

LOOKING BACK

by Shelly Gautreau and Nancy Young

The Hague Historical Society held its regular monthly meeting at the Hague Baptist Church Annex on February 20, 1974.



After a brief business meeting, the program was turned over to Clifton West, who outlined the history of West Hague School District #3 from old account books which he had uncovered. Mr. West and a number of those present had attended school in the district and there were many humorous anecdotes to relate.

Apparently, a school district was created whenever there was an apparent number of children, about 30, to fill a one-room schoolhouse. West Hague District #3 came into being in 1812 and covered the geographic area between the West Hague Road and Route 8 and from the road on which the Sanitary Landfill is now located down to a line drawn from the Mays' home on Route 8 to the Leon Wells home on West Hague Road. The first trustees were John Holman, John Hafford, and William Cook, many of whose descendants continue to live in the area. The first record of state aid for education was in 1870 when \$70 was allocated to the district. The records indicate that the assessed valuation of the property in the district in 1889 was \$15,775, an indication that property taxes were now being levied to pay for education.

Generally, there were two terms, one in the winter and one in the summer. In between terms children were needed for work on the farm. In 1900, \$320 was paid in [a] teacher's salary for the entire year.

The eight school districts in the Town of Hague were consolidated into the present central school district in 1926-1928, when the present school building was constructed.

2024 Update – 50 years later

In 1979, Hague Central School was annexed to Ticonderoga Central School District. Many argued that consolidation to the TCSD to the north would reduce taxes in the town of Hague. Ironically, the same segment of seasonal residents that originally pushed for consolidation are now protesting that Hague is taxed disproportionately. (WIKIPEDIA)

Hague taxpayers are now liable for over 50% of the school taxes for the Ticonderoga School District.

State aid in 2024 is estimated at \$8,581,904. Teachers' Salaries for K-6 are \$1,936,248 and for 7-12 are \$1,894,679.

Final assessed value Ticonderoga – \$919,076,649 – uniform 100%.

Final assessed value Hague – \$1,048,887,733 – uniform 97.5%.

School Taxable assessed valuation – Ticonderoga – \$750,164,379.

School Taxable assessed valuation – Hague – \$989,984,752.

Having or not having children is not a viable argument when school taxes are questioned as NYS laws determine school taxes. Hague's population is showing a declining trend since 2010. There were 896 residents

in 2008; 632 residents in 2022 and approximately 528 residents in 2024. We are losing the youth quickly and that is sad. But, that fact will not help us as it pertains to taxes.

New Hampshire raises 60% of their school funding on property taxes, Vermont, very little, and Hawaii none!

NYS touts the "lottery monies" as being used toward funding education as aid. Since 1967, the NYS Lottery has earned \$78.7 billion and has funneled over \$64 billion into helping K-12 public education. Since the "Lottery" is a government body and the prizes are public funds, the NY Constitution requires that all net proceeds from games go towards the support of schools. Yet, for every \$1 spent on the lottery, only approximately 34 cents go toward education. (nylottery.org)

The Hague School Advisory Committee (SAC) is attempting to convince the Ticonderoga School Board

of Education to use Multi-Year Assessment Averaging (MYAA) to correct the tax levy to benefit both towns. You can study their course of action on the "townofhague.org" website under "Committees."

We believe most of us who attended Hague Central School and remember the community spirit and happier times are thankful we have those days embedded in our hearts. ▣

