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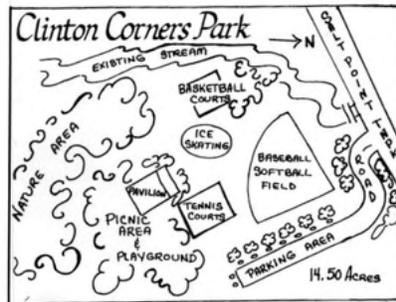
FRIENDS PARK: VOLUNTEERISM AT ITS BEST

by William P. McDermott

After once again watching kids under ten with their baseball gloves cycling along Salt Point Turnpike and Clinton Hollow Road to get to Little League games at Clinton Hollow Park (now Fran Mark Park), my wife Louise enlisted me in the spring of 1976 to create a baseball field on our property. Crude though it was, it served as a practice field for one season.

That year the town Planning Board had approved a plan for up to 49 houses to be built by a developer on Salt Point Turnpike (East Clinton Estates). Per the agreement, the developer offered the town a choice of accepting money or land as part of the plan. Paul Schwarze and I enlisted 50–60 local residents to attend the next Planning Board meeting for a public hearing. After a period of questions and answers, Paul asked the assembled citizens how many were interested in acquiring the land rather than the money from the developer. The Town Hall was filled with a thunderous applause for land acquisition. The Planning Board was then faced with the will of the attending citizens and voted to accept the land. The developer reluctantly agreed to set aside 14.9 acres with 300 feet of frontage on Salt Point Turnpike for what is now Friends Park.

All well and good. The next step was to ask the Town Board for money to create a park. Though the audio/visual presentation to the board (park with a baseball field, basketball and tennis courts, and a playground for small children designed by Paul Schwarze) was well received, the Town Board chose not to offer any financial support.



Now what? Louise and a number of others, including Glenda Schwarze and Mary Jo Nickerson, formed a fundraising committee. Garage sales, donations, and progressive dinners (the first in town) gradually raised over \$15,000. Pete Burns, Charlie Budd, Chick Wyant, and other volunteers donated the use of their bulldozers, front-end loaders, and similar equipment—as well as their labor—to convert the cornfield into a smooth surface.

The group charged me, a reluctant city boy, with grading the surface. When I expressed reluctance, Paul said, “Just get on the damn York rake tractor and drive.” So I went off with Paul following behind, seeding enough acreage for a baseball field. Money raised by the fundraising committee paid for the blacktop surfaces for two basketball courts and a tennis court. A \$750 donation from the Lions Club paid for the baseball backstop, which was installed by several of its members. With a couple of crude benches, the ballfield was ready for the Little League players and older residents interested in playing pickup softball.

A depression in the ground (courtesy of Pete Burns) filled with water in winter served as an ice skating rink. Pete also helped install the playground equipment for the young kids. Betty Davis paid for the shrubbery at the entrance to the park. A path allowed residents to visit several acres of wetland that the park volunteer committee protected.

Finally, Clinton had a park in Clinton Corners. What to name it? Responses to letters sent to all volunteer organizations resulted in many suggestions. It was the Friendship Garden Club’s entry “Friends Park” (Friends = Quakers) that was chosen. About two years after the work began, the completed park was turned over to an appreciative Town Board. *Volunteerism at its best!*

(Editor’s note: William P. McDermott was chairman of the Town Park at Clinton Corners Development Committee.)



FRIENDS PARK FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Louise McDermott, chair
Glenda Schwarze
Joan Ashton
Eleanor Burns
Jane Dieckman
Mary Jo Nickerson
Sally Smith
Ethna Kost

NEWS & NOTES

Members are encouraged to submit information of interest to the Society at large. Please send your emails to us c/o craigmarshall266@aol.com.

Artifact donations

Bob Schoch, son of the late Viola Schoch of Primrose Hill Farm, has offered a collection of valued family items relating to Clinton's heritage to our archive, educational, and exhibit programs. We are extremely appreciative of his offer and will keep you informed of this important project.

Roadside marker

Through an application by Vice President Craig Marshall, CHS has been awarded a grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation to cover the cost of a historical site roadside marker on Fiddlers Bridge Road. The sign will note the legend of the Fiddlers Bridge Ghost for which the road was named. Installation and a recognition event are planned for this spring.

