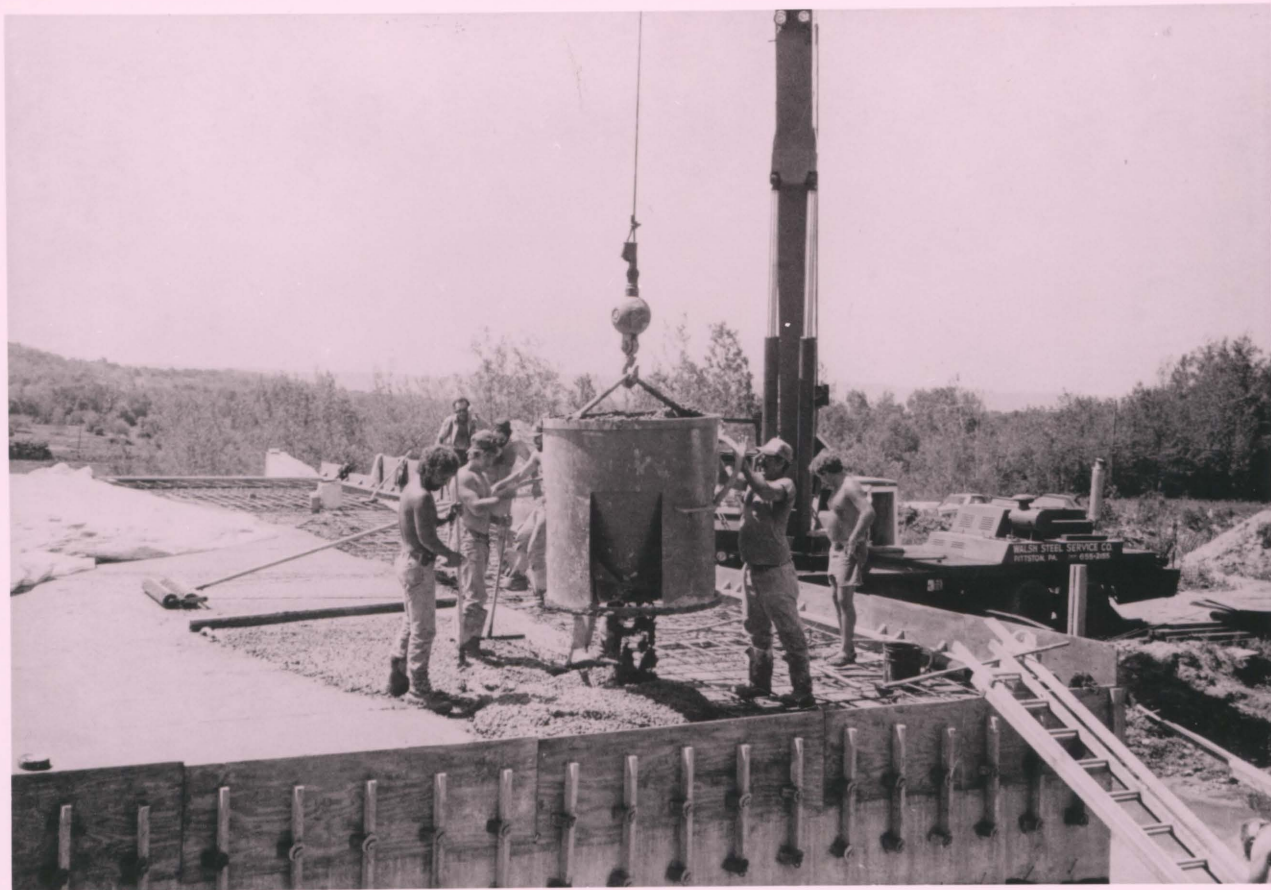




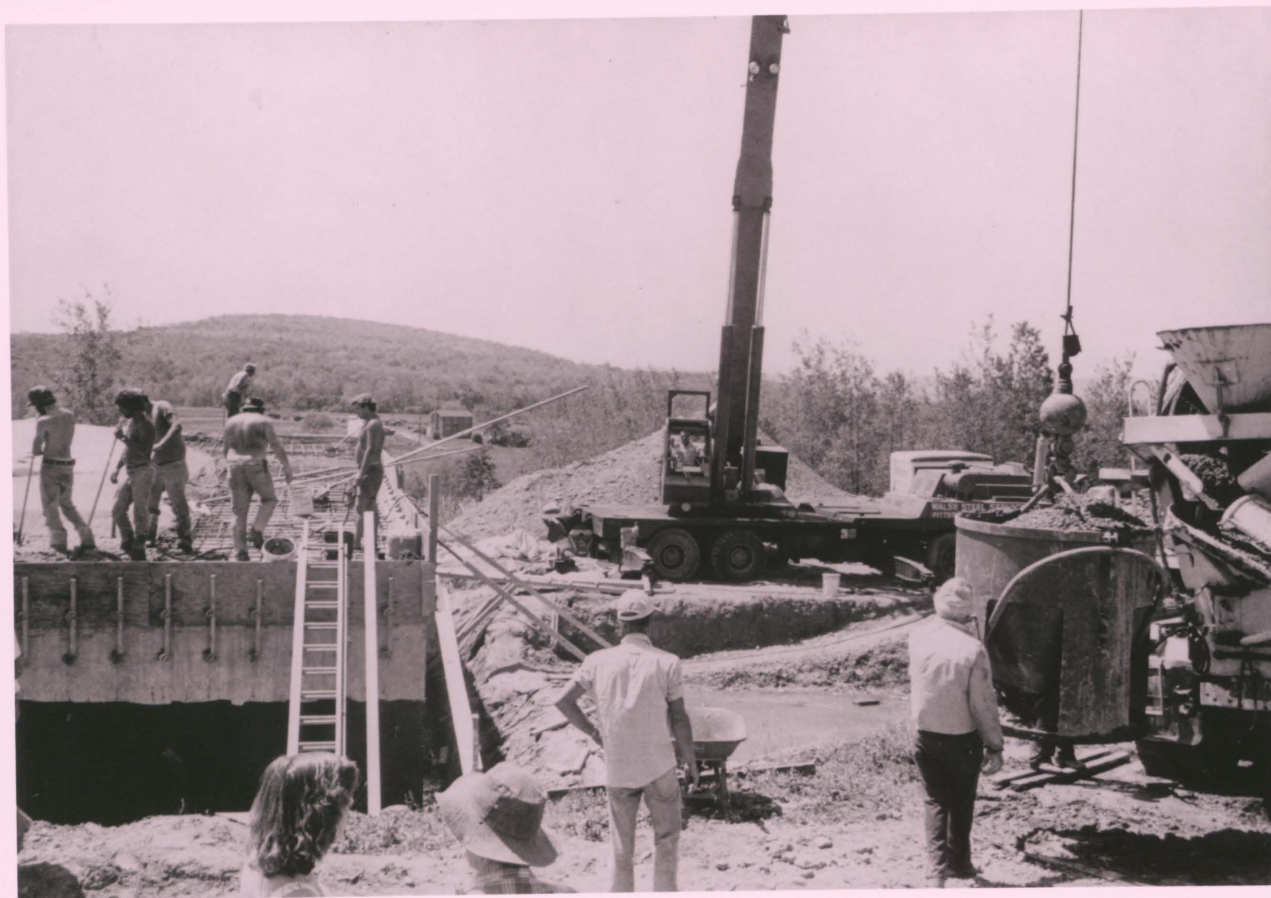












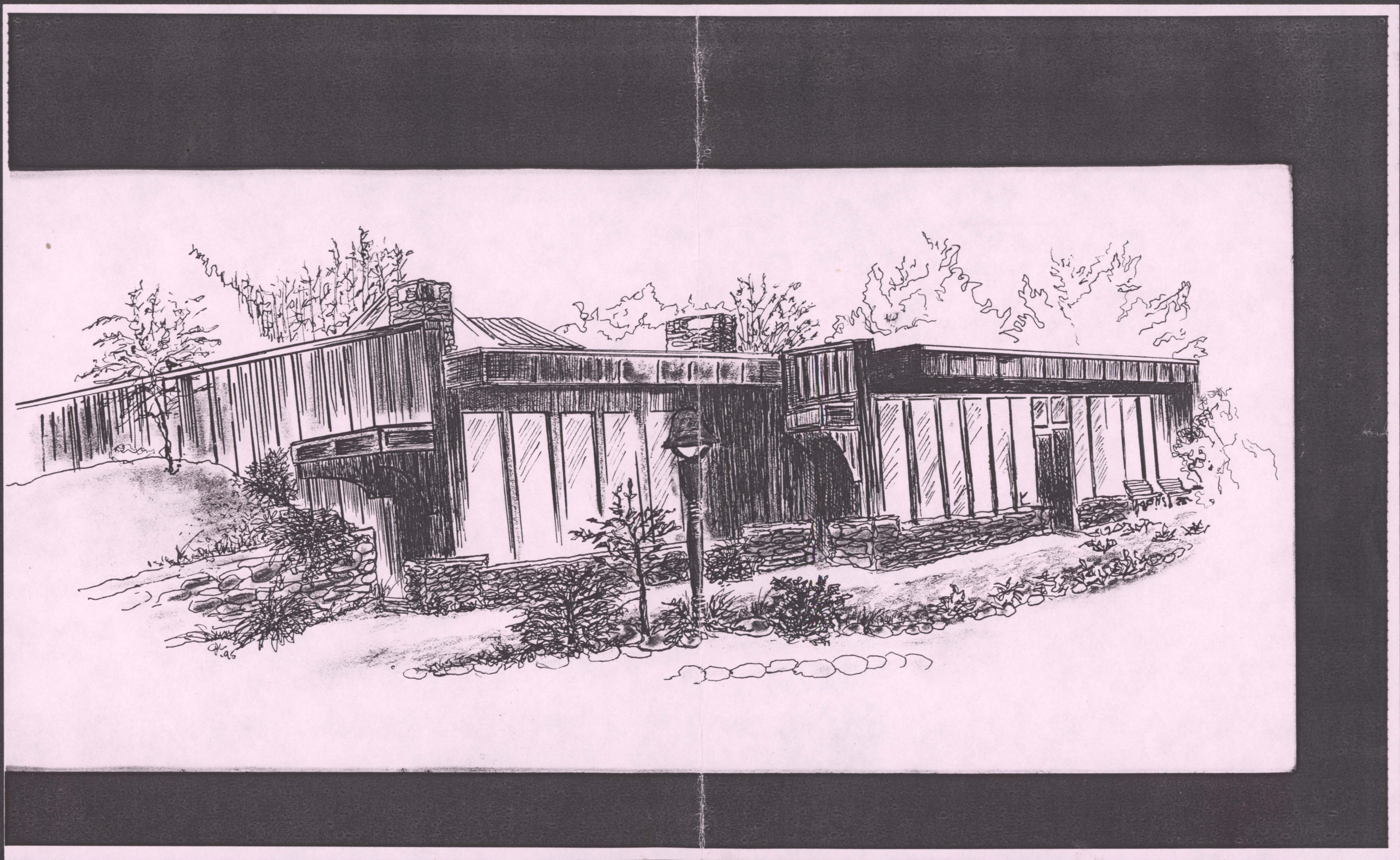












AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made this _____ day of _____, 1992,
between WILLIAM H. CORBETT and FRANCES RATCHFORD CORBETT, his wife,
of Shickshinny, Pennsylvania (the "CORBETTS") and WILKES UNIVERSITY
located in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania ("WILKES").

ARTICLE I - Background.

For several decades Col. and Mrs. William H. Corbett have been
concerned that the World cannot much longer provide a habitable
environment for plant and animal life, unless man changes his
practices for managing the Earth's resources. One evident
necessity is for human beings to decrease their demands for space
and for non-renewable energy.

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

WILLIAM H. CORBETT and FRANCES RATCHFORD CORBETT

and

WILKES UNIVERSITY

CONCERNING

THE CORBETT HOUSE

and

THE RATCHFORD FIELD STATION

The house of approximately 5,000 square feet in area is constructed
of reinforced concrete, built on a south-facing hillside, with
only the doors, entry, and windows exposed. A wood-
burning cookstove supplies heat for the house. Heating, pre-heats
the domestic hot water and heats the swimming pool. As
engineered and built, the interior temperature remains between 62
and 73 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the year.

There has been a happy confluence of interests between the CORBETTS
and WILKES University: the owners believe their property can
contribute to man's understanding of how to be a part of, rather
than a despoiler of, the environment, and WILKES has academic
programs and objectives which can be advanced through the use of
the property. Accordingly, the owners are entering into this
Agreement, which outlines how the owners and WILKES will share use
of the land while the owners are in residence; how they will donate
their home property to WILKES upon their demise; and how the
property will be preserved, used, managed, and supported after
transfer of title to WILKES.

The property to be donated consists of the CORBETTS' home and
furnishings, two outbuildings--a small greenhouse and a three-bay
equipment shed--and approximately 100 acres of surrounding land,

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ARTICLE I - Background.

For several decades Col. and Mrs. William H. Corbett have been concerned that the World cannot much longer provide a habitable environment for plant and animal life, unless man changes his practices for managing the Earth's resources. One evident necessity is for human beings to decrease their demands for space and for non-renewable energy.

Believing that wasteful practices in home design and construction are major contributors to our overconsumption of energy, the CORBETTS researched the literature on solar heating, earth shelters and insulating techniques. Using the information from such study, the CORBETTS designed their present home. Construction began in November of 1980 and was completed in August of 1982. The house has met their hopes for comfort and economy.

