

HAPPY 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OHA!

ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION'S

# HISTORY

VOL. 26 NO. 1

## HIGHLIGHTS

\$5.00 SPRING / SUMMER 2013

*IN THIS ISSUE:*

OHA celebrates its  
150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2013





## *The Summer Ghostwalk: Oakwood Visions*

**June 14, 15, 28, 29,  
Oakwood Cemetery**

*Take a guided stroll along the peaceful paths of serene Devotion Valley in Historic Oakwood Cemetery, and encounter some of the fascinating Syracusans from centuries past who will spin their stories for you.*

**Friday, June 14th & 28th and  
Saturday, June 15th & 29th.  
Tours start at 6:00pm each evening  
and leave every 15 minutes from  
Oakwood Cemetery's Chapel.  
Reservations made by June 7th: OHA  
Members: \$8, Non-Members: \$10;  
After June 7th: OHA Members: \$10,  
Non-Members: \$12.**

**For more information and  
reservations please call Karen  
at 428 1864 x 312.  
RESERVATIONS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED.**

## *The Best of Ghostwalk - Ghost Talk: "Salt City Confidential"*

**October 26 2:00, & 7:30 at SU  
Warehouse Auditorium**

*Move over Monk. Step aside Sherlock. It is your turn to be the armchair detective seated in the comfort of the SU Warehouse Auditorium and hear testimonies about perplexing mysteries and nefarious wrong doings and ne'er do wells from the Salt City's past as told by those involved. Pinched from our eight years of Ghostwalks, this event allows you "to do the Talk without the walk."*

## *The Fall Ghostwalk: Salt City Spirits*

**September 13, 14, 20, 21,  
OHA and Downtown East**

*Take a stroll through the historic Near Eastside of downtown and encounter personalities from the Salt City's past who can't wait to share their stories from yesteryear.*

**Friday, September 13th & 20th and  
Saturday, September 14th & 21st.  
Tours start at 6:00pm each evening  
and leave every 15 minutes from OHA.  
Reservations made by September 6th:  
OHA Members: \$8, Non-Members: \$10  
After September 6th: OHA Members:  
\$10, Non-Members: \$12.**

**For more information and  
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# HISTORY

VOL. 26 NO. 1 HIGHLIGHTS \$5.00 SPRING / SUMMER 2013

## ON THE COVER



Cover photo for the book  
*Onondaga County Bicentennial  
1794-1994*

HAPPY 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OHA!

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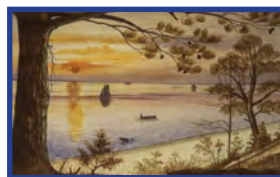
OHA Gift Gallery

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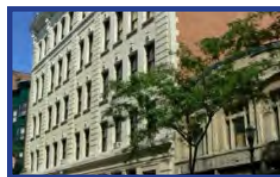
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**OHA Staff**

- Gregg Tripoli**, Executive Director
- Daniel Connors**, General Manager, Skä•noñh Center
- Dennis Connors**, Curator of History
- Karen Cooney**, Support Services Administrator
- Thomas Hunter**, Assistant Director / Curator of Collections
- Andrew Jordan**, Gift Gallery Assistant / Building and Grounds Maintenance
- Sarah Kozma**, Research Associate
- Matthew MacVittie**, Assistant Curator of History / Gift Gallery Manager
- Lynne Pascale**, Director of Development
- Scott Peal**, Education Associate
- Michael Piscitell**, Director of Finance
- Pamela Priest**, Archivist / Research Center Manager

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ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION'S  
**HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS**

**OHA** [www.cnyhistory.org](http://www.cnyhistory.org)

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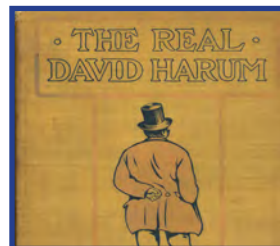
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*Many thanks to Paychex for providing top quality in-kind payroll and payroll tax services to OHA.*



HAPPY 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OHA!

# SESQUICENTENNIAL SALUTE - OHA CELEBRATES 150 YEARS

*By Gregg A. Tripoli*

In 1862, as more and more central New Yorkers were playing increasingly pivotal roles in a devastating Civil War, there was a general realization, locally, that history was being made. There was also an awareness that the founders of our young community were passing away and, along with them, the stories and the mementos documenting the beginning of Syracuse and Onondaga County were in danger of being lost forever.

Community leaders decided that it was time to create an organization charged with collecting and preserving the history they were witnessing and experiencing. That organization is the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA).

OHA was officially chartered by a special act of the New York State Legislature on April 29, 1863. The founders included such luminous names as Wescott, Geddes, and Townsend that are still recognizable today due to the streets, towns, and neighborhoods named after them. 2013 marks the official 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of OHA, making it the oldest cultural organization in Onondaga County and one of the oldest continually operating historical associations in the United States of America. Those claims should be a major source of pride for the local community that has supported OHA, through good times and bad, over the past century and a half.

Since its founding, OHA has evolved into a community anchor institution. Through our collaborations, our off-site and on-site exhibits, our presentations, programs, publications, productions, and products, OHA adds value throughout our community and brings the great stories of Onondaga County's history to a worldwide audience.

In our immediate historic neighborhood in downtown Syracuse, we have created a destination experience through inexpensive parking, a critically acclaimed top-rated history-themed restaurant, a unique, high-quality retail store, and the only comprehensive general history museum and research center in Onondaga County. Through our

Neighborhood Association, OHA has been instrumental in making our neighborhood cleaner, safer, and even more beautiful with flower baskets hanging from every light pole.



Over the past 150 years, and continuing into the present day, OHA has amassed a collection that has informed exhibits, programs, and publications on local, state, national, and international levels. Consisting of millions of individual items, OHA's collections include:

**Documents**, such as the May 26, 1775 "General Association...for the Rights and Liberties of America," which constitutes the first document of the first representative government of New York State and helped form a unified colonial response to British aggression, paving the way for New York's involvement in the Revolutionary War, and serving as a precursor to the Declaration of Independence, which was signed little more than a year later.



*Example of clothing in the OHA collection*

**Photographs**, such as the earliest known photograph (a full-sized daguerreotype) of famous abolitionist, and ex-slave, Frederick Douglass.

**Paintings**, including the largest private collection of portraits by Charles Loring Elliott, who was, by all accounts, the most accomplished portraitist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is

represented in the finest galleries and museums in the U.S. and Great Britain.

**Clothing**, from Revolutionary War uniforms to the couture gowns worn by fashionable society ladies over the past 200 years.

**Objects**, such as the Confederate flag captured by local Civil War soldiers at the fall of Savannah, Georgia.

**And so much more.**

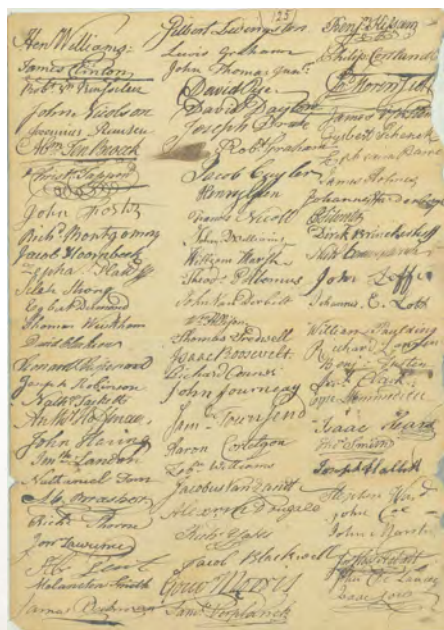
The Onondaga Historical Museum serves as the primary venue to showcase the phenomenal collections of OHA. Our current exhibit on central New York at the Battle of Gettysburg highlights those very records of our local community's participation in that momentous battle that, 150 years ago, OHA's founders hoped and dreamed would be saved and preserved for the future so we would not forget the sacrifices that were made for our benefit. We have not forgotten.

I am so proud to be a part of a community and an organization that has ensured that those hopes and dreams

would be, and have been, fulfilled. And all of us, at OHA, are committed to ensuring that the history being made today, along with the memory of those who are making it, will be preserved for those who come after us. It's part of the reason why it is so important that we, as a community, continue to strive to make an impact, today, that we will be proud of and that will be worthy of our great heritage.

Our common shared history adds depth, meaning, substance, and value to every aspect of our lives. Our history is fascinating and helps define who we are as a community. It is inspirational and encourages the determination to make the most of today. It is also informative, providing the improved judgment we need to prepare and plan for the future.

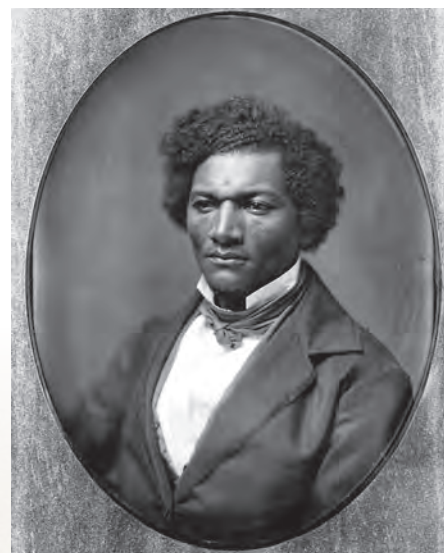
So join us throughout this year. Be fascinated, inspired, and informed and celebrate this great sesquicentennial milestone for our community. Let us show you how much we sincerely appreciate your support. Give us the opportunity to engage you in the compelling stories of your history that has touched the entire world in amazing ways. And, together, let's make some history of our own that will be worth remembering and celebrating 150 years from now.



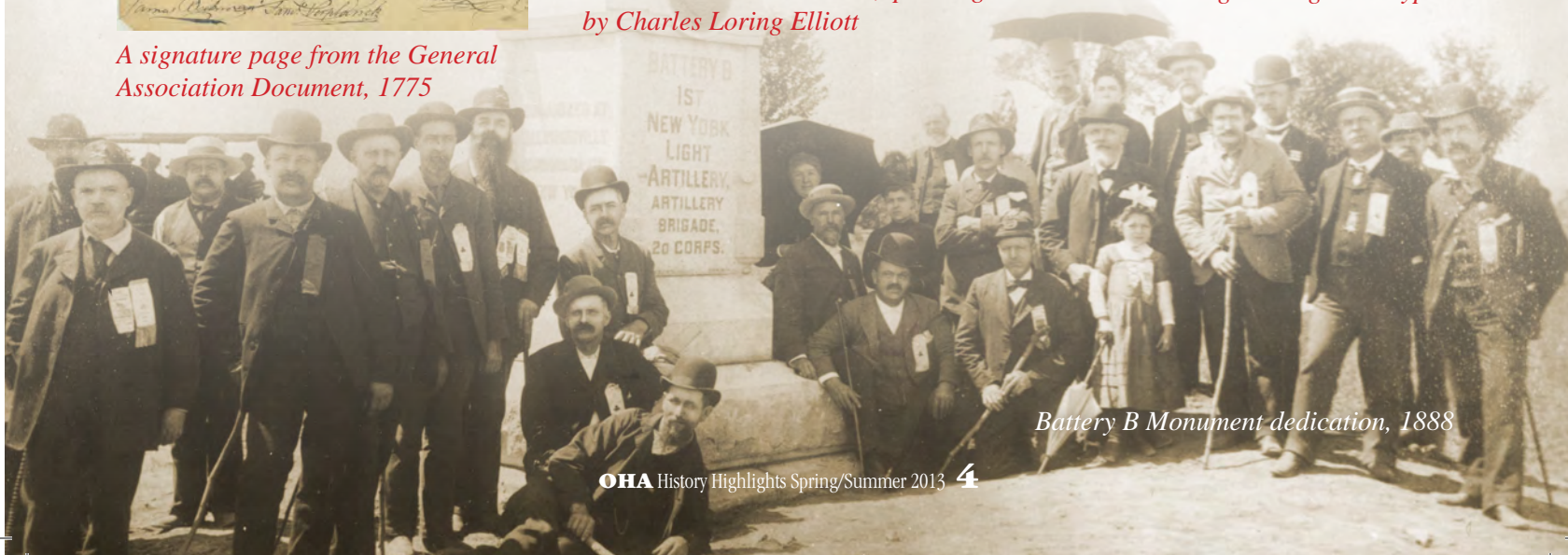
*A signature page from the General Association Document, 1775*



*Ursula Ann Elliott Fitch, painting by Charles Loring Elliott*



*Frederick Douglass daguerreotype*



*Battery B Monument dedication, 1888*



## A RECORD CROWD VIEWS OHA'S PRESENTATION OF THE PRELIMINARY EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

By Gregg A. Tripoli

**O**n September 27, 2012, OHA hosted a traveling exhibit on President Abraham Lincoln's Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation at the Oncenter in Syracuse. This was an unprecedented display of this historic document, the only one surviving that was written in Lincoln's own hand. 3,500 people visited the exhibit during the one-day viewing, which was the largest daily turnout of any location during the eight-city tour across New York State.

