



Newsletter

APRIL 2014

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Live for Today

Dream for Tomorrow

Learn from Yesterday

ANTIQUe APPRAISAL DAY APRIL 12 TOWN HALL WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS IT WORTH?

Have you ever asked yourself if those treasures you have tucked away should be insured? Are they heirlooms, or just taking up valuable space? Solve the mystery behind your keepsakes and come **Saturday, April 12**, to have your cherished possessions evaluated.

Our experts will give oral appraisals. They are particularly knowledgeable about, but not necessarily limited to, the following categories: **Dennis Holzman** (rare and out-of-print books, autographs, photographs, prints, fine art, decorative accessories, Americana); **Mark Lawson** (estate jewelry, paintings, fine

decorative antiques, rare collectibles); Dr. **Galen Ritchie** (coins and stamps) and **Ann VanDervort** (dolls and accessories and old glass).

Come early between **10 a.m. and 2 p.m.** to the **Bethlehem Town Hall**, 445 Delaware Avenue. The charge for **three items is \$10** or one item for \$5. Admission is free.

BHA members will have items of interest on display. **Rob Halley** will "help us appreciate the lives of our ancestors through strange and wonderful things." **Galen Ritchie** will share his Lincoln penny collection. **Ann VanDervort** will have antique dolls and price books for you to admire. (Continued on back page.)



History Hikes and a Paddle



History hiking with Susan Leath in Delmar.

History hikes are back again this year. On the second Saturday of the month beginning in April, town historian Susan Leath will lead hikes that explore Bethlehem's hamlets. Delmar, Slingerlands, South Bethlehem, Normansville, Selkirk and Cedar Hill are all

included. New this year, join Leath for a guided kayak paddle along the Hudson River and Vlomankill on Saturday July 19. Learn about Bethlehem's historic river connections from the unique perspective of actually being on the water. For a complete

listing and registration info visit our website at bethlehemhistorical.org or email Susan Leath at sleath@townofbethlehem.org.

"To keep our museum moving forward and have it for the next generation, we need your help"

Volunteers Needed

Summer Hosts: Just one Sunday afternoon during the summer for 2 hours from 2-4 PM. You don't need to be an expert about the museum, just a welcoming host. You will have a partner and there is plenty of reading material if you want to brush up on your local history.

Meeting Greeter: At our regular meetings, greet guests, ask them to sign the register and give them a smile.

Mailing Help: Help with mailing 2 or 3 times a year stuffing envelopes and putting on labels.

Do you have ideas for activities or displays? Do any of BHA's committees appeal to you? We'd want to hear from you! To keep our museum moving forward and have it for the next generation we need your help. Please contact Dawn Pratt, 767-2285, dpratt137@aol.com

Annual Meeting and Dinner

We are pleased to announce that our annual meeting this year will feature a buffet dinner held at the Mansion at Cedar Hill. The Mansion at Cedar Hill is the elegant and historic building across from the schoolhouse which is the former summer home of Governor Glynn, residence of noted attorney Daniel Prior and also the former Elks Club. The date is Thursday May 15 at 5:30 PM with the annual meeting beginning at 7 PM. Chicken Cacciatore, green beans almondine and tossed salad are on the menu and there will be a cash bar. Look for a mailing soon with details on price and reservations.



Cosmetic “smoothing” of house hold linen and clothing could begin only when flax, silk, and cotton came to be spun into threads fine enough for the finished woven articles to react favorably to the application of a heated tool. The process of ironing began as far back as 1082 by the Chinese.

Can you imagine the fuels used to heat up these antique irons? Kerosene, gasoline hot coals – so hazardous! Ironing was truly a dreaded ordeal for the maid

or housewife.

One of our large collections at the museum is period clothing. Not only will we be able to display the clothing, but with our new acquisition of irons, we can match the clothing to the iron used at that time.

To mention a few of the smoothing irons donated by the estate of Joan Stahlman are: various sad irons, a charcoal iron by Talifero and Cummings, a Geneva hand flutter iron, petrol irons by the Akron Lamp Company and early electric irons. This donation is greatly appreciated.

Parlor Organs

For a number of years a handsome parlor organ has stood in the corner of our Cedar Hill Schoolhouse museum. It was donated by Grace and William Waldbillig who had it in their home on Wemple Road. It brings to mind memories of simpler times and family gatherings long before television and social networking were means of entertainment.

Parlor organs, also called pump or reed organs, were in widespread use during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Because they were lighter in weight and more durable than pianos, colonists found them easier to transport and maintain. The pump organ was a popular choice for smaller churches and was commonly used in theaters during the silent film era.

Manufacturers designed elaborate cases for the organs as they became prized pieces of furniture for the home, reaching the peak of popularity about 1900. It would not be unusual for a prosperous farm family to own one.

At one time there were over 600 factories producing such organs in the United States. Our organ was made about 1888 by the Wilcox and White Company in Meriden, Connecticut.

The popularity of the parlor organ declined with the change of musical taste in the 1920's. By the mid 1930's the era of the pump organ ended with the invention of the electronic organ.



BHA is turning 50 in 2015!

The Bethlehem Historical Association opened the Cedar Hill Schoolhouse as a museum of local history in 1965. We are starting to plan for our 50th anniversary celebration. Do you have any thoughts or ideas to share? Our president Kathy Newkirk would love to hear from you. Contact her at 767-2980 or kan331@aol.com.

Bethlehem Historical Association

Cedar Hill School House

P.O. Box 263

Selkirk, NY 12158

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Continued from front...

Art Young will display a collection of stamps.

This event is part of an ongoing effort to keep our Bethlehem Historical Association Museum up-to-date and moving forward. Kathleen Newkirk, president of the Association, explained, "Proceeds are intended to be used to purchase archival storage supplies in order to safely preserve and organize our collections."

For more information, check **bethlehemhistorical.org** or call Susan Gutman at 475-1411 and start searching your closets, shelves and trunks for your "what's its?" to bring on April 12.

Coming Events

At the Cedar Hill Schoolhouse

Thursday, March 20, 7 PM

The Winne/Creble House

A talk by

Brian Parker and Bill McMillen

Saturday, April 12

Antique Appraisal Day

(See front page for details.)

Thursday, April 24, 7 PM

The Corning Estate

A talk by Paul Grondahl

Thursday, May 15

Dinner & Annual Meeting

(See inside for details.)

Coming in June

Ice Cream Social and Summer Exhibit

Farming in Bethlehem