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DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
153 Main Street Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522

WINTER 1989

## HISTORY AT OUR DOOR STEP: A FUTURE FOR THE SOCIETY AT THE AQUEDUCT OVERSEER'S HOUSE

Some exciting news is poised on Dobbs Ferry's door step.

The Historical Society plans to lease and operate the two-story Italianate brick Aqueduct Overseer's House at Walnut Street, once restored, as future headquarters for the Society "for research and public programs and to provide information about the history of the Aqueduct."

This project presents some exhilarating but difficult challenges to the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society, its Board of Trustees and its membership. We are energized by the opportunity to plan for our future in an historic building right on everyone's "favorite backyard"-- the Old Croton Aqueduct Trailway State Park.

To share in and develop this preservation partnership with our members, the Village of Dobbs Ferry and the NY State Parks Department, we will need to meet the operating expenses of a future Historical Society office, public resource center for research, walking tours, exhibits and an Aqueduct Archive. Beyond the State-paid restoration expenses there will be maintenance, furnishings, utilities and other operating costs to be met in the course of re-adapting the Overseer's House into a public history resource center on the Aqueduct.

In 1992 the Old Croton Aqueduct will mark its 150th anniversary. Only one building remains on the 26 mile-long Aqueduct trail as witness to the history and daily life of this area-- the Aqueduct Overseer's House at 15 Walnut Street in Dobbs Ferry.

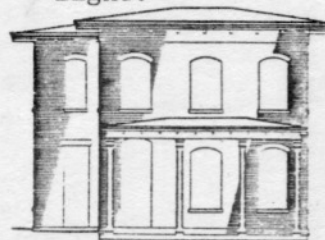
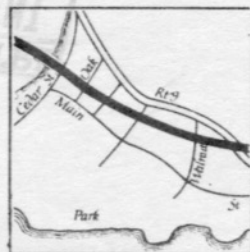
The 1845 building faces north, with its front porch looking across Walnut Street where the Aqueduct trailway enjoys an unusually broad 200' frontage. There, and across the street, the Overseer's House, an 1890 barn and a State Parks maintenance shed form a complex overlooking the Hudson River, the railroad and the junction of Livingston Avenue and lower Main Street from a point where Walnut (once Water St.) rises up to meet Broadway.

With a view towards the coming 150th anniversary celebration of the opening of New York City's Croton Aqueduct water supply in 1842, the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society has been talking with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (Taconic Region), to plan for the future of the State-owned Overseer's House and the future of the Historical Society.

In a collaborative effort to preserve and put to public use the 1845 National Register listed building, the State is proposing to direct a complete restoration and rehabilitation of the Overseer's House, with the help of Environmental Quality Bond Act funding. Concurrently, the Society has voted its intent to become the eventual operator of the building.

Our future cannot be ensured overnight. The Overseer's Project will take over 24 months of cooperative planning, expert advice and creative public and private support. During this time the Historical Society will continue and build upon its programs which bring village history to light.

We hope the results of this effort will provide for a sound future for Dobbs Ferry's past.



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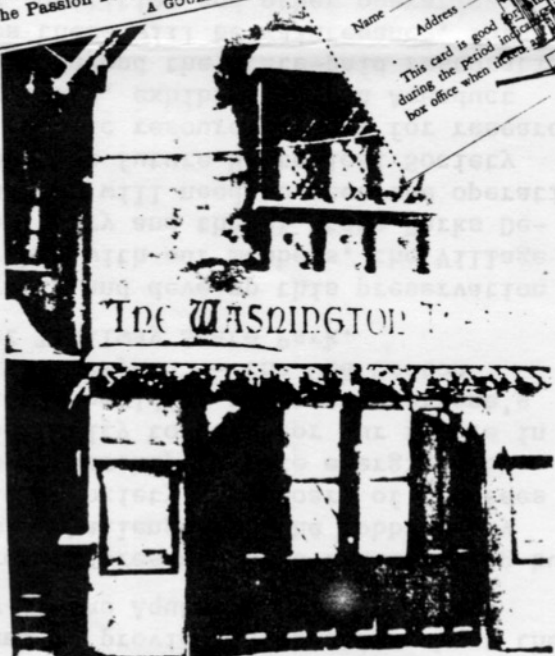
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