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**BMSHS**  
Briarcliff Manor-Scarborough  
Historical Society

Website  
[www.briarcliffhistory.org](http://www.briarcliffhistory.org)

## 2016 Late Summer Newsletter

Dear Members and Friends --

We hope you were among the over 200 people who attended the east coast premiere of *Money Man: Frank A. Vanderlip and the Birth of the Federal Reserve* on the beautiful afternoon of Saturday, June 18 held at the Julie Harris Theatre of The Clear View School in Scarborough. It was special.

It began with a parade of antique cars from Beechwood to the theatre, which Vanderlip built 100 years ago for his children. It was known as The Scarborough School through the 1970s.

The 90-minute film was written and directed by Vicki Mack of Palos Verdes, California. She shot many scenes a couple of years ago at Beechwood, the luxury condominium development, which includes the former Beechwood mansion.

The story focuses on Frank A. Vanderlip (1864-1937) who ascended from humble beginnings on a farm in Illinois to the highest levels of banking, including serving as president of First National City Bank (now Citibank) from 1909 to 1919. Source material ranged from his autobiography, *From Farm Boy to Financier*, published in 1935, to original journals, contemporary newspapers and magazines and the BMSHS archives.

The *Money Man* event concluded on Beechwood's gorgeous lawns, in the library and ballroom with music, good food, friends and history: a perfect combination.

Some pictures from *Money Man* are on page 2.

### In Memory of Rhoda Holzer

(1951-2016)

It is with sadness that we note the death of **Rhoda Holzer** on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Rhoda was the artist who painted the Briarcliff Rose for the BMSHS many years ago. The

image adorns our notecards and many of you have larger prints of the rose, which display her artistry. Among other credentials she had a degree in botanical illustration and watercolor



from the New York Botanical Gardens. We're gratified to have known her and to have the treasure she left us with.

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*Don Christy, Executive Produces and Vicki Mack, Producer and Director*



*Parade of antique cars at The Clear View School*



*Alan Stahl, Jug Tavern*



*Generations of Vanderlips from as far as California and Montana*



*Carl Boe, Warner Rush, Mimi Boe, Kaye Blockley, Karen Smith, George and Elaine Behling*



*Julie Harris Theater - All seats taken*



*Alex Vastola in the "mother-in-law" seat and Karen Smith, BMSHS president, arriving in style.*



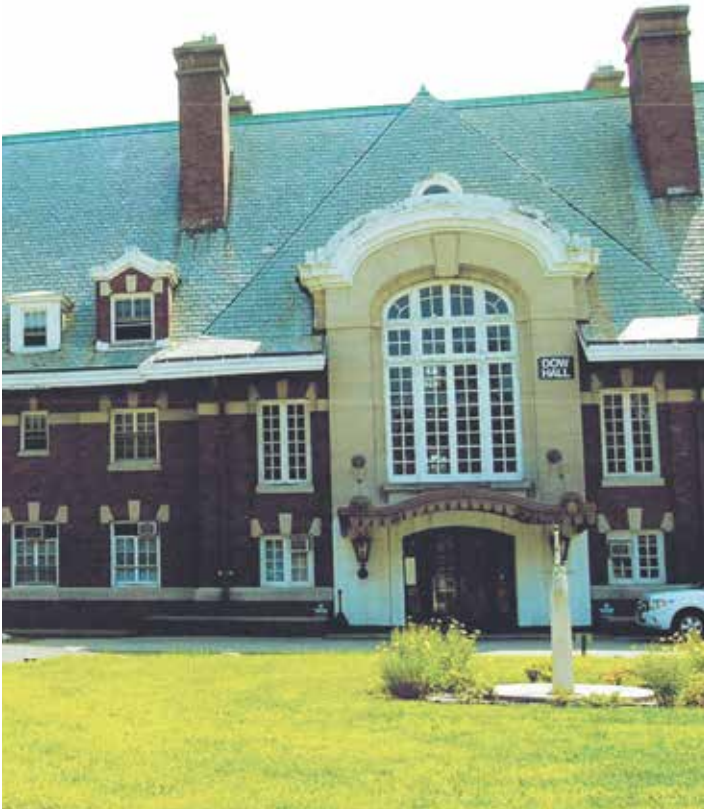
*Event planners celebrate at Beechwood after the screening. Pictured, from left: Doug Turshen, Jug Tavern of Sparta, Inc.; Charles Devlin, Clear View School; Karen Kotter Smith, BMSHS; Vicki Mack, "Money Man" producer and director; Don Christy, "Money Man" executive producer; and Norman Cohen, Beechwood at Scarborough.*

