



STEPHENTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 2021

CAR WASH

The Heritage Center was pleased to present the 2nd Annual Car Wash on August 29, 2021 at the New Scrub Board Laundromat and Car Wash on Route 22. The event was sponsored by Darcy Construction and made possible by owner and operator Alan Stuart, who is also a Historical Society Board Member. The crew (recruited by Alan) included Alayna Haviland, Paris Darcy, Matt Ehrke, Riley Robertson, Colten Peeters, and Zach Menos, as well as Joe Hogan (another board member), and Jake the dog, and boy, did they ever work hard! The weather was great, lots of folks turned out to support us, a good time was had by all, and there sure were a lot of clean cars in Stephentown!



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TOWN HISTORIAN'S CORNER

Patricia Flint

HISTORY OF THE TOWN HALL

Stephentown's Town Hall, located on Grange Hall Road, was originally a Grange and came into being at the Stephentown Depot in 1903 due in part to the help of Henry J. Best, the Master of the West Sand Lake Grange. Walter B. Goold was the first Master and Edith Brown was its first secretary. There were three names associated with the organization during its existence: Mt. Whitney Grange, Fraternal Family Farm Organization, and finally, the Taconic Valley Grange, during which time the Stephentown Town Supervisor was Stanley H. Matthews (photo is from 1911).

The Grange disbanded in 1918 when Edward Quinlan was Master. The building was sold in 1930 with much speculation as to what would become of it, especially since the town occupied part of it and used it for election purposes and town business. It was sold to satisfy proceeds due to the heirs of the original three owners.

The Grange was reorganized in 1934 with meetings held at William A. Lapp's old blacksmith shop, a wooden structure on Grange Hall Road.

The subordinate #1538 of the Patrons of Husbandry was formed October 11, 1934 by Clifford Maul, Deputy Master of Rensselaer county. By December 17th of 1934, officers had been elected all committees had been appointed, and all four degrees given. Regular meetings were held to discuss town/public concerns as well as to plan social events, contests, and community service projects, many of which were sponsored by the Grange.



William A. Lapp's Blacksmith Shop



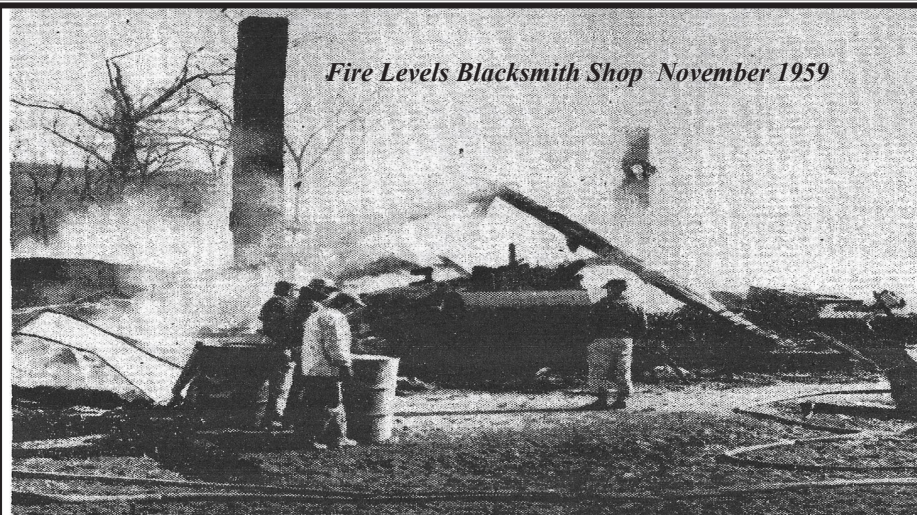
Stephentown

GRANGE HALL SOLD; PLANS NOT KNOWN

STEPHENTOWN, March 6.—The building known as the Grange hall was sold at a partition sale Saturday at the court house in Troy. There were quite a number of bidders from Stephentown. It was struck off to Chester Wager of Troy who it was understood was bidding for a Stephentown party.

"There is quite a little speculation as to what use will be made of the property. The town occupies a part of it and it is used for election purposes and town business. The building was erected some years ago and was used as a private school known as Mt. Whitney seumary. It was built by Rufus Sweet, Walter Goold and Spencer Brown. All these parties are dead and it was to divide the proceeds among the heirs that the property was sold."

