

NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

Issued Monthly by the Clinton County Historical Association

48 Court Street, Plattsburgh NY 12901, 518-561-0340

No. 318 PRESIDENT: Mark A. McCullough EDITOR: Helen W. Allan March 1995

MARCH PROGRAM

An amazing Civil War event in our neighboring state of Vermont is the subject of CCHA's March program. The presentation is researched and presented by Donald Miner of South Burlington who was an organizer of the very successful "Civil War Days" in St. Albans last October. Mr. Miner claims a relationship with Clinton County through his great-grandfather, Edward W. Ryan, who emigrated from Ireland in the early 1850s and settled in Beekmantown where he worked as a blacksmith. Recently retired as a chemist with the Shell Oil Company, Donald Miner serves as Vice-President of the St. Albans Historical Society and is a member of the Center for Research on Vermont, sponsored by the University of Vermont.

A 1953 publication entitled "The St. Albans Raid, October 19, 1864" was prefaced with this statement: "The St. Albans raid of October 19, 1864 aroused not only local but national excitement. Thousands of words have been written concerning this affair, some true, some fictitious. No history of Vermont is complete without its mention. It has inspired a short story in the 'Saturday Evening Post', which in turn has suggested a moving picture. It has provoked several unsettled questions. However, the fact remains that the most accurate and complete story of this raid was written by L. L. Dutcher shortly after the raid occurred." Dutcher concluded his detailed description of the raid with the comment that a U.S. Army order to shoot marauding parties resulted in rebel sympathizers in Canada becoming much more respectful and less likely to encourage attacks on the United States from their side of the border. In 1911 the Montreal Gazette reported a somewhat bizarre epilogue to the affair. "Four leading citizens of St. Albans, Vt. entered the hotel (*Ritz-Carlton*) and paid their respects to Gen. Bennett H. Young, who, with 20 companions armed to the teeth, raided and held up their town a half century ago." Evidently, forgiveness was the order of the day for the people of St. Albans.

This presentation is sure to attract a large audience. It will be held in the first floor meeting room of the County Government Center on Monday, March 6 at 7:30 p.m. The program is free and open to the public.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Many contributions to the Historical Association have been made in memory of longtime CCHA member Sydney Beyland who died recently. Our grateful thanks go to the donors and we send our sympathy to Lydia Beyland.

CCHA director/curator Helen Allan has been elected to the Board of Trustees of the New York State Historical Association at Cooperstown. NYSHA will open its new American Indian Wing to the public this summer and unveil the major collections recently given by Mr. & Mrs. Eugene V. Thaw.

The museum currently has two interns working on various projects. Niki Kourofsky, a graduate of State University at Oswego, plans to pursue a career in museum studies. Allison Derusha is a senior at SUNY Plattsburgh, majoring in anthropology. Allison also looks forward to a career in museum work.

PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER TO PRESERVE OUR PAST

The Historical Association is pleased to announce that it has been awarded public funds by the New York State Council on the Arts for a presentation of a series of six lunchtime brown bag programs. The series is designed to make the museum's collections more accessible to the public through their use by the presenters of the programs. The sessions will last from 12:00 p.m. until 1:00 p.m., and they will be held at the museum. The schedule is as follows:

March 14: "Reflections - The Story of Redford Glass", presented by Helen Allan, director/curator, Clinton County Historical Association & Museum.

March 28: "Native Americans In The Champlain Valley", presented by Dr. Gordon Pollard, SUNY, Plattsburgh, and William Umbreit, independent researcher.

April 11: "Documents Can Deliver", presented by James Bailey, City of Plattsburgh Historian.

April 25: "Plattsburgh Barracks - An Enduring Legacy", presented by James Ciborski, Clinton County Historian.

May 9: "North Country Images", presented by Janet Garrell, Director, Kent-Delord House Museum.

May 23: "Two North Country Pioneers: Peter Saily and Pliny Moore", presented by Joseph Swinyer, Librarian, Special Collections, Feinberg Library, SUNY Plattsburgh.

Prior registration is required and there will be a maximum of twenty participants in each program. Reservations can be made by calling the County Museum at 561-0340. Cold beverages will be provided at the programs, and donations to the museum will be accepted.

BOARD AND WASHING INCLUDED

"M. Lane Esq

Plattsburgh March 12 1846

Sirs,

I saw Mr. Standish & had some conversation with him about his son George, who wrote the annexed lines, I am of the opinion that he would make you good help. He is 15 years old rather large of his age, bright of action, good scholar, understands arithmetic well, & I think would be contented with you & would be trusty. He has no bad habits, & I have no doubt but what he would please you. If you should conclude to give him a trial, it is the wish of his parents & friends that you should look over & take care of his moral character as he will be out of parents view. It is very important that boys of his age should observe the Sabbath, such as neglect its observance will surely turn out badly. I feel interested in the young man, wish him to do well, & I have confidence that he will do well under your training. Mr. Standish desires ab't 10 days notice to prepare him to go. You know his family very well, Mr. M. Standish.

Yours Respectfully
James Bailey"

"M. Lane Esq

Plattsburgh March 12th 1846

Sir,

Mr James Bailey informed my Father that you wanted a Boy as clerk in a store & office at your place (Redford). He has consented to have me make a trial & has had some conversation with Mr Bailey on the subject. My parents are willing to have me stay with you one year if qualified & I suited you: they think I can earn eight dollars a month & board; at any time he says you can dismiss me, if you are not satisfied with my qualifications or conduct.

I have been in Goldsmith & Stevenson's store about 4 months during the last year. Should you conclude to take me on trial and I should remain for one year & be satisfied with the employment, there would not be any difficulty in mak(e)ing further arrangements.

If you think advisable to take me please advise Mr Bailey or Father.

Respectfully Yours
George H. Standish"

(Annotation)

"N.B. 8\$/mos. board & washing included. Mr. Standish will see you personally about his management.

Yours J.B."

Editor's note:

The Historical Association recently acquired a large collection of papers relating to the Platt family, given by Margaret Myers Byrne. This important collection has been placed on long-term deposit at Special Collections, Feinberg Library, SUNY Plattsburgh. Other gifts from Mrs. Byrne include the letters printed above which refer to the Redford Glass Company. Matthew Lane, great-great-uncle of Mrs. Byrne, was one of the owners of the glass works which operated between 1831 and 1851.

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FUNDING CUTS THREATEN OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE

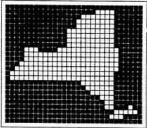
CCHA has learned that it will receive general operating support from the New York State Council on the Arts in a continuation of its multi-year GOS. The Association is also the recipient of \$1,700 for a spring, 1995 series of lunchtime programs entitled "People Working Together To Preserve Our Past." During the past three years CCHA received public funds from NYSCA for conservation treatment of the portraits of Dr. and Mrs. Isaac Patchin of Schuylar Falls, painted in 1840 by Asahel Lynde Powers. Professional treatment of paintings requires many hundreds of hours of painstaking work. Without NYSCA's support, the Historical Association could not have provided the portraits with the conservation care they required.

Our State Arts Council is threatened with major cuts in its already slim budget. We reprint below a portion of letters sent by the Historical Association to Senator Ronald B. Stafford and Assemblyman Chris Ortloff.

"As you know, many cultural organizations in the North Country depend on funding from the New York State Council on the Arts, whether in direct funding as in the case of the Historical Association and the County Museum, or through the decentralization program. The latter program allows our local arts council to distribute funds to deserving organizations such as the Kent-Delord House Museum.

"We are all aware that something must be done to reduce the State budget, but surely a severe cut in state arts funding (a relatively small appropriation for all the enriching cultural and educational programs in New York State) is not the answer. Funding from the New York State Council on the Arts for the past thirty-five years has enabled museums, historical societies, performing and visual arts groups, and libraries to preserve and interpret our cultural heritage. Drastic cuts in funding will certainly diminish this achievement, and it will take a very long time, if ever, to regain the prominence of arts and education in our state. We respectfully ask you to do everything you can to retain the New York State Council on the Arts funding at its present level. Thank you."

State of the Arts



NYSCA

TO OUR MEMBERS:

If you share this concern, please take a few minutes to contact your state representatives. Let them know that through NYSCA we receive desperately needed funds to help us preserve the patrimony of Clinton County.