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

SEPTEMBER 1996

SEPTEMBER 27th ANNUAL MEETING WILL FEATURE VIDEO HISTORY OF MAYOR NANNA'S TENURE DURING BABY BOOM PERIOD OF VILLAGE'S GREATEST GROWTH

Former Dobbs Ferry Mayor John F. Nanna will be the guest of honor at the annual meeting of The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society at Our Lady of Pompeii Parish Hall on Friday, September 27th at 8:00 p.m. A videotape including the accomplishments of Mayor Nanna spanning the years from 1959 to 1979 will be shown. The Mayor first served as a Village Trustee, then as Mayor and Town of Greenburgh Councilman.

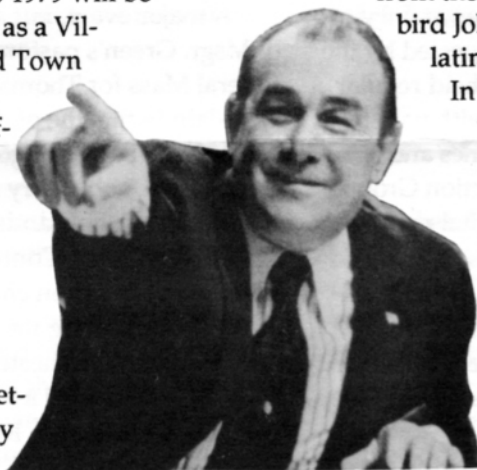
Mayor Nanna's tenure in office paralleled the period of greatest growth in population and development in the Village's history. This was the generation of the baby boomers.

John Nanna, like hundreds of other former World War II veterans, came to the Village to buy homes and raise their families. During World War II Nanna served in the Army Corps of Engineers, advancing through France, Belgium and Germany to meet the Russians on the Elbe.

As President of the 17th District Home Owners' Association, he came to the attention of local Republican leaders, who persuaded him to run for office.

During his tenure, he was active in acquiring the Juhring Estate for open space, the purchase of the railroad station, and taking title to the cemetery on Ashford Avenue.

Another accomplishment was the establishment of Memorial Park; and he was also instrumental in closing the dump at the waterfront, which had been a depository of village garbage for decades. This was followed by the transformation of the former dump area to our present Waterfront Park.



Mayor John Nanna

The Juhring property, containing the source of Wicker's Creek, is considered by the former mayor to be a high mark of his administration. The property, which was under consideration for development, was purchased by the Village as open space with funding from the State and Federal Governments. Ladybird Johnson wrote to Mayor Nanna congratulating him on the foresight of the Village.

In addition to Mayor Nanna's recollections, the meeting will include the election of trustees.

Members will vote for six Trustees for 3-year terms ending September 30, 1999, and three non-Trustee members of the Nominating Committee for one-year terms ending September 30, 1997. The meeting is open to the general public, but only paid members may vote in the elections and on resolutions before the assembly.

The membership year runs from October 1 through September 30. This year's Nominating Committee, consisting of three non-Trustees (Faye Delmerico, Chair, Peggy

Coffey and Demarest Romaine) and two current Trustees (Terry Lockett and Fred Staats), have nominated five incumbents and one new Trustee candidate.

The incumbent candidates are Jean Fritz, Virginia Gagliardi, Julia Rockiki, Mary Walter and Ray Willsea. The new candidate is Harriet J. Kessler.

The Nominating Committee named incumbents Delmerico, Coffey and Romaine as the three non-Trustee members of the Nominating Committee next year. The two Trustee members of that Committee will be named by the Board of Trustees after October 1.

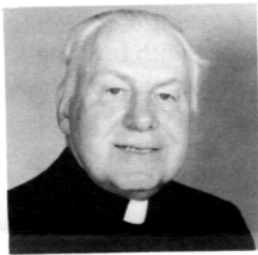
Officers of the society will also report on increased membership, on stable financial standing, on programs and events, and on ongoing research.

Church Renovation, Youth Ministry, Jewish Outreach, and Latin Were Hallmarks of Msgr. Green's and Msgr. McManus' Tenures

Editor's Note: Here is Part III of a condensed history of Sacred Heart Church in Dobbs Ferry, written by Hank Walter]

The Third Renovation, Antioch Youth Ministry

Cardinal Terence Cooke named Monsignor Gerard A. Green as the ninth pastor of Sacred Heart parish. He served fifteen and a half years, from September, 1968, to February, 1984. Before coming to Sacred Heart, Bronx-born Msgr. Green had been rector of Cathedral College in Manhattan for six years and a science professor at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, Yonkers, for ten years.



Msgr. Green

Msgr. Green, a gentle devout scholar like the parish's third leader, Father Fitzsimmons, was nonetheless a very active pastor not afraid of testing new ideas and trying new activities suggested by the parishioners. He held regular prayer meetings with parishioners in their homes and started a Social Action Group.

