

# The Historic County

Newsletter of The Passaic County Historical Society

December 2003 Volume 5 - Issue 4

LAMBERT CASTLE, 3 VALLEY ROAD, PATERSON, NJ 07503

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## 2003 Heritage Citizenship Awards

Each year the City of Paterson Historic Preservation Commission presents Heritage Citizen Awards to members of the community who have promoted awareness of the City's historic environment. This year the award ceremony and reception was held on November 2, 2003, at the Senator Frank R. Lautenberg Transportation Opportunity Center on Spruce Street in Paterson. This site is the former Rogers Frame Fitting Shop rehabilitated by the NJ Community Development Corporation. The four 2003 Heritage Citizenship Award Recipients were:

- **Paterson Commons I Associates L.P.**—for their adaptive reuse of a portion of the former Boris Kroll Mill at 122-135 20th Avenue.
- **New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)**—a non-profit community service agency, for the adaptive reuse of an historic locomotive mill, (*the former Rogers Frame Fitting Shop and Administration Building*) at 36-32 Spruce Street.
- **Thomas Amitrano and Herman Schaper, Jr.**—for their rehabilitation of an Eastside Neighborhood residence.
- **Glen Corbett**—for his book, *The Great Paterson Fire of 1902*, documenting the effect this event had on Paterson.

In addition to the Heritage Citizenship Awards, Good Graces Certificates (*named in honor of the late Grace George of the Paterson Visitor's Center*), were presented to the following for "making this historic city look good through their friendliness, creativity, and volunteer spirit:"

- **The Passaic County Sewerage Commission's Passaic River - Newark Bay Restoration Program** - for their upper raceway cleanup and restoration project.
- **Paterson Trolley Driver Jose Torres** - for his continuous promotion of, and spreading good will, for the City of Paterson and its history.

After the ceremony and reception, visitors received a guided tour of the Senator Frank R. Lautenberg Transportation Opportunity Center. Key components of the multi-service community center include a pre-school facility; the Garrett A. Morgan Transportation and Technology Academy, an alternative high school for students interested in careers in transportation; job training and placement in the transportation industry; a job shuttle service to job sites inaccessible through public transportation, and a transit information center to help link residents with public transportation to suburban-based job sites. In addition to the many educational, counseling, and service programs offered by NJCDC, soon housing will be available for 12 young adults who are transitioning from foster care programs to independent living.

The Passaic County Historical Society congratulates the recipients of the 2003 Heritage Citizenship Awards and Good Graces Certificates. We add our sincere thanks and appreciation to all for documenting and saving visible reminders of Paterson's history, and to the City of Paterson Historic Commission for their untiring preservation initiatives.

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*The Historic County*  
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*The Passaic County Historical Society is a private, not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) educational institution.  
The Society operates and manages Lambert Castle, which is owned by the County of Passaic.*

## PCHS Awarded Two Grants

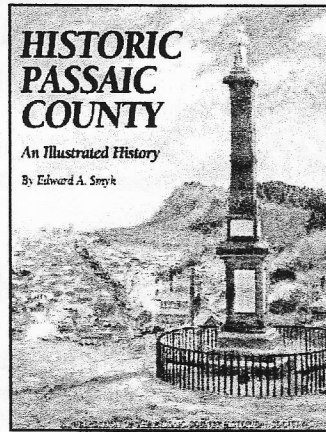
As part of the new long-range vision that calls for the creation of a multi-functional "history center" at Lambert Castle, the Society has been awarded two competitive grants that will help achieve that goal.

The first is the \$15,000 "operating" grant awarded to the PCHS from the NJ Historical Commission. This support will be used to create different educational programs designed especially for students who visit Lambert Castle as part of their school instruction. The grant will underwrite costs for professional museum educators to develop and design thematic programs that are coordinated to meet the requirements set forth by elementary and high school curricula. Included in these new educational programs will be pre- and post-visit instructional materials which teachers may use in the classroom to prepare students before visiting Lambert Castle and to summarize that experience afterward.

The second is the \$500 "project" grant awarded to the PCHS by the Passaic County Cultural and Heritage Council through a grant from the NJ State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. This award is for *Historic Paterson - My Home Town*, a new project in which elementary age children living in Paterson may enroll in a program that uses art, architecture and the unique site of Lambert Castle to discover the special historical character of their home town. The children will express their pride and love for Paterson through their artwork which will later be on public display in the Community Gallery at Lambert Castle.

Both of these awards require matching monies from their recipients and are provided through competitive grant programs offered to non-profit educational organizations throughout the State of New Jersey. The Board of Trustees of the PCHS would like to express their appreciation to both the New Jersey Historical Commission and to the Passaic County Cultural and Heritage Council for their generous support.

## Announcing a New Publication! *Historic Passaic County: An Illustrated History*



The PCHS Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the completion of the Society's book project, *Historic Passaic County: An Illustrated History* by Edward Smyk. The book is scheduled for release in January 2004.

The publication consists of 48 essays, 57 photographs, 8 woodcuts, engravings, a watercolor and drawings for a total of 65 illustrations.

Historical Publishing Network, a company whose speciality is preserving in print some of the nation's invaluable local historical narratives, is publishing the book.

The Society is very grateful for the financial support of local business sponsors who made this publication possible.

## William Ware Elected to Board Board of Trustees

The Passaic County Historical Society warmly welcomes the return of William Ware to the PCHS Board of Trustees. Bill was elected to the Board at the October meeting.

Bill is a resident of Passaic, and has been a member of the Society for many years. He fills the Trustee position formerly held by John Pogorelec.

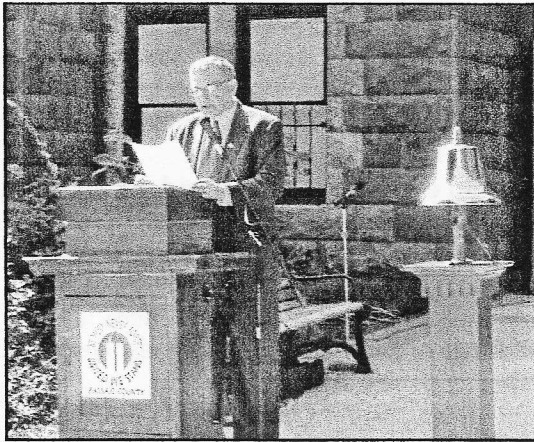
## In Memoriam

Sara Virginia Peterson, age 97, died Wednesday, September 3, 1003. "Virginia" as she was known to her friends at the PCHS, was a life long resident of Hawthorne, before moving to Ridgewood ten years ago. She was a graduate of Vermont Academy, Class of 1924, Saxtons River, Vermont.

