

The Rensselaerville Press

📖 A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE RENSSELAERVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 📖

"Today is Tomorrow's History"

Spring 2022

Soldier from Rensselaerville

When the Rensselaerville Press published "Medusa A Neighborhood Song" in 1876, Harriet Rider had already been a widow for twelve years. Her four noble boys, Cecil, Rufus, Walter and William ranged in age from fourteen to twenty-four. Little William had only been two years old when his father John went off to war for the last time. William probably didn't even remember him. After some difficulty, Mrs. Rider had obtained a widow's pension of eight dollars per month, with two additional dollars per month for each child under sixteen. Quite meager by today's standards, but with supplemental income from odd jobs and help from neighbors, enough to get by on the 1860s.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, or the War of the Rebellion as it was called in those days, young Rensselaerville men like young men throughout the North, took up arms to keep the union united. John Rider, thirty-four years old at the time, a farmer went to Westerlo on August 4, 1862, and voluntarily enlisted in Company K 113th Regiment of the New York Infantry. His enlistment was for three years, and he mustered in as a Private.

John apparently was a level headed individual, possibly due to the lessons he had learned in his 34 years of living and working in the rugged hill towns of Albany County, but whether it was his age, his knowledge or a combination of those things, he was quickly promoted. Ten days after he enlisted, John was a Sergeant in what soon became Company K New York 7th Heavy Artillery.

Army life was certainly not easy and living conditions in the camps left much to be desired. Dysentery and other ailments often ran rampant, and soldiers not only fell victims in battle but more often just to poor health.

Sergeant Rider briefly left the war to return to the Rensselaerville hills to recuperate from one of these ailments, on leave in October 1863. He eventually recovered sufficiently to return to duty and in the spring of 1864, he traveled by rail first from Albany to New York City, a fare of \$1.50 in those days, and then on to Philadelphia, Baltimore and Alexandria, Virginia. He rejoined his company from Camp Distribution Virginia June 1864.

The Spring offensive had started in May of that year, and it was General Grant's idea to seize the Confederate Capital, at Richmond, and hopefully end the war. This pitted him, head-to-head against another General of some repute, Robert E. Lee. What followed in May and June was a series of battles, moves and countermoves, ever southward around Richard, until the two sides squarely faced each other at Petersburg, Virginia. The two armies would engage each other in trench warfare for the next year as Grant laid siege. John Rider was never to see the fall of Petersburg, however, on June 22, 1864, in one of the opening skirmishes, he was wounded and reported missing in action. Taken prisoner, he was moved to Richmond on June 25, probably to the infamous Confederate Libby Prison and subsequently to Lynchburg where he died from his wounds on July 16, 1864.

In June of 1867 the citizens of Rensselaerville, in spirit of pride to honor their brave dead, erected a monument honoring twenty-nine of its young men, who gave their lives so that this nation might not be divided. Twelve [sic] of those names, were members of Company K of the 7th New York Heavy Artillery. The seventeen-foot-tall monument was dedicated on July 4, 1867, with much pomp and ceremony. It still stands to this day in honor of these Rensselaerville boys who died so far from home, and now so long ago.

Tom Rider – written January 1985

The following is additional information found in the RHS archives. John Rider received a \$50 bounty and he enlisted for three years. He was buried in Popular Grove Cemetery National Cemetery in Petersburg Virginia. Grave #4616. Originally interred in the Old Cemetery located in Lynchburg, Va.

Continued on Page 2

Soldier from Rensselaerville... *Continued from Page 2*

The Civil War Monument is in the Rensselaerville Cemetery on Methodist Hill Road. To locate the monument, enter the main gate and go straight to the top of the steep hill and you will see the monument overlooking the village. The inscription on the monument reads as follows: "They died in defense of their country."

7th New York Heavy Artillery

Lt. C. Swaime Evans	age 24	Lester U. Fish	age 20
St. Edward Slater	age 28	George Van Wie	age 21
St. John Rider	age 35	Edward Holmes	age 29
Col. Jonathan Russell	age 29	John Greene	age 30
Andrew Fenton	age 28	Levi Smith	age 23
Isaac E. Finch	age 21	George Bouton	age 28

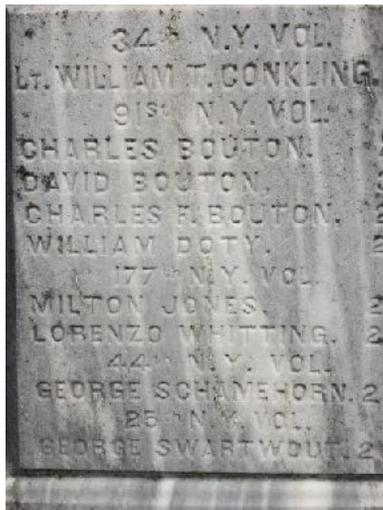


Other casualties from the Town of Rensselaerville listed on the monument are:

5 th N.Y.Art.	Silas White	age 18	91 st N.Y. Vol.	Charles Bouton	age 27
3 rd N.Y. Cav.	Peter Rafferty	age 33	91 st N.Y. Vol.	David Bouton	age 32
118 th N.Y. Vol.	Philip Miller	age 30	91 st N.Y. Vol.	Charles F. Bouton	age 23
15 th N.Y. Eng.	Charles Greene	age 20	91 st N.Y. Vol.	William Doty	age 27
61 st N.Y. Vol.	John West	age 17	177 th N.Y. Vol.	Milton Jones	age 20
24 th Ill. Vol.	Charles West	age 24	25 th N.Y. Vol.	George Swartwout	age 26
127 th Pa. Vol.	Edwin Crandel	age 21	44 th N.Y. Vol.	George Schamerhorn	age 22
34 th N.Y. Vol.	Lt. William Conkling	age 24	177 th N.Y. Vol.	Lorenzo Whitting	age 20

To continue sharing the names and information the RHS has discovered about the Civil War Veterans that have lived in Rensselaerville the next few issues of the Rensselaerville Press will focus on the Civil War. Two hundred and twelve names have been discovered so far of the veterans who served in the Civil War and lived in the Town of Rensselaerville. For some veterans we only have their name or what cemetery they are buried in but a few we have extensive information. Of the 212 veterans 40 have been identified as serving with the 7th New York Heavy Artillery. Casualties were high in the 7th Regiment from Albany County known as the Seymour Guard. Killed in action 14 officers and 277 enlisted men, and by disease 4 officers and 376 enlisted men, making a total of 669.

¹ What was a bounty during the Civil War? "Congress authorized a \$100 bounty in July 1861 to men enlisting for three years. With the passage of the Enrollment Act (March 3, 1863), three-year enlistees received \$300 and five-year recruits got \$400, but these sums were divided up and paid in monthly installments with the soldiers' regular compensation. Bounty jumpers were men who enlisted in the Union or Confederate army during the American Civil War only to collect a bounty and then leave. The draft of 1863 allowed individuals to pay a bounty to someone else to fight in their place rather than be drafted. The Selective Service Act of 1917 made bounties illegal."



Tom Rider's great great grandfather was John Rider. A couple years ago Tom went on a mission to locate John's grave. John's son was Rufus Rider, his grandson was Fred Valentine Rider, John was the great grand gather of Fred Junior who was Tom's father.



Photo sent by Tom

Grandma and the Family Tree

Unknown Author (from FaceBook)

