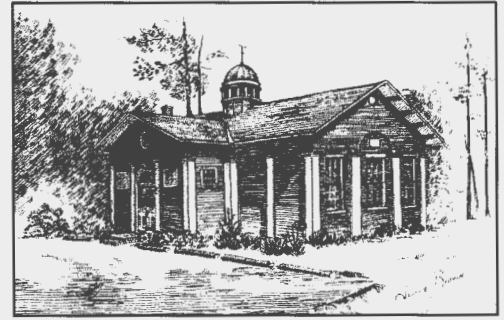


# TOWN OF BETHLEHEM HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

*Old Cedar Hill School House, Selkirk, New York 12158*



*Summer 2009*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members and Friends:

The 2009 annual meeting of the Town of Bethlehem Historical Association was held on May 14, 2009. Election of officers and Trustees resulted in the following slate: President, Valerie Thompson; Vice President, George Lenhardt; Recording Secretary, Carrie-Lynn VanApeldoorn; Corresponding Secretary, Susan Leath; Treasurer, Wendy Brandow. New Trustees are Lois Dillon and Susan Haswell to serve until 2010. Susan Haswell, outgoing President, was honored for her service to the Bethlehem Historical Association. Town Historian, Susan Leath, gave a presentation on Samuel Champlain and Henry Hudson. A group of 28 members attended and participated in a birthday cake celebration of the 150th birthday of the school house.

For the first time, members of the association marched in the Bethlehem Memorial Day Parade and we hope this will be an annual event.

Our summer exhibit opening, "Bethlehem's Hudson River Heritage", was held on Sunday, June 14, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Part of the day's celebration was a display and sale by members of the Bethlehem Art Association. An ice-cream social at 1:00 p.m. courtesy of Stewart's Shops provided a welcome treat on a rare day of sunshine in an otherwise rainy season. The exhibit features a large area relating to the importance of steamships, both commercial and recreational. A series of photographs from our collection, donated years ago by steamship buff and former member, Bill Tinney, portrayed some of the important steamships of that era.

Emerson Martin, Jr. had on display his extensive collection of Indian artifacts reflecting the history of the Native Americans who hunted and fished in our area. Emerson was available to provide additional information to visitors. Other parts of the exhibit included displays on ice-fishing and bee keeping - important industries in the early life of our community. Many thanks to Ann VanDervort and Marian Davis who spent hours of time arranging the exhibit and to all those, far too numerous to mention specifically, who contributed in ways both large and small to produce and manage this outstanding visual display of our Bethlehem history. The exhibit remains open at the Cedar Hill Schoolhouse Museum, 1003 River Road in Selkirk on Sunday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. until October 24, 2009. This is a must-see presentation of which we can be justly proud. Over 117 visitors signed our register on the opening day and since then until August 1st the museum has had 80 visitors.

After many years of dedication to the Bethlehem Historical Association, as president, trustee and most recently chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, Peter McGinty, has decided to take a well-earned rest from his active participation. Thank you Peter for so much you have given us through the years. Our new vice president, George Lenhardt, has graciously agreed to take on the added responsibility as chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. George welcomes any volunteers to assist him in this important function.

I'd like to call attention to the new post office box for our association. The address is P.O. Box 263, Selkirk, NY 12158. Mail sent to our old address is re-routed and then forwarded to the box which results in a delay of mail reception. Thanks!

Due to the extension of the Bethlehem Hudson River Heritage Exhibit until October 25, 2009, the annual card party held at the end of October will be moved to a spring date yet to be determined.

Looking ahead, the Bethlehem Historical Association is committed to a presence at the Bethlehem Voyage 400: A festival commemorating Henry Hudson's Journey in 1609. This celebration will take place on August 16, 2009 from noon to 6 p.m. at the Henry Hudson Park. BHA will have a booth with relevant historical displays and membership information.

Plans are currently underway for a bus trip on Saturday, October 17, 2009 to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to view the opening of the New American Wing. Colonial and early nineteenth century period rooms have been installed and are being interpreted - One of these exhibits included the Winne Room from the Town of Bethlehem. Thanks to Susan Haswell for organizing this trip and details with respect to costs, etc. will be forthcoming shortly.

At the June 14th social, Ron Selkirk presented the BHA with a detailed written history of his ancestor, James Selkirk (1756-1820). On Sunday, July 25th a New York State Historical marker was unveiled honoring his great-great-great grandfather James, a Revolutionary War patriot, who founded the hamlet of Selkirk. Susan Haswell former BHA President, and Town Historian, Susan Leath, attended the event.

A thank you is in order to Ann VanDervort for her care of our flower beds and to Jack Cunningham, Supervisor, and Gregg Sagendorph, Highway Superintendent and his crew for their continued support and excellent maintenance of the museum grounds.

Valerie J. Thompson

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

Lois Dillon, *Committee Chair*

Our Town has a famous name - Bethlehem. Many have had suggestions of how the name was started years ago, but we really do not know.

