

DHS News

The Official Newsletter
of the

Deposit Historical Society

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The Deposit Historical Society

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Note: You can view our newsletters with color pictures in pdf format on our website!

“Horse and buggy days”

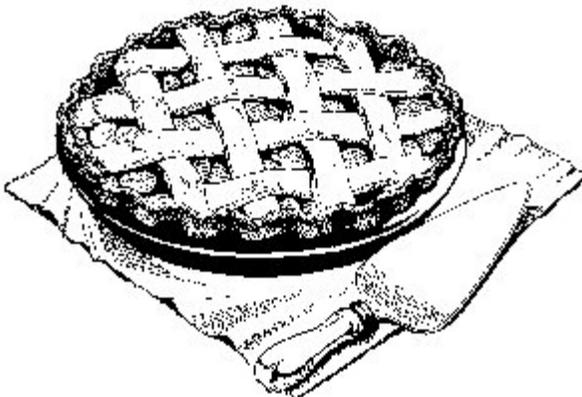
In the fall of each year we have fond memories to delight our imagination. Recently, a friend offered me a fresh NYS apple (golden delicious). That immediately touched my innate sense of well being during this time of year. What a refreshing taste it was. In my thoughts one idea leads to another. The links of life are most enjoyable and keep me “revved” up and raring to go searching our countryside for pleasures of times gone by.

That premise led me to a journey down memory lane in our village and country side. Various natural wonders always abound for us to love. I see the River continues to flow with grace down its course. The hills surrounding the watershed flourish now with greenery and later with colorful splashes. All these wonderments fill a void necessary to dream about the best possible existence one could ever hope for!

Please remember to take advantage of your surroundings. Deposit offers exceptional free gifts to be discovered, if you join and then take advantage of what our historical society has to offer year round. Maybe your trip down through history will inspire you to make your heart happier.

Richard Axtell, president

Harvest Pie Sale, October 12th.



Come to DHS’s annual pie sale at our booth on Front Street during Deposit’s Octoberfest. A variety of delicious homemade pies will be available as well as great items from the museum gift shop. Donations of pies will also be very appreciated.

Call for pick up at 467-4422. Help support your local Historical Society!

Early American Frontier History Portrayed

On Wednesday, June 18, 2014, at 7:30 PM, George Cummings, a local history buff, presented a living history program entitled “Rifleman in the Sullivan-Clinton Campaign.” He explored the life of a rifleman and his part in the campaign to rid Central New York of Indians, Tories and British troops that were raiding American settlements. Mr. Cummings was accompanied by Seneca Indian reenactor Brad Flint who recounted his side of the story

Of the 308 engagements of the American Revolution, 92 were fought in New York State with the Bread Basket area of Seneca Lake to Middleborough being the target area. Prior to the Revolutionary War, the Iroquois League was dominant and included the Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora tribes. When forced to take sides, the Tuscarora and the Oneida sided with the colonists. The Mohawk, Seneca, Onondaga, and Cayuga remained loyal to Great Britain because they decided that if Great Britain won, the British would leave. On the other hand they believed the colonists would stay and invade their lands.

Indians were used as scouts because they knew the area and they were used by both Americans and the English. They ran in front of the army to keep them safe. The Indians lost many good chiefs in battle and did not approve of British tactics. The Indians preferred to utilize the “bait and switch” ambush technique as their main weapon. They would send a few Indians out to obtain a pursuit and then the majority would come up from behind in an ambush.

The 1777 Battle of Oriskany was part of an attempt to gain control of Lake Champlain and the Hudson River. When the Indians saw that their “booty,” which they expected to take home, had been removed from Fort Stanwix, they withdrew their support for the British and abandoned them.

The 1778 raid on Unadilla and Onaquaga (North Windsor/Harpursville) was led by the American militia against the Iroquois towns. They descended on the two towns and destroyed them, razing most of the buildings and taking or destroying provisions. The raid was done in retaliation for a series of raids on frontier communities led by Mohawk Chief Joseph Brant and British-supported loyalists.



In 1778, Cherry Valley was attacked by British and Iroquois forces. The raiders’ attack on the fort was unsuccessful. The fort was then guarded by the Loyalists, while the Indians rampaged through the rest of the settlement. Not a single house was left standing, and the Seneca, seeking revenge, were reported to slaughter anyone they encountered. Chief Brant attempted to restrain the Indians’ actions but was unsuccessful.

