



LANSINGBURGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2 114th Street (P.O. Box 219)
LANSINGBURGH (Rensselaer County) N.Y. 12182

August/September, 2008

THIS SUMMER AT THE MELVILLE HOUSE

The historic marker has been removed, sandblasted, then repainted and replaced by Gordy, Warren, Deborah, Liz, and Julie, in official State colors.

Work on the Melville House restoration has begun, with the removal of dangerous, old, wooden stairways, roofs, and porches in the rear by David Frueh Contracting of Glenmont. Following this work, Gerald Dagullo of Guilderland, will restore the rear chimney and repair the rear roof.

The hemlock tree next to the front porch was removed by Constable Tree Service of Waterford.

A HISTORIC NOTE

An 1840 assessment roll of the Town of Lansingburgh in the New York State Library, contains an entry for the Melville House under the name of its owner:

"Knickerbacker, William 2 Houses lot No. 23, 24, E. Side River St., Co. of North & River Sts. 1 Div'n. real property valued @ \$1,350, personal property valued @ \$1,000 total tax due \$9.58."

NEW MEMBERS

New members since the last newsletter are as follows:

Zachary Chiera	Danish Brotherhood of America
Theodore Crier	Alice Fulton
Joan Enzien	Peter Enzien
John Jorgensen	Robert & Betsey Hoffman
Larry Moss	Lorraine O'Brien
Stephen Muller	Pamela Poulin

Anyone who joined since the last newsletter should find their membership card enclosed.

SPRING RAFFLE WINNERS

The Spring Raffle winners are:

Hostess Set - Linda Zych
Plate - Lansingburgh Eagles
Book - David Beales
Jug - Karen Biel
Relish Dish - Jennifer O'Neill
Flask - Julia Shaw

EARLY AUTUMN PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Porch Sale - Saturday, September 13, 9am - 2pm. Donations of household items, collectibles, books, tools, art, etc. in good condition are needed. If you can volunteer for one, two, or three hours at a time, helping to set up, mind the merchandise, put it away, or escort visitors to the attic museum, please let Warren know (235-4041). Please come and shop. If you can post our notice of our sale somewhere useful, please do so.

Our October meeting will be held on Thursday, October 23rd at 7:30pm. Noted author David Pitkin will speak about Ghosts of the Northeast, the subject of his book by the same name. Rensselaer County ghosts will be featured, including the ghost of Aaron Burr in Lansingburgh. Weather permitting, we may visit the site of the Aaron Burr apparition nearby. Copies of David's book will be available at the meeting for purchase and inscription.

SAVE THE DATE

The Lansingburgh Historical Society will have a dinner at the Lansingburgh Veteran's Club (First Ave. near 122nd Street), on November 6, 2008. Details will follow in the next newsletter.

HIGHLIGHTING RECENT ACQUISITIONS

This summer we have acquired some important and interesting items for our collections.

Gifts of Warren F. Broderick:

- a rare dark amber soda bottle, marked "Fred Romp, Lansingburgh"
- an 1848 letter from a purchaser in Pittsburgh, of oil cloth from D. Powers and Sons
- an 1867 mortgage, relative to a house on the southeast corner of 16th St. & 4th Ave., owned by the Comstock family
- a magazine advertisement for Trojan Boats, manufactured at 393 3rd Avenue
- an 1887 school music notebook belonging to Miss Lavina E. Flynn, a 14 year old student at St. Augustine's School.

Gifts of Robert and Betsy Hoffman:

- a Civil War era photo & autograph album of L. D. Dargen.

MUGGINGS IN MELVILLE GARDEN - HELP NEEDED!

According to our wild roses, spider flowers, bee balm, borage, and other garden friends, thugs named Grapevine, Sumac, Locust, Plantain, Mulberry, and several tall undesirable types have been creeping, harassing and even smothering our poor flowers. Our once welcoming walkways at the house and in Melville Park have become obscured by unwanted green trespassers whose numbers multiply as they loiter insolently. Visit and see for yourselves! Weed Police are asked to come whenever able, with work gloves, straight-edge shovels, edgers, digging tools, pruners, loppers, and bags. Warren, Gordy Brown, Ed Johnson, and Sharon Wesley have put in considerable time fighting the invaders and welcome any inquiries and help. Deputy Gardeners are thanked in advance and asked to please keep all areas safe under foot for our restoration workmen by removing any trimmings and debris promptly.

Our September meeting will be held on Thursday, September 18th at 7:30 PM at the Melville House.

Stuart Lehman of will appear in costume as the Colonial Physician in Upstate New York. He will speak and demonstrate about the lives and careers of early doctors in our area. Mr. Lehman is the curatorial supervisor in charge of tours at the State Capitol and Governor's Mansion.

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Our November meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13th at 7:30 PM at the Melville House.

Shirley Dunn of East Greenbush will about Lansingburgh's original residents, the Mohican Indians. She is the author of two books on the subject. Native American sites in Lansingburgh include Devil's Kitchen, Diamond Rock, and Unuwat's Castle. Copies of her books will be available at the meeting for purchase and inscription. Native American artifacts from Lansingburgh will be on display.