

# There's Something Fishy Off Broadway

ILEANA FERRERAS  
The Bronx Staff Reporter

There is something fishy about the way Corlear Avenue, in the Kingsbridge area of Northwest Bronx, got its name. Neighborhood residents had mixed feelings and interesting comments when asked if they were aware of this bit of trivia.

According to the Bronx historian John McNamara, Corlear Avenue, originally called Water Street and later Ackerman Street, is named after Anthony Van Corlear, who was made responsible for obtaining reinforcements from the mainland by Governor Peter Stuyvesant himself, when the British fleet attacked New Amsterdam.

Officially, Corlear was drowned in the Spuyten Duyvil Creek, now known as the Harlem River Ship Canal, which is at the foot of the avenue that now bears his name, but, according to McNamara, a legend recounted by Washington Irving, states he was actually "pulled under by a giant mossbunker."

This fish, also known as menhaden, has a deep body, sharp-edged belly, large head and tooth-edged scales. Adult fish only grow to about 15 inches, inspiring laughter and disbelief from Corlear residents.

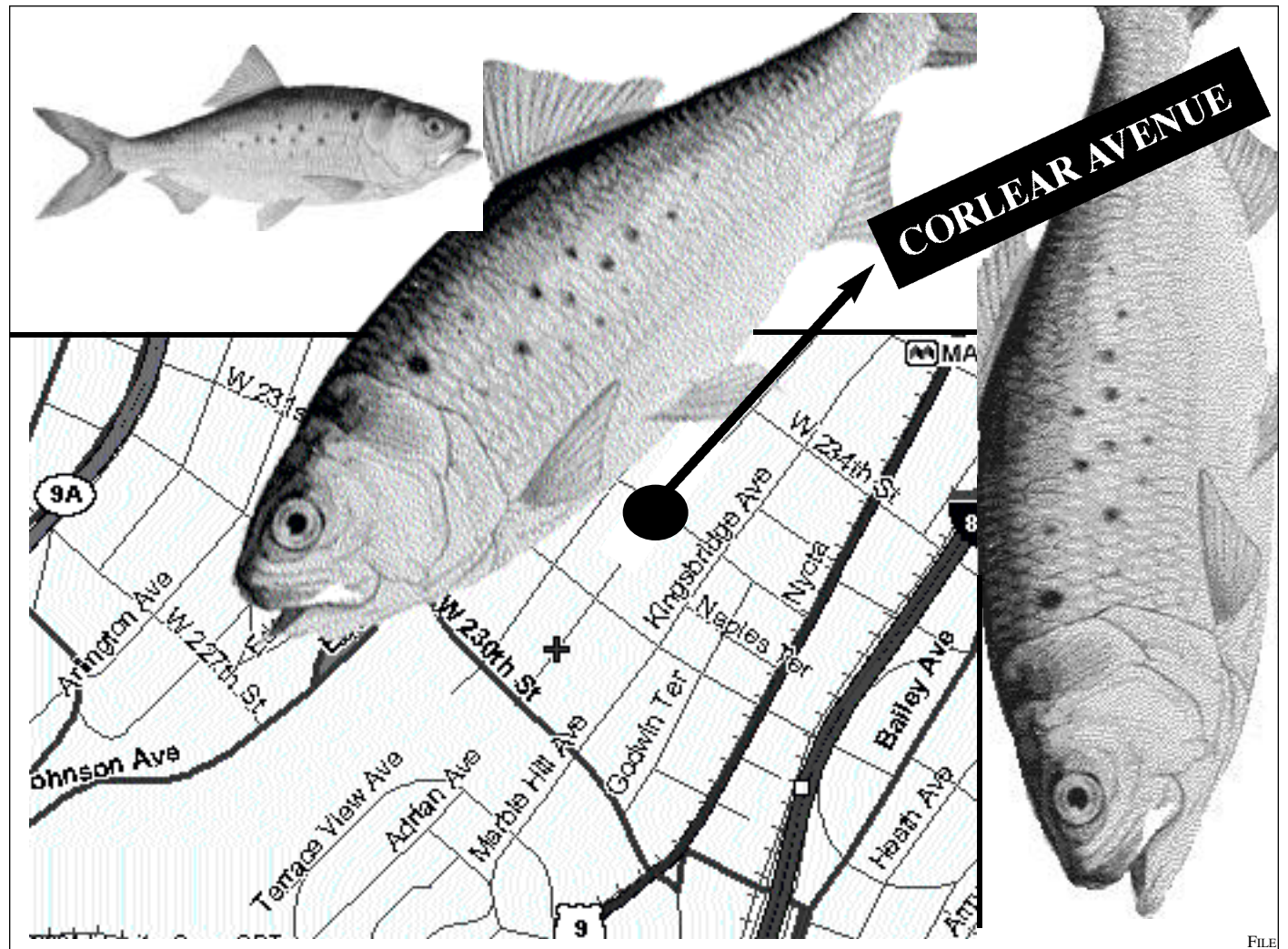
"That's the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard in my life," said 29-year-old Rob Rivera, director of promotions for New York City nightclubs Limelight and Tunnel, who was in the neighborhood visiting family. "If he got pulled under by a giant fish, he deserved to die. Unless the fish was a shark, there is no reason to be pulled under."

