

# RELICS

Issued by  
*Pascack Historical  
Society*

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**MUSEUM and ROOMS 19 Ridge Avenue, Park Ridge, New Jersey Mailing Address P.O. Box 285 Park Ridge, N. J.**

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VOL. 53

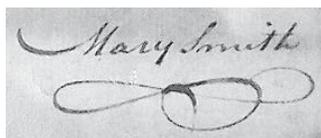
MARCH 2009

NO. 246

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## REACHING BACK IN TIME

“It’s a reproduction!”  
“It can’t be real!”  
“ My goodness!”  
“ What if it is...”



So were the exclamations of Society volunteers a few months ago as they ogled a framed letter resting on a table in the society’s rear meeting room —a few minutes after some fellow volunteers had brought it down from the attic above. Somehow they all knew they were in the presence of something special and the chattering stopped abruptly.

The letter was dated January 12, 1776. It was addressed to “Dear Sister”-Miss Betsy Ivers at New York- and in perfect stylized penmanship reflecting its era- signed “Dear Sister affectionately yours, Mary Smith.”

This was only a few days after the Continental Congress passed a resolution calling on colonial committees to indoctrinate those “honest and well-meaning, but uninformed people” by expounding to them the “origin, nature and extent of the present controversy.” The body also calls for confirmed Tories to be disarmed and confined, if necessary.

Mary’s words (see letter) reflect a major concern for her sister and her family’s well being during those explosive and uncertain times. Were they Tories? Were they Patriots? Who was Mary Smith? Where was Mary located when she penned this letter to Betsy? How did our Society end up owning such a precious letter? These and so many other questions came streaming into the volunteers minds and a discussion ensued.

The agreed that the first thing to do was to let our members know that we had found this rare item and

that we would keep them informed as to our future findings. That we did in the November 2008 issue of *Relics*. We said that we would prepare an article for this edition -and so we have. We hope you will find our initial research as exciting as we have.

The first thing we discovered was that Mary was by blood and marriage connected to many famous families of the American Revolution. The clues and leads we found were endless and we realized almost immediately that we had to create boundaries for what would be contained in this article. We decided that our initial attempt would focus on Mary, her sister Elizabeth “ Betsy” and their father Thomas Ivers.

Our search led us to the Society’s library and archives, other libraries, interested genealogists and the Internet. The new *Early American Newspapers* site on the New York Biographical and Genealogical Society’s( NYG&B) website was of paramount importance to our search. Now, thanks to wonderful technological advantages, a member of the NYG&B no longer has to travel into New York City to comb through early newspapers. It can be done from the comfort of one’s own home.

Mary Ivers Smith was 23 years old when she penned the letter to Betsy. Born in New York City, on October 5, 1753, Mary was one of six children born of Thomas and Hannah Ivers. She would die at her parent’s house 22 days short of her 50th birthday on September 13, 1803 at Corlears Hook (where the island of Manhattan bulges to form a “hook” on the East River). The following was printed in the September 15, 1803 issue of the *Morning Chronicle*:

*continued page 2*

On Monday Night, the 12<sup>th</sup>, at Corlears-Hook, of the prevailing fever, Mrs. Mary Smith, daughter of Thomas Ivers.

One only aim her pious soul possest,  
Heaven saw the purpose and the saint was blest!  
With blameless steps & o' humble paths she trod,  
"Now with the poor in spirit, rests with God."

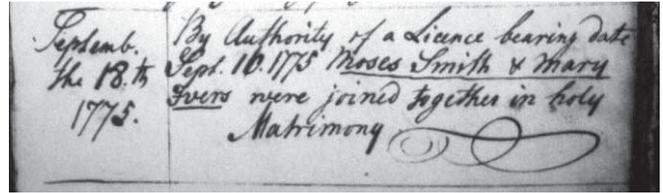
The records show that over 200 people died of Yellow Fever that year.