There's been a change in Grandma, we've noticed her of late,
 She's reading history or jotting down some date.
 She's tracking back the family; we'll all have pedigrees.
 Oh, Grandma's got a hobby; she's climbing Family Trees.
 Poor Grandpa does the cooking and now, or so he states,
 That worst of all, he has to wash the cups and dinner plates.
 Grandma can't be bothered; she's busy as a bee,
 Compiling Genealogy, for the Family Tree.
 She has no time to baby-sit, the curtains are a fright.
 No buttons left on Granddad's shirt, the flower bed's a sight.
 She's given up her club work, the serials on TV,
 The only thing she does nowadays is climb the Family Tree.
 She goes down to the Courthouse and studies ancient lore,
 We know more about our forebears than we ever knew before.
 The books are old and dusty, they make poor Grandma sneeze,
 A minor irritation when you're climbing Family Trees.
 The mail is all for Grandma, it comes from near and far,
 Last week she got the proof she needs to join the DAR.
 A worthwhile avocation, to that we all agree,
 A monumental project, to climb the Family Tree.
 Now some folks came from Scotland and some from Galway Bay,
 Some were French as pastry, some German, all the way.
 Some went on West to stake their claim. Some stayed near by the sea.
 Grandma hopes to find them all as she climbs the Family Tree.
 She wanders through the graveyard in search of date or name,
 The rich, the poor, the in-between, all sleeping there the same.
 She pauses now and then to rest, fanned by a gentle breeze,
 That blows above the Fathers of all our Family Trees.
 There were pioneers and patriots mixed in our kith and kin,
 Who blazed the paths of wilderness and fought through thick and thin.
 But none more staunch than Grandma, whose eyes light up with glee,
 Each time she finds a missing branch for the Family Tree.
 Their skills were wide and varied, from Carpenter to Cook,
 And one (Alas) the record shows was hopelessly a crook.
 Blacksmith, weaver, farmer, judge, some tutored for a fee.
 Long lost in time, now all recorded on the Family Tree.
 To some it's just a hobby, to Grandma it's much more,
 She knows the joys and heartaches of those who went before.
 They loved, they lost, they laughed, they wept, and now for you and me,
 They live again in spirit, around the Family Tree.
 At last she's nearly finished and we are each exposed.
 Life will be the same again, this we supposed!



Grandma and the Family Tree... *Continued from Page 3*

Grandma will cook and sew, serve cookies with our tea.
 We'll all be fat, just as before that wretched Family Tree.
 Sad to relate, The Preacher called and visited for a spell,
 We talked about the Gospel, and other things as well,
 The heathen folk, the poor- and then- 'twas fate, it had to be,
 Somehow the conversation turned to Grandma and the Family Tree.
 We tried to change the subject, we talked of everything,
 But then in Grandma's voice we heard that old familiar ring.
 She told him all about the past and soon was plain to see,
 The Preacher, too, was nearly snared by Grandma and the Family Tree.
 He never knew his Grandpa, his mother's name was ..Clark?
 He and Grandma talked and talked, outside it grew quite dark.
 We'd hoped our fears were groundless, but just like some disease,
 Grandma's become an addict--- She's hooked on Family Trees.
 Our souls were filled with sorrow, our hearts sank with dismay,
 Our ears could scarce believe the words we heard our Grandma say,
 "It sure is a lucky thing that you have come to me,
 I know exactly how it's done, I'll climb your Family Tree."



Town of Knox Bicentennial



The Rensselaerville Historical Society was invited by the Knox Historical Society to be a guest of the Town of Knox on February 28, 2022 at their Bicentennial Proclamation Ceremony. Prior to 1790 Knox was part of a wild mountainous area know as Watervliet, and then as the West Manor of Rensselaerwyck. In 1790 Rensselaerville included the present towns of Berne, Westerlo and Knox. In 1795 the area comprising both Berne and Knox were separated from Rensselaerville and were known as Berne. In 1815 Westerlo split from Rensselaerville. Finally, in 1822 Knox became a separate township. Knox was named after Revolutionary War

hero General Henry Knox. Knox was known as the "Pillbox Capital of the World" from 1896-1906 for its importance as the primary manufacturing center of wooden pillboxes. They were made by local families from the area's plentiful native basswood trees.

