

Volunteers restore famed house

Building houses library, activities

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

PITTSFORD — Its lavish design was made for a woman who spurned it and chose to live in a far less respectable area with another man rather than the one who built it.

General Lafayette, the prominent French statesman and hero of the American Revolution, was reportedly entertained in its confines.

And, although no written records exist of such occurrences, tales passed from one owner to the next relate that runaway slaves fleeing to Canada via the Underground Railroad took refuge inside its walls.

Rumour also has it that a wooden cage in the attic served as a holding pen for any harbored slaves who decided to become unruly. On the other hand, the cage might have also served as a cell for a deranged relative.

Known throughout this suburban town as "The Manse," this legendary building has served St. Louis Parish, 60 S. Main St., since the edifice was purchased in 1949. Over the years it has housed a school, a convent, and now a school library and parish activity center.

Up until the spring of this year, however, the building's carpeting had become torn and tattered. In addition, its gold-painted walls were dirty and dim.

But about 50 school parents, school staff people and other volunteers spent the summer giving the Manse's interior a fresh new look, according to Sally Schrecker, who coordinated the renovation project along with Deborah Miller.

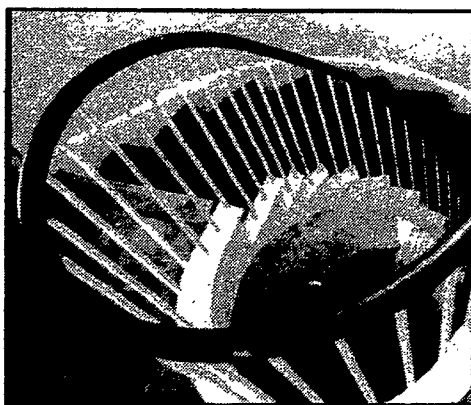
Schrecker noted that volunteers removed books from the library to paint the bookshelves, wallpapered much of the Manse, ripped up the old carpeting, and repainted the interior.

"It was a wonderful combined effort of a lot of people," said Carolyn Wagner, a teacher and school parent who



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

The Manse has served Pittsford's St. Louis Parish since the edifice was purchased in 1949.



A piece of marble sits at the bottom of the spiral staircase, indicating that the house was bought and paid for — an early 1800 practice.

volunteered to help during the project. "It was wonderful to go from the terrible condition it was in to what it is in now."

According to Miller, the new carpeting was donated by a former parishioner, A.J. Nasser. Miller selected the wallpaper, which is similar in design to 19th-century wall coverings, she said.

Including supplies, much of which were donated at cost, and any profes-

sional labor that was necessary, the project totaled \$15,000 — most of which came from the parish's home/school association budget, the coordinators said.

In the future, Schrecker and Miller hope to obtain a matching grant from New York Landmark Conservancy, based in New York City. The grant money would go to repairing the Manse's foundation, Schrecker said.

The Manse was built in 1812 by a bachelor distiller named Augustus Elliot for his bride-to-be, Jane Penfield, daughter of Daniel Penfield, the founder of the Rochester suburb by the same name. According to historical information provided by parishioner Cheryl Mahoney, Jane Penfield decided that money couldn't buy her love, so she ran off with Daniel Brown to "that cluster of huts at the base of the Genesee Falls, known as Rochester-ville."

As for Mr. Elliot, he left for Pittsburgh to forget his lost love, and sold his home to a judge. Elliot died in 1818, only six years after seeing his house built in vain.

At least he didn't wind up in the cage in the attic.

Divinity School terminates boycott of South Africa

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — The Diocese of Rochester has ended its boycott of companies doing business in South Africa.

The diocesan Stewardship Council voted Nov. 22 to lift the restrictions, based on a recommendation from its Investment Committee.

The diocese had completely divested business portfolios of companies doing business in South Africa by June, 1989, completing a process of selling off such investments begun in January, 1988.

The diocese is among a growing number of groups, agencies, and government bodies ending the boycott against South Africa, which had been intended to force the country's white government to remove apartheid restrictions on black South Africans, and to grant them political and social equality.

The Colgate Rochester Divinity School's Governing Board, for example, voted to lift the restrictions on Oct. 27, 1993, based on recommendations from the board's Committee on Social Responsibility.

