

# ~ The Vista ~

NEWSLETTER OF THE SCHUYLER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## HAPPY 130TH BIRTHDAY LEE SCHOOL MUSEUM!

### The Lee School Museum turns 130 years old this year.

The Society's first museum, the Lee School (located at 1954 State Route 14 in Montour), was built in 1884 on land donated by the descendants of David Lee, an early Montour settler. There existed an earlier log-cabin school on the site built sometime before 1829.

The Lee School, officially known as Montour District #1 School, was in service from 1884 to 1937. Teachers at Lee taught children of all grade levels, mostly up to 8th grade, before rural children were bussed to centralized school systems.

The one-room schoolhouse was mothballed until 1960 when it was sold to the Society for \$1.

Notable original appointments include blackboards (wooden

and original students' and teacher's desks.

In the early years, as the children walked to school, boys would precede girls and ward off any snakes or rodents with sticks.

This spring 4th graders from local schools will come to tour Lee and learn about schooling in the old days. There are still switches by the teacher's desk in case any of the kids misbehave!

Lee is available to tour by appointment in good weather.

Happy 130th birthday Lee School!



boards painted black), narrow, beaded paneling, wide board flooring, a cast-iron wood stove,

day Lee School!



## TIME FOR 2014 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Society membership renewal for 2014 is in full-swing! If you have recently renewed, we thank you very much and are grateful for your support. If you are not sure about your membership status please check the address label on the back of this newsletter. It will show your membership expiration

date. If you no longer can find your blue membership application that was sent in the last *Vista* please go to our website at [www.schuylerhistory.org/membership](http://www.schuylerhistory.org/membership) where you can print out another form. A follow-up postcard will also be sent soon. Thank you for your support!

## FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

ANDREW TOMPKINS

The **Montour Moose Club**, Rt.14, Montour Falls, will be hosting a **benefit breakfast** for the Society on **Sunday, March 2nd from 8am to 11am for only \$6 per person**. Tickets can be purchased at the museum or at the breakfast. We are indebted to the Moose for our annual breakfast and applaud their commitment to many Schuyler County organizations.

Board members and volunteers **Paul Gillette** and **David Lisk**

have been working on projects this winter that will really help researchers this year.

Paul has gone through our **Surname folder files** and organized and alphabetized them properly for easier research. The index of Schuyler families we have folders on has been updated and will be posted to our website.

David is currently organizing our **newspaper collection**. Our early papers (1870s to 1905) have

been digitized and are available at **fultonhistory.com**, which has newspapers from across NYS in pdf format.

The rest of our newspapers are only available in hardcopy and David has put them in chronological order and indexed the ones we have. The newspaper index will also be posted online.

Thank you Paul and David for all your hard work!

## NEWS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE BRICK TAVERN MUSEUM

The **Brick Tavern Museum will remain open this winter**. In past years the museum has been closed from before Christmas through March. The **museum winter hours are Wednesday to Friday, 10am to 4pm**. In April it will resume regular open hours. Summer Saturdays will be determined.

The **Society's Annual Meeting** will take place on Wednesday, **April 23rd** at the Brick Tavern

Museum. New Board officers and members will be elected and a short program on the Watkins Glen State Park will be

given to Society members. The meeting will start at 6pm with program to follow.



The **second annual appeal** has exceeded the \$5,000 goal thanks to so many of you. A **second donor list** can be seen on **page 5** of this newsletter for those who donated after November 21, 2013. We continue to be touched by your generosity and support!



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## FROM SOCIETY PRESIDENT RICHARD OWLETT

You will likely remember that last year, we were successful in applying for a grant to cover the cost of a cast iron historical marker commemorating the Chemung Canal. The public ceremony to dedicate the sign will be in late May. It's a great start to mark some of Schuyler County's historic sites and buildings, but we would like to continue with more.

A new round of grant applications has recently been announced, so I would like to extend an invitation to all of our members to send us ideas of what you would like to see commemorated with a historic sign. The design is the traditional size and shape, with yellow letters on a blue background. There is enough room on the signs for the location title and a brief description. With all the visitors Schuyler County hosts in the course of a year, we feel that it is appropriate to show pride in our history, even though, like the Chemung Canal, most of that history is long forgotten.

So, if you have a suggestion as to a Schuyler County location that deserves a historical marker, please let us know and include a little background info. We will begin a file on the submissions and pick one or two to apply for another grant. E-mail [info@schuylerhistory.org](mailto:info@schuylerhistory.org), call the Museum at (607) 535-9741, or drop in during Museum hours, Wed.-Fri., 10 'till 4. RO

## SENECA NATION PRESENTATION & DINNER

The Schuyler County Historical Society will be partnering with the Yates County History Center and the Dundee Historical Society to offer a catered dinner and presentation by **Dr. Kurt Jordan**, professor of anthropology at Cornell University, on **Wednesday, April 30th**.

Dr. Jordan will speak about the Seneca nation of the Iroquois at the Tyrone Fire Hall. He will share his research on the settlement patterns, housing and political economy of the seventeenth and



*Cornplanter (1750-1836) was a Seneca war chief and diplomat*

eighteenth century Senecas.

The ham dinner will be catered by Steve Owens of Dundee.

Doors will open at 5:30pm with dinner served around 6:15pm. Dr. Jordan will begin at 7pm.

**Reservation must be made by Friday, April 25th.** Please call the museum at (607)535-9741 to make your reservation.

Cost for the entire event will be \$12 for society members and \$16 for nonmembers. We hope to see you there!

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## MUSEUM RESOURCES

### BOOKS FOR SALE

Although the Holiday Open House & Book Sale before Christmas was cancelled due to inclement weather, the Museum still has many wonderful books and maps available for purchase. All prices include tax.

*(Shipping is also available. Please call Museum at (607)535-9741 for shipping charges.)*

**Home in These Hills: A Young Woman's Diary**

Author: Viola Coolbaugh / Published: 2010 - 82 pages /  
Price: \$10.35

**A Link in the Great Chain: A Hist. of the Chemung Canal**

Author: Gary Emerson / Published: 2004 - 100 pages /  
Price: \$13.50

**The Stoneware of Havana, N.Y.; and its makers 1850-88**

Author: Allen F. Sweet / Published: 2011 - 87 pages / Price:  
\$24.30

**Around Watkins Glen: Images of America**

Author: Charles R. Mitchell & Kirk W. House / Published:  
2006 - 128 pages / Price: \$21.50

**Schuyler County Days Bygone: An Historical look at Schuyler County**

Author: Barbara H. Bell / Published: 2008 - 338 pages /  
Price: \$26.00

**History & Families: Schuyler County, NY**

Author: John Potter, ed., Schuyler County Historical Society / Published: 2005 - 144 pages (hardcover) / Price:  
\$21.50 or \$32.40 (leather)

**Seneca Hope: The Life and Landscapes of James Hope**

Author: Frank W. Steber / Published: 2012 - 118 pages /  
Price: \$16.25

**Seneca Dawn: The Pioneer Journey of John Dow**

Author: Frank W. Steber / Published: 2007 - 114 pages /  
Price: \$16.25

**Seneca Sunrise: The Life and Times of Frederick Davis, Jr.**

Author: Frank W. Steber / Published: 2002 - 134 pages /  
Price: \$13

**Watkins Glen Tour Guide**

Author: Gordon D. Cooper / Published: 2009 - 320 pages /  
Price: \$32.50

**Town of Catharine History, Schuyler County, New York**

Author: Carol Tetz Fagnan / Published: 2003 - 408 pages  
(hardcover) / Price: \$43.25

**The History of the Town of Catharine, Schuyler County, NY**

Author: Louise Cleaver / Published: 1945 - 686 Pages  
(hardcover) / Price: \$54

**Early History, &c., The Village of Havana, NY, Illustrated**

Editor: W.E. Morrison & Co. / Published: 1976 - 400 pages  
(hardcover) / Price: \$59.50

**Early History, &c., The Towns of Catharine, Hector, Veteran, Catlin, Dix & Montour, 1798-1870**

Editor: W.E. Morrison & Co. / Published: 1976 - 100 pages  
(hardcover) / Price: \$37.80

**1873 Village of Watkins Map reproduction, 23"x17"**

Price: \$32.95

**1874 Atlas of Schuyler County reprint**

Price: \$53.95

**Duplicate school yearbooks available for purchase!**

**Watkins Glen High School: 1938, 1940, 1941, 1951, 1954, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1964**

(Call first for availability)

Price: \$10 each

**Schuyler County Historical Society Tapestry Throw**

While supplies last! Price: \$54

**We're with you every step of the way.**

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**Watkins Glen:** 318 N. Franklin St., Watkins Glen, NY 14891 (607) 535-7186



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**SECOND ANNUAL APPEAL**

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<i>Margaret Newell</i>	<i>Peggy Scott</i>	<i>(As of 1/30/2013)</i>

**MEMORIAL DONATIONS**

*Memorial donations are gratefully accepted. Please include addresses of those who should receive acknowledgement of your generosity.*

Roy & Shirley Craver, in memory of Barbara Bell  
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 Paul Gillette, in memory of Irene & Fred Gillette  
 Thomas Hilberg, in memory of Carol A. Hilberg  
 Frank & Judy Wilhelme, in memory of Thomas & Susannah Berry

**SEEKING VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS**

The historical society is always in need of interested volunteers to perform such functions as greeters, tour guides, research room aides, groundskeepers, data inputters, scrapbook indexers, etc. at the museum. In some cases volunteers can even work on projects from home.

There are many opportunities to get involved. If you have some free time and can donate your talents to the Society it would be much appreciated.

In the past we have also had summer interns here at the museum. If you or your children or grandchildren are looking for a summer internship opportunity

please contact us. The Society has hosted internships in such areas as graphic design, anthropology, and local history. Internships can be tailored to student majors by working closely with the museum director. These type of experiences are invaluable for future employment possibilities.

Volunteering at the museum is interesting and fun. There is always something new to find out about Schuyler history- and being among the wonderful artifacts, interesting books, scrapbooks, and newspapers will keep your curiosity piqued and your mind stimulated.

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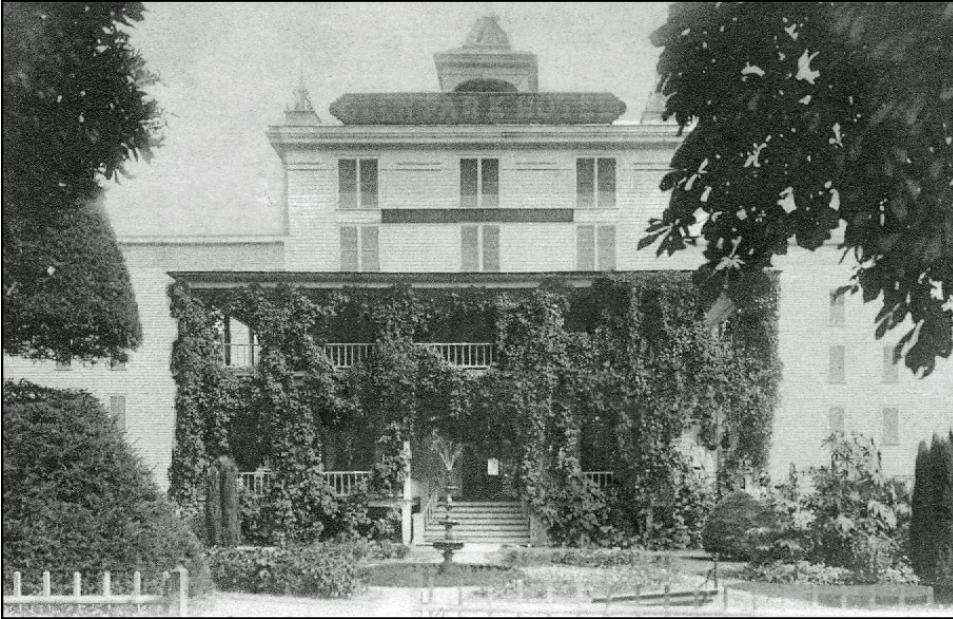
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## MUSEUM RESOURCES

### HISTORICAL PHOTOS



Two photos of the **Glen Park Hotel**, once located on South Franklin Street between 12th and Durland Avenue in Watkins Glen. The Glen Park was a four-story 120-room hotel that was a popular landmark for many years.

An original two-storied structure was built in the early 1860s by Colonel E.C. Frost. Two additional stories were built and the wings were built in 1872 as tourism increased. The Frost family were owners or proprietors for most of the time before the hotel was torn down in 1919.

The Glen Park boasted beautiful gardens where fresh vegetables were grown for guests' meals. In the summertime there was a covered outdoor kitchen where chefs prepared sumptuous meals. There also existed magnetic and sulphur springs on the premises which were said to have healing and restorative properties. Also a laundry, an ice house, and a croquet court were available. A horse-drawn street car carried guests from the railroad depot at the head of the lake to the Glen Entrance and to the hotel. Guests would often stay for weeks, or even an entire summer.

At the dismantling of the building in 1919 the wooden beams from the hotel were reused in the building of the five homes that exist in the area today.

The bricks used in the homes were recycled from the old Davis Malt House located on Madison Avenue. A few local residents also ended up owning the beautiful statues that graced the landings throughout the hotel.

The photo at right is undated but it shows the hotel's familiar front yard water fountain. The women wearing aprons makes it likely that this is a photo of the hotel staff.

Most of the grand hotels that existed in Watkins to serve summer visitors are now long gone. Only old photos and advertisements remain.







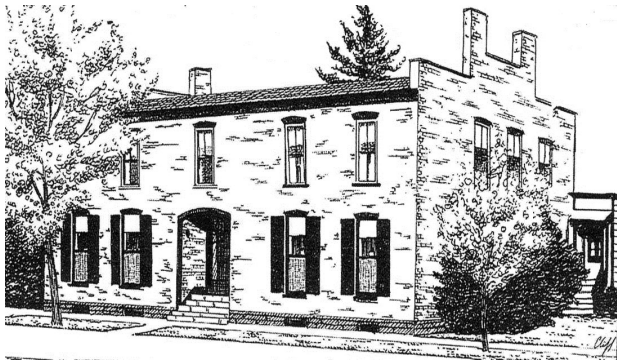
Here we have an advertisement piece from the 1880s showing three scenes from up in the Watkins Glen. The last issue of *The Vista* showed a photo from within the **Glen Bazaar** souvenir shop looking outwards. We can see here what the actual building looked like. We also see **James Hope's art gallery**, where many of his beautiful paintings were displayed and sold. He resided there with his family.





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Editor:  
**Andrew Tompkins**



Operation of the Brick Tavern Museum is partially funded by a grant administered by the Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce and authorized by the Schuyler County Legislature.

## *Victorian Tea 2014*

The annual Victorian Tea at the Brick Tavern Museum will be held Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, the day before Mother's Day.

Our annual tea has become quite a yearly occasion, with many enthusiastic participants returning year after year.

As usual there will be many exciting tea flavors making the

rounds and wonderful finger foods, cookies, cakes, and petit fours to follow. Museum volunteers serve as wait staff, complete with white dress shirts, white gloves, and black bow ties.



More details will be forthcoming as planning develops. Please be sure, though, to hold the date for what will surely be a great event.

## **Society Calendar**

**March 2: Montour Moose Club Benefit Breakfast, 8-11am**

**April 23: Annual Society Business Meeting**

**April 30: Seneca Nation Dinner & Presentation, Tyrone Fire Hall, 5:30pm**

**May 10: Victorian Tea**