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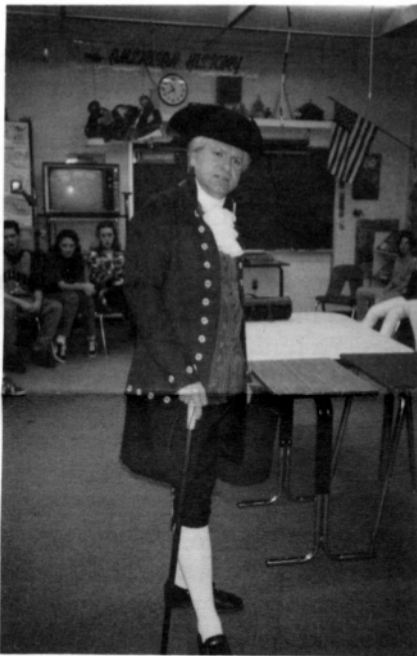
Resident  
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

VOLUME XIV, No. 4

DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
12 Elm Street, Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522

APRIL 1996

## "DR. DOBBS" AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MEDICINE AT DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S APRIL 27 GALA



*Dr. Alexander Dobbs, fictional regimental physician and surgeon for General George Washington's Army, as portrayed by Dr. Joseph Gagliardi.*

What was life and medical practice like in Colonial and Revolutionary War New York? Come to the annual spring Gala of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society on April 27 and find out!

A delicious Gala dinner will be followed by a program truly fascinating: Dr. N. Joseph Gagliardi will present a one-man docudrama about 18th Century medicine and life conditions in the American colonies, newly reconstituted as

independent nation-"states" at war with England.

The event will take place on Saturday, April 27, beginning with dinner at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall of South Presbyterian Church. "Once again the Society is indebted to the church's ministers, Joseph Gilmore and Susan De George. The Historical Society Trustees and members thank them for their kindness in granting us the use of the hall for our Gala," said Bill Blanck, president.

Admission to the Gala, which will include a raffle for a number of desirable prizes (donated by local merchants and friends of the Society), as well as dinner and the history program, is a low, low \$15 for adults and \$8 for children under 12. (Not bad for a fun night out, considering that tips and sales taxes are *not* required of you!)

After the dinner, Dr. Gagliardi will explain how New Yorkers lived during the Revolutionary War and how doctors treated patients at that time. He will play the part of a fictional "Dr. Alexander Dobbs" who volunteers in 1776 to be a regimental surgeon and physician in General George Washington's army.

According to the Maryland Medical Journal of May 1994, the fictional "Dr. Dobbs" was born and

raised in a Hudson Valley settlement known informally as "Dobbs Ferry," named after an "uncle," William Dobbs, who operated a ferry service across the Hudson River from Willow Point to Sneden's Landing.

"Dr. Dobbs" marches with the Continental Army to White Plains, New York, and takes part in the battle there; in victories at Trenton and Princeton, New Jersey; and in defeats at Brandywine and Germantown, Pennsylvania. He then finds himself camped at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, at the end of 1777.

Dr. Gagliardi, as "Dr. Dobbs," is dressed in authentically reproduced clothing (three-cornered hat, powdered wig, breeches, long white stockings, buckled shoes, blouse, waistcoat and jacket). In real life he is a physician with a practice in Maryland; he is a nephew of Society Trustee Virginia Gagliardi. The docudrama program that Society members will see and interact with has been performed for the past three years before school groups and doctors' assemblies.

Raffle chances are printed elsewhere in this newsletter. You may send your raffle chance money, your admission (\$15 per adult, \$8 per child under 12) and any additional

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## "Dr. Dobbs" at Gala

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donations to the Society at the Mead House, 12 Elm Street, Dobbs Ferry in advance of the Gala.

Since attendance at the Gala has been increasing in recent years, and since seating in the hall is limited, you are advised to make your reservations early.

Desserts for the dinner are provided by members and friends of the Society. If you wish to donate baked goods or other desserts, please call Trustee Terry Lockett at 693-5386 after 4:00 p.m.

Chairpersons of the Gala are Trustees Muriel Brown and Virginia Gagliardi. They can use some volunteer help.

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

The Society needs volunteers:

- To organize and catalog its files under supervision.
- To make minor furniture repairs (wood-working experience required).
- To garden: The beautiful grounds of the Mead House need care. Planned flower gardens will bloom again with volunteer help.
- To photograph -- to interview -- to videotape. The Society's ongoing program of videotaping local residents needs volunteers.

