

Historical Happenings



Dansville Area Historical Society

Box 481 • Dansville, NY 14437 • 585-335-8090

Website: dansvilleareahistoricalsociety.wordpress.com

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VOLUME 23, No. 1

"Caretakers of Our Area History"

SPRING 2015

President's Report

Dear Members and Friends,

The mid-point of winter has just passed and hopefully we're on our way to an early spring. This season has taken us back to the memories of our youth when the snow came early and stayed until Spring. As we begin a new year, our expectations are high for an exciting year at DAHS.

The 2015 Membership renewal forms were mailed recently. The membership funds support the newsletter as well as much of the routine maintenance of the Museum. Utilities, supplies, and insurance costs increase each year for us as they do for you. Please complete your renewal to help us meet these expenses. If you have already sent in your renewal, thank you.

There are several levels of support for you to select from. The form also allows you to indicate if you are interested in volunteering at the Museum on projects or programs. The Life Members received the renewal notice in case you would like to make an additional contribution.

The 2014 Challenge was a wonderful success. With the generous support of many members and David Smith's matching funds, we raised just over \$4,000. We now have the funds to begin some of projects that have been on hold because we didn't believe we could afford the expense. This

will include upgrading the computer equipment to better catalog our collection and digitize our displays. We are also making plans to reorganize one room for a manufacturing exhibit to highlight Foster Wheeler.

2015 programs are taking shape already. Our first program will spotlight Women in Medicine on March 8th. We have scheduled it for a Sunday afternoon to make attendance easier during this season. You will see more information on this later in the Newsletter. Committees are busy planning the events of the year including more public programs, 4th grade student visits to the museum, Christmas Concert, and the Annual Dinner Meeting. If you have suggestions for programs or projects, please call or email them to us.

Don't forget you can stop by the Museum to tour the many interesting displays available. You can also shop the gift shop for items that will keep Dansville history alive for the recipients. Books, collectibles, throws, ornaments and cutting boards with local historical buildings are available. We are open the first and third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at a DAHS program soon.

Gerri Waight, President

Community Programs

Sunday, March 8, 2015 at 2 p.m.

North Dansville Town Hall, 14 Clara Barton St.

Early Women Physicians of the Genesee Country

Presented by Jane Oakes

Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

North Dansville Town Hall, 14 Clara Barton St.

Antique Woodworking

Presented by David Palmer

*North Dansville Town Hall is
handicapped accessible. Admission is free.
Donations gratefully accepted.*





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*“Caretakers of Our
Area History”*

Box 481
Dansville, NY 14437
585-335-8090

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DAHS Museum

14 Church St.
Dansville, NY

Open 10am to 2pm
1st & 3rd Saturdays

2015 Anniversaries

Compiled by David Gilbert, DAHS Curator

Here are some of the anniversaries that Dansville will be celebrating in 2015:

200 YEARS AGO - 1815:

- Dr. James Faulkner, back in Dansville after serving in the War of 1812, begins building his “empire” by taking over Nathaniel Rochester’s paper mill.

150 YEARS AGO - 1865:

- The Civil War ends; 46 soldiers from North Dansville lost their lives in the conflict.
- The *Dansville Herald* is purchased by Frank J. Robbins and D. F. Moore, who change the newspaper’s name to the *Dansville Express*.

100 YEARS AGO - 1915:

- The new St. Mary’s church on Elizabeth Street, replacing the original St. Mary’s church on Franklin, is built and dedicated. Across the street, the former Whiteman residence is converted into a parochial school.
- Dansville’s two Lutheran churches, St. Paul’s and St. Jacob’s, elect to merge; the last service in the old German Lutheran church on Main Street is held in October.
- Dansville’s first automobile speed limit is set at 15 mph.

75 YEARS AGO - 1940:

- The last two wooden business blocks in Dansville, the Betts & Hedges blocks, are destroyed in a fire; they would be replaced by the Martina Block in 1948.
- Martin Allen, the last of the original three “Flying Allens,” dies at age 90.
- John Klink, local photographer and founder of the Klink Motor Car Company, dies at age 71.
- The Rainbow Grill is opened by Chris and Steve Dromazos.