Federal Library of Rensselaer Ville

First one hundred years of the Rensselaerville Library

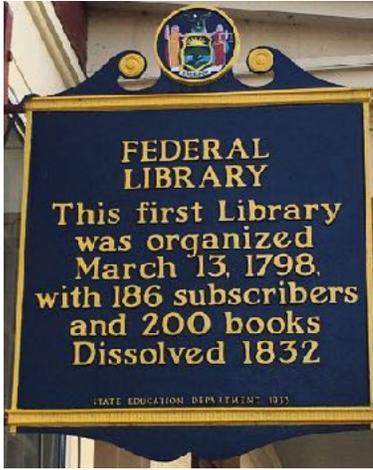


Photo by Rose Kuhar

On March 1, 1798, less than ten years after the first settlers-built log homes in Rensselaerville, the townspeople came together to establish a library. This action reflected their character and their level of literacy. The following was copied from the minutes of their first meeting.

“Rensselaer Ville 13th Mar 1798

The subscribers do hereby associate for the purpose of establishing in this town, to be distinguished by the name of The Federal Library of Rensselaer Ville, which we agree shall be constituted and conducted according to the Act of the Legislature of the State of New York, passed the first day of April A.D. 1798 entitled “An Act to incorporate such persons as may associate for the purpose of procuring and erecting Publick Libraries within the State. And we,

the subscribers, each of us, agree to pay the sum of Two Dollars for the purpose of raising sum sufficient to become an incorporated body according to the Act above mentioned.” Forty-two people signed the document including the following:

Rev. Samuel Fuller 1 share
Asa Hudson
Elisha West
Samuel Jones 2 shares
Samuel Jenkins
Elisha Murdock

Bristol Galt
Nicholas Cornell
Rueben King
Isaac Hyde 2 shares
Hans Winegar
186 names took out shares many taking more than one share.

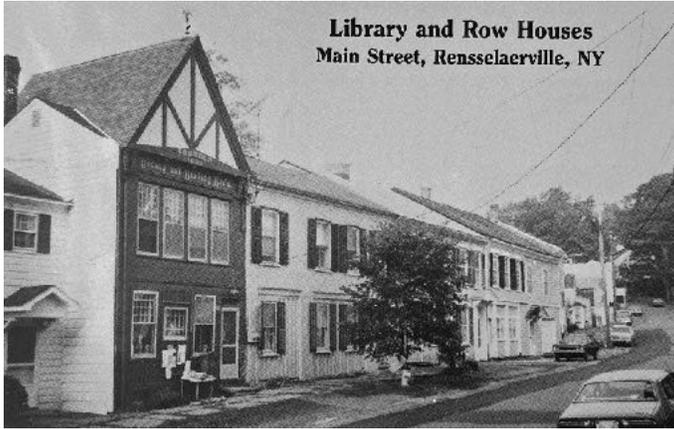
The minutes for the first four years have not been located but the following is a summary of the minutes from 1804-1832. The library was located in private homes and it appears the home owner most of the time was the librarian.

March 1804 annual meeting was held at Allan Crocker, innkeeper’s house. They voted that each proprietor of the library pay 25 cents for each share they owned by October 1st. Trustees meet on Tuesdays in March, June, September and December. Apollos Moore was elected Chairman and Jonathan Jenkins Treasurer. Robert P. Lewis was appointed librarian and to receive at the rate of \$3.00 per annual for the time he kept the library. Library to be open on Saturdays. The trustees examine the books for injury and levied fines. A fine of five cents for any book not in on time by the next quarterly meeting. “Agreeable of the State and a resolution of the Board: Trustees passed on February 18, 1804” Several persons here in after named forfeited their respective shares in the Federal Library of Rensselaerville and are entitled to no further benefit from the same. Nineteen men were on the list to be removed. Some were reinstated on the payment from 2 cents to \$1.50. By end of October men were reinstated. Nineteen men were on the list in March and on December 4th more names were added including the first female Betsy Mulford.

1805 A special meeting authorizing Apollos Moore and Jonathan Jenkins to layout what there is in Treasury for books at their discretion, as soon as it is convenient and receive three dollars for their trouble and expense.

Federal Library... *Continued from Page 5*

1808 Ichobod Peck appointed librarian for \$3.00. It was voted that books may be drawn and returned on Mondays and Saturdays.



