

The Rensselaerville Press

📖 A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE RENSSELAERVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 📖

"Today is Tomorrow's History"

Fall 2022 - Winter 2023



Rensselaerville Fire Company



On **January 14, 1897**, a meeting of the legal voters of the Rensselaerville Fire District was held after a due notice had been given about the meeting. A motion was made and J. R. Chadwick was elected chairman and S. Golden Secretary. By a vote taken in an open meeting it was decided to elect three Commissioners and a Treasurer. Dewey Bell, C. B. Cross and Wm. F. Smith were declared Commissioners for a three-year term and John B. Shultes was elected treasurer for three years. It was then voted in an open meeting to appropriate \$275 for the purchase of a hose and necessary fire apparatus. At an organizational meeting of the Fire Commissioners on **January 20, 1897**, M. S. Golden was selected as chairman and C. B. Cross as secretary. "The Rensselaerville Fire Company was the name chosen for the Fire District. It was moved that the Fire Commissioners expend for 600 feet of hose and hose cart, a sum not to exceed \$275. The following named persons were chosen firemen for the above-named company".



Foreman – Lewis (Louis) Becker, **Assistant Foreman** – J. F. Becker

Nozzlemen – Romaine Southard, William Becker, Dewey Bell, William G. Smith, Charles Golden, Irvin Yeomans

Hosemen – Frank Rice, Van N. Huyck, Albert C. Golden, Abe Yeomans, Charles Smith, Henry M. Miner, Frank Bell, Charles Hewitt, Louis Smith, M. S. Golden, Arthur S. Golden

Laddermen – T. R. Chadwick, Charles Oswald, P. Dreisbeck, Charles Dean, James H. Rider, John Baitsholts, Alvin Yeomans, William J. Williams

Bucketmen – Charles Jenkins, D. McCulloch, A. E. Kyte, Arthur H. Shultes, William F. Smith, Myron Bryant, John B. Shultes, Joseph Bouton, David Lincoln, Robert Smith

The First Fire After Fire Company Was Formed

"From Rensselaerville: On the morning of Friday last, (**December 10, 1897**) between 1 and 2 o'clock, the cry fire broke upon the slumbers of the community and roused to their duty and to test their apparatus and courage, our newly equipped and yet untried fire department. The fire was located in the grist mill, the property of Mrs. F. C. Huyck, of Albany... For two long hours it was an even deal between fire and water. Our boys, however, held their own until the building became some what cleared of smoke, and the flames could be dealt with more directly. Then the issue no longer doubtful...The damage to the building and machinery is estimated to be about \$1,500. The insurance is but \$1,000... And now permit me to add a word of praise, and meager praise at that, for the unselfish courage of our firemen, under the leadership of their chief, Mr. Louis Becker, who did not send where he would not first go himself. Those who think they know, say that the boys worked with efficiency as trained regulars. One thing I know and that is, R'ville fire Company, in five hours' time, could turn Perdition itself into a bog swamp."



Rensselaerville Fire Company... *Continued from Page 1*

“A special meeting of the inhabitants of the Fire District in the Village of Rensselaerville was held in Miners Hall on **August 25, 1899**, pursuant to call, and the sum of one hundred dollars was voted for the purpose of erecting a tower for keeping and storing hose and cart.” H. M. Miner Sec.



Building across from the stop sign on Rt. 85, the building on the left of the pole and tree is the location of the first firehouse. Photo donated by Diana Fritz.

“A special meeting of the inhabitants of the Fire District in the Village of Rensselaerville was held in Miners Hall at 2 PM, **May 9, 1900** – Frank Rice was elected Chairman. The object of the meeting was the purchase of a house of H. M. Miner for a hose house for storing and drying hose, ladders and cart – instead of building a tower adjoining the Grist Mill as was formerly intended and the price of the building is \$200. One motion duly made and seconded that we adjourn until tomorrow.” Henry M. Miner, Sec.

Thursday, **May 10, 1900** “The chairman called the meeting to order and stated the unfinished business (from May 9th meeting). The motion was duly made and seconded that there be raised by taxation the sum of \$150 upon the taxable property of said Rensselaerville Fire

District for the purpose for purchasing the Miner building and other expenses connected therewith’ The chair appointed M. S. Golden as Teller. They were present and voting; F. C. Huyck, Dewey Bell, William F. Smith, H. M. Miner, Frank Rice, M. S. Golden, Thomas R. Chadwick. Carried the teller reported of ballots cast – five in favor- two opposed. The Chairman then declared motion.”

