

# DRYDEN HISTORY HOUSE AT SOUTHWORTH HOMESTEAD

January, February,  
March 2015  
Volume 35 (2015)

Dryden Town Historical Society  
14 North Street, Dryden, NY 13053  
607-844- 9209

## IT'S NEWS!!

### ***DTHS Receives Sertoma Grant***

**Dryden Sertoma Club** awarded DTHS a \$500 grant. DTHS requested a Sertoma Grant to help with the cost of repairing the main stair railing at the Southworth Homestead. The beautiful old railing needed to be stabilized for the Southworth House tours. The railing was removed, all broken sections were repaired, new splines were made to replace old, and all the spindles were made secure. The railing is now sound and ready for this year's visitors. Many thanks to Sertoma for the support that spearheaded this repair.



*Chris Lowe repairs the main stair railing in the Southworth House. The railing was unstable and had several damaged areas. Chris removed the entire railing, made repairs and strengthened the joints and spindles.*

## HOURS

**Saturdays, 10am - 1pm**



## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

March 28, Saturday 10 am - 12 noon  
**Pruning Workshop** at the Southworth Homestead

This year ***Dryden Village Beautification Brigade*** will add Southworth Homestead to its list of sites that receive attention. DTHS has asked for assist with pruning, maintenance planting, and suggestions. A "Pruning Workshop" will be held at **Southworth Homestead on Saturday, March 28th from 10 am - noon** and will start Dryden Beautification's gardening year. This workshop will be led by Tompkins County Horticulture agent Monika Roth. Monika leads the Citizen Pruners Program in Ithaca, so this will be a great opportunity to get your pruning questions answered! All are welcome.

## DTHS Annual Meeting

May 3, Sunday 1 pm, Dryden Village Hall  
Followed by **Book Talk with Grey Osterud**, partnered with Historic Ithaca, at 1:30 pm. See next page for more information.

## Annual OP Sale

May 29 8 am - 5 pm

May 30 8 am - 3 pm

This year we will add a "Collector's Corner". Donations of collectibles are very welcome. See next page for more information.

## DTHS ANNUAL MEETING

May 3rd, Sunday at 1 p.m. , Dryden Village Hall

DTHS Annual Meeting, Election of Trustees

At 1:30 p.m., Program - "Book Talk" Author Grey Osterud will present a talk on her award winning book, Putting The Barn Before The House: Women and Family Farming in Early 20th Century. This 2012 book features voices and viewpoints of women who lived on family farms. The author explores the flexible and varied ways that farm families shared labor. Ms. Osterud is the author of two previous books on farm families in central New York.

DTHS again appreciates partnering with Historic Ithaca in presenting this "Book Talk." Come to DTHS annual meeting and the book talk program, see displays, and enjoy refreshments. Open to all.

## Coming in MAY- the DTHS "OP" Sale

Friday, May 29 (8am - 5pm), and

Saturday, May 30, 2015 (8am - 3pm)

Back by popular demand!! We are holding another "Opportunity" Sale as a fundraising event for the DTHS. It will be held on the grounds of the Southworth Homestead on **Friday, May 29, and Saturday, May 30, 2015. This year we will feature a Collector's Corner.**

We are asking our members to look around their homes to see what treasures they can part with; you need the space and we need sale merchandise. This would be a good time to cull your collection of antiques and vintage items, or simply recycle your reusable clutter.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Kitchenware
- China and glassware
- Lamps
- Small appliances
- Holiday decorations
- Tools
- Toys, dolls, games and puzzles (no missing pieces)
- Musical instruments (no pianos, please)
- Art (paintings, prints, sculpture)
- Furniture (chairs, tables, and such - larger items will need to be evaluated on a case by case basis).
- Collectibles

