

Before Belleayre: Living High in Highmount

Most people know Highmount as the wide spot in Route 28 with the big Belleayre Ski Center sign. Come to the HSM hall Saturday evening, June 17 to find out what you don't know about the amazing history of this community.

The 7 p.m. illustrated lecture by HSM President Diane Galusha will be the Society's contribution to Headwaters History Days, and as such admission is free.

Consider these tantalizing tidbits:

An exclusive Manhattan school for boys known as the Weingart Institute kept a summer camp in Highmount. Alumni included soon to be famous songwriters Oscar Hammerstein, Herbert Sondheim (father of Stephen Sondheim), Lorenz "Larry" Hart; and his future partner Richard Rodgers.

The Grand Hotel, with its 700-foot veranda and moveable bar, catered to guests arriving on the Ulster & Delaware Railroad, whose thrilling double horseshoe curve started at Pine Hill and culminated at the station located at the hotel's entry road (now Owl's Nest Road.)

The railroad made this high altitude spot attractive to the wealthy: Opera star Amelita Galli-Curci, Shakespearean actress Julia Marlowe, Brooklyn Daily Eagle publisher Herbert Gunnison and pioneering gynecologist Alexander Skene all had sumptuous summer estates in Highmount.

Skene, (the Fleischmanns library is named for him), was

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A young Julia Marlowe (1865-1950) as a deranged Ophelia in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Marlowe's chief claim to fame was her decades-long collaboration on Shakespearean revivals with actor E. H. Sothorn, whom she married in 1911. They would often perform for schoolchildren or other public audiences that could not afford Broadway ticket prices.