These projects will run through spring and summer. If you are interested, call us at the Mead House, 674-1007, and leave a message on the answering machine.

### MEMBERSHIP INCOME HELPS FUND NEEDED PROJECTS

Membership income so far in this membership year totals \$5,048. Society Secretary Mae Pepper reported to the Board of Trustees that the total includes \$3,951 in dues and \$1,097 in other contributions.

She also said that the Society now has 273 memberships, including 142 multi-person memberships. Estimated number of persons who are members is at least 415, figuring at least two persons in each family and other multi-person membership.

Sixty members also contributed additional dollars for specific purposes -- \$850 for the Mead House, \$152 for microfilming and indexing and \$70 for other projects. One member gave \$25 which was matched by the member's employer. (Note: if your employer has a matching gift program, tell your employer what you are contributing to the Society, and, in that way, double your gift!)

As extensive work is being planned for the porch, the fencing and the grounds, every dollar is needed.

### ~IN MEMORIAM~ CATHERINE THORNTON ELLEN THORNTON

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society has expressed its profound sympathy to Jock Thornton, former Trustee and long-time friend of the Society, who has suffered two tragic losses in the space of ten weeks.

On April 15, his wife, Ellen Thornton, died at the age of 57. On February 2, his mother, Catherine Thornton, died at the age of 89. Both women were members and staunch supporters of the Society. Both were parishioners, along with Jock, of Sacred Heart Church. Both were graduates of Marymount College in Tarrytown. Ellen was a retired teacher. Catherine, a retired public relations specialist.

Catherine was born in Dobbs Ferry on January 29, 1907 to Hugh A. and Mary Carpenter Thornton. In addition to her public relations work, she was a lecturer for more than three decades for the Sleepy Hollow Restorations between 1950 and the early 1980s. Catherine was also a co-founder of the Dobbs Ferry Chapter of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Ellen Thornton was born in Mount Vernon on June 25, 1938 to John and Margery Falvey O'Reilly. She was a Rockland County teacher for 33 years at Pearl River Elementary School, Pomona Junior High School and Spring Valley High School, retiring from that school three years ago.

After receiving her bachelor's degree in education from Marymount, she graduated from Seton Hall University in New Jersey with a master's degree. Ellen married Jock at Marymount Chapel in 1973 and has lived in Dobbs Ferry since then. She served her parish as a eucharistic minister and was a former chairperson of the Dobbs Ferry Youth Council.

Both Catherine and Ellen were active for many years in the community events that have shaped Dobbs Ferry in this century; both clearly loved the village and its history. In the case of both women, the family has suggested that memorial donations may be made to the Historical Society.

Besides being a former Trustee, Jock, an attorney, has been unstintingly generous to the Society with his time and legal services.

### DONATION OF ITEMS NEEDED FOR JUNE 1st PORCH AND YARD SALE

The Society will conduct a porch and yard sale on Saturday, June 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Mead House, 12 Elm Street. Donations of items to be sold for the Society's benefit are most welcome. If you have items to donate, call Trustees Hugh and Charlotte Frankenthaler, 693-9527.

## SACRED HEART CHURCH THROUGH TWO WORLD WARS

*(Editor's Note: Here is Part II of a condensed history of Sacred Heart Church in Dobbs Ferry, written by Society Trustee Hank Walter.)*

### The Theologian, the Dramatist, World War I

The third pastor, Father James Fitzsimmons, STD, was born at Ballyjamesduff, County Cavan, Ireland, the youngest of 10 children. He had emigrated to New York when he was 18, and was ordained at 26. Before coming to Sacred Heart at 39, he taught philosophy and dogmatic theology at the Dunwoodie Seminary, Yonkers.

Father Fitzsimmons brought to Sacred Heart a widely known reputation for gentleness, piety and scholarship skills. He bought the rectory at 468 Broadway across from the public school in 1905. It remained the rectory for 65 years. Father Fitzsimmons stayed with Sacred Heart for five years, leaving Dobbs Ferry in 1908 to found St. Gregory's Parish on West 88th Street, off Central Park West in Manhattan.

Father John Talbot Smith served the parish for 15 years as its fourth pastor. He had served as editor of *The New York Catholic Review* in Manhattan and was widely known as an author and lecturer, contributing articles regularly to Catholic newspapers and magazines across the country. Among his many books were *Women of Culture*, *His Honor the Mayor*, *The Training of a Priest* and *The Black Cardinal*.