1809-1815 Librarian was Lucinda Murray Frisbee, widow of Dr. Rueben Frisbee. Their home was located on the lawn of the present Catalpa House. In 1811 library would pay her \$10.00 with the added duty to inspect books. In 1812 they cut her pay by 60%. 1813- Some of the books are sold. Lucinda received \$4.00 that year.

1816-1821 John Conkling appointed as librarian. Library must have been located in his house.

1821 At the June meeting the library was moved to Franklin Frisbee's and Joseph B. Moore appointed librarian.

1823 William D. Stead librarian, library had 229 volumes, there were 52 shares and cash on hand \$21.28

1828-1832 Alpheus Dwight appointed librarian, 1829 paid \$4.00 annually and 55 cents for putting new cards on books.

March 5, 1832 "Resolved that this meeting adjourned to meet on Tuesday, the 13 of March, at the house of Alpheus Dwight at one o'clock P.M. And that the stockholders be notified by the trustees (who are thereby appointed a committee) to attend for the purpose of taking into consideration the expediency of dissolving this society and making division of the books and other property belonging to said society."

March 12 or 13, 1832 At the meeting of stockholders, two weeks from date in the village of Rensselaerville it was unanimously resolved that the society to dissolve and that the books and case be sold at public auction at Joseph Clark's in the village at one o'clock P.M. Gideon appointed auctioneer and Franklin Frisbee secretary to be paid 50 cent out of the funds. The chairman and secretary to put up advertisements in different parts of town.

March 30, 1832, Resolved Ichobod Peck to call upon individuals owing funds for books bought at a Public Sale of library.

The records shows John Niles bought:

Lock on Understanding 2 vols @ 40cents ea.

Evans Sketches @ 29 cents

Sketch Book 3 vols @ \$1.44

Total sales brought \$56.89

Sketch Book was the most popular book in the library and was out almost continually.

After dissolving the Federal Library Mr. Fuller started a parochial library. He states he reported to the bishop that he had done so with 80 volumes. There was a parochial school just down the lane from the Trinity Episcopal Church next to the village schoolhouse. The Academy also had a library for its students.

Traveling Library

1895 Miss Chadwick heard from Bessie Huyck of the traveling libraries which the state sent out. They wanted to get one for Rensselaerville. They chose from the state catalog one of 100 volumes. It was a requirement that someone give a bond, thus becoming a trustee and that someone be appointed to care for the books. Mr. Chadwick gave the bond and appointed his daughter to care for the books. The books arrived in two cases designed to hold the books one resting on the other. They were set up in the hall of the

Federal Library... *Continued from Page 6*

Chadwick's house. (This house is the one just north on State Route 85 next to the Catalpa House). Before receiving the books Miss Chadwick canvassed the village. The cost of \$5.00 was divided by those interested with no one paying more than 25 to 30 cents. Two traveling libraries were secured that year and each library was kept six months.

Associate Library and Reading Room

Mr. Dobb the Presbyterian minister was having trouble with vandalism among boys because of living conditions during winter. A reading room was considered most important. The reading room was wanted as a place for the boys to gather and to keep them off the streets and out of mischief. In the preparation, Miss Chadwick covered bound books with heavy manila paper and put title and author on covers.

August 14, 1896 Officers and a board of managers were elected. According to the constitution the object "shall be to establish and maintain a free Reading Room and subscription library of the best classes of literature". Any person of good moral standing may become a member of the association paying the subscription fee prescribed by the Board of Managers, and by compliance with its constitution and by-laws. Rooms over the store of Charles Oswald were given free by Christian Oswald and put in order and furnished largely by Francis Conkling Huyck. A traveling library from the state was first ordered.

September 14, 1896 Miss Alice Chadwick appointed librarian and as many assistants that may be needed. Women on duty in the afternoons and men in the evening. Open to the public no later than 10 P.M.