Local sponsors of the exhibit included Wegmans, Destiny USA, Polaris Library Systems, and the Allyn Foundation. The exhibit was designed by the New York State Museum using collections and images from the New York State Library and the New York State Archives.

The Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Lincoln as a military order on September 22, 1862, five days after the Union victory at the Battle of Antietam during the Civil War. It stated that all slaves held within the 11 states of the Southern Confederacy would be freed on January 1, 1863, unless those states returned to the Union. Lincoln donated the document to the U.S. Sanitary Commission, which raffled it at an Albany Relief Association Fair in 1864 to help raise money for the war effort. It was won by famous abolitionist Gerrit Smith, after he bought 1,000 raffle tickets at \$1 apiece to help ensure it would stay in New York. He later sold it to the New York State Legislature and then donated the proceeds from that sale to the Sanitary Commission. The document



has been kept in the New York State Library Archives ever since. It is rarely available for viewing by the public.

The exhibit also featured a letter written by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which was delivered at the Centennial Commemoration of Lincoln's document in 1962. Both documents in the exhibit stand as important examples of the path to freedom for African Americans and the nation.

People stood in line, some waiting as long as 3 ½ hours, to view the exhibit at the Oncenter. OHA staff, along with Bernard Margolis, the New York State Librarian, Christine Ward, the New York State Archivist, and New York State Library staff members answered questions and visited with those in line to help pass the time. Oncenter staff, particularly J.J. Lorence, were extremely helpful in preparing for the exhibit and providing whatever assistance was needed. The last people in line finally reached the exhibit at 12:30 AM on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

Thomas Dunn, spokesman for the New York State Education Department stated that, "Syracuse really had

the most passionate response. There's no doubt about it." OHA is certainly proud that our community rallied in such a significant way to show its passion for history!



*Crowds of people waiting to see the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation*

## OUR GLORIOUS WORKPLACES – CHUCK HAFNER'S FARMERS MARKET, November 17, 2012



**Many thanks to the following sponsors:**

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HAPPY 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OHA!

## OHA's Sesquicentennial Year Began with A Jubilee Celebration, January 25

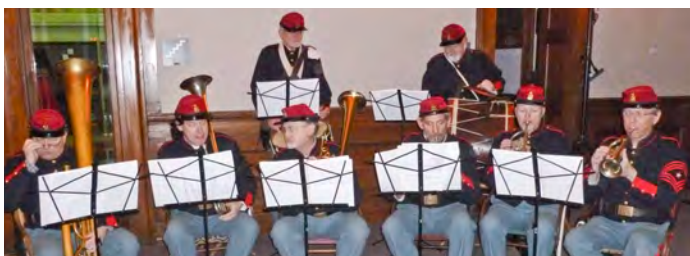
by Lynne Pascale

Good news calls for a special occasion. A conversation between Hon. Langston McKinney, a retired City of Syracuse Judge, and OHA's Executive Director Gregg Tripoli planted the seed for *A Jubilee Celebration*, held in the Carnegie Library Building as a joint fundraiser for OHA and the Black History Preservation Project. Over 150 people attended the party, a fitting number as this event recognized several 150-year anniversaries: the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Syracuse "Jubilee" that resulted, and the founding of the Onondaga Historical Association.



*Inside the Carnegie Library Building*

*A Jubilee Celebration* was held in the historic Carnegie Library Building, just steps away from the original 1863 Jubilee location at the Wesleyan Methodist Church, today the location of the Mission Restaurant. The event was coordinated by The Events Company, and catered by Parisa Restaurant. The Excelsior Coronet Band, playing on vintage, Civil War era instruments, provided cocktail-hour music. They were followed by Soft Spoken whose contemporary sound brought the party into the present.



*The Excelsior Coronet Band*

Historic characters in costume greeted guests as they arrived. Curators Tom Hunter, Dennis Connors, and Matt MacVittie installed a temporary exhibit that displayed Civil War-related artifacts, paintings, and documents. Amanda Hebblethwaite portrayed the teenaged-entrepreneur Mary Elizabeth Evans and Mike from Lune Chocolat in Manlius demonstrated how he creates the Mary Elizabeth chocolates from the original early 20<sup>th</sup> century recipes.



*Mary Elizabeth candy store*

In its sesquicentennial year, Onondaga Historical Association is the area's oldest continuously-serving cultural institution. *A Jubilee Celebration* kicked off a series of upcoming OHA anniversary events in 2013. For more information, check OHA's events calendar, Facebook page, and website at [cnyhistory.org](http://cnyhistory.org).

The Black History Preservation Project is a collaborative initiative of residents, community organizations, and Syracuse University faculty and staff. The Black History Preservation Project is committed to honoring and celebrating the history and heritage of black people in Syracuse and Central New York. A virtual Black History Museum, the project includes the documentary, "Syracuse's 15th Ward and Beyond," as well as *Our Stories*, a collection of interviews of members of the Central New York black community. For more information, visit [ourstories.syr.edu](http://ourstories.syr.edu).

# Jubilee Celebration



Historical characters who greeted the guests: Bottom row left to right: Katishma Grey as Ann Castle, a freedom seeker from the South who settled in Syracuse; Amanda Hebblethwaite as Mary Elizabeth Evans, a Syracuse teenaged-entrepreneur who made a fortune selling candy and opening restaurants; Jesse Navagh as Mack, a canal hoggee; Top row left to right: Toni Jones as Mrs. Caroline Loguen, abolitionist and wife of Rev. Jermaine Loguen; Marsha Mahoffy as Mrs. Deborah Sedgewick, and abolitionist who lived on Segewick Farm on James Street; and John Mahaffy as Mr. Sedgewick.



Guests Jan Liddell (left) with OHA board member Tara Ross (right).





*A very large Confederate flag secured by members of the 149<sup>th</sup> (Fourth Onondaga) Infantry Regiment during the capture of Savannah, GA in 1864*

# Onondaga Historical Museum Lends Local History Objects to New York State

by Thomas A. Hunter

**OHA** has the privilege of lending some of our significant archival and museum objects to New York State for 2013. One loan includes consequential abolition and Civil War objects to the New York State Museum for its current sesquicentennial exhibit on the American Civil War – *An Irrepressible Conflict: The Empire State in the Civil War*. Thomas Hunter, OHA’s Curator of Museum Collections and Pamela Priest, OHA’s Archivist, worked with NYS Museum curators, researchers, and exhibit staff to lend seven compelling objects germane to Onondaga County’s role in pre-Civil War and Civil War events. These include a height measuring rod for soldiers; a reward poster for a fugitive slave, Harriet Powell; a surgery kit; a very early daguerreotype photograph of Frederick Douglass; a rifle telescope made by William Malcolm of Syracuse; a very large Confederate flag secured by members of the 149<sup>th</sup> (Fourth Onondaga) Infantry Regiment during the capture



*Harriet Powell reward poster, 1839*



***Marquis de LaFayette's Visit to New Onondaga County Courthouse in 1825***, by George K. Knapp, Oil on Canvas, 1903

of Savannah, GA in 1864; and a miniature monument to the 122<sup>nd</sup> (Third Onondaga) Infantry Regiment made by Henry Ghee, a member of the regiment. When referring to OHA's contributions to the exhibit, Jennifer Lemak, Curator of History at the New York State Museum, described them as *show-stoppers!* Special recognition is given to OHA as the source of the daguerreotype of Frederick Douglass on the NYS Museum's exhibition webpage. No other object on the webpage is associated with its lending organization. Other objects in the exhibit include an 1860 life mask of Abraham Lincoln and the only known portrait of Dred Scott. The exhibit is available for viewing at the New York State Museum through September 22, 2013. For more information about *Irrepressible Conflict*, visit [www.nysm.nysed.gov](http://www.nysm.nysed.gov).

OHA also lent four landscape paintings to a new two-year temporary exhibit at the NYS Capitol Building. Called *Hall of New York*, the exhibit features landscape paintings from around NYS. OHA's four paintings highlight



***Syracuse by Moonlight***, by Johann Culverhouse, Oil on Canvas, 1871

the natural and man-made landscape of Syracuse and Onondaga County. Three of the paintings are from the local history series painted by George Kasson Knapp. Painting in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Knapp captured both contemporary Onondaga County settings, as well as bygone scenes. The three Knapp paintings include "Comfort Tyler's Tavern on Onondaga Hill depicted in 1803," "Marquis de LaFayette's visit to the new Onondaga



***Comfort Tyler's Tavern, on Onondaga Hill depicted in 1803***, by George K. Knapp, Oil on Canvas, 1903

County Courthouse in 1825," and "Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Activity along East Seneca Turnpike," which juxtaposes a modern Franklin automobile with the old, dilapidated Onondaga arsenal from the War of 1812. The fourth painting is the stunning *Syracuse By Moonlight* by Johann M. Culverhouse, painted in 1871. The scene illustrates nighttime business activity along the Erie Canal, adjacent to the former Bastable Block (now looking east from Clinton Square toward the Gridley Building in Hanover Square). Culverhouse not only recorded the architectural and transportation features of the day but he also contrasted the new gas lighting with the natural brightness of the full moon. Merchants loaded and unloaded the canal boats with the assistance of both types of illumination. *Hall of New York* is scheduled to be open through 2014. To see OHA's painting, *Syracuse By Moonlight*, visit <http://www.hallofnewyork.ny.gov/central-new-york>

It is an honor to be included in these two prominent exhibits in Albany. We are pleased that we could participate with such notable objects representing the history of Onondaga County. OHA is planning a day trip to Albany on May 22, 2013 to visit these two exhibits. Please visit our website at [cnyhistory.org](http://cnyhistory.org) for more details pertaining to the trip.

# THE Skä•noñh CENTER – OHA’S NEW FACILITY ON ONONDAGA LAKE

*Skä•noñh Center*

By Gregg A. Tripoli

As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, under a License Agreement with Onondaga County, OHA has assumed management of the county facility known as Sainte Marie Among the Iroquois on Onondaga Lake Parkway in Liverpool. We have begun a year of planning to re-purpose that site into a Native American Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Heritage Center named Skä•noñh (pronounced “ska-no”), which is an Onondaga welcome greeting meaning peace and wellness.



This agreement transpired as a result of many meetings that OHA has had with the County Executive’s office over the course of the past few years. County Executive Mahoney and OHA both recognize the profound impact that the Haudenosaunee and, in particular, the Onondaga Nation have had on the history of this area, as well as on the larger scale of our state and our nation.

Their history has, for the most part, been related, often erroneously, through the perspective of others, beginning principally with European contact during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, as the original inhabitants of this land, their history extends back far beyond that point.

