

FRIENDS OF *Florham*

Fall 2007

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Dedication of Hennessy Hall

Ed and Ruth Hennessy, the honorary co-chairs of the Friends of Florham Gala for the last two years, gathered with family and friends on May 7, 2007, to celebrate the dedication of Hennessy Hall at the College at Florham. For nearly 50 years, Hennessy Hall was known simply as "The Mansion." The naming of this magnificent 100-room Georgian-style masterpiece designed in the 1890s by noted architect Stanford White and set in gardens and grounds designed by Frederick Law Olmsted recog-



Ed Hennessy stands beside the plaque placed to the right of the front door of Hennessy Hall.

nizes Ed Hennessy's outstanding generosity and his dedicated service to his alma mater. He is an alumnus and trustee emeritus who served on the University's board of trustees for 16 years, 11 of those as chairman.

The afternoon began with a program on the back portico of the Mansion overlooking the Italian Gardens. Vice Chairman of FDU's Board of Trustees Robert Hallenbeck welcomed everyone to the campus. Speakers included Bishop Arthur J. Serratelli, who extended a special blessing on behalf of the Archdiocese of Paterson, Hennessy's fellow alumni and former FDU board members Tom Ferguson and George Martin and University President J. Michael

(continued on page 3)

College at Florham Green Day

On April 23, the Friends of Florham were pleased to participate in the College at Florham's Green Day, a student-focused community celebration of the University's venture into environmental sustainability. Its purpose was to recognize, share and celebrate the contribution that each individual can make to the overall goal of sustainability. Green Expo was held in the Great Hall of Hennessy Hall and on the Mansion Circle.

The Friends of Florham were pleased to publicize their mission and point out some examples of their accomplishments in preserving the mansion and gardens. Since the organization was founded in April of 1990, the mission of the Friends of Florham has been to preserve "Florham," the



Celebrating Green Day at the College at Florham are, from left, Linda Carrington, Elaine Earlywine and Emma Joy Dana.

(continued on page 2)



**FAIRLEIGH
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THE LEADER IN GLOBAL EDUCATION

President's Letter

The hot summer of 2007 is now past, and we, the Friends of Florham, welcome you to enjoy the fall at Florham, which is incredibly lovely at this time of year. Do come to the campus and especially to see the colorful Olmsted Cutleaf Maple Grove display on Dreyfuss Road (if you drive in from the Madison Avenue entrance, turn right at the crossroad, you will find yourself there). The Grove is truly breathtakingly beautiful!

On May 19, we had our 10th annual Spring Gala. It was great! Hennessy Hall (Mansion) was elegantly decorated and all those attending were festive in spite of the clouds. The food and the music were both outstanding. My thanks to Board Member Suzy Moran who decorated the Great Hall and Lenfell Hall. She opened the French doors from Lenfell Hall, and one could look out into the Italian Gardens which were in full bloom. We honored Barbara Keefauver for initiating this event and thank all of you who support us through your attendance and donations.

Speaking of flowers, the daffodils this spring were beautiful and especially abundant. During the summer when I was vacationing in Montana, Ted Ambrosiano, who is in charge of the grounds of Florham and a member of our board, called me to proudly tell me that the "Florham Lilies," planted last year in the front courtyard, were much bigger than a year ago and were spectacu-

larly beautiful. We are grateful to Ted for keeping us in bloom!

The Friends are actively investigating the possibility of replacing the front door of the mansion with one that more closely resembles the original door. We must adhere to necessary fire and safety restrictions, but we are working with an architect and hope to find a door that will maintain the dignity of the beautiful mansion, while ensuring the safety of students and community guests. We will keep you informed as to our progress with this project and the others that are part of our overall long-range plan.

Our archives — which our Archivist Antonia Moser put into such admirable and workable order — are being put to good use by students and scholars alike — including Jack Turpin and Barry Thompson, who will be presenting our annual lecture on Sunday, October 28. Their presentation promises to be extremely interesting and apropos of the former Twombly Estate and our preservation aims. Do come to the lecture. I know you will all enjoy it. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read a review of Turpin and Thomson's latest book, *New Jersey Country Houses: The Somerset Hills*. I'm sure it will inspire you to join us that Sunday.

— Emma Joy Dana

College at Florham Green Day (continued from page 1)

country estate of the Twomblys. Much of the Friends' work, therefore, has been restoring structural and ornamental decorative elements of the estate.

Some examples are the restoration of Lenfell Hall (the Twomblys' "Withdrawing Room"), the main hallway, the balustrade and the lanterns on the pillars in front of the mansion and the pergola at the eastern end of the Italian Gardens. A large portion of the funds raised by the Friends is used for these sorts of restorations and reconstructions. The preservation of historical treasures, if it is done correctly, is often quite expensive. For example, the cost to restore the pillar lanterns mentioned above was \$83,000.

