

# 'Acropolis' means adventure for couple

By JACK HILSHER

In any Webster's Acropolis is "the high fortified part of an ancient Greek city"...so what's it doing in the Dallas Shopping Center?

"Very well, thank you," say the new proprietors of this Acropolis, a Back Mountain restaurant in transition. When the former owner Hercules Maniatis of Kingston chucked the food business to return to Athens several months ago, he sold out to Robert E. and Janie Clark of Haddonfield Hills.

After a short closing for redecorating and some menu adjustments, the Clarks reopened Acropolis and haven't paused to catch their breath since. While new to restaurant operating the Clarks are no strangers to food service. Both were food brokers for the same firm, in fact, Bob hired Janie. They married last year and decided that logging up to 40,000 miles per car per year was not their idea of the good life. They knew there was something better out there and they were determined to find it.

Janie Clark has been in the Back Mountain since 1976 but Bob Clark was new to the area. However he would make a good public relations man for the Back Mountain because, compared to what he had been used to in more metropolitan areas, he says, "People here are friendlier, more down-to-earth. This is a more relaxed way of life with far less hustling for a buck." So both Clarks agreed that if a change could be made, this must be the place. It could, it was, and they couldn't be happier.

After the sale was closed, Acropolis duties were split two ways: Bob took the kitchen because he is a skilled amateur cook and loves it. Both his grown sons also cook, so he probably ranks high as a teacher too. Janie took everything else, and couldn't wait to tackle the rather gloomy dining room. She said, "The first things to go were all those horse pictures." (Some will recall that the



NEW RESTAURANTEURS - Bob and Janie Clark have re-opened the Acropolis restaurant in the Dallas Shopping Center. Most, but not all, of the Greek menu has been replaced with fresh items.

White Horse Tavern once occupied that space.) Next she lightened and simplified the dining room decor, installed new carpeting throughout and modernized the bathrooms. It all began to look like it should.

Next casualty was the old menu. Since neither Clark was in favor of continuing a strictly "black olive and ouzo" look, only the most popular Greek dishes survived the first cut: roast leg of lamb, of course; Beef Lemonato, a casserole of beef cooked in lemon butter and white wine; and since there wouldn't be much Grecian without it, "Souvlaki," which to the uninitiated is shish kabob, complete with skewer and char.

New items added were fresh salmon, fresh sole, prime rib and steaks. (Regular trips to Philadelphia docks insure that fish items are fresh.) Specials are tested on a blackboard in the dining room and will be added to the regular menu if they prove popular.

Regulars will notice - and probably complain says Janie - about some specialties left off their menu, "Mousaka" for example. "Don't care," says Janie. "Let 'em grumble. Mousaka won't be back until it can be made with fresh egg plant, which means summer. We'll serve certain dishes only in their season when they are fresher and tastier, like sugar snap peas. These are only good for a limited time and that's the only time we'll have them."

In an unusually short time the Clarks are getting a feel for what customers like and want, and fully intend to satisfy them. A woman who professes to be a "spinach pie connoisseur" and has sampled that appetizer "all over the country" claims the Acropolis version to be the best.

Recently a couple came in on Saturday and had Bob Clark's Maryland crab cake. The place is closed Sundays and Mondays, so the couple came back on Tuesday for more crab cakes! Bob says, "Mine aren't frozen, aren't deep fat fried, and contain no filler material." (No wonder the couple returned.) A seven-year regular who always had roast lamb came in, had it again, and said, "I don't know - somehow it's better!" Some unusual lunch dishes are proving to be runaway sellers. There's a Turkey Reuben which Janie claims to be "as good as corned beef but with 80% less fat." A fresh roast turkey sandwich is made from turkey breasts cooked each morning, and of course, the Acropolis version of the famous "Philadelphia Cheese Steak," with genuine Philly steak rolls delivered regularly.

