

The Piermont Newsletter

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Piermont's Robert Samuels - a Remembrance

Bob Samuels and Karen Brown, his beloved partner of 30 years, died of complications from COVID-19 this Spring. Bob was the president of the Piermont Civic Association and an editor and writer for the Piermont Newsletter for over 20 years. In what was to be his final article for the Newsletter, a story of three memorable Piermont friends named Bob, he described himself as 'the last of the Piermont Bobs', which he was.

Bob had hundreds of subscribers to his email postings about all things Piermont – Village Board notices, Piermont-in-the-news stories, obituaries. Bob sent out these emails almost daily. In the last week of April, during the first weeks of Piermont's sheltering in place because of COVID-19, many folks noticed the absence of communication from Bob. I called to see how he was doing. He said he had just returned from driving a very ill Karen to Englewood Hospital. He drove himself there two days later.

Bob moved to Piermont in 1981, after being released from months of hospitalization and rehabilitation after his nervous system was ravaged by Guillain-Barré syndrome. He returned to his family, old friends, and a new home on the Sparkill Creek in a wheelchair. This is how most Piermonters will remember seeing him, in a wheelchair, with Karen by his side. The sudden and shocking turn his life had taken was the subject of his 1991 book *Blue Water, White Water*: "We make many choices, but the important stuff seems to happen on its own. It's as though we're all on small individual rafts, bobbing down a wide river. The water is calm and blue. We steer this way and that, sometimes even briefly paddling against the flow, seemingly in control. But the current pushes us relentlessly on. Unexpectedly, the river can narrow and suddenly the rapids are upon us. It's all white water now, and we have no control. Tremendous boulders threaten. If our luck holds, if random chance is with us and our raft isn't smashed on a rock or sucked into a whirlpool, we reach the next run of blue water."



Bob Samuels—photo by Charlie Samuels

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In those last weeks of April, Bob was again approaching white water. But his run on the Piermont "blue" was long and extraordinary. Bob knew both these things, and every day appreciated the life he lived. He'd tell you so.

Bob Samuels liked being called a newspaper man. He spent his early career covering New York City for The New York World-Telegram & Sun. He kept a photograph of himself interviewing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his work desk. In 1968, Bob became Editor

for The Texaco Star, the company's shareholder magazine. In later years, he was the travel editor of the publication New Mobility. Those assignments sent he and Karen across the U.S. and Europe. His research and writing led his readers up a ramp of possibilities for the handicapped traveler.

Bob immersed himself in Piermont life almost as soon as he unpacked his bags on Ferdon Avenue. I remember helping carry his wheelchair up my stairs to a meeting about high-rise development in 1983. Over the years he volunteered and gave his writer's gifts not just to the Newsletter, but to dozens of local causes and local candidates. His contributions to Piermont took many forms. Bob would tell you he was proudest of his work to get vehicles off the Piermont Pier on weekends. So think of him when the Pier opens again and you are out there enjoying a car-free stroll on Sunday.

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Piermont's Robert Samuels - a Remembrance continued from page 1

Bob was a relentless advocate for his community. He demanded that the Village stick by its promise to keep the North Shore Walkway a public path during the day, after adjacent homeowners pushed hard to close it. Bob was the “squeaky wheel” petitioning for ADA compliance throughout the village. He and Karen served together on the Zoning Board of Appeals in the 1990’s. Bob was also a member of the Piermont Waterfront Resiliency Commission..

As the best of citizens, Bob and Karen would spend countless evenings at Piermont Village Board meetings, pretty much by themselves in an otherwise empty audience. Bob would attend those meetings and offer his sound judgment and historical perspective to the discussions taking place. Very, very often he gently eased the board into better decisions on just about everything having to do with community life. Going forward, attending in his absence, I am sure I will be asking myself, “what would Bob say to this?”

At every Piermont Civic Association event, whether staffing the membership table or enjoying an evening of music at Flywheel Park, in fact, at every possible opportunity to experience the pleasure of village life, Bob and Karen would be there. Out on the Pier, distinctive in his wheelchair, you’d see Bob, with Karen, walking along with their marvelous, large spotted poodle.

Robert Samuels, as his son Charlie so well put it, “really knew how to squeeze the juice out of life”. Bob loved living in Piermont, Karen at his side, with its small town complexities and kindnesses, wonderful neighbors, a great newspaper delivered each morning, bullfrogs that croaked after dark in the creek below his house, the haze that floated just above the water in the evening.



Bob seen here with his son Charlie Samuels, was honored at the PCA's 50th anniversary in 2018. —photo by Betsy Franco Feeney

We don't know what the pandemic will bring to Piermont in the coming months, but we do know what it has taken. The turbulence of our village's loss will be calmed in time by the same joys Piermont provided Bob and Karen, and we'll settle back onto blue water, for awhile. —Margaret Grace

Robert Samuels and Karen Brown are survived by their beloved families. Bob's son Charlie Samuels, a photographer and filmmaker Bob often collaborated with, his wife and their two grandchildren Cassidy and Atticus, and Karen's two sons, Tony and Adam, their wives and grandchildren Sam, Caleb, Caitlin, Jordan, and Shelby.



Karen Brown and Bob Samuels at the PCA Lobster Fest—photo by Patricia Lukes

Piermont Musings



Kid Mischief of Bob Samuels and Charles Mouquin

Piermonters often referred to Bob Samuels as “that guy in the wheelchair” but I knew him when we both worked as staff writers for the Texaco oil company, traveling the country to write articles for four company publications. Later, he became my boss and was guilty of introducing me to my late husband, Charles Mouquin, his long-time friend. Bob stood up as Best Man at our wedding.

Bob and Charles grew up across the street from each other in Grand View. Always a wonderful story teller, Bob took pleasure in shocking me with tales of their youthful escapades. When he first met him, the summer before 8th grade, Bob was appalled to learn that Charles did not know how to swim or ride a bike. Charles was a puny kid who had moved up from Greenwich Village, where his dad was professor of chemistry and physics at NYU.

