



Egbert Benson HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RED HOOK

P.O. Box 397 Red Hook, N.Y. 12571-0397

The Lone Ranger Returnsto Historic Red Hook

The 206th annual meeting of the Red Hook Society for the Apprehension and Detention of Horse Thieves was held on October 1, 2002. Fifty-eight members heeded the call to meeting and were present for roll call. After the usual dinner and business routine (election of officers, report of any horses stolen during the year, etc.), Fred Van Nostrand, Sr. spoke about the radio, TV and film history of the Lone Ranger and his side-kick, Tonto. Mr. Van Nostrand's impressive 66-year collection of Lone Ranger memorabilia was on display for viewing, where enthusiastic comments could be heard such as: "I remember that" or "I had a..." The minutes of this meeting have now been entered into the long record that began in 1796.

On 10 October 1796, at the home of Stephen Holmes, 64 local residents met to establish a society for the purpose of "Recovering Stolen horses and apprehending persons Guilty of the Same." [Location of the first meeting place is not known, but was probably in what is known today as Upper Red Hook]. Officers elected were: chairman, Isaac Stoutenberg; treasurer, Hendrick Benner; and secretary, G.B. Van Ness. David Martin, John Martin, Jacob P. Heermance, Garrett Heermance, Philip Pitcher and Zachariah Smith were appointed riders to find and return horses stolen from the subscribers. Riders were "to be paid the sum of three pounds each at any time or times when they shall go in pursuit of any Horse or Horses Stolen as Aforesaid." The new society would provide an important service to its members in this former time when personal loss or theft insurance was not available, and when horses were an integral part of everyday life.

The original By-laws, enacted in 1796, provided
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Fall 2002

From Soup to Nuts

This summer we have had a variety of donations and interesting visitors to the EBHS. Roy Paisley, principal at the Red Hook High School, donated a post card mailed to Bertha Link many years ago that has a picture of the 1907 Red Hook High School football team. Can you help us identify the players?

Richard Coons helped us fill in our file on Egbert Benson with research materials. They include everything from the dedication of Egbert Benson Drive and the visit and address by Attorney General Louis Lefkowitz (This took place in the late 1970s) to articles from *The Barrytown Explorer* and the *Register Star*.



The EBHS-sponsored course at Bard's Lifetime Learning Institute, "The History of Red Hook," featured a tour of Red Hook's historic and scenic sites, including a stop at the 1760 Elemendorph, our home. The sunny fall day was a perfect backdrop as EBHS Trustee Nick Annas shot part of our group in front of the old inn.

A most unusual book, *A Review of Diseases in Dutchess County from 1805 to 1825*, came to us from Maynard Ham. Jane Shaffer Deyo sent another

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Lone Ranger...

that subscribers would be fined the sum of two shillings each for "non attendants on the Stated Meetings of the Said Society." In 2002, the fine for missing an annual meeting is \$15.50.

A review of the records reveals that between 1805 and 1868 a total of \$399.89 cash was paid out to recover horses reported stolen. On 14 June 1813, "an extra meeting of the society was held at the house of A. H. Heermance and \$52.50 was distributed among the Riders for the purpose of pursuing the horse of Barent Lewis." Three riders were called out in 1842 to find a horse owned by William K. Teator, and were paid \$7.50 each. A report from the riders at the 2002 annual meeting provided that there were no horses stolen during the previous year.

The original territory covered by the Society, as set forth in Article 11 of the original by-laws, is described as follows: "...the society shall Extend Southward to a Certain Road Leading from Peter Cantines by the way of Genl. Van Ness to the town of North East Comprehending that part of the town of Rhinebeck west of the said town of Northeast and north of the Said Road above Mentioned." [The "road from Peter Cantines," most likely refers to the present Route 199, as it runs from Barrytown at the River east toward Pine Plains, which was once part of Northeast. At that time we were part of the Town of Rhinebeck.] Today there is no territorial restriction for membership in the Society.

