

OCTOBER

MamaroneckHistoricalSociety.org

| MamaroneckHistory@gmail.com

Monthly Member Get-togethers!

Third Tuesday of every month (except January, July & August)
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm (ish) at
Woman's Club of
Mamaroneck, 504 Cortlandt Avenue.

First a quick 15 minute catchup on current projects and mysteries in Mamaroneck

Then we dive into the "feature" presentation, usually with a PowerPoint, 30 - 45 minutes.

Afterwards, we break for light refreshments, socializing, and trading family stories of old Mamaroneck.

Coming next month...

Tuesday, November 21st

The Kemper Memorial:
Remembering Mamaroneckers Who Gave Their Lives To Defend Us.



The Florence/Powell Burying Ground October 2023

Always working on exploring, restoring, or preserving some part of Mamaroneck History

Everyone doing research or restoration projects at the Mamaroneck Historical Society is a volunteer. We're your neighbors. And, like you, our lives are full.

But sometimes, when you have a passion for something, you find the time, energy, and resources to forge ahead.

If you're a *prospective* member why not consider becoming a member. Join now and you are good through 2024.



Annual General Meeting & Board of Trustees Election

November is our Annual Members General Meeting and Board of Trustees Election.

There are five Trustees up for re-election this year:

George Mgrditchian	VP
Don Sutherland	Treasurer
Ray Maldonado	Trustee
Dennis Cucinella	Trustee
James Maver	Trustee

Member Holiday Party

December (Date TBA)

George Mgrditchian is scouting restaurant locations and prices.

1816 School House

Just a reminder that (thanks to John Pritts) the School House is open for visits on the last Sunday of each month, from 1:00 - 4:00pm.

You can make a difference as a Member!

When you become a 2024 Member, no matter how much you participate or donate, it all helps! **Donate now for 2024!**

mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org/support

Minimum Suggested 2024 Member Donations:

\$25 (\$20 for Seniors & Students - \$40 family)

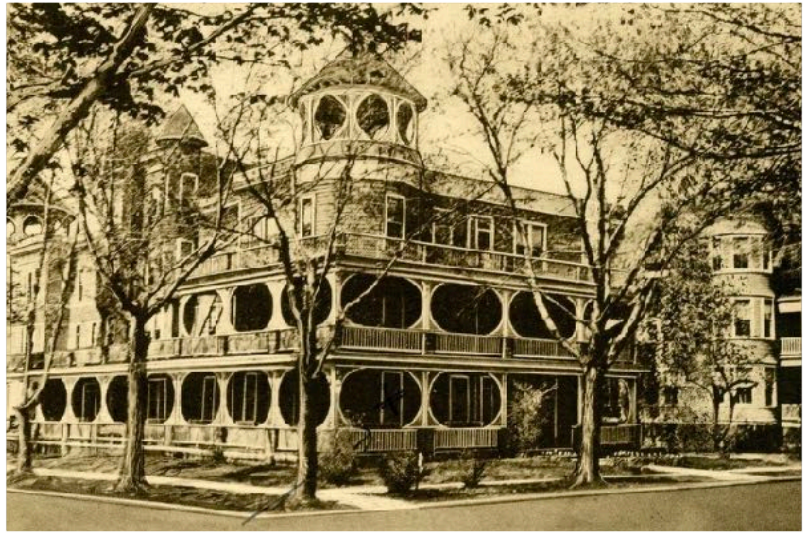
Checks payable to "The Mamaroneck Historical Society"

Mailing Address: **The Mamaroneck Historical Society, PO Box 776, Mamaroneck, NY 10543**

The (Possibly) Haunted Larchmont Manor Inn

At Foley's Hardware one day I overheard a lady telling another person about how she had worked at the Manor Inn and that it was haunted.

Intrigued I asked her if she really thought it was haunted and she proceeded to list off the various apparitions that had been seen over the years. What have you heard?



How Mamaroneck Streets Got Their Names

Paul D. Rheingold has done some great research on the names of Mamaroneck streets. How did your street get its name?

You can find this article at mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org/streetnames and you can contribute to this project if you know the origins of a street name that we've not been able to find yet.

And learn how old Mamaroneck streets are in a Mike Meaney article on the website at mamaroneckhistoricalsociety.org/streets



Some Photos From the October 17th MEMBER GET-TOGETHER



The Battle of Heathcote Hill

October 21/22, 1776

Spring 1776. The Town of Mamaroneck holds its annual Town Meeting in the little school house at the junction of what is now Old Post Road and Orienta Avenue. The main topic of discussion: delegating different sections of the roads to be repaired by various residents.

Late Summer 1776. Things are changing rapidly. Loyalist townsman William Lounsbury, weaver, one time town official, is bayoneted to death by his Patriot neighbor, John Flood, boatman, in a cave in the Great Lots; the first blood of the Revolution shed in Westchester County.

Now it's the 21st of October. On the flat surface of Heathcote Hill, Mamaroneck is occupied by 130 Massachusetts Militia, Col. Carpenter's 1st Bristol Regiment [Continental Army] "to protect the [supply] stores, assist in repairing the roads and prevent any communication between disaffected inhabitants and the enemy." There are a lot of Loyalists in Mamaroneck.