First, Bob taught Charles how to ride a bike, starting with letting him coast down a hill. Soon, they were taking their bikes on the bus to Bear Mountain and riding the 30 miles back home. Bob remained a great cyclist, often pedaling on long trips with his then wife, Rikki, until he was stricken with Guillain-Barre syndrome in 1981.

Like their heroes Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer, Bob and Charles built a raft by nailing an old board to a log that had washed up on the shore of the Hudson. Once out on the river, they discovered that the strong tide made paddling their craft almost impossible. Luckily, Bob’s father, a writer working from home, spotted them caught in the current and towed them back to safety in his motorboat, accompanied by a stern, fatherly lecture. Years later, the boys bought an old gaff-rigged sailboat from the Grand View sea scouts. Bob told me that Charles made a bikini for his girlfriend and literally sewed it on her body on the sailboat.

Once during a summer sleepover, the 12-year olds decided to walk in the pitch-black night from Grand View to Nyack. Tired on the return trip, they found an unlocked car. Bob lifted up the hood to “cross the wires like they do in the movies” while Charles sat in the driver’s seat. Along came the South Nyack Police offering assistance. “Oh, no thank you, Officer,” said the would-be car thieves. Giving up on “crossing the wires,” Bob slammed the hood down and climbed into the passenger seat. One of them figured out how to pull the emergency brake and they smoothly coasted down the hill into Grand View and home.

Skipping school, or “playing hooky” as it was then called, was another Bob and Charles’ game. They would pen each other’s parental excuses and then hitchhike into Manhattan. First, they would take in some uptown culture---the suits of armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the dinosaur bones at the Museum of Natural History. Then they felt righteous enough to while away the afternoon with a double feature Western at a 42nd Street movie house.

Those old-fashioned Westerns inspired BB gun play. They fantasized how much “just a flesh wound” might hurt; and debated whether to shoot each other in the arm. They practiced by shooting a BB into an innocent leg of lamb stowed in the Mouquin refrigerator. Try as they might, they could not retrieve the BB. Charles’ father ended up chomping down on it, nearly cracking a tooth. When asked how it got there, Charles shrugged “I have no idea.”

Since both sets of parents worked, the two boys were often left to their own devices. Bob’s stepmom worked at Time Inc. and Charles’ mom operated a bi-lingual business school in Manhattan. This was unusual in the early 50s; it wasn’t until 1963 that Betty Friedan, who also lived in Grand View, published *The Feminine Mystique*. When their parents weren’t home, Bob remembers Charles dragging out his father’s gram-weight chemical scale so that they could weigh and evenly share a can of hash for dinner.

When Charles and his family moved to Rockland Road, the boys discovered a Chinese brass cannon and more mischief to get into. One day they made some gunpowder and loaded up the cannon. (In those days, kids’ chemistry sets came equipped with the chemicals needed to make gunpowder.) They aimed the cannon toward Piermont and fired away. Having no idea how far the cannon range might have been, they lined up some cardboard boxes in front of the cannon and fired again. Upon inspection, they noticed a three inch hole had passed through the cardboard boxes and wondered how far the projectile might have traveled. At that point they decided it wasn’t safe to fire again and carefully put the cannon away, worried that they might have killed someone.

After high school, Bob joined the Air Force in San Francisco. Charles headed to the University of California at Berkley. When they could, the two would meet to go camping along the California coast. They remained best friends...sharing the joys and sorrows of their lives until Charles died in 2008. Before that, they spoke every morning, at 9:30, when the stock market opened. —P.J. Mouquin

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This issue of *The Piermont Newsletter*, and many past issues, can be found online at <http://www.piermont-ny.com/newsletter/> thanks to volunteer Richie Stark.

The Goswicks on Call

The siren near Pirelli Park seems to have sounded off a lot during these trying spring and early summer days of lock-down—signaling that someone is going out to do their duty. And the one thing you can be sure of in these very uncertain times is that whichever vehicle is leaving the firehouse to help us all—a fire truck, the ambulance, the chief’s car—will have at least one Goswick aboard and very often more than one. Because the family for whom the pavilion on the pier is named has been involved with the Piermont Fire Department for longer than the rest of us have lived in the Village. And to sit socially distanced from Dan and Candy Goswick to talk about their part of this history, is to begin to understand an admirable tradition of service that has been handed down through generations.

Both of the Goswicks have spent their entire lives in Piermont. Danny was born in the same house where he lives now at 583 Piermont Avenue—he jokes that he just moved downstairs! Candy Lynch was born into a family with another familiar Piermont name, in a house just across from the Post Office. Their mothers had been friends in high school, so their families were very close. And as friends from infancy, Danny and Candy got married in 1988 when Danny was 19. They have been married for 33 years, during which they produced four children, Andy, Samantha, Hope and Danny, all of whom are in the Fire Department except for Andy who having left Piermont, and just returned, will be rejoining!

Given that the job of Fire Chief is a two year commitment, the comings and goings of the Goswicks through the job is dazzling. Texas-born William, Dan’s father was chief in 1967-68 when Dan was an infant. William, “Bill”, Goswick also served as Piermont’s mayor for four terms. Pauline Goswick, Mother of Dan Goswick Sr. is a Life Member of both the fire department and Ladies Auxiliary. She served as dispatcher for the Fire department for many years. She was also an attendant on the Ambulance. Uncle Francis Taulman was chief twice, and Uncle

Lawrence, “Tex”, was chief 3 times. Larry Cabrera is the grandson of “Tex” Goswick and is currently 2nd assistant chief alongside his cousin Dan Goswick, Jr. But Dan has set the record, serving as chief four times—at least so far—

the first time in 1995-96. He is currently a captain in the Fire Department, serves as Harbor Master, as a member of the Underwater Rescue Team and one of the first Emergency Medical Technicians. He has twice been named fireman of the year.

