

PRESERVE THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

CLINTON HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER



October
2011

***BOB WICKS' WORLD WAR II
BOMBARDIER STORY***

Some will recall Bob Wicks who ran the Clinton Bowling Center from just after World War II into the 1980s. He had been in the Army Air Corps and flew B-24's over Europe during World War II.

The extraordinary, true story of 1st Lt. Robert W. Wicks will be presented by his son David E. Wicks. Lt. Wicks was a B-24 Liberator bombardier, 15th Air Force, Italy, who was shot down on his 24th combat mission. He was saved by a Slovak family who hid him on their farm for almost five months, exposing themselves to being shot by the Nazis. David traveled to Slovakia in 2004 and spent ten days with the Slovak family who helped his father survive the war.

Join us at 2 PM Sunday, October 23 for "Bombs Away"story of Bob Wicks in World War II. Refreshments will follow.

Viet Nam War Vets' Names Wanted

Names of those Kirkland and Clinton veterans who served during the Viet Nam War are sought by the Clinton Historical Society for the annual Veterans' Day ceremony November 11, 2011. This year Viet Nam vets will be recognized for their service to our country.

Send names, rank, and service to P.O. Box 42, Clinton, NY 13323 or to the Society's web site clintonhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.

The Society depends upon the generosity of its members. Please help us "preserve the past for the future" by remembering CHS in your will and estate planning. Thank you!

Clinton Historical Society
Founded in 1962

Clinton Historical Society Newsletter

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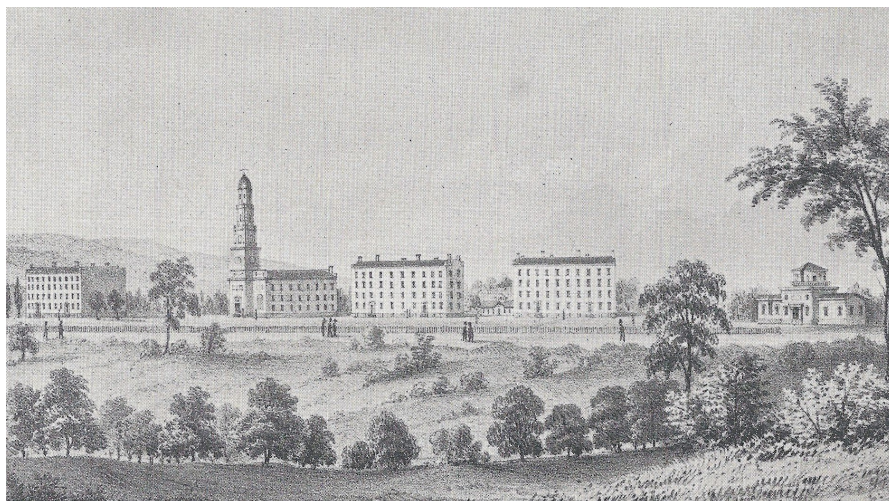
P.O. Box 42
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OPEN HOURS

