



# The FERRYMAN

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VOLUME XI, No. 2

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

JUNE 1992

## MEAD HOUSE NEEDS "A LOT OF WORK" -- AND MONEY



*Architect Steve Tilly, after inspecting the house, observed that it is a wonderful house on a site in the middle of the Village, and is locally important.*

*The Mead House is safe and meets legal requirements as a "private residence." But it needs a lot of work. More work would be needed to meet the requirements of a "public building." Moreover, Mead House does not meet eligibility standards for public funding as a national or state landmark, a fact that adds even greater importance to private fundraising.*

Those were the bottom line findings of professional inspections made of the house between October, 1991 and April, 1992 by eight experts. The experts spent a total of more than a dozen hours in and around the house, donating their time, observations and recommendations to the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society at the request of Society President Candace Shuluk.

Mrs. Shuluk said the 14-room house at 12 Elm Street, which the late Clara Mead bequeathed to the Society, as well as the work of repairing and maintaining it, "has given the Society a new and wholly unexpected focus as a place where its expanding historic collections can be stored, displayed and made available to its members."

She explained: "These collections of photos, slides, oral histories, newspaper microfilm, artifacts, historical records, etc. -- collections that our

members currently own through membership in the Society -- have outgrown their present repository in the basement of the library."

If the house were to be upgraded to a "public building," that is, if it were opened to non-members, considerably more work would be needed than if it remained as a private structure open to Society members only.

Such work would include, among many other things, exit lights, fire exit doors, smoke detectors, possibly also sprinklers, strengthening cellar ceiling beams under the living and dining rooms, surrounding the furnace and boiler with fire-retarding walls and providing access to the handicapped.

If the house remains a privately owned residence open only to Society members, the experts agreed that certain repairs would still have to be made over the next decade or so. These include new roofs, replacing certain supporting columns in the cellar, repointing mortar in the cellar's brick walls, strengthening the railings of the first and second floor porches, removing three large trees that are too close to the house, correcting some outdoor drainage problems, painting the exterior and eventually installing a new electrical system.

*(continued on page 2)*

## MEAD HOUSE NEEDS WORK AND MONEY

*(continued from page 1)*

Mrs. Shuluk said that regardless of the use the Society makes of the house and whether the house remains a privately owned structure for Society members only or is transformed into a "public" building, "capital funds running to the tens of thousands of dollars, large amounts for the Society in its present financial condition, need to be raised and spent."

She said, "I am confident that our members will support us in our efforts to raise such funds," adding that large corporate potential donors, as well as individuals interested in local history, will be contacted in order to raise money first for repairs that need to be done immediately and then to establish an endowment whose income could be used to maintain the house in good condition.

Mrs. Shuluk noted the first need is to install new roofs on the house, estimated to cost more than \$8,000. Leaks have already been repaired and one of the roofs has been replaced.

The Gala attracted \$505 for the roof from several donors -- \$100 each from Dr. Mae Pepper, Carol Lofstedt and the Patrolman's Benevolent Association of Dobbs Ferry, a \$100 pledge from Patrick Steinschneider and smaller amounts from Fred Staats, Elizabeth Cook, A. Lofstedt, Peter Oberdorf and Barbara McManus. After the Gala, George Page, the narrator of the Clara Mead video, sent the Society a check for \$100 for the Mead House.

Mrs. Shuluk said she had conveyed the Society's deep thanks to these donors and then appealed to others -- members and non-members alike -- for roof contributions and pledges as the most critical need at this time. If you are interested in contributing or pledging any amount for new roofs, please contact the Society, Mrs. Shuluk, or any of the Trustees.

Vice-President Hank Walter publicly thanked the eight experts at the Gala for their time and recommendations: Architects Robert Burton, Patrick Steinschneider, Stephen Tilly and Joseph Trapani; Lew Zickel, a structural engineer; Scott De Alba, an insurance inspector; Village Building Inspector James Dunne, and Westchester County Historic Preservation Planner Karen Kennedy. It was Ms. Kennedy who determined that the Mead House would not be eligible for landmark funding because too many additions were made to the house over the past 140 years.

## SUMMER SUNDAYS IN THE CEMETERY

Caroline Kravath, former Preservation Management Intern, will again coordinate the efforts of volunteer conservationists who wish to further the preservation of Dobbs Ferry's landmark Little White Church Cemetery on Ashford Avenue. Resetting stones and documenting "uncharted" areas of the cemetery will be undertaken on Sundays, beginning in June.