In 1779, the Battle of Newtown (Elmira area) was ordered by the Continental Congress and led by General John Sullivan. It was the result of the colonists’ petition demanding that congress “deal with the Indians who sided with the British.” General Sullivan’s forces attacked several Indian villages and destroyed all foodstuffs in the vicinity. These actions demoralized the Indians

Indians had war clubs, tomahawks, bows and arrows, and knives. All were replaced by the rifle. Rifles were important trade items. The fancier the gun, the more desirable to the Indians. One way to make the gun fancier was to wrap a maple gun stock in string and burn off the string making tiger marks. Traders who sold guns to Indians were outlawed. Consequently, rifles were acquired either through secret trade or ambush. Gunsmiths went into Indian settlements to fix guns as the guns that the Indians

managed to acquire needed frequent repairs. Indians had many customs regarding warfair that differed from those of the colonists. They would not eat before battle, traveled light and left items in camp, and etched marks on their rifle barrel to keep it shooting straight. The Indians could not tell who was who during battle, so they put ribbons on their guns until they figured out who were the enemy.

Wampum was made from clam and conch shells. A bow drill was used to drill holes in the shells, so they could be used on clothing and strung together. Wampum was used for meetings and agreements and was exchanged to seal deals. It was used like money in trade for beads, colored cloth, blankets, linen, pots and pans, and other metal. Leggings protected the Indians as they ran through the bush. To tan and water proof the leather they would use animal brains along with walnuts to dye the leather while it was suspended on a rack of saplings over a hemlock fire. Moccasins were made from rabbit skins with fur and leaves on the inside. An Indian's nightly job was fixing the moccasins, and they traveled with 2 or 3 pair on them. They would dry wet ones on a stick in front of the fire. When preparing dinner, an Indian used a deer jawbone to scrape kernels off a corn cob. A mortar and pestle was then used to grind corn into powder for corn mash

The Flint-lock musket was developed by the French in 1610. The napped flint was shipped from Europe in kegs, although some flint was mined in New York State. Guns continually needed fresh flints: a nicked or damaged flint would not make a big enough spark in the tinder box to ignite the gunpowder. The local blacksmith would make the steel that would strike the flint.

A skilled rifleman could load and fire a musket 3 to 4 times a minute. The steps for loading flint-lock: the cock tightly holding the flint is rotated to half-cock, the gun is loaded from the muzzle end with 60-70 grains of black powder, the round lead ball wrapped in cloth or paper (patch) is inserted, the ramrod is rammed down to push the ball, patch and powder into the breach, the flash pan (frizzen) is primed with a small amount of finer gunpowder (carried in the horn), and then the frizzen is loaded. After all this, the rifle could be fired. It was hard to

hit anything beyond 50 yards. The British were better shots since they practiced, and the Americans did not have enough powder to practice. General Washington called for a corps, comprised of men from Virginia and Pennsylvania, skilled in the long rifle. The woodsmen prided themselves on shooting officers.

In 1798, a contract musket was a flint-lock that had a brass pan, no patch box, and had horn at the end. It was made with standard interchangeable parts. The smoothbore fowler rifle was used for game and birds. In central PA, the Germans made a larger bore for deer and boar. Since it was a heavier bore, it needed more powder and lead. A Shimmel rifle was a plain basic rifle, either flint or percussion, without a butt plate, entry ramrod pipe or side plate and a sheet metal trigger guard. It was a barrel, stock, and trigger. The lock-stock-barrel rifle had all the parts: the lock (part holding the sparking mechanism); the stock (the part being held), and the barrel (the part for aiming and for the explosive-driven ball). The basic rifles allowed stealth in the woods. The flintlocks were replaced in 1830 was when firing caps were invented.

After the war, some Indians were rewarded with land for being loyal, while others were pushed north and west. Many Oneidas went to Wisconsin. Germans had settled in Schoharie, a present from the Queen of England, in 1712. Consequently, many Germans were aligned with the British as mercenaries. Of the 30,000 mercenaries from Germany who fought, more than 5,000 deserted and settled. Many men from Sullivan and Clinton's armies returned to central New York after the war and received land grants.

The historical garb of Rifleman George Cummings and of Seneca Indian Brad Flint enhanced the flavor of the story telling. After the presentation there were two tables of artifacts that were available for audience perusal. After the audience participation, refreshments were served in the train room.



The Myth of the Last Cause of the Confederacy

On Wednesday, July 16, 2014 at 7:30 PM, David Clutz, author and historian, presented the program entitled “The Myth of the Last Cause of the Confederacy.” He retold the story of the unsung heroes of the 137th regiment who turned the tide for the Union side during the Civil War.