He enlarged Brownson Hall, the church basement now known as Oussani Hall. He organized the Talbot Dramatic Club and successfully produced many plays in Brownson Hall. Father Smith's love for the theater prompted him to establish the Catholic Actors Guild in 1914. He also founded the Catholic Writers Guild in 1920 and the nation's first Catholic boys' camp in Cliff Haven, NY, in 1922.

When America entered World War I in 1917, Sacred Heart Parish also became involved. The parish was asked to collect money for the Catholic War Fund. Its quota was \$3,000; a total of \$5,000 was collected. Meanwhile, 90 parishioners (a roughly estimated 20% of the men in Sacred Heart) entered the armed services to fight in Europe -- 79 in the army, 11 in the navy.

### The Activist and the First Renovation

Father Smith died in September, 1923, after an

illness of several months. The parish had no leader until March, 1924, when Father William J. B. Daly was placed in charge. Father Daly had served as chaplain of the 69th New York Infantry during the Spanish-American War and was on a U.S. Commission in Cuba to deal with post-war matters there. He then served 17 years as assistant rector at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Serving for 18 years as Sacred Heart's fifth pastor, Father Daly was a whirlwind of activity. Within a few months, he started the first complete renovation and repair to the church, a project that was finished four months later. One of the changes Father Daly made was to remove Father Flannelly's painting of the Crucifixion and commission a New York City artist to replace it with a different Crucifixion scene. The artist selected was Hans P. Hansen. Hansen's work was hung high next to the roof over the main altar; only part of it could be seen from the back pews of the church. Some 63 years later, it was lowered by the tenth pastor, Msgr. Hugh McManus, to make it visible from all parts of the church. What happened to Father Flannelly's original painting is not known.

Father Daly started Wednesday religious instruction classes to expand the traditional Sunday School training, began the January ceremony of blessing the children of the parish, formally organized the Sanctuary Society.

Reaching out to the community at large, he delivered Memorial Day and high school commencement addresses, served as a judge of oratorical contests in the high school, spoke to the Civil War Veterans and the Sons of Veterans, delivered the invocation at the Defense Day Celebration and hosted a convention of the Yonkers Division of the State Sodality Union in Brownson Hall. He also began to provide religious instruction to the children in Children's Village. He set up a bus service for Catholics in Chauncey Village to attend Sunday Mass at Sacred Heart -- an arrangement that lasted for almost four years, when the Chauncey Catholics were transferred to the new parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ardsley.

He also pronounced the invocation at the laying of the cornerstone of the village's municipal building. He delivered the panegyric for Mother Cabrini on Foundress Day at what was known at the time as Villa Maria (now the Cabrini Home). He prodded Peter Carpenter (later the first Postmaster of Dobbs Ferry to be named by a Democratic President [Roosevelt] to



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establish the Brownson Drum and Fife and (added later) Bugle Corps, a group of men who marched in various parades and played at Communion breakfasts and village celebrations.

In 1925, the "signature" bronze statue of the Sacred Heart was blessed and installed on the east lawn of the church on Broadway near the corner of Rochambeau Avenue. It was a gift of Father Gabriel Oussani, D.D., professor of Semitic languages at the seminary. In September, 1926, he hosted a huge Holy Name Rally on church grounds. Thousands of men from nearby state Holy Name regions paraded, prayed, sang and listened to speeches in what was billed as "the largest gathering ever held in the village."

He was a tireless fund-raiser. Sacred Heart Church, constructed in 1895, had put the parish into debt for \$57,000. Twenty-nine years later, when Father Daly became pastor, this debt was still \$26,000. It took the new pastor only three years and 10 months to wipe out the debt, and at the same time, pay for the complete renovation of the church in his first year.

### **World War II, The Second Renovation, The New School**

Father Daly and his parish, along with the village, state and nation, were shocked on the eve of the Immaculate Conception holy day in 1941, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and propelled America into World War II. Ten months later, Father Daly retired and was named the parish's first (and only) Pastor Emeritus. The war then occupied the attention of the next two pastors, Fathers O'Connor and Conroy.

Father Patrick J. O'Connor, former chaplain of the New York City Fire Department, became the sixth pastor in October, 1942. But, according to *The Catholic News*, he "served for only three months until his accidental death when hit by a bus." He was not related to the Waterford-born Father David O'Connor, the parish founder. For a few months, Sacred Heart again had no pastor, until April, 1943, when Father John B. Conroy was appointed.

