

# Between the Lakes

A Newsletter of the  
**Interlaken Historical Society**  
Volume 49 No. 3     January 2024  
www.interlakenhistoricalsociety.org

Learn more about the white, whitetail deer, their home at Deer Haven Park and the evolution of the former Seneca Army Depot to its current use.



**Monday, January 22, 2024**

**7:00 p.m. at the**

**Covert Municipal Building**

## **The Mysterious and Majestic Seneca White Deer**

The mysterious and majestic Seneca white, whitetail deer have fascinated mankind from around the globe for generations. Now recognized as the largest known herd of white whitetail in the world, their once clandestine existence was only hinted upon via Iroquois legend. Such sightings were rare at best, but legend proved their existence centuries ago.

Fast forward to 1941. The government seized over 10,000 acres of privately owned property nestled between Seneca and Cayuga lakes to create the Seneca Ordnance Depot. This pristine landscape was previously settled by the mighty Six Nations of the Iroquois. Not surprisingly, the existence of any white whitetail deer remained elusive, however . . . until 1949.

Amazingly, cutting-edge technologies may have been embarked upon to develop and secure the first Northeastern Armed Forces munitions facility in the nick of time prior to the United States becoming involved in WWII, but as advanced as such intelligence was, no insight could have possibly predicted what nature had in store for its own incomparable white deer herd development. Nor could mankind foreshadow what would evolve, over 70 years later, into a conservation and ecotourism site dubbed Deer Haven Park, LLC.

We will peek into this fascinating saga and be introduced to some of the amazing wildlife who call this park home, most especially the majestic Seneca white deer.

Our Speaker for the evening is Dee Calvasina, an author and professional writer whose work has been published in numerous regional, national, and international publications. Her book, *Beyond the Fence, The Amazing World of Deer Haven Park* was published in 2022 by Idea Press. A Finger Lakes native, she is also a columnist for the *Finger Lakes Times* wherein her monthly piece entitled “Beyond the Fence” highlights both the human and wildlife adventures surrounding Deer Haven Park, LLC. Dee shares her passion for the white, whitetail deer in a manner that allows her readers an adventure via the written word. She resides in upstate New York with her husband and two furry canines.



The program will be held in the Town of Covert Municipal Building, 8469 Main Street. Interlaken. The room is handicapped accessible. We will also be live streaming the program, or you can view it on our YouTube channel, check the website, <https://interlakenhistoricalsociety.org/>

For more information contact John Hunt at 607-592-3224

See you Monday, January 22, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Check out the Historical Society webpage for past issues of the Newsletter and our gift shop for books and other items.

## President's Report

Greetings to all, trust everyone enjoyed the Holidays!

As we start 2024, it's a brand New Year for us all. With projects to work on this year, we strive to maintain our museums and contents. Work on the Farmers' Museum building roof and ramp to be done this year to keep it attractive and safe will be an asset to those who visit. We'll continue being open Saturdays in July and August, and other times by appointment, reminding me, we need docents for those Saturdays, so please contact us.

We have quarterly programs on the fourth Monday of January and April, with special events in July and the fall. This year our January speaker will share her knowledge of the Seneca Army Base in Romulus, she's a guide at Deer Haven, has written a book about it and has a monthly article in the *Finger Lakes Times*. I'm sure we all will learn more of the base and the wildlife there.

In the summer we'll have our Summer Social on the Library lawn, and Plowing Day and Country Fair at the Brook Barn in September. Our will share what's being done to preserve our nation resources.

Have a safe winter time, see you at our program on January 22<sup>nd</sup>!

John Hunt, President

### New Life Member

Amy and Brian Quan, Interlaken

### New Member

Greg Zoller, Seneca Falls

### Thank you!

Thank you to all those who made donations to the Historical Society in response to our 2023-2024 Fund Drive. As of December 31, 2023 we have received \$505.00 for the general fund, \$2,210.00 for capital repairs, and \$1,700.00 for the building fund.