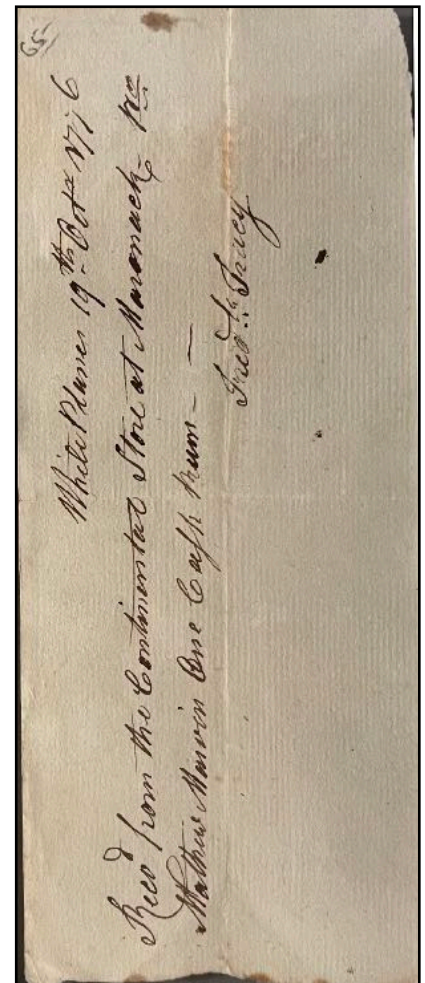
Washington, in White Plains, learns that the British are sending famed guerilla fighter Robert Rogers and his Loyalist militia, the Queens American Rangers, (a 400-man unit composed of "farmers and townspeople who scarcely knew one end of a gun from another") to take Mamaroneck and the stores. He orders the 20th Connecticut Militia [Continental Army], who are in Rye, to go to Mamaroneck and "make the best stand you can...I will as soon as possible order a party to attack them in flank." They had about 170 men.

The Patriot militia had fled by the time Rogers arrived that morning. Hessian adjutant Baurmeister [British Army] said that they "did not await [Rogers'] arrival, and abandoned their magazine."

Washington was furious. "Our people shamefully deserted on their approach, not for want of numbers but want of a good Officer to lead on the men."

Rogers had his men take possession of the Continental Army provisions in the houses, barns, and mills along the Mamaroneck River, consisting principally of rum, molasses, flour, and pork. (See our Oct. 19, 1776 receipt for a cask of rum from the Mamaroneck stores.)

"However," Baurmeister said, "Lack of wagons, complete ignorance of the enemy's [Continental Army's] strength, and the fear that they might have doubled back made the detached troops [British Army] destroy these badly need provisions."



Rogers then settled his men on Heathcote Hill under the cover of the ridge below Munro Avenue across from the Woman's Club at 504 Cortlandt Ave. They had no tents and made fires from rail fences.

Rogers commandeered the 1730 school house at Old Post Road and Orienta Avenue for his headquarters, sending the children home. One student, many years later, recalled him as "a very rough looking man with red eyes."

Washington ordered Lord Sterling to "fall upon Rogers in the night."

Sterling assembled a Continental Army attack force of 600 men, chiefly comprised of the Delaware Blues under Col. Haslet, supplemented with elements of Lt. Col. Daniel Brodhead's 1st Pennsylvania State Rifle Regiment, Col. Smallwood's 1st Maryland Regiment, and according to Peter Kimball of the New Hampshire militiamen, "eight went out of our company."



To these were added another 150 men composed of Major Green's 1st, and elements of Col. George Weedon's 3rd Virginians.

At dusk, Robert Rogers set out his sentinels and 'out guard.' He made sure he was well protected on the approaches from White Plains, Harrison, and Rye, all directions from which the Continental Army might come.

The southwest he assigned a single sentinel. The entire British Army was encamped in this direction so he didn't feel it needed much attention.

After all the Ranger's Heathcote Hill sentinels and outguards had been placed, as late as 9:00 that night, some local patriots memorized their locations, rushed up to White Plains and informed Lord Sterling [Continental Army] of the exact dispositions.

Later Rogers walked the perimeter checking on his sentries and decided that the south-west access *should* be protected more. He ordered Captain Eagles with his 60 men to post an outguard between the main camp and the lone sentinel at Munro and Rockland. Then he retired to his quarters at the School House.

Late that night, Col. Haslet and his Continental Army detachment of 750 men made their way down Weaver “until they arrived within half a mile of the highway from New York to Boston (approximately Myrtle Blvd).”

They left the road there, cutting northeast across fields, the guides clearing any obstacles ahead of them. My guess is that at Blossom Terrace, they would have crossed Palmer to the High School Hill. Sticking to the higher ground, they would have proceeded on Carpenter until “They approached a lane (Rockland) on the other side of which they knew there was a sentinel.”

They had to search quietly to determine where exactly he was. Then several of Green’s Virginians crept along the ground, jumped him and threw him to the ground before he had a chance to yell or fire his gun. Though secured, this young Indian that Rogers had recruited on Long Island kept thrashing about. Fearful that his actions would raise the alarm, an officer ended his life by thrusting a sword through him.

