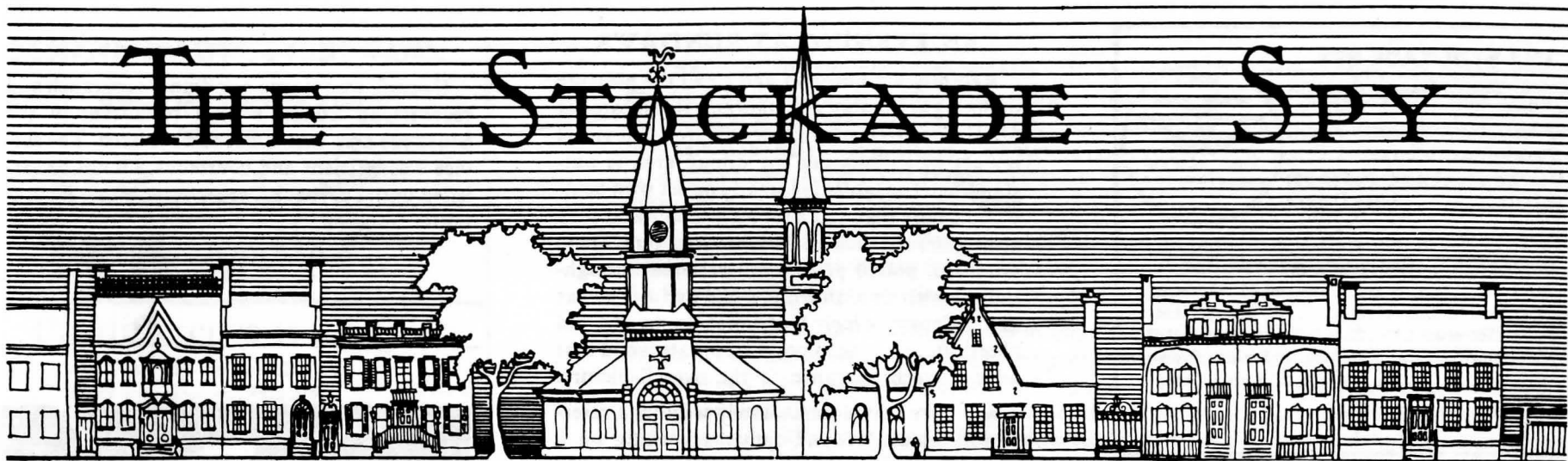


THE STOCKADE SPY



NOVEMBER 1980

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The Stuff of History

Upstairs in the First Reformed Church of Schenectady in a fireproof vault the size of a very small room are shelves of books--ledgers and books of indentures, books by and about former ministers of the church, notebooks of minutes of missionary societies and women's organizations, church directories from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, old histories of the church and the denomination, a few old collections of hymns or Sunday School lessons or catechisms. About 150 paperbound volumes of the Minutes of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America are there too, dating back into the middle 1800s; and most importantly, sixteen bound volumes of minutes of Consistory and of the vital records of church members, dating from 1683 to 1980. A three-drawer file cabinet is filled to overflowing with loose documents filed alphabetically according to subjects which range over the full three century span of the church's existence.

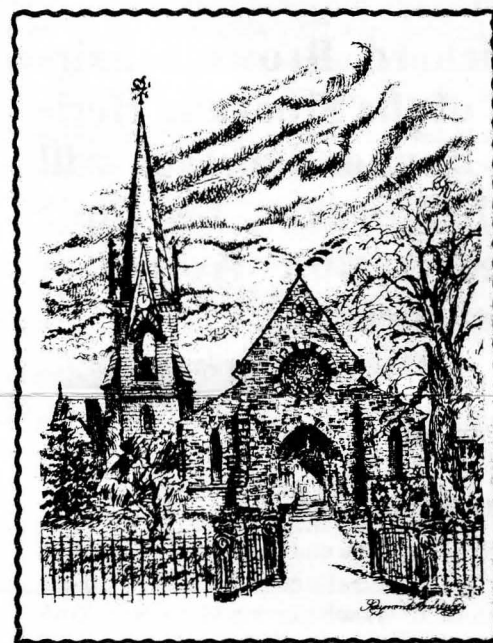
This is the stuff of history. All the records dated before the year 1797 are in Dutch, those before 1784 consisting mainly of vital statistics and records of financial transactions with only scattered pages of minutes of consistory meetings. These, along with many of the loose documents from the filing cabinet and similar documents now in the Schenectady County Historical Society collections, are the sources which Jonathan Pearson laboriously translated and correlated with colonial ecclesiastical records to write his history of the old Dutch church in Schenectady in celebration of its 200th anniversary in 1880.

