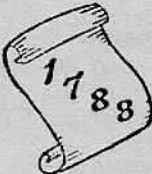


The Clinton  Historian

TOWN OF CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CLINTON CORNERS Vol. III No. 4 March 28, 1978

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING March 28, 1978

6:30 cocktails

7:30 dinner

PROGRAM following dinner

1. Mini-business meeting
 - a) Oral history
 - b) Treasurer's report
 - c) Nominating committee
2. Election and installation of officers
 Installation performed by
 Clifford Buck
3. Recognition Awards -
 Presentation by Bill Mc Dermott
4. Films
 - "Poughkeepsie - 1912"
 - "Trolley Cars - Ferry Boats - Dayliners"

Narrater - Hubert C. "Bud" Spross
Audio-visual - Bill Lana

The original copies of both of these local films are now in the National Archives.

GEORGE S. VAN VLIET - HISTORIAN

It is 30 years since George S. Van Vliet passed from our midst. However, his contributions to the history of Clinton and indeed Dutchess County remain as fresh as ever. His address in 1941 at the annual meeting of the Dutchess County Historical Society delivered at the Presbyterian Church at Pleasant Plains remains as a tribute to his knowledge of the town.

His father, who served as Supervisor of Clinton 1872 - 73 and again in 1882, and his uncle were surveyors who surveyed many of the large tracts in Dutchess. Their knowledge of history was passed to George S. He made his own special contribution researching many of Clinton's records in the Town and throughout Dutchess. His expertise was recognized early when Frank Hasbrouck approached him to provide information about Clinton's history. This information was published in Hasbrouck's History of Dutchess County in 1909.

Recognition as an historical authority continued throughout all his life. He was one of the founders of the Dutchess County Historical Society in 1914 serving as its first vice president, after which he served as trustee until his death. In fact he delivered the first historical talk to the group of 50 individuals who met on 4/28/1914 to form that society. His topic "Great Nine Partners and the Little Nine Partners". At the next meeting 5/26/1914 the county historical society was formed.

His written contributions can be found in the early Dutchess County Historical Society Yearbooks. One work is of particular interest for its thoroughness of research and concern for accuracy. In his work Pawlings Patent, Alias Staatsburg published in 1915 he

referred first to the map his uncle George had created from the original survey of 1751. While his uncle was able to lay out the lots it was George S. who could breathe life into the bare facts. Not satisfied with simply describing the original owners of Pawlings Patent he added his next love, geneology, to bring the added dimension of real people, generation after generation, to his work. This same combination of historical research and geneology is much in evidence in his work on Clinton published in the Dutchess County Historical Society's Yearbook in 1941. His description of Clinton is chock full of people and their lives intermingled successfully with historical fact.

Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt's trips to Mr. Van Vliet's home in Pleasant Plains were more than just neighborly calls on his friend. The President consulted with George S. as Dr. J. Wilson Poucher and the Poughkeepsie Eagle had in 1913 about Clinton. At that time the President was compiling information for two books about Crum Elbow - Clinton and Hyde Park. The extent of Mr. Van Vliet's contributions to the President's historical work can not be fully appreciated for George S. rarely sought recognition for the help he gave others.

His knowledge of geneology together with an excellent memory often startled people he met for the first time. He was able to mention some geneologically accurate fact about a person's background without reference to notes. His knowledge was not limited to Clinton. He knew a good deal about most of the old families in Dutchess.

His interest in history continues in his children Helena and H. Richard both of whom are well known for their extensive knowledge of Clinton and Dutchess County. Our thanks to the Van Vliet's for keeping the history of Clinton alive and fresh.

A NEW MASTHEAD!!!

Our plan was to unveil the new masthead for the Clinton Historical Newsletter with the first issue of Volume IV in May. The attractiveness of Peg Chart's artistic production compelled us to share it with you right away. Thanks Peg - neat work.

Speaking of the newsletter we will be sending it to you between meetings in the future instead of just before each meeting. In this way the activity of the Society will reach you more frequently. And by the way articles for the newsletter are always welcome. Write about any historically related matter which interests you - it'll undoubtedly be of interest to the reader.

Please let us know how you feel about the new masthead. Also we are interested in learning more about your reaction to the newsletter. Does it meet your expectations? If not how?

Please Be Careful

The final bell has tolled for the Maude Boice house built before 1850 in Clinton Corners. It has been condemned and will be torn down. We were going to speak of our need to be aware of such potential losses in the future so that we may foster preservation where feasible. That's what we were going to discuss but last week a tragedy befell another old house. This tragedy was avoidable. You may have read about the fire at the house of the Supervisor of Unionvale. The cause of the fire -- a wood burning furnace. A number of people are using wood as a primary or supplementary source of heat. Often these are installed by the do-it-yourselfer. Often these are in our old houses. May I suggest as a way of preserving your house from a mistake you may have made that you invite your wood burning neighbor to inspect your installation and you inspect his. Perhaps in this way we will avoid such tragedy to our old or young houses.

On the way to the National Register -- STONE MEETING HOUSE

The Clinton Historical Society filed an application on behalf of the Upton Lake Grange with the Dutchess County Landmarks Association. It was passed to New York State Parks for review as to its eligibility for the National Register. On 2/15/1978 the following reply was received, "I think the structure appears to meet the National Register eligibility criteria and if you would like to pursue designation the next step should be an on-site inspection" Needless to say our reply went out the following day requesting the on-site inspection. Lets hope that the visit is satisfactory and we honor this grand building and its long and interesting history. The Friends (Quakers) who occupied it for so long and now the Grangers have contributed much to the community. The honor is well deserved.

The Clinton Historical Society encourages and is willing to aid anyone who wishes to apply for National Register designation. We will be glad to share with you any information we have.