### Kate Hunt 1950 —2023

Our deepest sympathies to Gary Hunt and all of Kate's families. Kate died on December 1st. Thank you to all those who chose to remember Kate with a gift to the Interlaken Historical Society.

## Fund Drive Gifts

### General Fund

Gerard Messmer III, Odessa, NY

Thanh and Sitha Sisana, IMO Jessica and Charlie Young, Interlaken

### Capital Repairs

Charles and Patricia Asay, IMO Llewellyn and Betty Egan, Newman, GA

Doug Barkee, IMO Judy Barkee, Interlaken

Diane Barlow, Interlaken

Barbara Barrows IMO Howard Barrows, Interlaken

Chris Carroll, IMO Eugene Carroll, Macedon, NY

Marilyn Crooker, Trumansburg, NY

Jean and Bruce Currie, IMO Bill Schaffner, Interlaken

Mary Daly IMO Dan Daly, Shrewsbury MA

Gwendolyn Freeman, Interlaken

Sally and John Hubbard, IMO John and Chancey Gregg Interlaken

Gerard Messmer III, Odessa, NY

Roland Neiss, Jr, Ovid, NY

Dieter and Ute Pollmann, IMO Parents, Macedon

Bill and Caroline Pritchard IMO Robert W Pritchard, Interlaken

Janet Patterson Vavasour IMO Pat and Ferne Patterson, Scotia, NY

Lee Weaver IMO Ivan Weaver, Trumansburg

Raymond White, Interlaken

### Building Fund

Glenn Bucien IMO Beverley Hancox, Interlaken

John Joseph Daly, Ashburn, VA

Mary Diamond IMO Seymour Diamond, Interlaken

Bill Gates IMO Barbara Gates, Ovid, NY

Gerard Messmer III, Odessa, NY

### Gifts In Memory of Kate Hunt

#### General Fund

Sherri and Kyle Marianacci, Bloomfield, NY

#### Capital repairs

Paige Mengal

Chris Vogt and Meg Jastran, Interlaken

#### Building Fund

Marlene and Kenyon Alexander, Romulus, NY

Frank Arpino, Waterloo, NY

James & Janet Buisch, Savannah, NY

Deborah Driscoll, Geneva, NY

Deb and David Hirschhorn family, Danville, PA

Interlaken Fire Department, Interlaken

Lake View Cemetery Board of Trustees, Interlaken

Cathy Millspough, Interlaken

*IMO In Memory of*

## Powder Horns in the Collections

By Gerry Messmer III

Powder horns are a very interesting item to study in historical perspective. In general, they have not changed much since their inception, and they are very hard to date because the style of manufacture was repeated over and over for decades and even centuries. They range from very simple utility horns to storage horns, campaign horns to the fancy presentation horns that can be seen at Fort Ticonderoga that were never carried.

Today, many powder horns are made in an elaborate style and often as a “showy” item for modern day living historians and re-enactors who want to “look good”. The reality is that the horn, shooting bag, knife and tomahawk were referred to as “hunting tools” in first person writings and autobiographies. They were not a fashion item, but a utility item or tool for survival. On another note, today we fill them with “black powder”. That too, is a modern term. All they had until smokeless powder was...powder.

Even granulation (Fg, FFG, etc) is a modern invention. In more than 30 years of research I have only seen one first-person description of powder. In this the writer describes the powder being drawn off a keg that had arrived overland by wagon. The top layer, or most coarse, was drawn off for cannons, the next layer of coarseness after settling, was used for muskets. Muskets, being smoothbore could fire the coarse powder more easily. Next, they drew off for rifles and the fine powder that settled on the bottom was for the pistols.

In relationship to powder horns is the often discussed “priming horn”. In short, priming horns are a modern invention of the 1960s rendezvous era brought on by the movie *The Mountain Men*, starring Charlton Heston. In fact, Mr. Heston is carrying an ‘unauthentic’ priming horn made by Earl Cureton, the original owner of my business, Powderhorns and More. I have discussed this priming horn with the current owner as he has the records of it being used on the set! Back in the day they simply loaded and primed from the same horn.