The Community Group of seniors, still a vital part of parish life, was begun in his tenure. He also pioneered the Parish Council, conducting 30 neighborhood meetings and holding elections. He was the first Sacred Heart pastor to allow girls to process to the altar with the Cross and lectionary and to attend Mass within the sanctuary.

He named the first lay person, Dr. Catherine Hickey, as principal of the elementary school. The choir developed into a first-rate group under the direction first of George Blaha and then of Mrs. Nettie Sbano, both parishioners. For a number of consecutive Advents, he hosted a Candlelight Service of Scripture readings and religious musical selections sung by the Masters School Glee Club, under the direction of another parishioner, Jack Pierpont.

Msgr. Green carried out the third major renovation and repair of the church building in 1982. He refurbished the lovely painting of the Crucifixion by Hans Hansen on the wall above the main altar, took down the white, wooden reredos behind the altar, replaced it with a large solid red curtain, suspended an arms-outstretched statue of the Sacred Heart from the curtains and replaced the old pews.

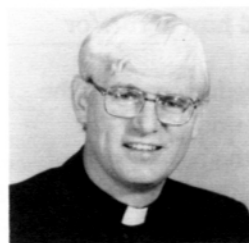
In November, 1979, Sacred Heart parish became the birthplace of the New Antioch youth ministry program. With the full support of Monsignor Green, parishioners Gerry and Mary Mandry developed the Anioch program, and assistant pastor Robert P. Hickey was its moderator. The program offered young people the opportunity to experience "church" in their own teenaged community, responding to their need for religious education and faith development in a language and experience uniquely theirs.

The parish's Antioch supported the start of new Antioch communities in other Westchester areas. The early leaders were also instrumental in bringing the New Antioch to places as far away as Australia and the Philippines, as well as to parishes in the northeast, midwest and southeast United States. The Australian Antiochers affectionately refer to Sacred Heart in Dobbs Ferry as "the mother church" of their Antioch.

A major event, but a sad one, took place at the end of Msgr. Green's pastorate: he conducted a solemn funeral Mass for Thomas Ruotolo, a parishioner who was slain in the line of duty as a New York City policeman. Scores of government officials from New York City, Dobbs Ferry and the river towns attended the Mass and thousands of police officers from the City, Westchester, Connecticut and New Jersey came to pay their respects on church grounds and in the village streets surrounding the church. It was the largest such gathering in Westchester. Shortly after, in February, 1984, he was named assistant director at St. John Neumann Residence, Riverdale, for men considering the priesthood, serving until 1992, when he retired. He is now at Our Lady of Consolation, Riverdale.

The Restoration, the Jewish Outreach, Latin

Msgr. Hugh F. McManus served five years as tenth pastor of the parish, from 1984 to 1989. In 1984 the parish became involved in feeding the hungry. Parishioners Lloyd and Alice Westlake started working in Mother Teresa's Soup Kitchen in the Bronx. Then, as funding from outside sources and donations from parishioners became available, the Westlakes and other Sacred Heart members started serving other



Msgr. McManus

Sacred Heart Story (continued)

kitchens and pantries. The parish opened up its own pantry at St. Joseph's Church in Yonkers in 1988. This program is still a major activity of the parish.

With a keen sense of history and architecture, Msgr. McManus restored parts of the church to remind parishioners of the building's Victorian neo-Gothic origins. He installed a cast-iron screen, painted black and gold, between the altar and the tabernacle resting against the wall. He brought the Hans Hansen painting down from near the roof, installed additional canvas above the painting and had it painted blue to extend the blue sky above the Crucifixion scene up to the roof to create the illusion of infinite distance.

In one outreach program, Msgr. McManus established good relations with the Greenburgh Hebrew Center and its spiritual leader, Rabbi Barry Kenter. The center and the parish held joint Thanksgiving services and conducted traditional Jewish seders for parishioners to illuminate what Jesus' Last Supper was like. The rabbi also spoke to Sacred Heart children on the 50th anniversary of Kristall-nacht, the start of the

wholesale persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany, and the parish and the Hebrew Center held a joint commemorative service.

Msgr. McManus named a woman religious (for the first time), Sister Gertrude Fuchs, O.P., as administrator of the parish. He also placed both the parochial school and the religious education classes for public school students under a single director, Dr. Catherine Hickey. He instituted Latin in the upper four grades of the school, explaining that Latin was part of the cultural tradition of the Church. The Latin classes were featured in an article in *Catholic New York*. Shortly after New Year's in 1989, the Cardinal announced his appointment as the Archdiocese's Vicar for Education. He is now pastor of Our Lady of Fatima parish, Scarsdale.

[Part IV, the final installment, will be published in the next issue. Meanwhile, research is going forward on Our Lady of Pompeii and the Greenburgh Hebrew Center. Histories of these houses of worship will be published in the future, as will histories of the Protestant churches in Dobbs Ferry -- Zion Episcopal, South Presbyterian, Dobbs Ferry Lutheran and Aldersgate United Methodist.]

