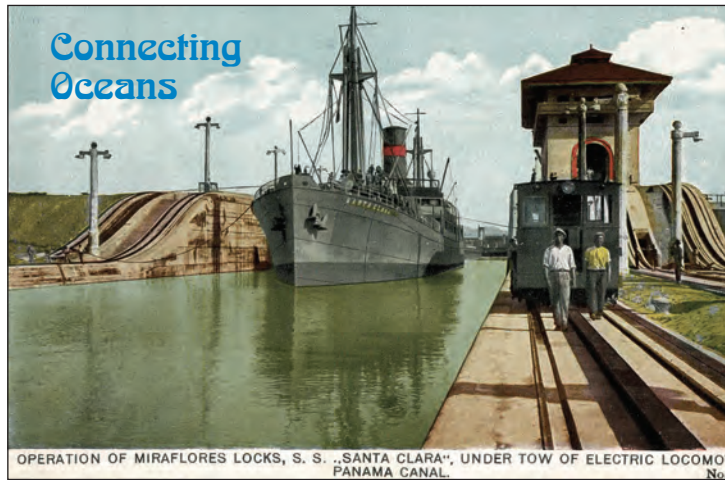


The globe in my New Paltz Campus School fifth-grade classroom clearly showed the Panamanian isthmus; Mrs. Compton, head-enlightener, pointed out that a channel was dug to connect the two oceans. Shipping options increased. Ho Hum.

Not until the book, *The Path Between the Seas*, by David McCullough, made it onto my reading list that the unrivaled marvel of that canal became apparent. The problems overcome by the engineers were enough to amaze. Mesmerizing was the story of



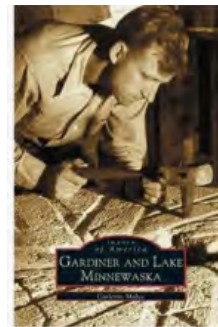
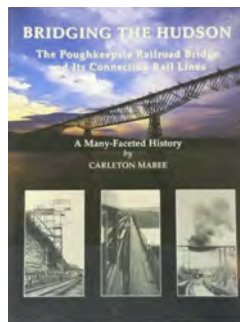
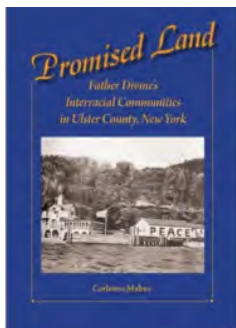
Compton, Mr. McCullough, sign me grateful.

Vivian Yess Wadlin

tracking down of the Aedes aegypti mosquito. Its eradication ending the Yellow Fever carnage that killed more than 20 thousands workers and had driven the earlier French efforts into a ditch—so to speak.

Consider the money saved by every ship that has passed through that canal since it opened in 1914.

Consider, too, the things that were made more affordable to all of us in those 110 years. Mrs.



Carleton Mabee (1914-2014)

Carleton was born in Shanghai, China on Christmas Day, 1914, the year the Panama Canal opened and Europe fell into WWI. He died on December 18, 2014, a few days shy of his 100th birthday. Carleton chose to live much of that 99 years in the heart of Ulster County—and in the shadow of the Shawangunks in Gardiner, NY.

Those of us lucky enough to have known him, or to have attend any of his historical society talks, or been a SUNY New Paltz students taking his courses, know how vividly he presented our history. We know how he deeply he loved it all—and the vigor with which he presented it into his 90s.

The Seaway Story

After this issue of About Town (Fall 2023) went to press, I stumbled upon a Carleton Mabee book in my archives. It was the story of the St. Lawrence Seaway from concept to its completion, published by Macmillan in 1961. The most important aspect of *Seaway*, vis a vis the Fall 2023 story, titled Water Works, would have been the impact of the massive trade enabled by the seaway's existence.

Other Gifts

Most of us are familiar with Carleton's other contributions to understanding our history, especially the books that directly touched Ul-

ster County. I've listed them here:

- *Gardiner and Lake Minnewaska*, 2003, Images of America Series
- *Sojourner Truth, Slave, Prophet, Legend*, 1993;
- *The American Leonardo, The Life Of Samuel F.B. Morse*, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1944
- *Promised Land: Father Divine's Interracial Communities*, 2008
- *Listen to The Whistle: An Anecdotal History of the Wallkill Valley Railroad in Ulster and Orange Counties, New York* 1995;
- *Bridging the Hudson: The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge and Its Connecting Rail Lines, a Many Faceted History*, 2001;
- *Saving The Shawangunks*, 2017, Black Dome Press

Two other books by Carleton Mabee that are not Ulster County centered but are none-the-less informative not just on their topics, but on Carleton's life-long focus on the fight for equality for all:

- *Black Freedom, The Nonviolent Abolitionists from 1830 Through the Civil War*, 1970
- *Black Education in New York State*, 1979