

The Museum at The Creamery

# THE SKANEATELES HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Nov-Dec 2016

Vol. 31, No. 5

Laurie Winship, Editor



There will be no monthly program in November. Our next event will be our annual Holiday Open House, on Sunday, December 4, from 1-4 pm. See p. 2 for further details!



## Tea with the Queen!

Come have tea with Queen Victoria on Sunday, Dec. 11 at 3:30 at the Museum at The Creamery as part of the annual Dickens Celebration. We are excited to be able to offer this festive event that used to be held at the former Stella Maris. The Queen will explain the history of proper tea etiquette, and we will be serving scones with jam and clotted cream as well as a variety of other sweets. Tickets are \$25 per person, and seating is limited to 30 people.

Please contact the Chamber of Commerce at 685-0552 to make your reservations before they sell out!





## *Tis the Season*

*Please join us for  
Holidays at The Creamery Open House  
4th of December  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm*

Join us for a festive time of shopping, entertainment and holiday desserts at the Museum at the Creamery the first Sunday in December. Bring a friend and visit our Gift Shop at the Creamery. We will be selling new handmade pieces of Westerwald Pottery made exclusively for us; books by local authors about Skaneateles; our new ornament featuring the Mottville Chair, a beautiful holiday gift and very special collectible; and many other gifts unique to Skaneateles that make great presents for friends and family who love the history and memories of our beautiful village.

**This year we will have a special musician joining us from 2:00-3:00. Eileen Rose has been playing Appalachian Dulcimer for 14 years, and it is her passion. She has been nominated for two SAMMYs (Syracuse Area Music Awards) with bands she plays in, as well as a nomination for The People's Choice Award for her playing with a local bluegrass band. She will be playing traditional Christmas music for our open house, some of which will be familiar, some of which will be new to us. We will be passing a hat for donations for this musical treat.**

Browse our unique exhibits and antique Boat Museum. Tours of the museum will be available throughout the afternoon, or feel free to browse exhibits at your leisure followed by holiday refreshments. The Holiday Open House is always a festive time to visit with friends and neighbors and a Dickens character or two. As always, we wish to thank all the volunteers who help in so many ways to make our museum a success and wonderful part of our community. So mark your calendars for December 4th and may we all have a happy and healthy holiday season.



*Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days, that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth, that can transport the sailor and the traveller, thousands of miles away, back to his own fire-side and his quiet home!*

*Charles Dickens*

Submitted by Karen Lengyel

**CREAMERY HOURS**

Nov 1-19, Fri-Sat, 1-4 p.m.  
 Nov 25-Dec 18, Fri-Sun, 1-4 pm  
 Dec 23, 1-4 p.m.  
 Dec. 30, 1-4 p.m.  
 Or by appointment



Providing website support

**Barbara Spain made Life Member**

Congratulations to Barb Spain, our most recent Life Member, recognized for her many efforts from the earliest days of the historical society to ensure that our mission has been met. Her contributions have included:

Serving as Past President of the Board of Directors  
 Writing and editing the Society newsletter for many years

Helping move from the old Town Office building to the renovated Creamery building  
 Serving as researcher from the inception of the research department, specializing in genealogical research as a result of her own extensive family genealogical work

Co-authoring two books on Skaneateles history, and recently writing one on 5-Mile Point  
 Transcribing and publishing birth, marriage and death records of St. James Church, and working with Jim Dougherty and Ted Prindle on similar records from the Presbyterian Church  
 Indexing census records from 1875, 1892, and 1930.

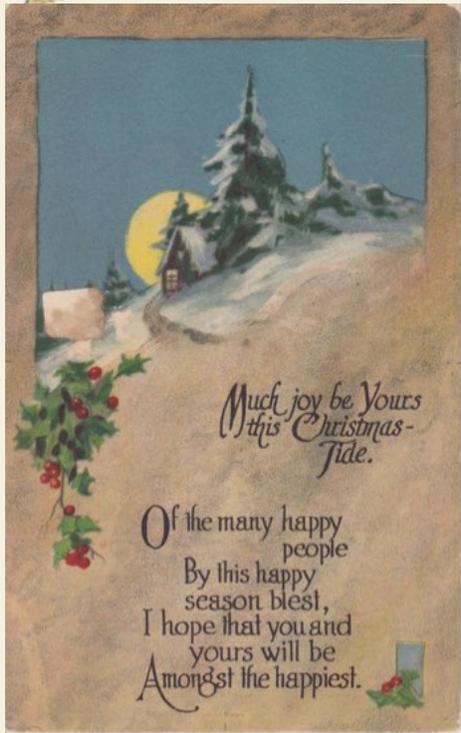
For these, and many other contributions, The Board of Directors has chosen to honor Barb with a Life Membership.

