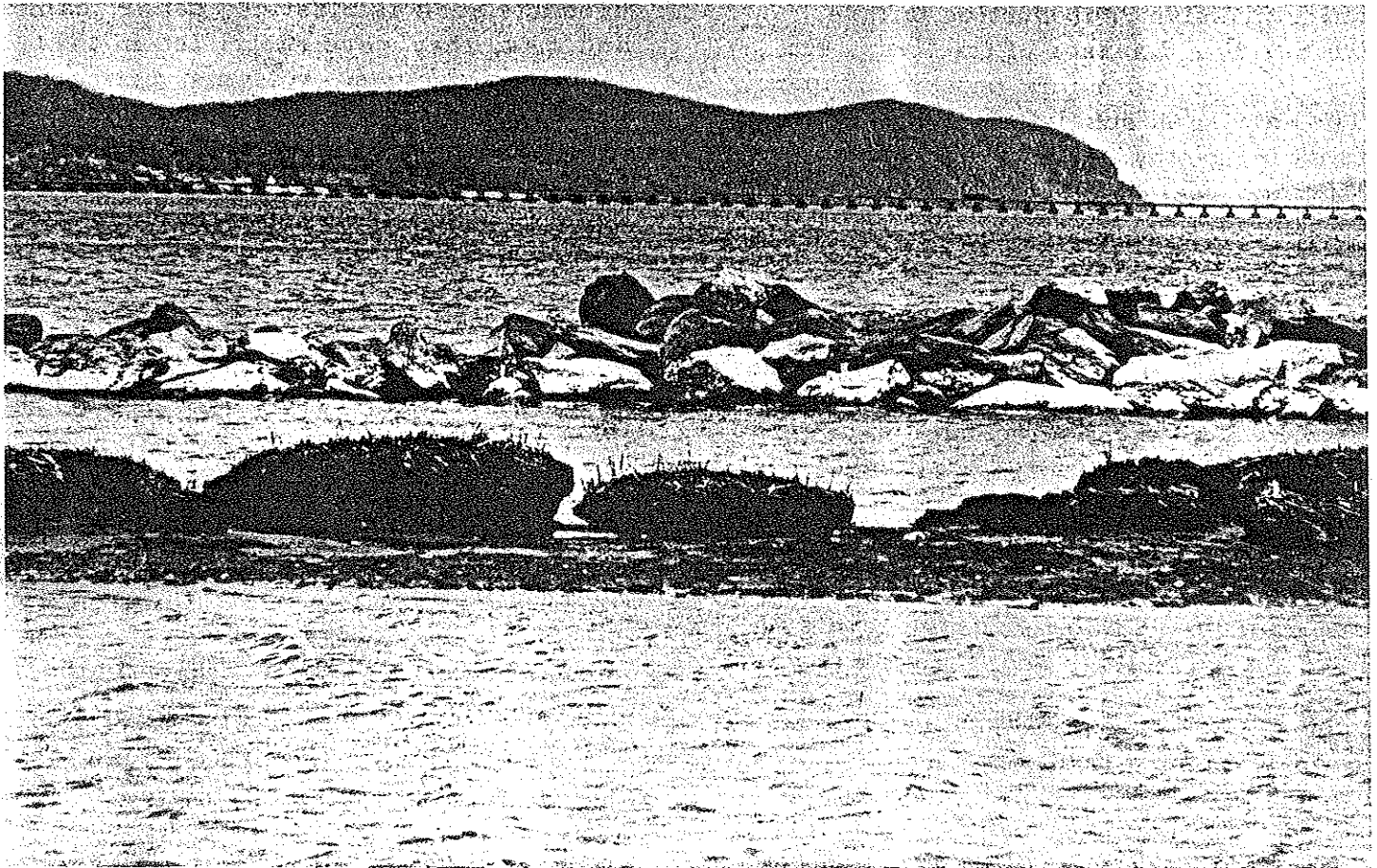


# THE PIERMONT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME X, No. 2

PUBLISHED BY THE PIERMONT CIVIC ASSOCIATION

JULY 1976



## WHO'S AFRAID OF THE PCB'S?

Stan Jacobs

We've been talking this spring with Piermont's Don Hardy and with officials of the N. Y. State Environmental Conservation Commission (DEC) about the latest Hudson River pollution problem. Since 1942 highly toxic and persistent PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls) have been discharged into the river from General Electric's Glens Falls and Fort Edwards plants. The river's commercial fishery was largely closed in February by DEC for the first time in history, and all fishing has been prohibited in the upper Hudson between Ft. Edwards and the Troy Dam. The ban presently includes crabs and all fish except shad, sturgeon over 4 feet, and goldfish. No levels have been set

on other species, although high levels have been found in a few ducks that feed on fish or shellfish. Fines of up to \$7 million and cleanup costs of at least \$20 million may be assessed against GE, but so far it is the commercial fishermen who have had to absorb the major losses, now running on the order of 50% of their usual incomes. Economic effects extend to related businesses, such as fish markets, restaurants, and the sale of bait and fishing equipment. It is a serious setback to much recent talk about the improving quality of the river water.

Some wonder what all the fuss is about, since no cases of PCB poisoning related to the consumption of Hudson River food products have been proven. One hears such opinions expressed as

"the fish taste perfectly good", "whatever is in the river will be diluted enough to be harmless", or "it's all a plot to keep us from fishing the river". There are, however, well-documented effects on laboratory animals--loss of hair, massive reproductive failure, cancer-like diseases of the liver, etc., and 16 reported human deaths in Japan. The catalog of sub-lethal human symptoms is lengthy: fatigue, dizziness, jaundice, weight loss, abdominal pain, uterine ulcers, headache, pain in the joints, allergic dermatitis, asthmatic bronchitis, fungus infections, nausea, acne, pigmentation changes and so on. Over a 15-year period at least 65 GE workers have become ill from their work with PCB's. Possible cancer-causing effects have perhaps received undue attention, but it's notable that environmental carcinogens are now recognized as the chief cause of cancer.

Human and animal dosage levels have varied widely, and little is known about tolerance levels. Even less is known about possible synergistic interactions between PCB's and other environmental parameters near the tolerance limits. Among some 2000 persons tested in the U. S. in 1973-74, 5% had more than 3 ppm (parts per million) in fatty tissues, while 33% had more than 1 ppm. Fish are now considered by the FDA, somewhat arbitrarily, to pose a hazard to the regular fish-eater when they reach 5 ppm. Tappan Zee bass have been tested at 3-50 ppm, and shad at 1-9 ppm. The highest levels were measured in an eel from the upper Hudson, 559 ppm. A 150 lb. adult eating a 50 ppm fish will not, of course, raise his own PCB level by that amount, even if he absorbs all of the chemical. PCB's are readily soluble in fatty tissue, however, and the more toxic varieties are only purged slowly, so the concentrations are cumulative. Like alcohol and cigarettes, the chance of eventual damage is higher when usage is prolonged. Nonetheless, many of us continue with these more common variants of Russian roulette.

PCB's are similar in chemical structure to DDT, but are more toxic, and less biodegradable. They have good insulating and heat-transfer properties, and are flame-retardant. Used over the last 45 years in a wide variety of products such as plastics, paper, paints and inks, they were restricted in 1971 to so-called closed-systems, primarily in electrical products. Now manufactured only by Monsanto in the U. S., PCB's will reportedly be "phased out" entirely in the near future. Acceptable substitutes already exist. PCB's do not occur naturally, and are extraordinarily resistant to being broken down in the environment into less harmful forms. At present only some obscure soil bacteria and incineration over 2000°F are known to be effective. PCB's can now be found in most living organisms on the planet, including Antarctic birds, and frequently at levels ten to a thousand times higher than is DDT. Unfortunately, the highest levels measured in fish anywhere in the U. S. have been in those from the Hudson River.

The G. E. plants were charged last October with breaking two statutes pertaining to discharge into the river, and have since lowered their effluent levels from 30 lbs. of PCB/day to about 1 lb., against a goal of zero discharge by June, 1977. Even if those PCB faucets can be turned off completely, however, many problems remain. Foremost is how to clean up an estimated 460,000 pounds of poison remaining in the river. PCB's are heavier than water, and tend to stick to suspended particles and settle to the bottom. There they are taken up by living organisms and accumulate at higher levels in the food chain. Levels in the river water itself appear to be extremely low. Poughkeepsie and 3 other communities, in fact, draw (and treat) their drinking water from the river. The many local sailors and few hardy swimmers won't likely suffer from the accidental mouthful, though swallow-

continued on page 2:

...emergencies, such as unexpected legal fees, up \$10,000.

Almost everywhere U. S. citizens are rising up against steeply increasing local property taxes. They are contesting and even rejecting school budgets and bond issues. The trouble, of course, is that the cost of municipal government and education, as a rule is rising a good deal faster than the general price level. Piermont, unfortunately, is no exception to the rule. Residents of Piermont want and like their village services; probably nowhere do taxpayers get so much for their money. But the fact remains, the cost of these services is soaring. In fiscal 1968-69 village taxes were already \$168,000 or roughly \$67 for every man, woman and child in town. In fiscal 1975-76 village taxes came to \$390,796 or \$156 for each inhabitant, a 30 percent increase in 7 years, or an average increase of 18 percent a year.

Last April 12 the Village Board presented the 1976-77 budget to a group of citizens who had taken the trouble to attend the meeting. There were no cheers. Piermonters found that taxes will rise from \$390,796 in 1975-76 to \$454,578 in the coming fiscal year, a 16 percent increase. What's more, the increase was understated in a sense. The Village government transferred \$39,800 from capital funds (money left over from the \$661,00 sewer bond issue of 1968) to the village revenue account. In other words, if 1976-77 taxes were figured as they were last year, they would come to \$494,376 an increase of 26 percent, or a cost per inhabitant of \$194.

