

Colonial Terraces Walking Tour

By Brian Flannery, August 2001

CLINTON SQUARE. One of Colonial Terraces two parks. The **Governor George Clinton Statue** was downtown until displaced by urban renewal. East and west sides of Square ~ longest rows of houses in Colonial Terraces.

STORE BUILDING. The only commercial space in C.T. ~ two stores plus two apartments upstairs. Note the raised plaza. In a memo, Henry Wright explained why the planners created the raised plaza: "There could be nothing nicer than quite a large space paved partly with gravel where cement will be too expensive, with a nice broad tree, under which could be served during fine weather, soft drinks and suitable light lunches. In the absence of any other communal features, this together with a little park in front of the store will thus become a centre of evening activity and create a feeling of fellowship among the various tenants in this community." Front entrances to stores were added later. Original doors were on sides of building. Shop on left still uses one of the original side doors as the main door. Front entrances were cut into what had been two large bay windows.

BUSH AVENUE TO CORNER OF NORTON STREET. As C.T. streets go, **Bush Avenue** is one of the wider ones. The land that was saved by having narrow streets and by attaching the houses was used for the two parks, that is, public amenities.

26 BUSH AVENUE. Notice the characteristic C.T. stone gutters here are in particularly good shape ~ the homeowner takes great pride in them. Looking up **Norton Street** towards **Farrell** (that is, east), one sees a quintessential example of Wright's style ~ his preference for irregular street layouts and sloped sites. Wright preferred the challenge of difficult sites ~ that is, hilly sites rather than flat ones. The difficult sites offered the opportunity to do something more interesting ~ such as have many changes in levels (through the use of stone walls and banks, and flights of steps) ~ to create a more picturesque effect.

NORTON STREET TO CORNER OF LILLY STREET. **14 & 16 Norton Street** are an interesting example of attached houses in that it's hard to tell that they're not just one large house.

LILLY STREET TO CORNER OF BENNETT STREET. **6 Lilly Street** is a good example of one brick end unit model ~ the beautiful original open porch is still open. Compare with the house at the other end of the row (porch enclosed).

BENNETT STREET TO CORNER OF WILSON STREET ~ TENNIS COURTS. Apparently added after the housing project had passed from the federal government's hands into the hands of the private Colonial Terraces Corporation. The present courts, sadly in rundown condition, will shortly be rehabilitated by the City of Newburgh at the request of the Colonial Terraces Neighborhood Association.

4 BENNETT STREET. Group home for developmentally disabled and mentally retarded people. Built by the State of New York in 1987, it's design was altered to make it more compatible with the architecture of the surrounding neighborhood after C.T. residents raised a ruckus.

WILSON STREET, THEN FARRELL STREET to CORNER OF THIRD STREET. **10-14 Wilson Street** (between **Bennett** and **South Streets**) is the only place where the original **Wilson Street**/east side of **Farrell Street** landscaping is still preserved - sloped front yards (no walls) with Japanese Barberry hedges running along the ridge at the top of the bank. Notice how the apartment house at **12 Farrell Street** (middle of block/opposite **Norton Street**) is set back for dramatic effect. For added effect, it was the only building on the street that didn't have hedges in front of it. (At the property line, the hedges running along the ridge at the top of the bank turned at a 90-degree angle and headed back towards the rear, so that the building was flanked by hedges.)

THIRD STREET TO CLINTON SQUARE. Once again, notice how some houses are set back farther than others to make the streetscape more interesting. **360 Third Street** ~ note the large shed on the front lawn. This is probably the most dramatic example of why the Colonial Terraces Association asked the City of Newburgh to place an umbrella of protection over the neighborhood. As of Fall 2004, the Colonial Terraces Architectural Design District is to go into effect. Any exterior changes to a C.T. property that are visible to the street will have to be reviewed by the City of Newburgh Architectural Review Commission, in order to preserve the architectural heritage for generations to come.