proposed widening of roads within the village and the Town. There have been some victories (and some defeats) but it is clear that the battle is far from over as evidenced by articles in more recent issues, such as **Palisades at a Crossroads** which urged residents to act regarding road safety after two Palisades children were injured (Dec. 1995), **Bus Safety a Priority for Orangetown** which recounted the passing of an Orangetown law making it a violation to overtake and pass a stopped school bus (Oct. 1996), and **Residents Fear Impact of Traffic on Palisades**, a report on the building of the Palisades Mall at Route 59 and Route 303 (Oct. 1996).

Zoning and Land Use: Over the years Palisadians have successfully challenged many zoning decisions and proposed uses of land they deemed inappropriate for their hamlet. The Newsletter has been able to report that factories have not been built on Route 9W, a giant warehouse was not erected on the northwest corner of Oak Tree Road and Route 340 nor did condominiums go up on that same site, and that the 9W Golf Range did not expand into a 'theme or entertainment park.' The acquisition of "Timothy Meadow" (the Palisades Triangle) demonstrated just how much we care about preserving the rural character of our hamlet.

Proposed Village of Palisades: Two votes, one in the 1970s and one in the 1980s, were held on the question "Should Palisades Become a Village?" Both times the answer was no with a narrow margin. In March 1985 before the second vote 10964 published **Debate**



Over Incorporation of Palisades into Village Status which consisted of two articles, one favoring incorporation prepared by the Palisades Civic Association, and one opposed to village status prepared by the Committee to Preserve Palisades—under a disclaimer by 10964 that the Newsletter was entirely neutral in the Hamlet/Village status debate. This was followed in May 1986, by two full page paid advertisements, for and against village status. 10964 included a general plea to all readers asking them to keep the controversy in perspective and to respect each others' different opinions on the issue.

The Question of a New Hudson River Crossing: As early as the November 1985 issue of 10964, Palisadians were alerted to a NY State Department of Transportation proposal to put a bridge across the Hudson from Palisades to Hastings (**A Palisades to Hastings Bridge?...Never!**). The Palisades Civic Association began to monitor this proposal as did the Tappan Zee Preservation Coalition, which was formed specifically for this purpose.

The Historic Areas Board of Review: An article about the debate regarding expanding the authority and autonomy of the Historic Areas Board of Review, **Historic Areas Laws Reviewed**, included a history of the Board. (June 1995)

Issues and Concerns: Continued page 15

FROM THE EDITOR:

With this issue, we complete 20 years of publication. People tell us that they enjoy reading 10964 and want to keep on getting it, but the newsletter cannot produce itself! We need to recruit some new talent to keep on publishing; as things stand now, we may have to cut back to just four issues per year.

Over the years, many wonderful people have contributed their talents to the newsletter. As their lives have changed, they have then gone on to other activities. The secret of our longevity is that new contributors have always stepped in to take over. We welcome help of any kind, whether it is to contribute a few items from time to time, or to edit or lay out an entire issue. Don't be intimidated by the thought of learning how to do these things...most of us had little practical experience with putting out a newsletter before we started. New Palisades residents may find it to be a good way to get to know the town and meet some

new friends.

Currently, we are looking for people who can do several specific things: we need someone to oversee our small checking account and to mail out out-of-town subscriptions; we need someone with computer expertise and equipment to help with layout for next year, and we would like to get someone to join our roster of editors, perhaps by co-editing one of the upcoming issues in order to get a feel for the process. Writers and photographers with ideas are always welcome! Meetings are held about 6 weeks before publication of each issue (although it is not necessary to attend in order to write something), and you can find out how to join by calling any one of our staff listed on the last page.

We would also like to give belated credit to Diana Green, whose beautiful photograph of this fall's entering Kindergarteners was published without a credit caption in the October issue.

BULLETIN BOARD

Ellen and Rudolph Gregus have announced the marriage of their daughter, Ruzena, to Dr. Alec Goldenberg of West Orange, N.J. on November 2, 1996. Ruzena is an opera singer and interior designer, and a graduate of both the Manhattan School of Music and the Parsons School of Design. Alec is a hematologist-oncologist at the Tisch-New York University Medical Center, and is Director of the Hematology Clinic at Bellevue Hospital.

