

Frontenac Historical Society and Museum

Spring 2021

www.frontenacmuseum.org



WOMEN'S HISTORY...the greatest story NEVER told

Like most public organizations, activities at the museum have been curtailed by the pandemic. So, we decided that if people cannot come to the museum, we would take the museum to the people! An empty storefront window proved an asset for the plan. Since March was Women's History Month, it seemed like an opportunity to be creative for the community and at the same time, honor some of the women in the community. As the bumper sticker in the store window says, "**Women's History...the greatest story Never told.**" Women's History month is rooted in the fact that traditionally, history books recorded the actions of men—that is of wars, conquests, political, social, and economic movements. The stories of women are found in letters and journals that present the nitty gritty realities of life amid that history. Email and tweets are unlikely to serve that purpose.

Another theme of the Women's History movement is the importance of recognizing the heroic qualities of ordinary women. Highlighting those qualities offers girls and women with role models, or "**sheroes**" that inform and inspire them to identify their own heroic qualities. To that end, eleven local women were interviewed to develop narratives that told their stories. Experimenting with the process and pressed for time, the first interviewees were women involved with the museum, already committed to preserving history, and who were willing to risk exposing their stories to the community. Not a single one saw herself as a candidate for being called a "**shero**," which is exactly the point of the project. Each woman was not only accomplished in her own right, but has in her own way, contributed to the quality of life in the local and larger community. Given an adage that women and girls need to think of their lives as metaphors for the lives of girls and women in the culture, the stories are framed by their ancestry, world and national history, women's history, and cultural norms over the time of their lives. Such framing informs and highlights the challenges they faced and the things they accomplished. The narrative context honors them in ways they deserve.

Eleven women have been profiled to date: Marilyn Baader, Pat Deller, Carol Fearon, Patty Hanford, Pat Kimber, Joan Parsnick, Meta Riestler, Dona Ross, Carole Sanders, Betty Shockey, and Janet Strecker. Eric Rosencrans graciously allowed the use of a cur-

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rently vacant storefront space in the village where the illustrated stories, enlarged and mounted on colorful posters, were hung for viewing by passersby. While Women's History month is over, we would like to continue collecting and recording the stories of women "of an age" from the community as part of our on-going mission of preserving local history. Dozens of women are yet to be interviewed. You might get a call. Anyone interested in sharing their own story or recommending someone to be interviewed, please contact the museum (315-889-7273) or Linda Albrecht (315-406-1264). We also hope to undertake a similar project to honor military veterans in the area.

The Big Question?????

When will the Frontenac re-open? This is a question which the Board of Directors and Officers review monthly. As you know, our docents are all volunteers. We are concerned for their safety and the safety of our guests. While we have COVID screening protocols in place, we do not want to create any undue hardships or risk for our volunteers. Therefore we are being conservative and thoughtful in answering this question. Currently, visitors may schedule a visit on Tuesday mornings from 10am-12N by leaving a message on 315-889-7273 or contacting Pat Kimber at 315-889-5875. We are looking toward a return to normalcy later in the summer as it appears that a good percentage of our population will be vaccinated by that time. Updates and announcements will be posted on our Facebook page and website. Stay tuned!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The museum will be holding several fundraising events this summer. We hope you'll mark your calendar and participate. Not only will you enjoy a great meal, but you will also support the Frontenac's efforts to keep history alive in our area.

July 3rd—Doug's Fish Fry

July 17th—Chicken BBQ with thanks to the Union Springs Lions Club

September 4th—Doug's Fish Fry ends our summer season.

Wag 'n' Walk

Mark your calendar for Saturday, **August 14th** from 10am-3pm for "the Ultimate Dog Lover's Event". There will be a route around the village of Union Springs with fun challenges for the dogs. Of course, all dogs will need to be on their leash. There will be different events such as a demonstration by Max200 on dog agility training, vendors with dog related services and products, raffle of a MacKenzie Childs dog item and much more. It will all conclude at the Frontenac Museum with a hotdog for you and a treat for your "puppy". More details will be forthcoming so please watch our website.

FURNACE TROUBLES

Back in January, Marilyn Baader came into the Museum to do some work in the office and found the office cold and the furnace unresponsive. John Kimber and Dale Katovitch soon determined that a diagnosis and fix was beyond them and called in Mason and Grant. They arrived soon and after taking numerous measurements determined that the furnace's master computer was not functioning. It would be a pricey fix, but one was available locally and installed the next day. Alas, the furnace was still unresponsive! A closer evaluation of the diagnostics revealed the error, and now it seemed that it was the blower motor which was malfunctioning. (Yes, even though it is a hot water system, there is a blower. It forces air into the rapidly burning gas in the furnace.) The new computer was removed, the old one reinstalled, and a blower was located, this time a couple of days out. Luckily, the weather was in a mild stretch, so we didn't have to worry about pipes freezing. The new blower motor arrived, was installed without a hitch, and the old furnace fired up promptly and purred like a kitten. It was her lungs, not her brain! Still pricey, though!

Hidden Heroes

Have you checked out Hidden Heroes on the museum website? We have posted 13 stories of local heroes—some of whom may be new and unknown to you. Each has a fascinating story of how they contributed to local history or beyond. If you subscribe to NEWS on the museum home page, you will automatically receive notification when these stories and other newsworthy events and happenings are posted. It only takes a minute but keeps you in the loop forever! To subscribe, visit the site (www.frontenacmuseum.org) and scroll down to the subscription section on the home page.

Our heroes to date include: Sally Taylor, Mary McGhan Perkins, Charles & Dr. Elizabeth Wakeley, Elisha & Hannah Durkee, Brigadier General George Fleming, Will Hoagland, William Wallace Adams, Vernie Yates, Muriel and Ethel Abbott, Elizabeth Lawton Hazard, Marge Gibbs & Millie Lewis, Rev. L. C. Robie and Junius Irving.



JOIN THE FRONTENAC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Membership is key to our museum. We rely on members to help the Society run programs, maintain the museum, building and grounds, conduct research and store and preserve local history, artifacts and documents.

To make a special memorial gift, please contact the museum at **315-889-7273**.

Membership Dues

Individual Membership \$10

Family Membership \$15

Additional Donation \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Please create my/our membership in the Frontenac Historical Society for 20 _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Email Address: _____

Mail Gifts to: Frontenac Museum, PO Box 338, Union Springs, NY 13160

OR

Access our website: www.frontenacmuseum.org and donate thru PayPal.

The Frontenac is a qualified not-for-profit 501©(3) organization and your contributions may be tax deductible.

The Membership year runs from January 1—December 31.

FROM THE GENEALOGY ROOM

Offered here are answers to two questions frequently asked of our volunteer genealogists.

What does the phrase “once removed” mean?

First cousins share a grandparent, second cousins share a great-grandparent, third cousins share a great-great-grandparent, and so on. The term “removed” refers to the number of generations separating the cousins. So your first cousin once removed is the child (or parent) of your first cousin. Your second cousin once removed is the child (or parent) of your second cousin. And your first cousin twice removed is the grandchild (or grandparent) of your first cousin. The Frontenac can provide you with a chart which will untangle these relationships for you. Just email us at www.frontenac178@gmail.org for a free copy.

Why is it so hard to trace early female ancestors?

Early law in our country created coverture—a set of marriage and property laws that resulted in women losing their identity upon marriage, thus becoming anonymous. Women could not sign contracts, keep any earnings, or own property including any that was hers before the marriage. Her husband even owned their children as well as his wife’s clothing and that of their children, as early wills attest. In contrast, none of these restrictions applied to single women. By the 1840’s, coverture laws began to ease. In 1848, New York passed the Married Women’s Property Act which served as a model for other states and allowed a wife to own the real and personal property she brought to the marriage as well as any property she acquired during the marriage. In 1860, New York passed a law granting married women ownership of their wages and joint authority of their children.

Coverture laws diminished the identity of married women creating significant challenges to family researchers today.



NEW HISTORICAL MARKERS

The William Pomeroy Foundation has approved two historical marker requests from the Frontenac. Most exciting to us is the marker recognizing the former St. Joseph’s Church in Cayuga, as this is the first marker we have requested for that village. This request was especially challenging as the history of the church actually dates to 1853 but primary source documentation to support this date was impossible to find. Thanks to museum Board member Patty Hanford, a resident of Cayuga, who completed the necessary research and submission with the assistance of Marilyn Baader and County Historian, Ruth Bradley. The marker will read:

**ST. JOSEPH’S
CATHOLIC CHURCH BUILT
AND DEDICATED BY BISHOP
BERNARD J. MCQUAID 1870.
INCORPORATED 1872. CONVERTED
TO PRIVATE RESIDENCE 2004**

Our second request recognizes John Irving and will be placed at the site of his home, 13 Cayuga St., where the Irving family resided from 1907-1946. In addition to his work in Ithaca, Irving owned the marble works in town and is responsible for many of the headstones found in village cemeteries. This marker will read:

**JOHN IRVING
SCHOONER MASTER & STONEMASON.
CARVED STONES FOR EARLY
CORNELL U. BUILDINGS & FORMER
CORNELL PUBLIC LIBRARY IN
ITHACA. LIVED HERE 1907-1913.**

We hope you will join us at their unveiling once the dates are announced. We are again indebted to the William Pomeroy Foundation, who is funding the entire cost of these markers and to the Villages of Cayuga and Union Springs for their installation.

**Recommended Changes to the Frontenac Historical Society & Museum
Constitution and By-Laws**

The committee tasked with review of the Constitution and By-Laws has put forth recommended changes as outlined below. Both documents may be amended at any meeting by two-thirds vote of members present, provided notice was given previous to the meeting. Ratification of the recommended amendments will occur at the annual meeting held in August 2021 followed by formal approval and adoption by the Board of Trustees.

Constitution: Article III Membership: Levels of membership have been deleted as published on the current membership card substituting the importance of membership to maintain the facility and the documents within. Membership will continue at \$10/year for individuals and \$15/year for families. Any additional contribution at the time of membership renewal will be considered a welcome donation.

Article VI Election of Officers and Board of Trustees: The election of Board members will continue to be on the plurality of votes cast by members at the annual meeting. However, at the recommendation of our attorney, the Officers of the board will be elected by the Board members following the annual meeting.

By-Laws: Article IV Committees: The *Library Committee* has been combined with the *Museum/Curating Committee* to become *Museum/Curating/Library Committee*. All functions of the three committees will continue. Additionally, a *Buildings and Grounds Committee* has been added with responsibilities for overall well-being of the physical space and ground management and maintenance of heating and plumbing equipment. The *Nominating Committee* has been eliminated as it will become an ad-hoc committee appointed annually by the President.

These changes will be reviewed with members at the annual membership meeting in August. If you have any questions regarding these recommended amendments, please contact Pat Kimber, President or Marilyn Baader, Committee Chair at www.frontenac178@gmail.org

**Frontenac Historical Society
PO Box 338
Union Springs, NY 13160**

PLACE
STAMP
HERE