Fire Levels Blacksmith Shop November 1959



Wyatt Haley was Master when the blacksmith shop burned to the ground in November of 1959. At the time, in addition to the Taconic Valley Grange, the building also housed the second and third grades of the Stephentown Elementary School, that had been placed there due to overcrowding. A new structure (constructed of fire resistant concrete blocks) was built almost entirely by Grange members and volunteers—it was dedicated in a special ceremony on May 13, 1961.

For a while (from 1960 to 1972) the Town Offices were located in the one room School House District #4, which is now the home of the Town Library

On March 17, 1972, Town Attorney Jay Lind handed over to Town Supervisor Carl Jensen the deed to the Taconic Valley Grange after several months of talks between the parties. Supervisor Jensen said the building would be used as a town hall for town board meetings, public hearings and the like, but when not in use, would be available to town organizations with approval of the town board. When the Taconic Valley Grange was dissolved in 1974, the records and artifacts were returned to National Grange headquarters, to be held in escrow for any future reorganization in Stephentown. The building was sold to the town of Stephentown for \$1.00 with the proviso it would always be available to a future Grange of local membership.

District #4 - Became Town Hall in 1960



Grange To Dedicate New Hall May 13 1961

STEPHENTOWN — The new hall of the Taconic Valley Grange will be dedicated Saturday May 13 at 8 p.m. The ceremony will be open to the public.

State Grange Master Leland Smith of Brasher Falls will officiate, and the officers of the Grange will assist in the ritual. Following the dedication, a program will be presented under the direction of the Grange lecturer, Mrs. Robert Stead.

*Taconic Valley Grange Dissolved 1974.
Records & Artifacts returned to National
Grange Headquarters*

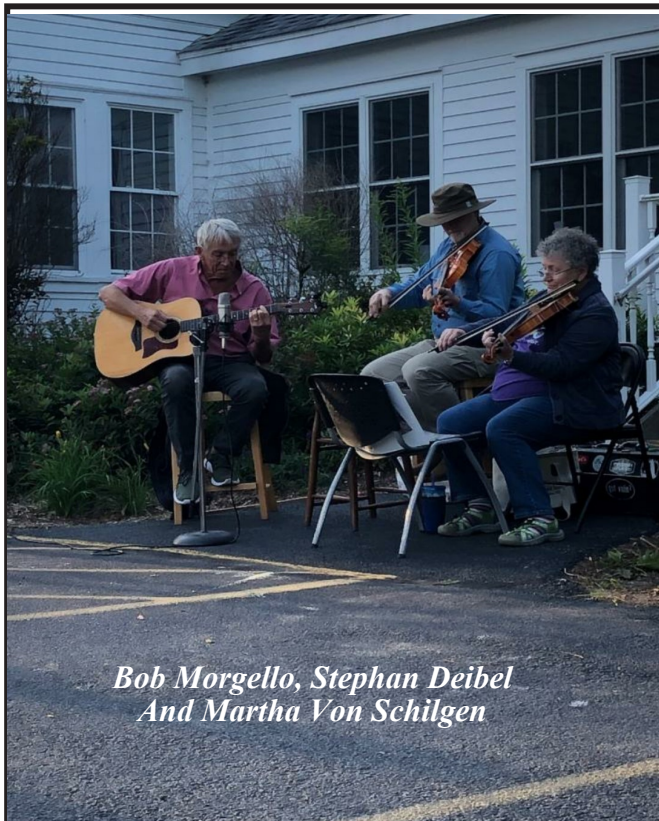


ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

Next month you will receive a letter from the president of the Stephentown Historical Society filling you in on what we've been up to this past year, and what we hope to accomplish going forward. We'll let you know what our plans and hopes are for 2022 and we'll ask you to help us to make it possible. Though the past 18 months have been anything but normal, we've tried to carry on by maintaining our open hours on Friday from 1 to 4 pm. Volunteers arrive each week to attend to our collections, answer mail and genealogy requests, and to update Facebook and the website. If you'd like to stop in for a visit, we'd love to see you. Please wear a mask and if you can let us know ahead of time, that would be great. You can email us at shs@fairpoint.net or give us a call—518-733-6070. Thanks.

LIVE AT THE LIBRARY!

This year the Stephentown Historical Society was pleased to be included as co-sponsors with the Stephentown Memorial Library in a series of "Live At The Library" concerts! A wonderful lineup of local singers and musicians performed at the Library in July, August and September. Folks brought lawn chairs or blankets, made themselves comfy, and enjoyed not only the show, but the opportunity to be outside and with each other! The concerts were free—we just passed the hat and folks responded generously to this good will offering as they always do. Looking forward to next year!



*Bob Morgello, Stephan Deibel
And Martha Von Schilgen*



Billy Gilbert and Marty Eckhardt

SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER—2021

**All Meetings Begin at 2 PM and are held at the Town Hall
Until Further Notice—Please wear a mask—Thank You**

Sunday, September 12, 2021

The History of the Bicycle
Henry Meudt

Sunday, October 3, 2021

A Child POW
Presented by Isabel Krebs

Sunday, November 7

The History of the Vanderbilt Hotel
And Downtown Stephentown
Presented by Pat Flint, Town Historian

Sunday, December 5, 2021

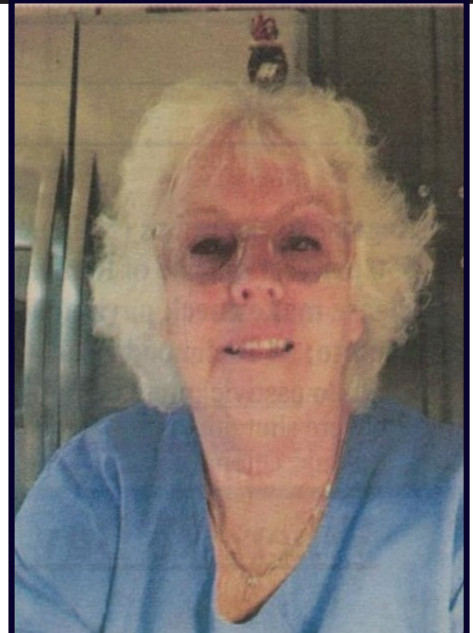
Annual Holiday Gathering—Coffee, Tea,
Light Refreshments Provided.

Sunday, January 9, 2022

D-Day and Normandy
Presented by Eric Durr

IN MEMORIAM
LINDA SULLIVAN

It was with great sadness that we had to say goodbye to good friend and Society Member Linda Sullivan, who passed in July of this year. Linda, a lifelong resident of Stephentown, loved history and genealogy, and volunteered every Friday at the Heritage Center. She was a wealth of information, had a fantastic memory, and never passed up a chance to help out. She was a member of the board several times over the years. She loved her family and home here in Stephentown and could often be seen in her yard riding her John Deere tractor. We miss your bright smile and quick wit Linda. Rest in peace.



DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL
ADDRESS?

The easiest and quickest way for us to reach out to our members is by email. If you are a member, have an email address and have not been receiving the SHS newsletters in your inbox, please consider providing us with your information. We promise not to inundate you with a lot of annoying emails—and you can opt out any time you want. We'll be able to keep you up to date on our monthly programs as well, and we can notify you as to cancellations or postponements.

Thank you!

Refreshments for Programs

The Society is looking for people to help out the Hospitality Committee by signing up to bring a dessert or cheese and crackers to our monthly programs. We do have a few dedicated people who always come through, but we would like to expand this list—that way it's only someone's turn once in a while! AND we'd get to sample everyone's baking skills! Let us know if you can help out. You can call Kat Deen at 617-332-6636 or Bev McClave at 518-733-5170.

Thanks!



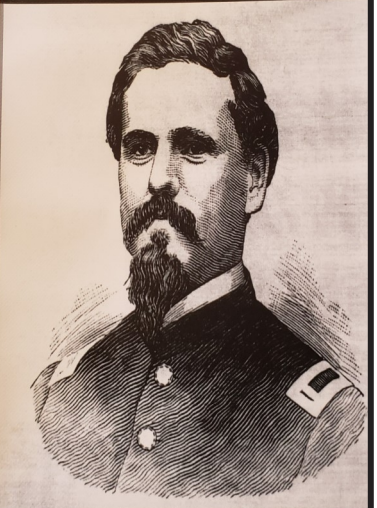
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VETERANS BANNER

You can't help but notice the Veterans' Banners around town—they are a wonderful affirmation of the service and dedication of our forefathers. Recently, the Carpenter family purchased a banner for their family member, Albert Doty, a veteran of the Civil War. Pictured at right is the banner sponsored by the Heritage Center for I. Dewitt Coleman. It is located at the intersection of Rte. 43 and Garfield Road. We are proud to recognize the courage and patriotism of our soldiers both past and present.