Candy is currently serving as President of the Fire Department’s Ladies Auxiliary—her mother was president for 13 years, and her mother’s other five daughters also served in the Auxiliary. Candy is also in the Emergency Medical Service and serves as police dispatcher. Her father Leroy

Lynch was also the Fire Chief, and her Grandfather, Thomas Lynch, was the engineer in charge of the fire trucks.

Of their children, Samantha is Vice President of the Ladies Auxiliary, Hope is in the EMS, in charge of the ambulance, and Danny Jr. is the present fire chief, who, while serving as Assistant chief in 2018 was recognized for having saved the life of a child by performing CPR. So as this roster indicates, there is always a Goswick or two aboard when the members of the fire department are summoned in any emergency.

So what has this strange time been like? There have been many more emergency calls of all sorts than usual—two or three a day. Inexplicably, there have

been more fires than in a normal year, but the big increase is in medical calls, about 30 of them related to COVID-19. Danny Jr. set up a protocol for dealing with potential viral contamination, the vehicles routinely carry personal protective equipment, and although the firemen do not have COVID-19 tests to administer, they are trained to use oxygen levels, lung sounds and blood pressure to determine whether an individual requires hospitalization or can shelter at home. Danny is proud of the level of training the Department has always provided its members, especially the training that allows them to deal with medical emergencies. —Joan Gussow



Dan and Candy Goswick.



In Memoriam

Lois, Charles and Chanda Bullock

Piermont mourns the loss of three members of the Charles Bullock family - one of Piermont's oldest and most respected families, to COVID-19 in April.

Lois and Charles were childhood neighbors and students at Tappan Zee High School in the 1950's. They later married and together, raised three children, Chanda, Clifton and Charles Jr. Chanda Lori Bullock-Ogburn, a health care worker, also died of COVID-19.

Lois Bullock worked with the Nyack School district, retiring in 1988. Charles was a Palisades Parkway policeman, then trooper. Charles had been a volunteer in the Central Nyack Fire Department since 1968, rising to the rank of Chief in 1978/79.

Lois, Charles and Chanda were all devoted members of St. Charles AME Zion Church in Sparkill. Their deaths are described by Pastor Rev. Brandon McLaughlin as a "crushing blow" to their church community, as it has been to the Piermont community and their neighbors on South Piermont Avenue.

The Bullock family was honored last month by a parade past their homes from Piermont, Nyack and the



Charles and Lois Bullock with their children Clifton, Chanda and Charles, Jr.—
photo by Lian Bullock

county police and fire departments on the occasion of the Bullock's great granddaughter's birthday.

Charles and Lois are survived by their two sons, two granddaughters and two great grandchildren.

Piermont Provides

The Piermont Chamber of Commerce and Piermont Civic Association's joint fundraising campaign, Piermont Provides, raised money and awareness to support the Emergency Room, ICU and other FrontLine Staff at Montefiore Nyack Hospital by delivering to them delicious meals from Piermont restaurants.

Thank you to all of our donors. Together we raised

\$36,000 and delivered hundreds of meals prepared by Piermont's Pier 701, Basque, TWK Community Market, 14 and Hudson and D'Vine Pie. Thank you to the hard-working folks at our local restaurants, and to all the volunteers that organized, packed and made deliveries.

We so grateful to you for your generosity.



Local Heroes

Many nurses, doctors and front line workers call Piermont home – we call them heroes. Among them are Erin Wei and her husband Chris Winfree. Erin has been working as an anesthesiologist at Nyack Montefiore Hospital and also helped out at Forest Hills Hospital during the peak of the pandemic. Erin's husband Chris is a neurosurgeon at Columbia NY-Presbyterian. He and his group helped staff a COVID unit at his hospital. "I was just doing my job. I don't particularly feel like a hero" says Erin.

Erin and her husband moved to Piermont in 2012 right before Superstorm Sandy, from New York City- not the best welcome wagon for the Wei's, nonetheless they stuck it out. Now with two children age five and seven, Piermont has very much become their home.

During the height of the pandemic, Erin and her husband would coordinate their schedules so that one of them was always home with their children. How did they manage those long, long hospital days with two young children at home? Columbia University helped with home schooling and fortunately, our wonderful community also stepped in, Erin says. Her "amazing neighbors" kept her family fed, dropped off many baked goods/desserts, played the part of the Easter Bunny with a multitude of gifts left for the children during the holiday, and along with their generosity of spirit, they kept Erin and her family sane during this horrific time. Erin also was the recipient of meals from Piermont Provides with dinner from Pier 701 funded by local donations.

So as we all feel so grateful to Erin and her husband, she humbly feels thankful to our villagers and Piermont. "What an important role the community's support was during this time" she generously says.

To all our heroes, a heartfelt thank you.—*Joanne Ottaviano*



Erin Wei at work. —photo by Ashley Caggiano, MD



Piermont under COVID-19 shutdown: Friday evening of the Memorial Day weekend typically finds Piermont humming. Crowds of residents and visitors stroll the downtown area, enjoying the shops and restaurants or simply savoring the start of a three-day weekend and the summer season. And of course, parking spots are impossible to find! But the shutdown forced by COVID -19 left downtown Piermont deserted on the Friday of Memorial Day Weekend 2020. There were long intervals with no traffic, and only the occasional pedestrian despite idyllic weather. It's 9 PM – usually prime time – and Piermont Avenue sits nearly empty. Two local residents take the opportunity to chat as they walk their dogs; socially distancing from one another, they carry on a long conversation while standing undisturbed in the middle of Piermont Avenue. 22 May 2020. —Photo by Daniel Spitzer MD

“On Closer Observation...”

I like to think of the quarantine as Mother Earth sending us to our room to be with ourselves.

The Earth needed healing and so did we.