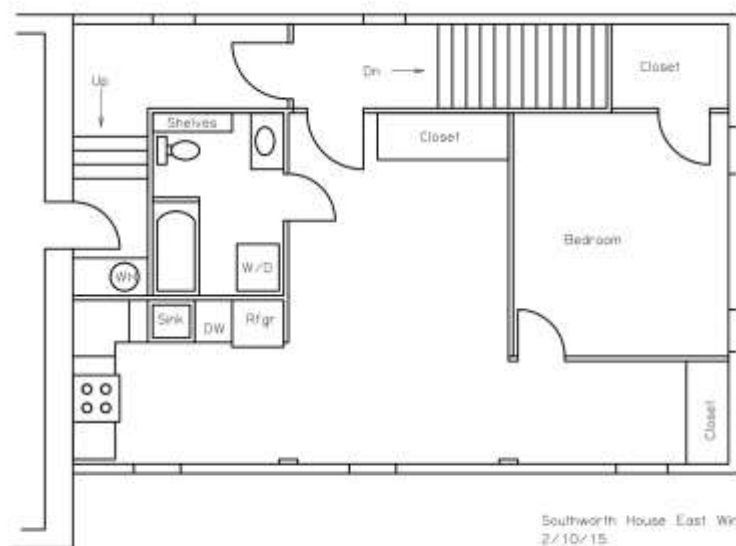
No clothing or books, unless the item in question is vintage or antique. When in doubt, call Mary Hornbuckle (898-3461) or Shirley Price (844-8700). Arrangements can be made for picking up donations or for dropping items off at the Southworth Homestead.

Donate what you no longer want or use and then buy someone else's treasure to take its place. Items with ties to local history are particularly desirable.

## Southworth Homestead Facility Update (Winter 2015)

At their January meeting the DTHS Trustees authorized the final phase of construction in the east wing of the Southworth House: the installation of an apartment on the second floor. Those of you familiar with the History House know we had an apartment there to generate income for the Society. We estimate that a one-bedroom apartment in the Southworth House will net about \$4,500 annually to offset some of the costs of operating the Society. We have started work in the space, installing insulation and sheetrock, but work to complete the project, such as the installation of the kitchen and bathroom, is dependent on our ongoing fundraising efforts. A floor plan of the apartment appears below.

Future Newsletters will describe our continuing work to stabilize and repair elements in the main brick house such as the wallpaper in the northwest parlor and the shutters, to name a few. Our list of deferred maintenance items is long and expensive and sometimes it seems like the work will never end. On the other hand, it is gratifying to look back on how much we have accomplished due to the generosity and hard work of our benefactors. As always, we encourage people to stop and have a look. The Historical Society is open Saturdays, 10am - 1pm.



Southworth House East Wing  
2/10/15  
Apartment Floor Plan

## Beaver Traffic Goes Through Dryden by *David Waterman*

In Albany on September 7, 1683, two Cayugas and a Susquehannock met with Robert Livingston, the British Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and produced a map which Livingston transcribed in his notes. The map depicted routes, long known to the Iroquois, by which each of the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, and Oneida tribes might portage over their respective passes through highlands south of the Finger Lakes and transport beaver pelts by canoe down tributaries to the Susquehanna River. Livingston noted that a trading post, which the Cayugas suggested he build down river at Conestoga, PA, near the Maryland border, *"is nearer them then this place, and much Easier to transport themselves and Burthens by water, whereas they muste carry all to this place upon there baks"*. Determined to learn the layout of the Haudenosaunee Confederation behind the Mohawks, he questioned them about travel times and added annotations to his map. The tributary depicted for the Onondaga route is the Tioughnioga River, and for Senecas the Chemung, but the native cartography is ambiguous regarding the Cayuga route. Their tributary lies somewhere between those two and their journey's duration was 1-1/2 days of portage and one day canoeing to reach the Susquehanna, then five more days to Conestoga.

Today's topographic maps imply the Cayuga route went through Dryden. Hills and passes do not change much in a few hundred years. The best route from Cayuga Lake to the Susquehanna for heavily laden canoes is to portage around Ithaca Falls, push up Fall Creek through Dryden, carry to Harford and paddle down East Owego Creek to Owego. It is not the shortest journey, but alternative creeks leading more directly to passes south of Cayuga Lake continue to cascade after going through their gorges, making bulk transport by canoe impractical. Fall Creek is the advantageous exception. Above Ithaca Falls it bears east and stays on the Cayuga side of the hills for 15 serpentine miles, only slowly gaining elevation to Dryden Lake and a pass that is 200 or more feet lower than the others.