The Haudenosaunee influence on our collective history is immeasurable and includes everything from women’s rights

*Residents of Onondaga Nation, c. 1910*



to our form of government, to sports, fashion, domestic life, military strategies, farming methods, environmental stewardship, and much more.

OHA and the County Executive felt it was important that this fascinating and important part of our collective history be told in direct collaboration with, and in concert with the active participation of, the Haudenosaunee people. OHA has a relationship with the Onondaga Nation that has been strengthened over the past few years; a relationship based on mutual trust and understanding. We honor and respect the oral history tradition of the Longhouse that continues to this very day.

Onondaga Lake is sacred to the Onondaga Nation and the Haudenosaunee and it is central to their history, from the source of sustenance to the legendary Hiawatha and the founding of the Great Law of Peace. It also plays a pivotal role in our community’s early and modern history from the center of international diplomacy among the French, English, and Dutch to the establishment of the city of Syracuse, to a symbol of industrial pollution, to a national model of advanced technological environmental remediation, in which the Onondaga Nation plays a prominent role. It is, therefore, a particularly appropriate place to establish a Haudenosaunee Heritage Center.

Almost one year ago, I saw a letter to the editor in *The Post-Standard* written by Dr. Philip Arnold, of Syracuse University, and I realized that he had a vision for the Sainte Marie site that was extremely compatible with the proposal



*George Samuel*



*Onondaga Women and Children just returned from church, c. 1910*

we were developing. In hopes of his involvement in the establishment of a unique educational component to the Heritage Center, I contacted Dr. Arnold.

Since then, we have had meetings with the Onondaga Nation leadership, the County Executive, and the presidents of our local colleges and universities in an effort to create an educational collaborative that deals with the foundational values of the Longhouse tradition espoused in the Thanksgiving Address and the Great Law of Peace. The collaborative is being formed by representatives of OHA, the Nation, Syracuse University, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, LeMoyne College, Onondaga Community College, and Empire State College

Dr. Arnold, who is a well-known educator, lecturer, and author served as the Director of Native American Studies at Syracuse University and will be the founding director of our educational center at the facility. I would like to thank Syracuse University's Chancellor, Nancy Cantor, Provost Eric Spina, and Dean George Langford for arranging to have the University generously sponsor Dr. Arnold in his new position. Under Chancellor Cantor's leadership, Syracuse University's commitment to Native American studies and to the education of Haudenosaunee scholars is exceptional and serves as a tribute to the Native American heritage in our community, and our country.

I would also like to thank the County Executive for her vision, her leadership, her support, and for her respect and reverence for the great history of Onondaga County and, in this particular case, her respect for the Native American history of this area. Without her vision and her dedication to maximizing the potential of this wonderful community amenity, this unique precedent-setting collaborative opportunity would not have happened.

OHA's Daniel Connors is serving as the General Manager of the new Heritage Center and is responsible for all

operations, including the museum and retail aspects that will be established there. Dan joined the OHA team about one year ago in anticipation of this position. He received his masters degree at SUNY-ESF and is trained to harness the cultural and natural resources of our community in an effort to add value to our parks system.

Dan's services at the center, as well as OHA's support services, are sponsored by an appropriation from the Onondaga County Legislature in a motion sponsored by Legislators Judy Tassone and Michael Plochocki. We are grateful to the entire County Legislature for their support and confidence in this new venture.

OHA will have several events and programs at the Center throughout 2013 as we continue the planning process, though it will not be open to the general public on a regular basis until sometime in 2014. So stay tuned as we keep you updated on our progress concerning this exciting new history-related community project.

*Onondaga Women and Children, c. 1910*



*New York Central Railroad Station  
Trainshed and stone bridge spanning  
Onondaga Creek, c. 1900*

# *The Bridges of Onondaga County*

Dennis Connors

**N**o, not Madison County. . . Onondaga County! (Actually, the famous book and film were about Madison County in Iowa, not our next-door neighbor to the east.) But the upcoming OHA exhibit opening this May will explore our own county's legacy of bridge building.

Syracuse and Onondaga County are not generally the places one thinks of when bridges are mentioned. Pittsburgh, for example, straddles three great rivers with an impressive collection of spans. New York City sits hard between the Hudson and East Rivers and boasts the granddaddy of all bridges – The Brooklyn Bridge. As a native of Buffalo, I grew up with many trips across the Niagara River, on the classical Peace Bridge or the elegant Rainbow Bridge, which overlooks Niagara Falls.

Onondaga County may not have any of those impressive crossings, but with its lush geology of hills, streams and rivers; its rich heritage of turnpikes, canals, railroads; and the Post World War II intersection of two great interstate

highways, we are a community that has been shaped by a legacy of bridges. A recent New York State report lists over 450 bridges in Onondaga County. And presently, we are deep into a community-wide discussion about the future of a particular series of bridges – I-81 in downtown Syracuse – that will impact the future of our city for generations to come.

This newest OHA exhibit is called, *The Ties That Bind: The Heritage of Onondaga County's Bridges*. It will encompass a variety of examples, told over time, that



*Bascule Bridge, West Genesee, July 1916*



show both the importance of bridges as critical linkages  
*Lift Bridge on Salina Street spanning the Erie Canal  
 at Clinton Square, c. 1900*

contributing to our growth, as well as how they often have “bound” us up in debate as they became issues of conflict and division.

One of the first construction projects that led to the birth of Syracuse involved the erection of a bridge across Onondaga Creek in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was an effort that also served as a dam, allowing a mill to exist, that would draw some of the first commercial activity to what would become the state’s fourth largest city.

As an historian of Syracuse for more than three decades, I have often heard locals regret the fact that the Erie Canal was filled in through downtown. In large measure, bridges made the canal possible through the city. But over time, they also became a thorn in the growing community’s interconnectivity and actually helped play a role in motivating our ancestors to bury that same canal.

For years, Syracusans complained about the trains that ran through downtown at grade level. The problem lingered for years, in part, because of a debate about the aesthetics of the bridges that might raise them from the streets. That debate echoed many of the arguments that we hear today about the future of the I-81 viaducts. Eventually, the 1930s result was a handsome blending of engineering technology with art deco style. Unfortunately, all were lost in the 1960s construction of Route 690.

And while we deliberate the future of the I-81 bridges, built in the 1960s, just a few blocks to the west, exist the three oldest bridges in the county: 19<sup>th</sup> century, cut limestone engineering masterpieces holding up Erie Boulevard, Genesee and Washington streets over Onondaga Creek. All three are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. They are truly remarkable survivors in the heart

*Route 81 under construction in the 1960s.*







*New York Central Railroad Station and elevated tracks, 1936*

of downtown and serve as dramatic, historic and aesthetic assets for the future of the Onondaga Creekwalk.

These and other stories will be explored in this newest exhibit. Such as why is that low bridge on Onondaga Lake Parkway, the one often being hit by vehicles, so low? And where is the last surviving Erie Canal bridge in the city? At the same time, young and old might learn to identify a *Whipple Truss* from a *Plate Girder* span. Can you?

*The Ties That Bind: The Heritage of Onondaga County's Bridges* will be on view at the OHA Museum through October 20, 2013. It is generously sponsored by the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council's I-81 Challenge as a significant opportunity to help inform the community about the long-term influences of bridges on our lives.



*Railroad Bridge over Willow Street with Art Deco detail, c. 1960*

*North Salina Street Bridge*





# Voltaire Combe:

## A Civil War Soldier & His Art

By Thomas A. Hunter

Artist and illustrator, Voltaire Combe, was born Captain Combs, in Jordan, NY on May 1, 1837. He was the youngest of five children born to William and Lavina (Winter) Combs. Combs' older siblings and cousins introduced him to romantic stories, poetry, and engravings. That exposure would resonate in Combe's writings and artwork throughout his life.

Combs graduated from the Jordan Academy on March 15, 1850 just before his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. That same year Combs wrote a romance based on the novel Robinson Crusoe.

Combs probably received his first art lessons from the itinerant artists who worked between Jordan and Syracuse. He met, and possibly received some instruction from Sanford Thayer, a renowned Syracuse artist. "I pulled Thayer's doorbell one morning [in 1851], when the world was younger, and I was a boy of 14." He later became familiar with the work of major artists of the Hudson River School such as Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand, and Daniel Huntington.

At about age 20, Combs moved to Syracuse and called himself Raphael Combs, and painted window shades, signs, and banners. At age 24, Combs changed his name, yet again, to Voltaire Combe, paying homage to the French writer, Francois Voltaire.

Voltaire Combe enlisted in the military at age 24 on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1861 at Syracuse. John Moschell, of Clay, was raising a cavalry company in Syracuse and had advertised in the local newspapers for men, no less than 5' 8", to serve 3 years, supplying their own horse, no less than fourteen hands high. If the men could not provide their own horse, they had the option of contracting with some local entrepreneurs who supplied the horses. After completing a complex contract under the supervision of an attorney, and obligating themselves to pay \$160. plus interest, they received the horse. The Federal government paid \$.50 each day to the owner to help pay off the debt. If the man was discharged early he was obligated to pay \$145. Initially known as the Onondaga Cavalry, this group of volunteers was to be paid \$14. per month. The Onondaga Cavalry merged with the



Van Alen Cavalry Regiment as Co. B. The Van Alen regiment was renamed the 3<sup>rd</sup> New York Volunteer Cavalry Regiment.

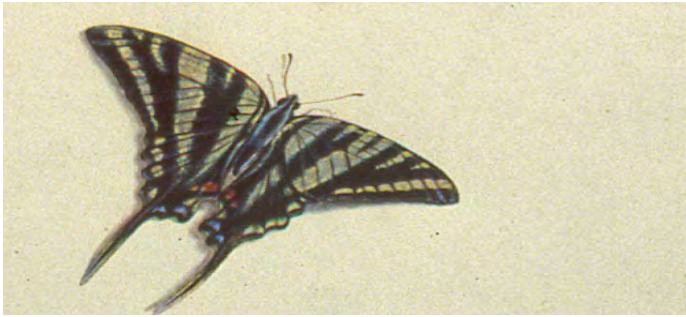
Combe was mustered in as a private on July 30, 1861, in Albany, to serve 3 years. He listed his occupation as artist. He was appointed Chief Bugler on August 31, 1861. During the war, the 3<sup>rd</sup> New York Cavalry fought throughout Virginia and the Carolinas. The regiment had eight officers and twenty enlisted men killed in action; nineteen other men were wounded in action. One officer and 155 enlisted men died from either disease or other causes.

Introduction to fighting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> NYV cavalry came at the Battle of Ball's Bluff.

On October 21, 1861, Colonel Edward Baker, a senator from Oregon, and a personal friend of President Lincoln, man brigade across the Potomac River from Maryland to Virginia to attack the Confederate force camped near Leesburg, VA. On the VA side was a 100' high bank called Ball's Bluff that could be scaled only by a narrow cow path. Baker hadn't scouted the enemy and put his command in a position that offered no retreat should things go wrong. On top of the bluff, Union troops found themselves on open ground confronted by four regiments of Mississippians and Virginians. The Confederates fired down upon the Union troops, which turned them into a disorganized, chaotic mass. Baker was instantly killed by a Confederate sharpshooter's bullet. The Confederates then charged and routed the Union troops who turned and leaped and rolled down the bank onto additional advancing Union troops. Some tried to quickly



*Night Before Ball's Bluff – October 20, 1861  
Reading Faust in Capt. Foss' Tent, 25th MASS Inf.*



*Butterfly drawn by Combe on Oct. 8, 1863*

swim across the Potomac River and were drowned. Others surrendered or were captured when they tried to hide. The Union lost over 200 killed or wounded, with over 700 taken prisoner. Voltaire Combe escaped injury and lived to play his bugle another day.