50 YEARS AGO - 1965:

- Governor Nelson Rockefeller signs a bill authorizing the construction of the “Genesee Expressway”—Interstate 390.
- The Blum Shoe Store on Main Street is sold to Thomas & Dwyer.
- Thomas P. Reilly, the inventor of Ra-Pid-Gro, dies at age 80.
- The Dansville telephone system switches over to the dial system, ending the old “number please” request by the operator.

25 YEARS AGO - 1990:

- In the wake of wide local protests, the state elects to drop Allegany County as a possible site for a radioactive waste dump.
- Dansville Lumber & Hardware on West Avenue becomes Rogers & Tenbrook.
- Dansville’s 50-foot-high “salt dome” is built.

10 YEARS AGO - 2005:

- Four companies announce that they will move into the old Foster Wheeler complex.
- A Dunkin’ Donuts opens in the Airport Plaza.
- The singing group *Band of Brothers* releases its first CD, *Almost There*.

DAHS Three-Year Strategic Plan Finalized

This past year, the Dansville Area Historical Society, consultant Christopher S. Clarke, and interested community members met in a series of meetings to forge a strategic plan for the Dansville Historical Museum.

The resulting plan comprises a set of priorities and action steps to be implemented over the next three years. Items include collaborating with local schools and with area community events, developing an exhibit plan for the Museum, securing proper storage and display casework for Museum archives and artifacts, recruiting citizens to serve on ad hoc committees to expand DAHS resources, promoting the Museum's offerings through articles and

advertising in area media, and identifying and developing DAHS volunteer skills.

We are indebted to those who served on the Planning Committee: *Paul Constantine, Teresa Dearing, Susan DeMuth, David Gilbert, Janet Gunn, Nancy Helfrich, Mary Jo Marks, Jeff Miller, Betty Minemier, Chad Schuster, Peter Vogt.*

Funds for Dr. Clarke's consulting services were made possible by a "Get Set" grant from the New York State Council on the Arts and administered by the Museum Association of New York. If you would like a copy of the Strategic Plan Report, email us at dahs@stny.rr.com.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Named to National Register for Historic Places

Last September, St. Paul's Lutheran Church and the Dansville Area Historical Society co-sponsored a celebration at the church to commemorate the church's inclusion on the National Register for Historic Places. Designation was based on St. Paul's German heritage in the early history of Dansville and also on the significant factor that Clara Barton and Dansville citizens founded the first local chapter of the American Red Cross in the church on August 22, 1881.

Presenters for the program included Cynthia Howk, Architectural Research Coordinator of the Landmark Society of Western New York; Barry Haywood, Board Chair of the Clara Barton/Livingston Chapter, American Red Cross; the Rev. Virginia Mazzarella, Pastor of St. Paul's; and Gerri Waight, President of the Dansville Area

Historical Society. Dr. Virginia Bartos from the State Historical Office of Preservation spoke about the Christ stained glass window in the sanctuary and whether John LaFarge (a contemporary of Louis Comfort Tiffany) is its possible creator. Parishioner Ken Mountzouros and Valerie O'Hara, President and designer of Pike Glass Studios, also spoke about the Christ window, its gift to the congregation in 1883 by Reuben Whiteman, and its recent restoration.

Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archaeological resources.



Inscription outside St. Paul's Lutheran Church reads: In this church was organized first local Red Cross Society in the United States by Clara Barton, August 22, 1881. Photo Credit: Kelly Lucero – NYHistoric.com

Challenge Grant 2014

DAHS is truly a community organization. We are reminded of that by events of the past few months.

In September, at the conclusion of St. Paul's Lutheran Church celebration of being named to the National Register of Historic Places, Dansville native *David Smith* issued a challenge to DAHS, the Lutheran Church congregation, and the Dansville Chapter No. 1 of the American Red Cross Chapter. Dave offered to match dollar for dollar (up to \$1,000 for each organization) monies raised by members by December 1, 2014.

