The Ridgefield ENCYCLOPEDIA

A compendium of information on more than 5,500 people, places and things relating to Ridgefield, Connecticut.

by Jack Sanders

Red Petticoat Press

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About this book

As a community well into its fourth century, Ridgefield has a long and eventful past, as well as a busy present. As a journalist and historian focused on the town, I found it a challenge keeping track of countless people, places, events, and "things" relating to Ridgefield, a challenge that increased as I grew older and the town grew bigger. The number of "facts" continued to expand as my aging brain became less nimble at handling them.

So a dozen years ago, I started writing down bits and pieces of information about the town — in alphabetical order — so I'd have a place to find facts quickly. As the list got longer and longer, it occurred to me that others might also find this compendium useful. The result is the *Ridgefield Encyclopedia*.

This, the second edition, has more than 5,500 entries of information about the town, around 550 of them new. Thousands of improvements have been made to the text, including countless additions, clarifications, and corrections.

However, this has been mostly a one-person project and, even with the help of my eagle-eyed wife and adviser, Sally, the text will inevitably have typographical and other imperfections. Anyone finding an error in the *Ridgefield Encyclopedia* is encouraged to tell me about it via the email address below.

Similarly, if you feel information is missing, please pass on your suggestions for additions and improvements.

This work is constantly being expanded and revised. Electronic versions are available on the websites of the Ridgefield Historical Society and Ridgefield Library.

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NOTE: Abbreviations and source codes appearing in brackets are explained at the end of the book.

A

A&P: The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company opened a small grocery store at 378 Main Street in 1948 (long after the liquor store had arrived — *q.v.*). It became a supermarket at 46 Danbury Road in 1962 (in 2026, the Walgreens site), and closed in November 1981. [JFS, DD100]

A&P Liquor Store opened at ONS133½ Main Street Sept. 12, 1935, [P9/12/1935] and later was located at ONS86 Main Street. [1940 telephone directory]. The store became Bolling's (*q.v.*) and a new, larger store opened next to the supermarket at 46 Danbury Road, remaining in business long after the food store closed, lasting until in 2015 when, then called Best Cellars, it closed in the wake of owner A&P's bankruptcy. It is in 2025 Caraluzzi Wines and Spirits (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Aarons, Richard N., (1942-2025), a Ridgefielder for more than 50 years, was an award-winning journalist who specialized in aviation. He served for many years as the town's emergency director. He was also a town constable, fire police officer, and emergency services photographer. [L12/13/2025]

Aaron's Court is a short, dead-end road serving 9 of 10 lots at a 45-acre subdivision on the east side of Ridgebury Road. The development was obtained by Lewis and Barry Finch, father and son, in 1980. They had earlier proposed a corporate park there. The road is named for Aaron Turner (*q.v.*), circus owner, who was born nearby. [RN]

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program in Ridgefield provides free tax preparation assistance at the Ridgefield Library. There are no age or income limitations, and you do not need to be an AARP member to use the service. Season sessions are announced in January. [WU 1/31/2025]

A Better Chance (RABC), Ridgefield, is the Ridgefield chapter of a national organization that sponsors talented, motivated girls from inner-cities to attend RHS. Students live at 32 Fairview Avenue, called ABC House. The program began 1987 with six students. As of 2025, 66 RABC Scholars had graduated from RHS and "have gone on to study at leading universities and colleges. Many of our alumnae have pursued advanced degrees in medicine, technology, business & law." [JFS]

A Birdseye View was a column in *Ridgefield Press* in the 1930s and 40s, written by Duncan Smith (*q.v.*).

Abbe family, the, recently returned from years of living overseas, rented homes on West Lane and West Mountain in 1934 and 1935. They consisted of James E. Abbe, noted photographer of celebrities; his wife, Polly Shorrock Abbe, a former Ziegfeld Follies dancer, and their children Patience, Richard and John, who attended the East Ridge School (*q.v.*). The children became national celebrities when their 1936 book, *Around the World in Eleven Years*, written mostly by Patience, 11, became a bestseller. Patience (1924-2012) became a journalist, sculptor and conservationist; Richard (1926-2000), a California state judge; and John (1927-2022), a conservationist and state employment agency manager. [FBFR]

Abbot, Dr. Joel (1776-1826), a physician, was the first native Ridgefielder to be elected a U.S. Congressman. He served between 1817 and 1825 from Georgia, where he had moved in 1790s. In 1820, he was a delegate to the

convention in Philadelphia, Pa., that prepared the original edition of the *National Pharmacopoeia*. Dr. Abbot was one of 1,800 congressmen known to have held enslaved African Americans. His house in Washington, Ga., is a National Historic Landmark and Georgia state historic site (but under the name of subsequent owner, Robert Toombs, a congressman and U.S. senator). [WWW]

Abbott, David: *See* Abbott's Mill Road.

Abbott, George Irving, (1857-1932), a village businessman who was born in Irvington, N.Y., lived on and probably developed Abbott Avenue (*q.v.*). He was an early leader of the RVFD and served as a Republican state representative, 1903-05. [JFS]

Abbott, Katherine Muriel, (1894-1984), one of three women from Ridgefield to serve in World War I, was a nurse in France at Base Hospital #69, Savanay. After the war she continued to work as a nurse, living in Waterbury and later Hartford. She is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery. [Rockwell, A]

Abbott, Rev. Larmon Wooster, (1818-1900), a Methodist minister, served at Jesse Lee Methodist Church from 1870 to 1872, but lived in Ridgefield at least until 1882. He was a state representative in 1881 and a longtime school board member. He died in Waterbury, where he is buried. [JFS]

Abbott Avenue, between High Ridge and Gilbert Street, was probably named for George Abbott, a businessman who owned and probably developed the neighborhood around 1900. [RN]

Abbott's Mill Road is an 18th Century name for Florida Hill Road (*q.v.*) because it led to the grist mill of David Abbott (now about the site of Moongate — *q.v.*). The name appears in a 1745 deed. *See also* Iron foundry. [RN]

ABC: *See* A Better Chance.

Ability Beyond, a regional non-profit based in Bethel, helps persons with various disabilities and that has been very active in Ridgefield. "Our programs empower individuals, no matter their ability, to live with independence, work with dignity and thrive in their communities," says their website. It was formerly known as DATAHR, the Danbury Association To Aid the Handicapped and Retarded. [JFS]

Ables, Kay, (ca.1936-2025), a Ridgefielder since 1968, was named town historian in 2006, succeeding Richard E. Venus (*q.v.*). Long active in the community, including the Ridgefield Woman's Club, she had been a founder of RUOK (*q.v.*). She had worked for years at the Keeler Tavern, cataloguing and preserving Joseph Hartmann (*q.v.*) photographs, and was one of the chief contributors to the book, *A View from the Inn,* annotated and illustrated excerpts from the 19th Century diaries of Anna Resseguie, daughter of the Keeler Tavern's innkeeper. She became active in the Ridgefield Archives Committee, predecessor of the Ridgefield Historical Society, which began preserving local historical records and sought a place to safely store them. She promoted efforts to preserve, move and use the 18th Century David Scott House as the headquarters for the new historical society, of which she was the first vice president. As town historian she appeared at countless community meetings and events, promoting the society and local history, and preservation of significant structures and records. She received the Rotary Citizen of the Year in 2005 and the Ridgefield Old Timers' Community Service Award in 2003. [JFS]

Ablon, Ralph E., (1916-2021), lived in the late 20th Century at 306 Branchville

Road in the former Biddle estate called Woodlands. The NYT called him "an improbable corporate matchmaker who expanded a family scrap metal company into a pioneering conglomerate that eventually thrived by investing in the growing service economy." [NYT 12/3/2021] He and his wife Sylvia bought the 14.2 acre estate in 1964. [JFS, DD206]

About Ridgefield: What We Were - What We Are, is an 80-page, comprehensive, illustrated report on many facets of Ridgefield, include architecture, neighborhoods, history, landmarks, natural resources, cultural and religious centers, open spaces, cemeteries. Compiled by Madeleine Corbin, it was produced as a soft-cover book in 2002 by the Ridgefield Design Council (*q.v.*) and has an extensive index. [JFS]

Ackworth Cottage was the home of Mary Linda Bradley (*q.v.*), ONS33 West Mountain Road (now 143?). Ackworth was the Yorkshire home of Rev. Thomas Bradley, chaplain to Charles I, and an ancestor of the Connecticut Bradleys. [JFS]

Acocella, Charles, (-1944), of Ridgefield was a first lieutenant in the Army during World War II who was killed in action at Leyte, the Philippines, in December 1944. He was posthumously awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, and is memorialized at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial. [JFS]

Acorn Cottage was the name Herschel Brickell (*q.v.*) used for his home at 569 Branchville Road. The house was torn down in December 2021, but the garage in which he died by suicide is still there. [WWW, JFS]

Acorn Place, a 1,200-foot, dead-end road off lower Silver Spring Road, was approved in 1976 and developed by William Hornibrook. Particularly toward its western end, it does indeed have oaks that produce many acorns. [RN]

Acorn Press was the name of the parent company for *The Ridgefield Press* (*q.v.*) and other weekly newspapers from 1938 until 1997, when the company merged with Hersam Publications of New Canaan to become Hersam Acorn Newspapers, then HAN Network. The company motto was "Tall oaks from little acorns grow." The headquarters were at 16 Bailey Avenue. The company was purchased November 2018 by Hearst Media; all Ridgefield operations closed by end of 2018. [JFS]

Acoustic Celebration, an affordable Sunday afternoon singer/songwriter series since 2002, has been produced by Barbara Manners (*q.v.*) at various venues, recently at St. Stephen's North Hall. [JFS]

Acre Lane off Wilton Road West was developed around 1964 by brothers Frank, John, and Robert Symone as Parkview Estates. The size of the 23 one-acre lots inspired name. [RN]

ACT of Connecticut, founded in 2018 and led by Katie Diamond, Daniel C. Levine, and Bryan Perri, presents limited engagement runs of well-known Broadway musicals and plays, as well as world-premiere productions by the next generation of writers and composers. Normally four shows per season are produced, with each featuring Broadway professionals and Fairfield and Westchester County talent. ACT also offers youth education classes, camps, workshops, and a conservatory program for high school students. In 2017, the town leased the former Schlumberger (*q.v.*) auditorium to ACT, which began using it as its theater in May 2018. Its first production was Mamma Mia! [JFS]

Actors who've lived in Ridgefield**:** David Cassidy, Crocker family, James

DePaiva, Kay Young Eason, Miles Eason, Chris Elliott, Gene Ellis, Jessica and Santino Fontana, Tom Gilroy, Giancarlo Esposito, Ellen Hanley, Glynis Johns, Don McKay, Gerry Matthews, Douglass Montgomery, Amber Skye Noyes, Olaf Olsen, Sally Ann Reid, Cyril Ritchard, Grant Rosenmeyer, Misty Rowe, Hilda Spong, Pat Stanley, Erland van Lidth de Jeude, Robert Vaughn, Tonja Walker, Mary Wray. (*q.v. each*). [WWW]

Adam Broderick Salon and Spa was established in 1986 at 89 Danbury Road by Broderick, a well-known Manhattan colorist. His salon had earlier been in the south end of the Bissell Pharmacy building on Governor Street. [JFS]

Adamowicz, Tony, (1941-2016) of 148½ Main Street won the outstanding young driver of the year award from the Sports Car Club of America in 1969 and was a leading sports car racer in the 1970s. He began his career with the US Army and worked as a communications staffer at the White House during the late 1950s and 1960s. He continued to race until his death at the age of 75 from brain cancer. [JFS, P2/27/1969]

Adams, Dr. Daniel L. (1814-1899), a physician known as "Doc Adams," has been called the "father of baseball" because he set down on paper many of the rules by which modern game is played. A member of the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club in New York City, he served six times as its president. The 1835 Yale graduate lived from 1865 to 1888, in the old Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*) house, now Ballard Park (*q.v.*). He was the first president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank (*q.v.*), serving from 1871 to 1879, and, in 1880, the first Ridgefield Library president. A Republican, he was state representative in 1870. He died in New Haven where he was buried. [WWW, RSB21]

Adams and Keeler: A real estate and insurance firm established 1892 by Russel R. Keeler or son William R. Keeler, who were also lumber dealers and had a livery stable. In 1941 it became Keeler and Durant (*q.v.*), a real estate and insurance firm. Their large livery stable on southern Main Street burned down Oct. 15, 1912. Some 40 horses and many carriages were rescued from the fire. [RT]

Adams Road, between Lincoln Lane and Jefferson Drive at Washington Park Estates off Branchville Road, was named for second president, John Adams, at the suggestion of Selectman Paul J. Morganti (*q.v.*). It was developed by Bert Ison and became a town road in 1956. [RN]

Addessi Center, the former Gaeta Shopping Center (*q.v.*) at 421-23 Main Street, was purchased by the Addessi family in 1984. It includes the former Odd Fellows Hall, now chiefly occupied by the Toy Chest (*q.v.*).

Addessi Jewelry Store opened in 1966 at 387 Main Street in a spot that had for four decades housed the Ridgefield Post Office. The business, then owned by Rick and Donna Addessi, was later taken over by son Wayne Addessi. [P5/1966]

Addessi Square consists of the two, matching, brick buildings of stores and offices, originally called Scott Block (*q.v.*), from 387-395 Main Street, owned by the Addessi family whose jewelry store (*q.v.*) is one of the shops in the block. [JFS]

Address numbers, street: *See* Renumbering.

Adler, Larry, (1914-2001), a harmonica virtuoso who gave concerts around the world and made many recordings, lived at the James Waterman Wise house on Pumping Station Road in early 1950s. He also wrote film scores including for "High Wind in Jamaica" and "Genevieve"; the latter,

nominated for an Academy Award, was probably written here. He was accused of supporting communism, which he denied. Discouraged by the communist witch hunt, he moved to England in 1952. [WWW]

A Dying Fall was a murder mystery (Lippincott, 1973) by Hildegarde Dolson (*q.v.*) in which the victim supposedly slips on a step in a contemporary art museum's sculpture garden, falls and is mortally impaled upon a sharp work of art. Dolson, who lived in Lewisboro and married fellow mystery writer, Richard Lockridge (*q.v.*), wrote several mysteries set in a town modeled after Ridgefield. [JFS]

Affordable Housing Committee works with organizations and individuals to create more affordable housing in Ridgefield, and to help people find the housing they need. It reports to the Board of Selectpersons, which appoints its members. [RW]

Afghanistan War Memorial: *See* Persian Gulf War Monument.

African Americans: The first documented African American living in Ridgefield was Mingo (*q.v.*), an enslaved man who ran away from his owner, Timothy Keeler, in 1734, but there were probably enslaved Blacks before him. The first free Black to own land here was Michael Dimorat, who bought a lot on West Lane in 1736 and apparently built a house there. He was soon followed by Robert and Samuel Jacklin, who owned sizable farms; two of Robert's sons fought in the Revolution. At least seven Black men from Ridgefield served in the Revolution. At least 83 African Americans lived in town in the 18th Century, of which 53 men, women and children were enslaved. Two African Americans, Edward and Betsey Armstrong (*q.v.*) operated an Underground Railroad station in the first half of the 19th Century in Ridgebury. Four Blacks — two of them Armstrong grandchildren who grew up at the station — served in the Civil War. Ridgefield's Black population through its first three centuries has been around 1% or less of the total population. It was the greatest (2.3%) in 1860. Black men in the 18th and early 19th Centuries were prevented by law from holding office (or voting), but that ban vanished in 1870 with the passage of the 15th Amendment; the following year, Thomas F. Brown and Hart Stiles, were elected town haywards (*q.v.*). It was not until the 1970s that an African-American — Dr. Clifford V. Smith (*q.v.*) — was elected to a major office, in this case, the Board of Education. *See also* NAACP, A Better Chance.[UNM]

Age: Ridgefielders median age in 2017 was 44 compared to 40 in the state and nation. 33% of the residents were 45 to 64 while 5 to 14 was the second largest group, 20%. [RP1] *See also* Life expectancy, oldest resident.

Age of Video, a store with movie rentals, TVs, video recorders, etc., opened Oct. 10, 1980, at Girolametti Court, 19 Danbury Road. [P10/9/1980] *See also* New Age of Video.

Aging, Commission on, is an appointed town agency that promotes and oversees programs for senior citizen. It publishes the *Ridgefield Senior Central* (*q.v.*), a guidebook for senior services. [JFS]

Airdrifts Farm was the name of a spread on both sides of Ridgebury Road, just south of Regan Road, owned by Ellis B. and Mary McLaury in the 1930s. [RGE]

Airplane crashes: *See* plane crashes.

Airplane spotting posts were maintained from December 1941 into 1945 and again during the Korean conflict, designed to spot and report enemy

aircraft in the days before long-range radar became extensive and effective. The first, briefly used post was at Wadsworth Lewis's estate, Taghkanick (*q.v.*), but was soon permanently established on East Ridge east of the East Ridge School (*q.v.*), using a small octagonal office that had once been a bathhouse on the F.E. Lewis estate — *see* Upagenstit. Eventually a viewing tower was built next to the office. Between Dec. 7, 1941, and May 29, 1944, during World War II, some 200 men, women and children staffed the airplane spotting post, reporting more than 7,000 aircraft to military officials. After the war, the tower was removed as a safety hazard, but the warming hut remained. However, a new tower was erected for the Korean war. It was torn down around 1971. The hut was moved to Bailey Avenue, where it was standing in 2026. [P8/23/1945, JFS, RP]

Airport noise: The "North Salem-North Ridgefield Environmental Improvement Association" filed in 1983 a class-action lawsuit against Danbury Airport, seeking $15 million in damages and a reduction of aircraft noise over their homes. The effort failed to compensate, but efforts to reduce noise, especially on take-off, were initiated. [P9/22/1983]

A. J. Carnall Inc., an insurance and real estate office, was established in 1922 by Thaddeus Crane and in 1930 was taken over and renamed by Arthur J. Carnall (*q.v.*). It became Ridgefield's largest insurance business. It merged with Keeler and Durant Inc. (*q.v.*) in 1987. Originally located at ONS123 Main Street, it moved to the corner of Main and Catoonah Streets around 1965. In the 1990s the business became Fairfield County Bank Insurance Services (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Alcohol: Ridgefield has had a long love-hate relationship with alcoholic beverages. During the 18th Century and the first two-thirds of the 19th Century, state laws guided the establishment and regulation of taverns and the like. The selectmen and constables were the local regulators, but they pretty much had to allow the sales of alcoholic beverages. Ridgefield had a tavern on Main Street as early as 1720, probably operated by the Smith family and, according to the Rev. Samuel Goodrich, had at one point in the 18th Century, 10 taverns. In 1800, it had only five. The town also had several distilling operations (*see* Still Road, Hezekiah Scott), probably mostly making apple brandy. "Hard" apple cider was commonly made by most households; cider mills around town helped farmers produce the liquid for cider from apples. By the mid-1800s, temperance movements were gaining popularity in town. In 1872, the General Assembly passed a law, allowing a town meeting to vote to ban the licensing of outlets to sell alcoholic beverages. Starting that year and for the next 40 years, Ridgefield had many votes on the question, but the temperance supporters usually won, and Ridgefield was a dry town for most of the years until Oct. 7, 1912 when alcohol sales were finally permitted, only to cease in 1920 with the arrival of Prohibition (*q.v.*). Since Prohibition ended in late 1933, Ridgefield has never banned alcohol sales. In pre-Covid 2020, eight stores and more than 30 restaurants sold hard alcohol (several outlets like Stop & Shop could sell beer only). The town even has a Nod Hill brewery (*q.v.*). *See also* Prohibition, Package stores, Sons of Temperance. [JFS]

Aldrich, Lawrence "Larry," (1906-2001), founder of a women's fashion company in NYC in 1927, moved to Nod Road in 1939. He created a museum, then Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art and now the Aldrich

Contemporary Art Museum (*q.v.*) in 1964, located then in the "Old Hundred" (*q.v.*) building, 258 Main Street. He donated Aldrich Park (*q.v*.) in 1958. His wife, **Winifred Payne Aldrich** (1914-2003), an artist, was museum co-founder. [WWW; Aldrich discussed his love of art in P1/7/1965]

Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum was founded in 1964 in the "Old Hundred" (*q.v.*) at 258 Main Street by Lawrence Aldrich (*q.v.*), New York City designer of women's clothing. Expanded several times in subsequent years, it has become a major venue for showing contemporary art in America. The museum does not maintain a collection of its own. The modern exhibition building was opened in 2004; the administrative offices in front, once the "Old Hundred," had previously been the museum's exhibition venue. [JFS]

Aldrich Park, totaling 37 acres, was donated in several pieces by Lawrence Aldrich, founder of the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (*q.v.*). The first grant was in May 1958, in honor of the town's 250th anniversary; after more gifts were made during 1960s and early 70s, his contributions totaled 37 acres. With additional acquisitions, the park is now 65 acres. The park is the site of one of the earliest Little League fields in Ridgefield. [RN]

Alexander Hamilton High School, Ridgefield's first public secondary school, opened in 1915 in the four-room, former Center School (*q.v.*) on Bailey Avenue (the site is now a municipal parking lot). The first graduation was in 1917. The high school moved in 1926 to East Ridge School after a 1925 remodeling of what was originally Benjamin Franklin Grammar School (*q.v.*), and the "Alexander Hamilton" was changed to "Ridgefield." The Bailey Avenue building became the Garden School for primary grades. [SD]

Alfredo, Anthony Francis, (1999-), a Ridgefield native, is an American professional stock car racing driver. He competes full-time in the NASCAR Xfinity Series, driving for Our Motorsports and part-time in the NASCAR Cup Series, driving for Beard Motorsports. [W]

Alibi, The, was a restaurant on Route 7, a little north of Topstone Road, that was destroyed by a fire in January 1976.

Alkiewicz, Andrzej, (1924-2000), a native of Poland and WW2 resistance fighter who spent time in concentration camps, was president of the Wall Street brokerage, Hoppin Watson Inc., from 1971-76. In 1983 he founded Perception International, a consulting firm on business strategies with many leading clients, including the U.S. government. He lived on West Mountain Road for 25 years. [JFS, DD273]

All for Kids, a preschool from 2003 to 2013, was founded by Nan Howkins (*q.v.*).

All That Glitters was a store selling "contemporary jewelry" at 409 Main Street. Most pieces were produced in Armonk, NY, by owner Nancy Galli and her husband, Patrick. The store opened in November 1980, but was gone by 1983. [JFS]

Allan, Edwin B., (1929-2012), was co-owner of Allans' Men's Store *(q.v*.), from 1955 to 1981, and was later a commercial real estate agent. Active in community, he was clerk of the Board of Finance for 17 years, a member of Parking Authority, a director of Habitat for Humanity and Ridgefield Bank, served on the Boards of the Ridgefield Cemetery Association, Branchville Fresh Air Fund, Boys and Girls Club, Wadsworth R. Lewis Fund, Family Y, and District Nursing Association, and was one of the original 16 members of the Chamber of Commerce. He was Rotary Citizen of Year (*q.v.*) in 2006. [WWW]

Allans' Men's Store was the name employed by brothers **Edwin B. Allan** (*q.v.*) and **Donald G. Allan** (1930-2014) after they purchased former Paterson's Clothing Store in 1955, eventually relocating it to 440 Main Street. They retired in 1981. [P1/29/1981]

Allee, Dr. William Hanford (1872-1929), a native of New York, was a physician and advocate for improved schools in Ridgefield. He was a leader in the effort to build the consolidated Benjamin Franklin Elementary School (*q.v.*) and establish Alexander Hamilton High School (*q.v.*), and supported woman suffrage. He lived at 304 Main Street from 1906 until his death, but practiced in Wilton and is buried there. He was married to **Laura Curie Allee** (later **Shields** — *q.v.*).

Allen, Barnabas, (1792-1881), born in Ridgebury, son of Stephen (*q.v.*), a Revolutionary War veteran, was president of the Pahquioque Bank of Danbury. [RIRA]

Allen, James Lane, (1849-1925), a prolific Kentucky-born novelist at the turn of the 20th Century, supposedly once lived here, says Bedini, but no record of that has been yet found. [RIR]

Allen, Mike, produced between September 2021 and November 2025 221 podcasts called "Amazing Tales" on little known aspects of Connecticut history. A former radio journalist and public relations expert, he lived for a while at Casagmo but now lives in Danbury. [JFS]

Allen, Steven or Stephen, (1766-1852), a Ridgebury farmer, was a private at age 15 in the Connecticut Continental militia in 1781. He helped escort home American prisoners released by the British in a 1781 exchange. He is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. His wife was named **Weighty Allen**! [JW]

Allen, William I., (1933-2001), was a local insurance businessman. He was an early member of Connecticut Fifth Regiment, the town Civil Preparedness director for five years. He was a founder of town's Independent Party in 1990s and ran for first selectman as an Independent in 1993. His hobbies included owning DUKW amphibious vehicles from WW2 — he threatened to sue town in 1980, after two of his "ducks," stored at the town dump, were chopped up and hauled away [P9/11/1980, WWW]

Allen, William W., (1919-93), was popular athletic director at RHS, from 1950s until his retirement in 1979. He started as a physical education and math teacher in 1947. Known as "Coach Allen," he led the baseball team to five straight Fairfield County Class B League titles in the 1960s — the 1966 team went undefeated, winning 15 straight games. He also coached football and basketball, and was a founder of Little League in Ridgefield. He retired to Rhode Island. [WWW]

Alligator Farm was the estate of Arthur and Teddy Edelman (*q.v.*) at 129 Spring Valley Road, so called because the Edelmans were involved in the reptile leather business. The house was built 1969 around a dismantled barn from the old Stonecrest (*q.v.*) estate on North Street. [WWW]

Almost A King, a 1917 movie starring Evelyn Greeley, had scenes shot in Ridgefield by W.A. Brady World Film Company. One scene involved a car being blown up. *See also* Movies.

Aloha was the name given to the brick mansion at Peaceable Street and High Ridge by owner Amy Low Huntington in the 1920s. She had earlier used this name for her rented estate on West Lane in Lewisboro. [DD192]

Alpert, Norman, (1925-1981), was founder of Alpex Computer Corp. and held

patents on such devices as point-of-sales systems, He was also instrumental in creating computerized TV games. Around 1980, he developed a small computer designed to "communicate over telephone lines and to transmit information to a screen or printer," said NYT. He lived on Old West Mountain Road from 1972 until his death from suicide. [JFS]

Alternative High School, the, familiarly known as the "A-School," was established in 1995 by RHS teacher Joan Voss (*q.v.*), with strong backing from Paul Hazel, systemwide personnel director, and had its first graduation in 1996. It has an enrollment of 20 students, who sign an agreement to abide by its rules, and graduates four to five students a year. They are served by about five teachers (most also teach at RHS); Voss was principal and teacher until retiring in 2010. Long located behind Ballard Park in an old Ballard estate outbuilding, the school "provides services to students requiring increased educational, social, and emotional supports in a small class setting. In addition to academic instruction, the program provides individual and group counseling in a safe and structured environment to encourage students to develop an enthusiasm for lifelong learning and the pursuit of post-high school opportunities." Voters in 2025 approved erecting a new school on the former Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*) property, just east of the Bark Park. It is the first new school in town since 1915 to bear a pitched roof instead of a flat roof. [JFS, rhs.ridgefield.org]

Altieri, Donald Bruce, (1957-2011), RHS 1975, was a restaurateur involved in many eateries around the turn of the 21st Century. He started his first restaurant, The Olde York Pub, in Ridgefield, at age 18. Later he was involved with The Bushwacker, The Brickyard Cafe and Uncle Harry's, all in Danbury, then Bully's Restaurant and Steakhouse in Ridgefield, and Jilly's Italian Restaurant on Martha's Vineyard. "These are just a few of the more successful and memorable restaurants he opened over the past 35 years," his family said at his death. [P6/23/2011]

Altnacraig, (also Altna Craig and Altna-Craig), a mansion at 55 High Ridge, was built in 1908-09 by Alonzo Barton Hepburn (*q.v.*) and his wife, Emily Eaton Hepburn (*q.v.*). In the 1950s it became a nursing home. After the home closed and while it was on the real estate market, it burned down in a suspicious 1994 fire. *See also* Breezy Nook (*q.v.*). [WWW, DD156ff]

Altopp, Rev. Whitney, DMin, became St. Stephen's Church's 32nd rector in July 2012. The daughter of a Methodist minister, she began service in the Episcopal church in youth ministry in 1994 and was ordained to the priesthood in 2003. She served congregations in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania before coming to Ridgefield with her husband, Michael, and their four children. [JFS]

Alvord, Dr. Elisha, an early Ridgefield physician, was one of 22 people who died "of a prevailing fever" between Feb. 14, 1812, and Feb. 14, 1813. [RidgefieldBirths Marriages Deaths, Vol. 2, 1745-1852, p. 216]

Amateur Dramatic Club of Ridgefield was staging productions in the Town Hall in the 1870s. [P7/16/1879]

Amateur radio: *see* Ham radio.

Amatuzzi, Giacomo "John" (-1983)**, George** (1946-2021), and **Gigi** (-2023), brothers and natives of Italy, came to the U.S. in 1958 and began working in restaurants around Mamaroneck, NY. They became partners with Joseph Gigliotti in Roma Pizzeria (*q.v.*) in 1967 and soon took it over, making it one

of the most popular and praised restaurants in Ridgefield history, famous for donating pizzas to community organizations, sports teams, honor roll students, and others. They bought the "Telephone Building" (*q.v.*) that quartered the pizzeria, and renovated it. George's son **Dr. George Amatuzzi** has his optometry practice there. The family has received many community service awards. [JFS]

Amatuzzi Block: *See above and* Biglow Block, Pizza Block, Telephone Building.

Ambling Along Old Main Street, a 2024 book, has more than 100 images in color, most from old postcards, that show what the village of Ridgefield was like in the early 20th Century. It's by Jack Sanders, indexed and produced by Red Petticoat Press in hardcover and softcover. [JFS]

Ambrose, Patrick, who lived in Ridgebury, served in the Connecticut Line from Jan. 1, 1781 to December 1783. [JW]

Ambulance service, operated by the Ridgefield Fire Department (*q.v.*), began in 1938, taking its first passenger to the hospital Jan. 4 (Aldo Casagrande, injured in a fall on the ice). The service was free to townspeople and operated by volunteer firefighters; the ambulance was acquired by the fire department, which raised $2,000 by public subscription to buy it. By the end of the year, 54 ambulance calls were received. [P1/6/1938] Today at least two ambulances are on duty 24/7, staffed by paramedics. (*q.v.*)

Amcam Farm was the name of Harold S. Goldsmith's (*q.v.*) dairy cattle operation on Bennett's Farm Road around Lake Windwing area in the 1940s and 50s. [JFS]

American Legion, Everett Ray Seymour Post 78, was founded Aug. 20, 1920, by WW1 veterans. Its name recalls the first Ridgefielder to die in combat in WW1. One of its first projects was to erect the War Memorial on Main Street at the head of Branchville Road in 1925; it lists the names of all service people from Ridgefield in all wars through WW1. Aside from providing support for local veterans, the legion organizes the Memorial Day Parades, has sponsored military band concerts, conducts Veterans Day ceremonies, sends honor guards to the funerals of area veterans, and has sponsored two local baseball teams for older teenagers. Early meetings were on the top floor of the Martin Block (*q.v.*), but in 1939, the Legion began leasing the old Titicus Schoolhouse (*q.v.*) from the town as a legion hall. The organization has had as many as 151 members. [JFS, RPJ4-16]

American Legion Auxiliary was organized in 1923 for the wives of American Legion (*q.v.*) members and has served as a supporter of Legion activities and other community service. [JFS]

American Mercury, The, a popular magazine founded by H.L. Mencken, published major authors and thinkers of the 1920s and 30s. It moved its offices to 360 Main Street in 1936, [P9/1936], and was still publishing there in 1938. Paul Palmer (*q.v.*) of Wilton Road East was editor and publisher in 1937 and Gordon Carroll (*q.v.*), also of Ridgefield, was managing editor. [JFS, P9/25/1941]

American Women's Voluntary Services was a WW2 organization that provided a "motor corps" of drivers for essential war-related services locally and regionally, including moving military personnel, and helped with various war support missions. In 1958, it donated the Town Clock (*q.v.*) on Main Street, using funds left over from fund-raising collections during the war. It had its headquarters on Catoonah Street [P12/11/1941].

Amici's was a restaurant at 37 Ethan Allen Highway in Branchville in the 1990s. where Luigi's (*q.v.*), Cooper Tavern *(q.v.*), and Americo's, *et al.*, had been.

Anascote was the name Richard A. Jackson (*q.v.*) used for his estate, the former King homestead, at Main Street and King Lane. While *anascote* is a kind of Spanish fabric, here the word is a portmanteau pun on the name of his wife, Anna Scott. [RN]

Anchorage, The, was the West Lane home in the 1920s and 30s of Molly and Edward S. Beach (*q.v*.).

Ancient Mariner, a restaurant in CVS shopping center, was opened in 1974 by Tom Quinn (*q.v.*) and Gerald Geraerdts. Jessica Wilmot started working there in 1978; in 1992, she bought the place [P4/12/2007], retiring in 2025 when it was acquired by veteran restaurateur Shannon Sturz. "The Mariner" is, in 2026, the oldest continuously operated restaurant that has stayed in the same location. (Venice, *q.v.,* is two years older, but began is a different spot at Copps Hill Plaza.) [JFS]

Ancona, Joseph, (1890-1958), a native of Italy, came to the U.S. in 1912. He served in US Army in WW1 and was gassed by the Germans; he earned a Purple Heart. Around 1920, he established a grocery and general store in Branchville that grew into Ancona's Market (*q.v.*). He opened Joe's Package Store (*q.v*.) in 1933. He was a founder of the Branchville Civic Association. His sons Nazzareno, John and Joseph took over businesses. [WWW]

Ancona's Market was established in 1920 by Joseph Ancona (*q.v.*) along Route 7, Ethan Allen Highway, in Branchville. A new 20,000-square-foot store opened July 14, 1980, at 720 Branchville Road, operated by sons Joe and John Ancona. The market closed in January 2014 and most of its space became a CVS. [JFS]

Ancona's Wines and Liquors, is, in 2025, the oldest Ridgefield business owned by the same family. The name was a successor to Joe's Package Store (*q.v.)*, which was founded by Joseph Ancona (*q.v.*) after Prohibition ended. Its current name began being used when an enlarged store opened August 1962 at 49 Ethan Allen Highway. The store moved to new location next to Ancona's Market (*q.v.*) at 720 Branchville Road in 1980. Ancona's opened a Wilton store in 2009, and a Ridgefield center store in 2018. After Joseph died, his son Nazzareno "Nano" Ancona (1931-2004) took over the business. After Nano's death, his son Mitchell assumed ownership. [JFS]

Anderson, Harry, (1906-1996), was an American artist and illustrator who worked for *Saturday Evening Post, Redbook, Collier's Cosmopolitan, Good Housekeeping,* and *Ladies' Home Journal*. He was also known for religious art, often as book illustrations. He lived on Old Branchville Road from 1950s until his death. [WWW]

Anderson, Henry Burrall, (1863-1938), a native of NYC, was Yale/Harvard educated NY industrial lawyer. He built his first home here on West Lane [P7/3/1902], which later became the Upagenstit estate. He then built a new mansion on West Mountain, but left it after wife died in 1903. He bought some 3,000 acres on West Mountain, including 600 in Ridgefield and the rest in North Salem and Lewisboro, NY, hoping to sell sites for fancy estates and also to develop the Port of Missing Men (*q.v*.) resort in partnership with Ogden Mills. Eldridge N. Bailey (*q.v*.), later a first selectman, was his superintendent. He also established the Ridgefield Water Supply Company (*q.v.*). He was in the Navy in World War I, and

loaned his yacht for Naval service. [WWW; DD69, 134, 135, 136]

Anderson, Jesse Ebert "Bert," (1879-1939), the town's night constable, was the second Ridgefield policeman to die while on duty. He was killed Oct. 9, 1939, when his service revolver discharged after he accidentally dropped the gun in the town hall. *See also* John Palmer. [WWW]

Anderson's Tea House Road, another name for Old Sib Road, was used informally in 1920s and 30s, because the road led to H.B. Anderson's Port of Missing Men resort restaurant (*q.v.*). When Prohibition banned alcohol sales, the restaurant picked up this name or just "Tea House." It appears on a 1928 property map. [RN]

Andrews, Charles Sperry, (1917-2005), and **Andrews, Doris Bass,** (1920-2003), both artists, met at the Art Students League in NYC and were married for 55 years. He, known as Sperry, was native of NYC who served in Army munitions in WW2 and landed at Normandy; she, a native of Lexington, KY, served in Army Corps of Engineers in WW2 as a telegraph operator. They lived here first at the former Book Barn (*q.v.*) on Route 33, arriving in 1948. In 1957, they bought the farm of sculptor Mahonri Young (*q.v.*) that had earlier belonged to artist J. Alden Weir (*q.v.)* on Nod Hill Road. In the late 1970s they began efforts to preserve the farm and with help of The Nature Conservancy, and others, got Congress in 1990 to create Weir Farm National Historic Site — now park (q.v.) — there. [WWW]

Andriani, Renee Williams, who grew up in Ridgefield, is an illustrator of books, especially for children, who has also had a career creating Hallmark greeting cards. Her work has been published by Scholastic, Dutton Children's Books, Simon & Schuster, Puffin Books, MB Publishing, HarperCollins, Dial Books, and Little, Brown & Company. [JFS]

Andrieni, Joseph Manuel, (1852-1932), a native of Spain, was a banker, writer and printmaker whose work is in major collections such as the British Museum. He married Mary Shipman McHarg, a great grand-daughter of Joshua King (*q.v.*), and seems to have lived in the Ridgebury area in the 1890s. He wrote *J. Winifred Spenceley. His Etchings and Engravings in the Form of Book Plates,* New York, 1910 and his collection of Spenceley works is now at Yale University. He also wrote about Cuban postage stamps and acted as an anonymous private publisher. He was a benefactor of the North Ridgefield Schoolhouse in the 1890s. [NB11/9/1894, SD]

Andrus, Lynn, who moved to Ridgewood Road in 1976, was a potter and elementary school teacher. She was married to Robert Andrus. They had left town by the mid-1980s. In 2024, she was living in North Carolina where her daughter, Caron, also a potter, operates Blue Barn Studios. [JFS]

Anglican Church: *See* St. Stephen's Church *and* Ridgebury Episcopal Church.

Animal Control Officer is the title of what was long called a dog warden. The job has expanded to include occasionally dealing with wild animals or pets that are not dogs. The "ACO" is a civilian working under the Ridgefield Police Department's control.

Animals: *See* under Livestock, Dogs, Mammals, or individual species names.

Ann Stephen's, a women's clothing store, was opened Oct. 11, 1972, in Copps Hill Plaza by 26-year-old Stephen Zemo (*q.v.*), who later became a longtime town selectman and a major commercial developer in Ridgefield. His brother Don, 28, opened Zemo's Men's Store at same time. [JFS]

Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Auditorium is housed in the Diamond

Properties Performing Arts Center, 36 Old Quarry Road. The theater features an "intimate viewing environment," with 182 seats and a turntable (rotating) stage, the only stage of this type in the region. It is the venue for ACT of CT (*q.v.*), a contemporary theater company. [JFS]

Annesi, Adele, a Ridgefield native, is a writer and teacher of writing, who worked for *The Ridgefield Press* and is the author of the 2023 novel, *What She Takes Away* (Via Folios).

Annual Town Meeting (ATM): *See under* Town Meeting.

Antennas: The highest structure in Ridgefield is probably the commercial AM radio antenna at Great Swamp, behind the town garage/transfer station/ school bus depot, which is 180 feet tall. The most visible is the 141-foot-tall monopole alongside the police station at 76 East Ridge Road, which carries antennas for various police, fire and other public services as well as cell phone providers. Ridgefield does not regulate the height of amateur radio antennas. However, it has rejected potentially unsightly commercial antennas such as in 1967 when the Zoning Board of Appeals turned down AT&T's request to build a 162-foot-high microwave tower on Peaceable Ridge, which would have been visible over a wide area of western Ridgefield. (*See also* Cell towers.)

Antique car shows were sponsored annually by the Lions Club from 1951 to the 1980s, usually in Veterans Park, and were overseen by the area chapter of the Horseless Carriage Club of America. [JFS]

Antiques Flea Market was a longtime fundraiser for the Community Center (*q.v.*), usually in early June. It took place on Veterans Park Field for many years but 1982 heavy rains led to deep ruts and much damage to the turf [P6/10/1982]. When town refurbished fields and installed underground irrigation, cars were banned from the field and sale was moved to lawns around the center grounds, and inside the center. The sale was discontinued in the 2010s.[JFS]

Anyan, Sally Bishop, (1943-2025) was a popular music teacher, hired in the fall of 1966. Her husband, **Joel**, was also a local musician. She started at Scotland School and later worked at Veterans Park. She retired in 2005 after 38 years of teaching music in Ridgefield. [RT]

Aokeets, also Aokeels or Aokkeels, was an American Indian name for Little Pond, on the west side of Route 7 south of Route 35 intersection. It's said to mean "hornet place" or possibly "adversary's place," in the Siwanoy language, suggesting an ancient battle may have occurred here. The word appears in the 1708 deed from the natives to the first settlers. [RN]

Apartments: REV maintains that the very first free-standing, dedicated apartment building in town was 4 Barry Avenue. It had four apartments, and was owned early in the 20th Century by Morris Gottlieb (*q.v.*). [DD239] However, there were certainly many tenement and apartment operations in the 19th Century, including one in the building that became the Bailey Inn (*q.v.*). The first large-scale apartment development was Ridgefield Arms (*q.v*), the first 45 units of which opened in November 1964, developed by Nicholas R. DiNapoli Sr. *See also* Condominiums, Casagmo, Fox Hill Village, Suburban Action Institute..

Apgar, Allen Stoddard, (1841-1905), came here in 1900 at the recommendation of his friend, Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*), and built Stonecrest (*q.v.*) mansion and estate on North Street. His house's design was similar to

Lounsbury's Grovelawn (*q.v.*). He was a Manhattan bank executive, and had served in the Civil War. His widow moved away in 1907. [JFS]

Appalachia Service Project, founded in 1984 by Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church, sends volunteers each spring to help poor families with such projects as home repairs, maintenance, and accessibility — "to make local folks' homes warmer, safer and drier. To prepare for the trip, volunteers attend monthly orientation meetings from February to June. In 1984, there were 11 volunteers on the week-long trip; in 2024, there were 268 volunteers. In its first 40 years, the non-sectarian program has provided 4,750 volunteer weeks of service. [JFS, jesseleechurch.com]

Aquarion is a new name for the old Bridgeport Hydraulic Company (*q.v.*). The company has taken over many small private operations and community systems at the Ridgefield Lakes and Ridgefield Knolls. In recent years it has been owned by EverSource. *See also* Ridgefield Water Supply Company.

AR Kids was a children's clothing store that closed in 2019 at 416 Main Street, a sister business of Audrey Road, a clothing store at 7 Bailey Avenue. The space became the Candlelight Shoppe. [P7/26/2021]

Archer, Donald Hull, (1912-1978, was an arborist who came here in the 1940s to work for Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*), later for Bartlett. From 1974 until his death, he was town tree warden, establishing the town's first tree nursery, and working closely with community organizations to plant more trees. He served on the Parks and the Conservation Commissions, was active in Rotary and the Masons, and lived on North Street. [JFS]

Architects: Notable architects connected with Ridgefield include Cass Gilbert, Allan J. Gelbin, Cass Gilbert Jr., Jack Grasso, Philip Johnson, Warren E. Kaffka, Sean O'Kane, John Ames Mitchell, Harris Hunnewell Murdock, Laurence F. Peck, Walter Kerr Rainsford, Cary Selden Rodman, David Scott, Robert L. Shape, Philip Sunderland, Edgar A. Tafel, Bert Tydeman, Ralph Thomas Walker (*q.v. each*).

Architectural Advisory Committee, a town committee, advises the Planning and Zoning Commission, reviewing all applications for commercial and institutional developments, multi-family developments, signs, etc. and serves as the Village District consultant, reviewing all applications for exterior work and signs in the Village District. Members have expertise in architecture, landscape architecture, lighting and planning. "It has an important role in guiding the design of new building and maintaining the character of the town." [RW]

Arden Lake, a short-lived name for Great Pond (*q.v.*), was coined by Camp Arden (*q.v.*), which operated a summer camp on the northwestern side of the pond in the late 1930s and early 40s. [JFS]

Are You OK?, also called R.U.O.K, is a free service in which volunteers telephone each morning to make certain elderly or disabled residents are all right. It was established and is operated by the Ridgefield Women's Club, with the help of the Ridgefield Firefighters' Association, at the Ridgefield firehouse. (*q.v.*).

Area of Ridgefield: Ridgefield is about 35 square miles, including 34.4 land and 0.5 water. That translates to 22,400 acres, 9,065 hectares, 975,744,000 square feet, or 140,507,000,000 square inches. Before Ridgefield ceded its northern tier to Danbury in 1846 to become the western fifth of that town,

Ridgefield was 57.7 square miles. [JFS]

Arena, Joseph R., (1925-2007), a native of Stamford, landed in Normandy on D-Day and earned the Purple Heart for combat wounds when he was 19. He was grand marshal of the 2000 Memorial Day Parade. He had been a manager at Bob's Sports in New Canaan and later worked for Squash's Ridgefield News Store (*q.v.*). He moved here in 1962 with wife, Sylvia. [JFS]

Arent, Arthur, (1904-1972), was a Depression-era playwright, prolific early TV screenwriter, and novelist whose summer home was on Saw Mill Hill Road for 30 years. [WWW]

Arigideen Farm was the "Gentleman's farm" of Daniel and Louise McKeon (*q.v.*), consisting of 135 acres around intersection of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads. The main house address was 11 Old Stagecoach Road. The name sometimes appears as Arigadeen. "Arigideen," said Louise McKeon, is "the name of a small river in County Cork, Ireland, where Dan's grandfather was born. It means 'little silver stream' because the salmon would go up river and in the water cast a silver shadow." The farm specialized in Guernsey cows, then switched to Brown Swiss in the late 1940s and sold unpasteurized milk for many years. The farm, purchased in 1938, was sold in 2005 for $12 million, then the highest price ever paid for a residential property in Ridgefield. It became Double H Farm, named for its owner, E. Hunter Harrison (*q.v*), a noted railroad executive. However, part of it is now a town preserve called McKeon Farm (*q.v.*). *See also* Zack's Ridge, Henry Whitney, David Hunt, Samuel Coe, *and* Knap's Farm. [RN, JFS]

Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia holds the remains of several Ridgefielders, including Nathan B. Bruckenthal, Lt. Thomas Carnegie, John W. Carney, Brigadier General David Perry, Major Gen. J.F.R. Seitz, and Major Lee Perry Vance (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Arma Tool & Die Company, a rare manufacturing facility in Ridgefield, opened in June 1975 in a new building on 1.3 acres at 845 Ethan Allen Highway, Route 7, just north of Haviland Road. Tools and moldings were made in its 7,400-square-foot building. The business closed in 2004 and the property, under Siema Company, was sold in 2005 for $1.25 million. In 2020, the building was used by 845 Wireless Investments LLC and other LLCs. The property is also the site of a Cingular cellular telephone antenna. [JFS]

Armand, Col. Charles (1751-1793), officially, Charles Armand Tuffin, marquis de la Rouërie, was a French cavalry officer and wealthy French nobleman who fought with colonists during the Revolution. In the summer of 1779, he established a barracks for his Partisan Legion near the intersection of Barrack Hill and Old West Mountain Roads from which his men attacked the British and protected patriots in Westchester and Putnam Counties. Some of his cavalrymen also patrolled the region to apprehend marauders, deserters, rioters, stragglers, and other soldiers found guilty of violating the General Orders. [RIR]

Armand Place, Road, in and adjacent to Eleven Levels (*q.v.*), was developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and named for Col. Charles Armand (*q.v.*), a Revolutionary War figure, who had camp nearby. [RN]

Armstrong, Edward, (ca. 1790-1851) and wife **Betsey**, (-1858), known as Uncle Ned and Aunt Betsey, are reported to have operated a station on the Underground Railroad in the 1840s, maybe earlier, on Ned's Mountain.

They lived off Ned's Lane and sheltered runaway slaves in a small cave or caves in Ned's Mountain. Both are buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [UNM]

Arnold, Benedict, (1741-1801), a general in the Continental Army in the Revolutionary War, led local troops at Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*), especially at the north end of Main Street. Legend says his horse was shot out from under him near the driveway to 563 Main Street. Ridgefield commemorated him and the battle with a medal (*q.v.*) honoring his local exploits. [JFS]

Arnold, Paul Dean, (1908-85), was a former Nabisco executive who, in 1940, despite being allergic to flour, founded Arnold Bakers in the garage of his Stamford home. By 1964, one Greenwich baking plant alone was producing 10,000 loaves of Arnold bread an hour. In 1952 he and his wife Betty bought the Eleven Levels (*q.v.*) estate, living there until 1959 when they returned to his home town of Greenwich. He was active in scouting and brought Admiral Richard E. Byrd to Ridgefield for a scout benefit — as a consultant, Byrd had helped Arnold pioneer techniques for freezing bread. He was also active in Rotary and Red Cross. [WWW]

Arnold, Wayne Ragsdale, (1920-1955), a native of Kansas, was a very early atomic scientist. He was present at the Chicago Pile Experiment, Dec. 2, 1942, which was the first time man had initiated a self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction, and controlled it. He died in a car crash at the age of 34 and is buried in Maple Shade Cemetery. He was chairman of the Zoning Commission at the time of his death. [OR, FAG]

Arnold's Way, a private road off northern Main Street, leads to several houses, built 2003. The name recalls Gen. Benedict Arnold (*q.v.*), hero of the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*), the main fighting of which occurred at and north of this land. [RN]

Arrowhead Camp was the name of Henry B. Anderson's (*q.v*.) estate on Round Pond in 1910s. [SR1916]

Arrowhead Place is a short, dead-end road off Ramapoo Road. It serves a 1998 subdivision of Rolf Almgren and Birgit Almgren Lindeberg, brother and sister, of 8.7 acres of Almgren family property into 10 half-acre lots. George Hanlon, who built the houses, selected the name to be in keeping with the American Indian theme of Ramapoo (*q.v.*). [RN]

Arrowitz, Rand, is an artist and sign-painter, who operated Old Ridge Studio at his home on Pin Pack Road in 1980. [P10/30/1980]

Artists of note from Ridgefield include: Harry Anderson, Doris Andrews, Sperry Andrews, John Atherton, Charles Roswell Bacon, Harry Bennett, Edwin Howland Blashfield, Michael Capobianco, Charles Cobelle, Bob Crofut, Ralph Delli-Bovi, Ernest Benham Dielman, Frederick Dielman, Carlus E. Dyer, Herb Eilertsen, Robert Franco, Arthur H. Frentrop, Leon Gordon, Simon Greco, Fred Greenburg, Dolores "Dee" Katz, Van Kaufman, Uldis Klavins, Bob Knox, Ruth Kobler, Nicholas Krushenick, Margaret Malval, Donald Moss, Elizabeth Atkins O'Brien, Herb Olsen, Robert Parker, George Passantino, Bernard Perlin, George W. Picknell, Frederic Remington, Alexander Ross, C. Chandler Ross, Adam Salvo, Hattie Saville, John Walter Scott, Ednah Shapiro Root, Pat Scott, Charles Sheeler, Frederick Shrady, Howard Silverman, George Henry Smillie, George Karl Sottung, George Stengel, Tina Cobelle Sturges, Paul Ullman, J. Alden Weir, Peter Wick, Mahonri Young. (*q.v. each*) *See also* Illustrators, Postage Stamps.

Ascot Way, a short, dead-end road off lower Main Street, is named for the

subdividing company, Ascot Associates (William Wade and Anthony Ricardo). We could not discover the reason for "Ascot." Developed around 1969, it became a town road in 1974. [RN]

Ashbee, Charles, (1872-1962), was a local banker who was famous for playing Santa Claus for many years in the village. Ashbee also collected autographs of U.S. presidents — he had all but Washington, as well as most Civil War generals. *See also* Ashbee Lane. [WWW]

Ashbee Lane, a dead-end off Route 7, south of Cain's Hill Road, was developed by Everett Lounsbury Jr. in the late 1950's and early 1960's. The name honors Charles F. Ashbee (*q.v.*), Ridgefield's longtime Santa Claus. [RN]

Ashland Cottage, a Victorian house at 321 Main Street, was for many years painted pink and called informally the Pink House. Built around 1850, it became in 1852 the parsonage for St. Stephen's Church. It was later the residence of "Lawyer Sam" Keeler and in 1931, first home here of Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v.*). It once was The Pines Inn (*q.v.*) and on May 27, 1925, the "Fried Chicken and Waffle Shop" plus "The Maple and Fine Antique Shop" opened there. [P6/11/1925]

Ashton Croft was the name of the 207 Main Street mansion built by Henry E. Hawley (*q.v.*), now the Methodist church's Wesley Hall (*q.v.*). It was also sometimes called Hawley Cottage (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Asketh, Jordan Socrates, (1904-1979), a native of Türkiye, was a hydrology expert who designed many large-scale Caisson wells. Over a period of a decade in the mid-20th Century, he filled swampland that is now the grounds of the Ridgefield Recreation Center, but which he had hoped would be developed for light industry. He lived on Wilton Road West. [DD345]

ASML Holdings NV, or Advanced Semiconductor Materials Lithography, took over Silicon Valley Group in 2000, occupying former Perkin-Elmer (earlier, the Benrus Center — *q.v.*) building on Route 7. ASML announced in Dec. 13, 2001, that it was shutting down here, consolidating operations in Wilton. The Dutch company supplied photolithography systems for the semiconductor industry. [JFS]

Asoquatah, an American Indian word for West Mountain, appears in the 1708 deed for the first purchase of land from the Indians, but was never commonly used. The meaning is uncertain, but theories include (1) "pine tree sap place," (i.e., good source for adhesive or sealer); (2) a place where the ruler lived, (3) "backward" or perhaps "turning place" in an old native path (*see* Oreneca Road); (4) "something that is not crooked." [RN]

Aspen Ledges, the steep cliffs on the north side of Ledges Road, is a named corrupted from the original American Indian term, "asproom," or even asprumquak, as in Asproom Mountain (*q.v*), which is nearby. [RN]

Aspen Ledges Road, extending from the end of Old Stagecoach Road to Bob Hill Road, was built around 1959 by Robert Kaufman at Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*). *See also* Aspen Ledges. [RN]

Aspen Mill Road, a dead-end road, extends off Ledges Road. Developer William Peatt Jr. in the early 1960's had proposed "Asproom Mill Road," after native name for nearby ledges and the fact that Hezekiah Scott's grist and cider mill was only a short distance away (*see also* Kiah's Brook, Asproom). However, "Asproom" was apparently deemed too weird by the old town Planning Commission and was changed to inappropriate "Aspen."

[RN]

Asproom Boggs is a swamp along the Titicus River first mentioned in 1721 — *see also* Asproom Mountain. [RN]

Asproom Loft, mentioned in 1756, may have been an early term for Barlow Mountain (*q.v.*) and also appears as Asproom Loaf and Aloft. [RN]

Asproom Mountain was a common 18th Century name for the lofty ridge or hill that extends from Limestone Road westerly to Spring Valley Road, now sometimes called Ridgebury Mountain, and including Barlow Mountain and Sugar Loaf Mountain. The word "asproom" is a corruption of Asprumquak, used for the mountain by John Copp in 1716, and is said to mean "lofty place" in the native language. It has been corrupted into names like Aspen Ledges Road (*q.v.*). [RN]

Asproom Plain was the flatlands south of the Asproom Mountain range or perhaps in the area just to the north, along Regan Road. It was first mentioned in 1724. *See also* Asproom Mountain. [RN]

Asproom Peek is possibly the area around Summit Lane with an elevation of 860 feet or perhaps it's Asproom Loaf (*q.v.*). It was mentioned in a 1722 deed. [RN]

Astronomical events: *See* Eclipses, Meteors, UFOs.

Assessor's office in the lower level of the town hall is responsible for calculating and compiling the value of all taxable property in Ridgefield, including land, buildings, motor vehicles, boats, machinery, utilities, various kinds of factory and office equipment, farm animals, and other property. The annual compilation of property values, as of each October 1, is called the Grand List (*q.v.*). It may be modified by the Board of Assessment Appeals (formerly called the Board of Relief), which meets each March. The assessor's office also handles applications for tax deductions or exemptions for senior citizens, veterans, farm or forest land, open space, and other special cases. Until 1975, all assessors and Boards of Assessors had been elective offices; that year, the town changed to hiring a single, appointed professional, overseen by the Board of Selectpersons. *See also* Mill Rate, Kenneth Carvell, Al Garzi. [JFS]

Atherton, John Carlton, (1900-52), was a major American illustrator who produced scores of magazine covers — more than 40 covers for *Saturday Evening Post* — and countless inside illustrations. In 1948 he was among founders of Famous Artists School in Westport. An expert fly fisherman, he wrote and illustrated *The Fly and the Fish*, still in print more than a half century after his death, and lived on Branchville Road starting in 1932. He was married to Maxine Atherton (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Atherton, Maxine "Max" Breese, (1903-1997), a native of California, was an expert fly angler who wrote for sporting magazines and whose posthumous memoir, *The Fly Fisher and The River,* was published in 2016. She wrote *Every Sportsman's Cookbook*. She was married to artist and angler John Atherton (*q.v.*).

Atlases: *See* Maps of Ridgefield.

Auditorium, Ridgefield High School: *See* Richardson Auditorium *and* Ridgefield Playhouse.

Auerbach, Jessica, is a novelist whose *Sleep, Baby, Sleep*, became an ABC-TV movie in 1995. A New Jersey native and Vassar graduate, she taught high school and at Wesleyan University, has lived in Ridgefield since 1983, and

has served on the Conservation Commission. Her first novel, *Winter Wife*, was published in 1983. Other novels include *Catch Your Breath* (1996) and *Painting on Glass* (1988). Her 2005 memoir, Writing in Chocolate, is described as "a tale of mystery and chocolate, a writer's memoir about her search for secrets and stories in a small-town chocolate shop." She received a National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship in 1985. [JFS]

Autarkes was the name of the Dexter L. Stone (*q.v.*) estate on West Mountain in 1900. [Kendall] The name suggests self-sufficiency. [JFS]

Authors and writers from Ridgefield include: James Lane Allen, Adele Annesi, John Atherton, Peggy Bacon, Preston Bassett, Silvio Bedini, William Blankenship, James Blumgarten, Joseph Epes Brown Jr. and III, Linette Burton, Gena Canestrari, Eli Culbertson, Robert Daley, Rosamond Dauer, Peter de Jonge, Beulah Sanford Osborn France, Ronald Joseph Goulart, Charles A. Goodrich, Samuel G. Goodrich, Scott Langdon Fagley, Ellen Greve, Max Gunther, Barbra "BB" Jackson, Nalini Jones, Roger Kahn, Gerri Lewis, Bettina Liebovitz Knapp, Clare Boothe Luce, Mary Main, Deirdre Mardon, Susanna Hofmann McShea, Caitlin Moscatelli, Frederick Nebel, Suzanne Nelson, Hildegarde Oskison, Brad Parks, Will Payne, Kevin Peraino, William Pfaff, Florence Powdermaker, Hortense Powdermaker, Richard Gid Powers, Philip W. Quigg, Laura Reiley, Frederic Remington, Mark Robinson, Jane Rockwell, Cary Selden Rodman, Donald I. Rogers, Cornelius Ryan, Kathryn Morgan Ryan, Jack Sanders, Ezekiel Sanford, Patrice Sarath, Victoria Secunda, Maurice Sendak, Kenneth Sheldon, Eric Sonnichsen, Peter Spiegelman, Billy Steers, Jane Stern, Lou Tabory, Alvin Toffler, Jane Trahey, Karen Joyce Warren, Max Wilk (*q.v. each*). *See also* novelists, poets, playwrights.

Automobiles: Rockwell maintains that the first automobile made its appearance in Ridgefield in the 1870s at the Ridgefield Agricultural Fair (*q.v.*) on Wilton Road West. "It was invented by Simon Ingersoll of Stamford (his name is today recalled in the multinational Ingersoll Rand Inc.). The automobile may be described as being a large box set on small wheels, narrow gauge, and steam was the motive power. The boiler was in the box and fed from behind. Mr. Ingersoll engaged George P. Gregory of Titicus to operate the automobile in our town. The machine was driven up and down Main Street, exciting much curiosity and wonder. At the Fair Grounds, it was speeded around the track." The first commercially manufactured automobile seen in Ridgefield was reportedly in 1898 when one from Norwalk passed through town [RP 10/?/1898]. The first mention of a locally owned car in the RP was 1901 — Dr. R.W. Lowe's Locomobile [RPC]. Francis D. Martin listed the following as the first owners of cars in town: 1. Burgoyne Hamilton. 2. W.S. Hawk. 3. Dr. R.W. Lowe. 4. George Johnson and Frank Hurlburt. 5. Peter McGlynn. 6. L.L. Beckwith. (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Avent, William, (1821-1863), was a private in the Union Army who, Rockwell says, enlisted from Ridgefield and died in the service at Stafford County, VA, March 30, 1863. He is buried in Branchville Cemetery. [JFS]

Axolotl was Ridgefield High School's jazz band in the 1970s. [JFS]

Ayala, Juan: *See* Nathaniel Miller.

B

B & B Floor Covering, operated in the mid-20th Century by Andy Bloomer and Jim Bellagamba in the basement of the Masonic building, later became Bellagamba Floor Covering at 3 Danbury Road. [DD365]

Babe Ruth baseball, for older youths past Little League age, was established in 1961 when it became a separate league. Charles Coles (*q.v.*) was the first president. [JFS]

Babbin, Jacqueline, (1921-2001), was one of first female head producers of TV shows, working for David Susskind's production company in 1950s and 60s, carried mostly on NBC, but also CBS networks. She won both Emmy and Peabody awards, and lived with companion Jane Trahey, a noted ad executive and writer, at 174 New Road, from 1961 to the mid-70s, when both moved to Kent. [WWW]

Bacon, Charles Roswell, (1867-1913), was an accomplished landscape and figure painter who ran The Ridgefield Inn (*q.v.*) from around 1894 until 1903. He was the father of artist Peggy Bacon (*q.v.*). He committed suicide and is buried in the Scott section of Ridgefield Cemetery. [WWW]

Bacon, Francis McNiel, (1835-1912), Harvard 1884, was head of Bacon and Company, a dry goods and woolen firm in Manhattan, as well as a director of a bank and an insurance company. He built the Nutholme mansion on Peaceable Street, later called Westmoreland (*q.v.*), which in 2026, is the Jewish temple, Congregation Shir Shalom (*q.v.*). He liked to skate on New Pond, and would toss coins to children skating there, sometimes resulting in mad scrambles and bruises. [JFS, DD202]

Bacon, Margaret "Peggy," (1894-1987), born in Ridgefield to artist Charles Roswell and Elizabeth A. Chase Bacon, became noted American illustrator who wrote children's books, and drew satirical cartoons and caricatures for *The New Yorke*r and other magazines. She also wrote acclaimed mystery novels. [WWW]

Bahr, Abel "Billy," (1877-1959), was one of the 20th Century's top experts on and collectors of ancient Chinese art. Many works in his collection are now in major museums. He came to Ridgefield in 1951, living in The Coach House (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Bahring, Ernest, (-1863), served in the Union Army from Ridgefield, says Rockwell. He was missing in action at June 13, 1864, at Proctor's Creek, Va., and presumed killed. [JFS]

Bailey, Dr. Annie Keeler (1855-1927), a Ridgefield native who grew up on Ridgebury Road, was one of earliest women physicians in Connecticut. She graduated in 1876 from State Normal School (now Central Conn. Univ.), and studied medicine from 1881 to 1886. She established a practice in Danbury in May 1886, was associated with Danbury Hospital, was a mentor to many nurses, wrote articles on healing for medical journals and also spoke on religious subjects at Danbury churches — two of her lectures were turned into books still available. In 1908 she petitioned the Superior Court to allow a name change to Annie Keeler because she so much disliked her abusive father, Halcyon Gilbert Bailey (*q.v.*). She died in an auto accident in Danbury. [WWW]

Bailey, Eldridge Nettleton, (1876-1955), a native of Shelton, was Republican first selectman most years from 1911 to 1926, elected to the office 11 times. He was a construction engineer for H.B. Anderson, and was head of the Anderson's Ridgefield Water Supply Company. He was also superintendent of the Ridgefield Electric Company, 1919-1925, and a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. He was later mayor of Bradford, Vt., but returned to Ridgefield and spent his last years at The Elms. [WWW, RSB28, DD136]

Bailey, Halcyon Gilbert (1828-1905), married Emily Keeler of Ridgebury Road in 1854. Bedini describes a satirical election campaign Gilbert ran, complete with posters, for office of town hayward (*q.v.*) — the posters generally made fun of women and promoted drinking. Emily divorced him by 1880, and in 1908, national news stories reported that his daughter, Dr. Annie Keeler Bailey (*q.v.*), asked a court to change her name to Annie Keeler to "free the honor of her mother's family from the taint arising from the name of her father." "Father," she was quoted as saying, "was a man addicted to excessive dissipation, shocking immorality and profanity. He was a disgrace to the family." Later in life, he became a business entrepreneur in and around North Salem, NY, and he is buried in Peach Lake Cemetery, North Salem. Bailey had 10 brothers and sisters — one brother was even more colorfully named than he: Festus Confucius Bailey. But then there was his sister, Alpha Zerelia Bailey, who had married Charles Bailey, and became Alpha Zerelia Bailey Bailey. [WWW]

Bailey, Lewis H., (1818-1899), a native of Kent Falls, NY., who came here in 1839, became a leading Ridgefield businessman, a founder and second president of Ridgefield Savings Bank (*q.v.*) and its first secretary-treasurer. He established the Bailey Inn (*q.v.*) and built Bailey Avenue (*q.v.*). He and David Hurlbutt bought a saw mill in 1855. [RLR21.204] He was also a partner in the Bailey and Gage Store (*q.v.*), which had been the King and Dole store *(q.v*.) from the 18th Century; it later became D.F. Bedient's hardware store (*q.v.*). He served as a state senator in 1875. In his younger days, he played clarinet in the Ridgefield Band (*q.v.*). His daughter was Arvilla Bailey Keeler (*q.v.*). [JFS, RSB22]

Bailey, Theodore B., (-1940), was a blacksmith who lived at the northern end of Ramapoo Road, and practiced dowsing (*q.v*.) in the early 20th Century. [DD267,268]

Bailey and Gage was a late 19th Century general and hardware store at 404 Main Street, predecessor of D.F. Bedient, a partnership of Lewis H. Bailey and D. Smith Gage. Gage had been a clerk at the Old Hundred (*q.v.*), bought the place around 1880 and moved it two blocks north; undertaking was added to the business around that time. Both Bailey and Gage were among the town's wealthiest businessmen. [WWW]

Bailey Avenue, a dog-leg road between Main and Prospect Streets, was built in 1879 by its namesake, Lewis H. Bailey (*q.v*.). It served as a shortcut to the small freight yard along its eastern leg where the Ridgefield branch railroad line terminated, and allowed development of Main Street backland. In 1973, it became the first one-way road in town. [RN]

Bailey Inn, established 1870s by Lewis H. Bailey, operated in a four-story building near 293 Main Street. Part of the building was originally a cabinet factory, built in 1830 by Rufus H. Pickett, Samuel Hawley, and Thaddeus

Hoyt; by 1850s, part of the old factory was removed and the rest used as a hall. By 1860, it was owned by Bailey, who converted it to a tenement. But after the arrival of the railroad in the village in 1870, Bailey reconfigured and expanded it into an inn. The structure was demolished in 1919 after a rear wing was moved to the rear of the neighboring King mansion. [DAUB]

Bailey's Backyard is a restaurant established in 1999 at 23 Bailey Avenue, formerly the site of Ridgefield Coffee Shop (*q.v.*) and many earlier businesses of all sorts, including a bicycle shop. It features many farm-to-garden meals. [JFS]

Bailey's New Road, a neighborhood name in early 20th Century for the straight stretch of Farmingville Road from Lee to Limekiln Roads, was built about 1914 as bypass — Farmingville Road originally traversed today's Lee and southern Limekiln Roads. It was so called because E.N. Bailey (*q.v.*) was the first selectman who approved the project. [RN]

Baja Cocina, a Mexican-style restaurant, opened in 2018 at 426 Main Street.

Baker, Dr. Amos, (ca.1753-1823), was a Ridgefield physician who "discovered" the "Baker apple" in the late 1700s. The variety was once fairly well known in the region, but is now probably "extinct." He served in the Revolution as a surgeon's mate under Col. Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*). He was a state representative in 1792 and was an organizer of the Methodist congregation in Ridgefield. He lived at 536 Main Street and was married to Sarah Stebbins, daughter of Benjamin Stebbins (*q.v.*), who lived across the street where Casagmo is. [WWW, DD113]

Baker, Albert M. Jr. (1934-2001), an engineer who pioneered the use of mobile MRI scanners, was longtime supporter of education and conservation. An amateur ornithologist, he did field surveys for the Connecticut Audubon Society. While leading the Ridgebury PTA in the 1970s, he and his wife **Patricia** were leaders in raising money to buy Peterson Gorge (*q.v.*). He served on the Conservation Commission and was active in Ridgefield Open Space Association (ROSA) in efforts to save what's now Bennett's Pond State Park. A 57-acre preserve on Shadow Lake Road is named for him. [JFS, P7/7/2001]

Baker, Paul (*nee* **Paul V. Baldaserini**), (1920-2014), grew up in Ridgefield and was a longtime radio and television personality in Danbury area, especially on WLAD in 1950s and 60s, and later WREF (*q.v.*). He also did cable TV Channel 10 news broadcasts with Abe Najamy. For many years he was the voice of the stock car races at Danbury Racearena at Danbury Fairgrounds. [WWW]

Baker, Ralph L., (-2009), a chemical engineer turned artist, was a vice president at Union Carbide who lived on Armand Place from 1979 until the mid-1980s, and then had a condo at Casagmo while maintaining a home address in Houston. He retired from Carbide in 1988 and took up painting in acrylics and oils. Some of his scenes of Ridgefield, including one of the town hall, were apparently sold commercially in town in the 1990s. [JFS]

Baker apple: *See* Dr. Amos Baker; also DD113.

Baker Street Steakhouse was a short-lived restaurant at 470 Main Street, lasting from 1975 to 1976, between Friar Tuck's and Touchstone's (*q.v. each*). [4/17/1975, P9/21/1975]

Bakes, George L., (ca. 1923-2016), a Norwalk resident, was a photographer who became a developer and spent 25 years trying to get the Planning and Zoning Commission to approve a new use for the former Camp Adventure

(*q.v.*), which he bought in 1971 for $600,000. Among other proposals were a corporate headquarters and high-density apartments. The town finally agreed in the mid-1990s to allow age-restricted multifamily housing. The result is Ridgefield Crossings, Laurel Ridge Health Care Center, and Regency at Ridgefield (*q.v. each*). The town also got a large chunk of open space, including much of the western and northern shore of Great Pond (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Baldaserini, Gino L. "Jinx," (1917-2018), a Ridgefield native who died at age of 100, was master golf-club maker for Pedersen in Wilton. He was a brother of Paul Baker (*q.v.*); [P3/3/2018].

Baldaserini, John J. "Jack," a Ridgefield native and RHS 1963, has been a longtime real estate agent and manager. *See* Comstock Court. [JFS]

Baldaserini, Paul: *See* Paul Baker.

Balducci, a chain, high-end supermarket, bought Hay Day (*q.v.*) at 21 Governor Street in 2004 and closed in April 2009 [P4/9/2009]. The company became a food wholesaler called Baldor, which today distributes to many local stores and restaurants. [JFS]

Baldwin, John, (1717-1809), a native of New Haven, served in the Connecticut militia during the Revolution and was at the Alarms at Fairfield, Bedford and Norwalk in 1779. He is buried in Titicus Cemetery. He was living in Ridgefield by 1751 when he married Abigail Northrup. He was a farmer who owned land in both Ridgefield and "Salem" NY.

Baldwin, Karen, the 17th school superintendent, served 2015 to 2018. [JFS]

Baldwin, Mary Ann (1944-2022), a native of NJ, was chairman for four of her nine years on the school board in the 1980s and later became the long-time director of social services for the town, retiring in 2020. She was the wife of **Dr. Randall Baldwin**, dentist. [KFH]

Ball, Rev. John Percell. (1908-1992), also known as Percy Ball, was pastor of the Goodwill Baptist Church (*q.v.*) from its founding in 1940 until 1959. He returned in 1969, serving several years before the congregation disbanded for lack of members. In 1940 he and his wife Mary were living on the Browning (*q.v.*) farm in Ridgebury, but he soon moved to Norwalk where he was pastor of a larger church and active in the Black community and in city's Common Council — he helped pass a Fair Housing Law and co-founded NEON, an anti-poverty agency. [WWW, RPJ8/5]

Ballantyne, James Douglas, (1871-1948), was a superintendent of Upagenstit (*q.v.*) estate. [DD144, P7/29/1948]

Ballard, Elizabeth Biglow, (1876-1964), bequeathed Ballard Park, which had been her family homestead called Graeloe (*q.v.*), to the town, and ordered her historic house to be razed. She was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club and one of the 11 founders of the Ridgefield Boys Club. Her father was Lucius H. Biglow (*q.v.*); her husband, Edward L. Ballard. [WWW]

Ballard Backland: *See* Ballard Park.

Ballard Green, the town's first public housing for the elderly or disabled, opened in 1979 with 40 independent living units on Ballard Backland, at the west edge of Ballard Park (*q.v.*). In 1982, 20 more units were completed. Three apartments were added in 1983 in Ballard Carriage Barn. [JFS]

Ballard Greenhouse was part of the estate of Elizabeth B. Ballard (*q.v.*) that she gave to the town (*see* Ballard Park). It's now used by the Ridgefield and Caudatowa Garden Clubs for growing plants and as a venue for programs

and center of the clubs' annual Mothers Day plant sale. [JFS]

Ballard Park, a five-acre park on Main Street, south of Gilbert Street, was the 1964 bequest of Elizabeth B. Ballard (*q.v.*), whose home, Graeloe (*q.v.*), was there. Earlier, it had been home of her father, music publisher Lucius Horatio Biglow (*q.v.*); before that, Dr. Daniel L. Adams (*q.v.*), whom some call the "father of baseball," and in 18th Century, belonged to Col. Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*). Edward L. Ballard hired Frederick Law Olmsted's firm in 1932 to redesign his homestead. The park includes a garden, maintained by the garden clubs, the kitchen for Meals on Wheels, and for many years, the Alternative High School. *See also* Bandstand *and* Pergola. [WWW]

Ballou, Lance Chaffee, (1920-2016), a 1941 Dartmouth graduate who was a Naval captain in WW2, spent 35 years in sales at NBC TV network. He began Lance Ballou Productions whose shows included *Andrea Doria: The Final Chapter*. In 1987 he launched a new weekly TV show, *Airshow*, an hour-long report on the world of flight, broadcast on ESPN. [P2/26/1987] With second wife, Margaret Sweeney, M.D., he wrote several film scripts and books for children and families. He lived at 188 Main Street. [JFS]

Balne, H&J, at 17 Danbury Road (Girolmetti Court), a "Coffee factory store," opened in 1981with 30 coffees, teas and equipment. [P1/29/1981,2/5/1981]

Ball, Lucille, (1911-1989), the actress and comedian, filmed scenes from her movie, "Stone Pillow" (*q.v.*) at Peaceable Acres (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield and also used a novel by Ridgefielder Irene Kampen (*q.v.*), *Life without George* (*q.v.),* as the basis of her TV comedy series, "The Lucy Show." Her co-star in the "I Love Lucy" TV series was **Vivian Vance**, who lived on Route 116 in nearby North Salem, NY, and frequently shopped in Ridgefield. [JFS]

Bancroft, Lindgren, (1916-1942), a member of the Merchant Marine who was RHS 1934 and Yale 1938, died early in WW2 after the Esso T.C. McCobb tanker, aboard which he was an engineer, was torpedoed by an Italian submarine off northern South America. He survived 35 days in a lifeboat only to fall overboard in a daze and drown; he was the first Ridgefielder to die in the war as a result of combat. He was 25 years old, and was posthumously awarded the Merchant Marine Mariner's Medal. [WWW]

Bands, early: The Ridgefield Band, founded in 1837, was still giving concerts by 1877. [RP] A "Ridgefield Brass Band" played for Independence Day in 1852. Mutual Cornet Band (*q.v.*) was performing in the 1870s. The Ridgefield Boys Band was disbanded in December 1932, and was replaced in April 1933 by The Oreneca Band, "a new and better band." (*See also modern teen bands by name.*) [JFS]

Bandstand in Ballard Park was built by the Ridgefield Women's Club and dedicated May 17, 1975, three years after *The Ridgefield Press* carried an editorial wishing for such a structure in the park. It was designed by architect James Hancock. The cost of $6,000 was raised by the club. [JFS]

Bank robberies in Ridgefield included: Connecticut National Bank, Danbury Road, 1964, two suspects caught; Branchville office of Ridgefield Savings Bank, 1975, Ridgefielder convicted; State National Bank office on northern Route 7, late 1970s, robber waited for police in parking lot; Ridgefield Savings Bank drive-in, Governor Street, 1984, one robber arrested. [JFS]

Banks, David and Daniel, owned the woolen factory on Route 7 at Topstone Road in 1839 that had been Cain's Mill (*q.v.*). [RLR 16/328]

Banks, Hugh S., (1805-1892), a native of Westchester County, NY, operated a

private “Classical and English School” for up to 25 boys in the former Goodrich homestead (“Peter Parley House”) in 1843. Around 1847 he left town and by the early 1850s was in Newburgh, N.Y., where he taught for many years, was on the school board, and died in 1892. [JFS, DD152] *See also* High Ridge Institute, Chauncey Wilcox, William O. Seymour.

Banks: Seemingly countless banks have come and gone in Ridgefield, especially in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries. These banks have had offices in Ridgefield since the first, Ridgefield Savings Bank, opened in 1871: Bank of America, Chase Bank, CitiBank, City National Bank, City Trust Company, Connecticut Bank & Trust Company, Connecticut National Bank, Constitution Federal Savings & Loan, Danbury Savings & Loan, Eagle Federal Savings and Loan, Fairfield County Trust Company, First National Bank & Trust Company of Ridgefield, First Niagara, First Union Bank, Fleet, Hartford National Bank and Trust Company, HSBC, Hudson City Savings Bank, M&T Bank, National Bank and Trust Company of Fairfield County, NewMil Bank, People’s Bank, Ridgefield Bank (which had been Ridgefield Savings Bank), Shawmut Bank, State National Bank, Union Savings Bank, Union Trust Company, Village Bank & Trust Company, Wachovia, Washington Mutual, Webster Bank, Wells Fargo (*q.v. most*).

Banks Hill Place, a dead-end road, serves the 1983 “Lounsbury Ridge” subdivision (*q.v.*). The Banks family was farming this neighborhood as early as the 1850s and the family was in town at least a half century earlier. [RN]

Banks Mill and **Pond**: Banks Mill Pond, cited 1795, was on Norwalk River, north of Topstone Road, and stored waterpower for “woolen factory” operated by David and Daniel Banks (*q.v.*). Earlier, the facility had been owned by Hugh Cain (*see* Cain’s Hill), who operated a fulling mill there. The Banks family had mill till at least 1839. [RN]

Bannerman, Lois, (1920-1992), was an internationally known harpist who, as wife of John L. Senior Jr., lived on the Senior farm off Turner Road straddling the Danbury-Ridgefield line in Ridgebury in the 1960s; they were divorced 1969. Her first husband, Capt. Harold J. Heinrich, died in a plane crash in 1955. She subsequently married architect-builder Howard Crawford and retired to Savannah, Ga. She was a child-prodigy harpist who was fought off kidnappers on Long Island as a 10-year-old. As a teenager she appeared in a Hollywood film. [WWW]

Bar & Grille, a “sports bar” restaurant at 967 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) just south of Route 35, was opened in 2009 by Anthony “Tony” Wilmot (*q.v.*) and his wife, Kristina Traynor. After Wilmot’s death, it became Hoodoo Brown’s (*q.v.*) barbecue. [JFS]

Barber, Edward J., (1888-1953), owner of a steamship line that bore his name, lived at 153 West Mountain Road, which he bought in 1939 from the William F. Ingold estate. [NYT1/25/1939] It later became the Innisfree estate (*q.v.*). [P6/18/1953, DD272]

Barbers: Notable barbers in Ridgefield have included Paul Laszig, the Mugavero family, Mike Pontello, and Conrad Rockelein — *q.v. each*.

Barbour Collection: *Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Records* is a large series of books reproducing the Barbour index to most early births, marriages and deaths, produced by Genealogical Publishing Company. *Volume 36* contains Ridgefield’s birth, marriage and records from 1709 to 1850. It’s 167 pages and also has Redding’s records. [JFS]

Bard, Harry Erwin, was Ridgefield's third school superintendent, serving 1924-28. He lived Florida Road and had land there long after he left Ridgefield. He was an unsuccessful school board candidate around 1931.

Bare Mountain is a name appearing in a 1752 deed for what is more commonly called Bear Mountain (*q.v.*), but which may be more accurate spelling, reflecting a bare or treeless top to the hill. [RN]

Bareburger, a restaurant at 38 Danbury Road, opened in 2013 in the former Chambers Army & Navy Store (*q.v*.), which began as a gas station. It's part of a small, NYC-area chain. *See also* Orrin Beers.

Barhite, Philip, was a founder with Lewis C. Seymour of Seymour & Barhite, a 19th Century dry goods business in the village. He was the father of William C. Barhite who succeeded him in the business. The store was also known as Barhite and Seymour. [CBRFC]

Barhite, William C., (1855-1937) was a Republican state representative, 1893-95 and 1919-23. He was a local merchant who was a partner in Seymour & Barhite, and co-owned the building just north of the Bedient building on Main Street. His father, Philip (*q.v*.), was a founder of the firm. He grew up on what is now Stepping Stone Farm in Ridgebury. [JFS]

Barhite Building, north of the old Bedient Hardware (*q.v*.) building, was named for William C. Barhite (*q.v.)*, its owner and probably builder. Later called the Denton Block (*q.v*.), it includes 410-412 Main Street (*q.v.*). Today it bears the name of Robert J. Creamer (*q.v*.), whose law offices are within. [JFS]

Bark Park, a town-owned recreational facility for dogs, was opened in 2002 on the former Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*) property at 58 Prospect Ridge Road. The fully fenced playing park has separate areas for small dogs and all dogs, built-in toys, and water, and is overseen by the Parks and Recreation Department, with help from Ridgefield Operation for Animal Rescue (ROAR). [JFS]

Barlow, John, (1744-?), was a blacksmith who lived on Barlow Mountain, named for him. He came here from Fairfield in 1769, and had his shop and home near the top of the mountain along an old highway, once the eastern end of Old Barlow Mountain Road, now a hiking path through Pierrepont State Park. He may have served stagecoaches that once traversed this route. Barlow made wrought iron objects, such as shoes, hinges, and nails, and may also have produced parts for guns (contrary to an old legend, he did not invent the "Barlow knife," which came from England). Bedini says he moved west around 1802, but other sources say he died in Fairfield 1786, but this may be confusion with another John Barlow. He apparently had a son, John Jr., (1769-1848), who is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [CBRFC]

Barlow, Samuel J., (abt. 1842-?), was a tinsmith and coppersmith (the 1870 census calls him a "tinman"). A Democrat, he was a state representative in 1876. [JFS]

Barlow, Marvin Kellogg "Tony," (1906-1974), a native of Bellingham, Wash., was a cartoonist and illustrator in the 1930s through 1950s whose work appeared in many magazines and advertisements. He is said to have lived here and is buried in Corona Del Mar, Calif.

Barlow Mountain is the name for the eastern end of Asproom or Ridgebury Mountain (*q.v*. *each*) where it joins with the northern end of Stonecrest or Copps Mountain. It is now part of Seth Low Pierrepont State Park (*q.v.*).

The mountain, named for John Barlow (*q.v.*), reaches about 950 feet above sea level — one of the highest points in town — is in park. The peak was known in the 18th Century as Asproom Loaf or Loft (*q.v.*). [RN]

Barlow Mountain Elementary School opened in March 1971 on Barlow Mountain Road and was closed in June 1980 due to dwindling enrollments. The building was sold in 1983 to Ridgefield Family Y (*q.v.*), which added an indoor swimming pool. The Family Y went bankrupt in 1990 and the town voted to buy the building back in May 1993 from Village Bank, which had foreclosed the mortgage. The building was used as the Ridgefield Recreation Center. In 2000, voters approved funds to restore it as an elementary school and to build new Recreation Center. The school reopened in September 2003. [JFS]

Barn, The, is a teen center opened in an old Lounsbury estate barn in Veterans Park in December 1994. It was overseen by the town and Youth Commission, but was eventually taken over by the Boys and Girls Club. It is aimed at Ridgefielders 13 to 18 years old. *See also* Teen centers.

Barn Door is a restaurant at 37 Ethan Allen Highway, opened around 2010. *See also* Luigi's, Cooper Tavern, Jean's, Cella's.

Barn dances in the 19th and early 20th centuries took place in the late spring or early summer to celebrate the new growing season. They were held in haymows, the part of a barn where winter hay for livestock had been stored, and are described by Venus in DD302.

Barnes, Katherine Moore (1868-1927), built in 1906 the Mediterranean-style mansion at 105 Branchville Road (also addressed as 18 Ivy Hill Road). She was active for many years in the Ridgefield Garden Club and maintained her primary residence in New York City. She left town in 1925. Her brother, Joseph, lived with her. [JFS]

Barnhizer, David George, (1929-2015), who grew up in Iowa, was an Emmy Award-winning television director and producer who lived in Ridgefield for 27 years until 2015. His work included producing and directing NBC's "Children's Theater" series in the 1960s, directing the Dick Cavett (*q.v.*) show from 1969 to 1972, and directing the 1969 film, "Here's Dick Cavett." (In 2017, Cavett coincidentally moved to Ridgefield.) Barnhizer was a frequent opinion contributor to newspapers such as *The New York Times* and *Ridgefield Press*. His longtime companion was fellow Iowan Bette-Barron "B.B." Stamats (*q.v.*), a noted landscape designer. Their antique house was at 153 South Salem Road. [JFS]

Barnum Place, off Turner Road at the Turner Hill (*q.v.*) subdivision, was named for Phineas T. Barnum (1810-1891) of Bethel, whose circus lived into the 21st Century as Ringling Bros., Barnum and Bailey Circus. While Barnum never lived here, Ridgefield native Aaron Turner (*q.v.*) in 1836 hired a young P.T. Barnum as a ticket-seller, secretary and treasurer of the Turner circus. [RN]

Baroness von Wächter-Lautenbach, Josephine, (1833-1930), nee Josephine Louise Lee, was the daughter of Ridgefield native David Lee (*q.v.*). She married in 1855 Baron Johann August von Wächter-Lautenbach, foreign minister of the Kingdom of Württemberg, and later became one of the richest women in her country. [RT, WWW]

Barrack Heights is Francis D. Martin's (*q.v.*) 34-lot subdivision on Barrack Hill Road and North Salem Road, served chiefly by Continental Drive (*q.v.*).

Mapped in 1956, the development was not approved until 1966. [RN]

Barrack Hill Road runs off North Salem Road to the NY state line; the easterly half quite old and may have been called the Toilsome Path in the early 18th Century (*see* Toilsome). The first recorded use of its current name was in an 1857 deed for four acres on "Barac hill Road." The name recalls the cavalry barracks of French troops, led by Col. Charles Armand (*q.v.*), near the corner Old West Mountain Road. H.B. Anderson (*q.v.*) improved the western portion for the Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*). [RN]

Barrack Hills is a 1965 subdivision of 9.6 acres into six lots along Barrack Hill Road between Blue Ridge Road and Hillcrest Court by John F. Coyle *et al.* of New Canaan. Coyle was then also a Ridgefield junior high teacher. [RN]

Barrackhill was the estate of Eustace and Maud Conway (*q.v.*) in the early 20th Century, located off what is now Grandview Drive. [SR1911S] *See also* Jonathan Peterson, B.E. Levy. [JFS]

Barrows, John A. "Jack," (1932-1995), a Massachusetts native who grew up in Ridgefield and was RHS 1950, was a cartoonist and illustrator who also taught at Silvermine Guild and Wooster School. He illustrated several books including *Socks Says*, about the Clintons' White House cat. He lived in Danbury for many years. [JFS]

Barry Avenue, also known as State Route 822 (old Route 102 — *q.v.*), extends from High Ridge Avenue to the intersection of West Mountain and Ramapoo Roads, where it becomes West Mountain Road (*q.v.*). John Barry, and then the Robert C. Barry family, had a sizable farm on the northide of the road, almost opposite Fairview Avenue, at the turn of the 20th Century (at 52 and at 70 Barry Avenue). It was called Barry Avenue at least by 1908; earlier the road was known as New West Lane (*q.v.*). The highway is relatively modern, built probably in the early 1850s as a shortcut to West Mountain (instead of using the older Ramapoo Road/Gilbert Street route). [RN, DD247]

Bartolo was a restaurant at 103 Danbury Road, with chef-owner Arthur Michaelsen (*q.v.*). It closed in 2024 after about 10 years in operation. [JFS]

Bartolucci, Enzo, (1914-2003), a native of Italy, built Wayside Market on Danbury Road, opposite Grove Street, in 1939 and ran it until retiring in the 1970s. He served in the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps in Rome in WW2 and was a member of the Board of Education in the 1960s. "Throughout my life, I never borrowed a dime, either to get started in business or to purchase a car or a home," he once said. "I was always able to save and pay for things. This has been my philosophy and my way of life." [Impact]

Barton, Rev. Susan: *see* Susan Davies.

Baseball was being played formally in Ridgefield as early as Sept. 28, 1874, when the Highlands of Ridgefield were among the teams competing in a "base ball" tournament in Danbury. On Sept. 2, 1887, *The Ridgefield Press* Nine played the Danbury Club at baseball on the fairgrounds off Wilton Road West. The early 20th Century Ridgefield Baseball Club, sponsored for a while by Wadsworth R. Lewis, is described in DD146, including its use of professional players from teams like the Yankees. *See also* Little League, Babe Ruth, Daniel L. Adams [JFS]

Basketball: A Ridgefield basketball team was formed in 1908 and played its games against other towns' teams in the Town Hall. *See also* Katoonah

Basketball Club. [RP]

Baskin-Robbins had an ice-cream outlet at 90 Danbury Road, Ridgefield Commerce Park, starting around 1979. It was replaced in 2016 by short-lived 4 Seasons Ice Cream. [JFS]

Bassett, Francis Joseph, (1911-1995), a Ridgefield native and 1929 RHS graduate, was an RHS teacher from 1933 until WW2 when he served in the U.S. Navy, stationed in London. He later taught college in NY and PA. He wrote countless, usually brief commentaries to many newspapers over the years, including *The Ridgefield Press*. He died in Florida. [JFS]

Bassett, Preston K., (1892-1992), an engineer and inventor who held 35 patents for aeronautical devices, was the former head of Sperry Gyroscope on Long Island. He counted the Wright brothers, Charles Lindbergh, Eddie Rickenbacker, Wiley Post, and Amelia Earhart among his friends. He was a president of the Keeler Tavern Preservation Society (*q.v.*) and published an 1976 autobiography, *The Life and Times of Preston R. Bassett*. He also wrote a children's book, *Raindrop Stories*, published by Atheneum on his 89th birthday in 1981. [P3/19/1981, P5/7/1992]. [WWW]

Bates, Herb, operated a taxi business in the 1920s from a garage at 16 Bailey Avenue, a site that was later Jacob Walters' (*q.v.*) auto repair, and then *The Ridgefield Press* building. [DD100]

Bates, John S., (1848-1936), was born on a Ridgefield farm and learned the stone-cutting trade. After working for other companies, he founded John S. Bates Monuments in Norwalk in 1902, a cemetery stone business that still exists in 2024. He is buried in Riverside Cemetery, Norwalk, presumably with a Bates Monument. *See also* Bates Farm Road. (JFS)

Bates, Taylor, bought a saw mill from Abner Gilbert on the east side of New Road (possibly today's Limestone Road) in 1852. [RLR 20/52]

Bates Farm Road, an old highway between Bennett's Farm and Limestone Roads at the Ridgefield Lakes, dates from before 1856. The Bates family was living in the area by 1835; John Bates and Taylor Bates were farmers by the 1840s. Before 1961, it was considered a portion of Limestone Road, but selectmen defined its extent, paved it and gave it its name, suggested by Selectman Paul Morganti, who remembered a Bates farm there when he was a boy. *See also* John S. Bates. [RN]

Batson, Dr. Ramon, a native of Aruba and Harvard graduate, was an acclaimed neurosurgeon who specializes in spina bifida when he lived in Ridgefield in late 1980s. He moved to Redding. [JFS]

Battle of Ridgefield: **1.** On April 27, 1777, the British met patriot militia in a daylong, miles-long conflict, considered the only inland Revolutionary War battle in Connecticut. It pitted British troops marching to Compo in Westport after having burned a part of Danbury against local militia and Continental soldiers under General David Wooster (*q.v.*) and Benedict Arnold (*q.v.*). Skirmishes were fought along North Salem Road and upper Main Street, and General Wooster was mortally wounded along North Salem Road just south of lower Tackora Trail. The British encamped for the night east of Wilton Road West opposite Olmstead Lane. **2.** A 2024 book of that name by Keith Marshall Jones (*q.v.*), much expands on and revises his earlier *Farmers Against the Crown (q.v.). See also* Battle of Ridgefield Monument. [JFS]

Battle of Ridgefield Monuments: 1. A stone was erected in the Casagmo wall

by estate owner George M. Olcott and daughter Mary (*q.v. each*) in 1909 as a memorial to those who died in the fighting that took place along this stretch of Main Street. The monument says: *At the Battle of Ridgefield, April 27, 1777, Died Eight Patriots Who were laid in these grounds Companioned by Sixteen British Soldiers. Living, their enemies, dying their guests. "In honour of service and sacrifice This memorial is placed For the strengthening of hearts."* (Note that text contains an error, once covered but today worn off, showing a second word "April" and making the date seem like 1877.) In December 2019, at least four skeletons, believed to have been soldiers who died in the battle, were unearthed in the cellar of a house at 536 Main Street (the house was built some years after the battle), just south of the monument. *See also* Revolutionary War cemetery. **2**. In 2002 the Connecticut Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America and the town created another marker commemorating the battle, this one with a bronze plaque mounted in a stone, located in Ballard Park. It states: "The chief engagement of Connecticut's only inland battle during the War for Independence was fought approximately 100 yards from this site. Several hundred hastily-mustered militia joined a handful of Continental troops under Generals Benedict Arnold and Gold Stilliman to face British regulars more than thrice their number led by Major General William Tryon. Only an hour before, American General David Wooster fell mortally wounded during his second attack on the British rearguard as it retreated toward Ridgefield after burning patriot supplies at Danbury. Although Tryon's redcoats carried the day in Ridgefield, the resulting 'Hornet's Nest' of patriot farmer-soldiers ensured Crown troops never returned, and may have contributed to British General John Burgoyne's isolation and surprising defeat at Saratoga six months later. In memory of those who fell in defense of America at Ridgefield: Major General David Wooster, Lt. Col. Abraham Gould, Lt. Hezekiah Davenport, Lt. Nathan Gray, Lt. Ephraim Middlebrook, Lt. William Thompson, Joshua Bartlett, Bradley Dean, Silas Haines, Samuel Seeley, David Selleck, Abraham Smith, David Stevens; Dedicated on the 225th Anniversary of the battle by: The Connecticut Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America Edward Franklin Romig, II, Governor; 225th Anniversary Committee, Keith Marshall Jones, Chairman; Rudolph Marconi, First Selectman." [JFS]

Bauer, Kenneth M., RHS 1988, has promoted grassroots development projects in the Himalayas and Central Asia. He was a Fulbright fellow in Nepal, where he conducted research for his book, *High Frontiers: Dolpo and the Changing World of the Himalayan Pastoralists*, published in 2004 by Columbia University Press. In 2024 he is a senior lecturer in the Dartmouth College Department of Anthropology. [JFS]

Bavarian Beer Festivals were held by the Lions Club as fund-raisers from 1972 to 1975 after which they were canceled, reportedly because of the cost of insurance. [JFS]

Baxter, Darius Crosby, (1842-1923), a native of Somers, NY, started out a shoemaker, but stopped after losing a hand in a blasting accident. After a stint as a storekeeper, he founded *Baxter's Monthly* (*q.v.*), starting Jan. 13, 1875, which by March became the weekly *Ridgefield Press*. He sold the publication in 1880 to Charles W. Lee, and later opened a livery stable that, in 1889, was located behind the Ridgefield Inn (*q.v.*), west of 441 Main

Street today. He then operated the Lakeview Store (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Baxter, Samuel Barnum, (1819-1864), was a Union Army soldier who died Oct. 26, 1864, possibly as a result of injuries sustained in the Battle of Cedar Creek, Va., fought on Oct. 19, 1864. He is buried in Titicus Cemetery. He was 45 at the time of his death. [JFS]

Baxter's Monthly, founded Jan. 13, 1875, by D. Crosby Baxter (*q.v.*), was the first news publication in Ridgefield, although Baxter's aim was to have a medium in which local businesses could promote themselves. By March, it was published weekly as *The Ridgefield Press* (*q.v.*).

Bayberry Hill Road extends off lower Branchville Road to and including a circle, serving a 1955 subdivision by the Stam-Nor Holding Company of Raymond Wennik and George Bossert. Town officials deemed the original name of entrance road — Lakeview Road, because it overlooked John's Pond — to be confusing since a Lakeview Drive already existed. The circle was called Boswen Drive — residents didn't like that, either, and both entrance and circle roads were changed to Bayberry Hill Road in 1959. [RN]

Beach, Edward Stevens, (1857-1931), a native of New Britain, was a "distinguished patent lawyer" who died at his home, The Anchorage (*q.v.*), 58 West Lane, while talking on the telephone. A Trinity graduate and award-winning orator, he was known internationally for his expertise in patent law and was the author of *Digest of the Decisions of Law and Practice in the Patent Office from 1880 to 1890.* [NYT8/24/1931]

Beacon Hill Cottage was the estate of Dr. Newton B. Shaffer (*q.v.*) in the early 20th Century on east side of Wilton Road West. Its house is still standing at 316 Wilton Road West, but is smaller and mostly hidden from the road. The name comes from the belief that the British signaled their ships at Compo in Westport from encampment here after Battle of Ridgefield April 27, 1777. [RGE]

Bear Mountain, a ridge up to 794 feet above sea level south of the eastern end of George Washington Highway, runs north-south between Old Mill Road and Pine Mountain Road. First mentioned in an 1739 land record, it may reflect bears in the area — or may be misspelling or misunderstanding of something totally different, Bare Mountain (*q.v.*). [RN]

Bear Mountain Road, a short road up the west slope of Bear Mountain, was developed by Otto H. Lippolt (*q.v.*) as part of his Hemlock Hills subdivision, designed in 1959. On a 1957 map, Lippolt called the planned road "Bare" Mountain Road, suggesting he may have supported the "bald top" theory (*see* Bare Mountain). [RN]

Bear Swamp, near Round Pond, is mentioned in an 1800 deed. It's quite possibly the swamp east of and parallel to Oreneca Road near Sturges Park. [RN]

Beards, Dorothy "Sibbi," became in March 1966 one of three Connecticut finalists in the Mrs. America Beauty Contest. A homemaker, she had appeared in many local amateur theater productions in the middle and late 1960s and lived on Lounsbury Road. Her name disappeared from local news in 1970. [JFS]

Bear's Den was a location on old the Stonecrest (*q.v.*) estate, east of North Street, so called at least by 1795 and mentioned by Rockwell. [RN]

Beaver Brook was probably a stream that runs along Wilton Road East, called by U.S. Geological Survey the East Branch of the Silvermine River. The

name appears in a 1770 deed. [RN]

Beaver Brook Road, the main roadway through Ridgebury Estates (*q.v.)*, extends from Briar Ridge Road to Shadow Lake Road. It was probably a modern name made up by a developer — no old record of a Beaver Brook thereabouts has been found. It became a town road in 1970. [RN]

Beaver Dam was the name of several locales cited in late 1700s deeds. One may have been near the junction of Silver Spring and St. Johns Roads. Another was west of Tanton Hill Road on the Ridgefield Brook/Norwalk River. [RN]

Beck & Quint, at 88 Danbury Road in 1980, was part of a local chain of electronics appliance stores, selling TVs and audio components. It was gone by 1983. [JFS]

Becker, Bruce, (1925-2011), was an attorney and writer who lived on Hillcrest Court from the late 1960s until his death. His practice specialized in the entertainment industry and was also a producer of the movie, *Three*. A backgammon expert, he was the author of *Backgammon for Blood and Decisions*. He was active in Ridgefield Playhouse and the Community Center. In the 1960s and 70s, he was married to Andrea Eastman (*q.v.*).

Becker, George H., (ca. 1851-1923), was third RVFD chief, serving from 1904 to 1909. He was also a Republican state representative, 1907-09. A native of New York City, he lived on Catoonah Street and was a newspaper and magazine dealer in 1917.

Beckwith, L.L., owned much land along eastern Peaceable Street in the early 20th Century. He was on the board of the Ridgefield Water Supply Company in 1913. [DD203]

Bedford Road is an old name for Route 35 — West Lane-South Salem Road — from Main Street to the colony line. First mentioned in 1717, the highway was so called because Bedford, NY, was the next town of significance to the west (in 1790, Bedford had the largest population of any town in Westchester County!). The term shows up as late as 1902 on a map. This was part of a stagecoach route from New York to Hartford. *See also* West Lane. [RN]

Bedient, David Francis (1862-1929), called Frank, a native of Wilton, owned D.F. Bedient Hardware (*q.v.*) and lived at 34 Catoonah Street. He was also a licensed mortician. A Democrat, he was a state representative, 1913-15, and a town assessor. He was also a vestryman at St. Stephen's Church. [JFS]

Bedient, Francis Harvey "Beadie," (1886-1969), son of David F. Bedient, ran D.F. Bedient Hardware for many years. He lived at 6 Barry Avenue. [DD239]

Bedient's Hardware, operated by D.Frank Bedient (*q.v*) at the corner of Main Street and Bailey Avenue, 404 Main Street (ONS101), sold hardware, appliances, and other items. It was also a funeral home in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. The store was a descendant of King and Dole general store, opened in 1783 at the Old Hundred (*q.v*.), what is now Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum offices (*q.v*). Starting in 1953, "Bedient's" was owned by the Morelli family till closing 1998. The Morellis sold the building to Urstadt Biddle Properties. [JFS]

Bedini, Americo Anthony "Ben," (1921-2008), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1939, was a star baseball player at RHS, who later taught and coached football at Housatonic Valley Regional High School in Falls Village, then at Rye (NY) High School, 1954-1961. At Housatonic Valley, his football record

was 26-1; at Rye he had 69-5, with five undefeated seasons and six league championships. Then established and coached football many years at Iona College, where he is called "the Father of Football." In 1967 Iona had a perfect 9-0 record and a 20-6 bowl win over Kings College, to become the 1967 National Club Football Champions. At age 60, he became a college scout for the Cleveland Browns. [WWW]

Bedini, Bernice "Bunny": *See under* Frank Lancaster Jr. and Sr., *and* Steven Lancaster.

Bedini, Dominic "Poni," (1920-2004), who overcame polio as a child, died one day after the 60th anniversary of his parachuting into Normandy on D-Day as a member of the 101st Airborne Division, "the Screaming Eagles." He was wounded that day in France, but later fought in Holland where he was taken prisoner by the Germans, but soon released in an exchange. Then fought in Battle of the Bulge where he was seriously wounded and spent more than a year recuperating in military hospitals. He earned two Purple Hearts. He was a mason for Morganti Inc. and Ippoliti Construction Company. [SNTS]

Bedini, Ferdinand B., (1913-2002), a Ridgefield native who was RHS 1931 and a WW2 veteran, operated the Vincent Bedini contracting firm, taking over from his father in 1947. He was an outstanding community volunteer, active with the 4-H, Boy Scouts, American Legion, Men's Club, Italian-American Club, Community Center, Red Cross bloodmobiles, and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. He received the ROTA Civic Award in 1996. He was a brother of Silvio Bedini (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Bedini, Michael, RHS 1966, often called "Buddha" from the way he would sit, was a leader at the Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club for 32 years and was head of Ridgefield Men's Softball League for 43 years. He honored by Ridgefield Old Timers in 2019. [JFS]

Bedini, Silvio (1917-2007), was born and grew up in Ridgefield, served in Army Intelligence in WW2, and became a Smithsonian Institution historian and deputy director. He wrote more than 20 books of history, including *Ridgefield in Review* (1958). He was an expert on antique clocks, and early scientific instruments, especially surveyors' tools. [WWW]

Bedini, Vincenzo "Vincent" I., (1887-1947), was a native of Italy who started a long-lived contracting company in Ridgefield. Among other projects, he helped build Silver Spring Country Club's golf course. He was a dowser. His sons, Ferdinand and Silvio (*q.v. each*), both worked for him; Ferdinand took over the firm. His wife was Cesira Stefanelli. [P5/29/1947]

Beechwood, Charles Szentkuti's 1987, 25-lot subdivision on the north side of Farmingville Road, is served by Norrans Ridge Drive and Linden Road. [RN]

Beechwood Lane, a short road off Pelham Lane to a cul de sac at Twin Ridge (*q.v.*), connects with Rising Ridge Road. The name was suggested to developer Barry Montgomery by author Max Gunther (*q.v.*) when he bought a lot there in 1968 with a large, 200-year-old American beech tree. It became town road in 1968. [RN]

Beers family moved from Norwalk to Ridgefield in the 1790's when **Anthony Beers** bought a house on Nod Hill Road on the Wilton line. It later became the home of artist J. Alden Weir and is now a major historic center at the Weir Farm National Historic Site (*q.v.*). Anthony and other family members are buried in the Beers Cemetery (*q.v.*), which was adjacent to the his

homestead. The Branchville district was once known as Beers Station (*q.v.*) because Sherman Beers (*q.v.*) operated the first station there on the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road. [RN]

Beers, Bradley, (1819-1880), a Branchville farmer, sold his clover and plaster mill on the Sugar Hollow Turnpike (Route 7) north of Branchville to Willis Edmonds and Lewis H. Mead in 1856. [RLR 21/50] *See also* Eleazer Beers.

Beers, Eleazor, (1781-1851), son of Anthony, was a prominent Branchville farmer and businessman. He owned the clover mill on the Turnpike north of Branchville, taken over by his son Bradley (*q.v.*). He bought a half acre on the Sugar Hollow Turnpike "with a privilege of raising a pond on said river by means of a dam across the same" in 1840 [RLR 16/168] and four years later, sold the land "with the clover mill standing thereon," to son Bradley. He apparently built the mill, then sold it. [RLR 17/155] At his death, his estate was worth $5,100 [$170,000 in 2024], a sizable amount. His sons, Sherman (*q.v.*) and William B., were prominent in late 19th Century Branchville. In 1842 he pledged $50 [$1,200] toward the cost of building a Baptist church in Wilton. [JFS]

Beers, Henry I., (1830-1917), a Ridgefield native, became a millionaire as an oil wildcatter in PA. He ran a restaurant in San Francisco during the Gold Rush era and became a major businessman in CA. He then joined with Peter Cornen (*q.v.*) in buying a farm in 1863 in northwestern PA that wound up providing large amounts of oil. Also invested in NYC land, and with Cornen, sold Cornelius Vanderbilt 16 of the lots on which part of Grand Central Terminal was built. He settled in Oil City, Pa., but is buried in Ridgefield (Scott's) Cemetery. [WWW]

Beers, Orrin and Marion, were Ridgefield real estate agents and developers in the mid 20th Century. In the 1950s, Orrin ran a new Gulf gas station at the corner of Danbury Road and Grove Street, which became Chambers Army & Navy Store and, in 2024, Bareburger. *See* Settlers Lane, Wooster Heights. [RN]

Beers, Sherman, (1809-1878), son of Eleazor (*q.v.*), operated the Halfway House, a small inn, on the Sugar Hollow Turnpike in the mid-19th Century. The building, now 38 West Branchville Road, was the first Ridgefield station on the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road in 1852. He sold the "hotel" in 1868 to Seth J. Benedict. He was a farmer and is buried in Beers Cemetery. *See also* Beers family, Beer Station. [JFS]

Beers, W.C., in an 1899 bill to Herbert Mead is described as a "dealer in fish, oysters & clams" in Ridgefield, Conn. [eBay artifact]

Beers, William H., (1834-1925), a Ridgefield native, was the third president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank, and served as a director for 54 of the bank's first 100 years, longer than anyone in the bank's history. He was a teacher at Farmingville, Florida, Whipstick, and Center Schools. [RSB23]

Beers, William Woolsey, (1822-1879), a Ridgefield native, was a teacher in Bethel and Hawleyville for 13 years, and ca. 1852 , became a Branchville businessman. He was the first postmaster and first station-agent at Branchville. He was a cousin of Sherman Beers (*q.v.*). [Hurd]

Beers Atlas, formally known as *Atlas of New York and Vicinity From Actual Surveys by and under the direction of F.W. Beers…*, was published in 1867, containing a detailed, hand-colored map of Ridgefield, with names of almost all building owners. Also, on a different page is a close-up map of Main Street. Electronic versions readily available on the internet. Reprints

on paper are also sold. [Rumsey]

Beers Cemetery on the south end of Nod Hill Road, near Weir Farm, has about 30 graves, mostly of Beers, Bouton, Sanford, and Jellick families. It was established in the 1830s; its owner is unknown. [HLYB]

Beers Community Auto Service, owned by Orrin A. Beers, was at the corner of Danbury Road and Grove Street in the mid-20th Century and sold Gulf gasoline. The site was Bareburger in 2026. [JFS]

Beers Station, an early name for the corner of town today called Branchville, was first recorded in an 1854 deed. It was named for Sherman Beers who, in 1851, leased two front rooms at his close-by house/hotel to serve as a station (one room had been a "bar room"). William W. Beers (*q.v.*) served as first stationmaster, from 1852 until his death in 1879. The term last appeared in a 1868 record — the area was more officially known as Ridgefield Station (*q.v.*) [RN]

Belden, Chris, a University of Michigan graduate, is a playwright, novelist, and songwriter who with his wife, Melissa has lived in Ridgefield since 2007. He worked in the publishing industry in New York City where he wrote and cowrote several screenplays, including *Amnesia,* which was made into a movie. He's produced two albums, *Songs About Anything* (2003) and *Camouflage* (2007). His novels include *Shriver, Carry-on, The Private Dick,* and *The Vote — Shriver* was turned into the 2023 film, *A Little White Lie*, starring Michael Shannon, Kate Hudson, and Don Johnson. [chrisbelden.com]

Bell, William Patterson, (1924-1943), a Navy aviation radioman, was flying a routine patrol off Florida Sept. 20, 1943, when his plane disappeared. He had enlisted while a junior at RHS. [NR]

Bell at Community Center: Mounted over concrete on the front lawn, this 19th Century bell belonged to Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*), a gift from a Union Army colonel and friend. Cast in 1845 in Ohio, it had been captured by Confederate troops. Bedini says when the bell and other scrap metal were recaptured by Col. Alexander Warner, commander of a Connecticut unit, it bore the painted inscription: "This bell is to be melted into a cannon – may it kill a thousand Yankees!" The colonel acquired the bell and later gave it to Lounsbury. It was rung for the signing of the armistice at the end of World War I, and again in September 1945 at the end of World War II. [OMS]

Bell, Book and Candle was a book and gift shop at the Donnelly Shopping Center in the 1960s and early 1970s in the spot later occupied by Colby's of Ridgefield for many years. [P8/2/1962, 5/20/1965]

Bell District schoolhouse was on the west side of the south end of Main Street, almost opposite and a bit south of Rockwell Road. The district was formed about 1846 [P10/23/1913]. The school burned in 1865 and Rockwell says its 30 students were absorbed into Flat Rock, West Lane, and Whipstick school districts to avoid having to build a new school. *See also* Belltown. [SD]

Bellair Inn was at ONS59 Main Street in the 1940 telephone directory. That in 2026 is the building at 360 Main Street, corner of Governor Street, housing the Tooth Fairy Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics practice (*q.v.*). [T1940]

Belltown was a southern Main Street neighborhood, so-called in the mid-1800's when a schoolhouse there was said to be the only one in town with a bell to summon its pupils. The name never appears in any official records. *See* Bell District schoolhouse. [RN]

Belmont, Peter: *See* Ridgefield Golf Range and Miniature Golf Course

Belmont Restaurant, operated by Leo Pambianchi and Elvira Girolmetti, was on Main Street in the 1940s — *see under* Fairfield Lunch. [RPJ]

Belote, Thomas H., (1947-2015), who grew up in Ridgefield and was RHS 1965, was an immigration attorney and former federal prosecutor who served as chairman of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) in Washington, D.C. Interested in the town's past, he wrote the "Looking Back" history columns for *The Ridgefield Press* for 15 years. He was active in Ridgefield Old Timers, (*q.v.*), Ridgefield Historical Society, Tricentennial Commission, Museum in the Streets, the Land Conservancy; and aided many other groups. He was a law partner with wife **Jane** in Belote & Belote, with offices on Bailey Avenue. He had license plate, TOWNIE. (For a profile of him and his work for the federal government, *see* P2/24/1983.) [JFS]

Belsky, Dr. Joseph, (ca. 1926-2025), an endocrinologist, lived on Stonecrest Road from 1961 until 2004 and was medical chief of the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission in Hiroshima, Japan, from 1969 to 1972. He was recognized for his Japan work in 1981. [P7/2/1981]. He served on the school board from 1965 to 1969. Dr. Belsky was a leader at Danbury Hospital, where he served as its first full-time director of medical education as it became a teaching hospital. He headed the Departments of Medicine and Endocrinology, and initiated an annual research day. He and his wife Jane moved to Danbury in 2004. [NR]

Belvedere Court serves Anthony J. Czyr's 1997 subdivision of nine lots from 28 acres off the east side of Limekiln Road. The name, which has no historical connections, is based on Italian for "beautiful view." [RN]

Belzer, Arnold Mark, was rabbi from July 1969 until 1981 at Temple Shearith Israel during a period of considerable growth for the temple. However, in 1981, he wound up suing the congregation for breach of contract after its trustees discharged him in a dispute over his management. [P4/16/1981]. Since 1990, he has been rabbi and rabbi emeritus at Congregation Mickve Israel, Savannah, Ga., the third oldest Jewish congregation in the U.S., founded 1733. [JFS]

Benchmark Senior Living: Also called Benchmark Assisted Living; *see* Ridgefield Crossings.

Bender, Rev. Fred, (1923-2013), a musician and minister, was rector of St. Stephen's Church, starting May 10, 1981 [P3/26/1981]. He had served in Pennsylvania early in his career, came here from Darien, and retired in 1988 to NH, then NC. Earlier, he had been an organist. During WW2, he was a pilot and flight instructor in the Army Air Force. [P12/19/2013]

Benedict, Daniel, bought in 1752 from Jonathan Olmsted a house, barn and "grist mill" at the south end of "Titicus Hill." [RLR 4/26] This mill, much closer to the village than the Mamanasco Mill but perhaps smaller in capacity, was on the Titicus River probably along Saw Mill Hill Road. He sold it to Epenetus How in 1771. [RLR 5/133]

Benedict, Delight, (1759-1812), a Ridgefield native, was a teacher at the West Lane schoolhouse who was made "famous" by Samuel G. Goodrich in his *Recollections of a Lifetime*, which devotes several pages to "Aunt Delight Benedict," his first teacher. He did not find her inspiring and called her an "old petticoat and pen-knife pedagogue." Her father, John Benedict, had graduated in 1747 from Yale. [WWW]

Benedict, George E., (1877-1942), a Ridgefield native, joined the Ridgefield Savings Bank in 1899 and was secretary and treasurer when he died. He was a member of the school board and, in, the WW1 Draft Board. He was an amateur photographer; his pictures appeared in area newspapers. [RSB27]

Benedict, Gamaliel Northrop, (1760-1835), was a Ridgebury farmer who was a sergeant in the Revolutionary War. He was a selectman in 1811. He served as a state representative in 1811 and 1817, and was the father of State Rep. Gamaliel Northrop Benedict. [JW]

Benedict, Gamaliel Northrop, (1793-1856), was a Ridgebury farmer who was appointed Ridgebury postmaster in 1848. He was a selectman in 1829 and 1830, and a state representative in 1831 and 1834. His father was State Rep. Gamaliel Benedict. [JFS]

Benedict, James (1685-1762), one of the first settlers, was the second person to serve as a deacon of the congregational church. He was an officer in the militia and, in 1755, compiled a genealogy of the Benedict family. He was married to Sarah Hyatt and their daughter, Sarah, is said to be the first non-native person born in Ridgefield. [FAG, RIR, Ancestry]

Benedict, Jesse L., (1878-1956), was a Republican state representative, 1919-23. A Main Street merchant, he was for nearly 40 years the town's treasurer. [P11/1/1956]

Benedict, John, (1753-1823), a state representative in 1777 and 1779, served as a corporal in the Revolutionary War and was a selectman in 1770, 1774 and 1777. He died when a tree fell on him. [CH12/23/1823, JFS]

Benedict, John, (1821-1889), was a farmer who lived near the corner of Silver Spring Road and West Lane. He married Harriet Olmstead (1818-1850) and then her sister, Sarah W. Olmstead (1813-1862).

Benedict, Samuel A., son of Jesse and Polly Benedict, drowned off Kenzies Point in Fairfield July 30,1842, aged 20 years. His gravestone is in Titicus Cemetery. [FAG]

Benedict, Sarah, daughter of James (*q.v.*) and Sarah Benedict, was the first non-native person born in Ridgefield, May 23, 1709. [RIR, Barber]

Benedict, Timothy, (1709-1791), served as a captain in the British army during King George's War, 1744-48, fighting in Nova Scotia. He was an early settler of Ridgebury, a leader in the community and church, and a Ridgefield selectman in 1750. His house still stands at the north corner of Ridgebury Road and George Washington Highway, used today as the Congregational Church parsonage. He was the enslaver of Dorcas, called "ye negro woman servant of Timothy Benedict" when she died Jan. 10, 1760, and Phyllis or Phillis, "an adult negro servant," who was baptized in the Congregational Church in 1790.His gravestone is the oldest extant stone in Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW, RLR 1/214]

Benedict, William N., bought a saw mill "and fixtures" from Thomas N. Couch in 1864 on Route 7 near Florida Hill Road. [RLR 23/486] In 1870, he bought "the saw mill property" south of Main Street with the mill dam, pond, mill and machinery from Phoebe and Henry Johnson. [RLR 15/45] This mill was probably at the intersection of Wilton Road East and Whipstick Road and may have been one of the earliest mill sites, dating from the early 1700s. [JFS]

Benel, Harold F., (1922-1999), developed the Ridgefield Manor (*q.v.*) subdivision from the old Upagenstit (*q.v.*) estate, starting in 1954. Benel was later a building inspector in New Jersey, where he lived. [RN, DD150]

Benenson, Edward Hartley, developed in 1957-59 the Ridgefield Shopping Center, which began with the Grand Union as anchor, and included a post office wing at the north end. It now houses CVS and other shops and restaurants, including the Ancient Mariner (*q.v.*).

Benjamin, Margery Rose Hofstatter, (1923-2009), a poet, was for many years Mrs. Ralph Delli-Bovi. She lived at Homewood (*q.v.*), was active in many Ridgefield organizations and was once assistant to the director of the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art. After her divorce from Ralph Delli-Bovi (*q.v.*), she married Dr. Bernard Benjamin, and spent many years on Martha's Vineyard, where her poetry was well known. Two books of her poems, including *Song Spinner* (2005), have been published. [P10/1/2009]

Benjamin, The, is a "uniquely American, French-inspired restaurant and bar," opened in June 2023 at 20 West Lane, what had earlier been Bernard's, The Inn at Ridgefield, Tode's, and the Kane Inn (*q.v. each*). Owners are restaurateurs Dave Studwell and Rob Moss of Washington Prime, and B.J. Lawless, of BJ Ryan's Restaurant Group, all in Norwalk. In November 2025, the property was sold to Rexhep Krasniqi, of Monroe, NY, who changed the name to R House (*q.v.*). (HH, DD288)

Benjamin Franklin Grammar School, the town's first "modern" school, opened in 1915, built with the help of donations of land and funds from town's "summer people" (*q.v.*). When it opened, schoolhouses at Flat Rock, West Lane, Whipstick, West Mountain, and Titicus closed (Titicus soon reopened) along with Center School. It ceased being called Benjamin Franklin when Ridgefield High School moved to a new wing on the building in 1926. The building was often called the Center School, East Ridge School, and Ridgefield High School (*q.v. each*), as well as the "Old High School," and is now the core of the Richard E. Venus Municipal Building (*q.v.*). The Ridgefield Playhouse (*q.v.*) occupies the former school auditorium, and the Yanity Gym (*q.v.*), the gymnasium. *See also* Center School, Alexander Hamilton High School. [SD]

Benjamin Rockwell House has been used as a name for a one-and-a-half story center chimney house at 113 West Lane, which from 1970 to 2010 served also as Red Petticoat Antiques. The house said to date from 1740 and was probably owned by the Smith family in the 19th Century. [JFS]

Bennett, Abraham, bought the grist mill on the Norwalk River at Florida Hill Road (*see* Moongate) from Elijah Hauley in 1740.

Bennett, Daniel, (1794-1877) was a farmer whose small 18th Century house on Silver Spring Road, almost opposite the current entrance to Silver Spring Country Club, is still standing in 2020. [WWW]

Bennett, Eli, operated a store in Branchville in 1878. [P5/13/1878]

Bennett, Harry Raymond, (1919-2012), a South Salem native who came to Ridgefield when he was one, was among the most prolific paperback book cover artists in the United States — more than 800 during a 17-year period from 1965 to 1982 alone. He graduated RHS in 1937 and was a major in the U.S. Army in Pacific in WW2. He then studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and American Academy of Art, and began his career as an advertising artist, soon turning to book covers — many of his cover models were Ridgefielders. He lived for many years at 599 Main Street, a Victorian that's been turned into condominiums called "Bennett House" (*q.v.*). Around 1982, he moved to Astoria, Ore., and turned to expressionist

painting from a studio overlooking the Pacific. [WWW]

Bennett, James, (1675-1725or7), a native of Fairfield (perhaps what is modern-day Redding), founded what was to be a sizable clan here. He came to Ridgefield in 1721, buying a house on Danbury Road, possibly near Grove Street, from Alexander Resseguie (*q.v.*). He soon began amassing much land a couple of miles to the north where he evidently eventually lived. In 1740, his estate was divided among his heirs: Gershom, Ephraim, Samuel, Abraham, and Deborah Bennett, Elizabeth (Mrs. Jonah) Smith, and Hannah (Mrs. Israel) Mead. By 1835, the "Widow Lucy Bennett" was living on Great Hill Road but by 1867, not a single person named Bennett still owned a farm in all of Bennett's Farm District. The size of James Bennett's farm is difficult to determine, but it apparently included most of the present Ridgefield Lakes area, as well as Fox Hill and the ponds to the north. Bennetts also had land to the west, near Lake Windwing, possibly part of the same farm. *See also* Bennett's Farm. [RVR, JFS]

Bennett, Jeremiah, was a Ridgefield farmer and shoemaker who, in 1876, was arrested along with his wife, Adeline, and four of their sons, on charges related to a rash of burglaries in Ridgefield and neighboring towns. He and sons **George** and **Arthur** were convicted and sent to state prison for five to 15 years. Their farm was just south of 430 Silver Spring Road. [WWW]

Bennett, Josiah, (1754-1848), a native of Fairfield, served in the Revolution and is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. He was probably a Danbury farmer and shoemaker. [JW]

Bennett, Thomas, a Ridgefield native and son of artist Harry Bennett (q.v.), is a commercial and fine artist in NYC. [JFS]

Bennett House is a small-scale, 1980s conversion by Stephen Zemo (*q.v.*) of a large old house at 599 Main Street into three condominiums. It had been the home of artist Harry Bennett (*q.v.*) and his family and before that, the Lee family (*see* Robert A. Lee). [JFS]

Bennett's Farm, one of the town's oldest names, has referred to a section of northeastern Ridgefield since the 1730's; the first recorded use of the term is in a 1739 deed. James Bennett (*q.v.*) came here in 1721 from Fairfield and his farm probably eventually included much of today's Ridgefield Lakes. Some offspring settled in Bennett's Farm area. In 1756, the TM voted to establish a schoolhouse at the corner of Bates Farm and Bennett's Farm Roads. In 1867, Bennett's Farm school district (District #2) consisted of almost all of Limestone and Bennett's Farm Roads, the whole of the Ridgefield Lakes, and most of Great Hill Road. The name has several variations, including Bennetts' Farms, but the original seems based on one Bennett having one farm, so Bennett's Farm is probably correct. [RN]

Bennett's Farm Cemetery: *See* Selleck Cemetery.

Bennett's Farm Road, an old highway, is today defined as running east-west from Route 7 through the Ridgefield Lakes to Old Stagecoach Road. The route appears on a 1856 map of town, and probably most sections date from the 1700s. However, 18th Century Ridgefielders probably considered Bennett's Farm Road — or **Bennett's Path**, as it was called in 1743 — to be today's Limestone Road from Danbury Road to Great Hill, and Great Hill Road to Bennett's Farm Road since it was the most direct route from town to the farm — *see also* Great Hill Road. Today's section between Route 7 and Great Hill Road was formerly Maplewood Road (*q.v.*), but changed in

1973 to Bennett's Farm after residents petitioned selectmen. The segment of Old Stagecoach from the Ridgebury Firehouse to Ridgebury Road was, before 1961, part of Bennett's Farm Road. [RN]

Bennett's Farm School, a one-room schoolhouse, stood at the corner of Bennett's Farm and Bate's Farm Roads, and was District 2 in 1867. The schoolhouse was closed in 1915 but reopened as neighborhood enrollment grew. However, it finally closed 1928. Historian George L. Rockwell believed the building was the second oldest schoolhouse in the state, but he could not get community support to maintain it as a historic building. So it stood unused and deteriorating many years, and was finally torn down in the 1970s. [SD]

Bennett's Long Pond: Another name for Bennett's Pond(s) — *q.v.*

Bennett's Path: *See* Bennett's Farm Road.

Bennett's Pond(s) is a pair of ponds west of Route 7 and north of Bennett's Farm Road, now owned by state as part of Bennett's Pond State Park (*q.v.*). The name first appears in 1745 and in 18th Century, this term is always singular. However, it's been invariably plural on modern maps because there are now two distinct ponds connected by a stream; singular form in 18th Century indicates only one large pond existed then — a 1779 deed refers to "Bennets Long Pond" [RLR 4/180], suggesting its oneness as well as its shape. Clark's 1856 map of Fairfield County shows two distinct ponds. The ponds are probably a "dying" body of water, the remnants of a small lake formed after the last glacier some 15,000 years ago. Their water flows into the Saugatuck River and feeds Saugatuck Reservoir in Redding/Weston. An 1818 Town Meeting banned fishing on the pond and later that year, a man was fined $10 for breaking law. The ponds were part of Col. Louis D. Conley's Outpost Farm (*q.v.*) from ca. 1915 to 1947 and were later owned by IBM. [RN]

Bennett's Pond State Park, named for the body of water it surrounds, was created 2004 when town gave land to the state after a long zoning battle with the previous owner. The land was farm and woodlots for two centuries. From from 1915 to 1947, it was part of Col. Louis D. Conley's Outpost Farm, and from 1947 to 1968, the core of property was the Fox Hill Inn. in 1970, IBM purchased the inn as well as much of the old Outpost Farm land from the estate of Sidney Sarner (*q.v.*), hoping to put a corporate school there, but abandoning plans after townspeople objected to a helicopter pad on the campus. In the 1990s, IBM offered to sell the land to town, but town — for reasons never clear — declined. IBM then sold to Eureka V LLC (*q.v.*), an arm of a major Northeastern developer, which proposed huge housing development on its 458 acres north of Bennett's Farm Road. The town objected to such a large-scale development. The Ridgefield Open Space Association (ROSA) strongly urged town to buy the land. On Dec. 20, 2001, the town took title by eminent domain, then turned property over to state in 2004. The park's 456 acres adjoin other town open spaces totaling more than 1,500 acres, including the Pine Mountain and Hemlock Hills Preserves (*q.v. each*) and Wooster Mountain State Park, and is connected with the multi-town Ives Trail (*q.v.*). In 2024 Eureka still owns about 156 acres south of Bennett's Farm Road. [RN]

Benrus opened its "Benrus Center" in 1967 at 901 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7). The 203,000-square-foot-headquarters and factory for Benrus Watch

Company, founded 1921 in New York City, were then the largest commercial buildings in Ridgefield. Its 47 acres were purchased in June 1964 and Gov. John Dempsey broke ground for a center, built by Morganti Inc. (*q.v.*) starting in August 1964. The company ceased operations here in the early 1970s and was bankrupt by 1977, but the brand is still used for watches, apparel, and handbags. The Route 7 property later became a Perkin-Elmer (*q.v.*) facility, then Silicon Valley Group (*q.v.*), ASML Holdings (*q.v.*), and now is called Pond's Edge Professional Office Park and used for medical offices and storage. The site had previously belonged to Outpost Nurseries and then Woodcock Nurseries (*q.v*. *each*). [JFS]

Benson Road, a short, dog-leg, dead-end road off Ridgebury Road, was developed by William Mannion in the 1960's and accepted by the town in 1968. It was named for the farm of Frank Benson (1867-?), a native of Canada who came to Ridgefield from North Salem in 1908. He lived in the house on the southeast corner of the intersection of George Washington Highway with Ridgebury Road. [RN]

Bent Garth was the name Louisa (Mrs. Gerald) Gray gave to her house at 50 High Ridge Avenue around 1910. It was later the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Teviot Livingston. A garth is a cloistered yard, and bent suggests it was grassy. [DD155, 195]

Benton, Suzanne, (1936-), a native of NYC, is a sculptor, printmaker, and painter who is well known for sculpting metal masks which she uses with myths and legends to tell stories. Her masks have appeared in dozens of solo shows and are in many museum and private collections. She has been active in feminist work, and helped found Women's Political Caucus (*q.v.*) here. In 1996, the Veteran Feminists of America honored her as a pioneering feminist. She moved to Donnelly Drive in 1965 and is the author of a book on metal sculpture. [JFS]

Benusis, Alison, of 2 Peaceable Street was Miss Connecticut in 1993, and had been Miss Connecticut Teen in 1990. [JFS]

Benusis, Jennifer, of 2 Peaceable Street, was Miss Connecticut in 1986. [JFS]

Bercovici, Konrad, (1882–1961), was a prolific writer of novels, travel books, and Hollywood movies. His novel, *The Volga Boatman*, was turned into a movie directed by Cecil B. De Mille. He was a friend of such actors as Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin — though he later successfully sued Chaplin for stealing the plot Chaplin used for his 1940 hit film, "The Great Dictator." He lived on West Lane just across Ridgefield line in Lewisboro, but had Ridgefield mailing address. *See* The Orchard. [JFS]

Berendsen-Hill, Jane, a Ridgefielder since 1982, has been tax collector since 2004. A graduate of McGill University with a master's in management from MIT, she has been active in the community serving on the Board of Finance and School Site Committee, with PTAs, starting with Branchville, and as treasurer of Friends of Ridgefield Community Programs. [RidgefieldCT.org]

Beretta Arms Co. had, in the 1970s, a mailing address of P.O. Box 697, Ridgefield, Conn., 06877, (in 1980, Box 2000) and a phone number of 438-7345. Its stationery advertised "excellence in firearms design." An ad in *American Handgunner* magazine [Jan/Feb 1977] called the company "the distributor of Pietro Beretta guns." "Beretta is the oldest firearms manufacturer in the world." [W] The Ridgefield operation appears to have been a division of Charles Daly Co., a sporting and antique arms dealer,

which had an office at 10 South Street and whose president was Jerome S. Walzer of Weston. The operation was also associated with Sloan's Sporting Goods, at the same address. [JFS]

Bernese Mountain Dog Parade has been an annual event, started in 1995 by Cathy and Geoffrey Smith, who lived on Main Street near the Fountain. On a Saturday in October as many as 200 of this breed of large dogs would walk down Main Street's sidewalks with their owners. When the Smiths moved away, actor Giancarlo Esposito (*q.v*.), who had a Bernese Mountain dog, took over sponsorship. He was followed by Patti and Charles Ballard, who ran the parade for many years. The event ended in 2014, the 20th anniversary, and in 2015 took place in Greenwich. In 2024, it was resurrected in Ridgefield and takes place in December. [JFS, P10/9/2014]

Berquist, Philip, (1924-2016), was longtime chairman of the Housing Authority in the late 1970s and the 1980s. A CPA, he moved in 1954 to North Salem Road where he maintained a small farm or large garden. [P7/16/1987] He was active in Grange. [P1/28/2016]

Bernard's, a restaurant at 20 West Lane, was opened March 2000 by Bernard and Sarah Bouissou and soon included Sarah's Wine Bar on the second floor. It was formerly the Kane Inn, Tode's Inn, the Inn at Ridgefield, The Benjamin, and in 2026, is R House (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Bernstein, Jared, (1955-)**,** RHS 1974, lived on Tanton Hill Road, was the chair of the United States Council of Economic Advisers. He was the chief economist and economic adviser to Vice President Joseph Biden in the Obama Administration and was named in 2020 to serve on the Council of Economic Advisors by President-elect Joe Biden. He was a bass player in local bands as a teenager and graduated from the Manhattan School of Music. His mother, **Evelyn Bernstein,** was a longtime RHS physical education teacher, and his sister, Judy Bernstein, also taught in Ridgefield schools and was president of the teachers' union. [JFS]

Berthier Place, a dead-end road running south off Chestnut Hill Road, serves about nine, three-acre lots and was approved in 1987 as part of the 61-acre Dillon Estates subdivision by Dillon Associates (*q.v.*). The name recalls Alexandre Berthier, a French military officer under Comte Rochambeau (*q.v*.), who led French troops who encamped in this vicinity in 1781. [RN]

Besse, Alice Patricia Stefanelli, (1918-80) was Ridgefield tax collector 1965 until her death. [P5/8/1980]

Bessette, Aime Raymond "Ray," (1930-2013), a Massachusetts native with degrees from RPI and MIT, was a Wall Street investment banker who was the founder, chief backer and longtime leader of the Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation, which built the Ridgefield Skating Center in the early 1970s. He helped many youngsters learn and play hockey, his favorite sport. He was also a school board member. He lived at the former Albert H. Wiggin (*q.v*.) home on Peaceable Street, coming here in 1961 and moving to Naples, Fla., in 1989. [P3/7/2013]. [JFS, DD156]

Bessette, Mimi, an actress and singer, graduated RHS in 1974 and was Miss Ridgefield 1975. She performed in Broadway and Off Broadway shows including *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* on Broadway in 1982 [P3/25/1982], and *Bonnie and Clyde* in 2011. She has appeared on the TV show, *Difficult People*, and in the movie, *Annie*, has several albums of her songs plus appears in a half dozen cast albums. Her father was Ray

Bessette (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Best Division was a 1709 subdivision of meadowland which, as the name suggests, was prime property, deeded out to lucky proprietors. Most lots were along Danbury Road, from the vicinity of Fox Hill condominiums northward. It was also called **Best Meadow**. [RN]

Betts, Matthew, (1830-1915), a civil engineer, for many years he split his time between living in Manhattan and Ridgefield. He married to Margaret Keeler in 1856 in Ridgefield. He was a Republican state representative in 1877.

Betty was an enslaved servant of Esther Keeler (*q.v.*) for many years. [UNM]

Betty Grant: In 1739, an American Indian named Betty, with Jacob Turkey and Mokquaroose, sold Ridgefield settlers land extending from modern-day Ridgebury north to the New Fairfield line. Much became annexed to Danbury in 1846; Danburians apparently called it "the Betty Grant." [RN]

Betty's Corner was an old name for the intersection of Ridgebury and Old Ridgebury Roads in the north end of the town, said Daniel M. McKeon. Another source said it's in Danbury, just south of Interstate 84. The name supposed to come from the American Indian Betty — *see* Betty Grant. [RN]

Biagiotti, Aldo P., (1929-2024), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1947, was the author of *Impact: The Historical Account of the Italian Immigrants of Ridgefield, Connecticut,* published in 1990. He also wrote children's stories and gardening articles for magazines and had a radio show on Italian heritage on WREF (*q.v.*). He was an intelligence officer in the Army, then worked for the State Department, and was an agent for the CIA, and finally, worked for the Department of Agriculture. [NR, L5/31/2024.]

Biagiotti, Fabio Paul "Fibber," (1930-2023), RHS 1949, was a Ridgefield native and longtime teacher who was known as a consummate storyteller. He was a brother of Aldo Biagiotti (*q.v.*). [L9/2/2023]

Bicentennial of Ridgefield was celebrated in 1908 with various events, including speeches and the publication of a book, *Ridgefield, Conn., 1708-1908 Bi-Centennial Celebration,* (*q.v.*). William O. Seymour (*q.v.*) was chairman.

Bicycles: Despite at least two attempts to repeal the ordinance, bicycles were banned from Main Street sidewalks starting in 1893. The ban remained in effect until late in the 20th Century when it was quietly removed from the town ordinances during a major updating. It had rarely been enforced. Cycling had become so popular that in many cities, streets were paved in order to provide bicyclists with a safe surface. In fact, the roads in Connecticut were first paved primarily for cycling, not for then-rare automobiles. Ridgefield, however, didn't get a paved Main Street until the mid-1920s. Skateboards are still prohibited (2026) from sidewalks in business districts. One of the earliest bicycle dealers in town was Abram Dann, who advertised Columbia bicycles in 1895 — "they are the leading wheels. Guaranteed for one year." [P11/22/1895].

Biddle Hill, the high point at the "top" of Branchville Road near the western intersection of Old Branchville Road, was named for Edward R. Biddle's family who lived in the early 20th Century in a large house atop the hill on the former farm of Ebenezer W. Keeler, which included much of modern Twin Ridge (*q.v*). *See also* Biddle sisters, Nutmeg Ridge, Woodlands. [RN]

Biddle Sisters: **Christine** (1878-1972), **Harriet Louise** (1875-1963), and **Edna** Biddle (1889-1967), daughters of **Edward R.** and **Harriet Wilmerding Biddle**, longtime residents of Ridgefield in the first half of the 20th Century,

were members of a wealthy family who had their weekend and summer homes here. (Their brother, **H. Wilmerding Biddle**, was a frequent visitor until his death in 1962.) They lived on an estate at 306 Branchville Road, an area called Biddle Hill, until around 1940 when they bought a mansion at 30 Peaceable Street (ONS8). The sisters were active in St. Stephen's Church and in the Ridgefield Garden Club. Christine volunteered for the Red Cross during both world wars. *See also* Woodlands. [JFS]

Big Baby, a seven-foot resin sculpture by Nina Levy of Brooklyn, NY, of a child in diapers, was erected in front of the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in November 2003 while the museum was undergoing a $9-million expansion — the baby symbolized "rebirth." The face was vandalized Jan. 2 by two young men using road flares, and the sculpture was removed. [AP1/8/2004]

Big Shop is a 2½-story building at the north end of the Bailey Avenue municipal parking lot. Built ca. 1830 on the site of the present First Congregational Church, the structure housed a carriage factory and other small industries in the 19th Century and was also a community meeting place — Hannibal Hamlin, vice-president under Lincoln, spoke in second floor hall, called Jones Hall (*q.v.*), in 1864. The building, moved to the center of town around 1887 to make way for the church, continued to house businesses. A room at the southeast end was used for many years by "Judge" John Gilbert, trial justice, as his courtroom (*see* Justice Court); it was later used as meeting room for organizations [P3/13/1924]. In the mid-20th Century the Big Shop was turned into apartments; they were condemned by the town around 1971. The building was vacant until 1977 when Bartholomew T. Salerno (*q.v.*) purchased it from G.M. Zandri's (*q.v.*) family; he renovated and restored it as a location for restaurants, shops and offices. It now houses Luc's and TerraSole restaurants (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Big Shop Lane is an old path, only the ends of which are readily distinguishable today. It extends from Main Street between #426 and #440 eastward to lower Bailey Avenue. While it does not appear on 1856, 1867, 1893, or 1900 maps of the village, an engraving called "View from East Ridge," drawn in 1853, seems to show a path extending from Main Street to East Ridge in this vicinity. The lane is named for the Big Shop (*q.v.*), whose front borders the path. A 1972 investigation by a town attorney concluded the road is private, not owned by town. [RN]

Biglow, Lucius H., (1833-1909), was NYC music publisher, mostly of hymns. He partnered with Sylvester Main (*q.v.*) for many years as Biglow & Main, and was a friend and publisher of hymns of Fanny Crosby (*q.v.*). He was also president of L. H. Biglow & Co., printers and stationery suppliers; president of the Metropolitan Realty Company; and, according to the NYT, "director in a dozen other concerns." In 1888 he bought the former Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*) homestead and turned it into an estate, called Graeloe (*q.v.*). His daughter Elizabeth Biglow Ballard (*q.v.*) later lived on the estate and bequeathed it to town; it is now Ballard Park (*q.v.*). Biglow built the Telephone Building or Biglow Block (*q.v. each*) on Main Street. [JFS]

Biglow Block was an informal name given to the Tudor-style building at 411-419 Main Street, completed in April 1913 [P2/6/1913] by Lucius H. Biglow (*q.v.*). It was officially known as the Telephone Building, and later, the Martin Block, Amatuzzi Block and the Pizza Block (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Bike Peddlar was a bicycle shop behind Friendly Ice Cream, 105 Danbury

Road, (*q.v*.), that closed in 1975 [P3/13/1975]

Bill o' Fare was a restaurant in the Gaeta Shopping Center (*q.v.*) in the late 1960s and very early '70s, operated by Bart Keaveny. The space later housed the Semaphore and Galloway's (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Billboard signs along roads in Ridgefield were banned by zoning rules in the mid-20th Century.

Biow, Milton, (1892-1976), an advertising executive credited with coming up with the idea of mailing in box tops from cereals for premiums, owned the Mimosa (*q.v*.) estate in the 1950s. He also created a once famous cigarette advertising slogan, "Call for Philip Morris." He wrote books on his ad career and owned radio station WNEW in NYC. [WWW, RN, FBFR]

Birarelli, James, (1915-1943), the first Ridgefield native serviceman to die in World War II, was killed April 23, 1943, when his patrol was ambushed "by a vastly superior force" in North Africa, said his Silver Star award. "Private Birarelli refused to surrender. He opened fire on the enemy and assisted in driving them off. As a result of this action, he was mortally wounded." He was son of Mr. and Mrs. Nazzareno Birarelli of Colonial Park [WWW]

Birch Court, a short lane off Walnut Hill Road at Eight Lakes (*q.v*.), became a town road in 1964. [RN]

Birch Lane, a dead-end road off Poplar Road, was developed and named by Armando Salvestrini in the early 1960s. The birches may have been stock for Outpost Nurseries (*q.v*.). Some maps label it as Birch Road. [RN]

Birch Pond is a mispronunciation of Burt's Pond (*q.v*.), an old name for Lake Mamanasco (*q.v*.). "Birch" Pond appears in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. The Burt family once owned the grist mill and much land around the lake. [RN]

Birchglade was the name of Blanche Shoemaker Wagstaff's (*q.v.*) home here in the mid-1930s. [JFS]

Birdseye, Agnes Elizabeth, (1900-1931), whose family had a home on Peaceable Street in Georgetown, became famous in 1931 when she shot her physician lover and then killed herself in NYC. She was buried in Branchville Cemetery, but her gravestone has vanished. [WWW]

Birth, first: The first person born in Ridgefield was Sarah Benedict (*q.v.)*.

Birthday, town's: The first purchase of Ridgefield land from the indigenous occupants was completed Sept. 30, 1708, which is generally considered the date the town was born. [JFS]

Bishop, Rev. David D., was rector of St. Stephen's Church from 1873 to 1878.

Bishop, Sarah (?-1810) was a "hermitess" who lived in a West Mountain cave in the southeastern corner of North Salem, NY, just over the state line. The cave is on the private property of today's Bulkley estate called Rippowam (*q.v.*), off Rippowam Road, and is not open to the public. Bishop would visit villages of Ridgefield, South Salem, and North Salem, especially for church services. Her origins and reason for seclusion are unknown, although legends include being distraught over abandonment by a sea captain lover on Long Island, or shamed by being assaulted by a British soldier on Long Island. She froze to death in 1810 and buried in an unmarked grave in North Salem. She's extensively described by Samuel Goodrich in ROAL, and is the topic of a Goodrich poem. She was also the subject of Maurice Enright's (*q.v.*) highly fictional novel, *The Ridgefield Tavern, A Romance of Sarah Bishop, Hermitess During the American Revolution*. [WWW]

Bissell, Harvey Platt, (1866-1930), was a pharmacist whose name appears on the venerable Bissell Pharmacy (*q.v.*), which he owned as H.P. Bissell Company from 1895 until 1928 and which he brought from Judge Hiram K. Scott (*q.v.*). Bissell was elected a state representative, 1901-03, state senator, 1914-20 and Connecticut comptroller, 1921-23, with a reputation for efficiency. President Harding named him collector of customs for Connecticut in 1923; he served until death. He also served on the school board, Republican Town Committee 16 years, and was a burgess. His house is now West Lane Inn at 22 West Lane. [WWW, DD98, DD288]

Bissell Building at 378-382 Main Street was erected ca. 1896 by Harvey P. Bissell (*q.v.*), owner of a pharmacy therein, shortly after the original structure on this spot burned down. A century later, the Bissell Building burned to the ground (May 26, 2005). About two years later, it was replaced by an almost exact replica of its predecessor. Among the businesses in the south side (#378) of the old and new versions of the building have been the A&P Market, Brunetti's Market, Gail's Station House, Bissell House, Village Tavern, Dog and Pony, and The Lantern (*q.v. each*). The north side store, 382, has been occupied by Interiors & Designs by Ursula for many years and was where Bissell Pharmacy was before the 2005 fire. [JFS, DD98]

Bissell House, a restaurant at 378 Main Street in the resurrected Bissell Building (*q.v.*). was opened by Roy Reeves in 2009 [P7/23/2009] and closed in 2015. It was briefly resurrected as the Dog and Pony, with Reeves still owner, then closed again in 2016, and was replaced by Village Tavern (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Bissell Pharmacy, earlier called the H.P. Bissell Drug Co. and later commonly called "Bissell's," was in recent years Ridgefield's oldest business. It was started in 1853 by Col. Hiram K. Scott (*q.v.*) and acquired by Harvey P. Bissell (*q.v.*) in 1895. Four months later, the building burned to the ground in the fire of 1895 (*q.v.*). Bissell erected a new building and pharmacy, at 382 Main Street. Bissell's had a popular soda fountain for 68 years until Feb. 3, 1964. After he died in 1930, the store went through a series of owners, including James J. Kelly, Edgar C. Rapp, Priscilla Lee, James Dubuque, John Fusco Jr., and Ed and Sue Karvosky. In 2005, the building again burned to the ground. The pharmacy moved nearby to the east side of the Donnelly shopping center parking lot at 23 Governor Street, where its line of non-medical gifts greatly expanded into **The Loft at Bissell's**. Neighboring RVNAHealth bought the building in 2024. When **Ed** and **Sue Karvosky** retired in late 2025, Bissell Pharmacy was closed. [JFS, DD98]

Black, Cuyler, a cartoonist, was youth minister at St. Stephen's Church from 2003 to 2008, resigning to "spread the Gospel through humor" full time with his greeting card and stationery business called Inherit the Mirth. A cartoonist since age 10, he'd had a national strip, "The Swan Factory," but quit after two years to pursue youth ministry. His book, *What's That Funny Look on Your Faith*, published in 2006, features his religious cartoons. In 2026, he is online pastor for the Liquid Church in New Jersey. [JFS]

Black Frank's Corner is a late 19th/early 20th Century name for the intersection of North Salem and Ridgebury Roads. Beverly Crofut said "Black Frank" was a Micmac who had a shack in the triangle of the intersection in the 1800s. Beers' atlas shows F. Stedwell living there in 1867; Frank Stedwell was listed in the U.S. Census as Black. *See also* Frank's Corner. [RN]

Blackman Road, an old highway, traverses Hawley's Ridge (*q.v.*) from

Farmingville Road south to the Ivy Hill Road intersection where the Blackman family had a sizable farm or farms. In 1805, John Blackman of Fairfield bought a 54-acre farm in the Hawley's Ridge area; much of the farm is now Hunter Heights (*q.v.*). [RN]

Blacksmith's Ridge is a very old name for a ridge in vicinity of today's Westmoreland development, particularly the Barry Avenue end. First mentioned in 1717, it's believed to be connected with Benjamin Burt (*q.v.*), town's first blacksmith, who had land thereabouts. [RN]

Blacksmith Ridge Bridge appears in mid-1700's deeds and may have referred to Peaceable Street as it crosses the swamp near Golf Lane. [RN]

Blacksmith Ridge Road serves a 1981 subdivision by Lewis J. Finch, son Barry Finch, and Dr. Robert Mead of 59 acres into 18 lots off east side of Peaceable Ridge Road and the north side of Peaceable Hill Road, overlooking the old Blacksmith's Ridge (*q.v.*) or possibly situated on part of Blacksmith's Ridge. [RN]

Blacksmiths in Ridgefield included Theodore B. Bailey, John Barlow, Benjamin Burt, Uriah DeForest, Eli Foote, W.H. Gaffney, Thomas Hawley, Lawrence Hoyt, William W. Seymour, Harry Thomas, and Norman Tinker (*q.v. each*).

Blackwell, Betsy Talbot, (1905-85), was editor of *Mademoiselle* magazine from 1937 until 1960s and tripled its circulation. She inaugurated many innovations and published many leading writers. She lived on West Lane, starting 1971. Son James M. Blackwell IV (*q.v.*) lived nearby. [WWW]

Blackwell, James M., IV, (1931-2003), was an executive with *Newsweek* magazine and member of the Board of Education in the 1970s. He lived at 20 Old South Salem Road with his wife, **Anne** (1941-2014), who was active in the community, especially with the Thrift Shop. His mother, Betsy Talbot Blackwell (*q.v.*), was a noted *Mademoiselle* editor. [NR]

Blaine, James G. 3rd, (1888-1969), namesake grandson of 1884 Republican presidential candidate and two-time secretary of state, bought the E.P. Dutton (*q.v.*) house on High Ridge for $32,650 in 1924 [P7/3/1924], but did not live there long. He was a NYC banker and investment broker. [DD168]

Blakely, Peter, is an internationally known photographer whose work has appeared in many major magazines, including *National Geographic, Time,* and *Newsweek*. He got his start as a photographer for *The Ridgefield Pres*s in the early 1970s while a student at RHS, from which he graduated 1973. During an RHS field trip to NYC, he came upon a crime scene, photographed it, took the negatives to the *Daily News*, and his picture wound up on the front page of the nation's then-largest circulation daily newspaper the next day. He's lived and worked in Japan many years. [JFS]

Blankenship, William, (1934-2012), was an IBM speechwriter who lived in Ridgefield in the 1970s and wrote a dozen novels, many of them best-sellers, including science fiction, mysteries, thrillers, horror and historical tales that were published in 27 languages. *Brotherly Love* became a CBS movie of the week in 1985. [WWW]

Blashfield, Edwin Howland, (1848-1936), a noted American artist, specialized in murals and was president of the National Academy of Design and the Society of American Artists. He was a summer resident, but apparently rented. He was a friend of Cass Gilbert (*q.v.*) and J. Alden Weir (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Blein, Sylvia M. (1890-1980), a native of France, was the companion and housekeeper of Geraldine Farrar (*q.v.*) from 1925 until the opera star's

death in 1967. She donated the stained glass window in the front of St. Mary's Church in memory of Farrar. [JFS]

Blight Prevention Board, consisting of first selectperson, health director, fire marshal, official and a member of the public, carries out the "Blighted Property" ordinance, adopted in 2014. It attempts to crack down on properties left unmaintained or with excessive numbers of unused motor vehicles. It meets monthly and won't accept anonymous complaints. [RW]

Bliznakov, Dr. Emile G., (1926-2003), a native of Bulgaria, was a leading expert on the immune system and aging. From the 1960s into the 1990s, he lived at 189 Ledges Road. He was president of the New England Institute for Medical Research (*q.v.*) in the 1970s. He wrote the book, *The Miracle Nutrient: Coenzyme Q10* (1987). He retired to Florida where he died.

Blizzards: *See* Snow storms.

Blockbuster, a video rental chain, had a large store at Copps Hill Plaza (*q.v.*) from 1991 until 2011, driving some local entrepreneurs out of business, but itself succumbing to competition from online streaming movies. [JFS]

Blodgett's map of 1792, drawn by William Blodgett, attempts to show the local industries of Connecticut's towns. The roads are difficult to see, but are quite accurate in reflecting major routes of the period. The map is also interesting in showing the little jog at the northwest corner of Redding, just above Great Pond, part of Fitch's Farm (*q.v.*) that once belonged to Redding but was ceded to Ridgefield. [Rumsey]

Bloomer family: *See* DD232 for early 20th Century history.

Bloomer Road, extending between Old Branchville Road and Branchville Road, is named for **Thomas S. Bloomer** (1859-1916), who in 1890 acquired a 35-acre farm there. His son, **Frank J. Bloomer**, (1890-1966), built a stone base for part of road by hauling rocks by horse from nearby fields — it's said to be one of the best-built minor roads in town. It may be part of an old highway that today includes Cooper Road (*q.v.*). [RN]

Blue Beats, The, a 1960s Ridgefield-based rock band consisted of Bruce Boege, Lance Drake, Pete Robbins, and Andy Gaeta. It cut two records for Columbia: "Extra Girl" in 1966, and "The Collector" in 1967. [OR]

Blue Feather Inn was a restaurant on Route 7, north of Branchville, near the Nod Hill Brewery location in 2021. Operated in the 1950s, it was owned by William DeLaurentis. The building probably no longer exists. [RSD1958]

Blue Front Grocery Store on West Lane, operated by Paul Davis in the 1920s, became Casa-More (*q.v.*), and is now West Lane Deli (*q.v. eac*h). [DD246]

Blue Ridge Road extends from Old Sib Road to Barrack Hill Road at Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*); and was accepted as a town highway in 1957. Invented by the subdividers, it was not an old local name. [RN]

Bluebird is an apartment building at 27 West Lane, first built as the West Lane Inn around 1900. [JFS]

Bluebirds live year-round in Ridgefield, though they probably once migrated south for the winter. *See also* Robins.

Bluhdorn, Charles G., (1926-1983), a native of Vienna, became one of the world's richest and most powerful men. At 16, he came to NYC, studied at City College and Columbia and, in 1946, went to work at the Cotton Exchange, earning $15 a week. Three years later, he formed a company that eventually became Gulf & Western, a conglomerate that ranked 61st in the Fortune 500 by 1981 and owned Paramount Pictures, Madison Square

Garden, and Simon & Schuster publishing. In 1963, he bought a 30-acre estate on lower Florida Hill Road and quietly contributed to the community. Among those who attended the private funeral services at St. Mary's Church was former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. [WWW]

Blum, Dr. Harry, (1898-2004), a physician, was also an artist who had his first formal exhibit at a NYC gallery at the age of 100. He owned a farm on Route 7 between Stonehenge and New Roads from 1943 to 1995, and in the 1950s and 1960s, raised minks there. He moved to Southbury. [WWW]

Blum, Howard, is a journalist and author of a half dozen non-fiction works, including *The Brigade: An Epic Story of Vengeance, Salvation and WWII* (2001). As a *New York Times* reporter, he was twice nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. He lived on High Ridge in early 2000s and now lives in Redding.[JFS]

Blume, Robert Nichols (1925-1945), a descendant of Ridgefield settler Jonathan Rockwell, was killed in action in Luxembourg Feb. 10, 1945, at the age of 19. Born in upper NY state, he came here as a boy when his father, Adrian, became a foreman at Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*). He graduated RHS 1943 and immediately joined Army. He was a radio operator who was killed while fighting snipers. He earned the Bronze Star and Purple Heart and is buried in Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial. [WWW]

Blumgarten, James, (1920-2005), a native of NYC who graduated from Harvard, was a screenwriter for early TV, doing such shows as *Doctor Kildare, Empire, Kraft Theater, Playhouse 90, Saints and Sinners, ABC's Wide World of Mystery*, and *Mr. Peepers.* He also wrote the script for the 1957 movie, *Mr. Rock 'n' Roll,* starring Alan Freed as himself. His books included *Up Against the Wall (Street)* in 1972 and *The Astronaut* in 1974. He lived here from 1957 to around 1977 when he moved to South Salem, but he is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [WWW]

BMW of Ridgefield at 746 Danbury Road acquired Ridgefield European Motors (*q.v.*) in 2008 and greatly enlarged the showroom building. In 2021, it was sold to Keeler Motor Car Company of Latham, N.Y. [P12/30/2021] *See also* Ridgefield Diner, Eric Erhardt.

Board of…: *See under* the descriptive name of the board, *viz*., for Board of Education, *see* Education, Board of.

Boardman, William Henry, (-1914), who had an estate on West Mountain Road, was for many years president of the *Railroad Gazette*, and for eight years its editor. He joined the newspaper shortly after his graduation from the University of Michigan in 1869. *See* Clattercote Farm. [P2/19/1914]

Boats: *See* Motor Boats.

Boat launches, both provided by the State of Connecticut, are located at the south end of Lake Mamanasco (*q.v.*) on Mamanasco Road and at the south end of Lake Pierrepont (*q.v*.) off Barlow Mountain Road. No gasoline-powered boats are allowed — *see* Motor Boats. [JFS]

Boating: Boats are permitted on all lakes in town, but gasoline motors are forbidden. *See also* Boat Launches, Motor Boats. [JFS]

Bob Hill Road extends from Knollwood Drive to Rockcrest Drive at the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v*.) atop Ridgebury Mountain. It was named for Robert Kaufman (*q.v.*) of Redding, Knolls developer, who for many years continued to operate the Topstone Hydraulic Company, the water firm that served the 250 or so houses at the Knolls. It was accepted by the town in 1961. [RN]

Bob Sharp Motors got its start in 1966 as a Gulf service station at 38 Danbury

Road (Bareburger in 2026), operated by race-car driver Bob (Robert J.) Sharp (*q.v.*). Sharp began his Datsun — now Nissan — auto dealership here, but by the early 1970s moved to a much larger facility on Route 7 in the Wilton section of Georgetown. He has been famous for his sports-car racing team that has included such drivers as actors Paul Newman and Tom Cruise. Helped by Sharp's fame as a race-car driver, the dealership went from selling 200 cars a year to some 2,000. The dealership was sold to Sharp employee Bruce Bennett in the early 2000s. [JFS]

Bobby's Court, a dead-end road off Riverside Drive at Stonehenge Estates, was named for Robert Tuccio, son of the subdivision developer Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*). Robert was a real estate agent and homebuilder in town. The road was accepted by the town in 1964. [RN]

Bob's Lake was a neighborhood name for Lake Windwing (*q.v.*) off Bennett's Farm Road. Bob Kaufman (*q.v.*) was the developer of the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), who owned property around the lake. [RN]

Bodurtha, Dr. Joann Norma, RHS 1970, is a professor of genetic medicine at Johns Hopkins, with specialties in dysmorphology, genetics and inherited diseases, and pediatrics. She grew on Hayes Lane. [JFS]

Boehringer-Ingelheim is a Germany-based manufacturer of pharmaceuticals whose USA administrative headquarters is north of Shadow Lake Road, along with a large R&D facility. B-I came here in 1974, buying 134 acres of old farmland off the north side of Shadow Lake Road as well as the Harry Mallory (*q.v.*) estate off Briar Ridge Road. In 1977 it established a temporary corporate headquarters in the old Ridgefield High School building on East Ridge, now the Venus Office Building (*q.v.*), making many repairs and improvements to the building. Gov. Ella Grasso attended the 1977 groundbreaking in Ridgebury for the R&D facility. By 1985 it was the town's top taxpayer, with an assessment of $21.8 million. The company opened its new administrative HQ in Ridgebury in 1992, leaving the old high school. By 2003, it had grown in the US to the point where it began a $500-million expansion of its Ridgebury campus. *See* also S. Scott Faubel. [RT]

Bogart, Charles D., was Ridgefield's second school superintendent, serving from 1921 to 1924. [JFS]

Bogot, Rabbi Howard I., a professor and an official of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, lived on Harvey Road after moving to town in 1981 [P6/18/1981]. He gave the annual Memorial Day Address in 1982 [P5/27/1982]. He left town in 1993 and, in 2026, was a lecturer in Jewish studies at Penn State Abington. [JFS]

Bogus, a section of Ridgebury south of George Washington Highway, is generally the area now called Ned's Mountain. The name first appears in a 1782 deed from the proprietors to John Rockwell's heirs for 2 acres "on the northwest part of Daniel Rockwell's land at Bogus so called." This mention occurs is 45 years before the first recorded use of Bogus in a print medium, reports *Oxford English Dictionary*. The word may have been used to reflect poor quality of the land, which is steep and very rocky. [RN]

Bogus Road, one of town's oldest road names still in use, first appears in an 1806 deed for land at Short Woods (*q.v.*). The name today applies chiefly to road running between a point near the end of Sophia Drive south to the intersection of Ned's Mountain Road. However, Rockwell says Bogus Road in 1770s was well-defined highway, extending from George

Washington Highway, south across Ned's Mountain Road, through the modern-day Hemlock Hills refuge, and coming out on Bennett's Farm Road near the Ridgebury School; the Hemlock Hills section is now a walking path. British troops are said to have used this route April 27, 1777, on their morning trek from Danbury to Ridgefield after burning of the former. [RN]

Boland, Elizabeth, (1899-1990), a Westport native who grew up here, taught mathematics in Ridgefield schools for 48 years, including at Center, Titicus and RHS. She was known as 'Bess' and was a sister of Mary (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Boland, Mary, (1898-1986), lived at 65 West Lane and taught English here 45 years, including at Center, West Mountain, and the junior and senior high schools on East Ridge. She began here in 1919 and retired in 1964. When she started teaching, the annual salary was $1,000. [P4/24/1986]. [WWW]

Boland, William P., (1901-1998), a well-known gardener on estates in the High Ridge neighborhood, was also a beekeeper. He was a brother of teachers Mary and Elizabeth Boland (*q.v. each*). His house at 65 West Lane had been the original State Police Troop A barracks (*see* Troop A). [DD291]

Bollas, Bertha, (1877-1963), was a Ridgefield real estate agent and small-scale developer who was known for smoking cigars. [KSN]

Bollenback, Dirk Floyd, (1931-2017), a native of Illinois, was a teacher at RHS from 1958 to 1996, and served as Social Studies Department chair for 32 years. He earned many honors including a John Hay Fellowship, a John F. Kennedy Library Award, and a listing in *Who's Who among America's Teachers.* In 2000, he wrote *St. Stephen's Church Reaches the Millennium* (*q.v.*), a history of the parish from 1975 to 2000, a follow-up to Robert S. Haight's (*q.v.*) 1975 history. He was a member of the Republican Town Committee, St. Stephen's choir, and Danbury Hospital volunteers. His wife, **Beverly**, was a president of the District Nursing Association. [WWW]

Bolling's Wines and Liquors at 393 Main Street had originally been the site of the A&P Liquor store. It then became Gristede Brothers "package store" in 1962 with William Bolling as its manager. When Gristedes (*q.v.*) closed its nearby market in 1975, the liquor store closed, too, and Bolling took over the space for 15 years, selling the business in December 1980 to Michael and Teri Liberta (*see* Liberta's Liquor Store). [JFS]

Bond rallies were conducted during World War II to sell war bonds, allowing citizens to invest in the war effort financially. Rallies were usually accompanied by variety shows and other kinds of performances, many of them on the stage of the original Ridgefield Playhouse (*q.v.*). One rally Sept. 25, 1943, was broadcast over the NBC radio network [P8/25/1943]. By August 1945 more than $6 million in war bonds — $108 million in 2026 dollars — were purchased by Ridgefielders. [P8/23/1945]

Bond ratings: Bond ratings are determinations by major financial companies about the creditworthiness of a municipality that issues general obligation bonds (*q.v.*) to pay for major projects or purchases. The better the rating, the lower the interest the bond-issuer has to pay. In October 2024, Standard & Poor's reaffirmed Ridgefield's long-standing AAA rating, the highest (best) rating possible. [ITH]

Bonds: To be able to afford major projects, like new buildings, the town issues bonds that investors can purchase and profit from the interest the town pays them. Thus, a bond is basically the same as a loan. The town has auctions of its bonds and sells them to whoever bids the lowest interest

rate. Those rates can be affected by the town's bond rating (*q.v.*). [ITH]

Bones was a nickname for several members of the Carboni family, including Reno Carboni (*see* Renz) and Olinto Carboni (*q.v.*). A variation was T-Bone (*q.v.),* applied to at least Stephen D. Carboni. [JFS]

Bongo's was a popular, almost legendary general store, affiliated with Western Auto, at 440 Main Street (ONS135). Opened in 1959 by Joseph Bongo of Stamford, it sold a wide variety of products from soft drinks to TV sets. The store closed in April 1965 after Bongo said he lost his lease; the space was taken by Allans' Men's Store. "The sidewalk in front has been a favorite gathering place for the duck-tail haircut, tight-pants young men," said *The Press.* [P4/29/1965]

Book banning: *See* Book controversy *and* Please Omit Funeral.

Book Barn was a book shop and tea house operated by Emmy and Fred Gregor (*q.v*.) from 1929 until the early 1940s on Route 33, literally on the Wilton town line. It was a popular tourist destination in the 1930s. Many postcards of this business, mostly from the 1930s, survive today. The building still stands, but has long been a residence. [JFS]

Book controversy: Between 1970 and 1973, the Board of Education was widely accused of "book burning" after succumbing to pressures from some parents — and board members — to remove certain books from the high school and junior high electives. Among the titles were *Soul on Ice* by Eldridge Cleaver, *Boss* by Mike Royko, and *Police, Courts and the Ghetto*. Among the groups opposed to the books were the Ridgefield Taxpayers League and Concerned Parents of Ridgefield. The controversy drew national press coverage and sparked an investigation by the Connecticut Education Association, which issued an October 1973 report, published as a 38-page booklet, called *Responsible Academic Freedom: Challenge to Ridgefield.* In the end most of the books were retained or reinstated. [WR]

Books on the Common, Ridgefield's longed-lived bookstore, was established in 1984 at Copps Hill Common (*q.v.*) — hence the name — by Sally and Bob Silbernagel (a few years after Bob's death in 1991, she became Mrs. Rudy Ruggles Jr.). In 2004, the store was acquired by the wife and husband team of Ellen Burns and Darwin Ellis, who, in 2009, moved to the former Bedient building, 404 Main Street. The store is still thriving in 2026. [JFS]

Books Plus, a bookstore at 424 Main Street, was established by Bernie Learman, in the early 1970s. It was purchased by Janice G. Whitney of Wilton from Carol and Henry Hill in 1981 [P10/8/1981]. It closed in the 1980s. [JFS]

Books about Ridgefield, including history and natural history, in and out of print (*q.v. most titles and/or authors*): *About Ridgefield: What We Were — What We Are*, by Madeleine Corbin, et al., Ridgefield Design Council, 2002, comprehensive, lavishly illustrated report on many facets of Ridgefield; *Ambling Along Old Main Street*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2024, over 100 old color images of Main Street, High Ridge and other parts of the village, with history and a map; *An Account of the Battle of Ridgefield and Tryon's Raid,* by James R. Case, privately printed, 1927, first detailed history of the 1777 battle; *Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records, Vol. 36,* by Wilma J. Standifer Moore, Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000, Ridgefield births, marriages and deaths from 1709 to 1850; *Battle of Ridgefield* by Keith Marshall Jones, Connecticut Colonel Press, 2025, the

most comprehensive, up-to-date account of this significant event in the Revolution, many maps, photos, profiles; *Bedini Addendum, The*, by Silvio A. Bedini, edited by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2026, additional information and corrections supplementing Ridgefield in Review (*q.v.*), including lectures, articles; *Brief Historical Notice of the Town of Ridgefield, A,* Village Improvement Society, 1906, history plus many photographs of the town, its houses, gardens and points of interest; *Country Life in Old Ridgebury, A,* Red Petticoat Press, 2023, annotated and illustrated diary for 1888 of Gilbert Burr, a young Ridgefield farmer; *Discovering Ridgefield* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2024, tips and resources for researching the past; *Farmers Against the Crown* by Keith Marshall Jones, Connecticut Colonel Publishing Co., 2002, account of the Battle of Ridgefield; *Farms of Farmingville*, *The*, by Keith Marshall Jones, Connecticut Colonel Publishing Co., 2001, a two-century history of 23 Ridgefield farmhouses "and the people who gave them life"; *Fascinating, But Forgotten Ridgefielders,* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2023, over 100 past Ridgefielders who accomplished notable — sometimes amazing — things; *Five Village Walks,* by Jack Sanders, Ridgefield Historical Society, 2008, self-guided history tours of village, with many pictures; *Glimpses of Ridgefield*, by Marie H. Kendall, 1900, unpaged, album-style book of dozens pictures of Ridgefield from the 1890s by a pioneering woman photographer; *God Save the King* by Keith Marshall Jones, Connecticut Colonel Publishing, 2025, a look at Ridgefield's many loyalists at the time of the Revolution; *Here Lyes Ye Body*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2022, guide to town's cemeteries, including interesting people buried in them, stone styles, traditions; *Hidden History of Ridgefield*, by Jack Sanders, The History Press, 2015, a look at Ridgefield's often unheralded people, places and things; *Historical Sketch of Ridgefield, An*, by Allan Nevins, The Elms Inn, 1922, Pulitzer-winning historian's brief history of the town and a description of what it was like a century ago; *History of Ridgefield*, by George L. Rockwell, privately printed, 1927, 583-page classic, strong on 19th and early 20th Century, with contains many early birth, marriage and death records and many photos; *History of Ridgefield, Connecticut*, by Rev. Daniel Teller, T. Donovan, 1878, first comprehensive history of the town, with great the engravings of scenes and buildings; *Images of America: Ridgefield*, by Kay Ables, et al., Arcadia Publishing, 1999, 127 pages of finely reproduced black-and-white pictures of Ridgefield past; *Impact: The Historical Account of the Italian Immigrants of Ridgefield, CT,* by Aldo Biagiotti, privately printed, 1990, extensive history of Italian community; *Notable Ridgefielders*, by Jack Sanders, The Ridgefield Press, 2000, 88-page, tabloid-sized collection of biographies of over 400 newsmakers during the 20th Century; *Proprietors of Ridgefield, The,* by Glenna M. Welsh, The Caudatowa Press, 1976, early settlement of the town, with particular focus on those who lived on Main Street; *Recollections of A Lifetime,* by Samuel G. Goodrich (Peter Parley), Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1856, two-volume autobiography with the first 300 pages on his growing up in late 1700s and early 1800s Ridgefield; *Recollections of My Youth, 1926-1957,* by Dr. Joseph J. Moylan Sr., self-published, 2013, well-written accounts of life in Ridgefield, chiefly in the 1930s and 40s; *Remember the Ladies: Notable Women of Ridgefield*, by Kay Ables et al., Ridgefield Historical Society, 2008, profiles of 14 noteworthy women in town's history;

Ridgefield 1900-1950, by Jack Sanders, Arcadia Publishing, 2003, over 215 views of Ridgefield looked in the first half of the 20th Century; *Ridgefield at 300,* by Geoffrey Morris, Morris Media Group, 2008, lavishly illustrated, coffee-table book about town's celebration of its 300th birthday; *Ridgefield Celebrities*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2023, profiles of 60 nationally and internationally known Ridgefielders of the past; *Ridgefield Chronicles*, by Jack Sanders, The History Press, 2014, interesting people, geography and places; *Ridgefield, Conn. 1708-1908, Bi-Centennial Celebration,* Bi-Centennial Committee, 1908, a collection of history, recollections, speeches, and photographs for the town's 200th birthday; *Ridgefield Encyclopedia*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2026, over 5,500 entries on Ridgefield people, places and things (this book); *Ridgefield in 1800* by Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich, The Acorn Club, 1954, a reproduction of the Congregational minister's November 1800 "statistical report" on the town; *Ridgefield in Review,* by Silvio A. Bedini, 250th Anniversary Committee, 1958, the most modern, complete history of the town; *Ridgefield Names,* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2021, 629 pages of the history of Ridgefield through its more than 1,200 names of roads, hills, mountains, streams, lakes, ponds, parks, refuges, and more; *Ridgefield Natural Resources Inventory,* Conservation Commission, 2012, 102 pages on almost every aspect of natural Ridgefield, including geology, water, flora, and fauna; maps, lists, etc.; *Ridgefield Reader,* edited by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2025, fiction, fact and poetry about or inspired by Ridgefield over three centuries; *Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department: 100 Years of Service* by Richard Aarons, RVFD, 1997, history of the department, with many photographs; *Ridgefield Walk Book*, Conservation Commission, 2014, trail maps and descriptions of the town's parks and open spaces; *Ridgefield's Great Estates*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2023, profiles of 20 'Golden Era' estates and their owners, with color illustrations; *Saint Stephen's Church Reaches the Millennium,* by Dirk Bollenback, St. Stephen's Church, 2000, a supplement to Robert Haight's church history (*q.v.*), covering the last quarter of the 20th Century; *St. Stephen's Church, Its History for 250 Years 1725 to 1975,* by Robert S. Haight, St. Stephen's Parish, 1975, the story of the church and its place in the community; *School Days*, Red Petticoat Press, 2024, education in Ridgefield in the era of the one-room schoolhouse, with profiles of 20 old schools; *So Nobly They Served*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2023, profiles of over 50 Ridgefielders who served their country with distinction over past three centuries; *Uncle Ned's Mountain*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2025, Ridgefield's African-American community from 1708 to the turn of 21st Century, including slavery, Underground Railroad, Black settlers, Revolutionary and Civil Wars soldiers; *We Gather Together… Making the Good News Happen: 1712-2012,* by Rev. Charles Hambrick-Stowe et al., First Congregational Church, 2011, extensively illustrated survey history of the church by its then pastor; *Where is Ridgefield Heading?* League of Women Voters, 1950, possibilities for Ridgefield's dealing with future growth, including bypasses for the village, and reconstruction of commercial blocks; *Wicked Ridgefield,* by Jack Sanders, The History Press, 2016, bad guys and bad times including thievery, bigotry, murders, missing persons, arson, book-banning, and other assorted man-made misery. [JFS]

Books set in or inspired by Ridgefield, either novels or memoirs, include: **Fiction**: *A Dying Fall* by Hildegarde Dolson, Lippincott, 1973; *Cast Down: A New England Haunting* by Tracy Petry, My Mutt Publications, 2015; *Divide by Two* by Mildred Gilman (Wohlforth), Mercury, 1940; *Don't Raise the Bridge (Lower the River)* by Max Wilk, MacMillan, 1960; *God's Payday* by Edgar C. Bross, G. W. Dillingham Company, 1898; *Hometown Heroes* by Susanna Hofmann McShea, St. Martin's Press, 1990; *Ladybug, Ladybug* by Susanna Hofmann McShea, St. Martin's Press, 1994; *Murmuring Ever* by Lynn Wallrapp, Manor Books Gothic, 1975; *My Brother Sam is Dead* by Christopher Collier & James Lincoln Collier, Scholastic, 1974; *Murder and Blueberry Pie* by Richard and Frances Lockridge, Lippincott, 1959; *Pecked to Death by Goslings*, by Jane Trahey, Prentice-Hall, 1969; *Please Omit Funeral* by Hildegarde Dolson, Lippincott, 1975; *The Hessian* by Howard Fast, Morrow, 1972; *The Pumpkin-Shell Wife* by Susanna Hofmann McShea, St. Martin's Press, 1992; *The Red Petticoat* by Joan Palmer, Lothrop Lee & Shepard, 1969; *The Ridgefield Tavern: A Romance of Sarah Bishop* by Dr. Maurice Enright, privately printed, 1908; *To Spite Her Face* by Hildegarde Dolson, Lippincott, 1971; *Two Little Girls in Blue* by Mary Higgins Clark, Simon and Schuster, 2006. **Non-fiction:** *A Private Battle* by Cornelius Ryan and Kathryn Morgan Ryan, Simon & Schuster, 1979; *Life Without George* by Irene Kampen, 1961; *Lost in Place: Growing Up Absurd in Suburbia* by Mark Salzman, Random House, 1995; *Memories* by Laura Curie Allee Shields, privately printed, 1940; *The Nearly Departed: Or, My Family and Other Foreigners* by Brenda Cullerton, Little, Brown and Company, 2003. [JFS]

Booth, Sheila, a native of England who grew up in Ridgefield, RHS 1966, was in the 1970s a reporter and canine columnist for *The Ridgefield Press.* An expert on dog training, she has written several books including *Purely Positive Training* and *Schutzhund Obedience*. [JFS]

Borden & Short, a short-lived hat-making firm in Ridgefield in 1860, included Edwin Short. It lasted a year, 1860-61. Short moved on to make hats in Bethel with Charles Shepard, under the name of Shepard & Short. The factory became the site of Bethel Town Hall. [CBRFC]

Boring, Wayne, (1905-1987), was one of the major artists for *Superman* comics from the early 1940s into the late 1960s. He drew more than 1,350 Sunday and 8,300 daily *Superman* strips, plus many comic books and covers. He lived on Lincoln Lane from 1957 to 1972. [WWW]

Borough of Ridgefield was incorporated March 12, 1901, for residents of the center of town, who received extra services such as sewers, fire hydrants, sidewalks, and street lights, and who were specially taxed to support them. Borough voters met the first Monday after first day of January to elect a warden, six burgesses, a clerk, a treasurer, a collector, a borough sheriff, three assessors and two auditors [P4/8/1909]. The borough also hired a "night watchman." The borough was abolished in 1921, replaced by the Village District (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Boss was a nickname for Rufus H. Pickett and for Albin Jennings (*q.v. each*). It was also the title of a locally controversial book by Mike Royko (*see* Book controversy). [JFS]

Boss Blues, The, was a Ridgefield-based rock band in the 1960s. [OR]

Bossidy, Lawrence, (1935-2025), a Ridgefielder since 1970 and a former GE executive, was a major American corporate leader, noted especially for his

work as CEO of Allied Signal Corp., which took over and changed its name to Honeywell. He co-authored the best-selling book, *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done,* and its sequel *Confronting Reality: Master the New Model for Success*. He supported and was a benefactor of many community organizations. [NR]

Boston Chicken was a fast-food restaurant in the 1990s at 52 Danbury Road, site of Dunkin in 2026. In 1997, it refashioned itself as **Boston Market**, but closed a year later due to the chain's bankruptcy. However, the brand was resurrected in 2000, grew to 348 restaurants in 28 states, but in 2024 virtually collapsed, closing all but a couple dozen stores. [W]

Bostwick: *See* Boswyck.

Boswen Drive: *See* Bayberry Hill Road, Wenbos Lane.

Boswyck was the 1890 estate of Henry de Bevoise Schenck on Florida Hill Road, later called Downesbury Manor (*q.v.*). The large mansion was perhaps the first sizable construction project in Ridgefield to make use of Italian immigrant workers. Schenck later built Nydeggen (*q.v.*) on Lake Mamanasco, now a residence at the end of Lisa Lane. Boswyck shows up in the 1895 Social Register and also appears sometimes as Bostwick. [JFS]

Botanika Cafe was opened around March 2022 at 424 Main Street by Ridgefielder Elena Snezhkina, serving vegan, organic, and gluten-free foods. The spot had earlier been Organika Kitchen (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Botton, Rev. Pierre A., (1929-2010), a native of France, came to Ridgefield as a young man in 1950 when his parents moved to Griffith Lane; his father worked for Schlumberger (*q.v.*). He was ordained a priest in 1956 at St. Mary's Church, said to have been the first ordination ever performed in Ridgefield. He served in parishes, as pastors, and as a Catholic high school teacher. He returned to town in 2002 after retiring. [P1/7/2010, 4/18/2002]

Boughton, George, (1824-1904), a native of Ridgebury, owned the general store next to the Congregational Church in Ridgebury, and served also as Ridgebury's postmaster much of that time. He was a Republican state representative in 1868 and 1872. He was also a selectman. [JFS]

Boughton, Major, (1790-1859), was a Ridgebury farmer and veteran of the War of 1812, who was a state representative in 1837, 1838 and 1844. He also served many terms as a selectman. [JFS]

Boughton, Seth, (1754-1840), also spelled Bouton, a native of Wilton, was a Revolutionary War veteran who served from August 1776 until the middle of 1782. He fought at the Burning of Fairfield & Norwalk. [FAG] After the war he settled in Ridgefield and was a state representative in 1814. [Rockwell]

Boughton, Thomas, (1764-1846), was a Ridgebury boy of 17 when he joined Rochambeau's army that had encamped in Ridgebury in 1781; he remained with Rochambeau until the victory at Yorktown. He returned to Ridgefield in 1782 and became a farmer who was active in the Ridgebury church. [JW]

Boughton's general store was on Ridgebury Road, adjacent to and just north of the Ridgebury Congregational Church. It was operated for 40 or so years in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century by George Boughton (*q.v.*) and was also the district's post office (*see* Ridgebury Post Office).

Boulder Hill Lane, Road, off Rockwell Road and Perry Lane, were part of the estate of Frederick Dielman (*q.v.*), called "The Boulders." Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) developed the property in the 1950s and the roads were accepted by the town in 1957. [RN]

Boulder Stone, The, a spectacular example of rock left by a melting glacier, is a huge granite rock sitting on five smaller limestone rocks, just off Route 116 in North Salem, N.Y. (part of Ridgefield before 1731). A modern geologist has estimated the boulder weighs 178 tons. Because it is pink granite, a type of rock not found hereabouts, the boulder almost certainly came from somewhere to the north – Rockwell suspected New Hampshire or Canada. Hudson Valley geologist Steven Schimmrich suggests the Hudson Highlands – and was deposited by the glacier. Some believe the formation is man-made, possibly by Viking visitors or by native American Indians. In either case, it's an eye-stopper. *See also* Viking chambers. [RN]

Boulders, The, the estate of artist Frederick Dielman (*q.v.*) In the 1950s, became the home of developer Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*). *See* Boulder Hill Lane, Road. [SR1916S]

Boulton, Joseph Lorkowski, (1896-1981), a native of Texas, was a noted American sculptor who specialized in wildlife, animals, and American Indians. He was also skilled at taxidermy. He and his wife, the former Helen Woodbury of Ridgefield, lived on Florida Hill Road in the early 1960s before moving to Westport where he died. [P5/21/1981]

Bouton: *See also* Boughton.

Bouton, Elmer, (1860-1941), was the superintendent on the Caudatowa estate at 23 High Ridge Avenue and lived in the house across the street at 28 High Ridge. He was famed for his pea patch. [DD151, DD293]

Bouton, Floyd Benjamin, (1858-1928), a Ridgefield native, started out operating a livery stable and then established the Bouton Funeral Home (*q.v.*) on West Church Street in Georgetown. in 1889. He also operated a branch mortuary at Sperry's Livery Stable on Catoonah Street in the early 20th Century. (JFS)

Bouton, Seth: *See* Seth Boughton.

Bouton Funeral Home on West Church Street in Georgetown was founded in 1889 by Ridgefield native Floyd B. Bouton (*q.v.*), who had previously operated a livery stable. Four generations of his family continued to run the business until 1982 when Donald E. Wakeman bought it. In a 1907 advertisement, Bouton Funeral Home said it had a "Ridgefield branch" with the telephone number, "1." [JFS]

Bowling: The first bowling alley in town consisted of two lanes installed at the Ridgefield Club (*q.v.*) on West Lane in the 1890s. That building later became the Congregation Church House, and the alleys were retained for many years. Soon after the turn of the 20th Century, six alleys were built behind the Bissell Building, 378-382 Main Street [DD100], later became an auto repair garage, and then was restored as alleys. The building was razed in the mid-1960s. RidgeBowl (*q.v.*) at 11 Danbury Road opened in 1964 and lasted until 1985. During the 1950s and 60s, many bowling leagues were organized in town and hundreds of Ridgefielders participated. No public alleys exist in town in the 21st Century. [JFS]

Boy Scouts of America: The first Boy Scout group in Ridgefield is believed to have started around 1910. By 1938, scouts had 25 members, some coming from Wilton or South Salem. Dick Venus believes Joseph F. Kasper was the first scoutmaster. Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) was also involved in early scouting. By 1968, Ridgefield had more than 1,000 boys involved in Cub or Boy Scouts, about 71% of all eligible boys in town and one of the highest percentages in the county. In 1975, the town had seven Cub Scout packs

and seven Boy Scout troops. The number of scouts has since declined. In 2024, there were four troops: Troop 76, sponsored by the Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church; Troop 431, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church; Troop 19 (Ridgefield's first all-girl Boy Scouts of America troop), St. Stephens; and Troop 116, Jesse Lee. [FJS, DD204]

Boyajian, David, is a painter and a sculptor specializing in metal media who has exhibited widely. He lived and worked on North Salem Road in the 1990s and early 2000s before moving to New Fairfield where he lives in 2026 and maintains a gallery. He teaches at WestConn. [JFS]

Boyce, Charlotte Davis "Lottie," (1889-1960), was a concert pianist who had performed at Carnegie Hall. Later, over more than 50 years in Ridgefield, she taught piano to nearly 500 students. She was the wife of Willis Boyce (*q.v.*) and mother of Walter Boyce (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Boyce, Walter Davis, (1929-2014), was a meticulous local historian of bowling, and of Ridgefield life in the late 1940s. He compiled an extensive biography of his mother, Charlotte Boyce (*q.v*.). [WWW]

Boyce, Willis Gilbert, (1896-1951), a native of Newburgh, NY, who came to Ridgefield around 1913, was a bank cashier, an accomplished violinist and singer. He was active in Rotary, Masons, and Odd Fellows, and was the husband of Charlotte Boyce (*q.v*.) and father of Walter Boyce (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Boyd, Margaret Woodward: *See* Margaret Shane.

Boyd, Thomas Alexander, (1898-1935), was a novelist whose portrayal of WW1, *Through the Wheat,* was called "one of the earliest and best of the realistic war novels" by noted critic Granville Hicks. F. Scott Fitzgerald, who mentored Boyd, called it "the best war book since *The Red Badge of Courage*." A Marine in WW1, he was gassed, probably leading to his early death, and received the Croix de Guerre. He wrote more novels, a series of biographies of notable Americans, Hollywood screenplays, and short stories for the "pulps." He moved to Ridgefield in 1925 to be near his editor, Maxwell Perkins, and later spent some time in Vermont where he ran for governor as a communist. His first wife was writer Margaret Woodward Smith (*see* Margaret Shane, Elizabeth Nash). [WWW]

Boyd's Lunch opened in 1940 in the former Village Grill quarters on Main Street. Proprietor Herbert Brooks, who had worked for the Howard Johnson chain, added a soda fountain. *See also* Fairfield Lunch. [P2/28/1940]

Bradley, Daniel B., (-1863), was a Union Army soldier from Ridgefield who died July 7, 1863, in Louisiana. The *Columbian Register* reported he died in a New Orleans hospital July 2. The *New Haven Daily Palladium* reported Aug. 21, 1863: "A correspondent of the *Jeffersonian* says that when the news reached Ridgefield that one of their townsmen had died in the service in Louisiana, where he had been taken prisoner and most shamefully treated by the rebels, some of the Copperheads (*q.v.*) expressed their sorrow by such remarks as these: 'He had no business there — he should have remained at home — served him just right.' " [JFS]

Bradley, Jesse Smith Jr. (1813-1888), a carriage trimmer, was a member of the Anti-Masonic Whig Party and a state representative in 1855. [JFS]

Bradley, Jesse Smith Sr., (1782-1833), was a coach-maker, the eighth and youngest son of Col. Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*). He was a selectman from 1821 to 1825. Like his father and his son, he was a state representative, serving in 1809, 1814, 1827, and 1829. His wife was Elizabeth, daughter of

Dr. Amos Baker (*q.v.*), who was also a state representative. [JFS]

Bradley, Mary Linda, (1886-1966), was an early woman pilot, a poet, and worked extensively on home-front support in WW1. She lived at Ackworth Cottage (*q.v.*), at 143? (ONS33) West Mountain Road. She was a daughter of William Harrison Bradley (*q.v.*) and a great-granddaughter of Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*). [WWW, DD107, DD285]

Bradley, Philip Burr, (1738-1821), a native of Fairfield, was a prominent Ridgefielder in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. He graduated from Yale in 1758 and a year later, moved to Ridgefield. As a colonel, he was leader of the Fifth Connecticut Regiment during the Revolution, and saw much combat. He wintered with his troops with Washington at Valley Forge. Before the war, he was elected a selectman three times in 1767 to 1769, and served as a Ridgefield representative to the colonial Legislature from 1769 to 1776, when he entered the military. After the war he served in many public offices as a member of the Federalist Party and was Ridgefield's state representative for almost every session of the Legislature between 1780 and 1791, a critical period when the new "State of Connecticut" was being organized, and when its young government was dealing with heavy war debts. President Washington named Bradley Connecticut's first "marshal," the top federal law enforcement official in the state. In 1788, he was a delegate who signed Connecticut's ratification of the U.S. Constitution. He was a large landowner and operated a tannery at Titicus (*see* Tannery Hill Road). His homesite is now Ballard Park. [WWW, DD107]

Bradley, Philip Burr II (1809-1890), a native of Ridgefield, graduated from Union College, NY, and studied law. In 1834 he moved to Galena, IL, in 1836, was appointed prosecuting attorney and postmaster of Galena. In 1839 he moved to Jackson County, IA where he became clerk of the District Court, a member of the Council of the Legislative Assembly, state representative and senator, chairman of the Iowa delegation in the National Democratic Convention in 1852. [JFS].

Bradley, Sturges, bought from Sarah Couch a "grist or corn mill' and a saw mill, west of the house of the late Thomas Couch, in 1818. [RLR 12/3] Probably this was at today's intersection of Route 7 with Florida Hill Road. Bradley, then of Bridgeport, sold it in 1822 to Stephen Jackson (*q.v.*). [RLR 12/177]

Bradley, William Harrison, (1848-1929), a native of Illinois and 1872 Yale graduate, was U.S. diplomat who built a mansion, called Felsenberg (*q.v.*), on West Mountain. He was a grandson of Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*) and father of Mary Linda Bradley (*q.v.*). [DD285]

Brady, James J., (1896-1976), the first police chief, was a North Salem native who grew up here, was a WW1 veteran, began work as a mechanic, and entered law enforcement as a deputy county sheriff in 1931. He became a full-time town constable in 1946 and was named chief in 1955 when the Ridgefield Police Department was created. He retired in 1965, and worked part-time as Martin Park guard. *See also* Police Commission. [WWW]

Bramblett, Garold "Jerry," (1926-1998), a patent attorney and Indiana native, was among the founders of the Ridgefield Symphonette (*q.v.*) and was active in the community, including Rotary and Masons. He helped start the Ridgefield Organization to Advance the Retarded, which later merged with DATAHR (*q.v.*). A licensed private pilot, he died when his glider crashed in North Carolina. [P4/16/1998]

Branchville, the name for the southeast corner of Ridgefield, was created around 1870 when four-mile branch railroad line from there to the village was opened. It is the lowest part of town, at 345 feet above sea level. Previously, this area had been called such names as Wheer Cock, Copps Corner, Ridgefield Station, and Beers Station (*q.v. each*). The community has included schools, a post office (located near the station), stores, mills and other industries, a summer camp, as well as the depot. Branchville was heavily damaged by the 1955 flood (*see* Floods), requiring road reconstruction and realignments, and new bridges. Branchville is in the Georgetown telephone district; most landline numbers begin 544- , earlier LI4 and even earlier, Lincoln. However, most of its old-time residents fiercely maintain that Branchville is part of Ridgefield, not Georgetown (*q.v.*), and in the 1950s they overwhelmingly voted against getting their mail delivered by the Georgetown post office (meaning their mailing address would be Georgetown). The neighborhood was served for much of the 20th Century by the Branchville Civic Association (*q.v.*). [RN]

Branchville Cemetery on Brook Lane is believed to have been established in 1862 by George Gruman and originally called Gruman or Grumman Cemetery (*q.v.*). The 2.1 acres may also have been owned by the Beers family, which may have expanded it, and was later acquired by Floyd Bouton of Bouton Funeral Home, Georgetown. In 2021 the town acquired title to the cemetery from the funeral home. In 2026, it contained about 1,300 graves, many belonging to Georgetown (*q.v.*) residents. [HLYB]

Branchville Civic Association, a 20th Century community organization that promoted the welfare of the Branchville community, established and maintained for many years the baseball field on Playground Road and used the Branchville schoolhouse (*q.v.*) as a meeting place. Leaders included Americo Ridolfi and Joseph Ancona (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Branchville Elementary School opened in February 1969 on the site of old Life's Farm (*q.v.)* and closed in 1983 due to dwindling enrollments; it became school administration offices in 1988. It reopened as a school in 1993 to handle by-then-rising enrollments (administrators moved to the "old high school" on East Ridge). The mascot was originally a St. Bernard, but was switched to a beaver. *See also* James B. Leonard. [P2/13/1969]

Branchville General Store was operated at 14 West Branchville Road from 1907 into at least the 1940s by Pasquale DeBenigno (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Branchville Hill is a term found on a US Geological Survey map for the ridge along Old Branchville Road at Bruschi Lane. [JFS]

Branchville Hill Road: A map prepared for the assessors in 1934 labels as Branchville Hill Road what we today call Nod Hill Road. This suggests that the ridge traversed by this road was at some time called Branchville Hill, a more likely possibility than the Branchville Hill situation cited above. [JFS]

Branchville Hobby, a store in the Ancona Center, Routes 7 and 102, was opened in 1969 by Edward E. Blackman next to Ancona's Market, but by 1972 had moved to space above the market. Expanded in 1980, the store was noted for its model railroad displays and equipment. It was gone by 1983. [P10/30/1980],

Branchville Livery Service was operated in the 1960s by Americo Ridolfi. His slogan was: "We'll Drive You Anywhere 24 Hours A Day." [JFS]

Branchville mica mine, a famous source of minerals including quartz, was

located east of West Branchville Road (*q.v.*), in the town of Redding. *See also* Fillow Mine, Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company, minerals. [JFS]

Branchville Post Office operated under that name from 1873 to 1920, mostly from a small building northwest of the railroad station. Before 1873, it was known as Ridgefield Station Post Office (*q.v.*). The first postmaster was probably William W. Beers, who was also station agent from 1852 until his death in 1879; for many years, he was responsible to getting the main Ridgefield post office's mail on and off trains. [JFS]

Branchville Road is the main route between the village and southeast corner of town. A sizable part of the original road, established by the selectmen in 1744, is today's Old Branchville Road; when the railroad arrived in 1852, a new, better-graded section of the road was built between Biddle Hill (*q.v.*) and "the flats" in Branchville to avoid the swamps and steeper grades found on the old route. Originally, the village end was probably today's Rockwell Road, which was created before 1725 as path to the fields to the east of the main settlement. Today's connection with Main Street was probably was established just before 1831; the section from Main Street eastward to the middle school was called "New Lane" and later "Railroad Avenue" and then "Hawley Street." (*q.v. each*). The entire road is today state Route 102 (*q.v.*); it was one of the first roads in town to be paved (with concrete) by the state, which occurred before 1920. The eastern end was realigned in the late 1950s after the Flood of 1955 — *see* Brook Lane. [RN]

Branchville schoolhouse on lower Old Branchville Road, still standing and owned by the town, has been used in recent years for storage — formerly by the Jaycees, later by the Little League — but is in 2026 being restored by the Ridgefield Historical Society as an exhibit and meeting venue. The schoolhouse dates from around 1873, replacing an earlier structure on the site, was long known as District Number 10, and was one of the last one-room schoolhouses to operate, closing in 1939. It is on the state Register of Historic Places. *See also* Branchville Civic Association. [SD]

Branchville Silex Mill: *See* Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company.

Branchville Soho Gallery was an art gallery on West Branchville Road, near the train station, in the old Branchville General Store (*q.v.*) building. It was opened in 1980 by Paula Reens of Wilton. [P9/4/1980]

Branchville Station has been a stop on the Danbury-Norwalk rail line since 1852 when it was called Ridgefield or Beers Station (*q.v. each*). The current station house, built probably around 1870, went out of service in 1975; in 1982 it became a bakery/restaurant, The Whistle Stop (*q.v.*). *See also* Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road.

Brand, horse: In May 1714, the General Assembly in Hartford assigned Ridgefield an official horse brand, which is an upside down heart. Because horses could easily travel long distances — beyond town borders — they needed a town brand to supplement the local owner's brand (*see below*).

Brand, livestock: In 1644, Connecticut's General Court enacted the first branding law in the colonies, requiring all livestock owners to ear-mark or brand their cattle, sheep, and swine over 6 months of age and to register their marks in the "town book." The aim was to "prevent disputes and differences that may arise in the owning and claiming of cattle, sheep, and swine that may be lost or stray away." Ridgefield's town clerk kept brand records until the late 1700s, but in later years, when owners had fewer

livestock, brands were abandoned and instead a description of the markings of the animal — invariable a cow or bull — were registered. [JFS]

Brandman's Paint Store opened July 1981 at 56 Danbury Road where H&H Paint and Wallpaper had been. The family run store had been founded 1907 with several outlets in nearby towns to the south. [P7/23/1981]

Brandstrom Instruments at 85 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) in Branchville was founded around 1972 by Arvid A. Brandstrom. The company moved here in 1975, and was by 1987 the "largest manufacturer of solenoid actuated power-failure devices in the U.S." These devices have been largely used as warning indicators on aircraft, including the Space Shuttle, in cockpit panel instruments. The company, which makes about 450 different types of products, is still in Ridgefield in 2026, probably the second oldest industry in town (behind Ullman Devices). Roots of the business was **Brandstrom Electric Company**, a specialty machine shop operated by Fred Brandstrom (1907-1986), Arvid's father, who built the building and moved here around 1956. It made high-precision products such as fuel control valves for Pratt & Whitney engines. [P12/22/1987]

Brasserie Saint Germain, 470 Main Street, opened in 2023 in the space once occupied by Touchstones (*q.v.*), Yuan (*q.v.*) and other restaurants. The French restaurant had operated for years as Sucré Salé (*q.v.*) in a smaller space at Copps Hill Common. [JFS]

Breezy Nook was the original name that A. Barton Hepburn (*q.v.*) applied to his 1909 mansion at 55 High Ridge Avenue. Hepburn soon changed it to Altnacraig (*q.v.*); REV speculates Breezy Nook "proved to be unsuitable for the home of the president of the Chase National Bank." [DD195]

Brennan, Suzanne Bellagamba, a Ridgefield native and RHS 1980, has been the executive director of the Lounsbury House since 2018. She had previously been director of development and community relations for the Ridgefield Playhouse, and co-chair of the Ridgefield Prevention Council. She was president of the Chamber of Commerce in 2023. [LI]

Bretagne, La: *See* La Bretagne.

Brewer, Arnold, (ca. 1895-1984), a native of Middletown, lived in Ridgefield from 1925 to 1977, teaching French at the Ridgefield School and after 1938, The Pomfret School, while retaining his Ridgefield home, and finally teaching at the Wooster School in Danbury, retiring in 1957. A decorated WW1 Army officer, he was active in St. Stephen's, serving on the vestry. He retired to New Hampshire. *See also* William Dodd Brewer. [P1/5/1984]

Brewer, William Dodd, (1922-2009), who grew up in Ridgefield and was a graduate of the Ridgefield School, was a career State Department employee who was U.S. ambassador to Mauritius (1970-73) and to Sudan (1973-77). He was the son of Arnold Brewer (*q.v.*).

Brewster, Dr. Blandina Worcester, (1902-1984), was a pioneering pediatrician and professor of pediatrics in NYC who taught at NYU for 38 years. *See* Carroll H. Brewster. [WWW]

Brewster, Carroll H., (1888-1952), was a prominent New York City attorney and husband of Dr. Blandina Worcester Brewster (*q.v.*). They bought The Hickories (*q.v.*) in 1936 and the family still owns the farm in 2024. [JFS]

Brewster, Carroll W., (1936-), son of Carroll H. and Dr. Blandina Brewster (*q.v. each*), is a former president of Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York and Hollins College in Virginia, and a former dean of Dartmouth

College. A graduate of Yale, he worked for the judiciary in the Sudan from 1962 to 1963. He retired to The Hickories in the 1990s and for more than 20 years, was a member of the Conservation Commission, a board on which he had first served from 1966 to 1969. [P10/8/1981]

Brewster, Rev. John Gurdon, (1937-2017), son of Carroll H. and Dr. Blandina Brewster (*q.v. each*), was a missionary to India in the 1960's and the Episcopal chaplain at Cornell University for 35 years. While at seminary in 1961, he was invited by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to be an assistant minister during the summer at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. He was a noted sculptor and exhibited widely in retirement. [JFS]

Brewster, Todd, is co-author with Peter Jennings of the best-seller, *The Century* (1998), a chronicle of the 20th Century that was also a TV show. He moved to Ridgefield in mid-1990s, was senior editorial producer at ABC News in 1994, and worked with anchorman Jennings. He had earlier worked at *American Heritage*, then Time-Life as a writer and editor for many years, covering such major events as the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe. His book, *Lincoln's Gamble*, on the Emancipation Proclamation, was published in 2014. *American Childhood: a Photographic History*, appeared in 2023. From 2008 to 2013, he was director of oral history at West Point; since 2108 he has been a senior visiting lecturer in journalism at Mount Holyoke College. [NR]

Brewster's Pond off the southeast side of Lounsbury Road is named for Brewster family. In 1936 Carroll H. and Dr. Blandina Worcester Brewster (*q.v. each*) bought the former Lounsbury farm, The Hickories (*q.v.*), as a weekend and vacation retreat, the the family is still living there in 2026. [RN]

Briar Ridge Road, an old highway, extends from the intersection of George Washington Highway and Miry Brook Road in Danbury almost straight north to the extreme northeast corner of Ridgefield in Ridgebury, straddling the town line along the way. At its north end in 2026, it turned into a dirt road closed to the public. The path continues northward a short distance in Danbury where it becomes paved again, part of a residential subdivision. Briar Ridge Road is a small portion of very old highway from Starrs Plain to Mill Plain (*q.v. each*), perhaps called the "Mountain Road." Briar Ridge first appeared on a 1936 map, probably descriptive of neighborhood vegetation. The area in 18th Century was known as Fox Hills (*q.v*). [RN]

Brick House was the name Mrs. Howard L. Thomas (Adèle B. Larocque) gave to her mansion at 35 Golf Lane, according to SR1916S. This still-standing house has also been called Fair Fields (*q.v.*). (RGE)

Brickell, Herschel Henry, (1889-1952), a native of Mississippi, was a prominent NYC newspaper editor and book critic. He was an editor for book publisher Henry Holt & Company, where he worked with poet Robert Frost and novelist Eudora Welty, among other noted authors; he is credited with mentoring many writers. He worked for state department on Latin American cultural matters and wrote a column for *The Ridgefield Press.* He died of suicide at his 569 Branchville Road home, called Acorn Cottage. [WWW]

Bridle Trail, a dead-end road off Hawthorne Hill Road developed in the late 1950's, was designed by the Connecticut Land Company (*q.v.*). It was originally planned to connect to Spring Valley Road; probably because of the rough terrain, idea was abandoned. So-called because of the many bridle paths in the area, the name is often misspelled Bridal. It became a

town road in 1961. [RN]

Bridgeport Hydraulic Company bought the Ridgefield Water Supply Company (*q.v.*) in 1991, and undertook many improvements in the lines. On June 30, 2000, the company, which had changed its name to Aquarion, announced that its water in Ridgefield was unfit for drinking because of bacterial contamination, affecting some 6,800 customers. It was two weeks before the all-clear was given and in the meantime, the utility supplied bottled water to its customers. In the spring of 2001, the company opened its new pipeline into Ridgefield, solving supply and quality problems that had plagued the system. Soon after, it stopped using Round Pond (*q.v.*) as a reservoir. In 2017, Aquarion became a subsidiary of Eversource (q.v.). [JFS]

Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company operated industrial mills in Branchville, north of the station, both along the main line and the branch line to Ridgefield center. The mills were for grinding quartz and feldspar, mined at the nearby former Fillow Mine (*q.v.*) and elsewhere, into "silex," used extensively in making paint and wood fillers. The operations lasted from 1891 to 1917. The mills were eventually owned by DuPont. Bridgeport Wood Finishing also owned a factory in New Milford to which the silex was shipped by rail. *See also* Stowell Manufacturing Company.

Brief Historical Notice of the Town of Ridgefield, A, a 60-page booklet published in 1906 by the Village Improvement Society (*q.v.),* contains many photographs of streetscapes, houses, gardens, and points of interest, all by Joseph Hartmann, as well as a brief history of town and the society. [JFS]

Brimstone Swamp is a location at south end of Nod Road on Wilton-Ridgefield line. well-known in 1700s. First mentioned in a 1717 deed and last mentioned in 1777, the name may have described the color or the odor of the swamp, or may have referred to the swamp's tendency to generate methane gas which, under some circumstances, will self-ignite to form what are called will-o'-the wisps, jack-o-lanterns, or *ignes fatuus*. [RN]

Briody, Kevin, RHS 1981, grew up and lives in Ridgefield, and is a guitarist and songwriter who was named Connecticut state troubadour for 2001 and 2002. He has won two Emmy Awards, had written music for both TV and movies, has produced several albums and owns Tune-Me Music. [LI, JFS]

Broad Hill was a name in use before 1725 apparently for either the ridge traversed by Peaceable Ridge Road, or the hill just to the south where Yankee Hill Road, Minute Man Road, and Revere Drive are. The name appears in records as late as 1794. [RN]

Brolin, Edward M., (1930-2002), a native of Massachusetts, was a popular teacher and administrator. He started teaching biology at RHS in 1963, became chairman of science department in 1968, assistant principal in 1970, and principal of East Ridge Junior High School in 1970. Around 1984, he became an assistant RHS principal and retired in 1990. A top Bridgewater State College baseball player, he tried out for the Boston Red Sox and pitched to Ted Williams. The Marine Corps veteran was the 1966 Jaycees Outstanding Teacher of the Year. He lived on Walnut Grove Road. [JFS]

Broms, Nelson, (1919-2023), a native of New York City and a resident of Main Street for his last years, was a leading executive in the insurance industry, including with The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States and was named chairman, chief executive officer, and president of The Equitable Life Holding Corporation. An Army captain in World War II, he

earned a Bronze Star. He was a benefactor of organizations that improve education for people of color. [P8/24/2023]

Bronkiewicz, Msgr. Laurence R., pastor of St. Mary Parish from 2003 until 2019, had earlier been the Diocese of Bridgeport's vicar of the religious, similar to a director of personnel. In the late 2010s, he began the planning of the parish's major renovation of the church building, completed after he had retired. He marked his 50th year in the priesthood in 2023. [P4/25/2019]

Brook Farm was Playwright Eugene O'Neill's *(q.v.*) country home at 845 North Salem Road from 1922 to 1927. Subsequent owners included Elis B. McLaury (*q.v.*); attorney and author Lemuel Welles (*q.v.*); and musicians Thomas and Virginia Redington Dawes (*q.v.*). In 1950s it was 31 acres; in 2026, 16.35 acres. [WWW, RGE]

Brook Lane, a short dead-end road that does little but serve an access to Branchville Cemetery and one house, was for over two centuries a portion of Branchville Road. In 1955, after the great flood (*q.v.*) washed out the Branchville Road bridge over the Cooper Brook, the state installed a new bridge and at the same time realigned and straightened the eastern end of Branchville Road, abandoning part of the old road, which is now Brook Lane. The selectmen chose the name Nov. 20, 1958. Ownership of the roadway transferred from the state to the town on June 25, 1959. [RN]

Brooks Bridge, mentioned in land records as early as 1752, crossed the Titicus River at either Sherwood Road or Ridgebury Road (*q.v.*). The last deed reference to it was in 1793. [RN]

Brookside Pines is a 1969 subdivision off the east side of North Salem Road, opposite Barrack Hill Road and bordering the Titicus River. William and Lina Oexle (*q.v.*) created the four lots from nine acres of their homestead. Armando Morales (*q.v.*) developed the lots in 1973. [RN]

Brookside Road, developed off southern Great Hill Road soon after 1955 by the Brookside Development Corporation, is so called because it parallels the Norwalk River – sometimes called the Ridgefield Brook at this point. It became a town road in 1961. [RN]

Brookside Shell was a name of a gas station at 60 Wilton Road West [CD1973]. *See* Hilltop Service Station.

Brookview Estates is a 1958 subdivision including Aspen Mill Road. The brook that's viewed is the Titicus River, although Kiah's Brook is close by. [RN]

Brophy, James (1815-1909) and **Ellen Benn Brophy** (1820-1885), natives of Ireland, were said to be the first Catholics to settle in Ridgefield, arriving on South Salem Road Nov. 30, 1848, Thanksgiving Day. By 1860, they had moved to northeastern Iowa where they were farmers. [RIR, A]

Brophy, John, (1841-1922), a native of Ireland, was a U.S. customs agent and a first selectman for eight years and also served as an assessor. A Republican, he was a state representative, 1893-95, and 1903-05, and a Fairfield County commissioner 12 years. He was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank and First National Bank and Trust Company. [WWW]

Bross, Edgar Clifton, (1863-1936), was an editor and writer. His book, *God's Pay Day* (*q.v.*), was set in part in Ridgefield. Bross was editor of *The Ridgefield Press* from 1887 to 1899, covering such major stories as the Great Fire of 1895 and the creation of a fire department. He also wrote *A Modern Pharisee* (1895). [WWW]

Brown, Beatrice, (Mrs. Morris Rothenberg), (1917-1997), a native of England,

was conductor and music director of Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra from 1970 to ca. 1995, and helped turn a small community group into a professional 75-member orchestra. She was the first woman awarded both Fulbright and Rockefeller grants for conducting. [NR]

Brown, Daniel, was a Ridgefielder accused of cutting down a liberty pole in 1777. [CDA1 XIV:349] Sarah Sherwood provided a 1779 deposition "on man cutting down liberty pole" in 1777. [CDA7 XIV:349]. These references may have been to a pole that stood on the triangle, near the site of the old Episcopal Church: "A Liberty Pole, erected by the patriots in Ridgebury at the beginning of the War, was cut down in the night by the Tories. Another was erected and filled with spikes, nails, old slugs, to protect it from the axe and saw." In 1860 the butt of the pole was dug up by William M. Lynes. It contained several spikes. [RIR127]

Brown, Earle B., (1909-1981), an optical engineer, taught at the Hayden Planetarium and for U.S. Army Ordnance Department, and was senior engineer at Perkin-Elmer. He wrote four books on optics, including *Modern Optics* (1966). He lived in Ridgefield from 1961 to 1980, first on Dogwood Drive, then at Casagmo. He died in Rochester, NY. [JFS]

Brown, Eddy, (1895-1974), a native of Chicago, was an acclaimed violinist, a child prodigy whose teachers included Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly. In 1906, while a student in Hungary, he won the Budapest Concerto Competition (finishing second was fellow student, Jeno Blau, who later changed his name to Eugene Ormandy). He was a soloist with many leading orchestras in Europe and the U.S., but in 1930, turned his interests to radio, becoming music director of WOR in NYC and in 1936, director of WQXR, the classical station still broadcasting in NYC. In 1944 he and his wife moved to Peaceable Street. By 1949 he was working for the State Department to expand music opportunities for Americans in Europe and then led the music conservatory at the University of Cincinnati. [WWW]

Brown, Eliphalet, (1816-1886), a daguerreotypist, accompanied Commodore Matthew Perry's pioneering expedition to Japan in 1853 and shot what is believed to be the first photograph ever taken in Japan — a country later famous for its Nikon, Canon, Fuji and other camera-makers. He probably did not live here, but is buried in the Scott section of Ridgefield Cemetery, with the Coolidge family — his wife was a Coolidge. [WWW]

Brown, Ellsworth F., (1893-1963), was chief of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department from 1920 to 1930. "Brownie loved a parade and as fire chief, served as marshal several times," wrote REV. "He was rather tall and very slender with gold rimmed glasses and a little well-trimmed mustache. He was always very proud as he marched down Main Street, wearing his white chief's hat and carrying his bullhorn, which was really a large silver megaphone. A large bouquet of flowers protruded from the bell of the horn." [DD240, P12/12/1963]

Brown, Joseph Epes Sr., (1843-1918), a Boston native, was a NYC banker prominent in Brooklyn civic life. He owned, starting ca. 1910, Wildfarms (*q.v.*) on West Lane. His son and grandson (*below*) were prominent scholars. His wife, Lavinia, was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club. [JFS]

Brown, Joseph Epes Jr. (1891-1937), a native of Long Island, was a professor, scholar and author, whose father owned the Wildfarms (*q.v.*) in the 1920s. The 1913 Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Yale earned master's and doctorate

degrees in English at Princeton where he taught many years. He wrote *The Critical Opinions of Samuel Johnson*, and *American Life and Letters* (1934). He and wife, Janet, were parents of Joseph Epes Brown III (*q.v.*). [RGE]

Brown, Joseph Epes III (1920-2000), a native of Ridgefield, was a scholar and author who specialized in the study of American Indian religious traditions. Among his works were *The Sacred Pipe*, based on his interviews with Black Elk, a medicine man, about religious rites of the Lakota. [RGE]

Brown, Leander, (ca. 1824-1849), a Ridgefield native and son of Solomon and Sally Brown, had been employed with Brooks Brothers, the clothiers, when he decided to join a group sailing to California to seek their fortune during the Gold Rush of 1849. After a rough voyage, they arrived in San Francisco in July 1849; in December, he died of a fever at age 25. On his memorial gravestone in Scott's Cemetery is this verse: "Farewell, Leander, hope shall rear an altar at thy tomb, And memory like the evergreen shall ever, ever bloom. Far from his native hills his dust in earth's green bosom lies, Yet God the precious charge both guard till he shall bid it rise." [Rockwell]

Brown, Thomas F., and Hart Stiles were the first African Americans elected to public office in Ridgefield, a year after the 15th Amendment allowed Black men to be voters. They were both chosen haywards (*q.v.*). [*State Correspondence* (newspaper), Wallingford, 10/14/1871]

Browning, Kirk, (1921-2008), a pianist and native of NYC, was an acclaimed director of television concerts for PBS, doing such pioneering works as Frank Sinatra's first TV show and the world premiere of Gian Carlo Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, the first opera written for TV. He won 13 Emmys. He lived on the farm of his parents, William and Elizabeth Miner Browning, on Spring Valley Road when his neighbor, Samuel Chotzinoff (*q.v.*), offered him a job in NBC's music library. His knowledge of music and sense of the camera led Chotzinoff to make him a director of Arturo Toscanini concerts, and from there, he went on to 185 broadcasts of "Live from Lincoln Center" for PBS, and many other programs. [WWW]

Bruckenthal, Nathan B. "Nate," (1979–2004), a member of the U.S. Coast Guard, was killed in the Iraq War, the first coast guardsman to die in wartime action since the Vietnam War. The petty officer third class was a victim of a suicide bombing near an oil terminal he was helping protect in the Persian Gulf. He lived on Grandview Drive from 1992 until 1995, attending middle school and RHS till his sophomore year. After graduating from high school in VA, he returned to Ridgefield, living with a friend and serving in the RVFD in 1997 and 1998. He posthumously received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. The U.S. Coast Guard Fast Response Cutter Nathan Bruckenthal was commissioned July 24, 2018 and the Coast Guard named a men's barracks at the busy Montauk station in his honor. A plaque at the Ridgefield firehouse recalls his service. He was survived by his wife, Patricia, and a daughter born after his death. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. [P4/29/2004, 10/20/2005, 10/18/2016]

Brugger, Johannes, with Rainer Kuhnt, was an owner of The Inn at Ridgefield in the 1990s. [RSD91]

Brundage, Fred T., (1872-1934), operated the Brundage & Benedict dry goods store (*q.v.*) on Main Street in the first third of the 20th Century. [JFS]

Brundage, Lawrence, (1907-1996), was a Ridgefield carpenter in much of the 20th Century. [DD89]

Brundage & Benedict, a dry goods and general merchandise store, was started by Julius Myers, a native of Germany, in 1897. He sold in 1900 to Fred Brundage and Andrew Flood; in 1907, Flood sold his interest to Jesse L. Benedict. The store moved to new Telephone Building in May 1913 [P5/15/1913]. Benedict took over the business in 1936 after Brundage died. The store sold clothing, newspapers, books, and many other items, and managed newspaper delivery routes by paperboys. Benedict sold it in 1951; it eventually became Miller's Department Store [DD228, 233]

Brunetti, Ernest A., (1889-1940), a longtime operator with Nazzareno Gasperini, of Brunetti and Gasperini's market (*q.v.*), had earlier worked at Port of Missing Men. His son, Joseph (*q.v.*), later had his own market. [JFS]

Brunetti, Joseph, (1920-2004), a native and popular grocer, managed Ridgefield's A&P and later owned Brunetti's Market (*q.v.*). An athlete and a longtime supporter of youth sports programs, he was also an early sportswriter for the RP. He graduated from RHS in 1938 and served in WW2. He lived on Olmstead Lane for a number of years. [WWW]

Brunetti and Gasperini's market at the corner of Bailey Avenue and Prospect Street catered to the Italian community from 1914 until 1920s. The store had been founded in 1904 by Benvenuto Carboni (*q.v.)* as the first Italian-specialties food market in town, and was later operated by Ernesto Brunetti and Nazzareno Gasperini; Ernesto was father of Joseph Brunetti (*q.v.*), who operated Brunetti's Market (*q.v.*) on Main Street. [DD51]

Brunetti's Market, a popular village food store specializing in meats, was founded by Joseph Brunetti (*q.v.*), a former A&P manager, in the space at 378 Main Street that A&P had occupied before moving to its supermarket in 1962 (*see* A&P). Brunetti retired and sold the business in July 1983 to Ed Bowie and Ron Manna, who closed in 1986, blaming high rents. Emilio Tomas and Dominick Surace became new owners, but the business soon failed and closed for good, replaced by Gail's Station House (*q.v*.) restaurant. [JFS, P7/14/1983]

Bruno, Michael Edward, (1910-2003), a native of Bridgeport and a Republican, was a lawyer who served one term as a state representative, 1949-51, and as chief air raid warden during World War II. He was the first chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals, had been a member of the Board of Education, and served on the Park Commission. He lived in Ridgefield from the 1930s until the early 1950s, and died in New Canaan. [JFS]

Brunstad, George, (1934-2023), a Ridgefielder and retired American Airlines pilot, was a devoted swimmer. On Aug. 29, 2004, four days after his 70th birthday, he became the oldest man at that time to swim the English Channel, crossing in 15 hours, 59 minutes. At age 76 he swam Lake Winnipesaukee's 22-mile length in 22 hours. (Both swims were for charity.) He and his wife Judy lived at 14 Shields Lane, and in 2008 moved to New Hampshire where he died. He was, incidentally, an uncle of actor Matt Damon. [JFS, Laconia Daily Sun, 8/7/2023]

Bruschi, Luigi (ca. 1891-1974), a native of Ancona, Italy, and U.S. Army veteran of World War I, was a building contractor who was also the superintendent of an Old Branchville Road estate, owned at various times by the Greims, Gerli, Goldsmith, or Petri families. Over the years, particularly in the 1930's, he bought and sold land in the Branchville and Florida districts, and he developed Bruschi Lane (*q.v.*). [RN]

Bruschi Lane, pronounced *broo-ski,* is a 1,300-foot, dead-end road off Old Branchville Road, named for Luigi Bruschi (*q.v.*) who developed it. The town accepted it 1967. [RN]

Brush, Eliphalet, (1748-1846), probably a native of New Fairfield who moved to Ridgefield at the end of the Revolution, fought in the war. According to a family genealogy, "His son-in-law, Samuel Sidney St. John (*q.v.*) in an autobiographical sketch, stated that Eliphalet Brush fired the first shot at the British when Tryon burned Danbury." He was commissioned an ensign of the New Fairfield militia in May 1781 and a captain in January 1782. In 1783, he bought the Daniel Whitlock farm in Ridgebury and moved there. He fathered 14 children, served as a selectman, was a state representative in 1818 and 1819, and is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW, JFS]

Brush, Platt, was a part-owner in the mid-19th Century of a saw mill "situated at the south end of the street in said Ridgefield" [RLR 19/121]. Stephen Smith was a co-owner. He was also involved in the carriage factory — *see* Brush, Olmstead & Company. [JFS]

Brush, Olmstead & Company, a carriage factory operated in the Big Shop, was started around 1825 by Platt Brush, Chauncey Olmstead, Czar Jones, and Abijah Resseguie (*q.v. each*), producing carriages sold in the eastern United States. In 1854, during a national financial recession, the company "failed," but apparently was resurrected and lasted until 1875. [RIR, DAR]

Brushy Ridge was at the southwest corner of town, probably including the Southridge Court and Silver Spring Road area, and was first mentioned in 1717. Another Brushy Ridge, near and perhaps west of Lake Mamanasco, was mentioned in 1741. [RN]

Bryan, William Jennings, (1860-1925), the noted orator and three-time Democratic presidential candidate, spoke in Ridgefield town hall April 19, 1907, and was a guest of Dr. John W. Cox (*q.v.*) at Stonecrest (*q.v.*). "Main Street looked as though half the population of the town had turned out," RP reported. [JFS]

Bryon, Benn Adelmar, (ca. 1866-1948), a Ridgefield physician who came here in the 1890s, was also the developer of Bryon Park neighborhood as well as Lake Kitchawan in Lewisboro, NY. His large house on Main Street stood where the CVS parking lot is in 2024. Daughter Kathryn G. Bryon (*q.v.*), founded the town's first Girl Scout (*q.v.*) troop. Late in life, Dr. Bryon moved to Norwalk. When he first came here, he used the name O'Bryon. [WWW]

Bryon, Kathryn G., (1901-1989), founded in 1921 the town's first Girl Scout troop, called Troop 1. Daughter of Dr. Benn Adelmar and Vena Bryon, she later married Craig R. Vosburgh. [JFS]

Bryon Avenue, extending from High Ridge Avenue to Fairview Avenue, is part of the early 20th Century subdivision by Dr. B. A. Bryon (*q.v.*), often called Bryon Park. The road was built between 1908 and 1912, and is sometimes erroneously called Byron Avenue. [RN]

Bryon Park, an early subdivision on the corner of High Ridge and Barry Avenues, is so called because, before its development by Dr. B.A. Bryon (*q.v.*), it was used as a playground, even though it was privately owned — town's first football team played there around 1905-06. The neighborhood includes Bryon, Greenfield, and Fairview Avenues — *q.v. each*. [RN]

Bryson, Eliza Tileston, (1834-1900), widow of Peter M. Bryson, established Ridgefield's first kindergarten in 1891, something she had done in other

locations including NYC where her main home was. A summer resident of town, she was known as a philanthropist, founder of the Bryson Day Nursery in NYC, a trustee and contributor of Teachers College at Columbia, a director of the Home for Aged Couples, and founder of both kindergartens and sewing schools. [NYT4/4/1900]

Bucha, Paul, (1943-2024), won the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1970 for heroism in a 1968 battle with North Vietnamese troops. He graduated from and later taught at West Point (where he was interred in 2024). He had a career in business including being chairman of board of a steel company, ran for Congress from NY in 1993; and advised 2008 campaign of Barack Obama. He moved to Ridgefield in 2000. [JFS]

Buchman, Dr. Joseph, a cardiologist and native of Brooklyn, opened a practice here 1964 after serving in the Navy, and became the moving force behind bringing paramedic service (*q.v.*) to Ridgefield. He also created the medical condominiums at 38A,B,C Grove Street, and had hoped a sort of emergency room service could be established (long before Urgent Care, the commercial service, opened). He was a founder of Ridgefield Family Y (*q.v.*). He retired in 1999 when he was living in Redding, and moved to Seattle, where he practiced internal medicine, and in 2026 lives in Dallas, TX. His son Michael has been a lawyer in Westport. [NR]

Buck Hill is the rise on Route 35, Danbury Road, where Buck Hill Road (*q.v.*) intersects. The hill-and-curve state roadway has been the site of many auto accidents, including several that were fatal (an off-duty Ridgefield police sergeant was killed there in 1980). [RN]

Buck Hill Road, between Danbury Road (Route 35) and Great Hill Road, was designed and named by Richard Conley (*q.v.*), head of the Connecticut Land Company (*q.v.*). The land was once part of his father's Outpost Farm. Paul Morganti (*q.v.*), the contractor who built the road, said he suggested the name to Conley because the colonel had frequently hunted deer in that area. Perry Scott built most of the houses in the early 1950s. Its most famous resident was actor-comedian Godfrey Cambridge (*q.v.*). It became a town road in 1954. [RN]

Bucks Pond, mentioned in 1976 deed, was another name for Roberts Pond (*q.v.*), perhaps so-called because deer visited its shores. [RN]

Buckspen Lane, an 850-foot road off the west side of Limestone Road, serve a 1977 subdivision by Albert Gaeta. A small portion of the road was earlier known as Corbin Drive (*q.v.*). The road was named by JFS in his capacity as a road name consultant to resurrect an old Ridgefield name that had fallen out of use — *see* Buckspen Swamp. [RN]

Buckspen Road, mentioned in an 1855 deed for land bounded "by the Buckspen Road so called," may be an old path in what's now Bennett's Pond State Park, perhaps the trail that goes north from Bennett's Farm Road past the old site of the Fox Hill Inn and up to Bennett's Ponds – possibly passing Buckspen Swamp (*q.v.*). [RN]

Buckspen Swamp was first mentioned in a 1741 deed for land "lying in Bennits Farm at Buckspen Swamp." In 1830, a deed describes land "situated in the Buckspen, bounded on the east by highway." A 1914 map of Col. Louis D. Conley' (*q.v.*) property north of Bennett's Farm Road describes "Bucks Pen Meadow," west of Bennett's Ponds, east of today's Shady Lane, and north of Fox Hill Lake; the swamp is nearby. Harold Iles said in severe winters,

deer "barn up" – gather in groups in a sheltered part of the woods, stamping down the snow and using their collective body heat to stay warm and that such a frequent gathering place was tagged the "bucks pen" for that reason. Daniel M. McKeon was told him of the existence – in woods off Great Hill Road – of a form of corral into which the American Indians would drive deer to trap and kill them for food and hides. The natives – or settlers – could have driven deer toward a swamp thereabouts in order to get them mired and make the animals easier to kill. [RN]

Buddha was a nickname for Michael Bedini (*q.v.*)

Bud's Liquor Store was operated on Main Street in the 1960s by Bud Mahoney. [10/18/1962, 3/14/1968]

Buell Street, once a path from North Street, opposite Mapleshade Road, to Rochambeau Avenue, was proposed as a formal road in connection with Peatt Park (*q.v.*), but was never built — possibly to limit traffic in Peatt Park. It was named by Peatt Park developer William Peatt Sr. to honor his wife, Alice J. Buell Peatt (*q.v*.). [RN]

Buffalo Creek is supposedly another name for the Titicus River (*q.v.*), but is not found in any 18th or 19th Century records. Adriaen Van der Donck (ca.1618–55), an early settler of lower Westchester, says of his own neighborhood in 1642: "Buffaloes are also tolerably plenty." Whether they were "tolerably plenty" in Ridgefield is unknown. [RN]

Buffalo Creek Acres: **1.** The name employed in the 1920s by Munson and Lizzie Wade for their house and 20 acres on North Salem Road that was later home of Jan Huton (*q.v*.). **2**. Name used by James B. Franks (*q.v.*) for his nine-lot subdivision of #1, served by Hessian Drive (*q.v.*). *See also* Buffalo Creek. [RN, DD20]

Bugsy: *See* under Snaky Santini.

Buhrman, Albert W. "Bert," (1915-1999), was a popular radio organist who provided music for many network shows in 1940s and 1950s, including *Sherlock Holmes, Bulldog Drummond, Dimension X, Mr. Keen*, and *Joyce Jordan, M.D.* He later did music for TV including *Strike It Rich*. He lived in Ridgefield 1950 to 1963, first on Branchville Road, later on Main Street, and left upon retirement to return to his native Ozarks where he was closely associated with and a benefactor of the College of the Ozarks. His wife was Darlene Buhrman. [WWW]

Bulkley, Jonathan, (1857-1939), Yale 1879, owned Rippowam (*q.v.*), a West Mountain estate. He headed Bulkley, Dunton and Company, a paper manufacturer established by his father in 1833, still existing and one of the oldest continuously operating businesses in NY state. He was a benefactor of many NYC charities. His wife was Sarah L. Tod Bulkley (*q.v*.). [WWW]

Bulkley, Sarah L. Tod, (1870-1943), president of the Garden Club of America from 1932 to 1935, traveled widely in the U.S. and in Asia promoting the aims of the club. She was also active in Ridgefield Garden Club for 40 years, and was known for her charitable work in NYC, where she also lived. She and her husband Jonathan (*q.v.*) owned Rippowam (*q.v.*), a large estate on Rippowam Road, starting in 1902 (the family still owns the estate in 2026). She and her daughter, Sarah Bulkley Randolph (*q.v*.), were among the founders of the Ridgefield Boys' Club. [NR]

Bullock, Michael Edward, (1940-1998), a former Marine fighter pilot who flew Boeing 747 airliners for TWA, was killed in a small plane crash in California.

He lived in Ridgefield from 1967 to 1995 and was active in the Republican Party and Lions Club. He was a founder and commandant of Ridgefield's Marine Corps League (*q.v*.). [WWW]

Bully's steakhouse at 470 Main Street succeeded Touchstone's (*q.v.*) and existed from ca.1993 until 2004. Among its owners was Donald Altieri (*q.v.*). It was followed by Koo (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Bundle, The, the largest package of projects ever undertaken here, was approved by voters Dec. 5, 2000. Costing $90 million (about $170 million in 2026 dollars), it consisted of converting the recreation center back into Barlow Mountain Elementary School, renovating the five other elementary schools, East Ridge Middle School and the high school, and building a new recreation center on the former Ippoliti property on Danbury Road. [JFS]

Bundles for Britain, a WW2 group with a Ridgefield chapter, aided the people of Great Britain, particularly with home-knit clothing, but also with medical supplies and ambulances. Theresa Strickland Colt (*q.v*.), head of the local chapter, was honored by King George VI after the war. [RP8-40, FAG]

Bung Town, an old name for the neighborhood along North Salem Road, east of Lake Mamanasco, first appears in town records in 1798 and last in 1854. RIR says one tradition related that a child, on a first visit to Isaac Keeler's grist mill near the corner of North Salem and Sherwood Roads, was frightened by the sound of the machinery, which the child described as "Bung! Bung! Bung!" Another suggested that "bung" was the sound the barrels of flour made as they exploded after British troops set fire to the mill in 1777 (*see* Battle of Ridgefield). A more likely source of the name is that one or several people in the neighborhood were part-time makers of bungs, the stoppers used in barrels — cutting bungs from wood or cork was probably a winter activity to earn some cash for a family. [RN]

Bungalow, The, was a name of a house at 47 Peaceable Street, used at least in 1924 when it appears on a postcard. The owners have included Albert Wiggin, Henry Steele Roberts family, Paul and Sadye Meisner (*q.v. each*), J. Louis and Asunta Read, Raymond Sawyer, A. Raymond Bessette (*q.v*.). It was also called Peaceable Acres (*q.v.*) and Wiggin's Way (*q.v.*). [DD197-8,OR]

Bunker, William, (1857/8-1942), was a wealthy New York City produce merchant who built an estate at 253 West Mountain Road shortly before the turn of the 20th Century. His carriage house and barn are both now also homes. [DD280] He specialized in rare first edition books, [NYT11/2/1924] He was also an AKC breeder of collies. His portrait, painted around 1905 by John White Alexander, is in the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. He died at his Ridgefield home.

Burdick, Eleanor L., (1897-1979), taught English, history and math at RHS, starting in 1920 when it was Hamilton High, and retiring in 1963. She was chairman of the English Department and directed the Drama Club. [WWW]

Burford, Heather, a native of Canada, was the first woman to lead a professional fire department in Connecticut when she became chief of the Ridgefield Fire Department May 8, 2006. She started the CERT (*q.v.*) program here, and earned a master's in public administration from UConn in 2010. Burford remained chief until 2013 when she took over the larger Seminole, Fla. Fire Rescue Department. [RT]

Burgess was an elected member of the Board of Burgesses who oversaw the early 1900s Borough of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). Their leader was the warden. [JFS]

Burkat, Leonard, (1919-1992), a native of Boston, was a music writer whose program notes were used by many orchestras and ensembles around the world. In 1946, he became the librarian at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood, then the administrative director of the Tanglewood Music Center until 1963. He later oversaw classical and Broadway music for Columbia Records' Masterworks and Epic labels. He bought a weekend home at 563 Branchville Road in 1966, retiring there and keeping it until he moved with wife Marion to Southbury, in 1975. [NYT8/25/1992, JFS]

Burlingham, Cora Weir, (1892-1986), the third daughter of artist J. Alden Weir (*q.v.*) and Anna Baker Weir, was a major force in shaping what is now Weir Farm National Historical Park through her interests in landscape design, horticulture, and preservation. She commissioned most of the stone walls, built by Joseph Knoche (*q.v*.), at the farm. She studied at the Parson School of Design in New York, and also was formally educated in botany and horticulture. She worked for many years at the New York Botanical Gardens, and served on its board of directors. She also worked as a volunteer nurse in France for the American Red Cross during WW1. In 1969, she donated 37.5 acres of her own property, also part of the original farm, to the Nature Conservancy, for what became the 110-acre Weir Preserve (*q.v*.), adjacent to Weir Farm National Historical Park. [JFS]

Burning permits can be obtained for brush only at the fire marshal's office at Ridgefield Fire Department, 6 Catoonah Street. Leaf burning is never allowed in Connecticut. [RAB]

Burns, Ellen, an accountant, was a leader in the Ridgefield Open Space Association (ROSA) (*q.v.*) in the 1990s and its efforts to get the town to buy the IBM/Fox Hill Inn property on Bennett's Farm Road, now Bennett's Pond State Park (*q.v.*). With her husband, **Darwin Ellis**, she owns Books on the Common (*q.v.*). Both were honored in 2025 by Keeler Tavern for their contributions to the community. [JFS]

Burr, Bradley and **David,** owned 75% of a "flax mill" (*q.v.*) and received the "liberty to erect a charding [carding] mill & distillery" in 1814. [RLR 11/229]

Burr, Gilbert B., (1866-1914), a native of North Salem and graduate of Coleman Business College, Newark, N.J., was a Ridgebury Road farmer, and member of the Boards of Assessors and Relief. A Republican, he was state representative from 1905 to 1907. His diary for the year 1888 was edited and published as *A Country Life in Old Ridgebury* in 2023. [Burr, JFS]

Burr, J. Howard, a Danbury clothier, had a high-end men's clothing store in the 1920s and early 1930s at 384 Main Street. It was acquired during the Depression by the manager, Samuel Patterson, who ran it till his retirement a few years later. A portion of the store was devoted to the wares of another Danbury business, Heim's Music Store. [DD97]

Burr, Peter, was in 1737 given permission by the Proprietors to build "a good and sufficient grist mill" on the "Norwalk River," along with a dam, north of Cedar Mountain. [RLR 2/201] This is today's Route 7 at Florida Hill Road (*see* Moongate). In 1740 Burr sold it to Elijah Hauley. [JFS]

Burt, Benjamin, (1680-1759), probably the town's first blacksmith, was born in Northampton, MA. In 1704, as young marrieds, he and his pregnant wife, **Sarah Belden Burt**, were captured by French and Indians during Massacre of Deerfield, MA, and were taken in mid-winter to Montreal, where Burt was forced to work for a seminary. Freed in 1706, he was carried with his again-

pregnant wife by ship to Boston; son Seaborn (*q.v.*) was born during the journey. The family came to Ridgefield in 1712 and Benjamin was given a home lot and one-28th of reserved outlying land in exchange for his agreeing to work at least four years as the community's blacksmith. He soon amassed a considerable amount of land throughout town, and later had a saw mill on Danbury Road and owned the Mamanasco grist mill (*q.v.*). S*ee also* Blacksmith Ridge, Burt's Pond. [WWW]

Burt, Charles H., (-1864), died in a Union Army hospital on an island in Long Island Sound off New Rochelle, NY, on Sept. 11, 1864. He is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [JFS]

Burt, David, (1750-), a loyalist in the Revolution, was seen associating with the British on Long Island in May 1779. A son of Seaborn and Susannah Lobdell Burt, he was like his brother Benjamin a Queen's Ranger. He moved first to Gagetown, N.B. after the Revolution, and then settled at Keswick in York Co., N.B. [CA] His confiscated real estate was returned by the Fairfield County court. [CDA1 XXXIV:459d,460a,461b]

Burt, Epenetus, bought Howe grist and saw mills at Titicus in 1865. [RLR 23/267]

Burt, Ferdinand W., (ca. 1851-1916), was a farmer who sold his spread to Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v.*) and then became an owner of the Titicus Store (*q.v.*). He died while visiting the W.J. Humphreys home, the same Danbury Road house in which he was married many years earlier — in fact, he died in the same room where the ceremony had taken place. [P11/14/1916]

Burt, Joseph, (1765-1859), a native of Ridgefield, was a son of Benjamin (*q.v.*) who was only about 11 years old when the Revolution began, and was only a year or two older when his parents fled to Long Island by 1779. His father died soon after they arrived in New Brunswick in 1783 and he apparently acted as the "man in the family," applying for compensation for losses suffered after refusing to join the Rebels. In New Brunswick, Joseph married Elizabeth Burnett and had 11 children, the 5th being Benjamin Burt, born in 1799, an early settler in the Burtt's Corner area of NB. Joseph died in Douglas Parish, York Co. NB [JFS]

Burt, Joshua, (1743-1817), was a Loyalist who fled Ridgefield for Long Island, but since he did not fight, was allowed to return in 1786. He was a son of Seaborn Burt. [JFS]

Burt, Seaborn, (1706-1773), was born on a ship bringing his family to Boston after his parents were freed from captivity in Quebec, where taken by French and Indians (*see* Benjamin Burt). He came to Ridgefield as a child and in 1759 took over ownership of the Mamanasco grist mill (*q.v.*). [RLR 4/155] A few years after his death, the mill was taken over by the Proprietors (*q.v.*), possibly because Seaborn's heirs were Tories; it was sold then to Benjamin Chapman (*q.v.*). *See also* Theophilus Burt. [JFS]

Burt, Theophilus (1756-1822), a son of Seaborn Burt (*q.v.*), was a Tory who fled to British protection in Revolution. In the 1770s, the state confiscated his property and sold off some in 1781, noting he "hath absconded and taken side with the British troops against the United States of America." His brothers, David and Benjamin, also fled in the war. However, after the war, Theophilus petitioned the General Assembly for title to his old land; the assembly in 1792 restored the title to what was left, probably including a share in Mamanasco grist mill (*q.v.*) his father and grandfather had owned. The proprietors granted him and Thomas Hyatt their right to the mill in

1797. [RLR 8/124] He apparently eventually left town. [JFS]

Burt Road is an old name for Old West Mountain Road, says a 1941 deed. Members of Burt family lived along it in the 19th Century. In fact, in 1891, Dr. John G. Perry of NYC bought the old Stephen Burt farm and turned it into what is now the Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) estate. [RN]

Burt's Lane was the earliest name for today's Catoonah Street; Benjamin Burt (*q.v.*) had his house on the north corner of Catoonah and Main Streets. [RN]

Burt's Pond: **1.** An 18th and early 19th Century name for Lake Mamanasco, first used in a 1793 deed. Benjamin Burt (*q.v.*) bought the grist mill at lake outlet in 1742; after his death in 1759, his eldest son, Seaborn (*q.v.*), operated it until his death in 1773. A few Burt properties were confiscated during Revolution because some family members sided with the British. In the 1800s Burts had interests at Mamanasco: Joshua Burt was one of several mill owners in 1817, and Epenetus Burt had grist and saw mills at the lake in 1865. The family continued to live in the Mamanasco neighborhood until early 20th Century. The name was sometimes misunderstood as Birch Pond (*q.v.*). **2.** Great Pond was also called Burt's Pond during the late 18th Century; it is believed that Benjamin Burt had land there. [RN]

Burton, Linette M. "Nat," (1916-1999), was a longtime reporter and feature writer for RP, starting in 1958. She had written two children's books before moving to Ridgefield in 1954 with her husband, Earl, a *Sports Illustrated* executive. A small garden named for her used to be on the front lawn of the old South Hall (now a private home) at St. Stephen's Church. [WWW]

Burying Yard, Ye, on upper Wilton Road East, just south of Main Street, is the town's oldest graveyard. Established Nov. 25, 1708, its use was discontinued by the mid-1700s. The grounds originally extended across Wilton Road East and included what are now several lots holding houses on Main Street and Wilton Road East. Rockwell said the current burying ground "is only a portion of the original cemetery, as a road was cut through a section ... about 1850, and the tombstones and remains of the early settlers were carted off. The … town meeting sanctioned this deed." No gravestones today stand. A monument bears the names of 40 people believed buried there. The grounds have been maintained off and on by The Caudatowa Garden Club, Parks & Recreation Department, and, more recently, the Graveyard Committee. [HLYB]

Bus service: "The Ridgefield and Danbury Automobile Bus" began service in summer 1916, with three trips daily each way, leaving Ridgefield from Scott and Lewis's store on Main Street; fare was 40 cents each way [P8/29/1916]. New England Transportation Company ran a bus from New York City to Pittsfield, Mass., that stopped in Ridgefield in 1920s and 30s. (NETC reduced service in February 1930 due to declining ridership [P1/30/1930].) Greyhound (*q.v.*) stopped at the center of town daily in the 1940s and 1950s. After passenger service on the branch train line ended in 1925, buses ran between the village and Branchville station for some years. Victory Bus Line (*q.v.*) from Ridgefield to Bridgeport was operated during WWII by Leo Pambianchi. HART bus service from Danbury to Ridgefield, begun October 1988, ended Jan. 31, 1992. However, HART weekday shuttle bus service to Katonah station began Aug. 8, 2002. Suspended briefly during Covid epidemic, it soon resumed. Since the early 2000s, HART has also sponsored a Danbury-Norwalk bus, called "7 Link" that at

first ran only up and down Route 7, serving Ridgefield only from Branchville, but which in recent years changed the route to include the center of Ridgefield. HART also operates SweetHART, a door-to-door, mini-bus service for the elderly and handicapped. [JFS]

Buses, school: The first public transportation of Ridgefield school children began in the early 20th Century when covers were built over farm wagons, drawn by horses. Children who lived within about a mile and a half of their schoolhouse were expected to walk, but those farther away got rides. Buses with internal combustion engines began to be used in the early 1920s. All of these buses were contracted services, an arrangement that continues to this day. In 1962, the Board of Education voted not to provide bus service to St. Mary's Catholic School students, but later that year, in what was probably the best-attended referendum of the century, 62% of the voters turned out to approve by a vote of 1,402 to 1,190 the town's providing school bus transportation to St. Mary's children. Today, the state requires the town to provide bus all local children who attend in-town private schools. Around 1980, the Board of Education insisted that the bus operator, then Dunn Bus Company, park its buses at the old Ridgefield dump off Old Quarry Road so that the town could collect the property taxes on them; they had been parked in Danbury. Today, school bus transportation is provided for all handicapped children and for qualified children living beyond maximum walking distances of 3/4 mile in elementary school, one mile in middle school and 1½ mile in high school (there are safety exceptions to the distance limits). School bus operations have been relatively safe, but there have been mishaps. On March 19, 1929, Aldo Branchini, 7, of Nod Hill suffered a fractured pelvis and internal injuries after he was run over by a school bus at the Benjamin Franklin Grammar School. On March 18, 1982, more than 50 Veterans Park children were sent to three hospitals after a car hit black ice, struck their bus, which rolled down an embankment on Peaceable Street. No one was seriously injured, but the crash prompted a study of road sanding procedures. In 2022-23, school bus transportation in Ridgefield cost $6,174,989.22, which included using 31 large buses and 19 small buses, operated by First Student, a company the school board has used for many years. [SD, JFS].