Now we knew that the letter we had was, indeed, a very significant item. But what of Mary's life? Who had she married? Did she have children? Where was she living when she says in her letter - "If you should not come up soon beg you will write..." Where was up? And which "Mr. Smith", among hundreds of Smiths, had she married ?

The answer to this would be found by following a "hunch" - a very unscientific way of researching history may we add.

At first, knowing that she was a New York City girl, we thought she might have married William Smith, a prominent attorney there. This was a real possibility in our minds because the " Mr. Gilbert Livingston" mentioned in her letter was a business

associate of William Smith. This proved to be the wrong Smith. Another dead end... and then we had a "hunch"... could she have married a "Smith" from "Smithtown" in Suffolk County, New York (part of present day Long Island)? By searching records of the Long Island Historical and Genealogical Society we were able to establish that Mary Ivers had married Moses Smith on September 17, 1775 (see picture).



They would go on to have seven children: Elizabeth Mary (perhaps named for sister Betsy?), Daniel, Thomas William, Louis, Maria, John Henry and Hannah Ivers (named for Mary's mother). Moses Smith was a patriot and is listed as having served in a militia. Quite possibly Mary wrote her letter from Smithtown while pregnant with her first child Elizabeth, whose exact 1776 birth date we have not been able to establish at this writing. Nor do we know what Moses did for a living. He died January 22, 1790.

