

# The Hague Chronicle

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OCTOBER 1973

HAGUE, N. Y.

## HAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Hague Public Library opened with its fall schedule on September 7th and is now open on Mondays, 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. and Fridays, 12:30 to 3:00 P.M. Students who have not returned overdue library books are urged to do so. The library is staffed by volunteers and is supported by voluntary contributions.

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## THOMAS F. SMITH

Thomas F. Smith, Town Supervisor, died suddenly at his home on August 29. Mr. Smith, who was born in Witherbee, New York, survived by his wife, Edith; a son, William M.; three brothers, Bernard L. of East Choster, Paul V. of Ticonderoga, and Leo L. of Balston Spa.

A Mass of Resurrection was offered on Friday, August 30, at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament with the Rev. Stephen O'Connor officiating. Burial followed at Valley View Comotory in Ticonderoga.

Mr. Smith came to Hague shortly following World War II to become the English and Social Studies teacher in the Hague School. In the early fifties, he was appointed principal to succeed Mr. Chuster. He remained in that post until 1970 when he retired. Following a short stay in Arizona, he returned to Hague and shortly thereafter was appointed County Director of Civil Defense. He collected Town Supervisor in November, 1972 and was a candidate to succeed himself in the November, 1973 election.

Although he served as supervisor less

than two years, Mr. Smith accomplished much. He took an active interest in the Town Park, the Sanitary Landfill, established a Town Planning Board and a Board of Assessment Review, and was actively involved in efforts to dispose of junk cars. During his term, Federal Revenue sharing funds became available and he developed the plans for their use. As a member of the County Board of Supervisors, he served on a number of standing committees, including civil defense, conservation, planning, and the Lake George water level.

At a special meeting of the Board following Mr. Smith's death, Mr. Robert Denno was appointed deputy supervisor and served in that capacity until September 3 when Mr. W. Keith DeLarm was appointed by the Board to

## - EN VOYAGE -

As you read this, your editor and wife will be at about the mid-point of a trip which will take them to a number of European port cities. Consequently this issue of the Chronicle was prepared several weeks ago and does not contain the usual reports of the School Board and Town Board meetings nor any recent news items. Those we will attempt to cover after we get back in mid-October.

View Comotory in Ti-

take over the remainder of Mr. Smith's term and to become the Democratic candidate on the November ballot. Mr. DeLarm is no stranger to the post; he served as supervisor from 1958 to 1972.

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## TI HOSPITAL EXPANDS

Ground was broken on August 27 by the Moses-Ludington Nursing Home Corporation for a 40-bed nursing home. The project, which will cost about \$1.5 million, was created and sponsored by the Moses-Ludington Hospital. It is being built on a plot obtained from the hospital immediately west and north of the present hospital building. Tracy-Trombly Construction Company of Plattsburgh is the general contractor. Completion is scheduled for next year.

On Saturday preceding the ground breaking, an "open house" at the hospital attracted over 200 visitors who were given an escorted tour through the various facilities. Mr. and Mrs. Howard Engler and Mr. and Mrs. Mich-

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ael Rogers represented Hague on the "open house" committee.

The nursing home is being financed, in part, by a \$1.2 million, 40-year mortgage loan arranged through the New York State Housing Finance Agency. The loan was consummated at a two-hour session immediately preceding the ground-breaking exercises, where about ten lawyers and nursing home officials checked and double checked a stack of documents about two inches thick.

The nursing home will be self supporting and will have its own staff and employees. It will get its dietary and laundry services from the hospital.

The hospital has served the Ticonderoga and Hague areas for more than sixty years. Its founder was Horace Mosos, a descendant of one of Ticonderoga's early settlers and an uncle of Harvay Mosos who presently resides on Sabbath Day Point. Horace left Ticonderoga at the age of 21 and made his fortune in Massachusetts in the paper manufacturing business. His aunt, Mary Mosos Shattuck, set up a trust fund in her will for community charitable purposes. When she died in 1906, Horace was named executor. He immediately got together with Dr. Cummins and members of the Town Board and plans to build a hospital were made. However, heirs of Mrs. Shattuck successfully broke the will and money already expended for the hospital had to be restored to the estate. Nonetheless, Horace, together with other public-spirited citizens, made good on their promise to build a hospital. This building is now part of the Emily J. Mosos Memorial Building, so-named in memory of Horace's mother, and was later converted to a nurses' home.

