

## **President's Message**

### **2004 Heritage Award Recipients**

Each year at our Annual Banquet we present awards to individuals or organizations that we deem outstanding in their contributions to local history. This past June, we presented awards in four of these categories.

Bobbie Thompson, our society's archivist, was presented with an award in the Written/Recorded category. She has spent countless hours organizing, recording, and filing all of our historical documents. She can be found working in our office most Tuesdays doing this or helping someone retrieve historical documents from our files.

Robert and Barbara Bielenberg were granted an award for Senior Leadership. Currently, Robert is the unofficial Inn Keeper and Curator for the Elmendorph Inn. He has taken responsibility for the basic setup of the facilities for various programs and continually acquires furnishings and accessories for the Inn. His wife, Barbara, is currently involved in both the Friends of Elmendorph and the Historical Society. She was past Project Manager for various phases of restoration of the Elmendorph and served as President of the Historical Society. She still contributes articles to our newsletter and helps staff our office. As a previous employee of Historic Hudson Valley, her contributions include her positions as Site Manager of both Montgomery Place here in Red Hook and Philipsburg Manor in Tarrytown. She was also the Assistant to the Director of Boscobel in Garrison.

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### ***Three Historic Ledgers are Added to the EBHS Collection in Memory of Tom Gilbert Barbara Bielenberg***

Last September I opened my computer after a summer of neglect to find a message, dated July 23<sup>rd</sup> from a historian friend in Saratoga, "There is a Red Hook blacksmith's Day Book at Tuttle's Bookstore in Rutland." Our Vermont-based daughter, also an amateur historian, drove to Rutland and found not one, but three tall, thin volumes, each one full of old Red Hook names. Lown, Moul, Cookingham, Donaldson, Elseffer, Livingston and Martin were some names that leapt off the pages.

One red flecked black volume was labeled in elegant script "The Property of Enoch Schultz Day Book 1853 Red Hook, Dutchess County, New York State.

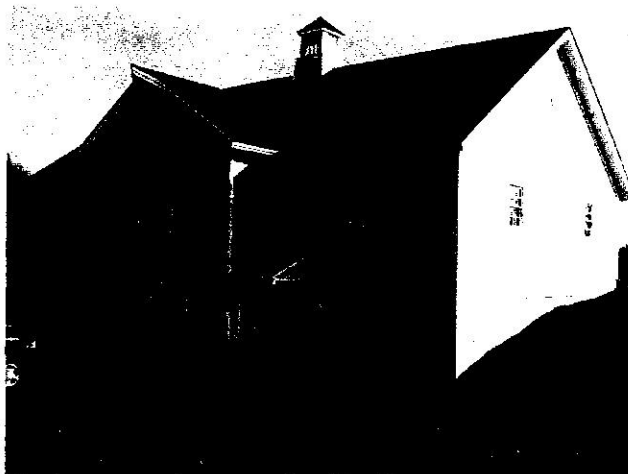
Mr. Schultz dealt in a variety of merchandise: Robert Donaldson bought "1 Sack Salt" on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1853. Lewis D. Elseffer bought 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  yd Serge, 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  yd Muslin, 4 Skeins Silk,

Buttons and 1 Spool Cotton on June 13<sup>th</sup>. 292 pages list a wide variety of goods – brooms, tea, codfish, butter, turpentine and shoes to name a few. Schultz took in butter and eggs as credit toward the purchase of manufactured goods

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## 2004 Heritage Award Recipients

Thomas and Eric Gardner, a father and son team who own Gardner Exhaust Systems, were honored with our Architectural Award. They design and manufacture replica exhaust systems for those enthusiasts restoring the American Muscle Cars. The award is for the architecture used in the recent construction of their manufacturing facilities here in Red Hook (see photo). In an attempt to blend in with the early rural architecture of this area, they designed their new building to look more like a nineteenth century barn than an ordinary manufacturing plant



**The New Gardner Exhaust System Building**

Photo by Nick Annas

Angela Arnold, a Red Hook High School graduate, received our \$100.00 scholarship for Student Academic Excellence.

We thank these individuals for their contributions to the community in these various categories. We also hope that in recognizing individuals in this manner will help further other interest in local history.

Regards,

Nick Annas, President

## Maynard Ham and The Red Hook Journal as told to Krista Weaver

In 1998, as a volunteer at the Red Hook Library, I stumbled across a collection of old newspapers. These newspapers were The Red Hook Journal and contained a weekly record of the comings and goings of the people of Red Hook – written and published over a century ago by an A. Peister. Although the information contained in its pages had been transferred to microfiche in 1977, and was in no danger of being lost, I had a strong sense that the papers were themselves historical artifacts, and should be preserved. Additionally, as I scanned the brown and crumbling pages, I was exhilarated to discover news of my own family, like this ad from 1898 announcing the sale of my great, great-grandfather's farm:

"For Sale: The well-known Groupe place west of the village of Red Hook, containing 13 ½ Acres. Come and see me. N.S. Groupe."

