



## Happy Birthday Harmon!

100 hundred years ago in 1907, Col. Clifford B. Harmon, a NYC real estate developer, filed a subdivision plan for the area known in our village as "Harmon".

Col. Harmon bought the property referred to as "The Farm", from a Van Cortlandt descendant. The land was adjacent to the existing village of Croton-on-Hudson. His plan was to promote the area as a cultural community and he initially focused on selling to artists, writers, dancers, musicians, etc.

The subdivision plan shown below, although difficult to discern in detail, shows the dimensions of the property with the Croton River on the right, Old Post Rd. South at the top (formerly part of Nordica Dr.), approximate location of route 129 on the left and Croton Point Ave. leading to the NY Central Railroad

Nikko Inn on Nordica ( now a private residence) which was visited by many notable stage and government people at the time.

As part of his plan to promote the development, Col. Harmon sold some of his land to the NY Central Railroad with a condition in the deed that the station must always bear his name. He also made an agreement with NYCRR that every train would stop in Croton. Special trains were run on Sundays to bring prospective buyers to the area.

Although many noted artists and writers did move to the area, the area was still relatively undeveloped in the early 20's. With the expansion of the railroad facilities at the station that took place at that time, many railroad workers started building on the lots and residing in Harmon.

The small black spots on the plan are the buildings that were in existence in 1907. Now, 100 years later, nearly every lot in Col. Harmon's subdivision is developed with the major building taking place after WWII. This later development was mostly modest homes lived in by returning GI's. The entire Harmon area, along with the Mt. Airy and Oscawana areas, were annexed into the Village of Croton-on-Hudson in 1932.

In the last two years, the "flats area" underwent an infrastructure renewal with the installation of new water mains, valves and hydrants. Con Ed re-lined many 70 to 80 year old gas mains and many homeowners upgraded their connections to the main lines.

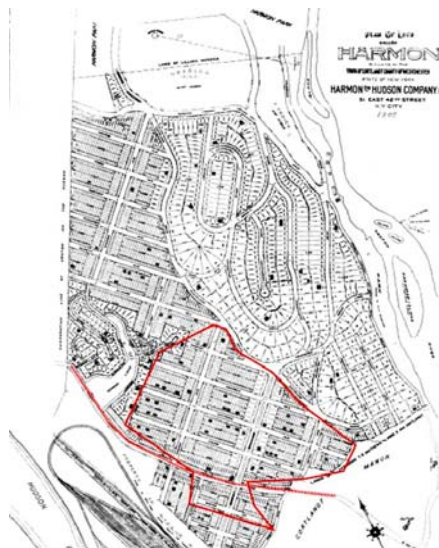
In time for Harmon's 100th birthday, work will proceed on replacing sidewalks under the Village's sidewalk program with the goal of completing 100 sidewalks. Additionally, Benedict Blvd. the gateway to Harmon, will see new pavement and curbs in 2007.

### February Calendar

- 5 & 20** Village Board Mtg.
- 13 & 27** Planning Bd. Mtg.
- 19** **President's Day**
- 7** Cons. Advisory Council
- 13** Recreation Adv. Comm.
- 14** Zoning Bd. of Appeals
- 21** Water Control Comm.
- 21** Visual Environ. Bd.
- 21** Trails Committee

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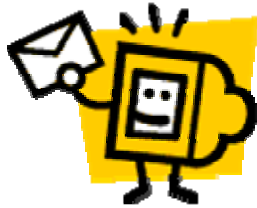
at the bottom. The area outlined within the plan was referred to as "the flats".

Water mains were laid and trees were planted along the streets. A sales office was built at the corner of Benedict Blvd. and S. Riverside which is currently occupied by a nail salon. Col. Harmon also built a 'play house' to be used for performances overlooking the Croton River (now a residence on Truesdale) and the

## **Website Gets New Look**

The Village website, [www.crotononhudson-ny.gov](http://www.crotononhudson-ny.gov), has a new visual look and has been upgraded to add new features to make it easier for residents to use and to provide more information. Quick links to important information and announcements are readily available on the Home page. Additionally, webcam pictures of the sections of the parking lot that experience flooding are available, refreshed at 15 minute intervals. Weather information localized to the station area is also available and refreshed every 15 minutes. A new red bar at the top of the Home page will provide alerts to important notices and emergencies. The website is an increasingly important source of information about the Village.

Additionally, the two email notification lists (1) for residents to receive up-to-date information notices and (2) for parking lot permit-holders to be alerted to potential flooding, have been steadily increasing with over 500 subscribers to each list. To sign up for timely information notices, click on "Subscribe to News" on the Home page. To receive parking lot notifications, click on "Train Station Parking" on the Home page and then click on "Subscribe to Parking Permits/Parking Lot Updates".



## **Day Care Allowed in Office Districts**

The Board of Trustees approved a zoning amendment that would allow day-care centers in the Limited Office O-1 and O-2 districts in the Village. Applicants would need to obtain a special permit from the Board of Trustees and would have to comply with the following conditions:

- Minimum lot size of 25,000 feet
- No more than one day-care center per lot
- Operational hours of 7am to 7 pm
- Restrictions on size and placement of recreational equipment.

Of the 19 parcels in the village that are currently zoned O-1 or O-2, only 7 meet the area requirements for such a day-care center. The Planning Board reviewed the proposed rezoning and made a positive recommendation to the Board of Trustees prior to its approval.

## **Tax Grievance Day**



Every year the Village Treasurer's office sends letters to property owners whose property assessment has changed notifying them of their new assessment. This is usually as a result of an improvement to their property.

If you received such a letter and disagree with your assessment, you may "grieve" it at a once-a-year meeting known as Grievance Day. Regardless of whether your assessment has changed this year, you may file a grievance if you feel your assessment is incorrect.

In the Village of Croton, the Board of Trustees also act as the Board of Assessors. They are required by law to meet once a year to consider the applications of property owners who feel their assessment is incorrect. This year Grievance Day is Tuesday, February 20. The Board will be available from 4 pm to 8 pm to review applications for a change in property tax assessments.

Applications for grievances must be completed and filed with the Assessor, Joe Sperber, prior to 4 pm on the day of the hearing. Applications are available in the Village Engineer's Office, as is a publication containing procedures for contesting an assessment.

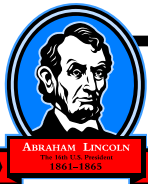
If you have questions about filing a grievance, you may call the Assessor's office at 271-4783.

## **Croton /Seniors Club**

With the holidays behind them, Croton Seniors are looking ahead to the winter months with a busy schedule including regular Friday meetings in the Community Room, exercise programs, book discussions, watercolor classes and upcoming trips. In February members will make a trip to Hunterdon Hills Playhouse to see the musical comedy "I Do, I Do".

Upcoming trips include the Cloisters Museum and New Leaf Café in March, Brooklyn Museum and Brooklyn Botanical Garden in April and "a performance of Singing in the Rain" at the Goodspeed Opera House in Had-dam, CT in May.

Membership dues of \$6/\$12 res./non-res. can be paid at any Friday meeting. Information and sign-ups for the above trips can be obtained by calling Sr. Coordinator Yvonne Beldotti at 271-5804.



### **Reminder!**

**The Village Offices will be closed Monday, February 19 for President's Day!**



## Spotlight on Paul Sarli

Paul Sarli has been a Croton Police Officer for 17 years, since 1990. Paul came to Croton after 1 1/2 years with the New Rochelle Police Department where he took his Police Academy training.

As a senior patrolman, Paul spends a typical day traveling throughout the Village in a patrol car. His familiarity with the neighborhoods and knowing what is normal helps him spot problems. He tries to go to every neighborhood during his patrols, visits the parks, and walks as much as possible especially in the Upper Village during lunch hours. He enjoys being out in the public and likes the fact that he knows so many people, who wave and interact on a friendly basis throughout his

tours of the Village.

A part of his job while on tour is to handle calls for help or reports of incidents. In these cases he may have to do interviews, collect evidence, take pictures and take supporting depositions. If the incident cannot be resolved by him, it is handed over to the detective division for further investigation.

Currently Paul is in his second year as President of the Police Benevolent Association (PBA) after seven years as its secretary. He is the department's Community Events person and is also the manager of Croton's PBA softball team which plays in area PBA benefit tournaments.

Paul grew up in Hawthorne and graduated from Westlake High School. He attended

Westchester Community College and owned his own painting business before beginning his police career.

With his wife and three children, two sons-13 and 10, and a daughter-9, he lives in Carmel. He describes them as a very sports-oriented family with Paul acting as assistant coach for his son's traveling baseball team, as well as coaching flag football and his daughter's softball team. In addition to attending all these games, they like to attend college basketball games and are fans of St. Johns, Duke and UConn.

Paul also enjoys vegetable gardening at his home.



*"In a village like Croton, I can more readily see how I can help people; it's one of the reasons I left the city."*

*Paul Sarli*

## 2006 Sidewalk Replacement Program Report

The Sidewalk replacement program continued to make good progress throughout 2006. Under the supervision of Ass't. Building Inspector Joe Sperber, DeCarvalho Landscaping Service, Inc. completed 46 applications for 5110 linear feet of sidewalk (including driveway



aprons). This is approximately one mile of new sidewalks. In addition 2591 linear feet of new curbing was installed. The total cost to the Village was \$79,832 under the program which splits the costs on a 60/40 basis with the homeowner paying 60%.

The opportunity to apply for a new sidewalk under this program will end on May 31, 2007. Applicants who complete and submit an application by that time will be eligible to obtain the 60/40 price split when the work is scheduled in the future. Work on new sidewalks under this program is expected to continue until 2010 or 2011. However, after the May 2007 deadline, 100% of replacement costs will be the homeowner's responsibility. An assessment of Village sidewalks was performed in the summer of 2006. After the May deadline, the Village will step up their enforcement program for sidewalks in poor condition and not already in the Sidewalk Program. This will include Notices of Violation as provided for in

the Village Code and could eventually lead to a lien on the property if the repairs are not made and Village has to do the repair work.

In 2007, the replacement program will focus on applicants on streets in the Harmon area which were put "on hold" during the period of the water main replacement

## Winter Break Programs

The Recreation Dept. is offering three special programs over the school Winter Break week.

**Make & Take Robotics** Tues., Feb. 20, 9am to 3 pm, grades 2-6. Make a working robot to take home; learn simple programming; enter the robot Olympics!

**Lego Star Wars & Motorized Machines** Wed., Feb 21, 9am to 3pm, grades 1-5. Lego enthusiasts have fun building your favorite adventure from a far away Star Wars galaxy! Take a Lego project home as well.

**Cake Decorating Camp** Tues.-Thurs., Feb. 20-22, 9:30am to 12:30pm, grades 3-7. This is a very focused dessert camp featuring "sculpted" cakes, layer cakes, and decorated cut-out cookies. Projects go home each day.

Registration deadline for all of the above programs is Feb. 15th. For more information call 271-3006.

February, 2007

**Published for the Residents of  
the Village of Croton-on-  
Hudson**

Gregory J. Schmidt, Mayor  
Thomas P. Brennan, Trustee  
Ann H. Gallelli, Trustee  
Charles A. Kane, Trustee  
Leo A. W. Wiegman, Trustee

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## Got a Question?



**Did you know that the same Col. Clifford Harmon who developed the Harmon area in Croton also established an internationally famous aviation award in 1926 - the Harmon Trophy?**



The Harmon Trophy is a set of three international trophies awarded annually to the world's outstanding aviator, aviatrix (female aviator), and aeronaut (balloon or dirigible). A fourth trophy, the "National Trophy" was awarded from 1926 to 1937, and a fifth trophy was created in 1969 to honor achievements in space flight.

The original awards were 24" tall bronze statues. Shown is the one for the aviator. It depicts WWI flying ace Raoul Lufbery launching a biplane. There is a different trophy for aviatrix and aeronaut.

The aviator's award is given for the most outstanding international achievements in the preceding year, with the art of flying given first consideration. The trophies were acquired by the Smithsonian Institution in 1950 from the Clifford Harmon Trust. Prior to 1950 the award was administered by the International League of Aviators. Since the late nineties, the National Aeronautic Association has awarded the trophies. The first aviator recipient in 1926 was Lt. Col. Pelletier-Doisy of France followed by Col. Charles Lindbergh of the US in 1927. Other recipients of note from the US were Wiley Post in 1933, Howard Hughes in 1936 and 1938, Maj. Charles Yeager in 1953, Gen. Curtis LeMay in 1957 and astronauts James Lovell Jr., Frank Borman, Wally Schirra and Thomas Stafford in 1965.

Lady Mary Bailey of Great Britain received the first aviatrix award in 1927. Amelia Earhart received the award in 1932 and Dr. Sally Ride (astronaut) in 1983. In the aeronaut category, Malcolm Forbes Sr. was the recipient in 1975.

Awards are not presented in all categories every year.

