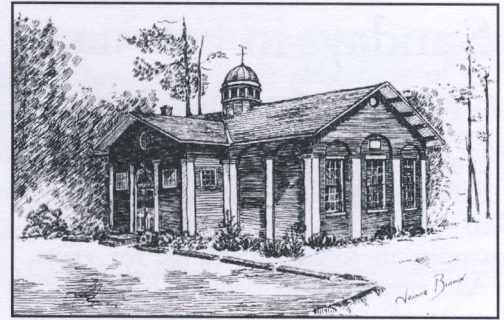


TOWN OF BETHLEHEM HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Old Cedar Hill School House, Selkirk, New York 12158



President's Message

Spring 2013

As I sit here contemplating what words to put on paper for my final message as your President, I am waiting for Spring to arrive even though the calendar indicates it is already here.

Two years ago when I started in the office of President, the Bethlehem Historical Association had 157 members. As I indicated at the time, my goal was to increase membership. Through the efforts of our membership chair, Kathleen Wagar, as well as others, we added 19 new members this year and now stand at a total of 174. (We are poised to drop 10 from our roster unless their past dues are paid soon). Although this is not a large increase in membership, it is moving in a positive direction.

BHA must continue to attract younger members of our community in order to continue its goals. I want to thank Karen Beck, Dawn Pratt, and Kathleen Wagar who tried something new this year by opening the museum each Sunday during February and also hosting weekday events for school children. This resulted in 185 individuals attending. Carrie-Lynn VanApeldoorn also assisted in this project. These efforts provided an opportunity for our children to see the benefits of your museum and "Learn from Yesterday". Perhaps this exposure has sown a seed in one or more individuals that will blossom and grow.

Susan Leath will continue her

history hikes once the weather improves. These hikes offer the opportunity to educate participants about BHA and provide a vehicle to attract new members.

On behalf of our association, I wish to thank Wendy Brandow, Susan Gutman, and Susan Leath for their efforts involved in running the QUILT raffle. This was our one fundraiser this year. As a note of interest, the winning ticket was sold at the local farmers' market.

BHA tries to maintain a presence at many local historical events in an effort to further our purpose. Our arms are open and welcoming for potential members. This often results in new members bringing their own personal knowledge and experiences of our town. If you know of individuals who may be interested in BHA, please do not hesitate to recommend them to membership in our historical association.

Our Holiday Silver Tea was held on Sunday, December 2, 2012 and Monday, December 3, 2012 with many in attendance. Participation was much larger than we have seen in many years. The DAR and Garden Club held their meetings at the museum during the holidays with 15 and 40 members respectively in attendance. Thank you to our Museum Display Chairs Ann VanDervort, Marian Davis and their committee for turning the museum into a festive "Christmas in Bethlehem"

scene and to Dawn Pratt, Kathy Newkirk and their committee for overseeing the refreshments.

The Annual Meeting and Election of officers and trustees will be held on May 16, 2013 at the Museum. I wish the newly elected slate of officers much success. The start of our Summer exhibit will begin on June 23, 2013 which will also be our annual Ice Cream Social from 1 to 4 PM. Please make a note on your calendar to attend and bring a friend to enjoy the exhibit and great ice cream!

In conclusion, a big THANK YOU to all of the officers and committee chairpersons who make the President's job easy! My past two years as your President has been interesting and rewarding. Thank you all, for showing confidence in me.



We note with regret the death of Member Marie Weideman.

Ms. Weideman was a long time member of our Association and made contributions to our Association.

Sundays in February

This year the Association decided to open the schoolhouse for a few hours each Sunday afternoon in the month of February. There was also an effort to encourage school groups and scout troops in town to arrange for visits. As a result, we welcomed 185 visitors, most of whom came to their town's museum for the first time.



Those of us who served as greeters and guides enjoyed meeting so many new people and acquainting them with the building. In addition to the permanent exhibits pertaining to the school and other aspects of Bethlehem history, the temporary exhibits were of great interest.



"Ice Harvesting on the Hudson" conveys the process of collecting and storing ice. Visitors learn that prior to refrigeration, the ice industry was so important that there were 187 ice houses along the Hudson just between Albany and New York City. Everyone has also been amazed to find out that ice packed carefully in sawdust would remain frozen, even throughout the summer months.

The other new exhibit, "Toys from the Attic" features many toys, games and other amusements from past generations. It is entertaining to look at this engaging collection, which evokes so many memories. Visitors have contributed to the fun by

recording their own favorite childhood playthings in booklets which we have available.

The touch table has been introduced in order to provide an interactive, hands-on activity. It is a display of objects which were once in common everyday usage, but are now either rarely used or have become obsolete. Children are able to handle each item and try to guess how it was used, while adults like to reminisce about the way things used to be done; so it has been fun for all ages.

Going to the museum is a pleasant, worthwhile way to spend a Sunday afternoon. We hope to do it again next year!

-Karen Beck



HISTORIC RESOURCES

By Lois Dillon, Chairman

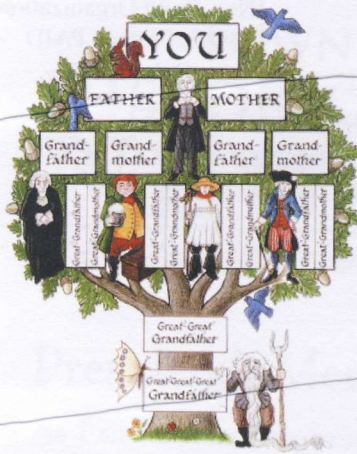
Now that spring has finally arrived, on a nice Sunday why don't you take a drive down to Van Wie's Point. Take Mosher Road off Route 144, not too far north from our Association. As you drive by the houses overlooking the Hudson River, you will pass some historic houses that you may have seen in photos on our Museum Walls. Many were built as summer homes for Albany residents such as Dr. Hailles – it has a tower on the second floor where he had a telescope. And, the Van Wie House where there is a historic marker – this is one of the oldest houses in Albany County. As you drive along, remember that they had Hudson River boat landings to pick up passengers for Albany and going to school at R.P.I. such as Dr. Hailles son did. Down the river further south Barrent Winne Road had a barge and freight business where local farmers brought their vegetables, fruit and hay to be sent and sold in New York City.

While there, think about the many ice houses that lined the river for miles. Then drive down Route 144 to our Town Park. Passing the big white house on the right that was George Best's house that was built allowing him to look down on the big ice house he owned. Today this is where you now enjoy games and picnics. If you want to know more about that – when our Museum opens for the season come down and ask to see the video where Henry Meyer tells you about ice-harvesting when he was working at Best's ice house. Another video you might enjoy seeing is Tollgates and Plank Roads with Allison Bennett and me. In it there is also pictures of when we moved our tollgate building down from Glenmont Center.



Annual Christmas Tea was held at the Little Red Schoolhouse Museum with wonderful decorations on December 2 and 3, 2012.

GENEALOGY CORNER *by Art Young Genealogy Chairman*



During several past genealogy reports, I have suggested that Ancestry.com is a great genealogy resource – parts of it are free from your home computer plus many of our local public libraries offer their full service free of charge, as also does our New York State Library. If you try Ancestry.com at home there are some more or less public files that they let you research without charge. There is a cost of about \$365 to purchase the full service for one year, but they also have an arrangement where you may purchase full access on a monthly basis for about \$35, so you could store up all your questions and just purchase one month's service.

However, having said all of that about Ancestry, I have recently found another research resource called Archives.com. This has very limited freebies but it will provide some basic public record info at no cost. Just put your name in the blank space they provide and you will get some response. I put in Arthur Young and got back "Arthur F. Young age 83, my correct date of birth, that I lived in Delmar, NY, my wife was Ann [they left out the e], I had a son David A. Young married to Maureen E. Young". They also provided some excellent research screens including: Young Surname History, View Relatives for Arthur Young, Build your Family History, Set Up Ancestor Alerts. Learning Resources and Historical Records Search. If you do much research on Google, you will often find that you are referred to Archives.com to answer your question, the catch is that Archives then asks that you sign up for their 7 day free service which is OK but it leads you into their full year annual subscription. I have now decided to sign up with them for at least one year at a cost of \$39.95, which is a lot less than Ancestry, but school is still out as to their ability to provide either more or better information. You may cancel Archives.com at any time if you do not find it helpful, but so far I have found a couple of NYS items that Ancestry did not have, or else I just did not make a correct entry. In any event, good luck with your research.

HISTORY HIKES TO RESUME IN 2013

History hikes sponsored by the Bethlehem Historical Association will resume beginning in May. Centered on local parks, History Hikes explore Bethlehem's hamlets led by Town Historian, Susan Leath, and Members of our Association. Hikes take place on the second Saturday of the month and begin at 9:30 a.m. lasting about one hour. The hikes are free; however, you must pre-register through the Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Department using their mail-in registration form or through their online system found at townofbethlehem.org. Each hike is limited to 20 people.

Hike locations include Delmar Four Corners May 11 and November 9; Slingerlands Fire Fighters Memorial Park: June 8; South Bethlehem Park July 13; Normanskill Farm Park August 10; Henry Hudson Park September 14; and Selkirk Park October 12

In case of inclement weather, check the Bethlehem Historical Association's website at BethlehemHistorical.org for cancellations. Info will be posted by 8 AM the day of the hike.

Questions regarding tours can be directed to Susan Leath, sleath@townofbethlehem.org.

TIME CHANGE

By Robert Mulligan

My family moved from Albany to the suburbs in 1948. I grew up on Brockley Drive, across Delaware Avenue from the new High School. At the corner of Elm and Delaware, where the Stewarts store is today, there was an old, large, weathered, mossy building set back from the roads, which I now realize was probably a former blacksmith shop. It was a gas station in my day, with a single set of pumps before it. I think the hardstand was probably just hard-packed gravel. I doubt if it was blacktop in that primitive station.

One day I was there on my bike, and two friends also happened to be there. One was "working" there. A well dressed lady drove up to the pumps in a big white convertible with the top down. My friend approached the car and she said "Five, please". He asked her, "Five gallons or five dollars?"

My other friend laughed. "You dumbbell! You can't put five dollars worth of gas in a car!"

And he was right. Gas was probably about 27 cents a gallon at that time. The cheapest gas I remember was 14 cents a gallon on Route 17 in northern New Jersey, during their perpetual gas wars.

What ever happened?

AN OLD-FASHION SU.

By Ann VanDervort, Museum Chairman

The Bethlehem Historical Association will open on June 23rd for our summer exhibit from 2 to 4 pm. Come join us for a relaxing day listening to the "Rural Felicity" singers and of course, a dish of ice cream compliments of Stewarts Stores.

This summer we will transform the center part of the museum into a park setting. This will showcase our newly acquired clothing from the 1890's.

We are looking forward to an interesting and colorful summer exhibit.

BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY CELEBRATION

The Bethlehem Public Library will be celebrating 100 years this year. Events are planned with a May date for the initial celebration. Please check the Bethlehem Public Library website for full details.

HELP NEEDED!

Hosts and hostesses needed for Sunday openings from 2 pm to 4 pm. Please call Dawn Pratt at 767-2285 to volunteer. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

If you have returned from vacationing in other areas, please notify Karen Beck so she can change your address to the local one.

Newsletter - Lois Dillon & Kathy Newkirk

MAY 16, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

Please plan to attend the May Annual Meeting and Election of Officers. The slate of officers for the year 2013-2014 were announced and will be voted upon at the May meeting. Additional Members will be needed to help fill vacant positions. Anyone interested in serving the Association please contact Kathy Newkirk at (518) 767-2980 or kan331@aol.com.

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

The date for the opening of the summer exhibit and ice cream social has been changed to June 23, 2013. Please make a note of this change and plan to attend this wonderful event.



1215889732 R001



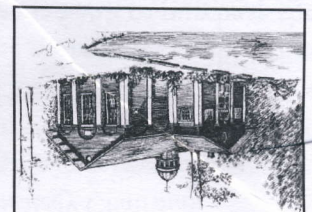
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Selkirk, New York 12158

P.O. Box 263

Cedar Hill School House

BETHLEHEM HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage PAID
Delmar, NY
Permit No. 52