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Gilboa Historical Society

Learning about, sharing, and preserving our history

v. 16.3

QUARTERLY CONTENTS—FALL 2014

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If you receive the Quarterly by the USPS, please check your address and let us know of corrections or if you have a seasonal change of address. An asterisk or dagger after your name means your membership is paid up. No symbols? Please the application on page 39 to earn *your* star.

Hints To Be Remembered, from *The Circle of Useful Knowledge* (1885)

Keep a diary, or let some member of the family keep it for you. Write down every night the work that has been done during the day, the state of the weather, and any facts in regard to the stock, etc., that ought to be recorded. It is very little trouble and is extremely useful; and the longer it is kept, the more interesting it becomes.

Hints to the Readers of the *Gilboa Historical Society Quarterly* (2014)

If someone in your family had read and followed the advice of *The Circle of Useful Knowledge*, please let us know so that we can preserve the diaries of your ancestors. Farmers often kept Day Books recording weather, crop problems, dairy techniques, etc.—a window into the world of yesteryear.

Published by the Gilboa Historical Society, Post Office Box 52, Gilboa, NY 12076
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The Gilboa Historical Society meets at 7:00 P.M. at the Gilboa Town Hall
on the third Wednesday of the month, March–December.

The Gilboa Museum, 122 Stryker Road, is open noon–4:30
Saturdays and Sundays, from July through Labor Day, and Columbus Day weekend
by appointment (607 588-9413). <http://www.gilboafossils.org>

The Tourism Map, publications, and other items of general interest
are available online at <http://www.northerncatskillshistory.com/societies/gilboa/>

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FIRE AT THE REXMERE HOTEL

Don VanEtten

Stephen Churchill had a deep fear of fire. When Churchill built a ladies residence at his Academy (late 1860s), he built it with a 100-foot fire-break around it.

A hundred years later, Celin Schoen worked with Frank Cyr in that building and was told to yell loudly and escape quickly in the event of fire: engineers in the 1960s estimated that an established fire in the Rexmere would fully engulf the structure within 8 minutes.

Fifty years later, automatic sensors routinely sent alarms reporting events at a variety of buildings—the Rexmere, DEC building, Stamford Central School, etc. This was not unusual as 21st century sensors might report thunder, lightning, or even a speck of dust.

At 10:39 on the morning of March 25, 2014, an alarm was reported from 159 West Main Street in Stamford. As usual, it was routed to the appropriate police, fire, EMS, and rescue agencies. I responded and was the first to arrive at the Cyr Center (aka, Rexmere Hotel) at 10:44; fireman Don Scully also responded, a minute behind me.

There was no apparent problem as I approached, so I drove around to the lakeside entrance and ran up to the grand ballroom door. From there, I

Photos

Black-and-white printing indicates differences in intensity (light and dark), not color. A deep orange-red flame, pine tree, and red fire engine will appear equally dark in print. Likewise, less-intense fires, moderate smoke, and light clouds will appear in similar tones in print.



In this picture, the exterior stairway from the second to fourth floors is completely engulfed in flame that looks like smoke.

As black-and-white printing cannot do justice to the majesty of fire, photos are not included in this article. I'll focus on events about the fire-fighting process at the Rexmere.

Northerncatskillhistory.com/societies/stamfordVFD has pictures and captions on the events (the above picture is the third at that site).

could see through the ballroom to the main entrance. Don had arrived, and between us was a wisp of smoke that we both acknowledged. The report of “smoke visible in building” was sent at 10:45.

I joined Don at the main entrance, but in that 30-second period, the fire had blown out the window to the left of the door—a new source of oxygen was feeding the fire, and the building was reported as being a working structure fire at 10:46.

Computer-Aided-Dispatch System

Security sensors detect intrusion, property damage, fire, or other events in residential, commercial, and industrial properties. While alarm systems vary greatly, fire departments are mostly involved with calls from electronically monitored 24/7 services that use a computer-aided-dispatch (CAD) system.

Delaware County’s CAD is housed in the State Police Barracks in Sidney. A CAD Incident Detail Report is shown to the right. It was initiated electronically by source N9C (in this case, ADT) at 10:39:27; was rerouted to the various agencies at 10:40:20; and the fire department was on site at 10:44:02. This top portion of the report was generated automatically.

Under the Narratives section, the dispatcher (ASmith) started to input notes from radio reports of those on the scene—smoke was in the building; full structure fire, mutual aid requests to Grand Gorge, Hobart, and Jefferson; fire police to shut down streets; Roxbury to reinforce Grand Gorge for standby in case of another emergency, etc. This CAD Incident Report can go on for pages with a massive fire such as the Rexmere.

Mutual Aid

Mutual Aid between fire departments is cooperative, *not* contractual—it’s a friendship between departments built up over years to access more resources for extraordinary fires. In practice, the Stamford department generally asks its nearest neighbors—Hobart, Jefferson, and/or Grand Gorge—for help based on departmental history, proximity, and resources.

Back-up units are then moved to protect against a second emergency. With the Rexmere fire, the Grand Gorge department went to help Stamford and the Roxbury department then moved equipment to protect Grand Gorge. When Roxbury also had to be called to the fire, additional department(s) in turn became responsible for both Grand Gorge and Roxbury.

On March 27, we had to go far beyond these local departments. In total, we drew on 26 fire departments and 300 firefighters from Catskill to Oneonta to Walton.

03/27/2014
13:59:33

DELAWARE COUNTY 9-1-1
CAD Incident Detail

PAGE 1
USER SMITH

CAD Incident: 2014-00003868
Phone : -
Name :
Address : 159 W MAIN ST
Community: STAMFORD VILLAGE
Jurisdctn:

ESN : 1531
Law : CLOSEST
Fire : STAMFORD
EMS : STAMFORD EMS
Rescue:

LD 27 ST

SubDivish:

Disp : C
Source: N9C

.....
CAD Call Times: ALARM ACTIVATION
.....

Incoming Call: 03/25/2014 10:39:27
Call Created : 03/25/2014 10:39:27
Call Send Time : 10:40:08
Call Dispatch Time: 10:40:20
Call Enroute Time : 10:41:54
Call Arrival Time : 10:44:02
Call Clear Time : 15:45:19
Call Closed :03/26/2014 15:45:19

Created By: SMITHA
Sent By : SMITHA
Event : ALMACT 1
Law : ALMACT 1
Fire : ALMACT 1
EMS : ALMACT 1
Rescue: ALMACT 2

Pos:003 TERM 3
Action:
Language:

Original Dispatch Remarks:

simplex 888-746-7539 - general alarm activation - catskill mt education center

.....
Narratives
.....

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 10:45
BUILDING LOCKED - SMOKE VISIBLE IN BUILDING - RETONE

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 10:46
FULL STRUCTURE FIRE-

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 10:47
REQ GRAND GORGE TO STAMFORD STATION
REQ HOBART TO SCENE - FULL RESPONSE
REQ JEFFERSON TO SCENE- FULL RESPONSE

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 10:49
JEFFERSON CONTACTED- REQ NYSEG TO SCENE

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 10:50
REQ FIRE POLICE TO SHUT DOWN STREET

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 10:51
NYSEG CONTACTED

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 10:58
REQ ROXBURY TO GRAND GORGE STATION WITH PUMPER/TANKER AND MANPOWER FOR STANDBY

Narrative By: 001\DEB 03/25/2014 11:01
JEFFERSON ENROUTE WITH ENGINE AND INTERIOR CREW AND 1 TANKER

An Incident Detail Report is initiated electronically and the top third filled in by the computer tracking electronic activity. Starting with the narratives, the activity is manually entered using standard code words by the dispatcher in radio contact with all parties. This record lists all mutual aid requests, disposition of them, and departures and arrival of personnel and equipment. It also records the status of departments that are covering for the departments at the site and the progress of activities against the fire. Finally, it records the release of personnel and equipment from the fire site and their arrival home.

One of the personal payoffs is the camaraderie that occurs at every mutual aid event. You're always working shoulder to shoulder with not only your own friends but also your friends in the other departments. You all can focus on the fire at hand because you know that your home communities are all being covered by other people you know and trust.

Visiting departments bring their own equipment, personnel, and supplies; but when a Catskill aerial truck—Cobleskill's was out of service—drives over to fight the Rexmere fire, good neighbor policy is that we would provide the fuel to get them back home, knowing that they would do the same for us should the occasion arise. Likewise, specialized equipment is always shared at the scene and always seems to be returned at some point. What goes around, comes around.

The Stamford Volunteer Fire Department

Most of the fire departments at the Rexmere fire were volunteer—Oneonta was the only salaried unit. I'm very proud of Stamford's company and the part that every individual plays.

About half of our members cannot regularly respond to alarms—they work out of the area, are beyond the hearing of the alarm, or cannot be available due to other environmental reasons. However, they are a valuable back-up resource to the department for major emergencies.

The other half can and do handle 95% of the emergencies we face. Of these, probably less than a dozen members will always be there to pitch right in and are the sinews of any volunteer organization—no one person can carry an organization on a lone pair of shoulders.

