



# Town of Clinton Historical Society Est. 1975 THE CLINTON HISTORIAN

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## IT'S COMING: THE RESTORATION OF THE CREEK MEETING HOUSE!

by Cynthia Koch

The Creek Meeting House was built in 1777–1782 by members of the Society of Friends (Quakers). An offshoot of the Nine Partners Meeting House in Millbrook (1751/1780), it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is considered a fine example of 18th century Quaker symmetrical “plain style” architecture.

The Creek Meeting House has not been significantly altered on the exterior. The Upton Lake Grange acquired the building in the early 20th century and significantly modified the interior, but many original features remain. The Historical Society has owned the building since 1992 and uses it for local history programming and as a gathering place for groups from throughout Dutchess County.

The Creek Meeting House is not presently accessible to people with disabilities and requires extensive interior and exterior repair and restoration. We are beginning our project by (a) addressing immediate problems of repair and public access, health, and safety and (b) undertaking a study to plan for the building’s long-term preservation and restoration.

This summer the Historical Society received three grants, totaling \$147,000, to help us move forward on the building’s repair and preservation—\$100,000 from the Dutchess County Community Development Block Grant Program to make the building accessible to people with disabilities; \$30,000 from the Dutchess County Historic Sites Infrastructure Grant Program to close up holes in the mortar and stonework at the tops of the gable ends; and \$17,000 from the Preservation League of New York State to complete a Historic Structure Report in order to document the historic building and prepare an overall plan for the building’s repair and restoration. We

are grateful to the Clinton Town Board for sponsoring the Community Development Block Grant; to Town Supervisor Michael Whitton, State Senator Sue Serino, and Assemblywoman Didi Barrett for writing letters in support of the Preservation League grant; and to Town Clerk Carol Mackin for her help with the county CDBG.

The Society must raise \$22,000 in matching funds for the grants already received and \$25,000 to repair the mortar and stonework at the top of the north and south walls. Please contribute!

Photo by Richard Morse



Interior north wall showing daylight beyond attic floor.

Photo by Richard Morse



Large void, south wall exterior.



## Fall Fundraisers

Clinton Historical Society

# TAG SALE & Home Baked Goods

**Fri. & Sat., Oct. 7 & 8  
9 am - 4 pm**

**2433 Salt Point Turnpike, Clinton Corners**

*Tag Sale donations are accepted 9/26 - 10/6. Items can be left on the porch. Please, no stuffed furniture, clothing, or electronics.*

## PROGRESSIVE DINNER

Our annual fall fundraiser, the Progressive Dinner, is on **Saturday, October 22**. This popular event brings members, friends, and neighbors together for an



enjoyable evening. The first stop is for wine and cheese, followed by dinner at another home and ending at the Creek Meeting House for dessert and coffee. Guests pay a minimum donation of \$50 per person for CHS members and \$60 per person for non-members. If you wish to participate in this important fundraiser, as a host or a guest, please contact Lisa Noval at 845- 266-4903 or [ljnoval@optonline.net](mailto:ljnoval@optonline.net) by 10/5.

# NEWS & NOTES

Members are encouraged to submit information of interest to the Society at large. Please send your emails to us [clo\\_craigmarshall266@aol.com](mailto:clo_craigmarshall266@aol.com).

## New Members

Dr. Carl A. Batlin and Susan Hinko  
Jay Britton and Tracy Ziemer  
Gail Denning  
Beth Forschler  
Lisa Klar  
Donna Mchugh  
Geoff Rodkey  
Maria Saha  
Katie Streck  
Stacy Whittaker

## Board of Trustees

Cynthia Koch, *president*  
Craig Marshall, *vice president*  
Cathy McMahan, *secretary*  
Frank McMahan, *treasurer*  
Rise Cross  
Marge Fountain  
William Holman  
Richard Morse  
Lisa Noval  
Robert Schoch  
Glenda Schwarze  
Barbara Seelbach  
Barbara Sweet

## Progressive Dinner is Back

The Progressive Dinner fundraiser is in need of hosts. Please contact Lisa Noval at 845-266-4903 or [ljnoval@optonline.net](mailto:ljnoval@optonline.net) by 10/5 to participate. See page 1 for details.

**Newsletter Team:** Craig Marshall, Judith Grabowski, Trip Sinnott, and 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](https://www.facebook.com/clinton_historical_society).

# SUMMER EXHIBIT SETS NEW RECORDS

by Craig Marshall



*The Zalesny family at the exhibit.*

“THE BEST YET!” “Wow, life was tough then!” “My kids and I learned a lot!” These were some of the comments our docents received from the visitors to our annual summer exhibit *Farm Life in Clinton: 1890–1920*, which was open weekends in July.

The principal theme was the life of Clinton farm families before the advent of electricity and tractors. The three parts of the exhibit were: a display of horse-drawn farm implements and a carriage on our front lawn; postings of over 120 vintage images with descriptive captions; and tables and walls filled with over sixty farm home artifacts from our archive and private collections. The exhibit was inspired by Stanley H. Benham, Sr. (1902–1990), who grew up on a dairy farm in Tower Hill near Millbrook and recorded in

detail the monthly schedule of the farmer, the weekly schedule of the farm wife, and children’s contributions to the family.