For many of us, this universal Pause of many weeks has not been unwelcome. At first, we were waiting for a return to “normal,” but accepted that this wasn’t going to happen anytime soon. And then we realized: It’s not about waiting.

There was a shift. We began to be more aware of our surroundings, of what’s outside our window. Remember the double rainbow on May 11th? We were all home for that. With fewer distractions, we became more attuned to the natural world. Spring, which was no respecter of the pandemic, arrived with a ferocious brilliance. Or that’s what one neighbor saw on “closer observation.”

“Spring’s first green was gold—with daffodils and forsythia. In May, our neighbor’s weeping cherry tree delighted us with its multitudinous cotton-candy blooms, so many that it turned the very air pink. Through our win-

dow, the natural beauty of spring has been our constant.”

As our vistas shrunk to what we could see around us, one of us observed: “I noticed that my house is like a sundial. Each day I started following the light from window to window.”

And many of us, looking toward the river, watched as a bald eagle routinely swooped and grabbed eels to bring to his nest in Grandview.

A local artist, who often paints the Hudson, was mesmerized each night by the way the sky was dark, but the river was even darker.

Piermont had an otherworldly look to those of us walking the empty streets after dark. Some of us discovered you could clock your running speed on the speed monitor on Paradise Avenue when there were no cars around late at night.

For a couple of weeks, when you walked down Main Street you could find beautiful produce and amazing fresh blue eggs on Laura Straus’ porch. Laura set up contact-free distribution of healthy fresh food there and offered it free to families in need.

Laura’s “porch project” led to local online cooking classes – Piermonterers learned to prepare artichokes and make focaccia while on “lockdown”. One day I chuckled to find a “starter dough” outside my front door. A painter offered a video about expressing oneself large and loose and happily with pastels on 44”x 32” paper.

And the smiling. In spite of all that is happening, a nearby friend added:

Because people are wearing masks when walking in Piermont, I notice that they smile with their eyes. That means we are actually looking at each other. (Not something we usually did in our, rushed, distracted pre-Covid lives when we were always thinking about the next thing and not being present to the moment.) So another gift of connection that the virus’s forced isolation has brought. —Ruth Sullivan



Photo by Robin Watts



The Streets of Piermont

Piermont is a compact arrangement of some 50 streets. A few, like Piermont Avenue and Ash Street, run for several blocks while others, like Broadway and Bridge Street, cover only a few yards. We walk these streets and use their names to give directions with little thought to the meaning or reason for these names.

Twenty-eight streets have geographic place names, seventeen are named for people, and five are named for trees that may or may not have bordered those streets. Many of these names were intended to honor and commemorate a person or place that played a role in the well-being of our village. That intent may have been retained for a generation or two, but in many cases they and their place in the community have now been forgotten.

This list is an attempt to restore some of these names to memory. For the sake of convenience in locating streets, this article divides Piermont into five sections.

North of Ash Street

Hester Street: An 1853 ad in the Rockland County Messenger offered sale of the house of Hester Blauvelt, plus seven other lots fronting Hester St (so the street name was in use as early as 1853). Hester Graham Blauvelt (1782-1854) was at the time, the widow of Nicholas Blauvelt. A reasoned guess: either her husband named the street in her honor, or locals associated the street with her property.

Ritie Street: Another street that appears to be named for a woman, identity unknown. In a search of Rockland newspapers, the only references that turn up are of turn-of-the-century social events. The uncommon name "Ritie" appears as the first name of five different young women in five separate items covering a period of fifteen years (not all in Piermont). These females are the only references located. Ritie Street appears in a 1912 map by the Sanborn Co., but may have been in use prior to that date.

Stevenson Street: For many years the Stevenson family lived here. The family operated a funeral home at the foot of Hester Street until the early 1990's.

South of Ash Street

Tate Ave: Capt. Joseph M. Tate was well-known along the Hudson and the New England coast as the successful owner and skipper of a commercial schooner. He owned much of the property along what was, in 1912, still known as West Lane (now Tate Ave.). He also owned the Tate Building on Piermont's Main St. which, until 1932, housed the post office and a pharmacy. This building, located next to the village hall later became known as the Auryansen Building, and presently is home to the Sidewalk Bistro. The sea eventually took Tate's life. In 1915 during his last trip before retirement, his ship, heavily loaded with oysters, went down in a storm in Narragansett Bay with all hands lost.

Hartz Terrace: [runs north off VFW Way]: When Joseph Hartz's mother was unable to care for her child, he was sent to Saint Agatha's Home in Sparkill. He left there at age five

when he was taken in as a foster child by Dorothy and Ray Holmes on Hudson Terrace. Hartz graduated in 1967 from Tappan Zee High School just down the street, and was soon on his way to Vietnam as an infantryman. During the Tet offensive in 1968 his unit was defending Highway 1 outside Saigon, and in March of that year, just weeks shy of his 20th birthday, Sgt. Joseph Hartz was killed in action.

Ferdon Ave: Ferdon Hall, the columned Greek Revival home that some refer to as the "Gone with the Wind House," was built around 1835 by one of Piermont's wealthiest men, William Ferdon. His son John was a NY Assemblyman, a NY Senator, and in 1856, was elected to the US Congress. When William died in 1872, John moved from his home on Rockland Road into the house on the corner of Ferdon Ave. (The name is a variation of a 1066 Norman family from Verdun in France.)

The Patch & vicinity

The term Patch usually applies to a settlement in a remote or undeveloped area, established by a company to house its (usually) immigrant laborers. Coal companies especially were creators of company towns or patch towns. In the mid-1800s Piermont's Patch consisted of shanties heavily populated by Irish railroad workers.