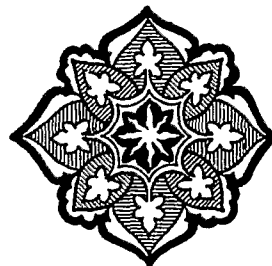
INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM BY LOCAL KIDS

Mixed Noodles by Alexander Lalire, age 6

We bought a box of curlicue noodles at the Shoprite on 303 in Northvale. We brought the noodles home. We found curlicues mixed with elbows by mistake. The factory made a mistake. We called Ronzoni. Two weeks later, they gave us a check and 2 coupons.

Arts News

An exhibition of works by Robert Adzema called *Time By Light* opened at the Bergen Museum of Art and Science in Paramus, N.J. on February 1. The sundials he has designed and built provide a beautiful interface between art and science. The show continues through April 7, 1997. The museum is in Paramus, and is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, call (201) 265-1248.



Arts News

THE ELMWOOD PLAYHOUSE CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

An extraordinary accomplishment! A community theater continues to thrive, improve and grow in Nyack. Conceived at the Rockland Foundation for the Arts in 1947, Elmwood has gone from a nomadic gypsy existence composed of dedicated artists who wanted to "put on a show" anywhere they could find space, to a highly regarded Rockland County institution housed in a 99-seat theater boasting a separate audition and rehearsal space, dressing rooms, prop rooms, and scenery and costume shops.

The term "community theater" often evokes an image of an amateur endeavor. Elmwood, on the other hand, is really semi-professional in the quality and sophistication of its productions. Bob Olson's sets are equal to anything on Broadway, as anyone will confirm who has seen an Elmwood play. And while some members do not receive payment and have chosen to pursue other professions, they still love to work backstage or appear in front of an audience. One of our young apprentices went on to win the Tony Award for Lighting. There are many at Elmwood who were once theater professionals. So the level is high. Audi-

tions are open to the public and anyone can simply walk in off the street and try out for any of the plays.

This 50th season began with *The Sisters Rosenzweig, Company*, and *Glengarry Glen Ross*. *Lost in Yonkers* will open Friday, March 14. Neil Simon's Pulitzer Prize winning play is a tour de force, requiring gutsy ensemble acting. It is the story of two young brothers who must move in with their bitter and domineering grandmother and their emotionally arrested aunt after the death of their mother. Although the plot line is serious, Simon's natural wit leavens the tension to create humor and poignancy amid the ferment. A dysfunctional family learns how to love, trust, and understand each other, just as the audience comes to appreciate and love these very complex Neil Simon characters. *Lost in Yonkers* will be followed by *Wait Until Dark*, which opens May 23, and *The Fantastiks*, which begins July 18. For tickets, call the box office at 353-1313.

Elmwood Playhouse welcomes new members and is always happy to discover talented and creative people eager to work hard, who can come together to make magic—the magic of live theater.

Leslie Hayes



The Palisades Presbyterian Church announces a spectacular benefit concert by Palisades opera star Patty Katz (who sings under her professional name, Patricia Potter) on Sunday, March 23, at 4:00 p.m. She will be accompanied by fellow Palisadian James L. Wadleigh on the piano. This vocal recital is being held to benefit the church's Bosnian exchange student. Tickets are \$20 apiece (\$10 for seniors and students) and a wine and cheese reception will be held after the concert. Patty is a professional operatic soprano, who has performed extensively in operas and concerts in America and abroad.

A MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY

from the Palisades Free Library
Board of Directors



The Board of Trustees of the Palisades Free Library has long been sensitive to the issues surrounding the process of Board member election in a small and close-knit community. We recognize that agreeing to run for Trustee places community members in a possibly uncomfortable position if they are not elected by their neighbors. The current election process, with its inevitable "winners" and "losers," may discourage enthusiastic and talented people from agreeing to be nominated. We are concerned that the Library is the greatest loser in this process, if it contributes to any reluctance among community members to serve the Library in the future.