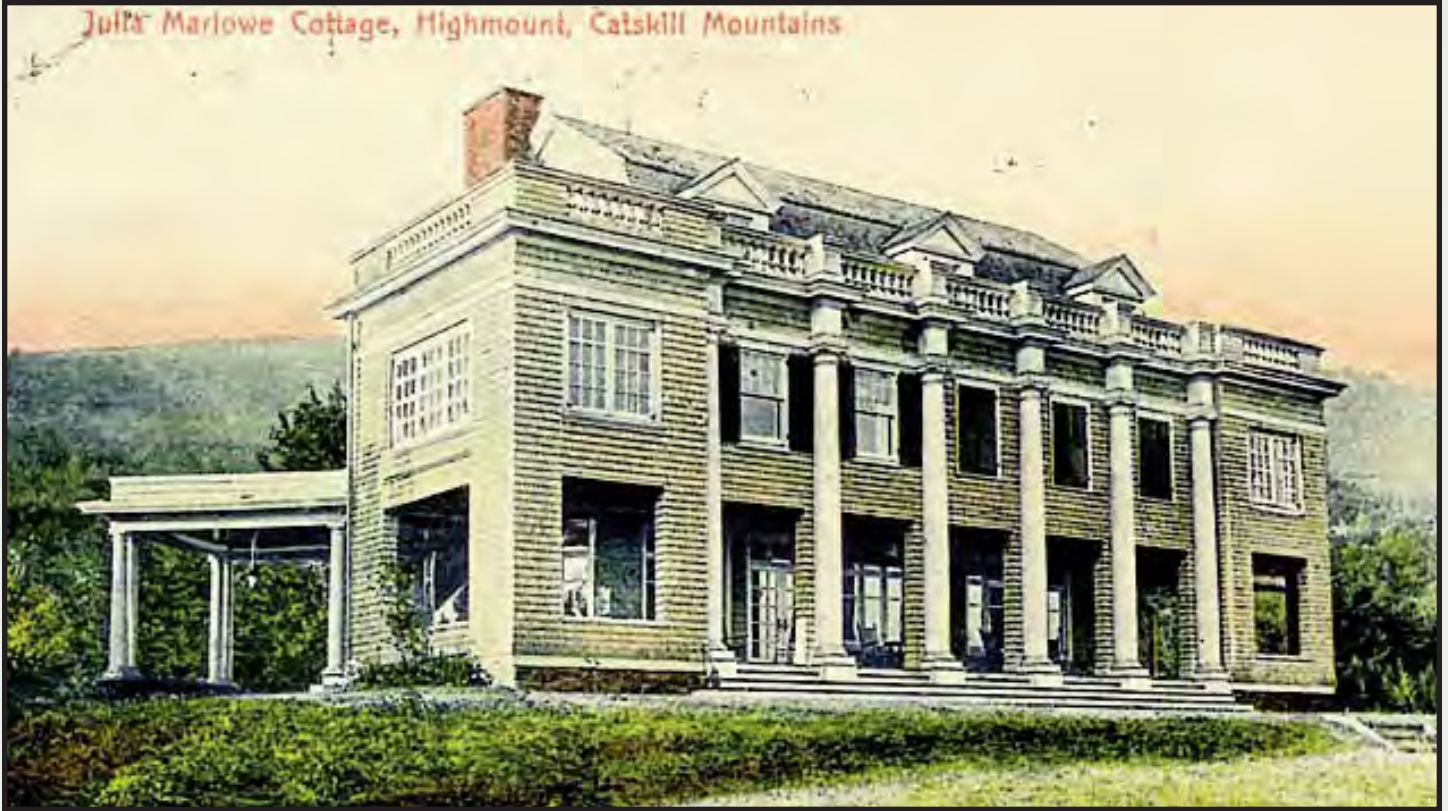


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also a sculptor. He relocated a small Episcopal church to their estate to use as a studio, and it was later the home and studio of Belgian artist Edward Buyck and Kentucky painter Paul Sawyier.

In 1918 New York State bought 4,500 acres of land up the side of the mountain where the ski center would be built in 1949.

But before the artists, the rich folks and the state, there were farmers and tradesmen making a living from the land. We'll meet the Greenes, the Olmsteads, the Smiths and the Cures, families who settled there long before the Civil War.

HIGHBROW—Julia Marlowe's Highmount home, Wildacres, is described on this postcard as a "cottage," which one can only presume is a comparison relative to other actors' mansions? With her stardom in the theater and good business sense, Marlowe achieved something quite rare for women in her day: financial independence. Wildacres is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

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FUN BY COMMITTEE—HSM Executive Committee members (from left) Fred Travis, Kacey Chuilli, Tina Greene (seated) Amy Taylor, Diane Galusha, Anne Sanford, Marilyn Pitetti and Henry Friedman work hard all year to bring you fascinating programs about our heritage and to preserve our local history. Committee member not pictured: Jackie Purdy.

A series of Sunday strolls through four area cemeteries will replace the Living History Tour that HSM has organized annually for the past five years. While we take a hiatus from this major event in 2017, we welcome you to learn more about people from our past at the following informal guided tours, which take place at 2 p.m. Admission is \$5 per person; kids 12 and under are free.

April 30, Clovesville, Bnai Israel and Irish Cemeteries, Old Rte. 28 east of Fleischmanns

May 28, Margaretville Cemetery, Cemetery Rd. In obser-

vance of Memorial Day, this tour will pay tribute to the veterans of all wars buried here.

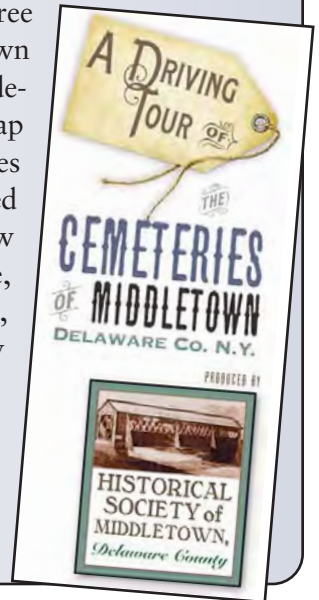
June 25, Bedell Cemetery, Little Red Kill Rd., Fleischmanns

Aug. 27, Avery (Dry Brook Rd.) and Gavette (Millbrook Rd.) Cemeteries. Meet at 1:30 p.m. at Margaretville Municipal Parking Lot, opposite Freshtown, or at 2 p.m. at Avery Cemetery.