However, apparently Combe was not too fond of the army, and in the spring of 1862, while at Camp Ruggles, Capital Hill, Washington, Combe left the camp without permission. He was absent without leave for about one month. Either after returning to camp, or being found elsewhere, Combe was charged with failing to appear at all drills and parades, and failing to perform his duties as bugler of the regiment. He was also charged with disobedience of orders and jailed.

Hearing of Combe's incarceration, Syracuse photographer George Barnard wrote a letter from Matthew Brady's Gallery in Washington City to Lorenzo Thomas, Adjutant General of the U.S. Army.

*Mrs. Barnard has a relative, a private, in the Van Allen Cavalry who has been confined in irons for some days without just cause or provocation.*

*I have been assured by the officers of his company that he is one of the best men in the regiment.*

*Does the army regulation require this severe and humiliating punishment before a trial by court martial.*

*Be kind enough dear Gen. to advise my wife in the matter and if you can render any assistance you will greatly oblige.*

*Yours truly,  
G.N. Barnard*

Notes on the back of the letter indicate that Gen. Thomas ordered an investigation into the matter, referring to Combe as Mrs. Barnard's cousin. No verdict was recorded of the matter.

Despite his AWOL activity, on July 10th, 1863, Voltaire Combe was promoted to sergeant.



*Sunset on the James River*

Painted at Camp of the Pines, October 8<sup>th</sup> 1863. "Dactyllus" "I was in the army. What were my thoughts were? I had many thoughts, days and years. This butterfly is but an echo."

On April 15th, 1864, Combe was court-martialed in Washington City for his 1862 AWOL incident, along with a similar one in February, 1863, and reduced in ranks back to private.



*"THE GHOSTS OF OTHER DAYS AROUND THE CAMPFIRE" 1/4/1864*

*Combe's notes: Bivouac among Gen. Magruder's fortifications in long ride to release prisoners at Richmond. Expedition was composed of 3rd NY Cav., 11th PA Cav., 1st NY Mounted Rifles, 1st District of Columbia Cav., and artillery units.*

While the Army of the Potomac was assaulting the city of Petersburg, VA in 1864, the 3rd NY Cavalry was attached to the 1st Brigade of General August Kautz's Cavalry Division. On May 7th, they went on a raiding expedition to Stony Creek Warehouse, and south of there, to cut the Weldon and Petersburg railroad line. This action impeded reinforcements under the command of General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard from marching north to relieve Petersburg.

In late June, the 3rd NY Cavalry under the command of General James Wilson, raided west from Petersburg into south central VA, south of Keyesville. On this particular raid, the men tore up several miles of Confederate railroad track along the South Side Railroad, skirmished at Reams'

**MY GREAT  
HERO**

*Combe's note:  
Peerless among  
war-horses,  
July 23, 1864  
Between  
Petersburg and  
Richmond, VA*



Station and a few other spots, and tried unsuccessfully to burn a bridge on the North Carolina Railroad. The Union cavalry under Wilson severely lost in the clashes and a couple of times barely escaped annihilation. In July, The Syracuse Journal wrote the expedition was disastrous, and reported that several was given immediate command at Ball's Bluff by General Stone. He led his 1,700

Union soldiers had been captured. This expedition proved to be personally calamitous for Combe. On July 3rd, 1864, his horse, Hero, died from injuries and exhaustion as a result of the expedition. Combe had lived with and cared for his horse for three years, and now it was dead.

On July 29th, 1864, Voltaire Combe was mustered out of service in New Bern, NC, because his term had expired. He eventually made his way back to Onondaga County, but spent considerable time getting back. In the fall of 1865, Combe was still in Washington. He stopped to visit the Capitol Building, which was still under construction, and while there, he purchased a photograph of it. Before he left he scrawled his name on the side of the edifice. "I placed my name up on the Temple, as high as I could reach."

After the Civil War, Combe moved back to Syracuse and evidently boarded and worked with George Barnard. About 1870, Combe moved to NYC and worked for the printing firm, Currier and Ives. There he painted pictures that were later reproduced as lithographs. In June 1872, Combe's brother Orison visited him in NYC. The two conversed day and night of earlier years in Jordan. "He was my only congenial." Orison was visiting from Michigan, where the family had moved a few years earlier.

Combe visited Jordan in the 1880s, and used local citizens as personalities for his later paintings and drawings. In the 1880s & 1890s he illustrated for several magazine stories.

About this time, Combe wrote a long, rambling allegorical manuscript whose main characters were Dan Tucker, Henry Clay, and John Randolph, an American politician from Virginia – known as Randolph of Roanoke. Combe worked on his manuscript for many years, but died before he could publish his lengthy work. After Combe's death, his widow, Betty, took the manuscript to a local publisher.



*Voltaire  
Combe  
and his  
horse  
Hero*

The publisher rejected the manuscript and Mrs. Combe destroyed it.

In 1905, Combe again visited Jordan to see his boyhood home once again, and may have stayed almost three years in Jordan.

In 1910, Combe moved to Grand Rapids, MI, where he lived and painted until his death at age 79 on December 23, 1916.

Part of Voltaire Combe's legacy lives on at the OHA Museum. Included in the association's artwork collection are about 100 drawings, watercolors, and illustrated poems and prose. The subjects aren't limited to the Civil War but also include nature studies, people and animals from Combe's past in Jordan, NY, fictional and mythical characters, illustrated sheet music, scenes from magazine articles that Combe illustrated, as well as three scenes lithographed during the Civil War: Camp Bates, Camp Oliver, and New Bern, N.C. Former OHA director, Richard Wright, acquired the Voltaire Combe collection from an unknown source, possibly from someone in Jordan. OHA does not have all of Combe's work at the museum. Other libraries and museums own his work; for example, Brown University Library owns a copy of Camp Bates, the Huntington Library owns a copy of Camp Oliver, and the University of North Carolina owns a copy of New Bern, NC. Voltaire Combe's artwork is a fascinating collection of the nostalgic thoughts, dreams, and emotions of a romantic artist and illustrator. Thanks to Mr. Wright, we are very glad to hold this fine representation of Combe's work, and will continue to preserve and share it with the community.



**HERO'S GROVE,  
ON THE JAMES,  
NEAR DUTCH  
GAP, VA**

*Combe's note:  
Kautz Cavalry  
Brigade - The  
grove where  
Hero, my horse,  
is buried. On the  
James River.*

# Location, Location, Location!

*Corinthian Hall,  
c. 1870s or 1880s OHA  
had left this building  
several years prior.*



## A Glimpse at the Many Homes of the Onondaga Historical Association

*By: Sarah Kozma*

The Onondaga Historical Association has occupied [or has been housed in] a number of buildings in its 150 year history. OHA has grown from its humble beginnings in a rented room to owning, occupying, and filling an approximately 55,000 square foot, five-story building. Although there have been many changes over the years, two things that haven't changed are its central location, in the heart of downtown Syracuse and its purpose to collect and preserve history. In fact, these pursuits are a part of OHA's 1863 Charter. In OHA's Act of Incorporation, passed April 29, 1863, it states "The said corporation is created for the purpose of collecting and preserving historical, genealogical, scientific and literary material ..." and "the buildings..., in which its collections shall be kept and its affairs carried on shall be located in the city of Syracuse, in the county of Onondaga..." In looking at OHA's past locations and related events it becomes evident that these two precepts have remained ever before its members and directors.

OHA's first home was at No. 2 Corinthian Hall; it consisted of just a couple of rented rooms. Corinthian Hall was located on North Salina St., just two blocks up from Clinton Square. It was a public hall, known for its popular social events in the early 1860s. Besides space for a few offices, it was mainly let for "Balls, Concerts, Exhibitions and

Festivals," and it was advertised as "a desirable place for Festivals and Social Parties." Starting around 1863, it was known for a short time as Historical Hall. This was during the time when OHA's exhibitions of "Ancient and Modern Curiosities" would have been available for public viewing. Whether there is any official connection between Corinthian Hall's brief name change and OHA being housed within its walls is anyone's guess.

During that time, OHA was busy with public lectures, social and literary events, and exhibitions. In 1865 they even held a ball/fundraiser - "With a view to encourage the laudable efforts of the Onondaga Historical Association, to complete the formation of a Cabinet and Library, the undersigned gentlemen have concluded to offer to the citizens of Syracuse and vicinity, a Grand Soiree, at Wieting Hall. . . ." (*Courier and Union* 2/25/1865).

The expanding OHA only stayed at Corinthian Hall for a few years and by 1866 it had already moved to its second home in Clinton Block, on the western edge of Clinton Square.

Clinton Block was right along the Erie Canal, at the corner of North Clinton and West Genesee Streets (the present site of the Clinton Exchange). Built in 1860, Clinton Block was a fairly new construction and its location was ideal. "The Central and Conspicuous



*Clinton Block, c. 1867-68*



*Clinton Block c. 1867-68 close-up –  
Note the Onondaga Historical  
Association sign above the door*

situation of the Clinton Block, on the principal Square of the city, renders it peculiarly eligible location for official and other business purposes."

Clinton Block gave OHA excellent visibility for its public events and



*2nd Wieting Block, c. 1880.  
The OHA collections had been moved out, but some administrative items and books remained.*



*Onondaga County Savings Bank (Gridley Building), c. 1880's*



*2nd Weiting Block - 1881 fire*

visitors. There was even a sign above the main entrance to direct visitors to OHA's room #17. The rent was \$150, presumably for the year, for a large space on the third floor. The benefits of renting within the building were described as, "Whilst the cheerfulness of the rooms, the width and ease of the halls and staircases, and the general accessibility of the building, cannot but render the apartments inviting to those of [various] occupations and professions." (*Syracuse Journal* 3/7/1861)

In 1871, Dr. John Wieting, an active board member of OHA, arranged for the collections of OHA to be moved to his building, the Wieting Block, on the southern edge of Clinton Square, on the corner of South Salina and West Water Streets. The Wieting Block was well known for grand public events and conventions of all kinds. It also housed the popular Wieting Opera House, as well as many other businesses. OHA's collections remained on exhibit for a few years, but public interest seemed to be dwindling.

Beginning in the mid 1870s the Association became, for the most part, publicly inactive. For a variety of reasons, including economic trouble and apparent public indifference, its exhibits and collections, which had been on display in Wieting Hall, were packed up for storage and placed in the Onondaga County Savings Bank – today's Gridley Building. This difficult time in the association's history turned out to be a blessing in disguise. On July 19, 1881, the Wieting Block caught fire and was completely destroyed. Although the majority of its collections were safely stored away in a nearby building, OHA did not escape completely unscathed. The early records of the association, meeting minutes, and some books were lost in the fire.

For over fifteen years OHA's collection remained in storage, first  
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at the Onondaga County Savings Bank, and then in the loft of the Syracuse Savings Bank building, where the collection was transferred in the later 1880s. Association meetings continued through those years, but their public presence had virtually vanished. A *Syracuse Standard* article from February 23, 1890, praised the work of Onondaga County historians, particularly Dr. Rev. William M. Beauchamp (later OHA president), but it emphasized the need for an active historical society. "There is a great need in Syracuse of a Historical society, whose business it would be to collect and preserve those things that relate to our history... The fact that such a society has existed here and is now inactive or dead is no argument that such an organization might not be [re]established."

It seems that the journalist's plea was heard, because it was shortly after that, in the early 1890s, that there was a revival of interest in the Onondaga Historical Association. Following the 1894 County Centennial Celebrations, of which OHA was a major proponent, the collections were taken out of storage, rooms were rented in the Syracuse Savings Bank building and, after refitting the rooms for exhibition, the OHA collections were once again opened to the public.

In his will, William Kirkpatrick, a long time supporter of OHA, left funds to be used for an OHA building. In 1905, OHA purchased the former Central New York Telephone & Telegraph Co. building, Syracuse's first purpose-built telephone company building, at 311 Montgomery Street. This building was built only ten years earlier in 1895/6, but the telephone company had already outgrown it and had moved into its new building down the street at 321 Montgomery St.