Virginia was a floral arranger and designer. She was a dedicated local historian and a former trustee of the PCHS. Virginia also served as docent and receptionist for the Society, and for decades she graciously greeted all visitors to the Lambert Castle Museum. Throughout her long association with the Castle, she supplied fresh flowers for the museum, and maintained a detailed daily log book. Virginia not only recorded the attendance record for the day, but made special note of prominent visitors, and those from other states and foreign countries. She worked closely with former directors and curators, and was instrumental in compiling the large collection of family group sheets that are so helpful to present day family history researchers.

Virginia will always be remembered as a very special, gentle lady who always had a kind word to say about everything and everyone.

## Day of Remembrance and Reverence



Assemblyman and Freeholder Peter Eagler reading names of 9/11 victims associated with Passaic County



The Salvation Army's New Jersey Youth Brass Band

Assemblyman and Freeholder Peter Eagler conducted a 9/11 remembrance ceremony at 10 a.m. on September 11, 2003 on the Castle plaza. An American flag hoisted by a large crane flew over the plaza. Eagler read the name of the 30 victims associated with Passaic County. The reading was punctuated with the ringing of a bell. Clifton Councilwoman Gloria Kolodziej sang *America, the Beautiful*.

During the solemn ceremony, a piper from the Passaic County Emerald Isle Band, dressed in full regalia, played *Amazing Grace*. Volunteers read 1,500 names of the September 11th victims. The remaining 1,500 names were read later that day at county-owned Camp Hope in West Milford.

The ceremony concluded with a recording of *America - The Light of the World*, a stirring song written by Wanaque resident Forest "Frosty" Lawson and his daughter.

At 7 p.m. an ecumenical Candlelight Service attended by approximately 175 people was held on the Castle plaza. The ceremony, coordinated by Rev. Carlisle Dickson and members from the First Presbyterian Church, Clifton, included representatives of the Celebrant USA Foundation, members of the Baha'i, Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faith communities, patriotic groups, Boy Scouts, law enforcement groups, fire departments, elected officials and community leaders.

The evening began with video excerpts from a CNN tribute, *America Remembers* and *Compassion Under Fire*, *Salvation Army at Work on 9-11-01*. Throughout the evening candles of remembrance were lit and moments of silence were held for the victims of 9/11. Music was provided by the Youth Band associated with the First Presbyterian Church, and the Salvation Army's New Jersey Youth Brass Band. Singing was led by The Interfaith Youth Chorus.

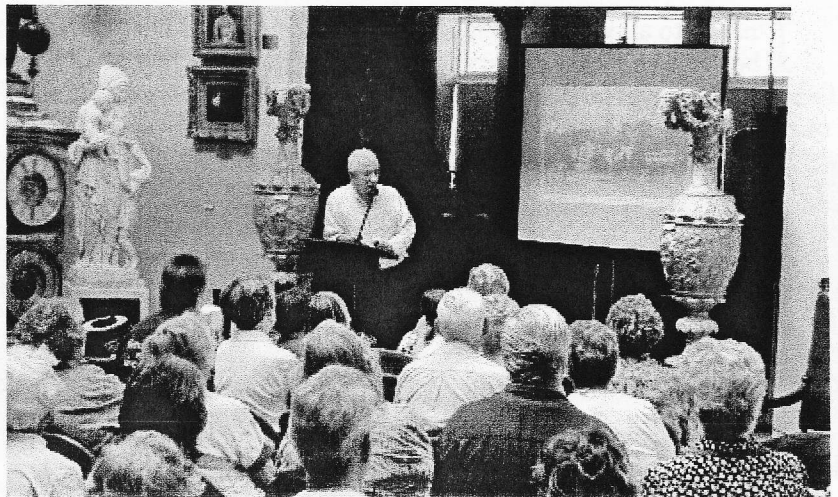
The service included readings from *The Torah*, *The Old and New Testaments*, and *The Holy Qur'an*. The program also included personal reflections, and poetry readings. The evening concluded with the lighting of candles and music from the CD *We Are One*, sung by a 400 youth choir from Montville, New Jersey.

## Castles in New Jersey

On Sunday, September 14, 2003, educator and historian Phil Jaeger of Cedar Grove gave a lecture and slide presentation at Lambert Castle. The topic was "The Castles of New Jersey." Approximately 65 people attended.

Although not as numerous or grand as their European counterparts, many castles were built in New Jersey a century or more ago. Some have been lost to time, some have been disguised by additions and renovations; however, others are still very visible.

The program included information about Kip Castle, Becker Castle, Ivisvold, Castle Edward, Moldenke Castle, Lambert Castle, and others. Jaeger's presentation also included whimsical castles such as the White Castle, Gingerbread Castle, and sand castles.



Historian Phil Jaeger - "Castles in New Jersey"

## Glinka Russian Folk Ensemble



Glinka Russian Folk Dancer

In keeping with the new vision of the PCHS, to provide a venue in which local ethnic groups can share their unique heritage, the Glinka Russian Folk Ensemble gave two performances at Lambert Castle on September 21, 2003. The folk dance group, whose purpose is to promote Slavic culture, adopted its name by honoring Mikhail Glinka, the first

Russian composer to incorporate folk dance in a contemporary style. The costumes were colorful and the accompanying accordion music was lively. The accomplished Senior Dance Troupe performed five dances providing glimpses of the folk-dance traditions from various Slavic regions. The group's dance instructor, Walter Kosik, was the soloist in the "Sailor Dance." The songs of the Woman's Choral Ensemble ranged from tender love songs to lively songs of the Ural Mountains. The Junior Dance Troupe, composed of the youngest members of the Folk Ensemble, performed a charming dance called *Grechaniki* (the girls dance).

The program was funded in part by the Passaic County Cultural and Heritage Council.

## Cedar Lawn Cemetery Tour

Approximately 64 people participated in a tour of Cedar Lawn Cemetery on Sunday, September 28, 2003. Two trolley buses filled to capacity left the castle at 1 p.m. At the main entrance to the cemetery 20 more people joined the group.

Howard Lanza, noted cemetery historian and author of *Cedar Lawn Cemetery*, led the tour. As the group stopped at various sections of the cemetery, Lanza pointed out unusual stones and inscriptions. He related interesting stories about the cemetery and the people interred there, and explained the significance of carved cherubs, angels, weeping willows, and other cemetery art.

At the conclusion of the program, participants returned to the Castle for a self-tour and informal reception during which Howard Lanza answered individual questions. Refreshments were served.



Howard Lanza Conducting PCHS Cedar Lawn Cemetery Tour

## Beefsteak Dinner

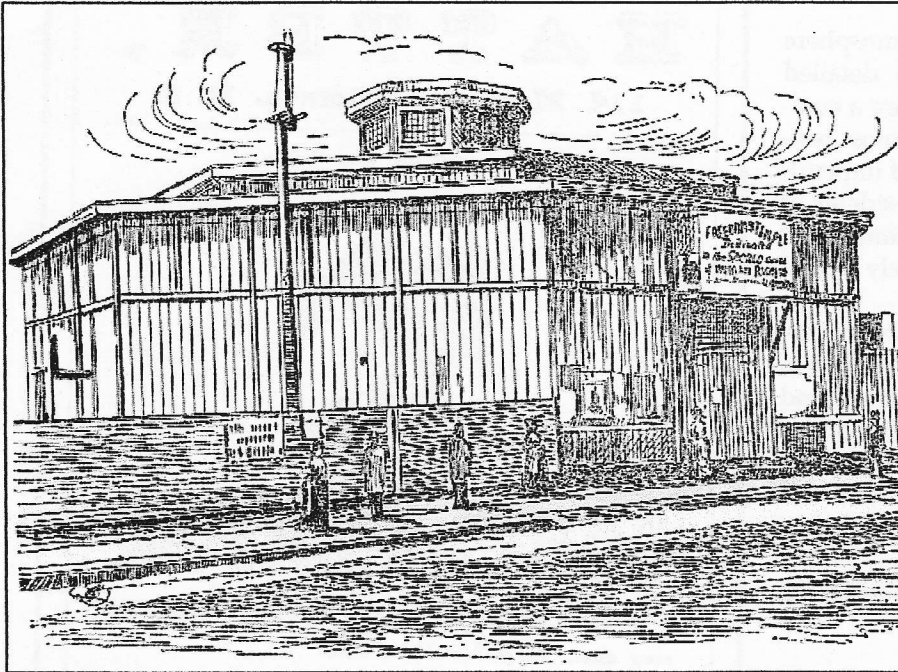
Thanks to all who supported the Society's Annual Beefsteak Dinner on October 8, 2003. The dinner was held in the beautiful Grand Conservatory room at the Brownstone in Paterson. The fund raising activity was very successful and most enjoyable. Through ticket sales and a 50/50 we raised \$1,772.00. This money will help defray a small portion of our operating expense.



PCHS Beefsteak Dinner Attendees at the Brownstone, Paterson, NJ - October 8, 2003

# Paterson's "Wigwam"

By Annita Zalenski



Edward B. Haines, compiler of *Paterson, New Jersey 1792-1892 - Centennial Edition of the Paterson Evening News*, wrote, "Ground was leased from the Van Houtens on lower Broadway, and like magic the Wigwam arose in a few days." Colonel Derrom's plan involved one of the first uses of the cantilever. The sign over the entrance read:

FREEDOM'S TEMPLE  
Dedicated to  
the SACRED cause of  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN LIBERTY

Many politicians presented their platforms at the Wigwam including Henry Wilson, Vice President of the United States [1873 to 1875]. The American Bards, a local male quartet led by Patersonian Charles E. Atherton, often sang at political rallies in the Old Wigwam. It was the site of a public meeting in 1874, to devise a cohesive plan to assist the thousands of people in Paterson who were jobless as a result of the Panic of 1873. Later the building housed a popular variety theatre called the "Odeon." When roller skating became a craze, it was fashioned into a roller rink. Eventually, the building was purchased by the Paterson Horse Railroad and turned into a stable. .

"What a transformation!" wrote Haines in 1892. He also noted that "Paterson's old historic structure [was] doomed soon to be torn down to make room for a modern building;" however, this did not happen.

By 1902, the Jersey City, Hoboken and Paterson Street Railroad Company had incorporated the Wigwam into their large facility that that encompassed an entire city block. The company's complex of mostly wooden workshops and sheds achieved unwanted notoriety, for it was in one of the trolley sheds that that The Great Paterson Fire of 1902 began, thus changing the City of Paterson forever.

## Did You Know That.....



Former World Heavyweight Champion Joe Louis, the "Brown Bomber," used Pompton Lakes as his training ground. It has been said that as he ran around the lake everyday many of the town's children would run with him. Louis trained at Doc Bier's boxers' training camp which was located on property originally owned by Aron Schuyler, one of the earliest settlers in the Pompton area. Many other boxing champions trained at the camp, including Sugar Ray Robinson, Primo Carnero and Jersey Joe Walcott. The training facility closed in the early 1950s, and the property was sold to the Elks Lodge #1895.

# The Little Falls Tornado

By Annita Zalenski

Today, thanks to those who study the atmosphere and weather patterns, we benefit from detailed daily weather reports. Videos of violent storms are a common sight on the nightly news, but in the 1800s, most residents of Passaic County had little or no warning of impending storms. We can only imagine the terror the residents of Little Falls experienced on a summer evening almost 170 years ago as a tornado swept through their sparsely settled village at about 8 p.m. on Friday, June 19, 1835.

Earlier in the afternoon, at about 5 p.m., a severe tornado had ripped through the center of New Brunswick, New Jersey, killing five people. It left a path of death and destruction 17.5 miles long and damaged 500 buildings. Debris fell as far away as Manhattan. That same evening weather conditions spawned other tornados in several towns in the New York metropolitan region. One of those towns was Little Falls.

The *Paterson Intelligencer* of July 1, 1835, published the following article about the events in Little Falls:

*From the Newark Daily Advertiser.*

## TORNADO AT LITTLE FALLS

We hear this morning that a violent thunder storm and whirlwind, with heavy rain, occurred at Little Falls, about five miles west of Paterson, on the Passaic, in this county on Friday evening about 8 o'clock - three hours after the one at N. Brunswick. The whirlwind appears to have risen about a mile southwest of the Little Falls, near the Bloomfield and Pompton turnpike as here an old uninhabited house has been subsequently discovered to be entirely demolished. Proceeding in a northeasterly direction, it next prostrated an orchard of 25 apple trees, belonging to a Mr. Roberts, about 100 yards from the old house, with the fences in its course. A number of his sheds, and other out-houses, a few rods farther on, were also totally destroyed. A house containing a gig and wagon, was also prostrated. The dwelling house, a new substantial building, escaped; but a large walnut tree before the door was considerably shivered, one of its largest limbs being town off and carried 200 yards to a meadow, from which a dozen men could not remove it. Mr. Roberts' loss is about \$500.