GRAVEYARD DIVINING: DRIVE IT!

Come to a tour and get your free driving guide to nine Middletown cemeteries! This new brochure, designed by Trish Adams, includes a map and short descriptions of cemeteries and some of their residents. Featured burial grounds are Margaretville, New Kingston, Sanford, Halcottsville, Kelly Corners, Bedell, Clovesville, B'nai Israel and the Irish cemetery nearby.

The April 30 tour will visit the grave of radio, stage and TV star Gertrude Berg (more widely known as Molly Goldberg) in the B'nai Israel Cemetery, Clovesville.



Roll Up the Rugs – It's Party Time!



The HSM hall on Cemetery Road can be rented for events, parties and meetings. A modest fee of \$100, plus a refundable deposit of \$50, allows the use of the spacious hall, kitchen and grounds for an entire day. Find information and an application on our website: www.mtownhistory.org/about-hsm.

The people in this photograph are not identified, but "Jennie Hewitt Doland" is written on the back, along with this, written in another hand, and likely much later: "Aunt Jen Doland's House. Grandma Scudder went there to live after her mother passed away."



by Mary Robinson Sive

This article, written by Mary Sive, who transcribed Jenny McKenzie Hewitt Doland's diary in the archives of the Delaware County Historical Association,, originally appeared in the Catskill Mountain News in 2005.

Jennie McKenzie Hewitt Doland, born in Scotland in 1850 and brought here at three months of age, grew up in Township (near Hobart) and taught in the Halcottsville/Kelly Corners area for 10 years. In 1833 she married William Hewitt, a peddler and a nephew of Old School Baptist Elder Isaac Hewitt, and continued teaching for several years. Will inherited the house Elder Hewitt had built next to the Baptist meeting house. Both buildings are still standing.

Jennie had begun sewing as a young woman, and that became her work (at considerably less pay) after she stopped teaching. After Will's death she took in boarders while also caring for her niece, Isabel Hull, whose mother, Jennie's sister, had died when the girl was 11.

After Isabel's marriage to Hewitt Scudder, Jennie in 1906 married David Doland, born in New Jersey, a creamery worker who also did many odd jobs. Both died in 1933 within nine days of each other. It was Isabel's descendants who had the foresight to make these diaries available to the public.

With listings of birthdays, deaths, anniversaries, attendance records, and countless names in the daily entries, including those of visiting peddlers, the diaries are a treasure trove for genealogists. They tell about the life of the community as well. And what a busy place it was!

"Early to Bed" – the Next Morning!

Dances, "entertainments," and parties took place on Friday or weekday nights, the dances in later years sponsored by Golden Seal and Maccabees, Firemen, the Grange, or the Red Cross. After about 1890, residents could hear lectures about Russia, the Panama Canal, and political speeches. They saw performances by Native Americans, a "niger" show, and "Ten Nights in a Barroom," and listened to

recorded music. Movies (“picture shows”) were shown beginning in 1908 at the “opera house” and also at church. On Christmas Eve they “went to the Christmas tree.” Sometimes “the boys stayed till near one o'clock and we had a skipping time.” On July 3, 1877, Jennie “let out school at 3 ... went to Roxbury on the train, went to a dance at night ... went to bed between 3 and 4 at the Hotel.” On the Fourth she “went to Clovesville to a dance” and the next day “came from Griffin corners (Fleischmanns) on the train ... went to bed at 6.” It was not the only occasion she “had a good time got home between 4 and 6.”

The “young folks organized a literary club at the school-house” in 1903, and in 1912 Jennie recorded the books taken out by various members of a book club. Singing school met weekly. To raise money, they held a “necktie party” (akin to a box social with the men choosing ties made of the same material as the girls' aprons). In the 1910s and 1920s the Larkin soap club met monthly or more frequently.

