

Stephentown Historical Society Newsletter

Vol II, Issue No. XIV

June 1992

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 1991

1991 was an eventful year. We had 4 successful fund raising events: the Strawberry Festival chaired by Claire Watts and Esther Koepf, the Craftfest with a committee which included Sylvia Leibensperger, Ellen Lewis, Beverly McClave, Dot Hurd, Meredith Rhindress, Tony Beverly and myself. Next came the Tag Sale chaired by Edith Strobl. This was followed by the Pumpkin Fest and, like the Strawberry Festival was held at Zema's Nursery stand on Rt. 22.

None of these events would have been a success without the contributions of members and friends in the community who gave time, money and goods - the greatest of these was time.

Our Annual Capital Fund Drive fell short of its \$6,500 goal, but this was a sign of the times. This was made up by the continued sales of our publications. New this year were the postcards which are proving to be very popular.

The operation of the Heritage Center continued to have our priority. We finished sheetrock and insulation with the help of a court referred volunteer and Howard Leibensperger. I was the "Go-For". Taking advantage of the NYS Electric & Gas Rebate plan, we netted a \$144.00 rebate by updating the balcony incandescents to energy efficient flourescents. The electrical system is now complete.

The monthly meetings were interesting and stimulating thanks to the Program Committee headed by Pat Bowman.

Our Newsletter Team consisting of Sylvia Leibensperger, Dick Lewis, Susan Savage, Ruth Leab, Virginia Atwater and Klaus Burg continued to produce a quality paper twice a year.

For the 3rd year, the Society cooperated with the Rensselaer County Chapter of the American Red Cross to recruit doners from the community for the semi-annual blood drives.

TRANSPORTATION EXHIBIT

This summer for four Saturday's beginning August 15th, the Historical Society will hold a transportation exhibit. It will include the following topics: Frontier Days, town roads and bridges showing 19th century transportation. Learn how local farmers shipped their goods on rivers and canals, how the railroad effected local boarding houses, taverns and inns and how the automobile won over the railroad in the 20th century.

If you noticed members of the Historical Society taking building measurements and photos in town you saw the preparation for construction of a Stephentown scale model dating from the early 30ies. The completed model exhibit at the Heritage Center will show the railroad going through town as it did between 1851 and 1952.

CRAFTFEST - JULY 25

Welcome to summer and our 3rd CRAFTFEST on the Fire Company's Muster Field. The same Committee that launched 2 earlier fairs is at work on what promises to be another great day.

We are set up for 30 to 35 entrants using both the indoor and outdoor areas. All the craftpersons have been approved by a jury to insure high standards of workmanship.

The day begins at 10:00. Throughout the day there will be demonstrations, exhibits, music, a raffle and more activities for children than in previous years. Plan to have your snacks and lunch at one of the picnic tables. The prices will be reasonable and the menu will offer a wide selection - chili, pizza, hotdogs, salads, cookies, ice cream, hot beverages and cold drinks.

We count on you to help with publicity. There is no better recommendation than your word.

Officers:

President	Betty Feathers
Vice President	Jane Dwyer
Recording Secy	Howard Leibensperger
Corresponding Secy	Edith Strobl
Treasurer	Ruth Leab

Trustees:

Fred Haley	Ray Meisberger
Calvin Kenyon	Erich Strobl
Joan McMillan	Everett Tatro

THE KINDERHOOK CREEK:

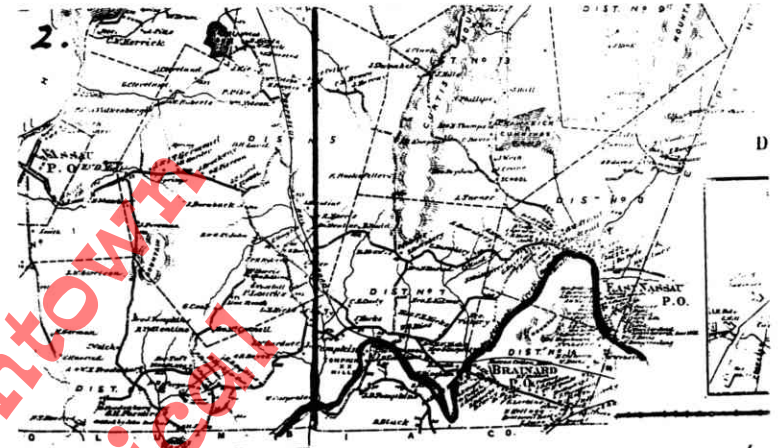
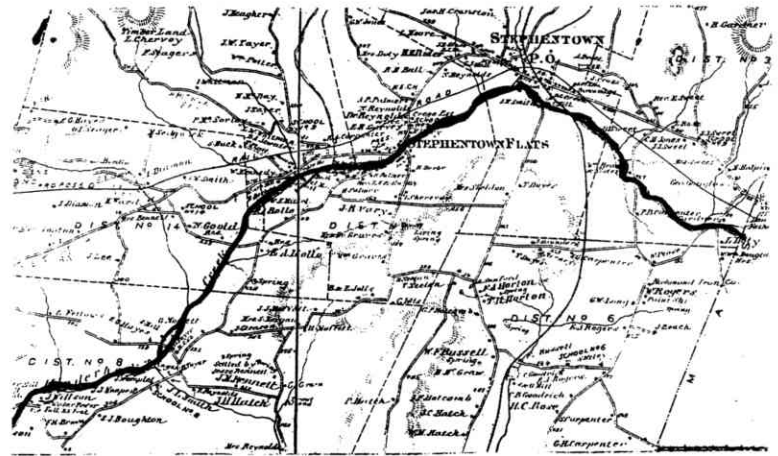
Then and Now

(continued from November 1991)

As the east tributary of the Kinderhook Creek joins the west tributary in Stephentown, it flows in a southerly direction toward the town of Lebanon. Along the way it accepts the Black River and the Roaring Brook streams. After entering Lebanon below the Adams Crossing Road, it receives the waters of the Wyomanock Creek, which is the only notable stream in Lebanon.

Turning northwest it again enters Rensselaer County in the area of the Webster Hill Road. As it passes through East Nassau, it is joined by the waters of Tsatswassa Creek. In a southwest course, it winds its way under the two bridges in Brainard and then returns to Columbia County, flowing along Rt. 66 through Riders Mills, Malden Bridge and Chatham Center. Continuing in a southwest course, the Kinderhook Creek passes through Valatie where it unites with the Valatie Kil stream. It proceeds on through Kinderhook to Stuyvesant Falls. Here, the Kinderhook Creek makes a descent by two natural falls - one forty-five feet and the other twenty-six feet. The two falls are about 40 rods apart. At the base of the lower and greater falls is a rocky point which rises to the height of a hundred feet, separating the stream into two flows, and forms an island containing twenty acres.

As the stream reunites, it flows on into the town of Stockport. In the center of the town the Kinderhook Creek from the north, the Claverack Creek from the south and Widows Creek from the east join together. These three Creeks form a two-mile stream now called the Stockport Creek and empties into the Hudson River. This stream (called in early times, Major Abrams' Creek) collects the water of seven-tenths of the whole of Columbia County. It enters the Hudson River about three miles north of the city of Hudson.



The Kinderhook Creek Bibliography: Beers Renss. Co. Atlas 1876; Beers Columbia Co. Atlas-1873; Columbia Co. at the end of the Century; History of Stockport; Spofford's 1824 Gazetteer; 1854 map of Stephentown

Our Curator continued to collect and catalog acquisitions in addition to genealogy for many who came to our area wishing to trace their heritage.

The highlight of the year was the Architectural Exhibit using the resources of consultants made possible by a NYSCA grant. Many members worked long and hard to beat the deadline. We opened August 17th. More than 200 people, including students from the Architecture Class of Berlin H.S. visited the exhibit.

As your President I feel fortunate to be part of such an enthusiastic and cooperate group. We have done much together and I look forward to more great times.

