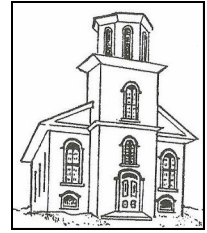


PRESERVE THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE



CLINTON HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

October 2015

“FARMIN’ IT IN ONEIDA COUNTY”

Relive the “good ole days” of rural Kirkland life by attending the Society’s October 11, 2015 program starting at 2 PM.

Washington Mills native Janice Trimbe Reilly grew up on a farm there and will tell about old farming methods, canneries, creameries, and Century Farm awards. She’ll also discuss the Lincoln Davies enterprise in Paris Station, the Batchelor Seed Company, and the Eureka firm. Also the recent development of smaller specialized farms serving a particular farm product will be covered.

Janice has been involved in writing eight books on local history with emphasis on farms and farming. She belongs to our Society as well as the Paris and New Hartford societies where she has written farm books.

Janice serves on the board of the Oneida County Historical Society where she was named “Volunteer of the Year” recently.

Great refreshments, as usual, will follow the meeting . Join us.



REMEMBER

Last winter?
Here’s the park gazebo, Giovanni’s Pizza, KAC, and Across the Row Bistro on a brilliant February 2015 day.

Clinton Historical Society

Founded in 1962

DIRECTORS

Mary Benson Byrd– secretary

Ruth Cosgrove-vice president

John Crossley

Barbara Decker

Eric Genalo

Robert Goering

Susan Goodier

Lisa Firsching– treasurer

Fran Lallier

Barbara Owens–

Jerry Semchenko– president

Pat Smith

Robert Tegart– Coordinator

Richard Williams– Editor

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(Original)



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OPEN HOURS

Saturday & Wednesday 1-4 or by appointment

DUES- \$10.00 individual, \$15.00 families/businesses, \$25.00 friend, \$50.00 contributing

FALL EVENTS AT CHS

While an all-volunteer society, CHS is very busy and has these events in October:

October 5– board of directors meeting

October 11– Janice Reilly's farm program; see page 1

October 12– Clinton History Walk with Kirkland Town Library between 10 AM to 2 PM at 1 Fountain

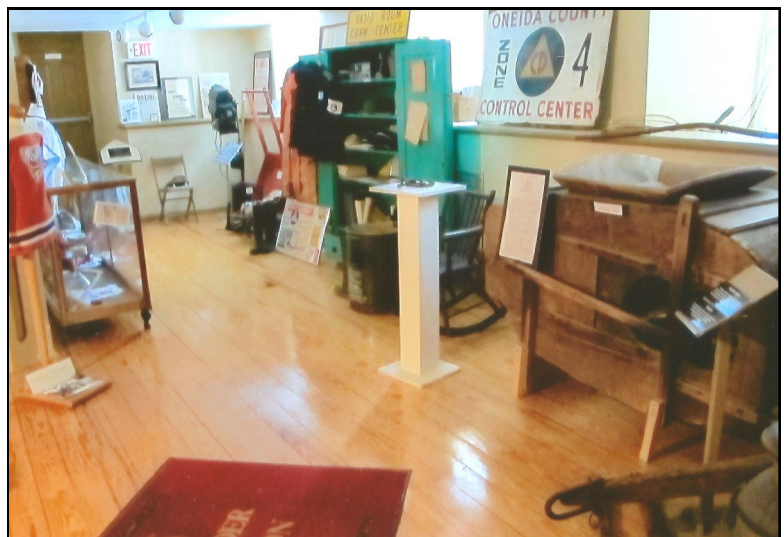
October 17– History and Scouting at Ft. Stanwix 11 AM to 3 PM

October 24– Genealogy Class at Kirkland Town Library 1 PM; presentations by Dick Williams, Yvonne Brady, and Bob Tegart

October 24– Tour of Village Green with Society Director Barbara Decker, 1:30 meet at 1 Fountain Street, as part of Hamilton Parents Weekend; learn about the history and architecture of the village center

Society Open Hours are each Wednesday and Saturday 1 to 4

For our many members who live around the country and are unable to visit our building, here's part of the lower level displays. Shown from right are a fanning mill, 1950s civil defense materials, and a Clinton Comet uniform worn by Archie Burton in the 1950s.



REMINISCENCES FROM CLINTON IN 1815

In the September Newsletter a brief series on Gaius Butler's reminiscences began and are continued here.

