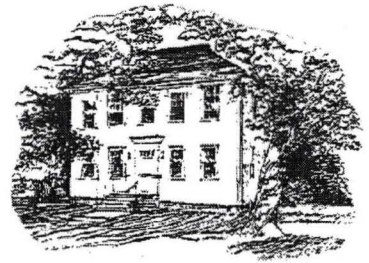


IMAGES

... then and now

From The Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

New Residents' Party Marks 35 Years

For thirty five years, an Open House for Village newcomers has been a popular evening event. This gives residents an opportunity to meet community leaders and their neighbors in a social setting.

Barbara Eveland (Mayor Eppa Rixey's mother-in-law) started this tradition. In 1973 she approached Council with the concept of a party for newcomers. They agreed, and with a small budget she organized the occasion and was the first hostess chairperson. There have been 21 hostess/chairs since 1973, with several ladies volunteering for multiple sequential years. Each year, the event changes a little, but the pattern has remained basically the same as when it was originally devised.

People who have moved into Indian Hill during the calendar year receive invitations, and Joyce Holder, (administrative secretary) records acceptances and regrets. The Mayor, members of Council, members of the Green Areas Advisory Committee, the City Manager and his staff, representatives from the Public Works and Water Works Departments and the Gun Club, the Police and Fire Chiefs, the Superintendent of Schools and School Board members, local clergy, the Historical Society officers and the Rowe Arboretum manager attend the party. It usually takes place from 5:00 until 7:30 on a Sunday evening in late winter or early spring.



Before the party, the hostess and her committee make arrangements for decorations, food, and beverages. One time – when the event was near Valentine's Day, the color scheme was all pink, red, and white. Floral arrangements, balloons and various layouts of tables have been used through the decades. One hostess noted that "decorating Livingston Lodge is like decorating a cave"; however she enhanced the building's ambiance with a motif of forced branches in bloom.

New residents are treated to a wide range of hors d'oeuvres contributed by other attendees. For the last two years, a tower of White Castle "sliders" has been very popular. Barbara Eveland supplied an anniversary cake every fifth year. A wide selection of beverages is offered, and the volunteer bartenders are husbands and friends of the hostess and her committee members. For many years, residents Jock and Tad Lawrence (father and son) volunteered their talent, setting the mood for the gathering by playing Broadway melodies on the piano.

Newcomers wear distinctive blue tinted nametags. The Mayor officially welcomes the new residents, and introduces key people in the Village. A variety of materials – Newcomer's Packet, information about the Rowe Arboretum, the Historical Society, the Winter Club, and Green Areas – are available for people to take home. The party continues as villagers mingle and converse in small groups.

The event has been held at three different village locations: Livingston Lodge, Peterloon, and the Little Red Schoolhouse. Though weather sometimes has affected turnout, there are usually about 100 attendees. Because of Livingston Lodge's size, more decorations were required there. Peterloon's staff offered tours of the home during the Open House. Recently the party has been held at the Schoolhouse, a more central location with a cozy atmosphere and adjacent parking.

This is the tenth consecutive year that Helen Verkamp has served as the hostess chairperson of the New Residents' Party. Her flair and warmth always make for a memorable evening. Both newcomers and old timers have enjoyed the festivities and informative nature of this tradition.

Special thanks to Joyce Holder for assistance with this article.



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