



Egbert Benson HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RED HOOK
P.O. Box 397 Red Hook N.Y. 12571-0397

Fall 2009

Who Needs an Historical Society?

- A genealogist researching a family history.
- A home owner wanting to know more about the former owners of her house.
- An architect defining an authentic Red Hook “look”.
- An art director seeking historic photographs for a calendar.
- An author fact-checking an article about Red Hook’s past..

And – very often – new residents wanting to pore over a collection of old maps, looking for clues to what used to be in their neighborhood.

An Historical Society is the Memory of a Community, a storehouse of photographs and documents preserving the attributes which make a community unique. Within its archives, an historical society preserves a community’s sense of place!

Hidden away on the second floor of the handsome old Elmendorph Inn, on North Broadway, our Archive Room has provided all the services listed above in the past few months and more! One of our volunteers is currently scanning 1920’s photos for a project she’s doing for the Red Hook Public Library! Rev. Roger Leonard is a regular visitor as he works on the final chapters of his forthcoming book on Upper Red Hook and author Cynthia Phillip frequently consults our files for her About Town articles.

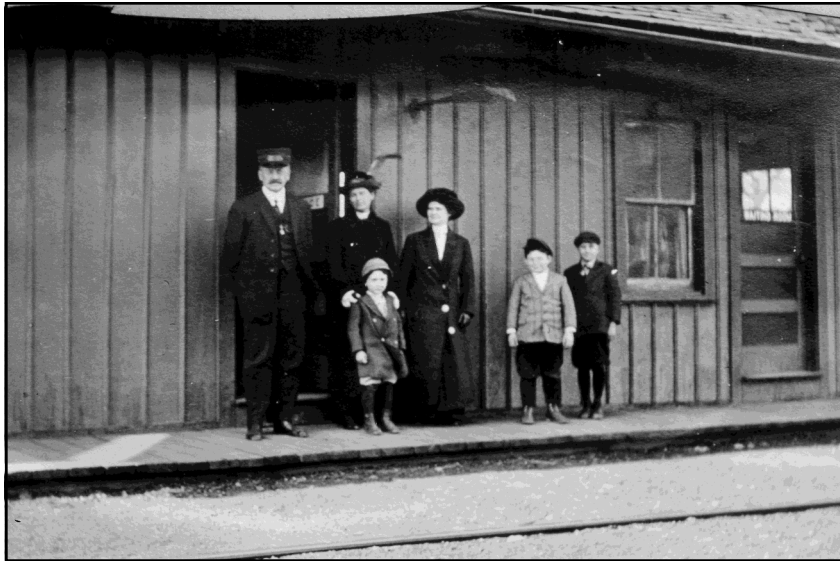
Patsy Vogel had become our volunteer technician – bringing us into the digital age and making it possible for residents to add old family photographs, 35mm slides and documents to the Historical Archives without parting with their originals. Red Hook High School graduate and Library of Congress editor James Hardin began our digital collection with 200 years of family records forming the Budd-Hardin Collection. **Contact Patsy at 845-758-0706 or Patsy@hvc.rr.com if you have pictures or documents to share.**

Like an attic storeroom, our Archive Room is out of sight and often out of mind! Our **public face** is the series of monthly programs we offer from September through June. It was standing room only at our June meeting featuring Evan Pritchard speaking on The Indigenous Inhabitants of Red Hook & Rhinebeck! The ever popular Tom Daley filled the meeting room with members eager to see his beautiful slides of historic Hudson Valley mansions. **Don’t miss our next meeting Wednesday, November 18th – “When the Automobile Was King!”—a show and tell and discussion with images from the Society and private collections! 7:30pm at the Elmendorph.**

Paid-up members receive advance notice of meetings and Newsletters expanding on our collections and activities. Our membership year begins in January but it is not too early to renew 2010 memberships right now while you think of it! Membership information appears on the last page of this Newsletter. We plan to update our mailing list this winter eliminating members whose dues are more than two years past due. If you prefer to receive your meeting notices by E-mail please let us know. **Please know how much we appreciate your support!**

Barbara W. Bielenberg

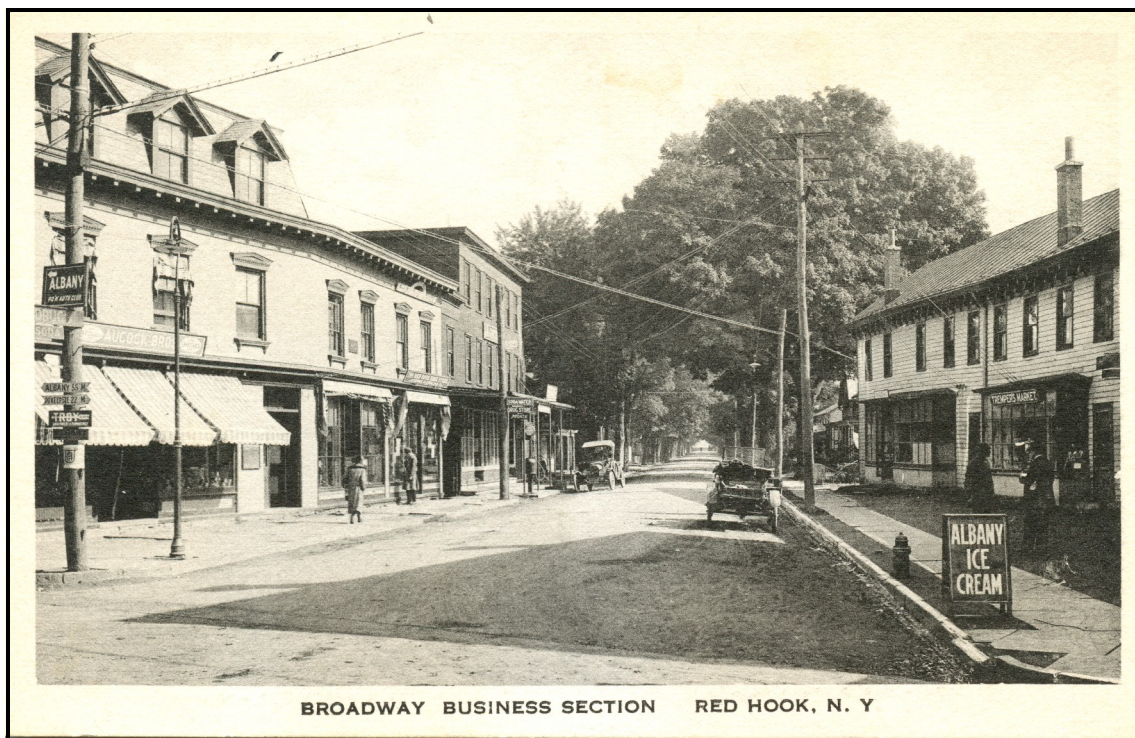
The photos on this page are of scans that were done for the Red Hook Historical Society. The label explains the type of material that was scanned.



This photo is from a 35mm slide from the Losee Collection at the EBHS Archives Room.



The original photo is a glass plate negative. It is part of the W.S. Teator Collection in the EBHS Archives.



This is a scan of a postcard from a private collection

Historical Society Board Reorganizes

President Patrick Higgins announced his desire to retire from office at an organizational meeting held on September 9th and his decision was greeted with regret and sincere appreciation for his years of service to the Historical Society. Barbara Bielenberg was elected his replacement. Two other key officers whose term limits forced their retirement were Treasurer John Kennedy who was replaced by Henry Christopher and Secretary Rose Rider replaced by Barbara Thompson. Patsy Vogel, Jonah Triebwasser, Rosalie Rossi and Maynard Ham will continue as Directors.

The new board began by reviewing the purpose of the Historical Society as outlined in its Constitution:

To preserve the past and present for the future by collecting and preserving the documents and artifacts of historic interest relating to Egbert Benson as well as the Township of Red Hook.

To promote and encourage historical research and to foster and promote public knowledge and interest in the history of Red Hook.

To develop and publish materials relating to the history of Red Hook.

To encourage preservation ...of historic sites, buildings and markers in the Township of Red Hook.

To cooperate with local officials in assuring the preservation and accessibility of historically related records and archives of the Township and its institutions.

To cooperate with or coordinate activities of other organizations in the Town to accomplish any or all of the above objectives.

New initiatives are continuing to fulfill these objectives:

Board Member Patsy Vogel is preparing a visual presentation on Red Hook in the 1920's based on the Society's Archives which will set the stage for the Public Library's spring 2010 "Great Read" Project, "The Great Gatsby" Patsy has also scanned glass plate negatives from the William S. Teator collection and posted them with documentation on the web site of Hudson River Valley Heritage, an award-winning, collaborative initiative administered by the Southeastern New York Library Resources Council. To view the photos go to www.hrvh.org and in the search box type **Egbert Benson Historical Society**.

Maynard Ham is collecting photographs, advertisements and stories about the days when the automobile was an exciting new invention in Red Hook with dealers and gas stations on almost every block! **Share in the fun at our Open Meeting at 7:30pm on Wednesday, November 18th**

Barbara Bielenberg and member Linda Keeling spoke against the proposed demolition of the 1790 Moul House by St. Paul's Lutheran Church at an Open Meeting of the Red Hook Planning Board held October 15th. (See article elsewhere in this Newsletter.)

Bist Du Hollander oder Deutschlander

In the early years and I do mean early such as the early 1700's to the mid 1700's, there was a man named Henry Beekman from Kingston, who was granted the land that became Rhinebeck and Red Hook. The first settlers were his Dutch neighbors from Kingston. They settled in the southern part of his Patent and were his first lease holders.

William Traphagen and Jan Elting came in 1705 and 1706 respectively. Kip and Ostrander families came in 1715 and Roosa, Burhans and Slegt came in 1719. They were well established in a part of Rhinebeck commonly called Kipsbergen.

There were troubles on the Livingston Patent in Columbia County and thirty-eight Palatine (German) families came into Rhinebeck to lease land at better terms than they had before... Bonesteels, Drums, Hagadorns, Widerwax, Burgers and Barringers were just a few of the names. The descendants of Burger, Barringer, Hagadorn, Stahl (Stall), Pulver and Trever are still with us today. Most of these families settled in the part that became Red Hook.

But in those early years the families did not mix very much. The Dutch men married Dutch women and had Dutch sponsors for the baptism of their children. These baptisms were for the most part in the Rhinebeck Reform Church until about 1743. The Palatine families were found in the churches of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Rhinebeck and St. Paul's German Reform Church of Lower Red Hook.

What was the status in those years? It was primarily Dutch. They were mostly 3rd and fourth generation families from New York City and from Kingston and Esopus. Whereas the Germans were immigrants, same old, same old. The Dutch had wealth in currency, land, and mills. According to William McDermott, Dutchmen had sixty percent of the community's assets. In politics it was the same story. Henry Beekman kept his thumb on whatever vote was taken and as it was a voice vote on local offices which probably kept the immigrants from offending him. Most of the offices went to his friends. The militia was another bone of contention. It wasn't until 1754 that Franz Neher was appointed a Captain. Until that time all the officers were of Dutch extraction.

After the middle of the eighteenth century the two groups began to come together. German and Dutch languages were being replaced with American English. There was more intermarrying. There were more freeholders and fewer leaseholders. There were more sales of lands of one hundred and two hundred acres to the successful farmer whether he is of Dutch or German extraction. The residents came together to form a viable and fast growing community.

Barbara Thompson

Moul House Demolition is Approved by Red Hook Village Planning Board

Listed on St. Paul Lutheran Church's National Register Nomination as "The Caretaker's Cottage", the 19th-century building sits by itself south of the large brick church surrounded by green lawns providing views of the large and historic cemetery behind it. Faced with financial ruin, the church committee filed for permission to survey two lots on South Broadway and demolish the Cottage so that the two lots could be sold (or leased) for development.

Johann Jacob Maul was born in Germany in 1706. His first four children were baptized in Kingston and in 1742 the first of four more children were christened at St. Paul's Church in Red Hook. Johann's wife Anne Dorthea died in 1760 and is buried in the Pink's Corners Cemetery in Rhinebeck. A "J. Maul" appears on an 1850 map near what is now Metzger Road in Red Hook.

Mindful of our Historical Society's constituted purpose "To encourage preservation of historic sites, buildings and markers in the Township"; the EBHS Board authorized the President to protest the demolition and to appear in person at the Public Hearing held by the Planning Board on October 15th. EBHS member Linda Keeling also protested the demolition. Representatives from the Lutheran Church committee spoke about the Church's dire financial need which they believed would be solved by the demolition.

In the end, it was the report by the Village Engineer that it would cost more to restore the structural integrity of the Moul House than the building was worth that influenced the Planners' decision. Those of us who helped raise the money to restore the Elmendorph Inn and lament the loss of the Red Hook Hotel to a gas station, took scant comfort in the mitigations promised by the Planning Board which ordered the Church to provide albums of professional quality photographs of interior, and exterior views and the setting of the Moul House to our Historical Society, the Village Historian and the Church archives as a permanent record of the old building. The albums are to be approved before demolition can begin.

Further, the Planning Board has the right to approve the design and scope of any commercial building proposed for the site, taking note of the context of the neighborhood of churches, homes and the cemetery which surround it. Your Historical Society is deeply concerned about what kind of an effect new construction replacing the historic Moul House might have on the existing neighborhood of gracious homes and churches and will continue to monitor the promised mitigations.



St Paul's Lutheran Cemetery caretaker's house South Broadway, Red Hook, New York
Photo by C. Vogel November 2008