



Egbert Benson HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RED HOOK

P.O. Box 397 Red Hook, N.Y. 12571-0397

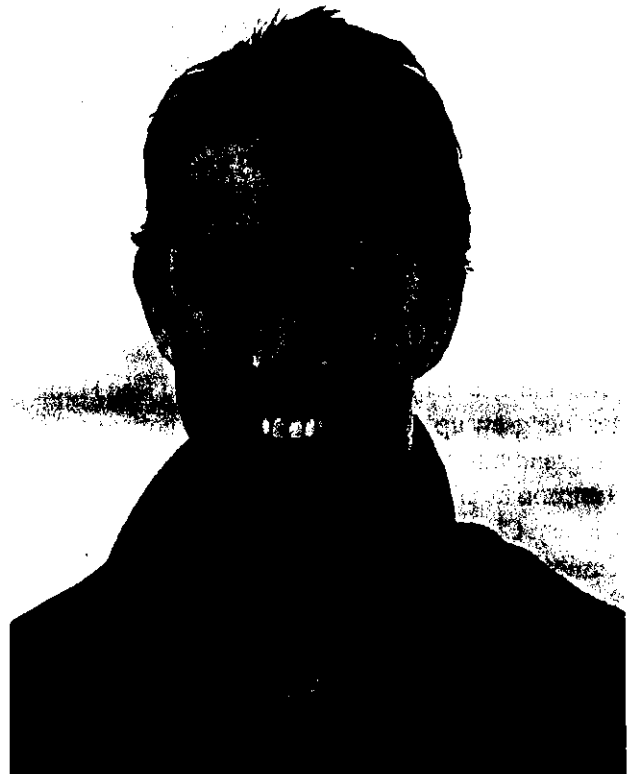
Annual Meeting, June 2002

Riverkeeper to be guest at June Annual Meeting

Alex Matthiessen, the Hudson Valley's newest Riverkeeper, will be the guest speaker at our annual dinner meeting June 18th where we hope to hear him discuss some of the recent challenges to the Hudson Valley and the River.

Mr. Matthiessen, who hails from California and has an extensive background in environmental advocacy, was appointed to his post in 2000, replacing the original Riverkeeper, John Cronin, in the important watchdog position created in 1983. The Hudson Riverkeeper is the River's most visible and aggressive advocate. The organization and the position was created from the former Hudson River Fisherman's Association, an environmental advocacy group that, with others, successfully fought to keep Storm King Mountain from being destroyed by plans to site a massive power plant there in 1980.

As Riverkeeper, Mr. Matthiessen has recently been outspoken on several projects directly affecting us, including the controversy over the Hudson River dredging of PCBs; the proposed Athens power plant; and the new St. Lawrence Cement factory proposed near Hudson. He has spoken out on the vulnerability of the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant in Buchanan, which has become a subject of concern since the 9/11 attack, and recently spoke in favor of shutting the plant down. With the help of a team of attorneys led by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and the Pace Environmental Litigation Clinic he investigates potential threats to the watershed and enforces environmental law in order to safeguard the Hudson River valley and the New York City drinking water supply. Mr. Matthiessen also oversees the fundraising and outreach operations of Riverkeeper, Inc., a



Alex Matthiessen, the Hudson Riverkeeper, has taken the place of John Cronin as the Hudson Valley's most aggressive advocate. He speaks at EBHS June 18th.

rapidly growing environmental organization that now operates with twenty staff, and is based in Garrison, New York.

Alex. Matthiessen came to Riverkeeper from the U.S. Department of Interior, where he served as Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary on matters of special importance to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. His primary responsibility was overseeing a

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Davis Cottage To Be Restored

An historic Red Hook house, designed by renowned 19th century architect Alexander Jackson Davis, is undergoing an extensive restoration under its new owner, Maynard Ham, almost 100 years after his grandfather lived and worked there.

