



# The Elm Tree

## Loudonville's Little Libraries

One positive from the quarantine and work-from-home has been the marked increase of foot traffic in the neighborhoods. Some say the new number of walkers reminds them of church at Easter! Many neighbors have become acquainted for the first time on walks, and with gyms being closed, outdoor exercise has been a salvation for many. If your walking loop includes Locust Lane, you may have noticed something new in the median, a miniature library!

Hank Masson, a Senior at Shaker High School, came up with the idea to install a Little Library in front of their home. Soon enough they had done the research and ordered a kit from the "Little Free Library." His dad, Patrick, maintains the median each year with his mowing skills and flower pots.

The Little Free Library is a world-wide book exchange network in the form of small boxes with a glass door that invites anyone to take a book or leave a book.

"Whenever I read a great book, I just want to share it with everybody. We hope the 'Locust Lane Little Library' can help create connections and build community, where neighbors meet and share interests through the books they love." said Jamie Masson, Hank's mom. Hank is the "Steward" of the library, and keeps a log of book activity. If, after a month one hasn't moved, the Massons remove the book and donate it. He keeps the library clean and tidy, and has even placed inside it a bottle of hand sanitizer and a notebook for patrons' comments. One week in and there had already been some activity!

Once your little library is built, you must register online to become an official part of the Little Free Library. One can then look up all the Little Libraries on their world map. So far, Loudonville officially has two! The other is on Paul Holly - installed as a Mother's Day gift to an English teacher.

If we are to make the most out of a challenging situation, this is one way Hank Masson has helped to provide a ray of light for our walking community - both diehards and newbies!



[littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org)

## President's Message



Perspective. Something that has changed for many of us recently. Our lives altered seemingly overnight, forever in many ways. The pandemic, social unrest and political division have altered our path. It will change our history for better or worse.

We are all suddenly learning what a global pandemic requires of us – and it is difficult, for everyone. It is during times like these that I am proud to be a part of The Greater Loudonville Association, working to support our community. years, we have For collectively addressed the most pressing community issues and funded innovative solutions to drive transformational change.

Through the pain and anguish, we have found within us the true meaning of community. We reach out to our neighbors and friends for support and comfort. It is what makes our organization so important. Our members want to preserve not only our history but our future.

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We know that each day is bringing significant challenges and pressures on our families and our businesses. We also know that nonprofits rise to challenges every day with ingenuity, compassion, resilience, fortitude, and integrity. In times like these, our communities stand together.

*What Can You Do?*

These are unprecedented times, and there are many ways to engage in philanthropy and effecting change. We hope that the GLA has given you the tools and the confidence to give it your all.

We tend to think primarily of Members, but there are so many more people and groups that are important parts of our community. We have members who are also volunteers, committee leaders, and contributors to our development. I want to continue to strengthen these relationships and through them, increase the value to our Members.

We have many great people and many opportunities. I want to engage you to work collaboratively to grow the association and grow the awareness of the value of our work.

I am honored to have been selected to hold this position and look forward to serving the board and the mission of the GLA.

I have immense confidence in our continued ability to respond with selflessness, foresight, compassion and kindness.

With gratitude,

*Darcy Harding*

## Welcome New Members

Andrea Celli  
Raji Bouchard  
Andrew Williamson

## “Lakelet Villa”

Exquisite 21-room Loudonville Tudor

Actually, it’s an entirely transformed  
Victorian mansion!



The story of the alteration of 407 Loudon Road is as engaging as the lives of those families who have been associated with this property.

An early owner, Hon. John Tweddle, held so many prominent positions in various civic organizations that Tweddle Tower and the chimes of St. Peter’s Church carry his name in the Albany community today.

In 1875 the property passed to the Rev. Charles DeW. Bridgman and his wife, Lucette. Bridgman was the pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Albany from 1862 to 1878 and later served as a rector of Holy Trinity Church in NYC. Lucette loved to walk and often made the trip to Albany from Loudonville on foot. As there were practically no houses south of Crumitie Road, being a rather timorous woman, she always carried a revolver, even when she walked to church on Sundays.

Some believe the house was built around 1860. Others suggest that Richard Wickham built the home for the Bridgmans in 1875. Wickham’s energy and great technical ability placed him in the front rank, building some of the finest public and private structures in New York.

