

SEPTEMBER 1985

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## 1985 Walkabout

Sat., Sept. 28th 10 to 4 Tickets \$6.00

Have you noticed two women walking the streets every night? No, our neighborhood is not returning to its "red light" district reputation of prior years; it's just Marie Cordero-Jones and I out and about doing our Walkabout work. In fact, the entire committee has been hard at work to assure that we have the best Walkabout ever.

The houses selected for this year's tour promise to show off the variety and ambiance of our neighborhood.

10 No. Ferry St. — The Widow Kendall house, built in the late 1700's, is now being restored by Richard W. Brown, Esq. to its former Greek Revival style with a modern addition leading out to the garden. This little "tipsy" house will be shown in progressive stages of its restoration on this and subsequent Walkabouts.

205 Union St. — Presently a fashionable and most authentic Victorian home, this house is really a gambrel roof Georgian built prior to 1775.

11 No. College St. — The home of Custer and Doris Quick has been renovated to achieve every modern convenience while retaining the features of a charming mid-19th century workman's house. The courtyard is wonderful!

23 No. Ferry St. — This lovely Victorian town house was built shortly after the Civil War. Now the home of CDR Ronald Jones and Marie Cordero-Jones, President of the Heritage Foundation, it is a showcase for their collections of boxes, flow blue, teapots, old tools and paintings.

9 Washington Ave. — The charm of this late 19th century home is enjoyed by Fred and Carol Goossen and their young family. It is tastefully decorated in a homey country style.

220 Union St. — This pre-revolutionary clapboard house restored by Rev. Robert E. Barron and the late Mrs. Barron is an example of two smaller houses combined into one. The low beam ceilings, fine antique furnishings and quaint exterior present a striking contrast to the brownstone surrounding it.

We feel that these homes are an excellent representation of our community, as are the churches and the Historical Society. Visitors on the Walkabout will discover how special and varied life in the Stockade can be.

Another special event will be taking place at the Historical Society on Friday evening, Sept. 27th, and will be included as another stop on the Walkabout tour. A colonial encampment will be staged by the 3rd Battalion Tryon County



Dear Stockade Resident,

You are cordially invited to attend and/or participate in the 34th Annual Villagers' Outdoor Art Show.

The show will be held on Saturday, September 7th from 11 am to 5 pm, with a rain date of Sunday, September 8th from 12 - 5 pm.

Looking forward to seeing you all and enjoying an event that is one of the many pleasant traditions of our neighborhood.

Yours truly,  
Colleen Macaulay  
Chairperson '85

Militia and it promises to be an exciting and most authentic representation of colonial life. We will also have the Charlton Fife and Drum Corps performing on Stockade street corners during the day. It should be a colorful and interesting day!

We are most grateful to the homeowners who have agreed to share their homes with everyone this year. It is only through their generosity that this event can take place, and it is a most important one to the financial interests of both the Schenectady County Historical Society and the Stockade Association. We hope that everyone will volunteer for some type of support activity on Walkabout day. It is truly a com-

## Food Fest in Conjunction with Stockade Art Show

Schenectady's finest restaurants will be selling samples of gourmet and ethnic delights at the Food Fest to be sponsored in conjunction with the 34th Annual Villager's Outdoor Art Show on Saturday, September 7, 1985.

The Food Fest will be held from 12 noon to 5 p.m. on Jay and State Streets in downtown Schenectady. A series of jazz musicians will be playing near the food booths and beer and wine tent. Musicians will be staged in front of Proctor's Theater and will include the Bob Reed Original Swing Band performing classics of the swing era, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The L.D. Quartet featuring long time jazz musicians, will perform from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Steve Anthony of Schenectady will be on trumpet, Tommy DiVito on piano, Mr. George Donaldson will play tenor sax, and Lord Duncan will play the drums. From 4 to 5 p.m. Lisa Smith, a guitarist and vocalist attending the Berkley School of music will perform. Lisa can be seen performing regularly at Peggy's Canal Side Restaurant.

At the same time, the Annual Villager's Art Show will be taking place in the historic Stockade district. The show will center around the Indian at Ferry and Front Streets. Juried fine art is accepted for the show. The Art Show is in its 34th year of existence and is known as one of the areas most popular Art Showcases featuring exhibitors from a 100 mile radius including Northeastern New York and Western New England.

The rain date for the Art Show is the following day Sunday, September 8. The Food Fest will not be held if rained out on the 7th of September. For more details contact Joanne Yepsen at Schenectady's Downtown Marketing and Promotions Agency in Canal Square.

community effort and an excellent opportunity to become involved in our wonderful neighborhood. Below is a listing of the members of the Walkabout Committee. Please call anyone on the list to find out what you can do to help.

