


Clinton Historical Society
Clinton Corners, N.Y. 12514

The Clinton  Historian

TOWN OF CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

***** SCHULTZVILLE: CLINTO

You want to experience something unusual? Come to the next meeting! A full understanding of history requires that we look at every aspect of it. Come and meet Bill & Linda Di Frenza, CHS members who have designed a program to help us understand the Revolutionary War from the British point of view. See the enclosed announcement.

This brings me to an important point. One purpose of history is to attempt to preserve the past. However, preservation is not effortless. For example, a great deal of effort was expended on Saturday September 29, 1990 when a number of members turned out to dig (tediously) for artifacts in Schultzville. It was a glorious day for that kind of work, and the undertaking was both fun and educational.

Another kind of preservation is to find, catalog, research, and display two and three dimensional objects which describe a community's past. To do this most effectively, a community needs a place to present its findings. To that end, the Museum Committee of the Society met on Thursday September 27, 1990 with a similar committee from the Masonic Temple in Schultzville. The purpose of the meeting was to determine how the two groups could use the historic building jointly. While no commitments were made, a tentative proposal was discussed. Essentially, it would seem that our Clinton Historical Society would take charge of the building, cover its operating expenses, and use it as a "museum." Insurance, fuel, utilities, maintenance, & misc. expenses would require that the Society raise about \$5,000 a year. What do you think?

The Society has also been involved recently in other efforts at preservation. You are familiar with our Landmarks program, but you may not be familiar with our microfilming program and the efforts of the Zoning Committee to include historically relevant matters in the new ordinance. As these programs progress, we will share additional information with our CHS members.

See you Friday Nov. 2 at the Meeting!!

Barely touched by the passage of time, Schultzville may be Clinton's museum hamlet. Odd, you say, to call a hamlet with lots of 20th century activity a museum. But the fact is that Schultzville has changed little since 1865. The wagon shop is still there and so is the blacksmith shop. These, together with the school and two or three houses right at the center of the hamlet, the Masonic Hall, and the church are all that the hamlet ever was. Oh sure, the shoe shop is missing and the location of the harnessmaker's shop is unclear, but the rest is there. Fortunately, the store which burned in the thirties was replaced by a structure that almost replicates the early store.

Travelers first passed through Schultzville as early as 1718 as they brought their wagons full of winter wheat from Dover to Rhinebeck. These tenants of the large landowner, Henry Beekman, brought their wheat rent to him at Rhinebeck from whence he operated his two land grants in Dutchess County. In 1744 Arie Buys, his family and his brother, were probably Schultzville's first settlers. Often we speak in Clinton of Dutch settlers and while there were some in the western part of the town, the Buys families were probably the only Dutch family Schultzville would see during the 18th century. He remained more than forty years until he died in 1784.

Perhaps Arie had a mill, but if he did it was a small one. "Big" business came to Schultzville a few years after the Schultz family arrived. By 1806, they had come and less than twenty years later they (there were several Schultz families) owned over a thousand acres between Schultzville and Bulls Head. Sometime in the 1830s Daniel Schultz, the entrepreneur of the family, had a grist mill, a saw mill, and the general store. These businesses brought other services to the town during the same period. Abraham Heerance was the shoemaker for almost twenty years until seventy year old John Freer replaced him in the late 1850s. The

"DIG WE DID!"

other tradesman who provided services in the 1840s was John Hendricks, a 27 year old carpenter who lived nearby.

The decade between 1840 and 1850 brought Schultzville to what it was to be into the twentieth century! Alvin Murch had opened a blacksmith shop, perhaps the first. By 1860 there were three other blacksmiths, two of whom twenty one year old Pat Lyden and thirty year old Michael Burns, were recent Irish immigrants. They worked in Murch's shop. Four blacksmiths in town by 1860 measures Schultzville's dramatic growth in less than two decades. Two physicians, Peter Denny and Marvin Wooden, two millers, John Buckaun from Massachusetts and his son Comer, coachmaker Samuel Cornelius, and tailor Anson Howard had joined carpenter John Hendricks in 1850 to provide a wide array of services in the hamlet or very close by.

Ten years later, two wagonmakers, two harnessmakers, a store clerk, and a butcher were needed to keep up with this busy hub of activity. But why there were three teachers in the hamlet or nearby in 1860 is puzzling. There was a school in Schultzville and another in Bulls Head - that accounts for two. Was one of the three, William Cornelius, Elizina Denny, or J. E. Denny, unemployed that year? This is just one of those many puzzles biographies of towns like Schultzville leave to tease the researcher to dig deeper for more complete understanding.

Daniel Schultz died in 1858, and his son, Theodore, twenty four years old in 1860, took over the business. He, too, died shortly thereafter but made a final lasting contribution to the profile of the town. He provided the money and land to build the Masonic Hall and the church on Centre Road, memorials to his generosity and tangible evidence of the successes the Schultz family had achieved. Schultzville remained a business center until the early decades of the twentieth century and evidence of the once thriving hamlet remains even today. Yes, Schultzville qualifies as a museum hamlet.

- Bill McD.

Eight CHS members were initiated into the world of archaeology during the "on-site" dig at the Masonic Temple on Saturday, Sept. 29. This was the first "participation" monthly meeting (Oct.) scheduled as an alternative to "presentation" meetings. Bill McDermott led off with a brief but highly informative history of Schultzville, to give the group better awareness of the significance of the area, and the origin of the Masonic Temple as the dig site. Then, after some "basics of archaeological digging" instruction from Bill, the group set off to the site high in curiosity and energy. The dig area was staked out adjacent to the Temple foundation, turf carefully removed, and scraping begun with handtools to unlayer the soil surfaces... no pickaxes, shovels, etc used here, in keeping with good archaeological practices. Member John Pruitt custom-built a very effective screening tool for the occasion, and this was used to search for small artifacts.

(continued - overleaf)

"ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN TRAINING"



MEMBERS DIG AT THE MASONIC TEMPLE FOUNDATION

*** REMINDER ***

NEXT MEETING:

*"THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION --
THE BRITISH
VIEWPOINT"*

FRIDAY NOV. 2

7:30 PM

TOWN LIBRARY

SCHULTZVILLE

Members Bill & Linda Di Frenza will bring us their program giving the British view of the American Revolution. Bill, active in area encampments, will come in the uniform of the regular British soldier, complete with musket and other field equipment. He will also bring other uniforms to accompany his talk. We will then hear about modern day encampments as another form of historical preservation through live participation. Sound intriguing? JOIN US!!

While the members were fully involved, Taconic Press reporter Gene Lomoriello stopped by to cover the event and found himself so intrigued by the activity that he stayed on longer than planned.

"I really thought it was wonderful to find a group of diverse people interested enough to get up early on a Saturday morning and start digging together," he said later. "The enthusiasm was really great!" As a result, a potential few paragraphs became a major article in the Taconic papers, complete with photographs of young and not-so-young folks engrossed in fascinating fun.

The results? The sub-surface yielded an early glazed-pottery cup (in pieces), some thin curved glass shards (possibly small pitcher), and oyster shell remnants. The real gain was the new knowledge and appreciation the group received of archaeological dig techniques, to be employed in future Clinton artifact searches.



TOM O'SHEA AND BILL McDERMOTT WORK THE SCREEN