Henry M. Minor Sec.

Frank Rice, Chairman

January 10, 1928, a bill of \$34.50 was presented by Harold Bell for wiring and installing lights in the hose room.

In **1939** the fire department was incorporated and became the department we have today, the Rensselaerville Volunteer Fire Company. The 1939 charter members were John Baitsholts, Elmer Bennett, Ralph Britton Sr., William Britton, Harold Borthwick, Dewey Cornell, Allen Davis, Gratton Dockrell, Lloyd Filkins, Charles Gifford, George Hale, William Kuhar, Richard Lansing, Niles Mackey, Alton Parker, Kenneth Pearson, Walter Pearson, William Rice Jr., Earnest Rivenburg, Gordon Shufelt, Stanton Shufelt, Clifford Shaw, William Smith, Clinton Wood and Malcolm Wood.

Methodist Episcopal congregation ceased using the Church in 1900. On October 6, 1905, Francis C. Huyck Sr. purchased the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church for \$500 and converted it to a community hall. September 10, 1926, the premises was conveyed by E. N. Huyck under the will of Emily Niles Huyck and Jessie V. A. Huyck to Francis C. Huyck Jr. The building was renamed Conkling Hall.

July 26, 1939, A motion was made by Rensselaerville Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. to accept the deed to Conkling Hall from Mrs. Francis C. Huyck Jr.

Mrs. Francis C. Huyck Jr. (Laura Talmage) was sent a thank you note August 11, 1939.

“On behalf of the people of Rensselaerville we wish to thank you for your most generous gift of Conkling Hall. We feel sure that with the co-operation of the people of the community, we will be able to preserve the hall as a center of recreation and community activity and may eventually be able to provide adequate fire protection for the town. Both these objectives will be achievements in which Mr. Huyck would have been

Rensselaerville Fire Company... *Continued from Page 2*

deeply interested, and we feel we can perpetuate his memory by carrying them through successfully, which we sincerely hope to do.”

Respectfully yours,

Elmer Bennett, Clinton Wood, Joseph Leggett
William G. Britton, Dewey Cornell



October 3, 1939, A motion was made to buy Sanford fire apparatus from Charles Doty of Kingston at a price of \$4,000 for 1100 feet ½ inch hose and five of 1½ inch hose, hand fire extinguisher, axe, crowbar, light bell siren, ladders and 3 lengths of suction hose. The price of the apparatus is to be \$4,000, complete including GMC truck. **January 2, 1940**, the Rensselaerville Volunteer Fire Company borrowed \$2,000 from the E.N. Huyck Preserve for 4% interest. Truck to be delivered in 1940. A siren and time clock were installed. The truck was housed on the ground level of Conkling Hall through the double doors that are still there.



Conkling Hall basement doors where fire engine was stored.

November 30, 1939, A motion was made for all volunteers to pay \$1.00 per year starting January first.

February 5, 1940, Dues will be \$1.00 per year with 50 cents due every six months.

March 13, 1940, A motion was made that Charter members be those who joined before April 12.

May 9, 1940, A motion that the siren ring at noon.

Rensselaerville Fire Company started having a Clam Steam in September **1941** and continued through late 1960s or early 70s. In **1942** bingo and card parties were held at Conkling Hall. The Fire Company starting in **1946** from late June through August, had movies Tuesday and Friday nights upstairs of the hall.

The Fire Company owned Conkling Hall until they moved to State Route 85 when Jesse V. A. Huyck gave them a building and land in **1958** to create a firehouse. The building was the former Huyck stable and had to be renovated before the fire truck could be moved to the new location.

The Rensselaerville Ladies Battalion was formed in **1980** after a devastating barn fire on May 2, 1980, at the Kropp Farm. Their primary function was to support the fire company, they provide various community services including Easter egg hunts, Halloween parades, lighting a village Christmas, visits from Santa Claus, organizing a yearly garage sale day, and an annual toy drive. The charter members were Valerie Barrett, Mary Bryan, Donna Decker, Rosie Fritz, Barbara Hahne, Bernadette Ketchell, Donna Kropp, Sandy Kropp, Ann Kuhar, Rosie Kuhar, Carol Perkinson, Magdaline Tallman, Anna Utter.

In **2014** the Rensselaerville Fire Department celebrated 75 years of protecting the village of Rensselaerville and buildings on the many roads surrounding the area including Crystal Lake. Bob Kropp wrote in their program “I am honored to have served as a member of the Rensselaerville Volunteer Fire Department for over 50 years.”

Two Stories Were Shared at the Celebration

“Richard (Dick) Bryan in 1976 was traveling home when he saw the department’s tanker heading down Route 85. Dick rushed home, called fire chief Bud Rivenburgh to see where the fire was. The reply was there no fire. A search was underway to locate the missing fire truck. The story goes that it was forcibly stopped at gunpoint at Meads Corner on Route 32. It seems like one of the residents of Camp Cass, a juvenile detention center, had decided it was a great mode of transportation, if not a little noticeable.”

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Rensselaerville Fire Company... *Continued from Page 3*

Lawrence (Dutch) Bryant reminisces about the fire company's clam steams. "They would start the set up by erecting an old Army Medical tent which took at least a dozen men. Tables, chairs, and steamers were brought down from the firehouse to Conkling Hall. About 35 bushels of clams had to be washed and a men's toilet had to be created with four poles in the ground with plastic wrapped around it. Someone was on duty to keep an eye on the raw clam bar, it seems there were some people who would bring a bag, and just scoop up the raw ones, and bring them home. Of course, there is always music. It was usually square dancing with the caller Bill Chetten, from Clarksville. One year the fire alarm went off during the Clam Steam and the old schoolhouse on Pond Hill Road burnt."

In 2022 the firehouse has had several additions added to the 1958 building.



The company has three trucks that are housed there. The building also has a small kitchen and community room where monthly meetings are held. The Battalion has dropped the name ladies and the Battalion membership is now open to all residents. The Battalion uses the community room for its fund raisers including Father's Day breakfast.

The township of Rensselaerville has three fire districts including Tri-village - the firehouse is located in Preston Hollow and Medusa. They are all volunteer companies and can only protect the towns if citizens continue to join the companies and go through the many trainings to become certified.

Rose Kuhar

Part Two - Civil War Soldiers from Rensselaerville

Part one was published in the Spring 2022 issue of The Rensselaerville Press

214 soldiers have been identified who may have been from Rensselaerville. The towns of New York State were required to keep records of the soldiers who fought in the Civil War from their town. The Union soldiers living in the western part of our township are featured in this issue. This information came from the records from Potter Hollow and Preston Hollow's Cemeteries plus a list from the American Legion, where they put flags on Veterans graves. By using the town records from Rensselaerville and finding that the Potters Hollow cemetery soldiers were not on the list, I turned to the Town of Broome records and located the soldiers. These young men were mostly farmers from the town of Broome, which borders Potters Hollow's western border. These soldiers had to be close neighbors of Potters Hollow and Preston Hollow's soldiers so have included them. One discovery is the town records from Rensselaerville are much more detailed than the ones from the town of Broome. The next step was using Ancestry.com to research each soldier's military records to see if additional information could be found on the soldiers. The one thing that I noticed was the Potter Hollow area soldiers seemed to have joined the service in 1862 at the beginning of the war. Most of the soldiers from the rest of the town joined a year or two later. Many Rensselaerville soldiers enlisted in the 7th NY Heavy Artillery or Infantry and fought in the battles of Spotsylvania, Mulford Station, North and South Anna, Totopotomoy Creek, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Hatches Run, Deep Bottom and Ream Station. Several soldiers died in Anderson, Georgia, the location of a Confederate prisoner-of-war-camp. This prison was open during the last fourteen months of the Civil War. You can visit the Andersonville Historic Site that includes a National Cemetery and Prisoner of War Museum. If ** are found after a soldier's name, his name is inscribed on a Civil War monument located in the Rensselaerville Cemetery. On July 4, 1867, the 17-foot gray granite monument was dedicated to 29 soldiers who died in the war.



Rose Kuhar

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Part Two - Civil War Soldiers... *Continued from Page 4***Graves in the Potters Hollow Cemetery and Bates Church Cemetery**

++ From Broome Civil War Records

Bates Hollow Cemetery Soldiers

Hagadorn, Lucius ++ Enlisted July 28, 1862 for three years, received a \$50 bounty, was in the 7th Heavy Artillery. Hagadorn was in the battles of Fredericksburg, North Anne, Totopotomoy Creek, Deep Bottom, Cold Harbor, Reams Station and Petersburg.

Prior, George O ++ Enlisted August 13, 1862, received a bounty from the town for \$390 and county for \$300. Prior was promoted to Corporal and was wounded at Totopotomoy Creek, Virginia. He was discharged on June 16, 1865.

Wilsey, Martin ++ Enlisted August 13, 1862 for three years, received a \$50 bounty. was in the 113th Infantry, possibly in the 7th Artillery. After mustering out he gave a Potters Hollow Postal address.

Soldiers buried in Potters Hollow Cemetery

Bates, Resolved ++ Enlisted December 22, 1863 for three years, received a bounty of \$390 from the town and \$300 from county - Wounded in War.

Goodfellow, Origin A. ++ Company F, 7th Regiment NY Heavy Artillery.

Gordon, Stephen Enlisted August 1862 for three years; born in Broome Center, a private in the 5th Artillery.

Haskins, Henry ++ Company D, 134 Regiment, NY Volunteers.

Hollenbeck (Hallenbeck), Nicholas ++ Enlisted July 28, 1862 for three years as a private. Address after mustering out - Potters Hollow Post Office.

Reed, Elias (Allis) ++ Private, Company E, 134 Regiment NY Infantry.

Richtmeyer, John W. ++ Company D, 7th Regiment NY.

Russel, Timothy R. ++ no information.

Smith, Orin ++ Enlisted July 28, 1860 or 1862 for three years, received a bounty for \$50, was in Company F 113th Infantry.

Walker, John ++ Enlisted August 10, 1862, Company D, 7th NY Heavy Artillery.

Young, David ++ Enlisted May 16, 1862 in Watertown, was in Company H, 192 NY Infantry. Young was born and lived in Conesville.

Potters Hollow Soldiers in Rensselaerville Civil War Records

Russell, Harvey (Henry) Enlisted August 6, 1862, for three years, received a County bounty of \$50. Russell mustered in as a Corporal, Company F, Regiment 7th Heavy Artillery. He was wounded at Cold Harbor in the thigh by a rebel musket, hospitalized then returned to his regiment.

Russell, Jonathan Enlisted August 6, 1862, for three years, paid a County bounty of \$50. He mustered in as a Corporal in Company I, 7th Heavy Artillery, served in the battle of Spotsylvania, was taken prisoner in Battle of Cold Harbor and died in Andersonville Prison.

Smith, Alexander Enlisted December 29, 1863, for three years, received a bounty of \$20. He mustered in as a private in Regiment C, NY Heavy Artillery. He fought in the

*All civil war grave photos by Linda Mormile**Continued on Page 6*

Part Two - Civil War Soldiers... *Continued from Page 5*

Battle of Wilderness, battles of Spotsylvania, Totopotomoy, Milford Run, Hatches Run, Deep Bottom. He mustered out with regiment on June 5, 1865 and moved to Broome Center.

Smith, Levi ** Enlisted August 6, 1862 for three years and received a \$50 bounty. Smith mustered in as a private in Company F, 7th Regiment of the NY Heavy Artillery, fought in battle of Spotsylvania, taken prisoner in Totopotomoy Creek and died in Andersonville Prison.

Cooksburgh Soldiers

Green, John ** Enlisted October 16, 1862 for nine months received a bounty of \$100 from town and \$50 from the county. He mustered in as a private in Company K, 177th Infantry. Greene was last heard from at Culpepper from which he was taken prisoner with three others. Died in Civil War at age of 30.

Preston Hollow Soldiers

Craw, Elson Enlisted October 18, 1862, for three years. Never mustered in at Albany, got his \$50 bounty and clothes then deserted. Never served; lived in Preston Hollow.

Evans, William H. Enlisted March 20, 1865, for one year and received a bounty of \$20. He mustered in as a private in Company G, 20th Regiment. Evans was at the surrender of General Lee.

Doty, William Enlisted September 1, 1864, for one year and received a \$900 bounty. He mustered in as a private in company E, 91st Infantry. Doty went with the 91st to Baltimore where he served one day then was taken sick with a fever and hospitalized. He died March 8, 1865 and is buried in the government cemetery in Baltimore.

Faulk, William B. Enlisted in August 1862 for three years. Faulk mustered in with Company I, 7th Heavy Artillery. He was promoted to Sergeant on August 18, 1862, promoted to 2nd Lieutenant, after participating in the battles of Spotsylvania and North Ann. He was wounded and discharged.

Greene, Charles Enlisted September 1861. Greene was with the Private Engineers Volunteers. He died in a hospital in Hilton Head, South Carolina, February 2, 1862 and buried there.

