



# Historical Happenings



Dansville Area Historical Society  
“Caretakers of Our Area History”

Volume 20, No. 2

Spring 2012

## President’s Report

Our weather has been something to talk about. March brought days close to 80 degrees, and then we had snow the end of April! Even now, when we should be well into short sleeve and sandals weather, the days are colder than normal. Our Board of Directors is working hard to improve our museum. Our landscaping looks wonderful and everything that should have bloomed did bloom – right on schedule! Dick Whitenack deserves much credit for caring for our landscaping.

Inside the museum we are in the process of painting an upstairs area and bringing our displays up to date with new items that have been donated. Please keep items from Dansville’s past coming for our displays.

We had a booth at Dansville’s Village Church Park during the Dogwood Festival, and wasn’t it wonderful that the week was warm and sunny! We introduced our newest collectible – the Dansville & Mount Morris Railroad. Sales did well, and our treasurer Jack Jacobs says we are in good shape for the maintenance chores ahead of us. Jack is also membership chair and has a list of our recent life members later in this issue.

Membership is very important to us, as for both income and members to keep the history of Dansville alive. Our renewals and new members are coming in very slowly. If you have forgotten to mail your membership, please send it in today. We need your help to recruit new interested families in our area. Please talk to your friends and relatives about joining DAHS.

Bettie Whitenack, our program chair, has organized our Annual Dinner and Meeting which will be held this year in October, not November as usual. After discussion, the board agreed on an earlier date to avoid the many activities that begin close to Thanksgiving. October 13<sup>th</sup> is the date to put on your calendar. Bettie has scheduled Les Buell who will give a presentation on Civil War Medicine.

New things are happening for your Historical Society. We have received a grant which will help us begin putting together a strategic plan for our museum. This is a very important and vital step for all of us who care about Dansville’s museum. An article in this issue talks about the grant. Please consider joining the planning process if you would like to become invested at this stage. Also, you can volunteer at any time for many other activities: helping at our booth at the Festival of Balloons on September 1 and helping at the open houses we hold at the museum. Right now, we are open the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of the month, but we could open more often with more volunteer help. Call me at 335-8909 if you can volunteer.

Another new thing is the Dansville Area Historical Society website. Chad Schuster is our webmaster and is doing an incredible job. Look online at his work and read about the website later in this issue.

We also welcome Sharon Harris as a new board member to fill Kat Sullivan’s unexpired term. She will be a great help in all our new endeavors.

*Jim*

Jim Snyder, President

# Acquisitions: January 16 – April 15, 2012

Al Hawk, Acquisitions

- Hyland House dinner menu for Christmas 1907
- Picture of Lucretia Jackson, wife of Dr. James Caleb Jackson
- Picture of Dr. James H. Jackson and his wife, Dr. Kate J.  
**From Sally Brooks, Wayland, via Tom Morsch, Rochester**
- From the Estate of Ed Losey:
  - Ed's Dansville High School Diploma, 1930
  - White Sabres Drum and Bugle Corps Hall of Fame Certificate and picture honoring Ed for his 67 years of service from 1928 (an original member) through 1995.  
**Through Dick Conrad, Perkinsville**
- Exercise board made by and/or for Bernarr  
**Karen LaForce, Dansville**
- Dansville Central High School Class of 1951 photo of class from 1951 Senior Trip to Washington, D.C. (with names).
- Book, *Frozen Laundry and Depression Soup*, published in 2009, containing articles by four Dansville women.  
**Jane Rowe Kenney, Dansville**
- Large wooden spool (6 inches) from Blum Shoe Factory
- Metal coat button
- Jackson (wooden) Rapid Rug Knitter with directions
- Two issues of WorkBasket magazine from 1957.
- Package of 50 needles purchased at G.C. Murphy for 35 cents.  
**Phyllis Neetz**

Mark your calendar!

## DAHS ANNUAL DINNER AND MEETING

Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

Program:

Civil War Medicine

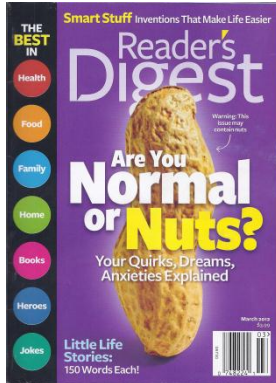
Presented by Les Buell



Les Buell has been involved in Civil War re-enactments since 1989 and has been researching the medical aspect of the war since 1992.

## Dansville's Dr. James Caleb Jackson In the News Again!

Although Dr. James Caleb Jackson (who founded "Our Home on the Hillside," known today as the "Castle on the Hill") died over 115 years ago, his name and his cold cereal invention have been included in two articles recently published by popular national magazines.



The March 2012 issue of *Reader's Digest* includes a quiz on cereal. One question asks, "Which doctor, who preached the wonders of a healthy diet, invented the first ready-to-eat cold breakfast cereal? (Hint: It was called Granula.)"