It is difficult to speculate upon how many Cayuga warriors over the next few decades would choose the canoe route through Dryden instead of trudging to Albany. As England's outpost for native diplomacy, Albany was subsidized by The Crown, stocked with plentiful goods, and could pay the highest price for beavers. Albany's annual volume varied, with peaks around 45,000 pelts. Although the proposed British trading post at Conestoga would never be built, Cayuga manpower problems prompting the Albany meeting were acute.

Forty-five years of Beaver Wars, pestilence, and the long and costly final conflicts with the Susquehannocks had reduced Haudenosaunee population to 10-20% of 1600 levels. Cayugas could not waste manpower moving pelts inefficiently, and even a small fraction choosing the route

through Dryden yields canoes numbering into the hundreds in some years.

Many of the Haudenosaunee were engaged at this time in hastily resettling towns and fertile valleys in the conquered Susquehannock lands, using adopted defeated tribes, before the area filled with Europeans. Though a large, stockaded Iroquois village was built at Conestoga, populated mostly with former Susquehannocks who became known as Conestogas, the Susquehanna River beaver trade went mostly elsewhere. Dutch fur traders on the Delaware River at Port Jervis in the Minisink Valley of West New Jersey, who would ship the beavers out of Philadelphia, were old friends of The Haudenosaunee. The portage to the Delaware began above Wyoming PA, less than half way down to Conestoga. It was said that a burdened native woman could walk to the Minisink and return in two nights. Livingston's papers document repeated admonishments to Haudenosaunee for trading beaver pelts in Philadelphia or on the Susquehanna River, even suggesting they bring traders found there tied up to Albany and be rewarded all their goods.

The spring snow melt, when filtered through primeval forests, provided a gradual, predictable freshening of the creeks to support a flotilla of heavily loaded, cedar framed, elm bark canoes. We can imagine them entering Fall Creek through the swampy land occupied today by Stewart Park, the golf course and Ithaca High. Approaching Ithaca Falls, they would be pulled onto a landing. Forest Home would have been a defensible spot to house an extended family or clan dedicated to maintaining the Ithaca Falls portage trail and hauling canoes and cargo up the path. A two mile climb roughly following Lake Street and University Ave, crossing the Arts Quad and continuing along the ridge south of Beebe Lake to Forest Home Drive and back to creek level above the Forest Home Drive Bridge, gained 550 feet of elevation in under two hours.

Then began the hard work of moving canoes upstream through the dark and unrelenting forests of upstate New York, at times wading up to the armpits, poling or roping up rapids, and dragging canoes over rocks. Few paddling opportunities presented while pushing up through Varna, Etna and Freeville, to the future village of Dryden, where the creek crosses West Main Street and forks behind Agway. To the right is the Dryden Lake Outlet Creek. Walking canoes up it, warriors would eventually find several dry rises on the right side, now NYSEG's crossing of the Schug Trail, Keith Lane, and Chaffee Road, to unload and spend the night. Porters camped at Dryden lake could have provided a feast of fish, turtles and local game as part of their services. Dryden portage would be the high point of the trip. Next morning, the carry to Harford was four miles long, roughly following West Lake Road and Route 38. After Harford, and walking their canoes downstream to Harford Mills, they could mount and paddle continuously to Owego. From there the Susquehanna ride was punctuated only occasionally with challenging riffs. On the return trip, warriors could save time by leaving the Susquehanna at the Chemung River, enduring a longer and higher carry with relatively empty canoes back to Ithaca and then home.

## SOUTHWORTH HOMESTEAD TREASURES:

### *Meriden Britannia Soup Tureen by Mary Hornbuckle*

As anyone who has taken a house tour knows, the Southworth home is full of history and beauty. The French scenic wallpaper, the family portraits, and the hollow-cut silhouettes are among the wellknown treasures on display. However, there are numerous smaller items that were retrieved from closets and cupboards that are now coming to light and are equally worthy of attention.

