

## Taking the Measure of Middletown for Jay Gould

HSM members got a fascinating look at the making of the 1856 map of Delaware County when Frank Waterman, Town of Meredith Historian, spoke at the Society's Annual Meeting Oct. 20. Waterman explained that the map was made by Jay Gould, an enterprising teenager who had helped survey for a map of Ulster County in 1852, and then contracted to create a similar map of Albany County in 1853. Born in Roxbury in 1836, Gould (the future railroad tycoon and richest man in America), then commenced mapping his home county, hiring cousin Iram More, I. B. Wilcox, William Zawadille and a Roxbury schoolmate, John Champlin, to do the actual surveying. Champlin, who was paid \$20 a month, was given a large wheeled odometer and a compass and walked and rode horseback over the hills and valleys of the county during the autumn of 1853 and 1854.

What follows are excerpts from the Middletown segment of a diary Champlin kept while surveying in 1853. His vivid descriptions of some of the people he encountered are amazing for their candor. Note the different names in use then for hamlets and streams (current names in italics).

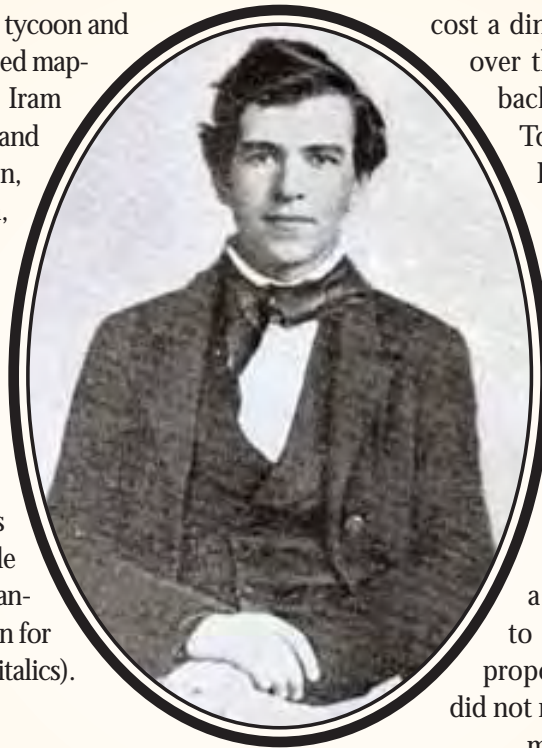
### The 1853 diary of John W. Champlin

**Saturday, Oct. 8th:** Started this morning about seven o'clock. Cold and frosty. Surveyed down as far as Batavia Kill (*Denver Valley*), thence up that stream to LaFarkins, where we took dinner. The country here looks poor, as well as the inhabitants; farms poorly fenced; houses small and going to decay, people rough and ignorant. Dinner, buckwheat cakes and honey. After dinner ran up the stream as far as Ballard's store. Here is a decided improvement in the face of the country. Looks a little more like living. From here we came across the mountain to Beaverdam (*Roxbury*) having surveyed this day 15 miles and 30 rods.

**Wednesday morn (12th):** The weather is not so chilly as it was yesterday. There is some snow on the ground. In about two hours we had breakfast (which) consisted of two bowls of potatoes and some rye bread. Our bill was 50 cents. Hence this question: If two bowls of potatoes are worth 25 cents, what are a bushel worth, and the following was proposed by the Col.:

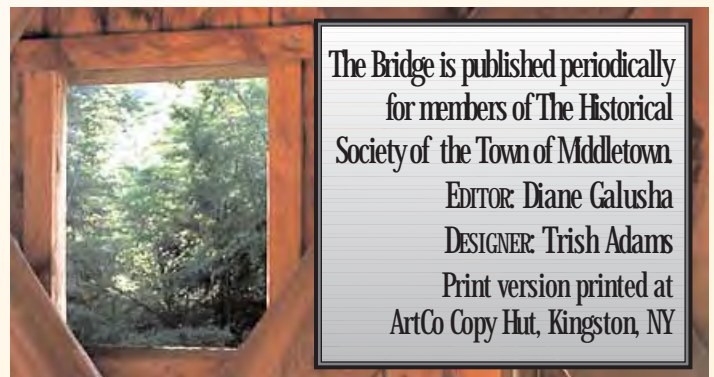
If 2 bowls of potatoes are worth 25 cents; what cost a dinner with chicken? To-day we surveyed over the mountain to county line then came back and surveyed toward Ballard's store. Took dinner at R.D. Sloat's and put up at E. Ganoung's. Had a very good supper then went to bed. Got up in the morning, eat breakfast. Paid 50 cents and started.