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*Two of the most significant events ever undertaken by the BMSHS will happen this fall. One involves a place -- Dow Hall -- and one involves a person -- Lt. John Kelvin Koelsch. Let me tell you about both.*

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## Want To Visit A Place You May Have Never Seen? Dow Hall



The BMSHS is privileged to give our members and friends an opportunity to see and to enjoy one of the grandest spaces in all of Briarcliff: a space, a true secret, known to and remembered by only a few of those who live here now. Dow Hall was built in 1903 to be a fine finishing school as part of the over-arching plan of our village founder. He drew away Mrs. Mary Dow from Miss Porter's School in Farmington, Connecticut to be its headmistress. He dedicated 35 acres for the school campus and invited the noted architect Harold Van Buren Magonigle to design it. Magonigle had worked with Calvert Vaux, and also McKim, Mead & White. He also created the impressive monument commemorating the U.S.S. Main at Columbus Circle. Socially prominent girls soon came from home and abroad to be educated at Mrs. Dow's School.

Arts, sports, literature, dramatics and social graces were emphasized. From 1933-1957 it grew and thrived as Briarcliff Jr. College. Between 1957-1977 it became a four-year college, Briarcliff College. It closed when the winds of change blew. In 1977 Pace University took it over. Soon Pace will be selling it and the wheel will turn again.

The fate of this century-old building, the last public building built by W. W. Law, is uncertain. Our mission is to be Caretakers of Our Heritage – to lovingly record, safely archive, encourage preservation, tell the village stories, and to promote lasting interest in the history of the community.

We encourage you to learn about Dow Hall, to care about it, and to be vested in what happens to it in the future. We invite you to join the BMSHS on this journey.

The article that follows is about Harold Van Buren Magonigle, the architect of Dow School.

We look forward to seeing you – and we look forward to YOUR seeing **Dow Hall on the Pace campus Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 o'clock in the afternoon for an Afternoon Lawn Party. \$60.00 per person. Come, enjoy it and fall in love with it.**

We need to know who will be coming by Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. Please email [mail@briarcliffhistory](mailto:mail@briarcliffhistory) or phone the center at 941-4393 and tell us you'll be coming. It's an extraordinary opportunity.

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## HAROLD VAN BUREN MAGONIGLE

(1867-1935)

Architect of Mrs. Dow's School

By Alex Vastola

Harold Van Buren Magonigle, the architect of Mrs. Dow's School in Briarcliff Manor, had a very distinguished and successful career as an architect. He is best remembered for the memorials that he designed and built across the United States, in many instances besting several major architects and architecture firms to win these commissions in national architecture competitions. However, he also designed schools, residences, churches, and even more utilitarian buildings. As he amusingly wrote in a December 26, 1918 letter to a potential client "My practice has an extremely wide range—from the national Memorial to President McKinley to a garbage incinerator plant in New York City."