We put the word out in a letter to our members, and by December 1, \$2,845.00 was raised! Dave's matching funds plus a bit more (thank you, Dave) brought our total to \$4,045.00.

These funds will be used for upgrades we have needed for a long time: computer equipment to catalog and photograph our collection online, secure and safe storage and display of our fragile and high-value artifacts and archives, expanded programs, and an area of the Museum for special exhibits.

We understand from Dave that St. Paul's and the Red Cross also "Met the Challenge."

Thanks to DAHS members who supported our Challenge Grant 2014: *Harold Bauer, Jon Shay, Gerrard Maltby, Dennis Gould, Richard Bondi, James Blum, John Vogel, Stewart Anderson, Linda Johnson, Thomas Knapp, Rev. Walter Connor, James Vogt, William Shearing, William Beierschmitt, Tompkins Insurance, C. Keith Mitchell, Fred Wyant, Paul and Annie Constantine, Gerri Waight, Jamieson Steele, Edward Perry, Nancy and Jim Helfrich, Betty and Robert Minemier, Dorothy and Bud Lang, Richard and Pat Bondi, Carl and JoAnn Hindle, Maureen and George Finn, Sarah Wagner, Norman Henrich, Crystal Eades, Marlene Kouwe, Marilyn and Henry Robin, Patricia Grant, Sherrie Reilly, Bernard Morgan, Tom and Joan Wamp, Constance Kane, Mary Kay Morsch, Frederick and Kathleen Goodell, Livonia Auto Supply, Inc., Julia and Mark Miller, Paul and Ann Black, Nancy Wetterau, Tom and Dee Clark, Elizabeth Black, Gary Reilly, Dave and Toby Emo, James Snyder, Rogers and Tenbrook, Lattimore of Geneseo PT, Leo Marks, Al and Jan Hawk, Salome and Tony Farraro, Guy and Anita Bennett, Norma Miner Evans, Hindle Funeral Home.*

Remembering Smith's Market

Dave Smith sent the following email when we excitedly told him that DAHS had raised over \$1,000:

"First and foremost, thanks to the DAHS leadership. Secondly, be sure to let the contributors know how grateful and proud we all are for their support of the Dansville community.

Please mention my father, "LG" and my brother, Doug, who were proprietors of "Smith's Market" on Main St. for some 30+ years. They were both active in community affairs.

I remember many advertisements from the store, mostly in the Penny Saver. Doc Conway also wrote of good times at Smith's Market in his newspaper column.

One Christmas dad raffled off a beautiful pony for customers of the store. The pony was right there for customers to see... kept it in a building behind the store. Lucky Strike cigarettes have the letters, LSMFT (Lucky Strike means fine tobacco) on the package. Dad took the letters and advertised in the Penny Saver: "Leonard Smith Means Fine Turkeys." They were fresh dressed right at the store. I would have to make dozens of turkey tags to tie to the drumstick giving the weight and etc. of the bird. Ted Scott delivered eggs weekly and I boxed them.

Dad had a way of making homemade sausage that he got from his father (had a meat market on West Genesee St. in Hornell) and sold 50 - 100 lbs. weekly. Anthony Termotto

would provide wonderfully fresh produce for customers to buy. Eddie Mack and Norm Sutfin were great men who helped my father and brother almost from the first day. Dad came to Dansville to open a new Market Basket, and Mom convinced him to stay. They had opened three other Market Baskets, and Mom was not wanting to move again as she was pregnant with my sister, Carol Anne. So, Dad talked with Elmer Basset of the Red and White, and they formed a partnership which was located where Tom Wamp has his real estate business. Elmer and Mable became terrific friends, and my mother just loved them both. Mom was so worried when Mable got one of the first pacemakers here in Rochester. I believe that was at least 50 - 60 years ago. Enough already!!!

For certain,... my love of history was greatly fostered by the following teachers (will folks remember them?): 3rd grade/ Elma Kearley, 4th grade/ Minerva Cowdrick, 5th grade/ Elma Kearley, 6th grade/ Margaret Holden, Jr. High / Doris Delong, Sr. High / Mr. James Yost (who is still alive and living on Babcock Dr. in Brighton). They were great teachers, and I was blessed to become their friends over the years.

THANKS, THANKS, THANKS. - DAVE

Continued on next page

Editor's Note: Dave most assuredly isn't the only Dansvillian to fondly remember Smith's Market. I remember that our family dog hung out at the rear door most mornings and never went away without a bone or piece of meat. We'd love to hear your Smith's Market memories. Email them to dahs@stny.rr.com.

Below is a reprint of Jim (Doc) Conway's *Bystander* column from the *Genesee Country Express* of March 25, 1982:

The sign looks about the same — but it's different. It changed a few weeks ago when Smith came down and Wood went up. We refer of course to Wood's Market which since New Year's Day in 1949 had been Smith's Market, a mainstay in our Main St. business section. On that first day of the year 33 years ago, Doug Smith and his father, Leonard, made the move from up the street in the Red and White store where they had operated the meat market and Elmer Bassett had held forth in the grocery department. Doug carried on following his father's death. Doug's decision to leave the store was hurried along by some hand problems — not compatible to the cold of the freezer and cutting meat. It had to be a difficult time for him, and his wife Sylvia. You just don't walk away from your second home without having second thoughts. The new owner is William Wood, formerly of Wayland. We welcome and wish him well. We always felt close to Smith's Market operation. In teenage days it was our good fortune to work for Leonard and with Doug, a butcher's apprentice if you will. There never was a dull moment when "L.G." was around. He expected an hour's work for an hour's pay but the educational benefits were many as have been described here previously. And besides, cleaning chickens and cutting blocks, making deliveries and carrying out scores of other assignments was an honorable occupation for a young man thrust into the business community at an early age. Doug had been at the Main St. stand since the 1949 opening except for a four-year tour of duty in the Navy during the Korean thing when we all went away to work for Uncle Sam. Nothing lasts forever,

much as we wish it could. The name Smith and market had been synonymous since "L.G." came here in the early 30's. The name has disappeared from the market sign but the memories will linger for years to come. We also wish Doug and Sylvia well in any new ventures. Still, it's a little sad when an era ends. Like they used to say in the movie newsreel — time marches on.



From *Genesee Country Express*, December 23, 1968

We Are Also Grateful

To *Jane Schryver* for a designated gift of \$1,000.

Jane's gift will be used to secure window film or shades to protect display items, a dehumidifier hookup for the basement, and a display case for the Kate Jackson dress currently on display in the "Castle on the Hill" room. These are all items we have had on our bucket list, and now they will be taken care of. We are deeply appreciative. Thank you, Jane.

Dansville Area Historical Society Mission Statement

The Dansville Area Historical Society is an educational institution whose purpose is to research, collect, exhibit, promote, and protect artifacts and archives that represent the Dansville area and its role in local, state, national, and international history.



OBJECT LESSONS

from the Dansville Historical Museum

by David Gilbert, Curator

DAHS Curator David Gilbert has undertaken an interesting project: to narrate Dansville's history via the description and interpretation of 100 objects housed in our museum.

OBJECT #22: Graham Cracker from Our Home On The Hillside (1868)

Every so often, I like to get online and type the words "world's oldest graham cracker" into my search engine and see what materializes. Mostly, what I get are recipes for pies. What I haven't gotten is anyone claiming to actually possess the world's oldest graham cracker. So maybe, just maybe, the object that sits in a locked cabinet in our museum -- a brown, ovoid lump that, admittedly, more resembles the end product of the digestive process -- is, in fact, the unofficial titleholder.