We have a successful Explorer program, a [co-ed] scout troop of youths from 14 to 21 who go through our regular training program. They cannot go into the immediate fire site, but are a great support to the team at fire scenes. I hope that we (or some other department) will benefit from their training and passion.

Also—and most important from my point of view—we have generous employers like Malinkrodt, BOCES, the schools, and some small businesses that regularly contribute to the department's success. SVFD exists because of understanding employers like these.

Planning

We hold pre-planning exercises on a regular basis for problematic situations (large buildings like the central school, the Cyr Center, row houses like that holding Ace and TPs Restaurant, or properties with unique access problems like those on Mount Utsayantha). These exercises have two distinct goals: to

| Manpower | Tankers | Pumpers | Aerial Trucks | Ambulances | Fast Teams |
|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| Arkville | Arkville | | | | |
| Bloomville | Bloomville | Bloomville | | | |
| | | | Catskill | | |
| | | | | Cooperstown Medical Trans. | |
| Davenport | Davenport Delhi | Davenport | | | |
| Fleischmanns | | | | | |
| | | Franklin | | | Franklin |
| Grand Gorge | Grand Gorge Halcottsville | Grand Gorge | | | |
| Hobart | Hobart | Hobart | | Hobart | |
| Jefferson | Jefferson | Jefferson | | Jefferson | |
| Masonville | | | | | |
| Meridale | Meridale | | | | |
| Middleburgh | | | Middleburgh | | |
| Oneonta | | Oneonta | Oneonta | | |
| Pindar's Cors. | Pindar's Cors. Richmondville | Pindar's Cors. | | | |
| Roxbury | Roxbury Schenevus | Roxbury | | | |
| Sidney | | | Sidney | | |
| Sidney Center | | | | | |
| Stamford | Stamford | Stamford | Stamford | Stamford | |
| Summit | Summit | | | | |
| Walton | | | Walton | | |
| | | Worcester | | | Worcester |
| 18 | 15 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 2 |

Mutual aid at the Rexamere fire

The Rexamere fire was fought by 26 fire departments and 300 firefighters from: (east/west) Catskill to Cooperstown and (north/south) Cooperstown to Walton.

Two temporary pools were set up on the driveway to serve as reservoirs, and hoses around the fire area served as a water system. Some of the tankers had self-contained pumps and they brought water (3,250,000 gallons) from area ponds and lakes; tankers without pumps were filled from the hydrants of the village water system (750,000 gallons). The tankers filled the reservoir, and pumpers and aerial trucks tapped into that water system to fight the fire. Aerial trucks were located to surround the burning hotel.

The "fast teams" thankfully were never used: they are the specially trained personnel who would be called upon to go into a burning building to retrieve fallen firemen.

develop plans to battle fire in difficult situations, and also to explain to new firefighters the procedures we use.

At the Rexmere, our planning was effective and the reality was as textbook as a fire could be. Everything went according to plan—there were no injuries and we were successful in keeping the trucks away from the collapse zone.

We had minor losses—the normal cost of doing business. Some hose lines near the fire were burnt when the building collapsed. Hobart had a pump fail, which was returned to service in a matter of weeks. Our aerial had minor heat damage but also is again operational.

We were very lucky that there was no wind on that day. The wall of trees connecting the Cyr Center to West Main Street could have been a conduit taking the fire to the residences around that area. We evacuated the houses on West Main and cut off their electric, but that was a preventative measure that was canceled in a few hours.

The hotel was a total loss to the owners, but thankfully the piano and paintings of MURAL had already been moved out. BOCES did lose some material and a valuable painting, and the buyer irretrievably lost his hopes and plans for the restoration of the hotel as well as some uninsured equipment stored in the building. Most of all, our community loved the building and was looking forward to its rejuvenation.

Community Support

It is always amazing to see how many people come out to support folks fighting a fire. There are people who “should” be there (EMS, law enforcement, state and county agencies, utility companies), but also people who simply go out of their way to make the firefighters’ efforts a little easier (Boyle’s Excavating, Hartwick College, TPs Restaurant, Vasta’s Restaurant, Stewart’s Shops, Tops, and the village highway and office staffs).

A NYS Parks and Recreation police officer passing on Route 23 saw Windemere Street at Rite Aid had not yet been closed. Knowing the problem posed by gawkers, he too made our job easier and safer.

In looking back on March 27, I believe the department—and the community as a whole—has gained confidence in our systems, our people, and our neighbors.

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Gilboa Historical Society *Quarterly* available free at
<http://www.northerncatskillshistory.com/societies/gilboa/>
Email this address to friends & family.

FIRE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Gerry Stoner

Massive fires that wiped out whole cities like Chicago, Portsmouth, and Nantucket were common, and Gilboa was no exception.

The Syracuse *Weekly Express* reported on May 8, 1890 “Gilboa, Schoharie County, was visited by a disastrous fire on Sunday. The entire business part of the town was destroyed, twenty-four buildings in all. The loss is about \$150,000 and the insurance only \$30,000. Many families are homeless.”

By June 19th, the Kingston *Freeman and Journal* reported “This little village of Gilboa is slowly recovering from the effects of the late disastrous conflagration, and the work of rebuilding has begun in earnest. A number of new structures being in various stages of completion. Luman Reed is putting up a building for a general store; A. S. Thomas, hardware; George A. Hartwell, feed store; W. I. Becker, hotel on the site of the old Gilboa House; J. Snyder, blacksmith shop; and Gilboa Lodge of F. & A. M. [Freemasonry] have purchased a lot and are making arrangements to put up a line building for store purposes with lodge room above. The style of buildings will be an improvement on the old ones, wood being the material principally used. There will be many vacant lots in the burned district probably for years to come. Meanwhile business is being carried on in such quarters as can be secured in the outskirts of the village.”

Nevertheless, the village’s 1890 fire pales in comparison to the day-in, day-out fear of fire and the all-too-real burning of homes or barns in rural areas where there was no way to call for help and no fire departments to pitch in.

Shelter was provided by highly flammable wood structures; essentials (food preparation, heat, and light) came from fire. Survival on this balance scale could be a risky proposition when the victim of a fire could only rely on the buckets of a few neighbors and water from their own wells or ponds.

Post-and-Beam Construction

Construction is a compromise of contractor’s goals with available resources. This is as true for beavers building a dam as it is for carpenters building large structures like the Schoharie Reservoir or the Rexmere Hotel.

Locally, 19th century farmers used wood from plentiful forests in their buildings. At the same time, the largest and most prosperous industry was leather tanning, where tanners skinned the live outer wood and bark from



The deconstruction of an English barn by Eric Dahlberg shows a characteristic method of construction in the 19th century. This is a pole barn with heavy vertical posts and horizontal beams. The wood used in this construction is largely hemlock and the tenons and mortises are held together with wood pegs. Photograph used courtesy of Eric Dahlberg

610004.02

hemlock trees to manufacture the necessary tannin. The bulk of these trees would then be left on the ground. This supply of already cut-and-squared trunks made hemlock the most popular local construction material—post-and-beam construction used these inexpensive trunks in houses and barns.

However, the joinery to hold the building together (mortises and tenons) was labor-intensive requiring skilled laborers.

Balloon Construction

One story says that in 1833, Chicago builder, Augustine Taylor was facing increasing labor costs and a shortage of suitable posts and beams.

Building St. Mary's Church in Fort Dearborn, IL, Taylor chose to save money by using standardized lumber nailed together by relatively unskilled laborers to form light walls of wood. Traditional contractors prophesied that the church would be "blown away like a balloon" in the wind. The name "balloon" caught on to describe this style of light construction.



The building was not blown away and was built—cheaper and quicker—by two semiskilled workers. The clapboard siding on this building was tight, and when the interior walls were plastered, the building provided as cozy a haven as could be had in an unheated building of 1833.

Other builders had used similar techniques earlier, but Chicago was where the concept of balloon construction caught on. The city became the home of the Lyman Bridges Co. that sold prefabricated balloon-frame structures to midwestern settlers. Later, Chicago's Sears, Roebuck and Co. marketed a broad range of precut kit homes.

Changes in the Twentieth Century

In the nineteenth century, fires consumed buildings *too quickly*, and there were *too many* fires. Limiting these problems became a focus in the 20th century.

Construction Techniques to Retard the Speed of Fires: Using the Rexmere as an example: the earliest alarm was sounded at 10:39; the first firefighters arrived in 5 minutes and saw no visible problem. A minute later, there was a wisp of smoke; and another minute later, the fire had burst through the wall. Within a half-hour, the building was totally engulfed, and by midafternoon, this immense, 7-story building had been completely demolished and the ashes and detritus were in the basement.

Standards in the 19th century were rudimentary: a good house would have had a tight outer wall and a plaster-and-lath interior wall, with the enclosed

What Is a Sears Modern Home?

From 1908 to 1940, Sears, Roebuck and Co. sold 70,000–75,000 homes through their mail-order Modern Homes program. Over that time, Sears designed 447 different housing styles, from the multistory Ivanhoe, with French doors and art-glass windows, to the Goldenrod, a three-room and no-bath cottage for summer vacationers. (An outhouse could be purchased separately for Goldenrod and similar cottage dwellers.)

Sears was not an innovative home designer, but a very able follower of popular home designs with the added advantage of modifying houses and hardware according to buyer tastes. Individuals could even design their own homes and submit the blueprints to Sears, which would then ship off appropriate precut and fitted materials, putting the home owner in full creative control.

<http://www.searsarchives.com/homes/>

airspace providing insulation (barns, naturally, would only have the outer wall—no plaster for the animals!)

Enclosed air for insulation was common in both post-and-beam and balloon buildings of the 19th century and is still the prime insulation used today. However, *unobstructed* air spaces were less efficient for insulation and promoted the possible spread of a fire. In post-and-beam construction, a fire could easily spread horizontally between the beams. In the balloon house, the path is even more dangerous as fire can easily travel from the basement vertically to the attic between the vertical studs. The studs in the Rexmere were approximately 56 feet tall, in effect providing 56'-tall chimneys within the walls to carry fire from the source throughout the building.

A solution was to block these hollow vertical spaces at every floor. New houses being erected today still use balloon construction, but for each floor of the house—the first floor is framed out; its “ceiling” (the eventual floor for the second story) is put in place; and then the carpenters lay out the second story. These floors act as fire stops between each level of the building.

Fire stops around plumbing and electrical conduits as well as at every floor are now generally required in all building codes, but there are still areas of the country that have not adopted or do not enforce building codes.

Developing and Using Fire-Resistant Materials: Rome burned in 64 AD, after which the Roman emperor, Nero, instituted regulations requiring the use of fireproof (largely masonry) materials for external walls. Was this perhaps the first recorded example of an engineering-based building code?

The fate of Gilboa's village was sealed when the land was destined to become the site of the reservoir in 1916. A new Gilboa started to be built at the junction of Road 1 (aka 990V) and Flat Creek Road where the Town Hall and Post Office are currently located. There were four relatively large buildings with apartments on the second floor: the first floors housed a large service station (Wyckoff's Garage), a rooming house, a market, and a large empty space that might have been meant as a meeting hall of some sort. Three smaller buildings were behind them on the hill facing Flat Creek Road, including the feed store and general merchandise of Leland Lewis.

The first four buildings used the fire-resistant buildings of the time. They all had standing-seam steel roofs and pressed steel tiles on the external walls and the internal ceilings (you can often see the ceiling panels in restaurants or homes today).

The Stamford and Windham fire companies discovered a disadvantage of steel-clad structures: their spumes of water could not penetrate to the interior of the buildings to quench fires.

Otsego Farmer, Cooperstown, NY, May 18, 1928

ALL THAT REMAINED OF GILBOA VILLAGE DESTROYED BY FIRE

The village of Gilboa, which was largely demolished following the construction of the Gilboa dam, built as a reservoir for New York City, and which also had suffered two destructive fires, the first in 1890, and the other in 1925, met with a third fire Wednesday morning, when the larger part of the village remaining was practically wiped out. The blaze, which was discovered at about 8:30 am, started from the explosion of an oil lamp in one of the apartments in the Clinton Wyckoff structure, and spread rapidly to other adjacent buildings.

The Wyckoff building which on the first floor consisted of a garage, ice house and tool house, had three apartments, one of which was occupied by Mrs. H. Regular and three children, the second by Floyd Haverly, and the third by Mr. Betts. All furniture and other contents of the flats were destroyed.

The adjoining general store of Leland Lewis was also destroyed with contents, and also the office building formerly occupied by the Nawn Construction Company and more recently for an office building housing the town of Gilboa. There were fifteen cars in the Wyckoff garage, all of which were removed. The Stamford and Windham fire companies answered to the alarm and were able to save what remained of the village.

Mr. Wyckoff values his property at \$24,000 and his insurance was \$7,000, and his stock and equipment at \$4,000 with \$2,000 insurance. Mr. Lewis valued his store at \$5,000 with \$3,000 insurance, and his stock at \$10,000 with \$6,000 insurance. There was no insurance, so far as is known, on the household goods and clothing in apartments. Fortunately all persons in the buildings escaped without injury.

All the buildings were practically new, having been built about four years ago. The village as a whole has suffered great loss from fire. So long ago as 1890 the business section of the village was destroyed by fire, and in September 1894, many buildings were burned.

710002.081

Richard Lewis recalls the steel side panels glowing red from the heat within and the cloud of steam when they were hit by spray. A solid stream of water would turn them dark gray, but he also remembers the resurgent cherry-red when the fire hose moved on.

Fire Fighting Progress: New fire-retardant materials and high-R-factor insulations may help, but the most significant changes have come about through effective legislation to curtail human stupidity.

The Iroquois Theater fire: 1903, Chicago, IL. The deadliest single-building fire in U.S. history—over 605 people died when iron gates blocked stairways, exit routes were blocked by the SRO audience sitting on the stairs, muslin curtains were flammable, exhausts to vent the heat and smoke were fastened closed, and an asbestos fire curtain failed.

Triangle Shirt Factory fire: 1911, New York City. The deadliest industrial disaster in the history of the city, 146 garment workers died because locking the doors to the stairwells and exits was a common practice used to prevent workers from taking unauthorized breaks and pilferage

In 1913, legislation on the Building Exits Code (later named the Life Safety Code) was begun, but it tends to advance only in response to a new problem. In 1946, Atlanta's 15-story, "absolutely fireproof" Winecoff Hotel burned and all occupants above the fire on the third floor were trapped—the single fire escape had been compromised. The fire spurred changes requiring multiple protected means of egress and self-closing fire-resistant doors for guest rooms in hotels. In the meanwhile, the fire was notable for the number of victims who jumped to their deaths.

Nevertheless, some people still resist enforcement of fire and safety codes developed in response to painful lessons learned through the years. 610004.01

Flood Relief Organizations

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Blenheim: and Breakabeen: | { | Rural Area Revitalization Effort, Inc., a non-profit at 125 Creamery Road, North Blenheim, NY 12131 (518 925-7700, rareny.org) and/or North Blenheim Presbyterian Church, Clauverwie Road, Middleburgh, NY 12122 |
| Middleburgh: | | Village of Middleburgh Flood Relief, P.O. Box 789, Middleburgh, NY 12122 |
| Prattsville: | | Prattsville Relief Fund, c/o NBT Bank, P.O. Box 380, Grand Gorge, NY 12434 |
| SALT: | | Schoharie Area Long Term, 258 Main Street, Schoharie, NY 12157. info@saltrecovery.org www.saltrecovery.org, (518) 702-5017 |

JAMES STEWART

Revolutionary War Veteran

James Stewart was born October 28, 1749 in Blandford, Ma. He began his service in the Revolution on April 20, 1775 in response to the conflict in Lexington. He volunteered and joined Captain John Ferguson's Company of Minute Men as an orderly sergeant. He marched with this company to Boston where he arrived in May 1775. There he joined Colonel Timothy Danielson's regiment. While in Boston, he performed garrison duties and participated in several skirmishes. He was originally scheduled for a term of 9 months, but stayed one month longer at the request of General Washington. He was dismissed in March 1776 and returned home.

James then enlisted in December 1776 to April 1777 and was engaged in carrying stores, provisions and ammunition for the Northern Army from Suffield, Conn. to Bennington, Vt. under the direction of Captain Cannon's company.

He again entered the service as a volunteer in May 1777 in Captain William Cannon's company and Colonel Whiting's regiment. He was sent by Colonel Whiting as an express to General Schuyler to inform him of the number of troops that were coming under the command of Colonel Whiting. He caught up to General Schuyler in Skenesborough. He stayed there until he was joined by his company. He then began marching from Skenesborough to Fort Ticonderoga with his company. On the way there, they were met by the American Army. They had evacuated Fort Ticonderoga and left it in the hands of the British Army. He was then dismissed and returned home.

He immediately volunteered again and marched northward and was in the Battle of Bennington. After that engagement, he again returned home.

Shortly after that, he joined Captain Cannon's company in Blandford and immediately marched to Bemis Heights in Saratoga, New York. He was sent to Albany with some prisoners and then returned back to Saratoga. He met up with the American Army and found that General Burgoyne and the British Army under his command had just surrendered to the Americans.

He was then dismissed in November 1777 and returned home, ending his time in the service.



James Stewart (28 Oct 1749–22 Nov 1844) m. Anna Seaton May 1776 (d. Mar 1814),
m. Cynthia Ward Apr 1815

James Stewart Jr. (b 1786–) m. Margret Gordon

Perry Reed Stewart (b Oct 1829) m. Adelia Jane Wideman Vincent

Jesse Reed Stewart (b 12 Jul 1878) m. Emma Price, Sep 1900

George Reed Stewart (b 24 Feb 1902) m. Alice Mae Zinc, Aug 1921

Edna Stewart

Ann Stewart

Barbara Rose Marie Stewart m. Richard Frank Russell, Sep 1958

Richard Frank Russell, Jr.

