BEECHMONT BUGLE

Official Newsletter of the BEECHMONT ASSOCIATION

Editor: V. Stanionis

SUMMER ISSUE August 2020

Beechmont Flagpole and Flag Restored

The Beechmont Association By-Laws require a general meeting each year. The Mission Statement of The Beechmont Association reads as follows: **The Beechmont Association was organized**

Pres. Victor Stanionis and V.P. Philip Holmes

in 1904 for the purpose of improving and beautifying Beechmont and protecting the community interests of its residents. It was incorporated June 9th, 1908.

According to the first recorded Minutes of the Beechmont Association, Eugene Lambden, J.F. Dwyer, and R. L Skofield met on the lawn at the junction of Beechmont Drive and Montgomery Circle at 8:30 am, July 4, 1904, "for the purpose of raising the flag over the property and the further purpose of organizing an association of the residents of Beechmont." Last year on July 4, 2019, with the newly installed flagpole, donated by the Thornton Donovan School and Headmaster Douglas Fleming,

Headmaster Douglas Fleming

a new flag was raised on the site by President Victor Stanionis and Vice President Philip Holmes.

Mr. Hugh Stuart, an army reservist, played "To the Colors" on his trumpet as the flag was raised and was followed by Ms. Bettye Malone who sang the "Star Spangled Banner" (in her operatic voice), at the 10 am dedication. Councilman Barry Fertel was also able to attend and say a few words and others running for election, Sara Kaye, were there.

In the photo below, is a picture of Mrs. Gordon who lives near the entrance to Beechmont Drive. She is a sculptor who built her house at its present location with her husband in 1941 and moved-in, in 1942, 77 years ago. At 97, she is simply amazing.

New President of The Beechmont Association

After serving as President of The Beechmont Association for 31 years, Victor Stanionis, Ph.D., stepped down and the Vice President, Philip Holmes of Montgomery Circle, became the new president. Stanionis, who first became president succeeding Bob Schaefer in 1980, was replaced two years later by Glen Mules. He was then succeeded by John Williams, and then Ronnie Patience. In 1991, Stanionis became president again and has served since then until today, thirty-one years altogether. Philip Holmes has lived in Beechmont for five and a half years, after moving to New Rochelle from Connecticut, where he was born and raised.

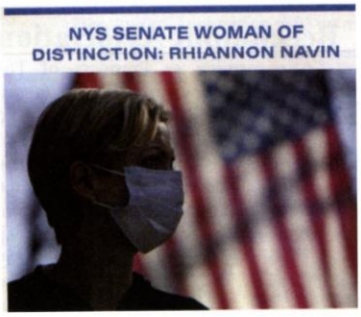
Philip Holmes

He joined The Beechmont Association in 2015, became an Advisory Board member in 2016, and Legal Board member in 2018. He also became Vice President in 2018. Philip has been the Director, Head of CMBS Underwriting, Citi Global Markets, Inc. for the last 17 years, a large lending institution in New York City. He has a Bachelors in Business from North Texas and a Masters in Land Development from Texas A&M.

Philip is married to his wife Jill, who was the art teacher at the Holy Family School in New Rochelle. They have three grown children. His interests include skiing, gardening, and physical fitness. Both Phil and Jill were originally attracted to Beechmont because their middle son went to Iona College for his undergraduate and graduate degrees. He enjoys his neighbors, the classic and diverse architecture of the neighborhood, and looks forward to continuing to advance and protect the uniqueness of Beechmont.

Beechmont People in the News

Rhiannon Navin is named a NYS Senate "Woman of Distinction"



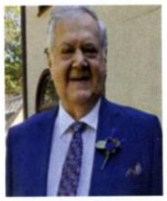
Beechmont Resident Rhiannon Navin was named a NYS Senate Woman of Distinction. Nominated by NYS Senator Shelly Mayer from the 37th District for her work in leading food distribution efforts in New Rochelle during the Corona Virus Pandemic. Mayer states that when New Rochelle became the first COVID-19 hot spot in New York in March 2020, Rhiannon became involved in helping community members most impacted by the virus. As part of a team at Westchester Community Opportunity Program (WestCop) she worked tirelessly to feed families in need. She helped shop for and assemble 60,000 lunches in the first month, filled pantry bags containing more than 320,000 pounds of groceries, and distributed 1,300 school lunches per day. Rhiannon donated countless hours and thousands of dollars to ensure New Rochelle families were fed. She was also featured guest on a Zoom lecture sponsored by the New Rochelle Library Foundation where she spoke about her book, "Only Child."

In the first virtual **Cocktails & Conversation**-sponsored **by** the NRPL Foundation entitled **"The Great Escape,"** she appeared with author and moderator Amy Bass, writer Brian Brown, literary agent Stuart Krichevsky. and publisher Pamela Dorman.

Rhiannon grew up in Bremen, Germany. Her career in advertising brought her to New York City where she worked for several large agencies before becoming a full-time mom and writer. Rhiannon's debut novel "Only Child" became an international best seller and was published in 20 languages. **Only Child** has elicited publishing deals in the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Poland, China, Spanish/Portuguese territories, Greece, and Israel with auctions pending in Germany, France, Italy, and Brazil. The family lives on Pryer Place.

Dr. Glen Mules is New Webmaster for **Beechmont.us**

Beechmont Drive resident, Dr. Glen Mules, is the new webmaster for the Beechmont webpage, **Beechmont.us**. He succeeds Martin Friedrichs.



Glen is a 2014 Ph.D. recipient from Walden University in Minneapolis, MN. He received a B.Sc. in Pure and Applied mathematics in 1962 from the University of Adelaide, South Australia, and an MS in Computer Science in 1973 from the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. From July 2001 to June 2015 he served as Principal Consultant and Senior Instructor at IBM in NY.

Since 2018 he has been an Instructor in the MS Data Analytics program at San Jose University in CA and an Adjunct Professor of Computer Science at Iona College from August 2015 to the present.

Iona Reopened on August 10

Seamus Carey, Ph.D.

Iona opened its first week on August 10 online. Transition to in-person instruction started on Monday August 17. Subsequent weeks will in a hybrid format with social distancing for students electing to come in person to classes and online for those who so choose. Accommodations were also made for faculty with underlying medical conditions. Students will not return to campus after Thanksgiving break.

This schedule advances the semester by three weeks to minimize student travel and exposure during the fall semester. The traditional fall break has been canceled. Labor Day, Columbus Day, and Veterans Day will be considered non-holidays and classes will be held on those days.

President Seamus Carey, Ph.D., is a national leader in higher education, who has been vocal on the relevance and importance of a liberal arts education. Carey also was an effective leader at Sacred Heart University, where he served as Dean of Arts and Sciences for four years. Prior to Sacred Heart, he was Chairman of the Philosophy Department at Manhattan College where he taught for nine years. With each role, Carey has focused on ensuring students' experiences incorporate studies of the liberal arts and make them career ready.

A Bronx native and first-generation college student, Carey earned a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Master of Arts from Fordham University, and a bachelor's degree from Vassar College. He attended Harvard's Management Development Program and the Executive Leadership Academy sponsored by the Council of Independent Colleges.

A devout Catholic, Carey, is married to his wife, Noreen. He attended Mt. Saint Michael and she attended St. Barnabas, Catholic high schools in the Bronx. They have three children.

'Containment Area' Is Ordered for New Rochelle Coronavirus Cluster

Source: The New York Times
Published March 10, 2020; Updated March 19, 2020

The National Guard moved in. Schools, churches, and synagogues were shut down. Large indoor gatherings were officially banned in March.

The sights and rituals of life in this New York City suburb and in Beechmont, which was partially located in the zone, changed when Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announced this drastic new step to try to control the spread of the corona virus in the largest cluster in the United States at the time.

INSIDE THE CONTAINMENT ZONE
State officials created a one-mile radius "containment area" in New Rochelle, a move that echoed measures taken in other health crises. The midpoint of the zone was a synagogue that was at the center of the state's worst outbreak.

At the time there were more than 1,000 cases of the virus in the United States, including more than 170 in New York, which had the third-highest total among states after Washington and California at the time.

Mr. Cuomo's decision appeared to be geared toward stamping out a disease by eliminating close contact among large numbers of people in an area just north of the nation's largest city.

Members of the state National Guard were deployed to New Rochelle to clean schools, and to deliver food to quarantined residents and thousands of students who faced several weeks at home without free or reduced cost meals. Mr. Cuomo closed large gathering places in the containment area, including schools, community centers and houses of worship.

Cuomo did not close streets or impose travel restrictions in the zone, he said, that he was only "containing facilities" where the virus might spread. "But I want to emphasize that the guard is here to help us," he continued. "They are not here to provide a military function. They are not here to provide a policing function. New Rochelle is not on martial law."

BEECHMONT LAKE Project Continues

A major capital improvement project scheduled for Beechmont Lake to preserve its natural beauty and restore its ecological health is slowly proceeding. Fred Wiener, Beechmont Association's chair of the Beechmont Lake Committee, reported that several of the performance milestone dates have been missed resulting in the City starting to enforce the liquidated damages provided for in their contract. At this point, the completion date is now being targeted for the end of November, although Alvaro Alphonso, the Assistant City Engineer, said that we should "take that with a grain of salt".

Beechmont Lake

Mr. Alphonso said that the construction of the forebay would begin on August 17 and that the fountains would be installed permanently in late October. Installation of the pathway around the lake would begin around October 26 and the City hopes that most of the plantings would be done before the onset of winter, but otherwise in the early spring of next year.

Possible dates for a neighborhood tour of the work site were suggested for November. Based on the schedule of the work, Fred requested that the tour be done sooner, since by the end of November most of the work will (hopefully) be completed.

The improvements will include dredging, adding native plantings, removing dead and diseased trees, redesigning the forebay, adding a flexi-pave nature trail, educational signs and new park benches. A third fountain will also be added, forming a triangular design on the Lake. A landscape contractor will be doing the site landscaping work. Beechmont Lake, received a $1.1 million allocation, beginning with $100,000 in 2017 to fully design a long-awaited dredging project: Restoration, however, is coming in at a higher cost than expected.

Fred Wiener

House Numbers for Emergency Identification

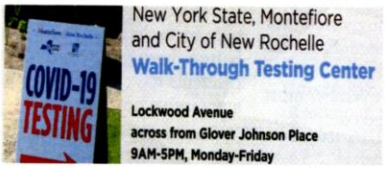
Even in this day of GPS devices it is important for police, fire departments, taxis, delivery services, and visitors to be able to easily locate and identify one's home by its house number. There are many homes in Beechmont which are unidentifiable because of missing, small, or worn out house identification numbers. The numbers should also be easily seen at night.

Many new residents have inquired about obtaining reflective house number signs. They are designed to identify a home both day and especially at night by using reflective numbers similar to the typical highway signs. The numbers must be four inches in height to meet standards for emergency identification.

Boardwalk Model

The house number signs come in many different styles: traditional, modern, antique in addition to the common "Boardwalk" model on a 48 inch pole with accompanying street name and are offered at www.addressamerica.com where many Beechmont residents have purchased their house number signs in the past.

However, it would be wise to have the pole securely anchored in a pail of cement before burying to deter vandals. Some residents have even coated their poles with automotive grease.

Beechmont Presidency
Stanionis - 1980-1982, 1991-2019

- **1977** – Appointed as Chair of Beechmont Lake Committee.
- **1979** – Computerized mailing list.
- **1980** – Elected President of **The Beechmont Association.**
- **1980** – Finalized gift of South Path to Iona.
- **1980** - Iona finalized use of Athletic Facility for Beechmont Association paid-up members.
- **1980** - City begins Beechmont Lake restoration, dredging with CETA funding.
- **1980s** Garden Committee organized to plant traffic islands with flowers.
- **1980s** – Began restoration of 12 stone pillars marking the borders of Beechmont at Montgomery Circle and Forest Place, The Esplanade and Antler, Ellenton and Claire, Pinebrook Road and Pell, and four at Aviemore Drive and Mountain Ave. Lanterns bought in Texas and bases fabricated in New Rochelle. Installed by licensed electricians and eight paid for by Beechmont Assn. and City, four paid in full by the Association.
- **1990** - Bronze Beechmont signs affixed to pillars
- **1990** - and large Beechmont signs at entrance to Beechmont Drive installed.
- **1990s** – Organized Annual Meetings as dinner dances in Clubs along Davenport Neck and at Iona College.
- **1993** - Opposed establishment of MacDonald's on North Avenue at entrance to Beechmont. McDonald's conceded to no drive-thru and a Georgian motif.
- **1995** – Received commendation from City for the Beechmont Association for improving the quality of life of its residents, beautification programs, and projects for **The Beechmont BUGLE**.
- **1997** - Landscaper hired to cut the grass and trim the planted bushes on twelve traffic islands in Beechmont.
- **2000** - Opposed establishment of regional IKEA in City Park area bordering Beechmont. Board stated it was a bad idea. Studies of traffic patterns indicated that traffic would increase on Beechmont Drive and Pinebrook Boulevard along with air pollution and an increase in noise.
- IKEA Parking at the New Rochelle athletic fields on Fifth Avenue would be used for overflow parking when 1763 car were expected for sales as opposed to the daily 1307 cars. For comparison about 587 cars per hour park at the Stop and Shop on Palmer Avenue. In addition, a traffic light was proposed for Beechmont Drive and Pinebrook Boulevard. The traffic study indicated that this would lead to a heightened sense of urbanism and activity contrary to features associated with a residential area. Beechmont formed **S.T.O.P.,** (Stop Taking Our Parkland), and organized neighbors in opposition to IKEA.
- **2002** - The Esplanade Island restored with six Kwanzan cherry trees, 14 Pfizer junipers, 6 princess spirea from Rosedale Nursery. Large boulders contributed by City and their placement supervised by landscape designer Donna Sanders. The $6000 cost was funded by the Association and fundraising amongst neighbors.
- **2005** - The City of New Rochelle issued a Proclamation to the Association declaring November 10, 2004, as **The Beechmont Association Day.**
- **2005** - Research finds LOST homes in Beechmont in old maps at City Hall.
- **2009** - The Beechmont Association map updated.
- **2009**- Committee for Historic Status for Beechmont report indicated most voting residents in favor of applying for historical status but opposition by a group of residents and Iona College caused it to be tabled.
- **2009** – Assembled email list of residents.
- **2009** – Established website for Beechmont with webmaster Martin Friedrichs.
- **2014** -Fund raising campaign in which residents, Iona, and the City contributed towards the $17,000 cost. Two Beechmont fountains installed in the Lake for aeration and aesthetics.
- **2016 - History of Beechmont from 1902-2016** compiled from old minutes, newspaper articles, old documents and maps, photos, etc. and published in a seventy-page booklet.
- **2017** - Published and edited a copy of the **City Realty Development 1902** brochure for Beechmont.
- **2017** – Edited and published pictures of Beechmont. homes from **New Rochelle in Pictures 1931.**
- **2019** – Restored and rededicated the flagpole originally erected at the founding of The Beechmont Association on July 4, 1904 at Beechmont Drive and Montgomery Circle.
- **2019** – Retired from Presidency.