It was baked in 1868; this we know from the little tag that was helpfully tied through a hole drilled in the cracker. The tag reads, "Graham cracker bought from 'Our Home,' Dansville, N. Y. October 1868 by T. K. D. Good solid bread." "T. K. D." turns out to be Rev. Thomas K. Doty, who was a patient at Our Home On The Hillside in 1867-68. As a man of the cloth, he likely received a discount on his stay at the water cure, as was the policy at the time. As confirmation, the museum also has a glass slide photograph of the chunky cracker, taken in 1908...by which time, no doubt, the forty-year-old biscuit had already arrived at a state of petrification. ("Good solid bread," indeed.) The photo was part of a slide show presented during the "Founder's Day" celebration, commemorating the 50th anniversary of James Caleb Jackson's arrival in Dansville on October 1, 1858.

Dr. Jackson, a former abolitionist, was a practitioner of hydropathy, a.k.a. "the water cure," the belief in the curative and therapeutic value of clean, fresh water. (Today, we call it "hydrotherapy," and take its usefulness as gospel, but in Jackson's day, the idea was still novel.) Developed in Europe in the 1820s, the craze reached America in the 1840s, and by mid-century there were some 200 water cures in the U. S., mostly in the northeast. The majority of them were gone by the end of the Civil War, and only a handful survived all the way into the 20th century (like the one in Clifton Springs in Ontario County). The Dansville Model Water Cure seemed destined to be one of the early casualties; when Jackson arrived, it was still less than five years old, but the building had already gone to seed. Unlike his predecessors, though, James Caleb Jackson knew what he was doing.

He'd taken up the cause of hydropathy almost by necessity. Chronically poor health had forced him to give up his earlier career as an abolitionist lecturer and publisher, and nobody expected him to make it out of his mid-thirties. As it turned out, though, the cold,

icy finger of death was no match for the cold, icy water of Greenwood Spring, a water cure facility in Cuba, New York, where Jackson turned as a last resort. The gamble paid off: although it was touch and go for a while, Jackson's health improved, and hydropathy gained one of its most fervid converts. Jackson, clearly not one to do things halfway, opened his own water cure over in Cortland County, christened Glen Haven, in 1847, and would subsequently earn a medical degree so he could practice there. With the insights into publicity and promotion that he'd learned as a newspaper publisher, he was able to turn Glen Haven into a smashing success.

But then fire, that great spoiler of plans, struck. In September 1854, the main building of the Glen Haven complex burned to the ground while Dr. Jackson was away at an abolitionists' meeting. On top of that, their insurance company had just gone bankrupt, owing to two other major fires (one in Troy, NY, the other in Milwaukee) that had occurred just days before. So, rebuilding was out of the question. They saved some money by buying a nearby hotel and moving the business there, and for a while things were back on the upswing. Eventually, though, disagreements with his business partner convinced Dr. Jackson that it was time to make a fresh start. And, since he still couldn't afford to build a new facility from the ground up, the search began for an already existing facility that he could take over -- and that, of course, was where Dansville entered the picture.

Buying the former Dansville Model Water Cure for the bargain-basement price of \$750, the Jacksons launched Our Home On The Hillside in October 1858. In surprisingly short order, they had taken the vermin-infested building,



with its leaky roof and its broken windows and its rear half-buried in mudslides from East Hill, and turned it into a thriving success; by the following spring they had some 250 patients. They brought with them all the hydropathic bells and whistles: plunging tubs, high-backed sitz baths, wet sheet wrappings, wet caps, and so forth. Later would come the infamous “Moliere thermo-electric baths,” the coffin-like steam cabinets with a hole on top for the patient’s head. (Harkening back to old medical prejudices, they still didn’t believe that breathing in steamy air was good for you.)

Dr. Jackson also brought with him the “Laws of Life,” his comprehensive philosophy of good health that he co-created with his employee/colleague/adopted daughter, Dr. Harriet Austin. Diet played a large role, and in this they largely followed the tenets of that famed pioneer of nutrition, the Presbyterian minister and temperance leader Sylvester Graham (1795-1851). Prior to Graham, it was generally held that it didn’t matter what you ate, as long as you filled your belly. Graham begged to differ. A vegetarian, he advocated for a diet rich in fruits and vegetables and cooked cereals, and proselytized against tobacco, alcohol, and caffeinated beverages like tea and coffee. (Somewhat more oddly, he was also anti-condiment, claiming that overindulgence in ketchup and mustard led to insanity.) But Graham’s most enduring legacy was his campaign against refined white flour, which shortened baking times but was far less nutritious. He recommended that people do their own baking at home, using whole-grain wheat flour, which would subsequently be known as “Graham flour.”

As you might expect, this did not win him many friends among professional bakers, and on at least one occasion he was threatened with physical harm by an angry mob of bread-makers.

He invented the graham cracker in 1829, thirty-nine years before the one in our museum was baked. It was a very basic flour-and-water recipe, a far cry from the sugar-laden treats we call graham crackers today. If he were around today, Graham would probably disown his own namesake food, and God only knows what he’d have to say about Golden Grahams breakfast cereal. (Not to mention s’mores.) Our modern spoiled palates would probably be very unimpressed by the graham crackers served at Our Home On The Hillside. But if you absolutely have to judge for yourself, here’s the recipe, published by the Jackson health resort in 1909:

Graham Crackers

To 1 teacup of very cold water add enough of Readshaw’s Forest Mills Graham Flour No. 1 to make stiff flour dough. Roll to a sheet ½ an inch thick and cut with biscuit cutter.

Bake in hot oven 30 minutes.

Of course, you’ll have to substitute some other brand of flour, and you’ll have to experiment with oven temperatures. Otherwise, good luck, and bon appetit.

Opportunity to Give and Volunteer Dansville Area Historical Society

Our 2015 membership drive has started. If you have already sent in a membership, thank you. If you are a Life Member, no additional dues are required. Gift memberships and additional donations are always gratefully received.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Also give address and time period for any different summer/winter address.

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- General** \$15.00 **Silver Level** \$25.00
 Business \$25.00 **Gold Level** \$50.00
 Platinum Level...\$100.00

I am already a DAHS Member & would like to make an additional donation \$ _____

This is a Gift Membership from: _____

I am interested in volunteering.

Call me about opportunities to help DAHS:

- Staffing Museum on Saturdays
- Staffing DAHS booth at shows
- Group cleanup day at Museum
- Photographing/Cataloging Artifacts
- Data Entry
- Becoming a Committee Member

Your tax-deductible checks may be made payable to DAHS. Mail to:
Dansville Area Historical Society
 P.O. Box 481
 Dansville, New York 14437

**DANSVILLE AREA
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

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Non-Profit Org.
US POSTAGE

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Permit #298
Rochester, NY



**Antique Woodworking
Thursday, April 2, 2015**

6:30 p.m.

North Dansville Town Hall
14 Clara Barton Street, Dansville
Presented by **David Palmer**

*Admission is free and open to the public.
Handicap accessible.*

**DAHS
Website Update**

dansvilleareahistoricalociety.wordpress.com

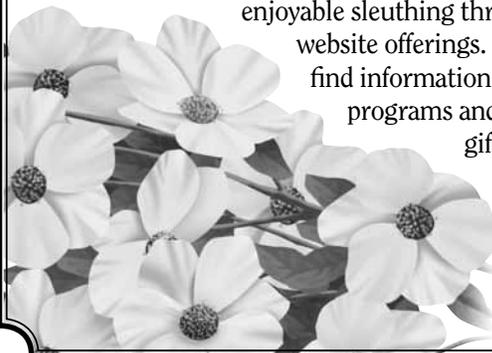
If you haven't visited the website lately, you're missing some interesting viewing. Webmaster Chad Schuster often has an eclectic posting up his sleeve. Prohibition! Hurricanes! And did you know that Ralph Waldo

Emerson visited Dansville? Don't miss out on some enjoyable sleuthing through the

website offerings. You can also find information on the latest programs and events, order

gifts and books,

and enjoy a slideshow of rooms in the Museum.



WANTED:

Our Museum collection is lacking a 1992 Danua. If anyone has one to donate, we would be grateful. Also, the Village of Dansville Historian needs Danuas from the 1980s. Please email us at dahs@stny.rr.com if you can help. Thank you!