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**The Heritage Center is open from 1 to 4 p.m. on Fridays and by appointment. It will be closed for the following dates in 2015:** Presidents' Day (2/13), Good Friday (4/3), Memorial Day (5/22), Strawberry Festival (6/19 tentatively), Labor Day (9/4), Columbus Day (10/9), Thanksgiving (11/27), Closed for the Month of December

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# NEWSLETTER

## Women Artisans Of Stephentown

David Flint



A Women Artisans Showcase featuring the works of talented Stephentown women was held Saturday, April 18, at the Stephentown Historical Society's Heritage Center. This was not a sales event but rather intended to let people know about just a sample of the many talented creators of arts and crafts that reside in this small town. A reception with the artisans took place Sunday, April 19. The exhibit included painting, sculpting, metal working, knitting, crocheting, spinning, dyeing, weaving, quilting, rug hooking, needlepoint, basket making, soap making, and stained glass crafting. The women featured in the showcase include Phyllis Defreest, Lynn Drumm, Bernice Gawron, Isabel Krebs, Tammy Madden, Florence Mason, Pat Mohos, Donna Mullet, Laurie Perrin, Nicole Peskin, Barbara Peterson, Meredith Rhindress, Lisa Wheeler, and Grace Zema.



## Glendouglas Farm Celebrates 250 Years

David Flint



For 250 years the farm on Osgood Road in Stephentown has been in continuous operation, run by descendants of the man who started it – Captain William Douglas. On June 1<sup>st</sup>, Isabel Krebs, present-day owner and a descendant of William Douglas, gave an illustrated talk about the farm and the history of the Douglas Family to the Stephentown Historical Society. Saturday, June 20 was the culmination of a three-day family reunion and celebration by the community of its oldest farm, now known as the Glendouglas Farm.

A grant for a roadside historic site marker was obtained and town highway people installed the sign and flag pole for this event. Isabel and Neil Krebs, who own the farm house at the end of Osgood Road, built on the foundation of William Douglas' log cabin, were the gracious hosts of the celebration, Isabel being the 4th-great-granddaughter of Captain William Douglas.

Town Supervisor Larry Eckhardt, acting as Master of Ceremonies, welcomed all to the historic event and the unveiling of a State Historic Site marker. *Continued on page 2*

PHOTOS BY DAVID AND PAT FLINT



*Glendouglas continued*



Following an Invocation by Rev. Trygve Tomlinson, Pastor of the West Stephentown Baptist Church, the American flag, one that was flown over the U.S. Capitol back in March in honor of William Douglas and was provided by Senator Chuck Schumer, was

raised by Phyllis DeFreest, Larry Holder and Yvonne Meekins, members of the Veterans of Stephentown. The Pledge of Allegiance was then led by Sarina and Jacob Krebs, sixth great-grandchildren of William Douglas. The National Anthem was sung by Marilyn Osgood and Larry Holder.



Six of the younger descendants of William Douglas then had the honor of unveiling the State Historic Marker which reads, "Glendouglas Farm. Est. 1765. Home Of Revolutionary War Patriot Captain William Douglas. Commemorating 250 Years Of Continuous Family Ownership." The sign was funded by the William C. Pomeroy Foundation.

## Dave Ruch Brings History To Life At Stephentown Heritage Center

*By Bea Peterson, Courtesy of Eastwick Press*



Musician and historian Dave Ruch captivated his audience at the Stephentown Historical Society's Heritage Center Monday evening, March 2. Whether he was playing guitar, mandolin, jaws harp, bones or spoons or singing, he brought history to life with his tales and

songs of a long ago New York.

He sang a lumberjack alphabet song that could be converted to many other trades as well. He reminded folks of the long cold winters spent in far off camps cutting trees and hauling them out of the woods. "If you couldn't play a musical instrument, sing, dance or tell stories, you most likely wouldn't get a job at a lumber camp," he said.

Ruch told of songs originally brought here by immigrants from many countries and then being passed down from generation to generation, sung and played in homes across the country. Music was the primary source of home entertainment before there were radios, he said. Those songs captured an important part of American history and Ruch has researched it for many years and now shares that history wherever he goes.

### PROGRAMS FOR THE STEPHENTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY AUGUST – DECEMBER 2015

Usually the first Monday of each month at 7:00pm, the Stephentown Historical Society sponsors an interesting historical presentation with a local guest presenter. Please join us for an educational evening followed by refreshments.

AUGUST 3 Battle of Bennington  
SEPTEMBER 14 Speaker to be determined  
OCTOBER 5 Ken Gypson '50's Race Tracks  
of Rensselaer County  
NOVEMBER 2 Speaker to be determined  
DECEMBER 7 Holiday Potluck at 6:30pm

Call for Winter 2016 Schedule

## ANNUAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

*Bill Zimmerman*

The Stephentown Historical Society's 34th annual Strawberry Festival became one of its most exciting events in recent memory. On Thursday evening SHS members and members of Girl Scout Troop 1752, along with some members of the Youth 2 Youth Berlin group, picked 150 pounds of strawberries in under 90 minutes at the Berry Patch on Route 22. On Friday morning about 18 members and friends hulled nearly 200 pounds of berries in under 3 hours. So far, so good.

Saturday the weather became more threatening. Still not a problem. Cool weather, rain, and a breeze weren't comfortable, but they were no particular threat. However, on Sunday morning when SHS workers arrived at the Berry Patch to set up tables and chairs, they found the tent on the ground with substantial tears in it. And the threat of more rain over the course of the day.



A Strawberry Festival in the open on a rainy day? Probably not a great idea. Time for Plan B. A couple of quick phone calls and the generosity of the Stephentown Volunteer Fire Department secured the Fire Hall on Grange Hall Road for the event. Berries, ice cream, shortcake, and serving supplies and equipment were quickly moved and set up. Some signs were repositioned, Dale and Don at the Berry Patch redirected people to our new location, and the Strawberry Festival opened on time at 11:00 am. Whew! The panic was over. The rest of the day was pleasantly uneventful. Scattered showers outside and workers and guests comfortable inside. Many residents took the extra step and joined us at the Fire Hall to enjoy homemade shortcake, ice cream, and



*Hulling Strawberries the previous day.*



*Festival Coordinators and Volunteers serving Strawberry Shortcake.*

homemade strawberry-rhubarb pie. While the turnout was down a bit from previous years, it was another successful Strawberry Festival, albeit with an exciting first hour or so.

Strawberry Festival Co-chairs Bev McClave and Bill Zimmerman and the Stephentown Historical Society would like to thank our customers, who braved less-than-ideal weather to partake of our local delicacies and support our work.



*This young man from Averill Park is enjoying the delicious short cake.*

We would also like to thank Girl Scout Troop 1752 and Youth 2 Youth Berlin and their advisers for picking the berries, Dale and Don at the Berry Patch for growing the berries and redirecting traffic, the Stephentown Volunteer Fire Department for the use of its building, the Saturday night graduation party users of the facility, who cleaned the facility in time for us to move in, and our corporate sponsors: Stewart's Shops, Price Chopper, and Big Y. Our Strawberry Festival is always something of a community effort. It was much more so this time around. Thank you all



*Young Volunteer Strawberry Pickers*

PHOTOS BY DAVID AND PAT FLINT