Holmes, George M Enlisted September 1863 for three years and received a \$900 bounty. Holmes mustered in as a Sergeant with Company G, 18th Regiment. He fought in the Peninsular Campaign under George B. McClellan in what was known as the Seven Days Battle. Holmes was wounded at the Battle of Malvern Hill and taken prisoner. He was discharged with disability; he reenlisted and served in Texas.

Jones, Milton ** He first enlisted October 18, 1862 for nine months and he received a \$50 bounty. Jones mustered in as a private in Company C, with the 10th Regiment, later renamed the NY 177th. He was near New Orleans at Bonnet Carri when he was taken sick and died from chronic diarrhea and buried there.

Robinson, William Henry -Enlisted September 1863, for three years and received no bounty. Robinson mustered in as a private with Company G. He fought In the Red Rivers Battles, in New Orleans vicinity, with 18th Regiment from Texas.

Showers, William Enlisted October 2, 1862 for one year and received no bounty. He mustered in as a private with Company E, Regiment 61st(?) Infantry. Showers died in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Treadwell, Stephen Enlisted August 6, 1862 for three years and received a \$20 bounty. Treadwell enlisted in Company I, with the 7th Heavy Artillery. He was promoted August 18 to Sergeant, promoted January 6, 1864 to Second Lieutenant after participating in the Battle of Spotsylvania, Milford Station and South Ann. Treadwell was wounded in Battle of Totopotomoy Creek and then discharged.

Part Two - Civil War Soldiers... *Continued from Page 6*

White, Jacob, Enlisted April 1, 1865 for two years and received a bounty of \$400. White mustered in as a private with Company G in the 125th Infantry. He was discharged in July 1865.

White, Silas Enlisted February 1, 1862 in Company I, with 5th Heavy Artillery Volunteers Regiment. He died in Baltimore on December 25, 1862 from measles.

Whitting, Lorenzo ** Enlisted August 18, 1862, for nine months and received a bounty of \$50. Whitting mustered in as a private with Company C in the 177th Regiment. He served his time with his regiment returning to Albany then home to his mother in Preston Hollow where he died from a fever contacted in service therefore was not mustered out with his Regiment.

*Rose Kuhar***Art Show 2023**

The Board of Trustees has chosen the 2023 Art Show dates for this year. It will start with an Artist Reception on Friday, July 21 and the show runs through Sunday July 30. The Grist Mill Art Show has become the most successful fund raiser for the RHS and each year the number of participants has risen. Look for more information and registration in early Spring. To be on our contact list email us at renselaervillehistoricalsoc@gmail.com. Also mark your calendar because Stringplicity will not only be playing at the Artist Reception on July 21, but is also returning with a concert on Saturday, July 22 at 44 Methodist Hill Rd.

2022 Rensselaerville Historical Society Highlights



- Research Coordinator Rose Kuhar and Archivist Justine Criswell represented small towns with a talk on the history of buildings in the village of Rensselaerville at the Mid Atlantic Regional Archival Conference held at Harrisburg, Virginia in March.
- Memorial Day Weekend the mill opened for the season with our Spring Bake Sale.
- For the local communities, Rose Kuhar fine-tuned her history of Rensselaerville and its buildings talk which now includes more than 200 slides. Over 100 individuals attended the first talk at Conkling Hall during May, she also spoke at the Town Building in June and she spoke in Westerlo in November. The November event was sponsored by the Westerlo Historical Society.
- The Academy bell is closer to being rehung. This past year welding was done. The bell will be located on the Kuhar Family Farm Café and Market property next to the Historical marker which is the site of the Rensselaerville Academy.
- The research volunteers continue to meet on Wednesdays during summer and early fall at the mill and during winter in the basement of the library. One of their goals is to keep births, deaths, marriages and property transactions as up to date as possible in their record books. They have been processing a donation of obituaries from the mid to late 1900s and are cross-referencing them to be sure they have their information. Joyce Chase is the head of this project. Volunteers are welcome, come for an hour or more. The hours are from 11am - 2pm on Wednesdays.