Ladik St: Michael H. Ladik (c. 1868-1935) ran a successful butcher shop and grocery store on Rockland Lake until that community, along with others, vanished when it was absorbed by the Palisades Park Commission to create the present parkland. Ladik moved to Piermont around 1910 and became a prominent real estate developer and builder in Piermont. He developed properties in the Patch and owned commercial buildings on Main Street. The streets of the Patch, including Ladik Street, were referred to by name in deeds in the late 1920s; they were private ways until taken over by the village by 1940.

Paradise: The story, perhaps apocryphal, is that there were several very attractive young ladies living in Bogertown, all vigorously pursued by eligible young suitors. When these young men traveled along Bogert Lane on their way to the ladies, they referred to their journey as being on the road to Paradise, and the name eventually stuck.

Piermont Landing & vicinity

Devries Court: The first European settlement in this area, called Vriesendale, was established in 1640 by Capt. Petersen DeVries. The settlement was eventually attacked and burned by natives, and DeVries returned to New Amsterdam. His description of the fertile land motivated Jan Pietersen to organize a group of sixteen men to obtain a land grant, known as the Tappan Patent, in 1686. It became the basis of the earliest permanent settlement in what became Rockland County. For years, it was believed that Vriesendale was located near the Tappan Slote, but recent scholarship places it closer to Edgewater, NJ.

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Piermont Marsh Update

It has been seven years since Piermont was blindsided by the Piermont Marsh Draft Management Plan, a funded proposal from HRNERR, that in its original form had proposed to eradicate up to 200 acres of Phragmites or “common reed,” the predominant plant in the Marsh. HRNERR, the agency in charge of the Piermont Marsh, has been doing this in its other Hudson River marshes for years. Its preferred method is mowing followed by years of repeated applications of glyphosate-based herbicide. The theory is that, once a marsh is cleared, the “native” plants that dominated a century ago would rebound.

Unlike the other marshes, Piermont Marsh is adjacent to a human community. And our community’s response to the plan was withering. “No Herbicide” and “Don’t Let DEC Destroy Piermont Marsh” signs sprung up along the Sparkill Creek. Loud objections were voiced at a series of meetings held by DEC in the village. Local opposition did not abate, but rather increased over time, as bad news about glyphosate continued to come out in the press. After Piermonters opposed the original proposal, HRNERR revised its plan in 2018 to eradicate phragmites in only about 40 acres, in the central part of the Marsh.

But glyphosate is far from Piermont’s only issue with the plan. Many Piermonters’ opposition is based on their own observation of the critical role that Phragmites played during Hurricane Sandy. It absorbed much of the destructive force of that storm surge.

In a positive response to the community’s objections, the DEC decided to fund a study by Dr. Peter Sheng of the University of Florida, on the Role Coastal Marshes Play in Protecting Communities from Storm Surges. The study is expected to be completed this summer (2020), with a presentation (with Q and A) that will take place in mid- to late July as an on-line webinar. Stay tuned for announcements so you can join the webinar. Will we know what the DEC plans to do with the marsh then? In a recent conversation, Heather Gierloff, the new head of

HRNERR, assured the Piermont Marsh Alliance that Piermont would be kept informed.

Meanwhile, over the past seven years, a steady drumbeat of very negative news about glyphosate has filled the airwaves, including large damage awards and numerous ads from law firms pursuing actions against the herbicide industry.

Back in 1994, the Village passed a resolution codifying its de facto policy of relying on cutting and other physical means rather than herbicides for dealing with problem vegetation. Last year Mayor Tucker and the Board of Trustees decided to single out glyphosate by passing a resolution entirely banning its use on property belong to the Village of Piermont.

At a recent conference sponsored by the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Program, noted scientist Dr. Judith Weis ended her presentation on Estuarine Phragmites Management with “...despite its bad reputation, Phragmites provides many benefits that are generally unknown and unappreciated. After studying salt marsh

ecology and the impacts of stressors, including invasive plants, for many years, I have concluded that removing this invasive species wherever it is found – especially along vulnerable coastlines – is a very expensive and often foolish procedure.”

Climate change has become a tangible reality in Piermont, with increased sea-level rise and stronger storms. Around the world, shoreline communities are looking to create natural barriers for protection, not remove existing ones. So here we are, going into 2020 with our Marsh still intact, thanks to the vigilance of concerned residents.

—Margaret Grace



Editors note: The date has been set for this workshop: July 16, 7-8:30 p.m. - Public Workshop to Share Results of Piermont Marsh Study. Access details will be announced via email and social media.



From The Library

We at the Piermont Library miss our patrons very much and look forward to brighter days ahead. Although our building remains closed, we are still here for you. You can stay informed about our online resources, as well as our virtual programming, by visiting our website (www.piermontlibrary.org), Facebook, and Instagram. Please like and follow us to make sure you receive notifications. If you need to reach the director, please call 845-580-4070 or for general information email info@piermontlibrary.org. If you are not receiving our enewsletters and emails, please email info@piermontlibrary.org.

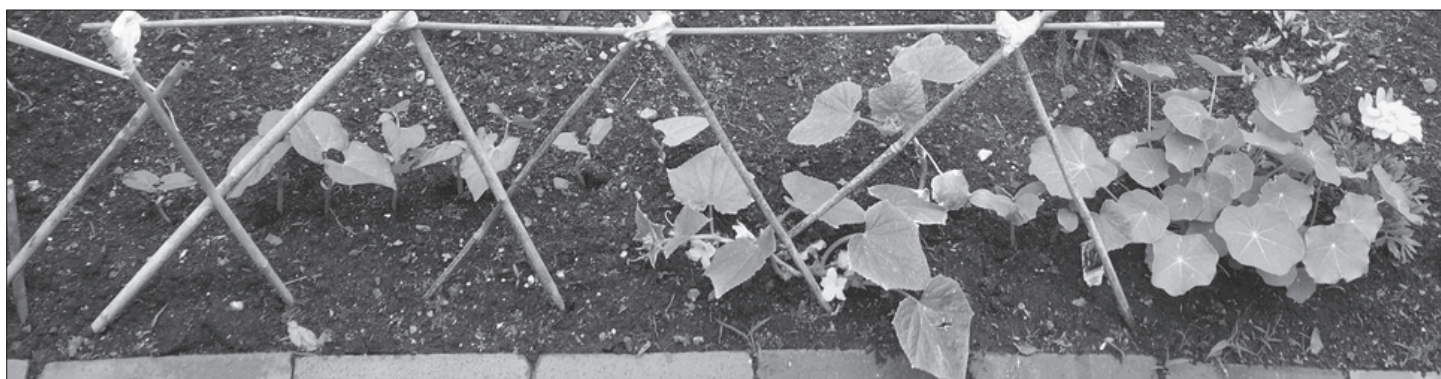
For June we have the work of featured local artist, Robert Adzema online through our Dennis P. McHugh Piermont Public Library Facebook page. You'll also have a chance to see our students' artwork that was part of our Art from

