

The Clinton Historical Society
Clinton Corners, N.Y. 12514

The Clinton  Historian

TOWN OF CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Clinton Historian
Bill Mc Dermott, editor

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by the Clinton Historical Society

Thanks from the president

I wish to express my appreciation to all those who have helped me in the past four years. The Clinton Historical Society began in 1975 following the recommendation of the Clinton Bicentennial Committee, chaired by Kate Spross. I accepted the responsibility of president reluctantly knowing there were many others whose knowledge of Clinton's history was much fuller than mine. The limit of my knowledge was all too apparent from the start. Surely, I have grown but more importantly the society has grown and today is active in its pursuit of historical information about Clinton.

There have been a number of accomplishments in the past four years thanks to the support of the membership and the activity of the officers and trustees. These accomplishments reach beyond the regular and informative meetings. They include the development of a quarterly newsletter, preservation of documents, field trips, Clinton History Days (Julia Buglion's energy), and providing a repository for historical documents and other material of importance.

Personally I have gained immensely. Not only have I learned about Clinton's history but I have also learned close up photography to preserve documents and other materials such as post cards on film. Most pleasing has been the opportunity to talk history with people like Helena VanVliet and others.

Although other work draws me away from serving again I hope to continue to serve the Society in other ways in the future. There is plenty to do. Clinton's history is full and those who pursue it feel its rewards. I have felt those rewards and look forward to more. My appreciation to all for the opportunity.


Bill McDermott

Our appreciation to Helen Harper

for her response to our article in the last issue of the Clinton Historian entitled Let us Copy it. Mrs. Harper made available for copying approximately 20 post cards depicting various buildings and places in our Town of Clinton. All areas of the town are represented in these post cards many of which are dated prior to 1910. The Christian Alliance Church parsonage in Schultzville with its minister and wife sitting on the front lawn provides a fine example of the appearance of the parsonage at that time as well as the dress of the minister and his wife. Pleasant Plains, Clinton Corners and Clinton Hollow are all represented in this historically important group of post cards.

Post cards of the neighboring towns of Salt Point, Pleasant Valley and Hyde Park filled out the fine sample of this area in the early 20th century. All of these have been captured photographically and are now available to us in color slides. These 50 slides will make a pleasant program sometime in the future. While the pictures may be unfamiliar to us the places they depict are quite familiar. In fact we pass them each day. They will bring back memories to the old timers and delight the younger ones as we view the way it used to be.

Special thanks to Putnam Davis for his alertness in this matter. Put, knowing the importance of these post cards, called Mrs. Harper and arranged for the loan while the photography was in progress. Again may we express our thanks to Mrs. Harper and others in the town who have made such material available. We believe there is more and are prepared to continue our preservation efforts either on film as in this case or by putting the material away in our fireproof facility.

Peter Zenger

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The name stimulates the hazy recesses of our memories. Zenger?, Zenger? - oh yes I remember, freedom of the press. John Peter Zenger came to America from Germany around 1700 when he was about 20 years old. An apprentice printer to start, he rose to become the printer on November 5, 1733 of the second newspaper established in New York City. His New-York Weekly Journal published every Monday, was established as an outspoken political opponent of some of the governing practices of the Provincial Governor, Col. William Cosby. Zenger was particularly critical of Gov. Cosby for his dismissal of judges who would not support his practices because of their illegality. Finally on Sunday November 17, 1734 Zenger was imprisoned on the charge of publishing seditious libels. He remained in prison for the next 8 months unable to meet the bail requirements for freedom until the next court would hold session. He was defended by Andrew Hamilton from Philadelphia and John Chambers of New York City. The verdict which resulted in his freedom was hailed by his biographer as "the morning star of that liberty which subsequently revolutionized America". (Ruthford - John Peter Zenger (New York, 1904). Even at that time the verdict was well received for the audience in the court room applauded and Andrew Hamilton received on September 29, 1735 the thanks of the Common Council of the City of New York and the freedom of the city for his public service in the Zenger matter.

How does Zenger relate to Clinton? It was in Mr. Zenger's paper that the Nine Partners advertised the first sale of the undivided land east of the Water Lotts. On June 19, 1734 the treasurer of the Nine Partners paid (John) Peter Zenger 4 shillings, 9 pence to advertise for sale land on the east side of Fish Creek, now known as Crum Elbow Creek. This 1300 acre parcel was sold to Polycarpus Nelson. The land, actually in Hyde Park, is along the Creek extending from a bit north of Fall-kill Road south to slightly below the East Park traffic light.

The Clinton Historical Society year runs from April 1 to March 31. Membership renewal is upon us again.

Please clip out the following application for renewal of your membership and send to

Henry Schott, treasurer
Clinton Historical Society
Allen Rd.
Salt Point, N.Y. 12578

family \$5.00 individual \$3.00

Name: _____

address: _____

Committees

The AWARDS committee in the persons of Barbara Oberly and Alan Mueser have met, deliberated and chosen the candidates for our Annual Recognition Award given to the person or persons who have contributed to the history of Clinton. This award is given to individuals who have preserved some of Clinton's history in some important way. The Executive Board was pleased with the choices and approved them unanimously. The awards are presented at the Annual Dinner.

The report of the ELECTIONS committee will be received by the membership at the Annual meeting on March 30, 1979 at the 1830 Inn. Appreciation is given in advance to Fran Monahan and Marguerite Freer for their efforts in this assignment. Also thanks to Julia Buglion for making herself available to this committee.

Skeletons in the closet

ANNUAL DINNER

At our last regular meeting, January 19, 1979, Bill Benson shared with us the skeletons in his closet. The Bensons have lived in Dutchess County over 200 years and they were prolific. Like many of us these days, Bill began a number of years ago to ask questions about his family. Finding a previously completed genealogical work on the family up to the early 20th century, lulled Bill into believing he could quickly bring the family tree up to date. That was his first mistake. But his mistake was our good fortune. Bill shared with us the genealogical nooks and crannies he had to investigate to bring his ancestral heritage to the present. His fluid and humorous presentation provided us with an evening of fun which gave many of us a good basis for beginning our own genealogical searches. He showed us how to find material and how it should be used. He also demonstrated the risk of making too many assumptions without benefit of supporting evidence. The membership in attendance expressed their appreciation with innumerable questions and fine applause.

WELCOME home Kelsey

We're glad your home, Kelsey. The town seemed too quiet while you were in Rhinebeck at Northern Dutchess Hospital. While we recognize you have to work continuously at your recovery its good to see your spirit as strong as ever and your humor remaining in full bloom. Hope you can make the Annual Dinner. In any case we expect to see you round town very soon. It was good to hear you feel well enough to work a bit. Doing our town business without a bit of your humor and philosophy to sweeten it up is no fun.

FRIDAY MARCH 30, 1979

Cocktails at 6 PM Dinner at 7:30 PM

at

The 1830 Inn
Pleasant Valley

Announcements of the annual dinner were sent to the membership during the last week of February. Those who wish to attend are reminded of the deadline for reservations-

March 14, 1979.

That date gives the restaurant the two week time they require to prepare for our meeting.

Last year several of our members were unable to attend because there was not enough room at the Country Tavern. Therefore, the membership voted to hold the meeting this year at a larger place.

The program includes 1) year in review, 2) election of officers, 1979-80, 3) recognition awards and 4) a film. The film is a 28 minute color production entitled A PLACE IN TIME produced by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Its theme is preservation in various parts of the country. It has been tastefully done and speaks about methods of preserving the special character of each of these places. If you have not sent your reservation please send your check AND dinner choice to Louise McDermott Clinton Corners

Complete dinner choices:

- 1) stuffed breast of Chicken \$8.00
- 2) roast top sirloin 8.25
- 3) broiled stuffed shrimp 9.00

Dancing follows program.