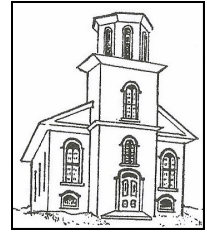


PRESERVE THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE



# CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March 2017

## **LEARN ALL ABOUT CLINTON IN THE MID-1800S**

On Sunday, March 12 the Clinton Historical Society will present a look back at Clinton in the mid-1800s...1850s to 1870s. In words and pictures old buildings and prominent people of that era will be featured. Population data and technological changes from that period will be shown.

To present this information Society President Wade Lallier and Society Editor and Historian Richard Williams have put together a PowerPoint program which should delight and inform all viewers, young and old, at the same time.

It's at 2 PM at the Society. Refreshments will follow in the restored 1832 Baptist Church at One Fountain Street, Clinton.

## **HELP WANTED AD**

The Society Board of Directors is advertising for a part-time administrator to handle the administrative chores and provide support to all the volunteers and the officers.

Administrator (part-time) wanted by the **Clinton Historical Society**; computer skills required, \$15.00 per hour; send resume to [clintonhistorical-society1@gmail.com](mailto:clintonhistorical-society1@gmail.com) or P.O. Box 42, Clinton, NY 13323; deadline March 15, 2017.

Interested Society members are encouraged to apply by 3/15/17.

Clinton Historical Society

Founded in 1962

### **DIRECTORS**

Mary Benson Byrd– secretary

Ruth Cosgrove

John Crossley

Barbara Decker

Joseph Ellis

Eric Genalo

Rbert G. Goering

Lisa Firsching– treasurer

Susan Goodier

Wade Lallier-president

Barbara Owens

### **Web Site**

[www.clintonhistory.org](http://www.clintonhistory.org)

### **Facebook**

Clinton Historical Society  
(Original)



### **E-Mail Address**

[clintonhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com](mailto:clintonhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com)

### **Phone**

315-859-1392

### **Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 42

Clinton, New York 13323

### **OPEN HOURS**

Wednesday 1-4; Saturday 1-3

### **Editor**

**Richard Williams**

**DUES-** \$12.00 individual, 1 year; \$30.00. 3 years; families/businesses, \$17.00 1 year, \$45.00 3 years; \$25.00 friend; \$50.00 contributing

## **DISPLAY QUIZ**

How well do you know former everyday items? A display case at the society has six “what’s it’s” and YOU can guess what they are. The prize will be a book from the gift shop and a year’s membership.

So, stop in to look over the items and enter your guesses. Curators Rose Raymond and Eunice Zoeckler enjoyed putting this display together and hope all have fun guessing. Deadline is **March 31, 2017**.

## **NEW COMPUTER UPGRADE**

Turning Point Computers on Commercial Drive has installed a new server and other components to provide an updated system for the volunteers to use.

Now three terminals are available for volunteers and visitors.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA REVISED**

The Society web site, [www.clintonhistory.org](http://www.clintonhistory.org), has lapsed a bit with outdated items. This will be addressed soon and kept up-to-date.

Similarly, postings on the Society’s FACEBOOK page will be made more regularly with current events and items.

## **LOWER LEVEL REARRANGEMENTS**

President Wade Lallier wants to increase the exhibit space on the lower level which will mean cleaning out the artifact storage room, and possibly removing the partition. Contact Wade if you can help paint and renovate that space.

Clinton was settled in March 1787; the town of Kirkland was formed April 13, 1827, and the village of Clinton was incorporated April 12, 1843.

## CANAL HISTORY

While Clinton history includes the Chenango Canal between 1836 and 1878, the ERIE CANAL really began the canal era in the nation.

The Erie Canal began construction on July 4, 1817 in Rome on a site now occupied by the Worthington Industries .

On May 19-21, 2017, this spring, the Oneida County History Council in partnership with the Canal Society of New York will conduct this three-day conference.

On Friday May 19 the sessions will be at the Oneida County History Center at 1608 Genesee Street when six speakers with canal expertise will present.

The next day a bus trip of significant canal sites in both Utica and Rome will take place, and on Sunday, May 21 the conference will end with a two-hour boat ride on the Erie Canal from Herkimer.

Details will follow.



CELEBRATING 200 YEARS  
OF THE ERIE CANAL

# Save the Date

The Oneida County History Council presents

## 200 ERIE CANAL *Bicentennial Conference*

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, May 19-21, 2017

A 3-day event in Rome and Utica, NY celebrating 200 years of an engineering marvel.

**Friday:** Speakers present a variety of canal topics at the Oneida County History Center in Utica from 9:00am - 4:00pm with an optional dinner in the evening at Aqua Vino at 5:00pm

**Saturday:** A bus tour hosted by the Canal Society of New York will take you to prominent historic sites that helped shape the canal from Utica to Rome

**Sunday:** Head out on the canal with an Erie Canal Boat tour leaving from Herkimer, NY

Attend all three days, or choose your favorite event. Great for history lovers, educators and students.

Speaker information, detailed schedules and registration coming soon on [www.eriecanal200.com](http://www.eriecanal200.com)

Erie Canal Bicentennial Conference is on:  and 





## END OF TRAIN ERA 60 YEARS AGO

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To most current Clinton residents trains to Clinton are unheard of. If one is over 60 a faint memory of the trains through the village may still exist.

The train era took the country by storm in the 1830s and 1840s, and every town wanted to have a railroad. Previously every town wanted a canal. For the obvious reasons of faster, safer, and smoother passenger travel and moving freight in all seasons trains won the day.

The train era here extended from September 3, 1866 to **March 29, 1957** and will be summarized here to begin this series on local trains.

The Town of Kirkland at one time had the iron rails of five railroad firms: NYO&W RR, Rome and Clinton RR, New York, West Shore, and Buffalo RR, trolley to Utica (Utica Belt Line) , and the Third Rail trolley.

Local historian Phil Munson wrote in the 1970s, "Railroad fever was rampant, It permeated city and hamlet alike. Unusual was the settlement that didn't desire a rail connection, each, so it seems in retrospect, confident that their specific location was ideally suited to become, if not the hub, at least a significant and lucrative link in any railway venture that might come their way."

Rails reached Utica in the 1835-6 period, and the need for coal for Utica textile mills caused demand for rail connections directly south to the Pennsylvania coal fields. Coal was also needed by iron blast furnaces in Franklin Iron Works, now Franklin Springs, and in Kirkland.

Horse trolleys began in Utica in the 1860s . A horse trolley line eventually was built to New Hartford. There passengers and freight had to be transferred and carried to the steam train to Clinton which began in 1866. Three years later in 1869 an agreement was worked out for a steam train from downtown Utica right to Clinton.

For unknown reasons the engine was called the "dummy." The *Clinton Courier* in September 1866 said the "awful dummy is in town. Eyes and ears were open. There was a longer and louder toot. A grand rush of boys and dogs followed. It was the dummy. Hats off Three cheers. The dummy was a beautiful car with capacity for 40 passengers besides baggage and cost \$6000.00. " Why a steam train was called a dummy is unclear.

Othniel S. Williams, prominent Clinton judge, attorney, businessman, investor, who had built the Alexander Hamilton Inn for his private home in the 1830 period, became president of the Utica, Clinton, and Binghamton RR which extended the rails slowly with gangs of French Canadian laborers to Randallsville (then Smith Valley) south of Hamilton.

*At right is an NY O & W diesel engine dating from the early 1950s pulling some freight cars.*

