

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON LODGE

The Lodge may have been built in 1845, but I am not sure whether the Fairchilds built the Lodge or not. Mr. Terwilliger told me they came to the Lodge around 1875 or before. They owned all the property from Beaver Dam Rd. to the Bay. Its western boundary was Brookhaven Acres and the eastern boundary was the Carson's property. William Murdock and his family worked for the Fairchilds. The house they lived in is still in existence. It is a green house on South Country Rd. across from the Lodge. Mrs. Stanley Hermann is a relative of Mr. Murdock.

The Carmans were good friends of the Fairchilds.

In 1892, there was a robbery at the Lodge and the silver was stolen. The police caught the thief, and when the trial came up, he jumped bail and ran away to another country.

George Washington was on a plantation down south and his wife was making some coffee and it boiled over. There were little particles of something on the outside of the coffee pot. George Washington was a chemist, so he tasted the particles and they tasted just like coffee. That's how he got the idea of instant coffee. At first, he just made small batches and then he wanted to build a factory. The first to use instant coffee were the airlines and the Army. Some of the stores had a little on the counter but it was expensive. The government wouldn't let George Washington put his full name on the coffee cans; it had to be G. Washington Coffee.

George Washington came to Bellport in 1915 to build his coffee factory. When George Washington bought the property the only buildings were the big house, the farm house, and a barn or two.

Some people say that he was actually a relative of the President George Washington. But most people say he adopted that name when he came to the United States. They say he came from either Belgium or South America. His wife came from Belgium and he had a head gardener who came from Belgium. He also had a Japanese butler. He had a son and 2 daughters. His son was named George. One of his daughters was named Martha, but I don't know what the other was named.

The Washingtons used the Lodge as a summer house and they had a winter house in Brooklyn. They had 12 men all year round to take care of the Lodge. In the summer there could be as many as 25 men. He had a carpenter who worked there all year round and a superintendant, Ken Murcle who lived there with his family. The Murcles lived in the house that the

fire department burned down in 1970. William Murdock worked for George Washington as well as for the Fairchilds. Mrs. Pierman said that she remembers the young George who used to play with her cousin. She said he always had a little monkey on his shoulder.

George Washington had a hobby of keeping strange animals as a zoo. Some of them were parrots, flamingos, other exotic birds, fish, monkeys, foxes, eagles, bears, and a coatimundi. One of the girls had a cheetah. Washington built many buildings, a lot of them were for the animals to live in. He got his animals from a city importer; he would tell the importer what kind of animals he wanted and how many and the importer would get them. Mr. Terwilliger recalls that once at the train station he saw a crate full of 4 pink flamingos, for George Washington.

There was a rumor that a bear from the Washington Lodge killed a child, but actually this happened at an Inn at Southaven, Hunter Inn. As an attraction they had a Black Bear chained to a tree in front. One day, two boys about 12 or 13 years old were coming home from school and they saw the bear and began teasing it. So it got angry and grabbed one of the boys and the other boy ran away. Bears are very strong and can be quite dangerous when angry. Somebody in a car saw this happening and tried to run over the bear with their car. When help finally came, the bear had mauled the boy so badly he died. The people of the Inn got rid of the bear.

One of George Washington's birds got loose and he announced and advertised that there would be a great reward for anyone who finds the bird. Someone found the bird and brought it to George Washington expecting a great reward. George Washington gave the person a five dollar bill.

George Washington got one of his foxes from Alfred Nelson's brother, who got it from a soldier, who found the cub in a trench. The soldier brought it back and chained it to his barracks. Alfred Nelson's brother saw it and wanted to buy it. The soldier sold it for 25 dollars. Alfred Nelson told me the fox was very tame and just like a dog. His brother named the fox "Frenchy". The Nelson family finally decided they couldn't keep the fox, so Alfred Nelson's brother sold it to George Washington for 25 dollars. George Washington already had another fox so he put the two together. One winter some dogs came and dug a hole under the foxes' pen and the foxes escaped. About a winter later

one of the Brown boys shot a fox with a collar on; the fox probably walked right up to him.

George Washington had another hobby of keeping prize pigs.

George Washington liked plants very much. He planted many beautiful trees around the Lodge. Many of them are still living. He also imported some foreign trees. He had a very very beautiful table garden. Alfred Nelson said it was one of the most beautiful sights he had ever seen. It was said that one morning in a tree nursery, George Washington spent 6000 dollars. On the table garden he grew some melons. Then he got this edea of introducing wine into the melons, to give them a wine flavor. During the war George Washington had a victory garden of potatoes. There used to be a gigantic elm tree about 100 feet high on the turn-around circle in front of the Lodge. Sometimes this beautiful tree was cut down because all that's left is a stump.

George Washington built an enormous cement pool, that took days to fill. There used to be a red house next to the swimming pool, but two young ladies, Miss Sweeney and Judy Newnawk had it moved across from the new Southhaven school and next door to Mrs. Paris.

One day George Washington was looking his land over and decided he wanted a hill on the east side of the lodge. So he called Jimmy Stephani and asked him to take his bulldozer and make a hill. In about a week they produced a hill. George Washington was a rather eccentric man. George Washington was looking at the hill and changed his mind. He told Jimmy to move the hill over there, behind the pool. So the hill was moved behind the pool and stayed there.

In the early 1920's the Washingtons were robbed. It was in the winter so the Washingtons weren't there, the Japanese butler was on the third floor and didn't hear a thing, and the superintendent was in Patchogue. A truck came with some men and they stole all the silver and everything else valuable they could get their hands on. Mr. Terwilliger was constable then and he was called in. They never caught the thieves. Mr. Washington told Mr. Terwilliger that they had been robbed twice in Brooklyn and from now on he was going to use the cheapest silver plated stuff.

George Washington wanted to build his instant coffee

factory on Beaver Dam Rd. where the cement factory is now. He built 3 houses for factory workers across from the property. The people of Brookhaven didn't want him to build factory, so they kept raising the price of the land until George Washington got out and moved away in 1925. The Washingtons had an auction when they left. He moved to New Jersey and built this factory there. When he moved he moved some of the buildings from the lodge to N.J. For four years the lodge stood empty.

After the Washingtons moved, a man named Mr. Addlestein bought it around 1935. Everything he did seemed to be a failure. First he ran a boarding house for a couple of years, and he had a chicken farm for a while. He wanted to convert one of the back buildings into a club. He made a cocktail lounge, but he couldn't have a club because Brookhaven wouldn't give him a liquor license. Mr. Terwilliger worked for him. Around 1940 Mr. addlestein left.

Mr. Murray Wunderlich and Mrs. Frances Wunderlich rented the lodge to make Camp Washington Lodge. Camp Washington Lodge lasted until around 1951.

In 1961 the Marist Brothers bought the lodge. They are an educational Order of the Catholic Church. They use it as a summer retreat for the Brothers. They also bring groups of children out from Roslyn N.Y. for picnics. They were planning to make a high school but they didn't.

In 1970 a school was started at the lodge by a group of people who wanted to make a new school. We are renting it from the Marist Brothers. Some of the teachers live at the school in the winter time. I am one of the students who go here. I heard about the contest and wanted to write about my school building - the Bay Community School building.