

# MAMARONECK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO Box 776 Mamaroneck, NY 10543

Newsletter Fall 2020

[www.mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org)

## President's Message

### Board of Trustees

#### CO-PRESIDENTS

Gail Boyle, John Pritts

#### VICE PRESIDENT

George Mgrditchian

#### SECRETARY

Phyllis Kaskel

#### TREASURER

Don Sutherland

#### ARCHIVIST

Mike Tripicco

#### TRUSTEES

Ray Maldonado

Bette Pollak

John Verni

Pres. Emeritus

Carol Aiken

Dear Friends of Mamaroneck History,

We hope our Fall Newsletter finds you well and thriving despite the challenges. This certainly has been a year for the history books!

Our Fall Newsletter focuses on celebrating our past history while exploring our current moment in time as we share a significant historical event.

*"History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future."* Robert Penn Warren

We appreciate your ongoing interest and support.

Gail Boyle and John Pritts

## De Lancey Burying Ground Rededication Ceremony

**September 25, 2020**

On a beautiful Saturday morning in September, a large crowd came together to celebrate the rededication of the DeLancey Burying Ground. And what a wonderful celebration it was!

The historic DeLancey family cemetery had been neglected for many years, getting basic maintenance provided by the town of Mamaroneck. No burial had taken place there since 1905 and many of the gravestones were damaged, broken or missing.

The DeLancey family had a long history in Mamaroneck and made significant contributions to the community including construction of the new Boston Post Road (1800), building the first publicly funded school houses (1806 and 1816), and establishing the new Parish of St. Thomas Episcopal Church (1814).

Local resident and historical society board member, Mike Tripicco, became intrigued when he read that there had originally been a stone wall surrounding the burying ground located on Palmer Avenue near the intersection of Delancey. Mike decided he wanted to rebuild the wall. After inspecting the site though, he realized the whole cemetery needed to be restored. Local historian and society member Peter Fellows joined Mike in this effort and got the backing of the historical society for the project.



2019 Pre-Restoration



2020 Post-Restoration

Mike and Peter formed a committee and then received permission for the project from the Town of Mamaroneck. The Burial Grounds Preservation Group (bgpg.org) a non-profit restoration organization, was hired and fundraising began!

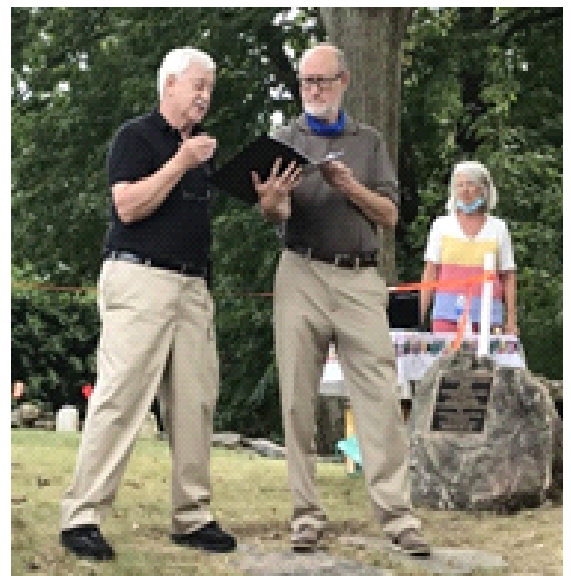
Peter and Mike did extensive research on the DeLancey family members buried at the site. With the support of the Town and many community organizations and volunteers – all of the grave markers were removed, reset and cleaned. The site was cleared and the Mamaroneck High School Football Team built that stone wall. Mike's original goal was met!

After years of hard work, the restoration of this historic cemetery was completed – and officially opened to the community on September 25, 2020.



Reverend Carol Gadsden of St. Thomas Episcopal Church opened the event with a rededication the burying ground.

Then the celebration began. Mike and Peter shared the history of the DeLancey family in Mamaroneck and their contributions to our community.





Mike and Peter explained the preservation Process along with preservationist Zach Studenroth from the Burial Grounds Preservation Group.



Certificates of Recognition were presented to the individuals and community groups who provided support and funding for the project including the Mamaroneck Town Board seen here with County Executive George Latimer and Mayor Tom Murphy of Mamaroneck.

And finally, following safe social distancing, folks toured the restored site and enjoyed refreshments.



Mike and Peter had a vision – and with support from the community they made it happen.



If you have an idea, the Mamaroneck Historical Society invites you to share it with us. We can help you make it happen!

