



The Historian

The Newsletter of The Summit Historical Society

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G. Morrison Hubbard, Jr. ("Morry")

A Noteworthy Contributor to Summit

By Robert A. Hageman

How many people do you know who have lived in Summit for 97 years since 1909? One choice is G. Morrison Hubbard, Jr. The G. is for George, but Mr. Hubbard is known to most people as simply "Morry".

His profile has been relatively low in our city over the years, by his design, but this should not obscure the noteworthy contributions that he has made to Summit. He has given college scholarships for students who attended Lincoln School; and in John Sayre's name scholarships to children of Summit police officers; purchased uniforms for high school band members; and given gifts to the YMCA and the Overlook Hospital Foundation. More public gifts include an unprecedented and unrestricted gift to the City of Summit in 1998, and this year, a donation of .733 acres of land to the city for the Reeves-Reed Arboretum.

An example of Morry Hubbard's approach to giving over the years is that when the Carter House (present site of the Summit Historical Society) was moved in 1986, additional money was needed to complete the funding of the move. Each donor of \$5,000 was to be listed on a plaque, so Morry gave \$4,975.

Hubbards Move To Summit

Morry Hubbard's parents moved to Summit in 1906. They came from Brooklyn, but were originally from Connecticut. In fact, the Hubbard family roots go back to 1639 in Hartford, Connecticut. His grandfather was a mechanic at Stanley Works in that state.

When the Hubbards came to Summit they lived in the converted Elkwood Railroad Station home at 73 Passaic Avenue, before moving across the street to 72 Passaic Avenue. Both houses, very nice ones, still remain. (The house



G. Morrison Hubbard, Jr. ("Morry")

("Hubbard" continued from page 1)

at 73 Passaic Avenue is currently owned by Shirley Wight Keeney, a longtime volunteer at the Historical Society with outstanding volunteer service to the entire community. She was the focus of our article in the February, 2005 Historian).

In 1926 the Hubbards moved to 155 Hobart Avenue. The home, which is Morry Hubbard's current residence, was built in 1916 by Mrs. Susan Reeves for her mother. Ten years later, the house was traded to the Hubbards for four acres of land that Morry's father owned across the street on Hobart Avenue. By this time, Morry was matriculating at Summit High School.

June 3, 1909

Morry Hubbard was born on June 3, 1909, three years after his mother and father moved to Summit. He grew up in a family of one brother, John, born in 1907, and a sister, Elizabeth, born in 1917. Neither of his siblings is living.

School Years

Morry attended the first Lincoln School located between Beechwood Road and Maple Street on DeForest Avenue. Before that he attended kindergarten at a school located on Passaic Avenue



Father, Mother, Morry, Brother Jack on Passaic Avenue

He went to Summit High School (now the Middle School), then on to Lawrenceville Prep School located outside of Princeton for his senior year.

After graduating from Lawrenceville, Morry went to Dartmouth, graduating in 1932. His father had also graduated from Dartmouth and his mother from the then all-women's college of Mount Holyoke as one of nine women in the graduating class.

Memories of Growing Up in Summit

People - "People were nice to kids". A story relayed to me by Morry was that when he was a child, he and a friend, Fred Cowperthwait, would sell all types of trivial sports products and get samples to keep. By the time they got to the home of Mrs. Harmon, across from the present Summit High School, she would ask: "What do you boys have left?" They would tell her, and she would say, "That's just what I need!" The boys would then make the sale. This example of quiet generosity has inspired Morry Hubbard's approach to philanthropy over the years.

Schools - He recalled the time when his father received a phone call one evening from his fourth or fifth grade teacher. The teacher told Morry's dad that he was unable to control the boy in school. "Why", the father asked? The teacher replied, "Because today Morry just jumped up out of his seat during the middle of class and ran to the window to watch a fire truck go by". "Nevertheless," Morry said, "I had the best teachers in the Summit public schools of my entire education."

Town - "Everybody knew almost everybody in a nice and caring way". During his childhood, mail was delivered to the Hubbard neighborhood on Passaic Avenue by a man named Mr. Spinning. In the winter he delivered the mail on a sleigh. Kindly he would offer rides to the kids.

Recreation - "Casual. It could be through the YMCA or in pickup games". In high school Morry played baseball and basketball and ran track on the school teams.