This last dish has become a favorite with neighbor Tommy Van Scoy, whose TOVON diamond business is next door. Van Scoy used to be a hamburger fanatic for lunch but the Clarks' Philly Cheese Steaks changed that in a hurry. On the other side, neighbor Tom

Quinn of "Ye Olde Clock & Gift Shoppe" says, "I have no special favorite.. I mix it up a little. But I'm hooked...sometimes I'm there for lunch three times a week." (Homemade desserts may also have some influence on the repeaters.

An unusual aspect of the new menu lies in the Clark food philosophy. Janie says, "We are both conscious of the importance of low fat, little salt, and calorie counting. I don't want to call ourselves 'health nuts' exactly, but we do believe in these things and I suppose some of this rubs off on customers. We once offered to get no-fat cheese and salad dressing for a customer and she was so grateful she now comes in regularly for the same dish. We'll accommodate anyone's wish or requirement."

It all seems to be coming together. Bob remarks, "Last Saturday almost three-quarters of our customers were new, so it had to be strictly word-of-mouth working. We do intend to advertise too."

In the revamped Acropolis dining room are Dee Scouton, Noxen; Wendy Sweppenheiser, Vernon; Janie Bushkar, Kingston Township; and Karen Wentzel, Dallas. In the kitchen are Mike Gusher and Chris King, both of Dallas.

In the food service business, if new ideas and enthusiasm add up to success, the Clarks have got it made!

# '84 Lake-Lehman class seeks missing mates

The Lake-Lehman High School Class of 1984 is seeking information on 11 class members for their upcoming 10 year reunion.

Anyone with information on the following individuals, contact Joan Skopic-Hunter at 610-821-9181 or Zina Traver-Sult at 477-3056.

Class members among the missing are Susan Bonsavage, Cathy Cordick, Maureen Follmer, Tom Ganis, Mike Havrilla, Alan MacDonald, J.D. Pallante, Karen Sennick, Sharon Sesin, Sherry

Titus and Ken Williams. The reunion will be held July 23, at Appletree Terrace, Newberry Estate. Cost for the evening is \$26 per person and includes dinner and music by the Great Rock Scare.

An informal get together will be held Friday, July 22 at Grotto Pizza.

Class members are also reminded to return their questionnaires to Hunter at 184 Shiloh Court, Whitehall, PA 18052.

## Spring cleanup schedules

Dallas Borough and Dallas and Kingston townships have set their annual cleanups for the week of May 16-21.

### DALLAS BOROUGH

Hours will be: Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Large appliances, including refrigerators from which freon has been removed, can be dropped off at the Borough Building for a \$10 fee or arrangements can be made for pickup for \$15 by calling 675-1389.

Tires removed from rims will be accepted for \$2 each. The following items will not be accepted: paint in cans, car batteries, contractor's debris, refrigerators with unreleased freon, yard waste, garbage or toxic or hazardous waste.

### DALLAS TOWNSHIP

Hours: 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday at the rear of Dallas Township Municipal Building. Proof of residency is required at time of drop off.

There will be a service charge for large items. Tires: only 2 per household.

The following items will not be accepted: hazardous wastes, chemicals, garden waste, animal or human waste, building materials, garbage, newspapers, or recyclables.

### KINGSTON TOWNSHIP

Hours: Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m.-7 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Center Street Maintenance Building, 225 East Center Street, Shavertown.

Proof of residency is required. Residents with pick-up trucks must have an admission coupon for entry to the clean-up site. Vehicles larger than a full size one-ton pick-up truck will require a \$75 fee.

Coupons are available at the Kingston Township Municipal Building, 11 Carverton Road, Trucksville, PA 18708-Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

No large appliances, yard waste, construction debris, paint, household chemicals, hazardous materials, garbage or recyclables will be accepted. Tires are limited to two per family.

## Lake Twp. recycling center open May 14

The voluntary recycling drop-off center for Lake Township will be accepting recyclables on Saturday, May 14 from 10-12 noon at the township building. The following items may be dropped off: Aluminum and Bi-metal cans, clear, brown and green glass, Plastic #1 and #2 only. No motor oil containers can be accepted.

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