



Historical Happenings

Dansville Area Historical Society
“Caretakers of Our Area History”



Volume 20, No. 1

February 2012

President's Report

We always talk about the weather here in New York State. This winter has been a great one – November, December, and January all having days near or in the 50s. January and now February have seen our first amounts of real SNOW. As the weather changes, so does the cost of heating our Museum. We have completed the new storm windows and insulated the floor in the attic. All of us will be paying a lot more to keep warm this winter.

Membership renewals have been coming in with over 50% of our 2011 members renewing so far. Enclosed in this newsletter is an envelope you can use to send us your renewal if you haven't already. We will be having a telephone membership drive to remind members how much they are needed to keep your Museum going. Please also consider becoming a Life Member of the DAHS.

We currently have two vacancies on the DAHS Board of Directors. Sheila VanAuken and Kat Sullivan both stepped down at the end of 2011. Sheila is known to many as a tireless, loyal, and valuable member of our organization, and many of our accomplishments were due to her insightful help. Kat was our newsletter editor and the reason you have enjoyed so many articles over the years.

Our November Annual Dinner and December Christmas concert were very well received. We cannot do either without the assistance of the Board and DAHS members who come forth each year to help. Thank you!

We have taken on several improvements to be done in 2012. We are bringing our computer up to date with new items in the Museum, painting interior walls, and moving historical items for our guests to see. This is a big undertaking. If you are willing to help, please advise one of the Board members.

I would like to honor Mary Hammond, our past recording secretary. Mary served for 25 years. She passed away in December 2011.

We look forward to another productive year at your Historical Society. Please stop in and visit during one of our open houses – the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month. You can also call if you need something special. Keep warm. Spring will be here soon!

Jim

Jim Snyder, President

Acquisitions: October 16, 2011 - January 15, 2012

- International coin collection; 77 pieces from 11 countries
 - F.H. Waltman Ford invoice selling new 1935 Ford to William D. Conklin for \$660
 - Dansville Presbyterian Church 1989 directory
 - F.A. Owen News – 6 issues, 1959-1961
 - *History of the D&M Railroad* by William D. Conklin (1964)
 - *History of Dansville Plant of Foster Wheeler* by Norman Freeman (1977)
 - William D. Conklin's High School Diploma from East High School in Rochester, June 1908
 - Letter listing factual errors and corrections in "Angel of the Battlefield" book about Clara Barton
 - Packet of newspaper clippings related to Mark Twain
 - Books: *Speeches and Letters of Abraham Lincoln 1832-1865* (1907); *An Officer's Notes*, 3rd Edition (1917); *Far From the Madding Crowd* by Thomas Hardy (1912); *Selected Writings of Joseph O'Connor The Rochesterian*, Volumes One and Two (1911); *Typography and Design*, U.S Government Printing Office, presented to William D. Conklin
- Maureen Downey Finn, Marysville, Ohio**
- 24x30 framed portrait of Amariah Hammond from early 1800s, painted on wood
- Catherine King, Wakefield, Rhode Island**
- Items related to Bernarr MacFadden:
 - "Dietetic Creed"
 - "Culinary Creed"
 - "The Most Unforgettable Character" article from *Man's Sex Life* (1948)
 - "Cause and Prevention of High Blood Pressure" (1945)
- Donna Dwyer, Dansville**
- *Dansville 1789-1902* by A.O. Bunnell (Instructor Publishing Co., Dansville, green cover)
 - *Acorn to Oak – The Story of the Dansville Public Library* by William D. Conklin (1969)
 - "The Legacy of New York Women 1848-1998" booklet by Gov. Pataki's Commission Honoring The Achievements of Women
- Anonymous Donor**
- Receipt from the Dansville Herald
 - Program for Bernarr MacFadden's 77th birthday
 - Genealogical record of descendants of John McNair and Christiana Walker, 1880
- Holley Spencer, Canaseraga, NY**
- Miniature scissors (2 inches overall) used by seamstresses in Japan; brought back by brother Jim Morgan after World War II.
- Bernard Morgan, Dansville**



