

A Stroll Through Old Nassau

.....With a Stop at the Village Library

By Mary F. Kosegarten

THIS IS A CURTISY to the Nassau Free Library which was first chartered in 1893 and which has served our community faithfully and continuously these seventy-five years.

In fact, the library is a dozen years older than its charter, for in 1881 a group of women with literary appetites and with community purpose opened a library in Clapper's Market, a store which used to stand on the corner of Church Street and Maiden Street. Two of those pioneer founders were Clara L. Merchant (Mrs. Abel) and Sarah Alice Huested (Mrs. Charles E.). Their young daughters, Clarinda Merchant and Lelia Huested, grew up in the library and their ambitions for its growth and service were demonstrated all the years of their lives.

In 1888, the library moved across the street to Huested's Store, (our ice cream parlor of today.) In 1892, it was transferred to its present quarters - the charming little building of colonial design which had served as the custody room of the Nassau Dutch Reformed Church.

MY OWN EXPERIENCES with the Nassau Free Library date from a very important day in 1916. My father was

a library trustee at the time and since I was in first grade, learning to read, he decided it was time that I discovered where the books were.

Of course we walked. Won't you join us on our nostalgic excursion from our home on John Street to the library on Church Street? In those days the Nassau Union School, a four-roomed structure on Chatham Street, housed all the children of the village of grammar school age. We used to call the present Donald Sutherland school grounds on John Street, "Mr. Van Valkenburgh's meadow." And that green meadow was a place of enchantment! It was seldom we passed that delightful spot without making a detour to pick wild strawberries or to gather a bouquet of field daisies or to inspect a killdeer's nest for little birds. On this occasion, however, I am quite sure there were no nature strolls. At the end of John Street where the Sunoco Station stands, Mrs. Rose lived with her son, Peter Dockendorph. She was a wonderful Irish lady whose flower garden had a singular beauty. She used to talk to her flowers as if they were her babies! If we found her in her garden, I'm sure we paused to chat. It was part of the fun of walking up street.

One stop, I remember well. It was at Lynd's Drug Store,

located where the IGA Store is today. In memory, it was a handsome edifice. In the windows, along with huge bottles filled with jewel-colored water, there were neat displays of Yardley's lavender products or Whitman's chocolates or Waterbury's Compound. Inside and out, the store shone with gleaming glass cases and fresh paint and soap-and-water cleanliness. After my father and the Lynd brothers had greeted each other and talked at some length about village affairs, we walked past the candy counter to the ice cream parlor - one of the most beautiful rooms in the world. Since my father seated me at one of the pretty mahogany tables, I knew I might have a soda and not the usual ice cream cone. Miss Merrifield, the soda fountain girl, came from behind the marble counter to ask if we wanted plain or carbonated water and to take our orders. Back she went to her mirrored realm with its stained glass cabinets to mix our ten-cent strawberry sodas. As we sat there, my father began to tell me something about the library: what it was and how it began.

AS A SCHOOLBOY, my father had lived with Dr. Philip C. Neher, caring for his horse and accompanying him on evening jaunts into the

countryside. This arduous program for a twelve-year-old had its dividends. Dr. Neher was a knowledgeable amateur astronomer, and as the two drove into the night, the older man shared with his eager, young companion everything he knew about the constellations and the movement of the planets. The Neher home housed one of the best private libraries in the village, and my father was encouraged to spend his free time after school and in the evening, reading Dr. Neher often told him about the libraries in large cities and of his wish for a library in Nassau, a dream shared by many other villagers. In the course of our conversation, I was informed that the library was "a quiet place like school" and that I was to behave myself accordingly.

Continuing our trip to the library, we crossed the village square with its storybook bandstand and made our way up Church Street. As I recall the library at that time, it was painted a rather unpleasant yellow with green trim in contrast to its pristine whiteness of a later day. On either side of the porch was a bench, a convenient place to wait for the library to open.

The elms along the old main road used to be a beautiful sight; in summer the lacework of their leaves met

in a shady arch through the village.