About a decade later, ownership passed to Peter Kells Dederick, his wife, Marietta, and their three school-age children. (Their daughter Bertha eventually married Peter G. Ten Eyck, sons Prescott and Archland later lived in homes a stone’s throw away.) The 1895 Albany-Troy Blue Book lists One Lodge St. as the permanent residence for the family, with a summer residence at *Lakelet Villa* in Loudonville.

An 1883 Lithograph shows the expanse of the Dederick land, running from Loudonville Road diagonally to the Menands Road, with a lake at the southeasterly border. Many outbuildings dotted the

property, including two towers, an enormous greenhouse, a chicken house, barns, garages and three small homes for servants. Dederick, a world traveler, was also interested in horticulture and planted fifty different types of trees on the property.

The Dederick home was a classic Victorian, with elaborate gingerbread details on the central tower and decorative touches on the greenhouse. The five-story tower and the smaller tower overlooking the lake were built similarly as “watchtowers” for viewing the property and the surrounding areas.

Dedericks’ love for the exterior beauty of their home and grounds was directly related to his upbringing on a well-to-do farm in Columbia County. Inventive by nature, he was educated at the Hudson River Institute at Claverack. He concentrated on developing mechanical devices to take the place of hand labor on the farm, establishing the Dederick Agricultural and Machine Works in Albany in 1859. There he developed the hay-baling press and was the only baling press manufacturer in the world for the the next 20 years. In 1871 he established branch factories in Chicago, Montreal and St. Louis, and then more factories under foreign patents in Europe and Russia. Models of his baling presses are in the collection at the NYS Museum!

Their home and grounds were the scene of lavish entertainment, and for a long time the social activity of Loudonville was centered around this spacious estate.

Upon the death of Marietta in 1923, Dederick sold the Victorian home to the Louis R. Mack family. A Packard dealer, Mack held the franchise for 22 counties, making fancy cars even more important to the life of the new family at Lakelet Villa. Every year brought a new Packard to the garage for each family member.



**GLA is thinking of *virtually* everything...**

**Halloween "By Neighborhood"**

Get your costumed kids and neighbors to pose for some pics and share to our Facebook page - just define the streets your goblins represent!

**Nov 7th at 9am: Triangle Tulip-Planting**

(Weather-permitting,) feel free to come by to help as we prepare the tulip beds for spring! This is *not* virtual.

**Holiday Tree Lighting - Loudon Green**

Virtual this year

*Keep checking our Facebook page!*

And then there was this October storm...



**Greater Loudonville Association**  
PO Box 11144  
Loudonville NY 12211-0144

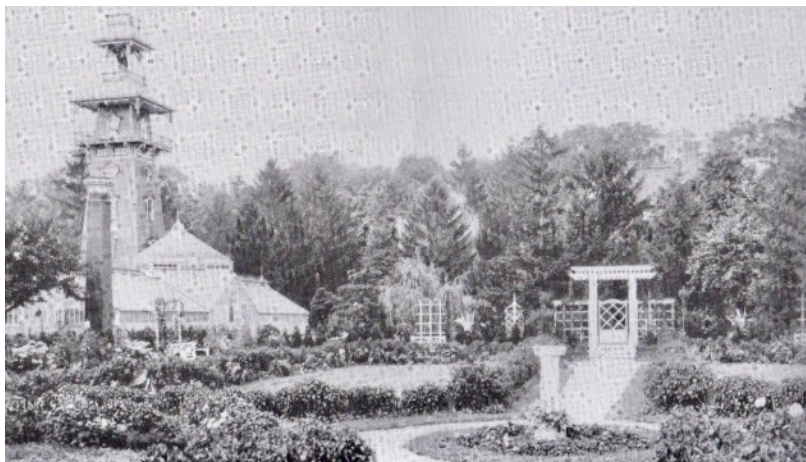
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or current resident

Louis and his wife Elizabeth purchased Lakelet Villa even though they were not particularly fond of Victorian architecture. Thus, they had the house gutted and rebuilt in the English Tudor style. The Times Union reported that the 1924 changes cost about \$50K. The house's current asymmetrical composition consists of a variety of forms, textures, materials and colors. Architectural features include towers, turrets, a tall chimney, projecting pavilion, porches, bays and encircling veranda. Textured wall surfaces occasionally are complemented by colored-glass panels in the windows. Stained-glass windows including the Mack family crest flank both



view from the north, c. 1920



sides of the living room fireplace. Rich wood paneling and moldings appear throughout the house.

The daily maintenance of such a grand property and the proper rearing of two daughters, Peggy and Nancy, were accomplished with the help of several live-in and part-time staff members. The low cost of labor and the available supply of Irish immigrant workers enabled the Macks, as well as other families to employ skilled workers for the endless household duties. The late Nancy Mack recalled the attentive care of a chauffeur, cook, waitress, chambermaid, laundress and several gardeners. Charlie, a gardener, lived in one of the houses by the pond; another small house was occupied by the chauffeur and a third house was rented out.

Nancy remembered the childhood times spent with her sister in the elegant gardens. But the story of her falling into the large lily pond, requiring rescue by workmen, was a continuing embarrassment for Peggy during dinner-table conversation.

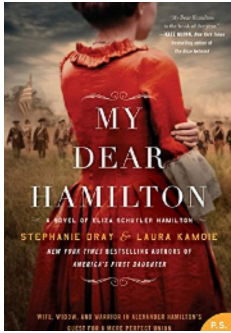
In 1943 the property was sold to Joseph and Mary Rainey. It was Rainey who had to subdivide the property due to the increased cost of maintenance, as labor and material costs escalated. Two dozen building lots resulted, including Patroon Place, Orchard Grove and Princess Lane, leaving the remaining 3.5 acres for the main house. Mrs. Townsend Morey, Jr. (Paula), purchased the home in 1977 where she lived with her family.

Although the style of the house was changed significantly, it remains a gracious home that is once again, waiting for a new owner to make their mark on Lakelet Villa!

Article part of GLA-produced book: "Loudonville: Traveling the Loudon Plank Road" published in 1997

Project spearheaded by Sharon Holub  
"Lakelet Villa" written by Mary Durgee with minor edits by Carolyn Martel

**Extensive gardens - complete with viewing towers, greenhouses, fountains and lake - graced the property, which extended to Menand Road on the north c.1920**



## My Dear Hamilton

by Stephanie Dray and  
Laura Kamoie

This novel of historical fiction, by the authors of the NYT bestselling book, *America's First Daughter*, tells the story of Eliza Schuyler Hamilton, from

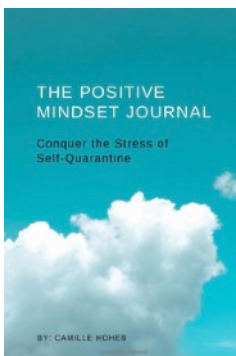
her girlhood in the Pastures, to her widowhood in Harlem, and along the way the reader has a ringside seat to the American Revolution, the intricate game of politics and the foundation of our nation. A native Albanian, Eliza travels to locations very familiar to us, including her family's mansion in Albany, meeting with the Six Nations in Central New York, and a burgeoning New York City, where Harlem was considered to be "the wilds." In fact, the Hamiltons owned "[t]hirty-five acres. Barns, sheds, stables, gardens, orchards, chicken houses, duck ponds, and all." Spanning the tumult of the Revolution, and reaching all the way up to the eve of the Civil War, through the decades where the nation itself was being invented out of whole cloth, *My Dear Hamilton* depicts the societal and political changes that rushed past Eliza, while maintaining its focus on her as the prime mover of her own story.

Although she frequently interacts with the most revered historical personages of her time (James Monroe, Dolley Madison, Marquise de Lafayette, and the list goes on), the authors carefully and touchingly depict her relationships with her two sisters, Angelica and Peggy, as well as with her father. Eliza would need their support as she and her husband navigated through the minefield of political entanglements inherent in shaping our Country and forming our Central Banking System. If we think our politics today are back-stabbing, compare it to eighteenth century instances, such as when, "two congressmen had come to blows with cane and fire-tongs on the floor of the House of Representatives."

The intricate level of detail regarding Eliza's everyday life is extraordinary, but even more compelling is the way in which the authors shape an historic tale to reflect enduring human emotions, values and relationships. Given the turbulence of our lives at present, reading this saga is a great reminder of what we have come through as a nation and how the best of the human spirit can prevail through the most trying of times.

## While We're Talking Books:

### *Local Author, Current Topic - The Positive Mindset Journal*



When Quarantine set in, Loudonville resident Camille Hoheb thought about journaling the experience. Then she thought of how she'd like to have a special journal for this unique time. Finally, she decided she would create a journal, available on Amazon, with just the kinds of prompts and opportunities for reflection that bring on positivity despite this unexpected and challenging climate.

Its benefits help organize your thoughts, prioritize what's important, encourages writing your own historical account of 2020 and nurtures a healthy and positive mindset. The year's not over yet!