There was a story told about a young man our government sent out to Central New York State years ago with the job of naming the Towns. He was a student and lover of Greek and Roman History. Note some of the names he picked: Ithaca, Geneva, Homer, Ovid, Aurora.

Could a young man have named the Town of Bethlehem after his favorite period in history??

The Helderberg Mountains can be seen from our Town. They are famous for their escarpment with fossil rock from the Ice Age. Also, they are important for recreation. However, long before these things were known, and our town was just developing, blue slate was found in these mountains and became important as building developed. Men delivering slate in wagons coming down from the mountains stopped overnight on their way in small hotels along the the main road to town.



This is a photo of one of our Town's Historic Houses. Located on the Hudson River, the Albany Engineer whose name was Melious built this house in 1904 at Van Wie's Point. It was later sold to Chauncey Hakes a well-known automobile dealer and aviator who brought his bride here. He was a good friend of Charles Lindbergh and he was responsible in bringing Lindbergh to Albany where Lindbergh and his famous plane The Spirit of St. Louis appeared before thousands of people in Albany's Lincoln Park.

## "THE SOMETIMES DARK SIDE OF GENEALOGY"

By Art Young, *Chair, Genealogy Committee*

Luck both good and bad often plays a major part in genealogy research. I was at a dead end as to the family of my great-great grandmother, Helen Jane (Hinckley) Reed, until I learned that she died in the city of Waterford. So I visited the Waterford City Clerk's office and requested a copy of her death certificate. She died in 1912 and deaths in those days were hand recorded in those 3 x 4 foot ledger books. The new death certificate form being used today does not have a blank for the parents of the deceased, but I just happened to notice, as the clerk was copying the information for me, that there was a column in their ledger marked parents so I asked the clerk to please add all of the information contained in their records, to the death certificate form, even if there was no blank line requesting it.

They added Stallham Hinckley, father and Jerusha Bradish, Mother that was the good luck. So on my next trip to the NYSL, I found a book listed for the Bradish family, only was not able to locate it on the shelf indicated. However as I turned away from that book stack, I heard something fall. I almost didn't go back to see what it was but thought maybe I had created some type of problem on the book shelf on which I had been searching - guess what? The Bradish book I was looking for was a wrapped up canvas square that had been dislodged from the back of the shelf and that was what had fallen to the floor.

The chart was hand written in 1888 and contained 6 generations of the Bradish family starting with Robert who came to America in 1635, who had a son Joseph born in Cambridge MA, who had 3 sons, John, James and Joseph. The chart listed every child of both John and James through the next 4 generations and lucky for me I found Jericho Brandish married to Stallham Hinckley in the last generation at the very bottom of the chart, under son James's family line. Strange that the only mention on the chart of Joseph, the brother of John and James was "also a son Joseph of which nothing more is known".

Well, maybe not so strange on this 1888 chart of a well-to-do MA family. More recent research of the Bradish family shows that brother Joseph born 1672 in Sudbury MA and who died 1700 in Kent England was a pirate. In 1698 he signed on as boson mate on the Adventure, bound for Borneo. When they reached the Spice Islands and while most of the passengers and officers were on shore, some of the crew members decided to take over the ship and divide up the cargo which consisted largely of precious metals and Spanish gold coins. Joseph was the only one on board who understood navigation, so they made him captain and gave him 2 ½ shares of the cargo. The Adventure with Joseph Bradish as captain, sailed with Captain Kidd's group for a while but the Adventure was later captured in Boston harbor. Joseph was returned to Kent England where most piracy trials were held at that time. He was convicted of piracy and executed by hanging on 12 July 1700.

(P.S. Please keep in mind that I am descended from his brother James, Joseph the pirate was not a blood relative of mine only a very-very-very distant sixth great uncle.)



## GENEALOGY CORNER

By Art Young, *Committee Chairman*

Spring 2009

Today I would like to provide you with some information on the importance of "passenger lists" when searching for your ancestors. The history of passenger arrival records to our county is much too lengthy for this newsletter article alone and we will cover this topic additionally in a future "G" series regular meeting report. Passenger lists may contain vital facts and records for anyone who has either background information or some other knowledge of having some ancestors that were born outside of the United States.

The most difficult part of passenger list research is often just finding where the records are stored. This has been made much easier with the emergence of the internet as a communications and reference tool and the proliferation of passenger list databases on CD-ROM's. Following are some internet resources for your consideration: Ellis Island – [www.elisisland.org/](http://www.elisisland.org/); Hamburg passenger list 1850-1934 – [www.genealogy.net/gene/www/emig/ham\\_pass.html](http://www.genealogy.net/gene/www/emig/ham_pass.html); National Archives – [www.nara.gov/publications/microfilm/immigrant/immipass.html](http://www.nara.gov/publications/microfilm/immigrant/immipass.html); The Olive Tree immigration passenger lists – [www.rootsweb.com/~ote/immipass.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~ote/immipass.html); Family records – [www.Familyrecords.gov.uk](http://www.Familyrecords.gov.uk); Mary's Genealogy Treasures – [www.telusplanet.net/public/mtoll/mmigr.htm](http://www.telusplanet.net/public/mtoll/mmigr.htm) and Cyndi's List - [www.cyndislist.com/ships.htm](http://www.cyndislist.com/ships.htm).

Another great resource for passenger lists is our National Archives Centers and we are most fortunate to have three regional offices within driving distance: Northeast Region Pittsfield, Silvio Conte National Records Center, 10 Conte Drive, Pittsfield, MA 01201-8230, Tel. 413-236-3600 – Email [Pittsfield.archives@nara.gov](mailto:Pittsfield.archives@nara.gov)  
Northeast Region Boston. Frederick C. Murphy Federal Center, 380 Trapello Road, Waltham, MA 02452-6399, Tel. 781-663-0154 – Email [Waltham.archives@nara.gov](mailto:Waltham.archives@nara.gov)  
Northeast Region New York City, 201 Varick Street, New York City, New York 10014, Tel. 1-866-840-1752 or 212-401-1620 – Email [newyork.archives@nara.gov](mailto:newyork.archives@nara.gov)

When the passenger lists are located for an ancestor, they most often include a copy of the ship manifest. The manifest most often will include an entire family if they all came at the same time or other relatives of a single person if coming alone. Ages are often included, as are city and country of birth and sometimes the name of nearest relative that has remained in the country of birth is recorded. The entry port of crossing is always included together with the landing date and in some cases the ancestor's city or town of destination in America is included.

Another excellent resource for passenger list information may be found at [www.familytreemaker.com](http://www.familytreemaker.com) – you do need to be careful with this research as some services listed here are free and you may find somewhere fees are charged which may be a more costly service than you wish. In any event good luck with your research.

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### OLD PHOTOGRAPHS ON EXHIBIT

BHA Members have been scouring the Town Photo Archives and BHA's collection to present "Photographic Memories: Bethlehem" at the Bethlehem Public Library, October 1 through the 31st. The exhibit features a variety of old Bethlehem photos from the early 20th century on. Enjoy pictures of people, homes, vehicles, rural scenes, industry and more as part of this Quadracentennial display. **Reception: Sunday, Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2pm - 4pm; at the Library.**

### SAVE THE DATE! BHA BUS TRIP TO NYC

On Saturday, October 17, Bethlehem Historical Association will sponsor a bus trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City to visit the recently re-opened American Wing and specifically the 1751 New York Dutch Room that was reconstructed from the Town of Bethlehem's Winne House.

Joining us as lecturer/guide will be architectural historian, Ned Pratt, who is currently president of the Dutch Barn Preservation Society and the local chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians.

There will be time on your own to see other exhibits. You can view the Met's website at [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org).

More details will soon follow in a separate flyer. Cost for BHA members will be about \$55; non-members, \$60. Cost includes motor coach transportation; museum admission, guide service and driver tip.

*And now for something completely different:*

For the regular meeting of Thursday, November 19, the Association is asking members to volunteer to give us a presentation of not more than ten minutes about some antique in their collection which has an interesting story attached. This object could be anything, as long as you can display it on a table at the front of the room and as long as you can talk about it – how you got it, what you do with it, why you cannot get rid of it until Aunt Mabel is dead – whatever. Just make sure that you do not take more than ten minutes absolute maximum to do so.

To encourage you, the spouse of Madame President and the Program Chairperson will lead off the evening with interesting items from their own family history.

For further information, or to volunteer for this program please call Bob Mulligan at 439-3802.



*Outgoing President, Susan Haswell  
and  
Incoming President,  
Valerie Thompson*

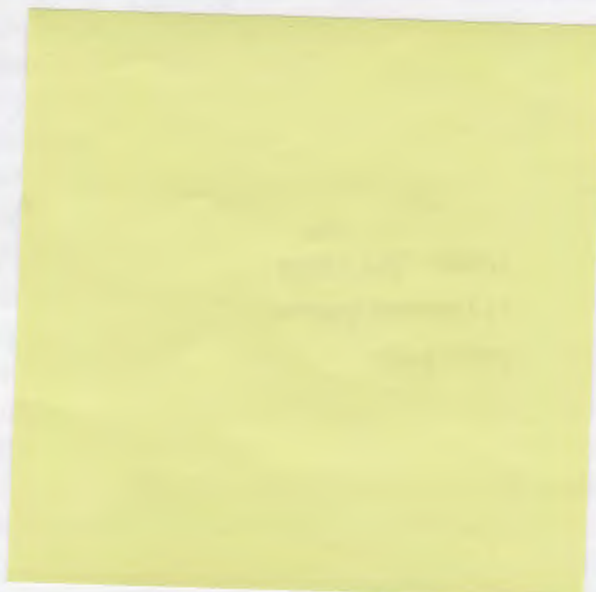


*Memorial Day Parade*



*Birthday Cake  
150 Years!*

*Newsletter - Lois Dillon & Kathy Newkirk*



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