In response to these concerns, the Board has worked in conjunction with the Tappan firm of Englander and Smith to draft a resolution to amend our by-laws. We believe this resolution will insure that the Palisades Free Library will always have a dedicated Board of Trustees. David Englander has graciously worked with the Board to simplify, clarify and formalize the nomination process. The full text of the amendment is posted in the library and copies will be available at the annual meeting.

In a nutshell, the resolution seeks to reduce the number of nominees required to fill a vacant seat from two to one. The community election will serve to ratify these nominees for Board membership. Nominees will continue to be identified and selected by a commit-

tee comprised of a Trustee and two or four community residents. Additionally, the resolution formalizes the "write-in" process by the community to insure that we all have an equal opportunity to run for Trustee, as well as communicating a balanced understanding of nominees' credentials.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Palisades Free Library is scheduled for Sunday, February 23^d, at 2:00 pm, and will be held at the Library. The agenda features the election of two new Board members, and an interesting talk by our guest speaker and Palisadian, Milbry Polk. Residents attending will be also asked to vote on the adoption of the resolution to amend the by-laws. All Palisades residents will receive in the mail biographies of those running for Board members. As always, absentee ballots can be cast, and can be obtained from the library.

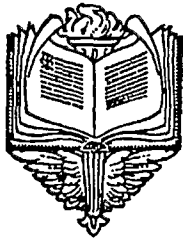
The year 1996 was monumental in our Library's history. Our June dedication celebration finalized many years of hard work. With the continued support from the Palisades community, with the steadfast dedication of a vibrant Board of Trustees, and our library staff, our "gem of a library" will serve us well in the future.

NEEDED: Chairs for the Children and Adult Areas

In total, we still need four chairs for the children's room and eight chairs for the adult area. A child's chair will cost \$290, an adult chair \$390. So far, five tables for adults and children and four children's chairs have been donated. Might you consider donating a chair to one of these areas? A brass plaque will acknowledge each tax deductible gift. What a great way to make a lasting contribution!!

Reading Club

Several people have suggested forming a reading/issue-discussion group that would meet at the library once a month, on a weekday morning. Will those interested in joining, please telephone Nancy Hall 359-6237 or the library 359-0136.



ASK NOT WHAT YOUR LIBRARY CAN DO FOR YOU....

*Or at least, try applying
a little enlightened self-interest.*



During my term as a Library Board member, neighbors have occasionally brought up questions about Library operations; asked me why we're not open more hours, why certain services or activities aren't available, things like that. And as a parent, Library patron, and Board member I have to admit I've wondered at times myself. Until recently, the answers were either obvious (we were after all undergoing renovation and expansion) or difficult to address (Library resources and Board focus being heavily devoted to the building project). Now that we've accomplished what we set out to in terms of the physical expansion, our next task is to expand community involvement in, and use of, the resources our Library now has available.

In the past, many community members participated in Library affairs — working with the Board in groups like the Historic Committee and the Plant Sale Committee, organizing lecture series, and bringing their interests and concerns to the Library in other ways. There was even a Book Committee that helped select acquisitions! In recent years, though, the Board's attention has been on fundraising for our expansion project and then on the expansion itself, at the expense of wider community involvement. And of course we're all busier (*we believe*) than the

Palisadians of that rosy past.

Yet the truth is that it doesn't really take that much time. Joining a study committee to see how we might expand Library services within our budget could be very rewarding not only for committee members but for every patron. A local internet users group (yes, I believe the Library *will* have telecommunications services available soon) would be fun and informative. Or how about series of lectures for our high-school-aged kids, exploring careers in media, medicine, or other areas? These activities may take more time to organize than the Library staff, or the trustees alone, can spare. But with your help, we *can* make them happen.