Croquet, riding, and picnics at Perch Lake or in Hubbell's lot were summertime amusements. In the winter, Jennie rarely failed to comment on “splendid sleighing,” “the first nice sleighing this winter,” or “good sleighing ever since Christmas,” though sometimes she “had a slippery time getting to school.” In the 1910s the ladies aid and other clubs traveled to Margaretville, Pine Hill, Dunraven, or Griffin Corners to enjoy sleigh rides.

Sleepovers – Your Place or Mine?

Visiting was a way of life. Jennie and her husbands rarely had a meal by themselves. When they did she would note “we are alone” or “noone been in today.” Before Burr Hubbell “put up the telephone wire” in 1898, visits often were not prearranged. One Saturday Jennie “started for Brag Hollow but came across Fannie Vermilya and went home with her and stayed all night.” Another time she “went to Willards they were all gone Sarah Sanford was there we done the milking.”

One Saturday she and Will started out but met the folks they had planned to visit on the road, so went back home. Another time, not finding their intended hosts at home, they visited someone else.

Visits often meant overnight stays. During Will's absences on business, Jennie typically spent the night with a neighbor or a relative, or other women stayed with her, perhaps for reasons of propriety. To visit her parents' home in Township Jennie “walked over the mountain” or “went

over across.” She might get a ride on a milk wagon or milk sleigh, but residents also took full advantage of the new (since 1872) railroad service.

“The cars” took people to Margaretville, Roxbury, or Stamford to shop, get a haircut, have their pictures taken, to high school, or to visit. After 1900, with train service extended to Oneonta, folks could visit the fair in a day: “A large crowd at the Oneonta fair today. 47 from this station an excursion from Kingston 11 coaches jammed full” (1906).

The year before, Jennie and David stayed overnight and took in a trolley ride and a show.

Residents traveled to New York and Albany for medical attention and to California and other western states. Not a few, including Jennie's unmarried sister, spent winters in Florida beginning in the early years of the century. Two of Jennie's brothers lived there. The trip at first involved taking a boat from New York to Jacksonville and continuing by train, but by the 1910s more and more traveled by private automobile, so “car” soon meant automobile.

The Good Old – but not Cheap – Days

Some prices seem quite out of proportion to us: Jennie paid \$40 for doctor's bills and a medical trip to New York in 1888, almost as much as that year's grocery bill of \$56 and nearly double the rent of \$24. In 1914, when Doland earned 20 cents an hour, the water bill was \$16.

Among unexpected findings we learn from the 1906 diary that Callie, “the colored girl to Kelly's called tonight to bid me goodbye. She and her sister start for Virginia tomorrow.” (There does not seem to be any Callie in the 1900 Census).

That Middletown officials were elected at town meetings held in February certainly was news, but records at town hall confirm this. State law gave each county's legislature power to shift town elections to November, and 1903 was the first year that Middletown voters went to four different polling places.

It is startling to see 19th-century use of abbreviations such as “Xmas” and “phone,” but the real challenge are the many unfamiliar terms. I have been able to identify party and card games such as Flinch, Euchre, 500, Fox and Geese (a mixer), or a “pink tea” (a formal occasion). But what was “Black Heifer entertainment” or a “waffle club”? I hope some readers will have answers.

6 Join the Hunt for History: Start Your Detectors!

Ever wonder what keys to the past might be hidden just out of view, under the sod?

There's a group of metal detectorists who spend a lot of time looking for this sort of buried 'treasure,' and they're coming to Halcottsville to see what they can find June 10 and 11.

This relic hunt, by detecting enthusiasts from eastern New York and New England, will be jointly sponsored by HSM and the Halcottsville Fire Department which will share the revenue derived from participation fees. HSM is seeking funds to establish an archives for its growing collection, and HFD is restoring the 1916 Wawaka Hose House for possible use as a small museum.