Accounting for a large part of the 1976-77 increase were retirement of debt, up \$8,400; street lighting bills, up nearly \$5,000; insurance, up \$2,400; judgements and claims up \$2,000; employee wages and benefits up \$19,000; contractual expenses (supplies, ambulance equipment, part time help, rentals, spare parts, building repairs, etc.), up about \$17,000 including a fire hydrant rental increase of more than \$6,000;

A large part of all these increases is obviously mandatory; and most of the rest cannot be slashed summarily because the outlays are an integral part of the village operation. Yet if expenses keep on rising as they have been, they will about quadruple in fifteen years, even without any allowance for inflation and will cost each inhabitant an intolerable \$800 a year. Piermont plainly has got to look at its budget as a whole, setting one service against the other, and decide what it can afford, not only next year but in the years ahead. Then Piermont has got to do what is necessary to reconcile its ends and its means. ■

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### CONVALESCENT HOME UP FOR SALE

The familiar old gray building on Rte. 9-W in Upper Grandview known as the Jewish Convalescent Home is now for sale. The building has served as a half-way house for ambulatory convalescents from the time it was purchased by the Jewish Convalescent Home sixty years ago until utilization of the aged structure ended two and one half years ago. During that period, as many as 90 to 100 post-surgical, heart, and hospital patients at a time were able to complete their cures in scenic splendour, and perhaps in greater isolation from the world than some might have preferred. Patients usually stayed several weeks, until able to return home.

The home was founded by a Jewish charitable group, also named The Jewish Convalescent Home. The 9-W property was its only facility. Patients were admitted on a non-sectarian basis, and without regard to race. The needy were admitted without charge.

Since the facility was closed, the building has suffered from vandals, and both the charity and residents hope for an early sale of the seven acre property. The charity itself is now in the process of legal dissolution. ■

## ★ PCA REPORT

The Piermont Civic Association has had an active year.

★ attracted an overflow crowd at our 10th Annual Dinner where our PCA cooks outdid themselves in preparing delicious food, and Ed MacPherson charmed us with his verses.

★ pressed the New York State DOT for a reduced speed school zone and elimination of the passing zone in front of Tappan Zee Elementary School on 9W. These changes are now in effect.

★ successfully petitioned the Orangetown Town Board to appropriate money from Town Revenue Sharing monies, for the purchase of flashing lights marking the new school zone at TZE

★ watched a historical slide presentation given by Howard Brawner, a marvelous collection of photos that made "Olde Piermont" come to life.

★ immortalized-- the March issue of the Newsletter was selected as Piermont's contribution to Rockland County's official 1976 Time Capsule.

★ held the second annual Memorial Day Blue Grass Fair (see centerfold story)

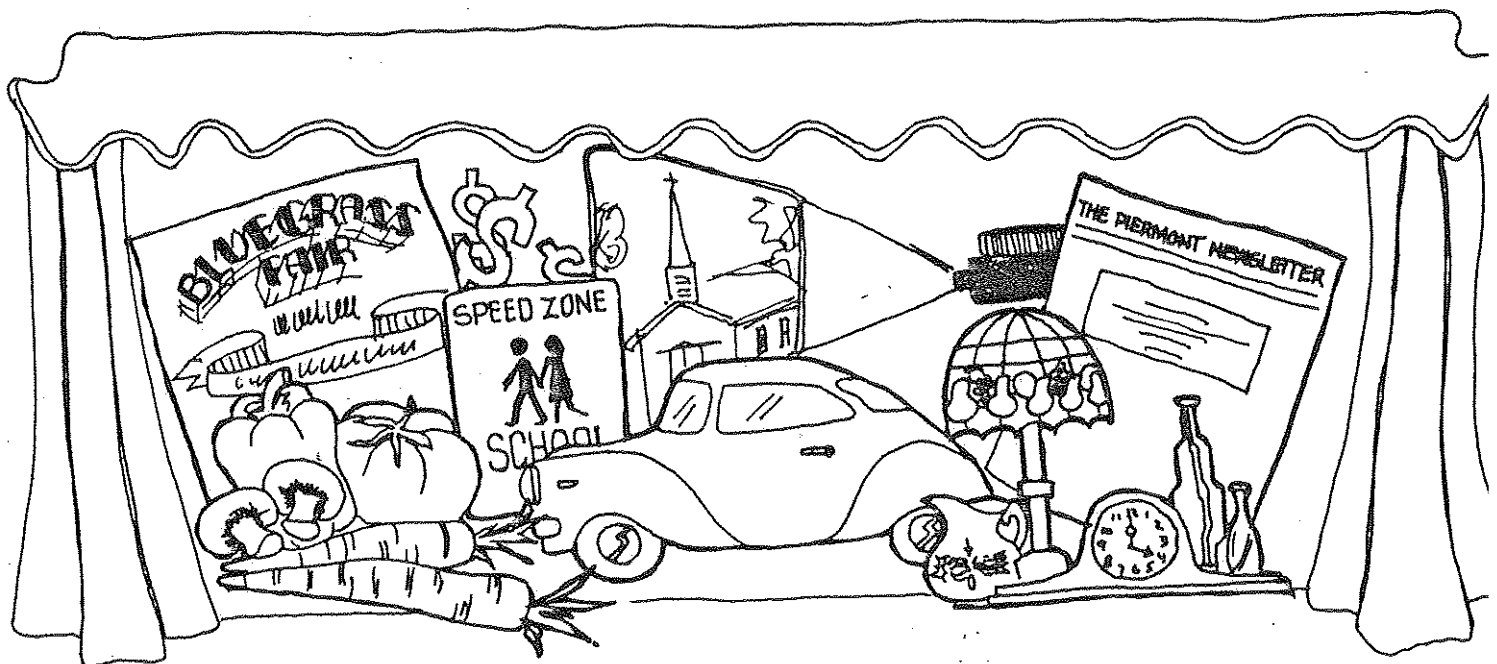
★ sponsoring on September 19 the second Piermont Antique Fair. All community groups are invited to participate free of charge in the Fair that will be professionally managed by Heirlooms International

★ contracted for the purchase of a new stage curtain for the Village Hall. The curtain, new backdrop, and new hardware should be in place by the end of the summer. It is the PCA's gift to Piermont in the Bicentennial year. We hope it will brighten the hall, improve the acoustics and stimulate amateur theatricals. Thanks to all who participated in our successful fund raising that made this gift possible.

For the PCA to continue activities on behalf of the Village and its residents we need your support. Increased membership is vital and volunteers for our projects are needed.

Dues are \$5.00 per year for a family membership. Dues monies are used to publish this Newsletter, and its continuous publication is dependent on your support. Please send in your membership dues today to PCA Treasurer, Maggie Voorhees.

Volunteers for projects or to help with the Newsletter contact Carole Novick.



## PIER CLEAN-UP

On Saturday, April 24, the Piermont Conservation Commission (CAC) held its second clean-up of the Piermont Pier. More than twenty people donned work clothes and boots to spend the day removing the past year's accumulation of litter from this unique piece of land.



*Bob Cone and Lennie Hunt at the Pier clean-up.*

CAC members and experienced clean-up hands alike agreed that the rate of litter the past twelve months had been encouragingly low, in spite of the fact that a full eight-hour cleaning day was necessary. However, several problems, due to the status of the pier, make additional clean-ups more inevitable than some had hoped. For one, the pier is not owned by the Village but by Continental Can, who leases the land to Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory. Although the gates, placed at the entrance to the pier by Lamont, after the closing of the dump, prevent the auto traffic which brought so much of the garbage; Lamont does leave the gates open, sometimes for weeks, when one of its vessels is docked. It is difficult to determine the Village's role on land owned and leased by other parties.

All concerned individuals agree, however, that if numerous garbage disposal cans were placed strategically

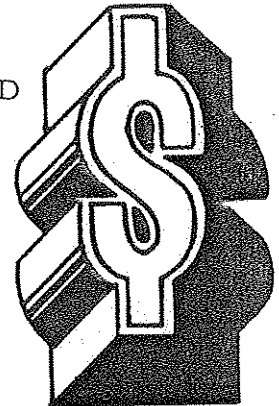
along the pier, the clean-up problem would be greatly alleviated. Currently, the CAC is working with the Village to see if these disposal cans could be placed along the entire length of the pier and with Lamont about the problems which arise when the gates are open.

With these accomplishments and the cooperation of the many people who enjoy the pier for biking, fishing, birding, and walking, the CAC hopes the '76 Clean-Up will not need a follow-up in '77. ■

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## SEWER TAX REFUND

If your house is not tied into the town sewer system and you rely on septic tanks, you may be eligible for a tax refund from Orangetown. Walter Butler, president of the West Hudson Environmental Association received a \$27.74 refund on his \$34.68 sewer tax bill after he complained that his home is not tied into the town system. It is through his efforts that the problem comes to light.



By law, Orangetown may assess all citizens 100% sewer tax whether they are tied into the system or not, however, Orangetown has agreed to assess those not using the system at a 20% rate. The problem is that Orangetown has not properly identified all the houses that fall into the non-user category. To check whether you would be eligible for a refund, check the tax rolls in Orangetown Town Hall. If you find as a non-user you have been assessed at the 100% rate contact Donald Brenner, Town Supervisor of Public Works, he will verify your claim and help you to have your assessment changed and collect any refund due you. ■

## DO YOU HAVE A PERMIT TO DO THAT?

Word has gone out from the village government that a crackdown has begun on violators of regulations requiring permits from the village, especially for construction and demolition work. A meeting of village officials was held recently for the specific purpose of studying this problem, and as a result all village employees--including police and road crew--will be serving as "eyes and ears for the Building Inspector" to detect work for which no permit has been obtained.

In a discussion of this new determination to enforce the regulations, Mayor Bryan expressed a certain understanding of the more relaxed attitudes of the past, when common sense and a due consideration for your neighbors interest was usually enough to protect the public interest. However new concerns with the protection of the environment, construction on more difficult sites as available land grows more scarce, and the inexorable rise of taxes has made it necessary for the village to enforce permit regulations more effectively.

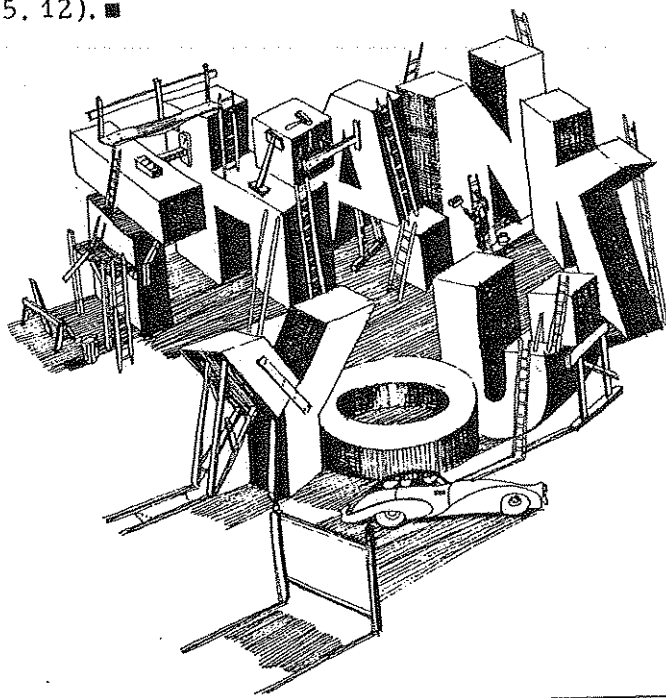
Most minor violations are simply due to lack of knowledge of the regulations, but the more serious, deliberate circumventions of the building permit law are usually motivated by the desire to build in violation of codes (for which a permit would not be granted) or to keep improvements out of official records to avoid tax increases. (It is worth noting that it is also difficult to reduce taxes if a property owner keeps demolition out of the public records, so be sure to get a demolition permit before tearing down that shed.)

A building permit is required for all new construction and additions to existing structures. In the case of alteration of existing structures, the need for a permit depends on the nature of the work. Structural changes, involving the

strength or support of a building, require a permit, as do changes in the number of plumbing fixtures. Minor renovations often do not. The Building Inspector, Clem Miller, has fairly wide discretionary powers in alteration work, and is the best source of information about the need for a permit for any proposed alteration work.

In addition to the general requirements for new construction and alterations, the village ordinances require permits for certain specific things which do-it-yourself Piermonsters should remember (ordinance paragraph in parenthesis): storing building materials such as sand or bricks on street or sidewalk (1.4), excavating or opening surface of street or sidewalk (1.6), moving buildings (1.7), erection of poles or wires over public property (1.8), improvement of streets or sidewalk (1.9), construction of cesspools or septic tanks (4.2), connecting to public sewers (4.3), and construction of private swimming pools (7.4).

One final note: if you object to this new crackdown and decide to organize a protest, don't forget your parade permit (5.12). ■



When the Piermont Summer Recreation Program opens this July 6th it will be the 30th year that children in Piermont have been offered a morning recreation program free of charge. Beginning in the mid-forties a patrolman in Tallman Mountain Park, Harry Drews, organized the Tallman Boys Club which many young Piermonters remember fondly. After Harry Drews died in 1950 the Village Board instigated a Village run program directed by John Streppone and later by August Reissman.

For 5 weeks beginning July 6th young Piermonters who have completed kindergarten through age 13 meet for swimming, nature study, arts and crafts, instrument instruction and singing, with emphasis this season on taking a lot of field trips, seeing the Mets play at Shea Stadium, and at least one bike tour.

Last year 145 children participated in the summer program. High school age aides, 7 in all, are counselors. Most of those who were counselors last summer will be back. Marge Spring is

Brainard is this years director and life-guard. Suzanne Coletta will again be in charge of arts and crafts. Grace Meyer will lead the nature studies. The organizational setup has benefitted Piermont teenagers looking for paid employment early in the summer. Their pay is the minimum wage and 7 posts are available each year. Most of the aides have gotten their training in the summer program when they served a season as volunteers at age 14 or 15. After the summer of volunteer help and training is behind them, teenagers may be assured of a paid position the following summer.

Marge Spring speaks for the '76 program in looking forward to a good summer from July 6 to August 13. She thinks a Time Capsule enterprise might be an appropriate and challenging undertaking this Bicentennial summer.

For Piermonters of all ages, the pool will stay open 2 weeks after the end of the summer recreation program. Grandview children may also attend the morning program, paying a nominal fee to the Village to participate. ■

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## PIERMONT LIONS CHARTERED

The Piermont Lions Club, which was organized in January of this year, was officially recognized at its Charter Night ceremony on May 15th. During the Charter Night, the club received gifts and pledges of support from other Lions Clubs in this area of the state and from the Lions International.

The Piermont Club presently has thirty-one members, primarily from Piermont, but also residing in Grand View, Upper Nyack, Sparkill and Tappan. The club is being nursed through its formative stages by Ray Icobelli of the Blauvelt Lions, who, as Guiding Lion, is helping president Tom DeRaffele to establish the club on solid footing.

The Piermont Lions are a service organization dedicated to helping the community. The club is already working on several projects. They are negotia-

ting with the Clevepack Paper Company for permission to carry out a plan to restore the beach area and establish a sitting park. This park would be dedicated to the memory of Frank Parelli, late Lion treasurer and resident of Piermont. The Lions have supplied needed gates on the local little league field. The labor involved in this project was volunteered by Lion members Lou DeGennaro and Mario Pellegrino.

In a larger project, the Piermont Lions are planning to participate in the restocking of the Sparkill Creek and aid in setting up casting instruction for interested youngsters in Orangetown.

The Piermont Lions meet at the Hudson Terrace Restaurant at 7:30 p. m. on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Anyone interested in joining should contact Tom DeRaffele at 359-6013. ■



The biggest project the Library has sponsored in some time has now been completed and proudly displayed. The Bicentennial Quilt is made up of 30 appliqued squares which depict scenes from Piermont and its history. It all started two years ago when Lisa Ordahl gave a talk and demonstration of quilting which caught the imagination of several women and ultimately resulted in twenty-seven women spending over a year, under the competent direction of Mary Kennedy, making Piermont's quilt.

Mary Kennedy of Tappan is the coordinator of two other bicentennial quilts made for the Rockland Historical Society. Most of the twenty seven who worked on Piermont's quilt are from the immediate neighborhood, but several are dedicated quilters from other areas of the county who have contributed their skills to many quilts.

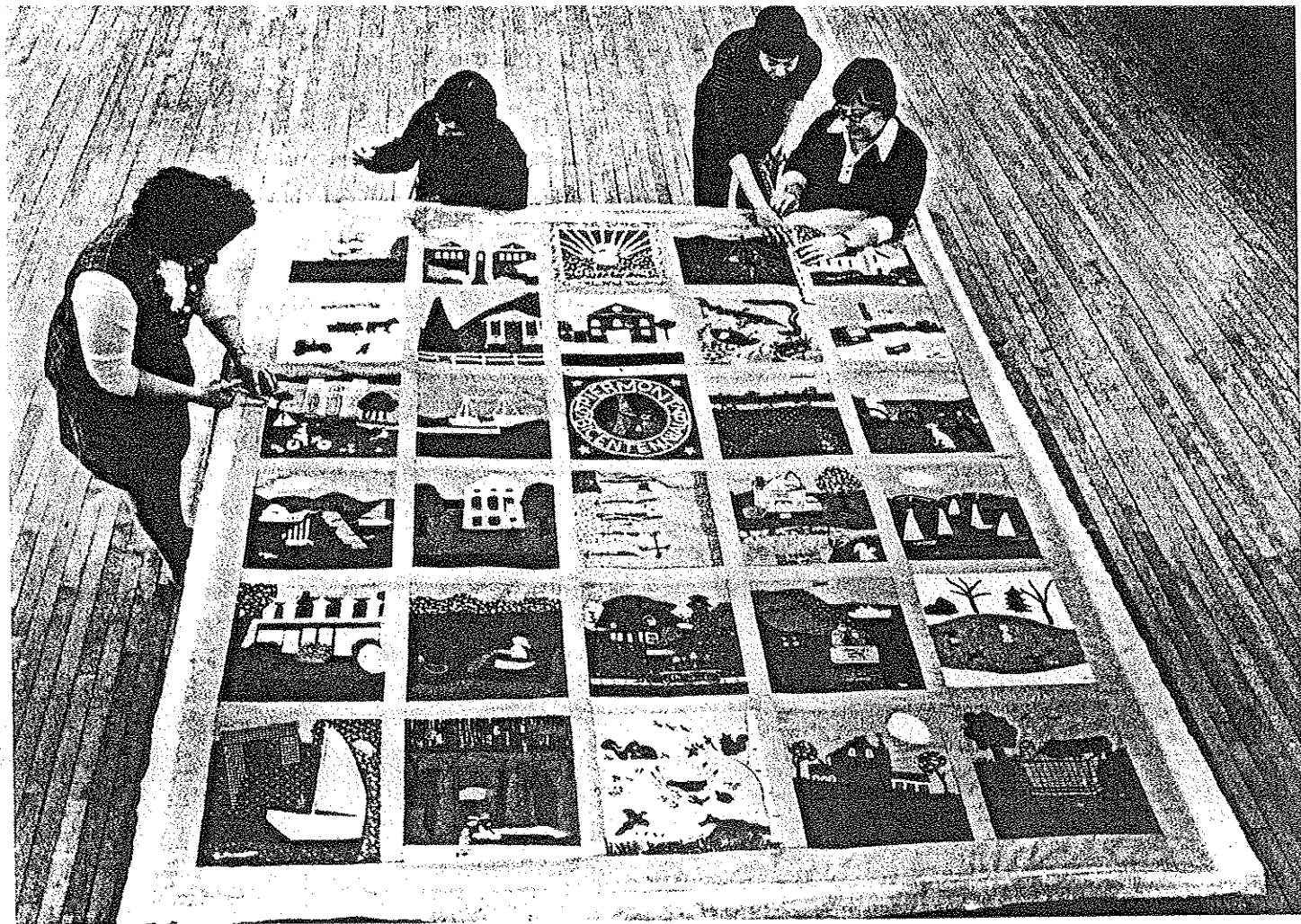
Diplayed at the Library during May, the quilt has now moved to the Pearl River Library for display in June. After that, it returns to the Piermont Village Hall, where it will be permanently hung. A brief biographical sketch of each of the quilters accompanies a description of the square she made in the broadside which is displayed with the quilt. Following is a listing of each square and its quilter: 1. The Half Moon, by Margaret Holihan, Piermont; 2. Winter on the Hudson, Velma Fluhr, Nyack; 3. Fort

