

~The Vista~

Volume 1, Issue 3

November 2008

**Schuyler County
Historical Society
Brick Tavern Museum
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**Benefits of SCHS
Membership:**

- Subscription to the 16-page *Journal* and our new newsletter *The Vista*.
- Free use of our Research Library.
- Invitation to special Society programs and events.
- Full voting privileges to help shape our Society's future.
- The opportunity to help preserve Schuyler County history!

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SCHS Acquires Wedgwood School

Out of concern that another old one-room schoolhouse would fall prey to the wrecking ball, the Town of Dix offered the Wedgwood School, District #9 on Route 414 to the Schuyler County Historical Society.

Although not normally in the practice of acquiring real estate, the SCHS Board voted to acquire the property as it expands its efforts to preserve the history of Schuyler County.

The Wedgwood School is in relatively good physical shape and could be used by the Society for future storage and display of some of our larger collections. Our current Museum is running out of space for our ever ex-

panding collections.

The Wedgwood School opened its doors to students in the late 1880s and closed in 1950. It was used later as a community center and more recently as a storage facility for the Town of Dix.

We are pleased to take possession of the Wedgwood School and look forward to working with the local community to upgrade and renovate the building in the future.



Wedgwood School in the early 1900s. The physical appearance of the school has not changed much today. (SCHS photo collection)

We will keep you apprised of future developments regarding the school. If you attended the school as a student we would also like to hear from you.

Please contact the Museum at (607)535-9741 or info@schuylerhistory.org for further information.

Montour Falls Main Street Book Out

The Montour Falls Business District: West Main Street's Proud Past and Hopeful Future by SCHS volunteer Virginia Steil Bruckner has recently come out and is available for sale at our Museum.

The book was the brainchild of the late Nancy L. Musser, who passed away unexpectedly last November.

Volunteer Ginny Bruckner decided to continue and complete the project

as a benefit to SCHS.

Copies are available for \$20 at our Museum.

Please contact the Museum at (607)535-9741 or info@schuylerhistory.org to order your copy by mail.

The Historical Society at Work

This past spring a request came in from the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia based in Arlington, Virginia. They were looking for information on a Charles James Duffy, a native of Watkins Glen, who went missing in Laos in January 1961.

They were looking for any photos of Duffy, local published articles, and information on memorial services held or a memorial stone placed in a local cemetery on his behalf.

Their primary purpose, as indicated in their request letter, was "to locate photos of the 1,763 American

still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia." It seems their records on Duffy were quite limited as he went missing early in America's involvement in Southeast Asia.

The hunt for information on Charles James Duffy was on. The Duffy surname family file, cemetery records, and the birth and death index would all be searched. Here's what was found:

Charles James Duffy, known as "Jimmy," was the son of Mrs. Augustus Biener of S. Monroe Street in Watkins Glen. He was born in 1918 and attended Watkins Glen High School and was in the Seabees

in World War II. He was working as a civilian contractor near Vientiane, Laos when he was captured by Communist Pathet Lao guerillas while on a hunting trip on January 13, 1961.

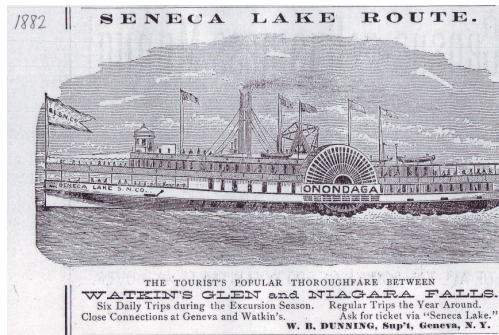
The State Department later received word that Jimmy Duffy was shot by his captors that April. His body was never recovered.

There is a gravestone at Glenwood Cemetery in Watkins Glen for him. A photo was also found in our files. All the information found was sent and soon after SCHS received a grateful thank you letter with a donation for our efforts.

Steamboats on Seneca

Presentation to be given by County Historian Barbara Bell

Schuyler County Historian Barbara Bell will be giving a presentation on the steamboats of Seneca Lake on Wednesday, November 19th at the Human Services Complex on Route 14 in Mon-



tour Falls.

There will also be old steamboat photos and some recently donated historic lithographs of steamboats and steamboat

line advertisements to view as well.

Admission is free and we hope to see many of you there.

For further info contact the Museum at info@schuylerhistory.org or (607)535-9741.

Holiday Open House and Book Signing

This year's Holiday Open House will be held on Sunday, December 14th from 2-4pm at our Museum.

Come see our trimmed tree and holiday decorations and enjoy some light refreshments and punch.



Holiday Open House at the Brick Tavern Museum.

This year we will have at least two local authors in attendance to sign their books for you before you wrap them as gifts to loved ones.

Barbara Bell and Ginny Bruckner will sign their recently released books and am

sure will answer any questions you may have for them.

The festivities are free and we hope to see many of you there.

For further info contact the Museum at info@schuylerhistory.org or (607)535-9741

Recent Donations to our Collections

We received some interesting donations to our Museum recently.

From Laura Wallenbeck we received genealogies on the Agard, Woodford and Hibbard families.

From the Yates County Historical Society we received two Civil War era letters from Union soldier Hiram Denning of Company G, 45th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment to his cousin Otis Corbett of Watkins Glen.

You will probably see excerpts of these interesting letters in a future *Journal* article.

Most recently we received a number of framed area lithographs, including some on Seneca steamboats, from Clay Richards, son of former Schuyler County historian Art Richards. Included also was a Currier & Ives print of Watkins Glen and a Seneca steamboat line advertisement poster.

Thank you very much!

New Books Available for the Holidays

The Montour Falls Business District: West Main Street's Proud Past and Hopeful Future by Virginia Steil Bruckner (\$20)

Images of Sports: Watkins Glen Racing by Kirk House and Charles Mitchell (\$20)

Postcard History Series: Finger Lakes by Kirk House and Charles Mitchell (\$20)

Seneca Dawn: The Pioneer Journey of John Dow by Frank Steber (\$15)

A Walk Through Watkins Glen: Water's Sculpture in Stone by Tony Ingraham (\$23)

Recent Programs Well Received

Recent programs sponsored by the SCHS were well received by our membership and the public.

Our recent harp and hammered dulcimer music concert held at the Lawrence Chapel on September 14th drew roughly one hundred audience members. Musicians Roxanne Ziegler and Mitzie Collins

were very pleased with the turnout.

On October 4th living historian Eileen Patch gave a presentation as her great-grandmother Sarah English from 1883. She read letter excerpts from Sarah's son, George, who was killed in the Civil War. Her period costume and demeanor were quite interesting to audience members.

Authors Sought for *Journal*

If you have an interesting story or remembrances having to do with Schuyler County won't you submit them to us for inclusion in our *Journal*?

We are always looking for submissions to be published in our *Journal*. It could be about your ancestor, your town, or anything you think our membership would find interesting. Please contact the Museum at (607) 535-9741 or info@schuylerhistory.org.

Membership Appreciation

The Schuyler County Historical Society would like to thank all its new and renewing members for their 2008-09 dues. As you know, we can not operate without your generous support.

If your mailing label has the date 5/08 indicated on it you are receiving this newsletter as a courtesy to re-

mind you that your membership dues are now due.

Reminder: Dues paid now will go until December 31, 2009 as we are changing our membership year to a calendar year. Starting in 2010 your membership will run January to December instead of May to April as in the past. Thanks again!

Mark your Calendars for these Upcoming Events!

November 19- Barbara Bell, presentation on Seneca steamboats, Human Services Building, 7pm.

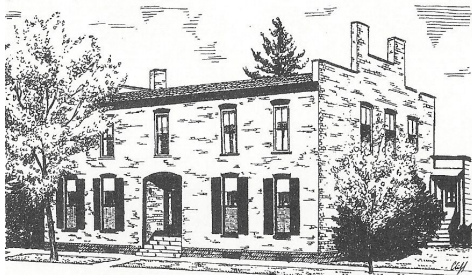
December 14- Holiday Open House and Book Signing, Museum, 2-4pm.

SCHUYLER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Brick Tavern Museum
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Non-Profit Org.
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Watkins Glen, N.Y.



We're on the Web!
www.schuylerhistory.org

Join or Renew Your Membership In the Schuyler County Historical Society

Please send to:
Schuyler County Historical Society
PO Box 651
Montour Falls, NY 14865

NOTE: New membership year. Dues paid now are good through December 31, 2009!

Levels of Annual Membership (choose one)

- New Renew Gift
- Individual (\$20) Couple (\$25)
- Organization (\$40) Business/Patron (\$50)
- Benefactor (\$100) Donor (\$250)
- Student (\$5) [18 years and under]

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

The Schuyler County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit organization.

I'd like to get involved and volunteer.