Sherri Lynn Russell

Laura Ann Russell

This information was taken from a testimonial given by James on July 26, 1832 in a county court when he was a resident of Westerlo, New York. He was 83 years old at the time and was applying for his pension after Congress had passed the Benefit Act in June of 1832. This genealogy has been approved by the Sons of the American Revolution, and a reenactment of this ceremony is on YouTube.com—search for James Stewart SAR

800109.01

Skohere and the Birth of New York's Western Frontier 1609–1731

Jeff O'Connor

I like to call this project, nearing completion, a book about the Palatines that's not about the Palatines. It updates the Palatine experience in the Schoharie Valley, but explores in great depth the eventful century of New York history prior to their arrival and how it ultimately shaped that experience.

Into this rich context, the earliest documented history of the Schoharie Valley is placed in vivid detail and given new relevance. What has emerged will challenge the traditional origin stories of our county, and connect the unfamiliar regional events of the 17th century to those of the more familiar 18th century. The talk will shed some light on the author's motivations, preview the many subjects explored in the book, and provide teasing hints of significant discoveries that he is not at liberty to talk about—yet.

**Carpool a Friend
Wednesday, September 17 at 7:00
Gilboa Town Hall, 373 Route 990V**

770001

The Meat on Your Table

Most Gilboans are omnivores, and the meat on our tables traditionally has grown up locally. Some of the meat was wild—deer, fish, and small game—but the majority on the table had been grown on-the-farm.

Locally grown meat was mostly beef, pork, and chicken. On our farms, chickens laid the eggs for our breakfasts until a certain age when the chicken would find its way into the pot. Their small size and productive cycle determined when to be butchered.

Cows and pigs presented a problem: they had to be “force fed” right up until butchering time. Force feeding means gorging on rich summer grasses to grow large, and eating a large amount of grain to maximize marbling. It quickly became traditional to breed animals scheduled for slaughter so that they could be in the barn through the winter, weaned in the spring, grow fat on the summer forage, and be fed a high-grain diet before slaughtering in the fall.

The next two articles refer to the processing of meat for our tables.

The first, by Russell W. Warnick, is adapted from a blog on a PBS reality-docu series called *Kill It, Cook It, Eat It*. The show asked six, 20-somethings if they would be able to eat meat from cattle after watching the birth, nurture, and slaughter of said animals.

The second article is by Gerry Hubbard, and tells of the actual slaughter process on Hubbard Hill in the late 1940s. This was still the time in Gilboa when heating was by fire, plumbing was outside, farming methods were traditional, and tractors were in the early stages.

200027.030

The Gilboa Museum

122 Stryker Road
Gilboa, NY 12076

Open Columbus Day weekend,
and by appointment (607 588-9413).
Online 24/7 at <http://www.gilboafossils.org>

DINNER MEAT AND GREET

Russell W. Warnick

Are you able to eat the meat from cattle or other farm animals after watching the birth, nurture, and slaughter of said animals? This question was asked to a group included a vegetarian, a vegan, a foodie, and a fast-food junkie who participated on a PBS reality-docu series called *Kill It, Cook It, Eat It*.

Meat Your Dinner

To start, the group ventures out onto the farm where they are introduced to a small number of cattle. They feed them and are asked which one they would like to eat, with the fast-food junkie saying she'd prefer the one that "has the least amount of poo on its [ass]."

Such sophistication, now you understand the addiction to fast food.

The group is taught how to feel the meat to find out if the animal is mature enough for slaughter and for eating; a somewhat intimate way to choose a cow to be slaughtered. It's at this point that the group is able to make an informed decision so that the death of the animal won't be wasteful.

Their decision is not glamorized, it's not your typical reality scene. They are not taking the decision lightly and it is apparent that they are making a conscious decision; they have chosen to end the life of two animals.

Could You Eat Something with a Name?

The realization of their decision kicks in when they make their way to the abattoir, but not before the strict vegan makes a statement comparing the death and eating of animals as comparable to eating humans. This writer would have to argue otherwise.

This is where the episode becomes graphic, the group watches the actual death of the cows, a rather emotional experience, but not for the non-meat eating participants, as you might expect.

The episode closes at the dinner table, each member of the group discusses their feelings and all have a greater appreciation for the food on their plates; however, the two non-meat eaters, despite not wanting the meat to go to waste, refuse to eat it.

KILL IT, COOK IT, EAT IT. . .

As It Occurred in Gilboa in the Late 1940s

Gerry Hubbard

We did not see many pistols around Hubbard Hill—they were not useful for hunting and were a luxury only city people could afford.

Nevertheless, my dad had a .38 revolver (bought when he became a deputy sheriff for Schoharie County) and it was the only one in the family. Once, when I saw him preparing to go on a call, I wondered why he didn't act like the sheriffs I'd heard on the Lone Ranger and Tom Mix radio shows—why didn't he carry it in a holster on his belt but placed it in the glove compartment of the car when he was called?

The only time I saw the .38 used was when we had to butcher a large pig. Those animals had a very hard skull, a .22 would not be sufficient, so we'd use the pistol and shoot them through the ear to put them down. Smaller suckling pigs would be dispatched with a sticking knife (one with both edges sharpened), and the pig would bleed out and finally drop over, ready for scalding, scraping and gutting.

I remember shooting cows between the eyes with a rifle from about six inches. We tried to drop them very close to where we would butcher them so they would drop straight down without a sound—they were too heavy to drag very far. We'd use a block and tackle to pull them up with by the hind legs for gutting and skinning.

After that, we let the animals hang until the carcass stiffened up. We'd take smaller animals inside to the dining room table covered in newspaper and cut them up. Larger animals had to be cut up into quarters outside and then brought in piecemeal to be cut up into smaller steaks, chops, ground meat, etc.

The knives were always very sharp; the scalding water for the pigs was very hot; and the weather was usually pretty cold. We'd sometimes nick ourselves with the knives, wet ourselves with the water, and our hands would get very cold and stiff as we were working—but we usually got through it all without major trauma. We had to be especially careful with the sticking knife, and I remember my dad cut himself with that once.

Around Our Neighborhood

Themed Tours at Hanford Mills Museum during the month of September

Hanford Mills, County Route 12, East Meredith, NY 13757

September 10-14: East Meredith Businesses; September 17-21: Domestic Arts; September 24-28: Gristmilling & Harvests.

Guided Tours at the Dr. C.S. Best House & Medical Exhibit, Thursday, through October 10:00 am–2:00 pm

Dr. C.S. Best House & Medical Exhibit, 1568 Clauverwie, Middleburgh, 12122

The Paintings, Watercolors and Drawings of D. F. Hasbrouck, American Impressionist 1849–1917, through October 12, 10:00 am–@ 4:00 pm

Zadock Pratt Museum, P.O. Box 333, 14540 Main Street, Prattsville, NY 12468

Goza: Music from the Americas, Puerto Rico & Spain—September 25 @ 7:30 pm–9:00 pm

Bouck Theater, SUNY Cobleskill, 107 Schenectady Avenue, Cobleskill, 12043
GOZA, (Spanish for “Joy”) is a Latin quartet with a tightly woven blend of song and dance rhythms from the Americas, Puerto Rico and Spain.

“Animals on the Farm” for the Cauliflower Festival—September 27 @ 10:00 am–5:00 pm

Historical Society of Middletown, 778 Cemetery Road, Margaretville, 12455
See the History Tent at the Cauliflower Festival.

Plein Air Art Class with Jim Cramer, for children 8 to 12, \$25—September 27 @ 10:00 am–2:00 pm

Bronck Museum, Vedder Research Library, 90 County Route 42, US 9W 1.5 miles south of the intersection of routes 9W, 385, and 81, Cossackie, NY 12051

Woodsmen’s Festival—October 4 @ 10:00 am–4:00 pm

Hanford Mills, County Route 12, East Meredith, NY 13757

The Good Old Days, Songs of Early America—October 8 @ 7:30 pm–9:00

Carlisle Historical Society, 541 Crommie Road, Carlisle, NY 12031

Linda Russell, balladeer and musical historian, on “In the Good Old Colony Days, Songs of Early America.” Sponsored by the New York Council for the Humanities. 518 234-3041, carlislehistoricalsociety2008@hotmail.com.

Upstate/Downstate by Alex Thomas, October 15 @ 7:00 pm–9:00 pm

Gilboa Historical Society, Gilboa Town Hall, 373 Route 990V, Gilboa, 12076

It sometimes seems as if upstate and downstate New York are two different planets, but are they really? If there is such a big difference between upstate and down, where does one end and the other begin? Join Alex Thomas, director of the Center for Small Cities and Rural Studies at Utica College, as he asks the question, “is there one New York or two?”

ON LOCATION

Silent Movies in Gilboa

Lee Hudson

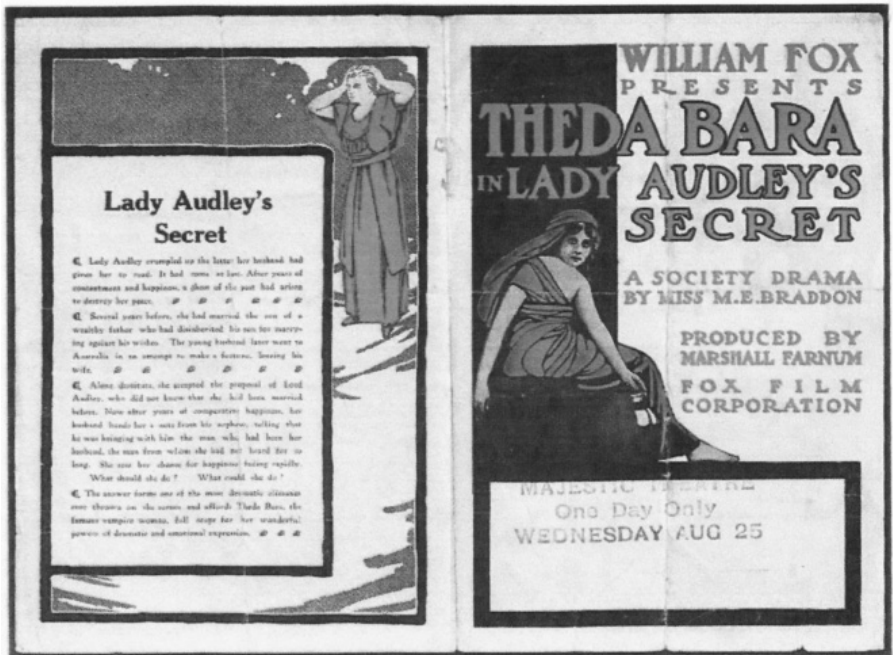
During 1915 and 1916, major moving picture studios shot at least five silent movies in Gilboa.¹ Villagers watched these exciting productions come to life en masses and mingled with the celebrity actors and crew at the Gilboa House where they routinely stayed. And for villagers now accustomed to weekly showings of top silent photoplays since S. J. Pierce and Albert Christman opened Gilboa's moving picture theater, the Hippodrome,² the appearance of these well-known stars was certainly thrilling.

But as much as Gilboa was clearly appreciated by the film companies for the town it was—it was also a popular location for what it could become. Gilboa's scenic diversity had all the elements that companies could use to create the illusion of places found around the world. The directors realized that this versatility, nearby in upstate New York, helped them crank out a movie in a month on their pressured schedules with tight budgets.

Typically numbering around 20, the actors and tech crews were in Giboa for one to four weeks. Directors relied upon dry conditions and good sun for the light required by the cameras, construction of set pieces, and dangerous stunt routines.

We don't know how Gilboa was initially discovered, but Fox Film director Frank Powell did his part to promote it. After extending his thanks for all the courtesies afforded him, his cast and crew during their stay filming *The Witch*, he revealed that he had shared his enthusiasm with boss William Fox in a letter recommending that Fox suggest the wonderful country Gilboa as a production location to his other ten directors.³ Surprisingly, he didn't seem aware that Fox director Marshall Farnum had already been there.

Likely the first, *Lady Audley's Secret*⁴ shot scenes in Gilboa in early June of 1915. Issues of the *Gilboa Monitor* and *Stamford Mirror*⁵ report the local buzz this filming caused. To get a mining scene, the crew headed for "the rugged steep cliff by the creamery where, after considerable digging and many discouragements, a mammoth nugget was unearthed. From here the scene was transferred to the Manorkill Falls where the dirt was panned and the supposed gold separated from the gravel. After making his great strike, as the play goes, the miner was so overcome with joy that he fainted and fell headlong into the stream where he laid for several minutes." Spoiler alert—he didn't drown.



This is one side of a promotional poster for *Lady Audley's Secret*. These 5 1/2" x 8" cards were stamped with the theater and times in the black bordered box on the front. Retrieved from movieposters.ha.com/ No attribution for artist/designer who created poster. Reprinted courtesy of movieposters.ha.com 562003.031

Starring William Fox's vamp superstar, Theda Bara,⁶ *Lady Audley's Secret* was a sensation. It was followed a few weeks later by Powell's *The Witch* as Gilboa's scenic flexibility took the viewer from gold mining in Australia—to the streets of a Mexican village.

Marshall Farnum was back in September with the Equitable Motion Pictures Corporation to film scenes for *Creeping Tides*⁷ with another one of silent film's leading ladies—Alexandra Carlisle. Gilboa provided the icy Canadian waters that Carlisle landed in after her runaway horse tossed her off and set the scene for her rescue and romance with scoundrel Stephen King.

Next, teaming up with the Ocean Film Corporation in February 1916, Farnum returned to Gilboa and headed to the Lewis Brothers' farm to film river scenes for *Driftwood*.⁸ Based on Owen Davis' drama, the maze of melodramatic misunderstandings and misfortunes between lovers eventually finds resolution. Exterior location shots fared better with the critics as Gilboa morphed into the storyline Canadian wilds, demonstrating again



The second side of the poster shows engaging stills from the movie *Lady Audley's Secret*. Retrieved from movieposters.ha.com/ No attribution for artist/designer who created poster. Reprinted courtesy of movieposters.ha.com 562003.032

the words of one company member that “our town will be famous for making motion pictures as it has the scenes that will fit into most any play.”

The fifth film and the one that received the most coverage in Gilboa’s press,⁹ *Caprice of the Mountains* was directed by John Adolphi for the Fox Film Corporation. Shot in Gilboa in May 1916, star June Caprice and supporting actors charmed villagers with their accessible warmth and humor. Local articles discussed filming in difficult weather, death-defying stunts, socializing with the troupe, and the skills of film company member W. E. Reed who apparently spent his downtime carving a medallion out of ivory depicting one of the lady members of the company. Our star-struck journalist and *Monitor* editor concludes that “Gilboa has, at different times, entertained some noted people of all professions, but never before, until the last couple of weeks, has she had a sculptor for a guest.”

For the film, a cabin was built on the Stryker property in the southwest part of town, and another on the Hardenburgh place in Prattsville. The final wedding scene was enacted in and by the Flat Creek Methodist church with

a mountaineer wedding party convincingly portrayed as typical of those found in Kentucky.

Although some villagers traveled to New York City or Oneonta to catch an early showing, Pierce and Christman made a concerted effort to schedule all the pictures that had been shot there. And, when three of the five movies were later shown in Gilboa's movie theater,¹⁰ the villagers and local community folks packed in to see their hometown on the silver screen.

Notes

1. Only five are documented by the Gilboa *Monitor* but issues of the paper are missing.
2. Gilboa *Monitor*, 5/22/1913. Pierce & Christman opened the Hippodrome 5/24/1913.
3. Gilboa *Monitor*, 6/24/1915. William Fox, founder of Fox Film Corporation incorporated 2/1/1915.
4. Based on the novel by M.E. Braddon (pseud. of Mary Elizabeth Braddon Maxwell), London, 1862.
5. Gilboa *Monitor*, 6/10/1915; Stamford *Mirror*, 6/12/1915. Company arrived in Gilboa 6/5/1915.
6. Theda Bara (Theodosia Goodman) was one of Fox Studio's highest paid stars, the screen's first sex symbol, and starred in the first million dollar movie. Her exotic screen name is an anagram for 'arab death.'
7. Released as *The Tides of Fate* on 9/3/1917. Gilboa *Monitor*, 9/23/1915; Altoona *Tribune*, 10/16/1915.
8. Gilboa *Monitor*, 2/3/1916.
9. Gilboa *Monitor*, 5/18/1916; 5/25/1916. Editor was George L. Fuller.
10. Gilboa *Monitor*, *The Witch*, 8/24/1916; *Lady Audley's Secret*, 9/30/1916; and *Caprice of the Mountains*, 6/9/1917. Missing issues of the *Monitor* prevent our knowing if the other two films were shown in Gilboa.



Lee Hudson, a native New Yorker, has lived on the old Vroman-Cornell property (Shew Hollow Road) full and part time for over 20 years. She retired recently from previous careers in higher education and public service and is researching the amazing early village life in Gilboa.

562003.030

Gilboa Historical Society Quarterly available free at

<http://www.gilboahome.com/>.

Email this address to friends & family.

Reprinted from A Crooked Gun
LT. CHARLES T. HUNTER

Conesville, 134th NY Infantry, Co. I

Peter Lindemann

The Fatal Accident in the East River

Each of the men in the book *A Crooked Gun* has a story. Most are bare bones, but a few are fleshed-out with news clippings, letters, and even photographs. Lt. Charles T. Hunter has all of these. His is a story of a handsome fast-rising officer, a capsized boat, a tragic drowning, allegations of intoxication, and a young widowed bride.

Hunter was born in Conesville, Schoharie County in August of 1841, the son of Mary and Thomas, an Irishman. Charles and his older brother Alexander worked on the family farm and later as schoolteachers. Alexander would go on to become a doctor. Charles joined the service, mustering-in as a private in the 134th New York Volunteer Infantry on September 12, 1862. He was 21 years old, 5'11", with blue eyes, brown hair, and dark complexion.

Hunter was promoted to sergeant on September 23, 1862 and by July 1, 1863, he was a first lieutenant. Furloughed home, he married 21-year-old Zilpha A. Couchman of Livingstonville on November 4, 1863 in Broome. Returning to duty, he was chosen as one of the officers of the general Court Martial of N.Y. and was Chief Commander of the steamer " " used in the transfer of volunteers South.

On March 11, 1864, while in a rowboat crossing the East River from Morris Island to Riker's Island with several women and children, the boat capsized and Hunter and six other passengers drowned. The next day, the New York *Daily Tribune* blamed the lieutenant for the accident, reporting that he "was intoxicated, and that his conduct while in the boat tended greatly to produce the catastrophe."

On March 13, the New York *Herald* countered that the "statement in regard to the condition of the Lieutenant is entirely unfounded, and seems to have emanated from the boatmen in order to screen themselves from censure. He was an esteemed officer, and one of the jurors of the general court martial of the city. He is a brother of the well known Dr. A. S. Hunter, of this city."

The *Herald* further explained, "the boat, being heavily laden and encountering strong gales, lurched when near the Island of North Brothers, was at once filled with water. Lieutenant Hunter commenced to bail it out, when

it encountered another gale, which so startled the already terrified women that they sprang to the opposite side, and immediately all were precipitated into the water.”

The March 24 Schoharie *Republican* added the heroic postscript that Hunter “swam nearly to the shore, as if to try his strength, then returned to the assistance of the others, where he twice appeared on the surface, and then sank to rise no more.”

On March 26 the New York *Times*—“the newspaper of record”—finally quashed the allegation of Hunter’s intoxication, stating that Hunter “was not only not intoxicated then, but at no time had those on Riker’s Island known him to be. His friends naturally feel grieved at the unwarranted imputation, and in justice to the unfortunate officer and to them, the correction should be made.



Lt. Charles T. Hunter, 134th N.Y.V.
A. Harco, Photographer, 120 Bowery, N.Y.
(New York State Military Museum)
825003.02

Two-and-a-half months after his drowning, Hunter’s body was recovered. “On the 31 inst.,” reported the Schoharie *Republican* on June 23, “the body of the late Lieutenant Charles T. Hunter, drowned in the East river March 11th 1864, was found six miles from the place of the accident, in the middle of the river, by a fisherman. As the body had been so long immersed in salt water, it was but slightly discolored. An inquest was held, after which the deceased was taken in charge by his brother, Dr. A. S. Hunter, of New York city, and interred in Greenwood Cemetery.”

Hunter’s widow Zilpha applied for a pension on April 28, 1864. In support of the application, Captain Perry E. McMaster, Hunter’s commanding officer, provided two depositions. The first affirmed that Hunter was indeed in the line of duty when he drowned:

I, Perry E. McMaster Capt. 134th Regt. N.Y.V.I, on honor, certify that Chas. T. Hunter 1st Lieut., 134th N.Y.V.I, was in the line of his duty at the time of his death (March 11, 1864). For after he had left the volunteers at Washington and Alexandria he returned to New York on the cars, and was on his way to Rikers Island, N.Y. St. to report when he met his death by drowning. It was also necessary that he should cross in a small boat, his orders being to “report without delay” to the rendezvous he took the small boat which was the only one crossing at the time.

Charles T. Hunter as Seen by Different Sources in *A Crooked Gun*

Adjutant General Reports, 134th Inf., 662

Age 21 years; enrolled September 5, 1862 at Conesville to serve three years; mustered in as private, Co. I, September 12, 1862; promoted sergeant September 23, 1862; first sergeant, no date; mustered in as second lieutenant, Co. E, April 22, 1863; as first lieutenant, July 1, 1863; drowned March 11, 1864, in North river, NY; also borne as Charles F.; commissioned second lieutenant April 14, 1863, with rank from March 25, 1863, vice H. Ramsay promoted; first lieutenant June 23, 1863, with rank from June 10, 1863, vice J.M. Dart promoted.

Warner: *Military Records of Schoharie County Veterans of Four Wars*, 338 Charles J. Hunter; Conesville; single; age 21; enlisted as sergeant. September 5, 1862; promoted to first sergeant, in June 1862; furloughed home after the battle of Gettysburg, and married; transferred to recruiting service as first lieutenant; drowned in New York Harbor, by overturning of skiff while taking a pleasure sail, March 11, 1864.

Muster Record, image 381 of 452

Born in Conesville, NY; age 21; farmer and teacher; blue eyes; brown hair; dark complexion; 5'11".

Town Register, Conesville, 8; image 68 of 109

T. Charles Hunter; born 1841 in Conesville; residence Conesville; married; farmer; parents Thomas and Mary; promoted second lieutenant, Co. E April 2, 1863; first lieutenant April 22, 1863; deceased; drowned March 11, 1864; place of burial New York city.

1865 New York State Census, Conesville, Table VII, "Deaths of Officers and Enlisted Men" image 22 of 33

Age at time of death, 22; married; citizen; entered service, September 22, 1862; 3rd sergeant; rank at time of death, 1st lieutenant; 134th NY; volunteer; promoted from 3 sergeant to first lieutenant; date of death, March 11, 1864; drowned in East River; killed by accident; left a widow; place of burial, Gree[?] Cemetery; drowned in East River, NY; was faithful to his country.

My knowledge of the above facts is obtained from the following source: I being at Rikers Island N.Y. at the time know that he was sent to Washington and had not returned, therefore know that he was returning. And that only row boats crossed the river at time of day.

McMaster's second deposition concerned the cause of the accident, stating, "that at the time of crossing the river by Lieut. Hunter as stated in said report, that the wind was blowing a gale, the river in consequence was very rough and a squall capsized the boat & Lieut. Hunter and others were drowned, which said capsizing and drowning as I verily believe was unavoidable on the part of Lieut. Hunter and occurred without any fault on his part."

Zilpha Hunter's application was approved, providing her a pension of \$17 per month, continuing until her remarriage to Madison Richtmyer on November 18, 1867. Richtmyer died in 1901, and the widow resumed her \$17 pension. On October 6, 1917, her pension increased to \$25. Zilpha Hunter died December 7, 1917, and is buried in the Gilboa Rural Cemetery.

The 1891 *Schoharie County Veterans of Four Wars* by Corporal George Warner is considered the standard reference on county veterans. Looking no further than that book, one would get only a murky glimpse of the above story. The author, himself in the 134th, states that Lt. Charles T. Hunter "drowned in New York Harbor, by overturning of skiff while taking a pleasure sail, March 11, 1864."



Peter Lindemann grew up in Colonie, graduated from Cornell, and moved to Cobleskill in 1986. He has worked for the New York State Assembly for the past 30 years, is a serious researcher in local history, and portrays historical figures such as Corporal James Tanner of Richmondville and President Abraham Lincoln. He recently has reenacted a Lincoln-Douglas debate and interpreted a first-time-ever meeting of Lincoln with Mark Twain.

825003.01

Gilboa Historical Society Donations

We are making plans to continue landscaping the GHS Museum and to "dress" the forthcoming pavillion. There seems to always be ways to improve the visibility of the society.

If you want to donate to these (or other) activities, please get in touch with a GHS board member or send us a note with the membership application form on page 39 of this *Quarterly*.

GILBOA MILITARY SERVICE PERSONNEL

LaVerne Hubbard

As I hope you know, we are developing an honor roll of everyone who has served in the military and has lived at some point in Gilboa. Please note that this is a roster of *all who have served*, regardless of the location or time of their posting.

The names that we have retrieved to date are as follows, but I am sure there are many more names that deserve to be on this list. Please recall those you know who have served our nation and make sure that they get listed.

Please send omissions to me at 106 Mulberry Lane, Middleburgh, NY 12122, clhubb@midtel.net, or 518 827-5239.

Gilboa Honor Roll

Revolutionary War

Ellerson, David
Stewart, James

War of 1812

Clark, Amos
Efner, William M
Mackey, Daniel
Roe, Herman
Snyder, William
Sprague, Elisha
Wales, Levi

Civil War

Ackerly, Oscar
Ames, Francis C
Andrews, Grover L
Bailey, James L
Baldwin, William
Barlow, John
Barlow, Joseph
Batchelder, David
Beach, William
Becker, William M

Beltman, John
Bevens, Dennis
Borthwick, Alex
Brewster, J L
Brewster, Otis
Brines, Harvey J
Cain, William
Chapman, Omer
Chichester, George
Clark, James
Creighton, David W
Creighton, Henry
Dayman, Charles
Desyliva, Andrew
Desyliva, Henry A
Desyliva, Homer
Disbrow, Charles
Driggs, Charles A
Duncan, Orra M
Eggnor, Nathan
Ellerson, Charles
Face, Erastus
Fanning, Benjamin
Franklin, Nelson W

Fraqhr, Arthur II
Finch, Stephen
Finch, William
Fox, Elmer
Fries, George
Friest, Wesley
Gardner, Charles
Gavit, Leander
Goodfellow, Martin
Gordon, Seth R
Harris, Roscoe
Hartwell, Charles
Hay, Alden M
Hay, Jefferson
Holdridge, Orlando
Houghtaling, Edward
Houghtaling, Henry
Houghtaling, Samuel
Hubble, Solomon
Jackson, David
Jackson, Jeremiah
Jenkins, John L
Lafferty, Peter
Lake, Martin

Lawyer, Francis
 Lane, Perry
 Layman, Wallace
 Lee, Peter
 Lemily, Winslow P
 Mackay, James A
 Mattice, Alonzo
 Mattice, Henry C
 Mattice, Paul
 McGinnes, Barney
 McIntyre, Archibald
 Monroe, Henry
 Moon, Luman D
 Moore, Timothy S
 Newcomb, Sylvester
 Peek, Alvah
 Proper, John R
 Reed, William L
 Rider, Reuben
 Roe, Daniel S
 Roe, Jinks P
 Saxe, Charles
 Schermerhorn, Hiram
 Schermerhorn, William
 Sellick, Whited
 Shafer, Thomas L
 Shoemaker, Abram
 Smith, Hiram
 Smith, John H
 Smith, Sylvester J
 Southwick, Calvin
 Sowles, Lorenzo
 Stillwell, Hiram
 Thorn, William
 Tibbets, James
 Vroman, Albert L
 Vroman, William
 Warner, Milo
 Waters, John
 Welch, Michael

Wiesmer, Malbone
 Wilber, Hiram
 Wilber, Philip C
 Wilber, Stephen
 Williams, George
 Wood, Charles E
 Wood, Charles N
 Wood, Joseph
 Wright, Eli
 Wright, George H
 Wright, John
 Yeomans, Charles
 Yeomans, George
 Yeomans, Horace

Spanish-American War

Benjamin, Philo
 Borst, George

World War I

Hallock, Warren
 Krieger, Earl
 Krieger, Henry
 Ledger, John G, Sr.

World War II

Bailey, Vernon
 Becker, Paul
 Bevins, Ernest
 Blakesley, Charles
 Blakesley, Rudolph
 Brandow, Richard
 Bremer, Ernest
 Buel, George
 Brosman, William F
 Chase, Victor
 Clark, Floyd
 Clark, Lestor
 Clark, Orville
 Clark, Richard

Clark, William
 Connine, Douglas
 Conro, Carlton
 Cornell, Marvin
 Davis, John
 Dingman, Robert
 Eisner, Hollis
 Ekstrom, Clyde
 Ekstrom, Robert
 Ellis, Glendon
 Falkner, Louis
 Flower, Regnald
 Forgacs, John
 Gadrick, Edward
 Gonzlik, John
 Hanley, Harold R
 Harrington, Anton
 Harwood White,
 Catherine
 Harwood, Hubert
 Haskin, John K
 Hilliker, David
 Hilliker, Donald
 Hilliker, Ernest
 Hinman, Robert
 Hogland, Guy
 Hubbard, Everett B
 Jones, Albert
 Kohler, Lewis
 Laux, John
 Ledger, John G, Jr.
 Ledger, Paul R
 Ledger, William H
 Lewis, Donald
 Lewis, Richard
 Lord, Vernon
 Makley, Jerry Jr.
 Mattice, Ford
 Merwin, George
 Marchase, Michael

Oakley, Fred
 O'Hara, James John
 Peckham, Vivian B
 Peterson, Everett
 Peterson, Harold
 Reed, Gordon
 Regular, Laurence
 Richtmeyer, Richard
 Schermerhorn, Warren
 Swartz, Edward
 Van Aken, Arthur
 Van Hoesen, Marshal
 Varrecchia, Clement
 Wally, Ronald M
 Wells, Randall
 Whitbeck, Alton
 Wilson, Randolph

Korea

Beattie, Donald
 Brainard, Charles
 Brainard, Donald
 Brainard, Floyd
 Clark, Benjamin
 Clark, Louis
 Conley, Robert
 Cook, Claude
 Heinzinger, Walter
 Juried, Nicholas
 Latta, Wilfred
 Ledger, Raymond A
 Mace, Donald
 Mace, Victor

Peters, Everett
 Schermerhorn, Ward
 Standhart, John
 Starheim, Olaf
 Thorn, Frank
 Tompkins, Irving
 Tompkins, Norwood
 Wood, Jared Geradel

Korea to Vietnam

Brainard, Richard
 Brown, Franklin
 Buel, Endwell
 Carpinelli, Bernard
 Case, Clifford
 Clapper, Arnold
 Clark, George
 Conro, Darrell
 Conro, David
 Dent, Gerald
 Eglin, Ernie
 Ellis, Paul
 Freeman, Donald
 Gifford, Mark
 Haight, Manley
 Hallock, Glen
 Hubbard, Clifton L
 Hubbard, David
 Hubbard, Douglas
 Hubbard, Gerald
 Hubbard, Marilyn
 Ledger, Carl R
 Marold, Paul

Morkaut, Michael
 Slater, Ralph [Pete]
 Stoner, Gerald O
 Stryker, Carson
 Stryker, Monte
 Taylor, James Barry
 Wickert, Fredrick

Vietnam

Bellinger, James
 Lateula, Gregory
 Licursi, Albert
 Morrissey, Robert
 Orlando, Donald
 Terry, William
 Truesdell, Larry
 Van Aken, Kipp

After Vietnam

Wood, Donald
 Wood, Michael

Iraq, Desert Storm

Beattie, Donald Jr.

Afganistan to Current

Clark, Josua
 Gifford, Shawn
 Jones, James
 Orlando, Michael
 Porter, Jason
 Rijos, Felix
 Wyckoff, Donald

CEMETERY OF JOHN ISAAC MATTICE AND FAMILY

Beatrice Mattice

As you drive through Gilboa, notice the little cemetery down near the Gilboa Bridge. A few years ago I became interested in this forgotten cemetery with several monuments leaning against the big tree, and some down. It was not a good thing for our many area visitors to see that sad old cemetery. This was brought to the attention of the Gilboa Historical Society and the Town who now owns the land.

This past summer, Dustin and Delana Truesdell offered to reset the stones that were down. It took them about four hours to reset nine monuments. One was broken in two and will be repaired later. (Their pay was only a thermos of coffee and a dozen or so muffins; the concrete was donated.) That was some difference from a previous quote of \$85 per monument. Many thanks to Dustin and Delana. It takes the young folks to get things done!

After that, several people who never knew the cemetery was there noticed the monuments. Tom Molle does a good job mowing the old cemetery each year, but no one could see it. And now, after the monuments were reset, the Town road men brush-hogged all around the little cemetery. Many thanks to all you people who helped with this project.



Cemetery of John Isaac Mattice and family, after cleanup by Dustin and Delana Truesdell. Photograph courtesy of Gerry Stoner

The family has been researched and as far as I can tell, all the monuments here are of the family of John Isaac Mattice. He married Priscilla Layman and they were the parents of at least 8 children.

John Isaac lived on the Wally Stryker farm, later Fred Wickert's. John Isaac Mattice was born in 1787 and died December 29, 1845 and was the first known burial, though no monument was found. The year 1897 seems to be the last burial.

If anyone is interested, I'll be glad to help find your connection to John Isaac as I have a great amount of information on this family.



Beatrice Mattice is the prolific historian for the Town of Conesville who has contributed to the New York Roots website, is the author of They Walked These Hills Before Me: An Early History of the Town of Conesville, and has written a number of articles and treatises.

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Upstate/Downstate

Alex Thomas

It sometimes seems as if upstate and downstate New York are two different planets, but are they really? If there is such a big difference between upstate and down, where does one end and the other begin?

Join Alex Thomas, director of the Center for Small Cities and Rural Studies at Utica College, as he asks the question, "is there one New York or two?"

561009

Carpool a Friend

Wednesday, October 15 at 7:00
Gilboa Town Hall, 373 Route 990V

The Gilboa Museum

122 Stryker Road
 Gilboa, NY 12076

Open Columbus Day weekend
 and by appointment (607 588-9413).

HISTORY MONTH

Robert Weible, NYS Historian

I'm pleased to learn that more and more people are becoming aware of the fact that November is officially New York State History Month.

Given the fact that many of us are already sponsoring programs in November, it should not be a strain to promote or get involved with State History Month. At a minimum, I'm hoping that you will be able to communicate with your members and encourage them to take advantage of the programming that will be available through your organization and at the state's historic sites, museums, archives, libraries, historic preservation agencies, schools, and other cultural and educational institutions.

1. If you are planning any November events, I'm happy to say that the State Museum is currently developing a History Month logo and can make it available to help promote your activities and those of your members.
2. The New York Council for the Humanities (NYCH) has agreed to use the History Month logo to brand *any* November events that it sponsors.
3. Not only that, NYCH will be reopening its popular *Speakers in the Humanities* program in September and has agreed to offer the incentive of one extra booking for host sites that sponsor a Speakers program during November (Speakers presentations are normally limited to two annual programs for each host site).

There is, of course, still time to plan History Month activities, and I would encourage you to do so. We will be promoting our activities on our website, and would be pleased to get the word out about your events, too. It would be easy to link your site to ours, and it would be great, in fact, for everyone to promote each other's History Month events.

As we demonstrated earlier this year at the Conference on New York State History, the history community can best realize its potential when all of us work together—we have another opportunity to demonstrate our strength again this November. So let's do it. Let everyone know if you have thoughts on additional ways to make History Month work for us. 540202

Speakers in the Humanities: nyhumanities.org/speakers/adult_audiences/
New York State Museum: nysm.nysed.gov
New York State Historian: rweible@mail.nysed.gov

Reprinted from Diane Galusha: Liquid Assets
BUILDING REPUTATIONS

Through the Board of Water Supply

Diane Galusha

The city's reservoir and tunnel projects attracted laborers and professionals from all over the country. Two of those who built substantial reputations during the Pepacton era, and then stayed on to make lasting contributions in the area, were labor leader Clarence "Hank" Mayer and attorney Herman Gottfried.

Mayer was born in Rich Hill, Mo. in 1902, and grew up in Illinois, where he worked in the coal mines, as had his father and grandfather before him. He studied economics and sociology at Illinois Wesleyan University. As a young man, he managed to own a small coal company, but during the Depression of the early 1930s, he became an advocate for the unemployed and later worked on construction jobs. With such jobs in short supply during World War II, he worked for the National War Fund, raising money for international relief, the USO and other aid efforts.

The son of a socialist, Mayer ran unsuccessfully on the Socialist Party ticket for Illinois Senator in 1940. In 1946 he moved his family—wife Ada and sons Scott and Gene—to

Hank Mayer came to the Pepacton project from Vermont as a laborer, and became a union leader. He is shown in this 1949 photo with wife Ada and sons Scott and Gene in front of the "Euc" [The Euclid Company of Ohio specialized in heavy equipment for earth moving, namely dump trucks and wheel tractor-scrappers from the 1920s to the 1950s. It was taken over by General Motors and later by Hitachi].

Photo courtesy of Diane Galusha and Ada Mayer.

740004.012



Vermont to live near and work with Scott and Helen Nearing, who had developed an ardent following for their views on cooperative living and organic subsistence farming. But in 1948, Mayer, in need of a more reliable income, read in *The New York Times* of the big public works project under way near Downsville. And on a 30-below-zero morning he arrived at contractor Walsh-Perrini headquarters and landed a job as a laborer.

He soon became a foreman, and in June his family joined him from Vermont, moving into the Scott and Mary Barnhardt home in Shavertown that had been claimed by the city. That spring he was tapped to become the business agent for Laborers International Union Local 17.

“I started to make demands on the company,” he related in his 1989 autobiography. “There had to be fresh water in the drinking cans, and there had to be better safety conditions.” He led a strike protesting contractors’ efforts to fire 10 rounds a week while driving the East Delaware Tunnel from Pepacton to the Rondout. And he fought to have an ambulance on site because of the distance to the nearest hospital in Liberty. A serious accident that left several workers injured at the Lew Beach shaft of the tunnel proved his point. “In three days we had ambulances at both shafts and portals. It took an explosion before the company woke up. They didn’t move until they were forced to,” Mayer wrote.

He continued to work with the union through completion of the Pepacton project and on later construction jobs. In 1952, the Mayers bought the former Ward Shaver farm on Shaver Hill Road in the town of Andes, overlooking the reservoir. There the family operated a small farming operation and hosted many visitors who came to learn about their organic gardening methods. In 1987, after 35 years in Andes, Hank and Ada moved to Vermont, and then to Florida, where in 1993 Hank Mayer died at the age of 91.

As Mayer had fought for the workers, Herman Gottfried fought for property owners being evicted from the reservoir basin. But he started out on the other side.

A Brooklyn native, Gottfried was born in 1910 to German immigrant banker Morris Gottfried and his wife, Fanny. He earned a bachelor’s and master’s degree in English literature at City College, where he did his thesis on Edgar Allen Poe’s theory of the universe. He went on to Brooklyn Law School, then went to work for the city, heading the law department of the comptroller’s office during the tenure of Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia.

In 1941 he married court stenographer Margaret “Peggy” O’Neill, daughter of a New York City Board of Water Supply (BWS) engineer. The follow-



Herman Gottfried, right, congratulates Charles Allen on winning a sizeable property damage award in 1954. Gottfried began his career as an attorney for the city but switched sides in 1950. Photo courtesy of Diane Galusha and Alton Weiss. 740004.013

ing year, he joined the U.S. Navy, serving as an officer aboard the USS *Isherwood* and surviving a Japanese kamikaze attack on the vessel. On his return to civilian life, he was named Acting Corporation Counsel in charge of the BWS' Kingston law office.

There he supervised a staff of five lawyers, two title examiners and four stenographers preparing the city's land acquisition cases for its upstate reservoirs.

He spent more than three years in that capacity, during which time he argued strenuously before appraisal commissions and Supreme Court justices to persuade them to allow the city to pay as little as possible for the farms, homes, and businesses it was taking. Then, in late 1949, Gottfried was urged by colleagues to leave the city's employ and "go west," to Margaretville, to establish his own practice representing the sorts of people whose claims he had been paid by the city to oppose.

"I was called a turncoat. They thought I was probably a spy, with some justification," he recalled in a 1996 interview, noting that his "tobacco road" description of one farmstead at a commission hearing, when he worked for the city, didn't sit well with local residents. "When I was working for the City of New York I had to represent them to the best of my ability, which I did, and it worked to the advantage of the city," Gottfried said, admitting to "some regret" that initial Pepacton property damage awards were fairly low. "That haunted me some," he said. "But after we got several awards in 1952 for claimants I represented, they knew I meant business. We hit home runs galore."

Gottfried went on to represent hundreds of people in both the Pepacton and Cannonsville basins, not only those who had lost property to the reservoirs, but merchants who had lost business, workers who had lost jobs and wages, and downstream landowners whose riverside properties had been devalued. An attempt by the city to have him disqualified from representing upstate clients in riparian rights cases because he had "inside information" about the way the city arrived at its appraisals was tossed out by a state

Supreme Court justice in January 1957. An effective advocate for his clients, he won substantial awards for them, and in turn profited handsomely while gaining recognition as a specialist in the area of condemnation law.

The Gottfrieds became longtime Margaretville area residents, contributing to the community and its social scene for many years. Among the organizations and institutions they have generously supported are Margaretville Memorial Hospital, Fairview Public Library in Margaretville, the Margaretville Central School Scholarship Fund, Kingston Hospital, and libraries and hospitals in Florida and Cape Cod, where they maintain residences. In 1998, they donated to the Village of Margaretville the office building they built in 1969 to house the Gottfried practice.

Sources: C. H. Mayer's *The Continuing Struggle: Autobiography of a Labor Activist* (1989); interview with Herman Gottfried, August 1996; *Catskill Mountain News*, Sept. 8, 1993, Jan. 6, 1999.



Diane Galusha is on the Board of Trustees of Woodchuck Lodge Inc., the non-profit organization responsible for maintaining the 1862 house and for promoting John Burroughs' legacy. She is the author of several books of local and regional history, and is also founding president of the Historical Society of the Town of Middletown, Delaware County. Reprinted from Galusha, D. 1999. *Liquid Assets: A History of New York's Water System.* Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, courtesy of Purple Mountain and Diane Galusha.

740004.011

Leonard Hill Fire Tower



My name is Judy Merwin and I am writing to tell you that I enjoyed your article on Leonard Hill Fire Tower, but you didn't have all the facts.

The person observing was not a forest ranger; the title was Forest Fire Observer; and the last person to man Leonard Hill was me and I am very much alive!

Actually there were 2 people who manned Leonard Hill after Ken—Don Dyson and myself. I started in 1981 and closed the tower in I think it was 1988. After, I went to Utsayantha and closed that tower in 1990.

260008

Your name, address, and membership status appears on the label of the physical Quarterly: a * next to your name indicates a paid-up individual membership; likewise, ** indicates a paid-up couple's membership, and *** indicates a paid-up family. A single dagger † indicates lifetime membership and a double ‡ indicates a couple's lifetime membership. Please consider joining if you are not a member, and let us know if we have incorrect address information.

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† The Board has a "wish list" of memorial gifts; please inquire of a board member, and provide the complete wording of the dedication, your name and address, and the name and address of a next-of-kin to be notified.

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