Bush, Arthur Lewis, (1913-1945), a 1931 RHS graduate, was killed in action on Jan. 18, 1945, in the Battle of the Bulge near Ondenval, Belgium. A native of England, he and his family came to the US in 1929 and were living on Silver Spring Road, just across from the Ridgefield line, where his father was a gardener on the Swaine estate. By 1940, the family was living in Madison County, NY., and Arthur was working as a truck and bus driver. He enlisted in 1944 at the age of 31 and was assigned to Company E, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Division of the Army. He left a wife and a small child. Private Bush was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Bush. He is buried in New Woodstock, Madison County, NY. [P5/25/1950, FAG, JFS]

Busino, Orlando, (1926-2022), a native of upper New York, was a cartoonist whose work appeared in *McCalls, Reader's Digest, Good Housekeeping, Saturday Evening Post*, and other magazines. He thrice won the National Cartoonists Society's award for best magazine cartoonist. His "Gus" series appeared for decades in *Boys Life* magazine, and were the subject of two books. He often visited the schools, giving cartooning demonstrations. He lived on Shadblow Hill Road from 1961 until his death. [NR, WWW]

Butler, Justine, (1934-2011), a prominent professional tennis player in the Northeast in the late 20th Century, was the first pro at the Ridgefield Tennis Club (*q.v*.) and taught for Parks and Recreation. The Justine H. Butler Tennis Courts, behind the Venus Office Building and Yanity Gym on East Ridge, were named for her. [NR]

Butler, James, grocery stores, an early chain of groceries, known for their green fronts, had a store at 414 Main Street for a while in the early 20th Century. The son of the founder married Joseph Conron's (*q.v.*) daughter. Butler and his cousin, a nun, founded Marymount College. [DD269, W]

Butterfly was what opera star Geraldine Farrar (*q.v*.) called her home at 34 New Street. She was famous as starring as Madama Butterfly in the Metropolitan Opera's first production of the Puccini opera in 1907, and went on to sing that role many times, often with Enrico Caruso, at the Met. The house was later owned by Maude Bouvier Davis (*q.v.)*.

Buttery, Stephen, (1819-?), was a farmer and tavern-keeper on Florida Road. In May 1861, he allegedly shot Abraham Nash (*q.v.*) and another man who'd torn down a secessionist flag he'd erected to oppose the Civil War. [UNM]

Buttonwood Swamp, a wetland at the east end of Bennett's Pond(s), is first mentioned in a 1763 deed and last cited in land records in 1940. Because of changes in water levels, the swamp today may be part of the eastern end of the pond, west of Route 7, a little north of the Bennett's Farm Road intersection. Buttonwood is a more correct name for the sycamore. The tree so-called because the fruit looks like an old-fashioned button. [RN]

By-The-Green was the name used by Mrs. David Egleston for her home at 181 Main Street. The name refers to the property's being next to the old village green or meeting house yard. [P7/20/1911]

Bye, Arthur Edwin, (1919-2001), a Netherlands-born landscape architect, focused on natural landscapes. In the 1950s he was among the first to promote using native plants and restoring native woodlands on residential and commercial properties. He taught for many years at Cooper Union in NYC and was the author of *Art into Landscape, Landscape into Art* (1983). He lived on the Francis D. Martin estate in the 1950s and 1960s and later on Cottonwood Lane in Fox Hill condominiums. [NYT12/17/2001, JFS]

Bypass Road: 1. An old road no longer in use connected Barry Avenue with Peaceable Hill Road; part is now town open space. **2.** The original name of Ligi's Way (*q.v.*). The road bed was created in the 1990s by the town, using leftover fill from many projects around Ridgefield. [RN]

Byrd, Admiral Richard E.: *See under* Paul Dean Arnold.

Byrne, Rev. Patrick, was second pastor of St. Mary's Parish, from 1886 to 1892. [JFS]

Byrnes, Rev. Horace W., (1851-1912), was the minister at Jesse Lee Methodist Church from 1902 to 1906, and preached locally famous anti-liquor and anti-gambling sermons in the early 20th Century. [P7/24/1902, 3/15/1906]

C

Cable television: The first cable TV service in Ridgefield was offered in 1980 by TelePrompTer (*q.v.*). Group W took over and reported in 1983 that about 70 miles of cable would be installed by the end of that year; 200 miles of roads still needed cabling and would take close to 10 years to complete. In 2026, "cable TV" services are called internet providers, and the two wire-based providers are Frontier and Xfinity. [JFS]

Caboose: *See* Ridgefield Sport and Toy Caboose

Cadence Academy Preschool is operated by a chain company that, in 2018, took over The Children's Corner (*q.v.*) at 115 Barlow Mountain Road.

Cady, J. Cleaveland, (1837-1919), an architect, designed the First Congregational Church (*q.v.*). His other projects included the south range of the American Museum of Natural History in NYC and 15 buildings at Yale. [JFS]

Cady, Dr. Philander Kinney, (1826-1917), an Episcopal minister and professor, is said to have maintained two chapels in his house at 94 Main Street. He was a professor and a dean at the General Theological Seminary from 1889 to 1902. He was distantly related to J. Cleaveland Cady (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Cain, Hugh, (ca.1744-1808), built and operated a fulling mill (*q.v.*) on today's Route 7 (which did not exist then) on the north side of Topstone Road. He was a sergeant in the Revolution. Cain sold the fulling mill, a house, barn, shop, coloring house, hoghouse, and 20 acres in 1789 to David Banks for £250, but continued to run the mill. *See also* Cain's Mill. [RN, RLR 7/77]

Cain, Stephen, (1945-2020), a native of England, was a British Army major who served in Northern Ireland and Afghanistan, and was presented a "Member of the British Empire" by Queen Elizabeth. He came to Ridgefield in 1991 where he was a consultant on international terrorism. He organized the Allied Forces Foundation in 2008 when he walked from West Point to Boston to raise awareness of the needs of servicemen and veterans and their families. He also ran a meat delivery business. [P4/26/2020]

Cain's Hill, a ridge across which winds Cain's Hill Road (*q.v.*), is named for Hugh Cain (*q.v.*) who had a fulling mill (*q.v.*) at foot of the hill. The name first appears in a 1855 deed. Earlier it has been called Sturdevant's Clapboard Tree Ridge (*q.v.*). [RN]

Cain's Hill Road, a steep road between the Farmingville/Lounsbury Road junction and Route 7, was once part of a major route from Ridgefield to Redding. It became less used in mid-1800s when the less steep New Road (*q.v.*) was built as bypass. Cain's Hill Road, which was not paved until the 1960s, is one of few town roads with truck traffic ban. In 2006, it was widened and improved in spots, but it still remains a challenging road. [RN]

Cain's Mill: Hugh Cain (*q.v.*) started a fulling mill (*q.v.*) in 1770 at what is now the northeast corner of Route 7 and Topstone Road, opposite Cain's Hill Road. He sold the mill to David Banks in 1789 [RLR 7/77], but seemed to continue to work there into at least the 1790s. The operation was enlarged into a woolen mill that burned down in July 1828 [*Schenectady NY Cabinet*, July 9, 1828]. The rebuilt mill was later owned by Elias Glover (*q.v.*). The building eventually collapsed or burned, but the sizable stone foundation was visible for many years. However, in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, many

people stole stones to use for walls. The 9.3-acres was purchased by the state in 1969 for the Norwalk River Flood Control Project. Today, the site is on the National Register of Historic Places, though there is not much to see except the river and a little of the stone foundation. [WWW]

Caldor, a discount department store at Copps Hill Plaza, replaced Grant's in 1977. It went bankrupt and closed in 1999, replaced by Kohl's (*q.v.*). The Caldor chain of stores was named for founders **Carl** and **Dor**othy Bennett (Carl was a former liquor salesman whose route included Ridgefield). [JFS]

Calle, Christopher, is an artist who has designed more than 40 U.S. postage stamps. He moved here in 1986, and lives on Old Sib Road. [NR]

Cambridge, Godfrey, (1933-1976), an African-American comedian and movie actor, moved to Buck Hill Road in 1974, and was soon enmeshed in battles with his real estate agents, whom he brought before state regulators for selling him a defective house, and with town officials over a fence he erected too close to the road. While he never charged that the real estate agents or the town acted because of racial motives, he did say his teenage daughter had been threatened and that his car was vandalized because of racial prejudice. A native of Harlem, he got his start as a stage actor on Broadway, earning an Obie. He turned to films, often comedies, but insisted that his roles depict him "as a man, rather than as a Negro." He died of a heart attack while playing Ugandan dictator Idi Amin for an ABC TV movie, *Raid on Entebbe*. *See also under* Racism. [NR]

Cameron's Line is a geological fault that runs from Manhattan northeasterly through Westchester and into Ridgefield. The line enters town near the southwest corner and almost exactly follows West Lane and High Ridge into the village, continues across Prospect Ridge, through Great Swamp and Farmingville, then into Redding, on up to Danbury and northerly into Litchfield County. *The New York Times* said the line "marks an abrupt change in the earth's crust that resulted from a collision between North America and a European-African land mass 400 million years ago." Later, the European-African continent pulled away, leaving behind a piece of its edge; i.e., land south of the line was once part of today's western Africa while north of the line was North America. Thus, many soil types south of the line are considerably different from those on the north; for instance, limestone is common in the northern two thirds of town, but not in the southern third. S*ee also* Limestone. [JFS, NYT10/20/1985]

Camp, Herbert Viets, (1935-2022), an attorney with offices at 409 Main Street, was a Republican state representative from 1969 to 1974. In 1986, he unsuccessfully tried to be the GOP candidate for state senator in 26th district, losing in a primary to Judith Freedman of Westport [P9/4&11/1986]. He and wife, Alice, moved to Craigmoor Road South in 1965, living there until 2008 when he closed his practice. and they moved to Stony Point, CT. [NR]

Camp, Rev. Samuel, (1744-1813), was the first settled pastor of the Ridgebury Congregational Church, starting in 1769. He served as pastor for 35 years, until 1804, when he was obliged to resign, probably due to health. He continued to live in Ridgebury until his death in March 1813. Camp outlived three wives, all buried alongside him in Ridgebury Cemetery with matching stones, but half the size of his; in 1769, married Hannah Garnsey, who died in 1777, age 33; a year later, he married Lucretia Barker, who died in 1782, age 35; eight months later, he married Mrs. Mary Keeler Northrop, who died

1800, age 54. [JFS]

Camp Adventure began as Camp Topstone in 1925 on the northwestern shore of Great Pond and became Camp Adventure around 1950. In December 1963 was purchased by the Volunteers of America to use as a sort of Fresh Air camp for city children. Camping activities ended by about 1970 when the property was acquired by George Bakes, a developer, who spent more than 20 years trying to get town approval of a new use. The property became Laurel Ridge Health Care Center, Ridgefield Crossings Assisted living, and Regency at Ridgefield age-restricted condominiums, but, important for the town, nearly 49 acres of open space protecting Great Pond was donated to Ridgefield by Bakes. [JFS]

Camp Arden was established in 1934 by Irving Schoenberg as a Jewish summer camp on 135 acres on the north and west shores of Great Pond. It advertised 40 buildings, swimming and boating, extensive recreational facilities including eight clay tennis courts, three cement handball courts, a baseball diamond, and more. It offered full-time physician, nurse, "camp mothers" for both boys and girls, experienced chefs, and more. Its motto was: "Camp Life Today, Real Life Tomorrow." Its fee in 1938 was $225 ($5,000 in 2024 dollars). The camp closed when WW2 broke out and the property later became Camp Adventure (*q.v.*). *See also* Arden Lake.

Camp Catoonah was a 42-acre Girl Scout (*q.v.*) camp off upper Rippowam Road on NY state line. Most of the land was donated by Ernest Sturges and Warren Keeler to the Girl Scouts in the late 1940s; the camp opened in the summer of 1950 and eventually included an in-ground swimming pool. It closed in 1998, and was donated to the town by a requirement of the original deed, and became Sturges Park (*q.v.*) in 2000. Part of the camp land was earlier sold for development — *see* Kimberly Court. [P2/3/1998]

Camp Coleman operated at Lake Mamanasco around 1910, serving the Boys Scouts, Boys Club and choir of St. John's Episcopal Church in Stamford. The camp was run by the Rev. F.A. Coleman. [SA7/1/1910]

Camp Comfort: Although signs describe Camp Comfort, active in late 19th Century, as being in Ridgefield, the center of the hunting and fishing camp was on northeast shore of Lake Oscaleta (*q,v*,) in Lewisboro, NY. However, the property on which camp operated was in both Ridgefield and Lewisboro, and the main access may have been from Ridgefield. [JFS]

Camp Hidden Valley: *See* Hidden Valley Camp.

Camp Topstone, aimed at Jewish adults from NYC, was founded about 1925 [NY American 6/7/1925] on 135 acres on the north side of Great Pond by the Shapiro brothers, Israel and Albert, of Brooklyn NY on a site that would subsequently be Camp Merriemount, Arden Lake Camp, and Camp Adventure (*q.v. each*). The camp was often described as being in Branchville, probably because it was the nearest major railroad station stop. On May 12, 1929, a fire destroyed the social hall and 15 bungalows at Camp Topstone "on the Danbury Road." Loss was $13,750 ($257,000 in 2026). [P5/16/1929] Four years later, another fire destroyed the dining hall and nearby buildings. [NH5/27/1933] [JFS, RP]

Campbell, Betty Lou Hillock, (1926-2012), a native of Florida, was a musician and singer, and obtained a pilot's license at a time when it was unusual for women to do so. She lived for many years at 164 Main Street. [P11/29/2012]

Campbell, David Colley, (1939-2021), and **Martha King Campell,** (1939-2024),

were prominent community volunteers in the last third of the 20th Century. A native of Detroit and a Harvard graduate, David was a 50-year Ridgefielder who was president of Jaycees, active in Little League and Pony Colt baseball, served on the Parks and Recreation and Pension Commissions. Martha served on the Board of Education and Housing Authority, and was active in Ridgefield Women's Club, Red Cross Blood Mobiles, and Keeler Tavern Museum. Together, they were in 2004 the first couple to be selected Rotary Citizens of the Year (*q.v*.). They were also honored by Ridgefield Old Timers in 2012. [JFS]

Campbell, Richard G., (1933-1996), a native of Ohio, was the flight engineer aboard TWA Flight 800, from JFK to Rome, which exploded off Long Island, killing all 230 people on board the Boeing 747-100. A 12-year veteran of the Air Force, retiring as a captain, Campbell joined TWA in 1966 and had flown 18,500 hours as a captain, first officer or flight engineer. He first moved to Ridgefield in 1985, moved to California in 1989, and returned to Ridgefield in 1994. [P7/25/1996]

Campbell, Sullivan Graham, (1922-1972), chairman of the board of Graphic Sciences and a native of Kansas, was a Ph.D. mathematician and computer expert. He worked for IBM and became an executive with Xerox. His company, Graphic Sciences, created and sold an early version of the fax machine. He died in an auto accident at age 49. He was married to Betty Lou Campbell (*q.v.*) and lived at 164 Main Street. [NYT2/10/1972, P1/28/1971]

Camps: Among the private summer camps that have operated here are Arden Lake Camp or Camp Arden, Camp Adventure, Camp Catoonah, Camp Comfort, Camp Topstone, Hidden Valley Camp, Life's Farm, Rabbit Hole Farm, St. John's Camp (*q.v. each*). *See also* John's Pond. [JFS]

Canale, RoseMarie Rigano, (1934-2025), a native of Mamaroneck, NY, was a St. Mary Parish administrator, who was active in the arts, particularly theater. She directed, acted and produced many off-Broadway shows, including her favorite, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. A resident since 1962, she directed many plays for the Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts (*q.v.*), Ridgefield Summer Theater and Ridgefield Dinner Theatre of which she was a founder. [KFH8/24/2025]

Candee's Pond, a body of water on the north side of lower Branchville Road, west of Florida Road and near the Branchville Cemetery, is named for Howard S. and Elizabeth Candee, who from 1928 to 1938 owned the estate in which it was located. The pond had already existed by then. Candee (ca. 1883-1953) was involved in NYC real estate and later lived more modestly on New Street. The property was later owned by S. Howard Young, whose guests there included actress Elizabeth Taylor and Dwight Eisenhower who reportedly made his decision to run for president there. Clearing of the wild growth on the estate in 2024 made the pond more visible to the passing public. [RN]

Candle Shop was a store "with gifts and trinkets and candles galore," as a 1960s postcard described it. Located at 719 Danbury Road (Route 7) (ONS283), it was started in the late 1950s by Helen Molnar and Lawrence G. Timeus; it was managed in 1983 by Joyce Buttikofer and had many fans in Ridgefield as well as the region. By 1999, however, the business had closed and the space was a mobile telephone store. It was renovated in 2017-18 into Laurent Luxury Lighting, which sells "upscale custom

decorative fixtures for high-end residential spaces." [JFS]

Candlelight Shoppe, a venerable Ridgefield women's lingerie shop, opened around 1965, and in 2020, when it was owned by Pam Fitzpatrick, moved from 407 Main Street to 416 Main Street in 2020. Fitzpatrick's mother, Alda Carboni, started the business with a focus on bra-fitting. [JFS]

Candlestick factory: Brothers John W. and Francis A. Rockwell first operated a factory making metal candlesticks in the building that afterward became part of the Bailey Inn (*q.v.*) on Main Street. They then moved operations to a building that stood nearly across from today's firehouse. That factory was destroyed by fire in April 1859, with a loss of $5,000. "More than 20 hands are thrown out of employment," said the *Hartford Times.* When Catoonah Hall (*q.v.*) was soon built on the site, the factory resumed there from 1860 to 1868, when it, too, burned down. The factory chiefly made brass and tin candlesticks, but also produced newspaper holders used by libraries and special patented clamps to keep the covers fastened on a child's bed. [DAR4/15/1859, Daub, WWW]

Candlewood Hill first appears as a name in 1749, probably for what is today called Pine Hill, northwest of the intersection of Farmingville and New Roads and near Aldrich Park. In colonial times, pines were often called "candlewood" because pieces of the resiny wood, especially the knots, were used as primitive candles. [RN]

Candoto: Writing in 1800, Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich says this was American Indian name for High Ridge. It may be a variation of Caudatowa (*q.v.*), which also appears sometimes as "Candatowa," and which supposedly meant "high mountain." One American Indian language authority says the word may be related to *kodtuhkoe*, which meant "at the top of a hill" or "highest place" in the language of some Massachusetts tribes. The name never appears in the land records, so the word may be badly corrupted from the original. [RN]

Canestrari, Gena, (1916-1976), a writer and native of Lewisboro, was a longtime Ridgefielder. She wrote at least two TV shows, a 1952 drama called "A Man and His Conscience," for the Armstrong Circle Theater, and a 1958 episode for the popular series, "The Millionaire." In the 1940s and 50s she worked full-time as a writer and editor for WTIC news in Hartford. She also wrote stories for children. Early in her career she worked at the *American Mercury* magazine, then based in Ridgefield, and was editor of *Great Teacher Magazine*. In the 1970s she taught at the Institute of Children's Literature in West Redding. She lived at 126 High Ridge at the time of her death. [P10/14/1976]

Canfield, Timothy, had one of the town's earliest saw mills, which he bought from Moses Northrup in 1726 "standing on Stamford Branch so-called," also subsequently called Canfield's Mill River (*q.v.*). This is the stream running out of Ridgefield south of Route 35 and crossing Route 123, where the mill probably was. This location was in Ridgefield before the Oblong (*q.v.*) was ceded to NY in 1731. [JFS]

Canfield's Mill River was a 1720s name for the Stamford Mill River (*q.v.*). Timothy Canfield (*q.v.*) had a saw mill where the river crosses under today's Route 123 in Lewisboro. [RN]

Canine control officer was a term used by town government for the dog warden. Around 2000, it became animal control officer (*q.v.*), largely

because of the need to deal with some wild animal problems. [JFS]

Canine Shelter: Long called the "dog pound" or just "the pound," the shelter is at 40 South Street, operated by the Animal Control division of the police department. In 2020, Kris Zulkeski was animal control officer (ACO for short). The job has been full-time since 1973. A six-run pound was built in the 1950s, and was enlarged in 1972 to 14 indoor runs. Dog licenses are issued by the town clerk's office but enforced by the ACO. Mandatory registration of dogs began in 1908. [JFS]

Cannonball House was Cass and Julia Gilbert's (*q.v.*) name for their Ridgefield home, now the Keeler Tavern Museum (*q.v.*), so called because of a cannonball — actually, a defused grenade — lodged in a beam on north side of building, fired by a British cannon during the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Cannonballs believed to have been fired at the Battle of Ridgefield have been unearthed over the years along the route of the British incursion through the town. Rockwell reports two were found in the 19th Century by Hubert P. Main (*q.v.*) in the family's yard north of the Lounsbury House. Another ball was found about 1878 in the road when it was being repaired in front the Lounsbury House (*q.v.*). About 1880, Ebenezer A. Hoyt (*q.v.*) plowed up a ball on Main Street lawn in front of his house, opposite the Keeler Tavern. In 1925 a cannon ball was found on the grounds of Gerardus P. Herrick (*q.v.*) on High Ridge. KSN reported that "Doc" Daniel Adams (*q.v.*), who owned what is now Ballard Park in the 1860s and early 1870s, dug two cannonballs from a retaining wall on his property. More recent finds include: Charles W. Sterling unearthed a cannonball in 1944 while working in his garden at Titicus — this may not have been from the battle since it was larger than those fired here. In March 1951, young Robert Scala unearthed a Revolutionary War cannonball in a rotted tree trunk in front of The Elms Inn (*q.v.*), owned by his father. (A month later, another cannonball was found under floorboards in a rear room of the inn.) In 1954, Atilio Cassavechia was spading near the front wall of his son's home on Danbury Road when his fork struck a cannonball. In the early 1970s two children digging in the woods at Casagmo found a ball. In June 2005, workers on the new Arnold's Way development off Main Street found a cannonball while excavating. [JFS]

Canoe Brook, Gutter was apparently a name for the outlet stream of Lake Mamanasco as it flows to the Titicus River. A 1754 deed called this the "Canoe Gutter" — gutter is an old word for a small brook or stream — and a 1789 deed calls it "Canoe Brook." The name suggests the American Indians had used this stream as a route between the Titicus and the lake, possibly on fishing or hunting expeditions. They maintained seasonal villages or campsite along parts of the lake. [RN]

Canterbury Gallery, a high-end antiques store, was opened at 409 Main Street in October 1981 by Kathy Varisco of Redding [P10/18/1981, P11/5/1981]

Canterbury Lane begins at Ridgebury Road opposite George Washington Highway, extending westward. An old highway that once led to the state line and beyond, it was called West Lane (*see* West Lane 2). In 1969, Mutual Land Management and Development subdivided its eastern end and PZC renamed road Canterbury Lane, perhaps because it sounds elegant or maybe as a playful reference to horses since there are stables and bridle trails in area. [RN]

Capobianco, Michael, (1948-2019), a native of the Bronx and an artist, was

creative director for Bantam Books and Kensington Publishing, responsible over the years for creating a number of acclaimed book covers for best-sellers. He lived in Ridgefield many years, retiring to Rapid City, S.D.

Cappiello Brothers Jewelers was operating at 424 Main Street in 1981 and also had a store in New Milford. The location had been Hibbart's Market in the 1920sand 1930s. [DD37]

Caputo's East Ridge Cafe: *See* East Ridge Cafe

Caraluzzi's Wines and Spirits opened in 2017 in a space at 46 Danbury Road that had been A&P's Best Cellars, which closed in 2015 in the wake of owner A&P's bankruptcy. Better known for its food markets, Caraluzzi also has several liquor stores, including in Georgetown and Danbury.

Carbe, Nino, (1909-1993), a native of Sicily, was a commercial artist who lived in Ridgefield with wife Betty from 1953 to 1964 when he returned to California, where he had started with Disney in 1940. During the 1940s, he worked on *Fantasia, Bambi, Pinocchio, Dumbo,* and other Disney classics. Later he worked for Walter Lantz on Woody Woodpecker animations, and Hanna Barbera. He lived here at a time when he was working on children's books, and for Book-of-the-Month Club. He did many backgrounds and special effects for Bakshi's film, *Lord of the Rings*, in 1980. [FBFR]

Carbe, Victoria "Vicki" (also known as Victoria Valentino), is a daughter of Nino and Betty Carbe (*q.v.*), and lived in Ridgefield in the 1950s and early 60s. She was an actress who appeared in a dozen films and was a Playboy Bunny in the 1960s — Miss September in 1963. She was one of the women who publicly accused Bill Cosby of sexual assault. [JFS]

Carboni, Benvenuto, (1869-1940), a stonemason, was one of first Italian immigrants to settle in Ridgefield, arriving in 1901 to work on the new water system. In 1904, he established first food market catering to growing the Italian community. He was a founder of Italian-American Mutual Aid Society (*q.v.*). He and his wife, Assunta, had six children, including Octavius "Tabby" Carboni (*q.v*.) and Olinto "Lynce" Carboni (*q.v*.). [WWW]

Carboni, Donald "Don," RHS 1955, a native and longtime resident, is an illustrator/designer who was a graphic design artist for Avon Cosmetics. He has also designed a typographic font, called Carboni. He illustrated the 2008 history book, *Celebrating Ridgefield's 300th Birthday, A Fun Book*, aimed at local elementary school pupils. In 2006, he was honored by the Ridgefield Old Timers Association. [JFS]

Carboni, John Nicholas, (1939-1994), a Ridgefield native, son of John P. and Ines Servadio Carboni, served 28 years as an officer in the U.S. Army. He was RHS Class of 1957 president, graduated from Bucknell in 1961, and was in ROTC. He was honored by ROTA in 1992. He was killed with wife Barbara in an auto accident in Germany where he lived. He was survived by two daughters and three grandchildren. [P9/8/1994]

Carboni, Octavius "Tabby," (1899-1992), a native of Italy, came here in 1903 and became a popular local insurance agent. He was among the first employees of State National Bank (*q.v*.) office here in 1959. He was town treasurer, 1957-59; a member of the school board for 20 years in 1930s and 40s; served on the War Rations Board; and was a Housing Authority member many years. He excelled at sports — his nickname was said to have been coined by friends who found his athletic reflexes catlike. [WWW]

Carboni, Olinto "Lynce," (1909-2006), a son of Benvenuto Carboni (*q.v.*), was a

star athlete at RHS, Class of 1927, served in the Navy in WW2, worked many years as a plumber, as maintenance head for the Ridgefield schools, and finally as a courier for the schools, retiring in 2000 at age 92. [WWW]

Carboni, Reno J. "Renz," (1913-1992), son of Benvenuto (*q.v.*) and Assunta Carboni, operated an Italian grocery store, founded by his father, at Prospect Street and Bailey Avenue, later turning it into a restaurant called Carboni's Cozy Nook or Carboni's Luncheonette, which closed in 1969. In 1962, he reopened the Maplewood Restaurant on Route 7, just over the Danbury line. He was also longtime custodian for the schools and for Ridgefield police headquarters. [P12/3/1992]

Carboni, Robert "Bob," (1929-2018), RHS 1947, was an award-winning public relations executive. In the summer of 1950, while a student at Ohio U., he compiled thousands of words of history of Ridgefield sports since 1875 for the *Press's* 75th anniversary "Diamond Jubilee" publication. A football, baseball and basketball player at RHS, he was honored in 2003 by the Ridgefield Old Timers Association (*q.v.*) for his athletic achievements. [JFS]

Carboni, Vinnico, (1877-1979), a native of Italy, lived on Greenfield Street and died at age 102. He would daily walk several miles each way to and from work at an estate in South Salem where he was superintendent. [DD228]

Cardinal Court: A tertiary road (*q.v.*) off the south side of Peaceable Ridge Road, serving John Maggio's 1979 five-lot subdivision, Peaceable Ridge Manor, from 12.7 acres. The road is named for the bird. [RN]

Carey, Richard Owen, (1931-2022), a 1954 Yale graduate, was a founder and chief promoter of Village Bank and Trust Company (*q.v.*) in 1974 and was its chairman of the board, retiring in 1981 when he was living in Washington, CT, where he would serve as a selectman. He had led the Connecticut Land Company, a real estate development firm in Ridgefield. [P4/2/1981]

Cargon, William H. Jr., (1879-1938), a native of Katonah, NY, came to Ridgefield in 1917 when he bought the Ridgefield Lumber Company, now Ridgefield Supply. He served on the Board of Finance, was active in the Lions Club and Methodist Church, and was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. [RSB29]

Carnall, Arthur J., (1895-1972), a native of England, came to Ridgefield as a boy in 1904. In 1922, he joined the real estate and insurance business of Thaddeus Crane (*q.v.).* In 1930, two years after Crane's death, he took over the business, renaming it A.J. Carnall Inc (*q.v.*). He helped negotiate land purchases for Silver Spring Country Club, of which he was a longtime member. [WWW]

Carnegie, Lt. Thomas, (1945-1968), a native of Chicago, was the second Ridgefield killed in Vietnam. He came to Ridgefield in 1965 when his parents moved to Silver Spring Lane and had worked part-time at the Grand Union while on summer vacation from Belknap College. He enlisted in the Army in 1967. On April 18, 1968, while fighting Viet Cong, he was killed. The Army said: "As Lt. Carnegie moved forward with his radio telephone operator to adjust artillery fire, an exploding rocket severely wounded the radio operator. Disregarding his own safety, Lt. Carnegie moved to the aid of the injured man and after administering first aid, began moving him to a secure area. After moving the wounded man a few meters, Lt. Carnegie was mortally wounded by enemy rocket fire." His mother Barbara Carnegie put it more simply: "Tommy had gone to aid his wounded

radioman when he was killed." He was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. [SNTS]

Carnegie Medal, the nation's highest honor for civilian heroism, was presented in 1978 to Ridgefield native Leo J. Pambianchi (*q.v.*), then living in Pownal, VT: "Leo J. Pambianchi saved Max E. Linder from being struck by a train, Pownal, Vermont, March 1, 1978. When his two-door sedan plunged down the bank of a railroad cut and landed astride the rails of a track on which a freight train was approaching, Linder, 69, remained in the driver's seat, badly dazed. Pambianchi, 66, horse trainer, descended the steep rocky bank, moved onto the track, and opened the passenger door of the automobile. He pulled Linder out of the sedan and was holding him in a standing position between the rails when the train rounded a curve about 80 feet away. As Pambianchi lifted Linder and began carrying him out of the train's path, he stumbled and fell toward the bank. Pambianchi landed on top of Linder and remained in that position as the train passed, striking the sedan and pushing it about 720 feet before stopping." [Carnegie Hero Fund Commission].

Carney, John W., (1938-2018), a native of Philadelphia, PA, served in the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard and had been sales director at Jobson Publications. A 35-year resident of Ridgefield, he served on the Police Commission from 1986 to 1998. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. [FAG]

Carney, Lawrence, (1837-1863), a native of Ireland who had recently moved to town from New Canaan, was killed at the Battle of Gettysburg. His body was never recovered and he was declared "lost in war." He was 25 and the husband of Mary Carney. [JFS]

Carnival Shop was a gift shop operated by Mrs. John Farrell Hughes at 408 Main Street (ONS #109) in a small building that was famous for its leaning to the south. The building was razed in 1977 and replaced with new structure, occupied since ca. 2010 by Tazza Cafe (*q.v.*). Once the White Spot (*q.v.*) restaurant operated from this spot. [DD63]

Carpenter, Hortense (1818?-?), said to have come from "Ridgebury, Connecticut," was a circus bareback rider who married in 1840 George Fox Bailey of North Salem, head of his family's circus that combined with P.T. Barnum's to result in Barnum & Bailey circus. She reportedly worked for Barnum when she met Bailey. [SHPTC]

Carpenter, Nellie Crouse, (-1943), a daughter of an Ohio congressman and industrialist, was unsuccessfully wooed by the poet and novelist Stephen Crane. She instead married Samuel Emlen Carpenter (*q.v.*), settled in Ridgefield and had six children before they were divorced in 1914. [OR]

Carpenter, Samuel Emlen, (1869-1929), son of an old Philadelphia family, was a real estate executive who built the West Mountain estate, Hillaire (*q.v.*). He married his first wife, Nellie Crouce Carpenter (*q.v.*), in 1897 and divorced in 1914. Three years later, he married silent film star Katharine LaSalle (*q.v.*). They left Hillaire and moved to a large house at 145 High Ridge Avenue that later became Frances Cleaners (*q.v.*). They had one child and were divorced in 1924. He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [OR, DD269]

Carpenter Close, a lane at Casagmo off Main and Grove Streets, was named for the Carpenter family, ancestors of the Olcotts who built the estate named Casagmo (*q.v.*); Carpenters were among the first immigrants from England in New England and helped found Rhode Island. [RN]

Carr, Donald, (1887-1961), a native of NYC who had a country home here in the

1930s, was a writer, real estate executive, top amateur golfer, and expert on springer spaniels. A WW1 veteran, he founded during WW2 "Dogs for Defense," and aided in training the animals for military use. He was married to the poet, Blanche Wagstaff (*q.v.*). He wrote a book, *The People's Martyr*. They came here in 1934 and had moved to NJ by 1945.

Carriage factory: *See* Brush, Olmstead & Company.

Carriage-making was a significant industry in Ridgefield during the first two-thirds of the 19th Century. Carriages made in town were reportedly marketed in places as far away as New Orleans. The industry was said to have started with Jesse J. Skellinger and Elijah Hawley (*q.v. each*). *See also* Big Shop, Brush, Olmstead & Company. [JFS, ROAL136-7]

Carriere, Winifred Osborn, (1912-2002), grew up in Ridgefield, a daughter of Richard (*q.v.*) and Beulah Osborn (*see* Beulah France). She graduated from Syracuse, married Albert Carriere, an aspiring playwright, and moved to NYC. After they divorced, she had career editing for Prentice-Hall, McGraw-Hill, and magazines. She returned to Ridgefield in the late 1960s to a home on Cedar Lane. She wrote such books as *Cats 24 Hours A Day* (1964) and *An Easy Guide to Artificial Light Gardening for Pleasure and Profit* (1952). Her grandfather, Richard W. Osborn (*q.v.*), founded lumber and coal business later called Ridgefield Lumber Company (*q.v.*), then Ridgefield Supply Company (*q.v.*). Her scrapbook is owned by HS. [WWW]

Carrington, James Beebee, (1860-1929), was an editor of *Scribner's* magazine who lived on Nod Road, in the early 1900s. He dealt with many of the top literary and artistic people at the turn of the 20th Century, including Maxfield Parrish and N.C. Wyeth. He also wrote many articles on nature and art for magazines and newspapers. He was a member of the Salmagundi Club. [NYT7/16/1929]

Carroll, David Robert, (1954-2021), RHS 1972, was a native of Bethel who founded D.R. Carroll Construction Company in 1972, starting out and specializing in asphalt paving. Son Christopher took over leadership of the company on his retirement.

Carroll, Gordon, (1903-1978), a Baltimore native who lived in Ridgefield in the 1930s and early 40s, was an editor and publisher of magazines, including *The American Mercury*, published for a while from offices on Main Street. He had been a reporter for *The Washington Post* and other major daily newspapers. During the 1930s he was an outspoken critic of President Roosevelt. Later he became a senior editor at *Reader's Digest*, an editor at *Time* and editor-in-chief of *Coronet*, published by *Esquire*. He was a founder of Famous Writers School in Westport. His son, Gordon III, was producer of such Hollywood classics as Cool Hand Luke and Alien. [WWW]

Carroll, Leo Francis, (1900-85), a native of Bethel and a World War I veteran, was a state policeman from 1921 until 1952, rising to second in command of the entire department. He headed Troop A (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield for many years. He was on the State Liquor Control Commission member from 1953 to 1957; was first selectman from 1957 to 1967; and served on the school board from 1969 to 1975. He lived on Wilton Road West. Under First Selectman Carroll, several schools were built and more than 600 acres of open space were acquired. [WWW]

Carroll's Folly was a jocular name for intersection of Routes 7 and 35 from about 1940 to 1984 The semi-roundabout was said to have been designed

by State Police Lt. Leo F. Carroll (*q.v.*) of Troop A (*q.v.*), who later maintained "Carroll's Folly" was invented by his political enemies.

Cars: *See* Automobiles.

Carter, Samuel III, (1904-1989), a graduate of Princeton and Oxford, started out as an American magazine writer in Europe during the 1930s, became a Madison Avenue advertising agency executive in the 40s, and then quit in the 1960s to write books. His 20 titles were mostly histories, many of them aimed at teenagers, and included *Cherokee Sunset, The Incredible Great White Fleet, Cyrus Field: Man of Two Worlds, The Siege of Atlanta, 1864,* and *Blaze of Glory*. He lived on Silver Hill Road in the 1970s. [WWW]

Cartier, L.P, a member of the jeweler family, owned Downesbury Manor on Florida Hill Road in the 1920s; in the fall of 1923 he leased it to the Paulist Fathers, a Catholic order of priests, who used it for a short period as a seminary for about 20 candidates for the priesthood. [JFS]

Cartoonists known nationally who lived in Ridgefield: Tony Barlow, Jack Barrows, Cuyler Black, Wayne Boring (Superman comics), Orlando Busino, Herb Green, Bob Gustafson, Will Johnson, Robert Kraus, Jerry Marcus, Rene Williams. *See also* Illustrators, Artists.

Carvel Ice cream store arrived at 680 Danbury Road (Route 7) in a stand opened in May 1957, part of the original Carvel chain of stores operated in the tristate area by Tom Carvel, who became locally famous for his gravelly voiced TV commercials. The stand was taken over in 1977 by Ridgefield Ice Cream (*q.v.*), owned by Felix Lechner, who retained the original look of the Carvel stand. Carvel's soft ice cream, sometimes called frozen custard, has been known for its high butterfat content, giving it a distinctive richness. A modern Carvel store, opened in 1983, still operates at 113 Danbury Road. The original store is now Flobees (*q.v.*) [JFS]

Carvel Curve was Ridgefield police slang for the curve in Route 7 north of Route 35, scene of many accidents. It's so called because a Carvel Ice Cream stand operated there from 1957 until 1977. From 1977 until 2023, it was Ridgefield Ice Cream, but "Carvel Curve" was still used by police 30 years after Carvel left the site. In 1976, the Police Commission began a campaign to have the state straighten or at least improve the curve. In 1987-88, state reduced the severity of the curve in conjunction with widening the road to four lanes at that point, but accidents occasionally still occur there. [JFS]

Carvell, Kenneth C., (ca.1939-2019), became the town's first, appointed, full-time professional tax assessor in 1975, replacing the elected assessor position. He became Westport's assessor in 1983 [P7/28/1983] but continued to reside here. He was an expert bowler. He was succeeded by Al Garzi (*q.v.*). (S*ee also* Harold O. Davis). [JFS]

Cary, Melbert B., (1852-1946), a Princeton graduate, was an NYC lawyer specializing in railroads as well as an inventor, politician, and writer. In the early 1890s, he built the "Wildflower Farm" estate on West Lane and Country Club Road. Active in Connecticut Democratic politics, he ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1902. He wrote several books including *The Connecticut Constitution* (1900) and *The Woman Without A Country* and, in his 80s, the novel *Back Stage.* He held a patent for a device for converting a vase into an illuminated lamp. [WWW] *See also* The Connecticut Citizen Melbert B. Cary Jr.).

Cary, Melbert B. Jr., (1892-1941), son of Melbert Sr. (*q.v.*), was a celebrated graphic artist and publisher. In 1923, he married Mary Flagler, (1901-1967), a wealthy granddaughter of Henry Flagler, a Standard Oil founder and a major early developer of Florida. They acquired an 1,800-acre estate outside Millbrook, N.Y., turning it into a vast wildlife refuge called Cannoo Hills, which has become the Cary Arboretum and the Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies. (*See also under* Dr. George G. Shelton.) [WWW]

Casa Lu, a Mexican restaurant at 896 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) opened in 2024 and was closed by the end of 2025. [JFS]

Casagmo, a 320-unit condominium community at the north end of Main Street, was originally built as apartments in 1968-69 by David L. Paul (*q.v.*) and designed by Lee Harris Pomeroy (*q.v.*). It was named for the 1892 mansion that preceded the condos, built by George M. Olcott (*q.v.* and *see also* Olcott Way). The word is comprised of Italian "casa" for home, and Olcott's initials. The Olcott estate was acquired in the 1960s by Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) who obtained the rezoning for apartments at 15 units per acre, then sold the property to Paul. The much deteriorated Casagmo mansion was torn down in February 1968. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, the property was the Stebbins farm (*see* Benjamin Stebbins) and part of the site of the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). [RN]

Casagrande, Aldo, (1884-1953), was an accomplished musician who played trumpet. In 1904, he became one of first Italian-American members of Oreneca Band (*q.v.*), and was an organizer of the Ridgefield Boys' Band (*q.v.*) in 1926, which lasted into the 1930s. He worked for the Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill in Georgetown. [Impact, Ables]

Casagrande, Lt. Col. Jeo, (1921-1996), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1939, was a navigator aboard a B-17 in WW2 when it was shot down over Germany. He was captured and a POW from January 1944 till the war's end. He continued to serve in the new U.S. Air Force after the war and was one of the first to pilot the new B-36 bombers. He retired in 1962 as a lieutenant colonel in the Strategic Air Command and became a stockbroker in Riverside, CA. [WWW]

Casagrande, Katherine Finch "Cookie," (1924-2010), daughter of Harold Finch (*q.v.*), RHS 1942, was a longtime and popular employee of Squash's News Store and worked in the school cafeterias for many years. She was married to **Peter Paul Casagrande** (1916-2004), who also worked at Squash's. [JFS]

Casa-More was a country store established in April 1940 by Gene Casagrande and John Moore on West Lane between Olmstead Lane and Silver Spring Road. Later known as West Lane Pizza & Deli, it is the last neighborhood food store in Ridgefield. The store has existed since around 1920, owned by Howard Thomas, then by Carl Gustafson, then by Paul Davis when it was known as the Blue Front Grocery Store. In 1986, Joe Hahn, formerly of Galloway's Restaurant (*q.v.*), bought the business and changed the name to West Lane Market and Spirits. [JFS; DD142]

Casa-Torch Lane, a dead-end road off upper Branchville Road, is named for John Casavecchia and for Donald and Gina Torcellini, who bought and subdivided the property into five lots around 1953. "Torch" or "Torchy" are nicknames applied to some members of Torcellini family. [RN]

Case, Sidney Russell, (1939-2005), a native of Massachusetts, was a public

school music teacher elsewhere for many years and an organist who played at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Ridgefield, and at many other churches in the United States. He performed organ concerts in the Midwest and Northeast, accompanied professional artists in concert, and directed semi-professional and amateur musical theater productions. He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [P12/1/2005]

Casey, Michael D., (1944-2008), son of William H. and Valerie Casey (*q.v.*), was a decorated Vietnam veteran of the Green Berets. He joined Casey Fuel in 1972 and later owned the company. He was a member of the Ridgefield Police Commission. [P11/3/2008]

Casey, Valerie Dyer, (1918-2005), a former fashion model, was active in community and served as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission from 1972 to 1980. She founded the Friendly Visitor Program for Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association and was a president of the Caudatowa Garden Club. She was the wife of William Casey (*q.v.*). [P2/10/2005]

Casey, William E., (1839-1908), was a Ramapoo Road farmer for whom Casey Lane (*q.v.*) is named. [RN]

Casey, William Henry, (1917-2002), moved to Ridgefield in 1948 and founded Casey Fuel, now Casey Energy, in 1949. He added real estate to the business in 1961. He served on Board of Finance and led the Republican Town Committee. He was married to Valerie Casey (*q.v.*), and they lived in the old Gilbert House (*q.v.*). at 536 Main Street, where the business was also headquartered. For information on their house, see DD113. [P8/2002] [WWW]

Casey Energy is a fuel oil and propane business founded as Casey Fuel in 1949 by William H. Casey (*q.v.*). It changed name around 2010 to reflect the addition of propane delivery service. Its headquarters are at 536 Main Street and depot on Bailey Avenue. The business was later run by son **Michael D. Casey** (*q.v.*), and grandson, **Shane Casey**. [JFS]

Casey Lane runs off Ramapoo Road and was named for the William E. Casey family, who lived at the corner of the two roads. In 1860, Thomas W. Casey of North Salem, N.Y., a shoemaker, bought property on what is now Rippowam Road. Eleven years later, his son, William E. Casey also began buying land here, but it was not until 1878 that he acquired the little house on Ramapoo Road. He was a farmer, and the road probably led to his fields. The house is one of the few genuine saltboxes – with long-sloping rear roof – left in town. [JFS]

Casino: **1.** This was a name for a portion of the Ridgefield Club (*q.v.*) clubhouse on West Lane, site now of Congregational Church's Lund Hall, that was used for community events, even dog shows, in the early 1900s [P9/12/1901, DD289]. It burned in 1978. The building was also called at times the Playhouse because in the late 1930s, summer stock companies performed there. **2**. A building so called on the Nutholme/Westmoreland estate was also used for many Ridgefield Garden Club events in the first half of the 20th Century. It included an outdoor "ballroom" for dancing. The casino stood where the Westmoreland Community Association recreation area is today, and was razed in the 1990s. [JFS]

Cass Gilbert Memorial is the brick building at 152 Main Street built 1937 as a

library for the architect's papers. Designed by his son, Cass Gilbert Jr. (*q.v.*), it was dedicated Oct. 1937, with Gov. Wilbur L. Cross, speaker [P10/7/1937]. It proved too small and was sold as a residence, eventually becoming home and dental office of Dr. Robert Mead (*q.v.*). In 2016, Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center purchased the building and 1.1 acre to use as its offices. [JFS]

Cass Gilbert Fountain, a Ridgefield landmark, was fashioned of Vermont marble and erected in 1916 as a gift to the town from Cass Gilbert (*q.v.*), architect of U.S. Supreme Court building, Woolworth building *et al.,* who lived nearby in what is now Keeler Tavern Museum. Its base is probably designed to serve both as a decoration and as a watering trough for horses. The town had planned to place a standard trough in the island, and the Gilberts, along with others, opposed on the grounds it would be an eyesore. The fountain was aimed at providing both water for horse and an ornament for the important intersection. The fountain has been frequently hit by cars; major damage was done in 1981 by a hit-and-run driver and on June 9, 2003, it was hit by a Hummer, driven by a drunken driver, which did extensive damage requiring a year to repair. State highway officials have long wanted it removed and the intersection refashioned, but have balked because of local resistance. Police cite the intersection as among the most accident-prone in town. [RN]

Cassavechia, Dora Conti, (1922-2003), was town clerk for eight terms, from 1980 to 1995. Previously she had been assistant town clerk. She was married to Quinto Cassavechia — *see* Thunder Hill Lane. [JFS]

Cassidy, David, (1950-2017), actor and singer, lived at 43 Olmstead Lane from 1995 to 1998. He was a star of the 1970s TV series, *The Partridge Family*, and was nominated for an Emmy for a part in the TV series *Police Story*. He frequently performed in Las Vegas. [WWW]

Catch, The, was a restaurant on Route 7 just south of Route 35, a successor to King Neptune (*q.v.*). *See* Arthur Michaelsen.

Catholic Church erected a church building on Catoonah Street in 1879 under the guidance of Father Martin Lawlor of Danbury before there was a settled pastor; it was dedicated Oct. 5, 1879. A 1868 fire destroyed a small building on Catoonah Street that had been used as a church (*see* Fires). The first Catholics to live here were reportedly James and Ellen Brophy (*q.v.*) who arrived from Ireland in 1848. The first Catholic mass may have been said in 1781 in the encampment of Compte de Rochambeau (*q.v.*) in Ridgebury. *See also* St. Mary Church, St. Elizabeth Seton Church. [JFS]

Catoonah, also spelled Catona or Katonah, was an American Indian sachem, sagamore, or leader who sold settlers the first and largest of eight tracts that made up Ridgefield. That deed began: "I Catoonah sachem of Ramapoo Indians and Associates within her majesties province of New York in America." It transferred an estimated 20,000 acres for £100. Catoonah's home-base was in New York where in 1680, he sold 22 Stamford residents a tract called "The Hopp Ground," which became town of Bedford. He sold other parcels in the Bedford-Pound Ridge area around 1701-2; deeds as late as 1743 bear his name. The village of Katonah within the township of Bedford is named for him. It was believed that he was the grandson or great-grandson of Ponus, a powerful chief who sold Stamford to its settlers; one legend says he died of grief after

wife, Cantitoe, a/k/a Mustato, and son, Papiag, were killed by lightning. His grave is said to be in Katonah's Woods in the triangle formed by Beaver Dam, Cantitoe, and Girdle Ridge Roads in Bedford. [GC]. Bedini says he was buried on a farm beneath two boulders. *See also* Camp Catoonah. [JFS]

Catoonah Basket Ball Club: *See* Katoonah Basket Ball Club.

Catoonah Hall was a large, 19th Century building on Catoonah Street, about opposite today's firehouse, with commercial use on first floor and a large hall on second floor. It was named for the American Indian leader, Catoonah (*q.v.*), and was probably the inspiration for the name, Catoonah Street. Around 1859, the Catoonah Building Association began issuing capital stock to build the hall; one share equaled $100. Leaders were Russell B. Perry, president, and Hiram K. Scott (*q.v.*), treasurer. The hall was dedicated Sept. 29, 1859. Francis A. Rockwell's (*q.v.*) candlestick factory was located on the first floor. A political rally was held in the second floor hall one evening in September 1868 and that night the building burned down, and with it the old Catholic church, which stood next to it (*see* Fires). Unfortunately for Catoonah Hall, the fire station across the street did not exist then. [JFS]

Catoonah Kitchen & Bar was a restaurant at 23½ Catoonah Street from 1999 to 2004, serving the creations of Chef Luke Rutten who grew up in Ridgefield. It was followed by Gringo's (q.v.). [JFS]

Catoonah Street: **1.** The roadway from Main Street to High Ridge was laid out in 1721 and was known by the 1740's as Burt's Lane (*q.v.*). Clark's map in 1856 labels it New West Lane, an extension of the name that was being applied to Barry Avenue. By the 1860's, however, deeds and maps were calling it Catoonah Street, a name probably acquired from the fact that Catoonah Hall (*q.v.*) was located there starting in 1859. The hall was named for the American Indian leader Catoonah (*q.v.*). The road is an unmarked state highway, Route 822 (*q.v.*). The intersection with Main Street was a triangle until the early 20th Century. [RN, P10/1/1981] **2.** A restaurant at 23½ Catoonah Street, opened in 1980 by Paul R. Courchene and Stephen J. Thompson, used that name and advertised itself as "Ridgefield's only dinner club" since it offered live music. The menu included quiches and crepes. It lasted only a year or so. [JFS]

Cats: For the largest**,** *see* Spice. *Also see* Wild Cat Lot. For a cat-loving author, *see* Winifred Carriere. *See also under* Dogs.

Cattle Pen Lane, a 1,300-foot, dead-end road off lower Nod Road, serves the 1983 "Nod Hollow" subdivision of nine lots. Yale alumnus Walter H. Cook had bequeathed the land to the university upon his death in 1978; Yale sold to the developers, John J. Murren and Robert J. Kane. When Murren sought a name for road, JFS suggested something to do with Yale – such as Yale Lane or Eli Way. It was rejected with the explanation, "I went to UConn. We always hated Yale." He chose a name that recalls an old stone-walled livestock enclosure alongside the road. It became a town road in 1985. [RN]

Caudatowa: **1.** Supposedly an American Indian name for Ridgefield that various authorities translate as "high ground." However, it does not appear in early deeds and grants, but is first mentioned in Teller in 1878. Bolton's *History of Westchester County* (1881) repeatedly mentions the word as "Candatowa"

as do other authorities, including Huden, who said Candatowa is "a greatly modified" version of the Paugusset word for "great mountain." Candoto (*q.v.*), a word said to apply to High Ridge, may be another form. **2**. Name given to the mansion of A. Newbold Morris and MacDougal Hawkes, no longer standing, at 23 High Ridge early in the 1900s. [DD195, RN]

Caudatowa Drive, a short road between Blue Ridge and Rock Roads, is part of the Eight Lakes development (*q.v.*). It became a town road in 1961. *See* Caudatowa. [RN]

Caudatowan is the name of the Ridgefield High School yearbook, first used in 1946. Before that, it had been called Collis Summus (*q.v.*). The name reflects the fact that school was located on a hill overlooking the village. *See* Caudatowa.

Cavalry Place, a dead-end road off Armand Road, is part of a 53-acre, 18-lot subdivision by Termont Development Company in 1979. "Cavalry Court" was suggested by JFS to recall a French cavalry unit stationed in nearby barracks during the Revolutionary War (*see* Col. Charles Armand) but name was tongue-twister for some and Cavalry Place was used instead. "Cavalry" itself is tricky, often confused with "Calvary," the place where Jesus Christ was crucified. It became a town road in 1985. [RN]

Cave, The: In 1730, the Proprietors granted Lt. Benjamin Benedict 60 acres lying "west of ye Cave." This may be what later became known as Sarah Bishop's Cave (*see* Sarah Bishop) on West Mountain in adjacent North Salem, N.Y. – then part of Ridgefield – or it may have been a cave in a hill off southern Ned's Mountain Road. *See also* Bear's Den, Joe's Cave, Ned's Lane.

Cavett, Dick, (1936-), is a comedian and TV talk show host who, with his wife, author and management consultant Martha Rogers, bought the Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) estate on Old West Mountain Road in July 2017. [JFS]

Cedar Lane, an old road between South Salem Road and West Lane, is shown on Clark's map in 1856, and Beers, in 1867. The name is used as early as 1912 when it appears on the Whitlock map. Venus said many cedars once grew in this neighborhood. Cedars often appear in fields that are left unmown, but are usually eventually crowded or shaded out by the faster-growing and taller deciduous trees, such as maples. [RN]

Cedar Mountain is an 18th Century name for the tall, rocky ridge — up to 630 feet above sea level — between today's Route 7 and Florida Road, first cited as "West Cedar Mountain" in the General Assembly's 1709 grant of first purchase of American Indian land. West Cedar Mountain may have been a name first applied by Fairfield residents, whose border (now Redding) was nearby. Ridgefield settlers soon began dropping the "west" and calling it Cedar Mountain or Mountains by the 1720's. The 1970 US Geological Survey map uses "Cedar Mountain" as the official name. [RN]

Cedar Mountain Road was apparently the original name for today's Florida Road — a subdivision of common land in 1745 mentions 29 acres "lying west of ye Cedar Mountain Road." *See* Florida Road, Cedar Mountain.

Celestino, Jason, a Ridgefield native and RHS 1991, has been Ridgefield's building inspector since 2018, replacing Bill Reynolds, who had served 28 years. Celestino had been a local builder. [RW]

Cella's Restaurant was a turn of the 21st Century establishment at 37 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7). *See also* Luigi's, Cooper Tavern.

Cell towers and antennas, large and small, are located throughout town, sometimes hidden and a few atop utility poles along power lines. The tallest is probably the monopole at the Ridgefield Police station, erected in the mid-1980s with a height of 141 feet. The 2016 tower off Old Stagecoach Road on Ridgebury Mountain is about the same height. A cell antenna was once located within the spire of Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church, but was eventually removed. [JFS]

Celli, Joseph, (1944-), is a musician and composer who taught at Ridgefield High School, was chairman of the music department, and led the school band from 1971 to 1975. He developed the marching band and various instrumental music programs. He and wife Jeanann lived on Turner Road. In 2024 Celli, who lives in Connecticut, was both a performer and composer specializing in contemporary and improvised music for oboe and English horn. He has produced many recordings of his work and presented thousands of music events. [W]

Cemeteries: Ridgefield has around 20 known cemeteries, some owned by the town and some by private individuals or organizations. Others have no known owners and at least two have vanished. The cemeteries are: Beers, Branchville, (Ye) Burying Yard, Davis, Fairlawn, Gamaliel Smith, Hurlbutt, Lounsbury-Rockwell, Maple Shade, New Florida, Old Florida, Revolutionary Burial Ground, Ridgebury, St. Mary's, Scott's, Selleck (Bennett's Farm), Seymour, Smith, and Titicus (*q.v. each for details*). The oldest, Ye Burying Yard on Wilton Road East, has not standing gravestones, but a monument listing who may have been buried there. The next oldest cemetery is Titicus, which has stones as early as 1738. Fairlawn, established in 1909, is the newest graveyard. Columbariums (*q.v.*) are located at St. Stephen's Church and First Congregational Church, and in St. Mary Cemetery. An index of all then-extant stones was completed by the state necrologist in 1937 — *see* "Gravestone Inscriptions, Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut." At least two cemeteries have vanished: The Smith Cemetery on Mopus Bridge Road at the NY line, and the old Episcopal cemetery on Ridgebury Road, just north of Ned's Mountain Road. [HLYB]

Census: *See* Population of Ridgefield

Center School served the central village of Ridgefield during the 18th and 19th Centuries from various locations. Early editions of the schoolhouse were located on the Meeting House Yard (*q.v.*), in front of the Community Center, and on Catoonah Street. From the mid-1800s into the 20th Century, it was called School District 6. From 1882 until 1915, Center School was in a two-story structure on Bailey Avenue, a gift of Gov. Phineas Lounsbury. The building became Alexander Hamilton High School (*q.v.*) in 1915, and Garden School (*q.v.*) in 1926. Closed in 1955, it was razed the same year to create a municipal parking lot. [SD]

Central Garage began on Main Street in the Bissell Building (*q.v.*), according to pre-1920 postcards. By the 1920s, according to Venus, Gus Constantini was operating the Central Garage, possibly also called Ideal Garage, from the southern corner of Danbury Road and Grove Street. He sold to Louis DeVantery, who ran the place many years. Central Garage appears in the 1933 phone book as selling Tydol gasoline. It was the Tide Water Garage (*q,v,*) by 1935 when RP mentions it was selling Plymouths. Pamby Motors (*q.v.*) bought the property in 1952, and still owns it in 2026. [DD350]

Century 21, a real estate group. had its Ridgefield office at 398 Main Street (ground floor of Masonic Hall) at least through 2005, led by John Frey and Jack Baldaserini. In 2026, the spot is Coldwell Banker real estate. [JFS]

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), organized in 2007, serves Ridgefield and the surrounding towns in times of disaster, community emergencies and town-wide events. It consists of volunteer residents who are specially trained and certified by the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. [JFS]

CGS Laboratories, which made radio communications equipment, had a facility in what is now Stonehouse Common (*q.v.*). It became TRAK and after moving to Wilton and becoming Wiltek. [RPC10]

Chamber of Commerce: *See* Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce.

Chamberlain, Rev. Linus Parmelee, (ca1801–1856), was the first pastor, serving from 1836 to 1837, of what is today Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church (*q.v.*). [RIR, 1850 US Census]

Chambers Army & Navy Store, a clothing store at 38 Danbury Road selling mostly new products (despite a name suggesting military surplus), was opened by Steve Chambers in 1979 in the former Gasland (*q.v*.) station. (It's often misspelled Chamber's.) The store closed in 2005. Long empty, the space became in 2013 Bareburger (*q.v.*), a restaurant. [JFS]

Chambliss, Prince Caesar, a native and resident of Birmingham, Ala., was a 1966 graduate of Ridgefield High School, which he attended for two years on a special program. He went on to Wesleyan University, University of Alabama, and graduated from Harvard Law School. He became a leading lawyer in Memphis, Tenn., the first African-American partner in any law firm in Tennessee (1981), the first African-American president of the Memphis Bar Association (1996), and the first African-American president of the Tennessee Board of Law Examiners (2003). He wrote an autobiography, *Prince of Peace,* in 2010. [JFS]

Chambliss, Samuel, (1929-2014), was an attorney specializing in environmental law who wrote the first draft of Connecticut's Inland Wetlands Act that, to this day, governs use of wetlands. He practiced here in the 1970s and 80s, but moved in 1987 to an 18,500-acre ranch on the savanna of Zimbabwe where he and his wife, Janet, were involved in helping endangered black rhinos. They and two neighbors created a 60,000-acre preserve for wildlife. In 2003, the government confiscated the Chambliss ranch and the couple fled the country, almost penniless, settling in South Africa, in 2005. They returned to the States in 2012. He died in Florida two years later. [WWW]

Chancellor Park was the original name of the assisted living facility at 640 Danbury Road, later called Great Pond Crossing. In 2003, it became Ridgefield Crossings (*q.v.*) when Benchmark Assisted Living purchased the place. [JFS]

Chapin, Harry, a noted singer from the 1960s and 70s, donated his time to give a concert at RHS as part of his campaign to fight world hunger Dec. 24, 1974. [JFS]

Chapin, Henry Edward (1905-1962), was president of Outpost Supply Company (*q.v.*). He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [P11/15/1962]

Chapman, Benjamin, of Salem NY bought the Mamanasco grist mill (*q.v.*) in 1779 after the Proprietors had confiscated it from the heirs of Seaborn Burt (*q.v.*), a loyalist. [RLR6.39a] He bought other properties nearby that had

belonged to loyalists. [see RLR6.48b.1780, 6.65b.1782]

Charles Daly Co.: *See* Beretta Arms Co.

Charles Pope Choristers was a mid-20th Century choral group, started in New York by Charles Pope (*q.v.*) and later based in Ridgefield, after Pope moved here. They performed many concerts in Ridgefield and the region. [WWW]

Charlie Peanuts was a nickname for Charles Stannard (*q.v*.), a local chauffeur who also was a peanut and popcorn vendor at baseball games and movies early in the 20th Century.

Charter Oak Court, a dead-end road off Limestone Road, serves the 19.5-acre, 1975 subdivision of Dennis and Linda Moore. One of the earliest of the "Planned Residential Developments" (*q.v.*), seven lots were created at about one acre each in a two-acre zone, and 9.3 acres along the Norwalk River were designated as open space. The name was selected by Town Planner Oswald Inglese (*q.v.*), to recall Connecticut's most famous tree, which once stood in Hartford in whose trunk colony officials hid the state's charter to prevent English Gov. Edmond Andros from seizing it and control of the colony in 1687. An earlier plan for the property called the road Riverview Road, which appears on some maps. [RN]

Chase, Stephanie, (1957-), a native of Illinois who moved to 208 Mimosa Circle as a youngster, was a child prodigy violinist who grew up to be a major concert violinist who has performed with top orchestras around the world, and has been a professor of violin and chamber music at New York University. She and her husband, Stewart Pollens, an expert on historical musical instruments, were living in New York City in 2023.

Chase Bank, earlier known as Chase Manhattan Bank, opened at 108 Danbury Road (*see also* HSBC) in 2021. It had been located for many years at 92-98 Grove Street, arriving there in the 1990s. The bank has ancient Ridgefield connections: *See* Alonzo Barton Hepburn *and* Albert H. Wiggin. [JFS]

Chast, Roz, (1954-), an acclaimed *New Yorker* cartoonist and author of many popular books, has lived on New Street with her writer husband, William E. Franzen (*q.v.*), since 1990. Since 1978, she has published more than 800 cartoons in *The New Yorker* and has written or illustrated more than a dozen books. She sold her first cartoon to *The New Yorker* in 1978 when she was 23. In 2024, President Biden gave her the National Humanities Medal for her contribution to the humanities. [NR, P10/31/24]

Chauffeurs' Ball was an annual dance held in the town hall, sponsored by the social organization to which the town's chauffeurs belonged. They were occurring at least by 1912, for which a dated photograph exists, and continued until World War II. The ball was opened to the public and attendees included some of the wealthy people who employed the chauffeurs. [DD14, DD73, DD355]

Chauncey, Mary Jane Potter, (1847-1936), a native of Schenectady, NY, was prominent in NYC society, head of the Van Cortlandt Manor commission, and aided the babies' ward of a hospital. A daughter of Right Rev. Horatio Potter, Episcopal Bishop of NY, she lived late in life with her daughter, Nathalie Elisabeth Chauncey Pierrepont, wife of Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v*.), at Twixthills. [JFS] *See also* Chauncey Island.

Chauncey Island is a small, wooded island in Lake Naraneka, just east of Lookout Point. It's named for parents of Nathalie Elisabeth Chauncey (Mrs. Seth Low) Pierrepont — *see* Mary Jane Potter Chauncey. The name

appears on USGS maps in 2024. [RN]

Chautauqua was a non-profit organization from Pennsylvania that sponsored traveling, 5-day programs, mostly under a tent, of entertainment and instruction — plays, concerts, lectures, and exhibits as a sort of "people's university." Ridgefield's first program was Oct. 23, 1886, when only a few people showed up [P10/28/1886]. After a hiatus, it returned in 1917, continuing annually until 1928 when poor attendance and lack of financial support ended it. [RPJ, DD117]

Chawla's of Ridgefield, a clothing store for boys and young men, opened Nov. 21, 1981, at 440 Main Street, having taken over Allans' Mens Store (*q.v.*) [P11/12/1981]

Chayes, Herbert, (1915-1983), a NYC native, was president of Chayes Dental Laboratories in Danbury, pioneers in developing modern dental equipment, and he later held executive positions with Technicare and Demetron Research. He was a decorated Navy veteran of WW2, an OSS and CIA employee, a Rotary member, and lived on Grand View Drive. [P8/4/1983]

C.H.D. are initials carved into many square stones found along the state highways (*see* Roads, state). They mark the edge of the state-owned right-of-way along each side of a road. C.H.D. stands for Connecticut Highway Department, the name what is now the Department of Transportation, when the markers were installed, mostly in the 1930s. [JFS]

Cheers, a liquor store at 393 Main Street, was opened by Michael and Kathy Evans in September 2015 after buying Liberta's Spirit Shop. The business closed Dec. 31, 2018. [P12/30/2018]

Cheesman, Dr. Timothy Matlack, (1824-1888), son of a physician, was a NYC physician who, in 1887, built the stone house, Matlack, on Prospect Ridge, and died the next year. His wife, the former Maria Louisa Smith, continued to live there until her death in 1903. He served as a surgeon in the 7th Regiment NY National Guard in 1853 and earned an MD degree in 1859. He was a surgeon in the Civil War, with the rank of colonel. A painting of him is owned by the Museum of the City of New York. His son, **Timothy Matlack Cheesman Jr.**, also became physician. In 1922, the Cheesman house became Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*). It was purchased by the town in 1971, used as school administration offices, and in 1991, became congregate housing. The surname is often misspelled Cheeseman. [WWW]

Chef Scala, or just **Scala's,** was a restaurant on south corner of Main and Catoonah Streets, operated by John Scala, former chef at Outpost Inn, in the late 1940s until 1951 when he bought The Elms Inn (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Chekhov, Mikhail Alexandrovich "Michael," (1891-1955), nephew of playwright Anton Chekhov, was a native of Russia where, by 21, he was a noted actor. By 1923, he was a director at the Moscow Art Theatre, but his innovative methods led Communists to label him "alien and reactionary." He moved to Germany and then England, establishing a well-respected method of training actors at a school there. In 1939, as war broke out, he moved his Chekhov Theatre Studio to the former Ridgefield School (*q.v.*) at the north end of Lake Mamanasco. Chekhov made his first public appearance in an English-speaking role in a Russian War Relief dramatic program on the old RHS stage (now the Ridgefield Playhouse). Around 1941 he moved to Hollywood where he taught and acted in films – his role of the psychoanalyst in Alfred Hitchcock's *Spellbound* earned an Academy

Award nomination. Among his students were Marilyn Monroe, Jack Palance, Anthony Quinn, Yul Brynner, Gregory Peck, and Akim Tamiroff. The school lives on today as the Chekhov Theatre Ensemble in New York City. *See also* Michael Chekhov Theater Festival. [WWW]

Chekhov Drive, Road: Some maps, including Hagstrom's *Atlas of Fairfield County* (1966) and *Champion Map Book*, so label the private driveway to old Martin farm/Ridgefield School (*q.v.*) property on North Salem Road where the Chekhov Theater Studio (*q.v.*) operated from 1939-41. The private roadway serves a small subdivision.

Chekhov Theater Studio was operated from 1939 to 1941 in the former Ridgefield School at the north end of Lake Mamanasco by Michael Chekhov (*q.v.*). It moved to California around 1941. [JFS]

Chestnut Hill Road extends from Ridgebury Road to the NY state line where it connects with Finch Road in North Salem. The highway existed before 1856, but the name does not appear to have been applied until 20th Century — in use by the 1930's. It's named for the American chestnut (*Castenea dentata*), common before a blight in the early 1900's eventually killed all mature trees. The road's most famous resident was Maurice Sendak (*q.v.*), who lived at 400 Chestnut Hill Road. [RN]

Chestnut Hills Estates, a subdivision of about 40 one-acre lots north of Chestnut Hill Road (*q.v.*) in Ridgebury, was developed by Lewis J. Finch *(q.v.*), beginning around 1958. It includes Parley Road, Twopence Road, Harding Drive, Finch Drive, and Sarah Bishop Road.

Ches(t)nut Ridge: **1.** In 1710 Town Clerk John Copp drew in the town record book a map of the division of "plow lands" into 25 lots for the 25 settling families — two lots were on "Chesnut Ridge" (usually spelled without T in 18th and 19th Centuries). This ridge is believed to be the vicinity of Ramapoo Road, Overlook Drive and Farm Hill Road. **2.** An 1810 deed describes land in Ridgebury "at a place called Chesnut Ridge," which may be in the area of today's Scodon (*q.v.*) neighborhood.

Chevrolet automobiles were sold at George Scott Jr. dealership at 378 Main Street in the 1920s. [DD100]

Chez Lenard, an upscale, French-style mobile hot dog stand on Main Street, was established in 1978 by Lenard de Lescinskis (*q.v.*). In 1981, he sold to Michael Soetbeer who in 1997 sold to Chad and Kirsten Cohen, who sold in 2007 to Michael Principi. Celebrities who've eaten Chez Lenard dogs include Paul Newman, Martha Stewart, Barbra Streisand, Diana Ross, Giancarlo Esposito (*q.v.*), and Harvey Fierstein (*q.v.*).

Chianese, Anthony Peter "Tony," (1938-2020), a native of Mt. Vernon, N.Y., owned Ridgefield Insurance Agency, 1973-2000, and served on the Police Commission, 1975-79. He was a host of the Buon Giorno American Radio Show on the old WREF radio station and had been chairman of the Republican Town Committee. He moved to Delaware, where he died. [P10/15/2020]

Chichester, Old: S.G. Goodrich describes Old Chichester as "an uncouth, unsocial being, whom everybody for some reason or other seemed to despise and shun. His house was of stone and of one story. He had a cow, which every year had a calf. He had a wife — filthy, uncombed, and vaguely reported to have been brought from the old country. This is about the whole history of the man, so far as it is written in the authentic traditions of the

parish. His premises, an acre in extent, consisted of a tongue of land between two of the converging roads. No boy, that I ever heard of, ventured to cast a stone, or to make an incursion into this territory, though it lay close to the [West Lane] school-house. I have often, in passing, peeped timidly over the walls, and caught glimpses of a stout man with a drab coat, drab breeches, and drab gaiters, glazed with ancient grease and long abrasion, prowling about the house; but never did I discover him outside of his own dominion. I know it was darkly intimated that he had been a Tory, and was tarred and feathered in the revolutionary war, but as to the rest he was a perfect myth." [ROAL] However, Daniel Chichester, II, was born April 6, 1738, in Stamford, Connecticut, a son of Daniel Chichester and Abigail (Bishop) Chichester. On June 12, 1764, in Ridgefield, Fairfield, Connecticut, Daniel married Rachel Robert. There were no children born to this union. Daniel and Rachel were members with their parents at the New Canaan Church, but transferred their membership to the Congregational church at Ridgefield, Connecticut, in 1786, where they remained. Daniel died December 5, 1810. A Daniel Chichester was one of 37 signers of a petition on January 2, 1782, remonstrating against allowing "Torries" who had served in the British forces to return as citizens to their town. [*History of Stamford,* by Reverend Elijah Baldwin Huntington, self-published, Darien Connecticut, 1868, page 256]

Chicken thieves: Chickens were valuable farm animals, not only for the eggs they laid and the meat they could provide, but also for the fertilizer they produced. Being relatively small and portable, they were also often the target of thieves. At times, Ridgefield was plagued with chicken thieves such as the Howard-Reddy Gang (*q.v.*) which operated in the 1920s. [WR]

Chicken's Rock, a large outcropping at the beach at Great Pond (Martin Park), was named for the American Indian, Chicken Warrups (*q.v.*), said to have enjoyed sitting there to enjoy the view in the early 18th Century. [RN]

Chief Catoonah Tobacconist, a store selling tobacco products, including pipes and cigars, was opened by Jim Cannatelli in 1976 at Yankee Ridge shopping center. In 1980, it moved to the rear of 409 Main Street, Hackert and Monti building, and later operated on Bailey Avenue. [JFS]

Chieftain, The, the student newspaper at Ridgefield High School in 1950s and 60s, was replaced by *The Criterion* (*q.v.*). *See also* Tiger Paw Press. [RT]

Children's Corner, a child care center at Barlow Elementary School, was founded by Nan Howkins (*q.v*.) and operated from 1994 to 2015. [JFS]

Children's Cottage was a children's clothing consignment shop, opened in 2004 at 409 Main Street by Maura Sullivan. [P7/8/2004]

Chipmunk Lane, a short dead-end road off Beaver Brook Road in Ridgebury Estates, is a rare example of a road named for a rodent (only four other Fairfield County towns had chipmunk roads by 1985; none had Rat or Mouse roads). It became a town road in 1970. [RN]

Chiropractors: According to [DD97], Ridgefield's first chiropractor was Dr. Mary Cooney, who lived over Bissell's Pharmacy in the 1920s.

CHIRP, Concert Happenings in Ridgefield's Parks, is a series of free summer concerts, features a variety of music genres, mostly Tuesday evenings but also many Thursdays, in Ballard Park, produced by Barbara Manners (*q.v.*). The series, supported by donors, began June 25, 2002, and between then and 2025, 460 concerts have been scheduled, including folk, jazz,

bluegrass, Cajun, Irish, country and western, big band, gospel, blues, classical, Tejano, and even military bands. [JFS]

Chisolm, Benjamin Ogden, (1865-1944), was a banker and a prisons expert who believed the corrections system should rehabilitate, not just punish. He served on NY state and federal prison commissions, and produced books and pamphlets on prison reform bearing such titles as *The Man Who Slipped A Cog, If It Were Your Boy, Man-Power in Prison, Making the Prisoner Over,* and *How Shall We Curb Crime*. He lived at Wickopee Farm on Peaceable Street and High Ridge. The house, razed around 1945, stood at what's now 38 Peaceable Street. Always called "B.O." by friends, he sponsored many movies in town and helped finance the erection of Ridgefield Playhouse in 1940. His name is often misspelled Chisholm (which was, in fact, used by some other family members). [WWW, DD203,204,205]

Chotzinoff, Samuel, (1889-1864), (pronounced "SHOTzinoff"), a native of Russia, was a pianist who became music director of NBC. He persuaded Arturo Toscanini (*q.v.*) to lead NBC Symphony Orchestra and commissioned Gian Carlo Menotti to write TV's first opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Both Menotti and Toscanini visited his Spring Valley Road home; Toscanini gave two concerts in Ridgefield. Chotzinoff was also a novelist and playwright, and founded the Chatham Square Music School, now part of The New School. [WWW]

Chrisafis, Peter, (1896-?), a native of Greece, operated The Fairfield Lunch (*q.v.*) on Main Street in the 1920s with partner John Papageorge. Chrisafis was a well-known wrestler in the region, and matches often took place in the Town Hall. His may have been the first Greek family to move to town. [DD74]

Christ the King Church at 209 Tackora Trail, operated by the Society of St. Pius X (*q.v*.), is well-known regionally for providing traditional masses said in the Latin language. The church was built starting in 1984. [JFS]

Christensen, Andrew C.P., (1873-1954), headed Pequot Real Estate Development Company, which created the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v*.) development. A native of Denmark who came to Ridgefield in 1917, he bought the old "Higgins house" (burned in 1954) on Bennett's Farm Road and 600 acres, envisioning the development as providing as summer "camps" for New York City residents. He later sold his holdings to William Winthrop (*q.v*.), but continued to live here. In their later years here, he and his wife operated a restaurant on the east side of Main Street, near Books on the Common. In 1949 he returned to his native Denmark, where he died in 1954. [P11/11/1954, JFS]

Christian Science: *See* First Church of Christ, Scientist.

Christmas trees: *See* Rockefeller Center Christmas trees.

Christopher Road, a short, dead-end road off Tackora Trail, was named in 1959 for Christopher Franks, son of James Franks, the developer. Nearby Lisa Lane is named for his daughter. [RN]

Cibani, Tia, a designer of high-end, colorful children's and women's clothing, purchased an 18th Century house on Silver Spring Road in November 2023. A native of Libya, she grew up in Canada and lived in China for a decade before establishing her clothing business in Manhattan. Her line, Tia Cibani Designs, is carried by boutiques around the world. [JFS]

Cider mills: Cider making, a Connecticut and New England tradition in late summer and early autumn, was an important task. The beverage was as common here as wine is in Italy. The fruit was crushed in a certain way so that the meat was deliberately bruised, often at a cider mill. Bruising and then exposing the crushed apples to sunlight, or at least the air, for the proper amount of time turned the pomace – or apple cheese – a brown color, a change that added a great deal of sugar and richness to the juice. The cheese was then layered on rye straw or on cloth, and squeezed in a wooden press. A cider mill used water power to operate the bruising machinery. Squeezing the resulting mash for its juice was done with hand-powered screw presses. The liquid was then allowed to ferment in barrels. Of the half dozen 19th Century cider mills in town by 1850, perhaps the largest and last to operate was Goeppler's mill (*q.v.*) at 80 Topstone Road, which made both cider and vinegar. Others were located on Saw Mill Hill Road at Titicus (*see* Aaron B. Gilbert), on the Kiah's Brook, on the Titicus River on lower Ridgebury Road. One on lower Ridgebury Road near Regan, operated by 1796 — several existed even earlier. Note that true cider back then was not the "juice" we today call cider, but an alcoholic beverage, often with quite a "kick" to it. Cider mills could be dangerous; 3-year-old Betty St. John of Ridgebury was "killed by a cider mill wheel" in 1798 — *see* Samuel St. John. [JFS]

Cinema, **The**, also called Cinema Ridgefield and Ridgefield Cinema, opened at Copps Hill Plaza (*q.v.*) around 1972 and lasted until 1990. Jerry Lewis theaters had the initial operation. [JFS]

Cingolani, Dino Vincent "Ching," (1927-2004), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1945, was among the best baseball players from Ridgefield where he was a top pitcher and hitter, batting .485. Amazingly, on April 26, 1944, when the right-hander hurled the no-hitter against Wooster School, he still lost, 3-2. He faced 23 men in six innings; six reached first — five on walks and one on a fielding error. But RHS committed errors with walked Wooster players on base, allowing three to score. As a pitcher he was wooed by several major league teams and played in the minors for a few years. He settled in Norwalk where he and his wife were major promoters of fishing and the Norwalk Islands. [WWW]

Circle, The: A traffic circle, similar to a roundabout, at the intersection of Routes 7 and 35, existed from about 1940 until 1984, when it was converted to a T intersection employing traffic lights. *See also* Carroll's Folly. [RN]

Circle F Ranch was a dude ranch operated in 1942 and 1943 at the former Downesbury Manor (*q.v.*) on Florida Hill Road. [JFS]

Circle Luncheonette on Route 7 just south of Route 35 intersection, was operated by Alice Harding Finch, who also had the Green Doors Motel nearby. [JFS]

Circuses: Circuses visited Ridgefield through much of the 19th Century and into the 1980s in the 20th Century. Ones that focused on exotic animals were called menageries; the world-famous Van Amburgh's Menagerie brought Hannibal, the largest elephant in the U.S. to Ridgefield Nov. 1, 1861. Twentieth Century circuses that visited here included Hunt Brothers and Sells Floto. They usually set up on empty lots or even parking lots in and around the center of town. Several Ridgefield people were circus founders or executives — *see* Aaron Turner, Lewis June; also Hunt Lane, Turner Hill

[DAR, DD117]

Citizen of the Year: *See* Rotary Citizen of the Year.

City National Bank of Connecticut opened a branch at new Copps Hill Plaza Dec. 9, 1972. It became Citytrust in 1977 and in 1990 failed and was acquired by Mechanics and Farmers Bank. [JFS]

Ciuccoli Field, the old town/school baseball field on East Ridge, is named for Altero "Chick" Ciuccoli (1911-1993), who for many years was the maintenance chief for the Parks and Recreation Department (*q.v.*). *See also* Governor Park.

Ciuccoli TV was a longtime business that, in 1980-83, was at 113 Danbury Road, Copps Hill Common. The store, which in the 1980s sold Zenith and Sony and serviced many brands, was founded and operated by Nello J. Ciuccoli. An ad in 1980 said "in 24th year." [P12/11/1980, 8/18/1983].

Civil War: At least 209 men and women who had lived in Ridgefield before or after the war served in the Civil War. [RIR] Ridgefield contributed to the war effort by offering $200 bounties or bonuses for enlisting in August 1862, twice what the federal government was offering. The local bounties were increased to $300 the next year. At least 25 men who enlisted from Ridgefield died in or because of the war: William Arvent, Ernest Bahring, Samuel Baxter, Daniel B. Bradley, Charles I. Burt, Lawrence Carney, Albert N. Davis, Ezra Lee Edmond, John G. Fry, Selah Gage, George Gilbert, Sylvester Godfrey, Frederick A. Grumman, John H. Harrington, John W. Hoyt, William Jemmison, Henry Keeler (*q.v.*), Thomas Payne, Edwin D. Pickett, John Scot, Francis E. Seymour, Frederick L. Sturges, John Ward, Rufus Warren, and Joseph S. Whitlock (*q.v. each*). [Rockwell] *See also* under Samuel Coe, Aaron W. Lee, John Rowley.

Clague-Davies, Susan: *See* Susan Davies.

Clams: Masses of bleached clam shells are often found in the ground in Ridgefield. Most were probably dug on the shore of Long Island — clamming was a popular activity and food source in 18th and 19th Century Ridgefield. Empty shells were often tossed in backyard trash pits. Some finds may indicate the location of an American Indian village. [DJN]

Clark, Alexandra Grinnell: *See* Alexandra Grinnell Pozzo.

Clark, Martin, along with James Gilbert, acquired from Keeler St. John, 1½ acres and buildings plus a "shingle mill" (*q.v.*) in 1848 [RLR 19/21].

Clark, Tom, (1904-2002), a Ridgefield native, was a popular resident and longtime grocer, who joined First National Market here in 1932 and became its manager, retiring in 1959. He then worked at Wayside Market (*q.v.*) for 15 years. He was an expert bowler, still playing in his 90s. [WWW, DD365]

Clark's Map of Fairfield County is the earliest detailed map of Ridgefield showing the owners of virtually every building in town in 1856. The large, wall map includes a close-up map of Main Street. Copies are owned by Ridgefield Library and town clerk's office (damaged); one used to hang for years in the tap room of The Elms Inn. High-resolution electronic versions readily available free on the internet for viewing or downloading. The map was created by Richard P. Clark of Philadelphia, who visited Ridgefield in December of 1856 to promote the new map's sale. [Rumsey]

Clarke, George B., (1861-1934), a NYC native and son of a furniture factory owner, worked in furniture sales for Lord and Taylor in NYC, retiring in 1909 to open a furniture store on Main Street. He sold it to Raymond H. Krotz ca.

1929, then had an antiques shop on Danbury Road. He was a member of the Board of Assessors and a Ridgefield Savings Bank director. [RSB27]

Clarke, Will, had a furniture store in 1904, according to the address on an envelope mailed that year in Ridgefield. But see also George Clarke. [JFS]

Class pranks: Senior classes at Ridgefield High School often celebrated graduation with a prank or two. Among the best known: **1976**: Naked male student rode through school on a motorcycle (some say this was just a prank, not a true "class prank"); **1979**: Stacking 79 tires on RHS's flagpole (generally agreed to be the best of all of the pranks); **1980***:* Hanging 80 chairs from goal posts; **1981**: Gluing 81 brassieres and jockstraps on the flagpole; also a life-size statue of a cow placed in an interior courtyard; **1982**: Many — probably 82 — real estate "for sale" signs, taken from around town, were posted on the school grounds; **1983**: 83 frogs were let loose in the cafeteria; huge Paul Bunyan head from Danbury Fair placed in the north parking lot, but police, who had staked out the school, caught pranksters in the act (this is also reported as having taken place in 1982); **1984**: A VW Beetle (without motor) was placed in an interior courtyard; **1985***:* Students camped out in the inner courtyard where they had placed a PortaPotty on which they painted "The House That Bernie Built," referring to the name of the principal, Bernadette Marczely. A junk car was deposited outside the school; **1986**: Stringing a 30-foot banner across North Salem Road, saying "86 We're Young, We're Wild, We're Free." Also, someone put a layer of grease on hallways on the second floor of the high school. Dead fish were found on the floor and in various file cabinets. Putty or glue was placed in the locks of some school doors; **1987***:* Cafeteria windows were painted black. During graduation the band performed "I Sing the Body Electric" from "Fame," and then "Louie Louie" to which all the graduates stood up and danced; **1988***:* Senior Lounge was turned into a beach, complete with sand and volleyball net; also a plan to release 88 mice in the administrative office failed when, the night before the event, the mice were left in the trunk of a car and all died; **1989***:* 89 pumpkins were rolled into the smoking lounge; a Town Spirit Shop sign was mounted in the cafeteria. "Class of 89" was fertilized into the upper field (now part of the Student Center) so grass was extra green for weeks (still legible at least in part for several years); **198?***:* Three chickens were let loose in the school, each bearing a number, 1, 2 or 4, so that after they were caught, school staff continued searching for #3 — which didn't exist; **1991**: A large number of crickets were released in the library; **1993***:* 10,000 ladybugs were released in the cafeteria during lunch; also, students put a goat, rabbits and chickens in the interior courtyard along with a banner in the shape of a joint, reading "flying high with the class of 93." Locks to the courtyard were glued; **1995**: "We were very well behaved and didn't have a class prank." — Rori Shapiro; **1996?**: Students dumped a huge load of manure at the front entrance with a sign that said "we've taken your sh-t for 4 years, now here's some of ours"; **1999**: Chickens' feathers were dyed green — the class color for the seniors. Many students set off a bunch of alarm clocks in lockers at a set time. Large number of seniors rode bicycles to school on Route 116, taking up the northbound lane and backing up traffic. **2001**: Also reported as a year when most of the class rode bicycles to school. Some rode right into the school; **2005***:* A letter on the school letterhead was

sent to each senior family, saying that due to low grades the senior was not going to graduate in June; **2009**: Class reportedly rode scooters to school on North Salem Road. **2012**: Also reported as a year when the class rode scooters to school along North Salem Road. [JFS]

Clattercote Farm was the name of the country home of Mr. and Mrs. Bradford Boardman and family. Their estate in the 1910s was on the north side of West Mountain Road straddling the NY line, and touched on South Pond in Lewisboro, though the house was in Ridgefield. Clattercote is a hamlet in Oxfordshire, England. [SR1916]

Clayholes, The, is the area around the northern corner of Main and Gilbert Streets, so called in the 1800s, says Rockwell. Clay dug from this then-swampy area was possibly used as a mortar in such places as stone foundations and chimney stacks. The resulting "holes" would fill with water and freeze over in winter, making good skating ice. Bedini says the holes were filled in during the 1860's. The site is across Main Street from one of the campsites of the area's American Indians, who may have used the clay here for making pottery. [RN]

Clayton Place, a 1,000-foot-long, dead-end road off Barlow Mountain Road, along north side of Pierrepont Pond (*q.v.*), is named for Reed Clayton Shields (1956-1995), son of Attorney and Mrs. Reed F. Shields (*q.v.*). Attorney Shields was representing Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*), the developer of Twixt Hills (*q.v.*), when the development was being planned. It was accepted by the town in 1964. [RN]

Clearview Drive, Terrace, private roads at the Ridgefield Lakes *(q.v.),* presumably have good views. They've been designated Scenic Roads. [RN]

Cleves, Mabel E., (1867-1952), a Montessori-educated kindergarten teacher, came here in 1898 and brought town's privately supported preschool and primary education into the 20th Century. In 1901, she led the founding of Mothers Club, which became the PTA. When the town took over operating the kindergarten in 1915-16, Cleves was hired as the main teacher. She retired 1938, and became a popular storyteller at the Ridgefield Library. She is remembered in the naming of Cleves Auditorium (*q.v.). See also* Kindergarten. [WWW, SD]

Cleves Auditorium in Veterans Park School is named for a popular educator, Mabel E. Cleves (*q.v.*), and seats about 450 people. [SD]

Cliffs, The: 1. *New England Magazine*, in October 1895, says this is another name for Aspen Ledges (*q.v.*); **2.** Informal name for giant rock outcropping near northeast end of Lake Mamanasco (*q.v.*) at Richardson Park (*q.v.*), popular with daring teenage jumpers and divers. [RN]

Clock, Gilbert: A large, old grandfather's clock near the selectmen's office on the town hall second floor was a gift from Victor Gilbert (*q.v.*) of Stonehenge Inn when he moved to the Virgin Islands in 1963. [DD87]

Clock, Town: *See* Town Clock.

Clothes District, The, was a women's clothing store at 409 Main Street. It closed in January 1981 [P1/29/1981]

Clover Mill: Probably the town's first — and maybe only — clover mill was built by Eleazer Beers (*q.v.*) on what is now Route 7 north of Branchville, using the waters of — and a pond he created on — the Norwalk River. Bradley Beers, his son, sold this mill for $980 to Willis Edmonds and Lewis H. Mead in 1856. There was also a plaster mill involved. [RLR21/50] Clover

mills crushed the old clover flower heads to obtain and clean the seeds to make available for planting; clover was a major hay crop. [JFS]

Coach House, a stone and wood outbuilding from the William Hawk estate, "Hawk's Nest" (*q.v.*), was converted into a house at 80 Branchville Road that has been home to a number of celebrities in the arts, including dancer Marthe Krueger (1942-1951), tap dancer Paul Draper (1949-50 lease), Chinese art collector Abel Bahr (1951-59) and actor Don McKay (*q.v. each*). It has also been called the "Old Coach House." [JFS]

Coal dealers in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries included: Ridgefield Lumber (Supply) Company, James F. Kennedy Company, Samuel S. Denton Company, Ernest Scott Company, B.E. Sperry Company [DD39]. Coal was used for both heating and cooking, first coming into common use here in the mid-19th Century. The price of coal in Ridgefield in 1912 was $8.25 a ton ($267 in 2024 dollars). [SA11/12/1912]

Coal mining existed in the ledges along southern Ridgebury Road. The *NY Journal of Commerce* reported [10/2/1847]: "A bed of coal has been discovered in the town of Ridgefield...Measures are in progress for working it. A gentleman of experience has contracted with the proprietor of the land for the privilege, and is now in pursuit of the proper hands and means for commencing operations." In an 1850 document in the land records, William Barhite leased to Cedar Mining Company, headed by David Hurlbutt, the right to do "examinations for coal and other minerals and metals" for 99 years on six acres, "it being a cedar hill or mountain," placing it near the intersection of Ridgebury and Mopus Bridge Roads. A 1860 description of the boundaries for the South Ridgebury School District says southern line went by "the coal mine at the foot of Ridgebury Mountain," so Hurlbutt apparently may have been successful in mining coal. [JFS]

Cobbler's Lane, a short road off South Salem Road, serves seven lots, developed in 1963 as Cobbler's Knoll by John W. Huffer and Paul G. Widman on land belonging then to Mr. and Mrs. Ward W. Green. A cobbler – someone who repairs shoes – may have once owned the property. It became a town road in 1964. [RN]

Cobelle, Charles, (1902-1994), an impressionist artist and native of Germany, painted lively French scenes while living in America. An architect by training, he studied art in France with Marc Chagall and Raul Dufy and his work includes many Parisian street scenes. His murals can be found throughout the United States at such places as the Henry Ford Museum, and the offices of Holland American Lines, Neiman Marcus, Gimbels, and Bloomingdale's. In Ridgefield, his murals were found at Bernard's Inn (they've been since removed but preserved) and at Boehringer Ingelheim's headquarters. He lived on Seth Low Mountain Road for 32 years and died at 92. He is the father of Mary Christina "Tina" Sturges (*q.v.*), also an artist. [WWW]

Coca, Imogene, (1908-2001), was an early TV celebrity and comedienne who starred with Sid Caesar on Your Show of Shows and later The Imogene Show. She also appeared on Broadway from childhood till late in life, and in movies. She won 3 Emmys. She lived at 80 Silver Spring Lane, especially summers, starting in 1953, probably introduced to the town by Debbie Rosenberg, her agent and a longtime Ridgefielder. She died in Westport. [WWW]

Cocco, Susan, (-2024), was a voice for women's rights and racial equality in Ridgefield for three decades. She was chair of the Democratic Town Committee for 16 years, a Connecticut delegate to three Democratic National Conventions, a co-founder of the annual Martin Luther King Ceremony, active in Girl Scouting, and active in anti-bullying efforts. She had a long career in advertising and public relations, and she wrote the 1985 book, *Assertiveness Training.* She lived on Branchville Road. [JFS, P7/30/2024]

Coe, Samuel Augustus, (1844-1936), a native of North Salem, was a Ridgebury farmer who lost an arm during the Petersburg campaign in the Civil War. He came to Ridgefield in 1886 and was a Republican selectman many years and state representative, 1911-13. Sometimes called the "Mayor of Ridgebury," he owned what became Arigideen Farm (*q.v.*), later Double H Farm (*q.v.*), on Old Stagecoach and Ridgebury Roads. [WWW]

Coffee House of Three Roads was a 1930s business at 165 West Lane. *See* Three Corners Antiques. [JFS]

Cogswell, Staff Sgt. Charles Gardiner, (1923-1944), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1941, joined the Army in 1942 and flew 43 combat missions as a B-17 waist gunner. Though he was eligible to come home after so many missions, he instead volunteered for more flights. Soon after, his plane was shot down in the Adriatic Sea. His remains were never found. His picture appeared in *Life* magazine – in the background of a shot showing columnist Westbrook Pegler participating in a scrap drive in front of the town hall. He was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, Air Medal with 6 Oak Leaf Clusters, the American Campaign Medal, and World War II Victory Medal. He is listed on the Tablets of the Missing at Sicily-Rome American Cemetery, Nettuno, Italy. [WWW]

Cogswell, Roy, (1947-2005), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1965, was a popular owner-operator of The Early Bird (*q.v.*) restaurant for 15 years in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries. He had also been the owner-operator of the meat market within the Hay Day Market on Governor Street, a bartender at Galloway's restaurant, and a deli owner in Vista, NY. He was active in the Lions and other community organizations. [P5/26/2005]

Cohen, Rich, (1968-), a Chicago native who's lived in Ridgefield since 2007, is an award-winning non-fiction author who has written more than a dozen books as well as many articles for *Vanity Fair, The New Yorker, Rolling Stone*, and other magazines. His books include *Sweet and Low, Israel Is Real, Tough Jews,* and *PeeWees: Confessions of A Hockey Parent* (*q.v.*). He also writes for *The New Yorker* and *Harpers*. [TRR]

Colabella, Deirdre "Dee Dee," established the Ridgefield Pride Art Center and its gallery, and is also publisher of *068 Magazine.* She had a career in fashion merchandising, marketing, and website design. [P4/30/2019]

Colby's, one of oldest stores in Ridgefield, marked its 25th anniversary 1980 [P10/9/1980] at 13 Governor Street. Colby sells blinds, shades, shutters, draperies, custom window treatments, shutters, blinds, draperies, upholstery, wallpaper, and bed ensembles. [JFS]

Cold Spring is a term that appears first in an 1810 deed for land on West Mountain, described as "beginning at a heap of stones on the highway commonly called Cold Spring Lane." The same year, a deed mentions land as being "near the mill pond, so called, at the outlet of Cold Spring." An

1818 deed mentions property "west of Mamanasco Pond," including a parcel at Cold Spring. This may have been in today's Turtle Pond (*q.v.*) area, before the pond was created by dam for Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*), or it may have been connected with Round Pond (*q.v.*). [RN]

Cold Spring Lane: *See* Cold Spring.

Cold temperatures: *See* Temperature**.**

Coleman, Rev. James, (1766-1842), was a circuit-riding Methodist preacher who, after marrying Martha DeForest of Ridgefield in 1804, moved to the Scotland District of town. At one time his circuit ran through western New England and eastern NY to the Canadian border. He is credited with establishing the first Methodist congregation in Danbury, and in many other communities. He and his wife are buried in Titicus Cemetery. [WWW]

Coleman's Lunch, a diner on Bailey Avenue behind town hall, was opened ca. 1915 by Michael Coleman who died ca. 1927. The diner was operated briefly by new owners, but razed in 1930 and where it stood is now a parking lot. *See* DD61

Coles, Charles Jr., (1922-2003), a native of Canada and RHS 1941, was president and/or CEO Ridgefield Savings Bank from 1972 to 1887. He joined the bank in 1946 as a teller after having served in the U.S. Army tank corps in Pacific during WW2. He had been an athlete as a young man and when older, supported many youth sports programs. He was a noted collector of antique clocks, Ridgefield postcards, and local memorabilia. He lived on New Street. [WWW]

Coles, Ichabod, bought a house and grist mill at Florida Hill Road and Route 7 in 1852 from Ephraim Jackson [RLR 4/27-31] and sold it in 1859 to Obadiah Platt [RLR 4/196]. It was on or about the site of Moongate (*q.v.*).

Coley, Daniel, (1729-1800), probably from what is now Redding, moved to Ridgebury in 1754 and served in the militia in 1775 when colonial forces were besieging Boston. He had a son, **Ezra**, who died in 1776 while "on his way home" from service in the army. [JW]

Colin, Justin Stanford, (1924- 2012), who owned Dunrovin (*q.v.*) mansion when it burned down in 1977, was a general partner in Lazard Freres, and senior partner at Colin, Hochstin Co., a brokerage firm he co-founded in 1971. A veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1943-46, he graduated from Harvard College in 1949, Yale Law School in 1952, and worked for a while with the U.S. Department of Justice. He was chairman of the Board of the American Ballet Theater, 1974-78. He was married to Mary Lee Potter Colin. [JFS]

College: *See* Education.

Collins, Judy, (1939-), the noted American folksinger, had a home at 239 Mountain Road at the Ridgefield Lakes with her husband, designer Louis Nelson (*q.v.*), in the late 1900s and early 2000s. [JFS]

Collins, Francis, (1879-1980), owned the Ridgefield Water Supply Company in the mid-20th Century and lived in the former Benedict farmhouse on Whipstick Road. [DD157]

Collins, William, hired as Ridgefield's 18th school superintendent on Dec. 18, 2018 at the age 56, almost immediately resigned due to health problems. He had been superintendent at Newington. [JFS]

Collis Summus was the name of the Ridgefield High School yearbook in 1945; it means "top of the hill," reflecting the location of the school on East Ridge. In 1946, it was retitled Caudatowan (*q.v.*), which it remains today.

Colls Point is found in town records as early as 1717 when a map drawn by Rev. Thomas Hauley, town clerk, notes "Colls Poynt" near the very south end of Great Swamp — the area north of Ivy Hill Road, east of where it crosses the old railroad bed/rail trail and east of Prospect Ridge. The term was used as late as 1851, probably later. One old meaning of "coll" is a pile of wood — from earliest settlement, Great Swamp was used as a source of fireplace wood; perhaps trees cut from swamp were dragged to Coll's Point to await sawing into logs and splitting. Wood may also have been stored there to season. The location was sometimes called Colt's Point. [RN]

Colonial Green, a four-lot subdivision of 10.2 acres between South Salem Road and Golf Lane, was obtained in 1969 by Czyr Construction Company (*q.v.*). The land was once part of Ridgefield Golf Club (*q.v.*) and uses an old railroad bed as a private accessway — *see* Ridgefield and New York Railroad. [RN]

Colonial Heights, an 89-lot, late-1960's subdivision including Minuteman Road, Revere Drive, and Yankee Hill Road, was developed by Lewis J. Finch *(q.v.*) and Paul J. Morganti *(q.v.*) — the town's first and biggest development using three-acre lots. [RN]

Colonial House was a local inn in the mid-1930s. [R1935]

Colonial Lane, developed in the early 1950's by Harold "Pinky" Gillum (*q.v.*), runs off North Salem Road just north of Barlow Mountain Road to a dead-end. It was accepted by town in 1963. The name, in use by 1957, perhaps reflects the fact that the area was one of the first sections of Ridgefield outside the village to be developed by the colonial settlers. [RN]

Colonial Tea House was established ca. 1924 at 536 Main Street, but soon became Colonial Tourists (*q.v.*). *See also* Gilbert House. [DD114]

Colonial Tourists, The, was a guest house operated by Jennie Pehrson Gilbert and her sister, Emily Davis, in the 1920s and 30s at 536 Main Street, the so-called Gilbert House (*q.v.*). [DD114]

Colt, Harris Dunscombe, II, (1901-73), was an internationally known archaeologist who specialized in Middle East deserts, but was also an expert on Rudyard Kipling and a collector of old engraved views of New York City. He lived at 15 High Ridge Avenue, the Peter Parley House, which his father, a Yale-educated lawyer, had acquired in the late 1910s. He also owned briefly the Stonecrest (*q.v.*) mansion. [WWW, DD152]

Colt, Theresa (Teresa) Strickland, (ca. 1904-55), a native of Malta, was the wife of Harris Dunscombe Colt (*q.v.*) and a member of the prominent Maltese family. During World War II she was very active in relief efforts for both Malta and Great Britain. She headed Ridgefield's branch of Bundles for Britain (*q.v.*). For her wartime services, King George VI awarded her the King's Medal for Service in the Cause of Freedom by His Majesty. [FAG, JFS]

Columbariums: The First Congregation, Jesse Lee Methodist and St. Stephen's Churches maintain a columbarium at or near their church buildings. St. Mary Parish has a columbarium at its cemetery. [HLYB]

Commission on Aging: *See* Aging, Commission on.

Commons, Vivian K., (1898-1974), a senior warden at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church for many years, was the first chairman of the parish nursery school. He was a Boys' Club president for many years. He owned a family wholesale pharmaceutical business, Commons Brothers, in NYC and,

although he lived in Redding, was very Ridgefield-oriented and is buried with his wife, Helen, in Fairlawn Cemetery. [JFS].

Community Center, whose formal name is the Ridgefield Veterans' Memorial Community Center, is the former Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*) mansion on Main Street, which he called Grovelawn (*q.v.*). The estate was purchased by the town in 1945 to honor veterans; the land surrounding the mansion is now Veterans Park (*q.v.*). Proposals to turn the building into a town hall (1949) and a school (1952) were rejected. In 1954 the mansion became what would be long called "The Ridgefield Community Center," operated by a non-profit group that leases from the town. It was restyled in early 2000s as "the Lounsbury House." [JFS]

Community Emergency Response Team: *See* CERT.

Community gardens are plots available to the gardening public, first-come, first served, at Edith Meffley (*q.v*.) Garden on Halpin Lane. Plots are overseen by the selectmen. Applications for the Herman L. Schuster Community Garden, an organic-based, raised-bed garden on Farmingville Road, has a yearly fee for a single plot of $75; email FCG06877@gmail.com. [JFS, WU 1/31/2025]

Compassion Coins: *See under* Compassionate Ridgefield.

Compassionate Ridgefield is a non-partisan, non-profit organization, inspired by concerns about the high rates of stress, depression, and bullying, the incivility and hostility on social media platforms, as well as the increase in hate vandalism in the area. "Our ultimate goal is to create a Ridgefield where every person — no matter their age, ethnicity, gender, abilities, religion, political, or sexual orientation — feels welcome and respected," the organization says. It initiated Ridgefield's "compassion coins" as "a way to personally acknowledge someone and show your admiration and respect for their kindness, compassion or generous actions." [JFS]

Composers and songwriters who have lived in Ridgefield: Aaron Copland, Fanny Crosby, Andrew Gold, Stephen Jenks, Jim Lowe, Hubert Main, Vaclav Nelhybel, Alex North, Noel Regney, Harold Rome, Stephen Schwartz, Ernest Troost, and Alec Wyton (*q.v. each*).

Computer Store, The, opened in September 1981 at Girolmetti Court, 19 Danbury Road, offering sales and service of "PC's and software." [P9/17/1981]

Comstock Brook, the east branch of which eventually empties into the Norwalk River at Wilton Center, apparently has its source in a swamp (perhaps Brimstone Swamp — *q.v*.) north of Pelham Lane, between Nod and Nod Hill Roads, just over the Wilton line in Ridgefield. The stream was named for Comstock Ridge or Knoll, a hill in Wilton west of Route 33 and south of Deforest Road, near which it flows. The hill in turn was named for Capt. Samuel Comstock, said to be the first settler on the ridge. The name appears on US Geological Survey maps. [RN]

Comstock Court, a dead-end road at the south end of Nod Road at the Wilton line, serves a 1979 subdivision by Barry Finch and Jack Baldaserini (*q.v. each*). When the lots started selling in early 1980's, they shocked many, with prices of $200,000 or more, then extraordinary for lots without sewer or water service. The road was named for the nearby brook (*q.v.*). [RN]

Conant Road is the only road in town named for a college president. Robert H. Baldwin, president of the Lincoln Development Corporation of

Massachusetts, the original subdivider of Westmoreland (*q.v.*), graduated from Harvard College in 1952 when James Bryant Conant was president of the university. Jerry Tuccio, who later took over the subdivision, retained Baldwin's suggested name for the road, a dead-ender off Remington Road, that was accepted by the town in 1969. [RN]

Concert Happenings in Ridgefield's Parks: *See* CHIRP.

Condominiums: The first residential condos in Ridgefield were a portion of Fox Hill (*q.v.*). David Paul *(q.v.*), who planned rental apartments, agreed to try some units there around 1970; the experiment was so successful he made all of Fox Hill's 286 units condominiums instead of rentals, then converted his earlier Casagmo apartments from rentals to condos. The first retail condos were said to be 89 Danbury Road (*q.v.*), established in 1980. The first office condos, Executive Pavilion (*q.v*.), 90 Grove Street, were built in 1984. Grove Office Park, 38A, B & C Grove Street, backed by Dr. Joseph Buchman (*q.v*.), offered medical condos around the same time. [JFS]

Conductors, musical, from Ridgefield include: Dan Micciche, Maxim Shostakovich, Charles Spire, and Frieder Weissmann (*q.v. each*).

Confederate Bell, on the front lawn of Lounsbury House (*q.v.*), was cast in Ohio in 1845, captured by the Confederate Army during the Civil War and slated to be melted with other iron into cannon. Recaptured by Union forces it was given to Gov. Phineas Lounsbury by a military friend. He mounted it in his backyard; in 1971 the Lions Club moved it to the front lawn on a new stand. The bell was rung for the endings of both World Wars I and II. [JFS]

Congregate Housing at 51 Prospect Ridge, first proposed by First Selectman Elizabeth Leonard in 1987, opened in 1991-92, along with Halpin Court (*q.v.*). The facility uses the former Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*) building with additions and modifications. Its 34 one-bedroom apartments have 24-hour supervision in case of emergency, housekeeping services, and a common dining room with one meal a day. For a history of the property, *see* Holy Ghost Novitiate, Halpin Lane, Halpin Court. [JFS]

Congregation of Notre Dame, an order of Catholic nuns based in Quebec, had its American novitiate, U.S provincial motherhouse and a retirement home at 223 West Mountain Road from 1962 to 2005, when it was purchased for $8 million by Ridgefield Academy (*q.v.*). The property had originally been John Hampton Lynch estate, called West Mountain Farm (*q.v.*) *See also* Notre Dame Academy. [JFS]

Congregation of St. Vincent de Paul: *See* St. Vincent de Paul novitiate.

Congregation of the Holy Spirit: *See* Holy Ghost Novitiate.

Congregation Shir Shalom, a reformed Jewish congregation, was created in 2015 with the merging of Temple Shearith Israel (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield with Jewish Family Congregation of South Salem, NY. *See also* Westmoreland, Nutholme.

Congregational Church: *See* First Congregational Church *and* Ridgebury Congregational Church.

Congress, members of: Ridgefield has had three native-born members of the U.S. House of Representatives: **Dr. Joel Abbot,** a congressman from Georgia; **Henry G. Stebbins**, from New York; and **Jeremiah Donovan**, from Connecticut (*q.v. each*). **Clare Boothe Luce** (*q.v.*) moved to Ridgefield just after having been a congresswoman from Connecticut. **Jonathan Ingersoll** Jr. (*q.v*.), a Ridgefield native, was elected a

congressman from Connecticut in 1793, but declined the job before being sworn in; his son, Ralph, not a Ridgefielder, did become a congressman. Connecticut Democrats Sept. 8, 1910 picked **George Pratt Ingersoll** of West Lane, a former U.S. minister to Siam, to run for congressman at large in the November election; he lost. Native **Romeo Petroni** (*q.v.*) ran unsuccessfully for Fifth District congressman in 1966 on the GOP ticket. **Jeffrey Peters** (*q.v.*) ran for the nomination in 1986, but failed (from New Hampshire he later ran for President!). **Mark Nielsen** (*q.v.*), then a resident of Danbury, but soon a Ridgefielder, ran on the GOP ticket for Fifth District congressman in 1998 and 2000. **Dennison F. Fiala** (*q.v.*) was a GOP candidate for congress in 1980. No U.S. senators lived in Ridgefield, but **Ron Wyden,** (1949-), senator from Oregon (1996-), is the son of author **Peter Wyden** (1923-1998), who lived in Ridgefield from 1974 to 1998. [JFS] *See also under* Representatives, U.S. [JFS]

Congressional Medal of Honor winners who've lived in Ridgefield are Col. Edward M. Knox, Civil War, 1892; Gen. Wilbur E. Wilder, Indian Wars, 1896; Paul Bucha, Vietnam War, 1970 (*q.v. each*). Only Wilder is buried here.

Conklin, Irving B. Sr., (1899-1966), was a dairy farmer, operating Conklin's Dairy on Ramapoo Road from 1928 into the early 1940s. The farm later became the Ramapoo Hills subdivision (*q.v.*). In 1941, he acquired the Stonecrest (*q.v.*) estate on North Street where he raised beef, hogs and sheep for the war effort. In the early 1950s, he and wife **Ethel** subdivided part of the estate into Stonecrest Road and Ridgecrest Drive. In 1953, he started a riding school on part of the old estate's farm. In 1944, he and Leo Pambianchi founded Ridgefield Motors, which became Conklin Motors on Danbury Road in 1950, then Kellogg-Theiss in 1955, and finally in the 1980s Village Pontiac-Cadillac (the building houses Party Depot in 2026). Conklin was active in Lions, Rotary, and Odd Fellows. His son, **Irving B. Jr.,** was chairman of Planning and Zoning Commission in the 1970s. [WWW]

Conklin, James, of Lower Salem bought a gristmill and a house at "Limestone" in 1788, probably on or near the old Stonehenge Inn site [RLR7/41]. He also bought a gristmill at Route 7 and Florida Hill Road (*see* Moongate) in 1780 [RLR7/61]. He also had a saw mill on the western side of West Mountain, cited in 1785 and 1788 [RLR6/151]; it may have been gone by 1795. [RLR8/82]

Conklin Court, a road never developed, was to serve six lots off North Street, just south of Ridgecrest Drive, part of Stonecrest Estates (*q.v.*) development. Instead, St. Mary Parish bought it as part of the cemetery property. It was named for Irving B. Conklin Sr. (*q.v.*), who had owned and developed Stonecrest. [RN]

Conklin Dairy on Ramapoo Road was established by Irving B. Conklin Sr. (*q.v.*) on July 1, 1928. It was perhaps the biggest of several Ridgefield dairies (*q.v.*) operating in the early 20th Century.

Conklin Motors, operated by Irving B. Conklin Sr. (*q.v.*), opened its showroom on Danbury Road in 1950 [P7/27/1950]. The building is now Party Depot (*q.v.*). The business had been Ridgefield Motors on Bailey Avenue before the move. [RPJ6/9] It became Kellogg-Theiss (*q.v.*).

Conley, Edward Thomas "Eddie," (1912-1992), a Ridgefield native, became a professional boxer from 1927 to 1942, fighting in 68 recorded bouts with 26 wins, 40 losses, and two draws. He later lived in Danbury. [DD122]

Conley, Col. Louis Daniel, (1874-1930), a NYC native, was an executive at Conley Tinfoil, founded by his grandfather, and was a leader in NY's "Fighting 69th" regiment in the early 1900s. In 1914, he began building his Ridgefield estate, Outpost Farm (*q.v.*), as an escape from the city. In the early 1920s he established Outpost Nurseries (*q.v*.), which became among the largest nurseries in the East, supplying many campuses, parks, estates, and two World's Fairs with plantings; its mill provided wood for boats in WW2. Conley eventually owned some 2,000 acres, mostly in Ridgefield, some in Danbury; hundreds of acres are now Bennett's Pond State Park (*q.v*.). He also created Outpost Kennels and Outpost Inn (*q.v. each*). [WWW]

Conley, Richard Ehret (1903-1984), son of Col. and Mrs. Louis D. Conley of Outpost Farm, Inn, and Nurseries, was head of Connecticut Land Company (*q.v.*). A private pilot, he with fellow pilot Joseph Wittman established Conn-Air air taxi (*q.v*.). He lived in a house just north of today's Fox Hill condominiums. [DD273]

Conn-Air was an air taxi service between Danbury Airport and New York City, operated by Ridgefielders Richard Conley and Joseph Wittman, who met in World War II as Navy pilots. [DD273]

Connecticut Bank and Trust Company in 1982 took over State National Bank (*q.v.*), which had an office here. In 2012 CBT became Berkshire Bank, which has no office here. [JFS]

Connecticut Citizen, The, was a "weekly" newspaper published in Ridgefield. The first — *and only* — issue was Oct. 8, 1892. It said its aim was to "battle on behalf of the farmers, mechanics and laboring class of Western Connecticut in favor of lower tariff taxation, purer politics, and just state representation." *The Citizen* backed Grover Cleveland and Adlai Stevenson for president and vice president in that year's election (Cleveland defeated incumbent Benjamin Harrison). The publication may have been a vehicle for Melbert B. Cary (*q.v.*) to promote his views and candidates — Cary was a wealthy Ridgefielder and a Democrat who was chairman of the Cleveland and Stevenson Campaign Club in Ridgefield and in 1902 ran for governor of Connecticut. [JFS]

Connecticut Land Company was started in the late 1940's by Richard Ehret Conley (*q.v.*) as a vehicle for handling the disposition of Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*) property acquired by Col. Louis D. Conley, Richard's father, in the 1910s and 1920s and totaling nearly 2,000 acres. Richard Owen Carey took over the company, developing of some of the land in the 1960s and 1970s. Company subdivisions included Bridle Trail, Buck Hill Road, and Copper Beech Lane (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

'Connecticut Lenox, The', was the title of a long article about Ridgefield in the October 1895 issue of *New England Magazine*.

Connecticut Light and Power Company: *See* Electricity.

Connecticut Printing and Graphics Inc., a printing shop at 971 Ethan Allen Highway, was owned in 1983 by Edward A. Gilchrist and Robert Andreason, and was the successor to RoBell Printing (*q.v.*) [CD1983]

Connecticut State Police: *See* Troop A.

Connolly, Michael, (1947-1989), a native of Massachusetts, grew up in Ridgefield, became a professional singer and actor, and appeared in shows around the country. He performed in several Broadway shows — his first was "Otherwise Engaged," with Dick Cavett (*q.v.*). He appeared in TV soap

operas, “All My Children” and “One Life to Live.” [WWW]

Connolly’s restaurant at 896 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7), owned by brothers Bruce and Steve Connolly, opened in April 1981 in space that had formerly been The Hungry Knight (*q.v.*). It specialized in seafood and steaks [P4/9/1981]

Conron, Joseph H., (1871-1931), was a wealthy president of a New York wholesaling firm, who lived at Hillaire (*q.v.*) estate, from 1910 to 1931, on West Mountain. [WWW] *See also* West Mountain Pines, Conron’s Pond.

Conron’s Pond is a small body of water near the northerly side of West Mountain Road, between Sharp Hill and Ramapoo Roads. It’s located on former estate-farm, Hillaire (*q.v.*), owned by Joseph H. Conron (*q.v.*). [RN]

Conroy, Capt. John and **Mary,** operated the Fairhope Country School (*q.v.*) from 1931 to 1936 in Farmingville. Capt. Conroy was a World War I Navy commander and served as a captain in the Merchant Marine in World War II. They lived in NY. (JFS)

Consentino, Joseph, (1939-2018), and **Sandra**, documentary filmmakers who moved to West Mountain Road in 1964, won at least three Emmys and numerous other television awards. Joseph started out as a magazine photojournalist and Sandra, a high school art teacher. A graduate of St. John’s and of Columbia School of Journalism whose photographs appeared in *Sports Illustrated, Look, Life,* and *The Saturday Evening Post,* Joseph became in 1970 a documentary film cameraman and was a director for the TV show Big Blue Marble in the 1970s. An accomplished potter, Sandra taught art in NJ, NY and CT schools. In 1970, she started her career as a film editor and joined Joseph in making their first documentary together — a PBS special on farming, called “Days Have Gone By.” Together, they have produced, directed, filmed, and edited hundreds of documentaries for commercial and public television, on such subjects as the conflicts in the Middle East, the Mafia, Lucy and Desi, Muhammad Ali, and World War II. A former professional baseball player who spent two years in the Boston Red Sox farm system, Joseph founded the Ridgefield Nighthawks in 1981 and, in 1993, the New England Collegiate Baseball League, which plays in summer. [P1/25/2018]

Conservation Commission, created in 1962 under the leadership of First Selectman Leo F. Carroll, consists of nine volunteer Ridgefield residents and two alternates who serve for staggered three-year terms. Commissioners are appointed by the Board of Selectmen “to devote their efforts to the sound development, conservation, supervision and regulation of the town’s natural resources.” The commission oversees the Open Space Conservation Fund of donations made by townspeople to preserve open space (*q.v.*). [RW]

Constables, town: During the 18th and much of the 19th Century, the constable was the enforcer of Connecticut and town laws. In the 18th Century at least, the office was considered the second most important in town, behind the selectmen. Constables were elected at the ATM and later at semi-annual municipal elections well into the late 20th Century, although by then their powers and uses had diminished. After Ridgefield voted to establish a police department with overseeing Police Commission in 1955, constables were employed mostly for directing traffic at emergencies. The fire police of the Ridgefield Fire Department used to be constables. [JFS]

Constantini, Consantino A. "Gus": *See under* Ideal Garage. [DD350]

Constitution Federal Savings Bank was operating at 107 Danbury Road in 1980 [10/2/1980]

Contessa, Amedeo "Matty," (1909-1981), native of NYC, was a long-time Ridgefielder and prominent citizen, who died at his retirement home in Lebanon CT. He had operated Contessa Yarns (*q.v.*) for many years, and had been active in many organizations, including serving as president of the Lions Club in 1949, and being a vestryman at St. Stephen's. [DD64, JFS]

Contessa Yarns, which was operated on Bailey Avenue by Matty Contessa (*q.v.*) during the mid-20th Century, did a large international mail-order business. [DD64]

Continental Congress, Second: Ridgefield was one of a handful of "Tory Towns" early on in the Revolution, but soon switched to the patriot cause. ….after mature Deliberation in said meeting the question was put, Whether this Town will adopt and Confirm to the resolves contained in ye association of the Continental Congress or not. Resolved in the Negative, 9 Desent."

Continental Drive, part of the Barrack Heights (*q.v.*) subdivision, runs from Barrack Hill Road to North Salem Road. Francis D. Martin, the subdivider, named it because French troops in the service of the Continental Army camped nearby during the Revolution (*see* Armand Place *and* Barrack Hill Road). The road, which has one of the steepest inclines of any in town, was accepted by a Town Meeting in 1959. *See also* Peck Hill.

Contractors, major, in Ridgefield have included John Morganti and Sons, Achille Bacchiochi, Vincent Bedini and Sons, David R. Carroll, and Ippoliti Construction (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Conversation Piece, an antiques, gifts and collectibles shop, was opened in May 1980 at Girolmetti Court, Danbury Road, by Garth and Fran Deitrick. [JFS]

Conway, Eustace (1859-1937) and his wife **Maud Allis** built the estate, Barrackhill (*q.v.*). He was a lawyer and expert on Shakespeare, who had a collection of rare manuscripts and documents including a 17th Century portrait once thought to be of the bard. [WWW]

Coogan, Theodore Havemeyer, (1909-1983), was a member of the Board of Finance, 1955-1983, a real estate agent and Harvard graduate whose father was an owner of the old Polo Grounds in NYC. [NR]

Cook, Henry Miles, (-1944), was a master weaver who operated the Miracle Studio (*q.v.*) on Route 7. [JFS]

Cook, Jeanne, (1929-2020), a native of Illinois who owned travel agencies in Chicago and later in Ridgefield, was a leading force in growing the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra from the 1970s into the 1990s, was a member of its board for more than 30 years and was president for 9 years. She held an annual Derby Day at her home to benefit the orchestra. She was active in and a benefactor of many organizations. She lived in her later years in a house, no longer extant, at 103 Peaceable Ridge Road, that was once the home of Joli Gabor (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Cook Close, a lane at Casagmo (*q.v.*), is said to have been named by David Paul (*q.v.*) after distant relatives of the Olcott family, on whose former estate Paul developed Casagmo. [RN]

Cooke, Mrs. Abigail, (1690-1764), was the daughter, widow and mother-in-law of Congregational clergymen. In her 1761 will, she left "my negro woman Dinah" to Dorcas Ingersoll, either her daughter or granddaughter. She was the daughter of Rev. Samuel Russell of Branford and the widow of Rev. Joseph Moss of Derby, she married Rev. Samuel Cooke on Aug. 16, 1733 — she was his 4th wife. She probably lived with her daughter and son-in-law — the Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll (*q.v*.) on the north corner of Main Street and King Lane, and is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [UNM]

Cooke, John P., (1937-2005), Yale 1959 and a veteran of five years in the Marine Corps, was chairman of the building committee that erected RHS on North Salem Road. He was the first third-party member ever elected to a Ridgefield public office in the 20th Century (Independent Party, Zoning Board of Appeals, 1993), and ran for first selectman in 1995 with Independents. An executive at Emery Air Freight, he moved to Old Branchville Road in 1965. In 1956 he was a member of the U.S. eight-oar crew that won a gold medal in the Olympics in Melbourne. His wife, **Torrey**, has been active in the community, including the Ridgefield Garden Club, for many years. [WWW]

Coombs, Elmer R., (1928-2018), native of White Plains, was an oil burner technician who owned the Thumpkin Else (*q.v.*) and was an active bowler. His wife, **Josephine,** (1931-2007), was manager of RHS cafeteria. They lived at 15 Lakeside Drive for many years. [P11/15/2018]

Cooney, Dr. Mary, was said to have been Ridgefield's first chiropractor. She lived over Bissell's in the 1920s. [DD82, 97]

Cooper was a small neighborhood that nonetheless had its own railroad station (*see* Cooper Station) and post office (*see* Cooper Post Office). It was centered around Cooper and Cooper Hill Roads. [JFS]

Cooper Brook rises at the south end of Great Swamp and flows southeasterly between Florida Hill and Branchville Roads to Branchville where it empties into the Norwalk River near the railroad station. It once powered one of the earlier and longest-lived saw mill sites, Hoyt's Saw Mill (*q.v.*) at John's Pond *(q.v.*). It takes its name from a barrel-maker who lived nearby (*see* Cooper Hill). [RN]

Cooper Hill Road got its name, tradition says, from a cooper – or barrel-maker – who operated a shop near where Cooper Hill Road crosses the old railroad bed. The cooper may have been John F. Sammis (*q.v.*). Col. Edward M. Knox, owner of Downesbury Manor on Florida Hill Road, is said to have built the road to reach the tiny Cooper Station (*q.v*.). [RN]

Cooper Post Office operated from 1884 to 1888 at or near the Cooper Station (*q.v.*) on Cooper Hill Road. It was discontinued 1888 after postmaster John F. Sammis *(q.v.*) was charged with embezzling $81.71 in stamp sales. [JFS]

Cooper Road is a dead end off Branchville Road that was once longer. While the eastern end is now at Stony Hill Road, it had earlier extended easterly to Florida Road, nearly opposite today's Hickory Lane. Before Branchville Road was built in the early 1850s, it may have continued southerly, over a path now used by Branchville Road and by Bloomer Road, connecting to today's Old Branchville Road, a route shown on a 1745 subdivision map in old town land records. [RN]

Cooper Station was on the west side of Cooper Hill Road where it crosses the track bed and just north of Branchville Road. Samuel Clemens of Redding,

a friend of Col. Edward M. Knox (*q.v.*) of Downesbury Manor (*q.v.*), would ride the train from West Redding to Branchville, to Cooper Station, where he was met by the Colonel. The station was named for neighborhood, said to have had a cooper with quarters nearby (*see* John F. Sammis). It was also called the "Milk Station" because dairy farmers would leave cans of milk there for train pickup. Another name was "Zallicoffers" (*q.v.*). Ridgefield High School students from the area in the 1920s used the station's shelter when they were commuting to school in town each day via the train (until 1925). The postmaster at Cooper station was convicted of stealing money from stamp sales — *see* Cooper Post Office. [P4/8/1909, RN, RPC]

Cooper Tavern was a restaurant at 37 Ethan Allen Highway in the 1990s. *See also* Jean's Restaurant, Barn Door, Cella's, Luigi's.

Cooperative Building, Store: *See* Italian Cooperative Store

Copen, Dr. David, a cardiologist, was cited in 2000 by *New York Magazine* as one of the best doctors in the NYC area. He was chief of cardiology at Danbury Hospital and taught cardiology at Yale for 30 years. He came to Ridgefield in 1974. [JFS]

Copland, Aaron, (1900-1990), the American composer and native of Brooklyn, NY, wrote much of his Third Symphony while living on Great Hill Road. He arrived in December 1945 and wrote music here at least into May 1946. "I told almost no one where I could be found," he said of his stay in Ridgefield. "I felt in self-exile, but it was essential if I was to finish the symphony." While here he also worked on other projects including the orchestral score of Appalachian Spring, the ballet for which he won a Pulitzer Prize in 1945. Letters from him in the National Archives indicate he lived on Limestone Road, but evidence is that it was today's Great Hill Road. [WWW]

Copp, Dr. John, (1673-1751), of Norwalk was intimately involved in settling Ridgefield, but probably never lived here nor owned property here. He was the first town clerk, first teacher, first doctor, and first surveyor, who laid out Main Street and many of the first property divisions. His ancestors were early settlers of Boston (Copps Cemetery is on historic Boston Common). John was born there, but had moved to Stamford by 1698. In 1701, he was a schoolmaster in Norwalk and became by 1705 one of first medical doctors in the colony, perhaps first in Norwalk, and later served as a surgeon in French and Indian War. From 1706-08, he was involved in surveying the new town of Ridgefield, using a skill learned from his father in Boston. As as register or town clerk, he kept town's earliest records until 1713 — they can be read in town hall today, written in his hand. He later became very active in Norwalk where he lived; Copps Island off Norwalk was probably his. He also had a farm in Branchville/Georgetown — *see* Copps Corner. [WWW]

Copper Beech Lane, a short, dead-end road off Lee Road in Farmingville, is named for a species of tree, bearing copper-colored leaves, that is plentiful in the neighborhood, planted around 1940 by Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*) for stock. The road was developed by Richard Conley's (*q.v.*) Connecticut Land Company around 1956, and became a town road in 1959. Selectman Paul J. Morganti (*q.v.*) suggested the name. Local legend says that long ago, a murder took place in this vicinity and the corpse was thrown down an old well, which was then filled in and hidden. [RN]

Copperhead: 1. A native reptile that is uncommon and has rarely attacked a Ridgefielder, and whose bite has been described by a state herpetologist as like a "bad bee sting." Like other snakes, they are valuable for helping control rodents and other small creatures. Harmless snakes such as milk snakes are often misidentified as copperheads. [JFS] **2**. Copperhead was a derogatory term for a Northerner who supported the South during the Civil War. *See* Daniel B. Bradley. [JFS, UNM]

Copp's Corner, sometimes spelled Kopp's Corner, was an early name for the southeast corner of Ridgefield at Branchville, with Wilton to south, Redding to east. First mentioned in 1716, it was so called because John Copp (*q.v.*) had a farm thereabouts in the early 1700s, perhaps mostly in Wilton. The "farm" may have been chiefly fields and perhaps a barn; Copp appears to have had his residence in the village of Norwalk 11 miles to the south. But a small house along Route 7 just north of the Wilton line in Branchville, was said by some to have been owned by Copp; it was torn down in 2007. *See also* Wheer Cock. [RN]

Copps Hill, Copps Hill Road: "Copps Hill," a modern term not found in the early records, probably stems from the belief that the earlier "Copps Mountain" (*q.v.*) exaggerated the loftiness of the ridge. The road is very old — it seems to appear in pre-1730 land records, but it's not known when the current name was first applied. The name should be Copp's Hill Road, but it is never spelled that way. [RN]

Copps Hill Common is a shopping center developed announced in 1981 by Stephen Zemo at 103-109 Danbury Road along southwestern edge of Copps Hill Plaza (*q.v.*) shopping center. It was rebranded as the "Marketplace at Copps Hill" in 2009 to reflect the large number of food-related businesses there. Among the longstanding businesses it houses are Southwest Cafe, Ross Bread, Nancy O, and Ridgefield Organics. [JFS]

Copps Hill Plaza, the shopping center, was built by Plaza Investors Holmdel Corp. of Long Island, headed by Harold Lewis, and opened in the summer of 1972. The first store to open was Genovese Drugs, July 29, 1972 — it was also the first chain pharmacy in town. W.T. Grant opened July 31. Stop and Shop opened a 21,000-square-food market Oct. 3. The Zemo brothers opened stores Oct. 11: Don Zemo, 28, operated Zemo's Men's Store, his second store, while Stephen, 26, had his third women's clothing store, Ann Stephens. Venice Pizzeria began Nov. 20 under owners Dominick Ruggiero and Silvio Dinardo, and is now the oldest continuously operating restaurant in Ridgefield. Randy Ward opened Cycle Circus Dec. 2 — one of 12 bike shops in a Connecticut-New York chain, carried Italian, French and Swedish 10-speeds as well as the usual American models. Miller's Card and Giftique opened Dec. 8. The next day, City National Bank of Connecticut opened. The center was purchased by Realco Management Corp., owner of over 30 malls and shopping plazas, in November 1986 [P2/12/1987]. In November 2001, work began on new buildings along Danbury and Copps Hill Roads, expansion of Stop & Shop and the construction of a freestanding Eckerd's Drug Store, now Rite Aid. The owner in 2024 is Regency Centers/Equity One. *See also* Taxpayers, Top Ten. [P7/16/2020, JFS].

Copp's Mountain, the ridge along east side of North Street, was the original term for today's Stonecrest Mountain (*q.v.*). It was first used in a 1721 deed

in which the settlers purchased land from the natives, but why it was named for John Copp (*q.v.*) is not known — he never seems to have lived here on land he owned. The term appears frequently during the 18th and 19th Centuries, sometimes spelled Kopps Mountain, Koppes Mountain or even Copse Mountain. *See also* East Mountain. [RN]

Copps Old Line, also called ye Old Kopp Line, appears in deeds from 1748 until the end of the 18th Century, apparently referring to an old border between Danbury and Ridgefield on the town's east side, north of the Routes 7 and 35 intersection and running through Spruce Mountain. From deeds, it is certain the line was west of the present boundary between the two towns. The name suggests the old border had been surveyed by John Copp (*q.v*.) and that the line was a little off. [RN]

Coq Hardi, Le, was a French cuisine restaurant in the basement level of the Big Shop (*q.v.*) in the 1980s. The name meant literally "bold rooster." The chef was Carl Wright. The location later became Luc's Cafe (*q.v*.).

Corbin, Madeleine Kraeler, (1922-2010), an artist and a longtime voice for preservation of historic properties, was a founder in the 1970s of the Ridgefield Preservation Trust, an organization that catalogued historic properties and fought for preservation of them, and that grew into the Ridgefield Historical Society. She was director of the Ridgefield Historic Architectural Resources Survey undertaken in the late 1970s and a longtime member of the Ridgefield Design Council. Born in 1922 in NYC, Corbin studied at Carnegie Tech and at The Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, where she and her husband, Leonard, met. Her writings included *About Ridgefield: What We Were and What We Are*, a 2002 book about Ridgefield's past and future, and a 1987 guide to American barns, focusing on Ridgefield. [JFS, P11/18/2010]

Corbin Drive was once used as a private road off the west side of Limestone Road but has since become Buckspen Lane (*q.v.*). The road led to the house of Robert Corbin, a member of the town's first Zoning Commission, who lived there until the early 1970's when he sold the house and more than 20 acres to Albert Gaeta (*q.v.*), who subdivided it. [RN]

Cores Bogs: *See* Kores Bogs.

Cornen, Cyrus Alexander Jr., (1878-1935), was a Ridgefield businessman who was discovered in 1916 to have embezzled ca. $13,000 (equal to $375,000 today) from St. Stephen's Parish building fund, where he was the church treasurer. He was also town clerk, 1910-16, and probate judge, and was said to have also pilfered money from the town coffers. Friends made up losses and he was never prosecuted, but he left town in disgrace. He was a grandson of Peter P. Cornen (*q.v.*) [WWW, DD144]

Cornen, Peter P., (1815-93), was a pioneer oil wildcatter who made a fortune in western Pennsylvania in the 1860s-70s, partnering with Henry Beers (*q.v.*), a Ridgefield native and brother of his wife, Lydia Beers. He had earlier been a successful businessman involved in the California Gold Rush of 1849. One of Ridgefield's richest residents in the 19th Century, he came here in 1854, built a large house at the corner of Danbury and Farmingville Roads (*see* Cornen Avenue), now the site of the headquarters of Fairfield County Bank, of which he was a founder. The house was later occupied by his son Cyrus Sr. In 1887, Peter started a company to drill for oil and natural gas in Ridgefield — he believed rich deposits were in Farmingville — but

townspeople opposed the idea. He was a state senator in 1867, state representative in 1871, and first selectman in 1871-72. He was the first vice-president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank and one of its first directors. [WWW, RSB21]

Cornen Avenue was an informal but popular name around the turn of 20th Century for Danbury Road in the vicinity of today's Fox Hill condominiums, including the old Danbury Road that now is the main driveway through the condominium complex. It was named for Peter P. Cornen (*q.v.*), whose house was at corner of Danbury and Farmingville Road and who planted many maples along Danbury Road. [RN]

Cornen's Brook is a name appearing on a 1920s postcard for the Norwalk River or Ridgefield Brook (*q.v. each*) which flows north out of Great Swamp into Outpost Pond at Fox Hill, then across Danbury Road through Recreation Center land. Much of the land on east side of Danbury Road was owned in the late 19th and early 20th Century by Peter Cornen (*q.v.*) and family. [RN]

Corner Cafe was opened by Michelle and Joern Tittel on April 27, 2024, in a location at Main Street and Danbury Road that had long ago been Joe's Store (*q.v.*), and had last been Tony's Corner Deli and also Country Corners (*q.v. each*). [P4/18/2024]

Corner Cupboard was a short-lived restaurant at the south corner of Main and Catoonah Streets, opened in 1937 by William Pettit. It had formerly been Lorna Doone (*q.v.*) and later, several restaurants including The White Spot and Scala's. [JFS]

Corner Pub was a popular restaurant for 30 years at the north corner of Grove Street and Sunset Lane, owned by Barbara McCarthy (*q.v.*). The Pub operated from St. Patrick's Day 1982 until April 2012. The building had earlier been a restaurant established after Prohibition by John Pierpaoli, long called Perp's (*q.v.*) or Pierpaoli's Tavern. Other restaurants there have been Joe's Hideaway, The Lyons Den, Village People, and, since 2018, The Hideaway (*q.v. each*).

Corner Store, built by Thaddeus Keeler (*q.v.*) in the early 1800s at Main Street and West Lane, opposite the First Congregational Church, was a popular general store during much of the 19th Century and the only place "prescription" medicines could be bought for many years. In the 1890s at least, it was owned by Edward Hurlbutt Smith *(q.v.*). In July 1929, after a stint as an antiques shop, the building was removed and the space made into a lawn on the Herbert Spencer Greims property. Venus reports that the store was reconstructed on Soundview Road by Thomas Scott, added to, and transformed into a two-family house. (A cobbler's shop behind the store became a small barn and then a storage shed.) Other store owners included Judge George G. Knapp and S.D. Keeler (*q.v*. each). For a while it was reportedly a shirt factory owned by D. Smith Sholes. In 2024, it continues to be a lawn. [JFS, P7/25/1929, DD287]

Cornerstone Court, a short, dead-end road off Great Pond Road at the Redding town line, serves six lots of a 17-acre, 1986 subdivision, "The Knolls," by Lance Constructions. It is next to the monument, or cornerstone, where the eastern border of the town line turns from northwesterly to northerly. A 1975 town perambulation (*q.v.*) by father and son perambulators Ted and Bruce Meier (*q.v.*) describes this marker, about 200 feet south of Great Pond Road: "This is not a granite monument [like others], but is a long stone set upright in

the rock wall. This is believed to be one of the monuments of the survey and perambulation of March 8, 1888." [RN]

Cortina Shop, established in 1965 by Mrs. Sereno Jennings [P5/14/2009], was a children's clothing store for many years at 449 Main Street, later moving to the east side of Main. It closed in 2011 after 56 years in business [P1/5/2012]. Pat and Hallie Hepburn, mother/daughter, had owned the business since 1971.

Cosgrave, Jessica Garretson Finch, (1871-1949), was a women's rights activist who established the Lennox School in New York and was founder and longtime president of Finch College in Manhattan, which was named for her. She was in the first graduating class at Barnard College in 1893. Her first husband was James Wells Finch. After a divorce, she married in 1913 John O'Hara Cosgrave (*q.v.*). They had a home on Tackora Trail (probably #71) in the 1930s and 40s. [WWW]

Cosgrave, John O'Hara, (1866-1947), a native of Australia, was an editor of *The New York World,* who had a home on Tackora Trail in the 1930s and 40s. (He was uncle of John O'Hara Cosgrave II, 1908-1968, a noted designer.) His wife was college founder Jessica Cosgrave (*q.v.*).

Cosgrove, Irene and Ed, were the authors of the 1975 book, *My Recipes Are for the Birds*, published by Doubleday. They lived on Rowland Lane from 1968 until 1995. [JFS]

Costa Azul, a short-lived tapas restaurant featuring Spanish wines, opened in 2007 at 23½ Catoonah Street, replacing Gringo Cafe. [NYT1/27/2008]

Costanzi, Leno James "Jim," (1927-2013), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1945, was an insurance agent who was active in Lions, was a founder of ROTA, helped establish Meals on Wheels, and was a skilled golfer who played in international tournaments. [WWW]

Cotler, Julia: *See under* Julie Cotler Pottinger.

Cott Liquor Store, which opened in February 1934, was the first establishment licensed to sell alcoholic beverages after Prohibition ended. It was located in the Ernest Scott block on Main Street in a store later occupied by Squash's (*q.v*.). Cott was the same company that later specialized in soda soft drinks, dropping its alcoholic associations. [P2/8/1934]

Cottage Street, a short road off Barry Avenue, serves a ca. 1946 subdivision by Harold O. Davis (*q.v.*). It was so called because modest-sized homes were built there. [RN]

Cotton Carnival, an event sponsored by Jesse Lee Methodist Church early in the 20th Century, allowed young men 15 minutes to sew carpet rags brought by young women. "The one who sewed the greatest number of pieces in the neatest manner was to be awarded a prize." Women wore cotton gowns, men wore cotton ties. [P2/6/1908].

Cotton Patch Designs, a sewing shop at Yankee Ridge Center, 16 Prospect Street, in 1981, offered many sewing courses [P3/19/1981]. It sold Bernina sewing machines [P6/11/1981].

Couch, Edward J., (1828-1907), a native of Redding, was a hatter and real estate investor who became famous as an expert bird taxidermist as well as a pomologist. His art as a taxidermist was the subject of 1999 and 2008 exhibits at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (*q.v.*). A Republican, he was a state representative in 1882 and lived in the Whipstick district. [WWW] DAR reports that at the 1865 Ridgefield Fair, "Mr. Couch's

collection of birds was an object of special interest, and the chief one," the fair being otherwise an "inferior" edition. His wife, Mary Hawley Couch (1836-1919), a descendant of the town's first minister, was a founder of the Village Improvement Society. [WWW, RSB23] Many of his papers are in the archives of the Ridgefield Historical Society. [WWW]

Couch, Nathan, (1835-92), was a carriage trimmer and Civil War veteran who served as a Republican state representative in 1886. [JFS]

Couch, Simon, (1830-93), was a farmer and a Democrat who served as a state representative in 1876 and was on a committee that recommended allowing women to vote for president and vice president, a measure defeated by the Legislature as a whole. He was the brother of State Rep. Edward J. Couch (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Couch, Thomas N., had the grist mill at Route 7 and Florida Hill Road, later the Moongate (*q.v.*) site, in 1831 [RLR14/124-41], and may have sold it in 1865 [RLR23/486] *See also* Couch's Station.

Couch's Station, says Rockwell, was a stop on the Danbury and Norwalk railroad line situated between Branchville and Topstone Stations. Thomas Couch was a partner in the 19th Century iron foundry (*q.v.*) nearby at the north corner of Florida Hill Road and Route 7. Maps in 1856 and 1867 make no note of a station; it may have been simply a loading platform or small freight stop, perhaps near where Old Redding Road goes under the tracks today. In that case, the station would have been in Redding. *See also* Iron foundry *and* Furnace Pond [RN]

Counterfeiters were acting in Ridgefield in the 1750s, led by David Sanford (*q.v.*) and abetted by Owen Sullivan (*q.v.*), according to Bedini, who wrote an essay on 18th Century Ridgefield criminals. [JFS]

Countess von Waldersee, Mary Esther, (1837-1914), nee Mary Esther Lee, was a daughter of Ridgefield native David Lee (*q.v.*). She married in 1864 Friedrich Emil August, prince of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, later called Prince von Noer, minister of war of the provisional Schleswig-Holstein government. At that time she was properly addressed as princess. After his death, she married in 1874 Count Alfred von Waldersee, a Prussian field marshal, and as Countess Mary Esther von Waldersee became a noted German philanthropist. [WWW]

Country Carpet Company opened a showroom for carpets and wall-coverings at 590 Danbury Road in January 1987. [P1/18/1987]

Country Club of Ridgefield, which opened in 1895, was one of the earliest golf courses in the U.S., and one of the first in Fairfield County. Covering 65 acres for 9 holes on Peaceable Street and Golf Lane, it was built by William Sunderland (*q.v.*) of Danbury (father of Philip Sunderland — *q.v.*). The layout was: Hole 1. 324 yards, 2. 196, 3. 267, 4. 178, 5. 208, 6. 282, 7. 310, 8. 245, and 9. 260. By 1901, *Harper's Official Golf Guide* reported the entrance fee — a share of stock — was $300 (about $11,400 in 2026 money); annual dues, $25 ($930). Early officers included George G. Haven Jr., George C. Shelton, M.D., and Albert H. Storer (*q.v. each*). The club closed around 1932 when the 18-hole Silver Spring Country Club (*q.v.*) opened; most of the land became an estate, later Ward Acres, now mostly subdivided. The clubhouse was moved to Grove Street by Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) to serve as his goat barn (*q.v.*); it later became part of the laboratory of New England Institute for Medical Research (*q.v.*) and was

destroyed by fire in 1984. [P12/27/1984, DD350,351]

Country Club Road, a narrow dead-end road off lower West Lane, once extended eastward through the present-day Silver Spring Country Club to Silver Spring Road. While the eastern section of this old farm road stopped being used by the early 1930's when the golf club was built, it was not until Sept. 7, 1957, that the Board of Selectmen voted formally to abandon town title to the section through the golf course. The portion still extant was formerly used primarily as a service road to workers' houses and outbuildings on the Swords, Grant, and Sullivan estates in this neighborhood. [RN]

Country Corners was a convenience store at the turn of the 21st Century at 622 Main Street, originally Joe's Store (*q.v.*).

Country Diner at 199 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) gives its address as Ridgefield, but it's actually entirely within the town of Redding. [JFS]

Country Road, a name common in Ridgefield land records in the first half of the 18th Century, referred to Wilton Road West and first appears in 1724. The term was frequently found in old Connecticut land records referring to a main road that led through the "country" from one village center to another – in this case, from Ridgefield village to Wilton center (then the center of a parish of Norwalk) or to Norwalk itself. (The Post Road — US Route 1 through coastal towns — was called "The Country Road" as early as 1681.) [RN]

Couri, John, (1941-), a native of Brooklyn, NY, and a Syracuse graduate, co-founded in 1983 Duty Free International and was president and CEO. The chain of airport stores grew to 187 outlets and employed 2,500 people by the time he sold it in 1997. Its headquarters were on Copps Hill Road. He and his wife, Elaine, who grew up in Ridgefield, moved here in 1974. They established the Couri Foundation to help underprivileged children. They have also been instrumental in creating Founders Hall (*q.v.*) [P2/1/2001]

Courtney, Lewis Minor Jr., (1871-1946), a native of Virginia, was an estate worker, salesman, and dairyman (for Conklin Dairy) who was known for his live performances of verse. He was profiled in DD314.

COVID-19: Gov. Ned Lamont announced on March 18, 2020, that the first Connecticut fatality from complications due to coronavirus had just occurred and was a man who had been in a Ridgefield assisted living facility. The global pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which was first identified in an outbreak in China in December 2019, was declared a global pandemic March 11, 2020. As of May 1, 2023**,** a total of 79 people from Ridgefield had died of the disease or complications from it. During the height of the epidemic, many businesses closed except for take-out service (such as restaurants, pharmacies and liquor stores). Masks were required in public places. HS has collected and archived much information on the covid pandemic. On May 3, 2023, a flowering tree (*Amelanchier* "Autumn Brilliance"), donated by Steve Zemo and planted in 2022 in the pocket park in front of the HS's Scott House, was officially dedicated in memory of those who died. *See also* Dan Spano, Halloween. [JFS]

Cows: *See* Livestock.

Cox, James H., bought the "grain mill" at Lake Mamanasco in 1855. [RLR21/2].

Cox, Dr. John Watson, (1855-1928), a native of Mississippi and a wealthy chemical manufacturer, owned the Stonecrest estate on North Street. He was a leader in the Democratic party and once had presidential candidate

William Jennings Bryan as a guest at Stonecrest when Bryan spoke here. He was married to Marian Cox (*q.v*.).

Cox, Marian, (1882-1972), born Mabel Marian Metcalfe, was the author of several books of fiction and non-fiction including *Crowds and the Veiled Woman* (1910) and her autobiography, *The Sphinx Wore an Orchid* (1967). At age 16 she married much-older Dr. John Watson Cox (*q.v*.) and they summered for many years at Stonecrest, sometimes called Stonecrest Domain, on North Street. She sold it in 1934, but in 1940, returned to town, acquiring the former home of artist George J. Stengel (*q.v*.) at 57 Main Street. In 1943, she married Captain James Fox Logan, a Naval officer, but retained the name Marian Cox for her writing. Her papers are in the Yale University Library. [WWW, P1/23/1941]

Cox, Robert, (1947-2024), an English teacher at RHS from 1973 until 2003, also served as chair of the English Department. He was active in founding A Better Chance (*q.v*.), mentored the RHS literary magazine, *Lodestar*, and advised the High School Bowl team. After his retirement he taught part-time here and at Fairfield University and served as a member of the Board of Education from 2003 until 2007. In 1990, he was honored as an outstanding educator by the National Organization of Women, and in 2015 by the Ridgefield Old Timers. He lived in Ridgefield. [JFS]

Coyle, John F., (1923-1997, was an East Ridge Junior High School teacher who was also a real estate developer and agent in town in the 1960s (*see* Barrack Hills). He lived in New Canaan. [JFS]

Cradle Rock first appears in 1744 deed for 52 acres "lying at ye Cradle Rock." Another grant spoke of 64 acres "lying at ye Cradle Rock, back of Round Pond." In 1790, town officials settled a boundary dispute "at Cradle Rock so called" near the northeast corner of Round Pond. Thus, the rock was somewhere around Sleepy Hollow, Walnut Hill or Round Lake Roads. Presumably, the rock was either shaped like a cradle or teetered like a cradle — probably the latter. [RN]

Crafts, James Mason, (1839-1917), a distinguished scientist and fourth president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is often said to have lived in — and died at — his home in Ridgefield. In fact, he lived and died just across the state line in South Salem, NY. "Professor Crafts donated some valuable laboratory equipment to Ridgefield High School," his obituary said. [P6/26/1917]

Craig, Helen Kiernan, (1899-1975), bought what became Craig's Fine Jewelry (*q.v*) in 1950. She was married to Ross Craig (1891-1950). [DD94]

Craig, Norman, (1927-2011), a native of Bronxville, NY, who came here in 1946, was a Ridgefield jeweler, longtime volunteer fireman, public servant, and land developer. He served on the Board of Finance and during his years here, was a member of both the Republican and Democratic parties, serving on the town committees of each. His Craig's Jewelry Store on Main Street was acquired by his mother in 1950 from Francis D. Martin (*q.v*.). He received the Chamber of Commerce Public Service Award in 1986 and the Kiwanis Citizen of the Year Award in 1990. He was married to Elsie Fossi, who had worked in the store for his mother in the early 1950s. *See* Grand View Drive, Sound View Acres. [WWW, DD94, P2/3/2011]

Craig, William "Billy," son of Norman and Elsie Craig, took over Craig's Fine Jewelry (*q,v*,) in 2004. He had been active in the Chamber of Commerce

and other community organizations, and was a founder of Downtown Ridgefield. [JFS]

Craigmoor was the 88-acre gentleman's farm of Dr. and Mrs. Fred P. Solley (*see* Solley family). When the farm was acquired in 1909, the Solleys asked the family nanny, Christina Graham, a native of Scotland, to suggest a name. After surveying the property, she said in her Scots brogue, "Why, there's nothing but craigs and moors out here." *See also* Craigmoor Road. [RN]

Craigmoor Pond was a body of water at the corner of North Salem and Craigmoor Roads, now mostly a swamp. When the Solley family (*see* Craigmoor Road) sold their property here in 1955, they stipulated that "within two years from the date hereof and as part of the consideration of sale, the grantors agree to construct a dam and reflood the pond formerly known as Perch Pond and to be called Craigmoor Pond." The newly flooded pond was to be used for boating and fishing. It had earlier been called Forge Pond (*q.v.*). [RN]

Craigmoor Road, once part of former Solley family (*q.v.*) farm of 88 acres on North Salem Road, was a path to Lake Mamanasco at the west end of the farm. It became a town road in 1960; the Planning and Zoning Commission named the lakeside wings of the road "Craigmoor Road North" and "Craigmoor Road South." "Craigmoors" or "Craig-Moors" was a subdivision plan for 56, 40-by-130-foot lots on the east side of the lake along this road, filed in 1952 by Margaret Durant, Robert F. Solley, and Frederick W. Solley, children of Dr. and Mrs. Fred Solley; only a few of these tiny lots were developed. *See also* Craigmoor. [RN]

Craig's Fine Jewelry at 394 Main Street, one of the oldest family-owned businesses at the turn of the 21st Century, began in 1950 when Helen Craig purchased Francis D. Martin's (*q.v.*) jewelry store, and was subsequently owned by her son and daughter-in-law, Norman and Elsie Fossi Craig (*q.v.*), then by her grandchildren, Karen, Lori and William Craig, and since 2004, by grandson, William Craig (*q.v.*). Granddaughters Karen and Lori Craig had also worked many years at the store, which closed April 1, 2024. [DD94]

Cramp, Ralph E., (1900-1951)**,** a native of Brooklyn, was a town attorney and probate judge who came to Ridgefield in 1936 and lived at 21 Main Street. He served on the school board, and was active in the Boys Club, Rotary, American Legion, and was a Ridgefield Savings Bank director. [RSB29]

Cranberry Lane is part of the 1956 subdivision by Elizabeth H. Simmons of an old farm she and her pilot husband, Warren, owned at South Olmstead Lane and St. Johns Road. The subdivision included 14 lots and a private road, Orchard Lane. The road was accepted by the town in 1959. It was named for a cranberry bog that existed in nearby Silver Spring Swamp as late as the early 20th Century. [RN]

Cranberry Meadow, among the town's earliest place names, was usually spelled "Cramberry." First mentioned in 1709, it was in Great Swamp, west of Danbury Road and opposite the Fox Hill condominiums, now town-owned property where the Ridgefield Recreation Center is. Much of the centuries-old bogs were filled in long ago. The term lasted until 1820s. [RN]

Crane, Thaddeus, (1862-1928), a native of Somers, N.Y., was an insurance and real estate agent whose business later became A.J. Carnall (*q.v.*) insurance. His office was in the Telephone Building (just north of Planet Pizza in 2026). He lived off South Olmstead Lane and was a founder of the Promoter's

Club (*q.v.*). He died spectacularly in 1928 in Wilton when a train engine hit his car at a crossing and flipped it into the air. The car bounced off the engine and exploded. [WWW]

Crank, the, was a rectangular section of Ridgebury broken off to Danbury in 1736, after Danburians argued to the colonial legislature that all of this Ridgefield land was owned by Danbury residents. It extended along nearly all of George Washington Highway from the Danbury line almost to Ridgebury Road, and north almost to Shadow Lake Road and southward about a quarter mile from George Washington Highway, and is shown on Moses Warren's map (*q.v.*) in 1812. By the early 1800s, about 30 property owners in The Crank petitioned to be reunited with Ridgefield; legislature approved 1820. The term, Crank, mentioned in an 1788 deed, probably reflected jog in the town line — OED "crook, bend, winding, meandering; a winding or crooked path, course or channel." [RN]

Creagh, Agnes, (1914-2007), (pronounced *cray*), a Ridgefield native, graduated from Barnard College in 1935 and did graduate studies in geology at Northwestern University. She joined the Geological Society of American as an editorial assistant in 1936, wrote articles and books on geology, and rose to become executive director from 1962 to 1964. She then joined the College Entrance Examination Board, retiring in 1973. She spent her last years in Ridgefield and was a sister of Mary Creagh (*q.v.).* [P10/25/2007]

Creagh, Mary, (1908-2006), a Ridgefield native and longtime elementary school teacher, began teaching in 1927, and taught in Ridgefield from 1933 until 1969. She was a member of the last class, 1925, to graduate from Hamilton High School. *See also* Agnes Creagh. [JFS, DD308]

Creagh, William, (1871-1941), was an early superintendent of the Homewood (*q.v.*) estate and then was superintendent at Outpost Farm (*q.v.*). He was the father of Agnes and Mary (*q.v. each*). [DD308]

Creamer, Charles E., (1939-2021, was chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals for 42 years, retiring in 2014 at the age of 75, but he continued to serve as a member of the board, which he joined in 1971. He had been a chemist and mathematician for Union Carbide 31 years and held many patents on chemical compounds. [NR]

Creamer, Robert J. "Rob," RHS 1982, is a lawyer and CPA in Ridgefield. He passed the Connecticut Bar in 1993 and opened his law and accounting practice at 412 Main Street; it today includes about 10 lawyers and CPAs. In 2012 he received the Spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Ridgefield Community Service Award for his work helping others; he is "the person you can turn to when you've run out of people to turn to, a person you can turn to not just as professional, but as a friend," said Mark Robinson in presenting the award. He is son of Charles Creamer (*q.v.*) [JFS, P1/19/2012]

Creamer Building, formerly called the Barhite or Denton building (*q.v. each*) at 412-414 Main Street, houses on the second floor the practice of Robert J. Creamer (*q.v*.) as well as two first-floor retail outlets. [JFS]

Creamery: *See* Ridgefield Creamery.

Creamery Lane, existing since the 18th Century between the northern ends of Wilton Roads East and West, was the original northern end of Wilton Road East or the western end of Whipstick Road (today's segment of Wilton Road East from Creamery to Main was created around 1850, says Rockwell). The road is named for the Ridgefield Creamery (*q.v.*), whose

structure still exists along it. The selectmen in 1911 referred to it as "the Old Creamery Highway." [RN]

Creative Jewelers had a store in Copps Hill Plaza in 1987, as well as an outlet in Danbury. Its motto was "a gem of a store." [JFS]

Crehan, Diane, has been an artist and a well-known storyteller in Connecticut. She wrote the 2002 book, *Stories to Tell and How to Tell Them*, aimed particularly at Christian teachers, and lived for many years at 181 Main Street with her husband, Attorney Patrick Crehan (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Crehan, Patrick J., is a former longtime Ridgefield attorney. He and his wife, Diane (*q.v.*), came to Ridgefield in the late 1960s, lived at 181 Main Street most of that time, and retired to Woodbury in 2020. [JFS]

Crescent Drive, a private road at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), is so called because of crescent-shaped route as it extends from Mountain Road to Cross Hill Road. [RN]

Crest Road at the Ridgefield Lakes, accepted as a town road in October 1980, traverses the crest of a hill, just west of Bennett's Farm Road, to which it connects at its north and south ends. [RN]

Cricket Cage, The, was a gift shop in 1970s and 1980s at 418 Main Street (1980), later at 17 Bailey Avenue Ron Kubilius was president in 1983.[JFS]

Cripple Bush Wood is mentioned in deeds in 1840 and 1844 as being in Ridgebury, probably in the hills east of Pine Mountain Road. OED says an old American meaning of cripple was "a dense thicket or low-lying ground." DARE says in our region, "cripple" was a word for a creek, from the Dutch, *kreuple*; "cripple land" was wetland, and "cripplebush" was swamp. [RN]

Criterion, The, the student newspaper at RHSl during the 1970s, replaced *The Chieftain* and was itself replaced by *The Voice* in 1980. [JFS]

Crock 'n' Bowl was a gift shop at 21 Governor Street, between Woolworth's and the First National, in the 1960s and early 70s. [JFS]

Crocker, Anna Seymour Smith: *See under* William Crocker.

Crocker, Margaret Mary O'Shea, (1929-2009), has one of the most unusual gravestones in Ridgefield. The modest, flat, footstone-style monument gives her name, dates of birth and death, and describes her as "beloved mother & grandmother." Across the bottom is engraved the quotation "póg mo thóin," which is Gaelic for "kiss my arse." She lived in Redding for many years with her husband John, and worked for a real estate firm. [JFS]

Crocker, William, (bapt. 1790-1835), a native of New Haven and a son of a minister, was a harness-maker. Several generations of his and his wife's descendants — both women and men — were noted actors in the U.S. and Great Britain. With his second wife, **Anna Seymour Smith** (1792–1866), he had five children including **Elizabeth** and **Sarah Crocker,** both of whom became stars of the NY and London stage. Sarah was the mother of **Marianne "Minnie" Conway,** an actress in America and Great Britain. She had sons **Frederick Conway Tearle** and **Sir Godfrey Seymour Tearle;** both became stage and movie stars in Great Britain. William Crocker was a state representative in 1825, and the first president of the Ridgefield Union Society (*q.v.*), a sort of private police force founded in 1818. [WWW]

Crofut, Robert "Bob," a Ridgefield native and RHS 1970, is an artist and illustrator of 18th, 19th and early 20th Century American life. His work has appeared in *National Geographic, Time, Smithsonian, Reader's Digest, Yankee, American Heritage,* and other publications. [NR]

CROP was an annual walk of around a dozen miles to fight hunger, sponsored by the Ridgefield Clergy Association (*q.v.*) and the Ecumenical Youth Council, mostly in the 1980s. Based on a national program started in 1947, CROP stands for Christian Rural Overseas Program. [P10/20/1983]

Crosby, Enoch, (1750-1835), was a Revolutionary War spy and supposed inspiration for James Fenimore Cooper's novel, *The Spy*. Liljegren said Crosby owned land on Shadow Lake Road, and may have lived there briefly. Crosby served with the Fifth Connecticut Regiment, whose members were recruited mostly from Danbury and Ridgefield. During the war from 1776 onward, he spied on Tories between White Plains and Fishkill, leading to the capture of many people who were organizing to join the British. After the war he and his brother, Benjamin, had a farm in adjacent Southeast, NY, where he lived most of his life. [JFS]

Crosby, Frances J. "Fanny," (1820-1915), a native of Brewster, NY, was a prolific hymn-writer and poet, who produced some 8,000 hymns. She spent her early teenage years, about 1829-1835, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Elijah Hawley (*q.v.*) on Main Street. Here Ridgefielder Sylvester Main (*q.v.*) became a childhood friend who would later publish her hymns at the firm of Biglow and Main. Sylvester's son, Hubert, wrote music for many of her hymns. As a lobbyist for the blind in her early years, she became the first woman ever to speak on the floor of the U.S. Senate. [WWW]

Crosby Court, a short dead-end road running northerly off Old Trolley Road, is part of the 1997 Stone Ridge (*q.v.*) subdivision, created by the town of Ridgefield. It serves five of the 60 lots there. The name, recommended by JFS, recalls Enoch Crosby (*q.v.*), a Revolutionary War spy. [RN]

Cross Highway, a name first mentioned 1772, was a term for Topstone Road and probably Cain's Hill Road as well, and was in use until fairly recent times. The road "crossed" into the next town, Redding. [RN]

Cross Hill Road, a private road at Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), extends from Bennett's Farm Road to Mountain Road, crossing a hill. [RN]

Cross Pond, now called Lake Kitchawan (*q.v.*), is on the Lewisboro-Pound Ridge line in NY State, which, before the Oblong (*q.v.*) transfer, was on western border of Ridgefield, and is mentioned in Ridgefield deeds. [RN]

Cross Street was an early 20th Century name for Wooster Street, from North Salem Road to North Street. [RN]

Crouchley, Benjamin F., (ca.1855-1919), a railroad ticket agent and Adams Express agent, was elected first selectman from 1908 to 1910, unusual for a Democrat at the time. He was second selectman, 1911-15, and a member of the East Ridge School building committee. Born in NYC, he is buried in Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, but founded an important 20th Century Ridgefield family. *See* Charles Deems Crouchley, Sr. [NR]

Crouchley, Charles D. Jr. (1908-1994), was a teacher and assistant principal at RHS. He was a son of Charles Deems Crouchley Sr. (*q.v.*).

Crouchley, Charles Deems Sr., (1879-1961), son of Benjamin (*q.v.*), was a plumber and plumbing supply store owner whose shop was on Bailey Avenue, just beyond the Bedient Building. [DD62] He also had a store on Main Street selling both plumbing and auto supplies, and had a gas pump (where Squash's used to be). He was a president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank, a fire department chief, and a selectman in the early 1930s. [NR]

Crouchley, Ralph Bishop, (1904-1981), a Ridgefield native and son of Charles

Deems Crouchley (*q.v*.), led the Ridgefield Boys Club from 1942 to 1969. He had spent several years working in Mexico for a U.S. corn products company, then joined his father's plumbing and paint store before taking over the club, leading it out of financial difficulties. [NR, WWW]

Crow Hill was a mid-19th Century name for the rise along Ridgebury Road, just north of Ned's Mountain Road. [RN]

Cugene, Nicholas, (1912-1992), was an electrician who had an appliance store on Main Street for 30 years (next to Squash's —*q.v.*). [P2/18/1993]

Culbertson, Ely, (1891-1955), an anarchist, revolutionary, politician, author, and peace advocate, was mostly a contract bridge expert and promoter. He owned the Upagenstit (*q.v*.) estate in 1930s and wrote books on bridge, but also on world order, including *Total Peace* (1943), predicting a United Nations. He once ran for Congress. [WWW, DD147, DD148]

Culbertson, Sascha, (1893-1944), was a noted concert violinist, who owned a Stradivarius and lived at the former Upagenstit estate (*q.v.*) with his brother Ely (*q.v.*) during the 1930s. [DD147]

Cullerton, Brenda, an advertising copywriter and stand-up comic who grew up in Ridgefield, is author of the Ridgefield-oriented book, *The Nearly Departed* (*q.v.*) and three other books. [JFS]

Cultural District, **Ridgefield**, was proposed by the town's Economic Development Commission in 2019 and Ridgefield was officially designated by the State of Connecticut in 2021 as its first Cultural District. The district promotes the town's various arts and historical organizations and facilities, with the aim of drawing visitors to the community. It is locally supported by Friends of Ridgefield (*q.v*.), allowing it to apply for grants and more efficiently fundraise for the district's support. [ITH5/10/2024] In 2025, the state had 12 other towns meeting requirements for cultural districts: Bristol. Fairfield, Farmington, Manchester, New London, New Milford, Norwalk, Stonington, Torrington, Vernon, and Wethersfield. [CT.GOV]

Cumming, James (1866-1955), and **Margaret Hendry "Ma" Cumming** (1870-1949): He served on the school board and, during WW1, as town director of farm resources. His wife, **Ma Cumming**, was active in theRed Cross and was first president of the American Legion Auxiliary. Their son, **William** (*q.v.*) was the first to die in the war. [DD138]

Cumming, William James, (1895-1918), was the first Ridgefielder to enlist in World War I. The ambulance driver was also the first to die, succumbing to what was probably influenza in France. He is buried in the American Cemetery, Romagne sur Montfacon, Meuse, France, but has a cenotaph at Fairlawn Cemetery. (His name often incorrectly spelled Cummings.) [NR]

Curtiss & Crandon was a **r**eal estate agency at 17 Danbury Road in the 1980s, part of a 12-office regional group. [P9/10/1981]

Cushman, Dr. William Floyd, (1839-1904), a prominent NYC physician and treasurer of the NY Academy of Medicine, established a summer home at 88 Main Street in the 1880s and retired here full-time. He is buried in Maple Shade Cemetery. [JFS]

Cushman Lane was one of several names used for part or all of today's Rockwell Road. Dr. and Mrs. William F. Cushman (*q.v.*) lived on north corner with Main Street, starting in 1890. He died in 1904 and she in the 1930s. *See also* Lover's Lane *and* DePeyster Street.

Cutten, Ruloff E., (1896-1961), was a wealthy stockbroker and member of the

New York brokerage firm of E.F. Hutton & Company. He and his wife, **Ruth "Sunny" Lowry Cattier Cutton,** whom he divorced, owned Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) in the 1940s. [NYT6/21/1961, DD282]

CVS, the drug store chain, announced in 1983 it would take over the spot long occupied by the A&P supermarket at 46 Danbury Road. In 2001, it moved to the old Grand Union supermarket off Main Street. In 2014, CVS opened a second store at the former Ancona's Market, 720 Branchville Road. CVS is an abbreviation of the retailer's original name, Consumer Value Store, founded in Lowell, Mass., in 1963. *See also* Ridgefield Pharmacy. [JFS]

Cycle Circus, a bicycle shop at the new Copps Hill Plaza, opened Dec. 2, 1972, operated by Randy Ward as one of a small chain of 12 stores in CT and NY.

Cyphax was an enslaved man of the Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll who, at the age of 20, was freed by his owner on Nov. 24, 1772. Three days before, the selectman had interviewed him and decided he was fit to be freed [Rockwell, p. 55]. He subsequently moved to Norwalk. [UNM]

Czyr, Anthony J. (1940-2003), who built dozens of houses in town over a 40-year career, could quote Shakespeare with the ease of a college professor and was also a jazz guitarist. He donated his services to many community groups, and helped rebuild the RHS headquarters on Sunset Lane. He operated under names of Czyr Construction Company, Red Oak Corporation, and A.J. Czyr Inc. He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [JFS]

Czyr Construction Company was a home building company in late 20th Century, started by brothers Anthony (*q.v.*) and Edward Czyr; Edward soon left. *See* Colonial Green, Belvedere Court. [JFS]

D

D'Addario, Dominic A. "Dom," (1925-2012), a Branchville native and RHS 1943, was a navigator in WW2 and continued in the US Air Force postwar, retiring as lieutenant colonel. He became an engineer for Barden in Danbury and a kitchen designer for Rucon. In Ridgefield, he was a founder of the Independent Party and attended countless government agency meetings, usually with his wife, **Mary**. He served on the town Ethics Committee, and was active with the Laszig Fund (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Dairies in Ridgefield included Conklin's (*see* Irving B. Conklin), Dic-Ree (*q.v.*), Stonehill (*q.v.*), Walnut Grove (*q.v.*), the Nehemiah Lyman Keeler (*q.v.*) farm, and small operations by Elmer Leeson and Irving Keeler [DD16]. Onatru Farm Dairy, which specialized in goat's milk, advertised itself as from Ridgefield, but was actually on Elmwood Road in Lewisboro, NY. [JFS]

Dairytown operated a short-lived, deli-style store around 1980 at 37 Danbury Road, open daily 10-9, specializing in fried chicken [P7/17/1980]. *See also* Wayside Market, Genoa Deli.

Daley, Robert, (1930-), a former deputy New York City police commissioner, wrote more than 30 books, including best-selling novels and non-fiction works with police themes; *Prince of the City* and *Night Falls on Manhattan* were among six of his novels made into movies and TV series. He lived on Nod Road from 1984 to 1989. [WWW]

Dana's Restaurant opened May 31, 1983, at the site of the former Green Doors Motel (*q.v.*) on Route 7 just south of Route 35, operated by Dana Riggs (*q.v.*) who later owned the Red Lion. [P7/14/1983]

Danbury and Harlem Traction Company was formed around 1900 to run a trolley ("traction") service from Danbury to the Harlem Valley railroad line at Goldens Bridge, N.Y., aimed at cutting 15 minutes off a trip from Danbury to NYC. A bed was built and tracks were laid into Ridgebury along what is now Old Trolley Road (*q.v.*), passing through Ridgebury center. The bed continued nearly to Goldens Bridge, but tracks were never laid west of Ridgebury. A trolley from Danbury and Bethel to Ridgebury made test runs around 1901 but no regular service was ever established, and the company eventually went bankrupt. [RN]

Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road, the first company to provide "mass transportation" to Ridgefield, opened a 23-mile line from Norwalk to Danbury in 1852. Less than a mile of track passes through southeast corner of town, with a station at Branchville (*q.v*), originally called Ridgefield Station or Beers Station (*q.v. each*). Service was later provided by the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, the New Haven Railroad, Penn Central, and, since 1983, Metro North. Freight service on the line ended in 1964. The tracks and station are now owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The four-mile branch line from Branchville to Ridgefield village began passenger and freight service in 1870. A fatal wreck occurred on April 20, 1905, when the engine of the 8:20 a.m. train from Ridgefield to Branchville jumped the track, overturned and scalded engineer William Horan to death. (RP's headline: "Horan's Tragic End.") On Aug. 8, 1925, the last passenger train from Branchville arrived at Ridgefield

station — rebuilt and slightly relocated, it is now a Ridgefield Supply Company (*q.v.*) showroom. Buses then ran for some years between the Branchville station and the village. The last branch line freight train ran on Feb. 8, 1964. *See also* Branchville, railroads, George Weir. [RPJ, RPC, JFS]

Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike was a toll road first mentioned in Ridgefield land records, in 1835, and was also called Norwalk and Danbury Turnpike. Its company was established in 1795. The road generally followed the path of modern Route 7 from Norwalk to north of Branchville, then followed Simpaug Turnpike through Redding, Route 53 to Bethel. *See also* Norwalk and Danbury Turnpike. [RN]

Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike was a toll road from intersection of Haviland and Limestone Roads following today's Route 35, then north on today's Route 7 through Sugar Hollow where it met Sugar Hollow Turnpike (*q.v.*) near the southern end of Danbury Airport. It eliminated need to use the steep, old route over Moses Mountain from Starrs Plain to Wooster Heights. The company building and operating it was established by a legislative act in 1801; work was underway by 1803, but Rockwell says Sturges Selleck completed the road in 1812. Joseph M. and Ebenezer B. White were original incorporators. Liljegren placed the site of a toll station just north of the Ridgefield-Danbury line, on the west side of Route 7, just south of Bennett's Farm Road — a site destroyed by the Route 7 widening in 2005. The turnpike's name was still appearing in 1832, but the business soon failed and the route of the road turned over to the two towns it served. Ridgefield and Danbury did not charge tolls. [RN]

Danbury Corners was the intersection of Main Street and Danbury Road, or Routes 35 and 116, also often called Joe's Corner (*q.v.*). [RN]

Danbury Hill is a early 20th Century term for the area along Danbury Road from the end of Main Street north to the flats just before Farmingville Road. [RN]

Danbury Old Cart Path, probably the earliest named road in Ridgefield, was mentioned in the first purchase from the Indians in 1708, when it described land in the Branchville area. It may have followed nearly same path as the present Portland Avenue, West Branchville Road, Branchville Road, Florida Road, a little bit of Route 7, and then over Simpaug Turnpike into Redding and up to Danbury. [RN]

Danbury Path: *See* Danbury Road.

Danbury Road, a term that first appears in a 1718 deed, is today is Route 35 (*q.v.*) from Main Street to Route 7, then north on 7 to the Danbury line. . In 18th Century, Danbury Road's route was from the north end of Main Street on its present path to today's Fox Hill Village, where it followed the main road through the condominium development and returned to the present highway. At the intersection of Limestone and Haviland Roads, it turned eastward over Haviland Road, across Route 7 (non-existent in the 18th Century), and over Great Pond Road and Pickett's Ridge Road into Redding. There the route turned north over Starr's Plain Road into Danbury, passed east of Lake Waubeeka, and over Moses Mountain to Wooster Heights. Parts in Danbury were called the Post Road (*q.v.*). Today's section from Haviland/Limestone Roads to the Danbury line was the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (*q.v.*), opened just after 1800. A very old alternate Danbury Road, sometimes called Danbury Path, ran northeastward from the center of Fox Hill condominiums, connecting with Limekiln Road, which

led up to Haviland. Portions of Danbury Road were straightened in 1920s, leaving small pieces such as Old Danbury Road off Haviland Road, and Fox Hill Drive at the condominiums. [RN]

Danbury Savings & Loan Association opened a Ridgefield branch Oct. 14, 1972, at 2 Prospect Street in the Yankee Ridgefield Shopping Center (*q.v.*). The bank got a government bail-out in the S&L crisis of the late 1980s, and was taken over by Eagle Federal, which soon closed the branch here. [JFS]

Danbury town line was first surveyed by the county April 30, 1716. Perambulations (*q.v.*) subsequently checked and fine-tuned the placement of the border, which has changed in Ridgebury over the years because of agreements between the two towns (*see under* Crank *and* Ridgebury). [JFS]

Dance: Dancing, dances and balls were popular entertainment especially in the late 19th and much of the 20th Century. The town hall was often the site of balls, sponsored by various organizations, including the local chauffeurs. Outdoor dancing was offered at carnivals. Country dancing was popular at the Odd Fellows Hall (*q.v*.) for many years. Barn dances were also held from time to time. C. Margaret Starr Jessup recalled participating, as a girl in the 1910s, in "aesthetic dancing classes" taught by a Mrs Oye on the lawn of Mrs. John Ames Mitchell's Windover estate (*q.v.*). The girls — most of them daughters of high-society summer residents — wore bloomers also learned English country dances. [RPJ] The Firemen's Ball (*q.v*.) was a longtime fundraiser for the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department. Francis and Doris Martin had popular but invitation-only ballroom dances at Odd Fellows Hall and at Peach Lake. [DD352] Several schools of dance have operated here; among the most popular was taught by Joan MacDonald (*q.v*.) and her daughter, Carrie Pin, from the 1970s through the early 2000s, mostly through the Parks and Recreation Department. Patricia Schuster (*q.v.*) founded a ballet school that has grown and expanded into the Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance at 440 Main Street, which teaches many styles of dance. [JFS, DD117]

Dancers (professional) who've lived in Ridgefield include Paul Draper, James Fayette, Dorothy Hyatt, Marthe Krueger, Joan Elizabeth Seyfried MacDonald, Patricia Schuster, Pat Stanley, and Stella Tompkins (*q.v. each*).

Danelagh was the Great Dane kennel of Nancy-Carroll Draper (*q.v.*) on Old Stagecoach Road.

Dann, Dr. Jordan Robert, (1926-2022), a native of Pelham, NY, was a beloved veterinarian in Ridgefield for 65 years, starting in August 1958 when he opened the town's first veterinary hospital on Route 7. A graduate of Harvard, who earned his D.V.M. degree at Colorado University, he was a WW2 Army second lieutenant. His wife, Judith Leserer Dann, was active in the community. [OR7/13/2022]

DARE, or Drug Abuse Resistance Education, is taught in middle school by Ridgefield police officers, funded by the town budget process, residents' donations, and by members of the Police Benevolent Association. Begun in 1990 by the police, the program teaches about 1,000 students a year.[RW]

Darlington, John F. "Jack," (1935-1988), was a Union Carbide executive who was a popular leader in youth programs, such as Little League, Townies, Babe Ruth and Boy Scouts, for 20 years. He and his family moved to Ridgefield in 1967 and lived on Fillmore Lane. [P2/27/1988]

Da Silva, Susie, was named Ridgefield's 19th school superintendent in January

2020. She had been assistant superintendent in Darien since 2015 and before that principal at Kings Highway Elementary School in Westport from 2010 to 2015. She began her career as a language teacher. [P1/2/2020]

DATAHR: *See* Ability Beyond

Daubenspeck, Anita, (1938-2021), an Ohio native, was director of the Ridgefield Library from 1975 to 2000 who led growth from fewer than 40,000 books and other media housed in an 8,000-square-foot building to more than 100,000 items in a 26,000-square-foot building. She also introduced automation technology to library operations. She was named Outstanding Librarian of the Year 1996 by the Connecticut Library Association. She was the wife of David Daubenspeck (*q.v.*). [NR, KFH]

Daubenspeck, David, (1933-2021), a native of Pennsylvania, was a Ridgefield historian whose specialty was the houses of Main Street, High Ridge and East Ridge. His detailed research is available at the Ridgefield Library and Ridgefield Historical Society. Husband of Anita Daubenspeck (*q.v.*), he was a longtime IBM marketing employee. He came to Ridgefield in 1973, living at Twin Ridge and on Main Street, moved to Newtown in 2002 and back to Ridgefield in 2020. He compiled a Daubenspeck family genealogy. [JFS]

Dauchy, Jacob Jr., (1799-1883), a farmer, was a state representative in 1858. He was the son of State Rep. Jacob LeGrand Dauchy (1768-1857). [JFS]

Dauchy, Jacob LeGrand, (1768-1857) was a state representative in 1808. He was the father of Jacob Dauchy Jr., also a state representative. [JFS]

Dauchy, Jacob LeGrand, (1828-1914), was a hatter who lived on northern Main Street and served four years during the Civil War. He was a Republican state representative in 1881 and was a son of State Rep. Jacob Dauchy Jr. A longtime director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank (*q.v.*), he was also its first depositor — he was issued passbook #1 on Aug. 6, 1871. [RSB24]

Dauchy, John, was a loyalist at the time of the Revolution, "advertised, in 1776, by the Committee of that town, as inimical to the liberties of America." [TAL] After the war he tried to seek compensation for his loss of property in the Battle of Ridgefield, even though he had been a loyalist. [CDA index v. 3 of Ct archives for Rev. War. VIII:390]

Dauchy, Keeler, (1801-1887), was a merchant who had a store at what is now 381 Main Street where he also established Ridgefield's first lumberyard. Later the store was moved to a house at the south corner of Main and Catoonah Streets. (In the early 1920s the building was disassembled and rebuilt on Ivy Hill Road near the rail trail.) Dauchy and his brother were also one-time owners of what is now the Scott House (*q.v.*), headquarters of the Ridgefield Historical Society. He served as a state representative in 1840 and was a brother of State Rep. Walter Dauchy (*q.v.*). He was active in St. Stephen's Church. His home was just north of St. Stephen's Church building and after he died, the church bought it and turned it into a parsonage. In 1914, the house was moved to 23 Catoonah Street where today it holds shops and offices. [JFS, Haight, RIR]

Dauchy, Nathan, (1747-1824), called Capt. Dauchy, was a state representative in 1799, 1805, 1809, 1810, 1812, 1815. (It is unclear whether he or his son, described below, filled some of those terms.) He sold his half interest in the Mamanasco Mill in 1805. He joined the Episcopal Church in 1795 after being a Congregationalist, and lived just north of St. Stephen's. A plaque on the south wall of the church interior honors him. [JFS, RLR9/100].

Dauchy, Nathan Jr. (1773-1860), son of Nathan Dauchy, was a Main Street merchant and was state representative in 1803 and 1804. He died in the Troy, NY, area, to which he had moved. [JFS]

Dauchy, Samuel, (1769-1800), a state representative in 1797 and 1798, was a selectman in 1796 and 1797. His gravestone at Titicus Cemetery calls him "Samuel Dauchy Esq.," and several sources refer to him as "Dr. Samuel Dauchy." He was married to Mary Molly Bradley, daughter of Col. Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Dauchy, Samuel S., (1838-1894), a Ridgefield native, operated a large coal business in town after working for his father, Keeler Dauchy (*q.v*.). He served several terms as Ridgefield postmaster. [P12/14/1894]

Dauchy, Vivus, (1707-1795), a native of France, came to the colonies in 1735 among the many French Huguenots (*q.v.*) fleeing persecution. He moved to Ridgefield soon after and became a leader in the community, including the local militia. His descendants were prominent businessmen for nearly two centuries. He was among Ridgefield's enslavers, buying Peter, a "negro boy," from David Scott along with "the woman Dinah" Feb. 13, 1740, for £200. [UNM, Rockwell, p. 54]

Dauchy, Vivus, (1738-17??), son of the above Vivus Dauchy, is said in a family history to have died in the French and Indian Wars. [JFS]

Dauchy, Walter, (1793-1857), was a businessman who was a corporal in the War of 1812. He served as a state representative in 1832 and was a brother of State Rep. Keeler Dauchy (*q.v.*).

Daudt, Charles H., (1912-2002), a native of Missouri, was an aviation pioneer. After graduating from Purdue and Harvard Business, he became an aviation professor at the U. of Indiana, then joined American Airlines in 1940. During World War II, as a captain in the Air Transport Command, he pioneered many North Atlantic routes, as well as others around the world to aid the war effort. He flew transports "over the Hump" from India to China. Later as an American Airlines captain, he tested the 707, Boeing's first jetliner, and worked on its instrument panel design. He also designed and developed flight attitude systems for commercial aircraft. He and his wife, Marie, lived from 1960 to 1974 at Windover (*q.v.*) on West Lane. [P12/24/2002]

Dauer, Rosamond Mueller, (1934-2014), an *Encyclopedia Americana* editor at Grolier, was the author of six children's books, including the Bullfrog series (among them *Bullfrog Grows Up*, *Bullfrog Builds A House*), *The 300 Pound Cat*, and *Mrs. Piggery Snout*. Her poetry was widely published. She lived at 90 Olmstead Lane in the 1970s and early 1980s. [WWW]

Davidoff, Paul: *See under* Suburban Action Institute.

Davidson, Louise "Lulu," (1887-1976), an artist and writer, lived at 93 Olmstead Lane with her stepsister, Lillian Gilkes (*q.v*.). After spending the 1930s writing and painting in Paris, she operated a book shop here during WW2 and then an antiques shop. [WWW]

Davie, Malcolm, (1918-2006), a musician and native of Canada, was well-known locally in the late 20th Century as a bagpiper. He had four university degrees and over the years worked for a family ice cream business, taught math, was a minister, and was a counselor at several institutions. [WWW]

Davies, George, a florist, had a Danbury Road greenhouse in 1913 [P2/6/1913]

Davies, Margaret "Linda," (1909-2000), a Ridgefield native, taught elementary and junior high school for 42 years in Ridgefield, from 1930 when, at age

20, she started at Branchville Schoolhouse until 1972 when she retired at East Ridge Junior High. She was active in Grange, the library, Keeler Tavern, and other organizations, and held many graduate degrees. [WWW]

Davies, Rev. Dr. Susan, (1942-), a native of Detroit, was Ridgefield's first woman clergyperson, serving as a minister at the First Congregational Church, from her ordination in 1973 until 1976. She had joined the staff as religious education leader in 1971; she was divorced and known as Susan Barton then. In 1974, she married Yale theology professor James G. Clague and became Susan Clague-Davies. She moved to a pastorate in Maine in 1976 and in 1983, as Rev. Dr. Susan Davies, joined staff of Bangor Theological Seminary, where she as a professor and a dean; she retired 2011. In the early 2020s, she was living in Vizea, outside Bangor. [JFS]

Davis, Albert, (-1864), was one of four brothers who served in the Civil War and the only one to die — of dysentery in a Washington, D.C., hospital. He is buried in the Davis Cemetery off lower Silver Spring Road. [JFS]

Davis, Harold O., (1905-1986), the town's last elected chief assessor, served from 1952 to 1975. After him, assessors were appointed by the selectmen. Davis was a small-scale developer in town — *see* Cottage Street. [JFS]

Davis, Hiram, (1844-1947), was Ridgefield's last living veteran of the Civil War. A native of Wilton, he and three brothers served in the war. He was a stonemason and a GOP state representative from 1909 to 1911, a borough warden, and a volunteer fireman. He retired to Florida. [NR, WWW]

Davis, Rev. James W., (1844-1927), born on the Ridgefield-Wilton line, enlisted from Ridgefield in the Union Army at age 16, saw extensive service, was wounded at least once, and later became a minister and commander of the Connecticut Grand Army of the Republic (*q.v.*). A brother of Hiram Davis (*q.v.*), he spoke at the War Memorial (*q.v.*) dedication in 1925. [JFS]

Davis, John H., (1929-2012), son of John E. and Maude Bouvier Davis (*q.v.*), spent summers here with his parents at their 48 East Ridge Road home. He wrote books on the Kennedys and on the Maffia. His grandfather, John E. Davis Sr., rented a mansion at 32 High Ridge in 1930s. [WWW, DD153]

Davis, Maude Bouvier, (1905-1999), aunt of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis, lived at Tower Cottage (*q.v.*), 48 East Ridge from 1930s until 1966 when she moved to Butterfly (*q.v.*), at 34 New Street. She was a founder of Silver Spring Country Club, a president of Ridgefield Garden Club, and mother of author John H. Davis (*q.v.*). A young Jackie Bouvier would visit her aunt here. [WWW, DD153]

Davis Cemetery, off the east side of Silver Spring Road near the Wilton line, contained 21 gravestones in 1934; many fewer stand today. This is a family cemetery for the Scott, Davis, and Hoyt families. The earliest stone was 1832; latest, 1909. This cemetery, which may be seen on a hill beyond the driveway of 6 Silver Spring Road, is landlocked by private property. [JFS]

Davis Lane, now just a short dead-end road, once extended farther west from Nod Road, then turned 90 degrees north and ran halfway between Nod Road and Wilton Road East up to Whipstick Road. It was named for Clinton Davis, a dairy farmer who lived on the corner of Nod Road and Davis Lane from at least 1912 until the 1930's. [RN]

Dawes, Thomas Webster, (1943-2007), a musician and composer, was a founding member of The Cyrkle, a rock band in mid-1960s famed for its hit, "Red Rubber Ball." He became TV commercial jingle writer, best known for

Alka-Seltzer's "plop plop, fizz fizz, oh what a relief it is." With his wife, **Virginia Redington** (*q.v.*), he wrote an off-Broadway musical, "Talk of the Town," which opened in 2004. They also produced books on antique jewelry, he as photographer. They owned Brook Farm (*q.v.*) from 1982 until 2005 when they moved to Weston. [WWW]

Dawn Lane, a dead-end road off Haviland Road, was named for Dawn Lounsbury, daughter of Everett Lounsbury, the developer. The town accepted it in 1969. [RN]

Day, Katharine E., (ca.1883-1957), who lived on West Lane, was a retired New York public school principal, who became a member of the Ridgefield Board of Education. She was also active in St. Stephen's Church, the Ridgefield Garden Club, Women's Republican Club, and was a director of the Ridgefield Library. [BP5/20/1957, DD290]

Days Inn by Wyndham, a motel at 296 Ethan Allen Highway, describes itself as in Ridgefield, but is entirely within the town of Redding. In 2026, it also housed a Mexican restaurant, Acapulco. For many years it was the Ridgefield Motor Inn (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Deakin, David, who grew up in Danbury, was postmaster of Ridgefield from 1991 to 1993, and then postmaster in Southbury. He retired and became a town official in Bethlehem.

Dean, Charles "Chuck," (1930-2008), active in youth sports in the 1960s and 70s, was the first manager of the Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation's (*q.v.*) Ridgefield Skating Center. He co-coached the first RHS varsity hockey team. He was president of the Little League and co-founded the Pop Warner Candlewood Valley Football League. [P1/31/2008]

Dean, Morton, (1935-), born Morton Dean Dubitsky, spent over 40 years in radio and television journalism, mostly for CBS and ABC. He earned an Emmy and other awards, wrote two books, and was an anchor for CBS Evening News and ABC's Good Morning America. He also performed occasionally as a clown for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. He had a home in a former mill at 31 Saw Mill Hill Road from 1983 until 2017 [NR]

Death, first: Uzziell Hyatt, son of Thomas and Experience Hyatt, died Feb. 14, 1712, is said to be the first death recorded in Ridgefield. [Rockwell]

deBearn, Prince Gaston, and **Princess Frances Georgette Moss deBearn,** lived on Branchville Road from 1961 until the late 1960s. Their son was Count Gaston de Bearn-Viana, who grew up in Ridgefield, became a lawyer who interned with Robert F. Kennedy, worked for Hoffman La Roche for many years, and became a prominent Washington, D.C., lobbyist. [JFS]

DeBenigno, Pasquale, (1871-1964), a native of Italy, operated Branchville General Store (*q.v.*) from 1907 until the 1940s? He was the husband of Caterina. His name sometimes appears DiBenigno.

deBernard, Catherine "Teddy," (1908-1975), graduated from Army Air Forces Flying School in 1943 and became a Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP), ferrying military aircraft "to relieve men flyers for combat and other duties." A native of Paris, daughter of a World War I French aviator, she began flying in 1938, purchasing her own plane. Her first name is variously spelled; her last name is sometimes deBarnard or DeBernard. She was said to be a junior champion fencer. She lived at 145 Main Street (ONS34) with Mrs. Thorneycroft Ryle. No other local information on her has been found. [JFS]

Deborah Ann's Sweet Shoppe was founded in 2002 at 381 Main Street and

moved to 409 Main Street (the old Methodist rectory) in 2022. The candy and ice cream store is owned by Deborah Ann Backes with her husband Michael Grissmer. [P11/24/2022] The store is the subject of Jessica Auerbach's (*q.v.*) 2005 memoir, *Writing in Chocolate*. [JFS]

December, Joseph, (1925-1974), was a pharmacist and manager of Bissell's Pharmacy who in the 1960s bought Smith's Pharmacy, changing the name to December Drugs (*q.v. each*). He and his wife Shirley, office manager, lived at 27 Ritch Drive. [DD100]

December Drugs, a pharmacy at 454 Main Street, was owned by Joseph December Jr. (*q.v.*). It had earlier been Smith's Pharmacy (*q.v.*).

Decoration Day, celebrated in Ridgefield from after the Civil War until World War I when it became Memorial Day (*q.v.*), honored those who died in the Civil War and included decorating their graves, and speeches, usually in or at the Town Hall. [JFS]

Deeks, Noel Hiram, (1903-1980), a New Jersey native, was an acclaimed printer of the photographic works of Edward Steichen, working in the photographer's New York and Redding labs. He made the silver and dye-transfer prints of many of Steichen's greatest photographs. A 32-year resident of Ridgefield, he came here in 1938 and lived on Wilridge Road in Branchville. He was active in Boy Scouting and the Branchville Civic Association, and had served on the Board of Education. [JFS, P1/31/1980]

Deer: White-tailed Deer have lived in Ridgefield for centuries, but since the arrival of the first settlers, their populations had steadily declined. Hunting, the conversion of thousands of acres of forest into fields, and the increase in the numbers of roaming dogs made deer sightings uncommon by the mid-20th Century. However, by the turn of the 21st Century, overpopulation of deer had been brought about by a rapid increase in deer-attractive suburban landscapes, the conversion of fields and pastures into woodlands, and strong restrictions on hunting. The burgeoning population resulted in hundreds of auto accidents a year (529 car-deer reported crashes between 1999 and 2004 in Ridgefield), considerable damage to wild and garden plants, and a sharp increase in cases of Lyme disease. The selectmen created the Ridgefield Deer Committee in 2004 to determine the extent of overpopulation and if and how the town should deal with the problem. In June 2005, the committee voted 17-1 to approve many recommendations, including seasonal controlled hunting on town-owned property. The first controlled hunt was in 2005. A year later, the hunt was expanded to more town-owned open spaces, and in 2008, still more. (Several large state-owned tracts, such as Great Swamp, were already open to hunting.) While the hunts continue, involving both bows and guns, and the population has decreased, there is no shortage of deer in 2026. *See also* Deer Management Implementation Committee [JFS]

Deer Hill was mentioned in a 1744 deed. The location is unclear, but it was probably in the Limestone or northern Farmingville districts. [RN]

Deer Hill Drive, a dead-end road off Cedar Lane, was laid out in 1955 and accepted by the town in 1959. Developer Earl DeWitt Etheridge, a Pan-American Airlines captain, named the subdivision Mill River Hollow after the stream feeding a pond then existing at the west end of the 15-lot development. *See* Stamford Mill River. [RN]

Deer Management Implementation Committee, also known as the Deer

Committee, manages a plan to control the deer population. Since 2005, it has overseen an annual deer hunt. *See also* Deer. [RW]

Deer Pit, The, appears in three deeds in 1721 and 1722. The location is unknown but is probably within territory lost in the Oblong (*q.v.*) exchange, perhaps in the Southwest Ridges (*q.v.*), now north of Vista. A deer pit was a hole in the ground covered with sticks and brush, designed to trap deer – *see* The Wolf Pits. This Deer Pit was probably dug by the American Indians, who used deer meat for food, hide for clothing, and bones for tools. [RN]

Deer Track Hill Road: A 1958 town highway map uses this name for an old, abandoned road from the east side of Route 7, about 500 feet south of the New Road intersection, northeasterly to Fire Hill Road. Part of the east end of Riverside Drive (*q.v.*) apparently was built atop this path. The path may have been a deer track, but more likely, people, seeing an overgrown old road through the woods, imagined it as created by deer. [RN]

Defense Headquarters was a term for the American Women's Voluntary Services building on Catoonah Street when it was used as a headquarters for all local planning and coordination of home-front efforts in World War II, according to a decision by the Ridgefield Defense Council in December 1941, just after the declaration of war. [P12/11/1941]

DeForest, Elihu, (1742-1806), was part of Ethan Allen's forces attacking Fort Ticonderoga in May 1775, and became a captain in the Continental Army as late as 1780. He is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW]

DeForest, Joseph, of Danbury bought a third ownership of the Mamanasco mill in 1790 and sold it five years later. [[RLR7/118, RLR8/124]

DeForest, Uriah, (1755-1840), served in the Continental Army in 1776, was a blacksmith and farmer, and is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW]

Deiches, Walter Harold Goldstein, (1894-1964), a native of Michigan, was a well-known fashion consultant in NYC and an executive with Bonwit Teller Inc., a Fifth Avenue women's specialty shop in the mid-20th Century. He had also worked for Franklin Simon, Saks, G. Fox, and Bamberger's. He and his wife, Nancy Westheim, bought the former Lewis/Scripps farm at 100 South Salem Road in 1942. They had also lived at the corner of Nod and Branchville Roads. [DD102, NYT3/31/1964]

Deiss, Joseph Jay, (1912-99), wrote novels and non-fiction from 1950 to 1995. His first book, *A Washington Story* (1950), was written when he lived on New Street in the 1940s and early 1950s. He had a career in public relations before turning to writing. Later he lived in Italy where he was knighted for his writings about archaeological subjects. His last years were spent on Cape Cod and in Florida where he taught at U. of Fla. [WWW]

DeJa Vu, a consignment shop at 23 Catoonah Street (old St. Stephen's rectory); was operated in the 1990s, early 2000s by Nancy Ambler. [JFS]

de Jonge, Peter, (1954-), a Stamford native and Princeton graduate, was a reporter for *The Ridgefield Press* and its sister newspapers in the 1970s who later worked for Associated Press and *The New York Times*. He has written three thriller novels with James Patterson, as well as three non-fiction books about golf and golfers with Patterson. He has also written two police detective procedurals, set in Manhattan. [JFS]

de Lescinskis, Lenard Samuel, (1922-), native of Latvia, founded in 1978 Chez Lenard (*q.v.*), an upscale hot dog stand on Main Street. He and father were involved in the cosmetics industry, and he produced several perfumes

under name of Leonid de Lescinskis in 1940s, 50s, 60s. [JFS]

Delta was a Ridgefield rock band in mid-1970s and early 1980s. Performers included Bob Gagnon, Billy Foote, and Sean Finch.

Delli-Bovi, Ralph J., (1921-1999), a commercial artist, owned the Homewood estate in the last half of the 20th Century. He and his wife, Margery (*see* Margery Benjamin) were active in school and other programs. [JFS, DD307]

DeLuca, Elvina Franceschini, (1922-2012), ran Ridgefield's school lunch program for 25 years in the days when school meals were "home cooked." She was director of the School System Lunch Program from 1960 to 1985 and wife of **Sylvester Deluca**, operator of Deluca's Footwear (*q.v.*). [JFS]

DeLuca's Footwear, a shoe store, was established in 1956 at 388 Main Street by Sylvester DeLuca, (1917-1994), who had once operated a bowling alley behind this spot. He retired in 1975 and son James took over. The store moved to Prospect Street in 1989 and closed in the early 1990s. *See also* O and K Shoe Store. [RSD58, DD96]

deMaCarty, Adolf Cormac (1897-1962), a native of Durham, and **Jane Grant deMaCarty** (1908-1980), lived at Brook Farm (*q.v.*) in the 1950s. He was an insurance broker and veteran of WW1 and WW2. She was a great granddaughter of President U. S. Grant. She grew up in North Salem and wrote historical works. [JFS]

Dembitzer, Louis, (1900-84), a diamond broker, was a native of Belgium who fought in both World Wars. He and wife, Mauricette, who lived at 124 Mountain Road, adopted five survivors of concentration camps as their children. For an interview, see P7/9/1981. [JFS]

Dempsey, Lillian Loomis Wickes, (1867-1946), a native of Macon, Ga., became in 1899 the 32-year-old widow of 85-year-old Thomas Charles Dempsey, a wealthy merchant in Macon who also lived in NYC. In 1901 Mrs. Loomis built Northoline (*q.v.*), the 22-room mansion at 209 West Lane that was later Fairhaven (*q.v.*), the home of Geraldine Farrar (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Denton, Samuel Scribner "S.S.," (1865-1945), a native of South Salem, NY, was a Ridgefield business leader who by 1945, was one of the town's largest property owners. He had offices in former Barhite Building (*q.v.*), which he renamed the Denton Building. He sold coal, fuel oil, farm machinery, insurance, lumber, and had auto repair service. A Republican, he was a state representative, 1913-15. He was also a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. [WWW, RPJ5/11, DD39, DD116, RSB28]

Denton Block or Building, housing stores and offices at 412-414 Main Street, was named for its owner Samuel Denton (*q.v.*), who had a store and offices there. *See also* Barhite Building, Creamer Building.

DePeyster Street was another name for today's Rockwell Road, so-called for the Misses Augusta, Elizabeth and Cornelia DePeyster who in 1895 bought the former Perry homestead on Main Street at the south side of Rockwell Road. The name appears on a 1900 map. [RN]

DePaiva, James, (1957-), portrayed Max Holden on the ABC-TV Daytime soap opera *One Life to Live* from 1987 to 1990 and from 1991 to 2003. He later directed soap operas. In 1994-95, he and his ex-wife Misty Rowe (*q.v.*) owned the Twixthills mansion *(q.v.*).

Depot Hill, the hill traversed by Prospect Street between Main Street and the area of Bailey Avenue, is so called because Ridgefield Station (*q.v.*) was at the bottom (opposite Bailey). *See also* Station Hill, Library Hill. [DD37]

Depot Hill Street: Prospect Street (*q.v.*) was so-called on a 1941 New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad map of the Ridgefield station area. *See* Depot Hill.

Depot Road, a little lane built in the 1920s, leads from Route 7, opposite Route 102, Branchville Road, across the Norwalk River to the north end of Branchville railroad station or "depot." This was actually once the eastern end of Branchville Road; road was barricaded in October 2019 because the bridge was in bad condition and no one wanted to pay to rebuild it. It was still closed in June 2024, although there were reports that the bridge was about to be repaired.[RN]

Depression, Great, a major economic recession that began with the stock market crash of October 1929 and lasted through the 1930s, affected many Ridgefielders, rich and poor. By May 1932, the Lions and Garden Clubs were providing free land on which unemployed Ridgefielders could raise food. In the summer of 1933, many businesses adopted Roosevelt's NRA program to improve employment and set a minimum wage. Some of the grand estates shut down while others cut back on staffing. In December 1933, when the town began handing out applications for jobs under the federal Civil Works Administration, 170 unemployed Ridgefield men showed up at town hall. However, some wealthy residents, like B.O. Chisolm (*q.v.*), helped to counteract unemployment; Chisolm created work with such projects as building a new barn (for which he had no need), just to keep workers employed. For some it was financial ruin. On Oct. 15, 1934, Frank L. Hilton, a retired New York banker, stood on the sidewalk in front of the First National Bank on Main Street at 6:45 p.m. and shot himself in the head. "Simply one of the thousands who thought they could not carry on any farther," he said in a note. "Cause of death: suicide. Reason: Financial worry." First Selectman Winthrop Rockwell proposed in March 1935 seeking $100,000 in projects for the federal Public Works Administration grants that town was eligible for, including a $50,000 auditorium for the East Ridge School (it's now the Ridgefield Playhouse). The Depression also caused labor disputes. In February 1935, the laborers union petitioned the selectmen to raise the wage of municipal workers from 40 cents an hour to the 50 cents that federal relief workers were getting locally. In April 1935 the local painters' union went on a four-day strike, and won a wage of $7 for eight hours of work; the painters had been getting $6 for seven hours. A Torrington company, rebuilding a half dozen town roads in the spring of 1936, had trouble finding laborers willing to work for 45 cents an hour after someone told the workers the union scale was 62 cents. In March 1936 tight times forced the schools to drop the lunch program; the District Nursing Association (*q.v.*) decided to step in and provide at least milk, but had to stop by May because the schools had no way to refrigerate the drink. Responding to the fact that many people could no longer afford magazines or daily newspapers, *The Ridgefield Press* in May 1936 expanded from eight to 16 pages a week, adding many national features plus comic strips. [JFS]

Derby to Peekskill railroad, proposed in 1868 to run from Derby CT to Peekskill NY where it would cross the Hudson River on a proposed new bridge, would have passed through northern Ridgefield. The railroad's aim was to supply coal and iron from Pennsylvania to factories in the lower

Naugatuck Valley on the Housatonic River. The railroad and its bridge never materialized, but today's Bear Mountain Bridge was the automobile-carrying replacement for the bridge. [New Haven Journal & Courier, 1/171872, JFS].

de Reyna, Diane Detzer (1930-1992), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1948, was a science fiction novelist and short story writer of the 1950s and 60s who wrote nine novels under names of Jorge de Reyna, Adam Lukens, and Diane Detzer. She lived on Olcott Way at the time of death. Her father was Capt. August Detzer (*q.v.*).

Desire Under the Elms, the 1924 play by Eugene O'Neill (*q.v.*), is said to have been inspired by the playwright's time spent here. "It was not Brook Farm that inspired his play," says Bedini. "The inspiration came from his view of the smaller white colonial style house across the North Salem Road, owned by Louis G. Smith. From his front door O'Neill could see the Smith house framed behind the heavy drooping branches of two majestically tall elms on either side of it, which grew beside the road. The trees were cut down some years later to enable the road to be widened." [P10/5/1983] *See also* Indian Rock Farm

Desires by Mikolay: *See* Mikolay Jewelers.

Detzer, August J., (1896-1976), was a U.S. Navy captain who served in World Wars I, II and Korea, and owned radio stations WINE and WGHF-FM in Brookfield. His wife, Dorothy Allee (1909-96), was a daughter of Laura Curie Allee Shields and Dr. James VanAllen Shields (*q.v. each*) and was a longtime resident of town. [JFS]

Detzer, Diane: *See* Diane Detzer de Reyna.

DeVantery, Louis, (1885-1965)**:** *See* Central Garage. [P12/9/1965, DD350]

Devil's Run Road in the early to mid 20th Century was informal name for the dirt road that runs from Bennett's Farm Road at Fox Hill north to the Bennett's Ponds. Today the main roadway into the Bennett's Pond State Park, the road was part of Col. Louis D. Conley's massive estate, Outpost Farm, begun around 1914, and served as the main route to the pond or ponds. The name reflects the roughness of the rocky road, which even today tends to suffer washouts in heavy rains. [RN]

Deyo, Rev. John M., (1885-1966), pastor of the First Congregational Church from 1916 to 1918, led the Home Guard (*q.v.*) here. At the church, he encouraged "the growth of new fellowship groups for young men and women. Deyo gave the young men's group a fraternity name, Gamma Kappa Mu, and the motto 'Honor and Manliness.' It was the era in which many American pastors and social workers promoted Christian work with men and boys based on an ideal of 'muscular Christianity.'" He became longtime pastor of the Congregational Church in Danbury. [JFS, WGT]

D.F. Bedient Company: *See under* Bedient's Hardware.

Diamond, Katie, is a singer, actor, writer, and producer who has written, produced, and performed in numerous musical theater and cabaret shows, including on Broadway, over the past 20 years. She moved to Ridgefield in 2014 with her husband Bill Diamond and their three children, and is executive director of ACT of Connecticut (*q.v*.). *See also* Diamond Properties Performing Arts Center. [JFS]

Diamond Properties Performing Arts Center at 36 Old Quarry Road at the former Schlumberger-Doll Research Center (*q.v.*), houses a theater that is in

2024 headquarters of ACT of Connecticut (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Diane was a gift and flower shop at 17½ Danbury Road in the 1980s, owned by Diane Schwartz. [CD1983, P11/6/1980]

Diary of Jared Nash: *See* Jared Nash *and* Charles S. Nash.

Dick, Edwina Eustis (1908-1997), a Juilliard graduate, was a contralto who sang leading roles with opera companies in New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, and other cities, and was a soloist with the New York Philharmonic and other leading orchestras, singing under Stokowski, Toscanini, Reiner, Iturbi, and Metropoulos. She did many recordings. During WW2 she performed more than 1,000 times during a 2½-year USO tour that took her to all five Atlantic and three Pacific theatres. She married attorney Alexander C. Dick and lived from the 1950s through the 1980s on Old Branchville Road, her father's country home, and died in Southbury. She is buried in Branchville Cemetery. *See also* Eustis Lane. [WWW, P6/25/1987]

Dick, Jack R., (1928-1974), was a Brooklyn, NY., teenager who ran away from home in 1944 and was discovered working on the Ridgebury farm of William C. Browning. He became a millionaire many times over, amassed a world-class art collection, acquired a Greenwich mansion later owned by the Helmsleys, and was arrested for grand larceny and forgery. [WWW, WR]

Dickinson, Graham: *See* Graham Dickinson SPIRIT Skate Park

Dickson, Stewart: *See* Stewart Dickson & Co.

Dick's Dispatch was a series of 366 columns in *The Ridgefield Press* between March 13, 1982, and Nov. 16, 1989, written by Richard E. Venus (*q.v.*) and describing life in Ridgefield in the first half of the 20th Century, especially the 1920s and 30s. [JFS]

Dic-Rie Dairy was a dairy products delivery service operated by Dick (Richard E.) and Marie Venus in the 1950s until about 1961 from their 80 Olmstead Lane home. They did not have a dairy farm, but bought products from local farmers. *See also* Richard E. Venus.

Died in the Line of Duty: 73 Ridgefielders or those closely involved in Ridgefield have died while serving their country in the Army, Navy, Marines, Merchant Marines, or Coast Guard (no Air Force deaths are known). The Civil War was by far the costliest conflict in terms of Ridgefield lives, with 29 deaths identified. It was followed by World War II, 20 deaths; the American Revolution, 9; World War I, 5; Vietnam, 4; French & Indian, 2; and Korea, 1. (Of the 29 Civil War deaths, at least 18 were certainly or probably due to illness — although causes of death were not always reported in records. Those who died were (*q.v. each*): Charles Acocella (WW2), William Avent (C), Ernest Bahring (C), Lindgren Bancroft (WW2), Samuel B. Baxter (C), William Patterson Bell (WW2), James Birarelli (WW2), Robert Nichols Blume (WW2), Daniel B. Bradley (C), Nathan B. "Nate" Bruckenthal (I), Charles H. Burt (C), Thomas Edward Carnegie (V), Lawrence Carney (C), Charles Cogswell Jr. (WW2), William James Cumming (WW1), Vivus Dauchy (F), Albert N. Davis (C), Robert E. Dunlop (WW1), Ezra Lee Edmond (C), Ernest Farrell (WW2), Gaius St. John Foote (C), Samuel D. Freeman III (V), Armando Frulla (WW2), John G. Fry (C), Selah Gage (C), Elisha (Elijah) Gilbert (R), George Gilbert (C), Sylvester Godfrey (C), Frederic A. Grumman (C), John Raymond Gully (WW2), William Henry Hall (WW2), Albert Halstead (C), Jared Hine (R), John Williams Hoyt (C), William H. Jemmison (C), Charles E. Jennings (C), Frederick John (C), Henry Keeler (C), William H.

Keeler (V), Peter Kellis (R), Walter Ernest Kotelman (WW2), William Lee III (R), Jacob Nash (R), John Evald Nelson (WW2), Abijah Northrop (R), Edward Wayland Noyes (WW1), Jered Olmsted (R), John T. Orrico (V), Jeremiah Osborn (R), Thomas Payne (C), Edwin D. Pickett (C), Geno Polverari (WW2), James Ressegiue (F), Walter Rose (WW2), Carlo Scaglia (WW1), Meinhard Scherf (WW2), Harold W. Scott (WW2), John A. Scott (C), Howard Sears (WW2), Everett Ray Seymour (WW1), Francis Edgar Seymour (C), John S. Smalley (C), Nehemiah Smith (R), Frederick L. Sturges (C), Paul Ullman (WW2), Lee Vance (K), George O. Vetter Jr. (WW2), John Ward (C), Thomas A. Ward (WW2), Rufus Warren (C), Harvey J. Webster (WW2), William A. Weed (C), and Joseph S. Whitlock (C). [F=French & Indian War; R=Revolution; C=Civil; WW1=World War 1; WW2=World War 2; K=Korea; V=Vietnam, I=Iraq.] [JFS]

Dielman, Ernest Benham, (1894-1972), who lived lived here as a boy, was a painter, etcher, and sculptor. He worked in NYC and in Santa Barbara CA. *See also* Frederick Dielman. [JFS]

Dielman, Frederick, (1847-1935), a native of Germany, was an esteemed American artist, especially known for his murals, both painted and mosaic; mosaic panels in Library of Congress, entitled “Law” and “History,” are often cited as his best-known works. He was president of the National Academy of Design, 1899-1909, and taught at Art Students League and Cooper Union. He moved around 1910 to a home off Rockwell Road called “The Boulders,” One of his children was painter and sculptor Ernest Benham Dielman (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Diffrient, Nils, (1928-2013), a native of Mississippi, was a noted American designer of furniture. He focused mainly on ergonomic seating, and his best-known designs are the Freedom and Liberty chairs, manufactured by Humanscale. He was married to Helena Hernmarck (*q.v.*). He is interred in Mapleshade Cemetery. [JFS]

Dikeman: *See* Dykeman.

Dillman Court runs off Chestnut Hill Road, serving a 50-acre, 1984 subdivision by the Portland Corporation. The Planning and Zoning Commission selected the name in November 1984 to recognize Michael Dillman of Redding, a civil engineer who was involved in the design of many subdivisions in Ridgefield, and who had died earlier that year. [RN]

Dillon Associates, which Developed Dillon Estates (*q.v.*), was headed by John W. Ryan, its president, who had worked for I.M Pei and others in developing corporate headquarters, hospitals and laboratories. [JFS]

Dillon Estates, 17 lots developed by Dillon Associates (*q.v.*) on 61 acres, had been part of Daniel and Louise McKeon’s Arigideen Farm (*q.v.*) and in 1781 the location of a French encampment of troops under Count Rochambeau (*q.v.*). The subdivision is served by Berthier Place (*q.v.*). Groundbreaking took place August 1987 [P8/27/1987]

DiLisio, Louis Sr. (1931-2020) and **Lucy Johnson DiLisio** (1932-2024)**,** husband and wife, founded in 1973 Casa DiLisio Products in their home. The company makes acclaimed pesto sauces and other Italian-style food products. They lived in Ridgefield from 1963 unto 2020. [JKFH]

Dimitri's Diner, a Greek-style diner, was established by Dimitrios Paschalidis (*q.v.*) in 1995, at 16 Prospect Street.

Dimorat, John, (1734-1807), lived in Ridgefield as a child, a son of Michael

(*q.v.*). He served in the French and Indian War from both New York and Connecticut, and in the Revolution. He died in Boston's Alms House. His surname is spelled many ways in various records. [RLR 1/221, UNM]

Dimorat, Michael, who was possibly formerly enslaved, was the first free African American known to own land in Ridgefield. He bought a lot on West Lane in 1736 and apparently built a house on it, selling it three years later. He had four children, Elizabeth, John (*q.v.*), Mary, and Ziporah Dimorat. He probably came from Norwalk, the town just to the south of Ridgefield, and returned there after the sale. His place of birth and death are unknown, and his wife was not named in the records. [UNM, RLR1/221, 1/224]

Dimoret, Samuel, was the name taken by 1775 by Ishmael (*q.v.*), the Ridgefield-born man who escaped from his enslavers at least four times. He may have been living in Norwalk by 1810. [WWW, UNM]

DiMuzio, Patricia Burgoyne, (1936-2021), was a professional nurse and an amateur actress who was a founder in 1965 of the Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts (*q.v.*). She was married to Samuel DiMuzio, who was a school board member in the 1970s. They retired to Florida. [JFS]

DiNapoli, Nicholas R. Sr., (1906-1984), was a residential builder whose projects included Walnut Grove (*q.v.*), parts of Old Sib Road, and the Ridgefield Arms (*q.v.*) apartments. He headed DiNapoli Development Company. His son, Nicholas Jr., opened 30 additional units at Ridgefield Arms in 1983. [P5/10/1984, P4/14/1983]

Diniz, Al, (pronounced *dee-nez*), a native of Portugal who came to the U.S. in 1948, has been called the father of soccer in Ridgefield. In 1975 he co-founded the Soccer Club of Ridgefield (SCOR) where he coached and achieved many state championships. He also coached RHS boys soccer from 1973 to 2003, accumulating a 343-140-40 record, four state title appearances, two state titles, and five county championships. He was CT Junior Soccer Coach of the Year in 1981 and 1986, CT High School Coach of the Year in 1998, National Coach of the Year in 2003, and was inducted into the CT Soccer Hall of Fame in 2005. In 1981, Diniz Field (*q.v.*) was dedicated in his honor. [NR]

Diniz Field, a soccer field built in 1981 next to the skating rink off Prospect Ridge Road, is named for Al Diniz (*q.v.*). [RN]

Diocese of Bridgeport, which covers Ridgefield, was created in 1953. Before that, Ridgefield was in the Archdiocese of Hartford. St. Mary and St. Elizabeth Seton (*q.v. each*) are among 82 parishes in the diocese, which, in 2026, is led by Bishop Frank Caggiano, appointed in 2012. *See also* Holzberg Report. [JFS]

Dioguardi, Joseph Leo, (1890-1973), a native of Italy, was a farmer who became an early developer in Branchville. His projects included Wilridge, Mallory Hill and Old Town Roads. He began subdividing in 1914, selling mostly quarter-acre lots to people of modest means for $10 down and equally modest monthly payments. He served on school building committees in the 1960s. [JFS]

Diplomats: U.S. diplomats who've lived in Ridgefield include: William Harrison Bradley, U.S. consul to Canada; William Dodd Brewer, ambassador to Sudan and to Mauritius; George Pratt Ingersoll, ambassador to Siam; Clare Boothe Luce, ambassador to Italy and, briefly, Brazil; George L. Rockwell, U.S. consul in Quebec City; Roger Culver Tredwell, consul in Russia and many other

countries; John Gilbert Winant, ambassador to Great Britain (*q.v.* each).

Discovery Center, The, founded in 1985, staged scores of programs each year to help increase awareness of the natural and historical world around Ridgefield. It had no physical facility or headquarters. It appears to have shut down operations in 2019. [JFS]

Dissenting Society in Ridgebury was an 18th Century term for the new Ridgebury parish of the Anglican church, so called because the Congregational church was the official, colony-sanctioned church in Connecticut and congregations ("societies") of other beliefs, such as Anglicans and Baptists, were called dissenting societies. *See* Ridgebury Episcopal Church *and* John Whitlock. [RLR4/222]

District Nursing Association was founded in Oct 15, 1914, at the home of Mrs. Ebenezer W. Keeler, its first president, who served 10 years. Its motto was "assistance with both sympathy and justice." Originally located on second floor of Amatuzzi Building on Main Street, the DNA hired Helen Enright (*q.v*.) as its first nurse. Offices for 20 years were at 13 Catoonah Street, staffed by Irene Hoyt (*q.v*.), but moved in June 1980 to 304 Main Street and then to East Ridge. One of the organization's biggest supporters was Jack Boyd Ward (*q.v*.). The DNA became the Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association, then as it became more regional, just RVNA Health (*q.v*.), and built new headquarters at 27 Governor Street, opened in 2016. [JFS]

Divide by Two, a 1940 novel by Mildred Gilman Wohlforth (*q.v.*) published by Mercury, is set in Ridgefield**,** featuring a child of "modern" divorced parents who tries with unusual results to arrange his life to his liking. [WWW]

Dixon, Courtlandt Palmer, (1853-1921), was a NYC businessman. He and his wife, Louise Polhemus Dixon, built, starting in 1911, a 27-room mansion later known as Mamanasco Lake Lodge, Manresa and now St. Ignatius Retreat House (*q.v. each*). His grandfather and uncle had been U.S. senators from Rhode Island. He was a member of St. Stephen's vestry, president of the Ridgefield Library, member of the Board of Finance, and vice president of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield. [P10/12/1911, P10/25/1921]

Dlhy Court is the road leading from Ridgebury Road into the town-owned golf course, originally the Dlhy Ridge Golf Course (*q.v.*), but now more often called the Ridgefield Golf Course. *See also* Dlhy Ridge. [RN]

Dlhy Ridge is a name concocted by town officials in the early 1970's for the new municipal golf course, opened in 1974. It is the only place name in town that has no vowels, but because it is nonetheless tricky to spell and even pronounce, "Ridgefield Golf Course" has tended to replace Dlhy Ridge. The name recalls Joseph and Suzanna Dlhy (pronounced *dill*-ee) whose farm now forms a large portion of the course (land was also purchased from the Leighton family). Joseph came to the U.S. from Czechoslovakia in 1910 and five years later, when he married Suzanna Boron, moved to Ridgefield. He died in 1965. Suzanna, who sold the land for the course in the late 1960's, died in 1976. [RN]

Dlhy Ridge Golf Course is an 18-hole, 6,444-yard, par-71 municipal course on 140 acres approved by town meeting in December 1971. The course, designed by George and Tom Fazio, opened in 1974 and was making a profit in operations yearly by 1980 [P8/28/1980]. By 1989, 2,000 residents were registered as users. The fee in 1980 was $4.50 a round for residents,

and $6.50 weekends, with non-residents paying $2.50 more. The facility is also called the Ridgefield Golf Course. *See also* Dlhy Ridge. [JFS]

Dodd, Martha: *See* Martha Dodd Stern.

Dog and Pony was a short-lived restaurant at 378 Main Street in the 2010s, a resurrection of the Bissell House (*q.v*.).

Dog, Cat and Poultry Show was an annual benefit, established 1901, for Ridgefield Village Improvement Society (*q.v.*), held on grounds of Frederic E. Lewis (*q.v.*) estate. It included judged dog, cat and poultry competitions; 1908 show raised $170 for the society. [P9/17/1908]

Dog pound: *See* Canine Shelter.

Dogs were not apparently a popular "pet" in the 18th Century, perhaps because they needed feeding when resources were minimal, and could be dangerous in a farming community. (Cats, on the other hand, tended to feed themselves with mice and other rodents that they helped to control on local farms.) By the mid-19th Century, dogs were beginning to cause serious problems, particularly related to biting people and attacking livestock, especially chickens, calves and sheep. In March 1878, a Ridgefield ordinance required all dogs be muzzled. Any dog that was not muzzled could be shot on sight, and the shooter paid $1 reward. Dog registration began in 1908. Untagged strays were impounded; owners paid $5 (more than $175 in 2026 dollars) to get them back! Today, dogs in Connecticut must be licensed; licenses are sold by the town clerk's office in the town hall. *See also* Kennels, Canine Shelter, Helene Merrick, ROAR.

Dogwood Drive, a dead-end lane off upper Danbury Road, bears one of many local road names inspired by the vast Outpost Nurseries holdings, of which this was once a part. It was chosen by Richard Conley of Connecticut Land Company (*q.v.*) for the dogwoods, both wild and planted by his father, Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*). Perry Katz developed most of the lots. The town accepted the road in 1957. [RN]

Dolan, Martin (1853-1929), a gardener for the Casagmo estate early in the 20th Century, bequeathed the side altars, installed at St. Mary Church in 1934. His wife, **Mary Ann Haggerty Early Dolan,** (1849-1929), a native of Ireland, died one day before he did**.** [DD138].

Dolan, Dr. Walter T., (1905-1986), a native of Stamford, was a dentist in Ridgefield from 1931 until 1980; his last office was at 383 Main Street. He sold his practice to Dr. Neil Schwimer (*q.v.*), who came here in 1973. [JFS]

Dolen, Francis "Frank," (1926-2010), a writer for IBM who was as an officer in the Navy in World War II and Korea, served on the Planning and Zoning Commission starting in 1967 and on the Board of Finance starting in 1972. He was more widely known as a runner, completing many full marathons as well as a 100 kilometer race when he was 70. He lived in Farmingville. [JFS]

Doll, Henri George, (1902-1991), a native and citizen of France, was a scientist specializing in oil well research and was chairman of the board of Schlumberger Well Surveying Corp., based in France. He lived on Spectacle Lane in the 1950s, coming here as president of Electro-Mechanical Research or EMR (*q.v.*) on Main Street. His first wife was Anne Schlumberger, daughter of one of the founders of Schlumberger. When he retired in 1967, the Schlumberger Well Surveying Corporation's research laboratory in Ridgefield was renamed the Schlumberger-Doll Research Center (*q.v.*) in his honor. [JFS]

Doll hospital: *See* La Petite Francaise.

Dolph and Stewart Atlas of Fairfield County, published in October 1936, contains detailed maps of Ridgefield, showing the names of the owners of most buildings in town. [JFS]

Dolson, Hildegarde, (1908-1981), a novelist and second wife of novelist Richard Lockridge (*q.v.*), wrote four mysteries set in Ridgefield, which she called Wingate.They were *To Spite Her Face* (1971), in which the Thrift Shop is involved in a murder; *A Dying Fall* (1973), which features a death in the sculpture garden at the Aldrich Museum; *Please Omit Funeral* (1975), was inspired by Ridgefield's school book banning crisis of the early 1970s; and *Beauty Sleep* (1977), a murder at a health spa on a former estate here. Although she lived in nearby South Salem, she was very Ridgefield oriented. The Lockridges moved to Tryon, NC. [P1/22/1981]

Doman, Glidden Sweet, (1921-2016) started his career in 1943 as a blade designer for Sikorsky Aircraft. In 1945 he founded Doman Helicopters Inc., which produced small helicopters and was headquartered for many years at Danbury Airport. He developed innovations years earlier than larger competitors; some are now standard in helicopter technology. Doman Helicopters closed in 1969 and Doman began designing wind turbine blades for his new company, Gamma Ventures Inc. He lived in Ridgefield from 1958 to 1967; wife **Joan** was an RHS teacher. [WWW]

Donnelly, Joseph Henry, (1906-1992), Ridgefield's first full-time resident lawyer, opened a practice in July 1931. A Republican, he was named the town attorney in 1935, serving until 1948 and again for a year in the late 1960s. From 1941 to 1949 he was judge of probate, and was a state representative from 1939 to 1941. He became one of the largest property owners — for many years he was a top-10 taxpayer in town. He developed the Scodon subdivision, Donnelly Drive, Marcardon Avenue (all names that employ his name), Taporneck Court, Ramapoo Hills, and other subdivisions; he also owned Main Street commercial buildings and in 1960 built Donnelly Shopping Center (*q.v*.) on Governor Street. He turned former Gov. Phineas Lounsbury's home on Governor Street into Donnelly Professional Building (*q.v.*), which housed his practice, Donnelly, McNamara and Gustafson, for many years. [WWW, RSB31]

Donnelly Drive extends from St. Johns Road to Silver Hill Road. Built in the 1950s, it was named for Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v.*), who, with Perry Scott, developed the subdivision, part of which had been the Donnelly homestead on Wilton Road West. A 1956 Town Meeting accepted the road. [RN]

Donnelly Professional Building at 27 Governor Street was the former home of Gov. Phineas Lounsbury, who moved it from Main Street so he could build his bigger home, now the Lounsbury House (*q.v.*). Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v.*) bought and converted the house to offices in the 1960s. It was razed in 2014 to make way for Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association (*q.v.*) headquarters. *See also* House of Friends. [JFS]

Donnelly Shopping Center at 15-21 Governor Street, was opened in 1960 by Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v.*), occupied originally by First National, Woolworth's, and smaller shops. [JFS]

Donofrio, Nicholas M., (1945-), a Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute graduate who is a scientist and engineer, was senior vice president of Technology and Manufacturing at IBM in Armonk, overseeing IBM Research, the

Personal and Printing Systems Group, the Integrated Supply Chain and Integrated Product Development teams, and the Import Compliance Office. He also led IBM's worldwide quality efforts. He was also a member of IBM's Executive Committee and held seven patents. He retired in 2008. His memoir, *If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes,* was published in 2022. He and his wife, Anita, have lived on High Ridge Avenue since 1999. Anita Donofrio has been active in ROAR (*q.v.*), which named its headquarters the ROAR Donofrio Family Animal Shelter. [P6/12/2003, W]

Donovan, Jeremiah, (1857-1935), was the third Ridgefield native to serve in Congress. Born in Branchville, he was living in Norwalk by 1870 and in 1889 established what became Norwalk's longest-lasting tavern, long called Donovan's and now Donovan and MacKenzie's, at Washington and Water Streets. After serving in the State House of Representatives, he was elected in 1912 to Congress, serving from 1913 to 1915, considered a progressive. He was elected mayor of Norwalk from 1917 to 1921. [WWW]

Don't Raise the Bridge (Lower the River), published in 1960 by MacMillan, is a humorous novel by Max Wilk (*q.v.*) about life in suburbia, airline pilots and a country inn (what is now R House). Wilk lived on Silver Spring Road when he wrote the book. [WWW]

Doolittle, Ichabod, (1731-1807), a native of Wallingford, was said to have operated a tavern on Ridgebury Road. He was a captain in the Connecticut Militia very early in the Revolution and was at Ticonderoga and the Adirondacks. His commission was May 1, 1775, but he was honorably discharged that November due to illness. He then served as a selectman in 1777 and 1778 and as a state representative in 1780 and 1781. By 1800, he had moved to nearby Southeast in Putnam County, where he died. [JFS]

Doolittle's map of 1795, by Amos Doolittle shows the new state of Connecticut. Its Ridgefield depiction includes two churches in Ridgefield center and two in Ridgebury (Congregational and Episcopal). He also produced a 1797 map without town lines. [JFS, Rumsey]

Dot the Mop was a professional clown portrayed in the 1970s by Beverly Hoffman (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Dot's was a mobile lunch stand, operated in the early 1970s on Main Street, etc., by Richard E. Venus Jr. (1944-1977). [JFS]

Double H Farm was named for its owner, E. Hunter Harrison (*q.v.*), a railroad executive. The former McKeon farm known as Arigideen (*q.v.*) was acquired in 2005 for $12 million; it was on the market 2018 for $33 million after many improvements, and included three residences, one of them 12,000 square feet built in 2009. Its stables could accommodate 43 horses. [JFS]

Doubleday, George, (1866-1955), an industrialist, came here in 1911, first living in a house on West Lane. In 1915, he bought the 100-acre estate of Francis M. Bacon (*q.v.*) on Peaceable Street, which he called Westmoreland (*q.v.*), and enlarged it. Doubleday joined the Ingersoll Sergeant Drill Company in New York in 1894 and became its treasurer. After Ingersoll merged with the Rand Drill Company in 1905, he became a vice president, then president of Ingersoll-Rand in 1913. He was named chairman of the board in 1936, holding the position till 1955, the year of his death. In 1939 he was listed as one of the highest-paid executives in the nation. His first wife, Alice Moffitt, died in 1919. His second wife, Mary White, who had been his secretary and became active in the community, died in 1968. [WWW]

Doubleday, James M., (1907-1970), son of George Doubleday (*q.v.*) and a Princeton graduate, was a local banker and entrepreneur who, with his wife Elizabeth "Betty" Ballard Doubleday, bought and razed several mansions, replacing them with more efficient modern but still large houses. *See* Doubleday Lane. [DD215]

Doubleday Lane, a 725-foot road off West Mountain Road, serves part of the 1980 West Mountain Pines subdivision of Carl Lecher. It's named for James Doubleday, who bought the property in the mid-1950's and built the large house at the top of the hill, replacing an earlier mansion, Hillaire (*q.v.*). He called the place Hobby Hill. It became a town road around 1985. [RN]

Douglas Lane at Lakeland Hills (*q.v.*) off Bennett's Farm Road was developed in the 1950's by Harold Goldsmith (*q.v.*) on part of the old Todd brothers' farm. He named the road for Douglas Rosskamp, son of Paul Rosskamp, his surveyor, who lived nearby. Douglas was born on or close to the day development of Lakeland Hills began. It became a town road in 1956. [RN]

Dowling, John Edward, (1922-2004), a native Ridgefield attorney, earned the Soldiers Medal, the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for heroism displayed in April 1945 when his anti-tank gun was blown off a road in France; though he suffered shrapnel wounds to his back and lung, he dragged two of his comrades to safety. He became an FBI agent, then returned to his home town in 1950 to practice law, serve as probate judge at age 29, and in the late 1960s was town attorney. He was also noted as a teller of grand and often humorous tales. Among his several homes over the years were 36 High Ridge Avenue and 93 Olmstead Lane. [WWW]

Dowling Drive, which runs between Ridgecrest Drive and Stonecrest Road, developed Charles Elliott (*q.v.*), who selected friend and attorney, John E. Dowling (*q.v.*) for a name. Developed in the 1950's, the road was not accepted by the town until 1975. Some subdivision maps show the western end of the road as "Elliott Drive." [RN]

Downesbury Court is a dead-end road off the north side of Florida Hill Road, serving a late-1970's subdivision by Roger D. Carpenter and William S. Valus. It became a town road in 1980, named for Downesbury Manor (*q.v.*), an estate it was once part of. *See also* High Valley. [RN]

Downesbury Manor was a 300-acre estate on Florida Hill Road, built by Henry de Bevoise Schenck (*q.v.*) around 1890 — he called it Boswyck. It was soon renamed Downesbury by its next owner, Col. Edward M. Knox (*q.v.*), who enlarged the house and property. Mark Twain is said to have visited him there. The estate was leased to the Paulist Fathers (*q.v.*) in 1923 [P10/9/1923], but their interest in it soon waned. The property was later Circle F Ranch, a sort of dude ranch, which operated well into the WW2 era. After that, the unoccupied, 32-room mansion fell into disrepair and was razed in August 1953. Much of the land is now High Valley subdivision, including Downesbury Court. The name was often spelled Downsbury. However, Downesbury, in use in 1911 [P7/20/1911], was patterned after and named for an English estate on the Isle of Wight [P11/27/1941]. [RN]

Dowsing, the art of finding underground water using a forked stick, has had its practitioners in Ridgefield, including Vincent Bedini, James Hackert and Theodore B. Bailey (*q.v. each*). [DD267, DD268]

Dr. Mike's was a popular ice cream parlor established in 1975 in Bethel by Peter Seltzer. It moved to 409 Main Street starting in 1987 when owned by

Robert Allison, who had taken over in 1983. The business later became part of Deborah Ann's Sweet Shoppe (*q.v.*). *People* magazine said it had "the best chocolate ice cream in the country." "Dr. Mike" was a fictitious person. [P3/12/1987] *See also* Sweet Dreams.

Draft horses, used for pulling loads or farm equipment, and in construction work, were in use until the 1930s. Some of the last teams in Ridgefield were owned by Frank Bloomer, Clifford Seymour, Edwin Smith, Mrs. John H. Lynch, Joe Pinchbeck, George Doubleday, and Irving Conklin, who had four teams at one time. *See also under* Horses. [DD160]

Dragon Inn, Ridgefield's first Asian-cuisine restaurant, opened Feb. 1, 1973 in Copps Hill Plaza and survived around 10 or 15 years. [JFS]

Dragon Palace, a restaurant at Copps Hill Plaza, opened Sept. 22, 1994, replacing Imperial Szechuan. [P9/1994]

Draper, Nancy-Carol, (1922-2008), a native of Boston, was Republican state representative from 1953 to 1961 and lived on Old Stagecoach Road (former Westbrook Pegler farm — *q.v.*) where she was a breeder of Great Danes. She retired to her Wyoming cattle ranch and established in 2002 the Draper Museum of Natural History in Cody, Wyo., part of Buffalo Bill Historical Center. The museum "creates, accumulates, and disseminates knowledge about the natural environment and human cultures of the American West," focusing on the Greater Yellowstone region. [WWW]

Draper, Paul, (1909-1996), was an internationally known concert dancer who lived at The Coach House (*q.v.*) on Branchville Road, 1949-50. He often partnered with harmonica player Larry Adler (*q.v.*). Accused of communist leanings, he moved Switzerland in 1951, but returned to teach, choreograph, and occasionally perform in the US. [WWW]

Draper, Tara, a sophomore at Simmons College, was Miss Ridgefield in 1980. [JFS]

Dreger, Frank, (1872-1941), a native of Germany, was a sensational burglar whose specialty was silver. After being caught in June 1933 in Darien and interrogated at Troop A (*q.v.*) by Leo F. Carroll (*q.v.*), he confessed to a February break and theft at Upagenstit (*q.v.*), in which silver worth $10,000 ($241,000 in 2024 dollars) was taken. During that winter and spring alone, he is said to have stolen more than $3 million (2024 dollars) in silver. He also revealed he melted most of the silver and sold it to the U.S. government for coinage. He spent the rest of his life in prison. [WWW]

Dress code: Until the 1969-70 school year, girls were required to wear dresses or skirts to school through 12th grade — except on the very coldest days in winter. [OR 10/10/2025]

Drinkwater, William, (1701-1758), was apprehended by several women and beaten with rods for abusing his wife and being "quarrelsome with his neighbours," according to John Peter Zenger in *The New-York Weekly Journal* Dec. 31, 1731. He and his wife Elizabeth Benedict moved to New Milford and eventually had 12 children, and after she died in 1749, he remarried and had four more. [JFS]

Drive-in bank, first: Ridgefield Savings Bank (now Fairfield County Bank) at 3 Governor Street was the first drive-up bank in town, opening in 1959. The site was the old Ridgefield Boys Club (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Drug Abuse Resistance Education: *see* DARE.

Druid Lane is so called because people erroneously connect Druids with Stonehenge in England. Druid Lane leads from Route 7 into Stonehenge

Estates, so called because the Stonehenge Inn (*q.v.*) was just across the highway. However, Druids had nothing to do with England's Bronze Age creation, which dates back to the second millennium BC, whereas the Druids didn't arrive in Britain until the middle of the Third Century BCE — a thousand years after Stonehenge. The road was originally called Jerry's Court, after the development's builder, Jerry Tuccio, but residents in the mid-1960's petitioned the selectmen to change it to Druid Lane. Developed in the early 1960's, it was accepted as a town road in 1964. [RN]

Ducey, Kerry Anne, founded the local-news website, HamletHub (*q.v.*), in 2011, and was head of the HamletHub network of local websites until she retired them in 2025. She is a graduate of Susquehanna University with a master's in education from Adelphi. [JFS]

Duckworth, Rommie, became chief of the Ridgefield Fire Department June 6, 2025. Chief Duckworth has been with the department for 27 years, joining as a firefighter and working his way through the ranks. He is known nationally for his innovative work in firefighter education, EMS system design, and leadership development. [ITH5/23/25]

Duddy was a nickname for Harold A. Mead (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Dump, town: For many years, Ridgefield's trash was discarded in an open dump off South Street and Old Quarry Road; in the late 1960s, state required it to be a landfill — i.e., the trash is buried under dirt; in 1978, state ordered the landfill closed, saying it was polluting Great Swamp (*q.v.*); in 1980 town voted to build a transfer station (*q.v.*) from which Ridgefield's trash is hauled away to a waste-to-energy plant. The dump/landfill officially closed Aug. 20, 1980. *See also* Dumps.

Dump Ball: On Sept. 16, 1972, hundreds of Ridgefielders dined and danced on the parking lot of the town highway department overlooking the garbage landfill as REAP (*q.v.*) had its Dump Ball. Tickets cost $5 and the event raised money — and awareness — for the new recycling efforts. Among the gifts attendees received were drinking glasses made by cutting off the upper halves of bottles. [JFS]

Dump Road is another name, albeit informal, for Old Quarry Road, according to the minutes of the Board of Selectmen in October 1957. The road was one of two entrances to the old town dump (*q.v.*). *See also* South Street. [RN]

Dumps, family: Ridgefielders today are often excited as well as perplexed when they discover old bottles, broken pottery, clam shells, and other artifacts in the ground of their back — or front — yards. Odds are they have uncovered an old family dump. Before the town had a formal place where Ridgefielders could take their trash (*see* Dump, town), people just dug a holes into which they'd toss their trash. Often it was in conjunction with a fire that incinerated any burnable trash. However, a century or more ago, people consumed and threw out much, much less than today; consequently, dumps that served a family or a small farm for many years could be relatively small and limited in area. Bottles were reused. So were many cans. Plastics were virtually unknown. Some of these old dumps will turn up on home lots in modern subdivisions of old estates. But those estates were all once farms, each of which had one or several dumps. [JFS]

Dunbankin was the name of the 100 South Salem Road estate with 23-room house of August Zinsser (*q.v.*), who moved there after retiring as a NYC bank president. The house was built by Reginald Lewis (*q.v.*), son of

Frederic and Mary Lewis (*q.v.*) and then owned by Robert P. Scripps (*q.v.*), head of Scripps-Howard newspapers; after Zinsser family sold in 1952, owners included Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Ward, real estate agent Harry Neumann (*q.v*.), and Paul and Di Masters (*q.v*.). [JFS]

Dunkin Donuts opened its first store here in 1992 at 105 Danbury Road. It has since added outlets at Routes 7 & 35, and on Route 7 in Branchville, and in the Stop & Shop. In 2019, the chain, founded in 1950, rebranded itself as Dunkin, to reflect that it sold more than donuts, coffee in particular. [JFS]

Dunlap, James, (1862-1950), a native of Scotland, was a stonecutter who worked for many years on his Ramapoo Road farm and later lived next to a quarry on Silver Spring Road, a site now part of the Silver Spring Country Club property. [P6/8/1950]

Dunlop, Robert E., (ca 1896-1918), died — apparently of influenza complications — while serving as a military policeman in WW1 at an Army base in Spartanburg, S.C., which, ironically, was the state in which he had been born. [JFS]

Dunning, Hubert S. "Hugh," (1910-1999), a native of NJ, was president of J.H. Dunning Corp., maker of boxes. He bought Waterfall Farm (*q.v*.) in 1950 as a dairy farm and also raised and showed old English sheep dogs. He and wife Elizabeth left in the early 1970s and he died in New Hampshire. [JFS]

Dunning, Richard, (1814-1877), was a musician who played bugle and instructed the Ridgefield Band (*q.v.*). He married in 1855 Mary Henrietta Olmstead. By 1870 they were living in Wilton, where both are buried. [JFS]

Durant automobiles: *See* Flint.

