

Marshall Historical Society
Looking to the past to inspire our future

Newsletter

May, 2017

Marshall Historical Society
P.O. Box 232
Deansboro, NY 13328

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Website:

www.marshallhistsoc.org

Next Meeting

Saturday, June 10, 2017
Doolittle Schoolhouse,
Doolittle Road, Paris;
Lincoln Davies Museum,
Paris; Grande's, Sauquoit

Join!

Provide your name and address (and email, if applicable) to the secretary and pay the membership fee:

Individual: \$10:00

Family: \$15.00

Donate!

Your donations to the Marshall Historical Society are tax deductible.

Mark the Date!!

Saturday, June 10 has been chosen for our June Adventure. This year, it's been decided to visit the Doolittle School House on Doolittle Road; lunch at Grande's on Route 8; and tour the Lincoln Davies museum in the afternoon. We've made arrangements with Max Townsend at Lincoln Davies, and Polly Blunk at Doolittle, and they will be available to give brief talks about the museums. Lunch, as always, is on your own, but Grande's has a full lunch menu at reasonable prices. Reservations have been made for noon on the 10th, but we'll need to know the exact number by June 7 (Wednesday before) so they can be ready to host the exact amount of people who plan to attend.

Amy Buchholz gave a very interesting talk about Prints. She displayed many different types of prints, the kinds found decorating old houses, and explained how they are made and tools with which to make them. Amy showed pictures from Harper's Weekly, and discussed a Currier & Ives print which was brought by Gwen and Fran Lallier, who also provided the refreshments. We hope Amy can reprise her talk sometime in the future!

The Historical Society has been presented with six (6!) scrapbooks of local history, lovingly put together over the years by Eleanor Dawes. Bonny Niles, historian of the Town of Paris and president of the Historical Society, sent some clippings and photographs pertaining to Town of Marshall history; and Patti Hughes Hillman, daughter of David Hughes, mailed a scrapbook filled with more interesting glimpses into the past. Patti is the granddaughter of Ella Eastman Hughes, and she believes the scrapbook came from her aunt Blodwen Hughes.

Our next meeting will be June 10, when we will gather for fellowship, until we meet again in September.

Many citizens of the Town of Marshall have fond memories of the Maccabee Hall, which was located on the west side of Route 315 approximately where The Boro is. Built in 1897 by the Knights of the Maccabees #514, it was quite a structure. It featured a steel ceiling manufactured in West Virginia and a flagstone path (a rarity in those days) installed in front. Practically every carpenter in Deansboro was employed to work day and night at 7 1/2 cents an hour. There was a stage, a balcony and plenty of room. The opening and dedication of the building in 1898 was a gala affair, marred only by "a most disagreeable storm," which meant that some of the attendees were unable to leave the building with the result that they were served breakfast in addition to a 5 pm and midnight dinner.

The Maccabees are a fraternal society formed in 1878 in Canada, which sponsored financial aid and insurance to members and homes for the aged. At its zenith, the worldwide membership in the organization reached over 300,000; by the 1970s membership was down to about 10,000. The local Maccabee Society, which was called the Brothertown Tent, was quite active in Deansboro until about a little after the turn of the century. Electricity was installed in 1906. The Maccabees never actually owned the building, however; it was owned by a group of investors in the building which called itself the Deansboro Hall Association. The Association rented the hall to the Maccabees and the building was used as a community center. Prominent speakers, meetings, concerts, banquets, plays, talent shows and all kinds of activities and celebrations were held in the Maccabee Hall. The Men's Club rented the Hall for many years, and sponsored an active Shuffleboard (Shovelboard) team.

When the school in Deansboro burned in 1931, some classes were held in Maccabee Hall. The high school pupils occupied the main part of the Hall with Prof. A. J. Smith and Miss Kathryn Cornell as teachers until the new school was ready for occupancy in 1932. However, Mrs. Powell, former historian of the Town of Marshall related that the furnace in the Hall was very old and put all sorts of noxious gases in the building which built up over the course of the day, so nobody was kept in after school much in those days. Movies were held there, but the eels from Oriskany Creek used to get around the water wheel which generated the electricity. The movie would come to a stop and someone would have to go out to remove the eel. Esther Skerritt Sanders accompanied the silent movies on the piano.



Plays were put on for the public. Clifford Small, whose father was a charter member of the Maccabees, remembered Chautauqua performances in which five plays were presented in a season for \$2.00 a season

ticket. In 1945, Benjamin Smith temporarily moved his barber shop to the Maccabee Hall from the business block which was torn down by Claude Hinman in order to build the brick building which stands at the corner of Routes 315 and 12B today. Balls and dances were held in the Maccabee Hall to the music of Brownie Moyer's orchestra; I remember square dancing there in the 1950s and 1960s. Some have recalled dance lessons, Girl Scout and Boy Scout meetings, and participating in a talent show. Basketball games were played in the Hall. Voting was held there, and town business was conducted. The firemen held their first ham dinner there.

One special occasion was in September, 1946 when a public dinner was held to honor the returning veterans from World War Two, co-chaired by Gardener Hart and Frank Seelow. 90 people attended the steak dinner with all the trimmings and sang patriotic songs. Three years later, in the year 1949 the Barton Hose Company bought the Maccabee Hall, which later became a burden to the firemen, so they sold it to the Town of Marshall in 1956. In 1959, the town was looking to sell it, according to a Waterville Times article, so the hall, although still used for community functions, began to deteriorate. But who can forget ice skating on the rink which was maintained in the parking lot next to the hall?

In the 1970s, the structure that was originally Maccabee Hall was turned into a night spot, first called Peter's Little Cellar, operated by Jim Harrison and Peter Zuccaro; and lastly it was known as JR's Tavern. The building was then owned by A.R. D'Agostino of Clinton and operated by James Clements and Ronald Haskins of Oriskany Falls. The Bicentennial Ball was held there in 1976.

In February 1981, an explosion sparked a fire which destroyed the tavern - and the hall. When the firemen arrived at the scene the fire was fully involved and there was no saving the building. There ends the story of an 84-year-old building that was The Place to Be for much of its history.





History lovers and educators, get ready! This 3-day event in Rome, Utica and Herkimer, NY will celebrate 200 years of an engineering marvel.

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, May 19-21, 2017

Friday: Speakers present a variety of canal topics at the Oneida County History Center in Utica from 9:00am - 4:00pm with an optional dinner in the evening at Aqua Vino at 5:00pm.

Saturday: A bus tour hosted by the Canal Society of New York will take you to prominent historic sites that helped shape the canal from Utica to Rome.

Sunday: Head out on the canal with an Erie Canal Boat tour leaving from Herkimer, NY.

Attend all three days, or choose your favorite event. Great for history lovers, educators and students.

**See conference schedule at
<http://eriecanal200.com>**