The house, known as the Gardner's Cottage, was built at Maizeland c.1850 by William Chamberlain, owner of the estate established there by David Van Ness in 1797. The board and batten, two-story house is tucked behind the landmark red brick wall along West Market Street in the Village of Red Hook. The attractive "cottage style" house has a red tin hip roof, with a front, two-story portico. The Maizeland mansion stands in the background of the long enclosed yard. The house has been described as Classic with Davisian windows. Davis, with his partner landscaper designer A.J. Dowling, two of the major contributors to the American Romantic Landscape Movement, worked extensively in the Red Hook area in the mid-19th century, especially on the estates such as Montgomery Place in Annandale and Edgewater in Barrytown.

Maynard, an EBHS trustee and retired Red Hook teacher grew up with stories of the old cottage told by his grandfather John, who was head gardener for the Timpson family, owners of the estate at the turn of the century. Close to his grandfather, who lived with the family in his later years, Maynard loved hearing stories of his grandfather's prize rose garden at Maizeland and the competition for early spring vegetables among the estate gardeners at the time. Maynard's father was born there and several old family photos show the family in front of the beautiful old house.

The combination of an historically and architecturally significant house, coupled with the family connection, was too tempting to the former art teacher. A recent widower, his late wife Kaddy had become very attached to the house as well. When the property came up for sale last year, just after she died, Maynard decided it was meant to be. "It's a very, very nice house," he said. The design, and the very subtle details both inside and out give you a sense that a singular talent has thought everything through, he said.



John Ham, head gardener, sits with his family outside the Gardner's Cottage at Maizeland estate c.1920. His grandson, Maynard Ham, is restoring the A.J. Davis house.

As work progresses there have been some challenges, mainly some structural work that must be addressed in the rafters because of the settling in the front portico. It was decided, after consulting with a number of architectural historians and doing some sleuthing on his own, that the wrap-around porch, although original to the house, was not intended by the architect. Research on the work of the famous architect at the Avery Library at Columbia University and the Metropolitan Museum, uncovered more information. A Davis sketch of the "cottage" was found without the porch. Maynard decided to restore the house without the porch.

Maynard said he intends to restore the house as close to the original structure as is practical. A recent addition built in the 1980s, although not in keeping with the Davis design, may remain and be renovated for a studio. That decision has not been made yet. However, a 1940s fireplace will be removed and replaced with one authentic to Davis' design. A central hall that had been eliminated will also be reestablished. The original distinctive Davis windows and trim, which have been removed over years of changes, will all be replaced. Kitchen and bathroom additions will also remain, but be renovated. One of the mysteries that remain about the historic house is where an original kitchen had been.

Researching, planning and overseeing the restoration, some of which he will do himself, takes up most of his time these days. His son, John, who
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Gardner's Cottage...

works in the field of historical archeology, is involved with the project as well. It is very gratifying to see the transformation begin, Maynard said, referring to the first structural changes. Removing the porch, for instance, immediately restored an air of elegance to the house. "When I approach the front door now, I feel like I must straighten my tie ...and hitch up my jeans," quipped the new owner.

Riverkeeper...

government-wide task force to reform the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's hydropower licensing process. While at the Department of the Interior, he also conceived and developed the Green Energy Parks initiative, a joint program of the National Parks Service and the Department of Energy, which promotes clean and sustainable energy use throughout the national park system. He received a Presidential Award from the White House for his leadership on that project. Prior to that, he spent a year in Indonesia as a Macroeconomic Policy Analyst for the Harvard Institute for International Development and a summer working at the White House Council on Environmental Quality. In a stint as an independent environmental consultant, he wrote foundation grants and authored papers on the social and environmental impacts of international trade liberalization. Earlier in his career, Mr. Matthiessen served as the Grassroots Program Director for the Rainforest Action Network in San Francisco, organizing and managing an international network of affiliate activist groups.

Mr. Matthiessen earned a Masters of Public Administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 1995 and a Bachelor of Arts with degrees in Biology and Environmental Studies from the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1988.

We look forward to his coming to Red Hook to speak at our annual meeting on the subject of the river and the valley, a subject closely connected to our history and dear to our hearts.