Rivera said the neighborhood is family oriented, with children commonly seen playing on the street. Additionally, the bluebirds, sparrows and doves he feeds when he visits the area once a week make him forget that Corlear Avenue is in New York City. Rivera also said it was hard to imagine anything unusual happening on an avenue that he says is "Almost like a throw back to the fifties."

Evelyn McManus, who has lived in her house since it was built on Corlear in 1942, said she remembers ice skating in Van Cortlandt Park as a teenager when Corlear Avenue was just a series of empty lots and about a dozen houses. When asked if she knew of the legend linked with Corlear's death, the 88-year-old retiree said, "I heard a rumor ... there were rumors about it but most people shook it off, it was a different time."

She recalled the day she and her husband talked to the realtor about purchasing their home. "We didn't have two quarters to rub together... but the guy said we could make a deal and we did! I have been here ever since and I love it." She said the area's name would not have kept anyone from wanting to buy property since people in those days were thankful to have a roof over their heads.

With the exception of the Manhattan College Engineering School, Public School 7, Kingsbridge Israel Center, the Veterans of Foreign War Hall and a public library, Corlear is almost a completely residential



street, which stretches from 230th St. to 242nd St. at the beginning of Gaelic Park. With its two-story row houses and electric and telephone lines, the avenue looks out of place when compared to the five- and six-story buildings, noise and commercial feel of Broadway, just one block over. Many residents all agreed that Corlear Avenue is peaceful and a very safe place to live.

Safety is an issue for Lauren Ippoliti, a 28-year-old housewife and mother of two, who moved back to the Kingsbridge neighborhood from Westchester in order to have the peace of the suburbs while enjoying the convenience and culture which come with proximity to the city.

When Ippoliti was told of the way in which Corlear lost his life and the legend surrounding it, she chuckled and said, "This ought to be called Mossbunker Avenue; people usually name streets after heroes, not suckers."

How the area got its name doesn't really matter to Ippoliti as long as she and her family can enjoy the calm of an area that looks like a small town. She recalled giving her husband (who was her boyfriend at the time) directions to Corlear a few years ago. She said he came off the Major Deegan Expressway, made the designated turn and said, "Wow, houses, out of nowhere." The statement captures the very essence of this avenue, which is a mini-suburb within a city.

Although each of the people interviewed reacted differently to the legend, they all agreed it was quite silly. Perhaps, in the future, they will pass by the Harlem River Ship Canal and remember Anthony Van Corlear, but the likelihood is that they will think of that mossbunker. Wouldn't you?

## BRONX SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (Operated by Lehman College)

### WORKSHOP SCHEDULE FOR MARCH 2001

Date	Topic & Description	Time
March 07	<b>HOW TO START A SUCCESSFUL SMALL BUSINESS</b> Learn the basics to establish and manage a successful small business	10:00 am 12:00 noon
March 14	<b>HOW TO PLAN, PREPARE A BUSINESS PLAN PART I</b>	10:00 am 12:00 noon
March 16	<b>HOW TO PLAN, PREPARE A BUSINESS PLAN PART II</b> Obtain the useful tools for running your business or raising capital	10:00 am 12:00 noon
March 21	<b>LEARN HOW TO MARKET YOUR SMALL BUSINESS</b> Learn how to develop a marketing plan strategy	10:00 am 12:00 noon
March 28	<b>LEARN HOW TO FINANCE YOUR SMALL BUSINESS</b> Learn the criteria used by banks to evaluate a small business loan package	10:00 am 12:00 noon

Workshops are held at Lehman College  
**OLD GYM BUILDING, ROOM 108-B**  
250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468  
**SEATING IS LIMITED**  
**CALL TO REGISTER (718) 960 - 8806**