I hope the tradition of committees can be rejuvenated. We are a community rich in talent and energy, and the new Library offers a space where these assets can be shared. Anyone with an idea to propose, or who would be willing to work on any of the above ideas (or here's an easy one: we need someone to store donated books to be sold at the Plant Sale), please call a Board member or come to one of the Board meetings (posted on the Library bulletin board: usually the second Wednesday of the month, 7:30 pm). We look forward to hearing what *you* can do for your Library!

Annie Gerard

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

**Wednesday
Feb. 19th
4:15pm**

Stone Soup

Bring a raw vegetable along with an appetite for a good Russian folktale. What a

tasty soup we'll make from "only a stone and some water!" Grade school children who enjoy folktales and festive communal dining are welcome.

**Wednesday
Mar. 19th**

Egg Decorating

Bring some blown-out eggs and/or some raw and hard-

boiled eggs. We will dye and decorate eggs - some to take home, some to make a beautiful display in the library. Age 6 and up.

**Wednesday
April 9th
4:15pm**

Windmill

Make a miniature windmill with arms that turn. Ages 6 and up.

**Wednesday
April 16th
4:15pm**

Special event for Older Students, Teens, Adults

Learn to make origami cranes. Everyone will take

home one crane and will make at least one other to decorate the library. Myrna Sigal of West Nyack Library will be our very capable instructor. Minimum age: 9 years. Come to experience this colorful, decorative art.



Library News: Continued p. 14

SOUTH ORANGETOWN SCHOOL NEWS

Bond Resolution Update

On December 18, residents of the Town of Orangetown voted 1,305 to 1,097 not to approve a proposed bond referendum of \$8.9 million. If it had passed, the funds would have been used to finance construction of new classrooms in existing elementary schools, make necessary infrastructure repairs to all schools, and improve the science classrooms at the High School and Middle School.

Residents of Palisades, Sparkill, Grandview and Piermont were alone in supporting this bond, with 55% of those in the River Towns voting yes on the referendum. However, these votes were far outweighed by the no votes cast by residents of Tappan (56%), Blauvelt (56%) and Orangeburg (60%).

What happened to produce this defeat? What options are available for the school district, and what are the next steps that will be taken? According to South Orangetown Schools Superintendent Dr. Morton Sherman, one simple answer he is learning is that people are tired of being asked to spend more money and are upset with tax increases. In order to identify the specific reasons why the bond resolution was defeated, the District is engaging in an intensive information gathering initiative, designed to obtain a variety of community input and opinions.

Information Gathering Planned

As important, what the District learns from the community will be incorporated into the next stage of planning for construction and renovation. Ultimately, Dr. Sherman is confident that the District will be able to strike an acceptable balance between the expectations and concerns of Orangetown residents, and what is necessary to ensure continued excellence

in the academic environment in the face of rising enrollments, as well as address needs of aging physical school facilities. According to the 1997 BOCES demographer's report, these enrollments have risen by 20% since 1990, and are projected to continue through the year 2006 with another 429 students (16%). At the elementary school level, enrollment has increased 40%, from 942 students in 1986 to 1,315 this year.

The components of the information gathering effort include public discussion focus groups that were held in late January and early February. A survey, with questionnaires distributed to South Orangetown parents and also to the wider community through the publication *The Bridge*, should yield an even broader sense of public opinion on these issues. The District urges that all residents complete these questionnaires and return either one to Lisa Horton at the

South Orangetown Middle School as soon as possible.

Dr. Sherman also encourages anyone with questions, or simply with a desire to talk about the bond and related areas, to call him at 365-4200. He can also be reached by e-mail at MDARS@AOL.COM. Dr. Sherman remains available to speak in person to any community group upon their invitation.

Timetable

As of this writing, the Board of Education has met several times to discuss the future of the bond, and of the construction/renovation plan. Hopefully, the future direction will become clearer by the end of February. Palisadians can follow these developments by reviewing the literature that their school children bring home, or by calling the District.



