

Marshall Historical Society

Looking to the Past to Inspire Our Future

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Yvonne Brady (2026)
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Amy Buchholz (2028)
Brian Brewer (2029)

Website:

www.marshallhistsoc.org

Next Meeting

**July 17 at 6:30– History
of the Deansboro
Superette – Michelle
Gazzal Peck**

Join!

Provide your name and
address (and email, if
applicable) to the secretary
and pay the membership
fee:

Individual: \$10:00

Family: \$15.00

**HAVE YOU PAID
YOUR YEARLY DUES?
GET YOURS IN
TODAY!**

Donate!

Your donations to the
Marshall Historical Society
are tax deductible.

Greetings Friends:

June, 2025



Our June 19 meeting was well-attended and so interesting: Dennis Dewey, a volunteer with the Oneida County History Center, along with Janice Reilly, presented his well-done documentary “Farmin’ It”, about dairy farming in Oneida County.

It featured a small farm in Boonville - the Lee Dairy Farm, which has 60 cows to milk; a medium-sized dairy farm in Holland Patent, called the Finndale Farm, which milks 900 cows; and a large farm in New Hartford - the Collins Knoll Farm, with 1400 cows. Other farms were featured as well, including the McConnell farm on Post Street. We also saw the late Max Townsend talking about how farming has changed over the years.

The documentary noted those changes, from the way manure is spread, how silos are no longer used (the food for the cows is stored in plastic Ag Bags, hoppers or giant bunkers, which are mountains of chopped corn) to the monitoring of how the cow is doing: what she eats, how much milk she gives, often using a computer program. It told the story of the history of dairy farming and how the distribution of milk has changed to safer methods - from tin cans to sterilized glass bottles.

The Taywind Farm in Cassville is entirely robotic - the cows are milked using a robot and one is used to clean the stalls. We went from the history of dairy farming to the future and beyond!

It was a wonderful program! Dennis answered many questions and gave a little of his background. We are so grateful to him and to Janice for sharing this documentary with us.



To carry on the milk theme, refreshments consisted of cheese and an orange cream milk punch made by Alycia Schick, which was delicious!

Next month, on July 17, we welcome Michelle Peck from the Deansboro Superette, who will give the history of the store, which has been on the corner of Route 12b - Main Street - and Route 315 - Mill Street - since 1840. The meeting will begin at 6:30, and refreshments will follow. Let’s have a big, welcoming crowd for Michelle!

DEANSBORO LIBRARY AND READING CENTER

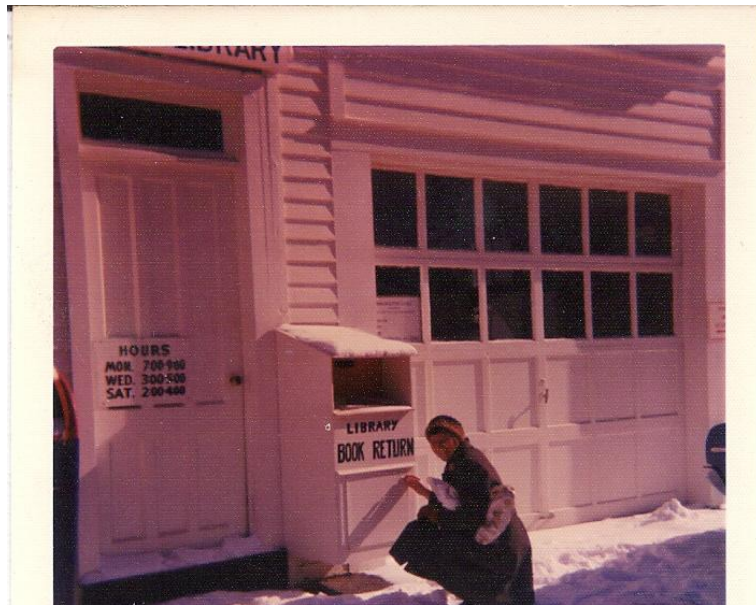
Early on, a 500-book Library was housed in the Deansboro High School on West Hill Road, now the home of the Ruia's. It was called the John C. Dean Library. The school, and the library, burned in 1931.