Harold Van Buren Magonigle was born in Bergen Heights, New Jersey on October 17, 1867, and was the son of John Henry and Katherine Celestine (Devlin) Magonigle. He was also the grandson of John Magonigle, a native of Greenock-on-the-Clyde, Scotland, who immigrated to America in the 1700s and married Elizabeth Van Buren, who was a cousin of U.S. President Martin Van Buren. Magonigle's father worked as a prominent theatre manager in New York City: building and then managing Booth's Theater while Magonigle's

mother was the daughter of Charles Devlin, the Irish poet, and the sister of Mary Devlin, the wife of the actor Edwin Booth, whom her husband managed.



*Harold Van Buren Magonigle, Architect*

Mr. Magonigle had a very early start to his career as an architect. He attended the New York public schools during his childhood. However, due to reverses in his family's fortunes, and because his mother always wanted him to become an architect, Magonigle entered the architecture profession at a young age. At thirteen he began working as a draftsman for the firm of Vaux and Radford, the same firm that helped Frederick Law Olmsted build Central Park in New York City. Two years later, Magonigle obtained a position working for Charles C. Haight. At the time,

Haight was working on the buildings at 49<sup>th</sup> Street for Columbia College. In 1887, he started to work for McKim, Mead & White, and while working for this distinguished firm he received the Gold Medal of the Architectural League of New York.

Magonigle worked for McKim, Mead & White for four years before he moved to Boston to work for Rotch & Tilden. During this period, he also worked as an instructor in decorative design at the Cowles Art

*Continued on page 5*

School. In 1894 he won the Rotch traveling fellowship to travel abroad to study architecture for the next two years. He then spent the next two years studying and drawing architecture in Europe, becoming the first student to enter the American Academy in Rome. On his return in 1896, Magonigle re-entered the firm of McKim, Mead & White, but left in 1897 to open his own architecture profession in partnership with Evarts Tracy. By 1898, he was serving in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battery of the 109<sup>th</sup> Regiment, National Guard of New York during the Spanish-American War. In 1899, Magonigle ended his partnership with Evarts Tracy and worked for the next two years as head designer and head craftsman for Schickel & Ditmars, and then from 1901-1904 he entered into a partnership with Henry W. Wilkinson, but by 1904 he began working as an independent architect.

Meanwhile, in the early years of the twentieth century, in 1903, Mary Elizabeth Dow, who had previously been the headmistress of Miss Porter's School in Farmington, Connecticut, started Mrs. Dow's School for girls in the Briarcliff Lodge, the grand resort hotel, while Dow Hall was being built. Mr. Law gave thirty-five acres of his own land at the top of Elm Road in Briarcliff Manor to be the campus of Mrs. Dow's School. Architect Harold Van Buren Magonigle was hired to build a large, chateausque brick building on this property as the main building.

There are several reasons why Mr. Law hired Magonigle for this job. First, Mr. Law had founded Briarcliff Manor as an incorporated village in 1902, and wanted to transition it from Briarcliff Farms to a model English village. He had already built the Briarcliff Lodge and the Briarcliff Congregational Church. Perhaps he thought, why not built an excellent private school building, to showcase how Briarcliff Manor was the ideal environment in which to live elegantly and to set up a school.

Furthermore, it is likely that Mr. Law had seen Magonigle's work with the U.S.S. Maine Memorial at Columbus Circle. It was erected between 1901-1913 to memorialize the soldiers and sailors who perished when the U.S.S. Maine was sunk in Havana

Harbor. It was designed and built by Magonigle with Attilio Piccirilli as his sculptor. Law hired him to build Mrs. Dow's School during this period.

Magonigle wrote about Dow Hall in 1909 for *The New York Architect*:

*"Mrs. Dow's School at Briarcliff Manor was a totally different class of problem. Reception rooms, rooms for gatherings of the pupils, library, class rooms, a dining room with large kitchens and service pantries, heating, ventilating and refrigerating plants, a laundry for the servants, with sleeping accommodations for a large corps of servants, male and female, a gymnasium, music practice rooms, an infirmary and a studio, besides rooms with private baths for two hundred pupils and numerous teachers, had to be provided for. The gymnasium and music practice rooms were thrown into one building; this made the latter of considerable extent on the ground and four stories and a basement in height. The difficulty here was to avoid the appearance of an institution and give it as domestic an appearance as possible under the circumstances.*

*"The basement is given over to the various services, the first floor to administration, class rooms, dining rooms and the like, the second and third stories to bedrooms for pupils and teachers, and the attic story to the female servants and to immense trunk storage spaces, a prime necessity in a house inhabited by some two hundred and fifty women. As will be observed, the gymnasium and infirmary buildings were arranged to form a forecourt for the main building to the west. On the east, commanding beautiful views through a grove of fine old oaks, is another courtyard, sheltered from the strong north and west winds, where the young ladies take open air exercise when they are not playing at football, baseball or tennis or similar vigorous sports. The exterior is of a deep maroon brick, with black joints raked out, artificial stone 'trimmings' and green slate roofs."*

Magonigle's career flourished for many years thereafter. He passed away unexpectedly on August 29, 1935 when he suffered a stroke of apoplexy while on vacation in Vergennes, Vermont.

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## LIEUTENANT JOHN KELVIN KOELSCH, U.S.N.

*\*This is the official citation given when Koelsch was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, August 1955.*

### Medal of Honor Citation

“For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving with a Navy helicopter rescue unit in North Korea on 3 July 1951. Although darkness was rapidly approaching when information was received that a Marine aviator had been shot down



and was trapped by the enemy in mountainous terrain deep in hostile territory, Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Koelsch voluntarily flew a helicopter to the reported

position of the downed airman in an attempt to affect a rescue. With an almost solid overcast concealing everything below the mountain peaks, he descended in his unarmed and vulnerable aircraft without the accompanying fighter escort to an extremely low altitude beneath the cloud level and began a systematic search. Despite the increasingly intense enemy fire, which struck his helicopter on one occasion, he persisted in his mission until he succeeded in locating the downed pilot, who was suffering from serious burns on the arms and legs. While the victim was being hoisted into the aircraft, it was struck again by an accurate burst of hostile fire and crashed on the side of the mountain. Quickly extricating his crewmen and the aviator from the wreckage, Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Koelsch led them from the vicinity in an effort to escape from hostile troops, evading the enemy forces for 9 days and rendering such medical attention as possible to his severely burned companion until all were captured. Up to the time of his death while still a captive of the enemy, Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Koelsch steadfastly refused to aid his captors in any manner and served to inspire his fellow prisoners

by his fortitude and consideration for others. His great personal valor and heroic spirit of self-sacrifice throughout sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the United States naval service.”

### Awards

Medal of Honor

Purple Heart

Prisoner of War Medal

American Campaign Medal

World War II Service Medal

Korean Service Medal

United Nations Korea Medal

Korea Presidential Unit Citation (Korea)

Korean War Service Medal (Korea)

### Namesake

The destroyer escort *USS Koelsch* (DE-1049) (later reclassified as a frigate) was named in his honor.

The John K. Koelsch Helicopter Flight Training Building at the Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii was dedicated in 2010.

Please plan to attend a momentous ceremony on Veterans Day, Friday, November 11, 2016 at 11 o'clock AM in Law Park to unveil the plaque, which honors an unsung hero and a home-town son. Refreshments will follow in the Community Center

# The Following Is a Commercial Announcement

We hope you have enjoyed the many programs and events we've had this year:

- The month-long map exhibition on the library's second floor and reception.
- Our annual meeting in April "Women of the House" with Jean Zimmerman.
- Professor Anthony Wood on New York landmarking and preservation.
- Michael Molinelli, the Honorary Chairman of the Afternoon Lawn Party at Dow Hall, gave us two programs on architecture, which everyone loved.
- Two of our young members, Alex Vastola and Michael Feist, received the prestigious Sy Schulman History award from the Westchester County Historical Society.
- We were helpful in writing the history of the train station/library/community center, which was dedicated on Memorial Day.
- John O'Loughlin gave us a program on the Korean War, and is also preparing remarks for the Lt. Koelsch Medal of Honor plaque unveiling, which will happen on Veterans Day, November 11 at 11 AM in Law Park.
- In June we, along with the Jug Tavern, the Clear View School and Beechwood, put on the extravaganza of *Money Man: Frank A Vanderlip* documentary and reception that followed.
- ...and we're not done for the year by any means.