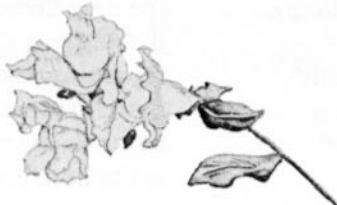
## CLARA VIDEO PROGRAM AVAILABLE

The video program, "The World of Clara Mead and Her House at 12 Elm Street," produced by Historical Society Trustee Rusty Russell and narrated by Dobbs Ferry's George Page, premiered to an enchanted audience at the Gala. Now, groups and organizations may arrange for a video viewing accompanied by a Society speaker who will describe the house, its needs and current plans for its future. Call to arrange for special showing dates and times.

## FREE MAP AND PAPER HANDLING WORKSHOP

Six to ten Dobbs Ferry volunteers will learn map and paper handling, repair and matting techniques in a free, two-day workshop during the week of June 22. The hands-on sessions will be conducted in the Community Gallery of the library by professional paper conservator Nelly Ballofett, of Ossining, who will demonstrate how to recognize conditions that are hazardous to paper, how to remove maps from harmful enclosures, how to remove tape and how to create slipcases and hinging mats with Japanese paper and linen tape.

Workshop trainees must be available to practice their newly learned craft as volunteers for the Society during July, August and September. They will continue to process and restore the Historical Society's collection of more than 100 maps in archival (acid-free) folders and steel map cases. Space is limited to no more than 10 participants. Please call the Society's office to register for this free workshop



## 130 ATTEND 1992 HISTORICAL SOCIETY GALA

Nearly 130 people attended the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society's 1992 Gala that celebrated the world of the late Clara Mead and her generous bequest of 12 Elm Street to the Society.

Candace Shuluk, President, and Gail Benson, Secretary and Benefit Chair, reported that \$4,200 was raised from admission tickets, a raffle, commemorative bottle sales and donations specifically dedicated toward repairs of the roofs of Mead House.

The Gala was held on Saturday evening, April 25, in Fellowship Hall of South Presbyterian Church. It included a splendid, tasty dinner, a stunningly beautiful video program about Miss Mead and her home, a short history of the Mead and Willsea families, a short talk on the needs of Mead House, a suspense-filled raffle of nine desirable prizes and a sharing of reminiscences of Clara Mead by some of her friends.

Copies of "Clara's Salad Recipe," touted by those who enjoyed it while Miss Mead was alive, were made available to interested attendees and a general call for volunteers for the Society's work and/or the Mead House was answered on the spot by a few people.

Ms. Benson reported that advance reservations and admission tickets accounted for \$1,805 of the evening's income; the raffle, for \$602; commemorative bottle sales, for \$1,157; Gala donations from people who could not attend, for \$150; and special donations for roof repairs, for \$505.

There were 106 paid advance reservations; 11 of these did not show up; an additional 31 people paid at the door. Most of the bottle sales were made before the Gala as the result of a notice in the Gala invitation; \$102 of the sales occurred at the Gala itself; and some of the sales came after the Gala.

The Gala's guests were warmly welcomed to South Presbyterian Church by Joseph Gilmore and Susan DeGeorge, Ministers, who donated the use of the Church Hall to the Society. Mr. Gilmore, in his remarks, noted that Miss Mead was a member of the Church.

The dinner, cooked and brought to Fellowship Hall by members and Trustees, consisted of baked ziti, lasagna, vegetarian dishes, garlic bread, dessert and coffee or tea. Ed Marron, of the Village Fire Department, was on hand to ensure fire safety and to contribute yeoman service in the kitchen, together with several members and Trustees.

Rusty Russell's sixteen-minute video of Clara Mead and the home she donated to the Historical Society was shown and drew universal acclaim from

the gathering. The video, produced, scripted, photographed and edited by Historical Society's Trustee Russell, was an extraordinary moving collage of photographs of Miss Mead, her fourteen room house, the grounds, her beloved flowers, books, personal items and historical artifacts. Lucy Voulgaris, friend and neighbor, contributed her knowledge of Miss Mead; George Page narrated the script. The production was sponsored by the Society.