The house of approximately 5,500 square feet in area is constructed of reinforced concrete, buried in a south-facing hillside, with only the doors, entry, and sun-gathering windows exposed. A wood-burning cookstove supplements the sun for space heating, pre-heats the domestic hot water, and heats the indoor swimming pool. As engineered and built, the interior temperature remains between 62 and 73 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the year.

There has been a happy confluence of interests between the CORBETTS and WILKES University: the owners believe their property can contribute to man's understanding of how to be a part of, rather than a despoiler of, the environment, and WILKES has academic programs and objectives which can be advanced through the use of the property. Accordingly, the owners are entering into this Agreement, which outlines how the owners and WILKES will share use of the land while the owners are in residence; how they will donate their home property to WILKES upon their demise; and how the property will be preserved, used, managed, and supported after transfer of title to WILKES.

The property to be donated consists of the CORBETTS' home and furnishings, two outbuildings--a small greenhouse and a three-bay equipment shed--and approximately 150 acres of surrounding land,

including a four acre pond. Not included are a tenant house and surrounding five acres of land. The property is hereafter referred to as "the CORBETT PROPERTY".

ARTICLE II - Provisions for Joint Use
While Owners Are In Residence.

General. As part of its educational program, WILKES has devoted a significant portion of its curriculum to courses of study relating to the environmental sciences, included among which are courses in "Hydrology," "Principles of Environmental Science," "Ecology," "Botany," "Limnology," "Advanced Air and Water Quality Measurement," "Physical Geology," "Plant Diversity," "Field Biology," and "Animal Behavior." Many of these courses require students to participate in various field studies during which tests are conducted, samples taken and analyzed, and observations and surveys made of plants, animals, water, rock, and soil. Moreover, members of the WILKES faculty conduct their personal research of the environment and through the School of Science and Engineering provide environmental testing services for government and business.

The CORBETTS and WILKES have agreed upon a cooperative program by which the CORBETTS have granted to WILKES permission to send faculty and students to the CORBETT PROPERTY from time to time in order to conduct field studies of the environment. These opportunities for field study are of significant benefit to the courses of study and testing services offered by WILKES. The CORBETTS and WILKES expect this cooperative endeavor to continue indefinitely and now desire to formalize their oral agreement by this written document.

The CORBETT PROPERTY shall be known as the "THE RATCHFORD FIELD STATION" when the reference is to its use as a facility for the study of the environment. The CORBETTS' dwelling house when distinguished from the land shall be known as the "CORBETT HOUSE".

Coordination procedures --

1. The CORBETTS agree that during the term of this Agreement they will continue to extend to students and faculty of WILKES permission to enter upon the CORBETT PROPERTY for the purpose of conducting field tests and observations related to the study of the environment so long as WILKES, its faculty, and students conform to all of the terms of this Agreement.

2. This Agreement shall be in effect for the fiscal year beginning August 1, 1992, and ending July 31, 1993. Unless

terminated pursuant to paragraph 3., below, and without further action by either party, this Agreement shall be automatically renewed each ensuing fiscal year, indefinitely.

3. Sometime during the month of June 1993, and in June of each succeeding year during the term of this Agreement, the parties to this Agreement shall meet to review their relationship and to determine whether or not the respective interests of the parties are being appropriately served by this Agreement. At that time either party may terminate this Agreement by giving notice of termination to the other party, in which case the termination of this Agreement shall be effective on the following July 31st.

4. Each time that WILKES desires to conduct a field study on the CORBETT PROPERTY and at least one week prior to the anticipated date of the field study a member of the WILKES faculty shall communicate with Colonel Corbett or Mrs. Corbett and request permission to conduct the field study on the CORBETT PROPERTY. At that time Colonel or Mrs. Corbett shall be given information with the respect to (a) the anticipated time of arrival, (b) the approximate number of people who are expected to conduct the field study, (c) the identity of the responsible parties and whether they are faculty, students, or both, (d) the general nature of the studies to be conducted, (e) the approximate length of the visit on the CORBETT PROPERTY, and (f) the general nature of any equipment which may be brought to the CORBETT PROPERTY. If the CORBETTS consent, the field study shall then be conducted at the time agreed upon.

5. A field study may be conducted by a student who is working on a special project if the student is granted approval of a member of the faculty and a member of the faculty has communicated to Colonel and Mrs. Corbett the information required by Paragraph 4., above. In order to avoid a situation in which a single student conducting a field study suffers accidental injury while alone, it shall be the general policy of WILKES not to permit a single student to conduct a field study, but to require two students to conduct the field study together. Otherwise, groups of WILKES students shall be accompanied and supervised by at least one faculty member. To reiterate, "The Buddy System" will be used without exception during visits to the property.

6. WILKES faculty and students shall conduct themselves so as not to unreasonably intrude upon the privacy of the CORBETTS or inflict damage to the CORBETT PROPERTY.

7. Upon arriving at the CORBETT PROPERTY, the WILKES faculty member or student conducting the field study shall promptly make known to the CORBETTS his or her presence and the presence of the other members of the WILKES group. At the conclusion of the field study, he or she shall also make the CORBETTS aware of the departure of the WILKES group.

8. During the field study, faculty and students of WILKES will be permitted to take samples of water, air, rock, core samples of sediment and soil, plants, leaves of trees, and representative samples of invertebrates, such as plankton and aquatic insects. Selected vertebrates may be captured and released for appropriate field study.

9. The parties expect that testing and measuring devices will be employed in conducting field studies. Faculty and students may also employ canoes or boats as they may deem appropriate to the conduct of the study.

10. Measuring devices and all other equipment brought upon the CORBETT PROPERTY by WILKES faculty and students shall be removed from the CORBETT PROPERTY at the conclusion of the field study unless the CORBETTS specifically allow such measuring devices or equipment to remain on the CORBETT PROPERTY.

11. WILKES shall designate a member of its faculty to act (a) as administrator of the activities it will carry on pursuant to this Agreement, and (b) as a liaison representative with the CORBETTS in order that communications between the parties may be direct, prompt, and effective.

12. The parties understand that neither of them is an insurer of loss or damage that may be sustained by the other party in connection with the activities contemplated by this Agreement.

13. WILKES acknowledges that it will be liable to the CORBETTS and to third parties according to law for any injury or damage that may be sustained by them as result of the negligence of the agents or employees of WILKES who are acting in furtherance of their engagement or employment. To insure against any such liability to the CORBETTS, WILKES now maintains, and hereby agrees to maintain during the term of this Agreement, liability insurance with a limit of not less than \$5,000,000.00.

14. The CORBETTS have insured their property against fire and other casualty. They also maintain personal liability insurance. The CORBETTS agree to maintain this insurance during the term of this Agreement.

ARTICLE III - Procedures and Conditions for Transfer of Title.

The CORBETTS intend to transfer the CORBETT PROPERTY to WILKES upon the death of the survivor of them subject to the following conditions:

A. WILKES will maintain the CORBETT PROPERTY intact; no part of it will be sold, mortgaged, leased, used as collateral, or otherwise encumbered except as may be required by the action of eminent domain or as may be authorized by Article VI of this Agreement. The CORBETT PROPERTY will be used by WILKES in the study of the natural environment, in the testing and teaching of methods of preserving the balance of its various elements, and in the development of methods by which society and industry may grow in harmony with the natural environment.

B. No permanent structures will be erected on the property except as are necessary for the educational mission. The design and construction of any such structure will be compatible with the architectural style of other, preexisting buildings on the property.

C. 1. WILKES will maintain the home known as the "CORBETT HOUSE" as a well-appointed private dwelling. The owners do not mean to dictate details of furniture placement and other minutiae, but they believe the structure will be a more effective teaching aid if it appears to be what it was designed to be -- a comfortable family home.

2. This condition is not meant to limit WILKES's use of the building. The owners envision its being a place for such activities as faculty meetings, retreats, exhibits, demonstrations, etc., as well as a laboratory subject for research and evaluation of materials, construction methods, etc.

ARTICLE IV - Organization and Management of the Facility.

The CORBETT HOUSE and the RATCHFORD FIELD STATION will be an integral part of Wilkes University. It will be placed, organizationally, under the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Under him a Board of Overseers will establish guidelines for the management and use of the facilities and will assure fulfillment of the terms of this Agreement. Membership of the Board will include Colonel and Mrs. Corbett and such members of the faculty and administration of Wilkes University as the President of WILKES may from time to time appoint. The CORBETTS may appoint to the Board the Executor of the estate of the survivor of them or the Trustee of the trust established by them pursuant to Article V, below.

The Board will meet not less often than annually. Although its members will serve without compensation, they may be authorized reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenditures incident to attendance at Board meetings.

A Director of the CORBETT HOUSE and RATCHFORD FIELD STATION will be appointed by the President of Wilkes. Under general oversight of the Board of Overseers, his duties will include:

Overseeing daily operations, including allocation of the use of the facilities to the several departments and activities of the University.

Providing for routine maintenance and repair of the facilities.

Developing operating cost figures to assist the Board of Overseers in preparing budget forecasts for the facility.

ARTICLE V - Financial Support.

The CORBETTS also intend to make provisions effective upon the death of the survivor of them for WILKES to receive in perpetuity an annual distribution from their estates or from trusts created by them in an amount which will be not less than the equivalent of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) in 1992 U.S. dollars. Additional funds will be derived from University funds in terms of faculty time and support services, and external grants and projects.

RESOLUTION

ARTICLE VI - Conditions and Procedures
for Termination of the Agreement.

It is the intention of both parties to this Agreement that the transfer of the CORBETT PROPERTY to WILKES be permanent. If, however, the CORBETTS do not establish for WILKES an annual income as provided in Article V of this Agreement, then WILKES may refuse to accept the CORBETT PROPERTY. If the CORBETT PROPERTY becomes no longer relevant to the teaching needs of WILKES after transfer of the property to WILKES, or if WILKES is otherwise not able to carry out the terms of this Agreement, then WILKES shall petition the Orphans' Court of Luzerne County or such other court as may then have jurisdiction for an order under cy pres or other relevant principles directing an administration or distribution of the charitable estate created by this Agreement in a manner as nearly as possible to fulfill the educational purposes described herein.

ARTICLE VII - Dispute Resolution.

WHEREAS, the Corbetta have agreed to establish an endowment which generates--at a minimum--twenty thousand dollars; and
If a dispute should arise among the participants to this Agreement which cannot be settled amicably among those involved, the matter may be submitted to the local courts whose decision will be final and binding upon disputants.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the CORBETTS have hereunto set their hands and seals and WILKES UNIVERSITY has caused this Agreement to be executed in its behalf by its duly authorized President the day and year first above written.

FURTHER, that the Board of Trustees of Wilkes University expresses its sincere appreciation for their generosity in agreeing to let Wilkes University use the property immediately and in ultimately conveying the property to Wilkes University for the benefit of Wilkes University faculty, students, and administration.

WILLIAM H. CORBETT

FRANCES RATCHFORD CORBETT

ATTEST:

WILKES UNIVERSITY

BY: _____

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, William H. and Frances Ratchford Corbett, Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, believe their property can contribute to man's understanding of how to be a part of, rather than a despoiler of, the environment, and Wilkes University has academic programs and objectives which can be advanced through the use of the property; and

WHEREAS, the Corbetts have agreed to permit Wilkes University to utilize their property for environmental research/study and other academic purposes while they are residing on the property; and

WHEREAS, upon their demise they have consented to ~~devise~~ *devise* the property and all its improvements to Wilkes University for study of the environment and other educational purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Corbetts have agreed to establish an endowment which generates--at a minimum--twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00) per year in 1992 dollars; and

WHEREAS, Wilkes University, its faculty, and administration have expressed an interest in accepting the property, the conditions for use, and ultimate ownership to enable continued research and study in support of its educational programs;

THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Wilkes University approves the use and transfer agreement regarding The Ratchford Field Station and Corbett House for academic and other specified uses; and

FURTHER, that the Board of Trustees, as a group, expresses its sincere appreciation to the Corbetts for their generosity in agreeing to let Wilkes University use the property immediately and in ultimately conveying the property to Wilkes University for the benefit of Wilkes University faculty, students, and administration.



Mr. and Mrs. Corbett...page

the intent of the gift...drawing increased public attention to the economics of your home. We will hold off on any such public relations effort until a time that seems propitious to both you and us.

I hope you have had a chance to update Steve Teller on this progress. We are keeping July 21, 1992 apprised of our meetings and I think, as we discussed during that late June session, it would be well for the two of them to hammer out the details of a contract between the Corbette and Wilkes. We are as one in our understanding of the eventual disposition of the

Col. and Mrs. William H. Corbett
The Silo
R.D. #1
Shickshinny, PA 18655

Dear Fran and Bill:

Thank you for your kind note of June 27. My colleagues and I also enjoyed our recent visit, and we are pleased by the progress we continue to make with regard to The Corbett House and The Ratchford Field Station. We appreciate your hospitality, the discussion, and the tour of your herb garden. We feel encouraged by the progress of these talks to take advantage of your invitation to visit more frequently. I know that Sid Halsor and Dale Bruns realize that you would like to have more visitors as time goes on, and your encouragement of us to have students and faculty visit is one we heard loud and clear. Sid has begun to consider some of the longer term studies and will be involving other members of the Department and School as well as its students in some of those projects.

Research and study of this sort should be valuable for you and also for the longer term analysis of the property. I am sure that there will be valuable lessons learned and it is my expectation that some of those lessons will be communicated to a wider community. That is really at the heart of your objectives for the property, man's understanding of how to live more responsibly in this environment. Although those who care for the environment feel that progress is sometimes slow, we are further along now than ten years ago, and we will be further ahead ten years from now than we are today. I truly believe that the House and Field Station will be important tools in that further understanding.