About 150 yards from Mr. Robert's house, a small two-story dwelling on the Morris Canal, which here follows the course of the river, was entirely demolished and thrown into ruins. It is a most remarkable fact, that there were twelve persons in the house at the time it was crushed, all of whom were subsequently taken out of the ruins uninjured. Across the river, in Bergen county, a dwelling house was struck b the lightning, which killed a dog lying on the hearth, and stunner a number of the family. We do not learn that any other material damage was done. The lightning is said to have been fearfully vivid and frequent.

**E. R. MASON,  
H A T T E R,**

**114 Main-st., Paterson, N. J.**

Has just received from Paris a



**CONFORMATOR.**

By which he is enabled to make perfect fitting HATS, suiting heads of every shape. The public are invited to call.

**HATS, CAPS, FURS, &c.**

No. 4, Phoenix Building.

Advertisement From

*Ray's Directory of the City of Paterson 1855-56*

## Kissing

Extracted by Linda Cammarata from  
*The Daily Guardian and Falls City Register*  
Paterson, July 31, 1865

KISSING—Ladies should see that these rules are strictly observed: The gentleman should be taller than the lady he intends to kiss.

Take her right hand in yours and draw her gently to you pass your left hand over her right shoulder, diagonally down across her back, under her left arm; press her to your bosom, at the same time she will throw her head back, and you will have nothing to do but to lean forward and press your lips to hers, and then the thing is done.

Don't make a noise over it, as if you were firing off shooting crackers, nor pounce down upon it like a hungry hawk upon an innocent dove, but gently fold the damsel in your arms, without smashing her standing collar or spoiling her curls, and by a sweet pressure on her mouth; revel in the blissfulness of your situation, without smacking your lips on it as you would over a glass of lager beer.

# The Fair Lawn/Paterson Fish Weir

Reprinted with Permission from the *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey*, Vol. 54, 1999

by allen lutins and Anthony P. DeCondo

## Abstract

Skinner and Schrabisch, in their 1913 report of archaeological sites in New Jersey, made reference to eleven prehistoric fish traps, or "weirs," in the Passaic River. One of these, the Fair Lawn/Paterson fish weir, is still extant. This report discusses the layout and function of this device, and discusses the evidence for assigning it a prehistoric construction date.

## Introduction

Fish weirs (traps), many built by native Americans prior to European settlement, once abounded on the Passaic River and elsewhere in the region. Until recently such structures were poorly documented, poorly understood, and their importance to reconstructions of regional subsistence and settlement patterns fairly neglected. This study documents one such structure, the Fair Lawn/Paterson fish weir (New Jersey State Museum #28-Be-176/28-Pa-147), in detail. This weir is still extant, and in an excellent state of preservation. It spans the Passaic River between the City of Paterson (Passaic County) and Borough of Fair Lawn (Bergen County), in New Jersey, and is usually visible. This paper illustrates how recent studies on weirs and prehistoric fishing serve to shed light on its use by native Americans, and suggests how the weir may contribute to contemporary archaeological studies in the northeast.

## Location/Description

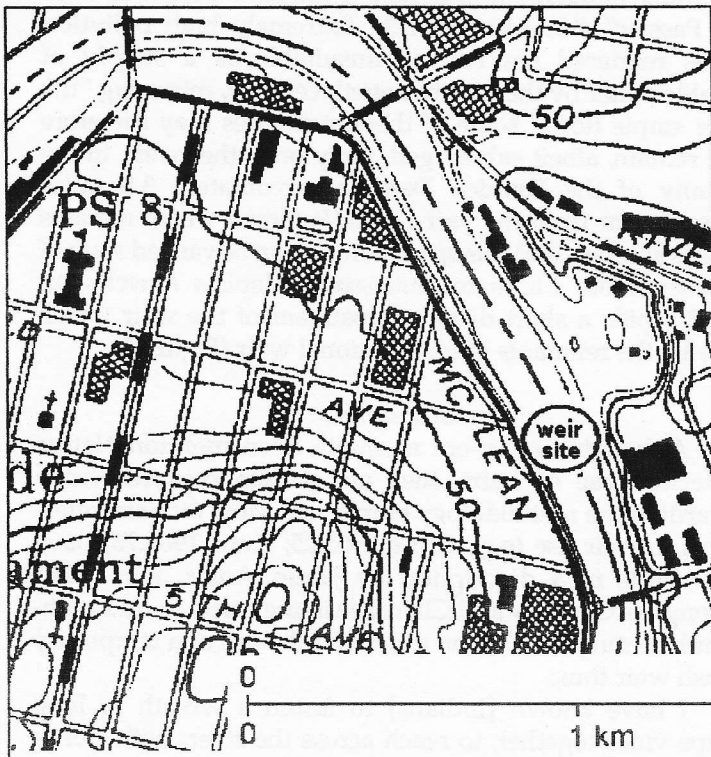


Figure 1

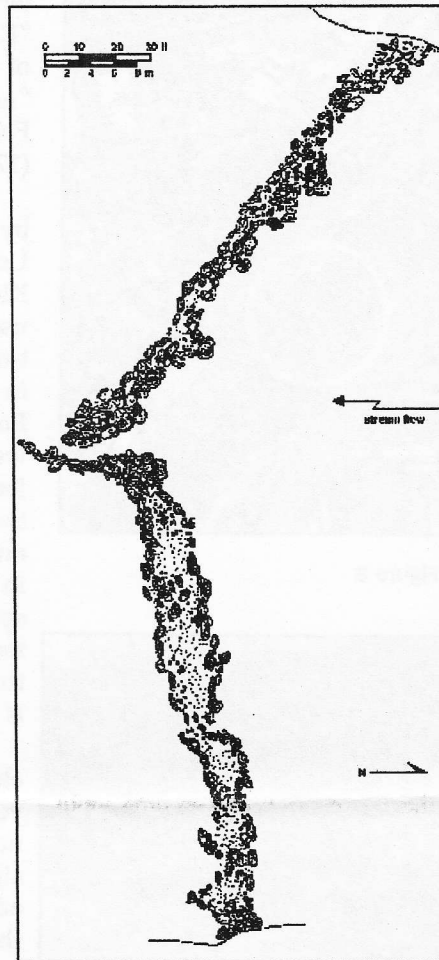


Figure 2

The Fair Lawn/Paterson fish weir (New Jersey State Museum #28-Be-176/28-Pa-147) spans the Passaic River approximately 180 meters (200 yards) north of the Fair Lawn Avenue bridge, straddling the Borough of Fair Lawn (in Bergen County) and the City of Paterson (in Passaic County), in New Jersey [Figure 1]. It consists of a "V"-shaped wall of river cobbles and boulders, with its point oriented downstream [Figure 2]. The structure spans the entire width of the Passaic River, which at that point is approximately 80 meters (260 feet) wide.

The integrity of the weir is excellent, probably owing to the lack of navigation and industrial impact on this stretch of the river. The alignment of the weir is clear, although a number of the constituent stones, especially near the center portion, became dislodged and repositioned over the years. Local informants note that the structure was altered slightly ca. 1933 when some of the boulders were relocated to allow small watercraft to pass through (Jim D'Ericco, personal communication). The entire structure is often clearly visible, especially at times of low water [Figure 3 and Figure 4]. The stones used in its construction consist primarily of glacial material almost certainly obtained from the adjacent river banks.

A large terrace lies adjacent to the weir on the east (Fair Lawn) side. This terrace once contained a rich assemblage of prehistoric archaeological material (characterized by Skinner and Schrabisch as a "workshop"), but all archaeological traces were obliterated by graving operations undertaken in the 1920s and the subsequent construction of a large industrial facility (still in operation) at that location

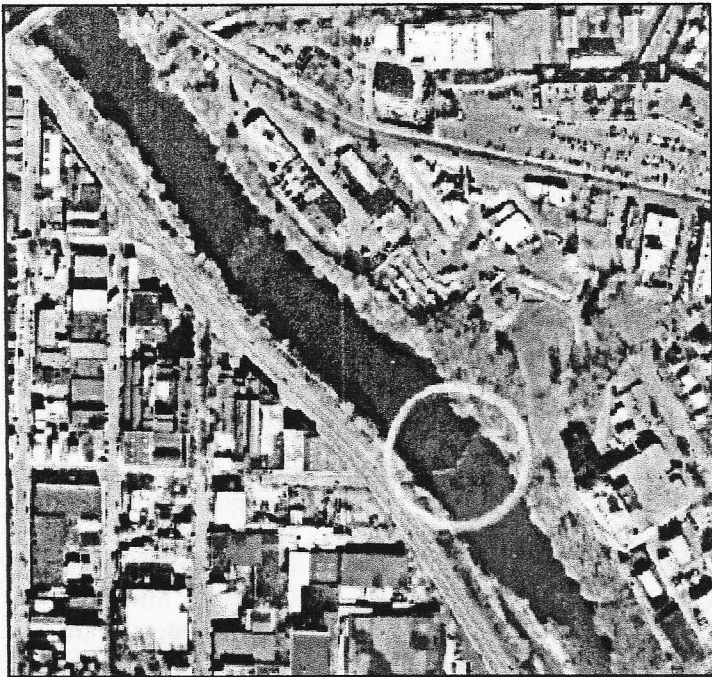


Figure 3

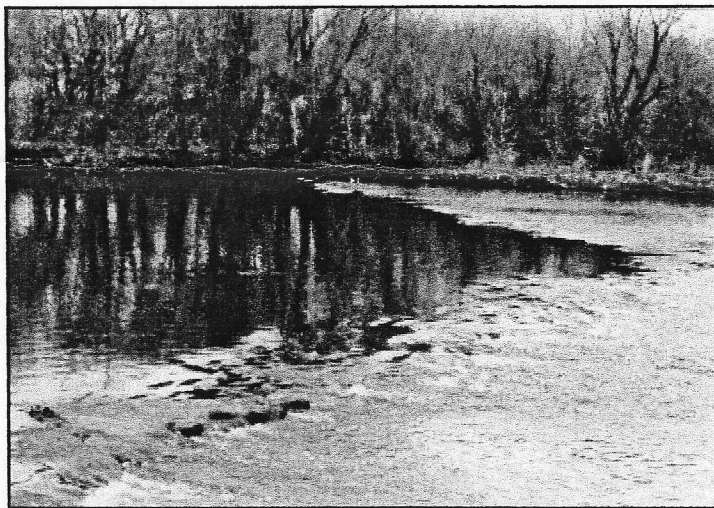


Figure 4

(Schrabisch 1922; Skinner and Schrabisch 1913:78).

The weir is strategically located to take advantage of favorable hydraulic conditions. Water levels here are relatively shallow throughout most of the year, and the current is slower in relation to points upstream and downstream from the weir (DeCondo 1994).

#### Historic References to the Weir

The region in the vicinity of the Fair Lawn/Paterson fish weir was known to early Dutch settlers as "Sloterdam" ("sluice dam"), a Dutch reference to the similarity of this and other nearby weirs to similar-looking structures in Holland. The earliest known written occurrence of the term "sloterdam" dates to 1708 (Rogers 1960:12), indicating that the term was probably in use beginning in the seventeenth

century. The name is found on numerous court documents throughout the eighteenth century, with many variations in spelling e.g., Slotterdam, Slooterdam, and later Slaughterdam). By the latter part of the century, use of the term was in decline. A 1764 Road Return notes that the "Road of Slotterdam," a thoroughfare traversing the length of the Passaic River on its eastern side, was by that time "now known as River Road" (Bergen County Road Returns, Folder B9). The appearance of the term on Erskine's maps (1778-9) is one of the latest known uses (Smullen 1921).

This portion of Bergen County was thinly populated by Dutch farmers through the middle nineteenth century. Use of weirs was and is unknown in Holland (Gerre van der Kle personal communication). There is no mention of the use of any type of weir in the area, nor is there any indication in historic records that large-scale fishing was practiced in this area during the colonial period. (The only known Euro-American use of fish weirs in the state prior to 1800 was by John Read, an agriculturalist from Burlington, New Jersey. In 1763 he began a commercial fishing operation on the Delaware River, employing weirs constructed of mats and nets which in no way resembled the stone weirs found in the Passaic (Woodward 1941:399-400)). In contrast, widespread Native American use of stone weirs was well documented at the time of European contact in this region. It is therefore most likely that the Fair Lawn/Paterson fish weir is of prehistoric origin.

In 1913, Skinner and Schrabisch (1913:75-78) listed eleven stone weirs in the Passaic River. Heusser, writing ten years later, stated that nine of these weirs remained, and noted: "These aboriginal mementos would have been lost sight of, had not the demand for potable water to supply adjoining municipalities depleted the once ample flow of the Passaic" (Heusser 1923:23). Extremely high pollution levels rendered the Passaic unsuitable as a supply of potable water by the mid-twentieth century, returning "the once ample flow;" some of these structures may therefore still remain, albeit submerged. Only one other weir, in the vicinity of the Dundee Dam (approximately 3.8 miles downstream from the Fair-Lawn/Paterson weir), remains visible at times, and this specimen is in an advanced state of disintegration. Photo reconnaissance depicts a well-confined rapids a short distance upstream of the weir which may be the remnants of an additional weir (Figure 3).

#### Utilization

Although contact-era accounts often mention Native American use of weirs, they are seldom comprehensive regarding the methodology employed. Most modern references to weir use (e.g., Cross 1965:25; Kraft 1986:76) have their basis in a description by James Adair, who lived among the Choctaw and Cherokee in the early- to mid-eighteenth century. In 1775 he described the use of a temporary brush weir thus:

I have known [Indians] to fasten a wreath of long grape vines together, to reach across the river, with stones fastened at proper distances to rake the bottom; they will

swim a mile with it whooping, and plunging all the way, driving the fish before them into their large cane pots.

These "large cane pots" were not analogous to stone structures such as the Fair Lawn/Paterson weir, so it is erroneous to presume that similar methodologies were employed. Given the extent of the spawning runs which took place in rivers (including the Passaic) where stone weirs are found, it is more likely that the primary method employed in their use was not to chase fish into the upstream-facing side of the structure, but rather to wait for spawning runs to conduct large quantities of fish against the downstream side. The use of such a passive method, requiring far less labor than that described in Adair's description, makes more sense, especially considering the numerous contact-era accounts attesting to Native American procurement of fish during spawning runs.

Riverine fish weirs in eastern North America are generally associated with the exploitation of anadromous and catadromous fish (lutins 1982). Anadromous fish are those which migrate upstream from the sea to spawn, and catadromous fish (primarily eels) are those which swim from lakes, rivers and streams out to sea to spawn (McClane 1978). Fisher (1983:36) characterizes anadromous fish as constituting "probably the greatest density of available food that existed for pre-agricultural societies in the Hudson Valley." They are a particularly attractive resource because spawning runs occur within a highly predictable time frame (Fisher 1983:40; Funk 1983:337). These runs can usually be predicted to within a few days' accuracy (Schalk 1977:213).

It is likely that fish played an important role in the diet of the natives living in the vicinity of the Passaic Rivers. Fish are an attractive food source because little risk and effort are expended in catching them (Perlman 1980:260,277). Fish are highly fecund, and are able to repopulate quickly despite heavy predation (Wheeler and Jones 1989:4). Among hunter-gatherer/collectors, the only alternatives providing such high yields per effort expended are deer and nuts (Perlman 1980:281). The absence of tools commonly associated with nut-meat extraction until well into the Middle Woodland period suggests that such resources were not likely utilized before that time in northeastern North America (Funk 1983; Snow 1980).

Numerous contact-era accounts attest to the widespread availability and extensive exploitation of fish throughout the entire Atlantic seaboard (Brumbach 1986:37,42; Bakeless 1961:223,262; Beverley 1705:146). This was especially true in large river basins, such as the Passaic. Jasper Danckaerts, a Labadist missionary, wrote of this area in 1680: "The Indians come up this river in canoes to fish, because it is one of the richest fisheries they have" (De Yoe 1961).

The presence of weirs has implications for the reconstruction not only of subsistence patterns, but for settlement patterns as well. Weir use implies seasonal settlement of at least a portion of the community in the vicinity of the structure in order to attend to such tasks as weir set-up, structural maintenance, and processing of the catch.

## Current Status

Aside from Skinner and Schrabisch's cataloging the structure, archaeologists have paid scant attention to this and similar features in this part of the country. The authors are currently involved in efforts to better document the structure and to nominate it to the National Register of Historic Places. The Fair Lawn/Paterson fish weir has been threatened in the past, particularly by proposed Army Corps flood-control projects which took little or no notice of the structure (USACE 1972; USACE 1987), but no currently proposed projects will threaten the integrity of the weir. Access to the weir site is unrestricted, though, so the potential for damage due to vandalism remains.

The Fair Lawn/Paterson fish weir is important for a number of reasons. Insights into this structure may be of utility for reconstructing inland weir-use, since studies to date on weirs in the northeast have concentrated exclusively on lacustrine and estuarine, rather than riverine, weirs (see, for example, Johnson et al 1942 and Johnston and Cassavoy 1978). In addition, the weir serves to highlight an aspect of prehistoric subsistence practices in an area (the Lower Hudson drainage) where extensive urbanization has severely compromised the integrity of the archaeological record. Finally, the Fair Lawn /Paterson fish weir is one of the few visible remnants of pre-European occupation in the entire northeastern United States.

## Acknowledgments

Much of the background information for this paper derived from allen lutins' M.A. thesis, with additional survey, water flow rate and lithic identification information provided by Anthony DeCondo and Phillip LaPorta. The authors wish to acknowledge Andrew Cartaina for his cartographic assistance, and Aerial Data Reduction Associates, Inc. of Pennsauken, NJ for supplying the photograph used in Figure 3.

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## Names the Indians Left Us

Extracted from *Four Chapters of Paterson History*  
by Charles A. Shriner, 1919

Acquackanonk: Indian *ach-quoa-ni-can*, meaning a brush net; *hanne*, a rapid stream; *onk*, a place, and so it means a place in a rapid stream where fish are taken with a brush net... Here are some of the different spellings found in official records: 1678 Aquickenuncke, Haquicqueenock; 1679 Haquequenunck, Aquegnonke; 1680 Hockquekanung; 1682 Acqueyquinunke; 1683 Aquaninoncke, Hockquecanung; 1684 Aquaquanuncke; 1685 Aquickanuncke, Haquequenunck; 1692 Acquicanunck;

1693 Acquiggenonck, Hockquickanon; 1694 Hackquickanon; 1696 Aqueckanonge; Achquickenoungh, Acquachanongue, Achquickanunk, Hackquickenunk; 1689 Aqueckkonunque, Aquoechononque, Achquikanuncque, Achquickenonk; 1706 Acquikanong; 1707 Hockquackanong, Hockquackanonk; 1714 Achquegenonck; 1736 Haghquagenonck; 1737 Acquagkanonk. In later years... the place was called Quacknick.

Campgaw...*kaaka*, wild goose, and *gawi*, a hedgehog, perhaps two names combined into one.