We turn now to sister "Betsy". We learned that she

To  
Miss Betsy Ivers  
At  
New York

January 12, 1776

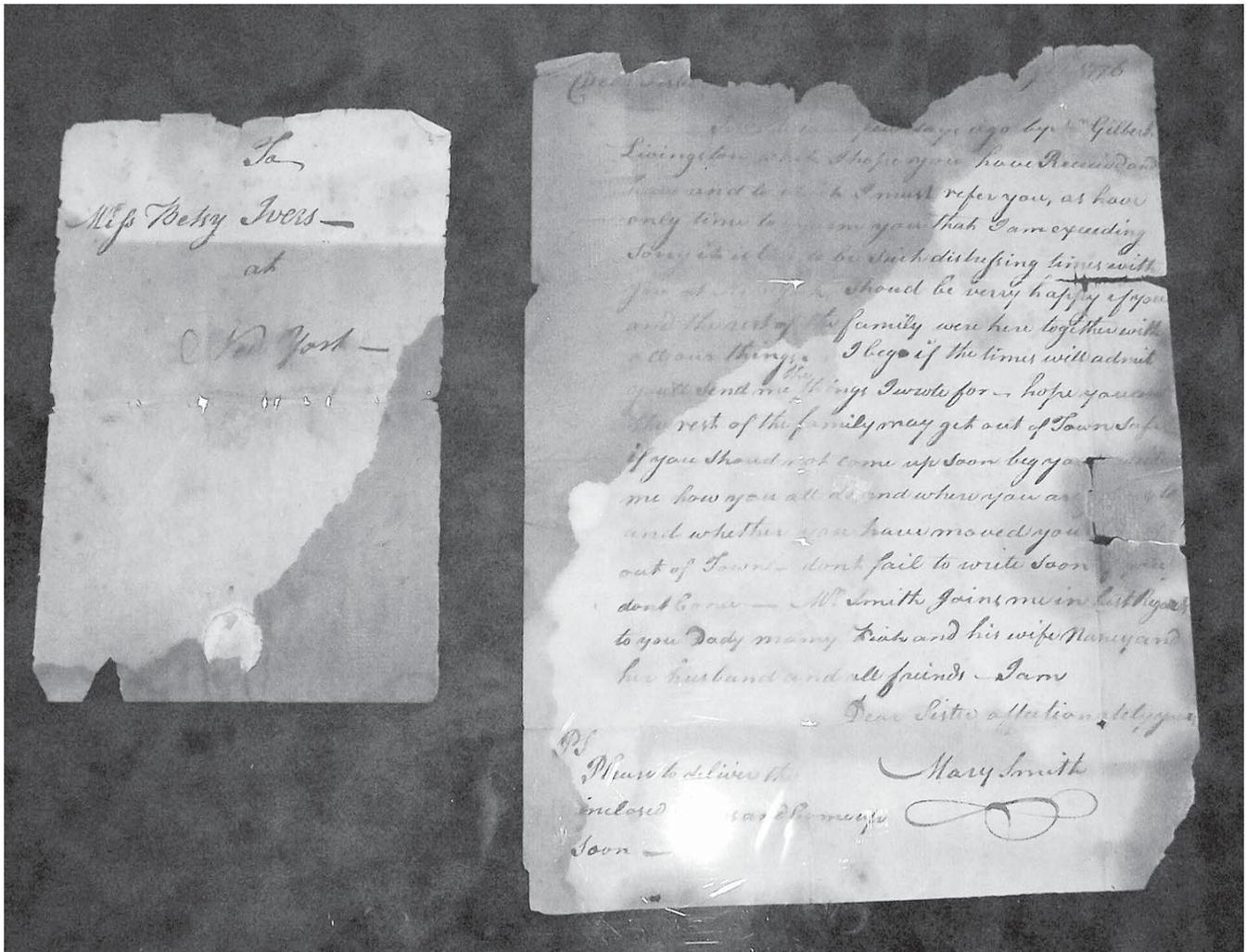
Dear Sister,

I wrote you a letter a few days ago by Mr. Gilbert Livingston which I hope you have Received and have and to which I must refer you, as have only time to inform you that I am exceedingly Sorry it is { } to be such distressing times with you in New York, I should be very happy if you and the rest of the family were together will all our things. I beg if the times will admit You'll send me the things I wrote for—hope you and the rest of the family may get out of ToWn Safe—If you should not come up soon beg you will write me how you all do and where you are going to and whether you have moved you {r} family out of Town—don't fail to write soon if you don't Come—MR. Smith joins me in best ReGArds to your dady momy Kiah (Hezekiah) and his wife nancy and her husband and all friends—I am

Dear Sister affectionaly yours, Mary Smith

P.S. Please to deliver the inclosed letter and come up soon.

(Society Trustee Helen Whalen transcribed this letter.)



was born in Stratford, Connecticut on July 19, 1756.

According to Peter Haring Judd, Ph. D., a noted historian and writer from New York City, her father Thomas Ivers was a trader with a storehouse by the mouth of the Housatonic River at Stratford. Shortly after receiving Mary's letter Betsy and her family would flee to Stratford to escape the British. She married Abraham Herring (1755-1837) there on September 8, 1776. One can only wonder if Mary attended her sister at the wedding. Unlikely during those difficult times-but, nonetheless, something to ponder.

After the Evacuation in 1783 the Herrings returned to New York City where Abraham had great success as a businessman. Dr. Judd informs us that "Betsy" had 14 children that were named in Dutch church records and four more who died before naming. In 1790, according to the first census ever taken in the United States, Abraham's household contained three free males over 16, three under 16, three white females, and three slaves. Elbert Herring, their eldest, graduated from Princeton and became a lawyer living to the age of 99 years. He served as the United States first Commissioner of Indian Affairs

from 1832-1836. In this capacity he signed the New Echota Treaty on December 31, 1835 that required relocation of the eastern Cherokees to Indian Territory (Oklahoma). This became known as the Trail of Tears.

We think the Herring Family may be the link to where the letter came from. The late Howard Durie's name borders on the legendary in our historical community. He authored *The Kakiat Patent* and many of the stories that filled the pages of *Relics* for many years. We think he was related somehow to the Herrings and we believe he might be the one who donated this letter to the museum. When we find proof positive of our theory we will report it to you.

We have saved Thomas Ivers (1724-1808) the father of Mary and Betsy for last. His expansive life and service to his community is worthy of a book one day. Dr. Judd has written about the Ivers Family for the NYG & B in the past and we hope that he will be the man to bring Thomas Ivers complete life story before the public.

Thomas Ivers obituary in the February 16, 1808 edition of the *New-York Commercial Advertiser* is lengthy, rather unusual during those times. It reads :

## DIED

“Yesterday morning, after a short illness, Mr. Thomas Ivers, in the 84<sup>th</sup> year of his age. He was remarkable for attaining this advanced age with the perfect possession of his faculties both of body and mind.—With real goodness of heart in him was united an inflexible integrity that preserved his long career amid various contests and unceasing avocations without blemish. With him Honesty was Honor.—Nor should the Patriot sleep in death without his record: such will he justly be considered, who at the risqué of life, and sacrifice of property, without ambition of distinction, and without prospective motives of certain or contingent advantage, stands foremost in defense of his Country’s rights, uniform, zealous and devoted—Thus nob’y acted the departed spirit, the subject of this feeble memorial, in that memorable contest which established the American Independence—The approbation of his conscience cheered the pilgrimage of his life: the consolation of religion irradiated his passage through the Dark Valley of Death. His friends and acquaintances, as also the New England Society, are invited to attend his funeral this afternoon at 4 o’clock precisely, from his late dwelling, Corlears-Hook.”

Thomas Ivers was a successful businessman and an early Patriot. He was a member of the Sons of Liberty, his property was taken by the British during the occupation and he held a number of political offices. As a member of The Committee of 100 he heard Alexander Hamilton’s celebrated argument in the famous Rutgers vs. Waddington case.

The Society’s search for further information about Mary and Betsy will continue.  
We encourage you to stop by the museum to view this extraordinary piece of American history.

by Francesca M. Moskowitz

My extra special thanks to Regina M. Haring, owner of DutchDoorGenealogy.com, whose wisdom, genealogical knowledge and encouraging counsel added a great deal to this article and author.

### Sources:

*Morning Chronicle*, September 9, 1809  
*Morning Chronicle*, September 15, 1803  
*The Columbian*, June 23, 1810  
*New York Evening Post*- February 15, 1808  
*New York Gazette*, January 15, 1776  
*New York Journal*, November 24, 1776  
*Cherokee Tragedy*, Thurman Wilkins, University of Oklahoma Press, 1986  
Long Island Historical and Genealogical Archives

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

“Hamilton & Adams”  
Sunday, March 29, 2 p.m.

Come and hear **Dr. Anthony Troncone**, Professor of History at Dominican College in Blauvelt, New York, tell the fascinating story of two Founding Fathers.

Hamilton’s opposition to fellow Federalist John Adams contributed to the success of Democratic-Republicans Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr in the uniquely deadlocked presidential election of 1800. With his party’s defeat, Hamilton’s nationalist and industrializing ideas lost their former national prominence.

Dr. Troncone, chairman of the Society’s Historical Advisory Committee, is a much requested speaker because of his ability to bring his subjects “to life”. His passion for his subject matter is always evident and appreciated by his audiences.

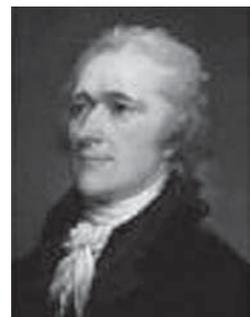
Invite a friend to share in this afternoon event with you.

Complimentary homemade cake and coffee/tea.

No reservation necessary. Children welcome in the company of an adult.



*John Adams*  
(1735-1826)



*Alexander Hamilton*  
(1757-1804)

New York Genealogical & Biographical Society  
Pascack Historical Society Archives  
Dutch Door Genealogy.com  
Genealogical & Biographical Notes on the Haring Family-Peter Haring Judd, Ph. D.  
United States Census- 1790  
Kansas State Historical Society

## ***A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT***

Dear Friends:

The trustees of the Pascack Historical Society believe our museum and its programs are the “front porch” of the Pascack Valley community. We welcome visitors and strive to give them an overview of what is special and unique about the Pascack Valley.

Our museum:

- Is a center of creativity. It engages visitors in a variety of activities where they make and do things.
- Is a memory bank. It illustrates cultural and historical aspects of the Pascack Valley.
- Is a storyteller. It interprets traditions, places, and peoples of the past.
- Is a treasure trove. It contains rare, unusual and meaningful objects.

Your support continues to help us preserve the many objects in the museum that may be forgotten or, worse yet, discarded. It also enables the continuation of our many excellent programs, i.e., Pascack Adventures, Sunday lectures and discussions and special exhibits and events. Thank you.

I look forward to working with you to maintain the Pascack Historical Society and to continue our special role in the story of the Community.

Carol Riccardo  
President

## ***NEW GIFTS***

We are the proud new owners of two original painting thanks to the generosity of our members. Westwood artist **Frank Ferrante** has gifted the museum with a painting he did of Park Ridge’s famous Wortendyke Barn. **Phil & Susan Accardi** of Simsbury, Connecticut gave us an oil painting of the now razed Stroshal Barn, which stood on Pascack Road in Park Ridge. Susan, whose maiden name was Gifford, grew up in Hillsdale and is the niece of our very own Howard Durie. Both of these paintings now grace our permanent collection. Stop by and see them sometime. Thank you to these generous members.

## ***ART WORKSHOP***

Trustee Barbara Farina, a retired public school art teacher, has added a new “cultural dimension” to our PASCACK ADVENTURES programs. Here is a photo of some budding (and might we say proud!) artists who attended one of our ongoing art workshops. Initially designed for children- we now invite folks of any age to participate. To see grandma and grandchild learning together is a sheer delight!! For upcoming program schedules call 201-573-0307 or log onto [www.pascackhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.pascackhistoricalsociety.com).



## ***THINGS TO PONDER...***

**“An honest politician is one who, when he is bought, will stay bought.”**

**Simon Cameron (1799-1889)**

**“I believe in God, only I spell it nature.”**

**Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959)**

**“The income tax has made more liars out of people than golf has.”**

**Will Rogers (1879-1935)**

**“Never trust the advice of a man in difficulties.”**

**Aesop (620 B.C.—560 B.C.)**

**“We could never learn to be brave and patient if there was only joy in the world.”**

**Helen Keller (1880-1968)**

# WESTWOOD CHAIN LETTER FACTORY

In May of 1935 chain letter fever swept over Westwood. Councilmen, policemen, housewives and school children were all going mad over the prospect of becoming rich in a few days. All rushed to a little store at 53 Center Avenue where they bought the letters by the dozen. Westwood's former Mayor Louis Ruckner presided there over a chain letter factory that did \$90-a-day in business just by selling mimeographed copies of chain letters, minus the names, at two for 10 cents. For a \$1.00 extra Ruckner supplied ten names for the letters.

A typical chain letter consists of a message that attempts to entice the recipient to make a number of copies of the letter and then pass them on to as many recipients as possible. Common methods used in chain letters include emotionally manipulative stories, get-rich-quick pyramid schemes, and the exploitation of superstition to threaten the recipient with bad luck if he or she "breaks the chain". Most of the time the recipient is asked to send a specific amount of money to the recipient at the top of the list. The writer adds his or her name to the bottom of the list and mails more letters out.

The former mayor's business flourished and his chain letter factory became a bona fide business. There were three girls churning out mimeographed letters all day long and every two hours they replenished the supply on his desk.

The Westwood post office reported that stamp sales were averaging over three hundred dollars a day. Postmaster Timothy Lyons placed a special mailbox in the tiny chain letter factory. Collections were made every three hours. Everywhere else in Westwood collections were made twice a day. Some Westwood residents reported receiving more than five hundred dollars from their chain letters. John Morris, Ruckner's assistant, would gladly show anyone the two hundred dollars he received from a \$1.00 investment he made but a week ago.

Ruckner reported that three ladies from Ridgewood purchased two dozen letters each. He claimed one unnamed man bought 500 of his treasures. Housewives passed up the butcher and grocery store to order a dozen letters as casually as they would buy a dozen eggs or a pound of pork chops.

Ruckner, who was also justice of the peace, declared, "The depression is over. Wheee!" He claimed

that this was only the beginning of his entrepreneurial efforts and that a profit of \$90 a day was 'nothing'. He promised to start a \$5 letter and then a \$10 letter which would increase the hopeful recipients "take" tenfold. He said he wouldn't stop there either and the odd thing was that he got unanimous support from Westwood citizens.



*Louis Ruckner*

He was a performance artist and living advertisement before people ever heard of such things. His office was a show window in a hardware store and he sat and pecked at his typewriter there while passerbys gazed at him and then walked to purchase his product. An article in the *Westwood News* (June, 1935) claimed he sold 4000 letters within a few days and that customers came into his factory at the rate of one a second—and that he had to push 20 people wanting to buy chain letters out of his store when he closed at 10:30 p.m. He then had to call for a special mail carrier to sweep the floor

of an accumulation of envelopes each containing a dollar. Ruckner planned to hire more and more mimeographers as time went on. Westwood couldn't wait.

by Helen Whalen

(This article is based on a story printed in the *Westwood News*, June 1935. When or how the chain letter factory closed still remains a mystery. Perhaps, a reader will be able to write the end of the story above.)



*The Chain Letter factory in 1934 (left) was located at 53 Center Avenue adjacent to today's present Pascack Movie Theatre.*

# MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS PROVIDE A MYSTERY

Do you like mysteries? Many people do, but before you start looking for clues, be forewarned that this mystery does not end with a solution neatly explained at the end. Following is some background information about the “mystery at the museum”.

Several months ago, two household brooms were donated to the museum by Randy Veraldo and his wife, Robin. Mr. Veraldo said that they came from the Casale House on Kinderkamack Road in Montvale just south of the New York State border. Randy Veraldo grew up in the Casale House. His mother Jeannette Casale Veraldo, gave the brooms to him. The farmhouse was believed to have been built in the 1700s and was razed for condominiums, Randy added.

Museum volunteers accepted the brooms and set about trying to find out more about them and hoped to date them.

The first step was to photograph the brooms and contact other museums and conservators to learn as much as possible about these two brooms. Surprisingly, no positive answers were forthcoming from these sources, despite the large body of available information about old brooms. They seem to be unique.

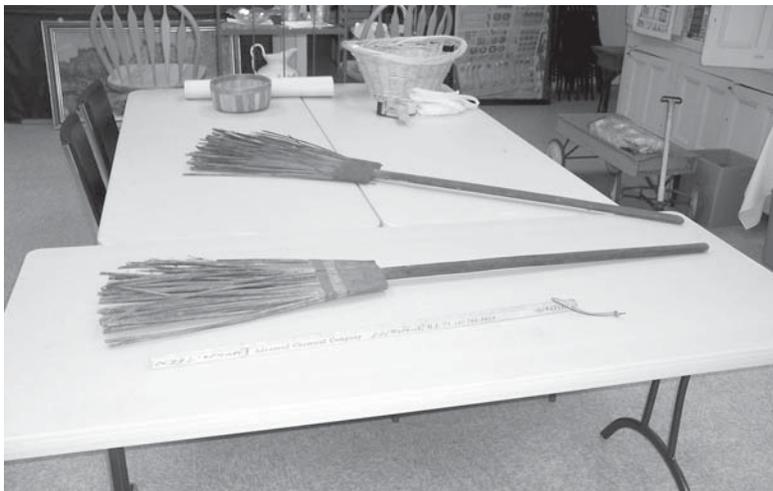
Why is the origin of an early broom significant? Various factors reveal when and where the broom is made, and in some cases, who made the broom. Before 1797 brooms in America were handmade at home by a local family established in a cottage industry. Early crude brooms were often made by tying straw, hay, twigs and cornhusks to a stick. Although strong twine was used, this type of broom fell apart after little use. A broom was an important housekeeping tool because food was cooked in an open fireplace in the kitchen. Firewood was carried into the house and the ashes had to be carried out. It was an arduous job that left ashes and dust behind, so the family needed a good sturdy broom to keep the hearth area clean.