Post Dartmouth

Before his adult working career, Morry Hubbard, at the age of fifteen, showed some of the business acumen that surfaced later in life. At this young age, he drove around (he did drive then) eight of the surrounding towns selling stationery and envelopes inscribed with a person's name and address. These products were made by a company in Troy, New York which advertised in various magazines. Morry went in person to Troy to make a deal. In effect, he gave up his commission in the stationery business as a loss leader to have the opportunity to sell the more expensive Christmas card lines to his customers. He had about 200 customers in the area.

After graduating from Dartmouth in 1932, Morry went to work in a real estate firm (Hubbard, Westervelt & Mottelay, Inc.) established by his father around 1924 in downtown New York City. The 1930's were an extremely difficult time at the firm, throughout the country and the world. Morry and his brother, John (Jack), largely spent this period with the very important work of adjusting mortgages, not only helping the lender, but the recipient's business as well.

World War II

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1945.

BACK IN REALTY

On March 17, 1942, at the age of 32, Morry joined the Army. Since his background was finance, he was sent to Sheppard Field, Texas to handle their finances. Among his duties was arranging cash payments monthly to the 50,000 troops stationed there. After a period, he was in charge of Air Corps financing in 17 states with an office in Chicago. He rose to the rank of Major and was honorably discharged in September, 1945.

A few years ago, Morry was one of the WW II veterans honored at the Summit Memorial Day Service on the Village Green.

Back Working in New York and Retirement

After the war, Morry went back to work with his brother, Jack, at the Hubbard firm. Business was still suffering, but then it began to noticeably improve in the coming years. In 1968 the firm was sold to Merrill Lynch and became a subsidiary later named Merrill Lynch Hubbard, Inc. He also established with his brother the Hubbard REIT. It was one of the earlier real estate investment trusts in the country on the NY Stock Exchange. While leading the subsidiary, he developed Merrill's participation in FHA, Ginnie Mae and its hospital financing operations.

In 1974, Morry Hubbard retired at the age of 65.



George M. Hubbard Jr., who has rejoined the mortgage firm of Hubbard, Westervelt & Mottelay, Inc., after three and one-half years in the Army. He was a major and served as finance officer at Sheppard Field, Tex., and later with the Air Technical Service Command in Chicago.

Marriage and Family



*1942 Wedding Reception
at 155 Hobart Avenue*

Morry and his wife, Elizabeth (Libby) were married for 63 years. After having known one another for nearly 17 years, they were married on March 17, 1942. The wedding took place at 2:00 pm. At 4:00 pm Morry reported for duty in the Army. The couple were longtime members of Central Presbyterian Church. Sadly, Libby passed away in 2005 at the age of 94.

Morry and Libby had two children: a daughter, Morrene, born in 1945. She is an artist living in Short Hills. A son, G. Morrison Hubbard III, was born in 1947. He is an attorney living in Savannah, Georgia. Morrene has two daughters and her brother has one daughter and one son.

Two News Items

Although most of Morry Hubbard's contributions to Summit through the years have been low profile, two of them have recently received some public notice.

The first centers around the Lincoln School, now the Lincoln-Hubbard School. The Hubbard family has a long history with Lincoln School. Three generations attended Lincoln: Morry and his brother, Morry's two children and two of his grandchildren. His mother was an early president of the Lincoln school PTA. He has spoken to classes at the school about the history of Summit. His daughter, Morrene, painted the murals at the school.

In 1998, Morry Hubbard gave an unprecedented and unrestricted gift to the city. It was placed by the city in the Summit Area Public Foundation for Summit education. The money is still being used for educational purposes today. As a way to thank Mr. Hubbard for his many contributions over the years, the Board of Education renamed Lincoln School, the Lincoln-Hubbard School.

This was not the first time that an elementary school in Summit was named in honor of a resident. Brayton School is named for a son of the Larned family who had donated the land site, and Wilson School is named for the family whose home was on the property prior to the school's construction.

Another recent Morry Hubbard donation, in June, 2006, was the .733 acre of land donated to the city for the Reeves-Reed Arboretum meadow management program. The land is located in back of Mr. Hubbard's property at 155 Hobart Ave. and is adjacent to the Arboretum land. In 1974 he bought property to help establish the Arboretum. So the recent gift was the second time that the Hubbard family significantly supported "green acres".

Some Concluding Words From Morry Hubbard

At the conclusion of my interview with Morry for this article, I asked him what he saw as a major challenge facing Summit in the coming years.

He quickly responded by saying the following: "It's similar to that facing all of us in the entire country - keeping civic pride and responsibility in our home, our schools and the community. Civic pride and patriotism are not bad attributes to live by."