It has been wonderful to have you and visitors from afar stop by the Center and we have happily received compliments on the work we are doing. It has been our pleasure.

Where do we need to do better? Our membership renewal campaign has lagged this year. Last year we had 214 memberships with 46 of those being NEW memberships. This year we have 168 memberships, of which 23 of NEW memberships. Won't you add your name to the 2016 list below as a member? We invite you to join us in support of our mission as we continue to grow and offer programs to fulfill our mission of being Caretakers of Our Heritage.

Sincerely,  
Karen Smith  
President, BMSHS

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## 2016 Membership to date

### Benefactor Memberships

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Bogoni, Paul & Irene  
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Curran, Connie  
Feist, Arnie & Carine, Michael & Nathan  
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Vastola, Gene, Anna, Christian, Lisa and Alex  
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Hugue, Germaine  
Korth & Shannahan  
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Sullivan, Lori  
Van Hengel, Dru  
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Beike, Bob & Joan  
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Feher, David & Gwen  
Gaffney, Thomas  
Gausepohl, Mark & Sheri  
Israel, Jody  
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Mesiti, Franco & Martha  
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Rinzler, James & Melissa  
Glick-Saper, Steve & Shelley  
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Wayne-Paulmeno, Bill & Larisa  
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Aisenbrey, Stu & Bev  
Comiskey, Tom & Beatrix  
Corfield, Peter & Gillian  
Cryan, John & Maria  
Dubac, Doris & Donald  
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Guardenier, Bill & Betsy

Hiller, Sid & Lana  
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Netburn, Malcolm & Susan  
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Jackson, Ted  
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Potente, Gene  
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St. Lawrence, Rosa  
Stroobants, Hank  
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DiMase, Frances  
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Florent, Mary Jane  
Gentile, Charles  
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Jones, Rhode  
Kwiat, Barbara  
Lasher, Carol  
Lichter, Risa  
Limongelli, William  
Mirsky, Sandy  
Myers, Louisa  
O'Loughlin, John  
Oechsner, Carl  
Olson, Maxine  
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Petroni, Violet  
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Briarcliff Manor-Scarborough  
Historical Society

P.O. Box 11, Briarcliff Manor, New York 10510

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Dear Members and Friends -- Please show your support for the Briarcliff Manor-Scarborough Historical Society's mission by becoming a member or renewing your membership for 2016 (our fiscal year and membership dues year is the calendar year). Your support is vital to us as we share our history through the newsletter, offer special programs and reach out to you through our website. Please renew, join us with your 2016 membership or send along an extra donation. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact us anytime at [mail@briarcliffhistory.org](mailto:mail@briarcliffhistory.org) or 941-4393.



**MEMBERSHIP TYPE** New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

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**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL**

Benefactor \$300 \_\_\_\_\_ Patron \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Family \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Seniors (2) \$40 \_\_\_\_\_

Senior (1) \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Extra Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional contributions always welcome.**

Please make your check payable to BMSHS and mail to PO Box 11, Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510

Look for BMSHS information in your emails, on the Village Community Events Banner, our newsletters, *The Gazette*, the bulletin board outside the EOCW Historical Center, Facebook, our website [www.briarcliffhistory.org](http://www.briarcliffhistory.org) and the Briarcliff Library announcements bulletin board. And we welcome your phone calls to us at 941-4393 and email at [mail@briarcliffhistory.org](mailto:mail@briarcliffhistory.org)