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Historical Society Updates... *Continued from Page 7*

- The Town of Westerlo Museum has been donating to the RHS. The director is slowly going through their collection and donating items that seem to belong to other towns.
- Several residents have donated books, letters and items which are cataloged and added to the collection.
- Member Ross Havens from Binghamton finished his research on the Thomas Watson family. The RHS assisted him with proofreading his manuscript for accuracy on facts, dates and location. He has donated a copy of his work to the Historical Society.
- Karen Haseley has been updating our website. She created many fliers and posters for our events and fund raisers. Karen has been a great asset as we negotiate the digital world.
- The 6th art show was a great success. 32 artists displayed their work with 16 of them being first time exhibitors. Ten youths exhibited as emerging artists with eight of them being first time exhibitors. 144 pieces were on display and six artists sold their artwork.
- Foreground Restoration restored portraits of Isabella Conkling Huyck and John Huyck. They still need to be framed. Thank you to all who donated, their portraits now hang in the display room.
- On September 25 at Conkling Hall the Rensselaerville's Attic Treasures was the RHS "antique roadshow". Residents brought their treasures to be appraised by local antique specialists. It was a fun day despite the rain and plans are being made to do it again.
- The Historical Society opened the mill for tours as part of the Path Through History driving tour on Columbus Day Weekend. Over 20 individuals traveled from the Albany area to visit Rensselaerville.
- Justine Criswell is starting to organize our collection and helping to preserve it by sharing her archival knowledge with the other researchers.
- John Snider is our new cemetery volunteer; he is working with homeowners who have family cemeteries on their property. He is documenting and photographing the gravestones. He is also assisting in cleaning up these small cemeteries. If you have a cemetery on your property, contact the society.
- The bridge plaque that was dedicated to William Rice Senior (former Albany County Sheriff) has been replaced to a safer site where State Route 85 and County Route 353 meet by the bridge over the Ten Mile Creek.
- The Annual Meeting was October 28 at the Medusa firehouse. New Trustees Ella Prince and Glenn Yelick were voted in. A big thank you to Barry Kuhar and Ethan Wilsie who went off the board. All the officers were re-elected for a two-year term. A motion was passed to increase membership fees.
- In December the RHS Membership Secretary mailed out about 90 letters and membership forms to individuals who have not paid their 2022 membership dues. (See the copy in this newsletter.) All dues are due in January for 2023.
- November was the last Trustees meeting until March, it was held after a Volunteers Appreciation Dinner at Kuhar Family Farm Café.

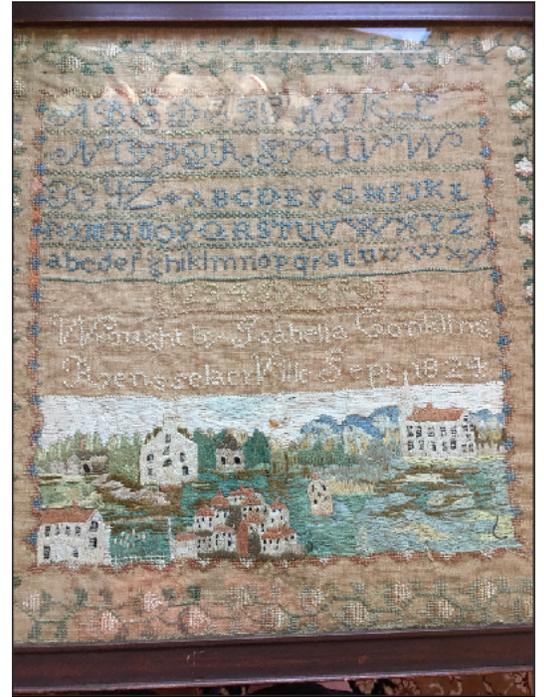
Attic Treasures

What a fun event for the curious who wanted to know more about the treasures they found in the attic! Was it an antique? How much is it worth? How about that ring that belonged to Great-Grandma or the Cameo taking up space in a jewelry box? Should you be wearing it or insure it? A cool damp day did not stop the steady stream of neighbors bringing their treasures to Conkling Hall on



Sunday, September 25 to have their antiques appraised by Russ and Josh Carlson, Ray Carucci and Annie Campo. Everyone left with a smile on their faces even if their item wasn't the precious antique they hoped it was.

What kinds of items were brought through Conkling Hall's doors? Clocks, dolls, paintings, books, daguerreotypes, pottery, glassware and much more. Some of the more interesting things seen that day were a tabletop slot machine, a brass mortar and pestle dated 1678, and a pair of turtle spittoons. Stop in the mill in the spring, and we will show you a needlepoint that impressed the appraisers.



