

Heritage Awards 2010

FLANDREAU FAMILY CEMETERY

First Burial 1800

Chester Place

New Rochelle, NY 10801

Nominated by: Ms. Catherine Josset (Flandreau descendant)

With the first documented burial on February 19, 1800, until 1892, when the last known burial took place, a small plot on the rolling farmlands along Boston Post Road at New Rochelle's eastern border was used as a graveyard by at least 30 members of the Flandreau family. From one of original founders of the 17th century French settlement, (Jacques) through several generations, including the only New Rochellean killed in the Civil War (John), the Flandreau family has figured prominently in this community.

The burials began when the Flandreau family owned extensive acreage along the road and continued here long after the family sold the farm in 1815. The year before, on February 16 1814, the children of Benjamin Flandreau laid out by deed "the Flandreau Burying Ground," 28 yards by 13 yards, and a right-of-way to the Boston Road (also referred to as Turnpike Road.)

After the Civil War, the owner of the former Flandreau property, Samuel Chowdrey, was unsuccessful in his bid to buy the plot for his farm (and move the bodies to another site, at his own expense.). Instead, he enclosed it with a stone wall and hedge. After he died, his "Hazlehurst Farm" was caught-up in the building boom of the early 1900s. As building lots encroached on the graveyard, some bodies were exhumed and reinterred in Beechwoods Cemetery. A monument to Elisha Harsen, a Flandreau descendant killed while serving on the monitor Tecumseh when it was sunk in Mobile Bay in 1874, was also moved to Beechwoods. As early as 1923 the cemetery was considered grossly neglected, as a local newspaper columnist and historian reported tumbled stones lying amidst weeds and construction debris.

The historically-important sliver of land, today completely overgrown with invasive foliage, now has the attention of concerned neighbors and descendants of the Flandreau family. With the 2010 Heritage Award, it is hoped that other New Rochelle and area residents will join their efforts to restore it to its rightful dignity.

THE CORNELL HOUSE

c. 1906

956 North Avenue

New Rochelle, NY 10804

Nominated by: Mr. Donald Riccio

Perched on the hillside overlooking North Avenue and Paine Heights, the striking house at 956 North Avenue displays a wonderfully eclectic mix of architectural details representing what is commonly referred to as Victorian styles -- Queen Anne, Shingle and Romanesque Revival that were popular in America during the late 1800s and early 1900s. These distinctive features, most of which were completed around 1906, are clearly evident thanks to the extensive and entirely appropriate restoration work its current owners have lovingly completed over the past 30 years. This exemplary restoration included the removal of aluminum siding, the replacement of 16 columns with custom replicas, replacement of sheet metal ornamentation with replicas made from the original stamps and the original supplier, the removal of 15 coats of paint to the original wood siding, and the replacement of about 150 panes of glass with original-styled diamond divided light windows.

North Avenue was North "Street" when the Albert and Annie (nee Davis) Cornell, both descendants of "old" local families, purchased a substantial tract of land along its western side, just south of the world famous Rose Hill Nurseries. The property was part of the newly named Highland Park section – one of numerous residential parks springing up in turn-of-the-century New Rochelle. Widow Annie Cornell and her children were most likely responsible for the construction of at least three houses that still stand between Braemar Avenue and Calton Road and share a similarly-constructed stone wall. It is quite possible that Howard I. Cornell, one of Albert and Annie's four children, was involved with their design as a young architect while studying at Copper Institute or as part of the New Rochelle architectural firm, "Pagan and Cornell."

The impressive residence and commanding location of 956 North Avenue was a most suitable home for Lee John Eastman during the height of his career as president of Packard Motors Cars, New York. While living here in the 1920s Eastman was also the vice president of the Automobile Dealers Association of NY, president of the Broadway Association and, later president of Packard Motor Cars, Detroit.

HOWARD R. WARE HOUSE (1907)

96 Pryer Terrace

New Rochelle, NY 10804

Nominated by: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kelly

"Ware's Department Store," Westchester's first and, for many years, largest department store had a prominent place on New Rochelle's most fashionable Main Street and in the community's illustrious history. From 1881 to the late 1930s, when it was sold to become the first suburban "Bloomingdales," Not only was the pioneering emporium a key place in New Rochelle during its 20th century boom years, its founder and owner, Howard R. Ware was a leading figure in the rapidly-growing community of New Rochelle. He was a director and vice president of the National City Bank of New Rochelle, a founder of the local Y.M.C.A. and an active member of St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church.

With the success of his store, Ware was able to buy into in one of the most prestigious of the residential parks being developed primarily in the southern tier of New Rochelle,

beginning in the 1880s with Rochelle Park. By 1904 the development trend had extended up North Avenue, and City Realty Company sold the first homes in the neighborhood they developed as Beechmont. City Realty was formed by the Lambden family, local lawyers and bankers, who purchased the former Pugsley and Montgomery Farms to build Beechmont. The centerpiece was the lake they created by damming Pine Brook.

