

THE STOCKADE SPY

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HISTORIC COMMUNITY RESTORATION IN NATIONAL EYE

Lee Bowden notes that there was no TV network coverage of the effects of privately-funded restoration of a century-old neighborhood in Columbus, Ohio. The TV report opened the result to Williamsburg, Virginia.

Lee states that this encouraging news might reinforce Stockaders' awareness of the significance of the restoration and renovation here. He requests that anyone planning to do such work on his or her home during the next several months please let it go unrecorded. The majority of filming of "The Stockade Film: Prelude" will be taking place, with the expectation, as promised, of imminent funding by the New York State Council on the Arts. Lee will be working primarily for specific shots focusing on individual homes. The Council's \$5,000 will cover most of expenses, but to finish, the budget lacks \$3,500.

"The Stockade Film: Prelude" will document the same process as the television network news thought important enough to report. With rejected national distribution, it is possible that future news programs might compare other communities' efforts to "the notable story of Schenectady's Stockade."

O.A.R.

O.A.R. has continued to meet regularly during this year and the reward for attention to details, planning, and perseverance will be very evident in the next few weeks. The 3-1/2 mile Niskayuna Trail will be opened officially very soon though people are riding now.

The target date for completion of the 7-1/2 mile Rotterdam section is October 15 and all is going very well. One can see the progress from I-890 and Route 5S.

The "Between the Bridge" recommendations are being complemented with corridors and arrangements are being made with landowners and municipalities through parts of Niskayuna, City of Schenectady, Glenville, and Village of Scotia.

Plans in Niskayuna for the Trail from Rexford Bridge east to the existing trail are moving along well. Watch the Gazette and ECOS newsletter for an arrangement about KAPL's cooperation and help.

The new 1977 Recreation Guide is available and now includes entrances and park facilities along the Niskayuna bike trail. The folders are similar to last year's and will be available at the Clearinghouse, the library, Locks 7, 8, 9, all municipalities and town government offices, Department of Parks and Recreation, and from O.A.R. steering committee members.

O.A.R. expects some progress in the next few months and will be getting press releases to the Gazette during the summer months.

TIDINGS

Newly married in April are Paul Hiatt and the former Irena Naumowicz of 4 Union Street. Congratulations!

Mr. Harold Schneiderwind of 203 Union Street is home from the hospital.

New resident of the Stockade is Elizabeth VanDerhoof at 4 Union Street. Liz grew up in the Stockade and her mother is Rosemary VanDerhoof who is well-known to many of us as the Secretary-Receptionist at St. George's.

Another new resident is Virginia Power, who has moved to lower Union Street. Her comment: "I never thought I'd have the pleasure of living in the Stockade!"

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STOCKADE ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 28, 1977

President Davidsen reconvened the January meeting so that the Constitutional amendments could be legally passed. Allen Brown presented the changes as follows; 1) change our legal address to Box 1661, Schenectady, N.Y. so that the Certificate of Incorporation reads correctly; 2) to amend the Certificate of Incorporation to correct a typographical error so that the Internal Revenue Service will accept our tax-exempt status. Mr. Kellogg moved that these changes be made. Mr. Sauer seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed. The President adjourned the January meeting.

President Davidsen called the March meeting to order at 8:10 P.M.

Secretary's Report: A motion was made to accept the minutes of the January meeting as published in the *SPY*. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Jim Schmitt recommended that a resolution to the City Council concerning the name change of West Front Street to Cucumber Alley be added to the minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Bob George gave the following report: Balances as of January 31, 1977 were: General Fund — \$2,440 and Heritage Fund — \$7,066. Total Income was \$80. Total expenditures were \$183. New balances as of March 28, 1977 are: General Fund — \$2,337 and Heritage Fund — \$7,066.

Stockade Movie: President Davidsen reported that Lee Bowden had been in contact with the New York State Foundation on the Arts concerning a loan on the \$5,000 promised him by the New York State Council on the Arts. The President stated that the Board thought it was in the best interests of the Association not to apply for the loan.

Membership: Barbara Sauer reported that she and Jim Lane are working on the door-to-door Membership Campaign which will take place during the first week in May. She stated that fliers will be distributed with the April issue of the *SPY*. She asked for volunteers to help on the drive.

Jo Braden asked how many people in the flood area are Association members. Specific information was not available on this matter.

Zoning: Jim Schmitt brought up a two year old motion on extending the boundaries of the Stockade. It had been presented to the City Council but was killed due to the change in Administration. He asked that it be pursued. Dr. Navias noted that it was not in abeyance but was being pursued by Allen Brown who reported that he was discussing the matter with David Frank.

Nominating Committee: The following individuals were nominated to preside on this committee: Barbara Sauer; Jim Schmitt; Jim Sherwood. John Elsbree moved that the nominations be closed and that one vote be cast for the slate. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Name Changes: Jim Schmitt presented the following resolution to be voted upon:

Resolution — Stockade Association of Schenectady, New York, Inc.