Chairperson ..... Marie Cordero-Jones  
Asst. Chairperson ..... Gerri Cook  
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George Weinheimer  
Book Critic ..... Richard L. Leveroni  
Paste-Up ..... Theresa Palkovic  
Distribution ..... Chris and  
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### Sponsors—Stockade Association

President ..... Martin Weinstein  
Vice-President ..... John Harter  
Recording Secretary ..... John L. Zegger  
Corresponding Secretary ..... Marie Cordero-Jones  
Treasurer ..... Kathy Johnson

## Editorial Column

Becoming Editor of a small local newspaper is rather like becoming head of a complaints department. People stop me on the street to discuss small vexations or irritating aspects of life in the Stockade. I tell them quickly that I am not in charge of sinking sidewalks, toppling trees, pooch poop, or flagging facades, to which the response usually is that *they* should do something about these problems.

*They*. Now there's an overworked pronoun. To whom are *they* referring. *They* are polluting our atmosphere; *they* are taxing us too highly in New York State; *they* should plow Schenectady's roads faster; *they* should take care of the problems in the Stockade. But who is polluting? Who is taxing? Who should plow? Who should take care of the Stockade's problems?

Now here in the Stockade, of course, we do have an Association with officers and board members to whose attention these problems are brought, but *they* need *your* help. Several committees are anticipated for the coming year: Walkabout, Christmas Party, Picnic, Program for General Meetings, Membership, Nominating, and a Stockade Improvement Committee which will deal with facades, sidewalks, dog excrement, traffic, and trees. The Walkabout Committee has almost completed its work, but hosts and hostesses are still needed—please contact either Eileen Julien or Susan Bokan. The other Committees all need staffing. We will be calling for volunteers at our first General Meeting of the Stockade Association to be held on Monday, September 30th. If you can't be present and you are interested in helping, please drop a note to Martin Weinstein, President, Stockade Association, Box 1661, Schenectady, N. Y. 12301.

Speaking of volunteers, you will notice that we have two new members on the *Spy* staff. Theresa Palkovic, whose children deliver the *Spy*, has willingly taken on the job of paste-up. George Weinheimer has undertaken to do a series of interviews with our neighborhood children, and the first of those interviews appears in this issue. Would anyone like to volunteer to receive Tidings from several sources and type them up? If so, please contact your Editor at 19 Front Street. Comments on the *Spy* are welcome.

In Memory of  
JOSEPH CARUSO  
who passed away on July 13, 1985

## President's Message

During a recent visit with our family a friend made this comment: "How lucky you are to live in such a beautiful neighborhood." Considering from whence virtually all of our ancestors came, I suppose being in America is lucky. But luck had nothing to do with creating freedoms or making this country great. It took, and still takes, courage, sacrifice, hard work and constant vigilance. The same, I believe, is true about the Stockade.

Luck has not made the Stockade what it is today; rather it was hard work, sacrifices and, yes, even courage at times. We must be ever vigilant to preserve what we have.

As President of the Stockade Association, and with your help, I intend to be vigilant and work for the Security, Preservation and Improvement of our neighborhood. I call it Stockade SPI. Security, for residents of all ages, but particularly for the very young and elderly among us; Preservation, maintaining the charm, beauty and quality of life; Improvement, encouraging repairs, plantings, better parking facilities and changed traffic patterns.

Let's work together as friends and neighbors. Come to meetings; voice your opinions. Put your ideas on paper. Write to me at PO Box 1661, Schenectady, NY 12301. I look forward to seeing you soon.

## Interview with

### Madeleine Clare' Schmidt

by George Weinheimer

9 a.m., July 31, 1985

Madeleine Clare' Schmidt, almost nine years old, is exercising every ounce of her poise as she greets me at the doorway of her home at eleven Front Street on this somber, overcast morning of our interview. She suppresses a pleased smile as I answer the first question, "Yes, I like dogs," and Mother Jennifer (Mrs. James Schmidt) is able to release the golden retriever to snuffle and wag his effusive greeting.