In 1784 the Reverend Theodorik Romeyn (usually called by his nickname, Dirck) accepted the call to be pastor of the Reformed Dutch Protestant Church in Schenectady. Dirck Romeyn was a passionate proponent of higher education and a history buff as well. A preliminary sketch of a history of early Schenectady which he intended to write is on file in the Potter collection in the Schaffer Library in Union College. He himself often wrote the minutes of the Consistory meetings over which he presided in the church, starting with the first meeting after he took office. His minutes, concisely and beautifully worded and written in a flowing hand, cover the business of the meeting thoroughly and often include pertinent details of the discussion. Perhaps because of Dr. Romeyn's excellent example, successive Clerks of Consistory since that day have filled their volumes with relatively detailed reports of the business transacted in consistory meetings. After 1784 the volumes of both vital statistics and minutes of consistory are virtually complete up to the present time, and after 1797 both are written in English. Again supplemented by the unbound documents in the files and in the Schenectady County Historical Society, and also those in the Schaffer Library, the volumes of later records are the basic sources for the second volume of the church's history, published this year along with a reprint of Professor Pearson's work to present a record of the entire three century span of the work of the church.

It has been the finest privilege and joy of a lifetime to spend the years from 1978 to 1980 in researching the church records and in constructing the narrative for the second volume of the church history, *Three Centuries, The History of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady*. In reviewing the excitement and intellectual momentum of the work, I would like to comment on the importance of each of various types of sources of information which together help evoke the spirit of the eras and events of history.

The minutes of Consistory are the primary and most valuable resource used for this work. In addition to their expected role in defining the major concerns of Consistory and the church in a given period of time, the minutes reveal some of the consistent attitudes held by individual members of Consistory and allow the reader to begin to identify with the group in almost a personal way, in spite of the fact that the normal written entries are always business-like and confined to the topics under discussion.

The First Reformed minute books also contain instances of special insertions of verbatim original material. One such insertion is that of the loose pages of Dr. George R. Lunn's letter of resignation delivered to Consistory on November 3, 1909. The resignation of Dr. Lunn, probably next to Rev. Clark Poling the most widely-known of the church's ministers, had been laid on the table for over a year and was accepted by Consistory only after the most agonizing indecision. The insertion in the minute book of his letter in his own defense and the mild nature of the resolution of farewell passed by Consistory speak of the paradoxes of the whole situation.



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Stockade Association Meeting November 24th, 8 P.M. at the Historical Society.

Richard Brown, chairman of the Stockade Heritage Foundation Inc., will be the speaker, his topic 'Preservation Activities in Schenectady.'

Dear Ms. Van DerBogert,

I wish to thank you and the Board of Directors of the Stockade Villagers for the generous contribution to my scholarship to the New York State Summer School of the Arts. I arrived here this past Saturday.

The program at Fredonia was excellent, I thought. It was possible to work in the studios for 8 hours each day if you wished. I feel I learned a lot from the experience.

Again I thank you for your concern with the development of young artists, such as myself.

Sincerely,
 Jay Wetmore

The Villagers awarded their first scholarship this year. While they may not always be able to do so on an annual basis they were pleased to give the 1980 scholarship to Jay Wetmore whose letter is above.

Who sets the type for the Stockade Spy? A stockader of course! Her name is Theresa Palkovic and she lives on North College Street and works at the Schenectady Herald Printing Company where our Spy is printed so nicely.

AN EVENING AT SUNDAY'S

Recently my husband and I had the pleasure of dining at Sunday's Restaurant. It is located at 616 Union Street in a restored Church. The visual impact upon entering the dining area is outstanding! The tables are small and set with bentwood chairs that make for an intimate and cozy atmosphere in such a cavernous structure. There are large, potted palm trees scattered throughout, lit with tiny, star-like white lights. The bar and balcony, which I assumed to be the old choirloft, are done in polished ornate wood that adds a warm elegance to the overall picture.