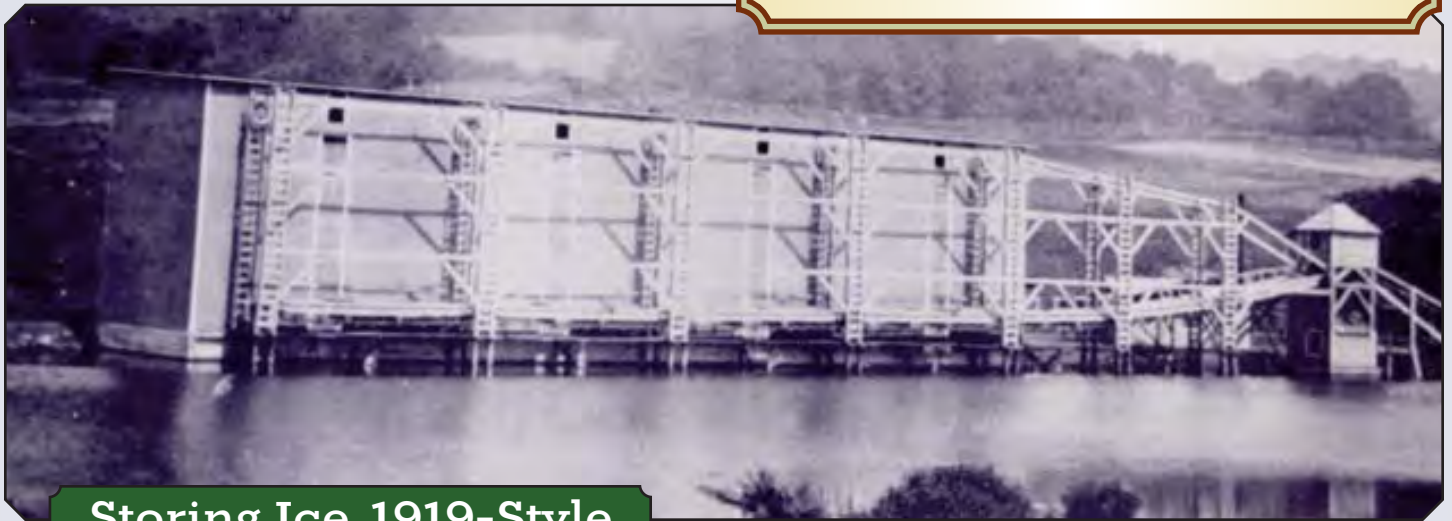
Many property owners in Halcottsville have agreed to al-

low their lawns and lands to be searched. If an item is found that has a special connection to the property owner's family it is usually offered to them. If not, it is at the discretion of the finder whether to keep the item or donate it to the historical society.

Spectators are welcome. A Saturday evening barbecue open to detectorists and property owners only will reveal what was found on the first day of the hunt. We look forward to sharing news of some interesting finds in the next Bridge!

Calling All History "Diviners"!

Are you a detectorist who'd like to join this event? Contact mrmetaledetector@aol.com.



Storing Ice, 1919-Style

Among the properties to be searched by the metal detectorists in Halcottsville will be the former site of a massive ice house built by the Ulster & Delaware Railroad to store ice from Wawaka Lake to chill the cars carrying cans of milk picked up at creameries along the route. Local men and horses cut cakes of ice from the lake in a seasonal enterprise that provided income during the lean winter months.

The ice house, which replaced an earlier U&D facility, was torn down decades later. The property is owned by Jim and Susan Kelly.

An article in the *Catskill Mountain News* Jan. 24, 1919 described the new and modern ice house:

It is the most up-to-date building of its kind in Delaware County, the structure being 40 feet wide, 30 feet high and 152 feet long. The building was erected on a concrete foundation and the large pond at Halcottsville, known as Lake Wawaka was drained last summer to facilitate the difficult work of reclaiming land suitable for a site from a part

of the hitherto flooded area.

The new building provides storage capacity for over 40,000 tons of ice. . . The ample space for storing cars on the new siding built last fall makes ice harvesting a comparatively expeditious and inexpensive matter. While the ice harvest lasts, business booms. . .

