

Town of Greenburgh
**ASSISTANT
TOWN HISTORIANS**
SURVEY MONKEY COORDINATORS



— felicia barber + riley wentzler —

*Alcohol, The Irvings and the
Hamiltons: The Sanctuary of Zion
Episcopal Church*

By: Riley Wentzler & Felicia Barber

with research assistance from Ryan Stuzin



At 55 Cedar Street, Dobbs Ferry, stands a small, but highly important stone church which has connections to Dobbs Ferry's first ever church. This is the Sanctuary of Zion Episcopal Church.

Birth of a Church and Connection to the South Presbyterian Church of Greenburgh:

The church grew out of the **South Presbyterian Church of Greenburgh** also known as the "Little White Church." Therefore, although we have already covered much of this in our April 27th 2019 article, *There is no church here, but "the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated" this ground: The Story of The Little White Church Cemetery*, much time has passed, so it is worth rehashing for our readers.

As previously stated, the original land for the Little White Church once belonged to Dirck Storm, who at some point in the 1800s, sold it to Martin and Rebecca Lefurgy. In 1823 the couple sold it to a group of Presbyterian ministers looking to form a church (DiLorenzo 2019). Two years later in 1825, they officially founded their church, at the time of its founding the congregation consisted of only six members. The name of this church was the **South Presbyterian Church of Greenburgh**, which still exists today, although at a different location. Its members gave it the nickname The Little White Church (Raftery 2011, p. 25). The South Presbyterian Church continued to operate on Ashford Avenue until 1869 when it moved to a new location on 515 Broadway (Raftery 2011, p. 25). However, while the activities of the South Presbyterian Church continued and continue to this day, not all of its members were content with the direction in which it was going.

This is where our current story begins, with one unhappy man. In the 1830's, a man named Van Brugh Livingston who was the presiding elder at the South Presbyterian Church attempted to officially establish complete abstinence from alcohol as a major tenant of the church (Sanzo 1983 p. 1). He lost that battle and

resigned. Mr. Livingston owned a substantial portion of land and upon his resignation donated much of his land for the creation of another church (Sanzo 1983 p. 1). The new church founded by Livingston and his friends was set up on Cedar Street (<http://www.ziondobbsferry.org/our-parish-hall.html>)

Gaining Size and Prominence:

While Livingston provided the land for the new church, his dream probably would not have succeeded without the help of Oscar Irving, the nephew of the famous author Washington Irving. Although not an ordained minister, Oscar Irving was a deeply religious man who held a lay church service every Sunday. It was Oscar Irving who invited Reverend Crosby to consecrate the ground for the parish and judge Anthony Constant to handle legal matters for the church. The church was officially organized on October 4, 1833 and incorporated under the name “**The Rector Church-wardens and Vestrymen of Zion Church in the Town of Greenburgh** on October 31, 1833 (Sanzo 1983 p. 2). Reverend Crosby served as the church’s first rector. The first building, a small stone building utilizing gothic style architecture, was constructed on February 16th 1834 (Sanzo 1983 p. 2) it only had 16 pews. The building then resided on only one acre (Sanzo 1983 p. 2).

The church went through rectors rather quickly in its early years. In 1834, Reverend Crosby resigned and was replaced by Deacon Edward N. Mead (Sanzo 1983 p. 2), who himself was only there a short time before he was replaced by Reverend William Creighton in 1836 (Sanzo 1983 p. 3). While each rector added something to the church either physically or in terms of doctrine, it could be argued that its early parishioners were more influential than its string of rectors. In 1840 two of Alexander Hamilton’s sons, James Hamilton and Alexander Hamilton jr and Washington Irving himself became members. James Hamilton served as the treasurer from 1845-1853 and Washington Irving participated in so many baptisms that Zion’s baptistry has been named The Irving Corner (Sanzo 1983 p. 3).

