



Historical Society, the Ulster County Landmarks Commission, the Huguenot Historical Society, and the Terwilliger Family Association (of that group), all benefited from KT's active involvement, often as an officer or director.

After retirement from business, Miss Terwilliger made a voluntary commitment to research and identify facts about the history of the Town of Wawarsing. She was appointed the first *Historian of the Town of Wawarsing* in 1964, the same year the *Ellenville Noonday Club* named her *Citizen of the Year*. As with her other commitments, KT gave unstintingly of her time to preserve historical information and buildings, with an unswerving dedication to historical accuracy. She gave frequent lectures (her slide lectures were always SRO, and people stayed long after the conclusion of the program to talk with her), contributed regular columns to the local papers, amplified by special newspaper articles about the background of contemporary issues and events.

KT's first book, *Wawarsing: Where The Streams Wind*, was out of print within 24 hours of its release in 1977, and is currently in its third printing. *Napanoch: Land Overflowed by Water* was published in 1982. KT and Marion Dumond collaborated in the publication of two pamphlets for the *Ellenville Public Library & Museum*, one about *Clayton's Military Band* at the time of the Band's reunion in 1985, and *An Old House Sampler*, an illustrated compilation of some three dozen early houses in the Town of Wawarsing. All her publications are still available for purchase at the *Ellenville Public Library*.

Miss Terwilliger spoke and wrote clearly and concisely, with humor and a wry appreciation of the idiosyncrasies of human nature. She had a rare gift of being able to talk to and with anyone, from school children to octogenarians, professional organizations and the average citizen, men and women alike.

When Florence M. Terwilliger, KT's mother, died, Katharine published a small booklet reprinting a few of Mrs. Terwilliger's favorite poems and quotations. In the introduction, KT wrote, "It is strange perhaps that one who could say things so well in her own words should have clipped so many of other people's." Anyone who heard Katharine speak will remember that she usually ended a talk with a quotation. Like mother, like daughter? Katharine's collection of clippings still exists.


**Terwilliger House**, the local history center of the *Ellenville Public Library & Museum*, stands at the intersection of **Canal & Childs Streets** as a permanent testimonial to Katharine T. Terwilliger, in recognition of a lifetime of service to her community.

She had worked closely with the Library Board and Director Marion Dumond to open the first local history room in the basement level of the **Hunt Memorial Building**. **Terwilliger House** was donated to the *Library* by the Resnick family who graciously concurred with the Library Board's recommendation to name the building in KT's honor. Katharine moved permanently to Wesley Manor outside Jacksonville, Florida, in 1988, but her interest in the Town of Wawarsing and its citizenry was unending. Her appearance at the 1993 *Noonday Citizen of the Year Dinner* honoring the *Ellenville Public Library & Museum* was the highlight of the evening and her comments were, as always, pungent, sincere, and thought-provoking.

Katharine Terwilliger gave much to the Town of Wawarsing in her lifetime, and few in the township are untouched by her life here, although they may not realize it. KT never let the community forget its past, reminding them that "to know the past is to avoid duplicating its mistakes in the future."

Ulster County educational institutions, hospitals, churches and libraries were all generously remembered in KT's will, as were historical associations, the Children's Home, the schools and colleges attended by Katharine and her family members, former employees of the Terwilliger Agency and KT personally. Financial bequests can't begin to match the treasures given to the community by Katharine's writings and involvement. To quote from one of her obituaries, "A great lady has died, but her accomplishments will serve generations to come." What a Wonderful Woman of Wawarsing!

These four Wawarsing women were chosen, not because they are the only notable women in the almost 200 years of Town of Wawarsing history, but because they exemplify the characteristics that should set the standard for citizens of either sex: generosity of spirit, commitment, adherence to a code of behavior that is selfless and public-minded. They gave of themselves, their talents, and their time. They were truly wonderful!

As always, most of the information in this column is available at the *Ellenville Public Library & Museum*. 

*Ellenville Regional Hospital Auxiliary*

**SALE**

**WEDNESDAY, November 12, 2003**  
**From 10 am to 3 pm, in the Main Lobby**

**We have BOOKS, Old & New**  
**Also COLLECTOR PLATES**