1964

What Is It? (continued from back cover)



B) Washtub Agitator

Made of tin-plated sheet iron, this artifact has a raised, brass-lettered oval labeled, "The Perfect Clothes Washer, Patented Oct. 13, 1885. An extraordinary example of tin craftsmanship, this was one of the first attempts at creating a washing machine. The two-handed plunger style washing tool forces the water up through the hole in the center when you plunge down

into the wash water. Ours is missing the "hood" over the hole which protected the user from getting squirted with water. (Donated to the DAHS Museum by Raymond L. Fedder.)

Programs

Your Dansville area Historical Society conducted its annual dinner meeting in November with the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War as the theme for the program. Amie Alden, Livingston County Historian, gave a slide presentation on the county's Civil War monuments. She reported that the decades following the Civil War were the greatest era in monument building across America. In Livingston County, eight monuments commemorating the sacrifice of local Civil

War veterans were erected between 1877 and 1915.

In December, the St. Peter's Episcopal Church was the setting for the Early American Christmas Concert. The program featured Tom Folan and a vocal quartet, along with guitarist Peter Kodas and Dansville favorite Mitzie Collins playing the hammered dulcimer. The music in the Christmas Concert highlighted some of the diverse types of vocal and instrumental music that has been a part of the musical experience of Americans over the past three centuries. The types and styles of music that

were performed ranged from a cappella or unaccompanied vocal pieces written for choral groups to solo music composed for the guitar and the dulcimer.

Plans are being made for the upcoming programs for 2012. We plan to have a program in the spring, in October for our annual dinner, and the Christmas Concert in December. If you have any suggestions for a program, please call me at 335-2727.

Bettie

Bettie Whitenack, Program Chair

The Dansville Area Historical Society

Officers and Directors, 2012

Officers

Jim Snyder, *President*

24 N. Elizabeth St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-8909

Paul Constantine, *Vice President*

5 W. Liberty St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-2316

Mary Harris, *Recording Secretary*

P.O. Box 161, Dansville, NY 14437
335-3949

Mary Jo Jacobs, *Corresponding Secretary*

9704 Highland Ave., Dansville, NY 14437
335-8883

John C. (Jack) Jacobs, *Treasurer and Membership*

9704 Highland Ave., Dansville, NY 14437
335-8883

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Al Hawk

52 Lincoln Ave., Dansville, NY 14437
335-5939

Marie Roberts, *Fundraising*

99 Main St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-5124

Nancy Helfrich, *Newsletter Editor*

5 Morey Ave., Dansville, NY 14437
335-5743

Richard Mark

7 Livingston Blvd., Dansville, NY 14437
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Jeff Miller

19 Chestnut St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-9187

Directors, Term Expires 12/31/2013

Ed Perry

19 Main St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-5708

David Gilbert, *Curator*

50 Jefferson St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-2568

Alice Burdick

P.O. Box 216, Dansville, NY 14437
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Bettie Whitenack, *Programs*

50 Clara Barton St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-2727

Directors, Term Expires 12/31/2014

Fred Calnan

6 Circle Rd., Dansville, NY 14437
335-8487

Chad Schuster

8825 Schuster Rd., Dansville, NY 14437
335-5812

Richard Whitenack, *House and Grounds*

50 Clara Barton St., Dansville, NY 14437
335-2727

Fund Raising Report

With winter finally here, remember we have warm blanket/throws in red, navy, and dark green for \$40 each. They are 100% cotton and launder beautifully. They were our first fund raising project in 1985 and are a favorite for graduation and wedding gifts.

We will be producing a new collectible in the next few months, and I am still open to suggestions. Also, the Dansville Public Library Board is ordering more of the Shepard Library collectibles. The library has a beautiful new addition but will keep only the Shepard building on the block, because of history, and just change the wording on the back to include news of the addition.

