

Marshall Historical Society

Looking to the past to inspire our future

Newsletter

August/September 2007

Marshall Historical Society
P O Box 232
Deansboro, NY 13328

Dorothy McConnell, President
Edith Eastman, Vice President
Carol Gilley, Secretary

Trustees
John McConnell
Joanne Bolan
Dale Allen
Howard West
Anne Jasek

Next Meeting
7.30 pm on
Thursday
September 20
Town Hall,
Deansboro

Join!
Provide your name
and address to the
secretary and pay
the membership fee:
individual: \$ 5.00
family: \$ 7.50

How is your summer going? Hope you're all having a good summer. The weather has been good for crops. I have been busy with red raspberries and the Waterville Farmers' Market.

Just a note of reminder. The society will reconvene with our annual Election of Officers on September 20th, at 7:30 p.m. in the Marshall Town Hall. At that time our dues will be payable to Treasurer, Carol Gilley, PO Box 277, Deansboro, NY 13328. Dues are \$5.00 an individual or \$7.50 a couple.

Dorothy McConnell will present a program on the "Musical Museum" also on September 20, 2007. It was fun researching this project and I have a video to share at that time. Arthur Sanders has volunteered to come that night to help with questions you might have.

Hope to set up a program committee to help with future programs. Any volunteers to help with this? I have to step down as president after 5 years so could use some help. There also needs to be a refreshment committee set up for the year.

There was a trustees meeting held Thursday, August 9th at 1p.m. to nominate the officers for 2007-2008 year. Anne Jasek is the head trustee for 2007.

Future plans

The Oneida County museums and Historical Societies are planning to be all open on Saturday, September 29, 2007 with displays and light refreshments from noon to 4p.m. Marshall Historical Society will be among those to be open. We will need people to help with this.

The Limestone Ridge Historical Society is planning to publish a cookbook. They are asking for recipes to be sent to Helen Alberding, PO Box 383, Oriskany Falls, NY 13425.

Let us have a good turn out for September's meeting.

Sincerely, Dorothy McConnell, President

The Ely Pipe Organ by Arthur H Sanders

This lovely old pipe organ has an interesting history -- much of it associated with one of the more colorful families of this vicinity. It was purchased new in 1830 to provide music for the home of Thomas and Louisa Ely (pronounced Eee-Lee), in their newly established homestead on the California Hill road, east of Deansboro, NY. It was a hop farm and in those days vast sums could be made farming hops.

The land had not always been hop land, however. It was tract number 57, of 400 acres, bought from the Brothertown Indians by Thomas Ely's father shortly after 1795 with the plan of establishing a home and hop farm. Thomas was born in 1799, and worked with his father and the men at a young age, setting hop poles and stringing vines. Thomas married Louisa in 1825 and, shortly after, bought her an exquisite pipe organ. Louisa enjoyed playing her pipe organ, much to the delight of the growing group of settlers in the nearby communities of Deansboro, Waterville, Paris Hill and Clinton.

Both Thomas and Louisa were Spiritualists, who believed that their relatives and friends who have "passed on" to spirit life, are trying to communicate with the living. Several confirmations occurred during sittings at the Ely homestead. Chairs were moved from their usual places, voices and tappings were heard, windows cracked, and writings were found. With the pipe organ to create the proper mood, the Ely homestead became a popular place for Spiritualist meetings. It

was rumored the famous Fox sisters once visited for several days.

Thomas and Louisa eventually passed on, and their son Frank was only mildly interested in the sect, and the congregation began meeting in other homes. Frank had brought a wife, Lotti, to the homestead in 1860 and in 1862, a daughter was born whom they named Belle. As a youngster, this "tom-boy" trained and drove a pair of goats hitched to a small wagon. She used to enjoy hiking and fishing with older friends, staying up all night. She was a large boned, tall, free-spirited woman, well able to take care of herself. Belle was popular, and she gave some parties unusual for this area. Farmers from as far as a hundred miles away would attend these four and five day gatherings. Nearly every Sunday, a group of Belle's friends would come to the house. There would be talk, some showing of horses and livestock some games, but later on everyone gathered around the old pine pipe organ. With Belle playing, the walls would be vibrating with singing.

Many of the older residents of this area recalled with pleasure the sight of big Belle Ely riding behind her high-spirited team of black stallions in the 1980's and 90's. She used to delight in racing around the countryside in her cutter, probably checking on invitations for her next party. But it was a sight -- horses in full trot, sleigh bells jingling, and Belle with reins and whip, her brown hair flying in the wind.

Belle's wedding was typical of her. There were thirty people at the house supposedly attending another party. Everyone was deep in song around the pipe organ when, about midnight, the Presbyterian minister from Clinton walked in. Belle and Bill Kimball -- assistant farm manager -- stepped up and were married. Certainly a wild party that night.

There are 54 keys, playing two ranks of pipes. The principal has 54 unstopped metal pipes; the stopped diapason rank is wooden - - the larger ones four feet long and six inches square. The pine case was stained with sour milk and has a deep reddish glow, often called pumpkin pine. It measures 87 inches tall, 58 inches wide, and 27 inches deep.

This organ may be one of the first constructed by Alvinza Andrews, who started making organs in 1830 in Waterville, NY. About 1852 he moved the factory to Utica, and his son, George L. Andrews, entered the firm. There are other Andrews organs at Vernon Center Presbyterian Church, the Constantia Episcopal Church, and the Deansboro Methodist Church.



Letter from Joan D. Woldvogel
Memorial Fund Committee
The Brothertown Indian Nation

Thank you for your Contribution of \$115.00 to the Brothertown Nation Inc. in Memory of Chairperson Emeritus June C. Ezold for use in the Development of a Brothertown Indian Community Center where she will be honored in a special way. In honoring the memory of June, you bring hope to a Dream that June had for many years – to have our very own building to house our treasured artifacts, make our library materials accessible, and hold our tribal meetings and gatherings.

We greatly appreciate your support. The Brothertown Indian Tribe graciously thanks you for your generosity

(Signed) Joan D. Woldvogel

PS: My husband Franklyn and I were on both trips that our Brothertown tribal group made to your hallowed grounds of our ancestors. We have many wonderful memories. Franklyn is the one who made the Brothertown Indian belt that is in the Historical Society there.

We dearly miss June Ezold's presence, but we know she is here in spirit. God bless her for all

she did for the tribe.

Thanks for keeping in touch and your gracious remembrance.

(Signed) Joan W

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Oneida County History Day

Saturday, September 29, 2007

Noon to 4.00 pm

Historical societies throughout Oneida County will celebrate Oneida County History Day on Saturday, September 29 with special historical displays and open houses. The day, organized by the Oneida Country Historians' Association, is planned to highlight the history of the county and its communities. It is hoped that many people will participate and be invited to consider membership in an historical society.

Please participate:

- Help welcome visitors to the display of the Marshall Historical Society at the Town Hall in Deansboro.
- Visit other historical societies and see their displays.