I have been making powder horns for a little over 20 years and am not even close to being an expert on them or even understanding the slight nuances that can place them in a region or time.

Diane Bassette Nelson has provided me with some excellent examples from our local museum that I would like to talk about.

The first one is from Jenny Hunts’ collection. It is one that is from the Fur-Trade Era, around 1840 or older. It is what we call a “transitional horn” and without markings it is hard to determine the maker. The “transitional” period is generally from 1750-1820.



The base plug appears to be pine and held in place with tacks of brass or iron. The tacks are used throughout time but appear more frequently in the Fur-Trade Era. They were very common on trade horns. I don’t believe it to be a trade horn based on the intricate carving at the tip. Trade horns would have been a simple design.

The next one is the Kellogg Powder Horn. This is a fine example of the common horn found on a farm in the frontier.

Without any engraving on it by the owner it is hard to place, but I place this around the early 1800s and is reflective of the style from that era and it is not a campaign horn. Common on them are the scratch

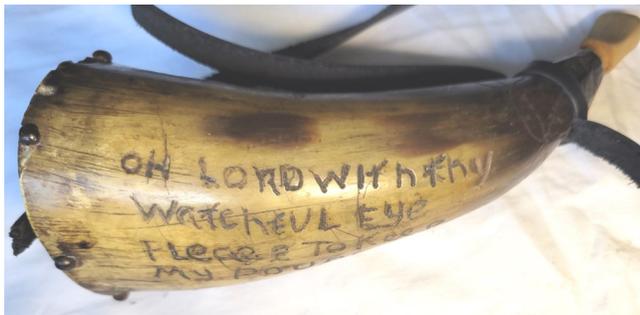


marks from scraping them down with a knife or broken glass to smoothen them out and to thin them making them lighter. The tip of this one has very nice hand filed flats with a wide groove for a strap. It is possible that this horn could be older than I think and seen service in the American Revolution or the War of 1812. It was made very well by a skilled craftsman.

The Tobey horn is beautiful horn with interesting engraving. It is typical of the mid-1800s but more special because the owner most likely had a military background somewhere in his history and was a mason. This is evident in the inscription on the horn and the engraving of a cannon, a square and compass. I have tried to research GW Smith and Newtown without luck.



The saying engraved on it is a variation from "Trust in God and keep your powder dry", a maxim attributed to Oliver Cromwell, but whose first appearance in print was in 1834 in the poem "Oliver's Advice" by William Blacker, with the words "Put your trust in God, my boys, and keep your powder dry!" The poem is a dramatic representation of Cromwell addressing his army during the invasion of Ireland. So, the date 1851, in relation to the saying on it makes sense.



This last horn, the Judson Horn, is a real beauty! By the date it looks to be an 1804 horn but could be older and the date added later. I think based off the provenance of the rifle this horn is much older than the rifle itself and possibly made in the 1780s. It is a beautiful example of a common horn and is exquisite in the fact that it is made and decorated so well.



The maker was an accomplished builder and took the time to take a simple design and make it better through carving and embellishments.

Of note is the style of engraving which is folk art. Folk art on horns was done by the owner of the horn. While they may have purchased the horn, they did the engraving themselves. A fine horn and the best of all Diane sent me to look at. Many of the attributes of this horn are used in making historical reproductions, including the flats at the tip and the simple base plug. What makes me think this is older than 1804 is the use of fine cut nails in the base. These are common in Revolutionary and French and Indian War powder horns.



The set trigger percussion rifle was owned by Joseph Judson who came to Danby in 1797 with Dr. Beers, one of the first settlers. He was born on August 20, 1782, in Stratford, Connecticut and is buried in Danby, NY.

Joseph Judson, at age 15, along with William Collins, age 16, were brought in as indentured boys by Dr. Beers to what was known as Beers Settlement.