In 1932, the Waterville Public Library formed branch libraries in Deansboro and Stockwell. The rules, established by the State Department of Education, stated that "each community form a small local committee, choosing one member to act as 'librarian' in a ... private home. No payment of rent is allowed, book shelves and cases must be donated, and there is no salary." The library in Deansboro was located in Daisy Pughe's living room on Main Street (Route 12b north). The hours were during the day Monday, Friday and Saturday; and from 10-11:30 on Tuesday and Wednesday. Many remember going there to borrow books. One of the Waterville school teachers, Marion Shaver Dixon, used to bring books from the Waterville Library to furnish Deansboro with books. They were changed once a month.

In 1949, Eloise and Floyd Harrington (later, following the death of Mr. Harrington, Eloise Beerhalter) of the Dean Homestead offered the use of the annex of their home, which was the office of a former owner, William Hovey, who kept his records there. Eleanor Dawes was one of the first librarians, followed by Marion Pughe, Laura Eisenhut, and Jeanette Kennard. Lynda Harrington Williams was the first paid librarian in 1961. Ellen MacLeod took over in 1962, working summers and school vacations, with Ann MacLeod as her substitute.



The Dean Homestead Annex



Librarian Ann MacLeod at the drop box in 1973 when the library was at the Water Board Building

In 1965, the Mid-York Library service, which was chartered in 1960, urged Waterville to join the service. Strong pressure was put on the Waterville Library Board, and it was decided they would become a member. Deansboro needed to expand, however, and the Water Board offered the use of the second floor of their building on route 12b south (the post office was on the first floor, which used to house the Barton Hose Company. The structure is divided into apartments today). Many volunteers helped to paint, paper and get the upstairs room ready for opening. The Cub Scouts we organized to help. An oak table from Miss Hattie Patterson

was loaned as a study table, and six chairs came from the Waterville school. Art Sanders cut off the legs of a round table to make a table for the children. Small chairs were obtained, a rocking chair was given, and drapes from Maccabee Hall were donated. Mid-York Library offered books for loan, and all was ready for a reception to celebrate the opening in July, 1965. That year also saw a 20% increase in circulation,

Ann MacLeod took over full time in 1966. In 1976 she moved to Clinton, and Joanne Bolan became librarian until she went to work full time. Ann came back in 1977 and worked until 1980.

The Library was moved when the former Deansboro Grade School (later WCS kindergarten) was sold to the Town of Marshall for \$1.00 in the fall of 1975, and the building became the Town Hall. The library was housed in what was the fifth and sixth grade classroom of the former school. In 1980, Florence Oser from Knoxboro succeeded Ann MacLeod. Florence retired in 1988, and was succeeded in 1989 by Fern Biederman, assisted by Chris Johnson. Fern also retired, and in 1992, Bonnie Lewis, assisted by Sharon Bennett, became the library director. Bonnie also had as an assistant Pat Shay, who succeeded her in 1997.

In 1996, the Town Hall, including the library, underwent extensive renovations, and library was closed from August to November. New shelving was put up, new windows and carpeting were installed, and an expanded children's room was implemented. The children's room used to be the nurse's office/library when the building operated as a school. An open house was held in January, 1997.

Jacque Roys was librarian briefly in 2006; then Pat Shay took over with Anna Falin as her assistant. When Pat moved, Margie Wilson, from the Waterville Public Library, and Anna were fixtures there. We can't forget Mary Ann Ford and Nancy Cali, who were always there: volunteers extraordinaire. There was a busy Friends of the Library group who instigated the Election Day Book Sale, with raffle baskets to benefit the library. The Book Sale and raffle go on, with a bake sale added.

In the summer of 2009, the Waterville Library Trustees held a public meeting at the Marshall Town Hall to discuss the future of the Deansboro branch and to bring to the public's attention the problem of declining circulation in Deansboro. The Trustees agreed to give Deansboro a year to bring their circulation up because they knew how important the library was to the community; however, that wasn't successful, and in August, 2010, the Trustees voted to close the branch.

However, a group of dedicated volunteers, realizing that a library is an integral part of any community, resolved to keep the library going, so the library was not closed at all during that time. The library is called the Deansboro Library and Reading Center, and is staffed entirely by volunteers.

They are, from 2010 to present:

Sharon Bennett	Rose Evans
Fern Biederman	Betty Hughes
Gail Blau	Ann Koester
Janet Dangler	Biddy Williams
Brandi Gall	Alice Yoxall

Many times there is a best-seller that is requested and that may be on hold or unavailable at other libraries. With generous donations, the library is able to get the book. Customer service is a staple at all libraries, but is unique in Deansboro.



From a fifth and sixth-grade classroom...

...to a library!



The children's room

HOURS:

Tuesday - 1:00-3:30

Wednesday - 1:00-3:00

Thursday - 9:30-11:30

Friday - 9:30-11:30

THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER

The weather this spring and summer has been unusual, to say the least, from tornadoes to cool temperatures to really hot days. Hopefully, however, this will not be comparable to the summer of 1816, which was dubbed the “The Year Without Summer” or “Poverty Year.” It was caused by severe climate abnormalities due to the eruption of Mt. Tambora in Indonesia in 1815. The cloud as a result of the volcano blocked the sunlight from reaching the earth, resulting in a significant difference in the temperature, which was enough to throw off the growing seasons across the globe. Summer temperatures in Europe were the coldest of any on record between 1766 and 2000, resulting in crop failures and major food shortages across the Northern Hemisphere.

The year started off as usual, with a normal spring promising warm days ahead. Instead, crops that were planted in April were nipped by frost in May. Temperatures fell below freezing almost every day that month. Strong winds and freezing temperatures from Canada killed the buds on fruit trees. Ice formed on ponds and streams from Maine to Upstate New York. By the end of May, corn plants froze.

On June 6, snow fell in Albany and in Maine. The ground froze on June 9. Though some fruit and vegetable crops survived in New England, corn was reported to have ripened so poorly that no more than a quarter of it was usable for food, and much of it was moldy and not even fit for animal feed.

The average temperature in July was 68 degrees. On the morning of July 6, in New York, Pennsylvania, and through the New England states ice formed as thick as window glass. Indian corn was chilled and withered, and the grass was so killed by repeated freezing that the cattle grazing could scarcely eat it. Little rain fell during the month. To accompany the misery that the lack of sunlight or warmth brought, drought was also commonplace, so much so that crops did not ripen because of the lack of sun and water combined. The crop failures in New England, Canada, and parts of Europe caused food prices to rise sharply. In Canada, Quebec ran out of bread and milk, and Nova Scotians found themselves boiling foraged herbs for sustenance.

The Diarist Charles Pierce tells of the month of August in this way: “This poor month, although it started off relatively sunny and warm, entered upon its duties so perfectly chilled as to be unable to produce one warm foggy morning or cheerful sunny day as the month went on. It continued with a cold rain storm and when it cleared, the atmosphere was so chilled as to produce ice one-half inch thick in many places. It froze corn, which was in the milk, so hard it rotted upon the stalk and farmers mowed it down for fodder. Every green thing was destroyed not only in this country but in Europe.”

In some places, the sky appeared permanently overcast. The lack of sunlight and water became so severe that farmers lost their crops and food shortages were reported in Ireland, France, England, and the United States. During this summer that wasn't, the population tried to find enough wood to heat their homes, and went around in heavy woolen clothes; and, if one went outside, added mittens and an overcoat. Temperatures seesawed up and down throughout the Year Without a Summer, bringing hope on warm days that the crops could be harvested after all. Then sharp cold spells brought despair. On June 22, for example, temperatures reached 101 degrees in Salem, Mass. Then a northwest wind brought a three-day cold spell, with 30-degree temperatures.

Yes, 1816 will always be remembered as the year there was no summer. We can only hope that with future weather, history does not repeat itself.