Seated formally in the parlor, we continue our interview with the exacting spelling of Madeleine's beautiful name. Her natural effervescence erupts as the subject turns to her coming birthday in August. Madeleine will become nine in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada where she will be participating as a pianist in the Seventh International Suzuki Conference. Over five hundred young musicians from the U.S.A., Canada, Japan, and other parts of the world convene for the occasion. Since age five she has been a pupil of Mrs. Marilyn Taggart who lives "somewhere on North Ferry Street; she's a really good piano teacher. Mom helps me practice about a half hour every day and she practices a lot herself, much more than I do." Madeleine and Jennifer Angerosa, also a pupil of Mrs. Taggart, have been honored with invitations to take part in this important musical event. The two girls, their mothers, and Mrs. Taggart plan to drive to Montreal, fly to Edmonton, and tour the Canadian Rockies by rental car before the start of the conference on August seventeenth.

Madeleine has always lived in the Victorian brick house in the Stockade where two classical maidens adorn the black cast iron rail of the stoop. She loves her house because, "it has lots of space and it has a piano, nice pictures, and a nice feeling in it. There is not a large backyard but I love to climb its tree. I like picking things out of the garden but I do not care for weeding.



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Behind the garage we grow cucumbers, lettuce, tomatoes, and snow peas. The snow peas and beans are not coming up as well as the basil is. My mother uses the basil to make pesto to put on linguine."

"I like cooking," volunteers Madeleine seriously. She cooks eggs, pancakes, and French toast for everybody. She likes pancakes best. "But I don't always eat very well."

Madeleine's Union College tee shirt attests to an enthusiasm for sports. Basketball and soccer at Union, swimming at the University Club, and biking up Cat Head Mountain are her favorites. "And I like helping my father at the Outdoor Art Show. I hand him the pictures when he works inside the ring at the Indian. The Stockade was a place that kept the Indians away but they probably let Lawrence in to barter."

"Nice" and "really nice" describe some of Madeleine's neighbors: Arthur Polachek of Arthur's Market, Chris and John, the Georges ("Have known them since I was born,") the Bowdens, Mrs. Moore, and the interviewer.

"I also love animals," declares Madeleine. Dagers, the friendly retriever who has kept us company, and her two cats are cited. She would like to have a bird, a tropical bird with all its beautiful feathers to look at. Madeleine enjoys drawing, too, but does not consider herself very good at it.

Reading is one of Madeleine's most absorbing hobbies. Currently, she is enjoying *The Girl with the Silver Eyes* borrowed with several others from a friend who has a whole bookcase full of enticing books. In addition Madeleine has a stack of books selected from the County Library where she set a goal of twenty books to be read this summer. Since she has already completed nineteen books she has upped her goal to thirty.

"I read a good book by Shinichi Suzuki called *Nurtured by Love*. I wanted to write to him to find out what he did during World War II but my mother said that he might not be able to answer my letter and I might be able to find out by reading his book. He was not a soldier; he likes playing the violin with children. His family was very poor and made violins so he was sent away during the war to work in the forest collecting wood. I also read *The Diary of Anne Frank*."

At this moment the boisterous rhythms of Bernsteins *America* intrude from the room next door. "That's my sister, Meredith, playing the VCR of *West Side Story*. I have watched it three times."

Our interview is brought to a vivacious conclusion when Madeleine performs Mozart's sprightly *Rondo* on the Baldwin baby grand. Bemused by the unanticipated dimension of this slight nine-year-old, your interviewer takes his leave forgetting his umbrella in the clothes tree in the hall.

"Our Caring and thoughtful Boss . . ."

## Memories of MARVIN

*The death of the Van Dyck's Marvin W. Friedman on April 23 occurred with the Spy's last issue of the season on press. Only a brief "In Memoriam" could be carried. This article attempts to pay a more fitting tribute to one of our outstanding citizens.*

Anyone living in the Stockade is apt to have many memories of Marvin Friedman and this reporter is no exception. Here are some very personal recollections of the man and his work:

Asking Marvin for an interview for a *Spy* article on local restaurants and hearing him say: "The earlier, the better." Time was set at 8:30 AM, and the visitor was surprised by the number of people at work, along with Marvin.

Attending GE committee meetings at the Van Dyck, starting as early as 8 AM—and there would be Marvin, aligning tables and chairs in the meeting room. Very often, he would personally serve the coffee.

The chaos on his desk, which would drive an efficiency expert mad, with odd papers everywhere. A sign forbade employees to touch the desk, lest important notes be lost. But somehow the work was done, and very well.

Dining at his next-door home, with the same warm, pleasant and efficient hospitality that marked his restaurant. And how his guests were selected to assure interesting conversation!

His walks around the dining rooms, and his question: "Are you folks getting enough to eat?" We always were—and he would see at a glance if everything on the table was up to his high standards.

