

Marshall Historical Society
Looking to the past to inspire our future

Newsletter

Marshall Historical Society
P.O. Box 232
Deansboro, NY 13328
marshallhistory17@gmail.com

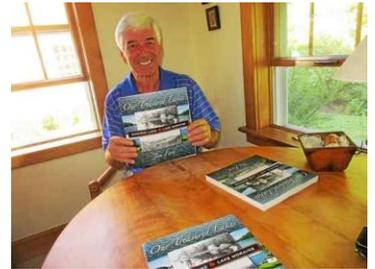
September, 2018

Greetings Members and Friends:

It hardly seems possible that it is almost fall, and soon summer will be a memory. Summer always goes so quickly: in June, it stretches enticingly ahead of us, so we think, "Oh, I have all summer to do such-and-such" (at least I do) and then boom! School is back in session, the leaves start turning color, and the days begin to get shorter. However, on the bright side, we have what we hope will be a year of interesting and intriguing programs.

As we mentioned last month, our "June Adventure" turned out to be our "July Adventure" - visiting the Museum at Cherry Valley on July 21. The is chock-full of historical items, some dating back into the 1600s: furniture, clothing, toys, and dishes, just to mention a few. What a lot of us found really interesting was the large diorama of Cherry Valley, with information relating to the Cherry Valley Massacre of 1778. We will have a speaker, Susan Murray Miller, from Cherry Valley who will speak about the Massacre for our March, 2019, program.

We are starting our year off with Jim Ford on September 20 at 7:00, who will speak on Lake Moraine and Madison Lake, based on his book, ***Our Treasured Lakes***, which hopefully will be on sale at the September meeting. Jim is an accomplished speaker and this should be a very interesting and informative presentation.



In October 18, Elizabeth "Perk" Stalter, Historian of the Town of Brookfield, will present a talk on Crane Silos, many of which can be found locally.

IMPORTANT! At our September meeting, we will have a number of business items to attend to, among them changing the By-Laws, electing officers, and electing a Trustee, whose term will end in 2023, to take the place of Ruth Melvin. The current By-Laws state that a quorum of 10 is necessary to conduct business, so be sure to put that meeting on your calendar: **September 20 at 6:30.**

President

Janet Dangler

Vice President & Inventory

John DeForest

Secretary/Treasurer

Yvonne Brady

Trustees

Ruth Melvin (2018)

Bill Koren (2019)

Amy Buchholz (2020)

Gen Cornelius (2021)

Gary Ford (2022)

Website:

www.marshallhistsoc.org

Next Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 20

6:30 p.m.

Lake Moraine & Madison

Lake- Jim Ford

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.

**MARSHALL HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT
2017-2018**

Officers for 2017-2018- Elected at the September 21, 2017 meeting

President - Janet Dangler

Vice President/Inventory - John DeForest

Secretary/Treasurer - Yvonne Brady

Trustee - Gary Ford (terms ends 2022)

Programs for 2017-2018

September 21 - "Brothertown Indians" - Janet Dangler

October 19 - "Curiosities in the Book World" - Professor Booknoodle, AKA John DeForest

November 16 - "Lady Liberty - The Story of the Statue of Liberty" - Cheryl Pula

February 24 - Pot Luck Luncheon - Good Food and Good Conversation

March 15 - "Barrel Making" - Bob Allers

April 19 - "Writing Your Own History" - Gary Ford

May 17 - Show and Tell

July 21 - Adventure to Cherry Valley Museum & Lunch

Visits

June 1, 2018 - Visit to Hamilton College Library Archives with Brothertown Indians

June 2, 2018 - Luncheon for Brothertown Indians at Marshall Town Hall

APHNYS Section 7 Meetings

October 17, 2017 - Hosted by Marshall Historical Society in the Congregational UCC

Meeting Room - speakers Wade Lallier (Chenango Canal), John Taibi (O&W Railroad) and Janet Dangler (Brothertown Indians).

May 5, 2018 - "Hops" hosted by Waterville Historical Society - speakers Matt Urtz, Steve Miller, Foothills Hop Farm, Mark Barnes

Oneida County Historical Association

April 14, 2018 - Rome Historical Society

Presentations on Brothertown Indians

3/10/18 - Oneida County History Center

4/3/18 - Paris Historical Society

5/23/18 - Waterville Historical Society

8/24/18 - Waterville Library

Continued Endeavors This Year

Businesses of Marshall. A questionnaire has been distributed to various businesses and information is being gathered with the idea of putting together into a book. Work has started on this project.