With pleasure, we introduce you to a stunning silver soup tureen from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was made by the Meriden Britannia Company of Meriden, Connecticut and, while not of sterling quality, is still a beautiful piece of quadruple plate.

The Meriden Britannia Company was founded in 1852 at a time when the Victorian age introduced the emerging middle class to a life of increased wealth and leisure. Silver plating involves a base metal alloy comprised of tin, antimony and copper which is covered with a thin layer of pure silver. The Victorians valued material signs of status and if they couldn't afford the more expensive sterling, they could own equally ornate pieces made of silver plate.

This tureen is made of hammered silver plate (model #1875 – 3) with added embellishments of birds and floral designs favored by the Aesthetic Movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. We don't know the exact age of this piece but model #1875 was found in the Meriden Britannia catalogue covering 1886-87. The tureen shown in the catalogue was the same shape but without the hammered texture or added decoration.

When we discovered the tureen in a cupboard it was covered with heavy tarnish. After cleaning and polishing the piece for close to two hours, it is now ready to take its rightful place in any elaborate table setting.



## HOLLY TOUR of Holiday Homes

The DTHS Holly Tour 2014 was the best attendance ever and the best weather ever. Although we worried that December 7th would be bad weather, the day was perfect. Imagine if that Sunday had been like any day of the month of February!

### Special thanks to those who hosted this year's

#### Holly Tour:

- William George House at George Junior Republic
- Renee & Jeff Matteson
- Julie Powell & Tom Sinclair
- Gina & Bard Prentiss
- Jeff & Kim Schenck

## CORNELL SAVOYARDS COME TO DRYDEN

DTHS was privileged to support and facilitate the recent musical performance of "Jennie's Will" by the Cornell Savoyards, at the Dryden Presbyterian Church. This kind of cooperation is what we look forward to in the town of Dryden, and DTHS was pleased to join in the activity.

On Saturday evening, February 28<sup>th</sup>, Dryden was the scene of a wonderful repeat performance of "Jennie's Will," a musical about a young woman from a prominent Dryden family and her place in history. Members of Cornell Savoyards, with fine music, strong voices and dialogue, made the character of Jennie McGraw come alive. MaryEllen Rumsey set the stage with a detailed description of Jennie. Corey Earle, filled in the details of the contested will of Jennie and her husband, Willard Fiske.

Rhoda Charlotte was the first child of John Southworth and Nancy Ellis. Rhoda married John McGraw from Irish Settlement Road. Jennie was their only child. The family lived in the house, a wedding present from John Southworth, on the corner of Elm and North Street, in Dryden. Jennie traveled widely, was well read and educated. The play made vivid the Victorian life of wealthy people, such as the Southworths, McGraws, Montgomerys and Dwights of Dryden.



## The 1942 Farmall H By *Shirley (VanPelt) Otis Price*

I just acquired my father's first tractor, a 1942 Farmall H. My father purchased the Farmall H around 1948 from my mother's Uncle Carl Mott, who had a farm on the S-corners of Irish Settlement Road and purchased the tractor new. It came with cultivators and plows that have been scrapped long ago, although I remember my father using the cultivators for weed control in the corn and potato fields. My brother, Dick VanPelt, painted and put new tires and rims on the tractor. He told me a story about the dent in the side of the metal. Our father was in the woods using the tractor and it slid sideways into a tree and made the dent.

The 1942 Farmall H was the tractor that we all (7 children) learned to drive tractor on. Dad also had a Farmall M that he had been given by his brother, Earl, later on, but that was a more powerful tractor that we could not drive it until we were older. The discussion as to how old we were when we first drove the Farmall H varies from 5 years old to 8 years old. I rather suspect it was more toward 8 years old. The Farmall H was used for pulling the wagons to pick up the hay bales and raking. The plowing and the field work were done with the Farmall M. My father also had a table buzz-saw that mounted on the front of the Farmall H and was run by a belt from the pulley. I am also getting the buzz-saw blade without the table. Maybe I will have it painted with a scene or hang it on my garage. We spent many hours each fall cutting wood for our 2 woodstoves. Wood is a very efficient heat source; it keeps you warm cutting, stacking and burning it.

