

THE CLINTON HISTORIAN

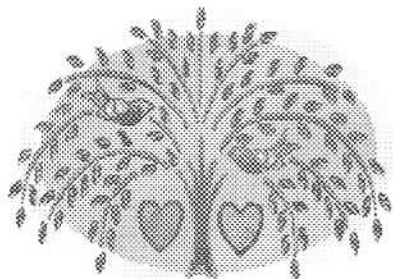
The Clinton Historical Society

Volume XVI Number 5

Craig Marshall, Editor 266-5494

June/July 2003

Wedding Trees



It was early morning, the sky was a bright blue and the air was warm. The young couple had spent their first days together in their new home. The bridegroom and his neighbors had built it for his new bride. The year was 1739. The white clapboard house was set square across the lane from the huge barn which housed the livestock, consisting of a cow for milk, a brace of horses to pull the stumps from the fields and help with the tilling of the soil, and the ever present pigs and chickens. It was time now, to follow the traditions of their forebears-- to plant their special saplings, in honor of their marriage.

As you drive around the town, look closely at the old houses - those built in the 18th & 19th centuries. You will see that many of them are, or had been, shaded by two huge trees (usually maples) placed in the front yard, on either side of the entrance-way. As custom would dictate, these trees were planted— one by the bride, and one by the groom, (yes, "his" and "hers"). They were the "wedding trees". A quaint custom that would later supply the family with maple sap for syrup, shade the house from the hot summer noonday sun, and if necessary, wood for the stove.

Two maples had stood for almost 200 years in front of my "old" house on

(Continued on page 3)

HOME OF AMANDA DEYO, PEACE ACTIVIST, IS DESIGNATED A CLINTON LANDMARK

By John Lacey

"Every girl should have the power to earn her own livelihood."

This assertion received overwhelming approval in 1980, when women around the country were beginning to realize their place in the modern workforce; but Amanda Deyo spoke these words in 1880 to a crowd of thousands at the Connecticut Peace Society's annual meeting. Amanda was a pioneer in the growing peace movement after the Civil War, and this was not the first time her views foreshadowed those of modern times.

This year, the Clinton Historical Society has awarded Landmark status to the house where Amanda Deyo lived from 1868-1886. It is located on the north side of Hollow Road, one mile west of the intersection with Salt Point Turnpike. The current owner is John Lowin. The CHS Landmark program recognizes significant homes, public buildings and sites in the town of Clinton. Significance is defined as a pre-20th Century building that was the home of a notable Clinton resident, or that has an exterior that is, essentially, original and is an example of the architecture of the period.

Amanda Halstead, born Julia Amanda in 1838, was raised on a 110-acre farm owned by her parents Joseph G. and Hannah G. Halstead, not far from Clinton Corners. Raised in the Quaker tradition, she graduated from the Poughkeepsie Female Collegiate Institute at the age of 17. She married Charles Deyo in 1857 and moved to the Hollow Road farm only a mile from her childhood home in 1868. Amanda and her husband provided the spark in bringing the peace movement to Dutchess County in 1871. She served as secretary and he served as president of the newly formed Dutchess County Peace Society for 17 years.

Amanda's energy and enthusiasm helped the



Peace Society grow to 3000 members in 1876. Focusing on women's suffrage, religion and temperance, she spoke to large crowds throughout the Northeast. Her focus on peace and religion reached a pinnacle in 1885 when she received a license from the NYS Universalist Association to preach. Two months later, the now "Reverend" Deyo began preaching in the Universalist Church in Poughkeepsie and was hailed as the only female pastor in Dutchess County. In 1888 she was called to be pastor of the Universalist Church in Oxford, Chenango County. She was appointed to represent the Universal Peace Union at the Peace Congress held during the Paris Exposition in June 1889. While in Paris, she spoke of a "United States of Europe" in which nations would exchange "their produce, their industry, their arts, their genius with the United States." In consideration of the present day European Union, Amanda Deyo was 100 years ahead of her time.

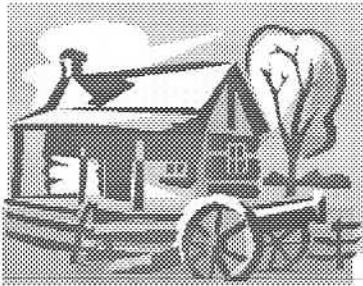
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Preserving Clinton's Heritage

Clinton Landmark *(Continued from page 1)*

After establishing the San Diego Peace Society in 1894, her husband's failing health brought Amanda back to Highland, NY. The passing of Charles in 1897 slowed the indefatigable Deyo only briefly and she was soon speaking again for the National Council of Women, sharing the podium with notables such as Susan B. Anthony, in 1901. In 1917 she became gravely ill and her family laid her to rest next to husband in Highland, NY.

Reverend Deyo's words spoken in 1880 "Take the peace out of religion and what have we left?" speaks to a legacy that holds as much weight now as it did 120 years ago.



**2nd Annual Historic Sites Tour
Saturday June 21**

With the great success of last year's historic sites tour, the Society is planning this to be an annual event. This year's tour will visit the Clinton hamlet of Bulls Head, which is little known today but which was an important thriving commercial area in the early 1800's. Included in the tour will be the former store and post office, an elegant Federal-style home with palladium windows, and an operating chicken farm that was recently recognized with the society's Preservation Award. Other homes are planned for the tour as well. **The deadline for registering for the tour is June 2** and the donation of \$22.50 will include lunch. Proceeds will go to support the society's programs. This will be the only announcement and invitation, so mark your calendar and send your check payable to: Clinton Historical Society, PO Box 122, Clinton Corners, N.Y. 12514. For information, call Bill McDermott at 266-3819.

Barbara Oberly

The Society thanks the family of Barbara Oberly for establishing a fund in her memory. We also thank the many friends of Barbara whose contributions will support the Society's preservation and education programs.



Did You Know...

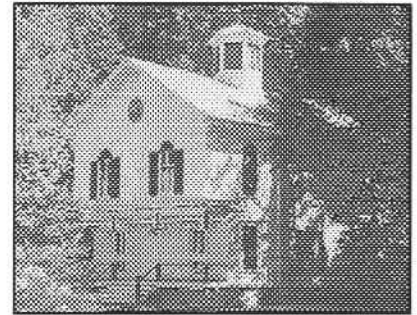
Declaration of Independence

Only two people signed the Declaration for Independence on July 4th 1776- John Hancock as President of the Continental Congress, and Charles Thomson as secretary. Most delegates signed the formal parchment document on August 2, but the last signature was not added until 5 years later.

Yellowstone Park

Yellowstone Park is the oldest and largest of our National Parks. It was established by an act of Congress on March 1, 1872 and occupies an area of over two million acres.

1865 Masonic Hall



Improvement to the outside grounds has begun with the installation of a walkway to replace the deteriorated and unsafe steps that led directly onto the county road. Members of the Masonic Hall Preservation Group volunteered their time (and backhoe) to complete this project, and we thank Mike Spitzer, Frank Mazzella, Jim Welling, John Cassaboon, Steve Keogh, and Harry Henck. Thanks also to David and Susan Golden for their donation of a large air conditioner to help make our summer events "really cool".



The Talleur Grist Mill in Clinton Corners 1917, five Talleur children and a cousin.

WELCOME SPRING

by Mabel Burhans

This appeared in May 1960 in her "Party Line" column

Back in the old days when many goods were only obtainable in season, they were welcomed with a joy unknown to us in this time of refrigeration and shipments by air, which make any delicacy available anytime of the year.

In the spring you were likely to hear one housewife say to another: "I am so hungry for the taste of something fresh." Suppose you hadn't had the taste of lettuce all winter. "I hadn't even missed it" some men and small boys might reply. But if you had gone without other things as well you might find something green very tasty.

The cabbages, carrots, beets, onions, potatoes that were so carefully stored away in the cellar in the fall were now sprouted, shriveled, limp and tasteless, not to mention the rotten ones that had to be sorted out. What a disagreeable job cleaning the cellar in the spring used to be. So children were sent out to dig dandelion greens and hunt for tender, young dock. The row of rhubarb across the vegetable garden was watched eagerly as the leaves began to unfold. It was cut as soon as the stalks were three to four inches long so the family could boast that they had had the first "mess of pie plant" as it was called. Not only did it add zest and flavor to spring meals, whether served as "sass" (sauce) or pie but its medicinal properties ranged along with the highly regarded sulphur and molasses as a blood purifier and tonic. Certainly it was much more palatable.

Country folks, even those not living on farms, were very self-sustaining with their gardens, backyard fruit trees, a flock of twenty-five to fifty chickens and perhaps even a pig readying himself to supply winter meat in a small pen at the back of the lot.

However, certain seasonal delicacies could be purchased as peddlers with a variety of

wares stopped at the dooryard gate.

Under the warm suns of April, the Shadblow make themselves into white bouquets along the fences and at the edge of the woods. The Dutch noticed that the early white blooms coincided with the shad runs and named the shrubs "shadbushes."

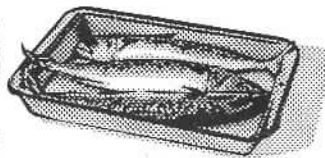
When we saw the white of the Shadblows we listened eagerly for the fishman's horn which heralded the coming of that king of fish—the Hudson River Shad. How Dutchess County folk loved their shad.

The pesky bones did not deter its devotees from full enjoyment of its delicious flavor.

The children skipped along beside Mother as she carried

a milkpan down to the gate to receive this trophy of spring. Thirty cents would purchase a fine roe of shad. You could get them for fifteen cents if you went down to the dock.

We still have an occasional shad peddler, but his coming is uncertain. The river no longer teems with fish and there are many more people to buy.



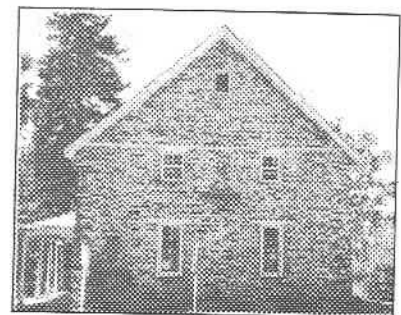
Wedding Trees *(Continued from page 1)*

Shadblow Lane. They are gone now, victims of time, rot and the whims of nature. But there are others still standing at the sites of the "original" settlers of Dutchess County. As you drive on some of the back roads in our area, be on the lookout for those special "heirlooms of the heart".

As told by CHS member Beth Gephart, now residing in North Carolina.

1777 Creek Meeting House

The preservation project of our 1777 Creek Meeting House has passed the reconstruction stage where replacement of damaged wood and structural members has been completed. Some unexpected significant rotting and deterioration was uncovered in principal supports, making the timing of this restoration even more critical than originally considered. We are fortunate to have carpenters who have the timber-framing skills to make these replacements with materials and methods consistent with the vintage construction of our landmark building. As we go to press, the copper roofing is being applied over a properly reconstructed base by a historic preservation metal roofing specialist to help insure 200 years of service. This reconstruction included replacement of deteriorated planking and removal of three applications of asphalt shingle installed over years past. Weighing 20,000 pounds, this shingle was contributing to the stress on the supporting structure. Completion of restoration is planned for June. This was truly a major project for our Society, led by Dick Collier and Bill McDermott, and planned at \$60,000. Of this amount, we received \$15,000 in volunteer and in-kind services for which we are very grateful. We again thank the generous donors and "angels" for the \$45,000 needed to bring this critical restoration project to fruition.



**OPEN MIC
LIVE
MUSIC**

Coffee House at the
1865 Masonic Hall,
Schultzville, NY



JOIN US FOR OUR 5TH SEASON

Features for 2003

May	24	Todd Giudice
June	28	Maggie Row
July	26	to be announced
August	23	to be announced
Sept.	27	Helen Avakian
Oct.	25	Barbones & Wild Flowers

Show starts at 8:00pm

Open mic performers sign-up at door 7:30.

Shuttle parking at the Town Garage.

Proceeds to restore the
Masonic Hall landmark.

Home baked treats and beverages
available.

Donation: \$ 5.00 Info: 845-266-3899

May Program Meeting:
"100+ years of Clinton Insurance
Services"

Lily Shohan, Secretary/Treasurer of Farmers Town Mutual Insurance Co. of Clinton, presented the history of this local enterprise that was founded as a co-op in 1884. Don Bowman, President of the company, assisted in the presentation. While many agencies have failed over this period, Farmers Mutual has found a niche in their market that has kept them successful and growing. They focus on insurance for barns, cottages, and other "part-time" residences that are not of interest to larger insurance companies. They also insure livestock and farm crops such as produce, grains, and hay. Lily showed company records including those organizing families whose names are well known in town today. Stories about Kelsey Wirehouse were told for the enjoyment of all who knew him. He was a longtime Farmers Mutual officer and active town member, including being Town Clerk. Farmers Mutual has grown from a local client base to a broader county and statewide base. It is seeking new members to help guide and continue its success.

June Meeting

Friday, June 6, 7:30 pm,
Creek Meeting House,
Salt Point Turnpike

"Archeologist's Dig at 1800's Site"
by Chris Lindner

Hyde Park is the site of a free black settlement of the early 1800's, and is being excavated and researched by Bard College Archeologist-in-Residence Chris Lindner. Known as the "New Guinea Project", Chris is uncovering evidence leading to better understanding of the lifestyle, employment, and social history of this component of early Dutchess County families. His slide presentation will include photos of artifacts he has found, and his findings and conclusions to date.

**Reminder: No program meetings
in July or August. The next program
meeting will be held Sept. 5.**

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The Town of Clinton Historical Society
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PO Box 122
Clinton Corners, NY 12514
(845) 266-5494

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Steven Hackbarth
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Mike Spitzer
Eliot Werner
TOWN HISTORIAN: Bill McDermott
The Town of Clinton Historical Society is a not-for-profit organization established to preserve, maintain, promote and educate on matters of historical significance and interest in the Town of Clinton and Dutchess County.

Reminders:
May 24
Open Mic Masonic Hall
June 6
CHS Meeting
Archeologist's Dig