- Robert Atkins
- James Caleb Jackson
- John Kellogg
- Melmet Oz

Their answer is, "Jackson created the ready-to-eat stuff with just flour and water."

The Sunday, May 27, 2012 issue of *Parade* magazine picked 12 all-American classic summer foods. One classic is granola: "Granola was created during the Civil War by nutrition crusader James Caleb Jackson, who baked sheets of moistened whole wheat flour, crumbled them into bits, then baked them again, creating hard little nuggets he called granula."

While "Granula" gave way to cereals produced by Kellogg and Post, we Dansvillians are very proud of the wellness and health connection that began with the Jackson family.



Dr. James C. Jackson  
(The Jackson Family)

You can read more about Dr. Jackson, Granula, and the Castle on the Hill and its history in these publications: *Dansville Area Historical Society Newsletter*, November 2011 (article on Granula, page 2) and November 2010 (Wall of Fame article highlighting Dr. J.C. Jackson, page 5), both free; *Dansville's Castle on the Hill* by David Gilbert (2004), \$5.00; *The Jackson Health Resort* by William D. Conklin (1971), published privately but a copy is available to read at the Dansville Public Library and at the Dansville Area Historical Society Museum; and *The Castles on the Hill* by Ted Jackson (2010), \$29.99 softbound and \$39.99 hardbound. All publications for sale are available at the Dansville Area Historical Society Museum, open the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of each month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 14 Church Street, Dansville, NY.

## DAHS's Railroad Collectible and Fund Raising News

I was thrilled that we were able to produce our latest collectible – **the Dansville & Mount Morris Railroad** -- in such a short time. It was ready for Dogwood Week and we enjoyed good sales at our booth in Church Park. This year we also served several tasty recipes from the **Rushbottom Cookbook**. The weather was good, many people passed by and enjoyed a sample, and several purchased a set of the cookbooks – a real bargain at \$10.00 for a two-volume set! The recipes are “down home” and vintage, and almost better are the photos detailing Dansville history.

The “D&M” Railroad collectible reads on the back, “Although efforts to bring a railroad to Dansville began as far back as 1832, it took nearly four decades for desire to become reality. 1871 saw the completion, after two years of earth moving and the construction of a 108-foot-long depot, of what was originally called the Erie & Genesee Valley Railroad; it was renamed the Dansville & Mount Morris Railroad in

1891. From 1911 onwards, the D&M was



the primary means by which products were shipped from Power Specialty (and later, Foster Wheeler); for many years in the 1900s the line was owned by the Hart family. In 1987 the tracks leading into Dansville were eliminated.”

The **Dansville Library** asked permission to reorder the historic Shepard Memorial Library Building collectible. These are now available for sale at the library and also at the DAHS Museum. The front remains the same, but the new addition to the library is mentioned on the back.

*Marie Roberts*, Fund Raising

### COOKIES

#### ☛ Caramel Nut Slices

*Jenny Linzy*

1 cup soft shortening (part butter)	
2 cups brown sugar (packed)	2 eggs
3-1/2 cups sifted flour	1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. soda	1 cup finely chopped nuts

Mix well shortening, sugar, eggs. Sift together flour, salt, soda. Stir in. Add nuts. Shape in 2 rolls, 2" across\*. Chill. Heat oven to 400°. Slice dough 1/8" thick. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet 8 to 10 minutes. Makes about 12 doz. These keep well.

\*Shaping is easy if you use waxed paper.

*A lot of these went to Vietnam.*

*This is one of the recipes we served at the DAHS booth during Dogwood Week. Recipe reprinted from Rushbottom Cookery Cookbook*



# Commemorating the Dansville & Mt. Morris Railroad



Bob Hart and Amie Alden at the Opening Reception for the Exhibit of the Dansville & Mt. Morris Railroad Company Records. (Photo courtesy of Genesee Country Express)

On April 12, Bob Hart, owner of the Dansville and Mt. Morris Railroad, Amie Alden, Livingston County Historian, and the Dansville Library came together with our local community to celebrate the history and preservation of the railroad's records

A display showing the Company's corporate records, some dating back to the 1890s, shows "business as usual" -- what was shipped, what was received, as well as company expenses. The display follows a timeline featuring the history of the Dansville & Mt. Morris Railroad Company.

The display will be at the Library this spring. Originals are being digitized at SUNY Geneseo, and will be made available at the Livingston County Historians' Office for researchers.

(Thanks to Genesee Country Express for information for this article.)

## DAHS Newest Life Members

Life membership in the Dansville Area Historical Society is a way to show your support by contributing \$150 for a lifetime membership. We honor these supporters with a nameplate in the entranceway of the museum. The following list shows our life members for 2011 and thus far in 2012:

### 2011

Paul and Gay Frame  
Dennis Gould  
Richard and Patricia Bondi  
Ted Jackson  
Chad and Colleen Schuster  
Dan and Cindy Rauber

### 2012

Marcel and Michael Kelly  
Ed Perry

# We Have a DAHS Website!

By Chad Schuster, DAHS Webmaster

If you have ever looked for information online about the Dansville Area Historical Society, you wouldn't have found very much. I know, because I was one of those looking. Shortly after I became a board member, we were notified that there was a free seminar at GCC available to historical organizations who wanted to create their own website. I volunteered to go, and sure enough, by the end of the workshop, I had created a website for the Dansville Area Historical Society. Here is the location:

[dansvilleareahistoricalsociety.wordpress.com](http://dansvilleareahistoricalsociety.wordpress.com)

Some of the goals for the website are to promote traffic at the DAHS Museum, advertise events/festivals, share knowledge and history, and give a place so that people can contact us via email. (Another place we can be contacted is on Facebook. Both the

website and Facebook will be a place to share photos from events and festivals.) Recently we got an email from someone in Idaho who has a photograph to donate!

The website has multiple pages for specific information: The home page will have many different postings from events to random photos. Other pages are Historical Happenings, Events/Programs, DAHS Museum, DAHS Slide Show, Items for Sale and Board members. I invite each of you to check it out and give me feedback on Facebook or via email: [dahs@stny.rr.com](mailto:dahs@stny.rr.com).

[Ed.Note: Chad has done an incredible job! Anyone interested in Dansville history will find this website a growing asset to our community.]

## DAHS Receives Grant Funding

The Dansville Area Historical Society has been awarded a GET READY grant to help the Museum begin its strategic planning process. This grant is from the New York State Council on the Arts and it will help DAHS to work this summer with Sally Treanor, a consultant recently retired as Senior Director, Administration and Operations and Grants Coordinator of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.

Treanor will meet with DAHS board and community members to provide an overview of the planning process and to begin the steps of developing a strategic plan to meet our mission of providing programs, exhibits and information on the history of the Dansville Area.

Anyone in the Dansville community who would like to join this planning process, or who would like to become involved with DAHS, is welcome to call DAHS president Jim Snyder to learn more. Jim can be reached at 335-8909.

# The Dansville Hall of Fame

(Part 10 of 10)

By David Gilbert, DAHS Curator

This issue concludes David Gilbert's ten-part series on the twenty men and women whom the Historical Society honored for their contributions to Dansville: Cornelius McCoy, Daniel P. Faulkner, Dr. James Caleb Jackson, Clara Barton, A.O. Bunnell, F.A. Owen, Dr. Frederick R. Driesbach, Lynn E. Pickard, William D. Conklin, Wilfred J. Rauber, Charles Williamson, Col. Nathaniel Rochester, Capt. William Perine, Dr. James Faulkner, Dr. James H. Jackson, Pell W. Foster Sr., Bernarr Macfadden, Thomas P. Reilly; Nicholas H. Noyes, and Harold A. Shay. The articles in this series will become available on the Dansville Area Historical Society website.

## **Wilfred J. "Wutz" Rauber (1907-1992) Inducted 1988**

Of the twenty men and women who have been inducted into the Dansville Area Historical Society's Dansville Hall of Fame, two of them were still alive when they received the honor. When "Wutz" Rauber was informed of selection back in 1988, he replied with a letter to the Historical Society expressing his appreciation. He also mentioned the other inductees, many of whom were personal acquaintances:

"Treasured memories include boyhood visits with Asa O. Bunnell on the veranda of that beautiful home he had christened "Top Col." On at least two such occasions, we shared grapes I had picked, without permission, from the nearby vineyard of John Michel. Mr. Bunnell's snow-white mustache had a purple fringe when he informed me that all fruit tasted sweeter when acquired 'extemporaneously.'

"There were pleasant chats with Mr. Owen on the lakeside lawn of his summer home at Cottonwood Point which jutted into Conesus Lake. Reference to his nickname "F.A." brought a smile and nod of acceptance. Nevertheless, this young visitor chose to address him as "Mr. Owen." The dignity of this man and his scholarly attitude, softening by an ability to make one feel at ease, led to several lakeside visits.

"Several flights in Lynn E. Pickard's open cockpit, Waco biplane were exciting excursions in the early days of civilian aviation. At that time, takeoffs and landings were on a rough Maple Street field dotted with very tough stubborn clumps from a previous alfalfa planting. Lynn's determination later transformed it, and adjacent land, into Dansville's fine modern airport. Good fortune permitted me to be informed of his ultimate goal and the technique he devised to reach it.



**Wilfred J. "Wutz" Rauber**

“There were countless hours of discussion, research and writing with William Dunn Conklin, an area analytical historian without peer. These were educational and enjoyable indeed... just being with, and working alongside, the master. Our years of friendly association provide a host of cherished memories.”

Wilfred J. Rauber was born in Dansville in 1907. He graduated from DCHS and later Alfred University. He was employed at the Dansville Post Office for 37 years, rising to the position of Superintendent of Mails before retiring in 1969. He was a long-time secretary of the Dansville Board of Trade (the forerunner to the Chamber of Commerce), and served for ten years on the Board of Education.

He was appointed Village and Town Historian in 1949, a position he held until 1986. Nobody, before or since, has done more to promote and preserve Dansville’s historical legacy than Wilfred Rauber did in those years. He spent countless hours in gathering together the photographs and other artifacts that make up the North Dansville Historical Files in the North Dansville Town Hall. He was also a key figure in the formation of the Dansville Area Historical Society and in the acquisition of the old St. Patrick’s rectory for use as a museum. In 1979, he was honored as Citizen of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce.

But more than anything else, he wrote. Over the decades, he wrote hundreds of articles on local history for the *Dansville Breeze* and *Genesee Country Express*, covering just about every facet of Dansville’s rich history. These humorous and well-written articles are a treasure trove of knowledge that would have otherwise fallen into obscurity -- they are still well worth seeking out by local history buffs. He also launched the “Old Photo Album” feature which still runs in the *Express*. His journalistic efforts won him accolades from the New York Press

Association which gave him an award in 1968 for Historical Series in a Newspaper. His magnum opus was his privately printed 1980 book, *D&M and DL & W – Putting Dansville on the Railroad Map*. Twenty years after his passing, “Wutz” Rauber’s name is still synonymous with Dansville history.

### **Harold A. “Tim” Shay (1913-2009)** Inducted 1995

Some made it into the Dansville Hall of Fame as outstanding business leaders. Some made it in as outstanding civic leaders. “Tim” Shay more than qualified on both counts.



**Harold A “Tim” Shay**

Harold Shay was born in Ossian in 1913. His father, Lloyd Shay, was a notable area farmer and businessman who, around 1918, purchased a new REO Speed Wagon and began trucking produce and livestock not only from his own farm, but also from his neighbors’. After attending the University



of Alabama, young Harold became his father's business partner in their various business ventures. In 1936, they purchased a tract of land on North Main Street upon which they would headquarter their shipping business, officially dubbed Shay's Service Trucking Company. For decades, the fleet of semi-trucks with the distinctive SHAY's blazoned on the side would be a familiar fixture on the area roadways. They also founded the Shay Oil Company which transported petroleum products from the Pennsylvania oil field. Other business ventures in those early years included a restaurant (1936-1942), a car dealership in the late 1940s, and a share of the Dansville Furniture Company which operated for many years out of the old Eagle Hotel on Jefferson Street.

After Lloyd's death in 1950, Harold (who married Margaret Bacon in 1941) continued to oversee the family's business holdings. Yet another Main Street venture, Main Tire Exchange, was launched in 1972, and would later expand to Rochester and Buffalo. In the early 1960s, he was instrumental to expanding the Brae Burn golf course into the Brae Burn Recreational facility with its new clubhouse that included a bowling alley and dining hall. (Shay was an avid golfer and bowler, although how he found the time to do either, given all his activities, was something of a miracle.) He was a founding member of the Dansville Fish & Game Club, which in 1945 obtained the land at Deer Park where their clubhouse would later be built. And he was the first president of the Livingston County Chamber of Commerce.


But wait, there's more. Shay was a town councilman and town supervisor, a president of the Dansville Exchange Club, a member and president of the Board of Education, a trustee of the Dansville Presbyterian Church, a member of the advisory board of the Monroe Savings Bank, president of the local United Fund Campaign, and active with the Steuben Area

Council of Boy Scouts and the Protective Fire Company.

He was also on the board of the old Dansville Memorial Hospital on Main Street and when, in the late 1960s, overcrowding at that facility necessitated the construction of a new facility, he donated the land upon which Noyes Memorial Hospital was built. He personally arranged the construction of the access roads that lead to the hospital. And, after buying the old hospital property after it had been vacated, Tim turned it over to be converted into an affordable housing project, now known as Faulkner Apartments.

In short, there was very little going on in Dansville in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to which Harold A. Shay did not make a significant contribution.

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# Dansville Area Historical Society

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Paul Constantine -- Vice President  
Mary Harris -- Recording Secretary  
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Sharon Harris

## DAHS Museum

14 Church St., Dansville  
**Open 10 to 2 p.m.**  
**1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays**  
Visitors Welcome!

Website:

[dansvilleareahistoricalsociety.  
wordpress.com](http://dansvilleareahistoricalsociety.wordpress.com)

## Our Newest Collectible



The Dansville & Mount Morris Railroad wooden collectible can now be purchased at our museum gift shop. See related story on page 4.