At this point the local guides all disappeared. We don’t know why. What we do know is that Major Green was not concerned because he knew that he just had to keep to a direct northeast line and he would reach the main camp of the Rangers.

Unfortunately, the bivouac of Eagles’ Ranger company was also exactly in the line of Major Green’s Virginians and they literally stumbled upon them in their sleep. Green assumed he had somehow unexpectedly arrived at the main Ranger camp and sent a messenger back to Col. Haslet to that effect.

The Virginians called out for the Rangers to surrender. Some of the Rangers rose to submit, some to resist. Hughson of Dutchess County, one of the lieutenants, cried out, “Fire away boys, fire! Never give up to the rebels! Moments later he was dead, fighting to the last.



In the midst of this confusion, Eagles adopted the outcries of the Continental Army Virginians and shouted, “Surrender you Tory (Loyalist) dogs! Surrender!” His men followed his example. For several minutes both the Virginians *and* the Rangers were cursing Rogers. Rangers faked fighting with each other, and friend could not be distinguished from foe because neither the 1st and 3rd Virginians nor the Queens American Rangers had uniforms. The trick probably saved the lives of many Rangers.

Col. Haslet arrived and surrounded the Rangers' outguard post, on three sides but Green's Virginians were so mixed up with Eagles' Rangers that he wasn't sure who to engage.

Meanwhile, Eagles and the Rangers were gradually withdrawing, moving closer and closer to their main camp, drawing the Virginians with them.

The uproar roused the Ranger main camp and the men rushed up to their positions on the ridge even though they had no idea what was happening.



Eagles and his men, mixed with the Virginians, came bursting upon them. It was pitch dark, and the fighting went on in the utmost confusion, each man fighting for himself.

Rogers was awakened too. He grabbed his fusil (a short barreled musket) and ran to the base up Heathcote Hill and then up on the top where the camp was, not knowing how things were going, who was attacking, with what force, or what advantage they might have.

He roared out, "They are running! They are running! Give it to 'em boys, damn 'em! Give it to 'em!"

The Rangers at the main camp, actually on the point of breaking and running, were reassured by his voice and words, figured they must be winning and turned back to the fight. The Virginians figured they were losing and started to disengage and retreat towards the Continental forces.

Col. Haslet [Continental Army] had paused momentarily to secure the Rangers that they had captured at the outpost, the 60 muskets at the site, and some blankets. Now he joined in the attack to support his Virginian contingent, but according to James McMichael of the Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment [Continental Army], "unfortunately, taking the Delaware Blues [Continental Army] for the enemy, we fired on each other..."

By now Rogers had all his men in a firing line. "Steady boys! Steady! Fire! Fire!"

There was a volley first, so powerful that the powder flash was spotted by General Heath of the Continental Army on Chatterton Hill six miles away in White Plains. Then the Rangers continued with a rolling fire.



The combination of the Continental Army's Pennsylvanians firing on his Delaware Blues, the Virginians rushing back from the ridge and the steady well disciplined fire from the Rangers convinced Haslet that he wasn't going to have the complete rout he expected and that he might be facing a more powerful [British Army] force than expected.

The Continental Army detachment retreated back up Weaver to White Plains, with their Ranger prisoners, a pair of flags, sixty muskets, some blankets and some of his wounded.

When the sun came up later that morning, Lord Stirling [Continental Army] publicly thanked the detachment and Col. Haslet while on parade, hailing a great victory.

The Ranger prisoners were questioned, 31 names recorded and gallows prepared. Washington had 28 sent up to Fishkill to be dealt with by the local congress. They were later marched to Exeter in New Hampshire. Three of the 31 were indentified as Continental Army deserters and hung at noon.

At Heathcote Hill, the dead, Patriot and Loyalist, were buried in a common grave. Local Nicholas Schofield later recalled that "their graves were too shallow and dogs kept digging up the bodies to eat, so they redug them and put heavy stones on them." (In 1904 when workers were digging for water and sewers on Munro Avenue near Fenimore, they found the bone chip remains, including some military buttons.)

The wounded remained on the battlefield for some time “their moans from pain, and cries for water, most distressing.” It was later afternoon before Rogers could gather enough ox-carts to convey them to a makeshift hospital in the New Rochelle Church.



Rogers reported 19 Rangers and one British officer killed.

Washington’s aide Col Tilghman wrote that a Continental Army officer reported a total of 25 dead, Patriot and Loyalist, in one orchard.

Lieutenant McMichael, Continental Army, reported 14 Rogers’ forces, 6 Pennsylvania Riflemen, and 9 Delaware Blues dead.

There were no more Town meetings that year, or for the remainder of the war. Mamaroneck was devastated by roving bands of marauders who stole, raped, killed, and burnt down local farms.

Seven years later, on November 25, 1783, the British evacuated New York City.

One month after that, December 22, 1778, the Town of Mamaroneck held its first Town Meeting since April 1776. Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert Budd of the Westchester County Militia was elected Town Clerk and Supervisor. The main topic of discussion: delegating different sections of the roads to be repaired by different residents.