Knowing, when unexpected guests came, that the Van Dyck was nearby, with first-class food, service and atmosphere. Bringing a cousin from Southern California to the Van Dyck, his surprise that we could walk to such a fine restaurant, and his comment: "Why, that's Red Norvo making music!" Nationally known artists are regular entertainers, thanks to the Van Dyck's stature in their world.

Introducing him at lunch to a clergyman, of a different faith than Marvin's, who was then new in the Stockade—and having Marvin return after his tour of the room to offer the clergyman his help on "anything that comes along."

Many people worked hard to earn and maintain the Van Duck's reputation, and Marvin would be first to say that he was far from alone in this demanding job. But his presence and influence over all operations, especially in the critical early years, were essential—and he did it all with a constant human touch. His greatest pride, he once said, was that his people brought their personal problems to him.

No wonder his employees marked his passing with a *Gazette* advertisement honoring "our caring and thoughtful boss, whom we will miss deeply." So do his family and the customers who became his friends and valued the friendship—deeply.

By John Ronayne

## Tidings

Gordon Moppert bought Richard Kerchner's house on North Ferry Street, near the park. He is in the process of renovation and restoration. Gordon is forever busy. Over the 4th of July week-end, in Rockport, Mass., Gordon surprised Sarah Michener with a diamond engagement ring.

Mary Ivy and Charles Del Signore of 24 Ingersol Avenue were married in City Hall on July 12th, 1985, by Mayor Karen Johnson. Congratulations!

Lisa Vellake has recently returned from London where she attended the Vidal Sassoon Academy. She is now back at work practicing her new skills at Annabell's.

Emily Polachek attended Union College for college level courses during the summer.

Susan Duggan graduated from Linton High School and following in her mother's footsteps will be attending Ellis School of Nursing in the fall.

Richard and Felicia of Front Street have a new baby son named Journey, brother for Jubal. Welcome to our new neighbor.

Also Eileen Julien and Himanshu have a new baby girl, Anjana, born May 9th. She can be seen most days as she takes her walk in the park with the aid of her grandmother.

Nick and Alice Colangelo, 111 Front Street, were recently honored by their children, Marty & Connie and Ted & Pam Colangelo, on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. A party was held at the Paramount Lounge on August 17th. Nick & Alice were married at St. John the Baptist Church. Many friends and neighbors attended their party. Ted Colangelo and his family arrived on Saturday, August 17th, and totally surprised his parents. He is presently a resident of St. Paul, MN. Nick and Alice's three grandchildren were also involved in the planning of the party. They are Peter, Debra and Kristin.

Sean Lane, son of Jim and Betty Lane of 148 Front Street, graduated from SUNY Fredonia in June with a B.S. in Music Therapy and a B.A. in Applied Piano Performance. On March 23, he was selected to give a Senior Honors Recital.

Sean, who is now 22, started playing the piano when he was 5 and studied with Mrs. Eva Rice and Mr. Fred Brumbaugh, both of Schenectady.

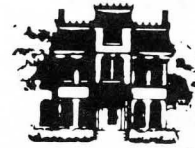
He is a member of the National Music Honor Society, Pi Kappa Lambda, graduated cum laude and received the music therapy service award. While a student at Fredonia, he played cocktail jazz piano at The White Inn, gave private piano lessons and entertained at weddings, anniversary parties and retirement dinners.

After a 6 month internship in Fairfax County, Virginia public schools, he will receive his license as a Registered Music Therapist. He is presently employed as an ADL instructor at a Living Resources Home in Loudonville.

## Autumn: 5:00 AM

Gold leaf quivering  
On dull green grass.  
Gray mist hovering,  
And silence.

E. A. Freeman  
Sept. 1977



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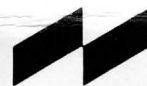
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# Recent Discoveries Between Front and Green, East of "The Old Fort"

By Dr. Susan Jane Staffa, July, 1985

There is a "new" very old house at No. 215 Green Street, and three old houses at 114 and 116 Front and 217 Green have received new historic designations as the result of research done by the writer this past June. Reassessing documents used by the original Committee on Historic Markers in the light of new sources of which they had been unaware, we were able to develop a much more complete picture of the ancient houses and lots which lay between the old Green Street burial ground and the Queen's Fort. The key sources were tax assessment lists dating from 1720, 1738, and 1751 which we found buried in the vault of the Schenectady County Historical Society. (The tax assessors generally listed property owners as they went from street to street, so their records reflect the relative positions of urban house lots. If we also have some deeds, we can "pin the list down" and fill in gaps in the map.)