**Membership Renewals**

Watch your mailbox in January for membership renewal information. We are still trying to have all our memberships renew in January—easier for you, easier for us.

The Skaneateles Historical Society 28 Hannum St. Skaneateles, NY 13152 315-685-1360

[www.skaneateleshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.skaneateleshistoricalsociety.org)  
[skaneateleshistoricalsociety@verizon.net](mailto:skaneateleshistoricalsociety@verizon.net)



## Original Lightning Production Form Rescued!

Clayton (Corky) Gray, the Lightning Class Historian, and Craig Thayer of Liverpool (also a Class member) recently visited The Creamery on a quest to preserve an important artifact from the days when the Skaneateles Boat Co. was building Lightnings.

Skaneateles Boat Co. (SBC) began building sailboats in 1930 in the building on Jordan St. which now houses Byrne Dairy and other shops. There they became quite successful, in spite of the depression, building 16' Comets and other small sailboats.

When they recognized the demand for a larger Comet-style boat, they commissioned Sparkman & Stephens, naval architects from Connecticut, to design a larger Comet. It was Olin Stephens who designed the Lightning, a delightful sailboat.

The 19' Lightning design became the most successful under 20' sailboat ever with 16,000 produced worldwide and SBC, beginning with Lightning #1 in 1938, was a major factor in that success. Of course, the Society has #1 on display and it draws Lightning sailors from far and wide, often for an emotional encounter with the one that started it all.

The form (or mold or buck) pictured was used to lay up the planks for the hull ensuring speedy and accurate production of the outside of the boat. It was languishing in the basement of the Last Shot Distillery on Mill Rd. which was the last production facility for SBC ca. 1950. John Menapace and his crew engineered the extraction of the form from its resting place of many years.

Corky Gray and Craig Thayer arranged for the transfer of the form to the Finger Lakes Boating Museum in Hammondsport where there is room to display it and expertise to rehabilitate it. They had offered it to us at The Creamery but we had no display space nor facility for repairs. It's an important artifact in the history of the Skaneateles Lightning and it now has fitting home.

Article by Dave Miller; photos by Craig Thayer and Dave Miller



A "backbone" is attached so it can be lifted



Craig Thayer stops at the Creamery for photo-



Arrival at FLBM for rehab and display

## Give the gift of time

We hope this newsletter will get you in the spirit of the season. Please consider giving the gift of your time as a volunteer to the historical society. No experience is needed and we will work with you to train you. There are so many ways that we could use your help such as gift shop volunteer, docent, help with displays, and serving refreshments for our monthly meetings. Let us know how much time you can give and how you would be interested in helping. It's a great way to meet other people and you will be helping to keep the museum up and running for our community and the many visitors who come each year. Consider asking a friend to work with you if that would make it easier. Please contact Laurie Winship at 685-1360.

This month's newsletter includes an invitation to our Holiday Open House, historic holiday postcards from our collection, and a description below of one of our active Board members who gives freely of his time. Enjoy, and Happy Holidays !

Submitted by Karen Lengyel



If anyone spends time at the museum, they will surely meet Dave Miller. He has been a volunteer at the museum for twelve years, and on any given day you may find him involved in a variety of projects: computer support, display signage, serving as a docent, attending a Board meeting, and sometimes basic building maintenance.

Dave grew up in the midwest. He worked for NCR, where he "developed a healthy interest in how things work." He and his family were transferred to this area where the beautiful lake and the village drew them to settle and raise their three children.

Dave later worked for Hand Held Products, where he retired after twenty years. While considering various retirement and volunteer opportunities, he noticed Sally Holben, a neighbor, who often walked by on her way to the museum. He asked Sally about volunteer opportunities at the museum. When Sally mentioned being a docent, he thought that would be a good fit as he has always had an interest in local history, "probably stemming from my father's constant side trips to historical sites during their travels."

One of Dave's unique accomplishments is the development of an interactive computerized "Lake Model," located in the museum lobby, and which is used as a teaching tool for young and old alike.

Dave will tell you that he enjoys his time at the museum. He also enjoys traveling, spending time with his wife, Paula, and Sophie, their "museum puppy."

Submitted by Julie DiBagio

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## **Annual Fund Drive**

Thank you to everyone who has supported us by making a donation to our annual fund drive. We have raised \$12,207.50 toward our goal of \$30,00.00. Please consider making a donation if you haven't already done so. This money is used for day-to-day operations of the museum, and we rely on your continuing support.