Canada Series. Re-join us here later in the summer as our young artists move to a new theme: The Sea!

We will also be offering Cooking Under Quarantine, and Yoga in Quarantine. Yoga will be with Amie Surya on June 17th at 2:00 p.m. Cooking Under Quarantine will feature Martine, preparing plant-based foods on the 24th at 2:00 p.m.

Over the summer, we will be adding live video art classes for adults and kids as well as other distance programming. Stay tuned for more to come! Further details are available on our website events calendar and social media. Check out some of the fun projects our community has been up to!

We also have digital books and audio books, movies, television, and music available through our website. If you do not have a library card and need one, please email info@piermontlibrary.org. —*Staff of the Piermont Public Library*



Beans, squash and nasturtiums sprout along a Community Garden path

The Community Gardener

As with so many other aspects of our lives, the Community Garden has had to make changes to accommodate the necessities of this time. As an organization and a location, the Community Garden normally serves many functions - members grow food for themselves, their families and their friends, as well as for Rockland based food pantries. There are normally shared tools, shared meals, group work days, shared watering facilities, meetings, parties, and time to sit and enjoy together or alone. For some members, the Community Garden can be the only place where they have their own plot of soil to work.

Stephanie Ryan is our new Garden Coordinator. She explained the new guidelines for our garden community during this time of COVID-19. The garden is still open to

members, with no visitors allowed. Social distancing rules of a minimum of 6 feet apart will be strictly enforced. Members are requested to bring their own tools to the garden, and take advantage of a hand washing station that has been set up by the water faucet.

It's possible that concerns about food shortages will create a new crop of Victory Gardeners all over the country including in Piermont. If you hear of anyone new to gardening specifically for this reason, please ask them if I can check in at the end of the season to see how they did. Please have them send me a contact e-mail and name via e-mail to: RocklandGoesGreen@aol.com. Remember, if you need some gardening help this season, the Cooperative Extension has excellent on line resources: <http://rocklandcce.org/gardening>. —*Susan Freiman*

Front Line Report

While COVID-19 continues to impact Piermont in profound ways, its emergency services departments and the village government are at the ready to help residents. Police Chief James Hurley said the department recognizes what a sad time this is for Piermont, with a number of residents sickened by COVID-19, and a number of deaths within our community. "It is a difficult time for our residents and our police officers who are responding to COVID-19 calls," he said. "I hope that in the near future we can begin to get back to normal in the village."

Chief Hurley said that extra officers have been placed on duty in the village on weekends as parking restrictions have been lifted because Piermont continues to be a popular destination and draws a lot of people to it. His officers are educating both residents and visitors on the need to wear a face mask and to social distance within the village.

"If you want to go out in public and do not have a mask," advised the chief, "we have a supply at the police department and we will distribute them to those who need them." Call the department at 845-359-0240 to arrange to pick up a mask.

The Piermont Fire Department and Ambulance have been extremely busy during the pandemic, according to Fire Chief Daniel Goswick Jr. Four of his members have contracted coronavirus.

Chief Goswick said that because the majority of fire department members are New York State EMTs and/or firefighters, they all have basic hazmet materials training and blood-borne pathogen training, which are both required in this pandemic. "Our policies and procedures are written in such a way that when we respond to calls, we wear Tyvek suits, full respirators or N95 masks, goggles and gloves," he noted. "When we get back from a call, all of these materials need to be disposed of."

In addition, the fire department and ambulance has "three sets of everything," according to the chief. When first responders get back from a call, all equipment is washed down and sanitized. Should the department get another call right away, they have spare equipment to respond with.

The chief, like other first responders in Piermont and around the county, are concerned about a second wave of the coronavirus that could hit this fall. That's why the chief urges caution to everyone going out in public. "Wear masks and social distance. When you go shopping for food, wear gloves. When you get back to your car, properly dispose of the gloves before handling your cellphone or handling your car keys," he urged.

Chief Goswick said that the ambulance service is extremely business and needs residents help. If any resident has a store of N95 masks or sanitizer or virtually any other emergency supplies that they can spare, the ambulance can use them. As a volunteer organization, when the ambulance transports a resident to the hospital, they cannot be reimbursed by the patient's insurance company, something that private ambulance services have available to them to help with funding and budgets.

"The Tyvek suits we wear cost \$175 each," said the chief. "When we get back from a call, we must dispose of that suit." Having at least two first responders on an ambulance and having responded to nearly 100 emergency calls since the pandemic hit, it is easy to calculate the huge cost borne by the village and the ambulance to protect Piermonters in Tyvek suits alone.

Additionally, both the Fire Department and the ambulance needs new volunteers. The Fire Department has traditionally invited potential volunteers to come by on Monday evenings, if they are interested in volun-

teering. Chief Goswick has shut down the fire house for all activities except emergencies, during this time of pandemic. If you are interested in volunteering, the chief urges residents to call the fire department at (845) 359-1208 and set up an interview by Zoom or by phone.