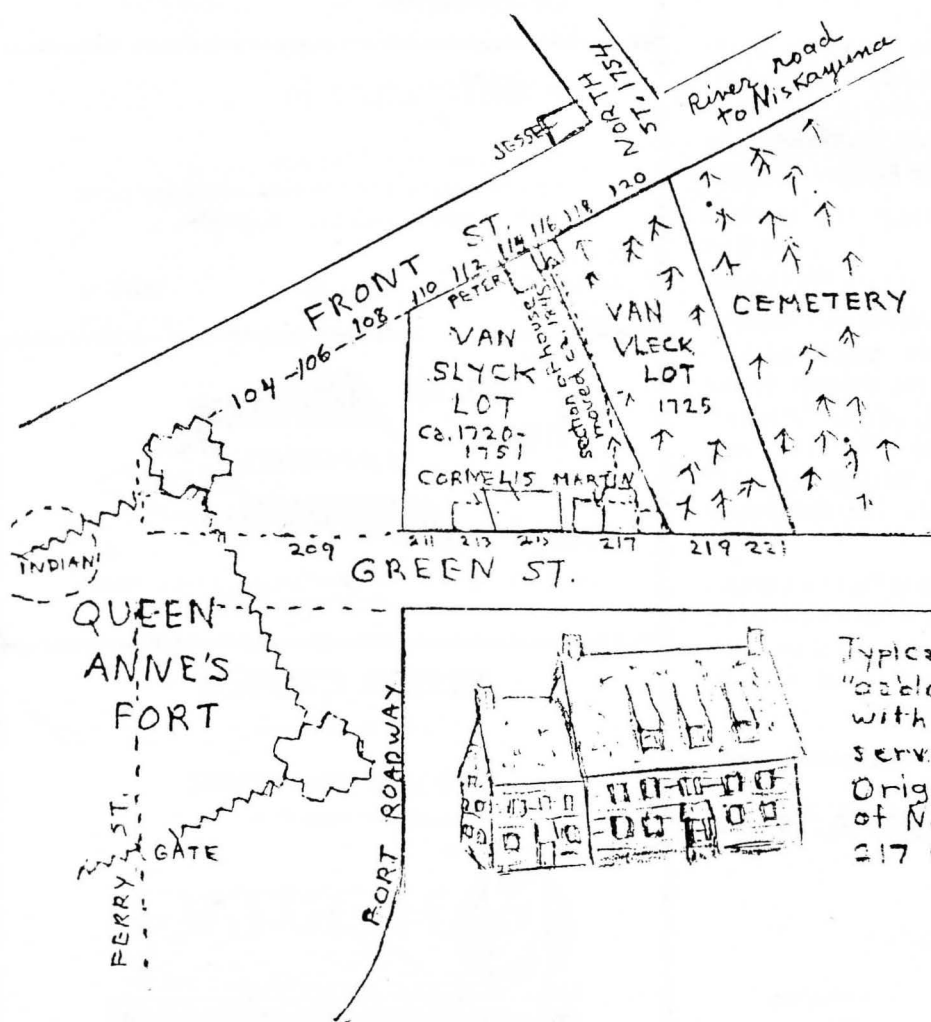
The realization emerged from this investigation that from about 1720 until about 1740 there had been two large lots in the area under study: one belonging to a Benjamin Van Vleck lay next to the cemetery on what had been woodland during the first two decades of the century, while the other lay next to the fort and had been part of the clearing around it. About 1725, the latter lot became the property of one, Cornelis Van Slyck, although the record indicates that he was living upon it before that date. The western boundary of the Van Slyck lot was the road that ran around that side of the fort. (It ran along the western edge of No. 211 Green and cut through the middle of No. 110 Front.)

The "new" old house, No. 215 Green, is now covered by green siding and has a large Victorian style entrance but, despite those modifications, the structure of the interior is much as it was when it was first built. Originally it was a large two and one half story central-hall house with a high gable roof, what the old residents of the Stockade called a "gable-ender." It also had a servants' quarter on the west, where No. 213 now stands. That building, long gone would have hidden the first clue to the age of the house to attract our attention: the strange western wall which is at a peculiar angle. (The chimney goes through the roof about four feet from the end of the house indicating a space between the inner and outer walls on that side.) Ten years ago, when we identified our own house at No. 32 Front as that of the commandant of the fort, we were intrigued by that angular wall because our house had one too, and that house, like ours, had been next to the fort. (If that space between the walls did not have some special military significance, it was probably a place for the storage of contraband furs, the fur trade being illegal until 1727. It could not have been a closet as the Dutch did not have closets until long after the house was built.) We had then tried to identify the house through deeds, but were able only to get it back to 1810 when it had belonged to "the heirs of John Lambert." With the aid of the tax lists, however, we can now ascribe the house to Cornelis Van Slyck. The genealogy reveals that Cornelis's granddaughter married John Lambert in 1779. At least as early as 1720, Cornelis had lived there and his younger brother, Martin, had had a similar but smaller house and servants' quarter next door at No. 217.

The Van Slycks were fur traders. More than that, they were part Indian. Cornelis and Martin were sons of Jacques Van Slyck who was the son of the original Cornelis who, in the 1630s, had gone upriver and had formed a liaison with a high ranking Mohawk woman. It was partly by virtue of that connection that Schenectady itself was eventually founded and the Van Slyck family in particular obtained much land in the vicinity. Cornelis and Martin inherited eighty acres of the fertile Great Flat southwest of town which had been the property of their Mohawk grandmother. Prior to the Schenectady Massacre (1690) Jacques had had a tavern on the south corner of Washington Avenue and Cucumber Alley that was frequented by Indians. Although trading with them was illegal, the Van Slycks apparently obtained a substantial income in that way. Harmanus, the older brother of Cornelis and Martin who inherited their father's property on Washington Avenue became one of the two wealthiest men in town (the other being Johannes Glen). The Van Slycks also performed critical services in the Colonial Wars, for their expert knowledge of Indian languages and customs made them indispensable to the British who needed the support of the Five Nations in the contest with France. For instance, Albert Van Slyck who was a son of Cornelis, was Sir William Johnson's principal agent among the Cayuga in the 1750s and '60s. He was charged with the task of persuading members of that often recalcitrant tribe to cooperate in keeping the road to Oswego open and holding the French at bay by foiling the plots of their spies among the Indians and sending his own Cayuga spies to Canada.

The houses of Cornelis and Martin in Green Street occupied a very important location in relation to the fort, the only gate of which was in Ferry Street. To get from there to Front Street as it led east along the river, one had to go around past their lot. Thus, the front of the Van Slyck lot was on Green Street and the back was on Front Street. The gable-end-to-the-street house at No. 114 Front, long called the "Adrian Van Slyck House" was actually built by Peter Van Slyck who was the son of Martin, at the back of his father's parcel, about 1737. (Adrian Van Slyck who was a son of Cornelis, had shared his uncle's house at 217 Green from about 1736.) To increase the size of his lot (for there is some evidence that there was a Van Slyck barn west of his dwelling) Peter bought half of the old Van Vleck lot east of his house. That parcel includes Nos. 116 and 118 Front. Following Peter's death sometime prior to 1759, his younger son, Martin, came into possession of his house. His older son, Jesse, about 1762, built the old red brick house that stands across the street on the corner of Front and North Streets and incorporated the earlier "Teller House."

Where did the house at 116 Front come from and when was it joined to No. 114? (The Committee on Markers in the 1950s had pointed out that 116 had been moved from somewhere and they thought it had been the house of Simon Speck, a free Black who had lived in the cemetery.) About 1845, James Rosa who then owned No. 114 renovated and developed it for his daughter, Catherine Moon, and her family. At that time, Martin Van Slyck's old "gable-ender" at 217 Green on the other side of the ancient lot had become very dilapidated and Rosa took a large section of it (the center-hall and the eastern wing of the first story) and moved it straight back to stand against No. 114 Front. Thus, the front of No. 116 was originally the back of part of the house of Martin and Adrian Van Slyck that had been built about 1720! Our identification depends upon many facts, both architectural and documentary, but one clue which gives away the age of the present



ensemble is found in the common brick facade that joins the two houses. The little gothic window in the gable of No. 114 cannot predate 1840.

The third house that we redesignated as a result of this project is the one that now stands at 217 Green. A study of the records concerning it and its architecture reveals that a couple named John and Alida Ogsbury built the present structure around the remains of the original Martin Van Slyck house about 1845. The cellar dates from about 1720 and is virtually identical to the cellar of the house of Martin's brother, Cornelis, next door. Most of the western wing appears to be essentially intact and, while the original central hall and eastern wing have been replaced and a low gable roof now replaces the original high one, the ancient posts and plate beams in the attic show that the framing of the second story was probably never entirely dismantled. Where the huge chunk of the first story had been removed from the middle and eastern side, the 1840s reconstruction was made using much salvage including floor boards, probably taken from the second story or the servants' quarter.

