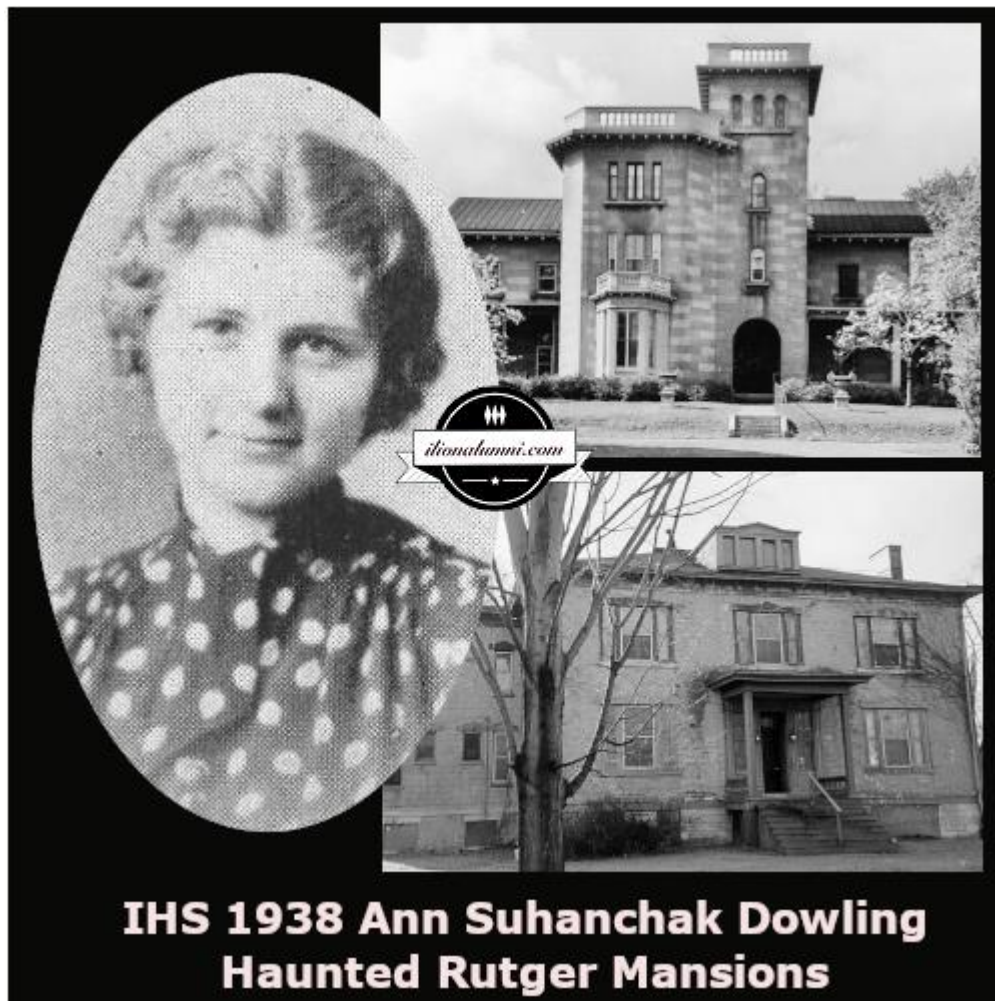


Haunted Rutger Mansions

Ann Suhanchak Dowling IHS 1938

October 2021



Ilion High School Class of 1938 Ann Suhanchak Dowling and the Utica Rutger Park Mansion

[Pearle Singer Nathan](#) was not the only IHS alumnus who was instrumental in preserving Utica's landmarks. IHS Class of 1938 graduate, Ann (Suhanchak) Dowling, and her son, Michael Dowling, also played significant roles in saving Rutger Park's historic mansions.

On October 9, 2021, you can help save the mansions by joining the tours. Bring your family members on Boilermaker weekend to see two historic mansions in Rutger Park! On Saturday, October 9th, [The Landmark Society of Greater Utica](#) will be hosting tours every hour, on the hour, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Tours are \$10 a person. In October 2019, the society offered up this spooky event - [A Haunted Night at the Rutgers](#).

Ann Suhanchak Dowling IHS 1938



Ilion High School Class of 1938 - Ann Suhanchak Dowling

Ann Suhanchak grew up in North Ilion, the daughter of Steve Suhanchak and Catherin (Oslash) Suhanchak. She had one brother, Stephen Jr. IHS 1939 and two sisters, Mrs. Frank Weiderman, Herkimer and Mrs. Robert Barnes, North Ilion. Ann graduated from Ilion High School in 1938. After graduation, she attended St. Peter's Hospital, in Albany, to be trained as a registered nurse. She did private duty nursing in Albany hospitals for several years. During World War II, she was employed in the medical department at Remington Arms, Ilion. Her father passed away in 1958 and her mother died in 1978.

Ann married James S. Dowling, a member of a prominent Utica family, on August 26, 1944. James was the son of the Supreme Court Justice William F. Dowling and Margaret Ober Dowling. He was one of nine siblings. He attended Utica schools, served in the Merchant Marine for several years and was in the Army Engineers during World War II. He was manager of the Herkimer Bowling Center and for three years operated the Capital Bowling Alleys in Iliion.

Ann and James Dowling had three sons, William, James and Michael and one daughter, Margaret. James Dowling died in his family home at 3 Rutger Park. James M. Dowling Jr. died, at the age of 51, July 22, 2001. Iliion Alumnus, Anne Suhanchak Dowling, died in 2004 leaving the Rutger mansions as part of her estate.