I appreciate your considered reflection on the prospect of publicity for our arrangement. Although this will be one of the largest gifts the University has ever received and one of a distinctive nature, I respect your wish for privacy and for what you have developed. It would be easy for people to misconstrue

Mark Davis

Mr. and Mrs. Corbett...page 2.

the intent of the gift potentially drawing increased public attention to the economics of your home. We will hold off on any such public relations effort until a time that seems propitious to both you and us.

I hope you have had a chance to update Steve Teller on this progress. We are keeping Harry Hiscox apprised of our meetings and I think, as we discussed during that late June session, it would be well for the two of them to hammer out the details of a contract between the Corbetts and Wilkes. We are as one in our understanding of the eventual disposition of the property and our understandings are commonly shared as to usage. It would be helpful to have these professionals lay their hands on the documents we have prepared and make them legally sound.

I trust that you enjoyed a wonderful 4th of July and the weather that accompanied it. We had a relaxing weekend and it was fun reflecting on the importance of the 4th on the history of this country. Our bold experiment in democracy continues to work well because of an understanding of the common good and the contributions of individuals such as the two of you.

Love to you both from Jane and me.

Sincerely,

Christopher N. Breiseth
Christopher N. Breiseth
President

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cc: Harry Hiscox, Esq.
Dr. Sid Halsor
Dr. Dale Bruns



BURRELLE'S

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A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

I recently heard a sermon in which the minister contrasted the terms "smart" and "wise." His point was that our culture values the former instead of striving for the latter. But, it is a very happy situation indeed when the two attributes converge in one person. I have been privileged to know at least two such wise, smart people — Colonel William H. Corbett and his late wife, Dr. Frances Ratchford Corbett. The Corbetts have provided future generations of Wilkes University students with all the benefits of their 150 acres of open space and the 5500 square foot passive solar house which they built in the early 1980s. This complex is now known as the Ratchford Field Station and Corbett House.

The Ratchford Field Station is located near Muhlenburg Corners about 20 miles from the Wilkes University campus. The only remaining farm building is a large white and red silo which has become an identifying landmark. Shickshinny and Culver Creeks provide enchanting pools and riffles along two sides. Much of the property remains open field, but much is also forested. There are also at least two small wetlands and a four acre constructed pond. Trails are being planned which will allow visitors to explore all of these diverse landscapes and to experience the fauna and flora of the area.

Over the past several years, the use of the field station has been growing. According to Dr. Sid Halsor, a geologist from Shavertown who is the director of the Ratchford Field Station, a wide variety of courses utilize the facility on a regular basis. Each summer Wilkes University offers advanced field studies courses for majors in the GeoEnvironmental Sciences and Engineering Department. Classes such as water quality, limnology, soils, geology, and hydrology conduct field work there throughout the year. Many students have completed senior projects in environmental

Field station is an ecological gift

science or engineering using this "natural laboratory." A weather station has been set up so that data can be monitored from the University or from a modem at a student's house.



Col. Corbett working in the Friendship Garden. Photo by Sid Halsor.

Some of the projects have practical applications. One group of engineers is now determining the feasibility of converting the silo into an astronomical observatory. Another group of students studied the problem of a precipitous drop in the level of water in the pond to determine the cause and suggest solutions to correct the situation.

"The utilization of the property is guided by an overarching objective that the land and home be preserved and used to further humankind's understanding of, and appreciation for, the environment." This goal is nowhere more evident than in the Corbett House. Colonel William (Bill) Corbett explained his simple concept of design to me by saying that a house should "fit into its surroundings." He says that if you use available materials (in this case, wood and stone from the property), consider the wishes of the occupants (plenty of storage space, small rooms, high ceilings, and long views), make the house accessible during all stages of one's life, and make a minimum demand on the environment then the house "sort of designs itself." I think it is a little more complicated than that.

The Corbett House, which is now managed by Shavertown resident Donna Lennon, is a prime example of form following

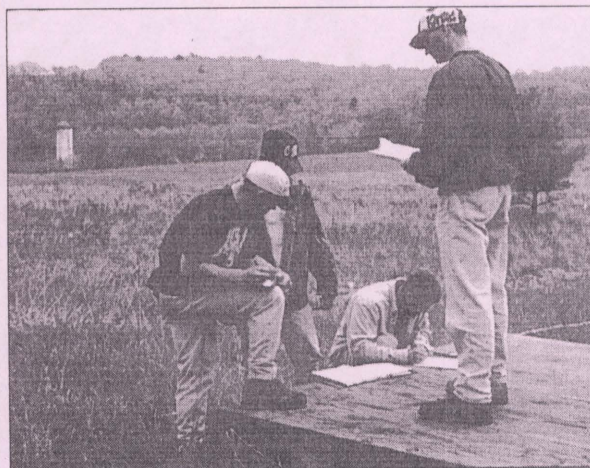
function. It is heated entirely by solar and wood. The house is actually built into the earth and is contained within a thick reinforced concrete shell. It is situated so that the thermopane windows receive maximum solar energy in the winter and minimum in summer. Heat is stored in rock, cement and in the air spaces. No fans or auxiliary electrical heating (available) have ever been required. The large fireplace and wood kitchen stove provide enough additional heat during dark winter days. The stove also heats the indoor swimming pool.

The "roof" of the house is covered with earth. Except for four stone chimneys and an attractive entry rotunda, it blends in with the gardens beyond. There have always been a wide variety of fruit and nut trees, berry bushes, and flower, herb and vegetable gardens. And, recently, a Friendship Garden has been added to honor the memory of Mrs. Corbett. The design was professionally done incorporating groupings of scents and colors. But, the garden is maintained by volunteer labor and private contributions of plants (there is a wish list) or

gathered on several trips abroad. The house includes a fully furnished guest wing, a hot tub, spiral staircase, office and den, as well as the 65 foot long front porch with all that glass.

Public participation in this unique partnership is encouraged. Wilkes has held continuing education classes on topics ranging from birding through garden design to literary/dinner seminars. Scouts and school classes may help on various projects or use the facilities for outdoor learning. "Window on Wilkes" or WOW has taped a couple of children's TV shows at Ratchford. Garden clubs, civic organizations, or congregations may wish to arrange meetings in the beautiful surroundings. If you are interested in more information or wish to arrange a visit, please contact Donna Lennon at 256-7604. Other questions or suggestions may be directed to Sid Halsor at 408-4611.

As we try to learn to live with our environment, the wisdom of the Corbetts is in front of us as an example. They have demonstrated that land use does not have to be destructive. Let us support this partnership in any way we can.



Students work in the field, with a silo in the background.

money.

Inside, the house is warm in both temperature and furnishings. Floors and wainscoting are real wood rubbed with linseed oil. Furniture and decorations reflect the eclectic interests of the Corbetts and their families. Many antiques are in the collection as well as items

C.V. 3-9-99

Shickshinny home will be featured

This month's episode of the award-winning television series, "GreenWorks for Pennsylvania," shows viewers how to incorporate environmentally friendly technologies into their homes, using the geothermal home of William Corbett, 83, of Shickshinny as one example.

James M. Seif, state Department of Environmental Protection secretary, said the focus of the program is to show viewers how some Pennsylvania residents are working to protect the environment from within their own homes.

"Everything we do at home — from the types of building materials we select, the type of energy we use, to the food and other products we buy — has a direct impact on our natural resources," Seif said. "This episode of 'GreenWorks for Pennsylvania' shows viewers how we can benefit the environment by making better choices at home."

The series is produced by the Environmental Fund for Pennsylvania and DEP.

The current episode runs through March 19 and can be seen on Service Electric Cable viewers Wednesdays at 3 p.m. on channel 21. The program is carried by 76 cable systems in Pennsylvania.

Following a video-magazine format, this episode, "Home, Green Home," shows viewers how they can save energy and reduce waste in the home.

Tamar Charry, producer of the program, explained Corbett's home in Shickshinny

is built into the side of a hill and uses solar energy and energy from the ground for heating and cooling.

Corbett was referred to GreenWorks by the Pennsylvania Audubon Society, which has worked with Corbett in the past, according to Charry.

Other highlights of this month's episode include:

- A visit to Souderston High School in Montgomery County where students in the environmental club built a home incorporating dozens of environmental friendly technologies;

- An explanation of Pennsylvania's new Electric Choice Program and how to shop for cleaner electricity;

- A visit to Construction Junction in Pittsburgh where they practice "deconstruction" instead of "demolition," giving a new lease on life to otherwise landfilled construction materials; and

- A look at how buying the new Chesapeake Milk brand available in grocery stores now can help dairy farmers learn ways to reduce water pollution.

"The goal of the 'GreenWorks for Pennsylvania' television program is to present positive examples of how Pennsylvanians are taking

care of our environment," said EFP Executive Director Timothy J. Schlitzer.



What makes this house
extra-special? ...p. 5

Saving the earth

Subterranean home and land will become a Wilkes laboratory

By PAT TROSKY
Citizens' Voice Staff Writer

A Union Township couple has ensured that a small part of the world will remain unspoiled for future generations through a gift to Wilkes University.

Col. William and Dr. Frances Corbett have bequeathed 150 acres of land in Ross and Union townships and a "one-of-a-kind" subterranean home to the university in exchange for the preservation of their dream that generations to follow will be taught to be part of and live with the earth instead of preying upon it.

"No one ever gives away anything for free. That's the first thing you have to know," the colonel said as he prefaced the reasons as to why he and his wife decided to make the generous donation.

It wasn't that they needed a \$2 million tax deduction — that's the estimated value of the gift.

It also wasn't to be memorialized although the university has insisted on calling the property the Corbett Farm and the Ratchford Field Station, named after the colonel and Mrs. Corbett's family which willed the land to her many years ago.

"We did it for purely selfish reasons," the colonel said with a smile. "We see how this area is

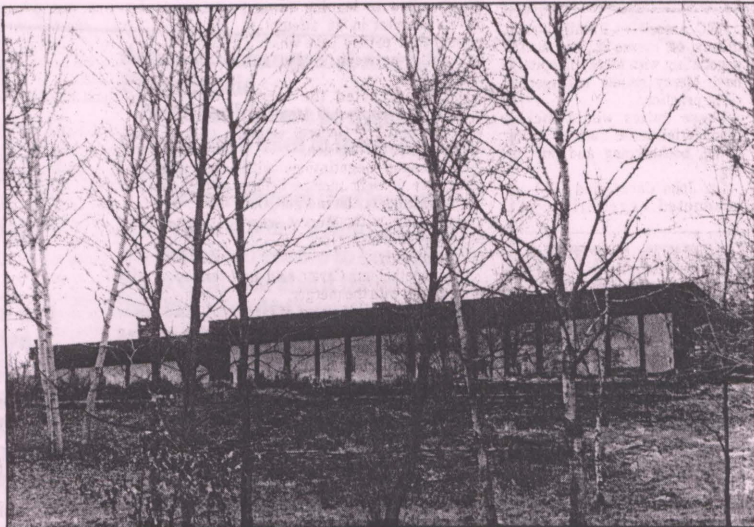
growing and we didn't want to see this land sub-divided or the property used in the wrong way. We have shown how humans can live in harmony with nature and a new generation needs to be shown this, too."

The colonel said he and his wife were environmentalists long before it became fashionable to be such a thing. Most of what they eat is either grown by them or caught in their four-acre pond. Their utility bill for the 5,500 square-foot home is in the neighborhood of \$90 a month and that includes heat, electricity and telephone service.

"When Frances and I decided to finally settle down after traveling all over the world with the military, we wanted to live where we would be part of nature instead of predators of it," the colonel said as he sat by the fieldstone fireplace which serves as one of the home's heating sources.

For Wilkes, the donation means not only an expansion of the campus but also a way to broaden and enhance its environmental sciences, engineering, and liberal arts curriculum.

"The home that colonel and Mrs. Corbett designed is an engineering marvel and it will serve as a classroom and retreat for the students and faculty of the university. The home and the land will be ex-



Front view of the unique home at Union Township

Citizens' Voice/Jack Kelley

plored, examined, studied and preserved by our professors and the students. Class after class will benefit from the Corbett's generosity," said Thomas Hazdor, vice president of development for Wilkes University.

Hazdor said environmental students will study the air, water and soil while literature students may sit alongside the pond and read Henry David Thoreau. Engineering students will study the design of the home while art and culture students will document and research the many antiques and treasures the Corbetts have collected over the years from their world travel.

"We've already had some classes at the farm and our environmental department has even helped the colonel with a problem with his pond. It seems a certain lily pad the colonel wanted on the pond was dying off. After the water was tested, our science department discovered the water was a bit acidic and offered remedies to correct the problem. Now everything is fine," Hazdor said.

Both the colonel and Frances, who earned her doctorate in marriage and family counseling from Columbia University, have been dedicated to education and the preservation of the environment and when it was mutually decided they would bequest their property for those purposes, their initial considerations were to leave their property to larger universities such as Penn State or the University of Pennsylvania.

"But the more we thought about

it the more we wanted a school that was closer to the farm and one that we were certain would fulfill our wishes. That's why we offered the idea to Wilkes," Frances said.

Legal papers have been fine tuned over the past year as to how the transfer of property will work. Actually there are two documents — the first will ensure that the Corbetts can reside in their home and be part of anything they would like to be as far as the university's programs are concerned until they die. The second is that the home remain intact and maintained and the land be used for preservation, education and research.

A Board of Overseers will establish guidelines for management and use of facilities. Membership of the board will include the colonel and his wife and such members of the faculty and administration of Wilkes University as the president of Wilkes may appoint. A director of the Corbett House and Ratchford Field Station will also be appointed.