The paper, published weekly beginning in 1866, always contained a verbose and dialogue-laden short story with a title like "Jones' Joust with the Duke", a poem borrowed from another newspaper and innumerable bits of playful wisdom like, "Some men, like some fences, don't amount to much until they get a gait on them." Readers of the paper could revel in loads of wonderful, useless trivia from around the world – the number of lead pencil factories in Germany; violent deaths in Chicago in 1904 (2,571!) – and shake their heads in agreement with Peister's succinct political commentary, like this 1899 observation:

"Everything seems to be quiet just now in political circles. Some of the prospective candidates seem to have taken a "dope" or something, that is keeping them unusually quiet."

Personal calamities of every kind were documented by the paper: bicycle accidents, farming accidents, railroad dismemberments, illnesses and deaths. Gossipy bits like the one in 1898 about the schoolteacher who went to Poughkeepsie and became suddenly "violently insane" were abundant in its pages, although, curiously, births were not recorded. Advertisements, like this one placed by the druggist W.M. Van Steenburgh revealed the commonplace physical concerns of everyday folks, and the mysterious potions used to treat them:

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## MEMORIALS

### In Memory of Tom Gilbert:

Bob and Barbara Bielenberg have presented EBHS with three Red Hook ledgers from the 1800's. They are given in memory of Tom Gilbert, who was an EBHS Board member at the time of his death, and was a long time supporter.

Contributions were given in memory of Tom by:

Nick and Carol Annas  
David and Frederica Dimmick  
Chris Kendall and Laura Battle  
Tom and Evie Seils

### In Memory of Fred Briggs:

Linda Keeling has given a contribution in memory of Fred Briggs, who was a long time member and supporter of EBHS.

### In Memory of Desmond Dewsnap:

Linda Keeling has given a contribution in memory of Desmond Dewsnap, who was the son of EBHS Life Members Catherine and Terence Dewsnap.

## EBHS 2004-2005 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Nick Annas, President  
John Kennedy, Vice President  
Rose Rider, Recording Secretary  
Victoria Young, Corresponding Secretary  
Evie Seils, Treasurer  
Maynard Ham  
Rosalie Rossi  
John Vincent

### Introducing our new trustee:

**Rosalie C. Rossi, Ph. D.**, of Tivoli, NY has accepted to serve on the board of directors for a two year interim appointment. Ms. Rossi comes to the Egbert Benson Historical Society with a B.S. and M.S. from SUNY New Paltz in Art, Art History, Education & Languages. She received her Ph. D. from New York University, SENHAP in Art History & Education.

Ms Rossi currently works as an artist/consultant in Tivoli, where she creates and markets art, programs, art exhibitions and video films. She has worked as an Adjunct Professor of Art at Marist College and as an Associate Professor of Art at Central Michigan University. She participates in many organizations such as; Friends of Clermont, Olana, Wilderstein, Montgomery Place, Vanderbilt Gardens, Friends of Mills Mansion and the Lifetime Learning Institute at Bard College just to name a few.

Rosalie Rossi is a great addition to our board of directors. We look forward to her assistance in the next two years.

## Additions to the EBHS Collections

### Barbara Thompson Archivist

Thomas Griffing, a great nephew of Red Hook community leader and philanthropist, Joseph Griffing gave us several gifts. Among them were numerous postcards of Red Hook from 1909, an eighth grade graduation diploma of Joseph Griffing, a wonderful photo of the Hoffman Inn with veterans of World War I and a 1918 newspaper *The Times Journal*, Madalin which has a listing of all the Red Hook men who served in the First World War.

One of the treasures he gave us was a collection of thirty six school books published in the 1890's. Some of the books were published by American Book Company: Maxwell's English Series *First Book in English*. In the *Applied Physiology Primer* there are several pages in the chapter of "Breathing, Heat and Clothing" which tell young students the harmful effects of alcohol and tobacco on their health published in 1898.

Included in this collection are books on *High School Algebra 1906*, , *Outlines of Musical History 1913*, *Elements of Arithmetic 1893*, *Introduction to Geography 1892*, *A First Book in American History 1899*. and a *Practical Course in Botany 1911*. These books are small in size and large in information for a well rounded education.