Another considerable share of the organization's preservation budget is used to underwrite projects closely related to the goals of environmentally oriented people and programs such as those recognized by the April 23 "Green Day" observance. Five Friends of Florham projects are especially appropriate to the spirit of this day: the restoration of the Clowney Gardens on the lower level of gardens behind the mansion; the Italian Gar-

dens to the east of the mansion, an endeavor that required, in addition to the recreation of the pergola and pathways around the parterre, the planting of many roses of historic vintage and a large number of dwarf English boxwoods; the construction of a wall and installation of a plaque demarcating the southern edge of the cutleaf maple grove — the only part of Frederick Law Olmsted's landscape plan still in existence on the University's grounds; and the replication of the famed "Florham Lily" or *hemerocallis* Florham, developed in 1899 by Arthur Herrington, as the first American cultivar, a crossing of *hemerocallis* *Thurbergii* and *hemerocallis aurantiaca*. The replication is a kind of "second cousin" of the original type, that historic plant being no longer available.

The Friends wish to emphasize that these projects are made possible by annual membership donations and from the proceeds of its well-attended annual Gala. For the past two years, Ed and Ruth Hennessy served as honorary co-chairs of the Gala.

— Walter Savage

Carol C. Knauff Appointed Board Member

Friends of Florham announces the nomination of Carol C. Knauff as a new board member. She brings a history of service and experience to the organization. Knauff currently serves as executive director of the Stars Challenge at Fairleigh Dickinson University. The Stars Challenge, a nonprofit organization, is a science enrichment program for top 6th- through 8th-graders hosted at Fairleigh Dickinson and Monmouth Universities.



Carol C. Knauff

Carol is also executive vice president of the FDU Alumni Board of Governors. She retired from AT&T as president of AT&T International where she was responsible for all operations outside the United States. Knauff was named Outstanding Engineering Alumni and Alumni Fellow by Penn

State. She received The PINNACLE award from FDU in recognition of her accomplishments in the business world and her service to the community. She also is the recipient of the Elia G. Stratis CASTLE Award, which is given annually to an alumnus or alumna of FDU who has demonstrated a lifetime of outstanding loyalty and service to the University. Knauff received a BS in Electrical Engineering from Penn State, an MS from the University of Missouri-Rolla and an MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson University.

She and her husband, Jeffrey, are long-time residents of Mendham and have two daughters. The Friends welcome Carol Knauff to the board and look forward to benefiting from her experience in business and her dedication to volunteer service.

Hennessy Hall (continued from page 1)

Adams. Emma Joy Dana, president of the Friends of Florham, also took the podium to thank Ed and Ruth Hennessy for their support of the Friends' efforts to continue the renovation and restoration of both the Mansion and the surrounding gardens.

Following the program all moved to the front of the Mansion, for the unveiling of a bronze plaque hanging near the entrance of this majestic structure, which formally and publicly named the Mansion "Hennessy Hall." Adams stated, "It is a fitting and a well-deserved honor that this jewel of the community henceforth be known for a man whose efforts shined so brightly."



At the Hennessy Hall dedication are, from left, Emma Joy Dana, Ruth Hennessy, Alan Painter and Joann Painter.



The Hennessy Hall dedication was held on a lovely spring day.

Hennessy is retired chairman and CEO of AlliedSignal, Inc.; former director of the New York Stock Exchange and Federal Reserve Bank of New York; and a trustee and founding president of the Tri-County Scholarship Fund of the Diocese of Paterson, N.J. He served on the boards of countless charitable entities. In addition to education, the Hennessy's philanthropic interests include the arts, health care and the economically disadvantaged.

He is married to Ruth Schilling Hennessy. They have two children and two grandchildren.

New Jersey Country Houses: The Somerset Hills

Volume 2, John H. Turpin and W. Barry Thomson, Mountain Colony Press, 2005

“Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me,” F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote in a short story published in 1926.

F. Scott Fitzgerald’s often-quoted comment assumes particular resonance as we consider the second volume of *New Jersey Country Houses: The Somerset Hills*, by John H. Turpin and W. Barry Thomson, which covers the growth and development of magnificent country homes built in the area roughly between the two World Wars. Comprehensively researched and elegantly photographed, the book is not just a tasteful and knowledgeable guide to major movements in architectural and landscape design during this period — which it definitely is — but more indirectly a historical and social commentary on the families, the lives lived in these homes during a complex period in the nation’s history: from World War I, the raucous high-flying Roaring ’20s, the boom/bust scenario of the stock market, the Great Depression and finally to World War II.

Financiers, industrialists and publishers — familiar names such as Belmont, Dillon, Forbes, Engelhard, Luce and Scribner — were among those who built impressive country estates in Bernardsville, Mendham, Far Hills, Peapack-Gladstone, Bedminster and Chester during this period. Of course, these diverse and often lavish estates were not developed without the assistance of top-ranked architects and landscape architects. Major architects such as Cross & Cross, Delano & Aldrich, John Russell Pope and Mott B. Schmidt — all well-known for their skyscrapers, commercial buildings, churches and country houses — and noted landscape architects including Ellen Biddle Shipman, Penelope Hobhouse and Innocenti & Webel essentially set standards, created environments which no doubt reflected the successful careers of their owners and reinforced their perceived social positions, while also accommodating the lifestyles of immediate and frequently several generations of families.

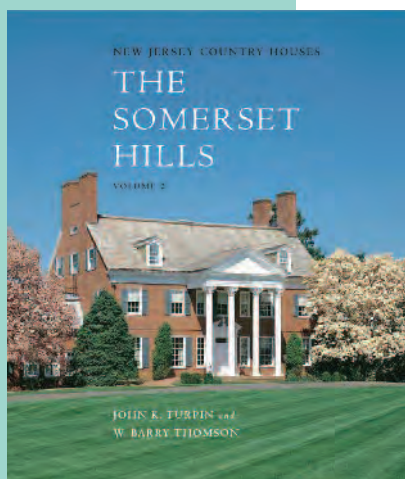
Jack Turpin and Barry Thomson introduced the first wave of estate building in the Somerset Hills

beginning around 1870 in the first volume of this impressive history of country houses (see *Friends of Florham Newsletter* review, spring 2006). Briefly, influences of Modern French or French Classicism and literal replications of historic styles characterized the architecture of these early years. The interwar period covered in the second volume was marked by a noticeable shift in architectural styles influenced mainly by Modern Classicism and the emerging Modern movement. Some owners may have been viewed at the time as incarnations of Fitzgerald’s Jay Gatsby — particularly as they built these lavish estates during the crippling economic years of the Depression — yet they nevertheless created individual, memorable country estates, which contrast sharply with many of the huge and soulless homes being built today by contemporary Gatsbys.

Many of these country homes of both periods are still standing, and Turpin and Thomson are particularly knowledgeable as they detail the history of ownership, the destructions and restorations of some of these homes and occasional selling-off of tracts of estate land. While the owners of these homes probably never thought of themselves as philanthropists, several of these estates have been retrofitted for both private and public use. A few examples include Thomas Harris Frothingham’s classically-designed estate, Dogwood, in Far Hills, which passed through a few owners, and is now the home of the United States Golf Association (USGA). The former estate of Julia and Redmond Cross in Bernardsville, which includes renowned formal gardens, was purchased in 1975 by the National Park Service. And the last owners of Allwood in Far Hills, the Buck family, who were active horticulturists, donated land in successive steps, including the 29-acre tract containing their renowned rock garden to the Somerset County Park Commission, which operates the Leonard J. Buck Garden. Both the Leonard J. Buck Garden and the Cross Estate Gardens are open to the public.

Jack Turpin and Barry Thomson have clearly written the definitive chronicle of country houses in the Somerset Hills in their wonderful two-volume architectural history. They are relatively circumspect about their personal views, but their books offer an implied and persuasive argument for historic preservation.

— Carol Bere



New Jersey Country Houses: The Somerset Hills

Program presented by
Authors John K. Turpin
and W. Barry Thomson

Sunday, October 28, 2007, 3 p.m.

Lenfell Hall, Hennessy Hall
(Mansion)

\$10 at Hennessy Hall

Reception and Book Signing

Friends of Florham Gala 2007

“It was truly an elegant evening.” “The tables looked wonderful — beautiful flowers, silver candlesticks.” “We loved the band. The music was great.” “The view of the gardens was spectacular.” “The Gala just gets better with every passing year.” These were some of the many comments heard about the Friends of Florham 2007 Gala — a tribute to Barbara Keefauver, who passed away in 2006.

Ten years ago, it was Barbara Keefauver’s idea to hold a ball to raise money for the renovation of the University’s Lenfell Hall. After 40 years of serving as a University lecture hall and entertainment area, Lenfell Hall was a dreary space with aging aqua paint, faded curtains and a worn parquet floor. The first ball raised enough money to begin renovation work. The galas continued, ably run by Barbara



At the Gala are Bill Keefauver, right, and his daughter, Betsy Lyons. Photo credit Judi Whiting.



Enjoying the evening near the Italian Gardens are, from left, Joe Atencio, Kathy Atencio and Phyllis Conway. Photo credit Judi Whiting.

and her dinner committee, and two years later, a new parquet floor, freshly painted walls and moldings, draperies created by Scalamandre and restored portraits greeted Gala guests. Eventually, renovations to the Great Hall and the courtyard also took place. As a result, the mansion, recently renamed Hennessy Hall, is now the jewel of the College at Florham. As in prior years, the proceeds from this year’s Gala will fund ongoing renovation projects for the mansion and grounds.

Ed and Ruth Hennessey were this year’s honorary co-chairpersons. Co-chairs of the dinner committee were Linda Meister, Suzy Moran and Susan Adams. Jerry Rose worked with Suzy Moran to create the stunning floral arrangements and sophisticated “tablescapes.” John Saleeby’s Orchestra provided “society swing” music for everyone to dance to or just enjoy. It was a grand and graceful evening.

This year, gala guests were greeted by a pianist and cocktails in the Great Hall. From there, they wandered out to the



From left are Pat Strasser and Arthur Vanderbilt. Photo credit Judi Whiting.



Become a Friend

Join the Friends of Florham. Participate directly in our efforts to preserve the architectural history of Florham, and support our informative program series. Your support will make a difference.

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