August 27, 1897, One year later reports 399 books in library, 64 readers, 58 traveling library cards and 1,050 books checked out. Daily newspapers: N.Y. Times, Albany Argus, Weekly: Harper's Bazaar, Puck, Judge, Monthly Harper's, Century. Rooms to be open Wednesday-Saturday afternoons and Saturday evenings. Dues ranged from 25 cents to 5 dollars. Tables, lamps, stove and chairs had been bought.

1889 Mr. Oswald had given the use rooms for free for three years and now needed the space back. Mr. F.C. Huyck offered to fit up the rooms in the Felter building at his own expense if the Association wished to take on the rent of \$2.00 a month. Thanks to Mr. F.C. Huyck and J.F. Becker for their generosity in fitting up and furnishing it so beautifully at their own expense and Mr. & Mrs. Mulford for the gift of 75 volumes of choice books.

Why was the library dissolved in 1838? At this time no records have been found to answer that question.

The previous information was taken from the RHS archives and the library archival room. Beginning with the minutes March 6, 1804. Original documents on the library are in the New York State Archives Room. A copy of the minutes was found in an old note book full of transcribed minutes and other information. On the first page is written: Manuscript by Miss Maria Dandale Albany, NY 1930 E. Chelly.

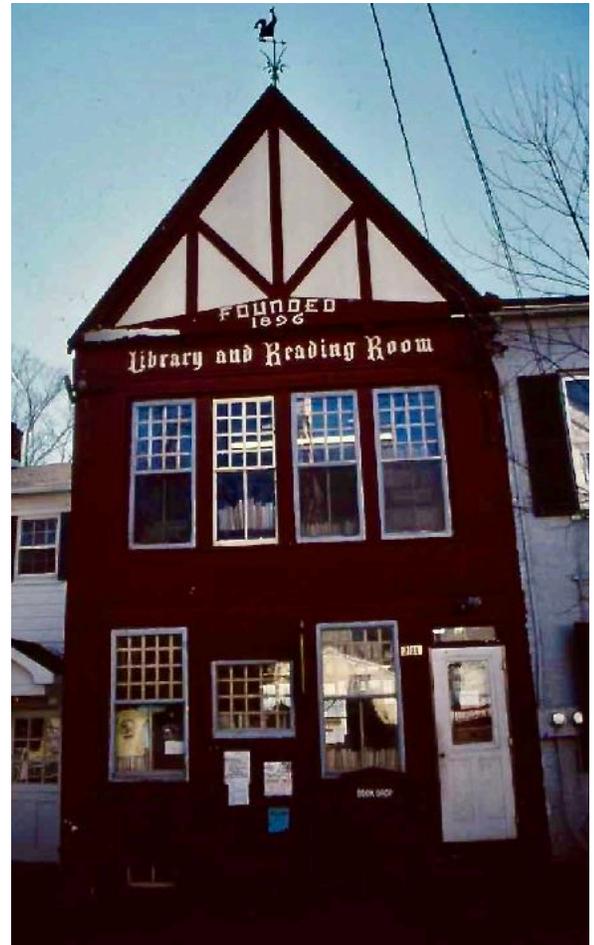


Photo by John Eldridge

Potter Hollow School #19

In December, 2021, a group of alumni from the Potter Hollow one-room school No. 19 gathered to reminisce and compare their experiences regarding attending that school.

The encounter was guided by Greenville historian, Don Teator. The entire get-together was digitally recorded by Tim Albright, a GCS social studies teacher and Greenville Media Club advisor, and two of the club's members, Alexis Langolis and Laila Overbaugh. Nadia Boyea, a GCS graduate (and recent SUNY Oneonta graduate) traveled from Oneonta to assist in the filming, and to provide tips with regard to camera set-up and lighting. (TheUpstater.com; Learning in a one-room schoolhouse, January 31, 2022)

It was interesting to note the differences in memories AND the similarities.



All Photos in this article by Linda Mormile

Above is the photo taken during the interview. From left to right: Virginia Reed Cook, Diane Reed Sala, Linda Reed Mormile, Don Teator (moderator), Bob Cook and Gerald Goodfellow.

