

# newsletter

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## Mary Keehan Had Great Joy Being A Member of Ardsley American Legion Post #458 Women's Auxiliary Unit For Over 50 Years

By **THERESA DI STEFANO**

In 2008, Mary (Maureen) Keehan was one of the few remaining active members of the Ardsley American Legion Post #458 Women's Auxiliary Unit when she handed in its charter and flag to the Ardsley Historical Society for safekeeping.

For over fifty years, Mary was active in the Women's Auxiliary Unit of the Ardsley American Legion Post #458 which was located on Legion Drive in Ardsley.

During this time, her husband, George, a Korean veteran, was a member of this post and also served twice as its Commander.

Mary remembers with great fondness how the Auxiliary Unit, as part of the active Ardsley American Legion Post #458, was very active in numerous social events and service activities that assisted and cared for all veterans who participated in serving our country.

The Auxiliary Unit members met each month to organize and plan upcoming events that would entertain and, more importantly, would result in raising monies to be used for community services and veterans affairs that helped veterans and their needs. Some of these events were: Friday night social dances and dinners, champagne brunches, holiday dinners, Super Bowl parties, Hobo Nights, and New Year's Eve parties. Many of these events were held at the Ardsley American Legion Post #458 located on



**The Auxiliary had an Easter egg hunt and party each year for the community children. Photo courtesy of Women's Auxiliary Unit**



**Auxiliary Color Guard getting ready for an upcoming parade. Mary Keehan, Corine, Angie McCabe. Photo courtesy of Women's Auxiliary Unit**

Legion Drive where even Boxing matches and a Flea Market were held on the Post's parking lot.

Organizing these events took much time and energy. Often there was difficulty gathering enough monies and volunteers for these events. But, the Auxiliary members always managed to achieve what they set out to do. Usually the meetings would end with the members saying, "We can do it." And, without fail, the plans were achieved and met with great success.

The Auxiliary Unit also assisted the Legion in sponsoring Little League Teams, Football and Boxing programs. They ran Halloween parties and Easter Egg Hunts for the community's children. Loretta Plitnick was chairman for these events and never failed to turn out successful events. The Village merchants also donated funds and monies for events. Yogi from Sunydale was their biggest supporter. The Auxiliary had a junior group of 20 young women who helped with these parties, sold poppies and marched in parades.

Mary recalls that, "under Veterans Affairs, the Post and the Auxiliary Unit participated at Montrose Hospital once a month socials that could have been: a

# Mary Keehan CONTINUED

dance, dessert and social evening, a card party or an evening of Bingo or time spent helping veterans write letters home. Our legion and auxiliary also participated by having an Annual Christmas Store whereby hospitalized veterans shopped for new gifts to send to their immediate families. We even put together food baskets for needy families at Thanksgiving, Christmas and other occasions.”



**American Legion Ladies Auxiliary Christmas Mitten Tree. Each year the Auxiliary unit members home made mittens. Madeline Piscitelli and Aura Addorisio. Photo courtesy of Women's Auxiliary Unit**

The Legion and Auxiliary continued its work doing holiday visits to Rosary Hill bringing wine and goodies to pass out to the patients as they sang carols parading up and down the hallways. They also sent gifts to Children's Village and the Junior Auxiliary made tray favors for Dobbs Ferry Hospital patients.

Mary said, "I very much enjoyed the social as well as the community side of my time as part of the Auxiliary Unit of Ardsley American Legion Post #458. I remember my two great mentors, Cora McCartney and Helen Silliman when I first joined. They supported me as I made my way through the committees and became president of my unit. They then pushed me on to become County President and on to become the Ninth District President." She was the only one from Ardsley's Auxiliary Unit to go that far.

When Mary was part of the Auxiliary Unit, the Unit had a membership of about 85 members with a Junior group of 20 girls. Then, Mary said, "about seven years ago while I was still president, I had to turn in our charter and flag to The Ardsley Historical Society." At this point, there simply were not enough members to go on. The Ardsley Historical Society also has the original list of the Auxiliary Unit members and the date it was first started on a plaque.

The Women's Auxiliary Unit was founded in 1924 as part of the very active Ardsley American Legion Post #458 located on Legion Drive in Ardsley. Thereafter, it was constantly engaged in patriotic and welfare work, especially for the veteran disabled in service to our country. (*A Short, Informal History of Ardsley, N.Y.* by Arthur W. Silliman). The original charter had 22 members who dedicated their works to veterans and to the welfare of all children.