BUDGET - June 2018

Income

	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Donations	100	100	100	150
Dues	200	250	280	250
Interest	5	15	15	15
Sales	50	75	250	300
Total Income	\$355.00	\$ 440.00	\$645.00	\$ 715.00

Expenses

June/July Outing	100	100	100	20
Misc Items - ex cookie tray for an event	100	100	250	100
Office	250	250	250	250
Programs	150	150	150	150
Marshall Historical Society Award	100	100	100	0
Projects	100	100	100	300
Conferences/Workshops	100	100	100	150
Total Expenses	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00	\$1,050.00	\$ 970.00

Excess expenditure over income (Expenses more than income)	545.00	\$ 460.00	\$405.00	\$ 255.00
---	---------------	------------------	-----------------	------------------

Savings - July 2018 \$4,793.77

12 Certificate (Expires Sept 12, 2018) \$1,885.01

Checking Balance - July 2018 \$710.20

Total in Bank Accounts \$7,388.98

August 2017 Account balances \$7063.55

Total Added to our accounts since Aug
2017 **\$325.43**

Constitution (2003) and the By-Laws revised 2007.

We propose making the following changes to the Constitution

- Business meeting at 6:30 pm and Program at 7 pm (Voted on last year and approved)
- Business meeting can be held as long as present is:
 - Trustee submitting a change (to By-Laws)
 - Two Board members to accept the change
 - at least 5 present to make a quorum
- Business Meeting three times a year: September(annual meeting); December; June, times and dates to be determined by officers and Board of Trustees.
- Add office title of Librarian – can be combined with another office – example Vice President.
 - The Librarian will maintain inventory and display of archives
- Regular meetings of the Society shall be held on the third Thursday of the months of September, October, November, March, April and May; a pot-luck luncheon in January; and an outing in June or July. This past year, because of the passing of Dorothy McConnell, our friend, founder and guiding light, we put off our planned January Pot Luck until February - there was no regular meeting.
-
- Miscellaneous Items to Discuss:
 - Calendar to sell in November featuring old and new photos of the Town of Marshall
 - Dorothy Plaque - completed in August
 - Annual Report
 - Budget
 - Slate of Offices
 - Election of new Trustee(s)

Notes on Amending from Original Constitution

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting by two-thirds vote of those voting, provided notice was given at the previous meeting. Or they may be amended at a special meeting called for that purpose, with previous notice and a two-thirds vote. All proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing.

Notes on Holding Office

A person who has been elected to the Board of Trustees for two consecutive terms or elected a president or vice-president for five consecutive terms, shall not be nominated to the same office unless one-year elapse between the end of his or her last term and the beginning of the term for which he or she is nominated.

ROMANCE WYATT, LAST OF THE BROTHERTOWN INDIANS

The Last of the Brothertown Indians in the area, Romance Wyatt, who died in 1907, was described as a kindhearted gentleman who had a sense of humor, laughed often and enjoyed a good joke. But to appreciate his story, it's necessary to understand a little of the history of the Brothertowns.

In the late 1770s, the remnants of once-mighty Algonquian tribes, reduced in numbers and driven from their homes in New England, Connecticut, and Long Island, united to form a new tribe at the encouragement of the Oneida Indians, part of the Iroquois "Six Nations" in New York State. The Oneidas were land-rich at that time, and deeded them land about 10 miles square around the present Town

of Marshall, extending from the foot of Sanger Hill northward along the Brothertown Road, across Forge Hollow, along the east side of the Deansboro Valley and up to the Dugway at Franklin Springs. Because so many tribes had joined together to make a family, and because they were intent on following a path of peace, they decided on the name Brothertown. Due to the fact they had no common language, they adopted the English language. Among the tribes represented were the Pequot, Narragansett, Niantic, Mohegan, Tunxis, and Montauk. They were led by Samson Occom, a Mohegan, who was their spiritual leader and teacher. Romance Wyatt, by all accounts, was a Montauk although he sometimes described himself as a descendant of the Narragansett tribe.

Romance Wyatt, commonly called Matt, was born in 1826 in the Town of Marshall. Here accounts of his very early life differ. Some sources tell us that at the age of 6 months his parents gave him to Cynthia Dick to raise; others state his parents died when he was 6 months of age and he was adopted; and others assert that, although he had no memory of his mother, he was seven years old when his father died. However he came to live with Cynthia Dick of Dicksville, the fact remains that she nurtured and cared for him, making sure he attended the Dicksville school, until he was 12 or 13 years old.

After that time, he worked for farmers in the area, but decided to travel to Fox River, Wisconsin, where many of his fellow tribesmen, including Cynthia Dick, had emigrated due to the increasing demand for the Brothertown land by the whites. At one time there were around 500 members of the tribe who were said to be industrious farmers, but they could not withstand the influence of the white settlers who often got the better of them in land deals. Therefore, gradually they gave up and moved. Wyatt stayed in the northwest only a few years, however, and came back to live in the Town of Marshall, where he went to work on the Chenango Canal which opened in 1837. He was at first a driver and then was promoted to steersman, at which position he worked for over thirty seasons. In those days a canaller had to fight his way along the towpath and at the locks. It is said that young Wyatt never picked a fight, but when forced into one he always came out on top; when he had a black eye the other fellow had two.

Romance Wyatt lived for a time in Hamilton, and it was there he got involved with the case of Jared Comstock and his wife Clarissa in 1858. Wyatt was frequently called to the home of the Comstocks to protect them from the murderous threats and attacks of their drunken son William. On the night Mr. and Mrs. Comstock were actually murdered by their son, Wyatt was unable to go to their home at their request due to a previous engagement; however, he was part of the search party who found William Comstock, the murderer, in the woods "secreted behind a log." He visited the prisoner, who escaped being lynched on the spot, many times while he was in prison in Morrisville, and was a witness for the prosecution at the trial. An aside: William Comstock was allowed to plead guilty to manslaughter in the first degree by



reason of insanity, and was sent to Auburn prison where he presumably lived out his life sentence. He was said to have been a model prisoner.

When the Civil War broke out Wyatt traveled to Utica to enlist in Co. K, 26th Regiment, and when that company was mustered out after about six months, he re-enlisted in the 83d Infantry, part of Company K and later in Company A. He was in the first battle of Fredericksburg, where he was wounded in his left thigh, and also in the battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. At Gettysburg he was in the thick of the fight at Little Round Top. He was shot in the right ankle, which left him with a slight limp, and on July 6, 1865, was honorably discharged with a pension of \$4. Wyatt was a great admirer of Abraham Lincoln, and while in the South he secured leave of absence long enough to come back to his home and vote for him.

In conjunction with voting, the story goes that as he entered the polling place, a man came up to Wyatt and said to him, "You know what side your bread is buttered on, don't you?" and gave him a \$5.00 bill. A few minutes later another man asked the same question and gave him \$1.00. Said Romance Wyatt, "Neither one of them asked me as to how I intended to vote, and I went ahead and cast my ballot as I had expected to. I had always known which side my bread was buttered on, but I had never expected to be paid merely for possessing that knowledge."

After the war, Romance Wyatt returned to the Town of Marshall, having developed a strong attachment for this valley and its inhabitants. He bought a house in 1866 on the road from Deansboro to Oriskany Falls near where Doug and Sue Cornelius live at 2151 State Route 12B. It is no longer there, but was across from where the Signal Trailer Park in Deansboro is now located. In 1867 he married Eunice Ann Beach, a white woman, by whom he had one daughter, Hattie. Wyatt worked on the canal and Mrs. Wyatt found a ready market for her spruce gum, which she sold to the nearby school children for a penny. It was made from the resin Mr. Wyatt gathered from the trees in the Nile Mile Swamp. The gum was a rather hard, brown substance with a sweetish, pungent flavor.

In 1881, Hattie Wyatt died of pneumonia at the age of 15, and a hydrangea tree was planted to mark her gravesite on the east slope of the Deansboro cemetery. Despite the considerable grief at the loss of their daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Wyatt carried on. Wyatt, when he found the time in the winter, wove baskets of white ash, and also produced and sold chair seats; and his wife, besides supplying the gum, was the creator of fancy work for the people of the village. Romance Wyatt was elected game constable in the Town of Marshall in 1877. It was hoped, an article in the Waterville Times stated, that Wyatt's fondness for fishing would encourage him to enforce the fishing and gaming laws, which he did.

Mrs. Wyatt died in 1893, and Romance Wyatt was left alone once again. Lewis Kindness, another Indian, lived with him for a while, but he eventually went west. Wyatt always enjoyed hard cider, and during one of his "sprees" during this time, he attended a revival meeting at the Congregational (Stone) church in Oriskany Falls. He listened to the appeals of the minister, but could not make up his mind to convert until he had one last drink. He did, and told the bar tender, "This is my last drink." He signed a pledge, which he kept faithfully to the end, not to indulge in any more "firewater." Wyatt went back to the Congregational church, became a member, and even worked for some years there as janitor. It is said that every Sunday he walked from his home in Deansboro to Oriskany Falls to attend church, and hardly ever missed a service.

Wyatt, who elected not to leave the banks of the Chenago Canal, died in 1907, sitting in a rocking chair on the front porch of his house on the Deansboro-Oriskany Falls Road. Reportedly, he had been in feeble health, so his death was not unexpected. He was buried in the Deansboro cemetery next to his wife and daughter. Although there is a population of Brothertown Indians in Wisconsin and all over the country, no more are left in this area. Hence, Romance (Matt) Wyatt is referred to as "The Last of the Brothertowns."