The locomotive boiler of engine number 7 recently dismantled will furnish power to a 20-horsepower engine that will run the endless chain elevator and the long conveyor used to distribute the ice. . . 60 cakes per minute could be elevated if a sufficient number of men were employed to handle the ice. A planer in the elevators will ensure a uniform thickness to every cake of ice. A signal tower has been erected for the watchman whose duty will be to manipulate the towers that control the elevators and the conveyors. The latter can be raised by a system of ropes and pulleys as necessary while the building is being filled. A special device for loading the cars of the milk train has just been placed in readiness.

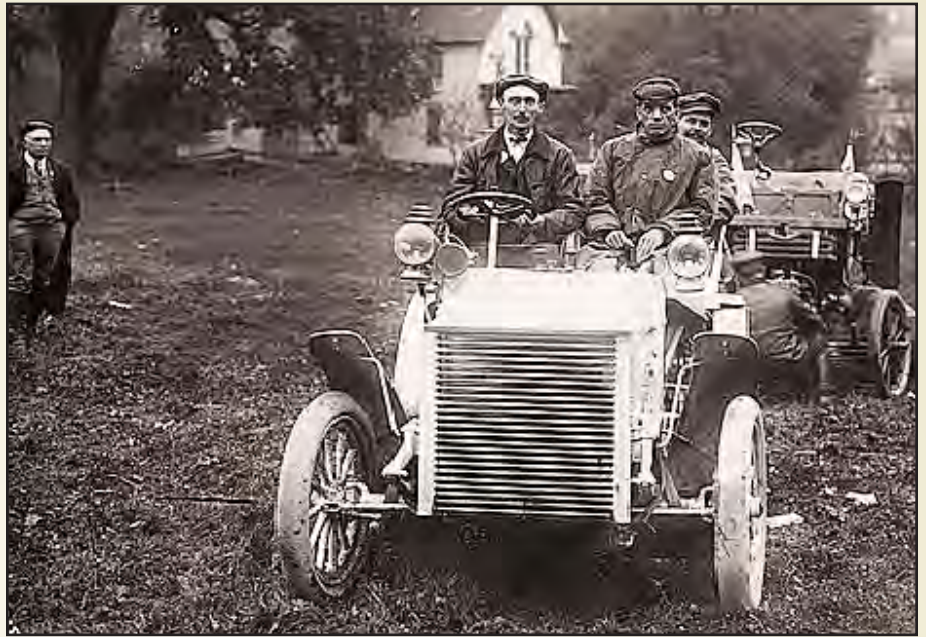
Margaretville is the place to be on September 23 for the annual Cauliflower Festival in the village park, where antique cars participating in a special expedition from Kingston to Franklin will stop by.

The vehicles will be commemorating the Automobile Endurance Run of October 1903 which brought 36 cars from 17 American makers with 125 passengers from Weehawken, NJ to Pittsburgh, PA. Their route followed the Hudson Valley to Kingston and then across the Catskill Mountains on the Ulster and Delaware Road, now state Route 28—the Catskill Mountains Scenic Byway. The 800-mile journey took them through Delhi, Unadilla, Binghamton, Buffalo, Erie, and Cleveland.

On October 7 the cars parked overnight in a field at Pine Hill. The following day they headed into Delaware County where a deluge turned the dirt roads to mud. By the time they reached the Susquehanna River at Unadilla, 10 inches of rain had fallen and flooding was widespread.

The cars and the people were tough and determined and their heroic efforts were widely reported and inspired the nation. Most of the cars made it to Pittsburgh and the veterans called themselves the Mud Larks.

Robert Selkowitz of Shokan is organizing the September 23 and 24 'pilot rally' between Kingston and Franklin, with



This was a White Steamer ready to roll at Pine Hill during the 1903 Endurance Run through the Catskills. Courtesy of the Detroit Public Library.

an eye to expanding the route in future years. Find out more and see a short video at www.1903autorun.com/

Photos & Info Needed — Mud Spatters OK!

If you have photos, diary entries or other information related to this historic automobile run, or can provide images and materials on cars, trucks or tractors for an exhibit on local motive power at the Cauliflower Festival, please contact Diane Galusha, 845-586-4973; history@catskill.net.