4. DeMaio's Boat Yard, Barbara DeMaio, Piermont; 5. Onderdonk House, Helena Hora, Congers; 6. Draw Bridge, Barbara Stackfleth, Piermont; 7. Tappan Zee High School, Julie Jackson, Piermont; 8. Kane Park, Grace Meyer, Piermont; 9. Vema, Milly Alvarez, Piermont; 10. Piermont Public Library, Mary Polinsky, Grand View; 11. Shad Fishing, Phoebe Braun, Piermont; 12. Mine Hole, Marian Brugger, Tappan; 13. Mayor Mimi Bryan, Sue Hesse, South Nyack; 14. Piermont Village Hall, Rikki Samuels, Orangeburg; 15. Piermont Bicentennial Block, seal designed especially for the quilt by Portia Takakjian, Piermont; 16. Map, Rikki Samuels; 17. Piermont Railroad Station, Naomi Phillips, Upper Nyack; 18. Marsh Wildlife, Marie Ruggiero, Pearl River; 19. Fishing on the Hudson, Hilde Schwartz, S. Nyack; 20. Fish of the Hudson, Helena Hora; 21. Viaduct, Sally Caiti, Upper Nyack; 22. Piermont's First Schoolhouse, Marge Puzziferri, Pearl River; 23. Pier During World War II, Mary Kennedy, Pearl River; 24. Castle, Dina DuBois, Piermont; 25. St. John's Catholic Church, Berta Miller, West Nyack; 26. Factory, Jan Engelder, Piermont; 27. Fire Department, Mimi Bryan, Piermont; 28. Sailing, Linda Sullivan, Piermont; 29. Skating Rink, Mary Rotelli, Piermont; 30. Cannon, Hilde Schwartz.

The quilt is not just an achievement, it is lovely and everyone who can should arrange to see it - allowing plenty of time to appreciate the fine detail and delightful humor and nostalgia of every square. We owe many thanks to Libraria Grace Meyer and Master Teacher Mary Kennedy for their perseverance in pulling it all together.

Plans for the Library's Summer Program are set and ready to go. Our Children's Librarian, Paula Scholz, is going on a sabbatical to Japan with Chris, her seismologist husband, and their children until 1977. Julie Jackson





*Left to right, Mary Kennedy, coordinator; Grace Meyer, librarian; Ruth Brawner, co-chairman, Bicentennial Commission; Mimi Bryan, Mayor.*

*Photo by Art Sarno/Courtesy of The Journal News*

will be standing in for Paula until her return. Julie will conduct the regular Tuesday morning story hours for preschoolers at 10:30 a.m. On Tuesday afternoons during the summer there will be puppet workshops at the Library. The Beachcombers Reading Club will be in full swing again this summer. Registration is from Monday June 21st to Friday, July 2nd at the Library. The reading club will run for five weeks, from July 5th to August 5th, and there will be the usual fabulous collection of prize shells for young readers to choose from. The Reading Club party is scheduled for Thursday, August 5th at 3:00 p.m.

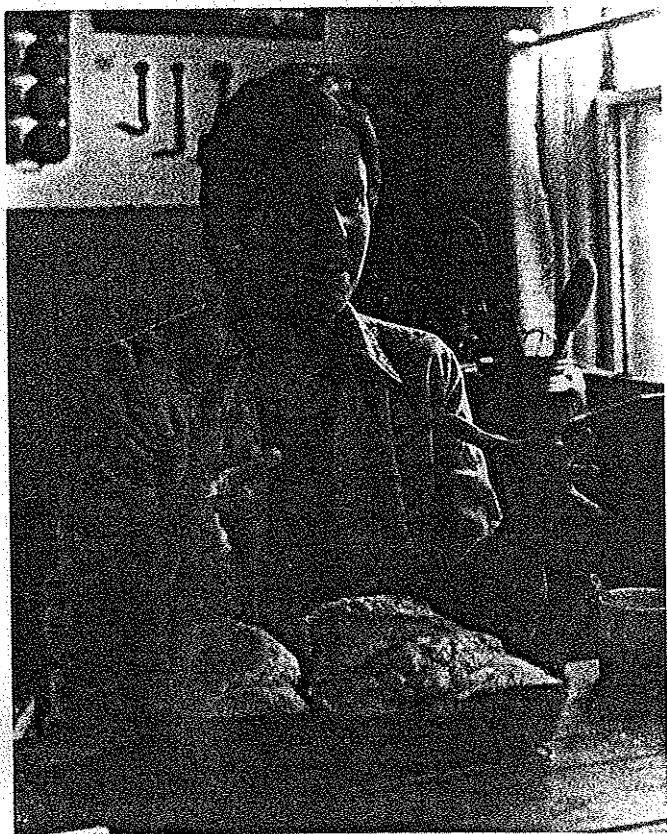
In the Upstairs Gallery the display in June is of Operation Sail, which will bring tall ships from many nations to

New York Harbor and the Hudson River on the week-end of July 4th. That display will be followed by one on the Summer Olympics - to be held in Canada - in July. During August, the children's work from the Piermont Summer Program will be on display.

The Library will have a table at the Antiques Fair in Piermont on Sunday, September 19th. Donations of books, paperbacks and records (especially those suitable for children) will be most welcome. Contact Grace at the Library for information about donations 359-4595.

The Library Board is saddened by the death of their long-time member and good friend, Charles Grutzner. Brian Holihan has been appointed to take his place on the Library Board. ■

# Compliments of the Chef



Linda Baker

Linda Baker didn't foresee a business tied to her surname when, in response to her husband's pleas, she tried her hand at baking bread. Now she is turning out 10 to 12 loaves weekly to order for the Piermont Exchange and is nurturing the dream of setting up her own small local shop some day.

While Linda deftly glazed three loaves of her special orange bread fresh from the oven, she recalled her early attempts at baking the whole grain bread her husband requested, using recipes from Beard on Bread. Having tried out a recipe, however, she began to make her own modifications and has developed several which are truly her own. Her special interest is in inexpensive, healthful and natural whole grains, and she has come to grinding her own flour using an old coffee mill. She does maintain, however, that some unbleached white flour is needed in each mixture to make the loaves light and tall enough to cut for

sandwiches. Most recipes she believes call for more sugar than needed to "cater to America's sweet taste". She cuts the sugar and uses some honey or molasses if necessary.

"Making bread is an art medium", Linda claims. "It's as creative as anything worked in stone. It just doesn't last so long". She loves the smell and satisfaction of kneading and handling the dough as well as the idea that people will enjoy eating her creations. "Some people wonder why I bake bread", she said, "because it is more expensive to make your own, but you get spoiled once you tasted it".

There are also other baking Bakers in on the act: 4-year-old daughter Karen is a "good bread stirrer and kneader" and husband Ted specializes in pretzels, cinnamon rolls and pita bread.

The Bakers moved to Piermont from Florida several years ago when Ted was granted a research assistantship in oceanography at Lamont. They saw themselves at first as transients but have become very involved with the community to the point that they are now looking at Piermont with "some idea of permanence".

Two of Linda's special recipes follow:

## LINDA'S ORANGE BREAD

3 cups unbleached flour  
1 1/2 cups milk  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 beaten egg  
1/4 cup oil, or melted butter  
1/4-1/2 cup orange juice\*  
1 tablespoon orange peel  
1 teaspoon salt  
3 teaspoon baking powder  
1/4 teaspoon baking soda  
3 tbsp confectioner's sugar

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Sift dry ingredients together. Add milk, egg, oil and orange juice\*. Stir til just moistened, and pour into a greased 9x5x3 inch loaf pan. Bake at 350° til

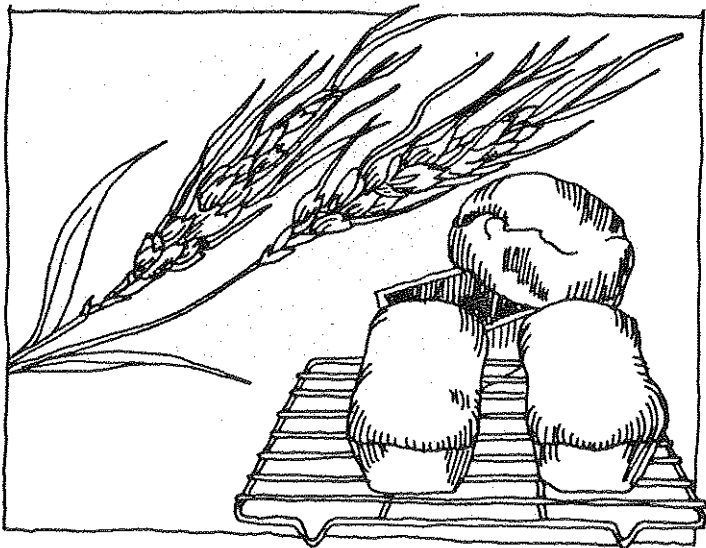
toothpick inserted in center comes out clean (approx. 50 minutes).  
Remove from pans and brush tops with the 1 tablespoon reserved juice mixed with 3 tbsp. confectioner's sugar.

\* reserve 1 tablespoon juice for glaze.

### RAISIN-PUMPERNICKEL BREAD (2 loaves)

2 cups rye flour  
2 cups wheat flour  
unbleached flour  
1 cup raisins or currants  
2 1/2 cups very warm water  
2 tablespoons molasses  
2 tablespoons yeast  
2 teaspoons salt  
2 tablespoons butter or vegetable oil

Combine water, molasses and yeast. Let stand 10 min. Add the salt, rye, wheat and 1 cup unbleached flour to make a batter. Beat well. Add raisins, and continue adding unbleached flour until dough is easy to handle. Turn out on floured surface and knead. Keep adding flour, and knead about 10 min. more. Dough should be elastic, and not sticky. Let rise in an oiled bowl til doubled (about 45 min.). Punch down, divide in half, and shape into loaves. Place in two greased 9x5x3 inch pans, and let rise til doubled again. Bake at 350° for 50 min. or til loaf sounds hollow when tapped on bottom. ■



# ORGANIZATIONS

## ROTARY CELEBRATES 25th YEAR

Charter Members of the Piermont Rotary Club celebrated their 25th Anniversary on May 15th. Sal Conigliaro was chairman of the affair and the committee consisted of Charles Stierlen, Thomas Boyan, Kurt Gerhardt, William Swindells and Joseph Masucci.

## PLAYGROUP REGISTRATION

We are the Piermont Community Playgroup, a non-profit pre-school operating in the Community Center on Hudson Terrace. We would love for you and your child to share our varied nursery school program with each other, and our concerned staff. Call 359-1354, and we will mail you an application for September, 1976.

We are always interested in ways we can better serve our community. If you have a special need (time conflict, transportation or whatever), or just want to talk about the kind of programs you'd like to see for three and four year olds, call 359-4050 and we'll take notes. It can't work without your continued help and support.

## THRIFT SHOP ELECTS OFFICERS

The TAPPAN ZEE THRIFT SHOP elected four officers at the Spring 1976 Board Meeting: President Mrs. Paula Silverman, Vice President Mrs. Maggy Voorhees, Secretary Mrs. Lisa Edge, and Treasurer Mrs. Kim Simpson. Other Board members include Mrs. Sue Alison, Mrs. Audrey Dowling, Mrs. Judith Gaddis, Mrs. Martha MacQueen, and Mrs. Norma McAvoy.

The semi-annual meeting of the Shop will be held on Monday, May 24th at Mrs. Ethel Frost's house in South Nyack.

The Thrift Shop will plan a tenth anniversary celebration in the fall. In ten years it has distributed to member organizations \$46,855.67. ■



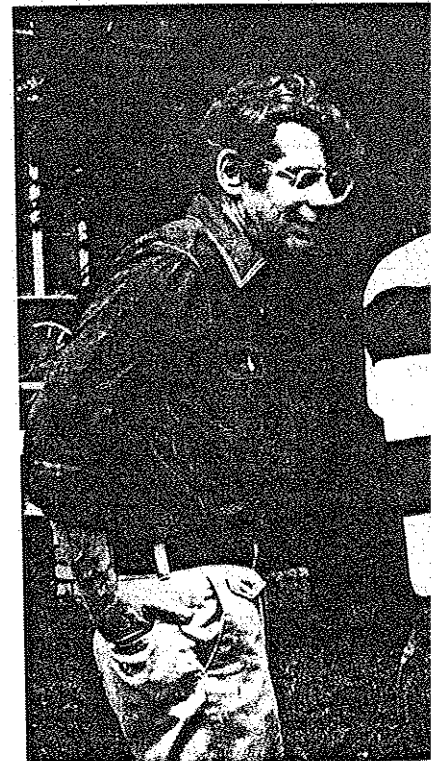
*Lori Douglas takes a turn at being the "Pocket Chairperson".*



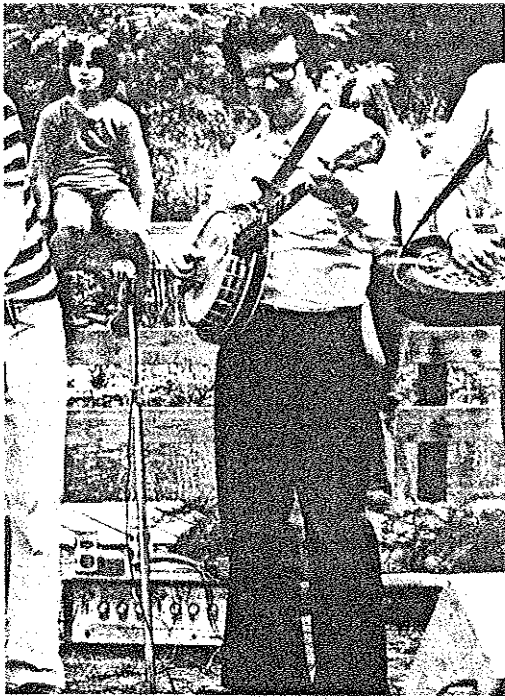
*Tara Nevins and friend Ron, join the "Blue that good old country music.*



*Bill Goswick and other fire company members delight young and old with rides on the Piermont fire truck.*



*Alex Crippen takes a under the watchful e.*



*ousins" making*

There was something sweet in the air, that down home "Blue Grass" music set toes tapping and brought smiles that lasted all afternoon. It was the PCA's second Annual Memorial Day Blue Grass Fair and it was, well, special.

The site was Kane Park, all spruced up with its new dock and plantings, and just about everybody was there. Hot dogs, soda, homemade goodies, antiques, artwork and tintage photographs; there was a lot to see and do. But the best was just to watch and listen, the people--enjoying--making their own music, harmonizing with each other.

Thanks to the "Blue Grass Committee": Bob Cone, Liz and Ken Barnes, Maggie Voohees, Lennie Sullivan, Lori Joseph, Helen Norman, Carole Novick, Barbara Kopf, Marge Spring, Sally Savage (and many other members who donated food and labors) whose hard work made the fair a success. ■



*e photo of Margaret Holihan  
b Cone.*



*Queen Peggie Streppone rides on the Fire Dept. float along with Laurie Alise, Maureen Scott, Vicky Stein and Michelle Naglieri.*

THE TURNING POINT - a new Restaurant/Coffee House is open at 506 Main Street. Proprietors Diane McAvoy and her brother John have achieved a charming yellow, white, and old wood interior and are serving lunch Tuesday through Saturday 11:00-3:00, Sunday from 12 noon. Dinner; Friday, Saturday, Sunday 5:30 to 10:30. Live music and Coffee House atmosphere after 10:30 and a Talent Night one Sunday a month when musicians are welcome to come and play.

In charge of the kitchen is Sarah Kravitz. The menu will change weekly. Opening week menu featured these delights:

Lunch - French Onion, cold Beet or Cucumber Yogurt, Soup, Mixed Green or Chef Salad - Chili - Omelette - Turkey Sandwich - Brownie a la Mode - Ice Cream Praline

Dinner - French Onion, cold Beet or Curried Pea Soup.  
Boeuf Bourguignonne or Coq au Vin  
Mixed Green or Tomato, Black Olive, Parsley Salad.  
Fresh Strawberries w/whipped cream or Chocolate Mousse  
Fruit and Assorted Cheeses

5 varieties of French grind cafe filter made individually. Wine and Beer are served.

Paintings by Jane Toan of Hickory Hill, Tappan, are hung at present. Other artists' work will be welcome in the future for showing and selling.

Just what you have been waiting for?

Fresh cut flowers can be picked out under TOMDIA's striped awning every weekend from now on. In addition, she has packets of seeds, window box plan-

tings, hanging plants and an infinite variety of potted plants from tiny to large standing fern, palm, etc.

New Hours: Wed Thurs Fri 12-5  
Sat Sun 11-6

Dried flower arrangements in baskets, antique containers and under glass domes are at the MARDY ALLEN Shop including azaleas, lily-of-the-valley, violets, bridle wreath, straw flowers, immortelles, statice and babies breath. Also to be found, shells and fine Perthshire Millifiori paperweights from Crieff, Scotland. Baskets in all shapes and sizes are from Haiti, Equador, the Phillipines and China.

Ginny Johnson has acquired a few original drawings and graphics by Arthur B. Davies. They may be seen at her CLAUSLAND Bookshop.

There is a snug new operation right on the river on Piermont Avenue north of the Fire House. Eric and Herbert Atkin, father and son, and Bob Dolan and Brad Scharf have opened SAILHAVEN. Everything about sail boats can be learned or purchased here. Sail boats are for sale and for rent. Boating hardware, sail parts, and sails are for sale. Sailing lessons are given.

Good Luck to another new Piermont enterprise!

Glass Art, Tiffany lamps and furniture predominate a mixed array of art objects at John and Rosella McGahan's PIERMONT ANTIQUES. Rosella, former proprietor of a beauty parlor in Blauvelt, will operate a small beauty shop at the rear of the Antiques. By appointment only - 359-1111.

Its au revoir to Dom and Mary Berardi at COMMUNITY MARKET and we all hope their new life and travels will be very happy. They will be missed after so many years of friendship and super service. And a warm welcome goes out from all to the new owners Tom Spinelli, Sam Montesano and Mike Votolo. Marty, it is great to know you will still be butchering!

THE TIN MAN has a variety of wind indicators fabricated from copper, brass, iron and wood, all signed and numbered. Bannerettes, a Rooster, Swordfish, Cross of Lorraine and Key, are designs he is showing. Stop at 512 Piermont Avenue for prices and installation estimates.

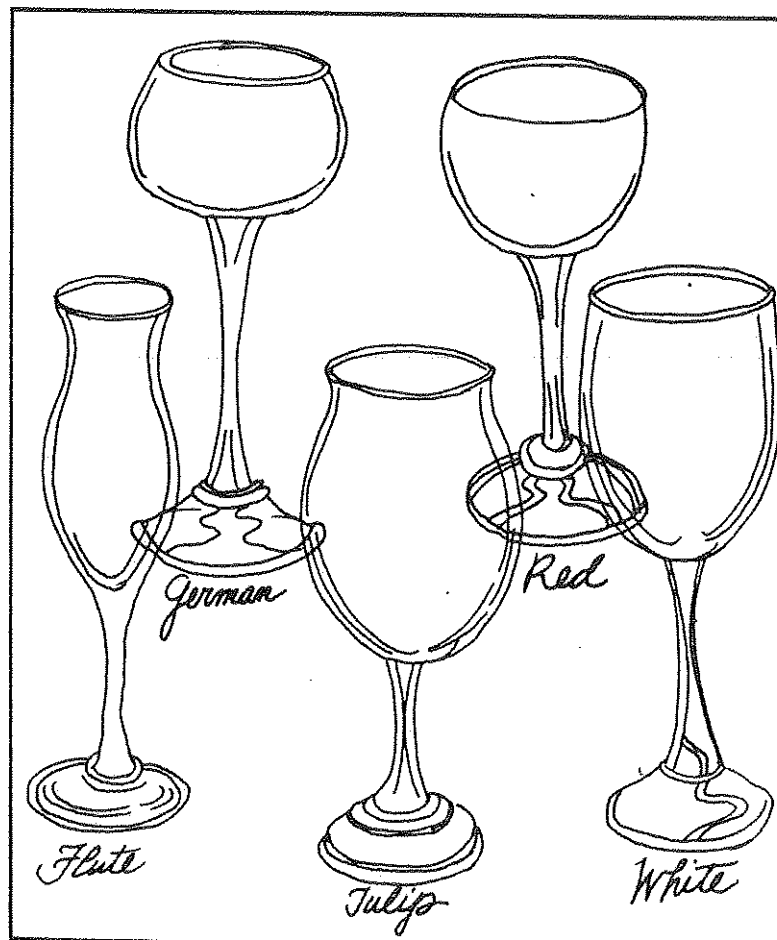
Michael Braun, a fine Graphic Art Photographer, carries out assignments for advertising agencies, institutions, laboratories etc. He has a dandy hobby designing lamps constructed from Mexican, Italian and Persian vases and tiles, which may be seen at his neat studio on Main Street.

THE FLOWER POT on Ferdon Avenue is wondrously full of cool green plants, cut flowers, outdoor plantings of all kinds including sturdy tomato plants and herbs. Robert and Jim, the new owners of the shop, have opened up the back greenhouse where their healthy stock enjoys the sun and customers can enjoy the sight. Open 7 days a week from 9:00 to 6:00, Robert and Jim specialize in convenient and personalized service.

Special orders are promptly filled as near daily trips are made into the flower and plant market. Floral arrangements are artfully done to your request.

Wines and Wines! George Walters at THE PIERMONT LIQUOR STORE will help you select, from a large cellar, tasty and appropriate ones for every day and special occasion needs. He has been in the liquor business forty years, thirty of them in Piermont, meanwhile traveling extensively in France, Spain, Italy and Germany studying wines of those countries. His selection is broad - from California, New York and the continent - and all come in George's service-with-a-smile special wrap.

If you would enjoy reading a 65 page booklet on French wines or a 25 page booklet on Italian wines, drop into his shop where he will gladly give them to you. ■



Charlotte Bordwell

Putting the essence of Ripley Mastin, Piermont's foremost poet, into approximately 1500 words is a task of the same order as putting an ebullient genie back into a bottle. To begin with, she began as Florence Josephino Mastin, born March 18, 1886 in Pennsylvania. Her life was spent in Piermont, however, near her beloved Hudson. Many of her poems reflect this love of the river and her perceptions of it.

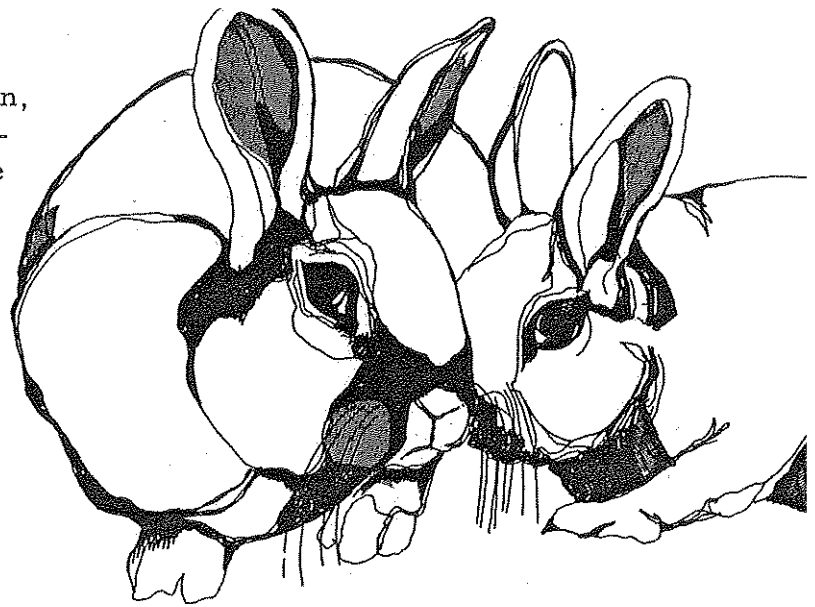
Her father, who commuted to his office at Dunn and Bradstreet via one of the numerous and fast trains through Piermont in the '90's was the President of the School Board that built the Piermont High School in 1899. She and her younger brother Robert Ripley Mastin were in the first graduating class from the High School. They were both on the staff of the "Literary Magnet" of the Tappan Zee High School, published monthly by the Literary Society. Her first poem, written when she was 13, was about an apple tree on the lawn of Four Gables, the Mastin home on Franklin Street (now the Radin house). Her brother Robert died when quite young and before she graduated from Barnard, Ripley had dropped the Josephino and taken Ripley as the name she preferred. A number of her poems were to, or about Robert, or were dedicated to him. One, from her first book of poems, Green Leaves (published in 1918), was:

Safe (To R. R. M)

There is a chamber in my heart  
Close curtained from the years,  
Where the lonely days go crying  
To blind me with their tears.

You are always waiting, darling,  
Within that secret place,  
And the mist of the world's crying  
Passes by your face;

And the dreams of the world, dying,  
Can never hurt you now,  
Beautiful forever,  
With a dream on your brow.



After graduating from Barnard she began her 42 year teaching career in 1910 at Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn.

In 1952 she retired from active teaching to continue writing poetry, sailing on the Hudson, enjoying nature, the river, the seasons, and most of all her friends. She published another book of poetry, Cables of Cobwebs, in 1935 and in 1952 she was awarded the first prize in the Annual Poetry Society of America Award Contest.

Her close relationship and understanding of young people, even after/particularly because of all those hundreds who had passed through her classes, was one of her most endearing and exciting qualities; she was excited by young minds and they, in turn, were excited by her. She saw them,

"Potent as thrusting spring  
articulate,  
young legions pass,  
infinite, great."

In 1960 she was awarded the George Washington Medal of Honor from Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge for her long poem, "Freedom's Dream", published as the official poem of the Hudson-Champlain Celebration 1609-1959. In 1962 her third book, Over the Tappan Zee and Other Poems was published. The



seeing to and for Piermont and the Hudson:

There's a green place with a pier and a  
mount,  
More thrushes are singing than you can  
count  
And the moon falls in a silver fount  
Over the Tappan Zee.

The houses wander like flocks of geese  
Down to the river to dream of peace  
Where ghostly whisperings never cease  
Over the Tappan Zee.

This is my home, this mountainy land  
By the sky and the river spanned,  
With the evening star like God's own hand  
Over the Tappan Zee.

And in 1963 she wrote these delightful,  
witty, tender, journalistic vignettes of  
old Piermont and the places and people  
Ripley had known as a young girl:

#### The Old Piermont School

It was a yellow, wooden school-house  
On the river below Orchard Terrace  
With two rooms, down and up,  
and pot-bellied stoves  
in the center of each,  
and double desks in long rows.  
My brother and I sat together.  
The rooms smelled of chalk, woodsmoke,  
apples and corduroys.

We stood in a long line for spelling,  
and Willy Brady, a little Irish boy  
was the only one who ever beat  
my brother Robert and me.  
Willy always said "Haich" for H.  
It was very exciting.

When we graduated upstairs  
we had Mr. Nodine.  
Mr. Nodine put noisy children  
under his knee-hole desk.  
They stayed there a long time.  
I have that desk  
and am writing on it now,  
and I have Miss Dunlap's  
stinging ruler.....

#### The Piermont Bath House

At the turn of the century  
my father leased some land

the Pier's amber sand.

Here was a perfect place to swim,  
and we learned handily  
From our snug bath house on the shore  
of the salty Tappan Zee.

Swimming was soon so popular,  
Rockland County was there  
Paying a quarter for suits and floats,  
and spring-boards for a dare!

There were sodas, too, five cents a glass,  
and Flags on Fourth of July,  
And friendships made forever  
under a summer sky.

A pixie quality in Ripley peeked out  
occasionally in some of her poems about  
village figures from the past:

#### Hickey

He was our only policeman,  
and everyone called him Hickey.  
He had nine lusty sons  
That people called the baseball team,  
and an Irish wife  
fair as a magnolia flower.

He was his own uniform,  
and quite enough it was;  
with his derby hat  
cocked on the side of his head,  
Piermont was his precinct.

I see him now,  
Walking jauntily  
Down, from his home  
On the hill, to the village  
In an aura of glory.

#### Lord! A Rabbit!

One day as I climbed the hill  
On my way home to lunch,  
I met Mr. Kipp in his cart.  
He was a grocer from Sparkill.

"Give me a ride to my street?"  
"Hop into the back", he said.  
There were many boxes there  
With wonderful things to eat.

I spied a cabbage in a crate.  
it looked so crisp and green,  
and I was very hungry.

