
Spindle City Historic Society

Volume 2 Issue 3

Fall 1999

DO YOU REMEMBER.....

....your high school days? The Cohoes High School classes of 1950 through 1959 are having a "Fabulous Fifties Reunion" in October. The CO-HI-SE-AN was the name of the school's yearbook and its theme in 1954 was "Television, One Symbol of a Changing World".

....Grace Reavy of Cohoes who died in 1959 at age 81? She was prominent in the women's suffrage campaign and was the first woman in NY State to hold municipal office: President of the State Civil Service Commission and Deputy Secretary of State.

....when the Cohoes Tigers won the Eastern B Baseball Championship? It was in 1957, the first time since 1937.

....what Amendment to the U.S. Constitution became law in February 1951? The 22nd, which limited the length of time that anyone may serve as President.

....that the first bingo license to be issued by the City of Cohoes was to the Holy Name Society of St. Bernard's Church in 1959?

....that Eva "Evita" Peron, wife of the Argentine president, died in 1952?

....when Cohoes Mayor Roulier proclaimed June 30, 1959 as "Mike Mazurki Day"? Cohoesier, athlete and star of stage and screen, Mike was appearing in "Li'l Abner" at the Colonie Musical Theater.

....that Cohoes sustained a record high fire loss of \$291,040 in 1957?

The Spindle City Historic Society gratefully acknowledges the donation of a file cabinet by Shirley Halls, Manager of the Business Center, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. It was greatly needed and will be put to good use.

LOCK 15 CLEAN-UP, A WORK IN PROGRESS

Beginning on July 10th, a group of Spindle City Historic Society members and friends began the cleanup of the Erie Canal Lock 15 area. The section adjacent to the north end of the lock was cleared of brush, saplings and garbage, as were portions of the path at the entrance from Vliet Street. Thanks to all, including the Kiwanis members who brought lunch to our group during our initial foray into the overgrown lock. Thank you, also, to the **Cohoes Beautification Program** for the Community Service Award presented to the SCHS for our efforts.

This will be an on-going project – the length of time required dependent on the extent of the help we can recruit. Please watch for notices of future cleanup dates.

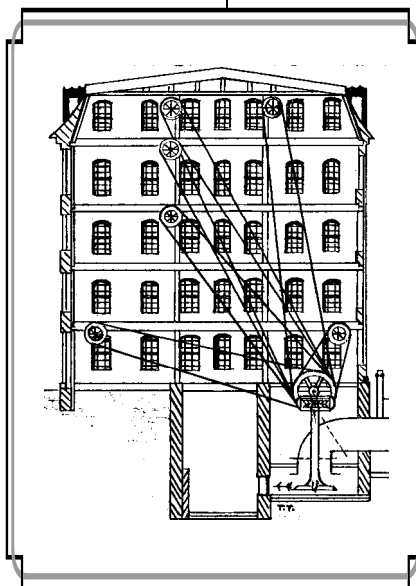
HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

The Village of Menands, incorporated in 1924, celebrated its 75th Anniversary in August. The village took its name from Louis Menand, a native of Burgundy, France, who opened a nursery and florist in the 1840's near the Albany Rural Cemetery.

Part of Menands' past are Montgomery Ward, Hawkins Stadium, and Mid-City Amusement Park. However, enterprises including Albany International, Empire Monument, International Harvester, Albany Steel, Tougher Industries, Simmons Machine Tool, and the Capital District Regional Market still call Menands home.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The Spindle City Historic Society welcomes new members *Eunice Antonucci, Frances Coughlin, Marie Gennett, Francis X. Houle, Phebe Carpenter Scoles, and Barbara Seguin.*



THE WILLIAM J. DICKEY HOUSE



“W. J. Dickey, superintendent of the Egbert Woolen Mill, moved into his new house on Imperial Avenue a few days ago. Last night he was surprised by a visit from a large party of his friends, who, after wishing himself and his wife many years of health to enjoy their new home, presented them with a handsome hanging lamp. The presentation speech was made by Mr. John Stiles and was suitably responded to by Mr. Dickey. Although the visit was a complete surprise, Mr. & Mrs. Dickey were equal to the occasion and a bounteous repast was soon in readiness for the visitors. Mr. M. A. Metcalf was among the guests and sang several choice selections. The evening was a most enjoyable one.” Thus read the article that appeared in the Personal & Society News section of *The Cohoes Daily News* on March 1, 1890. Now known as the William J. Dickey House, it was placed on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places in 1998 and will be 110 years old in March 2000.

Over the past nine years the house has been returned to as close to original condition as possible. The kitchen was “modernized” in 1941 and the original back porch was deepened and screened in. The main bath, in the kitchen area, was refitted and made smaller allowing the addition of a small rear hall, and a second bath was added on the second floor. Otherwise, the house is as it was for Mr. and Mrs. Dickey’s surprise housewarming.

In the 1980’s, the house was covered by vinyl siding which has been removed to reveal the architectural features that make it a Stick Victorian. The Stick style appeared in the mid-19th century and lasted until the turn of the century. The style is characterized by angularity, verticality and asymmetry. The Dickey House has a roof composed of steep intersecting gables. The front wraparound porch is simple with diagonal braces. The stickwork is evident in the series of intersecting boards at right angles, and the boards are used to show the inner structure of the house through exterior decoration. The house is painted in historic colors as well: Dove Grey, Union Gray and Regatta Rose.

Approximately 30 individual residences in the City of Cohoes were identified as meeting the requirements for Historic Register status in 1984, but the nominations were never completed. In 1997, Walter Lipka, City Historian, approached the current owners of these houses but only three agreed to pursue Historic Register nomination, one of them being the William J. Dickey House. Listing on the National Register recognizes the importance of these properties to the history of our country and provides them with a measure of protection.

The benefits of listing include: registered properties receive a measure of protection from the effects of a federal and/or state sponsored, licensed or assisted project through notice, review and consultation process; owners of historic properties may take a 20% federal income tax credit for the costs of substantial rehabilitation; municipalities and not-for-profit organizations may apply for 50% matching grants-in-aid for preservation work and registered properties receive priority consideration from federal and state agencies in space rental and leasing. The register includes buildings, structures, districts, sites and objects which demonstrate significance on the national, state and local levels.

The procedure for obtaining State and/or National Register Listing is straightforward. Sponsors submit an application to the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation containing detailed historical/architectural information which can be used to evaluate a property’s eligibility for listing. If the property appears to meet the eligibility criteria, applicants will be advised on how to prepare the nomination. The Historic Preservation Office will then seek comments of the owner(s) and local officials and arrange for an official review by the State Board of Historic Preservation. Once approved by the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the property is listed on the State Historic Register and forwarded on to the National Register for consideration.

Being listed on either Register does not limit the homeowner in any way. Rumors exist that you must get paint colors approved, cannot install energy efficient windows, or must allow for open houses; none of these are true. Legislation exists that allows for funding to individuals who have properties on the Registers, but there is currently no funding for these programs. The Register does provide some protection for the individual homeowner: i.e., protection from right-of-way changes in public street planning and disruption of properties from changes in public utilities.

The City of Cohoes has an impressive history. Getting more of Cohoes’ properties on the Historic Registers can be an important step in preserving that history, to be enjoyed by present and future city residents and visitors.

Spindle City Historic Society

OFFICERS

Linda C. Christopher, President
Craig Bock/Helena Keilen, Secretary
June Cherniak, Treasurer
Daniele Cherniak, First Vice President
Dennis Rivage, Second Vice President

UPCOMING EVENTS

Arcadia Book Project – Pictorial History of Cohoes –
Photograph Collection Days
10/16 Cohoes Music Hall, 10am – 4pm
10/12 Cohoes Library, 10am – 3pm
For information call Daniele Cherniak at 237-5618

10/30 American Magic Lantern Theater production
of *A Victorian Halloween* at the Cohoes Music
Hall. Sponsored by the Cohoes Caretakers.

For information call 237-7999

Waterford Historical Museum & Cultural Center, in
association with the NY Council for the Humanities,
presents

10/18 “The Resort and the Canal Town: Connections
between Saratoga Springs and Waterford”

11/7 “From Presidents to Cowboys: Heroes in
American Art in the Nineteenth Century”

For information call 238-0809

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

___ Individual Membership	\$10.00	___ Institutional Membership	\$25.00
___ Senior Citizen Membership	\$ 5.00	___ Contributing Membership	\$35.00
___ Student Membership	\$ 5.00	___ Sustaining Membership	\$50.00
___ Family Membership	\$15.00	___ Donation	_____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____ e-mail _____

Mail completed form with membership fee, payable to Spindle City Historic Society, to:

June Cherniak, Treasurer, 415 Vliet Boulevard, Cohoes, NY 12047

Spindle City Historic Society

P.O. Box 375

Cohoes, New York 12047