Msgr. Conroy served for 20 years as Sacred Heart's seventh pastor. He came to Sacred Heart parish in Dobbs Ferry at the age of 57, having completed 14 years as pastor of St. John the Evangelist Church in Clove, New York. At Sacred Heart, Msgr. Conroy guided his parishioners through the emotional and spiritual tempest of World War II, oversaw the church's second renovation and built the new Sacred Heart Parochial School.

The residents of Dobbs Ferry were deeply in-

involved in World War II, both abroad and at home. As a home front service for Sacred Heart parishioners in the armed forces, the Holy Name Society sponsored a monthly newspaper, *Sacred Heart Parish Front*, which was mailed to our servicemen and women. It ran stories about the parish and the village. Photocopies of four issues of the yellowing and crumbling newspaper were exhibited at a parish celebration after a Centennial Mass on November 12, 1995. The parish donated a set of the photocopies to the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society. They were added to the Society's archives of both World War II and Sacred Heart.

A total of 214 parishioners entered the armed forces during World War II and served our nation in Europe and the Pacific; 193 were men; 21 were women. It is estimated that 40% of the men of Sacred Heart Parish were in the service. Of the men, 112 served in the Army; 63, in the Navy; 8, in the Marines; 6, in the Coast Guard; and 4, in the Merchant Marine. Of the women, 11 were in the WAVES; 6, in the Nurse Corps; and 4, in the American Red Cross.

After the war, the church was completely renovated for the second time and its facilities modernized in 1952, 56 years after the church was dedicated and 28 years after the first renovation. The church was painted, stained glass windows were re-leaded, pews were cleaned and varnished, new kneelers were installed as were rubber tiles in the aisles and sanctuary, new doors were hung in the front vestibule, a new baptistry was established, all statues were repainted and a public address system was installed. Brownson Hall was also completely renovated and a modern kitchen was added.

In 1954, the decision was made to build a parochial school, but five years passed before ground was broken in July, 1959. School opened in September, 1960, for first through fourth grades. One class was added each year after that until all eight grades of Catholic schooling were provided to the parishioners in the 1964-65 school year. In November, 1962, the Parish celebrated the Centennial of its founding by Father David O'Connor in 1862. Less than four months later, Msgr. Conroy died at the age of 77.

Yonkers-born Monsignor John J. Nevin served for five years as Sacred Heart's eighth pastor, from April, 1963, to September, 1968. Before he was assigned to Sacred Heart, he had been pastor for 12 years at St. Joseph's Church, Croton Falls.

*The history of the Sacred Heart Church is part of the Society's work on all religious congregations in the Village. At present, we are helping in the research of the history of Our Lady of Pompeii Church, which will celebrate its 75th Anniversary next year.*

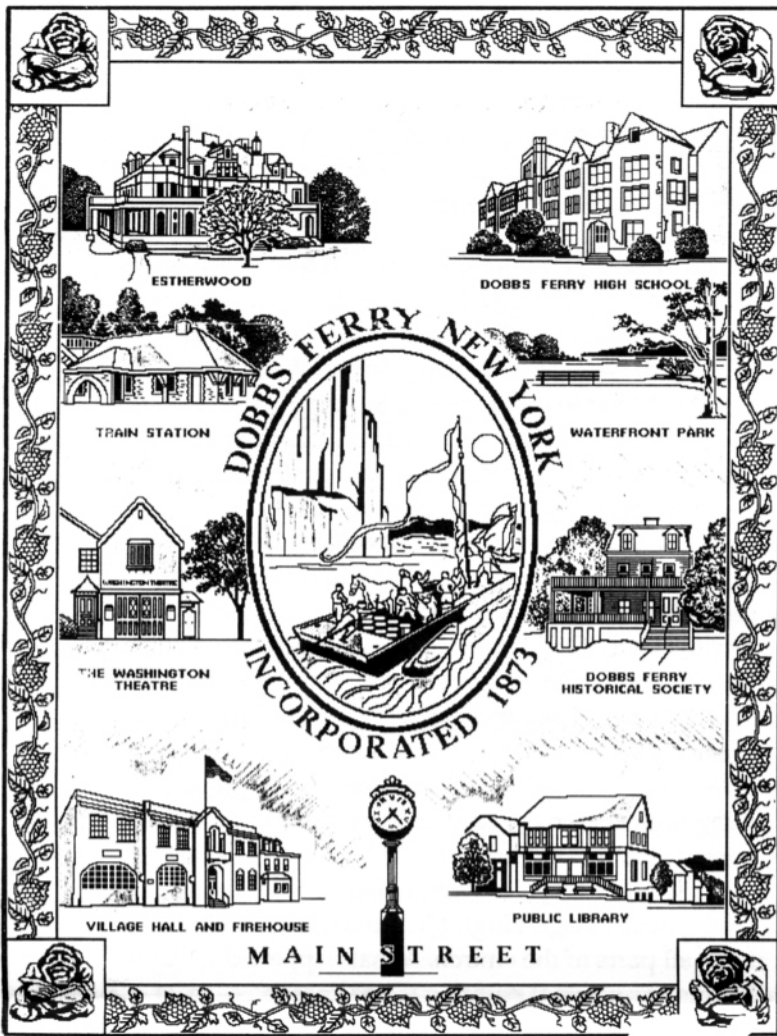
**YOUR RAFFLE DONATION WILL HELP THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO  
CONTINUE ITS WORK IN THE PRESERVATION OF DOBBS FERRY HISTORY**