For everyone and anyone who has ever been interested in, or curious about our "Castle on the Hill," the grand structure on East Hill, you can purchase Ted Jackson's book, *The Castles on the Hill*, in softcover (\$29.99) or in hardcover (\$39.99).

Marie,

Marie Roberts, Fund Raising Chair

Dansville's Connections to Pioneers in Medicine

This month, Paul Hoffman of Dansville is experiencing a "once in a lifetime" milestone as he climbs Mt. Kilimarnjaro in Tanzania, Africa. Here, in his words, is the interesting background to this journey:

"Why would I want to climb Mt.

Kilimanjaro and [pledge contributions] to the American Cancer Society to help find a cure for cancer? Part of the answer is the feeling that I've been surrounded by cancer all my life.



Paul Hoffman

"My father, Dr.

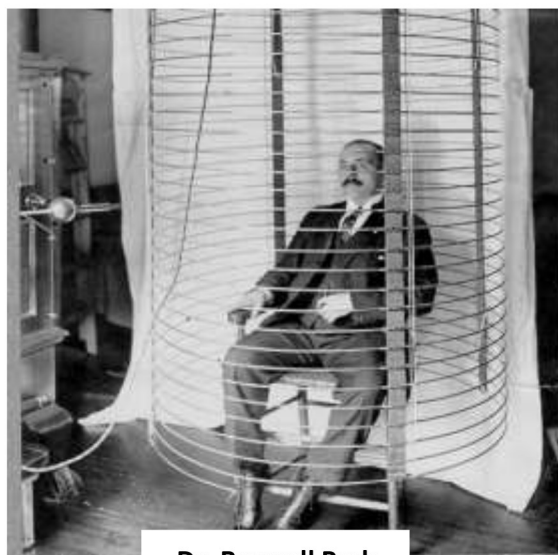
Joseph G. Hoffman spent a great deal of his life searching for the cause of cancer. I remember as a youngster going with him on weekends to his lab at Roswell Park Institute so he could check his ongoing cell experiments and being allowed to look through one of the very first electron microscopes.

"After his work on the Manhattan Project, he dedicated his life looking for a cause and a cure for cancer and was one of the first in the world to study the effects of atomic radiation on humans. For years, our home was crammed from basement to attic with live cell research, which had to be continually monitored.

"Life has an interesting way of coming about in a circle. The famous Roswell Park Cancer Institute (which was the first facility in the world dedicated to cancer research) in Buffalo, NY was started by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898. [My life partner Jane Schreyver]] and I live in Dansville, NY. Prior

to the Roswell Park Cancer Institute being founded in Buffalo, Dr. Park did some of his earliest cancer research and patient treatment in Dansville."

Hoffman is not sure exactly why or when Roswell Park first came to Dansville, but we know that, in 1908, Dansville's Dr. Frederick R. Driesbach rededicated the former Dansville Medical & Surgical Hospital (the current King's Daughters facility) as a cancer research hospital with the support of Dr. Park. Below is a photo of Roswell Park demonstrating a radiation modality treatment. Although this hospital failed after only a year, and



Dr. Roswell Park

Park returned to his already established Institute in Buffalo, Dr. Driesbach did persevere -- his next hospital project became the Dansville General Hospital which we know today as Noyes Memorial Hospital.

For more on Hoffman's climb to the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro, visit <http://main.acsevents.org/goto/PaulHoffman> and <http://www.packpaddleski.com/>.

Anniversaries Dansville Will Celebrate in 2012

200 years ago (1812):

- Dr. James Faulkner, 22, nephew of Capt. Dan Faulkner, begins practice in Dansville. Dr. Faulkner would go on to become a major local business and political leader.