The university gains a valuable property that can be used to solicit grants and funding for research projects and to recruit students for the future growth of the school. For the Corbetts, the transaction offers the peace of mind in know-

(See HOME, page 35)

About the house...

■ It was built in 1981 and contains more than 400 yards of concrete (100 of those on the roof). The outside walls are two-feet thick.

■ A centerpiece of the home is its 100-year-old oak door that leads into a silo-shaped foyer and circular pine steps.

■ The Japanese culture influenced several aspects of the home. In addition to paintings, ceramics, wood carvings and rugs, at the bottom of the staircase is a shrine-like family gallery, typically found in Japanese homes. To the side of the gallery is an exercise lap pool and a hot tub for soaking. The latter is separate from the commode room as it is in Japan.

■ The home has a wing that has its own kitchen, living area, bath and two bedrooms.

■ Measuring 50 by 90 feet, a focal point of the home is the 65-foot glass and wood enclosed sun porch which absorbs the solar energy into its slate floors. The heat then rises into vents that circulate the heat through the rest of the home.

■ The main kitchen features an Austrian-built stove that is fueled by wood and/or coal. The stove also heats the water for the home. Also in the kitchen is a maple plank counter top. Another top hosts a slab of marble.

■ A fieldstone fireplace with dual sides sharing one flue highlights the family living area. There are two other fireplaces that can be utilized to heat the home which maintains an average temperature of 65-73 degrees, year round.

■ Ceilings are eight and one-half feet high to keep the rooms from feeling stuffy and allow for air flow and light.

■ There are separate living quarters at one end of the home for guests that include a fully equipped kitchen and fire place.

■ Two and one-half acres surrounding the home are dotted with vegetable, herb (some 60 varieties) and flower gardens as well as a small covered walkway that hosts an archway of grapevines.



Frances and William Corbett

What makes this house
extra-special? ...p. 5

Saving the earth

Subterranean home and land will become a Wilkes laboratory

Home

from page 5

ing their little piece of heaven on earth will be preserved for the future generations to appreciate.

"Basically, our life isn't expected to change that much because of all of this. What we will do now is continue with what we have done in the past. We will spend hours either cultivating, planting, harvesting, canning or shopping through catalogs looking for something different to grow in our gardens. When the students come here to study, we'll show them where the bathroom is and answer any questions they may have. Other than that, I don't think

things will change that much," Frances said.

Nor should there be much change for Wilkes in the near future.

"We will respect the Corbetts' privacy and work within a schedule that is agreeable to both of us. We are excited about the prospects that are ahead of us with this gift and we are committed to honoring the Corbetts' wishes," Hazdor said.

By the way, there is one more reason why the couple donated their property to the university.

"We hope that others will follow our example and stick by their convictions as we have done in our desire to preserve a little part of the earth," the colonel said.

About the house...

At the end of the road, the house is a small, white, one-story building with a red roof. It is a simple, charming house with a small porch and a small garden.

It is a charming house with a small porch and a small garden. It is a simple, charming house with a small porch and a small garden.

It is a charming house with a small porch and a small garden. It is a simple, charming house with a small porch and a small garden.

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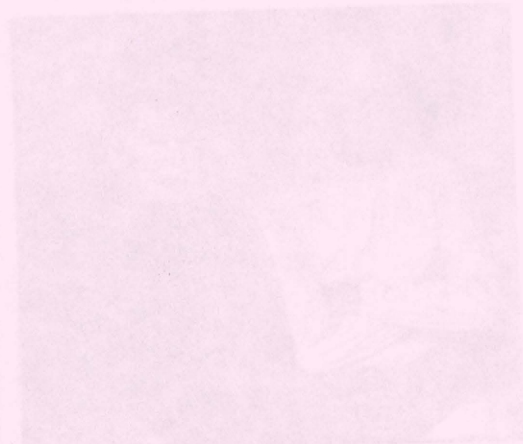
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It is a charming house with a small porch and a small garden. It is a simple, charming house with a small porch and a small garden.



Colonel and Wilkes Corbett

INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE CORBETT HOUSE AND RATCHFORD FIELD STATION

OWNERS: WILLIAM H. AND FRANCES RATCHFORD CORBETT

PROPERTY: The house is approximately 5,500 square feet in area and is constructed of reinforced concrete, buried in a south-facing hillside, with only the doors, entry, and sun-gathering windows exposed. A wood burning cookstove supplements the sun for space heating, pre-heats the domestic hot water, and heats the indoor swimming pool. As engineered and built, the interior temperature remains between 62 and 73 degrees throughout the year.

The property being donated consists of the house and furnishings, two outbuildings--a small greenhouse and a three-bay equipment shed and approximately 150 acres of surrounding land, including a four acre pond.

Tom Hadzor will explain the terms of the contribution.

VALUE OF GIFT: MORE THAN \$2 MILLION

The Corbett House and Ratchford Field Station will be an integral part of Wilkes University. The University devotes a significant part of its curriculum to environmental science courses, including Ecology, Botany, Advanced Air and Water Quality Measurement, Physical Geology, Field Biology, and Animal Behavior. Many of these courses require students to participate in various field studies during which tests are conducted, samples taken and analyzed, and observations and surveys made of plants, animals, water, rock, and soil. Members of the Wilkes University faculty also conduct personal research and through the School of Science and Engineering provide environmental testing services for government and business. The Corbetts and Wilkes have agreed to a cooperative program by which the Corbetts will allow these field studies to be done on their property.

A Board of Overseers will establish guidelines for management and use of the facilities. Membership of the Board will include Colonel and Mrs. Corbett and such members of the faculty and administration of Wilkes University as the President of Wilkes may appoint. A Director of the Corbett House and Ratchford Field Station will also be appointed.

STANDARD - SPEAKER

HAZLETON, PA
WEDNESDAY 24,000
FEB 16 2000



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Bids expected to be \$25-\$35 million for Susquehanna River pumping stations

WILKES-BARRE - Wyoming Valley flood protection officials are expecting bids for mechanical and electrical modifications to 13 pumping stations along the Susquehanna River to run between \$25 million and \$35 million.

Luzerne County Engineer Jim Brozena told members of the Wyoming Valley Flood Protection Authority Tuesday that plans and specifications for the revisions would be sent out by the end of the month.

The authority previously included \$11 million in the levee-raising budget for the improvements to the pumping stations.

However, in December, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, contractor for the project, said the scope of the work changed significantly over the last five years and required more exhaustive work in order to bring the pump stations up to current design standards and to incorporate new technologies.

Brozena said the spring would bring the resumption of work to complete dike improvements in Forty Fort and along the river near the Darte Center of Wilkes University.

He said work behind the courthouse will get underway in the spring of 2001 and that "a consultant is being brought on board to look at modifications we want to make."

Brozena said the preliminary

draft report on the proposed inflatable dam from Gannett Fleming, the consultant doing the feasibility study, would be made available to FPA members in 30 to 45 days.

He said a 50- to 60-page version would be put on the county web site and that a final public meeting would be scheduled before the final report is prepared.

The Corps of Engineers are raising levees three to five feet along a 15-mile stretch of the river.

The inflatable dam, if built, would be located below the Market Street Bridge. It would create a 400-acre lake for recreation officials hope would serve as a catalyst for development of a marina, business plaza and amphitheater.

OUR OPINION

TV
9-19-01

Kirby Center example of area's giving spirit

A community drawn together in common cause. Individuals tossing change and green back dollars — \$10s, \$20s and \$50s — into the collection.

Corporations donating thousands, even tens of thousands of dollars, goods and services. Senior volunteers, junior volunteers. Constant coverage in the paper. A defined purpose. A common cause.

If we pause for a respite from tragic events of this past week, the people in Northeastern Pennsylvania can take some pride and satisfaction in another common cause that culminated with the opening, 15 years ago today, of the F.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts.

No one would equate the recent disaster with the restoration of a theater. But the generosity and spirit of people leading up to the Kirby opening reveals the character of this community when a cause is presented. It's easy to forget, amid our day-to-day work and life, that when the need is presented, we step up.

And before the Kirby, there was a need.

The Dorothy Dickson Dart Center of Wilkes University was then and still is a fine theater, utilized by the community, but it had a third of the seating capacity of the Kirby. The sight lines at the Irem Temple, also in Wilkes-Barre, were less than ideal. The result was a void for professional entertainers.

So much that routinely stops at the Kirby now just passed right by

before. There was no arena, no amphitheater. Rock and pop concerts were held in echo-filled armories, college gymnasiums or the ill-suited CYC in Scranton. There was no Broadway theater season for Wilkes-Barre. No shows for children or performances by popular stars such as Bill Cosby,

David Copperfield or Tom Jones.

And the old Paramount Theatre (formerly, the Comerford) on Public Square didn't promise salvation. The movies and shows stopped in 1977 and after a succession of failed businesses in the lobby, some considered the best cure for the building was a wrecking ball.

A communitywide effort, led by businessman Albert Boscov and a principal

donation in the name of Fred Morgan Kirby II from his family, made the refurbished theater possible.

And on Sept. 19, 1986, the Kirby Center debuted with a black-tie gala featuring ballerina Cynthia Gregory, the Wilkes-Barre Ballet Theater and a portion of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic.

And of course, all those people who donated pocket change supported the new Kirby with attendance.

Watching the people of this community dig down and pitch in — then love the theater so much that the most mundane presentations were near sell-outs — was inspirational and proved how we get things done and how we'll proceed through these current, trying times. We reach our goal the old-fashioned way, together, one step in front of the other.

Happy birthday, Kirby Center.

It's easy to forget, amid our day-to-day work and life, when the need is presented, we step up. And before the Kirby, there was a need.

MIKE McGLYNN



The Cabbage Patch

Q.V. 5-31-00

A damn good governor

"It's time to get back to what this country is all about, protecting all of the powerless ... And that includes unborn children."

Gov. Robert P. Casey

In 1992, Bob Casey, the Pennsylvania governor from Scranton, was denied the opportunity to do something which should have been his absolute right as the governor of Pennsylvania — to address the Democratic National Convention in New York City.

Casey was blackballed because he consistently had opposed the party's pro-choice position on abortion, which to Casey, a devout Roman Catholic and father of eight, was a particularly heinous act of homicide.

With the Democrats in New York City looking at a solid opportunity to reclaim the White House in '92, the last thing the party needed was a divisive floor fight over the abortion plank in the platform. Democrats remembered all too well how the Republican National Convention which was held in San Francisco in 1964 (the "Goldwater convention") had deteriorated into a shouting match when another Pennsylvanian, U.S. Sen. Hugh Scott, strode to the rostrum and demanded that a civil-rights plank be written into the GOP platform. Thus, Democratic presidential nominee Bill Clinton had Casey silenced, an act of arrogance for which Casey never quite forgave Clinton.

Casey flirted with the idea of challenging Clinton in the Democratic primary race in 1996 as a pro-life Democrat. He had long had a strong feeling that the Democrats had contributed mightily to

their own inability to win the White House in 1980, 1984 and 1988 by driving Roman Catholics, a big part of the party's traditional core constituency, into the arms of Republicans over the abortion issue. Ultimately, the former governor's failing health prevented his running against Clinton.

Bob Casey was a traditional Democrat in a not-so-brave new world.

A wire-service obituary which ran Tuesday described Casey as a "conservative Democrat," but that label is misleading and, as such, does Casey something of a disservice. Certainly, he was conservative on the question of abortion but, otherwise, he was of the traditional Democratic stripe — and, quite possibly, one of the last of that cut: He had an abiding belief in the moral obligation of government to act as an engine of progress, as the great leveler of the playing field so that there is ample opportunity for all to enjoy the fruits of a free society. The condoning of abortion on demand, he frequently observed, was utterly inconsistent with and hostile to the concept of opportunity for all — and in the most starkly obvious manner conceivable.

His successor, Gov. Tom Ridge, during an interview roughly a year into his first term, remarked that, like many new Republican governors, he had inherited a state apparatus recently presided over by a traditional "tax and spend" Democratic administration. In defense of Ridge, he said this without rancor; it likely was merely a case of getting a little left-over campaign rhetoric mixed in with an informal "state of the commonwealth" message.

If Casey was a tax-and-spender to any extent, Wilkes-Barre and Luzerne County certainly benefited from his largesse. He started the ball rolling on the arena/convention center which now bears name. And, in a frequently forgotten gesture, he made it a PennDOT priority that the highway tangles and bottlenecks which choked East End when he took office be corrected. Today, you actually can get here from there, wherever "there" is. Wilkes-Barre no longer is the most inaccessible city this side of Juneau, Alaska.

In 1987, Casey designated Wilkes-Barre the first city to serve as "capital for a day." The event culminated in an open forum held at the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center on the campus of what was then Wilkes College. The governor introduced his cabinet and, over the course of the evening, he and cabinet members fielded questions from concerned citizens.

One woman who spoke complained that she had had to drive some distance "because my town wasn't made capital for a day."

The governor asked what town the lady was from.

"I'm from Scranton," she said in a tone tinged with irony.

Wilkes University

News

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Atty. F. Charles Petrillo Presents Wilkes with Portrait in Remembrance of His Former Professor

Wilkes-Barre - Wilkes alumnus, Attorney F. Charles Petrillo, presented a framed photographic portrait of his former teacher and professor, Myvanwy Williams, to the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts.

Receiving the portrait on behalf of the Darte Center was Alfred Groh, Wilkes Class of 1941, from Kingston, Pa., and Bruce Phair, Class of 1973, from Nanticoke, Pa. Groh is a professor emeritus of Wilkes, was a colleague of Williams, and is past director of the Darte Center (1965-1987). Phair is has been managing director of the Darte Center from 1987 to the present.