This morning was frosty but not very cold. We finished Batavia Kill and then came over into Red Kill. Here the land looks poor and the people poorer. The houses are small and cheap built, having a poor appearance. The farms are poorly fenced. It being now noon I am at J.H. Hammond's where I have the promise of a dinner. I have eaten dinner and surveyed to Clovesville. On the way some fellows proposed to make us say "Down Rent," but did not make it out. Clovesville lies between two mountains and is strung along perhaps a



Jay Gould: By age 16, he had formed his own surveying company.

*continues on next page*



The Bridge is published periodically  
for members of The Historical  
Society of the Town of Middletown.

EDITOR: Diane Galusha

DESIGNER: Trish Adams

Print version printed at  
ArtCo Copy Hut, Kingston, NY

## 2 Taking the Measure of Middletown for Jay Gould

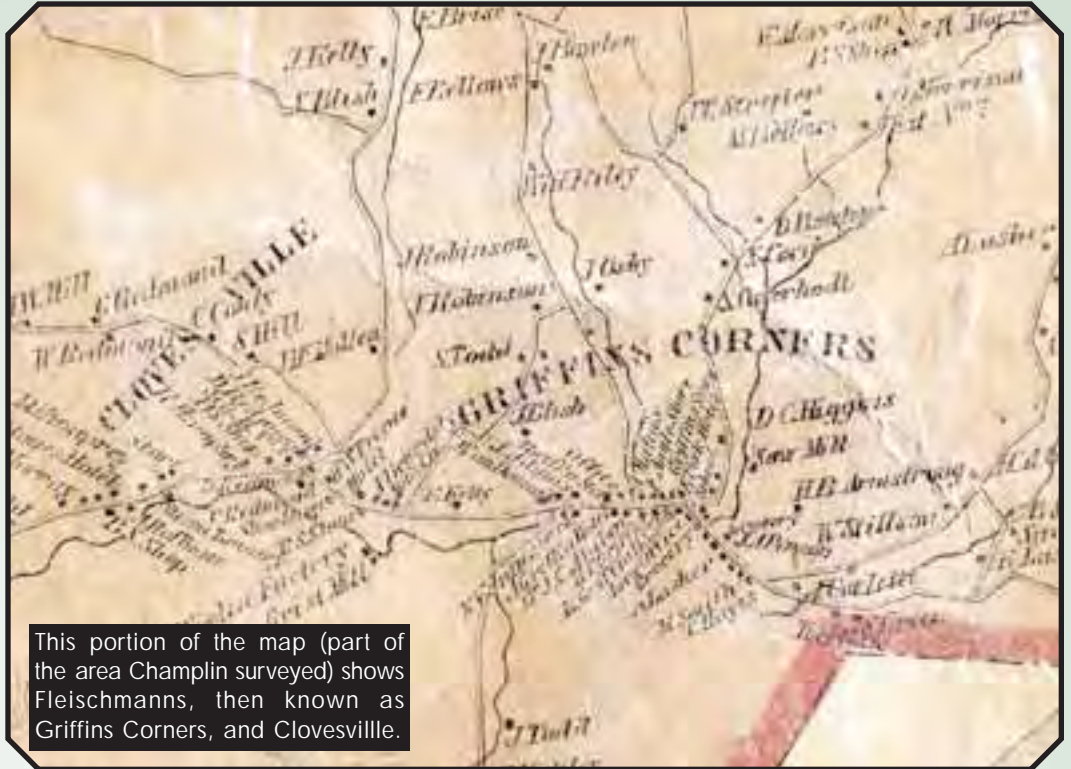
*continued from page one*

quarter of a mile. There is two taverns, two or three stores, and some other kind of crafts are carried on. There is two or three nice houses and a dozen of a meaner appearance. I am stopping at the temperance hotel.

**Friday morn (14th):** The weather this morning is cold and frosty, But gives promise of a pleasant day. We took breakfast then started for the county line at the top of Pine Hill. Here it runs through the middle of a house built by one Niltse who was over-fond of mutton, and when a constable came from Ulster he would step across the room and he was in Delaware, and when one came from Delaware he would step across the room

and be in Ulster. About half way down the hill is the ruins of the place where Greene shot the man; the house and barn are complete ruins. As you descend the stream there is a high range of mountains on the left whose margins skirt the stream. On the right there are a range of high hills bordering close upon the brook so that it leaves little or no space for flats. We surveyed as far as Bendle's Hotel. Got my boots tapped and took dinner, then came down as far as N. Dimmick's, (*now Erpf House, Arkville*) and here stopped for the night. Here the Clovesville stream empties into the Delaware, and here there is quite a quantity of flats. I took supper, went to bed, slept good.

**Sunday morn (16th):** Is another pleasant day. I tried J.S. Ingraham for his horse, but could not make a raise. He said he was sometimes penurious enough to compute the interest on his Bible, and see how much more money he would have had if he had not bought it. But Abe, the dear fellow, got Bruce Smith's horse, and then we went home. Got back about ten.



This portion of the map (part of the area Champlin surveyed) shows Fleischmanns, then known as Griffins Corners, and Clovesville.

**Monday morn (17th):** We started to go down the river. I surveyed up dry brook. Had a poor compass; 'twould not work. Went back to Margaretville and Jay sent for another. There was a law suit here.

**Tuesday morn (18th):** Another frosty morning. I started to survey intersections in Clovesville. I surveyed up Red Kill and down a cross road and up to the county line toward dry brook. Here on top of the mountain I came across old Johnny Ferguson that I have heard my father speak of. It was his son who went substitute for my grandfather in the last war. (War of 1812). The old man looked smart, and even went down to meeting on foot, a distance of two miles. I staid in Clovesville.

**Wednesday morn (19th):** I surveyed up the Bush (Brush) Ridge road. Came around by Pine hill and went up the Portertown road until night bid me close my labors. Came to a house owned by J. Morrison, a one-eyed man, and I asked him if I could stay. He guesses so, and I drove in. I went in the house and such a dirty hole I never got in before. The old

*continues on next page*

### HSM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Diane Galusha, PRESIDENT ♦ Carolyn Konheim,  
VICE PRESIDENT ♦ Marilyn Pitetti, TREASURER ♦ Lucci  
Kelly, SECRETARY ♦ TRUSTEES: Roger Davis,  
Phil O'Beirne, Anne Sanford, Henry Friedman  
[www.mtownhistory.org](http://www.mtownhistory.org) ♦ [history@catskill.net](mailto:history@catskill.net)

### Calling All Yankees

HSM will host the Delaware County Historical Association's "Delaware County in the Civil War" exhibit July 4-Sept. 2. It will be expanded to include information, photos and artifacts of soldiers from Middletown and vicinity. Do you have something in the attic or in a family album you'd consider sharing? We would love to scan or photograph it and include it in the exhibit. Please call Diane Galusha, 845-586-4973. Thank you!

man and woman were natives from the bogs of Allan and dirty as any pigs. She wore a hood all the time; she eat in it, and I guess she slept in it. I made out to eat some supper. The old man couldn't see what I was making a map for. The son's wife had on a dirty night cap and wore an awful smutty face with a pair of cross eyes. Shortly I went to bed, but did not sleep much. I got up in the morning, ate a little and started. I went up to the county line, then came back and ran up the county line again. I stopped at A. Houtan for dinner. Had an encounter with a couple of bull dogs. They scared me and I scared the woman. Didn't get any dinner here. Then went on to Miss Kelly's, an old maid.

Got dinner. She would not take any pay. I then came over to Big Red Kill and run over into Batavia Kill, then back again. The weather is the warmest that I have seen in 4 weeks.

**Tuesday morn (25th):** I went up to Montgomery's and got my wheel, and in the afternoon I took the stage to Col. Dimmick's.

**Wednesday morn (26th):** It froze pretty hard last night. I commenced at the Col's, and surveyed to Margaretsville. It was slow getting along. I got there about ten and bought a strap to carry my compass, then I started for Andes. I commenced surveying at Platte Kill. I took dinner at McLean's in Clarks-ville. (Also called Clarks factory, now Dunraven). I surveyed to the

foot of Palmer Hill, then came back to E. Bryant's (*hotel next to District School No. 4*). Staid all night.

**Thursday morn (27th):** It is very rainy. The land here lays well for grazing. The general course of the valley is northwest; it is watered by Sprout brook. The land on the north side gently slopes back for about a mile and ends in a sharp ridge of hills which separates it from Weaver Hollow. On the west of the stream are a range of mountains rising abruptly, and covered with hard wood. This is in the town of Andes. It was up this stream that the railroad was surveyed. The rise to the foot of Palmer hill was 100 feet to the mile. This route was abandoned. I have got a cold and sore throat. It rains still and it is now dark.

*A transcription of John Champlin's entire diary is included in a booklet about Jay Gould written by Delaware County Historian John Raitt in 1977. The booklet can be read on the Features page of the HSM website, [www.mtownhistory.org](http://www.mtownhistory.org).*

*In late 1854, John Champlin followed his brother Stephen to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and, like him, became a lawyer. Stephen entered the Union Army and died at age 37 in 1864 of wounds received in two 1862 battles. John Champlin served as Mayor of Grand Rapids 1868-70, was a State Supreme Court Justice 1884-91, and taught law at the University of Michigan 1891-96. He died in 1901.*

## Let history be your legacy

You're receiving this newsletter because you are a history lover, a community supporter, a person who recognizes that lessons from the past can most certainly inform our future, if only we heed them. No doubt that's part of what prompted you to join HSM, and to help us save the records, images and voices that tell Middletown's story. It is a big job, and we've only just begun. You can help ensure that HSM continues to preserve local history well into the future:

Make a tax deductible contribution to HSM, PO Box 734, Margaretville, NY 12455

Honor a friend or loved one's personal history by giving HSM a gift in their memory

Consider adding HSM to your bequests

Please contact any board member; email us at [history@catskill.net](mailto:history@catskill.net), or call 845-586-4973 for more information. Thank you in advance for your generous support.



George Hendricks, Jr., an HSM trustee since 2008, passed away Oct. 3. An avid genealogist and enthusiastic local history promoter, George did everything he could to support the Society. He's pictured here manning the welcome table at our Post Card Show in June. George was one of a kind and is already sorely missed. Fellow board members in November voted to establish a scholarship in his memory for a local high school senior interested in history. Watch for more information on this in the coming months.

4 **All Aboard the Delaware & Northern**

Among recent additions to the HSM collection is an album of 72 photographic prints and several pieces of ephemera relating to the Delaware & Eastern/Northern Railroad that was based in Margaretville between 1905 and 1942. The line connected with the Ulster & Delaware's Arkville hub and ran west along the East Branch of the Delaware River to Dunraven, Arena, Shavertown, Downsville and on to East Branch, where it met the O&W. It started life as the D&E, was reorganized and renamed the D&N in 1911, and was later operated by Sam Rosoff, known as Subway Sam for the subways and tunnels he contracted to build for NYC and its water system. Donations from a number of HSM members made possible the purchase of this collection from John Ham, who used many of them in *Rails Along the East Branch: The Delaware & Northern Railroad*, the 2006 book he authored with Robert Bucenec.



The Margaretville station of the D&N was located just west of Bridge Street. At that time, Route 28 turned over the bridge (shown, far left) and proceeded down Main Street and on to Dunraven before heading over Palmer Hill to Andes. Today, Route 28 bypasses the village entirely and covers the former D&N tracks.



111875 <b>DELAWARE &amp; NORTHERN RAILROAD</b> CONDUCTOR'S TRAIN TICKET.		Arkville	Margaretville	Kennedy's	Dunraven	Half's Bridge	Arena	Union Grove	Pleasant Val.	Wolf hollow	Taftmans	Andes	Shavertown	Rock Eddy	Pepacton	Scarville	Downsville	Colechester	Corbett	Gregorytown	Shulloppe	Long Flat	Harvard	East Branch	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Se.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.														
The Duplex Ticket must be properly punched before it is separated and the half given to passenger, who will be careful to observe that the date and the Stations FROM and TO which fare is paid are correctly punched out by the conductor. Redeemable at 10 Cents of any Ticket Office of the Company if NOT PUNCHED. Not Redeemable. Conductors are not allowed to redeem this ticket. GOOD FOR THIS TRIP AND TRAIN ONLY.		1916 1917 1918		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24									

The gas-powered, five-speed Brill motor car, purchased for the D&N in 1926, carried mail and passengers. It was fondly called the Red Heifer because of the maroon color and horn that reportedly sounded like a mooring cow.

Someone purchased this ticket Sept. 24, 1915 to ride from Arkville to Pleasant Valley on the Andes Branch of the D&N. The excursion cost 48 cents.

A short freight train heads west between Arkville and Margaretville, where The Meadows golf course is today.



The mechanical and storage shops of the railroad were clustered about a half mile west of the station, where Wayman's Automotive shop near Fair Street is now. Note the water tower to keep the boilers running on the steam locomotives, one of which is shown with unidentified engineer in the cab of Engine #3. The shop buildings were dismantled in 1956.



MEANWHILE, over at the former U&D station in Arkville, HSM collaborated with the Delaware & Ulster Railroad to erect a historic marker that pays tribute to the site that hosted two rail lines. Pictured at the Nov. 10 unveiling were (l to r) HSM Secretary Lucci Kelly; President of the U&D RR Historical Society Doug Kadow; DURR Chief Mechanical Officer Vic Stevens, and Catskill Revitalization Corp. President Dave Riordan. On deck are Roy and Barbara Moses and Bud and Peg Barnes.

## 6 Annual Meeting Featured a Gould Treasure



Leonard Utter, above left, gave Barbara and Gary Atkin some first-hand recollections of the Millbrook barn in this painting by the late Michael Fauerbach. The Atkins were the lucky winners of the raffle that raised \$750 for the Society. Our thanks to Ellen Fauerbach for donating the beautiful watercolor.

Sixty people (see crowd, below left) turned out to socialize, enjoy lunch and learn about Jay Gould's Map from Meredith Historian Frank Waterman at HSM's Sixth Annual Meeting Oct. 20. Waterman (top right) has researched Meredith history, the Civil War and the 1856 Gould map, among other topics.

Delaware County Historian Gabrielle Pierce, right, has her eyes on the prize but can't decide which dessert to choose! Lucci Kelly is the server. Others at the table are Ingrid Vanderleeden, left, Steve Miller at the end of the table, and Jackie Purdy. Lucci also lent one of the four Gould maps she owns (one for each of her children) for display at the event.

Caterer Sharon Fleck, below right, took a break with her assistant Sheila Matson while serving a delicious buffet luncheon for the hungry crowd at the HSM Annual Meeting.



Adah Clifford Murphy and husband John Francis Murphy were among the founders of the Pakatakan Artists Colony in Arkville and were featured in the Living History Tour of Margaretville Cemetery in June.

Robert Rowe was born and raised in Margaretville. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1949, traveling in both oceans during four years in the service. He later attended Syracuse and Boston Universities and then entered the United Methodist ministry where he served for more than 50 years in central New York. He is retired and lives in Rochester.

John Francis Murphy died nine years before I was born so I had no contact with him other than through spending many hours enthralled by what I remember as large albums of miniature (like computer “thumbnail”) sketches of his paintings. As I recall there were notations about where, and when they were painted, who purchased the paintings and the purchase price. I spent those hours while waiting for his wife Adah Murphy to come to breakfast, after I had started a fire in her fireplace, the summer I worked as her handyman (boy) in 1947 or 1948. That was about the same time my father and younger sister and I moved from Margaretville to Arkville (“Smithville”) across Route 28 from the Pakatakan Colony site and the Murphy rustic cabin and studio in the woods.

Part of my duties as I said was to start the fire in Mrs. Murphy’s fireplace. As I recall she had a brass cauldron and a brass wand with a soapstone tip soaking in kerosene. She had a basket of tinder, composed of wood chips, torn newspaper, dry leaves and grass, and kindling by the fireplace. She had plenty of small twigs she had gathered and logs that were cut to fireplace length. She had me split wood outside by the shed, and then pile by the fireplace.

To start the fire I piled some wood on the fireplace grate and placed tinder and kindling beneath it, lit the soapstone with a match and placed it underneath the pile of tinder and wood chips. If the fire struggled I could use the ancient bellows that stood by the fireplace to give it a few puffs of air. I soon had a roaring fire blazing — unlike the gentle blazes I started as a Boy Scout in Margaretville under our War-time Scout master, Dr. Gilbert Palen.