The librarians in 1916 were Mrs. Huested and her daughter Miss Lelia. Miss Lelia had glossy hair - dark and long - and she invariably wore a long, full skirt and a starched white shirt waist. I thought she was beautiful, and I was always in awe of her and her mother. Both were pleasantly organized in their work. They were always friendly, their discipline was always firm and sure. Mrs. Huested made out my blue library card, and Miss Lelia helped me find two books as she explained the rules of the library to me. The children's shelves were in the same section as the Children's Corner today. We checked out our books, thanked the librarians, and walked home. It was the first of hundreds of visits to one of my favorite places.

THE MEMORIES I hold of the library during childhood and adolescent days are cherished ones. The Nassau Union School and its principal, Mr. Harvey E. Alter, put great emphasis on the Nassau Free Library as a sort of educational center. To raise money, the library sponsored tea parties, entertainments, concerts, and at least one masquerade dance in Winters Hall which I remember vividly. On Saturday nights in

summer, the library was always open during the weekly band concerts. An ice cream cone and a new library book and your personal request played by the band equalled a very special happiness!

There have been many changes in our progressive village, and the growth of the library is one of those innovations. Our membership in the Upper Hudson Library Federation has brought new opportunities. The result has been a kind of renaissance for the library and a stimulus to the members of the Board and to our librarians. Let us not forget, however, that throughout the years our library has been blessed with sponsors and patrons who really cared. There has been a continuity in the purposefulness of the library program. Our present librarian, Mrs. Carolyn Sherman, and her assistant, Mrs. Doris Schutter, have the same wholesome qualities of friendliness and helpfulness - and the same wholehearted interest in running a good library that Mrs. Huested and Miss Lelia exhibited fifty years ago.

As a resident of Nassau - and as someone who loves my hometown and is very proud of its heritage - I feel privileged to pay this tribute to the Nassau Free Library. May it ever endure!



Chartered in 1893, the Nassau Public Library has served generations of village residents as an educational and cultural center of the community.

The Chatham Courier
Section B Page 1 Thursday, September 5, 1968

News of Castleton

Schodack Central PTA Will Greet Faculty

Rev. Eric King
Correspondent
732-2122

The first meeting of the Schodack Central PTA will be held at the Maple Hill School on Thursday, Sept. 12 at 8. Supervising Principal Larry Davis, Elementary Supervisor Gerald Friends and Principal Michael Nagle will introduce a faculty staff of 87, including 23 new teachers.

1968-69 executive committee includes, Donald and Mary Ann Roth, co-presidents; Mrs. Fred Hutchinson, first vice president and program chairman; Mrs. Howard Grogan, second vice president and membership chairman; Ben Mastrototare, secretary; Mrs. Ronald Snyder, treasurer; Gaylor Hymen, legislation; Joan Van Gelder, ways and means; Marion Valli, publicity; Dottie McCumber, co-hospitality; Joan Ennis and Dottie McCumber, room mothers chairman. The entire committee will serve as board of education representatives.

The program for the school year follows: Sept. 12, 8 P.M., Maple Hill High School, in production of Teachers; Oct. 3, 8 P.M., Castleton Elementary School, Reading Program; K-6; Nov. 7, 8 P.M., Maple Hill High School, "India" by Mr. J. R. Smith; Feb. 6, 1969, 8 P.M., Square Dancing at Maple Hill Elementary School; March 6, Outdoor Education Program at Maple Hill Elementary and May 1, Physical Education exhibition, grades 7-2 at Maple Hill High School at 8 P.M.

ENDS TRAINING
Sea Cadet Jack Freele, son of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Freele, 2 Morgan Terrace, Castleton-on-Hudson, returned home on Saturday, August 31, 1968 after undergoing two weeks of intensive "boot camp" training at Orlando, Florida.

Area Sea Cadets, flown to Orlando by Navy plane, were housed in air conditioned dormitories and academically trained in the latest of classroom atmospheres. Training was aimed at developing skills of basic seamanship and traits of self-reliance, patriotism and citizenship.