The following pictures feature at least one photo of each of the participants when they attended the school. Can you find them?



Potter Hollow... Continued from Page 8



Sharing a Rensselaerville Village with the New England States



*Justine Criswell and Rosemarie Kuhar
Photo from Justine Criswell*

How did I end up in Harrisonburg, Virginia on March 25 presenting at an Archival Conference? It all started when Justine Criswell, a RHS member and volunteer, saw a notice looking for presenters at the Spring Mid-Atlantic Regional Archival Conference (MARAC). Justine had been volunteering using her library archival skills trying to figure what treasures are in the RHS research room and the best way to preserve them. Justine is a MARAC member. When she saw the conference theme was “Communities Large and Small” she thought you can’t get any smaller than the community of Rensselaerville and maybe the RHS could come up with a proposal.

We had two weeks to think about it and maybe write a proposal. Justine had a major health scare and was no longer available to help. Karen Haseley and I spent one Wednesday afternoon at the Grist Mill and put our heads together to see if we could think of a proposal to submit.

We figured it was a long shot, but we wrote a proposal. Our proposal was how using our archives the RHS has researched more than 100 houses in the village of Rensselaerville. The pandemic had resulted in many homes being sold in the last two years and the new owners are asking the RHS for information on their house.

Surprise! The MARAC committee accepted our proposal, and I spent January and February first writing a five-part story: history of the historical society, the early history of Rensselaerville, Rensselaerville now, Ephraim Russ, architect-builder who built nine buildings, and the history of other homes in the village.

I came up with a 171 slideshow that matched the script. The photos I used were from the Historical Society collection, photos that Diana Fritz shared with the RHS. Also, ones Bub (Francis) Rivenburgh took, and his daughter Phyllis Fitzgerald shared many photos with the Historical Society. Mark Lewis discovered a photo of the old Decker house and John Eldridge sent us a wide variety of photos from his private collection.

As the script developed, I could be seen taking photos that would enhance the program. I took paintings off my wall and photographed them. I was thrilled to be able to include artwork from Dorothea Keller Martin, Warren Riter, Susan Story and Sue Shufelt.

About a week before the conference, we are told I had 15 minutes followed by a question-and-answer session. I said no Q&A — I needed more than 15 minutes. It was changed to 30 minutes. After five hours I reworked the script and deleted 30 slides. I was hoping I could do it in 30 minutes since I needed to share my block of time with Tupper Lake Library.

The night before the person in charge of our session said I could go 35 minutes and he would let me know when I had five minutes left. Justine was in charge of coordinating the slides and I just needed to share my work. My biggest fear was talking too fast because I knew the photos would tell the story.

The presentation went perfectly. I knew I had them when they laughed a couple of times. Afterwards I realized the individuals who had traveled from New York State all came to learn about Rensselaerville.

On Sunday, May 29 at 7 P.M. at Conkling Hall I am presenting the program Houses of Rensselaerville for the community. It will be about a 200 slide show of how the village has changed in 200 years. All are welcome!

Rensselaerville's Attic Treasures



Our fundraising committee proposes the creation of Rensselaerville's Attic Treasure, an antique appraisal day. This event will take place on September 18, 2022 from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. at Conkling Hall. This fundraiser will feature seasoned, local experts with a vast array of knowledge across the entire gamut of the antiques. A \$10.00 entrance fee will be required and will entitle the guest to one informal appraisal. Every additional appraisal will cost \$5.00 each. Bring everything from fine arts and jewelry to your rustic farm items. Don't know what that item is? Bring it with you. Come hungry... good food and drink will be catered by Kuhar Family Farms.

May Calendar of Events

May 10, Tuesday – Trustees meeting at 7:00 at the library

May 17, Tuesday – 6:00 P.M. Moving research material back to mill.

May 17 Tuesday – Clean the mill at 6:30 P.M. anyone who would like to help is welcome. Email us at rensselaervillehistoricalsoc@gmail.com.

May 21 – Rensselaerville Volunteer Fire Company Garage Sale Day

Starting May 25 – Mill will open and research volunteers will be at the mill from 11 A.M-2 P.M. on Wednesdays until mid-October.

May 28 – Bake Sale – Baked goods needed – drop off at 9:00 A.M. at the mill. Anyone who would like to help at the sale please email the RHS.

May 28 - Rensselaerville Library Spring Cocktail Party

May 29 – Sunday 7:00 PM at Conkling – All are invited to a program on the history of the village of Rensselaerville and the houses of the village.



Rensselaerville Historical Society Membership

At the annual meeting in 2020 it was voted to move the Fiscal and Membership year from July 1 - June 30 to January 1 - December 31. Our Membership Secretary has been working for the last two years to update our membership lists. To guarantee that you continue to receive the newsletters and notifications please renew your membership as soon as possible. Memberships help the RHS keep the Grist Mill open to the public and meet expenses. The trustees appreciate any one who is a life member.

2022 Art Show: July 29, 30, 31, August 3, 6 & 7

The RHS is looking for local artists (past and current residents and RHS members) to display their work at the 2022 Art Show. If you are interested in submitting some of your artwork, or some from a deceased artist, please fill out the Art Show Entry form (<https://rensselaervillehistoricalsociety.weebly.com/art-show-form.html>) and click on the submit button.

After submitting the form, please click on the “Click Here to pay via PayPal” at the bottom of the art form page. Or go to this link (rensselaervillehistoricalsociety.weebly.com/donate.html) for instructions. Please use the email address rensshstp@gmail.com to send money via PayPal.

If you prefer, you may write a check for \$15 payable to Rensselaerville Historical Society and mail to RHS Art Show, POB 8, Rensselaerville, NY 12147. Contact Rosie (rensselaervillehistoricalsoc@gmail.com) or Nancy (nancyrvp@gmail.com) if you have any questions regarding your submissions.



Rensselaerville's Three Tiny Lakes

"From their rock-rimmed basins high on the Helderberg plateau, near the remote southwestern corner of Albany County, three tiny lakes send their waters thousand feet down into the valley of the Catskill Creek." The biggest of the three is Myosotis, a clear, brook-fed pool high above the picturesque little community of Rensselaerville. Some two miles to the west and more than two thousand feet above sea level is the second of the trio, Crystal Lake. In a deeper valley, lies the blue geometrical shape lake known as Triangle Lake.

The waters of Crystal and Triangle Lakes bubble up from Helderberg springs. They over-flow into a little unnamed stream that runs westward through the hills into Schoharie County then turns south to join Catskill Creek near Livingstonville. The runoff from Myosotis cascades down the spectacular Rensselaerville Falls of the Ten Mile Creek to meet the Catskill just below Oak Hill. On old maps Crystal Lake is identified as "The Big Lake" and the small lake to the north was labeled as "Little Lake". Myosotis cannot be found on these early maps.

The mills along the Ten Mile Creek found the water flow diminish as the hemlock trees were harvested. To increase the flow a meadow was dammed up and for the next hundred years it was called the Pond or Huyck's Pond. Many people thought the modern name Myosotis was of Native American origin, but it is a botanical name for forget-me-not — those beautiful tiny blue wildflowers that grow around the lake in spring. It is derived from a Greek word meaning mouse's ear.

The above information was from a newspaper article in the Knickerbocker News, Albany, N.Y., Saturday, June 4, 1949 by Frederick C. Dowsing.

Membership

Date: _____

Name: _____

Membership (new or renewal)

Street or PO Box: _____

Check off what you are sending

Town, State, Zip: _____

Individual Membership \$10.00

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Family Membership 15.00

Alternate Mailing Address and when to use this if you are a

Sponsorship Membership 30.00

"seasonal" resident (the post office will not forward our newsletter or

Life Membership 150.00

other third class mail): _____

Donation Portrait Restoration _____

Other Donation _____

Name: _____

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Street or PO Box: _____

TOTAL: _____

Town, State, Zip: _____

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◆ Newsletter ◆

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