

Clintons' new neighborhood

Westchester: The Golden Apple

President Bill Clinton and first lady Hillary Clinton, who is also a potential candidate for the U.S. Senate from New York, have turned a formerly quiet neighborhood in Chappaqua, N.Y., into a tourist destination simply by signing a home mortgage agreement.

The Clintons may have made a sound purchase with their new house — old house, actually, because it's the abode for which Old House Lane is named. Indeed, there was no lane before the surrounding houses that make up the cul-de-sac came to be. For reasons beyond its considerable accommodations — such as Secret Service quarters and the like — the house will be a simple sell if the Senate hopeful is not to call it home. Aside from its location in a solid real estate market, Horace Greeley High School — part of the county's well-funded school system — is just a few blocks away.

The home is in an exclusive area long familiar to the famous and fortunate who pride themselves on their carefully guarded privacy. Some neighbors jokingly worry that they may have to take customary backyard activities indoors if the Secret Service helicopter appears as frequently in the future as it did during the Clintons' buying tour.

Home to the palatial headquarters of *Reader's Digest*, Chappaqua is a thicketed area of New York's northern suburbs. In brisk autumn, when the sugar maples' glorious flame tones are in their rage, the area is a delight for leaf peepers.

Westchester County is incredibly diverse, a tapestry of old road houses and new strip emporiums range along the tree-lined streets, many of which were initially horse routes between towns on the eastern seaboard. Along the Boston Post Road, limestone markers set out by Benjamin Franklin count the miles from Wall Street in New York City to Boston's harbor. Their positions were set by use of a wheel's circumference and rotation count to measure distance. Along this route, numerous historical attractions may be found.

The Square House sits along this route in Rye, N.Y. Named not for its shape but for its situation on the town square, the builder's intentions for the use of the Square House are not known, although perhaps it was to have been a church. The house's first occupant was a miller in the early 1700s. In the late 1700s, the building was converted to an inn. The first U.S. president wrote in his diary of having slept there on the ides of October 1789.

Later turned into city offices, the Square House has now been restored by the Rye Historical Society as a museum, featuring a replica of innkeeper Widow Haviland's quarters and house collections.

Not far from Socks and Buddy's new digs is Schultz's Cider Mill in Armonk, N.Y. It grew from a fruit stand in front of the Schultz cider mill during the family's infancy, primarily to sell the orchard crop. Now in its 48th season of business, the mill offers the family's signature cider — available by the glass hot or cold, with or without cinnamon stick. It can be enjoyed along with the mill's fresh doughnuts, sugar-dusted by the grandchildren. Schultz's Cider Mill is just the spot to pick a pumpkin, fill a basket full of fresh garden vegetables, and, of course, choose a jug of fresh cider.

For an off-beat but not off-the-path touring spot, Gate of Heaven cemetery in Mount Kisco is just up the road from the cider mill. Run by St. Patrick's Diocese of New York City, the cemetery is the resting place of Babe Ruth, Billy Martin, James Cagney, Sal Mineo, radio personality Fred Allen — all scattered among the city's turn-of-the-century politicians. Lou Gehrig and mobster "Dutch" Schultz (no relation to the proprietors of the cider mill) lie on the Lutheran side of the hill in Kensico Gardens. It's not unusual to run into other gravesseekers spending the day finding the resting spots of the famous, paying respects and leaving mementos.

Cross-county in Mamaroneck, N.Y., a stop at an 80-year-old roadside attraction is a must. Built in a rather bizarre, but effectively eye-catching, Chinese pagoda style, Walter's Hot Dog Stand delivers the goods when it comes to grilled dogs. There's a secret to the mustard, too, that sets this place apart and is pined for the world over, as postcards on the walls recount.

The perfect spot to eat a dog is in neighboring Rye, on the boardwalk of Playland by the Sea. Built in the 1920s, primarily as a public and free amusement park, the network of beachfront parlors makes up a seawall that stretches along Long Island Sound. Long Island itself acts as a natural break-front that calms the ocean's scorn upon the shore-side retreat. The tall, deco-style beachhouses stand as testament to the years the shoreline has offered summertime relief to New York's masses, beginning when the auto became popular, then commonplace.

There's much to enjoy in this Northeastern neck of the woods, and if given the chance, look in on Bill and Hillary for yourself, once they make their move. It's certain they'll be polished ambassadors for Arkansas in New York's "Golden Apple."

Photographs and story by Lauren Hawkins, *The Morning News*