Over the next 70 plus years, OHA filled up their building until it was almost

bursting at the seams. Eventually, there were only narrow paths leading through stacked boxes, papers, and artifacts. The arrangement of the contents became a safety hazard and it limited the public accessibility of the collections. It was decided that something needed to be done. Around 1980, OHA, in cooperation with Onondaga County, acquired its second building, coincidentally, also a former telephone company building, at 321 Montgomery Street. This large building was to be used for storage, offices, and to establish a public-friendly historical museum. For almost 25 years, the collections of OHA were split between these two Montgomery St buildings. The archives and research center stayed at 311 and, for the most part, the

artifacts and museum inhabited 321. In 2005, 311 was sold and the entirety of OHA's collection was once again under one roof.

OHA has seen the inside of several buildings in its 150 year history, including a few that no longer exist. But through the many ups and downs that the years have brought, OHA has continued to implement and abide by the original incorporation precepts passed so long ago. OHA's commitment to being centrally located in Onondaga County and within the City of Syracuse has not changed and neither has its mission to collect and preserve our local history. Thankfully, OHA's many homes have only added to sustaining and implementing those objectives.



*Syracuse Savings Bank, c. 1893*



*311 Montgomery Street, c. 1910*



*321 Montgomery Street in 2012, today's OHA.*



**Locations of Onondaga Historical Association over the past 150 years**

1. Site of Corinthian Hall
2. Site of Clinton Block
3. Site of Weiting Block
4. Onondaga County Savings Bank/Gridley Building
5. Syracuse Savings Bank Building
6. 311 Montgomery St.
7. 321 Montgomery St.

# How Rufus Became *Ruthless*

By: Matthew J. MacVittie

For those that follow OHA's In Their Own Words: Personal Perspectives of the Civil War Twitter Project, the story of Captain Pettit has been unfolding since last July, as he slowly begins to relate the horrors of war, his failing health, and his descent into darkness as he corresponds with his wife, Elvira, and becomes increasingly ruthless in his campaign against the confederates. We will conclude the story of Captain Pettit here, but first, to recap the beginning of the story.

In 1835, at the age of eight, a bright young boy by the name of Rufus came to live with his aunt and uncle at a farm near Baldwinsville, having lost his parents several years before. It is here that he was raised and worked his family farm until the age of 18 when he became an apprentice to architect Elijah Hayden of Syracuse, who was also an ardent abolitionist.

In 1846, when Pettit was 22, the United States went to war with Mexico. Serving in Company A of the 1st New York Volunteers, he quickly found he had a great talent for soldiering. He fought in a total of eight battles, including those at Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, and Mexico City, where it is said his marksmanship was so great "I[t] knocked a Mexican Flag from its pole." After the war, Rufus was presented with a silver medal from the city of New York for his gallant service. Although never wounded, he did contract a condition of "Chronic Diarrhea," most likely the result of a malarial disease that plagued armies at the time, and which would trouble him for the rest of his life.

For the next 13 years, he resided at his family farm in Cold Springs near Baldwinsville. Little is known about his activities during these years other than he settled into a quiet life of farming with his wife, Elvira, and was a respected member of the community. Known as a man with a strong work ethic and few pretensions, his time with Elijah Hayden had taught him much about the cause of abolitionism and Rufus often voiced his opinion that freedom for all men is a God-given right not reserved only for those with the palest of skin tones.

When the Civil War broke out he decided to sign up once again for the army. Combined with his experience in the Mexican War and the creditability it lent, he recruited a

unit from among his friends and neighbors of Baldwinsville, originally named the Cold Springs Rifles, before

being moved into the artillery to become Company B of the 1st New York Light Artillery in the fall of 1861. Throughout the next few years, Rufus would come to be known as a tough, but fair, commander who was very well-liked by the men under his command. His soft side was seen in his heartfelt correspondence with Elvira as he constantly writes of his distress over the separation they must endure, "Oh Elvira, I think of you a thousand times each day. I see the tears spring to your eyes as I tell you my thoughts."

His Civil War unit's first action was with Major General George B. McClellan and his Army of the Potomac on the Virginia Peninsula in mid-1862. While there, Pettit suffered fatigue, exposure, and illness. These ailments would cut short his career as a field officer, but not before he fought at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville in May 1863. From Fredericksburg, he wrote that, "civilian men fired their shotguns at retreating Union soldiers, while women and children pelted their blue coats with stones." We begin to see a more vengeful and bitter side of Rufus come to the surface as he remarked, "If I had my way I would burn down every house in Virginia and plow up every street."

After the Battle of Chancellorsville, Pettit resigned from the service for medical reasons and returned home. He remained there for about a year before rejoining the army in March 1864. This time he was with the U.S. Veteran Reserve Corps, a branch of the service for veterans not fit for active field duty. He was assigned to Company F of the 12th Regiment.

On July 20, four months into his service with the Veteran Corps, Pettit was made superintendent and inspector of Union military prisons in Alexandria, Virginia. Sometime after that, his troubles began, as a year later he was arrested and charged with conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline. It seems that Pettit was on a self-



Rufus Pettit





*Stuart Sketches from Civil War Letter -Modes of Punishment*

directed mission to expose deserters from the Union army. Pettit was so obsessed with his mission, his accusers said that he tortured confessions out of men. He, of course, denied the allegations against him, and pled not guilty. After four months of legal delays that followed his arrest, he came to trial on November 14, 1865, before a court-martial board.

The trial opened with Dewitt James taking the witness stand to describe the first alleged incident in which he described:

“Sergeant Hiram Belknap had a man tied up with hands behind his back. Captain Pettit criticized the sergeant for not pulling the chain tight enough. Pettit himself pulled the man’s wrists higher behind him and said, “Now, are you going to own up to what regiment you belong to?” The man replied, “So help me God, Captain, I do not belong to any regiment.” Pettit then kicked the man in the face and blood spilled on the floor. From the gray hair, the prisoner seemed to be quite an old man.”

The vivid description was damning, but Pettit had an explanation: James was lying. In cross-examining James, Pettit said the commandant had a vendetta against him because he had fired him from his post and court-martialed several of his men. James replied that his only animosity toward Pettit was based on his confining men in the Alexandria

Slave Pen, the crude prison where slaves that were going to be sold were kept before the war, and which had become the Union prison camp.

After James’s testimony was finished, the prosecution called Sergeant Hiram Belknap of James’ regiment. Belknap confirmed James’ story of the bloodied old man, adding that as Pettit tightened the chain that pulled the man’s wrists toward the ceiling, he yelled, “That is the way I want you to tie up men!” Belknap continued with a description of the scene that suggested this was not the only time Pettit had tortured prisoners. “The old man’s toes barely touched the floor,” Belknap said, “but when Captain Pettit was gone, we’d give the prisoners a bucket to stand on.” I saw the blood run from the man’s nose and mouth.

The second alleged incident occurred at Princess Street Prison, where Pettit was accused of stringing up one Caleb Smith, alias Caleb Sweet, much as he had done to the old man at Washington Street Prison—but for up to 12 hours at a time. Pettit allegedly did this about half a dozen times before Smith finally gave in and ‘confessed’ to being a deserter. It is unclear whether Smith had ever really been in the army or whether he was simply trying to avoid further pain.

The prosecution called a string of witnesses to support its charge. The first was Sergeant Michael Murray, who was at Princess Street Prison from June 1864 to May 1865. “Sometimes he [Smith] could hardly speak,” Murray testified, ‘and he lost the use of his limbs.’”

Another witness, Joseph Bannister, testified “I was six months in the Princess Street Prison, I well recall Caleb Smith, alias Sweet. He was tied up eight or ten times, for as long as 16 hours each time. Captain Pettit said, I will make him own up or put him in his coffin. I saw Sweet tied up in pouring rain and in the hot sun, with blood oozing from his ears and flies picking his eyes.”

John Long of the 2d Pennsylvania Reserve Corps wrote in a sworn affidavit that he was in jail when a guard shot and killed “an entirely quiet and inoffensive man, Samuel Thomas of the 88th Pennsylvania. When we asked Captain Pettit for a blanket to wrap the corpse, he told us to use our own blankets, knowing full well that we had no blankets. When Mrs. Thomas came seeking her husband, Captain Pettit joked, “Your husband has been released.... in his coffin.”

The case against Pettit was closed, and it was time for the defense. Pettit had his work cut out for him. He would need a miracle to refute the strong case the host of prosecution witnesses had laid at his feet with their vivid descriptions of him brutally beating people on at least three different occasions.

Pettit opened his defense by calling as his first witness Lieutenant Colonel J.H. Taylor, who knew him when he commanded Company B of the 1st New York Light Artillery. Pettit got Taylor to say that he had been an “an efficient and gallant officer.” Major H.B. Burnham, the judge advocate of the court, interrupted and remarked to Pettit, “You are not charged with inefficiency or want of gallantry, but with certain named offenses and nothing else!” Pettit retorted that he was charged with cruelty, that it was well known that cowards were cruel, and that because he was not a coward, he could not be cruel.

Next up was Colonel Wells, Pettit’s key witness. Wells said Pettit was “in every respect a superior officer. It was very rare to ever hear of a case of mistreatment, in the Alexandria prisons, and I investigated every case. I never found any actual mistreatment.” Wells went on to explain that the men Pettit targeted might have deserved what they got. “More than in any collection of men I ever saw in my life, these men needed discipline,” he testified. “There were hundreds of professional thieves, pickpockets, robbers and murderers. They constantly assaulted each other. One group attempted to burn the Washington Street Prison while it contained 1,400 men.”

After Pettit finished with his handful of witnesses and presented some testimonials written on his behalf, he submitted a written closing statement to the court. For the most part, he reiterated his previous denials. Guilty was the verdict and dismissal from the army the sentence. He returned to New York State, decided to give up farming, bought a house in Baldwinsville, and began practicing law.

Pettit’s postwar years remain somewhat cloudy, but an incident with his son during that period suggests that

the brash behavior that turned up in the Alexandria prisons did not disappear. His son, Rufus H. Pettit, graduated from Cornell with a degree in entomology, taught at Michigan Agricultural College, and went on to invent a device called the flit gun, a bug-spray device that would be very well known throughout the first part of the twentieth century. The former prison commandant reacted by denouncing his son as a ‘butterfly chaser’ and eventually disowned him.

As Pettit entered his 60s, he applied for a military pension for his service in the Mexican War. Listing his occupation as ‘gentleman,’ he was awarded \$8 a month. The next year, 1881, he applied for a Civil War pension, based upon a doctor’s affidavit that he suffered from “chronic diarrhea, spinal paralysis and cystitis.” The application was denied, most likely, because of the court-martial ruling.

A few months later, Rufus D. Pettit, former gallant battlefield commander and brutal prison-keeper, was dead at age 67. Perhaps many of the men of the 1st New York Light Artillery’s Company missed the firm but fair captain who had led them into battle on the Virginia Peninsula in 1862. But no doubt few of the Union prisoners stuck in Alexandria, Virginia, in 1864 felt the same way. We must ask ourselves where the bright young boy from Baldwinsville who was so passionate about the cause of freedom for all men went and did the horrors of the bloodiest war in America’s history drive him to act out in such a malicious manner? Or was there always a sinister side lurking within Ruthless Rufus?

Follow OHA’s Twitter Project today for the next chapter of *In Their Own Words, Personal Perspectives of the Civil War* at [twitter.com/OnondagaHisAssn](https://twitter.com/OnondagaHisAssn)



**Capt Rufus Pettit’s  
four barrel .22  
caliber (pepperbox)  
pistol now in the  
collection of OHA.**



149<sup>th</sup> Flag Staff

# ONONDAGA AT GETTYSBURG

By Dennis Connors

This year continues the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. It is estimated that over 12,000 men from Onondaga County left Central New York to fight for the Union and, ultimately, over 1,500 gave their lives to end slavery in America. Most of those men fought in a handful of units that were primarily recruited within the County. In



a few months, it will be the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the most famous battle of that war – the engagement at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, which lasted from July 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> of 1863. In particular, three Onondaga County units played critical roles in that Union victory – the 122<sup>nd</sup> New York Volunteer regiment, the 149<sup>th</sup> Regiment and Battery B of the 1<sup>st</sup> New York Light Artillery.