If there is any lesson to be learned from our comprehensive study, it is that none of these houses can be understood apart from the others and that only an approach focussing upon a *neighborhood* can reveal the identities as well as the relationships of Schenectady's ancient dwellings.

*Editor's Note:* Dr. Susan Staffa's brochure "Colonial Schenectady in Maps" will be available at the Historical Society on the day of the Walkabout.

## The Status of Riverside School

### State Education Commissioner's Decision

On April 10, 1985 Gordon M. Ambach, State Commissioner of Education, upheld the Schenectady City School District's decision to sell the Riverside School property to Blake Realty. He stated that the School District did not act improperly in granting an extension to Blake in order to obtain a special use permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Brown School did not appeal the decision.

### Brown School Rebid

On July 22, 1985 Brown School offered the Schenectady City School District \$136,600 for the Riverside property, citing that the transfer of the property to Blake Realty had not taken place as stated in the bid specification. During the week of August 5 the City School District authorized the sale of Riverside School to Blake for \$126,600. The Actual deed transfer is expected to take place in late August.

### Zoning Board of Appeals Decision

On August 14, 1985 a ZBA hearing was held to review Blake's reapplication for a special use permit to create condominium apartments in the Riverside School building. The initial application had been denied by the ZBA because of insufficient parking spaces and the lack of an independent traffic assessment. Blake had appealed this decision to the State Supreme Court.

The revised Blake plan specified a total of 30 apartments with 2.1 parking spaces per apartment. Another traffic study by Blake was submitted which indicated minimal impact on Front Street traffic. Stockade President Martin Weinstein presented the results of a Brown School-sponsored evaluation which concluded

that the Blake traffic assessment was flawed and that the data did not support its conclusions. Jim Sherwood presented the results of his survey which showed a serious parking problem on Front Street in the Riverside School area and provided excellent photos by Art Covert to support this conclusion. Stockaders from Ingersoll Avenue and North Street expressed concern about flooding and snow removal relative to Front Street parking. Will Rogers questioned whether the closing of the present front entrance to the building would in fact discourage street parking by condominium residents.

After adjourning to consider the testimony of both sides, the ZBA returned and unanimously granted a special use permit to Blake Realty with several conditions. Members felt that the traffic surveys indicated Front Street has the capacity to handle the increased traffic from the condominiums and that the requirements of the zoning ordinance had been satisfied. Among the conditions for granting the permit are the closing of the front entrance of the building and the removal of snow from the rear parking lot instead of banking it.

### What Now?

The approval by the Commissioner of the sale of Riverside School to Blake Realty and the ZBA approval of a special use permit will allow Blake to obtain title of the property and create condominiums. Construction is expected to start this fall and work will be completed next year on the units, which will sell in the \$75,000 to \$150,000 range. President Weinstein intends to review the progress of the work periodically to ensure that Stockade area concerns are addressed to the maximum extent possible. The Special Committee wishes to thank Stockaders who have attempted to retain Riverside as a school, which the Association believed was in the best interests of the community.

## To Ernie, From Frans

You dare to disbelieve  
You dare to write  
You give me the courage  
You give me the words

(I put no periods to my sentences)  
I also disbelieve in immortality  
I also disbelieve in man-shaped gods  
We only disagree about computers

We only differ in our styles  
We only differ in our backgrounds,  
but not in the neighborhood,  
not in our observations,  
both making sense of children and cardinals

I won't dispute with you or Spinoza  
I won't play Einstein to your Newton  
or sift your sands again except to  
admire them,  
walking one last time together beside  
the waters

(the universe is not a watch)  
(the universe is not a computer)  
(the universe is not a tool)  
(the universe is not a poem)

Together we walk forward saying hello again  
(the universe is not just a neighborhood,  
but where does the universe begin or end?)  
To you old father I dedicate my praise

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## Book Beat

By Richard Leveroni

The new Peter De Vries novel, *The Prick of Noon* (Little, Brown) is an interesting melange of several literary and social elements. The author, whose some twenty odd books have a general popular following, has been associated with *Poetry* and the *New Yorker* and his style reflects a very witty, urbane, erudite and intellectual background. In *The Prick of Noon* (the title comes from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and is meant to suggest our hero's life is far from over despite the reversals of fate) turns a comic and satiric eye on the plight of one Eddie Teeters, film producer and occasional stand-in actor, as he pursues the girl of his dreams, Cynthia Pickles, a member of the smart set of exclusive Merrymount, Conn.

Unfortunately, our hero has several strikes against him despite great personal charm, looks and ability. The films he produces are X-rated adult videocassettes masquerading as educational "training" films for public education and his acting is limited to explicit close ups when the regular leading man proves inadequate. He is also from a modest background: his father was a cemetery caretaker and his mother used to pay other children to play with him because he was unpopular as a child. Much of the plot revolves around our hero's double life and people's reactions to him when he is unmasked. A primary motivation is Eddie's sense of "belonging" or fitting in and the parallels to Fitzgerald's *Gatsby* are obvious; indeed our hero keeps making them himself and is consciously aware of the social class distinctions in modern American life. Much of the story is set in a country club, once exclusive but recently gone bankrupt and reopened by the town as public, and this device lets us bring together a diverse group including bikers, lower class waitresses, and the rich.

As with many recent American films (*American Gigolo*, *Hardcore*, *Angel*) the sex industry is used here as metaphor and there is nothing explicit or offensive in the novel, which is really a *Bildungsroman* or novel of education where the hero, to use critic M. H. Abrams' definition, "passes from childhood through varied experiences . . . into maturity and the recognition of his identity and role in the world." Indeed, our hero's most endearing quality is his attempt to improve himself—he is constantly using new words (not always correctly) and making lists of terms to look up as he hears others. His desire to belong and fit in also prompts him to look at houses (to settle down and find roots) and to purchase an enormous limousine, which, together with his somewhat loud taste in clothes, all to clearly mark him as an outsider to old Merrymount society.

Our hero is no saint. While pursuing Miss Pickles and seeking respectability, he dallies with Toby Snapper, a wise cracking, voluptuous waitress whom he genuinely admires and to whom he relates well; she thinks of him as above her socially the way Cynthia is above him. Toby is a well-drawn major character essential both to the clever plot structure of the novel and its moral center, which has to do with the way people treat and react to each other and how we all make individual accommodations to circumstances despite what sociologist Max Weber called "life chances" which bind us within socio-economic determinism.

As previously suggested, the plot revolves around money (who has it, how to get it, what it can be used for), marriage (finding the right partner) and fate (how people come to meet each other, how laws and society circumscribe our lives). There is a certain amount of mystery and suspense along with the comedy, as the reader

speculates on the possible outcome of several legal and personal entanglements. The book is neither long enough (233 pages) nor deep enough to make any major pronouncements and is somewhat derivative and predictable in parts; still it is an amusing and pleasant read and does make one think seriously about the quality and meaning of protagonist Eddie Teeters' life.

## Rensselaer's Market Plan

(To "Guenevere" from *Camelot*, with 6 beats in lines 1 & 2, 7 on 3 & 4)

Over Troy, on the bluff,  
Ricketts wrung cash enough  
From alumni year by year  
To rebuild his Rensselaer.

From the War radar won  
Atom bombs, ton for ton,  
Rivalled Russia's, and a race  
To patrol thru outer space.

Brought the New Rensselaer's  
Graduate engineers,  
Brought the staff, equipment, fees  
For research and PhD's.

Mansfield made Washington  
Cut out funds for the fun;  
D.O.D. will reappear,  
Race to rescue Rensselaer?

Or will "gray flannel suits"  
Barter grants for recruits?  
Or the State—will people see  
Growth thru high technology?

Will new firms incubate  
On our "One-twenty-eight"  
Till their products rival Bell's  
Bytes per chip and solar cells?

Rensselaer's market plan,  
Now pursued with elan—  
Databased, for student fees  
What half-lives have your degrees?

What will best cut careers  
Thru the dense coming years:  
Friendly mice or spread-sheet biz,  
Engin sigh or apple fiz?

(i.e.: classical "engineering science & applied physics," injected with computerese.)

by John Bradshaw  
Green Street

## Tidings

The Harters, the Gemmettes, and Clare Weiner and George Wheeler, all of Front Street, spent time during this summer visiting England and taking advantage of the strong American dollar.

Dottie Libbon spent time in the hospital but is now home again on Front Street—not for long though. She and Joe have sold their home and will be moving to Niskayuna.

Kate Weiner has returned from two years of study at Cambridge University. She and Robert Webber, also a student of Cambridge University and formerly of Bristol, England, are now residing at 10 Washington Avenue.

Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Lewandowski of 32 Ingersoll Ave. have moved to Sacandaga Lake. Mr. Lewandowski lived in the Ingersoll Ave home for 60 years. He and his family moved there when he was 9 years old.

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