In 1920-21 Horace Mosos again furnished initiative and much of the money for the building which is now the Mosos-Ludington Hospital. Considerable help was also given by Mrs. Ludington of Springfield, Mass. whose husband had been in the paper business

with Horace. In 1946 the hospital as we now know it was completed. In 1950 the nurses' home was enlarged to its present size. Mrs. Marjorie Laundroo of Hague is presently in charge of the corps of nurses.

The hospital is now planning an extension to the hospital to increase its capacity to 87 beds. Work on this expansion is expected to begin in about two years.

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### HOME BUREAU TO MEET

The Mohican Chapter of Home Bureau Federation will open its fall schedule with a meeting on October 2nd at 10:00 A.M. in the Baptist Church Annex.

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### TAX EQUALIZATION RATE

The assessed value of real property in the various towns is determined by the Town's Board of Assessors. The standard of assessment prescribed by law is that all property in each assessing unit be assessed at full value.

Because of fluctuations in market value of property, it would be a most difficult task to have assessed values correspond to actual market values at all times. For this reason assessed values generally remain constant, increase or decrease only when improvements or additions have been made. In the Town of Hague, for example, current assessed values are intended to be 50% of 1967 true value. This complies with the standards fixed by law as long as the assessed values are at a uniform ratio or percentage of full value.

To determine state aid due the various towns and school districts and to determine a fair tax rate on school districts comprising the various towns, the equalization rate is established by the State Board of Equalization and Assessment. In Hague the equalization rate in 1970 was fixed at 70%; in 1972 it was 53%.

True value of property is a matter of opinion only and it is not significant that the state appraisers and the town assessors differ. Only if the percentage or ratio of assessed value to true value is not uniform will inequities arise.

In arriving at the 1970 and 1972 equalization rates, the State Board appraised a sampling of specific properties in Hague, 56 in 1970 and 48 in 1972. The ratio between the assessed value and the true value of each parcel was then determined. These ratios were then averaged and the 70% equalization rate in 1970 and 53% rate in 1972 were then computed. Since the assessed values did not materially change over the two-year period, the findings of the State Board indicate that market value increased an average of 32% in the two years; a piece of property worth \$10,000. in 1970 would be worth \$13,200. in 1972. It must be kept in mind that in arriving at its conclusions the State Board is not saying that each parcel increased in value by 32%, but that property as a whole increased that amount.

An interesting by-product of the study is the wide variation found to exist in the ratio of assessed value to true value in the individual parcels sampled. In the 1970 study ratios ranged from 37.5% to 101.21%, indicating that in the opinion of the State Board some assessments were as low as 37.5% of true value, and others were as high as 101.21% while the average was 70%. In the 1972 study variations were as great, the range being from 10% to 69.2% while the average was 53%.

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ENCON TO REGULATE WATER LEVEL

On June 13, Governor Rockefeller signed into law a bill which relieves the International Paper Company from the obligation to control the Lake George water level. This responsibility is now in the hands of the Department of Environmental Conservation and the operation of the dam site at Ticonderoga will be assigned to the Lake George Park Commission.

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SANITATION SURVEY UPDATED

The results of the sanitation survey being conducted by the Department of Environmental Conservation have been updated to August 9. As of that date, the sanitation facilities of 2,666 dwellings have been inspected with the following results: 1992 have proved to be satisfactory, 627 are questionable, and 47 have failed completely. In the first report one out of 70 systems

proved unsatisfactory. In the updated report this has increased to one out of 57. This does not take into consideration the number of questionable systems which will prove to be unsatisfactory.

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FISHING IS GOOD

The Fish & Game Committee of the Lako George Association reports that this year has been one of the best in recent years for fishing lake trout and bass. Stocking during the past year consisted of 31,400 rainbow trout, 36,500 landlocked salmon, and 20,000 spring spawning rainbow trout. No lake trout were stocked because of hatchery problems.