Correcting Misinformation

It is important for everyone to become and remain informed, and part of the information gathering initiative is an information dissemination effort. A number of concerns have already been raised by members of the South Orangetown community related to how the bond will be used, and the implications of its passage or defeat. Some of these, which reflect inaccurate or incomplete information, include the following:

- (1) *Approving the bond means that the Palisades School will close.* In fact, the closing of the Palisades School facility is in response to New York State directives, which promise to cut funds for programs such as this one which operate in discrete facilities. Thus, the Palisades School will be integrated into a mainstream elementary school facility whether or not there are funds for adding classrooms.
- (2) *The bond's defeat means that reorganization of the elementary schools will not occur.* As with the Palisades School, the decision to reorganize was a programmatic one, and one which is still planned for implementation as of Academic Year 1998-1999. Options for achieving reorganization and for housing the Palisades School are currently being reviewed.

- (3) *Other ways to finance reconstruction could include lowering per pupil expenditures.* According to the District, annual statistics released by New York State represent what the District spends. However, these statistics are artificially inflated by including as expenditures the costs of self-sustaining programs such as the Palisades School, Continuing Education, and the after-school program S.E.E.C. By next year, New York will calculate both sets of expenditures.

- (4) *Instead of new classrooms, the District could re-open the Orangeburg School at a lower cost.* In fact, it would cost at least \$5 million to renovate this building to comply with standards for elementary school aged children instead of the college students it now services. Factoring in the overhead costs of operating the building (such as heating and janitorial services) and the current annual revenue of \$147,000 that would be lost by such a conversion, this option does not appear to be viable.

Once again, the District invites anyone with questions or opinions to call, write, e-mail or attend the open Board of Education meetings to voice their concerns.

Ellen Chayet Kidd

Bus Safety Poster Contest

As part of the continuing campaign to ensure school bus safety in the District, the Town of Orangetown in conjunction with the South Orangetown School District sponsored a poster contest open to middle school students throughout Orangetown. On Tuesday, January 28, the winners of the contest were honored at a ceremony at the South Orangetown Middle School attended by Orangetown Supervisor Thom Kleiner and school superintendent Dr. Morton Sherman, among others.

Several Palisades students submitted winning posters: Brooke Scher, Dorian Walther and Katie Rosenwasser were awarded first prize; second prize posters were contributed by Philip Umbrino, Christine Kim and Cattleya Concepcion; and honorable mention went to the poster submitted by James Hughes. Posters submitted by Bobby Griffin, Leonel Ponce, Crystal Hrynenko and Chris Champon were also acknowledged by a certificate. Congratulations to all of these Palisades students for their hard work and creativity, and for helping keep the issue of bus safety visible in the South Orangetown community!

MARCUS LANGSETH

Marcus Gerhardt Langseth, a pioneering earth scientist at Lamont-Doherty for 40 years, died in early January at his home. He was 64. The cause was lung cancer. During his career at Lamont, he specialized in the measurement of heat flow through the Earth's crust, and was a pioneer in the field. In the 50's and 60's, he worked with Robert Gerard and Maurice Ewing to develop instruments and techniques for heat flow measurement. During the mid-60's, together with Richard Von Herzen, he compiled the first global picture of how and where heat flowed near the Earth's surface, which helped to prove the emerging theory of plate tectonics. Dr. Langseth also headed the Apollo lunar heat-flow experiment on the Moon; after it was disabled when an astronaut tripped over one of its wires during an earlier mission (in front of millions of TV viewers), the experiment was completed on the final mission, Apollo 17.

Dr. Langseth was born in Lebanon, Tenn., in 1932.

He received his PhD in geophysics from Columbia in 1964. In 1993, he was appointed the Palisades Geophysical Institute Senior Scientist at Lamont, and he was also an adjunct professor of earth and environmental sciences at Columbia. He is survived by his wife of 35 years, Lillian, and two sisters, Christine Benagh of Nashville and Elva Corbitt of Lewisville, Tex.



