



The FERRYMAN

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VOLUME XX No. 2

DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
12 Elm Street, Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522 (914) 674-1007

September, 2006

Ogden Engine Company No.1.

A new century is approaching and our village is growing. Will there be adequate fire protection for the ever increasing population? With this need in mind, a small group of concerned citizens joined together and petitioned the existing Fire Department with the intent of forming a new company. The new century approaching was the 20th, Dobbs Ferry had a population of 2,840 people and the Fire Department was comprised of three companies, Resolute Hook & Ladder Co., Livingston Hose Co. and Chauncey Hose Co., all of which were located a considerable distance from the burgeoning new community of homes on Ashford Ave. near Ogden Place East and West.

The minutes of the Village Board Meeting of January 6, 1898, show the first official record of the request to form a new company. Henry Ellis, secretary of the Fire Department sent a letter to the board informing them that as a result of a meeting held by the Fire Department, approval was given to create a new company. The citizens who signed their names told the board they wanted to form a hose company to be known as Ogden Hose Co. The village took no immediate action. According to company records, on March 30, 1898, a group of men gathered at the home of J. C. Horn to form

a hose company. Michael Creedon was appointed temporary chairman. The group adopted the name Ogden Hose Company No. 3.

The following men were elected to serve until the annual 1898 meeting: Foreman: Fred Dorson; Assistant Foreman, Thomas Creighton;

Secretary, Owen Sheridan; Treasurer, Andrew Seiss and Chairman, Michael Creedon.

Resolutions were drafted to be presented to the village board requesting an apparatus, place of residence and other firematic items.



Courtesy of Ogden Hose Company Museum

Following the organization meeting the first company business meeting was held. Nominations were made for company officers, wardens and delegates. On April 5, 1898 Ogden Hose Co. No.3 elected its first slate of officers. Elected were: Andrew Seiss, foreman; Sidney Martin, assistant foreman; Michael Creedon, chairman; Owen Sheridan, secretary; Henry Kastberg, financial secretary; Thomas Creighton, treasurer and Thomas Creighton and Andrew Seiss, wardens.

Ogden was now a company but it lacked a home and an apparatus. On April 7, the village board confirmed that Ogden was now part of the Dobbs Ferry Fire Department. During the meeting, Mr. J. C. Horn offered to lease his building located at Ogden Place East for \$10 a month for five years. On May 5, the company adopted the resolution to rent the property

beginning May 1 at the annual rent of \$120 per year in quarterly increments.

A hand drawn hose jumper, used as the apparatus of choice of the era was assigned to the company and Ogden Hose No. 3 began to respond to calls for help in the village of Dobbs Ferry.

As time progressed, Ogden became an integral part of the fire department. At the August 11, 1906 meeting it was decided not to renew the lease of its quarters and a committee

Keeping in pace with the ever increasing technological advances, on Feb. 4, 1916, the members notified the village Board that they accepted their first motorized apparatus. The American LaFrance Engine had been in the firehouse on a trial basis for a month and everyone was pleased with its performance.

The "Roaring Twenties," arrived and the needs of the Company began to enlarge. As the Company and its equipment increased they outgrew the firehouse. On, Oct. 2, 1922 a



Ogden Engine Company on Lefurgy St. c. 1908

Photographer: Henry G. Lauterbach

was formed to work with the village to find new accommodations for the Company. At the same meeting, in anticipation of a new apparatus, the company's name was changed. On December 1, 1908, the regular meeting "opened under the new name of Ogden Engine Company No. 1." On Dec. 8 the members tested their new horse drawn "Chemical Engine."

In 1910, after two years of committee meetings and two successful referendum votes during village elections, a lot on Ashford Ave. opposite Ogden Place West and around the corner from their rented accommodations was secured and the village built a one story structure to serve as Ogden's firehouse. The first meeting in the new firehouse on Ashford Ave. was held on Oct. 4, 1910 - the site of today's quarters.

contractor began the first addition to the building, the construction of a second floor. The sorely needed space became a focal point for the Company for years to come.

New American La France Pumper Arrives

The "Twenties," were not without controversy. In August of 1926, the *Dobbs Ferry Register* printed the new fire alarm signal codes and no one in the Company had received them. Fortunately, no fires were reported until this situation was rectified! The end of the decade also brought the state of the art new American La France pumper, a piece of equipment that would serve the Department for nearly three decades.

As the Great Depression gripped the country, the dedication of the members never

faltered. They even decided in May of 1931 to drill at least twice monthly, with a heavy fine of \$25 levied against those who missed.

During the 1930's, the firehouse became the social hub for the members and their families. Dances, boat rides and game days were held to further camaraderie. At a special meeting in Dec. 1934 the Company decided to hold a Christmas Party for members' children from one to 12 years old. Each child received a gift, ice cream, orange, apple, cookies and fruit punch. The party cost the Company an extravagant \$32.92 and is still held every December although the cost and menu has changed over time.

