

# Frontenac Historical Society and Museum

Fall 2022

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178 Cayuga St., Union Springs, NY 13160

## Festival of Trees 2022

### Cayuga Lake Through the Years....

That's the theme for the Frontenac Historical Society's Christmas Tree Entry in the Festival of Trees at the Ward O'Hara Agricultural & Country Living Museum. This year, we chose to focus on Cayuga Lake--- at least our part of it. The 'lake' part of it was fairly easy---boats, fish and other critters. Slimy looking fish, fish nets and poles decorate the branches. Local artist, Jen Soucy, painted glass like balls with sailboats. Small, crafted sail boats join them.

Residents who live on the lake may also think of swamps, turtles and frogs, so we have included them at the base of the tree while some rest on logs and a wood burl under the tree at the edges of the sky-blue lake that surrounds the tree. A Red Jacket Yacht Race floats on the 'water' as the legendary lake monster "Greenie" peeks from under it--- with a goofy smile. Red winged back birds roost in the tall cattails and swamp grasses that rise from the swamp behind the tree.

That takes care of the Lake part of the theme and certainly those items have existed 'through the years', but it's pictures from our archives that tell the rest of the story. Ice harvesting at Cayuga, springtime "lake cleaning" at Farley's Point, steamboats, and other items represent human activity on the lake over the hundred years or so since we've had pictures taken to memorialize them. There are pictures of the State Parks on both sides of the northern section of the lake, as well as pictures of such familiar places as the Deerhead and Wolfe's Restaurant. We know that there are dozens of other places lost to history for which we do not have photos in our collection. If you have any, please post them on our Facebook page.

Visitors to the Agricultural Museum will enjoy over 125 decorated trees. You can vote on your favorite tree. Hint: (**Frontenac Tree is #2**).



## We Thank CNY Tuesdays

In partnership with NBC3 News, CNY Tuesdays is a weekly campaign to recognize the stories of Central New York non-profits who are making a difference in their community. Adam Weitsman, owner of Upstate Shredding, and his daughter, Clover, are empowering area non-profits through weekly \$2,000 grants nominated and voted upon by community members.

We are so grateful to our supporters who nominated the Frontenac for a grant. The strength of these nominations resulted in the Frontenac being selected as one of 5 finalists moving us to the voting phase. Once again, our friends, champions and community members rallied to get out the vote and support the Frontenac. We received the greatest number of votes resulting in us receiving a \$2,000 grant. Additionally the Frontenac was featured on NBC3 News at 7 on November 22 when board member Pat Kimber was interviewed by reporter Michael Benny.

The story of the Frontenac is one of preserving and promoting local history. We are grateful to the Weitsman family, NBC Channel 3 and our committed supporters who enabled us to receive this generous grant. The Board of Trustees is exploring several possibilities for its use. The final decision will be announced once it is made.



The Oswego Valley Fiddlers performed in September.

### SUMMER PROGRAMS A SUCCESS!

The program committee for 2022 planned and presented six outstanding programs for all ages and interests. The previous newsletter spoke about the first three, and now the final three will be summarized. We are grateful to the speakers and groups who give their time and talent, and to you who come and enjoy learning about history.

Claire Morehouse shared parts of her upcoming book entitled ***Beginnings of Business***. The years between 1800-1870 saw Union Springs boom as a village. Cayuga Lake, the Mill Ponds and quarries made Union Springs an ideal location.

In September, we were treated to a concert by ***The Oswego Valley Fiddlers***. What a treat to hear the fiddles, spoons and kazoos reminding us of the Appalachian style of music. There was opportunity for the audience to play the spoons and *Oh - what a joyous sound!*

October welcomed back Walt Gable to regale us with a Halloween thrill entitled ***Haunted Tales, Hoaxes & Strange but True Stories of the Finger Lakes***. Seneca County historian, Walt is a true storyteller, and everyone was listening to know where these sites might be in our area. Ghost stories anyone?

Next year's programs are in the planning stages. We would love to hear what you would like to know more about or if you could recommend a speaker or participate in sharing your talent.

Contact Tom Parsnick at **315.889.7273** and leave him a message with an idea or offer to participate.





## **A Walk Through Cayuga's History...**

The Cayuga Waterfront Festival, in its 15<sup>th</sup> year, is a fun-filled family event with a youth fishing tournament, softball tournament, many vendors, live music throughout the day, and dynamite fireworks to conclude the day. It is a chance to showcase the village and Patty Hanford, a resident and museum board member, was there to highlight the Frontenac Historical Society.

The display was entitled Walk Through Cayuga's History and portrayed a pictorial presentation of Cayuga's history from the 1700's to the present time. Highlights of events from the early Native American presence, the construction of Cayuga's bridge (the longest in the United States in the early 1800's), and early industries that led to community growth were shown with pictures and explanations.

This amazing presentation of Cayuga Village was developed by museum board member Linda Albrecht with many thanks from the Waterfront Committee.

## **Renewal Time!**

Your membership renewal is so important to us. It helps us keep history alive in our community; it substantiates our mission, assures us that we are moving in the right direction with the community and shows that we are valued by you.

Please consider renewing your membership for 2023, and also making an additional donation to the museum. Every dollar helps! All the work done at the museum is done by volunteers who are priceless to our mission.

## **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](http://www.frontenacmuseum.org) and donate thru PayPal.

The Frontenac is a qualified not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization and your contributions may be tax deductible. The membership year runs from January 1—December 31.

## **Welcome Yorkers!**

On Thursday, Oct. 20th, the Frontenac welcomed members of the Union Springs Middle/High School Yorkers Club.

The Yorkers Club was founded by the New York State Historical Association to facilitate middle school and high school students with a better understanding of NYS history. Local clubs would form at middle and high schools and, together with an adult advisor, students work on projects pertaining to NYS history, compete in competitions with other clubs, and take field trips around the state to visit historically significant sites. While the NYSHA was dissolved in 2017, many schools have Yorkers groups that are still active, as is the case with Union Springs CSD.

The Museum was happy to host over a dozen members of the middle and high school Yorkers Club, after school, as they discovered all the local history that the Frontenac has to offer. It was our pleasure to show these young people all of the local treasures that we house at the Frontenac Historical Society and Museum.

If any club or group is interested in a private tour of all that we have to offer, please don't hesitate to call the museum and leave a message.

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

### **+ Red Cross Heroes +**

Another successful American Red Cross blood drive was held on October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Union Springs Fire Station, thanks in part to the volunteers from the Frontenac Historical Society, who helped set up and take down tables and chairs, greet donors, check in and thank blood donors, to ensure they have a positive donation experience. Blood donors of all types and a few who had never given before gave blood or platelets, donated 34 units, which will help keep the blood supply from dropping ahead of the holidays.

People of all blood types are needed for the blood drives, especially platelet donors and those with type O blood. You can book an appointment to Donate using the Red Cross Blood Donor App or calling 1.800.733.1767. A blood donor card or driver's license is required at check-in.

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

## **Our Backbone is Strong!**

Since the Frontenac's inception in 1976, donations of historically interesting items have formed the backbone of our collection. The Frontenac is formally chartered as a museum by the New York State Department of Education. As such, we adhere to their museum standards and best practices. Our Curating Team meets every Tuesday to review, inventory and archival store donations or to plan how the donation can best be used to tell the stories of our local history.

To date, 1,280 collections have been generously given to the Frontenac. A collection may contain one or many items. In some instances, a collection, such as that given by the Hecht family or the Brightman family, may contain hundreds of items. Each item in the collection is assigned a unique accession number which is then entered into a data base, together with a description of the item, name of donor, history of the item if available and where it is housed within the museum. It is then labeled with its accession number and placed in archival storage, as appropriate. Each donor receives an acknowledgement of their donation which may be used for tax purposes.



Some examples of recent donations to our collection include a USCS letter sweater and class dog which belonged to Bertrand Mott, donated by his wife Lois Mott; Susan LeGore's wedding dress blouse worn in her 1842 wedding to Farley Grant Fish, donated by their descendant, Grant Fish; memorabilia of the local Rebekah Lodge donated by Georgianna Tracy; salvaged relics of the steamship Frontenac donated by Scott Peters; a painting of Frontenac Island by William Henry Yates as well as the Civil War Company Clerk records of Esek Hoff donated by Hoff's descendant Ken Harris.

We love to hear the stories behind each donation. Ken Harris and his family traveled from their home in Tallahassee FL to deliver their treasured donations. Ken shared with the Curating Team many stories of hardships experienced by both Esek during war as well as those of his wife, Debra Carr Hoff, who remained home at 17 Center St. in Union Springs. The museum is grateful to present-day owner, Janine Irwin, for permitting the Harris's to tour her home and share Ken's wonderful childhood memories.

Ken's mother, Georgene Smith, moved to this home in 1931 at age 6, together with her sister, mother and grandparents. One of the first friends she made was her next door neighbor, Vernie (McGulpin) Yates, who resided with her father, the artist William Henry Yates. In 1946, Vernie gave the painting to Georgene and her husband as a wedding present. Vernie told Georgene that the painting had never been finished but she wanted her to have it as a reminder of her and their friendship. It was the wish of Georgene, now 97 years old, that the painting belong to the people of Union Springs, who know the island well and who remember Vernie and her father. The painting is now displayed in the museum, together with photos and artist related items used by William Henry Yates. It tells the story of two wonderful families tied together in friendship and love of community. *Read more on Esek and Debra Hoff, go to the website under NEWS, scroll to page 8*