"The horseback mail to Lairdsville (5) was at length superceded by one direct to Utica semi-weekly. In winter, the New York papers often required a thawing out before they could be distributed owing to the length of time on the way and open vehicles. Our former citizen, Mr. John Herrick, was for a long time stage proprietor and mail carrier, and the Utica papers, the 'Western Recorder', 'Patriot', 'Patrol', and 'Columbian Gazette' of those days, then as now came in packages outside the mail."

"Most of the country subscribers to the Utica papers were supplied by Post-riders. In summer and winter, in sunshine and storm for 14 years, did Mr. Jephtha Burt of Hanover (6) perform, his weekly rounds. And as Tuesday began to wane, no object in the distance was more welcome than the old sorrel nag, bearing well-stuffed saddle bags, filled at one end with the 'Utica Patriot' for the Federalists, and at the other end with the 'Columbian Gazette' for the Democrats." (7)

"Until, and perhaps a short time after Hamilton College was organized, no school for the exclusive instruction of young ladies had existed here. The experiment of establishing such a school was made by Miss Nancy Royce, as principal, assisted by Miss Eliza Ann Royce, her sister. It was kept during the first term in a chamber at Dr. Seth Hastings' residence.(8) It was then removed to the upper story of the building at the northeast corner of the Park. The next step was to enlarge the Royce Mansion to double its original size. The school has a good reputation, both at home and abroad, and numbers came hither from Canada for instruction. (9)

Footnote (5)- Mail to Lairdsville seems rather incongruous today, though some who have mailed a letter recently may disagree. Be that as it may. I believe the statement points out a rather fascinating fact about the very early days hereabouts, the importance of Norton Avenue, then just the road to Laird's Tavern on the Genesee Road (Seneca Turnpike, Route 5). It was at Laird's evidently that Clintonians first met the stages that plied that great road hauling their passengers and mail, not at Middle Settlement or Manchester (hamlet of Kirkland today).

Footnote (6)- Hanover is a cross roads in the northern part of the Town of Marshall, at the corner of Peck Road and Hanover Road. Previously it had a church, post office, and a school and now is in the middle of many fine farms. Directions- take Austin Road to Grant Hill Road to Brouillette Road.

Footnote (7)- This indicated to Phil Munson that the Clinton neighborhood for some reason attracted a higher percentage of well-read and literate early arrivals than some other areas.

Footnote (8) The Hasting residence was on the site of today's NBT Bank.

Footnote (9) The Royce sisters arrived here with their parents from Plymouth, CT in 1801. Samuel & Abigail Royce built one-half of the house at Kirkland Avenue, today the double house just south of the Verizon telephone building. The second half was built prior to 1817. *to be continued*



Shown at left is September presenter Russ Oechsle of Homer who gave an interesting talk on early Clinton clock and bell maker Timothy Barns. Barns, who was born in 1749 in Branford, CT, moved to Cooperstown, NY in 1796 and to Clinton in 1799. He lived and worked in a home and shop in the rear of today's Owens-Pavlot-Rogers Funeral service at 35 College Street.

He moved to New Haven, NY in Oswego County in 1821 and died there in 1825.

NEWS FROM THE MUNSON LIBRARY-COLLECTION

Society coordinator Bob Tegart announced that he has been copying and scanning many documents and sharing them with Hamilton College. Nan and Les LeBrecque have been organizing and cataloging the Society's map collection which includes taking a picture of each map. Joan and granddaughter Frances Jones are working on the Clinton Figure Skating Club materials in the library. Bob has put several items from Clinton businesses into two of the display cases on the first level. He calls the display, "Made in Clinton."

Many of the donated pictures lack complete captions so Bob is considering a Picture Identification Night where people can come in and help us caption these pictures. More on this later. Eunice Zoekler has been reorganizing the topical and vertical files. They contain information on such topics as the fire department, our churches, etc.

The Munson Library is the heart of the Society. New donations of anything about Clinton and Kirkland are always welcome. Research is free to members, too.

BROCHURE RELEASED IN SEPTEMBER

With the September Newsletter was the annual program brochure and the list of dues-paying members. We regret that one member's name was omitted; apologies to Sandy Roberts of Franklin Avenue.

Clinton Skating Rink was underway in the fall of 1926 on the triangle formed by Franklin Avenue and Meadow Street, today's lot for the Calidonna family Clinton Tractor apparatus which is for sale. David Kilbourn donated the use of his land, plowed the field, and offered the use of a team of horses. Earl C. Dawes, Robert C. Brockway, and John Pryor also loaned teams and helped with grading and other construction jobs as did many high school students. The community owes a debt of gratitude to these progressive citizens who pioneered ice skating, figure skating, and hockey in Clinton 89 years ago.

CLINTON SCENE

The local history previously printed in the now-defunct *Clinton Courier* will continue here in the Society's Newsletter.

CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL CONGESTED

Local schools always were in our local weekly, and this article in the *Clinton Courier* September 15, 1926 serves as one example.

Recall that in 1926 15-16 one-room schools still operated in the Town of Kirkland and the Marvin Street School District # 4 served village students in grades one through twelve. Some rural pupils also attended the Clinton High School on Marvin Street, opened September 18, 1893 with 429 pupils. Centralization came in 1931.

The September 15, 1926 article told how congested the high school had become with an influx of new students causing an "unavoidable congestion which is not easily remedied."

60 new names had enrolled that fall. Attendance follows: grade 1- 46; grade 2- 35; grade 3- 45; grade 4- 42; grade 5- 44; grade 6- 38; grade 7- 44; grade 8- 36. 35 was the normal number for each classroom. Grade one was divided into two sections due to the size.

Elementary teachers were Miss Margaret Whitehead, Miss Mary Farrell, Miss Ida Holgate, Miss Pearl Perry, Miss Mary Graham, Miss Louise Schleider, Miss Iva Sheldon, Miss Gertrude Welch, and Miss Bessie Griffin.

At the junior high level Mrs. Phila MacConnell taught, and at grades 9-12 were Miss Josie Restle- history, intermediate algebra, and biology; Miss Catherine McCabe,- French; Harley Doolittle- algebra, geometry, and physics; Miss Sara Sherman- English; Miss Rose Dawes- Latin; Miss Beatrice Fox- commercial subjects; Mrs. Bessie Philbean- music and drawing; Miss Clara Bullock- nurse and first aid teacher.

The Training Class had 15 members under the direction of Mabel Smith. Training classes were held in the summer and throughout the year to train the rural one-room school teachers, many of whom only had a high school education themselves. Most secondary teachers had one or two years of a normal school or private college.

Students over 16 drive to school almost routinely today as most don't like riding a school bus. For some this was a necessity in 1926 as many came from the rural school districts, and there were no school buses then prior to centralization in 1931.

The Courier reported that "Several students live several miles out of town and who find it necessary to drive to and from school. These have secured operators' licenses to drive for that purpose. Since it is necessary to leave their cars upon arrival at school, a long line may be seen any school day in front of the school building."

"This has caused several complaints by residents of Marvin Street, but since there is not other adequate parking space, consideration should be given to those young folks who are striving for their education."

Short Takes On LOCAL HISTORY

1– Buy a Clinton Historical Society T-Shirt or take your own one to The Cleaners on College Street, and they will embroider the Society logo into your shirt.

2– Board trivia– In the late 1700s many houses consisted of a large room with only one chair. Commonly a long wide board folded down from the wall and was used for dining. The “head of the household” always sat in the chair while everyone else ate sitting on the floor. Occasionally, a guest, who was usually a man, would be invited to sit in this chair during a meal. To sit in the chair meant you were important and in charge. They called the one sitting in the chair the ‘chair man.’ Today in business we use the term chairman or chairman of the Board. At the Society it is ‘president.’

3– The Milkhouse Apartments on Chenango Avenue South were really, yes, a milk station between 1914 and 1967. The Harlem Dairy Company of New York City, later to become Queensboro Dairy, opened the milk station and cheese factory just south of Lock 19 of the then defunct Chenango Canal. Area dairy farmers hauled their raw milk by horse-drawn wagons and later trucks in numbered cans for processing. NYO&W trains until 1948 and the tractor-trailer trucks took the milk to New York City until closing in 1967.

Robert Peach bought the old milk station from Warren Evans and converted it into apartments in the late 1980s.

4– Sanford Avenue was called Stump Street up to the 1940 period. In the vicinity of numbers 140-150 on the west side Clinton schools had a sports field for football and baseball games as late as the 1950s.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Greetings,

We have had a busy summer filled with activities galore and are very thankful for all the support we have received from our membership.

Our community has lost a very important information outlet. We depended on the Clinton Courier to keep us informed, current, and aware. With the loss of the Courier we have a void in our link to local activities, programs, events and news that is important to us all.

What we are doing from this point forward is using our website "www.clintonhistory.org" and our Facebook page to keep you informed. So please take a look at these sites for information we are sharing and also check out the new “Clinton Signal” website located at www.wearethesignal.com.

Thanks.....*Jerry Semchenko.*