Myvanwy "Miffy" Williams joined the Department of English at Wilkes College as an instructor and director of English and Theatre Arts after retiring from Coughlin High School in 1963. Williams was a well-loved and respected contributor to the Darte Center and its activities until her death in 1972.

-MORE-

Mail Bag

Military women, who don't belong there, victims of bad moral values

Editor:

So drill sergeants and boatswains have been committing hanky pank! What's surprising is that we seem surprised.

For more than a generation we have been telling our children that there are no absolutes: Truth and falsehood are merely a matter of individual perception. Right and wrong depend upon who you are. If it feels good, do it. Do unto others before they do it unto you.

And to be sure we have made our point. We pass out condoms at sixth grade recess.

A recent poll of college students disclosed that many more than half of those polled admitted to cheating on exams.

Did they learn how to cheat in college?

So what do we expect our boys and girls to do when we put them together in barracks and aboard ship?

Play Bingo?

Should we be surprised when our warships are called "Love Boats" and 10 percent of the girls returning from a recent cruise turned up pregnant?

And who is responsible for this situation?

We are.

We elected the representatives who made our armed forces "coeducational." And for what reason did they do so? For political advantage. More than half the registered voters are women. And some women, our politicians believe, itch to get into military uniforms.

Fortunately not many of them. I've never met one.

Unwanted pregnancies and humiliating stories of sexual harassment are

so far the most obvious tragedies to us.

And we must not overlook that many millions of scarce defense dollars have been wasted in providing the special facilities and services required for assimilating women into the Army, Navy and Air Force.

But our major loss may prove to be in the ability of our defense establishment to do its job.

Our people in uniform — I almost

said men — are there for one purpose: to protect us against our enemies.

Unfortunately, they have not been able to protect themselves against us.

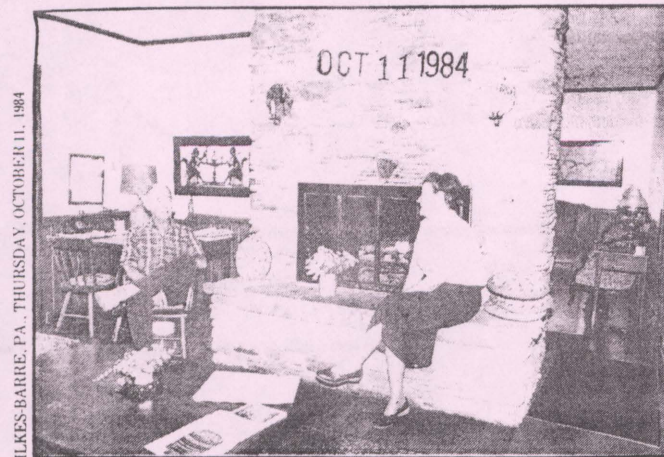
Let's admit we have made a horrible mistake and ask our representatives to repeal the orders that are converting our armed forces into laboratories for social experiment.

William H. Corbett
Shickshinny



1-22/3

Muhlenburg Home on Saturday Club Tour



Col. Corbett and Wife, Fran, Chat by Hearth



Maple Plank Forms Fran's Kitchen Counter

CITIZENS' VOICE, WILKES-BARRE, PA., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1984

(Continued From Page 48)

and eat. "We raise all we can and can all we raise," he twinkled as he showed a new variety of bean almost ready for harvest. Preferring to live in harmony with nature and its animals, Corbett also grows sunflowers for birds to feed from and rosebushes "just to look at."

He has no qualms, however, of shooting pesty deer and rabbits out of his garden, although, he says, it's a losing battle. Corbett, too, has roots in this area; the farming community of Corbettsville was named after his great grandfather and Corbett himself was born and raised on a farm in Virginia.

Frances and Bill incorporated several kinds of wood when building their home, using different pieces from the Ratchford home in Nanticoke where they lived while the underground home was under construction. Their love of wood is very evident in that there are at least 30 different kinds in the structure and in furniture throughout. There is pine, chestnut, oak, hemlock and cedar in the home itself

while maple, aspen, mahogany, teak, rosewood, holly, polonian, birch, cherry, poplar and camphor are but a smattering used in the furnishings.

The maple plank serving as a kitchen counter and cutting board is from the Ratchford land and the rosewood dining table is the same one from which Col. Corbett ate his porridge when just a lad. The chestnut doorway in the kitchen was constructed from wood cut in the 1920s from the 110-acre homestead.

Designed by Corbett, a West Point engineer, the home features a 63-foot long enclosed windowed stone entranceway with an overhang which keeps the sun out in the summer and allows it in during the winter months. It is the home's main heat source, according to Corbett, who pointed out that the floor slabs give off the heat which is then drawn through the home by means of a conduit system, again designed by Corbett. The huge stone fireplace, opened on two sides, augments the heat system. The result? "The house is 'nice and warm in winter and cool in summer.'"

says Corbett. He pointed out that the entranceway has never been below 55°F, even when the "weather outside was -10° last winter."

Main entry to the Japanese-styled home is made through a 100-year old oaken door which sits in a copper covered farm silo-type entrance. Descending a circular stair to the floor below, a visitor finds himself in a part of the home which can be closed off by airlocking doors, another feature which helps keep the home warm in winter.

The unique home features a Japanese style bath with hot tub, shower and exercise pool as well as guest quarters complete with their own fully-equipped kitchen, bathroom, living room and bedrooms.

Antiques, Oriental rugs and lovely pieces of furniture purchased from countries world over by the extensively traveled couple grace the home and add a charm found nowhere else in this area.

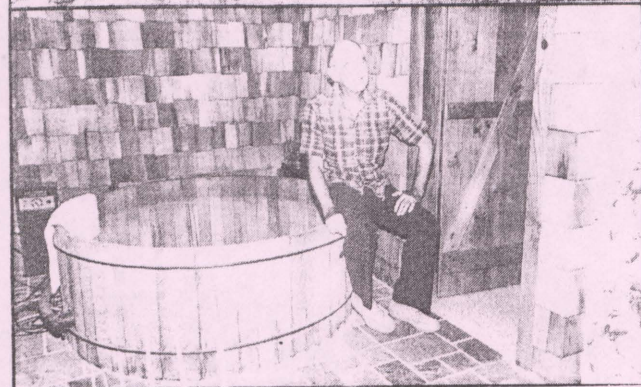
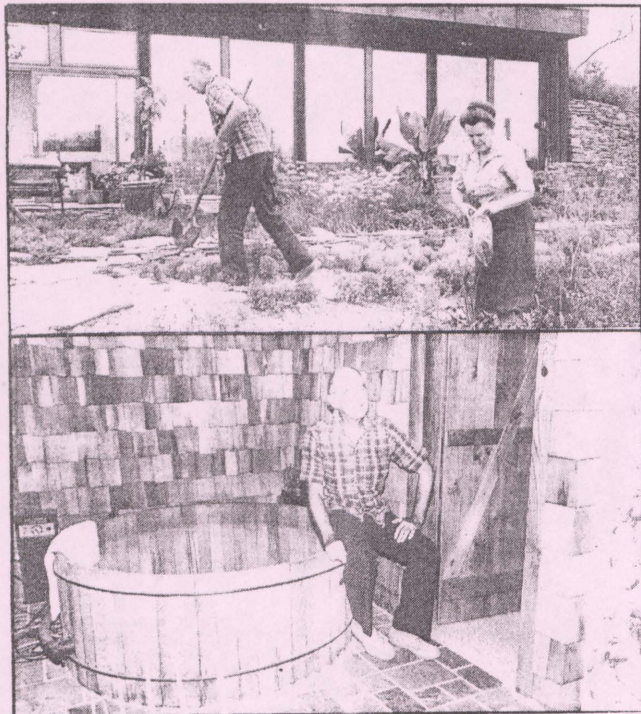
Other homes on the tour include the country house of Dr. and Mrs. Robert E. Conway, Sutton Road, Shavertown; Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Strunk, Sylvan Lake, Sweet Valley; and a contemporary home in Kingston.

Tickets for the tour may be purchased from any club member or at any home the day of the tour. Proceeds from the event go to the scholarship fund and community projects.

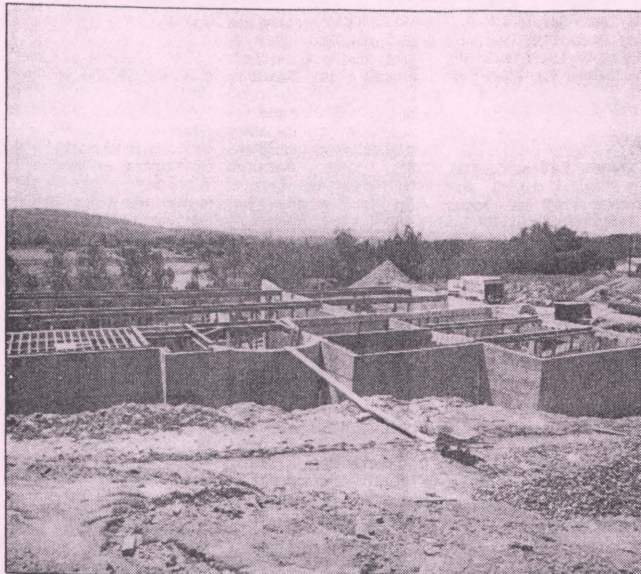
Features

Working in the herb garden at the back of the home is one of the many pleasures the Corbetts share. There are more than 60 different herbs growing on the terraces including oregano, Rosemary, thyme, dill, mint and basil.

At the end of a long day, the hot tub and exercise pool provide relaxation for bones made weary from gardening and housework. The hot tub room (bottom photo) is covered with cedar shingles, while slate pieces cover the floor.



That 'Hole the Crazy Old Galoot Dug to Live In' Is Taking Shape; Structure Draws Many Sightseers



May — Concrete Walls Poured



Bill Corbett — 'That Crazy Galoot'

By BARBARA S. LOFTUS
Features Editor

It's certainly no vine-covered cottage.
Nor is it meant to be.

The underground home that Bill Corbett and his wife, Frances, are building in Muhlenberg has the neighbors talking and curiosity seekers wagging their tongues about "that crazy galoot who's digging a hole to live in."

Corbett is no crazy galoot.

Already the home he designed has drawn architects from across the United States to the area to see the structure which, though underground, will be energized by solar power and the earth's natural cooling system. He has installed an electric back-up system and has a bright red wood-burning stove as well, but the main source of energy will be the sun.

Corbett, a retired Army officer with a degree in architecture and urban planning from the United States Military Academy at West Point, said he used the envelope principal in the home's construction; that is, the insulation is on the outside. "First you have the concrete shell, then on top of that is the waterproofing, then styrofoam insulation and finally the earth," he explained.

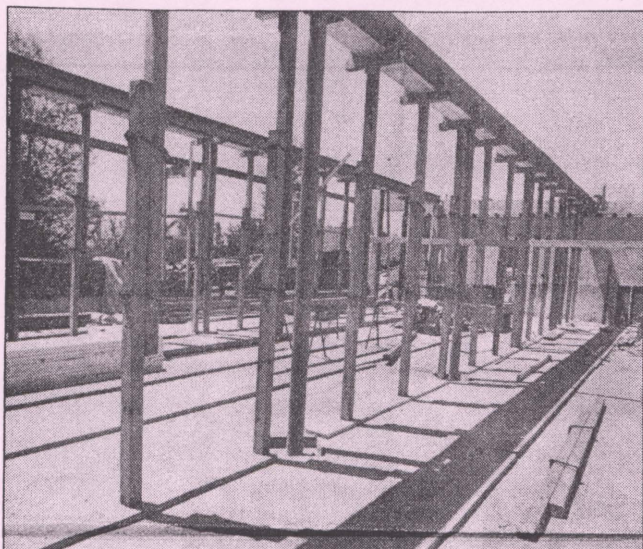
Corbett and his wife started building the home last spring and had hoped to have a house warming around the fourth of July, but...

At any rate, while actual dates for the housewarming have not been set, they will be moving into the home which sits on 110 acres of land that was in Frances' family for years, at least by Christmas, he hopes. Workers are putting the finishing touches on the drywall and inside while Corbett himself is doing much of the electrical work. The woodstove is already hooked up and working and there is a telephone.

Measuring 50 by 90 feet, entry to the home is made through an old farm silo which has been converted with a circular stairway and a beautiful copper-roofed addition complete with Frances' grandmother's oak front door which dates back about 100 years. And on the front of that door will be the original bronze bell chime that brought her grandmother to the door when...

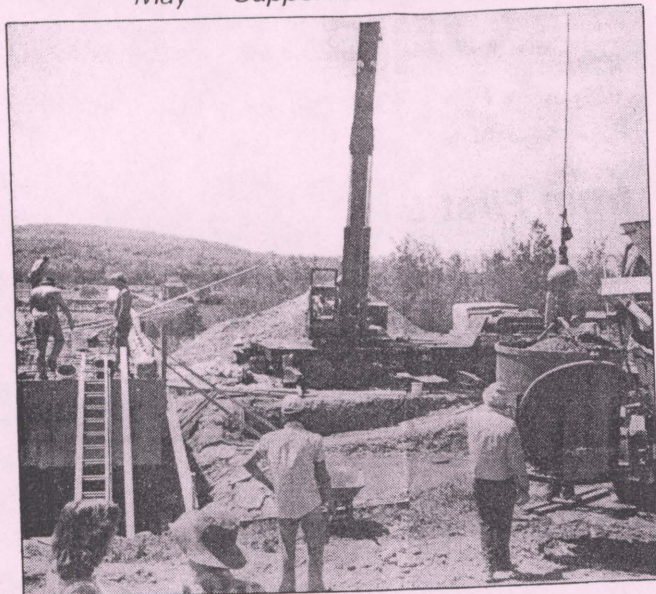


August — Frances Corbett Assists at Conveyor...