HSM Strategic Plan: Great Minds Think . . . a Lot!

The nine-member HSM Executive Committee is developing a strategic plan to chart a course for the organization through the next three to five years.

HSM successfully applied for planning assistance from the Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY) program. Through webinars, an extensive survey and a five-hour retreat facilitated by Susan Weinrich of the Council for Non-Profits of New York, the board has considered and discussed needs including a research archives, hall renovations and attracting board members and volunteers.

A plan, addressing challenges, opportunities and action items will be adopted in May, setting goals and spelling out our agenda through 2020 and beyond. We'll be looking for your input and ideas, and hope you'll be an active participant in an invigorated Historical Society!

Thanks go to Jim and Susan Kelly for generously hosting the retreat at Susan's Pleasant Pheasant Farm bed and breakfast in Halcottsville on March 11.



**HISTORICAL
SOCIETY of
MIDDLETOWN,**
Delaware County

THE 49¢ POST

THE 49¢ POST is an exclusive feature for members who receive *The Bridge* via e-mail. Because your newsletter requires no postage or label, you get an "extra"!

Mid-Century Memories!

Got 45 minutes for a trip down memory lane?

Check out the terrific video created by Fred Margulies of a slide show on Middletown in the 1950s that was presented April 16, 2016 at our hall. Photos of people, places and events show what a different place this was in the middle of the last century. Do you remember the Gray Ladies at the original Margaretville Hospital? Swimming in the river beneath Hall's Covered Bridge? Watching football (not soccer) games at Margaretville Central? Even if those aren't your memories, you'll enjoy this look at Middletown past, enhanced by members of the audience who add personal reflections to information provided by presenter Diane Galusha.

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/198068406>

Georgia and the late Dave Taylor got married in 1952 at the Old Stone School, which Georgia attended briefly as a child.

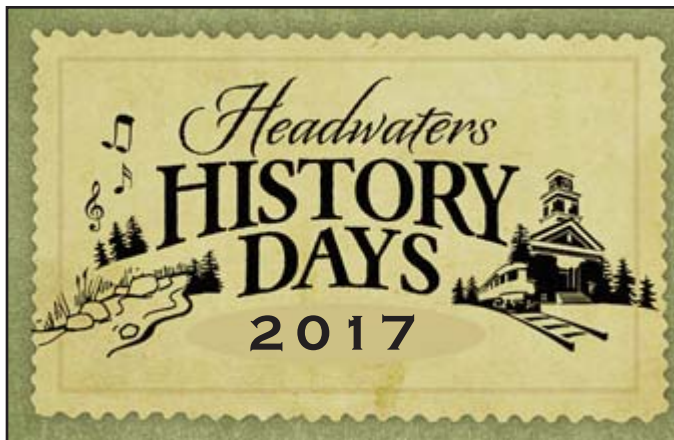


What Lies Within? Signs of Historic Times!

By the Way . . . Enjoy the Scenic Route

Have you visited the Catskill Mountains Scenic Byway website? There is so much to discover about Route 28, along with Routes 42 and 214 which make up the Byway. The website has descriptions of historic sites and museums, as well as detailed driving tours related to railroads and the NYC water system. Listen to the theme song, "Catskill Mountain Home," composed and performed by Jay Ungar and Molly Mason. Find a link to Drive28.com and download three wonderful audio guides to the Byway, packed with history and contemporary information. Look inside on page 7 to read more about an exciting re-creation of an historic "scenic drive" headed our way this September, in conjunction with the Cauliflower Festival.

Go with
the Flow:
Headwaters
History
Days
are
coming
soon!



Headwaters History Days June 17-18 includes HSM's program on Highmount (read all about it on the front page), an Open House at the Stone School in Dunraven, a railroad talk in Fleischmanns, and more. Visit www.headwatershistorydays.org to learn more. This is Middletown's signature event for the Scenic Byway, and it coincides with Path Through History statewide. History lives in the Central Catskills!