

PRESERVE THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



September
2011

HAMILTON COLLEGE CAMPUS OPENS THE SOCIETY'S 50TH YEAR

Hamilton College and the Society both celebrate anniversaries in 2011-12. Kicking off the commemoration for Hamilton's bicentennial will be a program at 2 PM on Sunday, September 25, 2011 by Hamilton's Associate Vice President for Facilities and Planning Steve Bellona. He served with and retired from the Coast Guard after graduating from the Coast Guard Academy and holds a master of science degree from the University of Illinois. His program is entitled "Hamilton College Land Development- 1812 to Present."



In conjunction with the College's 200 years the Society will open immediately following Bellona's talk the exhibit "Celebrating Hamilton at 200" with pictures, maps, artifacts, and other memorabilia. This exhibit will run through the Christmas (Shoppers' Stroll). **Members and the public may preview the exhibit Friday 9/23 and Saturday 9/24 between 11 and 4 PM.**

Plan to join us for this special program and opening. Refreshments will follow at the Society on 1 Fountain Street.

HISTORY CAMP 2011



Another successful History Camp for kids took place August 1-5. Participants are shown at left: front row- *Nicholas Gale, Luke Chesebro, Anica Shepherd, Gabriel Josyula, and Nathan Gale.* Back row- *Mrs. Faye Cittadino, Gabrielle Dewhurst, Katie Schlosser, LeeAnn Chesebro, Samantha Gaffney, Emmeline MacPherson, Charlie Bonham, Erick Smith, and Frank Cittadino.*

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OPEN HOURS

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

Editor

Richard Williams

CORRECTION FROM JULY NEWSLETTER

The caption on page three of the July Newsletter should read the Smyth/Sherman/Schaffer home at 19 Chestnut Street.

DUES ARE DUE AGAIN

Dues notices went out with the March 2011 Newsletter, but several members have not yet renewed. Please check your envelope label to see the date to which your dues are paid. If circled in RED, please remit \$10.00 individuals, \$15.00 households/business; \$25.00 Friends, and \$50.00 contributing members or your membership will be suspended.

DUES 48 YEARS AGO

All know that prices have gone up, and that's true of Society dues. Still a bargain however!!!

In the October 1963 CHS Newsletter dues was listed as \$2.00 for individuals, \$3.00 for married couples, \$10.00 for contributing members.

Also in that Newsletter the topic for the October meeting was *The Chenango Canal, and the Horns in the Distance*.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

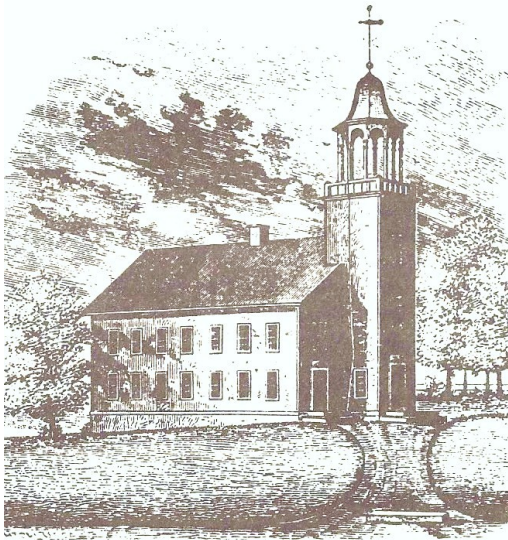
I hope everyone had a great summer!

To celebrate our 50th we have put together a varied and interesting group of programs this year. If you or someone you know would like to help the society plan and implement these programs please let us know by contacting the Society at 859-1392.

We are in the process of planning for the next 50 years 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. Stop by or call me at 725-4830 if you are interested.

Together we can celebrate the past 50 years and plan for the next 50 and you have the possibility to participate in both!

Paul



OLD WHITE MEETING-HOUSE.

OLD WHITE MEETING HOUSE

Situated in the park between 1798 and 1836 was the Old White Meeting House, the second building to house Clinton's first church, the Society of Clinton, now the Stone Presbyterian Church. A recently-found description from the 1930's of the interior bears reprinting:

"The exterior was of painted white clapboards, with pale green doors and large wrought iron hinges and latches. From the square tower top hung a lightning rod, and in the belfry a bell, cast in Clinton by Timothy Barnes, tolled the time of day.

Entering the church one might have seen three uncarpeted aisles leading to a pulpit which was built according to New England custom, quite lofty, hung with crimson drapes, with a frame of wood and tracery (interlaced and branching lines).

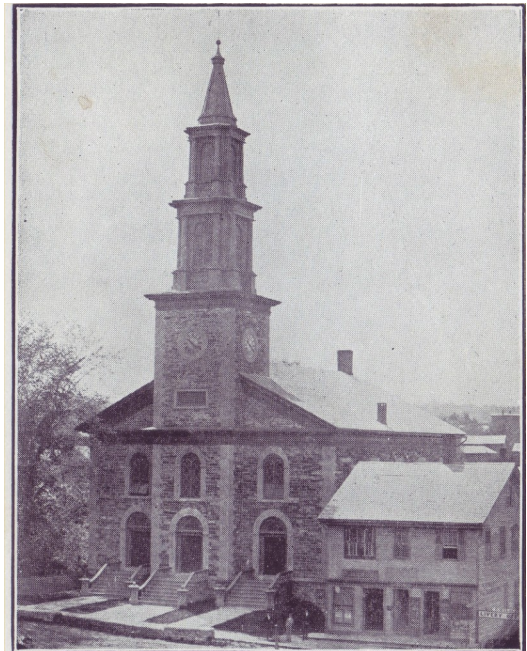
In the rear were large windows shaded by Venetian blinds, and pillars supported the gallery and ceiling.

The pews were square sections holding eight to twelve persons so that the capacity of the meeting house was about 500 people. At least half of the congregation must have sat with their backs to the minister because the seats were built facing each other. Although the pews were unpainted inside and blue on the exterior, after the pews were sold, the owners could do anything they pleased with the interior. The highest price paid for a pew was \$3.97, and that was for the pew Peleg Havens bought.

In the winter during the first years no stove existed in the church because people believed that warmth of their souls should keep their bodies comfortable. However, a few ladies were allowed to have foot stoves, and at first some people brought their dogs, but that caused too much commotion.

In 1836 because of decaying parts, the Old White Meeting House was torn down and services were begun in the new stone church on South Park Row. The lightning rod, gilt ball, weathercock, star and bell were transferred to the new church."

Note— the date of the fire is wrong on this picture; it was 1876.



THE OLD STONE CHURCH.

Erected by The Society of Clinton in the years 1835 and 1836, at a cost of about \$8000. Burned in the summer of 1875

PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN CLINTON 19TH CENTURY

For most of the 19th century private schools dominated the Clinton/Kirkland educational scene. Some of these institutions lasted a few years and were held in the operator's homes while others built buildings for school use. Some of these structures survive today, but most have burned or have been torn down and replaced with more modern structures.

With few State requirements almost anyone could open a school then. Of course, others did apply and received New York State Regents charters to operate. State funds often were granted for books and other expenses of private schools.

When public secondary schools appeared on the scene in the 1890s, private schools began to fade away. By 1924 all were out of business here except some more recent nursery schools.

The book *A Century of Schools in Clinton* by Helen Neilson Rudd in 1964 is recommended for more details and a list of principals and teachers.

Among the longer-lasting schools were Clinton Grammar School, Royce's Seminary, Home Cottage Seminary, Cottage Seminary, Clinton Preparatory School, Huntington Hall, Kirkland Hall, Dwight's Rural High School.

The Male Division of the Clinton Liberal Institute is shown at right. It stood at Utica and Mulberry streets between 1832 and about 1903 when the stone was used to build Carnegie Dormitory at Hamilton College.



HAMILTON'S COORDINATE COLLEGE



For a brief ten years all-male Hamilton coexisted somewhat tensely with the new all-female Kirkland College across the street. Kirkland failed to gain sufficient funding so Hamilton decided to end supporting and subsidizing it. Kirkland merged into Hamilton, now coed, in 1978. Hamilton is currently thriving with many new buildings, increasing tuition, and growing endowments.