With the anniversary of their bravery and sacrifice approaching, OHA has installed an exhibit entitled, *Onondaga at Gettysburg, In Their Words, In Their Deeds, and In Their Manners*, which provides an overview of the dramatic roles played by these Onondaga men. It also focuses on nine local individuals who were directly involved, utilizing photographs of each and vivid descriptions of what they experienced in their own words.

The 149<sup>th</sup> and 122<sup>nd</sup> were involved in the stubborn defense of Culp's Hill on July 2 and 3, the position where the entire right flank of the Union line was anchored. In this action, especially for the 149<sup>th</sup> on the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, its stand against overwhelming numbers was not unlike the work of Colonel Joshua Chamberlain's 20<sup>th</sup> Maine earlier in the day at Little Round Top. The actions of the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine formed the centerpiece of the 1993 movie, *Gettysburg*.

The other famous event associated with the Battle of Gettysburg was the Confederate attack on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, known as Pickett's Charge, thrown against the Union center at Cemetery Ridge. Helping repulse that dramatic assault was Battery B, formed originally in 1861 with men from the Baldwinsville area. A few Rebel soldiers actually reached its cannons that afternoon and, for a few intense, life and death moments, the Onondaga County men were reduced to hand to hand fighting to defend their artillery pieces, before the Confederates were captured or forced to retreat.

*Sgt. Sager*



The exhibit also explores the attachments that these Onondaga County veterans continued with Gettysburg after the war. The stories of the three battlefield monuments erected to these units is told, along with photos of the veterans visiting Culp's Hill and Cemetery Ridge. An original illustration by George Sager, of the 149<sup>th</sup> is exhibited, which shows the initial design for that unit's memorial. Other Civil War artifacts from the OHA collection are also displayed.

Perhaps the highlight of the exhibit is the inclusion of the actual flagstaff that the 149<sup>th</sup> used that day at Gettysburg, generously on loan from the Onondaga County Courthouse and County Clerk, Sandra Schepp. It still bears the repairs made by Color Sergeant William Lilly when the staff was shot in two by the hail of Confederate bullets that day, 150 years ago. To the veterans of the 149<sup>th</sup>, and the other units, as well as to us today, these images and artifacts serve as powerful reminders of our nation's history. They evoke the sacrifice that our country endured for four years to ensure, as Lincoln would state in his address five months after the battle, *"that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom."*

*Col. Barnum with the first national colors of the 149<sup>th</sup>, 1864*

## In Memoriam: Jack Cottrell By Karen Y. Cooney

The staff of OHA was saddened to hear of the death of **Jack W. Cottrell**, longtime OHA supporter and member. He passed away on December 28, 2012.

Jack was born in Syracuse on August 21, 1918, and graduated from Syracuse University in 1941 with a Masters degree in Civil Engineering. After graduation, Jack joined his father, Ensign S. Cottrell, in the family surveying business. In 1990 he incorporated Cottrell Land Surveyors with his son, Gary, and was active in the business until his health failed. He was one of the founders, first presidents and treasurer of the Central New York Society of Land Surveyors. He was also a member of the American Congress of Surveying & Mapping and the New York State Society of Professional Engineers.



Jack was a long-time member of the Board of Directors of OHA and served as the Board President. He briefly served as OHA's interim executive director. He was a member of the New York State Canal Society, the Erie Canal Museum, National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Archaeological Institute of America, the Landmarks Association of Central New York, and the Town of Manlius Historical Society, where he also served on the Board of Trustees for many years. Additionally, Jack had a deep interest in local politics.

Obviously, history and all things historical intrigued Jack. In 1992, he and his wife, Dawn, donated his extensive map collection to OHA accompanied by a generous donation to help underwrite the cost of cataloguing and archiving. This map collection is invaluable and used regularly by patrons of OHA's Research Center.

Jack leaves behind his wife, Dawn, and an extended loving family. His knowledge and presence will be greatly missed by all those who knew him.

# JIMMY VAN HEUSEN:

*The Syracuse Songman Who Kept Hollywood Humming*

By Gregg A. Tripoli

2013 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Jimmy Van Heusen, one of the world's greatest songwriters, and one of the most colorful characters from our local history. Jimmy was born on January 26, 1913 in Syracuse, as Edward Chester Babcock. He attended several local area schools before being expelled for misbehavior of some sort or another. Music was his first true love but his father didn't approve of it as a career choice, so Chester chose a stage name from a shirt collar advertisement and, at age 16, he began a radio career at local stations WSYR and WFBL as Jimmy Van Heusen (though his closest friends would always continue to call him Chester). On those shows, he would often play the piano and write songs on the spot for listeners who phoned in a subject. It was certainly good practice for the man who would eventually write over 400 songs, including around 40 top hits for Frank Sinatra.



*Frank Sinatra record album cover*

He also attended Syracuse University for a time but left for New York City in 1933 when he and his Syracuse neighbor, Jerry Arlen (brother of Harold "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" Arlen), picked up Harold's gig at the Cotton Club when Harold was called to Hollywood to write songs for the movies. While in New York City, Jimmy landed a songwriting contract for the music publisher, Remick Music Corp., which brought him into contact with Hoboken, New



*Jimmy Van Heusen, Sammy Cahn, Frank Sinatra*

Jersey native, Frank Sinatra. Their mutual love of women, music, and late night revelry created an intensely close friendship that lasted 50 years.

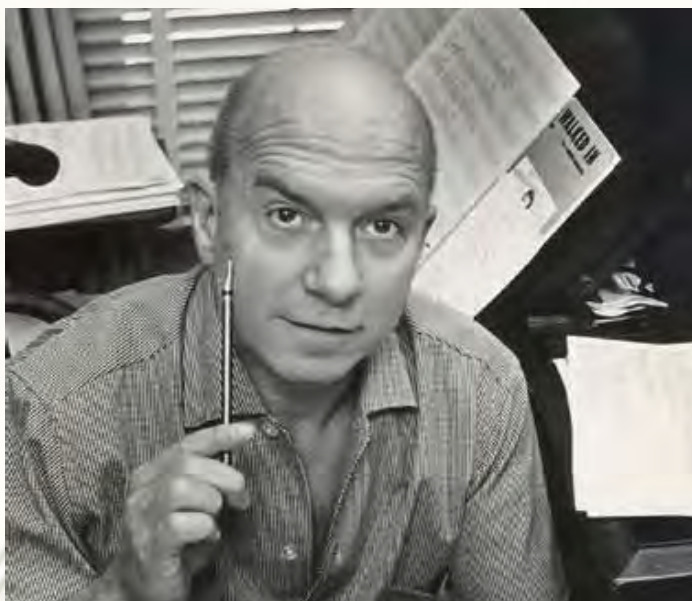
Beautiful music is only one part of a great song and, throughout his career, Jimmy worked with some of the best lyricists of all time, including Eddie de Lange, Johnny Burke, and Sammy Cahn. Though Jimmy eventually became famous for his music, his first hit came, surprisingly enough, as a lyricist in 1938 for a tune by Jimmy Dorsey called "It's the Dreamer in Me." In early 1940, he teamed with lyricist Burke to write the music for "Imagination," his first big hit for Sinatra, who recorded it with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. Another of the 60 songs he wrote that same year was a follow-up chart topper for Sinatra and Dorsey called "Polka Dots and Moonbeams." The team of Burke and Van Heusen was so prolific, and so successful, they became known as the "Gold Dust Twins."

By the end of 1940, Jimmy was hired by Paramount Pictures to write songs for the movies and he headed to Hollywood. He earned his first Oscar for "Swingin' On



*Jimmy Van Heusen with Lyrics Partner-Johnny Burke*

a Star” for Bing Crosby from *Going My Way* in 1944. Three more Oscars would follow as well as the first song to ever win an Emmy, “Love and Marriage,” which Frank Sinatra sang in the television production of *Our Town*. The hit was repeated on television as the theme song for *Married With Children*.



*Jimmy Van Heusen at work*

Throughout this time, Jimmy was also indulging in his other love – flying. An accomplished pilot, he flew test flights during WWII, which was a dangerous occupation at a time when the military was, somewhat haphazardly, cranking out new planes at a record pace. His hit, “Come Fly With Me,” was a particularly autobiographical tune. To avoid a potential ban from the movies by Paramount’s insurance carrier, he did his flying under his original name, Chester Babcock.

Continuing his work with Crosby, Jimmy wrote the songs for all five of the famous *Road* movies for Bing and Bob Hope. In the final film from that series, *The Road to Hong Kong*, as a tribute to Jimmy, Bob Hope’s character was named Chester Babcock.

It wasn’t long before Sinatra made his move to the movies and, together, he and Jimmy made Hollywood their



*Jimmy Van Heusen in the cockpit*



*Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Jimmy Van Heusen.*

personal playground. Jimmy shared an apartment in the Wilshire Towers with Sinatra’s conductor-arranger, Axel Stordahl, that became ground zero for some of the wildest parties of the Hollywood hey-day era. Jimmy and Frank cut a wide swath through the starlets who populated the streets of Tinseltown throughout the 1940’s and 50’s.



*Jimmy Van Heusen*

Jimmy was one of the original hardcore, though low profile, “Rat Pack” members. Frank and Jimmy were best buddies and, uncharacteristically, there was no competition between them, even for the ladies they both loved so much. Jimmy didn’t have Frank’s good looks and fame, but he had more than Frank’s share of personal magnetism and swagger, which resonated with women. The famous actress and beauty, Angie Dickinson, who alternately dated both men noted that many people “always said that Frank

really wanted to be Jimmy.” Van Heusen once said “I dig chicks, booze, music, and Frank Sinatra. . . in that order.” He was funny, bawdy, and talented and was the life, and often the instigator, of those famous parties. Everybody loved Jimmy, and Jimmy loved a lot of those bodies back.



*Jimmy Van Heusen at work*

Jimmy was a smooth operator but he had a coarse side too. He didn't hide his preoccupation, if not preference for, prostitutes and his language was peppered with words that would make a gutter blush. His alcohol consumption was legendary but he worked as hard as he partied and the hits, along with the money, kept rolling in.

His close friendship with Sinatra was tested when President John F. Kennedy's advance team chose Bing Crosby's and Jimmy's adjacent estates over Frank's "Presidentially prepared" playground as JFK's official Palm Springs retreat. Unlike many of Frank's relationships with friends involved in that famous "snub," Jimmy and Frank's



*Jimmy Van Heusen*

relationship, after a rocky period, was restored. At one point, Frank called out Jimmy from the concert stage to ask “Hey Chester, why don't you give this song to Jack Kennedy and see how many records *he* sells?” The song, “High Hopes,” an Oscar winner that Jimmy wrote for Frank ironically became JFK's campaign theme song.



*Record album cover*

When Frank slit his wrist in a suicide attempt over his break up with Ava Gardner, he did it in Jimmy's New York City apartment. It was Jimmy who got Frank to the hospital and it was Jimmy who greased the palms to seal the lips of anyone who could contradict his concocted story about an accident with broken glass.

Jimmy finally married at 56 years old and was confined to a wheel chair after a stroke in his late 60's. He returned to Syracuse regularly to visit his family and to stop on his way to a vacation home he kept in the Adirondacks. In 1986,



*Jimmy Van Heusen's wife Bobbe*

he was in town to be honored at a tribute celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civic Center. He died in 1990. His Oscars and his Emmy, along with many of his personal papers, are housed at Cazenovia College, the school that evolved from the Cazenovia Seminary, which, ironically, Jimmy was kicked out of no fewer than three times in his youth.

