

YORKTOWN HOMES OF HISTORIC DISTINCTION

Small House Design Award Winner (1932)

In the early 1920s, the publisher Halsey W. Wilson, creator of the famous Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, known to librarians and students everywhere, purchased extensive acreage in what was then the rural Croton Heights area of Yorktown.

He sold off plots of land at very affordable prices, and surprisingly, many of the purchasers were adventurous single women—teachers and librarians from New York City who saw an opportunity to own property away from the city's noise and grime. The little residential enclave soon became known as "No Man's Land" because of the many women who created homes there. Wilson also purchased what is now Peter Pratt's Inn to serve as a lodging place for out-of-town property owners awaiting completion of their homes.

In 1927, Anna Van Nort, a schoolteacher, enlisted the aid of her architect and neighbor, Elizabeth Coit, to build one of those homes. Coit, a Radcliffe graduate and the first woman to receive the Langley Award from the American Institute of Architects, specialized in designing houses outside of the city mainly for women. Coit designed a two-story cottage for Van Nort that was nestled into its forested site and complemented by airy porches on three of its facades (along with a practical woodshed on its fourth). Her design received a special mention in the small house architectural competition of 1932 sponsored by Better

Homes in America. According to the review committee, the house "shows domesticity and real charm and fits its country site very well." The home is also pictured, along with its floorplan, in American Country Houses of the Thirties by Lewis A. Coffin.

Anna Van Nort lived in her woodland home for the rest of her life, and upon her death, it remained empty for several years. In 1967, Edward and Louise Wohlrab purchased the property and, in 1983, sold it to their daughter and son-in-law Leslie and Robert Troise, so the home has only really changed hands between two families in 91 years.

Today, Anna Van Nort's house remains remarkably true to its original design of 1927 and has recently been added to the growing roster of Yorktown's Homes of Historic Distinction. Current owner Leslie Troise, who, like many of her pioneering Croton Heights predecessors, is an educator, has made minimal changes. During her parents' tenure, central heating was added, a luxury not available to the Croton Heights settlers of the 1920s. The kitchen, of course, has been remodeled although the site of the old wood stove can still be seen, and an access door to the dining room has been moved. The living room features the original beamed ceilings and a large fireplace, surrounded on either side by rustic wooden cabinets. Outside, a guest house has been added that now accommodates

Troise's father, and a swimming pool nearby enhances the property. The porches are surrounded by trees, now much more mature than the saplings of 1928.

Over the years, of all the rooms in the house, Lesley Troise continues to favor the screened porch off of the dining room, perched amidst the adjoining forest like a magical tree house.

The Yorktown Landmarks Preservation Commission (YLPC) is always seeking applicants for traditional Landmarking or the Homes of Historic Distinction Program. To qualify, homes must have historical significance based on age, architectural style, past ownership, or association with a person or event important to Yorktown's history. Through the program, plaques designating the basic facts about each house's history are fabricated and installed on or around the home. YLPC will work with each homeowner on appropriate wording for the plaque and will assist in research. The cost for the application and the plaque is \$100. Applications are available online at yorktown-ny.org/planning or by emailing nmilanese@yorktownny.org.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TERRY NAUMANN
Lesley Troise's home was recently designated a Home of Historic Distinction by the Yorktown Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The Yorktown Landmarks Preservation Commission would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Tim Beachak and Esteban Baquero of Signs Ink of Yorktown in the design, preparation and production of Homes of Historic Distinction signage.

Receiver of Taxes
363 Underhill Avenue
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9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

TOWN OF YORKTOWN School Tax Bill for Year 2018-2019

The **First Half** of the school taxes are due and must be paid no later than October 1, 2018. *(Last day to pay without penalty).*

For resident's convenience, the office of the Receiver of Taxes will be open for extended hours on:

September 28th and October 1st from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Please note that only **one (1)** School Tax Bill is mailed to each resident. The bill was mailed on September 1, 2018. Each bill has two perforated payment stubs located at the bottom of the statement which are to be used for payments. Please call the Tax Office if you have not received your bill.

Payment options:

- **Payment in person**
- **Payment by mail**
Please be sure that all envelopes are postmarked by an official United States Post Office no later than October 1, 2018.
- **On-line check payments**
Please refer to the "Tax Receiver" website at www.yorktownny.org to make payments on-line.

**Taxes must be postmarked no later than
October 1, 2018**

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