For many years the meetings were held in the homes of individual subscribers (members). The minutes of the centennial meeting on 6 October 1896 inform us that the meeting was held at the home of Martin Lasher. The officers elected were: president, J. R. Kerley; secretary, E. C. Perrine; treasurer, P. F. Potts; and collector, J. W. Pitcher. Three Riders were also elected. Balance on hand in the treasury after paying Mr. Lasher \$25 for supper was \$2,066.98. The minutes made no reference to any horses reported stolen during that year.

On October 4, 1904 the Society voted to adopt a new protocol for the recovery of stolen horses. It was

decided that the use of riders be discontinued and that the telephone be used instead (no information given as to who would be called for help). At the same time a motion was approved that the 1905 meeting be held at Academy Hall in Upper Red Hook. After the 1904 annual dinner at the house of Elmer Boice, the meetings would be henceforth held in a public place. Today the annual meetings are held at the Hendrick Hudson Lodge on Graves Street in the Village of Red Hook.

At the 144th annual meeting of the Society on 1 October 1940, Clinton Gallagher, Irving P. Fraleigh, Albert F. Kerley and Karl N. Llewellyn were accepted into membership. The officers elected were: president, John Kerley; treasurer, Henry Brenzel; collector, John Losee and secretary, Curtis Fraleigh. A motion was passed that "this Society reinstate and re-constitute the ancient office of Rider annually after the ancient manner & practice Provided however that this resolution shall not alter the resolution of Oct. 4, 1904 as to the procedure when a horse may come to be stolen and Provided also that any rider who wishes to ride shall do so at his own cost and expense to the honor of himself and the Society, and Provided further that a rider may drive".

The Society was a "male only" organization until October 2, 1956 when President Irving Doyle made a motion "that we entertain our ladies at the next annual meeting, our 160th." The motion was duly seconded by Mr. Lloyd Rockefeller and unanimously carried. At the 160th meeting on 1 October 1957, Mrs. Donald E. Norton and Mrs. William J. Walsh applied for and were accepted into membership. Mrs. Edna Thorley joined in 1958. In 1986 the first female officer, Lottie Kittner, was elected treasurer. Times have changed and our current membership (2002) is approximately 50% female!

Membership in the Red Hook Society for the Apprehension and Detention of Horse Thieves has often been passed down through families by tradition. Eugene Budd attended his 68th consecutive meeting (perfect attendance) on October 1, 2002 — he came to earlier meetings with his father and now attends with his son. Another long-time member, Oakleigh

Ham, now attends with his grandson. Elmore Fraleigh was elected to the position of secretary in October 1944 upon the death of his father, Curtis Fraleigh, the previous secretary. (Elmore served as secretary of the organization for 50 years before retiring for health reasons.) The continuous record of the Society reads like a "Who's Who in Red Hook" for each year of time. Recent newcomers to Red Hook are now on the membership rolls and join with the old-timers in continuing the annual get together in honor of "the horse" and of law and order.

Requirements for membership today are: (1) A member does not need to own a horse (a canvas at the 2002 meeting revealed that only seven members owned at least one horse); (2) An applicant must have "some" knowledge of "the horse" and give a short speech to prove that he/she knows something about horses; (3) A member must be available to answer the call to service on the 1st Tuesday in October each year (dues pay for the dinner) to enjoy the camaraderie of the members, learn a bit of history from the guest speaker, and just have a light-hearted good time; and (4) Any member who misses three meetings and neglects to pay the fines for said missed meetings will be stricken from the roles.

The Lone Ranger and Tonto (and their respective horses, Silver and Scout) have passed into history, but the Red Hook Society for the Apprehension and Detention of Horse Thieves endures as an important part of our community under the capable leadership of President Woody Klose. If the non-member reader would like to be notified of the next annual meeting, please send your name and address to Jane Knobloch, Secretary, at P.O. Box 207, Red Hook, NY 12571 (or E-mail to jane@jane-knobloch.com) and mark your calendar for the 1st Tuesday in October, 2003 at 7 pm. We look forward to welcoming new members into our esteemed Society.

