



# DHS News

The Official Newsletter  
of the

Deposit Historical Society

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The Deposit Historical Society

145 Second Street

Deposit, New York 13754

(607) 467-4422

Website: [www.deposithistoricalsociety.org](http://www.deposithistoricalsociety.org)

*Note: You can view our newsletters with color pictures in pdf format on our website!*

I would like to thank everyone for their generous donation in support of the roof of the Bundy House and garage. With your donations and a grant from the George A. and Margaret Mee Foundation, we do have the money for the roof, and we are waiting on the availability of the roofer. Some of the other projects we are working towards would be the front entrance steps and platform, repointing the bricks on the bank building, and windows at the Bundy house. Your support has been invaluable.

Our programs are held on the third Wednesday of the month. However, the Museum visiting hours are now closed until next Memorial Day weekend. We do accept appointments if you are interested.

Our research team still meets Tuesday mornings from 9:30 -12:00. Please give them a call to set up a time for your research or walk through the back door of the Bundy House at 143 Second Street on Tuesday mornings. If you have any family history that you would like to share, please give us a call. {(607) 467-4422}.

*President Terry Raymond*

## John Darrow as Dewitt Clinton

On June 15, 2022, the Historical Society welcomed John Darrow, local historian, who came in the character as the Dewitt Clinton instrumental in the building of the Erie Canal. The 363-mile Erie Canal was built to reduce the time and money involved in getting products from Buffalo (Lake Erie) to Albany (Hudson River). It was built between 1817-1825 and within 10 years the tolls had paid for its construction. The canal transformed New York City into a major seaport and opened the interior of the U.S. to settlement.



# Dennis Valente - Vintage Phonographs

On May 18, 2022, the Historical Society welcomed Dennis Valente who did a musical presentation and history of vintage phonographs. The several different models of early phonographs brought by Dennis were presented and explained. He also explained how Edison and Johnson, founder of Victor Company, developed and competed in the industry. The recording part of the cylinder was first made from Bakelite and then out of wax that had to be shipped to England to be electroplated. Edison had the singers speak directly into the horn, while Johnson had the singers record with a microphone which resulted in better sound. The phonograph in the museum, which he had cleaned and fixed ahead of time, was unique because the horn was enclosed in the cabinet. This phonograph was one of the 1000 made, and it probably cost a week's pay at the time. At the end, Dennis gave instructions to several Historical Society members on how to operate the machine. Then he played cylinders of old-time music.



# “Big Chuck” D’Imperio - “Open Houses”

On August 17, 2022, the Historical Society welcomed “Big Chuck” D’Imperio, who did a discussion and book signing of his recent book *“Open House” - Stories of Upstate Mansions.*”

The Nash House in Buffalo was the home of Edward J. Edward Nash Sr., a leader of the Civil Rights Movement. The House is a perfectly preserved example of 1958 Black America. The words behind the Woman’s Suffrage Movement were written by Matilda Gage in the Gage house in Fayetteville. The Wadsworth Homestead, consisting of 300 acres, in Geneseo, was the home of seven generations, of Wadsworths, beginning with the 1790 founder of Geneseo. The Wilder Home in Malone was the original farm of Almanzo Wilder, husband of Laura Ingalls, the author of the books *“Farm Boy”* and *“Little House on the Prairie.”* Laura Ingalls based her books on the boyhood tales told to her by Almanzo. Many events from the stories occurred and are documented in the house. In Middleburgh, one can find Dr. Best’s Medical Museum. This house was built in 1884, and was used for over a century by a father and son who practiced medicine. Hyde Hall in Cooperstown was the home



*continued on page 7*

## Beatrice Daddis-Summers and Barbara Fenning-Acker

On July 20, 2022, Beatrice Daddis-Summers and Barbara Fenning-Acker, shared their songs and musical talents. The local duo performed original tunes as well as popular and old tyme music. The time flew by as the duo sang 17 songs, including “Across the Great

Divide” (to honor former Historical Society Smitty Axtell), “Smoke Along the Tracks”, “The Last Cigarette” and ended with “Shine on Me.” Sadly, their time was up, and the music ended. Hopefully, they will return in the future



## Jack Shay on Movie Theaters of Bing



On September 21, 2022, the Deposit Historical Society welcomed Jack Shay, a former journalist

and author of several books. Jack gave a historical account of the theaters past and present in the Triple Cities

He began with the origins of motion pictures from after the Civil War to the 1900s. There once were 56 theaters in the triple cities area, with some changing names over time, such as the “Grand” to the “Art Theater” in Binghamton and the “Goodwill” to the “Enjoy Cinema” in Johnson City. The Capital was once the largest of the area theaters with 2,684 seats; it was 6 stories high, and had brass and glass everywhere. It had hosted concerts by Liberace and the Pittsburg Symphony, and it sheltered beauty and gift shops along with law offices and insurance companies. It closed in 1966, and its site today hosts a parking lot. The presentation ended with the crowd asking questions and informing Jack about Deposit’s State Theater. Our Deposit Theater had earned a mention on Jack’s 4-page handout listing the history of all the theaters. It was an interesting evening enjoyed by all.



# A Ladies Tea



The Deposit Historical Society hosted a Ladies Tea to raise money for the roof project at the Bundy House part of the museum. Twenty six ladies attended, and \$450 was raised. Did you know that in the 1800's Anne, Dutchess of Bedford in Great Britain, first started afternoon teas as a result of the "sinking feeling" she would get midafternoon. She would request tea and scones, and soon she was inviting friends to join her. Tea was also originally poured into cups with no handles. Later a saucer was added to match the cup, and the hot tea was poured into the saucer from the cup for sipping as the tea cooled. This is where the expression of "having a dish of tea" came from. Tea was brought to America in the late 1600's via the Dutch West India Company to the settlement of New Amsterdam (now known as New York state) and it became a ritual in many upper class households. A little known superstition today, dating back to the 1700's goes something like this, "Dry tea goes in the cup first, followed by the sugar, then water, and last milk. To put milk in your tea before sugar is to cross the path of love, perhaps never marrying!" Also, bad luck will follow if you leave your spoon in your tea cup! Lastly, the proper etiquette to eat a scone is to break it into bite size pieces and eat with your fingers. The ladies attending the tea also enjoyed a program presented by Denise Smith from River Bee Honey. The program was all about honey, but really it was all about the bees. Denise shared many fun and interesting facts about bees and honey. The historical society is looking forward to hosting another tea in the near future.





# DAR Meetig



The Historical Society and the Koo Koose chapter of the DAR hosted the August meeting of the southern tier DAR chapter. Ladies from 12 local chapters attended the meeting and all were in awe of our “gem” of a museum. Local artist Tim Beers spoke on his craft of scrimshaw, shared beautiful pieces that he created, and answered the many questions that the group had. The Koo Koose chapter donated baskets for a silent auction and the \$200 proceeds from the auction were donated to the Historical Society





# Sled Factory and Iron Foundry Support Each Other



One of the recent items in the Deposit Historical is Deposit-made sled on loan from Ellen and Jim Ficurilli. Jim worked with past president Smitty Axtell for many years and wanted to preserve the sled for display at the museum for all to enjoy.



The sled factory was originally used as a school, known as No. 4 school, or 'Pine Grove School.' In 1881, the Old Pine Grove and another small local school were sold for \$2,000. In 1886, a pen sketch of the village shows the building being occupied by the Deposit Manufacturing Company, aka, Sled Factory. An 1895 Broome County illustrated book reported that "The Deposit Manufacturing company turns out annually 50,000 hand-sleds and gives employment to twenty people." In the 1897 "Directo-

ry" published by the Episcopal Church, the Deposit Manufacturing Company is identified as being at 24 Fourth Street, Deposit.

In the 1870's, the Deposit Manufacturing Company, owned by a Mr. Horton, started making hand sleds and shovels. The runners for the sleds were made at the local foundry (Deposit Iron Company). The ironwork for the company's sleds, coasters, baby-cutters, "Imperial" and "Excelsior" snow shovels were made at the Iron Foundry. In 1897, there was an ad in the *Courier* advertising "wooden coasters." Another 1897 *Courier* ad for the Deposit Manufacturing Company, Inc. showed two of their current models. One, named the "Champion," was dolled up a bit. In 1899, it was reported that the sled factory shipped more than 5,000 sleds. A 1901 *Courier* stated that a former Virginia resident, C.M. Hill, had been employed as a hand decorator of sleds; it commented "Mr. Hill is certainly an artist in his line."

The sleds had iron runners and iron side rails to which the iron struts (supports) were directly fastened. The only wood on these models was the body platform. In the beginning, this design left a portion of the iron handrail projecting out the rear of both sides. According to former town judge, Paul Page, one young man received a serious wound when his sled hit a stationary object causing the sled to come to an abrupt halt. The young man continued forward causing the rear iron projection to puncture him in the groin. The later models had the inside rails topped by wooden "slats" extending the wood rearward beyond the iron-shod wood. These were blunted in the rear to prevent such injuries.

The business was discontinued sometime between 1901—04. In 1907, the building was bought by E.D. Jester and converted to a two-apartment dwelling by J.H. Phillips. The sled factory turned apartment building still stands on Fourth Street.

About 1875, A.P. Blatchley established a foundry and machine shop. The Deposit Iron Company (The Foundry) was located in the present Town of

Sanford garage parking lot. The 1895 Broome County illustrated book reported that “the Deposit Iron Company manufacturers of gray and malleable iron, recently increased its capital stock and doubled the capacity of its plant. This concern is under the management of E.P. Halpin and has an annual output of \$20,000 to \$25,000.” (Inflation: earnings today would be \$706,685.71 to \$883,357.14) Mr. Vosburg became owner of the business which then used his patented invention of the revolving annealing furnace. All employees said it was superior to any other furnace.

The foundry also manufactured the malleable iron parts which went into an 1899 patented invention

of C.P. Knapp’s, “The Positive Carpet Stretcher and Tacker.” It was advertised to stretch carpet anywhere and was self-feeding with tacks that were driven true and never missed. He took up shop in the Pearl Button Factory (present site of the Deposit Central High School) . There were 25 employees that put out 250 machines a day which still resulted in a 5,000-back order.

It should be noted that both the sled and Mr. Knapp’s “Positive Carpet Stretcher and Tacker” are in the museum for viewing.

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## “Big Chuck” *continued from page 2*

of George Clarke who was one of the most influential families in the early Cooperstown. He was a visionary creator, and his large house contains all the innovations of the times. Woodchuck Lodge in Roxbury was the home of John Burroughs who was a world famous conservationists in the late 1800s. His home reflects his spartan life style, but Burroughs also had important

visitors such as Henry Ford and Thomas Edison.

The “*Open House*” book features 35 famous, little known homes that Chuck visited and investigated. If you wish to get the details of the houses, Chuck’s book contains a map of the houses’ locations, their opening hours, and interesting highlights and tidbits.

# DEPOSIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2022 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

**All programs are free of charge and everyone is welcome. Please check our website for any changes or cancellations. All programs are followed by refreshments in the train room.**

OCTOBER 19th Wed. 7pm

SAMANTHA MISA, folklorist and author, presenting “*Witches of the Catskills.*” Book signing and refreshments.

NOVEMBER 16th Wed. 7pm

“*Extraordinary Courage*” -Trailblazers of Nursing, a portrayal written and directed by Judith Present. You will meet Clara Barton, Dorothea Dix and Ruby Bradley, all Trailblazers.

DECEMBER 4th Sun. 2pm

“A HOLDREGE FAMILY CHRISTMAS.” Free Holiday Musical Event. Refreshments will be served.

## *Membership Renewal Time Again*

If you are not a Lifetime member, it is time to renew your membership for 2022.

Membership rates are as follows:

Lifetime -- \$150

Annual -- \$20

Please submit your membership renewal promptly to Deposit Historical Society,  
145 Second Street, Deposit, NY 13754.

*Thank you for your ongoing support.*

### ***Contact the DHS News editors for information, suggestions, or address changes...***

If you have information to share with us about our mysteries, historical events, or suggestions for new articles or projects at the Museum, **or if you have moved**, mail it to DHS Newsletter editors Michael and Gail Musante at 145 Second Street, Deposit, NY 13754, or email it to one of us at [gail.musante@gmail.com](mailto:gail.musante@gmail.com) We will be delighted to hear from you! Thanks!!

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