In 1797 a change swept through the history of broom making (pun intended).

Levi Dickenson, a farmer in Hadley, Massachusetts, made a broom using the tassels of sorghum, a grain that he was growing. His wife thought Levi’s broom was exceptionally good and told friends and neighbors about it. The demand for these brooms spread quickly as more and more people ordered and Levi was soon making brooms for eager customers. Of course, Levi’s efficient brooms were known for falling apart! Levi was not pleased and he worked on a machine that would make brooms better and faster. In 1810 the foot-treadle broom machine was invented and holes were drilled in the broom handle. Pegs were inserted in the holes and the sorghum tassels were secured with

twine to the pegs in the handle.

By 1820, the Shakers were making brooms that incorporated many changes, including using wire to bind the broom to the handle. The traditional round broom was put in a vise and sewed into the flat broom that is in use today. The American broom industry continued to flourish until 1944



*These “mystery” brooms await identification. Can you help?*

when foreign brooms were permitted in to the U.S. duty free. Only a few small broom factories continue to make high quality brooms.

As noted above, the Museum volunteers have been unable to date the two brooms or uncover any additional information about them. One suggestion was that they are made from reeds that are call phragmites, and this type of reed is known to be traced to the Meadowlands area. This information would seem to indicate that the brooms were made locally.

One of the brooms is on display at the Museum. Visitors are invited to ask a docent to explain how it was made. Using the above “clues” about the history of broom making, would you like to guess when it might have been made?

## Broom derivation

The word “broom” is derived from Old English *bes(e)ma* and Middle English *besem* meaning an implement for sweeping, usually made of a bunch of

*continued page 9*

## MEMORIES OF PARK RIDGE

I was born in Holy Name Hospital in Teaneck, NJ, and in a few days brought home to Park Ridge, where my home was at 248 Rock Avenue. That was to be my home until I was nineteen years old. Our family homestead consisted of my grandmother and grandfather's home at 250 Rock Avenue and my parent's home at 248, both situated on a two acre parcel of land which was the remainder of a four acre lot purchased in 1892 by my grandfather, Adolph Wiesner, his brother Otto Wiesner, and their mother Juliana Wiesner. Family legend has it that those three



*Adolph and Marie Wiesner, circa 1915,  
grandparents of the author.*

had emigrated here from Germany some years before, settled in New York City until they could find and afford some property in the country, and subsequently bought property in what was then the Township of Washington, later to become the Borough of Park Ridge. My great-grandfather, Peter Wiesner, was to join the family once they were settled and established.

While he apparently left Germany on board a ship, nothing was ever heard again from the ship, and it was presumed lost at sea. In 1900, Otto Wiesner sold his half of the property and relocated to Liberty, NY. The remaining half of the property served as home for my grandfather, grandmother, and their children. In 1932, when my parents were married, a small parcel of the original property served as a site upon which they built a small home and lived there for 52 years until my father's death in 1984. My

earliest memories are of the war years. Probably the first was the memory of my father coming home early from work, which was most unusual, and recounting to us all the news that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor and our country was at war with Japan. Actually, all of this was rather confusing to me, for I didn't understand what had happened, I had never heard of Pearl Harbor or Hawaii, and while discussion of Japan as a country with evil intentions was quite common among the adults, I really did not know anything about world affairs or what either war or Japan was. My confusion was increased by the fact that I thought they were saying that Pearl River had been bombed. I did know what and where Pearl River was, and it seemed to me that having something so obviously bad happen so nearby was pretty scary. The next time we went to Pearl River to shop I was amazed to see nothing had been destroyed and asked my parents about it, they had a good laugh about my misunderstanding. I was somewhat embarrassed about my error, but was relieved that the "war" was not so nearby.