All the Rensselaerville Historical society's trustees were available throughout the day to check individuals in and share the items they had appraised. Micah and Rochelle Kuhar set up on the lawn with food from Kuhar Family Farm Café. Hot coffee, Paninis and Chili were enjoyed throughout the day.

Will the Historical Society attempt this fund raiser again? At the November Board of Trustees meeting, it was voted to have a second antique day if appraisers can be located. If you know of a local antique appraiser who might be interested in the event, please let the RHS know.

Rose Kuhar



Attic Treasures photos taken by Karen Haseley

Sending Messages at the Turn of the Last Century

Long before cell phones and devices were used to post pictures and memos of the places people were visiting, people were sending pictures and messages using a different medium - the postcard. Postcards were the way to send a message or share a picture with someone else, perhaps to let people know "I wish you were here" or share a new place being explored.



Unlike an Instagram post, which is only in the cloud, these cards have become collectables and Rensselaerville was a destination where many postcards have been shared from.

On a Wednesday in June at the RHS a man named Tim Albright came by and donated a collection of Rensselaerville post cards to the Historic Society. Along with a terrific collection Tim shared some interesting facts about the cards. For example, you can tell if a card is from before 1907 based on where the message is written. Before 1907 no message was allowed on the address side of the card, so people wrote around the picture - just like we do today when we create a meme or caption for our photos.

I was also intrigued by some printing on some of the cards which read "Barton and Spooner, Cornwall and (Germany) 1873 - my interest was piqued since I used to live in Cornwall, NY and am very familiar with Cornwall on Hudson. Apparently, the post card was printed in Cornwall on Hudson but sent to Germany for the coloring - German engineering was ahead of the US and they were able to add color in a much more realistic way. There are several postcards in the collection that were printed in this manner that dated back to the 1870s.

Overall, the collection ranges from 1870 to about 1945. Many of the postcards show a tree lined Main Street including some that highlight specific buildings, such as the Library and Reading Room, the Fire Department and the Mill. There are also cards that highlight Conkling Hall and the churches in town. There are also some interesting shots that show the vehicles of the day. Other cards show the Falls, Lake Myosotis and Crystal Lake.



Nancy Rypkema

Shortly after the Society received this wonderful collection of cards a second donation of post cards was received. The town of Westerlo Museum is organizing and going through their collections. They are passing on items that don't have any connection to their town. The cards we received had pictures located in all the towns in Rensselaerville. The Historical Society had a table at Medusa Fest in August where we shared the Medusa postcards.

Rose Kuhar

Gettysburg Address

For two months, June and July 1863, the greatest battle fought in North America took place in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The battle ended with 7,058 men lying dead or dying plus 33,264 who were treated for their wounds. Local citizens banded together to create a cemetery to bury the Union soldier bodies. They worked from October 1863 through the Spring of 1864 recovering and reinterring the bodies which had been buried in temporary graves. On November 19, 1863, their cemetery was dedicated as a National Cemetery. At this event President Abraham Lincoln gave his famous Gettysburg Address. He spoke after Edward Everett gave a two-hour oration. The remarkable thing is President Lincoln only spoke 272 words to the mourners relating the significance of the battle as it related to the principles of the Declaration of Independence. As significant as this battle was, there is little evidence that many Rensselaerville soldiers fought at Gettysburg. But most Americans know the beginning words Lincoln spoke that day.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

“Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation: conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above the poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”



Photo: Henryhartley at en.wikipedia Statue: Randolph Rogers (1825-1892)
Originally from en.wikipedia Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4898371>

Rensselaerville Historical Society Membership Form

Date: _____

New Renewal

Mail to: RHS Membership Sec.

Individual Membership \$15

PO Box 8

Family Membership \$20

Rensselaerville, NY 12147

Supporting Membership \$50

***Make checks payable to:**

Life Membership \$200

Rensselaerville Historical Society

Special Donations:

Paint the Mill Fund \$ _____

Color Printer \$ _____

Archival Supplies \$ _____

Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: Street or POB: _____

Town, State, Zip: _____

Alternate address for seasonal residents (and dates that apply):

Email: _____ Receive a printed newsletter

Telephone: _____

We are always looking for volunteers. If you are interested, please check the area where you are willing to help and we will contact you:

Bake Sale

Art Show

Antique

Research & Collections

Outdoor Upkeep

Mill Tours/Cleaning

◆ Officers ◆

President Matt Mulholland
Vice President Ken Storms
Secretary Joyce Chase
Treasurer Tony Campo
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