The 1942 Farmall H is one of the last tractors manufactured until 1947 due to the war. All production of farm tractors was stopped and the factories retooled to produce tanks and other military vehicles until the end of WWII. The tractors after the war were bigger and had more horsepower.

The 1942 Farmall H will pull a float in the Dairy Day Parades for the Dryden Town Historical Society and be admired as a really pretty old tractor and do light work at home. She may also be displayed at the Tractors of Yesteryears (TOYS Club) in Cortland at the HCCA Museum on Route 11 from time to time.

I have offered the 1942 Farmall H to my daughter Marcie and her husband Zach when they get some acres of their own with the stipulation that if they were to not need the tractor that they would see if anyone else in the families would like it. I would like to have the 1942 Farmall H stay in our families as long as possible so that its' story will continue.

### **SOUTHWORTH HOUSE TOURS**

#### **Starting Saturday, May 2**

Beginning May 2nd, tours of the Southworth Homestead will be offered. On the first Saturdays of the months of May through October, tours will be given at 10 am, 11am and 12 noon.

With the gift of the Southworth house came many treasures. This year, we can look forward to seeing more unique objects that were used by the family over the decades. Beautiful hair combs, interesting playing cards, and family photographs are some of the treasures we'll see this year.

**EXHIBITS** – There is activity afoot in the DTHS exhibit room. New exhibits are filling the display cases.

#### ● **"For the Young People: Mementos of Youth"**

For 175 years, the Southworth Homestead was a family home. In the 19th century, John Southworth and his second wife, Betsey Jaeger occupied the house and filled it with children. In the 20th century, the children of Becky Southworth Simpson lived and played in the homestead. This exhibit displays some playthings of Southworth youth.

#### ● **"Silver From the Southworth Homestead"**

Elegant silver graced the tables of Southworth, Dwight and Montgomery families. In this display, a tureen decorated with birds and flowers, and a silver coffee set are featured.

#### ● **"Early 19th Century Woven Coverlets"**

Rebecca Southworth Simpson bequeathed the Homestead and contents to DTHS. Many outstanding treasures were part of the contents. Three woven coverlets were stored in a trunk in a back bedroom. They are dated 1837, 1838, and 1839. Archibald Davidson of Ithaca and Impsom of Cortland wove the beautiful pieces on display.



A big holiday wreath donated by Fred and Muriel Likel decorated the red barn at the Southworth Homestead.



Mom and son making a beautiful holiday ornament at our Holiday Workshop in December, volunteer Gwen Beck in background



Bob Watros, DTHS president congratulates Angela Sullivan as the winner of the 2014 Quilt Raffle. Angela bought her winning ticket at Hollenbeck's Cider Mill.



Jean German helps as Joan Watros draws the winning 2014 quilt raffle ticket on December 6th. Joan donated the quilt made by Lettie Burch.



On a recent Saturday, Jean Tyler and son, Robbie, look at the R Townley great wheel in the exhibit room at the Southworth Homestead. Jean wrote an article that was published in the October issue of the publication, "The Spinning Wheel Sleuth" about the research, similarities, and differences of two central New York great wheels. Jean was one of the Blacksheep Handspinners Guild members who first delivered the R Townley great wheel to the DTHS collection. Jean then acquired her own great wheel. You can read the article about spinning wheels at DTHS.





GREETER , Mary Hornbuckle with Bard and Gina Prentiss, Betsy Cleveland at Prentiss Home, Holly Tour



Holly Tour at the Prentiss home: Tinsel and Christmas stockings lead the way to the living room. It is a family tradition every year, to hang Bard's grandfather's sleigh bells on a red ribbon above the doorway.