Sharing their memories of Miss Mead were Dr. Mae Pepper, Carol Lofstedt, Sally Backus, Joan Beer and Ellen Grell. Director Tema Harnik delivered a history of the Meads and Willseas, the two families who occupied the house for almost 120 years, and Trustee Hank Walter gave a short talk on the condition and needs of Mead House.

Mrs. Shuluk publicly thanked the many organizations, business people, Society members and Trustees who contributed time, effort and money to make the Gala a social, as well as financial, success.

### BOARDERS AT 12 ELM STREET

Over the years, Miss Clara Mead opened up her home to young women who were looking for lodging in Dobbs Ferry. Many spent a year or two with Miss Mead and came to know her well. The Society would like to record the reminiscences of former boarders for its Clara Mead archives. Call us, if you lived at 12 Elm Street, or if you have information on the whereabouts of past lodgers.

### WANTED: CCJP INTERN

The Historical Society has received a \$1,500 Management Skills Internship Grant from the Corporate Community Jobs Project. This grant will allow the Society to hire and train one or two high school or college students between June and September to work with the local history archives and photo collections. The management interns will also help with the accessioning of new items from the Clara Mead Collection.

Applicants should be between 16 and 21 years of age. They are expected to have organizational and communications skills and should be able to work independently, but under supervision. Computer experience and an interest in local history, art or photography are pluses. Interested? Call Director Tema Harnik at 693-7766.



## **PICK UP YOUR COMMEMORATIVE BOTTLES!**

Dozens of people who ordered and paid for one or more of the Society's commemorative bottles before its Gala on April 25 have not yet collected their bottles.

The bottles may be picked up at the Society's office in the basement of the library, 153 Main Street, any Monday or Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., or any Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

If you have ordered one or more bottles and cannot come to the office during these hours, you may make an appointment at some other time that is convenient for you. Call 693-7766.

Only 250 of this edition of the bottles were hand-blown for the Society; as of mid-May 95 had been sold, with gross proceeds for the Society totaling \$1,157. A special pre-delivery price had been set for orders received before and at the Gala and before May 1.

The flasks were hand-blown by Clevenger Brothers, a firm of artisans who revived colonial glass-blowing techniques and formulas that were used in America as far back as 1739. The bottles are azure blue; they display the Society's "Ferryman" logo on one side and the Village seal on the other.

Judy Holzer, Chair of the Society's Sales Committee, said that the flask sold this year would be the first in a collection, each of which would celebrate a different place in Dobbs Ferry history and be in a different color and shape. This year's premiere limited edition has the number "1" blown into the Palisades section of the Village Seal.

"They come in boxes," Ms. Holzer said, "and make a fine gift with a local history accent."

The price for non-members is \$14.95 each. The price for members \$13.95, or two for \$26.00. They can be bought at the Society's office or ordered by phone.

## **ELEVEN HAPPY WINNERS**

Eleven choice raffle prizes were awarded at the big drawing at the Society's Gala. The lucky winners, in alphabetical order, the prizes and the prize donors are:

- 1) Susan Storm Denham, *A Pictorial History of Westchester*, donated by the Westchester County Historical Society.
- 2) Oris C. Hildenbrand, a flowering plant, Sprainbrook Nursery, Scarsdale.

- 3) Dorothy Hull, concert tickets, Historic Hudson Valley and the Philharmonia Virtuosi.
- 4) Virginia Linde, a gift certificate, Flowers by Carole, Main Street, Dobbs Ferry.
- 5) Carol Lofstedt, concert tickets, Historic Hudson Valley and the Philharmonia Virtuosi.
- 6) The Lutzker family, a gift certificate, The Elegant Poster, Cedar Street, Dobbs Ferry.
- 7) John T. Reilly, a gift certificate, Meechie's Restaurant, Main Street, Dobbs Ferry.
- 8) Elisabeth Rothschild, a one-year membership in Friends of Boscobel, Boscobel, Garrison.
- 9) Candace Shuluk, lawn concert tickets, Boscobel, Garrison.
- 10) Fred Staats, a basket of cheer, Candace Shuluk, Gail Benson, and Sisters Flowers.
- 11) Betty Thompson, a one-year membership, Westchester County Historical Society.

## **THANKS TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

The Society's 18-member Board of Trustees thanked the many shop owners, business persons and organization representatives who helped make its 1992 Gala a financial, as well as social, success. They contributed raffle prizes, food, flowers, money and/or services.