Judy McLaughlin, daughter of William Landauer, added to our collection of year books from Red Hook Central School. We now have a series which runs from 1952 to 1973 with the 1966 year book missing. We also have one from 1937 and are looking for the ones between that year and 1952. These are important in giving a sense of the students and development of the educational system.

**Thanks to all who have given with generosity to our growing collections.**

## MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to all who have responded to our membership mailing. As of early November, we have four new Life Members:

Jane Deyo  
Richard Jenrette  
Ken McCarthy  
Ltc. Orris Thompson, Jr.

We have many renewals, and some new members. We welcome you all! You can check your membership status by looking at the mailing label on this newsletter. If it says 2005 on the line above your name, you have paid your dues for next year. If it has an earlier year, we are asking you to send in your dues by January 1<sup>st</sup>. If you feel that the date on your label is not correct, please call the office (758-1920) to let us know. (You will probably need to leave a message on the answering machine.) Your dues really do make a difference!

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### Three Historic Ledgers

The 1850 US Census tells us that three years earlier, in 1850, Enoch Schultz was a 30-year-old merchant living in a hotel kept by Andrew Crane. Other boarders were his clerk, 15-year-old Alfred Schultz and a physician, John Bates. According to a Beers Atlas map of Red Hook Village, Andrew Crane occupied a large building on South Broadway where the Burnett & White Funeral Home stands today. There was a store in the old Red Hook Hotel building on the corner of Broadway and West Market and perhaps this was the location of Schultz's shop.

No name identifies the tall, thin blacksmith's ledger but the top of page one is titled "Red Hook, April 1/58". The subsequent 138 pages of accounts end in February 1862. From them we learn that a set of 4 new shoes for A. Martin's horse cost 1.25. F.H. Delano and E. Statts paid the same for their horseshoes while Mrs. E. Livingston and Robert Donaldson paid \$3.50 to have their oxen shod.

There were 16 blacksmiths working in the Red Hook area in 1850, among them 28 year old Frederick J. Schultz who lived with his 24-year-old wife Catherine and two young children. Schultz lived near the English wool spinners Mark and Joseph Spurr and there are frequent listings in the ledger for J. Spurr -- "work for factory", "sharpen picker teeth" "12 new pick teeth". The Spurr cottage still stands in the hamlet of Annandale near the site of the Livingston woolen mill. We picture Schultz serving his Annandale and Barrytown neighbors -- Livingston, Delano, Donaldson, Astor and Spurr as well as Chamberlain from Maizefield on the west side of Red Hook.

It is tempting to conclude that the two ledgers were preserved together by Schultz descendants and finally wound up together in a Vermont bookstore. But what of the third volume found with them? The cover says only "Ledger No. 5, June 5, 1876". The handwriting is very tight, precise and bookkeeper like. The entries begin with an alphabetical index to the subsequent numbered pages. The names are definitely Red Hook: Franklin Delano, George S. Vosburg and others as Trustees of School District No.6, Dr. John E. Losee, and many Elseffer listings. "Rutherford Stuyvesant Guardian of John Armstrong Chanler a Minor" documents \$400 deposited at the Bank of Red Hook, the first payment by Richard DuBois on his lease.

Perhaps some reader with an accounting background would be willing to look at this Ledger and tell us what it represents. The three ledgers provide interesting insights into the economic life of the Red Hook community in the mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century and my husband and I are pleased to donate them to the Historical Society in memory of Tom Gilbert, a devoted Historical Society member who passed away this year.

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### Maynard Ham and the Red Hook Journal

"Give me a liver regulator and I can regulate the world.," said a genius. The drug-gist handed him a bottle of DeWitt's Little Early Risers, the famous little pills."

Serious concerns of the day -- Will the winter be cold enough to produce a good ice harvest? Will the coal strike end? How will the apple crop turn out? -- lived alongside silly admonitions like this one:

"If you ride a wheel avoid the monkey-on-a-stick style. It is not only ungraceful, but unhealthy and idiotic."

And fads were documented as well: "Violets are the rage."

Finally, the crumbling old papers were preserved by the Library in archival boxes for safekeeping. I photocopied sections of the Journal to share with others, who became as excited as I was about the discovery of this treasure trove of local history. Eventually I began compiling the passages that interested me most in a newsletter-type format, handing it out at the Historical Society's monthly meetings. Beginning with the 1898 issues, I've worked my way up chronologically month-by-month to 1904. Looking ahead to next year I am excited about discovering news that on October 2, 1905, the electric lights were turned on in Red Hook Village for the first time. I think there should be a celebration.

The **Red Hook Weekly Journal** began publication with Volume I, issue #1 April 29, 1859. The first publisher was L. Piester, Editor and Proprietor.

