



Frontenac Historical Society and Museum

Summer 2025

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178 Cayuga Street, P.O. Box 338, Union Springs, N.Y. 13160

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What's Happening at the Museum?



Who else has a professional artist paint their front doors? Frontenac Museum Board President and professional artist Jennifer Soucy has recently painted the new front doors at the museum. The doors were purchased through a grant from The McIntosh Foundation and were installed in June by Doug Wood. Painting was the final step, and Jennifer stepped up to get the job done.

Meanwhile, professional exhibit preparator Paul Pawlaczyk contemplates potential layout of the redesigned Tom Eldred Military History Room. He has undertaken a thorough review of the artifacts and stories in the room, as the museum adds four new glass display cases to the room. The most visited exhibit has been notably crowded with many items in small spaces. When completed, each item will have its own space and explanation. A new addition to the room is the Revolutionary War rifle that can be seen mounted above the Civil War uniforms of local soldiers. The rifle was the gift of the Yawger family, among the earliest citizens of the township.



Frontenac Historical Society and Museum~

August 17, 2025 6pm

The annual meeting is an opportunity for members only to hear from the President and the Treasurer about the accomplishments and the financial position of the museum for 2024. Additionally new board members are introduced and take the oath of office.



This meeting will precede the program scheduled at 7pm entitled “Ran Away with the Circus!” given by Jane Oakes. Jane has been described as “one of the area’s most popular historical speakers whose well-illustrated programs are always lively and engaging.”

The Board of Trustees encourages your attendance and participation.



In Remembrance

Dr. Sally Roesch Wagner
Friend of the Frontenac

We mourn the passing of Dr. Sally Roesch Wagner, a pioneering historian, author, and educator. Dr. Wagner passed away on June 11, 2025 at age 82.

Dr. Wagner was a towering figure in the field of women’s history. As one of the first individuals in the U.S. to earn a doctorate in women’s studies, she devoted her life to amplifying the stories of women whose contributions had been erased or sidelined. Through her scholarship, teaching, and advocacy, she reshaped the narrative of American history to be more truthful, inclusive, and just. Her generosity of spirit ensured that others — students, colleagues, and institutions like ours — could continue that essential work.

She was the founding director of the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation and Social Justice Dialogue Center, created to honor and restore the legacy of the radical suffragist Matilda Joslyn Gage. The relentless pursuit of justice led her to establish the Gage Center in Fayetteville, New York, a home for truth-telling, activism, and community engagement.

Her impact as a scholar and public intellectual was far-reaching. Dr. Wagner authored numerous books, including *We Want Equal Rights: The Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Influence on the Women’s Rights Movement* (Native Voices, 2020), and edited *The Women’s Suffrage Movement* (Penguin Classics, 2019), a foundational anthology of writings from the American struggle. She was featured in major public media projects, including PBS’s *The Vote*, and appeared in CNN’s special reports.

Dr. Wagner also served as adjunct faculty in the University Honors Program at Syracuse University and was a founding voice in the creation of one of the first college-level women’s studies programs in the country. She brought not only academic rigor to her teaching, but also a deep sense of humanity, purpose, and resolve.

Dr. Wagner was a treasured friend of the National Women’s History Museum. ***She was also a Friend of the Frontenac Museum as a presenter and supporter, and donated the four large posters seen in the Women’s Forgotten History Room.***

We extend our condolences to her family, colleagues, and generations of students, readers, and activists she inspired. Dr. Wagner faced her death, her family shared, “with unwavering love, deep gratitude, and without fear.” Her legacy will continue to echo in every effort to reclaim women’s rightful place in history.

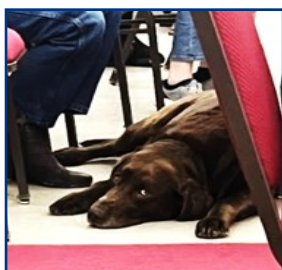
How Fortunate to Hear These Wonderful Speakers!

Training Service Dogs to Companion Autistic Children was a welcoming program to start off the summer season and was presented by Fred Horning, who is an engaging speaker. He shared his training methods with thoughtfulness and caring. Fred brought his two service dogs with him, and an audience member also brought her own service dog. The three dogs quietly roamed the audience during the talk. Eight children attended with their parents, and the dogs were loved by all the children as well as the adults. We learned why Fred chose chocolate Labs as his service dogs to train, why he started to train service dogs, their value as service dogs, and best ways to train any service dog.

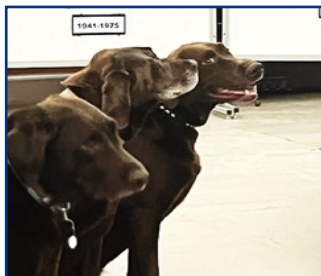
Fred is committed. As a daily reminder, he reads a quote posted on his refrigerator that states, "The meaning of life is to find your gift, and the purpose of life is to give it away."



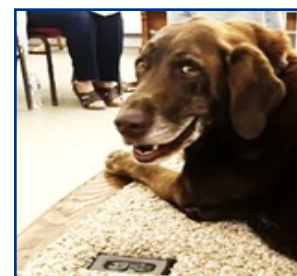
A young family with an autistic son learns how these remarkable dogs are chosen and trained.



Fred's well-being is foremost in his service dog's mind, even when resting.



With a word from Fred, the service dogs snap to attention, awaiting instruction.



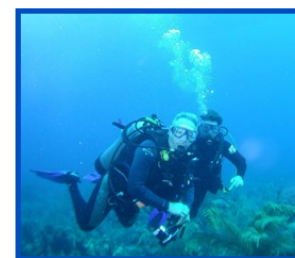
The eldest Lab, Henry, seems to smile as he listens.



Liz Kreitinger, Steward and Executive Director of the **Cayuga Lake Watershed Network**, is an environmental scientist with degrees from Cornell University and its Department of Natural Resources and the Environment. Her talk reminded us that we are privileged to have abundant freshwater, a vital resource that sustains our communities and ecosystems.

Liz took us on a journey through the 850 square-mile Cayuga Lake Watershed sharing the challenges our land and water are currently facing. Attendees gained insight into the complex and dedicated network of people and organizations working to protect and restore our water, as well as resources to further our own stewardship of our watershed so that it will be sustained for future generations.

Our World Underwater was given by scuba diver, Henry "Mac" MacDonald with his wonderful wife Joan, who assisted him with additional information at times. The photos were brilliant in color and the aquatic examples showed indescribable beauty in underwater nature. Photos of a shipwreck, manatees, turtles, sharks, brilliant colored fish and so much more. He has an upcoming scuba adventure trip set from October 25 to November 3 in Curacao. He welcomed anyone interested in diving or interested in visiting the area to contact him for details. **What an opportunity!**



More Programs Ahead!

August 17th – **"Ran Away With the Circus!"** with Jane Oakes



September 14th – **The History of Willard Memorial Chapel** with Sydney Fischer, who will take us on a picturesque tour of this beautiful chapel.



ECHOES OF THE PAST

By Patti Myska

Genealogy – A line of descent traced continuously from an ancestor.

John and Pat Kimber moved to Union Springs in 1990 after purchasing an 1827 house located at 13 Cayuga Street. With the dwelling then over 160 years old, they wondered what interesting stories there were to be found about the house and its former residents. It did not take long for the Kimbers to begin their journey of uncovering this history and to be bitten by the genealogy bug!

Research revealed that Almeron and Evalina Wright Durkee were the original owners of the home in 1827, which was purchased using the \$500 Evalina received from her grandfather's estate. Following communication between Kimbers and a Cornell Architect, a parallel search of the families was conducted, and online real estate transactions found recent Durkee descendants Vyn Ann and Jack Blackman in California. Contact was made, which resulted in a budding friendship and genuine connection! A reflection of this connection was displayed by the benefacting of two spectacular portraits of Almeron and Evalina to Pat and John, which are proudly hanging in their parlor.

After meeting the Frontenac Museum genealogy researcher, Norma Bilak, Norma taught Pat how to research and document family history. With her help, Pat was able to submit the rigorous application for DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) acceptance of Pat's family members that served in the Revolutionary War. Although Pat identified at least seven ancestors that fought in the war, six were accepted by DAR (due to the strict document requirements). Upon acceptance of membership, she secured a blue and white ribbon that includes the DAR insignia, her membership in the Owasco Chapter and a bar engraved with each ancestor's name.

The six ancestors are:

James Cronkite (4th great-grandfather) - Albany County, served in the Mohawk Valley campaign
Isaac Dodd (4th great-grandfather) - only war officer; Captain, (currently) Bloomfield, New Jersey
James French Sr. (4th great-grandfather) - Starks Brigade, New Hampshire, served at Bunker Hill
James French Jr. (3rd great-grandfather) - he served and was injured at Bunker Hill at age 14
Squire Read – (4th great-grandfather) - Corporal, served at Saratoga & Ticonderoga
Jabez Russell – (4th great-grandfather) - was in the Bedford Minutemen, which was the second line to shoot at the Redcoats at the Battle of Concord.

Having seven ancestors that fought in the Revolution is considered pay dirt in genealogy, but Pat's golden lineage doesn't stop there. The following are a few interesting and amazing relatives: (see pg.8)



"THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN UTICA"



John and Pat Kimber
Almeron and Evalina Durkee in portraits



DAR – Pat's Revolutionary War soldier ancestors

Hats Off to Ruth!



We are pleased to announce that Ruth Bradley, Cayuga County Historian, was the winner of the drawing for the MacKenzie-Childs Courtly

Check Compote donated by Claire Morehouse. This was the first of two raffles planned for the summer and is designed to raise funds for our general operating expenses. Ruth, with her most generous and kind heart, has returned the compote so that it may be raffled next summer to again raise **more funds** for the museum. We are most grateful to both Ruth and Claire for their generosity.



Vice President BJ Bellen (right) held the beautiful MacKenzie-Childs fruit compote and President Jen Soucy (middle) held the ticket box, while Bud Shattuck picked the winning ticket, which, as it turned out, belonged to Cayuga County Historian, Ruth Bradley (below left).



You may purchase tickets for the next raffle during museum open hours, programs, at the upcoming Doug's Fish Fry on September 2nd (Labor Day weekend) or from a museum board member.

The current raffle features a beautiful handmade and hand-painted



Rosy Check Ceramic fluted cake stand, trimmed with gold luster and stamped by the Aurora artisans involved in its creation. Valued at \$500, it was generously donated by MacKenzie-Childs. Raffle tickets are \$2 each or 3 tickets for \$5.

Take a chance! You will help the Museum.



MUSEUM MEMBERS RIDE IN 4TH OF JULY PARADE



July 4th, 2025, was one of those picture-perfect Central New York summer days we will long remember. Eric Rosenkrantz, Patti Myska, and Jen Soucy met at AJ Smith Elementary School, along with Dale Katovitch and members of the Community Band, who rode in a wagon pulled along by Eric's truck. Eric, who generously offered to drive in the parade, covered his pickup truck with stars and stripes and the museum's banners. In the back, chairs were placed so that Eric's wife Fran could watch over the band members in the wagon, while Jen and Patti waved flags, sang, and played a tambourine. People of all ages turned out to enjoy the parade and the Community Band. At the end of the parade route, everyone gathered at Frontenac Park for a remembrance and a special choral performance by the students of the Adventist Academy.

Next year, we will celebrate this nation's Semiquincentennial, or 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, which will be celebrated nationwide throughout 2026.



YO HO HO AND A BOTTLE!

The A+ Bottle Redemption Center, located on Old State Route 326, is accepting returns which will then benefit the Frontenac Museum. It is so easy to make this donation. When you drop off your returns, please let them know that the proceeds are to go to the Frontenac Museum, and they will do the rest. This is another way in which you can help the Frontenac keep history alive! Thank you in advance for your support.



HODGES FAMILY DONATIONS

Union Springs residents Dick and Joyce Hodges have recently donated several items to the Frontenac Museum. Highlights on display include a photograph of Mary Ann Day Hodges (left), mounted in a curved bubble-glass frame. This portrait can be seen in the Genealogy Room. A beautifully carved scrollwork inbox (middle) holds a copy of the Union Springs Advertiser and is hung in the side entryway. The Hodges also donated a black picture frame with a raised gold design (right) that is currently undergoing restoration to its chipped corners. Other items not shown include an intricate crazy quilt embellished with cross-stitched handwriting, now draped across a screen in the Women's Forgotten History Room, and a hand-held, fully functional, miniature sewing machine, now housed in the Union Springs Room. Please be sure to look for these and other unique items with a local history during your next visit.

ACANTHUS HUNGARICUS

(Prickly Bear's Breeches)



This summer, visitors to the museum were surprised and delighted to see this wonderful addition to the flower bed. While many people grow acanthus plants for their attractive, shiny, deeply lobed leaves, they also produce a wonderful 2' to 6' tall spike lined with purple and white flowers. Acanthus is also deer-resistant.

United Way—Day of Caring—August 7th

What is the Day of Caring? Nucor Steel originated this concept in Cayuga County in 2023 when Jason Curtis arrived in Auburn to be General Manager. Part of Nucor Steel's mission is to be stewards in the communities where they live and work. Nucor partners with United Ways across the nation.

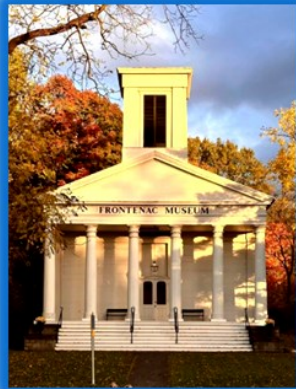


What is involved? Day of Caring is an opportunity for volunteers to sign up and tackle projects as non-profits serving Cayuga County residents. Projects range from painting stair repair, gardening and more! In 2024, nearly 220 volunteers completed 16 different projects across the county. The goal is to see this event grow into more regions of Cayuga County.

Will Frontenac Museum participate? Yes, this year we will have 3 volunteers to do gardening to freshen the flower beds and to wash the exterior windows in the exhibit section.

What does the Museum need to do on August 7th? Welcome volunteers, provide any materials needed, work alongside them as able and celebrate with them when the projects are completed.

Include the Frontenac in Your Will or Estate



Preserving history

Ensuring the continued enrichment of our community for years to come is as easy as naming the Frontenac Historical Society & Museum in your will or designating it as a beneficiary to your retirement plan, IRA or other financial account.

An easy way to give

There is no minimum for the gift.

You can change your plans at any time.

Help preserve local history.

How to word

I give, devise and bequeath to the Frontenac Historical Society & Museum, a 501©3 non-profit located in Union Springs (enter amount or percentage of the estate or description of property) for (designate the purpose, if desired, or leave blank for gifts to be used to address the greatest need).

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.

(continued from page 4)

Suffrage activist Susan B. Anthony - Susan is Pat's second cousin, four times removed. Her mother is Pat's cousin five times removed. Susan's great-grandfather is Pat's five times great-grandfather. Note: "removed" indicates a generational difference, it signifies how many generations apart two relatives are in relation to their shared ancestor.

First female in battle in a war zone, Annella G. French – Annella is Pat's mother! She was a nurse overseas in WWII. When caring for the German POW's, she used to communicate with them by singing to them. Annella would contract Pappataci fever while serving in one of three battles. The military subsequently paid her money due to the illness, which she used to purchase a home with her military husband, Robert P. Scheduling. Annella had four brothers, three that also served. The siblings were all musicians, one playing with the likes of Tommy Dorsey. When Annella was overseas, her brothers recorded the song "Always" on an 16RPM record and sent it to her to lift her spirits.

Dubbed most beautiful woman in Utica, Helen Keyes French – In the 1880's, Helen's picture was printed in a Utica newspaper as their most beautiful woman! Helen was born with a caul (piece of membrane covering her face, like a veil). Due to this rare event, she was believed to have psychic powers and later conducted seances.

Hoover's Relief Mission member, the Reverend William Scheduling - William came from Berlin in 1905. Despite not speaking English when he immigrated, within two years of his arrival he received his doctorate and was part of Hoover's Relief Mission to Russia between 1921-1923. William settled in Wisconsin and traveled by horse to conduct religious services in both German and English.

Peter Davis – Steven was killed by Indians at the Delaware Water Gap during the Revolutionary War.

Pat and John are tireless volunteers and board members of the Frontenac Museum. With over 25 years of genealogical research thus far, Pat is the expert on Genealogy at the Museum. I am truly grateful to her for her guidance, and for sharing her knowledge and suggestions for the research requests we receive. Both Pat and John are true gems!



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AFFIX
STAMP
HERE