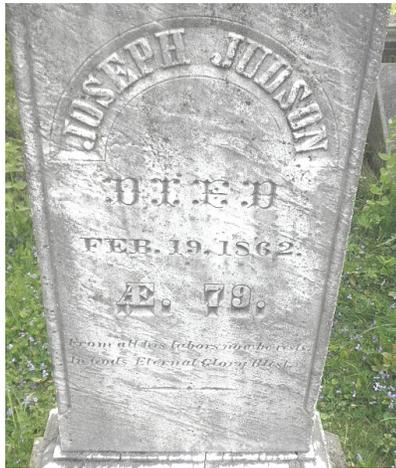


The rifle has a "back action" lock. They are called "back action" because the mainspring hangs behind the tumbler, this lock was popular on percussion guns made in St. Louis, New York, California, Ohio, England, and Belgium. I have seen several back action rifles in person with most of them attributed to gunmakers from New York. Most back action rifles are from around 1835 or 1840 and beyond.

Clearly, Joseph Judson would have purchased this rifle in his later years making the horn something he may have been given by his father. His father was William Judson, born July 25, 1737, meaning he may have served in the American Revolution.

According to the Connecticut Revolutionary War Military Lists, 1775-83, a William Judson served in the 4<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Regiment under Colonel Samuel Whiting. The last piece I could find potentially tying this horn to the family was in the Military Minutes of the Council of Appointments of the State of New York, 1783-1821, where a 'William Judson' was officially appointed as a Captain in the 4<sup>th</sup> Division of Suffolk County in 1805. Given his potential service in the Revolution he could have risen in prominence to be respected enough to be appointed as an officer (in 1804 with official publication in 1805). Even with an unknown death date and location this may be possible, but it is speculation without corroboration.

By accounts I have read, Joseph was finished with his indentured time by age 22 and by age 24 had purchased the Jennings Pond property from Lewis Beardsley in 1805. This pond was at the headwaters of Buttermilk Creek. He went on to become the first teacher in Danby and was a prosperous farmer. This rifle would have been his hunting or sporting rifle and he probably carried this family horn his entire life. It is a remarkable surviving horn with deep history that I think, with further research, have its provenance proven. If only this powder horn could talk!



To learn more about Gerry's work with powder horns see his Facebook page at Powderhorns and More.

## The Daly Twins from Interlaken

By John Daly

Most people remember the Daly's who ran the GLF store in Interlaken but there was another Daly family that operated a dairy and cash crop farm off of Halls Corners some two and a half miles south of the town. The family had five children (Maureen, Michael, Monica, John and Dan) and parents Catherine and John who had emigrated from Ireland in the 1920s. The Daly family lived in New York City until they decided to own a farm in upstate New York because the beautiful green hills of Interlaken reminded them of the same in Ireland.

Farming following World War 2 was not a very profitable business and the farm just got by with the kids doing most of the work and the parents working at Willard or the father driving a taxi back in NYC. Most of the work was done by Dan and John since Michael was either in the Army or studying at Cornell.

Dan and John's studies at Interlaken were lackluster since they were milking twenty some cows a day and when they graduated from ICS Mr. Elliott told their father there wasn't a chance in hell for them to get into Cornell or any other top flight school. However, Mr. Elliott did visit the Dean of Agriculture at Cornell and got him to agree that if John and Dan went to another year of High School and took regents exam courses and did well they would gain admission to the school.

That's exactly what happened. Both went on to graduate from Cornell, then on to the service for three-year tours and then many years in the reserves. Dan ultimately a US Air Force Lt. Colonel and John US Coast Guard Lt. Commander.

Dan settled in Shrewsbury, Mass and became owner of many commercial real estate properties and was a broker for Smith Barney.

John settled in NYC and worked for NBC and for Radio City Music Hall. Following that he was appointed Chief Financial Officer of National Geographic Society and finished as a Vice President with Wells Fargo bank.

Both have beautiful families who have flourished in the last 40 years of prosperity in the United States. Dan and John have never forgotten their roots and attended almost all of the Interlaken Central School reunions over the years. Dan passed away five years ago and John lives near the family in Ashburn, Va.

