

August 24, 2004

Mr Sherman Pincus
247 Park Hill Avenue
Yonkers NY 10705

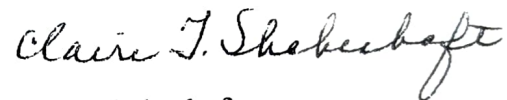
Dear Sherman:

Re: The Park Hill Painting

My late husband, Charles Shakeshaft, first saw this painting in a real estate store window on South Broadway, many years ago. He wanted to buy it, but could not afford the price. His good friend, Tony Lagana, decided to give it to him for his birthday, and Charlie was thrilled. This painting was his pride and joy, and he invited many people in to see it. Tony had Louise Minervini restore the painting before he gave it to Charlie.

I know that Charlie would be pleased to have this painting hang in the Yonkers Riverfront Library where many people can see it. Please arrange to have a plaque with it that reads: "Donated by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Shakeshaft."

Sincerely yours,



Claire Shakeshaft

file copy

SHERMAN PINCUS 247 PARK HILL AVENUE YONKERS NEW YORK 10705

September 21, 2004

 RECEIVED 9/28/04

Dear Claire,

Sorry for the delay in writing but your letter arrived while I was traveling. We are very anxious to have the Park Hill Painting hanging in our new Riverfront Library. The Park Hill Residents Association is awaiting a response from the Yonkers Historical Society who currently is holding the painting. We hope to hear from them very soon. Once we are in possession of the painting we will have it reframed. The actual painting itself does not appear to require any restoration.

I will keep you informed on the progress. Aside from the plaque which you request, we also envision a plaque which would give a little history of the painting.

Again, thank you for your correspondence.

Yours truly,

✓ CC: Jeff Williams, President
Yonkers Historical Society

The Park Hill Painting

See the centerfold, next page

by Michelle Jacobs

Most of us enjoy the sense of history that pervades the old houses and streets of Park Hill, however we can only imagine what our neighborhood actually looked like early in the 20th century. True, there are some old photos of the early residents promenading around the winding roads, but they merely capture the odd corner, a few houses, only a hint of what the actual neighborhood looked like. Thanks to the late Charlie Shakeshaft (and a couple of his friends) we now have a comprehensive image of Park Hill in Teddy Roosevelt's day.

For years a meticulously detailed artists' rendering of Park Hill had hung in the old real estate office owned by Walter Carr on South Broadway. When Carr closed up shop, the picture vanished until Jack Flynn (of the funeral home) discovered it rotting in Carr's garage. He and Charlie went over to ask about it but unfortunately Carr's price was high...too high, especially given the condition of the picture, dirty and riddled with holes. Imagine, then, Charlie's surprise when it was presented to him by his good friend Tony Lagana as a birthday gift. Restored to its former glory by Park Hill resident, Louise Minervini, it has enjoyed a place of honor in the Shakeshaft parlor.

The painting, dated 1908 and signed Richard Rummell, is done on gouache and ink on brown paper. Its fascination lies in the fact that it provides an aerial view of South Yonkers, as if seen from a hot air balloon. You can clearly make out houses that are still standing (including the Shakeshafts' own), as well as a number of wonderful structures now sadly lost. These include several Park Hill houses, the small houses that lined South Broadway, Wallace Lodge (an inn that was used for various functions and parties including Claire Shakeshaft's parents' wedding reception) which burnt down, and the elegant old Racquet Club and lake. You can clearly see the old clubhouse with its porte-cochère and bay windows. The lake (from which Lakeside Drive gets its name) is depicted with its island and gazebo. And you can see how an abundance of wooded land helped give Park Hill its distinctive flavor — a reminder that we are now custodians of this precious virgin land, and that our Conservancy money can be used to preserve it from insensitive development.

The view in the painting extends beyond Park Hill to Leake and Watts, to Ludlow, to the Hudson with its sailboat and paddle steamer traffic, and to the mighty Palisades beyond, mostly bare rock with only a few young saplings at the shoreline.

You can also see the Yonkers steam railway (stopped at the Lowerre station), and various open and closed motor cars riding past the pedestrians of Park Hill.

Like the houses here, the painting is soon to change hands. Claire Shakeshaft will be leaving us to be closer to her family on Long Island, and has decided to donate the picture to the Yonkers Historical Society. Before then, however, you will have the opportunity to see it. The picture will be on display as part of this year's House Tour. The date is May 21st, so mark your calendars! ■

Michelle Jacobs has written for The New York Times, Newsweek International and other publications.

SOURCE: THE PARK HILL REPORTER
SPRING, 1995

YONKERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LOAN AGREEMENT

Borrower (Individual or Organization):

Park Hill Residents Association

Description of Item:

Park Hill Painting dated 1908 and signed by Richard Rummell done on gouache and ink on brown paper Rendering

Purpose/Event/Date(s):

Displayed as part of an exhibit on the Park Hill neighborhood to be held at the Riverfront Branch of the Yonkers Public Library from March 12, 2005 to March 31, 2005.

Loan Date: **March 7, 2005**

Return Date: **by April 8, 2005**

Contact Person: **Sherman ^{Pinkus} Pinkus, Park Hill Residents Association**

Address: **c/o Judy Schavrien, Yonkers Public Library, Riverfront Branch**

Phone: **(914) 377-1500**

Fax: **(914) 376-3004**

I AGREE TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS:

Name: SHERMAN PINKUS Title: _____

Signature: *Sherman Pinkus* Date: 3/10/05

**Please sign this agreement and return the original to the Yonkers Historical Society,
c/o Yonkers Public Library, Grinton I. Will Branch, 1500 Central Park Avenue,
Yonkers, NY 10710**

3/17/05
RECEIVED
Picture returned
as of Mon. 4/4/05
MV