

HSM sets goals for growth

Charting a path for steady growth over the next three years, the Historical Society Board of Trustees is nearing completion of a strategic plan that includes seven major goals.

HSM, chartered by the State Education Department in March of 2005, is being assisted in the planning process by consultant Joanne Lindstrom of Ithaca. Her services, which have included facilitating intensive meetings with the HSM committee in June and November of 2006, and in April of 2007, have been supported by Get Ready and Get Set Grants from the Upstate History Alliance.

The draft plan was expected to be adopted in May, providing a blueprint for HSM to follow through 2009.

"Having a plan is only as good as the paper it's written on," commented HSM President Diane Galusha. "We will need to stay focused on the goals, and seek help from our friends and supporters in the community to make them happen. We have a lot of important work to do, and encourage anyone who'd like to serve on the committees we will soon establish to contact a Board member.

"We believe that as the goals of this plan are reached, and new ones are established, the Historical Society of the Town of Middletown will become a respected and trusted resource in our community for generations to come."

The following goals are outlined in the plan:

- Strengthen the Board of Trustees: We will re-examine and revise the by-laws and constitution, create a functioning committee structure and cultivate active and committed board members
- Increase and diversify support: A Fundraising Committee will work to identify potential donors and grant opportunities, bolster fundraising activities and create an endowment plan. A Membership Committee will come up with a strategy for recruiting new members and collaborating with community organizations, and the Board will work to enhance a good working relationship with town and village government and with other historical societies in the region.
- Establish a History Center. HSM will seek guidance from professionals in the museum field to determine the feasibility of an exhibit, archives and research center, and establish a task force to investigate options. Eighty percent of those responding to an HSM survey last year said they wanted HSM to establish a history center.
- Educate youth and adults: A new Education Committee will work to collaborate on history programs and projects with schools and youth groups, engage underserved elements of the community and explore establishing a schol-

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Seen on Main Street, c. 1903



This dapper man strolling along Margaretville's Main Street (we think), and the grinning wagon driver and his bony horse provide tantalizing glimpses into village life circa 1903.

The images (photographer unknown) were among 21 glass plate negatives found above Miller's Drug Store years ago and donated to the Historical Society by Al and Naomi Weiss. Ten of the negatives were scanned and restored by Ed Kirstein of Roxbury.

The enlarged and framed photographs will be exhibited at Fairview Public Library's new community room (the former garage) on Walnut Street Saturday, June 2 when Margaretville Historic Walking Tour brochures will be made available for the first time.

The self-guided Walking Tour includes brief histories of 44 buildings in a one-mile loop around the village. The buildings are numbered on a map made by Gene and Beth Thompson. Historic and contemporary photos (by Jack Zamor) illustrate the free brochure, designed by Annie McAdams of Treadwell. Diane Galusha wrote the text. Special assistance was provided by Lucci Kelly, Howard Etts, Jr., Ira Lawrence and Al Weiss.

The Walking Tour is the result of a partnership between HSM and the Delaware County Rural Health Alliance, the Delaware County Office for the Aging and the Delaware County Historical Association. Tours were also produced for Walton and Franklin.

Brochures will be available at most buildings highlighted on the tour, as well as in the Gottfried Municipal Building and NBT Bank on Main Street.

DON'T MISS THIS ONE!

Stunning artwork, gorgeous autumn views of the Catskills and the fascinating homes and studios of two of the 19th century's finest landscape artists will be featured on a bus tour to benefit the Historical Society Thursday, Oct. 18.

"The Catskills Through Artists' Eyes" will be the focus of the trip to Cedar Grove, the home of Hudson River School of Art founder Thomas Cole in Catskill, and Olana, the Persian-style home of his most prominent student, Frederic Edwin Church, just across the river in Hudson.

Tickets for the event are \$50 for members, \$60 for non-members. The fee includes guided tours of Cedar Grove, which this year offers an exhibition of another Hudson River School artist, Asher B. Durand, and of Olana, recently restored, with its beautiful gardens and fabulous views of the mountains to the west.

Lunch at Creekside, a popular restaurant on Catskill Creek in the Village of Catskill, is also part of the package, which is a fundraiser for the Society.

Watch for further details in the next issue of The Bridge.

Meantime, call Dale Trethaway at 607-326-4780 to reserve your seat. They're sure to go fast!



Beautiful Olana, the Persian-inspired home of artist Frederic Church, will be a destination for HSM's first bus tour October 18. Reserve your seat now! Photo by Dale Trethaway.



For generations, the Hubbell family has cared for and kept the records of the Kelly Corners Cemetery, established in 1886 as the Eureka Cemetery. In April, Bob and Carolyn Hubbell, above, joined members of Friends of Middletown Cemeteries to re-inventory monument inscriptions and match them against a map of plots and their purchasers. The original map was written in pencil on a slab of wood; Gary and Barbara Atkin translated the faded writing and meticulously created a new map on paper. The correct and comprehensive results will be posted on the Delaware County Genealogy and History Website.

Say Chees e!

Are you over 80 and a resident of Middletown?

We want to take your picture!

A group portrait of town elders will be taken at 6:30 p.m. Wed., July 11 in Binnekil Park on Main Street (across from NBT Bank).

Rain date is July 12.

The photo session (it will be quick!) will precede a concert and ice cream social in the park (see calendar of events). Bring a chair, and a smile!