History Award Nominations Sought

Now is the time to honor those individuals or projects that you have observed and admired in our community. Each year the Historical Society solicits nominations of significant contributions to the historic heritage of the Town of Red Hook. Nominations may be made in one or more of the following categories:

- **Written or Recorded:** typed or published texts; taped photographic or audiovisual material; documents or research work.
- **Architectural:** historic restorations, preservation or design applications, which reflect or enhance the vintage rural character of the Town.
- **Artistic:** artwork, artifacts or replicas, in any media or material, which depict, typify or enlarge comprehension of the past.
- **Environmental:** site works that conserve, restore or beautify settings reminiscent of the areas past.

Nominations may be made in each of these two categories:

- **Senior:** an individual or group over the age of 21;
- **Junior:** an individual or group under the age of 21.

Nominations must be received by June 11th. Mail to the Egbert Benson Historical Society of Red Hook, Box 397, Red Hook, NY 12571-0397.

Please include the following:

- Award category;
- Identification of the nominee by name, title or location;
- Your name, address and telephone number in case we need more information.

An objective Heritage Awards Committee will evaluate nominations received by the due date. Winners will be notified and a formal presentation made at the Annual Dinner Meeting on June 18th. Awards include a complimentary membership, award certificate and complimentary dinner.

For more information, call 758-5634.

From the President's Desk....

May 15, 2002

As we wind down our year at the Historical Society, we are grateful for the volunteers who have helped us through a difficult spring, which has seen several of us out of commission with various ailments. But everyone pulled together and we got the mail out, the programs organized, business done and the final newsletter just about on time. My thanks to the board for working so hard, to volunteer members like Annetje Gilbert for organizing refreshments, Elmendorph's Madeline Klein for all her help, the indefatigable Steve Lawson for always being there when the computer inevitably misbehaves and John Vincent for his interest and support in all things audio-visual and digital. And to Barbara and Bob Bielenberg, who are never far away and always there for advice and direction, despite the fact that they both theoretically were to step back a little and take a much deserved rest from years of work here, our great thanks. Their garden on Fraleigh Street may get a little more attention these days, but they are still here every Tuesday, thank goodness!

This has been a very good year. The sales of our Red Hook History book, which is in its second printing, have allowed us to plan for future projects and pay for current ones. With our grant from Furthermore and the addition of some of the book money, our new Red Hook Guide will be published in June and be ready for summer visitors. The illustrated, four-color walking and biking tour of the two villages of Red Hook and Tivoli will be given free to local merchants, historic sites and community organizations. We now have our own phone and phone listing and we have bought some much needed supplies for the Archives Room. More plans will be presented in the fall.

The Archives Room continues to be used and continues to grow. We have been given several fine collections recently. Charlotte Hubbard Bathrick, who is moving from Red Hook after 87 years, has donated all the records from the Upper Red Hook Historical Society. The educational Society was formed by Upper Red Hook farm families around 1903, and was active for eighty years. We will talk more about Charlotte and the URH Historical Society in the next newsletter.

A beautiful collection of photographs taken by Charles Eggert was donated to EBHS by Charles and Kipp Eggert. The Eggerts once owned Maizeland, the historic David Van Ness house in Red Hook. Many of the professionally executed pictures document the estates and the natural landscape of the area.

We have received a lovely Christmas Souvenir from the Barrytown Graded School in 1908 from Mrs. Elsie Lown of Rhinebeck. Mrs. Lown, who is 102 years old, grew up in Barrytown. Mrs. Jane Shafer Deyo who grew up in Red Hook, has sent us from New Mexico, a collection of old photographs of Red Hook, including some rare shots of the Curtis Hardware Store on East Market St.

We hope to see you at the annual meeting in June. Update your dues if necessary and come join us! Otherwise have a great summer.

Clare O'Neill Carr

Some things never change...