From the Collections

Last summer we received five school registers for Covert District #6 school. Each volume contains the name of the teacher(s), the students, the visitors, and a census of the families with school age children. The set includes school years 1910-11, 1911-12, 1912-13, 1915-16 and 1917-18. In addition to the student names, their sex and age are noted. While many of the names repeat each year, the range shows that some students aged out or others were old enough to attend school.

We have a full index to the set has been created which lists approximately 115 names. In this summary index the names and their primary designation of S Student, P Parent, V Visitor and T Teacher are shown. As was common during that time most of the Mrs. Someone does not list her given name and no research has been done to provide that information.

Andersen, Hjordis	V
Ball, Clara	S
Ball, Homer	S
Ball, Purdy	P
Bates, Naomi H	T
Bond, Jessie	S
Bond, Martha	P
Bond, Mary L Miss	S
Bortz, Ruth Mrs	V
Campbell, Frederick Mrs	V
Clawson, Anna	T
Cole, Ralph	V
Comden, Albert	S
Comden, Charles	S
Comden, George	P
Comden, Wesley	S
Cooper, Ellen	P
Cooper, Fabian	S
Cooper, Mary	S
Copeland, Helen	V
Dawson, Grace E	V
Delong, Alta	V
Delong, Clayton	V
DeMun, W. C.	V
Denison, Martha Mrs	V
Donnelly, J T	V
Donnelly, Margaret	V
Donnelly, Nellie B	V
Donnelly, P C	P

Donnelly, Raymond	S
Donnelly, Rice	S
Donnelly, T M	V
Donnelly, Veronica	T
Donnelly, W W	V
Edwards, D S	P
Edwards, Roger	S
Emmons H	P
Emmons, Walter	S
Ganoung, Alfred H	V
Goodell, B F Mrs	V
Green, Alice	S
Green, Clifford"	S
Green, Jas	P
Green, O	P
Harmon, Florence	S
Harmon, Harry	P
Hayward, A W Mrs	V
Hayward, Adin A W	P
Hayward, C.C Mrs	V
Hayward, Herman	S
Hayward, Otis	S
Higgs, L E Mrs	V
Ingalls, Ben J	V
Leary, Francis (Mrs)	V
Leary, Ray F	V
March, Marian	V
McCoy, Jane	V
McNair, Arthur	S
McNair, Fred A	P
McNair, Mary	S
McNally, Mary	V
Medlock, Jannettee	V
Murphy, James	V
Murphy, James Mrs	V
Murphy, Mae	V
Owen, Alice	V
superintendent	V
Palmer, Catherine	S
Palmer, Fred	P
Palmer, Fred Mrs	V
Palmer, Harold	S
Palmer, John	S

Palmer, Leo	V
Palmer, Mark	S
Palmer, Merle	S
Palmer, Percy	S
Palmer, Roy	S
Patrick, Harry	P
Patrick, Harry Mrs	V
Patrick, Helen	S
Quick, D	P
Quick, Darwin Mrs	V
Quick, Kenneth	S
Quinn, Anna	V
Ryan, Mary	V
Saylor, Chas	V
Schrier, Charles	S
Schrier, Walter	P
Schrier, Walter Mrs Nettie?	V
Sprague, Edith	C
Sprague, George	C
Sprague, George D	P
Sprague, Howard	S
Sprague, Robert	S
Stannard, Martha	S
Stannard, Nemi	P
Stannard, Nemi Mrs	V
Steward, E Burr	T
Stewart, Burr	P
Stewart, Catherine	S
Strong, Charlotte	S
Strong, Charlotte	V
Strong, Fay	P
Sutton, Alice	S
Sutton, Chas O	P
Townsend, J M	V
VanOstrand, A.O.	P
VanOstrand, Carroll	S
VanOstrand, Lyle	S
Wellin, Edward	P
Wellin, John	S
Wellin, Marcia Mrs	V
White, Clark	P
White, Eleanor	S
White, Mildred	S
White, William	S
Wilson, Wilmer	V
superintendent	V



Covert School District #6 was north of the Hamlet of Covert and east of the Interlaken/Trumansburg Road. The school, marked in the yellow box, was west of the corner of Schier and Halls Corners Roads. Some records note District 6 as Archer District.

## Library News

Many people think of history as a dry, dull subject that equates to a memorization of dates and names. Historians see it very differently – it’s a drama of intertwined lives and details spanning hundreds of years, culminating in your own personal experience. This interest drives many to invest hundreds of hours of research into their own family genealogy, putting personal details and faces to those who came before them.

As many of you know, the Interlaken Public Library houses a generous collection of genealogical and local history resources. Individuals frequently visit and request genealogical research assistance from library staff - which is not only encouraged - it’s one of our favorite parts of the day-to-day library job. On occasion the library will receive a donation of a family bible or genealogical record to aid future researchers.

This year the Interlaken Historical Society partnered with the Interlaken Public Library to put on a special exhibit in the Maurice Patterson Research Room utilizing one of those unique donations. In honor of Veterans Day, the library exhibited the Army uniform of local resident Lewis “Buster” Tunison, alongside some information on his service and a photograph of Mr. Tunison on the top of the Empire State Building during his time in service.

Mr. Tunison was born in Hector, NY in 1923 and later married Interlaken resident Jean Wiggins. In 1943 he entered the US Army and was initially assigned to the Army Air Corps, later moving to the Army Signal Corps. He served overseas in the European Theater with 3163<sup>rd</sup> Signal Service Company,

Just a reminder that the Interlaken Public Library has partnered with the Ulysses Philomathic Library in Trumansburg, to bring you digitized newspapers!

We are now able to offer Interlaken and Trumansburg newspapers from 1829 to 1999, searchable from the comfort of any device with an internet connection or from your local library.

maintaining radio relay networks across France and Germany, until his honorable discharge in 1946.

Many local residents are part of or come from military families. Military records play a vital role in genealogical research, adding documentation and clarity to the lives of our loved ones. Mr. Tunison’s time in the military was recorded by his son, Michael, an avid historian until his death. His research is now available for future members of the Tunison family to use in their genealogical and family research here at the Interlaken Public Library.

Chelsea Hastings, Library Director,  
607-532-4341



*Help support your local library, join the Friends of the Interlaken Public Library!*



**Dues for 2023-2024** are now due. Our fiscal year is July 1 to June 30th. If your label has a date prior to 2022 please consider bringing your membership up to date. Dues can be paid through our webpage.

Life Membership in the Historical Society is still only \$100. No need to remember to pay your dues each year!

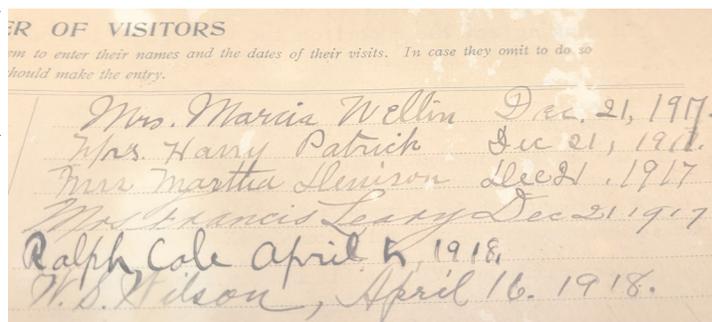
Gifts for the Building Fund are welcome anytime. Send your check or use the QR code on our website.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Interlaken Historical Society

**NOTE:** the email address for the historical society has changed:

**interlakenhistoricalsociety@gmail.com**

*Part of the Visitor's register page in the 1917-18 Covert School District #6 register. See page 6 for an index to students, visitors and more.*



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**Mark Your Calendar** January 22, 2024

For our next in person program

For more information on the

Historical Society events contact

President, John Hunt, 607-592-3224

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