Jane Knobloch

From Soup...

package from her home in New Mexico. It contained various early photos of workers at the old Red Hook Tobacco Factory and the Curtis Hardware Store (later Stockenbergs and Williams), as well as pictures

of Dr. H.L. Cookingham, a Red Hook country doctor from the early 20th century, and Raymond Shaffer, her father. Included in her post were her class ring from Red Hook High School and a copy of the Hardscrabble Yearbook, Class of 1949. Some familiar, somewhat younger faces.

We were visited by several people searching for the families of Sherman, Heermance, Stewart and Rowe. For Sherman, all we could come up with was suggestions for searches in records we didn't have. For Heermance and Stewart, there was more material available. There was a couple interested in researching their barn and a gentleman who was interested in taking rubbings of old bottles for his book on bottles in Dutchess County. That we could provide, from the generosity of Fred Briggs, with antique bottles from Battenfeld's Dairy, the Lewis Teator dairy farm in Red Hook, and a soda or beer bottle from A.H. Coon, Madalin.

Tuesdays at the Historical Society are always interesting, varied and filled with friendly people striving to help those of today and tomorrow.

Barbara Thompson, Archivist



Can anyone identify these 1907 Red Hook ball players? Let us know.

"Bills are out for a game of Base Ball on Labor Day, Monday afternoon, September 1st, between the "Heavy Weights" and the "Ghosts," or the fat and lean businessmen of the village, for the benefit of the Lutheran Parsonage Fund. The Citizen's Coronet Band will be in attendance. Admission 15c, children under ten, 10c, wagons 25c." - The Red Hook Journal, Friday, Aug. 29, 1902.

From the President's Desk....

Oct. 15th 2002

You may notice this newsletter is a little different. It is on the small side, but supplemented with one of our new Red Hook Guides, which were just published last month. We wanted our members to have one of the first copies. We are very proud of this handsome four-colored brochure, which was designed by Steve Lawson, and put together with a board committee of EBHS trustees and members from Tivoli and Village of Red Hook. Funded by a grant from Furthermore, a Fund headed by our neighbor and friend Joan Davidson of Germantown, and supplemented generously by the Red Hook Town, Red Hook Chamber of Commerce, and the Villages of Red Hook and Tivoli, it has, as they say, been greeted with much critical acclaim! In other words, we hear people love it!

I am very grateful to the members of my committee who worked so hard to produce this beautiful "Guide." Tom Cordier, Vickie Young, Donna Griffith, Bernie Tieger, all from Tivoli; and Barbara Bielenberg, Linda Keeling and Maynard Ham from Town and Village of Red Hook. My thanks to Marc Molinaro, Susan Davis and Janice Clum Lawson for reading over the manuscript as well.

This newsletter also contains an important appeal to members to update your dues and continue your involvement in the Society, as well as a full page membership form. If you are a member in good standing, thank you, and feel free to overlook the enclosed letter; if not, please read the letter and check your membership status.

After a relatively quiet summer (we usually close down in July and August, but archivist Bobbie Thompson continued her work with the collections each Tuesday for most of the summer), we started our new working year with a renewed slate of officers. I agreed to serve another year as president, while Tom Cordier, who led the Tivoli contingent in researching and putting together the Tivoli portion of the "Guide," agreed to carry on as vice-president. Treasurer Evie Seils will once again serve to manage the books, a job she does really well. Finally, Jane Knobloch, our new trustee, will serve as recording secretary and Vickie Young will continue as corresponding secretary. EBHS member Annatje Gilbert has agreed to organize refreshments at our public meetings.

One of the first projects we undertook this fall was to sponsor and organize a course on the History of Red Hook at the LifeTime Learning Institute at Bard College. The seven-week course, based on our "Brief History" features historians Roger Leonard, on Upper Red Hook; William McDermott, on the Colonial tenant-landlord system; Architect Alan Neumann on the influence of the Great Estates; and Barbara Bielenberg and myself on the first 200 years of Red Hook's history. On Nov. 1, we will wrap up with a talk on the last 100 years, when developments in industry, then technology, led to great changes in town. We are thrilled that Red Hook history is getting such a boost, and that EBHS is at the heart of it!