Communipaw... *gamunk*, on the other side of the river, and *pe-auke*, water-land, meaning the big landing place from the other side of the river.

Goffle...At this place two roads forked, one leading to Hackensack and the other to Pompton. The Indians called the place *lalchawwiechen*, which means the fork of a road. The Dutch translated the word "fork" into their own language, *gaffle*; from *gaffle* to *goffle* is easy enough.

Hackensack...*haki*, place; *gischi*, now; *achgook*, snake; a place wth [many] snakes.

Hoboken...*hopoacan*, a pipe.

Hohokus...*ho*, a shout; *hokes*, bark of a tree. According to the Indians the cold was so intense at this place that the bark of the trees cracked with a loud noise.

Mahwah... word for field.

Macopin...*macopanaackhan*, ...where pumpkins grow.

Moonachie...*munhacke*, a badger.

Pamrapo...*pemapuchk*, a big rock.

Paramus...word for a place with wild turkeys.

Pascak...word for where the roads divide.

Passaic...*pach*, to split; *ic*, where. Perhaps indicating the division of the land into a valley, or the place where the river splits the rocks at the Falls. There have been a number of changes in the spelling of this word. It started out with *Passaic* in 1666, but changed the same year into *Passaick*; in 1675, it was *Pasayak*, in 1679 *Passawack*, *Pisawick*, *Pissaick*; in 1682 *Pasawicke*, *Passaiack*; in 1686, *Pissaik*; in 1695 *Passaya*, in 1713, *Passaiack*.

Peckman/Peckamin...*pakihm*, cranberries.

Pequannock...*pauqu-un-auke*, land cleared for ploughing.

Preakness...*per-ukunces*, a young buck.

Sicomac...*kitchi*, great, and *kanik*, enclosed land.

Singack...*schinghacki*, a flat country, or *schingask*, a marshy meadow.

Slank...*sihillen*, where the river subsides; and *hannek*, a flowing river, the backwater from a freshet.

Succasunna...*suken*, black; *achsun*, stone, black iron ore.

Totowa...*tetauwi*, between, that is, land between the river and the mountain. Or, perhaps the Lenne Lenape borrowed this word from the Cree *totawew*, meaning great strength, as shown by the river at the Falls.

Wanaque/Wynockie...*winak*, sassafras, and *aki*, place.

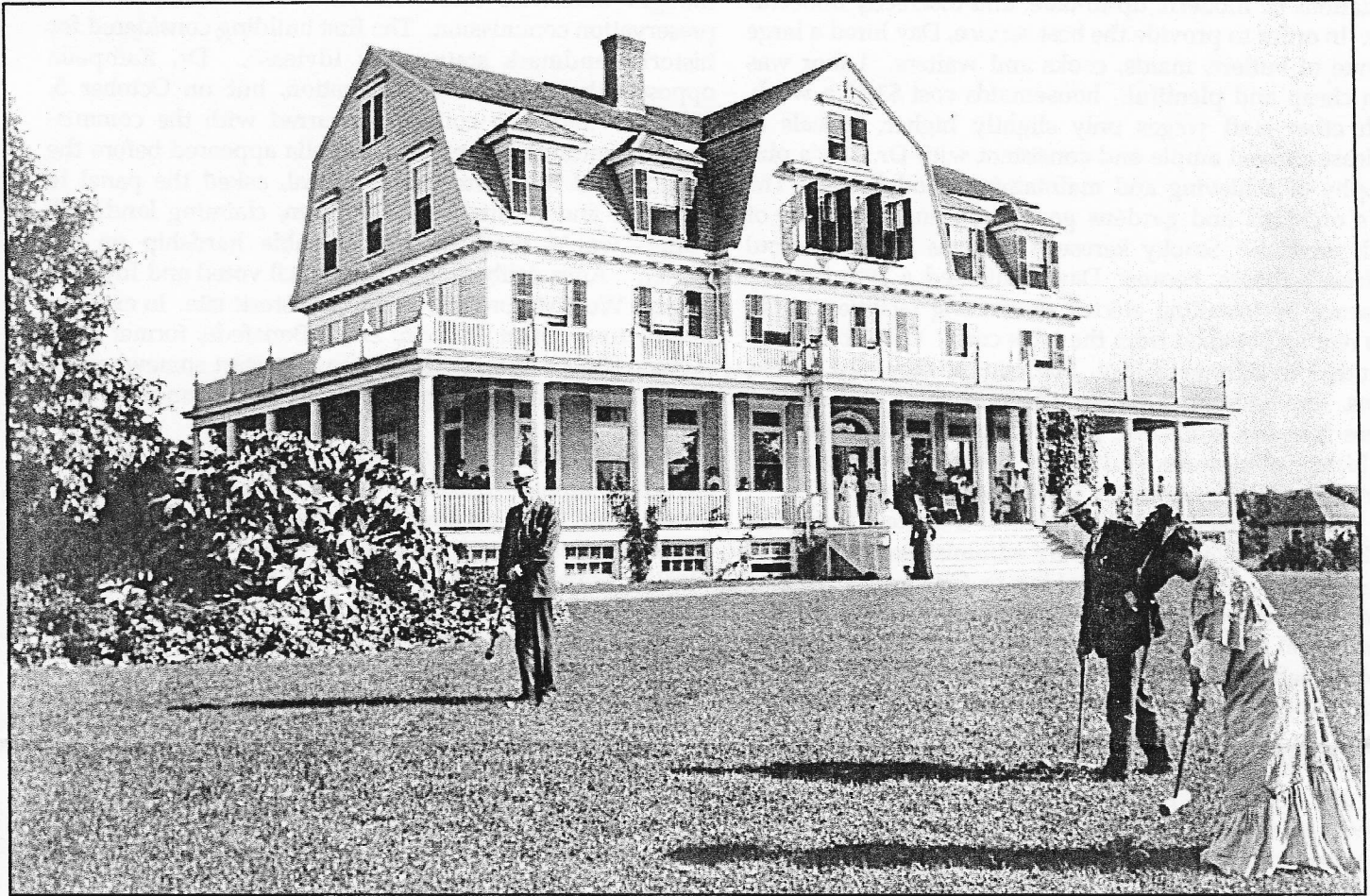
Wagaraw...*woakeu*, crooked and *aki*, place, that is, where the land is crooked, due to the bend in the river.

Watchung...*wachtschu*, a hill, or *wadchu*, a mountain.

Watsessing...*wadchu*, mountain, and *achsun*, stone, a stony mountain.