In alphabetical order, they are: Battaglia Brothers Deli, Boscobel, The Elegant Poster, Evergreen Flower Shop, Flowers by Carole, Historic Hudson Valley, the House Committees of Livingston Hose Company and Resolute Hook and Ladder, Meechie's Restaurant, Philharmonia Virtuosi, Rusty Russell Projections, Sisters Flowers, South Presbyterian Church, Sprainbrook Nursery, the Village of Dobbs Ferry and the Westchester County Historical Society.

Issue Editor  
Henry Walter

Writers  
Henry Walter  
Tema Harnik



CELEBRATE THE

# 4th OF JULY



WITH THE DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Raffle Prizes and gift certificates will be awarded at Waterfront Park.  
Drawing at Bandstand at 5 pm. Winner need not be present.**

Return tickets & donation to DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
in door slot of Dobbs Ferry Public Library, 153 Main St., through July 3rd,  
OR to Historical Society's table at PICNIC-IN -THE-PARK, July 4th. Phone (914) 693-7766 (24-hour answering)

*Prizes will include:*

**Commemorative Bottles ★ Gourmet Meals  
Aerial Color Photos of Dobbs Ferry ★ Books on Local History  
and Other Exciting Prizes**

<p>\$1 each, 6 tickets for \$5, FREE LUCKY BONUS 13 FOR \$10.</p> <p>FREE LUCKY 13th TICKET with \$10 donation for page of 12.</p> <p>FREE EARLY BIRD 14TH TICKET with \$10 for 12 through July 1.</p>	<p><b>FREE BONUS!</b> with \$10 for 12 by July 1</p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____</p>	<p><b>FREE BONUS!</b> with \$10 donation for page of 12</p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____</p>
<p><b>RAFFLE</b></p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____</p>	<p><b>RAFFLE</b></p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____</p>	<p><b>RAFFLE</b></p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____</p>
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**IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER, PLEASE USE THIS COUPON TO JOIN US!**

**Dobbs Ferry Historical Society**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone(day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve.) \_\_\_\_\_

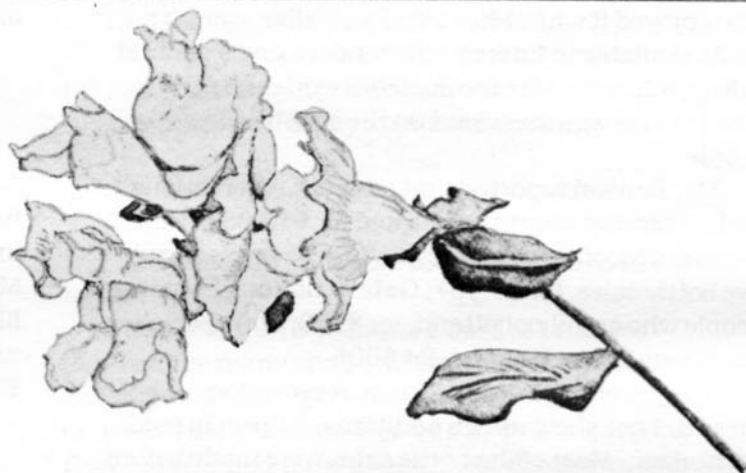
<u>MEMBERSHIP</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Renew
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron.....			\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting.....			\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Professional...			\$30 & \$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing.....			\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining.....			\$18
<input type="checkbox"/> Family.....			\$12
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Adult.....			\$8
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Limited income..			\$3
<input type="checkbox"/> Residents over 80.....			Honorary

Please make check payable to and mail to:  
 DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 153 Main Street (Library Building)  
 Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522  
 Tel. (914) 693-7766 (24-hr. answering)

Membership contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mead House contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Newspaper Microfilming Project contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL enclosed (TAX DEDUCTIBLE) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 My employer's matching contributions form is enclosed.

For office use							
Date paid	Date received	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renew	Last prior	Date entered	By	Date deposited	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check # _____

*Clara Mead loved flowers  
 and drew them beautifully.  
 She loved Dobbs Ferry  
 and its history, and she left  
 the Historical Society her home.  
 Help us preserve it.  
 Please join us if you are not  
 already a member.*



*Illustration by Clara Mead*

**DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
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