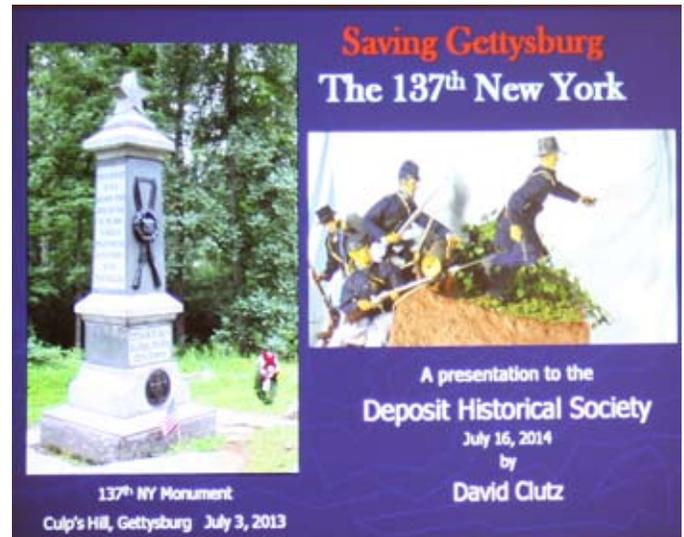
Gettysburg had the distinction of being the site of one of the largest battles fought on U.S. soil, of being the farthest north of the battles fought in the Civil War, and of being the battle where the Confederates began to lose the war. Men from Broome, Tioga, and Tompkins Counties made up the 137th New York Union regiment which had been mustered out of Binghamton, New York. The regiment started with over 1,000 men and lost 490. Men volunteered to fight due to patriotism, the \$300 enlistment incentive bounty, and fear of the draft.

General Lee’s plan in June of 1863 was to invade Pennsylvania. He felt the northern invasion and the subsequent win would demoralize the North and bring European recognition for the Confederacy. At the time, he felt success was certain as his army was thought to be invincible. He expected the Yanks to turn and run. Lee was considered to be the best military leader of the South and superior to his opponent, Major General George Meade, who had been in command for only 3 days.

The Battle of Gettysburg was actually 30 battles. The successful outcome for the north is attributed to the actions of the 20th Maine under Colonel Josh Chamberlain at Little Round Top and of the 137th New York under Colonel David Ireland at Culp’s Hill.

July 1, 1863. The Union army is forced back to Cemetery Hill after the death of Major General John Reynolds. Robert E. Lee surveys the situation and upon seeing Cemetery Hill decides it will be difficult to capture or dislodge any troops holding that hill. Lee suggests to Lt-Gen. Richard Ewell to take the hill if practical, and Ewell declines.

July 2, 1863. Left end of Union line. In the early



morning, General Henry Slocum (Union) sends 4900 men of the XII Corps to fortify Culp’s Hill. Culp’s Hill is a woodlot containing many large boulders with no undergrowth. It rises to 638 feet, drops to 500 feet, and then rises again to 541 feet. They build breast works and an auxiliary defense transverse to the main line. There are 9800 Union men in 28 regiments facing 6400 Confederate men in 22 regiments on Bennett Hill. At risk are the Union supply wagons and artillery along the Baltimore Pike.

3:45 P.M. Lee is under attack. Gen. James Sickles defies Meade’s orders and extends his line west leaving Cemetery Ridge and Little Round Top uncovered with his left flank “in the air.” He places himself in front of his support. Lee’s plan is to attack Cemetery Ridge via a flank attack and use Culp’s Hill as a demonstration.

4:15 P.M. Lt. Gen. James Longstreet (Conf.) attacks the Union putting Sickles regiment under heavy attack. (Union) Maj. Gen. Gouverneur Warren discovers that Little Round Top is undefended and sends Col Strong Vincent to defend it. Col. William Oates (Conf.) leads his 15th Alabama up Big Round Top, then down it, and up Little Round Top. Col. Josh Chamberlain sees a “thick group in gray pushing in the direction to gain” and decides to undertake an offensive stand.

6:30 P.M. Due to lack of ammunition, Chamberlain yells "Bayonet!" in preparation for a charge. Lt. Holman Melcher (Union) leads the color guard forward to retrieve the injured soldiers. Maj. Ellis Spear (Union) sees the colors moving forward, decides they are charging, sends his regiment charging forward, and is joined by Chamberlain. Alabama retreats. The Union wins Little Round Top. Each side lost 32-34% of their men during this battle.