Stephentown
New York
Salutes
Lieutenant
I. DeWitt Coleman



CIVIL WAR
Union Army

News From Long Ago!

Published Saturday November 22, 1902
Fall River, MA. Daily Evening News

William H. Hatch, of Stephentown, N. Y., has shot and killed a gray wolf that weighed nearly 150 pounds. As near as the farmers of Hancock and Lebanon can estimate the wolf has made away with 100 sheep, three cows, and any number of turkeys and hens the past two months, and hunting parties in Western Massachusetts have been searching for him all the fall. The wolf is thought to be 15 years old and to have wandered down from the Adirondacks. Hatch will receive a bounty of \$50 from the New York State treasury, \$150 reward offered by the farmers of Hancock and vicinity and several large private purses.

Published October 18, 1888
Abilene, Texas Semi Weekly Farm Reporter

Chauncey Larkins, a young farmer of Stephentown, N. Y., is thought to have committed suicide because of his inability to find any one who would marry him. He proposed to five women in one week, offering the last one a load of apples, his wagon, team and farm if she would accept him. On her declination, he announced that he would kill himself, and as he soon afterwards disappeared, it is supposed that he has carried out his threat into execution.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Keeping in mind that NOTHING is certain during these trying times, we do have tentative plans. Our calendar for 2022 will hopefully include (in addition to our monthly meetings):

- HOLIDAY POTLUCK DINNER
- ANTIQUES APPRAISAL
- UPDATED LIGHTING @ SHS
- *STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
- *POST OFFICE DISPLAYS
- *NEW DISPLAYS @ SHS
- *CAR WASH
- *JULY PICNIC
- *CONCERTS

Stephentown Historical Society

4 Staples Road—PO Box 11
Stephentown, NY 12168

Email: shs@fairpoint.net

Website: www.stephentown-historical.org

Phone: 518-733-6070

Fridays 1pm—4 pm

First Saturday of the Month—10am—2 pm

Board of Directors

President

Beverley McClave

Vice President

Arlene Longo

Treasurer

Alan Stuart

Recording Secretary

Ellen Jennings

Corresponding Secretary

Laurenne Teachout

Town Historian

Pat Flint

Trustees

Isabel Krebs

Kat Deen

Alex Haley

Jean Bolen

Joe Hogan

Susan Demick

On September 12th, we thankfully were able to resume monthly meetings with a couple of changes. For now, due to Covid 19 restraints, we are meeting at the Town Hall and masks are required.

Our first speaker was Henry Meudt, who spoke on “The History of the Bicycle”.

Henry is pictured below with his restored 1893 Dursley-Pedersen reproduction.



Did you know that we're on Facebook? If you haven't already, why not check us out? It's a good place to see what's new at the Heritage Center, as well find out the latest on meetings, programs, and other happenings. Also, we like to post old pictures— people, homes, and places— and sometimes we need your help identifying those folks or places. If you have any old photos or interesting stories that you would like to share, give us a call at 518-733-6070 or email us at shs@fairpoint.net. Be sure to give us a “like”, and we definitely don't mind if you share.



Genealogy buff?

If so, check out

www.stephentowngenealogy.com

This site is maintained by Jeanette Otis and contains a lot of interesting information!

And don't forget the SHS website! Visit us at

www.stephentown-historical.org

**Stephentown Historical Society
Membership**

(If you are a current member, a renewal notice will be sent to you.)

NEW MEMBERS

Please complete the form below and return it to:

(Check made out to:)

**Stephentown Historical Society
PO Box 11
Stephentown, NY 12168**

Membership Categories

Please check one:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Member — \$10.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Member — \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership — \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime (Individual) — \$200.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate — \$60.00 | |

(Annual Membership is January—December)

Dues enclosed _____

Tax Deductible Donation _____

I'd like to volunteer—please contact me: YES [☐]

Name _____ **Phone #** _____ **Email** _____