Stewart's Shops donation

With cancellation of all CHS fundraising activities last year due to the virus, CHS is very grateful to be awarded \$2,500 from Stewart's Shops as part of their special COVID-19 program to support local non-profits affected by the pandemic. Thank you, Stewart's Shops!

Newsletter Team:

Craig Marshall
Judith Grabowski
Trip Sinnott
Eliot Werner

Clinton Historical Society is a not-for-profit organization established to preserve, maintain, promote, and educate on matters of historical significance and interest in the Town of Clinton and Dutchess County.



Friend us on Facebook at
Clinton Historical Society
clinton_historical_society.

THE UPTON LAKE 802 JUVENILE GRANGE

by Marjorie J. Buck

(Editor's note: Marjorie Buck, who grew up on a farm in Salt Point, recently donated to the Society her scrapbook from 1941—the year she served as lecturer at the Juvenile Grange, which met in the Creek Meeting House.)

The Juvenile Grange was patterned after the subordinate (adult) Grange. In 1941 there were fifteen officers listed. The top-ranking officer was the master, who presided over the meetings. The lecturer was the third-ranking officer and provided the program. Over the years I held both of these offices and various others as well.

When the master presided over the meetings, each officer had a particular spot in the room where he or she stood or sat. The master was at the front of the room. To the right of the master were Pomona (fruit), Ceres (grain), and Flora (flowers). They each had a little stand with a basket of fruit, grain, or flowers. The lecturer was on the left side of the room, about in the middle of that side. The gatekeeper was at the back of the room (near the entrance to the room). Members had to give the password to the gatekeeper when they entered the room for meetings, which had many rituals.

I recall that the lecturer's part of the meeting was toward the middle or end. The lecturer's job was to plan and lead the entertainment. The program usually started with someone giving the current events. The term "lecturer" likely had something to do with giving a lecture or presenting informational, educational, or entertaining material.

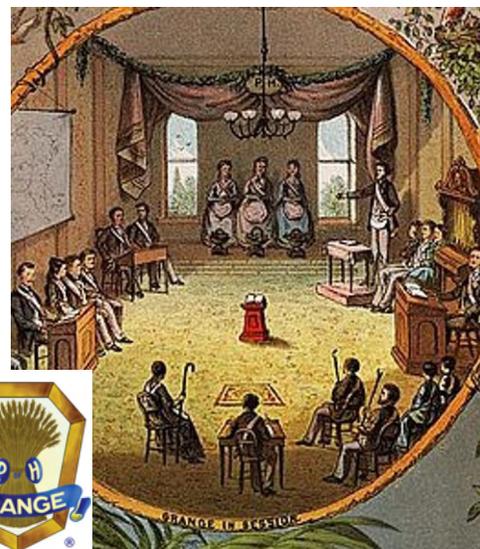
I lived on a farm in Salt Point and attended the one-room school there through sixth grade. In the fall of 1940, I started attending seventh grade in the Millbrook Memorial School and graduated from high school there in 1946. Aside from home and farm work and school, the Grange, 4-H, and church were our social activities.

After Juvenile Grange I joined the adult Upton Lake Grange and kept up my membership for many years, but I seldom attended the meetings after I graduated from college since I no longer lived in Dutchess County and was rarely home. I think the adult Grange accomplished a lot of good business, especially things helpful to the farmers.



Marjorie Buck's 1946 high school graduation photo

I do remember that a proposal my mother (Mildred C. Buck, wife of Clifford M. Buck) made to the Grange later became a New York State law. Here's how it happened. A Black person was walking on the road in Salt Point at night. He or she was hit by a car and I think was killed. My mother suggested that people should walk on the side of the road facing traffic and proposed this at a Grange meeting. The proposal was recommended higher up in the Grange organization and eventually became a New York State law.



ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, APRIL 2

Please plan to attend our Annual Business Meeting virtually (via Zoom) on Friday, April 2, at 7:30 p.m. The business meeting will take place just before the evening program, Craig Marshall's presentation "History of the Town of Clinton."

In accordance with our bylaws, members elect trustees at the annual business meeting. We will also announce the slate of officers for 2021-22 that has been approved by the Board. There will be brief reports on our programs, plans, and finances and a chance for members to ask questions. I promise the meeting will be brief, but this is an important legal requirement for our continuing work as an educational institution chartered by the State of New York.

So please join us and stay for Craig's program! And fingers crossed that next year we can come together at the Creek Meeting House in person and enjoy our traditional potluck dinner.

Cynthia M. Koch
President

Call for nominations

The CHS Board of Trustees is seeking nominations for trustees. Interested persons should contact info@clintonhistoricalsociety.org before March 15 for more information.

Board of Trustees

Cynthia Koch, president
Craig Marshall, vice president
Cathy McMahan, secretary
Frank McMahan, treasurer
Carol Burns
Rise Cross
Marge Fountain
Rich Morse
Mary Jo Nickerson
Lisa Noval
Jim Pellegrino
Glenda Schwarze



CHS WEBSITE ENHANCEMENTS

by Cathy McMahan, IT/Website Chair

- **Home page Announcement bar**—we can now highlight new website features, upcoming events, etc., on the home page.
- **Photo slider** added to home page—rotates through several vintage photos that will change periodically.
- **CHS publications** are available for purchase through the website. Click on Support Us—Shop to print the order form.
- **Videos** of our Zoom program meetings are being added to the website under People, Places, and Stories—Videos.
- **Donations** to CHS can now be made through PayPal. Click Support Us—Donate to make a donation. (*PayPal cannot be used for membership dues.*)



DISPLAY CASES

CHS has acquired three large display cases that will enhance our exhibits with secure, visible display space for artifacts from our archive and possibly loans from other groups and private collectors. The Society thanks the Beacon Historical Society for the donation and (left to right) Vice President Craig Marshall and CHS member John Vanderlee for moving the fragile cases to the Creek Meeting House.

2021

➤ DUES ARE DUE ➤

*Your CHS membership is important!
The address label on this newsletter
shows the most recent year
of paid dues.*

Student.....	\$10
Individual.....	\$20
Family	\$35
Friend.....	\$75
Donor	\$150
Patron	\$250
Benefactor.....	\$500
Visionary.....	\$1,000
Life.....	\$5,000

Please make checks payable to:

Clinton Historical Society

and mail to:

PO Box 122

Clinton Corners, NY 12514



Friday, April 2, 7:30 p.m.
Annual Business Meeting Via Zoom
and *History of the Town of Clinton*
 Program presented by **Craig Marshall**
See page 3 and 4 for details.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2021 FIRST FRIDAY PROGRAM ZOOM MEETINGS

Members will be sent the link for the Zoom programs in advance, along with information on how to download the necessary app.

April 2, 7:30 p.m.

History of the Town of Clinton

Presented by **Craig Marshall**, CHS Vice President and Town of Clinton historian

The Town of Clinton was incorporated in 1788 as one of the eight original towns in Dutchess County. Clinton was settled as part of the 1697 Great Nine Partners Patent, with the earliest road in the county passing through it in 1713. Many vintage photographs will be exhibited relating to early schools, churches, a dance hall, railroads, mills, and more. Examples of its notable early architecture will also be shown.



May 7, 7:30 p.m.

Film: Babe Ruth at Sing Sing

Presented by **Jim Ormond**, independent filmmaker

In 1929 Babe Ruth and the New York Yankees traveled to Sing Sing to play an exhibition game against the inmate team. Ruth blasted a fastball with such a force that it cleared the prison's 40-foot wall. This new documentary looks at the game through the lens of social history, examining the events in major league baseball and the American prison system that led up to the Sing Sing game.



June 4, 7:30 p.m.

The Forgotten Hamlets of Northern Dutchess County

Presented by **David Turner**

David Turner will speak on the many forgotten hamlets in the northern part of Dutchess County. Hear about the fascinating history of these locations. Included will be dozens of turn-of-the-century images of little-known hamlets from northern Dutchess County. In many cases he has before and after pictures of the buildings he will speak about—what their function once was and what it is today.