After the charter and flag were handed in, in 2008, attempts to establish another Ardsley Women's Auxiliary Unit took place. Unfortunately, at this time there were not enough members to do so. However, those women who wished to join are now part of Dobbs Ferry's American Legion Post which is still active.

When the Auxiliary Unit ended, Mary proudly recalls that, "with the monies left in our treasury and with the help of the Ardsley Gar-

den Club, I was able to place the Blue Star Memorial in the square in front of the Ardsley Hardware store to honor our service men and women. Lou Pascone was very helpful in finding the right stone for the Blue Star, as he was himself a veteran. He and the members of the Highway Department were a great help with this project."

Mary (Maureen) Keehan grew up in Scarsdale. Her parents were both from Ireland and came to this country for a better life. Her parents met in Scarsdale on Fort Hill Road working for different families.

Mary's love for gardening and flowers came from her father who grew four acres of every vegetable and flower known to mankind. In addition, Mary's mother did floral arrangements. Today, her brother, Michael, also shares the family's love of flowers and vegetables as he grows a great garden every year.

After grade school in Scarsdale and high school in White Plains, Mary worked in White Plains at Macy when it first opened. After, she worked as office manager for Dr. Posiello, a chiropractor, here in Ardsley. Later, she returned to school and became an Electrologist. Mary now has her own practice.



**During a parade, little girls marched with crowns made of Poppies. Photo courtesy of Women's Auxiliary Unit**

Mary came to live in Ardsley when she married her husband, George, who grew up in Ardsley. They met at Dr. Paul Seitz's office. They spent much time in The Ardsley Chocolateria. Mary has six children: Susan, Duane, Michael, Douglas, David and Maureen. She has seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Currently, Mary continues her social services by belonging to The Ardsley Garden Club (past president), The Ardsley Historical Society; American Irish Association (past president), Dobbs Ferry Women's Club; and the Dobbs Ferry American Legion Auxiliary Leisure Club at Sacred Heart Church in Hartsdale.



**Blue Star Memorial in the village square honor our service men and women. Photo courtesy of Women's Auxiliary Unit**

*The Ardsley American Legion Post #458 is still active. So, if in the future, more women wish to join and participate in an Ardsley Women's Auxiliary Unit of Ardsley's American Legion Post #458, this Auxiliary Unit could be started again. Please address such inquiries to: Mary (Maureen) Keehan, 693-4328*



# Ardsley Kids Want To Know...

## Did Ardsley have a role in the American Revolution?

### Ardsley's American Revolutionary War Cannonball

By **THERESA DI STEFANO**

In 1988 Ludmila and Brian Yamrone gave to the Ardsley Historical Society a heavy round iron object that was shaped like a cannonball. This object was found on their property at 19 Captain Honeywell Road in Ardsley. Mrs. Yamrone found the object while she was planting a garden. "Thinking that the object could have historic value, they thought that the Ardsley Historical Society would be the best place for its preservation and future study." (Arlene Weston letter to Mary Lichtenberg)

Mrs. Arlene Weston, President of The Ardsley Historical Society, decided to take the object to West Point Military Academy. On March 4th, 2002, Mrs. Weston went to West Point Military Academy and there she met with Mr. Paul Ackermann, curator and Conservator of Arms. After weighing, measuring and examining the object very carefully, he found that all clues indicated that, indeed we (Ardsley) have a cannonball from the time of the American Revolutionary War.

The cannonball had a flat mark the size of a dime. Mr. Ackermann said this is where the metal would be poured into the mold. Later as it cooled, it would be snapped off to form a ball with a small flat surface. Extending from this flat surface is a thin mold band, very faint on our cannonball because it is almost worn away from being in the earth so long. If this had been of English origin, the flat surface would be marked with what was known as a broad arrow. Continental Army cannonballs were plain. So, therefore, our cannonball was indeed a Continental Army cannonball from the Revolutionary War time. To prove this further, the cannonball was found where General Washington's Continental army encamped—in the hills of Ardsley which is where Mr. and Mrs. Yamrone's property is now located. (Information found in Mrs. Arlene Weston's letter, March 24, 2002, addressed to Ardsley Historical Society).

## Small History of George Washington and his Continental Revolutionary War Troops and General Rochambeau and his French Troops in Ardsley

In July 1780 The French Army lead by General Rochambeau landed at Newport Rhode Island. In 1781, General Rochambeau met with General Washington in Connecticut to discuss plans to attack New York City where the British had their main stronghold in the colonies.

Later in 1781 General Rochambeau and his French troops marched south to meet with General Washington and his Continental Army in New York. The two armies and both generals met in Greenburgh—5,000 French troops camped east of Sprain Brook and 4,000 Continental troops camped west of Sprain Brook.

General Rochambeau's headquarters was located in the Odell House that is still standing on Ridge Road (currently being made into a museum). General Washington's headquarters was located in the Joseph Appleby farm house (no longer standing) along the present day Secor Road. This location is now the location of WFAS broadcasting station. Washington's army camped on the land where the current Ardsley High School is now located.

In preparation for the attack on New York City, both armies practiced drills and reconnaissance missions. This was done in the surrounding hills. One such place was where the current Concord Road School is located. In fact, when the construction of the Concord Road School was underway, some of the old roads that were used by these armies were found. (*A Short, Informal History of Ardsley, N.Y.* by Arthur W. Silliman, Illustrated by D. Paolucci).



**Ardsley's American Revolutionary War Cannonball. Courtesy of Ardsley Historical Society**

The cannonball found by Mrs. Yamrone on her property located at 19 Captain Honeywell Road is located in the area where these military exercises took place.

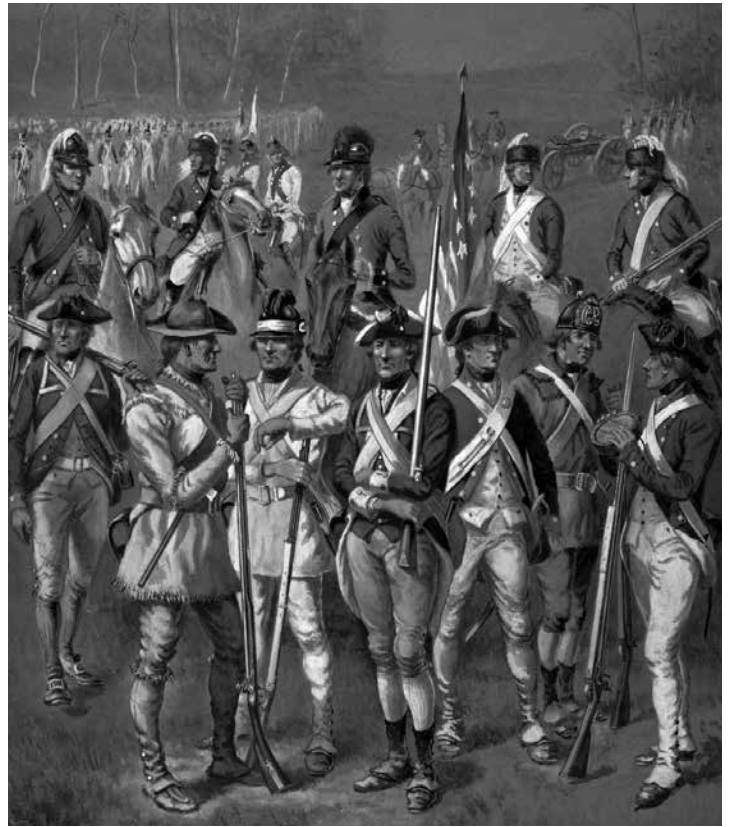
Then, while the practicing and plans were still being made to attack New York City, General Rochambeau received a letter from Admiral de Grasse informing him that his troops were to meet with the French West Indian fleet in Virginia. At this point, both generals took some of their troops and led them across the Hudson River at Dobbs Ferry and Kings' Ferry and then headed towards Yorktown, Virginia where a major and decisive battle was to be fought.

So, there is much proof that Ardsley's cannonball is no doubt a cannonball from the American Revolutionary War time. Also, yes indeed, French troops and American Continental Revolutionary troops were here in Ardsley, the very troops that fought for America's independence and freedom from England.

Next time, when you find yourself walking to school or in the Concord Road School or High School areas, maybe you can make your imagination see these troops while they were getting ready to go into battle.

The Ardsley cannonball can be found in The Ardsley Historical Society's office located on the second floor of Ardsley's Public Library.

*Information for this article was found in various places. Some information may be conflicting, but hopefully, a general picture of time and place can be seen.*



**A watercolor painting depicting a variety of Continental Army soldiers. Charles M. Lefferts (1873-1923). Image courtesy of Wikipedia.org**



**Painting of General Washington and General Rochambeau after the Battle of Yorktown. Louis-Charles-Auguste Couder (1790-1873). Image courtesy of Wikipedia.org**

# Picture of the Past Winter Carnival on Woodlands Lake

By **THERESA DI STEFANO**

“When Mitchell C. Vincent, retired music director at Ardsley High School, first came to Ardsley from North Country, he organized a Winter Carnival, complete with King and Queen.” (*A Short, Informal History of Ardsley, N.Y.* by Arthur W. Silliman)

The carnival was held every winter on Woodlands Lake. An ice skating competition took place. The photo to the right shows a number of automobiles and a large crowd watching one such winter carnival.



Photo courtesy of Ardsley Historical Society

## Spotlight Sally Nomer

By **THERESA DI STEFANO**

For 34 years Sally Nomer was extremely active in Ardsley's community. Sally was a Village Trustee for six years while she served as a liaison to Ardsley's Board of Education and Ardsley's Beautification Program. In Ardsley, Sally was a founding member of ACE (Ardsley Committee for the Environment) recycling program. As such, Sally was present sorting bottles, newspapers and other items on their way to be recycled.



Taken by Sheila Fried, found in Ardsley Historical Society's files

In Ardsley, Sally was a Girl Scout Leader for 12 years, a PTA Editor, UNICEF Chairman, an active member in The Ardsley Historical Society, and a teacher in the Ardsley Community Nursery School.

Sally also shared her talents outside of Ardsley as she was a member of the county Village Officials Associations, a board member of the Greenburgh Nature Center and she taught nursery school in Scarsdale.

Sally continued sharing herself in the Ardsley community and surrounding communities until she and her husband moved to Rhode Island in 1989. There she lived until 1994 when she died.

On December 6, 1994, The Ardsley Historical Society held a program in her honor titled, “Something With Ardsley On It: A Memorial Tribute to Sally Nomer.” Then, two years later in the Summer time on June 15, 1996, A Memorial Tree Planting for Sally Nomer took place in Memorial Park (now known as Lou Pascone Park).

When Sally was a member of Ardsley's PTA, she helped put together a recipe book entitled *Nary a Truffle by The Ardsley PTA*. Sally left behind her recipe for Newport Fudge (A Family Recipe that Goes Back 100 Years). What a wonderful way to remember Sally Nomer.

### SALLY NOMER'S RECIPE FOR NEWPORT FUDGE

8 squares (8 oz. pkg.) Baker's unsweetened chocolate  
4 cups sugar  
1 cup milk  
6 tablespoons butter or margarine (original recipe called for "butter the size of 6 butter balls")  
1 teaspoon Vanilla  
Greased 9 x 13 inch pan

Melt chocolate in large pan over low heat. Add sugar, milk and butter. Boil until quite thick and a drop forms soft ball in glass of cold water, about 15 to 20 minutes, stirring frequently. remove from stove and add 1 teaspoon vanilla. Beat long and hard to thicken and cool. Keep beating until fudge is very thick, but not too thick to pour into greased baking pan. Spread quickly. When cool and "set" (which happens at once, or may take overnight), cut into 1 inch squares and store.

**GIFT HINT:** This quantity fills 4 UNICEF card boxes.



## Thank You Mary Lichtenberg

The Ardsley Historical Society would like to thank Mary Lichtenberg for 30 years of service. During this time, Mary was one of the founding members and served as President and Editor of the Society's newsletter that was published three times a year. A most important contribution has been her 25 years as the Society's Archivist.

We thank her for her enthusiasm, commitment and contribution as an active member of the Ardsley Historical Society.

We are happy that Mary will continue to be available to assist us in our continued pursuit of Ardsley history.

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## Historical Society Social Programs

Sunday, March 25, at 2pm · *A Century of Local Justice in Ardsley*

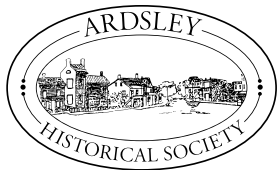
Sunday, April 22, at 2pm · *The Water Wheel, Romance and Drama*

Sunday, May 20, at 2pm · *Frank Addyman, The Last Ardsley President*

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The Ardsley Historical Society Newsletter is published three times each year. The Society was established in 1982 and is chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. Its purpose is to collect, preserve, and disseminate the history of Ardsley to members and to the public. Archives are open to the public on Tuesdays from 10 am to 12 noon, or by appointment, at the Ardsley Public Library, 9 American Legion Drive. Our phone number is 693-6027.

Subscription to the Newsletter is included in membership dues. All articles, queries, and replies should be addressed to the editor, Theresa DiStefano. Although every attempt is made to maintain historical accuracy in the Newsletter, the editor and the Society assume no responsibility for errors. The editor also reserves the right to edit where necessary.



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