During a crowded memorial service at the Palisades Presbyterian Church, Dr. Langseth was remembered as a gentle man of great intelligence, warmth, humor, and generosity, who will be sorely missed. He was an esteemed colleague of many scientists from Lamont, a beloved husband, a stalwart bass singer in the church choir, a fond and indulgent dog owner, a marvelous uncle to his nieces and nephews, and a good friend and neighbor to all who knew him. Even at the very end his intellectual curiosity did not desert him; as he approached death, he confided to Pastor Laurie Ferguson, "This is *interesting*."

FEATURES AND ESSAYS: *Continued from page 2*



The Riddle of Glozel by Alice Gerard. "No one could accept the idea that early man in France was making pottery and using written symbols before the pyramids were built." *Dec. 1994*

Was Cro-Magnon Man in the Palisades? Excerpts from an article by Herbert C. Kraft which appeared in the

1994 spring bulletin of the New York State Archaeological Society identifying figures scratched on a rock as reproductions of prehistoric Lascaux pictographs. *Feb. 1995*

Squatters in Palisades by Sam Gerard. Six wild turkeys move into the neighborhood. *Feb. 1995*

Cruising the Hudson on a Nineteenth Century Ship by Greta Nettleton. An account of a one-week cruise on the Hudson River, from Alpine to West Point, as a volunteer sailor on the river sloop *Clearwater*. *June 1995*

A Gift of Life: The Story of Richard Novosad by Milbry Polk. A Palisadian's account of finding a bone marrow donor and his dedication to educating the public about the importance of organ donations. *Oct. 1995*

History and Memoirs: *Continued from p. 4*

Growing Up in Palisades: 1916-1935; and More Palisades Boyhood Reminiscences; and After the War. A series by John Garrison as told to Milbry Polk reflecting life in Palisades from 1916. *Dec. 1991; Feb. 1992; April 1992*

Historical Humor From the Turn of the Century by William Knudson. A choice anecdote. *June 1992*

William K. O'Neil: A Short Story of a Long and Wonderful Life by Milbry Polk; and **William "Tippy" O'Neil: A Neighbor's Remembrance** by Ernest Quick. A profile and a memoir of the proprietor and auctioneer of Yonderhill Antiques. *Feb. 1993*

Historic Roads and Paths in Palisades by Alice Haagensen. A history of the origins on the present-day roads in Palisades and how they came to be, including colorful descriptions of how they began and who used them.

"Until 1687, Palisades was the home of Munsee Indians of the Algonquin tribe who traveled from their riverside summer camps to their more permanent winter shelters by way of shoulder-width trails, in many cases worn eighteen inches deep over many years of use. These trails led inland from the few breaks in the Palisades cliffs, often following stream courses....

In the 1820's and 1830's a road was built from the settlement at the top of the hill to Tappan ... called the 'new road'. The name which was finally given to the road came from the majestic oak at the corner of the County Road (Route 340)...an enormous oak with a spread of nearly a hundred feet with a clear cold spring at its base.

In the 1880's and 90's Gypsies used to camp near the oak tree; ... the carts were the real Romany ones, curtains and bedding sticking out the back. As a rule two carts, and they camped at the spring - came, and just as suddenly departed. The women in long full skirts and necklaces, the men scary looking.

By 1832 the new road must have extended at least as far as where Palisades Gardens now is, because there was a camp meeting held there that year, lasting a week, in which a thousand people came to listen to the "very powerful preaching." "The whooping and screaming in the Meeting House was never

equalled in this place..." *June 1993*

The Old Standard Oil Property by Alice Haagensen. The history of the land lying just north of Palisades on the top of the cliff which is now part of Tallman Park. *Oct. 1993*

Bears in Palisades? Excerpt from an article which appeared in The Nyack Evening Journal on March 6, 1920. *Feb. 1994*

Growing Up on the Last Farm in Palisades by Andrew Drab as told to Milbry Polk. A description of life in Palisades beginning in 1925. *Feb. 1994*

School Days in Palisades — Fifty Years Ago by Alice Haagensen. An account of grades 1 through 8 in the New School (now the Palisades red brick school) and Kindergarten in the Old School (now the Palisades Community Center). *April 1994*

The Big House — and the Little House by Caroline Tapley. First in a series about historic houses in Palisades, starting with the earliest house still standing. *June 1994*

Palisades Historical Committee by Alice Haagensen. The history of the committee, beginning in 1861, whose materials are now stored in the Palisades Library. *June 1994*

Heyhoe Woods Road Through the Ages by Greta Nettleton. A history of the houses and land lying off Oak Tree Road and running behind the Palisades School. *June 1994*

The Ding Dong House — Second Oldest House in Palisades by Robert Gerard. Continuation of the series about historic houses in Palisades. *Oct. 1994*

First Historical Marker for Palisades. Marker erected at site of a community of free blacks in the early 1800's, lying off Route 9W; the last houses were taken down when the Palisades Parkway came through in the early 1950's. *Oct. 1994*



Mary Tonetti

History and Memoirs Continued on page 14

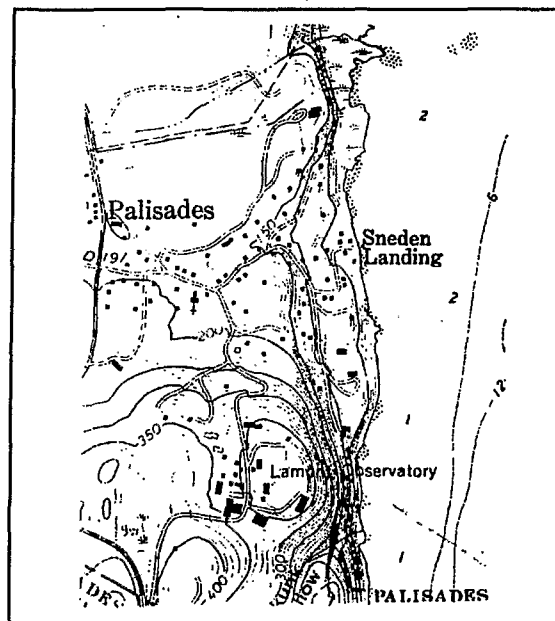
History and Memoirs

Local Restoration and Archeology at the De Wint House by Greta Nettleton. Built in 1700, the house represents a rarely seen example of a local dwelling that bridges the era of primitive cabins built in the wilderness with later prosperous farm homes built during settled times. Located on Oak Tree Road just past Route 303, the house will be open to the public when work is completed. *Feb. 1995*

Mary Lawrence Tonetti: Palisades Library and Historical Committee Begin New Series of Publications by Alice Gerard. The life story of the irrepressible matriarch who almost single-handedly made Snedens Landing an artist's colony during the first half of the 20th century. *Feb. 1996*

Palisades in 1861: A Retrospect. In 1888 Winthrop Gilman wrote this description of Palisades in the year 1861. "Few of us would recognize the hamlet if we were transported back in time today...one of the major differences was the lack of tree cover in parts of the village." *April 1996*

A Break in the High Land—The Sparkill Creek. A history of the creek and surrounding areas. *Dec. 1996*



Library News: Continued from page 9

IAC Magazine Index: The Library now provides access to the Information Access Company (IAC) Magazine Index files on ANSER at our PAC terminal. The IAC Magazine Index includes indexing and abstracting of 400 popular general interest magazines and the full text of over 250 titles. Journal coverage is generally two years plus the current year. You can research current issues, computer technology, business, world affairs, travel & leisure, and people. To begin your research successfully, ask the Reference Librarian for assistance. Remember, we're here to help.

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Fri.	3 pm to 5 pm
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Sun.	1 pm to 5 pm

Announcements and Reports

The number of groups and organizations whose announcements and reports have been carried in the Newsletter is astonishing and gives a sense of the activities going on during these twenty years. Included, in no particular order, have been: Palisades Presbyterian Church, Palisades Library, Palisades Civic Association, Palisades Community Center, Oak Tree Playgroup, Senior Citizens group, Parent-Child Center, Soccer Club, T-Shirt Basketball League, Palisades-Sparkill Little League, Cemetery Plot Holders, Swim Club, Flag Pole Committee, Historical Committee, and Cub Scouts, Brownies, and Girl Scouts. Reports from the South Orangetown School District and Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory have been a constant as have reports by Andrew Norman on the results of political votes. There have also been announcements of exhibitions

at the Thorpe Intermedia Gallery in Sparkill and notices of events at the Rockland Center for the Arts and at the Elmwood Playhouse.

The reports of organizations give us a look at events they sponsored such as the Civic Association's public meetings which brought speakers to the Community Center; the Library's Annual Dance, a tradition which began before the birth of the Newsletter and ended with the rock group later known as Kiss in the 1970s; the Community Center's long-running Wine-Cheese-Art events, its Fun Runs and Flea Markets; 10964's own Goods and Services Auctions (1978, 1981, 1983) and its Fathers' Day Box Lunch Picnic (1978); and of course those hardy perennials, the Library's Fall and Spring Plant Sales and the Church's Strawberry Festivals.

Issues and Concerns: Continued



Earliest house in the area, built by Patentee Daniel De Clark in 1700. Rear view.

Tenneco Gas Line: An account of how Richard Vickerman of Route 340 saved countless lives in Palisades and Tappan by alerting town officials to a backhoe digging over the Tenneco gas line south of Oak Tree Road, along with an admonishment for all Palisadians to keep watch. "Had the pipe been hit, had it ruptured, much of Palisades and Tappan would have become a crater." (Feb. 1996)

Ed. Note: A more detailed listing of articles (and subjects covered) is available at the Palisades Free Library where there is a complete file of 10964 issues in the reference section.

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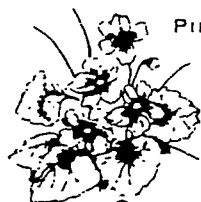


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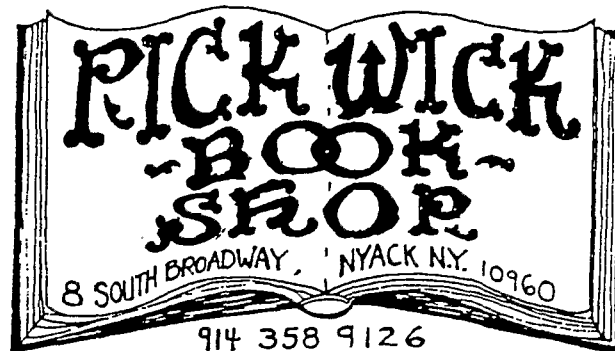
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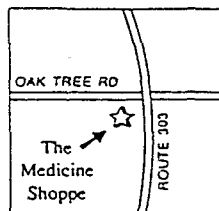
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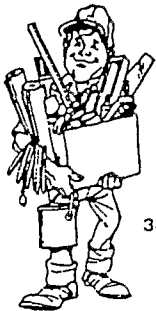
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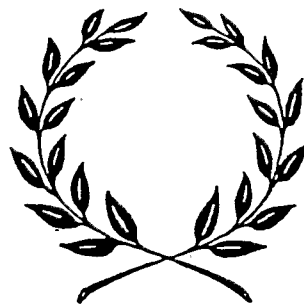
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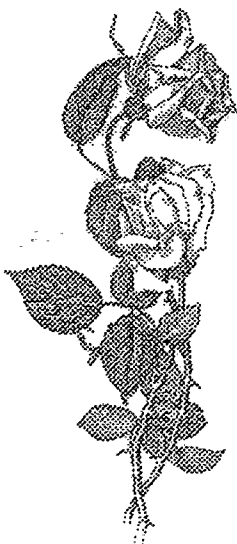
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Poetry

Seed Catalog Vistas

*The bark of the maples across the road
With winter's brush has silvered gray —
Or is it the sap has begun to run
And leap again to the lengthening day?*

*But the frost is still beneath the turf
Yet bulbs force green again through hoar
While dormant folk crowd cozy fires
And grasp at Spring through a printed door.*

by Margaret Taylor Anderson

