
DUANESBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 2

October 2015

Directors' Message

We were fortunate to have good weather for the self-guided driving tour of Duaneburg on September 19th. This was in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the town in 1765. Over two dozen individuals volunteered to serve as docents which made the tour possible. We heard many positive reports from those who participated.

The Historical Society also benefited from the generosity of an anonymous benefactor. We now have a Canon video recorder which will be used to make a permanent record of the presentations at all future meetings. It was put into service for the first time at our September meeting when Will deForest spoke about "Memories of Duaneburg" to a packed audience.

Len Van Buren, President; Shirley Martin, Vice-President; Howard Ohlhaus, Treasurer; Directors: Cindy McKeone, Eamon Murphy, David Vincent, Carl Wiedemann, and Pat Van Buren

Backroads of Duaneburg Driving Tour

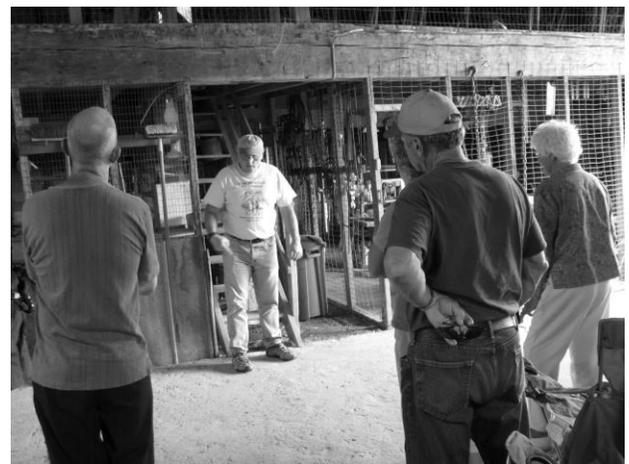
The driving tour of historic and significant places and buildings held on Saturday, September 19th, 2015 was a successful event. However, it would not have been possible without the involvement of docent hosts at each of the 27 sites on the tour. The Historical Society thanks the following individuals who served in this capacity:

Linda Armour	Lynne O'Rourke
Kim Balfour	Pat Payst
John Barr	John Peters
Jan Black	Kathie Rockwell
Ann Christman	Lorrie Runnels
Emma Fleck	Steve Schrade
Matt Ganster	Tony Solomon
The Hughes Family	Len Van Buren
Barton MacDougall	Donna Titus
Shirley Martin	Donna Vincent
Cindy McKeon	Barbara Watt
Joseph Merli	Chuck Wilber
Gayle Gifford	Denny Wolfe
Howard Ohlhaus	

2015 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Programs are held at the Bishop Scully Hall -Our Lady of Fatima Church- Delanson at 7:00 PM the 3rd Monday of the month. The following programs are scheduled for the remainder of 2015:

September 21	Memories of Duaneburg William DeForest
October 19	Delansons' Changing Scenery Lenny Van Buren
November 16	Quaker Street Remembered Dennis Wolfe
December 21	Silas Marsh House History & Annual Christmas Party Lorrie Runnels



Docent Kim Balfour at the Ganster barn

Charis McHeard, Our Summer Intern

Pat Van Buren

The Duanesburg Historical Society was formed in 1944 for the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of our local and regional history. Our Society has historically valuable non-governmental records that include information on the development of the town, its institutions, its buildings and its people. These records, including family photographs, correspondence, and legal papers, are an important part of this heritage. We also have a collection of interesting artifacts and memorabilia from the town. Although presently we do not have our own dedicated public space, we are currently in the process of safely archiving, inventorying and cataloging the items that we have.

The Society began the project about 3 years ago. Our member volunteers have been able to sort and provide archival storage for about 80% of our material to date. The Historical Society was very fortunate this summer to have a volunteer intern, Charis McHeard a student at St. Rose College who successfully fulfilled her course requirement of 120 hours with us. Charis is the daughter of Ken and Lisa McHeard, pastor of the Duanesburg Reformed Presbyterian Church.

Initially Charis worked on the portion that was ready to be cataloged. She cataloged, then recorded that information on a spread sheet and provided inventory sheets for each box that she worked on. She then transcribed the Death and Birth records from 1894-1914 of Dr. Paul Roach of Quaker Street creating a searchable database and researching various illnesses having terminology that would not be recognized by us today. After that she helped merge material that was now ready to be added to our collection. She again kept records of all new materials. She was also able to help with quilts that needed to be safely wrapped, cataloged and stored. Presently we are working on new collections to be sorted, organized, and properly handled for preservation. Additionally Charis completed a Basic of Archiving on-line course through the AASLH.

Having an intern with Charis' conscientious attention to detail and her enthusiasm for the tasks at hand has translated into significant progress on the files in our archives. This is an ongoing project and we encourage anyone interested in this project to join us by contacting Pat Van Buren 895-2632.



Charis McHeard

Membership

Membership in the Duanesburg Historical Society remains one of the greatest bargains in history! For just five dollars you can be a member and support an organization which is dedicated to preserving local history for future generations. Please join today!

Membership Fees: \$5.00 Adults \$1.00 Students

Name(s) _____

Telephone # _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

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

The Great Chadwick Road Controversy

By Carole deForest

In 1947, George Fidler, presented a paper to the Historical Society on the history of Chadwick Road. This is a brief summary of his remarks, but first some background.

The Albany Susquehanna Railroad arrived here in 1863, following along the upper reaches of the Normanskill watershed. The wetlands through which it passed, (and where a depot was planned in proximity to Quaker Street), was known at the time as Toad Hollow. That name was quickly dropped in favor of Quaker Street Station. Later, as a bustling town built up around this railroad center, it was renamed Delanson.

It was soon realized that the railroad provided a quick and efficient farm-to-market route, but there was a problem for the farmers south of the Schoharie Turnpike. Getting their products to the train station required first traveling west along the turnpike to Quaker Street before doubling back down the hill to the train depot. Around 1870, some farmers in the Lee's Corners area, (towards the top of Crow Hill), began to wonder together if they could somehow create a shorter route.

They focused their attention on the intersection of the Knox Rd. with the Schoharie Turnpike as a likely location for a short cut route that would by-pass Quaker Street, to the east of the town, connecting with an existing road into Delanson, which we know as East Shore Rd.



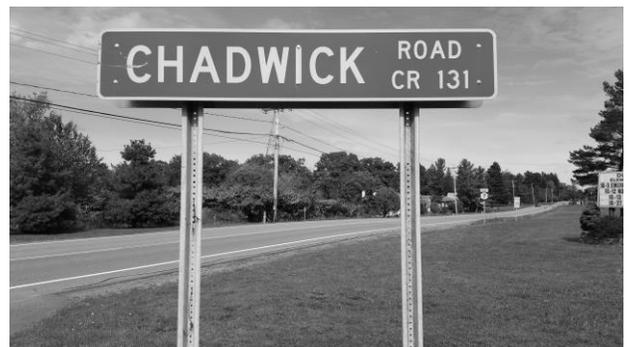
The Chadwick Farmhouse

They approached Mr. Chadwick whose farm was on the north side of the Turnpike, at that intersection. He was interested in working something out. BUT, the idea met with strong resistance by the thriving business community of Quaker Street, which was profiting from the trade generated by this traffic through the town.

Petitions were circulated to bolster both sides of the issue. Money was raised and a land survey ordered. Tempers ran high and then higher. There were rumors, grumbings, name-calling and hard feelings. "The noise," said Mr. Fidler, "was like a great peal of thunder." "The road," said the Quaker Street town fathers, would benefit no one except the people of Knox." None-the-less, in the midst of the heat that was generated, the Chadwicks offered to GIVE the land necessary for the project.

Other land was purchased. Deeds to the right of way were offered to the town for the building of the road, but by now, politics was involved, and they refused to accept them.

The war raged on. Elections were won or lost, on the basis of a man's position on this one issue. Time passed, in fact seven years' worth of time passed, before everyone was sufficiently 'wore out about the thing' to finally allow the project to go forward.



Today, as we use this convenient road to cross between the Schoharie Turnpike and Rt. 7 these heated disagreements of the 1870's are long forgotten. A few houses have now been built along the its curving length, and a school, and a park. We simply take Chadwick Road for granted and forget how difficult and untidy change can be.

But now, when YOU travel this short-cut road, or see the signpost on either end, you can think of it as a bit of colorful history, "hiding in plain sight."

Duanesburg Barns: Windows to the Past

By Linda K. Armour

I first thought of making the Town of Duanesburg barn quilts last year, around this time, when Pat Van Buren mentioned to me that the Town was going to be celebrating its 250th anniversary. The original plan was for one quilt, to hang in Town Hall. I went to see the current quilt, made in the 70's, for inspiration. I wanted to do something special and different, and barns immediately came to mind, since the area was settled as a farming community, and I am from a similar community, further south in the Catskills.

After seeing the quilt that now resides in Town Hall, and having barns in mind for the quilt, I decided on four quilts instead of one, with each quilt showcasing 4 barns/farms. First, there is no large space in Town Hall that could accommodate another large quilt. But Town Hall has several spaces that could accommodate smaller wall quilts. Second, my idea for barns would require the blocks to be much larger in order to show enough detail of the barns/farms. That would make any large quilt much too large for hanging, unless very few barns were included. Third, technology developed since the first quilt in the 70s allowed us to print photos on fabric, making for a unique barn block.



Linda Armour

Howard Olhous brought dozens of barn photos to the table. It was tough to narrow them down, but I focused on a variety of barn styles and colors, in addition to making sure that they represented the entire geographical area of the Town. It was also important to include all of the current working farms in the Town. Somewhere along the way, very early in the plan, the idea of viewing the barns through a window evolved. It seemed a more visually attractive way to view the barns than just placing them in a block. This also suggested the name of the project.



One of the Barn Quilts

While I was selecting barns, I was also working on how to transfer the barn photos to fabric for the quilt blocks. There were several options, including printing them on my computer printer. That would have been tedious, costly, and the quality could not be guaranteed. Race Printing provided the perfect solution. I provided the digital photos of the 16 barns selected, and the white 100% Kona cotton, cut to individual sizes. They cropped them and sent them to a place in Albany which did the printing. We ended up with 11" x 17" barn photos on fabric, high resolution and detailed.

In searching for barn fabric, I came across the stone wall fabric. I was immediately sold. Since all farms had stone walls that were built when the farms were first settled, that was a natural and became the background for the quilts. Next I searched for fabric to make the window frames. That was more challenging, but the mottled black that was chosen works perfectly. It suggests old painted barn wood, adding to the "authenticity" of the window.

Next I canvassed local quilters and came up with the perfect combo to create the quilts: Janet Fritz and Ellen Grasek, who sewed along with me, and Sherry Schrade who assisted with ironing and securing a location for working on the quilts. The pattern actually evolved as we made the quilts. First, I squared up each printed barn to 11" x 17". Next we determined the width of the grilles, or windowpane dividers. They gave depth to each barn block and make it appear that you're looking out a window at the barn. After stitching the windowpane dividers we auditioned the window frame fabric for the best width. The fabric corners of the window frames were mitered to resemble mitering on wood window frames. I had initially thought that just 2 sides of a window would highlight the barns, but Janet and Ellen quickly convinced me that we needed 4 to complete each window. After completing the window frames we auditioned the stonewall fabric for the width that would look best as our background/sashing.

When the quilt tops were complete we put them together for quilting. The stone wall fabric was also used for the backing. Batting was 100% cotton request (thin). The tops were smoothed by hand and all layers pinned in place. We chose to use 1/4" silhouette quilting by machine on the inside edges of the window frames. A sleeve was added across the top of the back for hanging purposes. The top of the sleeve

was stitched in place with the binding, and by a stitch-in-the-ditch row at the bottom of the sleeve. The binding was attached to the back of the quilt, then brought around to the front and machine stitched in place. No hand sewing was needed on the quilts.

Funding for the quilt project was made possible by a grant from Schenectady County. I was familiar with the Community History through the Arts grant since Pat VanBuren and I had received it numerous times for projects when we taught together at Duanesburg Elementary School. Their funding made it possible to purchase all the fabric, batting, thread, and especially the printing of the barns through Race Printing.

The quilts made their debut at the Reformed Presbyterian Church during the September 19 Historical Society drive about. Before the quilts go to their permanent home in Town Hall, they will be shown in Cobleskill in the "Pieces from the Heart XI" quilt show hosted by the Cobleskill United Methodist Church, Fri. Oct. 16 and Sat. Oct. 17. Many hands made this project happen, and I'm excited that Town residents and others will be able to view the finished quilts for years to come.



Linda Armour, Ellen Grasek and Janet Fritz working on the quilts