The Utica Dowling Family

In a October 19, 1947 Utica Observer newspaper article titled "People worth Knowing", Ellen D. Dowling Mattinson Waterville and Utica described her life growing up in Utica and New Hartford. She listed the members and the occupations of the husbands. They were Ellen Dowling, wife of Frank W. Mattinson vice-president and general manager Skenandoah Rayon Corporation, Mildred Dowling, wife of Bert D. Lockwood, Utica attorney, Gretchen, wife of John Lynch, with the American consulate in Stockholm, William F. Dowling Jr., of Tuckahoe, counsel to the Burroughs Welcome Company, James Dowling, Iliion business man, Mollie, wife of Eugene Von Wellsheim, manager of the Waterville Textile Company, Barbara, wife of Dr. Herbert W. Heintz; Patricia, wife of Alfred Von Wellsheim, with the Fort Plan Beaunit Mills, and Richard L. Dowling, studying for his doctorate at the Harvard Graduate School.

The Rutger Mansions



Number 3 Rutger Park, Utica NY
The Dowling Family Home

3 Rutger Park Utica, NY

The Dowling family purchased 3 Rutger Park in 1958 to be their family home. The building was erected in 1830 and was designed by Philip Hooker who also was the architect of Hyde Hall, on Otsego Lake. The Rutger street property has been referred to as the Miller-Conkling-Kernan-Dowling home to reflect the names of the prior owners.

3 Rutger Park: The Federal Style mansion, designed by Philip Hooker, was built in 1830 by Judge Morris Miller. It was later owned by his son Rutger Bleecker Miller. It was sold to Thomas R. Walker, Utica's mayor from 1849 to 1850, and in 1863 to Roscoe Conkling, a Utica attorney who served as Utica's mayor, two terms in the House of Representatives and as U.S. senator from 1867-81. He was one of the most powerful, influential Republican leaders in the nation. In 1975, Mrs. Dowling worked to have the home placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It now receives safeguards provided under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

A Utica Observer dispatch article published November 27, 2007, documented Michael Dowling's family ties to the Rutger houses. [Family member: Save the mansions.](#)

UTICA - Preservationists and city officials have fought to save Rutger Park's historic mansions, but perhaps no one wants that more than Michael Dowling.

Michael Dowling, 48, grew up in 3 Rutger Park. He and several other family members have an interest in the estate.

Michael Dowling called upon his older brother William Dowling, the executor of the estate, to preserve the mansions at 1 and 3 Rutger Park.

"The executor needs to fulfill his fiduciary responsibility to the estate and the parties of interest to preserve those houses as best he can," Michael Dowling said. "And, that means the heat is on in the winter."

The family home is the same building that national political power broker and U.S. Sen. Roscoe Conkling called home in the 1870s. It's also the place where President Ulysses S. Grant was entertained on several occasions.

"I used to wonder as a kid what it would have been like to be there at that time," Michael Dowling said, "to think that these great Americans were in this room."

Michael Dowling said he wishes to see the property "live on." That's what his mother, the late Anne Dowling, would have wanted, he said.

"Nothing would have pleased her more than to have those properties restored to their original splendor," Michael Dowling said.

Attempts to reach William Dowling Friday were unsuccessful.

Michael Dowling, who lives in Florida, was in Utica this week for Thanksgiving. He hasn't been in 1 or 3 Rutger Park in about three years, and said he drove past the grounds this week.

"It saddens all of us to see the level of disrepair and deferred maintenance they've fallen into over the last several years under the executor's mismanagement," Michael Dowling said. "They need to be heated for the winter, or I'm concerned that irreparable harm will be a result."

"Michael Dowling described his mother as a woman who had a great interest in history and preservation. She was deeply saddened by the loss of 2 Rutger Park, he said."

"There's nothing she would like more than to have the properties restored and put on display for all to enjoy," Michael Dowling said. "To enjoy the rich history that emanates from both buildings."

A 1994 court order required that the properties be maintained. Speculation about the future of 1 and 3 Rutger Park increased after the death of Anne Dowling in 2004. The city had been fighting to preserve the buildings since 2 Rutger Park, a sister structure that was also owned by the Dowling family, was demolished in 1994.



Number 1 Rutger Park, Utica NY
The Dowling Nursing Home

1 Rutger Park - Munn's 'Castle' Utica, NY

The Italian Villa-style home, erected about 1854 was designed by architect Alexander Jackson Davis for Utica banker John Munn. Gun maker Samuel Remington, from Ilion, owned the house and lived here during the Civil War. Mrs. Munn sold the property to Samuel Remington on Jan. 1, 1864. He was Remington Arms Vice President and later the company president. Remington died on December 1, 1882 and is buried in Armory Hill Cemetery, Ilion NY.



Samuel Remington - Owner 1 Rutger 1864

Remington sold the Munn mansion to John C. Devereux, in 1868. Devereux resided there for several years. John C. Devereux was a former Utica mayor (1839-1840) and a co-founder of the Savings Bank of Utica. The next owner, in 1879, was industrialist Walter Jerome Green. Walter J. Green Jr. inherited the property, on the death of his father, in 1885. He then held the property until he died on June 17, 1951. The home was bequeathed to Grace Episcopal Church by the Walter Jerome Green Jr. In 1952, the house was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. James Dowling of Utica for \$27,000. The building was then used as a certified nursing home.

Landmarks Society of Greater Utica

The Landmarks Society of Greater Utica purchased the historic mansions at No. 1 and No. 3 Rutger Park in 2008 with the hope to restore them.

"Landmarks finally purchased them and surrounding property for \$325,000, with \$125,000 coming from The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties provided by the Ted and Melva Max Fund, the Bull Family Fund and the Rosamond Childs Fund. Other funding came through loans from The Preservation League of New York and the city of Utica. Since, Landmarks has worked tirelessly to do what they originally intended to do: Save them. The group has successfully secured and buttoned up both buildings to prevent further deterioration, which has been significant."

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