Tree at Matteson House, Holly Tour



Decorated table at Matteson House



Blue and white coverlet woven by Archibald Davidson, a new exhibit at DTHS





Holiday Wishes at William George House



Beautiful mantle at William George House



Stockings hung with care at George House



GREETERS Jean Eaton and Ginny Stairs, WITH Kim Schenck, and Betsy Cleveland at Schenck home



GREETERS Joan and Walt Torello with Julie Powell, Tom Sinclair, and Betsy Cleveland at Powell/Sinclair house



Merry Christmas wishes hung on the dining room wall at the Prentiss home.



## LISTINGS OF APPRECIATION

As of: February 27, 2015

### **CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED (since October, November, December 2014 Newsletter)**

#### **FROM DECEMBER 2014**

**Kenneth & Virginia Barton** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**Marilyn Baurle "Trust"** — A gift membership  
**Bruce Beatty** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**William & Jane Bailey** — For the DTHS general fund  
**Kathleen C. Elliot** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**Leslie Chatterton & Allyson Ford** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**William R. George Agency (Mr. Jeff Dailey, Exec. Director)** — Open house at DTHS Holly Tour  
**Joyce McAllister** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**Jeff & Renee Matteson** — Open house at DTHS Holly Tour  
**Claudia Melin & Charles Smith** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**Jeff & Kim Schenck** — Open house at DTHS Holly Tour  
**Alphonse Pieper & Elizabeth Shrier** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**Bard & Gina Prentiss** — a) For the Southworth Project; b) Open house at DTHS Holly Tour  
**Horace & Shirley Shackelton** — a) For the Southworth Homestead Project; b) For the DTHS Collection usage  
**Julie Powell & Tom Sinclair** — Open house at DTHS Holly Tour  
**Donald E. Turk** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**William & Shirley Tweitman, Sr.** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**Susan Yanoff** — For the Southworth Homestead Project

#### **FROM JANUARY 2015**

**David & Brenda Armstrong** — Two gift memberships for DTHS  
**Dryden Community Center Café** — Monetary share of food table at 2014 DTHS Fall Harvest Fest  
**Sandra Prugh** — For the Southworth Homestead Project

#### **FROM FEBRUARY 2015**

**Louise McGee** — For the Southworth Homestead Project  
**Betsey VanSickle** — A gift membership for DTHS

### **GIFTS IN MEMORY**

**Barry Adams** — In memory of Molly Adams  
**Marilyn Baurle "Trust"** — In memory of Walter Baurle  
**Julia M. Lonnberg** — In memory of Willis Marion  
**Betty Marion** — In memory of Willis D. Marion  
**Pamela Shoemaker** — In memory of Belle (Snyder) Wolcott & family  
**David Stanfield** — In memory of Christine Slocum  
**Ann E. Zwart** — In memory of Frances Mary Schutt  
**Annette Otis** — In memory of Harold & Nancy VanPelt  
**Gerald & Bonnie Roe** — In memory of Irene Jane Dann Dedrick  
**Robert & Joan Watros** — a) In memory of Willis Marion; b) In memory of Robert Fox  
**Candlelight Inn B & B** — In memory of Seraphim Nitsios

### **March Membership News:**

Welcome new members-

- Candace Akins, Freeville, NY
- Carl & Mary Kimberly, McGraw, NY
- Annette Otis, Skaneateles, NY

We have 147 memberships to date, but there are 45 outstanding renewals. Please check the date on your label and send in your renewal if it still shows 2014. Thank you for your memberships. Your support is appreciated.

**Dryden Town Historical  
Society**

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## HOURS AT THE SOUTHWORTH HOUSE

**Saturday, MARCH 7 AND MARCH 21  
10 AM – 1PM**

**Starting APRIL 4  
Every Saturday 10 AM – 1 PM**

Would you prefer to receive the newsletter electronically, as an attachment in an email, instead of the print version that arrives in the mail?

If so, please send us an email with “Prefer Newsletter Electronically” in the subject line to [drydennyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:drydennyhistory@gmail.com).

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