When a new rector named Reverend William A. McVickar arrived on July 19 1852, he expanded the church, tripling the size of the building. However, it was a

second renovation in 1870 that brought the church to its current size (Sanzo 1983 p. 6). In 1919, Colonel Franklin Q. Brown donated the Victory Bell that currently hangs in the church's bell tower (Sanzo 1983 p. 8). The church was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places

(https://www.rivertownenterprise.net/dobbs_ferry/zion-episcopal-added-to-national-historic-register/article_703c3dc6-5779-11eb-9eca-0b8675ac2952.html).

Lending a Helping Hand:

The Sanctuary of Zion Episcopal Church has provided many services to the community through the years including: a thrift shop known as “The Hillside Thrift Shop” (<http://www.ziondobbsferry.org/thrift-shop.html>), which provides cheap but well-made clothing, books, toys, and home goods to Dobbs Ferry residents in need, The Zion Crafters Guild (<http://www.ziondobbsferry.org/zion-crafters-guild.html>) which knits various types of clothing for local homeless shelters and donating money to the Yonkers Animal Shelter (<http://www.ziondobbsferry.org/animal-shelter.html>).



Previous Slices of History include:

1. Greenburgh's BROTHERLY LOVE, RELIEF AND TRUTH: A History of The Freemasons in Greenburgh (9/12/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5658/BROTHERLY-LOVE-RELIEF-AND-TRUTH--in-Greenburgh>
2. Greenburgh and The Arts (9/22/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5665/Greenburgh-AND-The--ARTS>
3. A Final Resting Place for "Man's Best Friend": The Peaceable Kingdom (9/29/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5653/A-Final-Resting-Place--for-Mans-Best-Friend>
4. Greenburgh's Hall of Heroes: Ferncliff Cemetery Where Memories Live Forever (10/12/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5667/Greenburgh-Hall-of-Heroes>
5. Greenburgh at The Great American Crossroads: Greenburgh's Civil War Story(10/19/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5666/Greenburgh-at-The-Great-American-Crossroad>
6. A Different Kind of Rebel: Greenburgh's Contributions to the Underground Railroad (10/27/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5680/A-Different-Kind-of-of-Rebel--Greenburghs-contributions-to-The-Underground-Railroad>
7. "The Disappearing Railroad Blues" in Greenburgh: The Fate of the Putnam Railroad Line and the old Putnam Trail (11/6/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5675/The-Disappearing-Railroad-Blues-in-Greenburgh>
8. A Thousand Words Which You Never Knew: The Forgotten Story of the Seal of Greenburgh (11/17/18)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5651/A-->

[Thousand-Words-Which-You-Never-Knew-The-Forgotten-Story-of-The-Seal-of-Greenburgh](#)

9. **How a Flat Tire led to a Happy Escape: The Story of Carvel in Greenburgh (12/11/18)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5670/How-a-Flat-Tire-led-to-a-Happy-Escape>
10. **The Guardians of History: Greenburgh's Historical Societies (1/6/19)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5676/The-Guardians-of--History>
11. **A Small House, an Important Meeting, a Huge Victory: The Story of the Odell House (1/12/2019)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5654/A-Small-House--an-Important-Meeting--A-Huge-Victory>
12. **The Intersection of Banking, Ballet, and School: Greenburgh's Warburg Estate (Updated) (10/22/19)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6095/The-Intersection-of-Banking--Ballet--and-School-updated>
13. **Lost History: The Tragedy of Malkasten (1/26/19)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5673/Lost-History--The-Tragedy-of-Malkasten>
14. **A Beautiful View for the Perfect Event: The Belvedere Estate (2/9/19)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5652/A-Beautiful-View-for-The-Perfect-Event--Belvedere-Estate>
15. **The Power of Wealth and Humility: A Reflection on Two Highly Influential African Americans (2/18/19)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5679/Wealth-and-Humility>
16. **Greenburgh Under the Hollywood Lights: The TV shows and movies Filmed in Greenburgh Part I (2/23/19)**

<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5668/Greenburgh-under-Hollywood-Lights-Part-I>