Dunrovin was in the 1930s and 40s the West Lane estate of William Matheus Sullivan (*q.v.*), attorney for Metropolitan Opera and many of its singers. It included playhouse where musical productions were staged, mostly as benefits — such as Dunrovin Music Festival — and included major opera and show business stars, including Lily Pons and Geraldine Farrar (*q.v. each*). Originally called Wildfarms, Dunrovin had been the home home of Melbert Cary (*q.v.*). The mansion burned to the ground in 1977 when owned by Justin Colin (*q.v*.). However, the playhouse survives, and is now a residence on Country Club Road. [JFS]

Dunworth, Joseph M., (1923-2011), a native of NYC, was a naval officer in WW2 and Korean War, retiring as a reserve commander in 1967. He worked for McGraw Hill, Burnham Furnaces and had his own furnace business. He served on the Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education over 18 years, ran unsuccessfully for first selectman in 1969, and was especially noted for his early efforts to fight for tax relief for the elderly. In 1965, he was among the founders of the Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts. [WWW]

Durant's Party Place was a party supply store at 15 Danbury Road in 1981 [P2/5/1981] and later, in the early 2000s, was located on Route 7 in Branchville. The business is now based in Danbury. [JFS]

Durst, Robert A., (1943-2022), a NY real estate heir who became famous for his alleged involvement in the 1982 disappearance of his ex-wife Kathleen Durst in South Salem, NY. as well as the deaths of two others, bought a house at 9 Ned's Lane in Ridgebury in 1999. [WWW]

Dustin, Robert E. "Rob," is a documentary filmmaker who from 1996 until 2010 lived at 18 Woodlawn Drive. He has won several Emmy Awards for his work, which often deals with ice skating. [JFS]

Dutch Elm Disease destroyed most of the many American Elms in the town, especially on Main Street, starting sometime after the winter of 1935 (no examples of the disease had been noted by then). Nonetheless, huge, mature American Elms still live in town in 2026. [JFS]

Dutch settlers: John Sturdevant (*q.v.*), Sturtevant or Stirtivant, a native of Norwalk, was among the original proprietors. He died before he was able to develop his Main Street lot and 22 years after his death in 1717, his land was set aside for building an Anglican or Episcopal church. Dutchman Swamp (*q.v.*) may be named for his family, or for the Dykman (Dikeman, Dykeman) family, early settlers of the Scotland district who were probably of Dutch ancestry. [JFS]

Dutchman Swamp: A 1740 deed transfers nine acres "lying in Dutchman Swamp," probably in today's Ridgefield Lakes area, possibly north of Fox Hill Lake (*q.v.*). John Stirdevant (or Sturdevant), one of the original proprietors, came from a Dutch family and may have been nicknamed "the Dutchman" by his fellow settlers. He owned land in this vicinity. [RN]

Dutton, Edward Payson, (1831-1923), was the book publisher, E.P. Dutton, whose imprint is today owned by Penguin. Dutton built a house at 63 High Ridge Avenue (*see* High Ridge Manor *and* On-The-Ridge**)** and was active in intellectual and religious life of community; he helped establish Benjamin Franklin Elementary School and Alexander Hamilton High School, and was a devout Episcopalian. [WWW, DD162-168]

Dutton Lane: A 1914 landscaping plan for what is now the Richard E. Venus Municipal Building but was then the site of the new Benjamin Franklin Grammar School (*q.v.*) bears a penciled-in label of Dutton Lane for what is today eastern Governor Street (as it runs between old school and the police station). E.P. Dutton (*q.v.)* supplied much of the funding to buy this land for the grammar school, built in 1915. Dutton Lane may have been suggested to show appreciation for the contribution, but apparently town fathers thought extending the name Governor Street was simpler. [RN]

Dyckman: *See* Dykeman.

Dykeman, Niram, (1823-1880), a Civil War veteran, established the Union Hotel in the 1860s with his wife Mary Jane Smith (1824-1903). Sometimes spelled Dyckman or Dikeman, the latter used by descendants of this family.

Dykeman House was a multistory inn operated by the Dykeman (or Dyckman) family in the 1880s at about 441 Main Street (Toy Chest in 2026). In the early 20th Century, the building was moved to High Ridge and Abbott Avenues, where it is now apartments. *See also* Oreneca House. [RIR]

Dyer, Carlus E., (1917-2016), a native of Missouri, was longtime director and curator of exhibitions at the Aldrich Museum. Early in his career, he painted murals for the WPA and his work was exhibited in 1938 in the Museum of Modern Art's New Horizons of American Art and in 1939 at the World's Fair. He joined the MOMA staff as exhibition and publication director in 1940 and designed catalogues for major shows. He illustrated *The Classic Ballet*, a book by Lincoln Kirstein of the New York City Ballet. His paintings and sculpture have been exhibited at MOMA, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Silvermine Guild Arts Center. He lived at 79 Bayberry Hill Road from 1969 to 2006, married to Ruth Kobler (*q.v.*). [P8/11/2016]

Dyer, Ruth Kobler: *See* Ruth Kobler.

Dzielinski, Bernard P., (ca. 1923-2017), was Democratic town chairman from

1973 to 1983; a selectman from 1983 to 1988; and member of the Board of Finance for many years, starting in 1989. He was an IBM program and product manager, retiring in the late 1980s. A Connecticut native who grew up on a farm, he sold produce, especially potatoes, at farmers markets late in life. His wife, **Shirley**, (1928-2018), was a Veterans Park School teacher for many years. They moved here in 1968. [NR]

E

Eagle (town hall): A building committee renovating the town hall voted on Jan. 11, 1951 to buy a laminated wooden eagle to place over the doorway. The committee paid Saldarini and Pucci, architectural sculptors, $340 to carve it from a white pine block; donors for the cost included A.J. Carnall, Victor Gilbert, and "Mr. Noel," architect for town hall renovations. The eagle was originally painted white; around 1974, it was painted bronze, prompting much criticism. Finally, for U.S Bicentennial, Fred Glissmann (*q.v*.) spent 200 hours restoring and gilding the eagle. The gold leaf deteriorated in 1980s and the eagle was again painted white. However, it was regilded in early 1990s and gold it wears in 2024. [JFS]

Eagleton, June, a native of England, was program director of Ballard Green Senior Center, starting September 1980. [P9/4/1980].

Eaglesham, Ross Alexander, (1900-1959), was a commercial artist who lived in the 1940s and 50s at 152 West Mountain Road. His wife **Mary** was active in the community, and taught first aid. [DD272]

Earl, Consuelo Vanderbilt, (1903-2011), called "Consie," was a descendant of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt. Her father was president of the NY Central Railroad. In the late 1940s she bought 26 acres on Old Oscaleta Road and established Iradell Farm (*q.v.*) where she kept exotic animals from around the world. She also raised Skye and silky terriers and toy poodles. Her fourth and last husband was Noble Clarkson Earl, a Howard-Johnson restaurants executive. She died at age 107, possibly the oldest person to have lived in Ridgefield, and is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [WWW]

Early Bird, a restaurant that started out in the late 1980s at Copps Hill Plaza and later moved to its current location, 86 Danbury, has long been a popular gathering place for "townies," especially in the morning. The cafe began as a breakfast and lunch operation, but later expanded to included dinners for some years. By 1991 it was owned by Joe Hahn (*see* Galloway's) and Roy Cogswell (*q.v*.); after Hahn left, Cogswell continued to run the place until his death. The restaurant, closed by a fire in late 2025, never reopened. [*See* profile feature P1/4/2002, JFS]

Earthquakes: Minor quakes felt here from time to time; one of the largest Oct. 19, 1985, at 6:07 a.m., centered near Ardsley in Westchester County, registered 4.0 on the Richter scale. An 1884 quake measured 5.0. On April 5, 2024, at 10:23 a.m. a 4.8 quake centered around Whitehouse Station, N.J., was noticed widely in western Connecticut. Quakes may be felt a bit more in Ridgefield because Cameron's line (*q.v.*) runs through town. [JFS]

Eason, Kathleen "Kay" Young, (1912-1994), a native of England, was a British actress who appeared in stage and screen roles in the 1930s and early 40s. Kay Young married in 1939 Michael Wilding (later the husband of actress Elizabeth Taylor). After they were divorced, she came to the U.S. and married British actor Douglass Montgomery (*q.v.*). They moved to Fair Fields (*q.v*.) on Golf Lane in 1965, but Montgomery died a year later. She later met Myles Eason (*q.v.*), an Australian actor living in Ridgefield; they were married and lived at 43 Olmstead Lane until her death. She was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club. [WWW]

Eason, Myles, (1915-1977), a native of Australia, was an actor and director on three continents. He was a Royal Shakespeare Company performer after WW2 in England, then turned to films, and later was on TV, appearing in soap operas As the World Turns and The Guiding Light. His wife, Kathleen (*q.v.*), was a British actress. They lived at 43 Olmstead Lane. He was noted for his gardening abilities. [WWW]

East Farm Lane, a 1,300-foot-long road off the easterly side of New Road, is part of a 1983 subdivision by Michel and Mario Morin of part of the old Lee property that the Lees called their "East Farm." It became a town road around 1985. *See also* Lee Road *and* Robert Lee. [RN]

East Fire Hill Road: *See* Fire Hill Road.

East Meadow(s) is the relatively flat land that lies along the upper Norwalk River, especially around the Great and Little Ponds, and perhaps as far south as New Road. It's mentioned in deeds between 1717 and 1826. *See also* East River. [RN]

East Mountain: 1. Deeds from 1820 to 1837 mention East Mountain, which appears to be a Scotland District neighborhood term for Copps or Stonecrest Mountain (*q.v.*); **2.** The perambulation of the Ridgefield and Redding line in 1828 notes a monument north of the southeast corner of town (in Branchville) "is upon the side of the East Mountain, a few rods west of the high peak on Elisha Gilbert's lot" — this is probably the steep hill along the east side of Route 7, north of Branchville and southerly of Redding line. [RN]

East Ridge, the ridge east of and parallel to Main Street, has also been called Middle Ridge. [RN]

East Ridge Cafe, also called Caputo's East Ridge Cafe, was a restaurant on the corner of Prospect and Grove Streets, formerly Gaddi's (q.v.), that operated from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s. The building is the old Walker homestead.

East Ridge Junior High School, built 1966 by Morganti Inc. (*q.v.*) at East Ridge and Branchville Roads, served 7th and 8th grades; in 1970, Morganti built an addition on the north side to add classrooms — *see* Morganti additions. In September 1985, it became East Ridge Middle School (*q.v*). [JFS]

East Ridge Middle School, formerly East Ridge Junior High (*q.v.*), converted to a middle school, grades six to eight, in September 1985 with 900 students in its first year. The school board and Superintendent Elliott Landon (*q.v.*) felt the 6-8 grouping was better for the students; it also freed space in elementary schools to handle then-growing enrollments. [P11/20/1984]

East Ridge Road, sometimes called East Ridge Avenue, is a fairly modern name for an old road between Prospect Street and Branchville Road, east of and parallel to Main Street. It has also been called Orchard Lane and Middle Ridge. In the 18th Century, it continued southerly to connect with Rockwell Road. [RN]

East Ridge School applied to former Benjamin Franklin Grammar School (*q.v.*) after it was expanded in 1926 to house Ridgefield High School (*q.v.*). At that time, it handled grades 2 through 12, and was sometimes also called the Center School. The building was expanded in 1939-40, allowing elimination of the last district schoolhouses, and started being called Ridgefield High School in 1955 when Veterans Park School opened, even though middle school grades were still housed there. The gymnasium was added 1960

(*see also* Yanity Gym, Ridgefield Playhouse, Venus Office Building). [SD]

East River is an early name for the Norwalk River as it flows southerly along eastern edge of town. Possibly shortened version of East Meadow (*q.v.*) River, the term was in use by 1718 [RN]

East Woods, an old and forgotten term for an area in Ridgebury, was probably in the vicinity of Ned's Mountain or a little east and north of Lake Windwing. It first appears in a 1774 deed [RN]

Easter Egg Hunts for smaller children have been run since the 1960s, many of them free at East Ridge athletic fields (in 1968 an estimated 800 children hunted) and at Ballard Park sponsored by the Ridgefield Woman's Club (*q.v.*) and Parks & Recreation Department, but lately have been at the Lounsbury House, which in 2026, called it a "Hoppy Days Easter Egg Hunt" and sought a suggested donation of $25 to support the historic landmark. In the 1950s, the Lounsbury House, then called the Community Center, had an annual Easter Egg hunt and roll. [ITH, JFS]

Eastman, Andrea, a senior vice president at Paramount Pictures, is former a Hollywood casting director who lived on Hillcrest Court in the late 1960s and the 1970s when she was married to Bruce Becker (*q.v.*). While here, she was casting director for such major films as "The Godfather" and "Love Story." She is a major figure in the ethical treatment of horses. She attended Staples High School in Westport. *Trooper at the Beverly Hills Hotel*, a 2022 book for all ages, is about her and her dog. [JFS]

Easy Living Furniture opened at 80 Grove Street late 1980; by 1983, it was at 440 Main Street. Owner was Robert Wachsman. [P11/6/1980, CD1983].

Eaton, Francis Storer, The Lord Newall, (1930-), an executive with Schweppes USA Ltd., bought the former Starr homestead on Farmingville and Lounsbury Roads in 1969. His father was made a lord by King George VI in 1946 for his WW2 service. In 1972 Lord Newall returned to England, served in the House of Lords more than 25 years — leaving in 1999 due to House of Lords Act of 1999 that expelled all hereditary peers. He then became known as Francis Storer Eaton Newall, 2nd Baron Newall DL ("deputy lieutenant"). He has been active in civic and charitable work.

Eckerd Drugs at 125 Danbury Road, Copps Hill Plaza, had been a Genovese Drugs store (*q.v.*), which was purchased by JC Penney in 1998, rebranded Eckerd. It, in turn, became Rite Aid (*q.v.*) in 2007 and occupied a 10,000-square-foot space by 2003 [P9/18/2003]. Rite Aid closed in 2025.

Eckhaus, Ethel Fleischman, (1927-2020), a native of NYC who had an early career in retailing, was active in gender equality organizations and a founder of the Women's Political Caucus (*q.v.*). She lived in Ridgefield from 1970 until her death and was the wife of Manny Eckhaus. [P7/30/2020]

Eclipses: While lunar eclipses are relatively common, significant solar eclipses — sun blocked by moon — are rare in Ridgefield. The last four were: *June 16, 1806*, described by S.G. Goodrich in ROAL as total here; *Jan. 24, 1925,* total; *July 10, 1972,* 80% blocked; *April 8, 2024*, 90% blocked.

Economic & Community Development Commission, a seven-member selectpersons-appointed panel, promotes carefully planned economic development matching the character of the town. "The commission will seek to involve all agencies, commissions, boards, and departments in the town which are involved in, or are affected by, economic development, as well as the residents of the town, in its work to promote economic

development." [RW]

Economists of note from Ridgefield include Jared Bernstein, Nicholas Perna, and Donald I. Rogers (*q.v. each*).

Edelman, Arthur, (1925-2018), and **Theodora "Teddy,"** (1928-2016), husband and wife executives and designers in the field of high-fashion leathers and reptile hides, owned Fleming-Joffe in NYC; in 1981 they founded Edelman Leathers. They lived at 129 Spring Valley Road in a seven-bedroom home designed in 1968 from a former dairy barn moved from Stonecrest (*q.v.*) on North Street. They called their 31-acre estate Alligator Farm. [WWW]

Edith Meffley Award, **The**, is given annually by Conservation Commission to people who have made major contributions to preserving and protecting Ridgefield's environment. (*See* Meffley, Edith)

Edith Meffley Garden on Halpin Lane, the town's first community garden, was established in the 1970s by Edith Meffley (*q.v.*) of the Conservation Commission and named for her in 2017. *See also* Community Gardens.

Editors: Newspaper editors and publishers in Ridgefield have included: John O'Hara Cosgrave, Fabian Franklin, John Nash, Karl Nash, Thomas Nash, Cyrus Northrop, Paul Palmer, Robert Scripps, John N. Wheeler, Lee B. Wood (*q.v. each*). *See also* Magazines.

Edmond, Ezra Lee, (ca. 1846-1864), a Union Army private, was, according to his gravestone in Scott's Cemetery, "killed at Petersburg, June 17, 1864, ae. 18 yrs, 10 mos." He had joined the Union Army 2½ months earlier. [JFS]

Edmond Town was a 19th Century neighborhood along Florida Road, about half way between Florida Hill and Branchville Roads, at the old junction of Cooper Road, long the home of the Edmond family (which is also spelled Edmonds or Edmund). [RN]

Edmonds, John D., (ca. 1832-1865), probably a Ridgefield native, as a teenager taught school in town. He married and moved first to Benton, NY, and then near Grand Rapids, MI. In 1861 he enlisted in the Civil War, but was discharged in 1862 after being severely injured in a runaway-horse incident not involving battle. He studied law in Michigan and returned to Ridgefield where he died of tuberculosis at age 33. He may have been the town's first lawyer, but he might have been too ill to practice. He was a son of Robert Chauncey (*q.v.*) and Abby Darling Edmonds of Silver Hill Road. [WWW]

Edmonds, Robert Chauncey, (ca.1801-1884), a Whig, served as a state representative in 1851. A carpenter, he lived on Silver Hill Road and served on the school committee for the Flat Rock School District in the 1840s and early 50s. His son was John D. Edmonds (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Edmonds, Willis, was an owner of the clover mill (*q.v.*) and plaster mill on the turnpike (now Route 7) north of Branchville in 1856. His partner was Lewis H. Mead. [RLR21/50]

Education: The earliest schooling took place in private homes or the Meeting House (*q.v.*). In 1721, the town meeting voted to spend "eight pounds for ye support of a school," the first mention of schooling in the town records. In 1726, the voters approved money to repair the school. The first teacher was believed to be the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), the Harvard-educated minister of the Congregational Church. As Ridgefield began to develop outside the village and more people built houses in rural parts of town, school districts (*q.v.*) began to be created, such as at Limestone, Bennett's Farm, and Ridgebury. In 1799, the First Society had 10 schoolhouses

serving 433 children. Ridgebury has two more schoolhouses and about 75 children. By the mid-19th Century there was a peak of about 15 districts in all. After motor vehicles became available to provide bus service, the town opted for centralized schools, and all the rural districts began closing down, starting in 1915. The last two, Branchville and Titicus, closed in 1939. However, except for a brief period in the 1940s and 50s, when all schools were in the center of town, Ridgefield has continued to favor neighborhood schools for its elementary (K-5) schools; in 2025, there are six elementary districts. For middle school (6-8), there are two districts, and only one district for high school. In the 18th, 19th and early 20th Centuries, schoolhouses were paid for by taxes collected in each district, with some aid from the town. Parents supplied wood or coal to keep the buildings heated in winter. Parents had to pay for textbooks until 1912 when the town voted to supply them free. The [P3/19/1879] has a story, "Our District Schools of Today and Our District Schools of 30 and 40 Years Ago." In the 2017, 75% of Ridgefielders 25 or older held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 37% in the state. [SD, RP1]

Education, Board of, is a nine-member elected panel overseeing the operation of Ridgefield schools. Earlier known as the Board of Visitors or School Visitors, it has considerable powers under CT statutes, especially the ability to create budgets that the selectmen cannot adjust; only the Board of Finance or Town Meeting can reduce school budgets. The board hires and supervises school superintendents. The unpaid members are elected to four-year terms; four are elected at one biennial municipal election and five at the next. [JFS]

Edwards, Barbara, a former Ridgefielder, was flying with Wilson and Darleen Flagg (*q.v.*) aboard Flight 77 when it was crashed into the Pentagon Sept. 11, 2001. She had been a teacher. [JFS]

Edwards, Ralph, (1913-2005), a leading radio and TV personality in the 1940s and 50s, invented and hosted the show, Truth or Consequences. He later created such long-running shows as This Is Your Life and Name That Tune. In 1958, he and wife Barbara bought a house on the corner of North Street and Stonecrest Road, living there off and on until 1971. [WWW]

Egan, Judge Joseph (1946-), a native of Long Island, was a longtime Probate Court judge. He came to Ridgefield in 1956, graduated St. Mary's School, 1960; Fairfield Prep, 1964; St. Peter's College, 1968; and Fordham Law in 1971, when he returned to town and practiced with John E. Dowling (*q.v.*). In 1990, he was elected Ridgefield probate judge, a position he held through the consolidation of Ridgefield's court into the Northern Fairfield Probate District in 2011 (*see* Probate Court). He left office due to mandatory age-70 retirement in 2016. He is a former president of the National College of Probate Judges. A lifelong athlete, he was on the first Ridgefield Red Raider team, formed in 1958, that played in the Orange Bowl; he later coached Red Raiders. He also played baseball at Prep and in college. He is married to Ridgefield native **Aileen Leary**. [JFS]

Egleston, David Stebbins, (1830-1908), was an executive with Egleston Brothers & Company of New York City, iron merchants. He had his country house at 181 Main Street with his wife, **Fanny Hawley Egleston**, a descendant of the town's first minister, and donated many of the furnishings for new First Congregational Church. He was a director of Bank

of America and other institutions. [JFS]

Ehrlickman, Allyson, a freshman at RHS, won a gold medal at the World Tap Dance Championships in Riesa, Germany, in December 2011. [P1/12/2012]

Eight Lakes, the town's largest subdivision, has several hundred lots ranging from tiny ones around Lake Mamanasco to one-acre parcels on West Mountain. The land was part of Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) resort property, which included eight lakes and ponds: Lake Mamanasco, Turtle Pond, and Round Pond in Ridgefield; Lakes Rippowam, Oscaleta, and Waccabuc in Lewisboro; and Pine Lake and Hemlock Lake in North Salem. Between 500 and 600 acres of the Port land in Ridgefield, acquired in 1951 by J. Wesley Seward and William H. Hayes of NYC, were subdivided for Eight Lakes between 1951 and 1954. Roads include Walnut Hill Road, Birch Court, Rock Road, Scott Ridge Road, Blue Ridge Road, Caudatowa Drive, Sleepy Hollow Road, Round Lake Road, First through 12th Lanes, Mamanasco Road, and the west ends of Barrack Hill and Old Sib Roads. [RN]

89 Danbury Road was advertised in 1980 as "Ridgefield's first office condominium" by real estate agent John F. Coyle. Suites sold for $76,500 to $169,900. Since 1986, the building has mainly housed Adam Broderick's salon. [JFS]

850 Wood Fired Pizza Restaurant at 424R Main Street was opened Dec. 27, 2014, by Larry Debany, next to his other restaurant, Fifty Coins (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Eilenstein, Arthur F. (1863-1959), native of Germany who had served in German army and came to U.S. in 1890s, was the last surviving Ridgefield veteran of Spanish-American War. He served in the First Regiment, Second Company of NY Volunteers. A bricklayer, he built many buildings, chimneys and swimming pools in town, and lived in a house he built at 79 West Lane [P3/26/1959, DD294]

Eilertsen, Herb, a native of Pennsylvania and RHS 1971, was a longtime Ridgefield artist who operated The Frame Barn (*q.v.*) for 30 years. He opened the business on Danbury Road in May 1980 and later moved to Main Street in the old Gristede building. He moved to Gaylordsville around 2006 and later to rural Pennsylvania near Lancaster where he has a gallery/studio. [JFS]

Electricity was first provided in Ridgefield just after the turn of the 20th Century by a company founded by H.B. Anderson (*q.v.*). A generating plant was located on Ivy Hill Road near the railroad crossing. After a few years it was sold to Associated Gas and Electric Company, which probably shut down the plant when a regional power distribution system was established. Litchfield Light and Power Company (*q.v.*) served the town in the 1930s. In the early 1940s, Connecticut Light and Power, founded in 1917, took over. In 1966, CL&P became part of Northeast Utilities, which in 2015 rebranded itself as Eversource. Most of Ridgefield's electricity now arrives via a high-voltage line that enters town from Redding, travels up the old railroad bed to a transformer substation at the end of Prospect Street. In the 2020s, the town began a program of generating electricity from solar panels atop public buildings, such as Ridgefield High School. *See also* Ridgefield Electric Company *and under* Environment. [JFS, DD135]

Elections: In the 18th Century, election of officials in Ridgefield occurred at Annual Town Meetings (*q.v.*) in December, probably the least busy month for farmers. By the 19th Century, municipal elections had moved to the first

Tuesday of October until the late 1960s when they were moved to the Tuesday after the first Monday in November to coincide with state and national elections. (In the early 19th Century, state office elections took place in April.) Town elections are held in odd-numbered years; state and national elections are in even-numbered years. Voting hours are 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the polling places of the four voting districts (*q.v.*). For local referendums, such as on the town and school budgets, voting is at Yanity Gym. The first voting machine (*q.v.*) was installed in 1914; before that, candidates were elected and issues decided by paper ballots or voice votes. Only white men could vote in elections before 1870 when the 15th Amendment allowed Black men to vote, too. The first election in which women could fully participate was 1920 thanks to the 19th Amendment. Connecticut had allowed women to vote on school issues starting in 1893 and on library questions starting in 1909. The 26th Amendment, ratified in 1971, reduced the voting age from 21 to 18. New voters are sworn in by the registrars of voters, or by the town clerk or assistant town clerks, whose offices are in the town hall. [JFS, RW]

Electro-Mechanical Research opened a lab in 1946 on Main Street in what became South Hall of St. Stephen's Church. The company president was Henri Doll (*q.v.*) of Spectacle Lane. The company, which moved to Sarasota, Fla., in 1958, specialized in research and development of telemetry used in spacecraft, missiles, and aircraft, and was later known simply as EMR. EMR has been called "a secret division of Schlumberger," which, among other things, helped to develop the "Uncle Henri" non-metallic mine detector. *See also* Schlumberger. [JFS]

Elephants: Hannibal, "the largest elephant in this country," paraded down Main Street with the Van Amburgh's Menagerie Nov. 1, 1861. Elephants were said to have been housed in winters at Ridgebury farms of people associated with circuses. [DAR] *See also* Circuses.

Elephant Ball was an annual fundraiser in the mid-20th Century for the Ridgefield Republican Party. [JFS]

Elevation of Ridgefield ranges from the lowest point, Branchville along Route 7, 342 feet above sea level, to the highest, Pine Mountain (*q.v.*), 1060 feet. The village averages 725, but highest village point is 860 at 35 High Ridge Avenue. Round Pond on West Mountain is 778 feet; at its highest point near Sturges Park (*q.v.*), West Mountain reaches 1,000 feet. Main Street at the town hall is about 735 feet. The old Ridgefield Savings Bank building at 374 Main Street, now owned by Fairfield County Bank, has a marker on the front at exactly the 745 foot elevation. Main Street at the Cass Gilbert Fountain, it's about 800 feet. East Ridge at the old high school and at the Ridgefield Skating Center is 750 feet. [JFS]

Eleven Levels was an estate on north side of West Mountain Road, east of Old West Mountain Road, amassed by NYC lawyer Arthur Fraser, starting 1907 and eventually totaling 180 acres. It was named for ripples in the eastern slope of West Mountain. Owners included Joseph and Nora Shapiro (*q.v.*), 1930s-1952; Paul and Elizabeth Arnold (*q.v.*), 1952-59; Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) purchased it in 1959. Tuccio subdivided the estate after lengthy lawsuit with P&Z; his development of 100 acres into 62 lots, also called Highland Acres, includes Eleven Levels Road, Armand Place, Green Lane, Old Wagon Road, and Trail's End Lane. The 5,500-square- foot house,

designed by Grosvenor Atterbury in 1911, is at 24 Old Wagon Road. [RN]

Elfstrom, Barbro, a native of Sweden, was an actress, journalist and Middle East expert who was the former wife of filmmaker Robert Elfstrom (*q.v.*), with whom she bought a home on Old Branchville Road in 1965. She lived in Beirut for many years, working as a television correspondent, and wrote several books published in Sweden. [JFS]

Elfstrom, Robert, a filmmaker and director of photography for many TV documentaries, moved to Old Branchville Road in 1965. While here he, often with his wife, Barbro (*q.v.*), produced several films, including "Gospel Road," starring Johnny Cash, in which Elfstrom himself plays Jesus; "The 13th Guest," a documentary based on a dinner discussion of the Vietnam War, one of whose participants was Elizabeth Leonard (*q.v.*), later first selectman; and "A Song and A Stone," a profile of folksinger Pete Seeger. He has filmed documentaries for PBS, National Geographic Explorer, the Discovery Channel, the BBC, CBS, and many others. He left Ridgefield in the 1980s for San Francisco. [NR, JFS]

Elkow, Jon, was elected chairman of the Board of Education Nov. 21, 1981. The Democrat and longtime resident had served 3½ years on the board. [P11/24/1981]

Elliott, Charles (1901-1983), was a Railway Express station agent in Ridgefield, and a longtime owner of KEB gas station, 31 Danbury Road which became Ridgefield Mobil. He also operated a refuse collection company for many years, and developed Dowling Drive (*q.v.*). [DD83, 355].

Elliott, Christopher Nash, (1960), a son of Bob Elliott of the 1940s-60s comedy team of Bob and Ray, is an American actor, comedian and writer known for his surreal sense of humor. He appeared in comedic sketches on Late Night with David Letterman (1982–1988), created and starred in the comedy series Get a Life (1990-1992) on Fox, and wrote and starred in the film "Cabin Boy" (1994). His writing won four consecutive Primetime Emmy Awards. Elliott became a cast member of Saturday Night Live in 1994. He and his wife Paula lived on Old Branchville Road from 2003 to 2008. Their daughter, **Abby**, was a cast member of Saturday Night Live from 2008 until 2012, the first SNL cast member to be the child of a previous cast member. (She was the third generation of Elliotts on SNL; Chris's father co-starred on an SNL Christmas episode in 1978.) [W, JFS]

Elliott, W.S., MD, DDS, of Danbury opened a branch dentistry office in Ridgefield September 1886. [P9/30/1886]

Ellis, Gene, (1933-2016), born Gene Hufeisen in Seattle, grew up in Alaska, and became an actress, specializing in dancing roles. Appeared on Broadway and Off-Broadway in many shows, and performed in summer stock, retiring in 1964. In 1972 she became a full-time writer of soap operas, often working with her husband, scriptwriter Ralph Ellis (*q.v.*). Together they wrote for As the World Turns, Search for Tomorrow, and The Doctors. She also wrote for Loving, One Life to Life and General Hospital. She retired from writing in 1994, but was active locally in the Caudatowa Garden Club and volunteering at the Keeler Tavern Museum.

Ellis, Dr. Joseph, became principal of RHS in 1990 after 15 years as assistant principal. He retired in 2003 after 41 years in education. In 2024, he is an active member of the Rotary Club. [JFS]

Ellis, Ralph, was a screenwriter for many soap operas in the 1970s and 80s. He

was the husband of Gene Ellis (*q.v.*).

Elliss, Shoman, owned Titicus Store (*q.v.*) in the early 20th Century. [DD27, 28]

Elm, the: In 1986 plans were announced to realign the entrance to the Grand Union shopping center on Main Street to be opposite Prospect Street, requiring the felling of an American Elm on the west side of Main Street near the southwest corner of Ballard Park. A large citizen outcry — spearheaded by Maureen Glaser — ensued, with many "Save the Elm" protests; even "Save the Elm" T-shirts were printed. Town officials scratched the plan. Despite experts saying the elm was dying, the tree lived until 2013 when, by then seriously ailing, it was cut down. Almost immediately, planning began on realigning the shopping center entrance. [P8/7/1986, P11/21/2013]

Elm Branch is an old name for one of two brooks that rise west of Silver Spring Road and east of the New York State line, and flow south to Scott's Reservoir in Lewisboro [RN]

Elm Shade Cottages was an old name for The Elms Inn (*q.v.*) complex on Main Street, now condominiums. Early versions spell it as Elmshade. *See also* John W. Rockwell.

Elm Tree School, The, a private school for girls, taught French, German, music, English, drawing, painting, and domestic science. It was operated in 1913 by Marguerite F. Bunner and Pauline Willing. [P1/2/1913]

Elms, The: *see under* Elms Inn.

Elms Inn, The, at 500 Main Street was a popular hostelry for more than a century**.** The main building was erected in 1760 and was turned into an inn around 1860 by John W. Rockwell, who called it Elm Shade Cottages. The term, The Elms, was in use by the 1920s. In 1932, Andrew Wallace (*q.v.*) owned the inn. By the 1940s, it was owned by James H. Perry. The Scala family operated the inn after 1951 when it was purchased by Chef Giancarlo "John" Scala (*q.v.*). Among the people who dined there in the last half of the 20th Century were Robert Redford, Paul Newman, Elizabeth Taylor, Judy Garland, Lily Pons, Arturo Toscanini, and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The restaurant closed in 2010; the accommodations operation closed 2013. The property was developed into 16 condominiums, called The Elms, using two of the major old Elms Inn buildings (but the iconic water tower building was razed). [JFS]

Ely, Christopher: *See under* Post-Graduation Party.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) holds communications equipment, including radio systems, that may be needed in major emergencies, such as a blizzard, flood, ice storm, or widespread power failure. Powered by a large generator, it is located at the Yanity Gym on East Ridge. It is also a center of Ridgefield's CERT (*q.v.*) operations and where many CERT classes take place. [JFS].

Emilio Tailoring was operated at 113 Danbury Road by Emilio Gallo who advertised custom-made suits for as little as $300 in 1980. [P9/11/1980].

Emirill, a store offering "fine gifts, accessories and furnishings from the Orient," opened at 440 Main Street in July 1981. [P7/23/1981]

Emmet, Dr. Bache McEvers, (1843-1921), a native of Hyde Park, NY, who was largely educated in Europe, became a leading gynecologist in NYC, specializing in diseases of women. He taught at NY Post-Graduate Hospital, and was on the staff at Columbia University Hospital. He also

published many articles and invented several surgical instruments. He established a summer home on West Mountain Road, ca. 1896, later living there full time and dying there. He called the place Greywacke (*q.v.*); it later became Innisfree (*q.v.)*, home of Dr. Patrick Neligan (*q.v*.). [DD272]

Emmy Awards, for excellence in various aspects of the television industry, have been received by Ridgefielders Jacqueline Babbin, David Barnhizer, Kevin Briody, Kirk Browning, Dick Cavett, Imogene Coca, Joseph Consentino, Morton Dean, Robert Dustin, Sam Feist, William Hamilton, William G. Henley, Jay David Saks, and Ernest Troost. (*q.v. each*)

Employment: Ridgefield is home to 10,652 jobs, including: Professional, scientific, and technical services — 2,047 jobs, $178,081 average annual pay; Health care and social assistance — 1,413, $40,235; Retail trade: 1,089, $41,268; Accommodation and food services: 982, $25,046; Management of companies and enterprises: 738, $195,797. [REP]

EMR: *See* Electro Mechanical Research.

Enchanted Garden, founded in around 1995 by Judy Hirt-Manheimer, is a educational and arts center for children "from birth through high school," offering "a thoughtful blend of early childhood education, music, dance, and performance opportunities" at two campuses: the School of the Arts, 165 Danbury Road, was built in 2000; the dance and theater studio, 529 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) offering music/voice lesson rooms, an ensemble room with grand piano, and a professional recording studio. In the early 1990s, Hirt-Manheimer hosted "Judy's Enchanted Garden" on local cable TV. [JFS]

Energy: *See* under Environment, Electricity.

Eng, Larry Fung, (1938-2021), a native of Canton, China, was the owner of the Rickshaw, a Chinese restaurant on Route 7 for many years until its closing in 1977. He had lived in Ridgefield from 1964 until his death. His obituary said: "He survived a Japanese invasion of his village during WWII by fleeing through rice fields and bamboo forests on the back of his mother. He emigrated from China around the age of 10 via pirate-infested rivers of China and then across the Pacific on The USS General W. H. Gordon and began the American Dream through hard work." [DNT 9/11/2021]

Enright, Ellen, (1861-1933), was the first nurse to work for the District Nursing Association (*q.v.*) and was very well liked. Her brother was a physician, Dr. Maurice Enright (*q.v.*). She is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [P11/6/1980, P3/9/1933, DD145]

Enright, Maurice, (1864-1926), was a physician and the author of the 1908 novel, *The Ridgefield Tavern: A Romance of Sarah Bishop (Hermitess)* (*q.v*.). He was the son of James and Jane Enright who lived on Ramapoo Road, opposite Casey Lane. He practiced medicine in Brooklyn, and is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. *See also* Ellen Enright. [WWW]

Enrollments: *See* School enrollments.

Entre Vous was a restaurant at the corner of Prospect and Grove Streets, in existence by 1983. The space in 2025 is Gallo. [DNT11/13/1983]

Environment: Many agencies and organizations encourage the protection of the environment and wise use of resources, including the Conservation Commission, town garden clubs, Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment (RACE), Ridgefield Environmental Action Program (REAP) (*q.v. each*). RACE found in 2024 that 700 Ridgefield residents own/lease an

electric vehicle (EVs and PHEVs); 297 Ridgefield households have a solar array; 185 Ridgefield households have a heat pump; 69 Ridgefield households have a battery system; 66 Ridgefield households have a Level 2 EV charger; 23 Ridgefield households have a Geothermal Heat Pump System. [WU]

Episcopal Church: Ridgefield once had two parishes — St. Stephen's (*q.v.*) and the Ridgebury Episcopal Church (*q.v.*). They were originally called Anglican churches.

Eppoliti, Edgardo, (1940-2009), was a Ridgefield builder and developer. He founded Eppoliti Realty Corp., which was taken over by son, Michael Ippoliti. He and his wife Marcia restored the 1868 D.H. Valden (*q.v.*) Victorian house and grounds at 118 North Salem Road. The surname is also spelled Ippoliti, the version used by most members of his family.

Equal Franchise League, organized 1911, was the local forerunner of League of Women Voters (*q.v.*) and fought for woman suffrage. Its first president was Emily Eaton Hepburn (*q.v.*) of Altnacraig on High Ridge.

Equity One: *See* Copps Hill Plaza *and* Taxpayers, Top Ten.

Equivalency Line is an 18th Century term for NY colony/state line, so-called because it represented what New York received in the form of the Oblong (*q.v.*) in exchange for Connecticut's receiving the panhandle that included Greenwich. Thus the line marked the "equivalent" value of the Greenwich area. [RN]

Erhardt, Eric George, (1938-2015), a native of Latvia who was educated in Germany, came to the US when he was 18. In August 1964, he opened Ridgefield European Motors at 92 Danbury Road (site of Marty Motors in 2024), specializing in BMW cars. He moved his dealership to 748 Danbury Road, northern Route 7, in 1971 and also soon opened the Sugar Hollow Racquet Club (*q.v.*), with indoor courts. When he retired after 44 years in business, he was the longest BMW dealer under single-ownership within the U.S. [P7/16/2015]

Esposito, Giancarlo, is a noted TV and film actor who had a home at 94 Main Street from 1999 to 2006. He believed the house was haunted. The place was sold in a mortgage foreclosure action. [JFS]

Essey of Veracruz was a women's clothing store from the late 1970s into the 1980s at 17 Danbury Road, Girolmetti Court, with the slogan, "designer clothes at discount prices." In 1983 it called itself "the first discount store in Ridgefield." [P4/18/1983]

Ethan Allen Highway, also known as U.S. Route 7, is the only road through Ridgefield that bears same name in three states. Technically the entire 312-mile length from Norwalk to the Vermont-Canada border is officially known as Ethan Allen Highway, but some towns use local names, such as Sugar Hollow Road in Danbury, and Danbury Road in Wilton. In Ridgefield, from Route 35 north to Danbury line, it is Danbury Road; "Ethan Allen Highway" is used for Route 7 in Ridgefield south of Route 35 to the Wilton line in Branchville. *The American Guide* (1949) says the name was chosen "because it passes through the Green Mountains (Vermont) where Ethan Allen (who was born in Connecticut) and his Green Mountain Boys fought for independence of Vermont from NY domination and at the same time put down Tory opposition during (the) Revolution and in 1775 launched their successful attack on Fort Ticonderoga." *Connecticut,* a 1938 WPA guide,

takes a different tack, saying “US 7 is known as the Ethan Allen Highway because it was the route taken by the eager-eyed recruits from Connecticut who hurried north to join the Green Mountain Boys.” *See also* Route 7, Super 7, Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike, Sugar Hollow Turnpike, *and* Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike. [RN]

Ethan Allen Preparatory School was a private high school for golfers established in 2020 at the former Stonehenge Inn (*q.v.*) by the nearby Golf Performance Center. *See* Golf Performance Academy.

Eureka V LLC is the owner of 156 acres, the remnants of a 678-acre spread it purchased in 1998 from IBM (*q.v.*) on Bennett’s Farm Road (then called Maplewood Road). The land was the core of the old Outpost Farm (*q.v.*) of Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*), part of which was later the Fox Hill Inn (*q.v.*). The town condemned 522 acres northerly and easterly of Bennett’s Farm Road, paying Eureka $8.5 million, and sold it to the state; it’s now Bennett’s Pond State Park. In 2024 Eureka still owns 156 acres and buildings south of Bennett’s Farm Road, which it sought to develop, at first for corporate offices and then for multifamily housing. The Planning and Zoning Commission has limited its development of housing, which Eureka unsuccessfully took to court. [JFS]

Eustis, John R., (1882-1955), a retired newspaper man and public relations counsel in New York, moved to Old Branchville Road in 1936. He built the pond called Lake Noroneke from a swamp on his property. He was the father of Edwina Eustis Dick, the opera singer who lived on the property until the early 1980s. Eustis Lane (*q.v.*) recalls the family. [JFS]

Eustis Lane, a dead-end road off Old Branchville Road, serves a 1999 subdivision of 35 acres into 11 lots by John N. Sturges. The land had belonged to Alexander and Edwina Eustis Dick (*q.v.*) and earlier by John R. Eustis (*q.v.*) [RN]

Evergreen Place is a short dead-end road off Pheasant Lane, part of the Scodon III subdivision approved around 1974 for Jerry Tuccio, and subsequently developed by Carl Lecher and others. [RN]

Eversource, an electricity supplier in Ridgefield, was called Connecticut Light and Power Company until 2015 when CL&P’s parent company, Northeast Utilities, rebranded itself as Eversource. Connecticut Light and Power Company became part of Northeast Utilities in a 1966 merger, but retained its name. Eversource also supplies the natural gas in Ridgefield and, since 2017, has owned Aquarion, the local water company. *See also* Electricity. [JFS]

E.W. Morris Memorial Library is the original name of the Ridgefield Library building, dedicated in June 1903, a gift to the town from James Morris (*q.v.*) in memory of his wife Elizabeth W. Morris, who died in 1899 at her home here. It was called “one of the finest buildings in town” by Ridgefield Design Council (2002). *See also* Ridgefield Library. [JFS]

Executive Pavilion is an office condominium developed by Charles Szentkuti (*q.v.*) at 90 Grove Street on part of the site of the former New England Institute for Medical Research (*q.v.*). It was first proposed as a three-story, 90,000-square-foot office building in February 1984; revised to two stories at 42,000 square feet in April 1984 [P4/26/1984].

F

Factory Pond once existed east of Route 7, north of Topstone Road. Fed by Norwalk River, it supplied water for David and Daniel Banks' woolen factory in 1830s, a successor to Hugh Cain's fulling mill. *See* Cain's Hill Road. [RN]

Fadiman, Edwin A. Jr., (1925-1994), was a novelist and journalist who lived in Ridgefield from 1979 until around 1988. His best-known novel was *Who Will Watch the Watchers*, set in World War II Germany. [NR]

Fagley, Scott Langdon, (1945 to 1980), was a fashion writer and editor for *New Woman, Esquire* and *Gentlemen's Quarterly.* He lived on Ivy Hill Road. [P9/11/1980]

Fainer, Percy (1925-1994), a native of Montreal, was a chemist who worked for Clairol, Seagram, IBM, Perkin-Elmer, but was known locally as an artistic photographer. A member of the Ridgefield Guild of Artists, he lived on Lisa Lane. His wife, **Jocelyn "Jo" Fainer** (1930-2025) was active in the library and the Ridgefield Scholarship Group (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Fair Fields was the name of an estate at 35 Golf Lane, featuring brick Georgian mansion, built in 1903. *See also* Cary Wellington, Douglass Montgomery. [WWW]

Fair Grounds, The, was the site of the Ridgefield Fair and Cattle Show (*q.v.*) from at least 1865 until 1881 on the east side of Wilton Road West opposite Olmstead Lane. It included a racing track and large exhibits hall. [RN]

Faircourt was the name used for an estate at 77 High Ridge by Helen Minturn Post. It was later called Herrick House or Grey Shingles. Gerardus Post Herrick (*q.v.*) inherited Faircourt from Post. [WWW]

Fairfield County Bank is the name adopted in 2004 by the former Ridgefield Savings Bank (*q.v.*) and Ridgefield Bank, headquartered at Danbury and Farmingville Roads, with offices on Main Street and on Governor Street. The 1.9 billion community bank has 17 offices, plus additional ATMS, in Fairfield County in 2024.

Fairfield County Courier was a short-lived daily newspaper founded by Ridgefielder Donald I. Rogers (*q.v.*) in 1969. [JFS]

Fairfield County Musical Association was formed June 7-9, 1854, in Ridgefield during a musical convention at which a chorus of nearly 200 singers performed, directed by Professor I.B. Woodbury of New York. Officers included Ridgefielders Rev. Friend W. Smith, minister at the Methodist church, president; G.C. Mead, secretary; and C. Smith Jr., treasurer. More than 100 people joined the association at the meeting, which may have been sponsored by the Ridgefield Musical Association (*q.v.*). [RT]

Fairfield County Rail Road Company was incorporated by the General Assembly in May 1835 to build a "single, double or treble rail road or way" from Danbury to either Fairfield or Norwalk, possibly running through Ridgefield. [RT]

Fairfield County Trust Company, a bank that had earlier been First National Bank and Trust Company of New Canaan, merged in May 1959 with First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). It kept its own name. [RPC]

Fairfield Court is a short dead-end road off Manor Road at Ridgefield Manor Estates (*q.v.*), probably named for the county in which Ridgefield is situated. It was accepted by a TM in 1961. [RN]

Fairfield Lunch at 452 Main Street where Question Mart was later located for many years. The Fairfield Lunch was opened in about 1925 by Peter Chrisafis and George Papageorge, and continued in business under that name until, in 1935 the Chrisafis and Papageorge families moved to Cambridge, Mass., and by 1940 it was Boyd's Lunch (*q.v.*). For a while it was also the **Village Grill**, run by William Dingee, and also **Belmont Restaurant**, operated by Leo Pambianchi and Elvira Girolmetti, possibly the last restaurant in that spot. (Note: Histories vary on the order of the different restaurants, with Fairfield first and Belmont last.) [DD63, DD74, RPJ]

Fairhaven was the first Ridgefield home of Metropolitan Opera star Geraldine Farrar (*q.v.*) from 1924 to 1954, located at 209 West Lane. Earlier it was called Northoline (*q.v.). See also* Butterfly.

Fairhope Country School was a private coed school for nursery through eighth grade that operated from 1931 to 1936 at the Hickories (*q.v.*) in Farmingville. Tuition was $1,000 a year (about $16,000 in 2022), and a maximum of 25 children were enrolled. Summer camp was also available. Owners were John H. and Mary Conroy (*q.v.*); Mrs. Conroy later operated a nursery school and kindergarten in Scarsdale, N.Y. [SD]

Fairlawn Cemetery, Ridgefield's "newest" cemetery, was established in 1909 on North Salem and Mapleshade Roads, and consists of 1.1 acres bordering the Titicus and Hurlbutt Cemeteries. It is served by a loop road that enters from North Salem Road just south of Settlers Rock and across from New Street. Privately owned by the Donnelly family, it contains about 630 gravesites and memorial stones, and is still active. (Incidentally, there are 27 Fairlawn cemeteries in the U.S.) [HLYB]

Fairview Avenue runs between Barry Avenue and Bryon Avenue, part of Dr. Benn Adelmar Bryon's Bryon Park (*q.v.*) subdivision of around 1909. It probably reflected the "fair view" of both the town and West Mountain. It was originally called Fairview Street. [RN]

Family Room, The, was a small restaurant catering to teenagers in the mid 1960s at Grand Union shopping center, opened in February 1966 and operated by Dick and Ruth Fay. It was also known as The Shaggy Dog. [JFS]

Farm Hill Road is part of the Ramapoo Hills subdivision (*q.v.*), developed by Judge Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v.*), starting about 1956. The road, accepted by town in 1963, traverses pastures of the old Irving B. Conklin Sr. (*q.v.*) dairy farm, operated there from around 1928 to 1948. [RN]

Farmers Against the Crown is a book containing comprehensive account of the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*), revealing much new information and correcting many old mistakes in earlier histories. Written by Keith Marshall Jones (*q.v.*), it's 162 pages, paperback, extensively illustrated, and was privately printed in 2002. [JFS]

Farmers Mills District is a term that appears in a single 1869 deed for 3.5 acres in what is now Farmingville area. It was probably just a mistake. [RN]

Farmersville is a variant of Farmingville that appears in deeds between 1841 and 1856; one deed said "Farmers Ville District." [RN]

Farmingville is the section of town, much of which is a fairly flat plain, that extends generally east of Great Swamp to the Redding line. The name first appears in an 1839 deed, probably coined for the excellent agricultural soils of the area, with the addition of the French suffix, meaning a town or settled place, that was in fashion in the early 1800s. A school district there existed at least by 1784 when it was called the Fifth School District. Before Farmingville came into use, the area was simply described as "east of the Great Swamp." Another 19th Century name for the area was Woodchuck (*q.v.*). Keith Jones wrote a history of the neighborhood called *The Farms of Farmingville* (*q.v.*). [RN]

Farmingville Elementary School opened in February 1964, the town's third "modern" flat-roofed school. The school was behind schedule so its students had been housed since September 1963 at Ridgebury School on double sessions. Farmingville's first principal was Robert McDonald (*q.v.*), who retired in 1989. In December 1963, the Board of Education rejected a request to call it the "John F. Kennedy School" to honor the recently assassinated president. [JFS]

Farmingville Road is a very old highway from Danbury Road to the junction of Lounsbury and Cain's Hill Roads, and originally included Cain's Hill Road (*q.v.*) and Topstone Road in serving as a main route to Redding; it is shown as such on Blodget's 1792 map (*q.v.*) of Connecticut. Originally, the present Lee Road to Limekiln Road and the south end of Limekiln Road were Farmingville Road, as it skirted the northern edge of the main body of Great Swamp. The name of Lee Road and the longer Limekiln Road were created when a straight bypass across the swamp was built around 1914. For a while, that bypass was called "Bailey's New Road" (*q.v.*) [RN]

Farmingville schoolhouse on Farmingville Road stood opposite present Farmingville School site in District Number 10. The schoolhouse had been a gift of Gov. George Lounsbury in 1900; the previous Farmingville building, a bit farther east and dating from mid-1800s, was razed ca. 1900 — land on which it stood was given to Louis Morris Starr (*q.v.*) in exchange for the site of Lounsbury gift. George and his brother, Phineas, had been schooled in the older building and both became governors of Connecticut. The schoolhouse closed in 1937 as part of the school consolidation, and pupils went to the Garden and East Ridge schools in the village. Long empty, the building was sold about 1950 to Alexander Alland, a noted photographer, who moved it to North Salem to serve as his studio (it is still there 2025). *See also* Farmingville. [SD]

Farms of Farmingville, The, is a two-century history of 23 Ridgefield, Connecticut farmhouses and the people who gave them life, focusing on Farmingville district but covering the greater community from the 1700s into the 20th Century. The hardcover book by Keith Marshall Jones (*q.v.*) is 509 pages, with many maps, house plans and photos; indexed. It was privately published in 2001. [JFS]

Farrar, Geraldine, (1882-1967), was an international opera star, but especially well known at the Metropolitan Opera in NYC. A native of Massachusetts, she began her career as a teenager in Europe where she made her debut with the Royal Opera in Berlin in 1901. Her acclaimed debut at the Met occurred in 1906. Over the years she starred with Enrico Caruso, Antonio Scotti, and Louise Homer. In the 1910s, she made eight Hollywood movies,

albeit silent, and was married to movie star Lou Tellegen from 1916 to 1920. She was also said to have been a lover of conductor Arturo Toscanini (*q.v.*). She retired in 1922, moving to 209 West Lane in 1924, to be near her father, Sidney (*q.v.*); she called her home Fairhaven. She moved in 1954 to a smaller house at 34 New Street. Her companion for 50 years was **Sylvia Blein**. Farrar was active in helping Girls Scouts, Red Cross, American Women's Voluntary Services, the Ration Board during World War II in Ridgefield. [WWW, DD302-04]

Farrar, Sidney D., (1859-1935), a native of Maine, was a professional baseball player and father of opera star Geraldine Farrar (*q.v*.). In 1883, he joined Philadelphia Phillies (*nee* Quakers) in the National League for the team's very first season. As first baseman he started seven years. His last major league season was 1890, with the Philadelphia Athletics. His lifetime batting average was .253, with 905 hits, 18 home runs. He played 943 games as a professional at a salary of from $900 to $2,000 a season ($29,000 to $66,000 in 2024 dollars). In 1922 Farrar, who'd been a Massachusetts merchant, bought a North Salem Road farmhouse and 30 acres from Joseph T. Hubbard, calling it "Farrar's Thirty Acres." (DD says 40 acres). [WWW]

Farrar Lane is a short old road between Tackora Trail and North Salem Road, recalling Sidney D. Farrar (*q.v.*), who owned a farm bordering on the south side. The road appears on Clark's 1856 map of Fairfield County. According to some deeds, it was formerly considered to be the southern end of Mamanasco Road. [RN]

Farrar's Thirty Acres was a name Sidney D. Farrar (*q.v.)* gave to his farm on North Salem Road; *see* High Pastures. [WWW]

Farrell, Ernest, (-1944), was a private in the U.S. Army who was "captured by Germans and shot." A former Naugatuck resident, he left a wife, Luella Farrell of Ridgefield, reported the *Waterbury Democrat* on Dec. 4, 1944. [JFS]

Farruggio brothers were criminals who grew up in Branchville, where they were known as bootleggers. They were arrested there and convicted of receiving stolen goods in 1931. By 1934, **Salvatore "Sam"** (1913-35) and **Joseph** (1916-35) were wanted for killing a New York City policeman who tried to prevent them from burning down a Catholic church; a bystander was also killed and another policeman seriously injured in a shootout. The brothers were later shot and killed by police in Brooklyn. The name is sometimes spelled Farruggia. [WR]

Far-Vu Farm is the name of Francis D. Martin's (*q.v.)* farm on the north end of Lake Mamanasco from the 1940s to the 1980s. The property had earlier been Ridgefield School and Chekhov Theater Studio (*q.v. each).* The farm was subdivided in the late 1900s and includes Tea House Lane (*q.v.*). The name also appears as Farview and Farvue. [JFS]

Fashion Shop, The, was a women's clothing store in the 1950s and early 60s, operated by Charles and Mildred Klein at ONS121 Main Street (now part of 418 Main Street). [FB, RHCM]

Fasolo, George, A. (1927-2008), a native of Hartford, was the first director of the Ridgefield Community Center, serving from 1954 to 1960. Two years later, he began a 30-year career with the Cardinal Shehan Center in Bridgeport. While here he helped found and coached the first Pop Warner

football team in the state, and taught physical education at St. Mary's School. [JFS]

Fast, Howard, (1914-2003), was a high school dropout who published his first novel before he was 20. By the turn of the 21st Century, he had written more than 80 books of fiction and nonfiction. Millions of copies of Fast titles have been printed in a dozen languages, including *Spartacus, Citizen Tom Paine, Freedom Road, The Hessian* (set in Ridgefield) and some that were made into movies or TV series. He lived on Florida Hill Road in the 1960s and early 70s. [WWW]

Father Edd: *See* Rev. Edward Schultz,

Faubel, S. Scott, (1924-1981)**,** a former bus company owner, created Shadow Lake Orchards in Ridgebury. In 1952 he began planting apple trees on his parents' farm on Shadow Lake Road. By 1974, he had more than 1,200 trees and a popular farm stand selling apples and cider [P1/29/1981]. The orchard is now part of Boehringer-Ingelheim's campus; many of his trees are still alive. [JFS]

Fawcett, Robert, (1903-1967), a native of England, was once called "an illustrator's illustrator." His art was so respected that it was commemorated on a 2001 U.S. postage stamp. He did paintings for virtually every magazine of note in the country, illustrated books, and wrote about his craft — his book *On the Art of Drawing* (1958) was popular for years. He was one of the founders of Famous Artists School in Westport, and lived on Nod Hill Road. [WWW]

Fayerweather, Frederic, (1860-1941), a Ridgefield native and lifelong resident, attended Florida Schoolhouse, taught at Limestone and Ridgebury Schools, and soon went to work for Louis Comfort Tiffany in NYC. There, he became expert on and designer of stained glass, especially for churches, and traveled widely for Tiffany. He commuted to NYC for a half century and was active in the music program at St. Stephen's Church, for which he left a large bequest. In 1914 he became the first person in Ridgefield to cast a ballot using a voting machine. [WWW]

Fayette, James, RHS 1988, became a principal dancer with the NYC Ballet, retiring in 2005. He had taught at the Colburn School in Los Angelesl, which focuses on the performing arts. He grew up on South Salem Road and, when given an Arts Award by ROTA in 2025, credited the town's "rich cultural heritage" with having helped inspire him to a career in dance, citing people like Patricia Schuster and Joyce Flanagan (*q.v. each*) with fostering his interest in dance and music. [P9/3/1987, JFS]

Faza Motorsport was a dealer selling the Fiat Abarth 1000 sports car in 1963, apparently by special order, and was located at ONS#17 Governor Street.

FCIAC is the Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference, founded in 1961, to which Ridgefield High School has belonged for many years.

Federated Woman's Club: *See* Ridgefield Woman's Club.

Federer, Charles A. Jr., (1909-1999), a noted astronomer, was longtime editor of *The Sky and The Telescope* magazine. As a boy, he attended 3 three years of Alexander Hamilton High School while his parents lived in Redding. [NH6/24/1925/ NYT10/2/1999]

Feist, Sam, RHS 1987, was named CEO of C-SPAN, the non-profit cable TV channel covering government, in 2024 after a long career at CNN, where he was Washington bureau chief from 2011 to 2024, and where he won four

Emmys. When he was at RHS, Feist was very active with Tiger TV, providing video coverage of many events — including school board meetings — for the community cable channel. [JFS]

Felsenberg was the estate/mansion of diplomat William Harrison Bradley (*q.v.*), built in the early 1900s on West Mountain in what's now the Blacksmith Ridge Road area. The house burned down in October 1921. The name is German for "rock hill." [P10/1921, DD195, DD285]

Fence viewers were town officials elected annually by the ATM to check on the condition of farm fences in their districts and to order repairs when needed. The aim was to avoid damage to crops by livestock that had escaped their enclosures. *See also* haywards[JFS]

Feneley, James Nelson, (1953-1974), RHS 1972, was killed in 1974 when the small plane he was piloting crashed in a wooded area of Roxbury during a rain storm at 2:30 a.m. Two fellow 1972 RHS graduates died in the same crash. They were returning to Danbury Airport from a trip to Block Island. He was the son of James and Hilda Feneley. His gravestone in St. Mary Cemetery says: "In flying I tasted the wine of the gods of which those on the ground could know nothing." [P9/5/1974, FAG]

Ferndale Farm along Spectacle Lane and Gay Road belonged to Arthur W. Northrop from around 1890 to the late 1930s. It was later the estate of Henri Doll (*q.v.*) of Schlumberger-Doll (*q.v.*).

Festival 2000, Ridgefield's New Year's Eve celebration Dec. 31, 1999, to welcome the new millennium, included many concerts under tents on the Community Center grounds and fireworks at midnight. A 124-page softcover book, *Festival 2000: Ridgefield Enters the 21st Century,* offered a profile of Ridgefield, its many activities, businesses, agencies, etc. (First Selectman-emeritus Abraham Morelli was chair of the planning committee, but missed the event — he was in Syracuse, NY., awaiting the birth of a grandchild.) *See also* Y2K. [JFS]

Fiala, Dennison F., (1935-2014)**,** a mechanical engineer, was a GOP candidate for congress in 1980, and headed Ridgefield's celebration of the national Bicentennial in 1976. He and his wife Beverly moved to Cooper Hill Road in 1970. He moved elsewhere in 1985 and died in Guilford. [P5/15/2014]

Fibber was a nickname for Fabio Paul Biagiotti (*q.v.*).

Field Crest Drive runs from Wilton Road West, apparently along or across the crest of a field, to Silver Brook Road, serving Parting Brook Estates (*q.v.*) subdivided by Charles W. Weitzel Sr., (*q.v.*). The name appears first on a 1955 map but development did not begin until the 1960's. The first section of the road, ending in a cul-de-sac, accepted by the town in 1968. The road was extended to join with Silver Brook Road around 1976. The name often appears as Fieldcrest [RN]

Fields, Gail Rogers Glissmann, (1940-2015), who moved to Ridgefield as a child and was RHS 1960, was an artist who created Ridgefield's commemorative medals (*q.v.*) honoring Benedict Arnold and David Wooster for the 1977 anniversary of the Battle of Ridgefield. She was then known as Gail Glissman(n), married to Fred Glissman(n) (*q.v.*), and was active in the local arts scene. After divorcing in 1980, she married Charles Fields in 1991, and moved to Cape Cod where she became inspired by the coastal scenery. [WWW]

Fierstein, Harvey, (1954-), a native of Brooklyn, is an actor, playwright,

comedian, and gay activist, who has won four Tony awards and an Emmy nomination. His acclaimed Torch Song Trilogy is about a homosexual man struggling to live in New York. As a Ridgefielder, he has spearheaded efforts to help AIDS patients, particularly at Bread & Roses, a hospice in Georgetown. He has also led gay pride celebrations here. He has lived on Hawthorne Hill Road since 1985. In 2026, he received the Spirit of Dr. King Community Service Award (*q.v*.). [NR]

Fife and Drum was a restaurant in the 1950s and 60s at about today's 105 Danbury Road. The building was razed and the site later became Friendly Ice Cream restaurant and then a Pizza Hut. In 2020s, it's the site of the Heritage Square Shopping Center (*q.v*.).

Fifth Connecticut Regiment is a Revolutionary War unit founded 1775, most of whose members were recruited from Fairfield County. The regiment fought or was stationed at Fort St. John, Quebec City, Ridgefield, Germantown, Valley Forge, Morristown, and Yorktown. The regiment was initially commanded by Col. Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield and was disbanded in 1783. In 1974, a group of mostly Ridgefielders re-established the Fifth as an honorary unit to re-enact the lives and battles of Revolutionary soldiers. Founders were Dennis Ambruso, Eric Chandler, Otto DePeirne, Jim Freebairn, Rick Gillespie, Fred Glissmann, John Passiglia, Tom Pearson and James Purcell, Jr. It is still doing re-enactments in 2026. [JFS]

Fifth Lane is another of the "numbered" dead-end roads at Lake Mamanasco, part of the Eight Lakes (*q.v.*) development. [RN]

Fifth Purchase of American Indian land by the Proprietors for the Town of Ridgefield occurred March 7, 1729. Most or all of this land is now in North Salem, thanks to the Oblong (*q.v.*). The sellers were seven natives, including Taporneck, Wett Hams, Crow, Moses, and Sam.

Fifty Coins was a restaurant in the early 21st Century, operated by Larry Debany in the rear of 426 Main Street. Debany sold it around 2014 to a Fairfield restaurateur, and it closed in 2016. In 2019, Tablao Wine Bar and Restaurant opened in the space. *See also* 850 Wood Fired Pizza Restaurant. [JFS]

59 Bank Street was a restaurant at 37 Ethan Allen Highway, operated by Arthur Michaelsen (*q.v.*) and wife Julia, who later ran Bartolo at 103 Danbury Road. It was named for a restaurant they owned simultaneously at 59 Bank Street in New Milford. [JFS]

Fillmore Lane is a short dead-end road off Ritch Drive, was named by and for Leslie D. Fillmore of Stamford who, in 1956, developed three lots on this road. He purchased the land from Harold Ritch, the subdivider. The town accepted the road in 1963. [RN]

Fillow Mine, also called the Branchville Mica Mine, was first excavated about 1876 by property owner Abijah N. Fillow. He sought mica, but what he found was considered inferior quality, and operations ceased by 1878. Yale scientists found dozens of minerals there. Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company (*q.v.*) mined quartz and feldspar there from 1891 to 1917. [BC]

Finance, Board of, was created in 1909 [P4/8/1909] with six members, appointed by the selectmen and the first selectman as ex-officio chairman. It became an elective agency by charter revision in the 1980s. The board each spring deliberates the budgets of the town agencies and schools, makes adjustments (often downward), and recommends them to the

Annual Town Meeting (*q.v*) for approval each May. It also acts on special appropriations. The first female member was Lucy Moffitt Lynch (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Finch, Alice Harding (1889-1977), a native of NYC, came to Ridgefield in 1913 when she married Harold E. Finch (*q.v*.). In 1927 she and her husband acquired the United Cigar Store (*q.v.*) in the Scott Block (*q.v.*), a business that later became Squash's (*q.v.*). She was the original owner and operator of the Green Doors Motel, 1952-67, as well as the Circle Luncheonette (*q.v. each*). She was active in the Women's Republican Club and Sunshine Society and, for many years, was Republican registrar of voters. [RN]

Finch, Harold Everett, (1886-1952), a Republican leader in town, was state representative, 1947-49. He operated the United Cigar Store (*q.v*.), a forerunner of Squash's (*q.v.*), and was a real estate agent. He was the father of Lewis J. Finch (*q.v*.). [NR]

Finch, Lewis J. (1916-2003), a Ridgefield native, was a real estate developer and agent, whose subdivisions included Chestnut Hills Estates, Rolling Hills, Hunter Heights, and Colonial Heights (*q.v. each*). He was president/chairman of Ridgefield Boys' Club, Ridgefield Library board, Village Bank and Trust Company. Known as "Bub" or "Bubby," he owned the building and had his office at 426 Main Street in the last half 20th Century, often working with his son, **Barry N. Finch** (1942-2022). [NR]

Finch Drive extends between Chestnut Hill Road and Harding Drive at the Chestnut Hills (*q.v.*) subdivision in Ridgebury, and was named for the family of Lewis J. Finch (*q.v.*), its developer. Development of the road began around 1958 and it was accepted by the town in 1963. [RN]

Finn, Joel E., (1938-2017), a native of NY state, was an IBM executive who was a well-known racing historian and author of a dozen books on Grand Prix race cars and racing. He once owned a Maserati 250F that had been owned and raced by Stirling Moss. He also drove race cars on the Grand Prix circuit. His collection of historical materials is now in the archives of the Rev Institute of the Collier Museum in Naples, Fla. He lived at 14 Nutmeg Ridge in the 1970s and early 80s. [WWW]

Finn, Roland E. "Ron", (1930-2010), a native of Stamford, was a Planning and Zoning commissioner and president of the Ridgefield Jaycees in the late 1960s, early 70s. Between 1962 and early 70s he and family lived on Grandview Drive, then North Street, when he worked for Perkin-Elmer. [P11/4/2010]

Fiorentini, Angelo "Angeluci," (1870-1937), a native of Italy, was a gardener on estates and an avid reader, especially Shakespeare. After his beloved dog Fanny was crippled by a car, he would bring Fanny to work with him by putting her in a wheelbarrow. He lived on Greenfield Avenue and is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [Impact]

Fire gong: In 1897 when the new Ridgefield Fire Department (*q.v.*) was formed and got its quarters in the town hall basement, a new alarm procedure was instituted to replace the tolling of church bells – a metal, wheel-shaped gong was hung at the rear of Town Hall where it could be struck with a sledge hammer to summon the volunteer firefighters. The gong was removed at some point and put in storage. For the Volunteer Fire Department's 100th anniversary in 1997, the original gong was mounted alongside the town hall on Bailey Avenue where it still stands today. [JFS]

Fire Hill is an oval-shaped hill, halfway between Great Pond and Umpawaug

Pond. Most of the hill, which reaches an elevation of nearly 700 feet above sea level, is in Redding, but the southwest slope crosses into Ridgefield along Route 7 at Stonehenge Estates. The name is first mentioned in an 1847 deed, possibly so-called because signal fires were lit here during Revolution, or for some early conflagration on the hill. [RN]

Fire Hill Acres is the original name for the 61-lot subdivision, now commonly called Stonehenge Estates, on the southwestern slope of Fire Hill (*q.v.*) off Route 7. Approved in 1963, the plan included Jerry's Court (now Druid Lane), Riverside Drive, Longview Drive, and Bobby's Court, named for the son of the developer, Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*). [RN]

Fire Hill Road skirts the top of Fire Hill (*q.v.*), extending from Pickett's Ridge in Redding southward into Ridgefield, then along the Ridgefield town line and back into Redding, emerging at Simpaug Turnpike. The Ridgefield section is sometimes called "East Fire Hill Road" on maps. [RN]

Fire of 1895, Ridgefield's most destructive conflagration, broke out Sunday, Dec. 8, around 9 p.m. in the Bedient & Mead building (later the Bedient building which, in 2026, houses Books on the Common *et al*.). By the time it was contained at 3 a.m. Monday, it had destroyed 10 buildings housing at least 13 businesses plus several apartments on the east side of Main Street and north side of Bailey Avenue. The cause was never determined though arson was suspected. The loss was estimated at $100,000 (about $3.7 million in 2024 dollars). [P12/13/1895, DD69, RIR243] *See also* fires.

Fire police is a group of volunteers under the Ridgefield Fire Department who direct traffic and perform certain other special services at the scenes of fires, auto accidents, and other emergencies, supplementing the Ridgefield Police. They also may direct traffic at special community events. [JFS]

Firehouse, Catoonah Street, had its site approved by town meeting Aug. 10, 1907. The meeting also approved $3,500 toward building cost, which completed 1908 in Georgian Revival style. Much of the cost was raised by donations, especially from wealthy summer people, and from fundraising such as the Firemen's Fair (*q.v.*).

Firehouse, Town Hall (first): The first fire station was authorized January 23, 1897, at a special town meeting which instructed the selectmen to fix rooms in the basement of the new Town Hall to accommodate the new equipment. The outline of the original arched equipment bays can still be seen in the lower level of town hall along Bailey Avenue. The first fire engines, holding hose or ladders and other equipment, were pulled by either a team of men or by horses obtained from George Scott Jr.'s livery stable next to the town hall to the east. (Later, at the Catoonah Street firehouse [*above*], Sperry's livery stable across the street housed fire horses.) *See also* Ridgefield Fire Department *and* Fire gong. [JFS]

Firelands: *See* Ridgefield, Ohio.

Firemen's Ball was an annual dance, outdoors in June, to benefit Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department. The first took place in 1938, but subsequent balls had to be discontinued due to WW2, and was replaced by a carnival after the war. However, the balls resumed in 1951 after state outlawed games of chance at carnivals; 300 people attended this ball, at $2.50 per person [P6/11/1981]. The events continued until 1980s, often held outdoors, such as at old high school field or tennis courts, or in the Ridgefield Skating Center. A total of 1,200 people attended 1966 ball; July

8, 1972, nearly 2,200 people — an all-time record — turned out on the high school tennis courts as Lionel Hampton and his band perform. By 1982, attendance was down to 600. The balls were discontinued later in the 1980s and replaced by the Firemen's Carnival, usually held on the grounds of the East Ridge Middle School. [JFS]

Firemen's Carnival, the modern replacement for the Firemen's Ball (*q.v.*) as a fundraiser for the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department, takes place in late June (after school ends) on the grounds of the East Ridge Middle School. [JFS]

Firemen's Fair was an annual fundraising event for the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department (*q.v.*), held in town hall in August in the early 20th Century. It included the sale of merchandise, an ice cream parlor, cake sale, a "fish pond," candy booth, grab bag, displays, decorations [P8/27/1908].

Fires: Noteworthy fires have included: *Sept. 18, 1868*: A blaze destroyed the recently built Catoonah Hall (*q.v.*) on Catoonah Street, the first floor of which was used for J.W. Rockwell's factory for making candlestick and other metal objects used in the home. Upstairs were apartments. Flames spread to some smaller buildings, including one used by Catholics as a church, which was also destroyed. The *Middletown Constitution* reported "the fire was the largest ever known in Ridgefield. *Dec. 8, 1895*: *see* separate listing under Fire of 1895. *Oct. 15, 1912:* The Adams & Keeler stable on lower Main Street was set afire by an arsonist. Firemen wet down the partially burned barn and inspected nearby buildings, but soon after they left, the remains of the stable burst into flame and it completely burned down. Two horses died, but many horses and carriages were saved. An arsonist was later charged. *June 23, 1921:* Lightning struck a shed at Mortimer C. Keeler's farm at Whipstick, igniting a blaze that spread to barns and stables. The fire department's "motor apparatus" responded, but could do little. *Oct. 21, 1921:* Hawk's Nest, a huge, 28-room mansion built by hotel-owner William S. Hawk on Branchville Road, burned to the ground in a spectacular blaze. The place had been vacant for some years. *April 26, 1922:* A large building near today's 16 Bailey Avenue burned down; it contained a bakery, a cooperative store, and several apartments. Also lost was a small building that housed the instruments of the old Ridgefield Band. *Jan. 9, 1926:* Much of the mansion of Robert Scripps (*q.v.*) was destroyed; RP called it "The worst and most insidious fire the [fire] department had ever fought." It caused $20,000 in damages [$354,000 in 2024 dollars]; *March 24, 1926:* 11 head of cattle died when a large barn on Mortimer Keeler's farm on Nod Road burned to the ground, only five years after another fire destroyed buildings on the farm. *April 1, 1952*: The W. Knox Denham home, a Colonial-era saltbox, burned to the ground. The family escaped through a second floor window. *March 26, 1959*, A cat tipped over turpentine can, starting a fire that destroyed Richard A. Rainsford's barn on Florida Road, full of antiques, rare paintings, and 5,000-book library [3/26/1959]; *Feb. 27, 1960:* A fire gutted La Bretagne Inn on West Lane at Olmstead, the second time the inn burned in 13 years. The 1947 blaze helped spark the town to have 24-hour fire protection; this one sparked a campaign to buy an aerial ladder truck. *Dec. 3, 1978*: The Congregational Church House was destroyed by a blaze that was started by a child playing with a candle during a Christmas season program. *April*

1, 1984: A defective baseboard heater started a fire at 69 Indian Cave Road, Twin Ridge, that killed IBM executive John Manningham, 54, and his wife, Patricia. *May 26, 2005*: A blaze believed to have originated in the kitchen exhaust system of Gail's Station House restaurant destroyed the landmark Bissell building (*q.v.*) on Main Street, a building erected around 1896 after the great fire of 1895. [*See also* DD237]

Fireworks: A town meeting June 18, 1940 voted 19-17 to ban the sale and discharge of fireworks in Ridgefield. From 1960 to 1976, Rotary sponsored fireworks in the village, but the high cost of insurance plus traffic problems led to their demise there. In 1996 Fairfield County Bank began sponsoring them at the Ridgefield High School campus on North Salem Road. [JFS]

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Ridgefield's Christian Science congregation, has its church at 260 Main Street, built in 1964 and opened in 1965. The first Christian Science meeting here took place in 1902 in a house at the corner of High Ridge and Barry Avenue. The Christian Science Society of Ridgefield was established in 1924, and in 1942 became the First Church of Christ, Scientist. From 1929 to 1964, the congregation was housed in the "Old Hundred" building at 258 Main Street, just to the south, which soon became the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art and is now the museum's administration building. [RPC75]

First Congregational Church, also known as the First Society, is the town's oldest religious congregation. On Oct. 9, 1712, the General Assembly approved a church in Ridgefield by allowing the town to tax its residents "toward the settling and maintaining of the ministry." In the 18th Century, the Congregational church, descended from the Puritans, was also closely aligned with local government. The first church building, called the Meeting House completed in 1726, also served as the location of town government meetings and the community school. The first Meeting House stood on town green in front of today's Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church (*q.v.*). A subsequent meeting house dating from around 1800 was a little south of first and remained there until 1888 when new stone building was completed at Main Street and West Lane. This, the current church, was designed by J. Cleveland Cady (*q.v*.) on land donated by Henry K. McHarg (*q.v.*), a descendant of the second minister, Jonathan Ingersoll (*q.v.*). The congregation's first minister was Thomas Hauley (*q.v*.), who lived in the now-historic Hauley House (*q.v.*). He was followed by Ingersoll and Samuel S. Goodrich (*q.v.*). The 11-room parsonage, now called a parish house, opened April 23, 1913. A "Second Ecclesiastical Society" (*q.v*.) was created in Ridgebury in 1761. [P4/24/1913, JFS]

First Congregational Church Fair was a Christmas-themed event; in 1980, the 16th annual edition took place in the "new" Church House (Lund Hall). [P11/25/1980]

First Congregational Church House, where meetings, classes and special events took place, had been the former Ridgefield Club (*q.v*.), built in 1887. It burned down in December 1978 and was replaced by Lund Hall (*q.v*.). [JFS]

First Lane is the northernmost of the "number lanes" off Mamanasco Road, most of which were part of the Eight Lakes development (*q.v*.). [RN]

First National Bank of Ridgefield was founded in 1900 as town's first commercial bank, providing checking and other national services. It operated from an office in town hall as did Ridgefield Savings Bank). Its

building at 368 Main Street, corner of Governor Street, opened 1911, and still stands today, largely unchanged. The bank was later called First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield. It merged with Fairfield County Trust Company (*q.v.*) in 1959; by 2018, through many mergers, it became Wells Fargo. [JFS, RPC]

First National Market opened in May 1936 in the Scott Block (*q.v.*), described as "one of the most beautiful combination meat and grocery markets in Fairfield County." Tom Clark was manager. In 1947 it moved to the "Heyman Block" near today's 440 Main Street. Around 1960, the chain opened a large supermarket in the new Donnelly shopping center on Governor Street. The name soon changed to Finast (a portmanteau version of its old name and a pun on "finest"), but the store closed around 1974, replaced by Grand Central Market. In 1941, First National signed a lease for property at 360 Main Street, the south corner of Main and Governor Streets to built "a self-service store or super-market of the kind which has had a rapid growth throughout the country in recent years." [P8/7/1941] The plan was abandoned in the face of great opposition to expanding commercial uses on Main Street south of Governor Street. [JFS]

First Niagara Bank opened an office at 108 Danbury Road in 2012 after the company purchased many HSBC (*q.v.*) branches. The office here closed 2015 and customers were sent to its Norwalk branch. [JFS]

First Purchase of land for the settlement of Ridgefield occurred Sept. 30, 1708, when "Catoonah, sachem of Ramapoo Indians and Associates within her Majesties province of New York in America," sold the Proprietors, the first settlers, an estimated 20,000 acres for £100. *See also* Catoonah, *and* Purchases. [JFS]

First selectman, selectperson: *See under* Selectpersons, Board of.

First Society: *See* First Congregational Church.

Fischer, Marcus, (1918-1969), a musician and native of Missouri, was with his wife, Marguerite (*q.v.*), one of the five founders of the Ridgefield Symphonette, which became the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra (*q.v.*). He was its first president. From 1946 to 1961, he played French horn with the New York Philharmonic. He moved to Ridgefield in 1958, and taught at RHS two years, then in North Salem. [NR]

Fischer, Marguerite, (ca.1918-2006), was a cofounder and first conductor of the Ridgefield Symphonette, now Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. She was the wife of Marcus Fischer (*q.v.*) and later lived in Danbury. [NR]

Fischer, Robert C., (1881-1973), native of German, was called "one of Broadway's busiest supporting players in the first two decades of the 20th Century." The actor moved to Ridgefield in 1926 and was directing the Ridgefield Players (*q.v.*) in the 1930s. He performed on New York City stage in such players as Autumn Crocus, Sweet Adeline, Harem, [P4/5/1934], and in movies, such as Watch on the Rhine. He lived on Silver Spring Road.

F.I.S.H. (Friends In Service Here) provided free transportation for medical and therapy appointments for seniors or disabled residents of Ridgefield. *See also* Rides for Ridgefield. [JFS]

Fish and Game Club: *See* Ridgefield Fish and Game Club.

Fisher, Charles R., a native of Waterbury who grew up in Watertown and graduated from UConn, was Ridgefield's full-time town engineer when he came here in 1985. He retired in 2018. He oversaw many major

infrastructure projects, including municipal building sewer construction and many new roads. [JFS]

Fisher, George, was Ridgefield's postmaster from 1982 to 1987, the first postmaster in two centuries who was not a resident. Successor to Richard E. Venus (*q.v.*), he left here to be postmaster of Danbury. [P6/18/1987]

Fisher, Ira Joe, (1947-), a native of western New York, is a broadcaster, poet, and educator who has lived here since 1990 and has volunteered for countless community fund-raising benefits. He began as a weather reporter in Cincinnati, winning two regional Emmys there for writing. He later worked for WNBC, WCBS, and CBS network, in NYC. Author of three books of poetry he often does readings. He has presented many "Speaking Fearlessly" seminars and taught at UConn and Mercy College. In 2025 he was named Citizen of the Year by the Rotary Club (*q.v.*). [NR]

Fisher, Susanne, (1903-1990), was a concert and opera singer who lived on Silver Spring Road in the 1930s. Juilliard-educated, she gained fame singing the role of Cio-Cio-San in *Madame Butterfly* at the Metropolitan Opera in 1935, the first West Virginia native ever to sing at the Met. She was married to Clifford Menz (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Fisher Lane is a short, dead-end road running easterly off Old Trolley Road, north of George Washington Highway, at Stone Ridge Estates (*q.v.*). It honors Charles R. Fisher (*q.v.*), the town's first full-time engineer who designed the subdivision. [RN]

'Fishkill Road': A 1783 deed describes 50 acres, a house, and a barn, noting that "the road from Ridgefield to Fishkill (is) running through said land." The references is to North Salem Road, [RN]

Fitch, Thomas IV, (ca. 1700-1774), lived in Norwalk, was Yale 1721, and served as governor of the colony from 1753 to 1766. He owned a farm in eastern Ridgefield and western Redding (*see* Fitch's Farm). His son, Thomas V, is said by some to have been the inspiration for the song, "Yankee Doodle Dandy." [WWW]

Fitch's Farm was a tract of 132 acres in Redding on Ridgefield line near Great Pond, acquired in 1700s by Thomas Fitch IV (*q.v.*). Part of tract extended into present-day Ridgefield — this section was ceded to Ridgefield in 1786 because landowners at that time felt it was too far from Redding center. *See also* Blodgett's map of 1792 *and* Little Pond. [RN]

Fitzgerald, Edward J., (1923-1968), only 44 when he died, was a Pan-American Airlines pilot who'd moved to Tannery Hill Road in 1962. He soon became active in youth sports, holding offices with Little League and Red Raider football, as well as being active in scouting. He was chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission at his death. *See* Fitzgerald Field. [P8/8/1968]

Fitzgerald Field, a Little League ballpark next to Serfilippi Field on South Shore Drive at Lake Windwing, is named for Edward Fitzgerald (*q.v.*), a Ridgefield youth sports leader. It was opened in 1971. [RN]

Five Gold Rings was a gift shop in the Big Shop (*q.v.*) in 1980. [JFS]

Five Village Walks is a booklet of guided tours of Ridgefield village history, with over 50 pictures from past, written by Jack Sanders. It's 56 pages, indexed, and includes a map, and was published by Ridgefield Historical Society, most recently in 2008. [JFS]

Flagg, Darlene "Dee," the wife of Wilson Flagg (*q.v.*) and a former resident, was aboard Flight 77 when it crashed into the Pentagon Sept. 11, 2001.

She had been active in the Ridgefield Woman's Club and one of the leaders in its building of the Ballard Park Bandstand. She and her husband were living in Millwood, Va., where they had a farm and raised black angus cattle. *See also* Barbara Edwards. [JFS]

Flagg, Rear Admiral Wilson "Bud," a former Ridgefielder who was retired from both the U.S. Navy and as an airline pilot, was aboard Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon Sept. 11, 2001. A U.S. Naval Academy graduate, he served three tours as an F-8 fighter pilot in the Vietnam War, had been both a high-ranking officer in the Naval Reserve (with an office at the Pentagon) and an American Airline pilot. His Naval decorations included the Distinguished Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Air Medal and the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V. He and his wife **Darleen** (*q.v.*) had lived on Scott Ridge Road. [JFS]

Flaggy Boggs, ye: In 1717, two proprietors received grants of land at "ye Flaggy Boggs," possibly on the fringes of the Great Swamp – perhaps the area later called Reed Swamp (*q.v.*), situated in the triangle created by Lee, Limekiln and Farmingville Roads. A flag is an old term for a reed. [RN]

Flamesmen, The, was the marching drum corps of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department during various periods of the 20th Century. Wilfred Weaver resurrected the group in the 1970s. [DD266]

Flanagan, Joyce, (1955-2024), a WestConn graduate, was an acclaimed coordinator of music and the performing arts for the Ridgefield schools for 36 years. Her RHS choirs performed in Canada, Ireland, England, Germany, Austria and Italy. She was also noted for leading successful student stage productions. ROTA honored her contributions to education with a 2025 posthumous award. [JFS]

Flannagan, John Bernard (1895-1942), a noted American sculptor, is said to have spent the summer of 1937 in Ridgefield with a friend, Stephen Luce Brown. He was recuperating from a broken leg after being hit by a car, but he was also suffering from brain tumors and alcoholism. [JFS]

Flat Rock is a local name used as early as 1716 ("ye Flatt Rock Ridge") for area south of village generally along Wilton Road West. It's named for a massive stratum of rock that surfaces mostly between St. Johns Road and Wilton Road West, but which can also be seen as far north as Prospect Ridge and even in Danbury. The stratum said to be part of the same shelf on which Manhattan Island's skyscrapers have their foundations. [RN]

Flat Rock Brook, a term that appears in a 1717 deed for land "near ye Flatt Rock Brook, east of ye Rhode," is the east branch of the Silvermine River (*q.v.*), also later called the Beaver Brook (*q.v.*), which flows southward east of Wilton Road West. *See also* Silvermine Brook. [RN]

Flat Rock Corporation, founded in 1929, is the holding company of the Silver Spring Country Club (*q.v.*); it built and operates the club. *Seealso* Flat Rock Drive. [JFS]

Flat Rock District, an old school district in the south central part of town, includes Wilton Roads East and West, and St. Johns Road. *See* Flat Rock schoolhouse. [RN, SD]

Flat Rock Drive, a dead-end road off lower West Lane, is named for Flat Rock Corporation (*q.v.*), which built the Silver Spring Country Club, from whom developer Perry Katz had acquired his land. Oddly enough, the neighborhood is not in the old Flat Rock District, but was always part of

West Lane District. It was accepted by Town Meeting in 1965. [RN]

Flat Rock House is a name applied to the 160-acre estate between Wilton Road East and Nod Road, owned since the 1950s by the Landegger (*q.v*.) family. The main house was built in 1936. The estate was earlier known as Rolew Farm and Ivanhoe Farm (*q.v. each*). *See also* Flat Rock District, Whipstick Ridge.

Flat Rock Road appears on maps published in 1912 and 1936 for today's Wilton Road West (Route 33), which traverses the middle of the Flat Rock District (*q.v*.). [RN]

Flat Rock schoolhouse, serving District Number 9 in the mid- to late-19th Century, was one of the town's smallest schoolhouses, located on the east side of Route 33, Wilton Road West, nearly opposite Acre Lane. It was closed 1915, but the fate of the building is unknown. In 1930, the selectmen sold it at auction to Charles Hussey for $450 along with a 2,500-square-foot plot. The owners are believed to have sold the building, which was moved elsewhere — it may be the small house at 148 St Johns Road. The schoolhouse site bordered "Twin Maples" (*q.v.*), a roadside rest area, established when state highway was straightened there in 1928. *See also* Flat Rock District. [SD]

Flat Rock Woods, says Teller in 1878, was around Soundview Road. [RN]

Flax Mills turned the flax plant into fibers that could be woven into linen**.** One was operated by Bradley and David Burr, and Philip Keeler, around 1814, probably along upper Route 7 near Great Pond or in the Stonehenge area. [RLR 11/229]. *See also* Harry Gilbert. [JFS]

Flint, a brand of automobile made in Flint, Mich., was sold at Jacob and John Walters' (*q.v.*) dealership, 378 Main Street, in the 1920s. Flints were made by Durant Motors; the Walters also sold the Durant brand. [DD100, 107]

Flobee's, at 680 Danbury Road, a food stand, was scheduled to open in the fall of 2024. It was previously the Ridgefield Ice Cream Shop (*q.v*.). [P4/17/2024]

Floods: On *April 15 and 17, 1854,* more than 18 inches of snow fell— unusual for mid-April. Ten days later, temperatures in Ridgefield reached 70 degrees, and a few days after that, rains and the melting snow led to what *The Hartford Courant* called the worst flood in 200 years. Only two bridges were left on the train line between Branchville and Norwalk and several local mills were swept away. In *November 1866,* the dam on New Pond broke causing a flood that wept away two small buildings, a bridge, and a woman and child — both rescued. [Columbian Register 11/10/1866] On *Oct. 15 and 16, 1955,* 13.8 inches of rain fell in three days, wiping out roads and bridges on Norwalk and Titicus Rivers, and in Branchville on the Cooper Brook and Norwalk River; in one 24-hour period, 7.82 inches fell. The disaster led to the Norwalk River Flood Control Project (*q.v.*). *See also* Rainfall, Meisner's Inn.

Flores, Maria, was a pseudonym for Mary Main (*q.v*.)

Florida is first mentioned in an 1827 deed for three acres "at a place called Florida," bounded on the east by the Redding line. The name was later applied to two roads and a school district. The origin of the name is unknown — for a discussion of many possibilities, *see* [RN]

Florida Cemetery: *See* New Florida Cemetery *and* Old Florida Cemetery.

Florida Hill: US Geological Survey says this little round hill, 620 feet above sea

level, is situated southeast of Florida Hill Road about 1,200 feet west of the Florida Road junction. [RN]

Florida Hill Estates is a subdivision of 36 acres into 31 one-acre lots off the north side of Florida Hill Road, served by Ridgewood Road (from Florida Hill Road to Harvey Road) and developed around 1960 by William P. Connors and Harry Richmond (*see also* Meadow Woods). [RN]

Florida Hill Road, a fairly modern name for one of the town's oldest roads, was once a major route to northern Fairfield, now Redding. It existed by 1744 when it was known as the Mill Road because it led to a grist mill, erected by Peter Burr, on the Norwalk River (present site of Moongate — *q.v.*). It continued from there into Redding over what is now called Old Redding Road. [RN] *See also* Abbott's Mill Road.

Florida Road was formally laid out on Dec. 6, 1744, by the selectmen, who described it as starting at the Wilton line, running north to what is now Florida Hill Road, then called Abbott's Mill Road. It predates today's Route 7 and is part of an old route from Norwalk to Danbury. At least one tavern or inn stood along Florida Road, which tradition says served as a stagecoach stop in the 1700's. *See* Stephen Buttery. [RN]

Florida schoolhouse, on the south side of Florida Hill Road, just west of Florida Road, was a rare brick schoolhouse. It was razed around 1934 when Florida Hill Road was straightened; served District Number 11 in the mid to late 19th and early 20th Centuries. It also served students from western Redding. [SD]

Floyd: *See* storms.

Flu: *See* Influenza.

Fly Brook was the name of a stream apparently noteworthy for its insect population or for the speed of its waters (a meaning of "fly"). It's mentioned in several deeds between 1815 and 1828, and may have been in the vicinity of Nod, Branchville and Whipstick Roads. [RN]

Flynn, Mike, who grew up in Bethel and was an accomplished athlete in high school, joined the Boys & Girls Club of Ridgefield in 2002 as an intern. A 2002 graduate of Southern CT University, he became executive director in 2014. "During his career, his effort to develop all of the club's programs has been instrumental in the growth of memberships. The middle school and high school programs, Torch Club and Keystone Club, that Mike started 15 years ago, are now flourishing," the club said in 2024. He also oversaw the major expansion of facilities in 2023. [JFS]

Folliott, George, was a Ridgefield Tory who was jailed in 1777 as "a dangerous person." However, he quickly changed his tune. According to the Acts of the Governor and Council of Safety in Connecticut which was in session in Hartford on 13 June 1777, "George Folliot of Ridgefield, who was committed to the gaol in Hartford as a tory, was liberated from said prison, by paying all costs, and taking the oath of fidelity." [RIR81, AHR]

Folliot, John, brother of George, son of Joseph and Anna Tengue Folliot, was cited as a Tory in [New York Historical Society Quarterly, 1955 p118]. He was born at Ridgefield Aug. 22, 1754, and was younger brother of George.

Folliott's Ridge was an area west of North Salem Road near Barrack Hill Road, cited in an 1803 deed, that was derived from the name of landowner Bartlet Folliott (1785). The region was also called Toilsome (*q.v.*). [RN]

Fontana, Santino and **Jessica,** husband and wife, are Broadway actors and

singers. They moved to the West Lane area of Ridgefield in 2021. In 2019, Santino won a Tony Award for Best Actor in a Musical. Santino also voiced Prince Hans in Disney's 2013 animated feature *Frozen*. He has appeared in many movies and TV series. Jessica is also a writer and podcaster. [JFS]

Food Chandler, a European bakery and gourmet food store, opened in June 1981 at 90 Danbury Road. The mother-daughter owners were Sigrun and Anna Opgaard. [P6/25/1981]

Football made its first appearance in Ridgefield in 1905 when an adult town team was formed and lasted several years, practicing in a small field on Catoonah Street and playing area towns in a pasture at High Ridge and Barry Avenue. In the 1910s and 20s, the chief football action here was at the Ridgefield School (*q.v.*) on North Salem Road. A town team called the Spartans (*q.v.*) was formed among adults in the 1930s, playing teams from area towns. The Ridgefield Athletic Club fielded a team in the late 1930s. The first RHS team was organized in 1942 under Squire Burtis, coach for all the school's sports. It was a six-man squad; 11-man football did not arrive until October 1956. The only undefeated RHS football team was 1967. By the fall of 1968, the RHS Tigers had won 15 straight games, finally falling in a state tourney play to Northwest Catholic of West Hartford, 36-22. In September 1958, the Red Raiders (*q.v.*), the town's first midget football squad, was organized. Football stars who have lived here included Elmer Q. Oliphant and Raymond "Chip" Salvestrini (*q.v*. each). Marty Schottenheimer (*q.v.*), a coach with a number of pro teams, lived here in the 1970s when he was a NY Giants coach. Townsend B. Martin (*q.v*.) was an owner of the New York Jets. *See also* Tigers, Hilltoppers.

Foote, Anna Jenner, wife of Sterling Foote (*q.v.*) and daughter of William A. Jenner (*q.v.*), summered at 35 High Ridge Avenue for many years. She was listed in the 1914 Who's Who while her husband was not; she was active in many social organizations in NYC and fought for woman suffrage. [DD154]

Foote, Eli (1799-1864), a blacksmith, was born in Weston. In 1823 he married Mary Edmond of Florida District and two years later bought a house and blacksmith shop from Caleb Grumman on Main Street (probably 563 Main Street, nearly opposite the Casagmo entrance) for $1,200. Mr. Foote died of "acute gastritis" at the age of 65. Foote's Hill (*q.v.*) named for him. [RN]

Foote, Gaius St. John, (-1863), was a Union Army soldier who died during the Civil War, probably of disease. [Rockwell]

Foote, Sterling, (1880-1955), was a philologist and noted collector of books who taught at Yale, and who summered at 35 High Ridge Avenue many years in the early 20th Century, according to DD154. He was married to **Anna Jenner,** (1881-1947), who was a daughter of William A. Jenner (*q.v*.), who built the mansion.

Foote's Hill referred in the mid-1800s to Main Street from near Casagmo's entrance north to Pound Street, so-called because Eli Foote, a blacksmith, lived thereabouts. [RN]

Forbes, James Wendell, (1923-1999), a native of Alberta, was circulation director of *Life* magazine and was president of Life Circulation Company, now DIAL America. In 1970, he formed his own consulting firm in magazine publishing and direct mail marketing and was deputy publisher of Guideposts Associates. In 1979, he founded the School of Magazine Marketing, with the Magazine Publishers of America. He lived on

Peaceable Hill Road. [Profile 3/10/1983]

Ford, Gerald R.: As Rep. Ford, the House Republican leader, the future president spoke at a testimonial and GOP fund-raising dinner Sept 30 1966, for Romeo G. Petroni (*q.v.*), a Ridgefielder who was running for congress. The dinner was at the Cloverleaf Restaurant in Danbury, although a document in LOC giving excerpts of Ford's speech says the event was in Ridgefield. [JFS, LOC]

Fore Hills, a locality mentioned in early 19th Century deeds was probably just north of our town line in the Ridgebury section of Danbury. [RN]

Forest Drive, a short dead-end road off White Birch Road, was developed in part around 1962 by a firm called Hanco Inc. and probably named for the woods in the neighborhood. [RN]

Forge Pond, at the southwest corner of North Salem and Craigmoor Roads, was so called at least in the 1830's because a nearby late 18th Century iron works (*q.v*.) used the water stored there. The pond is now mostly a swamp. *See also* Craigmoor Pond, Foster's Mill Pond, Perch Pond. [RN]

Forrest, Todd, a longtime Ridgefielder, is vice president for horticulture and living collections at the New York Botanical Garden. In 2025 he wrote the NYBG book, *Gardening with Nature at the New York Botanical Garden*. [HS]

Forrester, Lot, (1782-1854), was a carpenter who served as a state representative in 1822 and 1828 and as a selectman in 1815. He died in Howard, NY. His father was State Rep. William Forrester. In the 1810s he had a cider mill in Ridgebury on the east side of Ridgebury Road south of Shadow Lake Road [RLR12/31,12/48]

Forrester, William, (ca.1744-1809), was a Ridgebury farmer who served as a state representative in 1777, 1778, 1792, 1794, 1795 and 1796. He is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. He was the father of State Rep. Lot Forrester. [JFS]

Fort Hill, the name of an area around North Salem and Barrack Hill Roads, appears Beers map in 1867. Many people, including Bedini, assumed it was related to the Revolutionary War, but a deed dated Feb. 15, 1721 describes "seven acres and three roods, lying in Titicus, north of Fort Hill." Thus, it probably recalled an American Indian fort somewhere up Barrack Hill. The name appears "Fort Hill, 1777" on two gateposts erected ca 1900 by James F. Kennedy at 224 North Salem Road. [RN]

Foss, Kassie, is a Westport watercolor artist who produced a series of note and greeting card views of Ridgefield from 1999 into the early 2000s. They were published by her Onion Hill Press.

Fossi, Elsie: *See* Norman Craig.

Fossi, Louis J., (1930-2013), a Ridgefield native, was first selectman from 1973 to 1981, an uncommon Democrat in that office in that era. His administration oversaw a period of growth and turmoil in town, and had many accomplishments: it built Ballard Green senior housing, helped bring Boehringer-Ingelheim to town, replaced the dump with a transfer station, moved the police out of the town hall basement and into their own headquarters, and found new uses for the empty, deteriorating old high school. Fossi had earlier been a selectman and a member of the Board of Finance. Fossi's career included running a shoe store (*see* Fossi's Footwear), owning a grocery store called Wayside Market (*q.v.*), and selling real estate. He retired to South Carolina. [WWW]

Fossi's Footwear was a shoe store on Main Street in the 1950s, as early as 1951, operated by Louis J. Fossi (*q.v.*)

Foster, Jonah, (1751-1815), was at the "New Haven Alarm" in the Revolution. He was often chosen to moderate town meetings dealing with Ridgefield's manpower commitments to the war and the payment of bonuses to recruited soldiers. He or a son Jonah had a mill at Asproom Mountain/ Aspen Ledges in 1783 [RLR6/101, Rockwell]

Foster, Jonah, possibly a son of the above Jonah, had a saw mill and clothing shop in 1841, says [RLR17/321]. He was also a part owner of the Mamanasco grist mill in 1831 and a saw mill "at the old iron works" site [RLR14/118, 16/150, 16/184, 19/338]

Foster, Richard T., (1919-2002)**,** a noted American architect who lived in Wilton, designed a Mid-Century Modern home at 805 North Salem Road for his brother, **Dr. Craig R. Foster**. He worked in partnership with Phillip Johnson of the Harvard Five on both the Glass House in New Canaan and Round House in Wilton. His work can be found across the country, including the New York University library and the Kline Biology Tower at Yale University. His funeral was at Jesse Lee United Methodist Church here.[NH9/17/2002]

Foster's Mill Pond appears in several deeds from the early 1840s, probably referring to an old pond along the east side of Craigmoor Road also called Forge Pond (*q.v.*). It was on the outlet stream from Lake Mamanasco whose waters kept it full. In the early 1800's, Jonah Foster (*q.v.*) owned several mills in the Scotland District, including a good portion of the gristmill at Mamanasco and a saw mill at North Salem Road opposite Craigmoor Road, using Mamanasco waters; also called **Foster's Pond.** [RN]

Founders Hall. Ridgefield's senior center, offers social, educational and physical fitness programs for people 60 or older. Conceived and built by Founders Hall Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization started by the families of Elaine and John Couri and Liz and Steven Goldstone, it opened Nov. 24, 2002, at 193 Danbury Road, land the town leased to the foundation next to the Recreation Center. Since then, Founders Hall has had more than 7,900 members; in 2025, its 3,897 members included 3,051 Ridgefielders. It offers roughly 250 courses, lectures, seminars, and wellness programs, "designed to support lifelong learning, physical well-being, creativity, and meaningful social connection for today's modern aging population." [JFS]

Fountain: **1**. *See* Cass Gilbert Fountain. **2.** "A spring or fountain of water" at the Isaac Lewis (*q.v.*) homestead on the west side of Main Street included lead pipes "laid in the aqueduct" and served at least five properties in the 1830s. **3.** The horse watering trough, gift of John Ames Mitchell, that once stood at Main and Catoonah Streets, and is now at West and Olmstead Lanes, has been called a fountain because it has a nozzle that can produce a spray and has a bowl below it. [RN]

Fountain Inn, a bed-and-breakfast, opened in 2019 at 114 Main Street in the the former Benjamin Hoyt (*q.v.*) homestead, one of the most interesting and historic houses in town. (*For more on this historic house, see under* Douglas Haynes, Paul *and* George Ullman, Dr. Henry Minot, Edward Kidder, Drs. Evelyn *and* James Inkster, *and* George Smillie.) [JFS]

Four Chimneys: 1. The former E.P. Dutton house on High Ridge was briefly called this by Mrs. Royal C. Van Etten [DD195]. **2**. An estate on Mill River Road in South Salem, N.Y., erroneously described as being in Ridgefield in

biographies of Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Four Corners is an old term for the intersection of Barrack Hill Road and Old West Mountain Road, so called as early as 1839. While only two corners exist today, the junction was four-way until the early 20th Century. A road, almost opposite Old West Mountain Road, went northerly down hillside to Tackora Trail, just south of Old Sib Road; by the 20th Century; it was probably deemed to be too steep and was abandoned by the town. [RN]

Fourth Lane is another of the short, dead-end roads off Mamanasco Road at Eight Lakes (*q.v.*). [RN]

Fourth Purchase from the American Indians by Ridgefield's proprietors on July 4, 1727, was signed by Taporneck, Wett Hams, Moses, Richard and Samm. They were paid £18, two guns, and three bottles of rum. The land is now in Lewisboro and North Salem, thanks to the Oblong exchange (*q.v*.).

Fowler, Benjamin, (1761-1801), served in the Revolution and is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW]

Fox Drive is a short, dead-end road off Aspen Ledges Drive at the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.)*, named for the many red foxes in the vicinity when development was beginning around 1959. Ridgefield is also home to the less common gray fox. *See also* Mammals. [RN]

Fox Flat was a 19th Century name for flatland on west side of North Street, south of and opposite Pine Crest Drive. [RN]

Fox Hill: 1. Fairly modern name for the hill, 740 feet above sea level, to the west of Route 7 along Bennett's Farm Road in Bennett's Pond State Park (*q.v*.). In 1914, Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v*.), built his Outpost Farm (*q.v.*) mansion at the summit. His house later became Fox Hill Inn (*q.v.*) **2**. A version of the Ridgebury locality, Fox Hills (*q.v.*). [RN]

Fox Hill condominiums consists of 286 units built from 1969 to 1972 by David L. Paul (*q.v.*) on the 28-acre former Outpost Inn/Shapley School (*q.v. each*) property. They were Ridgefield's first residential condominiums; Paul had planned apartments, but the Planning and Zoning Commission suggested he try marketing some units as condos. It was so successful, Paul made all units condominiums and then converted to condos the rentals at his already-built Casagmo (*q.v.)*. He chose the name to recall Fox Hill (*q.v.*), two miles north, site of former mansion of Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*), who had established the Outpost Inn and once owned this land. [JFS]

Fox Hill Drive, the main road through Fox Hill condominiums on Danbury Road. had been known as Outpost Drive (*q.v.*) when the property was the Outpost Inn. It was originally a segment of Danbury Road that was abandoned by the state in the 1920s when the straight stretch at the west edge of Outpost Pond was built. [RN]

Fox Hill Inn, a restaurant with French menu, was a popular tourist destination, opened in 1948 by Frederick F.M. Barker [RPJ7/14]. The inn was acquired in 1960 by John Yervant, who sold the property to IBM (*q.v.*) in January 1971. The inn's main building had been the mansion at Outpost Farm (*q.v.*). It was razed by IBM in 1975. Yervant built a new Fox Hill Inn in Brookfield. *See also* Bennett's Pond State Park. [JFS]

Fox Hill Lake, two bodies of water, connected by a stream just west of and 200 feet lower than nearby Fox Hill, is collectively called Fox Hill Lake. The artificial lake was created by the Pequot Realty Company of Bridgeport in the mid-1920's for the Ridgefield Lakes development. Its waters flow

northerly into the Bennett's Ponds, then easterly into the Saugatuck River and Reservoir. *See also* Pickerel Pond. [RN]

Fox Hills were first mention in 1802 when Theophilus Benedict of Danbury sold 12 acres "being the west part of my farm, including what I call Fox Hills and sheep pasture" in the vicinity of Shadow Lake and Beaver Brook Roads, west of Briar Ridge Road in northern Ridgebury. The term was used through 1846, morphing into "Fox Hill" in 1869 and 1876 deeds. [RN]

Fox Lake is an incorrect name for Fox Hill Lake (*q.v.*), appearing mostly in real estate promotions in the 2020s. [RN]

Foyt, Mary Hart, who came to Ridgefield as a teenager in 1965 and is RHS 1968, retired as tax collector in 2004 after 37 years of service to the town. She has later worked for many years at the front desk for the Ridgefield Library. She has been active in the community, and was named Rotary Citizen of the Year in 2001. [P3/29/2001, JFS]

Frame 'n' Art Shop was operated by Dennis Sullivan (*q.v.*), first on Main Street, then Bailey Avenue, and by 1986, at 421 Main Street. [JFS]

Frame Barn, The, was operated by artist Herb Eilertsen (*q.v.*) at 80 Grove Street in 1980, and continued until at least 2006. [JFS]

France, Beulah Sanford Osborn, (1889-1971), a native of Redding, married in 1908 Richard C. Osborn of Ridgefield; they had a daughter Winifred Osborn Carriere (*q.v.*). After Richard's death in 1919, Beulah studied nursing, became a nurse in NYC, married her university professor, and developed into a leading authority on child care, writing articles for more than 100 magazines, appearing on TV, serving as editorial director of *American Baby* magazine, and writing two books: *How to Have a Happy Child* (1952) and *How to Have a Happy, Healthy Baby* (1964). [JFS]

Frances Cleaners at 145 High Ridge Avenue was established and operated for more than 40 years by Frances Zandri Strouse. She installed state-of-the-art (at the time) dry-cleaning equipment and was said to have been the first dry-cleaner in Connecticut. The business was acquired at her death by her daughter and son-in-law, Marilyn and Brian Maltas (*q.v.*). The business was housed in a sizable Victorian house built early in the 20th Century by Samuel Carpenter (*q.v.*) and purchased by Strouse in 1943. The business closed July 30, 2016. [P7/25/2002]. In 2023 the house was purchased by the Greylock Group LLC of New Milford, and in 2024-25 efforts were underway to remediate pollution from TCE (tetrachloroethylene), found in the ground from the dry-cleaning operation. [JFS]

Franco, Robert, (1932-1983), a native of Yonkers, NY, who grew up in Norwalk, was an artist and former director of the Silvermine Guild College of Art, where he was also an instructor. He specialized in scenes of both New England and the Caribbean and moved to Cape Cod, where he died. He lived on Topstone Road from 1962 to 1972. [P10/20/1983]

Franklin, Fabian, (1853-1939), a native of Hungary and a polymath, was a civil engineer, surveyor, professor of mathematics at Johns Hopkins, editor of *The Baltimore News* and later associate editor of *The New York Evening Post*, and author of several books on economics and Prohibition. He lived on Barry Avenue with daughter, Margaret, from 1931 until his death. [WWW]

Franklin Heights is a small, 1960's subdivision of 11.5 acres between Barry Avenue and Nutmeg Court, which roads serve the lots. It was named by developer Lewis J. Finch for Professor Fabian Franklin (*q.v.*) and his

daughter, Margaret, who had owned the property. [RN]

Franks, James B., (1922-1995), was a mid-20th Century developer whose projects included Lisa Lane, Christopher Road, Hessian Drive, and Mamanasco Lake Park (*q.v. each*). [RN]

Frank's Corners is an old name of uncertain origin for the intersection of Ridgebury, Spring Valley and Mopus Bridge Roads, according to a map in Hyde's atlas of Westchester County and vicinity, published in 1908. It may, however, be a misplaced label for Black Frank's Corner (*q.v.*) nearby. [RN]

Frank's Restaurant on Route 7 in Branchville was operated in the 1930s by Frank Ancona about where the Tusk and Cup is located in 2026. [JFS]

Franzen, William E., a writer and husband of cartoonist Roz Chast (*q.v.*), has lived on New Street since 1990. He is famous locally for staging elaborate Halloween displays that require New Street to be shut down Halloween evening. He wrote the light-hearted 1988 book, *Hearing from Wayne and Other Stories*. [JFS]

Fraser, Arthur Cleveland, (1859-1934), a New York City patent attorney, built the 180-acre Eleven Levels (*q.v.*) estate starting around 1907. He lived at his house (24 Old Wagon Road) until his death. [RGE]

Fraser's Pond, on the north side of West Mountain Road, a little east of Eleven Levels Road, was probably created as part of the Eleven Levels (*q.v.*) estate. It is named for Arthur C. Fraser (*q.v.*) who amassed the estate. [RN]

Frazier, Mary Fuller, (1864-1949), was an eccentric heiress who bought a house on North Street in 1946. She gained widespread notoriety for bequeathing $1.5 million (more than $15 million in 2024) to the small town of Perryopolis, Pa., where she was born but which she had visited only once in the 61 years after she left. [WWW]

Fred's Exxon, originally Esso, was Fred Frulla's service station at 108 Danbury Road from 1979 to 1994. The site on the east side of "Gasoline Alley" is in 2025 occupied by Chase Bank. *See* Alfred Frulla. [JFS]

Freeholder's Corner was an early 18th Century name for the junction of the boundaries of the towns of Ridgefield, Redding and Danbury, just east of Route 7 and north of Great Pond. It was first mentioned in 1734, appears as late as 1808 in a perambulation (*q.v.*), and was also called Freehold Corner. A freeholder was a white male who owned at least 40 shillings' worth of property, free and clear, and thus had a right to vote in elections and meetings. Why this area was so-called is unclear. [RN]

Freeman, Martin I., (1905-1983), a native of Pennsylvania, was an acclaimed industrial designer, specializing in household products. He received several awards from the Museum of Modern Art. A WW2 intelligence officer, he lived in an old mill on Saw Mill Hill Road from 1960 until his death. The U. of Pennsylvania offers a fellowship in his name. [P7/14/1983]

Freeman, Pat, was, with husband **Jim**, (1934-2024), an owner of the Ridgefield Sport and Toy Caboose (*q.v.*) from 1966 to 1987. She was for several years president of the Chamber of Commerce, which honored her "significant contributions" to the town in 1997. The Freemans lived here from 1962 to 1999, retiring to Cape Cod, then Florida, and finally back to Massachusetts. [NR]

Freeman, Samuel Digges III, (1937-1967), was a U.S. Army captain who was serving as an intelligence officer when his aircraft caught fire in an operation over Vietnam, severely burning him. He was evacuated to the

U.S. and died at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C., of complications from his burns. He was posthumously awarded the Soldiers Medal, the highest military honor awarded in non-combat duty; the Purple Heart and the Air Medal with Device for Valor. A West Point graduate, he was 29 and had a wife, son and two daughters, all of Rowland Lane. He is buried in Virginia. [JFS]

Freer, Howard C. Sr., (1891-1958), owned a Hudson and Essex car dealership on Catoonah Street [now Colonial Cleaners] during the 1920s; Leo Pambianchi (*q.v.*) worked with him. He went on to start Freer and Freer Radio and TV, selling some of the first televisions in town during the late 1940s and 1950s. [OR9/18/2020, DD350]

Freeston, Kenneth, Ridgefield's 15th school superintendent, served from 2003 to 2008. He came from Redding schools, and went to North Salem's. [JFS]

Freezer, public: In the days before home freezers were widely available, the town had a privately owned "public freezer" at 116 Danbury Road where one could rent space to store frozen foods. The freezer later became part of the Town Spirit Shoppe (*q.v.*). [DD173]

Frentrop, Arthur H., (1924-2002), a native of St. Louis who lived on Limekiln Road, was a nuclear physicist whose inventions have been used for years to discover oil. In 1951, he worked with the team that designed the accelerator for the hydrogen bomb at the UCLA Laboratory for Nuclear Research, and soon after became active in efforts to promote world peace. He worked for Schlumberger here for 28 years. As an artist, sculptor and woodworker, he was active in the Ridgefield Guild of Artists. [P7/11/2002]

Fresh Air Camp: *See* Life's Farm.

Freund, Sanford H.E., (1880-1954), a native of NYC and a Harvard graduate, was a NYC attorney who specialized in corporate and railroad law. In 1924, he bought the Matilda Ziegler (*q.v.*) estate, called Ashton Croft (*q.v.*), now Jesse Lee Methodist Church's property at 207 Main Street. The Odd Fellows (*q.v.*) bought the estate from the Freund family in 1956, used the carriage house as its quarters, and later sold the mansion (now Wesley Hall) and most of the land to the Methodists. When the Odd Fellows folded, the church bought their old carriage house. [JFS, NYT11/30/1954].

Frey, John H. (1963-), a Greenwich native and RHS 1981, who grew up in Ridgefield, is a real estate broker and principal of Century 21 Landmark Properties. He was a state representative from 1999 until he retired at the beginning of 2021, longer than any of his predecessors, and was a senior Republican whip. He has been a delegate to national conventions and since 2007 a member of the Republican National Committee. He is active in many community organizations. As a boy, he was a member of Ridgefield's legendary "Little Singers" (*q.v.*). [NR]

Friar Tuck's, the first of eight restaurants to occupy the lowest level of 470 Main Street, Yankee Ridge (*q.v.*), opened in May 1974 [P5/30/1974] but closed in less than a year later [P4/17/1975]. It was succeeded by Baker Street Steakhouse (*q.v.*), equally unlucky, lasting from 1975 to 1976. Apparently, the space suffered from a serious ventilation problem that was solved by the time Touchstone's (*q.v.*) arrived in 1976 — it lasted 17 years. [JFS]

Friedman, Peter, was a New York City developer who in the 1980s proposed a "Rolls Royce-class" corporate park on more than 200 acres between George Washington Highway and Shadow Lake Road in Ridgebury.

[P3/22/1984] When that met with heavy opposition, he tried to build multifamily housing on his by-then 252 acres, but the town voted to buy his land instead — *see* Stone Ridge Estates. [JFS]

Friendly Ice Cream operated a full-service restaurant at 105 Danbury Road, opening July 17, 1970 [P7/23/1970] and closing in late 1980s, replaced by Pizza Hut (*q.v.*). The spot had been near the site of Fife and Drum (*q.v.*) restaurant. Friendly, the town's first chain restaurant, had a staff of up to 33 people, many of them teenagers. Difficulty in finding enough workers led to its closing. [JFS]

Friendly Town was a program sponsored by Lions Club in the 1950s, bringing city kids to the country, similar to Fresh Air. [JFS]

Friends of Ridgefield Community Programs Inc., a non-government program, was established to help with fundraising for non-profit organizations, allowing private donors, who are often restricted to donating exclusively to 501(c)(3) organizations, to support the community. The Friends of Ridgefield hosts organizations such as CHIRP, Ridgefield's Emergency Fund, Ridgefield Responds, and the Holiday Trust Fund. [ITH5/10/2024]

Friends of the Ridgefield Library, a volunteer, non-profit group, primarily raises money to help the library, regularly running book sales from its basement-level quarters. It also sponsors a folk music concert series. [RLW]

Frigon, George A., then a 29-year-old former undertaker from Waterbury, was hired in 1971 as the town's first full-time professional sanitarian. He had received the highest score ever recorded on the state sanitarian's test. His hiring under Health Director Dr. Patrick Neligan led to vast improvements in the installation of septic systems and operations of restaurants, among the many realms that required skilled health-code inspections. In 2024 he was a wastewater consultant in Maryland. [JFS]

Frog's Point is a name that first appears in the land records in 1842 for land on West Mountain, possibly near the intersection of Peaceable Hill Road and Peaceable Ridge Road. [RN]

Frulla, Alfred "Fred," (1928-1998), owned and operated the former Fred's Exxon (*q.v.*) from 1979 to 1994, as well as the National Car Rental Agency of Ridgefield. He was a Korean War veteran. [DNT4/18/1998]

Frulla, Armando, (1922-1945), was an Army paratrooper who survived D-Day but was killed in battle at Bastogne, Belgium. PFC Frulla earned the Silver Star and Purple Heart. He is buried at St. Mary Cemetery. [WWW]

Frulla, Eugene J., (1914-1960): In June 1945, Army Staff Sgt. Eugene J. Frulla was among the first veterans of the European theatre to be allowed to return home. He had been overseas for 34 months during which time a participated in six campaigns and earned a Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Oak Leaf cluster. [P6/7/1945]

Fry, John G., (1844-1863), a Ridgefield native, was a Union Army soldier who died of dysentery in an army hospital during the war. [JFS]

Fry, Varian, (1907-1967), was a journalist and classics scholar who, in 1940, went to Marseilles, France, for the Emergency Rescue Committee and set up a network that smuggled more than 1,000 Jewish intellectuals out of Nazi-held Europe, including Hanna Arendt, Marc Chagall, Jacques Lipchitz, Siegfried Kracauer, Franz Werfel, and Lion Feuchtwanger. Long after the war ended, he began to be recognized for his work. Streets in Berlin bear Fry's name, and high schools in Germany and France are named in his

honor. In 1994 he was awarded the title of Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Israel. At least two books, a TV movie and a Netflix series have been produced about him. He also wrote an acclaimed autobiography, *Surrender on Demand* (1945). He and his wife Annette lived at 78 Olmstead Lane in the 1950s and 60s, and later 215 Farmingville Road. While here, he taught some Latin classes at RHS. He died in Easton, age 59. [WWW]

Fuller, Edward W., the sixth school superintendent, served from 1947 to 1954.

Fulling mill: This early facility, which once stood at the north corner of Route 7 and Topstone Road, treated woolen cloth by removing oils from the wool, cleaning and thickening the fabric. The waters of the Norwalk River powered the machinery that pounded and otherwise processed the clothing, and also washed away the chemicals used in the process. Cloth could also be dyed at the mill. The facility was built in 1770 by Hugh Cain (*q.v.*) who in 1789 sold it, a house, and other property to David Banks (*q.v.*) for £250. Banks probably had some tie to the family, for Cain's daughter, Ann, married Thaddeus Banks Jr. After Banks died in 1847, the mill was operated by Elias N. and John S. Glover at least through 1867, and later by Henry F. Lawton. By the 1900s, the mill had disappeared but part of stone foundation was declared a town landmark in the late 1960's; many stones from it had been stolen for use in walls, fireplaces, etc. Cain's house burned in the early 1960's, killing its elderly occupant. [JFS]

Fulling Mill Lane, between Cain's Hill Road and New Road, was named for Hugh Cain's nearby fulling mill (*q.v.*), erected in 1771 on the Norwalk River at the corner of Route 7 and Topstone Road, a site the lane overlooked before the trees returned to what was once open land (*see* Cain's Hill). The neighborhood was developed by Harry Richmond and William Connors (*see* Meadow Woods). Fulling Mill Lane became a town road in 1964. [RN]

Funeral homes: Funeral parlors that operated in Ridgefield in the 19th through 21st Centuries, most of them in the first third of the 20th Century, were Gilbert & Brothers, Jacob M. Lockwood, Bouton, Lawrence and Gillespie, D.F. Bedient's store, Wilson's, and Kane (*q.v. each*). Only Kane and Bouton may have records for early funerals, but material before 1960 probably does not exist. Gilbert and Brothers operated in the mid-19th Century, succeeded by Jacob M. Lockwood in 1866. [JFS]

Funerals: Among the more interesting or unusual ones were for Cornelius Ryan, Annunziata Spadoni, Henry A. Wallace, Charles G. Bluhdorn (*q.v. each*).

Furman, Robert J., was Board of Education member, 1975-80, and board chairman, 1978-80. He resigned in 1980 citing business pressures. A resident since 1966, he was a Branchville PTO president [P8/21/1980].

Furnace Pond was a 19th Century name for today's Miller's Pond (*q.v.*), west of Route 7 just north of Florida Hill Road. In the 1800's, the Couch family operated an iron foundry there, centered on a furnace (*see also* Couch's Station *and* Moongate). [RN]

Fuzzy was a nickname for Nehemiah Lyman Keeler (*q.v.*). [JFS]

G

Gabbianelli, Frank, (1886-1972), operated a shoe store in a Main Street building that once stood where Fairfield County Bank is now. In the early 1930s, he moved to 390 Main Street until his retirement in 1940 when his space was taken by Hyde's Liquor Store (*q.v.*). [DD96]

Gabbianelli, Ray, (1914-84), operator of Ray's Liquor Shop (*q.v.*), ran an advertisement in 1950, saying: "I came to town during World War One as a boy of three. My father opened up a cobbler's shop, waiting on customers, blacking boots. When I was 18, RHS gave me a diploma and I went to Italy to study medicine. Because of my health, I returned after two years, started as an agent with the Prudential Insurance people. The Army singled me out in 1943 and decided I shouldn't settle down yet; three years in Europe was the result. Back to insurance, but what I really wanted was my own business. So, in May 1948, Ray's Liquor Shop came into being…." [RPJ]

Gabor, Joli, (1896-1997), a native of Hungary, was Miss Hungary in 1936 and later operated a Madison Avenue jewelry business. She was the mother of Eva, Magda, and Zsa-Zsa Gabor, celebrities and actresses. In 1966, she and her husband, Count Odon de Szigethy, bought a modest home on Oscaleta Road, and she immediately set about glamorizing the place. "I like to make from a nothing something," she told the RP. They later lived at 103 Peaceable Ridge Road, a home later owned by Jeanne Cook (*q.v.*) that no longer exists. [WWW]

Gaddi's was a **r**estaurant at 5 Grove Street that opened in 1986 [SA2/14/1986]. It had earlier been Entre Vous. The space is occupied by Gallo in 2026. [P5/7/1987]

Gaeta, Albert (1925-2006), a Ridgefield native, was a plumber and village businessman, who created and owned the Gaeta Shopping Center in the village. He served as a member of the Police Commission and as chief of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department. *See also* Corbin Drive. [NR]

Gaeta Shopping Center at 421-423 Main Street was established in the 1950s by Albert Gaeta (*q.v.*), and includes the old Odd Fellows Hall (*q.v.*). It was purchased in August 1984 by Enrico and Donna Addessi, who also owned former Scott block where the jewelry store they founded is. The center is now called the Addessi Center. [P8/16/1984]

Gaffney, W.H., (1868-1943), was a blacksmith with a shop on Catoonah Street. He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [P7/24/1902, FAG]

Gage, D. Smith, (1844-1923), was a wealthy local merchant who at 17 was clerk in Lewis H. Bailey's "Old Hundred" (*q.v.*), bought the store in 1880 and moved the operation north to larger quarters at 404 Main Street, where it eventually became D.F. Bedient's Hardware (*q.v.*). He was treasurer of Ridgefield Savings Bank and one of its first directors. He also served as a town assessor. He lived on Prospect Street. [WWW, RSB21]

Gage, Selah, (ca. 1819-1863), of Ridgefield was serving in the Civil War when he died of typhoid fever at the U.S. Marine Hospital in New Orleans, La. He was buried in Mapleshade Cemetery. [JFS]

Gage Block: *See* D. Smith Gage. [DD69]

Gage's Cemetery: *See* Scott's Cemetery.

Gail's Station House was a popular restaurant at 378 Main Street, originally the Ridgefield branch of a small breakfast and lunch operation in West Redding, near the train station. Using the former Brunetti's Market space, Gail's was opened in 1990 by Gail Anderson and Nancy Broughton, and was soon sold to John and Patty Finnegan. The restaurant closed in 2005 when the building burned down (*see* Bissell Building). [JFS]

Gaines Research Center was headquartered 635 Danbury Road (Route 7) in what is now Stonehouse Commons' main building and once were the offices of Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*). It opened in 1944, did research into dog nutrition and genetics for its food products, and left in 1951. Gaines also made use of the old Outpost kennels (*see* Red Lion) at 621 Danbury Road to house about 125 dogs used in research. [JFS]

Galanski-De Leon, Adam, RHS 2008, is a novelist, author of *The Magpie Funeral, Mercy Dogs* and *Szarotka.* He lives in Chicago.

Galleri Seven sold art, framing, and oriental embroideries at Copps Hill Plaza in the 1980s. Owner Sally (Keller) Rudick, (1930-2008), operated the Galleri Seven there and in Danbury for more than 30 years. [DNT9/21/2008]

Gallick, Muriel, (ca. 1914-1998), was an actress who had appeared on Broadway in the 1930s and later became an American Kennel Club official recognized to judge 26 breeds. She was married to Eric Sonnichsen (*q.v*.) and lived in Ridgefield from the 1960s until her death. [WWW]

Gallo, an Italian restaurant at 5 Grove Street in the former Walker home, opened in 2014. Owner Raffaele Gallo, a native of Capri, is a Ridgefield resident and the former owner of Toscana (*q.v*.). The location had earlier been Gaddi's, East Ridge Cafe, and other restaurants. [JFS]

Galloway's, a bar and restaurant, was operated by Frank Dolen and Joe Hahn, in the Gaeta shopping center, 439 Main Street. Founded in 1980, it became locally famous in July 1985 when, during a propane delivery, the restaurant literally blew up from leaking gas — no one was seriously hurt. The restaurant was never replaced. [JFS]

Gamaliel Smith Cemetery was established in the 1830s on the east side of West Lane, a little north of Country Club Road. Only 14 stones stood in 1934; about 10 were there in 1990. It served neighborhood Smith, Clark, and Whitlock families. The earliest stone was 1835, the latest, 1881. This cemetery, surrounded by a stone wall, is right on the road, but several feet above it; it has a gated entrance. [HLYB] *See also* Smith Cemetery.

Garofalo, Louis A., (1934-2008), an insurance agent based in Norwalk, was head of the Ridgefield Taxpayers League (*q.v.*) for many years. He lived on Victor Drive. [JFS]

GAR (Grand Army of the Republic): *See* Edwin D. Pickett.

Garcia, Liz W., a native of Canada and RHS 1995, is a Hollywood movie writer and director who often uses her experiences growing up in Ridgefield in her films, such as "The Lifeguard" (2013), "One Percent More Humid" (2017), and "Purple Hearts"(2022). She was a producer for several TV series including Memphis Beat, Cold Case, and The Sinner. She is married to actor-writer Josh Harto. [JFS]

Garden of Ideas, a privately owned, non-profit public park, was created over many years by landscaper Joseph Keller (*q.v.*) with his wife, Ilsa Svendsen, on 13 acres at North Salem and Craigmoor Roads. It became a non-profit operation in 2011 and a special zoning permit for what Keller called a

combination arboretum, botanical garden, and wildlife sanctuary was issued in 2013. It closed in 2019 after a campaign to get donor support for a fund to maintain it permanently failed to raise enough money. [P9/12/2019]

Garden School was a name applied to the old Center School/Alexander Hamilton High School building on Bailey Avenue when it was used from 1926 to 1955 as a K-2 school. The Garden School closed when Veterans Park School opened opened in 1955 and was razed the same year to make way for a municipal parking lot. *See also* Center School. [SD]

Gardens: *See* Community Gardens, Ballard Park.

Gardiner, George Schuyler, (1854-1921), a native of NY, bought the former Cushman house at 88 Main Street in 1916 and called the place Kalmia Lodge. He had a prosperous lumber company, focused on pines from Mississippi; kalmia are evergreen shrubs native to North America. He died here. [DAUB]

Garzi, Al, Ridgefield's tax collector since 1983, was the second full-time professional tax collector after the town eliminated the elective office (the first was Kenneth Carvell — *q.v.*). When he started working here as an assistant in 1977 under Carvell, Garzi often rode his bicycle from Brookfield to his job in Ridgefield. In 2024, he was by far the longest-serving major town administrator. [JFS]

Gas lighting was introduced in Ridgefield at the beginning of the 20th Century when the Ridgefield Illuminating Company (*q.v.*) was formed. Gas was generated in a building on Bailey Avenue by heating coal in a method called gasification. The gas was piped four-inch main to Main Street and West Lane. Private homes along the route could be illuminated by the system, as well as the Town Hall and several stores. The firm soon went out of business for financial reasons and electric lighting took its place (*see* Electricity, Natural gas). [RIR]

Gasland was the last gasoline station to occupy building at the north corner of Danbury and Grove Streets which, in 2024, is Bareburger restaurant. The building was erected in the 1950s and, in design, later matched the A&P supermarket, built a few years later just to the north (now site of Walgreen). Gasland closed 1979 when company went bankrupt.

Gasoline Alley was local slang for the section of Route 35, Danbury Road, from Main Street to Farmingville Road, so-called in the last third of the 20th Century because of the half-dozen gas stations then along it. The term recalled a popular 20th Century newspaper comic strip of that name. [RN]

Gasparino, Nancy, (-2002), operated several food service establishments in Ridgefield in last decades of the 20th Century, including the Village Bakery (*q.v.*) and the Ridgefield Coffee Shop (*q.v.*) on Bailey Avenue, usually with her husband **Albert**, (1918-2010). They lived on Barry Avenue and retired to Florida. [P5/6/2010]

Gasperini, Nanny, was the first chef at the Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) resort. [DD135]

Gaub, Adolf, (1907-77), and his wife, **Lori,** (?-1982), operated the Ridgefield Diner, 746 Danbury Road, from the middle 1950s until the early 1970s. In 1964, they enlarged the building and changed name to Ridgefield Restaurant (*q.v.*). In 2020 it is the site of BMW of Ridgefield. [JFS]

Gaumer, Brian, (ca.1951-2019), RHS 1969 and a lifelong Ridgefielder, was a professional photographer whose studio, The Village Photographer, was in 2 Big Shop Lane. He was an organizer of the Ridgefield Guild of Artists and

worked on archiving the historic negatives of Joseph Hartmann (*q.v.*) at the Keeler Tavern Museum. Later he was a carpenter, whose business was 1 Good Carpenter. He was married to **Jean Gaumer**, an RHS teacher. [JFS]

Gay, Ulysses Simpson, (1869-1953), a farmer, was born in Towners, N.Y., the year his namesake was elected president. In 1900, he came to Ridgefield, buying a house and 20 acres from Anna Seymour and establishing a farm on lower Spectacle Lane, which he held until his death at the age of 83. He had a large family, and many descendants still live in the area. As recently as the 1980's, the Gay family had large reunions here. [RN]

Gay Road is an old short path between lower Wilton Road East and Spectacle Lane, appearing on maps as early as 1856 and named for Ulysses S. Gay (*q.v.*) and his family, who lived at the eastern end. [RN]

Gay's Hill is a 1977 subdivision of 15 acres into seven lots on the east side of Spectacle Lane, land once owned by Ulysses S. Gay (*q.v.*). It was developed by Marcelino Lavin of Wilton, who also did Table Rock Estates (*q.v.*) on St. Johns Road. [RN]

Gelbin, Allan J., (1929–1994), a noted American and native of NYC, lived on Peaceable Ridge Road in 1960. He had been an apprentice to Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin East in Spring Green, Wisc., from 1949 to 1953. He then worked as a general contractor and supervisor overseeing the construction of three Wright-designed homes in Ohio, and one in New Canaan. Gelbin established his own private practice in Connecticut in 1957 and built the first of his three personal homes in Ridgefield in 1958. Among the contemporary residences he designed here were the Richard Owen Carey (*q.v.*) house (and office building) on Copper Beech Lane.

Gelfman, Dr. Nelson, (1927-2019), a pathologist, was longtime director of Danbury Hospital's Renal Dialysis Unit, which was later named for him. He was a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission from 1967 to 2013, and had earlier served on the Conservation Commission. He was also an amateur herpetologist, especially knowledgeable about turtles. He lived on Hessian Drive and was married to Mary Gelfman (*q.v.*). [P2/14/2019]

Gelfman, Mary Boyce, (1935-2020)**,** a teacher and attorney, was school board chairman in the 1970s, serving on the board for 11 years. She became a lawyer in 1981, specializing in special education cases statewide. She was married to Dr. Nelson Gelfman. (*q.v.*). They came to Ridgefield in 1964. She graduated from Swarthmore, got an MA from Teachers College, Columbia, and her law degree from UConn. [NR, P7/2/1981]

General Economy Store operated at ONS115 Main Street, according to the 1928 phone book. [JFS]

Gengarelly, Walter Janvier, (1935-2010), a native of NYC and an airport manager, was active in the Libertarian movement. He ran for first selectman as a Republican in 1979 and Connecticut governor as a Libertarian in 1982. He moved to Ridgefield in 1974 and later owned the former Hilltop gas station (*q.v.*). He lived his last years in Newtown and Danbury. [WWW]

Genoa Deli, a family-owned delicatessen and pizza restaurant, started in 1982 at 37 Danbury Road in the former Wayside Market (*q.v.*). It moved in 1993 to 113 Danbury Road. Owner for 40-plus years has been Saverio D'Arcangelo. [OR10/24/2025]

Genovese Drugs opened July 29, 1972, as the first store in the new Copps Hill Plaza and the first chain pharmacy in Ridgefield. That chain of about 141

stores was purchased by JC Penney in 1998, rebranded Eckerd (*q.v.*), but was then acquired by Rite Aid (*q.v.*) in 2007. [JFS]

Geoghan, Michael, (1863-1928), a teamster on the Upagenstit estate, was a popular fellow who mysteriously committed suicide in 1928. [DD142]

Geoppler's Cider Mill (pronounced *Gep*-ler) was, among the half dozen 19th Century cider mills in town, perhaps the largest and last to operate. Goeppler's made both cider and vinegar at 80 Topstone Road at the very eastern edge of Ridgefield, overlooking the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad tracks at Topstone. The mill was active in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The building is now a residence. A 1910 account said the mill could produce 3,000 gallons of cider a day when Adolph Geoppler ran it. The name is often misspelled Goeppler. [JFS, BF5/24/1910]

George Washington Highway, an ancient road from Ridgebury Road at Ridgebury's center to Miry Brook Road at Danbury line, was said to be part of the route through Ridgefield used by General Washington Sept. 20, 1780, on his way to meet Rochambeau (*q.v.*) in Hartford. In 1932, the bicentennial of Washington's birth, Ridgebury Road – from North Salem Road north to Ridgebury Congregational Church – was renamed George Washington Highway to include almost the entire route the general followed through town. In 1959, First Selectman Leo F. Carroll had the original name of Ridgebury Road restored, but the leg running east from Ridgebury retained the commemorative name. [RN]

Georgetown is a village, a telephone exchange, a post office, a fire district, a voting district, and was once a school district and had a train station, but it is not a "town" in the Connecticut sense of a legal governmental entity. It is part of Wilton, Redding, Weston and to a small degree, Ridgefield, and grew up around old mills, mostly the Gilbert and Bennett wire mill. Thompson says that in 1764, George Abbot built a grist mill and became a prominent man in the community for many years. After the Revolution, neighborhood residents voted to name their community and decided on Georgetown, in recognition of the popular miller. The Georgetown telephone exchange, used also for Branchville, is 544-, originally LI4 or Lincoln 4. Zip is 06829. In the 1950s, a vote was taken among Branchville residents on whether to have their mail delivered by the nearby Georgetown Post Office (meaning they'd have a Georgetown mailing address) or the more distant Ridgefield Post Office. Staying with Ridgefield won, hands down. (A very early history of Georgetown by "H. St. J" can be found in the Feb. 28, 1879 *Press*.) *See also under* Glenburgh Mills. [JFS]

Geppetto's Workshop: *See* Mike Pontello.

Gerdau, Alan: *See under* Tontine Emporium.

Gerli, Francis Michael, (1914-1992), chairman of the board of Gerli & Co. textiles of NYC, was a Navy commander during World War II, flying search planes in the Atlantic and Caribbean areas. He was a graduate of Georgetown University and Fordham Law, and had a doctorate in economics from Assumption College. He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery with his parents (*see* Paolino Gerli) who lived here many years. [JFS]

Gerli, Paolino, (1890-1982), was a noted silk merchant with a weekend and summer home — part of the former Greims (*q.v.*) estate — on Old Branchville Road. He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. His son **Francis** (*q.v.*) took over the firm. In 1940, when Paolino Gerli sold his home to Edward

and Elizabeth Petry, one of the features of the estate was a Japanese Tea garden, complete with a tea house that had been a gift to Gerli from a wealthy Japanese businessman who had it shipped from Japan to Ridgefield. [P4/41940, P7/15/1982, P3/12/1992]

German-American Bund was a pro-Nazi organization, rumored to be planning to buy the former Ridgefield School/Chekhov Theatre Studio (*q.v. each*) property at the north end of Lake Mamanasco. Francis D. Martin bought it instead, hinting he did so to prevent the organization from coming here. [WWW, JFS]

Giant Pumpkin Weigh Off takes place each September in Ballard Park, founded by Steve Maydan of New Street and sponsored by the Connecticut Giant Pumpkin Growers. The first year had 13 entries; in 2024, the 12th annual event, among the 14 pumpkins throughout the Northeast, weights ranged from 2,125 to 299 pounds. [HH]

Giblin, Karen L., formerly of North Valley Road, a Democrat who was once manpower coordinator for the mayor of Baltimore, was elected in 1987 as a member of the Board of Selectmen. She chaired the Parking Authority, belonged to the Route 7 Task Force, the Downtown Committee and other organizations. She was named in 1997 a member of the state's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. In 1992 she formed the Red Hot Mamas, which started locally and became national, as a support group for women experiencing menopause. She lived here from 1981 until early 2000s. [NR, P716/1987]

Gibney, Frank Bray, (1924-2006), a Pennsylvania native, was a journalist and author who was an expert on Asia, especially China. He came here as an 11-year-old when his parents, Joseph and Edna Gibney, took over the Outpost Inn. He served in Army intelligence in WW2, interrogating Japanese POWs. After the war he became a writer for *Time* magazine in Europe and Asia and by 1949, was Time-Life bureau chief in Tokyo. He later became a senior editor at *Newsweek* and a staff writer for *Life* magazine. He also wrote a dozen books, including *The Khrushchev Pattern, Korea's Quiet Revolution,* and in 1960, *The Operators,* about corporate criminals. His 1992 book, *The Pacific Century*, predicting the rising economic power of eastern Asian nations in the then-coming century, was a companion to a 10-part PBS series, produced by his son, documentary filmmaker **Alex Gibney**. In 1979, he co-founded the Pacific Basin Institute in California "to further understanding, on both sides of the Pacific, of the tremendous importance of their relationship and their shared responsibilities." [WWW]

Gibney, Joseph, (-1962), a former singer, managed the Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) from 1933 until the late 1940s. He was a veteran of Longchamps and other prestigious restaurant operations, and turned Outpost into a dining destination for many Ridgefielders as well as celebrities, including Lily Pons, Lawrence Tibbett, Gloria Morgan Vanderbilt, Clare Boothe Luce, and Eleanor Roosevelt (who, as first lady, drove herself there for lunch). He hired Giancarlo Scala (*q.v.*) as a chef. [JFS, WWW]

Giftz, Gemz & Jewelz opened at 452 Main Street in 2026. The site had long been Touch of Sedona (*q.v.*).

Gilbert family: Many were millers, particularly in the Titicus neighborhood. For an overview see DD113. The name was sometimes spelled Gilbart in old records.

Gilbert, Aaron B., bought a house, cider mill, grist mill, workshop, and an acre, with the privilege of using Upper Pond from Nov. 1 to May 1, for $1,200 in 1872. [RLR25/287]

Gilbert, Abner, (1745-1820), a shopkeeper who was at the Battle of Ridgefield, was a selectman and father of Abner Gilbert Jr. An Abner "Gilbart" was a part owner of a grist mill at Limestone in 1788 [RLR7/48]

Gilbert, Abner, was, as a Union Party member, a state representative in 1864. [Note: There were two Abner Gilberts in town at the time; one was a son of Abner Jr.; I am not sure which was the rep; *see* DD113]. Abner Gilbert sold his saw mill in 1852 on the "east side of said New Road" — probably Limestone Road. [RLR20/52]

Gilbert, Abner Jr., (1780-1855), was a state representative in 1815 and operated a store on northern Main Street with partner Richard Randall, his brother-in-law and also a state representative. He built the Gilbert Homestead (*q.v.*) at 563 Main Street. [JFS, DD113]

Gilbert, Albert Earl "Gil," (1939-), one of the nation's leading wildlife artists, lived at 147 Main Street in the 1960s and 70s. His work has appeared in many nature books, *Encyclopedia Britannica* and *World Book Encyclopedia*, on several federal duck stamps, and on many of the Christmas Wildlife Stamps of the National Wildlife Federation. [NR]

Gilbert, Cass, (1859-1934), was a noted architect who bought the "Old Keeler Tavern" in 1907. His wife, Julia Finch Gilbert, was said to be a descendant of Timothy Keeler, who owned the place in the Revolutionary era [P8/15/1907]. Gilbert designed U.S. Supreme Court building, Woolworth Building and U.S. Custom House in New York, the state capitols of Minnesota, Arkansas and West Virginia, the main libraries of St. Louis and Detroit, and buildings on campuses of Universities of Texas and Minnesota, among many others. He is buried in a large family plot at Fairlawn Cemetery. His son, **Cass Jr**., designed the old high school auditorium, now the Ridgefield Playhouse. *See also* Cass Gilbert Fountain. [WWW]

Gilbert, Charles, with Harry Gilbert, in 1858 bought a house, saw mill, grist mill, and use of Upper Pond, from Elias Gilbert for $1,150; it was located at Titicus. [RLR21/175]

Gilbert, Ebenezer, (-1852): "Today the bell tolled for Mr. Eben Gilbert, found dead in a ditch, lying with face downward, his bottle by his side." [DAR]

Gilbert, Elias, sold in 1858 his house, saw mill, grist mill, located at Titicus, plus use of Upper Pond, to Harry and Charles Gilbert for $1,150. [RLR21/175]

Gilbert, Elisha (Elijah), (-1778), a Continental Army sergeant from Ridgefield, died Jan. 6, 1778, while serving with the Connecticut Fifth Regiment at Valley Forge. Rockwell says he froze to death. He enlisted for a three-year term in May 1777. [Rockwell, NA]

Gilbert, Frank I., (-1930), custodian of the George Scott block in the 1920s, was injured in a gas explosion [DD96].

Gilbert, George, (-1864), was a corporal in the Union Army who died of wounds received in combat at Peach Tree Creek, Ga. [JFS]

Gilbert, George Washington (1847-1924), known as "the hermit of Ridgefield," lived on the north side of Florida Hill Road near Harvey Road in an 18th century house that was falling down around him. He was widely noted for fondness for puzzles and for going barefoot most of the year. He liked visitors and telling them stories; Rockwell says "he related many strange

tales and yarns which gained in detail and wonder with each narration." Edward M. Knox (*q.v.*), whose Downesbury Manor was nearby, built him a cottage to live in. Gilbert froze to death there in January 1924. He is buried in New Florida Cemetery. *See also* Hermit Lane. [WWW]

Gilbert, Harry, with Charles Gilbert, in 1858 bought a Titicus house, saw mill, grist mill, and use of Upper Pond from Elias Gilbert for $1,150. [RLR21/175]. In 1841, Harry acquired land "commonly known as the old flax mill," from Burr, Hull and Philip Keeler et al. [RLR18/29].

Gilbert, Isaac Henry, (1742-1822), lived in the Gilbert Homestead (*q.v.*) and was a Tory who fled to Canada and died in Ontario. [DD115] Nancy Cutway of Ontario reported in 2021: "My 5th-great-grandfather Isaac Gilbert … was born in Ridgefield CT, a great-grandson of Matthew Gilbert who was one of the "7 pillars" who founded New Haven. Isaac was a young ensign during the French and Indian Wars. Then during the Revolution, he joined the Queen's Rangers and sided with the British. All 7 of his brothers took the Patriot side." The family settled in Norfolk County, Ontario. [NEHGS Vita Bevis Forum]

Gilbert, Jabez Mix, (1781-1856), bought the gristmill at Titicus by 1812 from Epenetus Howe and Jeremiah Gilbert [RLR10/90] and also had a saw mill there by 1819. He apparently devoted most of his attention to his tannery, which was operating by 1822 and lasted many decades. [RN] (*See also* RLR11/221,12/252,12/253, 12/265, 12/335, 13/245). He was a founder of the Methodist church in Ridgefield and he served seven times as a selectman in the 1810s and 20s. He was a state representative in 1818, 1827 and 1828.

Gilbert, James, had in 1849 a saw mill, possibly at Titicus — *see* RLR18/368, 19/21 20/228. He also bought a saw mill at Titicus in 1852 [RLR20/58, 22/372]. According to the *Bridgeport Standard* [10/31/1867], he had just opened a sorghum mill at Titicus to manufacture syrup, which, like maple syrup, was a popular sweetener.

Gilbert, John S., bought part ownership in James Gilbert's saw mill in 1860. [RLR22/372].

Gilbert, Josiah, had a grist mill at Limestone by the time of his death, ca. 1774, probably on the Norwalk River near Stonehenge Inn site. [RLR 5/141, 5/138, 6/1].

Gilbert, Richard L., (ca.1822-?), was a farmer who as a Whig, served as a state representative in 1849.

Gilbert, Roland L., (1875-1951), a Ridgefield native, was a telegrapher for the New Haven Railroad for 15 years, and then worked for 30 years between 1907 and 1946 for the Ridgefield Savings Bank, serving as secretary and treasurer in his last years. Among his hobbies were tatting, lace-making and radio. [RSB27]

Gilbert, Victor, (1906-1986), opened Stonehenge Inn in 1946, naming it after the historic site in England where he served during WW2. He called himself a skinker (*q.v.*) and wrote a column for *The Ridgefield Press*, called "Not Skinking," and had weekly celebrity interview program on WLAD radio in Danbury. A clock collector, he donated the grandfather clock in town hall in 1963 when he sold the inn and moved to the Virgin Islands where he owned a hotel in St. Croix. [WWW].

Gilbert, William A., (1853-1921), was a prominent Republican who lived at 536

Main Street. He was a co-owner of the lumberyard with Richard Osborn that became Ridgefield Supply Company. He married Jennie Pehrson late in life. [DD113, 114]

Gilbert, William Henry, (1842-1916), was a carpenter and partner in the Gilbert mills at Titicus. He moved to Gilbert Street in 1885, buying an old Gilbert house at 28 Gilbert Street, the corner of New Street (razed about 2004). From 1884 to 1888, he was a selectman. He is buried with other family members under an imposing monument at the Ridgefield Cemetery, the stone for which was quarried from Gilbert land on the west side of New Street, north of Gilbert Street. [RN, CBRFC]

Gilbert, Willis Sherwood, (1866-1940), was a postman, and later postmaster from Jan. 18, 1916, to July 1, 1924. He managed the telephone office for 15 years. Later he went into the shoe business. He lived on Governor Street where the shopping center entrance is today. She served as a selectman. [DD1, P6/27/1940, RSB28]

Gilbert & Bennett Manufacturing Company in the Redding section of Georgetown was established in 1818 by Benjamin Gilbert, who started out weaving livestock hair into sieves for sifting flour and meal. He also processed hair for stuffing mattresses and cushions. In 1828, Sturges Bennett became a partner. In 1830, they set up their first factory in Georgetown. In 1834, they began using wire, which eventually led in 1861 to production of the world's first "insect wire screening" now so common on doors and windows. By the 1880s the company began making galvanized wire fencing, which became a major product for decades. The mill in Georgetown had 175 employees in 1893, and several hundred a few years later, making it by far the largest employer among the four towns. While none of G&B's 51-acre factory site was in Ridgefield, the company controlled a Ridgefield landmark. For many years, Great Pond was used by the mill as a backup water supply, and G&B controlled the use of the dam until the 1990s. Many Georgetown residents who worked at G&B are buried at Branchville Cemetery (*q.v.*). The company closed the mill in 1989 and planned to convert the multi-building campus into a village of houses, condos, offices, and shops. In 2005 the project was approved by the town of Redding. Financial problems stalled progress and after much legal haggling, Redding has taken title to the old mill and again plans "a mixed-use, walkable village that would provide a multitude of housing options, commercial and retail space, public spaces, and even perhaps a Georgetown train station." *See also* Georgetown.[G&B-150, JFS]

Gilbert & Brothers was a funeral home that operated in Ridgefield before 1866 when it was purchased by Jacob Lockwood — *see* Funeral homes.

Gilbert Homestead was a name of the house at 563 Main Street, later the home of Commander and Mrs. John Jay Pierrepont (*q.v.*). The core was built by Abner Gilbert Jr. (*q.v*.). [DD113]

Gilbert House was the name for 536 Main Street (ONS169) [DD113]. *See also* Colonial Tourists.

Gilbert Store was on northern Main Street, nearly opposite today's entrance to Casagmo in much of the 19th Century. By 1908, "The store kept by Abner Gilbert at the north end of the street has been moved back and changed into the stable of George H. Newton." [RB15] *See* Abner Gilbert Jr.

Gilbert Street is a fairly modern name for a very old road, probably among the

first to be laid out by the early settlers in the 1710s and 1720s. Together with Ramapoo Road, it served as the main route from the village to the forests and later pastures of West Mountain, as well as the waters of Round Pond — until the construction of Barry Avenue (*q.v.*) provided a smoother route. The road was called Ramapoo Road (*q.v.*) on 1900 map, but by 1908, "Gilbert Street" was appearing on maps, probably named for William Henry Gilbert (*q.v.*).who lived at the intersection of New and Gilbert Streets. [RN]

Gilbert's Upper Pond is another name for Upper Pond (*q.v.*), used in the 1840's and 1850's at least. It recognized Jabez Mix Gilbert, who at various times had various Titicus mills powered by the water from the pond but was best known for his tanning works. Gilbert owned the pond's water rights. [RN]

Gilchrist, Gail Anthony Brittain, (1938-2018), a native of Alabama, was an watercolor artist best known for her 1990s poster, "Doors on Main Street," still being sold in 2026. She also produced several postcards with watercolor views of Ridgefield. A acclaimed interior designer, she was the wife of the Rev. John "Dick" Gilchrist, rector of St. Stephen's Church from 1990 to 2003. [L]

Gilchrist, Huntington, (1891-1975), a native of Boston, was a journalist, corporate leader, diplomat, soldier, educator, and political scientist. While he was an executive with American Cyanamid from 1928 to 1955, he also had a long career in international relations. He was the only person from any nation to serve as a senior member of the international staff in the establishment and operation of both the League of Nations and the United Nations; he helped draft the UN charter in 1945. In 1950, he was U.S. minister in charge of the Marshall Plan in Belgium and Luxembourg and he helped found the International School in Geneva. He moved to Ridgebury around 1940. In 1960, he was chair of the 200th anniversary celebration of the founding of Ridgebury Congregational Church. [WWW]

Gilkes, Lillian Barnard, (1903-1977), was a nationally recognized scholar, author and critic whose notoriety here was chiefly civic and political. She wrote *Cora Crane: A Biography of Mrs. Stephen Crane*, as well as short stories and book reviews. She lived at 93 Olmstead Lane with stepsister, Louise Davidson (*q.v.*), and was active in the community, including Democratic party. She moved to Tryon, N.C., in 1962. [WWW]

Gillette, William H., (1853–1937), was a 24-year-old actor when he gave a performance in town hall Aug. 22, 1877. He went on to become world famous, especially for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes. In 1919, after five years of construction, his majestic, stone home in Hadlyme was completed. Today, it is the central attraction of the popular Gillette Castle State Park. [JFS]

Gillum, Harold S. "Pinky," (1896-1966), a Ridgefield native and WW1 veteran, was a local house builder and also one of the world's best makers of bamboo-based fly fishing rods, some of which today can fetch prices of over $8,000. Between 1923 and his death, he produced some 2,000 rods under the name Gillum Fly Rod Company (*q.v.*). Customers included Bing Crosby, Benny Goodman, and Philip Pillsbury. [WWW]

Gillum Fly Rod Company, founded in 1923, was operated in Ridgefield by Pinky Gillum (*q.v.*) and later by his widow, **Winifred "Winnie" Beckley Gillum**, and her second husband, **Marcus Prosser**. [WWW]

Gilroy, Tom, (1951-), a Ridgefield native and 1978 RHS graduate, is an actor, director and filmmaker. He wrote and produced the movie, *Spring Forward* (1998), based on Ridgefield experiences and starring Ned Beatty and Liev Schreiber, part of which was filmed here. Other films include *The Cold Lands* (2013) and *Touch Base* (1994). He has appeared in more than 30 films and TV shows. He has also taught acting in NYC, and has been an instructor at Columbia University and Davidson College. [NR]

Gino's Way is a short, dead-end road off High Ridge Avenue, between Barry Avenue and Ramapoo Road, serving six lots developed around 2010 by Don and Jim Sturges of Sturges Brothers Fine Home Builders. The 2.5 acres at 213 High Ridge Avenue had long been the homestead of the Gino Bob Polverari (*q.v.*). [RN]

Girl Scouts of America: In 1921, Kathryn G. Bryon (*q.v.*) established the town's first Girl Scout troop, Troop One, consisting of a handful of girls; it disbanded in 1924 when she went off to school. In 1937, Mrs. Arthur Leiby founded a new Troop One, and Girl Scouting has continued non-stop since then. Early scouting activities included a physical education program (such things weren't taught in the schools), folk dancing, posture exercises, health games, softball and basketball, hiking, camping, and, of course, crafts — scouts would make such things as leather belts, silver bracelets, wooden bookends, and brass ashtrays. During WW2, scouts helped with the airplane spotting tower and knitted hundreds of socks for submarine crewmen. By 1975, the town had 770 Girl Scouts; in 2020, there were 15 troops. *See also* Camp Catoonah. [RPC, JFS]

Girls' Athletic Club existed 1924 when it staged "By Way of the Secret Passage," a comedy in three acts. [JFS]

Girolametti/Girolmetti is an old Ridgefield family that has used two different surname spellings. The original families, including Paolo Girolametti, arrived here 1897 and used the five-syllable version, but some later generations switched to four. *See* Girolametti Court. [DD363]

Girolametti, John, (1933-2010), a Ridgefield native and businessman, was owner of Old Ice House (*q.v.*) restaurant and Girolametti Court. He served in the U.S. Army in Korean War. For many years, he spelled his name Girolmetti [P6/10/2010]. His wife, a chef at the Old Ice House, was the former **Dorothy Allegressa** Girolmetti (1934-2021). [NR, DD363]

Girolametti Court, a **s**hopping plaza at 7-19 Danbury Road, was called Girolmetti Court when it was opened by John Girolmetti (*q.v.*) in 1981, with 12 shops and 12 apartments. The name was later changed to Girolametti. Its apartments-over-businesses arrangement was new for Ridgefield zoning officials and has since been used in many developments. [RN, DD363]

Girolmetti, Frank, (1888-1920), was superintendent of the Westmoreland estate in the early years of the 20th Century. He helped George Doubleday amass acreage for the estate. He died of the "Spanish flu" during the epidemic. [DD202]

GIST, Global Issues for Students and Teachers, was a 1980s student club at RHS aimed at addressing current social issues, including hunger and poverty. Steve Blumenthal was teacher leader in 1987. [P2/26/1987]

GL Printing and Graphics opened Dec. 8, 1983, in the bottom level of Yankee Ridge, 470 Main Street. It also had a Danbury store. [P12/8/1983]

Glen Acres is a 32-lot, 1963 subdivision of 35.4 acres, owned by James Franks

on the east side of Tally-Ho Road (*q.v.*) and the north side of Haviland Road, part of the old Elizabeth Glendinning property. The name may be a pun on the nature of the terrain and its former owner's name. The homebuilder was Edward Stoll. [RN]

Glen Road is a short, dead-end lane off Buck Hill Road, developed around 1954 by Perry Scott and Richard E. Conley (*q.v.*), so named because of the glen it traverses. [RN]

Glenbrook Court is a short dead-end road off Standish Drive, in a glen near a brook, laid out in 1965 and accepted by a town meeting in 1968. It was extended in the mid-1980's part of the Meadow Woods development (*q.v.*).

Glenburgh Mills and Chemical Works was a chemical and patent medicine company in Georgetown during the mid-190th Century, owned by Dr. Nehemiah Perry Sr. (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield and later by his son, Samuel Perry. The operation included a grist mill. Nehemiah was said to be a skilled chemist and spent much time experimenting with compound medicines, dyes, and spices. One of the most popular of his concoctions was "Demulcent Compound for Coughs and Colds." Samuel sold the business in 1869. Glenburgh was an old name for Georgetown. [Thompson, Rockwell, WWW]

Glimpses of Ridgefield is an album-style book of dozens of photographs of Ridgefield, taken in the 1890s by pioneering Connecticut woman photographer Marie H. Kendall (*q.v.*), published in 1900.

Glissman(n), Frederick G., (1935-2004), a NYC native, was an artisan and historian who had lived in Ridgefield for 50 years. He was closely involved in the founding of the Connecticut Fifth Regiment that re-enacted Revolutionary War events. An early member of the Ridgefield Guild of Artists, he restored the eagle on the front of the town hall in 1990, re-leafing it in gold. He managed the 1977 production of the Benedict Arnold medal, designed by his former wife, Gail (*q.v.*). (His surname is spelled with both one and two Ns in various legal documents.) [NR]

Glissman(n), Gail: *See* Gail Rogers Glissmann Fields.

Glover, Elias, bought the old Cain's mill/Banks woolen factory on what is now Route 7 at Topstone Road for $300 in 1843 [RLR17/260]. John Glover became a partner in 1848 [RLR18/242], but bowed out in 1855 [RLR21/200].

Glover, John: *See* Elias Glover.

Goat barn, the, the former clubhouse of the Country Club of Ridgefield (*q.v.*) near Golf Lane, was moved around 1934 by Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) to Grove Street, where it housed his goats. In the 1940s, it became the factory of Ridgefield Silversmiths (*q.v.*), and from 1951 to 1953, Oriented Plastics (*q.v.*). In 1954 it was sold to the New England Institute for Medical Research (*q.v.*), which used it to house part of its research operations. The building burned down in 1984 [P12/27/1984]

God's Payday by Edgar C. Bross, published by G. W. Dillingham Company in 1898, was a romantic novel, with scenes set in Ridgefield — the main character pays a visit by train to escape the city and stays at the Keeler Tavern. Bross (*q.v.*) was editor of *The Ridgefield Press* from 1887 to 1899. [WWW]

Godfrey, Ebenezer, bought the grist and saw mills on the Norwalk River by Florida Hill Road (*see* Moongate) in 1831 [RLR14/348, 14/250B] but soon

sold to Thomas N. Couch [RLR14/124]

Godfrey, Sylvester, (-1864), was a Union Army soldier who was captured and died in the Confederates' Andersonville (Ga.) Prison. He is buried at New Florida Cemetery. [JFS]

Gofer Ice Cream at 407 Main Street opened in October 2021 and closed in the fall of 2024 — no doubt because veteran Deborah Ann's Sweet Shoppe opened a larger facility next door. [P9/19/2024]

Goeppler's Mill: *See* Geoppler's Cider Mill.

Gold, Andrew, (1951-2011), was a songwriter, singer, producer, engineer and musician, who played guitar, bass, keyboards, accordion, synthesizer, harmonica, saxophone, flute, drums, ukulele, musette, and harmonium. He was a member of Linda Ronstadt's band and its arranger in 1970s. He wrote TV and movie soundtracks as well as several top hits including "Heatwave," and "You're No Good." Oddly enough, he was also the voice of Alvin, the TV cartoon chipmunk. His father was Ernest Gold, Academy Award composer of film scores, and his mother was Marni Nixon, the singing voice of Natalie Wood, Audrey Hepburn and Deborah Kerr in movies of major Broadway musicals. He lived on St. Johns Road in the 1990s until early 2000s and had a studio at 18 Bailey Avenue. [WWW]

Gold, Irving, who bought Lelak's Delicatessen (*q.v.*) in 1975, gained national attention for his widely publicized campaign to get Howard Cosell, an ABC TV sportscaster, fired. "He's got to go," Gold said in 1977. "He's 25 years behind the times." Gold organized a 'Howard Must Go' campaign, complete with newspaper pleas in New York, Chicago and other large cities, and sold a kit, with a bumper sticker and a button, to cover the cost of his anti-Cosell campaign. [NR]

Gold Card: The Senior Gold Card Discount Program, sponsored by Senior Positive Initiative Forum (*q.v.*), provides free Gold Cards to Ridgefield residents 65 and older. Holders receive free and discounted services from many town departments, organizations and businesses, described in a Benefits Guide. Apply at the Town Hall information office. [JFS]

Golden Apple was the name of the farm-estate of Nancy and Col. Edward Meier at 166 Lounsbury Road. [P7/20/1911] The house, ca. 1880, was earlier the Nathan L. Rockwell farm. [FoF]

Goldsmith, Harold, (1903-1969), a NYC native, was a major publisher of pulp magazines during the 1930s and 40s, including romance, mystery, detective, and Western stories. His Popular Publications turned out more than 40 different magazines a month by the late 1930s. He was also publisher of *Argosy*. In 1943, he bought Taghkanick (*q.v.*) estate, selling in 1946 to Henry and Clare Boothe Luce (*q.v.*) and moving to Old Branchville Road. In 1954 he developed the Lakeland Hills subdivision with Lake Windwing. His wife, Yvonne, a public relations executive, was a noted breeder of Weimaraners. [WWW]

Goldsmith's Pond is an informal, neighborhood name for Lake Windwing (*q.v.*), so called because it was created by Harold Goldsmith (*q.v.*) for his Lakeland Hills development (*q.v.*). [RN]

Goldstein, Dr. Mel, (1945-2012), a native of Massachusetts, was a meteorologist who created Connecticut's only meteorology bachelor's degree program and also established the weather station at WestConn. "Dr. Mel" did radio and TV weather casting, especially at WTNH in New Haven

(1986-2011). His *Complete Idiot's Guide to Weather* (1999) was a top-selling book. He lived on Rowland Lane from 1972 to 1996. [WWW]

Goldstone, Steven, (1946-), a native of NYC, was chairman and chief executive officer of RJR Nabisco Inc., and chairman of the board of ConAgra Foods Inc. In recent years he has managed Silver Spring Group, a private investment firm. He and his wife, Liz, with John and Elaine Couri, created Founders Hall (*q.v.*), Ridgefield's senior center. They live on Silver Spring Road. [P2/1/2001, 10/8/2015]

Golenbock, Peter, (1946-) is a sports author who lived in Ridgefield in the 1980s. He has written more than a dozen books on athletes and athletics, most related to baseball. Perhaps the most famous are *Balls*, written with Graig Nettles, and *Number 1*, with Billy Martin. [JFS]

Golf: *See* Country Club of Ridgefield, Silver Spring Country Club, Dlhy Ridge Golf Course, Ridgefield Golf Course.

Golf Court is a short dead-end road off the southern end of Golf Lane (*q.v.*), serving part of a 1997 subdivision, Golf Ridge, by Carl Lecher. The Planned Residential Development had eight, mostly one-acre lots plus 8.5 acres of open space. The land bordering West Lane, South Salem Road and Golf Lane had belonged to Elizabeth Hull (*q.v.*), whose estate sold it for $1.1 million to give the proceeds to The Nature Conservancy. (Miss Hull also gave land to the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield.) [RN]

Golf Lane is an old road running between West Lane and Peaceable Street that once led to and through the Country Club of Ridgefield (*q.v.*), a 65-acre course built in 1894. Most of the course later became Jack B. Ward's Ward Acres Farm (*q.v.*), where show horses were raised, but in the 1980s and 1990s, was subdivided and today holds houses instead of horses or duffers. While its name recalls the course, it existed long before the course did. [RN]

Golf Performance Academy on Stonehenge Road, off Route 7, formerly Ethan Allen Preparatory School and even earlier, Stonehenge Inn, is a school for golfers. It describes itself as "a full-time golf boarding school in Ridgefield, Connecticut, for student-athletes grades 7-12 and postgraduates who aspire to play collegiate and professional golf." It works closely with the Wooster School in Danbury in providing academic courses.[JFS]

Good Cheer was the turn of 20th Century home of Dr. A.L. Northrup, still standing in the triangle of West Lane, Parley Lane and High Ridge [Kendall, P7/20/1911]

Good Government Party was a Ridgefield-only third party, founded in 1963, with members saying they were "dissatisfied with the leadership and control of the two existing parties," especially with respect to the schools. It ran candidates in 1963 and 1965. None won, but some came close — one collected 1,295 votes. Party membership peaked at 75, and in 1971, though inactive, still had 65 members. The GGP was officially discontinued in 1981 due to inactivity. [RPC]

Goodall, Jane: *See* Jane Goodall Institute.

Goodman, Benny, the "King of Swing," gave a concert Aug. 28, 1965, in Veterans Park field, benefiting the Danbury Hospital Children's Ward. Emcee was TV personality Jack Sterling. Goodman charged no fee for the concert. Some 2,500 people attended. [JFS]

Goodrich, Abigail: *See* Abigail Goodrich Whittelsey.

Goodrich, Charles Augustus, (1790-1862), was a Congregational minister, son of the Rev. Samuel Goodrich, and brother of Samuel G. Goodrich *(q.v.*), also known as Peter Parley; he wrote two dozen books of history, biography, geography, and religion; noted for popularizing motto, "A place for everything and everything in its place"; lived most of his life in Berlin, Conn. and Hartford. [WWW]

Goodrich, Rev. Samuel, (1763-1835), was the third minister of First Congregational Church and husband of **Elizabeth Ely Goodrich**. Among their seven children were Samuel G. Goodrich (*q.v.*), Abigail Whittelsey (*q.v.*) and Charles A. Goodrich (*q.v.*), all major names in letters in the 19th Century. He graduated from Yale. His house on High Ridge, built for him in 1797, still stands at #15. After 25 years here, he moved to a congregation in Berlin, Conn., where he died and is buried. [JFS]

Goodrich, Samuel G. (1793-1860)**,** a Ridgefield native and son of Elizabeth and Rev. Samuel Goodrich (*q.v.*), was a noted American author of more than 150 books, many aimed at school children. He often used the pen name, Peter Parley. His autobiographical *Recollections of A Lifetime* has more than 200 pages describing what Ridgefield was like at the turn of the 19th Century. He had a publishing company in Boston and helped Nathaniel Hawthorne become a published author. He was a state senator and representative in Massachusetts where he spent most of his adult life. Late in life, he bought an old house in Southbury, Conn., and also served as U.S. consul to Paris. The West Lane schoolhouse is often called the Peter Parley School because that's where Goodrich got his first taste of public education. [WWW]

Goodwill Baptist Church was an African-American religious congregation in Ridgefield. Its first service was on March 5, 1941, and its first pastor was the Rev. John P. Ball (*q.v.*). The congregation bought old Ridgefield Creamery (*q.v.*) building in 1942, and used it for services on ground floor, with apartments above. The church disbanded about 1975 due to dwindling membership, and the building was sold and renovated into apartments. [JFS]

Gordon, Frank, was a commercial photographer who had a store on Main Street in the 1940s and very early 1950s. He lived in Georgetown when he opened Ridgefield Photo Shop (*q.v.*) . The store was acquired in May 1951 by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Korker (*q.v.*).

Gordon, Leon, (1889-1943), was a Russian-born painter who specialized in portraits, but also produced landscapes and sculpture. Among his portraits were Willa Cather, Will Rogers, President Calvin Coolidge, Winston Churchill, John L. Lewis, and Helen Keller. *Good Housekeeping* in 1930 commissioned him to paint "the 12 greatest American women," an acclaimed series that appeared monthly in the magazine (the Eleanor Roosevelt portrait is in the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery). He lived in Ridgefield for several years in the former Belden Fields home on Bennett's Farm Road. [P1/27/1944]

Gosling was the name for Ridgefield used in a novel by Jane Trahey (*q.v.*), which was based on her experiences moving to town. [JFS]

Gottlieb, Morris, who got his start with a pushcart business in town, had a thriving clothing and shoe store at 131 Main Street early in the 20th Century. He eventually moved his business to NYC. [JFS, OMS]

Goulart, Ronald Joseph (1933-2022), a native of Berkeley, CA, was a popular culture historian and mystery, fantasy, and science fiction author who wrote more than 180 books including science fiction, mysteries, and comic novels, as well as TV and movie scripts, newsletters, cartoon strips, and more. He used such pseudonyms as Kenneth Robeson, Con Steffanson, Chad Calhoun, R. T. Edwards, Ian R. Jamieson, Josephine Kains, Jillian Kearny, Howard Lee, Zeke Masters, Frank S. Shawn, and Joseph Silva. Known for his humorous writing, he even wrote a mystery novel featuring comedian Groucho Marx as the detective. He and his wife **Frances Sheridan Goulart,** also a writer, moved from Weston to Cooper Road in 2000. [NYT1/28/2022]

Gould, Col. Abraham, (1732-1777) of the 4th Regiment, Connecticut Militia, was killed at the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). Two years later, the British burned his widow's home and many others at Fairfield. [BOR]

Governor Park is the recently coined term for the complex of athletic facilities east of the old East Ridge School/Ridgefield High School, at 84 Governor Street. It includes Ciuccoli Field (*q.v.*) —the old high school baseball field — as well as basketball courts, a softball field, and concession stand. It is adjacent to the Justine H. Butler Tennis Courts and Graham Dickinson SPIRIT Skate Park (*q.v.*) each.

Governor Street was built from Main Street to East Ridge in the summer of 1887 [P9/16/1887]. RP suggested it should be called Governor Street after Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*), whose property it bordered and traversed. The portion from East Ridge to Prospect Ridge was probably built around 1914 with the construction of the Benjamin Franklin Grammar School (*q.v.*), now the Venus Office Building. [RN]

Governors of Connecticut from Ridgefield: Two brothers, *Phineas* and *George Lounsbury* (*q.v. each*) were elected governor, Phineas serving from 1887 to 1889 and George, 1899 to 1901. *Melbert B. Cary* (*q.v.*) ran unsuccessfully for governor as a Democrat in 1902. *Romeo Petroni* (*q.v.*), a Republican, was also unsuccessful in an early bid in 1986. *Walter Gengarelly* (*q.v.*) ran for governor on the Libertarian ticket in 1982

GRADD (Government of Ridgefield Against Drunk Driving) is a cooperative effort between the police, RHS students, faculty, town government and citizens to attempt to ensure a safe and sober graduation period for students. *See also* Post-Graduation Party. [RW]

Graduation: The first Ridgefield high school graduation was in 1917 at then Hamilton High School (*q.v.*), which was only two years old. The first four-year graduating class — 10 students — was in 1919. In 2005, after decades of commencements at Ridgefield High School, the ceremonies moved indoors to the O'Neill Center at WestConn in Danbury.

Graeloe was the home of Lucius H. Biglow (*q.v.*) on Main Street, now Ballard Park. The name is combination of his wife's maiden name, Graham, and his name, with E's added for a Gaelic flavor. The property and house once belonged to Col. Philip Burr Bradley (*q.v.*). [JFS, OMS]

Grafton, Samuel, (1907-1997), a native of Philadelphia, was a writer who was accomplished in many genres. He wrote the nationally syndicated column, "I'd Rather Be Right," penned several books on politics and economics, freelanced for magazines, published a popular mystery novel *A Most Contagious Game* (1955), and, with his wife, **Edith**, wrote a Broadway play

and acclaimed scripts for television. They lived on Barry Avenue from 1948 until 1962. [WWW]

Graham Dickinson SPIRIT Skate Park: Built in 1998 and operated by the Parks and Recreation Department, this fee-based facility on East Ridge east of the Yanity Gym (*q.v.*) is named for a 16-year-old who was active in efforts to create a skate park and who was killed by a truck while walking along Route 7 a few weeks after the park opened. SPIRIT stands for the fund-raising campaign: "Skate Park in Ridgefield — It's Time!" [JFS]

Graham, Laurence I., was a Wilton resident who owned the Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) for a while in the 1940s [RPJ7/14]. He later became first selectman of Wilton.

Graham, Michael, is a puppeteer who grew up on Spring Valley Road. He started "Michael's Marionettes" at age 13 and began giving shows. In 1977, he established Spring Valley Puppet Theater, which, based in New Haven was still doing shows in the 2010s. Graham was retired by 2024. [JFS]

Grain elevator on lower Bailey Avenue, dating around around 1890, served local farmers with farm feeds and supplies. It was built and owned by Samuel D. Keeler (*q.v.*). The building was razed in 2023 to make way for multifamily housing. [DD58].

Grand Central Market opened in the old First National space at the Donnelly Shopping Center at 27 Governor Street in 1974 and was later renamed GranCentral. It included a separate liquor store. The market closed in August 1989, and was replaced by Hay Day Country Market (*q.v.*).

Grand Levy: *see under* Grand List *and* Mill Rate.

Grand List, the compilation of all the taxable property in Ridgefield, has been used since the 18th Century to calculate the town's revenue from local property taxes, the chief source of town government's income. The more the value of property people own, the more they pay in taxes. The Grand List includes land, buildings, motor vehicles, machinery, office equipment, farm stock, utilities (poles, wires), and other items. The value of the Grand List — which is a percentage of the supposed market value of the property — is multiplied by the mill rate (*q.v.*) to obtain the potential tax income (if everyone pays up) for the town, called the Grand Levy. In modern times, the Grand List has been calculated at 70% of market value, a percentage required by state law. [JFS]

Grand Union supermarket opened in 1959 at new Benenson (*q.v.*) shopping center, 467 Main Street. It closed in 2001 and was replaced by CVS (*q.v.*), which had been on Danbury Road. [JFS]

Grand View Drive, off Barrack Hill Road, employs a somewhat clever pun, descriptive of not only the terrain but also of Jean C. and Nina LeGrand, former owners of the land. The road serves a subdivision about 47 acres, developed by Peter Lorenzini and Norman Craig in late 1950s. It was originally the estate of Benjamin Levy (*q.v.*) — part of estate is now Levy Park (*q.v.*). [RN]

Grange: *See* Ridgefield Grange.

Grant, Evelyn Alice Lunderville (1915-1983), a 20-year salesperson at Allan's Men's Store, was the inspiration for a TV series character. A close friend of Ridgefield author Irene Kampen (*q.v.*), Ms. Grant appeared as a character in Kampen's book, *Life Without George*. When Lucille Ball decided to use the book as the basis for a 156-episode TV series, "The Lucy Show," after her

separation from Desi Arnaz, she played Kampen's character while Vivian Vance (of North Salem) played the role written around Ms. Grant. [P9/22/1983]

Grant's, formally the W.T. Grant Company, opened July 31, 1972 in new Copps Hill Plaza and included a general department store, light auto service, and restaurant. Its 225 employees, were managed by John LaTulippe. The chain went bankrupt and close the store in February 1976. Caldor (*q.v.*) took over spot in 1977.

Grassi, Sebastiano, a Ridgefield woodcarver, gave an elaborately carved chair to President and Mrs. Warren G. Harding in June 1922 in honor of the calling of a conference on world disarmament. The chair was placed in the White House. [JFS]

Grasso, Jack, (1927-2005), a native of White Plains, NY, was a prominent Ridgefield artist and a founder of the Ridgefield Guild of Artists (*q.v.*). He began as an architectural designer, and did many Ridgefield houses. At 40, he quit business and became a self-taught watercolorist. Many of his paintings are of Cape Cod. His works are in many private and public collections. He was a member of the Salmagundi Club in NYC, and supported many local charities with donations of his works. His wife, **Carol Pankowsky Grasso,** has long been active in the community. [P9/22/2005]

Grassy Island was, as early as 1717 the name for the slightly elevated strip of land along both sides of Danbury Road (Route 35) from the foot of Island or Danbury Hill north to the river at Fox Hill condominiums. The name last appears in land records in 1789. It was so called because of the many reeds growing in Great Swamp in this area. [RN]

Grassy Swamp is a turn-of-the-20th-Century name for the swamp on the north side of Farmingville Road, below Lee Road – actually, a part of Great Swamp (*see* Grassy Island). [RN]

Gravestone Inscriptions, Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut, is a 205-page, loose-leaf compilation of all the then-extant gravestones in Ridgefield's 20 known cemeteries. It was begun on Nov. 9, 1934, as a Depression-era work project and completed in December 1937 under the supervision of Charles R. Hale, state military necrologist, assisted by Mary H. Babin, secretary. It is completely indexed. Copies are held by the town clerk and the Ridgefield Historical Society, as well as this writer. [JFS]

Gravitte, Beau, is an actor who has appeared in films, on stage and in such television series as *One Life to Live*, *Third Watch* and *Murphy Brown*. He has taught acting classes here. He is married to Debbie Gravitte (*q.v.*).

Gravitte, Debbie Shapiro, (1954-), a native of Los Angeles, is a stage and TV actress and singer who made her Broadway debut in 1979 in the original cast of "They're Playing Our Song." She won a 1989 Tony for best feature actress in a musical – "Jerome Robbins' Broadway." She has also co-starred in the TV series, *Trial and Error*. She has done many benefits for local organizations and for many years led a Christmas special at the Ridgefield Playhouse. She and her husband, Beau Gravitte (*q.v.*), moved here in the 1990s.

Gray, Philip M., was headmaster of the Ridgefield School from 1934 to 1937. [P9/23/1937]

Gray Court College: In January 1941, Gray Court School, a prep school in Stamford, bought the Upagenstit (*q.v.*) estate on West Lane to create a

junior college for women. The school paid $72,000 ($1.5 million in 2024) for the property, including 40 acres of the original estate. In September, 70 students showed up, with a faculty of 14. By 1945, financial troubles closed the school. The name is sometimes incorrectly spelled Grey — it was named for school founder Jessie Callum Gray. For a profile, see DD149.

Gray Shingles was the home of Gerardus and Lois Herrick at 77 High Ridge Avenue for much of the 20th Century and later owned by Jack Hoeft. It was originally built by Helen Minturn Post around 1890, but much modified by the Herricks. [JFS]

Great Ditch first appears in a 1774 deed for a place probably west of Ridgebury Road, north of Chestnut Hill Road, and south of Old West Lane (Canterbury Lane). "Ditch" suggests it was man-made, and the Great Ditch may have been excavated by Rockwell family to drain wetlands for crop or pasture use. The water probably fed Mopus Brook (*q.v.*). Another Great Ditch mentioned in 1824 deed for Farmingville land. [RN]

Great East Meadow Pond is the original — and wordier — name for Great Pond, so called because it adjoined the Great Meadow (*q.v.*) just to the west. [RN]

Great Fire of 1895: *See* Fire of 1895.

Great Hill: 1. This name was mentioned in 1740 for a hill east of Lakes Oscaleta, Waccabuc and Rippowam, south of Round Pond, and thus probably along West Mountain Road at Old West Mountain Road, peaking 880 feet above sea level at Ridgefield Academy; **2.** In Limestone District, a Great Hill is mentioned as early as 1754, probably today's Great Hill traversed by Great Hill Road (*q.v.*). **3.** Mentioned 1759 as being in "ye New Patent," now Ridgebury, this Great Hill was possibly in the vicinity of Old Stagecoach and Ridgebury Roads. **4.** Yet another Great Hill appears in an 1800 deed for land in the vicinity of Jo's Hill in Danbury, then part of Ridgefield. [RN]

Great Hill Road is a very old highway, mentioned in land records as early as 1739, extending today from Limestone Road to Bennett's Farm Road. Although the term "Great Hill" dates from the 18th Century, the road name appears to dated from the 1940s or 50. In the 18th Century, this was "the road to Bennett's Farm" or Bennett's Farm Road. The name is certainly appropriate for the road; from where it crosses the Norwalk River (near its south end) it rises 160 feet (from 520 to 680 feet above sea level) in a distance of about 1,000 feet of roadway. It was sometimes called "the Old Road to Ridgebury." [RN]

Great Island appears to have been the ridge along Danbury Road from Fox Hill condominiums north to approximately the intersection of Haviland and Limestone Roads, an area once almost surrounded by swamp or running water. It was first mentioned in 1712. *See also* Island Hill. [RN]

Great Ledges was an early term for Asproom (Aspen) Ledges (*q.v.*), appearing in a 1753 proprietors' deed for five acres lying "at ye Asproom Mountain, west of ye Great Ledges." [RN]

Great Meadow was another of those old terms that was used for several localities in town. In all cases the term probably disappeared because the greatness of the meadows was diminished by original owners' selling off portions of them to other farmers. **1.** Mentioned as early as 1780, this meadow was situated on lower West Lane, south of Cedar Lane, owned by the Northrup family; mentioned as late as 1835. 2. First cited in 1781, this

Great Meadow was situated "at the Island so called," probably Grassy Island (*q.v.*), along Danbury Road. It was owned by the Dauchy family. **3.** The Stebbins clan had a Great Meadow "on the Titicus Plain so called...east side of the river," mentioned in 1797. **4**. In 1798, a deed mentions an acre "lying in the Great Meadow so called in Ridgebury Parish," perhaps near Shadow Lake Road **5.** The Warren family had a Great Meadow in Limestone District, according to a 1795 deed; it was probably near Great Pond in a neighborhood called "East Meadow" and "Great Estate Meadow" in the 1700's and early 1800's. [RN]

Great Pasture was near both Whipstick and Miller's Ridges (*q.v. each*) in the Nod Road neighborhood. It was first mentioned around 1769 and was still used through 1805. [RN]

Great Pond, called Nesopack (*q.v.*) by the American Indians, is a largely spring-fed body of water east of Route 7, north of Great Pond/Pickett's Ridge Road. It was called Great East Meadow Pond (*q.v.*) as early as 1769, and the first use of "Great Pond" appears in a 1774 deed. The pond said to be 34 feet at deepest spot and covers about five acres. It is the location of both Ridgefield's Martin Park (*q.v.*), and the private Great Pond Club (*q.v.*). most of the shore now owned by town of Ridgefield, much of it obtained in 1992 when P&Z approved development of former Camp Adventure (*q.v.*) into Laurelwood (*q.v.*) and Ridgefield Crossings (*q.v.*) plus later Regency at Ridgefield (*q.v.*), all to the north and northwest. *See also* Burt's Pond and Smith's Pond. [RN, JFS]

Great Pond Club is a private, limited-membership beach on the southeastern side of Great Pond, founded 1950s. [JFS]

Great Pond Crossing was the name of Ridgefield Crossings (*q.v.*) senior living center for a year or two, earlier called Chancellor Park (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Great Pond Mountain is the hill just northeast of Great Pond on the line between Ridgefield and Redding, reaching 790 feet above sea level — highest point in eastern Ridgefield. The term first appears in the 1808 perambulation (*q.v.*). [RN]

Great Pond Road leads from Route 7 past the entrances to Martin Park and the Great Pond Club and soon becomes Pickett's Ridge Road (*q.v.*) in Redding; in fact, it has also been called Pickett's Ridge Road in Ridgefield. This is an 18th Century stagecoach highway and post road that was part of route between Ridgefield and center of Danbury before Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (*q.v.*) through Sugar Hollow was built — *see* Danbury Road. [RN]

Great Rocks: A 1717 deed mentions 19 acres "lying eastward of ye Country Road (Wilton Road), bounded west by highway, south by Norwalk (now Wilton) bounds, east by ye Great Rocks and common (land), west by ye Country Road." These rocks, cited only in this deed, are west of the southerly extension of Spectacle Lane at the Wilton line. [RN]

Great Rocks Place is a short, dead-end road off Wilton Road West near the Wilton line. The name, suggested by JFS, recalls nearby the Great Rocks (*q.v.*). It was accepted by the selectmen in October 1980, but was mistakenly transcribed as Great Rock Place. [RN]

Great Spring, cited in a 1734 deed, was probably situated in what is now western Danbury but what was once northern Ridgefield. [RN]

Great Swamp: 1. The large wetland west of Danbury Road, north of Ivy Hill

Road and east of Blackman Road, traversed by Farmingville Road, has been so called since the town's founding in 1708. The northern extent of the swamp has been variable, but reaches nearly to Haviland Road. It is probably the floor of an old lake created by the melting of the last glacier 20,000 years ago and is the headwaters of the Norwalk River (*q.v.*). Also known in the 18th Century as "ye 1,000 Acre Swamp," a name that's probably an exaggeration, the swamp was once larger and has gotten smaller from filling. In 1718 the swamp was divided into lots among among the 27 Proprietors (*q.v*.) who used it as source of wood, for hunting, and for berries, including cranberries. In the 1960s and 1970s, the state purchased 341 acres as part of Norwalk River Flood Control Project — a dam built at Fox Hill condos could be activated in times of flooding, holding back water in the swamp. A large aquifer beneath the swamp is considered important as possible future source of drinking water. Because of this, the state in 1978 ordered the town to shut down its "dump" (*q.v.*) or landfill, to prevent its leaching pollutants into the aquifer. Its elevation 575 feet (U.S. Geological Survey), or 581 feet (aerial imaging, 2004). **2.** New Purchase Swamp (*q.v.*) was also occasionally called Great Swamp in 1700s. [RN]

Green, village: *See* Village green *and* meeting house yard.

Green Doors Motel, Ridgefield's first and only true motel, was opened in 1952 by Alice Harding Finch (*q.v.*) on Route 7 just south of Route 35. She retired in 1967, but the motel lasted until the early 1980's and was remodeled into what became a series of restaurants, starting with Dana's (*q.v.*) — it was John's Best Pizza in 2024. (Note: The Ridgefield Motor Inn, now a Days Inn, is in Redding.) [RN]

Green Lane is a dead-end road of about 950 feet off Eleven Levels Road. The name was used in Jerry Tuccio's mid-1960's plans for the property, but its origin is unknown — though it possibly honors a former town engineer named John Green. [RN]

Green Willow, an antiques shop, opened in Copps Hill Common in fall of 1987, moving from Cannon Crossing in Wilton where it started in 1976. It was owned by former actress and singer Lynn Brinker, who named it after the first Broadway play she appeared in. [P11/24/1987]

Greenberg, Frederick, owned a mid-century modern house, designed in 1951, by Edgar A. Tafel (1912-2011), student of Frank Lloyd Wright, at 38 Saw Mill Hill Road. The identity of Greenberg has not been discovered. [LoC]

Greenfield Street off Barry Avenue is part of the early 20th Century Bryon Park (*q.v.*) development. Before the area was subdivided around 1910, the land was a "green field," at least in the growing season. It's sometimes erroneously called Greenfield Avenue. [RN]

Greenridge Drive, a short, private, dead-end road off Rita Road at the Ridgefield Lakes, traverses a ridge that's presumably green at times. [RN]

Greenwood, Dr. Jacob "Jake,**"** was named principal of RHS in June 2020, replacing Stacey Gross (*q.v.*). He taught biology there from 1999 to 2012, was promoted to dean of students in 2006, and science department chair in 2009. He left to become assistant principal at Darien High School in 2013. In 2018, he became principal of Masuk High School in Monroe.

Gregor, Emma Sloan, and her husband, Fred, owned the Book Barn (*q.v*.) on Wilton Road West, Route 33. [JFS]

Greims, H.S., (pronounced *Grimes*), was a family who owned an Old Branchville

Road estate in the 1920s. *See* Paolino Gerli.

Grennan, Augustine "Gus," (1924-2006), a native of Stafford Springs who lived on Cain's Hill Road, was a banker from 1955 until he retired in 1987 as Union Trust Company's Ridgefield vice-president. He was a longtime chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He moved to Rhode Island in 1987. [P8/6/1987]

Greve, Ellen Jones, (ca.1923-1983), a native of Ohio and graduate of Skidmore, was a writer for such magazines as Cosmopolitan and Harper's, and had taught at Famous Writers School and Norwalk Community College. She had lived on Bennett's Farm Road since 1963. He name was pronounced *Gre-VAY*). [P11/9/1983]

Greyhound, the bus company, served Ridgefield for many years. The stopping and ticket-selling location was Ridgefield Drug in 1940 and later, Squash's Ridgefield News Store, both in the Ernest Scott Block on Main Street. In 1940, a ride from Ridgefield to NYC was 90 cents; to Washington, D.C., $3.30. [P3/28/1940]

Greywacke was the name of the home of Bache Emmet M.D. (*q.v.*), at 153 West Mountain Road, later Innisfree (*q.v.*) of the Neligan family. The term, in use by 1900, refers to a gray stone. [Kendall]

Griffin Hill Road, a road in the extreme eastern part of Ridgefield, off Fire Hill Road, is part of a 1924 subdivision of 63 lots, many of which were purchased by Isabel R. Griffin of New York City. To reach it requires going through Redding. [RN]

Griffith Lane is a dead-end road off the east side of High Ridge Avenue, named for Mr. and Mrs. William H. Griffith, who created it under the name of The Rondax Company. Mrs. Griffith was a niece of Governor Phineas C. Lounsbury (*q.v.*), who built the Community Center building as his home and had owned the Griffith Lane property — at the corner of Griffith and High Ridge was a storage tank for his water supply, now converted into a house. She inherited the Lounsbury estate, selling the main portion to the town as Veterans Memorial Park (*q.v.*) [RN]

Grimes, Joseph Jr. was Ridgefield's seventh school superintendent, serving from 1956 to 1962.

Grimes: *See also* Griems.

Grimes, Joseph, was Ridgefield's seventh school superintendent, serving from 1956 to 1962.

Gringo Cafe was a restaurant at 23½ Catoonah Street, opened in 2005 by Jessica Wilmot, also owner of The Ancient Mariner (*q.v.*). It was closed by 2007, replaced by Costa Azul (*q.v.*), [P5/26/2005]

Grissmer, John, (1933-2024), who moved to Ridgefield in 1973, taught drama at UConn, American University and Xavier University. He wrote a Broadway play, *The Candy Apple* (1970), that, he'd rather proudly report, NYT critic Clive Barnes called "a quite astonishingly bad play." He produced and directed movies *The Bride* (1972), *Scalpel* (1975) and *Blood Rage* (1985). He wrote the book and music for *The Perfect Game*, "a quirky romantic comedy about love, the invention of basketball, time travel, and the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principal;" it played off-Broadway in 2024. [JFS]

Grist mills, also called corn mills, were established as early as 1716 to grind grain, such as wheat and rye, into flour. Major 18th Century mills existed on Lake Mamanasco, the Titicus River near the village, Route 7 and

Stonehenge Road, and Route 7 and Florida Hill Road (Moongate). *See also* Abbott's Mill Road, Aspen Mill Road, Bung Town, Burt's Pond, Jabez Mix Gilbert, Daniel and John Lee, Mamanasco grist mill, Miller's Pond, Mill River, Moongate, Peter Burr, Ichabod Coles, Benjamin Chapman, Josiah Gilbert, Stephen Hard. [JFS]

Gristede Brothers Market, at 381 Main Street, was part of a chain of 132 small supermarkets owned by Gristede Brothers of the Bronx. Often called just Gristede's, it opened in 1949 when the chain bought Samuel Perry's market (earlier, Stewart's Market and originally, S.D. Keeler's). It closed in the fall of 1972, citing poor business as its reason. Gristede's also had a liquor store at 393 Main Street, the former A&P Liquor Store, from 1962 to 1975, when it was sold to manager William Bolling (*see* Bolling's Liquor Store).

Gross, Stacey Dr., was principal of RHS from 2012 to 2020. Connecticut PTA named her Principal of the Year in 2018. [JFS]

Grossfeld, Israel, (1920-2013), owned I. Grossfeld Ltd. at 405 Main Street, a men's clothing store. He gained national attention after his son **Fred** disappeared in 1966 while a junior at Massachusetts Institute of Technology; he maintained that police, both city and campus, routinely failed to act quickly on missing persons reports, and believed his son had been kidnapped or somehow injured. Fred's body was later found in Charles River, an apparent suicide. He sold his store in 1980 and moved to Israel, but later lived in Florida, where he died. [WWW]

Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, also called The Wayside Shrine, is a stone structure at the Prospect Ridge Congregate Housing, dedicated in 1925 when property was Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*). Religious statues were removed when the town bought property in 1971. [JFS, RPJ]

Grove Inn was established in the early 1920s by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Laschka in an 1888 house on Danbury Road, nearly opposite the north end of Tanton Hill Road. It burned down March 14, 1929. [JFS]

Grove Office Park, 38A, B & C Grove Street, a three-building project sparked by Dr. Joseph Buchman (*q.v.*), was built between 1973 and 1986 as medical condominiums. It now houses both medical and professional offices.[JFS]

Grove Ridge was "a steep ridge east of Pumping Station Swamp," says CPN, but no mention has been found in land records to 1890. [RN]

Grove Street, extending from Prospect Street to Danbury Road, is a popular bypass to Main Street and southern Danbury Road. So called since at least 1908, the road existed by 1856 and probably much earlier. It was probably named for an old fruit grove at what is now Casagmo property. [RN]

Grovelawn, today called Veterans Park (*q.v.*)**,** was the name that Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*) used for his Main Street estate; his house became the Community Center or "Lounsbury House" (*q.v. each*). The house was built in 1896 [subject of extensive historical feature story in P10/23/1975]. The cistern for the estate was located at 8 Griffith Lane, converted to a house by Peter McManus (*q.v.*). The estate is also the location for Veterans Park Elementary School and the Veterans Park athletic fields. [RGE]

Grovellen is a brick mansion at High Ridge and Peaceable Street, built around 1915 by Charles Henry Holt of the publishing family, and named for his wife, Ellen. [JFS]

Growth of Ridgefield: The town began settlement around 1709 with about two dozen families moving here. However, the earliest official count of residents

wasn't until 1756 when the Connecticut colonial government found 1,069 Ridgefielders. A 1774 enumeration counted 1,708 people and a 1782 Connecticut enumeration found 1,697. The first official population count of Ridgefield was the 1790 federal census, 1,947 people. The number rose slowly to 2,474 in 1840, then dipped to 2,337 in 1850 and 2,213 in 1860, probably due to the attraction of more open, fertile, and less rocky farming lands to the west. The population dropped 13.3% in 1870 as more people after the war sought better land for farming. The 1870 population of 1,919 was less than the 1790 population. Starting around then, town fathers began efforts to make Ridgefield more attractive to visitors, summer/ weekend residents and dairy farming, such as by having a railroad spur line into the village. As a result the population grew steadily, helped by immigrants from Ireland, Germany and eventually Italy, who came to work on estates and to build infrastructure and utilities. By 1910, the population was 3,118. However, World War I brought another 13% decline as many young people went off into the increasingly industrialized world. The 1920 population was 2,707; it was the last time the town saw a drop. From then on, it increased, sharply in the 1920s (32% by 1930, when it totaled 3,580 people). And by the 1950s, the town grew more attractive to commuters, thanks to highways like the Saw Mill River Parkway, improvements to Route 35, and the building of I-95. Old farms and estates began being turned into subdivisions. The population jumped 87% from 1950 to 1960, when it totaled 8,165 people. Then, in what was one of the top growth spurts of any Connecticut town at the time, the population rose by 123% in 1970, reaching 18,188 people. Thereafter growth has been from 4 to 13% per decade, depending on national economic fluctuations. Lack of land available for development has slowed growth. Most additional population has come from new multifamily units, chiefly in and near the village. [JFS]

Gruman, George B., (1836-1912), a native of Wilton, became a maker of ice-cutting and -handling equipment (*see* Gruman Ice Tool Works). He probably started the Branchville Cemetery (*see* Gruman Cemetery). The spelling of his name often appears as Grumman, but in his will and advertising, he spelled it Gruman. [JFS]

Gruman Cemetery was the original portion of Branchville Cemetery, created in 1862 by George B. Gruman (*q.v.*) when he bought 1½ acres off Florida Road, at north end of today's cemetery. Most of this land was later acquired by Floyd Bouton of Bouton Funeral Home, Georgetown, and merged with additional Bouton land to form Branchville Cemetery. Some of the 1½ acres may still be owned by Gruman heirs, says surveyor Eric Kristoffersen. George Gruman's gravestone is the tallest in the cemetery. The name has also been spelled Grumman or Grummun. [JFS]

Gruman Ice Tool Works Inc. was operated in Branchville by G.B. Gruman who said in a 1911 advertisement: "Ice Tools of Quality. We've been making them since 1859." The company was especially known for ice tongs, which were sold widely, but also made ice cutting tools and other implements for harvesting ice from ponds and lakes. The building was where 41-49 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) is now. [JFS] *See also* Ice houses.

Grumman, Charles, had a silver plating business in the early 19th Century at 149 Main Street. One of his employees was Isaac Lewis (*q.v.*), a noted silversmith. [JFS]

Grumman, Frederic A., (1846-1864), served and died, probably of disease, in the Union Army while stationed in Tennessee. He is buried in the Nashville National Cemetery. He was only 18 years old. [JFS]

Grumman, Josiah N., (1823-1904), a Ridgefield native, was a shoemaker who became a shirt maker. He moved to Norwalk in 1872. [CBRFC]

Grunig, George Jr., operated a "new" real estate agency at 394 Main Street (ONS91) in the 1950s. [RPJ4/11, DD94]

Grunsell, Gerald: *See* Horologist of London.

Guigui, Drs. Armand and **Christine,** were Ridgefield physicians in the last quarter of the 20th Century. Christine (1926-2024) was a pediatrician who practiced many years with Dr. James Sheehan (*q.v.*). Armand was a surgeon who died in 2002. They lived on Lounsbury Road. [JFS]

Gully, John Raymond, (1918-1944), a private first class with the Army in France died in combat July 23, 1944. He left a wife, Alice, and two children; one two months old was in the hospital for a spinal condition. Posthumously awarded a Purple Heart, he is buried in Wooster Cemetery, Danbury. [JFS]

Gun Hill Farms was reportedly one of the names of the Robert Roache subdivision that includes Powderhorn Drive and Old Musket Lane (*q.v.*); It has also been called Big Gun Hill. [RN]

Gund, Adolf (also **Adolph**), 1869-1945, a native of Germany, was a toy-maker who founded Gund Manufacturing Company, now an international brand of plush toys or "stuffed animals." He came to the US in 1894, and married Luise Bigler in New Jersey in 1898, the same year he started his company in Norwalk, which later moved to NYC. He sold the business in 1925 and held patents. Gund came to Ridgefield in late 1920s, living on the north corner of North Salem Road and Wooster Street where he had a toy-making workshop in his barn (now converted to a house). Luise died here in 1936 and is buried Fairlawn Cemetery; they had no children. Adolf soon moved back to NYC where died in 1945, age 75. His half brother Fritz, who died here 1915, is buried in Scotts Cemetery. [WWW]

Gunpowder, a 755-page novel set in the 18th and early 19th Century, starts off with the Battle of Ridgefield. Author Douglas Haynes (*q.v.*) lived on Main Street; the 2019 version of the book is called The Ridgefield Edition. [JFS]

Gunther, Max, (1927-1998), a native of England, was an editor and writer for major magazines who wrote 26 books, several best-sellers, about aspects of American life. *Split Level Trap* (1960), describing suburban life, became a best-seller, as did *The Weekenders* (1964), a look at how Americans spent their weekends. He specialized in books on wealth; one of his most quoted observations is: "It is unlikely that God's plan for the universe includes making you rich." He lived on Peaceable Street, then Beechwood Lane, from 1960 to 1987. He's buried Branchville Cemetery. [WWW]

Gustafson, Harvey V., (1919-2001), a Marine veteran of World War II, was an art teacher and artist who lived on Silver Spring Road with his wife, Hope. He taught in Ridgefield, then Weston. A watercolorist, he exhibited widely in the Northeast. He retired to Rhode Island. His children included son **Rex**, a longtime Ridgefield attorney. [JFS]

Gustafson, Robert "Bob,**"** (1920-2001), a native of Brookline, Mass., was a RP cartoonist from the late 1960s until his death. He served in the U.S. Army as a pilot, pitched semi-pro baseball, and studied at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts School. Before he was 21, he was sending cartoon gag ideas to

The New Yorker; several were used. He did cartoons for many magazines and drew syndicated *Tilly the Toiler* strip. He later worked for Mort Walker on *Beetle Bailey* and *Hi & Lois*. He lived on Wilton Road West and on Cedar Lane between 1954 to 1960 when he moved to Old Greenwich. [WWW]

Gymnasium, old RHS: In the fall of 1939 the town's first dedicated gymnasium opened at the East Ridge School/Ridgefield High School as part of an addition that included the auditorium (now the Ridgefield Playhouse) and cafeteria. The first basketball game was played Nov. 30, 1939; the first RHS dance there was Dec. 22, 1939. Before this basketball was played in Town Hall. It continued to be used until 1960 when a new and larger gym —now used for recreation and as a voting place — opened. *See* Yanity Gym [JFS]

Gypsy Moth: This Asian species, whose name was changed in 2021 to Spongy Moth, was introduced in the 1800s to the Boston area as a possible source of silk. Without natural enemies, it spread, becoming a major pest, defoliating countless acres of deciduous trees. Here, it was mentioned as early as 1908 in a RP story about how automobiles may help spread of caterpillars [P3/5/1908]. The species tended to have population explosions every eight to 10 years; major infestations in Ridgefield occurred 1969, 1970, 1971, 1980, 1982, and 1989 when a fungus killed most caterpillars. A 1971 town meeting voted to spray the whole town with Sevin by helicopter, but lawsuit threats by local conservationists such as Daniel and Louise McKeon (*q.v.*) prompted the spray company to bow out. The Conservation Commission also oppose widespread spraying [P9/11/1980]. [JFS]

H

Hackert, James, (1925-2010), an owner of the Hackert & Monti real estate agency in the 1960s and 70s, was a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of World War II who was active in the Kiwanis Club and enjoyed horses, and practiced dowsing (*q.v.*). He retired to South Carolina in 1980. *See also* Hackert & Monti Building.

Hackert and Monti Building, 409 Main Street (ONS90), is the former Jesse Lee Methodist Church (*q.v.*) rectory, converted to stores and offices around 1964-65 by James Hackert and Sal Monti, real estate entrepreneurs. [JFS]

Haddon, Jon R., a native of Chicago, was rabbi of Temple Shearith Israel, starting in summer 1987 [P8/6/1987, P9/24/1987]. He retired in 2008. He was Ridgefield Police chaplain many years and has been active in the arts here and in Danbury where he lives. He began his career as a cantor. [JFS]

Hagemeyers' Pond is a small, man-made body of water between western Ivy Hill Road and Branchville Road, named for Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Hagemeyer who once owned it and a sizable house nearby. [RN]

Hagerty, H.J., was Ridgefield's street cleaner in the early 20th Century, employed by Village Improvement Society (*q.v.*).

Haight, John F., (1920-2002), a Newburgh, N.Y., native who came here as a child and was RHS 1938, was Ridgefield's second police chief, serving from 1965 to 1977, during which time the department grew from 10 to 30 officers and moved from the town hall basement to the East Ridge headquarters. He joined the town constabulary in 1947. A WW2 Army veteran, he earned a Bronze Star for heroism. [WWW]

Haight, Robert S., (1914-2006), an insurance executive, wrote the 1975 book, *St. Stephen's Church: Its History for 250 Years*. He was school board chairman, 1969-70; chairman of the Elementary Schools Building Committee in 1968; and Lions Club president in 1965. He moved to Memory Lane in1955 and retired to New Hampshire in 1972. [WWW]

Haines 5¢ to $1 was a general merchandise store at about 440 Main Street from 1938 until the mid-1950s, operated by Allen and Mary Haines of Lafayette Avenue. In the 1950s, it included a soda fountain/lunch counter. The site was later Bongo's (*q.v.*), Ridgefield Pastry Shop and, in 2024, Harmony Nails and Spa. [JFS]

Hair Affair Ltd., was a shop at 52 Danbury Road in 1981 [P7/23/1981]

Halfway House: In the 1860s, Sherman Beers (*q.v.*) operated a small hotel and dining spot connected with the railroad, including a bar and a waiting room that served as a station. He called it the Halfway House because it was half-way between Danbury and Norwalk on both the Sugar Hollow/Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike and, later, the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road. By the 20th Century, the building had become a grocery store operated by Walter Little (*q.v.*) and is now a two-family apartment building at 38 West Branchville Road. [JFS]

Hall, Frederick Charles "Fred C.", (1907-1989), a native of London, England, was a longtime builder and later, in the 1960s and 70s, town building inspector. He and his wife Gladys retired to Florida, where he died. [JFS, A]

Hall, William Henry, (1908-1944), a native of Ireland, had served with with an

engineering group at Nichols Field, Manila, when he was taken prisoner by the Japanese after the fall of Bataan in 1942. He supposedly had been a POW in Japan, but it was later determined he had died soon after he was captured. He had worked for Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*) before enlisting. [JFS]

Halloween: 1. Famous annual display has been staged by William E. Franzen (*q.v.*) on New Street since the 1990s. **2.** U.S. postage stamps issued in 2016 featuring four jack o' lanterns were photographed by former Ridgefielder Sally Andersen-Bruce, using pumpkins grown on New Street by Paul Montanari. **3**. Ridgefield Police have staged an annual Halloween party at the Community Center since the 1980s. **4**. Halloween was famously canceled two years in a row due to storms felling power lines on many roads: Oct. 29, 2011, a storm called Alfred or "Snowtober" and Oct. 29-30, 2012, Tropical Storm Sandy (*see* Storms). 5. Covid caused the annual Halloween Walk the Saturday before Halloween to be canceled in 2020. A "Spooktacular Drive-Thru Halloween Event" at the Lounsbury House Oct. 31, 2020, sponsored by the Ridgefield Police Department with the Ridgefield Theater Barn, required viewers to stay in their cars and was completely booked. Traditional trick or treating en masse on Main Street was discouraged, and many houses were closed to visitors. [JFS]

Halsted, Prince Albert, (1847-1864), who grew up on Ned's Lane in Ridgebury, was one of the first African Americans to volunteer for Civil War service in Connecticut. Soon after joining, Albert spent nearly three months in Knight General Hospital, a military facility in New Haven, suffering with typhoid fever. For some reason, he was returned to duty on April 5, 1864. Ten days later, he was dead. His medical record said he had died of "typhoid pneumonia." [JFS]

Halpin, James (ca. 1821-1911), was a farmer and laborer who came here from Ireland in the mid-19th Century and had a small farm on Prospect Ridge. [DD69] *See* Halpin Lane.

Halpin Court on Halpin Lane (*q.v.*). is an affordable housing complex built privately by the Nolan brothers of Danbury on land contributed by the town from the old Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*) property. Its 16 one-bedroom units and 9 two-bedroom units opened in the fall of 1991. Nearby is the town's Prospect Ridge congregate housing (*q.v.*). In 2025, Acadia Housing Inc., a non-profit based in Rocky Hill, was being proposed as a new operator of the housing. [JFS]

Halpin Lane runs from Prospect Ridge Road opposite the Venus Office Building/old high school, eastward down to the old railroad bed. It once led to the small farm of James Halpin (*q.v.*) and on into Great Swamp. The road was first paved soon after 1971 when the town bought Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*). [RN]

Ham radio: First amateur radio station in Ridgefield was operated in 1912 by Carlton Ross Stevens (*q.v.*); another early amateur was **John W. Hubbard** (*q.v.*), who ran a local radio store and who was involved in the earliest shortwave communications with Europe. **E. Earl Roberts** (*q.v.*) was also an early ham. Today, some of the CERT (*q.v.*) volunteers and leaders are ham operators.

Hamilton, Alexander, (1757-1804), considered a Founding Father of the U.S., is said to have visited Ensign Samuel Keeler's Tavern September 19 1780, as a colonel traveling with General George Washington, Marquis de Lafayette,

General Henry Knox and others on their way to Hartford, the entourage spent the night in Ridgebury. [RIR130, 202]

Hamilton, Burgoyne, (1882-1937), was said by Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) to have been the first owner of an automobile in Ridgefield [BP6/12/1964]. He became a major New York City real estate dealer. [NYT12/27/1937] He was president of the Blue Cockade, an anti-Prohibition group in the 1920s. He was a son of Charles A. Hamilton (*q.v.*) [DD160]

Hamilton, Charles A., (1861-1921), president of International Silver, had a mansion at 61 High Ridge at the turn of the 20th Century. Part of the house was later moved across the road to become 72 High Ridge; the rest of the building was razed. Charles was the father of Burgoyne Hamilton (*q.v.*). [DD160]

Hamilton, Gay Story, (1935-2023), a native of New London, became in the early 2000s the chairman of the Council of Elders of the Mohegan tribe in Connecticut. As Gay Ramabhushanam, she lived in Ridgefield from the early 1970s until the mid-1990s, and was active in the community, especially the schools. [JFS]

Hamilton High School: *See* Alexander Hamilton High School.

Hamilton Road runs between Remington and Holmes Roads at Westmoreland (*q.v.*), named for Alexander Hamilton. As a Continental Army colonel, Hamilton visited Ridgefield with George Washington in 1780, staying overnight in Ridgebury. It became a town road in 1969. [RN]

Hamlet Hub, a local news website, was founded in 2011 by Kerry Anne Ducey, who had in 2009 created Talk of the Town, a blog that showcased local happenings and stories in Ridgefield. HamletHub LLC grew to a network of hyperlocal news sites. [JFS]

Hamlin, Hannibal, of Maine, vice-president from 1861 to 1865 under Abraham Lincoln, spoke in the hall of The Big Shop (*q.v.*) in 1864. [Rockwell]

Hammel, Dr. Heidi B. (1960-), has been an interdisciplinary scientist on the James Webb Telescope Project; her focus is on Webb's theme "Planetary Systems and the Origins of Life." As a planetary astronomer she has focused in the past on Neptune and Uranus. She is noted for her promotion of astronomy, and women in science. In 2002 she received the Carl Sagan Medal, given to a scientist whose communications have greatly enhanced the general public's understanding of planetary science. *Discover* magazine named her in 2002 one of the 50 most important women in science. She moved to Ridgefield in 1998 and then to Washington, D.C., in 2011 where she coordinated international, space and ground telescope projects. The asteroid 3530 Hammel was named in her honor in 1996. [P4/7/2011, JFS]

Hampden, Paul, (1907-2006), was born in London but came to Ridgefield at age 4, son of actor Walter Hampden (*q.v.*). He was an advertising executive who lived on the family estate on Mopus Bridge Road for many years and was active in the community, serving on the Planning and Zoning Commission in the 1960s and 70s. He ran for first selectman in 1963. He often wrote letters — and poems — published in the RP. [NR]

Hampden, Walter Dougherty, (1879-1955), was a Brooklyn-born actor who honed his skills playing Shakespearean roles in England. He went on to star alongside many of the stage and film's greatest names in the U.S. His last role was as the father in the film, "Sabrina," starring Audrey Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart, in 1954. He moved to Mopus Bridge Road in 1911 and

maintained the farm there until his death. Known for his quick wit, Hampden was in the Ridgefield post office one day when another patron tapped him on the shoulder. Hampden turned around, and the man who had tapped him said: "Oh, I beg your pardon. I thought you were someone else!" to which the actor replied, "I usually am." [WWW]

Hancock, George, is a student of history, including Ridgefield history, and has written three historical books: *This Quiet Place* (2012), a fictional account of life in Ridgefield in the 18th Century through the eyes of Keeler Dauchy as he grows from a boy to a successful merchant; *Until Jacob Comes Marching Home* (2013), a look at Ridgefield in the Civil War, from 1863 to 1865; *A Killing at the Inn* (2013), a fictional tale of a murder at the Keeler Tavern (Resseguie's Inn). [P12/23/2013]

Hanley, Ellen, (1926-2007), was an actress and singer known for her role as Fiorello H. LaGuardia's first wife in the 1959 Broadway musical "Fiorello!" She lived in Ridgefield, was a sister of William G. Hanley (*q.v.*), and is buried in Mapleshade Cemetery. [WWW, FaG]

Hanley, William Gerald, (1931-2012), a native of Ohio, was a stage and TV scriptwriter and a novelist. He earned a Drama Desk Award for two 1962 off-Broadway one-act plays; his "Slow Dance on the Killing Ground" opened on Broadway in 1964 to good reviews. Soon after he began writing for TV, especially plays and movies, winning two Emmys. He won an Edgar Award for his teleplay for the 1987 miniseries, "Nutcracker: Money, Madness & Murder." His novels included *Blue Dreams, Mixed Feelings,* and *Leaving Mount Venus,* all published in the 1970s. He lived here in his later years and is buried in Maple Shade Cemetery, alongside his sister, actress Ellen Hanley (*q.v.*). He moved to Ridgefield in 1973 with his wife, actress Pat Stanley (*q.v*.); they were later divorced. [WWW]

Hanneman House, a name used for the town-owned house at the north corner of Main and Market Streets, which was acquired in 1945 from the Lounsbury family as part of Veterans Memorial Park (*q.v.*). In 1986, it was considered as a location for A Better Chance (*q.v.*) [P4/24/1986], but voters rejected the idea. It was once the home of radio organist Burt Buhrman (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Hansen, Jeffrey, a short-lived school superintendent here, resigned in 1997.

Hanson, Donald P., (-1978), was the founder and longtime publisher of *Woman's Day* magazine, which was first owned by A&P, the supermarket chain, and is today owned by Hearst. The magazine was founded in 1931 and Hanson retired in 1968. He lived in Ridgefield from 1957 until late 1972, and was a founder of the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield. Hanson was the author of the anonymous article, "I Saw A Man Die," first published in *Reader's Digest* and still circulated today, about a friend who was fatally burned after a can of fire-starter fluid exploded while he was spraying hot charcoal for grilling a steak. His wife, **Muriel Ripperger Hanson,** (1917-2000), was a feature editor and columnist for *Woman's Day*.

Harahawmis, another version of the place name Narahawmis (*q.v.*), is found in histories of Lewisboro, N.Y., for a place in the "Kitchawan-Waccabuc area," which was part of Ridgefield before 1731 (*see* Oblong). [RN]

Harbor Electronics, at 650 Danbury Road (Route 7), built assemblies for early models of Apple Macintosh computers. The California-based company sold the 18,000-square-foot building to Schimenti Construction (q.v.) in

2007. [CTI 12/23/2025]

Hard, Stephen and Phebe, owned Josiah Gilbert's (*q.v.*) old grist mill at Limestone, and sold it to Hezekiah Smith in 1780 [RLR6/50]

Harder, Dr. Jean, (1925-2016) was a psychologist and psychoanalyst who lived and practiced here from the late-1970s until the mid-1990s. She was a founding member of the Youth Commission (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Harding Drive at Chestnut Hill Estates (*q.v.*), was named by developer Lewis J. Finch (*q.v.*) for his mother, Alice Harding Finch (*q.v.*). It became a town road in 1964. [RN]

Hardscribble House was what writer Hugh Mulligan *(q.v.*) called his home at 50 Crest Road.

Harkaway Farm, on North Salem Road, belonged to Ada Forbes Phair, and later was the home of the Leeman family (*see* George Leeman). During the 1920s, it was supposedly an inspiration for the play, *Desire under the Elms*, by neighbor Eugene O'Neill (*q.v.*). [DD17]

Harrison, Ewing Hunter, (1944-2017), was one of the 20th-21st Centuries' leading railroad executives. During his career, he was CEO of Illinois Central Railroad, Canadian National Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway, and CSX Corporation. He bought McKeons' Arigideen Farm (*q.v.*) in 2005, renaming it Double H Farm (*q.v.*), and turning it into an equestrian showplace that was once on the market for $50 million. [JFS]

Harrison Court, a dead-end road off Sleepy Hollow Road, recalls Harrison Horblit (*q.v.*), a renowned book collector. In 1996, John N. Sturges subdivided 43.8 acres into 10 building lots plus 21.4 acres of open space on the north side of Round Pond, a parcel owned by himself and Jean M. Horblit, Harrison's widow. [RN]

Harrison's Wine and Spirit was at 390 Main Street in 1987. It had been Hyde's (*q.v.*). [JFS]

HART stands for "Housatonic Area Regional Transit," now formally known as HARTransit, based in Danbury, which operates weekday buses between Ridgefield and Katonah station as well as the on-demand "SweetHART" buses for seniors and the disabled. *See also* Bus Service. [JFS]

Hartford National Bank and Trust Company opened a branch in the new Yankee Ridge Shopping Center on Prospect Street Dec. 12, 1972.

Hartmann, Elsa: *See under* Joseph Hartmann.

Hartmann, Joseph, (1867-1938), a native of Germany, was a photographer who moved to Ridgefield around 1890 and in the next 45 years, recorded many of the people and places in town via glass-negative photographs. Many appear in the 1999 book, *Images of America: Ridgefield* (*q.v.*), produced by the Ridgefield Archives Committee. He had his studio in the Bedient building at Main and Bailey, and he lived on Catoonah Street. The **Hartmann Society** was formed in the 1970s to preserve, catalogue, and identify the thousands of negatives, which Hartmann's daughter, Ridgefield High School teacher **Elsa Hartmann,** had given to the RP, which eventually donated them to the KTM, which has copied and still preserves the collection. [WWW]

Harvey Road, off the north side of Florida Hill Road, is one of two roads named for Harvey D. Tanton (*q.v.*), Republican first selectman from 1951 to 1953. The road existed by 1952 and was accepted as a town road in 1961. Some say the name was suggested by Bertha Bollas (*q.v.*), who was involved in

the development of houses there. *See also* Tanton Hill Road. [RN]

Hassel, Rev. Roy, (1935-2025), was minister at Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church from 1972 until the early 1990s. He later became district superintendent. [DNT7/6/1972, JFS]

Hat making: *See under* Adonirum Keeler, Edward M. Knox, James Bainbridge Lee, Harry B. Mallory Sr., *and* Jones, Slawson & Co.

Hatting: *See* Hat making.

Hauley: *See also* Hawley.

Hauley, Elijah, bought the grist mill on the Norwalk River at Florida Hill Road (*see* Moongate) from Peter Burr (*q.v.*) in 1740. He sold it in 1744 to Abraham Bennett. [JFS]

Hauley, Lt. Joseph, (1714-1749), a son of the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v*.), apparently had the "the first documented house in Farmingville" section of Ridgefield, along what would now be the northern end of Ivy Hill Road. The inventory of his estate in 1749 includes "one negro boy" valued at £366. [FoF; Danbury Probate Records, 1744-1782, Vol. 1, p. 87.]

Hauley, Rev. Thomas (1689-1738), the town's first minister, lived in the "town's oldest house," a gambrel-roofed residence at 236 Main Street (*see* Hauley House). A native of Northampton, Mass., he graduated from Harvard in 1709 and was ordained in 1712. He and his wife, Abigail Gould of Fairfield, came here 1713 as newlyweds when he became minister of the Congregational Church. At that time the operations of the church and the town were virtually the same – "government" meetings were held in the church, church records and town records were kept together, and the minister was the only schoolteacher — he was probably the most educated settler. He was also the first town clerk, then called "register." On Dec. 13, 1725, the Town Meeting agreed to pay him £70 a year for three years, and to add £10 a year after that until his salary reached £100, at which point it would be fixed. He was able to enjoy the full £100 for eight years before dying in 1738. Hauley was spelled in that fashion until Benjamin Smith became town clerk and register of records in 1785 and began spelling it Hawley, the "modern" version. His predecessor Stephen Smith, town clerk from 1747 to 1785, had always written it Hauley, as had Rev. Hauley himself. His slate gravestone in Titicus Cemetery (*q.v.*) is the oldest readable headstone in town. [RN]

Hauley House: At 236 Main Street on the north corner of Branchville Road, this gambrel-roofed house is said to date from 1713, built for the town's first minister, Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), and is probably the oldest house in town. It is a private residence, not open to the public, and was called "The Homestead" when Sarah Hawley lived there many years later [SR1916]. Glenna Welsh (*q.v.*), a 1970s historian of Ridgefield, who had previously owned and lived in the Keeler Tavern (*q.v*.), lived there in the 1960s and 70s. [WWW]

Hauley Place, a short, dead-end road off Lounsbury Road, is located on what was probably called Hauley's Ridge (*q.v.*). It was developed in 1978 by William R. Hornibrook who first proposed using the name, "Thomas Hauley Place." The selectmen accepted it as a town road in 1980.

Hauley's Ridge is the territory north of Florida Hill Road, generally east of Ivy Hill Road – including Meadow Woods (*q.v.*) and perhaps including the land traversed by Blackman and Lounsbury Roads. It's so called because the

descendants of the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*) had land there in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. [RN]

Haven, George G. Jr., (1866-1925), was a New York City business and railroad leader whose large summer home, Homewood (*q.v.*), was on West Lane at Country Club Road. He was known as an expert horseman. His wife, Elizabeth Shaw Ingersoll, was a daughter of CT Governor Charles Ingersoll. He had a nervous breakdown in 1924 and committed suicide a year later. [JFS]

Haviland, Isaac, (1820-1901), had a store in the Limestone District in 1856 [NG5/1856]. He became a partner in Harvey & Haviland, makers of tobacco products in Brooklyn, N.Y. In 1866 he moved to Bridgeport, where he lived the rest of his life. [HG, CBRFC]

Haviland, Isaac F., (1854-1935), a Ridgefield native, son of Isaac and great-grandson of Jacob Haviland (*q.v. each*), grew up in Brooklyn, where he had moved as a child. He learned the cigar-maker's trade from his uncle, Reed Haviland, at South Norwalk. "This occupation injured his health, however, and after 3½ years he gave it up and went into the plumbing business." He settled on a Danbury farm, and then retired to Florida. [CBRFC, HG]

Haviland, Jacob, (1757-1825) came from Dutchess County, N.Y., in 1801 and bought a 150-acre farm "at Limestone," mostly on the north side of Haviland Road (*q.v.*). He is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [FAG, RN, HG]

Haviland, Reed (1832-1900), a grandson of farmer Jacob Haviland (*see* Haviland Road), was a partner in the Old Well Cigar Company in South Norwalk. The sizable factory remained in operation from the mid-19th Century well into the 20th Century and its large building still exists at the west end of Washington Street — in 2009 it was nominated for the National Register of Historic Places. His father, Reed Haviland (1793-1835), a son of Jacob, is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [HG, JFS]

Haviland Road, an old and historic highway, extends between Danbury Road, opposite Limestone Road, to Route 7. From around 1720 until the early 1800's, it was considered part of the main road from Ridgefield to Danbury, continuing over Pickett's Ridge, Starrs Plain and Wooster Heights in Danbury — *see* Danbury Road. Sometime after the new Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike was built, this portion of the old Danbury Road picked up its more modern name from the family of Jacob Haviland (*q.v.*), who had a farm along the western part until around 1920 when Reed Haviland sold the homestead and about 100 acres to Charles and Hulda Ritch (*see* Ritch Drive). The road was so-called at least from 1946, but probably much earlier. [RN]

Hawk, William S., (1859-1935), operated the 14-story Hotel Manhattan at Madison Avenue and 42nd Street, built in 1896 next to Grand Central Terminal. One story higher than the recently built Waldorf Astoria, it was one of New York's premiere hotels (razed by CitiBank in 1964 to build a 40-story office building). Hawk was active in civic and social life of Ridgefield where he built a mansion, Hawk's Nest, along Branchville Road at the turn of the 20th Century. Mrs. Hawk (Edith Alliene Davis) was a sponsor of the town's first kindergarten, and the Hawks paid for the sidewalk at the new Ridgefield Library in 1901. Their huge mansion burned 1921 (after Hawk had sold it), but its coach house (*q.v.*) is still a home at 80 Branchville Road. FDM says Hawk was the second person to own a car in Ridgefield.

[BP6/12/1964] *See also* Hawk's Nest.

Hawkes, Emile McDougall, (1862-1929), who lived at 23 High Ridge Avenue in the early 20th Century, was the first chairman of the Board of Trustees — from 1911 to 1929 — of the Museum of French Art at the French Institute in the United States. His house has since been replaced by the brick home there now. [DD153]

Hawk's Nest, the mansion of William S. Hawk (*q.v.*) on Branchville and Rockwell Roads, burned down in 1921. It reportedly had at least 30 rooms.[WWW]

Hawley family: *see also* Hauley, the earlier spelling of the name.

Hawley, Charity, (1760-1860), was five months short of 100 at her death. She was the widow of Deacon Elisha Hawley (*q.v.*). In writing his autobiography, *Recollections of A Lifetime*, Samuel G. Goodrich (*q.v.*) "refreshed his own memory by conversations with Mrs. H. and drew largely upon her stock of information in regard to local matters in the preparation of his volumes." Her son, NYC business executive **Irad Hawley**, was the only one of six children to survive her. Another son was Rev. Stiles Hawley (*q.v.*). [NY Observer 8/9/1860]

Hawley, Ebenezer, (1791-1868), was a farmer who served as a state representative in 1830, 31, 34, 43 and 44, and many years as a selectman in the 1820s and perhaps in the 1860s. He is buried in Florida Cemetery.

Hawley, Deacon Elisha, (1759-1850), a furniture maker, served in the Revolution, including at the Battle of Ridgefield. A grandson of the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), he was active in the Congregational Church here and was married to Charity Hawley (*q.v.*). Goodrich has a long profile of him [ROAL519]

Hawley, Ebenezer, with Samuel Olmsted, leased a saw mill "at Pompion Ridge" from Samuel and Timothy Hoyt in 1816 — probably on the Cooper Brooks near Johns Pond. [RLR11/249]

Hawley, Elijah, (1785-1863), a Ridgefield native, was a carriage-maker, who served in the Revolutionary War. He started out as a wagon-maker, but, working with Jesse J. Skellinger (*q.v.*), established a carriage-making operation. He lived at 212 Main Street, across Branchville Road from where his grandfather and Ridgefield's first clergyman, the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q,v*), lived. He and his wife hosted Fanny Crosby (*q.v.*), the famous blind hymn writer, in their home during her early teenage years. He was a selectman from 1817 to 1820 and a state representative in 1820. [ROAL136-7]

Hawley, Elisha, (1759-1850), a cabinetmaker and grandson of the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), was for 60 years a deacon of the First Congregational Church. He served in the militia during the Revolution, and participated in the Battle of Ridgefield and fighting around New York City. [FAG, ROAL]

Hawley, Elisha Judson, son of Irad Hawley (q.v.), was a New York City banker, operating at 50 Wall Street in 1871. [Commercial and Financial Chronicle, New York, 6/3/1871] He owned much land on High Ridge that was developed for mansions in the last third of the 19th Century — *see* J. Howard King. [Beers]

Hawley, Enoch: *See* Walter Hawley.

Hawley, Henry Eugene (1838-1899), a native of NYC and great great grandson of Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), was a NYC tea merchant, head of Carter, Hawley & Co., who ca. 1892 built Ashton Croft (*q.v.*), the Main Street

mansion that's now Wesley Hall (*q.v.*) at Jesse Lee United Methodist Church. [JFS]

Hawley, Irad, (1793-1865), a Ridgefield native, was founder of the Borough of Hawley in Wayne Co., PA. He was the first president of the Pennsylvania Coal Company, which had its big yards near the Hudson River in the West Village of NYC. He died in Italy and is buried in Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, NY. The Ridgefield Library displays a portrait of him. He was a son of Deacon Elijah and Charity Hawley (*q.v. each*). *See also* his brother, Talcott Hawley *and* son, E. Judson Hawley. [JFS]

Hawley, Samuel: "There were four Hawley brothers, of whom two had declared for the King and two had joined the Continental Army," said Bedini. "William Hawley, a patriotic brother, had captured General Agnew's horse [April 26, 1777] and concealed his prize safely (at least he thought so) in a cellar. However, his loyalist brother, Samuel, discovered the animal and delivered it the same night to its former owner in Danbury. The next day these two brothers met each other face to face in hostile ranks at the Battle of Ridgefield." [RIR82]

Hawley, Rev. Stiles, (1799-1830), was a Ridgefield native, a great grandson of the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), and a son of Deacon Elijah and Charity Hawley (*q.v. each*). A missionary in what were then western states and territories, he was drowned in Illinois while crossing the Kaskaskia River on the ice on his way to a preaching assignment in 1830. For a while the family was told he had been captured by American Indians until his body was found some time later by a party of friends who had gone out to search for him. [NY Observer, 8/9/1860]

Hawley, Talcott, (1762-1807), enlisted in the militia in 1777, about age 15, under Capt. David Olmsted. He soon joined 2nd Regiment of the Connecticut Line, and re-enlisted in 1781 for three years. He saw service in the West Point area. He was a son of Capt. Thomas Hawley and his wife, Elizabeth, and a grandson of the Rev. Thomas and Abigail Gold Hauley (*q.v.*). [FAG, Rockwell].

Hawley, Rev. Thomas: *See* Rev. Thomas Hauley.

Hawley Jr., Capt. Thomas, (1721-1765), a son of the Rev. Thomas Hauley, settled next door to his brother, Joseph Hauley (*q.v.*), in Farmingville. The 1765 inventory of his estate included a "Negro man" valued at £50. He is buried in Titicus Cemetery with their parents. [UNM]

Hawley, Thomas, was a blacksmith and wheelwright at the turn of the 19th Century. [ROAL137]

Hawley, Walter, was killed by lightning, along with son **Enoch** and a grandchild, as they were sleeping in their beds July 11, 1837. Mrs. Enoch Hawley was also struck, but survived. They lived somewhere in western Ridgefield, said many news stories at the time. According to the 1830 census, both men were coopers. [JFS]

Hawley, William, was a Revolutionary War soldier. *See under* Samuel Hawley.

Hawley, William, (1785-1863), was a leading businessman who lived in what is now 181 Main Street and served as a state representative in 1816, 1817 and 1824. The 1860 census gives his occupation as "gentleman and retired merchant." For many years he was a partner with Lt. Joshua King in operating the Old Hundred store, originally King & Dole (now the second floor of the Aldrich Museum offices). He married Catherine, a daughter of

Lt. King. He was a selectman from 1821 until 1825. [RIR, DAUB]

Hawley and Pickett was a 19th Century cabinet-making factory, established by Rufus H. Pickett (*q.v.*) and Samuel Hawley in what later became the Bailey Inn (*q.v.*) on Main Street. Among their early employees was Jacob Lockwood (*q.v*.). [DAUB]

Hawley Cottage is another name for Ashton Croft (*q.v*.), so called because it was built by Henry Eugene Hawley (*q.v.*) in 1892. [JFS]

Hawley Street is an early name for the portion of today's Branchville Road between Main Street and the East Ridge area, named for Hawley/Hauley family that owned the house on northeast corner of Main and Branchville Roads for nearly two centuries — *see* Rev. Thomas Hauley. [RN]

Hawthorne Hill Road is a short lane off Ridgebury Road, partly serving as a route to Bridle Trail. The Spring Valley Corporation subdivision was part of a 98-acre former farm, owned by or under option to Richard Conley of the Connecticut Land Company at that time; it was once considered as a site for the Ridgebury Elementary School. The road is named for the plant, of which there were many on the property. Thus, the spelling is incorrect and should be *Hawthorn*. It became a town road in 1961. [RN]

Hay Day Country Market, a high-end supermarket, opened in June 1991 at 27 Governor Street in the former First National and GranCentral space (*q.v. each*). The market was satirized in the 1994 novel, *Ladybug, Ladybug*, by Susanna Hofmann McShea (*q.v.*). It was sold to Balducci (*q.v*.) in 2004. Much of its space is in 2026 the Ridgefield Thrift Shop (*q.v*.). [JFS]

Hayes, Clifford W., was a developer and restaurateur — *see* Hayes Lane.

Hayes Lane, a dead-end road off Olmstead Lane, was named for Clifford W. Hayes who filed the road and subdivision plan for seven, one-acre lots in 1948; later, more lots were developed. (For his own home Hayes built the house on Danbury Road that later belonged to actor Cyril Ritchard — *q.v.*) Hayes also operated a roadside eating place, called Poor Ole Cliff's, on Route 7 north of Route 35. When he left town in the 1950's, he took the name with him and opened another Poor Ole Cliff's on Marathon, one of the Florida Keys. [RN]

Haynes, Douglas, a financial executive, is the author of *Gunpowder (q.v.),* a privately printed novel whose plot begins with the Battle of Ridgefield. In 1998 Haynes and his wife, Laurice, bought 114 Main Street and got permission for it to become a B&B — it is now The Fountain Inn (*q.v.*). Haynes in 2024 lived in Briarcliff Manor, Westchester County, but still owned the inn. [JFS]

Hayward was an 18th and 19th Century town official whose duties included making certain that cattle fences were in good repair — to prevent livestock escaping and damaging crops of others. They could also impound stray livestock. "Hay" is from a Middle English word for "hedge" or "fence." Ridgefield was choosing haywards in 1871 when Thomas F. Brown and Hart Stiles were elected to the office — the first African Americans to serve in public office in Ridgefield (it was a year after Blacks gained the right to vote under the 15th Amendment). [JFS]

Hazel, Edwin Paul, (1944-), author and educator, a native of Nichols, CT, and a Yale graduate, was hired in 1972 as chairman of RHS English Department. He was soon named systemwide director of pupil personnel, a post he held until his retirement in 2004. He is the author of three acclaimed fantasy

novels, including *Undersea*, and a number of short stories, and has lived in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont — where he's been a school board member — since his retirement. He is married to the former Regina Yannuzzi (*q.v*.) [JFS]

Head of the Bogs: An 1812 deed describes four acres "at a place called the Head of the Boggs" — the north end of what we today call Silver Spring Swamp and what was then called the New Pound Bogs (*q.v.*). [RN]

Healy, Dr. Harold E., (1922-2026), a native of New Britain was a math teacher who became a Middletown High School principal, then principal of RHS starting in 1960. He oversaw the school during a period of rapid growth — the move from the East Ridge to the North Salem Road campuses in 1972. After his retirement in 1978, he became a Realtor. He was named office manager of John F. Coyle Associates' (*q.v.*) office at 23 Danbury Road in 1980. Later in life he has lived at Meadow Ridge in Georgetown. [P1/12/1978, P9/4/1980, OR1/12/2026]

Heart Brand Estates, a subdivision off Route 7 including Ashbee Lane and Richardson Drive, was developed around 1962 by Everett Lounsbury Jr.. The reason for name is not known; however, it may have been inspired by the fact that in Ridgefield's town records, which once kept track of local horse and cow brands, the very first brand recorded, in 1714, was an upside-down heart. [RN]

Hearthstone Inn or **Hearthstone Outpost Inn** were names for the Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) for a while in the late 1940s, early 50s when it was a sister inn to the Hearthstone Restaurants in New York City, all owned by Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Maneck of Ridgefield [RPJ7/14]

Heartstone was the name Edward Kidder (*q.v.*) gave to his house at 114 Main Street, 1915-21. [JFS]

Heat waves: *See* Temperatures.

Heath, Major General William, (1737-1814), and his brigade of Continental troops encamped along the south side of West Lane, west of where the First Congregational Church stands today, in July 1779, sent here by Gen. Washington to defend Stamford and nearby coastline after the British had attacked Fairfield. Gen. Heath remained in town for some days along with, off and on, several brigades of troops under three other generals, Samuel Parsons, John Glover and Richard Howe. [RIR]

Hebert, David, was parks and recreation superintendent in the 1970s. Active in Fifth Connecticut Regiment, he raised the regimental oxen Jeb and Dan (*q.v.)* at his residence, supplied by town, at Richardson Park (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Heckert, Scott, is a 2011 graduate of Ridgefield High School who became a NASCAR racing driver. He lived on West Lane.

Heidinger, Dr. Clifford, a veterinarian and native of New Canaan, operated the Ridgefield Animal Hospital, 614 Main Street, from 1985 until his retirement in 2023. He is a graduate of Purdue University's College of Veterinary Medicine and has been active for many years in the Rotary Club. [JFS]

Heim, Vivien Hull (1928-2010), a Ridgefield native, was a longtime music teacher in town, including at Farmingville School. As a child, "she was the principal piano player at hometown events in Ridgefield," her obituary said.

Heim's Music Store: *See under* J. Howard Burr.

Heirs Highway, Lane, and **Way,** are all names that appear occasionally in the land records for what has become a dead-end driveway off Pumping

Station Road near NY line. The name probably relates to an old bequest. [RN]

Heller, Georganne Aldrich, a daughter of Larry Aldrich (*q.v.*), is a theatrical and film producer, co-founder of the Daedalus Theatre Company and of Women-In-Film, and has been president of Irish Theatre & Film Production, a not-for-profit that presents the work of Irish playwrights in NYC, London and Dublin. She is also an artist who focuses on collages and assemblages. [JFS]

Heller, Howard Joseph Jr., (1964-2001), a 37-year-old managed funds expert with Carr Futures, was the only then-current resident killed on 9/11 (*q.v.*). He was working on the 92nd floor of the World Trade Center in Tower 1. A native of Ohio, he and his wife Mary-Jean, and their four children, ages 8, 6, 4 and 16 months at the time, lived in a quaint yellow farmhouse that he had fixed up and restored himself. [JFS]

Heller, Dr. John Herbert, M.D., (1921-1995), of Wilton was president of the New England Institute for Medical Research (*q.v.*). He taught pathology and biophysics at Yale from 1946 to 1953, and in 1954 established institute on Grove Street. He was active in cancer and radio frequency research, but also gained some fame for his studies of the Shroud of Turin, about which he wrote a book. [P12/20/1995]

Helminski, Edward F. Jr., (1938-2018), a native of West Virginia, was director of the Boys and Girls Club for 40 years, retiring Jan. 1, 2001. Active in the town softball league, he was named to the Connecticut Softball Hall of Fame in 1998. In 2006 he received a Special Award from the Ridgefield Old Timers Association (*q.v*.) for his contributions to the youth of Ridgefield. [P8/16/2018]

Hemlock Hills is a 357-acre refuge purchased by the town at $1,000 an acre in February 1969 from the estate of Otto H. Lippolt [P2/6/1969]. This was originally the name of Lippolt's subdivision of the area, including Old Mill Road (*q.v.*); 2,500-square-foot-lots were planned for summer cottages. Lippolt had gone so far as to install some drainage and culverts along the dirt roads. The old Bogus Road (*q.v.*) runs through the property. S*ee also* Lippolt property. [RN]

Hemlock Hole was mentioned in a 1742 description of land "at the Hemlock Hole near Mount Robinson," in present-day Danbury, then part of Ridgefield. [RN]

Henley, Dr. Jean Emily, (1910-1994), a native of Chicago, was an internationally known anesthesiologist who, during World War II, was one of the few women physicians serving in the U.S. Army. In 1950, she wrote an acclaimed anesthesia textbook published in German that was so popular it went through 13 editions. (Her psychologist father was an immigrant from Germany, and she spoke the language fluently.). She taught at a NYC hospital from 1951 to her retirement in 1972. Her parents, Dr. Eugene and Helen Henley, had a country retreat on Ned's Mountain Road which later became Dr. Jean Henley's home and where she enjoyed studying the local fauna and flora and was active in conservation efforts. She was also a sculptor. [JFS]

Henning, Peter, who lived at 165 West Lane in the 1970s, is a documentary filmmaker, known for "Ironman Triathlon World Championship" (2005), "The 1994 Winter Olympics on TNT" (1994) and "Iron Dog Snowmobile Race"

(2015). He was a cameraman for the NBC Ironman Hawaii shows from 1992 to 1999. From 2000 through 2012, we was senior vice president for television for the World Triathlon Corporation, supervising the production of all Ironman television broadcasts for NBC. He had earlier done other sporting documentaries, including underwater films. [JFS]

Henny Penny Farm at 673 Ridgebury Road has since about 2010 practiced "regenerative farming" to restore wildlife habitats as well as to produce meat and woolen products which are sold at its farm store, farmers markets and other outlets. It offers a day camp for children. [JFS]

Henrici Associates was a surveying firm particularly active in Ridgefield from the 1950s to 70s, headed by Henry Henrici, with an office on Governor Street (in Bethel by 1970s). [JFS]

Henry, Rev. Francis A., became rector of St. Stephen's Church in July 1878 and remained for 10 years. [JFS]

Hepburn, Alonzo Barton, (1846-1922), was comptroller of the currency for the federal government, 1892-93, and later president of Chase National Bank in New York City. He began as a math professor and lawyer. He built, with wife Emily Eaton Hepburn (*q.v.*), a large country home called Altnacraig on High Ridge. Born to a farming family in upper NY state, he also owned and operated the former Benedict farm on Whipstick Road with 150-plus acres, calling it Whipstick Farm. He was the author of several books about money, as well as *The Story of An Outing*, published by Harper & Brothers in 1913, about a safari to Africa. He was close friends with novelist Irving Bachelor and artist Frederick Remington (*q.v.*). He died after being run over by a Manhattan bus. [WWW, DD156. DD157, DD196]

Hepburn, Emily Eaton (1865-1956), a native of Vermont, built with her husband Alonzo Barton Hepburn (*q.v.*) the High Ridge mansion called Altnacraig. After her husband's death, she built the New York City landmark hotel, the Beekman Tower, completed in 1928, and designed as a hotel for young working women in Manhattan. A member of the Ridgefield Garden Club, he was active in the suffrage movement and later in programs to support women, and was a benefactor of her alma mater, St. Lawrence University. *Daughter of Vermont* is her 1952 biography. [WWW]

Hergenrother, Stephen, valedictorian of the RHS Class of 2024, is a top national track runner. He was the Gatorade Player of the Year in 2023-24 for Connecticut cross country. [JFS]

Heritage Day: Sparked by a rained-out Memorial Day parade, the town had first annual Heritage Day July 4, 1982, with 18th Century military displays, programs on the Battle of Ridgefield, a sidewalk sale, and a Dixieland band concert [P7/1/1982]. Some programs, such as Dixieland music, were continued for a few more years on the Fourth. [JFS]

Heritage Farm was operated at Routes 7 and 35 in 1980, selling fruits, veggies, flowers [P11/25/1980]. It was for many years a popular farm stand.

Heritage Lane is a short, dead-end road off Barrack Hill Road, part of the large Eight Lakes (*q.v.*) development. [RN]

Heritage Square Shopping Center, at 105 Danbury Road, includes, in 2024, Legacy Martial Arts, the Tutoring Club, and Insight Counseling. *See also* Fife and Drum. [JFS]

Herlihy, Martin, (1998-), son of Timothy (q.v.), RHS 2016, is a writer and performer for Saturday Night Live, a show in which his father was long

involved. He studied at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. [HH1/2025]

Herlihy, Timothy Patrick, (1966-), an American actor, comedian, screenwriter, producer, and playwright, has lived on Nod Road since 1996. [RLR] "Films written or produced by Herlihy have grossed over $3 billion at the worldwide box office. He frequently collaborates with Adam Sandler, who played a Saturday Night Live character, 'The Herlihy Boy,' in honor of him." He wrote or co-wrote Sandler films "Billy Madison" (1995), "Happy Gilmore" (1996), "The Wedding Singer" (1998), "The Waterboy" (1998), "Big Daddy" (1999) and "Pixels" (2015). He was a former head writer for Saturday Night Light. [W]

Hermit Lane is a short, dead-end road off the south side of Florida Hill Road, developed by Carl Lecher and named for George Washington Gilbert (*q.v.*), so-called "hermit of Ridgefield," whose crumbling family homestead was nearby. It became a town road in October 1980; [RN]

Hernmarck, Helena, (1941-), a native of Sweden, is an internationally known tapestry artist who has lived and worked at 879 North Salem Road since the 1980s. She is noted for working on monumental tapestries for buildings, especially corporate offices, and has worked with many of the leading architects of the era. She was married to industrial designer Nils Diffrient (*q.v.*).

Herr, Ralph J. "Jack" (1930-2017), was a retailer, owning four NAPA auto parts stores. He was noted for bringing U.S. military bands to Ridgefield, mostly through Kiwanis, for 140 concerts for five decades starting in 1967. "Ridgefield is the only place in the U.S., other than Washington D.C. that can boast of having a military band play at least once a year for 50 years," said Darla Shaw. [P6/29/2017].

Herrick, Gerardus Post, (1873-1955), a native of NYC who usually went by the name of Gerard, was a lawyer and inventor of the Convertoplane, a near helicopter, in the 1920s and 30s. The Smithsonian has the sole working model. He and wife, **Lois**, lived at 77 High Ridge Avenue, starting in the 1920s. The HS owns a propeller used on a Convertoplane and exhibits it in town clerk's office. Lois was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club. [WWW, DD190-192]

Herrick Lane is an old, informal name for a portion of an old road that ran west of and parallel to High Ridge Avenue – from Peaceable Street south. Today's Shadow Lane is the southern half of this road, which served as an access to the rear of the large High Ridge houses, including that of Gerardus and Lois Herrick (*q.v.*). [RN]

Hersam-Acorn Newspapers: *See under* Acorn Press.

Hessian, The, is a novel by Howard Fast (*q.v.)*, published by Morrow in 1972, about a fictional incident involving German soldiers during the Revolutionary War in Ridgefield and Redding. Fast lived on Florida Hill Road. *See also* Hessian Drive. [JFS]

Hessian Drive off North Salem Road was named for the skeletons of two alleged Hessian soldiers from the Revolutionary Battle of Ridgefield, dug up during a nearby 1874 excavation by workers for Dr. Archibald Y. Paddock (*q.v.*), who kept the bones himself. However, current scholarship suggests that no Hessians were involved in the conflict and the skeletons may have belonged to British soldiers. The road was developed in 1959 by James B. Franks (*q.v.*) to serve eight lots at his Buffalo Creek Acres (*q.v.*). [RN]

Hewitt, Mary E., (1809-1894), was a poet and editor who produced a half dozen books between 1846 and 1860. As a young widow, she married Russell W. Stebbins (*q.v.*), a NYC merchant and Ridgefield native, and in 1861 they retired to the Stebbins farm at 180 North Salem Road, where she died in 1894, virtually forgotten in literary circles. [WWW]

Heyman, Joseph, of Ketcham Road, a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission in the 1970s, ran unsuccessfully for state senator on the Democratic ticket in 1974. [P2/28/1974]

Hibbart, Wilmot Lyman, was a Main Street market owner in the early 20th Century and Ridgefield native.

Hibbart's Market at 424 Main Street specialized in meats in the 1910s and 1920s. Established by Wilmot Hibbart (*q.v.*), it later became Schultz's Market, and Capiello Jewelers. [DD37, DD83]

Hickok, Dr. Oliver Starr, (1835-1885), a native of Bethel and a Yale graduate, came to Ridgefield in 1860 to practice medicine. Soon, according to *The New York World,* a Mrs. Canfield "admitted that the M.D. had drugged her, and while in a state of stupefaction from the effects of the draught, he had committed a diabolical outrage upon her person." Attempts were made to run Dr. Hickok out of town, but he remained in Ridgefield. In 1865, at age 30, he married 19-year-old Albacinda Slauson. They lived in the Titicus neighborhood where he continued to practice medicine until 1885 when he died at age 50. [JFS]

Hickories, The, is the name, first used in the 19th Century, for the Lounsbury Road farm of the Lounsbury family that produced two governors, Phineas and George (*q.v. each*), and later became the Brewster (*q.v.*) family homestead. *See also* Fairhope Country School. [JFS]

Hickory and Tweed was a sports shop, particularly for skiing equipment, owned by Michael Ward in the old Hidden Barn (*q.v.*) building at the north end of Ridgefield Shopping Center (now CVS) in 1960s. It burned down around 1971. The business may have also been called the Ski & Racquet (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Hickory Lane is a short dead-end road off the east side of Florida Road, serving seven one-acre lots; plan filed in 1958 by Kustaa Havunoja of Redding. It became a town road in 1962. [RN]

Hidden Barn Gift Shop, a gift and antiques business, was operated by Carolyn and Herman Koch in the 1950s from a red barn at the north end of the Ridgefield Shopping Center, then commonly known as the Grand Union shopping center. The address was ONS144 Main Street. The barn, later Hickory & Tweed (*q.v.*) ski shop, burned down around 1971. [JFS]

Hidden History of Ridgefield is a 160-page, illustrated book about Ridgefield's often unheralded people, places and things, a sequel to *Ridgefield Chronicles* by Jack Sanders, published by The History Press in 2015.

Hidden Lake is a modern name for what was long known as Turtle Pond (*q.v.*) at Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*) development. [RN]

Hidden Lake Court is a 250-foot-long, dead-end lane off Old Sib Road at the southeast end of "Hidden Lake" (*q.v.*). Part of Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*), it was originally (1952) planned to connect with Barrack Hill Road but terrain was simply too steep. [RN]

Hidden Valley Camp, a New York Herald-Tribune Fresh Air camp operating in the 1950s on the site of the former Life's Farm Fresh Air Farm (*q.v.*) on

Florida Road, now site of the Branchville School. [DNT6/28/1960]

Hideaway, The, is a restaurant on Grove Street at Sunset Lane, opened in 2013 by Patrick Lynch of Easton. *See* Corner Pub, Joe's Hideaway, Perp's.

Hieeta, a name of unknown origin, was the country home of Mrs. Cary Selden Rodman (*q.v.*) early in the 20th Century. [JFS]

High Meadows Road appears on a 1959 subdivision map filed with the town clerk by John and Louise Meyers for nine lots on 12 acres off Regan Road; it was never developed. [RN]

High Pastures is the name of 30-acre farm owned by the late Mrs. Mary L. Olcott. It was previously a gentleman's farm of Sidney D. Farrar (*q.v.*) and was subdivided in 1965 — *see* High Pastures Court, Farrar's Thirty Acres. [RN]

High Pastures Court, off North Salem Road, serves subdivision of Sidney D. Farrar's (*q.v.*) farm, later owned by Mrs. Mary L. Olcott, who called the place High Pastures (*q.v.*). James Hackert, Ridgefield real estate agent, used the name when he subdivided the property into 17 lots in 1965. [RN]

High Ridge was so called from the earliest settlement of the town — it is the loftiest locality in or near the village, The U.S. Geological Survey measures the top around 55 High Ridge Avenue at 860 feet above sea level. Rev. S. G. Goodrich (*q.v.*) said the American Indians called the place Candoto (*q.v.*). The earliest map of the village area, drawn by John Copp in 1710 to show plowland lots, locates "ye High Ridge," and the name appears frequently in deeds for farmland. Copp and the proprietors chose this area as prime planting land – high, dry, open to a full day of sunlight, and very close to the village homes. After the Civil War, J. Howard King (*q.v.*) was promoting the area as ideal for large summer homes of the wealthy, with views westerly to beyond the Hudson River and southerly to Long Island. Rev. Goodrich's house, built around 1797 at the southern end, may have been his first residence south of King Lane/Peaceable Street, although some accounts indicate that as many as two houses on High Ridge were burned by the British during the Battle of Ridgefield. In the early 20th Century, High Ridge was sometimes called West Ridge (*q.v.*) or King's Ridge (*q.v.*). *See also* High Ridge Avenue. [RN]

High Ridge Avenue, first called High Ridge Road as early as 1830, was renamed High Ridge Avenue after Civil War when J. Howard King (*q.v.*) was promoting the area for large summer homes. The name long applied only to the portion of the road between West Lane and Peaceable Street, but is now used for road between West Lane and Gilbert Street. In early 20th Century, the portion between Catoonah and Gilbert Streets was called Maple Avenue (*q.v.*). It is said that at least two houses near High Ridge were burned by the British after the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). *See also* High Ridge, Publisher's Row. [RN]

High Ridge English and Classical Board School for Boys, operated in the late 1840s and early 1850s by H.S. Banks and then the Rev. Chauncey Wilcox (*q.v.*), was located in the former home of the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich (*q.v.*) on High Ridge Avenue. [JFS]

High Ridge Hall is the name given to 82 High Ridge, a 16-room brick Georgian-style mansion built in 2008. [CBR]

High Ridge Institute was a small private school providing post-eighth-grade education in the 1860s at the former Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich (*q.v.*) house

on High Ridge Avenue. It was taught by William O. Seymour (*q.v.*), who went on to be a civil engineer with railroads in the Midwest. [JFS]

High Ridge Manor is a name of recent vintage applied to the former home of E.P. Dutton (*q.v.*), 63 High Ridge Avenue. The house, built in the early 1890s by James "Big Jim" Kennedy, has 14 rooms including 7 bedrooms as well as Tiffany windows. Dutton called the place On-The-Ridge (*q.v.*).

High Ridge Road was the original name of High Ridge Avenue (*q.v.*).

High Valley is a subdivision of 23 two-acre lots from 51.6 acres off the north side of Florida Hill Road, obtained in 1969 by Giles and Barry Montgomery (*q.v.*). It includes High Valley Court and Road, and North Valley Road, and was part of the Downesbury Manor (*q.v.*) estate of Col. Edward M. Knox (*q.v.*). The name is descriptive of the territory. [RN]

High Valley Court is a long, dead-end road serving part of High Valley (*q.v.*) subdivision. [JFS]

High Valley Road serves part of High Valley (*q.v.*) subdivision. [RN]

Highcliff Terrace, off Bennett's Farm Road just south of Bates Farm Road, is a private road at the Ridgefield Lakes. There's a steep embankment just to the south. [RN]

Highest point in Ridgefield is said to be Pine Mountain (*q.v.*) at 1,060; *see also* Elevation.

Highest structure in Ridgefield: *See under* Antennas.

Highland Acres: *See* Eleven Levels.

Highlands, The, was perhaps the first Ridgefield baseball team. An RP article said the team played in "a base ball tournament in Danbury" starting Sept. 28, 1874. Others playing included the Secrets of Stamford, Rip Raps of Westport, Modocs of Danbury, Osceolas of Stratford, and T.B.'s of Bridgeport. [RT]

Highmeadow Estate is said to have been the name that Dr. Leopold Weiss (*q.v.*) gave to what was later called Sunset Hall, owned by his wife. (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Hightower, John, (1933-2013), a native of Atlanta, was a museum executive, who in 1970 became director of the Museum of Modern Art. He later was president of the South Street Seaport Museum in Manhattan, executive director of the Maritime Center in Norwalk, and director of the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va. He moved to Ridgefield in 1983, living on High Ridge and then Main Street. [JFS]

Highview Drive off Knollwood Drive, part of Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), built in the late 1950's and early 1960's, is named for its view, which includes Lake Windwing and Ned's Mountain to the north. Its elevation ranges from 680 to 720 feet above sea level. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Highview Road, a private lane at the Ridgefield Lakes, extending from Great Hill Road to Lakeview Drive, is 590 to 650 feet above sea level. It is often confused with Highview Drive, which is two miles away.[RN]

Highways: *See* Roads, federal, state *and* town; also under route numbers and individual names.

Highway Department, Town, used to be a separate town agency but is now grouped under Department of Public Services. The department maintains and, in winter, plows around 170 miles of town roads. Past superintendents of the highway department from the 1920s to the 2000s included Tom Potter, Dick O'Keeffe, Curtis Leighton, Bob Mulvaney, Sam Comstock, Fred Gay, Frank Serfilippi, and [DD79].

Higley, Robert Dale Warren "Rob" II, (1971-2001), a former Ridgefielder who was 29 years old and lived in Danbury, died on 9/11 at the World Trade Center. He worked in client services for Aon Corp. and was in Tower 2. Higley moved to Beaver Brook Road in Ridgefield when he was 4 and left when he was 8 years old. He maintained many Ridgefield friends, said his wife, Vycki Higley, who had also lived in Ridgefield. They had a child born after his death. His grave is in St. Mary Cemetery. [JFS]

Hill, Berkley H. Sr., (1901-1981), a Danbury native, was a real estate agent, stockbroker, and early aviator. A private pilot in the 1920s, he was one of the first to fly in this area. He lived here 1948-70 on Market Street and was active in the Boys Club here. He retired to Heritage Village, then to Florida. [P2/19/1981]

Hill, Peter, RHS 1968, retired in the spring of 2020 after nearly 45 years working for the Ridgefield public works and highways department, the last two decades as the director. He was the highest ranking African American in town government. He is a veteran of the Vietnam War.

Hillaire was the estate of Joseph Conron (*q.v.*) on West Mountain Road, just north of Ramapoo Road. It was later the home of Samuel Carpenter (*q.v.*) and finally became a subdivision served by Doubleday Lane and Sharp Hill Lane, [DD269] *See also* James Doubleday.

Hillcrest Court is a short dead-end lane at the crest of a hill off upper Barrack Hill Road, part of the Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*). It's about 920 feet above sea level. [RN]

Hillscroft Farm was a 87-acre estate, now much smaller, centered on a house at 133 St. Johns Road. A previous house there was built by Charles T. Root, but destroyed by fire, and the current house was built in the 1930s by Edward W. Simons, president of First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield. It was subsequently owned by Dr. Royal C. Van Etten, noted NYC obstetrician. His estate superintendent was Richard E. Venus, who became postmaster, a selectman, and town historian. Several of the estates buildings, including at least two barns, are now houses. *See also* Table Rock Estates, Charles Root, Vita Semplice Farm. [DD169, 170, 171, 172, etc.]

Hillsdale Avenue traverses a hill and a dale, part of the 1910-1927 Mountain View Park subdivision by Conrad Rockelein (*q.v.*). The original name on the 1927 updated subdivision map was Hillsdale Street. [RN]

Hilltop Dispatch was the Ridgefield High School student newspaper from 1935 until the school moved from its "hilltop" on East Ridge to 700 North Salem Road in 1972. For many years the newspaper was published quarterly, but in its later years was issued more frequently. *See also* The Criterion. [JFS]

Hilltop Service Station was a small gas station at 60 Wilton Road West, Route 33, near Wilton line, opened in the 1920s and was owned by Harry Tripp in 1929. The Jensen family had the business from the 1940s into the 1960s. Around 1970, the original building was razed and by 1973 a new gas station was called Brookside Shell. [CD1973]. In recent years, the operation has gone through several owners. As a result of failed efforts to get zoning permission to conduct auto repairs there, the station was unprofitable and closed, and has remained closed since the early 2000s — even though at one point, zoners granted permission to operate a convenience store there. The site has suffered from problems of petroleum pollution of the soil. [JFS]

Hilltoppers was a nickname for the Ridgefield High School athletic teams from the early 1940s until around 1964 when Tigers (*q.v.)* began to be used. The name referred to the fact that high school building was on the top of a hill, i.e., East Ridge. *See also* Millionaires. [JFS]

Hilsenrad, Philip (1905-84), an attorney with a practice in town, operated with his wife, **Molly**, the Mamanasco Lake Lodge (*q.v.*) from 1940 to 1961. [JFS]

Hilton, Derek W., (1934-2015), a native of England, was a well-known magician, using the name, Sim Sala Bim. He founded Top Hat Magic Club, worked for IBM, and lived at 57 North Street in 1970s-80s. He returned to England in 1987. [JFS]

Hilton, Harold Cornelius, (1919-1994), nicknamed "Flash," has been called the greatest RHS track athlete and was considered for a spot on a U.S. Olympics team. The South Carolina native was raised by his aunt, Ella Holmes, on Bailey Avenue. He graduated from RHS in 1939 and served as a US Army sergeant in WW2. He later owned a cleaning business in Stamford and taught figure skating. He was posthumously honored by Ridgefield Old Timers in 1999. [WWW]

Himes, Rose Marie, (1927-2021), a native of Pennsylvania, was active in Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts, Charles Pope Choristers, and other organizations between 1963 and 1987, and often wrote for the RP. She and husband **George** moved to Manhattan where she was an actress and a model for print advertising. [P4/22/2021]

Hine, Jared, (1734-1777), was wounded at the Battle of White Plains Oct. 28, 1776, during the Revolution, and died the following April as a result of his wounds. His son, Newton, also fought at White Plains. [JFS, NA]

Hines, Francis, (1920-2016), was a noted eclectic artist who from 1960 to 1970 lived in an imposing stone house on a hill at ONS50 Limestone Road. He was a successful commercial artist specializing in creating avant-garde expressionist pieces out of a wide variety of materials. In 1980, deploying two dozen helpers, he famously wrapped New York's Washington Square Park Arch in synthetic gauze. In the 1960s, in a converted barn on the Limestone Road property, he ran the Hines Theater, home to a community troupe that presented plays by Pinter, Albee and other American masters. [John Hallenborg; Peter Hastings Falk, DiscoveriesinAmericanArt.com]

Hines Theater: *See* Francis Hines.

Hirsch, Lawrence, is an attorney specializing in real estate law who practiced in Ridgefield in the 1970s as a partner with two firms, and then opened his own firm in 1980, based at 470 Main Street. He served as counsel to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals in the 1970s. He was admitted to the bar in 1963. [JFS]

Hirt-Manheimer, Aron, a longtime Ridgefielder, was editor of *Reform Judaism*, the world's largest circulated Jewish magazine, for nearly 40 years. He is co-author of *Sons of Survivors*, a 2025 memoir by lifelong friends who grew up in a close-knit community of Holocaust survivors. He also co-authored *Jagendorf's Foundry: A Memoir of the Romanian Holocaust* (HarperCollins 1991) and *Jews: The Essence and Character of A People* (HarperCollins 1998). His wife, **Judy,** founded the *Enchanted Garden* (*q.v*.).

Hirt-Manheimer, Judy, is the founder of the *Enchanted Garden* (*q.v.*), two arts centers for children of all ages. In the early 1990s, she hosted "Judy's Enchanted Garden" on local cable TV.

Historians of Ridgefield: Aldo P. Biagiotti, Silvio Bedini, Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich, Samuel G. Goodrich, Keith Marshall Jones, Allen Nevins, George L. Rockwell, Rev. Daniel Teller, Glenna Welsh, Richard E. Venus (*q.v. each*)

Historic Buildings: *See* National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Districts: Ridgefield has seven historic districts of which six are listed on both the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Places. The Ridgebury Historic District is listed only on the state register. Structures within the districts are considered historic resources; some 450 town properties and sites are on the state register. Ridgefield Historic Districts #1 and #2, which are the only ones overseen by the Historic District Commission, include Main Street south from Governor Street to Wilton Road West/East; eastern West Lane; and High Ridge Avenue south of Peaceable Street/King Lane. The districts were created with approval of a two-thirds majority of the property owners within them. The commission offers guidance on and a certain degree of control over how to appropriately maintain district properties. *See also* National Register of Historic Places. [JFS]

Historical Sketch of Ridgefield, An, is 48-page booklet history of the town and a description of what it was like in the early 20th Century, by Allen Nevins (*q.v.*), who later won two Pulitzer Prizes for history writing. It was published by The Elms Inn in 1922. [JFS]

History of Ridgefield, George L. Rockwell's 583-page book, is particularly strong on 19th and early 20th Century history. It also contains many early birth, marriage and death records, reminiscences and brief profiles, and many photos taken by Joseph Hartmann. Cloth and leather editions were privately printed in 1927 and reprinted by Harbor House in Westchester County in the 1980s. [JFS]

History of Ridgefield, Connecticut, The, by Daniel W. Teller, is the first full-sized history of the town, published in 1878 by Teller, who was the minister of the First Congregational church. The 251-page book, produced in cloth and leather-bound editions, is useful today mainly for its large collection of graveur images of Ridgefield, based on 1870s photographs — probably the earliest, accurate images of the town. His accounts of contemporary people and places are also valuable. [JFS]

Hitchcock, Anita and **Louisa,** were sisters who lived many years at 69 Main Str, built at the turn of the 20th Century and later moved back from the road by the sisters, who expanded it around 1928 after they got a $1-million inheritance from an aunt. When Louisa turned 100 in 1962, she forbade mention of it in *The Ridgefield Press*, believing a maiden lady's name should appear but twice in print — at birth and death. When she died later that year, both name and age were printed. Louisa left most of her estate to St. Stephen's Church while Anita, who died in 1966, left $800,000 to the Ridgefield Library and District Nurses. A cousin contested and managed to get $156,000 for himself. [FVW]

Hi-Y: *See* YMCA.

Hoban, Fairfield Wallace, (-1997), a lawyer, was a chess expert, whose column on the game appeared in *The Saturday Review* and *World* magazines. He wrote the 1974 book, *The Pleasures of Learning Chess*. During WW2, he served as an ambulance driver in the India-Burma theatre. He lived here from about 1967 to 1975. [WWW]

Hobby, Jackson. *See* Hobby Drive.

Hobby, John, (?-1954), was a teamster on the Upagenstit estate in the 1920s. He had been a horse driver for the Barnum and Bailey Circus. [DD142]

Hobby Drive off North Salem Road, created by the Scotland Knolls company around 1955 serves about 23 lots. It's named for Jackson Hobby, who farmed the land there around the turn of the 20th Century; part of his land had been a portion of the Town Farm (*q.v.*). [RN]

Hobby Hill: *See* Doubleday Lane.

Hobos: Hobos, bums or tramps were frequent visitors in the 19th and early 20th Century. The Town Hall cells in the basement were often used for overnight accommodations for these wanderers. The wealthy Richard A. Jackson (*q.v.*) family on Main Street at King Lane provided meals for hobos for many years. [DD81] They often worked as typesetters for *The Ridgefield Press* in the early 20th Century. [DD93]

Hockey: Hockey became an official sport at RHS in 1971-72 and the team compiled a 7-2-4 record under coaches of Ray Bessette (*q.v.*) and Chuck Dean (*q.v.*). [P3/16/1972] *See also* Ridgefield Skating Center, Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation.

Hodge, Sylvia Elnora Ward, (1920-2008), was a popular music teacher at RHS from 1964 (when she was **Sylvia Randall**) until about 1988 when she retired. She commuted from her native New Haven, where she was active in the music scene. She studied at Yale, Columbia, and graduated from Juilliard. [WWW]

Hoeft, Jack, who lived at 77 High Ridge in 1980s and 90s, headed Bantam Doubleday Dell in the 1990s. In 1979, he became president of the U.S. sales division of Harlequin Enterprises, Ltd. He joined Bantam Books in 1981 and six years later helped form Bantam Doubleday Dell and oversaw the group's 1998 merger with German-based Bertelsmann Publishing. Hoeft has been a New York University faculty member, teaching courses in the master's degree program at the Publishing Center. He was also chairman of the Board at Copyright Clearance Center. [JFS]

Hoffman, Beverly, wife of Robert F. Hoffman (*q.v.*), was a professional clown called Dot the Mop, who performed frequently in the region in the 1970s. [JFS]

Hoffman, Robert J., was a Union Carbide vice president who started as an office boy. He owned 90+ acre estate on West Lane at NY line, mostly in Lewisboro but the house, built 1938 by James Doubleday (*q.v.*), was in Ridgefield. His wife was Margaret Hoffman. The estate contents were auctioned in 1981. [5/7/1981]

Hoffman, Robert F., was a Republican selectman, 1969-77, who ran unsuccessfully for first selectman in 1977, against Louis J. Fossi [P11/10/1977]. He lived on Pierrepont Drive and moved to Raleigh, N.C., in 1978. He was married to **Beverly Hoffman** (*q.v.*).

Hoffman, William J. Jr, operated a paper mill which burned Dec. 19, 1866, at a loss of $25,000. He had bought the old mill at Mamanasco around June 1866, converted it to paper production, and called it "Mamanasco Lake Mills." [Commercial Bulletin, Boston, 7/7/1866]

Hogholler, Smith's: A 1749 deed mentions 2.5 acres "on Asproom Mountain near Ebenezer Smith's hogholler," probably a variation of "hogwallow," which was a "hollow or ditch in which pigs wallow." OED says the term can

refer to “a natural depression having this appearance.” It may have been at either Ridgefield Knolls or Twixt Hills, but *see also* Wallis’s hoghole. [RN]

Hogoboom, David Garth, (1940-2012), was a freelance videographer, director and producer of documentary films for international organizations, including the United Nations and UNICEF, documenting projects in Iraq, Rwanda, the Balkans and Asia. He was also a skilled carpenter and antique house restorer. He is buried in Branchville Cemetery. [P2/16/2012]

Holleran, Clifford “Kip,” (1895-1971), was a popular early principal of Ridgefield High School who also served as coach of its basketball team for many years. He was the first president of Rotary Club [P1/9/1941]. He came to Hamilton High School in 1921 and retired from RHS in 1957. He was a director of the Boys Club for 14 years. [WWW]

Hollow, The: Pre-1840 deeds occasionally refer to land in Ridgebury at “the Hollow.” The first mention was in 1821. It was probably a shortened form of Ridgebury Hollow (*q.v.*), first noted in 1794 and applying to a valley in what is the Mill Plain section of Danbury. [RN]

Holmes, Jennie, (1854-1943), was a teacher at Flat Rock School from 1873 to 1883 and was a well-known Ridgefielder. In 1934, many of her former students honored her at a gathering at the schoolhouse, which was then still standing. [P7/5/1934, P5/20/1943]

Holmes, John F. (1847-1906), was a farmer and Civil War veteran who was wounded and captured at Chancellorsville. He served as a Republican state representative, 1887-89.

Holmes, Orville Wells, (1877-1930), a farmer and brother of Irving Holmes, was the first selectman of Ridgefield for three one-year terms from 1916 to 1918. Holmes Road (*q.v.*) recalls his family. [JFS, 2/6/1930]

Holmes Road is an unusual circular road at Westmoreland, connected to Hamilton, Webster and Westmoreland Roads. It’s named for the farm of the brothers Irving and Orville Holmes, whose house on Barry Avenue was in 2009 the home of Fred P. Montanari, a former selectman. The road was originally called Lincoln Road, but was charged to avoid confusion with Lincoln Lane. Before 1966, today’s Remington Road (*q.v.*) was called Holmes Road. It was accepted as a town highway in 1969. [RN] *See* Orville Holmes.

Holt, Charles, (-1927), a member of the Henry Holt & Company book publishing firm, owned Grovellen, the brick mansion at High Ridge and Peaceable Streets at the turn of the 20th Century. He was a brother of Henry Holt, the firm’s founder, and died at the age of 81. [NYT4/28/1927] .

Holy Ghost Novitiate was a school for novices of the Holy Ghost Fathers, members of the Roman Catholic Congregation of the Holy Spirit. It was established in 1922 at Matlack, the former Dr. Timothy M. Cheesman (*q.v.*) estate on Prospect Ridge. The fathers enlarged house, built in 1887, adding dormitory rooms and a chapel. The operation shut down around 1969. The town bought the property in 1971, with 26 acres, for $395,000 ($2.9 million in 2024 dollars). The main building was used at first for school administration offices, then in 1991, with renovations, as Prospect Ridge congregate housing (*q.v.*). The land and outbuildings are now Ridgefield Guild of Artists (*q.v.*) quarters; Ridgefield Theater Barn (*q.v.*), Marine Corps League (*q.v.*) headquarters; Bark Park, and Scalzo Field (*q.v.*) for Little League. There are also the Halpin Court (*q.v.*) affordable apartments on

Halpin Lane, privately built by the Nolan brothers of Danbury. [JFS]

Holy Innocents School was an independent Catholic grade school, established in September 1972 by Catholic parents to fill the gap caused by the closing of St. Mary's School (*q.v.*). It lasted five years. [JFS]

Holzberg Report, The, an investigation into charges of sexual abuse by priests, was commissioned by the Bishop of Bridgeport in 2018 and led by retired Superior Court Judge Robert L. Holzberg. The report named three priests who had served in St. Mary Parish and who had sexually abused minors. The most egregious offender was **Charles Stubbs**, pastor from 1976 to 1991, who was labeled a "multiple abuser of minors." The report said 18 male victims, aged 9 to 15 when they were abused, "credibly accused" Stubbs of abuses while he was in Ridgefield. He was removed from the ministry in 1997 and "laicized" (defrocked) in 2004. The diocese paid $3.6 million to settle law suits involving his abuses. Three men credibly accused **Robert Morrissey**, pastor from 1992 to 2002, of abuses when they were 12 to 17 years old; some instances occurred when he served in Ridgefield. He was removed from the ministry in 2002. The diocese paid $1,262,000 to settle his cases. Only one victim came forward to accuse **John Draper**, principal of St. Mary School from 1962 to 1964. The incident occurred in 1958, before he came to Ridgefield. Draper died under mysterious circumstances in a New York City hotel in 1966. [JFS]

Home Guard: During WW1, Connecticut towns had special local militia which, among other things, stood guard over railroads, factories, bridges, and other facilities that might be sabotaged. Most members were people too old or otherwise not eligible for the regular military. In Ridgefield, Connecticut Home Guard Platoon No. 1 was formed May 18, 1917, under Capt. Clarence Judson of Danbury with 2nd Lt. David Workman (*q.v.*, later a RP editor), 1st Sgt. William Creagh, and Sgt. Joseph Zwierlein (*q.v.*). The platoon was under the command of Lt. Arthur D. Wood until he went overseas in the regular Army. He was succeeded by Rev. John M. Deyo (*q.v.*) as 1st Lt. in charge. There were up to 45 members. [RIR]

Home Video Outlet had grand opening in June 1981 at 99 Danbury Road [P6/4/1981]

HomeGoods opened a store of about 20,000 square feet at Copps Hill Plaza in 2023, using space that had been part of Kohl's (*q.v.*), which downsized to about 70,000 square feet and then closed. HomeGoods is based in Framingham, Mass., and had more than 800 stores in 2020. [JFS]

Homeland was the house of Laura Curie Allee Shields at 304 Main Street, on the south corner with Market Street from 1906 to 1968. The house had previously belonged to the Hurlbutt family and included a meat market (*see* David Hurbutt). Later it was District Nursing Association offices. In 2024, it was a residence. [JFS]

Homestead: **1.** A real estate firm on Main Street in the 1970s and 80s, established by John J. Baldaserini and Dante R. Brunetti. **2**. Name for the Hauley House (*q.v.*), 132 Main Street, in the early 20th Century, maybe before. [JFS]

Hometown Heroes, a novel by Susanna Hofmann McShea (*q.v)*, published by St. Martin's Press in 1990, was the first in a series about a quartet of senior citizen amateur detectives solving mysteries in and around Ridgefield which, in the book, is called Raven's Wing. Other titles in what was called

the "Hometown Heroes Series" were *Ladybug, Ladybug* (1992), and *The Pumpkin-Shell Wife* (1994). [JFS]

Homewood at 27 Country Club Road but facing West Lane, was the estate of George G. Haven. The estate was 56 acres in the 1950s when it was broken up into nine lots. The 8-bedroom, 7.5-bath house has 12,853 square feet of living space that includes a 50-foot ballroom, 13 fireplaces, a library, and an elevator, and sits on 3.22 acres. Owners over the years included the Swords, Wheadon, Grant, and Delli-Bovi families. [JFS]

Honey Hollow first appears in a deed in 1846 for a locality near the junction of modern-day Aunt Hack Hill Road and Middle River Road, then in Ridgefield, now in Danbury. [RN]

Honey Woods may be a location in western Danbury, possibly near Mill Plain intersection of Route 6 and Old Ridgebury Road. It is mentioned in one 1830 deed when the location was part of Ridgefield. [RN]

Hood, General Charles C.: "For many years, General Charles C. Hood, a well known soldier of the Civil War, lived in Ridgefield. General Hood was in the campaign in Tennessee, and with Sherman on his "March to the Sea." He served in the Spanish War and was Governor of the Island of Luzon in the Philippines." [Rockwell]

Hoodoo Brown at 967 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7), a popular smoked barbecue restaurant, was opened May 22, 2015, by Ridgefielder Cody Sperry. *See also* Bar and Grille. [JFS]

Hop Meadow Branch is a stream originating east of and parallel to lower Wilton Road East that flows into Wilton, past the Hop Meadow, mentioned in deeds before 1750. Today, it's often called the east branch of the Silvermine River (*q.v.*). [RN]

Hopper, Richard Sr., (1879-1952), was superintendent of the Reginald Lewis estate on South Salem Road and lived with his family in the old Richard Keeler farmhouse at 20 Old South Salem Road. [DD101]

Hopper's Pond, now mostly swamp at the north side of the junction of Old South Salem and South Salem Roads, was created in the 1920's as a duck pond by estate owner Reginald M. Lewis (*q.v.*) by damming up a tributary of the Stamford Mill River (*q.v.*). Richard Hopper Sr. (*q.v*.), the estate superintendent, lived nearby. *See also* Lache Linne. [RN, DD101]

Hoppy Days Easter Egg Hunt: *See under* Easter Egg Hunts.

Horan, William H., (ca.1868-1905), a resident of Danbury, was the engineer of a train on its way from Ridgefield center to Branchville which derailed in April 1905. The locomotive overturned and steam scalded and killed the trapped Horan, age 37. *See also under* Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road. [JFS]

Horblit, Harrison D., (1912-1988), a native of Boston and 1933 Harvard graduate, was a widely known collector of antique books and manuscripts and a philanthropist; his specialty was history of science, mathematics and navigation. His book, *One Hundred Books Famous in Science,* is considered a bible in its field. Much of his collection was donated to Harvard's Houghton Library. His wife Jean Horblit (*q.v.*) gave his large collection of old photographs and daguerreotypes to Houghton. The Horblits lived at the Oreneca (*q.v.*) estate on Oreneca Road. [RN, WWW]

Horblit, Jean, (1910-2009), a benefactor of the Ridgefield Historical Society and other local organizations, was a native of New Haven, who became a textile designer and stylist for Marshall Field & Company. She collected antique

Japanese woodblock prints, illustrated books and maps. She was the wife of Harrison Horblit (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Horologist of London was a clock shop at 450 Main Street operated by Gerald Grunsell from 1978 until 2014. He sold and serviced antique clocks. In 2024 the business was still in operation via a website. [JFS]

Horse Pound Swamp was first mentioned in a 1717 deed and lastly in 1796. The site of the pound itself, a corral to hold stray horses, is unknown — a 1729 deed refers to land "by ye Horse Pound on West Mountain." It may have been located west of western Peaceable Street, perhaps near the old Pinchbeck Nursery (*q.v*.). [RN]

Horses: *See under* Stables, Livery Stables, Ward Acres, Draft Horses, Kelly Stackpole.

Hot weather: *See* Heat waves.

Horton, Arthur D.: Ridgefield's fourth school superintendent, serving from 1928 to 1942. [JFS]

Houdini, Harry, (1874-1926), the famous magician born Ehrich Weisz or Weiss, was said to have frequently visited his brother, Dr. Leopold Weiss, at Sunset Hall (*q.v.*). However, Sunset Hall was owned by Sadie Weiss (*q.v.*), Leopold's wife, whom Houdini hated because she had divorced another brother, Nathan, to marry Leopold, around 1917. Harry specifically disinherited her in his will and seems to have disinherited Leopold, whom, Houdini students say, Harry also greatly disliked. Sadie, not Leopold, owned Sunset Hall from 1924 to 1931; thus, it seems unlikely Houdini visited, or at least visited often. [WWW]

House, oldest: *See* Oldest House.

House numbers: *See* Renumbering

House of Friends was a name given to the former Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*) home on Governor Street when it was operated as a boarding house by Mary H. "May" Rockwell (*q.v.*), who lived there from the early 1900s until 1947. Residents tended to be educators, such as teachers like John A. White and Mabel E. Cleves. It was the location of Hurlbutt-Rockwell School of Music (*q.v.*). The building later became offices and was razed in 2014 to make way for Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association/RVNA (*q.v.*) headquarters. *See also* Donnelly Professional Building. [P8/21/1980, JFS]

Households: Ridgefield in 2021 had 9,001 households, of which 86% were homeowner households. Of Ridgefield's 9,726 housing units, 83% were single-family and 17% multifamily. [REP]

Housing Authority was founded in 1974 to oversee the admissions to and operation of Ballard Green housing for the elderly, as well as later projects such as Prospect Ridge Congregate Housing and 51 Prospect Ridge affordable housing. Its members are appointed by the Board of Selectpersons. [JFS]

Howard, Richard B., (ca. 1924-2022), established with his wife, Teresa "Lily" Howard, the Ridgefield Tennis Club in 1971 with Justine Butler (*q.v.*) as pro. It was Ridgefield's first private tennis club, at a time when the few public courts were poorly maintained. He was also chairman of the Democratic Town Committee in the 1970s. [KFH, JFS]

Howard-Reddy Gang was a group of chicken thieves operating in western Connecticut and eastern NY in the 1920s. Fred Reddy, a leader, was a former Ridgefielder. Poultry worth hundreds of thousands of today's dollars

was grabbed at night and then sold, still alive, in New York City. [WR]

How's Limekiln was mentioned occasionally in early records. The kiln, owned in the 1790s by Epenetus How(e) (*q.v.*), was near the intersection of Ramapoo Road, Barry Avenue and West Mountain Road. [RN] *See also* Kiln Hill Lane, Limekiln Hill. [JFS]

How(e), Epenetus, (1741-1815), was a mill owner at Titicus in the late 1700s, early 1800s. He bought the grist mill at Titicus on the Titicus River in 1771 [RLR5/133] and apparently also owned at least part of a hatter's shop nearby. Howe and Jeremiah Smith sold Jabez Mix Gilbert and James Hoyt "our grist or corn mill" and other property in 1812 [RLR10/90]. He is said to have been a Tory and legend maintains there may have been a "Tory hole" for hiding loyalists in his home, a saltbox-style house still standing at 91 North Salem Road, at the corner of Saw Mill Hill Road [*see* P2/6/1986] *See also* How's Limekiln. He is buried nearby in Titicus Cemetery. [RIR, JFS]

Howe, Epenetus: Nathan Scott sold Epenetus Howe and William H. I. Howe of North Salem the Mamanasco mill in 1860, with the Mamanasco Pond of 150 acres, according to [RLR22/186]. He may have been a son of the Epenetus How(e) of the Titicus grist mill (*above*). [JFS]

Howe, John Ireland, (1793-1876), a Ridgefield native and grandson of Epenetus Howe Sr. (*q.v.*), became a wealthy industrialist after inventing the first machine to mass produce the common pin. His factory and home were in Derby; the house is now owned by Derby's historical society. A grandson, **John Ireland Howe Downes** (1909-1987), was an impressionist painter. [WWW]

Howe, William H. Ireland, of North Salem sold Epenetus Burt a house, grist and saw mill in 1865. [RLR23/267]

Howe, William Ireland, (1807-89), a farmer, was a state representative in 1856. He may have been an owner of the old mill at Lake Mamanasco. He is buried in the June Cemetery in North Salem.

Howes Court at the Turner Hill (*q.v.*) subdivision is one of its roads that reflect circus connections — circus animals were once housed for the winter on land near and possibly including Turner Hill. In 1815, Nathan A. Howes of nearby Putnam County, N.Y., established a precursor of the American circus by touring the region with Old Bet, an elephant belonging to Hachaliah Bailey of Somers. [RN]

Howkins, Nan Lee Rivers, (1941-2020), a native of Vermont who majored in chemistry in college, founded five Ridgefield preschools and child-care centers, including My Nursery School, from 1975 to 2015; The Children's Corner, operating from Barlow Mountain School, 115 Barlow Mountain Road, 1994 until 2015, after which it became Cadence Academy Preschool; All for Kids, 2003 to 2013; and Kaleidoscope Kids, 1991-94, 1997-2015. "Between 1975 and 2015, the schools provided education and care to approximately 15,000 children and parents, and employed thousands of teachers and directors," her family said. She wrote a book, *Profitable Child Care* (1993). [JFS, P5/21/2020]

Hoyt family was among the original settlers of Ridgefield, but the name was often spelled Hyatt and could be spelled Hayt, Uzziell Hyatt (*q.v.*) was the first settler to die in the town. [JFS]

Hoyt, Benjamin, received from the proprietors in 1751 7.5 acres "near his intended saw mill." [RLR3/310] (*See* Hoyt's Saw Mill). He may be same as

Jr. *below*. [JFS]

Hoyt, Benjamin Jr., was said to have been a Tory who lived at 114 Main Street, just south of the Keeler Tavern during the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). When the British set fire to the tavern, Hoyt extinguished it, fearing that the wind would spread the flames to his house. Later he supposedly boasted to innkeeper Timothy Keeler, "You may thank me that your house was not destroyed." Patriot Keeler is supposed to have replied, "No, sir! I will not thank a Tory for anything. I would rather thank the Lord for the north wind!" However, as KMJ points out, Hoyt was also Keeler's uncle and this story may be apocryphal. [RIR]

Hoyt, Charles Franklin, (1850-1926), a Ridgefield native and a farmer, was one of three Hoyt brothers who had houses next to each other on Main Street north of West Lane. Charles was at 127 Main Street, the large Victorian on the corner, reportedly designed to outsize the once-matching houses of his two brothers, Ebenezer A. and Edwin (*q.v. each*). [RSB26]

Hoyt, David, had "one half of a certain saw mill place, east of Pompion Ridge so called," in 1785 [RLR6/189] *See* Hoyt's Saw Mill. [JFS]

Hoyt, Ebenezer, owned Hoyt's Saw Mill in 1813, according to RLR10/235. That deed called him "Captain." He may have been captain in the local militia; he had served in the 1st militia company of Ridgefield in 1777. [JFS]

Hoyt, Ebenezer Andrews, (1846-1923), was a farmer who served as a Republican state representative, 1899-1901. He lived at 139 Main Street next door to his brothers, Edwin and Charles F. (*q.v. each*). He was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank for many years and vice-president, 1909-1923. He was also a tax collector. [RWB, RSB26]

Hoyt, Elias Gilbert, (1835-1902), was a carriage-maker. A Republican, he was a state representative, 1889-91; his daughter, Josie Hoyt Wright (*q.v.*), describes dad's election night celebration, including shooting off cannons, in her published memoirs. [JFS]

Hoyt, Edwin Keeler, (1852-1903), a Ridgefield native and a farmer, was one of the Hoyt brothers — *see* Ebenezer A. and Charles F. His house at 145 Main Street once matched his brother Ebenezer's next door. Legend has it he had a falling out with Ebenezer and removed various decorative features from his house so it wouldn't look like his brother's. [RSB26]

Hoyt, Halstead, appears to have had a 19th Century saw and fulling mill, with Clark Smith. [RLR21/163]

Hoyt, Col. Heusted Warner Reynolds, (1842-1894), a Ridgefield native and son of St. Stephen's rector Warner Hoyt, was a well-known Greenwich lawyer and colonel in the CT militia who served in both the state House and Senate in the 1870s and 80s — he was speaker of the House in the late 1880s. His father died when he was 3 and he moved with his mother, a Greenwich native, to her hometown where he lived the rest of his life. [W]

Hoyt, Irene Smith, (1904-1972), a native of Wilton who grew up in Ridgefield and was RHS 1925, was the extremely popular nurse for the District Nursing Association for 45 years; most of that time, she was the only paid employee. Called "Our Florence Nightingale on Wheels," she was the Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1962. [WWW]

Hoyt, James of South Salem was a partner with Jabez Mix Gilbert in a corn mill [RLR10/90]. He also had a saw mill on West Mountain that he sold in 1818. [RLR 12/24] *See* also Ebenezer Hoyt.

Hoyt, James H., bought a half share in a saw and shingle mill in 1847 and sold it in 1858. [RLR20/121, 21/163]

Hoyt, John Williams, (ca. 1841-1862), fought with the Union Army in the Civil War, including at the Battle of Chancellorsville, and died of disease at Douglas General Hospital, Washington, DC, June 28, 1863. Some records show his death date as June 27. He is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [JFS]

Hoyt, Lawrence C. "Larry," (1902-2002), a Ridgefield native, was a blacksmith, estate superintendent, horseman, and longtime custodian of Veterans Park School, serving 17 years from when it opened. A lifelong horseman, he was a member of one of the last mounted cavalry units, stationed in Brownsville, TX, in 1919; the Third U.S. Cavalry was called the "brave rifles," a name coined by General Winfield Scott during the Mexican-American War. He was born on Silver Spring Road and lived along that road most of his life. [WWW]

Hoyt, Munson, (1827-1906), a native of Westchester County, was a farmer who lived on Silver Spring Road in the house still standing but much modified, just north of the Silver Spring. He served in various town offices, including surveyor of highways in the Seventh School District – West Lane (1859, 1861, 1866). His name also appears as Monson. He is buried in Ridgefield Cemetery. [DJN]

Hoyt, Samuel: Ebenezer Hawley and Samuel Olmsted, leased a saw mill "at Pompion Ridge" from Samuel and Timothy Hoyt in 1816 [RLR11/249], probably on the Cooper Brook near Johns Pond. *See* Hoyt's Saw Mill.

Hoyt, Theron B., a Ridgefield native and son of Theron G. Hoyt of Farmingville, headed Hoyt Plating Company, manufacturer of gold- and silver-plated goods in NYC where he lived. His summer residence was The Wayside (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield [SR1916S]. In 1915 he married Pittsburgh native Elizabeth K. Carnegie, cousin of Andrew Carnegie. [JFS]

Hoyt, Timothy: *See* Samuel Hoyt.

Hoyt, Rev. Warner, (1810-1844), rector at St. Stephen's Church from 1838 to 1844, died while in office here. His son was Col. Heusted Hoyt (*q.v.*). (JFS)

Hoyt's Saw Mill operated at John's Pond (*q.v.*), southeast of Cooper Road. In 1751, the proprietors deeded Benjamin Hoyt land "near his intended saw mill" [RLR3/310]. By 1752 deeds begin mentioning "Hoyt's Saw Mill" [*viz*. RLR4/66, 5/44]; by 1816 Hoyt family deeds were referring to "the old saw mill spot" or the "old mill site" [RLR13/278], but a new mill was erected there in 1824, lasting at least into the 1870's. In 1816, Ebenezer Hawley and Samuel Olmsted, leased the saw mill "at Pompion Ridge" (*q.v*.) from Samuel and Timothy Hoyt [RLR11/249]

HSBC, or the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp., opened a branch at 108 Danbury Road in 2007 and closed in 2012. The office then became First Niagara Bank (*q.v.*), which soon departed town, leaving an empty building until 2021 when it became a branch of Chase Bank (*q.v*.). [JFS]

Hubbard, John W., (1892-1971), ran a radio store on Main Street for many years in early 20th Century. He was also amateur "ham" radio operator, with call sign 1RZ, who was involved in early experiments with transAtlantic radio transmissions. He served in WW1 as a sergeant and was a founder of Last Man's Club (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Huckleberry Hill, possibly the 817-foot-high hill just west of Bridle Trail and between Spring Valley and Ridgebury Roads, is mentioned in an 1810

deed. [RN]

Huckleberry Lane, a short, dead-end road off Wilton Road East, was subdivided around 1960 from Margaret Starr Jessup's property, which fronted on Main Street. It was accepted by the town in 1961 and was said to have once been a popular berry-picking spot. [RN]

Huguenots, French, were French protestants who fled persecution in their native land, several thousand coming to the American colonies. Sizable settlements nearby included Milford and New Rochelle. Ridgefield had two major French Huguenot families among its early settlers. The earlier was Alexander Ressiguie (*q.v.*), who was a large landowner. Soon after came Vivus Dauchy (*q.v.*), whose family became major merchants in town for nearly two centuries. [JFS]

Hughes, Elizabeth Ingram Deyer, (1904-1994), a native of Brooklyn, owned The Carnival Shop (*q.v.*) from the 1950s to the mid-1970s. A NYC debutante, she married in 1937 **John Farrel Hughes**, Yale 1924, who was a member of the NY Stock Exchange. [JFS]

Hughes, John B., (1902-1980), a native of Nebraska, was a widely known network newscaster and commentator during the "golden age of radio," especially the 1940s and 50s. He bought Ontaroga Farm (*q.v.*) in Farmingville in 1950. In the late 1950s he moved to Pittsburgh where he was a TV news anchor. His son **John Hughes** has been active in Ridgefield most of his life, and is a founder of the Soccer Club of Ridgefield. [WWW]

Hughes, Terry, was the director of the Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club for 10 years, leaving in 2010 to take a post with a club in Queens, NY. A Ridgefield native who grew up literally across the street from the club, he had been a member throughout his childhood and, as director, led the club through a $6-million expansion. He is in 2026 CEO of The Boys & Girls Club of the South Coast Area in San Clemente, CA, but has remained active with the Ridgefield Old Timers Association. [JFS]

Hulda Lane, between Danbury and Haviland Roads, was named for Hulda Ritch, mother of Harold A. Ritch, who subdivided the family homestead (*see* Ritch Drive) around 1954. Mrs. Ritch and her husband, Charles, had purchased the former Haviland farm there around 1920 and had lived on it for many years. She died in 1944. [JFS]

Hull, Bradley, (1763-1835), was a state representative in 1819 and a veteran of the War of 1812. By 1802 he had erected a saw mill near today's Route 7 probably in Limestone District [RLR8/302] and it was still in operation in 1834. [RLR15/78] His house and mill were both described as being on the Sugar Hollow Turnpike in 1850, though he was dead. [RLR19/337] His son, **Bradley H.,** sold the mill and 90 acres to George Hull of Danbury in 1860. [RLR22/137] Bradley is buried in the Old Florida Cemetery. [FAG]

Hull, Bradley H.: *See under* Bradley Hull.

Hull, Elizabeth, (1900-96), was a philanthropist and conservationist who lived at 478 Silver Spring Road. She donated 24 acres in Silver Spring Swamp area to Land Conservancy of Ridgefield *(q.v.*). She donated the proceeds of the sale of her homestead plus another 18 acres (*see* Golf Court), totaling nearly $2 million in value, to The Nature Conservancy. She was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club. *See also* Renumbering. [WWW]

Hull, Harry E. (1899-1987), a Ridgefield native and WW1 veteran, was first selectman 1947 to 1951, and 1953 to 1957, a then rare Democrat to win

that office. He was active in the American Legion and was grand marshal of the Memorial Day parade for 60 years. [P10/22/1981] [WWW]

Hull Place, a dead-end road built around 1977 off Ivy Hill Road, was named by Carl Lecher, the subdivider, to honor former first selectman Harry E. Hull (*q.v.*).

Hungry Knight, The, was a restaurant at 896 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7), in the late 1970s and early 80s, the first of several restaurants to occupy that building. It introduced the "salad bar" in Ridgefield. *See* Touchstone's, Ritz Asia, Casa Lu. [JFS]

Hunt, Daniel, (ca.1810-?), was a farmer who served as a Republican state representative in 1870. [JFS]

Hunt, David, established in 1836 a stagecoach line from his house (later owned by Samuel Coe and Daniel M. McKeon) on Old Stagecoach Road (*q.v.*), just below Ridgebury Road. The stage left at 2:30 in the morning, bound for Norwalk to meet the steamboat for New York City, and made stops in Ridgefield and Wilton villages. The stage waited in Norwalk for the next boat from New York for the return trip. *See also* Arigideen Farm. [RN, RIR]

Hunt, George, was founder of the Ridgefield Shirt Factory (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Hunt, Marcia Marchese (1940-2013), a native of Bridgeport who was a teacher and a San Francisco business owner, was a feminist and activist in Ridgefield, particularly in the 1970s, and a founder of the Women's Political Caucus (*q.v*.). In 1975 she was president of the local American Association of University Women. She and Jay B. Hunt were married in St. Mary Church in 1954. [JFS]

Hunt Court is a short dead-end road off Lynn Place, another circus-related name at the Turner Hill (*q.v.*) subdivision in Ridgebury. A few members of the Hunt family of Scotland District worked for circuses; one Hunt family, says Bedini, "kept an elephant named Bolivar on their farm and utilized it for carrying loads of grain on its back. It frequently terrified horses on the highway." A Hunt farm was later owned by playwright Eugene O'Neill (*see* O'Neill Court). [RN]

Hunt Mountain: Titicus Mountain (*q.v.*), the hill along the west side of North Salem Road near the NY line, is sometimes called Hunt Mountain because members of the Hunt family lived on or near its slopes from at least 1800 into the 20th Century. The term is more properly used on North Salem side of NY line where Hunt name has been well established. In Ridgefield, Titicus Mountain (*q.v*.) is more suitable. [RN]

Hunter Consignments was an antiques and furniture shop, opened April 3, 1987, on Big Shop Lane. [P4/9/1987]

Hunter Heights is a subdivision of about 65 acres of farmland off Blackman Road by Lewis J. Finch (*q.v.*). Approved in 1968, it consists of 25 one-acre lots along Hunter Lane and Hunter Lane West, plus nearly 30 acres of open space in Great Swamp. It's named for the Hunter family, who had owned the property for 28 years. [RN]

Hunter Lane, Hunter Lane West serve Hunter Heights (*q.v.*) and became town roads in 1970. [RN]

Hunting is permitted on the state-owned portions of Great Swamp, and in Bennett's Pond State Park in the fall for archery only — no firearms allowed. Hunting is also permitted on private property, with the permission of the owner. Hunting is banned on Sundays. Licenses are needed to hunt

and are available at the town clerk's office in the Town Hall. Controlled hunting for deer on certain town properties is permitted annually (*see under* Deer problem). *See also* Ridgefield Fishing and Hunting Association. [JFS]

Hunting Ridge, a 1986 subdivision of 27 acres into 11 lots, is served by Lost Mine Place (*q.v.*) off the south side of New Road, obtained by the descendants of Robert Lee (*q.v.*), part of whose farm was developed. [RN]

Huntoon, David D., (1925-2001), a Rhode Island native and Dartmouth graduate, was vice president of the Enforcement Division of the NY Stock Exchange, retiring in 1976 and forming a home remodeling business, Old World Craftsmen. He came to Ridgefield in 1957 and bought a home at 45 Peaceable Street in 1963, retiring in 1996 to a home on Shadow Lane. He served on the school board, 1969-71, and Planning and Zoning Commission, from 1975 until 2001, including as chairman. [P3/22/2001]

Hurlbutt, Aaron G.H., (1841-1878), was an early leader of the Mutual Cornet Band (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Hurlbutt, David, (1801-1858), a native of Wilton, began his career as a hatter, but became a butcher who operated a meat market at Main and Market Streets. He was also the owner of a coal mine (*q.v.*) in town, and was in the ice business. With Lewis H. Bailey, he owned a saw mill along the Norwalk River, probably near Florida Hill Road in 1855 [RLR21/204], later owned by an E. Hurlbutt. A Democrat, he was a state representative in 1850. He died when he was gored by a cow he was trying to butcher. His son was State Rep. Sereno Stuart Hurlbutt. [JFS]

Hurlbutt, Faustina, had been a teacher at the Titicus School in the 1880s and later joined with her cousin May Rockwell in operating the Hurlbutt-Rockwell School of Music (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield. [HHR]

Hurlbutt, Hester Elizabeth, (1896-1991), a Ridgefield native, became a longtime teacher in Boston and gained national attention for her efforts to fight condominium developers in that city. But she is locally known for a large number of different — and beautiful — portrait photographs of her as a small child, taken by Joseph Hartmann (*q.v.*), which are in the collection of the Ridgefield Historical Society. [WWW]

Hurlbutt, John Daniel, (1832-1866), a member of the meat marketing Hurlbutt family of Main Street, died from a lion bite. While visiting a traveling menagerie in Danbury, he asked the lion keeper whether he could put his hand in the cage. The keeper said it was safe, Hurlbutt did so, and the lion bit him. He contracted lockjaw, and died 10 days later. He was a son of David (*q.v.*) and brother of Sereno (*q.v.*). *See also* Hurlbutt Cemetery. [DAR]

Hurlbutt, Sereno Stuart (1825-1904), a Ridgefield native, was a carpenter and one-time partner in the carriage manufactory of Brush, Olmstead & Company (*q.v.*). He was also a clerk in the Rockwell candlestick factory. [RIR] A longtime tax collector, he retired from that post in 1902 at the age of 78. [P10/16/1902] He served as a Republican state representative in 1878. His father was State Rep. David Hurlbutt. His house at 304 Main Street was later owned and enlarged by Laura Curie Allee Shields (*q.v.*). [RSB24]

Hurlbutt Cemetery: In 1858, 18¾ square rods of land was purchased by John D. Hurlbutt (*q.v.*), for a cemetery (where John would be buried eight years after it was laid out). The last remaining lot, number 10 of approximately 27 lots holding in all about 250 graves, was sold by the administrator of his estate on April 19, 1866. This small portion of the "Ridgefield Cemetery"

(*q.v.*) is situated between Fairlawn and Titicus Cemeteries on North Salem Road, and borders Settlers Rock (*q.v.*). [HLYB]

Hurlbutt Lane is a former name for Market Street, so called because Hurlbutt's Market stood right next to the road near the corner of Main Street. *See* David and Sereno S. Hurlbutt. [RN]

Hurlbutt's Pond, now mostly swamp, was west of East Ridge Road, between Branchville Road and Rowland Lane, supplying one of David Hurlbutt's (*q.v.*) several interests in town — an ice business. It included an ice house, now 35 East Ridge Road, in which blocks of ice were stored for delivery to customers. [RN] (For a good description of ice harvesting operations, *see* DD275.)

Hurlbutt-Rockwell School of Music was operated from 1920 until 1938 by Faustina H. Hurlbutt and Mary H. Rockwell (*q.v.*) at House of Friends on Governor Street. It mostly provided piano lessons. [P8/21/1980].

Hurricanes: *See* Storms.

Hurzeler, Rudolph and Pauline, natives of Switzerland and Germany respectively, operated Ridgefield Bakery at 411 Main Street in the 1930s and 40s. The bakery expanded into a restaurant due to Pauline's cooking talents [DD115]. Daughter **Ruth** (*q.v.*) became town clerk and **Marie**, clerk of the Probate Court. [JFS]

Hurzeler, Ruth Mildred, (1917-77), became in 1949 the first woman elected as Ridgefield town clerk, an office that had been held by men since 1708. She had been assistant town clerk since 1946. She was re-elected 12 times until 1973 when she was defeated by Terry Leary, a Democrat, over the issue of her failure to reveal how much she earned in recording fees — Leary favored making the position salaried, which it soon became. She was a daughter of Rudolph and Pauline Hurzeler (*q.v.*) [WWW]

Hussar's Camp Place serves part of a 61-acre subdivision west of Ridgebury Road and south of Chestnut Hill Road, once part of the Daniel and Louise McKeon's Arigideen Farm (*q.v.*). Dillon Associates obtained 17 lots in February 1987. The name recalls the July 1781 encampment of 4,800 French troops under Compte de Rochambeau (*q.v.*) in this area. Ridgebury historian Daniel McKeon said there were 600 artillery, 600 cavalry and 3,600 light infantry, including hussars — light cavalry — under the Duc De Lauzun. [RN]

Huton, Jan H., (1906-51), was New York City dress designer at Foremost Sportswear Company, whose North Salem Road house caught fire Oct. 28, 1942, leading firemen to discover huge quantities of foods, such as sugar and canned juices, stored in the house, a pile of tires out back, and several tanks of gasoline and fuel oil – one holding 3,000 gallons. Huton denied he was hoarding during war rationing, maintaining items were stock for a cruise ship. [DD20]

Hyatt, Abijah: *See* Thomas Hyatt.

Hyatt, Abijah and **Thomas,** bought 75% of the Mamanasco Mill for $1,991 in 1817 [RLR 11/91]. They sold it to Jonah Foster in 1831 for $1,400 [RLR14/118B]] *See also* Theophilus Burt.

Hyatt, Charles. H., son of John B. Hyatt, was killed Feb. 17, 1852, at the age of 25 on the New York and Erie R.R. at Equinunk, PA. [RVR 1/242] A rail broke as the train on which he was a passenger was rounding a curve alongside the Delaware River, and Hyatt's car plunged down an embankment and

was partially submerged in the icy river. Only he and one other person died in the wreck. He had then lived in Wolcott, N.Y., and had been on the fatal ride in order to visit his parents in Ridgefield. His tall gravestone monument at Scott's Cemetery notes the cause of death, and also records the passing of his brother, Dr. Philip Hyatt, (?-1851), a physician who died of consumption (tuberculosis) in Ridgefield just one year earlier. [HLYB]

Hyatt, Dorothy, (1925-2003), a professional dancer, premiered on Broadway in the chorus of the 1943 production of *By Jupiter*. She went on to dance in *Mexican Hayride*, *Pacific Overtures,* and did summer stock productions of *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Dark of the Moon*, acting next to the likes of Nanette Fabray, Ray Bolger and June Havoc. After WW2, she traveled Occupied Europe with a U.S.O. Camp Show troupe of Broadway dancers and Radio City Rockettes performing for the troops. After living in New York, Switzerland and the Virgin Islands, she settled with her mother on Silver Spring Road in 1965. [P8/7/2003]

Hyatt, Dr. Philip: *See under* Charles H. Hyatt.

Hyatt, Thomas, bought one-third of the grist mill at Mamanasco in 1795 [8/123B]

Hyatt (or **Hoyt), Uzziell,** was the first non-native person to die in Ridgefield Feb. 14, 1712. He was 3 years old and was buried in the Burying Yard on Wilton Road East. He was a son of Thomas and Experience Scott Hyatt. [JFS]

Hyde, Edward D., (1899-1965), had managed A&P Liquor Store on the west side of Main Street in the 1930s. In 1940 he opened Hyde's Wines and Liquors (*q.v*.), later operated by his sons, Brian and Doug. [DD96]

Hyde, Elizabeth Alvina and **Mabel Lillia,** sisters who came from NJ, built the stone house and compound at 5 High Ridge Avenue, at the corner of Shadow Lane, around 1920. The architect was Roger Harrington Bullard (1884-1935), who also designed Twixthills (*q.v.*). It has been called an "Unusually fine and impressive stone estate complex" by HRI. [DD152]

Hyde's Wines and Liquors was a popular package store at 390 Main Street, opened by Edward D. Hyde April 1, 1940. It lasted until the early 1980s. A later owner was Rosemary McLinden, wife of first selectman Joseph J. McLinden (*q.v.*). Other subsequent owners were Barbara McCarthy (*q.v*.) and in 1984 Frank Zarro. *See also* Harrison's Wine and Spirit. [JFS, DD96]

I

IAMAS: *See* Italian-American Mutual Aid Society.

IBM, the computing giant, first expressed interest in the town in February 1951 when it proposed turning Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) on Old West Mountain Road into a company country club. The Zoning Commission voted 2-1 in favor, but because two members abstained, it was not a majority of the commission, and the plan was not approved. In 1970, IBM bought the former Fox Hill Inn (*q,v.*) on Bennett's Farm Road and other land totaling 700 acres to create a corporate training center. After a neighborhood outcry about a proposed helipad, IBM abandoned its plan. The Fox Hill Inn building was torn down in 1975 and in 1998 IBM sold the property to Eureka LLC (*q.v.*), a New Jersey developer. Today most of the land is Bennett's Pond State Park (*q.v.*). Meanwhile, Ridgefield became home to countless upper management employees of IBM who worked in nearby NY State corporate offices. [JFS]

Ice House was the informal name for The Old Ice House (*q.v.*), a restaurant at 11 Danbury Road.

Ice houses: An ice house was an insulated building used to store ice, cut from local ponds in winter, for use in iceboxes (precursor of refrigerator) in warm months. Among the ice houses in town were ones at Round Pond, on Danbury Road across from Copps Hill common; East Road Road (the house at 35 East Ridge is a converted mid-19th Century ice house); at 11 Danbury Road (later the site of The Old Ice House restaurant), operated by Mario Girolmetti. Many implements for handling ice, including tongs, were made at the Gruman Ice Tool Works (*q.v.*) in Branchville and sold nationally. *See also* Hurlbutt's Pond *and* Ridgefield Ice Company. For a good description of ice harvesting operations, see DD275.

Ice rink: *See* Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation.

Ice skating: *See* Skating parties, Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation.

Ice storms: *Dec. 25, 1855:* many trees felled [DAR]; *March 17, 1862:* "Large limbs broken from many trees…" in a storm that heavily damages apple orchards [DAR]. *March 3-4, 1940*: Widespread damage and power outages; *January 8-10, 1953*: Some parts of town are without power for five days. *Mid-December, 1973:* power out for more than a week in places, with temperatures as low as minus 2. [JFS]

Ideal Garage on Danbury Road, in existence by 1922, sold Graham-Paige automobiles in 1929. With the help of his son Walter, Consantino A. "Gus" Constantini (1885-1961), a native of Rome, Italy, established the Ideal Garage service station in the early 1920s at the corner of Grove Street and Danbury Road where Pamby Motors auto body shop is in 2026. By the early 1930s he sold the business which years later was acquired by the Pambianchi family. *See also* Central Garage. [JFS, DD350]

Idlewood was the old telephone exchange for Ridgefield, starting in 1955; a number would be Idlewood 8-6544. It became ID8-6544, then just 438-6544 in 1962.

I. Grossfeld Ltd. was a men's clothing store at 405 Main Street, established by Israel Grossfeld (*q.v.*) in the early 1960s and sold in 1980 to Nick Francella of Riverside. [JFS]

Illustrators: Noted Ridgefield illustrators have included: Harry Anderson, Renee Williams Andriani, John Atherton, Peggy Bacon, Tony Barlow, Harry Bennett, Bob Crofut, Robert Fawcett, Van Kaufman, E. W. Kemble, Tammis Keefe, Robert Kraus, Franklin Lischke, Donald Moss, Erik Nitsche, Jamison Odone, Herb Olsen, Richard Scarry, Maurice Sendak, John Downes Whiting (*q.v. each*). *See also* cartoonists, artists.

Images of America: Ridgefield. 127 pages of pictures of Ridgefield people, houses, businesses, scenes of town life, etc. from 1890s to 1950s, was produced in 1999 by Ridgefield Archives Committee, now the Ridgefield Historical Society for Arcadia Publishing. [JFS]

Imagination Station is a playground built in Ballard Park in 2015, largely with a $200,000 gift from George Landegger. *See also* Karl F. Landegger.

Impact is Aldo P. Biagiotti's (*q.v.*) 1990 history of the Italian community in Ridgefield; its full title is: *Impact: The Historical Account of the Italian Immigrants of Ridgefield, CT*. The 345-page hardcover was privately published by Romald Press and is indexed and extensively illustrated.

Income: The median household income in 2021 in Ridgefield was $163,945, compared to $78,444 statewide. [REP] *See also* Wages.

Independent Party: A third party, founded in 1993 by fiscally conservative Ridgefielders including William I. Allen, Dom D'Addario, and John P. Cooke (*q.v. each*), ran candidates in several elections. Cooke was the only one to win an office (Zoning Board of Appeals, 1993); he also ran for first selectman in 1995. When Allen died in 2001, his family said contributions in his memory may be made to the Open Space Fund, Town Hall, Volunteer Fire Department, "or, in lieu of a contribution, vote Independent!" In 2011, Tony Di Preta, owner of the Ridgefield Sport Shop on Danbury Road, ran for first selectman as an Independent. Soon after, the party switched to endorsing major party candidates they felt were closest to their thinking. In 2016, when only about 70 members were left, Irene and Jeff Burgess, the last official custodians of the Independent Party of Ridgefield, decided to let it "die a natural death." (Connecticut's statewide Independent Party is not the same as Ridgefield's Independent Party.) [JFS]

Independent School House stood on what is now Veterans Memorial Community Center Park land on Main Street from 1786 until ca. 1820, apparently aimed at above-average students from any of Ridgefield dozen-plus school districts. Its longtime teacher was Samuel Stebbins (*q.v.*). The schoolhouse was also used for town government and religious meetings; Jesse Lee preached his first sermon in Ridgefield in June 1786 there, leading to the founding of the local Methodist church of the same name here. The town had contributed to the cost of building the school, with the provision that government meetings could take place there. [RIR]

Indian Cave Road at Twin Ridge (*q.v.*) connects Twin Ridge Road with Rising Ridge Road and then continues to a cul de sac. It was named for nearby "Tony's Cave" (*q.v.*). Giles and Barry Montgomery (*q.v.*) built and named the road, accepted by the town in 1968. [RN]

Indian Rock Farm was the poultry farm of the Louis G. Smith family on northern North Salem Road in the 1920s and 30s, specializing in white leghorns. It was later a horseback riding school of Ada Phair, and then the home of the George B. Leeman (*q.v.*) family. It was said to have been named for a limestone rock outcropping overlooking Titicus River valley, says Paul

Biagiotti. The farm was said to have inspired Eugene O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms* (*q.v.*). [OR, DD17]

Indian Territory Association of Ridgefield was organized in 1895, mainly by Theodore H. Mead (*q.v.*), to promote "the general improvement of town roads, sidewalks, fences, grounds and residences, and also legislation for better roads throughout the state." It may have morphed into the Village Improvement Society. Its strange name probably led to its demise. [NEM]

Indians, American, inhabited the Ridgefield area more than 10,000 years ago, says LMW, who has found evidence of them at an archaeological dig at Richardson Park (*q.v.*). They were largely nomadic at a time when Ridgefield was largely tundra. RIR says later natives were "members of the Ramapo and Titicus villages in the Tankiteke sachemdom of the Wappinger tribe. The name Wappinger meant 'Easterners.' This tribe formed part of the Algonquin linguistic family, allied with the Mohican, Montauk and the New England tribes. The Wappingers were among those tribes that manufactured 'siwan' or wampum. They occupied much of the mainland territory of Greater New York, exclusive of Manhattan Island. They were generally wanderers, peaceful and friendly towards the white men." Their seasonal settlements or encampments were located in the vicinity of The Elms off the east side of Main Street, on the shore of Lake Mamanasco, and at Great Pond, where a natives' canoe was uncovered buried under the pond bed many years ago. [JAB] Typically, the natives would live near Long Island Sound in the winter, and inland in warmer months. In his 1800 description of the town, the Rev. Samuel Goodrich said: "There is the appearance of sundry Indian graves at a place called Nooricus Ridge," now the Norrans Ridge (*q.v.*) neighborhood. Local American Indians signed seven deeds over a period of nearly 30 years, transferring their interest in local land to the Proprietors — although they probably did not believe in the concept of "ownership" of the land. For more information on natives who lived here, aspects of their lifestyles, and their history, *see* Aokeets, Asoquata, Betty Grant, Black Frank's Corner, Buckspen, Catoonah, Chicken Warrups, Jacob Turkey, Kitchawan, Mopus, Norran's Ridge, Oreneca, Peespunk, Ramapoo, Rippowam, Table Rock Estates, Tackora, Taporneck, Tom, *and* Tony's Cave. [JFS]

Influenza: The "Spanish flu" epidemic of 1918 infected 115,000 people in Connecticut, killing nearly 9,000. The first Ridgefielder to contract this disease may have been Edward M. Roach, described by RP as "a traveling auditor, employed by the New Haven road [railroad]." He had come home from Boston, "feeling ill," Sept. 13, and by Sunday he was bedridden with pneumonia and on Sept. 19, he died. Many others died here — as many as seven in one week. Although the Danbury Fair was canceled, school continued as usual; there were also bond rallies and other large-group gatherings. By the end of March, about three dozen Ridgefielders had died of pneumonia or influenza; many more had been ill. [SHJ April 2020]. ***In December 1945:*** A flu outbreak had as many as 25% of students absent from classes. ***December 1968:*** The Hong Kong flu hit town, jacking up school absentee rates to as high as 12% a day, compared to the normal 5%. On ***Oct. 15, 2004***, in a year when vaccine was in very short supply, 500 older Ridgefielders lined up outside the Visiting Nurse Association to get a flu shot. ***May 18, 2006****:* The town's Emergency Planning Committee

met to consider "what happens in case of an avian flu pandemic." *See also* Covid. [JFS]

Ingersoll, Colin Montaigne, (1893-1929), whose family summered at their 20 West Lane home (R House restaurant in 2026) for many years, died 10 years after being gassed in WW1. He volunteered for the Army Infantry on the day he graduated from Yale Law School, and served 13 months in France, attaining the rank of first lieutenant. His death "resulted from a gas attack through which he passed during the war as a member of the Yankee Division," said the SA. "He had been practically an invalid for the last six years." A son of George Pratt Ingersoll (*q.v.*), he was 33 years old and is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery. [TDTC, P2/7/1929, P2/4/1929, SA 2/6/1929]

Ingersoll, George Pratt, (1861-1927), was a diplomat, former ambassador to Siam (Thailand) who lived part-time at 20 West Lane in what is in 2026 R House restaurant. He called the house Ingleside. He was an unsuccessful 1910 Democratic candidate for congressman at large. *See also* Bernard's, Kane Inn, Tode's. [NR, DD287]

Ingersoll, Rev. Jonathan, (1713-1778), a native of Derby, was the second minister of the First Congregational Church. A 1736 Yale graduate, he married Dorcas Moss of Derby and came to Ridgefield in 1739 and served until his death. "He is described as a man of brilliant intellect, of great strength and force of character," said Rockwell. He was chaplain in the town's militia and, during the French and Indian War, volunteered as a chaplain with Connecticut troops — including 22 Ridgefield men — serving around Lake George and Fort Ticonderoga. In 1761, he was invited to preach before the General Assembly on Election Day. He was said to have opposed the American Revolution, at least at the beginning. However, two of his and Dorcas's daughters married Revolutionary War officers: **Abigail**, to Capt. David Olmsted (*q.v.*), and **Anne**, to Lt. Joshua King (*q.v.*). Rev. Ingersoll also enslaved a man named Cyphax (*q.v.*), whom he freed in 1777. *See also* Jonathan Ingersoll II. [WWW]

Ingersoll, Jonathan II (1747-1823), a Ridgefield native and son of Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll (*q.v.*), became a respected political leader in the state, overcoming a handicap. A lawyer, he graduated Yale in 1766, served as a Superior Court judge, 1798-1801 and 1811-16, and as lieutenant governor of Connecticut, 1816-23. He was also elected a congressman from Connecticut in 1793, but declined the job before being sworn in. "He was marked by a nervous twitch of the face, which usually signalized itself when he began to address the jury," Goodrich said in ROAL. (He probably had blepharospasms.) His son Ralph became a congressman, minister to Russia, mayor of New Haven; son Charles, a U.S. District judge; daughter Grace, married French gentleman Pierre Grellet, moved to France and became a celebrity in the court of Napoleon; grandson Colin was a congressman and grandson Charles was governor of Connecticut. [WWW]

Inglese, Oswald "Ozzie," (1935-2024), a native of Argentina, was Ridgefield's town planner or "planning director" from 1972 to 2003, one of the longest-serving administrators of a town agency in the 20th Century. He served during a period of major growth, especially commercially, in the community. He wrote the Inland Wetlands Regulations in 1974 and became the wetlands agent for the town. He was named "1998 Professional Planner" in CT by American Planning Association. [NR]

Ingleside was the country home of George Pratt Ingersoll (*q.v.*), which in 2026 is R House restaurant (*q.v.*) on West Lane. The name was probably a pun on his own name. His main home for much of his life was in Stamford. [WWW]

Ingold, William F., (-1938), owned a large estate at 153 West Mountain Road, later called Innisfree (*q.v.*). In 1931 he was listed as owning a motor yacht that required a crew of 14 people. He was one of 23 partners for Pinchon & Co., described as "one of the largest financial houses in the country" in [NYT4/25/1931] that was largely involved in the theater and film industries. It ran into financial troubles in 1931. His heirs sold the 153 West Mountain Road estate to Edward J. Barber in 1939 [NYT1/25/1939, DD272]

Inkster, Dr. Evelyn Rogers, (1900-1987), a native of Massachusetts, earned an MD from Cornell in 1932, and was a pathologist in NYC. She practiced here as Dr. Rogers with her husband, Dr. James Henry Inkster (*q.v.*), from 1944 until 1960, at first in a 383 Main Street house that once stood next to the library (later the home and office of Dr. James Sheehan —*q.v.*) and later in a house at 114 Main Street. [P7/30/1987]

Inkster, Dr. James Henry, (ca 1900-1985), was a general practitioner from 1940 until 1960 with his wife, Dr. Evelyn Rogers Inkster (*q.v.*), a fellow Cornell Medical School graduate. He was active in St. Stephen's Church. [WWW]

Inland Wetlands Board reviews development proposals and issues permits for regulated activities (disturbance of soil, filling or removal of soil) adjacent to or within designated inland wetlands areas and watercourses. "The process is designed to prevent unwarranted intrusions into fragile wetlands and watercourses or adjacent areas, and to protect the waters of the State of Connecticut," the agency says. The seven-member board is elected, and share staff with the Planning and Zoning Commission. [RidgefieldCT.gov]

In Name Only, a 1939 movie starring Cary Grant and Carole Lombard, was set in Ridgefield. The film, which opens with the Ridgefield sign, was about a young artist summering here who falls for a man trapped in a loveless marriage to a gold digger (Kay Francis). [JFS]

Inn, The: 1. The original name of hotel at the south end of Main Street, operated early on by artist Charles Roswell Bacon (*q.v.*) [P5/7/1903] *see* Ridgefield Inn; **2.** In the 1950s and 60s, a shortened name for the Inn at Ridgefield, 20 West Lane; The Benjamin (*q.v.*) in 2025; and R House in 2026. [JFS]

Inn at Ridgefield was a restaurant at 20 West Lane, so called mostly in the 1960s to 1980s when it was owned by Henry Prieger. Prieger sold to Rainer Kuhnt and Johannes Brugger (*q.v. each*) in December 1986. [P5/28/1987, P10/29/1987] *See also* Bernard's, Tode's Inn, The Benjamin, R House. [JFS]

Innisfree was the longtime home of Dr. Patrick and Veronica Neligan at 153 West Mountain Road, formerly Greywacke (*q.v.*). It was razed ca. 2017. [JFS]

Inns: As a destination resort and arts center known for its fine food, Ridgefield has been home to many inns over the year, almost all offering accommodations along with food. Among them were: Bailey, Blue Feather, Dykeman House, Elms, Fox Hill, Hearthstone, Kane, La Bretagne, Meisner, Oreneca, Outpost, Pines, Resseguie's, Ridgefield, Sportsmen's, Stonehenge, Thompson House, Tode's, Union Hotel, and West Lane (*q.v. each*). Nearly a dozen inns also operated in colonial and early 19th Century Ridgefield and Ridgebury. [JFS]

Inside Out, a theatrical-style group that let young people act out

extemporaneous dramas about problems they faced — such as drugs, alcohol, school, peer and parental pressures, was founded in 1985 by Ruth Leibowitz (*q.v.*). She retired in 2011 from directing the popular program [P11/23/2011] and it faded out after that. [NR]

Intermission was a hair salon that opened Jan. 17, 1981 where Ye Olde Washtub was at Grand Union Shopping Center, operated by Patricia Tallman, Laura Mancini, and Edward Gotthardt. [P1/15/1981]

International Business Machines: *See* IBM.

Ippoliti family: *See* Edgardo Eppoliti.

Iradell Farm was established in late 1940s by Consuelo Vanderbilt Earl (*q.v.*) on 27 acres along at 17 Rippowam Road and focused on exotic animals and fowl from around the world. The name comes from Earl's daughter, Iris, and Earl's memories of the "dells" on her family's Long Island estate. The farm/estate dates from the 1930s when it was the country home of the Clarence P. Wyckoff (*q.v*.) family. [WWW, DD279]

Ireland, Barbara, was elected Ridgefield's state representative on the Democratic ticket in 1986, defeating Jan Johns. She served the 1987, 1989, 1991, and 1993 terms. She lived at 75 Hunter Lane until moving to Sherman in the late 1990s. She was the first woman member of the Ridgefield Rotary Club. [NR, P7/17/1986, P2/7/1991]

Iron foundry operated by Thomas Couch and Ebenezer Burr Sanford (*q.v.*) in the first half of the 19th Century on Norwalk River at or about what is now the Moongate (*q.v.*) property at Route 7 and Florida Hill Road. Said at the time to have been the only foundry between the Hudson River and New Haven, it turned pig iron into tools, including plows, and even manufactured a cannon. *See also* Couch's Station *and* Iron Works. [RIR]

Iron Works: 1. Deeds in the late 1700's and early 1800's mention the "Iron Works," a short-lived operation by Timothy Keeler Jr., Nathan Dauchy, and Elijah Keeler near Lake Mamanasco whose waters it used. Work on it began in 1789 along a stream from Mamanasco to the Titicus River just east of the Route 116 bridge opposite Craigmoor Road. By 1797, it was gone. The iron works may have converted iron ore to pig iron, or pig iron into tools, or both. The fact that it was on a stream suggests water powered machinery for tool-making. The source of the ore is unclear, although iron ore is known in Ridgefield; Samuel Huntington's 1792 Connecticut map bears the legend "Iron mines" in a section of Ridgebury north of George Washington Highway and along Briar Ridge Road. The works may have ceased operation because of difficulty in getting ore, but more likely, the problem was the cost and availability of fuel for the furnace, which consumed a huge amount of firewood [RSSG]; **2.** Ridgefield land records mention an iron works at Starrs Plain in Danbury that received its water supply from Ridgefield. In 1792, Benjamin Sellick of Danbury leased Eliakim and Abijah Peck of Danbury eight acres in Ridgefield "at Bennits Farm or Pond... for the purpose of raising a dam across the stream that leads to said iron works and save the water for the use of said works during the term of five years." The works probably stood on or about the pond that still exists along Route 7, opposite Bennett's Farm Road just into Danbury. *See* Iron Foundry. [RN]

Irving Oil Corp.: Limestone Service Station (*q.v.*), owned by James Giardini, began selling Irving gasoline and products from Canada in June 2006; it

had carried Texaco. Around 2014, the station switched to Citgo. [JFS]

I Saw A Man Die was the title of a 1962 letter about the misuse of charcoal fire-starter fluid, sent to *The Ridgefield Press* and then widely circulated by *Reader's Digest* and others. It was written by Donald Hanson (*q.v.*) as a warning to use the product carefully. It is still circulated today. [JFS].

Ishmael, (1739-?), was born in Ridgefield enslaved to Gamaliel Northrop. His birth record was the earliest official record of slavery in Ridgefield, although it is known enslavement existed earlier (*see* Mingo). By the 1770s he had run away from at least four enslavers and eventually became a free man, reportedly living in Norwalk under the name Samuel Demorat (*q.v.*). *See also* Michael Dimorat. [WWW, UNM]

Island, The, was a shortened form for Grassy Island (*q.v.*), the area along Danbury Road roughly from Copps Hill Common north to the southern entrance to Fox Hill condominiums. The term was used as early as 1709. The area was called an island because it was almost surrounded by swamp in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. Much of the wetland has since been filled in, particularly on the south and west sides of the Island. [RN]

Island Bridge, mentioned in deeds as early as 1717, still exists, carrying Outpost Road (*q.v.*) over the Norwalk River near the south entrance of Fox Hill condominiums. (Outpost Road is a state-abandoned section of the old Danbury Road.) The bridge brought Danbury Road across the river, also called Ridgefield Brook (*q.v.*), as the stream came out of its source, the Great Swamp (*q.v.*). It connected the north end of Grassy Island (*q.v.*) to the south end of Great Island. The term fell out of use in the 19th Century. [RN] *See also* Island River.

Island Hill along southern Danbury Road overlooked "the Island" (*q.v.*). In fact, it had views of both Grassy and Great Islands (*q.v. each*). The term Island Hill first appears in 1820 deed. [RN]

Island Hill Avenue was a name chosen by Conrad Rockelein (*q.v.*) who subdivided Mountain View Park on Island Hill in 1910. By 1927 he had applied this name to the road from Route 35, Danbury Road, to Hillsdale Avenue. [RN]

Island Meadow: A 1743 will mentions land at "Island Meadow," a term that continued to be used into the 1800s for a location on the bend of North Street where it curves just before meeting Barlow Mountain Road. It appears to have been about 10 acres. This area may have been earlier known as Turkey Island or Jug Island (*q.v. each*) and Island Meadow may have been the last remnant of those names. [RN]

Island River: Deeds in 1747 and 1801 for a house "near Island Bridge" described the parcel as bounded on the north by "the Island River." This was the Norwalk River, also called the Ridgefield Brook or Cornen's Brook (*q.v. each*) in this area, and it was so called because it separated Grassy Island from Great Island (*q.v.*). [RN]

Italian Cooperative Store operated on the first floor of a three-story building on Bailey Avenue opposite today's municipal parking lot, and sold shares to members. The store, aimed at recent immigrants, operated from at least 1920, but was destroyed in a fire April 26, 1922. The store shared the floor with Travostino's bakery; second and third floors of the building were apartments housing the Morganti, Marconi, Conti, and Travostino families at the time of the fire. The structure was often called "the cooperative

building." [AB]

Italian immigrants: The earliest Italian immigrants to arrive in Ridgefield may have been in the late 1880s, working on the construction of Henry de Bevoise Schenck's (*q.v.*) estate, called Boswyck, what became Downesbury Manor (*q.v.*), on Florida Hill Road. But none of them seem to have settled here. James Costanzi maintained that his grandfather, Esperanzio Sorcinelli (*q.v*.), was the first Italian immigrant in Ridgefield, around 1887. [AB, DD68] However, DD48 said Benvenuto Carboni and John Christopharo were two of the first four immigrants in 1902. There has been general agreement that Benvenuto and Assunta Carboni (*q.v*.) and their children were first *full family* to come here from Italy. At the turn of the 20th Century, many Italians from the Marche region of Italy arrived to work on the Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) resort, building roads and masonry structures; they were soon involved in building the first village water and sewer systems. Many of these workers — often trained as stone masons — settled in Ridgefield, working on the estates that were being established here, frequently as gardeners and caretakers. [JFS, AB]

Italian-American Mutual Aid Society was established to help immigrant Italians. Founded Nov. 20, 1913, as the Italian-American Political Club, Inc., it became in 1915 the "Italian American Citizens Political Club and Mutual Aid Society of Ridgefield, Connecticut, Incorporated" and then, on Jan. 14, 1926, the current name (often abbreviated IAMAS and called the "Italian Club"). In 1926 the society purchased land at 32 Prospect Street and built a hall, opened Jan. 29, 1927. [RIR] The club was famed locally for its annual September "Field Day" which included Italian foods and games such as bocci. The club was also noted for its separate monthly dinners, open to the public, for men and for women — a tradition that ended June 25 & 27, 2007, when the society, due to dwindling membership, decided to lease its main floor and banquet hall to Nature's Temptations (*q.v*.), a natural food market. The lower level still functions as the clubhouse. [JFS]

Italian American Political Club organized in 1913, and became the Italian American Mutual Aid Society (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Italian Club is an informal name for the Italian-American Mutual Aid Society *(q.v.*). [JFS]

Ivanhoe Farm was an early (ca. 1930 and before) name for the farm, developed by William Mead, that later became the Flat Rock House (*q.v.*) estate of the Landegger family. [Palmer, P9/25/1941]

Iven, Charles Joseph, (-1945), who lived on Peaceable Street, was a noted deep-sea sport fisherman, who broke a world record May 15, 1925, when he caught a 190-pound tarpon with lightweight fly fishing equipment. [JFS]

Ives, Charles, (1874-1954), the noted composer who grew up in Danbury and lived in Redding, may have used the family's Ridgefield land for inspiration — *see* Ives Court. [JFS]

Ives Court, a short, dead-end road off Pine Mountain Road, is part of a 1982 subdivision of 11 lots by Nancy Purdy of Norwalk. The name was suggested by the Conservation Commission to recall the family, from which the commission had recently obtained 12 acres of open space to the east of the Purdy land. (The Ives open space connected two large holdings of town-owned open space – Hemlock Hills and the Pine Mountain refuges, totaling more than 500 acres – and thus was a valuable acquisition. The

Ives property is also significant because it is said that composer Charles Ives (*q.v.*), a native of Danbury, used to seek inspiration by visiting a family-owned cabin on the property.) *See also* Ives Trail Greenway. [RN]

Ives Trail Greenway is a regional hiking trail connecting parks and open spaces in four towns. The 17-mile trail traverses Bennett's Pond State Park and Pine Mountain Reserve in Ridgefield; Wooster Mountain State Park, Tarrywile Park, and Wiedel Meadows in Danbury; Terre Haute open space in Bethel; and Bogus Brook Preserve in Redding. It recalls composer Charles Ives, a Danbury native who later lived in Redding and who reportedly had a shack on Pine Mountain (*q.v*.) in Ridgefield, which he would visit for inspiration. *See also* Liebowitz-Knapp Preserve, Hemlock Hills. [ivestrail.org]

Ivy Hill reaches an elevation of about 760 feet above sea level, northeasterly of the intersection of Ivy Hill and Florida Hill Roads on the lower end of the old Hawley's Ridge (*q.v.*). The "summit" is at the intersection of Standish Drive and Revere Place. The term first appears in a 1797 deed. The area was long known for its ground ivy. [RN]

Ivy Hill Road, an old route from town to the Ivy Hill neighborhood in Farmingville, extends from Branchville Road to the junction of Blackman and Lounsbury Roads. It was so called at least by 1919 when the name appears on a property survey map filed in the town clerk's office. The road dates back to the 18th Century. [RN]

Ivy Swamp Brook is mentioned in deeds from 1838 and 1844 as being on the south end of Lake Mamanasco — it's probably the brook that flows out of Turtle Pond (*q.v.*) down the side of Titicus Mountain into the lake. This waterway may be the Punch Brook (*q.v.*). **Ivy Swamp** may have been what is now called Turtle Pond, a man-made pond that could easily have been a swamp back then and is gradually reverting to swamp today. [RN]

J

Jack Slack was a 1970s Ridgefield-based band featuring Emmett Halliday on keyboards, James T. Halliday on sax and James McCarty on guitars, specializing in "rockin' blues." [OR7/14/2021, John Hallenborg]

Jacklin, Ebenezer, (1757-1821), a freeborn African-American native of Ridgefield, was a son of Robert Jr. (*q.v.*) and Anne Jacklin. He served in the Revolutionary War in the Fifth Connecticut Regiment and was at Valley Forge. After the war he moved to upper New England, mostly western Massachusetts, and died in Lenox, Mass. In his successful 1818 application for a federal military pension, he said he had been a farmer and a musician but was by then an invalid and in poverty. His name is on the Veterans Memorial on Main Street. [UNM]

Jacklin, Joseph, was described by Samuel Jacklin (*q.v.*) as his son; Samuel left his entire estate to him in 1780. However, the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich suggests he may have been adopted. Other records indicate he was a son-in-law of Samuel. He took the oath of fidelity in 1782, but by 1790 had left town and may have settled in NY state. [UNM]

Jacklin, Lewis, was a freeborn African American who enlisted in the Fifth Connecticut Regiment from Ridgefield and served at Valley Forge. His relation to Robert or Samuel Jacklin, both Ridgefield landowners, is not yet known; Lewis does not show up in land records as a property owner. His name is occasionally spelled Louis. He is listed on the War Memorial. [UNM]

Jacklin, Robert Jr., (1715-?), was an early land-owning African-American resident of Ridgefield. Son of a recently freed slave, he was among the first settlers of the New Patent (*q.v.*) section of upper Ridgefield, buying 74 acres there starting in 1745. At least two of his sons, Ebenezer and Thaddeus (*q.v. each*) served in the Revolution, and another son, Daniel, probably also served. Robert is last reported on the town's assessed property list in 1781. He was the brother of Samuel Jacklin (*q.v.*), who settled in southern Ridgefield. [UNM]

Jacklin, Samuel, (ca. 1720-1780), was a freeborn African American, born in New London, who came to Ridgefield around 1750 and possibly farmed first with his brother, Robert Jacklin Jr. (*q.v.*), in New Patent, but in the 1750s bought a farm in the Flat Rock district of southern Ridgefield. By his death he had property probably worth more than the average Ridgefield farmer's. He was the husband of **Sarah** and father of **Elisabeth** and **Benjamin**, and of adopted **Joseph**. Elisabeth married Jack Freeman, a Revolutionary War veteran, and they settled in Redding. [UNM]

Jacklin, Thaddeus, (1761-?), an African American son of Robert Jr. and Anne Jacklin, was born in Ridgefield and served in the Revolution. After the war he appears to have lived in New Milford, then in upper NY. [UNM]

Jackson, Barbra B. "BB", is a writer, producer and former host of the TV show, "House Dressings," carried on PBS in the 1980s on which she interviewed architects, designers, and interior decorators. She lived at 93 New Street and had a career in advertising. As BB Jackson, she has written four novels, including *The Gingham Gunslinger* (1975), *Dancing in the Snow* (2023), *Fool Me Once Shame on You* (2024) and *Her Daughter's House*

(2024). Her mother, **Joan Jackson**, owned the Indian Trading Post on Route 7, a mile north of Ridgefield's line, for many years. [P8/6/1987, JFS]

Jackson, Ephraim, sold a house and grist mill on Florida Hill Road and Route 7 to Ichabod Coles in 1752. [RLR 4/27-31] It was on or about the site of Moongate (*q.v.*). [*See also* RLR4/1]

Jackson, Fielding V., (1884-1962), son of Richard A. Jackson (*q.v.*), lived at Anascote (*q.v.*) at Main Street and King Lane and was a Yale-educated stockbroker, member of NY Stock Exchange, and active in St. Stephen's Church. His wife was **Julia Tower Jackson**, who died in 1988. [RN] *See also* Jackson Court. [JFS]

Jackson, Richard Arbuthnot, (1858-1934), native of Indiana, came to Ridgefield in 1916, buying the King family estate as a summer place, which he called Anascote (*q.v.*). He had been a railroad attorney and executive. He once headed the Rock Island Line and at his retirement in 1916, had been vice-president and general counsel for the Great Northern Rail Road. Locals called him "Stonewall" Jackson, partly in humor because he built the fancy stone wall now surrounding Anascote, and partly to distinguish him from another well-known local Richard Jackson — a teacher at the Ridgefield School. His wife was Anna Scott Jackson. After his death, his son Fielding Jackson (*q.v.*) moved into Anascote. DD81 has a report of hobos visiting the Jackson house. *See also* Jackson Court. [RN]

Jackson, Stephen, of Redding bought a "grist or corn mill" and a saw mill "a few rods west of the late dwelling house of Thomas Couch decd" in 1822 [RLR12/177B] and sold it to Ebenezer Godfrey in 1831. [RLR14/348]

Jackson Court is a short, dead-end road off the north side of King Lane with handful of house lots subdivided in 1978 by Carl Lecher and Nicholas DiNapoli Jr. from part of the former Jackson family estate, whose house sits at the corner of Main Street and King Lane (earlier, it was the King family estate — *see* Joshua King). *See also* Richard A. Jackson. [RN]

Jacob, Sereno Thorpe, (1896-1947), was a WW1 fighter pilot and an early airline pilot. He grew up in Westport, served in France in the Lafayette Flying Corps. After the war, he did some regional airmail piloting, and then joined the new Eastern Airlines, founded in 1926, and flew airliners for seven years. He retired and came to Ridgefield in the 1930s, working in real estate and becoming a member of the Board of Assessors and the building committee that expanded the "old high school" on East Ridge, where he was a proponent of building the auditorium that has become the Ridgefield Playhouse. He was a member of the Republican Town Committee, Lions Club, Last Man's Club, and Ridgefield Defense Council in WW2. [WWW]

Jacob Turkey was an American Indian who sold land to first settlers — *see* Betty Grant. [JFS]

Jacobsen, Sascha, (1895-1972), a noted violinist, graduated from Juilliard in 1915 and had his debut recital in Aeolian Hall that year. He went on to perform with many leading orchestras; he often played with pianist Samuel Chotzinoff (*q.v.*), and was a friend of Jascha Heifetz, Artur Rubenstein, and others from New York Philharmonic whom he'd invite to his home at 257 Old Branchville Road between 1937 and 1944. He moved to California, where he became concertmaster of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He owned the famous "Red Diamond" Stradivarius. [WWW]

Jagger, Joseph, (ca. 1702-1802), was a colorful 18th Century character who

bought 2.5 acres "with dwelling house ... lying easterly of Bennets Farm so called" in 1774, probably on the hill southeasterly of Bennett's Farm Road overlooking the valley of today's Route 7. Jagger came here from Redding and was in his 70's. He sold the place in 1792 for £6; he was then about 90 years old and perhaps moved into the village to be closer to assistance. In 1800, Rev. S. G. Goodrich called him a pauper and "an old man about 95 years, an Englishman who served under the Duke of Cumberland at the Battle of Culloden in 1745, and was in Flanders with the regiment previous to that battle." Goodrich said he had "wrought jet work in cedar since he has been in this country, till he was near 80 years old and he will to this day ... sing a martial air he learned in Flanders and cry, 'God save King George.'" Samuel Goodrich, the minister's son, reported: "We had a professed beggar, called Jagger, who had served in the armies of more than one of the Georges, and insisted upon crying 'God save the king!' even on the 4th of July, and when openly threatened by the boys with a gratuitous ride on a rail." The town was supplying welfare payments of about seven shillings a week to a family to care for "Old Jagger." Town records report: "Joseph Jagger dead December 24th 1802, supposed to be one hundred years old." [RN]

Jagger Lane, also appearing as Jaegger and Jaguar Lane, runs from behind the Pamby Motors building on Route 7 up to Bennett's Farm Road, opposite the site of the old Fox Hill Inn, now Bennett's Pond State Park. It may have been the predecessor of the eastern end of Bennett's Farm Road, which now comes out on Route 7 in Danbury just north of the Ridgefield town line. The road was named for Joseph Jagger (*q.v.*), who lived nearby, and was mentioned in deeds as Jagger Road as early as 1817. [RN]

Jaguar Lane is a variation of Jagger Lane (*q.v.*) appears on Whitlock's 1912 map of Ridgefield. [RN]

Jail: The town maintained a jail in the basement of the town hall during the first third of the 20th Century. "There were two cells on the north side of the jail and a larger one on the south side," said Dick Venus. "A very dim electric bulb, hung in the center and provided what little light was available." Prisoners were not held there for more than a day or two; they would be moved to the county jail in Bridgeport for longer periods of incarceration. The cells were sometimes used to house vagrants in need of shelter. The current police headquarters has holding cells where prisoners stay until moved to Bridgeport. [DD79, JFS]

Jambs, The, is a peculiar name that first appears in 1775 in a deed for three acres "in the eastern part of Ridgebury Society at a place called ye Jambs." It was mentioned as late as 1850, spelled "the Jams." In 1978, Ridgebury historian Ed Liljegren wrote: "The definition of 'jam(b)' changes in various editions of Webster's from 'a thick bed of stone which hinders them (miners) when pursuing the veins of ore' (1836) to 'a mass of mineral or stone in a quarry or pit standing upright, more or less distinct from neighboring or adjoining parts.' This latter definition is more in keeping with the root of the word, meaning a leg or support. In any case, I suspect that this is the definition the settlers had in mind. ...The most probable location was straddling what is now called Ned's Lane, which once went through to Old Stagecoach Road... If you travel down Ned's Lane as far as it reasonably passable, you can see a spectacular rock formation, which

could have well given rise to the name of the Jambs." [RN]

Jane Goodall Institute had offices in Ridgefield but Goodall herself never lived here. The institute arrived from Arizona in 1993 with a small, advance office on Main Street and in 1995 opened its full operation at 63 Copps Hill Road. The institute was founded in 1977 "to continue [Goodall's] chimpanzee research as well as expand efforts on chimpanzee protection, conservation, and environmental education." Why Ridgefield? The institute's CEO, Don Buford, lived on Old Mill Road in Ridgebury. However, the operation soon moved to Washington DC where it exists today. [JFS]

Jansen, Jane, a former selectman, was state representative in 1985 and 1986. A Republican, she was chosen at a special election in November 1985 to replace Martha Rothman, who resigned. She chose not to run again.

Janick, Dr. Herbert F. Jr., (1929-2018), was a professor of American history at WestConn for more than 30 years and wrote several books of local history, including (with William E. Devlin), *Danbury's Third Century: From Urban Status to Tri-Centennial* (2013). Although he lived in Ridgefield from 1962 until his death, he was a founder of the Danbury Preservation Trust and was active in Danbury organizations. He was a member of the board of the Connecticut Humanities Council. [JFS]

Japornick's Division: Rockwell and several town clerks incorrectly use this name for an early 18th Century proprietors' subdivision on West Mountain, misinterpreting the handwriting of Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), first town clerk, when he wrote "Tapornick's Division" (*q.v.*), named for the Indian Tapornick. In script, Hauley's "T" looked much like a more modern "J." [RN]

Jarvis, Rev. Samuel F., was rector of St. Stephen's Church from 1868 until 1873. In April 1873, the vestry had a disagreement with him over the number of collections he was taking at services, and he left in August.

Jaycees was a service club founded here as the Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1961 for people 18 to 35 years old, usually involved in local businesses. The club sponsored community events, including a Teacher of the Year award, and gave grants. It used the old Branchville Schoolhouse as storage and meeting place. Jaycees disbanded in 1987 due to lack of residents young and interested enough to qualify to join. [JFS]

Jean's Restaurant was opened in 1935 by Americo Ridolfi (*q.v.*) at 37 Ethan Allen Highway. In the decades that followed, it became Cella's, Luigi's (*q.v.)*, Cooper Tavern, 59 Bank Street (*q.v.*), La Piazza, Coco Bongo's, and was in 2026, the Barn Door. [JFS]

Jeb and Dan were a pair of young oxen, owned by the Fifth Connecticut Regiment (*q.v.),* that was used at time of the nation's Bicentennial in many parades and re-enactments in and around Ridgefield. They often pulled a cannon. They were kept by David Hebert (*q.v*.) at his home in Richardson Park and were retired by 1980 to the Stamford Museum and Nature Center, where they were exhibited for many years. [JFS]

Jefferson Drive extends between Branchville Road and Lincoln Lane, developed in the early 1950's as part of the Washington Park Estates by Bert Ison. He named the road after the nation's third President, who had no connection with the town. Other roads at Washington Park Estates recall the first, second and 16th Presidents. The road was accepted by a July 1956 Town Meeting. [RN]

Jeffro Drive: Otto H. Jespersen (*q.v.*) and William B. Rodier (*q.v.*) modified and

combined their surnames to form this portmanteau name and developed this dead-end road off Ivy Hill Road in the 1950s. Both had worked for Outpost Nurseries. Jeffro Drive appears as Jesperson Drive on at least one (1960) map of the town. [RN]

Jemmison, William, (1838-1864), an African-American volunteer, died Sept. 20, 1864, while serving as a Union soldier. His death occurred in a Philadelphia hospital, due probably to disease, but possible to battle wounds. [UNM]

Jenks, Stephen, (1772-1856), was a composer of both religious and secular music, who wrote at least 10 collections of works in early 1800s. He lived in Ridgefield around 1799-1800, married **Hannah Dauchy** of Ridgefield, daughter of Philip and Mary Dauchy. (Born in 1772, she died Aug. 11, 1800, age 27. [RVR]) In Ridgefield and the area, he was a teacher of psalmody [RVR]. In 1801, he married his second wife, Rachel Travis, in South Salem; they were divorced ca. 1806 after Jenks accused her of "scandalous behaviour." He eventually had a farm in Thompson, Ohio, with his third wife, Abigail Ross; they had six children. [WWW]

Jenner, Anna: *See* Anna Jenner Foote.

Jenner, William A., (1844-1915), a NYC attorney, built the mansion, "Overlook" (*q.v.*), at 35 High Ridge Avenue. His daughter **Anna** *(q.v.*) married Sterling Foote (*q.v.*). [DD154]

Jennes, B. "Barb" Fulton, an award-winning poet and teacher, was Ridgefield's first poet laureate. She wrote *Blinded Bird*s, winner of the 2022 International Book Award for a poetry chapbook, and has been widely published in journals and anthologies, was poet-in-residence at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, and has been the host of many poetry workshops and readings at Ridgefield Library. ROTA gave her its Civic Award in 2025 for her efforts to cultivate the arts in the community. [JFS]

Jenni's Hallmark replaced Miller's Card and Giftique (*q.v.*) at Copps Hill Plaza in September 1981, and was operated by Ben Daddona. [P9/10/1981]

Jennings, Albin "Boss," (1790-1887), a native of Weston, was a skilled carpenter who designed and built the Big Shop (*q.v.*) and many houses here and in North Salem, including the home he built in 1816 for his bride and himself that was later used for decades as the centerpiece of the Outpost Inn (*q.v.*). [RIR] He served many terms as a selectman from the 1830s through the 1850s, and was a state representative in 1843. [JFS]

Jennings, Charles Augustus, (1842-1933), was a sergeant in the Civil War who was wounded at Chancellorsville, Va., May 2, 1863, and later discharged. He became a foreman at the Gilbert & Bennett wire mill, died at the age of 90 and is buried in Branchville Cemetery. [JFS]

Jennings, Charles Edgar, (1848-1865), enlisted in the Union Navy in 1864 when he was 16 years old, served on two ships, and died of typhoid at Philadelphia in 1865, aged 17. He is buried in the New Florida Cemetery where his military memorial has incorrect information about him, confusing his military record with Charles A. Jennings (*q.v.*). He grew up on Simpaug Turnpike, on the Redding-Ridgefield line, and probably attended Florida School. [WWW]

Jensen, Valerie, established The Prospector (*q.v.*) theater on Prospect Street and has for many years been a very active advocate for the mentally disabled. She has been described as "an eccentric and innovative visionary dedicated to improving quality of life for people with disabilities. Her award-

winning work as an entrepreneur, filmmaker, author, advocate, and investor is fueled by her belief in the power of sparkle and a reach-for-the-stars attitude." *See also* Jensen Field. [LI]

Jensen Field is a Little League field built in 2019-20 on Route 7 at Simpaug Turnpike, named for the Jensen family of Main Street, led by Valerie (*q.v.*), a significant donor, who built The Prospector (*q.v.*) [P4/18/2019]. The land is owned by the state but has been leased to the town of Ridgefield for 25 years at $1 per year. Little League subleases the property from the town. The site used to house Walpole Woodworkers, which moved a quarter mile to the south. [P8/2/2018]

Jerry's Barber Shop: *See under* Mugavero family.

Jerry's Court was the name of the road leading into Stonehenge Estates off Route 7 when Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) subdivided the property, so called for Tuccio's son, Jerry. Residents didn't like the name and petitioned the selectmen to change it to the inappropriately named Druid Lane (*q.v.*) in 1966. Bobby's Court (*q.v.*), named for another Tuccio son, had better luck surviving. [RN]

Jerusalem Lodge is the local Masonic organization, officially Jerusalem Lodge, No. 49 A.F. & A.M. (Ancient Free and Accepted Masons). Founded in 1808, it is the town's oldest non-religious organization. Early meetings were in the Smith Tavern, but a Masonic Hall (*q.v.*) was established in 1817 at 396 Main Street where it has remained. "We embrace the tenets of Friendship, Morality and Brotherly Love." the lodge says on its website. "We do this by using the teachings of Freemasonry to better ourselves, our community, and each other. At our lodge, we make Masons, enjoy fellowship, and explore the rich history and meaning within Freemasonry." Many Ridgefield civic leaders have been members of the lodge. [JFS]

Jespersen, Otto H., (1901-1981), a native of Denmark, came to the U.S. in 1924 and to Ridgefield in 1936 to work for Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*). He also had an upholstery and antiques restoration business. Active in the community, he was president of the Ridgefield Boys' Club, a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, Board of Tax Review, and Democratic Town Committee — 10 years as chairman. He was Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1969. He and his friend, Outpost coworker William Rodier (*q.v.*), developed nearby Jeffro Drive (*q.v.*), named for them. In 1975 he moved to New Hampshire to live with son, Otto H. Jr., who'd been a professional photographer here. The Jespersen home on Ivy Hill Road had been the Ridgefield Electric Company (*q.v.*) power station in the early in the 20th Century. [P21/19/1981, NR, RN]

Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church: Itinerant preacher Jesse Lee organized the first Methodist group in Ridgefield; the first members were Mr. and Mrs. Ichabod Wheeler and Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Keeler. Because early meetings were at the Wheeler home near Still and Stonehenge Roads in Limestone District, the group was called the "Limestone Class." It was the third Methodist organization in New England. A native of Virginia, Lee preached Methodism from North Carolina to Maine in the late 1800s, riding horseback. He had first preached here on June 26, 1789. He was appointed chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1812, and two years later, chaplain of the U.S. Senate. He died in 1816 and is buried in Baltimore. The growing Ridgefield congregation in 1824 built a small church at the corner of

North Salem Road and North Street on land that's now part of the Ridgefield Cemetery. With 118 members, Ridgefield was made a station in 1836, the year it got its first settled pastor, Rev. Parmelee Chamberlain. The first church was replaced in 1841 with a larger structure at the north corner of Main and Catoonah Streets, a building that was in 1883 moved back 30 feet and expanded. The renovated church was the first to bear the name of Jesse Lee. The campus included a parsonage to the north of the church. (A picket fence that surrounded this campus had 1,063 pickets, said KSN.) This church was razed in 1965 as the growing congregation could no longer fit there. The late-19th-Century parsonage at 409 Main Street (ONS90) survives as, in 2026, Deborah Ann's Sweet Shoppe. The third church was erected at 207 Main Street in 1967-68 and consecrated May 12, 1968. The land was once the Hawley estate called Ashton Croft (*q.v.*) whose house has become Wesley Hall, used for offices and classrooms; the carriage house is a hall and chapel. *See also* Hackert and Monti Building, Rev. James Coleman, Rev. George Lansing Taylor, Odd Fellows, Electa Ziegler. [JFS]

Jessup, Caroline Margaret "Marrette" Starr, a grand dame of Ridgefield, grew up on the family estate in Farmingville and lived most of her life on lower Main Street. She was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club and was one of the 11 women founders of the Ridgefield Boys' Club. She was married to wife of Theodore C. Jessup (*q.v.*), headmaster of Ridgefield School (*q.v.*). *See also* Louis Morris Starr. [JFS; interview P6/18/1981]

Jessup, Theodore Carrington, (1892-1955), a native of New Jersey, was the longtime head of the Ridgefield School (*q.v.*), retiring in 1933. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Hamilton College, he was a captain in the Army during World War I and husband of Caroline Margaret Starr Jessup (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Jewish People's Fraternal Order: *See* Ridgefield Country Club.

Jinx was a nickname for Gino L. Baldaserini (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Jo's Hills, now part of Danbury, just north of Mill Plain, was within Ridgefield from 1731 to 1846 and appears in Ridgefield records by the 1740's and as late as 1810. Some claimed Jo was an American Indian who lived thereabouts, but Danbury historian Imogene Heireth said Jo was probably Joseph Crane and Jo's probably comes from Jos., a common abbreviation for Joseph. Ms. Heireth found an early reference to "Jos. Crane's Hills" in upper Mill Plain. By 1744, Crane had mills near the NY-Connecticut border. Danburians today retain the name as Joe's Hill Road. [RN]

Jobs: *See* Employment.

Joe's Corner is the intersection of Main Street and Danbury Road (Routes 35 and 116), so called because Joe's Store (*q.v.*) was at the northeast corner for many years. *See also* Danbury Corners. [RN]

Joe's Hideaway was a restaurant at the north corner of Grove Street and Sunset Lane in 1950s and 60s. It's named for Joe Pierpaoli, son of the restaurant's founder, John Pierpaoli, who called the place Pierpaoli's Tavern; Joe took over when father retired and renamed the business — *see* Corner Pub *and* Perp's. It's now The Hideaway. [JFS]

Joe's Package Store, founded by Joseph Ancona (*q.v.*), was the forerunner of Ancona's Wines & Liquors, operated from just after Prohibition's end until 1962 when the name was changed. In the 1940s and 50s, Joe's was at 41 Ethan Allen Highway; from 1962 to 1980 (as Ancona's) at 49 Ethan Allen Highway; then to 720 Branchville Road, where it is in business today. *See*

also Ancona's Wines & Liquors. [JFS]

Joe's Store, a small grocery store at 622 Main Street (the junction with Danbury Road), was established in 1918 by Mustapha C. Joseph (*q.v.*), and in 1938 taken over by his brother, James "Jimmy Joe" Joseph (*q.v.*). The original building was moved northerly on Danbury Road and is now 3 Danbury Road. Joe's Store later became Country Corners (*q.v.*) convenience store, then Tony's Corner Deli (*q.v.*), which closed in 2024 and became Corner Cafe (*q.v.*) [RN, WWW, P3/28/2024]

Joffee, Louis, (1868-1948), was a village tailor whose shop was on the first floor front of the Masonic Hall, 396 Main Street. [DD89]

Joffee Cottage was the summer home of R.E. Curtis on Main Street. [P7/20/1911]

Johnny Gelato, an ice cream shop at 424 Main Street, closed Dec. 21, 2018, after several years in business. [P12/20/2018]

John, Frederick, (-1864), a Union Army private, was captured by the Confederates at Drewry's Bluff, Va., and imprisoned at Andersonville, Ga., where he died of scurvy. He is buried in the Andersonville National Cemetery. [JFS]

John F. Coyle Associates was a real estate agency at 23 Danbury Road operated by its namesake (*q.v.*). In 1980, Dr. Harold E. Healy (*q.v.*), recently retired RHS principal, was named its office manager. [P9/4/1980]

John Soluri Preserve, 17 acres of open space, much in the Great Swamp, bordering state-owned open space, was acquired by the town in 1987 as part of the Beechwood (*q.v.*) subdivision and named for John Soluri (*q.v.*), a landscape architect who worked to preserve the natural features of the site and who served on the Conservation Commission. The preserve has trails. Parking for two cars is available off Linden Road. [RW]

Johns, Glynis, (1923-2024), a native of South Africa of Welsh ancestry, was a "British" actress who was one of the last survivors of the Golden Age of Hollywood. She created the role of Desiree Armfeldt in *A Little Night Music* on Broadway, for which she won a Tony Award and in which she sang "Send In the Clowns," composed by Stephen Sondheim specifically for her. She was also well known for playing Winifred Banks in Walt Disney's movie, "Mary Poppins." She appeared in many TV series. Johns had a condominium at Casagmo in the 1980s. [*See interview in* P4/12/1990]

John's Best Pizza at 955 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) operated about 25 years in a location that had been the Green Doors Motel (q.v.). It closed in 2026 and was replaced by a Riko's pizza restaurant. [JFS]

John's Pond, north of Branchville Road between Cooper Road and Stony Hill Road, is old mill pond on the Cooper Brook (*q.v.*), created around 1751 to supply water power to the saw mill of Benjamin Hoyt (or Hayt, Haight), and operated by the Hoyt family well into the 19th Century. An 1866 deed indicates the pond then was called simply "Saw Mill Pond." The modern name came from Norman John, who reportedly repaired the old dam or built a new one in the 1930's and created a renewed and larger (about six acres) pond. In 1977, the president of the John's Pond Association of neighboring landowners was *Mrs. John Norman*! The pond shore was the site of a camp in the 1930's. For many years, Dr. Alice Paul (*q.v.*), the suffragist, owned much of the pond shore. The state ordered the dam repaired in 1987. [RN, P8/27/1987]

Johnson, George I., (-1940), was Ridgefield's first telephone operator in the 1890s, working his switchboard in a small building on Governor Street, east

of today's Wells Fargo Bank, and later in the "Telephone Building" on Main Street (*q.v.*). He was also the town's telegraphy operator for 34 years and carried on a watch and clock repair business when people weren't calling and he wasn't sending Morse. He was also one of the first Ridgefielders to own an automobile: A one-cylinder 1903 Rambler Runabout. [P2/22/1940]

Johnson, Philip, noted 20th Century architect, designed the Schlumberger Research Center Administration Building, his first non-residential structure, completed in 1952 and restored in 2018-19. Annette Schlumberger and Henri Doll (*q.v.*) hired Johnson after a visit to his recently completed Glass House in New Canaan. The single-story rectangular steel-glass-and-brick building consists of perimeter offices organized around a central core that contains an open-air landscaped courtyard, glass enclosed conference room, and a library. [JFS]

Johnson, Rev. Samuel, (1696-1772), was an early itinerant Anglican missionary who is credited with helping establish St. Stephen's Church in 1725, and who went on to help create what is now Columbia University in NYC. He has been called "a key figure of the American Enlightenment." [WWW]

Johnson, Will, (1916-1984), a native of Georgia, was a cartoonist who drew gags for *Saturday Evening Post, Liberty,* and other major magazines, and also assisted Ernie Bushmiller with the daily "Nancy" comic strips, published in most newspapers in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. He lived on Hobby Drive from 1955 to 1983. By 1979 Bushmiller started to suffer from Parkinson's disease and left his franchise to Johnson, who did the daily comic, and another cartoonist who did Sundays. In the 1950s he shared a studio in NYC with Ridgefield artist Franklin Lischke (*q.v.*), and was active in the Rotary Club. [7/12/1984, JFS]

Johnson Hill is a locale mentioned in an 1858 deed, possibly around Grove Street or along southern North Salem Road [RN]

Johnson's Pond was off the east side of lower Wilton Road East in the early 20th Century. [RN]

Jones, Czar, (1789-1869), a Ridgefield native born on the Fourth of July, was a woodworker with the Brush, Olmstead and Company (*q.v.*) carriage factory in the Big Shop (*q.v.*), of which he was an owner. His house still stands at 188 Main Street. A veteran of the War of 1812, he served several terms as a selectman in the 1830s and 40s. A state representative in 1837 and 1838, he was the father of State Rep. Ebenezer Jones. *See also* Jones Hall. [JFS]

Jones, Daniel, (1770-1835), was a founder of the Jerusalem Lodge of Masons in 1808 and served as a state representative in 1810 and 1814. [JFS]

Jones, David L., (1857-1917), a Farmingville Road farmer, owned Walnut Grove Farm, now the Walnut Grove subdivision. The name was later used for a dairy run by the Stolle family. [RN, P11/6/1917]

Jones, Ebenezer, (1732-1821), led the Ridgefield militia in the Battle of Ridgefield and reportedly nursed a dying British soldier. [JFS]

Jones, Ebenezer, (1822-1889), was a "carriage man" — a partner in the carriage factory in the Big Shop and later operated a boarding house. He lived on Main Street and was a Republican state representative in 1858. He was a son of State Rep. Czar Jones (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Jones, Edward, (?-1779), a native of Wales, was living in Ridgefield when he was arrested in 1779 as a Tory spy and soon hanged at Gallows Hill in Redding. The validity of his conviction and the manner of his execution has

evoked much debate; some had reported that 12-year-old boys were forced by General Israel Putnam to pull the ladder from Jones's feet while others say the claim is untrue. [WWW]

Jones, Fred B., (ca. 1907-1999), was among the last of Ridgefield's farmers but was better known as a dog warden, called by a NY newspaper, "the best darned dog warden in Connecticut." He held the post in the 1950s and 60s when he lived (and farmed) on Lounsbury Road. He was also an expert lapidary who operated Fred's Gem Den. [WWW]

Jones, John "Jack," (1917-2012), was a popular state police lieutenant and longtime Ridgefielder. In his younger days, he was an assistant clerk at Hyde's Liquor Store (*q.v.*) [DD96]. He served at Troop A (*q.v.*) from 1943 to 1959 and became commander of Troop I in Bethany in 1969, retiring a year later. [P2/2/2012]

Jones, John, (1739-1817), was a lieutenant in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. "John Jones, a farmer of the town of Ridgefield, where his birth occurred, and of whom it is said that he was the first man of the locality to offer his service to the Colonial Government at the inception of the war of the Revolution, in which he enlisted and served valiantly, becoming a lieutenant. He was of Scotch origin on his father's side." [CBRFC] He was a state representative from Ridgefield in 1807 and 1808.

Jones, Keith Marshall III, was the first president of the Ridgefield Historical Society. The former advertising executive is also the author of three books of Ridgefield history, *The Farms of Farmingville, Farmers Against the Crown* and *The Battle of Ridgefield* (*q.v. each*), as well as other books of early American history. He now lives in Milford. [JFS]

Jones, Nalini, RHS 1989, is an author and novelist, daughter of Robert L. (*q.v.*) and Marguerite Jones. A graduate of Amherst College, she is the author of *What You Call Winter*, a short-story collection, and other books, including her first novel, *The Unbroken Coast* (Knopf, 2025), set in a Catholic fishing village outside Mumbai. A Stanford Calderwood Fellow of the MacDowell Colony, she has taught at the 92nd Street Y in NYC and at Fairfield U. [JFS]

Jones, Pamme, has been executive director of the Ridgefield Theater Barn since September 2017. She had served two years as president of the board of directors and two years as the box office manager, and had also performed in many productions. The Ridgefield resident earlier had a career in wedding and event planning. [ridgefieldtheaterbarn.org]

Jones, Robert L., (1937-2023), was the longtime director of the Newport Folk and Newport Jazz festivals and a founding producer of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. In the 1960s and early '70s, he was road manager for Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk and toured internationally with Dave Brubeck, Cannonball Adderley, Count Basie, and Sarah Vaughan, among other jazz greats. He and his wife Marguerite lived off Rockwell Road in Ridgefield for nearly 20 years, starting in 1985, and raised their three children: Nalini (*q.v.*), Radhika (*q.v.*) and Christopher Jones. He was an early promoter of ABC (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield. [P8/24/2023]

Jones, Radhika, (1973-), became editor of *Vanity Fair* magazine in 2017, serving until 2025. She formerly was the editorial director for the books department at *The New York Time*s, deputy managing editor of *Time* and the managing editor of *The Paris Review*. A Harvard graduate, she grew up in Ridgefield, daughter of Robert L. (*q.v.*) and Marguerite Jones (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Jones, Steffi K., is a watercolor artist who for many years led the Ridgefield Toy Clinic (*q.v.*). She is married to **Robert Jones**. [JFS]

Jones, Timothy, (abt.1824-1901), was a farmer who was a Whig state representative in 1854. [JFS]

Jones Hall was on the second floor of the Big Shop (*q.v.*) on West Lane at Main Street (now site of the First Congregational Church) and was the scene of many lectures and other gatherings in the mid-19th Century. Hannibal Hamlin, vice president under Abraham Lincoln, once spoke there. It was probably named for Czar Jones (*q.v.*), an owner of the building. [JFS]

Jones Pond existed early in the 20th Century along Farmingville Road, opposite New Road, serving watering needs of livestock on Walnut Grove Farm (*q.v.*), owned by David L. Jones (*q.v.*). The pond was also a source of "bog hay" and of ice for refrigeration. Its dam broke years ago and the pond is now mostly swamp; it's also now town-owned open space. [RN]

Jones Ridge was cited in the land records as early as 1789, apparently near the intersection of Branchville and Rockwell Roads, where the Jones family had land, at least from the Revolutionary period. Ebenezer Jones was living thereabouts in 1789. Benjamin Jones had land there in 1838, the last mention of the name in land records. [RN]

Jones, Slawson & Co. was a 19th Century hatting shop, the largest in town, located on Catoonah Street. The name also appears as Jones, Slawson & Betts. [RIR, CBRFC] In 1848, the partnership of Jones, Slawson & Co. dissolved after Jesse B. Slawson and Aaron Betts withdrew from the firm, leaving only Russell Jones. [Norwalk Gazette, 2/16/1848]

Jorgensen, Janel, won an Olympic silver medal when she was part of the U.S. women's 4x100 medley relay team that finished second in Seoul in 1988. She was RHS 1989. [NR]

Joseph, James "Jimmy Joe," (ca. 1881-1972), operated "Joe's Store" (*q.v.*) at the corner of Danbury Road and Main Street for many years. He and his brother M.C. Joseph (*q.v.*), who started the store, were natives of a part of Syria that's now Lebanon. James took over the store in 1938 after running a similar business in Georgetown. *See also* Oldest resident. [WR, WWW]

Joseph, Mustapha C. "Michael," (ca.1890-1938), opened "Joe's Store" (*q.v.*) in 1918 at what was then called Danbury Corners. He ran the business until his death in 1938 at 48. His brother, James "Jimmy Joe" Joseph (*q.v.*) took over until his death in 1972 at the age of 91. The intersection there was long known as Joe's Corner (*q.v.*). The business subsequently operated under the name of Country Corners (*q.v.*). [RN, WWW, DD365]

Journalists who lived in Ridgefield and are described here include**:** Howard Blum, Peter de Jonge, Frank Gibney, Huntington Gilchrist, Radhika Jones, Richard Kluger, Clare Boothe Luce, Henry Luce, Hugh Mulligan, Mike McIntire, Tom Moran, Karl S. Nash, Elizabeth Nash, Brad Parks, Donald I. Rogers, Macklin Reid, Joshua Rottenberg, Cornelius Ryan, Jack Sanders, Sally Sanders, Anthony Scaduto, John Scott, Robert Lewis Taylor, John Neville Wheeler, Mildred Gilman Wohlforth, Lee B. Wood, Peter Wyden (*q.v. each*).

JPFO: *See* Ridgefield Country Club.

Jubilee edition of *The Ridgefield Press,* published in 1950 to mark the newspaper's 75th anniversary, has over 100 tabloid-size pages of history and pictures of Ridgefield during *The Press's* then lifetime, 1875 to 1950. Its 7 sections were bound and paper-covered for sales in later years. [JFS]

Judges Lane is a private road in a small subdivision developed in 1974 off Rockwell Road by Carl Lecher, who named it for Judge Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v.*), who once lived on the property. Judge Reed F. Shields lived nearby. Both had been Probate Court judges. [RN]

Julian, Alexander, (1948-), one of the nation's leading designers of men's fashions and home furnishings, moved to 323 Florida Hill Road in 1988. The 30-acre estate, which had belonged to Charles Bluhdorn (*q.v.*), includes a 6,043-square-foot, custom, shingle-style house, designed and built in 1994 for the Julians by architect John Marsh Davis, and a 3,346-square-foot guest house/design studio built around 1900. It was on the market in 2020 for $5 million and sold a year later for $4.5 million. [NR, JFS]

June, Lewis, (1824-1888), a North Salem native, was a circus executive who lived at 478 North Salem Road, a house now on the National Register of Historic Places. He partnered with Aaron Turner (*q.v.*) in a circus in the 1850s and became co-owner with P.T. Barnum and others of the Barnum & Bailey Circus. He specialized in circus promotion techniques. [WWW]

Junior Grange: *See under* Ridgefield Grange.

Junior Police Academy teaches young people about the work of the Ridgefield Police Department. Officer Shawn Platt (*q.v.*) founded the partnership between the department and the Boys and Girls Club in 2002. [P9/16/2021]

Junmai, an Asian restaurant at 470 Main Street, opened in 2009 and by 2017 had been replaced by Yuan Asian Cuisine. In 2026, the space is home to Brasserie Saint Germain. [JFS]

Juran, Joseph, (1904-2008), a native of Romania, was an acclaimed quality-control expert and author of 16 books, including the popular *Quality Control Handbook*. He taught at NYU and founded in 1979 in Wilton The Juran Institute, devoted to quality control. He lived on Old Branchville Road for 18 years, moving to a retirement home ca. 2002. He and wife Sadie were married 81 years. [WWW]

Jurgensen's Ridgefield Radio was a radio shop in 1950s at 448 Main Street (ONS141) whose awning also said "sports goods." It also carried auto supplies. In 1950, it had been Kremer's Radio Service. "If your blood-pressure and time are worth anything at all to you, bring your radio or television set to us here at Kremer's for the best in repairs. When the job is done here, it STAYS done," says a 1950 advertisement.

Justice Court was a municipal judicial system in Connecticut that operated in the 19th and 20th Centuries, lasting until the 1960s. It consisted of a trial justice, or judge, an alternate trial justice, a prosecuting grand juror and an alternate, appointed biennially from the 12 elected justices of the peace and the six elected grand jurors of the town. The court held sessions when needed in Town Hall in the 20th Century, but elsewhere, such as the Big Shop (*q.v.*) earlier. "The Justice Court has jurisdiction over criminal offenses committed in Ridgefield which are punishable by fines up to one hundred dollars, or jail terms of up to sixty days or both," said Bedini. "It also rules on cases involving damages of not more than one hundred dollars." Mostly the court handled motor vehicle violations, domestic disputes, assaults, vandalism, petty thefts, and the like. [RIR]

Justine H. Butler Tennis Courts are the public courts east of the Yanity Gym on East Ridge. *See also* Justine Butler. [JFS]

K

Kaffka, Warren E., (1927-2013), an architect and a World War II veteran, worked for IBM for many years. A graduate of Pratt Institute, he had earlier worked for Eliot Noyes and Associates in New Canaan, and was a partner in Kaffka/Kistler in Ridgefield. A house he designed, built and lived in on Old Branchville Road became the home of writers Cornelius and Kathryn Ryan (*q.v. each*). A resident from the late 1950s until the early 2000s, he was an early member of the Ridgefield Guild of Artists (*q.v.*) and was active in Rotary. He and his wife Frieda had lived on High Ridge Avenue and retired to Whitingham, Vt. [P5/30/2013]

Kahn, Roger, (1927-2020), a journalist and author, lived at 830 North Salem Road and wrote the classic best-seller, *The Boys of Summer* (1972), about the Brooklyn Dodgers, which *Sports Illustrated* later ranked #2 in the top 100 books about sports. He moved here in 1971, and left around 1976. He wrote about 20 books, mostly on sports, and including novels. [WWW]

Kaleidoscope Kids child care center at the Ridgebury Congregational Church was established by Nan Howkins (*q.v.*) in 1997. [JFS]

Kalei-Dis-Scope was a weekly exercise program offered by Peggy Marks, often at Temple Shearith Israel, 1976-1980s. [P9/10/1981]

Kalogeras, Dr. Constantine "Gus," a native of Pittsburgh, was dean of the Ancell School of Business at WestConn in 1983 [P2/24/1983] and in 1992 became dean of the College of Business Administration at Niagara University. He was later a professor at Florida International University. [JFS]

Kampen, Irene, (1922-98), produced a dozen humorous novels and memoirs. *Life Without George* (1961), about her divorce, became the basis for Lucille Ball's "The Lucy Show" on TV. She lived off Danbury Road from 1954 until 1988. Her father was a prominent magician, Jack Treppel (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Kane Inn, a restaurant (and accommodations in early years), was opened in the late 1930s by Chris and Page Kane in Ingleside, the former home of George Pratt Ingersoll (*q.v.*), at 20 West Lane. It became Tode's Inn, Inn at Ridgefield, Bernard's, The Benjamin, and in 2026, R House. Page Kane, a pianist, directed many minstrel shows at St. Mary's Parish. She lived on Fairview Avenue in 1920s. A neighbor in Bryon Park, teacher Marion Green, was also a partner in the inn. [JFS]

Kaplan, Rabbi David, a native of Arizona, began leading the Temple Shearith Israel congregation in the summer of 1982. He had been ordained in 1975. He replaced Rabbi Elizabeth Rolle (*q.v.*). [P7/29/1982]

Kargle, George J., (1946-1980), a Ridgefield police sergeant, died in one-car accident on Route 35 at Buck Hill on way home from work early Feb. 26, 1980. A Marine Corps Vietnam veteran, he joined the department in 1968, and had led the police union. He lived in Bethel with wife and two sons. [JFS]

Karlonas, Helen, acquired around 1950 the Altnacraig (*q.v.*) mansion on High Ridge and converted it into a nursing home that she ran for many years. Among her notable clients was suffragist Alice Paul. [DD156]

Kasper, Joseph, was the superintendent of the B.O. Chisolm (*q.v.*) estate for many years. "Joe was very interested in the Boy Scout movement and I believe that he was Ridgefield's first scoutmaster," said Dick Venus. He was

the father of Ralph Kasper, longtime RHS teacher. [DD204]

Katchko-Gray, Deborah, a fourth generation cantor and longtime Ridgefielder, was cantor of Temple Shearith Israel/Congregation Shir Shalom, starting in 1999 and now cantor emeritus. She founded the Women Cantors' Network in 1982, a national organization. She has recorded many songs, written the book, *Katchko: Three Generations of Cantorial Art* used at Hebrew Union College, and is an accomplished embroiderer. [JFS]

Katoonah Basket Ball Club was a woman's team founded around 1906 that was captained by Mary Linda Bradley and coached by a young Francis D. Martin (*q.v. each*). Other members included Bessie McKibben, Susie Olmstead, Lacey Odell, and Flossie Benedict. [JFS]

Katz, Dolores "Dee," (1924-2017), *nee* Pracny, was a local artist who, in 1988, was described as a "91-year-old who delivered one-liners with the precision of Jack Benny." The former elementary school teacher was in her 40s when she took up art and became a regular exhibitor at area art shows. She also taught adult education art courses. A native of NY, she was married to **Moses Katz**. [P12/14/2017]

Katz, Eugene Joseph, (1907-2000), a native of NYC, was an ad agency executive whose Katz Communications had some 1,300 employees in 22 cities by 2020, with $2 billion in sales. After studying at Dartmouth and Oxford, he became a reporter for the *Daily Oklahoman*. In 1928 he joined the family business, working as an advertising salesman; in 1952 he became president of Katz Communications. He was chairman of Planned Parenthood, and active in the Center for Immigration studies, which annually gives the Eugene Katz Award for Excellence in the Coverage of Immigration to journalists. In 1936 he and his wife Florine bought a farm at the corner of Ridgebury and Chestnut Hill Roads, much of which is still owned by the family including son John Katz (*q.v.*). He was a major benefactor of the Ridgefield Library as well as many other non-profits. [JFS]

Katz, John, (1938-), a lifelong Ridgefielder who had careers in broadcasting, advertising and social work, may hold the Ridgefield record for volunteer public service. He had been a member and sometimes chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission more than 40 years, joining in 1979. He was a founding member of the Youth Commission (*q.v.*) in 1977, on which he served many years. He established in 1984 and headed for 40 years the Ridgefield Youth Services Bureau (*q.v.*), providing low or no-cost counseling to families or individuals. He belonged to the Ridgefield Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse for more than 15 years, and served on many other committees and groups trying to help young people. In 1996 he was given the Connecticut Youth Services Association's Youth Advocate Award. Also involved in animal welfare, he is a founding member of ROAR (*q.v.*) and was a special agent for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, investigating animal abuse cases. [NR]

Kaufman, Gert, (ca 1918-2002), was an environmentalist and first chairman of the old Flood and Erosion Control Board. She was a tireless promoter of the Western Connecticut Linear Park, a trail from Norwalk to Danbury that would follow the then-planned "new Route 7" and is now being created as the Norwalk River Valley Trail, sans interstate. She was the wife of Van Kaufman (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Kaufman, Joseph, (-1928), a multimillionaire president of the American Safety

Razor Corp., had — according to his NYT obituary — a country estate in Ridgefield, but indications are the estate was in Lewisboro, perhaps in the Vista hamlet area. The inventor and veteran of the U.S. Intelligence Service in WW1 had bought the estate in 1927. He died of appendicitis at the age of 46 less than a year later. [NYT4/4/1928]

Kaufman, Van, (1918-1995), worked for Walt Disney, drawing animation cells, but later became a leading advertising artist whose specialty was automobiles. His advertisement art in the 1950s and 60s is considered classic and works of art today. Most were for General Motors, especially Pontiac. He moved to 100 Cain's Hill Road in 1948 with wife Gert Kaufman (*q.v.*). They moved to Los Angeles in their native California in 1976. [WWW]

Kean, Geoffrey, of North Salem Road was a global entrepreneur and adviser to world governments. [Interview P7/7/1983]

Kearns, Burt, who grew up in Trumbull**,** was a *Ridgefield Press* reporter in the late 1970s and became an editor of its sister newspaper, *The Wilton Bulletin*. He then worked in 1981 for WNEW Channel 5 News in NYC, and in 1983, for WNBC-TV. A few years later he became managing editor of "A Current Affair," and in 1990, "Hard Copy," both tabloid TV programs. He has written many books on pop culture, including *Marlon Brando: Hollywood Rebel* (2024) and *Tabloid Baby* (1999). *Vanity Fair* has called him a "show business and pop culture savant." He lives in California where he also makes documentary films. [NR]

KEB was the name of a long-standing gasoline station on Danbury Road, founded in 1931 when Warner Keeler (*q.v.*), Charles Elliott (*q.v.*) and Francis Brown bought the station from John Moser (*q.v.*). It was originally a Socony station, and become a Mobil operation. It closed in 1971 when Elliott retired. Revamped with a new building, it is now Ridgefield Mobil. [DD83]

Keefe, Tammis, (1913-60), was a noted fabric designer who lived at 174 New Road with her partner, Jane Trahey (*q.v.*) from 1956 until her death. She specialized in handkerchiefs and towels. Her work is in collections of MOMA, the Smithsonian, and many other museums. She is buried beneath a small stone in St. Mary Cemetery. [WWW]

Keeffe, Bart, (1859-1932), was a coachman for F.E. Lewis's "Upagenstit" estate who refused to learn how to drive "an infernal machine" (car) and was pensioned off with life use of the house at 70 West Lane. [DD140]

Keeler, Adonirum, owned a saw mill (at Bogus?) and a cider mill plus a hat shop in northern Ridgebury [RLR16/281, 17/83B, 26/203, 26/218]

Keeler, Anna: *See* Anna Resseguie.

Keeler, Dr. Annie: *See* Dr. Annie Keeler Bailey.

Keeler, Arvilla Bailey, (1844-1933), donated a field on East Ridge to the Ridgefield Base Ball Club around 1910 to use for games. The club gave the land to the town to preserve for future generations of ball players. She was a daughter of Lewis H. Bailey of the Bailey Inn, Bailey Avenue and Bailey and Gage (*q.v. each*), and wife of attorney Samuel Keeler (1845-1932) of Main Street. [JFS]

Keeler, Capt. Benjamin, (ca 1762-1791), a Ridgefield native, died as captain of the brig Sally, which was wrecked in a storm at Eaton's Neck, Long Island, on its way to Stamford from the West Indies. He is buried in Titicus Cemetery. The accident helped lead to the building still-extant and historic lighthouse at Eaton's Neck in 1799. [JFS, RK, FAG, HLYB]

Keeler, Benjamin 3rd, sold two thirds of a saw mill in 1794, probably near South Salem Road at the NY line [RLR9/29B,9/215]

Keeler, Burr, owned one-sixth of "the old Flax Works, so called, standing on the land of the heirs of Philip Keeler" in 1839 [RLR16/352A]

Keeler, David, (1750-1771), died tragically, according to his gravestone in Titicus Cemetery, which states: "In Memory of Mr. David Keeler Son of Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Mary Keeler who was drowned on the 12th day of June 1771 in ye 22 year of his age." [JFS, FAG]

Keeler, David, had a saw mill in 1807, probably at Titicus. [RLR9/174A]

Keeler, David C., had a saw mill at Titicus and quit claimed the mill and right to Upper Pond to Thomas M. Raymond in 1852 [RLR20/240]

Keeler, Ebenezer, (1745-1832), a Ridgefield native, fought in the Revolution from 1775 to 1777. As a sergeant in a Massachusetts regiment, he fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill. After the war, he lived in Massachusetts and upper NY state. [WBK]

Keeler, Ebenezer Wood, (1840-1900), Ridgefield native, was educated at Rev. Dr. David Short's school (*q.v.*), and became a farmer, surveyor, and builder who worked on many mansions. He chaired the committee that built First Congregational Church in 1888. He served as a state representative in 1865 when he was only 24 — the youngest member of Legislature at the time. He later became first selectman from 1877 off and on until 1890. He lived on Branchville Road. [WWW, DD69, CBRFC]

Keeler, Esther, (17??-1818), was the enslaver of Betty, acquired as a 14-month-old "negro child" for £12 "New York Money" on April 10, 1769 from William Johnson when she was Esther Kellogg of Norwalk. On Dec. 6, 1770, Esther married Timothy Keeler Jr. of Ridgefield, and moved with Betty to a house on Main Street that Keeler had purchased and soon turned into the Keeler Tavern. Betty lived there "for many years" until her death. [UNM]

Keeler, George, (ca. 1805-1882), was a popular harness-maker who lived and worked at what is now 164 Main Street. [DOJN]

Keeler, Hannah, (1737-1806), who was married to Jeremiah Keeler, inherited an enslaved woman, Ellin or Ellen, from her father, Matthew Seymour (*q.v.*). [UNM]

Keeler, Henry, (1838-1862), a Ridgefield native and corporal in the Union Army, was wounded in the battle of Antietam, only six weeks after he enlisted. He died the next day, the first Ridgefielder to perish in the war. "After his brother, Silas, who was in the Army, heard of his death," wrote Anna Resseguie in her diary at the time, "he walked all the day among the graves full 25 miles and at sundown found two or three graves under an apple tree. One of these, a board at the foot told him, was his brother's." He is buried in Scott's Cemetery. [JFS]

Keeler, Isaac, had a grist mill and probably a saw mill along the outlet stream of Mamanasco, on the east side of North Salem Road between Sherwood and Ridgebury Roads. The mill was burned by the British after they looted its stores in April 1777. In 1789, Jacob Keeler of North Salem and Elijah Keeler of Ridgefield, "heirs of Isaac Keeler decd.," sold to Isaac Keeler of North Salem 1.5 acres "lying near the dwelling house of s[ai]d Elijah Keeler, being the old mill place where the grist mill lately stood that was burnt….for the purpose of erecting an iron works (*q.v.*)." [RLR7/75A]

Keeler, Ira Smith, (1833-1900), a Ridgefield native, was a farmer and Civil War veteran who, as a Republican, was a state representative in 1875. He died

in Florida. [JFS]

Keeler, Jeremiah, (-1853) was a Revolutionary War veteran who as a teenager witnessed the Battle of Ridgefield and then enlisted in the Continental Army. Soon after he was selected by Baron von Steuben to join the Light Infantry under the command of General de Lafayette and was promoted to orderly sergeant. He received a commendation from Lafayette. "He was frequently selected for the execution of difficult and responsible duties," says Bedini. [RIR]

Keeler, Jesse E., bought one-sixth part of a saw mill at Pompion Ridge (*q.v.*) from Timothy and William Hoyt of Brutus, NY, in 1824. [RLLR13/44A] He probably sold his interest in 1852 [RLR20.240B]

Keeler, John P., (1824-1908), was a Ridgebury farmer who was a Republican state representative, 1899-1901. [JFS]

Keeler, John S., (1829-1904), was a farmer and a joiner who served as a Republican state representative in 1871. [JFS]

Keeler, Jonah, (1690-1767), a farmer and carpenter, was one of the pioneer settlers of the Ridgebury section of town where, according to a Keeler genealogy, he built and lived in the once-famous "Pink House" (*q.v.*) on Ridgebury Road. He was also a Ridgefield selectman in 1731. Jonah had "a negro man" worth £40 in the inventory of his estate in 1767. [UNM]

Keeler, Jonathan, (1765-1847), a Ridgefield native, was a state representative in 1805 and 1806. He was town treasurer from 1812-13. Sometime after 1830 he moved to Westchester County, NY, where he died and is buried in the Friends Meeting Cemetery in Purchase, NY, suggesting he was a Quaker. [JFS, RK]

Keeler, Joseph Jr., sold Jabez Morehouse of Phillippy, Dutchess County, NY, for $900 11 acres "lying on ye south end of Titticus Hill so called" with a house, barn and grist mill in 1751. [RLR3.317/1751]

Keeler, Marilla, taught summer sessions at the West Lane schoolhouse between 1804 and 1817, paid between $1 and $1.50 per week. She was one of the town's earliest female school teachers. Born around 1788, she became a Quaker late in life, died in 1851, and is buried in Purchase, NY. [JFS]

Keeler, Mary J. Bassett, (1901-97), a homemaker, was elected in a special election on July 2, 1959 to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Robert R. Keeler (*q.v.*), her husband, on May 27. Because of the schedule of the General Assembly, she never had the opportunity to cast a vote. She lived at 35 Nod Road. [JFS]

Keeler, Matthew, (1725-1795,) was, according to a family historian, owner of one of the largest farms in town, consisting of 500 to 600 acres in the Whipstick District. Most of this land remained in the Keeler family until well into the 20th Century; a large chunk is now the Twin Ridge (*q.v.*) subdivision. On Jan. 8, 1782, a Matthew Keeler freed his enslaved servant, Dick, in consideration of his long and faithful service. [UNM]

Keeler, Matthew, (1756-1835) was a state representative in 1812 and 1817, and may be a veteran of the Revolutionary War. [Note: the Keeler family plot in Scott's (Ridgefield) Cemetery has two monuments with Matthew's name; both give the same death date, but main monument, erected later, gives a birth of 1756 while the older monument says he was 73 years old when he died, making his birth year about 1762.] [JFS, RK]

Keeler, Mortimer Cole, (1868-1940), was a state representative, 1927-31. He

was a farmer, bookkeeper and school board member, and lived on Nod Road. His father was State Rep. Russell R. Keeler. [JFS]

Keeler, Capt. Nehemiah, (1753-1838), served in the Revolution and operated a tavern at 673 Ridgebury Road. He is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. The house was later the home of the Powdermaker (*q.v.*) sisters. [JW]

Keeler, Col. Nehemiah, (1790-1881), was a Ridgebury farmer who was a colonel in the Connecticut Militia, and a state representative in 1846. He was the grandfather of Annie Keeler Bailey (*q.v.*), one of the first women physicians in Connecticut, and the son of Capt. Nehemiah Keeler (*q.v.*), who operated a tavern in Ridgebury. [JFS]

Keeler, Nehemiah Lyman "Fuzzy," (1913-2005), was a Ridgefield farmer who lived and worked on the land his ancestors settled in the early 1700s along the west side of Ridgebury Road. He was the last Keeler to live there; his saltbox homestead, called The Pink House (*q.v.*), was razed in 2009. For many years he had a dairy farm with 40 cows and supplied milk to Stew Leonard's family in the 1940s. Around 1968, he sold the land that became Pleasant View Estates (*q.v.*). *See also* Jonah Keeler. [WWW]

Keeler, Richard, had a small dairy farm on what is now Old South Salem Road early in the 20th Century; it became part of the estate of Reginald Lewis (*q.v.*). He bought one of his barns at the Columbian Exposition in 1893 in Chicago where it was an exhibition hall. It is today a home off Old South Salem Road. [DD101]

Keeler, Robert M., (1903-1959), was a Ridgefield contractor and son of Mortimer C. and Grace Keeler. He was known as a local practical joker. [DD62, DD63]

Keeler, Robert R., (1898-1959), a Ridgefield native, was state representative, 1951-59. His wife Mary Keeler (*q.v.*) was elected to replace him when he died in office. He was a farmer, Army lieutenant colonel who served World Wars1 & 2, and headed the Ridgefield Defense Council in WW2. His local offices included constable, member of the Boards of Assessors, Tax Review, and Zoning Appeals, and registrar of voters. He was also active in First Congregational Church. [JFS]

Keeler, Russell Benedict, (1800-1879), was a farmer who served as a selectman and as a state representative in 1851. [JFS]

Keeler, Russell Raymond, (1837-93), a farmer, was a Republican state representative, 1891-93. He was the father of two future state representatives, Mortimer C. Keeler and William R. Keeler. [JFS]

Keeler, Ensign Samuel, operated a tavern, no longer standing on Ridgebury Road, which was supposed to have been visited by General Washington in 1780 and where Rochambeau may have celebrated his birthday in 1781. It was located just south of Ridgebury Cemetery. [RIR]

Keeler, Samuel, (1845-1932), a Wilton native sometimes called "Lawyer Sam," was a longtime Ridgefield resident who practiced law in NYC. When he was 86, he was still commuting to his NYC office, reputedly the oldest commuter on the New Haven line, both in age and length of endurance; he had started commuting ca. 1867 after graduating from Yale. He was a member of the school board, 1892-1912; fifth president of Ridgefield Savings Bank, 1907-32; a founder of First National Bank; one-time owner of the *Ridgefield Press*; and a staunch Democrat. [WWW, RSB25]

Keeler, Samuel Dauchy "S.D.," (1852-1926), a Ridgefield native who lived on

Branchville Road., was a merchant and business leader. His grocery store on Main Street was a predecessor of Perry's and Gristede's Markets (*q.v. each*). In 1901, he built the first cold-storage warehouse in town. His grain and feed elevator building on lower Bailey Avenue was torn down in 2023; *see* DD58. A 1907 fire destroyed his cement storehouse on Bailey Avenue [P7/4/1907]. At times he owned the Titicus Store and Corner Store. [WWW]

Keeler, Sarah Couch, (1697-1787), was the widow of Timothy Keeler (*q.v.*). She bequeathed "my Negro girl named Lydia" to daughter Hannah Keeler Wilson in 1787. She also had Andrew, born July 22, 1761, son of Tamar. Timothy Keeler, Sarah's husband, had given his wife title to "Tamer" in his will dated 1748. [UNM]

Keeler, Thaddeus, (1785-1878), was a prominent businessman who probably built the house just south of the Keeler Tavern. He served as a sort of lawyer, and was a longtime justice of the peace. He built the Corner Store (*q.v.*) at Main Street and West Lane, opposite the First Congregational Church, which was popular during much of the 19th Century and the only place where for many years prescription medicines could be bought. He was a selectman in 1827 and 1829, and a state representative in 1839. (He was called Squire Thad or Quality Thad to distinguish him from "Wheelwright Thad" Keeler who lived farther south of Main Street.) [RIR]

Keeler, Timothy, (1695-1748), born in Norwalk, was a town clerk, selectman and representative to the General Assembly. He had enslaved servants including Tamar and Mingo; in 1734 he advertised for the return of Mingo (*q.v.*), who had run away, the earliest reference to slavery in Ridgefield. *See also* Sarah Couch Keeler. [RK]

Keeler, Timothy, (1764-1831), was a Ridgebury farmer who served as a state representative in 1804, 1806, 1807, 1808, and 1816. [RK]

Keeler, Timothy Jr., (1748-1815), one of the town's most prominent citizens of his era, purchased the house that became Keeler Tavern in 1769, opening his establishment in 1772; it soon became a sort of inn, general store, community center, and a major stage stop. He was the town's second postmaster; the post office operated in the early 1800s from the tavern. He owned several retail stores, including one in Scott's Ridge area, and had one-eight interest in a brigantine Sally, a ship that traded with the Caribbean and that eventually wrecked off Eaton's Neck (*see* Capt. Benjamin Keeler). He also acted as an attorney, aiding people with legal problems including court appearances. He served in the Fifth Connecticut Regiment during the Revolution, was a selectman for seven years between 1777 and 1805, and was a state representative in 1779 and 1781. [RK]

Keeler, Warner Hoyt. (1894-1981) was the K of KEB gas station (*q.v.*). He began his association with the station in 1932. When Mobil took over in 1946, he moved to Vermont, then Florida. He was first paid driver for the New Canaan Fire Department [P10/8/1981]

Keeler, William H., (1949-1969), was Army SP4 in Vietnam March 24, 1969, when the 19-year-old was killed in an incident involving removal of a mine — what the Army coldly called a "non-hostile action, accident." He grew up on Cooper Hill Road, attended RHS, and was a son of Robert and Frances Keeler. Ironically, he had already survived a near-death accident — 17 years earlier. Three-year-old Billy fell down a well and was rescued by Ridgefield's fire chief, Horace Walker. [NR]

Keeler, William Raymond, (1866-1941), a Ridgefield native, was a longtime real estate agent and co-founder in 1941 of Keeler & Durant (*q.v.*), real estate and insurance firm. A Republican, he was state representative 1939 until his death while in office. His father was State Rep. Russell R. Keeler. [NR]

Keeler and Durant was real estate and insurance firm, established as Adams and Keeler in 1892. On May 1, 1941, it gained its new name when George M. Durant retired from broadcast radio school in Manhattan to become the partner of William R. Keeler (*q.v.*), veteran real estate salesman. Its offices were at the south corner of Main and Governor Streets, starting in March 1945. Fred P. Montanari bought the business in 1960. In 1987 it merged with A.J. Carnall Inc. (*q.v.*) [P8/6/1987, P9/24/1987, JFS]

Keeler Close is a private lane at Casagmo (*q.v.*), named by the apartments' developer David L. Paul to recall an old Ridgefield family. Casagmo had first use of "close" — pronounced *clowse* — as a road name in town. [RN]

Keeler Drive, the main road through Pleasant View Estates (*q.v.*) in northwestern Ridgebury, is named for the family of Nehemiah Lyman "Fuzzy" Keeler, who had owned and farmed this land for two centuries until around 1968 when some 200 acres were sold to Jerry Tuccio, who subdivided it. The Keeler family lived in the "Pink House," a saltbox on the west side of Ridgebury Road, opposite Shadow Lake Road. The house was built around 1735 and became a Keeler house in 1795 when the heirs of Timothy Street sold it to a Nehemiah Keeler. The Ridgebury landmark was razed in 2009, much to the consternation of the community. The subdivision also has Keeler Court and Keeler Place, very short roads. [RN]

Keeler Lane, an old road, apparently connected Barry Avenue below Peaceable Ridge Road to another old lane, called Bypass Road (*q.v.*). Portions of it may now be Woodcock Lane (*q.v.*). A Keeler family lived on Barry Avenue in this vicinity as early as 1867 and well into the 20th Century. [RN]

Keeler's Ridge, mentioned in the 1786 perambulation of the Wilton and Ridgefield town line, seems to have been near Silver Spring Road, perhaps below Silver Spring Park. Jeremiah Keeler had land nearby in 1792. [RN]

Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center: In April 1966, the Keeler Tavern Preservation Society voted to buy for $85,000 the pre-Revolutionary hostelry at 132 Main Street from Glenna and Vernon M. Welsh (*q.v.*), who had made it their home. The building had served as an inn/hotel from the 1770s until it was purchased from the Resseguie/Keeler family by Cass and Julia Gilbert (*q.v.*) in 1907 [P8/15/1907]. The Gilberts, who called it the Cannonball House (*q.v.*), added the Garden House in 1915. After architect Cass Gilbert's death, widow Julia built a brick museum, called Cass Gilbert Memorial (*q.v.*) at 152 Main Street, dedicated in 1937, to hold his papers and paintings, but the collection proved too large and the brick building was sold as a house. In early 2016, the museum bought the brick house from the family of Dr. Robert Mead (*q.v.*) to use mostly for offices and classes. The museum provides many programs of local and regional history, has a large exhibit space in a barn in the backland, sponsors a summer camp, and provides many tours not only to visitors but to school groups from throughout the area. Its Garden House is a venue for many weddings and other special events. The society also maintains a sizable archive of historical documents and artifacts (many viewable online), and owns the Joseph Hartmann (*q.v.*) collection of late 19th and early 20th Century Ridgefield photographs. Early leaders included

Kathryn V. Rosa, Louise McKeon, and Preston Bassett (*q.v. each*). *See also* Timothy Keeler Jr. [JFS]

Keenan, Cody, a 1998 RHS graduate, was chief speechwriter for President Barack Obama from 2013 to 2017. An interview appears in P9/30/2021.

Kell, Reginald Clifford, (1906–1981), a native of England, was a renowned clarinetist who had a house on Split Level Road from 1964 to 1967. [JFS]

Kellen Auditorium: *See* Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Auditorium.

Keller, Joseph, who grew up in Ridgefield, is a landscaper and writer who created the 13-acre Garden of Ideas (*q.v*.) as a free park in the early 2000s; it closed in 2019 [9/12/2019]. For an early profile, see [P10/22/1987]. He is a son of Traugot and Terry Keller (*q.v*.).

Keller, Terry, is a gardener who wrote the "Gardening Guides" column for the RP for many years. She headed the Ballard Greenhouse in the 1970s, was a leader of the Green Guerrillas gardening program in Manhattan, and later started the Bronx Green-Up program at the New York Botanical Garden. She is the mother of Joseph Keller (*q.v*.) and widow of **Traugot Keller**. [JFS]

Kelley, Jocelyn "Jill," (1928-), was a member of the Conservation Commission from 1971 to 1985. In 1985 she was a founder of The Discovery Center (*q.v.*) and was school system coordinator of volunteers. Married to Sidney G. Kelley (*q.v.*), she lived for many years at 316 Florida Hill Road. In 2023, she donated two prime acres at the corner of Florida and Florida Hill Roads to the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield. [NR]

Kelley, Sidney G. (1926-2022), a conservationist and naturalist, had been on the board of the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield frin 1972 until his death, and was president for 10 years. He was honored for his service [P10/15/2015]. He was a longtime Perkin-Elmer technical writer. and married to Jocelyn Kelley (*q.v*.). [JFS, P12/20/2022]

Kellis, Peter, was a private in the Fifth Connecticut Regiment when he died, probably of disease, at Valley Forge, Pa., on June 11, 1778. [JFS]

Kellogg family: Kelloggs date back to the mid-1700's in Ridgefield. Three Kelloggs from town served in the Revolution: Daniel, Elijah, and Nathan Kellogg. [JFS]

Kellogg, Craig T., (1922-2005), an owner of the Cadillac-Oldsmobile dealership called Kellogg-Theiss (*q.v.*) in the late 20th Century, was a member of the Police Commission for 22 years, retiring in 1981. [JFS]

Kellogg, Hiram Jay, (1850-1938), was a farmer and selectman who, as a Republican, was state representative from 1897 to 1899. He lived on North Salem Road and at various times owned a much land in town. A well-known member of the community, Kellogg served as a selectman in 1887 and first selectman a year later. He owned a car in 1911 [P7/20/1911] *See also* Kellogg Street. [RN]

Kellogg Street runs between Mulberry Street and Ramapoo Road, does not appear on maps until early in the 20th Century, and began being called Kellogg Street by the 1930's. The name may recall Hiram J. Kellogg (*q.v.*), who owned land thereabouts. [RN] *See also* Kellogg Family.

Kellogg-Theiss was a Pontiac, Cadillac, and GMC truck dealership at 98 Danbury, established 1955 by Harry Theiss and Craig Kellogg (*q.v.*), who acquired what had been Conklin Motors (*q.v.*). The building in 2024 is the Party Depot. [JFS]

Kelly, John C., (1895-1984), Ridgefield native and World War I veteran, joined

the state police in 1920, led Troop A (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield from 1922-31, and served as commander of the entire Connecticut State Police Department, 1953-55. He was a former chairman of the State Liquor Control Commission. From 1961 to 1969, he was a Republican state representative from Ridgefield. [WWW]

Kemble, E(dward) W(indsor), (1861-1933), a native of California, was a nationally known editorial cartoonist and illustrator. He drew the original illustrations for Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, and was known for his sympathetic portrayal of African-Americans — he went so far as to live for many months on a Southern cotton plantation to gain greater knowledge of Blacks. He moved here around 1930 to live with his daughter on Wilton Road West, and is buried in Maple Shade Cemetery. [WWW]

Kendall, Dr. Calvin H., (1817-1904), was a Ridgefield physician and dentist, 1844-ca.1900. He lived and practiced at 85 Main Street, south of the Congregational Church. Dr. Kendall may have first lived and practiced in a house a half mile to the north, now the site of South Hall of St. Stephen's Church. He was the father-in-law of Marie (Mrs. John C.) Kendall (*q.v.*), an early photographer of Ridgefield and a pioneering Connecticut woman photographer. [WWW]

Kendall, Marie Hartig, (1854-1943), was an early woman professional photographer in Connecticut. She was taking photographs of Ridgefield from at least 1886 onward. She married Dr. John Calvin Kendall of Ridgefield and probably lived here for several years at the house of her husband's parents, Dr. and Mrs. Calvin Kendall (*q.v.*), at 85 Main Street. She and her husband moved to and lived the rest of their lives in Norfolk, Conn., where she had a photography business. In 1904, she showed her work at the St. Louis World's Fair. She also published in 1900 a photo book, *Glimpses of Ridgefield,* with more than 100 pictures of Ridgefield in the late 1880s and 90s. [WWW]

Kendra Court off North Salem Road serves Robert Cioffoletti's 1990s subdivision of the former Bedini gravel mining land. It was named for his daughter, who was two months old when the family moved from Newtown to Ridgefield in 1981. [RN]

Kennedy, James F. "Big Jim," (1859-1919), a native of Scotland, was a major builder of Ridgefield mansions in the late 1800s and early 1900s, including E.P. Dutton house and Matlack (*q.v. each*). He also built North Hall at St. Stephen's Church campus [Haight] and did the stone work on the First Congregational Church. He lived at "Fort Hill" (*q.v.*) at 224 North Salem Road [DD22] and was as also a coal dealer [DD39, DD163]

Kennels: Major dog kennels in Ridgefield included Danelagh, Gaines Research Center, Outpost Kennels, Red Door Kennel, Waldeck Kennels, Warily Kennels (*q.v. each*).

Kent Lane is a short, private road, serving several homes off the east side of Main Street, between Branchville Road and the Keeler Tavern Museum, named for Milton R. Kent of Danbury who bought property there in 1945 and established the Kent Apartment House in the house at 164 Main Street. He named the lane after himself. The lane was paved in 1977.

Kepcher, Carolyn, (1969-), as executive vice president and chief operating officer for Trump Golf Properties, appeared on the NBC TV show The Apprentice and ran Donald Trump's golf course in Briarcliff, NY. Trump fired

her on the show. She became co-founder and CEO of Carolyn & Co., which provides "a broad array of services and assistance to career women." She lived at 87 Cedar Lane from 2002 until 2022. [W]

Kerrigan, Kevin, is a top decoy artist with a national reputation. He lived on Florida Hill Road (1980) and later on West Lane. He grew up in Ridgefield, graduated from Immaculate High School, and began painting in 1977 and is expert at painting fish. He started creating decoys in 1978. [Profile P11/6/1980].

Kessler, Jason, is a film editor, photographer and documentary filmmaker who with his brother **Doug** created the 2000 film, "A Thief Among the Angels: Barry Moser and the Making of the Pennyroyal Caxton Bible." Jason lived at Fox Hill condominiums until 2017.

Ketcham Road, off Pin Pack Road, was named for Howard Ketcham, a NYC business executive, who owned a 13-acre homestead on the road from 1938 until 1944, and coined the name. [RN]

Kewley, Fred, an agent and a producer, had an office at 11 Bailey Avenue in the 1970s. Kewley managed such music stars as Chet Atkins, Harry Chapin and Buffy St. Marie.

Kiah's Brook is a name derived from Hezekiah Scott (*q.v.*), who lived and carried on several businesses along the brook and was called by neighbors "Uncle Kiah." Kiah's Brook today flows out of Pierrepont Pond (*q.v.*), also called Lake Naraneka, which in Uncle Kiah's day was swamp and pasture. The brook joins the Titicus River west of the intersection of Sherwood and Ledges Roads. [RN]

Kiah's Brook Lane was developed and named by William Peatt Jr. around 1960. Peatt said part of the road, a dead-end off Ledges Road, was laid over the foundation of an old building, perhaps the distillery of Hezekiah Scott (*q.v.*), or perhaps a blacksmith shop. It became a town road in 1963. [RN]

Kiah's Brook Refuge on Barlow Mountain Road is a strip of brookside open space, once part of the Luquer family property, purchased by the town as a school site. Scotland and Barlow Mountain Schools were built to the south. The refuge has long been used by students for environmental studies. [RN]

Kick was a nickname for Aaron Gilbert (*q.v.*), son of Mr. and Mrs. Roland L. Gilbert of Main Street [DD1]

Kidder, Edward Hartwell, (1840-1921), a Harvard educated New York City business executive, bought 114 Main Street in 1915 as a retirement home, calling it "Heartstone." Born in the North but raised in the South, Kidder was studying at Harvard when the Civil War broke out; he stayed in and supported the North while his brother George fought for the Confederacy. He hobnobbed with the national political leaders and was a benefactor of many charitable, educational and religious organizations. In 1902, his daughter's husband, novelist and biographer **Paul Leicester Ford**, was murdered by his own brother, Malcolm Webster Ford, a then-famous amateur athlete. Malcolm was having continual financial problems and had reportedly asked Paul to loan him more money. Paul refused and Malcolm shot him, then killed himself. Kidder was the first on the scene, and refused to cooperate with police investigation because of the family involvement. He died at Heartstone in 1921. [JFS]

Kiddie Shoppe, also called Rose's Kiddie Shoppe, was at 384 Main Street (ONS81) in the late 1940s and the 1950s, selling clothing and children's

furniture — but not toys. It previously had been at 23 Bailey Avenue, operated by Rose Belardinelli. [DD68, 97]

Kilcoyne, Margaret, (1901-1993), served as a secretary in Washington DC during World War I. She worked for many years for McCarthy Brothers plumbing in Ridgefield. [DD253]

Kilcoyne, Marie A., (ca.1907-2000), a native and 1925 Hamilton High graduate, was a teacher for 50 full years. She graduated from Danbury Normal School and taught in Easton for seven years, starting in 1927. She came to the old Branchville Schoolhouse in 1934, teaching first through fourth grade until 1939 when the school was closed. She moved to the Garden School, and taught second grade. When Veterans Park opened in 1955, she taught until retiring in 1977. She was famed locally for calling her pupils "my kiddies." [WWW, DD253]

Killing at the Inn, A, is a book of historical fiction, set at the Keeler Tavern; *see* George Hancock.

Kiln Hill Lane, a short dead-end road on the north side of Barry Avenue, recalls an old limekiln that was operated for many years near the corner of Barry Avenue and Ramapoo Road, about three quarters of a mile up the road (*see* Limekiln Hill). It serves the subdivision of George and Rose Kaiser's former poultry farm. The name was suggested by Jack Sanders after his turkey-related names (such as Turkey Ridge) were vetoed by developer Michael Futterman. [RN] *See also* How's Limekiln.

Kimberly Court is a dead-end road off upper Rippowam Road near the NY line, just south of Sturges Park, part of a 1989 subdivision by Joseph Mirra. The 30 acres was once part of the former Camp Catoonah (*q.v.*) [RN]

Kindergarten began being taught privately in Ridgefield in 1891, funded by Eliza Bryson (*q.v.*), a wealthy summer resident, and later supported by private donors. In 1916 the school board agreed to take over kindergarten instruction. The first public kindergarten teacher was Mabel Cleves (*q.v*.), who had taught at the private version. The first kindergarten classes were in the Center School, then Benjamin Franklin Grammar School (*q.v.*) but moved in 1926 back to the old Center School, renamed Garden School on Bailey Avenue, where they remained until 1955 when Veterans Park School opened. By 1944 kindergarten had became so popular that two sessions were needed to accommodate all the pupils. In 2010, the school board expanded kindergarten from a half day to a full day, saying, "In an age of rigorous, 'pressure-cooker' standards, a full-day program allows young children the time to learn the way they are supposed to learn — through exploration, experimentation, and social interaction in a variety of settings." [SD]

King, Grace, (1809-1866), was one of 10 children of Lt. Joshua King (*q.v*.) and Anne Ingersoll King, and was one of five who never married. She lived at the family homestead on Main Street with brother, Joshua Ingersoll King (*q.v.*). [DOJN]

King, John A., was a descendant of Joshua King who, in the late 1800s, sold some of the lots on southern High Ridge to "summer people" who built their mansions there. [DD151 and beyond]. *See also* J. Howard King.

King, John Francis, (1791-1838), was a merchant and a son of Joshua King, the Revolutionary War lieutenant and early state representative. He was a state representative in 1826.

King, Joshua, (1758-1838), a native of Braintree, Mass., served as a lieutenant

in the Revolutionary War, where he guarded the spy Major John Andre and accompanied him to the gallows in 1780. He is often called General Joshua King because after the war he held that rank in the Connecticut militia. He came to Ridgefield in 1783 and, with James Dole of Albany, established the King and Dole store (*q.v.*) at "Old Hundred" (*q.v*.) across the street. Lt. King married Anne Ingersoll, daughter of Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll (*q.v*.), in 1784. He became the town's first postmaster in 1793 and was a state representative for five terms (1789, 99,1802,12, 16). He was a member of the 1818 Connecticut Constitutional Convention, which produced the longtime governing system for the state. He owned much property and interests in several industries, including a tannery at Titicus with Philip Burr Bradley — *see* Tannery Hill Road. His homestead at 267 Main Street on the corner with King Lane remained in the family until the early 1900s; the original house, which burned down July 28, 1889, was replaced by the current larger house of similar design, set farther back from Main Street. His descendants were prominent in town until the early 20th Century. [WWW] *See also* J. Howard King.

King, J(oshua) Howard, (1829-1900), millionaire president of National Bank of the State of New York and grandson of Joshua King (*q.v*.), was largely responsible for development of southern High Ridge for estates after the Civil War. His main residence was Albany, N.Y., but he spent much time at the family homestead in Ridgefield and built "Peaceable Cottage" (*q.v.*) at Main Street and King Lane in the late 1870s; it was probably moved to High Ridge where it burned in 1903. He then lived in the King homestead, 267 Main Street, built in 1890 after its predecessor burned in 1889. *See also* John A. King, Elisha Judson Hawley.

King, Mary A., served in the Territorial Force Nursing Service from February 1915 to May 1919, mostly at the 4th London General Hospital. She was awarded the British Overseas Medal. [Rockwell, p. 333]

King and Dole was a general store founded in 1783 (some say 1785) by Lt. Joshua King and Lt. James Dole in Old Hundred (*q.v.*), what is now the second floor of Aldrich museum's administration building, 258 Main Street. It is believed to have been the site of the first post office in town, since King was Ridgefield's first postmaster. Over the years, the business moved to the center commercial district and eventually became D. F. Bedient's hardware store (*q.v.*). [JFS]

King Homestead is the formal name of the Joshua King (*q.v*.) house at corner of Main Street and King Lane. [SR1916]

King Lane, a short road from Main Street to High Ridge, recalls one of Ridgefield's most prominent families — *see* Joshua King *and* Joshua Howard King. It was so called from at least 1867 when the name appears on Beers Atlas as "Kings Lane." A 1924 map says "King's Lane," Today, the "s" and the apostrophe are both gone. A ca. 1910 postcard calls it Peaceable Street. [RN]

King Lotts was an old name for land near Lake Mamanasco, probably so called because in 1808, Joshua King (q.v.) bought property there. The name that doesn't appear in the land records until an 1856 deed. By the late 19th Century, a legend had developed that the name reflected the loyalist views of the Burt family, from whom King had purchased them. However, it seems likely that King's ownership was the source of the name, and not the

royalist ways of the Burts. However, it may also be that the name made a lasting impression because of its double-meaning. It could be, in effect, one of Ridgefield's few place-name puns. [RN]

King Neptune was a popular seafood restaurant on Route 7, Danbury Road, opened in 1955 by Fred Orrico (*q.v.*) and Joseph Chelednik. In June 1980, 50 employees threw a party for Orrico and Chelednik to celebrate the restaurant's 25th anniversary. [P6/26/1980] In 1986, the restaurant property was sold to Pamby Motors for its new showroom, but the Orrico family continued to operate the restaurant in a new Route 7 location just south of Route 35 until 2005. [JFS]

King's Grant Park is a subdivision of nine or 10 lots off Seymour and South Olmstead Lanes. The name is said to be derived from a tradition that this land and other property of the Seymour family came via a grant from a king of England. No mention of such a grant has been found in all town hall records, or in any of the histories of the town or region, and the name may reflect some ancient connection with the King family [RN]

King's Ridge was an informal late 19th Century name for High Ridge (*q.v.*), so called because J. Howard King (*q.v.*) and his family had property there and he promoted the development of the ridge for summer homes for the wealthy NYC residents. [RN]

King's Way is a late 1979's subdivision off King Lane (*q.v.*), served by Jackson Court (*q.v.*). [RN]

Kingswood Place is a road off Ashbee Lane, developed by Finch Realty Company in 1978. The name has no significance other than to sound fancy. [RN]

Kinnaird, Margaret Evelyn Thompson, (1914-2003), a native of Minnesota, created the Ridgefield Scholarship Group (*q.v*.), which oversees the distribution of RHS scholarships. She was treasurer of Ridgefield Thrift Shop, active in St. Stephen's Church, and lived on Peaceable Hill Road from 1946 until retiring to Maine in 1997. She was the wife of Richard Kinnaird (*q.v*.) [P2/27/2003]

Kinnaird, Richard Farrell, (1912-2001), a native of Iowa, was an astronomer and a lens engineer for Perkin-Elmer (*q.v*.), who developed many advanced lenses for cameras, telescopes and bombsights for the military and for NASA. His discoveries began being used in World War II and he later worked on such space programs as Mercury, Sky Lab, and Apollo. He lived on Peaceable Hill Road with his wife, Margaret (*q.v*.) from 1946 to 1997. [P12/16/2001]

Kip was the nickname for Clifford A. Holleran (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Kirk, George Jr., was a civil engineer who was president and general manager of the Ridgefield Water Supply Company in 1913. He was an early owner (1911) of an automobile. [RPJ]

Kitchawan is the modern name for Cross Pond, which runs along the Lewisboro-Pound Ridge line in New York State, once the western boundary of Ridgefield before the Oblong (*q.v.*). The pond was said to be eastern boundary for the Kitchawong natives, who roamed as far west as the Hudson River but who lived chiefly in Pound Ridge. Dr. Benn Adelmar Bryon (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield may have first applied the name when he started the development of summer cottages or camps around the lake early in the 20th Century. *See also* Lynn Marie Wieland. [RN]

Kitchin's map of 1758: "A Map of the Colonies of Connecticut and Rhode

Island," drawn by Thomas Kitchin in 1758, shows how Ridgefield extended through what is now western Danbury. The map shows town centers, and used old spellings like Ridgfield, Reading, and New Millford. [Rumsey]

Kiwanis Club was a civic organization founded locally in 1962, with Robert A. Kane as its first president. It sponsored scores of military band concerts thanks to member Jack Herr (*q.v*). It also sponsored annual fishing derbies for kids, and several annual horse shows. The club disbanded in the early 2000s due to lack of members. [JFS]

Kjoller, Rev. John, (1936-), whose name is pronounced "Keeler," was pastor of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church from 1968 to 2001, during which time it built its original church building on Ivy Hill and Branchville Roads. He and his wife, Elizabeth, retired to Cape Cod. [NR]

Klavins, Uldis, a commercial artist who designed many book covers, particularly paperbacks, lived on Topcrest Lane with wife, Dagne, in 1980s [P6/4/1981] He was living in Michigan in 2018.

Kleinmann, Dr. Douglas (1942-2025), a native of Chicago with a doctorate from Rice, was an astrophysicist who, with Frank J. Low, discovered Kleinmann-Low Nebula just beyond the "belt" of Orion, which led to a revolution in understanding of how molecules, dust particles, planets, and, ultimately, new stars are born in interstellar space. At Honeywell, he led the delivery of a detector for the Atmospheric Trace Molecule Spectroscopy (ATMOS) project, a space shuttle-based instrument designed to examine the composition of the upper atmosphere, and also delivered components for the Atmospheric Infrared Sounder (AIRS) instrument, which measured temperature profiles, water vapor, cloud cover, and sea- and land-surface temperatures from orbit. [BFH 7/18/2025]

Klopfer, Bernd and Joy, who lived on North Street from the 1970s to the 1990s, were husband and wife airline pilots, he for TWA and she, United. One of the earliest women pilots for a major U.S. airline, Capt. Joy Klopfer started flying lessons in Florida when she was 31, had been married almost 10 years and had two children. Son **Glenn Klopfer**, RHS 1988, also became a United pilot, and on Oct. 29, 1999, Joy as captain and Glenn as first officer made history on a flight from Kennedy to Los Angeles: The first mother-son team ever to pilot a commercial airline flight. [NR]

Kluger, Richard, (1934-) is a journalist, author of fiction and non-fiction books and a former weekly newspaper publisher who wrote *Ashes to Ashes*, an expose of the tobacco industry, which won a 1996 Pulitzer Prize. At least two of his books have been National Book Award finalists. He lived at 17 Main Street from 1969 to 1976. His wife, Phyllis Schlain Kluger, was also National Book Award finalist. The Klugers have written books together. [NR]

Knap's Farm is an old name first appearing around 1740 and last in 1790 for the area around Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads (*see* Arigideen Farm), once owned by Moses Knap. (*See also* Zack's Ridge, Double H Farm). [RN]

Knapp, Bettina Liebovitz, (1926-1981), a native of NYC, was a Hunter College professor and author of more than a dozen books on a wide variety of subjects ranging from French fairy tales, gambling, women, and Hebrew myths to biographies of such writers as Emily Dickinson and Jean Cocteau. Her country home at 219 Bennett's Farm Road had been purchased by her parents, author David and violinist Emily Gresser Liebovitz, in 1936, and she bequeathed the place to her sons, Charles and Albert, who gave 28

acres of it to the town (*see* Liebovitz-Knapp Preserve). She was married to **Col. Russell Sage Knapp** (1920-2012), a highly decorated WW2 bomber navigator, prominent NYC lawyer, and philanthropist. [WWW]

Knapp, George C., (1882-1924), a Ridgefield native, died in office as the town's probate judge and town clerk. He was first elected to those offices in 1916. He had been a mail carrier and proprietor of the Corner Store (*q.v.*).

Knapp, Joseph Lewis, (1929-2000), a Ridgefield native, founded Knapp Brothers Inc. tree surgeons with his brother Robert. He earned two Bronze Stars in the Korean War and was an expert antique car restorer, specializing in Stanley Steamers. {WWW]

Knapp Estates is a small ca. 1979 subdivision of 10.8 acres off Topstone Road on land formerly owned by the Knapp family. [RN]

Knights of Columbus, Marquette Council #245, was established in 1897, as an organization encouraging "Catholic men to live their faith at home, in their parish, at work and in their community." It serves both St. Mary and St. Elizabeth Seton parishes. Its motto is: In Service to One, In Service to All.

Knoche, Joseph John, (1868-1949), a native of Germany, came to Ridgefield in 1893 and became known for his fine stone masonry work, especially the walls at J. Alden Weir's (*q.v.*) farm, now a national historic park. He specialized in dry walls and worked at many estates including Oreneca, Sunset Hall, Savin Hill (Le Château), Rippowam, Nydeggen, West Mountain Farm (*q.v. each*). He is pictured in several Mahonri Young (*q.v.*) drawings at Weir's farm. His family has lived on Pelham Lane, sometimes also called Knoche Road (*q.v. each*), for more than a century. *See also* Cora Weir Burlingham. [WWW, DD258, 259]

Knoche Road is another name for Pelham Lane (*q.v.*) between Nod Road and Nod Hill Road. In 1893, John and Joseph Knoche bought property in Ridgefield and Wilton along Pelham Lane. Joseph Knoche Sr. (*q.v.*) built the stonewalls along both sides of the road, much of which is now part of Weir Farm (*q.v.*). Family still lives there in 2024. [RN]

Knolls, The: *See* Ridgefield Knolls *and* Cornerstone Court.

Knollton was the name given by the dePeyster sisters to their home at 54 Main Street, formerly Dr. Nehemiah Perry Jr.'s house, starting in the 1890s. *See* dePeyster Street. [JFS]

Knollwood Drive, originally called Topstone Drive, extends from Bennett's Farm Road over Ridgebury Mountain to the intersection of Barlow Mountain and Old Barlow Mountain Roads. Built around 1960 by Robert Kaufman (*q.v.*) as part of his Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), it was the first road at the Knolls, from which it derives its name, and was accepted as a town road in 1968. [RN]

Knox, Edward M., (1842-1916), a native of NYC, was head of Knox Hat Company, founded by his father. He was a second lieutenant in Civil War where, for heroism at the Battle of Gettysburg at which he was injured, he earned the Congressional Medal of Honor (*q.v.*). He bought a country home, Downesbury Manor, formerly Boswyck (*q.v.*), on Florida Hill Road, around the turn of the 20th Century. There, he entertained Mark Twain and other notables. He was called "colonel" but never attained that rank in the U.S. Army. *See also* George Washington Gilbert. [WWW]

Knox, Robert "Bob," (1953-), is an artist who has painted more than 20 *New Yorker* magazine covers, mostly whimsical, and has written and illustrated books for children. He lived on Bryon Avenue in the late 1980s and 1990s

with his wife, Dorothee; in 2024, they were living upstate. [NR]

Knox, Sophie Cary Bacon Storer, (ca. 1885-1946), was a founder of the Ridgefield Garden Club (*q.v.*) and its first president; the club's first meeting June 9, 1914, was in her 188 Main Street house. She was a founder of the Village Improvement Society (*q.v.*) in 1899, and was active in St. Stephen's Church. She was married to Albert H. Storer (*q.v.*), after whose death she married Harry H. Knox and moved to California where she died. [NR]

Kobler, Ruth M., (ca. 1923-2001), a painter, sculptor and native of Scotland, graduated from the University of Edinburgh. She served with British intelligence during WW2 and later moved to the U.S. She studied art in Florida, lived in Weston/Westport before moving to Ridgefield on her marriage to artist Carlus E. Dyer (*q.v.*). She studied and exhibited at the Silvermine Guild. [JFS]

Koerting, Fritz, (1925-2010), a native of Czechoslovakia of German ancestry, was president of Rodenstock USA, an eyeglass manufacturer. Active in the community, he was chair of Municipal Building Committee for many years and a leader at St. Andrew's Church. He was also president of Treffpunkt 68 German-American Club (*q.v.*). He lived at 34 Farm Hill from 1961 until his death. [JFS]

Kohl's, a discount department store chain, had an outlet in Copps Hill Plaza that opened in April 2000, replacing Caldor (*q.v.*), and which left town in 2021. [JFS]

Koo, (meaning "sky"), was restaurant at 470 Main Street opened 2005. It was replaced in 2009 by Junmai. [JFS]

Kopins, Karen, (1961-), won the Miss Ridgefield (*q.v.*) pageant in 1977, went on to win Miss Connecticut and to compete in Miss America. She became a movie and TV actress, starring in such films as "Fast Forward," "Creator," "Once Bitten," and "Jake Speed," and had a regular role in "Dallas" on TV. She married high school sweetheart Marc Shaw in 1990; they have four children, and were living in Redding in 2018. [NR]

Kopps Mountain is a version of Copp's Mountain, frequently appearing in the land records beginning in 1786. Copp's Mountain, named for John Copp, the man who surveyed the town and was its first town clerk, is the hill parallel to and east of North Street. [RN]

Kores Boggs is a version of Cores Boggs or Core's Boggs, a very old name for a locality in the Peaceable Street neighborhood, mentioned as early as the 1720's. The spelling switches during the 18th Century between Cores and Kores. The writers were probably trying to spell "coarse," descriptive of the surface of the bogs or of the vegetation in them. [RN]

Korker, Clarence "Korky," (1925-2026)**,** was a photographer who, with wife **Geraldine "Gerry" Korker** (ca. 1929-2015), bought the Ridgefield Photo Shop in 1951. They retired and moved to Fellsmere, Fla., in 1991. He had been a Navy photographer and photographed many dignitaries including presidents Truman and Eisenhower. Much of his vast collection of local photographs has been donated to the Ridgefield Historical Society, which has been scanning, cataloguing and posting them. [JFS]

Kotelman, Walter Ernest, (-1945) was a Navy radioman from Ridgefield aboard the submarine Kete. On March 10, 1945, Kete reported sinking three Japanese freighters and was then ordered home to Pearl Harbor to resupply. Kete disappeared, last heard from March 20. Kotelman was known as "Whitey" because of his blond hair. He was 22 years old and is

remembered at the Courts of the Missing, Honolulu Memorial, Hawaii. [JFS]

Kowalczyk, Edward "Ed," (1971-), a singer, songwriter, and musician, is a founding member of the band Live. He left Live in 2009 and produced an album, Alive, in 2010, and rejoined Live in 2016. He has lived on Gino's Way since 2013. [W]

Kraus, Hans P., (1907-1988), a Dachau survivor and world-famous rare book collector, owned the Taghkanick (*q.v.*) estate on Great Hill Road. He had at one time owned one of the three Gutenberg Bibles still in private hands. His collection included a copy of the Declaration of Independence and a first printing of the U.S. Constitution. He and wife **Hanni** donated much to the Library of Congress, including the Hans and Hanni Kraus Sir Francis Drake Collection of early books, manuscripts, maps, and memorabilia related to Drake's explorations. [WWW]

Kraus, Robert, (1925-2001), was an author, illustrator, *New Yorker* cartoonist, and publisher who wrote, illustrated and produced dozens of popular books for children. He was also founder of Windmill Books, a children'ss book publisher. He and his wife, **Pamela**, who also illustrated at least one children's book (*See the Christmas Lights*), lived at 212 Main Street. He is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery beneath a gravestone illustrated with one of his favorite characters, Spider. [WWW]

Krebs, Laurie, (1950-), is an award-winning author of children's books who lived at 570 North Salem Road (the former Town Farm — *q.v.*) in the late 1990s and early 2000s; she moved to The South around 2010. Her books include *We All Went On Safari, Off We Go to Mexico, We're Sailing to Galapagos*, and *We're Roaming the Rainforest*. She taught Farmingville School first grade for 17 years, then three years at St. Stephen's Nursery School. She is married to William Krebs. [JFS]

Krehbiel, Edward Benjamin, (1878-1950), a native of Illinois and son of a Mennonite minister, was a professor of European history at Stanford University who changed careers and became a jewelry executive. He graduated from the U. of Kansas, studied at Harvard and in Paris, and received a Ph.D. from the U. of Chicago, where he taught before Stanford. In 1919, while at Stanford, he took a job in publicity for a Sacramento department store and wound up by 1925 as merchandising manager for a major NYC department store. He soon became vice-president and general manager of Gorham, the silver and jewelry firm. He also wrote books on history and religion. He lived at ONS33 Main Street. [JFS]

Kreitz, Jeff, a Ridgefield native, was appointed the town's sixth police chief in 2018. He joined the department in 2003 and holds a bachelor's degree in justice and law administration from WestConn. [RW]

Kremer's Radio Service was a mid-20th Century retail store and repair shop at 448 Main Street (ONS141). A 1950 ad said, "If your blood-pressure and time are worth anything at all to you, bring your radio or television set to us here at Kremer's for the best in repairs. When the job is done here, it STAYS done." [JFS] *See also* Jurgensen's Ridgefield Radio

Krishna, Arvind, (1962-), a native of India, has been CEO of IBM since 2020 and chairman since 2021. He joined IBM in 1990 and led the building and expansion of new markets in artificial intelligence, cloud, quantum computing, and blockchain technology. He was a leader in the IBM's purchase of Red Hat, a software company — the largest acquisition in the

company's history. A co-author of 15 patents, he has been the editor of professional journals, and has published extensively in technical journals. He lived at Norrans Ridge in Farmingville from 2005 to 2025. [W, JFS]

Kristofferson, Kris, (1936-2024), the singer-songwriter-actor, is sometimes reported as having lived in Ridgefield, but never did. Publications such as *Who's Who* gave his address as Bailey Avenue, Ridgefield, because that's where his manager's office was in the 1970s and that's where he would sometimes be seen walking along the sidewalk. [JFS]

Krotz, Raymond, (-1966), a native of Ohio and WW1 Army veteran, operated a home decorating and antiques business, specializing in furniture, at ONS12 Prospect Street (now the site of Yankee Ridge shopping center) from 1925 into the 1960s. He lived on Silver Spring Road and then for many years at 149 Main Street. He was 77 years old when he died. [BT7/4/1966]

Krueger, Marthe, (1910-2000), a native of Alsace-Lorraine, France, was an internationally known concert dancer and choreographer who performed in many of cities of Europe and America. She studied in Europe and came to the US in 1933 at age 23, and taught at leading dance schools in NYC. She established a studio on Branchville Road in the early 1940s at the Coach House (*q.v.*) and later moved to Wilton. She did many WW2 benefits and toured with the USO as not only a performer, but a photographer. [WWW]

Kruelski, Maria Kalakura, (1920-2012), a musician and artist, lived on High Ridge with husband Edward, a landscaper and horticulturist, from 1960 until 1997 when she moved to Danbury. She played violin in several orchestras on the radio in NYC and was among the original members of the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. she later turned to old-time fiddling, especially Cajun and Zydeco, performing in bands on the East Coast and in New Orleans. She also taught origami, was a founding member of OrigamiUSA, and also taught pysanky, the art of Ukrainian egg decorating. She worked in the Planning and Zoning office for many years. [WWW]

Krushenick, Nicholas, (ca.1930-1999), was an abstract artist, whose works are in the National Gallery of Art. He taught at Dartmouth, Yale, Cornell, and other universities, and also designed sets for theatrical productions. He lived at 334 West Lane from 1968 to 1971. [WWW]

Krushinski, Sarah McGraw: *See* Sarah McGraw.

Kuhlmann, Henry G., operated his "Modern Grocery Store" at 426 Main Street in the 1920s and 30s. [JFS]

Kuhnt, Rainer K., with Johannes Brugger, operated the Inn at Ridgefield in the 1990s. [RSD91]

Kuzia, Leslaw "Les," (1942-), is a cinematographer who lived in Ridgefield in the 1980s with his wife, Caroline Di Diego. He worked with Marty Stouffer on the PBS "Wild America" series. He had homes here and in Nevada.

Kysor, Harley, (1917-2002), an Eastern Airlines captain, also had a career as a writer and corporate aeronautical consultant. He wrote *Aircraft in Distress: Manual of Air Survival* (1956). He was married to Lodi Kysor (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Kysor, Lodi Cann, (1922-2013), a native of Louisiana, was, in November 1970, the first woman elected chairman of the Board of Education. A Democrat, she served on the board from 1966 to 1973. She was president of the Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association and lived with husband Harley (*q.v.*) in the former Varian Fry (*q.v.*) house at 78 Olmstead Lane. [NR]

L

La Bretagne, a French cuisine restaurant and hotel, operated from the late 1930s until 1960 on easterly corner of West and Olmstead Lanes, owned many years by Eloise (Mrs. David) Lindsay. It was a popular watering hole for theatrical people, especially the local summer theater crowd [RPJ7/15]. The building burned in April 1947, helping inspire town to have 24-hour fire department coverage. It was rebuilt but destroyed by fire Feb. 27, 1960. The inn's site now holds three, two-family houses. [JFS]

La Cave was a restaurant in the late 1980s, early 1990s in the cellar level of the Big Shop (*q.v.*). The chef in 1989 was Steven Clutter. Ginny Carlotti was manager. [JFS]

Lacha Linne was a name applied to the old Hopper's Pond (*q.v.*), now mostly dried up, just north of the intersection of South Salem and Old South Salem Roads. Gaelic for "duck pond," it may have been chosen by Reginald Lewis, or by Robert P. Scripps, former owners. The pond was owned in late 20th Century by James (*q.v*.) and Anne Blackwell. [RN] *See also* Scripps Pond. [RN]

Ladybug, Ladybug: *See* Hometown Heroes.

Lafayette, Marquis de, (1757-1834), officially Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier Lafayette, was a captain in a dragoon regiment when, in 1776, he, Baron de Kalb and 10 other officers sailed to help American fight for freedom. He accompanied General Washington, Col. Alexander Hamilton and others from New Jersey to Hartford in 1780, stopping in Ridgebury Sept. 19-20, staying the night at various houses and taverns near the Ridgebury Congregational Church. He was one of the members of the court that tried and convicted Major John Andre whom Lt. Joshua King (*q.v.*) had guarded. After the war, he returned to France, where, a major general, he served in many military and government positions in times of turmoil and of peace, and was once jailed for five years. In 1824, he made a triumphant return visit to U.S. and was so popular that Congress voted him a grant of $200,000 and a whole township of land. [RN]

Lafayette Avenue, from Copps Hill Road to Washington Street, recalls Marquis de Lafayette (*q.v.*). It was developed by the late William T. Peatt Sr. (*q.v.*) as part of Peatt Park (*q.v*.). [RN]

Lahey Studios on Ridgebury Road sold original and reproduction sculptures and monuments 1960s and 70s, according to an advertising postcard. The street directory in 1966 showed John P. and Doris Lahey living on Ridgebury Road. [JFS]

Lake Number 1, 2, 3, and **4:** When the Ridgefield Lakes were subdivided in the 1920's, maps gave the planned, man-made lakes numbers instead of names; some are often still used in deeds. **Lake Number One** is now called Wataba or Rainbow Lake; **Two** is a small unnamed body of water on the north side of Fox Hill Lake, just north of Bennett's Farm Road; **Three** was not developed; **Four** is Fox Hill Lake. [RN]

Lake Road is a short loop road off Mountain Road at the west end of Rainbow Lake, one of many private roads at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*). It has been designated a Scenic Road [RN]

Lakeland Hills is a subdivision of 27 lots obtained in 1954 by Harold Goldsmith (*q.v.*) for about 30 acres on the north side of Bennett's Farm Road, opposite the Ridgebury School site. It includes Skytop Road, Douglas Lane, and North Shore Drive, as well as Lake Windwing (*q.v.*), which Goldsmith created. [RN]

Lakers, The, was a local "hot rod club formed to promote safety" in the 1950s.

Lakeside Drive includes what is probably the last dirt road of consequence in Ridgefield. The nearly mile-long road connects at each end to Bennett's Farm Road and runs through the Ridgefield Lakes. From its north end, it heads eastward as a dirt road, skirting the south edge of Rainbow Lake. It then crosses Cross Hill Road and becomes paved, heading southerly along the western shore of upper Fox Hill Lake and eventually ending at Bennett's Farm. At least the dirt portion is a private road, although the town provides some maintenance for public safety. It has been designated a Scenic Road along with Lakeside Drive Extension.[RN]

Lakeview Drive is a narrow private road at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*) from Great Hill Road to Highview Road, generally running along east shore of Fox Hill Lake. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Lakeview Road: (1.) In the early 1900's, this name applied, perhaps casually, to Tackora Trail overlooking Lake Mamanasco. (2.) For a while in the 1960's, the name was applied to Bayberry Hill Road, from Branchville Road to the loop, because it overlooked John's Pond to the north. It was changed to avoid confusion with Lakeside Drive many miles away. [RN]

Lakeview Store was on North Salem Road in Scotland District, near the south intersection of Tackora Trail, in the early 20th Century, operated by D. Crosby Baxter (*q.v.*). It was close to, but did not actually overlook Lake Mamanasco. [JFS, RPJ1/16]

Lancaster, Frank Jr., Ridgefield native and RHS 1968, was a star pitcher and hitter on RHS teams with a combined 41-7 record and three straight Western Connecticut Conference titles in the late 1960s. A left-handed pitcher, he was 19-4 in his final two seasons, striking out 229 batters in 157-plus innings with an ERA under 2.00; he batted .366. He played at Central Connecticut, graduating in 1973, when he began teaching math at RHS. He coached the boys' varsity baseball from 1975 until 2001, and the girls' varsity volleyball team for 21 seasons. He was a *NY Daily News* Coach of the Year in 1988 and 2000. He is a son of son of Frank and Bunny (Bedini) Lancaster [NR]

Lancaster, Frank William Sr., (1929-2021), a Ridgefield native and 1947 RHS graduate, was an automobile mechanic who operated the Lancaster Chevron Service station on Routes 7 and 35 for 12 years, and then worked for Kellogg-Theiss Pontiac/Cadillac for 23 years. He was a leader, often a founder, of many of the youth sports programs in town, including Townies, Babe Ruth baseball, Pop Warner football, and youth soccer. He was also an active booster of the girls softball program, and was honored by many organizations for his work with young people. He was the husband of Bernice "Bunny" Bedini Lancaster and father of Steven and Frank Jr. (*q.v. each*) [JKFH]

Lancaster, Steven Michael, (1953-1971), RHS 1971 and son of Frank and Bunny Bedini Lancaster, was a top student and athlete at RHS. He was a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council, yearbook staff,

Chess Club, and other organizations and had won several scholastic awards, including a Wadsworth R. Lewis scholarship and a VFW Auxiliary Good Citizenship Award. He lettered in football, baseball and indoor track and was quarterback of the 1970-71 football team. He died at 18 of cancer; Lancaster Memorial Field (*q.v.*) is named in his honor. [JFS]

Lancaster Memorial Field, at Ridgefield High School, is named for Steven Lancaster (*q.v.*). The field was dedicated in 1973.

Land Conservancy of Ridgefield, founded in 1967, is a non-profit organization to conserve open spaces; by 2024 it held some 722 acres throughout town. The largest parcel is 50 acres along Silver Spring Road donated by J.T. Jackson in 1975. Some parcels are open to the public while others are not. It is governed by a 12-member board and accepts land or conservation easements from donors who may specify exactly how the land is to be used or maintained, such as with no hunting or trapping restrictions. [JFS]

Land records consist primarily of copies of warrantee (sales) deeds, mortgage deeds, quit-claim deeds, attachments, releases, and other documents related to the ownership of land in town. The records include many surveyor-drawn property maps. Ridgefield's land records are kept in the office of the Town Clerk, Town Hall, 400 Main Street. They are complete back to the town's founding in 1708 — nothing was lost to fires or the British attack in the Revolutionary War. All the records are indexed by grantor (seller) and grantee (buyer), allowing one to trace property back through many owners. [JFS]

Land types: The surface of Ridgefield consists of 40% "hilly land of medium- to heavy-textured, slowly drained glacial till soils"; 30% "very stony or mountainous land" (useless for crops); 15% "hilly land of light-to-medium textured, moderately drained glacial till soils"; and 15% "stony, hilly land of medium- to heavy-textured glacial till soils." [Mont Francis Morgan, *The Soil Characteristics of Connecticut Land Types,* New Haven, 1939]

Landegger, Karl F., (1905-1976), a native of Vienna, was owner of pulp and paper mills around the world who was said during his lifetime to be one of the richest people in the world. He was a friend of UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, later president of Austria, who would visit him at his 160-acre estate, Flat Rock House (*q.v.*), off Wilton Road East. [WWW] His son, **George Landegger,** has been a benefactor of town, donating among other things much of the cost of Imagination Station playground in Ballard Park. [NR]

Landfall was, according to a 1950s real estate brochure, a 20-acre farm/estate at 336 Old Branchville Road, then owned by Celestine M. Cronin. The core of the estate still exists, at 4.5 acres. [JFS]

Landis, Jessie Royce (1904-72), nee Jessie Medbury, was a movie actress famed for playing mother roles (her "children" included stars Grace Kelly, Cary Grant, June Allyson, Tab Hunter, Anthony Perkins, Jean Peters, and Kim Novak). Her major films included "To Catch A Thief" (1955), "North by Northwest" (1959), and "The Swan" (1956). She also wrote stage plays and did TV shows. Her autobiography, *You Won't Be So Pretty, But You Will Know Mor*e, was published in 1954. She lived at 137 Old Branchville Road with her husband, Major Gen. J.F.R. Seitz (*q.v.*), from 1966 until her death. She is buried Branchville Cemetery (her husband in Arlington National Cemetery). [WWW]

Landmark Academy: *See* Ridgefield Academy.

Landon, Dr. Elliott, (1940-2023), Ridgefield's 11th school superintendent,

served from 1977 to 1986, and was largely credited with building much support for the schools and better morale among staff. He and his wife, **Joyce**, an interior designer, lived on Cain's Hill Road. He later became the superintendent in Westport for 17 years, from 1999 to 2016. [NR]

Landsberger, Gys Behr, (1921-2017), a native of Berlin and 60-year Ridgefielder, fled Nazi Germany at 12 for Paris where she studied at the Sorbonne. When France was no longer safe, she escaped via Marseille, hiking across the Pyrenees Mountains to Spain. In Marseille in 1941, she married Herbert Landsberger (1905-1981), whose parents were aided in their escape from France by Varian Fry (*q.v*.). (The Landsbergers did not learn that Fry also wound up living in Ridgefield till after Fry's death in 1967.) After arriving in the U.S. in 1944, Mrs. Landsberger became a translator for the French Embassy, and then moved to Ridgefield, serving as a translator and French instructor for Schlumberger Doll (*q.v*.) as well as teaching French classes for adults. She was a Ridgefield Library volunteer. [P11/2/2017, NT3/7/2011]

Langstroth, Dr. Francis Ward, (1878-1962), a native of New Jersey who had been a physician on Long Island, came to Ridgefield in 1922, buying the 79-acre farm of Alexander Baylis of New York City. He did not practice medicine here and, for most of his Ridgefield days, was retired, but he did raise Irish setters. He was a frequent speaker at town meetings and would sometimes deliver "fiery" orations. After he and his wife **Sophia** moved to Florida in the 1950's, his property was subdivided into the Scodon (*q.v.*) development that includes Langstroth Drive and Sophia Drive. [RN]

Langstroth Drive, extending from George Washington Highway to Sophia Drive, was built in the 1960's by subdividers Carleton A. Scofield and Judge Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v. each*) as part of Scodon (*q.v*.) development. It's sometimes mispronounced and incorrectly spelled as Langstroff. [RN]

Lane, Kathleen Elizabeth, (1920-1981), was a teacher at St. Mary's School from 1958 to 1968 and its principal from 1968 to 1971 when it closed. She was a president of the District Nursing Association from 1973 to 1975. A native of NYC, she had taught there before coming to Ridgefield in 1955.with her husband, Dr. John O'Gorman Lane. [P2/19/1981]

Lantern Drive: When Robert E. Roache subdivided Lantern Hills off Limekiln Road in 1962, he had a pair of pillars erected at the end of the road intending to put lanterns on them. He never installed them, though he did name the road for them. At last look (2023), flower pots topped the pillars. [RN]

Lapidus, Dr. Herbert "Buddy," is the man behind Odor Eaters, the deodorizing shoe inserts used by more than 300 million feet since he invented them in 1974 as a scientist for Combe Inc. He has lived on Nutmeg Ridge since 1972 and has been called "the Einstein of odor" and an "expert in odorology." [NR] [P3/24/1988] [NYT9/2/2001]

La Petite Francaise Doll Hospital was operated by Francoise Reversade at 605 Ethan Allen Highway in 1981 and by 1983-86, at 9 Druid Lane. [P2/12/1981]. She also sold doll houses.

Laqueur, Peter, (1941-2003), a native of Argentina, was a financial services executive and artist who as a U,S, Marine earned two Purple Hearts in Vietnam for battle injuries. He was grand marshal of the Memorial Day Parade two weeks before his death on Flag Day. A resident for 27 years, he had been an executive with GE, Marine Midland Bank, ITT Consumer

Financial Corp., Angram Inc, and Performance Partnership Group, which he founded. He was active in the Ridgefield Library, Save the Children, Marine Corps League, and was a pilot. In 1997 he took up painting, specializing in barns. He had exhibited in Ridgefield and Vermont. He was listed in Who's Who in America. [P6/19/2003]

Larson, Dr. David H., was school superintendent from February 1987 till July 1988.

LaSalle, Katherine, who married Samuel Emlen Carpenter (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield in 1917, was a silent film star who had been John Barrymore's leading lady. As Mrs. Carpenter, she lived on High Ridge and had one child. They were divorced in 1924. [OR, DD269]

Last Man's Club: On March 15, 1938, 31 veterans of World War I had a dinner at Kane Inn (*q.v.*) on West Lane for the first meeting of the Last Man's Club. Each March 15—the anniversary of the founding of the American Legion—members met at a table set for 31 people — when a member died, his plate was turned upside down and a toast was drunk in his memory: "To our dear departed comrade, may God and this club preserve his memory." Harry E. Hull was first president; John W. Hubbard, vice president; Harvey B. Lown, secretary-treasurer; Roy Blake, plate custodian; and Duncan Y. Campbell, chaplain. Other charter members were Harry Menzies, Robert R. Keeler, William T. Peatt, Sereno T. Jacob, John C. Kelly, Henry Palau, Thomas F. Shaughnessy, Giovanni S. Morganti, Gustave A. Rux, Joseph Mazza, Ernest Brunetti, Rudolph Marconi, Frederick C. Fisher, Henry M. Cumming, Julius Tulipani, Fred Minnerly, Silvestro Lavatori, Paminendo Costanzi, John J. Crowley, George Miller, William H. Johnson, Curtis V. Leighton, Harry Terpeny, George N. Bloomer, and Robert E. Richardson. At the last meeting, in 1989, Thomas Shaughnessy (*q.v.*) was The Last Man.

Laszig, Paul and **Johanna H.**, were German immigrants who came in 1932 to Ridgefield where Paul (1900-1974) owned Modern Barber Shop for 33 years. Using tips from his wealthy customers, Paul invested wisely and when Johanna (1896-1980) died, she left more than $1.4 million, $371,000 of which established the Laszig Fund (*q.v.*) two years later which awards annual grants to organizations that aid the town's elderly. [WWW]

Laszig Fund is a charity that aids Ridgefield's elderly by providing grants to organizations that help the old. Created with a bequest of Johanna Laszig (*see* Paul and Johanna Laszig) in 1982, the fund in its first 35 years gave away more than $1 million in grants typically of $1,000 to $25,000 each. In 2017, The Paul and Johanna Laszig Fund for the Elderly had assets of more than $1 million, administered by Wells Fargo [WWW]

Latanzi, Sylvia Celia Parlato, (1894-1990), a native of New York City who came here in 1931, was a longtime leader in the Ridgefield Republican Party and frequent speaker at town meetings. Her husband was Julius Latanzi (1888-1967). [JFS]

Laurel Hill was in early 20th Century the name of the estate of Cyril H. Burdette on north side of Old Branchville Road, east of Nod Hill Road. It was later the home of artist Harry Anderson (*q.v.*) [OR]

Laurel Hill Road is a narrow, dead-end lane running off lower Florida Road, probably developed by William Maki around 1951. The name was in use by 1954. [RN]

Laurel Lane, a short, dead-end road off upper Route 7, once connected Ridgefield with the Starr's Plain hamlet of southern Danbury, and appears

in town records as early as 1828, though the name is probably 20th Century. It is shown as going through to Starr's Plain as late as 1936 and even one 1960's map indicates it was a through road, although it has been a dead-end road entirely within Ridgefield for decades. [RN]

Laurel Ridge Health Care Center, a nursing home, opened in 1994 on the site of former Camp Adventure (*q.v.*) at 642 Danbury Road and is today operated by Athena Health Care Systems. *See* Laurelwood.

Laurelwood, the town's first large-scale nursing home for the elderly, opened in 1994 at the former Camp Adventure at 642 Danbury Road. It became Laurel Ridge Health Care Center (*q.v*.)

Laurent Lighting: *See under* Candlelight Shoppe.

Lauzun, Duc de, (1747-1793), a French military leader who was with Rochambeau (*q.v.*) when he stopped overnight in Ridgefield in 1781. While Rochambeau camped in Ridgebury on and near McKeon Farm, Lauzun and his troops camped in nearby Scotland District, east of North Salem Road and south of Sherwood Road, says Bedini. Formally known as Alexandre Louis de Gontaut, Due de Lauzun, he was executed during the French Revolution. [RIR]

Lauzun Lane is a short, dead-end road used primarily to access the south side of the McKeon Farm open space off Ridgebury Road. It is named for Duc de Lauzun (*q.v.*). [RN]

Lavatori, Eugene "Gene" Joseph, (1933-2022), a Ridgefield native (*see* Nazzareno Lavatori), was the popular owner and operator of Nina's Restaurant for many years, and also operated Gene's Fine Liquors and the Green Doors Motel (*q.v.*). He was active in many organizations including the Community Center, Boys' Club, Italian-American Club, Townies, and American Legion. He was a veteran of the Korean War, and loved to play golf. [P12/29/2022, DD363]

Lavatori, Nazzareno "Nanny," (1889-1980), operated an ice business in the early 20th Century, cutting blocks of ice from Robert's Pond and other ponds. In 1939, he established a restaurant on the front of his house at the north end of Main Street that would be called Nina's (*q.v.*), later operated by his son Eugene (*q.v*.) and named for Nanny's wife, **Nina Roberti Lavatori** (1898-1976). [JFS, DD363]

Lavatori, Steve, a Ridgefield native, was named the town's tree warden (*q.v.*) in 2019. A biology and botany major at UConn, he managed a large nursery, and had his own landscape and tree business for many years. [RW]

Laviano, William, (1941-2002), was a special education and civil rights attorney who several times was involved in conflicts with town agencies. He sued the school board over censorship of the high school magazine, *Lodestar* (*q.v.*), in 1988. He also challenged the board's handling of special education cases in 1986 [P2/13/1986], He sued the state for racist on-the-job treatment of a Black state trooper and won a $750,000 judgment. In 1997 he won a case against the Diocese of Bridgeport for covering up misdeeds and reassigning an abusive priest [P6/27/2002]. He moved here in 1970 and ran for state representative as a Democrat in 1972, but lost. He became an attorney in 1981. His residences included St. Johns Road. He retired to South Carolina. His daughter, **Jennifer Laviano** of Sherman, became an attorney specializing in special education. [NR]

Lawnmower Hospital was a business as ONS12 Catoonah Street by 1949. In

1958, it was operated by Clark L. Johnson. [CD1958]

Lawrence, Alice, (-2008), widow of a New York City real estate developer, spent a reported $20 million between 1990 and 1993 building a 10,000-square-foot concrete house at 191 Ridgebury Road on Pope's Corner (*q.v.*) to house her art collection. The house includes indoor and outdoor pools, three bedrooms, and a heated driveway and was designed by Uruguayan architect Rafael Viñoly. After she died, the property was donated to Fairfield University, which sold it and its 11 acres plus a 3,500-square-foot farmhouse, for $2.7 million to Fraydun Manocherian, owner of New York Health and Racquet Club chain. Since then property has been on and off the market for up to $25 million; in September 2019, the asking price was $9.7 million. By 2025, it was down to $7.5 million. [P8/29/2019]

Lawrence, William "Bill" Van Duzer IV, (1968-), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1986, is a prolific TV producer, screenwriter, and director whose series include *Scrubs, Cougar Town, Spin City, Ground Floor, Ted Lasso*, and *Shrinking*. He credits RHS teacher Robert Cox (*q.v*.) with mentoring him as a writer. [NYT3/7/2026, W]

Lawrence and Gillespie Funeral Home was operated in the mid-20th Century by Earle W. Gillespie, Edward Lawrence and Edward G. Lawrence, and was at ONS147 Main Street where Smith's Pharmacy was in the 1960s. It was purchased by Robert A. Kane (*q.v*.) to become Kane Funeral Home. [JFS]

Lawson Lane is a private way at Casagmo (*q.v.*), one of several named for the ancestors or family of Mary L.B. Olcott (*q.v.*), the last resident of the Casagmo estate (*q.v.*). Builder David L. Paul (*q.v*.) picked the names from a genealogy published by Miss Olcott in 1954. [RN]

League of Women Voters, an outgrowth of the Equal Franchise League (*q.v.*), is a nonpartisan political organization, organized Feb. 23, 1923; its first meeting was March 7. The first president was Mrs. E. J. Reed, mother-in-law of Rev. Hugh Shields (*q.v.*). Edna Schoyer (*q.v*) became president later in 1923, serving 10 years. The league, disbanded in 1950, was resurrected in 1962 by Mrs. Raymond Runyan; Helen Keeler Kallos, a member of the first league, was secretary of new one. The league, alive and well in 2026, "encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy." The original league described simply as fostering education in citizenship. [JFS, RPJ4/2]

LEAP was a program in the elementary schools in the 1980s for "gifted" pupils, who received special instruction in topics like computers. [JFS]

Leatherman, The, (-1889), was a vagabond dressed in 60-pound leather outfit who wandered western CT and southeastern NY from 1860s until 1889, staying in caves and receiving food from friends along his 365-mile route. His true name and origins are unknown. He visited Ridgebury regularly and was said to have also occasionally visited Branchville. [BURR, WWW]

Leavitt, Joan Loire, (1931-2021), a native of Bronxville NY, was active in community work, including teaching in schools, Methodist church, FISH, Thrift Shop, AFS, Founders Hall. A graduate of U. of NH she married Robert R. Leavitt in 1954. [P6/3/2021]

Lebetkin, Glen, a violinist, was the music teacher at Ridgebury School from 1973 until 2008. Since 1999 he has been director of Danbury Center Strings at the Danbury Music Centre. [JFS]

LeBoutillier, George, (1850-1936), was an artist who lived at 78 Olmstead Lane in the first third of the 20th Century. He was the husband of artist **Isabel LeBoutillier,** who died 1955. He was an owner of the LeBoutillier Brothers dry goods store on Broadway. [OO]

Le Château was a restaurant in Lewisboro, NY, that has since the 2010s become solely meeting center and wedding venue. *See* Savin Hill. [JFS]

Lecher, Carl, is a Ridgefield developer whose larger projects included Quail Ridge condominiums and Turner Hill subdivision. He was a longtime member of the Police Commission. [JFS]

Ledges Road, is an old road, existing by 1800, probably long before; it was one of the last town roads to be paved, around 1967. The "ledges" are the Asproom or Great Ledges (*q.v.*) on the north side of the road. It was called "Ledge Road" as early as 1909. [RN]

Lee, Aaron, (1793-1847), a Farmingville farmer, served as a state representative in 1821, 22, 23, 29, 30, 35 and 36. He had a limekiln in Farmingville. [JFS]

Lee, Aaron W., (1828-96), a farmer and first selectman, was a Civil War veteran, wounded at Gettysburg. He founded Ridgefield's GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) chapter, a sort of American Legion for Civil War veterans, named for his close friend, Edwin Pickett (*q.v.*). He was a GOP state representative in 1877 and 1880. He died in Redding and is buried there. [JFS]

Lee, Chapman, had a cider mill in Farmingville in the 19th Century. [RN]

Lee, Charles William, (1862-1892), son of Edwin E. and Ruth Lee of Ridgefield, became owner and publisher of *The Ridgefield Press* in November 1880 when he was only 18 years old. He also set the type. That year, he was living with the family of D. Crosby Baxter, the founder of *The Press.* Two years later, he sold the paper to William W. Whiting (*q.v.*), but remained on the staff for two years, resigning in 1884 due to ill health. He died six years later of tuberculosis and is buried in Norwalk. [JFS]

Lee, Daniel, had a grist mill off Stonehenge Road with John Lee in the 18th Century and was the father of David Burr Lee (*q.v.*). [RN]

Lee, David Burr, (1787-1853), a native of Farmingville district, started his career as a clerk in Abner Gilbert's store on Main Street, and went to NYC where he became a wealthy merchant. Two daughters married European royalty: Josephine Louise became Josephine, Baroness von Waechter-Lautenbach (*q.v.*), and Mary Esther became Countess Mary Esther von Waldersee (*q.v.*). Both visited Ridgefield in 1903. Another daughter, Abby (also called Blanche), married an English Naval officer, a grandson of Lord Dunmore, the last royal governor of Virginia. [WWW, RT, RB15]

Lee, Eva, is an artist whose work includes drawings, digital animations, and films. She lived in Ridgefield at the turn of the 21st Century. [P6/16/2005]

Lee, Frederick "Fred" Clarence, (1856-1933), a member of the large Farmingville Lee clan, was first selectman in 1893. He was the father of Robert A. Lee (*q.v.*). [RN]

Lee, James Bainbridge. Sr., (1916-1964), a native of Danbury and son of Frank H. Lee, the hat company founder, became Lee Hat president in 1950. He sold the company to Stetson in 1960. In 1927 he founded the *Danbury Times*, now *The News-Times,* and was president of Berkshire Broadcasting, which owned radio station WLAD (*q.v.*). A resident of Wilton Road West for many years, he died of heart failure at 47. [WWW]

Lee, James Bainbridge Jr., (1952-2015), son of James B. Sr. (*q.v.*), grew up in

Ridgefield and became a major investment banker in NYC at Chase Manhattan and JPMorgan Chase, where he was vice chairman and worked with many of the top financial leaders including Jamie Dimon. He advised on major deals including United Airlines' acquisition of Continental, General Electric's sale of NBCUniversal, and News Corporation's purchase of Dow Jones. He died at age 62. [WWW]

Lee, Jesse: *See under* Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church

Lee, John, had a grist mill off Stonehenge Road with Daniel Lee. [RN]

Lee, Priscilla Chisolm, (1905-1994), a Ridgefielder most of her life, was a daughter of B.O. Chisolm (*q.v.*) and owned the Bissell Building on Main Street for many years in the 20th Century. Known for her kindness, she was named Citizen of the Year by the Rotary Club in 1975. She was active in the Village Improvement Society, Ridgefield Garden Club, District Nursing Association, American Women's Voluntary Service, Ridgefield Boys Club and Wadsworth Lewis Fund. She had been married to **Cornelius Smith Lee** (1904-1954) and earlier to **Neville Davis**. She was an excellent equestrian. Her daughter, **Barbara Watson,** was a longtime Ridgefielder and also garden club member. [P12/15/1994, DD204]

Lee, Robert Aaron, (1889-1982), son of Fred C. Lee (*q.v.*) and grandson of Aaron W. Lee (*q.v.*), who lived on Main Street, and was one of the last of the Ridgefield Lees still bearing the family name. He lived in Greenwich in his later years, but kept property in Farmingville until his death at the age of 94. He left Ridgefield as a permanent residence in 1903, but frequently visited the town and was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank for many years. His daughter, **Barbara Lee Johnson**, lived on Lee family land along New Road until her death in 2001. [RN, DD70, RSB31]

Lee, Seth, (1755-1790), a Redding native and Ridgefield farmer, served in the Revolution in the Seventh Regiment. [Rockwell]

Lee, William, (1800-1881), a Ridgefield native, was a farmer who also operated a saw mill and a limekiln in the Farmingville district. A Republican, he was a state representative in 1841, 1842, and 1860. [FoF]

Lee, William II, (1710-1785), son of William Lees I (*q.v.*), was the founder of the sizable Ridgefield Lee clan. In 1762, he bought 92 acres and a house in Farmingville. He operated a popular saw mill in Farmingville as early as 1767. He was a half brother of Joseph Lees of Norwalk, and perhaps the first to drop the "S" from Lees. [RN]

Lee, William III, (1753-1776), reportedly participated in Washington's escape from Brooklyn, NY, in August 1776 and was killed in action the next month at Harlem Heights. The 23-year-old corporal was buried in Titicus Cemetery. [Rockwell, FAG]

Lee Lane is an early 20th Century name for Wheeler Road (*q.v.*), so-called because the "Lee sisters" lived in a house at the corner with Spring Valley Road, later owned by Mr. and Mrs. John N. Wheeler (*q.v.*). [RN]

Lee Road is an 18th Century road that was part of Farmingville Road (*q.v.*) until 1914 when the town built the straight section of Farmingville Road across the swamp from Lee Road to Limekiln and Blackman Roads. The name recalls Lee family, long prominent in Farmingville, and applies today to the road that extends from Farmingville Road to Limekiln Road; southern Limekiln was also once Farmingville Road. Lee and lower Limekiln skirt the north side of the main body of Great Swamp. *See also* William Lee II. [RN]

Leeman, Evelyn B, (1908-2002), was a teacher in Ridgefield schools for many years, starting in 1955. She was active in Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra, serving on board for 25 years, and with the Caudatowa Garden Club, Thrift Shop, Red Cross Bloodmobiles. She was the wife of George B. Leeman Sr. and mother of Jr. (*q.v. each*).

Leeman, George B. Jr., (1946-2017), was a Yale-educated mathematician who was active in local music circles, including the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra, for whom he wrote the program notes for many years. [DNT2/26/2017]

Leeman, George B. Sr., (-1978), was a musician who worked for RKO studios in Hollywood, then for CBS radio and TV as a composer and arranger for the likes of Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, Dick Haymes, Paul Whiteman, Andre Kostelanetz, and for 12 years with Arthur Godfrey. A Ridgefielder since 1942, he helped found the Ridgefield Symphonette (*q.v.*). He taught piano and worked closely with Ridgefield elementary schools where his wife, **Evelyn** (*q.v*.), taught for many years. Two weeks after his death, the Board of Education named the auditorium at Scotland School "the Leeman Room" in his honor. He lived at 822 North Salem Road. [NR]

Leeman Room, the music room at Scotland School, was named for George B. Leeman Sr. (*q.v.*).

Lees, Joseph: *See* William Lees I. [RN]

Lees, William I, (1655-1741), was one of the Norwalk residents who petitioned the General Assembly to allow the creation of Ridgefield. Although he probably visited the town, he never lived here. His son, **Joseph Lees,** came to Ridgefield and bought the Matthew Saintjohn homestead on Main Street in 1723; by 1737 he'd moved to Salisbury. Another son**,** William Lee II (*q.v.*), who dropped the S of Lees, founded the long-lived Ridgefield clan. [RN]

Leete, Rev. William Rockwell, (1886-1952), a Ridgefield native and Yale graduate, went to China as a missionary in 1912 and remained there for many years. In 1941, when he was a professor at the Nanking Theological Seminary in Shanghai, he was imprisoned by the Japanese in a prison camp for two years. Freed in 1943, he returned to the States and learned his son, Lt. Jonathan Leete of the Army Air Force, was missing in action in the Middle East. Another son, Henry, a sergeant in the Army, was killed that year in an auto accident at Fort Benning, Ga. After the war, Leete returned to teach in China. His father was Rev. William W. Leete (*q.v.*). He is buried in the family plot at the Lounsbury section of the Ridgefield Cemetery.

Leete, the Rev. William White, (1854-1946), a recent graduate of Yale Divinity School and a direct descendant of William Leete, governor of the colony of Connecticut from 1676 to 1683, became pastor of the First Congregational Church in February 1882, serving for six years. He went on to become a leader in the New England administration of the Congregational Church, and was a proficient golfer, winning the trophy in Class A for players 75 years old or older at the USGA tourney in Rye, N.Y., for five consecutive years. He was the father of William R. Leete (*q.v*.). The family is buried in the Lounsbury section of Ridgefield Cemetery. [NYT5/3/1946]

Lefebvre, Archbishop Marcel: *See* St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary.

Leibowitz, Ruth, (pronounced LEE-bowitz), a native of West Virginia who was active in helping young people, was a professional dancer who appeared on PBS's Children's Dance Theatre. She came to Ridgefield in 1976 and

taught dance and drama at Wooster School. In 1982 she joined the Youth Commission and three years later, founded and ran Inside Out (*q.v.*) for 26 years and was active in the Youth Service Bureau (*q.v.*) and the Barn (*q.v.*) youth center. Steve Zemo, Mike Taylor and the Leibowitz Family established for A Better Chance (*q.v*.) the Ruth Leibowitz Scholarship Fund in 2025 to honor her dedication as one of the founding members of ABC here. In 2026, she was living in Los Angeles. [JFS]

Leighton, Curtis Victor, (1895-1975), a Ridgebury resident, was foreman of the town highway department (*q,v*,) in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. [P7/24/1975]

Leir, Henry (1900-99), a native of Prussia who fled the Nazi regime, owned an ore importing and exporting firm that made millions. He spent much of the last third of his life, with wife **Erna**, overseeing millions of dollars in grants for education, health, and other causes, and established the Leir Retreat Center (*q.v.*) at his 33-acre estate on Branchville Road, which he bought around 1952. [WWW]

Leir Retreat Center at 220 Branchville Road (address is 47 Boulder Hill Road), founded by Henry (*q.v.*) and Erna Leir and opened in October 2007, hosts gatherings aimed at improving society and health. Subjects have included substance abuse, Lyme disease, human rights, assessment and treatment of suicide risk, human-animal interaction, mental health, training of police detectives, dementia, child abuse, and geriatric orthopedics. [WWW]

Lelak, John M., (1917-81), came to town in 1960 and operated Lelak's Delicatessen at Grand Union shopping center in the 1960s and 70s, selling the business to Irving Gold (*q.v.*) in 1975. Lelak sponsored many youth sports teams and was a president of the Chamber of Commerce. [P8/20/1981]

Lelak's Delicatessen: *See* John Lelak.

Leonard, Elizabeth Nowotarski, (1935-1992), a former Ridgefield reporter for the *Danbury News-Times* and other area dailies, was a state representative from 1977 to 1981, and first selectman from 1981 to 1987 — the first woman elected to that office. She retired due to ill health, but remained on the Board of Selectmen until her death at age 56. An active Republican, she moved to Ridgefield in 1958 from NYC. *See also* James B. Leonard. [WWW]

Leonard, James B., (1936-2016), who'd been a reading teacher in the schools, was the first principal of Branchville School (*q.v.*), from its opening in 1969 until its closing in 1983. He then became a central office administrator. A captain in the National Guard and lifelong Bethel resident, he was the estranged husband of Elizabeth Leonard (*q.v.*). [P10/17/2016]

Les Alpes, a bakery in the Grand Union Shopping Center, 465 Main Street, in the late 1960s until 1973, was owned by Otto (1930-2026) and Mia Hassig. Otto. a Swiss-trained master pastry chef, became a builder. [JFS, L]

Levine, Daniel C., (1972-), a Massachusetts native, is a Broadway actor who has performed in *Les Misérables, Chicago, Mamma Mia!, The Rocky Horror Show, Jesus Christ Superstar, Tommy*, and *Little Shop of Horrors.* He co-starred on TV's *Beverly Hills, 9021*0 and *General Hospital*. He is owner and director of Big Apple Tutoring, a Manhattan-based academic tutoring agency. Active in Ridgefield, he is artistic director of ACT of Connecticut (*q.v*.), a volunteer at the library and Founders Hall, is an artistic adviser to the Ridgefield Playhouse (*q.v.*), and is a member of the Conservation Commission. He is married to Bryan Perri (*q.v.*). In 2025, he received the Spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Community Service Award (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Levine, Evan S., a cardiologist, medical columnist and author of *What Your Doctor Won't (Or Can't) Tell You* (2004), has lived on Lounsbury Road since 2004 and has been known for exposing unethical practices by physicians and drug companies. [JFS]

Levy, Benjamin E. (1879-1952), a native of France, headed Coty, the French cosmetic firm, in the 1930s. He then led Charles of the Ritz. Levy bought Barrackhill (*q.v*.) on Barrack Hill Road, with 80 acres in 1940, a portion of which was later developed into the Grand View Drive neighborhood. He aided local groups, like the library and the Boys' Club, and his family donated Levy Park (*q.v.*) in memory of him and his wife, **Regine**. [FBFR]

Levy Park includes 38 acres donated in 1968 to the town by Richard Salomon, nephew of Benjamin E. Levy (*q.v.*), whose estate this was part of. Its official name is "The B. E. and Regine Levy Park and Recreational Area and Wildlife Refuge." Ten more acres were later added to the park. [RN]

Lewis, Frederic Elliott, (1859-1919), vice president of National City Bank, Manhattan, bought from H.B. Anderson (*q.v*.) in 1907 the West Lane estate he called Upagenstit (*q.v.*) and greatly expanded the house and the land holdings to around 100 acres. He was a director First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). He was married to Mary Russell Lewis (*q.v*.) and their sons Reginald and Wadsworth (*q.v. each*) also had estates here. [WWW] [*See* Upagenstit *for DD columns about the Lewis family.*]

Lewis, Helen K., (1924-2000), a native of Indiana, was a Ridgefield school librarian and president of the Ridgefield Library during a time of considerable expansion. She lived 43 years at 62 High Ridge Avenue. She had earlier worked for *Glamour* magazine. [P10/11/2000]

Lewis, Gerri, RHS 1966, is a longtime feature writer for *The Ridgefield Press, Ridgefield Magazine*, and *068 Magazin*e. Her first novel, *The Last Word*, a cozy mystery set in Ridgefield, was published in early 2024. Born Gerri Karwoski, she is married to retired GE vice president **Robert L. Lewis**, RHS 1965, and is a nearly lifelong resident. They were given the Ridgefield Old Timers' Civic Award for community service in 2025. [JFS2023]

Lewis, Isaac (1773-1860), was a silversmith who was active from ca. 1796-1809 in Huntington, Conn, and 1810-20 in Ridgefield. He worked for Charles Grumman at 149 Main Street. Silverware made by him is stamped "I. Lewis." He probably also worked from his home at 127 Main Street. *See also* Fountain #2 entry. [JFS, DD]

Lewis, Mary Alice Russell, (1862-1950), a native of Middletown and wife of Frederic E. Lewis (*q.v.*), oversaw the sizable gardens and vast greenhouses at her West Lane estate, Upagenstit. She was active in the community, especially after the death of her husband: She headed the Red Cross here in World War I through early World War II; volunteered at St. Stephen's Church where she donated the stained-glass chancel window, "Christ Blessing the Children," in memory of her parents; and was a charter member of Ridgefield Garden Club. [WWW, DD145]

Lewis, Reginald Mentourn, (ca. 1896-1960), son of Frederic and Mary Lewis of Upagenstit, was an NYC society leader who had a gentleman's farm at 100 South Salem Road in the early 20th Century. His Warily Kennels there (*q.v.*) bred Wire-haired Fox Terriers — in 1928, his Champion Talavera Margaret won best in show at the Westminster Kennel Club show in NYC. He also bred Guernsey cattle. He was an expert amateur golfer and was said to

have had one of the most valuable antiques collections on the Eastern Seaboard. He moved to Bedford, NY, and died in Maryland. His estate was later owned by Robert P. Scripps (*q.v.*). [NYT 7/4/1960, DD146]

Lewis, Robert Earle, (1921-2017), a South Dakota native and longtime Ridgefielder, was a Pan American Airlines flight engineer whose career spanned four decades aboard airliners ranging from giant flying boats to Boeing 747s. He was active in Silver Spring Country Club. [P9/7/2017]

Lewis, Wadsworth Russell, (1889-1942), a philanthropist, was a son of Frederic and Mary Lewis of Upagenstit (*q.v.*) on West Lane. He built Taghkanick (*q.v.*), designed by Philip Sunderland (*q.v.*) and later owned by Henry and Clare Boothe Luce, Hans P. Kraus, and Basha Szymanska (*q.v. each*). He was active in the community, serving on the school board, Draft Board, Ration Board, and other agencies and organizations. At his death at age 53, he established the Wadsworth R. Lewis Fund, which has donated more than $4.5 million to local organizations over the years. [WWW, DD146]

Lewis Drive extends from Shadow Lane to Golf Lane, part of the Ridgefield Manor Estates and named for Frederic Elliott Lewis family (*q.v*.), which owned the huge mansion and estate there early in the 20th Century. Development began in the mid-1950's, but the road wasn't accepted as a town road until 1969. The older houses toward the eastern end had been used for servants and other caretakers on the Lewis estate. [RN]

Lewis Fund: *See under* Wadsworth R. Lewis.

Lewisboro is the only bordering town whose name is not used in a Ridgefield geographical name. Eastern Lewisboro was once within Ridgefield before the Oblong (*q.v.*) was cut off in 1731. Originally called Salem, Lewisboro was once one town with North Salem. After North Salem became its own entity, Lewisboro became known as Lower Salem, but changed in 1840 to honor John Lewis, benefactor of the town's schools. "Lewisboro" first appears in the Ridgefield land records in 1842. Lewisboro's hamlets include South Salem, Vista, Cross River, Waccabuc, and Golden's Bridge. [RN]

Liberta's Spirit Shoppe opened May 1981, replacing Bolling's, at 393 Main Street, owned by Michael and Teri Libera. They retired in 2015 and Michael died in 2025. The business became Cheers (*q.v.*), which did not last long. The spot was originally the A&P Liquor Store (*q.v.*). [P5/21/1981, JFS]

Liberty Pole: *see under* Daniel Brown.

Libraries: First library was established around 1795 says RSGG, adding "We have a small library of about 150 volumes … annually augmented." In 1852 Hiram K. Scott (*q.v.*) established a lending library at his general store and pharmacy (later Bissell's — *q.v.*) on Main Street. [WWW] Among the more unusual libraries in town is the Walker Library of the History of Human Imagination (*q.v*.). *See also* Ridgefield Library.

Library Hill is an informal, early-20th-Century name for Prospect Street between Main Street and Bailey Avenue, so called because of Ridgefield Library on north side at west end. *See also* Depot Hill, Station Hill. [RN]

Liebovitz, David, (1892-1968), a native of NYC, was a playwright, novelist, and art collector, who had a summer home at 291 Bennett's Farm Road. He was married to Emily Gresser Liebovitz (*q.v.*), a concert violinist. About 28 acres of their farm was donated to the town by his grandsons — *see* Liebowitz-Knapp Preserve. David was the father of Bettina Liebovitz Knapp and Dr. Daniel Liebowitz (*q.v. each*). [WWW]

Liebovitz, Emily Gresser (1894-1981), a native of Brooklyn, NY, was a concert violinist who toured Europe as a youth and then the US. She was a close friend of Jascha Heifetz and would visit his Redding home to play violin together. She was the wife of David Liebovitz (*q.v.*) and the mother of Bettina Liebovitz Knapp and Dr. Daniel Liebowitz (*q.v. each*).

Liebowitz, Dr. Daniel, (1921-2014), also known as Dr. Dan or Rusty, was the son of David and Emily Gresser Liebovitz (*q.v. each*), and spent summers here as a youth. He was a physician, professor at Stanford, and author of a novel, two biographies and a cookbook. He has spelled his name with a W instead of V, at least since he was 20. [WWW]

Liebowitz-Knapp Preserve is 28 acres on the south side of Bennett's Farm Road, connecting the road to Pierrepont State Park and also to Hemlock Hills and the Ives Trail (*q.v. each*) via a pedestrian access on the north side of road. It was donated to the town in 2012-13 by Charles and Albert Knapp, grandsons of David and Emily Liebovitz (*q.v. each*), who bought the farm in 1936 as a country retreat. The name is spelled differently from most family members, but some use W instead of V. [JFS]

Life expectancy: Ridgefield's average life expectancy was 82.8 years in 2021. [REP]

Life Without George by Irene Kampen (*q.v*.), is a humorous 1961 autobiographical novel, dealing with single life in Ridgefield after Kampen's husband left her for another woman. The book became the basis of Lucille Ball's TV series, "The Lucy Show." Kampen wrote other humorous autobiographical books while living in Ridgefield. [WWW]

Life's Farm was a Fresh Air Fund camp established by John Ames Mitchell (*q.v*), publisher of original *Life* magazine, on the site of the present-day Branchville School. It was in operation as a summer camp for city kids from 1899 until around 1942, when it closed because of the war. In 1902, perhaps a typical year, 208 children attended the camp, also called Life's Fresh Air Farm. The campgrounds included a headquarter building, barracks-like housing for the children, a baseball diamond, and other facilities. The camp was reopened by the New York Herald-Tribune Fresh Air Fund in the 1950s, closing after the 1969 season — its 61st. Camp operations switched to other locations, [P6/26/1902, DNT6/28/1960]

Lightning events of note in Ridgefield include: *July 11, 1837*: Walter Hawley and Enoch Hawley, and two children, were all killed in one struck house by a lightning bolt around 11 p.m. *July 9, 1853*: A yoke of oxen, owned by David Northrop, was struck and killed by lightning. *Oct. 8, 1859*: The barn of Charles Smith was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. *June 22, 1865:* A small barn belonging to William Howe was struck by lightning, caught fire and burned to the ground. *Aug. 12, 1895:* Farmer William Tiley, 35, was working in a field when he was killed by lightning. *June 23, 1921:* Lightning struck a shed at Mortimer C. Keeler's farm at Whipstick, igniting a blaze that spread to barns and stables. *June 1937:* Lightning killed nine Jersey heifers at Robert Lee's farm in Farmingville. [RT]

Ligi, Joyce Casavecchia, a Ridgefield native and RHS 1960, is a retired banker who has spent many years in community service, including leadership roles in United Way, Red Cross, Datahr, Ridgefield Library, Little League, Lions Club, Keeler Tavern, Weir Farm, Girl Scouts, the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra, Community Center, and other organizations. She was Rotary Citizen of the Year in 2016. [NR]

Ligi, Richard, (1947-2008), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1965, was the fourth chief of the Ridgefield Police Department. He joined the department in 1967 as a clerk, became an officer in 1969, a sergeant in 1977, lieutenant in 1980, captain in 1990, major in 1996, and chief in 1999. He was noted for his kindness and caring, and especially for his work with youth and support for youth programs. [WWW]

Ligi's Way, originally and prosaically called Bypass Road (*q.v.*), extends between Farmingville Road and the South Street/Old Quarry Road intersection. It was so named in November 2011 for Police Chief Richard Ligi (*q.v.*).

Liljegren, Edwin D., (1930-), a local historian in the 1970s and 80s, documented the early residents of Ridgebury, but did not publish his work. His research papers were donated to the Ridgefield Historical Society. He lived at 253 George Washington Highway with partner, Alfred Zega (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Limekiln Corner is an early 20th Century and possibly late 19th Century term for the intersection of Lee and Limekiln Roads, originally part of Farmingville Road (*q.v.*). At the northwest corner, a limekiln stood, probably built and operated by the Lee family. [RN]

Limekiln Hill was once commonly applied to a spot near the four-way intersection of Barry Avenue, Ramapoo Road, West Mountain Road, and Peaceable Ridge Road, near which a large limekiln (*q.v*.) operated from at least 1742 into the 1800s. [RN] *See also* How's Limekiln, Kiln Hill Lane.

Limekiln Road, an old highway between Farmingville and Haviland Roads, existed by 1856 when it appears on Clark's map, and probably dates back at least a century earlier, perhaps to the 1730's. The south end of the road between Lee and Farmingville Roads was originally part of Farmingville Road (*q.v.*). It was named for an old limekiln (*see* Limekiln Corner). [RN]

Limekilns were large stone or brick ovens used to bake limestone rock into lime for use as a soil conditioner and for making plaster and mortar. Kilns were located in several places in Ridgefield, including the north corner of Lee and Limekiln Roads; the north corner of the intersection of Ramapoo Road with Barry Avenue/West Mountain Road; at the Selleck farm, 219 Bennett's Farm Road. *See also* Limestone. [JFS]

Limestone is an old neighborhood and school district in Ridgefield, so called as early as 1740, probably because of the limestone mining operations at Limestone Hill (*q.v.*) and elsewhere in the neighborhood. Limestone, used in making plaster and mortar, and as a treatment for acidic soil, was found only in the northern two-thirds of the town (*see* Cameron's Line). This prompted the building of several sizable commercial limekilns (*q.v.*) in the neighborhood as well as one on lower West Mountain. Limestone was one of the first neighborhoods outside the village to have a schoolhouse. The TM in 1752 voted that "there shall be a woman school kept at Limestone ... ye ensuing summer season." This is the first reference to a schoolhouse there, but one may have been established earlier. In 1790, the town meeting decided to erect a pound at "Limestone, near the parting of roads near the dwelling house of Ebenezer Lobdell, and not Bennetts Farm...." By 1834, land records often referred to "Limestone District." Limestone school district in the mid-1800's included all of upper Danbury Road, lower Limestone Road, lower Great Hill Road, Route 7 from its intersection with Danbury Road south to New Road, Haviland Road, and upper Limekiln Road. It was also called District Number Three. [RN]

Limestone Acres, a 23-lot subdivision filed by Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) in 1966, is off the western side of lower Limestone Road, and served by Shields Lane. [RN]

Limestone Hill: A deed filed in 1712 from the Proprietors to Joseph Keeler mentions nine acres "north of Limeston (sic) Hill." A 1717 deed refers to "Lime Stone Hill." The main body of the hill may have been just north of the intersection of Limestone, Haviland and Danbury Roads, where the service station is today. What is now fairly flat was once higher; decades of mining the limestone helped to flatten the territory to its present level. However, it might also have referred to a ridge to the south of Haviland Road, traversed by Poplar Road. [RN] *See also* Limestone *and* Mine Hill. [RN]

Limestone Post Office was operated from 1857 to 1861 by Edwin Taylor on Still Road at the corner of Stonehenge Road. The *New London Chronicle* reported its creation March 4, 1857. [JFS]

Limestone Preserve, a 58-acre open space maintained by Conservation Commission, consists mostly of swampland along upper Limestone Road. Made up of several donated properties, it borders Pierrepont State Park (*q.v.*) on the west. [JFS]

Limestone River: Rockwell says people who lived in eastern Limestone District sometimes called the Norwalk River (*q.v.*) thereabouts the "Limestone River." *See also* East River. [RN]

Limestone Road extends from Danbury Road to Bennett's Farm Road. While it bears the name of the district in which its southern end begins, 75% of the road is in Bennett's Farm District. In the 18th Century, the section from Danbury Road to Great Hill Road (including Limestone Road Extension) was all part of Great Hill Road called "the road to Bennett's Farm" or Bennett's Farm Road; the section from Great Hill Road north through woods and swamp to Bennett's Farm Road was built ca. 1852 after 31 people petitioned the selectmen for the new road – and offered $185 toward costs (more than $7,000 in 2024 dollars). For a while that section was called "the New Road" or "the New Road from Limestone to Ridgebury." [RN]

Limestone Road Extension is a new short-cut, bypassing the eastern end of Limestone Road. This straighter, newer section was cut through around 1960. [RN]

Limestone schoolhouse: The Limestone District (*see under* Limestone) had a schoolhouse as early as 1752 when the Town Meeting voted that "there shall be a woman school kept at Limestone ... ye ensuing summer season." While this is the first reference in the town records to there being a schoolhouse there — with a session for girls, a school had probably been established earlier. In 1867, when it was officially called District Number 3, the school was on north side of Haviland Road, opposite Still Road. At the turn of the 20th Century, a new schoolhouse was built on Danbury Road, two doors north of Limestone Service Station (*q.v.*), on land donated by John H. Finch. When it closed in 1925, the children were sent to Titicus School. The building was bought by Col. Louis D. Conley in 1930s as part of Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*) and remained unused until 1943 when it was purchased by Lewis J. Finch (*q.v.*), grandson of John Finch who'd provided the schoolhouse land. It was then converted to a house, which it is today at 411 Danbury Road. [SD]

Limestone Service Station at 399 Danbury Road was built in 1931 by brothers Jack and Joe Venus. Around 1950 Dino Giardini acquired the business.

Over the years it has sold Shell gas, Texaco, Irving (2006), by 2014, Citgo (the brand in 2026). It is a rare station that provides service at pumps and also has an excellent reputation for car repairs and service. [DD268, JFS]

Limestone Terrace, a short, dead-end road off the west side of Limestone Road, a little south of and opposite Rita Road, was created around 1961 by Great Hill Lakes Inc., one of William Winthrop's corporations that developed much of Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*). [RN]

Lincoln was the telephone exchange in Georgetown, including Branchville. Phone numbers began LI4-, which became today's 544-.

Lincoln Lane extends from Branchville Road to Old Washington Road, part of Washington Park Estates, a subdivision started around 1951 by Bert Ison and named for Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President — Lincoln never visited Ridgefield, but his vice-president, Hannibal Hamlin (*q.v.*), did. [RN]

Linden Road, a short dead-end road off Poplar Road, was developed starting in the 1960's by Armando Salvestrini, who named it for the trees in the vicinity. The road may be part of the eastern end of long-abandoned 18th and 19th Century highway from Danbury Road at Fox Hill Village to Limekiln Road, and called Norrins Ridge Road (*q.v.*). This was once the land of Outpost Nurseries, which may have hereabout grown its linden trees, known for their sweet scent and as a source of nectar for bees. [RN]

Lionetti, Wendy Gannon, who grew up here and is RHS 1980, has been town clerk since 2018, succeeding Barbara Serfilippi. Before that she had been administrative assistant to the first selectperson and earlier worked in the assessor's office for many years. She has been active in SPHERE, ROTA, is a crafter, and plays ice hockey. She received the Spirit of Dr. King Community Service Award in 2023. [JFS, RidgefieldCT.org]

Lion's Heart is a national non-profit organization with a chapter in Ridgefield in which students in 6th through 12th grades do volunteer community service. It is not affiliated with the Lions Club. [PR1]

Lions Club is a Ridgefield service organization, originally for men but now also for women. At its first meeting April 23, 1929, the club elected Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) as president. For many years it sponsored the Friendly Town Program (*q.v*.), bringing city kids to the country in summer. It ran annual antique car show from 1951 into the 1980s, and provided Christmas lights for Main Street. A special interest of Lions is helping the blind and visually impaired. *See also* Roll of Honor. [JFS]

Lipper was a nickname for Larry Leary, a late 20th Century Ridgefield builder.

Lippolt, Otto H., (1891-1965), a Massachusetts native, was a well-driller and land developer who bought over 700 acres in Ridgebury during the Depression, developed some of it in his Hemlock Hills (*q.v.*) in the 1950s and aimed to develop more. Lippolt came here in the 1920s, buying a 100-acre farm at the corner of Ridgebury Road and George Washington Highway. His widow Marion sold 570 acres to the town in 1967, now Hemlock Hills and Pine Mountain refuges (*q.v. each and see* Lippolt property). [WWW]

Lippolt Pond is a name on 1960's map for narrow body of water on the west side of Old Mill Road, more commonly called Old Mill Pond (*q.v.)*. The pond was created or resurrected by Otto Lippolt (*q.v*.), who developed the neighborhood in the 1950's and early 1960's. *See also* Hemlock Hills. [RN]

Lippolt property was a common name for the vast Ridgebury land holdings of Otto Lippolt (*q.v*.), involving some 25 parcels totaling about 570 acres, that

town bought in 1969 for $350,000 [P2/6/1969]. It became Hemlock Hills (*q.v.*) and Pine Mountain (*q.v.*) Refuges.

Liquor stores: *See* package stores.

Lisa Lane, a dead-end road off the west side of Tackora Trail, was developed by James B. Franks (*q.v.*), who named the road after his daughter. Nearby Christopher Road was named for his son. Both were part of the 1957 subdivision, Mamanasco Lake Park. [RN]

Lischke, Franklin, (1908-1991), a native of New Rochelle, NY, who was an artist and illustrator, was as a boy a model for many of Norman Rockwell's *Saturday Evening Post* cover paintings. A commercial artist, he was a Ridgefield resident from 1946 to 1986, living on Olmstead Lane, St. Johns Road, and Silver Spring Road. He did illustrations for *Ridgefield in Review* (*q.v*.) and other books about Ridgefield. He and his wife, Martha, moved to Litchfield, where he died. [WWW]

Litchfield Gas and Electric Company, the predecessor of Connecticut Light and Power Company, had an office at 18 Bryon Avenue in 1940**.** [TD1940] *See also* Electricity.

Little, Walter, operated a grocery store in the early 20th Century at what is now 38 West Branchville Road. *See also* Halfway House. [JFS]

Little Brook Stables was B. Sturges Selleck's stable of racehorses, around today's 23 Barry Avenue. [DD70]

Little Italy, a pasta and pizza restaurant, was opened in March 1989 at 88 Danbury Road by Lorenzo and Vincenzo Carusone.

Little League baseball in Ridgefield was first established in 1954; William W. Allen, athletic director at RHS, was its first president. Games were played on Prospect Ridge, where a dugout was constructed in 1955 and a scoreboard added in 1956. Veterans Park field for Little League was built in 1957, the first year when major league players got full uniforms. In 1960, Aldrich Field was added. In 2024, Little League served more than 500 boys and girls on over 80 teams from T-ball to Majors and the Holland Division. *See also* Fitzgerald Field, Jensen Field, Serfilippi Field, Scalzo Field. [JFS]

Little Pond, first called Aokeets or Aokeels (*q.v.*) by the natives, is a natural body of water on the west side of Route 7 just south of Route 35 intersection. It complements Great Pond (*q.v.*) to its east, and was perhaps was once part of a small chunk of Redding that extended into Ridgefield — *see* Fitch's Farm. *See also* Nesopack. [RN]

Little Rascals, a "discount" children's clothing store, opened at Copps Hill Common, 107 Danbury Road, in 1983. It complemented a similar store in Mamaroneck, N.Y. [P9/18/1983]

Little Red Schoolhouse: *See* West Lane schoolhouse.

Little Ridge Road is a dead-end lane off Indian Cave Road, part of the 1964 Twin Ridge subdivision by Giles and Barry Montgomery. It became a town highway in 1968, with a name descriptive of the land. [RN]

Little Singers, The, was a Catholic boys choir, established and led by Father Francis Medyski while he was pastor of St. Mary's Parish, 1973-76, during which time it twice traveled to Europe and sang at such locations as the Vatican, Westminster Cathedral and Royal Albert Hall. Among Little Singers alumni is John Frey (*q.v.*). The choir was resurrected in 1978 for a while at St. Elizabeth Seton Church. [P1/5/1978, 11/30/1978] In July 1986 Les Petits Chanteurs de Paris (Little Singers of Paris) came to St. Elizabeth

Seton for a concert. [JFS]

Livery Stables: In the 19th and early 20th Century, livery stables provided horses and carriages for rent, and spaces where villagers could house their own horses so they would not need their own stables. Livery stables also provided taxi and "trucking" services. Ridgefielders who operated stables included Henry Whitlock, son Morris Whitlock, Hiram K. Scott Jr., B.E. Sperry, H.J. White, Adams and Keeler, and D. Crosby Baxter (*q.v. each*)

Livestock: Because its rocky, hilly soils are not ideal for growing crops on a large scale, Ridgefield was largely a dairy farming community for more than two centuries. In January 1888, J.W. Rockwell said more than 800 cows lived in Ridgefield and nearby South Salem. In 1930, Ridgefield had 162 horses, 475 cows, 1,298 automobiles, and 1,425 taxpayers. Five Ridgefield herds were among the top 20 in milk production in Fairfield County from January through August 1940, the Fairfield County Dairy Herd Improvement Association reported. Among them were Daniel McKeon (*q.v.*), 11 cows, averaging 5,837 pounds of milk and 315.6 pounds of fat each; Rundle Bloomer, 96 cows, 6,229 pounds of milk, 251.2 pounds of fat; and Irving B. Conklin (*q.v.*), 84 cows, 5,675 pounds of milk and 250.1 pounds of fat. From the founding of the town, Ridgefield maintained a series of pounds (*q.v.*) to hold roaming livestock that might damage crops (many grown to feed that livestock!). Unclaimed animals were auctioned off by the town. On Oct. 5, 1857, the Town Meeting set the costs for impounding animals: Horses, asses and mules, 25 cent each; neat cattle, 12 cents; swine, 10 weeks old or more, 8 cents; sheep, 6 cents. To help deal with the problem of roaming livestock, the town voted Oct. 1, 1854, that "horses, neat cattle, mules, swine and geese shall be prohibited from running at large on the highways or commons of this town." That ban continued to be renewed at other town meetings in the mid-19th Century. *See also* Brands, Sheep, Swine, Ridgefield Creamery. [RT]

Livingston, Robert Teviot, (1896-1968), an Indiana native who lived at 50 High Ridge Avenue in the 1950s and 60s, was a professor of industrial engineering and management at Columbia University for more than 40 years. He received the Freedom Foundation Award in 1951, the Gilbreth Award and Medallion in 1965 and the Management Science Marquis Award in 1968. He was president of the Livingstone Institute for Management Research and Training, author of four books on industrial and management engineering, and was an editorial consultant for McGraw-Hill. [NYT1/8/1968, DD155] He married Katherine Hull Grey whose family built the house at 50 High Ridge. *See also* Bent Garth.

Loaf Hill was mentioned in Geographical Positions in the State of Connecticut Geodesy, an 1890 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey publication. CPN says it is one-half mile west of Fox Hill Lake, what was locally called Asproom Loaf (*q.v.*), Asproom Loft, Aspen Loaf, and Aspine Loaf in various 18th and 19th Century land records. It is what is generally the ridge that extends from Limestone Road to Spring Valley Road, including what are today called Barlow Mountain (elevation of 950 feet), Ridgebury Mountain and Sugar Loaf Mountain (*q.v. each*). [RN]

Lobdell, Samuel, (1820-1864), a native of North Salem, was a Ridgefield tailor in the mid-19th Century but eventually moved to Newark, N.J., where he died. [DOJN]

Local Streets was a Ridgefield teen band in late 1980s featuring Dwaine Bell,

Scott Young, John Paquin, Chris Secrest, and John Alexander. [P6/18/1987]

Locker Room, The, a sporting goods and clothing shop at Girolametti Court, 19 Danbury Road, opened in 1980. It lasted less than three years. [P9/4/1980]

Lockwood, Jacob M., (1817-1899), a Pound Ridge native, came to Ridgefield in 1833 and became a prominent carpenter and builder, and in 1866 also an undertaker. His business and probably his home were on Catoonah Street. He helped build the Methodist church at Main and Catoonah Streets. In 1868 he started the Ridgefield Cemetery Association, laid out much of what's now called Scott's Cemetery, and was its superintendent. He also sold St. Mary Parish the land on which it built its current church. [TCA1893, CBRFC, *Republican Farmer* 16/2/1866]

Lockwood Cemetery was a 19th Century name, so-called in [P12/10/1879], for what became known as Scott's Cemetery (*q.v.*), the most populated of the cemeteries within "Ridgefield Cemetery." Jacob Lockwood (*q.v.*) established it as Ridgefield Cemetery (*q.v.*), a name that by the mid-20th Century was often being applied to the group of six cemeteries in that triangular neighborhood. [HLYB]

Lockwoods or Lockwood's Corners is an old name for the intersection of Danbury, Limestone, and Haviland Roads, so called by the mid-19th Century because the Charles S. Lockwood family lived at the southern corner of Danbury and Limestone Roads; Charles bought the 29 acres and home from Jacob Dauchy in 1844. Lockwoods were an old but small family in Ridgefield, probably founded by Peter Lockwood of Norwalk, who came to Farmingville in 1744. [RN]

Loder, William C., (1843-1905), and **Mary,** (1851-1922), operated a boarding house at 3 Governor Street (*see* Loder House). He had worked for the railroad in the 1880s, then was furniture repairman, while also keeping boarders. A Republican, he served as a state representative in 1884. Loder was from an old French family; tradition had it that the first Loder came to this country with the army of Lafayette. [CBRFC]

Loder House was a boarding house at 3 Governor Street where the Fairfield County Bank drive-in office is today. It included the "Ridgefield Dining Room" restaurant in the 1920s. The building became the home of the Ridgefield Boys' Club (*q.v.*) from the 1940s until 1959, when it was razed. [JFS].

Lodestar was a Ridgefield High School literary magazine, founded in 1980. Its first advisers were teachers Steve Blumenthal and Adam Salvo (*q.v.*) [P6/12/1980]. *Lodestar* later gained national attention when in the spring of 1988, supporters of the magazine sued the school board, claiming a violation of free speech, after the Lodestar published an alumnus submission with colorful language that prompted the superintendent David Larson to ban non-student submissions. The legal battle that lasted a year and was finally settled out of court; it cost the school board more than $400,000 in legal fees. [JFS]

Lodewick, Philip and Christine, were the moving forces behind A Better Chance (*q.v.*) and have led fundraisers for ABC, such as Jazz at Maple Hill, at their home on Spring Valley Road. Both hold degrees from UConn and have been major supporters of the school; they donated the Lodewick Visitors Center, which opened at the Storrs campus in 2000. They have been active in St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, the Discovery Center, League

of Women Voters, and other organizations. [NR]

Loeb, Elizabeth A. "Nackey" Scripps, (1924-2000), a daughter of Robert P. Scripps (*q.v.*), owned the *Connecticut Sunday Herald* in Bridgeport and was publisher of the Manchester *Union-Leader* in NH. She endowed a journalism school at U of NH. She summered at 100 South Salem Road as a child. [WWW]

Loeb, Robert Herman, Jr. , (1913-1996), was the author of the best-selling humorous cookbook, *Wolf in Chef's Clothing*. He also wrote *How to Wine Friends and Affluent People* and *She Cooks to Conquer*, as well as a bar guide called *Nip Ahoy*. He had been food and drink editor of *Esquire* magazine. He lived on Farm Hill Road in the 1960s, later in Georgetown, and was living in Woodbury when he died.

Loitering: Ridgefield had several 20th Century proposals to ban loitering in the village, aimed at teenagers. The last effort, an anti-loitering ordinance in 1969, was adopted by the Town Meeting, but police had difficulty convincing prosecutors in the Superior Court to pursue their arrests for violations. The ordinance was abandoned in the early 1970s after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a similar law in another state. [JFS]

Lone Rock was the home of noted actor Cyril Ritchard (*q.v*.), located on a pond off Old Pierce Road (*q.v*.). *See also* Clifford Hayes. [WWW]

Long Bogs was situated in northern Ridgebury, possibly near the present-day Mill Plain section of Danbury or somewhat north of it. An 1806 deed indicates it was very near the New York line. [RN]

Long Bridge was probably more a road than a suspended "bridge," applied to a section of western Farmingville Road, from the first curve just east of Danbury Road to Norrins Ridge, just west of Lee Road. Because it bisected a part of Great Swamp, it was a "bridge." The term was mentioned as early as a 1753 deed. [RN]

Long Meadow, cited in deeds from 1774, 1802, and 1846, was probably along Ridgebury Road near Regan or Old Stagecoach Roads. [RN]

Long Pond: 1. An 18th Century name for the three lakes (Rippowam, Oscaleta and Waccabuc), once considered a single body of water that, before the Oblong (*q.v.*), was in Ridgefield. Environmental changes – filling, siltation, damming — made the lake shallower and created three ponds. [RN] *See also* North Long Pond. **2**. As early as 1740, deeds use Long Pond as a term for the Bennett's Pond(s) (*q.v.*) in what's now Bennett's Pond State Park. [RN]

Long Pond Mountain is mentioned in a 1760 deed for a homestead "lying near ye Long Pond Mountain" and on the "Colony line." The term also appears in 1815, 1819, and 1827 deeds for the steep hill on the north shore of Lake Rippowam (*q.v.*), once part of Long Pond (*q.v.*) in Lewisboro. The hill extends into Ridgefield along Rippowam Road. [RN]

Long Ridge, cited in a 1723 deed and on a 1700s map of the Southwest Ridges (*q.v.*), is probably north of Vista in Lewisboro, NY. Before the 1731 Oblong (*q.v*.) transfer, the locality was in Ridgefield. [RN]

Long Stone is a boundary marker about 200 feet south of Pickett's Ridge Road (also called Great Pond Road) on Ridgefield-Redding line, first mentioned in 1786. The 1828 perambulation (*q.v.*) speaks only of "a long stone" in a wall. By 1888, only a "monument" in a "stone fence" was noted. [RN]

Long Swamp was first mentioned in 1744 deeds for land along the Titicus River, east of North Salem Road and west of North Street, south of — and

perhaps also north of — Barlow Mountain Road. It was a vestige of a post-glacial lake that covered the Titicus River Valley into New York State, and the term appeared in deed as late as 1848. [RN]

Longden, John, (1911-2011), of Rising Ridge Road, a native of England and a former corporate financial officer who had worked for the United Nations, became the town's first "budget director" on March 13, 1972. The job eventually evolved into the "controller." Longden had been the volunteer clerk of the Board of Finance. He retired to Florida in 1995. His wife, **Ruth**, was a respected calligrapher who worked for museums. [P10/20/2011]

Longest Day, The, is a history of D-Day by Cornelius Ryan (*q.v.*), one of the most popular books ever written by a Ridgefielder, selling millions of copies in 18 languages since its publication in 1959. It was made into a 1962 movie noted for its huge cast of stars of stage and screen. [NR]

Longview Drive off Riverside Drive at Stonehenge Estates (*q.v.*) is so called for the view of the Norwalk River Valley and beyond — at least, at the time of development when fewer trees existed. The road rises from about 465 feet above sea level at its west end to almost 580 feet at its easternmost end. Built by Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*), it became a town highway in 1964. [RN]

Lookout Drive, Lookout Road, a private road off Lakeview Drive at the Ridgefield Lakes, is often confused with Lookout Point (*q.v*.). Lookout Drive has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Lookout Point, a dead-end road off Barlow Mountain Road, was developed by Jerry Tuccio in connection with Twixt Hills (*q.v*.) to serve homes on a peninsula projecting into Pierrepont Pond — Lake Naraneke (*q.v.*). It became a town road in 1961. [RN]

Loomis, Marianne, a resident since 1980 with a home on Overlook Drive, was a Board of Education member, served as secretary of the Conservation Commission for seven years, and was on Democratic Town Committee. She served as an East Ridge Middle School secretary. Her husband **Tony** (1945-2022) was a physicist who had taught at Harvard and worked at Schlumberger-Doll's research center here. [JFS]

Loppacher, Peter Andrew (1952-2021), a native of Poughkeepsie and RHS 1971, was a professional photographer who did much work for national and regional magazines. He fell to his death while photographing in the Swiss mountains. [P8/5/2021]

Lord Newall, The: *See* Francis Eaton.

Loren Lane is a short dead-end road off Mamanasco Road, named for Peter Paul Lorenzini (*q.v*.), who developed it in the late 1950's. [RN]

Lorenzini, Peter Paul (1916-2004), a native of Mahopac, NY, came to Ridgefield around 1940 and after doing defense industry work in Bridgeport during World War II, went into the home-building business. He also built the Soundview Road neighborhood, and also many houses on Split Level Road and at Eight Lakes (*q.v.*). A lifelong member of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department, he retired in 1970 to Fort Pierce, Fla., where he died. [RN]

Lorna Doone, a popular restaurant, was started 1921 by Mrs. Edward Hutchison and Mrs. James Hutchison on Main Street near where Addessi Jewelry Store is in 2026. When the Scott Block was erected in 1922, the restaurant moved to new space at corner of Main and Catoonah Streets, now 395 Main Street. The owners retired in 1937, and the restaurant became Corner Cupboard (*q.v*.), then others, including Scala's. For the past

four or more decades, it has housed real estate offices, most of them involving the Neumann family. In 2026, it is Houlihan Lawrence. [JFS]

Lorul Place is the name Frederic Remington (*q.v.*) gave to his home off Barry Avenue when he had it built in 1909. The name has been confirmed by a letterhead on correspondence written by Remington from there. Sometimes mistakenly spelled Lural [P12/30/1909], its origin is unknown. The estate was later called Oak Knoll (*q.v.*). In 1965, the house was declared a national historic landmark. The studio he had in the house has been reproduced in detail at the Remington Art Museum in Ogdensburg, N.Y., [JFS, WWW]

Lossius, Anna Augusta Wetlesen, (ca. 1936-2024), a native of Norway and a Ridgefielder since 1969, was the first woman to serve as branch manager at Bank of America in Ridgefield, and the first woman member of the Lions Club (*q.v.*), as well as the first female president. She was active in the First Congregational Church, Chamber of Commerce, and Habitat for Humanity, volunteering in Honduras and the Dominican Republic. [JFS]

Lost in Place: Growing Up Absurd in Suburbia, an autobiography by Mark Salzman (*q.v.*), published by Random House in 1995, offers a light-hearted look at Salzman's childhood and youth in Ridgefield. [JFS]

Lost Mine Place, a dead-end road off the south side of New Road, serves the 11-lot, 1986 Hunting Ridge subdivision. Its 27 acres, originally part of Robert A. Lee family's farm, were developed by Lost Mine Limited Partnership. The name recalls a silver mine (*q.v.*) that was said to have once operated somewhere off the northern side of New Road. [RN]

Lotus, a restaurant at 90 Danbury Road specializing in Mandarin and Szechuan cuisine, was started Dec. 1, 1981, by Geoffrey Liu, who later operated a similar restaurant in Westport. Lotus was later owned by Michael Chan. In 2004, when it was owned by Piu Ling, it closed and became Spagone, then Luna Rossa and, in 2026, Posa — all Italian cuisine. [JFS]

Lou's Liquor Store operated from Dec. 28, 1954, until April 27, 1987, in the Gaeta Shopping Center, 437 Main Street. It was opened by Louise Feduzi whose son, Lou, eventually took it over. Louise was still working there at age 90 in 1987. [P6/11/1987]

Lounsbury, Delia A. Scofield, (-1895), a native of Pound Ridge, NY, and the wife of Nathan Scofield, was the mother of two Connecticut governors, Phineas and George Lounsbury. During the Civil War she served briefly as a nurse in Washington, D.C.. probably related to her helping her son, Phineas (*q.v.*), a Union soldier who was seriously ill. [JFS]

Lounsbury, George Edward, (1838-1904), a native of Pound Ridge, NY, and a graduate of Yale, started his career as an Episcopal priest, but left the ministry due to throat problems and operated shoe factories in Norwalk. He was a state senator, 1895-97, and served as governor of Connecticut from 1899 to 1901. He retired to the family farm, The Hickories (*q.v.*), on Lounsbury Road and left an estate worth $300,000 (about $10 million in 2026 dollars). [WWW, P9/15/1904]

Lounsbury, Nathan, (1807-94), a native of Stamford, was a farmer, Republican state representative in 1875, and father of two governors, Phineas and George Lounsbury (Phineas was state representative the year before his father). His home is now The Hickories (*q.v.*) on Lounsbury Road. He was the husband of Delia A. Scofield Lounsbury (*q.v.*). [JFS, Rockwell]

Lounsbury, Phineas Chapman, (1841-1925), was a shoe manufacturing

executive and NYC bank president who was Republican governor of Connecticut, 1887-89. His home, Grovelawn, at 316 Main Street, is now called the Community Center or The Lounsbury House *(q.v.*). He was a state representative in 1874 (his father, Nathan, was a state representative the following year). His brother, George (*q.v.*), was also a governor. [WWW]

Lounsbury Cemetery: *See* Lounsbury-Rockwell Cemetery.

Lounsbury House: **1**. Phineas C. Lounsbury's original home at 316 Main Street was moved around 1894 to 27 Governor Street to make way for new house. It was razed 2015 to make way for new Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association headquarters. **2.** The present Ridgefield Veterans Community Center — *see* Community Center. [JFS]

Lounsbury Lane is a steep old road that connected Lounsbury Road to Florida Hill Road, appearing on Clark's map in 1856. It was abandoned for most of 20th Century, but in the late 1980's, John Sturges received approval to develop some lots along the southern end, whose route was modified somewhat to avoid wetlands. It bore the Lounsbury Lane name at least by 1946, reflecting the nearby Lounsbury family (*see* Nathan Lounsbury). [RN]

Lounsbury Ridge is a 1983 subdivision by Carl Lecher (*q.v.*) of 21 acres off Lounsbury Road, served by Banks Hill Place (*q.v.*). [RN]

Lounsbury Road extends from Ivy Hill and Blackman Roads on the west to Farmingville and Cain's Hill Roads on the east. It probably existed from the 18th Century, serving as an extension of Ivy Hill Road to Cain's Hill Road, a main route to eastern Redding. By the turn of the 20th Century, it was being called Lounsbury Road after the Nathan Lounsbury (*q.v.*) family that lived at The Hickories (*q.v.*) farm along the east end of the road. [RN]

Lounsbury-Rockwell Cemetery, also called simply the Lounsbury Cemetery, was established in 1894 using land at the tip of the triangle of North Salem Road and North Street that had been the site of the first Methodist church in town. The private family cemetery, usually considered part of "Ridgefield Cemetery" (*q.v.*), contains about 45 gravesites or memorials. [HLYB]

Lovejoy, John, (ca. 1835-1853), a sailor from Ridgefield and son of Daniel and Betsie Lovejoy, "was lost at sea Nov. 2, 1854 (sic) in attempting to save the life of a passenger who accidentally fell overboard, aged 19 years," says his gravestone in Scott's (Ridgefield) Cemetery. His heroic deed was in fact in 1853 aboard the passenger ship, Advance. [FBFR]

Lovers Lane: Every town seems to have a lovers lane, whether or not it's on the map – and it's usually not. In the early part of the 20th Century, today's Rockwell Road, or at least its western leg, was nicknamed Lovers Lane, where village sweethearts could find a bit of privacy. Probably other little lanes here have been so called. [RN]

Low, Deborah, the 16th school superintendent, served from 2007 to 2014. [JFS]

Lowe, Jim, (1923-2016), (pronounced *low*), was a longtime popular disk jockey on WNBC, WCBS and WNEW in New York City who sang "The Green Door," which became a number-one hit song in 1956. He was also a composer and wrote "The Gambler's Guitar," a 1955 hit sung by Rusty Draper, and "Close the Doors They're Coming in the Windows," a million-seller country hit. He lived in Twin Ridge during the 1970s. [WWW]

Lowe, Dr. Russell W. (1868-1944) (pronounced *laow*), a native of Oneida, NY, practiced medicine here for 53 years, starting around 1891— except for service in the Army Medical Corps in World War I. He was also the town

health officer, the medical examiner, and the school physician much of that time. He was president of the Danbury Medical Society for 40 years and was a community leader whose advice was often sought on non-medical issues. Among the first Ridgefielders to own a car, he lived and practiced at 531 Main Street, later the home of Dr. Peter and Beth Yanity (*q.v. each*). [WWW, CBRFC]

Lower Mill Pond, another name for Lower Pond (*q.v.*), was first mentioned in an 1846 deed. [RN]

Lower Pond, an old complement to Upper Pond, is now a very small pond along the Titicus River on the south side of Saw Mill Hill Road, just below Roberts Pond (which is much newer than Upper or Lower Ponds). Beers shows Lower Pond was several times larger in the 19th Century than now. These ponds were water storage for several downstream mills at Titicus. It has also been called "Saw Mill Pond." [RN]

Lown, Harvey Bishop, (1899-1967), a Wilton native, was a popular businessman and World War I veteran who was a Republican state representative from 1935 to 1937. In 1940, after serving 13 years as town tax collector, he was arrested and convicted of mixing tax dollars with his insurance business finances, and spent more than two years in state prison. According to testimony, he used town tax income to pay insurance premiums of some customers who had been hit hard by the Depression and couldn't afford to keep up with their insurance. Although he had gradually been returning funds he had thus "borrowed," the state was cracking down on tax collectors who intermingled funds, and decided to use Lown as an example. Nonetheless, he remained so popular among Ridgefielders that, after his release from prison, he returned to his business, the Lown Agency, and remained active in the community, especially veterans groups such as Last Man's Club (*q.v*.). [WWW. DD94,95]

Lown Agency was a local insurance business from the 1930s to the 1950s. *See* Harvey B. Lown.

Loya, Drew, was appointed as fire marshal in October 2024 by Board of Selectpersons after serving 25 years with the fire department and two years before that as a contract medic. [ITH]

Loyalists: Ridgefield was largely a town of loyalists in early 1775 and, at a special Town Meeting Jan. 30, 1775, with only nine dissenters, some 200 men passed a resolution stating "We do acknowledge his most sacred majesty King George ye 3rd to be our rightfull Sovereign, and do hereby Publickly avow our allegiance to him and his lawfull successors, and that we will to the utmost of our power support his throne and dignity against every combination in the universe … It would be dangerous and hurtfull to the Inhabitants of the Town to adopt said Congress measures and we do hereby publicly disapprove of and protest against said Congress and the measures by them directed to as unconstitutional, as subversive of our real liberties, and as countenancing licenciousness." However, by Dec. 7, 1775, the tide had turned and the ATM unanimously passed a resolution, supporting the Continental Congress. Nonetheless, many Ridgefielders remained loyal to the king; some fled to NY and Canada; some left and then returned. The state confiscated the land of several loyalists, but after the war, often return all or part of the property in an effort to help heal political wounds. Among local loyalists were: David and Joshua Burt, John Dauchy, Samuel Hawley,

Josiah Smith, Ebenezer Stebbins, Josiah Stebbins, Rev. Epenetus Townsend, William Wallace, Daniel Wilson, Thomas Wilson, Nathan Wood, Sara Wood. (*q.v. each*). Keith Jones has documented over 50 Ridgefielders known to have been or suspected of being Loyalists. [JFS, GSTK]

Luce, Clare Boothe, (1903-1987), native of New York City, was a journalist and playwright, whose "The Women" was a hit on Broadway and in film in 1930s. Her 1949 screenplay for "Come to the Stable" was nominated for an Academy Award. She was a GOP congresswoman from Fourth District of Connecticut from 1943 to 1947, and ambassador to Italy from 1953 to 1956. She and her husband, Time-Life founder Henry Luce (*q.v.*), had a home on Great Hill Road from 1947 to 1961. [WWW]

Luce, Henry R., (1897-1967), born to missionary parents in China, was co-founder, longtime editor and publisher of *Time* magazine, then founded *Fortune, Life,* and *Sports Illustrated.* He and his wife, playwright, congresswoman, and ambassador Clare Boothe Luce (*q.v.*), bought the Taghkanick (*q.v.*) estate on Great Hill and Limestone Roads in 1947 and lived there till 1961. They called the place Sugar Hill. [WWW]

Luckey, Andrew A., (1965-), who's lived on Marcardon Avenue since 2001, is an animator, artist, author, designer, director, illustrator and television producer, primarily of animated works. He also writes and illustrates children's books and Bible studies. From 1989 to 1992, he was a producer on the 1980s-1990s animated TV series "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles," which earned five Emmy nominations. He has also been involved in producing video games, and holds a master's degree in divinity. [W]

Ludington Court is a cluster of five, $1-million-plus houses on the former Gilbert homestead, 509-517 Main Street, on the north corner of Main and Gilbert Streets, developed in 2018-20. The project was developed by Michael Eppoliti of Ridgefield, designed by Mose Associates. It's named for Sybil Ludington, the young woman from Putnam County, N.Y., who, according to legend, warned militia in NY about the British attack on Danbury and Ridgefield in 1777. *See also* William Henry Gilbert.

Luigi's: Restaurant at 37 Ethan Allen Highway, was operated by Louis and Margaret Ridolfi (*q.v.*) from ca. 1960 to 1986. *See also* Jean's Restaurant, Barn Door, Cella's, Amici's, 59 Bank Street.

Luke, Mary, (1925-1993), wrote seven, critically acclaimed, historical biographies and novels on Elizabethan and Tudor personalities, including *The Nine Days Queen, The Nonsuch Lure*, and *A Crown for Elizabeth,* She lived on Hawthorne Hill Road, and was active in the Ridgefield Library, Visiting Nurse Association and Ridgefield and Caudatowa Garden Clubs. [WWW]

Lund, Rev. Clayton R., (1919-2000), was 17th minister of the First Congregational Church, serving from 1956 to 1986. After leading efforts to rebuild the church house, destroyed in a 1978 fire, the new building was called Lund Hall in his honor. Best known for comforting those in need, he was praised at his retirement by novelist and historian Kathryn Morgan Ryan (whose Roman Catholic husband, author Cornelius Ryan, was a close friend of the minister). Lund, she said, is "a man of surging talent and uncontainable compassion." [WWW]

Lund Hall is the community center at First Congregational Church, completed in 1980, after a December 1978 fire destroyed the old church house (formerly the Ridgefield Club — *q.v.*). The cornerstone was laid May 18, 1980 and the

building was in use by December [P11/25/1980] dedicated Dec. 7, 1980, named for the church's minister, Rev. Clayton R. Lund (*q.v.*).

Lural Place: *See* Lorul Place.

Lusk, Rev. William B, "Daddy," (1869-1953), a native of Northern Ireland, was rector of St. Stephen's Church from 1915 to 1950. [P4/6/1915]. He and his wife, Edna, had chickens, a cow, and some rabbits out back of the rectory. In World War I, he traveled to France to visit and encourage the troops. After World War II, he served on the Postwar Planning Board, and helped rebuild an ancient, bombed-out church in London. After working in England, the Lusks returned to Ridgefield, living on High Ridge. [WWW] His retirement home at 42 High Ridge Avenue was built for him. [DD155]

Lydy, Beth, (1896-1979), a Broadway musical actress and wife of violin prodigy Eddy Brown (*q.v.*), wrote scripts for Brown's radio programs on WOR and WQXR in NYC. They had a house on Peaceable Street in the 1940s. [FBFR]

Lynch, Alice Rockwell, (1918-2001), a Ridgefield native who lived on St. Johns Road, was an antiques dealer and a cousin of Pat Nixon, wife of the president, who would visit her here. She also attended presidential events, and once, wearing a gold lame dress her trash collector had found at a tag sale and had loaned to her, she was widely written about for her partying at a Johnny Cash concert at the White House. "She was almost as much fun to watch as the entertainment," said the *Washington Pos*t. [WWW]

Lynch, John Hampton, (1859-1929), an NYC native, was president of the Terminal Warehouse Company in Manhattan [NYT3/21/1929] who established the 50-acre West Mountain Farm estate in 1914, now Ridgefield Academy. He was married to Lucy Moffitt Lynch [DD273, RGE]

Lynch, Lucy Moffitt (1874-1960), wife of John Hampton Lynch (*q.v.*), was a member of the Board of Finance for 10 years, and was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club and the Garden Club of America, and a founder of the Ridgefield Boys Club [P11/17/1960, NYT11/13/1960, DD273, RGE]

Lynes, Benjamin, (1759-1840), was captured as a boy by the British just before the Battle of Ridgefield and was soon released after he refused to help them. He served as a teamster in the Continental Army. He later had a store and a tavern/inn at the top of the hill on the east side of Ridgebury Road, about where #484, Ridgebury Farm, is today. This is also the land on which William Maltbie Lynes (*q.v.*) subsequently built his house — still standing as the center of the farm. Benjamin was a state representative in 1812, 1820 and 1821. The name is sometimes misspelled Linus. [RIR, RPT, JW] *See also* Spruce Ridge Farm.

Lynes, William Maltbie, (abt. 1818-1882), was a Ridgebury farmer who served as a Republican state representative in 1856. He was a son of Benjamin Lynes (*q.v.*).

Lyons' Den was a restaurant on north corner of Grove Street and Sunset Lane, operated 1960s by Bill and Helen Lyons. It earlier had been Pierpaoli's Tavern, Joe's Hideaway; later Perp's, Corner Pub, The Hideaway (*q.v. each).*

M

MacDonald, Joan Elizabeth Seyfried, (1931-2019), was a dancer for the Washington Redskins and the Radio City Rockettes summer touring troupe. She and her husband Robert moved here in 1970 and she began teaching dance in 1972, mostly through the Parks and Recreation Department. After she retired in 1999, her daughter **Carrie Pin**, took over the school. [NR]

Madeline Drive, off Bennett's Farm Road, was created in 1958 when Ridgefield Lakes Inc., headed by William L. Winthrop, subdivided 20 acres just north of Fox Hill Lake. Madeline was the wife of John Tuite, a surveyor with Henrici Inc., which worked on the subdivision. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Madrigals, The, a co-curricular a cappella group of 34 RHS students led by Lauren Verney-Fink, performed at Radio City Music Hall in NYC for the Rockettes' annual Christmas Spectacular Nov. 29, 2025. [P11/20/2025]

Mafia Blocks has been an informal term, apparently coined in jest by Paul Morganti, for concrete barriers erected Sept. 24, 1984, at top of a connecting ramp between parking lots of Edwin Allan buildings at 440 Main Street and Yankee Ridge Shopping Center [P9/27/1984]. They were installed by Morganti and his partners at Yankee Ridge, who complained that cars sped through the connector, using it as a short-cut to avoid Main Street and creating hazards for pedestrians and cars. Merchants said the blockade made parking difficult and hindered deliveries by large trucks. Repeated attempts by the town to get them removed to improve traffic flow in the lots have failed over the subsequent decades. [JFS]

Magazine editors and publishers who lived in Ridgefield include: Betsy Talbot Blackwell, James B. Carrington, Gordon Carroll, Deirdre Colabella, Harold Goldsmith, Henry Luce, John Ames Mitchell, Geoffrey Morris, Paul Palmer, Philip W. Quigg, Kathryn Morgan Ryan, Abigail Goodrich Whittelsey, E. Matilda Ziegler. *See also* American Mercury, Editors, Ridgefield Magazine.

Magicians: *See* Derek Hilton, Houdini, Jack Trepel.

Mail carrier, first: Robert Wilson (*q.v.*) was said to be the first Ridgefielder to deliver mail, 1901.

Mail Boxes Etc, USA opened in September 1987 at 54 Danbury Road, owned by John Tarrantino and John Sommers. It grew into the UPS Store. [P9/10/1987]

Main, Hubert Platt, (1839-1925), a Ridgefield native, was a publisher and composer of music for more than 1,000 hymns in the 19th Century, some for the words of Fanny Crosby (*q.v.*), of whom he was a close friend. With Lucius H. Biglow (*q.v.*), he owned the NYC music publishing firm of Biglow & Main. He also collected books on music, 35,000 volumes of which were acquired by the Newberry Library in Chicago. [WWW]

Main, Mary, (1903-1998), a native of Argentina born of British parents, was a novelist and acclaimed biographer of Eva Peron (*The Woman with the Whip,* 1952). She often wrote under the pseudonym of Maria Flores, and became totally blind by the 1960s, but still produced a historical novel, *The Girl Who Was Never Queen*, in 1962. Her husband, James, was a British

engineer. She lived with her son, Jeremy Main from 1973 until her death. [NYT11/16/1998]

Main, Sylvester, a Ridgefielder and father of Hubert Main (*q.v.*), was a musician, music teacher and hymnist who became a partner with Lucius H. Biglow (*q.v.*) in the large, 19th Century religious music publishing company, Biglow and Main. [JFS]

Main Street was originally called the Town Street, Ridgefield Street and Village Street. The name "Main Street" was in use by 1818. It existed by 1709, and was formally defined Dec. 26, 1721, when the town fathers specified it was "eight rodds weadth" (132 feet wide). It was paved with concrete in the mid-1920s. It was paved in 1926. [RN] For a pictorial history of Main Street, *see* OMS and FVW.

Maine, Florene, (1896-1980), was a nationally known antiques specialist and dealer who lived at 113 West Lane at her death where she operated Red Petticoat Antiques. She came to Ridgefield in 1928, operating a store on Route 7 opposite Florida Hill Road until 1966. After a brief period in Wilton, she bought the antique West Lane house in 1971. Maine sold her first antique at the age of 5 — a jewel box that had belonged to the Duchess de Orleans. The buyer, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, paid 4,000 times what she had paid for it. [P11/20/1980, WWW]

Maiolo, Guido, (1937-2025), a physical education teacher, was Ridgefield High School football coach from 1980 to 1990 and guided the team to school's first state championship (Class L) in 1983. He also coached girls softball in the 1990s and girls basketball. A field at RHS was named for him in 2013 and he received a National Football Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award in 1992. [JFS, KFH]

Maiolo Field is a multipurpose athletic field at Ridgefield High school, named in 2013 for former football coach Guido Maiolo (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Malin, Robert, (1937-), then of Harding Drive and a graphics director for Perkin-Elmer, designed the official town seal (*q.v.*) in a competition that ended in 1972. More than a dozen artists submitted entries. He moved to Brookfield. [JFS]

Mallon, Mary, (1869-1938), famously called Typhoid Mary, was said to have been a cook with a a family of Ridgefield "summer people" in the early 20th Century and, as a typhoid carrier, was responsible for six cases of the fever in one family in town [P7/22/1909]. A native of Ireland, she worked as a cook for many families and institutions in and about New York City, but was apprehended twice and eventually spent much of her life in court-ordered isolation on North Brother Island, N.Y. [WWW]

Mallory, Harry B., (1874-1964), was a partner in the Mallory Hat Company in Danbury and was a founder of the Danbury Savings and Loan Association. Very much afraid of fire, he built his house north of Shadow Lake Road, east of Briar Ridge, to be virtually fireproof. Besides having stone walls and a slate roof, the building was equipped with sliding steel doors that automatically closed when unusually high heat was detected, thus confining a fire to one area. His manor house was acquired by Boehringer Ingelheim Ltd., which used it for a while to accommodate visiting executives but tore it down in one of the company's expansions on the site. *See also* Mallory Pond. [RN]

Mallory Hill Road is a loop from Wilridge Road to White Birches Road, part of a

development begun by Joseph Leo Dioguardi (*q.v.*) as early as 1914; this road was not built until the late 1940's, so called at least from 1949. It was named for the Mallory family, which had lived thereabouts since 1800 when Nathan Mallory had property on the Ridgefield-Wilton line. [RN]

Mallory Pond, so-called on Hearne Brothers map, ca. 1965, is a small body of water, now owned by the town, south of the eastern end of Shadow Lake Road. It's better known today as Shadow Lake (*q.v.*). For many years in the first half of the century, the pond was owned by Harry B. Mallory (*q.v.*), who stocked it with game fish. Mallory's house, on the north side of Shadow Lake Road, was acquired by Boehringer Ingelheim Ltd., to accommodate visiting executives; it was eventually razed in one of the company's expansions on the site. The pond probably built by Mallory sometime after 1909 for fishing and to encourage wildlife to live on his sizable estate. [RN]

Malloy, Alexander Graham, (1938-2019), was an inveterate collector of many things, including ancient coins and artifacts which he sold through his company, Alex G. Malloy Inc., with offices at 15 Danbury Road. He was co-author of the book, *Kiddie Meal Collectibles* (2001). He retired to Summit Point, W.Va.

Maltas, Brian, (1943-2020), and **Marilyn**, (1944-2015), operated Frances Cleaners (*q.v*.), the family business, for many years. [JFS]

Malval, Margaret "Peggy," (1912-2008), a native of Australia who came to Ridgefield in 1942, was an artist who lived on Wilton Road West for many years. Her work appears in RIR and has been exhibited widely in the region. She was active in WW2 homefront efforts here.

Mamanasco: This unusual American Indian name first appears in a description the first purchase of land from local natives in 1708 for a boundary that "extends to a place called Mamanasquag, where is a oak tree marked on ye north side of the outlet of water that comes out from a sort of grassy pond, which is known and called by said name..." Some have thus interpreted the word as meaning "grassy pond." Huden translates the word as "united outlets," or "two sharing the same outlet," suggesting Mamanasco may have once been two ponds. Mamanasco has at least 12 versions of spellings in the land records including: Mamanasquag (1709), Mamanasquogg (1716), Mamanusco (1741), Mamanausco (1745), Mamanusqua (1745), Mamansquog (pre-1750), Mammenusquah (pre-1750), Mamenasco (1746), Mamenasqua (1750), Mammenasco (1790), and Mammenusquag (1797). [RN] *See also* Mamanasco Lake.

Mamanasco Farm was the **e**state of Anne S. Richardson (*q.v*.), house built ca. 1912, razed after her death in 1965; property is now Richardson Park plus sites of RHS and Scotts Ridge Middle School [WWW, DD13]

Mamanasco grist mill, a water-powered mill that ground wheat, corn and other grains into flours**,** was established about 1717 by Daniel Sherwood, with whom the town had contracted to build and operate the flour mill. Located at the end of today's Pond Road (*q.v.)* below a dam on Mamanasco Lake, the mill was soon acquired by Seaborn Burt (*q.v*.); one of Seaborn Burt's heirs was son Theophilus Burt (*q.v*.), a Tory, who fled to British protection in the war. The state confiscated his property, including his share in mill. However, after the war, Theophilus returned and state restored some of his property title, including a share in the Mamanasco mill that his father and grandfather had owned. The Proprietors, deciding to give up any

connection with the mill, granted for the modest sum of $50 the remainder of its title in the building and pond to Burt and his partner, Thomas Hyatt, in 1797. [RLR 8/124] Burts continued to have interests in the mill — Joshua Burt was one of several owners in 1817, and Epenetus Burt had grist and saw mills at the lake in 1865. It has not yet been determined when the mill stopped producing flour, but there was a paper mill operating thereabouts by 1866 — *see* Mamanasco Lake Mills. *See also* Read's Mill Pond. [JFS]

Mamanasco Hill is the name for the ridge to the northeast of Mamanasco Lake, an area that includes North Salem Road, upper Pond Road, Circle Drive, Hobby Drive, and Colonial Lane. It appears in records as early as 1717. [RN]

Mamanasco Lake, the town's largest body of water, has long been an important Ridgefield resource. Created by nature and enlarged by the pioneers, the lake is 4,750 feet long, 1,500 feet wide, and about 96 acres. The deepest part of the lake, in its central basin, is 10 feet, and it has an average depth of five to six feet. The lake is probably a vestige of a large post-glacial lake in the Titicus River valley. Rockwell says it was created by beavers damming up the outlet, which is less likely as a cause but possibly helped its size. Indigenous peoples had encampments there, catching the fish and hunting wildlife that drank from it or fed around it. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, the lake was an important source of stored power for mills (*see* Mamanasco gristmill). With the development of its watershed (such as Eight Lakes — *q.v.*), the lake has suffered from eutrophication related to excessive nutrients, which the Mamanasco Lake Improvement Fund (*q.v.*) has been working to control. Gasoline motors are banned from the lake (*see* Motor boats), but boating is encouraged, with a state-owned boat launch at the south end. [RN, Mamanasco Beach Club]

Mamanasco Lake Improvement Fund (MLIF), organized in 1971, aims "to preserve and beautify" Lake Mamanasco (*q.v.*)." The non-profit consists of members living within the watershed area of the lake. With the cooperation of the town and the State Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, MLIF has launched a long-term program to restore the lake, including chemical treatments as a short-term solution to the aquatic weed problems, and a watershed management plan that will eventually reduce the flow of pollutants into the lake from its watershed. [MLIF.org]

Mamanasco Lake Lodge was a resort operated on Tackora Trail by Philip Hilsenrad *(q.v.*) and his wife, Molly, at the south end of Lake Mamanasco from 1940 to 1961. The inn accommodated up to 60 guests, and offered swimming, boating, tennis, evening shows, etc. It was located in the former Whylurup (*q.v.*) mansion of Cortland P. Dixon (*q.v.*), now owned by the Society of St. Pius X (*q.v.*). *See also* Manresa.

Mamanasco Lake Mills was a short-lived paper mill at the old Mamanasco gristmill site on Lake Mamanasco, created in the summer of 1866 by William J. Hoffman (*q.v.*). [Boston Commercial Bulletin 7/7/1866] It burned down that December with a loss of $25,000 ($488,000 in 2024 dollars). Apparently the mill was rebuilt and operated for some years. Hoffman had previously operated in North Salem and Croton Falls, and had three wagons that traveled around collecting old cloth and paper to be made into "rough quality wrapping paper." [RIR]

Mamanasco Lake Park, a 1957 subdivision on the southern end of the lake,

includes Lisa Lane and Christopher Road (*q.v. each*), developed by James B. Franks (*q.v.*).

Mamanasco mill: *See* Mamanasco gristmill.

Mamanasco Mountain was mentioned in 1809 Proprietors survey, possibly for the hill, about 650 feet above sea level, at Richardson Park, west of Ridgefield High School and at the northwestern end of the lake. [RN]

Mamanasco Ridge was mentioned in 1797, probably referring to the same locality as Mamanasco Hill, later Scott's Ridge (*q.v. both*), the ridge traversed by North Salem Road in the lower Mamanasco Lake area. [RN]

Mamanasco Road existed before 1856 when it appeared on the first detailed map of the town. However, until well into the 20th Century, it was little more than a dirt path around the lake, providing access to its shores for fishing. Development came to the road in the 1920s or 30s when William Peatt Sr. created his resort, consisting mostly of summer camps. The Peatt beach and recreation area were functioning until the 1980's. At around the same time Peatt arrived, the Helmuth Cottages were built there, also to serve as summer camps. Farrar Lane (*q.v.*) was once considered the southern end of Mamanasco Road. [RN]

Mammals: Among the wild mammals that have been seen in Ridgefield in the 21st Century are: Black Bear, Bobcat, Chipmunk, Coyote, White-tailed Deer (*q.v.*), Fisher, Gray Fox, Red Fox, Mink, Field Mouse, Mole, Moose (*q.v.*), Opossum, Cottontail Rabbit, Raccoon, Norway Rat, Flying Squirrel, Gray Squirrel, and Red Squirrel.

Manderback, Rev. Aaron, (1912-2018), a native of Philadelphia, was rector of St. Stephen's Church from 1950 until his retirement Oct. 5, 1980 [P8/21/1980]. He continued to serve as a fill-in from time to time and lived many years at Meadow Ridge in Georgetown. During his tenure, the parish obtained South Hall (which it sold in). In 1951 he helped establish what was to become the Ridgefield Clergy Association. [NR]

Mandolin Club was a group of Ridgefield-based musicians who performed in the 1920s.

Mannen, a Japanese restaurant, opened in 2002 at 15 Danbury Road. The space had earlier been the Old Ice House restaurant (*q.v.*).

Manners, Barbara, an attorney, came to Ridgefield 1983 and has been a Democratic member of the Board of Selectpersons since 1997. She is the creator, organizer and producer of hundreds of CHIRP (*q.v.*) concerts in Ballard Park from 2002 onward, as well as Acoustic Celebration (*q.v.*) concerts indoors. Starting in 1994, she spearheaded the creation of Ridgefield Playhouse for Movies and the Performing Arts (*q.v.*). [NR]

Manning, Sue, a native of Cincinnati who moved to Ridgefield in 1970, was chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission from the late 1970s to the early 1980s and was elected first selectman, from 1987 through 1997. She was president of Ridgefield Family Y, (1981-85), president of the League of Women Voters, and of the First Congregational Church Women's Fellowship, and has been active in many other organizations. She became an executive with Fairfield County Bank (*q.v.*). She lives at 56 East Ridge Road in a house once owned by another first selectman, Winthrop Rockwell (*q.v.*). [NR]

Manor Road runs from West Lane to Lewis Drive, the main road through the Ridgefield Manor Estates (*q.v.*). This was earlier the front driveway leading

to Upagenstit (*q.v.*) mansion of F. E. Lewis, and included yellow brick gutters and "street lights." Developed for housing in the late 1950's, it became a town highway in 1969. [RN]

Manresa is a name given to the former mansion on Tackora Trail by the Jesuits when they operated the place as a retreat center from 1960 until 1979. Earlier it had been the home of C.P. Dixon (*q.v.*) and mobster George Scalise (*q.v.*), then Mamanasco Lake Lodge (*q.v.*). Now belongs to the Society of St. Pius X (*q.v.*). In a cave near Manresa in Spain, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, a founder of the Jesuits, spent a year in solitude — a "retreat" — which contributed to his formulation of the Spiritual Exercises that has been used for centuries. [RGE]

Mansfield, Dr. Howard P., (1863-1922), was a family physician in Ridgefield from 1901 until his death. From 1918 to 1921, he was the warden of the Borough (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield. His home and office were in a large Main Street house two doors south of Prospect Street. Gov. Marcus Holcomb named him to the state Council of Public Health in 1920. He is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery. [JFS]

Manville, Thomas F. "Tommy," (1894-1967), a socialite and asbestos industry heir, married the fifth of his 11 wives, **Bonita "Bonnie" Edwards**, in the Ridgefield office of Judge Joseph Donnelly Nov. 18, 1941. Bonnie filed for divorce 17 days later! [JFS]

Maple Avenue was an early 20th Century name for today's High Ridge Avenue from Peaceable Street to Gilbert Street. The selectmen changed the name to do away with confusion over the use of two names for what amounts to the same road. [RN]

Maple Grove was a popular picnicking spot in the early 20th Century, along the original Norran's Ridge Road (*q.v.*), a now-abandoned highway from behind the Fox Hill Village eastward to Limekiln Road, then part of the Outpost Nurseries holdings. [RN]

Maple House, a furniture store at 609 Ethan Allen Highway in the 1970s, was involved in a protracted zoning battle with the town — *see* Guy Tavoliero. The building had been a restaurant before the 1946 adoption of zoning which made the area residential. Because it predated zoning, the commercial use was allowed to continue. However, after the building was vacant for more than a year, the Planning and Zoning Commission maintained it had lost its legal non-conforming status and could no longer be used for commercial purposes. It has, however, continued to be commercially used and was so in 2026 when Litchfield Hills, a stone countertop designer, occupied most of the building. [P3/8/1973] In 1981 La Petite Francaise (*q.v.*), a doll hospital, was there. *See also* Russian Village. [JFS]

Maple Restaurant was a full-service lunch and dinner restaurant at 621 Main Street (ONS152), operated starting about 1938 by Nazzareno Lavatori. The building was also his home. Son Eugene Lavatori (*q.v.*) subsequently opened Nina's Restaurant (*q.v.*) at the same site.

Maple Shade Cemetery, often appearing as Mapleshade Cemetery, was established around 1850 and so-called at least by 1889. It is bordered by North Street and Mapleshade Road, as well as by Scott's (on the south) and Titicus (west) Cemeteries. The town took over ownership from the Scott family in 2006. In 2024 it had about 890 graves. [JFS]

Mapleshade Road from North Street to North Salem Road borders the north

side of the Titicus and Mapleshade Cemeteries. Predating 1856, it was created to provide convenient access to the plots at the rear – and oldest – part of the cemetery, or to provide a more convenient connection between lower North Salem Road and North Street, both ancient highways. The name probably came from the cemetery (*q.v.*), which was so called by at least 1889. [RN]

Maplewood was the home at 19 Main Street of actress Hilda Spong from 1935 to 1955. [WWW]

Maplewood Hotel/Inn on Route 7 in Danbury, just across Ridgefield line, opposite Bennett's Farm Road (formerly called Maplewood Road), was established by Benjamin and Phoebe Selleck of Maplewood Farm [DD234]. The establishment was later called Maplewood Tourist Court. *See also* DD321-322.

Maplewood Road was named for Sturges Selleck's Maplewood Farm through which it ran; thus, the name originally applied to road from Great Hill Road to Route 7. However, it was changed to Bennett's Farm Road after 1973 petition to the selectmen from those who though Bennett's Farm was historically more accurate. Maplewood Road is now an 1,100 foot link between Great Hill and Bennett's Farm Road; it was one of the last dirt roads to be paved in town. [RN]

Maps of Ridgefield: The following are among the most useful historical maps of the town (*see also entries for each for details*): Beers Atlas of Fairfield and Westchester Counties, 1867; Blodgett's map of 1792; Clark's Map of Fairfield County, 1856; Doolittle's map of 1795; Dolph & Stewart's Atlas of Fairfield County, 1936; Romans map of 1777; Sotzmann's map of 1796; Warren's map of 1812; E. Belcher Hyde's atlas of Westchester County (1908), which covers western half of town. [Rumsey]

Marcardon Avenue is a dead-end road off Creamery Lane. Often misspelled Marcadon (for many years, street signs were incorrect), the name represents the first three letters of names of its three developers, Francis D. Martin, Arthur J. Carnall, and Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v. each*). Road serves part of a 1939 subdivision of 35 lots. *See also* Media Lane, Soundview Road. [RN]

Marconi, Rudy, a Ridgefield native, RHS 1966, and a Democrat, was elected first selectman in 1999 and re-elected ever since, serving in the office longer than anyone in the town's history. He is graduated from Nichols College, and worked in the paper and printing industry before returning to town in 1986 to join the family contracting business. He served four years on the Planning and Zoning Commission and two terms as a selectman before becoming chief executive. [NR]

Marcus, Delphine (1931-2005), a native of London, England, and former wife of cartoonist Jerry Marcus (*q.v.*), was a longtime announcer on WMNR-FM classical radio station and was active with Aldrich Museum.

Marcus, Jerry, was Ridgefield's 13th school superintendent, serving 1989-92. (he is no relation to the cartoonist.)

Marcus, Jerry, (1924-2005), was a syndicated cartoonist, most noted for his daily and Sunday strip, *Trudy*, but also as a magazine gag cartoonist. He lived here 1956-96, at first on Skytop Road, then Stonehenge Road, and frequently contributed cartoons to the *Ridgefield Press*. He and his friend, Orlando Busino (*q.v.*), would often give presentations in the schools.

[WWW]

Marczely, Bernadette, (?-2009), was RHS principal from 1982 to 1987. She came here 1976 as assistant RHS principal and later became for 20 years a college professor. She wrote three books, including *Supervision in Education*, 2002. [P5/28/1987]

Mardon, Deirdre Frances, (ca. 1943-2012), a native of Chicago, was a romance novelist reported to have lived in Ridgefield in the late 1970s or early 1980s [P7/7/1983]. She wrote for Harlequin, with such titles as *Canvas of Passion, Destiny's Sweet Errand,* and *Reluctant Lover*. She later moved to Bethel, then South Carolina, where she died.

Margarita 5K race for runners, benefits Ability Beyond. *See* Southwest Cafe.

Margrill, Herbert, (1924-2021) was an NYC advertising executive whose face appeared in many advertisements in the 1970s and 80s. He was head of Herbert Margrill Advertising Inc. and had a home at Florida and Laurel Hill Roads from 1977 until 1984. [P12/18/1980]

Mari Clin Bru Farm was a name for a summer estate, concocted from the names of Clinton R. Irwin Martin, his wife, Marion, and her son, Bruce S. Sheldon around 1910. The farm was described by the *Brooklyn Eagle* as 4 miles from the village.

Marianite Sisters of the Holy Cross, a French order of nuns, began serving in St. Mary's Parish April 9, 1953, and the following year, started teaching in the new St. Mary's School (*q.v.*). They continued until around 1969 when declining vocations led them to leave Ridgefield. The school closed in 1970 (reopening in the 1990s). The order still operates the University of the Holy Cross in New Orleans, La. [JFS]

Marie Lane, a short road at the Ridgefield Lakes, is named for Marie Tuite, daughter of John Tuite, surveyor of a 1958 subdivision by Ridgefield Lakes Inc. [RN]

Marine Corps League, Ridgefield Detachment #044, was formed in 1971 and by 1975 began using a town-owned, former outbuilding on the Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*) for its headquarters. First regimental dinner was in 1975. Early leaders included Bill Lawler, Kip Jones, John P. Cooke, and Al Pfeifer. It sponsored annual Toys for Tots collections and, in the past, was a major participant in annual April litter cleanup campaigns. [RPC]

Marjoy Pond is a modern name for what was for two centuries called Upper Pond (*q.v.*), so called because a subdivision of nearby land was called Mar-Joy, probably concocted from the names of the developer(s) or their family. The pond is surrounded by the Mar-Joy open space, donated as part of the subdivision. The pond and surrounding land had been owned at the time by John R. Busca of Hamden. [RN]

Mark, Robert, was football coach at RHS for 14 years, retiring in 1972 with a 57-45-4 record [P11/1972] and then became athletic director at the school. He started as an RHS physical education teacher in 1958 [P4/10/1958].

Market Street, an old lane between Main Street and East Ridge, was so called as early as 1856 because Hurlbutt's Meat Market was along its south side, just east of Main Street. *See* Sereno S. Hurlbutt *and* Hurlbutt Lane. [RN]

Marketplace at Copps Hill Common, The: *See* Copps Hill Common.

Marriage: *See* Wedding, first.

Marsh, Geraldine "Lee," was the town's first female dog warden, having been appointed May 27, 1971. She had been a veterinary nurse. [JFS]

Marshall Road, a dead-end road off Peaceable Street, part of the Westmoreland (*q.v.*) subdivision, was named by subdivider, Lincoln Development Company of Massachusetts, and developed by Jerry Tuccio. It became a town road in 1969 and was probably named for John Marshall, (1755-1835), third chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, who has no known connection with Ridgefield. [RN]

Marshalls, a department store, opened in 25,000 square feet of the former Kohl's (*q.v.*) space at Copps Hill Plaza on Danbury Road in November 2023. [DNT8/13/2024]

Martin, Clinton R. Irwin, and his wife, Marion, of Brooklyn, summered at Mari Clin Bru Farm (*q.v*) ca. 1913. He worked for the Equitable Life Assurance Society. [NYT9/13/1913 p. 13]

Martin, Edward Trueblood, (1918-1990), was a Pan-Am pilot many years. He graduated from the Univ. of Michigan in 1942, and became Army test pilot, then engineering test pilot for Boeing. In 1949, he was a pilot in an operation that flew thousands of Jews from Yemen to Palestine, an effort he described in his 1958 booklet, *I Flew Them Home: A Pilot's Story of the Yemenite Airlift*. He lived on Cherry Lane in 1970s and retired to Heritage Village, Southbury, where he died, aged 71. [DNT2/28/1990]

Martin, Francis D. (1893-1982), a native of West Park, NY, came to Ridgefield when he was 3. His father, J.S. Louis Martin (*q.v.*), was for many years superintendent of Gov. Phineas C. Lounsbury's Main Street estate (now the Veterans Memorial Community Center/Lounsbury House). He attended Center School on Bailey Avenue and Norwalk High School, then trained as a watchmaker and optician. In June 1911, he opened a jewelry store on Main Street — in 1950 when he sold his business to Craig's Jewelers (*q.v*.), he claimed he had repaired 125,000 watches and 25,000 clocks. Martin acquired much real estate in town, most of it commercial, such as along Grove Street, Old Quarry Road, and Danbury Road (including today's Copps Hill Plaza), as well as buildings on Main Street. In 1941 he bought the former Ridgefield Boys School (*q.v.*) on North Salem Road as his home and turned it into Far-Vu Farm. He served on the board of the Methodist Church, was scoutmaster of Ridgefield's first Boy Scout troop in 1912, a founder of the Ridgefield Promoter's Club (*q.v.*), a 27-year member of the Board of Finance, chairman of the Boys' Club, first president of the Lions Club, and chairman of the Red Cross during WW2I. He led development of a swimming beach at Great Pond, then donated it to town — *see* Martin Park. He was survived by his wife of more than 65 years, **Doris G. Martin** (1895-1987). *See* [P9/24/1981] for a picture when he was seven years old. *See also* Martin's Jewelry Store. [WWW, DD350, 351, 352]

Martin, J.S. Louis, (1862-1949), a native of Switzerland, was the father of Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) and lived in a house on the south side of Governor Street, just west of Veterans Park School entrance. Trained as a watchmaker, he was superintendent of Grovelawn (*q.v.*), the Lounsbury estate, for many years. [JFS]

Martin, Dr. Philip, (1920-2013), a Ridgefield native and WW2 veteran, was a Ridgefield optometrist and son of Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*). In 1983, he wrote an essay about life in the 1920s Ridgefield in the 275th Anniversary special supplement in *The Ridgefield Press.* He was married to June Pascoe. His office in 1960 was at ONS96 Main Street (Amatuzzi Building), and he later

practiced at 426 Main Street. [JFS]

Martin, Townsend B., (ca. 1908-1982), an investment banker, race-horse owner and breeder, and one-time, quarter-owner of the NY Jets football team, owned "Twelve Furlongs," what is in late 20th/early 21st Century the Landegger (*q.v.*) family estate off Wilton Road East, Nod and Whipstick Roads. Distraught over the impending death of his seriously ill wife, Irene, he committed suicide by gunshot. Two days later Irene died. They lived in North Castle NY at the time. [NYT10/29/1982, DD157]

Martin Block, the Tudor-style building at 411-419 Main Street, houses in 2026 Planet Pizza, Dr. George Amatuzzi, *et al*. Built in 1913 by Lucius Biglow (*q.v.*) and once owned by Francis D. Martin (*q.v*.), who had his jewelry/ watch shop there, it was originally called the Telephone Building (*q.v.*).

Martin Luther King Day celebration takes place annually on the Monday holiday to honor the Civil Rights leader and his goals, and typically includes presentation of the Spirit of Dr. King Ridgefield Community Service Award (*q.v.*). The event was founded in 1996 at the suggestion of Corine Moorhead, and has been annually organized by Mark Robinson (*q.v.*), who's also the emcee. [P1/19/2012] Some 400 people attended the 30th anniversary event, honoring Harvey Fierstein, Jan. 19, 2026 [OR1/19/2026]

Martin Park, one of Ridgefield's most popular and populous parks, consists of 9.4 acres on the south end of Great Pond. The name commemorates Francis D. Martin (*q.v*.), who in the 1950s created the Great Pond Holding Corporation which, with the help of many volunteers, developed the park. Privately owned but open to the public, Great Pond beach was operated by Martin until, in 1970, he gave it to the town, stipulating that it be named for him and that it be self-supporting through membership fees. [RN]

Martin Road is applied to a private road serving a six-lot, 22-acre subdivision of part of Francis D. Martin's Far-Vu Farm (*q.v*.), approved in June 1981 [RN]

Martin's Corner or **Curve** was an informal term for the sharp bend in North Salem Road, a little north of Mamanasco Road and Ridgefield High School, bordered on the west by old Francis D. Martin (*q.v*.) farm, whence the name. The term was largely employed by the Ridgefield Police in referring to the scene of many auto accidents. [RN]

Martin's Jewelry Store: An optician, horologist and entrepreneur, Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) opened his first store June 26, 1911, selling jewelry, eyeglasses and doing watch repairs. He opened in a new version on Main Street in October 1935 which became Craig's Jewelry Store (*q.v*.) in 1950 when it was at 415 Main Street (later the Yarn Bee). [DD94]

Martinu, Bohoslav, the noted Czech composer, has been said to have spent the summer of 1944 at a Ridgefield estate, Four Chimneys. The estate was actually at 18 Mill River Road in the South Salem hamlet of Lewisboro, N.Y., which probably had mail delivery from Ridgefield. [JFS]

Marty Motors, a wholesale and retail used-car dealership at 92 Danbury Road, was established around 1970 by Marty McDonough and was owned by the Keaveny family after 1981. Plans in 2024 were to replace it with a convenience store. [JFS]

Mary's Restaurant at 11 Danbury Road, now site of Girol(a)metti Court [P11/19/1964] was opened in 1933 by Mario and Mary Girolmetti. It grew into The Old Ice House (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Mary's or **Mary Lane** is a short, dead-end road off Barry Avenue, named for

Mary McManus, wife of Peter A. McManus, contractor and former Ridgefield state representative. The McManuses owned the property which, in 1951, they subdivided into seven lots of about one-half acre each. [RN]

Mary Rebekah Lodge, the women's side of the Odd Fellows (*q.v.*), was formed here April 14, 1905, as Rebekah Lodge No. 51, but since so many members were named Mary, they decided to personalize the lodge's name by adding Mary. "Daughters of Rebekah," the national organization, aims to "live peaceably, do good unto all, as we have opportunity, and especially to obey the Golden Rule: Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." The Ridgefield lodge disbanded in the 1990s due to lack of membership. [JFS]

Masonic Hall at 398 Main Street is the 2½ story building just south of the town hall. The original hall was built in 1817 by the Jerusalem Lodge of Masons (*q.v*.). The first floor was used by a store, although the ground floor was leased as a town house or hall for government use in 1832 with the Masons using the upper floor. Later, the first floor housed *The Ridgefield Press.* The building burned in the Great Fire of 1895 and was replaced immediately with a building of similar design, still standing today. *The Press* and tailor Louis Joffee occupied the first floor [DD89] for many years. Then the Thrift Shop (*q.v*.) was there, and later the Gordon Walsh Agency. In 2026, the Coldwell Banker real estate agency occupied the first floor. [JFS, RIR]

Masonic Lodge: *See* Jerusalem Lodge of Masons.

Masters, Julia Bartlett "Di," a member of the Board of Selectmen and the Planning and Zoning Commission in the 1990s and early 2000s, was executive director of the Community Center (Lounsbury House) from 2009 to 2014. She lived at 100 South Salem Road with her husband, Paul. [LI]

Matlack was the Prospect Ridge (*q.v*.) home of Dr. and Mrs. Timothy Matlack Cheesman (*q.v.*), which the doctor had built in 1887. It later became the Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*), the school board offices, and is now Prospect Ridge Congregate Housing (*q.v*.). Matlack was an old name in Dr. Cheesman's mother's family. [WWW]

Matthews, Allan F., (1920-1986) and **Lillian E.** (1921-2011), founded in 1974 Spotlight Theater (*q.v.*), a local company for young people. Both had performed widely together in touring companies of major productions — they had known each other since they were 12 and were married 43 years before Al's death. He was a master sergeant in Patton's army in WW2. They are buried in St. Mary Cemetery. Son **Victor** helped lead Spotlight after his father's death. [NR]

Matthews, Gerry, (1931-2025), was an actor who has performed in films and on stage, and who was for 40 years the voice of Sugar Bear in Post cereals' Sugar Crisp commercials. He was also the man in a tiny boat floating in a toilet for Ty-D-Bol toilet cleaner commercials in the 1960s. He later voiced characters in animated holiday specials such as *Pinocchio's Christmas* (1980) and *The Leprechauns' Christmas Gold* (1981). He was married to actress Pat Stanley (*q.v.*) and lived at 190 Lounsbury Road in the early 1980s. They later settled in Walla Walla, Wash., where Matthews founded the Museum of Unnatural History, featuring weirdness. [P4/2/1981]

Maxine Furs opened at 440 Main Street in April 1987, possibly the town's first and last fur store. [P4/16/1987]

Mayer, Maureen, (1937-2011), a native of the Bronx, was the longtime owner

and operator of the West Lane Inn (*q.v.*). She and former husband Henry Prieger of the Inn at Ridgefield (*q.v.*) bought the hotel, then used it as a boarding house in 1972. Under Mayer, it became the West Lane Inn (*q.v.*) in 1978. She was joined by her daughter, Debbie Prieger, in operating the inn for many years. [5/26/2011, DD288].

Mayhew, Richard, (1920-2018), a longtime Pan-American pilot, logged more than 29,000 hours and flew more than 20 different types of aircraft for the airline. Among his many celebrity passengers were the Beatles on the flight from London to JFK in February 1964 for their inaugural trip to the United States. [P9/27/2018]

Maynard, Effingham, (1835-1918), head of the firm of Clark & Maynard, NYC publishers and wholesale booksellers, built a mansion at 2 Peaceable Street after purchasing land from the estate of J. Howard King (*q.v.*). It is rumored the house was designed by Stanford White, but no evidence has been found [DD207]; for the garden, however, it is known he hired Frederick Law Olmsted's firm. The only verified Olmsted garden in Ridgefield [LOC], it has been largely destroyed by subsequent subdivision of the back yard. Daughters **Mary** and **Helen Maynard** lived there many years [DD208]; his son, **Walter Effingham Maynard,** was involved in NYC real estate.

McCain, John, visited Ridgefield April 8, 2000, to stump for Mark Nielsen of Danbury, later of Ridgefield, a Fifth District congressional candidate. [OR]

McCann, E. Armitage, (1875-1937), a native of Scotland, was a famous model-ship maker, noted especially for his sailing vessels — as a former ship captain, he knew his subject. He popularized the model-ship hobby especially through his columns in *Popular Science* magazine in the 1920s and 30s, and also wrote books on model-making. He moved to Bryon Avenue in 1933. Many of his ships are in major collections. [WWW]

McCarthy, Barbara, owned the Corner Pub (*q.v.*) on Grove Street and Sunset Lane from 1982 until April 2012. Before that, she operated Hyde's Wines and Liquors (*q.v.*) on Main Street. She was elected president of the Chamber of Commerce in 1981. [P2/5/1981]

McDonald, Robert, (1931-2025), was the first principal of Farmingville School, serving from 1963 to 1989. He grew up in Danbury and graduated from WestConn. After teaching in Stamford six years, he came here to teach at Ridgebury School in 1961. From 1993 to 2000, he was coordinator of the career center at RHS. [NR]

McDonald's Mill Pond was mentioned in a 1772 deed for today's Miller's Pond (*q.v.*) on the Norwalk River, just west of Route 7 and north of Florida Hill Road. Daniel McDonald operated a grist mill that used the pond for water power. Probably situated on the site of the present house, Moongate (*q.v.*), it was one of the town's earliest mills. [RN] *See also* Abbott's Mill Road.

McGeehin, Molly, is the town treasurer in 2026, first elected in 2015. She is a Democrat who is active in many community organizations. [JFS]

McGlynn, Charles T., was a funeral director whose business was on Catoonah Street in 1920. [P9/7/1920]

McGlynn, Rev. Francis Hennelly, (1897-1965), who grew up in Ridgefield, was ordained a priest in Holy Ghost Fathers (Congregation of the Holy Spirit) March 8, 1924, and celebrated his first mass at St. Mary's Church here. [P2/28/1924] As a priest, he became scholar of national reputation, a theologian and professor of theology who taught decades of future

missionaries in his order. He became the provincial — the head — of the congregation's entire American province in 1949, leading more than 100 of the congregation's operations in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and East Africa from headquarters in Washington, D.C. [WWW]

McGlynn, Margaret McAulay, (1893-1982), a native of Scotland, was a feisty Democratic political leader in the town and state for many years. She served on the school board in the 1930s and 40s, as an assessor, a registrar of voters, and member of the Park Commission, and was active in St. Mary Parish. She was the wife of Thomas J. McGlynn and mother of Fire Chief Richard T. McGlynn (*q.v.*). [NR]

McGlynn, Michael, also known as "Tinker Mike," was a partner in McGlynn & Ryan Plumbing Shop (*q.v.*) in the 1930s. [DD96]. *See also* Michael T. McGlynn.

McGlynn, Michael T., (1861-1959), a Lewisboro native who was called "Painter Mike" to distinguish him from cousin "Tinker Mike," served as a member of the Board of Education for more than half a century and despite being a Democrat, was often elected its chairman. A house painter well respected in town, he was on the board of the Ridgefield Savings Bank for 57 years and was vice-president many years. [NR, RSB25]

McGlynn, Richard T. "Dick," (1927-2009), born across the street from the Catoonah Street firehouse, was the first chief of the paid fire department. He was a teenage volunteer in WW2 before joining the Navy, and in 1950 became one of the town's first paid firefighters. In 1973, he was named the paid department's first chief, retiring in 1989 after overseeing a period of sizable growth in services, staff and equipment. [WWW]

McGlynn, Robert W., (1921-1991), a Ridgefield native, was a private school teacher who grew up on Fairview Avenue, a son of **J. Edward McGlynn**, a house painter and acting postmaster. He was a 1939 RHS and a Wesleyan graduate. He joined the staff of Deerfield Academy in 1948 and became an influential teacher; among his students were John McPhee, the Pulitzer-winning writer, and his admirers included McPhee and poets Seamus Heaney and Robert Creeley. [WWW]

McGlynn & Ryan Plumbing Shop was at 388 Main Street in the 1920s, then moved to the old Catholic church on Catoonah Street (later the Thrift Shop for many years). Michael "Tinker Mike" McGlynn was the senior partner in the firm and his son-in-law, William H. Ryan, was the junior partner. [DD96]

McGovern, Richard Gordon, (1926-2014), an executive, started at Pepperidge Farm sweeping floors and became its president in 1968. By 1980, he was named president and CEO of Campbell Soup Company [P12/4/1980], retiring in 1989. He made many contributions to the Ridgefield Library and donated lighted public basketball courts on East Ridge. He lived at 182 Lounsbury Road. [WWW]

McGraw, Sarah, an actor, director and acting teacher, has performed in opera, regional, stock, repertory, and international theaters, including touring across Europe, South America, and the British Isles. She and her husband, Scott Krushinski, PA, lived in the Ridgefield Knolls in the 1990s and 2000s. She was teaching theater outside Pittsburgh in 2020. [P11/4/1999]

McHarg, Henry King, (1851-1941), a wealthy railroad executive and philanthropist, had a home on Nod Road in Ridgefield from 1925 until his death. A great grandson of Joshua King (*q.v.*), and great great grandson of

Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll (*q.v*), he donated the land on which First Congregational Church (*q.v*.) is located. [WWW]

McIntire, Mike, is a journalist who has won three Pulitzer Prizes and lives in Ridgefield. He was hired fresh out of college in 1985 by Acorn Press newspapers, publishers of the *Ridgefield Press*. He later became a member of a Pulitzer-winning team at the *Hartford Courant*, and in 2017 shared a Pulitzer as a member of the *New York Times* team investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 election. During the 2020 presidential campaign, he was part of a team that obtained and published Donald Trump's long-concealed tax returns, a journalistic exclusive that earned George Polk, Daniel Pearl and Scripps-Howard awards. His father, **Lee McIntire**, was an early director of the Woodcock Nature Center (*q.v.*) [JFS]

McKay, Dan, was chauffeur for the Maynard sisters on Peaceable Street. [DD208,209]

McKay, Don, a native of West Virginia, was a singer and stage actor who appeared on Broadway in 1950s-60s. He lived at 80 Branchville Road, the Old Coach House (*q.v.*), and was known for hosting parties with interesting guests from the theater and arts. [P11/5/1969, P12/22/1980]

McKenna, Arthur J., (1913-2000), Yale 1936, was active in the community for nearly 40s years as a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Sewer Advisory Committee, and Republican Town Committee, as well as with Keeler Tavern and Community Center. He and wife **Marjory**, also active in town, lived on Silver Spring Road in Jared Nash (*q.v.*) house. [JFS]

McKeon, Daniel Manning, (1906-2001), a native of NYC who was sometimes called "The Squire of Ridgebury," was a stockbroker and gentleman farmer who was a longtime member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, and a leader in town government, in the regional Catholic Church, and in local and regional conservation and organic farming movements for more than 60 years. He was a historian of Ridgebury and especially its part in the American Revolution. He and wife, Louise (*q.v.*), bought what they called Arigideen Farm in 1938 — it had been the 135-acre farm of Samuel Coe (*q.v.*). Some of the land was much later subdivided, and much of it later became Double H Farm (*q.v.*). The own owns Arigideen fields at the south corner of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads, used for grazing sheep; there are also nature trails, maintained by the Conservation Commission (*see* McKeon Farm). [WWW] *See also* Ridgebury schoolhouses.

McKeon, Louise Huguet, (ca. 1917-1993), was a community leader who came here in 1938 with husband Daniel *(q.v.*). She belonged to both Ridgefield and Caudatowa Garden Clubs and, as Caudatowa president in WW2, she helped lead efforts to plant Victory Gardens. She was conservation chairman of the Garden Club of America, 1965-1968, and a leader in its lobbying for the national Highway Beautification Act of 1965. She was a founder and early president of the Keeler Tavern Preservation Society. An active Republican, she was, in 1951, chairman of the Republican State Central Committee. [NR]

McKeon Farm on Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads is a 43-acre town-owned open space consisting mainly of hillside meadows and some forest, which provide important habitat for many birds, flora, and fauna. The site, which has many marked hiking trails, includes sheep, goat, and llama pastures in the Apple Orchard, a small museum of farm equipment, the two

livestock pastures that had been operated by Henny Penny Farm (*q.v*.) and a teaching garden for individuals on the spectrum run by Cornerstone Home and Gardens. *See* Arigideen Farm, George Orlan. [RCC]

McKeon Place is a short, dead-end road off Turner Road at Turner Hill (*q.v*.). It was once planned to connect at both ends with Turner Road. The name recalls noted Ridgeburians Daniel and Louise McKeon (*q.v*. *each*). [RN]

McKeon Pond appears on a Hearne map (ca. 1965) for a small pond on the McKeons' Arigideen Farm at the northeast corner of Old Stagecoach and Ridgebury Roads. The pond, once used for watering the McKeons' cows, is a source of the Mopus Brook (*q.v*.). [RN]

McLaury, Ellis B. and Mary in 1928 bought playwright Eugene O'Neill's house, Brook Farm (*q.v.*), on North Salem Road, and also acquired other tracts in the area. Ellis was the head of the McLaury Marble Corporation in the Bronx. Their son, John, had a chicken farm on Ridgebury Road in the 1930s — *see* McLaury's Hill. [RN]

McLaughlin, Msgr. James J., (-1985), a native of Bristol, was pastor of St. Mary's Parish from 1956 to 1968. During his pastorate, St. Mary's School was enlarged and a convent built. In 1954, he was appointed vice-chancellor and secretary to Lawrence J. Shehan, bishop of Bridgeport (later Cardinal Sheehan). He was appointed a papal chamberlain by Pope Pius XII in 1954 and later a domestic prelate by Pope John XXIII in 1959. He was 72 and retired when he died. [BP8/4/1985]

McLaury's Hill was a local name for Ridgebury Road from the Spring Valley Road intersection to north of Regan Road, so-called in a 1955 *Ridgefield Press* article. Mr. and Mrs. John E. McLaury once had a house and chicken farm on the hill, just beyond the sharp curve. [RN] *See also* Pope's Corner

McLinden, Joseph J., (1924-2012), a retired Emery Air Freight executive, was elected first selectman Nov. 2, 1971, and served one, two-year term. The Republican was a former chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission and later managed the Ridgefield Water Supply Company. [JFS]

McManus, Patricia Potter, (1919-2013), was town tax collector, 1980-86, succeedingf Alice Besse; she had been assistant tax collector, 1966-80.

McManus, Peter A., (1889-1970), a native of Scotland and a Republican, was state representative from 1941 to 1953. He helped to establish the State Labor Relations Board and was named one of its first members, serving from 1945 to 1967. An architect and builder, he worked on many of the town's mansions and large buildings. He was a Trial Court justice and member of the Board of Assessors. [WWW]

McManus, Thomas "Tom," is in 2026 chair of the Ridgefield Tree Committee, active in the Graveyard Restoration Committee and other community work. [JFS]

McNamara, Walter, (1938-2015), a native of St. Louis, was a United Airlines 747 pilot who is considered the father of recycling in Ridgefield. An early and longtime leader of the Ridgefield Environmental Action Program — REAP (*q.v.*), he managed the Recycling Center from 1974 to 1987. He was also active in efforts to control water quality of Lake Mamanasco, where he lived. He moved here 1969 and retired to NC around 2003. [WWW]

McShea, Susanna Hofmann, grew up in Ridgefield, graduated RHS 1967, and wrote three books, set in Ridgefield (which is called Raven's Wing). *Hometown Heroes* (1990), *The Pumpkin-Shell Wife* (1992) and *Ladybug,*

Ladybug (1994) feature four elderly amateur sleuths who solve murders. [NR]

Mead is an old Ridgefield family, here as early as 1722 when Theophilus Mead of Norwalk bought two acres on North Salem Road. Israel Mead had land at Grassy Island in 1729. Meads had generally lived on the western side of town, and in eastern Lewisboro, where there is a Mead Street today. [RN] *See also* Mead Ridge. [JFS]

Mead, Harold A. "Duddy," (1932-), RHS 1948, was a well-known personality in town in mid-20th Century. He sought permission to establish a new restaurant at the old Twin Lakes Inn on Route 7 in 1966. He had had a restaurant where Nina's (*q.v.*) later operated. Mead and mother, Sheila Mead, of West Lane also operated Ridgefield Coffee Shop (*q.v.*) at Joe's Corner 1961-62. He retired to Florida. [JFS]

Mead, Jeremiah, (1752-1840), was a Revolutionary War veteran who served in Capt. Keeler's company. He fought at the battles of Long Island, Harlem Heights, White Plains, and probably Germantown and Monmouth. He became a selectman in 1807 and 1808 and was a state representative in 1814. He married thrice: Martha St. John about 1776; Rachel Smith Feb. 17, 1779; and Betty Whitney Oct. 6, 1784. [FAG]

Mead, Lewis, (-1802), died Dec. 5, 1802, "on the coast of Malabar in the Chinese Sea." [RVR 1/211] He was on board the ship, Penman, on its passage from Canton, China, to New York.

Mead, Lewis H., was an owner of the clover mill (*q.v.*) and plaster mill on the Sugar Hollow Turnpike north of Branchville starting in 1856 [RLR21/50]

Mead, Milan Hoyt, (abt 1830-1900), was a farmer who became co-owner of Nash & Mead, the general store at Titicus (*see* Titicus Store), for 20 years. He was a state representative from 1895 to 1897.

Mead, Dr. Robert E. (1931-2015), was a Ridgefield dentist for 40 years. He bought the former Cass Gilbert Memorial (*q.v.*) in 1958 as home. A well-known antique car restorer, he especially enjoyed Stanley Steamers. He used his talents on several occasions to repair the nearby Cass Gilbert Fountain (*q.v.*) after it was damaged by automobiles. His house is now the offices of the Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center. [P3/19/2015]

Mead, Theodore Hoe, a wealthy New Yorker, was the original owner of Rippowam, what became the West Mountain estate called Rippowam Farm (*q.v.*), hundreds of acres that included seven miles of private roads on both sides of the state line. He wrote the book, *Horsemanship for Women*. [P9/12/1901] *See also* Indian Territory Association.

Mead Ridge, a development of 19 lots on the north side of South Salem Road, is served by Mead Ridge Road and spurs, Mead Ridge Drive and Lane. Henri Engelbert named the 1958 subdivision for his wife, Lydia Mead Englebert, descended from the old Ridgefield Mead family. Englebert came from NYC in 1948 to purchase a house and 49 acres from Eleanor C. Peil that had earlier been part of Reginald M. Lewis (*q.v.*) estate and farm. For many years before Lewis, the property had been a Keeler family farm. *See also* Mead. [RN]

Meadow Woods, a 1965 subdivision of 92 acres into 53 one-acre lots on Lounsbury and Ivy Hill Roads, is served by Standish Drive, Revere Lane, and Glenbrook Court. It was developed by Harry Richmond and Bill Connors, both of Norwalk, who named the place for the combination of meadowland and woodland that made up the tract. [RN]

Meals on Wheels: 1. The volunteer organization that prepares and delivers meals to shut-ins and senior citizens who need assistance was founded in 1974, inspired by the Ridgefield Clergy Association and District Nursing Association. By 2022, five part-time employees and over 175 volunteers were producing delivering 52,000 meals per year. The fee was about 30% of the cost of the meal, but became free of charge when Covid hit and has remained so. The commercial-grade kitchen and administration office is at Ballard Green, 25 Gilbert Street. [JFS] **2.** A commercial operation at the old Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) in the 1950s in which special trucks delivered meals from the inn's kitchen to homes. Orders were placed by phone. [DD343]

Medal of Honor: *See* Congressional Medal of Honor.

Medals, commemorative: 1. In 1927, a brass medal showing the Battle of Ridgefield monument in the Casagmo wall was issued to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the battle. The medal hung from a red and blue ribbon, with stars on it, that could be pinned to clothing. **2.** In 1977, a coin-style medal commemorating the Battle of Ridgefield was designed by Gail Glissmann for the town's Bicentennial Committee and struck in both silver and bronze. It featured images of Generals Benedict Arnold and David Wooster, both heroes at the battle. This medal was restruck in 2002 for the 225th anniversary. **3.** The town's 275th anniversary in 1983 was marked with a medal featuring the town seal (*q.v*.) on one side and the Cass Gilbert Fountain on the other. (For the 300th anniversary, a pewter ornament was issued.) *See also* Ornaments

Media Lane is an old name for the northern end of Soundview Road, so called in the 1939 subdivision by Francis D. Martin, Arthur J. Carnall, and Joseph H. Donnelly, that included lots on the east side of "Media Lane." The name probably referred to road's being midway between Wilton Road West and Wilton Road East and was still used as late as 1952 on some maps. [RN]

Medve, Richard "Rick," a Fairfield native, was a popular RHS teacher and coach of track and football. Medve's track teams eventually won 670 meets over his 28-year career here. His boys' track team compiled the Fairfield County conference's longest winning streak of 54-straight meets between, 1974-77, and his girls' cross country team won 39-straight from 1975-77. He came to RHS in 1964, retired in 1990, and coached both boys and girls track teams. He was Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference Coach of the Year in 1977. His teams won 16 FCIAC championships; finished runner-up nine times; won four state championships and finished state runner-up three times; and won a total of 23 FCIAC Eastern championships. [JFS, P5/31/1973]

Medynski, Rev. Francis, (1921-2008), a native of New Jersey, was Catholic priest who was pastor of St. Mary Parish from 1973 to 1976 when he became the founding pastor of St. Elizabeth Seton (*q.v.)* parish. He retired in 1996 at the mandatory age of 75. While at St. Mary, he established and led a boy choir called The Little Singers (*q.v.*). His parents died in the flu epidemic when he was a baby and he was raised in an orphanage. [WWW]

Meeting House, The, was a multifunctional community building that served as a church, a school, and the town hall. On Dec. 19, 1723, the ATM voted to build a "meetinghouse" on the green that was 34 feet wide and 40 feet long, "and 28 feet between the sill and the plate" — i.e., the hall ceiling would be nearly 28 feet high. Eventually, schooling took place in a separate

building, but government meetings as well as church services continued to be held in the Meeting House through the 18th Century. By 1818, when the new Connecticut Constitution declared that the Congregational Church was no longer the official state church, town government meetings were being held in other public buildings and meeting houses were used only for religious functions. Still, they were called meeting houses; the word "church" in the 18th and 19th Centuries usually referred not to a building, but to the congregation that met in the meeting house. In the 21st Century, the Congregational Church in Ridgebury has been calling itself the Meetinghouse (q.v.).

Meeting House Yard was the formal name for the old village green (*q.v.*) that stood along Main Street at the head of Branchville Road, so-called because the Congregational Church or "meeting house" stood on this land. The Town Meeting defined its location Nov. 12, 1712, the land laid out to be 16 rods (264 feet) wide (east-west), twice the width of the Main Street right of way (132 feet), and extended quite a bit to the east, now a private residence at the corner of Branchville Road. It was 20 rods (330 feet) from north to south, making the total area of the green exactly two acres. Here many ceremonies took place, and the local militia trained. The term was used as late as 1823. In 1885, the town agreed to pay the Congregational Church $2,000 for the "meeting house yard," provided that the church removed its building, which it did in 1888. [RN, POR]

Meetinghouse, The, is a name the Ridgebury Congregational parish has adopted in the 21st Century, under Pastor Dr. Deborah Rundlett. "We are dedicated to enriching the community of Ridgefield, CT, and the surrounding areas through a vibrant blend of artistic expression, uplifting music, transformative leadership programs, and a welcoming inclusive space for our community partners," its website says. "For over 250 years, Ridgebury Congregational Church has been a steward of this historic campus, fostering a spirit of community, reflection, and renewal. The Meetinghouse grew out of this tradition as a separate, inclusive space dedicated to creativity, connection, and well-being." [https://meetinghouse.life]

Meffley, Edith, (1925-2021), was a leading voice of conservation in Ridgefield, serving on the Conservation Commission from 1965 until 2005 [P9/1/2005], longer than anyone in the agency's history. A resident from 1960 to 2015, she was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club, where she helped create a conservation program in the schools. She was a founder of the Discovery Center, was active with Visiting Nurse Association and with Child and Family Services, and was founder and longtime administrator of the Community Gardens on Prospect Ridge, now called the Edith Meffley Garden. She was named Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1972. The Edith Meffley Award is given annually by the Conservation Commission for major contributions to Ridgefield's environment. She was married to **C. Fred Meffley,** (1922-2007), also active in the community; they lived on Lewis Drive. [NR]

Meier, Col. Edward D., (1841-1914), a native of St. Louis, was a Civil War veteran, who fought at Gettysburg. He became a leading mechanical engineer and president of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Among his projects was designing the 10,000-horsepower boilers at Grand

Central Terminal. He and his wife Nancy had a summer home, Golden Apple, the former Nathan L. Rockwell Sr. farm, at 166 Lounsbury Road in the early 20th Century. [FoF]

Meisner, Paul and **Sadye:** *See* Meisner's Inn.

Meisner's Inn was an exclusive hotel in the former Albert Wiggin (*q.v.*) mansion, "Peaceable Acres," (*q.v.*) at 47 Peaceable Street, operated for 16 years in the 1940s and 50s by Paul and Sadye Meisner, who were experienced in the hotel field. It was later owned by J. Louis Read (*q.v.*). During the Flood of October 1955, water leaked into an old basement tank holding calcium carbide used in an early 20th Century household lighting system, releasing acetylene gas that exploded, injuring two firemen and damaging the building. [DD197]

Melcombe, Richard, RHS 1973, is in 2024 a film, TV, commercial/promo producer and media producer in Calabasas, Calif. He was a producer of many TV films and series in the 1990s and early 2000s, including the "The Lost World" series. He owns Richmel Media and Entertainment. [JFS]

Meltzer, Alan, (1944-2011), a native of NYC, was the founder of Wind-up Records with his ex-wife Diana Meltzer. They had a home on Old Branchville Road in the 1980s and 90s, and Meltzer operated Rainbow Records, a store at 88 Danbury Road. In 1985 he founded CD One Stop, wholesalers of CD music, operating from his house. It later merged with CDNow and eventually became part of Amazon. In 1991 their only child, Michael, 20, RHS 1989, was killed in an auto accident on Danbury Road; a music scholarship at RHS was established in his name. Meltzer was also an expert at poker who played in televised competitions. At his death, he left $1 million to his chauffeur and $500,000 to the doorman at his Manhattan residence. He and his son are buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [WWW]

Memorial Highways are allowed to be created on state roads to honor notable people who've died. Ridgefield Memorial Highways honor **1.** Richard E. Venus, Route 35 from the fountain to the West Lane Schoolhouse; **2**. Elizabeth Leonard, Route 116 from around Barlow Mountain to Ridgebury Roads; **3.** Maurice Sendak, Route 35 from Limestone/Haviland Roads to Route 7.

Memories is an autobiography by Laura Curie Allee Shields (*q.v.*), privately printed in 1940 by Acorn Press (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield. She was an early activist for woman suffrage who lived most of her life on the corner of Main and Market Streets, and the book has many reminiscences about her life in Ridgefield in the early 1900s, along with photos. [JFS]

Memory Lane, a short private road off West Lane, serves a subdivision of about four acres into three lots, filed by Myrtle L. Englund (for her husband, Eugene) of Norwalk, in 1956. The land had formerly been part of the Elizabeth Swords Grant estate, called Homewood (*q.v.*) [RN]

Men's Shop, The, at 452 Main Street (ONS145), opened in 1948, carrying "some of America's great names in men's furnishings," including Puritan, Swank, Jantzen, Arrow, BVD, Paris, Wembley, Plymouth, Lee, and Biltwell. In the early 1960s, the shop was called Dante's Men's Furnishings but by 1962, it was The Question Mart; in 2024, Touch of Sedona; in 2026, Giftz, Gemz & Jewelz.

Menageries: *See* Circuses.

Mench, George Arpad, (1930-2017), a native of Lodz, Poland, was a professional photographer in 1950s and 60s who produced many commercial postcards, especially for Volkswagen. He lived on North Salem Road. He moved to Hawaii where he died. [JFS]

Mencher, Dr. Alan G., (1925-2020), a native of NYC, was a U.S. diplomat specializing in science, who was a member of the team that negotiated U.S./Soviet Union nuclear disarmament agreement. He graduated from MIT, Yale (MS) and UCLA (PhD), was a World War II U.S. Navy veteran and worked briefly on the U.S. Space Program before joining the Foreign Service of the Department of State where he served for 22 years and received a citation for his work as a scientific attaché. He lived in Wilton and his last years in Ridgefield where he was active in the American Legion and Ridgefield Men's Club. [FAG]

Menz, Clifford Willis Jr., (1911-1978), a tenor and Minnesota native, was a concert and opera singer who lived on Silver Spring Road in the 1930s. His wife, soprano Susanne Fisher (*q.v*.), was more famous. They gave a benefit concert for the PTA here in November 1941 [P10/30/1941]. They retired to Florida where both died.

Meteors: On Dec. 14, 1807, the early morning in Ridgefield was lit up by a ball of fire, described by Goodrich as nearly the size of the moon, passing across the sky. It exploded several times and the sounded like thunder, he said. The next day, a piece of the meteor was found in a part of Weston that is today Easton. It weighed 25 pounds and is now in the mineralogical collect at Yale. [ROAL] On July 20, 1860, many Ridgefielders saw a great meteor, witnessed widely in the Northeast and as far south as Delaware, that passed overhead and apparently fell into the sea. In her diary, Anna Resseguie described it as "a meteor of uncommon size and brilliancy." [DAR] On Nov. 18, 2001, the Leonid meteor showers put on an amazing show, one of the best in many years, which Ridgefielders who were up at 4 a.m. enjoyed from the comfort of their homes or at a gathering at Great Pond organized by the Discovery Center. [JFS]

Merrick, Helene (1908-2009), a native of France, and her husband, attorney **J. Harold Merrick,** were active in town in the middle and late 20th Century. She raised and showed Dalmatians for many years, and was the author of the 2004 book, *Barnum and His Friends,* about Dalmatians. During World War II, she volunteered to work in the Women's Land Army at the University of Connecticut. She was long active in what is now the RVNA. [NR]

Merrie Moppet Too was a **c**hildren's clothing consignment store in the Hackert and Monti Building, 409 Main Street, opened August 1980 by five owners [P10/2/1980]. By May 1981, it had closed and the site became The Red Balloon (*q.v.*). [P5/7/1981]

Merriemount, Camp, is mentioned in [P8/23/1934] as being the former "Camp Topstone"; it was near Great Pond.

Merry-Go-Round was a **s**tore selling children's clothing at Copps Hill Plaza in the late 1970s, but went out of business in March 1981. [P3/26/1981]

Merullo, Matthew, Fairfield Prep 1983, grew up in Ridgefield and became a minor league all-star, a Triple-A batting champion, and a catcher for six seasons in the major leagues. He played for the Chicago White Sox, Cleveland Indians and Minnesota Twins for 223 games with a .234 batting average, making only 11 errors with a .982 fielding percentage. He lives in

Madison (2020). His grandfather was **Lennie Merullo**, a shortstop who played for the Chicago Cubs (1941-47), appearing in 639 games in which he scored 191 runs, drove in 152, had 497 hits and batted .240. His father, **Len "Boots" Merullo,** played shortstop, third base and the outfield from 1962-64 in the Pittsburgh Pirates farm system, and has been an assistant coach at RHS. Matt's son, Nick, played in the Baltimore Orioles minor league system in 2014. [NR]

Methodism in Ridgefield: *See* Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church, Rev. James Coleman, Rev. George Lansing Taylor, Wesley Hall.

Metiticus: *See* Titicus.

Mexican Border War (1910-1919): Ten men from Ridgefield served in this war: Robert P. Bissell, William R. Cushman, Cass Gilbert, Jr. (*q.v.*), George G. Haven, Jr., John W. Hubbard, Thomas Kelly, Earl W. Panzer, George Riggs, Jr., George Scott, Jr., and Oscar F. Johnson. [RIR]

Mexican War (1847-1848): Two Ridgefielders volunteered to serve in this war: John Porter and John Holland [RIR].

Meyers, Steven, who provides environmental consulting services, had a career in environmental law, including 20 years at GE and then as global environmental director at Amazon Web Services. He was elected president of the HS in 2024 and lives on Lewis Drive with his wife, **Cynthia Vehslage Meyers**, an illustrator [HS]

Mica, the mineral, was mined here in the late 19th Century, mostly as an ingredient, when finely ground, in house paints. Mica mines were in Branchville, off North Street and off Ramapoo Road. [RN]

Micciche, Dan, is in 2024 music director/conductor of the musical, *Wicked*, on Broadway (a musical by Stephen Schwartz — *q.v.*) He is a graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music at Berklee, teaches classes, and coaches. [JFS]

Michael Chekhov Theater Festival was an annual celebration of the legacy of Michael Chekhov (*q.v.*) in October in Ridgefield since 2009. The festival staged a variety of plays until the late 2010s. [JFS]

Michael Meltzer Memorial Scholarship: *See* Alan Meltzer.

Michaels, a crafts supply store, opened in October 2024 in about 12,500 square feet of the former Kohl's space at 125 Danbury Road, Copps Hill Plaza. [DNT8/13/2024]

Michaelsen, Arthur, RHS 1984, was a longtime Ridgefield restaurateur, starting with 33⅓ at Copps Hill Plaza in the 1980s. He later owned The Catch (successor to King Neptune — *q.v.*), 59 Bank Street in Branchville and New Milford, and until 2024 Bartolo (*q.v.*) at 103 Danbury Road. His wife **Julia** was partner in the business. He came to Ridgefield as a boy in 1969. [JFS]

Middle Ridge was the early 20th Century name for East Ridge. At that time, what we call Prospect Ridge was considered East Ridge. [RN]

Middlebrook Lane, a dead-end road serving nine or 10 lots off Branchville Road, east of Bayberry Hill Road, was named by its developer, Ronald Hubbard, in 1979 for the Middlebrook family, which owned the land in the 19th Century. [RN]

Midrocks Road runs between Bennett's Farm and Limestone Roads — amid rocks — built chiefly to serve a subdivision of 15 lots of one-third to two-thirds acre each, by Nicholas R. DiNapoli Sr. and Jr. in 1961. It was accepted as a town highway in 1962. [RN]

Mignerey, George A., (1877-1956), a native of Danbury, was a pharmacist who in 1911 bought Howard D. Smith's drug store on the east side of Main Street. He later moved the business to the west side, 423 Main Street (ONS102), and used the name Ridgefield Pharmacy (shown on a bottle of his). He retired in 1946, and sold to Edward M. Smith. He was active in St. Stephen's, Lions, Masons, and was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank, 1931-1956. He published many postcard views of Ridgefield. The name is sometimes incorrectly spelled Mignery. [NR, RSB]

Mikolay Jewelers Inc. opened Desires by Mikolay at 394 Main Street, the former Craig's Jewelry Store (*q.v*.), in 2024. The retailer also has a store in Chappaqua, NY. [P11/14/2024].

Military leaders who lived in Ridgefield include: Col. Philip Burr Bradley, Major Stephen Cain, Col. Louis D. Conley, Gen. Charles Hood, Lt. Joshua King, Brig. Gen. David Perry, Col. Edward M. Knox, Major Gen. John Francis Regis Seitz, Gen. Wilber E. Wilder (*q.v. each*).

Military band concerts: During the last third of the 20th Century, Ridgefield became known among military musicians as "Band City" for its many concerts by U.S. military bands, includes those from the Marine Corps, Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Air Force, along with specialty groups like the Marines' Jazz Knights, the Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus, and the West Point Marching Band. Almost all were sponsored by the Kiwanis Club (*q.v*.) and arranged by Kiwanian Jack Herr (*q.v*.), and all were provided free of charge. [JFS]

Milk Station was an early, probably informal, name for Cooper Station (*q.v.*), perhaps because its chief function was as a place for dairy farmers to drop off their large milk cans for branch line trains to deliver to creameries and dairies. [RN]

Mill Brook is a former name for the stream that connects Mamanasco Lake to the Titicus River, flowing under North Salem Road near Sherwood Road, first appearing in a 1722 deed. [RN]

Mill Path was an early name for North Salem Road, so called because it led from the village to Mamanasco Mill, three miles northwest of the village. It first appears in a 1722 deed; later deeds use "the Mill Road" (*q.v*.) or "the road to Mamanasco Mill." [RN]

Mill Plain is a section of western Danbury that was once within the bounds of Ridgefield, having been in the center of New Patent (*q.v*.). The term is mentioned in Ridgefield records as early as a 1769 deed for 20 acres near a stream "that runs into ye Mill Plain Pond," today called Lake Kenosha. Bailey says "Mill Plain...derived its name, according to tradition, from a mill that was a little east of the present Fair Grounds, which had so high a dam that it flooded the swamps by Mill Plain Pond." [RN]

Mill Pond is a term used for many local bodies of water, including Mamanasco Lake, Upper Pond, and Lower Pond. [RN]

Mill rate, the, is the town's rate of taxation. As of July 1, 2024, the rate was 26.35 mills for every $1,000 of assessed value. (One mill equals one one-thousandths of a dollar or a tenth of a cent.) When multiplied times the amount of the town's taxing base, as defined by the Grand List (*q.v.*), the mill rate yields an amount of money — the Grand Levy — that would be raised by property taxes to pay for the town government, including schools, police, fire, highway and other services. The mill rate is calculated

by the Board of Finance and approved by the voters each spring after town and school budgets have been approved. Simply expressed, for 2024-25, voters approved town and school budgets totaling about $168 million. But because of other revenues, such as state and federal aid, fees charged for services, back taxes paid, and interest on investments, and the fact that nearly $2 million won't be collected because senior citizens tax relief programs, the amount needed to be raised by taxes is about $151 million, obtained by applying 26.35 mills to the approximately $5.8 billion Grand List. Here's an example of how the mill rate translates into a tax bill. A rate of 26.35 mills is equivalent to $26.35 of taxes per $1,000 of assessed value. A house with a market value of $1 million would be assessed on the Grand List at about $700,000 (70% of market value). Multiplying 26.35 mills — expressed as .02635 — times $700,000 results in an $18,445 tax bill. [RW, JFS]

Mill River: *See* Stamford Mill River.

Mill River Hollow, a 15-lot subdivision off Cedar Lane, is served by Deer Hill Drive, developed in 1955 by Earl D. Etheridge, a Pan-American Airlines pilot. It was so called because it overlooks the headwaters of the Stamford Mill River, or Mill River, just to the west. [RN]

Mill River Pond is body of water off the south side of South Salem Road and the western end of Deer Hill Drive, created in the 1940's by the damming of the Stamford Mill River, though earlier ponds may have existed there for mills. Its dam burst in the late 1970's and was never repaired, turning the pond into a meadow, on its way to becoming woods. [RN]

Mill Road or **Path** was an early name for North Salem Road because it led from the village to Mamanasco Mill. It was also sometimes a name for Florida Hill Road (1744), which led to mills on the Norwalk River. [RN]

Mill View Terrace is a short, dead-end road off Nursery Road, developed ca. 1963 by Lewis J. Finch, who said he selected the name because the property overlooks the site of what was once "a tremendous mill." As early as 1745 Richard Olmsted had a grist mill near what became Stonehenge Inn (*q.v*). Many subsequent water-powered mills operated hereabouts. [RN]

Miller, Dean, a retired vice-president at GE Capital, has been president of Meals On Wheels since 2015 and was a longtime member of the Ridgefield Library Board of Directors. He was named Rotary Citizen of the Year (*q.v.*) in 2022. [LI, JFS]

Miller, Nathaniel L., (-1974), president of a newsprint firm. lived from 1925 to 1970 in the house — which he rebuilt from an old mill building — next to where Florida Hill Road crosses the Norwalk River. He called the place "Moongate" (*q.v.*), for the circular, moonlike opening in the pond dam that allows the water to flow through. Miller died in upstate Connecticut, cared for by his companion, **Juan Ayala**, who described himself as a Spanish nobleman. [RN, P6/13/1974]

Miller, Van was Ridgefield's fifth school superintendent, working from 1942 to 1947 with a break of a year and a half to serve in the Army Air Force in WW2.

Millers Card and Giftique was a store at Copps Hill Plaza, operating from Dec. 8, 1972 until the summer of 1981, replaced by Jenni's Hallmark. [P9/10/1981]

Millers Lane serves part of a five-lot subdivision of 11 acres off Saw Mill Hill

Road and Kellogg Street by Five Stars Land Development. The name was suggested by JFS to recall the several mills that operated along Saw Mill Hill Road. [RN]

Miller's Pond is a small pond on the Norwalk River, created by the Moongate (*q.v.*) dam. While previously mill ponds existed there from the early 1700s, the name reflects Nathaniel Miller, who built the current dam for his Moongate estate in the 1950s. [RN] *See also* Platt's Mill Pond.

Miller's Ridge, a very early name that lasted nearly a century and a half, first shows up in a 1717 deed. The ridge extended from Wilton Road East and Whipstick Road southward along the east side of Wilton Road East to around Spectacle Lane where it met Spectacle Ridge. The name probably comes from a very early mill — perhaps town's first saw mill — that stood on stream a short distance below Whipstick Road and just east of Wilton Road East. *See also* Silvermine River. [RN]

Millionaires was the nickname for Ridgefield High School sports teams in 1930s and early 1940s, presumably because of the many, wealthy people who lived here. *See also* Tigers.

Millionaires' Row was a name informally applied to the southern end of High Ridge, where a half dozen mansions were built and owned by wealthy New Yorkers around the turn of the 20th Century. [DD195]

Millstone Brook, an ancient and short-lived name, apparently for the upper Titicus River or one of its branches, is mentioned in a 1721 deed. Perhaps early millstones were created from a quarry near here, possibly the Millstone Rocks (*q.v.*). [RN]

Millstone Court is a short dead-end road off Ramapoo Road, serving some of the seven lots in a 1993 subdivision by Donald and James Sturges. JFS recommended the name because of the subdivision's probable proximity to the Millstone Brook and Millstone Rocks (*q.v. each*).

Millstone Rocks, undoubtedly connected with Millstone Brook (*q.v.*), was cited in a 1722 deed and may have been a place where the first settlers cut millstones from a rock outcropping. [RN] *See also* Millstone Court.

Mimosa was an estate off North Street, created by Morris Simon (*q.v.*) from an old farm, and probably named by later owner Milton Biow (*q.v.*) for mimosa trees planted there (they did not survive the climate). Jerry Tuccio bought the estate in November 1964 and subdivided it in 1965 into 47 house lots cut from 69 acres, served by Mimosa Circle, Court and Place. [TCM3503, P11/19/1964] The main house still exists at 257 Mimosa Circle. [RN] *See also* Wood Acres.

Mindlin, Dr. Raymond D., (1906-1987), a scientist and engineer, made many important contributions to applied mechanics, applied physics and engineering scientists. He earned the National Medal of Science, presented by President Carter, and the Medal of Merit, presented by President Truman. He lived at 89 Deer Hill Drive from 1973 to 1983 and taught at Columbia University. [P11/24/1987]

Mine Hill, mentioned as early as 1789, seems to have been a hill that, because of all the mining of limestone from it, has virtually disappeared. It may have been situated along Danbury Road, just north of Haviland and Limestone Roads, near Limestone gasoline service station, and may have been earlier called Limestone Hill (*q.v.*). [RN]

Minerals found in Ridgefield include biotite, calcite, dolomite, forsterite, gold,

hornblende, iron ore, lepidolite, mica, muscovite, nacrite, orthoclase, pegmatite, quartz, serpentine, silver, talc, and uraninite. Many more are found in the nearby Branchville Mica Mine (*q.v.*). [RIR170-71]

Mink, George, was a horse trainer who worked for Jack B. Ward (*q.v.*) at Ward Acres for more than 40 years. [DD201]

Mingo, (ca. 1706-??), enslaved by Timothy Keeler (*q.v.*), ran away in 1734, prompting Keeler to advertise for his return. Mingo was unusual in that he could both read and write. He was about 28 years old when he escaped. It's not known what happened to him. [JFS]

Minister, first: The town's first member of the clergy was the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), selected by the ATM Dec. 13, 1714. [JFS]

Minor, Henry R., a South Norwalk surveyor, produced a map of Ridgefield in 1912, showing the location of every house in town, along with its owners and occupant. [NH9/27/1912]

Minorities: *see* Racial/Ethnic Population.

Minot, Harry, grew up in Ridgefield and served as general manager of radio station WPKN from 1978 to 2008. Before that he had been a producer at Compton Advertising in NYC, and had begun his broadcasting career at WLAD (*q.v.*). Since retirement he has produced a monthly program on WPKN, centered on "antique culture," and including music, readings, and old radio plays. He is a son of Dr. Henry Minot (*q.v.*)

Minot, Dr. Henry Davis Jr., (1919-2004), a native of Massachusetts and a Harvard graduate, was a WW2 bomber pilot who became a thoracic surgeon at Norwalk and Stamford Hospitals. He moved to Ridgefield in 1960, living at first at 114 Main Street, then 4 West Mountain Road. When he retired in 1986, he became a school bus driver in Ridgefield and later Wilton, feeling it was a community service. He also served as an assistant medical examiner in the region. He also enjoyed breadmaking and driving his antique BMW motorcycle. [WWW] [profile P7/21/1983]

Mint in 2020 was an Indian restaurant at the Days Inn (*q.v.*) at 296 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) in Redding, but says it's in Ridgefield. It became Tawa, also Indian, but has by 2024 apparently closed. (Tawa still operates in Stamford.) [JFS]

Minuteman Road serves part of the Colonial Heights (*q.v.*) subdivision, extending from Oscaleta Road to Revere Drive. It was accepted by the Town Meeting in 1970. Sometimes incorrectly appears as Minute Man Road. [RN]

Mirabella was a restaurant at 43 Danbury Road, owned in the 1990s by Tony Ramadani, now of the Red Rooster Pub (*q.v.*)

Miracle Studio was on Route 7 just north of New Road and advertised it had "everything in hand loom weaving." In the 1930s and early 40s, master weaver Henry Miles Cook created fabrics of intricate design and "remarkable color combinations" here, according to his 1944 obituary. [JFS]

Miry Brook in Ridgebury is alleged in Rockwell to be so called because British troops, on their way to Ridgefield after burning Danbury in 1777, lost cannon because they became *mired* while being dragged across a brook, whose bridge was removed by patriots. The tale is untrue — the name appears in a deed in 1741, 36 years earlier. Miry was a fairly common name for waterways in Connecticut that were swampy. Most of the brook is

in Danbury, where it became the name of a school district, but its source is in Ridgebury, possibly including Shadow Lake. [RN]

Miss Connecticut: Ridgefield has had three: Karen Kopins, 1977, Jennifer Benusis, 1986, Alison Benusis, 1993 (*q.v. each*).

Miss Ridgefield was a beauty and talent pageant operated in the 1970s and early 80s; it led to Miss Connecticut pageant and awarded scholarships to winners. The best-known winner (1977) was Karen Kopins (*q.v.*), who went on to become Miss Connecticut, compete in Miss America pageant in 1977, and become a TV and movie actress. Actress Mimi Bessette (*q.v.*) was the 1975 winner; 1980, Tara Draper.

Missionary Society of the First Congregational Church was formed in April 1875 to raise money to support missionaries in foreign countries and U.S territories.

Mitchell, John Ames, (1845-1918), a graduate of Harvard who was trained as an architect, was a founder in 1883 and editor of the original *Life* Magazine. He also wrote several novels, one of which, *Amos Judd*, was turned into 1922 movie, "The Young Rajah," starring Rudolph Valentino. Mitchell donated the watering trough (*q.v.*) that stood on Main Street in front of town hall, now in triangle at West and Olmstead Lanes. His estate at 194 West Lane was called Windover; much of its land was subdivided into the Sycamore Lane (*q.v.*) neighborhood early in the 1970s. Mitchell established Life's Farm (*q.v.*), a Fresh Air camp in Branchville. He is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery. [WWW]

Mobil: *See under* Socony, KEB.

Moderator is an official town office, dating back to the 1600s in Connecticut. It is the person who leads the town meeting, be it the ATM or a Special Town Meeting. Unlike other town officials, the moderator is elected by those attending the town meeting to serve only for the duration of the town meeting (in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, they are elected for multiyear terms). The moderator may tend to be the same person for a long period of time, or as is usual, a different person for each meeting.

Modern Barber Shop was operated 1932-1965 by Paul Laszig (*q.v.*) on Catoonah Street in a building that was torn down to make way for the parking lot behind Addessi Block.

Moffett, Phyllis (1898-1964), founded and owned a small chain of NYC restaurants called "Hamburger Heaven." She bought the former Emmett/Ingold/Barber estate at 153 West Mountain Road in 1958. The property was later the Neligans' "Innisfree" (*q.v.*).

Mohr, the Rev. Ursinus O., (1862-1929), a native of Pennsylvania, was superintendent of Life's Farm (*q.v.*), the Fresh Air camp in Branchville, from the late 1890s into the early 1920s, assisted by his wife **Mary**. He was a minister who often preached in Congregational churches, and was also a Ridgefield justice of the peace. [JFS]

Mokquaroose was an American Indian who sold land to the first settlers — *see* Betty Grant.

Molly was a large road grader that the town bought in 1948 especially to handle big snow storms. It was made famous in several Dick Venus columns [such as DD86 & 133].

Monahan, William Costello, (1894-1970), founded and ran Monaplastics (*q.v.*), a light industry in Branchville. [P5/7/1970]

Monaplastics, a rare industrial factory in Ridgefield, made precision plastic parts for home appliances, cars, and various pieces of medical and dental equipment from 1938 until the late 1970s on West Branchville Road. It was named for William Monahan, who was an American living in England when he founded the company there in 1932. He moved here as war in Europe loomed. After he died in 1970, his wife took over the business for a few years. [PC]

Monckton, Donald, was a Ridgefield police officer from 1972 to 2011. In 1980 he was named the department's first youth officer [P6/19/1980]. He retired at the rank of major. [JFS]

Monderer, Jack, (1925-2005) was Ridgefield's school psychologist and director of pupil personnel services in the late 1950s, early 1960s. His wife, Phyllis, was an active Democrat. [JFS]

Montanari, Andrew John "Andy," (1932-2021), president of Montanari Fuel (*q.v*.) for more than 20 years, was a well-known member of the Southern New York Racing Association and was famous for driving the number 55 car at Danbury Fair Racearena for more than two decades. After he hung up his racing helmet, he rebuilt nearly a dozen classic cars over the years, including vintage hot rods. *See also* Montanari Fuel.

Montanari, Ciro, (1886-1952), was superintendent of the Westmoreland (*q.v.*) estate in the 1920s. [DD]

Montanari, Frank P., (1924-2013), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1944, served in World War II and with brother, Fred (*q.v*.), founded Montanari Fuel (*q.v.*). He served as president for many years. He and wife Linnea lived on Dowling Drive. [P4/25/2013]

Montanari, Fred Peter, (1921-2010), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1939, was a founder of Montanari Fuel who then operated Keeler & Durant (*q.v.*) real estate and insurance business which he bought in 1960 and sold to A.J. Carnall in 1987. Early in his career he was a plant manager for Doman Helicopter (*q.v.*). He served on the Board of Selectmen in the 1960s, the Zoning Board of Appeals, as chairman of the Republican Town Committee, president of the Ridgefield Board of Realtors, and on four school building committees: Branchville, Scotland, Farmingville, and East Ridge Junior High. He was a World War II veteran of General Patton's Third Army. He lived on Barry Avenue for many years. [P2/18/2010]

Montanari, John, a Ridgefield native and RHS 1973, is a retired broadcaster who spent 35 years in public radio hosting classical music programs, mostly on five-college radio, WFCR, in Amherst, Mass. He lives in Shutesbury, Mass. [JFS]

Montanari Fuel Service at 15 South Street is a family-owned business founded in September 1946 by brothers Frank and Fred Montanari (*q.v. each*), Ridgefield natives just returned from the war. Brother Andy Sr. soon joined to help with deliveries. When Fred left for career in real estate and insurance in 1951, Andy Sr. became vice president with Frank, president; Frank retired 1996, Andy Sr. became president. In 2019, Andy Jr. is president. The company acquired Ridgefield Oil and the DaSilva Fuel Oil Company of Danbury.

Montessori school: *See* Ridgefield Montessori School.

Montgomery, Douglass, (1907-1966), a native of Canada, was a British and American actor famous for portraying Laurie alongside Katharine Hepburn

in the 1933 film, "Little Woman." He and his wife, Kay Young (*see* Kathleen Eason), moved to a Georgian-style brick mansion on Golf Lane in January 1966 and he died that summer of cancer. [WWW]

Montgomery, Giles (1910-1985) and **Barry** (1939-2018)**,** were father and son developers from Stamford who did High Valley (*q.v.*) and Twin Ridge (*q.v.*). developments in Ridgefield as well as Dolphin Cove and Old Stone Bridge in Stamford,.

Monti, Salvatore "Sal," (1930-2015), a native of Darien and a Realtor, was a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, longtime moderator of town meetings, and a president of the Rotary Club who helped develop the Dlhy Ridge Golf Course (*q.v.*). *See also* Hackert & Monti Building.

Mont-Lac appears to be a name being used at least in the 1870s for West Mountain; it means "mountain lake" and probably refers to Round Pond near the summit. [*see* P12/11/1878]

Moongate is a small estate at junction of Route 7 and Florida Hill Road, so called because of the dam on the river with a circular opening. It was first called Moongate by Nathaniel Miller (*q.v.*), who built the house on the foundation of an old mill (*see also* Miller's Pond, Abbott's Mill Road, grist mills). [RN]

Moore, David James, (1916-1969), an Army veteran of WW2, was a POW in Germany, freed at war's end, who earned a Purple Heart and Croix de Guerre. He owned the United Cigar Store (*q.v.*), selling it to Aldo "Squash" Travaglini (*q.v.*) in 1953. [P1/16/1969]

Moore, Sister Ann, CND, a nun in the Congregation of Notre Dame *(q.v.*), was principal of Notre Dame Academy (*q.v.*) during its short life from 1968 to 1972.

Moorhead, Lillian, (1932-1997), became in 1973 the first woman ever elected to Board of Selectmen, a government body then more than 2½ centuries old and now called Board of Selectpersons. She ran unsuccessfully for first selectman in 1981 [P7/2/1981], and retired as a selectman in 1983. She moved to Ashbee Lane in 1963, served many years on the Housing Authority she helped to create, and was also a Youth Commission member, a trustee of Danbury Hospital, an NAACP board member and a founding member of the Women's Political Caucus. She moved to Martha's Vineyard in 1991. [WWW]

Moose are very rare in Ridgefield, but one was sighted near Route 7 on Sept. 2, 2008. A few days later it was seen on Great Hill Road and Limestone Road. The moose was possibly the same one that two weeks later was killed on I-684 in Lewisboro, NY, causing a nine-car pile-up. [JFS]

Mopus is an ancient name, probably of American Indian origin, connected with several places in Ridgebury. It appears in many versions, starting in the early 1700s, including Mopoos, Mopoas, Mopo's, Mopoes, Mopoo, Mopo, Mopoo's, and Mopose. The spelling, Mopus, is fairly modern, first appearing around 1841. Mopus may be the name of a native — perhaps Mopo — who lived thereabouts. [RN]

Mopus Bridge was first mentioned in an 1849 deed, but the bridge on Mopus Bridge Road, over the Mopus Brook, certainly existed long before the name appeared. [RN]

Mopus Bridge Road extends from Ridgebury and Spring Valley Roads westward to New York State. In 1841, town officials mentioned an "old

Mopus Road" in changing the path of the highway. The older route may be what we now call Wheeler Road. This may have been the original main highway between Ridgefield and North Salem. The road is probably a very early one, existing at least by the time of the Revolution when General George Washington (*q.v.*) probably passed over it with his entourage in 1780. A Washington-commissioned map of the area (Erskine-DeWitt map 43-D, ca. 1779) seems to show Mopus Bridge Road as the best route from Salem Center to Ridgebury center. This same route is also shown on a 1770s map, "drawn by Abraham Close of Salem," as part of the main road from "Upper Salem" (North Salem) to Danbury, while North Salem Road (*q.v.*) is shown as the main road southward to Norwalk. [RN]

Mopus Brook is a little stream that runs under Mopus Bridge Road, mentioned as early as 1721 in the "Third Purchase" from the natives. The brook has two branches. the eastern rises in McKeon's Pond near the northern corner of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads, then proceeds northerly through Chestnut Hill Estates to a swamp west of the Ridgefield Golf Course, then south along Spring Valley Road and westward to connect to the main stream; west branch rises from a small pond and a swamp near Finch Road (the North Salem, NY, extension of our Chestnut Hill Road) and flows south to meet the east branch. The Mopus Brook then connects with the Titicus River (*q.v.*) in a swamp a short distance south of Mopus Bridge. [RN]

Mopus Ridge: The "Second Purchase" of Ridgefield land from the Indians in 1713 mentions a boundary crossing the "lower end of Mopoos Ridge," most of which is in North Salem today, but before 1731 was part of Ridgefield. The ridge runs from western Mopus Bridge Road northwesterly for about a mile and a half to a short distance north of Finch Road in North Salem. [RN]

Mopus Swamp or **Mopus Boggs** is a wetland north of Chestnut Hill Road and west of Chestnut Hill Estates and the Ridgefield Golf Course that was mentioned in deeds before 1750 as "Mopo's Bog or Boggs" and in 1787 as "Mopoo's Swamp." [RN]

Morales, Armando, was a Cuban who fled his homeland after Fidel Castro took over. He developed Brookside Pines (*q.v.*) in 1973. He later moved to Florida. [RN]

Moran, Tom, an RHS graduate, is a national political columnist for Advance Local and former editorial page editor and columnist for *The Star-Ledger* of Newark, N.J. He is well known for decades of coverage of NJ politics. [JFS]

Morehouse, Lemuel, (ca. 1696-1768), was one of the early settlers along Main Street, living a little south of where the Keeler Tavern is, starting in 1729. According to the 1768 inventory of his estate, he had "a negro woman" enslaved, who was worth £25. [UNM]

Morehouse, Charles Burr, was a Republican state representative in 1883

Morehouse, Jabez, of Phillippy, Dutchess County, NY, was a miller in the 1750s. For $900 Joseph Keeler Jr. sold him 11 acres "lying on ye south end of Titticus Hill so called" with a house, barn and grist mill. [RLR3.317/1751].

Morelli, Abraham Jr., (1940-), RHS 1958, an owner of D.F. Bedient Hardware (*q.v.*), spent 25 years as a volunteer in government and community organizations before being elected first selectman in 1997, serving until 1999 as a Republican. In 2000, he and wife Leslie, also an active volunteer, moved to upper NY state. [NR]

Morelli, Abraham N. Sr., (1911-1995), came to Ridgefield in 1940 to work as a clerk for D.F. Bedient's store on Main Street. After two years he opened his own electrical and appliance business on Bailey Avenue and in 1952 bought Bedient's store, which his family continued to operate until 1998, when it was closed — *see* Bedient's Hardware. He was active in the Lions Club and was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. [RSB31]

Morgan, Bayeux Badeau, (1892-1978), a native of New Rochelle, NY, was for many years in the 1940s and 50s, the town's chief assessor. His wife was Florence Morgan (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Morgan, Florence Bengston, (1898-1988), a native of Iowa, was from the 1940s to the 1960s a correspondent covering Ridgefield news for area daily newspapers as well as *The Ridgefield Press.* She was the wife of Bayeaux Morgan (*q.v*.) and came here in 1932. They retired retired to NH in 1962. [NR]

Morgan, John P. "JP," (1920-2009), a native of Wales, was a painter, metal sculptor, and stained-glass artist who was locally famous for his annual hand-drawn Christmas cards, sent to family and friends over a half century period, that were personalized for each recipient and often involved intricate designs. He and his wife Martha lived on Lincoln Lane. [JFS]

Morganti, John S. (Giovanni Silvio), (1887-1965), a native of Italy, came to the USA in 1903 at the age of 15. He started work here as a laborer on sewer lines in the village, then worked for contractors on building houses. He served in WW1 in France with the 77th Infantry, fought in major battles, and was wounded in the forehead. Before enlisting, he started a contracting firm in 1916 that grew to be among the 400 largest in the nation by 1970s (*see* Morganti Inc.). He remained active in his company until the early 1960s when his sons, Paul (*q.v.*), John, Joseph, and Robert took over. He and former Elizabeth Eramo, marked their 47th wedding anniversary in January 1965; three months later, he died. [WWW]

Morganti, Paul J. (1920-1997), a Ridgefield native, was a building contractor who in 1959 became president of Morganti Inc. (*q.v.*). A Republican, he was a member of the Board of Selectmen, 1955-1965, and 1993-95, and served on boards of Ridgefield Library, Ridgefield Bank and Union Trust Company. He was involved in naming many town roads. The Rotary Club named hims Ridgefield Citizen of the Year (*q.v*.) in 1986. [NR]

Morganti Additions was the informal name for classroom additions quickly and inexpensively built in the summer of 1970 by Morganti Inc. on north sides of Ridgefield High and East Ridge Junior High Schools, both on East Ridge, to handle burgeoning enrollments. Paul Morganti (*q.v*.) maintained he could build permanent brick additions for less than the price of portable classrooms; and he did it. The old RHS addition is used today as town hall "annex" while the addition at what's now East Ridge Middle School is still used as classrooms. [JFS]

Morganti Court, a 900-foot road, serves a 1983 subdivision of 22.6 acres into six lots and 15 acres of open space off the east side of Wilton Road West, near the Wilton line. The open space is a ravine that includes a portion of the Great Rocks (*q.v*.). This land had long been in the Morganti family, and was subdivided by John Morganti and Sons. John S. Morganti (*q.v.*) himself excavated from the backlands of this property years ago; clay for surfacing tennis courts came from here. Morganti also personally planted a row of

maples still standing off the easterly side of Wilton Road West, behind some of the houses. [RN]

Morganti Inc. has been one of the nation's top 400 contractors, specializing in large buildings, such as schools, hospitals and corporate offices, around the world. The company was founded in 1916 by John S. Morganti (*q.v.*), an immigrant from Italy; his sons Paul, John, Joseph, and Robert later led company. Paul (*q.v.*) was president starting 1959; Robert took over 1981 [P10/18/1981]. Ridgefield buildings by Morganti include East Ridge Middle School, Ridgebury School, Yankee Ridge shopping center, Ridgefield Commerce Park, and 901 Ethan Allen Highway (former Benrus Center — *q.v.*). The company, whose headquarters were on Danbury Road, was sold in 1988 to Consolidated Contractors Company of Athens, Greece, which retained Morganti name but moved offices to Danbury. Other offices were in Florida, Massachusetts, New York, Texas, Abu-Dhabi, Dubai, Egypt, Greece, Jordan, Italy, and Qatar. *See also* Morganti additions. [WWW]

Morrissey, Robert, was pastor of St. Mary Parish from 1992 to 2002, when he was removed from the ministry. *See under* Holzberg Report.

Morris, Augustus Newbold, (1838-1906), was born in the Morrisania section (named for his family) of the Bronx, NY, and, though educated as a lawyer at Columbia, became a "man of leisure" who spent much of his time in social organizations, including managing the Home for Incurables at Fordham. He built a house, Caudatowa, at 23 High Ridge (no longer extant) around 1890 and spent much of his later years in Ridgefield where he was a founder and president of the Ridgefield Club (*q.v.*), where he was active in Democratic endeavors, and where he died. [JFS]

Morris, Elizabeth W., (1834-1899), wife of James N. Morris (*q.v.*), is the person for whom the Ridgefield Library was formally named, i.e., "E.W. Morris Memorial Library." The Friends of the Library Reading room, to the south just after entering the Main Street entrance, contains a plaque over the fireplace: "This building was erected A.D. MCMII by James Morris in Loving Memory of his wife, Elizabeth W. Morris." When she died, she left her husband $200,000 (about $8 million in 2026), some of which he presumably used to build the library as a memorial to her. They were married in 1866 in New York City. She was active in the community in the 1890s. Her father, James Winthrop Gray, headed a large importing/exporting firm engaged in trade with China in the mid-19th Century. [JFS]

Morris, Geoffrey, has had a long career in the magazine industry, working for the *National Review* and *Reader's Digest*. In 2002, he created and was editor-in-chief of *Ridgefield Magazine* (*q.v.*), and his enterprises soon grew to include *Fairfield Magazine, Bedford Magazine, Norwalk Magazine, Berkshire Magazine, Litchfield Magazine,* and *Wilton Magazine*. In 2020, he sold the operation, which is now owned by Colabella Media (*see* Deirdre Colabella), whose replacement *068 Magazine* is more regional in content. A longtime runner, Morris was been a founder and a sponsor of the Ridgefield Triathlon (*q.v.*).

Morris, James N., (1840-1907), a Wall Street attorney, gave the town the E.W. Morris Memorial Library (*q.v.*) building, better known as the Ridgefield Library, which opened in 1903 as a memorial for his wife, Elizabeth W. Morris (*q.v.*). A summer and weekend resident for many years, one of his homes here was the Old Hundred (*q.v.*), now offices for the Aldrich

Contemporary Art Museum. He died in Ridgefield. [JFS]

Moscatelli, Caitlin, is a journalist and writer specializing in gender-related subjects. She is the author of *See Jane Win: The Inspiring Story of the Women Changing American Politics* (Dutton, 2019) and has written for *The New York Times, Time, Vanity Fair*, *Harper's Bazaar* and other publications. She and her husband, Chris Kellen, moved to Olmstead Lane in 2022.

Moser, John M., (?-1950), opened an early gasoline and service station at 31 Danbury Road in the 1920s that sold Socony gas and oil, Fisk tires, and Weed chains. He sold in 1931 to KEB (*q.v.*). He lived at 55 Danbury Road. [DD, JFS]

Moss, Donald, (1920-2010), a native of Massachusetts, was a leading sports artist, who painted hundreds of covers and inside illustrations for *Sports Illustrated* from the 1950s to the 1980s. He also designed more than a dozen U.S. postage stamps, including the 1976 Olympics set, and produced many golfing posters. His paintings are in many major collections. He was the author of *How to Paint Watercolor* (1968). He lived on Peaceable Street 23 years before moving to Farmington in 1999. [WWW]

Moss Crags was the name of summer home of David Chidlow on Tea House Road, according to [P7/20/1911].

Mothers Club was founded by Mabel Cleves (*q.v.*) in 1901 to involve parents in the schools. It became the PTA around 1916. [SD]

Motor boats are banned from Lakes Mamanasco and Pierrepont, as well as Great Pond and Round Pond. The first ban — covering Mamanasco — went into effect Sept. 15, 1944, enacted by the selectmen after a petition from neighbors who didn't like the noise and pollution that gasoline engines created. Electric motors are allowed. [JFS]

Motor Sport Design Corp. operated on Route 7 in the 1960s in the former Kellogg Theiss building. The firm, headed by J. Macy Willets (*q.v.*), designed, modified and built racing cars and racing car equipment. It moved to Westport. [DNT8/25/1965]

Motor Transportation Corps was a subset of American Women's Voluntary Services (*q.v.*) which provided rides for military and other essential personnel. [JFS]

Mount Vernon and Eastern Railroad was created 1907 to build an electric railroad line on standard gauge track from Mt. Vernon, N.Y., to Ridgefield [P10/17/1907]. The company dissolved 1911 with nothing built. [JFS]

Mountain lions, also called panthers, probably once lived in Ridgefield, but by 1800 were driven out or hunted to extinction [RSSG]. In spring 2011, there were many sightings all over Fairfield County, including Ridgefield, of a "mountain lion." In July, a car struck and killed a genuine mountain lion on the Merritt Parkway in Milford. Scientists determined the animal had trekked more than 1,500 miles from South Dakota. Late one night around 1970, a lion kept as an exotic pet at a house in the Florida District got loose and headed eastward, running across Route 7. A motorist who saw it dash in front of his car was so shocked that he drove straight to the police station five miles away — it was long before cell phones. As he approached the officer on the desk, he said: "I know you're going to think I'm drunk, but I just saw a lion run across Route 7." The cat was later captured and kept under better tether. [JFS]

Mountain Park is a 1987 subdivision of 23 acres off Mountain Road into five,

two-acre lots, plus 11 acres of open space bordering the Hemlock Hills/ Pine Mountain refuge complex. The developer was Ridgefield Lakes Partners, which included restaurateur Fred Orrico (*q.v.*). [RN]

Mountain Road: 1. Today's Barry Avenue was so-called in an 1856 deed and as late as 1910 on a property map. 2. An old highway from Route 7 over the Pine Mountain to Pine Mountain Road, mentioned in an 1854 deed as "the Mountain Road leading to Buttonwood Swamp." 3. At the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), a road around Rainbow or Wataba Lake, from Bennett's Farm Road to Shady Lane; the western section is the southern end of an "old highway" which connects with Pine Mountain Road and leads to Miry Brook. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Mountain View Avenue runs between Hillsdale Avenue and Danbury Road, part of the 1910 subdivision called Mountain View Park (*q.v.*). It overlooks Copps Mountain (*q.v.*). [RN]

Mountain View Park is a 19.4-acre subdivision from 1910 and 1927 by Conrad Rockelein (*q.v.*), with 75-by-250-foot lots off west side of Danbury Road, south of Copps Hill Plaza. It includes Island Hill Avenue, Hillsdale Avenue, and Mountain View Avenue. [RN]

Mouse House was a Disney-products store that opened May 3, 1980, at Yankee Ridge Center, 20 Prospect Street. It lasted several years. [JFS]

Movies: The first motion picture shown publicly in Ridgefield was in 1899, an animated short projected in the town hall by the American Bioscope Company. The first movie filmed, in part, here, was *His Royal Highness* (first called *Almost A King — q.v.*) with Carlyle Blackwell and Evelyn Greeley, released in 1918. A "moving picture machine" was installed in December 1918 in St. Stephen's Parish House to show films "of an educational character" every Sunday night. Silent movies were also shown in the Town Hall in a program operated by Arthur Ferry. [DD204] *In Name Only* (*q.v.*), a 1939 film, was set in Ridgefield. *Stone Pillow* (*q.v.*) was filmed here in 1985. *Spring Forward* (1999) was filmed in Ballard Park and based loosely on Ridgefield events — *see* Tom Gilroy. Scenes from the 2007 comedy, *College Road Trip*, were filmed at the Lounsbury House, which portrayed an old inn. The same locale was used for the 2008 film, *All Good Things,* in which the building portrayed New York City's Gracie Mansion. The 2018 Hallmark TV movie, *Christmas Camp*, has scenes filmed in Ridgefield, including its holiday-lit Main Street. In the 2022 film, *The Noel Diary,* Ridgefield is the location of the long-lost mother of one of the starring characters and although the film purports to show a scene or two from Ridgefield, nothing was filmed here. For many years Ridgefield has had a Ridgefield Film Commission, which lured filmmakers to the town. Allison Stockel (*q.v.*) was its longtime leader. [JFS]

Moylan, Francis P., (1919-2001), was appointed the town's first full-time fire marshal in 1981 after having served as the part-time fire marshal for 26 years. A Ridgefield native, he joined the volunteer department in 1940 and was a member for more than 60 years. His wife was **Pauline Frulla Moylan**, longtime Republican registrar of voters. [JFS]

Moylan, Dr. Joseph J. Sr., (1926-2016), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1944, was a director of psychological services at a mental hospital in Raleigh, NC, until his retirement in 1994, and wrote a memoir, *Recollections of My Youth*, published by his son in 2013 as a 184-page paperback book. In it he tells

about his growing up between 1926 and 1957, mostly set in Ridgefield, and including many profiles of the local Irish-American population. Copies are available to read at the Ridgefield Library and HS. He served as chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Dayton and at Parsons College (Iowa). A noted athlete at RHS and member of the first football team, he was honored by ROTA in 1998 [JFS, P2/27/2016]

Ms President US's Ridgefield chapter, which has workshops at the Ridgefield Library, aims "to motivate and prepare girls to aim for the highest civic leadership positions and to know that they can achieve them." Girls learn about public speaking, diplomacy and listening skills, local/state/federal government, and women's history while having an opportunity to meet and greet exemplary female leaders. [https://www.mspresidentus.org/chapters.html]

Mugavero family, four generations of Ridgefield barbers, began with **Vincent Mugavero** (1902-1987) of Norwalk who from 1931-38 ran Ridgefield Tonsorial Parlor at ONS89 Main Street. He was joined by his brother **Jerry** (1904-88) who bought the business in 1938 when Vincent opened B-V Ranch (*q.v.*), a restaurant on Route 7. Jerry operated Jerry's Barber Shop at a new location, 396 Main Street (ONS93, on south side of Masonic Hall) for many years. (For a while he was joined by Mike Pontello —*q.v*., who married Jerry's daughter, **Agatha,** and eventually took over the Masonic Hall spot). Jerry lived on Route 7 in Branchville. Jerry's son, **Peter**, operated Peter's Barber Shop in Branchville for many years. Peter's daughter, **Linda Mugavero** Morganti, operates The Barber's Daughter at 723 Branchville Road in 2024. [WWW] [DD93]

Mugsy was a nickname for Mario J. Frulla, former Ridgefield policeman, firefighter and gas station operator. The word also appears as Muggsy. [DD10, DD87]

Mulford, Dr. Roland Jessup, (1871-1951), was the founder in 1907 of the Ridgefield School (*q.v.*). A graduate of Harvard and Johns Hopkins, he was the author in 1903 of *The Political Theories of Alexander Hamilton.* After he was succeeded in 1922 by Theodore C. Jessup (*q.v*.) in running the school, he taught Latin at Princeton and became headmaster of the Lawrenceville School in NJ. [RPJ]

Mulford School was an early name for the Ridgefield School (*q.v.*), reflecting its founder, the Rev. Roland Mulford (*q.v.*).

Mulberry Street is an old highway that existed by 1856 and probably much earlier. Once considered a part of Saw Mill Hill Road (*q.v.*), it extends between Pin Pack Road and Ramapoo Road, connecting the Titicus area with West Mountain. The name was in use by the mid-1940s, appearing on the town's first zoning map in 1946. The RP in 1942 referred to Mulberry Street as the eastern end of Saw Mill Hill Road. It's so called for the species of trees in the area. [RN]

Mulligan, Hugh, (1925-2008), a journalist and native of NYC, was a longtime correspondent and columnist for Associated Press. He drank with John Steinbeck, covered the death of three popes and President Kennedy, was the only reporter — British or American — at the wedding *and* the funeral of Princess Diana, and was dining with Salvador Dali when the artist was booted from a restaurant because his ocelot defecated on the floor. He wrote three books including *No Place to Die: The Agony of Vietnam* and

Been Everywhere, Got Nowhere, and lived in Ridgefield Lakes home from 1977 until his death; he called the place Hardscribble House. [WWW]

Mullin, Scott, is an award-winning Ridgefield photographer who worked for *The Ridgefield Press* from the 1980s into the 2010s. His work has appeared in many other publications, including the NYT.

Multifamily housing: *See* Apartments *and* Condominiums.

Mundle, The: A single 1721 deed refers to 17½ acres "lying on ye west of ye Mundle." The word may have been incorrectly transcribed; mundle is archaic term for a "stirring stick." [RN]

Munkoff's Paint and Power sold paint and power tools in 1960s, and was located about where the Ancient Mariner is in 2024.

Murder and Blueberry Pie by Richard and Frances Lockridge, (Lippincott, 1959) is a mystery novel inspired by Ridgefield's 250th anniversary celebration. The Lockridges, who wrote the famous Mr. and Mrs. North series of mysteries made into movies, radio and TV shows, lived in Lewisboro and often visited Ridgefield. [JFS]

Murdock, Harris Hunnewell, (1879-1959), a 1901 Harvard graduate, was a NYC architect and member of the firm of McKim, Mead and White. From 1919 till around 1960, he had a home at 200 Chestnut Hill Road, later owned by Maurice Sendak (*q.v.*). His wife, **Florence**, was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club. (*q.v.*)

Murdock's Corners was a local name for intersection of Chestnut Hill and Spring Valley Roads. In the 1930s, the family of Harris H. Murdock (*q.v.*) lived nearby. [RN]

Murmuring Ever by Lynn Wallrapp (*q.v.*), (Manor Books Gothic, 1975), is a novel of a family moving to a New England town (Ridgefield), where they discover a legend that's haunted the town since the Revolutionary War. The family's teenage girl winds up falling in love with the ghost of a soldier hanged 200 years earlier. Wallrapp grew up and wrote the book here. [JFS]

MUSE was a short-lived theater company founded in town in 1975.

Museum in the Streets is a network of 30 plaques offer pictures and text describing historic sites around town. Installed in 2008 as part of the town's 300th birthday. Created and organized by the Ridgefield 300th Anniversary Committee, they were turned over to the Ridgefield Historical Society in 2015. Twenty seven plaques are in and about the center of town, 2 in Branchville and 1 in Ridgebury. A map of the plaques is available on the society's website. [HS]

Musicians who've lived in Ridgefield include: Larry Adler, harmonica; Eddy Brown, violinist; Sidney Russell Case, organist; Samuel Chotzinoff, pianist; Sasha Culbertson, violinist; Richard Dunning, bugle; Andrew Gold, multiple instruments; Sacha Jacobsen, violinist; Reginald Clifford Kell, clarinetist; Ed Kowalczyk, singer, songwriter; George B. Leeman Sr., pianist, arranger; Glen Lebetkin, violinist, conductor, Emily Gresser Liebovitz, violinist; Charles Pope, organist and conductor; Maxim Shostakovich, pianist, conductor; Dmitri Shostkovich, pianist; William H. Slater, organist; Charles Spire, pianist, conductor; James Richard Steinman, composer, music producer; Peter Walters, pianist; Alec Wyton, organist; *see also* Leonard Burkat, *and under* Composers, Conductors, Singers, Songwriters.

Mutual Cornet Band was performing in the 1870s in Ridgefield for many events. [P7/16/1879] An early leader was Aaron G.H. Hurlbutt (*q.v.*).

Mutighticus: *See* Titicus.

My Brother Sam is Dead, by Christopher Collier & James Lincoln Collier (Scholastic, 1974), is a fictional account of teenagers in the Revolutionary War, set in Redding as well as Ridgefield. It won Newbery award. Christopher was Connecticut state historian.

My Nursery School was established in 1975 by Nan Howkins (*q.v.*) and operated until 2015 [P3/12/1981].

Myers, Debs, (1911-), a native of Kansas who lived on Fulling Mill Lane from 1967 to 1969, was a noted political adviser who worked for such political leaders as U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy, presidential candidate Adlai E. Stevenson, and New York City mayor Robert F. Wagner. He was managing editor of *Newsweek* magazine in the 1940s. In City Hall Park in Manhattan, within view of the window of the office where he worked under Wagner, is a monument to him, bearing one of his oft-quoted observations: “Do the right thing, and nine times out of 10, it turns out to be the right thing politically.” [WWW]

N

NAACP: *See* National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

Nancy's Lane was a name occasionally applied late 1900s to Regan Road (*q.v.*). The reason is unknown. [RN]

Narahawmis was the name used in the first purchase of land from the American Indians for the southwest corner of the 20,000-acre tract, an area north of the Vista section of today's Lewisboro, N.Y. It may mean "He is carrying something on his back." [RN] *See also* Harahawmis.

Naranauta was the name applied by George H. Newton to his home at 563 Main Street, later the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Jay Pierrepont. Its origin is unknown. [DD195]

Naraneka, Lake, pronounced *nair-a-NEE-ka*, is the original and accurate name for the 38 acres of water today more commonly called Pierrepont Pond (*q.v.*) off Barlow Mountain Road, created by the late Seth Low Pierrepont in 1936-38. "We are calling it Lake Naraneka after one of the Indian chiefs who signed the deed to the town of Ridgefield," Pierrepont said. Water went over the spillway for the first time March 30, 1938. The name is often confused with Lake Noroneke (*q.v.*). [RN]

Nash, Abraham, (1718-1801), was in 1748 the first of Nash clan to settle in Ridgefield. He had a farm on lower Wilton Road West. He and Rhoda Keeler, who were married in 1738, had 12 children.

Nash, Abraham "Abram" St. John, (1822-1906), was shot in the leg in May 1861 after tearing down a "secessionist" flag at or near the home and tavern of Stephen Buttery, probably on Florida Road. The incident was reported in many New England and New York newspapers. He was accompanied by recently enlisted soldier Lewis P. Fowler of Hartford, a daguerreotype photographer, who was also wounded and had to be discharged from the service. [JFS]

Nash, Rev. Albert, (1812-1900), a native of Ridgefield, was a Methodist minister who served many congregations in western Connecticut and Massachusetts as well as central New York. He was closely involved in helping the African American community of "Little Liberia" in Bridgeport where Mary Freeman, the moving force behind Little Liberia, bequeathed him $12,000 ($377,000 in 2024 dollars) in 1883. He was married three times and widowed twice. His first wife, Charity Abbott of Wilton, died in 1838, a few days after giving birth to their son, who died six months later. His son, Olin, served in the Civil War. He died in Otego, NY, and is buried with his second wife, Adeline, and two infant sons in Stockbridge, MA. [JFS]

Nash, Charles S., (1865-1929), was the town's leading carpenter and builder for many years. His birth and early life were recorded by his father in the *Diary of Jared Nash* (*q.v.*). He was the first chief of the volunteer fire department, an early Boy Scouts organizer, a member of the Board of Burgesses and Board of Finance, a trustee of the Methodist Church, a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank, and vice president of the First National Bank and Trust Company. [NR,WWW, RSB26]

Nash, Christie Law Jones, (1882-1967), a Wilton native and graduate of Mt. Holyoke College, was an assistant librarian and later chief librarian at

Ridgefield Library, 1922-1955. Her father was David L. Jones, owner of Walnut Grove (*q.v*.) farm. She was the wife of Howard Patterson Nash (*q.v*.) and mother of Karl S. and John W. Nash (*q.v. each).* [NR]

Nash, Elizabeth Grace Boyd (1921-2003), a native of St. Paul, MN, who was known as "Betty Grace," was managing editor for many years of *The Ridgefield Press* and other Acorn Press newspapers, and the wife of Karl S. Nash (*q.v.*), publisher. A daughter of novelists Thomas and Margaret Smith Boyd (*q.v. each*), she had lived in Ridgefield as a child, graduated from Vassar in 1942, and worked as a model and as an editor at *1,000 Jokes* magazine. At *The Press*, which she joined in 1950, she added a strong focus on the human side of the news (rather than just government reporting) and kept the coverage as local as possible. She retired to Cocoa Beach, Fla. One of her children, Thomas Boyd Nash (*q.v.*)**,** became publisher of Acorn Press, later Hersam Acorn newspapers. [JFS]

Nash, Hiram Olmstead, (1811-67), a Ridgefield native, was a shoemaker and owner of the "Titicus Store" (*q.v.*), who, as a member of the Union Party, was a state representative in 1857 and 1865. He was the father of State Rep. John Dempster Nash (*q.v.*). [DOJN]

Nash, Howard Patterson (1877-1922), son on John D. Nash (*q.v.*), was a Ridgefield educator who operated a private school at 486 Main Street early in 20th Century (until the opening of Alexander Hamilton High School — *q.v.*). He graduated from Harvard in 1901 and the father of Karl S. and John W. Nash (*q.v. each*) who owned *The Ridgefield Press.* He was the husband of Christie Law Jones Nash, who worked at the library [P2/28/1922] [RPJ5/7]

Nash, Sgt. Jacob, (1751-1779), was home on furlough from service in the Continental Army in July 1779 when he heard the British were attacking the coastal communities. He joined others in rushing to Norwalk where he joined the fight, and was captured and executed by the British. He "was found dead with his Hands bound together & pierced with Bayonets, no Shot having ever entered any Part of his Body." Another account says his body had seven stab wounds. He is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [WWW]

Nash, Jared, (1825-70), was a farmer and shoemaker who lived on Silver Spring Road whose diary for the years 1865-66 was discovered in the 1970s, transcribed and edited by Jack Sanders into *The Diary of Jared Nash*, published in *The Ridgefield Press* and available digitally at the HS website, on Facebook's Old Ridgefield group, and at ridgefieldhistory.com. (A print version is due in 2026.) [DJN]

Nash, John Dempster, (1838-1902), born in Titicus, learned retailing in Norwalk. In 1859 he joined his father in operating the H.O. Nash & Son store at Titicus, purchased from S.S. Olmstead. Starting in 1875, he partnered for 20 years with Milan H. Mead, renaming store Nash & Mead. He was postmaster at Titicus from 1882 to 1896. A Republican, he served as a state representative in 1880 (the first session held in the "new" Capitol building) and also held many local offices, including selectman and school board. [CBRFC] His father was State Rep. Hiram Olmstead Nash (*q.v.*). He was married to **Sarah Jane Holmes** (1840-1917). [DOJN, RSB25]

Nash, John Wallace (1912-2013), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1931, joined brother Karl (*q.v.*) in buying *The Ridgefield Press* (*q.v*.) in 1937. He left in 1948 to strike out on his own, and owned weekly newspapers based in

New Milford, then daily newspapers in Winsted and in Westfield, Mass. He served in Army in WW2. [JFS]

Nash, Karl Seymour (1908-1992), a Ridgefield native descended from the town's founders and a grandson of John Dempster Nash (*q.v.*), bought *The Ridgefield Press (q.v.*) with brother John (*q.v.*) in 1937 and built the business as Acorn Press at 16 Bailey Avenue until his retirement in the late 1980s. He graduated from Hamilton High School in 1926 and Harvard in 1930. He served on the Board of Education for 20 years, 17 as chairman, and was a frequent Town Meeting moderator. He also helped found the Good Government Party (*q.v.*). *The Press* in 1987 [P6/4/1987] celebrated his 50 years as an editor and had many reminiscences of his life. In 1951 he married Elizabeth Grace Boyd (*q.v.*), daughter of novelists Thomas Boyd and Margaret Woodward Smith (*q.v. each*), and they ran the newspaper enterprise together. [WWW]

Nash, Luther Roberts, (1871-1947), son of John D. Nash (*q.v.*), worked at the Titicus Store in his youth, but went to MIT and Harvard, became an electrical engineer and corporate executive, and wrote books with such enticing titles as *The Economics of Public Utilities: A Reference Book for Executives, Investors, Engineers, and Students* (1925) and *Anatomy of Depreciation: A Discussion of Utility Accounting Methods from Time to Time in Effect or Proposed by Regulatory or Utility Representatives, with Particular Reference to Recent Controversies* (1947). He married Bonnibel Remington, a member of the typewriter clan. [JFS]

Nash, Marion Holmes, (1862-1930), librarian at Ridgefield Library and a former teacher, was the first female to serve on a major town board after women won suffrage, joining the Town School Committee (Board of Education), in October 1921. [P10/11/1921] She was struck and killed by a car in front of her home at 486 Main Street Nov. 9, 1930. [P11/13/1930]. She was a daughter of John Dempster Nash (*q.v.*).

Nash, Thomas Boyd was publisher of *The Ridgefield Press* and other Hersam-Acorn newspapers from the 1990s until the company was sold to Hearst in 2018. While he and his partner, Marty Hersam, led the company, it expanded manifold, acquiring weekly newspapers throughout Fairfield County and in Vermont, as well as a large printing plant in Trumbull. He was the last member of his family to live on a piece of property off Main Street that his ancestors had held for three centuries. [JFS]

Nash, Uriah "Riah," (1763-1837), a Ridgefield native and son of Abraham Nash (*q.v.*), was a state representative in 1823, and a selectman in 1800 and 1801. He moved to Sullivan County, NY in 1832, and died there.

Nash automobiles were sold by Leo Pambianchi in the old Sperry livery stable on Catoonah Street in the 1940s. [DD133]

Nash Private School: *See* Howard Patterson Nash.

Nash & Mead Store: *See* Titicus Store.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Ridgefield Chapter, was founded in July 1951 at the Goodwill Community Church, to deal with problems facing Blacks in Ridgefield, including discrimination in housing and employment. It was one of only a handful of chapters in the state, and grew in the 1960s to more than 200 members — many of them white. However, the chapter, suffering from dwindling membership, shut down by 1990. [UNM]

National Bank and Trust Company of Fairfield County briefly had a branch at Ridgefield Shopping Center (Grand Union) around 1960. After a merger with Black Rock Bank and Trust Company in 1960, the Stamford-based bank was renamed State National Bank (*q.v*) in 1962.

National Charity League (NCL, Inc.) is an organization of mothers and daughters who work together on community service, leadership development and cultural projects, including providing volunteers for community organizations and events. When it was started in 1985 by Marie Pinchbeck, it was the first NCL club on the East Coast. By 2012 it had expanded into two chapters, the Ridgefield and the Nutmeg Chapters, serving more than 29 organizations in town. In 2012, there were nearly 300 mother-daughter teams, called patrons and ticktockers, with the girls in grades seven through 12. [P1/12/2012]

National Education Association-Ridgefield: *See* Ridgefield Teachers Association *and* Ridgefield Education Association.

National League of Woman's Service was a sort of Red Cross in Ridgefield during World War I, providing many war-support services. Mary Linda Bradley was its leader. [DD285]

National Register of Historic Places: These buildings and sites are listed individually on the register: Keeler Tavern; Governor Lounsbury House (Community Center); Fulling Mill/Woollen Mill Archaeological Site on Route 7 north of Topstone Road; Branchville Railroad Tenement on West Branchville Road; Thomas Hyatt House; Lewis June House on North Salem Road; Benedict House and Shop on Rockwell Road; Rochambeau March Route in Ridgebury; Ridgebury Congregational Church; and the Frederic Remington House off Oak Knoll Lane. Many other historic houses, buildings and site are within the town's seven historic districts (*q.v.*).

Native Americans: *See under* Indians, American.

Natural gas began arriving in Ridgefield in the late 1960s. On Nov. 11, 1969, Connecticut Light and Power Company started digging up Main Street and sidewalks to lay gas mains to provide the center of town with natural gas service; the Copps Hill area had gotten it first. The village last had gas 60 years earlier, generated by a plant in town that went bankrupt with the arrival of electricity (*see* Gas). The two biggest customers — probably a reason CL&P agreed to bring gas to town — were the 320-unit Casagmo complex and the 278-unit Fox Hill condominiums, both developed by David Paul (*q.v*.). Ridgefield's gas line comes into town under the Route 7 corridor and connects to the 1,100-mile Algonquin Line that runs through Danbury (passing just north of the Ridgefield line in Ridgebury), which in turn connects to a line from Texas. [JFS]

Nature's Temptations is an organic/specialty food market, founded by Jeff Konchalski in 1993 at 18-20 Prospect St. in Yankee Ridge shopping center. It moved to 32 Prospect Street in 2007. It is also a popular spot to grab a lunch, eat-in or take out.[JFS]

Nearly Departed, The, is a humorous book about growing up in an unusual family in Ridgefield on lower St. Johns Road, by Brenda Cullerton (*q.v.*). The book especially features her mother, Mary McLachlan Cullerton (1928-1999). Published 2003 by Little, Brown and Company, its full title is: *The Nearly Departed, Or, My Family & Other Foreigners*.

Nebel, Frederick Lewis, (1903-1967), a native of NYC, was a "pulp fiction"

writer who by his own estimate, produced more than 4,000,000 words on his three typewriters for novels, novelettes, short stories, and articles. He was widely published in magazines. Novels were *Sleepers East* (1933), *But Not the End* (1934) and *Fifty Roads to Town* (1936). Lived here from 1934 until late 1950s; was chairman of Zoning Board of Appeals and serviced on War Price and Ration Board. [WWW]

Ned's Lane is a short dead-end road off the south side of Ned's Mountain Road (*q.v.*). Near here during the first half of the 19th Century, perhaps earlier, was a small compound of African-American cottages, including the home of Ned and Betsey Armstrong (*q.v*.), who were reported to have operated a station on the Underground Railroad, hiding their "passengers" in caves on Ned's Mountain. [UNM, RN]

Ned's Mountain is a hill south of Ned's Mountain Road and east of Ned's Lane (*q.v.*) that reaches about 962 feet above sea level. Its name recalls Edward "Ned" Armstrong (*q.v.*), an African-American who, with his wife, Betsey, lived and operated an Underground Railroad station off Ned's Lane (*q.v.*)

Ned's Mountain Road extends from Ridgebury Road northeasterly to the south end of Old Mill Road, traversing the northern slope of Ned's Mountain (*q.v.*).[RN]

Needles, a yarn shop on Bailey Avenue, was opened in March 1983 by Sandra Greene and her daughter Kim Welch. [P3/31/1983]

Negro Rocks, mentioned in an 1855 deed, may have been along Great Hill Road near Buck Hill Road. Its origin is unknown. [RN]

Neighborhood Watch is an anti-crime program, sponsored by the Ridgefield Police Department since the 1970, aimed at reducing home burglaries and car thefts. The department supplies signs and advice. [RW]

Neighbors and Newcomers: *See under* Newcomers Club.

Nelhybel, Vaclav, (1919-1996), a native of Czechoslovakia, was a prolific composer — more than 400 of his 600-plus works have been published; many have been performed by leading orchestras such as the Vienna Symphony and the Orchestra de la Suisse Romande. He lived on Lake Road from 1968 to 1973, then moving to Newtown. In 1980, the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra premiered his *Six Fables for All Time*. He also lectured and performed at RHS and over 1,000 people attended the April 1973 Vaclav Nelhybel Festival, with the composer leading junior and senior high school bands. [WWW]

Neligan, Dr. Patrick, (1926-2014), a native of Ireland who came to the U.S. in 1954, and Ridgefield in 1956, practiced medicine here and at Norwalk Hospital, where he held many leadership and teaching roles. He was director of the town Health Department for 34 years, 1970-2004, during which town hired its first full-time sanitarian and modernized health codes. He founded Norwalk Community Health Care Center to aid that city's poor. He and his wife, Veronica, owned the West Mountain estate they called Innisfree (*q.v.*).

Nelson, Private John Evald, (1921-1945), grew up in Ridgefield, joined the Army in November 1944, and was killed in the Philippines fighting, a month before Japanese surrender. He is buried in Mapleshade Cemetery. He was married and lived on Farmingville Road. Less than two months after his death, his wife, Jeanette, gave birth to their daughter. [NR]

Nelson, Louis, (1936-2024), an industrial designer and NYC native, designed the 164-foot reflecting mural at the Korean War Veterans Memorial in

Washington, DC. His design work ranged from signs and product packaging to even a fast-food restaurant. He had a home from 1973 until about 2015 on Mountain Road at the Ridgefield Lakes was the husband of folksinger Judy Collins (*q.v.*). [NYT12/13/2024]

Nelson, Suzanne, a native of New Jersey who grew up in Southern California, is an author of adult, young adult and children's books, including "foodie romance middle grade novels" such as *Cake Pop Crush*, *Macarons at Midnight*, and *Hot Cocoa Hearts.* Her adult novel, *The Librarians of Lisbon*, was published in 2025. She had been an editor for Scholastic books.

Nesopack was the natives' name for Great Pond, mentioned in first purchase from American Indians. Huden translates the word as "double pond" or "two ponds," suggesting the name included both Great Pond and nearby Little Pond. [RN]

Neumann, Harry Heinz, (1930-2015), a native of Germany, came to US in 1938, served in the US Coast Guard, and worked in photography for Sikorsky Aircraft. He moved to Ridgefield in 1964. In 1969 he and his wife, Lorraine, founded Harry H. Neumann Associates, which for a while was Ridgefield's oldest family-owned real estate firm; it's now an office of Houlihan Lawrence, but still in its old quarters at 395 Main Street. The Neumanns lived for three decades at 100 South Salem Road, the old Scripps (*q.v.*) estate, The main house once had an underground tunnel that extended to a nearby house; it has since been sealed off. [OR1/10/2026, P11/25/2015]

Neumann, Harry H. "Chip," is an owner of Neumann Real Estate and served as president of the Connecticut Association of Realtors in 1990-91. He is a son of Harry Heinz Neumann (*q.v.*).

Nevin, Hardwick Marmaduke, (1897-1965), a native of Pennsylvania, was a playwright, actor and poet. He was at Princeton when he left to enlist in the American Field Service in World War I, providing medical support for French troops and received the Croix de Guerre for bravery from the French government. He began his career as an actor on Broadway, and started writing plays in the late 1920s. In 1929, *Young Alexander*, about Alexander the Great, was staged on Broadway and among its cast members was a young Jessie Royce Landis (*q.v.*). He lived in Ridgefield, then moved to Redding (where his house burned to the ground, destroying much of his writings), and finally in Wilton. [WWW]

Nevins, Allan, (1890-1971), an American historian and Columbia professor, lived at the Elms Inn in early 1920s and wrote *An Historical Sketch of Ridgefield* (*q.v.*), published by The Elms Inn, in 1922. He went on to win two Pulitzer Prizes for *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Courage* (1933) and *Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration* (1936). He also wrote an introduction to *Ridgefield in Review* (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Nevins, Barbara, is a longtime Ridgefield restaurateur — *see* Southwest Cafe.

New Age of Video, a store that rented movies on tapes and DVDs, was the second generation of the Age of Video (*q.v.*), and was owned by John Sheehan (ca. 1947-2019), an RHS teacher.

New Canaan Road: West Lane (*q.v.*) from the schoolhouse southwesterly to the NY state line was sometimes called New Canaan Road because it was the most direct route from Ridgefield to New Canaan. The name appears on a 1936 map. [RN]

New England Institute for Medical Research on Grove Street was founded

1954 by Dr. John Heller (*q.v.)*, its longtime president. The research center was located partly in the "goat barn" (*q.v*.) which was expanded over the years, and produced more than 400 published scientific papers over 28 years. It specialized in research into causes of disease, and specialized in cancer and radio frequency effects on humans. By the early 1980s, it ran into financial problems, including state charges of mismanagement. With debts totaling more than $1.1 million, the institute filed for bankruptcy in 1982 and closed [P3/4/1982]. In 1984, a four-hour fire heavily damaged the old "goat barn" section of building. [P12/27/1984]

New Florida Cemetery, also called simply Florida Cemetery, was created in 1835 and many burials from Old Florida Cemetery (*q.v.*) were moved there — it is not known why. It stands along Route 7 just south of Simpaug Turnpike and contains about 97 burials, including George Washington Gilbert and Charles Edgar Jennings (*q.v*.).

New Joy, The, was a Ridgefield teenager band from the late 1960's to the early 1970's. It won the Ridgefield "Battle of the Bands" in 1969, 1970, and 1971. The original band consisted of Jim Filgate, Mike Filgate, Ricky Martylewski, and Garry Johnson. [JFS]

New Lane was the original name of Branchville Road (*q.v.*) as it comes off Main Street. It first appears in the minutes of Town Meeting on Oct. 3, 1831. The lane probably extended only to East Ridge, Ivy Hill Road, or perhaps Rockwell Road (*q.v. each*). [RN]

New Patent, often spelled *Pattent*, was the first name applied to what is now Ridgebury (*q.v.*), reflecting the fact that Ridgefield already had one patent from 1714, in which colony and Queen Anne confirmed the settlers' title to the town's land. On June 1, 1731, Governor Talcott signed the "New Pattent" for land bounded on the south by Ridgefield, east by Danbury, north by New Fairfield, and west by the colony line, probably in compensation for land lost by Ridgefield in the Oblong (*q.v.*) settlement. In 1846, upper New Patent was ceded to Danbury. [RN] *See also* Second Society.

New Pond is the body of water west of New Road, south of Saw Mill Hill Road, and east and north of Ramapoo Road, Built in the mid-1800s by Aaron B. and William H. Gilbert, who operated mills on the Titicus River near North Salem Road, the pond was "new" because it supplemented the long-existing Upper and Lower Ponds. All were used to store water to power the Titicus (*q.v.*) mills. [RN]

New Pound Boggs was the original name for Silver Spring Swamp (*q.v.*). The origin of the name, used as early as 1709, is uncertain; it may have reflected the recent creation of a animal pound just across line in Wilton, which was then part of Norwalk. [RN]

New Pound Ridge applied to the ridge on the west side of Silver Spring Road, running southward from the Silver Spring Country Club to the New York State line near Wilton. The name first shows up as "New Pound Bogs Ridge" in 1716; soon after, "bogs" or "boggs" was dropped. It also occurs as New Poundridge" (1803) and "Newpound Ridge" (1774 and 1784). [RN]

New Purchase Bridge, mentioned in 1730s deeds, was probably the bridge that carried Sherwood Road over the Titicus River. *See* New Purchase Swamp. [RN]

New Purchase Swamp was the settlers' name for the sizable wetland behind

the Ridgefield High School, extending along both sides of the Titicus River from Sherwood Road and lower Ridgebury Road westward into New York State. It was so called because it was part of the settlers second or "new" purchase of land from the Indians in 1715. [RN]

New Road: 1. The road between Farmingville Road and Route 7, built 1856 as alternative to the steep Cain's Hill Road (*q.v.*), making access easier to new Topstone Station on RR line in Redding. **2**, From the 1830s to the 1870s this was a name for today's Limestone Road from Great Hill Road northward to Bennett's Farm Road because it was a new route to upper Bennett's Farms and Ridgebury. **3.** An early name for the section of Branchville Road built early 1850s as alternative to what's now called Old Branchville Road (*q.v*.). **4.** An early name for Barry Avenue (*q.v.*), built 1840s as alternative to Ramapoo Road as route between village to West Mountain. [RN]

New Street runs between Gilbert Street and North Salem Road. The south portion, from Gilbert to Pound Street, was built first by Fred C. Lee and became a town road in 1908. Soon after, Pound to North Salem Road section was completed. The road served the new homes of many Italian immigrants. [RN]

New West Lane was applied in the mid-19th Century to Barry Avenue, probably because it was a new road westward to West Mountain (*q.v.*), bypassing Ramapoo Road (*q.v.*). The name was sometimes extended to apply to today's Catoonah Street (*q.v.*), according to Beers' 1867 map. [RN]

New York, Danbury and Boston Railway was one of the many names used over the years for a proposed railroad through northern Ridgefield that was never completed — *see* Danbury and Harlem Traction Company.

New York, Housatonic and Northern Railroad was established in 1850 to run a line from Brookfield, CT, to White Plains, NY, and issued $1 million in stock for the 40-mile system. From the south, it would have entered Ridgefield from North Salem just north of Chestnut Hill Road, traveled through swamp and the present Dlhy Ridge Golf Course, and reached Ridgebury Road north of the church. From there, it may have used the path that is now Old Trolley Road (*q.v.* for more details) as it headed into Danbury. The endeavor went bankrupt in 1875, apparently without building any bed in Ridgefield. [RN]

New York State line: For an official description of the line, which is Ridgefield's western border, *see* Wilton and Ridgefield Angle.

Newall, Lord: *See* Francis Eaton.

Newcomers Club of Ridgefield was founded in 1967 by the Ridgefield Community Center as a place where new residents could learn about the town and meet others who have recently moved here. Now an independent organization, the club sponsors many events and groups. In 2024, the club was renamed Ridgefield Neighbors and Newcomers and now welcomes everyone in town without regard to length of residence. [P4/3/2025. JFS]

Newton, George Henry, (1870-1923), a native of Ohio, was a retired banker who owned Oak Knoll (*q.v*.), the former home of Frederic Remington (*q.v.*) in the 1910s until his death. [DD264]

Nicholas, Lucile (1903-1982), was a Ridgefield teacher for 36 years, starting at Ridgebury schoolhouse, then Titicus, East Ridge and finally Veterans Park. An amateur archaeologist, she had an award-winning collection of

American Indian arrowheads or points, many found in Ridgefield. [P4/28/1960]

Nichols, Peter "Pete," RHS 1975, is a retired, 36-year RHS science teacher, who majored in natural resources and environmental studies in college. He began the recycling program at RHS and East Ridge Middle School, and started the RHS Garden and Garden Club, which he ran for ten years. Active in the community in the 2020s, he serves on the board of the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield and as a member of the Conservation Commission. He volunteers for the HS, Meals on Wheels, Appalachia Service Project (*q.v.*), and other organizations — one of his many volunteer projects is constructing ramps at homes of those who require wheelchairs or walkers. [JFS]

Nielsen, Mark, a graduate of Harvard University and Law School, is a corporate attorney who twice ran unsuccessfully for Fifth District Congressman when he lived in Danbury, first in 1998 — John McCain (*q.v.*), Robert Dole, and Jack Kemp all stumped for him (Democratic incumbent James Maloney won by a narrow margin) and again in 2000. Nielsen had served as a staff member to Mitt Romney when Romney was governor of Massachusetts. While in Danbury, he was a state representative (1992 to 1994) and state senator (1994 to 1998). Nielsen moved in 2004 to Ridgefield where he has lived since. [JFS]

Nigh, William Grant, (1949-2001), a native of Indiana and president of his class at Yale Divinity School, began as minister at First Congregational Church in the summer of 1987. He served until 1994 and moved to Florida where he died at 52. Nigh Memorial Garden (*q.v.*), the columbarium at the church, is named for him. [P8/6/1987, P6/23/2005]

Nigh Memorial Garden and Columbarium, also called the Nigh Meditation Garden, is located at the First Congregational Church of Ridgefield, 103 Main Street. It was named for a former minister, William Grant Nigh (*q.v.*).

Nighthawks was a Ridgefield baseball team, founded in 1981, that became the Connecticut Nighthawks. *See* Joseph Consentino.

Nina's was a restaurant, popular with townies, at the north end of Main Street, the last version of a series of restaurants in the building at 621 Main Street. Nazzareno Lavatori expanded his house there in 1938 and opened a restaurant out front. Later, it was a car dealership, and then Leo Pambianchi's restaurant, The White Spot. Still later, there was a laundry, run by Ida "Bunchy" Weaver as well as a small luncheonette, whose owners included Pete "The Greek" Chrisafis, Duddy Mead and his mother, Andy Kerr, and Bill Bondaino. Gene Lavatori (*q.v.*), son of Nazzareno, bought the place from Bondaino, and opened his own restaurant in 1964, naming it after his mother, **Nina Roberti Lavatori** (1898-1976). For a while, he had a liquor store there, too. In 1979, Gene began opening for dinner, but the restaurant was never as popular for dinner as it was for breakfast and lunch. The business was sold around 1983 and new owners were unable to duplicate Lavatori's success; the restaurant closed and the building was eventually razed in 1990s to make way for 621 Main Street, which in 2024 houses Citibank, Sanda's cleaners, and upstairs apartments. [JFS, OR]

Nine-Eleven: Ridgefield, with the rest of the world, was shaken by the terrorists' attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon Sept. 11, 2001. Ridgefield churches filled for prayer services, volunteers headed to New York to aid

those searching the rubble and caring for victims, and the town came to a halt as it waited for news of victims and survivors. The dead included one then-current Ridgefield resident, **H. Joseph Heller,** 37, a managed funds expert. Also killed were: **Tyler Ugolyn**, 23, a research associate who grew up here and had only recently moved to Manhattan; and **Robert Higley**, 29, a client services representative who spent part of his childhood here and married a Ridgefield woman. Heller, Ugolyn and Higley were in the World Trade Center; their graves are in St. Mary Cemetery. In Washington, Rear Admiral **Wilson Flagg**, USN ret., and his wife **Darlene Flagg**, and their friend **Barbara Edwards**, were former Ridgefielders aboard Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon. New York City firefighters **John Williamson** and **Christopher Blackwell** were the sons of Ridgefield residents (*q.v. each victim*). The town's **9/11 Memorial** on the grounds of the Recreation Center on Danbury Road was unveiled Sunday, Sept. 11, 2011, in a ceremony attended by hundreds. The monument makes use of a piece of structural steel from the World Trade Center. The town has an annual memorial service there each Sept. 11. [JFS]

911 emergency call service began in April 1975 in Ridgefield.

Ninth Lane is a short, dead-end road off the west side of Mamanasco Road, developed in the 1950s as part of Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Nitsche, Erik, (1908-1998), a native of Germany, was called one of the top 10 graphic designers of the 20th Century. During his 60-year career he was involved in art direction, book design, typography, illustration, photography, film, signage, exhibits, packaging, industrial and corporate design, and advertising. He created scores of posters, book and record-album covers, ads, postage stamps, and even typefaces. Some of his work, particularly posters, are in the collections of top museums. He lived on Lounsbury Road and Old Branchville Road from 1954 to 1974. [WWW]

Noah's Ark Day Care Center and Nursery School was established 1972 at then-former St. Mary's School; Mrs. Anna Capel was first director. The school was operated by the parents of the pupils.

Nod is the section of Ridgefield just north of Wilton and west of Branchville (also a section of northern Wilton, probably the source of the name). The word is probably a Biblical reference to land of Nod, place where Cain went after slaying Abel (*Genesis 4:16*) — thus it may suggest a place not very well thought of, perhaps due to its hills, its rocky soils or its distance from the village of Norwalk. [RN]

Nod Hill appears on U.S. Geological Survey maps (1949-1970) as the name for hill just east of Nod Hill Road, a little north of the Beers family cemetery, reaching 660 feet above sea level. [RN]

Nod Hill Brewery, 137 Ethan Allen Highway, was founded in 2017 by the father-son team of Dave and Rob Kaye and in 2020 was operated by Dave and his wife Sarah. Its motto is "Brew with Wonder, Drink with Joy." The brewery has a taproom for onsite sales, but also sells beer in cans and kegs to package stores and restaurants. "We gravitate towards brewing hop-forward modern beer, traditionally-influenced European styles, and both clean and mixed ferment oak-aged beers," the company says. "We are a 100% green energy-powered brewery that is dedicated to sustainable brewing practices." The name, based on the nearby Nod neighborhood, was selected to acknowledge "our rich local history, and [as] an evocative

yet rooted name that has inspired us to have fun & be creative with the names of our beers." Those names include Super Mantis, Giddyup, Geobunny, Queen of Cups, Knight of Pentacles, and Magic Mailbox. [JFS]

Nod Hill Road is an old route from Old Branchville Road into Wilton where it retains the same name. The Beers Cemetery and J. Alden Weir house are along its SW segment in Ridgefield. The road has also been called Branchville Hill Road. [RN]

Nod Road is an old highway from Branchville Road south to the Wilton town line, where it becomes Whipstick Road (Ridgefield's portion may have earlier been known as Whipstick Road, too). Nod Road runs alongside western slope of Whipstick Ridge. [RN]

Nod West Drive is a short, dead-end road off the west side of lower Nod Road, serving four, two-acre lots, part of a 1964 subdivision by John, Robert, and Paul Morganti. [RN]

Noel Diary, The, was a 2022 film in which Ridgefield is the location of the long-lost mother of one of the starring characters and although the movie purports to show scenes from Ridgefield, nothing was filmed here. [JFS]

Nolan Brothers: *See* Halpin Court.

Nook, The, was an antiques business operated by Lydia S. Holmes in the 1930s. The shop (and her home) was along a part of Danbury-Norwalk Road (Route 7) which became Stonehenge Road after state built a bypass. Victor Gilbert acquired the place in 1946 and enlarged it to become Stonehenge Inn (*q.v.*). The name was being used for the house as early as 1911 when E.F. Holmes lived there. The building burned down in 1888 and was replaced by a structure that is now being used as a golfing school — *see* Golf Performance Academy. [RPJ7/14, P7/20/1911, WWW]

Nooricus Ridge: In his 1800 description of the town, the Rev. Samuel Goodrich said: "There is the appearance of sundry Indian graves at a place called Nooricus Ridge." It may be Norrans Ridge (*q.v.*), east of Fox Hill condominiums. [RN]

Norman, Dr. John, (1912-2002), a native of Syracuse, NY, was an expert on fascism who worked for the Office of Strategic Services in WW2, debriefing people fleeing Nazi Germany. He became a college professor who taught a course in intelligence and espionage, as well as history, political science and government. An expert on propaganda, he wrote two books, *Edward Gibbon Wakefield, A Political Reappraisal* (1963) and *Labor and Politics in Libya and Arab Africa* (1965) as well as a book of poetry. He moved to Cooper Road in 1965. [WWW]

Norman, Richard A., (1915-1997), native of Ohio, was a radio announcer and producer of classical concert music for WOV and WOR-FM, and other stations. He had been a speech consultant to CBS News, and a professor of English at Barnard college, retiring 1981. During WW2, he was a captain in U.S. Army Air Corps. He lived in Ridgefield his last 15 years. [P7/31/1997]

Noroneke, Lake, more a pond than a lake, is a private, man-made body of water south of Old Branchville Road, a little west of Nod Hill Road. The name appears on current U. S. Geological Survey maps (Bethel Quadrant). John R. Eustis (*q.v.*), a retired advertising executive who came here in 1936, built the pond shortly thereafter, naming it after an Indian, also called Oreneca (*q.v.*), from whom the settlers bought land. It's often confused with

Lake Naraneka (*q.v.*), built around same time. [RN]

Norranorwa's Sprang is a locality at Great Swamp whose name appears on the Rev. Thomas Hauley's "Mapp of ye Great Swamp," drawn in 1718, and in various deeds. The map seems to place the sprang, an old word for spring, along Farmingville Road (now Lee Road) a little west of Limekiln Road. The name may be related to "Oreneca" (*q.v.* and *see also* Lake Naraneka *and* Norrans Ridge) [RN]

Norrans Ridge was a locality north of Farmingville Road and east of Fox Hill condominiums, whose name came about through years of modification by tongues that found the American Indian language difficult to pronounce. The area may have been a burial ground for the natives — *see* Nooricus Ridge. The word was possibly originally Nawranawoos; possibly the same name as Oreneca (*q.v.*), the sachem. It's even been called Orange Ridge. Variations of the name, mostly in land records, include: Nawranawoos (1712); Nornorways (1717, 1749, 1796); Norranorwas (1718, 1801); Nornornans (1738); Norrons (1738); Norrans (1739, 1801, 1811, 1826, 1858); Norrens (1751, 1785); Norways (1769); Nooricus (1800); Norrins (1958). *see also* Norranorwa's Sprang, Orange Ridge. [RN]

Norrans Ridge Drive is a looping road off Farmingville Road, serving the Beechwood subdivision (*q.v.*), a 27-lot development approved in 1987 and developed by Charles Szentkuti (*q.v.*). It uses the old name for the area (*see above*). [RN]

Norrans Ridge Road, only vestiges of which still exist, ran from Danbury Road to Limekiln Road from the early 1700s until early in the 20th century, passing through what is now Fox Hill condominiums. It was part of Danbury Path (*q.v.*), the original main route between Ridgefield and Danbury.. In the late 1920s, a Town Meeting gave Norrans Ridge Road to Col. Louis D. Conley for his Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*). [RN]

Norris, Benjamin Deforest, (1810-1902), was a Ridgebury farmer who, as a Whig, was a state representative in 1847.

Norris, Stephen, (abt.1739-1818), was a selectman in 1778, 1781 and 1782, and served as a state representative in 1779. He was among the Ridgefielders who sought state compensation (£4, 10 shillings) for losses suffered — usually confiscated livestock — during the British invasion of Ridgefield in April 1777. He lived on the corner of George Washington Highway and Briar Ridge Road.

North, Alex, (1910-1991), was a major composer of music for many top films, including "Death of A Salesman" (1951), "The Rainmaker" (1956), "The Sound and the Fury" (1959), "Spartacus" (1960), "Cleopatra" (1963), "The Agony and the Ecstasy" (1965), "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" (1968), "2001: A Space Odyssey," "The Shoes of the Fisherman" (1969), "Willard" (1971), "Dragonslayer" (1981), "Good Morning, Vietnam" (1987). He wrote the song, "Unchained Melody," which was a major pop hit. He mentored John Williams, who became one of the greatest film composers. He lived at 226 Great Hill Road from 1950 until early 1960s. [WWW]

North and South Road was a mid-1800s term for today's Florida Road. [RN]

North District was a 19th Century school district in northern Ridgefield, probably short for North Ridgebury District. Its schoolhouse was on Ridgebury Road opposite Old Ridgebury Road, and was probably a half-district with Danbury, whose nearby students attended the Ridgefield

school. [RN]

North Hall is a multi-use building on the campus of St. Stephen's Church (*q.v.*), built in 1908-09.

North Long Pond was an early name for Lake Rippowam in Lewisboro, which before Oblong (*q.v.*) was in Ridgefield. [RN] *See* Long Pond.

North Main Street: Early in the 21st Century, Realtor Ray Hastings (q.v.) spearheaded an effort to rename the commercial section of lower Danbury Road "North Main Street," believing it would improve the cache of the strip that had long been called "Gasoline Alley." The proposal was rejected by a Nov. 13, 2002, town meeting. [JFS]

North Mountain wass an old term for Ridgebury Mountain (*q.v*) and possibly also Barlow Mountain (*q.v.*) to the east of Ridgebury Mountain. [RN]

North Patent is an old term for Ridgebury, used chiefly in the 1750s. It's a variation of New Patent (*q.v.*) and was usually spelled *Pattent*. It referred to what's generally Ridgebury and was not part of the original town patent. [RN]

North Ridgebury District: *See* North District.

North Ridgefield Post Office operated 1899-1901, according to Jim Forte's postal history.

North Salem-North Ridgefield Environmental Improvement Association filed in 1983 a class action lawsuit against Danbury Airport, seeking $15 million in damages and a reduction of aircraft noise over their homes. [P9/22/1983]

North Salem Road is a fairly modern name for an old highway, much of which existed before 1720; parts between village and Mamanasco may have been based on an old Indian trail. It is second longest road in town — 4.24 miles from intersection of Main Street to the NY State line. The highway is named for town it leads to (much of which was part of Ridgefield before Oblong —*q.v*.). The section from Ridgebury Road west may be relatively new, replacing a route over today's Ridgebury and Mopus Bridge Roads. A state highway, it was first called Route 143, then Route 33, and now 116 (*q.v. each*) [RN] *See also* Fort Hill, Tackora Trail, Mill Path, Fishkill Road.

North Shore Drive runs along the north shore of Lake Windwing off Bennett's Farm Road. Part of 1954 Lakeland Hills (*q.v.*) subdivision, most of road today is dirt, part of Hemlock Hills (*q.v.*) refuge. There are some houses at its western end. [RN]

North Street is a fairly modern name for the late 18th Century road extending from North Salem Road in the village about two miles to Barlow Mountain Road. It served chiefly the farms on Copp's Mountain, along which it runs, and was so called because it heads almost directly north out of the village. An earlier name was Skunk Lane (*q.v.*) [RN]

North Valley Road is a dead-end road northerly off High Valley Road, part of Giles and Barry Montgomery's 1969 High Valley (*q.v.*) subdivision, accepted by the town in 1973. [RN]

Northoline was the 22-room mansion at 209 West Lane, built by Mrs. Lillian Loomis Dempsey (*q.v*.) about 1900 and later called Fairhaven (*q.v*.) when Geraldine Farrar (q.v.) lived there. The house was still in use in 2024.

Northrop, Dr. Aaron L. (1834-1908), a NYC dentist, had a weekend and retirement home at 48 West Lane from the 1890s until his death. His name usually appears A.L. Northrop. *See also* Caroline Hanford Northrop.

Northrop, Abijah, (1751-1779), served in the Revolution and died a prisoner of

the British in New York. A Northrop genealogy indicates he may have been born in Ridgefield or South Salem, and notes that his will was probated in Westchester County. [Rockwell, JFS]

Northrop, Benjamin Keeler, (1824-1913), was a well-known local teacher in the 19th Century, who also served as first selectman from 1867 to 1870. He taught in five districts in Ridgefield including the Bell or Belltown School on Main Street, as well as in Vista, Lewisboro, South Salem, and New Canaan. Among his pupils was Gov. George Lounsbury. He was a member of Board of School Visitors. He was married in 1847 to Catherine Keeler in the Lannon House (*see* Tuppence), [P10/23/1913] and lived on South Salem Road. He was a Republican state representative in 1857, 1861 and 1879, and a director and vice-president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. [RSB23]

Northrop, Caro Holmes, (1860-1941), a Republican, was state representative from 1935 to 1939. He was a farmer and skilled local house-mover and was said to have used only one mule to move the Episcopal rectory from 351 Main Street to 23 Catoonah Street in 1914. He claimed he could move a house a mile with the dining room table set, and nothing would be disturbed. He lived on Silver Spring Road and was a son of State Rep. Linus O. Northrup. [JFS, DD160, DD161, DD293]

Northrop, Caroline Hanford, (1841-1927), was the wife of Dr. Aaron L. Northrop, NYC dentist. They lived on West Lane between High Ridge and Parley Lane. She was said by Rockwell to have been an aunt of President Warren G. Harding, but the *Bridgeport Telegram* said she was a cousin of Harding's wife. [JFS]

Northrop, Charles Betts "Charlie," (1839-1921), a local builder, was a Republican state representative from 1909 to 1911, a longtime member of the Town School Committee, and a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank for 37 years. His oration at 1908 Bicentennial is in Bicentennial book [RSB24]

Northrop, Cyrus, (1834-1922), grew up on a small West Lane farm, attended West Lane schoolhouse, and at 15 taught at the Center School in the village. He graduated from Yale in 1857, and became editor of *New Haven Palladium* in late 1850s, then taught English literature and rhetoric at Yale (one of his students was Wilbur L. Cross, later governor). Wooed in 1884 to head University of Minnesota, he grew that school from a small rural institution to a major American university, retiring in 1911. The huge Northrop Auditorium, designed by Cass Gilbert (*q.v.*), honors him at the Twin Cities campus; so does Mount Northrop in Sawtooth Mountains near Lake Superior in northern Minnesota and the town of Northrop in the south part of the state. He delivered a stunning address at the 1908 Ridgefield Bicentennial, which appears in the souvenir book for that event. [WWW]

Northrop, Daniel, taught at the West Lane schoolhouse in at least 1814 and 1816, at a salary of between $10 and $12 a month. [SD]

Northrop, Elbridge Gerry, (1829-1906), was a farmer and a Republican who served as a state representative, 1887-89. His brother, **Cyrus** (*q.v.*), became a Yale professor and then president of the University of Minnesota. [JFS]

Northrop or **Northrup**, **Gamaliel**, (1696-1783), among the town's first settlers, described himself as a blacksmith, but was apparently also a carpenter: He built the first "Town House" (*q.v.*) in 1744. He was the original enslaver of Ishmael (*q.v.*), born in 1739, whose birth notice in the town records was the

earliest official mention of slavery in Ridgefield. It's also the first record of an African-American birth in Ridgefield. [UNM]

Northrop, Linus Olmstead, (1830-1914), was a shoemaker and harness-maker who lived on Wilton Road West and served as a Republican state representative in 1886. He was the father of State Rep. Caro Holmes Northrop. [P2/19/1914]

Northrop, Matthew, (1740-1829), was a corporal in the Connecticut Fifth during the Revolution. He is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW]

Northrop Road, an old name for South Street (*q.v.*), apparently reflected some past landowner thereabouts. The name also appears as Northrup. [RN]

Northrup, Moses, sold his saw mill to Timothy Canfield (*q.v.*) in 1726 — one of the first such mills in town. The location is not certain. [JFS]

Northrup's Island: In 1717, the Proprietors deeded Joseph Northrup "one rood and eight pole upon an island in ye New Pound Bog Swamp, called Northrup's Island." The elevated area within or about Silver Spring Swamp (*q.v.*) was probably named for the family that owned the land. [RN]

Norwalk and Danbury Turnpike is apparently the correct name for the turnpike that ran through southeastern Ridgefield in the early 19th Century. The term does not appear in our records — instead, the road seems to be always "the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike" (*q.v.*). [RN]

Norwalk Mill River was an early name for the Norwalk River (*q.v.*). A 1712 deed mentions land "lying on both sides of ye branch or river called Norwalk Mill River, about midway between ye Cedar Mountain and ye East Meadow," and reflects its use as source of mill power probably downstream in already well-settled Norwalk (Wilton then was part of Norwalk) whence many of settlers came. However, mills were soon built along Ridgefield portions.[RN]

Norwalk River, Ridgefield's longest stream, traverses about 7 miles in town. It rises in the Great Swamp (*q.v.*), flows northwest of Danbury Road, then east at Turn of the River (*q.v.*) to the Route 7 valley, and then south to Long Island Sound at Norwalk. The elevation is 590 feet above sea level at its source at Great Swamp and drops to 345 feet in Branchville. The river was once a source of power for many mills in the 18th and 19th Centuries — *see* Norwalk Mill River. Its waters caused much damage in an October 1955 flood, leading to Norwalk River Flood Control Project (*q.v.*). The upper reaches of the river along Danbury Road are often called the Ridgefield Brook (*q.v.*). [RN]

Norwalk River Flood Control Project: In the aftermath of the costly October 1955 flood that ravaged Fairfield County and other parts of Connecticut, the state, working with the Army Corps of Engineers, developed a flood control project that established several areas where earthen dams could be closed to back up and store water in times of unusually heavy rains. The first dam, near Fox Hill condominiums, creates a reservoir in Great Swamp (*q.v.*), much of which the state purchased as part of the project. (The state in 2024 was working on plans to "rehabilitate" this dam.) Other dams were designed for Miller's Pond on Route 7, Candee's Pond on lower Branchville Road (for the Cooper Brook), and the Spectacle Swamp near Woodcock Nature Center on Ridgefield-Wilton line, but were not built. The state purchased many hundreds of acres as part of the project. In addition, land uses within flood zones along major rivers are restricted by state and local regulations to prevent construction of structures or landscaping that might

adversely affect water flow — or be subject to costly flood damage — in heavy rain situations. *See also* Floods. [JFS]

Norwalk Road is an early 18th Century name for Wilton Road West (*q.v.*), formally laid out by town in 1737. [RN]

Norwalk town line: *See* Wilton town line.

Norways or **Norway's Ridge** was an 18th Century version of Norrans (*q.v)* or Nornorwas Ridge and has no connection with the Scandinavian nation. [RN]

Norwitt, Glori, an attorney and the chair of the Economic Development Commission (*q.v.*), was named in 2025 CT's first "envoy for international engagement." AdvanceCT, a non-profit that appointed her, said her job would include "coordinating the in-state visits of delegations from other countries and raising international awareness of Connecticut's economy." A resident since 2004, she joined the EDC in 2019 but resigned in 2025 to take the statewide post. She is married to **R. Adam Norwitt,** CEO of electronics manufacturer Amphenol. [CTI 8/4/2025]

Not Skinking: *See* Skinker.

Notable Ridgefielders is an 88-page, tabloid-newspaper-sized collection of brief biographies of more than 400 people who made news in Ridgefield between 1875 and 2000. It also contains an extensive historical timeline from 1875 onward. Illustrated and indexed, it was published by *The Ridgefield Press* on the occasion of its 125th anniversary in 2000. Copies are still available at HS in 2026. [JFS]

Notre Dame Academy was a Catholic girls high school on West Mountain Road, operated by Congregation of Notre Dame (*q.v.*) on their motherhouse campus from 1968 to 1972. It closed closed due to lack of enough students; the first class was 40 students. Sister Ann Moore was principal. The school building, erected by Morganti Inc., is today used by Ridgefield Academy (*q.v.*).

Novelists from Ridgefield include: Jessica Auerbach, Jacqueline Babbin, Chris Belden, William Blankenship, James Blumgarten, Thomas Boyd, E.C. Bross, Samuel Carter, Robert Daley, Jay Deiss, Peter de Jonge, Diane Detzer de Reyna, Edwin A. Fadiman Jr., Howard Fast, Adam Galanski-De Leon, Ronald Joseph Goulart, Samuel Grafton, Barbra B. Jackson, Irene Kampen, Gerri Lewis, David Liebovitz, Clare Boothe Luce, Mary Luke, Mary Main, Susanna Hofmann McShea, John Ames Mitchell, Hugh Mulligan, Frederick Nebel, Hildegarde Oskison, Brad Parks, Julie Cotler Pottinger (Julia Quinn), Howard Roughan, Kathryn Morgan Ryan, Patrice Sarath, Margaret (Peggy) Smith Shane, Peter Spiegelman, Robert Lewis Taylor, Rosanne Daryl Thomas, Jane Trahey, Lynn Wallrapp, Thomas Walsh, Max Wilk, Mildred Wohlforth, and Bari Wood (*q.v. each*).

Noyes, Amber Skye, is a television film and series actress and singer who moved to West Lane in 2022. She guest starred in several dramas including NBC's "The Blacklist," "Blindspot," "Law and Order S.V.U.," and "F.B.I.," as well as in multiple episodes of "Beauty and the Beast," "MacGyver," and "Quantico." [IMDB, W]

Noyes, Edward Wayland, (1900-1921), served as a cook aboard Navy vessels during most of WW1, and remained in the Navy. He died after being swept overboard in a storm in the Atlantic off Virginia June 27, 1921. He was only 21 years old. [JFS]

Nursery Road was built in 1964 as the main route into Rolling Hills Estates (*q.v.*) off Still Road. In 1985, the Crosswicks Corp. of Wilton subdivided 66 acres between the end of Nursery Road and Limekiln Road and extended Nursery Road to connect with Limekiln. That subdivision, called Overlook Groves, consists of 27 lots. The road is named for Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*) which owned most of the land in the area in the 1920s and 1930s. [RN]

Nutholme was the mansion of Francis McNiel Bacon (*q.v.*) on Peaceable Street, later called Westmoreland (*q.v.*) by its subsequent owner, George Doubleday (*q.v.*). The house is now quarters of Congregation Shir Shalom (*q.v.*). The name may have meant "wooded hill."

Nutmeg Court is a short, dead-end road off Farm Hill Road, part of Ramapoo Hills, Joseph H. Donnelly's 1956 subdivision. It became a town road in 1963. The name, recalling a state symbol, was a poor choice because of confusion with Nutmeg Ridge (*q.v.*). [RN]

Nutmeg Festival was an annual fund-raising fair at St. Stephen's Church, probably the longest running church fair in town, having reportedly begun with an "Apron and Cake Sale" in 1906 (possibly earlier), sponsored by The Ladies Guild. The event grew and, in 1951, the Rev. Aaron Manderbach (*q.v.*) suggested calling it the Nutmeg Festival. The last fair, the 111th edition, was in 2018; lack of enough volunteers to handle the huge event led to its replacement in 2019 with a less-taxing "Nutmeg and Neighbors" barbecue and dance. [Haight, JFS]

Nutmeg Ridge runs between Branchville Road and Old Washington Road. It was first planned in 1950 by Ridgefield Hilltop Acres Company (*q.v.*), which called it Biddle Lane (*see* Biddle Hill). In 1956, under refiled plan, the name was changed to Nutmeg Ridge. It was accepted by the town in two parts in 1958 and 1959. [RN]

Nydeggen was the estate of Henry de B. Schenck (*q.v.*), at 7 Christopher Road, built 1910. Its carriage house is now 22 Lisa Lane. Nydeggen or van Nydeggen was probably a Dutch family name, although the town that is apparently the name's origin, Nideggen, is in Germany.

O

Oak Knoll was a name applied to the former Frederic Remington home after his death; Remington himself called it Lorul Place (*q.v.*).

Oak Tree Lane is a dead-end lane so small it doesn't show up on many modern maps, running off Route 7 between Wilridge Road and Old Town Road in Branchville, at the north side of the "Dunkin Donuts building." It was part of a 1940 subdivision by Joseph L. Dioguardi. The name, first used 1950, was so called because a four-foot diameter oak, said to have been the largest of its genus in the Georgetown area, stood along the road. [RN]

O and K Shoe Shoppe was a store at ONS121 Main Street (now part of 418 Main Street) in 1955. By 1956 it was DeLuca's Footware (*q.v.*).

Oatland, at 251 Main Street, was the home of the Rev. James Tuttle-Smith (*q.v.*). It was later the offices of Electro Mechanical Research (*q.v.*), then from 1958, South Hall of St. Stephen's Church and, briefly, Ridgefield Board of Education offices. Since May 2021 it has been privately owned as a residence. The name sometimes appears Oatlands.

Oblong, The, was a chunk of Connecticut's western border ceded to New York in 1731 after years of negotiating the colony's western boundary. The oblong-shaped slice ran from the top of New Canaan (Norwalk) border to Massachusetts, and was about 1.75-miles wide. In exchange Connecticut got title to the panhandle, mostly Greenwich and other concessions. *See also* Wilton and Ridgefield Angles, New Patent, Ridgebury. [RN]

O'Brien, Elizabeth Whitman Atkins, (1913-1997), a native of NYC, lived in Ridgefield in the 1930, 40s and 50s, and was an advertising and public relations executive who later in life, living in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, became an acclaimed folk artist. She was predeceased by two husbands, Raymond Gabianelli and Richard T. O'Brien. [P5/1/1997]

O'Brien, Daniel "Dan," who owns the historic King homestead at 267 Main Street, has been, appropriately enough, the chairman of the Historic District Commission in the 2020s. A partner in an investment company, O'Brien has been president of the Chamber of Commerce, active in RVNAhealth, treasurer of the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra, and has served on boards of the Ridgefield Playhouse, Lounsbury House, and Keeler Tavern. He received the 2024 Rotary Club Citizen of the Year award in 2024. [JFS, HH5/31/2024]

O'Bryon, Dr. Benn Adelmar: *See* Bryon, Dr. Benn Adelmar.

Ochsner, Dr. Edward L.E., (1919-2005), a native of Massachusetts and a Harvard graduate, practiced medicine in Ridgefield from 1958 to 1972, living on Bryon Avenue. He was active in Rotary, the German Club, Masons, and the First Congregational Church. In 1973 he and his family moved to Switzerland. [P12/29/2005]

O'Connor, Flannery, noted Southern author, has been incorrectly reported as living in Ridgefield between 1949 and 1951; she actually lived in Redding with friends Robert and Sally Fitzgerald on Seventy Acres Road, which was served at the time by the Ridgefield post office, which is why she had a "Ridgefield" mailing address. [RN]

Octagon office: The small, octagon building at the curve in Bailey Avenue was

built ca. 1915 as a bathhouse at the pond on Lewis Drive at Upaganstit (*q.v.*), the Frederic E. Lewis estate. It was moved in the 1930s to the East Ridge School/Ridgefield High School to serve as a changing room for ball teams. It then became an office and warming room for airplane spotters in WW2 and the Korean War. It was moved in the 1950s to 30 Bailey Avenue, serving as an office for Bacchiochi Inc. and then, for many years, for a novelist. Each side is six feet, and the total space inside is 164 square feet — probably the smallest, heated, usable building in Ridgefield. [JFS, DD59]

Odd Fellows: Pilgrim Lodge, No. 46, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, was founded June 11, 1847, as a social and benevolent organization for men. In the early years it usually met in Masonic Hall but later meeting sites included upstairs at 381 Main Street in 1888. In 1928-29 the group built its own lodge hall at 441 Main Street (now the Toy Chest — *q.v.*); that building was sold 1957 after the lodge acquired in 1956 the Freund estate, at Main and King Lane, and the lodge moved its hall to its carriage house at 21 King Lane and later sold the rest of the estate to Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church. In 2006, with few members left, the lodge disbanded, selling Pilgrim Hall to the Methodist Church, which uses it as a chapel. For many years, the Ridgefield Montessori School was housed in Pilgrim Hall. [JFS]

Odone, Jamison, a native of Rhode Island, is an author, illustrator and professor of art who specializes in books for children as well as graphic tales for adults. His first book, *Honey Badgers,* was published in 2007 while he was living in Ridgefield. In 2024 he is an associate professor in the Department of Visual Arts at Frostburg (MD) State University. [JFS]

Odor Eaters, a foot deodorizer, was invented by Dr. Herbert Lapidus (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield.

Oexle, William, (1908-80), pronounced *OX-lee,* was a local merchant who was an expert antique car restorer. His restorations won many national awards from Horseless Carriage Club of America and the Antique Automobile Club of America. He came to Ridgefield in 1949, and over the years lived on Wilton Road West, North Salem Road and Ridgebury Road. He owned Oexle Supply, then Taylor Rental. He was the first chairman of the Police Commission in 1955. [WWW]

Oil: Peter P. Cornen (*q.v.*) led a movement in the 1880s to drill for oil in Ridgefield, especially Farmingville. RP reported in 1886: "The workmen digging the well on Dr. Bennett's place found a vein of soft material, greasy to the feel, and resembling tallow in consistency. It was similar to that found in digging a well on Aaron Lee's place that gave rise to the story of the finding of oil." [P11/11/1886] Cornen, who made a fortune drilling for oil in Pennsylvania, claimed Ridgefield is situated over an oil field of "considerable magnitude." On Nov. 19, 1887, a public meeting took place to discuss forming the Ridgefield Oil and Gas Heating and Gas Lighting Company to begin drilling. [P11/25/1887]. However, drilling never occurred, probably because many townspeople objected to the effect oil wells would have on the community. [JFS]

O'Kane, Sean, a native of London who spent most of his early life in Ireland, came to the U.S. in 1979 and soon opened an architectural office in Ridgefield. He lives on Olmstead Lane. Among his large-scale houses is 55 High Ridge Avenue, the former Altnacraig (*q.v.*) site. He also designed the

ROAR (*q.v.*) animal shelter.

O'Keefe, Rev. Joseph, was third pastor of St. Mary's Parish, appointed June 9, 1892. He served a year. [JFS]

O'Keeffe, John "Jack," (1904-1994), an Irish-born immigrant, was an estate superintendent in the 1920s, 30s and 40s, who had an encyclopedic knowledge of flora and fauna native to this area; expert botanists would come to him seeking his help identifying rare plants. He was secretary of the Ridgefield Fish and Game Society for many years. He and his wife Mary lived at 12 Olmstead Lane. Son **Thomas** of Ridgefield was a longtime US Post Office official and son **Jack**, a TWA corporate attorney and conservationist. [JFS, DD144, DD302, DD308]

O'Keeffe, Patrick F., (1906-1982), a native of Ireland born on St. Patrick's Day, came to Ridgefield at age of 5 and graduated RHS 1925. A carpenter, he became a building contractor, served on the Boards of Selectmen, Education, and Assessors, the Board of Tax Review and as a justice of the peace. He was active in Rotary and with the Boys Club, and was known as an expert horticulturist. He left town in 1959 to become maintenance supervisor of St. Joseph's Hospital, Stamford. [P9/16/1982] He owned the former Sperry livery stable on Catoonah Street where he sold cars. [DD133, DD309]

Oko, Dr. Adolph Sigmund (1883-1944) of Whipstick District, a native of Russia, was a librarian, editor of the *Contemporary Jewish Record* and an authority on the Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza. He also wrote several biographies of noted Jewish intellectuals as well as the posthumously published *The Spinoza Bibliography.* [P10/5/1944]

Oko, Dr. Benjamin K., MD., a psychiatrist, was a 20-year member — and 10-year chairman — of the Conservation Commission (*q.v.*), who is also a widely known birder who has led local bird walks. He continues to be active in environmental efforts, including RACE (*q.v.*). He is married to landscape designer **Helen Dimos**, and they live in a historic 18th Century saltbox—*see* Pulling-Dykman House. He is a son of Dr. Adolph Oko and lived here as a child, returning to town in 1995. [JFS]

Olcott, George Mann, (1835-1917), headed the NYC pharmaceutical and cosmetics firm of Dodge & Olcott. In 1893 he built an estate on the site of former Benjamin Stebbins (*q.v.*) homestead and farm, razing the historic saltbox to build an Italianate mansion whose name, Casagmo (*q.v.*), combins the Italian word for house with his initials. He was an early president of First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield. His daughter, Mary Olcott (*q.v.*), continued to live at Casagmo until 1962. [WWW]

Olcott, Mary Louisa Beatrice (1864-1962), a native of Brooklyn, was a genealogist, poet, suffragist, gardener, and dog breeder. The daughter of George M. Olcott (*q.v.*), who built the Casagmo (*q.v.*) estate on northern Main Street, she lived there most of her life. She published *Poems* in 1902 and also wrote articles on gardens and flowers, and a genealogy, *The Olcotts and Their Kindred*. She was active in Ridgefield Library and woman suffrage. She also bred prize poodles, game birds and swans at Casagmo. [WWW].

Olcott, Mrs. Mary Lattin, (1885-1974)**,** is often confused with Mary L.B. Olcott; Mrs. Olcott lived in Tuppence (*q.v*), which was also on Main Street, and

was also active in the Ridgefield Garden Club. She or her husband were not known to have been closely related to the Olcotts of Casagmo. [JFS]

Olcott Way is a private road at Casagmo (*q.v.*) on Main and Grove Streets, named for owners of the original Casagmo estate, George M. Olcott (*q.v.*) and later his daughter, Mary Louisa Beatrice Olcott (*q.v.*).The circular route is the longest road in Casagmo, serving more than 120 condominium units. [RN]

Old Barlow Mountain Road is a section of Barlow Mountain Road (*q.v.*) now either little-used or abandoned. It's applied chiefly to a short, dead-end road near the intersection of Knollwood Drive and Barlow Mountain Road. [RN]

Old Branchville Road, part of the original main road from the village to the southeast corner of town, was bypassed in 1851 by the newer, less hilly and less swampy Branchville Road (Route 102) section, which improved wagon transportation to and from the new train depot about to open at what we now call Branchville. The original path of Branchville/Old Branchville Road was laid out by the selectmen in 1744. [RN]

Old Burying Ground, The, the town's first cemetery, was once much larger than what appears today. The extant section stands on Wilton Road East below Main Street and just north of Creamery Lane, but has no gravestones left standing. The northern portion was developed ca. 1850 for a road and homelots after the graves were moved to Titicus Cemetery. This cemetery had been laid out Nov. 25, 1708, and at one time contained the graves of 40 pioneers, now listed on a granite monument in cemetery. It's one of few pieces of original public land still owned by town government since its beginning. It has been maintained off and on by Ridgefield Garden Club and the Ridgefield Graveyard Committee. [RN]

Old Chichester: *See* Chichester

Old Church Road, a name hand-written on a 1935 assessor's map for a road on the east side of a triangle of land, on which stood the Episcopal Church of Ridgebury. The road ran from Ned's Mountain Road northwesterly to Ridgebury Road, now be part of a private path. A church existed ca 1750-1810 and a cemetery until the 1870s. [RN] *See* Old Episcopal Cemetery.

Old Creamery Highway was an early 20th Century name for Creamery Lane (*q.v.*). [RN]

Old Coach House, The, at 80 Branchville Road nearly opposite East Ridge Road, is probably part of old Hawk estate, built ca. 1890; in 1940s was dance studio for Marthe Krueger; in 1949-50, home of dancer Paul Draper (*q.v.*); in 1951 Abel William Bahr bought it, collector of Asian antiques and art; in 1969, singer Don McKay lived there; also Charlotte Barclay.

Old Danbury Road, a short road, just east of Danbury Road, that runs between Haviland and Danbury Roads opposite the Limestone service station, was the original lower end of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (*q.v.*), which ran from Haviland Road north through Sugar Hollow to Danbury, incorporated in 1801. The state bypassed this jog in the Danbury Road around 1928 with the straight highway that passes Limestone Service Station.. [RN]

Old Episcopal Cemetery was located in a triangle formed by Ridgebury and Ned's Mountain Roads with a third, now-private path called Old Church

Road (*q.v.*) to the east of Ridgebury Road. Probably established in the late 1700s in connection with the Ridgebury Episcopal Church (*q.v.*), it was abandoned around 1870 and many stones were moved. Some were reportedly used for foundations and stepping stones. [RIR]

Old Farm was the name of summer and weekend home of Norman Thomas (*q.v.*), six-time candidate for U.S. President, at 108 Limestone Road. [WWW]

Old Florida Cemetery is located off the north side of Old Redding Road, just east of Route 7, and was probably established in the 1700s. Eleven gravestones were extant in 1934, but only five were left by 1958. Many graves in this cemetery were moved to the New Florida Cemetery — it is not known why. The earliest stone was said to date 1761. [JFS]

Old Hill was an early 19th Century name for a locality possibly near Lake Mamanasco [RN]

Old Home Day was a traditional local holiday in New England, a sort of "homecoming" when former residents would return to their home town to visit with family and old friends. On Old Home Day, July 4, 1914, Ridgefield coincided with an all-day celebration for the laying of the cornerstone for the new Benjamin Franklin Elementary School (*q.v.*). It included a parade, a giant picnic, speeches, a baseball game, concert and fireworks. [JFS]

Old Horse Pound appears in a 1796 deed for six acres "on the Mountain near the Old Horse Pound." *See* Horse Pound Swamp. [RN]

Old Hundred is the name of a building at 258 Main Street that started out as a general store, then became a house, a church, and currently, the second floor of the administrative offices for the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (*q.v.*). The original King and Dole store was founded in this building in 1783 by Joshua King (*q.v.*) and James Dole, Revolutionary War veterans, and was the location of the first Ridgefield post office (*q.v.*) and first offices of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. When it was converted to a residence in the 1870s or 80s, the building was jacked up and became the second story — as it is today. Just why it picked up the name "Old Hundred," probably in the last half of the 19th Century, is unknown, but it may have been related to its age at the time of its conversion to a residence. *See also* Christian Science Church, Lewis H. Bailey.

Old Ice House, The, was a popular Italian-style restaurant operated by siblings John (*q.v.*) and Mary Girolmetti (also spelled Girolametti) at former RidgeBowl alleys at 11 Danbury Road. It was descended from a bar and grill, called Mary's, opened in 1933 by Mario and Mary Girolmetti on the property. In 1964, the Girolmetti children built the RidgeBowl alleys and with it a bar and cocktail lounge. The Ice House, so called because Mario had been in the ice business (*see* Ridgefield Ice Company), closed around 2001 and the space was taken over in 2002 by Mannen, a Japanese restaurant, still there in 2024. [P6/10/2019]

Old Main Highway was the mid-20th Century name for the road east of and parallel to the railroad tracks and Route 7 in Branchville, now oddly called West Branchville Road (*q.v.*). This was the original path of the north-south main highway/turnpike through Branchville before Route 7 was created in the 1920s on the west side of the tracks and river. [RN] *See also* "Old Norwalk Road." [RN]

Old Meeting House Tract was a mid-19th Century term for a parcel on the

corner of North Salem Road and North Street, once the site of Methodist Church or meeting house (*see* Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church). When the church moved south to Catoonah Street corner, old meeting house was turned into a residence. The site, minus the building, is now Lounsbury family cemetery section of the "Ridgefield Cemetery" (*q.v*.). [RN]

Old Mill Pond is a name used by Otto H. Lippolt (*q.v.*) on the map of 1959 Hemlock Hills (*q.v.*) subdivision for a small body of water on the west side of Old Mill Road (*q.v.*). The name suggests a mill, undoubtedly a saw mill, was connected with the pond some years ago. It's also been called Lippolt Pond (*q.v.*) [RN]

Old Mill Road extends from George Washington Highway to Ned's Mountain Road, past the Old Mill Pond (*q.v.*) and is the main road of Otto Lippolt's Hemlock Hills (*q.v.*) subdivision, developed in the early 1960s. [RN]

Old Musket Lane is a short, dead-end road off Powderhorn Drive, part of Gun Hill Farms subdivision by Donald Thomas. The development was started in 1964 by Robert E. Roche who was interested in guns and things Western, and the road built around 1965. It became a town road, 1970. [RN]

Old Nod Road is another name for Old Branchville Road, according to a deed filed with the town clerk in 1946. [RN]

Old Norwalk Road, another name for Old Main Highway (*q.v.*), was the original path of the main road between Norwalk and Danbury through Branchville, running along the east side of the tracks. It was also often called the Danbury-Norwalk Road; *see* Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike. [RN]

Old Oscaleta Road is a short, old road that was once the west end of West Mountain Road as it extends into New York State, where the road is also called Old Oscaleta. It may have once been considered the western extension of our Oscaleta Road (*q.v.*). [RN]

Old Pierce Road is a little lane off Danbury Road, named for Charles Pierce, who lived there and worked on Outpost Farm (*q.v*), the estate of Colonel Louis D. Conley (q.v.), who in the 1920s owned this land. In 1979, the road was improved to serve a subdivision of the property of actor Cyril Ritchard (*q.v.*) who lived at Lone Rock (*q.v.)*, his house on the nearby pond [RN]

Old Quarry Road extends from Grove Street to the intersection of South Street and Ligi's Way. It's been so called from early in 20th Century, recalling a small, old, stone quarry, still visible on adjacent former Schlumberger-Doll property on south side of the road. The quarry was worked in the 19th Century, perhaps even the 18th Century, probably to supply stone for foundations, basements, and fireplaces of early homes. [RN]

Old Ram Pen: In 1777, the proprietors granted Benjamin Northrup land "lying in the Old Ram pen so called," along upper West Lane, connected with the Ram Pasture (*q.v*.). [RN]

Old Redding Road leads from Route 7 near Florida Hill Road into Redding and is sometimes incorrectly called Seventy Acres Road (*q.v*.). It's actually the eastern Ridgefield end of an old highway from at least 1740s between Ridgefield and Redding that included Florida Hill Road (*q.v.*). [RN] *See also* Redding.

Old Ridgebury Road: Highway that veers off to the right – northeastward – from upper Ridgebury Road and runs into Danbury where it also bears that name; probably should be just Ridgebury Road since it was the original

route and there is no “new” Ridgebury Road there. [RN]

Old Sib Road, sometimes **Sib Road**, does not begin appearing on maps until the 20th Century, although it may have been based an old logging trail in the 19th and even 18th Century. The road built or rebuilt around 1908 to serve as a Connecticut-side access to the Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) resort/ restaurant, and was earlier known as Port Road or Tea House Road (*q.v. each*). “Old ‘Sib’ Road” appears on a 1926 property map. Sib may be a corruption of “Sid,” nickname of Sidney D. Farrar (*q.v.*), who had a 30-acre farm on North Salem Road from 1923 until his death in 1935 (*see* Farrar Lane). While his land did not border Old Sib Road, it came close to the beginning of the highway at Tackora Trail. [RN]

Old Society: The lower half of town – south of Ridgebury – was in the 18th Century sometimes called the “Old Society” to differentiate it from the “New” or “Second” Society, which was Ridgebury (*q.v.*). Society was used in the sense of a parish of the Congregational Church.[RN]

Old South Salem Road, dating from the 1720s, was the original route of South Salem Road (*q.v.*) as it entered New York state. The wider and straighter state highway bypassed the road in 1938. [RN] *See also* Bedford Road.

Old Stagecoach Road is an old highway from Ridgebury Road southward to Aspen Ledges Road. The portion between Ridgebury Road and Bennett’s Farm Road (*q.v.*) at the Ridgebury Firehouse was long considered part of Bennett’s Farm Road, but after 1961 petition by townspeople, the selectmen renamed it. The section south of Bennett’s Farm Road had been known as Old Stagecoach (or Stage Coach) Road since at least 1946, but was not a developed road until the late 1950s (*see* Ridgefield Knolls). The whole route, plus a section now abandoned extending down to Ledges Road, were part of a highway dating back to at least the early 1800s, used by stagecoaches between Ridgebury and Norwalk, operated by David Hunt (*q.v.*) starting 1836. [RN] *See also* Henry Whitlock.

Old Still Road is a short, dead-end road off Still Hollow Place, probably not accurately named since it connected to, but was not part of the old Still Road (*q.v.*). The name was also sometimes applied in early 20th Century to Still Road between Haviland and Stonehenge Roads. [RN]

Old Stone Court is a 600-foot tertiary road off Bobby’s Court, created by Lewis J. Finch’s 1985 subdivision of 10 acres into five lots. It’s one of those names that make one wonder; after all, is there any “new stone”? [RN]

Old Town Road is a short lane between Route 7 and Wilridge Road, developed 1950s by Joseph L. Dioguardi (*q.v.*). It’s sometimes quaintly called Olde Town Road. Dioguardi said a title search of the land thereabouts indicated that in 1759 this was part of a road extending through Wilton to Pelham Lane (*q.v.*) at Nod Hill Road [RN]

Old Trolley Road was for many years a short, dead-end road off the east side of Ridgebury Road between George Washington Highway and Shadow Lake Road; extended in the 1990s in the Stone Ridge (*q.v.*) subdivision and now connects Ridgebury Road with George Washington Highway. The road was built on the bed of a Danbury and Harlem Traction Company (*q.v.*) line that ran from Danbury center by the Fairgrounds to Ridgebury and was supposed to connect to the Harlem Valley train line in Westchester. The company was formed in 1893 and went bankrupt in 1908. Tracks west of Ridgebury may not have been laid, though a bed was built for many miles.

Some trolley runs were done around 1901 but apparently no regular service to Ridgebury was ever achieved. [RN]

Old Wagon Road is a 1,600-foot dead-end road off West Mountain Road, part of the 1969 Eleven Levels subdivision (*q.v.*) by Jerry Tuccio. It became a town road in 1978. [RN]

Old Washington Road is an old road that originally ran between Branchville and Florida Hill Roads, but now dead-ends before it reaches Florida Hill Road. It was named for George Washington Gilbert (*q.v.*), the "hermit" who lived near its western end. It was called "Washington Street" on a 1946 zoning map. [RN]

Old West Lane is a 20th Century term for a road, part of which is now Canterbury Lane (*q.v.*). that led from Ridgebury center south of church to the NY state line. The name was changed in 1969 to lessen confusion with West Lane far to the south in Ridgefield village. [RN]

Old West Mountain Road is a very old highway connecting Barrack Hill Road at Four Corners (*q.v.*) with West Mountain Road, probably based on old Amereican Indian route from Lake Mamanasco to villages in Westchester. For Ridgefielders, it served as an access to fields and woodlots on the mountain, and to Round Pond, a source of fish and a saw mill. The Burt family had an early farm there, much of which became the Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) estate. [RN] *See also* Burt Road.

Old West Road is another name for Pumping Station Road (*q.v.*), used as late as the 1930s and early 1940s but earliest use is unknown. [RN]

Oldest business in town is probably Fairfield County Bank, founded in 1871 as Ridgefield Savings Bank. Others include Ridgefield Supply Company, which traces its roots Osborn and Gilbert's lumberyard in the 1870s; Ancona's Wines and Liquors, ca. 1920 by Joseph Ancona, which is the oldest family-owned retailer; Ridgefield Hardware, founded in 1938 by Ed Rabin. (*q.v. each*).

Oldest house: Probably the oldest documentable house is the Hauley House (*q.v.*) at 132 Main Street, dating from 1713. Tuppence (*q.v.*) at 35 Main Street may be older or about the same age, but was originally about a mile to the north and may have been built as a trading post. Parts of other houses, such as 181 Main Street's core, may date from around the same time or earlier. The 1738 Pulling-Dykman House (*q.v.*) at 11 Barlow Mountain Road is said to be "the least altered historic house in town" [ITH4/25/2025, RIR, JFS]

Oldest resident may have been Consuelo Vanderbilt Earl (*q.v.*), who died at age 107 in 2011. Eliza Gage Wade was 104 at her death in 1934. It was sometimes claimed that James "Jimmy Joe" Joseph (*q.v.*) was 114 at his death, but indications are this was due to a misreading of his birth certificate, written in Arabic. [JFS]

Oliphant, Elmer Quillan "Ollie,**"** (1892-1975), was one of the nation's top athletes of the early 20th Century. In football he held many records at Purdue. Then at West Point, he was the first cadet ever to letter in seven sports (football, baseball, basketball, track, boxing, swimming, hockey). In 1916, as an Army back, he was football All-American; Knute Rockne included him on his own all-time All-American team. During his college career, he was credited with 435 points – 135 at Purdue and 300 at Army. In 1921 for the Buffalo All-Americans in what's now the NFL, he led the

league with 47 points (including throwing seven touchdowns, kicking five field goals and 26 point-after-touchdowns). However, he retired from playing after that season. He spent many years working for MetLife. He and wife Barbara moved to Wilton Road West in the 1940s, then to New Canaan in 1952; both are buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [WWW]

Olley Court was founded in 2007 by Susan Buzaid as an interior design shop. It operated on Main Street for many years, and then moved to 1 Big Shop Lane where it operates in 2026. [JFS]

Olmstead family: *See also* under Olmsted, the earlier spelling of the name.

Olmstead, Chauncey, (?-?), was a partner with Abijah Resseguie in manufacturing carriages, first with Resseguie and then with Brush, Olmstead & Company (*q.v.*) in the Big Shop (*q.v.*). He was a state representative in 1846. He appears to have later moved to Stamford. [JFS]

Olmstead, Frank R., (1866-1914), a Ridgefield native, was a well-known carpenter and volunteer fireman who lived on St. Johns Road and later in a house he built on Barry Avenue. [P2/12/1914, FAG]

Olmstead, Jared Nash, (1819-1904), was a farmer who held many offices in the town. As a Union Party member, he was a state representative to the General Assembly in 1862 and 1863 and a selectman in 1867 and 1868, a constable in 1855 and 1863, surveyor of highways in 1859, 1862, 1866, and 1867, member of the Board of Relief in 1861 and 1864. He was also active in the Ninth School District affairs. His house still stands at 90 St. Johns Road. He was the father of Frank Olmstead (*q.v.*). [JFS, DJN]

Olmstead, Samuel Smith, (1806-1872), was a farmer who established the Titicus Store (*q.v.*), which he sold in 1856 to Hiram Olmstead Nash (*q.v.)*. He was a selectman in 1839 and 1840, and was a state representative in 1841 and, as a Whig, in 1854.

Olmstead Lane is a road dating from the 1700s and running between West Lane and Wilton Road West. At least four Olmstead families once lived along it in houses #75, 90, and 91 still standing, and a house no longer standing at what is now #79. It's one of few roads named for an original founding family, which in the 18th Century, spelled its name Olmsted. [RN]

Olmstead Scott House at 508 North Salem Road, corner of Barlow Mountain Road, is a saltbox built ca. 1750, possibly by James Scott 2nd. It was witness to the first skirmish of the Battle of Ridgefield as General Wooster attacked British troops lunching hereabouts. It's named for a later owner, T. Olmstead Scott. [RIR]

Olmstead's Corner was a 20th Century name for the bend in St. Johns Road at the top of the hill, south of Windy Ridge Lane, so called because Robert Olmstead's Windy Ridge Farm was there. Olmstead's house was 90 St. Johns Road. [DD85]

Olmsted, David, (1748-1815), a Ridgefield native, was a captain, later lieutenant colonel, in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. He married Abigail Ingersoll, daughter of the Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll, minister of the Congregational Church and niece of Jared Ingersoll, signer of the Constitution. She became the subject of the popular "Red Petticoat" legend, involving her waving a petticoat from a window to suggest hers was a Tory house to passing British soldiers during the Battle of Ridgefield in 1777 — while her husband was out fighting the Redcoats. (He reportedly later told her if he had seen her do that, he would have shot her dead —

probably apocryphal; the couple had four children after this and she remained with him the rest of her life.) From 1781 to 1798, he often served as a state representative, alongside Col. Philip Burr Bradley or Lt. Joshua King, and was generally active in town government. However, in the early 1800s, he moved to Onondaga County, NY, becoming one of the first settlers of the town of DeWitt, where he soon established a well-known tavern and inn. He died there. [WWW]

Olmsted, Lt. Ebenezer, (1748-1801), a Ridgefield native and Revolutionary War veteran, was a disgraced collector of state taxes who apparently spent his collections in 1780, causing the town — which was responsible for those taxes — to suffer financially for many years. He was arrested and all his possessions confiscated and sold at auction. He was married to Esther Ingersoll, daughter of the Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll (*q.v.*), and had been a prominent citizen. He apparently left town in disgrace. [WWW]

Olmsted, Frederick Law (1922-1903)**,** was a noted landscape architect whose firm did work in Ridgefield: in 1901-03, Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Mass., designed the grounds for the Peaceable Street/High Ridge mansion of Effingham Maynard — most of this has been destroyed by subsequent subdivision. The Olmsted firm also reportedly did work on what is now Ballard Park for Edward L. Ballard in 1932. Olmsted also worked with Cass Gilbert (*q.v.*) on non-Ridgefield projects. David Paul (*q.v.*) said Olmsted did work for Casagmo (*q.v.*) estate, but no evidence has been found. [JFS]

Olmsted, Jared (also Jered), (1753-1825), was an ensign in the Continental Army, serving in Capt. David Olmsted's company during the Revolutionary War. He was a state representative in 1800 and 1801. [JFS]

Olmsted, Nathan, (1717-1805), a deacon in the Congregational Church, was a state representative in 1777 and 1779 and served as a selectman in 1776 and 1782. Three of his sons fought at the Battle of Ridgefield. Samuel G. Goodrich has a profile of him in his *Recollections of A Lifetime* (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Olmsted, Samuel, (1734-1820), a Ridgefield native, was a farmer and sergeant in the Connecticut Militia during the Revolutionary War. He was a state representative in 1776 and 1778, one of the first representatives to the Legislature after Connecticut became a state in 1776. He was a selectman in 1747, 1752, 1755, 1758, 1777, and 1782. With Ebenezer Hawley, he leased a saw mill "at Pompion Ridge" from Samuel and Timothy Hoyt in 1816, probably on the Cooper Brook near Johns Pond [RLR11/249]. [JFS]

Olsen, Herb, (1905-1973), a once widely known watercolor artist and illustrator, did paintings for magazine covers, won dozens of awards, and wrote five instructional books on the painting. His work is in museum collections. He lived on Peaceable Street in the 1940s and early 1950s. [JFS]

Olsen, Olaf, (1919-2000), a native of Germany, played in 29 British films including *The Man in the White Suit, Lili Marlene,* and *We Dive at Dawn*, alongside such stars as Alec Guinness, Deborah Kerr, and Leslie Howard. He had parts in over 1,000 BBC radio and TV broadcasts. He came to the U.S. in 1953 and joined Ward Acres Studios of New Rochelle, NY, led by Jack B. Ward (*q.v.*), to produce TV commercials and documentaries. In 1957, he moved to Ward Acres on Peaceable Street, joining Ward in breeding and raising award-winning thoroughbred racing horses while continuing to produce travel documentaries as the Olsen Film Productions Company. His work included the widely seen *Lion Country Safari*. He was

active locally in the Red Cross. [WWW, DD201]

Olson, Edna-May, (1912-2003), was an insurance administrator for W.R. Grace in NYC, retiring in 1967. In 1973, she helped found and became first president of the OWLS (*q.v.*) and wrote the OWLS column for the RP for 30 years. In 1982 she became the town's agent for the elderly, serving about 20 years. She also ran the Food Pantry, and was on the Commission on Aging. She and husband Victor, (1910-1978), began summering here in the 1950s and became full-time residents in 1971. [NR]

Olympians from Ridgefield: Charles Szentkuti (*q.v.*) was on the Greco-Roman wrestling team from Hungary in 1936; John P. Cooke (*q.v.*) won gold in rowing in 1956; Janel Jorgensen (*q.v.*), won silver, swimming, 1988. Ridgefield native Kieran Smith, RHS 2018, won the bronze medal in the men's 400-meter freestyle final in the 2020 in Tokyo and a silver 4 x 200 meter freestyle relay in Paris in 2024. Tucker West competed in luge in the 2014, 2018 and 2022 Olympics. Curt Onalfo (*q.v.*) played on the 1992 soccer team in Barcelona. Erland Van Lidth de Jeude (*q.v.*) was a backup for the U.S. wrestling team in 1976 and was due to be in the boycotted 1980 Moscow Olympics. [JFS]

Onalfo, Curtis "Curt," a native of Brazil who was RHS 1987, came to Ridgefield as a boy, was a county and state soccer champion, and was a nationally ranked college soccer player. He was on the 1992 U.S. Olympic team at Barcelona, and played several seasons in professional leagues. [NR]

Onatru Farm: *See under* Dairies.

1RZ were the amateur radio call letters for John Hubbard (*q.v.*), a pioneer in ham radio electronics, who was among the first to transmit and receive radio signals with Europeans. [JFS]

Online history sources: *See* Internet sources.

On-The-Ridge was E.P. Dutton's (*q.v.*) name for his mansion on High Ridge [P7/20/1911, DD195], sometimes later called "Four Chimneys." [DD195]

O'Neill, Eugene, (1888-1953), acclaimed playwright, owned Brook Farm (*q.v.*), 845 North Salem Road, from 1922 to 1927. O'Neill won the Nobel Prize and four Pulitzers for his work. His popular play, *Desire Under the Elms*, (*q.v.*) was said to have been inspired by viewing the house across the road, owned then by Louis G. Smith and later by George Leeman (*q.v.*) [WWW] *See also* Elis B. McLaury. [WWW, DD16, ARR]

O'Neill Court is a short, dead-end road off North Salem Road, part of the 1982 subdivision by Joseph H. Donnelly called "Scotts Ridge," across the highway from the former home of playwright Eugene O'Neill (*q.v.*). [RN]

Ontaroga Farm was the "gentleman's farm" of Theodore B. Starr and son, Louis Morris Starr, in Farmingville in the early 20th century. The land now includes the Farmingville School site and Saunders Lane subdivision. "Ontaroga" is reportedly a Leni-Lenape word for "place of rocks and hills." The house still stands at Lounsbury and Farmingville Roads. [JFS, SR1916S]

Open Space: The Conservation Commission in February 2025 estimated the total amount of open space in Ridgefield at 5,660 acres, or 25.3% of the town's 22,387 acres. That consisted of: Town-owned "designated open space" and parks, 2,949 acres; Land Conservancy (owned and easements), 706 acres; State and federal lands, 1,417 acres; and "privately owned properties including conservation easements," 588 acres. The commission's goal is to have 30% of the town as open space. [JFS, RW]

Opera house: *See* playshop *under* William Matheus Sullivan.

Opgaard, Sigrun and **Anna**: *See* The Food Chandler.

Or-Mar Drive, the original 1963 name for Settlers Lane (*q.v.*), recalled the subdividers, real estate agents Orrin and Marion Beers. It was changed in 1971 because the neighborhood, did not like the name. [RN].

Orange Ridge was a bastardization of Norran's Ridge (*q.v.*), which in turn was a corruption of Nawranawoo's or Norranorwa's Ridge, the American-Indian name for the locality. The names referred to the rise east of Fox Hill condominiums (*q.v.*) north of Farmingville Road at Great Swamp, today traversed in part by Norrans Ridge Road (*q.v.*). "Orange Ridge" was used by George L. Rockwell in his *History of Ridgefield.* [RN]

Orchard, The: 1. Was an estate on West Lane in Lewisboro, right on state line, established early 1900 by Dr. George G. Shelton, wealthy homeopathic physician; later the home of the Abbe family (*q.v.*) and Konrad Bercovici (*q.v.*). Part of the estate was also called Westlawn (*q.v.*). **2.** Was a name for a picnic area used by organizations in the early 20th Century on property of Dr. Fred Solley on North Salem Road [DD18].

Orchard Cottage was the home of Mrs. Mary A. King in SR1916S, located along King Lane.

Orchard Lane is a private, dead-end, mostly dirt road off St. Johns Road, part of a 1956 subdivision by Warren and Elizabeth Simmons. The name probably reflects a former nearby use. [RN]

Orchard Street is the original name for what is now East Ridge Road. It was probably named for Lounsbury family orchards at today's Veterans Park and Boys & Girls Club [RN]

Orchards: While most Ridgefield farms once had their own orchards, the town has had several commercial, including S. Scott Faubel's apple orchard (*q.v.*) on Shadow Lake Road, as well as experimental orchards. Edward J. Couch (*q.v.*), a pomologist with a national reputation, had an elaborate orchard with many varieties of apples on Branchville Road. Francis A. Rockwell, a tinner and candlestick maker, had an orchard on Main Street opposite Market Street in the mid-19th Century, raising grapes and blackberries for church wine he bottled, as well as planting many varieties of pear and apple trees — was a proponent of the little known Baker apple (*q.v.*). *See also* cider mills.

Order of Eastern Star was the female side of the Jerusalem Lodge of Masons (*q.v.*), known for its community service in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. It remained active until the 1970s. [JFS]

Ordinations: On Oct. 16, 1790, Bishop Samuel Seabury of Connecticut ordained Dr. David Perry, a Yale graduate who was a physician in town, who became probably the first Ridgefield resident to be ordained a minister. He served as the Episcopal parish's first settled minister after the Revolution. The first ordination of a Catholic priest to take place *in* Ridgefield occurred in 1956 when Bishop Lawrence J. Shehan, who was here to bless the new St. Mary's School, performed the ceremony for the Rev. Pierre A. Button (*q.v.*).

Ore Bed: An 1830 deed describes land "near and west of the house of said (Reed) Haviland and known by the name of the Mine Lot or Ore Bed," probably a limestone mining operation near or at the intersection of Haviland, Danbury and Limestone Roads. *See* Mine Hill. [RN]

Ore Yard: About 1717, the proprietors sold land at "a place called ye Ore Yard." The precise location is unknown but may have been a limestone bed near the intersection of Danbury, Haviland and Limestone Roads (*see* Ore Bed). [RN]

Oreneca: 1. American Indian word that Huden translates as "curved place" or "land at the bend," for a location on West Mountain. **2.** A local American Indian sachem who was among the signers of deeds to the first settlers of Ridgefield. His name appears in various forms — minutes of a 1715 proprietors' meeting say "Tackora, alias Oreneca"; he was also known as Narranoke, Naraneka, or Noroneke. **3**. A 27-room mansion built in 1930 by Philip D. Wagoner (*q.v.*), head of Underwood, and later owned by Harrison Horblit (*q.v.*). His widow, Jean Horblit, sold it in 2004. When she and her husband bought the estate for $6.9 million, it included 12 acres and outbuildings. (*See also* Oreneca Lodge.) [RN] **4.** Name originally proposed by David L. Paul (*q.v.*) for Fox Hill (*q.v*.) condominiums on Danbury Road, but rejected because of potential confusion with West Mountain's Orenecas. [RN, JFS] *See also* Oreneca Road.

Oreneca Band was a boys band established in the 1890s, lasting a decade or so. The name was later resurrected and used by what had been called the Ridgefield Boys Band (*q.v*.). [DD59]

Oreneca Inn, also called **Oreneca House**, was established on Main Street, about on the site of The Toy Chest (in 2026), 441 Main Street, probably after the Civil War. It later became the Dyckman/Dykeman House, the Thompson House, and the Ridgefield Inn (*q.v. each*). Lydia Bouton Ruggles took it over in 1896, calling it Oreneca Inn until 1899. In 1903, Samuel S. Denton (*q.v.*) bought the building, moved it through fields to High Ridge at Abbott Avenue, where it became apartments. Eventually it served as St. Mary's Convent when nuns taught at the nearby school [RIR]. It is now an apartment house at 192 High Ridge Avenue, with two three-bedroom and two one-bedroom apartments. [JFS]

Oreneca Lake: A postcard from around 1905 shows a view labeled, "Lake Oreneca and Dr. John G. Perry's Residence." It may have been an alternative name for the locale better known as Round Pond (*q.v.*). [RN]

Oreneca Lodge was a home on Oreneca Road built by Henry B. Anderson (*q.v*.). When Philip Wagoner (*q.v*.), the Underwood Typewriter chief, bought the house, he hired workers in 1930 to tear it down and replace it with a new mansion, called Oreneca, of English Georgian architecture, with an exterior of St. Quentin stone, a French limestone. "The roof will be shingle title and the entire structure will be fireproof in every respect," RP reported. Architects were C.B.F. Brill and J. Robertson Ward of New York City. [JFS]

Oreneca Road is an old highway from West Mountain Road northwesterly past Rippowam Road to Sturges Park (*q.v*.). It is said to be part of the original West Mountain Road. Legend says that this route was part of an Indian trail that ran from Lake Mamanasco over Old West Mountain Road (*q.v.*), Rippowam Road and into New York State to Mud Pond in Pound Ridge. It's named for American-Indian sachem Oreneca (*q.v.*) and also reflects the name of an estate, Oreneca Lodge (*q.v.*), along its northern side. [RN]

Organika Kitchen, a 100% vegan and organic restaurant owned by Dimitri Pantzos, opened in the fall of 2019 at 424 Main Stree [P11/14/2019]. In 2025, the location was called Botanika Cafe (*q.v.*), but was still vegan and

organic.

Oriented Plastics, from 1951-53, produced extruded monofilament used to weave automobile seat covers. It operated in the old Goat Barn (*q.v.*) on Grove Street, and moved to New Hampshire. [JFS]

Orlan, George, (1929-2015), of 22 Pin Pack Road, an active conservationist was chairman of Conservation Commission for 12 years and a member for 23 years. He was largely responsible for the town's acquisition of McKeon Farm (*q.v.*) along Ridgebury Road. [P10/22/2015]

Ornaments: From 1989 until 2007, the Ridgefield Woman's Club annually issued ornaments commemorating notable Ridgefield buildings and historic places. A fundraiser for the club they were sold at its annual Craft Fair in November and at shops in town. The ornaments, all minted by Woodbury Pewter in Woodbury, CT, were based on the work of various artists; there is no record of the artists' names. The ornaments were: Cass Gilbert Fountain, 1989; Ballard Park Bandstand, 1990; Town Clock, 1991; West Lane Schoolhouse, 1992; Ridgefield Library, 1993; Aldrich Museum, 1994; Town Hall, 1995; Community Center, 1996; Firehouse, 1997; Keeler Tavern, 1998; Festival 2000, 1999; Settlers' Rock, 2000; Scott House, 2001; Ridgefield Playhouse, 2002; Hauley House, 2003; Branchville Station, 2004; H.P. Bissell Building, 2005; Ridgebury Congregational Church, 2006; Ridgefield 300th Anniversary, 2007. ***Other ornaments*** issued by other organizations including Scotland School, showing a Scottie dog, 1992; and St. Mary's Parish, showing the church, 1997. *See also* Medals.

Onatru Farm sold goats' milk in the mid-20th Century and advertised itself as being in Ridgefield when it was in fact in Lewisboro, N.Y., on Elmwood Road. (The farm is now a Lewisboro government center and park.) [JFS]

Orrico, Fred G., (1923-2006), a native of Greenwich, was a founder in 1955 of the widely popular King Neptune (*q.v.*) seafood restaurant on Route 7. He retired in 1985 and was the father of John Orrico (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Orrico, John, (1948-1970), RHS 1966, was an Army chief warrant officer who piloted UH-1 Huey gunships in Vietnam, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, and Air Medal. He and his crew were killed due to a mechanical failure when their helicopter crashed on a mission. [WWW]

Orticelli, Onorato "Larry," (1943-2015), a native of Danbury who grew up in Bethel, had been a teacher at Scotland School as well as in New Canaan, retiring in 2002. He was also an artist who specialized in house portraits, including Ridgefield buildings like the West Lane Inn, and had a part-time public relations and marketing business in the 1980s. [JFS]

Osborn, Jeremiah, a native of Ridgefield, was said to have died in the Revolution, according to a Whitney family genealogy. Records indicate he was still alive in 1782, but little else has been found. [*Whitney Family of Connecticut and Its Affiliations*, by Stephen Whitney, 1878, Vol. 1, pg. 202]

Osborn, Richard, (1676-1778), an early settler, reached the age of 102. "He was born at Eastchester in the State of N. Y. and came into this town in his 44 year… He was a very religious man, slender in body, had been a justice of peace and deacon in the prime of life; was temperate in his diet but animated in his passions." [RSGG]

Osborn, Richard Waldo "Dickie," (1850-1933), owned and operated Ridgefield Lumber Company (*q.v.*), now Ridgefield Supply. He lived at 470 Main Street (ONS149), on the south corner of Prospect Street, and owned all the land

and buildings on the south side of Prospect to Bailey. His house was later the home of his grandniece, Winifred Osborn Carriere (*q.v.*); it was razed in 1971 to make way for the Yankee Ridge shopping center (*q.v.*). Osborn was a member of the school board and was sixth president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. His wife was Annie Talman Osborn (d. 1965). His surname sometimes appears as Osborne. [DD48, CBRFC, RSB26]

Osborne, Sara: *See* Sara Osborne Wood.

Oscaleta Road, both ends of which connect with West Mountain Road, parallels that highway and was probably built in the 19th Century as a less-hilly bypass. The name is pronounced *oss-ka-LEE-ta*, supposedly from a word in a dialect of Spanish meaning "little kiss." It's taken from the lake of that name in nearby South Salem, originally called South Pond, but changed by the 1870s by owner Richard Hoe Lawrence, who had an estate along much of its shores. He renamed the lake after a word he'd heard and liked while living in Spain. A Lewisboro road also picked up the name. [RN]

Oscar F. Schultze Meats and Fish, a market "in the old Hibbard Market" on Main Street in the 1920s/30s, was one of a small chain of at least 11 stores in southern Fairfield County. The motto was "The best of goods at the right price." *See also under* Schultze, Oscar.

O'Shea, Elizabeth Marie, (1903-1959), was a popular teacher here, sister of Isabel (*q.v.*), and wife of Harvey Lown (*q.v.*).

O'Shea, Isabel M., (ca. 1906-1965), a Ridgefield native, was hired as a teacher here in 1925. She became elementary principal in 1944, when those grades were housed at the East Ridge School and at the Garden School on Bailey Avenue. When Veterans Park opened in 1955, she became its first principal, serving till her retirement in 1960; the school library is named for her. The auditorium at East Ridge Middle School, a building she helped to design and whose construction she helped oversee on the building committee, is also named for her. [NR]

O'Shea Auditorium at East Ridge Middle School honors Isabel O'Shea (*q.v.*).

Oskison, Hildegarde Hawthorne, (1871-1952), a granddaughter of Nathaniel Hawthorne, was an author of 23 books, mostly for children, but also some for adults, plus countless magazine articles. She was writing professionally at 16. Her biography of Hawthorne, *The Romantic Rebel,* was well known. She moved to East Ridge during WW2, later lived at The Elms Inn, and became active in the community until her death. [WWW]

O'Sullivan, Margaret, (1911-1993), known as "Miss O," was an RHS physical education teacher from 1943 to 1962. When she started here, girls had no RHS interscholastic sports at all. She established girls field hockey, softball, basketball, and tennis teams and also fought for better facilities for women. In 1962 she became a guidance counselor, retiring in 1973. ROTA honored her posthumously in 2000 for bringing girls sports to RHS. [WWW]

Otter Pond: An 1835 deed mentions land "at Otter Pond," apparently in the vicinity of today's Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), perhaps at or near Fox Hill Lake. It evidently no longer exists or has been supplanted by one of the more modern, man-made Ridgefield Lakes [RN]

Our Farmingville School is a 16-page, finely illustrated history of the schools of Farmingville, produced by Farmingville PTA in 1968 — it's a rare published history of early Ridgefield education. Charles Tepfer (*q.v.*) wrote the book and Dave Scott (*q.v.*), an architect who led the moving and reconstruction

of the Ridgefield Historical Society's Scott House, was the illustrator. [JFS]

Ousatonic Rail Road Company was incorporated in May 1836 by the General Assembly to build a line from Sheffield, Mass., along the Housatonic River to Danbury and possibly to Ridgefield, where at the state line, it would "meet a contemplated rail road from Harlem through West Chester County." The line was not built in Ridgefield. [RT]

Out and About Club is sponsored by Parks and Recreation Department, which says it offers "fun and exciting activities for adults (ages 18+) with special needs." The club was founded by SPHERE (*q.v.*) in the 1990s. [JFS]

Outhwaite, Georgia Schofield, (1896-1950), a native of Florida who lived on Saw Mill Hill Road in the 1930s and 40s, was a daughter of Gen. John Schofield who declined to run for president in 1896 because of the impending birth of Georgia (William Jennings Bryan ran instead). He had been secretary of war under President Andrew Johnson and military governor of Virginia after the Civil War. She was active in the community, serving twice as president of the League of Women Voters and a term on the school board. She also ran for state representative on the Democratic ticket. With her ex-husband Leonard Outhwaite, she once made a trip across the Atlantic in a 70-foot sloop. [P12/7/1950]

Outpost Farm was the estate of Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*), who built his house there ca.1915 and eventually owned some 2,000 acres, much of it devoted to his Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*). It was so called because it was his outpost from the hectic city life. His mansion eventually became Fox Hill Inn (*q.v.*), but was razed by new owner, IBM (*q.v.*). [RN]

Outpost Inn was a popular and widely known restaurant with overnight accommodations, established in 1930 by Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*) on about 28 acres along east side of Danbury Road — what is now Fox Hill condominiums (*q.v.*) — and was managed early on by L.G. Treadway Service Corporation. Its first manager was Vincent Bordenave, formerly with the Mid-ocean Club of Bermuda [RPJ7/14]. The Conley family sold the inn in the 1940s and its last owner was Albert Tramer (*q.v.*), a respected Swiss-born and -trained chef. The inn catered to both celebrities and townspeople — Eleanor Roosevelt ate there when she was first lady (she drove herself from Hyde Park). The main building had originally been a house built in 1816 by Albin Jennings (*q.v.*), a skilled carpenter, for his bride and himself. (Jennings later built the still-standing Big Shop — *q.v.*). The inn closed around 1962 and by 1963 was being used by the Shapley School (*q.v.*). Fox Hill developer David Paul bought the property at a foreclosure auction and had planned to use the main building as a community center for his new multifamily complex, but it was destroyed by a May 24, 1969, fire of undetermined origin. P7/31/1930 has a long, detailed story about the opening of the inn. *See also* Hearthstone Inn, Outpost Pond. [JFS]

Outpost Kennels were established at today's intersection of Routes 35 and 7 by Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*) to raise and sell Kerry blue terriers (his favorite — he was a pioneer in bringing the breed to America), Sealyham terriers, cocker spaniels, and English setters. The 175-foot-long building was once the largest kennel in New England. It was sold in the 1930s to Waldeck Kennels (*q.v.*), and then became part of the Gaines Research Center, operated by the dog food company. The building finally went from housing dogs to feeding people, becoming The Steak House and then the

Red Lion restaurants (*q.v. each*). [WWW, JFS]

Outpost Nurseries was a large-scale nursery operation, founded by Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v*.), involving some 2,000 acres in northeastern Ridgefield. It provided plantings for many estates, colleges, parks, and two Worlds Fairs. Named for the Colonel's Outpost Farm (*q.v.*), the nurseries operated from around 1920 until it was sold to Woodcock Nurseries (*q.v.*) in 1944. During WW2, its large saw mills produced timber for naval ships using wood from its nurseries and elsewhere, including FDR's Hyde Park estate. [JFS]

Outpost Pond is a small body of water on Danbury Road, privately owned at Fox Hill condominiums (*q.v*.), that was created by Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*) in late 1920's in front of his new Outpost Inn (*q.v.*). The pond is fed with the waters of upper Norwalk River (*q.v.)*, often called here "Ridgefield Brook" (*q.v.).* It was a popular community ice skating spot from the 1930s through the 60s. [RN] *See also* Willow Pond.

Outpost Road was a section of the old Danbury Road (*q.v.*), abandoned by the state in the 1920s when it straightened the highway. Today called Fox Hill Drive, it is the main entrance-exit route through Fox Hill condominiums. It traverses Island Bridge (*q.v.*) over the Ridgefield Brook (*q.v*.). [RN]

Outpost Supply Company at 92 Danbury Road, just north of Conklin Motors, was operated in the 1950s by Henry Edward Chapin (*q.v.*). It sold paints, hardware and electrical appliances. In 1960, the building was leased by William H. Casey (*q.v*.) for a gas station and fuel oil business. It later became Marty Motors (q.v.). [DNT5/9/1960]

Overlook was the name of the estate of William A. Jenner (*q.v.*) at 35 High Ridge [P1/2/1913]. Before the trees grew up around it, the house, built in 1882, had one of the best views found anywhere in the village. [DD154, DD195]

Overlook Drive is a semicircular road, attached at each end to Ramapoo Road. Its "overlook" is to the east from the westernmost curve where the elevation is 720 feet above sea level. The road is in Ramapoo Hills (*q.v.*), a 1956 subdivision by Joseph H. Donnelly *(q.v.*) of what was once the Conklin dairy farm (*see* Irving B. Conklin). It became a town road in 1963. [RN]

Overlook Groves is a 1985 subdivision of 27 lots on 66 acres east of Limekiln Road, served by Nursery Road and Whitewood Hollow Court (*q.v.)*. It was created by the Crosswicks Company of Wilton. [RN]

OWLS is a senior citizen group founded in the 1970s that meets at Founders Hall (*q.v*.) to hear informative talks and has sponsored many programs for seniors as well as day trips. Its name means Older, Wiser, Livelier Set. Edna-May Olson (*q.v.*) was a founder and first president. [JFS]

P

Paccadolmi, Phyllis, (192?-2006), a Ridgefield native, was on the staff of Ridgefield Library for 53 years. She retired as librarian in February 1999, but continued to volunteer there. The library's annual Phyllis Paccadolmi Award honors "those whose commitment to the Library exemplifies her spirit and dedication." [WWW]

Package stores: The Cott Wine and Liquor Store, which opened Feb. 1, 1934, was the first new liquor store since Prohibition (*q.v.*) was repealed. By 1973, there were exactly one dozen liquor stores in Ridgefield, probably the peak. In 2020, there were eight, including two Ancona (*q.v.*) stores. The oldest of the stores is Ancona's Wines and Liquors, with outlets in Branchville and off Governor Street; the business dates back to just after the repeal. [JFS] *See also* Alcohol.

Padre Pio Academy is a traditionalist Catholic school on Tackora Trail for pre-K through eighth grades. Its curriculum consists of religion, language arts (learning to read and write, English grammar, dictation, literature, composition), Latin, history, geography, mathematics, nature study and science, music, art, and physical education. S*ee also* Society of St. Pius X.

Paddock, Archibald Y., (1827-1888), was a retired New York City dentist and treasurer of First Congregational Church, who lived on central Main Street and briefly became the center of a national news story. On Aug. 25, 1888, during target shooting behind his home, he shot and killed his 18-year-old son, Harry, and then killed himself. Although the shooting of his son was officially declared an accident, his family believed that Dr. Paddock deliberately shot Harry because the boy would not follow his father's career choice for him. In 1874, Paddock's workers digging in sand off North Salem Road uncovered human skeletons believed to belong to two Revolutionary War soldiers (*see* Hessian Drive); one skeleton was later found in a hidden closet when half of Paddock's former home was being moved to 612 Main Street, where it stands in 2026. [WWW, HLYB, P8/5/1976] *Note*: His and his son's gravestones erroneously say they died in 1889.

Palmer, Charles F., (1877-1950), a Ridgebury farmer, was a selectman, Board of Education member, and Ridgefield Savings Bank director. He was a correspondent for the *Danbury News-Times* for 55 years and also wrote for *The Ridgefield Press*. [RSB31]

Palmer, John K., (1880-1932), the first Ridgefield police officer to die in the line of duty, was killed instantly when his motorcycle collided with a car at East Ridge and Governor Street, in front of the state police barracks, on July 31, 1932. Chief Palmer, as he was called, was a town constable responding to "the East Ridge ball grounds to investigate the authority of a man to peddle his wares during the afternoon ball game." [WWW]

Palmer, Paul, (1901-1983), was editor and publisher of *American Mercury* magazine, which had its editorial offices in 1936-37 at Main and Governor Streets, and which Oct. 1, 1937, moved to Palmer's house, Rolew Farm, off Wilton Road East and Whipstick Roads (later Flat Rock House — *q.v.*; s*ee also* Ivanhoe Farm). He was a former Sunday editor of *NY World* and later worked as an editor for *Reader's Digest* for 33 years. [P9/25/1941,

P7/7/1983, JFS]

Palmer, William E., (1844-1917), was a farmer who lived on Ridgebury Road and served as a state representative in 1885. [Burr]

Palmer Court off Route 7, north of New Road, was named for John K. Palmer (*q.v.*), a Ridgefield police officer killed in 1932 while responding to a call. George Hanlon, who developed the neighborhood in 1996, named the dead-end road. [RN]

Pambianchi, Armando "Matty," (1923-1986), a Ridgefield native, was a founder and longtime president of Pamby Motors (*q.v.*). He was a World War II veteran. [P12/18/1986]

Pambianchi, Harry T., (-1991), was a co-founder with Armando of Pamby Motors (*q.v.*).

Pambianchi, Leo James, (1911-1993), a Ridgefield native, was an entrepreneur who ran a Nash dealership in the 1930s at 378 Main Street (the Lantern in 2026) and in the 1940s, as Ridgefield Motors (*q.v.*), he sold Pontiacs in the old B.E. Sperry livery stable (*q.v.*). Helater owned Ridgefield Motors on Bailey Avenue. In the 1930s, he operated school buses for the town. During World War II, he created the Victory Bus Service (*q.v.*), bought a luncheonette on Main Street, and still had time to serve in the Army Air Corps. He also owned race horses. He left Ridgefield in 1962 for Vermont where in 1978 he received the Carnegie Medal (*q.v.*), the nation's highest civilian award for bravery, for pulling a man from a car that crashed onto a railroad track, seconds before it was hit by an approaching freight train. He was 66 years old at the time. [DD133, P11/18/1993, DD350]

Pambianchi, Tarquinio "Turk," (1920-95), operated Riverside Motors garage and gas station at 32 Ethan Allen Highway in the mid-20th Century. He was an early dealer of Datsun, now called Nissan, automobiles. [JFS]

Pambianchi, Tim, a Ridgefield native and RHS 1997, has been, as of 2025, chief of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department (*q.v.*) for 17 years. He has been a member of the department 29 years. [ITH8/22/2025]

Pamby Motors is the town's oldest auto dealership, established 1946 by Armando "Matty" Pambianchi as an auto body shop in the Big Shop (*q.v.*), then at 18 Bailey Avenue, next to old *Ridgefield Press* building. He soon acquired brother Leo Pambianchi's (*q.v.*) Nash dealership. Matty and brother Harry bought Central Garage on Danbury Road in 1952 and began selling Studebaker and Packard cars in 1953; Jeeps in 1963. Pamby's opened a new showroom on Danbury Road just west of the garage at Grove Street in 1981, selling Jeep, Renault and American Motors cars. In the mid-1980s, when Pamby's acquired the Rich Chrysler-Plymouth (*q.v.*) dealership at Danbury and Copps Hill Roads, the showroom moved there. Finally, in January 1996, the showroom moved to a new building at 665 Danbury Road (Route 7), and the former showroom on Danbury and Copps Hill Roads became solely a service center. Over the years Pamby has sold AMC, Renault, Chrysler, Plymouth, Jeep, Fiat, Mercury, and Yugo cars. The body shop and gasoline station remains at the original headquarters on Danbury Road and Grove Street, whose building was renovated in 2019; its gas station is the oldest continuously operated service station building in town. Pamby's sponsors many youth sports teams and other organizations in town; the Pambianchi family won the 1999 Kiwanis Community Service Award and the 1997 Ridgefield Old Timers Civic

Award. [P3/5/1981, WWW, DD350]

Pancake breakfast is an annual fundraiser for Ridgefield Little League, begun before 1980 and usually held the first Saturday in June.

Pankenier, Charles, (1944-2020), was a local historian who focused on the Keeler Tavern and Civil War. In 2011, Pankenier published *Ridgefield Fights the Civil War*, a book that aims "to represent how Ridgefield, Connecticut soldiers and their loved ones on the home front experienced the desperate 1861-1865 struggle that defined our country." He also produced a monograph on Cass Gilbert, and spent much time researching and portraying history at the Keeler Tavern Museum. He had worked in communications and marketing for IBM. [JFS]

Pants And… was a men's **c**lothing store at Copps Hill Plaza, opened in the 1970s and closed July 1981. [P7/23/1981]

Papageorge, John: *See* Fairfield Lunch.

Paper mill: *See* Mamanasco Lake Mills, *and* William J. Hoffman Jr.

Paperback Trader, The, was a used-book shop at 15 Danbury Road, Girolmetti Court, opened by Carol Scher and Mary Ellen Bigham on Sept. 24, 1980 [P9/11/1980] and later owned by Dorothy Halmstad.

Paramedic service began Feb. 15, 1986, with hiring of Med-I-Chair of Danbury to provide 24/7 response. The town soon decided to train its own firefighters as paramedics instead of hiring a service. [P2/13/1986, P1/16/1988]

Parent-Teacher Association was founded in 1901 as the Mothers Club (*q.v.*) by Mabel Cleves (*q.v.*) and was renamed Parent Teacher Association in 1916. It is designed to support the schools in town. Each school has a unit and all send representatives to the Joint Council, which coordinates the association's volunteer work. At RHS, the chapter is called the Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) because students are also involved. In Branchville for many years, the organization was called the PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) because staff and parents opted not to associate with state and national associations of which PTAs were a part. [JFS]

Parent Teacher Student Association: *See* Parent-Teachers Association.

Paris Hairstylists, one of Ridgefield's oldest family owned businesses, was founded in 1964 by Jack and Lou Parascondola, fourth generation hair stylists, at 52 Danbury Road and moved to 609 Main Street in May 1981 [P5/21/1981]. (The location was a house, built 1918, once the home of Lon and Will Stevens. [DD3]) In 2024, the business was owned by Stacey Parascondola Jchick, Jack's daughter. The business changed hands in 2025.

Park Lane between Route 7 and Playground Road in Branchville is an old road, based on a private path established by the Ancona family and others, and improved by Morganti Inc. It appears as early as 1934 on a town assessors' map, probably named for the playground/baseball field it leads to. It became a town road in 1955. [RN]

Park View Acres is a 1964 subdivision of 23 lots from 23 acres off Wilton Road West, served by Acre Lane, developed by the Symon Brothers Construction Company. The only "park" in the area was a small state roadside rest area on Route 33, called Twin Maples (*q.v.*) that included a picnic table. It ceased being used by the 1980s. [RN]

Parke, William More, (-1961) was an NYC attorney and a trustee of Colgate

University for 35 years. He and his second wife, Ruth, had a summer home on St. Johns Road opposite South Olmstead Lane for 20 years in the 1940s and 50s. He was 83 at his death. (NYT1/2/1962)

Parker, Albert, (1897-1983), a native of New York, was a prominent NYC attorney and philanthropist, who was a founder of Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He established the law firm of Parker Chapin Flattau and Kiimpl, and specialized in corporate banking and financial law. He and wife Jeannette and three children moved to the former Hunter home on Blackman Road — now the Hunter Heights (*q.v.*) neighborhood — in 1949. He was chairman of the town's Planning Commission before it merged with the Zoning Commission. In the early 1960s the Parkers returned to NYC where Albert was involved in many Jewish philanthropies and in aiding and leading not only in Albert Einstein College, but Columbia and Brandeis. [P11/22/1983]

Parker, Robert M., a graduate of the Whitney Art School in New Haven, was a Ridgefield banker and artist in the late 20th Century. He manager of the Union Trust Company bank branch on Danbury Road and also drew and painted many Ridgefield scenes that were made into prints and sold commercially. He called his subjects "vanishing Americana." He had lived at 144 Silver Spring Lane and died in Arizona in 2019 at the age of 91. [DNT1/12/2019, 11/5/1971]

Parking Authority is the town agency that regulates use of parking lots in the village and at Branchville Station. Town Meeting approved the new agency in June 1980 [P6/19/1980]. The agency hires and oversees the people who patrol the parking lots and enforce time limit.

Parks: Ridgefield has two state parks — Pierrepont and Bennett's Pond — as well as many town parks, including Aldrich Park, Ballard Park, Bark Park (for dogs), Governor Park, Martin Park, Recreation Center (with spray park), Richardson Park, Sachem Park, Sturges Park, and Veterans Park (*q.v. each*). Much of Great Swamp (*q.v.*) is state-owned and open to hunting. [RW]

Parks and Recreation Commission and **Department:** As public recreation became more important after WW2, the need for supervision of the town's parklands prompted the creation in 1947 of the Park Commission, which in 1967 was expanded in name and function to Parks and Recreation Commission, whose seven members — appointed by the Board of Selectpersons — oversee a paid staff. The department sponsors many recreational programs, courses, and camps; provides indoor swimming facilities at the Recreation Center (*q.v.*) and Barlow Mountain School (*q.v.*) and outdoors at Martin Park (*q.v.*); and maintains town parks as well as most of the town and school athletic fields and grounds. The first superintendent, now called director, was William Seirup. Others included David Hebert (*q.v.*), Paul Roche (*q.v.*), and Dennis DiPinto. [RPC, JFS]

Parks, Brad, RHS 1992, is a mystery novelist, the only writer to have won the Shamus, Nero, and Lefty Awards, three of American crime fiction's most prestigious prizes. His novels have been translated into 16 languages and have won widespread acclaim. While at RHS, he was a correspondent for *The Ridgefield Press*. He became a journalist with *The Washington Post* and *The (Newark, N.J.) Star-Ledger*. The Dartmouth graduate is a full-time novelist living in Virginia with his wife and two children. [JFS]

Parley Lane, one of the town's shortest through roads, runs 200 feet between West Lane and High Ridge Avenue and recalls the pen name of Samuel Griswold Goodrich (*q.v.*), who grew up on High Ridge in a house opposite Parley Lane. The lane may have been designed to avoid the steeper south end of High Ridge Avenue; it was formally established in 1851 when Isaac Lewis sold the town, for $5, a strip of land "two by 15 rods" in size. In ROAL, Goodrich says in his boyhood in the early 1800s, it was but a footpath through private property. The road was called Parley Lane at least by 1912 when the name appeared on a property survey. A 1936 map says "Parley Street." [RN] *See also* Peter Parley Lane.

Parley Road at Lewis J. Finch's 1958 Ridgebury subdivision, Chestnut Hills (*q.v.*), runs between the northern ends of Harding Drive and Twopence Road. Samuel Goodrich had no connection with the property. The road is often confused with Parley Lane six miles away. It became a town road in 1964. [RN]

Parlor Rock was an Early 20th Century name for a large, flat-topped rock off the west side of lower Ridgebury Road south of Regan Road where Ridgeburians – especially members of the Keeler and Selleck families – used to picnic, overlooking the Spring Valley. [RN]

Parma Market (Deli) and Bakery at 56 Danbury Road sells many freshly made Italian-style products. The deli, founded by Nicholas and Concetta Simeone, opened in 1997 and the bakery was added in 2004. The store, which carries many items from Arthur Avenue in the Bronx, also produces many of its own meals and baked goods. [P2/5/2004]

Parsonages: *See* Rectories.

Parting Brook Estates, a subdivision developed by Charles W. Weitzel Sr. (*q.v.*) from 1955 to 1960, encompasses the eastern part of Fieldcrest Drive (*q.v.*). [RN]

Partridge Drive, part of the 1959 Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v*.) subdivision, is a dead-end road off Old Stagecoach Road, and became a town highway in 1968. It was named by surveyor Edgar P. Bickford, because of the large number of "partridges" noted by surveying crews. [RN]

Party Depot at 98 Danbury Road is a party supplies and gifts store, one of four — two in Danbury and one in New Milford. It operates in a building that had previously Kellogg-Thiess and Conklin Motors auto dealerships (*q.v. each*). The store opened in the mid-1990s. [JFS]

Paschalidis, Dimitrios, (ca 1941-2021), a native of Greece, established Dimitri's Diner in Ridgefield in 1995. He sponsored many youth sports teams in town, started the Dimitri's Fund for college-bound high school students and helped many in need. [P11/5/2021]

Passantino, George C., (1922–2003), was an American artist, teacher, and author of several books on painting, including the popular *The Portrait and Figure Painting Book* in 1979. He taught at Art Students League, Famous Artists School, and Silvermine School of Art and has been widely exhibited. He lived at 30 Rising Ridge Road from 1966 until his death at age 80. [JFS, P8/21/2003]

Pasternak, Nicole, RHS 1974, is a jazz vocalist who has performed at many venues throughout the region since her high school years. She studied violin, guitar and piano. She lives in Yonkers, NY. [P8/6/1987]

Patent: On May 22, 1714, representing Queen Anne of England, Connecticut

Governor Gurdon Saltonstall signed the patent, officially declaring Ridgefield a town within the colony of Connecticut. The patent still exists and is kept in the vault of the town clerk's office. *See also* New Patent. [JFS]

Patriots Way is the name of a house at 155 Main Street; *see* Redcoats.

Patterson, Samuel, (1879-1967), was a Ridgefield clothier — *see* J. Howard Burr.

Paul, Alice, (1885-1977), was a leading American suffragist and coauthor of the Equal Rights Amendment who had a home — for many years with her sister Helen — at 513 Branchville Road from the late 1920s until she left in 1976. She spent her last few years at Altnacraig (*q.v.*) and her final year at the place of her birth, Moorestown, NJ. She held a half dozen degrees, including a law degree, and had been arrested "many times" in demonstrations for woman suffrage. She founded the National Woman's Party in 1916 and the World Woman's Party in 1938. She is one of the very few women to appear on both a U.S. stamp and a U.S. coin. [WWW]

Paul, David L., (1938-2022), was the developer of Casago (*q.v.*) and Fox Hill (*q.v.*) condominium projects. A native of New York City, he was 29 years old when he began Casagmo in 1967-8, which were originally built as 320 apartments. He then built the 286-unit Fox Hill, which included the town's first condominiums as an experiment; they were so successful, he made all of Fox Hill and then Casagmo condominiums. In 1980, he proposed 224 units on 59 acres across Danbury Road from Fox Hill; the Planning and Zoning Commission rejected the plan; the site is now part of Ridgefield Recreation Center (*q.v.*). In 1983, bought nearly bankrupt Dade Savings and Loan Association in Florida, renaming it CenTrust Bank, and hired I.M. Pei to design $90-million CenTrust Tower. By 1988, CenTrust was the largest thrift institution in the southeastern US with $8.2 billion in assets, but in 1989, it lost $119 million and in 1990, $1.7 billion, and was seized by the federal government which charged Paul engaged in "excessive and inappropriate expenses and investments." Paul was convicted in 1993 of 68 counts of fraud, misappropriation of funds, and filing false tax returns, and sentenced to 11 years in prison and ordered to pay $65 million. Released in 2004 he continued to live in south Florida. [RN]

Paulist Fathers, formally the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle, leased the Downesbury Manor on Florida Hill Road in 1923 as a novitiate [P10/9/1923]. Their time here was brief.

Paving: The first road paving, part of a state experiment, was done on the eastern end of Branchville Road around 1912. Catoonah Street was paved in 1922. Sugar Hollow Road (Route 7) between Ridgefield and Danbury was paved with concrete in 1924. Main Street was not paved until 1926. By the early 1930s, most of the major roads had been paved with concrete or asphalt (macadam). Among the last roads to be paved, in the late 1960s and early 70s, were Spring Valley and Ledges. Part of Lakeside Drive is still a dirt road, but is not owned by the town. [RN]

Payne, Thomas, (-1862), a corporal in the Union Army, died of typhoid fever in the Civil War during the "Burnside Expedition" along the North Carolina coast. [JFS, Rockwell]

Payne, Will, (1865-1954), was a journalist who wrote many local color and regional short stories, as well as several turn-of-the-century novels about

business and finance and people who attempt to achieve success both ethically and unethically, including *The Story of Eva* (1901). In the early 20th Century, he was a staff writer for *Saturday Evening Post*, and summered at 83 West Lane. [JFS]

Peaceable Street is part of an old highway from Main Street west to today's Old South Salem Road at the state line. The eastern end is called King Lane, and "Peaceable" now applies from High Ridge westward. Peaceable may have been devised by a 19th Century developer to add class to the west-central swamplands; it first appears on the land records in an 1869 deed for 16 acres "in Peaceable Street." At 1.6 miles, it is one of Ridgefield's longer town-owned roads. It's sometimes confused with the Peaceable Street in the Redding part of Georgetown, close to the Ridgefield line, as well as with Peaceable Hill and Ridge Roads (*q.v. each*). [RN]

Peaceable Acres was a name for the estate at 47 Peaceable Street [DD197-8]. Lucille Ball filmed a scene for the TV movie *Stone Pillow* there. For its various owners, *see also* The Bungalow, Wiggin's Way, *and* A. Raymond Bessette. [RGE]

Peaceable Cottage was the home of J. Howard King (*q.v.*), built in late 1870s at the corner of Main Street and King Lane. It was probably later moved to the southwest corner of High Ridge and Peaceable Street where it burned down in 1903. [DAUB]

Peaceable Hill Road is an old highway from Peaceable Street up the south side of Blacksmith's Ridge on West Mountain. For many years, it ended at the east end of Yankee Hill Road near Peaceable Ridge. Originally – since before 1856 – the road extended farther north to Oscaleta Road, but had been abandoned until 1980, when Anthony Czyr's Red Oak Corp. developed a subdivision along its edges. The name existed by 1946, appearing on the town's first zoning map. [RN]

Peaceable Ridge Manor: *See* Cardinal Court.

Peaceable Ridge Road is a confusingly named road extending from Peaceable Hill Road to West Mountain Road over what was once called Blacksmith's Ridge (*q.v.*). Land along parts of the road have stunning views to the west. The road was earlier called Standpipe Road (*q.v.*), but in 1960, most of its residents decided that "Standpipe" was unattractive and petitioned the selectmen for a change. The resulting name is often confused with Peaceable Hill Road and Peaceable Street. The road first appeared on maps in 1912 and was probably was an accessway to woodlots. [RN]

Peach Lake: *See* Pehquennakonck**.**

Peacock, Grant Allen Jr., (1923-2010), a NY native and 1946 Princeton graduate, was a NYC jewelry business owner who was active in the community. He served on the Republican Town Committee, on the board of the Community Center, as president of the Lions, and on the board of the Silver Spring Country Club. He was a WW2 veteran of the Navy, retiring as a commander. [P2/11/2010]

Peanut Lady, The: *See* Carmella Sabilia.

Peat bogs were mined in the mid-20th century on the former Frederic Remington (*q.v.*) property on Barry Avenue by then owner, Griswold Forbes. The product was sold as "West Mountain Peat." [DD264]

Peatt, Alice J. Buell, (1897-1968), was a teacher in 1920 when she married William T. Peatt Sr. (*q.v.*). She served on the Board of Education from 1929

to 1942. She suggested the historic names used at Peatt Park (*q.v.*), developed by her husband. [JFS]

Peatt, William T. Sr., (1886-1978), a native of nearby NY state, was a developer and entrepreneur for many years. Wounded and gassed during Army service in WW1, he came to Ridgefield after the war, and besides building homes at Peatt Park (*q.v.*) established the popular Peatt's Resort (*q.v.*). In 1945, he moved to Florida with his wife Alice Buell Peatt (*q.v.*). Their son **William T. Peatt Jr.**, was also prominent in Ridgefield. [RN]

Peatt Park is a 1928 subdivision off Copps Hill Road that includes Rochambeau, Lafayette and Washington Avenues, names suggested by Alice Peatt (*q.v.*), wife of the developer William Peatt Sr. (*q.v*.) [RN]

Peatt's Resort was established on the north end of Lake Mamanasco (*q.v.*) around 1912 by William Peatt Sr., offering cottages, a swimming beach, boat rentals, and a snack bar. William Peatt Jr. took over in 1946. The family operated the resort into 1970s — the snack bar and boat rentals into 1980s. [JFS]

Peck, Laurence F., (1882-1951), was a noted architect who graduated from Harvard in 1904 and L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris in 1908. He had a home in Ridgefield and is said to have designed the War Memorial (*q.v*.) on Main Street, though this has not been confirmed. Others say William Kerr Rainsford (*q.v*.) designed it. [NYT7/20/1951]

Peck, Louise D., (1919-1999), a native of NYC and Barnard graduate, was a conservationist, poet, and philanthropist who came to Ridgefield in 1946 with partner, **Grace "Woody" Woodruff**. She promoted conservation at meetings and in letters, served on the Conservation Commission for 11 years, was a supervisor of the Fairfield County Soil and Water Conservation District, and belonged to the conservation committee of the Ridgefield Garden Club for many years. She donated 10 acres at Turtle Pond and later much of her own homestead, Woodpecker Hill, on North Salem Road to the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield. She was also active in the Ridgefield Library, Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra, and NAACP. Her poetry appeared in *Harper's, NYT,* and in her book, *Lambing*. She served in the U.S. Army during WW2. She bequeathed more than $3 million ($5.5 million in 2024) to such organizations as the Ridgefield Library, Keeler Tavern Museum, and the Ridgefield Symphony. [WWW]

Peck Hill was an early 19th Century name for the hill ascended by the dead-end leg of Continental Drive, off the west side of North Salem Road, reaching 730 feet above sea level. It was probably named for a long-forgotten member of the Peck family, early residents of the town. [RN]

Pecked to Death by Goslings, by Jane Trahey, (Prentice-Hall, 1969) is a humorous novel based on Trahey's (*q.v.)* experiences buying a Ridgefield barn and turning it into a home in Ridgefield, which she calls Gosling. [JFS]

Peeps was a nickname for Dwino T. Pierandri (1913-1989).

Peespunk appears quite a few times in very early deeds, reflecting a little-known custom practiced by the American Indians. It was first mentioned in a 1712 deed in which the proprietors granted someone land lying on both sides of "Peespunk Spring"; eventually, deeds simply referred to land "at Peespunk." The word, from "pesuppau-og," meaning "they are sweating," appears in the languages of the Narragansett and the Paugusett tribes; the latter lived in parts of Fairfield County. A peespunk or "sweat lodge" was a

hut or cave where native men built hot fires and took ceremonial sweat baths, subsequently cooling off in nearby water (the spring). Peespunk seems to have been on a West Mountain hillside on the west side of North Salem Road near the New York line. [RN]

Pee Wees: *Confessions of a Hockey Parent*, is a 2021 book, published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, in which Ridgefield author Rich Cohen (*q.v*.) describes his experiences with — and observations about — youth hockey in Ridgefield. [TRR]

Pegler, Westbrook, (1894-1969), was a syndicated newspaper columnist who in 1941 won Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on mob ties to unions in NYC. He lived at 106 Old Stagecoach Road from 1941 to 1948 and once called Ridgefield "an old aristocratic town of moldering white mansions on a white main street" that "has quietly become infested with wealthy Sixth Columnists" (communist supporters). *See also* George Scalise, Pork Hollow Farm. [WWW]

Pehquennakonck was the American Indian name for Peach Lake in North Salem and Southeast, N.Y., the lower half of which was in Ridgefield before the Oblong was ceded to NY in 1731. The word said to mean "the nearby high place," perhaps referring to an adjoining hill. In Narragansett language, "paquananauke" meant "battle field" or "slaughter place." If Pehquennakonck is related, it may have referred to some ancient native battle thereabouts. However, it may be connected with the Paugusett word, "Pequonnock," which means "a small plantation." "Peach" Lake may be a corruption of the native word rather than refer to the fruit. [RN]

Pelham Lane, a narrow country road along the Ridgefield-Wilton border, extends between Nod Hill Road in Ridgefield and Olmstead Hill Road, the Wilton extension of Nod Road. The eastern end is flanked by the Weir Farm National Historic Site. The road does not appear on 1856 or 1867 maps, but may have existed as a farm path from the 1700s — *see* Old Town Road — and may have been called "Ressiguie's Lane" (*q.v*.). It was named for John and Amy Pelham, who were farmers there by 1888 and perhaps as early as 1874 but who left by early in the 20th Century. It's also been called Knoche Road for the Joseph Knoche (*q.v.*) family that has lived there since 1895; Joseph built many of the stone walls at its eastern end. [RN]

Pelliccione, Vincent, (1933-2019), a native of Italy, was a Ridgefield home builder and developer. He served in the Army during the Korean War, and lived in Ridgefield many years. His major projects included the 38 Grove Street's three medical buildings. [HH12/24/2019]

Penmanship stopped being taught in the Ridgefield schools in 2010.

Pennington, John, was a violinist and member of the London String Quartet from 1927 to 1934 during which time he lived in Ridgefield for a while. He then became concertmaster of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. [JFS2023]

Peppeneegek or **Peppengheck**, an American Indian word that appears in various spellings, was the original name for Cross Pond (*q.v.*) and/or Cross River on the Lewisboro-Pound Ridge border. Part of the locality was once in Ridgefield, but was turned over to New York in 1731 in the Oblong exchange. Word supposedly means "land picked out, selected or looked at," or simply "selected land." [RN]

Peraino, Kevin, a native of California and RHS 1994, is a journalist who has

worked for *Newsweek* for many years and has written acclaimed books on Abraham Lincoln and Mao's China. He and his wife, Reena Ninan, a television journalist at CBS News, have two children. In 2023, he was named CEO of The Stamford Partnership, a nonprofit public-private partnership that works to improve the lives of those living and working in Stamford, acting as "a catalyst for civic projects and private-sector collaborations". [JFS2023]

Perambulation was the periodic inspection of the borders of the town, usually done by officials of both towns walking the line together to confirm boundary markers. Perambulations were undertaken fairly often in the 18th Century, less so in subsequent centuries. The last Ridgefield perambulation was run by Ted and Bruce Meier in 1975.

Perch Pond, also called Craigmoor Pond (*q.v.*), is on the south corner of North Salem and Craigmoor Roads, fed by waters from Lake Mamanasco's outlet. In the 18th Century the pond that stored water for Isaac Keeler grist mill across North Salem Road, burned by the British in 1777, Subsequently, it stored water for an iron works and was called Forge Pond (*q.v.*) in the first half of the 19th Century. The pond no longer exists and is now wetland. [RN]

Percival, Nick, (1942-), a longtime Ridgefielder and a 1964 Harvard graduate in physics, is a scientist and entrepreneur who has specialized in criticizing and explaining Einstein's special theory of relativity's treatment of time. He has spent more than a half century focusing on the Twin Paradox. In the late 1990's, co-founded TeacherWeb.com to provide teachers with an easy way to create and update websites for communicating with students and parents. [P2/9/2023]

Perlin, Bernard, (1918-2014), a Virginia native, was a celebrated artist who did post office murals in the Depression and for naval ships. He became a war artist-correspondent for *Life* and *Fortune* magazines in Europe and the Pacific Theatre, and was aboard the USS Missouri for the official Japanese surrender in September 1945. He became a "social realist" painter in NYC, and an illustrator for *Harper's*, *Collier's*, and *Fortune* well into the 1960s. He was a Gugenheim Fellow, studying and painting in Italy from 1948 to 1952. He moved to Ridgebury in 1959 where he pursued increasingly more abstract art. Three years later, a fire at his home destroyed much of his work. The fire sparked a movement that led to the building of the Ridgebury firehouse to give better coverage to the northern half of town. Perlin's art is in the collections of many museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago, Ashmolean Museum, Museum of Modern Art, National Academy Museum, National Portrait Gallery, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Tate Modern in London, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. In 2016, *One-Man Show: The Life and Art of Bernard Perlin* by Michael Schreiber was published by Gmünder, Berlin. [WWW]

Pergola, the, in Ballard Park was designed by noted landscape architect Fletcher Steele for the Westmoreland (*q.v.*) estate around 1929, situated between the original Steele-designed pool and what was by then a basketball court at the Westmoreland Homeowners Association recreation area. In 1992, The Ridgefield Preservation Trust (*q.v*.) moved it to Ballard Park. The pergola now sits at the north end of the park's historic parterre

perennial garden that has been underwritten, restored and maintained by the Ridgefield Garden Club since 1982. [Terry McManus]

Perna, Nicholas, is a well-known regional economist from Ridgefield who has specialized in Connecticut. He was a professor int Yale University's Department of Economics for 13 years, and a speaker at many economic forums in the state. He retired in 2017 after 15 years as Webster Bank's economic adviser. [DNT1/30/2017]

Perp's Cafe was a restaurant at the corner of Grove Street and Sunset Lane, so called during various periods of its life for John Pierpaoli, who established Pierpaoli's Tavern shortly after Prohibition ended. It was owned from 1975 to the early 1980s by Barbara Polverari and in 1982 became The Corner Pub; other incarnations included The Lyon's Den, Joe's Hideaway, and The Village People Cafe. In 2024, it is The Hideaway.

Perri, Bryan, is a music director for Broadway shows including *Wicked, Chaplin*, and *Jagged Little Pill*, and has worked on many national touring shows and other productions. He is resident music supervisor of ACT of Connecticut (*q.v.*) and teaches through its conservatory program. He is married to Daniel C. Levine (*q.v.*) and lives in Ridgefield. [JFS]

Perry, Dr. David, (1747-1822), a 1772 graduate of Yale, came to town around 1782 to practice medicine. He was, for a while, also a minister at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. He died in 1812. He probably lived where the Community Center is today. He was the father of Nehemiah Perry Sr (*q,v*,). [WWW]

Perry, Brigadier General David, (1841-1908), is believed to be the only Ridgefield native who rose to the rank of a general in the U.S Army and may also be the highest-ranking military officer to have been born here. He attended Rev. David Short's (*q.v.*) private school and joined 1st Cavalry in the Civil War where he fought in many battles. He then spent nearly two decades in the West, fighting American Indians. In 1907, his portrait was painted by Robert Henri, a noted American artist and teacher, and is now in Denver Art Museum collection. He buried in Arlington National Cemetery[WWW]

Perry, James H. (1873-1957), owner of The Elms Inn from ca. 1907 until his retirement in 1949, was a Republican state representative, 1915-17.

Perry, Dr. John G., (1840-1926), a native of Boston and graduate of Harvard, was a Civil War physician whose letters to his wife during the war were compiled in the book, *Letters from A Surgeon of the Civil War*. Published in 1906, the book was widely read and has been often quoted by Civil War historians. He was seriously injured in the war and almost had his leg amputated. Dr. Perry practiced surgery for many years in NYC and maintained a summer home on Old West Mountain Road, buying an old Burt farm (*see* Burt Road) in 1891 and enlarging the house. He sold it in 1912 to James Stokes, who created the Sunset Hall estate (*q.v.*) there. [WWW]

Perry, Dr. Nehemiah Sr., (1790-1866), son of Dr. David Perry, was a lifelong Ridgefield physician. He was a noted chemist and spent much time experimenting with compound medicines, dyes, and spices, all of which were produced at his Glenburg Mills and Chemicals Works in Georgetown. (Glenburgh was an early name for Georgetown.) [WWW]

Perry, Dr. Nehemiah Jr., (1827-1909), the third generation of a family of

physicians who had been serving Ridgefield for more than a century, had lived and practiced with his family farther north on Main Street, where the Community Center is now. After his father, Dr. Nehemiah Perry Sr., *(q.v.*) died in 1866, Junior built a new house and office still standing at the south side of the intersection of Rockwell Road and Main Street. He retired in 1893 and moved away in 1895, selling the house to the DePeysters of New York City (*see* DePeyster Lane). [WWW]

Perry, Samuel O., (1888-1976), a native of Redding, operated Perry's Market (*q.v*.) at 381 Main Street from 1929 until he retired in 1946 and sold the business to Gristede Brothers. [JFS]

Perry Lane runs between Whipstick and Rockwell Roads, part of an old highway or path that once paralleled Main Street for a longer distance than it does today, and whose name recalls the most prominent medical family to live in town. In the 18th Century, Perry Lane extended northward to Branchville Road about opposite East Ridge. Like East Ridge, it represented the rear line of the first lots laid out along Main Street, and was probably little more than a cow path. This route, from East Ridge south to Flat Rock, was said to have been traversed by some British soldiers during the April 1777 Battle of Ridgefield and on their way to the camp grounds at Flat Rock. The name recalls the Perry family and specifically Dr. Nehemiah Perry Jr., (*q.v.*) who built a house and office still standing at the south side of the intersection of Rockwell Road and Main Street. His property extended back to Perry Lane. [RN]

Perry's Market, also called Royal Scarlet (*q.v*.), was at 381 Main Street from 1929 and to 1949, operated by Samuel O. Perry. When Perry retired, he sold the business to Gristede Brothers (*q.v*.)

Perschino, Ralph (1924-2018), native of Norwalk, operated with his wife, **Gloria**, Red Petticoat Antiques at 113 West Lane from 1984 until ca. 2009. He was a retired school principal in Darien and associate superintendent there. [JFS]

Persian Gulf War Monument: An obelisk honoring Ridgefield veterans who participated in the wars in the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan was erected in 2023 on East Ridge at Governor Street, in front of the police headquarters. No soldiers from Ridgefield died in those conflicts. [JFS]

Pest House was a small building used to isolate people with serious communicable diseases such as smallpox, cholera, typhus, or tuberculosis, often in connection with forced quarantines. According to Rockwell, town's "first pest house" stood near corner of North Salem Road and Tackora Trail on St. Pius X property. Ridgefield histories and town records say nothing more about such facilities. However, Samuel G. Goodrich says his father's house on High Ridge was turned into a temporary "pest-house" in 1798 when a dozen family members were inoculated for smallpox, making them potentially able to transmit the disease to others. [ROAL]

Peter Parley was the pen name of author Samuel G. Goodrich (*q.v.*).

Peter Parley House is a name given to 15 High Ridge Avenue, a 1797 house built by the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich (*q.v.*), and where his son, Samuel (*q.v*.) — later the author pen-named Peter Parley, spent most of his childhood. It was later used as a boys school — *see* Hugh S. Banks *and* William O. Seymour; *also* Pest house..

Peter Parley Lane is a short road connecting West Lane and South Salem Road

at the West Lane Schoolhouse. It was so-called to reflect Samuel G. Goodrich's (*q.v.*) having attended that schoolhouse. The road serves no houses. The name is often confused with Parley Lane and Parley Road. [RN]

Peter Parley School: *See* West Lane schoolhouse.

Peters, Jeffrey, who lived on Pond Road from 1986 to 1997, ran for the nomination for Congress on Democratic ticket in 1986 but lost in a primary. [P2/13/1986] He was a member of Democratic National Committee in 1987 and moved to New Hampshire where he was a founder of We The People, the American People's Party, for which he ran for president in 2000. He is president & CEO, The U.S.-Mexican Development Corporation.

Peterson, Jonathan, (-1929), was the president of American Tobacco Company and U.S. Snuff Company. He died at his country home, Barrackhill (*q.v.*), and is reported to be buried at Fairlawn Cemetery. [NYT10/10/1929].

Peterson, Penny, RHS 1956, became famous locally for being a finalist in the Miss Rheingold contest in 1959. Now known as Penny King, she lives on the West Coast in 2024.

Petite Francaise, La: *See* La Petite Francaise

Petroff, Alexander Serge "Alex," (1890-1965) was an aircraft engineer who created the Russian Village (*q.v.*) restaurant at 609 Ethan Allen Highway in 1938. The Moscow native trained as an engineer. After the revolution, he fled his Russia and became a production engineer for his old friend, fellow ex-pat Igor Sikorsky, the helicopter genius, in Stratford. He operated the restaurant with his daughter, **Nadia Petrova** (*q.v.*), a Manhattan model and wife of a movie star. Petroff sold the business around 1945 (*see* Twin Lakes Inn) and, newly married and with a son, soon moved to Jordanville, NY close to a Russian Orthodox monastery and seminary. His wife and son **Nicholas Petroff** — who had been a CIA agent — are buried at the monastery. Alex died on a trip to Jerusalem; his remains were buried at a Russian convent cemetery on the Mount of Olives. [JFS]

Petroni, Catherine, (1929-2022), a former social worker with the Connecticut State Welfare Department, was the town director of social services for nine years, retiring Nov. 4, 1981. She was the wife of Judge Romeo Petroni *(q.v.*) and daughter of First Selectman Leo F. Carroll (*q.v.*). [P11/5/1981] She and her husband moved to Madison; she lived in Hamden at the time of her death. (L, NHR12/17/2022)

Petroni, Romeo (1929-2015), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1946, was an attorney, starting 1957 in the office of John E. Dowling (*q.v.*). He served as town attorney, 1957-1960s; state representative, 1961-67; state senator, 1971-74; and probate judge, 1974-1990. He was the GOP candidate for Congress in the Fifth District in 1966 and in 1986, he sought the GOP nomination to run for governor, but gave up [P6/12/1986]. He was a Superior Court judge, 1990-99, retiring under law at age 70; he then served as judge trial referee. He moved to Madison in 1990 with his wife, Catherine Carroll Petroni (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Petrova, Nadia, (1913-2000), a native of Moscow and daughter of Alexander Petroff (*q.v.*), came to the US in 1923 and soon became one of the "Powers Girls" with the John Robert Powers modeling agency. Nadia helped her father design and operate the Russian Village (*q.v.*) at 609 Ethan Allen Highway. In 1942, she married British movie actor Reginald Gardiner. They

settled in Beverly Hills, Calif., where she died at the age of 86. [JFS]

Pfaff, William, (1928-2015), a native of Iowa, was an international affairs columnist and author who was a well-known critic of American foreign policy and its intervention in world affairs. He wrote for the *New Yorker* and other publications, and authored eight books on American foreign policy. He and his wife, **Carolyn**, moved to North Salem Road in November 1965 and then to Paris in 1971. Carolyn was active in the Caudatowa Garden Club and wrote the Greenhouse column for *The Press*. [JFS, NYT5/1/2015]

Phair, Ada, operated a horse riding academy in the 1930s at the former Louis G. Smith (*q.v*.) farm on North Salem Road, an inspiration for Eugene O'Neill's "Desire Under the Elms. " [DD17]

Pheasant Lane, a short, dead-end road off George Washington Highway, is part of Scodon III, subdivided by Jerry Tuccio around 1972. The 1,565-foot-long road was finally accepted as a town highway in 1985 after lots along it were developed, largely by Carl Lecher. [RN]

Phelan, Robert J., (1931-1989), was active in youth sports programs in the 1970s and 80s, was president of Little League, and an umpire for 20 years. A memorial plaque to him is at Aldrich Field. [JFS]

Phelps, Rev. Samuel M., (1770-1841), a Yale graduate, was the fourth minister of the First Congregational Church, serving from 1817 until 1831 during a time of some turmoil in the Fairfield West Consociation. He also operated a private school called Ridgefield Academy (*q.v*.). In 1835, he published two volumes of his sermons. [NYG5/29/1817, BSY]

Philanthropic Youth Council was an organization established in 2001 by Ridgefield Community Foundation (*q.v.*) to encourage young people to raise money to aid community groups. It was governed by 22 9-12 graders. By 2010, it had granted more than $150,000 to local charities, but ceased operation around 2014. [RP]

Phillis was an enslaved African-American woman who was admitted to the Ridgebury Congregational Church. Church records report: "October 3, 1790 Lord's Day. Phillis, a Negro woman servant of Captain Timothy Benedict (*q.v.*), having on the 12th September last made Public Confession for the sin of ----- of which she had been guilty in her youth, this day proceeded to make public confession of the Christian Religion and enter into Covenant, she was baptized and admitted a member." [JW]

Photo Market was a camera and photography store at 90 Danbury Road in 1980. [JFS]

Photographers: Noted Ridgefield-connected photographers include Anton Anderson, Peter Blakely, Eliphalet Brown, Frank Gordon, Joseph Hartmann, Marie Kendall, Clarence "Korky" Korker, Peter Andrew Loppacher, George Mench, Scott Mullin, Antonie "Toni" von Horn Roothbert, Charles Sheeler, and Sam Zarember (*q.v. each*).

Pi-Pi was a nickname for **Vincenzo Bruciati,** (1886-1941). [KSN].

Pickerel Pond was an old name for Fox Hill Lake (*q.v.*), used in the late 1920s and 1930s. [RN]

Pickett, Edwin Darling, (1835-1863), a Ridgefield native described by a friend as a "taciturn country lad," was working as a clerk when he enlisted as a corporal in the 17th Regiment from Connecticut in August 1862. He was promoted to first sergeant, but soon was killed at the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1, 1863. Ridgefield's GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) Post, an

American Legion for Civil War veterans, was named for Pickett at the suggestion of Aaron W. Lee (*q.v.*) of Farmingville, a founder of the post. Lee and Pickett were wounded at the same time and spent the night together in the field. Lee woke the morning of July 1 to find his friend lying dead next to him. He was a son of Rufus H. (*q.v.*) and Betsey Pickett. [WWW]

Pickett, Rufus H. "Boss," (1803-1876), was a mid-19th Century cabinetmaker and partner in the Hawley and Pickett factory (*q.v.*) on Main Street at the site of the old Bailey Inn (*q.v.*); he lived across the street from the shop. He was "an expert turner and carver and he excelled at work in mahogany," says Bedini. After the partnership dissolved, Pickett continued the business on his own. His son, Edwin (*q.v.*), was killed at Gettysburg. [RIR]

Pickett, Rufus S., (1829-1903), a Ridgefield native, was a lawyer who became a judge in New Haven in the mid-19th Century. After the Lincoln administration came in to power he was appointed Inspector of Customs at the port of New Haven. He graduated Yale Law School in 1873, and in 1877 was appointed city attorney, later becoming a judge of the city court of New Haven. [FAG]

Pickett's Ridge Road is the old and probably correct name for what is now called Great Pond Road, which extends from Route 7, past Great Pond, and into Redding. In the early 18th Century and perhaps until the construction of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike through Sugar Hollow in the early 1800s, many travelers used this road as a route from Ridgefield to Danbury via Starrs Plain. It's named for members of the Pickett family, which had a large farm on Picketts Ridge in Redding. [RN]

Pickles restaurant at Copps Hill Plaza [P6/4/1981] was managed in 1983 by Alan Calcagni. [CD1983]

Picknell, George Wright, (1864-1943), was a popular American artist at the turn of the 20th Century and spent the summer in the "Hughes place" on Old Branchville Road in 1911. [P8/17/1911]

Pied Piper Fair was a fundraiser of First Congregational Church, usually Fourth of July weekend in the 1950s and 60s. [6/20/1957, 7/11/1963]

Pierandri, Harry, RHS 1964, was the first Ridgefield High School athlete to receive a Division I college scholarship. He starred in football and basketball at RHS; as quarterback, he led RHS to a conference championship. He then played for Boston College. [NR]

Pierpaoli's Tavern was a restaurant on the north corner of Grove Street and Sunset Lane, founded in the 1940s by John Pierpaoli, who had had a cider mill on the property in the 1930s. His son Joe later took over the restaurant, renaming it Joe's Hideaway. *See also* Perp's, Corner Pub *and* Hideaway.

Pierrepont, Commander John Jay, (1902-1950), an insurance executive, had a home at 563 Main Street. He was a great-great-great grandson of the first U.S. Supreme Court chief justice John Jay, and a great nephew of NYC mayor Seth Low. He was a U.S. Navy officer in World War II and was only 48 when died of a stroke. [P10/19/1950, NYT10/16/1950]

Pierrepont, Seth Low, (1894-1956), a native of Brooklyn, NY, was a diplomat, financier, and millionaire who, starting in 1913, amassed the Twixthills estate, now the Twixt Hills (*q.v.*) subdivision and Seth Low Pierrepont State Park (*q.v.*). He created Pierrepont Pond (*q.v.*) in 1936-38. He was a longtime member of the Board of Finance and of the vestry at St. Stephen's Church. A Republican, he was state representative from 1921 to 1927. [WWW]

Pierrepont Drive ascends Ridgebury Mountain from Barlow Mountain Road near Clayton Place to Twixt Hills Road, part of the 1961 Twixt Hills subdivision by Jerry Tuccio of the estate of Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v.*). [RN]

Pierrepont Park: *See* Seth Low Pierrepont State Park.

Pierrepont Pond: *See* Naraneke Lake.

Pigs: *See* Swine, Livestock.

Pike, Chris, a musician who was RHS 1979 and a graduate of Berklee College of Music, owned the Ridgefield Music Store from 1994 until around 2016 when he retired and moved to North Carolina. [P12/10/2015]

Pilgrim Hall, an old estate carriage house dating from the 1890s, was the home of the Odd Fellows (*q.v.*). It is now a chapel at Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church (*q.v.*) *See also* Hawley Cottage *and* Ashton Croft.

Pilgrim Hill Road, a dead-end lane off Danbury Road almost opposite Ritch Drive, serves a six or seven lot 1969 subdivision by Bartholomew T. Salerno (*q.v.*), who picked the name out of a hat — it has no direct historical significance in connection with Ridgefield. [RN]

Pilgrim Lodge: *See* Odd Fellows.

Pilots: Ridgefield has been the home to many notable airline, military and private pilots. Among them have been: *Jeo Casagrande* (*q.v.*), a WW2 bomber pilot later piloted cutting-edge military aircraft, such as the B-36, for the Strategic Air Command. Eastern Airline Captain *Richard R. Curti* of Ned's Mountain Road gained national notoriety Feb. 15, 1983, when he belly-landed a Boeing 727 at Miami International after its landing gear failed; no one was seriously injured. *Charles Daudt* (q.v.) was a WW2 pilot, university aviation instructor, and test pilot for early commercial jet airliners. He also designed aviation systems. *Catherine "Teddy" deBernard* (*q.v.*) was a World War II WASP. *Sereno Jacob* (*q.v.*) was pioneer airline pilot and WW1 fighter pilot. *Rear Admiral Wilson "Bud" Flagg* (*q.v.*) was a much-decorated F-8 fighter pilot in the Vietnam War, had been both an officer in the Naval Reserve at the Pentagon and an American Airlines pilot; he and his wife were passengers aboard Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon Sept. 11, 2001. *Bernd* and *Joy Klopfer* (*q.v.*) were husband and wife airline pilots, whose pilot son *Glenn Klopfer* (*q.v.*), copiloted a United flight to LAX with his mother. *Edward Trueblood Martin* (*q.v.*), was a Pan-Am pilot, an Army test pilot, and engineering test pilot for Boeing; in 1949, he was flew airliners in an operation that carried thousands of Jews from Yemen to the new nation of Israel. *Bonnie Tiburzi* (*q.v.*)*,* who grew up here, was the first female pilot for a major American commercial airline (American); her father *August Tiburzi* (*q.v.*), a former SAS and TWA pilot, operated Tiburzi Airways at Danbury Airport, providing scheduled and chartered flights to NYC. *Capt. John Walker* (*q.v.*) of Continental Drive, chief pilot in charge of training for Pan-American Airways, piloted in 1969 the first jumbo Boeing 747 put into commercial service. Other Ridgefield airline pilots well-known locally have included *George Brunstad* (*q.v.*), who was also a long-distance swimmer in his 70s; *Michael Bullock* (*q.v.*)*,* a Marine and 747 pilot, who died in a flying accident*; Berkley Hill* (*q.v.*)*,* an early private pilot; *Edward J. Fitzgerald*, a local leader in youth sports; *Richard Mayhew* (*q.v.*)*,* a veteran TWA 747 pilot who flew the Beatles from London to JFK in February 1964 for their inaugural trip to the United States*. Walter McNamara* (*q.v.*), a United 747 pilot considered Ridgefield's "father of recycling"; *John Orrico*

(*q.v.*), who was killed in Vietnam piloting a helicopter; *Billy Steers* (*q.v.*), a children's book author who is also, like his father, an American Airlines pilot. Eastern pilot *Clifford Zieger* (*q.v.*), who started commercial flying in the 1930s, and owned a popular apple orchard. Early women private pilots included *Mary Linda Bradley* and *Betty Lou Campbell* (*q.v. each*)

Pin Pack Road, an old highway running between Saw Mill Hill and Barrack Hill Roads, was named, according to legend, for a peddler who lived there many years ago. The peddler is supposed to have sold small household items, like buttons, pins, and eating utensils, carried in a backpack or "pin pack." The highway existed by 1856, when it appears on Clark's map. In the early 20th Century, it was known as Roscoe Road for the Roscoe (Rusco, Rasco) family that lived there for many years. "Pin Pack Road" was in use by 1960. [RN]

Pinchbeck Nurseries at Old South Salem Road and Peaceable Street was founded in 1895 by William Pinchbeck, a native of England who came to this country as a child. The nursery was first established in nearby South Salem, but was moved to Ridgefield in 1903 when William built a single greenhouse. At first they sold carnations, but later specialized in roses for the NYC market. The business grew to have some 60,000 square feet under glass (one greenhouse alone was 15,000 square feet) and a couple of acres under cultivation. The business was headed for many years by William's son, **Joseph G. Pinchbeck**, who died in 1977. Joseph's sons, **John** and **Joe** (and, for a while, **Jay**) operated the nursery until they sold the property in April 1999 after 96 years in business. [P4/8/1999] Both John and Joe had graduated from the Cornell University College of Agriculture; John was Ridgefield's tree warden for nearly 40 years. The property continued to be used as a retail nursery, called Peaceable Farm, until around 2013. [RN, JFS]

Pinchbeck Pond is a small pond between Old South Salem Road opposite the Peaceable Street intersection, and South Salem Road, formed along one of the little tributaries of the Stamford Mill River (*q.v.*). Joseph G. Pinchbeck (*see* Pinchbeck Nurseries) created the pond in the 1920s, planning one day to build himself a home on a bluff overlooking it. He abandoned those plans when the state built the new South Salem Road cutoff in 1938. [RN]

Pine Hill in Farmingville near Aldrich Park was so-called by 1842. *See* Candlewood Hill. [RN]

Pine Lake Road is a long, winding path through West Mountain's woods, but only a small portion of it is developed and in Connecticut. The road intersects with Barrack Hill Road just before the state line and, 400 feet on, is in New York where it wanders through forests as the "yellow trail" at Mountain Lakes Camp, owned by Westchester County, eventually reaching Pine Lake in North Salem. The road and probably the lake were constructed around 1908 as part of the extensive grounds of the Port of Missing Men resort (*q.v.*). [RN]

Pine Mountain, often called the highest point in Ridgefield, is a long ridge in what is still wilderness in the northeast corner of the town, north of the Bennett's Ponds and Rainbow Lake at the Ridgefield Lakes. At its highest point, the "mountain" is about 1,010 feet above sea level, say US Geological Survey maps. Historian George L. Rockwell placed the elevation at 1,040 feet. The mountain was so-called from at least 1835. [RN]

Pine Mountain Road is an old highway, only the northern half of which survives today. It ran from Miry Brook Road in Danbury south to Mountain Road at the Ridgefield Lakes. There is also evidence that at least the northern section of Pine Mountain Road was once part of a highway that connected Starrs Plain with Miry Brook, Mill Plain, and Ridgebury, mentioned as early as 1792 as "a mountain road from Miry Brook to Starrs Plain." The northern end begins in Danbury, crosses the Miry Brook, and then enters Ridgefield — the only Ridgefield road requiring one to use another town to reach. [RN]

Pinecrest Drive is a dead-end road off North Street, serving part of the 1958 subdivision called "Pinecrest," created by Richard Mayhew (*q.v*.), an airline pilot who also lived on the road. He selected the name because so many white pines were found on the property, believed to have been planted by previous owner, Dr. John J. Kiernan (1881-1957), a dentist. The subdivision of 22 acres into 13 lots also includes Sprucewood Road. [RN]

Pines Inn was a restaurant at 321 Main Street in early 20th Century. It's shown with sign saying "open all year luncheon — dinners" in a Hartmann (*q.v.*) photo from around 1920. The house, once an Episcopal rectory, was later called Ashland Cottage (*q.v.*).

Pink House: 1. N. Lyman Keeler's (*q.v.*) landmark saltbox, probably built in the 1740s at 739 Ridgebury Road, was sold out of the Keeler family in 2005, and razed in 2009. It had been pink for many decades; probably an early coat of red paint aged to pink in sun, and it became tradition to paint the house pink; **2**. The house at 321 Main Street, called Ashland Cottage (*q.v*.), was for many years painted pink, like the flowers of the Japanese cherry in front. The house was no longer pink in 2026. [JFS]

Pinnacle Ridgefield Developers built the Stone Ridge Estates (*q.v.*) subdivision, created by the town of Ridgefield. [RN]

Pirri, Lt. Joseph, (1915-1991), was commander of the state police Troop A barracks in the 1970s and had maintained a greenhouse in which he would grow such exotics as fruit orange and lemon trees. He lived most of his life in Stamford. [JFS]

Pisgah: A 1785 deed described land as being "on the mountain called Pisgah." Names of neighboring landowners suggest that Pisgah was in the northeastern corner of town, north of Bennett's Pond — perhaps Pine Mountain or Wooster Mountain, a little to the east. Biblical names for mountains were common in New England. It was from Pisgah that Moses saw the Promised Land he was never to set foot in. [RN]

Pitruzzello, Dr. Philip R., (1923-2017), a native of Middletown and a UConn graduate, was Ridgefield's eighth school superintendent, serving 1962-63. He had earlier been RHS principal, 1957-60. In 1968 he became a full professor of education administration at New York University School of Education, a post he held until 1988. He died in Seattle, Wash. He and his wife, Ann, had lived on Lisa Lane and Ridgewood Road. [JFS]

Pizza Block was an informal name applied to the old Telephone Building (*q.v.*) at 411-419 during last third of 20th Century because Roma Pizzeria was located at #411 and the building was owned by the Amatuzzi family, operators of Roma. [RPC]

Pizza Hut: In a town packed with pizzerias in 1990, Pizza Hut at 105 Danbury Road was the only national chain to open here; it failed and closed 2008. A 1994 fire shut down restaurant for weeks. It was located on the site of

Friendly Ice Cream (*q.v.*) and, earlier, Fife and Drum (*q.v.*) restaurant. [JFS]

Plane crashes, major: *Sept. 15, 1956:* A Long Island man was killed when his small plane ran out of gas and crashed in woods off Silver Spring Road. *Feb. 23, 1959:* A Piper Comanche carrying four people from Patterson, NY, including the pilot — a commercial airline pilot — crashed into Pine Mountain around 6 a.m., shortly after taking off from Danbury Airport (the daughter of a passenger later married the brother of the pilot). *Dec. 4, 1965:* An Eastern Airlines Super Constellation collided over South Salem with a TWA Boeing 707 jetliner, seriously damaging both aircraft. The jet landed at Kennedy; the Constellation flew over Ridgefield, dropping pieces, and crashed on a hillside off Route 116, just over state line in North Salem. Only 4 of 53 passengers died, but one was Capt. Charles J. White who succumbed trying to save the last passenger in the cabin (he was a brother of Elsa [Mrs. Lauren] Cadell of Catoonah Street). White was hailed as a hero and the crash led to safety improvements in flight levels and control near airports. *June 11, 1983:* In heavy fog a single-engine Beechcraft that had just left Danbury Airport crashed in a field on the south side of Mopus Bridge Road, killing the pilot from Brewster and all three passengers from Georgetown. Its loss of power was blamed on a faulty fuel tank seal. *July 18, 1993:* The Delta airlines pilot died, but a young passenger escaped as a vintage airplane crashed on Pine Mountain after taking off from Danbury Airport. *May 6, 1996:* As it attempted an emergency landing at Danbury Airport, a plane crashed on Pine Mountain, killing the pilot and his wife. **Not in Ridgefield:** *Sept. 1, 1974:* Three 1972 RHS graduates were killed when a small private plane piloted by one of them, James N. Feneley (*q.v.*), crashed into woods in Roxbury during a rain storm in the middle of the night. *Dec. 21, 1988:* Thomas Schultz (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield was among 259 killed in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. *July 17, 1996:* Flight Engineer Richard G. Campbell (*q.v.*) was a crew member aboard TWA Flight 800, a 747 that exploded off Long Island, killing 230. *See also* Wilson and Darlene Flagg.

Planet Pizza, part of a small regional group of family-owned pizza restaurants, opened at 411 Main Street after Roma Pizzeria (*q.v.*), which occupied that spot for many years, closed in 2003. In 2026, Planet Pizza had four family-owned stores and seven licensees operating under family guidance. The Ridgefield store was owned by Domenick Farago, and managed by Mike Drogalis. [JFS]

Plank roads, wood-surfaced highways, could be found throughout the Northeast, but none in Ridgefield, although the "Stamford, New Canaan and Ridgefield Plank Road" (*q.v.*) was chartered by the state in 1851. Plank roads could handle heavy loads without concern about the narrow wagon wheels sinking into mud or sand. However, they required constant maintenance, and were usually operated as toll roads. [JFS]

Planned Residential Development, also called "PRD," is a subdivision created under Planning and Zoning Commission rules, in which smaller than usual house lots are permitted if substantial open space is set aside in compensation. Often, the houses are clustered, giving rise to the term, "cluster development." [JFS]

Planning Commission: "Planning" is a state-endorsed system of controlling how a town develops, especially how and where subdivisions and other

large developments are laid out and developed. In 1947, a year after zoning (*q.v.*) was adopted to determine where different kinds of land uses would be allowed, the selectmen appointed a committee to study the need for a Planning Commission that could help control development of the town. By 1950, the town had an unofficial "Planning Committee" to mull over traffic, parking and other growth problems, but efforts to adopt town government planning met with much opposition and not until June 1958, in the midst of much development and after four earlier tries, did townspeople vote to adopt planning. In 1965, voters combined the Planning and the Zoning Commissions into one agency since their tasks were closely related. [JFS]

Planning and Zoning Commission oversees the orderly development and use of land in Ridgefield. It was created in September 1965 by combining Planning Commission, established 1958, and Zoning Commission, established 1946 (*q.v. each*). The commission eventually took over functions of Flood and Erosion Control Board, and for a while, the Inland Wetlands Board. Its offices are in the Venus Office Building annex. [JFS]

Platt, Dr. Clara Skiles, (1898-1983), a native of Texas, was active in education circles, serving on the Board of Education, 1955-61, and helping found the Ridgefield Community Kindergarten (*q.v.*). She served on the Commission on Aging, playing a major role in the town's adoption of senior tax breaks and in the creation of the Ballard Green. She and her husband, Raye (1891–1978), moved to Ridgefield in 1950, and back to Texas in 1982. [NR]

Platt, Shawn became a major — second in command — of theRidgefield Police Department in 2021. He joined the department in 1996, and served as a youth officer and a detective. He started the department's Junior Police Academy in 2002, and was Officer of the Year in 2004. [P9/16/2021]

Platt's Mill Pond is an old name for Miller's Pond (*q.v.*) on the west side of Route 7 north of Florida Hill Road. Obadiah Platt bought the grist mill there in 1759 and operated it probably until the 1770s. [RN] *See also* McDonald's Mill Pond, Moongate. [RN]

Playground Road runs between Branchville Road and Park Lane and leads to the Branchville Playground. The road was built by the town around 1935 to gain access to the field which the Branchville Civic Association (*q.v.*) had purchased to create the town's first privately established playground for public use, still used today but only as a baseball field. [RN]

Playgrounds are available at all six elementary schools as well as in Ballard Park and at the Recreation Center, which offers an all-abilities Sky's the Limit (*q.v.*) playground. [RP1]

Playwrights and screenwriters in Ridgefield include Arthur Arent, Chris Belden, Gena Canestrari, Clare Boothe Luce, Gene Ellis, Tom Gilroy, William G. Hanley, Timothy Herlihy, David Liebovitz, Hardwick Nevin, Eugene O'Neill, Harold Rome. (*q.v. each*)

Pleasant View Estates was developer Jerry Tuccio's (*q.v.*) last major subdivision, creating in 1968-69 88 lots on 200 acres of the former N. Lyman Keeler (*q.v.*) and Powdermaker (*q.v.*) properties off the west side of Ridgebury Road north of the Ridgebury Congregational Church. It's served by Keeler Drive, Powdermaker Drive, Keeler Place, and Keeler Court. [RN]

Please Omit Funeral by Hildegarde Dolson (Lippincott, 1975) is a mystery novel that deals with the death of the author of a controversial book that has just been banned by the local (Ridgefield) school system. The novel was written

during Ridgefield's famous "book burning" era. [JFS]

Pleuropneumonia, bovine, a contagious disease of cows' lungs, had a serious outbreak in Ridgefield in 1872. [Columbian Register, 5/11/1872]

Plummer, Gordon E. Jr., (1924-1984), a native of Massachusetts, was a Pan-American airline captain who, after the death of a son due to a drunken driver, founded in 1982 the state chapter of RID (Remove Intoxicated Drivers). He was active in Kiwanis, Masons, Shriners, and VFW. He was a Navy pilot in WW2. He and wife Alice lived on Lantern Drive. [P3/15/1984]

Plymouth automobiles: Dealership opened March 1935 in Tidewater Garage on Danbury Road, managed by O.J. Capaldi. Years later, Pamby Motors carried Plymouths until the brand was discontinued in 2001. [JFS]

Pocconock Trail, sometimes spelled Pocconoc, is a dead-end road off Pin Pack Road, leading through Pin Pack Estates, designed ca. 1965 by Lewis J. Finch and Jack Coyle. Surveyor Michael Jaykus named the road after one in a New Canaan subdivision he had worked on. The word may be based on the American Indian term for "cleared land." [RN]

Poets (published) who've lived in Ridgefield include: Margery Benjamin, Mary Louise Bradley, Fanny Crosby, Rosamond Dauer, Ira Joe Fisher, Mary Hewitt, Barb Jennes**,** Hardwick Nevin, John Norman, Mary Olcott, Louise Peck, Charles Recht, Robert Riche, Aram Saroyan, Joseph Tuccio, Frances Shoemaker Wagstaff (*q.v. each*).

Police: *See* Ridgefield Police, Troop A, Fire Police, Police Commission, Constables.

Police Commission is the elected agency that oversees the Ridgefield Police Department (*q.v.*). Among other things, it decides staffing needs, staff policies, town speed limits and other road travel regulations, and prepares budgets to submit to the Board of Selectpersons. The commission was established in 1955 when Ridgefield voted to have an independent and fully empowered police department instead of using constables and the State Police. The first commission chairman was William Oexle (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Polo was played in the 1930s on a field created for that purpose at Westmoreland (*q.v.*), the Doubleday estate on Peaceable Street. The field was located about where Westmoreland Road meets Peaceable. [DD202] Another polo field was located at the Eleven Levels estate. [DD271]

Polverari, PFC Geno Joseph, (1916-1945), a Ridgefield native and a member of the Army's Ski Troops inn WW2, was killed in battle while serving in Italy. He left his wife, Marguerite Maddock, and two-year-old son, John, and is buried in the Florence American Cemetery and Memorial. He had lived at ONS187 Main Street, Joe's Store (*q.v.*), where he also worked. [SNTS]

Polverari, Gino Bob, (1915-2001), was the longtime superintendent of Ridgefield's water supply, working for the Ridgefield Water Supply Company. He was also a partner with Alex Santini (*q.v.*) in the Towne Spirit Shop on Danbury Road. Gino's Way (*q.v.*) is named for him.

Polverari, Corrado "Primo" John, (1909-1996), a native of Italy, was a well-known Ridgefield stonemason. He lived on Stonecrest Road and was the brother of Geno Joseph Polverari (*q.v.*). [P9/12/1996]

Pomawski, Elizabeth, (1906-1956), was arrested in 1936 while living in Ridgefield for the death of her three-month old daughter who was "slapped" because she "cried too much." She pleaded guilty and was sentenced to three months in jail. [JFS]

Pomeroy, Lee Harris, (1932-2018), a noted American architect who held degrees from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Yale, designed the Casagmo condominium project, 1967-68. Known for his efforts at the conservation and modernization of many historic subway stations in NYC, he designed transportation, corporate and institutional buildings around the world. He was acclaimed for his adaptive uses for old buildings (the community center at Casagmo was originally the estate's barn). He did Fulton Street Pedestrian Mall in Brooklyn. [NYT2/25/2018]

Pompion Ridge was a name for what was later called Biddle Hill, along Branchville Road at the western end of Old Branchville Road, appearing in deeds between 1716 and 1854. Pompion is an old word for pumpkin. [RN]

Pond Mountain, the steep hill just eastward of Bennett's Pond, is first mentioned in late 1700s land records and last, in 1830. [RN]

Pond Road may be the town's oldest dead-end road. Running from North Salem Road at Scott's Ridge to near Lake Mamanasco, it was built around 1716 as an access to the grist mill at the outlet of the lake; it was originally called Mill Road. *See* Mamanasco grist mill. [RN]

Pond's Edge Professional Center: In September 2004, Dr. Richard Lipton and three other local doctors proposed converting part of an old SVG/Benrus (*q.v. each*) complex at 901 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) into a medical center. Nuvance and other medical offices, plus a gym, operate there; Nuvance has a radiological center with an MRI scanner. The property was Ridgefield's fifth highest taxpayer in 2017-18. It's also been called Ridgefield Professional Building. [JFS]

Ponded Swamp, sometimes appearing as Pounded Swamp, is a wetland on the northerly and southerly sides of Old West Mountain Road, near Barrack Hill Road. Mentioned often, as early as 1730s and as late as 1875, it was "ponded" because the swamp had a high water level; it in fact was probably a dying pond, created by the last glacier and was halfway between a pond and a swamp. [RN]

Poni was a nickname for Dominic Bedini (*q.v.*)

Pons, Lily, (1898-1976), French-born opera star, often visited and sometimes summered in Ridgefield, often staying at Sky Cottage (*q.v.*) on William Matheus Sullivan's (*q.v.*) estate, Dunrovin (*q.v.*). She sometimes performed at benefits at the Dunrovin playhouse. [JFS, DD312]

Pontello, Michael, (1931-2003), was a popular Ridgefield barber, known for his Main Street beautification efforts and for the wooden toys he made at his Geppetto's Workshop. He took over his father-in-law Jerry Mugavero's business, Jerry's Barbershop, in 1970. He wrote a fishing column for *The Press* for many years and was named Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1991. He marked 25 years in business in 1981. [P11/5/1981, WWW, DD93]

Pontiac automobiles: *See* Ridgefield Motors, Conklin Motors.

Poor House Lane, mentioned in 1862 deed, ran off Route 7 in Danbury into Ridgefield near Bennett's Pond. The name's origin has not been found. [RN]

Poor Ole Cliff's was a roadside eatery operated in the 1940s and 50s by Clifford Hayes (*q.v.*) on the west side of Route 7 north of Route 35. When he left town in the 1950's, Hayes took the name with him and opened a Poor Ole Cliff's on Marathon, the Florida Keys. *See* Hayes Lane. [RN]

Pope, Charles, (1930-2006), a musician, grew up in New York where he staged many musical and choral productions and was a church organist. He was

the founder around 1947 of the Charles Pope Choristers, a popular singing group that was later based in Ridgefield in the last third of 20th Century. He lived at 191 Ridgebury Road (*see* Pope's Corner) from 1965 until late 1980s with his wife, Eleanor Zettelmayer. They also ran Ridgefield Musical Kindergarten in 1960s and 70s. [WWW]

Pope's Corner has been an informal term, still occasionally used by local emergency services, for the sharp curve on a steep hill of lower Ridgebury Road, just south of Regan Road. The name arose because Charles Pope (*q.v.*) lived at 191 Ridgebury Road from 1965 until late 1980s (before the large, modern concrete house was built on the lot). [RN]

Popkins, John Reardon "Jay," (1957-2003), who grew up in Ridgefield in the 1960s and 70s, was a writer, whose novel, *Randy, My Son Always* (1999), was written under the pseudonym, Ernest Knobbs. His wife died young and a few months later, his six-month-old daughter died of infant death syndrome. He took his own life in Massachusetts. [JFS]

Poplar Road, which runs from Haviland Road to Linden Road, is part of a 1955 subdivision, Ridgefield Gardens, subdivided by Gustave Iser, but largely built by Armando Salvestrini. It's so called because of the poplar trees found thereabouts, planted probably by Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*), which owned this land for nursery stock from the 1920s to the early 1940s. It's sometimes erroneously called Popular Road. [RN]

Population of Ridgefield: Ridgefield's census population in 2020 was 25,033, including 6,374 children and 18,659 adults. Of the total, 20,956 (84%) were white; 214 (1%), Black; 1,506 (6%) Hispanic, 1,261 (5%) Asian, and 1,074 (4%), other. Here are total counts since the first census: 1790, 1,947; 1800, 2,025; 1810, 2,103; 1820, 2,310; 1830, 2,305; 1840, 2,474; 1850, 2,337; 1860, 2,213; 1870, 1,919; 1880, 2,028; 1890, 2,235; 1900, 2,626; 1910, 3,118; 1920, 2,707; 1930, 3,580; 1940, 3,900; 1950, 4,356; 1960, 8,165; 1970, 18,188; 1980, 20,120; 1990, 20,919; 2000, 23,643; 2010, 24,638. For more on the population over three centuries, *see "*Growth of Ridgefield." *See also* Racial/ethnic population, Wages. [DH,U.S. Census Bureau]

Porch, The, was a short-lived teenage coffee house, operated by Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church, starting in June 1970.

Porcupine is a mammal rarely seen in Ridgefield. One was sighted 1909 on Catoonah Street [P8/19/1909]. Forest animals, they are more populous to the north of Ridgefield, and are most common in Connecticut in northern Litchfield County. [National Wildlife Control Training Program]

Pork Hollow Farm was the "gentleman's farm" of columnist Westbrook Pegler (*q.v.*) on Old Stagecoach Road. Pork Hollow was a nearby locale. [WWW]

Port Chester and Ridgefield Railroad: *See* New York and Ridgefield Rail Road.

Port of Missing Men was a resort/restaurant on West Mountain in Ridgefield and North Salem, encompassing at least 1,750 acres, opened in 1907 by Henry B. Anderson (*q.v.*). The main building, a restaurant, was situated at end of the NY extension of Old Sib Road from 1907 until 1930s. The operation was sometimes called Anderson's Tea House — *see* Tea House. It was a popular place to dine, with grand views to the west. In its first two years, more than 20,000 people signed the guest book. The name was taken from the title of a popular novel of the time, written by Meredith B. Nicholson. [DD135, RN] *See also* Eight Lakes.

Port Road was a common term early in the early 20th Century for Old Sib Road,

which led to the Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*). [RN]

Portman, Mary Ann, (-1806), was an unusual character in the American revolution. In a Fairfield County Court deposition on Nov. 10, 1779, before Ridgefield Justice of the Peace John Benedict, Portman testified "that I being on Long Island last May, I there saw Jeremiah Smith, late of Ridgefield, also Benjamin Burt, Joshua Burt and David Burt, Jonah Smith, James Morehouse & Daniel Sherwood, all late of said Ridgefield, who all appeared well pleased with their situation, except Joshua Burt who manifested a desire to return home, but thro fear of the consequences, he durst not run the venture, and also that I saw Benjamin Stebbins the 3d, late of said Ridgefield, who was an enlisted soldier in the service of the enemy." Two years earlier, she had reported a Newtown man as a loyalist, according to records in the Connecticut State Library. She appeared to be a person of modest means so it was not clear why she was on Long Island. Her identity is also unclear; she may have been the wife of a **Richard Portman**, an indentured servant shipped to the colonies from England where he had been arrested for stealing corn and linen. The only other person bearing that surname in the Ridgefield records, he was here by 1747 but was expelled from the town in 1748 by the selectmen for reasons unknown, only to return in 1755 to buy a house. His name disappears after 1757, but Mary Ann apparently remained. Her death as "a widow" is recorded in the town records of 1806. [WWW]

Post-Graduation Party at Ridgefield High School is an annual parent-sponsored event, an elaborate, all-night bash that is alcohol-free and that has become a popular tradition. It began in 1984, a year after 17-year-old **Christopher Ely** (1966-1983) was killed on graduation night by a teenage hit-and-run driver outside a graduation party on North Salem Road at which alcohol was being served. "This event gets the grads off the roads and into a safe place, while also giving them an opportunity to party the night away. Drug and alcohol free, this senior centered event has annually proven to be an awesome experience for all." *See also* GRADD. [JFS, P6/16/1983, rhspostgrad.com]

Post office: Ridgefield has had eight post offices over the years, many of them short-lived: Ridgefield, Branchville (earlier called Ridgefield Station), Cooper Station, Limestone, North Ridgebury, Ridgebury, Scott's Ridge, and Titicus — *see* entries for each of those, especially Ridgefield Post Office. *See also* postage stamps, postmasters.[JFS]

Post Road: An 1843 property description says that North Salem Road connected with "the Post Road," i.e., Main Street. It is one of the few references to that ancient use of this highway. For its whole length from the NY line north to Haviland Road, today's Route 35 was one of the "northern" post roads, as opposed to the more famous "southern" one, today called U.S. Route 1 or the Boston Post Road. Stages with mail traversed this route between NYC and Hartford, often stopping at Keeler Tavern (*q.v.*). *See also* Stage coaches. [RN]

Postage stamps: Seven Ridgefielders have been honored on U.S. postage stamps: artists Frederic Remington, Charles Sheeler, Maurice Sendak, and Robert Fawcett; publisher Henry Luce; playwright Eugene O'Neill; and suffragist Alice Paul. In addition, several Ridgefielders have designed postage stamps, including Christopher Calle, Alex Ross, and Donald Moss

(*q.v. each*). For a 2016 Halloween-themed forever issue, Jack-o'-Lanterns, Paul Montanari of Ridgefield carved the four pumpkins and Sally Andersen-Bruce, a former Ridgefielder, took the photographs used on the stamps. *See also* Neziah Wright. [JFS]

Postmasters of the main Ridgefield center post office: The following were appointed by the federal government from among local political leaders — all were citizens of the town: Joshua King, 1793; Philip Burr Bradley, 1794; Jeremiah Dauchy; 1801; Timothy Keeler, 1805; William Keeler, 1815; Thaddeus Keeler, 1827; Silas Perkins, 1837; Harvey K. Smith, 1839; Charles A. Hanford, 1842; Russell Jones, 1844; Harvey K. Smith, 1856; Hiram K. Scott, 1859; Sylvester Main, 1861; Albert N. Thomas, 1864; Samuel S. Dauchy, 1867; Hiram K. Scott, 1869; D. Smith Sholes, 1883; Hiram K. Scott, 1889; D. Smith Sholes, 1893; William C. Barhite, 1899; Rufus H. Seymour, 1903; George L. Rockwell, 1912; Willis S. Gilbert, 1916; George L. Rockwell, 1924; John L. Walker, 1935; George L. Rockwell, Jr., 1940; John L. Sullivan, 1951; Richard E. Venus, 1961-81. [RPC110] After Venus, postmasters were civil-service jobs and none has been a resident of Ridgefield. They including George Fisher, appointed 1982; Elizabeth Wecker, 1988; David W. Deakin Jr., 1991-93; Tim Hushion at least 2007-2009; George Jacob, 2012 to present (2026). *See also* under local post offices, such as Ridgebury, Titicus and Branchville. [JFS, RPC]

Potash Hill, well known in 19th and early 20th Centuries, was a name once applied to the hill on Wilton Road West (Route 33) just north of the Silver Hill Road intersection. The name came from a nearby potash manufacturing operation, a common trade of the period. Potash, a substance obtained by burning wood, was used in the production of soap and was a popular soil conditioner for farmland and gardens. [RN]

Potash Hill Road connected Wilton Roads East and West north of today's Silver Hill Road. It was probably part of the old Wilton Road West, which used to connect with Wilton Road East near Silver Hill Road. [RN]

Potter, Rita M. O'Brien, (1916-2015), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1934, served in the US Marine Corps as a staff sergeant during World War II. She became an executive secretary for the *American Mercury* magazine (*q.v*), Electro-Mechanical Research (*q.v*.), and the Wiltek Corporation. She was an original member of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial in Arlington, VA [DNT2/24/2015]

Potters Ski Shop opened at 16 Prospect Street (Yankee Ridge), the fifth store in an otherwise NY state chain. [P11/17,1983]

Pottinger, Julie Cotler, (1970-), who was a Ridgefielder as a child and young teenager, is the author of historical romance fiction under the pseudonym, Julia Quinn. Her novels have been translated into 41 languages and have appeared on The New York Times Bestseller List 19 times.[2] She has been inducted into the Romance Writers of America Hall of Fame. She is perhaps best known for her *Bridgerton* series, adapted for TV by Netflix under the title Bridgerton

Pound Mountain, so-called in the 18th Century, is the hill north of Turner Road, now mostly in Danbury but before 1846, it was entirely within Ridgefield. Here, Union Carbide built its huge headquarters in the 1980s (now the Matrix Corporate Center) and the Toll Brothers developed the "Rivington" residential community in 21st Century. The hill, 860 feet above sea level at

its highest point, may have been named for an animal pound situated on or near the the hill, or the one on the ridge east of the Ridgebury Congregational Church. The ridge was called Pound Ridge (*q.v.*).

Pound Ridge is an old name for the ridge north of George Washington Highway and east of Ridgebury Road [Liljegren]. Thereabouts many of the 4,800 French troops under Comte de Rochambeau (*q.v.*) camped around July 2, 1781. The name appears in deeds written in 1824 and 1858. [RN]

Pound Street runs from Main Street opposite Casagmo to New Street and then a little beyond (east of) New Street. It does not appear on 19th Century maps and may have been developed ca. 1908 in conjunction with the building of New Street (*q.v.*). It originally extended to Ramapoo Road, but most of that western section has been abandoned. The road was named for an animal pound, established ca. 1797, that would have been on the north side of Pound at Main. [RN] *See* Pounds.

Pounds: Throughout its history, Ridgefield has maintained animal pounds, but their nature has changed a great deal. Most early pounds here were stone wall enclosures, perhaps 30 by 40 feet or so in size, often with wooden fencing to supplement and raise the wall height. While today they are used to hold stray or abandoned dogs, pounds were employed in the 18th and 19th Centuries to "jail" livestock that had escaped from their owners and were damaging crops or had the potential to do so. A farmer would capture the stray cow or horse and turn it over to the pound keeper. The TM would appoint pound keepers for various parts of town, often describing each as the "keeper of the pound key." If the livestock owner failed to claim the animal and pay a fee for its impoundment (and damages, if appropriate), it would be sold at auction, with the pound keeper, the finder and sometimes the town sharing in the income. The first pound was built on the Meeting House Yard (*q.v.*), and at a town meeting held Dec. 27, 1727, Joseph Lees was chosen "Keeper of ye Pound Key." As early as 1737, Ridgebury residents were authorized to have a pound. Other pounds were in Silver Spring, Limestone, and Bennett's Farm neighborhoods, among others. One was on northern Main Street — *see* Pound Street. A TM in 1857 voted that fees "the impounding of animals in Ridgefield was for Horses, Asses & Mules twenty-five cents each. Neat Cattle twelve cents each, Swine ten weeks old or more eight cents each and Sheep six cents." In the 20th and 21st Centuries, pounds have been limited to dogs — *see* Canine. [JFS]

Powderhorn Drive, a dead-end off Farmingville Road, was named by Robert E. Roache, who in 1964-65 created 23 lots from the 30-acre former Wilder property he called "Gun Hill Farms." It became a town road in 1968. *See also* Old Musket Lane. [RN]

Powdermaker, Florence (1894-1966), a physician and psychiatrist, and **Hortense** (1900-1970), an archaeologist, were scholars, teachers and authors in their fields. They lived on a Ridgebury farm, 673 Ridgebury Road, whose house was the Nehemiah Keeler Tavern (*q.v.*), in the 1950s and 60s (*see* Powdermaker Drive). Hortense's study of the film industry, *Hollywood: The Dream Factory*, "remains the only serious anthropological study of Hollywood," says one biography. [WWW]

Powdermaker Drive at Jerry Tuccio's Pleasant View Estates (*q.v.*) was laid out around 1968. Some of the land had belonged to Florence and Hortense Powdermaker (*q.v.*) [RN]

Powers, Richard Gid, (1944-), historian and author specializing in the FBI, grew up in Ridgefield, son of artist Richard (*q.v.*) and Evelyn Powers of Bloomer Road. He published *Secrecy and Power: The Life of J. Edgar Hoover* in 1987, his second book on Hoover. Later in life he turned to writing novels, such as *The Mystery of the Holy Trinity* (2014) and *Secret Agent Gals* (2024). He was a professor of American Studies at CCNY [P2/12/1987]

Powers, Richard Gorman, (1921-1996), an artist and native of Chicago, lived on Bloomer Road from 1954 until his death. His work revolutionized science fiction art, appearing on covers of over 800 science fiction books during the last half of the 20th Century. He did illustrations for *Ridgefield in Review* (*q.v.*), and a print of the Battle of Ridgefield in 1983 as part of the town's 275th anniversary celebration. *See also* Richard Gid Powers. [WWW]

Pozzo, Alexandra Grinnell, (-2022), was a professional portrait artist who lived at 342 Farmingville Road in the 1980s when she was known as Alexandra Grinnell Clark, wife of Richard C. Clark. She was commissioned to paint portraits all over the country; her portrait of world-renowned mezzo-soprano, Frederica Von Stade, hangs at the Houston Opera. [JFS]

Pranks: *See* Class Pranks.

Pres was a nickname for G.M. Zandri (*q.v.*), who lived on Bailey Avenue in the 20th Century. [DD59]

Presidents who have visited Ridgefield include George Washington (*q.v.*), during the war. Rockwell reports that Grant, Garfield, Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, and Harding visited Ridgefield, though not necessarily when they were in office or even running for it. Bill Clinton was a reported guest at a local inn after he left the White House. [JFS]

Preston, John Hyde, (1906-1980), a New York City native, was a magazine writer and novelist who lived in Ridgefield in the 1930s. He based his novel, *The Liberals*, on union-related happenings at the Gilbert and Bennett Wire Mill in Georgetown. [WWW]

PRD: *See* Planned Residential Development.

Price, Louis H., (1910-1984), born in a tiny Colorado mining town, was a business and a civic leader, who came to Ridgefield in 1933 to manage Ridgefield Supply Company (*q.v.*). He served as an Army lieutenant in WW2's Pacific Theatre. He bought Ridgefield Supply in the 1950s, and led its expansion and modernization during the town's building boom. He served six years on the Board of Education, was on the Veterans Park School Building Committee, served on the regional Draft Board, was an incorporator of the Boys' Club, and was a Boy Scout leader. He received the Jaycees Distinguished Service Award in 1968. When he retired in 1976, his son, **Louis H. Jr**., took over Ridgefield Supply. [NR, RSB32].

Pride Day, an annual of community celebration of straight, gay and lesbian lifestyles, first took place in June 1998, on the Community Center lawn. About 60 people attended the event, which was organized by ROUND (Ridgefielders Organized for Understanding & Diversity), and was supported by clergy, representatives of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbian and Gay), then-Congressman Jim Maloney, the Inside-Out Players led by Ruth Leibowitz, and Harvey Fierstein. A year later, a Rainbow Flag was flown for the first time in the nation over a state capitol, Hartford, on March 21, 1999. [SSS] *See* Ridgefield CT Pride.

Prieger, Henry, was owner of the Inn at Ridgefield, 20 West Lane, from 1966 to

1987. He purchased the inn from Walter Tode (*q.v.*). [P1/29/1987] In 2024, he was living in Maryland, owner of race horses.

Primiano, Carmine and Mario, of Ridgefield were the general contractors for the building of St. Elizabeth Seton Church (*q.v.*).

Private Battle, A, is a non-fiction book in which Kathryn Morgan Ryan (*q.v.*) used her late husband's secret diary accounts to tell the story of his four-year battle with cancer while living on Old Branchville Road; Cornelius Ryan (*q.v.*) was the author of *The Longest Day* and two other acclaimed histories of World War II, and Kathryn was an editor and novelist who assisted him in his research. (Simon & Schuster, 1979) [WWW]

Priyamont Montessori School operated for more than 30 years, beginning in the 1970s, mostly in the former Odd Fellows Hall, 21 King Lane. Rita Fernando and her husband Francis "Peter" Fernando (ca. 1923-2007) from Sri Lanka operated the school. *See also* Ridgefield Montessori School. [P5/17/2007, JSD1991]

Probate Court oversees wills and estates, deals with orphans, appoints guardians for incompetent people, and performs other functions related to family needs. Old probate records are useful for historical and genealogical research. Over three centuries, Ridgefield has been in five different probate districts: Fairfield, Oct. 1709 to May 1728; Stamford, May 1728 to Oct. 1746; Danbury, Oct. 1746 to June 9, 1841; Ridgefield, June 10, 1841 to Jan. 4, 2011; Northern Fairfield County, Jan. 5, 2011-present. In 2024, the district probate judge was Steven Boa DeMoura of Bethel, and the district probate court is in that town.

Professors: *See* Teachers.

Prohibition: In January 1919, the 18th Amendment enacting Prohibition was ratified and took effect a year later. (Connecticut was among the states that did not vote for ratification.) Many Ridgefielders, especially members of the Italian community, made wine, beer or even versions of "moonshine." Some shared it with others, sometimes for a fee. State Police at Troop A repeatedly conducted raids on suspected "gin mills" and "speakeasies" — the latter could be found on Bailey Avenue, Prospect Street and Grove Street as well as in Branchville. In one raid on a house on Prospect Street Feb. 12, 1926, state police confiscated 20 barrels "of what is reported as being very good wine, some of it having been imported from Europe." Nearby, 20 cases of beer and other alcoholic beverages were confiscated at the store of Brunetti and Gasparini at Prospect and Bailey Avenue. State police spent much time patrolling highways from NY into Ridgefield, looking for trucks carrying alcohol. In a statewide referendum in June 1933, Ridgefielders joined the state in voting for the repeal of Prohibition by a 6 to 1 margin. Prohibition was finally repealed in December 1933 and the first store selling alcoholic beverages, The Cott Wine and Liquor Store (*q.v.*), opened Feb. 1, 1934. *See also* Alcohol.

Project Resilience tries to "encourage the development of programs that promote the social and emotional growth and resilience of children and adolescents in Ridgefield." For instance, in 2024, it sponsored a talk about how children's failure at something can help lead them to success. [FB].

Promoters Club, the, a forerunner of the Lions Club (*q.v*.) and perhaps the Chamber of Commerce, had its first meeting Jan. 28, 1926, at the Elms Inn. George G. Scott (*q.v.*) was the first chairman. James J. Kelly, one of the

founders, said the club is “one in which religion and politics (are) barred and where the town’s interests would be advanced.” Other founders, mostly business people, included Thaddeus Crane (*q.v.*) and Harvey Lown (*q.v.*) [JFS]

Propper, Henry M., of Ridgebury was a member of a 1945 mission to confer with officials of the British Ministry of Health about housing problems in the future. Propper had been a member of the National Committee on Housing, formed in 1941 to help solve war housing problems. He was a former New York City housing official.

Proprietors, the, were the original purchasers of land from the American Indians starting in 1708, who then distributed the land among themselves, or sold to others, who could then become proprietors. There were originally 24 proprietors, but the number increased in subsequent years to include others who were major landowners. The Proprietors continued to hold sway over at least some land until around 1800 when their function was abandoned, and any land they held became the Town of Ridgefield’s property. The first deed of purchase was signed by these original proprietors: John Belden, Samuell Keeler Sr., Matthew Seamor, James Brown, Benjamin Wilson, Joseph Birchard, John Whitne Sr., Matthias Saint John, Benjamin Hickcock, John Beebe, Samuel Saint John, John Bouton, Joseph Keeler, Samuel Smith Junior, Jonathan Stevens, Daniell Olmsted, Richard Olmsted, John Stirdevant, Samuel Keeler Jr., Joseph Bouton, Jonathan Rockwell, Edmond Wareing, Joseph Whitne, Daniel Hait, Thomas Hyott, James Benedick, Joseph Crampton, Ebenezer Sension, Matthew Saint John, all of Norwalk, and Thomas Smith, Thomas Canfield, and Samuell Smith of Milford. Some of these people never lived here, but owned original lots.

Proprietors of Ridgefield, The, is a 188-page, illustrated history of early Ridgefield by Glenna M. Welsh (*q.v.*), mostly devoted to who the first settlers were, where they came from, and what they did. It includes a rather detailed description of the first village lots. It was privately published in paperback and hardcover in 1976 by The Caudatowa Press.[WWW]

Prospect Hill is along the northern section of Prospect Street, the area around the old high school tennis courts where the elevation reaches 750 feet above sea level. [USGS]

Prospect Ridge: **1**. East Ridge is probably the more accurate name for the top of the ridge east of Main Street. Today, however, East Ridge seems to apply only to the land along East Ridge Road (*q.v.*), while Prospect Ridge applies to the land at the top of the ridge along Prospect Ridge Road (*q.v.*). It’s all one ridge, but it’s got two names! **2.** “Prospect Ridge” is a name sometimes given to town-owned congregate housing (*q.v.*) in former Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*) off the east side of Prospect Ridge Road.

Prospect Ridge Road runs from Prospect Street to Ivy Hill Road over “Prospect Ridge” (*q.v.*).

Prospect Street runs from Main Street to the entrance to Prospect Woods (*q.v.*) and Sunset Lane. The name first appears in the Ridgefield Land Records in 1877 as “Prospect Avenue.” Teller in 1878, uses “Prospect Avenue.” The town’s sewer map, drawn in 1899, shows “Prospect Avenue.” When the switch to “street” took place is unclear. By 1946, “Prospect Street” was on the town’s first zoning map. The name was probably created after the Civil

War in an effort to add some "class" to the village and reflect the good views from Prospect/East Ridge, especially when there were fewer trees. The road is probably mostly of 18th Century origin and once extended eastward across Great Swamp to Farmingville. [RN]

Prospect Woods at 120 Prospect Street, completed in 1987 on 12 acres, is a condominium community complementing the Quail Ridge at the top of the hill, but with no age restrictions. It was formerly called Quail Ridge II. Prospect Woods has 71 units, ranging from 1,200 to 2,200 square feet, in 19 buildings. [JFS]

Prospector, The, is a non-profit, four-screen movie theater opened in November 2014 on Prospect Street with the aim of providing "meaningful employment for adults with disabilities." It was founded by Valerie Jensen (*q.v.*) of Main Street, and built on site of former Ridgefield Playhouse (*q.v.*) — its facade mimics old theater.

PS Associates was a real estate agency at 23 Catoonah Street in 1980; Ann B. Storer was president in 1983.

PTA: *See* Parent-Teacher Association.

PTO: *See* Parent-Teacher Association.

PTSA: *See* Parent-Teacher Association.

Publisher's Row is a somewhat exaggerated nickname for High Ridge Avenue, so called because E.P. Dutton (*q.v.*), a book publisher, and Charles Holt, whose family published books, lived on the road south of Peaceable Street.

Puchall, Abraham is owner and restorer of Windover (*q.v.)*, the former home of John Ames Mitchell (*q.v.*) at 194 West Lane. A Mitchell aficionado, Purchall operated the Herald Square Hotel in NYC which was Mitchell's Life Magazine headquarters at the turn of the 20th Century. He has thus lived in Mitchell's home and worked in Mitchell offices. He first bought the Windover carriage house in 1994 and restored it, then acquired the manor house in 2001. [JFS]

Pulitzer Prize, the, has been won by seven people who've lived in Ridgefield: playwright Eugene O'Neill (four times), novelist Robert Lewis Taylor, columnist Westbrook Pegler, composer Aaron Copland, journalist Richard Kluger, journalist Lee B. Wood, journalist Michael McIntire (twice), and historian Alan Nevins (twice) (*q.v. each*).

Pulling-Dykman House at 11 Barlow Mountain Road "is an outstanding example of painstakingly accurate restoration" [RIR] and "the least altered historic house in town" [ITH4/25/2025]. Believed to have been built in 1738 by a member of the Scott family (*q.v*.), it was designated a "Local Historic Property" in 2025. Former owners were Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Cashman; he taught at the Ridgefield School. In the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, it has been the home of Dr. Ben Oko (*q.v.*), a psychiatrist, and Helen Dimos, a landscape designer. [JFS]

Pump Lane is a short dead-end road built in the 1950s off lower West Lane near the NY line, so-called because the Silver Spring Country Club had a pump house along it to supply water for the club's golf course when it opened in the early 1930s. The course is now watered from a pond, enlarged in the 1970s, along Silver Spring Road. [RN]

Pumping Station Road runs off Oscaleta Road to the NY state line, past the old Ridgefield Water Supply Company (*q.v.*) pumping station in the swamp and becoming Petit Road at the state line. Dating back possibly to the 1700s, it

has also been called Old West Road (*q.v.*) and is probably a farm path. [RN]

Pumping Station Swamp runs along the west side of Oscaleta Road between West Mountain Road and Pumping Station Road, with some of the swamp extending south of Pumping Station Road. The Ridgefield Water Supply Company, now Aquarion, had wells and a pumping station in the swamp. It may once have been called Rattlesnake Swamp (*q.v.*) [RN]

Pumpkin Ridge is an old name for the hill at the western end of Old Branchville Road and near Branchville and Washington Roads, Jefferson Drive, and Nutmeg Ridge. It was later called Biddle Hill (*q.v.*) and earlier called Pompion Ridge (*q.v.*). [RN]

Pumpkins: *See under* Giant Pumpkin Weigh Off, *and* Halloween.

Punch Brook, mentioned as a landmark in the second purchase of land from the American Indians, may be the brook that flows from Turtle Pond on Old Sib Road down to Lake Mamanasco. *See* Ivy Swamp Brook. Also see [RN] for theories on word's meaning. [RN]

Purchases, American Indians: The land for Ridgefield was purchased from various American Indians in six deeds signed between 1708 and 1729. The transfers have been called the First Purchase, Second Purchase, etc. through Sixth Purchase (*q.v. each*). Much of the land Ridgefielders bought was subsequently lost, primarily to Lewisboro and North Salem due to the colony line change connected with the Oblong (*q.v.*) and, in 1846, to Danbury when Ridgefield ceded much of New Patent/Ridgebury (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Purple Frog, The, a gift shop, opened in 2013 at 5 Bailey Avenue, and moved to 414 Main Street. Owned by Emma Hardiman, it closed in 2018. [P12/20/2018]

Purple Heart is a U.S. military decoration awarded in the name of the president to those wounded or killed while serving with the U.S. military, on or after 5 April 1917. Among the Ridgefielders who've earned decoration are Charles Acocella, Joseph Ancona, Joseph R. Arena, Dominic Bedini (2), Robert Nichols Blume, Lt. Thomas Carnegie, Staff Sgt. Charles Gardiner Cogswell, John E. Dowling, Samuel R. Freeman III, Armando Frulla, Eugene J. Frulla, John Raymond Gully, Peter Laqueur (2), John Orrico, Meinhard Scherf, Lee Perry Vance, Harvey James Webster (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Pyle, Mary Vanderhoef, (1888-1970), of Ridgefield and NYC married noted American violinist Albert Spalding (1888-1953) on July 19, 1919, in St. Stephen's Church. French violinist Jacques Thibaud and Andre Benoist, Spalding's accompanist, provided the music. [W] "Miss Pyle is prominent in society and is noted for her beauty," said NYT [NYT7/8/1919]

Q

Quail Drive runs off Old Stagecoach Road. Originally called Kathy's Court (*q.v.*), it was built around 1960 as part of the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*). In 1969, residents petitioned the town to have the name changed, terming it "an anomaly." Quail Drive was chosen to recall a once common chicken-like bird in these parts that has become rare because it likes open fields. [RN]

Quail Ridge is a condominium community at 120 Prospect Ridge Road, built by Carl Lecher (*q.v.*) first proposed in 1981 by Edmund Cadoux of Westport for 61 units on former Sullivan property. Quail Ridge II, to the east, completed 1987, is now called Prospect Woods (*q.v.*). [RN]

Quaker Ridge is a 17-acre subdivision by P. K. Saunders (*q.v.*), starting around 1949 and including Saunders Lane off Farmingville Road. The reason for the name is unknown — he probably liked the sound of it. [RN]

Qualey, Denise, a certified social worker who works with Kids in Crisis, has held many volunteer positions aimed at helping Ridgefield youth in community with such organizations as Boys and Girls Club, Project Resilience (*q.v.*), and Compassion Project (*q.v.*). She was honored with a Civic Award from ROTA in 2022. **Kids in Crisis**, founded in 1978 in Greenwich, provides free, round-the-clock help for Fairfield County children, teens and parents dealing with any type of crisis, including abuse, neglect, and family conflict. Its 24-hour hotline is 203-661-1911. [JFS]

Quarry Road led eastward from North Street to a quartz/mica mine in Copps Mountain, north of (or within) the Mimosa development. The mine appears on Beers's 1867 map, and was apparently worked in the mid-1800s. [RN]

Quartz, the second most-abundant mineral on earth (behind feldspar), is a form of silicone dioxide found throughout much of Ridgefield. Indigenous people before Ridgefield was settled used it to make points for hunting spears and arrows, and tools for carving, cutting and drilling. In the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, it was mined and ground into a fine powder used in making paints. Major mica mines were located in Branchville (*see* Branchville Mica Mine) and off North Street (*see* Quarry Road). *See also* Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company *and* Stowell Manufacturing Company. [JFS, RIR, Beers]

Question Mart, a clothing store at 452 Main Street, operated by Velma Torcellini, closed after nine years in February 1987 due to retirement. [P2/5/1987] *See also under* Geno Torcellini.

Quigg, Philip W., (ca. 1921-2015), a writer and editor, was managing editor of *Foreign Affairs* for 15 years. He wrote several books, including *America the Beautiful*, and was a confidant of and writer for Henry Kissinger. He founded the Taproot (*q.v.*) writers workshops for senior citizens in Ridgefield in 1994 and was secretary of the Conservation Commission. [JFS]

Quince Court, one of developer David Paul's fruitily named byways at Fox Hill condominiums on Danbury Road, is often confused with Quincy Close (*q.v.*),

Quincy Close, a lane at Casagmo (*q.v.*), was named by developer David L. Paul for ancestors of George M. Olcott, who established the Casagmo estate in the 1890s. It's often confused with Quince Court (*q.v.*), one of Paul's byways at Fox Hill condominiums. [RN]

Quinn, Julia: *See under* Julie Cotler Pottinger.

Quinn, Thomas John, (1945-2024), founded The Ancient Mariner restaurant in 1974, the first of a half dozen eateries he would start. One in Lake Placid, NY, fed athletes at the winter Olympics in 1980. His most famous venue was The Water's Edge, created on a barge in Long Island City and site of such events as Billy Joel's first wedding. [P6/27/1924]

R

R House, a restaurant specializing in prime steaks, was opened In November 2025, by Rexhep Krasniqi, of Monroe, NY, who bought The Benjamin (q.v.) for $3.05 million. At opening, the 200-seat restaurant with four dining rooms offered prime-aged steaks, pork, chicken, seafood and other fare. and had an in-house butcher among approximately 50 employees, [HBJ11/19/2025]

RAAC: *See* Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation.

Rabbit Hole Farm, an arts camp, began in 1957 and lasted into the 1970s on an old farm on the east side of Route 7 south of Great Pond. The camp had instruction in painting, sculpture, music, drama, languages, science, and dance for children 6 to 14. Operated by Dinny and Jerry Doherty, it ran eight weeks in July and August. [JFS]

Rabin, Edward, (1911-1995), a native of NYC, founded Ridgefield Hardware (*q.v.*) in 1938. One of the few Jewish Ridgefielders at the time, "He had a very tough time when he first came to Ridgefield, but he stuck it out," said his son, Jerry, who took over the business in 1975. He was a charter member of Kiwanis Club and longtime member of Lions Club.. [NR]

RACE: *See* Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment *and* Environment.

Racial/ethnic population: In 2020, Ridgefield had 25,033 residents, 16 percent of whom were people of color. The population consisted of 84% white (20,956 people); 5% Latino (1,506); 5% Asian (1,261); 1% Black (224); and 4% "other" (1,074). [REP]

Racing, motorsport: People connected with Ridgefield and involved in auto racing have included Tony Adamowicz, Ron Finn, Bob Sharp, Jacqueline Seligmann, J. Macy Willets, Francois Sicard, Andy Montanari, and Paul Baker (*q.v. each*).

Racism/Prejudict: Both African Americans and Italians, and to a degree, Irish and German immigrants, were victims of racist treatment and incidents, particularly in the late 19th and the 20th Centuries. Major incidents involving **Blacks** included: **1.** On Sept. 30, 1922, the intoxicated brother of a State Police trooper beat up a Black man who had been dining at Coleman's Lunch (*q.v.*). He was arrested and convicted, but because the charges were so minor and the fine so small, *The Ridgefield Press* and others called for an investigation that eventually led to the governor's asking the head of the Connecticut State Police to investigate. [WR] **2.** During the 1950s, a Black man was seen chatting and laughing with a young white woman at Bongo's (*q.v.*) store. A racist employee complained to police that the man was making immoral advances. Police arrested him, but the case was thrown out of court. [WWW] **3.** On Dec. 23, 1978, a cross was burned on the front lawn of an interracial couple. Five males, aged 15 to 20, were charged with criminal mischief and disorderly conduct. Critics called the charges too light. The 18-year-old ringleader was convicted, and then charged by U.S. Attorney Richard Blumenthal with violation of the federal Fair Housing Act of which he was also convicted and was upheld on appeal. [WR] **4.** In 1974, actor-comedian Godfrey Cambridge was harassed after filing complaints against local real estate agents for

misrepresenting the quality and nature of the house he bought on Buck Hill Road. [WR] Incidents involving **Italian immigrants** included: **1**. In 1893, Jerry Crystonan, a laborer building the Downesbury Manor estate on Florida Hill Road (*q.v.*) shot and seriously injured Frank Caspera, a 14-year-old immigrant who shined shoes on Main Street. Although two doctors responded to help the boy, Ridgefield's Deputy Sheriff Thomas C. White declined to respond, saying he'd look into the case in the following morning. The fact that an Italian man had shot an Italian boy was not important enough for an evening response. Crystonan escaped and the boy, to the amazement of doctors, survived. **2.** In October of 1920, two non-Italian teenagers hanging out near the train station on Prospect Street got into a fight with Italian teens. Local newspaper coverage was as bigoted as was the constabulary's response. "It is alleged the Italians had used improper language to the companion of the youth. It also appears that one of the youths had previously had trouble with the Italians and that the latter held animosity toward him," said *The Press.* A "fracas" ensued in which "one of the youths knocked down an Italian" and then escaped by running behind the old Barhite building (in 2026 Gallo Restaurant) which was used as apartments. Thinking the youth was hiding in the Barhite building "and determined to wreck their revenge, the Italians broke out the door to the tenement quarters with a club and also smashed all the window lights by bombarding the building with cobblestones." The Italian boys escaped but the next day one was spotted in Branchville where he was grabbed by a constable, but fled when a friend tackled the constable. The constable fired shots at the fleeing boy, one hitting him, but he still escaped. *The Press*'s headline that week: "Italians on War Path: Smash Windows, One Shot Escaping Officer." Later captured in New Haven, the Italian youth was tried in Ridgefield town hall and given $47 fine and a suspended sentence. He later became a prominent New Haven contractor and tavern owner. *See also* Edward Rabin. [WR]

Raccoon Ramblings was the student newspaper at Farmingville School in the 1970s. The raccoon was the school mascot. [JFS]

Radio: The first radio receiver in town may have been owned by Paul Venus and made by Jimmy Kilcoyne. [DD229] Early amateur radio operators included Earl Roberts and Carlton Ross Stevens (*q.v.*) each. *See also* WREF, WAXB, WINE, antennas, *and* Ham Radio. [JFS]

Radio Shack was a chain electronics store at Copps Hill Plaza from May 1973 [P5/31/1973] until the company failed and the store closed Aug. 30, 2016.

Raifstanger, John Frederick, (1882-1938), operated the Sportsmen's Inn (*q.v.*) near Joes's Corner (*q.v.*) in the mid-1910s. By 1918, he was managing the Forest and Stream Club. He and his wife, Esther, lived for many years at 382 Main Street, and later sold real estate. [JFS]

Rail trail: *See* Ridgefield Rail Trail.

Railroad Avenue: 1. A mid-19th Century name for western end of Branchville Road because it led from Main Street to the station in Branchville. The name fell out of use after 1870 when the branch line was built and Ridgefield Station was opened in the center. **2.** The original name of Sunset Lane (*q.v.*), changed in 1958 after residents petitioned for a new name. [RN]

Railroads: *See* Danbury and Harlem Traction Company; Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road; Derby to Peekskill railroad; Fairfield County Rail Road Company;

Mount Vernon and Eastern Railroad; Ousatonic Rail Road Company.

Rainbow Drive, a dead-end private road at the Ridgefield Lakes so small that it does not appear on some official maps of the town, runs off Cross Hill Road toward its namesake Rainbow Lake. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Rainbow Lake is a private, man-made pond, created by damming a stream through pastures in the mid-1920s, one of the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*). Originally called "Lake Number One," it has also been known as Wataba Lake (*q.v.*) by some. Rainbow may reflect a type of trout found in waters hereabouts or may just be a "pretty" name. [RN]

Rainbow Records was a music store opened in the 1980s at 88 Danbury Road, an address now used by the Ridgefield Bicycle Company, but then part of the "Early Bird" group of shops just to the north. It was operated by Alan Meltzer (*q.v.*) and his wife, Diane. [WWW]

Rainfall: The average annual rainfall in Ridgefield has been about 52 inches, compared to the national average of 38 inches. In October 1955, 13.8 inches of rain in three days caused the worst flood of the 20th Century; in one 24-hour period, 7.82 inches fell. On Sept. 1 and 2, 2021, the remnants of tropical storm Ida dropped 8.4 inches of rain on at least the southwest part of town. Power was out for more than 500 Eversource customers and some flooding occurred — none causing major damage. [JFS]

Rainsford, Mark, (1918-1943), a native of NYC, was a lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers Camouflage Corps who was killed in a commercial airline crash in 1943 while on duty, and is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery in the Rainsford family plot (*see* Rev. William S. Rainsford). Mark Rainsford never lived here, nor did his parents, Dr. Laurence and Helen Morgan Rainsford, who are also buried at Fairlawn. [JFS]

Rainsford, Richard, (1930-1987), who lived here from 1950 to 1969, was an often flamboyant artist, art dealer and promoter of the restoration of historic buildings. He first made local headlines in 1959 when his cat tipped over a can of turpentine, spilling into a wood stove and causing a fire that allegedly destroyed $75,000 [$750,000 in 2024 dollars] worth of art, books and antiques at his Florida Road studio. He gained notoriety nationally in 1965 when the FBI arrested him in an art fraud scheme. A federal grand jury had indicted him on 18 counts involving the 1964 sale of fake paintings, including an alleged Jackson Pollack, at an auction of contents of the Westchester home of a famous movie actor, Walter Selzak. Five years later, Rainsford pleaded guilty to five of the 18 fraud counts, and soon left town. By 1976, he was teaching at Ohio University and living in Athens, Ohio, where he led a successful effort to preserve a historic 1804 log house.

Rainsford, Walter Kerr, (1883-1947), native of Canada and graduate of Harvard, was an architect who designed St. Stephen's Church as well as the War Memorial (but *q.v.*). A noted outdoorsman, he drowned off Fisher's Island in 1947. He was the son of the Rev. Dr. William S. Rainsford (*q.v.*), who attended St. Stephen's.

Rainsford, Rev. Dr. William Stephen, (1850-1933), was a retired Episcopal minister when his friend, banker J. Pierpont Morgan, built him a 22-room mansion, Savin Hill (*q.v.*), off Route 35 in South Salem, adjoining the Ridgefield line (his address was often given as Ridgefield). Born in Dublin to

English parents, Rainsford graduated from Cambridge and became involved in the plight of the poor; he at one point led a group of 800 people from slums of London to western Canada to find new lives. He became enamored there of big game hunting, which he would pursue later in life. Hired in 1882 as rector of the struggling St. George's Church at Stuyvesant Square, he turned the parish around, growing its membership to more than 4,000. Known as outspoken on many subjects, he supported help and education for the poor, birth control, and votes for women. He retired suddenly in 1906 after nervous breakdown. While he lived at Savin Hill, he also went on frequent safaris to Africa, became an expert on African game, wrote a book, *Land of the Lion*, and advised President Theodore Roosevelt and Winston Churchill on hunting. His son architect W. Kerr Rainsford (*q.v.)* designed St. Stephen's Church. [WWW]

Ram Pasture was situated along West Lane (then called Bedford Road) in and about the triangle created by Parley Lane, High Ridge and West Lane. In the early 18th Century, the town owned a sizable flock of sheep, pastured on common land and probably tended by a town-hired shepherd or by volunteers. These sheep were hired out to fertilize farmers' fields and the funds raised were used to support education. Periodically, a "sheep meeting" would take place. One on Dec. 24, 1742, voted that "the money coming for the hire of the sheep last year shall be given as bounty to help maintain the Town School forever, and when the money is gathered it shall be delivered to the committee that is appointed to take care of the bounty money given by the Government to support ye School..." Apparently the rams for the flock were kept at the Ram Pasture while the ewes were probably held nearby, perhaps in the vicinity of Olmstead Lane. [POR, Rockwell, RN]

Ramabhushanam, Gay: *See* Gay Story Hamilton.

Ramapoo is the name of an American Indian group that lived in Ridgefield. Bedini says that "the Indians who inhabited the Ridgefield area were members of the Ramapo and Titicus villages in the Tankiteke sachemdom of the Wappinger tribe." The term appears in the very first 1708 deed to the new settlers, which begins: "Know ye that I, Catoonah, sachem of Ramapoo Indians..." Ramapoo, Ramapo or Ramapough Indians left this area after selling their territories in western Connecticut and their populations seemed to concentrate around Rockland County, N.Y., and Passaic and Bergen Counties in New Jersey. Huden translates the word as "they are in route" or "temporary dwellers," but admits that "other sources give 'stream formed by round ponds' and 'river which empties into round ponds.'" Stewart says it means "round pond." [RIR, RN]

Ramapoo Hill Road is a dead-end road in the Ramapoo Hills (*q.v*.) subdivision, along Ramapoo Road. [RN]

Ramapoo Hills is a 1956 subdivision by Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v*.) of the old Irving B. Conklin Sr. (*q.v*.) dairy farm and includes Ramapoo Hill and Farm Hill Roads. [RN]

Ramapoo Rifle and Revolver Club, founded in 1953, is based at the town's rifle range (*q.v.*) at the town garage, 60 South Street. For its first 15 years, the club used a shooting range at the Community Center, located in the basement under the front porch. The club offers pistol permit courses. [JFS]

Ramapoo Road is an old highway, probably the original route from town to West Mountain, meandering from Gilbert Street westward to the intersection of West Mountain Road and Barry Avenue. Evidence is that Gilbert Street (*q.v.*) was originally considered part of Ramapoo Road. Indeed, a 1900 map of the village labels Gilbert Street as "Ramapoo Road." [RN]

Randall, Richard R., (1790-1838), was a merchant who, with his brother-in-law, Abner Gilbert, operated a store just south of 563 Main Street. He was a member of the Union Society, a sort of private police force in the town, and was a state representative in 1824. He died in Danbury and is buried there. [JFS, DD113]

Randolph, Sarah Bulkley, (1897-1982), was, with her mother, Sarah Tod Bulkley (*q.v.*), one of the founders of the Ridgefield Boys' Club, and was active in supporting the District Nursing Association. She was president of the Ridgefield Garden Club from 1941 to 1944 and was Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1980. She was also active in many NYC philanthropies. She lived at Rippowam (*q.v.*), the family estate on West Mountain. [JFS, P11/11/1982]

Rapoport, Irwin C. "Chuck," (1937-), professionally known as I.C. Rapoport, was a *Life* magazine photographer noted for his photo essay on the aftermath of the tragic Aberfan, Wales, coal disaster. He turned to writing scripts for TV shows in Hollywood including Law & Order, Baywatch, and several TV movies. He lived at the Ridgefield Lakes; [P1/29/1981] — permanently from 1971-78, but summering here starting in 1952. He gave the name Wataba (*q.v.*) to Rainbow Lake. [NR] (A feature story on him appears in [P9/17/1983].)

Rapp, Edgar C. "Dick," (1899-1981), was an owner of Bissell's Pharmacy in the mid-20th Century and lived at 145 Main Street. [RSB26]

Rationing: *See* Ridgefield Rationing Board.

Rattle Holes: A 1753 deed in which David Northrup transfers his house, barn and land to his son, describes the three acres as "lying at the Rattle Holes, so called, near the West Mountain." It was probably near West Rattle Snake Swamp. (*q.v.*)

Rattle Snake Swamp: "Ye Rattle Snake Swamp" appears in an 1718 deed from the Proprietors to Nathan St. John. It was probably the same as West Rattle Snake Swamp (*q.v.*). [RN]

Rattlesnakes: The timber rattlesnake, this area's only rattlesnake species, may be extinct in town, but was once common in the rocky ledges, hillsides, and edges of swamps. "There were at the first settlement great numbers of rattlesnakes and snakes equally poisonous, but they are almost destroyed," reported the Rev. Samuel Goodrich in 1800. "One method for their destruction was the turning of swine among them, which devoured them." The last Ridgefield rattler report may have been March 31, 1938, when Joseph Dlhy said his "big hound dog" died after being bitten by a rattlesnake in remote Ridgebury woods. [RN]

Raveis, William, real estate, a chain real estate company, based in New Jersey, opened in Ridgefield in 1980s, located at 414 Main Street, and closed in late 2018. [12/20/2018]

Ray's Liquor Shop was established by Ray Gabbianelli (*q.v.*) at 450 Main Street (ONS143). A 1952 advertisement offered free delivery. The shop closed in the 1970s and the location became the Horologist of London (*q.v.*). In 2018,

Tundi, a boutique and gift store, occupied the spot; in 2024, Sedona Art. [JFS]

Raymond, John, was a Norwalk resident who, with John Copp (*q.v.*), explored the territory that was to become Ridgefield in an expedition in May 1708. [JFS]

REACH, an acronym for Ridgefield Efforts at Crushing Hunger, was a hunger-fighting organization among students at RHS in the late 1980s and sponsored several annual Walk for World Health events. RHS Teacher Stephen Blumenthal was their adviser. [P10/22/1987]

Read, John Louis, (ca.1916-?), who was called J. Louis Read, lived on Country Club Road, then acquired Peaceable Acres (*q.v.*) at 47 Peaceable Street from Paul Meisner (*q.v.*) to continue operating it as a hotel. He was later the general manager of the Fairfield Motor Inn. [BP2/1/61,12/19/66]

Read's Mill Pond was another name for Lake Mamanasco, appearing in a 1791 deed when Elias Read (or Reed) was an owner and probably chief miller of the Mamanasco gristmill (*q.v.*). He began buying shares of the mill in 1781 and died in 1795. [RN]

REAP: *See* Ridgefield Environmental Action Program.

Recht, Charles, (1887-1965), an American attorney, represented Soviet Union interests in the U.S. from 1921 to 1933 when no formal relations existed between the two nations. He was the only officially recognized contact between the two countries — in effect, the Russian ambassador, the Russian embassy, the Russian consul, and perhaps even the Russian Chamber of Commerce in this country. He maintained that he was never a Communist. Also a poet, novelist and translator of plays, he had a home on Florida Road from 1950 until his death. [WWW]

Recollections of A Lifetime is a two-volume autobiography of Samuel G. Goodrich (*q.v.*), who wrote more than 150 books, mostly for young people, many under the name of Peter Parley. The first 300+ pages of this autobiography are devoted to his growing up in Ridgefield in the late 1700s and early 1800s, as well as a look at the town in 1856 when he paid a visit, providing a fascinating and unique look at life in Ridgefield two centuries ago. It totals 1,100+ pages, with many illustrations and an index (Miller, Orton and Mulligan, 1856). An abbreviated, one-volume version was also published. [JFS] *See also* Charity Hawley.

Recollections of My Youth: *See under* Dr. Joseph J. Moylan Sr.

Recreation Center, operated by the town's Parks and Recreation Commission, opened Jan. 15, 1994, at the old Barlow Mountain School. Before that, recreation programs were spread among various facilities, and administrative offices were located at the Yanity Gym (*q.v.*) and, earlier, at other town-owned buildings. In December 2000, voters approved reopening Barlow Mountain School and building a new recreation center at 195 Danbury Road, which opened Jan. 12, 2003. Paul Roche (*q.v.*) was superintendent throughout this period. The center offers scores of programs to exercise the body and mind, and periodically publishes catalogues of its offerings. The center also has more than a mile of trails, a Spray Bay (*q.v.*), and an "all-abilities" playground, and runs the Graham Dickinson SPIRIT Skate Park (*q.v.*) and the Yanity Gym. [JFS]

Rectories: TheMethodist church rectory or parsonage in late 19th and much of 20th Centuries was the building at 409-11 Main Street, now used for shops

and offices. St. Mary's rectory, on Catoonah Street just east of the church, was built in 1894 and torn down around 1974. St. Stephen's has had several rectories, whose buildings are still standing — *see under* St. Stephen's. The First Congregational Church's 11-room rectory on Main Street, just south of the church, was built in 1913 but is no longer used as a rectory. [P4/24/1913] Ridgebury Congregational Church's rectory is the one-time home of Otto Lippolt (*q.v.*) and earlier belonged to Gilbert B. Burr (*q.v.*). and may have been built around 1860 by the Reynolds family (*see* Jonathan Reynolds).

Recycling: *See* Ridgefield Environmental Action Program, Scrap Drives, Walter McNamara.

Red Balloon, The, was a **s**tore selling children's clothing on consignment at 409 Main Street, occupying space of former Merrie Moppet Too (*q.v.*). It was opened in the spring 1981 by Zebbie Mathis, Marty Pierce and Lynne Rudy [P5/7/1981] and was in business until around 2000. *See also* Children's Cottage. [JFS]

Red Brook is a 19th Century name for a stream on West Mountain, probably somewhere along Barrack Hill Road, perhaps near Old West Mountain Road. The name may have been related to clay or iron that colored the water at least seasonally. [RN]

Red Chimneys was a name applied to the house at 305 Main Street, which has four red-brick chimneys. [JFS]

Red Door Kennel was a facility offering obedience training, and boarding of dogs, operated by Dee Dee Beck (*q.v.*) at 189 Wilton Road East in the 1970s and 80s. [JFS]

Red Hot Mamas is a national menopause support group formed here in 1992 by Karen Giblin (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Red Lion Restaurant at 619 Danbury Road, the junction Routes 7 and 35, was the former Outpost Farm kennel, then part of a research center for Gaines (*q.v.*) dog food. The building was first used as a restaurant by The Steak House (*q.v.*). The Red Lion was opened by Dana Riggs (*q.v.*) in the early 1970s. Riggs remained until the late 1980s. Later it became Belzoni's Red Lion Grill. It closed 2005 and was razed to make way for Terrar LLC's apartment complex called The Terraces at Ridgefield (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Red Oak Corporation, owned by Anthony Czyr (*q.v.*), developed portions of Peaceable Hill Road (*q.v.*) in early 1980s. It also developed seven lots on the old Country Club of Ridgefield golf course land in 1982. [P12/23/1981]

Red Oak Lane, a dead-end road off Pumping Station Road, is part of Colonial Heights (*q.v.*), developed starting around 1965 by Lewis J. Finch and others. [RN]

Red Petticoat, The, is a novel for young people by Joan Palmer that offers a fictionalized version of the "Red Petticoat" legend (*see under* David Olmsted*)* from the Battle of Ridgefield in 1777. It was published by Lothrop Lee & Shepard in 1969. Palmer, a former Associated Press and UPI journalist, lived in Lewisboro. [JFS]

Red Petticoat Antiques was a shop at 113 West Lane from 1971 until 2000. The business had been established by Florene Maine (*q.v.*) and the name later employed because a fictional book for children used the house as the site of its own version of the Red Petticoat legend (*q.v.*); In the 1980s and 90s, the business was owned and operated Ralph and Gloria Perschino

(*q.v.*). [JFS]

Red Petticoat House: *See under* David Olmsted.

Red Petticoat legend: *See under* David Olmsted.

Red Petticoat Press is the imprint that Jack Sanders uses to self-publish various limited-edition histories of Ridgefield, such as *Uncle Ned's Mountain, School Days, Ambling Along Old Main Street, Ridgefield's Great Estates*, and the *Who Was Who in Ridgefield* series, as well as this encyclopedia. It is so called because he lives in what has been called The Red Petticoat House (*see* David Olmstead) on Olmstead Lane.[JFS]

Red Raiders was a Pop Warner youth football team founded in 1958. In 1959, the Ridgefield team was so good, it was invited to play in the Orange Bowl in Miami. By 2010 youth football was called just the Raiders. Soon after that, the term was dropped and in 2024, tThe Ridgefield Youth Football Tigers (*q.v.*) serves a similar purpose. [JFS]

Red Rooster Pub at 43 Danbury Road opened in 2016 in the former location of Toscana (*q.v.*), operated by Tony Ramadani who had owned Mirabella at the same location 20 years earlier. It closed in January 2025 and the property was proposed for multifamily housing. [JFS]

Redcoats was the name of the 23-room, 19,000-square-foot brick mansion completed in 1994 at 155 Main Street. It was so called because the owners, G. Wade and Pauline Lewis, were British. Their house included a 24-seat art deco movie theater and a replica 17th Century English pub. It was sold in 2000 to Americans who renamed it Patriots Way *(q.v.*).

Redding: When Ridgefield was established, much of its eastern boundary bordered northern Fairfield, which in 1729 became the Reading parish of Fairfield, named for John Read, a prominent early landowner. In 1767, Reading became a town and the name began to be spelled Redding. [RN] *See* Old Redding Road.

Redington, Virginia "Ginny," (1945 - 2022), a songwriter, singer, and author, was best known for the commercial jingles she wrote and co-wrote, including "You, You're the One" for McDonald's and "Coke Is It" for Coca-Cola. With her husband, Thomas Dawes (*q.v.*), she co-wrote two books about antique jewelry and an off-Broadway musical, "The Talk of the Town." She and her husband lived at Brook Farm (*q.v.*) from 1982 until 2005 when they moved to Weston. [WWW]

Reed or **Reedy Swamp** were **e**arly 18th Century names given to several local wetlands, including on the east side of Great Swamp, south of Limestone Hill, and on West Mountain. [RN] *See also* Flaggy Bogs.

Regan, Mary F., (1911-1993), and **Elizabeth M.**, (1916-1990), Ridgefield natives and sisters, were longtime teachers in the Ridgefield schools. Skidmore graduate Mary taught elementary grades 37 years at Titicus, Veterans Park and Farmingville Schools, and was active in promoting the teaching of Ridgefield history. [P3/11/1993] Elizabeth, who graduated from Danbury Teachers College, taught elementary grades for 39 years at the Center School and Veterans Park. [P11/1/1990] They lived together at 306 Wilton Road West

Regan Road, traversing a swamp between Old Stagecoach and Ridgebury Roads, was named for the family of Jeremiah and Mary Driscoll Regan who moved in the early 1850s to a small farm whose house stood on the site of the present Ridgebury Firehouse, opposite at the east end of the

road. Jeremiah died in 1902, Mary in 1886. Town records indicate the road was laid out by the selectmen in 1852. [RN]

Regency at Ridgefield is a community of 73 age-restricted condominiums, developed by Toll Brothers on the former Camp Adventure (*q.v.*) property, 638 Danbury Road. One resident of each property must be 55 or older and no children under 18 are allowed. *See also* George Bakes. [JFS]

Regency Centers (Equity One) owned about 480 shopping centers and other properties in the U.S. in 2024, including Copps Hill Plaza (*q.v.*) and the former Bedient's (*q.v.*) complex on Main Street and Bailey Avenue. [P7/16/2020]

Regiment, The, was a clothing store opens at Yankee Ridge Shopping Center, Prospect Street in October 1981, owned by Richard Points [P11/24/1981] It advertised having financial troubles two years later. [3/27/1983]

Register was an early term for the town clerk (*q.v.*). Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*). considered the first resident town clerk, signed himself as register. [JFS]

Registrar of voters is the official who maintains records of the registered voters in town. Each (or every) party elects a registrar and appoints assistant registrars as needed. [JFS]

Regney, Noel, (1922-2002), a composer, moved to High Ridge Avenue with his wife, Gloria Shayne (*q.v.*), in 1969. The couple wrote the Christmas song, "Do You Hear What I Hear?" in 1962 (he the words, she the music), which has been ranked among the 25 top Christmas songs of all time. The two collaborated on "Rain Rain Go Away," sung by Bobby Vinton, "Sweet Little Darlin," by Jo Stafford, and "Another Go Around," by Perry Como and Doris Day. They were divorced in the mid-1970s. He also wrote the English lyrics for "Dominique," the 1963-4 top hit by The Singing Nun. In 1975, he wrote the five-part cantata, "I Believe in Life." He often performed at the piano in Ridgefield, especially at The Elms Inn and in the schools. [WWW[

Reid, Elizabeth "Betsy" Sheehan, was a photographer and photo technician at *The Ridgefield Press,* and has been an administrator of the Ridgefield Historical Society for many years. She managed the society's collections until 2025 when she retired. She is a board member. A daughter of Dr. and Mrs. James Sheehan *(q.v.*), she is married to Macklin Reid *(q.v.*).

Reid, James Malcolm, (1902-1982), a native of Colorado, was a book publisher and 18-year resident who served on the Board of Education, 1959-64. He was a leader of the textbook department of Hartcourt, Brace & World, and edited many leading textbooks. He also wrote two books about poetry, and as on the board of Farrar, Strauss & Giroux. He was the father of longtime *Ridgefield Press* reporter and editor, Macklin K. Reid (*q.v.*).

Reid, Macklin K. "Mack", was an award-winning editor and reporter for *The Ridgefield Press* for more than 40 years, retiring in December 2020. He came to Ridgefield as a young child, a son of James M. Reid (*q.v.*), grew up here, graduated from RHS in 1969, and from Boston University. He is married to Elizabeth Sheehan Reid (*q.v.*).

Reid, Sally Ann, was a child movie performer from Ridgefield, using name Sally Swan; at age 12, she appeared in the film, "Unfinished Dance," with Margaret O'Brien, released in April 1947. [P5/22/1947]

Reiley, Laura, was named a 2017 finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in criticism. The 1985 RHS graduate was in 2024 the business of food reporter for *The Washington Post*, and was previously a food critic at the *Tampa Bay Times,*

San Francisco Chronicle and *Baltimore Sun*. A graduate of the University of Virginia and California Culinary Academy, she has written four books, is a three-time James Beard Award finalist, and has cooked professionally. [JFS2023]

Reiner, David Levy, became rabbi at Congregation Shir Shalom in 2013. A cum laude graduate of the University of Rochester, Rabbi Reiner earned highest honors from the Department of Religion and Classics, was awarded a year of post graduate study exploring music in the African-American Community. He was ordained and earned a master's degree in Hebrew Literature from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio. [ourshirshalom.org]

Relief, Board of, was the late 19th and early 20h Century version of today's Board of Tax Review. Its job was to hear appeals of property assessments made by the tax assessors and was an elective office.

Religious orders: Many religious orders have had facilities here: Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost fathers) operated the Holy Ghost Novitiate (*q.v.*) on Prospect Ridge. The Jesuits ran Manresa (*q.v.*) retreat house in the 1960s on Tackora Trail. The Vincentians used Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) in the 1950s and 60s as a novitiate. The Sisters of Notre Dame's American motherhouse was at West Mountain Farm (*q.v.*). The Sisters of St. Thomas of Villanova (*q.v.*) had a retreat house on Barry Avenue. The Society of St. Pius X (*q.v.*) operates a retreat house and Christ the King Church on Tackora Trail (formerly Manresa).

Remember the Ladies: Notable Women of Ridgefield is an illustrated, 100-page book that profiles of 14 noteworthy women in Ridgefield's history published by Ridgefield Historical Society in 2008. It also covers organizations they founded or led.

Remick, William J., a New Canaan math teacher, was chairman of the Board of Education, 1980-81 and had been a member since 1975 [P9/11/1980]. He lived at 56 Tanton Hill Road and retired to New Hampshire,.

Remington, Frederic (1861-1909), a native of Canton, N.Y., was a noted sculptor, painter, illustrator, and writer of subjects related to the early American West. He studied art at Yale and went to the West, where he worked and drew illustrations for *Harper's* and other magazines. He lived and worked for many years in New Rochelle, gaining an international reputation for his paintings and sculptures. He also wrote several books on the West. He moved in 1909 to a house he built off Barry Avenue (*see* Lorul Place), probably to be closer to lifelong friend, A. Barton Hepburn (*q.v.*), who also came from Canton. He died six months later of appendicitis. [WWW, DD264] *See also* Oak Knoll.

Remington Road runs between Barry Avenue and Peaceable Hill Road, part of Westmoreland (*q.v.*) developed in the mid-1960s. The name commemorates Frederic Remington (*q.v.*), who lived and died across Barry Avenue from Westmoreland. [RN]

Renumbering, Street Address: The current system of address numbers along roads and streets was adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission in 1969 after many complaints from emergency personnel about the haphazard "system" in use — and the fact that houses along many roads were unnumbered, making it difficult for police, fire and ambulance personnel to find people. However, many opposed the renumbering

because it was costly and/or inconvenient. A leader of the effort, who circulated opposition petitions, was Elizabeth Hull (*q.v.*), whose longtime address of 1 Silver Spring Road changed to 478 Silver Spring Road. She was unsuccessful. [JFS]

Renz was a nickname for Reno Carboni, local businessman and restaurant owner.

Representatives, state: *See* state representatives.

Representatives, U.S.: Ridgefield is in Connecticut's Fourth Congressional District, which includes most of southwestern Connecticut from Greenwich to Bridgeport, and northeasterly to Oxford. The congressman in 2024 is James Himes, a Democrat. Ridgefield had earlier been in the Fifth Congressional District, dominated by towns to the north. *See also* Congress, members of.

Resseguie is an old Ridgefield Huguenot family, founded by Alexander (*q.v.*) and Sara Resseguie, whose name is pronounced *RESS-sik-kee.*

Resseguie, Abijah, (1791-1887), began his career in carriage-making, 1810-15, and became a partner with Chauncey Olmstead (*q.v.*) in 1818; in 1825 he was a partner in the larger carriage factory operation in the Big Shop (*q.v.*), called Brush, Olmstead & Company. In 1829 he married Anne Keeler, daughter of William Keeler and granddaughter of Keeler Tavern founder Timothy Keeler Jr.. About that time they took over operation of the tavern, which was eventually called the Resseguie or Resseguie's Hotel. He was a state representative in 1847 and a member of the Whig Party. The surname is sometimes erroneously spelled Ressiguie. [RIR]

Resseguie, Alexander, (?-1752) may have been Ridgefield's wealthiest settler. John E. Morris, a family genealogist, says "Tradition has it that he was the younger son of one Alexandre Resseguie, a Huguenot refugee from France, who brought with him from the mother country a small, hair-covered trunk, studded with iron nails, containing all of the family wealth he was able to secure, consisting largely of title deeds to property in France." They were later lost in a fire. He was in Ridgefield in 1709, the year of his marriage to Sara Bontecou of New York City, also a native of France. His inventory at his death in 1752 listed more than £4,000 of value in real estate, mostly in Ridgefield, and included a couple of farms. His homestead alone totaled £2,200 in value, a hefty sum, and he owned parcels of land throughout town, as well as "a Negro wench and child" valued at £350. Total value of his estate was £10,514. He had considerable land at the Wilton-Ridgefield line in the Whipstick-Nod area, where he probably lived. [JFS, Morris]

Resseguie, Anna Keeler, (1787-1852), was the daughter of Timothy and Ether Keeler, who operated Keeler Tavern during Revolutionary era. She taught at Whipstick Schoolhouse and married in 1829 Abijah Resseguie (*q.v.*) and they turned tavern into Resseguie Hotel [KTM].

Resseguie, Anna Marie, (1930-1913), daughter of Abijah and Anna Keeler Resseguie, lived at and helped operate Resseguie's Hotel — the Keeler Tavern — in the last half of the 19th Century. Parts of her diary from 1851 to 1867 was published in 1993 by the Keeler Tavern as *A View from the Inn* (*q.v.*) [DAR, FAG]

Resseguie, James (-1748?), a son of Alexander (q.v.), was said to have died in King George's War, part of the French and Indian Wars. [Teller, Morris]

Resseguie Hotel was the name for the Keeler Tavern from the 1830s until ca.

1900. *See* Anna Keeler Resseguie *and* Abijah Resseguie.

Resseguie's Lane is an 18th Century name probably for what is now Pelham Lane, so called because it bordered the farm of Alexander Resseguie (*q.v.*). [RN]

Restaurants: Ridgefield's past as a "resort" destination helped inspire a half-dozen turn-of-the- 20th-Century inns, leading to the town's also becoming a dining destination. One of the earliest resort-era restaurants was The Elms Inn (*q.v.*), which lasted until around 2012, popular with both tourists and locals who wanted a special place to dine out. In 1928, Col. Louis D. Conley (*q.v*.) opened his Outpost Inn (*q.v*.) on Danbury Road, trying to bring some New York City dining quality to his country hometown. Many celebrities would visit Outpost. Even Eleanor Roosevelt, the first lady, drove herself from Hyde Park to dine there. In 1938, Chris and Page Kane turned an old summer "cottage" on West Lane into The Kane Inn (*q.v.*) with both restaurant and accommodations. Over the years, the establishment has had various owners — some of them world-famous chefs — and is, in 2026, R House. After WW2, a new round of destination inns opened. Fox Hill Inn (*q.v*.) appeared in 1948 in the former mansion of Colonel Conley, with magnificent views of the countryside. The inn was sold in 1971 to IBM, razed in 1975, and its site is now part of Bennett's Pond State Park. A year earlier, a veteran returning from the war opened Stonehenge Inn (*q.v*) on Route 7, naming it for the prehistoric landmark he'd seen while on duty in England. Victor Gilbert (*q.v*.) turned Stonehenge into a destination for the stars: Judy Garland, Elizabeth Taylor, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, many of the Rockefellers, and Mrs. Thomas Edison all dined there. In the 1960s noted chef Albert Stockli (*q.v.*), who had led the creation of top Manhattan restaurants, bought Stonehenge and raised its level of food to the point where *Holiday* magazine named it the best restaurant of any kind in Connecticut. The inn closed in 2017 after the death of the last owner.. One of the longest-lasting restaurant locations in the village was at the corner of Grove Street and Sunset Lane. Pierpaoli's Tavern was founded in the early 1940s by John Pierpaoli, who had had a cider mill on the property in the 1930s. His son Joe later took over, renaming it Joe's Hideaway. Over the following years, it became Perp's, the Corner Pub and in 2024, The Hideaway (*q.v*. *each*). For decades, the south corner of Main and Catoonah Streets held restaurants, including the Lorna Doone, the Corner Kitchen, Santini's, and John's — John was Giancarlo Scala (*q.v*.) who would soon buy The Elms Inn, turning it into a top-notch regional restaurant. Branchville has probably Ridgefield's oldest home of eateries, 37 Ethan Allen Highway. In 1935, Americo Ridolfi (*q.v.*) opened Jean's Restaurant (*q.v*.). In the decades that followed, it became Cella's, Luigi's, Cooper Tavern, 59 Bank Street, La Piazza, Coco Bongo's, and since around 2016, the Barn Door. The oldest continuously operated restaurant in Ridgefield is Venice (*q.v*.), which opened in 1972 at Copps Hill Plaza. The oldest restaurant in the same location with the same name is the Ancient Mariner (*q.v.*), founded in 1974 by Tom Quinn (*q.v*.). Jessica Wilmot began working there in 1978; in 1992, she bought the place and is still running it in 2024. In the 1950s and 60s, popular breakfast and lunch spots included the Fife and Drum in an old building near Copps Hill Common. Interestingly, the site later held a Friendly's restaurant and then a Pizza Hut (*q.v. each*), both

rare examples of chain restaurants opening in Ridgefield and both of which failed and closed, as did Boston Chicken (*q.v.*) to the south. The only big chain that has succeeded is Subway (*q.v.*) and, if you include small regional chains, Bareburger. (No McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, or similar fast-food operation has opened here, partly because the town's zoning discourages them, and partly because local entrepreneurs have managed to provide better food at reasonable prices.) Another popular hangout in the mid-20th Century was Nina's (*q.v.*) at the north end of Main Street. Gene Lavatori opened the breakfast and lunch cafe in 1964, eventually expanding to include dinners. When the family retired around 1983, the new owners were unable to duplicate Lavatori success, and the restaurant closed. Nearby, on lower Danbury Road, the Girolmetti (*q.v.*) family opened a bowling alley in 1964 on a site that had earlier been the family's restaurant called Mary's. Attached to the alleys a few years later was a full-sized restaurant, The Old Ice House (*q.v.*). The Girolmettis retired around 2003, and the space is now Mannen (*q.v.*), a Japanese restaurant. Many people treasured eating at the King Neptune (*q.v.*) on Route 7. The Fred Orrico family ran the seafood restaurant from 1955 until 2005. The food and service were very good, and the prices very affordable — on weekends, the long lines of customers waited just to get into the building. The 2024 townie hangout, especially in the morning, is the Early Bird (*q.v.*), opened in the late 1980s at Copps Hill Plaza and soon moved to 86 Danbury. By 1991 the popular Ridgefield native Roy Cogswell (*q.v.*) was running the place, continuing until his death in 2005. Nearly 20 years later it was still the place to pick up all the local gossip. Among the leading modern restaurateurs has been Arthur Michaelsen (*q.v.*), the chef-owner of Bartolo (*q.v.*) on Danbury Road. Michaelsen came to Ridgefield as a boy in 1969, was RHS 1984, and began a long career running local kitchens in the 1980s when he opened the popular 33⅓ restaurant at Copps Hill Plaza. He later owned The Catch on Route 7, 59 Bank Street in Branchville and in New Milford, and for many years until retiring, Bartolo. A favorite of the younger set was Roma Pizzeria (*q.v.*) on Main Street, which for many years rewarded A's on students' report cards with free pizzas. The Amatuzzi family, who ran the restaurant, also often supply pies free to Little League events and other non-profit community affairs. They retired in 2003 and their old spot has since been Planet Pizza. Southwest Cafe (*q.v.*) was opened in 1987 at Copps Hill Common by Barbara Nevins, and has been in the same spot under the same ownership ever since. Here's a summary of recent restaurant growth: 1955, 17 restaurants; 1965, 24; 1975, 27; 1985, 32; 1995, 42; 2005, 45; 2015, 46; 2024, 50+. *See also* Ridgefield Restaurant Association as well as each business's name. [JFS]

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) operated in Ridgefield in the late 20th Century, giving retirees opportunities to volunteer for public service. The local chapter eventually merged into a regional RSVP.

Reuter's Coach Works at 27 Catoonah Street, one of the oldest village businesses, restores fine automobiles, mostly vintage models. "Reuter's … was the source of some of the world's most respected, most prized, most honored restorations of antique and classic cars," said Shopowner magazine [3/23/2023]. Reuter's, founded in 1929 by Gus Reuter Sr., came here in 1970 and in 2026 was still operated by the Reuter family. [JFS]

Reutimann, Jacob "Jack," (1897-1963), a native of Switzerland, established in 1950 the Ridgefield Diner at 746 Danbury Road (BMW of Ridgefield in 2024). He sold to Adolf and Lori Gaub in 1957 but continued to live on the backland until his death. He had been chef at Hotel Green in Danbury in the 1920s and a poultry farmer in Bethel in the 1930s and 40s. He is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery with wife, Margaret. [JFS]

Reutimann's Diner was a local name for Ridgefield Diner when it was owned by Jacob Reutimann (*q.v*.)

Revere Drive, with twin dead-end legs off Minuteman Road, is part of the Colonial Heights development (*q.v.*) on West Mountain. The town accepted the road in 1970. The road is often confused with Revere Place. In keeping with Colonial Heights theme, the road was named for Paul Revere. [RN]

Revere Place, also named for Paul, runs off Standish Drive to a cul-de-sac at Meadow Woods (*q.v*.) in Farmingville. It became a town road in 1968. [RN]

Revolutionary War cemetery: While many veterans and victims of the Revolutionary War are interred in Ridgefield's 20 cemeteries, a group of soldiers — "eight patriots ... companioned by sixteen British soldiers" — killed in the Battle of Ridgefield were supposedly buried in an unmarked cemetery on the east side of Main Street, at the west edge of Casagmo (*q.v.*) south into the adjoining property. In 2019, four skeletons, believed to be soldiers who died in the battle, were found beneath the Casey family house south of the Casagmo entrance. *See* Battle of Ridgefield Monument.

Revolver, a Ridgefield-based Beatles tribute band from ca 1980, consisted of David Sturdevant, Jim Filgate, Garry Johnson, and Mike Filgate. [OR]

Rexall: Bissell's Pharmacy (*q.v*.) in the 1940s, 50s and early 60s was associated with Rexall, the national cooperative of independently owned drug stores that provided many Rexall-branded products as well as advertising. [JFS]

Reynolds, Bill, town building inspector for 28 years, retired in 2018. [P9/17/2018]

Reynolds, Jonathan, (1727-1809), a Ridgebury farmer, served in the Revolution in 1775 when he was wounded in the hip at the Siege of St. John's. He recuperated at home and returned to service for three more years during which he made cartridges and gun balls, hiding powder and lead in his home on George Washington Highway. (His descendants maintained the Ridgebury Cemetery for many generations.) [JW]

Reynolds, Susan S., a native of Yonkers, NY, is a Ridgefield attorney specializing in family law, a partner in Reese, Hirsch, Reynolds, and Kennedy. She had served as a Family Court magistrate for four years and in 2001 became a Superior Court justice. On retiring at age 70, she was named a judge trial referee. A resident since 1977 and former chair of the Republican Town Committee, she is married to CPA Thomas Reynolds. [JFS]

Reveaux, Edward, a mid-20th Century Broadway director and a playwright, was also an early TV producer and lived on Main Street in 1950. [11/30/1950]

RFD: **1.** *see* Ridgefield Fire Department (*q.v*.); **2.** *see* Rural Free Delivery (*q.v.*).

RHS: **1**. *see* Ridgefield High School (*q.v.*); **2**. *see* Ridgefield Historical Society (*q.v.*).

Rich, Matthew F., (1923-2009), opened Rich Chrysler-Plymouth-Valiant in a building he had built by Morganti Inc. at the north corner of Danbury and Copps Hill Roads. Rich sought and obtained zoning approval for the operation, from which he retired in the late 1970s. The building is now part of Pamby Motors. [JFS, P12/17/2009]

Richard E. Venus Municipal Building is the brick building that formerly served

as Ridgefield High School, the East Ridge School, and originally, Benjamin Franklin Grammar School, at East Ridge and Governor Streets. The Board of Selectmen unanimously voted Sept. 6, 2000, to rename it after town historian, postmaster and selectman; Venus himself attended the dedication ceremony. *See* Venus, Richard E.

Richardson, Anne S., (1884-1965), a community leader and benefactor, established in 1915 Mamanasco Farm, her estate on North Salem Road (the core of which is now Richardson Park — *q.v.*). A Republican, she served on the school board for three years, and was an original member of Park Commission, a founder of Boys' Club, active in Ridgefield Garden Club and the American Women's Voluntary Services (*q.v. each*). She was Rotary Citizen of Year in 1964. Her companion, Edna Schoyer (*q.v.*), was also a school board member but unlike Richardson, was a Democrat. RHS and Scotts Ridge Middle School are built on her former land. [WWW]

Richardson, Robert E., (1895-1962), worked for many years for the First National Bank of Ridgefield (now Wells Fargo). He was a former Board of Education chairman, was on the Board of Tax Review, served as state grand master of the Connecticut Order of Eastern Star, and was a popular man about town. [RN, DD292] *See also* Richardson Drive. [P8/2/1962]

Richardson Auditorium at RHS was named for Anne S. Richardson (*q.v.*), on whose former land the school was built. Seating over 900 people, the auditorium can be divided into four lecture areas, using sliding walls. [JFS]

Richardson Drive, a dead-end road off Ashbee Lane, is part of Heart Brand Estates (*q.v.*), developed in the 1960s by Everett Lounsbury Jr., who named the road for Robert E. Richardson (*q.v.*).

Richardson Park, 29 acres at 661 North Salem Road, opposite RHS, was donated to the town in 1967 by the estate of Anne S. Richardson (*q.v.*), whose large house on the property was posthumously razed at her instruction. The caretaker's cottage remains. The park includes walking paths, picnic areas, and frontage of Lake Mamanasco (no beach) that features the locally famous high rock cliffs from which generations of mostly young people have (illegally) jumped into the lake. [RN]

Riche, Frances "Fran," is a professional photographer and photographic artist whose work has appeared in many exhibits in the region. She was married to Robert Riche (*q.v.*).

Riche, Robert (1925-2018), graduated from Yale, worked as a reporter, then in public relations. He wrote 11 novels, a guide for teenagers, many plays, and three books of poetry. He lived at 45 New Street from 1980s until his death and was married to Fran Riche (*q.v.*).

Rickshaw was a Chinese-Polynesian restaurant on Route 7 in Ridgefield Motor Inn (*q.v.*), which became the Days Inn. The mailing address and phone number were Ridgefield, but the restaurant was physically in Redding. Larry Eng (*q.v.*) was an owner until its closing in 1977.

Rid Litter Day, an annual spring weekend cleanup of roadsides in Ridgefield, began in the late 1970s largely spearheaded by Beth Yanity (*q.v.*), and for many years, helped by the Marine Corps League. [JFS]

Rides for Ridgefield is an alliance of more than 20 organizations that provide rides for senior citizens and others in need of transportation to medical appointments, shopping and other events. It dates back to late 2011 when Eloise Barron of the Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association, brought

volunteers together to discuss opportunities to serve, and formally began in 2013, based at town hall and reachable at 203-894-7433. [P5/30/2013]

Ridge, The, is a nickname for Ridgefield that for some reason emerged in the 2010s or 2020s and became popular among newcomers. Let's hope it dies a quick death. [JFS]

Ridge Hollow Farm: *See under* Stables.

Ridge Road: 1. Ridge Road was an old highway leading into the present-day Silver Spring Country Club along the ridge to the south. Its north end joined Silver Spring Road at or near the present country club entrance, went west, and then south, paralleling Silver Spring Road, to a point below and opposite St. Johns Road. **2.** Ridge Road or Ridge Avenue were informal names for High Ridge Avenue and occasionally, East Ridge Road. [RN]

RidgeBowl: The Girolmetti family operated bowling alleys at 11 Danbury Road starting Oct. 12, 1964, on the site of the family's former restaurant, Mary's (*q.v.*). [P11/19/1964]. The alleys closed in 1985 and were converted to offices and shops. *See also* Old Ice House *and* Girolametti/Girolmetti.

Ridgebury, a name concocted from "Ridgefield" and "Danbury," is the territory generally held today to be north of the Aspen Ledges and west of the Ridgefield Lakes, extending north to and into Danbury. Originally called New Pattent (*q.v.*), "Ridgebury" began being used by 1762 (*see* John Whitlock), two years after the Second Ecclesiastical Society (*q.v.*) was formed, creating the second Congregational parish in town. While colony grants of land in what became Ridgebury were being made as early as 1697 (*see* Zack's Ridge). Ridgefield began buying land in this region in 1721 but it wasn't until 1731 that the colony government approved a patent for most of what's now Ridgebury plus land in western Danbury to the New Fairfield line. By 1734, Recompense Thomas had erected his house on Ridgebury Road, says Liljegren. By 1742, the town fathers had completed purchases from the American Indians and subdivided the new territory among themselves. Among early settlers were Keelers, St. Johns, Rockwells — all prominent in the First Society. In the 1770s, Ridgebury was a populous little hamlet, with taverns, stores, two churches (Congregational and Episcopal), a large cemetery, and even some modest industry, including a comb factory and some mills. Farming was the chief occupation. George Washington (*q.v.*) stayed in Ridgebury in 1780 and Compte Rochambeau (*q.v.*) and his troops encamped in 1781. From the 1780s until the 1810s, efforts were made to create a separate town of Ridgebury, but it never won approval of the Legislature, possibly because of opposition from Danbury which would have to give up some land, and Ridgefield, which would have to give up a state representative. In 1846, much of upper Ridgebury was ceded to Danbury, whose center was much closer for the residents in this wedge. In the 1870s, Ridgebury had two schoolhouses, South District and North District. [RN]

Ridgebury Cemetery, at 655 Ridgebury Road, a bit north of the Congregational Church, was said to have been established in 1743, but the earliest stones date from 1770s. Eighteen veterans of the Revolutionary War are buried there, as are such notables as author Cornelius Ryan, pioneering woman physician Annie Keeler Bailey, CIA leader Paul Velte, and Underground Railroad stationmasters Edward and Betsey Armstrong (*q.v. each*). Long privately held by a corporation, it was taken over by the Town of Ridgefield

in 2017, and contained about 830 graves in 2026. This cemetery is still accepting burials. [HLYB]

Ridgebury Community Club and Library Association existed in the mid-1920s, holding events like the Ridgebury Fair (in at least 1927) to raise money for a small library that would be established in the community club house. [NH8/25/1927] By 1961 the **Ridgebury Community Association** was organized and active in fighting light industrial development in the neighborhood; it also sponsored social gatherings. [BP7/19/1962]

Ridgebury Congregational Church, a member of the United Church of Christ, was founded in 1760, but a local congregation was allowed in 1739 to meet four months a year. Its current wooden Greek Revival structure on Ridgebury Road at Canterbury Lane was built around 1851. The oldest church building in Ridgefield, it's listed on the National Register of Historic Places (*q.v.*). By 2024, the congregation was called The Meetinghouse (*q.v.*). "In celebration of the beauty and uniqueness of each expression of God's diverse family, we welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings of participation in our congregation," said the congregation, led by the Rev. Deborah Rundlett. The church complex includes Shields Hall, its community center, built in the late 1960s and honoring the Rev. Hugh Shields (*q.v.*), longtime pastor. It is home to The Market, which provides "healthful dining" and retails gourmet items. [JFS]

Ridgebury Elementary School, the town's second "elementary" school after Veterans Park, had its first day of classes in November 1961, but was not formally dedicated until Feb. 11, 1962. By September 1963, the school was so crowded, it went on double sessions (which ended when Farmingville Elementary School opened in February 1964). In 1966 the selectmen approved buying 11.7 acres behind the school to use for student nature study. (Developer Robert Kaufman offered the land at $2,050 an acre.) In 1983, parents built a tire playground at the school. In 1997, the school was so crowded that a portable classroom was added. The building was enlarged in 2003-03. [JFS, RT]

Ridgebury Episcopal Church: In 1762, John Whitlock donated land for a meetinghouse for the "dissenting society of Ridgebury," an Anglican or Episcopal church serving Ridgebury. The church building was located in a triangle-shaped green formed by Ridgebury Road on the west, Ned's Mountain Road on the south and a now-closed but still town-owned path on the east side. There was also a cemetery there — *see* Old Episcopal Cemetery. The church operated before the Revolution, shut down during the war, reactivated, but then failed for lack of membership in the early 19th Century. [JFS, RIR, RLR4/222]

Ridgebury Estates, a subdivision south of Shadow Lake Road that includes Beaver Brook Road and Chipmunk Lane, was developed in the 1960s by Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*), who chose the name. It was first proposed in 1957 as Rolling Meadow Estates, but that plan was abandoned. In 1960s David Katz and Sons proposed Sherman Colonial (*q.v.*) development with one-acre lots, which became embroiled in long court battle over lot size; the Planning and Zoning Commission won with two acre lots. [RN]

Ridgebury Fair: *See* Ridgebury Community Club.

Ridgebury Farm is a seven-lot, PRD (*q.v.*) subdivision of 37 acres of former Lee

B. Wood farm off Ridgebury Road, developed by Carl Lecher (*q.v.*) in 1980 and served by Schoolhouse Place (*q.v.*). [RN]

Ridgebury Firehouse, also called Station Two, opened Oct. 16, 1968, after years of Ridgeburians' pleading for better fire protection. A major push began in 1962 after a fire destroyed many paintings in the home and studio of noted artist Bernard Perlin (*q.v.*) on Shadow Lake Road. *See also* Ridgefield Fire Department.

Ridgebury Hollow was first mentioned in a 1794 deed, probably now in the Mill Plain section of Danbury. *See also* The Hollow. [RN]

Ridgebury Post Office operated as early as 1826, according to RIRA. In 1831 the postmaster was Jason St. John; in 1842, Thomas St. John. From 1881 to 1901 it was at Bouton's general store, just north of the Congregational Church. [JFS, RIRA]

Ridgebury Mountain is the hill, reaching 930 feet above sea level, on which the Twixt Hills and Ridgefield Knolls developments are situated. It is north of Pierrepont Pond and Ledges Road, and south of Reagan and Bennett's Farms Roads. [RN] *See also* Barlow Mountain.

Ridgebury Road, from North Salem Road to Saw Mill and Turner Roads, near to the Danbury line, is the main highway from Ridgefield to and through Ridgebury. It is nearly four miles long. Probably in existence by the 1730s, it was by the 1750s called "New Pattent Road" (*see* New Pattent). In 1933, during the celebration of the Connecticut Tercentenary and a year after the 200th anniversary of the first President's birth, most of the road was officially renamed "George Washington Highway" because General Washington had traveled part of its length in September 1780. In 1959, the original name was restored for the north-south road (*see* George Washington Highway *and* SH 14. [RN]

Ridgebury schoolhouses: Ridgebury had two school districts, Number 15 North and Number 14 South, in the 19th Century. They were later combined into one, using schoolhouse at corner of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads. The school closed in 1929 and its building was purchased by Daniel M. McKeon (*q.v.*) around 1950 and moved across Ridgebury Road where today it is part of a house. The North Ridgebury schoolhouse was near today's Schoolhouse Place. [SD] *See also* Ridgebury Elementary School. [SD]

Ridgecrest Drive is part of the Stonecrest (*q.v.*) subdivision of Irving B. Conklin Sr., dating from the 1950s. [RN]

Ridgefield, a name created by the first settlers to describe the terrain, is not, like many other New England names, based on a town in Old England. In 1709, the legislature granted permission for the creation of a new town and in so acting, first used the name of "Ridgfield" (the name was frequently spelled Ridgfield in early documents). *See also* SS Ridgefield. [RN]

Ridgefield, Illinois, is an unincorporated town in northwestern Illinois, founded by Virginians just south of Wisconsin, in 1835 but named Ridgefield in 1855. Its name is not connected with Ridgefield, Conn.

Ridgefield, Ohio, is a township near such localities as Norwalk, Lyme, Groton, Hartford, Norwich, Oxford, and Sherman, all Connecticut town names. They are in what was called "The Firelands," a territory that was once part of Connecticut's Western Reserve, given to Connecticut residents whose houses were burned by the British during the Revolution. (Ridgefielders

claimed 65 losses worth £1,736, but only a few were houses.) [RN]

Ridgefield, Washington, is a town supposedly named for Ridgefield, Conn., by the sons of a minister who once served the South Salem Presbyterian Church and had enjoyed his visits to Ridgefield, Conn., village. [RIR].

Ridgefield Academy: 1. In 1817, Rev. Samuel M. Phelps (*q.v.*), minister of the Congregational Church, opened a private school, teaching "youth in the rudiments of the Latin, Greek, and French languages, in the theory of navigation, surveying and book-keeping, and in geography, English grammar, arithmetic, &c." Tuitions varied from $3.25 to $4.75 per quarter; boarding was $2.50 a week, "washing included." The school advertised that Ridgefield, "for pleasantness of situation, salubrity of air, and the sober and regular habits of the people, is exceeded by few in Connecticut." [NYG5/29/1817] **2.** In 1998, Landmark Academy, founded in Georgetown in 1975, announced it would buy the old Notre Dame Academy (*q.v.*) at 223 West Mountain Road for its new school (*q.v.*), a private co-educational institution renamed Ridgefield Academy, which opened the next year. In 2005, the academy completed a six-year, lease-to-purchase agreement that included gaining another 60,000 square feet of facilities on a total of 42 acres. By 2022 the school served preschool through eighth grade, with an enrollment of just over 200 students from Ridgefield and nearby towns. Administrative offices and the residence of the head of school are in the old Lynch family mansion, called West Mountain Farm (*q.v.*) — a building that the school appropriately calls Lynch House. [RGA]

Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment (RACE) is town government committee of volunteers "who want to help our community live sustainably and be good stewards of the earth. Serving in an advisory capacity to Ridgefield's First Selectperson, our mission is to raise awareness, educate and bring about action for the: responsible use of energy; conservation of natural resources; and reduction of waste." *See also* Environment. [RW]

Ridgefield Agricultural Society, a 19th Century organization to promote better farming practices, sponsored the annual Ridgefield Fair and Cattle Show (*q.v.*). Longtime president was Edward H. Smith (*q.v.*). In 1873, with Joshua King as its president, it had its fairgrounds (*q.v.*) on the east side of Wilton Road West and was erecting a sizable building there. Earlier that year it became a joint stock company. [JFS]

Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike: *See* Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike.

Ridgefield and New York Railroad, formed in July 1867, began issuing stock to build a train line from New York City to a Titicus station and eventually on to Danbury. The company actually built a track bed along part of its distance, including one section still visible off Golf Lane (*q.v.*). The plan succumbed to competition from the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad (*q.v.*), which built a branch line (*q.v.*) to Ridgefield in 1870. Stock certificates show up periodically on ephemera marketplace. Over the years the concept had other names and companies including "New York, Danbury and Boston Railway" and "Port Chester and Ridgefield Railroad." The proposed line was showing up on maps of Ridgefield as late as 1908. [JFS]

Ridgefield Angle is the name of the turn in the Connecticut-New York State line at Ridgefield. The line was established in 1731 boundary agreement transferring the "Oblong" (*q.v.*) to New York Colony. It and the Wilton Angle

better followed the Hudson roughly 20 miles to the east and also was an effort to keep as much of Ridgefield in Connecticut. Nonetheless, Ridgefield still lost many hundreds of acres. *See* "Wilton and Ridgefield Angles" for a detailed description.

Ridgefield Animal Hospital was operated by Dr. Clifford Heidinger (*q.v.*) from July 1985 until his retirement in July 2023 at 614 Main Street. The phone number was 438-4444, as in "all fours." [JFS]

Ridgefield Answer Book was an information guide, with answers to more than 400 questions about the town, that was published annually by *The Ridgefield Press* starting in the 1990s. It was resumed briefly in 2020s by Hearst Media, which bought *The Press.* [JFS]

Ridgefield Aquatic Club, the former Ridgefield Swim Club (*q.v.*)**,** "is a competitive swim program dedicated to empowering athletes to become champions in and out of the water." It makes use of the former Ridgefield Family Y pool, now town-owned, at the Barlow Mountain School, and runs competitive and non-competitive swimming programs for children and adults. [JFS]

Ridgefield Archives Committee was formed in 1990 "to assure the preservation of our town's written and pictorial history," to stage exhibits, and to foster interest in town's past. Early leaders included Jeanne Timpanelli and Kay Ables (*q.v. each*). The organization became Ridgefield Historical Society (*q.v*.) around the turn of the 21st Century. [JFS]

Ridgefield Arms is Ridgefield's first large-scale apartment complex. Forty-five units opened in November 1964, developed by Nicholas R. DiNapoli Sr. Advertised as "luxurious colonial apartments," the units offered free TV antennas, 30-inch oven and ranges, a 12-cubic-foot refrigerator, heat and hot water, and "provision" for air conditioning. A 426-square-foot efficiency rented for $125 a month; 825-square-foot one-bedroom for $160; and a 902-square-foot two-bedroom for $190. A second building of 30 units opened in 1983, developed by son Nicholas R. DiNapoli Jr. [P11/30/2014]

Ridgefield at 300 is a lavishly illustrated, coffee-table book about the town's celebration of its 300th birthday in 2008, produced by *Ridgefield Magazine*. (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Ridgefield Athletic Association, formed in the 1920s to promote sports activities, including boxing, wrestling and gymnastics, had a small gym at 37 Danbury Road. [DD75]

Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation (RAAC) was formed in the early 1970s to build and operate a non-profit ice skating rink on Prospect Ridge at Ivy Hill Road. Its zoning permit was approved June 15, 1971. A. Raymond Bessette (*q.v*.) was its chief backer. In the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, it has been known as the Winter Garden (*q.v.*) *See also* Hockey.

Ridgefield Bagels and Bakes at 463 Main Street (in the CVS shopping center), formerly Steve's Bagels, is a bakery serving breakfast and lunch and operated since 2023 by Gary and Emily King. [P11/28/2023]

Ridgefield Bakery at 411 Main Street (ONS92) was founded in 1866 and lasted until the mid-20th Century. J. W. Benedict ran it from 1894 to 1896, selling to Charles H. Stevens and William Reinhart in July 1896. Among the last owners was the Hurzeler family — *see* Ruth Hurzeler. It operated into the early 1960s when it became a restaurant, more recently Roma Pizzeria

(*q.v*.) and in 2026 Planet Pizza (*q.v*.). The last bakery owner was Christian D. Jensen. [P7/17/1896, JFS]

Ridgefield Band was founded in 1837 (or 1838 — RSB22) by Richard Dunning (*q.v*.), who was an instructor and bugle player with the band. The band was made up of five clarinets, three bugles, two French horns, three trombones, a bass, a snare drum and an ophicleide (something like a bassoon). After the turn of the 20th Century, it morphed into the Oreneca Band (*q.v*.). [RPC19]

Ridgefield Baptist Church was founded in 1961 when the Rev. Leonard Waterman (*q.v*.) organized and incorporated the Ridgefield Bible Fellowship as the Ridgefield Baptist Church. The first service took place in the Masonic Hall in December 1961. In 1962 the congregation began using Ridgebury School for services. Under the Rev. Harold Wheeler, a brick church building was erected at 325 Danbury Road; the first service was Christmas 1967, although the church was not dedicated until February 1968. *See also* Goodwill Baptist Church. [RPC, JFS]

Ridgefield Bicentennial Commission led the town's celebration of the nation's bicentennial in 1976, and oversaw 33 different projects, including a book, a play, fancy dress balls and several townwide celebrations, culminating in the re-enactment of the Battle of Ridgefield. Dennison Fiala (*q.v.*) was chairman of the commission. [JFS]

Ridgefield Bicycle and Sport Shop was operating at 416 Main Street in November 1980 [P11/25/1980].

Ridgefield Boarding School was a secondary school run by Samuel Sidney St. John (*q.v.)* from 1832 until about 1842 somewhere in the village. Tuition in 1833 was $25 per quarter, with $5 extra if French or math were taught, too. [NY Journal of Commerce, 9/11/1833]

Ridgefield Book Distributors, a wholesaling company, was located on Bailey Avenue in the 1960s and later in a barn on West Starrs Plain Road in nearby Danbury, where it burned to the ground. Owner was Richard Frisch of Ridgefield. [P1/8/1962]

Ridgefield Book Shop: 1. Louise Davidson (*q.v*.) and Beth Kemble Widmer opened a shop in house next to Perry's Market on Main Street, today site of Ridgefield Hardware [P1/20/1944, 2/10/1944] **2.** Another store of this name was opened at 26 Prospect Street June 11, 1973, by Whitney Book Shops, The new owners in 1981 were from New Canaan Book Store. [P2/5/1981]

Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club was founded in 1936 as the Ridgefield Boys Club by 11 Ridgefield women, mostly wealthy, to provide after-school activities, thereby reducing local "juvenile delinquency." The founders were Mrs. Edward L. Ballard, Mrs. John H. Lynch, Mrs. George H. Newton, Mrs. John Holbrook, Anne S. Richardson, Mrs. Jonathan Bulkley, Mrs. James M. Doubleday, Mrs. Theodore C. Jessup, Mrs. Francis Randolph, Edna Schoyer, and Mary May White (*q.v. each)*. In that era, married women were formally known by their husband's names). Soon the club began using the former Loder (*q.v.*) boarding house on Governor Street as its clubhouse. It started offering summer camps during World War II. [P6/11/1981] The town meeting voted in 1957 to lease "the Lounsbury fish pond property on Governor Street" to the club for $1 a year. [P6/20/1957] Ground was broken for new building there in June 1958, and the brick facility with gym opened in 1959. After a suit by the Women's Political Caucus (*q.v.*), a federal judge

ruled in 1983 that the town's leasing its land to a club for only boys at $1 a year was unconstitutionally supporting a discriminatory organization. [P7/14/1983] The TM then voted to sell the 4.9 acres at a fair market value of $59,000 to the club. [P12/1/1983] Girls were admitted in 1994 and the name was changed to the Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club. The building was modified and enlarged, 2006-7, and again enlarged in 2023. Today, the "club's programs and services promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence" with services ranging from "homework help to computer access for research, to innovative after school activities, to sports and vacation programs," all aimed at helping "young people develop into caring and responsible citizens." Past staff leaders of the club have included Ralph Crouchley, Ed Helminski, Mike Bedini, and Terry Hughes (*q.v. each*). Mike Flynn (*q.v.*) has led the club since 2014. [JFS]

Ridgefield Boys Band, a musical group established in 1926 by Aldo Casagrande (*q.v.*), was a successor of the old Oreneca Band (*q.v*.), whose name the boys band assumed in the 1930s. [DD59]

Ridgefield Brook is an alternate name for the upper reaches of the Norwalk River as it flows out of Great Swamp (*q.v.*) northerly past Fox Hill condominiums (*q.v.*) and Outpost Pond (*q.v.*), then west of Danbury Road past the Recreation Center northerly until Turn of the River (*q.v.)*. [RN, USGS]

Ridgefield Business Management Council, sponsored by the Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce (*q.v.*), helps chamber members "manage their business through planning, development, networking, and implementation."

Ridgefield Business Men's Association was one of several precursors to Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce (*q.v*.), founded in the early 20th Century. D.F. Bedient (*q.v.*) was president in 1913 and Albert H. Storer (*q.v.*) in 1914. [P4/24/1913]

Ridgefield Candy Shoppe operated in the early 1980s at 440 Main Street and "reopened" in July 1987 under new ownership of Judie Lapak and Marilyn Gilchrist. [P7/16/1987]

Ridgefield Cemetery: 1. An informal term often used to refer to the group of six cemeteries located in the triangle formed by North Salem Road, North Street, and Mapleshade Road. More especially, it is often used for the group of cemeteries consisting of Titicus, Scott's (*nee* Lockwood), Lounsbury-Rockwell, and Hurlbutt, but not Mapleshade or Fairlawn (*q.v. each*). **2.** The original official name of Scott's or Lockwood Cemetery, founded by Jacob Lockwood —see Ridgefield Cemetery Association. [HLYB]

Ridgefield Cemetery Association was established in 1868 by Jacob M. Lockwood (*q.v*.) who laid out what is now Scott's Cemetery, a part of the much larger cemetery now commonly — but not officially — called the Ridgefield Cemetery. [CBRFC, FAG, HLYB]

Ridgefield Center Historic District, which identifies significant historic properties from the first two centuries, is an irregularly shaped area that is roughly bounded by Pound Street, Fairview Avenue, Prospect Ridge, and Whipstick Roads that was added to National Register of Historic Places, beginning Sept. 7, 1984 (it's also on the state's register). It includes 241

"contributing buildings" and one other contributing structure, in the 395-acre area. Among the major properties in the district are the Lounsbury House, Keeler Tavern, Hauley House, the E.P. Dutton house, and Scott house (although moved from its 1984 location) (*q.v. each*). [P11/8/1984, W].

Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce has as its aim "building, promoting, and supporting our Ridgefield business community." Its first iteration was in the 1920s as the Promoters Club (*q.v.*). A Chamber of Commerce was started in the 1930s, but was short-lived. Local business people tried again in 1949, and this edition lasted into the early 1950s. As the number of businesses in town grew, the chamber was resurrected in 1965 and has continued nonstop since. In 1968, its first office opened at 27 Governor Street in the Donnelly Professional Building (*q.v.*). By 1990, it had moved to 7 Bailey Avenue to have a storefront presence in the central business district. The office moved to a non-storefront on Grove Street in the early 2010s. A few years later it moved to a 383 Main Street second-floor office. The chamber also sponsors the Ridgefield Restaurant Association and the Ridgefield Business Management Council (*q.v. each*).

Ridgefield Children's Center was operated at St. Mary's Parish from 1976 to 1981 by Nan Howkins (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Chronicles, an illustrated book by Jack Sanders (*q.v.*), profiles aspects of Ridgefield's history including interesting people, the things they accomplished, and the way they lived, as well as discusses the town's varied geography and place names. Its 160 pages were published by The History Press in 2014.

Ridgefield Cider Mill, on the corner of Grove Street and what was then called Railroad Avenue, was operated in the late 1920s and early 1930s by the Pierpaoli family. By 1940, it was Pierpaoli's Restaurant, followed by a series of restaurants — in 2026, The Hideaway. [T1933]

Ridgefield Civic Ballet was founded by dancer Patricia Schuster (*q.v.*) "as a way to expand her vision to give young dancers the opportunity to perform on the larger public stage alongside professionals, an experience she believed would inspire them to a higher appreciation for the full world of dance," says the Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance (*q.v.*). Some of her early students went on to become professionals themselves, including New York City Ballet Principal Dancer James Fayette (*q.v.*). The Nutcracker was the school's first main performance. [JFS]

Ridgefield Cleaners was opened just after World War II by former Army Air Force pilot Leno Valentino (*q.v.*) in the Denton Block (*q.v.*). He ran the business for 40 years before retiring in 1988. By the 1990s, the business was at 15 Governor Street, operated by Sam Hur.

Ridgefield Club, The, was first mentioned in 1886 as a planned "social club after the style of the Lenox Club" for wealthy summer people. By August 1887 the clubhouse on West Lane was nearly completed, but was already in use for bowling [P8/12/1887]. The facilities soon included a lounge and pool tables. The main club building later became First Congregational Church House; it burned down in 1978 and has been replaced by Lund Hall (*q.v.*). *See also* Country Club of Ridgefield.

Ridgefield Coffee Shop: 1. Harold A. Mead and mother, Sheila, of West Lane operated at the old Joe's Corner store ONS152 Main Street in February

1961. It was sold in December 1961 to William F. Bonadio of Danbury and closed a year later. (2) A different Ridgefield Coffee Shop was established 1974 by Nancy and Albert Gasparino at 23 Bailey Avenue. In late 80s and early 90s it was operated by George Tsilfides. The site became Bailey's Backyard (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Commerce Park is a shopping center, developed starting around 1980, with three buildings, on Danbury Road south of South Street. Early businesses included Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream, Lotus restaurant, and The Food Chandler. The final of the three buildings was not erected until 2012 and holds the Ridgefield Bicycle Company. In 2024, Commerce Park housed such businesses as the Early Bird Restaurant, Starbucks, MatressFIRM, Bella Home, Posa restaurant, Verizon, and Pure Barre. Morganti Inc. was a major backer of the project which it built.

Ridgefield Community Council was a local non-profit founded in 1939 by Stewart E. Scofield that staged events aimed at improving life in Ridgefield. For instance, it sponsored New Year's Eve dances and Old Home Days (July 4) in the early 1940s. Among other things, the council supported the adoption of zoning (*q.v.*) in town. However, in April 1942, the council disbanded because of the war and all the defense-related activities people were involved in. [JFS]

Ridgefield Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse, founded in 2005, is a group of community leaders "dedicated to the development and support of policies and programs that enhance the growth, safety and well-being of Ridgefield youth and families, especially in the area of preventing substance abuse." The council is co-chaired by the first selectperson and the school superintendent, and has representatives from most local organizations involving young people. [RW] *See also* Ridgefield Prevention Council.

Ridgefield Community Foundation was founded in 1999 to raise funds for community groups; Deidre McClain was a leader. To raise money, it published a book, *Ridgefield Kids Are Funny* (*q.v.*). It also established the Philanthropic Youth Council (*q.v.*). By about 2014 it had shut down.

Ridgefield Community Kindergarten was founded at the Ridgefield Community Center in 1959 by Dr. Clara Platt after the rapid growth in school population and the need for classroom space prompted the school system to abandon 25-year-old public pre-school kindergarten. Dolores Robinson was director for at least first 20 years. It was called "only nursery school in town" in 1981. [P7/2/1981] In 2024 the operation, also called simply RCK, is in the lower level of North Hall on the campus of St. Stephen's Church. Director in 2024 is Jennifer Cade.

Ridgefield Community Partnership was an anti-drug and alcohol group formed in the 1990s, which grew into the Ridgefield Prevention Council (*q.v.*). [P10/14/2004]

Ridgefield Community Programs, Inc.: *See* Friends of Ridgefield Community Programs.

Ridgefield, Conn. 1708-1908 Bi-Centennial Celebration is a 96-page hardbound book of history, recollections, speeches, and photographs in connection with the town's 200th birthday celebration, published by the Bi-Centennial Committee in 1908.

Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance was opened 2002 by Ridgefield Playhouse

with bequest from Patricia Schuster (*q.v.)*. It operates as a non-profit at 440 Main Street. Its first director was James Robey, former dancer with Metropolitan Opera Ballet.

Ridgefield Country Club: 1. *See* Country Club of Ridgefield. **2.** The last use of the Upagenstit (*q.v.*) estate before it was subdivided, the club operated in early 1950s, promoted on a postcard as "a former 3 million dollar estate, now your vacation resort. Only 51 miles from New York City on Route 35." It was operated by the JPFO — the Jewish People Fraternal Organization, which in 1951 New York state insurance commissioner alleged had ties to Community Party; the commissioner maintained the club was a secret site for underground Communist "indoctrination" and "propaganda." It closed by 1954 when the property was subdivided. *See also* Ridgefield Manor Estates

Ridgefield Creamery was a facility to which farmers brought milk to be processed into cream, butter, and bottled milk for sale. In January 1888 J.W. Rockwell said Ridgefield needed a creamery and could support one, pointing out that more than 800 cows lived in town and nearby South Salem. By 1894, the Ridgefield Creamery was established on Creamery Lane and was producing 60,000 pounds of butter annually; its operators that year were J.W. Rockwell, John F. Holmes, W. A. Benedict, R. W. Keeler, E. W. Keeler, A. C. Keeler, J. A. Wakeman, and H. A. Barrett. The operation had apparently shut down by 1910, and the building later became Goodwill Baptist Church (*q.v.*). After that closed, it was converted to all apartments by Robert J. Walker in 1976; Walker maintained that reports that the building was the old Congregational Church that had stood on the Green were untrue because it was structurally impossible; however, parts from the church may have been recycled and used in erecting the building. *See also* Livestock.

Ridgefield Crisis Resource Team assists school personnel in helping students or staff members who are coping with a loss. Team members are licensed mental health professionals.

Ridgefield Crossings, an assisted living facility at 640 Danbury Road, opened in 1999 as Chancellor Park (*q.v.*), then became Great Pond Crossing. It got its current name in 2003 when Benchmark Senior Living purchased the facility and added the Harbor Memory Care unit for people with Alzheimer's or other dementiaThe facility, along with Laurel Ridge Health Care Center (*q.v.*) and Regency at Ridgefield (*q.v.*) age-restricted condominiums are on former Camp Adventure (*q.v.*). *See also* George Bakes.

Ridgefield CT Pride is a local non-profile organization, founded in 2019, "to foster a sense of belonging for our LGBTQ+ community members and their families by educating, promoting awareness and understanding, increasing visibility, and celebrating our LGBTQ+ community members." It sponsors local events such as Pride in the Park, poetry readings, and social gatherings. [JFS]

Ridgefield Cycle Center opened in January 1983 near Cumberland Farms on Danbury Road, owned by Steve Fishman and Joe Kappell who had a similar store in Wilton. [P2/17or24/1983]

Ridgefield Deer Committee: *See* Deer problem.

Ridgefield Design Council in 2002 published the sizable study, *About Ridgefield: What We Were, What We Are* (*q.v.*). The council had advised the

town on matters related to the design of public buildings, spaces and streets, but was disbanded around 2012. [JFS, Patch12/1/2011]

Ridgefield Diner was established 1950 at 746 Danbury Road (ONS318) by Jacob Reutimann (*q.v.*), who sold it in 1957 to Adolf and Lori Gaub (*q.v.*) who in 1964 enlarged the diner, added liquor, and changed the name to Ridgefield Restaurant (*q.v.*). It closed ca. 1970 when the property was sold to Ridgefield European Motors (*q.v.)*.

Ridgefield Dramatic Club organized Jan. 14, 1911, and decided to stage, as its first production, "What Happened to Jones." [P1/19/1911] *See also* Ridgefield Players, Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts.

Ridgefield Drug Company was a pharmacy at ONS88 Main Street, about where 389 Main Street is now. [1940 telephone directory]

Ridgefield Education Association is a common name for the organization representing Ridgefield teachers in collective bargaining; i.e., it is the teachers' union. It is more formally known as Ridgefield NEA, or National Education Association-Ridgefield, reflecting its affiliation with the National Education Association, and was formerly known as Ridgefield Teachers Association (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Ridgefield Education Foundation is a non-profit organization of people "who believe that education is at the heart of our community" and are guided by a volunteer Board of Directors composed of parents, local community leaders, Board of Education members, the Ridgefield Public Schools superintendent, and teachers. The organization supports creative and innovative programs for both students and teachers, designed to improve the education program. [JFS]

Ridgefield Electric Company, founded in 1906 by H.B. Anderson (*q.v.*), was the first supplier of electricity in town, generating electricity with coal at a plant on Ivy Hill Road, next to the railroad branch. In August 1924, Connecticut Light and Power Company began providing the electricity to the Ridgefield Electric lines, increasing the voltage to the village; CL&P's feed comes from Georgetown [P8/21/1924]. The old power plant became a house at Ivy Hill Road — *see* Otto Jespersen.

Ridgefield Environmental Action Program (REAP) was formed in 1971, inspired by a League of Women Voters study of the dump and waste management. Its aim was creating a recycling program. On April 3, 1971, REAP had its first bottle-and-can recycling drive at the town highway garage. More than 3,000 pounds of glass and aluminum containers were collected; REAP earned $55 selling the containers — about $415 in 2024 dollars. Among the other ways funds were raised for a new center was the Dump Ball, held Sept. 16, 1972, when hundreds of Ridgefielders dined and danced on the parking lot of the highway department overlooking the trash landfill. The Recycling Center opened in 1974, long before recycling became mandatory in the state (in 1991).

Ridgefield European Motors, a dealership selling BMW, Mazda and other imported brands, was started in the mid-1960s by Eric Erhardt at ONS84 Danbury Road (later Marty Motors, 92 Danbury Road), then moved ca. 1970 to 746 Danbury Road (Route 7). The business was sold in 2008 to BMW of Ridgefield (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Fair and Cattle Show, sponsored by the Ridgefield Agricultural Society (*q.v.*), ran annually from 1858 until 1881. The first fairgrounds —

then for a one-day event — was on Gilbert Street. As the affair grew in popularity and size and lasted two days, it was moved to Governor Street at what's now Veterans Park. Finally it found a permanent home at the "Fair Grounds" east of Wilton Road West, opposite Olmstead Lane. On Thursday, Oct. 3, 1861, an estimated 6,000 people attended. [DAR] Probably by then it was a four-day event — Tuesday through Friday — in late September or early October. It was a typical country fair, with exhibits of products, produce and livestock, music, food, and awards. [RN]

Ridgefield Family Y, the town's second attempt at a YMCA operation, was established 1976, with its first offices at north end of Main Street, and then in St. Mary's School. It tried in 1977-78 to build a Y on an Ivy Hill Road site owned by the town, but neighbors opposed and others argue town would be supporting religious organization (Young Men's Christian Association). In 1980, it sought a facility on the former Francis Martin property on North Salem Road, but plans were vetoed by P&Z [P10-30/1980]. In 1981, voters OKed selling Ivy Hill land for a Y, but building costs wound up higher than expected. What's more, the closing of the Barlow Mountain Elementary School (*q.v.*) made that building available; the Family Y bought the school Sept. 22, 1983, for $625,000 [P9/22/1983]. By 1984, the Y had 4,000 members [P10/4/1984] and a year later opened an indoor pool. However, burdened with debt, the Family Y went bankrupt in 1990 and closed in June. The building became the town Recreation Center (*q.v.*), which assumed most of the Y's function, and when the center got a new headquarters on Danbury Road, the building returned to its original elementary school use *See also* YMCA, Ridgefield Aquatic Club.

Ridgefield Fights the Civil War is an illustrated history of Ridgefield's participation in the war, written by Charles Pankenier, It's 60 pages and was published by Worthy Shorts in 2011.

Ridgefield Film Commission was created in 2007 to woo filmmakers to the town and was headed by Allison Stockel (*q.v.*) of the Ridgefield Playhouse for many years. [P6/12//2008]

Ridgefield Fire Department, founded in 1897**,** is a combination of paid and volunteer firefighters and paramedics headquartered at the firehouse at 6 Catoonah Street. The department was all volunteer until 1947 when paid coverage of the firehouse began. It got its first ambulance in January 1938. A second firehouse opened in 1968 at Bennett's Farm, Old Stagecoach and Regan Roads in Ridgebury. Paramedic service began in 1986. A minimum of eight career firefighters staff the two stations on a full-time basis providing both fire and EMS services. Up to three paramedic-level-care ambulances are used. During Fiscal Year 2017-2018 a total of 37 paid career line positions were supported by the department's budget and volunteer membership was maintained at 53 members. *See also* Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department, paramedic service, Ridgebury Firehouse.

Ridgefield Fish and Game Association existed during the first third of the 20th Century. The association stocked nearby streams with trout and annually released "a great number of pheasants and quail." The association leased several streams, opened only to members for fishing. Membership was $1 a year in the mid-1930s. [R1935, DD144]

Ridgefield Fitness Center was operated by Sue and Jim Johnstone at 66 Grove Street (former Digitech building). It closed 2013.

Ridgefield Floral Society, a precursor of the local garden clubs, was founded around 1868 and had annual flower shows at Jones Hall in the Big Shop. [Bridgeport Standard, 8/4/1869]

Ridgefield Food Processing Center opened in July 1943 as part of the war effort to produce food locally, and ran during the summer, allowing residents to bring fresh fruit and vegetables they'd grown to be canned for them "under expert direction." Mrs. Edwin R. Myer was director. [5/27/1943] For its second growing season, 1944, the center put up 6,640 "cans" — actually jars — of fruits and vegetables. [P9/21/1944] While the center volunteers were mostly women, five men joined, including the Rev. William B. Lusk (*q.v.*) and seven-year-old Jacques Ullman, whose artist father Paul (*q.v.*), working as an undercover agent in France, was killed by the Nazis. [JFS]

Ridgefield Garden Club had its first meeting June 9, 1914, at the home of its first president, Mrs. Albert H. Storer, on Main Street. The club's initial aims were to promote the art of gardening, further the planting of small gardens, give practical suggestions and aid to its members, and encourage experimentation, but were soon expanded to include improving the community — the club absorbed the old Village Improvement Society. Today, the club oversees plantings around town, especially the gardens in Ballard Park where it and the Caudatowa Garden Club (*q.v.*) operate the Ballard Greenhouse (*q,v,*). Its popular Plant Sale takes place annually the Friday and Saturday before Mother's Day.

Ridgefield Gardens is a 1956 subdivision of 46 lots off Limekiln and Haviland Roads, designed by Gustave W. Iser, an architect, and developed largely by Armando Salvestrini, who continued developing in the neighborhood well into the 1980s. It includes Poplar Road, Hawthorne Circle, Willow Lane, and Linden Road. [RN]

Ridgefield Golf Course: *See* Dlhy Ridge Golf Course.

Ridgefield Golf Range and Miniature Golf Course opened Jun 9, 1984. The owner was Peter Belmont and the operation was later known as Belmont's. He was author of seven books on aspects of golf and maintained that he was the inventor of the only patented complete set of golf clubs in the history of the game. He had other golf centers in Florida and the West Indies. [DNT5/30/1984]

Ridgefield Grange, a once very active organization for the agriculturally minded, was founded in 1906 with 23 members, possibly to replace the disbanded Ridgefield Agricultural Society (*q.v.*). Albert C. Innis was the first master (president). Regular meetings included not only information on husbandry, but also talks about current events, foreign countries and history, as well as music and dramatic presentations. Members participated in many fairs, and had floats in local parades. There was no "grange hall" as was found in many communities. The Grange disbanded around 1973 because of dwindling membership. A **Junior Grange**, the first in Connecticut, was established in 1926 and lasted until 1965. [RPC90]

Ridgefield Group, The, was a consumer product evaluation service operated by Dr. Gordon Keswick at 79 Ned's Mountain Road in the 1970s.

Ridgefield Hardware was founded in 1938 by Ed Rabin (*q.v.*), and later operated by son Jerry Rabin. It began at 384 Main Street (Rodier Flowers in 2020) and moved across the street to a new building at 385 Main Street in

1948. In 2005-06, it added second story to the building, allowing more storage. In 2024, the store is still operated by the Rabin family, although Jerry retired in 2020. [JFS, DD97]

Ridgefield Health Resort, also called the Ridgefield Resort, opened about 1949 on old Upagenstit (*q.v.*) estate on West Lane. It was promoted on a postcard mailed in 1951 as a "beautiful 70-acre estate; private park, rolling lawns, landscaped woodlands; open all round round." It includes glass-enclosed swimming pool. The postcard also said it was the "home of the JPFO" — the Jewish People's Fraternal Order (*see* Ridgefield Country Club), The Zoning Commission soon charged operators with running an illegal home for the aged, rather than a resort or hotel. By 1952, the place morphed into Ridgefield Country Club (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield High School: The town's first public high school, called Alexander Hamilton High School (*q.v.*), opened in 1915 in the former 1882 Center School (*q.v.*), a two-story wooden building on Bailey Avenue (now the site of the municipal parking lot). The first principal was Caleb Niles, who also taught some classes. The first graduation in 1917 had only three students who had started their secondary studies at Norwalk High School. The first four-year graduation was 1919 — 10 students. The Hamilton building was soon overcrowded; some classes were held in the town hall and firehouse. Voters approved a new high school addition at East Ridge by a vote of 214-71, on Oct. 1, 1923 [P10/2/1923]. The new school opened in 1926 at the enlarged East Ridge School and began being called "Ridgefield High School." The school expanded again to include an auditorium — now the Ridgefield Playhouse (*q.v.*) — in 1939. A large gymnasium, now Yanity Gym, was added in 1957. After considerable debate and a huge 1968 referendum attracting more than 3,000 voters, the school moved to a new 213,000-square-foot building at 700 North Salem Road in 1972, built on the former Mamanasco Farm estate of Anne S. Richardson (*q.v.*). Planned for 1,800 students, the building was holding 2,000 youngster in the mid-1970s. The school was expanded and modified in 2002-03, including a new cafeteria. *See also* Graduation, Alexander Hamilton High School, East Ridge School, Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, Class pranks, Tigers, Hilltoppers, Millionaires. For a history of the debate over whether to building the high school on North Salem Road or expanding the building on East Ridge, see special section in [P9/14/1972]. [JFS, KSN] *See also* Morganti Addition, dress code, Tiger Hollow.

Ridgefield Hills is a 1961, 19-lot subdivision, served by Woodchuck Lane, developed by Lewis J. Finch and John F. Coyle off Wilton Road West. [RN]

Ridgefield Hilltop Acres, Company: In 1956, Ridgefield Hilltop Acres Company, headed by A. Edward Major, developed 24 lots on the Biddle Hill (*q.v.*) area on the north side of Branchville Road; *see* Nutmeg Ridge. [RN]

Ridgefield Historic Architectural Resources Survey, done in the late 1970s by the Ridgefield Preservation Trust (*q.v.*), catalogued the construction techniques, architectural style, and significant social history of some 600 of the town's buildings. The 1,500 pages of documents now belong to the Ridgefield Historical Society (*q.v.*), and can be downloaded from its website. [JFS] *See also* Jeremy Wilmot.

Ridgefield Historical Society: 1. The first historical society for Ridgefield was the local library, long called the Ridgefield Library and Historical

Association. During much of the 20th Century, virtually all historical records and artifacts were donated to and preserved by the library and kept in its underground "history room." Most of these records were later turned over to #3 or the Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center (*q.v.*) as the library divested itself of its historical association function. **2.** A "Ridgefield Historical Society" was founded in 1976, with the hope of creating a place where Ridgefield's historical materials could be preserved and appreciated. Beryl (Mrs. Robert) Auwood was elected president; other officers included Ralph Jahnige, Bobbi Longmire, Vernon Welch, Lee Dickinson, Charles Coles; directors included Dennison Fiala, John Tower, Kitty Rosa, Raymond Pearson, Paul Hampden, Jack Sanders, and Jeremy Wilmot. [SA3/29/1976]. This organization lasted only a year or so. 3. The current society was established, a descendant of the Ridgefield Preservation Trust (*q.v.*) and set up headquarters in the Scott House (*q.v.*), 4 Sunset Lane, in 2002. The society has a large, temperature-controlled vault for storing records and artifacts from Ridgefield's past; sponsors many programs such as lectures, discussions and demonstrations, related to Ridgefield history; operates the West Lane Schoolhouse (*q.v.*) museum; maintains a huge, searchable, online archive of information and pictures related to Ridgefield history (ridgefieldhistoricalsociety.org); and generally promotes the appreciation and preservation of Ridgefield's past.

Ridgefield Hunt Club had its first meeting Sept. 26, 1935 with 21 riders present.

Ridgefield Ice Company, in which Mario Girol[a]metti, Ciro Montanari and Nazzareno Lavatori were partners, started in 1923, when they bought the ice delivery business from J.W. Hibbart Company. the partners provided ice to most of the estates in town, getting ice from Round Pond, which they rented for $350 a year, and from a pond south of Veterans Park field owned by former Governor Phineas C. Lounsbury. They kept ice year round in a sawdust-insulated building just off Danbury Road, at what is now Girolmetti Court (*q.v.*). [P6/10/2010] *See also* Old Ice House.

Ridgefield Ice Cream was established in 1977 when Felix Lechner of New Milford bought the Carvel (*q.v.*) ice cream stand at 680 Danbury Road (Route 7); he had been manager there. Frequent customers included Paul Newman and Adam Sandler. Lechner sold the business in the mid 2010s and it closed around 2023. In 2024, the stand became Flobee's (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Illuminating Company was formed at the beginning of the 20th Century to provide gas lighting for village buildings and streets. A four-inch gas main was installed from the company's offices on Bailey Avenue up into Main Street and along West Lane. Private homes along the route were illuminated by the system, as well as the Town Hall and several stores. The firm soon went out of business for financial reasons and its illuminating function was replaced by the Ridgefield Electric Company (*q.v.*). [RIR]

Ridgefield Improvement Society was a late 19th Century organization promoting largely business interests, probably the equivalent of a chamber of commerce today. Longtime president was Edward H. Smith (*q.v.*). In 1879 it was making and planning improvements to the recently built Town House (*q.v.*). [12/24/1879]

Ridgefield in Review, written by Silvio Bedini (*q.v.*), is the most recent complete history of the town, published in 1958 in connection with

Ridgefield's 250th birthday celebration; it's extensively illustrated, 396 pages, indexed. While out of print it is available free in digital form from Internet sources, including the HS.

Ridgefield Inn, The: 1. Originally called simply "The Inn," this hotel catering to summer visitors from NYC was designed by William A. Bates, a NYC architect, and built about 1891 on east side of lower Main Street, about where #8 is now. Artists Charles Roswell Bacon (*q.v.*) and his wife Elizabeth Chase were early managers, and their artist-author daughter Peggy Bacon (*q.v.*) was born there. The new name. Ridgefield Inn, was given to the place when Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin S. Warner (*q.v*.) took over in 1903 [P5/7/1903] and soon after the original owner of that name had stopped operating (*see #2*). They hoped to open it year-round instead of May-autumn. In 1907 it was leased during the colder months by The Ridgefield School (*q.v.*) as a boys prep school. The inn was razed in the mid-1920s. **2.** A name used briefly from 1890 to 1898 for the old Oreneca or Dyckman House (*q.v*. each), operated by J.O. Poole, 1890-96, [RIR, RPJ7/14] It stood at about 441 Main Street (Toy Chest in 2026). The building was moved and is now apartments on High Ridge Avenue at Abbott Avenue. **3**. The name sometimes applied to the Inn at Ridgefield. (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Kids Are Funny is a book produced 2000 by Ridgefield Community Foundation as fundraiser, offering "wit and wisdom" of local children. [JFS]

Ridgefield KinderCare, a day-care center, was opened by Tracy Brown of Southbury in August 2023 at 35 Copps Hill Road. [P8/24/2023]

Ridgefield Knolls is one of Ridgefield's largest developments: 238 houses had been built on some 300 acres by Oct. 1, 1975. Designed in 1959 on the former Todd brothers dairy farm (*see* Todds Road), "The Knolls" includes Knollwood Drive, Senoka Drive, Bob Hill Road, Summit Lane, Aspen Ledges Road, Fox Drive, Rolling Ridge Road, Short Lane, Spire View Road, Partridge Drive, Quail Drive, Todd's Road, Sugar Loaf Mountain Road, Virginia Court and the southern half of Old Stagecoach Road. The name comes from the several small hills — or "knolls" — that make up the top of Ridgebury Mountain, site of the development. Robert Kaufman (*q.v.*) of Redding was the developer; for many years he continued to operate the Topstone Hydraulic Company, which provided water for the Knolls. The water system is now operated by Aquarion (*q.v*.). [RN]

Ridgefield Lakes is the town's largest "development" with over 450 houses by early 1980s, subdivided by several different companies. Development was begun in the 1920s by the Pequot Real Estate Development Company, led by Andrew C. P. Christensen, who came to Ridgefield in 1917, buying the old Higgins house (burned in 1954) on Bennett's Farm Road and 600 acres. He envisioned the development as providing summer "camps" for New York City residents. Work began in 1923 when John Morganti (*q.v*.) built the four dams used to create lakes. William Lawrence Winthrop (*q.v.*), known locally as Willie, acquired the property in 1932 and for a while called the development Fox Hill Lakes. There was no zoning when the area began to be developed as summer camps on lots of less than a tenth of an acre. The community water systems and the individual septic systems were designed for limited summer use. As the economy changed and as suburban life became more popular, the summer camps were converted into year-round houses and winterized new houses were erected — some

today sell for far more than $1 million. Aquarion, the state's largest water company, took over and upgraded many community water systems. Among the notable residents of the Ridgefield Lakes was folksinger Judy Collins (*q.v.*) Kennedy confidant Ted Sorensen (*q.v.*), and film composer Alex North (*q.v.*). [RN]

Ridgefield Library was established by 12 residents on Oct. 16, 1871 as the Ridgefield Library and Historical Association. In 1883, Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*) provided a building for the library on Governor Street (it had earlier served as the telegraph office and, after was the library, it became the telephone office and then Ridgefield Water Supply Company office; moved to Great Pond ca. 1960, it was heavily damaged by vandals and razed in the mid-1970s). The first librarian, Jennie Smith, was appointed in 1899 and served 25 years. James N. Morris donated a new library building at Main and Prospect Street (former site of Smith Tavern, *q.v.*), which was completed in 1902; it then housed about 3,000 books. By 1944, the collection had grown to 25,000 books and by 2024, more than 76,000 "physical items." A children's library was created in November 1957. The building was enlarged in 1962-63, and in 1984, underwent a major renovation from 7,200 to 24,000 square feet after an anonymous donor gave $1-million toward the project [3/17/1983]. The library underwent extensive renovation in 1996, but without an increase in size. Much of the library was razed in 2012 to make way for a 44,000-square-foot, "new library," which opened in 2014, financed with $15 million in private donations and $5 million grant from the town. Over the century, the original 1902 brick library structure was retained and restored as part of the facility. [RPC, RIR] *See also* E.W. Morris Memorial Library.

Ridgefield Lions Club: *See* Lions Club.

Ridgefield Lumber Company was owned for many years in early 20th Century by Richard W. Osborn (*q.v.*), whose office was on the south side of Prospect Street near Bailey Avenue. He sold the business to a group headed by William H. Cargon; it was then owned by Frank Dain and finally Louis Price (*q.v.*) whose family operates it today as Ridgefield Supply Company (*q.v.)*. [DD48]

Ridgefield Luncheonette was a mid-1960s restaurant at 411 Main Street. The business was acquired in February 1968 by Mrs. Paul Botsch and daughter Patricia and Jacqueline Roos. The site later became Roma Pizzeria, then Planet Pizza, and had previously been the Ridgefield Bakery (*q.v. each*).

Ridgefield Lydian Society was formed in January 1834 at the Congregational Church, according to a church history. An early ladies-aid organization, it was supposed to "raise funds to promote the interests of such benevolent associations or individuals as shall from time to time be considered worth our cooperation." The name suggests that its activities may have centered around singing. [RT]

Ridgefield Magazine was founded in 2002 by publishing executive Geoffrey Morris (*q.v.*), who went on to produce six other community magazines, including those in Wilton, Bedford, Fairfield, and Litchfield under the name, TownVibe Media. The glossy, full-color magazine contains many features and columns related to the community. In 2020, Ridgefield Media, headed by Amanda Duff, who had been a contributing writer, acquired Ridgefield Magazine and Duff became its editor. By 2022, it had been purchased by

Dee Dee Colabella (*q.v.*) and retitled *068*, focusing on Ridgefield, Redding and Wilton.

Ridgefield Manor Estates is a subdivision by Harold F. Benel, who bought the old Upaganstit (*q.v.*) estate in 1954 and razed the mansion. In 1955, he filed plans for 46 one-acre lots on 66 acres on Manor Road, Lewis Drive, Fairfield Court, Shadow Lane, West Lane, and Golf Lane. [RN, DD13-15]

Ridgefield Media: *See* Ridgefield Magazine.

Ridgefield Men's Club, founded in 1984, is a social organization for retired and semi-retired men, meeting twice monthly to hear speakers of interest. It offers activities in such groups as bridge, computers, personal finance, fishing, wood carving, and hiking.

Ridgefield Mobil: *see under* Socony.

Ridgefield Montessori School opened in September 1972 in the then-former St. Mary's School building. At some point this operation ceased. A new school of the same name opened in 1999 and in 2022 was at 96 Danbury Road. The school offers toddler, early education and kindergarten programs for children 18 months to 6 years old. *See also* Priyamont Montessori School.

Ridgefield Motor Inn, a motel at 296 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7), was actually in Redding. It was established in the early 1950s by Herbert R. "Johnny" Johnston, who also had a restaurant there, called Johnny Johnston's. The motel became a Days Inn (*q.v.*) in the early 2000s. [JFS]

Ridgefield Motors was a Pontiac dealership in 1940, housed in the old Whitlock/Sperry livery stable, ONS 13 Catoonah Street, opposite the firehouse. It was operated by Leo Pambianchi (*q.v.*) who moved the business to Bailey Avenue after World War II. [P3/14/1940]

Ridgefield Music Store at 21 Governor Street (Donnelly Shopping Center) was opened 1977 by Joe Cardillo, and taken over in 1994 by Chris Pike who retired in 2016. The store closed July 31, 2019. The store carried instruments, sheet music, and supplies and offered lessons. [JFS]

Ridgefield Musical Association existed in the mid-19th Century and had several choirs that gave concerts. One concert, Jan. 16, 1854, was called "quite pleasing" by Anna Resseguie. [DAR]

Ridgefield Neighbors and Newcomers: *See under* Newcomers Club.

Ridgefield Newcomers Club: *See* Newcomers Club of Ridgefield.

Ridgefield News Store: *See* Squash's.

Ridgefield 1900-1950, is a 2003 book containing more than 200 pictures of what Ridgefield looked like during the first half of the 20th Century, using postcard images of homes, estates, inns, street scenes, stores, churches, and more. More than 20,000 words by Jack Sanders tell the history and lore of the locales pictured. The 126-page book, published by Arcadia Publishing, includes a bibliography and index.

Ridgefield Office Supply: *See* Squash's.

Ridgefield Old Timers Association was founded in 1992 by Paul Baker (*q.v.*), who was its first chairman, Julie Petrini, John Tulipani, and Joseph Brunetti (*q.v.*). ROTA annually honors past Ridgefield athletes, as well as civic leaders and educators, and awards scholarships to Ridgefield students. Members must have lived in town at least 25 years. [JFS]

Ridgefield Open Space Association, or ROSA, was largely responsible for encouraging the town's acquisition of part of the former IBM/Fox Hill Inn

property, now the core of Bennett's Pond State Park (*q.v.*). Leaders included Ellen Burns, longtime owner of Books on the Common (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Operation for Animal Rescue: *See* ROAR.

Ridgefield Opticians was operated by Gary W. Usher in 1970s, early 80s, at 9 Bailey Avenue. It later moved to Copps Hill Plaza

Ridgefield Pediatric Associates at 38B Grove Street was founded in 1974, one of the town's first medical group practices.

Ridgefield Pharmacy: 1. in the early and middle 20th Century, this name was used for a drug store on Main Street operated successively by Howard Smith, George A. Mignerey, and Henry Smith (*q.v*. each). **2.** In the early 1970s, Tom and Ed Karvosky — who later owned Bissell's — opened a Ridgefield Pharmacy at 62 Danbury Road which, in the early 2000s, was sold to CVS (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Ridgefield Photo Shop, a store and studio, was established in 1945 by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gordon (*q.v*.) at 424 Main Street (ONS127). Clarence and Geraldine Korker bought the business in 1951. In 1959 or 1960, it moved to 392 Main Street (ONS89), next to Craig's Jewelry Store, then in 1966 to the new building at 403 Main Street. "That building was built by Morganti and our part was designed by Kodak for the store, studio and black and white and color labs," said Clarence Korker (*q.v.*). Around 1991, the Korkers retired and moved to Fellsmere, Fla., selling the shop to George Harrison of Wilton, who had a shop in that town. In 2007, Harrison announced he was closing the 62-year-old business, a victim of digital photograph. [JFS]

Ridgefield Players was an amateur theatrical group that staged plays in the 1930s, usually at town hall. "Metuchen" directed in April 1934 by Robert C. Fischer (*q.v.*), benefited the District Nursing Association [P4/5/1934]. Fischer also directed "Father-In-Law" in November 1935, benefiting the PTA. Members included Myrtice Weaver Keeler, Timothy J.E. Keeler, Karl S. Nash, Margaret McGlynn, Mary Creagh, Harvey Keeler, Mary Moylan, Francis J. Bassett, Paul Waldarke, Dorothy Detzer, and Lewis J. Finch. [JFS]

Ridgefield Playhouse, a movie and performance venue on Prospect Street, opened 1940 after a subscription drive to gain financial backing to build a movie theater here. Big backers of the theater were Arthur J. Carnall and B.O. Chisolm *(q.v. each*). The building was designed by John Eberson (1875–1954), a noted architect famed for the development and promotion of "movie palace" designs. It was Ridgefield's only movie theater for many years and site of many bond rallies in World War II. The theater closed in 1973 and the building became Village Bank and Trust Company (*q.v.*) in 1974. Razed in October 2012, the building was replaced with The Prospector (*q.v.*), a four-screen movie house whose facade imitates the original Playhouse. [JFS, DD204]

Ridgefield Playhouse for Movies and the Performing Arts is a non-profit performance venue, opened December 2000 (first show was a performance by Jose Feliciano of Weston), after several years of debate and fundraising, spearheaded by Barbara Manners (*q.v*.). The 500-seat venue is the former Ridgefield High School auditorium on East Ridge, designed 1938 by Cass Gilbert Jr. of Wilton, son of the noted architect Cass Gilbert (*q.v.*). The first RHS graduation there was in 1940. In 1947 and 1949, Arturo Toscanini (*q.v.*) conducted concerts there, benefiting the library and Ridgefield Boys' Club.

More than 4,000 productions have been staged in the first 25 years. [JFS] *See also* Ridgefield Playhouse.

Ridgefield Police Department was established in 1955 when the town voted to create an elected Police Commission to oversee policing operations. Until then, Ridgefield's policing was done by constables, whose powers were limited and whose chief was the first selectman, and by the state police (*see* Troop A). The first chief was James Brady, followed by John F. Haight, Thomas Rotunda, Richard Ligi, John Roche (*q.v. each*), and starting in 2018, Jeffery Kreitz. The department was originally housed in the cellar of the town hall; in 1976 it moved to the former state police Troop A barracks on East Ridge. [JFS] (In a move that made national news, the police halted all patrols in town in April 1971 because of budget problems.) [P4/1/1971]. *See also* Police Commission.

Ridgefield Post Office: The main or "Ridgefield" post office began in 1792 in King and Dole store, now the top floor of the administration building for Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (*q.v.*), also called Old Hundred (*q.v.*). It was later operated out of the Keeler Tavern. In 1811, mail left Danbury every Friday noon and arrived at Ridgefield at 3:00 p.m., according to Keeler Tavern records [RIRA]. It left Ridgefield at 5 p.m. and arrived in Danbury at 8 p.m. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the center post office had several different village locations. On July 31, 1922, it moved from east side of Main Street to 387 Main Street (Addessi Jewelers in 2026) and remained there until 1959; from 1959-84, the post office was at north end of Grand Union (now CVS) shopping center. The current post office building was approved by postal service April 8, 1980, but did not get zoning OK; the postal service decided to override local zoning and build anyway [P8/11/1983]; the new office opened on Sunday, Nov 11, 1984 under Postmaster George Fisher III; there have been seven outlying branch post offices (*see* Post offices). In 2021, local mail delivery vehicles began operating out of the main Danbury post office at Miry Brook instead of out of the Ridgefield office (an idea suggested by the RP in 2007 to open more parking at the Ridgefield Post Office). [RPJ, RPC, JFS]

Ridgefield Press, The, was founded by David Crosby Baxter (*q.v.*) in 1875 as Baxter's Monthly (*q.v.*) but in March became *The Ridgefield Press,* published weekly. Baxter, a local merchant, viewed his publication as method for local businesses to advertise their wares and services. The company went through several owners before being acquired by John and Karl Nash in 1937; they created The Acorn Press as the publishing company which over the years also produced weekly newspapers in Bethel, Redding, Weston, Wilton, in CT and Lewisboro, Pound Ridge and Bedford in NY. The Press was operated for many years by Karl Nash and wife, Elizabeth "Betty Grace" Nash (*q.v. each*). By the 1990s, subscribers had reached more than 7,000 and the paper served around 90% of the households in town. The Acorn Press merged with the Hersam family papers (New Canaan, Darien) in 1997 to create a seven-newspaper group as Hersam Acorn Newspapers. In 2007, Hersam Acorn bought 11 more newspapers, plus two printing plants and other publications in southwestern Connecticut and southern Vermont. The company was sold in 2018 to Hearst Media, which closed all the local offices, moved staff to Danbury and Norwalk, and significantly reduced Ridgefield news coverage.

Paid circulation in September 2024 was only 1,300 copies. [*See also below*]

Ridgefield Press online: Most old issues of *The Press* are not available online as of March 2026, but work was underway to put them on Newspapers.com. Microfilm of them can be found at the Ridgefield Library. For a fee, NewsLibrary.com has the "modern" *Press* digital text files (no pictures or ads) starting from about 2005 onward. Google News has free-of-charge, non-searchable digital images of *Press* pages for the following years: 1940 & 1941, first five issues; 1971-72—July-December; 1973 — Jan.-June; 1977 — Jan.-June; 1978 — full year (some missing issues); 1979-80 — full year; 1981-82 — full year (some missing); 1983 — Jan. 5 then most of July-Dec.; 1984-86 — full year; 1987 — full year (some missing);1988 — Jan.-June (some missing); 1989, 90, 91 — full year (some missing); 1992 — full year; 1993-97—full year (some missing). [JFS]

Ridgefield Preservation Trust was founded in 1973 to fight a development proposed for Main Street. The name was chosen Oct. 4, 1973. Leaders Kitty (Mrs. Paul J.) Rosa (*q.v.*) and Pamela (Mrs. Robert) Kraus soon decided to expand the group's interest to protect historic aspects of Ridgefield throughout the town. In the 1970s the trust undertook a massive effort to identify, catalogue and describe hundreds of historic buildings in town. In 2002 the descendant of the trust became the Ridgefield Historical Society. [JFS]

Ridgefield Prevention Council (RPC) provides information and education to the community to reduce "high-risk behaviors" among young people, offering programs "to build awareness through educational outreach, youth leadership initiatives, [and] community events." [RW] The council was created around 2004 through efforts by First Selectman Rudy Marconi and Schools Superintendent Kenneth Freeston to curb drug abuse. Many early members came from the old Ridgefield Community Partnership (*q.v.*). [P10/14/2004]

Ridgefield Pride Art Center was established in 2019 by Dee Dee Colabella in space above the 850 Wood Fired Pizza Restaurant behind the east side of Main Street to "provide work space and marketing support to resident artists." [P4/30/2019] It operated the nearby RPAC Gallery (*q.v.*) 410 Main Street.

Ridgefield Promoters Club: *See* Promoters Club**.**

Ridgefield Public Schools Foundation, founded in 2009, is a "privately funded, nonprofit organization serving as a liaison between the Ridgefield community and the Ridgefield School District to support our students' academic and social needs." [JFS]

Ridgefield Rail Trail is a 2.3-mile crushed-cinder path from Prospect Ridge to Florida Road that uses the old bed of the branch line of Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road (*q.v.*). The trail was built by Connecticut Light and Power Company, predecessor of Eversource, which used route for high-voltage transmission lines. Opened Dec. 11, 2000, it's used for walking or cross-country skiing; bicycles not allowed (as of 2024).

Ridgefield Ration Board, during World War II, oversaw and enforced federal rationing of foods, gasoline, tires, and other products in an effort to reduce consumer use of materials needed in the war effort. Its office was in the Garden School (*q.v.*) on Bailey Avenue.

Ridgefield Recreation Center: *See* Recreation Center.

Ridgefield Resort: *See* Ridgefield Health Resort.

Ridgefield Responds, a program through which Ridgefielders contribute to emergencies such as catastrophe and war victims, operates under the auspices of the Friends of Ridgefield Community Programs, Inc., (*q.v*.). Established after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 to support the New Orleans community, it has since aided victims of the 2010 Haitian earthquake, Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Covid, and in 2025, it was active in helping Ukraine (*q.v*.). [ITH8/22/2025, ridgefieldresponds.org]

Ridgefield Restaurant Association, a subset of the Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce (*q.v*.), promotes the large food serve community including more than 40 restaurants and bakeries.

Ridgefield Restaurant was located on the east side of Route 7, just south of the Danbury line, in the 1950s and 60s. Earlier called the Ridgefield Diner it was located on today Ridgefield BMW site. *See* Adolf and Lori Gaub.

Ridgefield Road: 1. In Wilton, Route 33 leading from the center of that town to the Ridgefield town line is called Ridgefield Road. **2.** In the 18th Century "Ridgefield Road" was occasionally used to refer to Route 33, Wilton Road West, in Ridgefield, particularly along its lower end near Wilton. **3**. In an 1850 deed in which Sherman Beers sells land to the new Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road, he says one piece bordered "the Ridgefield Road" — what we call Branchville Road today. [RN]

Ridgefield Savings Bank, founded in 1871 was the town's first bank; its first president was Dr. Daniel L. "Doc" Adams (*q.v.*), later called a father of baseball. Its first office was in the Old Hundred (*q.v.*) and then had various office locations on Main Street, including in Town Hall, until 1930 when its art deco, limestone-faced headquarters opened at 374 Main Street, designed by R.E. Hawes and E.F. Strassle. It became Ridgefield Bank in 1989 and, merging with a Norwalk institution in 2004, Fairfield County Bank (*q.v.*). In 1991 the bank opened a new headquarters at Danbury and Farmingville Roads, but the Main Street building remained in operation with abbreviated services. In July 2024, it closed the Main Street retail offices and was converted the building to banking support offices. Customer services were moved to the drive-in on Governor Street which, when it opened in 1959, was the first drive-in bank in Ridgefield. *See also* Loder House, Charles Coles, Carleton Scofield.

Ridgefield Scholarship Group was founded in 1969 by Margaret Kinnaird *(q.v*.) who, realizing RHS had 30 independent scholarships, proposed creating a clearinghouse for all applications and awards. She, Daphne McLachlan, guidance counselor Tony Chiodo and Principal Harold Healy spent a year creating the Scholarship Committee to form a liaison between students and donors. Jo Fainer (*q.v.*) was a longtime leader of the group. [P2/27/2003]

Ridgefield School, The, was a boys preparatory school founded in 1907 by the Rev. Roland J. Mulford, Ph.D., using the building of the Ridgefield Inn (*q.v*.) on lower Main Street off-season. The school opened Oct. 3, 1907 with 40 boys. [P5/18/1911]. In 1909 Mulford took an option on 125 acres north of Lake Mamanasco from Henry B. Anderson (*q.v.*) for the former W. N. Edmonds farm. Anderson was a trustee of the school; so was Cass Gilbert, George Pratt Ingersoll, and Albert H. Wiggin (*q.v. each*) [P4/22/1909] A new, four-story school building was erected there, along with a gymnasium. Many graduates went into government or diplomatic service. The longtime

headmaster was Theodore Carrington Jessup (*q.v.*); others were Erie A. Tucker and Philip M. Gray (*q.v. each*). The motto was "*semper fidelis*." Originally called the Mulford School, it was often later informally called Ridgefield Boys School. [DD12]. It closed in 1938 due to dwindling enrollments, probably because of the Depression. Some graduating classes, such as 1929, had as few as 3 members. [DD15, RPJ2/8]

Ridgefield Senior Directory is a periodically published guide from the Commission on Aging (*q.v.*) that lists programs and services available to local senior citizens.

Ridgefield Shirt Factory was founded in the 1840s by George Hunt (*q.v.*) and was at first located in the Big Shop (*q.v.*), but later moved across the street to a building on what's now an empty lot, and then to Catoonah Street on the site of the current Ridgefield Fire Department headquarters. "Colored shirts were a specialty of the factory, which employed as many as 60 persons at one time," said Bedini. "The chief market was New York City." The operation was run for many years by D. Smith Sholes (*q.v.*) and Henry Smith (*q.v.*). Most employees were women who worked from their homes. Sholes and Smith would provide women with packages of shirt "components" and the women would sew them together in their spare time. The final product was prepared for sale and packaged at the factory; the NYT reported in 1860 that 1,100 home-working women in the area were sewing for Ridgefield Shirt. It closed around 1893, probably because of competition from large-scale, mechanized operations. [WWW, RIR]

Ridgefield Shopping Center is the official name of the retail plaza at 453 Main Street, housing CVS and other retail businesses. Developed by the Benenson (*q.v.*) family, it opened in 1959 with Grand Union as its anchor, and included a new Ridgefield Post Office wing. [JFS]

Ridgefield Short Woods: *See* Short Woods.

Ridgefield Silversmiths produced both sterling silver and silver-plate items, such as candlesticks, candelabra, candy dishes, salt and pepper shakers, creamers, cigarette lighters, jiggers, and bowls, in the 1940s and early 1950s. Operating from the old goat barn (*q.v.*) on Grove Street. the company was founded by Edward San Giovanni (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Ridgefield Skating Center at 111 Prospect Ridge was built by the Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation (*q.v.*), led by founder A. Raymond Bessette (*q.v.*). It opened Dec. 11, 1971, as a non-profit rink; a roof was added in 1972 and sides in 1973. It was sold in 1989 when Bessette moved to Florida. Today it is known as the Winter Garden Ice Arena (*q.v.*). *See also* Hockey.

Ridgefield Sport and Toy Caboose was a popular "toy store" that expanded into youth sports equipment. The original store in an old building on Prospect Street was razed around 1971 to build Yankee Ridge Shopping Center (*q.v.*). Owners Jim and Pat Freeman moved to a new building they erected at 23 Governor Street. In 1987, they announced they were retiring and closing the store. [P2/5/1987] The building is now occupied mostly by Bissell's Pharmacy (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Station was the original name of Branchville Station and, for a while, was apparently the name of the whole southeastern corner of town. Between 1852 and 1870, the only stop on the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road in town was here; when the branch line opened, "Ridgefield Station"

became the name of the terminal in Ridgefield center while the old Ridgefield Station was dubbed "Branchville." In 1955 and 1956, 30 years after passenger service to Ridgefield Station in the village had ended, First Selectman Harry E. Hull asked the New Haven Railroad to change "Branchville Station" back to "Ridgefield Station" to reflect the town, not the neighborhood. The railroad rejected the request because it still had a freight terminal at "Ridgefield Station." Freight service continued to depot until 1964; the old station was used for storage by Ridgefield Supply Company (*q.v.*) until 2016-17 when it was completely reconstructed on the new site just to the west to use as a showroom. [RN] *See also* Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road, Depot Hill.

Ridgefield Station Post Office operated 1863-1873, at which time it became known as Branchville Post Office (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Street is another name for Main Street (*q.v.*). [RN]

Ridgefield Studios was the photography business of Paul F. Korker at 403 Main Street in 1980.

Ridgefield Supply Company, a lumber, building supply and hardware store, traces its roots to the lumber yard of Richard W. Osborn and William O. Gilbert in Branchville who, in the 1870s, moved the business to Prospect Street — at the end of the branch rail line that had just been built into the village. The yard was bought by Harry Mayne and William Cargon who renamed it Ridgefield Lumber Company. In 1933, Frank Dain became owner, renamed it Ridgefield Supply Company and hired Louis H. Price, Sr. as manager. In the early 1950's Price acquired the majority interest after Dain's death. When Mr. Price Sr. retired in 1974, Louis H. Price Jr. took over the company. In 2011, his daughter, Margaret, became the owner. The company took over the railroad depot after rail service ended 1962 and used it as a warehouse. The station was moved and reconstructed as a showroom in 2016-17. In 2021, LBM Holdings acquired the business and two years later, East Haven Builders Supply & Ridgefield Supply Company joined to create what is officially known as East Haven and Ridgefield Supply Company, a division of US LBM, which describes itself as "the largest privately owned, full-line distributor of specialty building materials in the United States." For an early history of the company *see* [P9/15/1983].

Ridgefield Swim Club was formed December 1990 to try to take over the pool of defunct Family Y (*q.v.*). It has become the Ridgefield Aquatic Club (*q.v.*).

Ridgefield Symphonette was founded in 1964 by Marcus and Marguerite Fischer (*q.v.*), Agathea Filgate, George Leeman Sr. (*q.v.*), and Bill Rodier (*q.v.*). Marcus Fischer was the first conductor. *See* Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. [JFS]

Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1964 by amateur and professional musicians who wanted a community orchestra, calling it the Ridgefield Symphonette (*q.v.*). It was led by one of the founders, Marcus Fischer (*q.v.*). In 1970, it became an all-professional orchestra, using musician auditions, and led by its the third music director, Beatrice Brown (*q.v.*). The name was changed to the Ridgefield Orchestra in 1976. A year later, it performed at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center and recorded an album with works by Bach, Mozart, Kabalevsky, Gounod and Liadov. In 1984, Maxim Shostakovich (*q.v.*) led a landmark performance of the music of his father, composer Dmitri Shostakovich, including the Fifth Symphony

and Second Piano Concerto, with Maxim's son, Dmitri, as the soloist. In 1986, the name was changed to the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. Later music directors include: 1996, Sydney Rothstein; 2008, Gerald Steichen; 2018, Yuga Cohler.

Ridgefield Tavern, The, is a 1908 novel by Dr. Maurice Enright (*q.v.*) using Sarah Bishop (*q.v.*), the hermitess, as a leading character. The self-published book in paperback and hardcover was an entirely fictionalized depiction of her life. [JFS]

Ridgefield Taxpayers Association was an anti-spending, anti-Planning and Zoning organization, led by William Winthrop (*q.v*.) in the 1950s. *See also* Planning.

Ridgefield Taxpayers League fought town/school spending and tax increases in 1970s and 80s. Its founder and longtime leader was Louis A. Garofalo (*q.v*.); others active in the group were Joseph Negreen, John Longden, and Norman Little. [JFS]

Ridgefield Teachers Association was formed in 1938 as the collective bargaining unit for the schools' professional staff. In the mid-1970s, the name was changed to National Education Association-Ridgefield or NEAR to reflect its affiliation with the national organization.

Ridgefield Teenage Canteen Inc. was a teen center in basement of Community Center in the 1950s. It was evicted by Community Center in 1959 after disagreements over its operations. [P3/26/1959]

Ridgefield Temperance Association was active in the 1870s to promote efforts to ban the sale of alcoholic beverages and encourage abstinence from drinking. At its 1878 annual meeting, it elected Edward H. Smith, president; Daniel "Doc"Adams, a vice president; and Francis A. Rockwell, vice-president (*q.v. each*) [P8/29/1878]

Ridgefield Tennis Club was established in 1971 by Richard B. Howard (*q.v*.) at 35 Copps Hill Road, offering outdoor courts at a time when most town-owned courts were in poor condition. Justine Butler (*q.v.*) was the first pro. It closed about 15 years later after the town made major improvements to its outdoor courts. *See also* Tennis.

Ridgefield Theater Barn is an amateur theatrical group that stages plays at a converted barn on the old Holy Ghost Novitiate property (*q.v.*) on Halpin Lane. It began as the Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts (*q.v.*) Actors, dancers, musicians, seamstresses, carpenters, singers, electricians, and other participants are all amateurs. Executive director since 2017 is Pamme Jones (*q.v*.).

Ridgefield Thrift Shop was established 1927 by the District Nursing Association at 388 Main Street to raise money for the DNA. Today it is an independent non-profit that donates grants yearly to many Ridgefield organizations and efforts. From 1928-60 it was located in various Main Street spots; in January 1939 it moved from the Denton Block to the Masonic Hall; in June 1960 the shop moved from the Masonic building, 396 to the old Catholic church and blacksmith shop at 15 Catoonah Street, where it remained 57 years. A much enlarged shop opened at the former Balducci/Hay Day market location, 21 Governor Street, in May 2017, greatly increasing its income. [RPC, JFS]

Ridgefield Tonsorial Parlor was started by Vincent Mugavero in 1930 at 392 Main Street. [DD93] *See* Mugavero family.

Ridgefield Town Hall: *See* Town Hall.

Ridgefield Toy Clinic was founded by Ednah Shapiro (*q.v.*) in 1949 to gather new toys for handicapped kids and to collect and repair toys for the needy. [P1/22/1981] It was based at the Community Center and led for many years by Steffi K. Jones. [RPC95] The Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department had operated a toy clinic from at least 1931 until WW2. [JFS]

Ridgefield TV was a **t**elevision and electronics repair business, existing June 1980 at 15 Ethan Allen Highway, Branchville. [P6/19/1980]

Ridgefield Union Society was organized in April 1818 by leading citizens to serve as a private police force to crack down on thieves and robbers. It lasted less than 20 years. William Crocker (*q.v.*) was the first president. [HS]

Ridgefield Veterans Club was an organization for military veterans in the first half of the 20th Century, but did not endure as has the American Legion. [RPJ4-16]

Ridgefield Veterans' Memorial Community Center Association is the official name of the non-profit organization overseeing the Lounsbury House, also called the Community Center, and originally Grovelawn (*q.v. each*).

Ridgefield Village Improvement Society: *See* Village Improvement Society.

Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association: *See* RVNAHealth.

Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department was **e**stablished in 1897 in the wake of the disastrous Fire of 1895 (*q.v.*) that destroyed much of the business center. Then called simply the Ridgefield Fire Department, it was organized into companies and housed in the basement of town hall until a firehouse was built in 1908 at 6 Catoonah Street. In 1954 the three companies – engine, hook and ladder, and hose – voted to consolidate into one Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department. Today its men and women augment the paid Ridgefield Fire Department at significant fires and other emergencies. In 2025, 52 volunteers functioned in a variety of capacities including interior firefighting, support services, and fire police (*q.v.*) services. They responded to 30 to 35 calls per month. *See also* Ridgefield Fire Department. [ITH8/22/2025, JFS]

Ridgefield Walk Book is a trail guide to many of Ridgefield's open spaces, published since the 1980s by the Conservation Commission and periodically updated. It includes many trail maps and is available at town hall and elsewhere. [JFS]

Ridgefield watch: Benrus (*q.v.*), the watch manufacturer that opened its headquarters here in 1967, produced while here, a "Ridgefield" model pocket watch of a slim, 17-jewel, open-faced design. [JFS]

Ridgefield Water Supply Company was established ca. 1899 by Henry B. Anderson (*q.v.*) and other wealthy "summer people" after the Fire of 1895 (*q.v.*) showed a need for a reliable village water supply. The first day of service was June 13, 1900. The company started with a few wells on West Mountain; it soon added a standpipe (*q.v.*) on Peaceable Ridge to maintain water pressure. Round Pond (*q.v.*) was added as a reservoir. Bridgeport Hydraulic Company bought the operation in 1991 and changed its name to Aquarion, which in 2000 was acquired by Kelda of England; in 2017 Aquarion became a subsidiary of Eversource (*q.v.*). [JFS, DD69]

Ridgefield Woman's Club was founded in 1966 as a community service organization. Club members have provided many volunteer hours helping town and regional organizations. It sponsored the creation of the Ballard

Park bandstand, dedicated in 1975, and produced a long series of commemorative ornaments (*q.v.*). Its annual crafts fair in late November raises money to support its work. Affiliated with the state and national Federation of Woman's Clubs, it was originally called the Federated Woman's Club. Mrs. Anthony Bedini was its first president. [RPC] It was often confused with the Women's Town Club (*q.v.*), no longer extant.

Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts, often called RWPA, was an amateur theatrical group founded in 1965 by Joseph M. Dunworth (*q.v.*), Evelyn Foley and Patricia DiMuzio, for not only staging shows but also "fostering and developing creative talent." Its first production, one-act performances of "Sorry, Wrong Number," and the second act from "Auntie Mame," took place that November. The workshop grew into today's Ridgefield Theater Barn (*q.v.*), with its own venue on Halpin Lane. [JFS]

Ridgefield Youth Commission is an "advocate for the youth of Ridgefield to ensure community development of youth services." Founded in 1977, its members are appointed by the selectmen for two year terms — and some can be younger than the voting age of 18. Meetings take place the first Wednesday at The Barn. [JFS].

Ridgefield Youth Football Tigers offers two programs depending on grade for padded football: Tackle for third through eighth graders and Modified Flag for third and fourth grade. "All of our programs are focused on character first, and then, athletic development of Ridgefield's young athletes," the organization says. Ridgefield Youth tackle football teams play in the Fairfield County Football League. [ryfctigers.org]

Ridgefield Youth Orchestra was founded in 1971 by Charles Spire (1929-2011), public school music director, but was open to non-public-school children. It gave many concerts in Ballard Park and elsewhere, and traveled to Europe on concert tours in 1979, 1984 [P6/2/1984], 1989, and 1991.This orchestra's function has been taken over by the Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Ridgefield Youth Service Bureau, founded in 1984 by its longtime leader, John Katz (*q.v.*), offers counseling for young people ages 3 through 18 and their families, and has an office at 66 Prospect Street (the town hall annex at the Venus Office Building). In the 2020s, Katz stepped down as director, and was replaced by Doug Barile, a clinician there since 2008. [JFS]

Ridgefielders Organized for Understanding & Diversity: *See* ROUND.

Ridgeway Terrace is a private, dead-end road at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*) off Bennett's Farm Road, a little north and opposite Bate's Farm Road. [RN]

Ridgewood Road from Florida Hill Road to Harvey Road serves Florida Hill Estates (*q.v.*), and was developed in 1964. [RN]

Ridolfi, Americo, (1905-60), opened Jean's Grill at 37 Ethan Allen Highway in 1935. Sometimes called "the mayor of Branchville," he founded and led the Branchville Civic Association (*q.v.*) which created the Branchville playground, still used as a ball field, and which rescued the deteriorating Branchville Schoolhouse and restored it in the mid-20th Century. [RPC]

Ridolfi, **Louis,** (1925-2014), son of Americo Ridolfi (*q.v.*) and a WW2 veteran, ran Luigi's (*q.v.*) restaurant in the same location as his father's Jean's Grill from ca. 1960 to 1986. He retired to Georgia. [NR]

Rifle Range: The town's first rifle range was in the basement of the Community Center (*q.v.*) beneath the front porch. In 1966, a plan to build a $7,500 rifle

range at the town garage drew more discussion than any other item in the proposed 1966-67 budget at a public hearing. The Ramapoo Rifle and Revolver Club (*q.v.*) proposed this range attached to the town garage at 60 South Street, saying some 200 Ridgefielders were interested in pistol and rifle target shooting. The plan was approved. The range has been overseen ever since by the club, which has provided many pistol-use courses. [JFS]

Riggs, Dana, (1936-2024), owned the Red Lion (*q.v.*). from its opening around 1972 until well into the 1980s. He also opened Dana's Restaurant (*q.v.*) in 1983, specializing in hickory-smoked barbecue meats. [P3/21/2024]

Rippowam: **1.** The area around Stamford was called Rippowam from the river that forms a double harbor on the sound. Rippowam was also the name of the tribe of American Indians that controlled this territory. The word meant "rocky cliff" in the native language. **2.** Someone who liked the word changed the name of North Pond in Lewisboro to Lake Rippowam. Much of the lake's shoreline was owned by Theodore H. Mead (*q.v.*) of South Salem, whose estate was called Rippowam, and extended into Connecticut and to today's Rippowam Road (*q.v.*) in Ridgefield. Western portions of the estate were acquired around 1902 by Jonathan Bulkley (*q.v.*) who created Rippowam Farm along Rippowam Road. The estate, which was said to have 7 miles of "well-made roads," is in 2024 still owned by his family *See also* Sarah Tod Bulkley. [P9/12/1901, RPJ4/9, DD276, RN]

Rippowam Farm: *See under* Rippowam.

Rippowam Road, named for the Rippowam (*q.v.*) estate along it, was in the 18th and early 19th Centuries part of the earliest version of West Mountain Road that also included Oreneca Road. In other words, it was part of the highway from Ridgefield into northern Lewisboro (then called Lower Salem). The road may have been part of an old Indian trail. [RN]

Rising Ridge Road at Twin Ridge (*q.v.*) runs from Indian Cave Road to Beechwood Lane and was named for the geography of the land it traverses. It became a town road in 1968. [RN]

Rising Starr Horse Rescue: *See* Kelly Stackpole.

Rita Road at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*) is a dead-end, private road developed in the 1950s, named for Rita Romano, who with her husband owned several lots there. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Ritch, Harold Adelmar, (1904-1981), graduated from RHS and spent most of his life here, working on local estates as a gardener. He developed Ritch Drive (*q.v.*). [RN]

Ritch Drive, extending from Haviland Road to Danbury Road, was named by Harold A. Ritch (*q.v.*), whose family had owned and farmed the land thereabouts. He developed the road as part of his 1954 subdivision, built mostly on corn and potato fields. The land was the former Haviland farm — *see* Haviland Road. [RN]

Ritchard, Cyril, (1897-1977), more formally known as Cyril Trimnell-Ritchard, was a native of Australia and the actor who played Captain Hook alongside Mary Martin in the acclaimed Broadway and TV productions of "Peter Pan." He had a long career, primarily on the stage, around the world. He retired to his home, called Lone Rock, at ONS184 Danbury Road (near Old Pierce Road). He was married to actress Madge Elliott, and was a devout Catholic, active at St. Mary Parish; he is buried in St. Mary Cemetery beneath a monument that says, "Captain Hook." [WWW]

Rite Aid, a chain drugstore at Copps Hill Plaza, is the descendant of Genovese Drugs (*q.v.*), the first store to open at the center in 1972. The business had been Eckerd Drugs until 2007 (*q.v.*) [DNT6/6/2007]. In 2020, Rite Aid had 2,464 stores. In June 2025, the financially troubled company announced it would close its Ridgefield store [P6/25/2025].

River Road is the original name for what we now call Tanton Hill Road (*q.v.*). It runs alongside the Ridgefield Brook (*q.v.*) or Norwalk River (*q.v.*). [RN]

Rivers: Ridgefield has three "rivers," probably so called because of their length. They include the Norwalk, Titicus and Stamford Mill Rivers (*q.v. each*). The town is also in the watersheds (*q.v.*) of the Saugatuck River, the Housatonic River, and the Silvermine River. [JFS]

Riverside Drive from Druid Lane to Fire Hill Road at Stonehenge Estates (*q.v.*), was so called by developer Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) because it runs beside the Norwalk River (*q.v.*). It became a town road in 1964. *See also* Deer Track Hill Road. [RN]

Riverside Motors was a garage and Gulf gas station at 32 Ethan Allen Highway in Branchville in the mid-20th Century, operated by Tarquinio "Turk" Pambianchi. He sold some of the first Toyota vehicles in the USA, including a model called Toyopet. [JFS]

Roach, Joseph Aloysius, (1896-1948), was wounded twice in World War I and held in a prison camp, but survived and contributed considerably to his community until he finally succumbed, apparently to war injuries, at the age of 53. He became the first commander of the American Legion Post, was a grand knight of the Knights of Columbus, served on the Board of Education, was also active in Boy Scouting, a boxing coach, and operated a stone-cutting and monument business of his father. [WWW, DD4, DD75]

Roache, Robert E., was a Ridgefield developer in the 1960s whose work included Powderhorn Drive, Old Musket Lane, and Lantern Drive, all in Farmingville. Roache "always wanted to be a cowboy," said an acquaintance. He wore cowboy boots and a cowboy hat, and named one subdivision "Gun Hill Farms." He later moved to the West. [RN]

Road renumbering: *See* Renumbering.

Roads, federal: U.S. Route 7 is a federal highway, so called not because it is owned by the federal government but because it is part of a nationwide numbering system designed to bring order to the highway network. The numbers and locations are coordinated by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Like state highways, north-south roads like 7 are odd-numbered; east-west routes are even numbered.

Roads, state: State-maintained highways in Ridgefield are: Barry Avenue (Route 822 from High Ridge Avenue to Ramapoo Road intersection); Branchville Road (Route 102 from Route 7 to Main Street, Route 35); Catoonah Street (Route 822, entire length); Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7 from Wilton line to Route 35); Danbury Road (Route 35 from Main Street to Route 7, then Route 7 to Danbury line); High Ridge Avenue (Route 822 from Catoonah Street to Barry Avenue); Main Street (Route 33 from Wilton Roads East and West to Route 35 at fountain; then Route 35 to Danbury Road); North Salem Road (from Main Street, Route 35, to New York State line); South Salem Road (Route 35 from New York line to West Lane); West Lane (Route 835 from New York line to South Salem Road intersection, then Route 35 to Main Street); West Mountain Road (Route 822, from Barry Avenue at

Ramapoo Road to New York line); Wilton Road West (Route 33 entire length, Wilton line to Main Street). (*See also entries under* Route #.) [RN]

Roads, town: Ridgefield had 420 town-owned roads totaling about 168 miles in 2018. These roads are maintained by the town to certain standards, including repaving and plowing. Private roads, including many at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), get plowed for the sake of public safety, but only minimal maintenance; most do not meet the town's width standards, which require right-of-ways of 60 feet for arterial (major) roads, 50 feet for local streets, and 40 feet for "tertiary" roads (usually dead-end roads). *See also* State roads, federal roads, renumbering, *and* Paving. [RN]

ROAR, Ridgefield Operation for Animal Rescue, was founded in 2000 to take in and arrange adoption for both dogs and cats. In 2005 it established the ROAR Donofrio (*q.v.*) Family Animal Shelter at 45 South Street, designed by Sean O'Kane (*q.v.*). Between 2000 and 2024, ROAR has had more than 5,000 cats and dogs adopted — from 250 to 400 animals a year. [JFS]

RoBell Printing at 971 Ethan Allen Highway was operated by Si Bellagamba in 1970s and became Connecticut Printing and Graphics (*q.v.*) by 1983.

Roberts, E. Earl, (1896-1981), was a Ridgefield electrician and the local Locke mower dealer for many years. He had his electrical store at 394 Main Street, opening just after that building was built [DD94] He was also an early ham radio operator. He lived on Island Hill Ave., then on Mamanasco Road. [P6/18/1981]

Roberts, Everett E. Jr. (1916-2007), a Ridgefield native, was a World War II hero, receiving the Legion of Merit for service while executive officer aboard the destroyer escort USS Samuel B. Roberts in the "Battle off Samar." A son of E. Earl Roberts (*q.v.*), the RHS alumnus graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1940, and was a career officer, retiring 1958. He held a degree in bioradiation and served many years as a military liaison to Atomic Energy Commission. Later he helped develop a ballistic missile early warning system. He died in Lewistown, Pa. at age 66; [WWW]

Roberts, Gail Flood, (1935-1997), a Massachusetts native, served as the town's dog warden from 1977 until her death, and considerably improved enforcement, facilities and treatment of dogs in town. [WWW]

Roberts, Henry Steele, (1901-1975), a real estate broker from Brooklyn, owned a 20-room mansion at 45 Peaceable Street that burned to the ground May 1, 1938, less than a year after he paid $55,000 ($1.1 million in 2024) to build it. [P3/3/1938]. In 1940 he was living at ONS18 Peaceable Street with wife Mary Seldon Roberts and three children. In 1942 he was working for Gateway Development Corp. in Norwalk.[DD196]

Roberts, Joseph, (1897-1985), was born Giosue Roberti in Italy and came to Ridgefield as a boy. He served in the U.S. Army during World War I, was a founder of the Italian American Mutual Aid Society ("the Italian Club"), and was a well-known general contractor, who developed Roberts Lane and Roberts Pond (*q.v. each*).

Roberts Lane is a short, dead-end road off Danbury Road, running alongside and beyond the Girolametti Court shopping area and the Mobil station. It is named for Joseph Roberts (*q.v.*), who lived there at some point and who built the first houses there around 1920. Until 1980, it was a private road. [RN]

Roberts Pond, off Saw Mill Hill Road, was also named for Joseph Roberts, who

created it around 1930 with a wood and stone dam. In the 1940s and 50, Roberts Pond was used in summer as a swimming hole by the Ridgefield Boys' Club. In winter, skating parties were often held there. [RN] *See also* Bucks Pond.

Robinson, Mark, a resident since 1992, served 12 years on the state's Martin Luther King Commission and is the founder and organizer of Ridgefield's annual Martin Luther King Day ceremony. He was a member of the Ridgefield Youth Commission from 2010 to 2021, has been a member of the Ridgefield Economic Development Commission, served for seven years on the board of A Better Chance of Ridgefield, and ten years as vice chair of the Democratic Town Committee. With Raymond Smaltz, he wrote the 2021 memoir, *Place of Privilege*, about their experiences as students at The Dalton School in NYC. In 2023, he published another memoir, *Black On Madison Avenue*, which won a number of awards. [JFS] See also ROUND.

Robinson, Mount, is a a hill in the New Pattent (*q.v.*), now western Danbury, mentioned in 1740s deeds, north of Mill Plain in Danbury. It has not been discovered who Robinson was. [RN, Liljegren]

Rob's Hollow is a 1963 subdivision of 25 acres from Ridgebury Road, opposite RHS, to Sherwood Road, with 6 lots and about 12 acres of open space swamp as part of the Titicus River watershed protection program (along the northern side of Sherwood Road near Ledges Road). The name recalls the son of James Hackert who, with Lewis J. Finch, subdivided the property. [RN]

Rochambeau, Compte Jean Baptiste Donatien Vimeu, (1725-1807), was a French general who stayed with his 4,800 troops in Ridgebury July 1-2, 1781, on their way to meet Washington on the Hudson and head south to Yorktown, Va. July 1 was his 56th birthday. Troops camped north of George Washington Highway and west of Ridgebury Road opposite Old Stagecoach; the encampments were re-enacted in October 1981. Ridgefield's first Catholic mass may have been celebrated during the encampment. Rochambeau's troops may have passed through Ridgefield in 1782 on their way back to Rhode Island where his ships were anchored to take them home to France. [P10/8/1981] *See also* Duc de Lauzun.

Rochambeau Avenue runs between Copps Hill Road and Washington Avenue at Peatt Park (*q.v.*), named for the Revolutionary War hero (*see above)*, though Rochambeau probably was never near this property. [RN]

Roche, John S. (1955-2018) was Ridgefield's fifth police chief. He joined the force in 1980 after a short period working in New Jersey. He was named officer of the year in 1983 and rose through the ranks to his appointment as chief in 2008. He died while in office. [JFS]

Roche, Paul, a native of Marlboro, Mass., was superintendent of the Parks and Recreation Department from 1977 to 2018, directing a minor town agency that grew from mainly mowing a few fields and maintaining Martin Park to a multimillion-dollar operation that runs hundreds of programs at the Recreation Center and elsewhere, and maintains the grounds of almost all town property. He worked under five first selectmen — Lou Fossi, Liz Leonard, Sue Manning, Abe Morelli, and Rudy Marconi — and at four headquarters — 19 Market Street, Yanity Gym, Barlow Mountain, and today's Recreation Center (*q.v.*) on Danbury Road. When he retired he was town's longest serving administrator. He graduated from University of New

Hampshire and is married to **Debbie Roche**, a banker who was active in the community. [JFS]

Rock Ridge Farm on Nod Road was owned by Robert R. Keeler (*q.v.*) in 1930 and, according to an ad, sold Rhode Island Red chicks.[JFS]

Rock Road, a short dead-end lane off Mamanasco Road, is part of the Eight Lakes (*q.v.*) development of the early 1950s, but its basis is an old highway. On some old maps, it runs from Mamanasco Road to Old Sib Road and beyond. [RN]

Rock Spring: Two mid-19th Century deeds mention Rock Spring, a neighborhood locality off Florida Hill Road, somewhere in the vicinity of Cooper Hill Road. [RN]

Rock Spring Lane is a short, dead-end road off the east side of northern Limekiln Road, developed and named by Earl S. Miller, who filed a 16-lot subdivision of one-acre parcels on 22 acres in 1957. The name presumably refers to a rock spring in the area. [RN]

Rockcrest Drive at the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*) runs from Knollwood Drive to Bob Hill Road. [RN]

Rockefeller Center Christmas Trees, from Ridgefield: The first official tree at 30 Rockefeller Center was in 1933, a 50-foot Norway spruce from Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*), decorated with 700 blue and white bulbs (today, trees carry 30,000 lights and are up to 100 feet tall); the 1994 tree, an 85-foot Norway spruce, came from home of Maria and Alan Egler, 1 Old Oscaleta Road; the 2006 tree, an 86-foot Norway spruce, was on the property of Robert and Deborah Kinnaird, 69 Peaceable Hill Road. Outpost may have supplied other trees in the 1930s [*Ridgefield Chronicles*]

Rockelein, Conrad, (1867-1954), a native of Germany called "Con," was a popular Ridgefield barber from 1889 until 1945. With an eye for real estate, he developed the "Mountain View Park" (*q.v.*) neighborhood off Danbury Road. He was active in Jesse Lee Methodist Church. His name is often misspelled Rocklein. [WWW, DD351, DD355]

Rockwell family were among the first settlers of Ridgefield. On July 9, 1711, Benjamin Hickock, one of the original 25 home-lot owners, sold his house lot at the north corner of Main Street and King Lane to Thomas Rockwell, bringing a family here whose descendants are still in town in 2026.

Rockwell, Alice Elizabeth, (1895-1972), a Ridgefield native and a graduate of Johns Hopkins, was a pioneering woman physician, who was believed to be the first woman to practice medicine in Bridgeport, Connecticut's largest city. She opened her practice in 1936 and retired in 1959. She maintained her family home at 48 East Ridge for many years. *See also* Rev. Nathan Rockwell. [P1/20/1972]

Rockwell, Eli, (1805-1857), was a Ridgebury farmer who was a state representative in 1839 and 1840 and a selectman in 1848 and 1849.

Rockwell, Francis A., (1818-81), a farmer and tinner, was a Republican state representative in 1867. With brother John W. Rockwell (*q.v.*), he established a candlestick factory, first on Main Street (opposite Aldrich Museum) and then on Catoonah Street (opposite the firehouse). The Rockwells also made augers and auger bits. Among their employees was John Brophy (*q.v.*). Rockwell held several patents on candlesticks and other devices. He also made grape and blackberry wines, widely sold in the region, especially in NYC and used as sacramental wine in churches (which suggests they were

not alcoholic). He was a member of the first Board of Directors of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. *See also* Catoonah Hall. [WWW, RSB21]

Rockwell, George L. (1869-1947), published *History of Ridgefield* (*q.v.*) in 1927, in many ways, the most extensive history of the town. He was postmaster from 1912-16 and 1924-35; a state representative, 1905-07, 1937-39; and a U.S. consul in Montreal. Born in New Haven, he lived at The Hickories (*q.v.*) on Lounsbury Road, and later on the East Ridge. His father was State Rep. Joel Lawrence Rockwell. [WWW, RSB26]

Rockwell, Jane, was a journalist and author of many children's books, including *Famous Authors Tell You About Their Beautiful Loving & Nutty Dogs, All About Ponds, Cats and Kittens: A First Book,* and *Wolves: A First Book*. She lived at 19 Mountain Road in the 1970s. [JFS, P5/8/1975]

Rockwell, Joel Lawrence, (1826-1909), a New York City native, was a shoe manufacturer who served as a Republican state representative in 1884. He was the father of George L. and Nathan Rockwell (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Rockwell, John Talcott, (1801-81), a Ridgefield native, was a Ridgebury farmer who served as a Republican state representative in 1860. He was active in the Ridgefield Congregational Church, especially its music program. He sold the family farm in 1862, moved to Brookfield, then Bethel and finally Danbury where he died. His daughter, Polly Maria, married George Boughton (*q.v.*), also a state representative. [JFS]

Rockwell, John Wesley, (1829-1917), owned The Elm Shade Cottages, later called The Elms Inn (*q.v.*) in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries [P8/21/1980]. He started out as a candle-maker and tinsmith, and with his brother, State Rep. Francis A. Rockwell (*q.v*.), operated a candlestick factory. He was married to Mary E. Byxbee (1825-1911), and had one daughter, Mary (*q.v*.). *See also* Catoonah Hall.

Rockwell, Mary H. "May" (1874-1949), a daughter of Elms Inn owner John W. Rockwell, was a music teacher in the first half of the 20th Century, who owned and lived in the House of Friends (*q.v.*). [P8/21/1980, WWW]

Rockwell, Rev. Nathan Lounsbury, (1851-1910), a native of Ridgefield, had a long management career at the family shoemaking factory in Norwalk, retired and became a self-supported missionary in Korea where he died at age 59 of pneumonia. Father of Dr. Alice Rockwell (*q.v.*) and brother of George L. Rockwell (*q.v.*), he and wife Emily had lived in Farmingville and then at 48 East Ridge Road. He is buried in the Lounsbury section of the Ridgefield Cemetery. [P2/9,16,23/1911]

Rockwell, Runa (1773-1864), son of Abraham and Esther Rockwell, was a Ridgefield native who was a weaver, farmer and captain in the Connecticut militia. A story about him and his wife, **Rachel Darling Rockwell,** appeared in many newspapers in 1858-59, noting that Runa's father fought the British at the Battle of Ridgefield and that four-year-old Runa saw several of the wounded patriots at his home in Ridgebury. Runa and Rachel were active in the Ridgebury Congregational Church to which they left an endowment. [JFS]

Rockwell, Winthrop Edward, (1881-1947), was first selectman from 1926 to 1947, the second longest term of chief executive (behind Rudy Marconi — *q.v.*). He grew up in Farmingville, attended the one-room Farmingville schoolhouse, then studied at Phillips Exeter, Yale and Johns Hopkins, but because of ill health never graduated. He served on the Draft Board in

WW1, was assistant town clerk and registrar of voters, as well as active in Lions Club, Grange, and as a director of Ridgefield Savings Bank. He lived at 56 East Ridge (later home of another Republican first selectman, Sue Manning —*q.v.*). His wife, **Olivia Lawrence Rockwell**, was active in the community, especially the District Nursing Association. [WWW, RSB29]

Rockwell Road, a very old lane running between Main Street and Branchville Road, predates by more than a century the western end of Branchville Road (*q.v.*), and used to be the main route from the village to the southeastern part of town —i.e., the original western end of Branchville Road. It had in the early 20th Century been known as DePeyster Street, Cushman Lane, and Lover's Lane (*q.v. each*). Perhaps to give stability to a name, George L. Rockwell, historian and postmaster, pressed his cousin, First Selectman Winthrop Rockwell, to officially name the road for their family, who were among the first settlers and proprietors of the town. (Neither man lived near the road.) [RN]

Rocky Neck and **Rocky Spring,** both 18th Century names, were apparently related localities on West Mountain, possibly south of Round Pond and near the NY line. [RN]

Rodier, Marywade Moses, (1912-2003), a native of Washington, D.C., established Rodier Flowers (*q.v.*) in 1952. Active in the arts community, she was a founder of Ridgefield Guild of Artists and among the early backers of the Ridgefield Symphonette (*q.v.*). She was the wife of William B. Rodier (*q.v.*). [NR, P6/5/2003]

Rodier, William B., (1912-1999), a landscape contractor who had earlier worked for Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*), was one of the three founders of the Ridgefield Symphonette, now called the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. He was a violinist. He also served on the town's school building committees in the 1960s and on the Park Commission. He and his wife, Marywade (*q.v.*), lived at 76 Ivy Hill Road. With Otto H. Jespersen (*q.v.*), they developed Jeffro Drive (*q.v.*), in part named for them (*q.v.*). [RN, WWW]

Rodier Flowers was founded in 1952 by Marywade Rodier (*q.v.*) on Bailey Avenue across from the Ridgefield Press building. It then moved to 447 Main Street, then to 384 Main Street and in 2024 to 381 Main Street. The business was acquired in the 1980s by Richard and Pat Provino — Pat had worked for Marywade. It was purchased in 2009 by Mary Jones. [JFS]

Rodman, Cary Selden, (1869-1911), a noted architect, bought a farm in 1911 off Barrack Hill Road and Tackora Trail, but soon died. Mrs. Cary Selden Rodman (Nannie Van Nostrand Marvin) is listed in SR1916S as having a country home, Hieeta (*q.v.*), in Ridgefield in 1916. Her son, **Cary Selden Rodman,** (1909-2002), was a prolific writer of poetry, plays, political commentary, art criticism, Latin American and Caribbean history, biography and travelogs, publishing a book almost every year of his adult life. She died in 1942 in NYC. The family held property here until the 1960s. [JFS]

Rogers, Donald Irwin, (1918-1980), a native of New Hartford, was an economic conservative author who wrote 14 books including *Teach Your Wife to Be A Widow, How to Beat Inflation Using It,* and *The Day the Market Crashed*, and *The End of Free Enterprise: A Manifesto for Capitalists.* He had a syndicated business-affairs column, 1950-1966. He moved to Mimosa 1964 when he was publisher of the *Bridgeport Sunday Herald*. In 1969, he created a Fairfield County daily newspaper, *The Fairfield County Courier*,

and was editor and publisher of the short-lived attempt. He moved to Manhattan in 1976. He was the father of author Lynn Wallrapp (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Rogers, Dr. Elwood I., (1878-1943), opened a medical practice at 360 Main Street, a property for which he in 1941 tried to get town permission for a First National supermarket *(q.v.*). This threat of commercialization of the historic southern half of Main Street helped lead to the adoption of zoning (*q.v.*) in 1946, He was killed in an auto accident. [JFS]

Rogers, Jimmy, was a Ridgefield comic character and ventriloquist in the 1920s and 30s, described by Venus in DD46, 61, 97, 292.

Rogers, Martha, wife of Dick Cavett (*q.v.*), is an author, customer strategist, and a founder of a management consulting firm. Rogers has also been an adjunct professor at the at Duke University and a co-director of the Duke Center for Customer Relationship Management. She lives at Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) on Old West Mountain Road. [W]

Rolew Farm was the name that Paul and Evelyn Palmer (*q.v.*) gave to their estate in the 1930s between Wilton Road East and Nod Hill Road. It was later called Flat Rock House (*q.v.*).

Roll of Honor, the, was a triptych sign erected at the northwest corner of the Town Hall yard, starting in August 1942, honoring all the town's service men and women. By war's end about 505 names were listed (*see* World War II).

Rolle, Elizabeth, was named rabbi of Temple Shearith Israel (*q.v.*) in November 1981, then said to be one of only 50 female rabbis in the world. [P11/19/1981]. She married in 1985 Rabbi Philip E. Schechter. She left in May 1982 [P5/20/1982] to take a position at a Jewish center in White Plains and had a career as a rabbi and an education director at congregations in lower Fairfield County. In 2022 she was operating Senior Concierge Services in Stamford, a service for stay-at-home elderly. [JFS]

Rolling Hills Estates is a subdivision of 25 one-acre lots on 35 acres off Still Road, developed by Lewis J. Finch (*q.v.*) who named the place for the "gently rolling hills" thereabouts. It includes Nursery Road, Mill View Terrace and Rolling Hills Road. [RN]

Rolling Hills Farm on Turner Road was operated by the Wilson family in the 1950s and 60s. [JFS]

Rolling Hills Road is a short, dead-end road off Nursery Road at Rolling Hills Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Rolling Meadow Estates: *See* Ridgebury Estates.

Rolling Ridge Road, a dead-end road off Old Stagecoach Road at Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), was developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s.[RN]

Roma Pizzeria at 411 Main Street was one of the most famous and popular restaurants in Ridgefield, opening in the early 1960s at ONS119 Main Street on the east side of the street. In 1966, owner Joseph Gigliotti went into partnership with brothers John, Gigi and George Amatuzzi (*q.v.*), who around 1970, took over the business and moved it across the street to the "Telephone Building" (*q.v.*) in a spot that had been occupied by the Ridgefield Luncheonette (*q.v.*). A few years later, the Amatuzzis purchased and renovated the whole building. Over the years, Roma gave away thousands of pizzas to students who got A's on their report cards, and non-profits who were having special events. The family, including wives Anna Marie (Mrs. George) and Vicki (Mrs. Gigi), retired in 2003. Planet Pizza (*q.v*),

a small regional chain, took over the spot. [JFS]

Romans map of 1777: Bernard Romans drew a map of Connecticut in 1777 that, for Ridgefield, depicts inaccurately the route between Ridgebury and the center of Ridgefield village. The map also shows a road from Ridgebury center, running out of town southwesterly. This was probably Spring Valley and Mopus Bridge Roads. It shows the old Oblong (*q.v.*). It was the first major map to spell the town "Ridgefield" (predecessors used Ridgfield), but used "Rigebury" for Ridgebury. The map shows some churches, and the Mamanasco mill. [Rumsey]

Rome, Harold Jacob, (1908-1993), a native of Hartford, was a composer, lyricist, and writer for Broadway who lived on lower Great Hill Road in the mid-1940s, probably drawn here by his friendship with James Waterman Wise (*q.v.*). Rome wrote such musicals as *Wish You Were Here* in 1952, *Fanny* in 1954, *Destry Rides Again* in 1959, and the show in which Barbra Streisand made her Broadway debut, *I Can Get It for You Wholesale* in 1962. [WWW]

Root, Charles T., (-1938), owned the Hillscroft (*q.v.*) farm/estate on St. Johns Road early in the 20th Century. His daughter married Franklin P. Adams, a once-famous newspaper columnist and humorist. Root was president of the United Publishers Corp., producer of a dozen trade magazines such as *Iron Age*. As founder of the American Association for Scientific Taxation, he was called "a profound thinker in the world of business and business economics." [DD170]

Root, Ednah: *See* Ednah Shapiro.

Roothbert, Albert (1874-1965) and **Antonie "Toni" von Horn Roothbert** (1899-1970), were philanthropists who lived at Topstone Farm on Topstone Road from just after their marriage in 1937 until their deaths. Both natives of Germany, he was a successful NYC investment banker who retired at 50 to devote his life to modern and Oriental art. She was a pioneering woman fashion photographer whose works appeared in *Vanity Fair, Vogue,* and *Harper's Bazaar.* She photographed many celebrities — she was especially noted for her picture of Albert Einstein. In 1958, the Roothberts established the Roothbert Fund to aid "students motivated by spiritual values, who can satisfy high scholastic requirements and are considering teaching as a vocation." More than 1,000 Roothbert fellows have been named since then. They also set up a scholarship at RHS. The name is sometimes erroneously reported as Rothbart. [WWW]

Rosa, Kathryn Venus "Kitty," (1921-2014), a Ridgefield native, was a leading voice in the efforts for historic preservation, and was a major force behind the purchase of the Keeler Tavern by the Keeler Tavern Preservation Society in 1965. She was a member of Historic District Commission from 1969 until her death — she was chairman from 1973 to 1999. She lived in a 1750s house at 75 Olmstead Lane and was the wife of Paul J. Rosa Jr. (*q.v.*). [NR] She operated the Village Trader, an antiques store, on Prospect Street in the 1960s. [P4/22/1965, 7/2/1968]

Rosa, Paul J. Jr., (1927-2004), who grew up in Stamford, served Ridgefield for 37 years starting in 1960 on the Zoning Commission, then the Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Board of Selectmen, and finally, the Board of Finance. He was also chairman of the Republican Town Committee for 10 years, and was member of committees

on tax relief for the elderly, and data processing. He was the husband of Kathryn Rosa (*q.v.*). [NR]

ROSA: *See* Ridgefield Open Space Association.

Roscoe Road is a previous name of today's Pin Pack Road (*q.v.*), reflecting a family that lived many years thereabouts and perhaps specifically to the family of Harry Roscoe, who lived there early in the 20th Century. Roscoe, and its variants Ruscoe and Rasco, were names of families here as early as 1783. [RN]

Rose, Lt. Walter W., (1920-1943), a native of New York whose family lived at Outpost Farms, was a decorated Army Air Force navigator during World War II. He had served in Greenland, Iceland, Labrador, and England before being assigned to the invasion of North Africa. On July 9, 1943, during the assault on Sicily, he was wounded on a flight over Italy. He died July 24 and is buried in Tunisia. He was posthumously awarded the Air Medal. [NR]

Rosenberg, Debbie: *See* Imogene Coca.

Rosenberg, Herbert F., a UConn graduate, started practicing law in Ridgefield in 1975, and moved here in 1977. He had been a partner with Romeo Petroni as Petroni and Rosenberg. He opened a law office at Village Bank Building in 1981. He was named town attorney in 1981 and resigned in 1983 to move to Florida. [P2/10/1983] He was chairman in 1981 of the Charter Revision Commission. He lived on Twin Ridge Road. [P4/2/1981]

Rosenmeyer, Grant, (1991-), who lived here as a child and went to Branchville School, is an actor and screenwriter best known for his roles in the movie, *The Royal Tenenbaums*, and on the Fox television sitcom *Oliver Beene*. He has appeared in many movies and TV series. His parents **Debra and Colin Rosenmeyer** had a home on Ridgewood Road in 2025. [W]

Rose's Kiddy Shoppe: *See* Kiddy Shoppe.

Ross, Alexander, (1909-1990), a native of Scotland who came to the U.S. as a child, was an artist specializing in nature, especially spring and summer flowers. He had been a *Good Housekeeping* magazine cover artist for many years; also painted for *Saturday Evening Post, McCall's, Cosmopolitan*, and *Colliers* — often including some or all of his four children as models. He also illustrated three religious books. In 1969, he designed a U.S. commemorative postage stamp for the 100th anniversary of professional baseball. He lived in Ridgebury from the 1970s until his death. [WWW]

Ross, C. Chandler, (1887-1952), was a portrait artist who painted many of the captains of industry and politics, including F. W. Woolworth, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S Truman. He bought the former Country Club of Ridgefield (*q.v.*) land and turned it into an estate that later became Ward Acres (*q.v.*) He is not related to Alexander Ross (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Ross Artisanal Bakery & Cafe at The Marketplace at Copps Hill Common was established in early 2009. Ross Schneiderman, who had been an award-winning TV sports producer, baked in the Ancona's Market kitchen, producing all-natural, crispy loaves that became very popular at Ancona's and farmers' markets. He soon opened the bakery at 109 Danbury Road that is still there in 2026. [JFS]

Ross Lane is a short, private, dead-end lane off Griffin Hill Road. In 1925 soon after Virginia Mulligan subdivided that area into tiny lots, Frederick W. Ross bought six of the lots (for a total of $374). [RN]

Rotary Club was founded in 1940, with a formal organizational meeting Jan. 2, 1941, at Outpost Inn [P1/9/1941]. Clifford Holleran (*q.v.*) was elected the first president. The club is known for its Citizen of the Year Award (*q.v.*), honoring outstanding Ridgefielders. It also gives scholarships and community grants; hosts speakers; and has a major fundraiser, called "A Taste of Ridgefield" each January. It has also run foreign exchange programs. The club elected its first female member — Barbara Ireland (*q.v.*) — in January 1991 [P2/7/1991]

Rotary Citizen of the Year is an annual (except 1985, 2020) award from Rotary Club (*q.v.*), recognizing service to the community. (Recipients do not have to be club members.) Their names are on plaques in the town hall and most are profiled in this encyclopedia: Charles Ashbee, 1959; Isabell O'Shea, 1960; Silvio Bedini, 1961; Irene Hoyt, 1962; Rev. Hugh Shields, 1963; Anne Richardson, 1964; Francis D. Martin, 1965; J. Mortimer Woodcock, 1966; Dr. Francis B. Woodford, 1967; Charles Weedon,1968; Otto H. Jesperson, 1969; Joseph Pinchbeck, 1970; Clifford Holleran, 1971; Edith Meffley, 1972; Don Archer, 1973; Richard E. Venus, 1974; Priscilla Lee, 1975; Harry E. Hull, 1976; Daniel M. McKeon, 1977; Jack B. Ward, 1978; Leo F. Carroll, 1979; Sarah Bulkley Randolph, 1980; Rev. Aaron Manderbach, 1981; Clara Platt, 1982; Karl S. Nash, 1983; Romeo G. Petroni, 1984; Paul J. Morganti, 1986; Theodore H. Safford Jr., 1987; Peter V. Yanity, 1988; Lawrence Aldrich, 1989; Preston R. Bassett, 1990; Michael Pontello, 1991; The Amatuzzi Family, 1992; Charles A. Spire, 1993; Gordon McGovern, 1994; Lee Dickinson, 1995; Lillian Willis, 1996; Charles Creamer, 1997; Sue Manning, 1998; Claire Kirby, 1999; Beth Yanity, 2000; Jeanne Timpanelli, 2001; George J. Goodstadt, 2002; Deborah L. Roche, 2003; Martha and Dave Campbell, 2004; Kay Ables, 2005; Ed Allan, 2006; Michael P. Ryer, 2007; Maureen Kiernan, 2008; Robert Tulipani, 2009; William Wyman, 2010; Philip and Christine Lodewick, 2011; Debra Hayes, 2012; Sarah Bouissou, 2013; Marcia and Peter Coffin, 2014; Christina B. Nolan, 2015; Joyce Ligi, 2016; Allison Stockel, 2017; Richard Vazzana, 2018; Mary Jones, 2019; no honoree due to COVID, 2020; Lori Berisford and Elaine Cox, 2021; Dean Miller, 2022; John Frey, 2023; Dan O'Brien, 2024; Ira Joe Fisher, 2025.

Rothenberg, Mrs. Morris: *See* Beatrice Brown.

Rothman, Martha, was elected state representative in January 1982 to fill unexpired term of Elizabeth Leonard, who had become first selectman. A Republican, she defeated Norman Craig. She was re-elected in 1983 and 1985, retired 1986, and left town. She had lived at 23 Wooster Heights Drive. [P1/7/1982]

Rottenberg, Joshua, RHS 1989, is a staff writer for the *Los Angeles Times* covering the film business. He was part of the team that was named a 2022 Pulitzer Prize finalist in breaking news for covering the shooting on the set of the film "Rust." A Harvard graduate, he has written for the *NY Times* and was a senior writer at *Entertainment Weekly*.

Rotunda, Thomas, a native of Danbury, was Ridgefield's third police chief. He joined the department in 1965 and was named chief in 1977. He retired in 1999 to become executive director of the State Division of Special Revenue, which oversees casinos, state lottery, dog tracks, etc. He retired from that post in 2001 and moved to South Carolina. [JFS]

Roughan, Howard, is a novelist whose books include *The Up and Comer* (2001)

and *The Promise of a Lie* (2004). He also co-wrote the novels *Honeymoon, You've Been Warned, Sail,* and *Don't Blink* with best-selling author James Patterson. He lived on Lynch Brook Lane from 2003 to 2015, and now lives in Naples, Fla.

ROUND (Ridgefielders Organized for Understanding & Diversity) grew out of the local working group formed by the state as advisory panels to address the educational equity issues raised by the Sheff v. O'Neil litigation (charging Blacks/Latinos in cities often got a poorer education because the state spent more resources on predominantly white schools). In 1994, after the initial advisory panel completed its work, the Ridgefield Board of Education appointed an advisory committee to draft a report with recommendations for educational equity in Ridgefield. Once the committee completed its work, it chose to continue working and in 1995 renamed itself ROUND. As a volunteer citizens group, ROUND launched a number of activities during the second half of the 1990s, including tolerance events at RHS, townwide diversity fairs, the Martin Luther King Day ceremony, and Pride Day. [MR]

Round Hill is an early 18th Century name, probably for the hill on which much of Silver Spring Country Club is located, or it may be the nearby hill mostly in today's Lewisboro, on and just across the NY line along West Lane. [RN]

Round Lake Road runs from Barrack Hill Road to Round Pond where it dead-ends. Developed in the 1950s as part of Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*), it should really be called Round Pond Road, but lakes apparently had more status than ponds among developers. [RN]

Round Mountain: 1. Many 18th Century deeds for land in the New Patent (*q,v,*) mention Round Mountain, situated in western Danbury, north of Bogg's Pond and about a mile north of I-84, and west of Middle River Road — territory that was in Ridgefield before 1846. The hill is about 1,025 feet above sea level. **2.** USGS maps published since 1938 say the Scotland and Barlow Mountain Schools site is called Round Mountain. The name is not found in 18th or 19th Century deeds, but does appear on an 1893 map. This hill is 620 above sea level. [RN]

Round Pond, one of the few natural bodies of water in Ridgefield, is, at 32 acres, the second largest; at 778 feet above sea level, it is also the highest. So-called at least by 1721, Round Pond was used as a source of fish, ice, mill power, and, for much of the 20th Century, drinking water provided by the Ridgefield Water Supply Company, which owned it as a reservoir. Around 2002, Bridgeport Hydraulic (*q.v.*), later called Aquarion, which bought the water company, stopped using the reservoir because it would be too expensive to build a purification plant to meet new federal regulations. To replace the pond, the company ran a high-pressure water line into Ridgefield from its larger reservoirs in 2001. In October 2004, Round Pond became state property, part of the "Centennial Watershed State Forest" that includes 15,000 acres the state acquired from Aquarion, largely in other counties. Round Pond's "roundness" comes from a geologic formation that created it — a kind of "fluvioglacial landform" or a "kettle." Kettles were created when a glacier receded, leaving occasional large isolated masses of buried ice. As the subterranean ice gradually melted and the ground above it slowly sank, a bowl-like depression formed. On West Mountain, a spring or springs and a relatively small watershed has filled the bowl with water to create the pond. In the late 18th

and 19th Centuries, a saw mill operated somewhere near Round Pond's outlet. Its waters flow southwesterly across the NY state line and into Lakes Rippowam and Oscaleta. From there the water travels westward and into the NY City water supply at Cross River Reservoir. For a good description of ice harvesting operations on Round Pond, see DD275. [RN]

Route 1: *See* Route 33.

Route 3: *See* Route 35.

Route 7, the only U.S. highway in Ridgefield, runs north-south from the Wilton line to the Danbury line. It is called Ethan Allen Highway (*q.v.*) from Wilton to Route 35, and Danbury Road (*q.v.*) from Route 35 to the Danbury line. The official name for the entire 308 miles of U.S. Route 7 from Norwalk to the Canadian border, is Ethan Allen Highway, although most towns employ older local names. Route 7 extends 78 miles through Connecticut. *See also* Roads, federal, Super 7, *and* Route 126.

Route 14: *See* SH 14.

Route 33 extends in Ridgefield from the Wilton line north to the intersection of Route 35 at the Cass Gilbert Fountain (*q.v.*). In Ridgefield, it includes Wilton Road West and southern Main Street; in Wilton, it is called Ridgefield Road from Ridgefield to Route 7, then Westport Road, ending at U.S. Route 1 in Westport. In the 1920s, this was State Route 304. Route 33 once continued north along Main Street and North Salem Road to the NY line at North Salem; in 1966, the state changed North Salem Road portion to Route 116 to match the route number in New York. [RN]

Route 35 from the NY line at Lewisboro (South Salem) to U.S. Route 7 includes South Salem Road, West Lane, Main Street, and Danbury Road (*q.v. each*). In 1926, it was State Route 3, and was changed to 35 in 1932. Route 35 from the NY line to Cross River area was completed in 1939, the final part of a straightening and rebuilding from CT to Peekskill. [RN]

Route 35A: *See* Route 835.

Route 102 is a state highway from U.S. Route 7 in Branchville to Route 35 (Main Street) in the village. In 1926, it was called State Route 329, but was changed to 102 in 1932. Before 1979, Route 102 also included Catoonah Street, High Ridge, Barry Avenue, and West Mountain Road — *see* Route 822. In 1961, the state abandoned a plan to realign Route 102 east of Route 35 — a new road would have run from Main Street opposite West Lane (at the fountain) to Route 102 near the Rockwell Road intersection. Town officials opposed new road through a historic area that would have required loss of a pre-revolutionary house. The state straightened the road in Branchville in spring 1958 after it was heavily damaged in the Flood of 1955 (*q.v.*). [RN]

Route 116 is a state highway from Route 35 northwesterly to NY State, meeting that state's Route 116. In 1926, it was State Route 143. [RN]

Route 126 was the old state number for today's Route 7 from Norwalk north to intersection of Route 35 (then called Route 3). [RN]

Route 143: *See* Route 116.

Route 304: *See* Route 33.

Route 822: A "secret route" (numbered routes maintained by the state but without signposts), formerly the western leg of Route 102. It extends 3.62 miles from Main Street over Catoonah Street, High Ridge, Barry Avenue, and West Mountain Road to the NY line, and has been so numbered since

1979. [RN]

Route 835, a "secret route" (numbered routes maintained by the state but without signposts), consists of one mile of lower West Lane from South Salem Road at the West Lane schoolhouse to the state line. Before 1968, it was known as Route 35A. [RN]

Rowe, Misty (1952-), is an actress who briefly owned, with her then husband James DePaiva *(q.v.*), the Twixthills mansion in 1994-95. [JFS]

Rowe, Dr. Robert A., (1917-1998), a native of Vermont, was a music educator in the Ridgefield schools, coming here in 1946 as supervisor of music, a new position. He developed an innovative K-12 curriculum. Rowe studied at Juilliard, served in marines, and earned a UConn doctorate. He retired from schools in 1979, but continued to teach music. He was active in Rotary and music director at First Congregational Church for 20 years. [NR]

Rowland Lane, a short, dead-end road off East Ridge, was named for Joseph and Alice Rowland (*q.v. each*), whose son Francis created the subdivision. Joseph developed houses along the road, beginning around 1940. The lane became a town road in 1951. [RN]

Rowland, Alice V. MacSherry, (1894-1971), a native of NYC, was a Republican state representative, 1931-35, and a state senator, 1943-51— the first woman elected a senator from Ridgefield. She was also the first woman deputy sheriff in Connecticut. She was a teacher and later a member of the State Board of Education for six years. Rowland Lane recalls her and her carpenter husband, Joseph (*q.v.*). [WWW, DD352, 353]

Rowland, Joseph Samuel, (1887-1962), was a carpenter and contractor who during the first half of the 20th Century, built many houses in town. "He was able to put up a house much cheaper than others," said Leo F. Carroll (*q.v.*). He was a native of Weston where he met his well-known wife, Alice (*q.v.*). They moved here in 1913, living on Island Hill Avenue and later on Creamery Lane. [RN, DD352, 353]

Rowley, John, (ca. 1841-1864), was a Civil War soldier, whose name appears on the War Memorial on Main Street. He was convicted of murdering a fellow soldier and hanged as a traitor. No record of his ever having lived in Ridgefield has been found — he was probably a paid "substitute" for a Ridgefield man. [WWW]

Rowley, Park A., a former vice chairman of the board of the Bank of the Manhattan Trust Company, had a 91-acre estate on Mamanasco and Old Sib Roads in the 1930s. [JFS]

Royal, Msgr. Kevin T., who grew up in Stratford, has been pastor of St. Mary Parish since August 2019. In 2006, he served as episcopal vicar for clergy of the Diocese, and was named chaplain to Pope Benedict XVI, carrying the title "Monsignor" in 2008. Besides serving various parishes in the past, he has been director of the diocesan Office of Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs, director of continuing formation of priests and coordinator for the ministry to the newly ordained. [smcr.org]

Royal Scarlet Store was once Perry's Market, later Gristede's (*q.v. each*), probably in the 1930s or early 40s. Royal Scarlet was a small chain of local markets. [JFS]

Royall Oak Ridge is an 18th Century name that appears in one deed and on one early map for land in the Southwest Ridges (*q.v.*). The ridge was probably in today's Lewisboro, along Elmwood Road north of Vista. Oaks

on this ridge may have been set aside by British officials for government use, such as for planks or masts on naval ships. [RN]

RPAC Gallery at 410 Main Street — an arm of the Ridgefield Pride Art Center (*q.v.*) — opened in 2019 to exhibit, sell and rent works by local artists and was established by Dee Dee Colabella (*q.v*.).

RSVP: *See* Retired Senior Volunteer Program

Rubel, Samuel, (1881-1949), a native of Latvia, was an ice and coal merchant in Brooklyn, who became a leading brewer of beer (Ebling). He bought Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) in 1947 and died there two years later. He was an art collector. [WWW]

Ruggles, Rudy L. Jr., a Harvard-educated physicist, was an IBM scientist and executive in the 1960s who became a scholar at the Hudson Institute and served as its president for five years in the 1970s. He spent the rest of his career in intelligence and national security affairs in the U.S. and abroad, including many months each year in the People's Republic of China from 1982 to 1997, as well as other overseas locations. He has been closely involved in helping Danbury Hospital whose Ruggles Biomedical Research Institute is named for him. He is a longtime Ridgefield resident. [JFS]

Ruggles Fine Arts Reading Room is the room on the north, just after entering the Ridgefield Library through the Main Street door. Named for Sara and Rudy Ruggles (*q.v.*), benefactors of the library, it contains books and media related to the fine arts, including collections of music on CD. The space is part of the original 1902 library building. [JFS]

R.U.O.K.: *See* Are You Okay.

Rural Free Delivery was introduced in Ridgefield by the U.S. Post Office in 1901, bringing mail delivery and services to farmers outside the more densely populated village. Previously rural residents had to go to a post office to get their mail. Until 1905, RFD carriers could also sell stamps and money orders, and had their own stamp cancellations for cards and letters. The first rural mail carrier was Robert Wilson (*q.v.*) In 1925, village delivery was instituted. [RIR, P9/1940].

Russell, Rev. Francis T., was rector of St. Stephen's Church from 1866 to 1868.

Russell, Dr. Scott, was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's disease around 2011. Leaving his executive position in human resources, he became active in Alzheimer's education. Elected to the Executive Board of the National Alzheimer's Association, he became their featured speaker for early onset Alzheimer's patients for many years. He also started an Alzheimer's in the School Program, explaining the disease and how children could help relatives with the ailment. He received a ROTA special award for his work in 2022. [ROTA]

Russian Village: In 1938, Alexander "Alex" Petroff (*q.v.*), a native of Russia and an aircraft engineer, opened this Russian-American cuisine restaurant at 609 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7) in what had earlier been a tourist court (motel). He was joined his daughter, Nadia Petrova, a Manhattan model who later married British movie star, Reginald Gardiner. Dinners started at 80 cents — about $18 in 2026 dollars. Live music was provided most nights by a pair of "Cossacks." In 1945, Petroff leased the premises, with option to buy, to Dominick F. Testa and Michael Tartaglia, who created a new restaurant called the Twin Lakes Inn (*q.v*.). [JFS]

Rustic Drive and **Road** are at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*). Rustic Road runs from

Bennett's Farm Road northerly along the eastern side of the north finger of Fox Hill Lake to a dead end. Rustic Drive goes from Rustic Road to Madeline Drive. Both have been designated Scenic Roads (*q.v.*).[RN]

Rusty Nail, The, a restaurant at 23½ Catoonah Street opened in April 1981 in a building that had held a restaurant called 23½ Catoonah Street. The owners were David Gardner and Paul McKeegan. The location has become an apartment building.

Rux, Albert, (1881-1969)**,** was the first foreman of the town highway department. [DD79]

RVNAhealth was founded in 1914 as the District Nursing Association (*q.v.*), to provide health care services to the community. It changed its name in the 1980s to Visiting Nurse Association of Ridgefield, Inc.; in 2005 became Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association. In June 1994, the town leased part of old high school (*q.v.*) to the organization, which moved from 304 Main Street and sold that house. In 2016, it opened new headquarters at 27 Governor Street after razing former Lounsbury house/office building (*q.v.*) there. In October 2019, to reflect its expanded role and territory of 28 communities, it changed its name once again, dropping the full word Ridgefield; it's now RVNAhealth. The organization has a branch office in New Milford. [JFS]

Ryan, Cornelius, (1920-1974), a native of Ireland, was a historian, journalist and author of the World War II trilogy, *The Longest Day, The Last Battle,* and *A Bridge Too Far.* He lived at 135 Old Branchville Road and is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery (*q.v.*) beneath a gravestone marked simply, "Cornelius Ryan, 1920-1974, Reporter." He was only 54 when died; TV newsman Walter Cronkite gave a eulogy at the funeral in St. Mary's Church. Four years after his death, his wife Kathryn Morgan Ryan (*q.v.*) described his struggle with cancer in *A Private Battle*, from notes he had secretly left behind for that purpose. [WWW]

Ryan, Ethel McGlynn, (1886-1971), the first woman to hold a state legislative office from the town; she was Republican state representative from 1925 to 1929 and 1943 to 1947. She had taught at the Titicus School and was later a member of the Board of Education. She served on Merritt Parkway Commission, which oversaw the design and placement of the highway. She was the wife of **William H. Ryan**, a businessman and former State Highway Department foreman. [NR]

Ryan, James E., (1876-1940), owned Ryan's General Store (*q.v.*) and was president of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield. A Republican, he served as state representative, 1915-19. [RSB26]

Ryan, Kathryn Morgan, (1924-1993), a Phi Beta Kappa University of Missouri graduate at age 19, was a magazine editor who in 1950 married historian-journalist Cornelius Ryan (*q.v.*). She did much research for her husband's WW2 books. She described his death from cancer in the book, *A Private Battle,* in 1978. She also wrote the novel, *The Betty Tree* (1972). After her husband's death, she lived on Jackson Court before moving to Florida where she died. She was active in St. Stephen's Church, the Ridgefield Garden Club, and the District Nurse Association. Her remains are in the crypt at St. Stephen's; her husband's are in Ridgebury Cemetery. [WWW]

Ryan, Margaret Dorothy Madden, (1912-1978), an NYC native who is buried in an unmarked grave in St. Mary Cemetery, was a daughter of Owen Vincent

"Owney" Madden, native of England who became an NYC gang leader, was owner of the Cotton Club during Prohibition, and served seven years in Sing Sing for involvement in a murder. (George Raft was his personal driver before he became a Hollywood actor.) Her father moved to Hot Springs, Ark., where he was also involved in illicit activities and where he died in 1965. She is buried in Ridgefield because her daughter lived here at the time of her death. [DB]

Ryan's General Store at 410 Main Street (ONS #111), was operated by James E. Ryan, who bought it from William C. Barhite (*q.v.*) in 1903. Tom Ryan, his brother, took over in 1940 and closed the store in 1950. Called the last of the old-time country stores, it sold clothing, groceries, hardware, boots and shoes, flour, and livestock feed. The location was occupied in 2018 by William Raveis Real Estate and in 2024, by the RPAC Gallery (*q.v.*). [RPJ5/3 has a nice profile.]

Ryba, Walter G. Jr., (1941-2000), who grew up in Ridgefield and was president of RHS 1959, was a professor of business law and dean of the School of Business at Fairfield University when he died. At RHS, he was also a captain of the baseball, football and basketball teams. A Dartmouth graduate, he lived at 105 New Street. (His name is pronounced *Ree*-ba.) [P8/24/2000]

S

Sabbath Day House: The Town Meeting on April 17, 1749, authorized the construction of a "Sabbath Day House" no larger than 12 by 10 feet. Popular in New England, a Sabbath Day house was a small building with a fireplace where families could warm up and have a bite to eat during breaks in the all-day services Sundays at the unheated meeting house that stood just to the southwest on the village green. Eventually, the Sabbath Day house was apparently converted into a "session house" where small meetings and lectures took place. It remained well into the 19th Century, standing a little east of the corner of Branchville Road and Main Street, the south edge of the homestead of the late Rev. Thomas Hauley, the town's first minister; the site may have been part of the village green in the 18th Century. [JFS]

Sabbath School was an old term for Sunday School. In January 1859, of the 500 children aged 4 to 16 in Ridgefield, only 200 were attending "Sabbath School," prompting the Congregational, Episcopal and Methodist churches to undertake a recruitment campaign. In March, Anna Resseguie reported, "The Sabbath School has increased in numbers in our three churches, since the effort commenced of bringing in the destitute." [DAR]

Sabilia, Carmella, (1859-1943), a native of Italy, was known as "The Peanut Lady" because she would travel on foot from Georgetown to surrounding villages, including Ridgefield, selling bags of roasted peanuts at 10 cents each. She and her husband had a grocery store in Georgetown and she would roast the peanuts early in the morning. She was well into her 70s before she stopped her treks. She reportedly left a small fortune when she died. [WWW]

Sacco Ristorante and Bar operated in the early 1990s at 90 Danbury Road, Ridgefield Commerce Park. [JFS]

Sachem Field, a Little League ball field at 201 Old West Mountain Road, is the only Little League field that had already been a ball field when it was acquired by the league; the others were created for the league. It had been established for the St. Vincent de Paul Novitiate (*see* Sachem Hill.)

Sachem Hill was the name of Robert A. DeMar's 1968 subdivision that turned the 110-acre former St. Vincent de Paul novitiate (*q.v.*), also called Sunset Hall (*q.v.*), into 26 house lots off Old West Mountain, Round Lake, and Walnut Hill Roads. The development included a sizable open space donation on Round Pond (*q.v.*) and what became a Little League field, called Sachem Field, which was once used by the novices to play baseball. The name, Sachem Hill, had been a name used by Samuel Rubel (*q.v.*) when he purchased the Sunset Hill estate in the 1940s. His reason for doing so is not known. [RN]

Sackett's Academy: "A man by the name of Sackett was employed to keep a high-school, or, as it was then called, an Academy," in the early 1800s, according to Samuel G. Goodrich, who, about age 12, attended the academy, which he called a seminary. [ROAL]

Saddle Ridge Road, a private accessway serving three houses off the north side of Regan Road, is shown on property maps in the town clerk's office

as early as 1964. [GM, JFS]

Safe Rides, founded in November 1982, is a student-run program that provides rides Friday and Saturday nights much of the year for teenagers who may need them for whatever reason, but chiefly to avoid impaired driving. In its first year, it provided 626 rides [P12/18/1983] but in the years that followed about 1,200 rides a year have been provided. Its phone number is (203) 313-5634. [RP1]

Safford, Dr. Theodore, (1923-2015), a Navy veteran, was a locally popular and professionally acclaimed family physician from 1951 to 1990s. Active in family medical organizations and in the District Nursing Association (*q.v.*), he was named Rotary Citizen of the Year (*q.v.*) in 1987. He lived on Main Street and later off West Lane. [WWW, P6/18/1987]

Sagebrush Serenaders was a country-western band based around the Tulipani brothers (*q.v.*) during the 1940s and 50s. The band performed at many square dances, with Aldo was on the accordion, Albert guitar, Joseph sax, John drums or bass, and Alfred bass. Bud Morrisroe played violin. [WWW]

Sagi was a restaurant at 23½ Catoonah Street in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

SAI: *See* Suburban Action Institute.

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church had its first worship service in Veterans Park School Dec. 1, 1963; 125 people attended. There were 53 children in the congregation's first Sunday school classes. In 1968, 6½ acres were purchased from the George Blackfords for a church building at Ivy Hill and Branchville Roads. On St. Andrew's Day, Nov. 30, 1969, the new 5,900-square-foot church, seating 275 people, was dedicated. In 1978, the congregation withdrew from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to become a member of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, now the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. A 1983, 2,600-square-foot addition to the church now houses classrooms, a music room, and fellowship areas. A large, new church was completed in 2013. *See also* Rev. John Kjoller. [P10/15/2015]

St. Elizabeth Seton Church, Parish, named for the first American citizen who was canonized a saint, was established May 29, 1976 under the leadership of Father Francis Medynski (*q.v.*), who had been pastor of St. Mary's Parish. The parish initially had 664 families (leaving 1,575 families at St. Mary's). The boundary between the two parishes ran along the north/west side of Danbury Road (Route 35 and 7) south to Limestone Road; thence east to the northern side of the junction of North Salem Road and Tackora Trail, thence northwest along the north side of Tackora Trail to Old Sib Road to the state line. (Tanton Hill, Stonecrest Roads and North Street south of Wooster Street, as well as Wooster Street, remained in St. Mary's Parish). A ground-breaking ceremony for the new church at 520 Ridgebury Road was held Sept. 27, 1977; Carmine and Mario Primiano (*q.v.*) were general contractors on the project. On Saturday, Dec. 24, 1978, the first mass was celebrated in the church, which was officially dedicated on Sept. 29, 1979. Many interior features were created by parishioners. For instance, neighbor Adeline Anderson spent eight years painting the stations of the cross and creating the art tapestries. Father Medynski himself fashioned the wooden parts of the stations. [JFS]

St. George Pure Water: In 1903, Dr. Benn Adelmar Bryon (*q.v.*) bought land at the top of Titicus Mountain [P5/7/1903] where a rock spring flowed. He

dubbed the spring St. George and was soon bottling its output under the name of St. George Pure Water. Sales were reportedly "respectable," but evidently not long-lasting. [JFS]

St. Ignatius Retreat House: *See* Society of St. Pius X *and* St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary.

St. John, Delia E. (1866-1958), a member of an old Norwalk family, taught at both the last Farmingville schoolhouse, and a little red schoolhouse that preceded it, starting in 1893. She did a painting of that schoolhouse that is in 2026 held by Jack and Sally Sanders. She later taught art in the Norwalk schools. [JFS]

St. John, Keeler, sold his shingle mill (*q.v.*) on the upper Titicus River in 1848 [RLR19/21].

St. John, Nathan, (1692-1749), was among the early settlers of the town. He enslaved Luc (Luke?), according to his 1749 estate tabulation. [UNM]

St. John, Samuel, (1763-1848), a Ridgebury farmer, served in the Revolution and is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. His three-year-old daughter was "killed by a cider mill wheel" in 1798. [JW]

St. John, Samuel Sydney (1806-65), a Ridgefield native and Columbia graduate who studied law, had a store in Ridgebury in late 1820s. In 1832, he established a "classical and commercial school" called Ridgefield Boarding School in the village of Ridgefield. He was a state senator in 1837 and, from 1843 to 1859, was a principal in NYC, overseeing more than 4,000 pupils. In 1859 he returned to his Ridgebury farm and served as a state representative in 1864. [Hurd] He was a Union Party member and son of Thomas St. John (*q.v.*), also a state representative, and father of Thomas Platt St. John (*q.v.*), lawyer and writer. *See also* Eliphalet Brush. [WWW]

St. John, Thomas, (1739-1816), an early Ridgebury settler, was a sergeant in the Connecticut Fifth Regiment in 1775. He is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW]

St. John, Thomas, (1785-1848), was a Ridgebury farmer who served as district postmaster in Ridgebury from 1835 until his death. He was a state representative in 1832 and 1833, and father of future State Rep. Samuel Sydney St. John (*q.v.*).

St. John, Thomas Platt, (1830-65), son of Samuel Sydney St. John (*q.v.*), a Columbia graduate, was an attorney in NYC and a promising politician there. In 1851, at age 21, he was elected as a NY state representative, then reelected. He was also the author of "Annus Mirabilis," long poem published in booklet form in 1848. Evidently preferring the life of a farmer, he left NYC in 1859, and returned to Ridgebury where he was born. But the death of his wife, Mary, in 1864, left him despondent and he died a year later, only 35 years old. [Hurd]

St. Johns Road, an 18th Century highway, runs from Wilton Road West southerly to Silver Spring Road. It may have originally been a farm path to skirt the east side of Silver Spring Swamp. As such it would have served as an access to not only the backs of the lots of Wilton Road farms, but also to the swamp, an important source of wildfowl and wild flora, such as cranberries. Members of the St. John family owned farmland thereabouts as early as 1815, but probably earlier. Captain Samuel Saintjohn, Matthias Saintjohn, and Matthew Saintjohn were among the first settlers and proprietors, coming here from Norwalk. [RN]

St. Mary Cemetery, established 1883 as St. Mary's Cemetery on corner of North Street and Copps Hill Road, is the town's largest and most used cemetery. An addition, including 16-foot Calvary group of statues and new entrance, was dedicated June 1, 1924 [P6/5/1924]. The columbarium was added in 2007. By 2018, there were about 4,650 graves and memorials on eight of the 21 acres owned by the parish. One of only four Catholic cemeteries in the Diocese of Bridgeport, it also contains the remains of former residents of Wilton, Redding, and nearby NY state. [HLYB]

St. Mary Church: The cornerstone for St. Mary Church, originally called St. Mary's Church, was laid July 4, 1896, [P7/10/1896] and the building dedicated July 5, 1897. The building, the parish's third house of worship, was erected at a cost of $20,700 ($765,000 in 2024 dollars). A bell was not installed until 1901. The building's style was described by the Ridgefield Design Council [AR] as "the only Victorian church in town, an eclectic melange of Gothic, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Shingle style architecture." In a 2021 project called "Gather and Grow," the church was expanded and extensively renovated, including the addition of an adoration chapel in the front and a new sacristy in the rear. *See also* St. Mary Parish. [JFS]

St. Mary Clubhouse: *See* St. Mary's Club, Clubhouse.

St. Mary Parish: The Catholic church on Catoonah Street was officially named St. Mary's Church in 1881 by the Rev. Lawrence Stephen McMahon, bishop of Hartford, and the parish incorporated May 12, 1882 The Rev. Thaddeus Walsh was named the first pastor. In August 1882 the parish bought its cemetery land on North Street. Land was purchased in 1893 from Jacob Lockwood for a new church and rectory on Catoonah Street; the rectory was built in 1894, the church in 1896-97. In 1953, the Marianite Sisters of The Holy Cross began serving in parish. In 1976, the growing parish split, with the creation of St. Elizabeth Seton. [RPJ5/12] Around the turn of the 21st Century, the parish stopped calling itself St. Mary's and switched to St. Mary.

St. Mary School, a Roman Catholic school, began in 1955 temporarily in the clubhouse on Catoonah Street. The new school building opened in September 1956 with 206 pupils in first through fifth grades on land was donated in 1954 by Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Hoffman and staffed by Marianite Sisters of the Holy Cross (*q.v.*). The school's first principal was Sister M. Helen. 53 sculptures in the school were done by noted artist Frederick Shrady (*q.v.*), a parishioner whose children attended the school. In 1962, Father John Draper became principal; in 1962 also, voters approved providing school bus transportation for St. Mary's pupils. In 1963, a new addition including a convent was built; by the late 1960s, the school had 600 pupils. The school closed in June 1970 after teaching nuns departed, citing lack of vocations, and hiring lay teachers in their stead would have greatly increased costs. However, it reopened starting 1996 when 20 children entered kindergarten, expanding to higher grades in subsequent years; by 2005, the first 8th grade class of the "new" Saint Mary School graduated. In 2024, the school reports it had 252 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, with a 7:1 student-teacher ratio. The student body came from 21 towns in Connecticut and New York; 19% are of color. [JFS]

St. Mary's Club, Clubhouse: St. Mary's Clubhouse was built in 1907 under

Pastor Richard E. Shortell (*q.v.*), and dedicated Memorial Day that year; St. Mary's Club, for men only, was established at the end of the same year, with 75 members [P11/21/1907]. The building was used for many parish functions and later became Knights of Columbus Hall. It was converted to parish offices in the 1990s. [RN]

St. Mary's Fall Festival is a **c**hurch fair operated for many years on a Saturday in early September as a parish fundraiser [P7/31/1980]. The first fair was in 1973. It had gone to an every-other-year schedule, but was halted by COVID (*q.v.*). The last edition was Sept. 8, 2018.

St. Mary's Rectory on Catoonah Street, just east of the church, was built in 1894 — before the church, but was razed the week of June 13, 1974. under the Rev. Martin J. O'Connor, pastor, after St. Mary's School closed, and much space became available in the school for housing priests. The house was a Victorian style that matched the church soon to be built.

St. Stephen's Athletic Association was created early in the 20th Century by the parish. Its basketball teams such as White and Red, and Black and Red, played for the public in town hall [P2/27/1908]; also had a baseball team.

St. Stephen's Church was established in 1725 as an Anglican mission by the Rev. Samuel Johnson (*q.v.*), who went on to help found what is now Columbia University. The first ministers were missionaries who handled several or more churches. The first settled rector was Dr. David Perry (*q.v.*), who served 1791 to 1795 and remained in town as a physician (his son and grandson were also physicians here). The first church building, erected around 1740, was burned by the British in 1777, and replaced in 1791. Church and parish were formally named for St. Stephen in 1831. The third and penultimate church was built in 1841-42. The current church, the fourth, was built in 1915. The first rectory was built about 1838 at the southwest corner of what is now Ballard Park, across from today's library (but then across from Smith Tavern). In 1852, the parish acquired "Ashland Cottage" (*q.v.*) as a rectory; it was sold in 1889. In 1887, the Keeler Dauchy house, just north of the church, was purchased as a rectory; in 1914, it was moved to 23 Catoonah Street and a new, larger rectory built farther back from Main Street. South Hall (*q.v.*) was acquired in 1958 and sold in 2021; North Hall (*q.v.*) was built in 1908-09 and is still in use. [JFS, Haight]

St. Stephen's Church: Its History for 250 Years 1725 to 1975, the story of the church and its place in the community, was written by Robert S. Haight (*q.v.*) and published in 1975. It's 220 pages, indexed and illustrated. [JFS]

St. Stephen's Church Reaches the Millennium is a 114 page history of the parish, designed as a supplement to Robert Haight's book (*above*) covering 1975 to 2000, and was written by Dirk Bollenback (*q.v.*). Published by the church in 2000, it's indexed and illustrated. [JFS]

St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary was a conservative Catholic seminary at 209 Tackora Trail, dedicated May 25, 1980, by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, At the same time, Lefebvre ordained several priests, an action Bridgeport Diocese Bishop Walter Curtis declared "illegal." Lefebvre returned April 22-28, 1982, for more ordinations. The seminary function was eventually discontinued. *See* Society of St. Pius X. [P3/25/1982]

St. Thomas of Villanova, Sisters of, came from France in 1954 to run a convalescent home in Norwalk, and bought a house at 40 Barry Avenue in

1968 as a retreat. They found they did not have time to use it to rest themselves and sold it in 1972. [JFS]

St. Vincent de Paul novitiate: The Congregation of the Mission, commonly known as the Vincentians (*q.v.*), bought Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) in 1955 to use as a novitiate. It closed around 1966 and its 110 acres subdivided as Sachem Hill (*q.v.*) in 1968. [JFS]

Saks, Jay David, (1945-2024), a native of NYC who studied at Juilliard and Mannes College of Music, won 13 Grammys (he was nominated for more than 50) and two Emmys as a music sound producer. His specialty was classical and Broadway music; he worked with Eugene Ormandy, Yo Yo Ma, James Levine, Pinchas Zukerman, Seiji Ozawa, James Galway, Marilyn Horne, Michael Tilson Thomas, Emanuel Ax, and Andre Previn. He has done many Broadway cast albums and was audio producer of "Live from the Met" broadcasts for more than 20 years as well as the Great Performances series on PBS and Disney's "Fantasia 2000." He moved to Ridgefield in 1977 and retired in 2019. He was an active supporter of the Dlhy Ridge Golf Course (*q.v.*). [NR]

Salem View Drive runs off the east side lower Spring Valley Road, serving a 23-acre 1990 subdivision, Highview Farm, by Colonial Homes Inc. of New Canaan which selected the name because the property looks across the Spring Valley to North Salem, NY. [RN]

Salerno, Bartholomew T., (1923-1988), a Brooklyn native, was an entrepreneur who came here as an RHS teacher in 1954. He established Bart Associates, a real estate office, did several small subdivisions, and acquired and restored the historic Big Shop (*q.v.*) in the early 1970s. He obtained an FCC license and started WREF (*q.v.*) radio station. He part-owned the company that fed the athletes at the 1980 Olympics in Lake Placid and supplied food to the American team at Sarajevo in 1984. [WWW]

Salomon, Richard, gave the town Levy Park (*q.v.*).

Salvestrini, Armando J., (1910-1993), a lifelong Ridgefielder, was a homebuilder whose biggest project was Ridgefield Gardens (*q.v.*). He lived at 78 New Street. [RN]

Salvestrini, Raymond Jr., "Chip," a Ridgefield native and RHS 1971, was a star athlete at RHS, earning eight varsity letters in three sports. He starred in football at Yankton College in SD, and played minor league football with Long Island Giants, New Jersey Rams. He became athletic director at New Milford High School, then Lehman College. In 1993, he became athletic director for Ridgefield schools and in 2001, moved to Danbury schools athletic director, then to White Plains in 2009, and in 2012 back to Danbury. [NR]

Salvo, Adam, (1935-2012), was a popular Ridgefield High School art teacher from 1959 to 1996 who inspired many students, especially artists, several of whom had a joint exhibit in 2006 at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (*q.v.*) at which he was honored. [WWW]

Salzman, Mark, (1959-), a native of Greenwich who grew up in Ridgefield, RHS 1977 and graduated from Yale in 1982, is a writer whose best known work was his 1986 memoir, *Iron and Silk*, a book about his living in China that was later made into a movie that he starred in. His autobiographical story of his Ridgefield childhood is called *Lost in Place, Growing Up Absurd in Suburbia* (1995). He lives in California. A cellist, he performed with YoYo Ma, Emmanuel Ax and others at Alice Tully Hall. He was son of Joseph and

Martha Salzman (*q.v.*). [NR]

Salzman, Martha, (1934-2003), was a concert pianist and harpsichordist, and a piano teacher, who was an early member of the Ridgefield Symphony. She moved to Ridgefield in 1959 with husband Joseph, and retired to Arizona in 1992. She was the mother of author Mark Salzman (*q.v.*). [P2/13/2003]

Samara Place is a dead-end road off West Lane, serving a 7-lot, 26-acre 1997 subdivision, Topgallant (*q.v.*), just before the NY line. Samaras are the winged seeds of maple trees. [RN]

Sammis, Elias H., (1849-1930), a native of New Canaan, came to Ridgefield as a boy with his father, John Wood Sammis, who operated a limekiln. He was a carpenter until 1896 when he returned to his native town. However, he is buried in Ridgefield Cemetery. [CRBFC]

Sammis, John F., (1847-1916), a Ridgefield cooper, was, in the 1880s, postmaster of the Cooper Post Office (*q.v.*). In 1888, he was charged with embezzling postage stamp money and the Cooper office was discontinued. By 1900 he was a farmer in Fairfield and later in Monroe where he died at the age of 69. He and wife Catherine are buried in Bridgeport. [JFS]

Sanabria, Nicholas, a native of Venezuela and son of a world-famous specialist dealer, auctioneer and cataloguer of aerophilately, was a philatelist and stamp dealer who specialized in airmail stamps of the world and produced catalogues in the 1960s. He lived in Ridgefield.

Sanden, John Howard, (1935-2022), a native of Texas, was one of the world's leading portrait artists, and painted more than 450 commissioned works of celebrities, corporate CEOs, senators, congressmen, and heads of colleges and universities. His official White House portraits of President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush were unveiled at the White House on May 31, 2012. He wrote five books on portrait painting and lectured for 25 years on portraiture at the Art Students League in NYC. He moved to Ridgefield in 1985 and painted both here and at his studio in NYC. In 1995, he received the first John Singer Sargent Medal for Lifetime Achievement from the American Society of Portrait Artists. [NR] [P12/29/2022]

Sanders, John F. "Jack", (1944-), a Fairfield County native, is a historian of Ridgefield who grew up in Danbury, graduated from Fairfield Prep and Holy Cross College, spent more than 45 years as an editor of *The Ridgefield Press,* and was inducted into the New England Newspaper Hall of Fame in 2010. He has lived since 1968 in Ridgefield with his wife, Sally, a newspaper editor and HS director. His books include: *Ridgefield 1900-1950, Five Village Walks, Ridgefield Chronicles, Hidden History of Ridgefield, Wicked Ridgefield, The Secrets of Wildflowers, Hedgemaids and Fairy Candles, Ridgefield Names, Uncle Ned's Mountain, School Days, Ridgefield Celebrities, Ridgefield's Great Estates, Bob's Ridgefield,* and *Ambling Along Old Main Street.*.

Sanford, Bradley Williams (1849-1935), was a farmer who served as a Republican state representative, 1901-03. He was a son of State Rep. Ebenezer Burr Sanford.

Sanford, David, a native of North Salem, led a gang of counterfeiters who operated in and around Ridgefield in the 1750s, according to a 1959 lecture by Bedini to the Women's Town Club. Sanford was associated with the notorious counterfeiter, Owen Sullivan (*q.v.*).

Sanford, Ebenezer Burr, (1808-69), a native of Redding, operated an iron

foundry, along with Thomas Couch (*q.v.*) at what is now the Moongate (*q.v.*) property on Route 7. [RIR] He moved to Ridgefield and was a Republican state representative in 1859. His son, Bradley Williams Sanford, was also a state representative. [JFS]

Sanford, Ezekiel, (1796-1822), an author and a native of Ridgefield, attended the Independent Schoolhouse (with S.G. Goodrich—*q.v.*), graduated Yale in 1815, and in 1819 published *A History of the United States before the Revolution, with Some Account of the Aborigines*. That year he began an edition of the British poets with biographical prefaces in 50 volumes, 22 of which he had published when his health failed (the remainder were published under a different editor). His satirical novel *The Humours of Eutopia: A Tale of Colonial Times* was published posthumously. He died in Columbia, SC. [JFS]

Sanford Station was a mid-19th Century railroad stop on the extreme western edge of Redding at the Ridgefield line. Consequently, the neighborhood – including some territory in Ridgefield – became known as Sanford Station or just plain Sanford. The 1934 Ridgefield assessors' map says Simpaug Turnpike, from Route 7 in Ridgefield up to and past this locality, was once called Sanford Station Road. Sanford Station (Sanfords Station on the Beers map) was probably so called because many members of the Sanford family lived in that neck of the Redding woods. Beers shows at least three Sanford houses nearby. Confusion with "Stamford" led to changing the name to Topstone Station (*q.v.*) around 1910. [RN]

Sanfords' Pond is in the southwestern corner of Danbury, just north of Interstate 84 near the NY line, territory that belonged to Ridgefield from the 1740s until 1846. The name appears on the current USGS maps; other names include Andrews Pond and Whiting's Pond. David and Daniel Sanford owned land here in the 1820s. [RN]

San Giovanni, Edward (1904-1996), a native of New York City, was a silversmith who operated mostly in the 1940s and 50s and held several design patents on silver serving objects and novelties. He owned Ridgefield Silversmiths (*q.v.*) in the 1940s and 50s. By the 1970s he was a real estate agent for Keeler and Durant (*q.v.*). He lived in many houses including on Silver Spring Road in the 1940s, South Salem Road in the 1950s, West Lane in the 1960s, 65 Peaceable Street in the 1970s, and later in an apartment on Prospect Street with wife, Claire, who was active in the Red Cross and other organizations. [JFS]

Sansome, Col. Frederick, owned Savin Hill (*q.v.*) on the Ridgefield-Lewisboro line from the 1930s into the 1960s.

Santini, Alesandro "Alex," (1914-1991), a Ridgefield native, was a chef, restaurateur, and a popular local personality in the last half of the 20th Century who was an expert bowler and golfer. [DD54,55,56,57, P2/14/1991]

Santini, Frank, (1926-1991), a Ridgefield native, was a lifelong and well-liked Ridgefield firefighter, starting when he was 16 years old and help was especially needed at the firehouse during WW2. After a stint in the Navy, he became active in the volunteers, eventually becoming chief of the department. In 1963, he joined the paid fire department and rose to the rank of lieutenant, retiring in the late 1980s. [P8/8/1991]

Sapone, Mary Lou, (nee McFate), who lived on Pine Mountain Road in the last third of the 20th Century, was a corporate investigator known nationally for

infiltrating activist groups. She was said to have been hired by the National Rifle Association to spy on anti-gun groups and has also infiltrated environmental groups. Friends of Animals accused her of infiltrating their group on behalf of U.S. Surgical, a company attacked by Friends of Animals for using live animals for experiments. She denied being a spy and said she was conducting research into illegal activities within organizations. In 1987, she was honored as one of the 100 Outstanding Women in Connecticut for her work in aiding the poor in Nigeria. [JFS]

Sarah Bishop: *See* Bishop, Sarah.

Sarah Bishop Park or **Refuge** consists of 39 acres, controlled by the Conservation Commission, south of Sarah Bishop Road and west of Twopence Road. The name recalls the hermitess (*see* Sarah Bishop), she was not connected with the property, and lived miles from it. The park, mostly acquired as part of the Chestnut Hill Estates (*q.v.*) subdivision, features a sizable stretch of an old trolley bed once slated to run from Danbury to the Harlem Line railroad near Golden's Bridge. *See* Old Trolley Road. [JFS]

Sarah Bishop Road at the 1959 Chestnut Hills (*q.v.*) subdivision in Ridgebury runs off Parley Road to a dead end. "Sarah Bishop" is also applied to an adjoining 39 acres of town-owned open space. The road was named for the hermitess, who lived nowhere near Chestnut Hills. Developer Lewis J. Finch said he selected the road name because, like Parley Road, it recognized an interesting character from Ridgefield's past. [RN]

Sarah Bishop's Cave: *See* Bishop, Sarah.

Sarah's Wine Bar: *See* Bernard's.

Sarath, Patrice, a 1980 RHS graduate, is a fantasy novel author whose novels include the Books of the Gordath (*Gordath Wood*, *Red Gold Bridge*, and *The Crow God's Girl*) and the romance *The Unexpected Miss Bennet*. She has written many short stories that have appeared in magazines and anthologies. She lives in Austin, Texas, where she is a marketing executive for Austin Community College, an editor, and a filmmaker. [JFS]

Sarner, Sidney, a NJ apartment developer**,** purchased in 1955 600 acres from Outpost Farm Inc., the core of the former Louis D. Conley (*q.v.*) estate. Sarner maintained his Sidney Sarner Foundation was establishing an experimental farm for "scientific farming and experimentation in land fertilization," and would be importing young wild and domestic animals from the "wilds of northern Canada and from parts of the United States" to see if they would cross-breed, creating new and hardy varieties. One of the experiment was to determine whether wild animals could be tamed and made useful to man if raised under controlled conditions. [P5/5/1955] [DD322] Sarner had died by 1970 without breeding success, and his foundation sold the property to IBM (*q.v*) for $1.9 million — about $16 million in 2026 dollars. The buildings included brick barns and houses to the south of Bennett's Farm Road. Some Sarner land on the north side is now Bennett's Farm State Park (*q.v.*); on the south, in 2026, it's mostly owned by Eureka V (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Saroyan, Aram, (1943-), was better known among Ridgefielders as a Little League coach than what he really is: novelist, poet, and biographer whose father was Pulitzer Prize-winning author William Saroyan and whose mother is actress Carol Marcus (Mrs. Walter Matthau). He lived at 26 Stonecrest Road in the late 1980s. He is the author of more than a dozen books, including *The Romantic*, a novel written in Ridgefield. He taught

writing at the University of Southern California. His two children are named Strawberry and Cream Saroyan. [NR]

Sassifrage Ridge: In 1728, the proprietors transferred to minister Thomas Hauley 11 acres "lying on ye north end of Saxifax or Sassifrage Ridge, so called…" This was probably on West Mountain, now in NY as part of the Oblong and was named for the tree that probably grew there. [RN]

Saunders, Phillip Keith, (1899-1997), a native of England, was an inventor and a developer. At 15, he joined the Royal Navy, served in WW1, and by his 20s was an engineer in Brazil. He later worked in South Africa where he invented the "diaphragm valve" control air flow in mines and in many other kinds of functions. He soon founded the Saunders Valve Company in England and had patents on a number of devices. He moved to the U.S. in the mid-1940s to avoid British taxes and to Ridgefield in 1948. A year later, he bought the Louis Morris Starr (*q.v.*) estate in Farmingville, eventually subdividing part of it into Quaker Ridge (*q.v.*). In 1960 he wrote a light-hearted, lively autobiography, *Dr. Panto Fogo: The Uninhibited Memoirs of A Twentieth Century Adventurer — His Inventions and His Escapades on Four Continents and the High Seas*. In 1950, he establish the Upton Country Club on the island of Jamaica. He maintained a home for himself and his daughter on Saunders Lane until 1974 when he moved to Manteo, N.C., where he died. [FBFR]

Saunders Lane is a dead-end road off Farmingville Road nearly opposite the Farmingville School, developed by and named for P. K. Saunders (*q.v.*) who called the subdivision Quaker Ridge (*q.v.*). [RN]

Saville, Harriet "Hattie" Jean Bristol, (1925-2022), a native of Vermont, was an artist known for her watercolors depicting children and childhood scenes. Active in the First Congregational Church, she was a Sunday School teacher and choir member. She and her husband, Richard, a teacher, lived at 115 North Salem Road from 1960 to 1981. [P2/8/2022, JFS]

Savin Hill was the name of the estate on Route 35 in Lewisboro on Ridgefield line that is now Le Chateau (*q.v.*), but was earlier called Westfair (*q.v.*). It was built in 1907 by financier J.P. Morgan as a gift to his minister, Rev. Dr. William S. Rainsford (*q.v.*). It's often mistakenly called Savin Rock. [JFS]

Saw Mill Brook was mentioned in a 1775 deed for land in Branchville at the Norwalk (now Wilton) town line. It was probably a stream flowing into the Norwalk River, possibly the Cooper Brook (*q.v.)* which was being used to power a saw mill. The name has been used for other streams in town. [RN]

Saw Mill Hill and **Road** runs from North Salem Road at Titicus to Pin Pack Road and Mulberry Street. The road was laid out in 1772, but the name of the hill and road are probably 20th Century. It was named for a sawmill that was once operated, possibly by Will F. Hoyt, a carpenter, near where the Titicus River crosses under the road. Several other mills, including a cider mill and a gristmill, were operated farther downstream near North Salem Road. [RN]

Saw Mill Pond was a common term in the past, applied to almost any body of water associated with a pond that stored water for a sawmill. [RN]

Saw Mill River is a brook that flows out of a swamp west and south of Turner Road in the northwest corner of Ridgebury, northward into Danbury along Saw Mill Road (*q.v.*) and into NY State and its reservoirs. [RN]

Saw Mill Road, only a few feet of which are in Ridgefield, runs from Turner Road to Routes 6, 302 and I-84 in Danbury (which pre-1846 was part of Ridgefield). The sawmill was near Route 6, built sometime between 1767

and 1799 and operated by William Nickerson in 1801. [RN]

Saw mills: Possibly the first "industry" and first "factory" in Ridgefield was a saw mill. Lumber was needed before almost anything else in the settlement of the town. Land records between 1708 and 1880 indicate that at least 20 saw mills were operated for varying lengths of time. Almost every neighborhood had a mill at one time or another. The earliest water powered mill may have been at the outlet of a pond that once existed at the corner of Whipstick Road and Wilton Road East. Another may have been on or near the site of today's Casagmo. Hoyt's Saw Mill (*q.v.*), in operation by 1752, lasted more than a century. Among the owners of saw mills were Lewis H. Bailey, Taylor Bates, Daniel Benedict, William N. Benedict, Sturges Bradley, Platt Brush, Benjamin Burt, Timothy Canfield, James Conklin, Jonah Foster, Abner Gilbert, Charles Gilbert, Elias Gilbert, Harry Gilbert, Jabez Mix Gilbert, James Gilbert, Epenetus Howe, James Hoyt, Bradley Hull, David Hurlbutt, Stephen Jackson, Adonirum Keeler, David Keeler, Isaac Keeler, William Lee II, William Nickerson, and Moses Northrup (*q.v. each*). *See also* John's Pond, Lower Pond, Millers Ridge, Old Mill Pond, Round Pond, and Steep Brook. [JFS]

Scaduto, Anthony, (1932-2017), was a writer who specialized in biographies of celebrities such as Mick Jagger, Frank Sinatra, and mobster Lucky Luciano; *Bob Dylan: An Intimate Biography,* has been called his best. "It is regarded as an influential book in the field, being one of the first to take an investigative approach to writing about his subject," said one critic. Scaduto lived at 135 Grandview Drive from 1973 until around 1979, and had worked for the *NY Post*. [WWW].

Scaglia, Carlo (1889-1918), a native of Italy, came to this country with his parents and entered the Army in May 1918. Four months later, he was dead, killed by a shell during combat in France. His parents were farm hands on the A.C. Fraser estate on West Mountain. It was not Scaglia's first military experience; he had spent three years as a private in the Italian army. He is buried in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in France where his monument incorrectly spells his name as Scaglio. [NR, NA]

Scala, Giancarlo "John," (1899-1971), a native of Italy known locally as Chef Scala, owned The Elms Inn (*q.v.*) from 1951 until his death. He came to the U.S. in 1921 to work for the St. Regis Hotels and later, the Longchamps restaurants. In 1937, he became a chef for the Outpost Inn (*q.v*.) in Ridgefield, and in 1948 established Scala's Restaurant at the corner of Main and Catoonah Streets. Three years later he bought The Elms from the James H. Perry estate. Sons **Mario** (*q.v.*) and **Robert** later operated The Elms; son **Richard** was a longtime dentist here. [NR]

Scala, Mario, (1927-1978), who ran The Elms Inn (*q.v.*) at the time of his death, was a chef who came to Ridgefield with his parents (*see* Giancarlo Scala) at the age of 10, served in the Army in WW2, and took over the inn when his father retired. His wife was **Violet Natoli Scala** (*q.v.*). [P4/20/1978]

Scala, Violet Natoli, (1927-2021), a NJ native, was the longtime, popular hostess and a manager at The Elms Inn. She was the wife of Mario Scala (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Scalise, George, (1896-1989), was a union boss with mob ties who in the late 1930s owned a 27-room mansion on Tackora Trail. After Scalise went to prison, it became the Mamanasco Lake Lodge (*q.v.*), then Manresa (*q.v.*) retreat center, and in 2018 is a retreat house and Catholic school, operated

by the Society of St. Pius X (*q.v.*). Exposes of Scalise's activities helped earn Ridgefielder Westbrook Pegler (*q.v.*) a Pulitzer Prize. [WWW]

Scallon, Frank J., (1899-1987), an inventor and benefactor, spent much of his childhood here, attending Scotland and Titicus schoolhouses. He invented the midget louver, a popular device for venting houses, particularly eaves, and formed the Frank J. Scallon Foundation focusing on urology research, based in Norwalk. [DD308, 324]

Scalzo, Christopher D., a Republican, was state representative, 1995-99. A native of Peekskill, N.Y., he lived on Main Street.

Scalzo, Robert P., (1931-1976), was active in working with Little League, Pop Warner football, and Townies basketball in the 1970s. A native of Ridgefield Park, N.J., and a veteran of the U.S. Army, he worked for IBM and moved to Ridgefield around 1968. RHS annually awards a Robert Scalzo Scholarship. *See* Scalzo Field. [RN]

Scalzo Field is a Little League ball field on the east side of Prospect Ridge, north of the skating rink, named in 1977 for Robert P. Scalzo (*q.v.*). [RN]

Scarry, Richard, (1919-1994), the children's book author and illustrator, lived in Ridgefield and was famed for his characters living in "Busytown." For Ridgefield's 250th anniversary in 1958, Scarry contributed a map of the Battle of Ridgefield, which appears in Silvio Bedini's *Ridgefield in Review* (*q.v.*). He rented a house on the Conklin farm, part of the old Stonecrest estate, on North Street from 1951 to 1959, when he moved to Westport, and 10 years later, to Switzerland. Son **Richard "Huck" Scarry Jr.**, born here 1953, is also a children's book author. [WWW]

Scenic Roads are **t**own roads, designated by the selectpersons, to protect visual and historic values, and have no commercial properties along them. The Scenic Road ordinance, adopted in 1974, was updated in 1994. Scenic roads as of 2026 are: Florida Road, Lounsbury Road, Old Branchville Road, Pelham Lane, Silver Spring Road, Clearview Drive, Clearview Terrace, Lake Road, Lakeside Drive, Lakeside Drive Extension, Mountain Road, Rainbow Drive, Shady Lane, Woody Place, Highview Road, Lakeview Drive, Lookout Drive, Madeline Drive, Rita Road, Rustic Drive, Rustic Road, Water's Edge Way, and Rustic Road. While the state also designates scenic highways, none is in Ridgefield. [JFS]

Scenic View Estates was what developer Jerry Tuccio originally called the subdivision that would later be known as Twixt Hills. [RLR-1961]

Schenck, Henry de Bevoise, (1861-1929), was a prominent New York City private investment banker who built Boswyck (*q.v*) mansion on Florida Hill Road, ca. 1890, and later, Nydeggen (*q.v.*), on Lake Mamanasco. His name often appears as Henry de B. Schenck. His wife, Maria Theodora van Wyck (1862-1942), was the aunt of Louise Polhemus Dixon, who built a nearby "twin" mansion, later called Manresa (*q.v.*), now St. Ignatius Retreat House.

Scherf, Meinhard, (1893-1943), a captain in the Merchant Marine, had been born at sea to German parents, and he died at sea at the hands of the German Navy. A native of Germany who became a U.S. citizen as a teenager, he was captain of a Liberty Ship on its maiden voyage to England when it was sunk by a U-Boat from his native country March 29, 1943. He was the second Ridgefielder to die in World War II combat — and also the second Merchant Mariner. He posthumously received the Mariner's Medal, the Merchant Marine's equivalent of the Purple Heart. He and his wife lived

on Barry Avenue. [WWW]

Schimenti Construction, which specializes in retail stores, opened corporate headquarters at 650 Danbury Road (Route 7) in 2007. Its 18,000-square-foot, two-story building sits on a little over an acre of land. The company moved to Rye, NY, in 2023. The building had previously been Harbor Electronics (*q.v.*). [CTI 12/23/2025]

Schlumberger-Doll Research Center on Sunset Lane and Old Quarry Road operated from 1949 until moving to Cambridge, Mass., in 2006. The center, part of a French-owned company, developed techniques for locating deep oil deposits. At its peak the center employed 250 scientists, technicians, administrators, and others and had a Cray computer, once one of the most powerful computers in use. Part of the old campus has been developed for condominiums; the town owns the rest. The Philip Johnson (*q.v.*) administrative building has been restored and leased for a commercial operation. Another building has become the Diamond Properties Performing Arts Center (*q.v.*), the venue for ACT of Connecticut (*q.v.*). *See also* Henri Doll. [JFS]

Schneiderman, Ross: *See* Ross Bread.

School board: *See* Education, Board of.

School bus depot was established in 1984 at former town dump after Candlewood Valley Bus Company, town's busing contractor at the time, lost its Danbury depot due to Route 7 widening. The town also wanted to gain the property taxes on the buses, which the bus company had been paying to Danbury. [JFS]

School districts: Ridgefield has had as many as 15 school districts in the 19th Century, each served by local schoolhouses; in the 1860s, they were Bell, Bennett's Farm, Branchville, Center, Farmingville, Flat Rock, Florida, Limestone, Ridgebury North and Ridgebury South, Scotts Ridge (Scotland), Titicus, West Lane, West Mountain, Whipstick — *see entries for each schoolhouse*. In 2026, there were six elementary and two junior high districts. *See also* Education, Mill Plain.

School enrollment on Oct. 1, 2025 was 4,360, consisting of 1,802 elementary, 1,161 middle school, and 1,397 high school [P12/1/2025]. Enrollments hit an all-time high in 1975 when Ridgefield had 6,029 students. Here are some public school enrollments over the years: 1856, 624; 1878, 4344; 1926, 714; 1931, 694; 1942, 674; 1955, 1,102; 1960, 1,832 (includes St. Mary's School); 1965, 3,645; 1968, 4,655; 1971, 5,843; 1972, 5,995; 1975, 6,029; 1980, 4,737; 1981, 4,551; 1983, 4,026; 1989, 3,284; 1990, 3,300, 1997, 4,450; 2014, 5,178; 2016, 4,970; 2023, 4,472. [JFS, SD]

School resource officer, a position approved by the Board of Education in 2001, is a Ridgefield police officer stationed full-time at RHS. The first SRO was Fernando Luis (2001-2022). The SRO oversees school safety and security, teaches law-related education classes, administers the high school DARE program, holds informative meetings and seminars on school safety and the law for parents and teachers, and is a resource for law-related referrals to social agencies. [RW, DNT6/26/2001]

School superintendents: *See* Superintendents

School Visitors, Board of, was the original name of the Board of Education (*q.v.*). The term was used in the late 1800s and early 1900s. [SD]

Schoolhouse Place is a dead-end road off northern Ridgebury Road, serving

Paul McNamara's 1981 seven-lot subdivision of the former Lee B. Wood (*q.v.*) property. It was named for the North Ridgebury Schoolhouse (*see* North District), which once stood nearby. [RN]

Schoolhouses: *See* School Districts.

Schools: *See* Education, *and* individual schools or school topics.

Schottenheimer, Marty, (1944-2021), a National Football League coach, lived on Mulberry Street in the mid-1970s when he was hired as a linebacker coach for the New York Giants; he later was defensive coordinator. He became head coach of Kansas City Chiefs for ten seasons, Cleveland Browns for five seasons, Washington Redskins for a season, and five seasons with the San Diego Chargers. He is one of just eight head coaches to win 200 or more games. "He would bring the neighborhood dads for an annual game at Giants Stadium and [was] a genuinely nice, likable guy (I was a kid)," said John Frey (*q.v.*). "He even drove a station wagon with that wood siding!" [JFS]

Schoyer, Edna, (1880-1946), a native of Pittsburgh, was an advocate of suffrage, of education, and of community service. A longtime companion of Anne Richardson (*q.v.*), she came to Ridgefield around 1915 and led the organization of the League of Women Voters, serving as its second president. She and Miss Richardson were twice elected together to the school board, serving from 1936 to 1942. She was also head of the Ridgefield Garden Club from 1939 to 1941, and active during WW2 on the home front. Her brother, **Barclay Preston Schoyer** (1911-1978), active in American groups dealing with China, wrote four novels and many articles on China, and often stayed at her home at Mamanasco Farm (*q.v.*). [NR]

Schreyer, Edward P., was an inventor who lived at 253 West Mountain Road in the 1950s. He invented an early electric steam iron and reportedly also an electric razor and other devices. He also had a house on Haviland Road in the 1950s until 1960. [DD280]

Schultz, Rev. Edward L. Jr, known as Father Edd, was assistant rector of St. Stephen's Church from 1976 to 1980. He was also a magician who ran workshops on ESP and mind control. [P8/21/1980]

Schultz, Thomas B., (1968-1988), on his way home, was one of 259 who died aboard Pan Am Flight 103 bombed Dec. 21, 1988, over Lockerbie, Scotland. The 20-year-old Ohio Wesleyan junior, son of Jack and Jane Schultz of Wilton Road West, had been studying in London. NH12/27/1988]

Schultze, Oscar F., of Norwalk operated a group of markets, specializing in meat and fish, in Fairfield County in the 1920s and 1930s. He retired by 1960. Ridgefield's outlet was on Main Street. *See* Oscar F. Schultze Market.

Schumann, Elka Scott, (1935-2021), born in Russia, founded an internationally known puppet theater. A daughter of John Scott and Maria "Masha" Scott (*q.v*. *each*), Elka had lived in town as a young woman. She married in 1959 Peter Schumann, a German puppeteer she met while studying abroad in a Bryn Mawr program, and in 1963 the two founded the Bread and Puppet Theater, based for some 50 years in Vermont. Its productions were often politically oriented, such as anti-Vietnam War. [JFS]

Schuster, Patricia (1937-1999), a professional ballet dancer, established in 1965 the Patricia Schuster School of Dance, later known as the Ridgefield Studio of Classical Ballet. She bequeathed her school to the Ridgefield Playhouse (*q.v*); it is now the non-profit Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance

(*q.v.*) at 440 Main Street. She also founded the Ridgefield Civic Ballet in 1978 (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Schwartz, Stephen (1948-), a native of NYC who studied at Juilliard and Carnegie-Mellon, is one of the most successful Broadway and movie composers and lyricists of the last third of the 20th Century and the early 21st. In 1971 when only in his early 20s, he wrote the music and lyrics for *Godspell*, for which he won two Grammys. He later wrote the music and lyrics for *Pippin, The Magic Show* and *Wicked*. He wrote lyrics to such films as *Pocahontas* (1995), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996), *The Prince of Egypt* (1998, music and lyrics), and *Enchanted* (2007). He has won many awards including three Oscars, three Grammys, four Drama Desk Awards, a Golden Globe Award, and a special Isabelle Stevenson Tony Award in 2015 [NR, W]

Scientists connected with Ridgefield have included Wayne Arnold, James Crafts, Henri Doll, Nicholas Donofrio, Heidi Hammel, John Heller, Richard Kinnaird, Herbert Lapidus, Raymond Mindlin, Nick Percival, Rudy Ruggles, Gildo Servadio, Fred Stahl, and John Wahl (*q.v. each*).

Scodon, a 1958 subdivision of 57 lots on the south side of George Washington Highway, is named for developers Carlton Scofield and Joseph Donnelly (*q.v. each*). It includes Scodon, Langstroth and Sophia Drives. *See also* Scodon III. [RN]

Scodon III, was the first PRD (*q.v.*) subdivision of any consequence — the town got 30 acres of open space which, by easement, is connected to the large Hemlock Hills and Pine Mountain refuges. West of the original Scodon (*q.v.*) development, Scodon III was proposed by Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) in the early 1970s, but developed mostly by Carl Lecher (*q.v.*). It includes Pheasant Lane and Evergreen Place. [RN]

Scofield, Carlton A., (1905-1983), a native of Pound Ridge, N.Y., who came to Ridgefield in 1919, was the eighth president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank (*q.v.*), joining as a teller in 1930. Early in his career he was assistant editor of *The Ridgefield Press*, and was elected a justice of the peace at age 21. He was a town Trial Justice in the 1940s and 50s, and a longtime member of the Police Commission. He was active in many other organizations, including the library, Salvation Army, Boys Club, Lions, Grange, Masons, YMCA, and Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department. He was a collector of antique banks, especially mechanical models, which he would exhibit at the bank and its branches. [RSB30, WWW]

Scofield, Fred R., (1865-1953), a native of Pound Ridge, NY, owned the Pound Ridge General Store for 21 years before retiring in 1905. He came to Ridgefield in 1919 and was a director and vice president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank for many years. He was active in the Methodist Church and father of Carlton Scofield (*q.v.*). [RSB29]

Scofield, Stuart, a former minister and Army officer, operated Stonehill Dairy Farm on south side of North Salem Road at New York State line in early 20th Century. The dairy was eventually bought out by Irving B. Conklin (*q.v.*). Milk bottles from Stonehill are found in collections today. [JFS]

Scooters was an "American-style cafe" opened at Copps Hill Plaza around 1987 [P10/22/1987].

SCOR: Soccer Club of Ridgefield (*q.v.*).

Scotland is a section of town, once called Scotts Ridge, consisting generally of the neighborhood around Lake Mamanasco and today's Pierrepont Pond.

First mentioned in an 1835 deed, the name came the Scott family (*q.v.*), many of whose members had lived in the neighborhood since the 1730s. Beers defines the Scotts Ridge school district boundaries (also called District #1) as running along the east side of North Street from around today's Mimosa, northward to Twixt Hills, then westward along the north side of Ledges Road and on to NY line. The south boundary, starting from the NY line, ran southeasterly along the old Barrack Hill Road to Old West Mountain Road, then easterly across Tackora Trail and North Salem Road, a little north of their southern junction, and on over to North Street. [RN]

Scotland Elementary School, the town's fourth "modern" elementary school, opened Sept. 6, 1967, on the former Luquer property on Barlow Mountain Road. It was built by the Arthur Canzler construction company of Danbury. Four years later, Barlow Mountain Elementary School (*q.v.*) opened on an adjoining site, creating so-called "twin schools." Douglas Smith (q.v.) of Wilton, an elementary principal in Norwalk, became the first principal. [RN]

Scotland Knolls, a mid-1950s subdivision of about 23 lots served by Hobby Drive and Circle Drive (*q.v. each*), is so called because it is situated on Scotts Ridge (*q.v.*) in the heart of the Scotland District. [RN]

Scotland schoolhouse: Several schoolhouses, serving what was also long called School District #1, existed over the years in several locations, starting in the late 1700s. Also called Scotts Ridge School, the first building probably was established by the 1770s on North Salem Road, near the northern end of Tackora Trail. In 1815, a new schoolhouse was built about a half mile south, opposite Farrar Lane. By the turn of the 20th Century, the school was back near Tackora Trail. Closed in 1926 due to low enrollment, the building was soon moved across North Salem Road to serve as an outbuilding at the Town Farm (*q.v.*). In 1950, former Scotland student Douglas Main bought the building, moved it more than a mile south, and turned it into a dwelling at 345 North Salem Road, still owned in 2026 by the Main family. Titicus School (*q.v.*) absorbed most of the pupils when the school closed. *See also under* Scotland for district boundaries. [SD]

Scott family: After the death of Jonathan Stevens, one of the original home lot owners, his mother, Mary Bouton, inherited the land at the southwest corner of Main and Catoonah Streets. On June 3, 1712, she sold the property to David Scott I (*q.v.*) of Fairfield, establishing a Ridgefield family that still exists in town today. David Scott's house is now the Ridgefield Historical Society (*q.v.*). According to Bedini: "In spite of the fact that David Scott 1st was one of the original Proprietors, the pedigree of the Scott family begins with James Scott 1st (*q.v.*). Until now there was no certainty whether James was a brother or a son of David. The foregoing records, coupled with a genealogy provided by the Daughters of the American Revolution, establishes the fact that James 1st was the son of David Scott. It is a matter of further interest that in every generation of the Scott family each David Scott had a son named James, and every James Scott had a son named David through the generations." Scotts, some of whom are listed below, held most of the major offices in town at one time or another, fought in all the wars, and gave their names to several localities and buildings. Sections of town – Scotland and Scotts Ridge — recall the family. At least four Scotts — David, Gideon, James, and William — served during the Revolution. [RIR]

Scott, Albert, (?-?) was a state representative in 1866. He had been a member

of the First Congregational Church from 1831 to 1856.

Scott, Burr, Capt. (1818-1850), died, according to his gravestone in Scott's Cemetery, "at Bridgeton, Barbadoes." Rockwell says he "died at Bridgton of a fever. A monument is erected to his memory in Ridgefield and another in North Salem, but none over his grave in the Barbadoes. Capt. Scott was master of a merchant vessel plying between the United States and the West Indies." Stebbins June's daughter, Laura June, married Captain Burr Scott, who died mysteriously in the Barbadoes. [RIRA158a, p.15]

Scott, David I, (ca. 1675-1760)**,** of Fairfield, believed to be a native of Ireland, bought lot number 13 on Main Street at the south corner of Catoonah Street in 1712. His family homestead, the Scott House, which he built around 1712, is now headquarters of the Ridgefield Historical Society. He was a farmer, and owned at least four enslaved persons (*see* Witness Stones). From David descended the many members of the Scott family in Ridgefield over the next three centuries. Scott had apparently left his wife in Ireland, and she later came to the colonies and sued him. [CBRFC] Bedini reports: "Page 88 of Volume I of the Fairfield County Court Records contains the record of a legal suit brought against David Scott of Ridgefield on 21 April 1719 by Mary Scott (*q.v.)* of Ireland, of the Town and County of Londonderry, and now also a resident of Ridgefield. Mary Scott obtained a judgment against her husband, David Scott, and she took 3 acres and 72 rods by execution…Lack of additional documentation makes any interpretation of the legal suit a matter of guesswork. The implication is that David Scott 1st may have left his wife and family in Ireland and emigrated to Fairfield, and moved from there to settle in Ridgefield." David sold his Main Street house to son-in-law Vivus Dauchy in 1741. [RIR]

Scott, David, (1785-1855), was a farmer who, as a Whig, was a state representative in 1849. He was the father of State Rep. Samuel Scott.

Scott, David W., (-2020), an architect, moved to Ridgefield in 1964, and opened a practice here in 1965. He was instrumental in saving the Scott House, now headquarters of the Ridgefield Historical Society. He was a Little League coach for 36 years and president of the Ridgefield Preservation Trust, 1999-2003. (He was not related to the ancient Scott family of Ridgefield.) He designed his own mid-century modern home at 90 Poplar Road that is now listed as a historic building in Ridgefield. [P3/5/2020]

Scott, Ernest, (1887-1958), a native of Scotland, built Scott Block (*q.v.*) in 1922. As an engineer and builder his projects included St. Stephen's Church, and many houses. He owned the Scott Coal Company (*q.v*.). [P5/22/1958]

Scott, Flavia E. Bensing "Punky," (1919-2011), a native of Chicago, was an artist who specialized in still life painted in oils. She and her husband, John Walter Scott (*q.v*.), came here in 1957 and lived in the landmark Lewis June (*q.v.*) house at 478 North Salem Road. [JFS]

Scott, Gene, of Silver Spring Road was a carpenter famous locally for going everywhere with his pet goat, Nanny. [DD127, 128]

Scott, George Gorham Sr., (1871-1957), was a son of Hiram K. Scott Sr. who became town clerk and judge of probate — like his father — for many years. He was the last male town clerk. He built the brick store and office building south of the Masonic Hall on Main Street. [DD94, DD256]

Scott, Harold Walter, (1919-1945), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1938, enlisted in the Army in March 1941, 10 months before Pearl Harbor. He was a

gunner on an A-20G bomber March 23, 1945, that was hit by enemy fire on a mission in the Philippines, and crashed into the ocean. Sgt. Scott was declared MIA. In 1952, his classmates placed a plaque in his honor in the downstairs hall of the old Ridgefield High School. [WWW]

Scott, Hezekiah, (1789-1879), a weaver, also operated a distillery on the brook near his home on Barlow Mountain Road — a stream that once recalled his name as Uncle Kiah's Brook, now just Kiah's Brook (*q.v.*). He also had a sawmill on Ledges Road, near the outlet from the modern Pierrepont Pond (*q.v.*). "Hezekiah Scott was a colorful figure in the community and he remembered and often related having voted in every administration from Madison to Hayes," Bedini reports. His ca. 1740 house at 2 Lookout Point Road retains such antique features as a huge kitchen fireplace with rear-positioned baking oven. He was a state representative in 1845. [RIR, RN]

Scott, Hiram K. Jr., (1869-1912), operated a livery stable at what is now 16 Bailey Avenue, behind town hall. The stable was destroyed by fire, and the site later became Bates' garage, then Julius Latanzi's garage, then quarters of *The Ridgefield Press* and its parent Acorn Press. He was also a town postmaster, a job his father had held. [DD98, 256] *See also* Livery Stables.

Scott, Hiram K. Sr., (1822-1909), a native of the Scotland District, was one of the town's leading citizens in the 19th Century. He started out as a teacher, became a constable at 22 and a colonel in the Connecticut Militia when he was only 21 — he was called Colonel Scott most of his life. He was postmaster for 28 years between 1849 and 1886, and, as a Whig, was a state representative in 1850 — the second youngest man in the Legislature that year. He was town clerk for 45 years, starting in 1852, and was probate judge for 33 years, beginning in 1854. In 1852, before the town had a public library, he started the Hiram K. Scott Circulating Library. Around that time he opened a general store on the east side of Main Street that also served as his town clerk and probate offices. The store's drug business grew and by the 1890s, he was the largest purveyor of pharmaceuticals in town. He sold the store in 1895 to H.P. Bissell, whose name is still on the pharmacy today. [WWW, CBRFC, DD98]

Scott, James I, "married Hannah Hyatt, daughter of Thomas Hyatt on 24 April 1722. Of their five children one son was named James 2nd for the father, another was named David for the paternal grandfather, and a third was named Thomas for the maternal grandfather." [RIR]

Scott, James, (1754-1826), a grandson of David Scott I and a son of David II, a Revolutionary War ensign of the 2nd company 16th regiment in May 1777. He was then commissioned as Lieutenant in May 1788. He served in the Alarm at Norwalk. He was married to Lucretia Olmsted in 1782. [FAG]

Scott, John, (1912-1976), a journalist born in Philadelphia, wrote eight books, scores of "white papers," and countless *Time* magazine articles as a correspondent. He spent most of the 1930s living and working in the Soviet Union; his well-known book, *Behind the Urals: An American Worker in Russia's City of Steel,* told of the experience. He was widely known as a speaker, delivering more than 4,800 speeches, all while also writing for *Time*. He built by his own hand a home (no longer extant) on Peaceable Ridge Road starting in 1946. In Russia, he married Maria "Masha" Dikareva Scott (*q.v.*) and their children include Elka Scott Schumann (*q.v.*). John's father was political activist Scott Nearing. [WWW]

Scott, John A., (-1865), was an African-American Union soldier from Ridgefield who died in the Civil War Aug. 19, 1865. He was mustered into the 29th Regiment of Colored Troops Jan. 5, 1864. Long after the Confederacy had surrendered at Appomattox, he died of scurvy at the Union Army base hospital in Brownsville, Texas — where John Smalley (*q.v.*), who grew up in Ridgefield, would die a month later. Scott is the only Black soldier from Ridgefield listed on the multi-stone monument to the 29th Connecticut Colored Infantry Regiment in New Haven. He is also remembered on Ridgefield's War Memorial and the memorial to African American Civil War soldiers in Danbury's Wooster Cemetery. [JFS]

Scott, John Walter, (1907-1987), was an illustrator for pulp magazines and an artist of the Old West who lived on North Salem Road from 1948 to 1987. He was married to Flavia "Punky" Scott (*q.v.*), also an artist. [WWW]

Scott, Maria "Masha" Dikareva, (1911-2004), a native of Russia, was a teacher, writer, and scholar whose parents were Russian peasants. She married John Scott (*q.v.*) and lived on Peaceable Ridge Road from 1946 until her death. She was the subject of a Pearl S. Buck book, *Talk About Russia with Masha Scott*. [WWW]

Scott, Mary, was the Irish-born first wife of David Scott I (*q.v.*), who apparently deserted her and her children in their native country. She followed him here, sued him in 1719 for desertion, and won a grant of Ridgefield land from the court. She is an unusual example of a strong-willed, early 18th-Century woman who would not let a man treat her badly without consequences. [RIR]

Scott, Patricia A. "Pat," (1938-2021), a native of Pennsylvania, was a Ridgefield artist who specialized in watercolors of Ridgefield buildings and country scenes as well as scenes of Nantucket Island. She was a founder of the Ridgefield Guild of Artists and a resident since 1964. She was also a sports photographer for RP. She was the wife of architect David Scott (*q.v.*).

Scott, Samuel, (1822-90), was a farmer who, as a Republican, served as a state representative in 1861. He was a son of State Rep. David Scott.

Scott, Steven M., (1948-1993), was a popular RHS social studies and economics teacher who died young of a heart condition. He taught at RHS for 23 years, starting in 1970. [P8/5/1993]

Scott and Lewis Garage was an early automobile sales and service outlet at 378 Main Street (south side of the old Bissell Building) in the 1920s, perhaps earlier. [PC]

Scott Block: **1.** Two brick buildings, 387-395 Main Street, erected in 1922 by Ernest Scott, an immigrant from Scotland (not related to Ridgefield's large Scott clan), were so called. Over the years, they've held the post office, Ridgefield Savings Bank, United Cigar Store, Squash's, A&P Liquor Store, Addessi Jewelers, Neumann real estate, Charles D. Crouchley's plumbing and auto parts shop (which had a hand-operated gasoline pump at edge of sidewalk), Cott Liquor Store (*q.v.*), First National market (*q.v.*), various restaurants (at the Catoonah Street corner) including Lorna Doone, Chef Scala's, Corner Kitchen (*q.v. each*). The property has been owned since 1982 by the Addessi family (*see* Addessi Jewelry Store) and is now called the Addessi Block. **2.** Directly across Main Street from Ernest Scott block (*see* #1) is a block of stores built in the 1920s by unrelated George G. Scott Sr. (*q.v.*), which has housed Craig's Jewelry Store, Harvey Lown Agency,

Earl Roberts electrical store, Shine Salon, George Grunig real estate, Hyde's Liquor Store, Ridgefield Hardware (*q.v. most*). It's been owned for many years by the Joseph H. Donnelly (*q.v.*) family. [DD94].

Scott Coal Company was owned by Ernest Scott (*q.v.*) on the site of Ridgefield Supply Company (*q.v.*) in the early 20th century. [DD39]

Scott House, the, an early 18th Century saltbox, is the headquarters of the Ridgefield Historical Society *(q.v.*). The house was built ca. 1740 at the south corner of Main and Catoonah Streets and was moved, ca. 1921, around the corner on Catoonah Street to make way for the Scott Block #1 (*q.v.*). When its spot was needed for a parking lot at the turn of the 21st Century, the building was donated by the Addessi family (*see* Addessi Jewelry Store) to the Ridgefield Historical Society, dismantled piece by piece, and stored in a truck until it was reconstructed at 4 Sunset Lane. The project was overseen by architect David Scott (*q.v.*). *See also* David Scott I.

Scott Ridge Road is *in* Scotts Ridge, but not *on* Scotts Ridge. Scotts Ridge is actually quite a bit to the east of this road, which runs from Blue Ridge Road westward to Barrack Hill Road at Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*). It takes its name, albeit s-less, from the old Scotts Ridge school district (*q.v.*). Beers places the label "Scotts Ridge" for the school district near what is now Eight Lakes on West Mountain and perhaps the developer of the early 1950s subdivision figured that the Eight Lakes land was once called Scotts Ridge or even Scott Ridge. Not so, either way. [RN]

Scotts Brook flows out of the southwest part of town, just east of lower Silver Spring Road, southward into Wilton, then westward into Lewisboro, N.Y., joining the West Branch of the Silvermine River, just below Scotts Reservoir. Scotts owned much of the land in the northwestern part of Wilton in the 19th Century — *see* Silver Spring Lane. [RN]

Scott's Cemetery is the official name of what is commonly called Ridgefield Cemetery (*q.v.*) and consists of five sections with four roads running generally north-south and one east-west. It is situated along North Salem Road, its main access, and North Street; access can also be gained from adjoining Maple Shade Cemetery (*q.v.*). Titicus Cemetery borders its west side, and the Lounsbury-Rockwell Cemetery, its southeast side. The cemetery was established in 1876, is privately owned by the Scott family and is still active. It has also been called Gage's Cemetery, from a former owner. In 2020 there were about 1,775 graves. [JFS]

Scotts Ridge: 1. The ridge along the east side of Lake Mamanasco that includes North Salem Road, Hobby and Circle Drives, and Pond Road, so called because many members of the Scott family lived thereabouts. It was once also called Mamanasco Hill or Mamanasco Ridge (*q.v.*). **2.** This is the "other" name for the Scotland (*q.v.*) district. "Scotts Ridge" as a term first appears in an 1843 deed and was in common use through the 1850s when Scotland began taking over. **3**. Judge Joseph H. Donnelly used "Scotts Ridge" as the name of his 1982 subdivision of 17 lots served by O'Neill Place and Taporneck Court along the east side of North Salem Road at the New York State line, the westernmost part of the Scotts Ridge or Scotland District. 4. The name of town's second middle school (*q.v.*) [RN]

Scotts Ridge Middle School opened Oct. 15, 2002 on land that had been the Mamanasco Farm estate of Anne S. Richardson (*q.v.*). It bears the 19th Century name of the nearby ridge east of Lake Mamanasco, which was

also the old name for the Scotland school district in the 19th Century. *See* Scotts Ridge.

Scotts Ridge Post Office operated from 1841 to 1846 by David Scott II, postmaster, probably at his house (no longer extant) on North Salem Road, opposite north entrance to Tackora Trail, (*See also* Tackora Lodge) or it may have been at the store/home of Elias Read.

Scrap drives were undertaken during World War II to collect metals, especially iron and steel, tin, and aluminum, as well as rubber to use for manufacturing war-related products since imports of some ores had been cut; many people contributed bumpers from their automobiles. An Oct. 17, 1942 one-day scrap drive netted 133 tons of metal, equal to 166 pounds per resident. Kitchen fats were also collected as was paper. [JFS]

Scribner, Elizabeth "Betsey" Hawley, (1787-1871), a native of Ridgefield and a great-granddaughter of the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), was the mother of Charles Scribner, the publisher, bookseller and founder of the still extant publishing house, eventually known as Charles Scribner's Sons or just Scribner's. A daughter of Thomas and Keziah Scribner Hawley, she was married in 1812 to Uriah Scribner, and they had nine children, the third of which was Charles. [Prominent Families of NY] She is interred in New York Marble Cemetery, Manhattan (the oldest public non-sectarian cemetery in the city). [FAG]

Scripps, Robert Paine, (1895-1938), a California native, was a newspaper mogul who had a country home at 100 South Salem Road from 1924 until his death at 42 aboard his yacht off Mexico. His father, E.W. Scripps, founded the Scripps-Howard newspaper empire which Robert ran for years. The main house once featured an underground tunnel that extended to the neighboring home; it has since been sealed off. [OR1/10/2026] That home was the guest house for the estate and the home behind the house was the servants house back in the day. *See also under* Fires *and* Elizabeth Loeb. [WWW]

Scripps Pond was a small body of water that once existed on the north side of Old South Salem Road near South Salem Road, created in the early 20th Century. It was so called because it was once part Robert Scripps (*q.v.*) estate. In the late 20th Century, the dam deteriorated and the pond is now mostly swamp. [RN] *See also* Hopper's Pond, Lache Linne.

Sculptors who have lived in Ridgefield: Suzanne Benton, Joseph Boulton, David Boyajian, John B. Flannagan, Frederic Remington (*q.v*.), Frederick Shrady (*q.v.*), Norman Tinker, Mahonri Young (*q.v. each*).

Sculptures: **1**. In front of the library, *see* Storytime. **2.** At the south end of the main building at Copps Hill Plaza, an untitled work by Philip H. Darling of Oyster Bay and Port Washington, Long Island, commissioned ca. 1971 by shopping center developer Harold Lewis on recommendation of his wife.

Seal, town, was designed by Robert Malin of Harding Drive, a graphics director for Perkin-Elmer, in a 1972 competition sponsored by First Selectman Joseph McLinden. His design includes Settlers Rock (*q.v.*); a spreading oak tree, recalling the state's Charter Oak (*see* Charter Oak Court); and farmhouses with stone walls to recall Ridgefield's long agricultural past. It is still used today. Among the 13 local artists who entered the contest were Don Carboni, Warren Kaffka (*q.v.*), Patricia Scott (*q,v*,), and Franklin Lischke (*q,v*,). [P2/10/1972]

Seamore, Matthew: *See* Matthew Seymour.

Sears, Joseph C., (abt. 1793-1857), was a Ridgebury farmer who served as a state representative in 1835 and 1843 and as a selectman in 1831.

Second Ecclesiastical Society is an early name for Ridgebury (*q.v.*) Parish, created in 1761. *See* Ridgebury, First Congregational Church.

Second Lane is a dead-end road off Mamanasco Road, part of Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Second Patent, often spelled "Pattent," was another term for New Patent (*q.v.*) or Ridgebury (*q.v.*). The first patent, authorizing creation of the town and issued by the colony government, was for the settlement of Ridgefield below Ridgebury. [RN]

Second Pond is mentioned in 18th Century deeds, and was probably in Mill Plain (*q.v.*). [RN]

Second Purchase of land from the natives by the Proprietors took place March 18, 1715. "Tackora, alias Oreneca, Indian," received £4 for the tract in the Scotland and Ridgebury areas, including the outlet of Lake Mamanasco.

Second Regiment was a men's clothing store at Yankee Ridge Shopping Center (*q.v.*) that closed Jan. 30, 1987. [P2/5/1987]

Second Society: *See* Second Ecclesiastical Society

"**Secret routes"** are numbered state highway without signs revealing the number. These are usually roads leading from Connecticut to another state whose connecting road is not a state highway. In Ridgefield, secret routes are: Route 822, Catoonah Street, Barry Avenue, West Mountain Road; and Route 835, West Lane from the schoolhouse to the NY line. [RN]

Secunda, Victoria H., (1939-2019), was a writer of books and magazine articles who lived in the Danbury section of Ridgebury, but was closely attached to Ridgefield and is buried in Mapleshade Cemetery. She was married to photographer Shel Secunda. [P7/9/2019]

Seemann, Max and **Henry**, brothers, bought the Titicus Store (*q.v.*) in 1947, later operated only by Max. The store closed in the early 1960s. [DD28]

Seir Hill, cited in 1700s deeds, was north of Mill Plain in Danbury, which was in Ridgefield from 1731 to 1846. Seir is a variation of "sear" or "sere," which either means "dry." It may reflect a locality in Jordan often mentioned in the Bible in an unfavorable light. [RN]

Seirup, William, from Trumbull, was Ridgefield's first full-time director of the parks and recreation program. He was hired in July 1966 served until 1972. [RT]

Seitz, Major Gen. John Francis Regis, (1908-1978), a 1929 West Point graduate and a career Army officer, was a much decorated colonel commanding the 26th Infantry Regiment in combat in Europe from late 1943 till war's end. He was commanding a battalion at Schofield Barracks, Oahu, Hawaii, when Japanese attacked Dec. 7, 1941. He married in 1956 stage and screen actress Jessie Royce Landis (*q.v.*); they moved to 137 Old Branchville Road in 1966. Soon after her death in 1972, he suffered a debilitating stroke. He died in Washington, D.C., and is buried Arlington National Cemetery (she is in Branchville Cemetery). [JFS, WWW]

Selectmen: *See* Selectpersons.

Selectpersons, Board of, is perhaps the oldest town agency, having been established as the **Board of Selectmen** when the town was created in 1708. The selectpersons are the managers of the town's government,

creating and overseeing the town (non-school) budgets, setting policies, hiring paid administrators and appointing many volunteer board and commission members, approving ordinances, and many other functions. Over three centuries, the board has varied in size from three to seven members, but mostly three. It was increased from three to five in 1983 to make it more representative of the town (it had also been five members during the American Revolution and was seven members in the early 1830s). The **first selectperson** is the chair of the board and also the equivalent of the town's mayor and manager, overseeing the day-to-day operations of Ridgefield's non-school government. The first selectperson was a part-time official until the mid-1950s when Harry E. Hull became the first to be full-time. The name of the board was changed by charter, approved by the voters, in 2023 to be "gender-neutral." The board generally meets twice monthly on Wednesday evenings and also serves as the Fire Commission, overseeing the fire department. [JFS, RW]

Seligmann, Jacqueline Reine Louise, (1906-79), daughter of Paris-NYC art gallery owner Jacques Seligmann, was a noted photographer and race car driver in France in the 1930s. During the early part of World War II, Seligmann volunteered as a truck driver to evacuate children from the path of the invading German army. A Jew, she fled the Nazis to the USA in 1943, and continued to do photography work. In the mid-1940s, she bought a house at 40 Old West Mountain Road which, in 1969, burned, destroying 14,000 rare books, antiques, paintings, Oriental wood carvings, sculptures, and a valuable daguerreotype collection as well as Seligmann's negatives and cameras. She continued to live in town until her death and is buried alongside her longtime companion, Edmee Chapelle, in Fairlawn Cemetery. [WWW]

Selleck family: *See* [DD234]

Selleck, Benjamin Sturges, (1867-1943), was a Ridgebury Road farmer who served as a Republican state representative, 1907-09. Called "Sturg," he owned several race horses. [DD234]

Selleck, Sturges, owned Maplewood Farm, just above the Danbury-Ridgefield line on Route 7 and was a major character in the building of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike through Sugar Hollow (*q.v. each*) in the early 19th Century. Some of his farm is now Bennett's Pond State Park.[RN, DD234]

Selleck Cemetery is a 19th Century neighborhood cemetery on Bennett's Farm Road, just south of the Limestone Road intersection, containing about 20 graves or memorials, mostly for members of the Selleck and Whitlock families. The earliest stone is dated 1826; the latest, 1907. It has also been called the Bennett's Farm Cemetery. [JFS]

Semaphore Restaurant was opened April 27, 1972, by Mr. and Mrs. Jan Myslik, who'd escaped communist Czechoslovakia. The location in the Gaeta Shopping Center had earlier housed the Bill o' Fare restaurant (*q.v.*).

Semia USA, a Lego and robotics learning center founded by Ridgefielder Eugene Zhang, RHS 1987, opened at 28 Prospect Street in Yankee Ridge late 2018/early 2019 [P12/20/2018]

Senators, state: *See* State Senators.

Senators, U.S.: *See under* Congress.

Sendak, Maurice, (1928-2012), a Brooklyn-born illustrator and author of more than 80 books, lived at 200 Chestnut Hill Road from 1972 until his death.

His books include *In the Night Kitchen, Outside Over There,* and *Where the Wild Things Are*. His many awards include the 1964 Caldecott Medal, Hans Christian Andersen Award; in 1997, President Clinton awarded him a National Medal of the Arts. He also designed sets and costumes for several successful Broadway productions, including an opera of "Where the Wild Things Are." A section of Route 35, Danbury Road, from Haviland/ Limestone Road to Route 7, was named Maurice Sendak Memorial Highway in 2016, although that stretch of road has no direct connection with him. [WWW]

Senior Positive Initiative Forum (SPIF), formed in 2005, is a town committee that helps meet needs of Ridgefield's senior population. It coordinates the organizations in Ridgefield that work with older residents and has helped organize many recreational activities for seniors that have included St. Paddy's Day celebrations, a Luau, a summer camp, and a Senior Senior Prom at the Recreation Center. It also runs the Gold Card (*q.v*.) program. *See also* Aging, Commission on.

Sept. 11, 2001: *See* Nine/Eleven.

Serfilippi, Alessandro, (1882-1970), was born in Italy and came to the United States in 1908, and to Ridgefield in 1914. He worked as a mason on Col. Louis D. Conley's Outpost Farm (*q.v.*) estate, and later for various contractors. Among his more visible creations is the stone wall around the former King/Jackson estate at the north corner of Main Street and King Lane. He started his own construction business in 1946, retiring in 1968. [RN]

Serfilippi, Barbara Torcellini, RHS 1960, was town clerk for 22 years, 1996-2018, and before that, an assistant town clerk for 17 years. In retirement, she is an active volunteer with the Ridgefield Historical Society. [JFS]

Serfilippi, Richard Nunzio "Serf," (1939-2003), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1956, was a local contractor and landscaper who spent much time and labor creating the Little League field later named in his honor while he was still living. The Marine Corps veteran was active in the community, especially Little League, Marine Corps League, Toys for Tots, the Italian-American Club, and the Conservation Commission. He was also Ridgefield's longest serving town constable. He was married to Barbara Serfilippi (*q.v*.). [P5/1/2002] *See also* Serfilippi Field.

Serfilippi Drive runs from South Olmstead Lane and St. Johns Road, created in the 1950s by the father and son contractors, Alessandro (*q.v.*) and Mario "Mike" Serfilippi, part of a development of land, including on South Olmstead Lane, that had belonged to the Serfilippi family since just after the turn of the 20th Century. [RN]

Serfilippi Field, a Little League ballpark located next to Fitzgerald Field off South Shore Drive, is named for Richard Serfilippi (*q.v*.), who volunteered much of the labor for building it in the late 1960s. [RN]

Servadio, Gildo Joseph, (1929-2001), Ridgefield native and RHS 1946, was a food scientist whose specialty was vodka. He also taught at University of Massachusetts. [WWW]

Session House: *See under* Sabbath Day House.

Seth Low Mountain Road directly recalls Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v.*), part of whose estate was subdivided in 1961 by Jerry Tuccio as Twixt Hills (*q.v.*).

The road is a dog-leg, connected at both ends to Twixt Hills Road on the south side of Ridgebury Mountain. Pierrepont's name came from ancestors named Seth Low, one of whom was mayor of NYC in 1902-03. [RN]

Seth Low Pierrepont State Park is a 305-acre park that includes much of the shoreline of Pierrepont Pond/Lake Naraneke (*q.v.*) was bequeathed to the state by Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v.*). The park includes a public boat launch (no gasoline engines) and miles of trails. The highest point in the park is Barlow Mountain (*q.v.*), 950 feet above sea level. [RN]

Settlers Lane, which forms the "cross" of a "T" at the end of Wooster Heights Drive, is part of a 1963 subdivision, and was originally called Or-Mar Drive (*q.v.*), for Orrin and Marion Beers, the subdividers. Residents petitioned for a name change in 1971. [RN]

Settlers Rock is a large boulder at edge of Fairlawn Cemetery on North Salem Road, opposite New Street, where, legend says, Norwalk men, exploring for the new settlement of Ridgefield, spent a night in May 1708. "The howling of wolves and the cry of the wild-cat filled them with terror, and one can imagine that daylight was greeted with much joy," speculated Rockwell. Bedini called Settlers Rock is "the first and still among the most important of Ridgefield's landmarks" and said the explorers "built fires around the base of the great boulder to protect them against wild animals." There's no contemporary written record of all this. The rock bears a plaque, placed in 1958 for the town's 250th anniversary. [RN]

Seventh Lane is a dead-end road off Mamanasco Road, part of Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Seventy Acres Road: In the mid 20th Century, this name was incorrectly used for what is now called Old Redding Road (*q.v*.) in Ridgefield. It's a Redding name for a Redding road. [RN]

Sewer Bed Road, an old informal name for South Street (*q.v*.), was named for the sewage treatment plant as well as its aeration beds that once existed east of lower Ligi's Way. *See also* Sewers.

Sewers: Bedini says the town sewage treatment system "became an accomplished fact because 12 of the town's summer residents met at the Hotel Manhattan in New York and adopted a resolution for this improvement, which they forwarded to the selectmen." This would have been in the late 1890s; the first map of the planned sewer system was created in 1899, and may be viewed today in the town clerk's office. The project coincided with the installation of the village water supply system, which made indoor plumbing possible in many houses but which then also created a need for sewage treatment. In April 1901 the town established a borough (*q.v.*) to tax villagers to pay the costs of operating the sewer system, which was completed around the same time, as well as street lighting, hydrants, and other special services. (Water was supplied by a private company.) Over the years, the sewage treatment plant on South Street has been enlarged and revamped to use the latest technologies. In the 1970s, a major project involving disconnecting storm drains from the sanitary sewer lines was undertaken because in times of heavy rain, the treatment plant would be overloaded with drainage water and that mixed with sewage would "overflow" into the Great Swamp. At the same time, many lines were found in need of repair. The plant underwent a major upgrade in 2021-24 after a second sewage treatment system (District Two)

along upper Route 7 was connected to the village system, and the District Two treatment plant shut down. The sewer system is operated by the Water Pollution Control Authority. Operation of the plant is paid for through sewer use fees — $894 per unit in 2024 — collected by the tax collector. The fee for hooking up fee to the sewer system is $5,700. [RIR, JFS, RW]

Sexual abuse charges: *See* Holzberg Report

Seymour: One of founding families of the town whose descendants still lived here in early 2000s. Matthew Seymour (*q.v*.), spelled also Seamor, was a proprietor (*q.v*.), among the first settlers in 1708-09.. His descendants were still living in Ridgefield in the 21st Century.

Seymour, Everett Ray (1895-1918) was the first Ridgefielder to die in combat in World War I. Private Seymour was killed July 29, 1918, in a battle in France. The Rev. Francis P. Duffy, chaplain of the 165th regiment, said Seymour "died fighting gallantly in the most desperate charge made by men of this regiment in its long annals. His battalion crossed the Ourcq River, near Fere-en-Tardenois, in the early morning of Tuesday, July 29th and were, for hours, the only American troops opposed to the Germans. They fought their way up high all that long morning, cleaning up machine gun nests, and near the very summit young Seymour was brought down by a bullet that suddenly ended his brief but glorious career." The local American Legion post is named in his honor. [WWW]

Seymour, Francis Edgar, (1842-1862), a 19-year-old tinner when he enlisted in 1862 as an Army private, died in the Civil War April 26, 1863, in the 1st Division Hospital 11th Corps at Brooks Station, Stafford County, Va. The cause has not been found. He is supposed to have been buried in Titicus Cemetery, but a stone has not been found. [JFS, RS]

Seymour, Lewis Curtis, (1835-1901), a Ridgefield native, was a dry goods merchant who served as a Republican state representative in 1874. His business was known as Seymour & Barhite (*see* Philip Barhite). [CBRFC]

Seymour, Matthew (Seamore), one of the original proprietors, is believed to have operated a very early trading post at about 149 Main Street. The building is no longer extant, but Bedini reported "a remnant of this structure is now part of the house," which was then owned by Raymond Krotz (*q.v.*). [RIR33]

Seymour, Samuel O., (-1907), operated a "fish, oyster and vegetable market" on the "new" Bailey Avenue, behind town hall, starting in May 1880. [RP]

Seymour, William Oscar, (1833-1911), a Ridgefield native, was a teacher and headmaster of the High Ridge Institute (*q.v.*) who later became a civil engineer working for railroads; he designed many train bridges and lines in the Midwest. He returned to Ridgefield and became a state railroad commissioner for many years. He was a was Republican state representative, 1868-69, 1902-03, led the 1908 Ridgefield Bicentennial celebration, and lived on Parley Lane. [WWW, CBRFC]

Seymour, William W., (1803-1883), a Ridgefield native, was a blacksmith who was named president of a Ridgefield anti-thieving association, created to combat recent burglaries and thefts in the 1860s. [*Hartford Courant*, 10/6/1868]

Seymour Cemetery was established on the east side of South Olmstead Lane, between Seymour Lane and Serfilippi Drive in the early 1800s as neighborhood cemetery for Seymour, Olmstead, and Benedict families.

There were 15 gravestones in 1934, fewer stand now. The earliest stone is dated 1812; the latest, 1889. Ownership is unknown, but it's nicely maintained by the bordering neighbors in 2026. [HLYB]

Seymour Lane, a short, dead-end road off South Olmstead Lane, serves 10 lots on former farmland of the Seymour family, who lived on nearby Wilton Road West. It became a town road 1959. The subdivision incorporating these lots was called King's Grant Park (*q.v.*). [RN]

SH 14: An 1893 map of the town calls Ridgebury Road "SH 14," meaning "State Highway 14." If the state ever owned any title to this road, it long ago gave it up. In the early 1970s, however, town officials tried to get the state to take over Ridgebury Road in exchange for the town's taking over Barry Avenue and West Mountain Road, which is state Route 822 (*q.v.*). The state declined. [RN]

Shadblow Hill Road, sometimes called Shadblow Lane, is a short, uphill, dead-end road off Florida Hill Road, serving a small subdivision developed mid-1950s by Olavi Havnoja. Shadblow or shadbush *(Amelanchier Canadensis et al.*), bloom in spring when shad, once a popular local fish species before dams blocked their runs up coastal streams. It's also known as juneberry or serviceberry. [RN]

Shadow Lake is a town-owned body of water south of Shadow Lake Road, west of Briar Ridge Road, originally called Mallory Pond (*q.v.*). Today, it is the centerpiece of the 57-acre Shadow Lake/Albert N. Baker Jr. (q.v.) Preserve, which includes hiking trails. Shadow Lake was part of the town's 1996 purchase of 188-acre Peter Friedman (*q.v.*) tract. In 2002, the selectmen added recreational use, specifically a **Little League field**. [RN]

Shadow Lake Orchards: *See* S. Scott Faubel.

Shadow Lake Road took its name from the pond (*q.v.*), but it's not clear when. The road, between Ridgebury and Briar Ridge Roads, existed by 1781 when it was shown on one of Berthier's maps (*see* Berthier Place), prepared for Rochambeau's troops, who encamped south of the road and east of Ridgebury Road. [RN]

Shadow Lane is a narrow, dead-end road off the southern end of High Ridge. Running behind (in "the shadow of") the High Ridge mansions, it originally served the backlands of these estates, and for delivery entrances to the mansions. In recent years it has been considerably developed, and a number of estate outbuildings there have been turned into sizable homes. It originally ran from lower High Ridge to Peaceable Street; the private north end lane was sometimes called Herrick Lane or Wiggon-Roberts Lane (*q.v. each*). "Shadow Lane" was in use by 1930. [RN]

Shadowbrook Farm is the original name of Twixthills (*q.v.*), the estate of Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v.*), and appears in NY Social Register, 1919. The estate included a chicken plant that burned in 1926. [P3/18/1926]

Shady Lane runs between Mountain Road and Lakeside Drive at Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*). It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Shafer, Allen O., (1919-2004), was chairman of the Board of Education in the late 1960s and was an executive with Eagle Pencil Co. in Danbury. He and his wife, **Jamie Ogle Shafer,** (1931-2016), owned and restored a ca. 1730 house built by the Nash family at 162 Wilton Road West. They were both active in Republican politics [JFS]

Shaffer, Dr. Newton M., (1846-1928), was one of the country's first orthopedic

surgeons and probably the top man in the field in the late 19th Century; he specialized in helping crippled children. He established in 1900 what is now Helen Hayes Hospital, the nation's first free-standing, state-operated hospital to treat people with physical disabilities. His country home on Wilton Road West was called Beacon Hill Cottage (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Shaggy Dog, The: *See* Family Room.

Shallow Brook Farm was the name given to the estate created from the former Ridgefield Golf Club (*q.v.*) by Chandler Ross (*q.v.*) in the 1930s, and retained by the Lyle Torrey family later. It became Ward Acres (*q.v.*) in the 1950s. [DD200]

Shane, Margaret Woodward Smith, (1895-1965), a native of Indiana and popular novelist, worked for newspapers before turning to novels. In 1922, her first novel, *The Love Legend*, written under the pen name Woodward Boyd, became a best-seller. Others included *Lazy Laughter* and *The Unpaid Piper* (1927). She married Thomas A. Boyd (*q.v.*), also a writer, and moved to North Salem Road in 1925. After a 1929 divorce, she married writer Ted Shane (*q.v.*); as Peggy Shane she wrote novels *Tangled Wives* (1932) and *Change Partners* (1934), and for Hollywood movies. In 1941, she co-wrote *Mr. Big*, a Broadway show. Her father was journalist Duncan M. Smith *(q.v.*) and her daughter was Elizabeth Boyd Nash (*q.v.*), an editor and co-owner of *The Ridgefield Press*. [WWW]

Shane, Theodore "Ted," (1900-1967), a native of NYC who was a humorist, wrote books and magazine articles, and created the "Cockeyed Crosswords" that were popular from the 1930s to the 1960s. At 16, he enlisted in the Black Watch, the kilted Scots division called the "Ladies from Hell," and fought in WW1. He graduated from Columbia in 1923 and came to Ridgefield in 1930 when he married writer Margaret Woodward Smith Boyd (*q.v.*), living here off and on until his death. He also wrote movies for MGM, and many profiles, particularly of sports figures, for *Colliers, Saturday Evening Post, Reader's Digest*, and other magazines, and worked as editor of *1,000 Jokes* magazine. In 1946, he ran unsuccessfully for state senator from Ridgefield. [WWW]

Shanty, The, was the name of the Farmingville home of Mr. and Mrs. John G. Westervelt, later called Topstone Farm (*q.v.*), on the north side of Topstone Road. [P4/23/1914]

Shape, Robert Louis, (ca. 1872-1941), a native of Milwaukee, was an architect and engineer who was a member of the firm of Shape, Brady and Peterkin which designed the 24-story Chandler Building at Times Square, ca 1913, then the second tallest building in NYC. He earlier had been involved in shipbuilding, and worked as a senior engineer in the Public Works Administration during the Depression. He was a veteran of the Spanish-American War. He lived at Windy Ridge, St. Johns Road, from 1928 until his death. He was married to Elizabeth Powell Shape. [P6/19/1944]

Shapiro, Ednah, (1917-1987), was a founder of the Ridgefield Toy Clinic (*q.v.*). She was named Woman of the Year by Bob Hope in 1955. The wife of Joseph Shapiro (*q.v.*), she remarried after his death and was known as Ednah Root, lived in San Francisco, and became a well-known abstract artist [P1/22/1981]. [JFS]

Shapiro, Joseph, (1888-1968), was a Russian immigrant with a background in chemistry who founded the Simplicity Pattern Company, which has

produced countless clothing patterns for homemakers over the past century. He bought Eleven Levels (*q.v.*) estate in 1930s, and sold in 1952. He was nicknamed "Pop" and was the husband of Ednah (*q.v*.) [WWW]

Shapley School was a private, co-educational prep school opened in 1963 by Carl Shapley (1927-2012), and his wife, Virginia Thayer Shapley, on the grounds and buildings of the old Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) on Danbury Road. Carl was a son of noted Harvard astronomer, Harlow Shapley. The school was small and not financially successful. It closed in 1968, not helped by the fact that police using undercover officers had made a number of drug arrests at the school. David L. Paul (*q.v.*) bought the school's property at auction in 1968 and developed Fox Hill Village (*q.v.*), containing the town's first condominiums. [RN, WWW]

Sharp, Robert J. "Bob," (1939-), is a Sports Car Club of America driver and former Nissan dealer who grew up in New Canaan and started his career in Ridgefield (*see* Bob Sharp Motors). [JFS]

Sharp Hill is an old name for the curve on West Mountain Road near the intersection of Ramapoo and Peaceable Ridge Roads, appearing as early as 1833 in town records. [RN]

Sharp Hill Lane is a 625-foot-long, dead-end road at Carl Lecher's 1980 subdivision, West Mountain Pines (*q.v.*). The property is a little west of Sharp Hill and Lecher selected the name at suggestion of JFS. It became a town road in 1985. [RN]

Shaughnessy, Thomas, (1900-1992), was a Navy veteran of WW1 who became last member of the Last Man's Club (*q.v.*). He spent many years at sea as shipboard radio operator. He lived on High Ridge Avenue, 1930-92, and was town's tree warden for many years. [WWW]

Shaw, Darla, a longtime Ridgefielder, was a reading teacher in the Ridgefield schools who eventually led systemwide reading education programs, and then became a professor at WestConn. In retirement, she has been active in writing and performing programs about notable Ridgefield women of the past, and portraying and explaining the work of schoolhouse teachers of the 18th and 19th Centuries at the West Lane Schoolhouse Museum. [JFS]

Shayne, Gloria, (1921-2008), pianist and native of Brookline, Mass., wrote the music for the Christmas hit song, "Do You Hear What I Heart" (1962) — her husband Noel Regney (*q.v*.) wrote the words. They moved to High Ridge in 1969 and had collaborated on several earlier popular hits (*see under* Noel Regney). She also wrote the hit song, "Goodbye Cruel World," which was James Darren's biggest hit. After a divorce in the mid-1970s, she became Gloria Shayne Baker and lived in Stamford. [WWW]

Sheehan, Dr. James, (1922-2003), was the town's first pediatrician and among the last physicians to make house calls. One of 14 children and a veteran of the U.S. Navy in WW2 and Korea, he opened a practice in 1955 and retired in 1996. He and wife, **Patricia**, (1929-2020), a local artist, had 11 children. For many years he was a partner with Dr. Christine Guigui (*q.v.*). He later joined Ridgefield Pediatric Associates (*q.v.*). In the mid-1960s, Dr. Sheehan was charging $7 for an office visit and $12 for a house call. "He didn't care about money." Dr. Guigui said. "One of his most famous sayings was 'as long as I have a roof over my head.'" The site of the Sheehans' original house/office at 484 Main Street, razed in 1981, is now a parking area for Ridgefield Library. [WWW]

Sheeler, Charles, (1883-1965), was a noted American artist and photographer, known for his "precisionist" style of painting. He lived and painted in a house that incorporated the former Whipstick schoolhouse (*q.v.*) at Nod and Whipstick Roads, from 1932 to 1942. The house was demolished in 2000 to make way for a larger residence. He was honored on 1998 and 2013 U.S. postage stamps. [WWW]

Sheen, Venerable Fulton J., Catholic author and lecturer, who became an archbishop, spoke at St. Mary's Parish in June 1949. In the 1950s, Bishop Sheen was the most-watched religious personality on TV and in 2002, began being considered for sainthood.

Sheep: The town once maintained a sizable flock of sheep that it would hire out to farmers to fertilize their fields — *see* Ram Pasture, Livestock.

Sheldon, Kenneth M., RHS 1971, was an editor at *Byte* magazine who wrote *The Code,* a 2000 suspense novel about a computer cult. His latest mystery is Deep Water. He also created the bestselling "Sing Along and Learn" series for children, published by Scholastic. He has created a fictional town of Frost Heave, NH, about which he has written a book, TV show, and does light-hearted stage shows under the name of Fred Marple. [JFS]

Shelton, Dr. George G., (1853-1925), had an estate, called The Orchard, on West Lane straddling the state line. His mansion, on the north side of the road in Lewisboro, was torn down by James M. Doubleday (*q.v.*). Shelton was a naturopathic physician specializing in nose and throat ailments (His patients included Henry Flagler, a major developer of Florida and creator of railroad lines and towns there — *see under* Melbert Cary Jr., a neighbor.) Though his house was in Lewisboro, he considered himself a Ridgefielder, served as president of The First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield, and is is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery. [JFS, DD313, 314]

Sherman Colonial was the name of a 1960s proposed subdivision for what is today called Ridgebury Estates (*q.v.*). It was also the informal name of a prolonged legal battle between the Planning and Zoning Commission and the developer. *See also* Beaver Brook Road [RN]

Sherwood, Daniel, (1686-1749), one of the first settlers, agreed in 1716 in a pact signed with the Proprietors to build a grist mill (*see* Mamanasco grist mill) at the outlet of Lake Mamanasco. He was born at Fairfield and in 1711 married Ruth Elizabeth Bradley; they had eight children born in Ridgefield. Many of their descendants were a part of the community for two centuries. Daniel probably moved to the town from Fairfield soon after his marriage. He was active in the Church of England (what became St. Stephen's). Some records call him Dr. Daniel Sherwood. [Bedini, JFS]

Sherwood, William, (1786-1876), was a carpet weaver who had a shop on Main Street at the corner of Market Street in the first half of the 19th Century. He earned three patents for carpet loom improvements, two in 1830 and a third in 1846. In 1850 he moved to Chicago, and in 1854 to Beloit, Wisc., where he died. During his later years he earned a patent on a "self-acting lawn and farm gate," which won an award at the 1859 United States Fair in Chicago. [RIR] He was a state representative from Ridgefield in 1833 and was a selectman in 1834. [JFS]

Sherwood Farm, a successor to Knap's Farm (*q.v.*), was popular enough in its heyday to be a local place, one that could have gone on to be a modern

name such as Bennett's Farm did. Mid-1800s deeds mentioned "land at Sherwood Farm" around the intersection of Ridgebury, Regan and Old Stagecoach Roads – in the 20th Century, the Arigideen Farm of the McKeon family, later Double H Farm (*q.v. each*). It was probably named for Nathan Sherwood, a son of Daniel Sherwood (*q.v.*), who had bought part of Moses Knap's farm in 1747. [RN]

Sherwood Road was named for descendants of Daniel Sherwood (*q.v.*), said to be the town's first miller, whose 1717 mill was nearby at the old outlet of Lake Mamanasco, at the end of Pond Road and Craigmoor Road East. It may be the original path of the south end of Ridgebury Road. [RN]

Sherwood's Ridge: A 1723 deed describes 15 acres "lying eastward of Sherwood's Ridge, over ye Great Swamp, lying on a Ridge called Walnutt Ridge." Probably so-called because Daniel Sherwood (*q.v.*) was given land here in compensation for moving to Ridgefield to set up and operate the gristmill at Lake Mamanasco. The ridge appears to have been on the east side of Great Swamp. [RN]

Shields, Rev. Hugh, (1890-1971), was minister of the First Congregational Church from 1919 to 1956, longer than any other minister in the church's three-century history. He was also minister of the Ridgebury Congregational Church, 1923-1962. Known for his speaking abilities, he earned his way through Butler University drama school giving stage readings of James Whitcomb Riley, et al. He later graduated from Yale Divinity School. He served as state representative, 1929-33, and was Rotary Citizen of the Year, 1963. His son, Reed Shields (*q.v.*), was a probate judge and attorney here. [WWW, RPJ5/13]

Shields, Laura Curie Allee, (1870-1968), lived at 304 Main Street for 62 years and was active in the woman suffrage movement here, described in her 1940 autobiography, *Memories.* She married **1.** Dr. William H. Allee (*q.v.*), a physician, and **2. Van Allen Shields**, (1871-1954), a patent attorney. [WWW]

Shields, Reed F. (1921-2006), a Ridgefield native, served in US Army in World War II and began the practice of law in Ridgefield 1950. He was a town attorney, 1951-54, and probate judge, 1955-1975. He retired from practice in 1985. An avid golfer, he was vice chairman of the Golf Course Committee when the town bought Dhly Ridge (*q.v.*) for a municipal golf course. He moved to South Carolina, but is buried Ridgebury Cemetery. *See also* Hugh Shields, Clayton Place, Shields Lane.[JFS]

Shields Lane is a dead-end road off Limestone Road, at the 23-lot "Limestone Acres," developed by Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) and approved in 1960. It's named for Reed F. Shields (*q.v.*), Tuccio's attorney at the time. [RN]

Shingle mill was sold by Keeler St. John to James Gilbert and Martin E. Clark (*q.v.*) in 1848 [RLR 19.21] and was located on the upper Titicus River along Saw Mill Hill Road. The mill was a variety of saw mill that had specialized equipment for cutting sections of logs into tapered wedges to create shingles, mostly for roofing.

Ships named for Ridgefield: *See under* S.S. Ridgefield. The only ship named for a Ridgefielder was the U.S. Coast Guard Fast Response Cutter Nathan Bruckenthal, commissioned July 24, 2018 — *see* Nathan Bruckenthal.

Shirts were a major product manufactured in Ridgefield in the 19th Century — *see* Ridgefield Shirt Factory and David Smith Sholes.

Sholes, David Smith, (1839-1907), a Ridgefield native who often went by D. Smith Sholes, operated the Ridgefield Shirt Factory (*q.v.*), for many years in the 19th Century. His partner was Henry Smith (*q.v.*). He helped found the circulating library that grew into the Ridgefield Library, was treasurer and president of the Ridgefield Savings Bank, 1903-07, which he helped to grow significantly in size. He served as a town assessor, registrar of voters, probate judge, member of the Democratic State Central Committee, and clerk of St. Stephen's. He helped found the First National Bank of Ridgefield and twice served as postmaster. [WWW, CBRFC, RSB24]

Shooting range: *See* Rifle Range.

Shornick, Louis, (1918-2016), a native of Stamford, was the last living member of the RHS Class of 1935. He grew up in Branchville where his father, **David Shornick**, had a garage, and attended the old Branchville schoolhouse. He obtained a degree in aeronautical engineering at RPI in 1939, served in the navy, and in 1953 moved to Mississippi where he bought a woodworking company that became Madison Furniture Industries. He maintained a touch with his old home town, often paying an annual visit, until his death. A lifelong active photographer, he contributed many photos of Branchville in the early 20th Century to the Ridgefield Historical Society (his closest friend in the Class of 35 was historian Silvio Bedini). [P12/29/2016]

Short, Rev. Dr. David Hawkins, (1806-77), became rector of St. Stephen's Church, 1845-46. About 1844, he acquired house on Main Street at corner of King Lane where he opened private school for both boys and girls; the school continued until at least 1857. Among students were Govs. Phineas and George Lounsbury, Gen. David Perry, D. Smith Gage, and Ebenezer W. Keeler (*q.v. each*). By 1859 he had returned to church work and moved to Winsted. [WWW]

Short Hills is an18th Century name for hilly territory around Haviland, Limekiln, Still, and Stonehenge Roads, possibly because they were small, low hills. [RN]

Short Lane, between Rolling Ridge Road and Partridge Drive at the 1958 Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), is short, having only three houses on it. [RN]

Short Woods was an 18th and early 19th Century name for an area around Bogus Road but possibly everything east to the Danbury line at Wooster Mountain State Park. It may have reflected the quality of the trees — short sometimes meant low-grade, and this was rocky terrain. [RN]

Shortell, Rev. Richard Edward, (1860-1934), was the fourth — and longest serving — St. Mary Parish pastor, working here from 1893 to 1934. As pastor, he built the church, rectory (since razed) and clubhouse. He was also considered a political power in town and served on the Board of Education for many years. [WWW]

Shostakovich, Maxim, (1938-), conductor and pianist, fled his native Soviet Union in 1981 and lived on Florida Road with his son, Dmitri, who had escaped with him. The son of Russian composer, Dmitri Shostakovich, he became conductor and music director of New Orleans Symphony. In April 1984 he led an all-Shostakovich concert with the Ridgefield Symphony, with son Dmitri performing Second Piano Concerto. He moved to Redding in 1991 and returned to his native land in 1994 where he and his son perform today. [NR]

Shrady, Frederick, (1907-1990), a painter-turned-self-taught sculptor, became internationally famous for his art, especially on religious subjects. He was commissioned by Pope John Paul II to create an "Our Lady of Fatima" statue for Vatican Gardens in 1983. He moved to 169 New Road in 1948, and soon converted to Catholicism. He did work for many churches. His first sculpture, a bust of Jesuit philosopher Martin D'Arcy in 1949, was purchased by Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1956, he did 53 sculptures for then-new St. Mary's School. During WW2, Shrady served with Army's "Monuments Men" unit that found thousands of pieces of art stolen by Nazis. He moved to Easton in 1959, after buying novelist Edna Ferber's mansion. [WWW]

Sib Road: *See* Old Sib Road.

Sicard, Francois, a native of France, is a high-end Ferrari race car mechanic and expert who has lived at the Ackworth Cottage estate, West Mountain Road, since the 1970s. His wife, Pam, is a former manager of Books on the Common. [068 March/April 2024]

Siegel, Paul, a Ridgefielder who had a career as an industrial and graphic designer, became an artist who has created a number of old-fashioned scenes of Main Street in the 2010s and then expanded into posters. His works do not employ paint, but are created on a computer, using a specialized tablet as a "canvas." [JFS]

Signposts were wooden posts to which announcements of future official government meetings, new laws or other official and community news was affixed — the equivalent of a newspaper, especially its legal notices. On Jan. 9, 1727, "ye white oak tree standing near Henry Whitne(y)'s" house was designated the town's first official signpost. The site was about where the First Church of Christ, Scientist, is now. As the town grew, other signposts were established in places like Limestone and Ridgebury. The town signpost was sometimes used as a location for special events. For instance, on Nov. 27, 1777, town constable John Watrous auctioned off six impounded, stray sheep "at the Ridgefield Signpost." [JFS]

Silex, finely ground stone, was manufactured in Branchville at the turn of the 20th Century for use in paints — *see* Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company.

Silicon Valley Group (SVG), a lithography equipment manufacturer, bought the 201,000-square-foot Perkin-Elmer (*q.v.*) building and 50 acres along Route 7 on Aug. 1, 1996; it was the former Benrus Center (*q.v.*). SVG became ASML Holdings NV (*q.v.*) in 2000.

Silver Birch Lane is a short, dead-end road off New Street, developed by Cleveland Bassett around 1952. The Bassett family lived in this neighborhood for much of the 20th Century. It was named for the White Birch trees, once more numerous in our area before global warming. [RN]

Silver Brook Road, a dead-end road off White Birch Road, was developed by Bartholomew T. Salerno (*q.v.*) between 1964 and 1967. [RN]

Silver Hill Road runs from Wilton Road East across Wilton Road West to St. John's Road, undoubtedly so-called because it led up a hill to the Silver Spring neighborhood. It's an old highway, dating from the 1700s – probably before 1750. [RN]

Silver mine: A mine for silver was said to have existed off the east side of New Road in the 19th Century. "My great grandfather, Edwin Lee, helped fill in that (mine) when a boy," Robert Lee said in 1976. "I've tried to find it. It isn't

where I was told it was." Lee suspected that the mine was north of the western side of the Little League field at Aldrich Park. Modern mineralogy experts have found evidence of "prospecting" for a mine thereabouts, including vertical shafts sunken into the hilltop, now filled with rocks. [JFS]

Silver Spring is an eruption of water on the east side of Silver Spring Road, about 4,500 feet south of West Lane. It was so-called at least by 1722, when it was mentioned in the road description. The name reflects crystal-like clarity of the water, not a metal deposit thereabouts. A small piece of land around it has been town-owned since first settlement. For more than two centuries the spring — reliable even in severe droughts — had been used for watering livestock; the area around it was pastures for several farms. Today, an occasional visitor will show up with jugs to capture the water for drinking at home. [RN]

Silver Spring Country Club was organized in July 1930 under the holding company of Flat Rock Corp. to build an 18-hole golf course on 263 acres on Silver Spring Ridge west of Silver Spring Road. The first governors included George Doubleday, Louis D. Conley, John H. Lynch Jr., Theodore C. Jessup, Richard L. Jackson, Seth Low Pierrepont, and Robert P. Scripps (*q.v. each*). A subscription to 10 shares of stock cost $1,000, about $18,000 in 2026 dollars. The first nine holes opened May 28, 1932; all 18 on July 2. The club closed in 1942 because of war rationing and reopened June 1946 [P4/4/1946]. In the spring of 1976, the club created a million-gallon-plus pond along Silver Spring Road for irrigating the course. In 2025, the club was the eighth highest taxpayer in Ridgefield, with a $16,791,250 assessment. [JFS]

Silver Spring Lane runs from St. Johns Road near the beginning of the Silver Spring Brook south to Silver Spring Road, and was so called because it's in the Silver Spring neighborhood. The northern part of this road, plus Silver Spring Park Lane, were once called Scott Road (*q.v.*), for Daniel Scott, the developer. However, the selectmen in October 1958 voted to change the names to Silver Spring Lane and Silver Spring Park Lane, acting at the request of residents who apparently didn't like the Scott name and didn't mind the confusion of having two more Silver Spring names in the neighborhood. One of its most famous residents was comedienne Imogene Coca (*q.v.*), who lived at #80 in the 1950s. [RN]

Silver Spring Park Lane serves Silver Spring Park, one of the town's earliest small-lot subdivisions outside the village. Daniel Scott started development around 1926, and it has always been a place where one could buy a house at a price more modest than the average in town. Part of the road was originally called Scott Road — *see* Silver Spring Lane. [RN]

Silver Spring Ridge is the ridge on the west side of Silver Spring Road, now chiefly occupied by the Silver Spring Country Club. The name first appears in 1789 and was in use into the early 20th Century. [RN]

Silver Spring Road was probably laid out December 1722 as one of several roads leading to Norwalk, the town from which most settlers came. It's the only town road with same name in three municipalities — and two states. The road extends about 3 miles from West Lane to Wilton line, then continues in Wilton under the same name, and into Lewisboro, NY, where it's also called Silver Spring Road (it is a dirt road in NY). The old highway returns to Connecticut at New Canaan, where it's called as Bald Hill Road

and ends at North Wilton Road. It's named for the spring (*q.v.*), which is a little less than a mile south of its northern end. [RN]

Silver Spring Skeet Club, organized in 1933, had regular shotgun shoots. Sundays as well as inter-club matches until 1937 when it moved to the Waccabuc Skeet Club range in Lewisboro, NY. [R1935, NH7/1/1937]

Silver Spring Swamp is the large wetland, probably second only to Great Swamp in size, that parallels Silver Spring Road on west and Olmstead/ South Olmstead Lanes and St. Johns Road on the east. It's fed by the Silver Spring (*q.v.*) and many other springs and brooks. [RN]

Silverman, Howard, (1919-2016), was an acclaimed, longtime professional artist who lived and worked on Limekiln Road, starting in 1958. He studied painting and drawing at the Académie Julien and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. A one-time, would-be playwright, he directed local amateur productions of several plays late in life. His wife was Rhoda. [JFS]

Silvermine Brook rises near the center of town off southern Main Street, possibly near the end of Hayes Lane, flows east of Wilton Road East, into Wilton, joining the Silvermine River's east branch, which flows into NY State, then New Canaan, and Norwalk where it meets the Norwalk River, which flows into the Sound. It's named for an old silvermine of unknown location in Norwalk. The Silvermine River also has a West Branch, fed by streams from Ridgefield, Wilton and Lewisboro. [RN]

Simons, Edward Willis, (1873-1964), a native of Port Chester, NY, was president of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield in the 1920s. He had earlier been president of Ernest Simons Manufacturing Company, founded by his father in Port Chester, which made shirts, sheets and pillow cases. He owned Hillscroft Farm (*q.v.*) on St. Johns Road, starting in 1921, and was active in the Ridgefield Library. [DD171]

Simons, Morris, (1886-1954)**,** an inventor, bought around 1934 a small old farmhouse and land from William Peatt Sr., enlarged the building considerably, landscaped the grounds, and added many improvements, such as tennis courts, a greenhouse, and a bomb shelter. It later became the Mimosa (*q.v.*) estate. He invented a diamond wire die, a method of extruding wire through diamonds. [RN]

Simpaug Turnpike runs from Route 7 into Redding, probably an early American Indian trail that was used by the first settlers to travel between Danbury and Norwalk. It was improved by Simpaug Turnpike Company of Ridgefield, established in 1832, of which little is known. Simpaug is said to be an American Indian word for "beaver," probably connected with Redding's Simpaug Pond farther north, along the west side of which the turnpike extends. [RN]

Simply Sweaters was a store at Grand Union Shopping Center, 1980; gone by 1983.

Singers, professional, who were residents**:** Mimi Bessette, Betty Lou Campbell, David Cassidy, Judy Collins, Michael Connolly, Katie Diamond, Thomas Dawes, Edwina Eustis Dick, Geraldine Farrar, Susanne Fisher, Santino & Jessica Fontana, Andrew Gold, Ellen Hanley, Jim Lowe, Philip van Lidth de Jeude, Clifford Willis Menz, Jr., Amber Skye Noyes, Nicole Pasternak, Lily Pons, Virginia Redington, Alfred Zega.(*q.v. each*).

Sisters of Notre Dame: *See* Congregation of Notre Dame.

Sisters of St. Thomas of Villanova: *See* St. Thomas of Villanova.

Siwanoy was an American Indian group who lived in Ridgefield — *see* Aokeets.

Sixth Lane is a private, dead-end lane off Mamanasco Road at the Eight Lakes (*q.v.*). [RN].

Sixth Purchase, the final acquisition of land from the American Indians for the new town of Ridgefield, took place April 10, 1729. The sizable tract included much of today's upper Ridgebury as well as what is now western Danbury (which was ceded by Ridgefield in 1846). The deed was signed by eight natives, including Ah Topper, Mokens, Waw Sachim, Jacob Turkey, and Captain Jacob Turkey. *See also* Purchases, New Patent.

Size of Ridgefield: *See under* Population, Growth *or* Area.

Skandera, Dr. Michael, (1924-2014), native of Danbury, taught in Ridgefield's public schools for 45 years, perhaps a record. He started at East Ridge School in 1947, then was at Ridgebury School from 1962 until his retirement in 1992. A World War II bomber pilot, he flew 50 missions over Europe. [WWW]

Skate Park: *See* Graham Dickinson SPIRIT Skate Park.

Skating parties were thrown annually for decades by Francis D. Martin (*q.v.*) at his property on the north end of Lake Mamanasco. They were open to the public. In 1966, Martin maintained that 3,000 ice skaters attended. In 1973, Martin opened his lakeside property to public skating all season long. [WWW, JFS]

Skating rink: *See* Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation.

Skeletons, believed to be Revolutionary War soldiers, have been uncovered along the route of the Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*), including two 19th Century discoveries near Hessian Drive, long though to be Hessians, but more recently believed to be British. At least one of these skeletons was long owned by Dr. Archibald Y. Paddock (*q.v.*), who exhibited it at the U.S. Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1776. In 2019, five skeletons were found beneath the Casey homestead just south of Casagmo, believed to be soldiers who died in the fighting at this spot. [JFS, RIR]

Skellinger, Jesse J., was a carriage-maker who came to Ridgefield around 1800 and built a chaise for the Rev. Samuel Goodrich (*q.v.*), working with Thomas Hawley (*q.v.*). Soon, with Elijah Hawley (*q.v.*), he established what was to be a 19th Century industry of carriage-making in Ridgefield. [ROAL136-7]

Ski and Racquet was a shop in a free-standing old barn at the Grand Union (Benenson) shopping center that burned to the ground April 5, 1971. The building had earlier been Hickory & Tweed (*q.v.*) and the Hidden Barn (*q.v.*) antiques. [RT]

Skinker was a title that Victor Gilbert (*q.v.*) gave himself. It is an old English term for a bartender or host at an inn. His *Ridgefield Press* column was called "Not Skinking." [WWW]

Sklarz, Dr. David, from Marblehead, Mass., was named director of middle school education in September 1981 and led a study of whether 7-8 grade East Ridge Junior High should be a 6-8 middle school. He became middle school's first principal and was named one of the top 100 education executives in the nation by the National School Board Association in 1987 [P2/5/1987]. A graduate of Columbia, he left in July 1987. He became superintendent of schools in West Hartford and by 2017 was superintendent in Marlborough CT, but has since retired and is living in

Newport, RI. [JFS]

Skunk Lane was another – perhaps original – name for North Street (*q.v.*), used as early as 1845. Bedini says "many of the residents in that area ate skunk meat, which was reported to be of good flavor when properly prepared. Skunks were commonly eaten during the pre-Revolutionary period." [RN].

Sky Cottage, a 1½-story colonial at 300 West Lane, was part of the Dunrovin (*q.v.*) estate and a summertime residence of opera star Lily Pons in the 1930s. [DD312]

Sky Top Road, the main road at Lakeland Hills (*q.v.*), runs from Bennett's Farm Road to the dead end of pavement. It is the modern portion of 18th Century Bogus Road (*q.v.*), now a dirt path through the Hemlock Hills Refuge (*q.v.*). [RN]

Sky's the Limit, built by the Rotary Club (*q.v.*), is a special playground designed for children of all abilities including those with handicaps and is located at the Recreation Center (*q.v.*). [RP1]

Skydogs, The, was a local rock band of adult men who played local venues from 1996 to 2000. Members included George Lee, David Van Sise, Dwayne Beyer. A version of the band was performing in and about Seminole, Fla., in 2016-17 called Skydogs 25. [P3/26/1998]

Skyview Estates is a 1955 subdivision by Stam-Nor Holding Corporation of the neighborhood that includes Bayberry Hill Road (*q.v.*) off lower Branchville Road. [RN]

Slater, William H., (1932-1983), was a musician and bank executive. A native of New Rochelle, he became organist and choir director of a church there at age 13, studied at the New England Conservatory of Music, and had performed widely on the organ and piano. He was organist at Ridgebury Congregational Church. He served on the Republican Town Committee and lived at 355 North Street. [P9/17/1983]

Slavery: The first known enslaved person living in Ridgefield was Mingo (*q.v.*), who ran away from Timothy Keeler in 1734, but there were probably slaves here soon after settlement. The first recorded enslaved birth was Ishmael (*q.v.*), born in 1739, who as a grown man ran away from at least four enslavers. A study has identified at least 83 African-Americans who lived in town in the 18th Century, of whom 53 were enslaved. The 1790 census, the first official count of the enslaved, listed only five slaves in town and four free non-white residents. By 1800, six of the 25 Blacks in town were enslaved. By 1820, there were no enslaved people in Ridgefield. *See also* Underground Railroad, Tamar, Witness Stones Project. [UNM]

Slavin, Sabina, was a longtime president of the Board of Directors of the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. Her husband, **Walter Slavin**, a physicist, was a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission. [P2/4/2002]

Slawson, Charles Wesley, (1832-1909), was in 1880 a "book agent" — selling books to townspeople — while also maintaining the family farm on North Street, what was later part of Stonecrest (*q.v.*). By 1900 he was living in Chicago where he was listed as a book publisher. As a member of the Union Party he was a Ridgefield state representative in 1866. [JFS]

Sleepy Hollow Road runs between Round Lake Road and Barrack Hill Road, part of the 1950s Eight Lakes subdivision (*q.v.*). The "cute" name is not local. [RN]

Sloan's Sporting Goods: *See* Beretta Arms Co.

Small pox: On Dec. 21, 1780, the town Meeting allowed "inoculation of ye small pox to be practiced in this town from this time to the first of April next and to be under the restrictions and regulations as is by law provided in that case." It had long been common knowledge that anyone who had survived smallpox became immune to the disease. In the late 1700s, "inoculation," also called variolation, involved infecting people with small pox, usually from pustules of people who had had mild cases, in the hope that they would become immune. It was often not successful. For instance, Sarah, daughter of Bartholomew and Sarah Weed, died "by the small pox by innoculation [sic]," her gravestone in Ridgebury Cemetery reports. She was 26 years old. On Dec. 4, 1797, 17 years after smallpox inoculation was first allowed, the Town Meeting again decided that "liberty is given to inoculation for the small pox, under the restrictions and regulations of law." Unlike most votes, it was not unanimous, and the motion passed by "two thirds of said meeting." The town established a Board of Health to deal with an outbreak in June 1860. "Some of the schools are closed. Social gatherings are to be dispensed with…" [DAR6/2/1860] *See also* Pest-House.

Smalley, John S., (1846-1865), an African American who was probably born here, was among the first Blacks to volunteer for Civil War service and among last soldiers to die in the Union Army. He grew up on Ned's Mountain in Ridgebury, volunteered in November 1863 and served with the 29th Connecticut Regiment of "Colored Volunteers." In the Petersburg-Richmond campaign in Virginia, he was wounded in the spine. He recovered and returned to service, even after the surrender at Appomattox, dying of dysentery Sept. 27, 1865, at Brownsville, Texas. He was a grandson of Edward and Betsey Armstrong (*q.v.*). [UNM]

Smalley House was a restaurant in the Gaeta Shopping Center, 439 Main Street, in the 1970s; succeeded by Galloway's (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Smillie, George Henry, (1840-1921), a NYC native, was a leading American landscape artist at the turn of the 20th Century. He lived and worked for many years at 114 Main Street, and painted scenes in and around Ridgefield — including a portrait of the Benjamin Stebbins (*q.v.*) house. His works are in the collections of major museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He had a home at Titicus by 1886. He sold the Main Street house to Edward Kidder (*q.v.*) in 1915. [WWW]

Smith, Azariah, bought a cider mill and 25 acres in Farmingville near the Lee farms. [RLR 12/136]

Smith, Amos, (1811-1881), was born in the Smith Tavern (*q.v.*) at Main and Prospect Streets, which his father, Amos, had established. He ran the tavern for many years, served as a selectman, and was one of the original directors of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. [RSB23]

Smith, Charles 2nd, (1817-1898), served as a state representative in 1855, 1862 and 1863. His first term, he was an Anti-Masonic Whig while his last two were as a Union Party member. He lived at Titicus crossroads. He had a grocery, shoe and "fancy goods" store that burned down April 19, 1857. [HC4/25/1857]

Smith, Clemence Mills, (ca 1731-1828), a native of Greenwich, married John Smith in 1751, and with him and son, Amos, operated a tavern at their house, built by John's father Ebenezer, at the corner of Main and Prospect

Streets, now the site of the Ridgefield Library. Her name sometimes rendered Clement, Clemente, or Clementine. [JFS]

Smith, Dr. Clifford V., (1931-2020), was an engineer and professor who, on Aug. 7, 1969, was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board of Education, becoming the first African American to serve on a major town board or commission. A former federal Environmental Protection Agency executive, Dr. Smith later became chancellor of the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, serving from 1986 to 1990, was vice president of Oregon State University, was a trustee of Johns Hopkins University, and president of the General Electric Fund. [JFS]

Smith, Cora Rubens, (1912-1978), was a pharmacist who, with her husband, Edward M., (*q.v.*), operated Smith's Pharmacy and, after his death, continued to run the business. She was a member of the Police Commission. [JFS]

Smith, Douglas, of Wilton, an elementary principal in Norwalk, was appointed June 2, 1966, as the first principal of Scotland Elementary School. [RT]

Smith, Duncan MacMillan, (1863-1956), a native of Illinois, was a longtime columnist for the *Chicago Daily News* who later owned the *Rockford (IL) Republican*. In 1929, he moved to Ridgefield to be close to his daughter, Margaret Shane (*q.v.*). He wrote a weekly column, A Birdseye View, for *The Ridgefield Press* for nearly 30 years. [WWW]

Smith, Edward Hurlbutt, (1827-1905), a descendant of one of the first settlers but born in Westport and raised in NYC, was a prominent businessman who moved to Ridgefield in 1849, operated a general store on Main Street and was a partner in the Ridgefield Shirt Factory (*q.v.*). A Whig first and then a Liberal Republican, he was a state representative in 1859 and 1873. He served as school board president, and president of the Ridgefield Improvement Society (*q.v.*). Known for his oratory and debating skills, he was for much of his life an outspoken opponent of slavery. He also owned the Corner Store (*q.v.*). He died the same day as his wife, Delia, both of the flu. [WWW, CBRFC, RSB22]

Smith, Edward M., (1902-1964), operated Smith's Pharmacy 2. (*q.v.*) and was married to pharmacist Cora Rubens Smith (*q.v.*).

Smith, Harvey, (1792-1864), a civil engineer, was in charge of building the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road in 1850 and served as the line's superintendent for many years. He was the first person appointed judge of probate when the Ridgefield District was established in 1841. He was a state representative in 1845. [RIR]

Smith, Harvey Keeler, (1813-87), a Ridgefield native, was an innkeeper who operated the Smith Tavern and founded the Oreneca Inn (*q.v.*), which operated for years under various names. He was a son of Amos Smith (*q.v.*), founder of the Smith Tavern. He was appointed postmaster in 1839 and in 1856, each time serving a couple of years. A Democrat, he was a state representative in 1852 and 1873.

Smith, Henry, (1821-1893), a Norwalk native, was a co-owner of the Ridgefield Shirt Factory (*q.v.*) who served as a Republican state representative in 1867. [P4/28/1893]

Smith, Howard Donaldson, (1859-1944), was a Ridgefield pharmacist and drug store owner early in the 20th Century. He produced a number of postcards under the name H.D. Smith. *See* Smith's Pharmacy 1.

Smith, Ida, a veteran manager of high-class hotels, managed the Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) starting in 1907. [DD135]

Smith, James, (abt. 1810-?), was a farmer who served as a Democratic state representative in 1852.

Smith, James "Big Jim," of Barry Avenue had a poultry farm, later Kaiser's (*q.v.*), that specialized in turkeys. He was also a rural mail carrier. [DD255]

Smith, Jeremiah, had part ownership of the Titicus grist mill. *See* Epenetus Howe.

Smith, Jennie E., (1842-1927), was the town's first librarian, appointed in 1899. She served 25 years and introduced the Dewey decimal system to the collection, about 3,000 books when she started. [RPC]

Smith, Job, (1754-1832), a farmer who was a major in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, was known in later life as Job Smith, Esq. He served as a state representative in 1800, 1805, and 1806, and was a selectman every year from 1802 to 1806. He is one of only three Revolutionary War veterans buried in Mapleshade Cemetery. [JFS]

Smith, John W. "Jack," (1883-1959), a native of England, was an estate superintendent who specialized in growing orchids. His plants won many national awards and Smith was involved in several national horticultural organizations. He ran the greenhouses at Upagenstit (*q.v.*). Active in the community, he was a selectman from 1947 to 1951, president of the Community Center, and member of the Rotary Club. [WWW, DD257, NYT8/23/1959]

Smith, Josiah, was a loyalist. In May 1782 Phineas Smith and Levi Smith of Ridgefield received, by order of the General Assembly, a deed to ten acres and buildings. Except for this tract, all other properties of their father, Josiah Smith, had been confiscated by the State and sold for its use because in 1777, the year he had "joined the Enemies of the United States." [RIR82]

Smith, Kieran, of Ridgefield, RHS 2018, won a bronze medal in the 400-meter freestyle competition in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. He also competed in the 2024 games in Paris. [P7/25/2024, W]

Smith, Lewis E., (abt.1847-?) was a farmer and a Republican state representative in 1882.

Smith, Louis G., was a New York City businessman who owned a chicken farm on North Salem Road that inspired his across-the-road neighbor, Eugene O'Neill (*q.v.*), in writing his play, "Desire Under the Elms." [*See* DD17] Ada Phair (*q.v.*) later owned the place.

Smith, Mary-Ann Tirone, a novelist and former librarian, lived here from 1970 until early 1990s. Her 10 novels include *The Port of Missing Men,* and *The Book of Phoebe*. [P7/16/1987, NR]

Smith, Matthew, (1740-1823), was a British soldier who deserted as General Tryon's troops were passing through Ridgebury on their way from Danbury to Ridgefield in 1777. He settled in Ridgebury and is buried in the Ridgebury Cemetery. [JW]

Smith, Nara Pellman, a German model and social media cooking star, and her model-musician husband, **Lucky Smith**, moved from Dallas, Texas, to Old Mill Road in 2024. [RLR 1173/721]

Smith, Nathan, (1753-1831), a state representative in 1804, 1805, 1807 and 1813, was a Revolutionary War captain but also served as the town

organizer of food supplies to feed the troops. He was clerk of the First Congregational Church from 1813 to 1831 and a selectman in 1786, 87, 91, 93, 93, and 94.

Smith, Nathan, (1790-1856), son of Nathan (1756-1831), was town clerk from 1832 to 1852 and the first treasurer of the Town Deposit Fund (*q.v.*).

Smith, Nehemiah, (1757-1775), died aboard the British prison ship Jersey in New York harbor. [Rockwell]

Smith, Samuel 'Button Sam,' (1719-1782), once the largest landowner in town, was a son of 'Norwalk' Samuel and Sarah Smith; his father was one of the original proprietors. His father gave him land valued at 500 pounds in 1751 "to which he added so much during his lifetime as to be called the largest landholder in the town." 'Button Sam' was so-called "in allusion to his short and corpulent figure." He lived on West Lane just east of Golf Lane. Smith dictated a will in 1782 that mentioned his "Negro boy," wishing that he be excepted from the "moveable estate" that could be sold to pay off any of his debts or to provide money to distribute to his heirs. [Whitney, p. 41-42; UNM]

Smith, Samuel Mills, (1816-89), was a farmer and a Democrat who served as state representative in 1853.

Smith, Stephen, (1717-1798), was a state representative in 1776, one of the first to serve in that post after Connecticut became a state. He was town treasurer from 1746 to 1785 and town clerk from 1747 to 1785. In 1790, he was one of the few people in town to own a slave. [UNM]

Smith Cemetery, an 18th Century cemetery that has vanished, was located on the north side of Mopus Bridge Road, bisected by the state line. No stones remain. Rockwell says none was there in 1927. *See also* Gamaliel Smith Cemetery.

Smith Road is an earlier name for today's Still Road from Haviland Road to Route 7, named for a family prominent in that area from the late 1700s until early in the 20th Century. [RN]

Smith Tavern: Operated during the 18th and 19th Centuries at the corner of Main and Prospect Streets was razed in 1900 to make way for the Ridgefield Library. Originally a residence, the tavern served as a meeting place for various organizations and even as a courtroom. *See* Amos *and* Clemence Smith.

Smith's Pharmacy: 1. The first Smith Pharmacy was operated by Howard Donaldson Smith (*q.v.*) very early in the 20th Century, but was gone by 1932**.** [JFS] **2**. A later and different Smith's Pharmacy was located at 423 Main Street (ONS102) in the middle of the 20th Century, operated by Edward M. Smith and his wife, Cora. Later, under Cora, it moved across the street to 454 Main Street, before it was sold in the 1970s to Joseph and Shirley December, who changed the name to December Drugs (*q.v.*).

Smith's Pond was a name for Great Pond (*q.v.*) in an 1835 deed. It was also Smith's Great Pond in 1828. Ezra Smith had land there. [RN]

Snaky was a nickname for Julius Santini (1922-1985), father of Julius "Bugsy" Santini.

Snoeck, Samuel and **Elizabeth**, (both 1856-1939), natives of Holland known as Ma and Pa, was a beloved couple who ran a boarding house in the Scott house (*q.v.*) on Catoonah Street in the early 20th Century. He died nine days after she did. [DD138, who incorrectly gives name as Snoecks]

Snow storms, notable: *April 6, 1852*: Two weeks into spring, more than a foot of snow falls on the town. *Jan. 18-19, 1857*: Blizzard with minus-7 low temperature shut down the town with huge drifts; snow in some places in the county was 10 feet deep [DAR]. *March 21-22, 1861*: Snow drifts "10 feet high in some places" from a storm. [DAR] *Jan. 18, 1867*: a huge snowstorm with 11-foot drifts shuts down town for two days. [DAR] *March 11-13, 1888:* The legendary "Blizzard of '88" with about three feet of snow, hurricane force winds and temperatures below zero shut down the town for more than a week. One drift on West Lane near High Ridge was measured at 15 feet. *Easter Sunday, April 4, 1915*: called by the *Press* "worst storm of the season," with less than a foot but lots of drifting [P4/6/1915]. *Oct. 10, 1925:* An early "blizzard." *Feb. 4, 1926,* a blizzard dumped three feet of snow on the town. "Everywhere were huge drifts which reminded us of the great blizzard of 1888," *The Press* said. *February 19-21, 1934:* called by Jennie Holmes the "biggest snowfall ever in Ridgefield." [DD85, 90, 91] *Dec. 28, 1947***:** Drifts reached 11 feet [DD85]. *Feb. 9 and 10, 1969*: Over 20 inches fell, winds of up to 50 mph, called the worst snowstorm in 20 years. *Oct. 10, 1979*: 6 inches fell, unusually early, causing much damage to trees and power lines. *Feb. 11, 1983*: In only 12 hours, nearly two feet of snow fell, one of the fastest accumulations on record. *Oct. 4, 1987*: A surprise storm dropped three inches of heavy wet snow on trees that had all their leaves, and with winds gusting to 40 mph, many broke; 83% of town lost power, some sections for many days [P10/8/1987]. *Feb. 17, 2003*, A President's Day weekend snowstorm dropped more than a foot and a half of snow on the town; meteorologists at Western Connecticut State University ranked it in the top 10 of recorded snowstorms. *Oct. 29, 2011*, called "Snotober," caused the cancellation of Halloween in town (canceled also next year by Hurricane Sandy, same date). *Jan. 21, 2016***:** A blizzard named Jonas provided nearly three feet of snow. *Feb. 22-23, 2026:* 20 inches or more fell on the town, closing schools for three days. *See also* Snowfall. [JFS]

Snowfall: The average annual snowfall for Ridgefield is 43 inches. However, the swings can be great. During the winter of 1960-61, snowfall totaled 81 inches. By March 24, 1994, 75 inches of snow had fallen during that winter season, canceling school 12 times. During the winter of 1995-96, the most snow of any winter in the century fell on the region: about 111 inches. On May 9, 2020, much of unpaved Ridgefield had a light coating of overnight snow. In January 1879, James R. St. John reported the following Ridgefield statistics on mid-19th Century snow: Average number of snowstorms per year: 17; average depth during each year: 5.5 feet; greatest depth in one year: 8 feet 4 inches in the winter of 1867-68; greatest depth falling at one time: Jan. 12-14, 1853, and Dec. 26, 1872, each 24 inches; greatest number of snowstorms in one year: winter of 1874-5, 27; fewest snowstorms, winters of 1864 and 1878, 9 each; the coldest day, Jan. 8, 1866, 21 below zero (the hottest was July 20-21, 1853, 100 degrees) [P1/29/1879]. The winter of 2022-23 had only three snowfalls, totaling 12 to 15 inches, depending on location in town. *See also* Snow storms. [JFS]

Soccer Club of Ridgefield, or SCOR, was founded in 1975 by Al Diniz (*q.v.*), John Kreisher and Jack Hughes; the three were honored in 2016 by

Ridgefield Old Timers Association. SCOR sponsors many teams and an annual regional tournament. [JFS]

Society of St. Pius X, a conservative Catholic order of priests, sisters and brothers, operates St. Ignatius Retreat House, Christ the King Church, and Padre Pio Academy (*q.v. each*) on a 13-acre campus on Tackora Trail, acquired in 1979. The order was founded in 1970 by the French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who visited Ridgefield in 1980. *See also* Mamanasco Lake Lodge, Whylurup, Manresa *and* St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary. [JFS]

Socony gasoline was sold at several Ridgefield service stations in 1920s-30s, including Moser's (*q.v.*) at 31 Danbury Road (now Ridgefield Mobil); Joe's Store (*q.v.*); and a garage at 378 Main Street. The name stood for Standard Oil Company of New York. It became Mobil; thus the Moser/KEB/Ridgefield Mobil station has sold the same company's gasoline nearly a century. [JFS]

Soda fountains existed at Bissell Pharmacy for 68 years until Feb. 3, 1964; also at Squash's News Store; Haines 5/10 Cent store in 1940s and 50s; Walker's Happy Store (*q.v.*) around 1920; and Bongo's (*q.v.*). Woolworth's (*q.v.*) had a counter that also served sandwiches and breakfast items. Boyd's (*q.v.*), a Main Street restaurant, had a soda fountain in 1940. [JFS]

Soils: *See* Land types.

Soldiers Fair was an event run by local churches during the Civil War to raise money to help injured and ailing soldiers in hospitals, particularly near the front. The 1863 fair in Jones Hall (*q.v.*) raised $475 (about $11,500 in 2024 dollars). [DAR12/23/1963]

Solley family: Dr. and Mrs. Fred P. Solley Sr. in 1909 bought the former Sherwood Farm of 88 acres on North Salem Road as a weekend and holiday retreat, naming it Craigmoor (*q.v.*). Dr. Solley practiced internal medicine in NYC and died in 1950. Daughter Margaret became Mrs. George M. Durant who, with her late husband, operated the Keeler and Durant (*q.v.*) real estate (he) and insurance (she) agency for 23 years; by 2008, the agency was part of Coldwell Banker. *See also* DD17, DD18.

Soluri, John, (1941-1989), was a landscape architect, head of Environmental Design Associates, and member of the Conservation and the Planning and Zoning Commissions. The 17-acre John Soluri Preserve (*q.v.*) in Farmingville honors his memory. He lived on St. Johns Road and was only 47 when he died. [DNT7/27/1989]

Songwriters: *See* Composers.

Sonnichsen, Eric, (1909-99), a merchant seaman for 45 years, also wrote short stories for H.L. Mencken's *American Mercury* and other magazines. He came to Ridgefield in 1965 with wife Muriel Gallick, an actress who had appeared on Broadway in the 1930s. They bred German shepherds. [WWW]

Sons of Temperance, formed in 1842, had a Ridgefield "Good Samaritan #17" chapter by 1845. The fraternal organization encouraged abstinence from alcohol *(q.v.*) and sold insurance for members. It lasted till around 1900. [JFS]

Sophia Drive, from Scodon Drive to Bogus Road at Scodon (*q.v.*), was named for Sophia Langstroth, a former owner of the land with her husband, Dr. Francis Ward Langstroth (*q.v.*). [RN]

Sorcinelli, Esperanzio, is said to have been the "first Italian to come to Ridgefield," probably in 1887, maintained grandson James Costanzi (*q.v.*). He was a stonemason who built many walls in town. He lived and worked here 20 years, then returned to Italy where his wife still lived. [AB]

Sorensen, Theodore Chaiken, (1928-2010), a native of Nebraska, was a lawyer and aide to President John F. Kennedy for whom he was a noted speechwriter. He helped Kennedy write *Profiles in Courage* and did many of Kennedy's most famous speeches. He wrote the sensitive letter from Kennedy to Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev that helped end the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. He lived at 277 Bennett's Farm Road in the 1970s. [WWW] [*For an interview when he was leaving Ridgefield, see* P1/6/1977]

Sorghum mill was established in Titicus District in 1867 — *see* James Gilbert.

Sottung, George Karl, (1929-1999), a graduate of the Art Institute of Chicago, was a noted artist whose works are in a number of museums, including the U.S. Naval Museum in DC. He created illustrations for many popular magazines in the mid-20th Century, including *Reader's Digest* and *The New Yorker*, and for a number of books. He and his wife, Ellen, lived at 96 Aspen Ledges Road, starting in 1967.

Sotzmann's map of 1796: Daniel Friedrich Sotzmann's map of Connecticut, published in 1796 in Hamburg, Germany, mixes both English and German words; names are often inaccurate (Ridgefield is spelled Rigdfield). It does good job of representing the highways from Ridgefield village to Danbury and to Ridgebury; also the old route to Danbury via Picketts Ridge and Starrs Plain. Its attempts to show industries include a saw mill (circle with line emanating) north of Route 35, South Salem Road, and another near Great Pond. A saw mill and perhaps two grist mills are shown off Saw Mill Hill Road in Titicus. [Rumsey]

Sound View Farm was the Clifford Seymour farm at 247 Wilton Road West, south of St. John's Road in the early 20th Century. The large house was used in 1970s as Knights of Columbus (*q.v.*) Hall.

Sound View Acres, a 1956 subdivision by Peter Lorenzini and Norman Craig (*q.v*. *each*), includes Soundview and Split Level Roads. [RN]

Soundview Road from Creamery Lane to Wilton Road West, had on its southern end views of Long Island Sound for many years, but most are now obscured by trees. Shown as a dirt road with no houses on a 1936 map of the town, it was perhaps an old estate path or related to the Fairgrounds (*q.v*.). Much of the road was part of the Beacon Hill (*q.v.*) estate, later owned by Peter Lorenzini (*q.v.*), who named the road and developed it in the 1950s and 1960s. It became a town road in 1958. [RN]

South End Cottage was the name used by Helen L. (Mrs. Anson) Strokes for her 54 Main Street home in SR1916S.

South Hall, a house at 351 Main Street, was so called by St. Stephen's Church which had long used it for various functions, including meetings and classes; it was the southernmost building on the church campus. It may date from the 1850s [DD], but was probably enlarged by the Rev. James Tuttle-Smith (*q.v.*), who lived there in the 1890s until his death in 1910 and called it Oatland. From the 1940s until 1958, it was the quarters of Electro-Mechanical Research (*q.v.*), which merged with Schlumberger (*q.v.*); Schlumberger donated the building to the church in 1958. In the 1960s the town Board of Education had its administrative offices and held its meetings on the second floor. The building and 1.185 acres were sold in 2021 to a private individual, who renovated it and returned it to its original use as a single-family home. [JFS]

South Long Pond is an early name for what is now Oscaleta Lake (*q.v*.) in

Lewisboro, once part of Ridgefield. [RN]

South Middle District was a school district, cited in 1864, that was probably the South Ridgebury [RN] school district. [*See* RN for details]

South Olmstead Lane, an old highway from Olmstead Lane to St. Johns Road, existed before 1856 as a farm path. It was probably established in the 18th Century to skirt the east side of the Silver Spring Swamp or New Pound Bogs. [RN] *See also* Seymour Cemetery.

South Pond: *See* South Long Pond.

South Salem is a hamlet in the Westchester County, NY, town of Lewisboro, bordering Ridgefield. In the 18th Century Lewisboro was originally called Salem; it then split into North Salem and Lower Salem. In 1840, Lower Salem changed its name to Lewisboro (*q.v.*). [RN]

South Salem Road is a portion of Route 35 from West Lane at the "Little Red Schoolhouse" to the NY line where it connects with Route 35 in the South Salem (*q.v.*) hamlet of Lewisboro. It was the main highway to NYC and in the 18th Century, called the Bedford Road (*q.v.*). [RN]

South Shore Drive is a shoreless road at Lakeland Hills (*q.v.*), named in connection with Sunset Lake (*q.v.*), which was planned just to its north but never built. Originally, it was two roads. From Bennett's Farm Road straight eastward to the end was called Sunset Drive while the rest of the road – southerly, then easterly – was South Shore Drive. The selectmen in 1972 extended the South Shore name to Sunset Drive to avoid confusion with Sunset Lane (*q.v.*), but leaving the additional confusion of just where the Shore was. [RN]

South Street is a short lane from Danbury Road to the town's sewage treatment plant, trash transfer station, recycling center, highway department, the ROAR dog shelter, and the town dog pound, probably the only significant road in town without a single, human residence on it — though many dogs and cats live along it. In the early 20th Century, it was a "cow path" between fields leading to the town dump and sewer plant. Once called Sewer Bed Road, it was improved by the Morganti family. The name is of uncertain origin. *See also* Sewers, Northrup Road. [RN]

Southridge Court serves a 1985 subdivision of 10 lots on 30 acres off the west side of Silver Spring Road on the Wilton-Ridgefield and New York-Ridgefield lines by Roger Petersen. The name recalls an 18th Century name for this area, Southwest Ridges (*q.v.*). [RN]

Southwest Cafe, featuring Mexican and Southwestern U.S. cuisine, is a restaurant at 109 Danbury Road (Copps Hill Common), founded in 1987 and operated by Barbara Nevins, who came here from New Mexico. (Co-owned in 1988 was Cheryl Guerrie.) "The food reflects the local cuisine in northern New Mexico," said Nevins. R.C. Gorman and Dennis Haggerty created the art on the walls. The restaurant sponsors the annual Margarita 5K race, benefiting Ability Beyond; the 18th edition of the race was in July 2024, and had 351 finishers. [JFS]

Southwest Ridges was a name, used as early as 1717, for the southwest corner of town which, before 1731, included much of Lewisboro. Today the territory would include land west of Silver Spring Road in Ridgefield, and along Elmwood and Smith Ridge Roads in Lewisboro. *See also* Royall Oak Ridge, Stamping Place. [RN]

Sovanu was the name of the home of Lilli C. Clark on mail sent to her in 1950.

She lived on Wilton Road West and managed Sanitary Cleaners on Main Street. The name may have been based on a Swedish word to signify a place to sleep. [JFS]

Spadoni, Annunziata, (1890-1911), was a 21-year-old Ridgefielder who died of "accidental poisoning" and whose funeral was said by the *Stamford Advocate* [7/31/1911] to have been "the largest and most expensive funeral in the history of this town, conservative estimates placing the cost at $1,000 [$56,000 in 2021]. More than 400 people stretching a mile participated in the procession to St. Mary's Cemetery, accompanied by the full Ridgefield Band. [JFS]

Spafford, James, was RHS principal, 1978-82. [JFS]

Spalding, Albert: *see* Mary V. Pyle.

Spanish-American War: Seven Ridgefielders volunteered for this 1898 war: William Creagh, John Dowling, Arthur F. Eilenstein, Rufus H. King, Jr.. Edward F. Lang, George E. Mantell, James D. Sweeney. All survived. [RIR]

Spanish flu: *See* Influenza.

Spano, Dan, RHS 2008, was one of the first Ridgefielders to die of complications from COVID (*q,v,*) in the early 2020s epidemic, passing away April 11, 2020, at the age of 30. A personal trainer, he owned a Gymguyz franchise, and was known for his charity work, such as collecting winter clothing for financially troubled families in Harlem. [P4/16/2020]

Spartans, the, was Ridgefield's adult football team in the 1930s [DD127]

Spectacle Brook, first mentioned here in 1732, rises in a swamp west of Nod Road, south of Whipstick Road and east of Wilton Road East, travels southerly, east of Spectacle Lane, into Wilton's Spectacle Bogs and ends at the East Branch of the Comstock Brook, which meets the Norwalk River and flows into Long Island Sound. The name is said to stem from the Wilton bogs' looking like a pair of spectacles, with upper and lower swamps connected. [RN]

Spectacle Lane, mentioned as early as 1744 in a deed, extends on its north from Wilton Road East, easterly a short distance, then southerly and parallel to Wilton Road East to the Wilton line. For many years, it extended beyond the line, connecting with roads in Wilton. Eventually the Ridgefield portion south of Gay Road became a barely used dirt road that, in Wilton, disappeared into woods. *See also* Spectacle Brook [RN]

Spectra Co. was a business that sold gobo lenses for Broadway shows that once operated from 52 Barry Avenue. [eBay auction item].

Spence, Dr. James K., (1922-1975), was a physician at 409 Main Street in 1967 and later moved his office to Bailey Avenue. His widow, Joann, was active for many years in the community. [JFS]

Sperry, Bert Eugene, (1871-1946), a native of Michigan, came to Ridgefield in 1892 and worked at Adams and Keeler livery stable. In 1897, he opened Sperry's Livery Stable (*q.v.*) stable on Catoonah Street, opposite the firehouse. He later had taxi service and ran a coal business there. He was active in the Lions Club and other organizations. [WWW, DD39, 132,133]

Sperry's Livery Stable: Bert Sperry (*q.v.*) bought from Morris Whitlock (*q.v.*) ca. 1897 a large livery stable on Catoonah Street opposite the firehouse. It later quartered Sperry's taxi service and coal business. The building collapsed Jan. 17, 1948. *See also* Livery Stables. [WWW, DD132,133]

SPHERE, an acronym for Special People's Housing, Education, Recreation,

Employment, was started in 1987. The founders, including Christine and Michael Steele and Ghislaine and Christopher Moomaw, were "families whose children were born with cognitive disabilities that relegated them to the margins of childhood life" and who "foresaw that if they didn't act together quickly, their adult children would spend a lifetime alone, in isolation, cut off from social, creative and educational opportunities." SPHERE was largely responsible for the creation of Sunrise Cottage (*q.v*.), founded the Out and About Club (*q.v.*), and has worked closely with The Prospector theater (*q.v*.). [JFS]

Spice was a 43-pound cat that made the Guinness Book of Records in 1975 for the largest size of a house cat. It was owned by Loren and Elsa Caddell of Catoonah Street. [JFS]

Spiegelman, Peter, (1958-), a former Wall Street software developer, has written a half dozen crime novels, most featuring a Manhattan private eye, John March. He won a Shamus Award for *Black Maps.* In 2024 he lived on Norrans Ridge Drive with his wife Alice Wang, a managing director at J. P. Morgan. [JFS]

Spies: Ridgefielders or Ridgefield-connected people who may have been spies include Mary Ann Portman, Edward Jones, Paul Ullman, and Martha Dodd Stern (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

SPIF: *See* Senior Positive Initiative Forum.

Spire, Charles, (1929-2011), was the public schools' music director from 1973 to 1990 after being a Ridgebury School music teacher, starting in 1967. He founded Ridgefield Youth Orchestra (*q.v.*) in 1971, and retired 1990. He was named Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1993 and lived on Cherry Lane until moving to Florida. [NR, WWW]

Spire View Road, a dead-end off Old Stagecoach Road at the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), is so called because, from it, one could see the Ridgebury Congregational Church spire. [RN]

Spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Ridgefield Community Service Award is presented each January to a "Ridgefield citizen whose selfless and generous acts have come to embody the spirit of Dr. King," said Mark Robinson (*q.v*.), organizer of Martin Luther King Day (*q.v*.) ceremonies featuring the award. [P1/19/2012] Following are recipients of the award: 2004, Dave Goldenberg; 2005, Ruth Leibowitz; 2006, Marianne Baldwin; 2007, Frank Lancaster; 2008, Rabbi Jon Haddon; 2009, Christine Lodewick; 2010, Barbara Manners; 2011, Valerie Jensen; 2012, Robert Creamer, Esq.; 2013, Rev. P.J. Leopold; 2014, Anita Donofrio; 2015, Jake Madeson & Nathan Pereyra; 2016, Elaine and Kevin Cox; 2017, Daniela Sikora & Tom Belote; 2018, Lori Beresford; 2019, Lane Murdoch; 2020, Carol Mahlstedt & Sharron Lavatori; 2021, Mark Robinson; 2022, Alison Stockel; 2023, Wendy Lionetti; 2024, Denise Qualey; 2025, Daniel Levine; 2026, Harvey Fierstein. [MR]

Split Level Road at Sound View Acres (*q.v.*) runs between Soundview Road and Wilton Road East, descending a steep hill (from around 750 feet above sea level to 630 feet), thus being of two levels – flat and steep. Many "split-level"-style houses were also built along the road in the 1960s. [RN]

Spagone, an Italian restaurant at 90 Danbury Road (previously Lotus, *q.v.*), was operated by Michael Spennato in the early 2000s. He had previously had a restaurant across Danbury Road. [JFS]

Spong, Hilda, (1875-1955), a British-born, Australia-educated actress, starred in

many stage productions, mostly comedies, from around 1890 until the late 1930s in Great Britain and the U.S., and was known for her beauty. She lived at 19 Main Street, which she called Maplewood, from 1935 until her death. Her RP obituary on the front page printed an embarrassing typographical error: *Hilda Spong, Stag Star, Dies at 81.* [WWW]

Sport and Toy Caboose: *See* Ridgefield Sport and Toy Caboose.

Sports: For some notable people in the world of sports who lived here, *see under* Football *and* Olympics; *see also* different sports by name.

Sportsmen's Inn, operated around 1915, perhaps near Danbury Road/Main Street intersection, was managed by John F. Raifstanger (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Spotlight Theater Workshop was a program founded 1974 by Allan and Lillian Matthews (*q.v.*) to allow youngsters to learn theater arts and to perform. After Allan's death in 1986, it was operated by Lillian and son Victor. [NR]

Spratt, Harold A., (1928-2019), a British-born philanthropist and a longtime Ridgefielder, worked for many years for Union Carbide. In 1952 he married Cora Brown, and in 1968 they moved to the U.S. Soon after, one son went blind (but still graduated from Amherst and Harvard Law). The couple moved to Ridgefield in 1978 and championed helping the handicapped — Cora spent 20 years taping books for the blind. Harold has been a major benefactor of local and area organizations in the 21st Century, including the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra, RVNA, and especially Danbury Hospital where he endowed the Cora and Harold Spratt Welcome Center, the Center for Nursing Excellence and Research, Spratt Family Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, as well as the chairs in Colon and Rectal Surgery and in Minimally Invasive Surgery. He also gave $1 million in 2018 in Cora's name to the United Way of Western Connecticut for the development of new affordable child-care centers. [JFS, P4/10/2008]

Spray Bay is a 2,800-square-foot park for children, with 26 fountain and shower devices, handling up to 150 children. Located at the Recreation Center off Danbury Road, it opened in 2014. [P7/3/2014]

Spring Forward, a 1999 movie, was filmed in part in Ballard Park; *see* Tom Gilroy. [JFS]

Spring Valley Puppet Theater was founded 1977 by puppeteer Michael Graham (*q.v.*), who grew up on Spring Valley Road. [JFS]

Spring Valley Road runs from lower Ridgebury Road, parallel to and west of Ridgebury Road, northward to Chestnut Hill Road. It is an old highway and predates 1856; it might even be an earlier route for Ridgebury Road from Ledges to Chestnut Hill Roads. It is so called from the many springs on the embankment along the east side of the road. This was one of the last roads in town to be paved, in the late 1960s or early 70s. [RN]

Spruce Hole is mentioned in several deeds between 1805 and 1834. This depression of land apparently existed in the Mill Plain area of Danbury, once part of Ridgefield. [RN]

Spruce Mountain, a hill that reaches about 920 feet above sea level, is really a Danbury locality, but some of its western "slope" may have been considered to be in northeast Ridgefield. Near its peak, west of Route 7, Danbury Airport once had a large, rotating beacon. [RN]

Spruce Ridge Farm: *See under* Stables.

Sprucewood Lane is a short, dead-end road off Pinecrest Drive (*q.v.*) at Pinecrest subdivision (*q.v.*). [RN]

Squash was a nickname of three brothers Aldo (Big Squash) and Louis (Little Squash) Travaglini, and Eugene, who lived in New Haven. Their father, Nazzareno "Luchetta" Travaglini, was also called Squash, though not to his face. *See also* Squash's. [DD60]

Squash's was the popular name for Ridgefield News Store at 389 Main Street when it was owned and operated by Aldo "Squash" Travaglini (*q.v.*). In 1953 he bought what had been the United Cigar Store (*q.v.*) from David J. Moore (*q.v.*) and changed name to Ridgefield News Store, although everyone soon called it "Squash's." The store carried newspapers, magazines, paperbacks, candy, tobacco products as well as stationery and office supplies; it originally had a soda fountain, which was closed around 1970. Travaglini retired in 1989, but the store was still called Squash's until it closed in 2023, although its formal name was Squash's Ridgefield Office Supply, which was actually a registered trademark. The store had been managed by Whitney Williams for many years. *See also* Squash. [JFS]

SQZBX was a license plate belonging to Aldo Tulipani (*q.v.*). It was a contracted form of "squeezebox," slang for an accordion, an instrument at which Tulipani was expert. [JFS]

SS Ridgefield: At least three ocean-going ships have been named Ridgefield: **1**. A World War II "type T-2" tanker, built 1944, commemorated the Battle of Ridgefield. After the war it was named the "Esso Purfleet" from 1947 to 1963 when it was scrapped in Belgium; **2.** The World War II Liberty Ship "James A. Butts" became after the war a tramp steamer and was, after it was acquired by the Ridgefield Navigation Company, named the Ridgefield in 1958. In 1962 it ran aground on Grand Cayman and broke in two. Why the company was named Ridgefield has not been discovered. **3**. Another Liberty Ship, launched in 1945 as the SS Colgate Victory, became in 1948 SS Hong Kong Transport. By 1957 it was the SS Illinois, and 1962, the SS Oregon Victory (it had been built in Portland, Ore.). In 1964, Saxis Steamship Company bought and named it SS Ridgefield Victory, perhaps because Ridgefield, WA (*q.v.*), was only a few miles from Portland, where the vessel was built. It was scrapped in Bilbao, Spain, in 1969. [JFS]

Stables: After the age of horse-powered vehicles came to an end in the early 20th Century, riding stables became popular as a way for people to experience the fun and sport of horseback riding. Many modern establishments also board horses for their owners who do not have stables on their own property. Among the major commercial stables in Ridgefield have been: Spruce Ridge Farm, 486 Ridgebury Road [RSD86], called Ridge Hollow Farm in [RSD91]; Copper Beech Stable, 879 North Salem Road [RSD73], Stonecrest Riding Stables [RSD66], called Stonecrest Farm in [RSD91], 258 North Street; Stepping Stone Farm, 20 Mopus Bridge Road [RSD86]. *See also* Livery Stables.

Stacey's Totally Baked, a cake and cookie bakery, was opened by Ridgefielder Stacey Sussman at 113 Danbury Road in November 2022. [P11/10/2022]

Stackpole, Kelly, RHS 1986, established Rising Starr Horse Rescue on Silver Spring Road in nearby Wilton in 2015. Rising Starr "saves, rehabilitates, retrains, and rehomes abandoned, neglected, or abused horses," the organization says. "Through equine interactive programs, we educate the public about at-risk horses and the importance of protecting them. By giving America's horses a second chance at life, we give the community

the chance to experience the love, patience, and compassion horses have for humans." ROTA honored Stackpole with a Special Award in 2025. [risingstarrhorserescue.org]

Stage coaches were the predecessor of today's buses. Probably as early as the 1740s Ridgefield was being served by stages that passed through between NYC and Hartford on the "upper post road" (*see* Post Road). Stages carried not only passengers, but mail. In May 1840, stages began operating between Ridgefield and Norwalk to connect with the steamer Nimrod, which ferried passengers to and from New York City. Five years later, the line was taken over by the Hunt family who ran a stage from Ridgebury through Ridgefield to Norwalk to meet the steamboats to NYC. Other stages also ran through Ridgebury in the 18th and early 19th Centuries, on their way to Danbury or New York. From 1852 until 1870, stages ran from the village to the train station at Ridgefield Station (*q.v.*); they ceased after the branch line to the village opened in 1870. After passenger service on the branch line ended in 1925, buses ran between the village and the Branchville station instead of stages. In 1866, G.R. Scofield began a stage trip Tuesdays and Saturdays from Stamford to Ridgefield [RIR, *Advocate*, 4/27/1866].

Stage Road: In the mid-19th Century Branchville Road between the two ends of Old Branchville Road was called Stage Road because it was built in the early 1850s as a smoother, less step route for the stages, both people and freight, running from the train station at Branchville (then called Ridgefield Station) to the center of town. When the branch rail line opened in 1870, stages were no longer needed and neither was the name. *See also* Old Stagecoach Road.) [RN]

Stahl, Fred A., (1944-), a pioneer computer scientist who has lived on West Mountain Road for many years, was a professor of computer science at Columbia University, an author of many scholarly articles, an inventor, science historian, and lexicographer, who has also been involved in computer security and forensics, and in real estate developer. [W]

Stainman, Rabbi Theodore, (1942-), a native of New Jersey, was the first leader of the first Jewish congregation in Ridgefield. He began work as a student rabbi in summer 1967 while still enrolled at Hebrew Union College in NYC. He left in spring, 1969. He was ordained in 1970 and joined Air Force as a chaplain in Alaska and at posts around the world; he retired as a colonel, 1993. He then taught at a Delaware college and served as a rabbi in Washington state and in Colorado, and in 2020 moved to Topsham, Maine, where he has taught adult education, and volunteered in hospice and anti-hungry programs. [NR]

Stalford, Francis Henry (1847-95), was a grocer and served as a state representative in 1885. He was married to Emma Barhite. A native of Pennsylvania, he died in New Jersey but is buried with his wife in the Barhite family plot in Scott's Cemetery, Ridgefield.

Stamats, Bette-Barron "B.B.," (1932-2009), a native of D.C., was a noted garden designer who lived for 27 years at 153 South Salem Road with her companion, TV director David G. Barnhizer (*q.v.*). Stamats was a frequent lecturer/instructor at the New York Botanical Garden and was a founder of the Indian Creek Nature Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. [P2/19/2009]

Stamford Mill River has its source in brooks from swamps of western Ridgefield in the West Lane-Peaceable area, flows into New York State,

and ends in a Stamford reservoir. The name appears as early as 1716. *See also* Mill River, West River. [RN]

Stamford, New Canaan and Ridgefield Plank Road was chartered as a toll road by the State Legislature in 1851, but was never built, probably because the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road (*q.v.*) opened service in 1852, providing a better means of handling heavy loads than a plank road was designed for. *See also* Plank roads.

Stamping Place, an unusual name, appears in a 1726 deed for two acres "lying at or near ye Stamping Place, on ye Southwest Ridges (*q.v*.)." It may have meant an area where wild animals, such as deer, habitually hung out. [RN]

Stamps: *See* Postage stamps.

Standish Drive, a circular road off Lounsbury Road, is part of Meadow Woods (*q.v.*) and became a town road in 1968. It's named for Miles Standish, the pioneer of Plymouth Colony, who had no known connection with Ridgefield or even Connecticut. [RN]

'Standpipe controversy': Around 1955, the Ridgefield Water Supply Company (Aquarion in 2025) bought the mansion at 35 High Ridge Avenue, the highest point in the village, with plans to erect a standpipe there to maintain strong water pressure in the center of town. Neighbors and others raised an uproar and the plan was abandoned. [DD154]

Standpipe Road is the former name for Peaceable Ridge Road (*q.v*.), used for many years until 1960 when a group of residents decided "standpipe" just did not sound right for them, and they petitioned the selectmen to have the name changed. The original name reflected the water company standpipe(s) (*q.v*.) standing along it.

Standpipes: Two 850,000 gallon water tanks, built in 2015 on a Peaceable Ridge Road site, 871 feet above sea level, provide pressure for the Aquarion water system in town. The first standpipe on the site was built in 1899-1900 and collapsed in 1972. A second was built in 1956, but was replaced in 2015. Peaceable Ridge Road was earlier known as Standpipe Road (*q.v*.). [RN] [DD69]

Stanley, Pat, (1931-), was a Broadway and television actress in the 1950s through 1980s. She won a Tony Award as Best Featured Actress in a Musical in the 1958-1959 season, for her performance as "Lois Lee" in the musical *Goldilocks*. and was nominated in 1962 for a Tony in *Sunday in New York*. Her TV appearances included two years on the soap opera, *The Edge of Night*. She was featured in the Jerry Lewis movie *The Ladies Man* (1961). She married actor and TV commercial voice Gerry Matthews and they lived on Lounsbury Road in the 1980s. [W, P4/2/1981]

Stannard, Charles, was a local chauffeur for the Hamilton family (*q.v.*) of High Ridge who was also known as Charlie Peanuts (*q.v.*) because he sold peanuts and popcorn at events like ball games. He was a well-known character in the first third of the 20th Century. [DD40 DD160]

Starbucks, the coffee-shop chain, opened at Ridgefield Commerce Park in the 1990s. [JFS]

Starr, Louis Morris (1868-1936), son of Theodore B. Starr, a New York City silversmith, took over his father's company and estate in Farmingville (*see* Ontaroga Farm) early in the 20th century. His daughter, C. Margaret Starr Jessup (*q.v.*), was a Ridgefield grand dame in the 20th Century. [JFS]

Starr's Plain, a section of Danbury whose name has spilled over into Ridgefield,

is generally the area east of Route 7 just north of the Ridgefield line. The name comes from some early member of the Starr family, among the first settlers of Danbury. Starrs Plain once had a Methodist Church, a school, a saw mill, and a hat factory, and still has two cemeteries.[RN]

Starr's Ridge is east of Route 7 and northerly and easterly of Great Pond, running southerly to Picketts Ridge Road and a little beyond. The name, used in the 18th and 19th Centuries, is from either Starr's Plain (*q.v.*) to the north or a Starr family who lived upon the ridge. [RN]

State highways: *See* Roads, state.

State line: *see* Wilton and Ridgefield Angles for a detailed description.

State National Bank was the first "commercial bank" allowed in Ridgefield after the sale of Fairfield County Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield (*q.v.*). It was the National Bank and Trust Company of Fairfield County (*q.v.*) in 1959-62, when the name changed after the merger, and was located in Ridgefield Shopping Center (Grand Union/CVS) on Main Street. In 1977, it was nation's oldest nationally chartered banking institution. It merged with and became Connecticut Bank and Trust Company in 1982 which in 2012 became Berkshire Bank, which has no office here. [JFS]

State police: *See* Troop A.

State representatives: In 2026, Ridgefield is represented in the State House of Representatives by two representatives, one for each district serving the town. Most of town is in the 111th District of the State House of Representatives, represented by Aimee Berger-Girvalo, except the southwest corner, which is in the 42nd District, represented by Savet Constantine. Each district has one representative; before 1967, town had two state representatives each term for its single district. In 1971-73 the town's main district changed from 163rd to 111th. For a while in the early 2000s, a small part of northern Ridgebury was in the 138th District. [JFS]

State senators: In 2024, Ridgefield is represented in the State Senate by two senators, one for each district covering the town. The north half of Ridgefield is in the 24th State Senate district, which includes Danbury and part of New Fairfield, and the south half in the 26th District, which includes Redding, Wilton, Weston and Westport, plus bits of New Canaan, Darien and Stamford. The dividing line is very roughly along Danbury Road (Route 35), Saw Mill Hill and West Mountain Roads.

Station Hill was an old and once popular village name for Prospect Street between Main Street and Bailey Avenue, so-called for the Ridgefield Station (*q.v.*) at the foot of the hill; *see also* Depot Hill and Library Hill. [P2/11/1954, RN]

Steak House, The, was a restaurant at 619 Danbury Road near Routes 7 and 35, owned in 1960s by Rose and Guy Leroux. It opened in the 1950s in a building that had been Outpost Farm's (*q.v.*) dog kennel, then a kennel for the Gaines Research Center (*q.v.*). Around 1970 it became the Red Lion (*q.v.*). The building was razed in 2005. [JFS, RGE]

Stebbins, Benjamin (1692-1780), a native of Northampton, Mass., was among the early settlers of Ridgefield. His 1727 saltbox house and farm on northern Main Street, now the site of Casagmo (*q.v.*) condominiums, was used as a hospital at Battle of Ridgefield (*q.v.*), whose main skirmish was nearby. The house was razed in 1892, but a bullet-riddled door from the house is now owned by KTM&HC. Stebbins narrowly escaped being hit by

fire during battle but house was probably saved from burning because a son, Josiah (*q.v.*), was a Tory. [RIR, WBK]

Stebbins, Ebenezer; 1. He was, according to old records, among seven Ridgefielders who were conveyed in December 1776 to Bolton, Conn., for being loyalists [CDA4 VIII199,200].

Stebbins, Emma: *See* Henry G. Stebbins.

Stebbins, Henry G., (1811-1881), was Ridgefield's second native-born Congressman serving from 1864 to 1866). A great-great grandson of Benjamin Stebbins (*q.v.*), he was a New York City financier, president of NY Stock Exchange, and president of Park Commission that oversaw building of Central Park. His sister, Emma (1815-82), who was born in NYC, became a noted American sculptress and feminist lesbian — her 1873 statue, "The Angel of the Waters," also known as the "Bethesda Fountain," stands in Central Park. [JFS]

Stebbins, Joseph (1735-1794), served in the Revolution at the age of 59 The son of Benjamin and Sarah (Mead) Stebbins, he married Joanna Smith on Feb. 5, 1762 in Ridgefield. They had nine children. His brother Josiah was a Loyalist.[FAG]

Stebbins, Josiah, (1733-1794), was a Loyalist who fled Ridgefield in the Revolution but returned afterward. [FAG] He eventually changed his mind, according to a document in state archives, called "RECANTATION OF JOSIAH STIBBINS [CDA2 XXXIV:281,282; CDA7 XXXIV 459c,460a, 461b], and got at least some of his confiscated property returned.

Stebbins, Samuel, (1762-1831), was a veteran of the Revolutionary War who served as a state representative in 1802, 1806 and 1813. He taught at the Independent Schoolhouse, as described by S.G. Goodrich in *Recollections of A Lifetime*. [JFS]

Stebbins Close, a private lane at Casagmo, was named for the family who had lived on and farmed the Casagmo land for more than a century and a half — *see* Benjamin Stebbins. [RN]

Stebbins Corner was a 19th Century name for the intersection of Main Street and Danbury Road because the Stebbins family farm, later the Casagmo estate, was along the southeast side. [JFS] *See* Benjamin Stebbins.

Steele family, the, was one of the few land-owning African-American families in Ridgefield in the 19th Century. Isaac Hart Steele (ca. 1834-1921) of North Salem bought a small farm on Limekiln Road in 1865; the house still stands at 101 Limekiln Road. Isaac managed The Hickories farm (*q.v.*) for Gov. George Lounsbury. His wife Katie died in 1889 and in 1892, Isaac sold the farm and bought a place near 89 Danbury Road. He eventually returned to North Salem, where he died. Daughter Mary E. Steele (1859-1933) was a lifelong Ridgefielder. [WWW]

Steele, Fletcher, was a Boston-based landscape architect who designed gardens and related facilities at the Westmoreland (*q.v.*) estate between 1929 and 1935. *See also* Pergola. [Terry McManus]

Steep Brook, cited as early as 1719, is east of northern Main Street and west of East Ridge, flowing through Casagmo, under Grove Street, and down into Great Swamp. Just north of Grove Street it drops 60 feet in elevation in a short distance, prompting the name. It may have been the site of the town's first saw mill, permission for which was given in 1714. [RN]

Steers, Billy, is a children's book author who is also, like his father, an American

Airlines pilot. As a boy, he lived in Ridgefield, coming to 115 Seth Low Mountain Road in 1967 and attending Scotland School. He moved in 1976 to Roxbury when his father bought a sheep farm there. Billy still live in Roxbury where he both writes and illustrates books, and is especially known for his "Tractor Mac" series. His son, Willy, is also a pilot. [JFS]

Steinman, James "Jim" Richard (1947-2021), was an American composer, lyricist and record producer, who lived at 22 Ketcham Road. NYT said "Steinman lived alone in his 6,000 square foot house described as a 'majestic museum of the self,' attached to a quaint cottage in the woods of Ridgefield. He spent years expanding and reimagining the house, transforming it into an embodiment of his own eccentric, complicated personality." His hit singles included Tyler's "Total Eclipse of the Heart," Air Supply's "Making Love Out of Nothing at All," Meat Loaf's "I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)," the Sisters of Mercy's "This Corrosion" and "More," Barry Manilow's "Read 'Em and Weep," and Celine Dion's cover of "It's All Coming Back to Me Now." He wrote the book, music, and lyrics for *Bat Out of Hell: The Musical*. His house, with all his original contents, was on the market in 2023-24 for $3.95 million. [JFS]

Stengel, George J., (1866-1937), an Impressionist artist, lived 145 Main Street, 1920-37, and had his studio above the garage out back. In 1919 he was a founder of the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, NY. [P1/23/1941, WWW]

Stepping Stone Farm: *See under* Stables.

Steppy was a nickname for Frank Taylor (*q.v.)*, village constable, because of an affliction that affected his gait. [DD80]

Stern, Jane, (1946-) is an author who, often with her former husband Michael Stern, wrote many books related American regional food. Among her 42 published books, three were made into movies, including *Ambulance Girl,* directed by Kathy Bates who played Stern as an ambulance EMT in Georgetown. She was on staff for 18 years at *Gourmet*, had a radio show on NPR and worked for *Saveur*. She lived at 92 Bayberry Hill Road from 2008 until 2022, and had earlier lived in the Georgetown section of Redding.[JFS, LI]

Stern, Martha Dodd, journalist and novelist accused of being a Soviet spy, has been incorrectly reported as living in Ridgefield; she had a home at 192 Kitchawan Road in the South Salem hamlet of Lewisboro, NY, but had a Ridgefield mail delivery, explaining why she had a "Ridgefield" mailing address. [JFS]

Stevens, Carlton Ross, (1898-1970), a Ridgefield native, was an inventor and World War I hero. As an Army motorcycle dispatch rider, he rode 800 miles to deliver the first sectional terms of the Armistice to General Pershing. He later invented many machines and electronic devices and founded Stephens Company in Waterbury. He worked on the Manhattan Project in World War II. When he was 14, he established the first ham radio station in Ridgefield. [WWW]

Stevens, Charles H. "Putty," (1863-1947), bought the Ridgefield Bakery (*q.v*.) in 1896, with William Reinhart as partner. He lived on north Main Street (North Salem Road). [P7/17/1896, DD365]

Stevens, Jane Copeland, (1921-2013), was a concert contralto who graduated from Juilliard and sang at Dr. Norman Vincent Peale's church, in USO shows in World War II, at Carnegie Hall and Radio City Music Hall, in

Broadway productions, on television including the Ed Sullivan Show, and at Manhattan night clubs. For many years, she taught acting as well as singing, both privately and in schools such as Wooster and WestConn in Danbury, and was the founder, director and producer of Memory Lane Productions, which recreated USO shows. In the late 1990s, she did a one-woman show, impersonating the 1940s star Jane Froman. She lived the last third of her life in Ridgefield. [JFS]

Steve's Bagels in the Grand Union/CVS shopping center on Main Street was established in 1993 by Steve Grover, who sold the business in 2004 to James Hegyi, who two years later sold to Mark and Toni Piazza. The site is now Ridgefield Bagels and Bakes, which opened in November 2023, owned by Gary and Emily King. [JFS]

Stewart Block was the early 20th Century name for the building at 381 Main Street. Walter Stewart, a New Canaan grocer, had briefly had a store there, after S.D. Keeler's market and before Perry's Market (*q.v. eac*h). It was later Gristede Brothers (*q,v*,). [JFS]

Stewart Dickson & Co. was a partnership of several individuals, organized June 1, 1942, that held patents on the manufacture of hatch covers for ships. Its headquarters was listed as Ridgefield.

Stiles, Hart, was one of the first two elected African-American town officials, chosen in 1871, a year after the 15th Amendment was enacted — *see* Thomas F. Brown. [UNM]

Still Road, an old highway, runs between Haviland Road and Stonehenge Road and once continued farther eastward — *see* RN for details. It was so called because Hull Keeler operated a distillery that produced cider brandy in at least the 1870s. *See also* Taylor's Corners, Old Still Road, Stonehenge Inn. [RN]

Stockel, Allison, was the longtime executive director of the Ridgefield Playhouse, retiring in 2022 after 20 years. During that time, Stockel led the Playhouse from 60 shows a year to 260 shows, and oversaw growth of the operating budget from $250,000 to $6 million. [JFS]

Stockli, Albert, (ca. 1918-1972), was owner/chef of Stonehenge Inn, 1965-72, after having been instrumental in founding such top NYC restaurants as the Four Seasons, Mermaid Tavern, Forum of the Twelve Caesars, Charlie Brown's, Zum Zum. He was the author of *Splendid Fare: The Albert Stockli Cookbook* (1970). [WWW]

Stokes, Anson Phelps, (1838-1916), was a merchant, property developer, banker, and philanthropist, who at his death was worth more than $20 million in 2024 dollars. While he visited here, he did not live here, but his widow did — *see* Helen Louise Stokes. [JFS]

Stokes, Helen Louise Phelps, (1846–1930), was the widow of industrialist Anson Phelps Stokes. (When he died in 1913, he left an estate worth about $800 million in 2026 dollars. [W]) In 1916 although she owned several sizable houses including the 100-room Shadowbrook mansion in Lenox, Mass., she bought the house and 10 acres of Mrs. George H. Newton at 54 Main Street, and used it as her summer and weekend retreat until her death. Her funeral was at St. Stephen's Church. Her husband, who'd died in 1913, was a brother of James Stokes (*q.v.*) of West Mountain, merchant, property developer, banker, genealogist and philanthropist. Among her sons was the Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes, a Yale scholar, historian, clergyman, author, and civil rights activist. [JFS]

Stokes, James, (1841-1918), was a wealthy banker and lawyer known internationally for his philanthropy, especially in connection with the YMCA movement. He built the Sunset Hall (*q.v*.) mansion in 1912 and died there. His posthumous biography, *James Stokes: Pioneer of YMCA* by Frank W. Ober came out in 1921. *See also* Anson Stokes, Helen Stokes. [NR]

Stolle, Carl A.F., (1880-1966), purchased Walnut Grove Farm (*q.v.*) in 1921 and operated a dairy, delivering milk until 1946 [P12/12/1946] when he sold his route to Marcus Dairy. He continued to own the farm until the 1950s and land at Farmingville and Limekiln Roads until the 1960s. He and his wife, Susan (1889-1969), are buried in Mapleshade Cemetery. [P6/23/1966]

Stone, Dexter L., (1853-1921), a Vermont native, was an 1877 graduate of Harvard and later NYU law who was an attorney in NYC. He retired to a home, Autarkes, on West Mountain Road near the NY line that burned to the ground in 1913 [P2/19/1914] at a loss of some $40,000 ($1-million+ in 2024). He did not rebuild. [JFS]

Stone Hill Dairy: *See* Stonehill Dairy Farm.

Stone House: *See* Stonehouse Commons.

Stone Pillow is a 1985 movie starring Lucille Ball, whose last scenes were filmed at Peaceable Acres (*q.v*.) estate, 47 Peaceable Street. [Doug Cuny]

Stone Ridge Estates is an unusual subdivision of 59 lots east of Ridgebury Road and north of George Washington Highway, created in 1997 by the Town of Ridgefield, which bought the 252 acres to prevent it from being developed for multifamily housing — probably the first time since the era of the Proprietors (*q.v.*) in the 18th Century that the town created home lots. Of that 252-acre purchase from developer Peter Friedman (*q.v.*) and others, 185 acres was devoted to Stone Ridge Estates, of which 92 acres became open space. In all, 160 acres of open space resulted from the 252 acres. Stone Ridge roads include Fisher Lane, Stonewall Lane, Old Trolley Road, Crosby Court, and Encampment Place (*q.v. each*). [RN]

Stone Ridge Manor was a name given to Eleven Levels (*q.v.*) mansion, 24 Old Wagon Road, in the early 2000s when it was being used as a bed-and-breakfast. The house was built in 1911. [RGE]

Stonecrest is a 230-acre estate along both sides of North Street; its mansion was built on 1900 by Alan Stoddard Apgar (*q.v*.), who concocted the name. Designed like Grovelawn (*q.v.*), the house burned in March 1949 and was razed. Part of the land is now Stonecrest Estates (*q.v.*). *See also* Alligator Farm, Stoney Crest, Irving Conklin Sr. [RN, RGE]]

Stonecrest Estates is a subdivision of a portion of the Stonecrest (*q.v.*) estate into lots served by Stonecrest Road, Dowling Drive and Ridgecrest Drive. The estate was acquired in the late 1949s by subdividers Joseph Young, Charles Elliott, and Francis Brown. *See also* Irving Conklin Sr. [RN]

Stonecrest Farm: *See under* Stables.

Stonecrest Mountain is a fairly modern name for the ridge easterly of North Street, probably inspired by the name of Stonecrest (*q.v.*) estate; also called East Mountain or Copps Mountain (*q.v. each*). [RN]

Stonecrest Riding Stables: *See under* Stables.

Stonecrest Road off North Street, was once the driveway to the main house at Stonecrest (*q.v.*), and is part of Stonecrest Estates (*q.v*.). [RN]

Stonehenge Estates is another name for Fire Hill Acres (*q.v.*), a Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) subdivision across Route 7 from Stonehenge Road and the old

Stonehenge Inn (*q.v.*), whence the name. [RN]

Stonehenge Inn was established in 1946 by Victor Gilbert (*q.v.*), named for the English landmark that impressed him when he was serving in WW2. The inn was centered on an old house at an old mill site, and was previously The Nook antiques shop (*q.v.*). Among the many celebrities who have eaten there were Judy Garland, Elizabeth Taylor, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, many Rockefellers, and Mrs. Thomas Edison. Stonehenge was later owned by then-famous chef Albert Stockli (*q.v.*) and after him, for many years by Doug Saville and David Davis. The main building burned in 1988, replaced by similar-looking structure. The inn closed in 2017 after the death of a new owner, Drew Friedman, who also owned Cobbs Mill Inn in Weston. In 2019, it was converted into the Ethan Allen Preparatory School, a private school for young golfers associated with the Golf Performance Center nearby, which by 2024 had been restyled as the Golf Performance Academy (*q.v.*). *See also* Taylor's Corners. [RN, WWW, P3/7/2019]

Stonehenge Pond, a body of water off Stonehenge Road on the Stonehenge Inn (*q.v.*) property, was once a mill pond. [JFS]

Stonehenge Road is an old section of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike, later Route 7, which was bypassed in the 1930s by the State Highway Department when it straightened Route 7 there. It was named for the Stonehenge Inn (*q.v.*), which adjoined its western side along its south end. [RN]

Stonehill Dairy Farm on south side of North Salem Road at New York State line, was operated by Stewart E. Scofield (*q.v.*) for about 15 years in the 1930s and 40s. A former Hunt family farm, it was the second largest dairy in Ridgefield behind Conklin's. The name also appears as Stone Hill. [DD16]

Stonehouse Commons is a residential and office condominium cluster at 619-641 Danbury Road (Route 7). The 24 condominiums were built in 1994. The main "stone house" building was erected in 1922 as the office for Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*) and is still used for businesses. [JFS]

Stonewall Lane is a short, dead-end road off Old Trolley Road, part of Stone Ridge Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Stoney Crest is said to be the original name of what was later called Stonecrest (*q.v.*), home of A.S. Apgar (*q.v.*) on North Street. [RN]

Stony Brook is apparently an early name for the Titicus River as it flows along the vicinity of Saw Mill Hill Road. That name is mentioned in early 19th Century deeds. [RN]

Stony Hill Road runs off Branchville Road, connecting along its northerly "scorpion's tail" to Cooper Road. Easterly off Stony Hill Road runs **Stony Hill Terrace**, a short dead-end. Both were developed starting 1962 by Caye Construction Inc. The name is sometimes spelled Stoney. [RN]

Stop & Shop, a supermarket, opened Oct. 3, 1972 at Copps Hill Plaza where it is today, Ridgefield's largest retail store. It eventually became the town's only chain market, after the closings of A&P, Grand Union, and First National. The original store was 21,000 square feet and open only Monday through Saturday. The store was enlarged in 2001-02. [JFS]

Storer, Albert H., (1858-1933), a business newspaper publisher in NYC, was active in St. Stephen's Church, was on the board of the library, and served on the school board early in the 20th Century. He was elected president of the Ridgefield Business Men's Association (*q.v.*) in 1914. He was married to Sophie Storer (Knox) (*q.v.*) and lived at 188 Main Street. [NR]

Storer, Francis Ellingwood, (1885-1943), a NYC native and Yale 1907, worked for publishing and banking firms in NYC, and was a vestryman and clerk of St. Stephen's Church. He was a son of Albert H. and Sophie Cary Bacon Storer, and lived at 188 Main Street.

Storer, Sophie: *See* Sophie Cary Bacon Storer Knox.

Storms, major: *April 15, 1871* — Hailstones as large as three inches in circumference broke 70 window panes in one house, and the finger of a man hit by one. "Cattle and horses in the fields were wild with terror and pain" [Columbian Register]; *July 13, 1916:* Major summer storm with "force of a hurricane" fells trees, knocks out train service, utilities, several people hit by lightning, 2.57 inches rain, barn destroyed (four buildings at Danbury Fair burned); *Sept. 21, 1938*: The huge hurricane that strikes southern New England takes a heavy toll on the town's trees; about 100 were reported down and many more damaged; *July 13, 1950*: Twister at 7:30 p.m. took off part of RHS roof and felled many trees on Governor and Main Streets, and in Veterans Park; *Aug. 31, 1954:* Hurricane Carol damaged many trees, gusts to 60 mph, 2.7 inches rain; *Sept. 17, 1999:* Tropical storm Floyd dumped 12 inches of rain, damaging a third of town's roads; *Aug. 2011*: Tropical Storm Irene knocked out power more than a week in some parts of town; *Oct. 29, 2011*: Rare early snow storm called Alfred or "Snowtober" caused widespread power outages for up to 11 days and canceled Halloween; up to 2 feet of snow in Connecticut; *Oct. 29-30, 2012*: Tropical Storm Sandy caused widespread power outages and canceled Halloween for second year in a row. *Aug. 4, 2020:* A tropical storm shut down power and closed roads a week for many parts of town. *See also* snow storms, ice storms, floods. [JFS]

Stornoway was the summer home of Mrs. A.W. Stewart (Frances Gray), named for the largest town in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. Location is unknown. She was living here in 1916 with children Francis and Mary. [SR1916S]

Storytime, a sculpture by Glenna Goodacre (1939-2020), depicts the shared joy of the wonder of a book. It was an anonymous gift to the Ridgefield Library in 2000, in honor of Library Director Anita Daubenspeck on her retirement. The sculpture was originally in the Storytime Sculpture Room, but was moved to the outdoors front when the library was rebuilt in 2014. [JFS]

Stowell Manufacturing Company: A photo from ca. 1900 shows a tall industrial building along tracks in Branchville, with a quartz mine in the background, labeled "Stowell Mfg. Co. Branchville, Conn." Stowell was a NJ company making paints, roofing materials, etc.; it possibly leased the facility to obtain ground quartz for its Monarch Mining Co, formerly Traylor Manufacturing and Mining Company of NJ, somehow connected with Stowell. *See* Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company.

Strawberry Festival: **1.** A fundraiser for church work sponsored by the Methodist Church in the 19th Century; in 1866, it was in Jones Hall (*q.v.*). **2.** An annual music event with ice cream and strawberries in Ballard Park, sponsored by East Ridge Junior High School in the 1980s and featuring student musicians, led by Susan Goff. [P6/4/1981]

Strawberry Ridge Road, a dead-end road off the west side of lower Nod Hill Road, is part of the 1960s Twin Ridge (*q.v.*). It's named for the wild plant once more common than now hereabouts. [RN]

Street lights along Main Street were originally oil lamps on posts at a few essential spots. In the 1890s, the Village Improvement Society (*q.v.*) added more, but

around the turn of the century, some were beginning to employ gas generated in Ridgefield — *see* Ridgefield Illuminating Company. Soon after, electric streetlights were showing up — *see* DD135 for a description and list.

Street numbers: *See* Renumbering.

Streets: *See* roads.

Strike, teachers: 20 Ridgefield teachers, most of the staff, resigned March 9, 1920, in a protest over salaries. They returned to work March 16, claiming their action was not a "strike." In May, salaries were raised. [RPJ p9]

Stroili, Paul E., RHS 1982, is an actor, comedian, playwright, and producer whose 2018 film, *Wake*, won several awards. He has been on the stage and in many TV shows, and is noted for his standup routines involving his mother, especially *Straight Up with a Twist,* which had more than 1,000 stage performances including a twice-extended Off Broadway run. His first theatrical performance was in a 1975 Ridgebury School musical. [JFS]

Stromberg, George, (1926-1993)**,** the second principal of Veterans Park School, served from 1960 until about 1966. During his tenure the library was expanded and dedicated to honor his predecessor, Isabel O'Shea (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Stroud, Adrian, was a Ridgefield policeman in the 1980s who later joined the Middletown police, where he retired as a sergeant. He wrote two books, the autobiographical *Brothers in Arms*, with accounts of policing events in Ridgefield, and *Prisoner of War Number 2378*, a biography of his father's experiences as a Japanese POW in World War II. He lives in Florida.

Strouse, Frances Zandri, (1910-2002), established Frances Cleaners (*q.v.*) in 1921 and operated it for 40 years. She was the wife of Arthur Strouse. [JFS]

Stuart, Aaron, (abt.1764-1818), was a selectman in 1809 and a state representative in 1810.

Stubbs, Charles, was pastor of St. Mary Parish from 1976 until 1991, but has since been removed from the priesthood after multiple complaints of sexual abuses. *See under* Holzberg Report.

Studebaker cars were sold by Pamby Motors in the early 1950s. [DD133]

Studwell, Genevieve G., founded and operated Ridgefield Travel Service (*q.v.*).

Sturdevant, John, (1676-1717), a native of Norwalk, was one of the first 25 proprietors (*q.v.*) of the town and the only one of Dutch ancestry. The name was also spelled Stirdevant. He had a son, John Jr., (1710-?), for whom Sturdevant's Clapboard-tree Ridge was probably named. [JFS]

Sturdevant's Clapboard-tree Ridge, mentioned in a 1751 deed, was in eastern Farmingville, probably around the Farmingville School and/or east and south of it. It may have been a popular place for finding oaks suitable for the clapboards to sheathe the town's first houses. John Sturdevant (*q.v.*) probably owned significant land there. [RN]

Sturdevant's Ridge, a version of the above, was common in the 18th Century. [RN]

Sturges, Earl, (1910-2005), a Ridgefield native and house painter, was a Ridgefield volunteer firefighter for over 70 years. He held every office in the department including chief. [NR]

Sturges, Frederick L., (-1863), a Union Army soldier who enlisted while living in Ridgefield, died of "chronic diarrhea" at a regimental hospital in Louisiana. He was 25 years old and is buried in Zion Hill Cemetery, Wilton, where his family was from. [RS]

Sturges, "Miss" M.A., operated a "seminary for young ladies" in Ridgefield in 1838. [NY Observer 10/20/1838]

Sturges, Nelson Augustus "Gus," (1873-1954), was a popular and skilled carpenter who suffered from a severe stuttering handicap. While crossing Wilton Road West at age 81 to get his mail, he was killed by a car. [DD127]

Sturges, Mary Christina "Tina" Cobelle, RHS 1976, is an artist of "pure abstraction, abstract or semi-abstract landscapes, and New York City views," known locally for her many paintings of Ridgefield, including "The Porches of Ridgefield." She is the daughter of artist Charles Cobelle (*q.v.*).

Sturges Brothers Inc., home builders, was founded in the early 1990s by brothers Jim and Don Sturges, Ridgefield natives, following in the footsteps of their father, builder **John Sturges**. They specialize in custom-built, high-end houses and additions. [JFS]

Sturges Park is the former Girl Scout Camp Catoonah (*q.v.*), donated to town in 1998 after the Girl Scouts stopped using the 42 acres off Rippowam Road. The park is named for Sturges family — Ernest Sturges and Warren Keeler donated the land to the scouts in the 1940s, stipulating that should it not be used for scouting, it would revert to the Sturges family. It did and the family then gave it to the town. The park, used for hiking and camping, including by scouts, adjoins 1,000-acre Mountain Lakes Park, operated by Westchester County on former Port of Missing Men (*q.v*.) resort land. [JFS]

Suburban Action Institute and its offshoot, Garden Cities Development Company, contracted in 1973 with George and Rose Kaiser of Barry Avenue to buy their 10.8-acre former poultry farm to erect about 108 apartments for low- to moderate-income families. SAI was known for its efforts to force towns to allow low-income families to live in the suburbs through zoning changes. The Planning and Zoning Commission rejected the application for rezoning later that year, citing traffic and sewer problems. In 1974, SAI leader, **Paul Davidoff** and others sued the town in Federal Court, charging "lily-white" Ridgefield was trying to zone out minorities and lower-income groups in general. Davidoff (1930-1984), an activist planner and professor, was the chief proponent of "advocacy planning" through which planners seek to represent the interests of various groups within society. He believed advocacy planning was a needed method for representing the low-income and minority groups who were not always on equal footing with the rich and powerful. However, due to internal squabbles and financial problems, SAI didn't pursue the case and it was eventually thrown out of court for lack of prosecution – its allegations were never ruled on. *See also* Apartments, Kiln Hill Lane. [RN, W]

Subway, a Connecticut-based franchise, opened its first sandwich shop in Ridgefield in 1990 at 416 Main Street, owned by Kevin Kerrigan (*q.v.)* and attorney Richard J. Fricke. Under new ownership, the business moved to Bailey Avenue and later closed. Two other Subway outlets, opened at 9 Ethan Allen Highway and 632 Danbury Road (both Route 7), still operate in 2026, when there were 37,000 Subways worldwide. [DNT7/20/1990, JFS]

Sucré Salé was a French restaurant opened in November 2014 at 109 Danbury Road. Its name means sweet and salty. The restaurant closed in February 2023 so owner Frank Bonnaudet could open a new restaurant, Brasserie Saint Germain at 470 Main Street, in the space once occupied by Touchstones (*q.v.*) and Yuan (*q.v*.).

Suffrage: *See* Woman suffrage.

Suffragists: Ridgefielders active in the suffrage movement, especially early in

the 20th Century, included Alice Paul (*q.v.*), Laura Curie Allee Shields (*q.v.*), Mary Olcott (*q.v.*), Emily Eaton Hepburn (*q.v.*), Charlotte Wakeman (*q.v.*), Edna Schoyer (*q.v.*).

Sugar Hill is the name of the Lewis/Luce/Kraus estate, originally called Taghkanick (*q.v.*), on Great Hill Road [OR]. The name appears on a 1950s aerial photo postcard by George Mench (*q.v.*).

Sugar Hollow is the valley traversed by Route 7 from around the town line north to Danbury Airport. It was probably a popular source of sugar maples in the 18th and 19th Centuries. [RN]

Sugar Hollow Racquet Club, providing the town's first indoor tennis courts, was approved by the PZC in July 1971 at 748 Danbury Road (Route 7, just south of Danbury line). The facility was next to Ridgefield European Motors, the BMW dealership owned by Eric Erhardt, who was also vice president of the new club. A later owner (1983) was appropriately named Ron Netter. [P7/2/1971] In February 1975, the club had its first "Fairfield County International" tournament, slated to feature number-one-ranked Jimmy Connors as well as Ilie Nastase. Nastase showed up, Connors didn't. The building was later razed and replaced with an inflated facility on the backland. That operation was eventually abandoned. *See also* Tennis.

Sugar Hollow Turnpike, incorporated in 1829, was a toll road that used parts of Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike and Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike, and was a predecessor to today's U.S. Route 7 (*q.v.*). The same company and name was used for the turnpike's northern spur that connected with the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike near today's Danbury Airport, running northwesterly to the NY line. It ceased being toll road by 1860. [RN]

Sugar Hollow Road is Route 7 in Danbury, from Ridgefield line north to I-84. It was part of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike in the 19th Century, then the Sugar Hollow Turnpike. It was eventually taken over by the state. It was first paved with concrete in 1924. [P7/24/1924].

Sugar Loaf Mountain Road runs between Regan Road and Old Stagecoach Road at Ridgefield Knolls, a late 1950s subdivision. Surveyor Edgar P. Bickford said the name was found on an old map of the area. It probably the 970-foot-high, rounded hill to the east, also called Barlow Mountain (*q.v.*). The name reflects conical shape of sugar as sold in 19th Century and was commonly used in many parts of the country. [RN]

Sullivan, Dennis, (1939-2005), was an artist who operated the Frame 'n' Art Shop (*q.v.*) in the 1970s and 80s, at first at 421 Main Street, then on Bailey Avenue, and finally at 481 Main. He was a founder of the Ridgefield Guild of Artists, serving in 1975 as its second president. [P10/13/24]

Sullivan, Jack, was an RHS English teacher and acclaimed freshman basketball coach in 1975. [P1/30/1975]

Sullivan, James Patrick, (1968-1986), RHS 1986, was shot and killed at the South Norwalk train station on Aug. 29, 1992. The 24-year-old had been an RHS track star. A 20-year-old Norwalk resident was convicted in 1993 of the killing. [P11/18/1993]

Sullivan, John "Jack," (1939-2015), RHS 1957 and a US Army veteran, was a longtime Ridgefield professional firefighter, joining in 1964 and retiring in 2007 as a captain. He had joined volunteer department 1959. [P2/5/2015];

Sullivan, John Lawrence, (1911-1961), was Ridgefield postmaster from 1951 to 1961. He was a star athlete at RHS and served in U.S. Navy during WW2.

He lived at ONS1 Prospect Ridge with his wife was Mary L. Sullivan. He said to have died of reaction to a bee sting [DD66]

Sullivan, Owen, (?-1756), a runaway Irish indentured servant, served in the army during the French and Indian War. A militia armorer, he learned smithing skills that he later used to make printing plates to clone the colonies' bills of exchange. He joined David Sanford (*q.v.*) and operated in and about Ridgefield in the 1750s before being caught and hanged as a counterfeiter. His name is also spelled Syllavan. [See the book: *Moneymakers: The Wicked Lives and Surprising Adventures of Three Notorious Counterfeiters*]

Sullivan, William Matheus, (1885-1947), a NYC attorney for the Metropolitan Opera and many of its stars, built a small opera house on his estate, Dunrovin, now on Country Club Road, where stars, such as Lily Pons and Geraldine Farrar (*q.v. each*), performed, mostly in benefits such as the Dunrovin Music Festival which helped Danbury Hospital. His William Matheus Sullivan Musical Foundation still awards grants to promising musicians. The mansion on West Lane burned in 1977, but the opera house still exists as a residence. *See also* Wildflower Farm. [WWW]

Summa, Christopher, RHS 1992, is a filmmaker whose work includes the acclaimed feature-length documentary *The Boy Who Found Gold*. He is a graduate of the School of Visual Arts in NYC. [IMDB]

Summer camps: *See* Camps.

Summit Lane, running between Bob Hill Road and Rockcrest Drive in the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), is 860 feet above sea level, nearly the highest location in the subdivision. [RN]

Sundberg, Mills & Demougeot was an advertising agency opened December 1980 at 402 Main Street, with William Sundberg, Thomas Mills and Robert Demougeot. [JFS]

Sunderland, Philip, (1871-1972), was a Danbury architect who designed the Town Hall (*q.v.*) in 1897, which was only his second major commission; the Benjamin Franklin Elementary School (*q.v.*), 1915; the Reginald Lewis (*q.v.*) house, 100 South Salem Road, ca 1913; Wadsworth Lewis's (*q.v.*) Taghkanick, 1937. He was 101 when he died. [P8/24/1972]

Sunrise Cottage is a group home at 6 Sunset Lane, serving six developmentally disabled adults. It was built in 2003-04 by group including Housatonic Habitat for Humanity, Inc., The Ridgefield Affordable Housing Committee, SPHERE (*q.v.*), and Town of Ridgefield Municipal Agent for the Disabled, with the help of the state and federal grants. [JFS]

Sunset Acres is a subdivision, filed by Charles H. Daudt, served by Sycamore Lane (*q.v.*). It divided up part of the Windover (*q.v.*) estate where Daudt lived and was developed by Morgan X. Helie. [RN]

Sunset Hall, a mansion built by James Stokes in 1912 at 162 Old West Mountain Road, overlooks Round Pond. Owners have included Sadie Glantz Weiss, Ruth Cutten, Samuel Rubel, Robert Vaughn, and Dick Cavett (*q.v. each*); *see also* Sachem Hill, St. Vincent de Paul, Winterwood. [RGE]

Sunset Lake was a pond planned pond of Lake Windwing and north and east of Bennett's Farm Road. It appears on the 1960 town map, but was never built by developer Harold Goldsmith (*q.v.*). *See* South Shore Drive. [RN]

Sunset Lane, running from Grove Street to Prospect Street Extension, was formerly known as Railroad Avenue because it paralleled tracks to Ridgefield depot. It was changed in 1958 because residents did not like the

name. The western end dates from a 1923 subdivision. [RN]

Sunset Road was the original 1957 name of the western end of South Shore Drive (*q.v.*). It was changed in 1972 to avoid confusion with Sunset Lane (*q.v.*). It had also been called Sunset Drive on official town map of 1960. *See also* Sunset Lake. [RN]

Sunset View was the name of a hotel on West Lane, operated by Thomas Kiernan, that burned to the ground March 9, 1913. Arson was suspected. [P3/13/1913]

Sunshine Society was founded in October 1900 as the Ridgefield Branch of the International Sunshine Society, to help shut-ins. It was disbanded late in 20th Century. [JFS]

Sunward Builders was a small construction company, owned by Glenn R. Symon of Ridgebury Road in the 1980s, specializing in custom solar houses and additions, passive solar retrofits, greenhouses, and "sunspaces." [P4/9/1981]

Super 7 was the informal name for an interstate-style expressway that was at first proposed to extend from Norwalk to beyond New Milford. The state decided in the 1950s that Route 7 needed upgrading and by the 1960s was proposing a four-lane expressway, at least from Norwalk to Danbury, connecting Interstates 95 and 84. Many people liked the idea at first — the country was in the midst of President Eisenhower's grand interstate building program, and these limited access highways were viewed by many as godsends to speeding up travel and relieving congestion on village roads. However, soon people near the path of the road began to organize and oppose on many grounds (pollution, property values, noise, wetlands damage, cost, etc). But the environmental issue proved the most solid. The big decision came July 7, 1972 when Federal Judge Jon O. Newman ordered a halt to all work on Super 7 until a study of the road's environmental impact had been made by federal transportation officials. Newman ruled that the study of the Norwalk to Danbury stretch should consider alternatives to the four-lane expressway, such as improved rail transit or reconditioning the existing Route 7. Subsequent court cases brought up similar issues. In December 1986, Ridgefield had an advisory vote on whether to support the construction of Super 7. Only 1,636 of the 12,900 voters showed up, with 1,241 against and 393 for the expressway. Finally, the years of well-organized opposition had delayed the project so long that the cost was becoming astronomical and the state, faced with budget crisis after budget crisis, "shelved" the plan in 1993 for at least 10 years. But that action was the end of the road — the price would only continue to skyrocket and the lawsuits proliferate. Instead, the state did various widening projects along the existing road, especially in Wilton and in Ridgefield north of 35 to I-84. This alternative had more support. [JFS]

Superintendents of Ridgefield schools: Charlotte J. Wakeman, 1919-21; Charles D. Bogart, 1921-24; Harry Erwin Bard, 1924-28; Arthur D. Horton, 1928-42; Van Miller, 1942-47 (away for 1½ years to serve in war); Edward W. Fuller, 1947-54; Joseph Grimes Jr., 1956-62; Philip Pitruzzello, 1962-64; Thayer D. Wade, 1965-66; David E. Weingast, 1967-77; Elliott Landon, 1977-1986; David Larson, 1987-88; Jerry Marcus, 1989-92; Ralph Wallace, 1998-2003; Kenneth Freeston, 2003-07; Deborah Low, 2007-14; Karen Baldwin, 2015-18; William Collins, 2019-19; Susie Da Silva, 2020-.

Surveyor of highways was an elected town office in the 18th and 19th Centuries. The ATM elected several surveyors to cover all parts of town. Their job was to inspect the town roads and, where needed, draft residents, usually those bordering the road, to maintain and repair them. There was no town highway department then to maintain roads and neighbors were expected to keep their roads in good shape.

Sussman, Charles "Chuck," (ca. 1942-2022), a native of NYC, owned the Town Planner Calendar (*q.v.*) publication for 25 years. He lived in Ridgefield for 45 years, 34 of them at Rainbow Lake.

SVG: *See* Silicon Valley Group.

Swamp radio: *See* WREF.

Swan, Sally: *See* Sally Ann Reid.

Sweaters Etcetera was a women's clothing store at 384 Main Street in the 1970s and 80s, operated by Helen Goldsmith. [DD97]

Sweet Dreams, an ice cream shop, opened in 1983 at 409 Main Street by Michael Lichtenstein and Roland and Carl Kravats, who had shops in Brookfield and New Milford. In 1985, they had a public stock offering for their business, which also supplied about 70 area restaurants. They gained some notoriety for their alcohol-flavored ice creams. *See also* Dr. Mike's. [SA7/12/1985]

Sweets, a homemade candy and ice cream shop, opened at 15 Bailey Avenue Sept. 10, 1983. [P9/8/1983]

Swenson, Hope Hollister (1937-2010), a NYC native, served 35 years on the Ridgefield Library board, which named its Visionary Award in her honor. She was also active in Keeler Tavern and Ridgefield Garden Club, was chairman of Nine Hole Golf at Silver Spring Country Club, having taken up the game at age 55. [P10/14/2014]

Swimming Pools: In 2025, Ridgefield had 13 "public" swimming pools that, under state law, must be inspected annually by the town Health Department for safety: Barlow Mountain School (indoor), 115 Barlow Mountain Road; Casagmo, 130 Olcott Way; Fox Hill, 1 Fox Hill Drive; Mimosa, 10 Mimosa Circle; Pleasant View, 48 Powdermaker Drive; Quail Ridge I, 19 Prospect Street; Quail Ridge II (Prospect Woods), 120 Prospect Street; Ridgefield Boys & Girls Club, 41 Governor Street; Ridgefield Recreation Center (indoor), 195 Danbury Road; Silver Spring Country Club, 439 Silver Spring Road; Turner Hill, 2 Barnum Place; West Mountain (Eleven Levels), 126 Eleven Levels Road; Westmoreland, 167 Holmes Road. [RW]

Swine: During the 18th Century, pigs were allowed to roam freely, provided they were "ringed" — that is, they had metal rings attached to their snouts so that they could not root around crops (the ring made that function very uncomfortable for the animal). The ATM December 4, 1786, voted "that Swine have liberty to go at large on the Highways and Commons provided they are Ringed, after they are two months old, and that in the Months of December, January and February they may go at large without Ringing." *See also under* Livestock. [JFS]

Swinging Bridge, the, was a 100-foot-long wood and iron bridge that spanned 40 to 60 feet over a gorge on the Rippowam (*q.v.*) estate of Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Bulkley (*q.v.*) during part of 20th Century. It was built in the 1920s at Mrs. Bulkley's suggestion and overlooked lakes Waccabuc, Oscaleta, Rippowam. It was still there in the 1950s, but is now gone [RPJ4/9, DD278]

Swords, Henry Cotheal, (1854-1924), was president of Fulton Trust Company

of NYC in early 20th Century. The NYT says he "was widely known in the financial life of New York." He was a trustee of the New York Society Library. His house on lower West Lane was center of large estate, formerly owned by George G. Havens (*q.v.*), accessed by today's Country Club Road (*q.v.)*. Swords sponsored popular horse and dog shows at his estate [P2/14/1924]. *See also* Homewood.

Syacus, Ruth, described in the town records as a "squaw," died Sept. 7, 1799. [RLR1/210]

Sycamore Lane is a dead-end road off West Lane, part of the 1967 Sunset Acres subdivision of the Windover (*q.v.*) estate. It was developed in the 1970s by Morgan X. Helie. [RN]

Sylvan Drive is a short road between Lakeside Drive and Woodland Way at Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*). Sylvan means "wooded." The name sometimes appears as Sylvan Road. [RN]

Szentkuti, Charles, (1914-2007), was a builder and developer of the Executive Pavilion (*q.v.*) office condominium on Grove Street. He also developed the 65-acre Beechwood subdivision of Norran's Ridge Road after failing to gain approval for 426 condominiums there [P2/6/1986]. He also built the 99 Danbury Road commercial building. He was commended for his conversion of former Colt Firearms factory in Hartford into multifamily housing. A native of Hungary, he was on 1936 Greco-Roman wrestling team in the Olympics and had master's degrees from Columbia. He also designed automated manufacturing machinery — one of his machines sewed pockets on Levi's pants. He moved to Ridgefield in 1964. [P4/19/2007].

Szemere, Istvan "Steven," (1906-1968), whose full name was said to be Istvan de Szemere de Genere Huba, was a native of Hungary who is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. He came to this country in 1949, saying he was the only living descendant of Huba, an Eighth Century leader of Hungary, and was trying to claim $19 million in assets that were frozen when the Russians took control of Hungary in 1946. He maintained that in 1918 he inherited the Huba clan fortune amounting to $50 million and including three castles, 80,000 acres of land and other properties. He was unsuccessful and wound up spending the last 10 years of his life as superintendent of the George T. Newell estate on Saw Mill Road in Danbury, just north of the Ridgefield line in Ridgebury. While he is buried in St. Mary Cemetery, his wife, the former Nancy Horvath, is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery. He said the two had met in Budapest near the end World War II, and that he had hidden her first from the Nazis and then from the Communists. [AP, FAG]

Szymanska, Basha, (1944-2019), a native of Poland who was an NYC businesswoman and patron of the arts, immigrated with her family to the US in 1950. At 19, she became a fashion model with the Wilhelmina Modeling Agency. Later she opened a designer boutique, "Basha &," on Madison Avenue where she designed her own popular clothing line. After living in Manhattan for more than 30 years, she moved to Ridgefield. In the 1990s she bought the old Taghkanick/Sugar Hill (*q.v. each*) estate, part of which she subdivided, living there until her death. [P7/4/2020]

T

Tabby was the nickname for Octavius Carboni (*q.v.*), coined reportedly because of his cat-like moves as an athlete. [WWW]

Table Rock Estates is a 1974 subdivision of 34 acres into 10 lots by Marcelino Lavin of Wilton on the east side of St. Johns Road, part of the old Hillscroft Farm (*q.v.*). The name refers to a portion of the flat, table-like surfacings of ledge hereabouts for which the "Flat Rock" (*q.v.*) district was named in the 18th Century. Local tradition says American Indians used certain flat rocks on or about this property to grind their corn or grain. [RN]

Tablao Wine Bar and Restaurant opened in 2019 at 426 Main Street, a space that had been 50 Coins (*q.v.*). It's "a taste of Spain featuring an authentic tapas menu, global wine list, and live music." Tablao also has restaurants in Fairfield and Norwalk. [JFS]

Tabory, Lou, is a sport fisherman and author who has written many books and articles on fishing techniques. He had a home on Pine Mountain Road from 1985 until 2016. [NR]

Tackora was an American Indian who sold much land to early settlers, and was also known as Oreneca (*q.v.*), and Naranoka. He was among the signers of the first deed giving the settlers ownership of 20,000 acres, and is the lead signer of the second purchase of 1715, where he is identified as "Oreneca, alias Tackora," and the third deed in 1721 where the name appears as Norreneke. Bedini says: "Tackora was the sachem of the Titicus village. He was identified by several other names including Oreneca, Norraneke, Narranoke, Naraneka, Tachora and Narranoka." [JFS]

Tackora Hill was a 22-acre estate of William and Margaret Bunker (*q.v.*) on West Mountain Road northerly of Ridgefield Academy. [SR1916]

Tackora Lodge was a name of the "David Scott house," built around 1810 on North Salem Road opposite the north intersection of Tackora Trail. It was once owned by Scott, Elias Reed, Hamilton B. Scott, and others, and may have once housed a store and the little Scotland district post office. It no longer exists. [RIR]

Tackora Road: A 1907 property map used this name for Old West Mountain Road, probably because it was part of an old American Indian trail – *see* Tackora Trail.

Tackora Trail, perhaps part of an old American Indian trail, parallels Route 116, North Salem Road. It predates 1856 and may have been built as bypass to swampier sections of North Salem Road, which may be probably older road. The name is fairly modern (not used before 1890), recalling an American Indian, Tackora (*q.v.*). Some old maps call this Scotts Ridge Road or Lakeview Road/Lane. [RN]

Tafel, Edgar A., architect and student of Frank Lloyd Wright, designed a house at 38 Saw Mill Hill Road. *See under* Frederick Greenberg. [LoC]

Taghkanick was an estate at 183 Great Hill Road, built by Wadsworth R. Lewis (*q.v.*) around 1937. The brick house, designed by Philip Sunderland (*q.v.*), was later owned by pulp magazine publisher Harold Goldsmith (*q.v.*), Henry and Clare Boothe Luce (*q.v.*), Hans P. Kraus (*q.v.*), and Basha Szymanska (*q.v.*). The name is an American Indian word for "forest wilderness" or

simply “the woods.” The estate was later called Sugar Hill (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Tallest structure in Ridgefield: *See under* Antennas.

Tally-Ho Road, a dead-end road off the north side of Haviland Road, serves Glen Acres (*q.v.*). Tally-ho is a phrase uttered by horseback hunters when a fox is sighted; its connection with this property is unclear since the neighborhood is not known to have ever hosted any fox hunts. [RN]

Tamar was an enslaved woman in the household of Matthew Seymour. Town records say she was the mother of Peggy, born in 1742;, Elisabeth, 1746; Dover, 1747; Betty, 1749; Allen, 1751; and Naomi, 1754. Three later children died at birth. Tamar is a Hebrew word for “date,” as in the sweet fruit. [RLR, Vol. 1, p. 257].

Tamarack Mountain, or **Mount Tamarack** is a hill in New Patent, cited in 18th Century Ridgefield land records. It is in territory once part of Ridgefield and now in western Danbury, possibly near I-84 and the NY line. It’s named for the tree. [RN]

Tanglewood Court is a short, dead-end road off the west side of Wilton Road West, serving a nine-lot, one-acre subdivision of 10.3 acres, approved in 1967. “The bushes and the woods were a tangle,” said Paul J. Morganti (*q.v.*), who with his brothers John, Joseph and Robert, subdivided the property and named the road, accepted by town in 1969. [RN]

Tannery, The, in 1800s, referred to an complex near the southwest corner of North Salem Road and Saw Mill Hill Road at Titicus Crossroads. Tanning is the process of converting hide to leather; Ridgefield once turned out large quantities of leather, particularly for Western markets. The large Titicus tannery was operated late 1700s by Philip Burr Bradley and Joshua King, Revolutionary War veterans, and was acquired by Jabez “Uncle Mix” Gilbert in 1806. The operation included a bark house and tan vats; bark was a source of tannin, a substance used in the tanning process. In 1856, the tannery later acquired by David H. Valden (*q.v.*) and included an “office, or store, currying shop, beam house, bark mill, bark shed, vats, tannery pond…” [JFS, RN]

Tannery Hill Road is a short road, ending in a circle, off the west side of North Street nearly opposite Mimosa. It serves “Tannery Hill,” subdivided in 1960 by James Hackert’s Arnor Corporation, consisting of 11 lots cut from about 12 acres. It became a town road in 1962. The name stems from the belief that an old house on the road was once associated with the tanning business, possibly by Jabez Mix Gilbert (*q.v.*). It’s also possible that a tannery was operated on or about the property by Lewis Smith. [RN]

Tannery Pond is a small pond to hold water for the Gilbert or Valden tan yards on the Titicus River, south of Saw Mill Hill Road and a little west of North Salem Road, cited in several deeds from the 1830s to the 1860s (*see* The Tannery). [RN]

Tanton, Harvey D., (1901-1960), a native of Prince Edward Island, Canada, was first selectman from 1951 to 1953, and a member of the Board of Selectmen from 1953 to 1957. He worked for Outpost Nurseries and later had his own landscaping business. He was a member of the Parks Commission, Rotary Club, and lived on Tanton Hill Road (*q.v.*), which was named for him. [RN] *See also* Harvey Road.

Tanton Hill Road is a loop road, both ends of which connect to the west side of Danbury Road, south of Limestone Road. It was developed in the 1950s

from small part of old Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*) land; the subdivider was a real estate subsidiary of the nursery, which had closed a decade earlier. It was originally called River Road (*q.v.)* because much of it ran alongside upper reaches of Norwalk River, but was changed in 1957 to honor former First Selectman Harvey D. Tanton (*q.v.*), who lived on the road, worked for Outpost, and who seconded the motion (!) to change River Road to Tanton Hill Road. The name is often incorrectly spelled Taunton Hill Road. [RN]

Taporneck was an American Indian leader, about whom little is known. His signature or "mark" is included on the first deed from the natives to the settlers in 1708. He is also the top signatory on deeds in 1727 and 1729 for land mostly in western Ridgefield — much was ceded to NY in Oblong (*q.v.*) exchange. Taporneck lived at Wepack (*q.v.*) or Long Pond (*q.v.*). His name is variously spelled in records: Tapornick, Tappornik, Topornick, Tawpornick, and Tapporneck; Rockwell misread early settlers' handwriting in transcribing deeds, calling him Japorneck. [RN]

Taporneck Court, off the easterly side of North Salem Road near the New York State line, is part of the 1982 Scott Ridge subdivision by the Gavin Company. The name recalls American Indian leader Taporneck (*q.v.*). [RN]

Taporneck Division was an early subdivision among the settlers of land that had been purchased in 1727 and 1729 from several American Indians; on both deeds the first signer was Taporneck (*q.v.*). Much of this land was in today's NY and was lost in Oblong (*q.v.*) exchange; it included territory in northeastern Lewisboro and southeastern North Salem as well as western Ridgefield. [RN]

Tappe, Kevin, (1952-2025), was chief of the Ridgefield Fire Department for nearly three years, retiring in 2017, and had been assistant chief for about seven years. He had previously held many firefighting positions in Stamford, and also spent 30 years as an instructor at the Connecticut Fire Academy. [P4/17/2025]

Taproot(s) was a program on writing, aimed at senior citizens, that operated in the late 20th and early 21st Century. Founded in 1994 by Philip W. Quigg (*q.v.*), it published two journals a year of local seniors' writing. In its later years, meetings took place at Founders Hall. [P10/14/2004]

Tarner, Stanley, (1923-2006), who lived on West Lane in the 1970s, was music producer for the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, and wrote the songs for many popular commercials, such as "Only Mustang Makes It Happen" and "This is the L and M Moment" (for a brand of cigarettes). A native of Greece, he was a graduate of the Juilliard School where he was a Rhodes Scholar. [P7/15/1971]

Taunton Hill Road: *See* Tanton Hill Road.

Tavoliero, Guy, was a businessman who in the 1960s was involved in a lengthy zoning dispute with the town over his Maple House furniture store at 605 Ethan Allen Highway. [P11/19/1970, P3/8/1973, P4/5/1973]

Taxes: Ridgefield's government and schools are largely supported by property taxes, due quarterly. Ridgefield residents also state and federal income taxes, and state sales taxes, (7% in 2026 for most items, 7.35% on sales of meals and certain beverages). *See also under* Grand List, Assessors, Town Meetings, Taxpayers (Top Ten).

Tax assistance: *See* AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program

Taxpayers, Top Ten: 1. Ridgefield's top taxpayers in 2025 were: Boehringer-

Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc., 900 Ridgebury Road, assessed value of $322,669,990, paying $8,502,000 in taxes (It has about 950,000 square feet of property in Ridgefield); 2. Connecticut Light & Power, which owns all the power lines and poles in town, $52,076,610 assessment, $1,372,000 taxes; 3. Equity One (Copps Hill Plaza), $23,100,000 assessment, $608,685 taxes; 4. Steve Zemo and Michael Taylor, owner of a dozen commercial and residential buildings, $21,766,900 assessment, $573,557 taxes; 5. Ridgefield Station Senior Living at 55 Old Quarry Road, $20,446,230 assessment, $538,758 taxes, 6. Benchmark Senior Living (Ridgefield Crossings, 640 Danbury Road, $18,978,230 assessment, $500,076 taxes; 7. Ridgefield Professional Office at 35 Danbury Road, owned by developer Richard Lipton, $18,027,940 assessment, $475,036 taxes. 8. Silver Spring Country Club at 439 Silver Spring Road, $16,791,250 assessment; $442,449 taxes. 9. Ridgefield BMW (Keeler Property Holdings) at 746 Danbury Road, $14,487,360 assessment, $381,741 taxes; 10. Laurel Ridge Health Care Center, 642 Danbury Road, $10,689,470 assessment, $281,667 taxes. [P4/3/2025]

Taylor, Edwin, was appointed postmaster at the newly created Limestone Post Office, the *New London Daily Chronicle* reported March 4, 1857. [JFS]

Taylor, Frank "Steppy," (1860-1931), was "Ridgefield's first regular officer" of the law [P2/5/1931]. In the late 1890s he became the village's "night watchman" for 25 years, paid by merchants. He became a town constable in the 1920s. [NR, DD80]

Taylor, Rev. Dr. George Lansing, (1835-1903), was minister of Jesse Lee Methodist Church, 1881-84. He clashed with *Press* editor William Whiting over temperance. His wife, **Eliza French Taylor,** wrote memoirs of their life that are in the collection of the HS. [WWW]

Taylor, Robert Lewis, (1912-1998), was a writer who won the 1959 Pulitzer Prize in literature for the novel, *The Travels of Jaimie McPheeters*. A former journalist, he wrote many profiles for *The New Yorker*, and a dozen books including biographies of Winston Churchill and W.C. Fields (two books became movies). He lived on Old Branchville Road in the 1950s and 60s. [WWW]

Taylor's Corners is an old name for the vicinity of the intersections of Still, Stonehenge and Haviland Roads, inhabited by members of the Taylor family as early as the 1780s when Preserved Taylor had property at East Meadows (*q.v.*). Edwin Taylor (*q.v*.) followed by David Taylor had a store at the corners in 1850s-60s; for a while, the store included a post office. Joseph Taylor had a flour mill nearby. [RN]

Taylor's Pond, a term that appears in records as early as 1908, is a body of water on the Norwalk River (Ridgefield Brook) westerly of Limestone Road north of the Great Hill Road intersection. Undoubtedly an old mill pond — perhaps built in the 1730s by Benjamin Burt (*q.v.*), it appears on town maps in 1856 and 1867, and was probably named for Edwin Taylor who, in 1867, bought two roods "with the mill dam thereon" at this location. The seller was Taylor Bates, who was probably related to Edwin. The Bradley family seems to have owned most of the land around the pond in the mid-1800s. [RLR24.258.1867]ß

Tazza Cafe is a coffee and espresso bar opened at 408 Main Street Oct. 18, 2010, by James Monica. The name means "cup" in Italian. [P11/4/2010]

See also Carnival Shop.

T-Bone was a nickname for **Stephen D. Carboni**, (1948-2018), a Ridgefield native and longtime Pamby Motors employee, who was active in community organizations. *See also* Bones. [JFS]

Tea House was an informal name for Henry B. Anderson's Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) on West or Titicus Mountain. The name was a reflection of the restaurant that served "elegant afternoon teas" frequented by many of the region's wealthier women. [DD135] Some have speculated that the name was a light-hearted description of a place known for serving much stronger beverages, and that it may have caught on during Prohibition when tea was about as strong as the drinks could get. [RN]

Tea House Lane is a tertiary road (*q.v*) serving several of the six lots in a 1998 subdivision off North Salem Road where Cecelia Ruggles divided the 18.8 acres of her homestead. Part of road was the original driveway to her house. The property, once part of Francis D. Martin's Far-Vu Farm (*q.v.*), is not far from the Port of Missing Men, often called the Tea House (*q.v.*). [RN]

Tea House Road was the informal name for Old Sib Road, the main route in Connecticut to the Tea House (*q.v.*) or Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*). The name appears on a postcard and in deeds. [RN]

Teachers, professors, educators, principals cited here include: William W. Allen, Sally Anyan, Francis Bassett, William H. Beers, Delight Benedict, Howard Bogot, Dirk Bollenbeck, Arnold Brewer, Carroll Brewster, Blandina Brewster, Edward Brolin, Philander Cady, Mabel Cleves, Robert Cox, John Coyle, Mary Creagh, Susie Da Silva, Susan Davies, Frederic Fayerweather, Fabian Franklin, Paul Hazel, Harold Healy, Sylvia Hodge, Jennie Holmes, Nan Howkins, Herbert Janick, Constantine Kalogeras, Marie Kilcoyne, Bettina Knapp, Edward Krehbiel, Elliott Landon, Kathleen Lane, Glen Lebetkin, Evelyn Leeman, William Leete, Daniel Liebowitz, Guido Maiolo, Bernadette Marczely, Robert McGlynn, Richard Medve, Marion Nash, Lucile Nicholas, John Norman, Richard Norman, Benjamin Northrop, Cyrus Northrop, Jamison Odone, Elizabeth O'Shea, Isabel O'Shea, Margaret O'Sullivan, Alice Peatt, Hortense Powdermaker, Florence Powdermaker, Richard Powers, Elizabeth Regan, Mary Regan, May Rockwell, Adam Salvo, Steven Scott, William O. Seymour, Charles Spire, Jack Sullivan, Elfrieda Travostino, Harold Voorhees, Mary Wahl, Karen Warren, Ruth Wills, John Winant. (*q.v. each*)

Teen Centers: In the 1950s, Ridgefield Teenage Canteen Inc. (*q.v*.) operated a center in the basement of Community Center. They were kicked out in 1959. In 1971, one opened in outbuilding on Ballard Backland; its directors included Jack Disher. The latest teen center, The Barn (*q.v.*), opened in an old barn in Veterans Park on Governor Street in December 1994, but is no longer a regular drop-in center. *See also* Porch.

Telegraph service: Ridgefield had telegraph service by 1866 when an office opened here. On Jan. 15, 1871, Western Union opened a telegraph office at the new Ridgefield Depot on Prospect Street. By 1876 there were telegraph poles along Catoonah Street. In 1867, the *Springfield (Mass.) Republican* said 13 telegraph poles between Danbury and Ridgefield had been struck by lightning in a recent storm. In the late 1880s, AT&T apparently ran a trunk line from Boston to New York east-west through Ridgefield; the line connected here with one coming from Danbury and the

north. [JFS]

Telephones: Telephone service began in Ridgefield in 1891 with one switchboard and 27 subscribers in the village. In March 1909, the exchange office moved to Governor Street with 350 subscribers, staffed by three day operators and manager, Willis S. Gilbert [P3/18/1909]. Around 1915, the office moved to the "Telephone Building" *(q.v.*), the Tudor block on Main Street. Dial service began in 1951, with 2,300 customers; dial equipment required a new brick building on Catoonah Street, then operated by Southern New England Telephone Company. [RPJ7/12] In March 1962, phone service went to all numbers; no longer was Ridgefield ID8-6544. ID stood for Idlewood. The availability of Touch-Tone electronic dialing began June 1, 1980. [P5/29/1980] Today, several companies such as AT&T and Ooma, provide traditional wire-based telephone service, though many people opt for wireless carriers. [JFS]

Telephone Building was the formal, original name of the Tudor-style building at 411-419 Main Street, built 1913 by Lucius H. Biglow (*q.v.*). Telephone company switchboards were on the second floor. It has also been called the Biglow Block (*q.v.*) and Martin Block (*q.v.*) and, in 2024, was owned by the Amatuzzi family. [JFS]

TelePrompTer was the first cable television (*q.v.*) company to offer service in Ridgefield, beginning 1980. The company was sold in 1981 to Westinghouse. [JFS]

Television: Ridgefielders involved in television acting, producing, writing, news, and directing include (*q.v. each*) Arthur Arent, Jaqueline Babbin, Paul Baker, Todd Brewster, James Blumgarten, Kirk Browning, Gena Canestrari, Imogene Coca, Michael Connolly, Morton Dean, James DePaiva, Rob Dustin, Myles Eason, Robert Elfstrom, Chris Elliott, Gene and Ralph Ellis, Sam Feist, Ira Joe Fisher, Samuel Grafton, Beau Gravitte, Timothy Herlihy, Barbra B. Jackson, Bill Lawrence, Andrew Luckey, Edward Reveaux, J. David Saks, Bill Shipley, Pat Stanley, Robert Vaughn, Tonja Walker. *See also* Cable television, Tiger TV, Howard C. Freer Sr., [JFS]

Telford road, named for its British inventor, consisted of vertically inserting long flat stones in the roadbed. These deeply imbedded slabs were covered with gravel, producing a road that was resistant to erosion, frost heaves, and potholes. The town used this system around the turn of the 20th Century for portions of Danbury Road, North Salem Road, and St. John's Road, among others. [RN]

Tellabration, an annual program of people telling non-fiction stories, began in 2023 at the instigation of Darla Shaw (*q.v*.). About 10 people each year present at the hour-long program, sponsored by the Ridgefield Historical Society. The event takes place a week or two before Thanksgiving. [JFS]

Teller, Rev. Daniel Webster, (1838-1894), a native of Yorktown, NY, was the 11th minister of the First Congregational Church, but more lastingly known as the author of the town's first full-sized history, *History of Ridgefield* (*q.v*.), published in 1878. He earned a medical degree from NYU in 1865 and practiced in Brooklyn. However, he left medicine to become a minister, earning a degree from Hartford Seminary. He came to Ridgefield in 1872 and, according to church historians, revitalized the congregation. He left in 1880 to lead a New Haven congregation. However, he often visited here and chose Ridgefield Cemetery as his final resting place. [WWW]

Temperance: *See* Alcohol, Prohibition *and* Sons of Temperance.

Temperatures: The average high temperatures for Ridgefield range from 33 in January to 82 in July while the average lows range from 19 in January to 64 in July. [Weather Atlas] On Jan. 24, 1857, DAR reports a reading of minus-27. On Jan. 8, 1866, Jared Nash recorded minus-16. [DJN] and DAR said it was "the coldest day old Dr. Perry ever remembers. Mercury 21 degrees below zero." DD91 reports that it reached 33 degrees below zero on a day after the Blizzard of 1934 Feb. 21 to 22. A famous hot spell occurred in July 1866 when temperatures reached as high as 97 in Ridgefield; some allege 140 in the hay fields. Hundreds were killed by the heat in NYC around July 6 that year. In August 1955, during one of the worst heat waves of the 20th Century, RP reported 117 degrees was recorded on the 10th green of the Silver Spring Country Club. [JFS]

Temple Shearith Israel was a reform Jewish congregation established in January 1967 by 16 families. In 1968 it acquired the old Westmoreland (*q.v.*) mansion at 46 Peaceable Street; its first rabbi was Theodore Stainman (*q.v.*). The first temple school opened its doors Sept. 9, 1967, with 46 pupils. In September 1977 the congregation dedicated a new addition, with sanctuary and pavilion; ceremonies included a concert by folksinger Theodore Bikel. In 2015, the temple merged with Jewish Family Congregation of South Salem to become **Congregation Shir Shalom** (*q.v.*). For a history of the building and congregation, *see* [P7/30/1987]. A fire of accidental origin in January 1982 destroyed hundreds of books at the temple [P1/7/1982]. Other rabbis have included Arnold Belzer, Elizabeth Rolle, David Kaplan, and David Reiner (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Tennis: Probably the first public tennis courts in town were located in the 1910s and early 1920s on the site of 441 Main Street, the former Odd Fellows Hall, and, after the hall was built, in the lot behind it. They were operated by Harvey Keeler. Tennis clubs began to appear in the 1970s with Ridgefield Tennis Club's (*q.v.*) outdoor courts, operated by Richard B. Howard (*q.v.*), at 35 Copps Hill Road, and the Sugar Hollow Racquet Club (*q.v.*) at 748 Danbury Road (Ridgefield BMW in 2024), which had a large indoor facility, later razed. Public tennis courts supplied by the school board and Parks and Recreation Department began appearing in the 1960s. [JFS, DD117]

Tenth Lane is a short, dead-end road off Mamanasco Road at Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Tepfer, Charles S., (1924-), was a magazine editor and publisher who specialized in such subjects as electronics and the early cable TV industry. He had publication offices at 607 Main Street in the late 1960s and the 1970s, and retired to Westport. [JFS]

Terraces at Ridgefield is two-building condominium/apartment building, developed by Terrar LLC around 2007-08 at 619 Danbury Road (Routes 7 and 35), the site of the old Red Lion (*q.v.*) restaurant. The complex has 50 units. [P11/13/2008]

Terrar LLC was a development company that built the Terraces at Ridgefield (*q.v.*).

Tertiary road is a town ordinance designation for dead-end road that serves no more than seven house lots, and ends in a cul de sac. It can be narrower than other town roads. [JFS]

Textbooks, free: On Oct. 7, 1912, townspeople, bolstered by more than 100 new women voters, agreed to provide free textbooks for school children.

(Women in CT at that time could vote on school-related issues.) [JFS, M]

the gym opened in July 2013 as an exercise center at 66 Grove Street, owned by Seth Hirschel. It closed suddenly in October 2018 due to financial problems [P10/18/2018]. The building was formerly Ridgefield Fitness Club and originally, Digitech (*q.v. each*). The name was lower-cased. [JFS]

Thalacker, Jimmy, was an airline pilot who was also an avid photographer. He took photos for the RP from ca. 1969-72, many of them aerial. He lived in Ridgefield, then Redding, and moved to Big Pine Key, Fla. [JFS]

Thayer, John Alden, (1895-1964), a NYC native, was editor of *The Ridgefield Press* from 1932 to 1937. He attended Dartmouth, was an Army lieutenant in WW1, and in 1940, moved to Florida and became mayor of Delray — thus he was known as "Mayor Thayer." He was featured in a 1933 full-page color ad in *National Geographic*, promoting the Plymouth Six car (he owned two Plymouths). [NR]

Third Lane is a short, dead-end road off Mamanasco Road at Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v*.). [RN]

Third Purchase of native land by the settlers took place Nov. 22, 1721, with the Proprietors paying £6 for a sizable tract on West Mountain bordering Round Pond and including land now in Lewisboro, N.Y., running north through the area around Ridgefield High School and Mopus Bridge Road and east to Barlow Mountain and North Street. [JFS]

This Quiet Place is a book of historical fiction, based in Ridgefield; *see* George Hancock.

Thomas, Albert N. (1830-1901), was a railway conductor and Ridgefield depot's first station agent in 1870. From 1864 to 1967, he was also Ridgefield postmaster. He was a Republican state representative in 1883. He was the son of State Rep. Elijah L. Thomas (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Thomas, Bessie Gilbert (1881-1959), was a frequent news correspondent for *The Ridgefield Press*. Her reminiscences of life at the turn of the 20th Century in Ridgefield appeared in the RPJ4/13. [JFS]

Thomas, Rosanne Daryl, is a novelist who lived on Olcott Way, Casagmo, in the 1990s. Her acclaimed novel, *The Angel Carver* (1993), was a NYT "Notable Book." [JFS]

Thomas, Elijah Lyon, (1806-78), a native of Wilton, was a bootmaker and a Republican state representative in 1872. He was the father of State Rep. Albert N. Thomas (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Thomas, Harry Marvin, (1884-1973), a Ridgefield native and a fifth generation descendant of Benjamin Stebbins, was a local blacksmith who practiced well into his 80s. In 1927 he built the house at 22 Catoonah Street, and blacksmith shop behind in 1926 (both standing in 2024). His earlier shop was across the street in the first Catholic church, what became the Thrift Shop. He was known for his strength and stamina — in his younger days, he would walk to Norwalk or Brewster and back on Sundays. [WWW, DD119-127, 129]

Thomas, Norman, (1884-1968), a six-time candidate for U.S. president on Socialist Party ticket, had a weekend and summer farmhouse at 108 Limestone Road from 1911 to 1923. He was a Presbyterian minister and a founder of what is now the American Civil Liberties Union. He also later had a place on West Mountain. [WWW]

Thompson House was a multistory inn operated by James F. Thompson from

1886 to 1890 at about 441 Main Street (site of Toy Chest in 2019). The building is now on High Ridge and Abbott Avenues. *See also* Oreneca House. [JFS]

Thorp, John S., (ca.1895-1950), was newspaperman and detective story writer. He worked for *New York World* and Hearst newspapers in New York and Boston and became fiction writer in 1936. He moved here ca. 1949 and, when he died, lived at ONS30 Main Street (previously the Joseph Gibney home). [NYT 3/7/1950, P3/9/1950]

Thousand Acre Swamp is a name for Great Swamp (*q.v.*), used in the first half of the 18th Century. The name was an exaggeration probably meant to reflect its large size, which was probably was closer to 600 to 700 acres then. [RN]

Three Corners Antiques was a shop in the 1930s-40s at 165 West Lane where the highway joins South Salem and Silver Spring Roads. A promotional postcard, postmarked 1940, says the business was owned by Douglas Curry. Earlier, it had been the Coffee House of Three Roads (*q.v.*) [JFS]

Thrift Shop: *See* Ridgefield Thrift Shop

Thumpkin Else was a **v**ideo game store/arcade off Main Street, behind Roma Pizzeria building, operated in the early 1980s by Elmer Coombs (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Thunder Hill Lane was a short dead-end road off the northerly side of Barrack Hill Road, serving five lots on around 10 acres, developed ca. 1957 by Quinto Cassavechia and Mario Marcheggiani. The name appeared on a sign at the end of the newly cut road and developers liked it, but could never figure out who put the sign there. It became a town road in 1966. Cassavechia died in 1969 at the age of 48 when a tree fell on him while he was working on this property [RN]

Tiburzi, August R. "Gus," (1911-1983), a native of New Jersey, was a TransWorld Airline pilot and World War II flying veteran. He founded Tiburzi Airways at Danbury Airport which, for the first time, provided air taxi service to NYC airports. He lived in Ridgefield in the 1950s and early 60s, moving to Florida in 1964. He was the town's Civil Defense director for 10 years. His wife, **Gunvor**, was active in the community and daughter **Bonnie** (*q.v.*) was the first female pilot for a national airline in the US. Son **Allan** has been a pilot for FedEx. [P4/14/1983]

Tiburzi, Bonnie, was the first woman to serve as a pilot for a major scheduled airline — American — in the United States. She joined American Airlines in 1973. She grew up in Ridgefield, a daughter of August and Gunvor Tiburzi (*q.v.*), She married Ron Krantz, an Eastern pilot. She left Ridgefield before graduating from RHS (she would have been in the Class of 1966). [NR]

Tide Water Garage was a Tydol-Veedol service station at 36 Danbury Road. It sold Plymouth automobiles starting in 1935, later also DeSoto, and was owned by Oscar J. Capaldi. according to the 1940 Telephone Directory. It was also called Central Garage (*q,v*,) and eventually became Pamby Motors. [JFS]

Tiffany's was a restaurant at Copps Hill Plaza in the late 1980s, located at the east end of the north wing. [OR]

Tiger Hollow, a privately financed athletic stadium and fields at Ridgefield High School, opened on Sept. 29, 2001. It has had one of the first artificial turf fields in the area. Tiger Hollow's upgrading and expansion of RHS sports facilities, planned and financed by volunteers, won Planning and Zoning

Commission approval July 25, 2000. The facility is still maintained by funds raised by a committee of parents.

Tiger Paw Press was a "serious" RHS newspaper started in 1965 but lasting only a year. It was replaced by *The Chieftain* (*q.v.*). [RT]

Tiger TV was a RHS program in the late 20th Century that provided training in the use of video equipment, and that broadcast programming over cable TV to Ridgefield homes. *See also* Sam Feist.

Tigers is a nickname for Ridgefield High School athletic teams, first employed in 1963-64 academic year; before that, teams were called the Hilltoppers (*q.v.*) or Orange and Black. In the 1930s and early 1940s, teams were being called the Millionaires (*q.v.*). Since the school colors were orange and black, perhaps the tiger, which is orange and black as well as powerful, was chosen as an appropriate symbol of strength. Before orange and black, the school colors were old rose and gray. [JFS]

Timpanelli, Jeanne Plante, (1924-2007), a native of Detroit, was a founder of the Ridgefield Historical Society who was active in the Keeler Tavern Museum, Ridgefield Archives Committee, the Design Council, Graveyard Committee, and Ridgefield Garden Club, and was named Rotary Citizen of the year in 2001. Among her major projects were the preservation and resurrection of the Scott House, home of the historical society, and the identification and preservation of the Joseph Hartmann (*q.v.*) collection of glass photographic negatives. She also donated a considerable amount of money to local organizations. [P9/13/2007]

Tinker, Norman, (1932-2019), was a blacksmith, welder and artist who moved to Ridgefield in 1966. He taught at Silvermine College of Art and operated The Tinker Shop, specializing in ornamental ironwork. He and his wife Evie moved in 1996 to Belfast, Maine, where Tinker became a well-known sculptor and collage artist, and where he died. [JFS]

Tithingman was an 18th Century town official elected at the ATM whose job was to "combat moral laxity," as one historian put it. At church meetings, they would make sure no one dozed off, and but they also handled disorderly and drunken people in town, including unruly youths. In 1767, Ridgefield was electing four of them. [JFS]

Titicus is an old school district and a neighborhood of Ridgefield just northwest of the village. The name comes from the Titicus River (*q.v.*) that flows through it. The word in turn is shortened form of Mutighticoss (or something similar), which probably meant "place without trees" in Mahican tongue, says Huden, The first mention, as Metiticus, occurs in a 1709 Proprietors order for a survey. Because of the swift flow of the river here, Titicus became an early small-scale industrial center, with mills and a tannery. By the late 1800s, Titicus had a store, post office, schoolhouse, cider mill, saw mill, flour mill, tannery, sash and blind factory, a blacksmith, and town's biggest cemetery. It almost also had a railroad station — *see* Ridgefield and New York Railroad. [RN]

Titicus Brook is an old form of Titicus River. In 1716 a deed mentions the Metiticus Brook. "River" was common by the 1750s. [RN] *See also* Stony Brook.

Titicus Cemetery, also called "Olde Town Graveyard" on a sign, is the town's second oldest burying ground, having been established in 1735, and is located between North Salem and Mapleshade Roads, part of a group of

cemeteries often called Ridgefield Cemetery. It may hold as many as 1,234 burials, including 52 veterans of the Revolutionary War, and has what is believed to be the oldest readable gravestone in town, that of the Rev. Thomas Hauley (*q.v.*), who died in 1738. [HLYB]

Titicus Court is a short, dead-end road off the west side of North Street, overlooking the Titicus River valley, serving Titicus Ridge subdivision (*q.v.*). [RN]

Titicus Crossroads is the area around the intersection of North Salem, Saw Mill Hill, and Mapleshade Roads. [RN]

Titicus Hill, the hill upon the town cemeteries are located, was first mentioned 1716. [RN]

Titicus Mountain runs along the westerly side of North Salem Road (Route 116) — and hence the westerly side of the Titicus River — generally from Lake Mamanasco area into NY. It was first cited in land records in 1721 and is also called Hunt Mountain in North Salem (the Hunt family farmed there). Its elevation reaches 952 feet above sea level. [RN]

Titicus Plain is a 19th Century name for a wide, rather dry flatland in the otherwise narrow or swampy Titicus River valley, from about Wooster Street to Barlow Mountain Road. It's probably the bed of an old lake — *see under* Titicus River. [RN]

Titicus Post Office operated from 1885 to 1899 at the Titicus Store (*q.v.*). John Dempster Nash (*q.v.*) was the postmaster. [DOJN]

Titicus Ridge is a 1978 subdivision by Richard Lorenzini of four lots from 8.8 acres, served by Titicus Court (*q.v.*). [RN]

Titicus River, Ridgefield's second longest stream, originates in creeks on the eastern slope of West Mountain, flows along Saw Mill Hill Road, under and along Route 116 into NY state, where it feeds the Titicus Reservoir in North Salem, part of NYC drinking water supply system. Some authorities place its length at 8.5 miles, but it is doubtless longer if its Saw Mill Hill portion is included. Most of the river bed is probably a remnant of a large post-glacial lake that covered the Titicus valley (*q.v.*). The river is believed to have been an important seasonal transportation route for American Indians. Many mills operated along its shores in both Ridgefield and North Salem. *See also* Stony Brook. [RN]

Titicus Schoolhouse at the south corner of North Salem Road and New Street, originally one-room, was expanded to three rooms as other districts such as Scotland and Bennett's Farm closed and merged their students into Titicus. The core of this building dates probably from between the 1830s to the 1850s, replacing an earlier version of the school; the first school at Titicus may have been built around 1760. The school was last used 1939-40, when East Ridge School was expanded to complete consolidation of district schoolhouses. On Nov. 9, 1939, ownership was transferred to the American Legion which turned it into the American Legion Hall, a function it serves today. [SD]

Titicus Store was the commonly used name for a general store operated at the corner of North Salem and Mapleshade Roads, founded around 1850 by Samuel S. Olmstead (*q.v.*) who sold it in 1856, to Hiram O. Nash (*q.v.*). Hiram was soon joined by son John Dempster Nash (*q.v.*) as the H.O. Nash & Son Store. John eventually took over and was a partner for 20 years with Milan Mead as the Nash & Mead Store; John was also postmaster of

Titicus Post Office (*q.v.*), which was housed in the store [DD27]. Shoman Elliss owned it in the early 20th Century. The store was last operated by Max Seemann who, with brother Henry, purchased it in 1947 [DD28]. In the late 1900s, the building was used as a business office. It is three apartments in 2024. [DOJN]

To Spite Her Face is a mystery novel by Hildegarde Dolson (*q.v.*), published by Lippincott in 1971, one of four set in Wingate, a fictional version of Ridgefield. One of the two murders in this mystery takes places in the Thrift Shop. [JFS]

Tobin Family, the, has been prominent in Ridgefield and the Silver Spring (*q.v.*) neighborhood for more than a century. **Daniel Joseph Tobin Sr.**, (1872-1947), born in County Wexford, Ireland, immigrated to NYC in 1904 with his wife, **Mary Roche Tobin,** (1876-1964). He soon became a Ridgefield farmer, working on estates, including Upagenstit (*q.v.*), and his home on Silver Spring Road nearly opposite the Spring. In 1915 Daniel and Mary bought at auction a Hoyt farm at 400 Silver Spring Road, with an 18th century saltbox. Their daughter, **Helen A**., (1905-1989), was born in NYC and became a teacher and deputy school superintendent in Stamford. Daughter **Catherine M**., (1907-1987), 1926 valedictorian at Hamilton High School (*q.v.*), was an elementary school teacher in Darien. Son **Daniel J. Tobin Jr.** (1909-1964), was born on a Silver Spring Road across from the Silver Spring. All three Tobin children went to the West Lane Schoolhouse (*q.v.*). Daniel Jr., who married in 1945 **Rita Josephine Rockwell**, daughter of historian George L. Rockwell (*q.v.*), was a carpenter and homebuilder. In WW2 he was a chief petty officer with the Seabees building air bases in the South Pacific. After the war he lived at 174 Silver Spring Road. Daniel and Rita had children **Daniel**, 1946; **John E**., 1948; **James M**. (*q.v.*), 1949; **Mary J**., 1950; **Anne M**., 1952; and twins **Lawrence R**. and **Stephen R.** in 1955. John lives in New Milford, Mary in Hawaii, Anne in New Mexico, Lawrence in Ridgefield. Stephen, a carpenter and cabinetmaker who worked on many houses in Ridgefield, died in 2009. Daniel, a veteran of the Vietnam War, died in 1969. [JFS]

Tobin, James, (1949-), RHS 1967, a plumbing contractor with a deep interest in Ridgefield history, has lived on Silver Spring Road all of his life and was instrumental in saving and restoring the Scott House, now the headquarters of the HS. He has also helped with the restoration of the West Lane Schoolhouse, including getting its bell to work. A longtime conservationist, he has been active in the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield since the early 2000s and received the Edith Meffley Award (*q.v*.) in 2013 from the Ridgefield Conservation Commission. [JFS]

Tobin, John E "Jack" Jr., RHS 1995, who grew up on lower Silver Spring Road, made international news in February 2001 when he was arrested by Russian authorities, charged with being a spy, and was sentenced to two years in prison. He'd been a Fulbright scholar studying the Russian transition to a market economy. After much diplomatic wrangling, he was released, arriving at Kennedy Airport Aug. 8, 2001, with his father, John Tobin (*see* Tobin Family), and Congressman Jim Maloney, who'd worked for his release. [JFS]

Tobin, Richard Lardner, (1910-1995), a native of Chicago, was a World War II war correspondent, who later became an executive at the NY *Herald*

Tribune, and executive editor of *The Saturday Review* magazine. He wrote several books, including T*obin's English Usage*. He is reported to have lived on Spectacle Lane in the early 1950s, but spent his last years in Southbury. [JFS, NYT9/12/1995]

Todd, Dr. William Sheridan, (1840-93), a native of Massachusetts and son of a Methodist minister, came to Ridgefield as a teacher at William O. Seymour's school (*q.v*.) between 1866 and 1868. He then went to medical school in NYC, returning to practice as a physician in Ridgefield by 1870. He was a state representative, 1889-91, and served on the school board in the 1870s. He was one of the founders of what became the Ridgefield Library, and was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. In the 1880s, he ran *The Ridgefield Press* for a while after the death of his friend, Editor William Whiting (*q.v.*) in 1884. He lived in the Eleazar Watrous house that stood where Governor Street begins at Main Street and which was moved to Abbott Avenue in 1888. [JFS, RSB22]

Todd Brothers Farm was a large dairy operation, much of which is now Ridgefield Knolls and Pierrepont State Park. In 1857, **Charles Todd** of Lewisboro bought 165 acres and buildings on Barlow Mountain. In 1868, he bought another 51 acres nearby. Sons **Charles Knapp Todd** (1855-1938) and **Rufus Todd** (1859-1936) took over the farm, eventually expanded it and became widely known in dairy farming circles. The main house still stands on the hairpin curve of Bennett's Farm Road, south of the Ridgebury School; a Todd barn diagonally across the road has been converted to a house. [RN, Burr]

Todds Road, which runs from Regan Road to Sugar Loaf Mountain Road, is part of the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*) and named for the Todd brothers, the bachelor farmers whose land makes up much of what is now the Knolls. [RN] *See* Todd Brothers Farm.

Tode, Walter, (1908-1984), was chef and owner of Tode's Inn at 20 West Lane (R House in 2026), which he operated from 1946 to 1966. In 1951, Tode was named one of the 10 Outstanding Chefs of the World by the International Societe Gastronome in Strasbourg, France. His building had previously been the Kane Inn (*q.v.*) and was also called the Inn at Ridgefield (*q.v*.) and later became Bernard's (*q.v.*). [WWW, DD149]

Tode's Inn: *See* Walter Tode.

Toffler, Alvin, (1928-2016), was an author and "futurist" whose most famous book was the bestselling *Future Shock* (1970). He lived on Deer Hill Drive, 1967-74, with his wife, **Heidi Toffler**, who helped with many of his books, including *Powershift* (1990). [WWW]

Toilsome was an old name for the hilly, rocky western slope west of North Salem Road in the Continental Drive-Barrack Hill Road area, so-called in the 1700s because working the land or even climbing it was "toilsome." Spelling variations in deeds include Toylsome (1730), Toilsom (1737), Toylsom (1744), Toilesome (1780), and Tilesome (1850). [RN]

Toilsome Brook appears in early deeds, located somewhere in Toilsome neighborhood. [RN]

Tom: Bedini says that "Indian Tom was one of the last aborigines to live in town." A bow, believed to have been made by him, was found in the area between North Salem Road and Tackora Trail. *See also* Tom's Spring *and* Tom's Spring Mountain. [RN]

Tompkins, Stella, at age 11 in 2024, was chosen to perform the role of Marie in New York City Ballet's annual holiday ballet, "George Balanchine's The Nutcracker." She had already been in around 80 performances at Lincoln Center. [P10/29/2024]

Tom's Spring was a spring and a neighborhood that existed in the area of Tackora Trail and Titicus Mountain, cited often in the 18th and 19th Centuries. *See* Tom. [RN]

Tom's Spring Mountain was a name for Titicus Mountain, says the 1721 deed for the third Proprietors' purchase from the American Indians. *See* Tom. [RN]

Tontine Emporium was an antiques business at 9 Ethan Allen Highway in Branchville, famously robbed May 18, 1976, of a large number of Tiffany lamps worth $200,000 (over $1.1 million in 2024 dollars). The business was owned by Alan Gerdau of Redding, an unusual businessman noted for taking out large advertisements in the NYT opposing the Vietnam War and discussing other issues. A very tall spruce in the front yard was lit up each Christmas, visible for quite a distance along Route 7. The business was housed in a small, early 18th Century house torn down to make way for a strip shopping plaza housing, among other businesses, Subway, in 2024. There is some belief the building may have been erected by John Copp (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Tony Awards: The Antoinette Perry Award for Excellence in Broadway Theatre, known as a "Tony Award," recognizes excellence in live Broadway theatre. Ridgefield winners include: Harvey Fierstein, Santino Fontana, Debbie Gravitte, Glynis Johns, and Stephen Schwartz (*q.v. each*).

Tony's Cave is located north of Indian Cave Road (*q.v.*) at Twin Ridge (*q.v.*). Rockwell says, "Tony was an Indian, who, strange as it may seem, hid in this cave to escape service in the Revolution." Tony is not mentioned anywhere in the government or land records of the town, and the reliability of the tale cannot be determined. The story was probably handed down by generations of the Keeler family, who farmed what is now the Twin Ridge area from the 18th Century into the 20th. In 2008, Chris McQuilkin found Tony's Cave, saying: "Fascinating to see ancient scorch marks on the walls suggesting an inhabitant predating all that we know." [RN]

Tony's Corner Deli at the corner of Main Street and Danbury Road closed in 2024 after 14 years in business. Owners Rosely and Dominick Servedio said the business had been seriously hurt by the Covid epidemic, and never recovered. The business, once Joe's Store, became the Corner Cafe in 2024 (*q.v. each*). [P3/38/24, 4/18/24]

Tooth Fairy Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics opened in 2009, operated by Dr. Suho Lee of Ridgefield, at 35 Copps Hill Road. Around 2019 it moved to 360 Main Street after extensively renovating the historic building there. *See also* First National Market, Keeler and Durant, Bellair Inn.

Topcrest Lane at the 1958 Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*) is a dead-end road off Bob Hill Road, descriptive of the terrain some 830 feet above sea level. [RN]

Topgallant, a 1997 subdivision of 26.3 acres off West Lane, near the New York line, into seven lots, was nautically named by the developer, A.J. "Jack" Abrams, who was a shipbuilder. The subdivision is served by Samara Place (*q.v.*). [RN]

Topstone, Camp, mentioned in [P8/23/1934] as next being called Camp

Merriemont and near Great Pond, is probably a predecessor Camp Adventure. [JFS]

Topstone Drive was the original name for what is now Knollwood Drive, developed by the Topstone Holding Company. The name was changed to avoid confusion with miles-away Topstone Road (*q.v.*). (RN)

Topstone Farm was a farm/estate on the north side of Topstone Road, centered on an 1880s house and belonging for many years to Albert and Toni Roothbert (*q.v*.). *See also* The Shanty. [JFS]

Topstone Holding Company was the developer of the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), owned by Robert Kaufman, who was once lived in the Topstone section of Redding. [RN}

Topstone Hydraulic Company was a private water company serving Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), owned by Robert Kaufman who developed the Knolls in 1950s/60s. It was sold to Aquarion in 2011. [JFS]

Topstone Road is part of an old highway from Ridgefield to Redding that includes Cain's Hill and Farmingville Roads. Today "Topstone Road" applies to the road from Route 7 to the Redding line at Simpaug Turnpike. It's so-called because it leads to the Topstone section of Redding, named for "Topstone Mountain," a nearby hill presumably so called because of a stony peak. [RN]

Torcellini, Geno, (1919-2007), whose name is sometimes spelled Gino, retired in 1985 after 40 years as manager of Silver Spring Country Club. He was also an officer of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department (*q.v*.) and was elected the town's treasurer for 20 years. His wife, **Velma**, spent 30 years with Union Trust Company (*q.v.*) and then operated the Question Mart (*q,v*,) . [P6/6/1985]

Tories: *See* Loyalists.

Tornadoes: *See under* Twisters.

Torrey, Lyle Blair, (1898-1977), was an executive who owned Shallow Brook Farm, what became Ward Acres (*q.v*.), in the 1950s until 1957. He was a member of the Board of Finance. His wife Grace Torrey was a president of the Thrift Shop and Caudatowa Garden Club. [JFS, DD200]

Toscana, a restaurant at 43 Danbury Road, was opened in 2003 by Raffaele Gallo, who subsequently opened Gallo (*q.v*.) on Grove Street. Gallo had previously owned a small restaurant in Manhattan called La Cantina Toscana. The location, a late 19th or early 20th Century two-family house (once the home of Conrad Rockelein —*q.v*.), was the Red Rooster Pub (*q.v.*), which closed in 2025. The building was proposed to be razed for multifamily housing. [JFS, DD351]

Toscanini, Arturo, the world-famous maestro, led concerts here in September 1947 and October 1949 as benefits for the Ridgefield Library and the Boys Club. He was lured here by his friend and boss at NBC, Samuel Chotzinoff (*q.v.*) and he was reportedly once a lover of Geraldine Farrar (*q.v.*).

Touch of Sedona, a gift shop at 452 Main Street, was opened in 1994 by Marge Courtney, a retired flight attendant. It closed in January 2025 when Courtney, 90, retired. [P1/2/2025]

Touchstone's at 470 Main Street was a popular restaurant in the lower level of Yankee Ridge shopping center from 1976 until April 1993. The restaurant was opened by Bill Reinke and Frank Borchetta of The Hungry Knight (*q.v*.), and its original staff included Carol Zeidler, Chef Erik Nigro, and Karen

Kenefick. It was followed by Bully's (*q.v.*). [JFS] *See also* Friar Tuck's.

Tower Cottage is a Queen Anne Victorian house, built in 1880 at 48 East Ridge Road as a home for Nathan Lounsbury Rockwell, nephew of Gov. Phineas Lounsbury (*q.v.*) whose Grovelawn estate it overlooks. The house, designed by Charles Northrop who also did Grovelawn, was later the home of John and Maude Bouvier Davis (*q.v.*); she was an aunt of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis, who visited as a child and young woman. [WWW]

Tower of Pizza, a restaurant on Route 7, north of Ace Tire, was destroyed by fire Jan. 24, 1986. Opened five years earlier by Mike Hartofilis and Nick Yiovanakos, it was never rebuilt. [JFS]

Town and Country Chrysler-Plymouth was an auto dealership in 1980 at the corner of Copps Hill and Danbury Roads. By 1983, it was called Ridgefield Chrysler-Plymouth, and was later acquired by Pamby Motors. The dealership was established in 1965 by Matthew Rich (*q.v.*). [JFS].

Town clerk, one of Ridgefield's oldest public offices, is in effect the town's "secretary" who keeps the records of all important transactions including land (deeds, mortgages, liens, etc.), births, marriages, deaths, burials, election results, and minutes of meetings of town agencies. Today, the town clerk also sells fishing/hunting licenses, issues dog licenses, and marriage licenses, and swears in new public officials. The town clerk and assistants can also swear in voters, although that task is usually done by the registrars of voters (*q.v*). The position, originally called the "register" in the 18th Century, was held by men until 1947 when Ruth M. Hurzeler (*q.v.*) was elected town clerk. In the early 1970s, the compensation changed from fees collected for services to a salary. In 2023, the voters approved a charter change, giving the selectmen the power to appoint town clerks instead of having them elected. [JFS]

Town Clock was erected in 1958 on the west side of Main Street, at the south edge of the business district, by American Women's Voluntary Service (*q.v.*), using fund-raised money left over from its World War II efforts. [JFS]

Town Deposit Fund: In 1837, the town received a $5,000 "deposit" from the state. The money was Ridgefield's share in a large amount of cash the state received from the federal government that was Connecticut's share in the federal budget surplus that Congress voted to return to the taxpayers. The money was received with stipulations. The principal had to be invested and could not be spent, but the annual interest from the deposit was to be used for schools and other municipal functions. Town Clerk Nathan Smith (*q.v.*) was appointed the first agent to handle the money as what was long called the "town deposit fund." Soon after receiving the grant, the town invested the money in mortgages issued to Ridgefield residents – serving as a kind of bank. In later years, the money was invested in interest-earning bank accounts. The agent of the town deposit fund remained a town office until the 1970s when the town treasurer took over the duties. [RT]

Town Farm: The ATM voted April 1883 to buy Lewis A. Reed's farm at 570 North Salem Road for $4,500 to use as a "town farm" where indigent, often elderly, Ridgefielders could live and earn their keep by running the farm. What some would later call the "poor house" consisted of a house, two barns, 50 acres of arable land, and 11 acres on a nearby "mountain," probably a source of firewood. In 1934, "inmates" raised oats, hay, onions, mangels, turnips, carrots, corn, cabbage, and potatoes, and had horses,

cows, chickens, and pigs as livestock. This was originally the Josiah Keeler Homestead, circa 1765, and was later the birthplace of Hiram K. Scott (*q.v.*). The town sold off a portion of the farm in 1886 to Jackson Hobby. The TM in October 1945 voted to sell town farm to help pay for purchase of Lounsbury estate, now the Veterans Park (*q.v.*) complex that includes the Lounsbury House, on Main Street. (RN)

Town Hall: In the early 18th Century, the town used the Meeting House/ Congregational Church for gatherings, then the village schoolhouse or other buildings, especially the Smith Tavern (*q.v.*). In the mid-19th Century, the town rented or leased space for government meetings. The first town-owned town hall, then called the Town House (*q,v*,), was dedicated in 1876. As the name suggests, it was mostly a hall, used for government meetings and many community events. Government records were not stored there, nor did officials like town clerks or tax collectors have offices there (they used their own homes or stores as offices and kept records with them). A wooden structure, the first Town House was destroyed in the Fire of 1895 (*q.v.*). The current brick structure was built in 1896 on the same site, and dedicated Nov. 21. Architect Philip Sunderland (*q.v.*) of Danbury designed it as a hall that held 125 people and included a balcony (*see* DD65) and a stage at western end. The hall was used for meetings, dances, lectures, basketball games, wrestling matches, concerts, and more. An office, used by banks and the town clerk, was in the front of the first floor. The TM voted in 1909 to add a ladies toilet to the building and to divide rear of the gallery into three rooms [P4/8/1909]. The building was remodeled in 1950 including adding a full second floor [P1/5/1950]. The eagle (*q.v.*) over the front door was purchased in 1951. More second floor offices were created in 1966 [P2/3/1966]. An elevator was added in 2003 to make the main and second floors handicapped accessible. (During construction, a roof beam slipped out of place, causing ceilings to collapse; some town offices had to be temporarily relocated to several remote locations. During 2016, a non-functioning, decorative "widow's walk" on the roof was built by local carpenter Michael Wise; the original railed walk had rotted and was removed decades earlier. [JFS]

Town Hall Photoplays were silent motion pictures shown at town hall in 1920s, perhaps earlier. The term was found advertised in a 1924 theatrical program. The movies included a pianist for musical accompaniment. [JFS]

Town House is the traditional name used for the seat of government from 1743 until 1896 when the current brick "hall" was built, although its predecessor was often also called the Town Hall. It was the "home" for government meetings and a frequent site of community events. The first Town House was a 26-by-18 foot building erected on the Green in 1744; before that, the church or "Meeting House" was used for both government and religious functions. However, the Town House was also used as a village schoolhouse. In 1786, the town contributed to the cost of erecting the Independent School House (*q.v.*), which was used for government meetings. In 1836, the town started leasing the first floor of the Masonic Hall (*q.v.*) for government functions. Voters agreed to erect a town house on the "Town Lot," just north of the Masonic Hall, in 1876. The 40-by-65-foot building, costing $5,976.55, consisted of two stories – a 12-foot-high first floor used for town offices and records, and a 16-foot-high second

floor, “fitted up for a public hall,” said Teller. It was apparently the first time town officials had offices in a public building; before that, they performed their functions in their homes or business offices (some continued to use their own offices). The basement included a lock-up or jail. The Town House was dedicated Dec. 1, 1876. It burned in the Great Fire of 1895 (*q.v.*). *See also* Town Hall. [RN]

Town Meeting, the legislative body that governs Ridgefield, consists of any Ridgefield resident who is a registered voter and attends the meeting. The Town Meeting approves mostly budgets, large special expenditures, new ordinances and changes in existing ordinances, and municipal land acquisitions and sales or leases. It is led by a moderator, elected at each meeting. The first Town Meeting in Ridgefield was Dec. 23, 1709, more than a year after the town’s creation; previous Ridgefield meetings took place in Norwalk, the “mother town.” For two centuries, the Annual Town Meeting (referred to in this book as ATM), took place late in the year when the crops were all harvested; it has in more recent times taken place in May. It once was the occasion of the election of all town officers, but in recent years, has been mostly for the approval of annual operating budgets, capital expenses, and the setting of a tax rate. Since the 2010s charter revision, the Annual Town Meeting can only *discuss* the budget and act on items of less than $100,000; the approval of operating and capital budgets is sent to a referendum (*q.v.*), allowing more townspeople to more easily participate in the financial decisions. (Because of Covid the 2021 Annual Town Meeting was held outdoors under a tent at the Venus Office Center.) [JFS]

Town planner is an early title for an appointed office, created by the Planning and Zoning Commission in 1966 and now called the planning director (*q.v.*). The first town planner was Lowell I. “Bud” Williams (*q.v.*). He was followed by Michael Ocorr, Oswald Inglese (*q.v.*), Betty Brosius, and Alice Dew.

Town Planner Calendar is an annual publication started in the 1990s, consisting of a calendar that includes many local events plus local advertising. It was owned for 25 years by Charles Sussman (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield. [JFS]

Town Ridge is the elevated land traversed by Main Street, so called as early as 1710 in town records. [RN]

Town seal: *See* Seal, town.

Town Spring is mentioned several times in 18th and 19th Century deeds for water source, probably public, somewhere on the southern Main Street area, possibly at Rockwell Road or maybe Creamery Lane, or farther north between 149 and 181 Main Street. [RN]

Town Street, The, is an old name for Main Street (*q.v.*).

Town Spirit Shop at 116 Danbury Road was operated from 1966 into the 1980s by Alex Santini and Gino Bob Polverari (*q.v. each*). Part of the building was a large, walk-in refrigeration building from the mid-20th Century when it was a public freezer (*q.v.*). The store was located nearly opposite today’s Venice Restaurant. [JFS]

Town treasurer: *See* Treasurer, town.

Town yard is an old term for the grounds of the Highway Department on Old Quarry Road and South Street. *See also* Meeting House Yard.

Townsend, Rev. Epenetus, was pastor of the “English Church” in Ridgefield in the mid-1770s and a loyalist in the Revolution. A 19th Century historian

says: “It is a significant fact that, though many members of his flock were prominent villagers, but one of them is mentioned anywhere in the town or state records as having participated in the patriotic movement, local or otherwise.” [GAG]

TownVibe: *See* Ridgefield Magazine.

Toy Caboose: *See* Ridgefield Sport and Toy Caboose.

Toy Chest, The, a toy store operating in the former Odd Fellows Hall (*q.v.*) at 441 Main Street, was opened about 1993 by Ann Lathrop. It also has an outlet in New Canaan. [JFS]

Toy Clinic: *See* Ridgefield Toy Clinic.

Trachtman, Joseph, (1901-1975), a native of Poland, was a prominent Manhattan attorney and Yale Law graduate, who taught law at NYU. He was an expert on estate planning, a topic on which he wrote and lectured extensively. He lived on Spring Valley Road for many years. [P10/23/1975]

Tracy, Anne McPherson, served more than 45 years on the board of the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield, retiring in 2020. She has also been a trustee of the Ridgefield Historical Society, and a member of the Ridgefield Garden Club. She is a granddaughter of Stephen T. Mather, first director of the National Park Service. [P10/15/2020]

Traffic lights: On Sept. 5, 1929, the Board of Finance appropriated $600 for a traffic light at Main and Catoonah Streets. The Oct. 8 Annual Town Meeting approved the light, the town’s first. [P10/10/1929]

Trahey, Jane, (1923-2000), was a top advertising executive in NYC, among the first women to establish her own agency with major clients (Calvin Klein, Elizabeth Arden, Bill Blass, etc.). An author, she wrote the novel, *Life with Mother Superior,* that was turned into the film “The Trouble with Angels,” starring Rosalind Russell. Her play, “Ring Around the Bathtub,” was produced on Broadway. Her novel, *Pecked to Death by Goslings*, reflected her experiences moving to Ridgefield (called Gosling). She was also a leader of the National Organization for Women and lived at 174 New Road from the 1950s until the mid-1970s. Her companions included TV producer Jacqueline Babbin (*q.v.*) and fabric artist Tammis Keefe (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Trail’s End Lane, a 500-foot, dead-end road off Eleven Levels Road at Eleven Levels (*q.v.*), was accepted by the town in 1978 and named perhaps for an old logging path. It’s sometimes called Trail’s End Road. [RN]

Trains: *See under* Railroads.

TRAK: *See* CGS Laboratories.

Tramer, Albert, (1906-1994), was the last owner at the Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) on Danbury Road. A Swiss-born and -trained chef, he had held positions in some of NYC’s top restaurants. He bought Hearthstone Outpost Inn in 1953, and soon moved here full-time. He sold the property to Carl Shapley (*q.v.*) in 1962 for a school and worked for a while as director of the restaurant at The Westport Inn. He retired and moved to Florida in 1973. [JFS]

Tramps: *See* Hobos.

Transfer station: A Town Meeting in February 1980 approved $430,000 to build trash transfer station off South Street and Old Quarry Road, site of the town dump (*q.v.*). Instead of depositing the community’s trash at the edge of Great Swamp, it would now, by order of the state, have it “transferred” to another dump site; some years later, the trash began fueling a power

generating plant by burning it. The town initially hired Waste Management Inc. to remove trash from the station and haul to its landfill in New Milford. The station opened Aug. 20, 1980 [P8/21/1980] when up to 100 pounds of household trash cost $1.50 to "dump." Six quarters were inserted into a machine to pay for fees; the operation switched to tokens or cash Aug. 1, 1984. Permits to dump were free for cars, $10 for pickups and vans, but now are $20 annually for cars. The fee to dump in 2024 for residents with up to 120 pounds was $5 for 5 bags or fewer, $10 for up to 10 bags. One can use a credit card to pay. In 2023, residential solid waste disposed per capita via the station was 1,721 pounds, slightly less than the 1,765 pounds in 2022. [JFS]

Travaglini, Aldo "Squash," (1914-2007), a Ridgefield native, worked, starting in 1928, as the "soda jerk" for the fountain at Bissell's Pharmacy (*q.v.*). In 1953, he bought United Cigar Store (*q.v.*). He changed the name to Ridgefield News Store, but everyone called the place Squash's (*q.v.*). The store was one of the busiest and most popular in the village, especially as a source of newspapers and magazines, as well as stationery items. In 1989, he sold the business to his son, Mark, who in turn sold it in 1994 to owners who changed the emphasis to office supplies but retained the Squash name. It closed in 2023. [NR]

Travaglini, Louis "Squash," (1918-2005), a Ridgefield native, was the longtime radio dispatcher, 1938-1974, for the State Police at Troop A in Ridgefield and then at the Ridgefield Police headquarters, 1974-1990, after the State Police left town. He and his brother, Aldo (*q.v.*), were both were called Squash. So was another brother, Eugene, who lived near New Haven, and their father, **Nazzareno Travaglini**, who hated the name. [P2/10/2005]

Travostino, Antonio "Bake," (1884-1970), a native of Italy, operated an Italian bakery and later including a grocery store on Bailey Avenue in the first half of the 20th Century. He lived on New Street. He is sometimes incorrectly called Albert. [DD64]

Travostino, Elfrieda (1922-1980), was an RHS social studies teacher in the 1970s who headed the Ridgefield Teachers Association during a tumultuous period of controversies over books and battles between the teachers and school board. In 1973, she reported someone had entered her house, took the family dog, hung it from a tree in the front yard, and called her on the phone to warn that it could happen to her and her children. The dog survived, and Mrs. Travostino quit her union post soon after. [WR]

Travostino's Bakery was originally at ONS13 Bailey Avenue, now #23, in early 1930s and by 1940, ONS11. It specialized in Italian baked goods, but was also a grocery store, operated by Antonio Travostino (*q.v.*). [DD64]

Treadway Service Corp., managed The Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) in the 1930s along with more than a dozen other inns in the Northeast.

Treasurer, town, is an ancient office that oversees the handling of the town's money. Originally, the job was performed by one of the selectmen, but soon became an office of its own. Today the treasurer oversees all town money, including investing funds where appropriate (such as surpluses). The treasurer issues checks for town payables, the payroll (including the Board of Education payroll), and debt service payments. The treasurer was elected until 2023 when voters approved a charter change giving the

selectpersons the power to appoint treasurers. [JFS, RW]

Tredwell, Roger Culver, (1885-1961), was an American diplomat who lived in nearby Wilton and who died in Ridgefield. Culver gained international attention in 1918 when, as an American consul in Russia, he was arrested by the Bolsheviks for spying and was imprisoned. His release was negotiated soon afterward. He served in diplomatic positions in such places as Hong Kong, Stockholm, Japan, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Australia, and several countries in Africa. By the 1940s he had retired to Nod Road in Wilton, just across the Ridgefield line; his mailing address was RFD 3, Ridgefield. He died while living at Altnacraig (*q.v.*) on High Ridge Avenue. [NYT7/13/1961; P7/13/1961]

Tree Committee, a seven-member volunteer town agency, encourages "preserving and improving our trees and greenscape. Our goal is to establish and maintain an optimum, stable, and safe public tree and plant environment, thereby enhancing Ridgefield's historic character: esthetic, natural, and economic." [RW]

Tree warden is a town official responsible for overseeing tree work along town roads within the town's right-of-way, including identifying potentially hazardous trees that should be removed. He works with the town's Tree Committee on planting new trees and the highway department on removing hazardous ones. In 2026, the warden is Steve Lavatori (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Treffpunkt 68 was German-American club that sponsored festivals and concerts in the 1970s and 80s. Treffpunkt means "meeting place" in German. Fritz Koerting (*q.v.*) was its president for many years and probably its founder. [JFS]

Trendsetters, a women's clothing store on Main Street, just north of Carnival Shop (*q.v.*), opened in 1967. It was owned by Gerta von Fekete (*q.v.*). [P8/13/1987]

Trepel, Jack, (1886-1965), was head of a small chain of florist shops, based in NYC, but was also a magician and president of the NYC chapter of American Society of Magicians. He gave magic shows for the USO in WW2. He lived at 179 Danbury Road on a driveway long called — and labeled — Trepel Lane. *See also* Irene Kampen. [JFS]

Trepel Lane: *See* Jack Trepel.

Triplets born to Ridgefield parents include Alyssa Brook, Joseph Anthony and Scott Andrew Grasso, children of Barbara and John Grasso of Ridgebury Road, Aug. 12, 1984. [P8/16/1984]

TriRidgefield, an annual Ridgefield half triathlon first held in 2007, consists of a half-mile swim in Great Pond, a 13-mile bike ride through northern Ridgefield, and a 5K run. In 2024, 213 individual participants finished in times that ranged from 1 hour and 22 minutes to 3 hours 23 minutes.

Trolley line: *See* Old Trolley Road.

Troop A was the official designation of the Connecticut state police barracks in Ridgefield, first located in 1921 at 65 West Lane, then from 1927 to 1974 at 76 East Ridge Road. Troop A was said to have been based in Ridgefield because Harvey P. Bissell (*q.v.*) was an influential member of state government when the state police was being formed. In the early years troopers primarily focused on enforcing motor vehicle laws and Prohibition. They also handled all major crimes in Ridgefield, supplemented by the town's constabulary until 1955 when the town created a police department

— *see* Ridgefield Police. The troop moved to Southbury in 1974 to be nearer the center of its patrol district. Ridgefield Police (*q.v*.) now occupy the East Ridge barracks while the West Lane building is now a home. The building was called a barracks because troopers actually lived there during their tours of duty; the barracks was equipped with a kitchen and chef, a dining room, and a sleeping dormitory. *See also* John Kelly, Leo F. Carroll, John Jones. [JFS, DD291]

Troost, Ernest, is an Emmy-winning film and television composer and songwriter who grew up in Ridgefield, RHS 1971, and graduated from Berklee College of Music. He has composed the scores for many films and television shows and received the Kerrville New Folk award for his songwriting. He also composed and produced two award-winning albums of songs for Judy Collins (*q.v.*), using the words of Emily Dickinson. He composed the music for such TV and big-screen movies as *Tremors, The Clown of God,* and *The Mysterious Tadpole*. He lived on Harvey Road.

Tropea, Phil, (ca. 1938-?), a native of Brooklyn, NY, was a tenor, guitarist, poet and radio show host who also wrote a novel, *Marco*. He lived on Prospect Ridge in the 1990s and early 2000s with his wife, Phyllis, a poet. Tropea He hosted Mattinata Sunday mornings on WREF and later had a show called Golden Voice. He frequently performed locally. He retired to Florida. [JFS]

Trotta's was a bakery and deli at 113 Danbury Road in 1981 [P6/18/1981]. It was gone by 1983 [RSD83]

Troughs: *See* Watering troughs.

Truman, Harry S, was rumored in March 1953 to be buying Harold and Yvonne Goldsmith (*q.v.*) home at 71 Old Branchville Road [United Press]. He did not buy here, nor did he probably ever set foot in town.]JFS]

Truesdale, Mount, is probably the hill, reaching 650 feet above sea level, west of Lake Truesdale and east of South Salem hamlet, once part of Ridgefield (*see* Oblong). It was cited in a 1729 deed and named for William Truesdale, one of the first settlers of what is now Lewisboro. [RN]

Tub Swamp was a location in the Southwest Ridges (*q.v.*), now probably in Lewisboro. A 1721 deed cited "Tubb Swamp." The name may have been inspired from the shape of the swamp. [RN]

Tuccio, Jerry, (1920-2007), a native of Italy who came to Ridgefield in the early 1950s, built — by his own estimate — about 1,200 houses in town, developing more of Ridgefield than any builder in its history. His large-scale projects were Westmoreland, Mimosa, Twixt Hills, Stonehenge Estates, Pleasant View Estates, Scodon, and Eleven Levels (*q.v. each*), plus many smaller neighborhoods such as Limestone Acres (*q.v*.). He also obtained the rezoning that resulted in Casagmo (*q.v.*) condominiums. He served in WW2 in Europe and Africa and began building houses in 1947 with his father. He retired in 1970, at age 50, estimating that he owned some 600 empty subdivision lots around Ridgefield at the time — many of them, his family would build on in the years that followed. [NR, P8/16/2007, WWW]

Tuccio, Joseph, (1917-2008), a native of Italy, Phi Betty Kappa graduate of Bowdoin, and a longtime Ridgefielder, was an insurance agency owner who and a poet. He published 10 collections of his works, and appeared in a number of periodicals. In 1985, he presented Pope John Paul II with a copy of his poem to the pontiff during an audience in Vatican Square. An obituary on Legacy reported he had been nominated for a Nobel Prize in

literature in 2007. He lived at Lookout Point from 1961 until his death. He married Rita Stazi, a former Miss Italy, in 1954. He was a brother of Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*). [P8/7/2008]

Tucker, Erie A., was the last headmaster of the Ridgefield School, 1937-38. He lived in North Salem. [P9/23/1937]

Tugman, Oakland Roy, (1899-1956), a native of Michigan, was an engineer in the Merchant Marine who served aboard three different ships that were torpedoed and sunk during World War II, and was also injured in an air raid in London. He and his wife lived on South Salem Road during the war. [P6/17/1943, 3/30/1944]

Tulipani, Albert Nazzareno Joseph, (1920-1994), RHS 1938, served in the Navy aboard the destroyer U.S.S. Wilson, escorting convoys to Russia on the "Murmansk Run" and hunting German submarines; then in the Pacific in such battles as Wake Island and Guadalcanal. He also served on aircraft carriers. Back home, he was a guitar teacher who played professionally in the region until the early 1960s, and worked at Brunetti's Market and later at the Grand Union Supermarket. [WWW]

Tulipani, Aldo Anthony, (1916-2003), RHS 1934, was in the Army in the Philippines. He had a long career as a mail carrier in Ridgefield, and also as an accordion teacher (his car's license plate, SQZBX was short for "squeezebox"). [WWW]

Tulipani, Alfred Anthony, (1921-2013), joined the Army in 1942 and spent most of his service in Canada with an anti-aircraft unit, guarding Great Lakes locks. He maintained that his wife, Mary, was "the first war bride in Ridgefield." The two met in 1943 at a Woolworth's in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and were married a year later. After the war, Alfred became a superintendent of local estates, including Casagmo (*q.v.*), as well as a landscaper. [WWW]

Tulipani, John Vincent, (1922-2002), RHS 1941, served with the Navy SeaBees in Hawaii, the Marshall Islands, and in the Philippines. He also played on the Navy All-Star Team with many former professionals. After the war he worked as a plumber and established his own plumbing business. [WWW]

Tulipani, Joseph Anthony, (1918-2004), RHS 1937, was one of the first Ridgefielders to fight in WW2. A member of an Army radar unit he served in Australia, the jungles of New Guinea, and the Philippines, and was with General Douglas MacArthur's forces in the liberation of the Philippines. He kept elaborate diaries of his experiences. After the war he was the superintendent of Ward Acres (*q.v.*) for many years and also a semi-professional photographer. [WWW]

Tulipani, Julius, (1890-1983), was an immigrant at age 17 in 1906. A veteran of WW1 he worked for H.B. Anderson on building Port of Missing Men roads [DD136], then became an estate superintendent of Outpost Farm and Wickopee Farm (*q.v.*). He served as a Republican selectman from 1947 to 1953 and was a longtime member of the Republican Town Committee. He was president of the Italian-American Club for more than 25 years — longer than anyone before or since. Over 500 people attended a May 1980 dinner for his 90th birthday. HS has a 1977 interview with him, conducted by granddaughter Beth Tulipani McKnight. [P1/4/1973, 7/5/1980, obit 1/6/1983, WWW]

Tulipani, Julius Robert "Bob," (1928-2023) a Ridgefield native and RHS 1946,

taught two years at Ridgebury School, starting 1965, and 23 years at Veterans Park, retiring in 1988 and becoming a real estate agent. He was active in many community service groups, including Boys Club and as a leader of the American Legion, helping organize many Memorial Day parades. He was an Army veteran of the Korean War. He received the Kiwanis Community Service Award in 1996. [JFS]

Tulipani, Vincenzo "Jimmy," (1887-1977), a native of Italy who came to the USA in 1906, was a noted local farmer who supplied many small markets with produce. He also planted more than 4,000 grape vines for wine production on his 65 acre farm on Nod Road. He was sometimes known as Jimmy Tulips [TD1940]. His wife was Evelina, also a native of Italy, and they had six children (*see* Tulipani brothers), five boys and one girl (Ada, later Mrs. Walter Walker). [P8/22/1977, Impact]. He was a brother of Julius (*q.v.*).

Tulipani brothers: Albert, Aldo, Alfred, Joseph, and John Tulipani (*q.v. each*), five sons of Vincenzo (*q.v.*) and Evelina Branchini Tulipani, all served in WW2 and all returned, living the rest of their lives in Ridgefield. All five brothers were musicians, playing together in the Tulipani Orchestra and with the Sagebrush Serenaders (*q.v.*).

Tulips: Sometimes used as a surname for Tulipani. For instance Vincenzo Tulipani listed himself as Jimmy Tulips in the 1940 telephone directory. [TD1940]

Tumbridge, Major John William, (1870-1945), who bought the Whipstick Schoolhouse in 1930, was an engineer and officer in the Second Brigade of New York State National Guard in 1899. His estate was on Branchville and Whipstick Roads. He was from Brooklyn, N.Y. and president of Trumbridge Realty Company, which owned the Hotel St. George on Columbia Heights.

Tuoti, George Edward, (1905-1962), was a landscaping expert who came to Ridgefield in the 1930s to work for Outpost Nurseries and then established his own landscaping company, based at his home on Tackora Trail. He was married to **Dixie Jackson Tuoti** (1911-2004), a well known local nurse.

Tuppence is an early 1700s house at 35 Main Street, originally located around 440 Main Street and moved in 1947 to its present location. It is said to have been an early trading post and one of oldest buildings in town. It was probably named by former owner, Mrs. Mary Olcott, perhaps reflecting the fact that it was a small cottage. *See also* Twopence Road.

Turkey, **wild**, is a native bird that was extinct in Ridgefield by the mid-19th Century, driven out by farming and by hunting. Turkeys like woods, especially those populated with oaks; they feed on the acorns. The state reintroduced the wild turkey in the late 20th Century, and by the turn of the 21st Century, they were a common sight in Ridgefield, although in 2023-24 they were suffering a mysterious population setback. Domestic turkeys were raised on a number of farms in town including the Jim Smith, later Kaiser, poultry farm on Barry Avenue in the mid-20th Century.

Turkey Island, first mentioned in 1712, was probably elevated land surrounded by swamp and Titicus River, later called Round Mountain — an area around Scotland-Barlow Mountain Schools. The "turkey" may have recalled the wild bird or Jacob Turkey, an American Indian who signed two of the deeds to the first settlers and who may have lived on this land. (RN)

Turkey Ridge was a gift shop at 1 Bailey Avenue (basement of old Bedient building), operated by Nadine Dolhy from around 1999 until the winter of

2021.

Turkey shoots were popular in 1920s on North Salem Road north of Tackora Trail, and in the 1930s and thereafter on Barry Avenue, led by James "Big Jim" Smith. [DD18]

Turn of the River is a very early name for section in the northeastern part of town along Danbury, Limestone and Great Hill Roads, used as early 1717 in deeds. It refers to the change in the direction of the flow of Norwalk River (Ridgefield Brook) from north to east to south in this neighborhood. [RN] *See also* Norwalk River.

Turner, Aaron, (1790-1854), born in Ridgebury, was an American circus pioneer. By 1820, his son, Napoleon, 7, was a trick rider in NYC circus. By 1828, Turner had his own touring circus and in 1836, he hired P.T. Barnum as his ticket seller, secretary, treasurer, and eventually, partner. Turner retired from the circus world and operated a Danbury hotel, called Turner House. [WWW]

Turner Road is a short road from Ridgebury Road east to the NY line, though some say it should extend southerly over what is now Ridgebury Road to Old Ridgebury. Its extent was defined by selectmen in November 1959. An old road, it's named for Aaron Turner (*q.v*.). [RN]

Turnpike Road, a term found in old records, is a shortened form of formal name for either of the two main turnpikes, and would probably refer to what is today Route 7; *see* Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike, and Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road. (RN)

Turnpikes: At least three toll roads operated in early 19th Century Ridgefield: Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike (incorporated 1795), Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (1801), and Sugar Hollow Turnpike (1829) (*q.v. each)*.

Turtle Pond is a small, man-made body of water off the west side of Old Sib Road, one of the "Eight Lakes" (*q.v.*) of the subdivision of that name. It was created around 1908 for Henry B. Anderson's Port of Missing Men (*q.v*.) resort, probably from a swamp, and is often erroneously called Hidden Lake. [RN]

Tuttle-Smith, Rev. James, (1831–1910), a decorated Episcopal chaplain in the Civil War, was from 1866 to 1888 rector of the Church of the Resurrection in Manhattan, then known as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In retirement in the 1890s, he moved to the 351 Main Street house he called Oatland (*q.v*.) that later became offices of EMR (*q.v*.) and South Hall (*q,v*,) of St. Stephen's Church, which sold it in 2021. (While he lived next door to the Episcopal church, he was not officially associated with it in a ministerial capacity, although he did belong and assist there.) He is buried in Lounsbury Cemetery.

Twelfth Lane is the final in the series of 12 small roads off the west side of Mamanasco Road, but unlike most others, it is a town road rather than a private drive, and a through road, not dead-end, connecting with Old Sib Road. One of the steepest roads in town, it runs from 650 feet above sea level at Old Sib to about 590 at Mamanasco in a distance of about 300 feet. [RN]

Twelve Furlongs was the estate off Wilton Road East of Townsend B. Martin (*q.v.*).

Twin Lakes Inn: In 1945, Alexander Petroff (*q.v.*) leased what had been his Russian Village (*q.v.*) restaurant at 609 Ethan Allen Highway, with option to

buy, to Dominick F. Testa and Michael Tartaglia, who created this new restaurant. Twin Lakes lasted into the 1960s, when it became Maple House Furniture (*q.v*.). The namesakes were hardly "lakes," but small ponds created by damming the Norwalk River. [JFS]

Twenty Mile Line was in early 1700s, the eastern boundary of New York Colony and western boundary of Ridgefield, incorrectly supposed to be 20 miles from a point on the Hudson River. *See* Oblong. [RN]

Twin Maples was a state-sponsored roadside rest area, with picnic table, on Route 33, Wilton Road West, nearly opposite Acre Lane. It was created out of land left when the state straightened Route 33 there. The rest area was discontinued in the 1970s, but space is still there, sometimes used by state for temporary storage of materials. [RN]

Twin Ridge, a 129-lot subdivision developed between 1960 and the early 1970s by Giles and Barry Montgomery, includes Beechwood Lane, Indian Cave Road, Little Ridge Road, Rising Ridge Road, Strawberry Ridge Road, and Twin Ridge Road. Much of the land had been a former Keeler family farm for two centuries. [RN]

Twisters: Generally considered small tornadoes, several have done significant damage here; July 13, 1950, part of the roof ripped off RHS, many trees felled in Veterans Park, on Governor and Main Streets. The earliest report of this sort of weather was in October 1800 which the Rev. S.G. Goodrich described thusly: "A remarkable thunder gust Tornado or hurricane passed thro the northerly part of this society and the south part of Ridgebury destroying everything in its course; in this and the neighboring towns 11 buildings were nearly destroyed and 3 or 4 entirely. Several dwelling houses were damaged in a surprising manner but none of the inhabitants were destroyed or very materially injured." [RSGG] *See also* Storms.

Twixt Hills is a subdivision of part of Twixthills (*q.v.*) estate of Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v.*) after 184 acres were sold in 1961 to developer Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*) by Pierrepont's widow, Nathalie Elisabeth Chauncey Pierrepont, for $145,000. In the same year, Tuccio began developing the 93-lot subdivision whose roads include Seth Low Mountain Road, Pierrepont Drive, Clayton Place, Lookout Point, part of Barlow Mountain Road, and Twixt Hills Road. *See also* Scenic View Estates. [RN]

Twixt Hills Road extends from Knollwood Drive and Old Barlow Mountain Road to Seth Low Mountain Road; *see* Twixt Hills. [RN]

Twixthills was the name of the 800-acre estate of Seth Low Pierrepont (*q.v.*), most of which later became the Twixt Hills (*q.v.)* subdivision and Seth Low Pierrepont State Park (*q.v.*); note that estate name was treated as one word. It refers to the setting of the Pierrepont house, between Barlow Mountain and Ridgebury Mountain. [RN] *See also* Shadowbrook Farm.

Two Little Girls in Blue, a novel by Mary Higgins Clark (Simon and Schuster, 2006), is a thriller set in Ridgefield about a mother's search for her kidnapped child. [JFS]

250th Anniversary Celebration of Ridgefield's founding began May 23, 1958, with children's parade down Main Street, with all public school pupils in costume. Events included a house tour, July 20; firemen's parade, Aug. 2; antique car parade, Aug. 23; and a Sept. 20 finale parade down Main Street, viewed up thousands. Karl S. Nash was chairman of the celebration committee, which commissioned the publication of *Ridgefield in Review* by

Silvio Bedini (*q.v.*) to mark the occasion. [P9/25/1958]

Twopence Road runs from Chestnut Hill Road to Parley Road, and was accepted by town in 1964. Developer Lewis J. Finch said the name should follow British pronunciation, "tuppence," but people rarely were doing so in the 21st Century. [RN]

Tydeman, Bert G., (1921-1981), a native of the US Panama Canal Zone who graduated from the Merchant Marine Academy, had a long career as an NYC architect for PanAm/Intercontinental Hotels and then Rockefeller Associates. He designed the columbarium at St. Stephen's Church where his ashes now lie. [JFS]

Tyler, Judy, nee Judith Mae Hess, (1933-1957), was an actress whose parents lived in Ridgefield. She and her husband died in an automobile accident when she was 24 — three days after she had completed filming "Jailhouse Rock" with Elvis Presley. As a teenager, she had played Princess Summer Fall Winter Spring on the popular children's program, "Howdy Doody." Her father was Julian Hess, a partner in the Ridgefield Hilltop Acres development, served by Nutmeg Ridge. [P7/11/1957]

Typhoid Mary: *See* Mary Mallon.

U

UFOs: The Project Blue Book Case Files on Sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects in the NA reports a Dec. 4, 1962 sighting by a Ridgefielder, whose name and address were redacted, over Ridgefield that evening. It was a low-flying, tubular object that hummed and glowed, the writer said. The Air Force decided it was a normal aircraft, probably a blimp.

Ugolyn, Tyler "Ty", (1978-2001)**,** a 1997 graduate of RHS who had only recently moved to New York from his family home in Ridgefield, died on Sept. 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center. At 23, he was one of the youngest victims. A Columbia University graduate, he began his "dream job" in the city as a research associate with Fred Alger Management Inc. At 6-foot-4, he was a natural athlete who was a star basketball player at RHS and later played for Columbia and had helped start a youth basketball program in Harlem. His grave is in St. Mary Cemetery [JFS]

Ugly Duckling Rent-a-Car business was opened by Bart and Kathy Keaveny at their Marty Motors dealership in the 1980s. All the rentals were used cars, for $12.95 a day. [P3/27/1983]

Ukraine: Ridgefield and the city of Druzhkivka (pronounced *droozh-keev-kah*) in Ukraine officially became sister cities in May 2023. Ridgefielders have sent many donations of equipment, supplies and money to the war-torn Ukraine via the Ridgefield Responds program. [ITH8/22/2025]

Ullman, George, was head of a NYC printing ink company who owned a house at 114 Main Street in the 1930s and 40s. His nephew, artist Paul Ullman (*q.v.*) and his wife, Babette (*q.v*.), lived there in World War II. [JFS]

Ullman, Babette, wife of Paul Ullman (*q.v*.), was active in the war effort on the homefront, working for many French relief efforts based in Ridgefield and elsewhere. After Paul's death she remarried and moved to California where she became involved in the arts community. She died 2009. Her biography, *Babette*, was written by Constance Crawford in 2005.

Ullman, Paul, (1906-1944), a native of France, was an Impressionist artist who, being Jewish, fled his native country as the Nazis were taking over. He came to Ridgefield where he was recruited by the U.S. government to serve in the OSS. Parachuted into France on a secret mission, he was killed by the Gestapo who had mistaken him for a local resistance fighter. He had lived at 114 Main Street from 1942 with uncle, George Ullman (*q.v.*). He earned a posthumous Bronze Star from the U.S. Army, and the Croix de guerre and Legion of Honor from the French government, and is included in the Book of Honor at the OSS Memorial Wall at Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in McLean, Va. His wife, Babette Ullman (*q.v.*), was active in war relief efforts in town. [WWW]

Ullman, Robert, (1905-1978), was an inventor who moved Ullman Devices Company (*q.v*.) to Ridgefield in 1959. He was known for hiring handicapped and senior citizen employees. His inventions included mostly tools, such as mirrors on the end of a handle for viewing hidden places, esp. around engines, and flexible claws for retrieving small parts from difficult places, but he also invented a hair dryer. Wife **Marie** (1912-1999) took over the company at his death. He was active in the community. He and Marie lived

in Wilton. [WWW]

Ullman Devices moved to Route 7 at Laurel Lane in 1959. The town's only true manufacturing industry in 2024, and by far the town's oldest industrial concern, makes small, specialized tools used by mechanics, technicians, etc. The company was founded in 1936 in NYC by Robert Ullman (*q.v.*) and does business worldwide. [JFS]

Umpawaug was the name of a section of eastern Ridgefield in 18th Century, reflecting a nearby pond in Redding with that name. Umpawaug has several possible translations from American Indian, including "beyond the bend" or "a fishing place" (Huden). [RN]

Umpawaug Hill was probably today's Fire Hill (*q.v.*), which overlooks Umpawaug Pond. [RN]

Under the Dogwood Tree was a gift shop at 13 Catoonah Street in 1980, 1987 [P9/11/1980]

Underground Railroad: A station was operated by Edward and Betsey Armstrong (*q.v.*) off Ned's Lane, probably in the 1840s, maybe earlier and perhaps into the early 1850s. Runaway slaves would be hidden in a nearby cave or caves. [JFS]

Undertakers: See Funeral homes.

Ungar, Albert, (1930-2016), head of Century Opinion Polls in NYC, lived at 37 Walnut Hill Road from the 1980s until his death. [P5/21/1987]

Union Hotel, The, built in the 1860s, was on the west side of Main Street [Beers], owned by Mr. and Mrs. Niram Dykeman. It went through various owners and names, and was last called Oreneca Inn or House (*q.v.*). The building was moved in 1903 to High Ridge and Abbott Avenues, where it is now apartments. [JFS]

Union Savings Bank opened an office at 100 Danbury Road (former Duchess restaurant) in July 2002. [JFS]

Union Society: *See* Ridgefield Union Society.

Unitarian Fellowship of Ridgefield, organized in June 1964, had its first service at the Ridgefield Community Center. Two years later the Danbury Church and the Ridgefield Fellowship merged under the name Unitarian Universalist Society of Northern Fairfield County. In 1970, the UUSNFC moved from Danbury to a former barn property at 9 Picketts Ridge Road in West Redding, which remained the Society's home until 2003. [OR]

United Cigar Store was established in the 1920s by Harold Finch (*q.v.*) at 388 Main Street. Later it moved across Main Street (from the George Scott block to the Ernest Scott block) where it would be operated by David and Alice Finch Moore; she was a daughter of Harold Finch. It in 1953 became Squash's Ridgefield News Store (*q.v.*). United Cigar Stores was a U.S. chain, selling tobacco projects, candy, newspapers and magazines, and other convenience items. In its first quarter-century it grew to nearly 3,000 shops and eventually became part of the corporation that bought Marvel Comics. *See also* David J. Moore. [DD96, W]

United Nations, the, looked at Ridgefield in 1946 as a possible location for the its world headquarters, focusing on the estate of Ruth Cutten (*q.v.*), known as Sunset Hall (*q.v.*), on Old West Mountain Road. A UN site committee inspected the property, both on the ground and from a blimp. It also looked at the former Ridgefield School (*q.v.*) property on North Salem Road. Among the UN personnel involved in the site selection was Huntington

Gilchrist (*q.v.*), who lived in Ridgebury. [RPJ3/12]

Until Jacob Comes Marching Home: A history of Ridgefield in the Civil War; *see* George Hancock.

Unwin, Edward, was superintendent of the Altnacraig estate (*q.v.*). [DD156]

Upagenstit (spelling varies) was the estate of Frederic E. and Mary Lewis (*q.v. each*) at West and Golf Lanes. It's a made-up word for "Up Against It." The estate was first assembled by H.B. Anderson (*q.v.*) around 1900; Lewis purchased it around 1908 and built a castle-like manor house that year, vast greenhouses, indoor swimming pool, and added more land, eventually totaling around 100 acres. The estate was owned 1930s and 40s by Ely Culbertson (*q.v.*). It was Grey Court Junior College (*q.v.*) from 1941 to 1945; Ridgefield Country Club, in the late 1940s, early 1950s. The core property was subdivided in 1955 as Ridgefield Manor Estates (*q.v.*), including Manor Road (mostly the old main driveway), Lewis Drive, Fairfield Court, Shadow Lane, and some of Golf Lane. The mansion was razed in 1955. DD137-150, and DD294 covers the history of the estate in great detail. [RN, WWW]

Upper Pond is a body of water on the upper Titicus River, created probably in the early 19th Century to provide power for mills at Titicus. It's now called Marjoy Pond (*q.v.*) *See also* Gilbert's Upper Pond. [RN]

UPS Store: The original operation at 54 Danbury Road was Mail Boxes Etc, USA (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Urgent Care at 10 South Street provides emergency medical services seven days a week. Dr. Jeannie Kenkare and her partners established PhysicianOne Urgent Care in 2008. The group had 26 outlets in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York in 2024. [JFS]

Urstadt Biddle Properties of Greenwich, owner of many shopping centers, bought the former Bedient Hardware (*q.v.*) building at 404 Main Street in 1998 and has also acquired other adjoining properties at the corner of Bailey Avenue, totaling in 2022 about 35,000 square feet of retail, office and residential (apartment) space. Around 2023, the property was sold to Regency Centers (*q.v.*). [JFS]

V

Valden, David Harvey, (1828-1885), a Ridgefield native, was a prominent 19th Century businessman who acquired the tannery at Titicus from the Jabez Mix Gilbert estate in 1856. He was a Republican state representative, 1878, [HURD], and the father of State Rep. Louis I. Valden (*q.v.*).[DD24,25]

Valden, Louis I., (1858-1920), son of David Harvey Valden (*q.v.*), operated the family tannery at Titicus (*see* Tannery Hill Road). He was a town assessor who served as state representative, 1897-99. He built in 1857 the well-known Victorian house at 118 North Salem Road. [DD24]

Valentino, Leno Rudolph, (1923-2013), a Ridgefield native and RHS 1940, was a B-24 bomber pilot in World War II, flying more than 35 missions in the South Pacific. He owned Ridgefield Cleaners on Main Street for more than 40 years. He was a commander of the VFW post. He retired to Tennessee. [P1/17/2013, P1/23/1983]

Valentino, Victoria: *See* Victoria Carbe.

Valley Brook Acres is 3-lot subdivision of 7.3 acres on the north corner of Nod Road and Davis Lane in 1977, by Roger Carpenter and William Valus. [RN]

Van Etten, Dr. Royal C., (1886-1980), a Rhinebeck, NY, native, was a noted NYC obstetrician and gynecologist who delivered more than 8,000 babies. A graduate of Columbia's medical school where he later taught for 25 years, he practiced for 59 years. In 1927 he bought Hillscroft Farm (*q.v.*) on St. Johns Road, and in 1951 moved to the former E.P. Dutton house at 63 High Ridge Avenue. Dick Venus, his estate superintendent, wrote much about the "good doctor." [P7/24/1980, DD169-189]

Van Lidth de Jeude, Erland, (1953-1987), a native of Holland and RHS 1972, was one of the most colorful and talented people to grow up in town. He graduated from MIT in 1977 with a computer science degree and, at 6 foot, six inches and 340 pounds, was on championship wrestling teams, He was a 1976 Summer Olympics alternate, and won a Bronze Medal in the international competition in Tehran in 1978. He was to perform in 1980 Olympics, but U.S. boycotted. Erland performed in the 1979 movie, *The Wanderers,* and with Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder in *Stir Crazy* in 1980. He also studied opera and sang with companies in three states. [WWW]

Van Lidth De Jeude, Philip, RHS 1970, a native of Holland and brother of Erland (*q.v.*)**,** is an opera singer. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and Manhattan School of Music, he has sung on stages across the U.S. and Europe. He now lives in NC where he teaches. [WWW]

Van Orman, Bill, RHS 1981, a golfer, placed sixth in the National High School Athletic Association tournament in Biloxi, Miss. in 1981 and was named an All-American golfer. At 21, he played in the U.S. Open, and went on to a career playing professional golf and working as a club pro. [JFS]

Van Poznak, Dr. Frederick, was a Ridgefield thoracic surgeon here between 1955 and 1974 before he and his family moved to England to facilitate his working in developing countries. During his years here, he was active in the community. He later returned to the U.S. and taught at Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons. He and his wife, **Joan Gilbert Van Poznak**, a Juilliard graduate, live in West Palm Beach, Fla. [JFS]

Vance, Lee Perry, (1921-1952), fought in two wars, was wounded in one and killed in the other. A NYC native, Vance moved to Ridgefield in 1934 when his father became superintendent of the Sunset Hall estate on Old West Mountain Road. He attended Ridgefield High School and joined the Marine Corps in 1940, earned a field commission, and attained the rank of first lieutenant. He fought at Guadalcanal, New Britain and Pelelieu, where he was wounded. After the war he served in the reserves and attended Johns Hopkins University, graduating in 1950, the same year he was called into active service in Korea with the Intelligence section of First Marine Division and promoted to major. He was seriously injured and died in a Marine Corps hospital in Seoul. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. [JFS]

Vaughn, Robert Francis, (1932-2016), was a popular TV and film actor, known for roles of Napoleon Solo in *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* on TV, and film roles in *The Magnificent Seven* and *The Young Philadelphians*, the last earning him an Oscar nomination. He appeared in 100 films and more than 200 TV episodes. Active in Democratic politics, he campaigned for John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy, A former Army infantry drill sergeant, Vaughn was the first major member of the film industry to speak out against the Vietnam War. made more than 1,000 anti-Vietnam-War speeches. He bought Sunset Hall (*q.v.*) in 1982, and moved in the mid-1990s to Salem View Drive, where he died. He wrote *Only Victims: A Study of Show Business Blacklisting*, and his autobiography, *A Fortunate Life*. [WWW]

Vazzana, Richard J., began his career as a high school and college teacher, got a Ph.D., joined IBM, and worked at executive positions in sales for 30 years; he became senior vice president of Novell. He's been active with the Community Center, Rotary Club, Ridgefield Symphony, and Charter Revision Commission. He was Rotary Citizen of the Year in 2018. [JFS]

Vega, Manuel and Grace, came from Cuba with a large family around 1960, escaping Communist takeover. Offered by Castro the job of attorney general, Manuel instead fled with his family. He was an international lawyer whose main client was General Electric. While here, the family lived at 70 Barry Avenue (ONS46). Their 10 children included Manolo, Marguerita, Rosita, Pedro, Mercedes, Ricardo, and Jose. The Vegas eventually "left Ridgefield by hired bus to Canada as their visas were expiring." They then settled in Spain. Son Fernando became an international banker and son Manolo entered the wine and spirits business, and then became a popular bullfighter. [Richard Mead on OR, DD250, 251, 252]

Velte, Paul Christian Jr., (1914-1976), was CEO of Air America, an airline owned by the Central Intelligence Agency flying primarily in Southeast Asia from the 1950s until 1975. He used Air America Huey helicopters to help with evacuation of Saigon in April 1975, rescuing more than 1,000 Americans and Vietnamese. A Ridgefield resident 1955 until his death, he was active in Ridgebury Congregational Church and Boy Scouts. [WWW]

Venice Pizzeria at 125 Danbury Road is one of the town's oldest restaurants, opening Nov. 20, 1972, in then-new Copps Hill Plaza. The owners were Domenick Ruggiero of Ridgefield and Silvio Dinardo of nearby New York. In 2002, it moved from its spot between Stop & Shop and Kohl's to a new building, part of a plaza redesign, close to Danbury Road. [JFS]

Venus, Michael John, (1943-2018), a Ridgefield native, served on the Board of Selectmen and Police Commission, and was a chairman for Ridgefield

Parks & Recreation Commission. As a Democrat, he ran unsuccessfully for first selectman in 1983 and in 1993. He operated Venus Oil for many years. Long active in the RVFD, he served as its president. He and his wife Veronica lived on Harvey Road for many years. [NR]

Venus, Richard E., (1915-2006), a former selectman and the first official town historian, was postmaster from 1961 to 1981, the last resident to hold that job. He wrote 366 episodes of "Dick's Dispatch," a column on early 20th Century people and events that appeared in *The Ridgefield Press* weekly from 1982 until 1989; it's been compiled in binder form by Ridgefield Historical Society and electronically by JFS. He and his wife, Marie, operated Dic-Rie Dairy. Before that, he had been superintendent of the Hillscroft Farm (*q.v*.). He lived many years at 80 Olmstead Lane. [WWW]

Verdery, Benjamin, (1955-), is a classical guitarist, son of Rev. John Verdery (*q.v.*) of Ridgefield. He grew up on the Wooster School campus in nearby Danbury. He has performed at major venues through the world and is married to flutist Rie Schmidt. [P1/15/1987]

Verdery, Rev. John, (1917-1985), a Princeton graduate, was headmaster of Wooster School in nearby Danbury from 1943 to 1976. When he started at Wooster, he was 25 and the youngest headmaster in the USA. He wrote an autobiography, *Partial Recall, The Afterthoughts of A Schoolmaster*, in 1981. He had a home at 620 Ridgebury Road in 1981. [P10/29/1981] He also had a home in France, where he died. Son **Ben** (*q.v.*) is a musician.

Veterans of World War II and the Korean War are listed on a large plaque in the town hall first floor corridor, unveiled Nov. 11, 1966. Veterans of earlier wars are listed on the War Memorial (*q.v.*) in front of Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church. [RT] The Veterans Monument in front of the Community Center (Lounsbury House) honors those who died in World War II. Korean, and Vietnam. In 2011 a Vietnam War Memorial *(q.v.*), listing 268 people who lived in Ridgefield and served in the Vietnam era, was erected in town hall. A monument to solders who fought in the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan was placed in front of the police headquarters on East Ridge in 2023; the monument bears no names. The town has had six veterans organizations: Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), American Legion, Ridgefield Veterans Club, Last Man's Club, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Marine Corps League (*q.v. each*). Rockwell has information on all veterans who enlisted from Ridgefield through WW1. RiR has names of all through Korean War. For a compilation of more than 1,200 veterans buried in Ridgefield cemeteries, see: findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/233401. For a list of Ridgefielders who died in the line of duty, *see* Died in the Line of Duty

Veterans Memorial Park: *See* Veterans Park.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3052, founded in 1962 by Gene Casagrande, was a support group for local war veterans. One of its first projects was to create a veterans memorial, dedicated in 1964 at Veterans Memorial Park in front of the Community Center, The post had closed by 2024, many of its functions presumably taken over by the American Legion (*q.v.*). [RPC126]

Veterans Park is the short, common form of the official name of Veterans Memorial Park, established in 1945 when the town bought Grovelawn (*q.v.*), the Lounsbury estate. An actual veterans monument was not erected until 1964. The park is 17.2 acres surrounded by Main, Market and Governor Streets, and East Ridge Road, and includes the Community Center/

Lounsbury House and the playing fields east of Veterans Park School (*q.v.*). *See also* Community Center, Hanneman House, Griffith Lane. [RN]

Veterans Park School, the town's first "modern" (flat-roofed) elementary school, was designed by the firm of Sherwood, Mills and Smith of Stamford and New Canaan, and opened in February 1955. Isabel O'Shea was its first principal. The school was enlarged in 1957-58. Its Cleves Auditorium, named for Mabel Cleves (*q.v.*), has been used for many community events, including town meetings and zoning hearings. *See also* Veterans Park, George Stromberg. [JFS]

Vetter, George, (1923-1945), a flight officer/navigator, bailed out of a B-24 bomber that had been hit by enemy fire in May 1945, and landed on an island with four other crewmen. They were sheltered by natives, one of whom betrayed the group to the Japanese. Four were shot and killed, including Vetter, three months before the war ended. He was a 1941 RHS graduate. [WWW]

VFW: *See* Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Victor Drive, a dead-end road off Ramapoo Road, was built starting in 1957 by Victor Williams. on part of the old Irving Conklin (*q.v.*) dairy farm. Its 15 lots were subdivided by Perry Scott. [RN]

Victory Bus Line: On Feb. 23, 1942 Leo Pambianchi (*q.v.*) began a bus service between Ridgefield and Bridgeport to transport local defense workers to the plants in the city using a new 30-passenger bus. Victory made three round trips daily. One of the drivers was Reno Carboni (*q.v.*).

Video Cinema Inc. was a VHS video rental store at 51 Ethan Allen Highway in 1987, carrying some 5,500 movies in stock. [P8/13/1987]

Video Transfer, The, was a business at 89 Danbury Road, started by Rick Bennette July 12, 1985, for transferring 8 mm movie film to VHS tapes. It later provided video services such as recording weddings and was at 99 Danbury Road. Bennette sold and moved to Florida in 2003. [JFS, OR]

Vietnam War: Five Ridgefielders died in that conflict: Peter C. Towne, Thomas F. Carnegie, Samuel D. Freeman, William H. Keeler, and John T. Orrico. They are remembered on the Veterans Memorial in front of the Community Center on Main Street. [SNTS]

Vietnam War Memorial: In May 2011, a memorial to Ridgefielders who served in the military during the Vietnam War was erected in the town hall. By May 26, just before the memorial was to be created, the names of 268 people had been compiled. Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Paul Bucha (*q.v.*) spoke at its dedication. *See also under* Veterans. [JFS]

View from the Inn, A, is a 350-page book with annotated excerpts from the diary of Anna Marie Resseguie (*q.v.*), whose family operated the Keeler Tavern or Resseguie's Hotel (*q.v. each*) on Main Street. The 1993 book was produced for the Keeler Tavern Preservation Society by a committee that included Kay Ables (*q.v.*), who'd become town historian. [DAR, JFS]

Viking chambers, shelters: Some people who have discovered stone-built "shelters" in the ground in woods around Ridgefield have claimed they were evidence of Viking or Norse visitors from a thousand years ago. Often these structures were simply 18th or 19th Century root cellars, built by farmers for storing such crops as potatoes, apples, and turnips for winter consumption by humans and livestock. They may appear today in the middle of woods, but many places that today are forested were open fields

a century or more ago. And many old farmhouses that may have once stood near the root cellars have disappeared. The interest in Viking relics was spurred by Barry Fell's 1976 book, *America B.C.*, which included descriptions of a stone chamber in Danbury, believed to be of ancient European by John Williams, a Bronze Age researcher from Danbury. [JFS]

Viking Haus was a store at Copps Hill Plaza selling Scandinavian household wares and apparel. It existed in 1980 and was gone by 1983. [JFS]

Villa Scalise was a name used informally for the Tackora Trail mansion that gangster George Scalise (*q.v.*) owned. *See* Whylurup, Manresa. [WWW]

Village, The, is today an informal name applied to the center of town, the area roughly consisting of Main Street, High Ridge, East Ridge, and the crossroads around them. It was once part of the Village District (*q.v.*). [RN]

Village Answering Service was operated by Bud and Sue Whitney at their home, 48 Branchville Road, for much or all of the last third of the 20th Century. Sue died in 2011 at the age of 87 in Maine. [JFS]

Village Bakery was opened by Nancy (Mrs. Albert) Gasparino (*q.v.*) at 446 Main Street [P1/12/1967] and closed in 1973 [P8/16/1973]. Gasparino later had bakeries near the Big Shop and at Copps Hill Common, and operated the Ridgefield Coffee Shop on Bailey Avenue for many years. [JFS]

Village Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield was Ridgefield's second locally owned commercial bank (first was First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield — *q.v.*). It opened in 1974 in former Ridgefield Playhouse (*q.v.*). In 1982, it changed its name to The Village Bank & Trust Company; in 1995, it acquired Liberty National Bank of Danbury. In 1999 it was acquired by Webster Bank of Waterbury. The Ridgefield Library bought the building in 2000 and soon sold it. The building was razed and replaced by the Prospector (*q.v.*).

Village Corner was a liquor store at 3 Grove Street in 1980 [P6/12/1980].

Village District was a governmental district within the town, with its own budget and tax rate. At the turn of the 20th Century, people in the center started getting services others didn't have, such as sewers, street lights, and fire hydrants. The Borough of Ridgefield (*q.v.*) was established to oversee these extra services, including a night watchman. In 1921, the town voted to abolish the borough and its government, and replace it with the simpler Village District, controlled like the rest of the town by the first selectman and the Board of Finance, which proposed an annual budget to cover village-only services. People who lived in the village voted at an annual meeting on their budget and to set a village tax rate, just as the people in the whole town voted on the town budget and tax rate. The Village District boundaries were supposed to coincide with neighborhoods served by the sewer lines since operation of the sewer system was the most expensive service the village budget supported. After new sewer lines and new hydrants began being installed outside the village district, voters decided in July 1974 to abolish the Village District and to charge fees directly to sewer users. [RN]

Village green was an informal name for the open area that is today mostly the eastern portion of the front lawn of Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church. Over the years, it held the Congregational meeting house (church) and, for a while, a schoolhouse. It was also used for militia drills. After the Congregational church moved in 1888, and the old church was removed,

the green was absorbed into neighboring properties. [JFS] *See also* Meeting House Yard.

Village Grill was a Main Street restaurant, operated by William Dingee, that, in 1940, became Boyd's Lunch (*q.v.*). *See also* Fairfield Lunch. [RPJ]

Village Improvement Society was established in 1899 by 14 prominent Ridgefielders at the home of Mrs. A. H. Storer to "make improvements in the village of Ridgefield, its streets, parks, public grounds and public buildings; and to do all things incidental to said business..." The society planted flowers and trees along village roads, hired a street-cleaner, maintained early street lights, and pressured merchants to keep signs modest. It merged in 1915 into the new Ridgefield Garden Club, which still has a Village Improvement Committee. *See also* Dog, Cat and Poultry Show. [RPC]

Village Market, opened by two Putnam County men in March 1981 in former Wayside Market (*q.v.*) at 37 Danbury Road, did not last long. [P3/19/1981]

Village Nursery was a "nursery, garden center, florist," at 659 Danbury Road (Route 7) — far from the village — in the early 1980s. [P4/2/1981]

Village Park is a small subdivision off Bryon Avenue, developed by Reed Whipple in the early 2000s. [RN]

Village People Cafe, The, was a restaurant on the north corner of Grove Street and Sunset Lane in 1978-79 (?), operated by Kevin and Albert Rowe. S*ee also* Perp's, Pierpaoli's Cafe, Corner Pub, Joe's Hideaway, *and* The Hideaway. [JFS]

Village Photographer, The, was the name of photography business of Brian Gaumer (*q.v.*) at 2 Big Shop Lane, which opened June 9, 1980 [P6/12/1980, P7/10/1980].

Village Street was another name for Main Street (*q.v.*), especially around the turn of the 20th Century. [RN]

Village Tavern was a **r**estaurant at 378 Main Street, opened in 2016 by Germano Minin and Bruno DiFabio in the Bissell Building (*q.v.*), replacing the Dog and Pony/Bissell House (*q.v.*). It closed in 2019, replaced by The Lantern (*q.v.*) in 2020. [JFS]

Village Trader, **The**, was an antiques shop on Prospect Street, operated in the 1960s by Kathryn Rosa (*q.v.*). [P4/22/1965, P7/2/1968]

Vincentians, members of Roman Catholic Congregation of the Mission (C.M.), bought Sunset Hall (*q.v*.) in 1955 and converted it to a novitiate for training priests and brothers. Founded in Paris in 1625 by St. Vincent de Paul, the order remained there until about 1966; it left because of declining vocations. *See also* St. Vincent de Paul Novitiate. [JFS]

Vinton, Gertrude, (1856-1934), established, with her sister Elizabeth Perry Vinton, (1846-1912), a school for girls, ca, 1893, at 76 East Ridge (now Ridgefield Police headquarters) after opening a similar school in 1883 in Pomfret, Conn. About 1903, they closed school here and Gertrude returned to Pomfret. She was daughter of Rev. Dr. Francis Vinton and a granddaughter of Commodore Oliver Perry. FoF says the school had operated in Farmingville before East Ridge. [NYT 11/15/1934]

Vinton School: *See* Gertrude Vinton.

Virginia Court, a dead-end road off Old Stagecoach Road at Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), is named for Virginia George, secretary to Robert Kaufman, Knolls developer. It became a town road in 1968. [RN]

Visitors, Board of, also called School Visitors, was the 19th and early 20th Century version of today's Board of Education (*q.v.)*. It was so-called because members would visit the schools and check out the quality of their operation. [JFS]

Vita Semplice Farm was a name used at least in 1910 by Joseph Conron for his estate on St. Johns Road, later called Hillscroft Farm (*q.v.*). He subsequently lived on West Mountain Road, in an estate called Hillaire (*q.v.*). *Vita Semplice* means "the simple life." The name also appears as Vita Semplace. [JFS]

Voice, The, was a Ridgefield High School newspaper that began in 1980, replacing *The Criterion* (*q.v.*).

Volunteers of America owned what was called Camp Adventure (*q.v*.) in the 1960s. The non-profit is "dedicated to helping those in need live healthy, safe, and productive lives." [JFS]

von Fekete, Gerda, (1918-2017), a native of East Prussia, owned Trendsetters (*q.v*.), a Main Street store. She came to the US in 1952 and opened Teen Fashions on Catoonah Street in 1967, which grew into Trendsetters and continued until her retirement in 1989. [P6/22/2017]

Voorhees, Harold "Bud," (1931-2007), a Ridgefield resident, was named business manager of the school system Aug. 30, 1971, and held the post for many years. His son, **John**, became a longtime photojournalist, most recently with the local Hearst newspapers. [JFS]

Voss, Joan Morris, a longtime RHS teacher of English and theater arts, was a major proponent and first principal of the Alternative High School (*q.v*.). She began teaching at RHS around 1975, and retired in 2010. Her many honors include Ridgefield Teacher of the Year in 2001 and Ridgefield Old Timers' Educator of the Year in 2017. [JFS, P1/7/2010]

Voting: To become a Ridgefield voter, one must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of the town, and at least 18 years of age by Election Day. Registrars of voters, the town clerk, or assistant town clerks can swear in new voters; all work in the town hall. Early voting in a presidential election, starting in late October, began in 2024. *See also* Elections.

Voting Districts: The town is divided into four voting districts for elections (local referendums are all at Yanity Gym): District One votes at East Ridge Middle School, (part of State Senate District 26 & part of State Representative District 111); District Two at Scotts Ridge Middle School, (State Senate District 24 & part of State Representative District 111); District Three: Yanity Gym, (part of State Senate District 26 & part of State Representative District # 111); District Four: East Ridge Middle School, (part of State Senate District 26 & State Representative District 42). To find out which district a voter lives in, call the registrars of voters office in the town hall, 203-431-2771 or 203-431-2772. [RW, JFS]

Voting machines: Ridgefield's first voting machine was used Oct. 5, 1914, for the town election; the machine cost $600 [about $20,000 in 2026 dollars]. Before that, voting was done by paper ballot. In November 2007, the town switched to optical-scanning voting machines in which people mark choices on a paper ballot, which is fed into a machine that tallies the results. For anecdotes about them, *see* DD78. *See also* Frederic Fayerweather. [JFS]

W

Waccabuc, Lake, was once partly in Ridgefield, before the Oblong (*q.v*.) was established; now it's entirely in Lewisboro, N.Y. American Indians called it Wepack (*q.v.*), but the modern name was apparently inspired by the Waccabuc House hotel, built 1860, on the lake. The origin of this "Waccabuc" is uncertain, but some think it might be a version of *wequa-paug*, which itself is a longer version of *wepack*. [RN]

Wade, Eliza Gage, a native of Boston, marked her 104th birthday May 27, 1934, and could remember talking to Revolutionary War veterans. She died three weeks later. She was the widow of Munson Gage. [P6/28/1934]

Wade, Thayer D., was Ridgefield's ninth school superintendent, serving in 1965-66. [JFS]

Wadsworth R. Lewis Fund: *See under* Lewis, Wadsworth R.

Wages: The 2020 census found that the among the 10,652 wage-earners, the average Ridgefielder was paid $86,969, compared to $69,806 statewide. The average wages for the five major work sectors were: professional, scientific, and technical services, $178,081 (2,047 people); health care and social assistance, $40,235 (1,413); retail trades, $41,268 (1,089); accommodations and food services, $25,046 (982); management of companies and enterprises, $195,797 (738). [DB] *See also* Income.

Wagner, Dr. Edward J., (1904-1957), was a local physician known for his bizarre behavior, who died by his own hand. Fire heavily damaged his home-office in 1956. He was a captain in the U.S. Medical Corps during WW2. [FAG]

Wagoner, Philip D., (1876-1962), an executive who headed Underwood, the typewriter company, built Oreneca (*q.v.*), a stone-faced mansion on Oreneca Road, ca. 1932. He led his company into computer production in the early 1950s with the Elecom brand; he retired in 1956. [WWW]

Wagstaff, Blanche LeRoy Shoemaker, (1888-1967), was an early 20th Century poet and author of many books of poetry, as well as books for children. She was first married to Alfred Wagstaff, from whom she was divorced, and then to Donald Carr (*q.v.*), also a writer. She and Carr lived in an antique house somewhere in town in the 1930s and early 40s. The Social Register says her home was called "Birchglade." NCA2/3/1938 said she lived on Branchville Road. [WWW]

Wahl, Dr. John S., (1920-1982), was a nuclear physicist who worked at the University of Iowa on one of the early atom smashers and also on the Manhattan Project, which created the first atomic bomb. He moved here with wife Stacey (*q.v*.) when he joined Schlumberger-Doll Research Center, specializing in peaceful uses of nuclear physics, and lived on Huckleberry Lane. [P8/19/1982]

Wahl, Mary Martha "Stacey," (1918-2007), a native of Iowa, was a WestConn mathematics professor and author who held patents on two math teaching tools and lived in Ridgefield more than 50 years. She was married to John S. Wahl (*q.v.)*, a nuclear physicist, who took the pictures for her children's book, *I Can Count the Petals of A Flower*. [P11/15/2007]

Wakeman, Charlotte "Biddy," (1877-1969), a native of Copake, NY, was Ridgefield's first school superintendent (*q.v*.), serving from 1919 to 1921.

She came to Ridgefield in 1906 to be principal and a teacher at the Center School on Bailey Avenue and later was principal of Hamilton High School. After leaving Ridgefield, she taught English in Mt. Vernon, NY. (It would be 86 years before the school board hired another female superintendent!) [WWW]

Waldeck Kennels was located in the 1930s and 40s in the former Outpost Farm (*q.v.*) kennel on Route 7, a building later used as the Red Lion Restaurant (*q.v.*). In February 1945, Heide Grafensteiner, a St. Bernard from Waldeck Kennels, won winner's bitch and best of opposite sex at the Westminster Kennel Club show in Madison Square Garden. [JFS]

Waldee Farms was a "gentleman's farm" operated on Old South Salem Road by fashion expert Walter Deiches in the 1940s, described in great detail by Venus. [*See* DD102-112]

Waldheim, Kurt, (1918-2007), would spend time at the Karl Landegger (*q.v.*) estate when he was secretary general of the United Nations between 1972 and 1981. They were old friends. He later became president of Austria, from 1986 to 1992, but eventually came under fire as having been a German army officer, involved in rounding up Jews and killing Yugoslavian resistance fighters. [NR]

Walgreens opened in 2008 in the former CVS/A&P location, 46 Danbury Road, after razing the older building. [JFS]

Walk-Bike Run was an annual fundraiser for Ridgefield Boys Club, started 1973 and taking place usually in November. The route covered 18 miles. [JFS]

Walker, Charles Wade, (1880-1961), was a musician, piano tuner, merchant, and town constable, as well as an organist and choirmaster at Jesse Lee Methodist Church. He operated Walker's Happy Shop (*q.v.*) on Main Street and was a member of the Masons, Odd Fellows, Lions, and Grange. He also contributed poetry to *The Ridgefield Press*. [WWW]

Walker, Horace A., (1892-1956), was town fire marshal in the 1940s. [DD133]

Walker, Jay Scott, (1955-), a native of NYC, founded the web-based business, Priceline.com, and has been chairman of Walker Digital, a research and development lab developing digital networks to create new business systems. He has a mansion on West Mountain that includes the Walker Library of the History of Human Imagination (*q.v.*).

Walker, John L., became Ridgefield postmaster July 18, 1935, after confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

Walker, Tonja, (1960-), is an actress who has appeared in a dozen movies as well as several soap operas, including General Hospital. She lived at 11 Peaceable Hill Road from 1992 until 1997 when she married Cleveland entrepreneur Edward Davidson (1950-2018), a lawyer and local business entrepreneur (also a musician and writer, he was on the board of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame). They later moved from Cleveland to Easton CT where he died. [JFS]

Walker, Ralph Thomas, (1889-1973), a native of Waterbury, was a major American architect of skyscrapers, called by the NYT "the architect of the century," for his many notable buildings in NYC and other cities. He never lived here, although he probably stayed with his parents, **Thomas** and **Marion Shipley Walker,** at what is now 83 West Lane. Nonetheless he is buried here in Fairview Cemetery, only a few dozen feet from another master of 20th Century building design, Cass Gilbert (*q.v*). Walker had killed

himself with a silver bullet. [WWW, DD294]

Walker Avenue: "The selectmen should look after Walker Avenue, it needs something done with it." Location is unknown. [P5/22/1878]

Walker's Happy Shop was opened around 1915 at ONS123 Main Street by Charles Wade Walker, selling typical "news store" products, plus toys, with motto, "Toys to make the kiddies happy, sweets to make the ladies happy, and smokes to make the men happy." Walker also installed a soda fountain. [JFS]

Walker Library of the History of Human Imagination, a private, three-story museum and library, contains a vast, eclectic collection of books, artifacts and memorabilia from around the world — including a genuine Russian Sputnik satellite. The library features floors of red oak and 13-foot high windows trimmed in mahogany within the West Mountain home of Jay Walker (*q.v.*). Walker says the library "celebrates humanity's intellectual and emotional adventure of discovery, learning, and creativity by showcasing thousands of rare books, artworks, maps and manuscripts as well as museum-quality artifacts both modern and ancient." Built in 2002, the 3,600 square foot facility features "multilevel tiers, 'floating' platforms, connecting stairways, glass-paneled bridges, dynamic lighting and music, and specially commissioned artworks that celebrate major achievements in the history of human invention." [JFS]

Wallace, Andrew Blake, (-1954), was "proprietor" of The Elms Inn in 1932. [P7/2/1932]. He apparently acquired the inn from James H. Perry sometime before 1928 and was still running it seasonally in 1938, but also managed establishments in Florida and New Jersey.

Wallace, Henry Agard (1888-1965), was 33rd Vice President of the United States, the 11th Secretary of Agriculture, and the 10th Secretary of Commerce. He founded the Progressive Party and served as its presidential nominee in 1948. His last years were spent at Farvue Farm on Route 35 in South Salem. A member of St. Stephen's Church, where his funeral took place, Wallace bequeathed the parish $6,200 in stock in the Pioneer Corn Company — a decade later, the stock was found to be worth $800,000 ($4.5 million in 2024 dollars).

Wallace, Ralph was Ridgefield's 14th school superintendent, serving 1998-2003.

Wallace, William, is listed in [LCR box 163] as a loyalist who "failed to muster" and who was a resident of Ridgebury. His hearing was in 1777.

Wallis's Hoghole: Locality somewhere near RHS, mentioned 1746, probably named for James Wallace, an early settler of the area. May have been the same as Smith's Hogholler (*q.v.*) [RN]

Wallrapp, Marilyn "Lynn," (1935-2001), a native of NYC, was a writer whose work included *Murmuring Ever* (*q.v.*), a "paranormal romance" novel that used Ridgefield and its 1777 battle with the British as an inspiration. She was married to Yustin Wallrapp and was a daughter of journalist Donald I. Rogers (*q.v.*).

Wallrapp, Yustin John, (1932-2014), was a top public relations executive and director of public relations for J. Walter Thompson. He then headed Ogilvy & Mather's public relations business. He was married to Marilyn "Lynn" Wallrapp (*q.v.*). and lived at 259 Spring Valley Road in the 1970s, early 1980s.

Walnut Grove is a 1960s subdivision by William Peatt Sr. of 35 lots from 48 acres north of Farmingville Road, served by Walnut Grove Road It was named after the farm (q.v.). Most of the original houses were built by Nicholas R. Dinapoli Sr. [RN]

Walnut Grove Farm was a dairy farm operated at the turn of the 20th century by David L. Jones (*q.v*.), who sold it in 1921 to Carl A.F. Stolle (*q.v.*). Much of land became the Walnut Grove (*q.v.*) subdivision. *See also* Jones Pond.

Walnut Grove Road: *See* Walnut Grove.

Walnut Hill Road extends from Old West Mountain Road to Round Lake Road at Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*) and was accepted by the town in 1957. [RN]

Walnut Ridge was a locality mentioned 1718 as west of the Norwalk River (East River) and east of Great Swamp, and may have been what was later called Cain's Hill; also called **Walnut Tree Ridge**. [RN]

Walsh, Gordon L. Sr., (1904-1984), was a prominent real estate agent in Ridgefield and Connecticut for many years. He helped establish the Connecticut Real Estate Commission to oversee the profession, was named one of its first members and was twice elected its chairman. He was active in Rotary, Masons, Eastern Star, Boy Scouting, and St. Stephen's Church. [NR] Son **Gordon Jr**. (1929-2022) was also active in many community organizations.

Walsh, Robert Jay, (1854-1916), a native of Lewisboro, N.Y., came to Ridgefield at age 10 and attended schools here, including William O. Seymour's High Ridge Institute (*q.v*.). He became an attorney in Greenwich in 1882. A Republican he served as a state senator, and in 1888 secretary of the state of Connecticut. In 1889 he was named a Court of Common Pleas judge. [CBRFC]

Walsh, Rev. Thaddeus, (1837-1885), was first pastor of St. Mary's Parish, serving from its founding in 1881-2 until his death. He is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [JFS]

Walsh, Thomas F.M., (1902-1984), was a mystery writer, who wrote many short stories and several novels including *Nightmare in Manhattan*, which won a 1950 Edgar and was made into the film, "Union Station," starring William Holden – one of two movies made from his books. He lived on Casey Lane from 1949 to 1965. [WWW]

Walters, Jacob and John, operated an auto dealership at 378 Main Street in the 1920s, selling Flint, Durant and Star automobiles. John ran the store and "Jake" was the mechanic. John later became a carpenter and house builder. [DD100]

Walters, Peter, (1913-1988), a native of Pennsylvania, was a popular pianist who, after a musical career in NYC, including on Broadway, came here in 1950 and played regularly at The Inn at Ridgefield, Stonehenge, Outpost, and Fox Hill Inns. He lived on Hayes Lane until 1966. [WWW]

Wanamaker, Thomas B. Jr., (1904-1991), a native of Philadelphia, was a grandson of the department store founder, John Wanamaker, for whom he once worked. He lived on Golf Lane, then Olmstead Lane in the 1970s with his friends, the Easons (*q.v.*). In his earlier days, he raised champion Irish Wolf Hounds at a ranch he had in Palm Springs, Calif. He died in Florida where he moved in the 1980s, but his remains lie in the crypt and columbarium of St. Stephen's Church here. [JFS]

War Memorial: The monument on Main Street at head of Branchville Road was

dedicated July 4, 1924 [P4/24/1924] by the American Legion, bearing 586 names of Ridgefield veterans from World War I to the Revolution; some say it was designed by architect W. Kerr Rainsford (*q.v.*) while Mary Linda Bradley (*q.v.*), who served on the design committee, said it was designed by Laurence F. Peck. It was sculpted by Raffaelo E. Menconi; Gorham cast the plaques and built the monument in Providence, R.I. *See also under* Veterans, John Rowley, Persian Gulf War

Ward, George, was head of the Ward Steamship Lines in NYC at the turn of the 20th Century and built a country home at 57 Barry Avenue. His company specialized in passenger ships to and from the Caribbean. [DD253]

Ward, Jack Boyd, (1916-1998), a native of New York and a Ward Baking Company heir, lived at Ward Acres (*q.v.*) on Peaceable Street from 1957 until about 1990, then on Rockwell Road, with his partner Olaf Olsen (*q.v.*). He raised show horses, especially Hackneys and Trotters, including many champions. Ward made many sizable donations to Danbury Hospital, Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association, Ridgefield Fire Department, Jesse Lee Methodist Church, and others. [WWW, DD200, DD201]

Ward, John, (-1865), was a Union Army soldier from Ridgefield who had an unusual record. He enlisted Aug. 25, 1864, after being drafted and served in the 15th Infantry. By September, he was already on the front lines, had been captured and was imprisoned at Fort Totten, N.C., from which he escaped on Sept. 27, 1864. He was apparently recaptured, for on March 8, 1865, he was listed as being imprisoned at Kinston, N.C., where he apparently died. Rockwell says he was "probably killed by guerrillas." He may have been a native of Ireland who had worked at the Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill in Georgetown and would have been about 26 years old. [JFS]

Ward, Stephen M. Jr., (1951-), served as the chief executive officer of Lenovo, the world's largest producer of personal computers. He then joined IBM and for 26 years led various divisions before becoming chief information officer. He has been an assistant to the IBM chairman at IBM headquarters in Armonk, NY. He has lived on Golf Court since 1999. [JFS, W]

Ward, Thomas A., (1923-1943), a second lieutenant in the Army Air Force, was on a training flight in a P-47 aircraft May 18, 1943, that crashed into the Gulf of Mexico, killing him and one other. He had lived at Truesdale Lake in South Salem, but was so closely attached to Ridgefield that he had attended Ridgefield High School and is buried in St. Mary Cemetery. [JFS]

Ward Acres was the show horse farm of Jack B. Ward (*q.v.*) from 1957 to about 1990, mostly located on the old Country Club of Ridgefield (*q.v.*) golf course along Peaceable Street at Golf Lane. The estate included a museum of antique carriages. Up to 45 horses were stabled on the 54 acres that featured a 19-room mansion, previously owned by portrait artist C. Chandler Ross (*q.v.*) and then by Lyle B. Torrey (*q.v.*). Most of the farm has been subdivided. [RN, DD200, DD201]

Wardenburg, Barbara, who went to law school and became an attorney while living on North Salem Road in the 1970s and 80s, was active in feminist causes, was a founder of the Women's Political Caucus (*q.v.*), a member of the League of Women Voters, and of the Republican Town Committee. She became noted for spearheading the successful lawsuit against the town's providing free land to the Boys Club, an organization she charged sexually discriminated against women. She was also active in preserving and

cataloguing the Joseph Hartmann (*q.v.*) collection of photographic negatives. She returned to her native California in 1987. [NR]

Warily Kennels, operated starting about 1923 at the farm estate of Reginald M. Lewis (*q.v.*) at 100 South Salem Road, specialized in Wire-Hair Fox Terriers, and won a number of awards. [JFS]

Warner, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin S., took over management of The Inn on lower Main Street in 1903, and changed the name to The Ridgefield Inn [P5/7/1903].

Warren, Karen Joyce, (1947-2020), RHS 1965, was a college professor of philosophy who obtained her Ph.D. from UMass Amherst in 1978. She taught environmental ethics, critical thinking and feminist philosophy, mostly at Macalaster College, St. Paul, Minn. She was called a pioneer in the field of ecofeminist philosophy and was author or coauthor of eight books. [P9/10/2020]

Warren, Rufus, (1841-1863), a Union Army private, was severely wounded in the left leg July 1, 1863, at the Battle of Gettysburg, had to have the leg amputated, and died July 17 of the amputation's complications. He was 21 years old and is buried in Titicus Cemetery. [JFS]

Warren's map of 1812: Moses Warren's map of Connecticut, published in 1812 in Hartford, shows, for the first time, the new route between Ridgefield and Danbury through the Sugar Hollow. The village's two churches appear in their proper places along the west side of Main Street. The map also shows "The Crank" (*q.v.*) in Ridgebury and was one of last maps to show Ridgefield extending to New Fairfield. [Rumsey]

Warrups, Chicken, (?-1765), also called Chickens, Chi-ken, and Sam Mohawk, was said to have been a sagamore or under-chief of the Mohawks who in his youth, killed another youth in a dispute over a girl, and was banished from his homelands. He settled in what is now Redding, but legend has it he enjoyed sitting on a large boulder at the south end of Great Pond, surveying the scene. The rock still bears the name Chicken's Rock (*q.v.*). He reportedly married a daughter of Catoonah, the Ramapoo leader who sold much of Ridgefield to the first settlers. In 1714, Warrups sold a sizable piece of land in the Lonetown area of Redding, then part of Fairfield, to John Read, after whom Reading, later Redding, was named. Over the years, however, Warrups battled with the colonists over details of the agreements he'd signed, and on several occasions he petitioned Connecticut's colonial leaders to clear up his problems. Disputes ended in 1749 when Warrups took John Read's offer of 200 acres near the Schaghticoke Reservation along the Housatonic River in Kent, giving up any rights to his old lands in Redding. [WWW]

Washburn, Rev. Benjamin Martin, (1887-1966), a native of Vermont and Dartmouth graduate, was an Episcopal priest who was bishop of the Newark, NJ, diocese from 1935 until 1958, and was a leader in the hierarchy of the Episcopal church in the US. In retirement, he spent his last eight years on Barrack Hill Road. Washburn and his wife, Henrietta Tracy de Selding Washburn, had one son, **Seth**, (1921-2016), an MIT graduate who became a Bell Laboratories engineer and wrote a seminal book on the design of switching circuits. [WWW]

Washington, George, the nation's first president, visited Ridgefield at least once, on Sept. 19, 1780, on a trip to Hartford to meet with the Comte de

Rochambeau. He was accompanied by the Marquis de Lafayette, and stayed at the tavern of Ensign Samuel Keeler, no longer standing on Ridgebury Road — it was near where the Congregational church is now. He is said to have also visited Col. Philip Burr Bradley's home, now Ballard Park, but this is undocumented. [RIR, JFS]

Washington Avenue runs between Lafayette and Rochambeau Avenues at Peatt Park (*q.v.*). All three namesakes were connected locally on Sept. 19, 1780 — *see* George Washington. [RN]

Washington Park Estates, a 1961 subdivision of 78 one-acre parcels along Branchville and Old Washington Roads developed by Bertram H. Ison, created Lincoln Lane, Jefferson Drive and Adams Road. [RN]

Washington Road is a variation of Old Washington Road, an old roadway that once ran from Branchville Road to Ivy Hill Road. The road now serves only home lots at the Washington Park Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Washington Street: The 1946 town zoning map uses this term for today's Old Washington Road (*q.v*.).

Wataba Lake is better known now as Rainbow Lake (*q.v.*), at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*). Huden says the name means the kind of roots used for cord and thread in sewing together canoes, but the name allegedly has no connection with Ridgefield's historical geography. In January 2021, Hollywood screenwriter Chuck Rapoport (*q.v.*), who spent much of his youth at Rainbow Lake, reported: "In 1954 I gave a new name to what was called Rainbow Lake, the artificial lake.... I made up the name Wataba Lake. It sounded so Native American. I posted a large sign on the entry posts to Lakeside Drive. That's all I did. Years later I discovered the US Government survey maps used that name as well as other local maps." Residents have staged an annual Wataba Lake Festival since 2015. [RN]

Water: *See* Ridgefield Water Supply Company for a history of public water. *See also* Watersheds.

Water's Edge Way is a private road at the Ridgefield Lakes, running along the northwestern shore of Fox Hill Lake, connecting Greenridge Drive with Bennett's Farm Road. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Waterfall Farm is a spread on Spring Valley and Mopus Bridge Roads that has been an equestrian center since the 1970s, operated by the Starbuck family. It had earlier been a farm owned by Hubert Dunning (*q.v*.).

Waterfall Road, a short lane running between Bear Mountain and Old Mill Roads at Hemlock Hills (*q.v.*), is named perhaps for the dam water at Old Mill Pond (*q.v*.). [RN]

Watering troughs: Once common along roadsides to serve thirsty horses, only two fancy ones exist today; one, waterless, in the island of the Olmstead and West Lane intersection, and the other, the Cass Gilbert Fountain. Donated by John Ames Mitchell (*q.v.*), in the fall of 1912, the Olmstead Lane trough originally stood until 1926, at Main and Catoonah Streets, then for a while at Titicus crossroads. It was cut out of a solid piece of granite, six feet wide and four feet three inches high. [*See* RPC118 for history of troughs.]

Waterman, Rev. Leonard Post, (1924-2007), the first pastor of the Ridgefield Baptist Church (*q.v.*), organized and incorporated the Ridgefield Bible Fellowship into the new congregation in 1961. It was one of five churches in New England that he started during his career; he retired in the early

1990s. A veteran of the Army Air Force, he flew 21 combat missions. He had a degree in mechanical engineering from Brooklyn Polytech, and was working for Nabisco when he was called to the ministry. [JFS]

Watersheds: Being high in elevation, Ridgefield is in the upper reaches of seven different watersheds, an unusually large number. Four of them feed public water systems. The Titicus River (*q.v.*) rises on West Mountain and runs into the NYC water supply system at Titicus Reservoir in North Salem. The Stamford Mill River (*q.v.*) rises in the West Lane (*q.v.*) district and feeds the Stamford reservoir system, part of Aquarion. Water flowing from the Silver Spring Swamp in southwestern Ridgefield feeds Brown's Reservoir, part of Norwalk's water system. The Ridgefield Lakes feed the Saugatuck Reservoir in Redding and Weston, serving Aquarion's regional supply (including Ridgefield). The Norwalk River (*q.v.*) rises in Great Swamp (*q.v.*) and travels via the Norwalk River Valley to Long Island Sound. The Miry Brook rises in ponds in northern Ridgebury and travels through Danbury to the Housatonic River, also emptying in Long Island Sound. Other streams in the south of town feed the Silvermine River watershed, which flows through Wilton and New Canaan into the Norwalk River at Norwalk. [JFS]

Watrous, Eleazar, (1786-1815)**:** A house that stood about where Governor Street begins and which was moved to 36 Abbott Avenue in 1888 belonged to this man (also spelled Waterous). Probate records indicate he was a carriage-maker who died in debt, only 28 years old. In the 1870s and 80s, this was the home and office of Dr. W. S. Todd (*q.v.*). At Abbott Avenue it was long the home of Mr. and Mrs. James T. Mitchell. [KSN]

Watson, James T., a former professional chef, began as senior pastor of First Congregational Church Nov. 4, 2018.

WAXB are the call letters of the commercial AM radio station, broadcasting on 850 kHz from antenna in Great Swamp. The station had been WREF (*q.v.*), founded to provide local programming, of which WAXB initially had none; it broadcast in Spanish. It ceased operations around 2024, but resumed in 2026 with local coverage in English. [JFS]

Wayside, The, was the summer retreat of Mr. and Mrs. Theron B. Hoyt (she was Elizabeth K. Carnegie, a cousin of Andrew Carnegie). It was apparently in Farmingville; Bedini says, "The property for the Farmingville cut-off was donated by Theron G. Hoyt (*q.v.*) who was then living on the Ben Lee property on the easterly side of the cut-off." Hoyt, a NYC businessman and native of Farmingville, owned Hoyt Plating Co., manufacturer of gold- and silver-plated goods. [SR1916S, RIR]

Wayside Market was a neighborhood grocery store at 37 Danbury Road, opposite Grove Street intersection, founded by Enzo Bartolucci (*q.v*.) in 1939 and later owned by Louis J. Fossi in the 1970s. Closed in 1982 the site became Village Market (*q.v.*), Genoa Deli, Dairytown (*q.v.*).

Wayside Shrine, The: *See* Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes.

We Elect A President, published in 1977, is one of four books for young readers written by David E. Weingast *(q.v*.).

We Gather Together… Making the Good News Happen: 1712-2012 is an **e**xtensively illustrated 300th anniversary survey history of the First Congregational Church, by its then pastor, Rev. Charles Hambrick-Stowe. (68 pages, published by the church, 2011.)

Weather: *See under* Floods, Ice storms, Snow storms, Temperatures, Twisters,

Lightning.

Weaver, Wilfred "Woofie," a Ridgefield native, was a former chief of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department and a longtime electrician who was an owner of Dingee Electric in the middle to late 20th Century. He was a Korean War veteran. He retired to South Carolina. [DD261, 266]

Webb, Rev. William H., (1916-1991), a native of NYC, came here in the 1930s to work on a poultry farm, later worked on estates, and was a WW2 veteran. He studied for the ministry and in 1969, was ordained an African Methodist Episcopal minister, serving congregations in Danbury, Waterbury, Bridgeport, Norwalk, and Branford. He and his wife Delita, who lived on Knollwood Road, were founders of the local NAACP, and he became president of the Connecticut NAACP in the 1970s. He worked behind the scenes to help resolve many discrimination cases in town. He served on the board of Danbury Hospital. [WWW]

Websites: Useful websites related to Ridgefield include the town government, ridgefieldct.gov; schools, ridgefield.org; Chamber of Commerce, chamber.inridgefield.com; local events, inridgefield.com; library, ridgefieldlibrary.org; historical society, ridgefieldhistoricalsociety.org; Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center, keelertavernmuseum.org; Aldrich Museum, thealdrich.org; Arts Council, ridgefieldartscouncil.org. [JFS]

Webster, Harvey James, (1925-1944), was a U.S. Marine private killed Sept. 15, 1944, during the landing at Peleliu Island in the Pacific when his amphibious tank was hit by a Japanese bomb. He was only 19 years old and received a posthumous Purple Heart. Brother Sgt. **George H. Webster** was wounded in France at the same time. Family lived on West Lane, 1941-46. [WWW]

Webster Road at Westmoreland (*q.v.*) runs between Remington and Holmes Roads and was probably named for statesman Daniel Webster (1782-1852), who had no known connection with Ridgefield. [RN]

Wedding, first: The first wedding in Ridgefield took place when Matthew St. John and Anne Whitne(y) wed on Oct. 13, 1709.

Weed, George Hoadley, (1858-1926), a native of New Haven, was a farmer and a Republican state representative, 1891-93. He eventually moved to Houston, Texas, where he died. [JFS]

Weed, William A., (1846-1864), a Union Army private, died of typhoid at Fort Wood (Bedloes Island) New York Harbor. He was only 17 years old. While he grew up in and is buried in New Canaan, he is listed as living in Ridgefield when he enlisted. [RS, FAG]

Weinberg, Robert Charles, (1902-1974), a native of NYC, was an architect, city planner and preservationist who was widely known and respected. He worked many years for the city of New York, was a commentator on WNYC radio, was an editor, taught at NYU and Yale, and wrote pieces for RP. He had a home on West Mountain. [JFS]

Weingast, Dr. David E., (1912-2007), was a historian, author and Ridgefield's 10th school superintendent, serving 1967-77. He wrote four history books for young people, including *We Elect A President*. (*q.v*.) He lived at 145 Main Street. [WWW]

Weir, Cora: *See* Cora Weir Burlingham.

Weir, Dorothy, (1890-1947), daughter of J. Alden (*q.v.*) and Anna Baker Weir, was an American artist who owned and operated the Weir family farm, now

Weir Farm Historic Site (*q.v.*), from around 1919 until her death. She wrote *The Life and Letters of J. Alden Weir* (1960). in 1930 she married sculptor Mahonri Young, who did much of his work at the farm. [WWW]

Weir, George Walter, (1852-1926), was conductor on the train between Branchville and Ridgefield for 36 straight years until the service ended in 1925. The NH suggested his 36 years on one route may have been a New Haven Railroad record. He died six months after the service ended. [NH8/8/1925]

Weir, Julian Alden, (1852-1919), a native of West Point, NY., was a noted American Impressionist artist. In 1882, he paid $560 for an old farm at the corner of Nod Hill Road and Pelham Lane as a summer place; he eventually lived there full time. He was president of the National Academy of Design, the Society of American Artists, and the Association of American Painters. He founded the Ten American Painters, consisting of the leading Impressionists of the era. Daughter Dorothy Weir (*q.v.*) took over the farm at father's death and married sculptor Mahonri Young (*q.v.*). Their farm is now Weir Farm National Historic Site (*q.v.*) [WWW]

Weir Farm Lane, a short dead-end road off the east side of Nod Hill Road, just north of the Wilton town line, is part of a six-lot PRD (*q.v.*) subdivision by Weir Farm Associates of Wilton, approved in 1987. The land was once part of J. Alden Weir's farm and some of the subdivision is now owned by Weir Farm National Historical Park. [RN]

Weir Farm National Historical Park, created by Congress in 1990 as the only national park property in the country that celebrates American painting, was the home of Impressionist artist J. Alden Weir (*q.v.*) and sculptor Mahonri Young (*q.v.*). The park site was the idea of Sperry and Doris Andrews (*q.v.*), who owned the Weir homestead from 1957 onward and enlisted the support of The Nature Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, the State of Connecticut, and various politicians, including U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman. The property today has 60 acres with 16 buildings under the care of National Park Service on Nod Hill Road and Pelham Lane in Ridgefield and Wilton; Weir's house and studio are both in Ridgefield; the welcome center and administration offices are in Wilton, which is why the park is often portrayed as being only in Wilton. A quarter dollar coin issued in 2020 representing Connecticut as part of the national parks series, features Weir Farm. *See also* Cora Weir Burlingham, Weir Preserve. [WWW]

Weir Pond, sometimes appearing as Weirs Pond, is a man-made body of water beyond the east end of Weir Farm Lane and a part of the Weir Farm National Historical Park (*q.v.*). The three-acre pond is approximately split between Ridgefield and Wilton, with the north half in Ridgefield. The National Park Service reports that "Julian Alden Weir was an avid outdoorsman who loved to fish, hunt, and hike. When his painting, 'The Truants,' won an art competition sponsored by the Boston Art Club, Weir used the $2,500 to purchase ten acres of land and constructed the 'Boston Art Club Pond,' known today as Weir Pond. He cleared a 3.6-acre area and constructed [with] water from intermittent streams and springs. Weir dug a stone-lined channel to help regulate the pond water level. It allowed him to divert water toward the pond during dry periods, and away from the pond to avoid flooding. He also built boathouse, dock, and stone steps to a viewing area. On the small island, he fashioned a gazebo

surrounded by white birches. Most of the structures are gone today, but the pond, the dam, and the small island still exist." [RN]

Weir Preserve is entirely in Wilton but closely allied with the Weir Farm National Historical Park (*q.v.*), which is in both Ridgefield and Wilton. The privately created preserve of 110 acres consists mostly of land that was part of J. Alden Weir's farm. In 2005 ownership of the Weir Preserve was transferred to the Weir Farm Trust, subsequently renamed the Weir Farm Art Alliance, and is located alongside Weir Farm National Historical Park. *See also* Cora Weir Burlingham

Weiss, Dr. Leopold, (1879-1962), was first radiologist to practice in NYC, with an office at home of his brother Ehrich, better known as magician Harry Houdini. In the 1910s and 20s, his wife, Sadie Glanz Weiss (*q.v.*), owned Sunset Hall (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Weiss, Sadie Glanz, (ca. 1877-1935), married Nathan Weiss, brother of magician Harry Houdini (Erich Weiss), later divorced him and married another brother, Dr. Leopold Weiss, causing great family uproar. She later divorced Leopold. Sadie bought in 1924 the West Mountain mansion now called Sunset Hall. With her sister, she established the Bruck-Weiss Millinery, catering to fashion needs of rich women in Manhattan from a 10-story headquarters just off Fifth Avenue. [WWW]

Weissmann, Dr. Frieder, (1893-1984), a native of Germany, was a world-renowned conductor of symphony and opera orchestras. He began his conducting career at the State Opera of Berlin while in his 20s. In 1932 and 1933, he was a guest conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic. He has led the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and many orchestras in North and South America. In this country he recorded for such labels as RCA Victor, Decca, Columbia, and Odeon. Many of his recordings are still being sold today. He married his first wife, popular German opera star Meta Seinemeyer, as she was dying of leukemia at the age of 33. He and his second wife, Rosita "Rose" Chevallier Boutell, an Argentine actress, came to Ridgefield around 1960, summering at The Elms Inn for nine years and then living full-time on Prospect Ridge. Rose is buried in Ridgebury Cemetery, Frieder in Holland. [WWW]

Weitzel, Charles William Sr., (1895-1973), founder of a plumbing firm of that name, was the town's last part-time sanitarian — the position became full-time after his retirement around 1970. He subdivided Field Crest Drive (*q.v.*) and lived on corner of Wilton Road West and Silver Hill Road. [JFS]

Welby, Allan, is an expert birder and member of the Conservation Commission in 2024. He periodically presents programs on birds and birding. He is past president of the Chicago Ornithological Society and editor of its monthly magazine, and leads bird watching trips and workshops for Connecticut and New York nature organizations.[JFS]

Welles, Lemuel Aiken, (1870-1953), Yale 1893, was an attorney who had been general consul for American Can Company in the first third of the 20th Century, retiring in 1933 to Brook Farm (*q.v.*) at 845 North Salem Road where he continued his interest in writing about history. Among his books were *The History of the Regicides in New England* (1927) and *The Regicides in Connecticut* (1935). [JFS]

Wellington, Cary L., (1920-2010), was an engineer, inventor, businessman, pilot, and entrepreneur. In World War II, he developed guided missile fuses and

bomb detonators. He held more than 20 patents and, his family said, started more than 20 companies over his career. He founded in 1981 the short-lived Western Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, based at WestConn. He lived at 35 Golf Lane, an estate then called Fair Fields (*q.v.*) [JFS]

Welsh, Glenna, (1913-78), was the author of *The Proprietors of Ridgefield* (*q.v.*), a history of settlement of the town and its Main Street. She lived in two of Ridgefield's most historic houses; she and husband Vernon owned, first, the Keeler Tavern (*q.v.*), which they sold to the Keeler Tavern Preservation Society and then moved to the Hauley House (*q.v*), both on Main Street.

Wenbos Lane was the original name of Bayberry Hill Road (*q.v.*), changed because it was deemed unattractive. It was based on the names of developers Raymond D. Wennik and George Bossert. [RN]

Wepack was an American Indian name for the territory at Long Pond (*q.v.*), mostly now in Lewisboro, but which would have included some land still remaining in Ridgefield where West Mountain Road crosses into NY state. Cited in a 1727 deed from the natives, its meaning is uncertain but Hudon guesses "shallow water." *See also* Waccabuc. [RN]

Wesley Hall holds classroom, meeting space and offices for Jesse Lee United Methodist Church, and is located behind (west of) the church building. Named ca. 1964 for Methodist leader John Wesley, the building was formerly a mansion called Ashton Croft (*q.v.*)

West, Tucker, (1995-), at age 18, was the youngest male ever to qualify to represent the US in the men's luge at the Olympics. He competed in the 2014, 2018 and 2022. He grew up on upper West Mountain Road where his father built a luge track. [P12/15/2017]

West Branchville Road is the dumbest road name in Ridgefield — the highway is in the *easternmost* part of Branchville and the town. It parallels the east side of the tracks by train station and is part of the old Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike (*q.v.*); also called Old Main Highway (*q.v.*). [RN]

West Cedar Mountain: *See* Cedar Mountain.

West Lane: **1.** The highway laid out in 1722 and originally called Bedford Road; the name "West Lane" first appeared in 1775, and then the name became common. It extends from Main Street at the fountain westward past West Lane Schoolhouse, then southwesterly into NY where it continues as a town road also named West Lane, ending at Route 123, Smith Ridge Road; it is a state highway its entire length, but is called Route 35 from Main Street to the schoolhouse, then unlabeled Route 835 to the state line. **2.** An early name for Catoonah Street, "West Lane" was first mentioned in a 1799 deed. By the 20th Century, some people were terming it "Old West Lane." *See also* New West Lane. [RN]

West Lane Inn: **1**. A small hotel called this opened in May 1910 at 27 West Lane [SA5/21/1910] on the south side of the road. The building later became known as Bluebird Apartments (*q.v.*), and is still multifamily. **2**. Since at least 1940, the name has been used for the former H.P. Bissell (*q.v.*) house across the road. This was ONS16 and today is #22 West Lane. The Bissell house was reportedly built in 1849. The building was called the West Lane Inn in the 1940 telephone book. It had been a boarding house when purchased in 1972 by Inn at Ridgefield owners Henry and Maureen Prieger. Mrs. Prieger, who returned to her birth name Maureen Mayer (*q.v.*), turned it into a hostelry in 1978 and ran it with daughter Debbie Prieger,

until her death in 2011. In 2019, Debbie sold the 18-room hotel to Christine Carnicelli and Danille Petrie [P11/14/2019]

West Lane Pizza & Deli is the last neighborhood store in town. Established in the 1920s, it was earlier called Blue Front Grocery Store and then by 1940, Casa-More (*q.v. for a history of the store*).

West Lane schoolhouse, which is owned by the Town of Ridgefield, is located in the triangle of South Salem Road, West Lane and Peter Parley Lane. Also called the "Little Red Schoolhouse" and "Peter Parley Schoolhouse," the original school dates from about 1756 but existing structure is probably mid-1800s. Part of the foundation may be from the 18th Century building. The school served District Number 7. Closed in 1915, it stood empty and unused for eight years until Ridgefield Garden Club started maintaining it in the 1923 and eventually restored the building as a schoolhouse museum. In 2012 operation was turned over to the Ridgefield Historical Society, which continues to maintain it as a museum; opening it once a month in the warmer months and hosting classes and special events there. The school's most famous student was Samuel G. Goodrich, the author of more than 100 books often under his pseudonym, Peter Parley — he was born in 1793 only a couple hundred feet from the schoolhouse. Other successful grads included university president Cyrus Northrop and pioneering woman editor Abigail Goodrich Whittelsey (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

West Mountain is a lofty ridge along the western side of town running southwesterly from around Lake Mamanasco at the north well into Lewisboro on the south. At its highest point, south of Sleepy Hollow Road just east of the state line, the elevation reaches about 1,000 feet above sea level. It was called *asoquatah* (*q.v.*) by the American Indians. Its trees were a source of lumber and fuel in 18th and 19th Centuries; saw and grist mills operated at outlet of Round Pond. [RN]

West Mountain Estates is another name for Jerry Tuccio's Eleven Level's subdivision (*q.v.*). First proposed in 1960, it was approved by the town nearly a decade later, and was still being developed in the late 1980s. [RN]

West Mountain Farm was the estate of John H. and Lucy M. Lynch (*q.v.*) on West Mountain and Old West Mountain Roads. The house and main property are now Ridgefield Academy (*q.v.*), and had formerly been Congregation of Notre Dame (*q.v.*).

West Mountain Peat was a brand of sphagnum mined on the former Frederic Remington (*q.v.*) estate, when it was called Oak Knoll (*q.v.*).[DD264] *See also* peat bogs.

West Mountain Pines was a 23-lot subdivision in 1980 by Carl Lecher of 55 acres of Hillaire (*q.v.*), the former Conron, later James M. Doubleday (*q.v.*), later Graham, later Minot property on the northeasterly side of West Mountain Road, just westward of Ramapoo Road. It was named for trees, planted by Doubleday and includes two roads, Doubleday Lane and Sharp Hill Lane. [RN] *See also* Conron's Pond. [RN]

West Mountain Road is part of the state highway Route 822 up West Mountain. The name applies to the portion that is the continuation of Barry Avenue, running from the intersection of Ramapoo Road westward to New York State. The original 18th Century path began with Gilbert Street in the village and continued over Ramapoo Road, up the mountain on the current West Mountain Road, across Oscaleta, Oreneca and Rippowam Roads, to get to

Old Oscaleta Road and the state line. It is possible that Oscaleta Road was the original path of the highway. However, since that road is generally flatter, it is more likely that Oscaleta Road was built (sometime before 1850) as a bypass to the steep West Mountain Road. [RN]

West Mountain School: 1. An old schoolhouse (*q.v.*) **2.** Seventh town elementary school was proposed to deal with rising enrollments, but its $2-million appropriation was rejected in 1970 by voters who did not believe enrollments would actually rise; they were correct. School would have been built on the McManus open space on Oscaleta Road. **3**. A private K-8 school operated on the grounds of the Margaret Ladd Franklin homestead on Barry Avenue in the 1930s, with Llenell F. Pugsley as director. It was an outgrowth of a small school started by Mrs. E.R. Squibb for children of the faculty of the Ridgefield School (*q.v.*). *See also* Fabian Franklin. [RN]

West Mountain schoolhouse was located off the southern side of West Mountain Road, built in the last half of the 19th Century. It was last used as a school in 1929, serving District Number 5. Today, the building is a residence at 155 West Mountain Road.

West Pine Mountain Road is shown on maps of the Hemlock Hills (*q.v.*) subdivision, but was only a partially built dirt road, north of and parallel to North Shore Drive. It was part of Otto H. Lippolt's (*q.v.*) plan to subdivide what is now the Hemlock Hills Refuge (*q.v.*). [RN]

West Rattle Hole: *See* West Rattle Snake Swamp.

West Rattle Snake Swamp, also called West Rattle Swamp, was connected with "ye West Rattle Hole," mentioned as early as 1717. West Rattle Hole appears fairly frequently in the land records of the early 1700s. These holes or dens were "under ye West Mountain." A "West Rattle Rocks" is also mentioned in a 1753 deed. All these locations were probably in the vicinity of and west of Peaceable Street and Peaceable Hill Road. [RN]

West Ridge was another name for High Ridge (*q.v.*), used sometimes in the early 20th Century. [RN]

West Ridgefield: In early 1920s, the railroad renamed Branchville Station "Ridgefield Station" and changed the village station from "Ridgefield to West Ridgefield," apparently at the request of some residents who thought "Branchville" was too little known as a place. Opposition was immediate and the railroad soon returned to the old names. [RN]

West River was an **e**arly 18th Century name for the Stamford Mill River (*q.v.*). [RN]

Western Auto was a chain/franchise of outlets selling auto and other hardware products that in Ridgefield was represented by Bongo's (*q.v.*) department store in the mid-1960s.

Western Connecticut Symphony Orchestra: *See* Cary Wellington.

Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra was founded by the Ridgefield Symphony in 2002 to provide "talented young musicians in the regional Connecticut and New York areas with exceptional learning and performance opportunities, while fostering an awareness and appreciation of the enjoyment and power of music." First called the Ridgefield Symphony Youth Orchestra, it began weekly rehearsals in 2003. Candidates were selected by audition. Today the organization has a Symphony Orchestra, String Orchestra and Wind Ensemble, involving more than 80 musicians from ages 10 to 18. Its office is at 77 Danbury Road. Its longtime executive director in 2026 is Laurie Kenagy. *See also* Ridgefield

Youth Orchestra. [JFS]

Western Union "reopens" an office at the Ridgefield depot in 1871. [RT] Telegraph office was located before Great Fire of 1895 (*see* Fires) in Bedient & Mead building, north side of Bailey Avenue at Main [P12/12/1895]. In the 1930s, the Western Union office was at or just north of 426 Main Street, possibly at Ridgefield Pharmacy.

Westfair was a name for Savin Hill estate, later Le Chateau (*q.v. each*), when it was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Nadel in the 1960s. The name reflects its being on the Westchester/Fairfield Counties border.

Westheim, David, (-1976), was the owner and operator of the popular Martha West clothing stores in the 1940s. [DD133]

Westlawn was an estate on West Lane, just across NY state line in Lewisboro; *see* The Orchard, Konrad Bercovici, Abbe family.

Westmoreland was the 246-acre estate of George Doubleday (*q.v.*), who bought much of it in 1915 from Francis McNiel Bacon (*q.v.*), who had called it Nutholme. Doubleday hired noted landscape architect Fletcher Steele to do the gardens in 1929. In 1964, 237 acres were sold for about $590,000 to the Lincoln Development Company of Cambridge, Mass., which subdivided it into 150 lots that were soon developed by Jerry Tuccio (*q.v.*). The main house became Temple Shearith Israel, now Congregation Shir Shalom. The estate was probably named for the land's moor-like qualities and its position west of the village. *See also* Pergola, Casino 2. [RN, DD202]

Westmoreland Road, shortest of seven roads at Westmoreland (*q.v.*), serves as a main entrance, running from Peaceable Street to Holmes Road. It became a town road in 1969. [RN]

Westwind was the name of an estate at the northern corner of Route 123 and West Lane in Lewisboro, N.Y., which, for many years, had a Ridgefield mailing address, with mail delivered by the Ridgefield post office. It was long the home of the Bell family, then served as a restaurant, and as the quarters of the Jewish Family Congregation. [MK]

Wheeler, the Rev. Harold D., (1921-2017), was the second pastor of the Ridgefield Baptist Church (*q.v.*) and the man under whom the church building was designed and built in 1967. A graduate of Bates College, he came here in 1965 and left in January 1976. He had earlier been a pastor in Maine and returned there. He retired in 1986.

Wheeler, John Neville, (1886-1973), known as Jack, was a journalist, editor, and author who headed the North American News Alliance and who hired such writers as Ernest Hemingway, Ring Lardner, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. He lived on Spring Valley Road from 1936 until his death. [*See* Wheeler Road] He wrote an entertaining autobiography, *I've Got News for You*. He and his wife, "Tee," are buried in Maple Shade Cemetery. [WWW, RN]

Wheeler Road, between Spring Valley and Mopus Bridge Roads, is named for the John N. Wheelers (*q.v.*), who lived on the corner of Spring Valley and Wheeler Roads, 1936-73. [RN]

Wheer Cock was an America Indian name for southeast corner of town, now Branchville, that possibly meant "good fishing place." It appears only in first deed from the natives, and not in any later deeds. [RN].

Where Is Ridgefield Heading is a 26-page booklet, published by the League of Women Voters, that suggested possibilities for dealing with future growth, including bypasses for the center, and complete reconstruction of

commercial blocks in the village. It was written in conjunction with Yale School of Architecture.

Whipping post was said to have existed near today's south corner of Main Street and Branchville Road for punishing evil-doers. It may be legend: No evidence of a whipping post has been found in town records. [Rockwell, JFS]

Whipstick, one of oldest place names in Ridgefield, applies to section of town south-southeast of the village, including Nod Road and Whipstick Road. It was probably named for sticks for there, used for motivating horses and cattle. The term is first mentioned in 1712 in Proprietors' deed for land on Whipstick Ridge, probably the ridge east of Nod Road. Reports in Rockwell and others that name had to do with a whipping post on Main Street are probably false. [RN]

Whipstick Farm was a 150-plus acre farm on Whipstick Road. *See under* Alonzo Barton Hepburn.

Whipstick Lough is a three-lot 1978 subdivision of 8.7 acres by Attorney Paul S. McNamara along the north side of Whipstick Road; lough means "south" in Middle English. [RN]

Whipstick Road is a very old highway from Nod Road to Wilton Road East. The term originally also applied to Wilton Road East from Main Street to today's Whipstick Road intersection. It was the road from the village to the Whipstick area. [RN]

Whipstick schoolhouse at the intersection of Nod and Whipstick Roads closed 1915 and became part of a house, once occupied by Charles Sheeler (*q.v.*), noted American artist. It was demolished in 2000 to make way for larger house. The school served District Number 8.

Whistle Stop is a bakery and bake shop in the Branchville train station, established 1982 by Lolly Dunworth Turner. [P1/7/1982]

White, Edwin P. (1829-99), a Ridgebury farmer, was a Civil War veteran and as a Republican, was a selectman and, 1895-97, a state representative. [JFS]

White, H.J., operated a livery stable that was destroyed by fire June 12, 1910, killing **Charles White**, 45, who worked there and was sleeping on the second floor. [RP] Location has not been determined.

White, Thomas C. (1848-1909), a native of England, came to Ridgefield in 1868 and was a house painter, with his shop on Catoonah Street. He eventually served as a deputy sheriff 12 years, and a member of the school board and the Democratic Town Committee [P5/27/1909].

White, William A., (1850-1912), a native of Newtown, was editor of *The Ridgefield Press* from 1901 to 1904 and later operated a printing business in Stamford while also producing a small weekly paper, *The Free Lance*. [SA10/21&24/1912]

White Birch Road runs from Silver Hill Road southerly, then westerly, to connect with Silver Spring Lane. It serves a 1952 subdivision by John M. McCormick. The area was then rich with stands of white birch, a species no longer common because of warming climate. [RN]

White Birches Road, a short dead-end off Wilridge Road in Branchville, begins in Ridgefield, but within a couple hundred feet enters Wilton. It's part of a post-World War II subdivision by Joseph L. Dioguardi (*q.v.*) who, on a 1950 map, called it White Birch Road. By 1958 it was White Birches, possibly in a foolish attempt to avoid confusion with White Birch Road (*q.v.*). [RN]

White Oak Point and **Island** are mentioned on 1717 map of Great Swamp land

division, drawn by town clerk Thomas Hauley [RLR], probably at the northwest edge of the swamp near Farmingville and Danbury Roads. [RN]

White Spot, The, was a restaurant started in the early 1940s at 408 Main Street (ONS109) by Edward Schmitt. It was soon owned by Mr. and Mrs. John Backer, who moved it to the south corner of Main and Catoonah (old Lorna Doone spot). In the late 1940s, it was sold to John Scala, who opened "Chef Scala" (*q.v.*). *See* DD63.

Whiting's Pond: Old name for today's Sanford's Pond (*q.v.*) in Danbury on the north side of the old Route 6 near NY line, part of Ridgefield between 1739 and 1846; origin unknown. [RN]

Whiting, John Downes, (1884-1976), an illustrator and artist, was born in Ridgefield, son of *Press* editor William W. Whiting (*q.v.*). He graduated from Yale in 1910, and illustrated many books and magazines, especially scenes of outdoor life and the sea. [JFS]

Whiting, William Wallace, (1855-1884), a native of New Haven, was editor of *The Ridgefield Press*, 1882-84. He was noted for a clash over temperance issues with Methodist pastor George Lansing Taylor (*q.v.*). He studied at Yale, married Catherine Downes in Egypt in 1878, and moved to Ridgefield soon after. He died here, leaving three children, including artist John Downes Whiting (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Whitlock, Henry, (1827-92), was famed as an expert with horses; he drove a stagecoach from Ridgebury to Norwalk when he was 12 years old. He owned several stage lines including ones running between New York City and Danbury, and Ridgefield and Norwalk. Later, working for the Barnum and Bailey Circus, he drove wagons pulled by up to 32 horses. *See also* Whitlock's Livery Stable. [CBRFC]

Whitlock, John, donated land in 1762 for a "house for public worship of God" to the "Dissenting Society at Ridgebury" (*q.v.*). It was the first time the term "Ridgebury" appeared in a land record. [RLR4/222]

Whitlock, Joseph S., (ca. 1842-1863), enlisted in the Union Army in July 1862 and fought at the Battle of Chancellorsville. He was wounded in the right arm July 1 at Gettysburg and had his hand amputated. As a result of his wounds, he died in an Army hospital, about 21 years old. He is buried at Gettysburg National Cemetery, but a cenotaph stone is at Selleck-Bennett's Farm Cemetery in Ridgefield. [RS, FAG]

Whitlock, Morris Burr (1853-1913), a Ridgefield native, lived in NY state for a while, and was a stagecoach driver for a while. He returned 1885 to Ridgefield where he bought his father, Henry Whitlock's (*q.v.*) small livery stock and opened the Whitlock Livery Stable (*q.v.*) on Catoonah Street, which at its peak had as many as 60 horses [CBRFC]. The stable was later owned by B.E. Sperry (*q.v.*). [CBRFC] *See also* Livery Stables.

Whitlock, Sturges Selleck, (1844-1914), was a fourth generation Ridgefielder who became a machinist and invented a printing press, patented in 1877. His Whitlock Printing Press Company in Derby, established in 1888, was by the late 19th Century producing 100 presses a year at an average value of $2,000 (about $67,000 in 2024). The factory in 2020 was a candidate for state historic register. The company continued to grow into the 1910s and was so successful, its presses were used to print U.S paper money and stamped postcards sold by the post office. However, under new management and a new name, it closed in 1936 at the height of the

Depression. Whitlock served as a state senator. He was married to Mary Olivia Singer, a daughter of Isaac M. Singer, the founder of the Singer Sewing Machine Co. [JFS, CBRFC]

Whitlock Lane is a short dead-end road off the north side of Bennett's Farm Road, west of Mountain Road, created in a 1979 subdivision of 22.7 acres into six lots and 13 acres of open space by Marcelino E. Lavin of Wilton. Whitlocks first came to this area by 1720. [RN]

Whitlock Printing Presses: *See* Sturges Whitlock.

Whitlock's Livery Stable: 1. was operated by Morris B. Whitlock (*q.v.*) opposite the firehouse on Catoonah Street in the late 19th Century. He advertised boarding, sale, and exchange services. He was son of Henry Whitlock (*q.v.*). The business became B.E. Sperry's (*q.v*.) livery stable and the building collapsed in 1948. 2. Another Whitlock's Livery Stable, on Danbury Road, now the site of Girolametti Court (*q.v.*), was started before the Civil War by Henry Whitlock and was later owned by son, Morris. It closed in the early 20th Century. [JFS, DD363, DD364]

Whitney, Henry, (1747-1813), served in the Revolution starting in 1775 and was promoted to captain in 1781. In 1782, he moved to a house still standing (but moved a bit westward) at Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads that had in modern times been the center of Arigideen Farm (*q.v.*). He was a tanner and ran a stage line from Ridgebury to Norwalk. The house and farm were later owned by David Hunt (*q.v*.). [JW]

Whitney, Ruhamah, (1744-?), born in Ridgefield, may have led a most unusual life. "Tradition says that she married, in opposition to her father's wish, with a young man whom he had taugh the carpenter's trade, and settled in Wilkes-Barre, Penn., where the Indians fired through an open window and killed her husband, as he lay sick in bed. She fled from the house, as did a man who was boarding there, and, as they soon became separated and he saw her no more, her friends thought she had been killed; but they afterward saw a traveller from Canada, who told them that the Indians took her to Canada, and sold her to a Frenchman, with whom she married and lived happily. As the tradition fixes the date between 1756 and 1760, when she was from 12 to 16 years old, and at least three years before the first settlement was made at Wyoming [the valley in which Wilkes-Barre is located], the reader is welcome to believe as much of it as does the writer." [WHITNEY]

Whittelsey, Abigail Goodrich, (1788-1858), who grew up in Ridgefield, daughter of Congregational minister Samuel Goodrich (*q.v)* and Elizabeth Ely Goodrich, became one of America's first female magazine editors. In 1833, she was named editor of *Mother's Magazine*. She went on to publish *Mrs. Whittelsey's Magazine for Mothers and Daughters* in the 1850s. She married minister Samuel Whittelsey, who died 1842, and was sister of authors Samuel and Charles Goodrich (*q.v. each*). [WWW]

Whortleberry Hill: A 1733 deed describes two acres on the east side of Great Swamp "where ye brook running at ye north end of ye Whortleberry Hill empties into ye Great Swamp." It was probably today's Ivy Hill. Whortleberries were what we now call huckleberries. [RN]

Whylurup was a name of the 21-room mansion and estate on Tackora Trail, built by Courtlandt Palmer Dixon (*q.v.*) and Louise Polhemus Dixon in 1911. It was later a home of mobster George Scalise, Mamanasco Lake Lodge, Manresa, and St. Pius X Retreat House (*q.v. each*). [SR1916summer]

Wick, Peter, (1902-1989), born Peter John Wiczkowski in NYC, was a NYC police sergeant and Ridgefield Trial Court prosecutor, who was also an accomplished artist. An advocate for youth, he helped organize what became the Police Athletic League for young people in NYC. He and his family moved to Ned's Mountain Road in 1940, a wild area that helped inspire many of his paintings. In 1959 he opened a gallery on White Street in Danbury. He later had a studio in Westport. He moved to Lakeland, FL, in 1984. A 2015 auction of 200 of his paintings raised more than $16,000 for a central FL charity. [WWW]

Wicked Ridgefield is a book offering historical assortment of bad guys and bad times "including thievery, bigotry, murders, missing persons, arson, book-banning, and other assorted man-made misery," written by Jack Sanders (160 pages, illustrated, indexed. The History Press, 2016).

Wicklo's Maple Hill Farm is the home of Phil and Christine Lodewick, 201 Spring Valley Road, scene of many benefit events for A Better Chance (*q.v.*). The name is created from owners' surname. [JFS]

Wickopee Farm was the home on Peaceable Street and High Ridge of B. Ogden Chisolm (*q.v.*). The house was razed around 1945.

Wide Awakes, a new organization of young Republicans — many too young to vote, had a huge pre-election march up and down Main Street Oct. 31, 1860, to support the election of Abraham Lincoln. "Between 300 and 400 Wide Awakes marched in procession, back and forth through the street with three bands of music," she said. "Multitudes of spectators thronged the highway." Orrin S. Perry, soon to become a brigadier general in the war and then a U.S. senator from Connecticut, spoke at the rally. [DAR, CMCH]

Wieland, Lynn Marie, is a Ridgefield archaeologist who had done pioneering work in excavating a site at Richardson Park (*q.v.*) frequented and inhabited by American Indians long before Europeans arrived here. The earliest artifacts date from ca. 10,000 years ago. She has also done extensive work at Lake Kitchawan (*q.v.*) in Lewisboro NY. Her sizable collection of artifacts has been donated to the RHS. *See also under* Indians, American. [JFS]

Wiggin, Albert Henry, (1868-1951), a Massachusetts native and son of a minister, was a longtime president of Chase National Bank, credited with considerably expanding the bank's size and scope to the point where it was called the "biggest bank in the world." He was also investigated for his dealings during the 1929 stock market crash. Wiggin was forced to retire, but was never prosecuted for any legal wrongdoing. As a result of the case, Congress added what some have called the "Wiggin Provision" to the federal Securities Exchange Act to prevent company directors from selling short on their own stocks and making a profit from their own company's bad times. He built a mansion at 47 Peaceable Street in the early 20th Century and maintained it as a summer and weekend retreat until 1921. He was among the first Ridgefielders to own an automobile. He was a friend and neighbor of his predecessor at Chase, Alonzo Barton Hepburn (*q.v.*). His name is often misspelled Wiggins or Wiggen. [WWW] *See also* The Bungalow, Peaceable Acres. [WWW] [DD156, DD196]

Wiggin-Roberts Lane was the informal name of a private accessway for four houses off eastern Peaceable Street, built probably to serve outbuildings of mansions in the area. It was named for Albert H. Wiggin and Henry Steele Roberts (*q.v. each*), landowners thereabouts early in the 20th Century. [RN]

Wiggin's Way was a name at the turn of the 21st Century for a house at 47 Peaceable Street, built for Albert Wiggin (*q.v.*); *see* The Bungalow, Peaceable Acres. [JFS]

Wilcox, Rev. Chauncey, (1796-1852), was principal of the High Ridge English and Classical Boarding School for Boys (*q.v.*) in the late 1840s. He was an ardent abolitionist and was the first minister of the North Greenwich Congregational Church where he served for 20 years before being dismissed for his abolitionist views — not by pro-slavery faction, but by those who felt Wilcox was not aggressive enough in his approach to freeing the slaves. He moved to Ridgefield to take over the school, and was active in the First Congregational Church, where he sometimes preached. [JFS, DAR] *See also* Hugh Banks, William O. Seymour.

Wild Cat Lot: A 1761 deed calls seven acres "the Wild Cat Lott" in New Patent (Ridgebury). The lot was probably on or about Ned's Mountain. Bobcats live in town; mountain lions (*q.v.*) are believed to have lived here before they were driven out or hunted to extinction. [RN]

Wild Horse Cafe was one of many restaurants to have operated at 23½ Catoonah Street in the late 20th Century. Opened in 1997 by Don Altieri and his wife, Karen, with Mark Curtin, the restaurant was noted for having a TV *in the floor* when one first walked in. [P10/9/1997]

Wildenstein, Felix, (1883-1952), a native of France, was president of the New York division of the Wildenstein companies, a group of art galleries founded in Paris in 1875. A recognized expert in French painting, he was widely known among museum officials and private collectors. He had an estate on West Mountain from the late 1930s to the late 1940s. [JFS]

Wilder, General Wilber Elliott, (1857-1952), a native of Michigan, received the Congressional Medal of Honor after an 1882 battle with the Apaches in Horseshoe Canyon, New Mexico. Then a lieutenant, he carried a wounded comrade down the side of a mountain amid a hail of Apache bullets. Four years later, Wilder rode alone into the camp of Chief Geronimo to arrange for his surrender. He served in Spanish-American War and WW1 in France, and retired in 1927. He lived for many years at The Elms Inn on Main Street, and is buried in Fairlawn Cemetery. Before he died, he was the oldest surviving graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. [WWW]

Wildfarms was the name of Melbert B. Cary's (*q.v.*) estate on West Lane, nearly opposite Cedar Lane; it burned to the ground in 1977 when owned by Justin Colin (*q.v.*). Some historians have applied incorrect names to the estate; Kendall called it Wildfarm; Venus said Wild Flower Farm. However, a 1906 letter from Cary says "Wildfarms." Later the estate was owned by Joseph Epes Brown (*q.v.*). When owned by William Mattheus Sullivan (*q.v.*). it was called Dunrovin (*q.v.*) The property was subdivided into seven house lots in 1980 by Ronald Hubbard. [JFS, P7/20/1911, DD309-310]

Wildflower Farm: DD309 calls the Melbert Cary (*q.v.*) estate on lower West Lane "Wild Flower Farm." *See* Wildfarms.

Wilk, Barbara, (1923-2007), was a painter, ceramic sculptor, teacher, film animator, and printer who worked with several techniques, including relief etchings, monoprints, lithographs and chine colle. Her work was exhibited widely here and in Europe. She taught at Fairfield University, and Norwalk Community College, and operated a Westport gallery, Optimums Inc. She was married to Max Wilk (*q.v.*) and lived on Silver Spring Road in the 1950s

and 60s. They were also collectors of great masters and notable 20th Century art. [JFS]

Wilk, Max, (1920-2011), was a humorist who wrote novels and became pioneer TV writer, doing skits for major comics and screenplays. He wrote nearly 20 books, some on TV history. His novel *Don't Raise the Bridge, Lower the River* was largely set in Ridgefield. He lived on Silver Spring Road from 1951 to 1966 when he moved to Westport. His wife is artist Barbara Wilk (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Willets, Josiah "Jerry" Macy, (1911-1997)**,** lived on South Salem Road in the 1950s and 60s, and operated Motor Sport Design Corp. (*q.v*.) on Route 7. [DNT8/25/1965] He co-owned a car that was entered in the 1941 Indianapolis 500, but it was destroyed along with other cars in the garage fire that started the morning before the race. "He owned several OFFY powered midget race cars in the 1940's up into the 1960's, "Sugar Blues" being the most famous," said Robert Swanson. [OR 1/21/2025] Mimi Elizabeth Bullock Willets, his wife, was very active socially in such organizations as the Ridgefield Garden Club, Women's Republican Club, Thrift Shop, and Silver Spring Country Club.

William Raveis Real Estate was a local branch of real estate chain, arriving in the 1980s and closing its office in 2018.

Williams, Alice Cary, (1892-1983), was the author of *Thru the Turnstile: Tales of My Two Centuries* (Houghton Mifflin, 1976), memoirs of her early life and family, centered on Boston and Nantucket in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Her father was a noted Boston physician. She had a farm on Cedar Lane from the late 1920s into the early 1960s, [P11/9/1983, JFS]

Williams, Edward, (1805-86), was a farmer who was a state representative in 1853. He was also a woodworker at the iron foundry of State Reps. Thomas Couch and Ebenezer Burr Sanford. He is buried at the Florida Cemetery. [JFS]

Williams, Josette deLotbinière Hubert, (1934-2024), who was born in Tokyo and graduated from Smith College, was a Republican selectman in the early 1980s and was appointed to the Board of Finance in July 1987 [P7/16/1987]. She was a longtime chairman of the Republican Town Committee. A former correspondent for area daily newspapers, she became a historian of Ridgebury while associated with the Ridgebury Congregational Church. She also compiled and lectured on aspects of World War II in the Pacific, where her father was involved in the Office of War Information (OWI) and developed ways to warn Japanese civilians, by way of dropped leaflets, of the impending bombings. Her daughter is illustrator Renee Andriani (*q.v.*).

Williams, Renee, *see* Renee Andriani.

Willis, Lillian, a native of Brooklyn, was a conservationist, 20-year member of the Conservation Commission in the 1980s and 90s, including chairmanship, and was an author of the original *Ridgefield Walk Book* (*q.v.*). She was a founder of the Norwalk River Watershed Association, and co-wrote *The River Book*, used for river environment studies by many schools in the river's watershed. She was Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1996 and moved to Vermont in early 2000s, where she has been active in environmental work. [NR]

Williams, Lowell I. "Bud", was the town's first full-time planning director, then

called town planner, hired in September 1966 at a salary of $12,500 ($118,000 in 2024 dollars). He left in the early 1970s to go into practice as a private consultant. [RT]

Willow Court is a dead-end road off the west side of Poplar Road, the result of a six-lot 1978 subdivision by Armando Salvestrini (*q.v.*). It was once part of Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*), probably where willow species were grown. *See also* Ridgefield Gardens. [RN]

Willow Pond was the original name for Outpost Pond (*q.v.*) at Fox Hill condominiums on Route 35, Danbury Road, so called that by Col. Louis D. Conley who created the pond in the late 1920s to embellish his Outpost Inn (*q.v.*) property.

Wills, Ruth E. (1897-2002), was a Latin, French, German, and English teacher at RHS, 1920-65 (starting when RHS was Alexander Hamilton HS on Bailey Avenue). She was known as a strict disciplinarian who, despite 5-foot height, wasn't afraid to take on football players needing a trip to the office. Her Latin students often excelled in state competitions. [WWW]

Wilmot, Anthony "Tony," (1963-2014), RHS 1982, was a baseball star from Little League through high school and college at Texas Christian, where he was captain of the NCAA Division I baseball team. He served as head coach of the RHS varsity baseball team for six years, amassing a 77-43 record. He was also an assistant coach for the Western Connecticut State University Colonials. He also coached special needs kids who played in the Holland Division of Ridgefield Little League. In 2009, he and his wife, **Kristina Traynor**, also a restaurateur, opened the Bar & Grille on Route 7. He had previously worked with his sister Jessica Wilmot (*q.v.*) at the Ancient Mariner (*q.v.*). He was a son of Jeremy Wilmot (*q.v.*) and Clifford Wilmot. [WWW]

Wilmot, Jeremy Griffiths, (1929-2010), was a town official active in preservation of Ridgefield's old buildings and heritage. She came to Ridgefield in 1955 and served on the town's first Charter Revision Commission in 1963, on the Historic District Commission and on the Zoning Board of Appeals. In 1989, she was elected to the Planning and Zoning Commission, and in the 1990s, left to be elected a member of the Board of Selectmen. In the 1970s, she was a founder of the Ridgefield Preservation Trust, which became the Ridgefield Historical Society, and she researched and wrote much of the 1,500-page Ridgefield Ridgefield Historic Architectural Resources Survey (*q.v.*). She was active in the Keeler Tavern, and in the Democratic Party, serving on the Democratic Town Committee. [WWW] She was the mother of Jessica and Anthony (*q.v. each*).

Wilmot, Jessica, RHS 1971, has owned the Ancient Mariner restaurant (*q.v.*) since 1992, but started working there in 1978. She is a daughter of Jeremy Wilmot (*q.v.*).

Wilridge Road runs from Route 7 in Branchville into the Georgetown section of Wilton, where it connects with Sunset Road; its two-town status sparked its two-town name. The road dates from around 1950, developed by Joseph L. Dioguardi (*q.v.*). [RN]

Wilson, Abner: *See under* Thomas Wilson.

Wilson, Daniel, was a loyalist in the Revolution and fled to British protection. His estate was confiscated by the state in May 1780. [CDA Rev. War doc index XXI I05-i08.]

Wilson, Elezkiel, "Of Ridgefield, Connecticut, in 1776 (was) proclaimed inimical to the Whig cause by the Committee of that town." [TAL]

Wilson, Lucy Schanno, (1928-2017), was named a president of products at Pepperidge Farm bakers in January 1983. [P1/13/1983] She became a divisional president and a corporate vice-president at Campbell's Soup, the parent company for Pepperidge Farm. She lived on Ned's Mountain Road.

Wilson, Robert, (1852-1940), was the town's first mail carrier, beginning in 1901. Using a horse and buggy, he carried mail through Titicus Center, Farmingville, Limestone, Florida, and the upper part of Whipstick, and "gained many friends with his friendly disposition and cheerful manner." [P9/5/1940] *See also* Rural Free Delivery.

Wilson, Thomas, was a loyalist in the Revolution, according to a 1780 petition from his brother, Abner Wilson, claiming an interest in Thomas's property that had been confiscated by the state. [CDA7 XXI106-108]

Wilton and Ridgefield Angles is the variation in the state line connected with the Oblong (*q.v.*) agreement of 1731, designed to better follow the Hudson River line and to keep as much of Ridgefield in Connecticut as possible. *See* Ridgefield Angle. [JFS] The state line as it runs along Ridgefield's west side is officially described as, from the north end, "the line between the towns of Danbury and Ridgefield in latitude 41° 22' 24" .030 and longitude 73° 32' 34" .456; thence south 4° 36' 39" west 10,878 feet to a monument (No. 91) in a swamp near Mopus brook in latitude 41° 20' 36" .900 and longitude 73° 32' 45" .920; thence south 4° 12' 16" west 10,493 feet to a monument (No. 96) south of a ledge on Titicus mountain in latitude 41° 18' 53" .507 and longitude 73° 32' 56" .001; thence south 6° 32' 21" west 7,214 feet to a monument (No. 98) known as the Ridgefield angle on a steep side hill sloping toward south pond in latitude 41° 17' 42" .690 and longitude 73° 33' 06" .764; thence south 32° 46' 06" east 14,109 feet to a monument (No. 103) in a swamp near a small brook in latitude 41° 15' 45" .460 and longitude 73° 31' 26" .775; thence south 32° 41' 46" east 10,443 feet to a monument (No. 106) at the westerly side of a rocky ridge near the southwest corner of Ridgefield in latitude 41° 14' 18" .626 and longitude 73° 30' 12" .940; thence south 32° 02' 28" east 11,047 feet to a monument (No. 109) known as the Wilton angle in woodland northwest of Bald Hill in latitude 41° 12' 46" .101 and longitude 73° 28' 56" .263." [N.Y. State Law §2]

Wilton Road East, sometimes called just Wilton Road, is an 18th Century highway that runs from the southern end of Main Street south till it meets Wilton Road West a little north of the Wilton line. Until the mid-20th Century, what was considered Wilton Road had its northern terminus at Whipstick Road (*q.v.*), the rest of the highway north of there being considered part of Whipstick Road. The south end of Wilton Road East – around the little community of houses at Silver Hill Road – was originally part of Wilton Road West (*q.v.*). The new route for the southern end of Wilton Road West was built after 1912. [RN] *See also* Potash Hill.

Wilton Road West was laid out formally in 1737 as Norwalk Road (*q.v.*), extending from Main Street south to the Wilton line and was probably the main route from Ridgefield to Wilton and Norwalk. It has also been called the Country Road, Flat Rock Road, Wilton Road, as well as Route 33. [RN] *See also* Wilton Road East.

Wilton town line: The border between Ridgefield and Wilton, which was then a parish of Norwalk, was established May 3, 1710. In the three centuries that followed, the line was resurveyed and under dispute several times, as late as the 1970s, but is now settled. [JFS]

Winant, John Gilbert, (1889-1947), a NYC native and descendant of Ridgefield's Gilbert family, was ambassador to Great Britain during WW2, a close friend of Winston Churchill, and lover of his daughter. In his youth he would summer here and in South Salem; his family belonged to the Ridgefield Club and teenaged Gil Winant was catcher on the club's baseball team. He studied at Princeton and became a private school teacher in New Hampshire, where he was elected governor. Though a Republican, he supported many New Deal initiatives that helped workers and their families, and his progressive ideas led President Roosevelt to appoint him the first head of the new Social Security Board. In 1941 he was named ambassador to Britain, where he became popular with the English public — and with actress Sarah Churchill, with whom he had an affair. He even planned to divorce his wife to marry her, but Sarah declined. Depressed over the outcome of the affair, his not being named the first secretary-general of the new United Nations, and his being nearly broke, he committed suicide — on the very day his autobiography, *Letter from Grosvenor Square*, was published. A statue of him was erected in front of the New Hampshire statehouse in 2007. [WWW]

Windover was the home of John Ames Mitchell (*q.v.*) at 194 West Lane, west of schoolhouse. Much of the land is now Sycamore Lane (*q.v.*) neighborhood. *See also* Charles Daudt.

Windwing, Lake, is a sizable, largely town-owned pond at Lakeland Hills subdivision, built 1950s by Harold Goldsmith (*q.v.*) Its name's origin unknown. The pond later owned by Robert Kaufman, developer of the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*) — *see* Bob's Lake. Most of the shoreline was acquired by the town in the late 1960s and nearby land includes Serfilippi and Fitzgerald Little League fields. [RN] *See also* Goldsmith's Pond.

Windy Ridge was the name of the home of architect Robert L. Shape (*q.v.*) on St. Johns Road. *See also* Windy Ridge Lane.

Windy Ridge Lane, a short, private, dead-end road off St. Johns Road, is part of a 1962 subdivision by Robert Olmstead, and named for his farm, whose house is right on the sharp curve of St. Johns Road south of the lane. [RN]

Winnes, Christopher Robert, RHS 1986, who starred at hockey at University of NH, was a professional hockey player starting in 1991 with the Boston Bruins and then with the Philadelphia Flyers. He later played in minor leagues. He became a firefighter in Warwick, RI. [NR]

WINE is an AM radio station in Brookfield at 940 kHz, founded by August Detzer of Ridgefield (*q.v.*) in 1964. [JFS]

Winter, Dr. Stephen M., a 1981 graduate of Weill Cornell Medical College, is a Norwalk Hospital physician who, often working with AmeriCares, has traveled around the world to provide medical assistance in emergencies, such as droughts, famine, war; countries included Thailand, Haiti, Rwanda, North Korea, Iraq, Albania, Kosovo, and Ethiopia. He is a clinical professor of medicine at Yale University School of Medicine. He lived at 35 High Ridge Avenue from 1992 until 2017. [JFS]

Winter Garden Ice Arena at 111 Prospect Ridge was built in 1971-73 by the

Ridgefield Athletic Association Corporation (*q.v.*), and originally called the Ridgefield Skating Center. It switched from non-profit to profit-making in the early 1990s. The facility offers hockey programs and public skating, and is the venue for Ridgefield and Wilton high school hockey teams. It reports it has 150,000 visitors a year.

Wintergreen is a 19th Century name for a locale, possible at or near today's Scotland School. Wintergreen is a wild, evergreen herb native to Ridgefield's woods. [RN]

Wintergreen Hill, a location in southern Ridgefield, perhaps near Silver Spring Road or Wilton Road West, is mentioned in 1830s deeds and named for the native evergreen wildflower. [RN]

Winterwood was a name for the mansion in the 1970s better known as Sunset Hall (*q.v.*), 162 Old West Mountain Road. [JFS]

Winthrop, William Lawrence "Willie," (1895-1971), a native of NJ, bought the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*) development in 1932, and spent the rest of his life continuing the development of the property. A former lawyer, he was known for battling zoning authorities and opposing school projects. [WWW]

Wise, James Waterman, (1902-1983), an author, art dealer and lecturer, lived on Pumping Station Road from 1943 into the 1950s. He was a son of Rabbi Stephen Wise, a famous reformer and a founder of the NAACP. James Wise covered the Spanish Civil War for the NYT and wrote nearly a dozen books including *Swastika: The Nazi Terror* (1933), *Very Truly Ours* (1943), *Thomas Jefferson: Then and Now 1743-1943* (1943), *The Springfield Plan* (1945), *The Jew in American Life* (1946), *Meet Henry Wallac*e (1948), and several about his parents. Blacklisted harmonica virtuoso Larry Adler (*q.v.*) lived for a while with him. Harold Rome (*q.v.*) was a close friend. [NR]

Wisner, Evelyn Schretenthaler, (1920-2018), a native of North Dakota, was a World War II naval flight nurse who helped rescue and treat many soldiers in the Pacific Theatre, often in planes flying high over the ocean. She lived in Ridgefield from 1990 until her death at 98. In 2012, she was named a "Hero of Western Connecticut" by the American Red Cross. [WWW]

Withrow, James R. Jr., (1911-1987), a prominent NYC lawyer, lived on Peaceable Ridge Road from the 1950s until 1983. In 1970, he led opposition to building of a seventh elementary school, West Mountain School (*q.v.*), on open space along Oscaleta Road, just below his homestead. [P4/30/1987]

Witness Stones Project begun in 2022 with eighth graders from the two middle schools in conjunction with a statewide organization and the Ridgefield Historical Society, places markers in front of buildings that once housed enslaved people. The first two were placed in front of the Scott House, the historical society headquarters, on Sunset Lane, commemorating Lidia and Quash, enslaved by David Scott in the 1700s. In 2023, stones for Peter and Dinah were added; they also lived in the Scott house. In 2024, Ann, also enslaved by David Scott, was remembered. [P11/24/2022; HS]

Wittman, Emeline "Dolly" Lynch (1928-2018), was a longtime Ridgefielder active in Ridgefield Garden Club, Ridgefield Library, RVNA, Meals on Wheels, St. Stephen's Altar Guild, and American Women's Voluntary Services. She was a granddaughter of John H. Lynch, whose West Mountain estate is now Ridgefield Academy (*q.v.*), and on whose land she lived. She married Joseph Wittman, a pilot (*see* Conn-Air). [P11/6/2018, DD273]

WLAD, an AM radio station in Danbury, has broadcast on 800 kHz since Oct. 5,

1947. Owned by Berkshire Broadcasting, it was for many years the only station with much Ridgefield news. It later acquired Ridgefield-based WREF (*q.v.*), now WAXB. *See also* Paul Baker, James B. Lee.

Wohlforth, Mildred Gilman, (1896-1994), journalist and novelist, was one of the original "sob sister" reporters in NYC. She interviewed many celebrities, and was kicked out of Germany in the 1930s for her unflattering stories about Nazis. She was the author of eight novels including *Sob Sister,* which was made into the 1931 movie of the same name. She also wrote pieces for *The New Yorker*. She lived from 1930 until her death on Rockwell Road with her writer-book editor husband Robert Wohlforth (*q.v.*). They marked their 50th wedding anniversary Sept. 7, 1980 [P9/11/1980]. [WWW]

Wohlforth, Robert, (1904-1997), was a reporter for the *NY Morning Telegraph,* who became an editor with Farrar, Straus and Giroux He wrote the novel, *The Tin Soldier*, an unflattering look at West Point, from which he graduated, and was attacked in the 1950s as communist sympathizer. He wrote a column in *The Ridgefield Press* for many years and called himself "Ridgefield's Oldest Living Continuous Vertical Commuter." He was married to Mildred Gilman Wohlforth (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Wolf Pits, The, were holes dug in the ground, baited and covered with brush, used to trap wolves in early 18th Century. This location, mentioned first in 1721 as "ye Wolfpitts" and then in many deeds, was probably somewhere off Old Branchville Road and Bruschi Lane, perhaps into Twin Ridge (*q.v.*). The pits were possibly dug by Norwalk settlers before Ridgefield was establish (the south border of Ridgefield was Norwalk in 1700). [RN]

Wolf Pit Ridge: A 1789 deed mentions land "near where Widow Mary Wood now lives at Wolf Pit Ridge." Liljegren says it was probably near Pleasant View Estates (*q.v.*). [RN]

Wolf Pond Run is an 18th Century name for the stream that runs northerly along the west side of Pine Mountain Road into Miry Brook (*q.v.*). The pond is now mostly a swamp in the town-owned Hemlock Hills Refuge (*q.v.*). [RN]

Woman suffrage: By Connecticut special act in 1893, women could vote on the election of school officers in a town. In 1909, woman suffrage was expanded to voting on library issues. *See also* League of Women Voters, Equal Franchise League, Laura Curie Allee Shields.

Women's Political Caucus was an activist organization in the 1970s and 80s, which fought discrimination against women and successfully pressed for measures that led to the conversion of the Boys Club into a Boys and Girls Club. Early members included Lillian Moorhead, Barbara Wardenburg, Jeremy Wilmot, Suzanne Benton, and Ethel Eckhaus (*q.v. each*). [JFS]

Women's Town Club was founded 1956 as a "civic group dedicated to improving quality of life in Ridgefield." It was known for its book and author luncheons, fashion shows and craft fairs, and was often confused with Ridgefield Woman's Club (*q.v.*). The first president was Elizabeth Hull (*q.v.*). The club was disbanded in May 1984 because too many members had returned to workforce. [P6/11/1981, P5/24/1984]

Wononkpakoonk was the American Indian word for the location of the northeast corner of the first purchase from the natives to the Proprietors in 1708. It probably encompassed the area around Umpawaug Pond, Fire Hill, Great Pond, and Little Pond, but mostly the area north of Topstone Road and just west of Umpawaug Pond (in Redding). Huden says the term may

mean “rocky point where the lake bends” or “an open space.” [RN]

Wood, Bari, (1936-), lived in Ridgefield from 1981 to 2006 and wrote eight horror, sci-fi, and crime novels; two, *Twins* and *Doll’s Eyes*, became movies. Stephen King called *Amy Girl* “a good book for a weekend, but not a weekend when you are alone.” [JFS]

Wood, Lee B., (1894-1981), a Pennsylvania native, was editor of the *New York World-Telegram and Sun* newspaper during a period when it won four Pulitzer Prizes. He came here in 1934, and moved to Ohio in 1979. His farm on Ridgebury Road is now the Schoolhouse Place neighborhood. [WWW]

Wood, Nathan, was a loyalist and a resident of Ridgebury. [LCR box 163]

Wood, Sara Osborne (1730-1815), a native of Ridgefield and daughter of Joseph and Mary Osborne who were among the first settlers of Ridgefield, married in 1759 or 1760 Jonas Wood Jr., a native of Long Island, who became a loyalist. They settled on the Delaware River in Delaware Co, N.Y. In 1780 they fled to Montreal, then became among the first settlers of Cornwall, Ont. Jonas and their four sons, Benjamin, William, John and Lt. Col Roger Wood are all listed as United Empire Loyalists, having fought with the British. She died in Cornwall, Ontario, and is buried in Trinity Anglican Cemetery. The stone house in which generations of the Wood family lived is now the Cornwall Community Museum [Ancestry]

Wood Acres was the previous name for the estate later called Mimosa, so-called by the Blum and Picker families who lived there before 1952. [RN]

Woodchuck was an old name for the area now called Farmingville. It first appeared in the land records in 1832 for land “at a place called Wood Chuck.” An 1835 deed describes land “in Woodchuck District so-called.” [RN]

Woodchuck Lane serves the 19-lot Ridgefield Hills (*q.v.*) off Wilton Road West. [RN]

Woodcock, Joseph Mortimer, (1904-1993), native of Fredonia, N.Y., known as “Woody,” was first selectman, 1967-71, and a Republican leader for many years. A forestry graduate, he was manager of Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*), which he bought in 1944, renaming it Woodcock Nurseries. He led the acquisition of Woodcock Nature Center, subsequently named for him. He lived many years at Farmingville and Danbury Road and later, on Huckleberry Lane. [WWW]

Woodcock Lane, a short, dead-end road off Barry Avenue, serving a 1974 subdivision by Marcelino Lavin of Wilton, was named for J. Mortimer Woodcock, who’d recently retired as first selectman. [RN]

Woodcock Nature Center, founded in 1972, was the idea of First Selectman J. Mortimer Woodcock (*q.v.*) for whom it was named. It makes use of a house and 149 acres that the State of Connecticut purchased as part of the Norwalk River Flood Control Project (*q.v.*). Though Ridgefielders led efforts to establish the center, almost all the property is in the town of Wilton! The staff in 2024 included 10 people, among them full-time educators who work closely with many schools. Lenore Eggleston Herbst is the executive director. [JFS]

Woodcock Nurseries was a successor to Outpost Nurseries (*q.v.*), which J. Mortimer Woodcock (*q.v.*) acquired in 1944 and closed in late 1960s. Woodcock, a trained forester and first selectman from 1967-71, had been an Outpost manager.

Woodford, Dr. Francis Bowditch, (1897-1977), a native of New Haven and Yale Medical School graduate who served in the Army Air Corps in WW1, was a

family physician in Ridgefield from 1926 to 1977. He delivered as many as 35 babies a year – often in their homes. He was town health officer, 1940-70, and school physician. For many years he practiced from his home at 325 Main Street. He was married to Julia Smith Woodford (*q.v.*). [WWW]

Woodford, Julia Smith, (1900-1989), a native of New Jersey and Wellesley College graduate, was a conservationist and first chairman of the Conservation Commission. She was on the WW2 Ration Board, was first chairman of the Thrift Shop, and was active in garden clubs, Republican Town Committee, District Nursing Association. She was married to Dr. Francis B. Woodford (*q.v.*). [NR]

Woodland Way runs parallel to Bennett's Farm Road at the Ridgefield Lakes, developed originally in the 1930s. The Henrici map of 1958 shows it connecting to Mountain Road on the north. [RN]

Woodlands was the name of the estate of the Biddle family at 306 Branchville Road, corner of Old Branchville, property later owned by Roos and Ablon (*q.v.*) families. The name appears on a 1950s real estate brochure for the 41-acre estate that included a 14-room main house, superintendent's and guest cottages, and barn with garage. [JFS, Bedini archive, SR1916]

Woodlawn Drive, a short, dead-end road off the north side of upper Branchville Road, was developed around 1960 by Joseph P. Coffey Sr. (*q.v*.). It became a town highway in 1963. In 1985, 430 additional feet were added. [RN]

Woodpecker Hill was the name of the homestead of Louise D. Peck *(q.v*.).

Wood's Gulf, so called by 1731, is the valley at the intersection of Silver Hill Road with the two Wilton Roads, particularly Wilton Road West; an old meaning of the word "gulf" is a deep hollow or chasm. It was probably named for Titus Wood, early farmer who had land there by 1731It was last mentioned in land records in 1792 [RN]

Woodstone Road runs off the east side of Danbury Road north of Fox Hill condominiums, through a stone wall and into a wood, serving a 1953, five-lot subdivision of 6.6 acres by William Mannion. [RN]

Woodworks, The, a custom woodworking, interiors and repair business operated by Glen Brelling, opened in 1981at 32 Bailey Avenue. [P9/17/1981]

Woody Place, a private road at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), runs off the west side of Mountain Road to a dead-end at Rainbow Lake. It has been designated a Scenic Road. [RN]

Woolen Factory: *See* Cain's Mill.

Woolworth's was a "five & dime store" opened in Donnelly Shopping center ca. 1960 and which closed October 1993. For a while, it was the only local source of small "pets" such as birds, fish and turtles. It also featured a popular lunch counter. [JFS]

Wooster, Gen. David, (1710-1777), Yale 1738, was the first major general in militia of Connecticut. In April 1777 he had hurried from New Haven to fight the British troops attacking Danbury, but arrived April 27 as British moved through Ridgefield on way to their ships on the Sound; with several hundred men, he surprised a British lunch encampment near the intersection of North Salem and Barlow Mountain Roads, inflicting heavy losses. However, he was wounded and taken to Danbury where he died May 2 in a house now part of Scott-Fanton Museum. [RN] A small monument along North Salem Road (Route 116) just south of the lower Tackora Trail intersection, marks the spot where he was mortally wounded.

A 30-foot monument to him was dedicated in Wooster Cemetery, Danbury, April 7, 1854. [RT]

Wooster Heights is a 1963 subdivision of 21, one-acre lots from 25 acres by Orrin and Marion Beers (*q.v.*), and is served by Wooster Heights Drive and Settlers Lane. [RN]

Wooster Heights Drive runs between North Salem Road and Settlers Lane (*see* Wooster Heights). It was named for Gen. David Wooster (*q.v.*), mortally wounded nearby. [RN]

Wooster Street, which runs between North Salem Road and North Street, was named for Gen. David Wooster (*q.v.*), mortally wounded near the North Salem Road end. *See also* Cross Street. [RN]

Workman, David W., (1875-1938), was a longtime editor of *The Ridgefield Press.* He joined the company in 1900 and was made editor in 1904, serving until 1932, when the paper was sold. He gradually converted the newspaper to all local news, dropping much earlier "boilerplate" regional and national news. He became in the 1930s a village constable, an armed policeman assisting the state police, and was also this district's state forest fire warden for 20 years. [NR]

World of Flowers opened at Copps Hill Court in December 1987. [P12/17/1987]

World War I: A total of 172 Ridgefielders served in World War I [RIR]. Two were women: Muriel Abbott and Mary A. King, both nurses (*q.v. each*) [Rockwell] Four died in the service: William James Cumming, Robert E. Dunlop, Carlo Scaglia, and Everett Ray Seymour (*q.v. each*). [TDTC]

World War II: Nearly 500 men and six women from Ridgefield enlisted in the service during this war. Bedini lists 17 who died. The service people were about 17% of the town's population; the men among them represented close to one third of the adult male population of the town. During the war the Lions Club had a "Roll of Honor" at the northwest corner of the Town Hall property, listing all the service people. The names were later transferred to a memorial on the wall of the first floor hallway in Town Hall. *See also under* Ridgefield Ration Board, airplane spotting posts, Red Cross, American Women's Voluntary Service.

Wray, Mary A., (1804-1892), was born Mary Retan in Ridgefield, the second of seven children of Harmon Retan and Chloe Lobdell. In 1826, she married John Albert Wray, who died in 1859. Shortly after her marriage, Wray made her debut as a dancer at the Chatham Street Theater in New York City. She moved to the dramatic arts, and was noted for her performance as Lady Macbeth alongside Edwin Forrest at the Walnut Street Theater in in Philadelphia. She performed at the Old Bowery Theater in New York City, where she supported Junius Brutus Booth, the father of Edwin Booth. She also toured the southern U.S. In 1848, she became a member of the Seguin Opera Company. She retired in 1864. Her son, known on the minstrel stage as "Billy Wray," died when the luxury steamship "Evening Star" sank in 1866 in New Orleans. Wray moved to her "country" home in Queens, NY, purchased by Billy. When she died, she was considered the oldest American actress. [JFS, W]

WREF: The AM radio station went on air March 11, 1985, at 850 kHz, founded by Bartholomew T. Salerno (*q.v.*) to provide local news and programming. Its 180-foot antenna was erected in 1983 at the north edge of the old town dump in Great Swamp (prompting the station's nickname, "Swamp Radio").

[P1/6/1983] The financially ailing station was sold to Berkshire Broadcasting in 1996, ending local coverage. It became “oldies” station with programming from a distant network; call letters changed 2011 to WAXB (*q.v.*) and in 2020, the station began carrying contemporary Spanish music. WAXB shut down several years, but resumed in 2026. [JFS]

Wright, Ann, was an agent for many of the top actors and actresses in TV commercials. She lived on North Salem Road in 1980s. [P7/2/1981]

Wright, Neziah, (1804-1879), was an engraver and partner in Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson, which produced the first United State postage stamps (*q.v.*) in 1847 and later became the American Bank Note Company. His adopted daughter, **Jenny Wright**, was the wife of Gov. Phineas Lounsbury of Ridgefield. Neziah with Jenny is buried in the Lounsbury section of Ridgefield Cemetery, though he probably never lived here. [WWW]

Wright, William, (1917-2001), was a 17-year-old seaman from Ridgefield working aboard the Morro Castle, who rescued several passengers when his ship caught fire Oct. 15, 1934 and burned off New Jersey, killing 133. Later, as a member of the Merchant Marine, he helped transport 10,000 service men to the invasion of Casablanca in 1942. After 25 years at sea, he retired as a lieutenant commander and moved to Bethel. He worked for the Federal Correctional Institution in Danbury for 15 years. [NB1/9/2001]

Writers: *See under* playwrights, poets, authors

Wyckoff, Clarence P., (1881-1934), a native of NYC educated in England at Harrow and Cambridge, bought what became known as Iradell Farm (*q.v*.) around 1930. He was a wealthy Wall Street stockbroker and a member of the New York Stock Exchange and was married to actress Margaret MacDona Wyckoff (*q.v.*) [DD279]

Wyckoff, Margaret MacDona, (1884-1939), had been a celebrated actress before marrying in 1913 the recently divorced stockbroker, Clarence Wyckoff (*q.v*.). She and her family continued to maintain a home at what was later called Iradell Farm after his death, and son James continued to live here into the 1940s. [NY American 11/1/1913, NCA2/5/1942]

Wyden, Peter, (1923-1998), a journalist and author, wrote 15 books examining such 20th Century events and issues as the Holocaust, the atomic bomb, the Berlin Wall, mental illness, suburban youth, and the Spanish Civil War. Among the personalities he interviewed was Fidel Castro. His son is **Ron Wyden**, U.S. senator from Oregon for many years. [WWW, P11/24/1987]

Wyton, Alec, (1921-2007), a native of England, was a musician, composer and professor whose 40-year career included two decades as organist and choirmaster at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine. He composed over 100 works, oversaw the rewriting of the Episcopal hymnal, and earned national recognition in the field of sacred music. In 1987 he became minister of music at St. Stephen's Church (*q.v.*), and retired in 1997 at age 75. He also lived here. (His name is pronounced *WHY-ton*.) [WWW]

Wyton, Richard, was a young harpsichord maker with a shop at 614 Main Street in 1980. He studied flute making from SUNY Albany. [P6/12/1980]

Y

Yabbecomb, Gilbert, came from Wales, and by the late 1700s, was a town pauper. On Dec. 4, 1797, the Town Meeting authorized the selectmen to "repair ye roof of ye House where Yabecomb lives, at the town expense." Yabbecomb was nonetheless receiving a four-pound annuity from England until 1802 on property he owned at "Quarry Park." [JFS]

Yale University has over 3 centuries educated many Ridgefield notables, including: Dr. Daniel Adams, 1835; Henry B. Anderson, 1885; Lindgren Bancroft, 1938; Philip Burr Bradley, 1758; William Harrison Bradley, 1872; Rev. Samuel Camp, 1764; Richard Owen Carey, 1954; John P. Cooke, 1959; Charles A. Goodrich, 1812; E. Paul Hazel, 1966; John B. Hightower, 1955; Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll, 1736; Jonathan Ingersoll (II); Fielding V. Jackson; Rev. Samuel Johnson, 1714; Samuel "Lawyer Sam" Keeler, 1867; Dr. John Calvin Kendall, 1870; George E. Lounsbury, 1863; Henry R. Luce, 1920; Arthur J. McKenna, 1936; Daniel M. McKeon, 1928; Cyrus Northrop, 1857; Dr. David Perry, 1772; Rev. Samuel M. Phelps, 1831; Frederic Remington (left before graduating); Mark Salzman, 1982; Rev. Hugh Shields, Divinity 1919; Lemuel Aiken Welles, 1893; Max Wilk, 1941; John Downes Whiting, 1910; William W. Whiting (left before graduating); Dr. Francis B. Woodford, 1918.

Yanity, Elizabeth "Beth," (1930-), spent nearly 70 years in community service, holding almost every office in the Community Center, serving on the Conservation Commission, as president of Caudatowa Garden Club, and as a member and/or officer of League of Women Voters, Visiting Nurse Association, Keeler Tavern, Graveyard Committee, Girl Scouts, Red Raider cheerleaders, Boys and Girls Club, Norwalk River Watershed Association, Recycling Task Force, and Family and Children's Services. She helped establish Ridgefield's Rid Litter Day (*q.v.*). [NR]

Yanity, Dr. Peter V., (1927-2008), a Pennsylvania native and husband of Elizabeth Yanity (*q.v.*), was a Ridgefield dentist active in the community, serving 16 years on the Parks and Recreation Commission, most as chairman, and from 1989, 18 years on the Board of Selectmen. In the 1950s he was a founder and a coach of the Pop Warner Football program. He was president of the Lions Club, a director of the Boys Club and Chamber of Commerce, president of the Community Center, and was active in St. Mary's Parish. He was Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1988, and received the ROTA Civic Award in 1998. He served in the Army Air Corps, involved in atomic bomb testing. The public gym at old high school on East Ridge is named for him. The Yanitys lived at 531 Main Street, earlier the home of Dr. Russell Lowe and Dr. Edward Wagner (*q.v. each*). [WWW]

Yanity Gym was built 1959-60 to serve Ridgefield High School when it was on East Ridge. On May 25, 1959, during construction, five huge structural arches collapsed, delaying the project for months. The gym was later named for Dr. Peter Yanity (*q.v.*), longtime chairman of the Parks and Recreation Department, which oversees gym's use today. It is often employed as a polling place and is the location of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and many CERT programs (*q.v.*) The gym

replaced the first RHS gymnasium (*q.v.*), opened in 1939. [JFS]

Yankee Hill Road, a short roadway between Peaceable Hill Road and Minuteman Road at Colonial Heights (*q.v.*), became a town road in 1968. [RN]

Yankee Peddler Fair, an annual, early June church fair of Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church, beginning in 1961, was famous for its apple pies and barbecued chicken [P6/11/1981]. The last fair was in 2006. Like with the Nutmeg Festival (*q.v.*), the church had trouble finding enough volunteers to run the fair. [JFS]

Yankee Ridge, the shopping center at the south corner of Main and Prospect Streets, extending down Prospect to Bailey Avenue, was built in 1971-72. Paul Morganti (*q.v.*) was a major investor and the contractor. [JFS]

Yannuzzi, Regina, achieved a rare accomplishment Nov. 5, 1991, winning *two* seats on the Board of Education. She ran as a Democratic write-in candidate for a four-year seat and the party's nominee for a two-year seat; she took the 4-year term and was soon elected board chair. She later became administrative assistant to First Selectman Rudy Marconi. She married novelist and school administrator Paul Hazel (*q.v.*). They moved to Vermont around 2004 where she has been active in local government, including serving as a lister (assessor) and town meeting moderator. In 2025-26, she was chair of the Select Board (selectmen). [JFS]

Yardage Shop, The, at 423 Main Street in the 1980s, owned by Hal and Verna Childs, sold fabrics and sewing supplies. [DD290]

Yarn Bee, a popular yarn and sewing supplies store at 415 Main Street in the 1970s and 80s, was operated by Sarah and Arthur Kessler. [JFS]

Yervant, John, owned Fox Hill Inn (*q.v.*) from 1960 to 1971, and sold the property to IBM (*q.v.*). In the mid-1970s, he and wife Felice built a new Fox Hill Inn in Brookfield. Both had been theatrical dancers, "but a World War II injury turned Mr. Yervant from dancing to dining rooms." [NYT8/30/1974, JFS]

Yesterday's Collectibles, a shop selling baseball cards, comics, stamps, coins, antique toys and children's books at 19 Danbury Road [P12/18/1980], was operated by Alex Malloy around 1980. [CD1983]

YMCA: Ridgefield's first Young Men's Christian Association, active in the 1920s, apparently operated chiefly as sponsor of a religiously oriented group for high school boys, called Hi-Y. (*See also* Ridgefield Family Y.)

Youmans, Catherine Lee, (1821-1894), was a summer resident and widow of Professor Edward L. Youmans, founder of *Popular Science Monthly*. She was a major benefactor of the Ridgefield Library. [P8/31-9/7/1894]

Young, Mahonri, (1877-1957), a noted American artist and sculptor, married Dorothy Weir (*q.v.*), daughter of artist J. Alden Weir (*q.v.*) in 1931. He lived and worked for many years at the Weir farm on Nod Hill Road, now Weir Farm National Historic Park (*q.v.*). Among his best-known works is the massive "This Is the Place" Mormon monument in Salt Lake City, whose statues were created in Ridgefield. [WWW]

Young, Joseph F., (1905-1972), a native of Greenwich, moved here in 1910, went to Brewster on his marriage, and returned to town in 1966. He founded and operated Young's Feed Store (*q.v.*) and was active in the community, including in the Boys' Club and Kiwanis. [P10/19/1972]

Young, Stephen Howard, (1878-1972), was one of the world's wealthiest art dealers. From the late 1940s until his death, he owned an estate on lower Branchville Road, opposite Old Branchville, that included Candee's Pond

(*q.v.*). A business partner was his nephew, Francis Taylor, father of actress Elizabeth Taylor, who would visit the Branchville estate. Young's friend, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, then Columbia U. president, is said to have decided to run for U.S. president while visiting Young in Branchville. Young left millions to build a medical center in rural northern Wisconsin, where he often vacationed. In 2026, future development of his estate into multifamily housing was being considered. [WWW]

Young Ladies School, a private school for older local girls, was operating in the late 1850s, possibly under the auspices of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Such operations were called "select schools." [DAR1/7/1859]

Young's of Ridgefield was opened as **Young's Feed Store** on Catoonah Street in 1948 by Joe Young (*q.v.*) and supplied several types of animal feed to local farmers. John Couri purchased the business in 1978 and his son, Chris, was running the business in 2023 alongside Dan Rella. Today Young's focuses on fencing and property management. [OR]

Young's Pond is an early 20th Century name for a pond off the west side of Limestone Road. Maps in 1936 and 1952 show R. Young living at the south end. [RN]

Youth Assistance Committee, established in 1978 by the Youth Commission, gave confidential help to young people seeking advice on such things as drinking problems. John Katz was the leader. It morphed into the Ridgefield Youth Services Bureau (*q.v.*). [P5/26/1983]

Youth Employment Service (YES), based at RHS and sponsored by the RHS PTSA (*q.v.*), is a clearinghouse for jobs for teenagers, mostly students at the school. It has been operating since the late 1980s. [JFS]

Youth Commission, a 16-member appointed town agency, "ensures participation, planning and development by the community of youth services." The agency was created by the selectmen in October 1977. Minors may be members. [RP1]

Youth officer is a Ridgefield Police Department position, created in 1980 to handle cases involving children under 16 and to work on helping prevent youth crime. The first youth officer was Donald Monckton. [P6/19/1980]

Youth Services Bureau: *See* Ridgefield Youth Service(s) Bureau.

Y2K was a potential computer programming flaw in which two-digit year formats (e.g., "99" for 1999) would cause problems on Jan. 1, 2000, when the year "00" could be misinterpreted as 1900 instead of 2000. Some feared widespread problems, but massive efforts were made to update systems. Ridgefield agencies spent many thousands of dollars fixing software; no problems were experienced when Jan. 1, 2000 arrived. [JFS]

Yuan, an Asian cuisine restaurant at 470 Main Street in the early 21st Century, was replaced in 2023 by Brasserie Saint Germain (*q.v.*). *See also* Touchstones, Friar Tuck's, Sherlocks.

Z

Zack's Ridge: "Zack" was a nickname for Isaac, in this case, Dr. Isaac Hall of Fairfield, who in 1697 received from the Connecticut government a grant of 150 acres in what was to become Ridgefield but at the time was simply American-Indian territory north of Norwalk, according to Liljegren. Dr. Hall had requested 250 acres for his service as a surgeon during an unnamed war or campaign. [RN]

Zalla's Sportswear was a women's clothing store operated by James Zalla (1916-2002) and wife Catherine Carlucci Zalla, of Danbury. He started as a tailor shop at 446 Main Street (ONS139) in 1955; the store closed in 1981. [P1/29/1981]

Zallicoffers was an old, little-used name for Cooper Station (*q.v.*). [P4/8/1909]

Zandri, Frances: *See* Frances Strouse.

Zandri, Guglielmo M., "Pres," (1881-1976), a native of Italy, operated a shoe store on Main Street in the 1920s or 30s. He also owned the Big Shop (*q.v.*). Later he was custodian at First National Bank and town hall. He lived on Bailey Avenue at the corner of Big Shop Lane and was longtime treasurer of the Italian-American Mutual Aid Society. [DD59, AB p304]

Zandri, Levio, (1908-1998), a Ridgefield native, grew up on Bailey Avenue and taught commercial courses at Ridgefield High School from 1934 to 1969 and was active in the community. At RHS he was an award-winning adviser to the *Hilltop Dispatch* (*q.v.*) and often voted most popular teacher. He was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Guglielmo M. Zandri (*q.v.*). [DD59, P4/16/1969]

Zarember, Sam, (1821-1991), a noted photographer and commercial artist, graduated from Parsons School of Design and taught at the School of Visual Arts, Manhattan. Born in Zaremb, Poland, he lived in Ridgefield from 1980 until his death [JFS]

Zega, Alfred Francis, (1928-1986), was a concert baritone singer who lived on George Washington Highway with Edwin Liljegren (*q.v.*) in the 1980s.

Zemo, Stephen, Ridgefield village's most prolific and prominent late 20th/early 21st Century developer, is responsible for Copps Hill Common, 100 Danbury Road apartments, senior-oriented apartments at 76 Governor Street, 86 Governor Street, and 62 Prospect Ridge; and Bennett House on Main Street. In October 1972, he opened Ann Stephen's women's clothing store at Copps Hill Plaza (*q.v.*) and moved here in 1978. He served as a selectman from 1995 until 2004, and again from 2015 to 2019, and has been on the boards of many community organizations. (*See also* Zemo's Men's Store) [NR]

Zemo's Men's Store at Copps Hill Plaza, opened in October 1972, owned by Don Zemo, brother of Stephen Zemo (*q.v.*). [JFS]

Zieger, Clifford, (1906-1970), was an Eastern Airlines pilot with more than 30,000 hours in the air. He went to work on Wall Street in 1929, but in 1933, learned to fly and opened a small airport in Virginia. He was hired four years later by Eastern, for whom he flew international routes until 1966. In the mid-20th Century, he owned Spruce Ridge Farm at 484 Ridgebury Road; his son Clifford Jr. sold the farm in 2013. [NYT6/26/1970]

Ziegler, Electa Matilda Curtis, (1841-1932), a native of Schuylerville, NY, was an heiress who owned Hawley Cottage/Ashton Croft (*q.v. each*) at 207 Main Street from 1912 to 1924. She was a noted benefactor of the blind, publishing a magazine and books for the visually impaired, and founding the E. Matilda Ziegler Foundation for the Blind which has provided millions of dollars in grants for research into blindness. Her husband, William Ziegler (1843-1905), was a millionaire leader in the baking powder industry whose mansion on Great Island, Darien, became one of the most expensive estates in the nation. [WWW]

Zinsser, August, (1871-1948), a lawyer and Columbia graduate, was president of the Central Savings Bank in NYC from 1926 to 1936. When he retired in the late 1930s, he bought the former Reginald Lewis-Robert P. Scripps estate at 100 South Salem Road, calling it "Dunbanken." The house sold 1952 to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Ward of NYC. [JFS, DD146]

Zip Code: Ridgefield's, 06877, was first used in 1963. Georgetown was assigned 06829, but it does not include Branchville (as the 544-telephone district does). [JFS]

Zoning, the system of laws governing what kinds of uses are permitted on the land of a town, was adopted in Ridgefield in 1946 after years of battling over its merits. Opponents had felt it was an infringement on their right to do what they wanted with their own property while proponents said organized and orderly development benefited the whole town, in quality of life, health and safety, and in property values. The Zoning Commission, which oversaw the zoning regulations, was combined with the Planning Commission in 1966. *See also* Planning, Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Dr. Elwood Rogers.

Zoning Board of Appeals, an elected, quasi-judicial committee, can grant exceptions to the zoning regulations in cases where zoning laws cause hardships not of the property owner's own creation. It can also overrule enforcement decisions of the zoning enforcement officer. ZBA consists of five regular members and three alternates who are can replace any board member who is unable to attend a meeting, or who feels there is a potential conflict of interest. Members and alternates are elected for five-year terms; if a member's term ends during an even year, that election occurs in the prior year. [RW]

Zwierlein, Joseph Aloysius, (1895-1972)**,** a Bridgeport native and house painter, served more than 60 years in the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department. He was town dog warden for 30 years, served on the Police Commission for 10 years, and was on the Fire Commission. [NR, DD241, 242, 243 and 293]

Zyzzyva was an independent publication/newspaper at Ridgefield High School in 1973. The eight-page tabloid was edited by Chris Rowe and Geriann Williams. [P5/31/1973]

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SOURCES, SHORTHAND and ABBREVIATIONS

A: Ancestry.com
AB: *Impact: The Historical Account of the Italian Immigrants of Ridgefield, Connecticut,* by Aldo P. Biagiotti, 1990
AHR: G.A. Gilbert, "The Connecticut Loyalists," in the *American Historical Review*, p 273-291, Vol IV, no. 2, January 1899
AR: *About Ridgefield: What We Were, What We Are***,** published by the Ridgefield Design Council, 2002
ARR: *A Ridgefield Reader*, Red Petticoat Press, 2025.
ATM: Annual Town Meeting
BAILEY: *History of Danbury*, by James M. Bailey, 1895.
BC: *Brent Colley,* webmaster, HistoryofRedding.net
BEDINI, Silvio: Information from his book, *Ridgefield in Review,* 1958, or from correspondence.
BEERS: *Beers Atlas* of Fairfield and Westchester county towns, 1867
BFH: Bouton Funeral Home
BOR: *The Battle of Ridgefield* by Keith Marshall Jones III, Tucson, Ariz.: Connecticut Colonel Publishing Company, 2024.
BP: *Bridgeport Post*.
BSY: *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College*, by Franklin Bowditch Dexter, 1911.
BT: *Bridgeport Telegram*
BURR: *A Country Life in Old Ridgebury*, (Gilbert Burr's diary), Red Petticoat Press, 2023.
CBR: Coldwell Banker Real Estate advertising.
CBRFC: *Commemorative Biographical Record of Fairfield County*, J.H. Beers, 1899
CDA##: Connecticut Digital Archives and record number.
CH: *Connecticut Herald*, New Haven
CLARK: *Clark's map of Fairfield County*, large wall map published in 1856
CMCH: Connecticut Museum of Culture and History (formerly Connecticut Historical Society)
CPN: *Connecticut Place Names,* Connecticut Historical Society, 1976
CD####: City directory and year published (various publishers).
CTI: *CT Insider*, an online Hearst site.
DAR: Diary of Anna Resseguie, published as *A View from the Inn: The Journal of Anna Marie Resseguie*, Keeler Tavern, 1993.
DARE: *Dictionary of American Regional English*, 1985.
DAUB: Research done by David Daubenspeck for his histories of the houses on Main Street, High Ridge and East Ridge.
DB: Donna Barber, manager of St. Mary Cemetery
DD: *Dick's Dispatch*, 366 columns by Richard E. Venus, published in RP. # = column
DH: Ridgefield 2021 Equity Profile, DataHaven, New Haven, 2021.
DJN: *Diary of Jared Nash* by Jack Sanders, RidgefieldHistory.com
DNT: *Danbury News-Times* newspaper.
DOJN: *Diary of John Nash*, daily activities of a Titicus merchant in 1870, JFS ed.
FAG: FindAGrave.com, an online cemetery database.
FBFR: *Fascinating But Forgotten Ridgefielders,* Red Petticoat Press, 2023

FDM: Francis D. Martin
FoF: *The Farms of Farmingville* by Keith M. Jones, Ridgefield, 2001.
FVW: *Five Village Walks* by Jack Sanders, 2008
GAG: Gilbert, G.A., "Connecticut Loyalists," in *The American Historical Review*, Oxford University Press, Jan. 1899
G&B-150: Miller, Raymond and Phillip Knowles, *The Gilbert & Bennett Mfg. Co. 150th Anniversary, Georgetown*, 1968
GC: *God's Country*, history of Pound Ridge, N.Y., by Jay Harris, 1971
GM: Google Maps
GOODRICH: Samuel G. Goodrich, a/k/a Peter Parley, *Recollections of A Lifetime*, 1856. He was a son of RSSG. See also ROAL.
GSTK: *God Save the King* by Keith M. Jones II, 2025/2026
HAIGHT: *St. Stephen's Church, 1725-1975*, by Robert F. Haight, 1975.
HBJ: Hartford Business Journal.
HC: *Hartford Courant*, called *Connecticut Courant* in much of 18th & 19th Century.
HEARNE: Map by Hearne Brothers, Philadelphia, 1965
HG: *Haviland Genealogy, The*, by Josephine C. Frost, NY, 1914
HH: *Hamlet Hub* website covering Ridgefield (posts often undated)
HHR: *Hidden History of Ridgefield* by Jack Sanders, History Press, 2015
HLYB: *Here Lyes Ye Body*, by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2022.
HRI: Historic Resources Inventory, compiled in 1979 by the Ridgefield Preservation Trust members.
HS: Ridgefield Historical Society, 4 Sunset Lane.
HUDEN, *Indian Place Names of New England,* by John C. Huden, 1961
HURD: *History of Fairfield County* by Hamilton Hurd, 1881
IMDB: Internet Movie DataBase.
Impact: *see* **AB**.
ITH#: *Inside Town Hall*, a weekly electronic newsletter on local government and civic affairs produced by the Town of Ridgefield, with date of publication.
JAB: John Alexander Buckland, *The Wiechquaeskeck Indians of Southwestern Connecticut in the Seventeenth Century*, Heritage Books, 2002
JFS: Research by Jack Sanders (John F. Sanders), compiler of the encyclopedia.
JSD#: Johnson Street Directory and year of publication.
JW: Josette Williams, "Biographies of Revolutionary War Veterans in Ridgebury Cemetery," unpublished ms., ca. 2006
KFH: Kane Funeral Home
KMJ: Keith Marshall Jones III, author of *Farmers Against the Crown The Farms of Farmingville* and *The Battle of Ridgefield.*
KSN: Karl S. Nash, longtime editor and publisher of *The Ridgefield Press*.
KTM, KTM&HC: Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center.
L: Legacy.com
LCR *Index to Loyalist Connecticut Court Records, 1776-84,* Connecticut State Archives Archival Record Group (RG) #003.
LI: LinkedIn
Liljegren, Edward, historian of Ridgebury active in the 1970s, unpublished MS.
LMW: Lynn Marie Wieland, a Ridgefield archaeologist.
LOC: Library of Congress
M: *Memories*, autobiography of Laura Curie Allee Shields, Acorn Press, 1940
MK: Maureen Koehl, Lewisboro NY town historian
MR: Mark Robinson (*q.v.*)

Morris: *The Resseguie Family,* by John E. Morris, 1888
NA: National Archives
NB: *Newtown Bee* newspaper
NEHGS: New England Historic Genealogical Society
NEM: *New England Magazine,* Oct. 1895 issue
NG: *Norwalk Gazette*
NH: *Norwalk Hour*
NHR: *The New Haven Register*
NR: *Notable Ridgefielders,* published by Ridgefield Press, 2000
NY: New York
NYC: New York City
NYGXXXX: *New-York Gazette* and publication date.
NYT: *New York Times*, often with date of publication.
OED: *Oxford English Dictionary*, compact complete edition, 1971
OMS: *Ambling Along Old Main Street,* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2024
ONS###: Old Numbering System, i.e., street numbers used before 1969
OO: *Old Olmstead: A Little History of A Little Lane*, Red Petticoat Press, 2023
OR: "Old Ridgefield" group on Facebook.
P#/#/#: *The Ridgefield* Press with date of an issue providing more information.
PATCH: *Ridgefield Patch*, the website.
PC: Post card
POR: *Proprietors of Ridgefield* by Glenna Welsh.
PZC: Planning and Zoning Commission
R1935: *Ridgefield, Connecticut: A Charming old New England Town*, 1708-1935, promotional booklet published by Lions Club and Ridgefield Press.
RB#: *Ridgefield, Conn. 1708-1908 Bi-Centennial Celebration*, by the Bi-Centennial Committee, 1908. # = page.
RCC: Ridgefield Conservation Commission website
REP: *Ridgefield 2021 Equity Profile*, by DataHaven, 2021, ctdatahaven.org
RGE: *Ridgefield's Great Estates* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2023
RHS: Ridgefield High School
RIR#: *Ridgefield in Review* by Silvio Bedini, 1958. # = page
RIRA Ridgefield in Review Addendum, ed. by Jack Sanders, 2026
RK: *Ralph Keeler of Norwalk, Conn., and His Descendants*, by Westley Keeler, Albany NY, 1980.
RLR: Ridgefield land records in town clerk's office, often with volume number and page cited.
RLW: Ridgefield Library website
RN: *Ridgefield Names* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2022
ROAL: *Recollections of A Lifetime*, autobiography of Samuel G. Goodrich, 1856. *See also* Goodrich.
ROCKWELL, *History of Ridgefield by* George L. Rockwell, 1927.
ROTA: Ridgefield Old Timers Association, annual awards booklet.
RP: *The Ridgefield Press* newspaper. *See also* P.
RP1: "Ridgefield!", formerly *The Ridgefield Answer Book*, which appeared in *The Ridgefield Press*, 2017, Steve Coulter, ed.
RPC##: *Ridgefield Press* Centenary edition, published in 1975, #= page number.
RPJ#/#: *Ridgefield Press* Jubilee edition, 75th anniversary issue, 1950, section and page number.
RPT: Ridgefield Preservation Trust survey of historic buildings, 1979.

RS: White, Barbour, et al., *Record of Service of Connecticut Men in the Army and Navy of the United States during the War of the Rebellion*. Hartford, 1889
RSB: *Ridgefield Savings Bank Centenary* supplement to The Ridgefield Press, written mostly by Karl S. Nash, 1971
RSD##: Ridgefield Street Directory (various publishers) and year.
RSGG: Rev. S.G. Goodrich, Ridgefield in 1800, The Acorn Club of Connecticut, 1954. (He was the father of GOODRICH/ROAL.)
RT: *Ridgefield Timeline*, by Jack and Sally Sanders *et al.*
Rumsey: David Rumsey Map Collection, Stanford University.
RVFD: Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department
RVR: Ridgefield vital records, town clerk's office
RW: Ridgefield government website, ridgefieldct.gov
RWB: *Ridgefield Walk Book, by* Conservation Commission, updated periodically
SA: *Stamford Advocate*
Sanders: *See* JFS
SD: *School Days! Schooling and Schoolhouses in Old Ridgefield,* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2023
SHJ: *Scott House Journal*, periodical of Ridgefield Historical Society
SHPTC: *The School House at Pine Tree Corner*, North Salem, New York, 1784-1916 by Helen G. Trager, 1976
SNTS: *So Nobly They Served* by Jack Sanders, Ridgefield, 2023
SRXXXX-: Social Register and year, followed by edition; i.e., S for Summer.
STEWART: *American Place Names* by George R. Stewart, 1970.
T1933: 1933 Southern New England Telephone Company Directory for Ridgefield.
T1940: 1940 Southern New England Telephone Company Directory for Ridgefield.
TAL: *The American Loyalists, or Biographical Sketches of Adherents to the British Crown in the War of the Revolution,* by Lorenzo Sabine, Boston, 1847.
TCA##: Town and City Atlas of the State of Connecticut and year.
TCM###: Map filed in town clerk's office, with its number
TDTC: "They Died for Their Country," list by Jack Sanders, 2024
TELLER: *History of Ridgefield,* by Daniel Teller, 1878.
THOMPSON: *The First Settlement of Georgetown and the Schools its Children Have Attended*, Wilbur F. Thompson, manuscript, 1916.
TM: Town Meeting (i.e., Ridgefield's voters)
TRR: *The Ridgefield Reader*, Red Petticoat Press, 2025
UNM: *Uncle Ned's Mountain,* by Jack Sanders, Red Petticoat Press, 2026
USGS: U.S. Geological Survey
VENUS: Richard E. Venus, in his "Dick's Dispatch" (*see* DD)
W: Wikipedia
WBK: *Ralph Keeler of Norwalk and His Descendants*, Wesley B. Keeler, Vol. 1, 1980.
WGT: *We Gather Together,* a history of 300 years of the First Congregational Church of Ridgefield, by Rev. Charles Hambrick-Stowe, 2012
WHITNEY: Phoenix, S. Whitney, *The Whitney family of Connecticut and Its Affiliations* (3 vols.), New York, N.Y.:Bradstreet Press, 1878.
WR: *Wicked Ridgefield* by Jack Sanders, 2016
WU: *Weekly Update*, a weekly newsletter published digitally by the Town of Ridgefield. *See also* ITH
WW#: World War, either 1 or 2.
WWW: "Who Was Who in Ridgefield," series of profiles by Jack Sanders, RidgefieldHistory.com and in his books.