

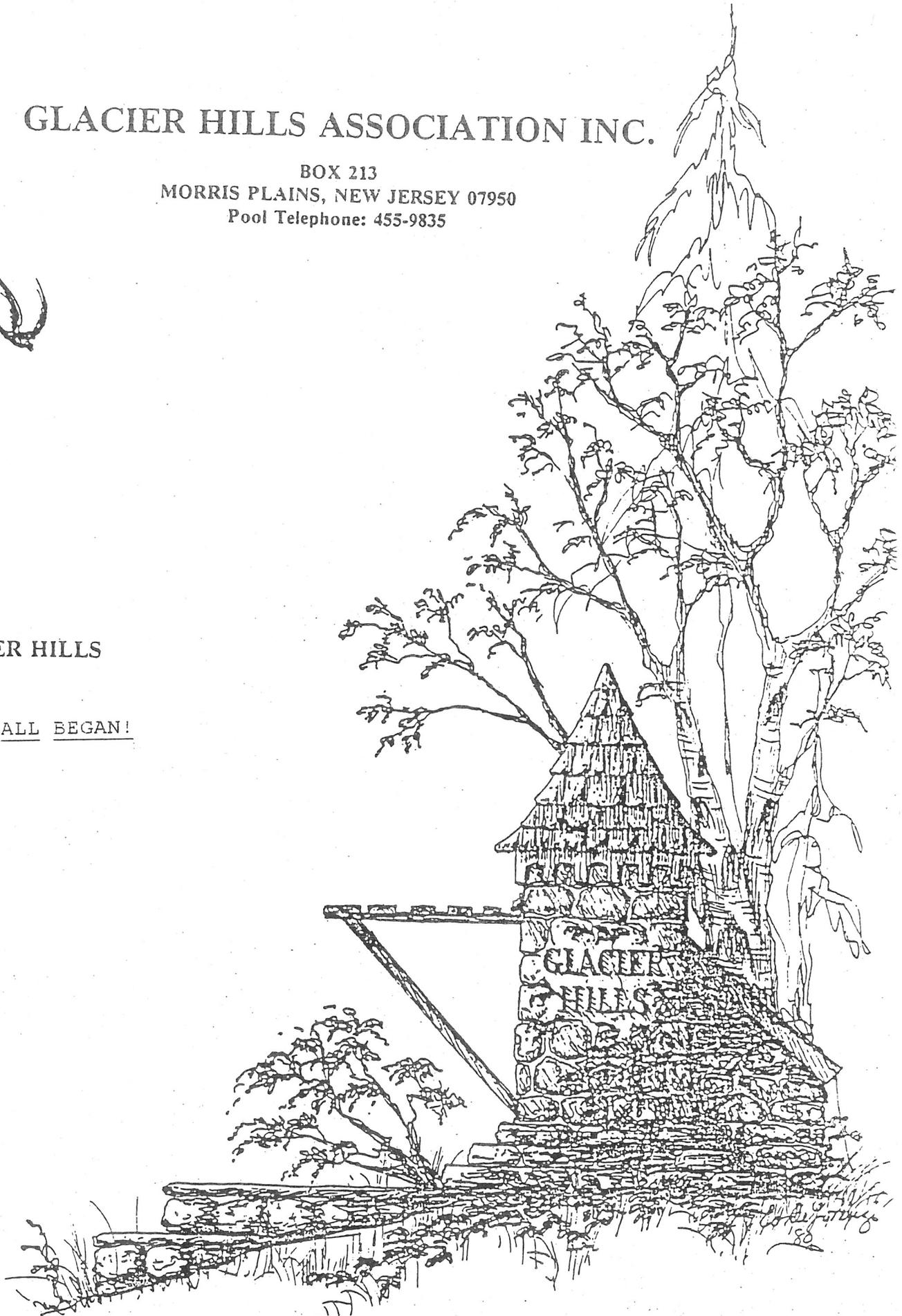
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GLACIER HILLS

HOW IT ALL BEGAN!



## HOW IT BEGAN

The year was 1945. The war in Europe was over and the mushroom cloud over Hiroshima signaled the end of the Pacific conflict.

The young lions were returning, and they wanted homes. Jobs they could get, but affordable housing was another thing. Vacant apartments were a rarity, and big bonuses for a year's lease were common practice. The Veteran's Housing Administration couldn't process the 4½%, twenty year mortgages fast enough, and commercial banks, at 5%, were swamped with applications.

What is now our lands were then part of the area known as Littleton Corners, a small settlement at the crossroads of Littleton Road (now known as Route 202) and Mt. Pleasant Avenue (Route 10). Save for a small post office, some nondescript homes, and a few penny ante stores, there was little but farmlands, dominated by the great Ballentine estate, the biggest, and only, employer in the neighborhood. The woods, however, were well-populated with fox, deer, mallards, flying squirrel, muskrat, opossum, and raccoon. As anyone who has had squirrels in their attic or raccoons in their front yard knows, some of these denizens are still around.

This sylvan setting cried to be developed. Into the breach stepped Edwin R. Closs, part visionary, part snake oil salesman, part rosy-cheeked optimist, and, said some, all baloney. His dream was that of a middle class Smoke Rise, to be created by medium income do-it-yourselfers, and he had no trouble finding a supply.

The first houses to be built were six in number and were located in Section 1. This promising start fizzled and building languished while the Ecloss Company tried to solve problems of finance (first and foremost), political road blocks, and an inadequate water supply. Finally, in 1951, the builder started again, this time in

Section 6 with the promise of bridle paths with a stable for your steed, a lake with boating and fishing, a ski run and toboggan slide, and - believe it or not - an airport for the flying enthusiasts. As proof of the reality of the dream, a sales contract of that period admonished "On Lake Front properties, no docks or summer houses of any kind may be constructed or maintained."

From 1952 to 1954, building in other sections proceeded spasmodically; to put it kindly. The Ecloss system produced some interesting contretemps, perhaps best exemplified by the following jingle, the whimsical work of one of the residents who lived through it:

## ODE

In the not so very long ago  
there came from Mowhawkland,  
A hungry man, rapacious, gaunt,  
with an itching in his hand.

For sustenance, and dancing girls,  
and other pleasures rich  
And also for a likely spot  
in which to make a pitch.

Footsore, weary, desolate,  
He glimpsed a barren land,  
Where others passed, he stood  
transfixed, his bursting thoughts  
undammed.

And thus in one man's earthy  
mind, complete with all its frills,  
Was born this paradise on Earth,  
That we call Glacier Hills.

And soon the hammers rang  
and saws sang to the shrinking sky,  
But shortly after others came  
to ask the reason why.

Like bees to honey, ham to eggs,  
They waved blank checks aloft,  
Our visionary was hard pressed  
to fight the peasants off.

In hardly any time at all,  
Well, almost hardly any,  
Our tireless genius, driving hard,  
Brought happy homes to many.

His daring concepts, new ideas  
inspired one and all --  
Who else but he would think  
to grow a live oak in the hall?

Who but the hidebound would  
complain, to find their footage  
shrinking,  
Along with their bank accounts -  
Such narrow minded thinking!

Imagination was the key --  
Not even Norman Thomas  
could build a modern house with  
footings anchored on a promise!

We give thanks for our swimming  
pools, on each and every day,  
Our plumb line ceilings, faultless  
walls, our spacious right-of-way.

In retrospect we bow our heads, to  
think we were the chosen  
from many millions in this land  
to have our assets frozen.

And so we laugh, and flush  
our many worries down the drain -  
Knowing that soon outside the  
house, they will appear again;

We hear our churning septic  
tanks awakening the town,  
But worry not - We know for sure,  
they're all of two feet down.

And so, 'tis fitting, each New Year,  
we gather in a crowd,  
To sound the tocsin, welkin ring,  
And give our thanks aloud.

For this we know, in summing up  
The profit and the loss -  
We owe it all, for certain sure,  
to the one and only CLOSS!

(ED. NOTE: Below is the translation for the poem on the previous page..just in case!)

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From 1952 to 1954, building in the other sections proceeded spasmodically, to put it kindly.

The Ecloss system of finance resembled its modern counterpart, the pyramid schemes which have flourished in recent years. Funds from the down payment on one house were cheerfully - and immediately - used to purchase materials for another, sometimes even before the checks had cleared. Thus, as one might imagine, led to some interesting contretemps. Whatever else it may have been, this period was not dull.

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In addition to his pie in the sky scheme for our physical assets, the "one and only" Closs had planned for the residents to form the Glacier Hills Club, with nominal dues of \$10.00 annually to operate the facilities and, eventually, to provide a club house for the myriad social activities envisioned by the dreamer. However, this club never got off the ground.

When the Ecloss company folded in 1954, the Gulchites (as they had come to be known) were left with shattered dreams and several pieces of very undeveloped parkland. But this did not deter people who had plumbed the mysteries of spackling and installed three way switches. In mid 1954, the Glacier Hills Association was formed, the first in a series of steps that led to the opening of the pool in 1963. Jim Darnall was the first president, the annual dues were an even more nominal \$6.00, and they were not easy to collect.

In March 1955, the first issue of the Glacial Deposit, brainchild of Dick Spencer, appeared. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending upon the point of view), copies of all issues were retained, and it is from these files we have taken the following chronological history: