

~The Vista~

Volume 2, Issue 2

August 2009

**Schuyler County
Historical Society**
Brick Tavern Museum
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Benefits of SCHS Membership:

- Subscription to the 16-page *Journal* and our new newsletter *The Vista*.
- Free use of our Research Library.
- Invitation to special Society programs and events.
- Full voting privileges to help shape our Society's future.
- The opportunity to help preserve Schuyler County history!

Inside this issue:

<i>Historical Society at Work</i>	2
<i>Freeman Middle School-Competition</i>	2
<i>Montour Falls Falls Harvest Festival 2009</i>	2
<i>Book Signing & Tour at Lee School</i>	3
<i>Montour Falls Village Homes Project</i>	3
<i>Volunteers Sought</i>	3
<i>Membership Application</i>	4

Fire Academy Presentation Librarian Diana Robinson to Speak

The Schuyler County Historical Society will sponsor a presentation by New York State Fire Academy librarian Diana Robinson on Wednesday, September 9th at 7pm.

The presentation will focus on the history of the Fire Academy building and will be held at the Fire Academy with a tour to follow.

Located in Montour Falls, the Fire Academy's cornerstone was

laid in 1858. Charles Cook, the builder and



The Cook Academy, circa 1892. The brick tower is no longer there (SCHS photo collection).

major proponent of the school, intended it to be an agricultural and mechanical college open to the "people."

Throughout the years it went by many names

and through many uses. It was known initially as the "People's College," then became Cook Academy, later St. John's Atonement Seminary, and finally the Fire Academy.

The Fire Academy building is truly a local landmark with a rich history worthy of exploring.

The presentation is free and open to the public.

Please contact the Museum at (607)535-9741 or info@schuylerhistory.org for further information.

Thank You Society Members!

Recently a letter was sent out to our current membership and those who had lapsed memberships asking to give a gift of membership or renew for the rest of the year at half price. The

mailing was made due to the changing of our membership year to a calendar year. As we rely on membership dues for operating expenses, we would have had a period without

any dues income.

We would like to thank all of you for gifting memberships, renewing, or just donating to the Society. Your generosity is much appreciated in these trying times!

The Historical Society at Work

Over the past six months a small group of dedicated volunteers have been diligently transcribing many of the donated scrapbooks we have here in our collections.

Most of the scrapbooks were originally compiled by residents of Schuyler County who clipped out interesting articles, marriage notices, graduations, and obituaries

from local newspapers. They mostly span from the early 1900s to the 1970s.



The scrapbooks are indexed in alphabetical order by last name- meaning any name that appeared in an article was recorded.

Indexing scrapbooks would

seem tedious to most, but they really have been a pleasure to work with. Many articles are interesting to the longtime Schuyler County resident, genealogist, or those who enjoy local history.

Look for some of the scrapbook indexes to appear on our website (www.schuylerhistory.org) under the "What's New" section.

Freeman Family Foundation Grant Competition

Watkins Glen Middle Schoolers complete Regional History Projects

The second annual New York State Regional History Competition was held for the Watkins Glen Middle School in June.

The winners of this year's competition are:

1st place (5&6 grades): Megan Hoy, "Watkins Glen State Park"

2nd place (5&6): Brook Shaffer, "Big Gully"

1st place (7&8 grades): Sarah Hazlitt, "Lehigh Valley Culvert"

2nd place (7&8): Chelsea Kennard, "Ernie Davis"

Freeman Family Foundation president Peter Freeman of New

York City (originally from Watkins Glen) started the competition to keep middle schoolers involved and interested in local and regional history. The winning projects are currently on display at the museum.

For further info contact the Museum at info@schuylerhistory.org or (607)535-9741.

Falls Harvest Festival 2009

This year's Montour Falls Harvest Festival will be held on West Main Street on Saturday, October 10th from 1-8pm.

The Schuyler County Historical Society plans on having a booth set up with



Celebrate the Harvest!

local history books and baked goods for sale. As the date approaches the Society will be contacting many of you to donate some of your delicious baked goods for sale.

Last year the Society

manned a booth and volunteers had fun meeting festival goers and chatting history. All proceeds of the book and bake sales are to benefit the Society.

For further info contact the Museum at info@schuylerhistory.org or (607)535-9741.

Book Signing and Tour at the Lee School Held

On Saturday, July 11th a book signing and tour of the Lee School was held.

Six area authors, including Barbara Bell, Ginny Bruckner, Gary Emerson, Carol Fagnan, Tony Ingraham, and Frank Steber, were available to sign their books and chat with visitors.

The Lee School, which is only open by appointment, was open to tour and many visitors were impressed by the old one room

schoolhouse off of Route 14 just south of the village of Montour Falls. The school was in operation from 1884 to 1943 and retains many items from that period. Among the items are an old wood burning stove, student textbooks, maps, and an 1888 world globe.

Please call ahead for an appointment if you have a group of six or more and would like to tour, or for further information- (607) 535-9741.

Books Available at the Museum

Schuyler County Days Bygone by Barbara H. Bell (\$24) NEW!

The Montour Falls Business District: West Main Street's Proud Past and Hopeful Future by Virginia Steil Bruckner (\$20)

Schuyler County New York: History and Families edited by John Potter (\$20 or \$30 for leather bound) NEW PRICE!

Seneca Dawn: The Pioneer Journey of John Dow by Frank Steber (\$15)

A Walk Through Watkins Glen: Water's Sculpture in Stone by Tony Ingraham (\$23)

Volunteer Seeks Help on Project

Ginny Bruckner, Society volunteer and author of the Montour Falls business district book, is seeking help with her project to track and record the histories of all the homes in the village of Montour Falls built between 1795 and 1921.

Over the years there have been visitors to the museum seeking information on the history of their

homes. Some of the requests have been from residents who have lived here for years, but more recently the requests have come from people moving into the village and buying some of the beautiful older homes.

Ginny is looking for deeds, photos of village homes, or photos of the people who built or lived in village

homes. If you wish to help her please send any items to the museum or send attachments to info@schuylerhistory.org.

You may also contact Ginny directly and she will come to you locally to make copies of any items you may wish to share. Her number is (607) 594-6331.

Volunteers Sought

The Schuyler County Historical Society is currently looking for volunteers to help greet visitors, answer phones, conduct tours, help with buildings & grounds, and with our clothing collection.

We are also seeking volunteers with computer experience in MS Word and Excel as we have many items to input into digital format.

We are open from Tuesday through Friday and Saturdays in the summer. Morning shifts from 10am to 1pm, and afternoon from 1pm to 4pm are available weekdays. Saturdays we are open 9am to 1pm.

For more info contact Andrew Tompkins at (607)535-9741 or info@schuylerhistory.org.

Mark your Calendars for these Upcoming Events!

August 22—Mechanics Club benefit dinner is rescheduled to November 7th

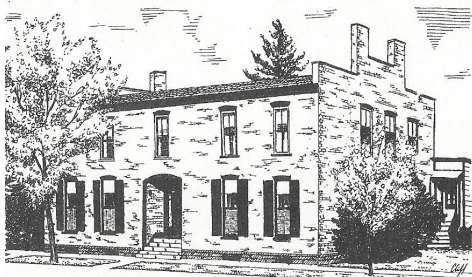
September 9—Fire Academy presentation by librarian Diana Robinson, NYS Fire Academy building, Montour Falls, 7pm.

October 10—Falls Harvest Festival booth, Montour Falls, 1-8pm.

SCHUYLER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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We're on the Web!
www.schuylerhistory.org

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Schuyler County Historical Society Turning "50" in 2010!

The founders met in March 1960 to organize the Schuyler County Historical Society with the constitution and by-laws adopted in April. The first officers were elected in May and the Society acquired the Lee one-room schoolhouse in June.

1960 was an eventful year for our Society and we are planning to celebrate the 50th anniversary accordingly. If you have any fun ideas on how best to celebrate our anniversary or would like to help organize events for our members please contact us. Our contact info is at the top of this sheet.

Some other fun facts:

From 1961 to 1968 the Society met in different towns and villages and rotated exhibits in and out of the courthouse display cases.

In 1963 our provisional Charter was granted and first outside display was completed at the Glen Park Centennial.

In 1968 exhibits and research files were moved to space donated by the Schuyler County Legislature, a two-room complex in the Rural Urban Center in Montour Falls.

In 1973 the Charles Lattin home was purchased with funds from the estate of Dorothy Longnecker. It is now our Brick Tavern Museum.