Clare O'Neill Carr

Fall/Winter Programs

Sept.17th: Col. Jim Johnson, Hudson River Military Historian and Executive Director of the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College spoke on the 225th anniversary of the British invasion of the Hudson Valley, including Red Hook, in 1777.

Oct.15th: Cynthia Philip, local author and historian, spoke on a work in progress: the history of Rhinecliff and the history of the Central New England RR that ran through the Town of Red Hook.

Nov.19th: State Supreme Court Justice Albert Rosenblatt and his wife, Julia Rosenblatt, will speak on their long involvement and interest in the "Baker Street Irregulars," a literary society devoted to the study and enjoyment of the famous Arthur Conan Doyle character, "Sherlock Holmes."

Dec.17th: Rev. Roger Leonard will once again perform a reading of Dicken's "The Christmas Carol."

Jan.21st, 2003: Antique bottle/stoneware "auction." Arthur Church will speak about his collection and assess your old bottles and jugs.

Board of Trustees

Clare O'Neill Carr, President
Tom Cordier, Vice President
Evelyn Seils, Treasurer
Jane Knobloch, Rec. Secretary
Victoria Young, Corr. Secretary
Mary Cioffi
Nick Annas
Katherine Dewsnap
Maynard Ham
Archivist Barbara Thompson

Heritage Awards Honor Local Works

At our June, 2002 Annual Meeting, the Society awarded four local individuals and Bard College for their work in keeping the history of Red Hook vital through preservation, collection, writing and publication.

Our benefactor, Robert Wise, and the Wise family trust, were awarded for their generous publication of the town's first history, "A Brief History of Red Hook," published last year. All proceeds from the sale go to support the EBHS.

Bard College was honored for its restoration of the hamlet of Annandale over the past several years. Many structures of the 250-year old hamlet have been saved and maintained.

Harold Fell was given the award for Senior

Leadership for his hard work in compiling the WWII project, in which he continues to research and record those who served from Red Hook in WWII and WWI.

Maynard Ham, one of our Trustees, was awarded for his Red Hook Journal Newspaper project. For several years, Maynard has gone into the files of the Red Hook Journal of 100 years ago, and published monthly "newspapers," taking the most interesting and humorous items from the original. The result is a wonderful snapshot of life in Red Hook at the turn of the century.

Charles Boyle was honored for his work in PANDA, our public access television station, for archiving historical material and programs



The Lifetime Learning Institute class stopped by the restoration-in-progress of Maynard Ham's 1852 Gardeners cottage, once part of the Maizeland estate. The beautiful setting of the A.J. Davis designed "cottage," seen in the context of the Georgian-style c.1796 David Van Ness mansion in the background, catches one of special features of many of our Red Hook historic sites. EBHS sponsored the class. Nick Annas caught the perfect scene on a sunny, autumn day, as EBHS led the tour.

Egbert Benson
HISTORICAL SOCIETY of RED HOOK

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2003 MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Egbert Benson Historical Society of Red Hook supports the collection, preservation and dissemination of the history of the Town of Red Hook. The Society presents free public programs on some aspect of history and culture in Red Hook or the neighboring Hudson Valley. The programs are presented on the third Tuesday evening of each month at 7:30 p.m. (except during the summer months). We maintain an archives and research room, open each Tuesday, or by appointment.

If you are a history buff, or if you are interested in local or regional history, then this is the society for you.

Annual Membership Dues

The benefits of membership are mailed notices of our monthly meetings and programs, three newsletters each year, and the knowledge that you support the Society, its work and publications.

Individual Membership \$10.....	\$ _____
Family Membership \$15.....	\$ _____
Business or Organization Membership \$15.....	\$ _____
Contributing Membership \$25.....	\$ _____
Individual Life Membership \$100.....	\$ _____
Donations eligible for company matches.....	\$ _____
Other Donations.....	\$ _____
Total.....	\$ _____

The Society needs volunteers to help with programming, the collecting and researching of history, and other duties required to sustain itself. Please check here () if you would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities.

Name _____
Mailing Address _____
Telephone Number _____ Email Address _____