Even today, Jimmy Van Heusen's songs are more recognizable than his name. Within the industry, though, Jimmy was huge. All the big names wanted him to write their songs, and attend their parties. He kept Hollywood humming in more ways than one. Though he may have been overshadowed by Frank, and the other more publicly famous singers of his songs, Jimmy swung on his *own* star – and somewhere in the night sky over Hollywood, he probably still does.



*Jimmy Van Heusen*

## ACADEMY AWARDS

Jimmy Van Heusen was nominated for the Academy Award for best song 14 times in 12 different years (in both 1945 and 1964 he was nominated for two songs), and won four times: in 1945, 1958, 1960 and 1964.

### ACADEMY AWARD WINS

“Swinging on a Star” (1945) (lyrics by Johnny Burke) for “Going My Way.”

“All the Way” (1958) (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “The Joker is Wild.”

“High Hopes (1960) (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “A Hole in the Head.”

“Call Me Irresponsible” (1964) (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “Papa’s Delicate Condition.”

### ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS

1945 – “Sleighride in July” (lyrics by Johnny Burke) for “Bell of the Yukon.”

1945 – “Aren’t You Glad You’re You” (lyrics by Johnny Burke) for “The Bells of St. Mary’s.”

1955 – “(Love is) The Tender Trap” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn)  
introduced by Frank Sinatra in “The Tender Trap.”

1958 – “To Love and Be Loved” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “Some Came Running.”

1960 – “The Second Time Around” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “High Time.”

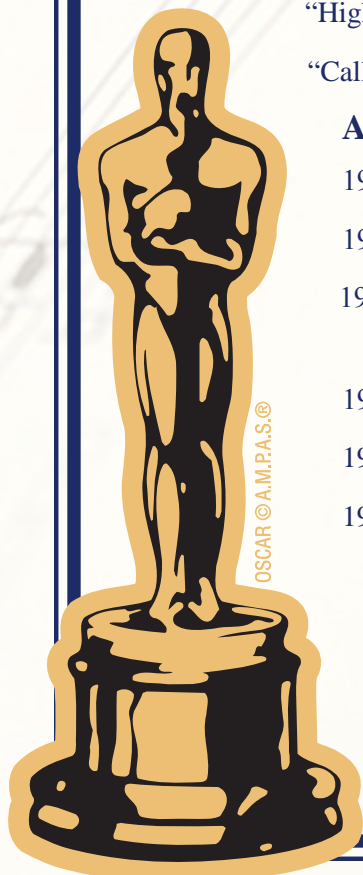
1961 – “Pocketful of Miracles” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “Pocketful of Miracles.”

1964 – “Where Love Has Gone” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “Where Love Has Gone.”

1964 – “My Kind of Town” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “Robin and the Seven Hoods.”

1967 – “Thoroughly Modern Millie” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for  
“Thoroughly Modern Millie.”

1968 – “Star!” (lyrics by Sammy Cahn) for “Star!.”





# Wedding Bells Ring at OHA

By Gregg A. Tripoli

On December 29, 2012, OHA's Gift Gallery saw some history of its own as the setting for, to the best of our knowledge, the first wedding to take place in our building. With a picturesque light snow falling outside our large windows onto Montgomery Street, 60 family and friends gathered among the beautiful holiday decorations in the Gift Gallery, listening to the classical tones of a violin to witness Dave Michel and Peggy Liuzzi joined in holy matrimony by Judge Rosemary Pooler. After the beautiful, and touching, ceremony, the bride, groom, and their guests enjoyed champagne and hors d'oeuvres as they strolled through the museum galleries before adjourning to Parisa Restaurant next door for a lovely dinner reception. OHA extends its best wishes to the newlyweds along with our heartfelt gratitude for choosing our museum and gift gallery as the site for such a special moment in the history of their lives together.



*Left to right, Peggy's granddaughter Ruby Stern, Peggy's daughter Anna Minsch, Peggy Liuzzi and Peggy's daughter Carla Minsch*

## Volunteer Spotlight By Thomas A. Hunter



A native of Miami, FL, Kevin served in the U.S. Navy from 1985-2000 as a non-commissioned officer. After leaving the Navy, he worked for General Electric and Siemens as a power generation field engineer. Kevin retired to Syracuse in 2010 and soon discovered the rich local history of the CNY area. In 2011, Kevin began to volunteer at OHA, working with Tom Hunter and the museum object collection. Kevin has reorganized collections storage rooms, processed museum donations, and assisted with installing and dismantling exhibits. Kevin enjoys the time he spends volunteering at OHA, and almost never misses a day.



*Kevin C. Troxell*

# ICONIC SYRACUSE

By Dennis J. Connors

Ondaga Historical Association and Syracuse's Connective Corridor program are about mid-way through an exciting 12-month project entitled, "Iconic Syracuse." Each month, the large billboard that is visible to thousands every day at the intersection of West Fayette and West Street, pairs a different combination of an historic scene, found along the Connective Corridor, with a contemporary painting inspired by that image. This public art project is located just west of the Syracuse University Warehouse building, and makes use of an existing billboard that normally would have been filled with commercial advertising.



*September 2012 Billboard, image from the collections of OHA, Painting of Fayette Park Fountain by Greg Mawicke*



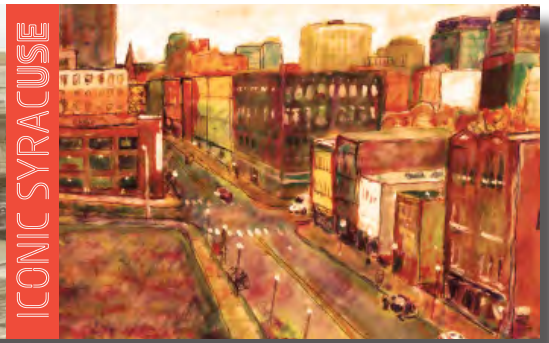
*October 2012 Billboard, image from the collections of OHA, Painting of Gridley building painted by Jesse Handelman*

It began in September of 2012 with the billboard displaying an historic photo of Fayette Park, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, side by side with a painting inspired by a detail from the Park's Victorian cast iron fountain, unfortunately long gone. The art was the work of Greg Mawicke of Syracuse University's Industrial and Interaction Design department. Mawicke's paintings alternate with those of fellow student, Jesse Handelman, both working under the guidance of department faculty member Denise Heckman. The graphic designer for the series is Stephen Kimek, Adjunct Professor at Syracuse University. The photos reproduced on the billboard are from the OHA's vast collection of historic images.



*November 2012 Billboard, image from the collections of OHA, painting by Greg Mawicke*

# ICONIC SYRACUSE



*December 2012 Billboard, image from the collections of OHA, Painting by Jesse Handelman*

“Iconic Syracuse” embodies “scholarship in action” and community engagement, the two key goals of the Connective Corridor, and was conceived as a beautification project at a key entry point for the Corridor, Downtown and Armory Square.

Linda Hartsock, Director, Syracuse University Office of Community Engagement and Economic Development, who co-created the project with Professor Heckman, noted that, “*This project is designed to enhance Syracuse’s sense of identity through the interplay of its past with interpretations of its promise, created by promising young talent who are engaged in meaningful ways in redesigning its future.*”



*January 2013 Billboard, image from the collections of OHA, Painting by Greg Mawicke, industrial design major*



*February 2013 Billboard, image from the collections of OHA, Painting by Jesse Handelman*

All original paintings that were created for this unique collaborative project will be available for purchase by the public through an auction process. **Please check OHA’s website, [cnyhistory.org](http://cnyhistory.org), or call Karen at 428-1864 x312 for details of the auction, which will be held at *Our Glorious Workplaces* event at Crouse Hospital on November 9, 2013.**

Images of all the previous billboards can be found at <http://cnyhistory.org/iconic.html>



# *Magic Toy Shop Memories*

## **Backroom Tour** By Thomas Hunter *Eddie Flum Num, The Play Lady, and Merrily at the Magic Toy Shop set*

Coming soon OHA will add to its backroom tour with *Magic Toy Shop Memories*. *Magic Toy Shop Memories* will be a combination of an open storage arrangement of OHA's toys, games, and recreation objects, along with components of the *Magic Toy Shop*, the former local children's TV program. In fact, this backroom tour area was constructed with funds that were generously donated in the name of the television show's creator and star, Jean Daugherty. The official name of the room is *The Jean Daugherty Memorial Magic Toy Shop Collection* room. The toys and recreation collection includes dolls, Teddy bears, hand-carved wood boats and trains, Punch & Judy marionettes, sports equipment, bicycles, pedal cars, and many other vintage playthings.

The *Magic Toy Shop* was a long running local children's TV show from the 1950s-1980s. Through the generosity of the late Jean Daugherty and WTVH-5, OHA received many items from the *Magic Toy Shop*. Elements of the

TV studio set include the counter and bookshelf, calliope, portable piano, two TV cameras (one from the original 1948 WHEN station), stuffed animals, sheet music, storyboards, costumes, an international doll collection, and, of course, Mr. Trolley's headpiece!

The concept of the *Magic Toy Shop Memories* backroom tour is often identified in the museum profession as open storage. The collection will be arranged and stored so that many objects are visible to patrons on the tour, while others will be boxed for protective storage. The arrangement will feature several large visible objects such as bicycles, dollhouses, and a 14' toboggan.

The room is scheduled to open in early May 2013. Staff will plan a special opening reception for the unveiling and we hope that many of our members and patrons will join us in celebrating the newly renovated exhibit and storage room. "Stay tuned" for additional announcements.



# HOW SWEET IT IS!

*The Story of Mary Elizabeth Evans, A Syracuse Girl Who Saved a Family, Served a Country, and Sealed a Legacy – With Candy*

By Gregg A. Tripoli, Executive Director, Onondaga Historical Association

It's been said that a life without chocolate is no life at all. Perhaps no one exemplified the truth in that statement more than 14 year old Mary Elizabeth Evans who turned her hobby of making candy into a business that lifted her family out of the depths of poverty and into a life filled with fortune, fame and philanthropy.

Mary Elizabeth was born in Syracuse in 1884 to a family of prestige and privilege. At the time, her maternal grandfather, Judge Henry Reigel, was the longest serving county judge in Onondaga County history. The bulk of his income came in the form of rent from his many real estate investments in town. The judge and his genteel wife lived in a large house on Court Street and mingled in the social circles of the leading Syracuse families. Their daughter, and Mary Elizabeth's mother, Fannie, was a free spirit who, much to her mother's dismay, refused to wear a corset and donned "split skirts" for riding horses and bicycles.

Fannie married William Evans, a music professor at Syracuse University, and they had four children. Mary Elizabeth was the oldest, which earned her the nickname "Big Sister." She fondly recalled an early childhood home-life filled with laughter, music and parties. William, however, found it difficult to support his young family on a professor's salary and, perhaps feeling some pressure from the

overshadowing prosperity of his father-in-law, he decided to seek his own fortune in the California Klondike gold rush. Unfortunately, he died in 1892 in New York City at the very beginning of his journey. Fannie put on a brave face as she took over a small grocery store from one of her father's tenants, teaching her children that "one should do something constructive when faced with a crisis." That advice was certainly put to the test when Judge Reigel died five years later, in 1897, when Mary Elizabeth was just twelve years old.

Left with an estate consisting almost entirely of property, the family was soon desperate for funds. With a depressed real estate market, high maintenance costs, and tenants who at rent payment time were less responsive to refined widows than they had been to a prominent male judge, the family was plunged into poverty and virtual homelessness within a couple of years.

For several months they were treated to free board in the Leavenworth family's stately mansion on James Street in exchange for taking care of the home and its elderly matron, while the rest of the family took an extended European vacation. The luxury and splendor of the grand house made a lasting impression on Mary Elizabeth, who thought



*Mary Elizabeth Evans*

“this is the way I would always like to live.” Unfortunately, the luxury was only temporary and, soon the two widows and four children were sharing a cramped, bedbug-infested, borrowed cottage.