Wednesday 1-3; Saturday
11-2; and 1st Wednesday
6-8

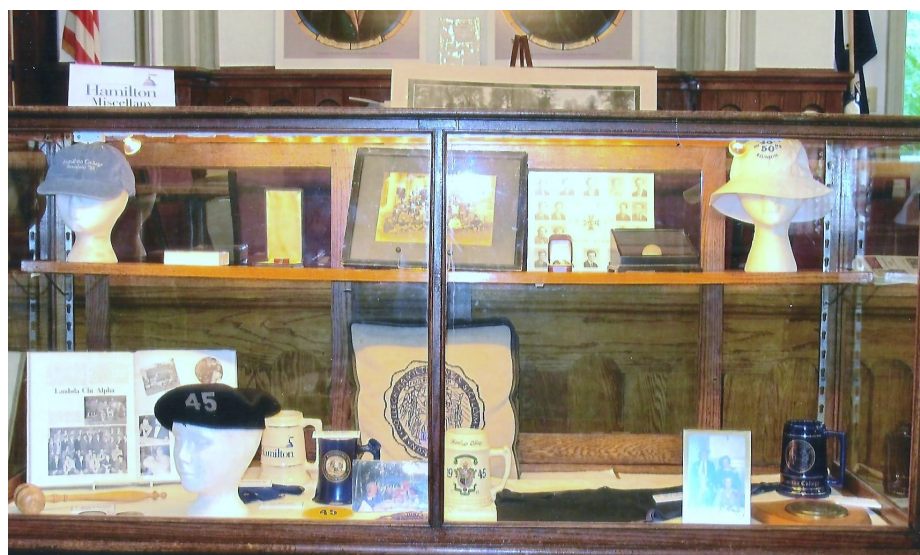
Editor

Richard Williams



HAMILTON COLLEGE ca. 1870s

From left: South College— 1814, Chapel— 1827, Middle (Kirkland, Soper Gym) 1821 -1890, North College-1824 and Litchfield Observatory; these buildings were detailed in Steve Bellona's talk September 25 to kick-off the Society's Hamilton College bi-centennial exhibit which will stay open through November 27, 2011 during regular hours. Below is one of the display cases full of Hamilton items such as a pillow, hats from reunions, Kirkland College ring, mugs, etc.



CIVIL WAR BOOK DISCUSSION

The Kirkland Town Library in partnership with the Society has won a grant to hold book discussions about the Civil War. Interested folks will meet on Wednesdays ,November 16, 2011 through March 14, 2012. at the Library. This is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the A L. A.

ONEIDA COUNTY IN 1963 OR HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED!

The January 1963 issue of *New York State Town and County Government* carried an article by Howard McDonald about our county. Here are some selected paragraphs which indicate significant change in 48 years.

The year 1963 will be particularly important and significant in this county's future. It will be the first under a new charter which provides for an elected executive-type government. This year's county budget totals \$22 million and requires a direct tax levy of more than \$8 million .

The county is home to the largest single employer in the Mohawk Valley- Griffiss Air Force Base, a multi-million dollar military establishment in Rome which employs some 8,200 civilians. The base activated in 1942. Tenants include SAC, Rome Air Material Area (ROAMA), Rome Air Development Center (RADC), a key A.F. research installation, and the 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadron of the Eastern Air Defense Command plus numerous support groups. Bombers and fighters are in the air daily.

The City of Utica, once a leader in the knit goods industry, gained national attention with its economic comeback following the exit of most of the textile plants to cheaper labor in the south. A principal factor was the movement to the city of two General Electric departments which employ 7,300 making GE the second largest employers after Griffiss AFB.

Other leading firms in Utica include Bendix, Kelsey-Hayes, Chicago Pneumatic, Sperry-Rand, Oneida Electronics, Special Metals, Mohawk Communications, Horrocks-Ibbotson, International Heater, Hart & Crouse. Rockwell Standard, and Mele Manufacturing.

In Rome in 1963 the "Copper City" had more than 30 firms turning out brass and copper mill products, bare and insulated wire and cable, copper-clad stainless steel cooking utensils, road graders, strip steel and flat wire, iron and steel fabricating, radiation and refrigeration equipment, machine tools, electrical insulating and sleeve tubing, and sporting goods.

2,550 farms include 1,800 dairy farms producing \$18 million worth of milk and cream each year. Some 70 farms devote 9,000 acres to snap beans, and hundreds of migrant workers come each summer to harvest the crops.

