

---

---

# DUANESBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

February 2013

---

---

### Message From The Directors

The Duanesburg Historical Society was organized in 1944, and has currently grown to over 100 members and member families. We are a not for profit organization chartered by the State of New York Education Department. The Society has worked diligently to preserve the heritage of the Town of Duanesburg through interesting programs open to the public, exhibits at events such as Duanesburg Days, and the publication of three volumes of "Remembering the Town of Duanesburg". But the heart of our organization is our members, with their continuous support and interest in the history of the Town of Duanesburg.

The creation of an Education and Research Center has been a goal of the DHS for many years. Such a facility would enable us to maintain an ever growing collection of objects, documents and photographs. The Society owns a building lot adjacent to the Quaker Street Library. However, at this time we do not have sufficient resources, both financial and physical, for the construction and maintenance of such a facility. However, it is imperative that historically important materials stay in the Town and be accessible to all including the Town Historian.

We also believe a central location will encourage residents to add to these documents and artifacts. Your Board of Trustees is open to further suggestions and support from the membership to help us address this challenge.

Finally, we appreciate the interest of our Town Supervisor, Rene Merrihew, and other Town Board Members who have supported DHS actively and through memberships. Our common ground is the rich history of the Town of Duanesburg and the preservation of same.

President, Leonard Van Buren  
Vice President, Shirley Martin  
Treasurer, Howard Ohlhous  
Secretary, John Peters  
Trustees  
John Brown  
Shirley Clark  
Mary Hughes  
Pat Van Buren  
Carl Wiedemann

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Directors Message
- 2 Historically Significant Buildings
- 3 2013 Program Schedule & Did You Know
- 4 The Toad Hollow School Bell
- 5 History Books Available from DHS



The Christ Episcopal Church in Duanesburg

## Historically Significant Buildings in the Town of Duaneburg

Compiled by Art Willis

While Duaneburg contains numerous structures identified as historic by New York State and the National Historic Register, four buildings stand out as significant markers of America's architectural history. Foremost among them must be Christ Episcopal Church built with financing and oversight by James Duane, completed in 1793 and unaltered since the addition of a steeple in 1811. Unique in upstate New York as a New England style, side entranced meetinghouse, the church includes an "hour glass" pulpit, a five-bay center-hall form, delicate corner pilasters and classically inspired detailing, including a prominent Palladian window. Many of the illustrious Duane family are interred in the cellar crypt, including James Duane, himself.



The Duane Mansion

The Duane Mansion, built between 1812 and 1816, is a large two-story frame residence on a slightly raised stone foundation. Symmetry and repetition characterize this Federal style structure. It has a low pitched roof, pierced by two chimneys with a simple frieze and boxed cornices marking the roofline. Squat, double hung windows with three-over-three glazing circle the low upper story, spaced at regular intervals. A prominent two-story piazza supported by massive Doric columns span the north facade. Catherine Livingston Duane, the third daughter of James Duane and Maria Livingston, underwrote the building of the manor with the direction of French architect Jacques Ramee (of Union college fame) and Philip Hooker.

The North Mansion and Tenant House were built in the late 18th century by General William North and Mary Duane, James Duane's eldest daughter. This mansion is a finely crafted example of Georgian style architecture and is the only example of this style in Duaneburg: symmetrical configuration, regular fenestration (window arrangement), hipped roof, carved frieze and pedimented doorway are characteristic of the more formal and sophisticated icons of

this style. The tenant house is a one and one-half story, altered salt box.



The North Mansion

Shortly before 1780, Quaker families began migrating to Duaneburg from neighboring New England and from the vicinity of Poughkeepsie, New York. On land leased from James Duane, they erected a log meetinghouse in what has since been called Quaker Street. Because of growing numbers, these Quakers (Friends) needed a much larger structure to accommodate the burgeoning population of worshipers. On land purchased by Job Briggs from James Duane, they constructed in 1807 the present frame meetinghouse of the "plain" aesthetic preferred by early Quakers.



The Quaker Meeting House

The building is an outstanding example of the severe austerity, modesty and careful craftsmanship practiced by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). It is constructed of hand-hewn timbers fastened with mortise and tenon joints. Hand-split lath walls are held in place with hand-wrought nails, hand-wrought locks, hinges, and handles on the doors, along with cast-iron stoves, were salvaged from the original old log meetinghouse. As with Christ Episcopal Church, there is an adjacent carriage shed to provide shelter for horses and buggies. And as with Christ Episcopal Church, the Quaker Street Monthly Meeting remains an active place of worship.

## 2013 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Programs are held at the Bishop Scully Hall -Our Lady of Fatima Church- Delanson at 7:00PM the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. No meetings are held in January or February

---

Monday, March 18, 2013 John Elberfeld & Jane McLane  
- Hill Towns

Monday, April 15, 2013 Lois Gruner-"Elijah Herrick ~  
God's Warrior"

Monday, May 20, 2013 Don Rittner "TBA"

Monday, June 17, 2013 Carl Kopecky-Old Stone Fort,  
Director

Monday, July 15, 2013 Annual Picnic: to be held at  
Shafer Park

Monday, August 19, 2013 John Peters-Quaker Meeting  
House

Monday, September 16, 2013 Pat Payst-Family Quilt

Monday, October, 21, 2013 Maxine Christman-  
The History and Collecting of Handkerchiefs.

Monday, November 18, 2013 Bart MacDougall  
Volunteering in Duanesburg

Monday, December 16, 2013 Annual Christmas Party-  
Toys from the Past

## Did You Know...

- The Town of "Duanesburgh" was formed in 1765 by land owner James Duane, settled with eleven Palatine German families. Michael Righter (1718-1804), first settler in Duanesburg is buried in the Duanesburg Village Cemetery.
- By 1790 there were there were seven public roads in town serving three hundred families and a population of 1,495 persons.
- In 1792, William North, one of Duanesburg's prominent citizens and newly elected to the NY State Assembly, supported the Act of 1792 to construct a state highway from Albany westward to Cherry Valley.
- As part of that act, the first NY State bridge ever built spanned the Schoharie Creek on the western border of the Town of Duanesburg.



Mariaville Main Street

- There were two plank roads in the town. The first one, the 42 mile long Fort Hunter plank road started at McCormack's Corners on Route 20, Carman Road, Fort Hunter Road, Curry Road, present day 5 Corners, Route 159 (Mariaville Rd) to Minaville. This plank road was surveyed by James Frost of Mariaville.
- The second plank road was the Schenectady-Duanesburg plank road built in 1849 and was used for a period of 30 years.
- The invention of the circular saw is credited to Benjamin Cummings of Cummings' Hollow, now Eaton's Corners.

## The Toad Hollow School Bell

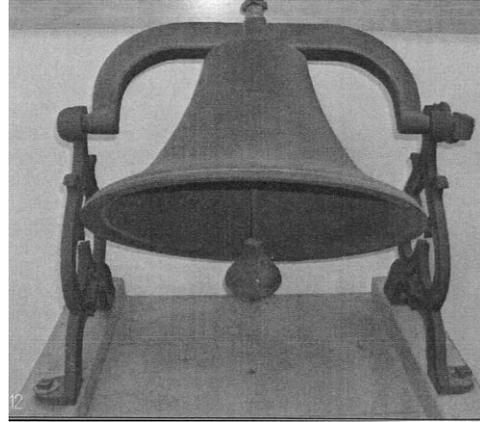
Recollections of Dick Neadle

When I was a Junior or Senior in High School, I became curious and looked into the 3rd floor storage room on the north end of the building and I saw a school bell there. I didn't think too much about it and wasn't really curious about that old bell.

However, many years later in a conversation with Warren Liddle - Warren shared the story of the Toad Hollow School Bell with me. Warren recalled that as a young boy he and his brother Henry were riding with their father from their farm on McGuire School Road to Delanson probably to take hay to the depot. The previous evening there had been a fire at the Toad Hollow School. Seeing the smoke, they went to take a look and retrieved the school bell. They took it back to their farm on McGuire School Road and Warren's mother used it to call the workers out of the fields for dinner. The bell had lost some of its tone, but they used it for many years. When they were done with it, they returned it to the school in Delanson.

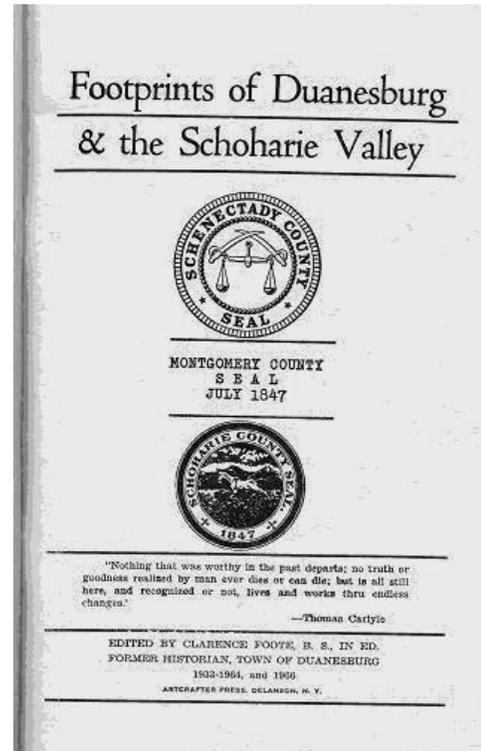
In later years the bell was found in the Elementary school in an archival area, moved to the Ullman house for storage and is now displayed in the Central Office.

Editor's Note: As some background for Dick's story I referred to "The Town of Duanesburg. A Look at Its Past", compiled by William Tiffany Avery. In an article written by Albert Livingston Bouck, I found the following information: District #4 in the Town of Duanesburg, the Toad Hollow School, was established c. 1842. This schoolhouse had three different locations - all along Cole Road until 1884 when a larger two room schoolhouse was built in the growing area that now was known as Quaker Street Depot. The last location of the Toad Hollow School was across the railroad tracks on Cole Road. Although abandoned in 1884 as a school, it stood until it burned in 1910.



Toad Hollow School Bell

## Local History Book



This 89 page book was produced by Clarence Foote, a former Town of Duanesburg Historian. Howard Ohlhaus, our present Town Historian states, "This book is a social history of our town that opens numerous windows into the lives of early residents." The DHS is selling this book for \$6.00. It may be purchased through the DHS website, at DHS meetings, and at the town hall.

The heart of the DHS is our members and their support and interest in the history of the Town of Duanesburg

### MEMBERSHIP

Choose the membership that is right for you and enjoy the benefits of supporting your Historical Society. If you are not a current member we hope you will consider joining.

Membership Fees: \$5.00 Adults \$1.00 Students

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

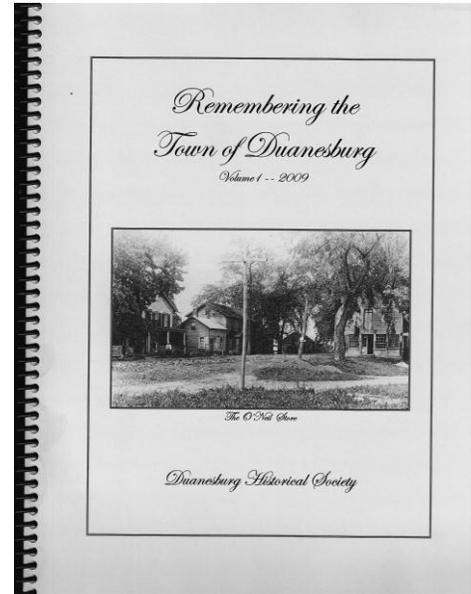
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(optional – not shared)

Membership level \_\_\_\_\_ Adults  
\_\_\_\_\_ Students

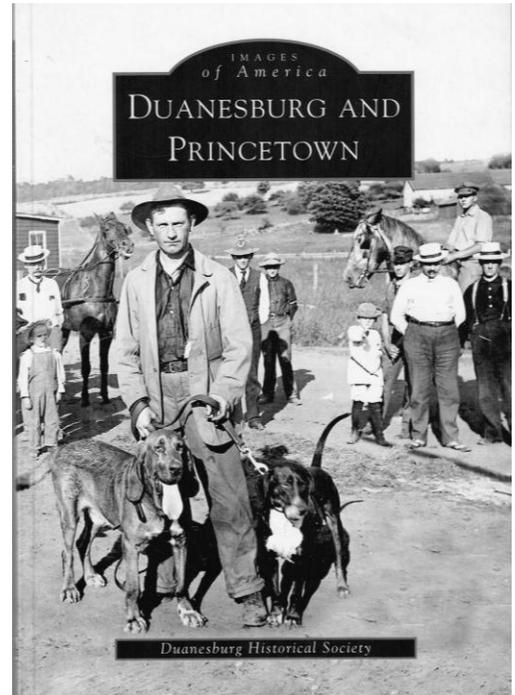
Make Checks payable to: Duanesburg Historical Society  
PO Box 421  
Duanesburg, NY 12056  
Attn: Membership

Visit us at [www.duanesburghistorical.com](http://www.duanesburghistorical.com) and join us on Facebook, search Duanesburg Historical

### Local History Books



There are three volumes in this series which preserve the oral and written history of our community. Volume 1 is out of print, but volumes 2 & 3 may be purchased through the DHS website, at DHS meetings, and at the town hall.



Published in 2005 as part of the Images of America series, this collection of photographs is available through the DHS website, at our meetings, and at the town hall.