17. Oh, The Places Your Mail has Gone: A History of The Hartsdale Post Office (3/9/2019)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5674/Oh-The-Places-Your-Mail-has-Gone>
18. From Insurance to Symphonies: The Home of Charles Ives (3/16/19)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5664/From-Insurance-to-Symphonies--The-Home-of-Charles-Ives>
19. Greenburgh Under the Hollywood Lights: The TV shows and Movies Filmed in Greenburgh Part II (3/29/19)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5669/Greenburgh-Under-the-Hollywood-Lights-The-TV-shows-and-movies-Filmed-in-Greenburgh-Part-II>
20. From Chasing Rabbits to Setting Records: The Amazing Story of Larry James (4/7/2019)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5661/From-Chasing-Rabbits-to-Setting-Records>
21. From Fixing Cars to building Infrastructure: How Massaro Park Got its name (4/13/2019)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5663/From-Fixing-Cars-to-Building-Infrastructure-How--Massaro-Park-Got-Its-Name>
22. There is no church here, but “the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated” this ground: The Story of The Little White Church Cemetery (4/27/19)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5678/There-is-no-church-here-but-the-brave-men-living-and-dead-who-struggled-here-have-consecrated-this-ground>
23. Irvington in Chains and our Process A History of Slavery in Irvington and A look at how Slices of History are made (and our interview with historian Robert Marchant) (5/11/2019)

<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5671/Irving-ton-in-Chains>

24. From Farmland to Shopping District: The Rise of Central Avenue (5/25/2019)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5662/From-Farmland-to-Shopping-District-The-Rise-of-Central-Avenue>
25. Like a long lost friend”: The story of how summer recreation has evolved in Greenburgh (6/7/2019)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5672/like-a-long-lost-friend>
26. Abandon Ship!!! The Story of United Nuclear Corporation and their Short-lived Elmsford Facility (6/28/19)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5656/Abandon-Ship>
27. Beyond Heritage Versus Hate Toward Hope and Reconciliation: The story of Mount Hope Cemetery and its Confederate Monument (7/13/19)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5657/Beyond-Heritage-Versus-Hate-Toward-Hope-and-Reconciliation---The-story-of-Mount-Hope-Cemetery-and-its-Confederate-Monument>
28. Hidden History: The Story of Fairview Fairgrounds Part I (7/27/19)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5660/fairgrounds>
29. Entertainers for Justice (8/3/2019)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5659/Entertainers-for-Justice>
30. A Tale of Two Towns: Greenburgh, NY, and Muncy, PA (8/23/ 2019)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5655/A-Tale-of-Two-Towns--Greenburgh-NY-and-Muncy-PA>
31. When Greenburgh Went “East Bound and Down”: Greenburgh During Prohibition (10/6/2019)
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5992/When->

[Greenburgh-Went-East-Bound-and-Down-Greenburgh-During-Prohibition](#)

- 32. From Mopping The Floor of One Institution to Managing Three at Once: The Amazing Story of Former Westchester County Commissioner of Public Welfare Ruth Taylor (12/12/19)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6272/From-Mopping-The-Floor-of--One-Institution-to-Managing-Three-at-Once>

- 33. Greenburgh Gets its “Sun Daze on” Under the Watchful Eyes of the Boys in Blue (1/9/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6366/Greenburgh-Gets-its-Sun-Daze-on-Under-the-Watchful-Eyes-of-the-Boys-in-Blue>

- 34. Making Martin Luther King Jr’s Dream Come Alive the Success Story of the Parkway Homes/ Parkway Gardens Community:(1/18/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6377/Making-Martin-Luther-King-Jrs-Dream-Come-Alive-the-Success-Story-of-the-Parkway-Homes-Parkway-Gardens-Community>

- 35. Formed By Adversity, Held Together by Faith: The History of the Parkway Homes/Parkway Gardens Community (2/27/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6547/Formed--By-Adversity-and--Held-Together-by-Faith-The-History-of-the-Parkway-Homes- Parkway-Gardens-Community>

- 36. From an Apple Orchard to The Olympics: The Saint Andrew’s Golf Club (3/8/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6591/From-an-Apple-Orchard-to-The-Olympics--The-Saint-Andrews-Golf-Club>