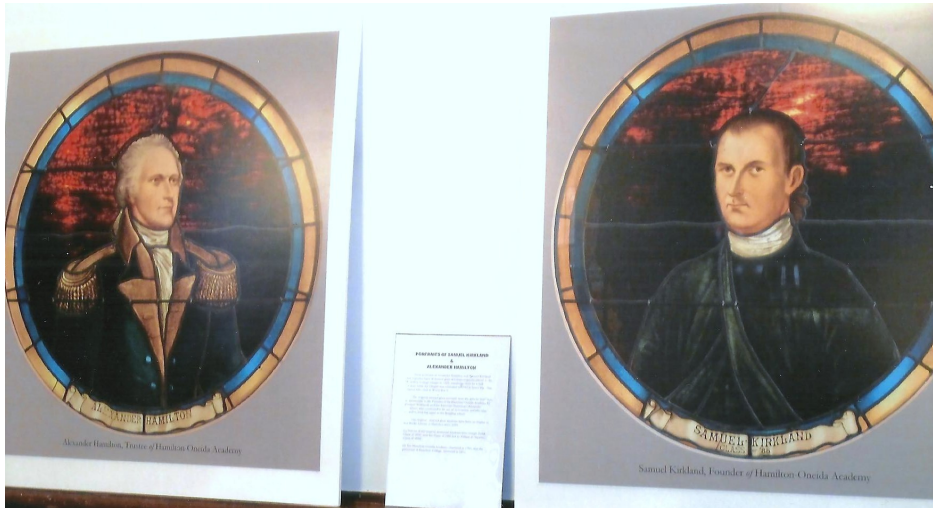
Oneida County is home to Mohawk Airlines with 38 flights daily, 1,500 employees, and an annual payroll of \$6 million. The City of Utica opened a 6,500 seat auditorium in 1960 at a cost of \$4.5 million which holds wrestling, hockey, basketball, boxing, and other events such as circuses and concerts.

Rome is located on the site of historic Ft. Stanwix which the British besieged in August 1777. Col. Gansevoort withstood the siege, and the colonists fought bravely at Oriskany causing the British to retreat.

Editor's note- *contrast the above with the County's current economic situation. Griffiss is gone as are GE, Bendix, Chicago-Pneumatic, Horrocks-Ibbotson, etc. Now medical and educational jobs plus positions at a local gambling casino are major employers as the above industries have left the area.*

HAMILTON COLLEGE BICENTENNIAL EVENT OCTOBER 27TH

One event in the celebration of Hamilton's 200th anniversary will take place at the Clinton Central School Performing Arts Theatre on Thursday evening, October 27 starting at 7:30. Clinton students from grades 7 and 8 plus high school history and government classes are involved as are Hamilton students and faculty.. Topics presented will be correspondence between Samuel Kirkland, Phillip Schuyler and the Six Iroquois Indians, a Hamilton-Jefferson debate, Hamilton vs. George Clinton, and a Hamilton-Madison debate.



Clinton teachers Andy Bankert, James Davis, and Mike Zogby plus Hamilton faculty Doug Ambrose, Carole Bellini-Sharp, James Bradfield, Rob Martin, and John O'Neal are advising and acting as consultants. Plan on viewing this replication performance of important economic and governmental issues then and now. Free admission.

Shown at left are the pictures of Hamilton and Kirkland which are on permanent display

at the Burke Library on campus but reproductions of the two pictures are at the Society for the College's bicentennial exhibit. An explanation is located between them.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER OCTOBER 2011

I hope you all enjoyed the beautiful Columbus Day weekend. This month we have a variety of interesting displays and historical events planned for you. "Bombs Away! A WWII Bombardier's Story" by David Wicks is the featured program for October 23rd at 2:00 P.M.

Dick Williams' "Celebrating Hamilton at 200" is still on display this month. It is an excellent display of Hamilton College history. Evelyn Edwards has a well-designed and fascinating display of early Hamilton College postcards that supplements Dick Williams' display.

I would like to thank Bonnie Hyde of the Schooltown Questers for her beautiful display for the month of September. This month Peggy Jury's "Hall's Autumn Leaf Collection" is on display for the Questers.

Anyone with Civil War artifacts or memorabilia they would like to loan the society for our upcoming Civil War displays contact Faye Cittadino at historybuff65@hotmail.com.

We are in the process of planning for the next year and would appreciate your ideas on the direction the society should take. Please feel free to contact us with your ideas!

We are also looking for individuals that would like to work on one or more of our committees. The committees are: Nominating, Building, Collections Communications and Public Relations, Finance and Investments, Hospitality, Membership, Publications, and Programs. Stop by or call the society at 859-1392 or myself at 725-4830 if you are interested.

Just a reminder this holiday season, the gift of membership to the society or any of our history books will always be cherished and remembered.