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GEORGE THE MONSTER

Perhaps the most authentic story of Georgo the Monstor appeared in the summer issue of the Lako George Association Publication, News and Views. Briefly, the facts are these:

In 1906, Harry Watrous, an artist and one time president of the National Academy of Design, and Colonel William Mann, editor of Town Topics, a sort of scandal sheet covering the New York Society goings on, were neighbors and good friends summering in Haguo. There were frequent wagers between the two men on which could catch the biggest fish.

One day Colonel Mann brought in what looked like a 30 or 40 pound lako trout. "Mann, what a fish!" said Watrous admiringly as he paid up. History fails to record what he said later when he discovered the prize trout was made of wood. Then it was Watrous' turn. He went to work on a sizeable chunk of pine log and soon produced the fear-some creature that came to be known as George the Monstor. He then rigged up an anchor, ropes and pulleys so that from his boathouse he could cause George to suddenly break water alongside an unsuspecting fisher man only to submerge as quickly as he had appeared.

When Georgo popped up beside Colonel Mann's boat, Watrous says the colonel screamed like a banshee, knelt to pray, then dived overboard and struck out for shore.

There were others who saw George up out of the water including a pair of honeymooners. In their fright, they upset the canoe and when the bride saw her husband doing a fast crawl for the shore leaving her to do her own swimming, she claimed she had had enough and the couple was soon back at the divorce courts.

When the Island Harbor House was levelled by fire some years later, it was feared that George had been lost but a few years ago he turned up in the Virgin Islands. No one knows for sure how he got there. At any rate, in 1971 George was returned to the region and is now on display at the Lake George Association headquarters in Lake George Village.

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PROPERTY TAXES AND THE SALES TAX

The town tax bill which is paid in January each year is made up of two items; the county tax and the town tax. (There is also a lighting district tax which is assessed against properties located in the lighting districts.)

The entire cost of town government is paid for out of town tax revenues. (In 1972 and 1973 these have been augmented by Federal revenue sharing funds.) Prior to 1968, the cost of county government was paid for entirely out of taxes on real property. In 1965 the county portion of the real property tax in Hague was \$27.80 per \$1000. of assessed valuation; in 1966 it was \$29.30; and in 1967 it was \$30.17. Beginning in 1968,

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Warren County received revenues from a 3% sales tax levy. This dramatically reduced the property tax rate in 1968 to \$8.79 per \$1000. assessed valuation and in succeeding years it has been even lower - \$5.51 in 1969; \$3.04 in 1970; \$3.04 in 1971; \$2.82 in 1972.

If the county did not share in the sales tax revenues, the county tax rate in 1973 would have been \$19.72 per \$1000. of assessed valuation. Thus, sales tax revenues have had the effect of reducing 1973 property taxes in Hague the equivalent of \$17.30 per \$1000. of assessed valuation.

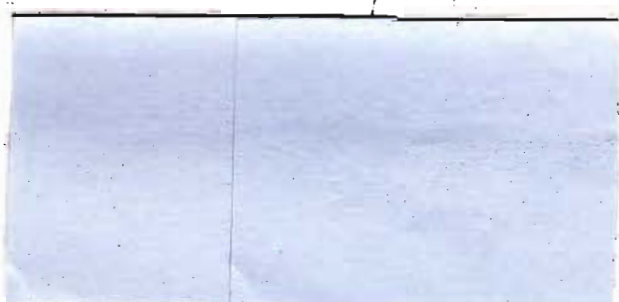
What the property owner saves in property taxes he probably pays in sales taxes. However, it is estimated that of the \$103 million spent by tourists in Warren County in 1970, \$66 million went towards the purchase of materials, supplies and services. On these purchases, \$4,620,000 was collected in sales taxes, the county's share being almost \$2 million. To this extent the property owner has been benefited from the transfer of the county tax burden from the property tax to the sales tax.

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INDEPENDENT PETITIONS FILED

Clinton Frasier and Raymond H. Monroe have filed petitions for councilman and superintendent of highways respectively and will appear on the November ballot as the candidates of the Hague Independent Party.

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