We were seated immediately without a reservation which I found rather surprising on a Saturday evening. The menu is not extensive but adequate. The appetizers include clams on the half shell, mussels mariniere (poached in wine and herbs), Coquille St. Jacques, Nacholupas (tortilla chips, chili, cheese and other things), Chili. French onion soup and soup du jour (that evening was cream of leek). The appetizers ranged in price from \$1 to \$3.50. If one does not feel like eating a full course meal, the menu features a section called, "for the light of heart". The offerings are huge salads like Spinach, Chef's, Greek Chef's or Sunday's Special which is iceberg and romaine lettuce, white asparagus, ham, turkey and bacon bits. There is also something called the "awesome burger" which has on it everything imaginable plus a side of spinach salad. The prices range from \$3.95 to \$4.25.

The specialties or full course meals include such selections as Steak au Poivre, Strip Sirloin, London Broil, Shrimp Scampi, Duck, Crepes, Scallops, Crab Legs, Stuffed Shrimp, Schrod, Chicken and Quiche. The dinners range in price from \$4.95 to \$10.95.

My husband started with Coquilles St. Jacques which we both found delightful and then for his main course he chose the Steak au Poivre, billed as "seasoned to perfection with peppercorns and finished with cognac". He found it a bit too heavy on the peppercorns and had to drink a lot of water but the flavor of the cognac was interesting and the steak was cooked to perfection. I had the Mussels Mariniere which I found to be very tender and flavorful. My main course was Baked Stuffed Shrimp. The shrimp was good but not outstanding. The stuffing was a little flat in flavor and did not measure up to the quality of the other things we had sampled up to that point. Every plate served to us had an appetizing, eye-appealing garnish of cantelope wedges on green leaves of romaine lettuce.

The desserts made the evening complete. Sunday's offers such unique fare as Peanut butter Supreme (grilled peanut butter sandwich topped with Haagen Dazs ice cream and confectioners sugar), Ice cream with M & M's candies or a crushed Heath Bar, Parfaits, Cheesecake, carrot cake and the specialty that evening was Pumpkin Cheesecake with nut crust and whipped cream. There is also Irish, Spanish, Brazillian and Dutch coffees. The desserts range in price from \$1.50 to \$2.50.

I ordered the Haagen Dazs vanilla ice cream with crushed Heath Bar and it was fantastic! My husband had the Pumpkin cheesecake which was equally appealing. I couldn't make up my mind which I like best.

Overall, we enjoyed our dinner very much and recommend Sunday's as a restaurant in the Stockade area that is not to be missed. The service was efficient and courteous. I'll not be satisfied until I get back there to sample that Peanut butter Supreme!

Donnalee Francis

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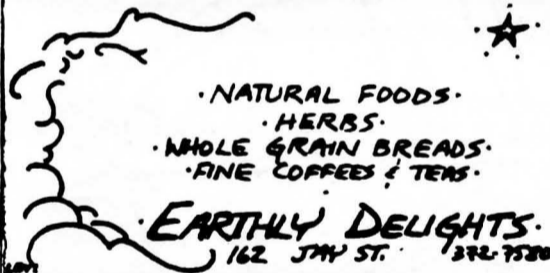
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Another valuable role of the minutes is to provide the text with moments of humor or sudden empathy. Such purposely funny remarks as must have been made in Consistory from time to time over the course of centuries never seem to have been included in the minutes, but many agenda items handled routinely in the past seem hilarious when viewed in the context of today. One splendid example is that of the straightfaced account of the repeated travails of the church in its efforts to keep its antiquated organ (powered by a water motor) functioning.

One also gets a feel of the times from such items in the minutes as the instruction in the 1880s to the sexton to forcefully request the marching bands of the political parties to cease interrupting the church's Wednesday night prayer meetings with their loud music.

Second only to the church minutes in importance to this history are the minutes of the General Synod of the church and a wonderfully comprehensive book from the church vault formidably named *A Digest of Constitutional and Synodical Legislation of the Reformed Church in America*. Almost equal in importance in an entirely different context, however, are Larry Hart's incomparable histories of Schenectady, which whenever consulted succeed in evoking the mood and the flavor and the specific events of the Schenectady of bygone days.