I remember that a lot of things changed now that we were "at war". The war seemed to be the main topic of discussion among the adults. There were a whole lot of new words to learn and deal with. My father had been self-employed as a builder of homes but now worked in a "war plant" making products for the "war effort". There were "shortages" of many things now such as meat, gasoline, and tires, and eventually a system of "rationing" of various things in an attempt to manage distribution of these products fairly. Prices of things were set by the "OPA" (office of price administration) to prevent price gouging due to short supply. The "draft" was a big topic of discussion, for many men were being inducted into military service, and before long some friend or relative was "drafted", making the war a very real and personal fact. Soon servicemen in uniform became a common sight in town, and some new events became a part of life. Everyone had to buy or improvise "blackout shades" at all of the windows so that finding targets in a night air raid would be more difficult for the attackers. My father was the "air raid warden" for our neighborhood and when we had practice blackouts, he would walk the neighborhood looking for any light escaping from houses that might provide a target, and advised the occupants of the problem. My class in school was walked up to Mittag and Volger's carbon paper plant in the center of town. Upon the flat roof of the factory, a small shelter had been constructed for the aircraft spotters who kept a



*Theodore Wiesner, Jr. - a proud graduate of Park Ridge High School Class of 1954.*

constant vigil to see and identify enemy planes. They had books of pictures showing silhouettes of planes to assist in identification. Thus the war, although being fought on foreign soil, became a very personal thing.

Weekdays began with a walk to school, or if it had snowed during the night, “old man Wildersin” from back around the corner would plow the snow with a large V-shaped plow pulled by a team of horses to clear the roads. His need for weight on the plow and our desire for a ride combined very well for we got to sit on the plank seat on the snowplow and ride to town. As years passed, the war ended and not too much later the cold war began, and since the atom bomb had been the product of WWII, now safe areas in the school building were identified and designated as shelters, and periodically we would have air raid drills to practice proceeding to these safe areas for shelter.

With the end of the war and the return home of so many military people, a great need for housing was the next order of business. The sleepy little town of Park Ridge awakened as did a great many areas of the country. The next new realities became “housing developments” and the mass production of many similar if not identical houses instead of custom homes built one at a time. Thus the market served by my father’s business shifted to home renovations and additions and only an occasional custom home. Along with the increasing population came some other new innovations such as shopping malls. Changes in school were drastic, for the towns of Montvale, Woodcliff Lake, and Hillsdale joined together to form a regional high school, so enrollment dropped in PRHS to

a class size of about 40 when I graduated in 1954.

After graduation, life in Park Ridge was classic life in the 50’s. The big things to do were surely simple by today’s standards. The big hangouts were Stockdale’s Ice cream bar on Kinderkamack Rd. between Park Ridge and Montvale, Blue Hill Pizza in Rivervale, Paramus Drive-in Theater, “Pop’s” deli next to the school in Park Ridge (home of the “Heavy”—a super size shake so thick you had to eat it with a spoon), and for serious shopping downtown Hackensack (the malls hadn’t won yet), the Cadillac Diner in Westwood, in the summer Pine Lakes for swimming, and a car ride was still a fun thing to do. At some point in this process Park Ridge changed from the sleepy town I grew up in to become “the suburbs”, and the pace of life quickened. I must confess that my tastes did not evolve to be happy with some of the changes. This led to a pilgrimage through Northwestern New Jersey and Orange County, New York to our present home in Cazenovia, New York over the next forty years or so. I think this is about as close to the Park Ridge of my youth as you can get, and I just love it.

Thanks for the opportunity to recall a whole bunch of really pleasant memories in writing this.

by Ted Wiesner



( continued from page 7 )

broom, heather, birch or twigs bound around a handle. Heath and broom are plants that were commonly used to make besom, the forerunner of the broom at it is known today. In Dutch it was besem, a word that may have been in use by the Early Dutch settlers in the new World.

by Virginia T. Hunt

Sources:

Wikipedia and various Internet postings  
Oxford English Dictionary, Random House Dictionary of the English Language



*Could this rough broom be used to sweep out a hearth or a barn? What is your opinion?*



*We all know that volunteer societies are always in need of funds, so we are very much appreciative of the following persons who are helping to keep Relics going.*

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