BUSINESSES CONTRIBUTE TO A SUCCESSFUL GALA

The Spring Gala netted almost \$1,750 from a capacity crowd that jammed South Presbyterian Fellowship Hall on April 27.

But more important than the funds raised were the camaraderie of the members and friends who attended the dinner, the smash success of the evening's history program on 18th century medicine in Dobbs Ferry, and the increased participation of the Village's business community in the Society's gala raffle.

The program featured Dr. N. Joseph Gagliardi, who, dressed in 18th century costume, presented a one-man docudrama on medicine as it was practiced in the American Colonies. He played the part of "Dr. Alexander Dobbs," a fictional regimental surgeon and physician in Gen. Washington's Army. After his formal presentation, he took questions from the audience, remaining in character throughout. At the end of the program, Dr. Gagliardi, a history buff who is a physician in Maryland, was given a standing ovation by the audience.

The number of raffle prizes was an unprecedented 30. Most of the prize donors were members of the Dobbs Ferry business community. The Society itself also donated a map, a commemorative bottle, an afghan and packets of postcards. Another non-profit

group that donated a prize was the Hilltop Thrift shop of Zion Episcopal Church. Two Trustees, Society Secretary Mae Pepper and Muriel Brown, provided prizes, too. There was also one out-of-town business donor -- Hastings Prime Meat.

President Bill Blanck thanked the Dobbs Ferry business community for its continued financial support of the Society and its activities and urged members to patronize local businesses.

The raffle prizes consisted of a combination of products, services and gift certificates. The business donors, exclusive of restaurants, include:

Brown Bag Bookstore, Carey Pharmacy, Crown Cleaners, Dan's Sporting Goods, Elegant Poster, Evergreen Florist, Flowers by Carole, House of Charm, Michael Hairstylist, Paul DeAngelo, R & S Beauty Center, Raymond Optician, Reader's Hardware, Rochambeau Wines and Liquors, Scheri Shop and Television Service Center.

Restaurant gift certificates were donated by: Bagel Authority, Chart House, Eagle's Nest, John Richards, Louisiana Cajun Cafe, Pizza Treat and Sam's Restaurant.

The Gala Co-Chairs were Muriel Brown and Virginia Gagliardi.

Frances Tahnee Neill Is Named Trustee Emerita After Twenty Years of Service

After 20 years of dedicated service to the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society, former President Frances "Tahnee" Neill has decided not to serve for another three-year term as Trustee. Her current term expires September 30.

The Board of Trustees, at its June meeting, thanked her for all her efforts on the Society's behalf and honored her by naming her

"Trustee Emerita." The late Filomena Ricciardi was the only other Trustee so honored.

Mrs. Neill has served the Society in many capacities: she was President for three years during the early period of the Society; she also served at different times as Vice President, Interim Director, Chair of various committees and, for twenty years, as a Trustee.

She and a former Trustee, Linda Moot, were responsible for developing the Society's Collections Policy, which New York State now uses as a model for other historical societies.

She also persuaded the Board to design and order an afghan which in half a year has become its most successful fund raising item to date. Over 260 have been sold.

The Society Participates in Four Events

On Memorial Day, several Trustees and members marched in the parade to honor Dobbs Ferry's veterans, living and dead.

On June 8, Dobbs Ferry Day, the Society presented an historical exhibit of some high points in the history of our local schools.

On July 4, the Society sponsored a table at the Village's Picnic

in the Park, exhibited its sale items, sold some, and recruited new members.

The Society participated in the Midsummer Night Village Event in July. Setting up its table on Main Street, members of the Historical Society told visitors about its work, and sold postcards, posters, and throws.

SCOUTS SPRUCE UP GROUNDS

Some members of Troop 24 of the Boy Scouts formed a one-time clean-up patrol for the Society. Working through the Dobbs Ferry Employment Service, the scouts, under Scoutmaster Edmund Dalio, raked the grounds of the Mead House in April and bagged a huge amount of winter debris for pick-up. Thanks, Ed! and thanks, Scouts! for a job well done.

GARDEN CLUB DONATES \$500 FOR GROUNDS UPKEEP

The Garden Club has donated \$500 to the Historical Society for the upkeep and maintenance of the grounds at the Mead House. This is especially welcome as it was necessary to remove two diseased trees from the property this summer at a cost of \$1,100.

THORNTON MEMORIALS

Donations to the Society memorializing Catherine and Ellen Thornton have exceeded \$2,500.

This is a well-deserved tribute to the two women by their many friends and colleagues. Both were members and supporters of the Society for many years. Both were active parishioners of Sacred Heart Church, were involved in the community and clearly loved Dobbs Ferry and its history.

PORCH SALE A SUCCESS

The Society's second annual porch sale on June 1st brought \$1,507 into the treasury, about \$100 more than last year. This will help defray recent painting and decorating expenditures.

Co-chairs of the event were Trustees Charlotte Frankenthaler and Tahnee Neill.

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