# West Milford's Idylease Inn: Survivor From Passaic County's Golden Age of Resorts

By E. A. Smyk, Passaic County Historian



Idylease Inn, West Milford, New Jersey

At the turn of the 20th century, the North Jersey highlands flourished as one of the better known recreation areas in New Jersey. According to the author of the 1897 Erie Railroad publication, the rustic, mountainous locale was "pure, bracing and exhilarating." Bloomingdale, Ringwood and West Milford still retain much of their rural charm, but the onrush of development has invaded this tranquil sweep of forests and wildlife sanctuaries. "The peaceful pastoral quietude of the country comes like a peaceful benediction for the frazzled city dweller," raved the Erie's publicist.

In pre-World War I days, numerous vacationers from New York and elsewhere came annually to the large, picturesque hotels that made places like West Milford Township a recreation mecca. These gracious establishments, with their wide and beckoning verandas, are now remembered in historic photographs, but Idylease Inn at 124 Union Valley Road remains a stalwart survivor.

Decades ago, Idylease ceased accommodating vacationers who craved rest, good food, and congenial company.

The three-story, gambrel roof building presently serves as a licensed rooming house, but during its halcyon days, the inn was noted for welcoming the well-to-do vacationer. Edgar A. Day, a Brooklyn physician, along with 11 other investors built Idylease in 1902-1903. It was a place where cheerful hospitality reigned for persons "wearied or worn with the ceaseless turmoil of the city." Originally, Idylease was planned as both a vacation spa and sanitarium. Somewhat of a literary romantic, Day named the resort after Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," an epic poem about Camelot, the legendary King Arthur's court.

After Day's architectural design was finished, his artisans began work on an impressive 50-room structure, replete with circular driveway and attractively landscaped grounds. Day had either seen or was influenced by a Virginia plantation called "The Oaks." This stately antebellum mansion contained an impressive oak staircase. Day had it duplicated for Idylease. The new hotel was finished in 1903. In the Newfoundland Improvement Association's promotional booklet, Day advertised Idylease as a "modern

health resort open throughout the year ... an ideal spot for rest and enjoyment."

What words would best characterize a stay at Idylease? Guests from that era would probably have said "genteel" and "leisurely." Dr. Day mandated that accommodations be modern, up-to-date, and discreetly unobtrusive. In order to provide the best service, Day hired a large retinue of butlers, maids, cooks and waiters. Labor was then cheap and plentiful: housemaids cost \$3.50 a week, with other staff wages only slightly higher. Meals at Idylease proved ample and consistent with Dr. Day's philosophy of achieving and maintaining good health. The inn's orchards and gardens gave forth an abundance of fresh produce. Smoky kerosene lanterns did not befoul Idylease's rooms, because Day eliminated a 19th century nuisance by installing electric generating facilities. Milk was readily obtained from the inn's cows. Other buildings included a carriage house, blacksmith shop, ice house, barns, and animal stalls for chickens, pigs and horses. James Norman, a historic preservationist who researched the history of Idylease, said in 1987 that the resort remained "for all practical purposes, a self-sufficient operation."

Day promoted a type of medical treatment known as hydrotherapy, where baths were administered to alleviate symptoms of overeating, drinking or for various nervous ailments. After a hydrotherapy session, the now relaxed guest could seek simple pleasures like a game of billiards, reading before Idylease's blazing hearth during the winter, or listening to an organ recital. For communicating with the outside world, the inn had one of those "newfangled" telephones, but most guests relied upon the more conventional, (and less expensive), letter or postcard. On September 3, 1909, E. O. Wakley used one of Idylease's hand-tinted postcards to write a lady friend. Wakley spoke of strong wind and nippy 48-degree weather, but indoors, radiant heat, sunshine, and "hot boxes in the treatment room" prevailed. "I'm improving steadily," Wakley wrote, and "hope to be my old self some day."

As time passed, Idylease developed more of a reputation as a medical facility. The inn began serving the health needs of local residents, especially on short notice, when someone required an emergency operation. In 1954, Dr. Arthur D. Zampella purchased Idylease and converted the resort into a nursing home. Gradually, Zampella restored the grounds and interior. For therapeutic purposes, he constructed a pool in the basement, and used the upper floors for patient needs. In 1972, Zampella decided to close Idylease as a nursing home. He adapted it for rooming house needs.

Fifteen years later, Zampella developed plans to demolish Idylease, and reconfigure the property for a \$110 million, 500-unit senior citizen housing development, complete with nursing home and emergency medical care building. The hard working physician readily admitted he had a sentimental attachment to the old inn, which had become his life's work. He planned to remove Idylease's grand staircase and hearth for reinstallation in a scaled

down replica of the building. Zampella was told the cost of reconstructing Idylease would be prohibitive, and it would be much less expensive to construct a modern, \$1 million building.

Zampella moved forward, but West Milford Township thought otherwise and decided to establish a historic preservation commission. The first building considered for historic landmark status was Idylease. Dr. Zampella opposed the impending designation, but on October 5, 1988, the township council concurred with the commission's recommendation. Dr. Zampella appeared before the council, and in an emotional appeal, asked the panel to postpone and reconsider its decision, claiming landmark status "would work an unreasonable hardship on the owner." After deliberating, the council voted and Idylease became West Milford's first official historic site. In explaining the township's position, Linda Bonafede, former commission chairwoman said, "We have to start somewhere or there will be no buildings left of any significance in West Milford."

After Dr. Zampella's death in 1992, the inn and surrounding acreage was left to Alice Zampella, his wife. Seven years later, another developer wanted to purchase the property and construct a senior village of 500 to 700 residential units, with an assisted care facility and nursing home. Developer Peter C. Dautel also envisioned a commercial center with convenience store, pharmacy and beauty parlor. Dautel planned to renovate Idylease for use as administrative offices and apartments. This ambitious project provoked the ire of environmentalists, who perceived it as a threat to nearby watershed property, and the plans were scrapped. Idylease thus remains as one of the few buildings that can still conjure images of Passaic County's golden resort era, when the well-heeled sought refuge, relaxation and better health amid ruggedly beautiful surroundings.



Mark Your  
Calendar!

PCHS Holiday Parties  
Sunday, December 14, 2003

Children's Party ~ 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
Limited to 30 Children.

Members Free ~ Non Members & Guests \$5.00

RSVP: Call Maryjane Proctor

973-872-0589 or e-mail Mj13@optonline.net

Members Party ~ 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

~Members Free~

Non-Members & Guests \$5.00

RSVP: Call Maryjane Proctor

973-872-0589

OR

e-mail Mj13@optonline.net