July 2, 1863. Right end of Union line. 4:00 P.M. The 137th NY is in a double line connected to Gen. Thomas Kane's Brigade (Union) on their right in the swale.

5:30 P.M. On order to assist Sickles, Maj. Gen. Henry Slocum's 12th Corps departs Culp's Hill. Gen. George Greene (Union) protests and stays leaving 1450 men to fight 6433 Confederate men. The 137th New York are alone on the right. Greene's regiment forms a thin line of defense. NY regiments shift right with soldiers positioning themselves an arm's length away from each other. There are 5 NY regiments against 3 rebel brigades. The 137th NY takes the 2nd brigade in the swale.

6:00 P.M. The 137th shifts into a single line and covers the abandoned breastwork of Kane's. The 149th NY moves into 137th breastwork. The fire power thins out. Soldiers can shoot a musket only 4 times a minute. Dusk descends. Greene's men are fighting in skirmishes. Pvt. James Mullen of Windsor is shot, and his brother Willis carries him back and says, "What will mother say?" Two confederate brigades along with Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's brigades approach the breastwork, find the breastwork abandoned and come at the 137th NY.

8:00 P.M. Moonlight battle at Culp's Hill. Stuart urges his men on. (Union) Col. David Ireland has 420 men while the 6 Confederate regiments have 2120. Ireland orders Company's A and F to turn to face flank and is nearly surrounded on 3 sides by 6 rebel regiments. The 137th needs help and sees the 71st PA regiment marching, and they come to help. Ireland has his men do a "wheel right" when they

swing around and get behind the traverse. Three of his lieutenants lead men on a bayonet charge and they stop the advance. Some men from the 149th from Syracuse want to leave but the colonel says, "Stay." Capt. Joseph Gregg and Lt. Henry Hallett lead bayonet charges and are killed.

11 P.M. At the traverse with ammunition gone and bayonets fixed, the 14th Brooklyn slides into the trenches and helps 137th. Kane's brigades return and position right of the 137th and the battle ends. The 137th did not break despite 4 to 1 odds against them. At the end of the day, Meade holds a council of war and asks his officers if they should withdraw or fight. Slocum says, "Stay and fight."

July 3, 1863 11A.M. Confederates renew attack, fail, and retreat. There are 6 more hours of battle. One Confederate regiment fires until they run out ammunition. They leave and a fresh regiment comes. The fire, retreat and return strategy occurs 3 to 4 times. Ireland is relieved by the 29th Ohio led by Capt. Hayes. The Confederates are on lower Culp's Hill shooting down on the 137th in the traverse. One fourth of the 137th is either killed or wounded.

Gettysburg statistics:

Under Union Commander George G. Meade: 93,921 engaged in battle, 23,055 casualties (25%), 3,155 killed, 14,531 wounded.

Under Confederate Commander Robert E. Lee: 71,699 engaged in battle, 23,231 casualties, 4,708 killed (33%), 12,693 wounded.

Total: 46,286 casualties.

After Gettysburg, in October 1863, the 137th joined Grant's army and engaged in the midnight battle in Wauhatchie, Tennessee. A few weeks later, Col. Ireland and the 137th push the rebels off Lookout Mountain, Tennessee under the cover of clouds. The 137th was discharged June 9, 1865 at Bladensburg, Maryland.



Mr. Clutz, the presenter, feels that Col. David Ireland is an unsung hero of Culp's Hill because his 137th NY regiment fought as courageously against superior numbers as did Joshua Chamberlain's men of the 20th Maine on Little Round Top. The 137th was just as successful with fewer men against greater odds. Col. Ireland was wounded in May 1864 during Sherman's "march to the sea." Within a few days he contracted dysentery and died in September in Atlanta, Georgia. His body was brought back to Judge Phelps's Home where his wife, Sarah Phelps, had been staying. He is buried in Spring Forest Cemetery, Binghamton, NY.