A mannequin of a farmer steering a horse-drawn plow greeted visitors. A new feature in this display was the description of “How It Works” on many of the artifact captions. For instance, for the vintage tabletop coffee mill, a knurled knob

could adjust the fineness of the grounds as the top crank turned to convert coffee beans into coffee grounds. One senior visitor, seeing the vintage meat grinder and sausage stuffer, remembered how as a youth he would grind pork on his family farm, clean the hog intestines, and push the ground pork into the intestines attached to the stuffer to make sausages. Another senior recalled spending hours on the hay rake hoping the rain held off until the hay could be loaded onto the field wagon. Clinton residents Claudia and Andy Cooley were amazed at how significantly the farmer’s monthly schedule was driven by nature and all the responsibilities of the farm wife. Fourteen-year-old Elijah Lindner learned about the work and tools used for ice harvesting, and his younger brother James liked seeing the old-time farming methods and horse-drawn implements.



*Visitor Jeff showing how he made sausage.*

A record 305 people attended the exhibit with visitors from as far as Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Jersey. Sales of Clinton-related books and maps reached a new high, as did the many donations that will help us develop future exhibits. Our sponsors again were Stewart’s Shops—with a generous grant—and Prime Print Shop of Red Oaks Mill, which donated the printing for advertising and exhibit material; we are very grateful for their support. Thanks also go to the docents who welcomed the visitors and answered their questions. This exhibit could not have been successful without the loan of artifacts from private collections and we thank the owners.



*Horse-drawn farm implements on display on the front lawn.*



*Trustee Lisa Noval staffed the CHS outdoor display in the morning*

## THE SOCIETY AT COMMUNITY DAY

*by Craig Marshall*

CLINTON COMMUNITY DAY, which began in 1917, returned this year for the first time since 2005. An energetic committee (which included representatives from the Clinton Historical Society) worked with Town officials to plan and execute a very successful event, which included displays by forty community organizations, vendors, and several fire companies and a parade and fireworks display. Former CHS Trustee Bill Dickett led the parade as Grand Marshal.

To help publicize our role in the community and attract new members, the CHS display featured posters of past Historical Society events related to preservation, education, fundraising, and social gatherings. We highlighted the upcoming restoration of the 1777 Creek Meeting House, and a mini-exhibit on our porch displayed artifacts of Clinton Community Days dating back to 1923. Our summer exhibit *Farm Life in Clinton: 1890–1920* attracted 215 visitors (a new one-day record) and President Cynthia Koch conducted tours of the building and archives. Unique flower arrangements distributed throughout our exhibit by the Friendship Garden Club added to the attractive display. Near the end of the day, CHS members carried the Society's banner in the parade.

This event was a great opportunity for residents and others to learn more about the Society and visit our landmark building. We thank the exhibit docents for welcoming our many visitors.

**2022 DUES**

*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



*Trustee Glenda Schwarze was an exhibit docent.*



*President Cynthia Koch leading a tour of the Creek Meeting House.*



*Grand Marshal Bill Dickett and Vice President Craig Marshall in the parade.*

*Photo by Carol Pedersen*



## Fall Fundraisers

- Fri., Oct. 7 Tag Sale
- Sat., Oct. 8 Tag Sale
- Sat., Oct. 22 Progressive Dinner
- Fri., Dec. 2 Holiday Auction
- Sat., Dec. 3 Holiday Craft Fair

Details in this newsletter!

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### MONTHLY FRIDAY PROGRAM MEETINGS

OCTOBER 7, 7:30 PM

Zoom only

*Patriots and Spies in Revolutionary  
New York*



**A. J. Schenkman,**

Gardiner town historian, has recently been named Best Author of 2022 by *Hudson Valley Magazine* for his book *Patriots and Spies in Revolutionary New York*. Mr. Schenkman

is a prolific author on historical topics in the Hudson Valley. He is a teacher, popular historian, and frequent lecturer.

NOVEMBER 4, 7:30 PM

Zoom only

*1944 Presidential Election  
and Dutchess County*

**Mark Lytle**, emeritus professor of history and environmental studies at Bard College, will speak on the 1944 presidential election when both candidates were from Dutchess County. President Roosevelt—seeking his fourth term—was from Hyde Park, while Governor Thomas E. Dewey was from Pawling. Dewey campaigned against the New Deal and for smaller government and less regulation of the economy. This was the only time both presidential candidates were from the same county.



DECEMBER 16, 7:30 PM

In person at Clinton Town Hall

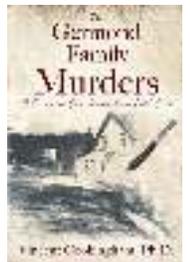
*The Germond Family Murders*

**Dr. Vincent Cookingham** will speak

at Town Hall on the Germond family murders.

In 1930 four members of the family were brutally murdered on their dairy farm in Stanfordville. The murders remain unsolved ninety years later and Dr. Cookingham, a distant

relative of the sheriff who initially led the investigation, has applied modern forensic knowledge to the case.



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 6:30 PM

**Holiday Potluck Dinner & Auction**

Bring a covered dish to share & a wrapped gift to auction.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 10 AM- 4 PM

**Holiday Craft Fair**

For more information contact Patricia Phelan at 845-518-5001 or phelan4@optonline.net