1940's Created Air Raid Wardens

The 1940's saw war grip the world with members answering the country's call to serve. Those who remained continued their vigilant protection of the Village and also joined in the home front war effort. In Jan. 1942, the company granted permission for the Air Raid Wardens to use the rooms in the firehouse every Sunday and whenever else deemed necessary.

The end of the war found the members back to business as usual. The members joined with the other companies in putting on shows to raise funds. The other single biggest change was that in April of 1948, the monthly dues for each member increased to \$.50.

Fabulous Fifties Arrive

The "Fabulous Fifties," ushered in the "Boom" era. There was a baby boom, a building boom, an education boom and a financial boom. Ogden experienced its own boom during the decade. They had a "generation" boom with more second generation members joining and becoming involved in Company activities. The village experienced a construction boom, with most of the construction being in the east end of the village. While the response area never changed in size, the number of structures the Company protected nearly tripled.

To keep up with the expansion of the village, a 1956 American LaFrance Engine that had a two stage centrifugal pump with a capacity of pumping 1,250 gallons of water a minute was placed into service. The last of the "open cab" rigs remained in service for thirty years, eighteen as Ogden's front line pumper. In addition to winning numerous

pumping competitions after it was over 20 years old and traveling to Elmira, NY, to help celebrate the 150th Anniversary of American LaFrance, this Engine, in 1984, at the age of 28, responded first to a house fire on Broadway and supplied all the handlines used to save the structure, a testament to its engineering and durability.

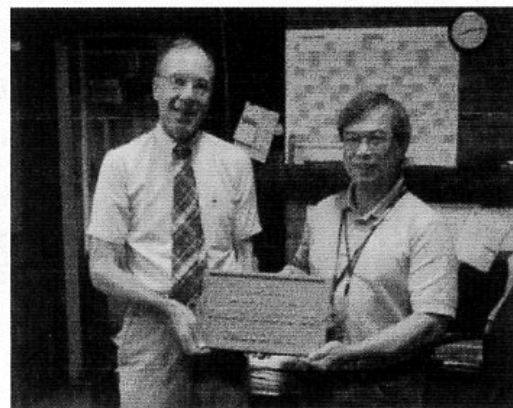
- Teresa Walsh

Note: the next edition of the newsletter will follow the progress of Ogden from the 60's to present day.



Historical Society Receives Artifact

The builder's plaque from the Dobbs Ferry railroad station pedestrian bridge has been given to the Historical Society by MetroNorth. On August 16, 2006, Chief Engineer Ken Cho presented the artifact to Larry Dengler, representing the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society. The plaque was removed from the bridge as it was being dismantled to be replaced by a higher structure just north of the present location.



Larry Dengler and Ken Cho, Project Engineer

The original bridge was built and installed in 1911 by the Owego Bridge Company of Owego, NY.

Removal

of the plaque in 2006 marks 95 years of service to the passengers of the New York Central Railroad and its successor, MetroNorth Railroad. After cleaning and preparation, the plaque will be put on public display by the Society. Arrangements are being made to receive a second plaque, currently still embedded in concrete, which marked the opening of the Dobbs Ferry railroad station in 1910.

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society wishes to thank Karen Timko, counsel to MetroNorth, for her assistance in preserving these significant milestones in our village's history.



Village Board Proclaims "Road to Freedom Day"

To celebrate Dobbs Ferry's role in the American Revolution, the Village Trustees passed a resolution declaring August 19, 2006 as "Road to Freedom Day." On that date, 225 years ago, Continental Army troops who had been encamped near General George Washington's Head Quarters here, left the area to begin the long march to Virginia where the American forces defeated the British at the Battle of Yorktown and ended the American Revolution.

Washington had been at Dobbs Ferry since mid-July, 1781, corresponding with the commander of the French troops, Comte de Rochambeau to develop plans for a united campaign against the British Army. The Continental forces were encamped near what is today Ardsley High School. Rochambeau had landed in Newport, Rhode Island, and brought his soldiers down through Connecticut to Westchester County, and camped near today's Sunningdale Country Club on Underhill Road. Washington had hoped to drive the British out of New York City but when word came that the French fleet was heading north towards the Chesapeake Area, he gave the order to move the army south towards Virginia. The troops from Dobbs Ferry marched north along the Hudson to King's Ferry where they met up with French troops, who had come across a more northern route, and were ferried across the Hudson.

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society sponsored a commemorative march on August 19th, following the probable route through the village and then gathering afterward at the Mead House for refreshments and conversation. Plans are already underway to make this an annual celebration as a way to teach citizens about our Revolutionary War heritage. To learn more, join us at the Annual Meeting.