**Raffle Prizes and gift certificates will be awarded at Gala on April 27th.  
Winner need not be present.**

*Prizes will include:*

- Gourmet Meals ~ Merchandise Donated by Local Merchants**
- Packets of Post Cards of Early Dobbs Ferry**
- Commemorative Bottles ~ Aerial Color Photos of Dobbs Ferry**
- Society's Afghan Depicting Local Buildings & Scenes**
- Historic Maps**

<p align="center">\$1 each, 6 tickets for \$5, FREE LUCKY BONUS 13 FOR \$10.</p> <p align="center">FREE LUCKY 13th TICKET with \$10 donation for page of 12.</p> <p align="center">FREE EARLY BIRD 14th TICKET with \$10 for 12 through April 25.</p>	<p align="center"><b>FREE BONUS!</b> with \$10 for 12 by April 25</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____</p> <p>Zip _____ Phone _____</p>	<p align="center"><b>FREE BONUS!</b> with \$10 donation for page of 12</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____</p> <p>Zip _____ Phone _____</p>
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**THROW IDEAL GRADUATION PRESENT**

Demand for the Society's handsome two-color 50' x 65" throw has been so great that a reorder was necessary. It is now available in either Williamsburg blue or cranberry red and can be ordered with the form below.

The throw will make an excellent graduation gift and with the coming of summer, multiple uses (e.i. at picnics and at the beach) may be found for it.

At holiday time and on Valentine's Day the throw was a popular gift for many former residents still cherishing fond memories of life in the village. During the cold winter, many chilly Dobbs Ferryites kept warm by wrapping themselves in local history.

Trustee Tahnee Neill, who last year proposed the afghan (shown at left), dealt with the manufacturer, and followed through on each sale, has reason to be proud. It is by far the most successful fund-raising item in the Society's history.

Dobbs Ferry Historical Society  
 12 Elm Street  
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ throw(s) @ \$45 each. Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (number)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Check color: Williamsburg Blue  Cranberry Red

**A Presentation of 18th Century Medicine on April 27th at the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society Gala.**  
**SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 27TH ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ SO. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL**  
 At the Gala, Dr. N. Joseph Gagliardi, dressed in a Revolutionary War Uniform, will present a one-man docudrama that illustrates 18th Century Medicine and Medical Procedures of the Revolutionary War.

**Dobbs Ferry Historical Society**

**IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER, PLEASE JOIN US NOW.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve.) \_\_\_\_\_

- MEMBERSHIP 1995-96 [ ] New [ ] Renew
- [ ] Patron..... \$100.00
  - [ ] Friend..... \$ 50.00
  - [ ] Contributing..... \$ 25.00
  - [ ] Family..... \$ 15.00
  - [ ] Individual Adult..... \$ 10.00
  - [ ] Student/Senior (over 60)..... \$ 3.00
  - [ ] Junior (Students under 16)\*... No fee

Please make check payable to, and mail to:  
 DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 12 Elm Street  
 Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522  
 Telephone (914) 674-1007 (24-hour answering)

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

\*Persons under 16 years of age must show parent's or legal guardian's consent for membership. Thus, if you have checked Junior membership above, please provide signature below.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Please check one: Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Guardian \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian