PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Our annual reunion is fast approaching, and a reservation form is enclosed with this newsletter. Note that, for ease of mailing, we have a single, two-sided form for dues/contributions, reservations and proxy voting. Please be sure to fill out both sides of the form. For details on the reunion schedule see the separate item on this page. Annual members, please send in your dues promptly to spare us the time and expense involved with follow-ups to delinquents. Our life memberships are a bargain at $350 ($200 for age 65 and older).

On the form we are asking again for special contributions for the Jean Hasbrouck House (see separate item about the house for details). As you’ll see on the form, we’re also looking to your generosity for contributions to our General Fund (which pays for our activities other than the Abraham House) and our Endowment Fund (the income from which feeds the General Fund). Our General Fund income is still insufficient to fund all the things we should be doing. Please mail back your forms to reach us no later than October 5, so that we can meet the caterer’s deadline for a luncheon headcount.

With the annual membership cycle starting in October, I’m also asking for your help in recruiting new members for HFA. Ask your relatives to join. Give memberships to your children and help them to develop an interest in their fascinating cultural heritage. The longer-term health of our organization depends on having younger members enthusiastic about carrying on its objectives as the older ones inevitably fade from the scene. As mentioned previously, a potential aide for interesting young people in their Huguenot origins is an issue of Calliope (a history magazine for children) devoted entirely to the story of the Huguenots (all in Europe except the last page, which features New Paltz). It’s available for $5.95 through the HHS Museum Shop. I found it interesting reading as an adult and would recommend it for about fifth grade and up. Call them at 845-255-4544 if you’re interested.

Robert W. Hasbrouck, Jr.

ANNUAL REUNION

Our reunion this year is on Saturday, October 13, in New Paltz. We will have registration, coffee/pastries and socializing beginning at 9AM in Deyo Hall. At 10AM HHS Executive Director Eric Roth will update us on what’s going on with HHS. At 10:45AM we’ll proceed to the French Church for our traditional short memorial service. Afterwards we’ll visit the Jean and Abraham Houses for an update on what’s happening and planned at each one. In between, we’ll be passing by an encampment of Civil War reenactors near the DuBois Fort and can stop for a quick look. At 12:45PM we’ll meet back at Deyo Hall for a group picture followed by lunch, a look back through HFA’s 50-year history, and our annual business meeting. We should be finished by 4PM. (Please make lunch reservations on the enclosed form.) The Huguenot Fellowship group will present a talk on Huguenot architecture from 5-6:30PM in the French Church. Locust Lawn will be open for public tours on Saturday and Sunday, but you won’t have much time for it on Saturday. The first tour each day starts at 11AM and the last at 4PM. Bring your HFA or HHS membership card for free house tours and a 10% discount (except on books) at the HHS Museum Shop.

If you are visiting Huguenot Street for the first time, we strongly advise you to spend at least one night here because the reunion will take up most of Saturday, and you will need at least one additional day to visit Huguenot Street. The houses can be visited only on guided tours and are closed Mondays. Feel free to contact us to help with your planning.
The Hudson Valley is full of beautiful scenery and tourist attractions; you can easily spend an entire vacation here.

Anyone planning an overnight stay should make reservations as soon as possible. The reunion is during the foliage season, and accommodations usually sell out early. New Paltz has three good motels: Super 8 (845-255-8865), EconoLodge (845-255-6200), Rodeway Inn (845-883-7373). You can also get information on bed & breakfast inns in the area (including a Hasbrouck house in Stone Ridge) from the Chamber of Commerce (845-255-0243).

Mark your calendars for October 13 and plan to come and find out about your extended family!

**MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Enclosed is our annual membership dues notice. If your mailing label has an L on it, you are a life member and owe no dues. If you think you are a life member and don't have an L on your label, contact our office for follow-up. Annual members who don't have 07 on their mailing label owe dues in arrears at $20/year as determined by the year on your label. Please send in your dues now; reminder notices are expensive! If you don't want to bother with annual dues, life memberships are $350 ($200 for age 65 and over).

If you wish to maintain your membership and feel you cannot afford the dues, please tell us your situation and request a waiver. We especially don't want to abandon long-time members whose current financial condition makes the dues a hardship.

Unlike the unincorporated family associations, membership in HFA does not include membership in The Huguenot Historical Society (HHS) although it does include all the benefits of HHS membership* except voting rights. If you want membership in HHS (and we encourage it), annual dues are $35 for individuals or $50 for families. You can send them a check at 18 Broadhead Avenue, New Paltz, NY 12561.

*Main benefits are (1) free house tours, (2) 10% discount at museum shop (except for books), (3) HHS newsletters, and (4) one free research request to HHS Library/Archives.

**OUR HOUSES**

**Jean Hasbrouck House**

The north wall has been restored and looks great, but much remains to be done before the house is ready to receive visitors again: interior restoration work, finalizing and implementing a furnishings plan, creating an interpretation plan based on self-guided tours, and working out details for implementing the plan. This work is not included in the original Jean Wall project, which covered taking down the wall and rebuilding it. The cost of all these steps is presently estimated at $125,000. Since it is a Hasbrouck house, it is only fitting that we should make a material contribution toward meeting these costs. Since this is the time for membership renewal and our annual fundraising appeal, we are designating this project as our top priority for the appeal and asking that you designate a special contribution for it on the enclosed multipurpose form.

Interior plastering on the north wall is underway with a crew of volunteers including five Frenchmen from Preservation Volunteers, a group from the Heritage Conservation Network, and a few New Paltz residents, all under the supervision of a master plasterer.

The final stage of the original north wall project is the installation of authentic-style leaded glass windows and related shutters. They will be constructed by an expert craftsman who works for the Metropolitan Museum of Art and should be in place by yearend. The entire Jean House restoration-to-reopening project is progressing, but at a slower pace than earlier anticipated, and it now looks as if the reopening will be next summer rather than in May.

The analysis of artifacts from the archaeology accompanying the north wall project should be completed this month. The analytic team will then start on the artifacts from the Abraham House.

**Abraham Hasbrouck House**

There are no new developments since the last newsletter. The house has been open for tours and has been doing well on moisture control even with a fairly wet summer. The analysis of artifacts collected around the house in the 2005 archaeology project should begin next month (see preceding paragraph).

**Locust Lawn (Josiah Hasbrouck House)**

An HHS task force (including HFA VP John Delamater) has convened to review the status of the Locust Lawn/Terwilliger House site and recommend a long-term course of action oriented toward making the site financially self-sustaining. This is a
challenging task in view of the property’s relatively isolated location, high cost of restoration/maintenance and limited support funds available. The houses are open for tours on weekends; but although knowledgeable preservationists extol Locust Lawn as a jewel, visitation has been sparse. (Saturday/Sunday tours are hourly – the first at 11AM, the last at 4PM. Sunday evening candlelight tours [7:00-8:30] are scheduled for September 16 and October 21.)

This summer the staff has been going through a collection of letters written by the daughters of Hylah and Levi (Josiah’s son, who had a greater influence on Locust Lawn than his father). Some of these letters have never before been reviewed by HHS. The collection will be used in conjunction with an exhibit planned for next year on needlework done by the women of Locust Lawn. A preview sample of these works was offered at the HHS annual meeting in June and attracted wide admiration for the high quality and intricate detail of the various objects.

HFA PRESIDENT REPRESENTS FATHER ON VETERANS TOUR

Our February 2006 newsletter highlighted the distinguished military career of Maj. Gen. Robert W. Hasbrouck, who during World War II led the 7th Armored Division through combat actions in the Netherlands, Belgium (Battle of the Bulge) and Germany. During a bitterly fought campaign in the southeastern Netherlands in Oct-Nov 1944 the Division liberated the town of Ospel at the cost of 49 of its men killed in action. Over 60 years later the people of Ospel still gratefully remember this action; and one resident, Harry Hendrix, who lived through it, together with his son Niek, brought to fruition their plan for a monument to honor the 7th Armored and particularly the men who made the ultimate sacrifice in freeing Ospel from the yoke of Nazi occupation. Their names are inscribed on the monument, which is topped by a helmet tipped downward to symbolize a soldier falling in battle.

Veterans at Ospel monument dedication with Harry and Niek Hendrix (2nd, 3rd from left) and US Military attache

The surviving 7th Armored veterans are all in their eighties or nineties now, but a small group of them went over for the monument’s dedication, accompanied by relatives of several of the men killed there. HFA President Bob Hasbrouck, Jr. joined
them, representing his father, the division commander, who died in 1985. Niek Hendrix organized a four-day bus tour for the group, starting with the monument dedication in Ospel on May 26, followed by visits to nearby battle sites at Meijel and Overloon, where the 7th Armored had fought. The dedication ceremony was attended by a crowd of local citizens and a Dutch veterans group as well as local and regional officials and the US Military Attaché to the Hague. On the following day the group had VIP seating for the elaborate Memorial Day ceremony at the large Margraten US Military Cemetery, which has over 8,000 graves, including some from the 7th Armored. Many civic and veterans organizations (including the 7th Armored) presented memorial wreaths, and there were tributes from high-level US and Dutch officials. Afterwards the group attended a large reception hosted by the mayor of Margraten and were introduced to the US Ambassador to the Netherlands. The last two days of the tour featured visits to 7th Armored battle sites from the Battle of the Bulge in eastern Belgium (see Feb. 2006 newsletter for details on this action). It included wreath-laying at existing monuments to the Division at St. Vith (site of the fiercest combat) and nearby Vielsalm (site of the Division headquarters).

What most impressed the tour participants was the still-existing reservoir of good will and gratitude felt by the Dutch and Belgian inhabitants of these areas for the men who had liberated their lands more than 60 years ago. Everywhere they went there were mayor’s receptions, luncheons, dinners and local historians to point out what took place and where, comparing notes with the veterans and their memories. At Margraten Cemetery local people have adopted individual graves to care for. Seeing the 7th Armored insignia on Bob Hasbrouck’s cap, one young man introduced himself and asked for information about the 7th Armored soldier whose grave he was maintaining. (The Division’s historian will be able to provide it.) And a small group of young US and Dutch soldiers volunteered to spend their Memorial Day weekend serving as the group’s honor guard for ceremonies at various locations on the tour. In contrast with the increased level of anti-Americanism in Europe in recent years, this tour was a heart-warming experience which made it an outstanding success for all involved.

DEWITT & MARJORIE HASBROUCK – A PRESIDENTIAL COUPLE

We received word from her daughter, Susan, that Marjorie Brenna Hasbrouck died on June 16. Due to deteriorating health she had not been active in HFA for some time, which is unfortunate because for
many years she and her husband, DeWitt Relyea Hasbrouck (who died in 1999), were among its most active members. In fact, by one measure their contribution was unique: they provide the only instance where both husband and wife were presidents of HFA. And Marjorie is the only person ever to be elected president who was not a direct Hasbrouck descendant – quite an achievement in itself! She was proud of her connection with the family and showed it in her commitment to HFA. They were both involved at an early stage. DeWitt appears on our records as a member in 1964. After Kenneth Hasbrouck orchestrated the formation of HFA in 1957 and served as its first president for 13 years, DeWitt succeeded him as our second president in 1970 until 1972 and remained very active in the Association for the rest of his life. Marjorie first became an officer (secretary) in 1979 and subsequently a vice president before being elected president in 1985. She served one year before Kenneth’s son Charles succeeded her but then took over again after Charles’s untimely death in 1987 and served two more years – the only HFA president to serve non-consecutive terms.

DeWitt, a ninth-generation descendant of Abraham, was born in Kingston, NY in 1917 and grew up there. His full name shows his connection with two other prominent area families. After high school he joined the Navy. He ended his enlistment in California in 1939 and remained there, taking college courses and working for Douglas Aircraft. Marjorie was born (1921) and raised in Grand Forks, ND. After she finished high school, she moved to California, where she and DeWitt met and wound up getting married in 1940. Their son, Michael, was born there in 1943.

In 1945 DeWitt’s family ties pulled him back to the land of his birth, and the family settled in High Falls (between New Paltz and Stone Ridge), where they built a house which is still in the family today. Daughter Susan was born in 1946, and DeWitt began a 25-year engineering career with IBM – Poughkeepsie, retiring in 1972. He served as a bloodmobile driver for the next ten years. After raising her children, Marjorie had her own career as a librarian in Stone Ridge from 1964 to 1990. They supported several local historical and conservation organizations (including HHS) and gave a conservation easement on 50 acres of their property to the Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy to ensure the preservation of its natural beauty. This busy pair each made a valuable contribution both to their community and to HFA. We miss their active presence and are still greatly in need of family members as devoted to our Association as they were.

A HASBROUCK REUNION IN NEBRASKA

In July descendants of Benjamin L. Hasbrouck (1881-1963) and Marie Jennie Van Cleave held a reunion in Elm Creek, Nebraska, where Benjamin, an 8th-generation descendant of Abraham, lived and farmed the land of his father, William. William’s father, Isaiah, was also a farmer and lived in the New Paltz area. William was born and raised there but was drawn to Nebraska (along with many others) by land grants of 300 acres offered to people who would farm the land and plant trees. (Earlier settlers had cut down most of the trees to build houses.) Benjamin was born in Bradshaw, NE in 1881. He married Anna Stage Jelinek in 1906, and they had five children before she died ten years later in a kitchen accident.

In 1921 he married Marie Van Cleave, whose ancestors emigrated from the Netherlands to New Utrecht on Long Island (NY) in the mid-1600s. The first American-born (in 1678) Van Cleave, Isbrandt, married Jennetje Vanderbilt, whose nephew Cornelius initiated the Vanderbilt dynasty. (The family still has a set of Vanderbilt silverware.) Isbrandt started the family’s western migration in a small way, moving to southern New Jersey. Subsequent generations continued westward through Ohio, Kentucky and Illinois before Marie’s grandfather settled in Nebraska.

Benjamin and Marie had ten children between 1922 and 1937, and they in turn have produced enough descendants to provide a large turnout at periodic family reunions. (The family line has continued to spread westward with members now in Texas, Colorado, Oregon and California.) The reunions have been held for many years. Attendance
has generally been in the hundreds. This year it was unusually light but included a wide spread of generations from small children up to the two most senior — a daughter of Benjamin and Marie (Doris Yonker) and a daughter-in-law of Benjamin and Anna (Arlene Hasbrouck). The participants enjoyed games, genealogy swapping, a pot luck dinner and a cemetery visit to the graves of Benjamin & Marie and other relatives. The next of these reunions is scheduled for July 2010.

No one went hungry at the Nebraska reunion

THE GUILFORD HASBROUCKS AND THEIR HOMESTEAD(S)

Guilford Farm – 1st house (circa 1706)

In 1706, at age 22, Joseph Hasbrouck, the eldest son of Abraham the Patentee, married Elsie Schoonmaker and looked about for a place to set up housekeeping and start a family. He eventually purchased the 2,000-acre Guilford Patent (originally established in 1684) along the Wallkill River 5 miles south of New Paltz (now in the Town of Gardiner). He built an unpretentious but sturdy stone house on the river (see illustration) and created a farm on the adjoining land. We don’t have much information about Joseph except that he served in several public positions in Ulster County and was recorded as being a county justice in 1722. He died in 1724 (age 40), but during their years together at Guilford, Joseph and Elsie produced ten children.

Joseph willed his house and lands to his eldest son, Abraham, who was 17 at the time; but Elsie retained life occupancy of the house, lived another forty years and raised all ten children there — a considerable achievement in that isolated location. Abraham retained title to the property, but in 1735 he moved to Kingston, became a merchant, and lived there until his death in 1791. He was a prominent citizen there — a 20-year member of the Provincial Assembly, member of the State Senate in 1781, and colonel/commander of the 1st Northern Ulster County Regiment. He kept a detailed diary of family and area events which is credited with being one of the most comprehensive chronicles of the era in Ulster County. (This diary is reproduced in Kenneth Hasbrouck’s Earliest Records of the Hasbrouck Family in America, available from HFA. Its first part contains the most authentic information we have — though frustratingly incomplete — about our family’s European origins.)

The most illustrious of Joseph’s other nine children was the youngest, Jonathan, who moved to Newburgh, bought and enlarged a stone house there, married Tryntje DuBois and served as a colonel (and friend of George Washington) in the Revolutionary Army until his death from kidney stones in 1780. Washington used Jonathan’s house as his headquarters in 1782-3, and it became New York State’s first official state historic site. (HFA’s booklet on Jonathan and his house is available from our office.)

Under the care of Elsie and her children the Guilford farm prospered. In 1765, the year after her death, it received the highest tax assessment in the entire New Paltz Precinct. Abraham then had his oldest son, Joseph (1743-1808), run the property. According to early New Paltz historian Ralph LeFevre, the farm served during the Revolutionary War as a supply depot for the federal army in the area (but there is no documentary evidence of it). Joseph became a lieutenant colonel in Colonel Cantine’s regiment. After the war, he became a general in the militia and was known thereafter as “General Joe.” He was active in politics as well, serving as New Paltz town supervisor, member of the Assembly and state senator. Joseph inherited the farm at age 49 and continued to live there. Around 1798 he built a slightly larger (55’x28’), more elegant brick and stone house not far from the earlier one.
The property’s tax assessment that year was again the town’s highest. (The assessment also recorded that Joseph had 12 slaves – 8 male, 4 female -- subject to taxation.) The new house was one of only four out of 300 in the town audit that used brick as a wall material. It was an expensive material and showed the owner’s wealth as well as his attention to avant garde design. This was a house befitting Joseph’s prosperity and high standing in the community.

Joseph died in 1808 without a will, and his estate was distributed in equal shares to his seven surviving children. By this time the children were breaking away from the traditions which had kept them associated with rural occupations and with New Paltz. His oldest son, Abraham, became a wealthy businessman in Kingston. (He was profiled in our Feb. 2000 newsletter.) The second son, Lewis, became a lawyer in Ogdensburg. The third became a doctor in Utica. The fourth son, another Joseph, bought his siblings’ interest in the Guilford property and remained there. By that time the 2,000 acres had been divided among heirs and pieces sold, reducing it to about 300 acres, a size which was then maintained until 1973.

Like his father, this Joseph (1781-1853) also received a commission in the state militia (he became known as “Colonel Joe”) and served briefly in the State Assembly (1801-4). The farm continued to prosper, and the 1850 census assessed the property at more than five times the average of its neighbors. However, around that same year disaster struck. Joseph’s house was destroyed by fire. Undaunted, the family moved to a tenant house at nearby Locust Lawn (almost certainly the Terwilliger House) while building a substantial new brick house on the site. Like its predecessor, this house had a two-story, center hall plan; but its design was very different from the stone house tradition. It was an elite country house – restrained but up-to-date and tasteful in every detail. It became known as the Guilford Bower Farm. It was an elegant but plain house – fitting with its owner’s wealth and status but still a farm house. But Colonel Joe died before it was completed. His widow, Jane, continued to live there until her death in 1870. Title went to the eldest son, Joseph L., who also lived there with his family, and to his bachelor brother, Josiah, who lived there but died in 1859, leaving Joseph L. with sole title. He ran the farm until his death in 1889, after which it was shared by his widow, Hannah (died 1902), their son Joseph Louis, and daughter Sara with her husband, the Rev. Calvin Lasher.

Joseph Louis ran the farm successfully until he died in 1924, and Sara and her husband both died soon afterward, leaving no family heirs. A relative, Joseph E. Hasbrouck, Jr. (who was executor of Sara’s estate), bought the farm in 1926 with the idea of moving there, but his wife objected that it was too far from town for her. So he sold it the next year to Hutchins C. Bishop of New York City, thus ending 221 years of Hasbrouck family ownership.

That same year Bishop sold the farm to St. Philip’s Episcopal Church in Harlem, which opened Camp Guilford as a summer respite for mostly black children from the city. In 1936 the Church sold the property to the Children’s Aid Society, which renamed it Camp Wallkill and continued to run it for disadvantaged children. The Society progressively replaced farm buildings with camp buildings while adapting the house as camp headquarters and infirmary.

In 1973 the camp closed, and the property was sold to GN Development Corp., which subdivided it, creating a vineyard (now Rivendell Winery), and partitioned the house with 54 acres of land. The rest of the farm became house lots. The house stood vacant for 15 years until it was bought, restored and occupied by Karl and Ann Rodman. In 1999 the house and its remaining land were listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since 2000
it has been owned and occupied by Martin and Kathy DeAngelis. Despite its multiple uses over the last few decades, it remains a distinctive example of the mid-19th century transition in Hudson Valley architecture away from the traditional stone houses of an earlier era. If you’re in the area, you can see it at 707 Albany Post Road in Gardiner.

(This article is based on research by Neil Larson for the National Register listing.)

THE STORY BEHIND THE THIRD PURPLE HEART

Our June newsletter article on the Purple Heart and its origin referred to the fact that, while only three awards were documented in 1783 and two were made at the initial ceremony at the Hasbrouck House in Newburgh on May 3, the third was so unusual that it deserved extra coverage. Here is what happened.

Daniel Bissell from East Windsor, CT enlisted in 1775, at age 21, in the Revolutionary Army. In August 1781 he was paymaster sergeant in the 2nd Connecticut Regt. when General Washington selected him for a top secret spy mission. It was intended to be brief. On the pretense of cutting wood for the Crown, Sgt. Bissell – posing as a royalist – was to obtain a pass onto British-held Long Island to scout enemy troop and ship positions and meet up with a boat to return on the 7th or 9th night. He accomplished his mission but missed his return boat and so enlisted in (now British) General Benedict Arnold’s corps to avoid being pressed into the Royal Navy. He became deathly ill with “bilious colic” and received treatment in a British hospital. He was not judged fit for duty until the following May, then assigned to a light duty job in the quartermaster office. For four months he recorded troop movements based on where supplies were being sent. When in danger of being caught with the papers, he committed them to memory. In September 1782, more than a year after his mission began, he finally had the opportunity to escape. He spent one night in a swamp up to his neck with his accomplices to evade a search party, took a boat and its owner hostage, waited for a break in the half-hourly British patrols, and then rowed to New Jersey. After getting through American lines, he went to Washington’s headquarters (the Jonathan Hasbrouck House in Newburgh) where he accurately dictated seven pages of notes with all the minute details he could remember and also made maps and drawings. This was the basis for his award of the Badge of Military Merit (later renamed the Purple Heart) on June 10, 1783 – 5 weeks after the first two awards.

This remarkable act of bravery should have made Bissell a hero for life, but the legendary bungling of the federal bureaucracy – already firmly established in those days – intervened with cruel results. Since Bissell’s spy mission was known only to General Washington, his unit had no knowledge of why he disappeared and declared him a deserter. His reappearance and decoration by Washington seemingly settled that issue. Bissell was discharged after the war; he moved first to Vermont and in 1806, to Ontario County, NY with his wife and nine children. Lightning struck his house and burned it down in 1813 while he and his family were at church; so by 1818 when he applied for a federal pension at age 64, he was in "reduced circumstances" and badly in need of assistance. Amazingly, the military records had never been corrected, and he was still listed as a deserter! His own records were lost, and apparently his Badge was destroyed in the 1813 house fire. Even with supporting letters from two of the late General Washington’s former aides, his application was denied! Later the decision was reversed, and he received $8 a month. In 1820 he was required to itemize a "declaration of worth", which put his grand total at $57.25. He died four years later at age 70. In 1876 his home town of East Windsor sent a delegation to decorate his grave in Allens Hill, NY and secured an amendment to the muster roll still listing him as a deserter. Looking at what has befallen many of our veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, the bureaucracy hasn’t improved appreciably since then!

(This article is based on a paper by Michael J. Clark, Site Manager of the New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site.)

We welcome our new members:
Nancy Dobler, Lake Welch, FL
Barbara Kluberg, Avon Park, FL
John N.Kluberg, Georgetown, TX
Patricia Touchton, Tampa, FL
Katherine Willingham, Gainesville, GA

We have received notice of the following member death:

Marjorie B. Hasbrouck