In July of 1917, the **Red Hook Journal** was merged with the **Tivoli Times** and issued under the name **Times Journal** and published by U.G. Lucas, Madalin, New York.



## Jack Lewis Writes About Winter in Barrytown c. 1930's

Jack Lewis was born in Barrytown in 1931 and has written a richly detailed description of growing up in that riverfront community during the depression. With his permission we quote from his account. Copies of Jack's memoir are available for study at the Red Hook and Egbert Benson Historical Society's libraries.

"Besides playing basketball during the winter months, we also would go skating and sleigh riding almost daily. Despite the dangers of the Hudson (because of the tides and subsequent ice movement), we continued to take chances against our parents' better judgment. There would be times when vast areas would be as smooth as glass, proving great conditions for ice boating. Other times, as the ice broke up and continually shifted, it could be very treacherous.

I remember holding my jacket to simulate a sail and being propelled clear to East Kingston by the wind. It was such fun that it never occurred to me how I'd get back across the river and north to Barrytown. Fortunately, a friendly ice boater came to my rescue – my first lesson in tacking. I should note that the river's channel was not kept open for the larger boats in those days. This allowed me to cross to the Ulster side.

We also skated at Lake Robert, a man-made, stream-fed pond that provided the boundary line between Sylvania Farm owned by Chanler Chapman and the Rokeby Estate owned by the Aldrich family. The lake provided ice for both estates. Sadly, the old pond no longer exists. On a recent hike to that area, I was amazed to see that what used to be our skating area had been filled with sediment and is now sprouting tall grasses and young trees. The only reminder is the small stream that meanders around the south shore over the Falls to the Mudder Kill and on out to the Hudson. No signs of the old ice shoot or platform remain.

On any given Sunday, the lake would be teeming with skaters. Some of the local youth, who were experimenting with the old Model "A" Fords and Chevies, would drive their cars onto the ice for a spin.

St. Joseph's also made their pond available to us. The Brothers would keep it free of snow for their students' use during the day. In the evening, we would take advantage of this facility. Not only was there great skating, but the Brothers always built a bonfire for warmth and to heat hot chocolate for our enjoyment.

Although the facilities of the river, Lake Robert, St. Joseph's and the local creeks were certainly great places to skate, the really shining gem at our disposal was Ed Smith's man-made skating rink. Sometime around 1940 Ed built a skating rink behind his garage. He leveled an area, poured a concrete curbing to hold the water, erected a building to change skates, keep warm, and to do our all-important snacking. He also provided lights and heat, all of this at no cost to us.

Recently I was reminiscing with a lady from Rhinebeck who had skated there. She informed me that she was charged 10c per outing. Maybe Ed only charged out-of-towners!

Ed took great pride in the rink. He kept the surface in excellent condition. Since it was sealed by the cement curbing, it was easy to flood the surface in preparation for smooth skating the next day. We were most fortunate to have such a wonderful facility at our disposal. I'm not aware of any other small hamlet in the area at that time that enjoyed such luxury. I only hope we conveyed to Ed how much we appreciated his efforts.

Sleigh riding was another of our favorite pastimes. When conditions were right on the Station Hill Road—enough snow and ice and not too much sand—we would start near the entrance to Good Hap (Chanler Chapman's winter home) and ride clear to the railroad station, a distance of about one-half mile. We could get up quite a "head of steam," especially on the hill near the station. When the road was bare or too sandy, we would ride down the hills near Chapman's tenant farmer's house on the river side of our house, use our own property, or ride the hills of his pastures. We would build our own toboggan runs. We would use about anything that would slide; the local dumps were a great source of building material for tobogganing equipment.

Possessing a competitive instinct, one of our great joys was to race our sled and man-made "toboggans". I once salvaged the metal frame of the front seat of a Model T Ford. Once the seat cushion was removed, the back of the steel seat was exposed. It was shaped like a semicircle and the bottom was a square metal frame that allowed me to steer the contraption. I should note that I was in the running in most races."

## MEMBERSHIP FORM 2005

### The Egbert Benson Historical Society of Red Hook

P.O. Box 397 Red Hook, New York, 12571

Name(s) (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (with area code): \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: Please check: Individual \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing \$ 25 \_\_\_\_\_

Family \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Sustaining \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Student (under 18) \$5 \_\_\_\_\_

Life \$100 (individual) \_\_\_\_\_

Donation (indicate any company matches please) \_\_\_\_\_

**Benefits of membership : Advance notice of monthly programs ~ The knowledge that you support the collection, preservation, and dissemination of the history of the Town of Red Hook .**