*Offered by James Schmitt
Seconded by Josephine Braden*

Whereas, the Common Council of the City of Schenectady in May, 1933 changed the name of Cucumber Alley to West Front Street

And Whereas, a stated purpose and intent of Schenectady Historic District Ordinance #14221 is to safeguard the heritage of the City of Schenectady by preserving that district in the City popularly known as the Stockade Area,

And Whereas, the Stockade Historic District has been designated in the National Register of Historic Places under Federal Public Law #89-665 calling for expanded historic places to encourage districts, sites, buildings and structures significant in American history and science and culture

And Whereas, the short roadway leading down to the river from Washington Avenue got its name many generations before because of the fact that wild cucumbers once grew there in profusion, now therefore be it

Resolved that the Council of the City of Schenectady amend its Ordinances to strike the name of West Front Street and reinstate the ancient name of Cucumber Alley.

Adopted: Unanimously
Approved: 28 March 1977

The motion to present the resolution to the City Council was seconded and passed unanimously. Jim Schmitt will present the Resolution to the City Council.

Flood: John Elsbree presented information on the last caucus meeting held by the City. Several alternatives to the flood problem were discussed. These included: 1) demolishing houses; 2) water-proofing houses; 3) flood dike; 4) small wall(s). Pros and cons were presented at the caucus. Dave Roberts suggested a committee of citizens be formed to make a proposal to the City Council. An Ad Hoc Committee was established to formalize a long term committee.

A lengthy discussion of the role the Association should play in the current controversy ensued.

Trees: The Tree Committee will write an article for the *SPY* encouraging Stockaders to take proper care of the trees in front of their houses.

The President adjourned the meeting at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara P. Sauer,
Recording Secretary



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the "Historic Preservation
rly", January-March 1977.

GAMES AMERICANS PLAYED

first Parker game catalogue
ed in 1885, a four-page leaflet.
time of Parker's death at 86 in
the Parker Brothers catalogue
more than 300 games. Of these,
e Parker invented more than
himself. He spent hours perfect-
ch game and constantly clarified
mplified rules, so that Parker
ers games are known for their
ent playing qualities.

name *Ping-Pong* was copy-
d by Parker Brothers in 1902
y the end of the year the game
t name was a national rage. For
Ping-Pong champions competed
e Parker Cup. Other Parker
ers games of the early 1900's are
ill played today, among them
Pit and Flinch. No one needs
roduction to the company's
st selling success of all games,
poly. Parker Brothers had dis-
this game, invented by Charles
w in 1933, as having violated all
standards. The company con-
d it too complicated, too long to
and too expensive to produce.
proved to be a runaway success,
more than 70,000,000 sets have
produced in a dozen different
ges. The game originally ap-
to the poor and escape-hungry
of the Great Depression, but
ntinued popularity shows the
re people take in acting out the
ial coups they would like to
m in real life. The Ouija board
its meandering planchette has
ed players with a taste of the
since 1892. Parker Brothers has
ised it as "Your Own Mystifying
."

other notable game belongs to
w and Righter, New York City.
company's steady seller for over a
y has been *Parcheesi*, with one
oldest trademarks in the United
(1874). *Parcheesi*, a classic,
ted in India and countless
are patterned along its line.
as track games, they always
a race for "home" or some
oal.

Like literary plots, only a few basic
game plays exist. Roughly, they fall
into four broad classifications. Besides
the already mentioned track games
involving chase, games of strategy
(backgammon, chess), games of skill
(jackstraws, Ping-Pong and others re-
quiring dexterity) and games that in-
struct (the numerous educational and
"quiz" games) prevail. Ideally, a game
will blend two or more of these
characteristics. Newer games have, for
the most part, rehashed older games
by updating settings or situations and
changing to a more modern or timely
name. Thus, *Pick Up Sticks* sup-
planted *Jackstraws*, *Scrabble* is a more
sophisticated form of the old *Ana-*
grams, *Chinese checkers* replaced
Halma, *Bingo* derived its form from
Lotto.

While game plays may be repeti-
tious, games often manage to reflect
current events and trends. All sports
have been depicted in games, from
Bicycling to *Yachting*. A steady
stream of occupational games has told
what people do for a living — *Toy*
Town Post Office, *Tiny Tot Grocery*
Store, *District Messenger Boy*, *The*
Doctor and the Quack, to mention a
few.

Transportation games run the
gamut from *The Trolley Game*
(1890's) and *The Flivver* (early
1900's) to space travel games of the
present. Games mirror almost every
memorable, historic event. *Race for*
the North Pole, *Flight to Paris* (*Lind-*
bergh's Atlantic crossing), *Pike's Peak*
or Bust, *Siege of Havana* and countless
others are history lessons in
themselves.

Old radio programs made game
subjects, as did Hollywood film stars.
Now games about various television
shows entertain Americans. Games of
instruction on flowers, birds, animals,
geography, history, arithmetic, spell-
ing and a host of other subjects have
perennially taught children about
their world.