Betty T. Feathers

* * * * *

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- June 28 STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
Zema's Too 1:00-5:00
- July 13 "Old-time Stores"
Heritage Center, 7:30
- July 25 CRAFTFEST
SVFD Muster Field, 10:00-4:00
- Aug 10 "Railroad Transportation"
Heritage Center, 7:30
- Aug 15, 22, 29,
- Sept 5 TRANSPORTATION EXHIBIT
Heritage Center, 1:00-4:00
- Sept 5 TAG SALE
Dave's Market, 10:00-4:00
- Sept 14 "Automobile Restoration"
Heritage Center, 7:30
- Oct 11 PUMPKINFEST - Fun & Food
Zema's Too, 1:00-5:30
- Oct 13 "Antique Apples"
Heritage Center, 7:30
- Nov 9 "Mahican Land Transactions"
Heritage Center, 7:30
- Dec 14 "Covered Dish Supper and
Holiday Party
Town Hall, 6:30

* * * * *

4th PICTORIAL ALBUM

The latest album has gone to the printers and copies should be ready for sale at the Strawberry Festival. It contains over 200 pictures of 'people, places and things'.

Whoever said that "good things come in small packages" forgot to add that small packages can also be filled with "a driving power". This is a fairly accurate description of the woman at the helm of the Stephentown Historical Society. (Don't you wish she'd run for president of our country? maybe then we'd get things moving.) Betty Feathers, who is in the second year of her presidency for the Historical Society, is a mover and doer.

Sitting in her dining room at a table loaded with, yes you guessed right, papers that she is working on for the Society, Betty talks about her past and how she and her husband Delmar first came up to this area as weekend and summertime vistors from Long Island.

Both Delmar and Betty wanted to have a lot of land, and in search of this dream, they kept coming further up north. It was 1956 when they purchased their property in Stephentown. Betty, who was a field advisor for the Girl Scouts in Queens, NY, had summers off, which enabled her to spend time in the country with her family. In 1964 Delmar and Betty decided to make a permanent move to Stephentown. After settling here, Betty tried finding a job in Albany or Pittsfield without success. Finally she asked a friend who was active in the 4H Club, whether there were any openings. At her friend's suggestion, she applied for an Agent's opening at the Hudson 4H Club, which led to a most successful career with the Cornell Cooperative Extension. She advanced from Agent, to Head of Home Economics and finally County Coordinator for Columbia County, from which position she retired in 1980.

Retirement brought new challenges and activities for Betty, who is untiring in her efforts to work on behalf of the community. She is a member of the Stephentown Planning Board, Secretary of the Lebanon Valley Federation of Women's Club, of which she is also a past president. Betty, who is an avid gardener, built her own greenhouse, and loves doing carpentry. When asked how come she is so experienced in fixing things, Betty tells how she was an only

YOU ARE INVITED
TO JOIN
THE STEPHENTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

child who was really supposed to have been a boy. Her father ignored the fact that she was a girl, and taught her all the skills a boy would need to have for life.

We have to thank Elizabeth McClave, our museum curator, that she drew Betty Feathers into becoming active in the Stephentown Historical Society. Her first involvement with the Society was during the Bicentennial, as Program Chairman. That, according to Betty, was the beginning. Now that she is completely immersed in the activities of the society, her primary objective is to get the Heritage Center completely restored. She'd like to complete the inside which needs scraping, painting, insulation and more. However, before all this can be done a ramp must be built, in order to comply with the law requiring all public buildings to be accessible for the disabled. This must be done before the planned Transportation Exhibit which is scheduled for August 1992.

As you can see this "small package" is a powerhouse of energy and it's hard to keep up with it.

1992 membership categories and dues are as follows:

Individual member	\$5.00
Contributing member	\$15.00
Business/Organization	\$25.00
Life member	\$100.00

We hope you will join us this year. Checks payable to Stephentown Historical Society, c/o Jane Dwyer, HRC1 Box 166, Stephentown, NY 12168

The Society is proud to announce that it has 31 Individual members, 1 Contributing member, 35 Life members and 4 Honorary members.

HERITAGE CENTER UPDATE - The museum building now has an operating furnace so that the meetings next fall can be in our 'home'. For heat efficiency we will next install full insulation. The construction of the entrance ramp will provide access for everyone. Work parties will finish walls and partitions, the upstairs storage and the grading of the yard.

Stephentown
Historical
Society



Editors: Virginia Atwater
Klaus Burg
Ruth Loab
Sylvia Leibensperger
Richard Lewis
Susan Savage