In 1907, the Wares moved into their newly-completed home at 96 Pryor Terrace. Five owners later, the exterior materials of the Shingle-style house have been restored to the original wood shingles. Additional restoration efforts to the house and former stable (now garage), has ensured that the property looks just as it did when photographed for a 1930 promotional booklet, *New Rochelle in Pictures*, and that an important cameo in New Rochelle's history has been preserved,

STATUE OF JACOB LEISLER (1913)

North Avenue and Broadview Avenue
New Rochelle, NY 10804

The statue of Jacob Leisler was created by one of the country's leading sculptors, Solon H. Borglum. Cast in bronze from an imagined likeness, the statue was unveiled on June 25, 1913 - one of many highlights during New Rochelle's 225th anniversary celebration. A local chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution (not to be confused with the Daughters of the American Revolution) commissioned the work to immortalize the man who helped a group of Huguenots (French Protestants) find a new home in America after fleeing their native country's tyranny and religious persecution dealt by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

On July 2, 1667, Jacob Leisler completed the deal that enabled the Huguenots to purchase from John and Rachel Pell the 6,100 acres that became New Rochelle. A wealthy merchant with involvement in numerous enterprises, Leisler later assumed the title of Lieutenant Governor of the Province of New York, under King James II. In 1691 he was unlawfully convicted of felony and treason and executed. Four years later, Parliament reversed the conviction, exonerating the deceased friend of the Huguenots. This statue is believed to be the only monumental memorial to Jacob Leisler.

MAHLSTEDT LUMBER COMPANY BUILDING (1920)

415 North Avenue
New Rochelle, NY 10801

Nominated by: Ephriam Rabin, President, Parchem Trading Company

When New Rochelle's civic and commercial buildings were constructed in the late part of the 1800s and early 1900s, no expense was spared in the materials used; the craftsmanship employed. This was certainly the case when the owner of the J. A. Mahlstedt Lumber and Coal Company (incorporated 1895) erected a handsome Neo-Classical Revival style building for his thriving enterprise's offices. The limestone two-story structure was prominently sited just opposite the Soldier's Monument at the west

junction of Huguenot and Main Streets. The lumber years were located directly behind the building, to the north, and additional storage yards and a mill were nearby on Pine Street. The Mahlstedt family had deep roots in the community- from involvement in civic affairs and elected position, to supplying and overseeing the construction of scores of residences, to the operations of the ice manufacturing concern on the lake that is now the Twin Lakes in front of New Rochelle High School.

After the Mahlstedt business closed following The Depression, and the building served multiple purposes, including offices for the United Water Company, the upper part of the facade was at some point covered in aluminum, hiding gorgeous detail work and the lettering: “J. A. Mahlstedt Lumber and Coal Company.”

This original lettering--“icing” on the stunning New Rochelle structure, is shining brightly once again, as is the beautifully-restored exterior and interior of the building. After purchasing the property in 2008, the current owner invested considerable money, thoughtful care and appropriate professional assistance to restore 415 Huguenot Street to its earlier and befitting glory.

BEAUCHAMP GARDENS APARTMENTS (1928)

151-155 Centre Avenue

New Rochelle, NY 10805

Nominated by: Alison Fricke, Board President

“Beauchamp Garden Apartments represent the finest type of building construction. In design and equipment they will be found on a par with the apartment residential homes in the Park and Fifth Avenue sections of Manhattan,” begins the 1928 sales brochure for the newly-constructed apartment complex in the fashionable suburb of New Rochelle. Touted for its convenience to the railroad station (a six-minute walk), shopping, theatre and business, and fine Public and Parochial schools, clubs and bathing beaches, the brochure also noted: “Here children grow up in refined surroundings....”

A group of German immigrants bought the land for the building in the 1920s and hired Otto W. Kritz to design and construct the six-story, 76-unit building. He employed the popular Tudor-Revival style architecture so widely used in homes of growing neighbors in the wealthiest of suburban communities of the day. The attention to detail Old World craftsmanship, coupled with the “modern” technologies, resulted in a residential complex loaded with charm and new amenities—all contained in a lovely park-like setting. “It is situated on one of the finest avenues in New Rochelle,” continues the brochure, “overlooking Residence Park and in the best residential part of town... The house stands on a large plot and the spacious the spacious courts which surround the building are all landscaped with shrubs and trees, while magnificent shade trees line the curbs of Centre Avenue.” Exemplifying the new concept of “garden apartments,” Beauchamps Gardens was highlighted in the 1927 book, *American Apartment Houses Today*.

From the time it first opened, Beauchamps Gardens has attracted a diverse group of tenants – professionals, artists, retirees and families. Today, the great grand-daughter and

granddaughter of one of the original builders and managers, A. Henry Fricke, also live in the apartment. They find it the perfect blend of city and suburbia - steeped in a proud, well-preserved heritage.

ISAAC E. YOUNG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (1928)

270 Centre Avenue
New Rochelle, NY 10805

Built at a cost of \$1,392,000 over three years, Isaac E. Young Jr. High School was immediately rated as one of the most architecturally beautiful school buildings in the country. The prestigious architectural firm Starrett and Van Vleck designed it in the Collegiate Gothic style. The firm also completed unique designs for Henry Barnard School and Jefferson School in New Rochelle, and were responsible for such notable structures as Lord and Taylor's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdales and the Downtown Athletic Club in New York City. When it was completed in 1928 the building could accommodate 900 pupils, but the site was planned for a future extension to the east of the building for an additional 200 students.