

elmendorph echoes



Fall 1990

Dear Friends,

How exciting it is to tell you that our South Room is ready to be used.

All at once, the time came when the Restoration Committee was selecting paint colors, lighting fixtures, heating system, etc. It has finally come together. My head was spinning with all that was happening. Everything that we found as we opened the south addition dated it to the first three years of the 1800's.

We hope you can join us on October 13th to celebrate our South Room restoration. I want to see our friends who have been loyal for so many years, and I want to meet our new friends.

I hope that any of you who met in the Elmendorph in 1977 or 1978 when we had no heat will join us again now that we have a heated building. Enjoy the change.

Thankfully,

*Rosemary E. Coons
President*



REMINDER: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13TH - 5 TO 8 PM

GALA COCKTAIL BUFFET PARTY

We hope you will be there to help celebrate the truly momentous, wondrous, special, amazing occasion. The room will be decorated, the heat will be on, the food will be fabulous, the atmosphere will be festive, and the only ingredient needed to truly make it a wonderful party . . . is "YOU."

Be a part of history and sign your name in the guest book as being the first "guests" of the "first" party at the "new" Inn. We will have as honored guests, Assemblymen Glenn Warren and Steve Saland and County Legislator Woody Klose.

DID YOU SEND IN YOUR REPLY CARD? WON'T YOU DO IT NOW?

If you misplaced your invitation, please call Lottie at 914-758-8891. **RSVP by October 1st,**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

FOR THE SHOP: To help on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and some Sundays. Sales help and some bodies to help cart the merchandise onto the lawn and back into the building at the end of the day.
Have some time? Interested? Call SHIRLEY 914-758-8604

FOR THE PARTY: Setup crew - Cleanup Crew - etc. Call LOTTIE 914-758-8891



SOUTH ROOM WALL REVEALS HIDDEN TREASURE

- Bob and Barbara Bielenberg

It was like opening a turn-of-the-nineteenth-century time capsule. When Craft Construction Company carpenter, Bill Brokosch, broke through a wall of crumbling lathe and plaster above the stone structure of the middle room fireplace, he found a cache of artifacts which experts at the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Bureau of Historic Sites reckoned had lain undisturbed since the south wing was added around 1803. On May 22nd, we took the collection to the Bureau's Peebles Island laboratory and watched a group of highly experienced curators and archeologists excitedly examine our dusty objects.

Of special interest was a stiff wad of woven material coated on one side with a black enamel-like substance. Curator Anne Cassidy said that the quality of the fabric and the style of the pattern indicated a c. 1790-1800 date and all agreed it looked like a very early and rare example of floor cloth, a linoleum-like floor covering popular in the late 18th and early 19th century.

Two pairs of leather shoes, worn and stiff with age, were identified. One pair with pointed toes represented a style in fashion only from 1802 to 1806, according to the curators. The shoes were constructed wrong side out and then soaked in water to soften the leather so they could be turned. An 1803 Ezra Ames portrait of the Fonday Family in the collection of the Albany Institute of History and Art shows family members wearing similar shoes.

According to Joseph M. Thatcher, Supervising Curator, the custom of sealing one shoe in the wall of a new structure, to bring good fortune, goes back to pagan days in Europe and continued in this country until the mid-nineteenth century. It is most unusual to find two pairs of shoes. Earlier in the restoration of the Elmendorph, a pair of infant shoes was found in the crawl space under the south room.

Paul Huey, Senior Archeologist, identified a number of other fragments found in the wall. They included pieces of a creamware saucer in the Queens pattern, made in England from 1780 to 1810, fragments of a 1790's clay pipe, a wine glass stem and pieces of a flint glass decanter, tumbler and flip glass. He pointed out a piece of window glass typical of the kind made in Albany during the period and the base of a small green glass gin bottle.

An indigo-dyed textile fragment was badly deteriorated, but examination under a microscope by Deborah Lee Trupin, Conservator of Textiles, revealed a cotton or linen warp and woolen weft typical of the period. Other pieces of clothing and harness were also identified. The curators agreed that the items discovered by Bill Brokosch were all of the same period appropriate to have been sealed in the wall while the addition was constructed in 1803.

Because of its rarity and historic interest, the crumpled and folded floor cloth was retained by the Textile Lab for treatment. Ms. Trupin placed the fragile bundle in a humidity chamber until it became soft and flexible enough to be unfolded. After further softening, it was flattened and carefully cleaned with spatulas, brushes and a gentle vacuum cleaner revealing a delicate white daisy-like pattern, centered with a red dot on a black ground. Much of the pattern had been worn off and the piece was crudely seamed and patched, revealing years of use before it was discarded and stuffed into the wall cavity.

The floor cloth has been returned to the Friends of Elmendorph, carefully packed in an acid-free study/storage mount. It and the other objects found in the Elmendorph "time capsule" will be on display at the South Room Opening Celebration on October 13th.

RESTORATION COMMITTEE

- Herman Gorgens

The restoration of the South Room is going well. Painting is complete as of September 21. The last major item is the finishing of the wood floor. It is scheduled to begin September 24 and to be completed September 28. That completes the contract work for the room as of now. The schedule provided plenty of time for the October 13th festivities.

The new and first-ever central heating system (part of South Room work) for the entire first floor is also to be complete the week of September 24. Most of the ductwork, furnace and chimney are in place.

The paperwork for the Environmental Quality Bond Act (EQBA) Grant (for historic preservation) for the remainder of the exterior is progressing. We have the final signed contracts from the State. At a recent meeting with the Regional office we were given the results of the architectural review of the plans and specifications.

Nineteen-ninety has been a very gratifying year. Major restoration work has been completed and more to start before the year ends. The EQBA grant paperwork is almost complete. That means physical work will continue.

There will be more announcements at the Party!

ELMENDORPH ETC. SHOP

- Shirley Brown

We are right on target! With two months to go, our lawn sales and garage sales have netted three-fourths of our goal toward the budget for completion of the "South Room." Thousands of volunteer hours, thousands of donated items, and many happy shoppers have made it a great season.

We have a busy schedule ahead of us. In addition to Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday sales, we will have a Halloween Item Sale, a Christmas Item Sale and a week-long, one-half price sale.

Do you plan to burn wood this winter? We have room-sized humidifiers. Are you making craft items for gifts or church bazaars? We have fabric at 50¢ a yard and loads of trim, thread, yarn, and needlecraft kits! Canning? We have jars. Furnishing an apartment? We have coffee tables, tilt-top tables, lamps, pots and pans, prints and paintings, frames.

Music lovers will find record players and records at 50¢. Stock up on winter reading material for yourself and your young readers. (Help boost Red Hook's S.A.T. scores. Reading does it!) Into "herbs"? Search through our series of herb leaflets with the history and how-to's of every herb you ever heard of, and some you haven't.

THANK YOU to our faithful workers, our loyal donors, and our wonderful customers!

For Your Convenience: OUR SHOP SCHEDULE

| | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| SEPTEMBER: | Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays | 10 AM to 4 PM | Garage Sales |
| OCTOBER: | Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays | 10 AM to 4 PM | Garage Sales |
| SPECIAL: | October 17, 19, 29 | - Christmas Items | |
| | October 24, 26, 27, 31 | - EVERYTHING | 1/2 PRICE |

AND FINALLY. . .

We welcome donations through this month. We have a space problem due to the work in the Inn. We have to be more selective than usual. We cannot handle any more hardcover books, or magazines, but we do need paperbacks, especially mystery and current novels.

Come and see us, either with donations to give or quarters to buy.

Address Correction Requested
P.O. Box 1776
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