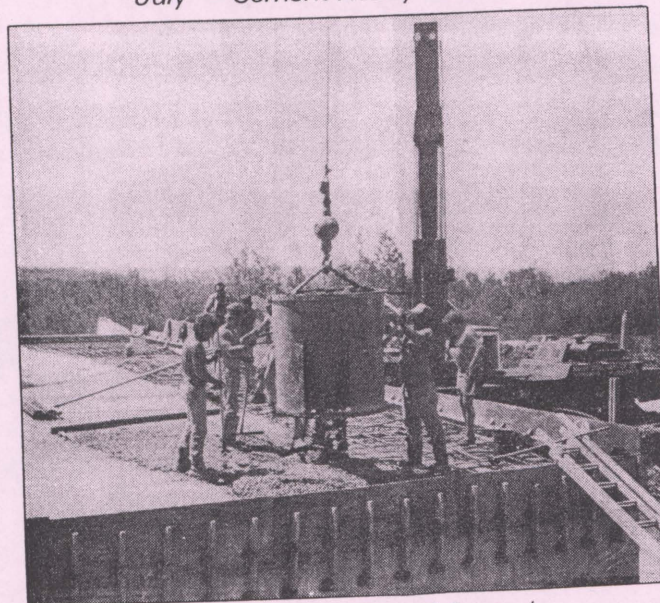




May — Support Beams Placed



July — Cement Ready for Roof



July — Cement Roof Poured

chime that brought her grand-
visitors rang many years ago.

Corbett said he expects to come in under cost of \$40 for each of the 5,500 square feet which is under roof. Included in the structure which is sure to be as spectacular inside as it is out, will be guest quarters with their own kitchenette, bath, living and bedroom; the solar collector porch which will double as a plant room at one end of its near-50 foot length while, at the other end, it will serve as a veranda outside the Corbett's master bedroom.

The outside of the structure incorporates stone and wood with a Japanese motif, a particular type of design that influenced Corbett when he was serving in the Army in Japan. Also influencing our "crazy galoot" was the custom in Japan of separating the bath room and the "benjo," their word for "pot."

In Japan, Corbett said, if you asked to use the bathroom, they would show you where to bathe. If you desired to take care of other bodily functions, they would show you to the "pot room," he said with a twinkle.

Corbett and his wife also decided to have a Japanese styled bath and so have allowed room for a hot tub, shower and exercise pool.

Corbett's fireplace in the living room is open on two sides and includes stainless steel flues. It is a beautiful, as well as utilitarian, piece built by Fred Winters. Other local workers include Bill Walters, masonry; Walt Chamberlain, dry wall; Paul Eyer-
man, roofing and waterproofing; John Fontinell and Al Clements, interior; Manny Pons, supervising engineer and two neighbors of the Corbetts, Joe Benscoter and Joe Pramick, both of West Nanticoke.

The Corbetts have been living in the West Nanticoke family home of Mrs. Corbett, the former Frances Ratchford, while their new home is being built. Corbett was born in Arlington, Va., and met his wife in 1962 after his retirement. He said their three children all live out of state and only one, a daughter, Mrs. John Marshall of McLean, Va., has actually seen the structure.

Son, William H., Jr., of Arlington, and another daughter, Maryann Harris of Seaboard, N.C., have heard plenty about it, but as yet, have not seen it.

"They'll all be here for open house," laughed Corbett as he sat in his usual work attire — blue denim shirt and pants held up by bright red suspenders. His hat, a floppy old thing, lay not far away on a stone ledge between the solar porch and the living room. They were the same suspenders that always pinpointed Corbett from all the other workmen during the summer and, always, there he was, underneath that same old hat.

Corbett and his wife were on site nearly every day and pitched in with the rest of the workers. Corbett knows where every beam, nail, support post and floor board are; there's not much that gets by him.

He'll quote statistics the outside walls are up to two feet thick and there's 100 yards of concrete on the roof alone, 400 in the entire structure and there's a three-car garage with its own grease pit for him to do his own car maintenance.

There's really not much to do inside — floors, wainscoting, cove molding, doors — when one considers the actual size of the project. And when the Corbetts are snugly in, then they'll start on the outside. Two acres have been set aside for growing their own food and the rest will be landscaped to allow them to enjoy the beautiful view from the top of their hill and to live in harmony with the deer, birds and other wildlife which flourish on the property.

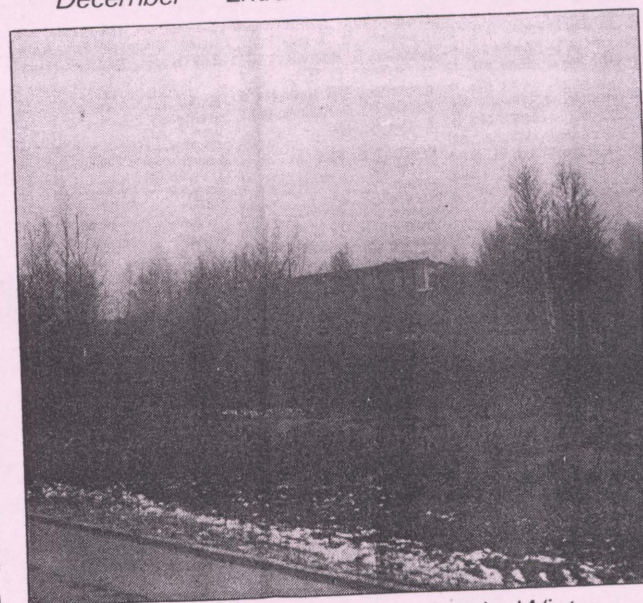
Corbett and his wife know what they want. And they've got it.

Who said he was a crazy galoot, anyway?

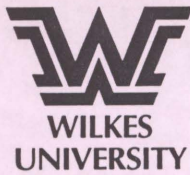
August — While Husband Bill (hat) Dumps Dirt



December — Entrance Gets Copper Roofing



December — Solar Home Awaits Winter



WILKES-BARRE • PENNSYLVANIA 18766 • 717/831-5000

To: Friends of the Ratchford Field Station
and the Corbett House

From: *J. Michael Lennon*
J. Michael Lennon
Vice President for Academic Affairs

*Corbett
House file*

Date: October 13, 1997

RE: Newspaper Article

Thought you would be interested in the attached article that appeared in the Dallas Post on Wednesday, October 8, 1997, written by Alene Case.

Hope you enjoy it!

cc: Mrs. Donna Pedro Lennon, Manager, Corbett House

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

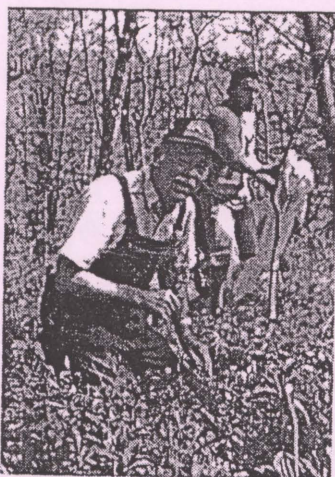
I recently heard a sermon in which the minister contrasted the terms "smart" and "wise." His point was that our culture values the former instead of striving for the latter. But, it is a very happy situation indeed when the two attributes converge in one person. I have been privileged to know at least two such wise, smart people — Colonel William H. Corbett and his late wife, Dr. Frances Ratchford Corbett. The Corbetts have provided future generations of Wilkes University students with all the benefits of their 150 acres of open space and the 5500 square foot passive solar house which they built in the early 1980s. This complex is now known as the Ratchford Field Station and Corbett House.

The Ratchford Field Station is located near Muhlenburg Corners about 20 miles from the Wilkes University campus. The only remaining farm building is a large white and red silo which has become an identifying landmark. Shickshinny and Culver Creeks provide enchanting pools and riffles along two sides. Much of the property remains open field, but much is also forested. There are also at least two small wetlands and a four acre constructed pond. Trails are being planned which will allow visitors to explore all of these diverse landscapes and to experience the fauna and flora of the area.

Over the past several years, the use of the field station has been growing. According to Dr. Sid Halsor, a geologist from Shavertown who is the director of the Ratchford Field Station, a wide variety of courses utilize the facility on a regular basis. Each summer Wilkes University offers advanced field studies courses for majors in the GeoEnvironmental, Sciences and Engineering Department. Classes such as water quality, limnology, soils, geology, and hydrology conduct field work there throughout the year. Many students have completed senior projects in environmental

Field station is an ecological gift

science or engineering using this "natural laboratory." A weather station has been set up so that data can be monitored from the University or from a modem at a student's house.



Col. Corbett working in the Friendship Garden. Photo by Sid Halsor.

Some of the projects have practical applications. One group of engineers is now determining the feasibility of converting the silo into an astronomical observatory. Another group of students studied the problem of a precipitous drop in the level of water in the pond to determine the cause and suggest solutions to correct the situation.

"The utilization of the property is guided by an overarching objective that the land and home be preserved and used to further humankind's understanding of, and appreciation for, the environment." This goal is nowhere more evident than in the Corbett House. Colonel William (Bill) Corbett explained his simple concept of design to me by saying that a house should "fit into its surroundings." He says that if you use available materials (in this case, wood and stone from the property), consider the wishes of the occupants (plenty of storage space, small rooms, high ceilings, and long views), make the house accessible during all stages of one's life, and make a minimum demand on the environment then the house "sort of designs itself." I think it is a little more complicated than that.

The Corbett House, which is now managed by Shavertown resident Donna Lennon, is a prime example of form following

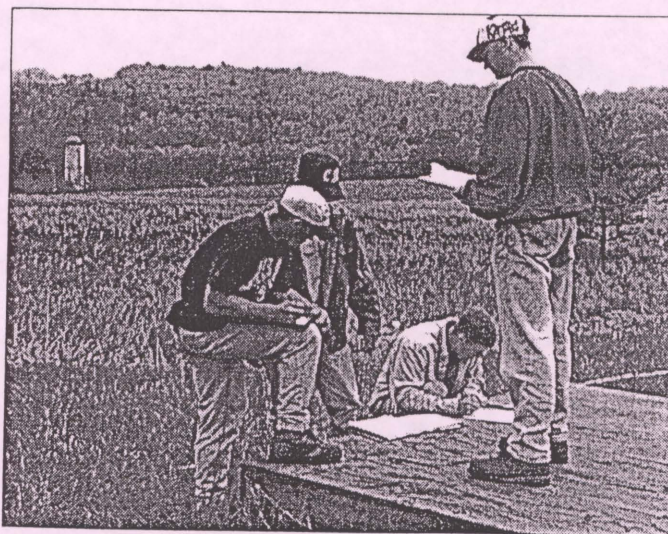
function. It is heated entirely by solar and wood. The house is actually built into the earth and is contained within a thick reinforced concrete shell. It is situated so that the thermopane windows receive maximum solar energy in the winter and minimum in summer. Heat is stored in rock, cement and in the air spaces. No fans or auxiliary electrical heating (available) have ever been required. The large fireplace and wood kitchen stove provide enough additional heat during dark winter days. The stove also heats the indoor swimming pool.

The "roof" of the house is covered with earth. Except for four stone chimneys and an attractive entry rotunda, it blends in with the gardens beyond. There have always been a wide variety of fruit and nut trees, berry bushes, and flower, herb and vegetable gardens. And, recently, a Friendship Garden has been added to honor the memory of Mrs. Corbett. The design was professionally done incorporating groupings of scents and colors. But, the garden is maintained by volunteer labor and private contributions of plants (there is a wish list) or

gathered on several trips abroad. The house includes a fully furnished guest wing, a hot tub, spiral staircase, office and den, as well as the 65 foot long front porch with all that glass.

Public participation in this unique partnership is encouraged. Wilkes has held continuing education classes on topics ranging from birding through garden design to literary/dinner seminars. Scouts and school classes may help on various projects or use the facilities for outdoor learning. "Window on Wilkes" or WOW has taped a couple of children's TV shows at Ratchford. Garden clubs, civic organizations, or congregations may wish to arrange meetings in the beautiful surroundings. If you are interested in more information or wish to arrange a visit, please contact Donna Lennon at 256-7604. Other questions or suggestions may be directed to Sid Halsor at 408-4611.

As we try to learn to live with our environment, the wisdom of the Corbetts is in front of us as an example. They have demonstrated that land use does not have to be destructive. Let us support this partnership in any way we can.



Students work in the field, with a silo in the background.

money.

Inside, the house is warm in both temperature and furnishings. Floors and wainscoting are real wood rubbed with linseed oil. Furniture and decorations reflect the eclectic interests of the Corbetts and their families. Many antiques are in the collection as well as items

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

WILLIAM H. CORBETT and FRANCES RATCHFORD CORBETT

and

WILKES UNIVERSITY

CONCERNING

THE CORBETT HOUSE

and

THE RATCHFORD FIELD STATION

AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made this _____ day of _____, 1992, between WILLIAM H. CORBETT and FRANCES RATCHFORD CORBETT, his wife, of Shickshinny, Pennsylvania (the "CORBETTS") and WILKES UNIVERSITY located in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania ("WILKES").

ARTICLE I - Background.

For several decades Col. and Mrs. William H. Corbett have been concerned that the World cannot much longer provide a habitable environment for plant and animal life, unless man changes his practices for managing the Earth's resources. One evident necessity is for human beings to decrease their demands for space and for non-renewable energy.

Believing that wasteful practices in home design and construction are major contributors to our overconsumption of energy, the CORBETTS researched the literature on solar heating, earth shelters and insulating techniques. Using the information from such study, the CORBETTS designed their present home. Construction began in November of 1980 and was completed in August of 1982. The house has met their hopes for comfort and economy.

The house of approximately 5,500 square feet in area is constructed of reinforced concrete, buried in a south-facing hillside, with only the doors, entry, and sun-gathering windows exposed. A wood-burning cookstove supplements the sun for space heating, pre-heats the domestic hot water, and heats the indoor swimming pool. As engineered and built, the interior temperature remains between 62 and 73 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the year.

There has been a happy confluence of interests between the CORBETTS and WILKES University: the owners believe their property can contribute to man's understanding of how to be a part of, rather than a despoiler of, the environment, and WILKES has academic programs and objectives which can be advanced through the use of the property. Accordingly, the owners are entering into this Agreement, which outlines how the owners and WILKES will share use of the land while the owners are in residence; how they will donate their home property to WILKES upon their demise; and how the property will be preserved, used, managed, and supported after transfer of title to WILKES.

The property to be donated consists of the CORBETTS' home and furnishings, two outbuildings--a small greenhouse and a three-bay equipment shed--and approximately 150 acres of surrounding land,

including a four acre pond. Not included are a tenant house and surrounding five acres of land. The property is hereafter referred to as "the CORBETT PROPERTY".

ARTICLE II - Provisions for Joint Use
While Owners Are In Residence.

General. As part of its educational program, WILKES has devoted a significant portion of its curriculum to courses of study relating to the environmental sciences, included among which are courses in "Hydrology," "Principles of Environmental Science," "Ecology," "Botany," "Limnology," "Advanced Air and Water Quality Measurement," "Physical Geology," "Plant Diversity," "Field Biology," and "Animal Behavior." Many of these courses require students to participate in various field studies during which tests are conducted, samples taken and analyzed, and observations and surveys made of plants, animals, water, rock, and soil. Moreover, members of the WILKES faculty conduct their personal research of the environment and through the School of Science and Engineering provide environmental testing services for government and business.

The CORBETTS and WILKES have agreed upon a cooperative program by which the CORBETTS have granted to WILKES permission to send faculty and students to the CORBETT PROPERTY from time to time in order to conduct field studies of the environment. These opportunities for field study are of significant benefit to the courses of study and testing services offered by WILKES. The CORBETTS and WILKES expect this cooperative endeavor to continue indefinitely and now desire to formalize their oral agreement by this written document.

The CORBETT PROPERTY shall be known as the "THE RATCHFORD FIELD STATION" when the reference is to its use as a facility for the study of the environment. The CORBETTS' dwelling house when distinguished from the land shall be known as the "CORBETT HOUSE".

Coordination procedures --

1. The CORBETTS agree that during the term of this Agreement they will continue to extend to students and faculty of WILKES permission to enter upon the CORBETT PROPERTY for the purpose of conducting field tests and observations related to the study of the environment so long as WILKES, its faculty, and students conform to all of the terms of this Agreement.
2. This Agreement shall be in effect for the fiscal year beginning August 1, 1992, and ending July 31, 1993. Unless

terminated pursuant to paragraph 3., below, and without further action by either party, this Agreement shall be automatically renewed each ensuing fiscal year, indefinitely.

3. Sometime during the month of June 1993, and in June of each succeeding year during the term of this Agreement, the parties to this Agreement shall meet to review their relationship and to determine whether or not the respective interests of the parties are being appropriately served by this Agreement. At that time either party may terminate this Agreement by giving notice of termination to the other party, in which case the termination of this Agreement shall be effective on the following July 31st.

4. Each time that WILKES desires to conduct a field study on the CORBETT PROPERTY and at least one week prior to the anticipated date of the field study a member of the WILKES faculty shall communicate with Colonel Corbett or Mrs. Corbett and request permission to conduct the field study on the CORBETT PROPERTY. At that time Colonel or Mrs. Corbett shall be given information with the respect to (a) the anticipated time of arrival, (b) the approximate number of people who are expected to conduct the field study, (c) the identity of the responsible parties and whether they are faculty, students, or both, (d) the general nature of the studies to be conducted, (e) the approximate length of the visit on the CORBETT PROPERTY, and (f) the general nature of any equipment which may be brought to the CORBETT PROPERTY. If the CORBETTS consent, the field study shall then be conducted at the time agreed upon.

5. A field study may be conducted by a student who is working on a special project if the student is granted approval of a member of the faculty and a member of the faculty has communicated to Colonel and Mrs. Corbett the information required by Paragraph 4., above. In order to avoid a situation in which a single student conducting a field study suffers accidental injury while alone, it shall be the general policy of WILKES not to permit a single student to conduct a field study, but to require two students to conduct the field study together. Otherwise, groups of WILKES students shall be accompanied and supervised by at least one faculty member. To reiterate, "The Buddy System" will be used without exception during visits to the property.

6. WILKES faculty and students shall conduct themselves so as not to unreasonably intrude upon the privacy of the CORBETTS or inflict damage to the CORBETT PROPERTY.

7. Upon arriving at the CORBETT PROPERTY, the WILKES faculty member or student conducting the field study shall promptly make known to the CORBETTS his or her presence and the presence of the other members of the WILKES group. At the conclusion of the field study, he or she shall also make the CORBETTS aware of the departure of the WILKES group.

8. During the field study, faculty and students of WILKES will be permitted to take samples of water, air, rock, core samples of sediment and soil, plants, leaves of trees, and representative samples of invertebrates, such as plankton and aquatic insects. Selected vertebrates may be captured and released for appropriate field study.

9. The parties expect that testing and measuring devices will be employed in conducting field studies. Faculty and students may also employ canoes or boats as they may deem appropriate to the conduct of the study.

10. Measuring devices and all other equipment brought upon the CORBETT PROPERTY by WILKES faculty and students shall be removed from the CORBETT PROPERTY at the conclusion of the field study unless the CORBETTS specifically allow such measuring devices or equipment to remain on the CORBETT PROPERTY.

11. WILKES shall designate a member of its faculty to act (a) as administrator of the activities it will carry on pursuant to this Agreement, and (b) as a liaison representative with the CORBETTS in order that communications between the parties may be direct, prompt, and effective.

12. The parties understand that neither of them is an insurer of loss or damage that may be sustained by the other party in connection with the activities contemplated by this Agreement.

13. WILKES acknowledges that it will be liable to the CORBETTS and to third parties according to law for any injury or damage that may be sustained by them as result of the negligence of the agents or employees of WILKES who are acting in furtherance of their engagement or employment. To insure against any such liability to the CORBETTS, WILKES now maintains, and hereby agrees to maintain during the term of this Agreement, liability insurance with a limit of not less than \$5,000,000.00.

14. The CORBETTS have insured their property against fire and other casualty. They also maintain personal liability insurance. The CORBETTS agree to maintain this insurance during the term of this Agreement.

ARTICLE III - Procedures and Conditions for Transfer of Title.

The CORBETTS intend to transfer the CORBETT PROPERTY to WILKES upon the death of the survivor of them subject to the following conditions:

A. WILKES will maintain the CORBETT PROPERTY intact; no part of it will be sold, mortgaged, leased, used as collateral, or otherwise encumbered except as may be required by the action of eminent domain or as may be authorized by Article VI of this Agreement. The CORBETT PROPERTY will be used by WILKES in the study of the natural environment, in the testing and teaching of methods of preserving the balance of its various elements, and in the development of methods by which society and industry may grow in harmony with the natural environment.

B. No permanent structures will be erected on the property except as are necessary for the educational mission. The design and construction of any such structure will be compatible with the architectural style of other, preexisting buildings on the property.

C. 1. WILKES will maintain the home known as the "CORBETT HOUSE" as a well-appointed private dwelling. The owners do not mean to dictate details of furniture placement and other minutiae, but they believe the structure will be a more effective teaching aid if it appears to be what it was designed to be -- a comfortable family home.

2. This condition is not meant to limit WILKES's use of the building. The owners envision its being a place for such activities as faculty meetings, retreats, exhibits, demonstrations, etc., as well as a laboratory subject for research and evaluation of materials, construction methods, etc.

ARTICLE IV - Organization and Management of the Facility.

The CORBETT HOUSE and the RATCHFORD FIELD STATION will be an integral part of Wilkes University. It will be placed, organizationally, under the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Under him a Board of Overseers will establish guidelines for the management and use of the facilities and will assure fulfillment of the terms of this Agreement. Membership of the Board will include Colonel and Mrs. Corbett and such members of the faculty and administration of Wilkes University as the President of WILKES may from time to time appoint. The CORBETTS may appoint to the Board the Executor of the estate of the survivor of them or the Trustee of the trust established by them pursuant to Article V, below.

The Board will meet not less often than annually. Although its members will serve without compensation, they may be authorized reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenditures incident to attendance at Board meetings.

A Director of the CORBETT HOUSE and RATCHFORD FIELD STATION will be appointed by the President of Wilkes. Under general oversight of the Board of Overseers, his duties will include:

Overseeing daily operations, including allocation of the use of the facilities to the several departments and activities of the University.

Providing for routine maintenance and repair of the facilities.

Developing operating cost figures to assist the Board of Overseers in preparing budget forecasts for the facility.

ARTICLE V - Financial Support.

The CORBETTS also intend to make provisions effective upon the death of the survivor of them for WILKES to receive in perpetuity an annual distribution from their estates or from trusts created by them in an amount which will be not less than the equivalent of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) in 1992 U.S. dollars. Additional funds will be derived from University funds in terms of faculty time and support services, and external grants and projects.

ARTICLE VI - Conditions and Procedures
for Termination of the Agreement.

It is the intention of both parties to this Agreement that the transfer of the CORBETT PROPERTY to WILKES be permanent. If, however, the CORBETTS do not establish for WILKES an annual income as provided in Article V of this Agreement, then WILKES may refuse to accept the CORBETT PROPERTY. If the CORBETT PROPERTY becomes no longer relevant to the teaching needs of WILKES after transfer of the property to WILKES, or if WILKES is otherwise not able to carry out the terms of this Agreement, then WILKES shall petition the Orphans' Court of Luzerne County or such other court as may then have jurisdiction for an order under cy pres or other relevant principles directing an administration or distribution of the charitable estate created by this Agreement in a manner as nearly as possible to fulfill the educational purposes described herein.

ARTICLE VII - Dispute Resolution.

If a dispute should arise among the participants to this Agreement which cannot be settled amicably among those involved, the matter may be submitted to the local courts whose decision will be final and binding upon disputants.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the CORBETTS have hereunto set their hands and seals and WILKES UNIVERSITY has caused this Agreement to be executed in its behalf by its duly authorized President the day and year first above written.

_____(SEAL)
WILLIAM H. CORBETT

_____(SEAL)
FRANCES RATCHFORD CORBETT

ATTEST:

WILKES UNIVERSITY

BY: _____

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, William H. and Frances Ratchford Corbett, Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, believe their property can contribute to man's understanding of how to be a part of, rather than a despoiler of, the environment, and Wilkes University has academic programs and objectives which can be advanced through the use of the property; and

WHEREAS, the Corbetts have agreed to permit Wilkes University to utilize their property for environmental research/study and other academic purposes while they are residing on the property; and

WHEREAS, upon their demise they have consented to ~~and~~ *devise* the property and all its improvements to Wilkes University for study of the environment and other educational purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Corbetts have agreed to establish an endowment which generates--at a minimum--twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00) per year in 1992 dollars; and

WHEREAS, Wilkes University, its faculty, and administration have expressed an interest in accepting the property, the conditions for use, and ultimate ownership to enable continued research and study in support of its educational programs;

THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Wilkes University approves the use and transfer agreement regarding The Ratchford Field Station and Corbett House for academic and other specified uses; and

FURTHER, that the Board of Trustees, as a group, expresses its sincere appreciation to the Corbetts for their generosity in agreeing to let Wilkes University use the property immediately and in ultimately conveying the property to Wilkes University for the benefit of Wilkes University faculty, students, and administration.

Talking Paper

April 14, 1993, Wilkes Alumni Breakfast

I am happy to be here. Of course, at my age I should be happy just to be!

My reason for standing here this morning, instead of sitting among you, is to explain the what, where, how, when and why of a joint project between ourselves, the Corbetts, and Wilkes University. After a few minutes I will be joined by Frances and Sid Halzor for a question and answer period.

I have chosen to explain the project by telling a story I call "The History of Seven Farms." It is a very personal story which, forgive me, must be told in the first person.

In about the year 1840, my great-grandfather left his home in a little green village named Corbetttsville, just across our northern boundary with New York. As he headed south, he took with him his bride and her dowry of \$3000 in gold.

When they reached what is now Arlington, Virginia, they bought 278 acres of farmland from the heirs of Lord Fairfax. The price was eleven dollars an acre, cash. The dowry, supposedly, covered all but \$58 of the cost.

But less than two generations later the farm was gone, except for ten acres my grandfather was given as an inducement to move his medical practice back home to Arlington

Yes, the farm was gone -- and so was the money!

It was on my grandfather's farmette --these remaining ten acres -- that I spent half my childhood formative years, learning to love the land and country living. If your time weren't so precious, I'd like to tell you more about such childhood pleasures as inhaling the aromas of the old smokehouse or climbing a tree to pick the perfect peach, one that peeled like a banana, was juicier than an orange, and tasted like Heaven!

Another generation and this farm, number two in this story, was also gone-- and so again was the money.)

Meanwhile, a child named Frances Ratchford lived with her family in another little green village -- West Nanticoke, Pennsylvania. There her father, also a land lover, bought pieces of land behind their home so that he could sit on his back porch and enjoy the beauty of what he called "My mountain." As much for avocation as vocation, he and his brother raised fruits and vegetables on a shelf overlooking the nearby Susquehanna, which since has been developed into Tilbury Terrace. The two brothers, being Irish, had a falling out; and there went farm number three.

