

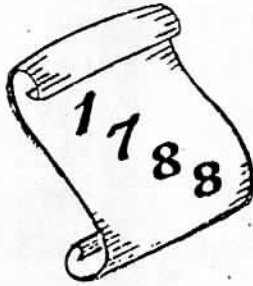
Eleonor Rogers  
525 Allen Rd.  
Salt Point, NY 12578



Clinton Historical Society  
Clinton Corners, N.Y. 12514



The Clinton



Historian

TOWN OF CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vol. VIII

No. 4

November 1991

WELCOME BACK, AL MUESER

Dear Al,

We are glad to see you back in our community. We know your recovery from your recent visit to the hospital will be quick, no doubt aided by your usual upbeat thinking. Hope to see your smiling face at the Society's Christmas party on December 6.

LOTSA ROCKS

Larry Arno and his WALL WALKERS completed their examination of the stone walls along Lot #1 of the Great Nine Partners division which was completed in 1734. Lo and behold, the walls were still in place as we had suspected.

Not only did this crew confirm and document these walls, but the report is that they had a great time. Sorry you missed the show. Maybe next time it will be your turn. In any case, I have asked Larry to give us a brief description of the experience and a brief report on their findings.

WORLD WAR II

Thanks go to Joe Kmiecik and Joe Kiernan for leading the discussion about World War II at the Society's last meeting.

Joe Kmiecik was at Pearl Harbor when it was bombed on December 7, 1941. Joe Kiernan was a prisoner of war in Germany for nine months. These "GI Joes" earned all the warm admiration they received from a grateful audience.

Thanks also to the audience whose reminiscences kept us enthralled for two and a half...yes, 2 1/2...hours. It was the longest program in the 16 year history of the Society...no one wanted to leave!

MUSING -

--about our growing archive.

While straightening the creases in an old handwritten document left to the Society, one's thoughts go to the individual who had written the document. Soon one can almost see him smiling about the intense effort and care being attempted to flatten the pages.

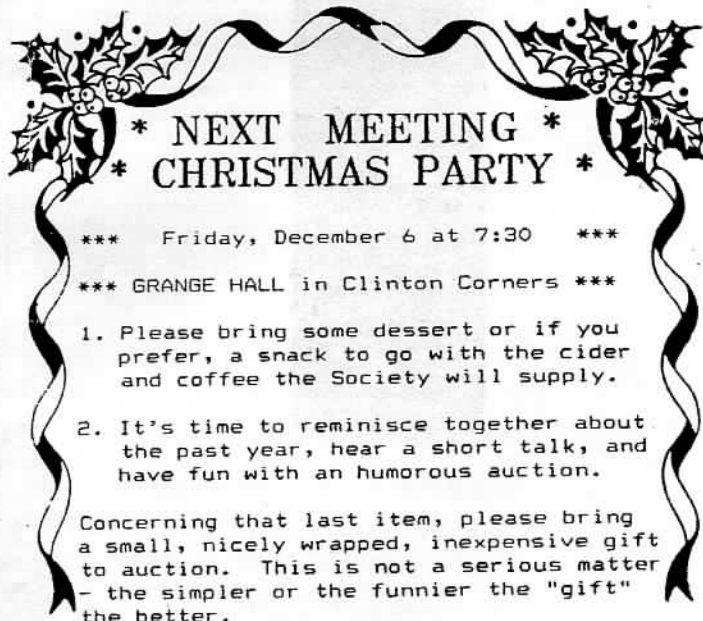
(cont'd)

One could almost hear him saying, "I didn't think it was worth all that effort when I put it aside for good. If only I had known its value to the history of the town, I would have taken more care."

Well folks, we now know the value of things from the past. Do we, like our imaginary former neighbor, recognize the value of twentieth century items which we regard as just so much clutter? The Society asks you to bring us your tired keepsakes which tell a bit about town history. Yes, a letter or a diary may provide a clue about times gone by. And don't forget the photos, newspaper clippings, old post cards, etc. If in doubt, show us - we'll be glad to tell you what we think.

See you at the Christmas Party !!

- Wm. McD



**\* NEXT MEETING \***  
**\* CHRISTMAS PARTY \***

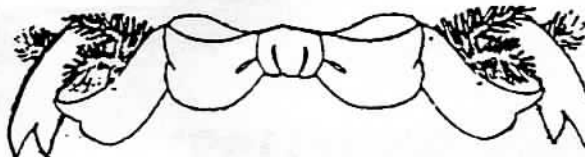
\*\*\* Friday, December 6 at 7:30 \*\*\*

\*\*\* GRANGE HALL in Clinton Corners \*\*\*

1. Please bring some dessert or if you prefer, a snack to go with the cider and coffee the Society will supply.
2. It's time to reminisce together about the past year, hear a short talk, and have fun with an humorous auction.

Concerning that last item, please bring a small, nicely wrapped, inexpensive gift to auction. This is not a serious matter - the simpler or the funnier the "gift" the better.

NOTE CHANGE OF LOCATION !!



# ★ Residents recall WWII as 50th anniversary ★

## ★ ★ ★ of Pearl Harbor approaches ★ ★ ★

by Phyllis Kapsalis

As the 50th anniversary of the Dec. 7 attack on Pearl Harbor approaches, many people will begin to reminisce of life during the war, at home and on the front.

The Clinton Historical Society touched base with these memories in a special forum held at their Friday, Nov. 1, meeting.

Those attending the Friday meeting were transported to the World War II era through memorabilia and stories told by those who lived through it.

The meeting began with an original recording of a 1941 radio broadcast, during which it was announced that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. The "Day of Infamy" speech by President Franklin D. Roosevelt concluded the opening activities.

Part of the meeting was an informal sharing period for members of the audience. About 25 people spoke at the meeting for almost two and a half hours, telling their own stories of life during the war.

Amid banners, medals and old newspapers, first speaker Joe Kmiecik of Clinton told about his U.S. Naval experience on the U.S.S. Helena as it was hit with a torpedo in the Pearl Harbor attack.

"We didn't hear the usual patrol planes," Kmiecik said. "It was very eerie, like the calm before a storm."

"The shells hit like a machete," he recalled. "It was scary."

Kmiecik refutes what government officials have said of there being no patrol planes covering the harbor.

"There were four to six planes that went out on patrol every half hour," he firmly stated.

Kmiecik fought in four battles in the Guadalcanal during the war.

Clinton resident Joe Kiernan, who was held prisoner in a German camp for nine months during World War II, told about the mail he never received there.

Letters written daily by Kiernan's wife never reached him at the camp, he said. Upon returning home, he had a pile of letters to read.

Today, Kiernan continues to correspond with the German soldier who captured him and took him to the POW camp.

### Women in the war

One of the women to speak was Florence Miller of Clinton. For her, she said, the war began in 1939. An immigrant from England, many of Miller's family remained behind.

Her family in England once had to cower beneath stairs during an air raid, she said. Houses on both sides fell, but the Miller's family's house was withstood the bombing.

In the United States, Miller was forced into the role of a working woman. She was enlisted as a claims adjuster for an insurance company, an unusual role for a woman in that era, she said.

Today, Miller also keeps in touch with a pen pal from England to whom she began writing during the war.

Edie O'Shea of Salt Point told about her mother joining the work force as a machinist in a factory that manufactured bullets and war supplies. For the first time, O'Shea's mother wore pants, a new experience for her.

Dorothy Bock brought ration books left over from the war to the Clinton meeting.

"At that time," Bock said, "ration books were more valuable than money."

Ration books were issued by the U.S. government, one book for each family member. The purpose of the books was to ration food and special items.

Used in conjunction with money, the stamps were used to buy sugar, coffee, butter, meat, soap powders, gas and shoes.

Clinton Historical Society President Bill McDermott said the focus of the meeting was to get some of the emotional reactions to the war and how the war touched people in general.

"The feeling at the meeting was both warm and positive," McDermott said.



WORLD WAR II REMEMBERED: Craig Marshall, who served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War, displays his uniform and World War II memorabilia at a Clinton Historical Society meeting



## NEW NEWS ?

Well, it's twentieth century news found while looking for something else. Keep a sharp lookout for that 20th century stuff:

April 12, 1919 - RED HOOK TIMES

"The town of Clinton is to have a town hall if the terms of the will of John Lyon, a former resident of that town, who died a few days ago at Rockville Center, L.I. are carried out. By his will, Mr. Lyon bequeathed \$10,000 for the erection of a town hall which will probably be located at Schultsville. The only provision of the will is that the town shall furnish the site for the building. Mr. Lyon was born in the town of Clinton and was educated at the DeGarmo Institute at Rhinebeck."



\*\*\* REMINDER \*\*\*

NEXT MEETING:

FRIDAY DEC 6

7:30 PM

GRANGE HALL

CLINTON CORNERS

-FEATURING-

"CHRISTMAS PARTY,  
WALL WALKERS,  
& AUCTION"



\*NOTE LOCATION\*

**DON'T MISS IT!!**

**\* WANTED: PHOTOGRAPHER \***

The Society has a number of photos which need to be reproduced. Most are old and need special treatment to lift good copies for our photo collection.

Additionally, the Society has a number of glass plate negatives which depict a variety of old sites and structures in town. For example, one glass plate has the only photo known to exist of Clinton's telegraph office. We need a volunteer to develop these negatives for our archive.

Call us at 266-3819 if you are able to do this work, or if you know of somebody who could help.

Note: For copying photos, a camera system is available for loan, and mail order developing can be used. Only 1 hour of training is needed to get acceptable copies if more professional services are not found. For glass plate processing (black & white), a full darkroom setup is available for loan...all you need is a dark closet (large) or room (small). Only 2 or 3 hours are needed for training. This is a fun hobby for all ages and a great winter pastime. The Society can pay for any costs. For more info, call Craig Marshall at 266-5684.



**\* FOR SALE \* \***

- in time for holiday giving.

"CLINTON: A HISTORY OF A TOWN"



Hardcover \$19.95      Softcover \$12.95

Don't forget to deduct 20% if you are a member of the Society.

Also available - that terrific map showing all the property and property owners in Clinton in 1800. This map created by Bill Benson is unique in Dutchess County and the envy of several historical societies. No other town has created such an attractive and complete resource.



**Seasons Greetings**