Don't Miss the Annual Meeting

The 2006 Annual Meeting of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society will be held on Thursday, Sept. 28 at 7 p.m. at the Mead House, 12 Elm Street. Six trustees for the Society will be elected and the President will give his report of the past years' activities.

Our guest speaker will be Dr. Richard Borkow who will speak about the village's involvement in the American Revolution. Dr. Borkow has assembled a slide presentation with maps of the area and detailed information about the Continental and French troop movements and Washington's correspondence with the commander of the French forces, Comte de Rochambeau. From July 13, 1781 until August 19, 1781, communications from General George Washington to his troops, his allies and members of Congress were written from "Head Quarters, Dobbs Ferry."

On this, the 225th anniversary of these events, Dobbs Ferry residents can look forward to enriching their own store of Revolutionary knowledge.

Mark Your Calendars

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society and the Dobbs Ferry Public Library are presenting their annual *Legends of Dobbs Ferry*. This year's program includes added stories of interest. Please join us on Friday, October 27th at 7:30 p.m. in the Library Community Room for the event and refreshments. While the program is free to all to dare to attend, any donations will be greatly appreciated to help fund future programs.

Volunteers Needed

Are you a grant writer? Are you a creative person with a willingness to help the Historical Society present programs of interest to village residents of all ages?

If you are interested in helping, please contact us at 674-1007. We'd love to chat with you .



Historical Society Gala Held on June 9th Honored Dobbs Ferry Teachers

This year's Gala on June 9th was a festive event with a lovely dinner, the ever-popular raffle, and an extra-special program featuring live readings of some of the letters from young soldiers serving in WWII to L. Doris Wood (a teacher who touched the lives of generations of village residents). The presentation of the letters was written by Jo Ann Skousen especially for the program. In addition we honored "unsung hero" Barbara Pearce. Barbara taught for 43 years in our village and greatly influenced many of the youngsters who attended her classes.

The Society is especially grateful to Georgette Hedberg, Jo Ann Skousen, Meg Lauer, Nathaniel Feldberg, Mark Hedberg, Richard Hedberg, Chris O'Donnell, Marc Petersen, Dave Smith, Brooke Wilford, Mckay Wilford and Miles Wilford. This wonderful cast brought to life the words of our young soldiers and Ms. Wood during this moving reading of the letters.

The letters read were written by village residents Charlie Baiano, Kenneth Frasca, Donato Herrera, Pat O'Brien, Andrew Serrell, Pat Venuto, Donald Jones, G.P. Jones, Jinny Jones and Madeline Jones (the four Jones's were children of William H. Jones).

Last, but not least, our very special thanks to the Dobbs Ferry, Ardsley and Hastings merchants listed below who so generously donated gifts and gift certificates to our raffle.

Ardsley Car Wash	Mystic Haven
Astoria Bank	New York Bagel Authority
Battaglia Brothers	Off Broadway Restaurant
Boutique Wine and Liquors	Performance Auto
Breezley' Bar and Grill	Readers Hardware
Cary's Pharmacy,	Rich Bean Bakery
Carvel	Riviera Pastry Shop
Comfort Restaurant	Rochambeau Wines
Dobbs Diner,	Sam's Italian Restaurant
Dobbs Ferry Café	Scaramella's Ristorante
Doubleday's	Soho East
Flowers by Carole	Starbucks
Getty Station (Ardsley)	Sunnydale
Gino's Barber	Sushi Mike's Japanese Restaurant
Good Yarns	Tomatillo
Jean-Denis Marzi Custom Framing	Unique Assortment
Life Cleaners	Veronica's Jewelry
Marshall's Cheeses	Village Café Ardsley.
Mimosa Restaurant	

Mead House Appeal

The response from Society members – and some nonmembers – to our Mead House appeal was overwhelming! As of mid-August, we have raised over \$5,000 to help pay for the most urgent repairs for the Mead House. We extend a heartfelt thanks to all the supporters listed below for their generosity, immediate response and expressions of concern.

\$500 and above

Jane & Eric Bessels
David Koenigsberg & Ada Huang

\$250 - \$499

Larry & Ellen Klein

\$100 - \$249

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Teresa, Jim & Lila Walsh
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Anthony Leggiero
Ruth Neuwirth
Ruth J. King
Lenore Eileen Lam
Ms. Aleta E. Reid
A. Schneider
Philip Ernest Schoenberg
Brian & Carolyn White
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous

A Note from the Membership Committee

September marks the start of the 2006-2007 membership year. Here's something to think about when you renew your membership: The Society's expenditures during 2005-2006 for programs, *The Ferryman*, and maintaining the archives and Mead House totaled almost \$32,000. Divided equally among our 220 memberships, the cost per member was \$145! Last year, the Society raised only \$5,620 – or an average of \$25.50 per member – from membership dues. This year, please consider making an extra donation above and beyond the minimum dues amount, and encourage your nonmember friends and neighbors to join the Society as well. Thank you!