Mr. Kipp's eyes bulged out of his head when the wagon reached my house, and he saw a core of cabbage. . . . "Lord" a rabbit! " was all he said.

#### In Grandma Ripley's Room: The Date Palm

Growing in my Grandma's room,  
a date palm rose above my head  
when Grandma sang this song  
before I went to bed:  
"Under the date palm I shall meet  
a wild gazelle with silver feet. . ."

Was I the wild gazelle?  
I could not ever tell  
Till once in the moonlight  
I saw my feet were white. . .  
I was the wild gazelle.

And, perhaps anticipating her voyage  
and her safe harbor, high on the hill

Ride It Out was written (appearing in the New York Herald Tribune for April 26, 1964 when she was seventy eight):

If you have lost the harbor,  
lower away,  
anchor against the wind,  
your hatches closed,  
your riding light well trimmed.

Sleep, now, with night your pillow  
and ride it out, but pray  
to Lord of the billow. . . .  
Morning, tall and fair,  
will follow.

Will declare  
Land, a harbor safe,  
Seen but in dream before,  
So gay, so green,  
The singing shore. ■

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#### VILLAGE MOURNS PARELLI

The Monday, May 24th Village Board meeting was solemnly adjourned "in memory of Trustee Frank Parelli, an old friend and fellow Trustee, with sorrow at his sudden death, and gratitude for his long years of service to the village of Piermont." Thus ended the meeting--this simple tribute and a moment of silence.

Because of Memorial Day, the Village Board's next meeting was post-

poned to Thursday, June 3rd, and at that time E. Donald Cocker, Jr. was sworn in as Trustee. Don comes to Trusteeship bringing experience in Village affairs from his years of service on the Planning Commission. His knowledge of the waterfront, its problems and potential will be particularly useful. Trustee Bill Goswami will replace Frank Parelli as Fire Commissioner, and Don will accept responsibility for the Department of Public Works. ■

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#### MINEHOLE ENTRANCE TO BE DEDICATED IN SUMMER

The mystery of the old Piermont minehole, documented in the Newsletter last year, will remain a mystery. Workers were restoring the entrance last week when the passageway collapsed into rubble. But the minehole will resume its role as one of the local sights later this summer, thanks to the volunteer work of Pelligrino Bros., masons and the L & M Iron Railing Co., both of Piermont.

After the incident, the companies changed their plans to make the entranceway a locked swinging gate and decided on a fixed barred grille in-

stead. The minehole's most outstanding feature (the origin and purpose of the "mine" itself are obscure) is a spring of water that trickles from the mine and this has been restored. Louise Windisch has re-created the well-known sign that hung over the spring urging tired visitors to drink the water. Mayor Bryan is checking with the Board of Health regarding the present quality of the water for drinking purposes.

The Companies' Bi-Centennial present to Piermont will be completed and dedicated about mid-summer, according to Mayor Bryan. The mine on Piermont Avenue, a few hundred feet west of the dam on Sparkill Creek. ■

# Notes Around the Village

## GADDIS WINS AWARD

Congratulations to William Gaddis for winning the 1976 National Book Award for fiction. His novel JR (reviewed in the March Newsletter) was chosen from a distinguished field of nominees.

## NEW PATROLMEN

Two new officers have joined the Piermont Police force on a part-time basis. They are John Cuccio, a resident of Valley Cottage and Glenn Pinchback of Piermont. Officer Cuccio is employed full-time by the Rockland County Sheriff's Department where his duties cover the security and escort of prisoners. Officer Pinchback is a full-time Safety Officer at Rockland Psychiatric Center. He attended Rockland Community College and is a graduate of Municipal Police Training Academy.

## STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

The Village Board as their Bicentennial contribution will sponsor an old-fashioned "Strawberry Festival". The event will be held Sunday June 27, at 7:00p. m. in Kane Park. Various strawberry desserts and coffee will be served. The hand-crafted American flag, sewn by Piermonters, will be first raised at the festival.

## NAME CHOSEN FOR PARK

In the March issue of the Newsletter a contest was opened to name Piermont's newest Park (the land known as the "right-of-way" where the tracks of the Erie Railroad used to lie). We are pleased to announce that a name has been chosen from the many good names submitted.

The winning name "The Erie Trail", will now be submitted to the Village Board for their approval. The name was submitted anonymously.

## NEW SEWER LINE BEING LAID

Piermont Avenue will be torn up for awhile due to construction of a new sewer between the silk mill bridge and the traffic light. If the crew does not run into unforeseen complications, they will finish the project in about two months, according to John Hickey, supervisor of the village Highway Department. Through traffic will not be affected.

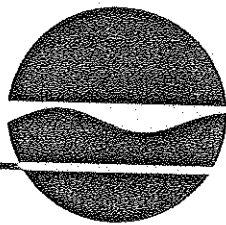
## BICYCLE INSPECTION AND REGISTRATION

Chief O'Shea informs us that there will be a bicycle inspection and registration on Sunday, June 27, at the Village Hall, from 11:00 to 4:00. If your bike does not have a serial number, one will be put on and recorded in case of theft. All bikes are required to be in good working order and to have a 3" reflector front and back if they are to be used at night.

## BICENTENNIAL

The Bicentennial Commission is now formulating plans for the remainder of our 200th year. Ideas include an all Village "bring your own food" cook out at the Community Center field in September, special Nativity scene displays in December and dessert and coffee finale in January. ■





## THE BIRDS OF PIERMONT

### Part 2

Anthony F. Amos

Three years ago in the Piermont Newsletter, I published a list of 210 species of birds that have been observed in Piermont. Since that time, I have observed an additional 38 species, bringing the total to a remarkable 248! To put that number in perspective, the Rockland County total is approximately 280 species, New York State 410, and for North America, north of Mexico, about 800 species have been recorded including 100 "accidentals". The large number of species recorded in Piermont is a reflection of the diversity of natural habitats in our village, with the river, pier, marsh and bordering woods of Tallman Park accounting for the majority of the records. Two other excellent habitats, the Sparkill Creek Sanctuary and railway right-of-way make Piermont an excellent place to observe birds.

Last year the village garbage dump was closed down and this has caused some changes in the bird populations here. There has been a reduction in the numbers of HERRING GULLS and STARLINGS that fed off the refuse and an increase in the number of grassland birds like HORNED LARKS, MEADOWLARKS, BOBOLINKS and various sparrows. As grasses, shrubs and wildflowers begin to grow again on this area, I expect we will see a continued increase in these kinds of birds.

Many of the birds in this list are very rare in Rockland County, reported here for the first time, some are very rare anywhere in New York State and the PEREGRINE FALCON is now very rare anywhere in the United

States. Others are more common but I had no actual records of them being seen in Piermont before.

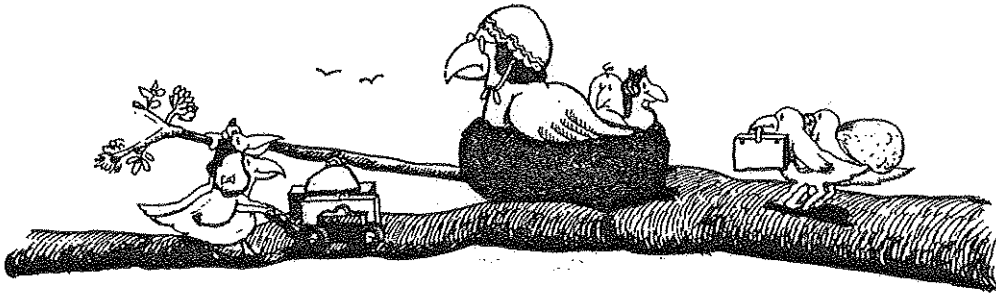
A LOUISIANA HERON, seen this May, in Piermont marsh, was to my knowledge the first record for this species in Rockland County and has been recorded only three times before in the interior of the States. The GLOSSY IRIS, a bird that is naturally extending its range northward spent about two weeks feeding with SNOWY EGRETS on the mudflats near the pier in August 1975. This is also a Rockland County first. Among the HAWKS, the GOSHAWK, I surprised (and it surprised me) just after it had killed a rabbit near the swimming pool in Tallman Park. The PEREGRINE FALCON was likewise feeding on its prey (a BLUE JAY) on the pier road on 27 September 1975. Three ROUGH LEGGED HAWKS were recorded over the marsh and pier on the 1975 Rockland County Christmas count and a few more times throughout the winter. Shorebirds provided two Rockland County "firsts", the WILLET, a large strikingly marked bird was first seen in May 1973 (4 birds) and since then three more times -- the latest on April 23, 1976, was one week earlier than the earliest inland record in New York State, and two sightings of a RED KNOT, abundant on the coast but uncommon inland. Also an UPLAND SAND-PIPER, seen on the old Piermont dump site in April and May 1976, has only been recorded twice before in the county.

One of the most unusual sightings was a SOOTY TERN (only seen on the coast on rare occasions after tropical hurricanes) in a flock of 62 LEAST TERNS (an unprecedented number for inland). Three of the LEAST TERNS had cinnamon-yellow underwings and I later found out they were birds that had been dyed for identification as part of an experiment originating in Connecticut.

