

across Connecticut and New England to fight for our independence during the Revolutionary War. The Community hosted 6,000 troops under the command of French General Rochambeau as they traveled from Newport, Rhode Island to Yorktown, Virginia to participate in the decisive campaign of the Revolution.

Beginning in the first decade of the nineteenth century, Plainfield began a fundamental transition which would forever reshape its character, population, economy and culture. In many respects, the history of this community, and many others throughout New England, is defined by the development and expansion of the textile industry. And Plainfield was an ideal place for this industry to grow. The rivers which run through Plainfield, including the Moosup and Quinebaug, offered an ideal source of power for early mills. The Hartford-Providence Turnpike, the major transportation route between the state capitals, ran through town. Moreover, Plainfield benefitted from its close proximity to Rhode Island—the birthplace of the factory-based textile industry in the United States. The early mills received important financial support from Rhode Island investors and utilized technology developed by Samuel Slater.

The first textile mill was established in the community by the Plainfield Union Manufacturing Company in 1809 along the Moosup River. Within a decade, the company employed 74 people who produced shirts, sheets, bedding and other products. In the years following 1809, which author Christopher Bickford describes as “those frenetic first years of growth of the textile industry,” several other mills were established along the Moosup and Quinebaug Rivers, including one owned by the Moosup Manufacturing Company. By 1820, the character of Plainfield had changed significantly as the textile industry became more and more widespread.

Over the coming decades, the textile industry would grow exponentially, remaking the community into an industrial center in Connecticut. The mills built during this period were multiple stories and incorporated the latest technological innovations. By 1840, Plainfield was home to seven cotton and five woolen mills. The cotton mills produced 3.2 million yards of cloth and employed 512 people. The woolen factories produced 110,500 yards of cloth using nearly 300 employees. In 1840, the railroad began to provide service to Plainfield. This linked Plainfield to communities throughout New England and provided another boost to the growing textile sector. Using the railroad, producers could distribute their products to new markets more cheaply than ever before. Moreover, the coming of the railroad helped to encourage the development of larger and larger industrial facilities. The original Wauregan Mill, built in 1853, was 250 feet long by 50 feet wide making it the largest mill in Plainfield by far. By 1860, this mill was the largest in Windham County with 425 employees who produced 3.9 million yards of various cloth products.

The history of Plainfield continued to be defined in large part by the textile industry through the 1920s. New mills continued to be constructed, including facilities built by the Plainfield Woolen Company and another by

the Central Worsted Company. The last major mill was built by Harold Lawton between 1906 and 1912. This was the largest facility ever constructed during more than a century dominated by continuous growth in the textile industry. The original structure was three stories, measured more than 250 feet long and had a 150-foot smokestack rising above its steam generators. Over the next six years, the original building was expanded twice and employment grew to 1,200. These developments in the early part of this century prompted the Providence Sunday Journal to write in 1912 that “Plainfield has been transformed from a quiet farming community into one of the busiest mill villages hereabouts.” The transformation of Plainfield from a frontier outpost into an industrial center was complete.

The residents of Plainfield have triumphed over a series of challenges throughout the twentieth century. They survived the Great Depression which dramatically reduced employment in the Town’s mills. Young men from the Town served their nation bravely in two world wars, Korea, Vietnam and other military actions around the world. The community developed new industries in the 1950s and 1960s during a period in which economic forces beyond its control shifted textile manufacturing to the southern United States and overseas. During this period, new manufacturers, including Kaman Corporation and C&M Wire, moved to old mill buildings and contributed to economic diversification and revitalization.

Mr. Speaker, a yet to be published book documenting Plainfield’s long history is appropriately titled: “Plainfield Transformed: Three Centuries of Life in a Connecticut Town.” Over the past three hundred years, the community has been transformed from a frontier outpost to a center of textile manufacturing to the town we see today. As the residents celebrate their past, they look to the future with optimism and a strong sense of community. I know that our grandchildren and their children will mark Plainfield’s 400th Anniversary with the pride we feel today.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH E. DEVOY

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 12, 1999

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to pay tribute to Joseph E. DeVoy on the occasion of the Forest Hills Community and Civic Association’s Testimonial Luncheon in recognition of his thirty-five years of service to the Association and to the Forest Hills community.

Joe DeVoy, a strong believer in community and coalition building, was selected as Community Board Six’s first Chairman and continues to serve as a member of the Board. He has served as the President of the Central Queens Allied Council, a forerunner of Civic Alliances in Queens.

Joe DeVoy’s strong interest and focus on community service led him to be one of the founding members of the Forest Hills Volunteer Ambulance Corps where he served as an EMT for six years. Through his dedicated ef-

forts, the North Forest Park Branch of the Queens Borough Library was completed and opened to the public providing neighborhood residents with a haven to read and learn about their community and the world. In addition, Joe DeVoy was the driving force behind the designation and development of Remsen Park as a historic landmark and protected area and currently serves as the President of the Remsen Park Coalition.

Joe DeVoy routinely works with neighborhood community groups and local elected officials to ensure the quality of life of his friends and neighbors in Forest Hills. Under Joe DeVoy’s leadership, the Forest Hills Community and Civic Association has developed a broad array of services for people of all ages. Today, the members of the Forest Hills Community and Civic Association still enjoy the benefits of Joe’s guidance and leadership in finding ways to resolve problems which affect the Forest Hills community.

Joe DeVoy has long been known as an innovator and beacon of good will to all those with whom he has come into contact. Through his dedicated efforts, he has helped improve my constituents’ quality of life. In recognition of his many accomplishments on behalf of my constituents, I offer my congratulations to Joseph E. DeVoy on the occasion of the Forest Hills Community and Civic Association’s Testimonial Luncheon in honor of his thirty-five years of service to the Association and to the Forest Hills community.

WE THE PEOPLE . . . THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 12, 1999

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to congratulate the young scholars of Woodbridge High School from Bridgeville who represented my home state of Delaware in the We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program. They were part of a group of 1200 students from across the country who were in Washington, D.C. from May first to the third to compete in the national finals of this program. These young scholars worked diligently and persistently to reach the national finals and through this program have gained a deeper knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy.

The names of the students are: Derek Bowman, Mike Clendaniel, Lisa Culver, Joy Diogo, Laura Diver, Shawanda Garrison, Krsitine Haring, Cassie Hartzell, Brooke Hearn, Lina Hertzog, Heather Holmes, Jared Judy, Michele Keough, Matt McCoy, Josh Miller, Blake Moore, Andrew Morozowich, Jessica Parkinson, Willie Savage, Crystal Short and Lefeisha Williamson.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to their teacher, Barbara Hudson, who deserves much of the credit for the success of the team.

The We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program is the most extensive