For those who wish to know about the Civil War, David Clutz has written several books: War and Redemption- A Civil War Tale (a novel about love and intrigue), Fields of Fame and Glory- Col David Ireland and the 137th New York Volunteers (a collection of 150 letters written by soldiers), and Rebels in the Front Yard (true stories of six teenagers drawn from Clutz's family archives).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Oct. 12 - Harvest Pie Sale during Oktoberfest on Front Street. Come early for the best selection of delicious homemade Pies. * Museum closes for the season.
- Oct. 15 - (7:30 PM) "Funeral Directing in the Early 1900's." Monthly program presented by Deposit funeral director, Rick Zacharies
- Dec. 7 - Annual Christmas Open House. Bring your family and friends to celebrate the holidays in our beautifully decorated museum. Enjoy delicious refreshments and musical entertainment by the Holdrege Family Singers.
- Note:** On Oct. 12th, the museum will be open to visitors from 2- 4 PM but will close for the season at 4:00PM. After October the museum will only be open for evening programs and the December Open House. The research library is open year round on Tuesday mornings (9:30 -noon), or by appointment.

SUMMER FUNDRAISER

In the summer, DHS took advantage of good weather to do some much needed fundraising to tide it over the winter months and to help pay the fuel bills for the Museum and the Bundy House.

July brought the Lumberjack Festival and DHS's annual Brown Bread and Baked Beans sale. Thanks to the many bakers and cooks for their donations of bread and beans and to Elaine Reinhardt and Terri Mastandrea for manning the booth.

In place of the annual Crafts Fair, an auction was held in August. The items sold ranged from jewelry to cow crossing signs, antique vacuum cleaners to computer printers, Kelly and Steinman glass to household goods. Our president, Smitty Axtell served as auctioneer and kept the proceedings on track, while Kathy Watkins made sure that auction attendees were well-nourished. At noon, the winner of the quilt raffle was announced.

Many thanks to all those who generously donated merchandise for sale at the auction and to all those who worked tirelessly to make the auction such a huge success.

DHS Learns About Dorflinger Glass

A new addition to the Museum's collection of cut glass, from Deposit's own Kelly and Steinman Glass Company, was recently made. On August 13th, Henry Loftus, curator of the Dorflinger Glass Museum, came to speak about the history of the Dorflinger Glass Works. During his speech, he presented the Museum with a pickle dish which was cut by Kelly and Steinman on a glass blank that was most likely supplied by Dorflinger Glass Works. The gift was made in memory of the late John Thomas, a former Deposit resident. The Dorflinger



Glass Museum is located in White Mills, Pennsylvania and houses the nation's largest collection of American Brilliant Cut Dorflinger Glass. The museum's home is the Dorflinger-Suydam Wildlife Sanctuary, which also houses an 1867 Glassworker's House, the historic White Mills Fire House, and the Wildflower Amphitheater.

The history of the Dorflinger Glass Works and of Christian Dorflinger, who started this factory in White Mills in the 1860's, was presented. After learning his craft in Europe, Dorflinger established himself in the 1840's in Brooklyn, NY and began making chimneys for kerosene lamps. Dorflinger built a large business there with three factories. When he was 35 years old, his doctors advised him

that the strain was too much and he decided to retire to what is now the Poconos in Wayne County, PA. He became a farmer, and, after a few years, he built a factory in White Mills. The White Mills industrial center produced exquisite cut lead crystal for more than half a century. The crystal graced many of America's tables, including those of several White House administrations. Skilled glass artisans came to White Mills to work from all over Europe.

Dorflinger produced much more glass than he could cut, so he sold blanks to other companies. In fact, he spurred the development of a new industry for the area. Loftus went into great detail about the process used to make decorative glass. Attendees learned quite a bit about how to recognize fine cut glass. Cut glass requires the addition of lead oxide to silica in order to make the glass soft enough to cut. The glass is blown into standard size wooden molds, but then goes through a process using stone or copper wheels to cut the patterns. The glass is then polished and smoothed. Fine, miniature hand-done engraving appears on many valuable pieces. Real lead crystal has a metallic ping (careful now), and sharp ridges. Cut glass had no long-lasting identification marks, as only small paper disks on the bottom of the glass identified the manufacturer. Therefore, it takes great skill and experience to accurately identify the patterns made by each cut glass manufacturer.



Archival Costs

The museum is very thankful for the generous donations of clothing, furniture, and artifacts that many of our members have made. However, keeping such items, particularly clothing and textiles, in good condition can be an expensive undertaking, as archival materials are very costly. To help defray such costs, we ask that future in-kind donations be supplemented by a monetary donation to help cover archival storage cost.

Contact the DHS News editors for information, suggestions, or address changes...

If you have information to share with us about our mysteries, historical events, or suggestions for new articles or projects at the Museum, **or if you have moved**, mail it to DHS Newsletter editors Michael and Gail Musante at 199 Front Street, Deposit, NY 13754, or email it to one of us at gail.musante@gmail.com We will be delighted to hear from you! Thanks!!

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