As for the village government, to cut down on the potential transmission of COVID-19, the Piermont Village Hall will continue to keep its doors closed to the general public during this time. The village trustees and other groups will continue to meet virtually. All village departments and especially all first responders are immediately reachable by phone or email.

The Department of Public Works continues its scheduled pick-up of garbage and trash collection and its work throughout the village. The Hazardous Waste Drop-off Facility at 35 Firemen's Memorial Drive in Pomona continues to be open for collection of hazardous waste. You can drop off materials between 8 am and 1 pm Monday through Friday. There are also some weekend drop-off dates. Call the facility at (845) 364-2444.

Want to Reach a Village Official?

Bruce Tucker—Mayor, 845-359-1258 ext 304; Email: btucker@piermont-ny.gov

Jennifer Deyorgi Maher—Clerk Treasurer, 845-359-1258 ext 303; Email: clerk@piermont-ny.gov

Sue Yanitelli-- Court Clerk, 845-359-0345 x2; Email: courtclerk@piermont-ny.gov

James Hurley-- Chief of Police, Dispatch for non-emergencies: 845-359-0240; For all emergencies, call 911; Email: police@piermont-ny.gov

Tom Temple--DPW Supervisor, Phone: 845-359-1717; Email: TTemple@piermont-ny.gov

Charlie Schaub--Building Inspector, 845-359-1258 ext 311

—Ron Derven

Water Chestnut Pull in Sparkill Creek Planned for July

Piermonter Julie Harman reported on the aggressive infestation of water chestnuts in the Sparkill Creek last year for the PCA Newsletter after she and her husband, Tom Mastronardi, who has lived on the creek for 25 years, did a water chestnut pull from their canoe. "The chestnuts block sunlight from penetrating the water and crowd out vegetation supplying food for fish and birds," Tom pointed out. "When they decompose, they deplete the oxygen in the water, which can kill wildlife." Creek dwellers saw the alarming speed in which the weeds spread, dropping their spiked black seedpods in early summer. Now the plants are back

In July, Lindsay Yoder, the Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator for the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM), as well as members of the Trail Conference Conservation Corps Aquatic Invasives Strike Force, will conduct a water chestnut pull in the broad basin of the Sparkill Creek below the skating pond. A tentative date is set for July 12. Due to COVID 19-related state guidelines, local volunteers will not be able to participate in this work. Lindsay hopes there can be a brief shoreline discussion of the water chestnut threat

to our waterways, and a demonstration of pulling techniques before they get started. This event information will be posted closer to the pull date.

Westchester County has thresher-like machines that have been used to pull these plants. Sometimes herbicides are used to kill-off the weeds. For now, hand pulling, and disposal of the plants by the Piermont DPW is the plan for the Sparkill Creek. Lindsay hopes their team will be able to return to the creek for a second pull in August. If not, a second pull may be done by the Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance. Even with aggressive pulling programs, the weeds require 5-12 years of pulling to be eradicated according to the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management.

The Sparkill Creek's upper pond is home to a myriad of wildlife and waterfowl. This habitat for egrets, heron, bullfrogs, carp and turtles is at risk if the creek waters become clogged with water chestnut weeds. Piermont welcomes Lindsay and her team's arrival in July.

Here is a link to Julie's Harman's earlier article in the Piermont Newsletter, page 5: www.piermont-ny.com/newsletter/Fall_19.pdf

The Streets of Piermont continued from page 8

Gair St: Before there were condos, the area now called Piermont Landing was home to a large paper mill that operated on the site for half a century. The company, founded in Brooklyn by a Scottish immigrant named Robert Gair, merged with the Piermont Paper Company in 1920, and re-located in the old railyards of the Erie Railroad. The Robert Gair Company developed a process to simultaneously print and construct cartons, an innovation that would change merchandising. Instead of storing and selling food-stuffs out of barrels, stores now could display products like biscuits and breakfast cereals on shelves in cartons identifiable by graphics and logos. The Robert Gair Company would eventually consist of 22 plants in the U.S. and Canada, making boxboard, folding cartons, and corrugated shipping containers. In 1957 the company was absorbed by the Continental Can Co.

Abbotsford: Eleazar Lord and Washington Irving visited Sir Walter Scott's home in Britain in the early 1800s. Called Abbotsford, it was a castle-like structure that became the inspiration for a mansion that Lord would build for himself on the hill above Piermont.

Rte 9W/Lawrence Park & vicinity

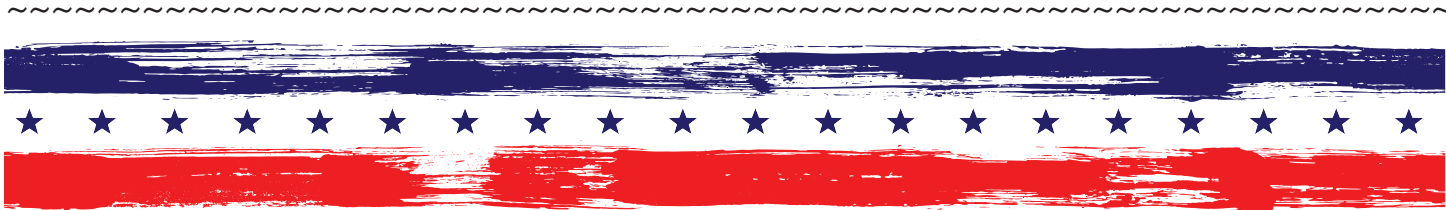
Hickey St: For well over a century the Hickeys have been part of the every-day functioning of the village. In the decades surrounding 1900 James Hickey was Orangetown's constable (law enforcement officer). William Hickey was the Orangetown poormaster (constable) in the mid-1900s and

was later chief of police in Piermont. George Hickey was an active participant in almost every aspect of village life. He served as a village trustee for 18 years, was on the Tappan Zee board of education 15 years, was chief of the Piermont fire department for 13 years, and was president for 20 years of the Local 89, International Papermakers' Union. He founded and was first president of the Gair company credit union.

Bauer Lane: Oswald Bauer was a well-known attorney who was also president of the Orangeburg Fair Association, the Sparkill Publishing Company, and publisher of the Sparkill Herald. In 1909 he built what is now called the Bauer-Crowley Building to house his law and real estate offices. He was attorney for the First National Bank of Sparkill. The bank was built in 1914 on the site of the old Sugar Loaf Mountain (excavated, and its dirt transported to fortify the Piermont Pier), across from the park that was the site of the old Erie Railway Sparkill Station.

Lawrence Park: In pre-revolutionary days and for some years thereafter, members of the Lawrence family owned extensive property in and around the Tappan area.

Castle Road: This road leads to the mansion built by Eleazar Lord, first president of the Erie Railroad, which was modeled after Sir Walter Scott's home (Abbotsford, also the name of a street in Piermont Landing). Lord called his home The Cedars, but locals referred to it as Lord's Castle. —*Ralph Titus*



JUNE 23, 2020

PRIMARY VOTING INFORMATION AND REMINDER

EARLY VOTING DATES

- Saturday, June 13, 2020 from 9AM until 2PM
- Sunday, June 14, 2020 from 9AM until 2PM
- Monday, June 15, 2020 from 9AM until 5PM
- Tuesday, June 16, 2020 from 12Noon until 8PM
- Wednesday, June 17, 2020 from 9AM until 5PM
- Thursday, June 18, 2020 from 12Noon until 8PM
- Friday, June 19, 2020 from 9AM until 5PM
- Saturday, June 20, 2020 from 9AM until 2PM
- Sunday, June 21, 2020 from 9AM until 2PM

ROCKLAND EARLY VOTING CENTERS: In Rockland County registered voters may access any early voting center. Masks and social distancing will be required.

1. Clarkstown Town Hall, 10 Maple Avenue, New City, New York
2. Haverstraw Town Hall, 1 Rosman Road, Garnerville, New York
3. Orangetown Town Hall, 26 West Orangeburg Road, Orangeburg, New York
4. Ramapo Town Hall, 237 Route 59, Suffern, New York

ABSENTEE BALLOTS:

Governor Cuomo signed an Executive Order enabling all registered New Yorkers to obtain an absentee ballot for the June 23, 2020 Primary. The application and a postage paid return envelope was mailed May 22, 2020. Voters should have received the mailing during the week of May 25, 2020.

For this election only, the application may be submitted via email or fax. As always, the application may be submitted via regular mail. Drop in applications are also accepted. Visitors to the Board are asked to wear a mask and follow our social distancing directives. The signature requirements have been relaxed for the June 23, 2020 Primary only. You may submit the application electronically, with an electronic signature. A special PDF Application for the June 23, 2020 Primary Election is available. You may also request an Absentee Ballot by sending a letter or email. The letter must be received no later than June 16, 2020. The letter must contain the following information: your name and date of birth, the address where you are registered, an address where the ballot is to be sent, and the reason for the request. The letter may be sent via mail, email or fax. Our email is VoterInfo@co.rockland.ny.us and our fax is 845-638-5196. The letter request is valid for the June 23, 2020 Primary only. All other elections require an absentee application.

NOTE: IF YOU HAVE REQUESTED AN ABSENTEE BALLOT, AND DECIDE YOU WOULD RATHER VOTE IN PERSON, YOU MAY DO SO AND TEAR YOUR BALLOT UP.

ALL PIERMONTERS VOTING IN PERSON ON PRIMARY DAY, JUNE 23rd WILL VOTE AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, 895 PIERMONT AVENUE. Masks will be required. A limited number of people will be allowed in the polling sites at one time, and social distancing will be enforced.

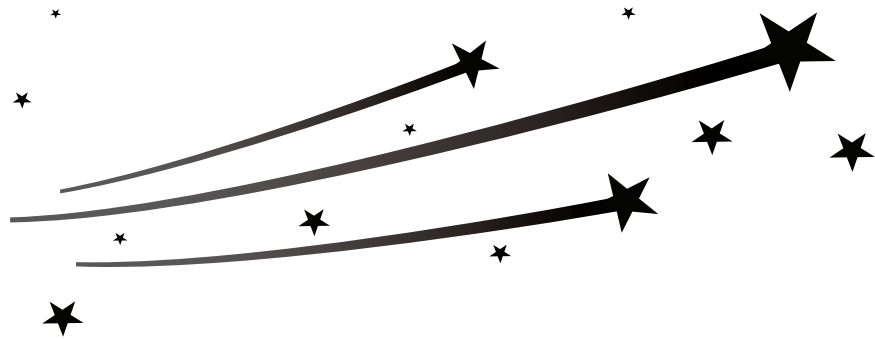
For forms, applications and additional information: Voterockland.com

The Piermont Civic Association presents
Summer 2020 Flywheel Concerts Under the Stars

These programs are tentatively scheduled, with changes and cancellations possible due to State and Village restrictions that may still be in place during Summer months. We will be posting updates on the Piermont Civic Association's Facebook page and on other social media.

July 9, rain date July 16 – TBD
 July 23, rain date July 30. Sam Waymon Group
 August 6, rain date August 13 Jeb Jones Band
 August 20, rain date August 27 Old #7 Band

The Piermont Civic Association looks forward to continuing our great tradition of offering free concerts on Summer evenings in Flywheel Park.



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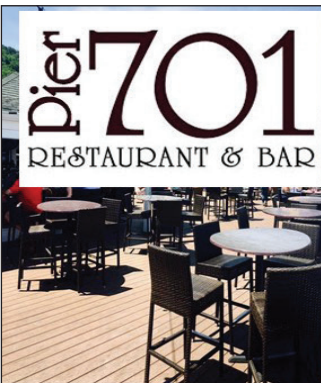
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