150 years ago (1862):

- The building currently occupying the northwest corner of Main and Ossian Streets is built by Dr. James Faulkner (see above) for the First National Bank of Dansville.
- Dansville suffers its first Civil War casualties, especially at the Second Battle of Bull Run

100 years ago (1912):

- Clara Barton dies at her home in Glen Echo, Maryland, at the age of 90.
- Dansville native Job E. Hedges receives the Republican nomination for Governor of New York; he loses to William Sulzer in the November elections.
- Kelly Brothers Nurseries issues its first retail catalog.

75 years ago (1937):

- Seventeen-year-old Gloria Allen becomes the first “Flying Allen” to perish during a performance, as her parachute fails during a balloon show in Virginia.
- Three new gasoline stations (representing Atlantic, Shell, and Socony Mobil) open in Dansville.
- The Rochester Telephone Company builds their new switchboard facility on the corner of Perine and Elizabeth Streets.

50 years ago (1962):

- The high school athletic field is dedicated to former principal Ralph W. Clements.
- The Lackawanna railroad station on East Hill, in operation since 1882, sees its last train stop there.
- The Brae Burn Recreation Center, featuring a 20-lane bowling alley and a banquet hall, is opened.

25 years ago (1987):

- The old Nathaniel Rochester house is relocated to the Genesee Country Village and Museum.
- Wolfanger’s Shoe Store, the Bella Vista Café, and Byrne’s Dairy open for business.
- Margaret Hondelink becomes the first female member of the local Rotary Club, after the Supreme Court rules that National Rotary Clubs must admit women.

10 years ago (2002):

- The new American Rock Salt mine, at Hampton Corners in Groveland, opens.
- The old Readshaw Mill building on Ossian Street is torn down.
- The Dansville Ames department store closes.



Compliments of
BOYD'S SHOE STORE
Weather Bird Velvet Step
Vitality and City Club Shoes

The Dansville Hall of Fame

(Part 9 of 10)

By David Gilbert, DAHS Curator

Nicholas H. Noyes (1883-1977)

Inducted 1995

Sometime around the year 1900, a pair of teenage brothers was spotted in a sheep's pasture on the outskirts of Dansville, trying to knock little balls into flowerpots with sticks...a game they picked up in college, but which was still largely unfamiliar to most ordinary folks. Within months, the local papers had taken note of the growing popularity of the game, and the owners of the Jackson Sanatorium, who saw the value to their patients of this not-overly-taxing outdoor activity, rushed in to take over what would soon be given the name "Brae Burn."



Nicholas H. Noyes

The boys were the Noyes brothers, Jansen and Nicholas, and no one could have imagined that, three-quarters of a century later, one of the lads who had introduced golf to Dansville would see his name on a million-dollar hospital, just a wedge shot away from the sheep's pasture in question.

The Noyes' family had been one of Dansville's most elite families practically from the day that Daniel W. Noyes (Nicholas' grandfather) arrived in town in 1849 to launch his law practice. Nicholas, born in Dansville in 1883, graduated from Cornell in 1906, married Marguerite Lilly in 1908, and joined the Eli Lilly pharmaceutical company in 1910, headquartered in Indianapolis, where he and his wife would live for most of their lives. He quickly rose in the company's ranks, becoming vice-president and director in 1913.

In addition to Eli Lilly, Noyes would become president of the Paper Package Company (1919-1947) and director of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago (1933-1951). Noyes would become one of the wealthiest people ever to have been born in Dansville; in his later years, he would be enormously generous with his money. Both his own Alma mater, Cornell, and that of his wife, Vassar, would receive generous contributions. A residence hall on the Vassar campus would be named after Nicholas' mother, Emma Hartman Noyes.

Nor was his hometown overlooked. He contributed generously to the Dansville Public Library, giving a memorial fund named after his father, Frederick W. Noyes. (Frederick was one of the key figures in the library's early history.) In 1949, he and his siblings donated the old family residence on Elizabeth Street to the Dansville Red Cross as a headquarters, in memory of their mother Emma Hartman.

But Noyes' most noteworthy contribution came in 1970 as Dansville was attempting to raise money for a new hospital building to

replace the woefully overcrowded hospital on Main Street. He and Foster Wheeler both contributed \$100,000 to the project. That that date, they were the largest charitable contributions in Dansville history. His reaction on learning that the hospital would be named after him was (in a letter to attorney Helen Pratt): “I appreciate very greatly the thought of naming the hospital with my name, although I would much prefer that it not be identified just that way.”

Nicholas Noyes died in 1977 at the age of 94. And he never lost his love of golf.

William D. Conklin (1890-1987) Inducted 1987

In his writings on local history, William Conklin was typically self-effacing; he always referred to himself as a “compiler” instead of an author, and in his most significant publication, he refused to give himself any credit at all. But students of the history of Dansville know better: few, if any, did as much to preserve Dansville’s rich historical heritage and make that history accessible to future researchers as did William D. Conklin.



William D. Conklin

Born in Rochester, Conklin attended the University of Rochester, graduating in 1912, then transferred to Columbia University, graduating from its School of Journalism in 1913. For the next three years he worked as office editor for the *New International Encyclopedia*. After serving in World War I, he came to Dansville in 1919 to work on the editorial staff of the F.A. Owen Publishing Company where he would be employed for more than four decades. He was an active community leader serving on the library board, the Dansville Board of Trade, the Dansville Memorial Hospital, the Dansville Red Cross, and the Community Chest. For his many contributions to local causes, the Chamber of Commerce voted him “Citizen of the Year” in 1967.

Following his retirement in 1960, Conklin set to work in earnest on his major project: the preservation of local history. And although it’s true that his writings held little in the way of narrative drive, as a “mere” compiler, he gathered together information from numerous sources – particularly letters and newspaper articles – and provided his readers with a wealth of information on various subjects of local interest. His most significant work, and the only one to have been professionally printed, was the anonymously published *Clara Barton in Dansville* (1966), a treasure trove of archival information on Dansville’s most famous resident and on the creation of the nation’s first local Red Cross chapter.

But Conklin was just warming up. Over the next several years, he would release a series of other collections of local history: *Acorn to Oak – The Story of the Dansville Public Library* (1969), *The Jackson Health Resort* (1971), *F.A. Owen of Dansville* (1972), and finally, *The Dansville Board of Trade* (1983), the last one written in his nineties. He moved to Poughkeepsie in 1983 where he lived until his death at age 97.

QUENTIN J. MASOLOTTE 1928 - 2012



Photo reprinted from Genesee Country Express

It is with sadness that we mark the passing of Quentin J. Masolotte on January 15, 2012. Quent was Dansville's Town Historian for 25 years. He graciously accepted that role when he retired as a history teacher at the Dansville High School in 1987. Quent was a good friend and a wonderful teacher. He will be missed by all of us.

2012 Membership Form

Membership: Individual / Family \$15.00 ____ Business / Organizations \$25.00 ____
Gift Membership ____ Life \$150.00 ____

I am interested in assisting with: House and grounds ____ Saturday Open Houses ____
Newsletter ____ Program Committee ____ Youth Tours ____ Exhibit Arrangement ____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

(Treasurer's Use: Date: _____ Cash: _____ Check # _____)

Send to: DAHS, P.O. Box 481, Dansville, NY 14437

Dansville Area Historical Society

Box 481
Dansville, NY 14437
Phone: 585-335-8090

Return Service Requested

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Paul Constantine -- Vice President
Mary Harris -- Recording Secretary
Mary Jo Jacobs -- Corresponding
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Richard Mark
Jeff Miller
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Alice Burdick
Bettie Whitenack

DAHS Museum

14 Church St., Dansville

Open 10 to 2 p.m.

1st & 3rd Saturdays

Visitors Welcome!

What is It?



- A) An 1880s dock cleat, used to handle tow lines.
- B) Washtub agitator.
- C) Mold for a double centerpiece candle
- D) Boiler fitting from Foster Wheeler Plant

See page 3 to learn more about this artifact