

HGS Board of Trustees Elects Officers

At the Annual Members' Meeting of February 15th, Dr. Oscar Johannsen was elected President of the Board of Trustees of the Henry George School. Irving Starer was elected 1st Vice President. Fryda Ossias was re-elected as 2nd Vice President. Constance Weinstein was re-elected as Secretary and as Treasurer. The Board expressed appreciation to outgoing President Edward Dodson, who did not stand for re-election for President, and for Stanley Rubenstein, who did not stand for re-election to the Board.

Georgist Gild Set for Second Arden Century

HGS-NY Assistant Director Lindy Davies traveled to "Delaware's Single Tax Town" on January 20th to address a dinner sponsored by Arden's Georgist Gild. After a tasty vegetarian meal cooked by the Georgists, some fifty people stayed on — with enthusiasm, if perhaps some incredulity — to hear how "The Single Tax is Just Around the Corner." At every level of government, he said, developments are taking place that compel people to search for new ways to raise public revenue without killing economic incentives, social cohesion or environmental quality. Soon governments will realize that lasting progress is impossible without the public collection of land rent. Until then, Georgist educators must spread a clear understanding of the dimensions of the land question.

The message resonated strongly among the Gild's members. Arden was founded in 1898, as a demonstration of Georgist principles, and it still raises all its local tax revenue by collecting land rent without any levy on improvements. But, Arden has not had any local Georgist organization for many years, and the residents had become indifferent to the principles upon which the town was founded. "Everyone who wanted to hear about it had heard about it," said Arden Georgist (and Philadelphia HGS Director) Mike Curtis. "But eventually some new, young people came in, attracted by Arden's history and its charm — and they wondered how it came to be that way."

Mike reminds us that Arden's public revenue policy is not 100% Georgist these

days, and it is a constant struggle to remind the town's elected Board of Assessors of their mission to assess the full rental value of Arden's land. Nevertheless, land use in Arden (and in its latter-day spinoffs, Ardentown and Ardencroft), is very different from the



Arden's Gild Hall

surrounding Wilmington suburbs. As in many cities, almost a third of the land acreage is held out of use — but in Arden, it is not held at the whim of speculators but for the whole community's enjoyment. A village green, nature trails and open-air theatre help to create the unique ambiance of the village.

The Arden Club, which was founded at the turn of the century to facilitate social life among the town's diverse population of artisans, bon vivants and social reformers, is the umbrella organization for all the Gilds, or interest groups, that still bring Arden residents together. Unlike most of the Gilds, however, the Arden Georgist Gild is concerned with social problems as well as socializing. New *Progress and Poverty* classes are being organized by alumni of the '94 class, and membership in the Gild is growing.

George Collins Appears on TV Panel

Our Director was invited to participate in a live panel on tax reform that was broadcast over Newstalk Cable TV on January 11th. The other panelists were Roland Fink of Citizens for an Alternative Tax System (advocating a national sales tax), Irwin Schiff, author of *The Federal Mafia*, who claims that the income tax is unconstitutional and Americans need not pay it (but who has

done time for tax evasion) and Mary McGuire of the National Association of Enrolled Agents, who favors reform of our current system. Discussion was lively and opinionated. Mr. Collins did his best to remind his fellow reformers of the classical Canons of Taxation, and to suggest to them a reform that, unlike what they were proposing, conformed to those old rules for a sensible tax.