Anyone who browses in the game
department of a store today will get
an excellent idea of the nation's
present interests. *Guru*, *Ecology*,
Ulcers, *Safety Belt Game*, *Jesus Deck*,
Watergate, *Women's Lib* and *Credit*
Card Game all have appeared in the
last few years. These will furnish a
glimpse of today for future
generations.

Finding old games intact and pre-
serving them represents a fascinating
challenge, as most were the perishable
pastimes of yesterday's children. The
Parker Brothers archives in the plant
at Salem, Mass., has nearly every
Parker Brothers game, along with
hundreds of others. The archives can
be seen by appointment. A display of
more than 600 games published
before 1930 is at The Game Preserve,
Peterborough, N.H.

Games will always fill a need for
relaxation, amusement and learning.
But, more than that, their preserva-
tion gives insight into life at other
times.

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— AS IT WAS —

MUSINGS ON THE HISTORY OF THE STOCKADE

What was the Stockade? We all know where it is now, but where was it and what was it originally? It will probably surprise many of you as it did me that the present description, "the area bounded by State Street, Washington Avenue, Front Street, and Ferry Street," is not strictly the area of the original 1661 to 1690 fortification. It was only when Queen Anne's Fort was built in 1704, that the configuration known to us as "the Stockade" came to take shape.

It is true that the original enclosure was delineated by the streets mentioned above, but the point is that all of these streets were not in the early days where they are now and the line of the palisade shifted in successive periods. The most notable divergence was projected by the placement of Queen Anne's Fort, centered about 100 feet north of the former northeastern blockhouse which had been located approximately on the site of St. George's Church. Front Street, which had originally led straight from its present corner with Washington Avenue to the old blockhouse, was rerouted from Church Street to bend north and connect with the new bastion. The line of Old Front Street behind the New Front Street can easily be observed on maps or, better yet, realized first hand as one walks straight east on Front Street from Washington Avenue and finds oneself up against the doorway of the John Yates house at the corner of Church, or walks north on Ferry Street to St. George's Church and notices the rather abrupt bend in the street at that point. Thus the old river road to Niskayuna, in existence from the earliest days, became the present east Front Street. The eastern portion of Old Front Street was abandoned and the triangle of land coming now between it and the new street was cut into what appears to have been three house lots. (At least one-third of this land adjoining the fort became the property of Philip Schuyler of Albany and by the middle of the eighteenth century came to be owned and occupied by Yateses.) In the main,

State Street, Washington Avenue, and Ferry Street remained where they were, although the last mentioned did not yet extend past the fort to the river. The Queen Anne palisade extended west beyond the old line toward the banks of the Binne Kill and south toward the river to include dwellings on the western and northern sides of Washington and Front Streets respectively.

What did the Stockade of the massacre look like? It is noteworthy that the map made in 1695 by the Reverend John Miller, chaplain to the British forces, often portrayed as a representation of the Stockade, did not show any streets, although it did represent 28 houses and two Indian longhouses. This drawing was, in all probability, meant to portray a fort, erected after the massacre, bounded by the Binne Kill, Washington Avenue, and a projection of State Street, where the survivors of the disaster resided while they were rebuilding dwellings which had been burned. In this same period a second palisade around the village was constructed, with Indian help in Indian fashion, of light poles and saplings.

From available documentary evidence, it would seem that the massacre Stockade was constructed of the trunks of immense pines, hewn flat and then set in trenches close together, so that they touched and no missile could get through. The tops rose to a height of ten feet and were pinned together and sharpened to points. It is an interesting fact that in the 1850's when work was being done on Ferry Street, the remains of old pickets, probably from the Queen Anne palisade, were found about two feet below the surface on the east side of the street. They looked like dark round spots of peat and were placed thus: Considering the line of Old Front Street between Church and Ferry, industrious archaeologists should come across a similar line of dark round spots two to three feet down running diagonally across the backyards of 22, 24, 26, 30, and 32 Front and 27 N. Ferry. Neighbors, get out your shovels! Be on the watch when digging in your gardens!

The streets, running regularly north and south and east and west, cut the area delineated by the Stockade into rectangular plots assigned to original Dutch proprietors. Front Street, State Street, Washington Avenue, and Ferry Street were rindiwegs or lanes between the palisades and the area of habitation. It is generally agreed that at the time of the massacre in 1690, there were two gates, one on the southeastern corner leading to the road to Albany (State Street), and the other almost certainly on the northeast corner leading to the pasture and to the river road going to Niskayuna (Front Street). These would have provided ready access to the enclosure for citizens who had dwellings, cabins, or outbuildings in the adjacent area. It would seem, from the French account of the massacre, that the invaders could not find the southeastern (Albany) gate and entered by the northeastern entrance. It is likely that they had to pick their way in the darkness through a jumble of buildings outside the Stockade. Even in those days the unity of the Stockade was social rather than simply territorial, and the Stockade influence penetrated the "Stockade area."

Dr. Susan Jane Staffa
April 20, 1977

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