A teen-age girl (I can’t remember her name) prepared Mrs. Murphy’s breakfast which we all shared. Mrs. Murphy quite often surprised us with such treats as fresh coconuts. I used a brace and bit and gently drilled through the shell I remember

a hissing sound when the bit broke through the shell. Then we drained whatever water it contained into three glasses and drank it. I then took a small hatchet and chopped the nut open. With a sharp knife I dug out the “meat” around the shell. We shared the meat, which didn’t taste anything like the packaged coconut I was accustomed to (and had pilfered from our pantry – if I could get away with it).

Sometimes it was a pineapple or red bananas that Mrs. Murphy had for a treat. But the real treat was having breakfast with, and chatting with Adah (of course I never called by her first name).

Another task I had was to help Mrs. Murphy clear the brush and weeds away from her spring in the woods. It was a rather unpleasant chore because of the ferocious mosquitoes that just

seemed to wait for us to appear. But, ever resourceful

Mrs. Murphy had a secret weapon, a healthy dose of citronella oil which she slathered on our necks and arms. (I can still smell it as I write). But it worked and we cleared the spring so that gravity could replenish her water supply. And it was delicious water – I wish I had some right now.

I knew nothing about the art history of the “Pakatakan Colony” at that time. I could see the large hotel building from the road, but had no idea that the patrons had been mostly renowned artists who stayed in tiny rooms, which encouraged them to get out in nature.

I did know an artist from Margaretville, Milla Etts (ten years my senior), for whose mother I had done odd jobs before moving to Arkville. On occasion, I even made plans to “just happen to be passing by” where Milla was painting a landscape (such as along Cemetery Road) at about the time she would call it

quits for the day, so I could help carry her painting supplies to her studio on Main Street. I have wondered if Milla ever studied under Adah Murphy, who gave art lessons at times in her long career. Milla and Adah did exhibit their art together at



The author in 1948.



Adah Murphy at Weedwild, the Murphys’ home in Arkville

*continues on next page*

## Breakfasts with Adah

*continued from previous page*

least once in a June 1939 library-sponsored exhibit at the Carman Studio in Margaretville.

One of my greatest regrets in regard to Adah Murphy (and Milla Etts) was that I never showed any interest in learning to paint. Here I was in the presence of a fine artist with all of the equipment available and I didn't have the courage to ask for help or advice. Unfortunately, for me, I never got another chance. Adah Murphy died in June 1949 in my senior year in Margaretville Central School.

A final regret was that I never followed another interest — that of photography — and asked her if I could take pictures of her, or at least her home and studio. One of the paintings in that studio is still impressed in my brain — a painting that appeared almost totally black (although it was various shades of grey and purple, and such) with the tip of a crescent moon peeking above a threatening storm cloud. I guess that painting really represented my experience that summer with Adah Murphy. She was the bright spot I remember above my regret that I never tapped her talents nor had another chance to meet her.



Middletown Highway Superintendent John Biruk and Councilman Brian Sweeney enjoy an image from the Time and Time Again series of 12 photographic collages that is now on permanent exhibit in the Town Hall. The photos, by Michael Musante, blend historic photos with contemporary views from the same perspective. An opening reception was held September 4.

## CEMETERY CRIME UNSOLVED

Despite a months-long investigation, State Police have made no arrests in the vandalism of Margaretville Cemetery, discovered August 7. Several concerned citizens gave donations totaling \$700 to be used as a reward for information leading to an arrest. That money will be used instead to repair a dozen damaged monuments in the spring, according to Mayor Bill Stanton.



## THE 45¢ POST

THE 45¢ 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"!

### CAULIFLOWER FESTIVAL COMEBACK



Wayne Ford of Denver shows Isaiah Figueroa how to prepare a beam for mortise and tenon joinery. HSM sponsored the day-long timber framing demo to complement the "Barn Yesterday" exhibit in the History Tent at the 9th Annual Cauliflower Festival on September 29. Isaiah lives with his grandparents, Kevin and Kathy Roberts, on one of the oldest farms in the Denver valley.



Tom Kaufman and his father, Smith Clark Kaufman try the HSM cauliflower planter on for size. The elder Kaufman picked cauliflower while growing up on his father Claude's farm in Canada Hollow.