NEWS DEADLINE
The Chatham Courier-Rough Notes will be happy to print news of organizations in the Castleton area as well as personal items. It is requested that all copy be in the hands of our correspondent, the Rev. Eric King by Sunday evenings.

HOME BUREAU MEETS
A dinner meeting will open the 1968-69 season of the Castleton chapter of Home Bureau on Tuesday, September 10, 6:30 P.M., at the V. F. W., Scott Avenue, Castleton. Officers of the group for the new season are Mrs. Seth Honeyman, Chairman; Mrs. Evan Hibbs, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Mollie Miller, Treasurer; Mrs. John Dadek, Secretary.
J. David Kaercher, who has been associated with Howard Mesand, florist, has opened his own florist shop at 639 London Road, Latham, adjacent to the Fidelity Bank of Colosse. He is the son of Rev. John A. Kaercher of Castleton.

LUTHERAN CHURCH NOTES
Pastor John A. Kaercher has announced the following services at Trinity Lutheran Church. The fall schedule begins Sept. 8 with an early service at 8:30, church school and family worship at 9:30 and the second or chief service at 11. The Sacrament of Communion will be administered on the first Sunday of the month. Because of the Labor Day weekend, opening Communion will be on Sept. 8.

HERE AND THERE
The Brown Company is having an Open House, Wednesday, September 11th 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. for employees and residents of the locality. All are welcomed.

Boy Scout Troop 253
Scout Troop 253 will start regular fall meetings on September 9 at 7 p.m. at the Clave Road Schoolhouse in South Schodack. Any boy wishing to join is welcome.

On September 14 the boys will be having a paper drive in the South Schodack area. If anyone outside this area wants papers picked up call 732-2062 or 766-3817.
Saturday September 21st the scouts will be having a clam-bake at the South Schodack Fire House. Anyone wishing to purchase a ticket please contact any of the Scouts of Troop 253.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church, situated at 35 Main Street, will begin its Fall program this Sunday at 10:30 a.m. with a united service for both children and parents. During the hymn before the sermon the children will go to their respective classes, and the service and Sunday School will conclude at the same time - at 12 o'clock. The pastor, the Rev. Eric King, will preach on "Those Whom God Hath Joined Together." The teaching staff will consist of the following department heads: Baby and Child Care: Mrs. Edward Swartz; Nursery: Mrs. Douglas Wilson; Kindergarten and Grade 1: Mrs. David Sanger; Grade 2 and 3: Mrs. Rudolph Finkle; Mrs. James Cosgrave; Grade 6 & 7: Andy Campbell; Grade 8 & 9: Gene Laska; High School (Morning Group): Mrs. Mayland Parker; (Evening Group) Richard Gaylord; Adults: Gay Hymen. There will be baby and child care beginning 10:30 a.m.

Retired Persons Luncheon
A Retired Persons Luncheon Club has recently been formed and meets Tuesday noon at the St. Paul's Methodist Church, Main Street. The group is open to all denominations and creeds. It is for those 55 years of age and over. The members bring a sandwich; beverage is supplied. After the luncheon there is a meeting and program. The purpose of the club is for retired persons to get together for conversation and fellowship. Officers recently elected are: George Caren, president; Lyle Von Arx, vice-president; Mrs. Ralph Barber, treasurer; Mrs. Albert Taylor, Sunshine Secretary; Mrs. Florence Yostinis, pianist; Mrs. Marie Calver, advisor; Rev. Eric King. A cordial invitation is extended to new members.

Wedding in Virginia
George Ennis, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Ennis, Seaman Avenue, and Susan Hankey were married, September 1st, at the Burlington Methodist Church, Roanoke, West Virginia. The bride is a student at Duke University and the groom is attending the Duke Theological Seminary. He was ordained as a deacon by the Troy Annual Conference at its session last summer in Poulney, Vermont. The new couple will live in Durham, N. Car.

Other Recent Weddings
On August 10th, Mrs. Isabelle Wilson, 53 Scott Avenue, to Joseph Schofield, and August 31, Richard Bauer of 1441 River Road, Castleton, and Dawn Wallace. The ceremonies were performed by Methodist pastor, Rev. Eric King.

Castleton Kiwanis News
Castleton Kiwanians on Wednesday were guests of a down-Hudson river trip on the yacht owned and captained by Gene Lasher. The regular meeting was preceded with a dinner at Garafalo's restaurant. Guests at the meeting included Gene Lasher, Bud Burdick and Ray Prende. Officers of the club present were: President, Harry Hallenbeck; Vice-President, Pete Ansell;

Secretary, George Koerner and Treasurer, John Ray. The Kiwanis Club gives many services to Castleton. It sponsors the Railroad Club for Boys, the two Scout troops and Cub pack, it sponsors and maintains a camp building for 4 H girls, as well as a gladioli growing contest for girls; it helps the Girl Scouts, co-sponsors the cross-country track meet each Fall at the high school, the Brick Yard Skating rink, it supports the American Legion and Little League baseball organizations, gives Christmas hampers and prizes for best costumes at Halloween. It currently has taken the initiative in bringing the Chatham Courier to include the Castleton community.

Castleton Yacht Club
Recently three local clergymen, Rev. Robert McLaughlin, Rev. John Kaercher, and Rev. Eric King participated in a service known as "The Blessing of the Fleet." This custom comes from an old Portuguese custom when fishing vessels were blessed before beginning the season's voyage. The custom here began 10 years ago by the Castleton Club for the upper Hudson fleet in connection with the 300th anniversary of the discovery of

the Hudson. Since that time the various clubs have rotated in this practice.

The Castleton Yacht Club has 96 members. Among its members is the Commissioner for Boats for New York State, Mr. James O'Brien. The Club has 45 yachts of various sizes. The commodore, elected yearly, is Mervin Butler; the vice-Commodore - LeRoy Oliver.

Masons Will Meet
Sunshine Lodge (F & A.M.) will have its first Fall meeting Tuesday, September 10, 8 p.m. in the Masonic Temple on Main Street. W.M. Edgar Swartz will preside and the first degree will be conferred. Other officers of the Lodge include: Sr. Warden James Bult; Junior Warden George Rowley; Senior Deacon, Peter Tacy; Junior Deacon, Beecher Woodside; Chaplain, Maurice Ansborg; Senior Master of Ceremony, George Mesick, Jr.; Junior Master of Ceremony, Rudolph Finkle; Tiler, Donald Swartz; Secretary, Wilbur Wallace; treasurer, Clayton Rowe.

Big Business
In 1967 total United States agricultural exports were valued at close to \$7 million.

WARD'S

NURSERY & GARDEN CENTER

Get them Now...
Bird Feeders
Chrysanthemums

Sunflower Seeds

Plants For Foundation Planting



South Main Street

528-0166

Great Barrington

STATE BANK

"From tiny acorns,
the mighty
oak trees grow."

The same can be said of saving regularly. Open a savings account with US and then, each and every payday, deposit a definite amount... no matter how modest. Before long, you'll have a sizeable nest egg to rely on in time of need. Take it from US, it's a very comfortable feeling.

Remember too, deposits made on or before the 10th of ANY month, earn interest from the 1st!

Do ALL your banking under THIS roof... it's the ONLY bank you need!

29 offices to serve your FULL-SERVICE needs

ALBANY (3)	GERMANTOWN	MENANDS
AMSTERDAM	GREENVILLE*	PLATTSBURGH (2)
CAIRO	HUDSON	PORT HENRY
CHATHAM	JOHNSTOWN	RICHFIELD SPRINGS
COHOES	LAKE LUZERNE	SARATOGA SPRINGS
COLONIE	LATHAM	SCHOHARIE
EAST GREENBUSH	LOUDONVILLE	TICONDEROGA
FORT PLAIN	MECHANICVILLE	TROY
	WARRENSBURG	WATERLIET

Serving Northeastern New York for over 164 years.

STATE
BANK
OF ALBANY
CHARTERED-1803

Member: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation