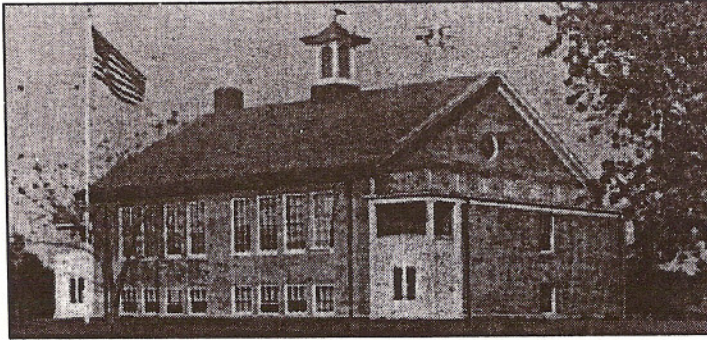


Students, district flourish in Port Jefferson Station

BY GEORGE MORAITIS

Somewhere in the "sometime in between" period, I was a student in the schoolhouse at 51 Terryville Road in the Port Jefferson Station-Terryville Union Free # 3 School District, at that time, called the Port Jefferson Station-Terryville Elementary School. I was a student there between 1957 and the first part of the 1961-1962 school year. In a contest, the students renamed it the Comsewogue Elementary School when a new schoolhouse was built and opened in the second part of the 1961-1962 school year at 401 Terryville Road in Terryville. The new school was named Terryville Elementary.

I was one of the students in Mr. Haar's fifth grade class, who moved to the new building after the Christmas holiday vacation period leaving my beloved school house behind. I was not happy about that move. The old school was my home for many years and my older brother, John and my sister, Maria, went through the school before moving onto the Port Jefferson school district. I thought I would soon follow them. But I was wrong. After graduating from the sixth grade from the Terryville Elementary School, I returned to the now named Comsewogue school. The school housed seventh and eighth graders. So I did not go downtown. I thought I would meet up with my siblings again in the Port Jefferson High School. Again, I was wrong. I continued on to the new John F. Kennedy Junior-Senior High at 200 Jayne Boulevard in 1965 and graduated with the class of 1969. But that's a



From the collection of G. Moraitis,
Port Jefferson Station-Terryville Elementary School, ca. 1930

story for another day.

The concept of establishing a school district for this area led to a meeting on April 8, 1874. Prior to this time, students traveled to the schools in Port Jefferson. The committee that began our school system thought that was a great distance for our own pupils to walk. So it was time for our own schools in our own community. The Port Jefferson school district was split. The students living north of North Country Road and Sheep Pasture Road continued in the district in lower Port Jefferson. The students to the south of these two roads would go to the newly established district. Port Jefferson objected to the idea. However, the new district, to be called Terryville-Comsewogue School District Number 38, prevailed and the line between the two districts still

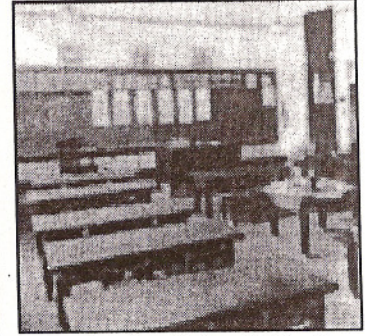
exists today. Mr. Thomas R. Terry, Mr. R.W. Wheeler and Mr. Addison Hulse became the new trustees.

The first schoolhouse, a restored Baptist church, was from Northport and was placed near the future Port Jefferson Station-Terryville Elementary School on Terryville Road in Port Jefferson Station. The pupil population was about 350 at that time. As the district grew, a vote was needed for a new schoolhouse and to purchase three and a half acres at a cost of \$47,275. The building would be a one-story and basement structure with four classrooms and an auditorium.

The dedication of the building was on December 5, 1921. The first of many additions and alterations was made in 1930. As the population grew so did the building. The board of education in 1930 was Mr. Joseph S. Kessler, president; Mr. Charles E. Smith; Mr. Arthur D. Rulon; Mr. Preston E. Terry, treasurer; Mr. David Baldwin, clerk; Mr. Dodd B. Craft, principal. By the time I was a student there in the 1950s, the board consisted of Mr. Albert H. Ralph, president; Mr. Robert L. Ball, Mr. Nicholas Caggiano, Mr. Hallan E. Goldstine, Mr. Donald P. Smith, clerk; Mrs. Ruth R. Terry, treasurer, Mr. Deane H. Royce, principal (who was my mother Alice Poulos Moraitis' physical education teacher at the Setauket High School in East Setauket).

By the 1960s, the board of education was Mr. Nicholas Caggiano, president; Mr. Waldemar Sill (who became president many times), Mr. George N. Trigony, Mr. Robert E. Woods, Mr. Peter Seitz; Mr. Donald P. Smith, clerk; Mr. Joseph Busa; Mr. Deane H. Royce, principal.

The faculty that I had during the 1950s and early 1960s included Mrs. Ernestine Gudzik, kindergarten; Mrs. Gertrude Howe, 1st grade; Mrs. Catherine Budrie, 2nd grade; Mrs. Valentine Curry, 1st. part of 3rd grade; Mrs. Rosella Gilbert, 2nd. Part of 3rd grade; Mrs. Dora Browning, 4th grade; Mr. Harold Haar, 5th grade,

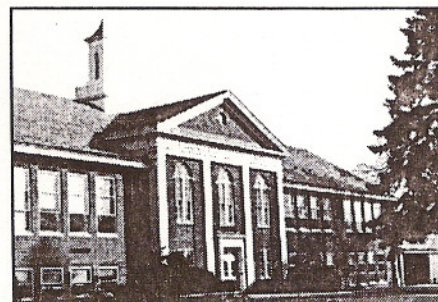


From the collection of G. Moraitis,
Inside the Port Jefferson Station-Terryville Elementary School

whose class moved to the new Terryville Elementary; Mrs. Marian Kirkland, 6th grade. Other names that readers might recognize are: Mr. Frank Chart, Mrs. Rebecca Thomas, Mr. Werner Schulman, Mrs. Eugenia Rice, Mrs. Matilda Dickerson (teacher and librarian), Mrs. Lorraine Jesaitis, Frances Alvarez, Mrs. Helen Bellows, Mr. Herbert Goldsmith, Mr. Clayton Huey, Mr. Harold Abrams, Mrs. Kathleen Quinn, Mr. Gordon Jackson, music band teacher; Mrs. Tillie Krivcoff, nurse teacher; Mrs. Hazel Warner, Mrs. Lisa Tillotson, Mr. Paul Huprich, physical ed. teacher; Mr. Albert Hess, Mr. Harold Horowitz, Mrs. Eleanor M. Cox, Mrs. Mary C. Futrell, Mrs. Harriet B. Hopkins, Mrs. Nancy A. Hutchinson, Mrs. Thelma M. Osthus, Mrs. Mary R. Robertson, Mrs. Louise H. Tupper, Mrs. Carole G. Walsh, Mr. Robert Johnson, Mr. Thomas E. Terry, Jr. head custodian; Mr. Henry Rackowski, custodian; Mr. George M. Smith, Mrs. Margaret Nystedt, office secretary; Mrs. Alice Jersey, head cook; Dr. Samuel Feinberg, school physician, (who delivered me in 1951).

Today, the building is occupied by the Maryhaven Center of Hope Day Treatment Program at Terryville, and Terryville Learning Center Eastern Suffolk BOCES. But, before all that, and before more additions were added to the building that included a cafeteria and more classrooms, the students ate their lunches brought in from home in the classrooms, and milk was delivered to each student. Gym classes were in the gym/auditorium. Mr. Terry, school custodian adjusted each student's desk. All the floors in the building were wooden. Each classroom was very large with huge windows and huge coat closet with an in door and an out door. An American flag and a picture of President George Washington were in every room. Civil defense along with fire drills were conducted on a regular basis — students went into the hallways, crouched towards the wall and covered our heads with our arms and stayed there until the drill was over.

In the 50s, there were no buses. Students had to walk to school and home. I walked home on the first day of first grade after lunch period because I thought you went home. I did not know it was just a lunch recess period. Of course, they were looking for me. I was home. They made sure I stayed the second day and every day after.



From the collection of G. Moraitis,
The elementary school, ca. 1980

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The move to John F. Kennedy Jr.-Sr. High School A member of the class of 69 looks back at Comsewogue school district's growth

BY GEORGE MORAITIS

After surviving the seventh and eighth grade in the Comsewogue School at 51 Terryville Road, the class of 1969 moved on to the new John F. Kennedy Junior-Senior High on Jayne Blvd. in 1965.

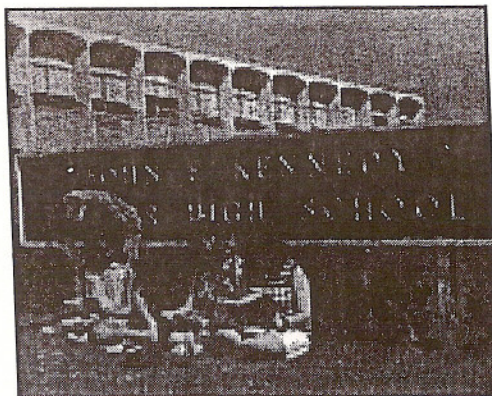
It was a great experience moving into a new school. The situation at the Comsewogue School on Terryville Road was an experience in itself, however. The class of 1968 and 1969 were in the same building going to our studies on split session. What that means is that the seventh grade went to classes in the early morning and left school in the early afternoon. The eighth graders came in early afternoon and stayed into early evening. After the Christmas vacation period, the two grades switched time slots. After training ourselves for early morning arrival, we were now going to school in the afternoon. We did that again when the class of 69 became eighth graders.

The class of 1968 continued their schooling in the Longwood school district in Middle Island. The class of 68 had to stay at Longwood for the following four years, with the district paying tuition to the district for our students. They never made it to Comsewogue's first high school. The Terryville Junior-Senior High School was not completed in time in order for them to attend; it was another year before its completion. By then, the new school was renamed John F. Kennedy, following the assassination of our beloved president.

The concept of acquiring the property of the new school site began in a meeting on April 17, 1959. The Everett Terry Estate of 23-plus acres became available at an asking price of \$3,000 per acre. The school district purchased the land to prevent it being used as a site of additional 70-80 homes. District residents voted for the new school on January 28, 1963. Groundbreaking was in the fall of 1963. The building opened its doors for students on September 15, 1965. The board of education members in 1963-1965 were Waldemar Sill, George Trigony, Edmund Baird, Joseph Busa, Hartley Davis, Martin Craine, Lawrence Pannullo, Martin Bellin, Marian Kirkland, Robert Schur, and Nicholas Poulos (the writer's uncle), Deane H. Royce, district principal, Harry G. Farrell, sr. high principal, Albert J. Hess, jr. high principal.

The class of 69, as ninth graders, was the highest grade. We were the top class for the next four years. We had to learn about school government with a class council. The class of 69 changed and made many school house policies. We were the top grade and the "rulers" of the lower classmates. We were the "Mighty Seniors."

The class of 69 set the foundation for future councils to change policies for the betterment of the students. Student councils met after school in today's room 112. We opened up the first student lounge. It was in the basement of the school and was entered from the staircase near the rear of the cafeteria. There was furniture and areas for study and talk without teacher supervision. A ping-pong table was in the middle of the floor. We were able to go down to the student lounge during our "off time." The class of 69 started Comsewogue's first high school yearbook. The journal was called *Charisma*. The school colors were green and white and our sport teams were called the Spartans. The class trip was at Mount Airy Lodge in the Pocono Mountains along with our many ski trips. The senior picnic was at Southaven Park where we went horseback riding. The junior prom of 68 was in the school cafeteria. The senior prom of 69 was at the Holiday Inn, which is now the Atria Retirement and Assisted Adult Living Facilities, across from what is now Blockbuster (which, believe it or not, was the Fox Movie Theater in the 70s).



From the collection of G. Moraitis, Students read in front of the sign for the new John F. Kennedy Junior-Senior High School, above.

At right, the cover of *Charisma*, the yearbook.

The yearbook photo of G. Moraitis, below right.

The program from the dedication of John F. Kennedy Junior-Senior High School, bottom.

Below, some of the patches and badges that distinguished the school and its "mighty seniors."

The members of the board of education in 1969 were Waldemar Sill, president; Martin Craine, vice president; members Richard Ahkao, Robert Schur, Joseph Busa, Charles Stropoli, Stuart Porter; John Wallen, district principal; Irwin Seliger, assistant district principal; Richard Bangs, principal; Jack Zamek, assistant principal.

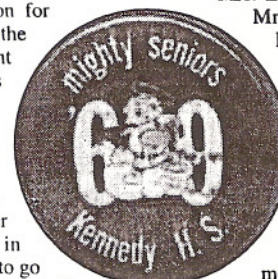
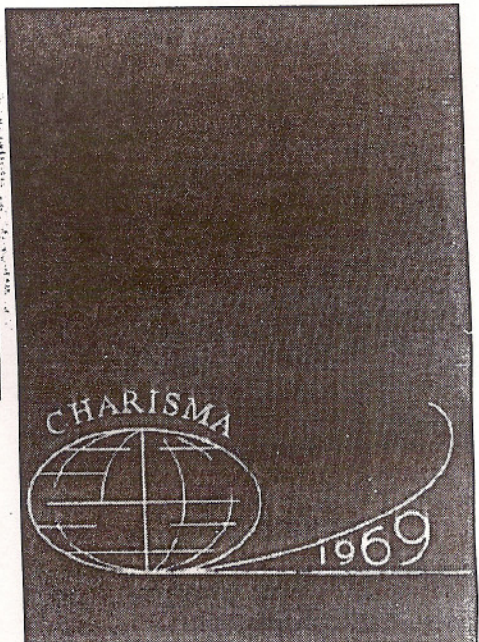
The board of education, district administration, J.F.K. administration, faculty, support staff, parents and students came to realize Comsewogue school district's dream to have the area's first graduation. It was on Sunday, June 22, 1969, 5 in the afternoon outdoors in the field west of the gymnasium. The parents sat in folding chairs facing the students who sat on the field bleachers.

Catherine Sabino gave the valedictory address. Alan Halperin gave the salutatory address. Anne Langan, as class president, gave the Presentation of the class of 1969 address. Our senior class advisor was Mr. John Cooney.

The faculty of 1965-69 period, who stayed those four years, included: art department: Mr. Jess Dorso, Mrs. Eleanor Meier, Mrs. Lamson, Mr. Atkins, Mr. Haley; business department: Mrs. Estelle Block, Mr. Laurence Lamm, Mr. Curt Brown, Mr. Andrew Cassidy, Miss Plowfield, Mr. McAllister, Mrs. Dugan; English department: Mr. Kevin Pusey, Mr. Joseph Claro, Mr. John Jurich (later guidance), Mr. Lowell Hendricks, Mrs. Shea, Mr. Matt Bloom, Mrs. Ann Tomblor, Mr. Meisner, Mr. Kaufman, Mr. Van Tassell, Mrs. Parish; foreign language department: Mrs. Catherine Chachakis, Mr. Finelli, Mr. Mikulecky; guidance department: Mr. Frank Gaffney, Mrs. Walsh, Mr. George Cobelli, health: Mrs. Jean Clay; home economics: Miss Mary Ann Cramer, Mrs. Cynthia Borowski, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Brooks; industrial arts: Mr. Christopher Dillon (later guidance), Mr. Jerome Paszkiewicz, Mr. Kriese, Mr. James Tyler, Mr. Sal Guli; librarian: Mr. Gus Basile, Mr. Roy Scott, Mrs. Geslak; math department: Mr. Richard Bloom, Mr. Alan Bromberg, Mr. Jerry Harell, Mrs. Edna Shelton, Mr. Hoppe, Miss Webber; music department: Mr. Gordon Jackson, Mrs. Casimira Swenson, Mr. Howard, Mr. Meadows; physical education: Mr. R. Peter Rovegna (later superintendent of

schools), Mr. Fred Hoffman, Mrs. Dorothy Tagner, Miss Nancy Wallrabe, Miss Woog, Mr. William Nugent, Mr. Paul Huprich; science department: Mr. Jack Zamek (later assistant principal and then principal), Mr. Frank Chieppa, Mr. Stephen Krase (later assistant superintendent), Mr. Guy Schrickel, Mr. Schwartz, Mr. Henry, Mr. William Gilroy, Mr. Jerome Reagan, Mr. Vigliotta, Mr. Warren Teufel; social studies: Mr. Robert Mancini, Mr. Robert Carr, Mr. Cornelius Clifford, Mr. Robert Harten, Mr. Harvey Kaplan, Mr. John Sullivan (later assistant principal), Mr. Helm, Mr. Frank Romeo, Mrs. Shropshire, Mr. Elliot Matis, Mr. Joseph Dessi.

John F. Kennedy Junior-Senior High School continued to be a high school for the classes of 1970 and 1971. The class of 1972 continued on to the new Comsewogue High School on Bicycle Path, while John F. Kennedy continued to house the seventh, eighth and ninth grades during the mid-80s. Later, the ninth graders moved into the high school. Today, J.F.K. houses sixth, seventh and eighth graders as the John F. Kennedy Middle School.



Dedication
**John F. Kennedy Junior High School
The Norwood School**

November 6, 1966
3:00 p. m.

CORNERSTONE CEREMONIES
1:30 p. m. — The Norwood School
2:15 p. m. — John F. Kennedy Junior High School