LOOKING BACK

Six Huge Panels Showcase Hague's History

by Hague Historical Society President Ginger Henry Kuenzel

In October, we spotlighted number one of the six panels that were created in 2007, Hague's bicentennial year, to celebrate the town's history. They are on display in the court room in the community center and we encourage everyone to spend time reading about the fascinating history of our town.

This month we take a look at panel number two, entitled *Stuff of History*. With its focus on objects and documents, it addresses questions such as, "Why do people like this stuff?" and "What can we learn from this stuff?"



Many of us save objects because they convey a personal connection with a family member, perhaps a parent or grandparent. Or, maybe it's something that's been handed down through many, many generations. However, if we don't record the relevant information about the object and our connection to it, those who come after us might never know its history and meaning when we're gone. That's why it's important to preserve it and to record the stories about it. This stuff could be furniture or other objects; it could be letters or photographs; or it could be personal journals, business ledgers, or meeting minutes.

The Hague Historical Society (HHS) has lots of stuff in all of these categories. These items have been entrusted to us to preserve and to share with townspeople and visitors to help them learn about the history of Hague and the people who lived here before us. One such item is the Civil War drum that belonged to Albert Graves. Originally from Vermont, he joined the Union Army as a drummer boy. Captured and incarcerated in Libby Prison in Virginia, he escaped and headed back north, eventually settling in Hague, along with his drum.

He changed his name to Albert Clifton and built the Island Harbor House Hotel. The HHS has this drum as well as a wealth of photos, letters, documents and other stuff from the hotel. One of the letters pictured on this panel is from Harry Watrous — creator of the Lake George Monster – to Albert's grandson, Bernie Clifton, expressing his condolences on the death of his father.

We also have journals from Walter Watts, who recorded detailed information about the weather, the lake, the heights of his children, and much more. Ledgers from stores that previously existed in Hague show us the price of goods and who bought them. Last but not least, we have an incredible collection of historical photos, many of which we plan to publish in a book in 2027. Stay tuned for more information on that!

What stuff do you have in your home that provides you with a connection to your family's history? Share your stories with us by sending them to haguehistorical@gmail.com.

THE HAGUE CHRONICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

All articles must be submitted by 6 pm the 20th of each month, for inclusion in the following month's issue. Send to editor@thehaguechronicle.org.