
DUANESBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 1

February 2021

Directors' Message

Dear Members,

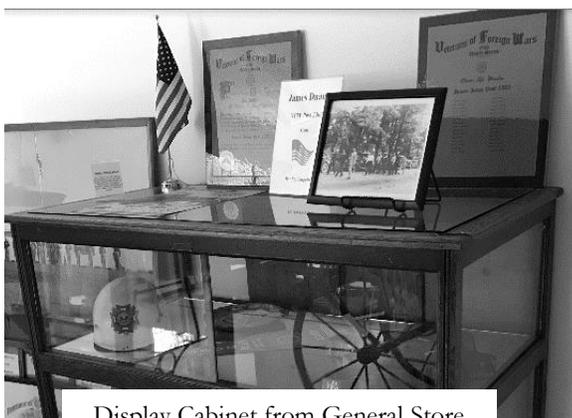
This has been a very challenging year for all of us. Getting together, sharing memories, and meeting for our DHS programs have been put on hold for this past year. As we enter 2021 with the promise of vaccinations, we are hopeful that soon the isolation will end. Our plan is still to resume meetings when it is deemed safe and our members feel comfortable with getting back together.

In the meantime, the work of the Duaneburg Historical Society continues. Members are generously paying their dues and making monetary donations to support our work and meet our expenses.

Kim Balfour, Carl Wiedemann and Howard Ohlhous are planning a Barn Tour Saturday, September 18th and additionally on that day there will be an Open House at the Research and Archive Center. We will keep you informed as the time nears and when we are confident that it will be a safe event.

We wish you continued good health and safety.

Leonard M. Van Buren - President
Shirley Martin - Vice- President
Howard Ohlhous - Treasurer
Marsha Brown - Secretary
Directors: Cindy McKeon, Carol Plue, Pat Van Buren, Carl Wiedemann, David Vincent



Display Cabinet from General Store

From the Archives

2020 was a busy time in the Archives. We have been able to accession and catalog a large portion of our collection as well as to take in new items.

We acquired many interesting pieces of memorabilia from the Duaneburg General Store from David Vincent including signage, display racks and a display cabinet. All the items from the store are a piece of its history and its place in the lives of our residents.

From Joe Merli's collection we received a display case, a display table, and a Pine Grove thermometer. Marsha Brown donated one of Joe Merli's hand crafted market wagons to be used for displaying as well as a way to remember and acknowledge Joe's talents and his involvement in our community.

Bob and Patty Barnhard have donated an antique hay lift and a child's cradle.

Our collection of meaningful items representing Duaneburg of the past continues to grow. In the meantime, let's not forget to document today so that those memories remain to be shared with future generations.



Market Wagon built by Joe Merli

Our Newsletter

The Duaneburg Historical Society newsletter is published twice each year. Subscription to the newsletter is included in membership dues. The newsletters are posted on our website (www.duanesburghistorical.com) and hard copies mailed to our members in October and February. The newsletters cover a range of topics, all relating to Duaneburg, past and present.

The Duaneburg Historical Society wants members to share their memories of past years. So please send us your memories of Duaneburg. They can be found in a moment of time in your childhood or youth, young adulthood, or as an adult. They could be times before, during and after WWII. They could be memories before, during or after the construction of the New York State Thruway. It could simply be a picture of you as a baby somewhere in Duaneburg and notes of what was happening at the time. Please just use your imagination and then share with us. We will then, with your permission, print these memories in upcoming newsletters. When you are ready, mail the memory and information to us at P.O. Box 421, Duaneburg, NY 12056. Thank you!

Gilboa Monitor – September 22, 1866

CLOTHS! CLOTHS! CLOTHS!

WE are just opening the largest stock of CLOTHS ever brought into this part of the country. All wishing Goods suitable for Fall and Winter wear, bought at the lowest prices, and selected with care, are invited to give us a call. And in order that all may go the Fall election with good understandings, we are now receiving a large stock of the celebrated

QUAKER STREET BOOTS!

Coarse and Kip, double and single soles, and taps. Also—Women's fine plain Morocco and Calf Shoes, of Quaker street make.

ALSO,

Just unloading, a car-load of Ashton's Turks Island and Western SALT, which will be sold lower than heretofore, as being bought and freighted in quantity. It was bought cheap and freighted low. Constantly on hand,

Flour, Teas, Sugar, Molasses, Coffee, Fish, PORK, and GROCERIES of all descriptions. CORN MEAL kept constantly on hand.

Calicoes, Sheetings, Ladies' Dress Goods, Collars, Handkerchiefs, Hose, etc.

SCHOOL and Miscellaneous BOOKS. Also, Blank Books. Our terms are strictly Cash or Barter, and no credit can be given for over 30 days.

FERGUSONVILLE CASH STORE, Sept. 18th, 1866.
- 171f OLIVER BROTHERS

Quaker Street Boots

From DHS files

After the first primitive grist and sawmills that served as the first local enterprise there appeared what later developed into a business that was to put Quaker Street on the map. I refer to the manufacture of boots and shoes. The earliest record states that it began with leather tanning at first on a small scale. This was established by Kirby Wilber first about 1812. Then he followed with a small custom shoe shop.

In this shop he trained his four sons, Robinson U.F., Edwin G., Wesson K., and Kirby W. 2nd who later succeeded him with the boot and shoe business. After changing hands among the brothers several times with some additional names included in the business, the factory passed into the hands of Dewitt Duane MacDonald and William Davis who succeeded the Wilber's in proprietorship. The last change in ownership was made in 1875 when D.D. MacDonald and son Seward became co-owners of the manufacturing business.

In 1883 the MacDonald's bought a parcel of land from the Society of Friends and erected there a building to serve as a shoe factory in conjunction with a retail shoe business, wholesale, and sort of commissary for the benefit of the employees. By this time, the boot and shoe business had become an important industry in this section. Upwards of fifty men were employed. Shoes were shipped to different parts of the state and large shipments were also sent to Ohio. The father and son partnership continued until the death of the elder MacDonald in July 1889.

Following this the shoe business was concluded and Seward MacDonald continued with the business of a general store. When the shoe business was discontinued 30 families left Quaker Street to find employment elsewhere.

Gilboa Monitor – October 26, 1882

IMPORTANT!

D. T. McGarry, of Manorkill, wishes to inform the people of Conesville and vicinity that he has just returned from New York with a

Large Stock of New Goods,

consisting of Dress Goods, Shawls,

Lawns and Calico of Every Style,

Ladies' Fancy Shoes, Mens' and Boys' New York and

Quaker Street Boots,

A full line of choice groceries and dried fruit, an immense stock of fancy smoking tobacco and cigars, largest stock of wall paper in town, and everything usually found in a country store, which he intends to sell at

"Oak Hill and Durham Prices."
GIVE HIM A CALL.

Duanesburg Now and Then

Duanesburg is a rural residential community with workers commuting to jobs in other areas and increasingly working from home at businesses located outside the town or running businesses from home.

Residents like the rural nature of the town. A survey was conducted last year to help update the town's comprehensive plan which guides planning and zoning. Respondents ranked rural preservation first among the three most important issues facing the town. And two thirds said that they agreed with town support for preservation and protection of the farming and agritourism community.

Although most people who live in Duanesburg are not farmers, the landscape we appreciate today is a heritage of the farm economy that dominated the first hundred and fifty years of the town's existence. The US census of 1860 is a snapshot of Duanesburg when agriculture was at its peak. The census tabulated 3,222 residents – half of today's population.

Most of the people living here in 1860 were born in New York State. Those born outside of the United States were from Ireland (90), England (49), Scotland (23), Germany (9) and other countries (12). The census also identified 56 residents born other states – half from Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont.

Most men were farmers or farm laborers. Most women identified themselves as either wives or housekeepers. Housekeepers were often the unmarried daughters in the household and most farm laborers were sons. Farm families and farm workers accounted for about 80% of the population.

There are 196 people who identified themselves as farm laborers or day laborers. Many of the farm laborers were unmarried sons living at home and working on the family farm. Domestic workers were paid household servants.

There were 28 schoolteachers. Most of the public education took place in one room district schoolhouses scattered around the town and ended at eighth grade when pupils were 14 or 15 years old.

Carpenters and blacksmiths were relatively common non-farm occupations. There were also 47 shoemakers – compared to 21 tailors, dressmakers, and milliners. Quaker Street was a center for shoe making in the 19th century.

Although there was no railroad in 1860, the "Great Western Turnpike" (today's route 20) crossed the town. It increased employment opportunities for inn and hotel keepers, domestics, turnpike gate keepers wagon makers, blacksmiths, harness makers and stage drivers.

Occupations in 1860

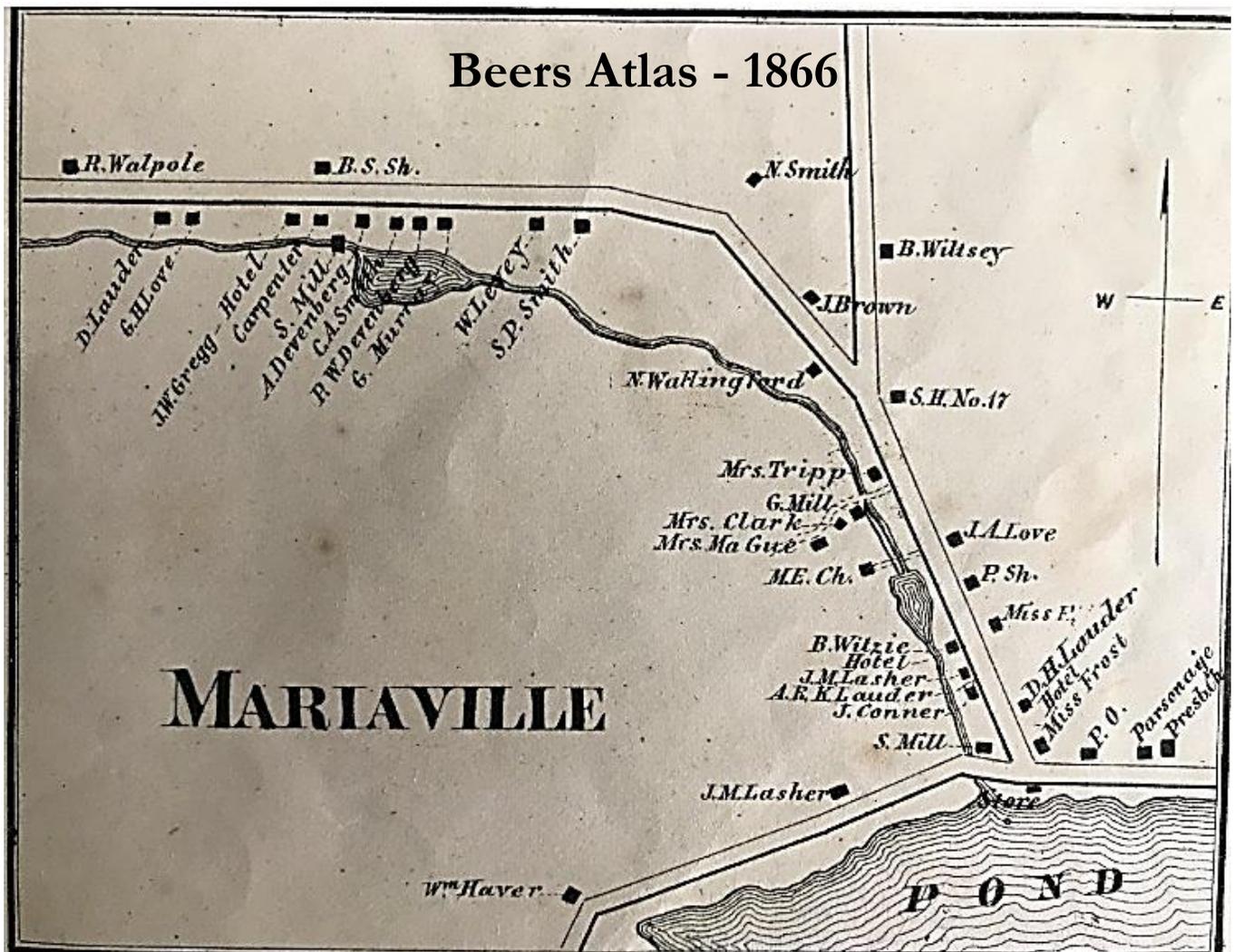
Blacksmith	15	Merchant	14
Butcher	5	Mill Wright	1
Carpenter	30	Miller	4
Clergyman	8	Milliner	4
Clerk	12	Painter	2
Cloth Manufacturer	1	Peddler	1
Clothier	1	School Teacher	28
Doctor	4	Shoemaker	47
Domestic	60	Stage Driver	1
Dress Maker	9	Stone Mason	6
Drover	1	Tailor	8
Farmer	614	Teamster	1
Harness Maker	3	Turnpike Gate Keeper	1
Hotel/Inn Keeper	5	Wagon Maker	6
Laborer (farm or day)	196	Weaver	1
Machinist	1	Woolen Manufacturer	1
Mail Carrier	1	Total	1,092

Mariaville Snapshot - 1866

Although most people in Duaneburg made their living as farmers and farm laborers, there were sawmills and grist mills where suitable waterpower was available. Mariaville had two sawmills and a grist mill located on the lake's outlet as shown in the 1866 Beers Atlas. The map also shows a blacksmith shop, a carpenter shop, a paint shop, three hotels, a school, a store, a post office, and two churches. Many of the names listed on the map also appear in the state census of 1865 with an occupation as follows:

Abraham Devenberg - farmer
 Perry W Devenberg - clergyman
 Mary Frost – keeping house.
 William Haver - harness maker.

James Lasher - farmer
 David Lauder – hotel keeper
 William Levey - laborer
 George H Love – carriage maker
 James A Love – painter
 Mary McGue – keeping house.
 Grace Murray - weaver
 Cornelius Smith - shoemaker
 Nicholas Smith - farmer
 Solomon Smith - shoemaker
 Mariah Tripp – keeping house.
 Nicholas Wallingford - laborer
 Richard Walpole - sawyer
 Benjamin Wiltsey - farmer



Map Abbreviations:

S Mill – sawmill
 P.O. – post office

G. Mill – grist mill
 P. Sh. – paint shop

B.S. Sh. – black smith shop

S.H. No. 17 - school

M.E. Ch. – Methodist Episcopal Church

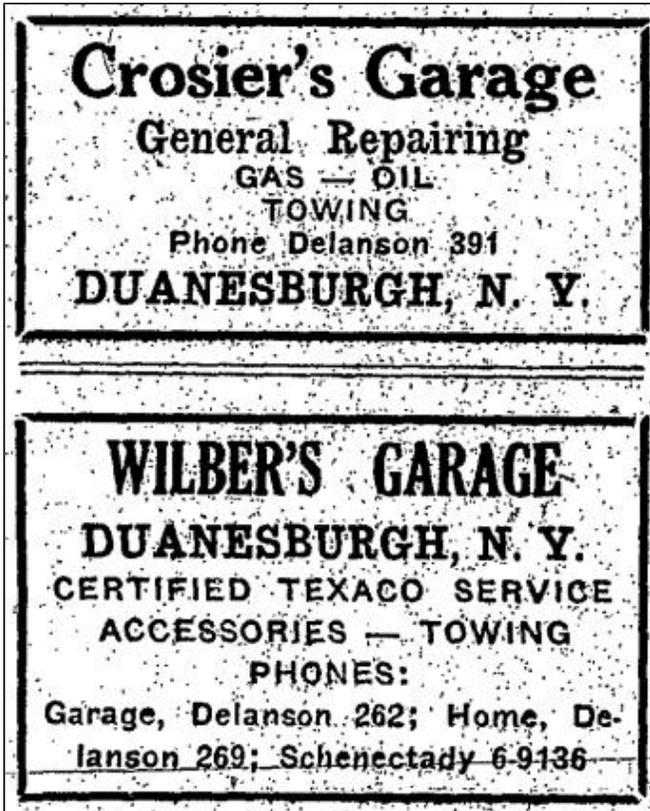
On the Road

There was a time, several decades ago, when “filling the tank” was a quite different experience for car owners than it is today. Gas stations were not gas stations; they were service stations! The customer pulled up to the pump but never had to leave the car. A service attendant, sometimes in uniform, would fill the tank, check the engine oil, wash the windows, and even check the tire pressure. Self-service and payment with a credit card were things of the future.

At one time the hamlet of Duanesburg had 6 service stations. These are some of the owners from the 1950s and 60s.

- Gid Wilber’s – Texaco
- Harry Alexander’s – Shell
- Wendell Salisburg, - Mobile
- Crosier’s Garage – Gulf
- Roy Knowles – Citgo
- Raymond Kennedy – Atlantic

Altamont Enterprise – March 7, 1941



Who We Are

The Duanesburg Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to documenting, collecting, and preserving our local history. Our activities include serving as a regional resource, maintaining a collection of historic items relating to Duanesburg, sponsoring monthly educational lectures, publishing two newsletters annually, maintaining a website, and doing independent research on topics relating to Duanesburg’s history. We have no staff and depend entirely on volunteers. Nevertheless, there are costs that need to be covered (i.e., insurance, website maintenance, preservation materials, publication of the newsletters). We rely entirely on membership fees and donations to accomplish our work.

Membership Application

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 that you will consider joining.

Dues \$10.00 Adults \$1.00 students

From July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021

Lifetime Membership - \$150.00

Name(s) _____

Telephone # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

(optional – not shared)

Make checks payable to: Duanesburg Historical Society
PO Box 421
Duanesburg, New York
12056