- 37. Ashes “Ashes, Ashes!!We all Fall Down”(3/23/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6653/Ashes-Ashes-We-all-Fall-Down>
- 38. A Leading Medical Institution at The Border of Greenburgh: The Story of New York Medical College (4 /4 /2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6685/A-Leading-Medical-Institution-at-The-Border-of-Greenburgh>
- 39. When the Cure was Worse than the Disease: A Look back on When The Medical Profession Wasn’t so Reliable: (4/18/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6728/When-The-Cure-was-Worse-than-the-Disease>
- 40. All Aboard!!! The Story of The Old Putnam Railroad In Greenburgh (5/31/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6909/All-Aboard-The-Story--the-Old-Putnam-Railroad>
- 41. Juneteenth: A Day of Liberation (6/6/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/6920/Juneteenth--A-Day-of-Liberation>
- 42. The Jewel of Greenburgh: The Life of Charles Lewis Tiffany (7/25/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7049/The-Jewel-of-Greenburgh---The-Life-of-Charles-Lewis-Tiffany>
- 43. Hastings’ Best and Brightest: Nobel Laureates of Hastings (8/1/2020)**
<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7065/Hastings-Best-and--Brightest---Nobel-Laureates-of-Hastings>

- 44. Happy Hour Amid Civil Strife In Elmsford The Story of How the Brother Against Brother Nature of the American Revolution Led to the Cocktail. (8/8/2020)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7158/Happy-Hour-Amid-Civil-Strife-in-Elmsford>
- 45. A Woman Rebel In Hastings: The Life of Margaret Sanger (1879-1966) (10/7/2020)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7166/A-Woman-Rebel-In-Hastings-The-Life-of--Margret-Sanger>
- 46. Headless Horsemen, Long Naps, and Sunshine: Washington Irving and Sunnyside (10/17/2020)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7171/Headless-Horsemen-Long-Naps-and-Sunshine>
- 47. A General's Residence in Greenburgh (10/21/2020) [A-Generals-Residence-in-Greenburgh \(greenburghny.com\)](#)**
- 48. The Ghost of Restaurants Past in Greenburgh Part I (12/12/20)**
[The-Ghost-of-Restaurants--Past-in-Greenburgh-Part-I \(greenburghny.com\)](#)
- 49. A Truly Trailblazing Road: Historic Roads in Greenburgh Part I- The Bronx River Parkway (12/19/2020)**
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7292/A-Truly-Trailblazing-Road-Historic-Roads-In-Greenburgh-Part-I>
- 50. On The Road Again: Significant Roads In Greenburgh – Saw Mill River Parkway (1/2/2021)**

<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7413/Saw-Mill-River-Parkway>

51. The Baby Brother of Parkways The Sprain Brook Parkway
(1/9/2021) [The-Baby-Brother-of-Parkways---The-Sprain-Brook
\(greenburghny.com\)](https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7413/Saw-Mill-River-Parkway)

52. Tarrytown is Alive with The Sound Music: The Tarrytown Music Hall
(1/30/2021)
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7525/Tarrytown-is-Alive-with-The-Sound-of-Music-Tarrytown-Music-Hall>

53. The Black Contribution to The Thin Blue Line: Greenburgh's First African - American Police Officers (2/6/2021) [The-Black-Contribution-to-The-Thin-Blue-Line \(greenburghny.com\)](https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7413/Saw-Mill-River-Parkway)

54. African- Americans Nobly Serving Their Community At the Levers of Power: African-American Town Board Members Past & Present (3/1/2021) [African--Americans-Nobly-Serving-Their-Community-At-the-Levers-of-Power \(greenburghny.com\)](https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7413/Saw-Mill-River-Parkway)

55. The Legacy and Influence of Alexander Hamilton In Greenburgh: The Life of His Great-Great Granddaughter - Mary Schuyler Hamilton
(3/13/2021)<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/7635/The-Life-of-Alexander-Hamltions-Great-Great-Granddaughter---Mary-Schuyler-Hamilton>

About the Authors:

We are both Assistant Town Historians at Greenburgh Town Hall and we are engaged to be married and are currently looking for permanent employment.

Riley Wentzler:

I was born and raised in a small rural town in central Pennsylvania. In high school, I took every honors course available including four years of Spanish. I received A's in all of them. I graduated third in my class of 146 students. This brought me to Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. Once there, I continued my trend of academic excellence. I graduated summa cum laude in Political Science with a minor in Spanish and a Master's in Communication Studies, with a G.P.A of 3.94. It was also there that I met my lovely fiancée, Felicia Barber. My Master's in Communication has promoted public speaking, teamwork, and customer service. My Political Science degree has developed my research skills using computer-based tools and provided me with experience using the Microsoft Office products. My minor in Spanish has facilitated my bilingual capabilities. During my internship at Greenburgh, I created the petition for the State Roads project using website tools. My diverse education and areas of interest have provided me with a wide range of skills. I look forward to finding a career opportunity in business or government. **To suggest a topic for next week's article, you can contact me at assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com, or to help me find employment, you can contact me at rjwentzler413@gmail.com**

Felicia Barber:

I was born in New York City and raised in Hartsdale, New York. I graduated from Ardsley High School. I recently earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. It was here that I met my fiancé, Riley Wentzler. As a result of my academic excellence, I won a scholarship every year. I learned and applied many graphic design skills to projects during my summer internships and at school. I am proficient in using Adobe graphic design applications including Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign. For my Identity/branding course at Edinboro, I created logos to appear on the tee-shirts of Physical Education majors. For a veteran's upcoming event, I used a typeface to focus the reader to the soldier in the poster. For the State Roads Legislative Campaign project, I created the embedded graphic-photo that accompanied the petition I am looking for a job to utilize my skills as a Graphic Designer in an agency, print shop, company or government **To suggest a topic for next week's article, you can contact me at assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com. To learn more about my artwork or to help me find employment you can contact me at feliciadbarber@gmail.com.**

Volunteer - Research Assistant - Ryan Stuzin:

I was born and raised in Scarsdale, New York. I am a senior at Edgemont High School, where I am captain of the varsity ski and golf teams. I also cover the ski team for the Scarsdale Inquirer. I have been a volunteer junior ski patroller at Stratton Mountain in Vermont and founded the Red Cross Club at my high school. I will be attending Colgate University in the fall, with a plan to study political science and/or history and eventually go to law school. I participated in the Town of Greenburgh internship program last summer, which inspired me to learn more about our town and its government. That, coupled with my love of history, is what prompted me to reach out to Riley and Felicia to help them with their articles about the history of Greenburgh.

Two Interviews with the authors:

<https://riverjournalonline.com/around-town/a-love-of-history-and-each-other/13708/>

<https://wcbs880.radio.com/articles/news/stories-main-street-couple-cerebral-palsy-brings-manytalents-town-greenburgh>

References:

DiLorenzo, K. (2019, March 15). Historians Bring Cemetery's Past to Light. *The Enterprise*, p. 6&21.

Raftery, P. (2011). *The Cemeteries of Westchester County*. Elmsford, NY: Westchester County Historical Society.

Robert, P. (2021, January 15). Zion Episcopal added to National Historic Register. *The Enterprise*, p. Unknown.

Sanzo, S. (1983). *A History of Zion Episcopal on the Occasion of its 150th Anniversary*. Dobbs Ferry, New York: Unknown .

Zion Episcopal Church. (2021). *Our Parish Hall*. Retrieved from [ziondobbsferry.org](http://www.ziondobbsferry.org): <http://www.ziondobbsferry.org/our-parish-hall.html>

Our last article, *The Legacy and Influence of Alexander Hamilton In Greenburgh: The Life of His Great-Great Granddaughter - Mary Schuyler Hamilton*, had a slight error. The letter to the editor of the Enterprise stating when Mary Schuyler Hamilton was not written by an unknown author. It was written by Gary Rappaport. We did not see his name because it appears at the bottom of the letter and we don't have a subscription to the Enterprise .