Meanwhile, the Rochester City Council voted to end its boycott Nov. 9. The New York State Legislature did so Nov. 19.

The decisions to relax the boycott come in the wake of a vote Sept. 23 by the South African Parliament to hold elections next April in which both whites and blacks will vote as equals.

Speaking at the United Nations Sept. 24, Nelson Mandela, head of the African National Congress, said groups and countries should end their boycott of companies doing business with South Africa.

According to Tricia Carey, a member of the Divinity School's Committee on Social Responsibility, the committee's recommendation was made not based on Mandela's speech, but on observing the improving situation in South Africa.

"We had been watching it for some time, and it was obvious that we weren't doing them any favors by staying out (of South Africa)," noted Carey, the Divinity School's associate vice president for finance and human resources. "We were asking, 'Are we really helping the people of South Africa?'"

The fact that Mandela called for the boycott to end at about the time committee members were considering ending it anyway was fortuitous, Carey acknowledged.

The Divinity School had adopted the boycott in 1988 following calls by a

number of black South African leaders — including Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Capetown — for restrictions against all companies doing business in South Africa.

Previous to its 1988 decision, the Divinity School had supported the "Sullivan Principles." Drafted in 1976, the principles called for non-segregation in the work place and fair employment practices. Investors were permitted to invest in companies endorsing these principles.

Black leaders by 1988 were saying that the principles were not having their desired effect, and had called for a complete boycott against South Africa.

St. James Mercy offering public series on diabetes

HORNELL — St. James Mercy Hospital is presenting a free series on diabetes in the MERCYCARE building's Adult Day Health Care Center on Bethesda Drive.

The five-part public series, which began Nov. 17, provides information about various aspects of diabetes. Remaining dates are Dec. 8, Jan. 19, Feb. 16 and March 16.

Reservations are suggested. Call 607/324-3900, ext. 3230.

Priest to administer Spencerport parish

SPENCERPORT — Bishop Matthew H. Clark has named Father Louis Nichols administrator of St. John the Evangelist Church, 60 Martha St.

Father Nichols replaces Father Robert J. Winterkorn who resigned as pastor at Bishop Clark's request in September in light of allegations of sexual misconduct with a female parishioner. Father Winterkorn has admitted to the allegations.

Father Nichols, a priest of the Syracuse diocese, has been serving at St. John's since Father Winterkorn's resignation. According to a diocesan statement, he will serve as administrator through June, 1994, when a new pastor will be appointed.

In a letter mailed to parishioners Nov. 22, Bishop Clark stated that he has asked Father Nichols to work toward peace and reconciliation in the parish, and to "call the community to resume normal parish life." He urged the parish pastoral council to work with Father Nichols and the parish staff in identifying the desired qualities for a new pastor and to identify future parish goals.

Father Winterkorn remains in a treatment facility out of state. When the treatment is completed, his future in ministry will be determined, the diocese said.

Hornell hospital begins holiday fundraiser event

HORNELL — St. James Mercy Hospital, 440 Monroe Ave., has begun a "Lights of Life" fundraiser campaign.

During the holiday season, lights will outline the 1890 porch and tower located on the hospital's Canisteo Street side. For a tax-deductible gift of \$10 each, lights can be purchased to honor an event, patient, loved one or other intention. In mid-December, the hospital will send Christmas-card notices to individuals being honored by the lights — or, in the case of memorials, to family members. In addition, a "Book of Honor" listing the donors and those honored will be placed in the hospital lobby.

A special outdoor lighting ceremony will take place Sunday, Nov. 28, at 7 p.m. This will be followed by a celebration in the hospital cafeteria.

All proceeds will benefit the St. James Mercy Foundation. For information, call 607/324-3900, ext. 3501.

Addison parish to hold annual Christmas bazaar

ADDISON — St. Catherine of Siena Church, 49 Maple St., will hold its 14th-annual Christmas bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 4. The event will run from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Included in the day's festivities will be a luncheon, arts-and-crafts exhibit, baked goods, door prizes, harvest pantry, white-elephant sale and raffle. Tickets for the raffle are on sale after weekend Masses.

Those who would like to help out with the bazaar are invited to call Janet Mong at 607/359-3992, Lavera Knowles at 458-5302 or Patty Dgien at 359-2115.