

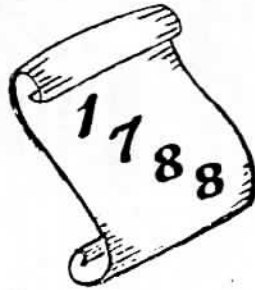
FRIDAY NOV 6

NEXT MEETING:

*** REMINDER ***

Clinton Historical Society
Clinton Corners, N.Y. 12514

The Clinton



Historian

TOWN OF CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vol. IX

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October 1992

Fifteen pages later plus supporting documents and we added a new category to our file cabinet. Entitled "IRS & NYS Reports" it is a reminder that this business of creating a museum carries with it responsibility and the paperwork to go with it. Thanks go to accountant George Roth, though not a member of our community, contributed his time (saved us a bundle of money) to review our application for yet another layer of tax exemption. It will assure those who make monetary or other donations that the IRS will be more likely to acknowledge the gift.

And speaking of the IRS they wished to know exactly what we were up to. Full descriptions of our plans were included in the application. Six categories described the Society's past and anticipated projects.

In brief the list follows.

1. Preservation - records, photographs, maps, ledgers, etc.
2. Education - meetings open to the public, exhibits, and the like.
3. Publications - our newsletters, the published town history, plans for a twentieth-century history.
4. Library - reference material such as books, manuscripts, census lists, pamphlets, etc.
5. Genealogy - development of a computer data base of Clinton's earlier families.
6. History center/museum - open on a regular schedule for the public to do research and view exhibits of the town's history.

Sure, it looks like a tall order but do you know something? We've been doing a lot of it anyway. In case you wonder how much interest there is, let me assure you there is a tremendous thirst for info about the past out there. At a recent talk I gave to the Palatines to American Assn. over 100 people attended. Almost half traveled some distance, including crossing state lines to attend.



From Florida to Clinton

"Any record of the Gildersleeve's having lived in Clinton?" the writer asked. "Sure" was our response by telephone. Why call? Why not write? The hot leads cool quickly and this one was not going to get away. "Did we want a xerox copy of a page or two of an 1808 store ledger from Clinton?" he wondered. "No," was our reply. We want the whole ledger. Well, that was too much to expect but we got the next best thing.

The spry 81 year old, Elmer Gildersleeve, was next seen at the Schultzsville store with his son and the ledger in hand. Having come to visit his son in Connecticut he brought the ledger and left it for us to copy. Thanks to Bill Benson's spectacular map of Clinton by 1800 we were able to answer this request for information in a jiffy. Elmer and his son appreciated the rain-soaked trip through town seeing where the Gildersleeve's lived and the cemetery where his uncle is buried. Perhaps the ledger will come our way someday.

And Maryland

St. Mary's City in southern Maryland, founded in 1634, was the fourth settlement in British colonial America. Visiting to learn about its social history program, I was surprised by the special event held on October 17 & 18. More than 100 men and women had gathered to present a "living history" event about the military experience of the average individual during the period. And what an event. War then was a face to face encounter. Guns, only recently introduced, were still not considered to be trustworthy. So the pike and other edged instruments of war were prominently displayed and demonstrated.

Most revealing was how difficult it is to leave the 20th century behind, when we study early history. But the uniforms, the genuine weapons, the slow march, the scrubby appearance of men & women, together with the demonstrations of war and encampment tears one away from simply being a complacent observer. And then the the experience of war becomes sinister and frightening. Duplicating such an educational experience is a challenge. The average museum with its

(cont'd next column)

excerpts from the Bag Press, Vol. 1 # 11
October 1964

"The biggest surprise of Clinton Community Day was discovery of the Clinton Museum. Who had heard of it? And how do you hide a museum? The Clinton Museum "is found" on Hollow Road, just west of the parkway. It is open Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4. At the end of October, it will be closed, to reopen again in April. Admission costs ten cents for adults, five for children from 6 to 12; children under 6 get in free.

The museum occupies two floors of the Weiland barn. It is neat, clean and well organized, with most of the articles clearly marked.

The best part of the excursion was meeting the curators, Arthur Weiland and Lonny Moore. The boys got the idea for the museum in 1962 when they visited Smith's Cove Museum and decided that they also had relics that would be of interest to people. For two years they have been collecting, repairing, arranging and labeling. They turn archaeologist to recover parts of the Poughkeepsie & Eastern Railroad, and exhibit their findings."

The article goes on to explain that Arthur and Lonny have busy lives on the student council, playing little league, participating in the school band and other similar activities one would expect of ordinary "kids." But these were no ordinary "kids." They were Clinton's first museum directors. One wonders how many reports they had to file with the IRS and New York State. Of course, we know the answer. Simple is real appealing but perhaps those times have passed.



(cont'd)

inert exhibits, as was the rest of St. Mary's City, pales beside such an approach. Yet, there was a lesson in it which hopefully will not be forgotten when Society members begin to present a picture of time past in Clinton.

"Local Poultry Farming"

Speaker: Alson Van Wagner

This is an especially interesting program about the development of a new "industry" in an essentially dairy area. Alson's father was the first to develop this alternative to dairy during the early decades of the 20th century. As an observant boy Alson shared his father's early experiences, learned how to conduct such a business, and following his college education carried on the business until his retirement.

Many of you have heard Alson speak on other subjects and he did a very nice chapter in our town history. Always informative, his talks are also entertaining. Most of you are also aware that Alson will be leaving Dutchess County sometime in the coming year. This is an opportunity to hear him once again and perhaps while you are wishing him well to thank him for past contributions.



THANK YOU, GEORGE ROTH

(914) 452-4831 Member: NSPA
(914) 452-4884 NYSIA
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GEORGE P. ROTH, E.A.
TAX CONSULTANT
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Happy THANKSGIVING

SIGN OF THE TIMES

After more than a century, De Laval, a manufacturer of milk separators, left Dutchess County, but not before this Swedish-owned corporation changed its name to Alpha-Laval. Once a part of an economy wherein manufacturing played a significant role, Alpha-Laval's departure reminds us of the changes which have come to Dutchess County during the recent decades. What remains of De Laval is an attractive manufacturing plant on route 44, but nothing visible identifies its former use.

But now, thanks to Jim and Caroline Huggins of Clinton Corners, a gift they gave to our museum recently will jog our memories for many years to come. They have donated an original eight foot (!) "De Laval" sign which will be exhibited in the future. Both Jim and Caroline have given many years to Clinton by way of their service in a number of community organizations. Their departure for our town after 3 decades is also another "sign of the times" and we wish them well. Thanks, Jim and Caroline... keep us posted in your new home in Missouri.

AND...ANOTHER MANUFACTURER'S ARTIFACT

Ethel Timmer, 96 year old daughter of Clinton Corners blacksmith Harry M. Findar, has lent the Society her father's business ledger to copy. He began his work in 1894 at his father-in-law's (Allendorf) Pleasant Plains shop as an apprentice, after having spent several years as a schoolteacher locally. His ability was quickly recognized and soon wealthy owner of Hyde Park estates brought their work to him. After moving to Clinton Corners, his reputation preceded him and his business grew quickly. This ledger is a particularly valuable asset to the history of our community - few ledgers of blacksmiths survive.

(Note: This blacksmith shop, which was located across from the Pleasant Plains Church, has been gone from the scene for several years. Fortunately, in our Society's recent "call for photographs to copy", an original snapshot of this shop taken about 1910 came to us on loan. Our copy came out excellent!)

★ ★ ★
*** REMINDER ***

NEXT MEETING:

FRIDAY NOV 6

7:30 PM

TOWN LIBRARY

SCHULTZVILLE

-FEATURING-

ALSON
VAN WAGNER

"EARLY LOCAL
POULTRY
FARMING"