Some people from the city
Came up to buy a farm
And really it's a pity
That I did them no harm!
They wanted a small plantation,
Ten acres, more or less,
And nice high elevation,
With everything the best;
The road must be macadam
That stretched before the door.
So then I said, "Dear Madam,
Before you tell me more
About all these requirements
This little place must have,
And what sort of env'r'nments
Your tired nerves would salve,
I'd like to ask you plainly,
If you'll take no offense -
About the recompense
You're willing to surrender
For such a pleasant place,
How much in legal tender?"
And then I watched her face.
"You brazen Real Estater,"
The lady barked right back;
I knew then I should hate her.
Such luck! Alas! Alack!
"Not over seven hundred;
You know I can't pay much!"
So I just up and thundered,
"I haven't any such!"

--- Red Hook Advertiser, April 27,
1923

Board of Directors

Clare O'Neill Carr, President
Tom Cordier, Vice President
Evelyn Seils, Treasurer
Lloyd Loop, Rec. Secretary
Victoria Young, Corr. Secretary
Mary Cioffi
Nick Annas
Katherine Dewsnap
Maynard Ham
- Barbara Thompson, Archivist

Three Run For EBHS Board

Three nominees will be presented for a vote at the annual dinner meeting June 18th to fill three open EBHS Board of Trustee seats. Two incumbent candidates, Clare O'Neill Carr, our president, and Evelyn Seils, our treasurer, will both seek re-election for a second term of three years. Jane Knobloch has been nominated to run for the third seat, replacing Lloyd Loop.

Lloyd, our recording secretary, has decided not to run for a second term because of increasing commitments in Saugerties, where he and his wife, Janet now live, and from where they have traveled twice monthly for three years to attend EBHS meetings. We will miss them both. Janet, though not a trustee, has always come to meetings and helped with note-taking as well as contributing refreshments and volunteer hours at our programs.

Jane, a long-time Red Hook resident and businesswoman, will run for a first term. She is an avid geneologist and local history sleuth who has written for our newsletter and has shared her research

with the Society. She has said one of her primary interests in coming on the board is in preserving historical materials. "I believe they should be accessible for people to find, and not be lost," said Jane.

A former Home Economics teacher, Jane became interested in history when she took several elective history courses while doing undergraduate work at SUC Plattsburgh and graduate work at SUC Buffalo. Manned with her Masters Degree, she began to teach, then went into real estate a few years later. She is now the Broker/owner of Jane Knobloch Real Estate. Through her real estate work, she become interested in the history of old houses. Tracing her family tree furthered her interest in history. "I grew into it," she said. "I hated it in high school." Now it is one of her primary interests, one she often pursues using the internet.

Jane is a member and past president of the Red Hook Rotary Club and a member of the Red Hook Chamber of Commerce. She has lived in the village since 1965.

DON'T MISS THE ANNUAL EBHS DINNER MEETING AND VOTE

Tuesday, June 18, 2002, Elmendorph Inn, Red Hook

6:00 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres & Dinner 7:30 p.m. Meeting and Election
8:00 p.m. Speaker, Alex Mattheison

Dinner Menu

Chicken Francaise
White & Wild Rice

Braised Oriental Orange Beef
Broccoli & Red Peppers

Peach Cobbler, Coffee & Tea

DINNER RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY JUNE 12th

Please make checks payable to RENNERS
And mail to: Mary Cioffi, 10 Old Post Road, Red Hook, NY 12571

RESERVATION FORM

Name(s) (please print) _____

Phone _____ Number of Persons @ \$15.00 _____

Amount Enclosed _____

The Egbert Benson Historical Society of Red Hook
P.O. Box 397 Red Hook New York 12571

MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2002

Name(s) (please print): _____

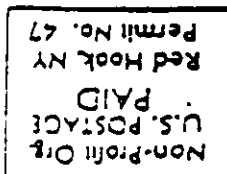
Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number (with area code): _____

Dues: Please check: Individual \$10 _____ Contributing \$25 _____
Family \$15 _____ Sustaining \$50 _____
Student (under 18) \$5 _____ Life \$100 (individual) _____
Donation (indicate any company matches please)

Would you like to help us with the work of the Society? Please check: _____

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP: + Advance notice of monthly programs + Three newsletters yearly + The
knowledge that you support the collection, preservation and dissemination of the history of the Town of Red Hook



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