

Newsletter

East Fishkill Historical Society

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From the Director – Malcolm Mills

We have been doing some rather belated spring cleaning in the carriage barn. Over the years the society has accumulated many old timbers, doors, windows and shutters salvaged from houses that were demolished. Some of the pieces came from people modernizing their old homes and looking to find a depository for their unwanted material. A few items were used in restoration of the Brinckerhoff house, but the majority has been taking up space in the barn and gathering dust and more dust for the past thirty years. We have plans to open up the carriage barn to better display our collection of horse drawn vehicles and agricultural machinery and so we needed the space. David Bushey approached Royal Carting Inc. and they generously agreed to waive the fee for accepting the material. We engaged John Paraskeva, who charged us a minimal rate, for helpers to empty the barn and load his dump trailer. They delivered more than 4000 pounds of material over the weigh scale at Royal Carting. There are still wood stalls to be dismantled but already the upper floor is clearer and with all that weight gone it probably sits inches higher! We intend to cut back the upper floor and display the sleighs, which will be visible from below. This will make room for the antique agricultural machines to be displayed more appropriately in the main barn. This was always our late trustee, Tom Scannell's wish to have the machinery more visible, particularly during school visits.

The mention of school visits reminds me that we welcomed 170 fourth grade students from Gayhead Elementary school one morning last month. They came in two waves and were divided into groups. Each group spent a session in the farmhouse, the schoolroom and finally in the carriage barn. While the schoolroom lesson was taken seriously, it invariably ended with one "bad" student sitting on the dunce's stool. I should like to thank all the trustees and members who assisted with the program. The highlight for the children was Noah, the goat, who patiently stood in the barn, while Debbie Scannell talked about the care of goats and other animals on a farm. She was ably supported by our own real farmer Dave Koehler, who

runs the Community Sponsored Agricultural Co-op. We hope the students and their parents will make a return visit to the site for the Strawberry Festival.

Noah, the goat, standing patiently while his owner Debbie Scannell talks to students in the Carriage Barn

School Master, Michael Elkin explaining to his students that the earth is round!

Support Those Business that Support the Society

Whenever we have events, such as speaker programs and events at the historic site, some local stores gladly allow us to display posters advertising the events. We would like to give them recognition and urge our members to shop at these stores in return for supporting the society's events. It would not hurt to thank them personally for giving us free publicity.

The sponsors are Frankie's Superette, East Fishkill Provisions, Hot Bagels, True Value Hardware, Hopewell Antique and Star Printing USA.

We also display posters at the Community Library and the Town Hall, which also allows us to hold programs there on Sunday afternoons.

Strawberry Festival –Sunday 8 June 2PM - 5PM

We are excited about this year's Strawberry Festival. Society member, Rick Soedler will again be playing his guitar and singing folk songs on the porch of the house. His music is just right for a summer afternoon spent with friends and neighbors.

Speaking of popular attractions none can beat the Petting Zoo with the younger folks. Noah the goat will be there with his friends. "Midge" the brown lamb will be wandering about and there will be many other furry animals like bunnies and guinea pigs just waiting to be cuddled and stroked. If you purchase a copy of the Southern Dutchess News you will see a picture of Noah and Midge sampling the strawberries to ensure they will be perfect for the strawberry shortcakes.

I probably say it every year, but there is something about our strawberry shortcakes, smothered with fruit and cream (for those not worried about cholesterol) that has me drooling in anticipation in late May. We are hoping for a glorious sunny day but just in case, all the tables and chairs will be set out under a tent. The shortcakes will be served at 3.30PM although drinks and cookies will be available from the start. The farmhouse, schoolhouse and carriage barn will be open for visiting and tours throughout the afternoon. The newly moved icehouse will be open for the first time. Although the ice harvesting display is not finalized our trustee, Carol Broadwell is doing a fine job of putting together the history of ice harvesting and storage. Come join us and bring your family, neighbors and friends for a traditional afternoon party in the country.

1896 Stormville Diorama

John Bortle, a Stormville resident, offered the society a diorama of the Stormville hamlet circa 1920. He had modeled it several years ago when involved with the model railway club and it had been exhibited in the East Fishkill Town as a section of the town's railroad

layout. It is a fine model, showing the Stormville railroad crossing with accurately modeled houses and buildings looking towards Seamans Road. The trustees are delighted to accept this detailed model, which will be displayed in the side room off the old kitchen.

Preservation of Historic Buildings Tapestry

Member, Lilian Derkach has on several occasions, mentioned that the beautiful needle point tapestry displayed in the hall of the Brinckerhoff house should be better protected from moths and dust. With this prompting the trustees voted to spend just over \$500 to have it encased in a shadow box type frame with a UV protected clear plastic front. The tapestry was first removed from the original wood backing made by society member Robert Rippstein in 1996, and mounted on a new board with acid free backing by David Bushey. The task of framing it was given to the two ladies at Picture Perfect Inc., Hopewell Junction. The result is a stunning visual display, which will preserve the handicraft for many years to become a future heirloom. Please look at this newly displayed work when you next walk through the farmhouse hallway.

The tapestry was a project undertaken by society members and depicts eight of the town's historic buildings, including two churches and the railroad depot. Several people created the needlepoint panels and Barbro Visconti stitched them together with her rendering of the society's logo as the center piece. The other artists were Dewey Owens, Julia Noble, Virginia Kaminsky and Joy Mills. Sadly Julia, Virginia and Dewey are no longer with us, but their legacy continues.

Donations towards the cost of preserving the tapestry should be sent to the treasurer.

Correction -The Original Historical Society Charter

Under this heading in the last newsletter I mis-spelled the surname of the attorney who drafted the society's application for its provisional charter. My sincere apology to Benjamin Roosa Jr. Esq. for not proof reading more carefully. It was pointed out to me that Roosa is the family name of early settlers from Holland. I should have known better!

2014 Spring Speaker Program

We had a very good turnout for Anthony Musso's talk based on his two volumes "Historic Treasures of the Hudson Valley". He obviously has a following from his Poughkeepsie Journal historic dateline articles and after his fascinating illustrated talk we were delighted to see that he sold

Poughkeepsie Journal historic datelines books.

several books