Last, but also valuable and especially rewarding to find, is the unexpectedly large amount of relevant information found in old newspapers, pamphlets, directories, scrapbooks, and especially in unpublished manuscripts donated to the Schenectady County Historical Society, to the Schaffer Library, and to the Schenectady County Public Library. The hardbound manuscript "Dirck Romeyn, 1744-1804," by Lewis Beck Sebring, Jr., in the rare book room of Schaffer Library, was especially important for its translations of the minutes of the church from March 11, 1784 to September 7, 1785. In this category belong also unusual random collections such as scrapbooks of church bulletins which were kept from 1901 to 1926 by Alonzo Paige Walton, Jr., painstakingly mounted in cardboard covers, and finally deposited in the church vault. The bulletins for the years 1904-1909 were particularly valuable in providing information of the numbers of visiting speakers in the church during the Lunn period, and of the topics of the Lunn sermons and many of the weekly church meetings.

Certainly any historian is forever indebted to all those who had the patience and took the time to record their memories, and to preserve their mementos and deposit them for safekeeping. And any historian who writes church history will second my vote of thanks to all the Clerks of Consistory (or of the Session or the Vestry) who care enough to include in the permanent record a verbatim copy of obviously important written records for the benefit of future generations, who try to include a sense of the discussion of major resolutions, and who write accurate accounts even of routine agendas for the unforeseen value such records may eventually provide.

Kathryn Sharp Pontius
Author of Volume II
of *Three Centuries, The
History of the First
Reformed Dutch
Church of Schenectady.*

TIDINGS

Anna Duggan, of 18 North Street, spent the month of July in Spain with the family of Senor Ruben Lisardo Tascon Tascon in Leon and on the Costa del Sol at Fuengirola. She is currently employed as a teller at Schenectady Savings and Loan Association.

Sean Lane, of 148 Front Street, a senior at Linton High School, is the pianist with the Jazz Ensemble of Schenectady Community College. He is also singing with the Schenectady Symphony Chorus and the Area All-State Choir. A member of the Linton choir and Serenaders, he is the accompanist for Serenaders, plays in the Rock Group "Finally" and is in the Linton Stage Band.

Happy Birthday Mrs. Kitts!

Betsy Comstock, of 217 Green Street, has accepted a job as director of communications for Parkside Management Services Inc. of Park Ridge, Illinois.

Emily Sherwood, daughter of Suzanne and Jim Sherwood of 142 Front Street, was home from Northampton, Mass. for a weekend to visit and to celebrate her birthday. She and an associate from Mt. Holyoke have recently formed "Variations" a production company specialising in women in the arts.

Happy Birthday Dr. Feibes!

Jimmy Buonome of Ingersoll Avenue reports that the paper drive held by the Junior Bowling League at Boulevard Bowl on Oct. 4 was a great success. Many thanks to all of those people who brought their old newspapers to the paper drive!

St. George's Nursery School has been very busy lately. The children went to the Schenectady Museum to see Habitat in October and to Browns Farm on Ft. Hunter Road to get pumpkins and to see the farm at the end of harvest time. Their annual Halloween party in school was a tremendous success. On November 14, there was a parents meeting and wine and cheese party at the home of Larry and Jennifer Schmidt at 11 Front Street.

Can anyone help me locate a poem for a very dear friend of the Stockade, Mrs. Sybil Johnson of Norfolk, Conn.? The poem in question used to be published every Christmas Eve in the old *Union Star* and was called- "Annie and Willie's Prayer". If anyone has any information about this poem, please call me at 372-5006.

Betty Lane

THREE CENTURIES

The History of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady

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Vol. 2 1880-1980 by Kathryn Sharp Pontius 432 pages

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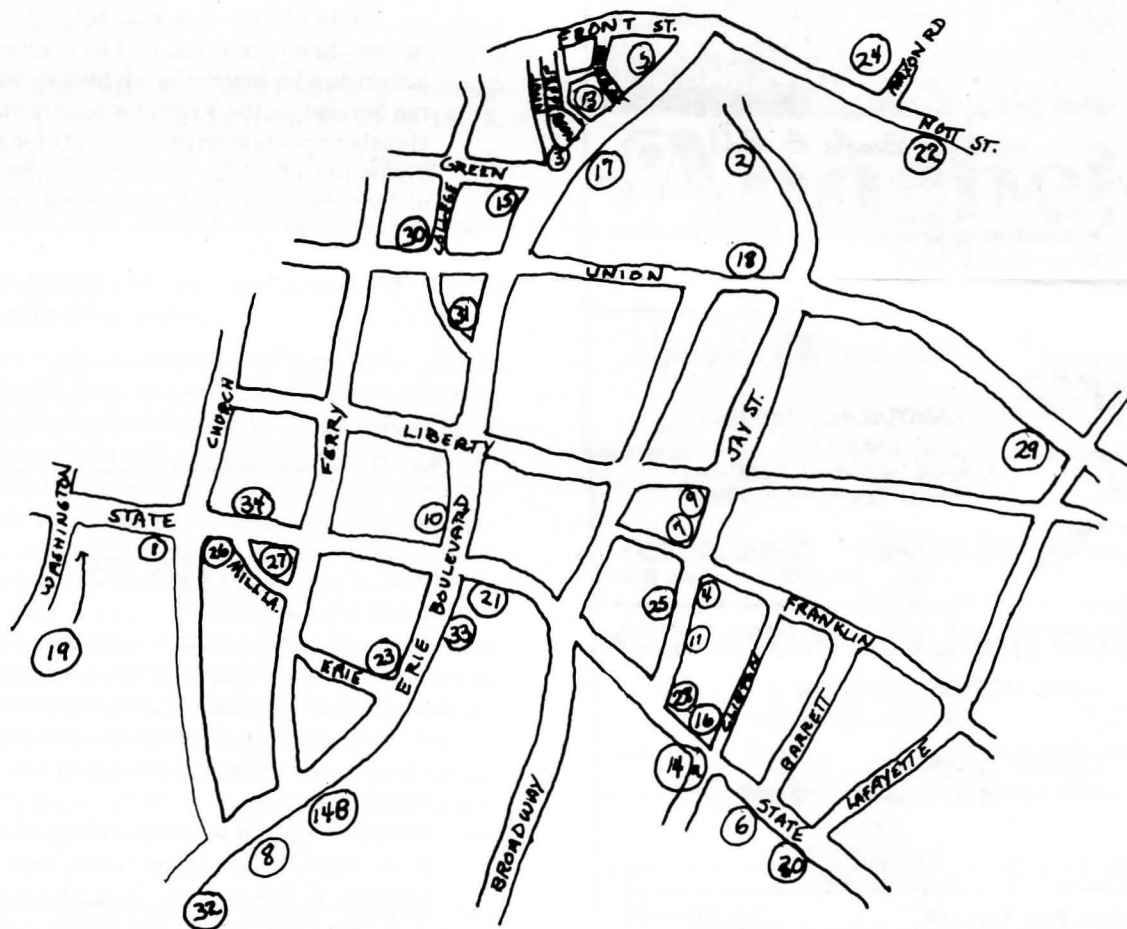
Stockade Area Restaurant Guide

compiled by

Donnalee Francis

If you happen to be a new resident of our Stockade area or just plain tired of the same places to eat, this guide will hopefully make tickling your culinary fancies a little easier and more fun. The restaurants listed below are done alphabetically and preceded by a number which corresponds to its location on the map. Each restaurant will then be categorized with the full address and any personal notes or recommendations. As Julia would say, "Bon Appetit".

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Beef & Brew | 18. Nana Angie's Italian Kitchen |
| 2. Blythwood Restaurant | 19. The Oxbow Inn |
| 3. Boulevard Diner | 20. Peggy's Sandwich Shop |
| 4. Brad's Restaurant & Tavern | 21. The Press Box |
| 5. Chez Pierre Too | 22. Ramada Inn |
| 6. Deli 400 | 23. Ruby's Silver Diner |
| 7. DeWitt's Restaurant & Tap Room | 24. Go Young |
| 8. The Electric Grinch | 25. Jay Street Deli |
| 9. The Executive Suite | 26. The Stockade |
| 10. The Grog Shoppe | 27. Strawberry Lane Restaurant |
| 11. Ingrid's | 28. Subway |
| 12. Jack In the Box | 29. Sunday's |
| 13. James' Tavern | 30. Van Dyck Restaurant |
| 14. (A) Lyle's Hoagies | 31. Wally's Diner |
| 14. (B) Lyle's Hoagies | 32. Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburgers |
| 15. Mike's Restaurant | 33. Wonder Burger |
| 16. Mike's Submarines | 34. Kentucky Fried Chicken |
| 17. Morrette's King Steak House | |



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