We invite you to visit the DeLancey Burying Ground located on Palmer Avenue – right behind the bus stop near the corner of Delancey. Enter through the new walkway and take a rest on the bench. Learn about the preservation and the DeLancey family from the interpretive reader and plaque. An historic adventure right here in Mamaroneck.

We encourage you to visit our website as well. The DeLancey link contains information about the cemetery as well as an interactive map that links with all of the historic burying grounds in Mamaroneck and Larchmont. [www.mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org)

There is also a link to the broadcast of the DeLancey Celebration on 9/25 at LMCMedia

[https://lmcmedia.org/show/delancey-burial-ground-dedication-9-26-20/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjIh0Bd8bjw&feature=emb\\_logo](https://lmcmedia.org/show/delancey-burial-ground-dedication-9-26-20/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjIh0Bd8bjw&feature=emb_logo)

## PANDEMIC AS HISTORY

In April, 2020, we invited members and friends of the Mamaroneck Historical Society to be a part of creating an historical record of the pandemic. We encouraged people to share their personal stories in any format: narrative, video, photo, poem, song, art etc.

All submitted material will become a part of the historical society's archives available to future generations. As we all know, it is the personal stories of people who have lived through a particular time in our history that enables us to understand the experience.

Thank you to the members of our community who gave us permission to share their powerful stories in this newsletter.

As we continue to live in this historic moment in time we encourage you to add to our historical record. Please submit your story, in any format, via email. [mamaroneckhistory@gmail.com](mailto:mamaroneckhistory@gmail.com)



A JILLIAN ABRAMSON PHOTOGRAPH

I took this photo for my high school photography class. The assignment was "Portrait Lighting". I figured I would use the restrictions that covid-19 produced to my advantage and set a scene that communicates the fear and disruption that we faced this year. The background of the photo is the actual setup that we used to store food in the height of the pandemic. This time of uncertainty taught us the importance of gratitude and how lucky we were to even have the ability to document this.

## A Poem

By Susan Amlicke

Cherry Blossoms are popping out  
Birds are singing and flowers are sprouting  
But we are not able to go about  
Sequestered in "lock down"  
And trying not to frown  
Gee it would be nice if we could  
Gather in town  
Unfortunately the Covid-19 pandemic is keeping us down  
We are praying that the virus will go away  
So we can begin again to go out and play



---

APRIL 25, 2020

I AM AN 87 YEAR OLD MALE AND I HAVEN'T LEFT MY HOME SINCE MARCH 10, 2020. WITH THE WORLD BEING TURNED UPSIDE DOWN BY THIS COVID19 VIRUS, IT IS VERY HARD TO BE WITH FAMILY. I WORRY WITH MY SON AND GRANDCHILDREN OUT THERE WORKING ON THE FRONT LINES.

AS I SIT BY MY WINDOW I SAW VOLUNTEERS IN THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT PASSING OUT LUNCH BAGS FOR STUDENTS, ALSO PASSING OUT COMPUTERS TO STUDENTS TO COMPLETE THEIR LESSONS. ON TUESDAY APRIL 20, 2020 THE VOLUNTEERS AGAIN PASSED OUT BAGS OF FOOD TO VILLAGE RESIDENTS DURING A HEAVY WIND AND RAIN STORM. THERE WAS A LINE OF CARS A BLOCK LONG NON STOP.

I SALUTE THESE VOLUNTEERS THAT STAYED AT WORK DURING THIS PANDEMIC TO HELP OTHERS.

SINCERELY YOURS,

DONALD M. KECK GERTRUDE AVENUE

### UPDATE - OCTOBER 2020

In a recent phone conversation Mr. Keck shared that he continues to be active. He is spending time with his family outdoors as much as possible. He enjoys his 5 children, 8 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren! He also remains connected with the Larchmont Fire Department and with the Larchmont Historical Fire Company. Looking forward to parading with the trucks soon!

## WHAT'S IN OUR ARCHIVES?

The artifacts in the archives of the Mamaroneck Historical Society are a treasure trove of resources. Society Archivist, Mike Tripicco, assisted by Bette Pollak, tries to keep things organized in our little closet in the Mamaroneck Library basement. With the help of Bette Pollak, society board member, we are trying to keep our archives safe and accessible. This is a challenge! Our wish is for a larger space within the library so that we can safely store, display and make available to the community the resources they need and want to enjoy.

### What are some of our historical treasures?

Many of our historical treasures are items that are found in people's basements or excavated during construction – and donated to the archives to ensure the artifact is preserved for future generations.



This treasure was discovered in 1990 while doing renovations at the American Legion Post 90. Hid in the choir loft of this former church was a Knights Templar Ceremonial Sword. The Knights Templar was a large organization during the medieval era. Members pledged to protect and defend the Christian faith. While most historians agree that the Knights Templar fully disbanded 700 years ago, there are some people who believe the order went underground and remains in existence in some form to this day.

Other treasures are items collected by Mamaroneck residents and donated to the archives to ensure their preservation. We are not sure who donated this pennant but we are thrilled to know that in 1925 our community hosted the State Firemen's Convention. What an exciting event that must have been!



Some of the treasures in the archives are items our archivist purchased at garage sales or flea markets or are again donated by residents while cleaning out their basements. Sporting events have always been a part of our history, enjoyed by all at Harbor Island. One hundred years ago the Mamaroneck All Stars hosted this baseball game featuring local star Dick McCabe. Artifacts like this poster allows local history buffs to dig deeper and learn more about life in the past.



**So who is Dick McCabe?**

Dick McCabe was the only child of Margaret and Richard James McCabe, Sr. born on February 21, 1896, in Mamaroneck.

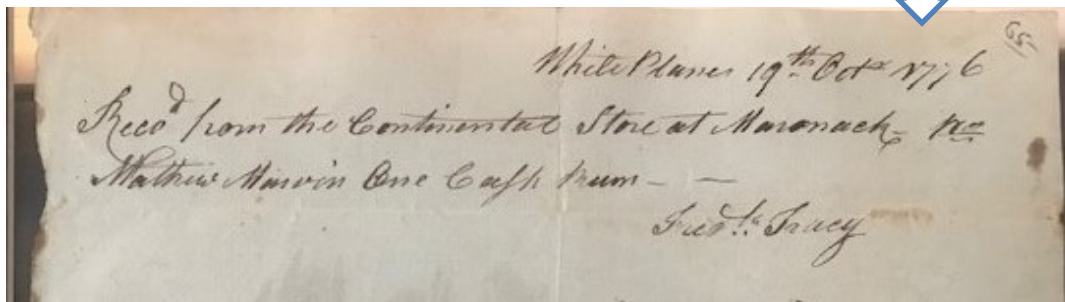
In 1914, at the age of 18, the 5 foot 10, 159-pound right-handed pitcher played with New Rochelle's semipro baseball team before signing a professional contract to pitch for the Eastern Association team in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

McCabe went on to a successful career in the minor and major leagues, retiring in 1933.

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/dick-mccabe/>

And finally, many treasures in our archives are donated by residents to establish the record of our role during significant historical periods. This fascinating artifact was "Obtained by the Mamaroneck Historical Society in honor of Burton C. Meighan, Historian Village and Town of Mamaroneck 1990".

**Check out this date!**



It Reads:

White Plains, 19th Oct 1776

Recd from the Continental Store at Maronack - ?from

Mathew Marvin One Cask Rum

Fred ? Tracy

**Our archives house many treasures of interest and value to residents and historical researchers. We are working towards our goal of making these treasures accessible for all to enjoy!**

## Did You Know? History that Transformed How We Live!

### The Works Progress Administration in Mamaroneck

Today, we are faced with a mini-depression caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of us have lost our jobs, been forced to work from home, and all sorts of other problems. Back in the Depression of the 1930's, Mamaroneck residents were faced with similar conditions. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was developed by President Roosevelt to get people back to work and give them the opportunity to feed themselves and provide housing.

One of the best-known projects that was part of the WPA here in Mamaroneck was the development of Harbor Island as we know it today. Building the seawall and Beach Pavilion (our current recreation department building by the beach) gave jobs to our local workers on the unemployment rolls of the time. The monthly wage was \$55, and each worker was allowed three workdays a week to spread out the money to a wider number of people. At the time of the Harbor Island project many other projects were chosen by the Village and Town Boards. Among them were bridges (Hillside Avenue), seawalls (Guion Creek), various sewer and water lines, and roads.



In an editorial from The Daily Times dated October 9, 1935, it is stated that “It seems to be the Federal plan to lop a little here, there, and everywhere, which it is probably forced to do with most communities trying to crash the gate with programs beyond all reason.” It goes on to say that the local boards were appreciative for the \$300,000 that was being made available to them for mostly labor dollars to help our citizenry. “It will solve the problem living for many men for many months ahead. It will mean money for the landlord, the merchant and for practically everyone in the village. It will place many in a position to fortify themselves and their families against the cold and discomfort of the winter months which are drawing so close. Mamaroneck needs every dollar of that help.”

Not all the projects here were that large. One, from around the same time, made available \$2,280 for sidewalks on 12 streets. In this case, the town supplied the material and all the federal money went towards labor. This makes clear that the WPA did not supply all money and material in all cases. There was quite a bit that came directly from municipal coffers.

The similarities between then and now are striking. I wonder how we could overcome those difficulties and get people working again. Is there a way? By John Pritts



## **Feature Article – Mamaroneck Memories**

Recording our memories is the best way to preserve history. Ben (Schapanick) Shaw, has done just that. Ben grew up in Larchmont and attended Chatsworth Avenue School K-6, Mamaroneck Junior High School 7-9, MHS 10-12. These excerpts from his memoirs will bring back memories for many in the community.

### **Mamaroneck High School, Class of 1958**

**By Ben (Schapanick) Shaw**

When I tell people that I was raised on the other side of the tracks in Larchmont, I am being both literal and figurative. The families in my neighborhood mostly lived in rented two and three family houses and worked in factories, as laborers, for the town, as domestics or as landscapers. We were a blue collar neighborhood who worked hard on survival. There was not a high level of education in our neighborhood, but everyone was respectful of one another and loved living where they did. I think I have always gotten along with people from different cultures due to the neighborhood where I was raised.

Although I was from the other side of the tracks, I attended Chatsworth Elementary School. Since I had been left back in kindergarten and did half day kindergarten and half day first grade before entering first grade, I would be graduating with the class of 1958 and not the class of 1957. I would be about a year older than everyone else. I was also a great deal larger than everyone else – and with a crewcut!

Academics were never a priority for me. I did not do homework, study, or worry about going to college. I would probably go into the service, work construction, or something like that. When everyone else in high school was worrying about their term paper, I did not even know what a term paper was all about. I was one of those nice, big kids that they were just passing along as I caused no trouble.

Dr. Boyle was our science teacher. At one point when all my friends were going to college, I thought I might like to go as well and went to ask him if I could take a science class in order to go to college. He told me it was a little late to think about that at this time, but was nice about it. He was also a track coach.

I probably remember the coaches better than anyone else. Dr. Story was my shot putt coach and a psychology teacher. He also coached his son who held the record for Mamaroneck High School in shot putt, that was until he coached me so well, that I broke his son's record. Dr. Story was good about this event. I also remember Dr. Story taking our psychology class to Wingdale, the mental institution, for a class. It was a very impressive trip and one that I will always remember.

I had never played formal hockey before MHS so I played as a walk on during the tenth grade and just practiced with the team in order to learn the game that year. I then played on the varsity for 11th and 12th grade. I played with Don Wakeman, Roy Halstead and Burt Van Beaver and his brother. Our coach was a French man and we lost more games than we won. We certainly couldn't compete with Darien and Greenwich who had feeder teams for the boys when they were young.

Fifty years after I played Varsity Hockey for MHS, I was still playing the alumni game at the Hommocks Middle School. It was a fund raiser and you could be an alumnus at age 18 and here I was in my 70's still playing in the Alumni Game. They had '58 listed as my graduation year in the program.

My wife heard someone in the stands say, "They really made a mistake with that number - it has to be '85, no one from '58 could still be out on the ice."



Ben, age 7, playing on the Chatsworth Playground with his sister.



Ben, Grade 9

Mr. Murtaugh was my 11th and 12th grade football coach. He was a good guy and I learned a lot from him. From Mr. Harrison my 10th grade coach, I learned the Single Wing Strategy, but with Murtaugh I had to change to the T formation. I was a tackle due to my large size, strength and speed for my size.

Our football team, the Zapata's, (named after the movie) had a tradition before each game. We would go say a prayer at St. Vito's Catholic Church and then go to the Mamaroneck Diner for breakfast. Then at 1:00 pm we would go to the school for a 2:00 game and get our legs taped. James Kronenberger, Mamaroneck Recreation Superintendent, and our trainer, was the one who taped our legs and ankles for the game.

Before my senior year we had a split season as we were growing, but my senior year we only lost one game to Roosevelt High School in Yonkers. That game still sits heavily with me. Our Power Line up was Pat Pennucci, our quarter back, with Richie Block, Guy Protano, Stanley Brice, Stan Brubacker, Paul Marafino, Stanley Perlin, Lee Gabler and myself.

Doc John Sullivan was the vice principal. When he heard I was going to college he told me the following: "Learn to say no." By this he meant that when people were going out to have fun, I needed to study, and say no. When I first went to college, I did not listen to Doc Sullivan, but the second time around I did listen to him and I succeeded.

When I graduated from MHS I had been named Honorable Mention to All County for football, track and field, and hockey. I was also captain of the track and field team my senior year. My name and sometimes my photo were in the paper. I had done very well for a boy who had no real athletic equipment or coaching until junior and high school. I would also later amaze people with both my BS degree in

recreation and my master's from NYU. You can never count anyone out.  
Shaw

By Ben (Schapanick)

## MAMARONECK HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD UPDATE

The board of the Mamaroneck Historical Society has been holding virtual meetings. As a non-profit educational organization our goal has been to sustain our mission dedicated to recording, preserving, and interpreting the history of the Town of Mamaroneck, the Village of Mamaroneck, and the Village of Larchmont.

Despite the challenges, we have been successful. The historical society hosted the rededication celebration at the DeLancey Burying ground in September. In October-November the society sponsored five educational programs in partnership with LMCCE, the Mamaroneck Public Library and the League of Women Voters-Larchmont Mamaroneck. We have continued to support local demands for research on historic sites and have expanded our website to include more resources, including interactive maps and election history.

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING POSTPONED

As per our by-laws, we normally host a General Membership Meeting in November. Nominees to board seats that are being vacated are introduced and all members participate in the voting process to determine the board for the coming year.

The current board discussed the options for hosting a live or virtual meeting or for holding a vote via mail. After considering these options, the board determined that under the current circumstances, stability of a functional board was essential. Therefore, a motion was made to roll over the officers and approved by the board. Members of the Board are listed on page 1 of this newsletter. If you have any questions please contact us at [mamaroneckhistory@gmail.com](mailto:mamaroneckhistory@gmail.com).

### Can we count on your support to continue this work?

Please help us to continue this work by renewing your membership at this time. As a non-profit organization all donations are tax deductible so please consider a donation during this holiday season. Our annual Historic Mamaroneck Calendar is available as well. Thank you in advance for your support!

**Hurry up and get your copy of the 2021 Mamaroneck Historical Society calendar while supplies last!**

Includes photos of memorable locations and dates in our history. **Perfect for Holiday Gifts!**

Cost: \$15.00

**Available for sale at:**

ASAP Ship and Mail – 180 East Prospect Ave.

Mamaroneck Public Library – front desk

1816 Schoolhouse on 11/29 – 1:00-4:00

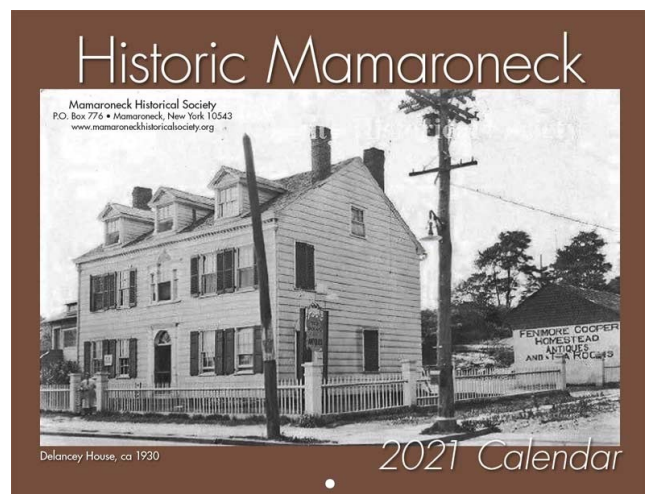
Foley Hardware – Larchmont

Village Paint – Mamaroneck and Larchmont

**Or request a copy by email from:**

Bette at [luckygem3@aol.com](mailto:luckygem3@aol.com)

Mike at [mat521@optonline.net](mailto:mat521@optonline.net)



**SUPPORT PRESERVATION OF LOCAL HISTORY - JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!**

**Please use the enclosed envelope to support this effort or**

**Join via our website at the SUPPORT link. [www.mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Dues: (Please check one) Membership is on an annual basis, from January 1st to December 31st of each year**

\_\_\_\_ \$20 - Senior/Student

\_\_\_\_ \$125 - Sustaining

\_\_\_\_ \$25 - Individual

\_\_\_\_ \$250 - Benefactor

\_\_\_\_ \$40 - Family

\_\_\_\_ \$500 - Corporate

**Additional Tax Deductible Donation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to the Mamaroneck Historical Society. Thank you for your support!**