In Their Own Words

Close encounters of the railroad kind

"There was a railroad bridge across the Millbrook just below the lower end of Arena. When I was a teenager, Dayton Webster and I often used to go to the bridge. . . We discovered that we could squeeze between the ties near the end of the bridge and there was a little space on the bridge abutment just under the tracks.

We would get under there when we saw that a train was coming. We waited, hearing the approach. When the train hit the far end of the bridge, everything began to shake and the rumbling grew. It was quite an experience when the train thundered over just a foot or two above your head!"

Frederick L. Ketchum

From A "City Boy" Remembers Arena

FINDING THE FARMS

The Historical Society has embarked on a project to identify all family farms in the Town of Middletown circa 1940-50. A quick count by several people working from memory shows there were at least 170 farms in the town in the middle of the 20th century. There are only four working dairies in Middletown today, all in the New Kingston Valley.

HSM would like to pinpoint 1950-era farms as closely as possible on a large map, along with the locations of creameries where farmers took their milk. We hope this information will be the take-off point for exhibits, programs and documentation projects about the business of farming and the impact of its decline on our region.

If you would like to contribute photos or information about your family farm in Middletown, or about creameries that served Middletown farmers, please call Diane Galusha (586-4973) or Andy VanBenschoten (586-4283), or email cybercat@catskill.net. We are also looking for volunteers to serve on a committee to develop farm-related history projects. Contact Diane if you would like to get involved.



Before the Water



"Silent Villages of The Lost Valley: The Stories Beneath the Pepacton Reservoir" is a day-long tribute to the lost communities planned for June 30 at Andes Central School from 10-4.

Five communities – Arena in the Town of Middletown, Shavertown and Union Grove in the Town of Andes, and Pepacton in the Town of Colchester – along with dozens of outlying farms, were claimed for New York City's largest reservoir. Nearly 1,000 people were displaced between 1947 and 1954 when the reservoir was constructed.

Andes Society for History and Culture is looking for individuals willing to share their stories and memories, and to show their memorabilia of life throughout the valley before the reservoir was built.

For more information and to volunteer to be a part of this day of remembrance and celebration of life before the reservoir, contact Katherine Somelofski, 845-586-1632.



The Arena school was crowded when this (undated) photo was taken. Memories of communities lost to the Pepacton Reservoir will be the focus of Reservoir Day June 30 at Andes Central School. Photo from Berna VanBenschoten collection.

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arship program.

- Increase visibility: HSM hopes to establish a web site within the coming months, will continue The Bridge newsletter and will formulate a coherent public relations, advertising and communications plan.
- Provide public programming. A committee will be established to select, organize and document local history programs.
- Have an accessible, well-preserved collection. This will involve training volunteers and cataloguing the Society's growing collection of historical items, now housed in the Middletown Town Hall.

HSM Mission Statement

The purpose of The Historical Society of the Town of Middletown, Delaware County is to build awareness and appreciation of the heritage of the Town of Middletown by discovering, preserving and making accessible historical information and materials related to the Town and its environs. These objectives will be achieved through educational programs and preservation projects, and through cooperation and collaboration with other local organizations.

Contact us: 845-586-4973. PO Box 745, Margaretville, NY 12455

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Grrrrr eat tools!

Doug Faulkner had a thing for tiger maple, that gorgeous golden wood with the dark, sinuous stripes running through it. Nor could Doug resist the lure of handmade tools, kitchen implements or whatzits whose purpose could only be surmised. Some of Doug's favorite tiger maple tools and gizmos are now on view at the Middletown Town Hall, courtesy of Doug's similarly afflicted wife, Fran. Stop by and check them out. See if you can guess what they were used for.



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A Moment in Time

A Moment in Time looks at local views on national or international issues of the day.

"Women suffrage should not be granted in this country."

The opening line of M. (Mary) Leone Archibald's essay left no doubt about where she stood on this issue.

The essay, written as a class exercise, was printed in *The Orange and Blue*, a Margaretville High School newsletter published in May of 1909. In it, the 16-year-old sophomore argued that a woman should be informed enough on the matters of the day to be able to discuss them with her family, but shouldn't be allowed to vote because "Active political work is outside of a mother's or wife's line of work, therefore domestic duties must be neglected. Second, modesty becomes a woman, therefore she should not be brought into rough contact with the world."

By asserting her rights, a woman would likely experience a decline "in the protections and courtesies due her," Leone wrote. And further, "she is represented at present in the financial world and therefore is not taxed without representation."

The Margaretville teenager might have been influenced by the organization in 1911 of the National Association

THE 41¢ POST

"THE 41¢ POST" IS A feature exclusively for members who receive *The Bridge* via e-mail. Because your newsletter requires no postage or label area, you get an extra feature — 41¢ cents' worth, to be precise!

Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS), led by Mrs. Arthur Dodge. But in 1920 opponents' arguments were overturned when the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution, granting women the right to vote, was ratified.

Leone was the daughter of Sinclair and Rosa Archibald, who in 1910 had a farm on Academy Street in the Village of Margaretville. She was considered studious, kind, solitary and destined for "single blessedness," according to a directory in the 1909 *Orange and Blue*.

Indeed it appears that Leone did not marry. US Census records show she was a teacher at the Pennsylvania Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Philadelphia in 1920. In 1930 she was living with her parents in the Village of Franklin and working in a coffee shop there. She died in 1974 and is buried in Margaretville Cemetery.

We wonder whether she ever cast a ballot. . .