A LONG-EARED OWL seen on 16 February 1976, in the trees bordering the Piermont dump was beautifully photographed by Warren Inglese and appeared in the JOURNAL NEWS. An escaped cage bird that has recently become established in the wild around New York City, the MONK PARA-

an apple tree (6 birds) near Corner  
ta's restaurant and also on the pier.  
A LARK SPARROW seen on August 23  
and 24, 1975, on the old Piermont  
dump area was the first county record  
for this bird that is rare in New  
York State, especially inland.

the Piermont marsh in the 1800's; the  
SHARP-TAILED and SEASIDE SPARROWS  
have been seen recently in the marsh,  
both in breeding season but no direct  
evidence of breeding, SHARP-TAILED  
SPARROW on 23 May 1973, (and three  
subsequent sightings) and two SEASIDE  
SPARROWS on 15 June 1973.■



<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Little Blue Heron	P	**Long-Eared Owl	P
**Louisiana Heron	P	Monk Parakeet	P,V
**Glossy Ibis	P,M	*Red-Headed Woodpecker	T
*Northern Shoveler	P	*Alder Flycatcher <sup>n</sup>	P
*Oldsquaw	P	Horned Lark	P
*Black Scoter	P	*Northern Shrike	P
*White-Winged Scoter	P	*Boreal Chickadee	P,T
Lesser Scaup	P	Eastern Bluebird <sup>n</sup>	T
*Bald Eagle	T	Yellow-Throated Vireo <sup>n</sup>	S
*Goshawk	T	Warbling Vireo	P
Red-Shouldered Hawk	P,T	Tennessee Warbler	T
*Rough-Legged Hawk	P,T	*Cerulean Warble	T
*Peregrine Falcon	P	Nashville Warbler	T
*Merlin	T	Prairie Warbler	T
*American Golden Plover	P	Hooded Warbler	P
*Upland Sandpiper	P	Eastern Meadowlark	P
*Red Knot	P	*Dickcissel	P
*Willet	P	**Lark Sparrow	P
*Long-Billed Dowitcher	P	*Seaside Sparrow <sup>n</sup> ?	M
**Sooty Tern	P	*Sharp-Tailed Sparrow	P,M

KEY: \*RARE

\*\*NOT SEEN IN ROCKLAND COUNTY BEFORE  
n = NESTING

LOCATIONS: P = PIER  
T = TALLMAN PARK  
V = VILLAGE  
S = SANCTUARY  
M = MARSH

wing Tappan Zee water is certainly to be avoided for other reasons.

About 80% of the contaminated sediments have been estimated to lie within 10 miles of the GE plants, which may facilitate removal by dredging. This will not be a simple operation since it must avoid resuspension of the sediment which could then be transported down-river. It has been documented by DEC that the annual spring flood in the Hudson is sufficient to scour up some of the PCB. Natural down-river transport rates have been estimated at 5,000-10,000 lbs. moving between 4 and 10 miles/year. Issues further complicating the PCB problem in the Hudson and elsewhere are that the factories and equipment may remain contaminated for some time; that other lower-level sources of PCB's, such as sewage sludge, are known to exist; that atmospheric transport of PCB's have been demonstrated (in the Los Angeles region for example); and that landfill areas will remain potential sources of this pollutant for years to come. It will be no easy task to trace, identify, and label for ultimate incineration the PCB-laden electrical equipment now in use.

A cleanup is feasible however. Decreases in PCB levels have been measured in some organisms elsewhere since the chemical was restricted in 1971. Mussels moved from contaminated to clean waters showed 75% decreases in PCB content in 5 months. Since the ban on DDT, affected species such as the osprey and pelican have showed definite signs of recovery.

The commercial fishermen are understandably upset by several apparent anomalies in the present situation. One is that individuals are now allowed to fish the river below the Troy Dam and to eat all they catch. While DEC's policy appears to be that the fisherman will be aware of the risk he is taking

is hardly borne out by conversations we've had with some who fish the Piermont shoreline. Second, as one DEC official observed, it is likely the heaviest fish-eaters may be persons at lower socioeconomic levels who fish for sustenance on a daily basis. Third, the taking of crabs has been banned, and yet in the Tappan Zee crabs have been below the 5 ppm FDA limit. Fourth, if the problem is serious, why isn't the entire river shut down, and perhaps other localities as well? Striped bass and eels continue to be available in local fish markets and restaurants. Discounting an improbable rumor that some Hudson River fish may have been shipped out-of-state, the chances still seem relatively good that a highly-contaminated river migrant might be caught elsewhere. DEC indicated that most Long Island stripers tested at low or insignificant levels, but at least one was found to be "high". About 3% of fish sold in interstate commerce have tested above tolerance levels. And fifth DEC has not advised the commercial fishermen exactly what should be done with the prohibited fish that are caught while obtaining legal species. Both throwing them back and giving them away has apparently been permitted. Somehow neither action seems appropriate if they are indeed a health hazard.

The shad run is now over and the fishermen are idle. How long will the ban last? Results of recent hearings will not be known until summer, and litigation may well follow. Will any reparations be made to those most directly hurt by the ban? Unlike the fishermen's 50% losses, \$27 million is an insignificant portion of G. E.'s income. Also unlike the fishermen, industry neither cares for the river nor depends upon it for livelihood. In an attempt to obtain a fair hearing for their views, the 51 Hudson River commercial fishermen have now joined to form the New York State Commercial Fishermen's Association. Don Hardy is president of the group,

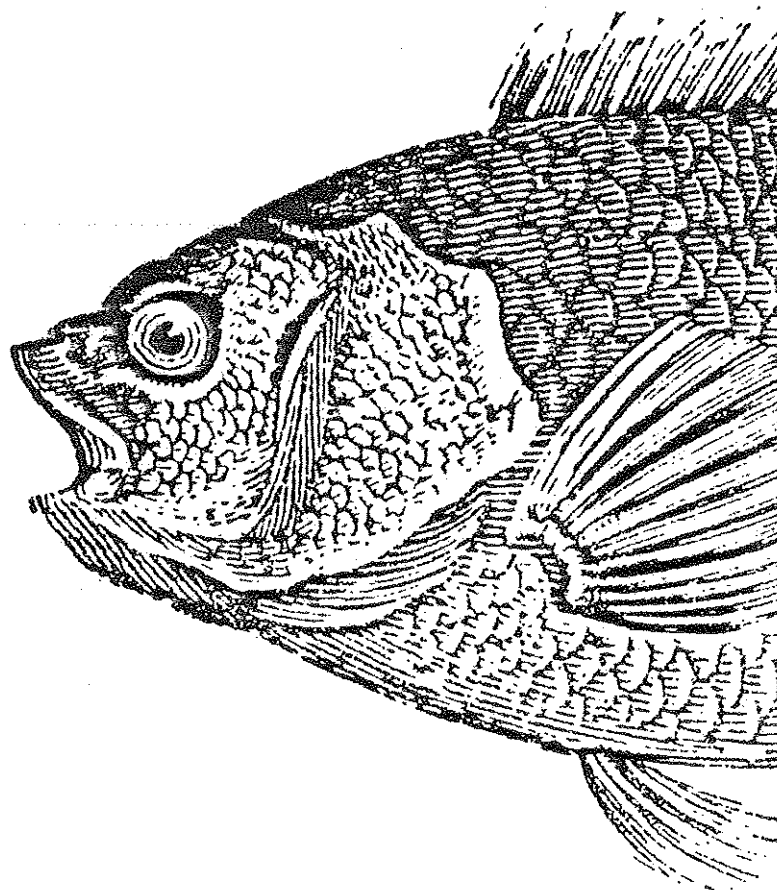
which has requested a meeting with Peter Berle, the new DEC Commissioner.

General Electric's response to the problem has hardly been commendable. It hired a consulting firm which presented incorrect data at the hearings, paraded the limp threat of moving elsewhere (where did G. E. think it would be welcomed?), and tried to buy its way out of the problem for only 10% of the cleanup costs and then only if it were certified that the pollution had been done "in good faith". A statewide business association intervened on G. E.'s behalf. Governor Carey tilted forward the industrial economy rather than the public health, at the same time requesting an indefinite delay in implementation of the state's Environmental Quality Review Act. G. E. should perhaps have been grateful that author Robert Boyle blew the whistle on them before medical problems appeared at the human level. Personal suits at a later date might have been astronomical. In Japan, officials of polluting companies are facing long prison terms. Surprisingly, there may be several benefits to be derived from the PCB incident, if we make the tenuous assumption that man can indeed benefit from his past mistakes. There are lessons to be learned that are applicable to other hazardous substances, like HCB (hexachlorobenzene), and the monster of them all - plutonium. For example, monitoring for pollutants has been stepped-up by DEC both in the Hudson River and throughout the state.

A second benefit may be the speedier passage of a more effective toxic substances control bill that has been slowly moving through the Congress for the past several years. Further, we are once again made aware of the necessity of continued vigilance and individual action. The permits to pollute that are issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are just that. G. E. "dutifully" reported to EPA for several years its discharge of PCB's into the Hudson. The reports were

right hand of bureaucracy frequently acts in ignorance of the left hand. While the Interior Dept. was spending millions to control predatory lampreys in the Great Lakes, permits were being issued that allowed PCB's to reach levels that now jeopardize the entire fishery there.

Closer to home, Clevepak Corp. and the Orangetown and Rockland County treatment plants all hold EPA permits to discharge into the river in Piermont. Less than four of the separate items in that effluent must be reported. Clevepak is permitted, e. g., to put an average of 7 lbs/day of zinc into the river. The three operations combined are allowed 6 tons/day of suspended solids into the river from the outfall just south of the end of Piermont Pier. Stand out near the end of the pier some day when the tide is coming in. Watch the water move around the end of the pier and in toward the Piermont shoreline. Speculate on its contribution to the severe siltation in the relatively calm region between the pier and Tappan Zee bridge. Complain to someone you know who can move mountains. ■



The PCA Newsletter is published for all of Piermont and anyone else who belongs to the PCA. This issue was written by Mardy Allen, Anthony F. Amos, Charlotte Bordwell, Bob Bradbury, Mimi Bryan, Gilbert Burck, Charles Berger, Bob Cone, Rosemary Cone, Cynthia Crippen, Dan Duonnolo, June Griesbach, Stan Jacobs, and Lisa Merrill. Photographs by Sally Savage and Alex Crippen. Art Director, Lori Joseph. Editor, Carole Novick. Typing by Bel Hautau and Mary Giraldi. New contributors to the Newsletter are welcome.

## A REMINDER...

If you are going on vacation this summer and your house will be empty, notify the Piermont Police and a neighbor of the dates you will be gone. This tip is offered by the Piermont Police Department.

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Piermont, New York 10968

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