But back at Frances' home an artesian spring on the mountain cascaded clear water down to the house, the air was clear, the fruit trees were fruitful, and the Susquehannah reminded one of Captain John Smith's claim that you could walk across the river on the backs of the fish¹⁾

This was also at the time that Frank Martz had a jitney line that ended at the foot of Harry Ratchford's driveway.

While making his home in the village of West Nanticoke, Frances' father was assembling, piece-by-piece, four adjoining parcels of land that earlier in our national history had been individual forty acre and a mule²⁾ homesteads. In the days before therapy was a household word, he would recharge his batteries by farming these acres and tending the fruit trees.

Not long after Frances inherited this property, we decided it was foolish to own a farm and not live on it. We sold out in Virginia, moved to West Nanticoke, put our belongings into temporary storage, and set up our drawing table.

As the first principle of home design, Frances and I believe the home should express and not dominate the personalities of its owners. Unfortunately, in our hypermobile society, we do not often have the luxury of such choice: the typical college freshman will work for three different employers during his career. His family of 2.78 members are more likely to spend much of their lives in a succession of rented one-size-fits all homes than in one built for them.

So, we gathered the old envelopes and scraps of paper upon which we had scribbled ideas on home design. At first, the results were an incoherent mess. But when they were organized in accordance with the following principles, they began to make sense.

The house would be built by local artisans out of locally available materials.

It would place limited demands upon external sources of energy.

It would require minimal maintenance, inside and out.

It would make only a small footprint on the land.

It would be habitable by the aged and the decrepit, who could not navigate steps and stairs.

In addition to such overall design considerations, we added a list of "druthers," for example, we wanted:

-- A guest wing which would provide complete accommodations for visiting friends and relatives.

- Bath facilities for the owners that included such amenities as a bidet and a hot tub.
- An interior exercise heated pool.
- A laundry room
- Ample pantry space for the owners, who raise and preserve much of their own food.
- A three-bay garage, with a grease pit in one bay.

Within the structure conforming to the general design criteria and providing the druthers," we exercised such peculiarities of personal taste as the following:

- Small rooms , contrary to the current popularity of wide-open spaces.
- High ceilings, to prevent occupants from feeling hemmed in by the small rooms (and, since we decided to 'go underground," to keep us from feeling pushed down by the earth above us.)

We soon realized that an underground structure using solar heating could best meet our design criteria-- if we could depend upon the sun to provide enough heat, here in the Northeast, and if we could find local talent to do the construction.

The first problem, heating, we solved by designing a two-stage system whereby the sun heated a concrete shell, within which we built a house by conventional methods. The sun maintained a temperature between about 55 and 85 degrees year-round --roughly that of Southern Florida -- within the shell and a wood-burning cookstove provided whatever supplemental heat might be needed.

We finally found two local artisans who expressed interest in building the underground concrete shell. We were spared a decision when one of them priced himself out of competition.

As you can imagine, the story of how the house got built could take a long time in telling. But instead, I'll describe the results:

The house is tucked into the south face of a hill, where its nearly 600 square feet of thermopane windows bring light and heat into the shell, constructed of about 400 cubic yards of reinforced concrete. Styrofoam insulation outside the shell causes it to store the sun's heat and keep the temperature in the shell within the design limits.

The house within the shell covers about 5500 square feet, all on one floor, except for the above-ground entrance which leads to a circular stairway down to the lobby below.

The garage, pantry, utility room, and closets consume about 2000 feet of the total, with the remaining approximately 3500 feet of "living space," that part of the structure within which people work, eat, recreate, and sleep, being divided into rooms clustered to minimize traffic as people conduct their daily activities.

Use of oiled, unpainted wood for floors, doors, trim, and wainscoting minimizes interior maintenance. What little exterior is not occupied by doors or sheltered by the earth is covered with rough-sawn planks, which need only to be stained every 10 years or so.

Being sealed from the elements, the house needs a way to inhale fresh air. A tube going down 16 feet below ground and leading to an intake 100 feet down hill provides the source.

Oh, yes. I forgot that one of the design constraints was that I control my passion for gadgets. A small fan that boosts the flow through the tube and a small pump that circulates the water from the cookstove to preheat the domestic hot water supply and to heat the swimming pool are the only examples of gadgetry that were allowed. Otherwise the seasonal changes in the Earth's position relative to the Sun automatically regulate the climate inside the house.

As you see, I could go on ad infinitum (or ad nauseum, perhaps) on the design and construction of the house. But I have one more point to cover this morning: its future.

Some time in 1989 we were having supper with a friend and member of Wilkes' faculty. We were celebrating the seventh anniversary of our moving in. The question came up, I don't remember how, of our plans for the future of the property. We would have liked some younger member(s) of the family to take over when we were gone, but their roots and interests were elsewhere. We could leave the property to be sold. Since the "highest and best" use of the property has been determined by appraisers to be to subdivide, gone would be the four farms Harry Ratchford painstakingly assembled. Gone also would be the wildlife and the fresh air and the rural tranquility.

I forgot to mention that we had previously given up on the prospect of changing our assets into asbestos travelers' checks.

But seriously, we had many times discussed the possibilities for the use of our property after our death. Fortunately our children were educated, grown, settled, well, and happy. Our youngest grandchild is a college senior. To leave the family the task of disposing of our home would be a "cop out" -- an admission they would make better decisions than we would.

The decision we adopted was to will it to an educational institution, with the proviso that the property be used only in

helping the institution teach courses related to environmental understanding and appreciation. Happily we found such a partner in Wilkes University, whose educational objectives and our interests are compatible. In the last three and a half years we have accordingly developed an agreement with Wilkes, whereby Wilkes will own our property upon our death, so long as it is used for the educational purposes described in the agreement.

And while we, Frances and I, are alive and in residence, Wilkes is being encouraged to use the property as set forth in the agreement.

The first three of the farms in my story now grow asphalt and concrete. Any young people growing up in such environs may never have enjoyed a glass of pure water, seen a deer, or climbed a tree. We hope these last four farms will help Wilkes to encourage young people to understand and to be kind to what is left of their environment.

Now, do you have some questions for us?



THE RATCHFORD FIELD STATION

Consisting of nearly 150 acres of hills covered with forests and meadows, the Ratchford Field Station is a "natural laboratory" dedicated to undergraduate field-based education and research. Students and faculty in the Department of Geoenvironmental Sciences and Engineering use the facility in conjunction with a wide variety of courses including geology, ecology, limnology, hydrology, environmental science and advanced field studies.

The Field Station offers a secure, permanent site in which long-term monitoring of natural processes can be performed and evaluated. Students gain valuable field experience and learn modern practices for collecting, handling and field-analyzing samples of rock, soil, sediment, ground water, surface water, and vegetation.

A recent addition to the Field Station is a large, wood pavilion. Located near a four-acre pond, the pavilion provides a sheltered area for outdoor instruction and work space for cataloging and compiling field data. The pavilion is also used for picnics and as a staging area for educational outreach. The creation of a network of trails is underway to provide access to the wide range of landscape features found at

the Ratchford Field
Station.



THE FRANCES CORBETT FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

Located "on the roof" of the Corbett House, the Friendship Garden is dedicated to the memory of Frances Ratchford Corbett by her husband William. Enlisting the aid of Walter Chamberlain, a landscape architect, Col. Corbett began to contour the land designated for the garden shortly after Frances' death in 1995.

Frances was interested in indigenous perennials not typically found in local gardens. To that end, Col. Corbett and Mr. Chamberlain have created a master plan featuring color-, scent- and edible-themed beds.

The beautifully landscaped Garden is maintained entirely by volunteers. Planting and weeding days are planned each season. Donations to the Frances Corbett Friendship Garden are accepted through the University. Copies of the master plan and the Garden Wish List album are available.

THE CORBETT HOUSE

After inheriting the Ratchford family farm, the Corbetts decided "it was foolish to own a farm and not live on it." They planned to build a home that would express the personalities of their owners. Rejecting chrome and Plexiglas in favor of wood and stone, whenever possible they used native materials and the talents of local artisans. Vegetable and herb gardens, as well as fruit trees, provided, on a year-round basis, a substantial portion of the Corbett's' food requirements.

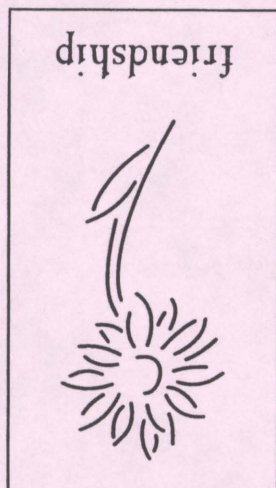
Making only a small footprint on the land, the Corbett House places limited demands on external energy sources by using solar heating and wood stoves to heat 3,500 square feet of living space. Furnished with family treasures, the home has oak floors and eight and a half foot ceilings. There is a guest wing, double -sided stone fireplace, indoor pool and hot tub. The two slate-floored galleria, which also serve as the solar furnace, are filled with plants and looks out to the herb and flower garden. Paths and steps lead down to the four-acre pond. A circular wooden staircase leads visitors to a cupola perched upon the earthen roof. This "front door" leads to the Friendship Garden and forest paths.

The Corbett House, completed in 1982, is a moral example to all. This house on a hill, indeed, a house built into a hill, serves as an inspiration to live in harmony with nature.

Wilkes University uses the Corbett House year-round for a variety of social and educational functions.



CORBETT HOUSE
RATCHFORD FIELD STATION
FRANCES CORBETT FRIENDSHIP GARDEN



Friendship

is the ideal we find exemplified in everything Colonel William and Dr. Frances Ratchford Corbett touched.

Respect and reverence for the earth is shown in the special home they built and the gardens that surround it. Sense of community led them to share their land, home and knowledge with Wilkes University. A garden "where people can plant things and watch them grow" is the legacy of friendship Frances left behind.

Wilkes University celebrates the Corbetts' example of friendship to nature, community and one another. Learning from these resources and sharing our own knowledge is the greatest tribute we can pay to their spirit of gen-

To volunteer, plan a visit or make a donation, contact:

CORBETT HOUSE
Donna Lennon

256-7604 - *call if questions about weather, rain date.*

RATCHFORD FIELD STATION
Dr. Sid Halsor
831-4611

FRANCES CORBETT FRIENDSHIP GARDEN
Stephanie Geyer
831-4772

or 822-0657 (home)



Mark Your Calendars--it's almost here!!!

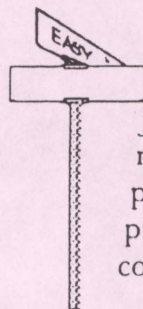


**Fall Family Day
at the Ratchford Field Station
and Corbett House**



You are cordially invited to Fall Family Day at the Ratchford Field Station and Corbett House on Saturday, September 7, between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Join other members of the faculty, staff, administration, friends and their families as you explore our off-campus facility that is used for a variety of educational and institutional functions. Tour the solar-heated Corbett House, stroll through the herb and flower gardens, enjoy a picnic barbecue at the pavilion (hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and soda will be provided), raft or take a canoe on the large pond, explore the woods, fields, and streams, or fly kites, throw horseshoes, play volleyball or badminton. Bring comfortable walking/playing shoes, sun protection, and a blanket or lawn chair should you want to relax or picnic outside the pavilion. Also, feel free to bring any additional food items you would like to share or grill. Note: Please call the University switchboard (831-5000 or 1-800-WILKES-U) if the weather looks questionable on the morning of September 7.

Directions: Heading south on Route 11 from Plymouth, turn right at the Hunlock Creek Post Office onto state road 4016. Stay on this road (always bear to the left at "Y" intersections along the way) for 5.5 miles where you will come to a four-way stop intersection (Muhlenberg Corners). Proceed straight through the intersection and follow the road for about a mile until you come to a fork in the road. This intersection is just past the Calvary Bible Chapel on your left and near a red and white silo. Turn right at this fork and follow the road about three-tenths of a mile to a designated parking area on your right. From here, it is a short walk to the Corbett House or picnic pavilion, just follow the signs. If you would like a map, or have any questions, contact Sid Halsor (831-4611, email: shalsor) or Donna Lennon (256-7604).



Corbett House & Ratchford Field Station

3 yrs. ago dinner w/ a friend - Wilber family member -
they feel
it is the best & best use for the property -
why

Mr. Corbett's father put property together of several
small farms -

Having apt to help Wilber train & educate
people to live as part of the land. not to
prey upon it.

about a grad faculty / students soil, water,
Rock samples

lectures, seminars, conferences -

to live comfortably w/o making great
demands on land

Dr. Flannery R. Corbett
marriage & family life Columbia
1 of the 1st people

1st master and 1st professional
diploma

— they grow their own vegetables —

started Fall 91-92 using field station

— Both of teachers enjoy being with students and experiencing the class —

— Sid Halzon - went around perimeter mapping of property —

1st master
1st prof. diploma

Consulting.

Ed. D. Mawry
family club
Columbia

highest & least use

Dr. Corbett's father assembled
prop. from local farms.

taken care of ob. to him,

- having agent to help W and programs
aimed at teaching gen. how to live as
part of env. rather than pry upon it.

Soil, water, plant, animal, studies

retreat, seminar center.

live comfortably w/o making
demands on environment.

not a tax write off.

present on way of life which we
hold dear

Fall 91 - began
classes on C. property.

- participate in classes

Both
teachers.

Corbett House

Ratchford Field Station

5,500 sq. feet.

app. 150 acres

D ^{Planned?}
V elox of original stories.
+ new stories