Mary Elizabeth confessed her sense of helplessness and frustration, as well as her desire to do something constructive, to her Sunday school teacher, Anna Merrill, at May Memorial Church. Mrs. Merrill wisely asked her young student what she *liked* to do. Mary Elizabeth responded that her favorite hobby was making candy, commenting that she often made it for her mother’s parties and everyone seemed to enjoy it. Mrs. Merrill offered to take a selection of Mary Elizabeth’s candy to a party to see if anyone would be interested in buying some. This led to the “interested outsiders” club for regular orders. For four dollars per month, members would get a one-pound box of candy delivered to their home every Saturday. In those pre-automobile days, Mary Elizabeth made the deliveries in a hand-me-down buggy donated by a neighbor pulled by an old horse that a local farmer gave her. The horse, which the children named Hercules, became a locally famous and welcomed sight in city neighborhoods, much as the ice cream truck became many years later. Mary Elizabeth wrote her name on each of the candy boxes and, thus, the business of Mary Elizabeth’s Candies was born.

Other members of the community came together to help once they heard Mary Elizabeth’s story, and tasted her delicious candy. Local resident, Caroline Stone, collected \$250 (no small sum in those days) from area merchants to buy Mary Elizabeth a ball cream-beater as a surprise Christmas gift from the community. The machine dramatically increased her production capabilities. The Stickley brothers made



*Mary Elizabeth’s Stickley candy stand*

her a cabinet that she filled with boxes of candy and placed in the lobby of the University Building downtown. Mary Elizabeth put a sign on the cabinet that read “Open these doors, take what you will. Pay cost of goods taken, make your change from my till” and she put five or six dollars in a bowl on the counter for change. Her trusting nature was rewarded and no one ever took advantage. Mary Elizabeth’s long standing business principle was to “play true with [one’s] customers if they would have their customers play fair with them.” Her “help yourself, honor system” of selling made news around the country and orders came

pouring in as her mother and her siblings, once they were old enough, chipped in to help. She sold over 16,000 boxes of candy in the first six months.

Mary Elizabeth was her own best salesperson as she traveled the train routes throughout New York and New England enlisting stores, hotels, and clubs to sell her candy. She was wise beyond her years and completely understood the benefit, and took full advantage, of the fact that she was an adorable young girl selling candy to support a family of widows and children. Of course, it didn’t hurt that her all natural, top quality product from old family recipes was exceptional.

Within a few years, she was opening her own string of shops from Boston to Bermuda, though the candy making operation remained in Syracuse. Her kitchens, and her



*Mary Elizabeth and her siblings*



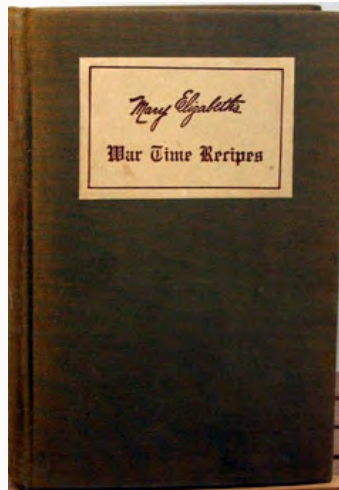
*Mary Elizabeth as Ka-Noo-No Festival Queen, 1905*

shops, were known for being immaculately clean and the 200 women she ultimately employed made chocolate in white dresses with white aprons. She was hailed in the press as the youngest businesswoman in the country and, by her early twenties, her earnings reportedly soared above those of the president of the United States.

From 1905 to 1917, Syracuse hosted an annual week-long festival, called the Ka-Noo-No Karnival, to attract people to town for the New York State Fair. Called the “Mardi Gras of the North,” the nightly parades, shows, concerts, balls, elaborately decorated floats, and lavish costumes drew hundreds of thousands of people to Syracuse. To be named King or Queen of the Karnival was the highest honor that could be bestowed on a resident. In 1905, the community showed its admiration and respect for 21 year-old Mary Elizabeth by naming her Queen.

Mary Elizabeth’s shop in Newport, Rhode Island was billed as a “tea room” where she used her grandmother’s fine Havilland china and served tea and cakes along with her famous candy. The shop was a hit with the wealthy summer residents, and regular patrons included women with names like Vanderbilt, Astor, and Gould who all encouraged Mary Elizabeth to open a shop in New York City. She opened her first one there in 1910 and, by 1914, she signed a million dollar lease for a large two-story establishment on one of the city’s busiest corners at 392 Fifth Avenue. She added lunches to the menu along with tea, cakes, cookies, and, of course, her candy. A *Syracuse Post-Standard* article from the time noted that she served 1,000 luncheons a day at the restaurant. Around this time, Mary Elizabeth moved into a large luxury apartment on Fifth Avenue, not far from her shop.

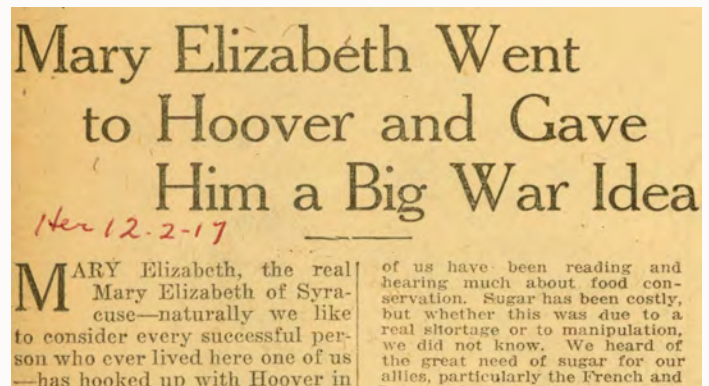
Soon after her move to New York City, Mary Elizabeth took a well-deserved European vacation. In 1914, when World War I broke out, she was staying at the palatial English estate of fellow Syracusan, Edna May, the famous actress and toast of London who married a wealthy English nobleman. Cutting her visit short, she hurried back to the States. Worried that the continued use of rationed ingredients in her recipes would hurt



*Mary Elizabeth's War Time Recipes*

the war effort, she made a quick trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with Herbert Hoover who, at the time, was the head of U.S. Food Administration. Their meeting resulted in a book that Mary Elizabeth wrote titled *War Time Recipes*, in which she substituted non-rationed ingredients for rationed ones so that Americans could continue to make their favorite dishes and still support the troops. She made adjustments to her own recipes as well and gave restaurant patrons the ability to choose alternative dishes that featured non-rationed ingredients. During this time her candy, for example, was made with honey, molasses, and maple sugar instead of the cane and beet sugars that were badly needed by U.S. and allied soldiers. The book was a great success and was re-issued during World War II.

Mary Elizabeth’s patriotic philanthropy kicked into high gear in 1917 when she funded, and led, a large expedition of the Red Cross and the U.S. Food Administration to the war front in Paris. There, she managed the U.S. Central Diet Kitchen for American servicemen. She also took over the kitchen of a Paris hotel and turned it into a confectionery so she could give American doughboys a very welcomed taste of home with her candy, cakes, and cookies.



*Syracuse Herald, December 2, 1917*

Edward O’Hara, the eventual publisher of the *Syracuse Herald* newspaper related his 1918 Paris encounter with Mary Elizabeth when he was a wounded soldier there. She arranged a difficult to arrange, but badly needed, operation for him at the St. Denis Hospital. He wrote of Mary Elizabeth’s tireless efforts delivering food, candy, and other homemade confections from a seven-passenger automobile filled with aids followed by a truck containing her treats. At the time, he asked if she was concerned about her business in the States since she wasn’t there to manage it. Her reply was, “I love New York but they could not give all Broadway for my return. The joy that comes to me in doing things for our boys is greater than millions in money.”



*Mary Elizabeth Evans Sharpe's Newport, RI candy shop*

Mary Elizabeth didn't have to worry too much about her business, or her millions. Her mother, her sister, Fannie, and her brother, Henry, were managing quite nicely in her absence while her other sister, Martha, was pursuing an acting career. Shortly after Mary Elizabeth's return to the States, however, tragedy struck the family as Henry died unexpectedly of influenza at 33 years old in 1919. Coincidentally, Mary Elizabeth was comforted at this difficult time by another Henry. Shortly before she left for Paris, while on a trip to Wyoming, at what would be described today as a "dude ranch", Mary Elizabeth met, and fell in love with, a handsome wealthy businessman from Providence, Rhode Island, named Henry Dexter Sharpe.



*Mary Elizabeth Evans Sharpe, Red Cross overseas, 1917*

On June 25, 1920, Mary Elizabeth and Henry were married in her Fifth Avenue apartment. Attended by her two sisters, she wore a fashionable drop-waist exquisitely beaded satin gown with a long train and yards of silk tulle. She continued managing her still growing business as she and Henry built Rochambeau, a 20,000 square foot French Chateau-style estate in Providence with a full-time staff of thirteen. Her childhood dreams, formed while she was a poor house-sitter in the Leavenworth mansion, had finally come true. Mary Elizabeth lived at Rochambeau for the last sixty years of her long life.

In 1924, at 40 years of age, Mary Elizabeth gave birth to her only child; a son named Henry, Jr., known as Hank. After his mother's death, Hank donated Rochambeau to Brown University, which continues to use the estate as the home of its Romance Languages Department.



*Mary Elizabeth Evans Sharpe (left)*

Mary Elizabeth became involved in politics as she worked hard to get her old friend, Herbert Hoover, elected as the country's thirty-first president in 1929. She was a delegate to the Republican National Conventions in 1928 and 1936, and she was a Republican Elector in 1932.

When the Great Depression hit, Mary Elizabeth added dinners to her restaurant menus and renegotiated her leases to a lower rate. She set up card and ping-pong tables after the supper hour so that patrons could enjoy a fun evening out just for the price of dinner. The business didn't make a lot of money in those years, but it didn't lose any either. More importantly, thanks to the advice of another woman, banker

Mary Voss Andress, she invested wisely and continued to grow her already substantial capital.

By 1933, Mary Elizabeth, her sister, Fannie, and their mother had made millions from the business, allowing them all to retire very comfortably. Her other sister, Martha, was married by then and expressed an interest in taking over the business. Since she was no longer to be involved, Mary Elizabeth discontinued the candy and donated all shares of the business to Martha. The shops outside New York City were closed and Martha moved the restaurant to a smaller venue on 37<sup>th</sup> Street, where she raised two generations of her family before selling the business in 1977. Under the terms of the sale, the new owner continued to operate the restaurant as Mary Elizabeth's.

Back in Providence, Mary Elizabeth became a great patron of the arts, historic preservation and downtown redevelopment, in addition to many other causes. The *Providence Journal* reported that she made "an impact such as few citizens, male or female, have made in the city's nearly 350 years" as she "hurled, cast, and propelled herself into every project she undertook."

Mary Elizabeth became interested in landscape architecture when designing the beautiful gardens at Rochambeau. After seeing her work, the president of Brown University, Henry Wriston, asked her to develop a landscaping plan for the school, which she did. Her daughter-in-law, Peggy, received her degree



*Mary Elizabeth's wedding day*



in landscape architecture from the Rhode Island School of Design and, together, they planned and planted a good portion of Providence. One of Mary Elizabeth's proudest projects was her transformation of an old scrap metal yard on the city's waterfront into India Point Park.

Inspired by her love of music, which was a lingering benefit of her father's influence, Mary Elizabeth was the first person to establish a free Community Concert Series in Providence. Free concerts in waterfront parks continue to be a mainstay of summers in Providence to this day.



*Fannie Riegel oil painting*

She became an art collector and decorated her home with works by Matisse, Rousseau, and Seurat before they became famous artists. In fact, when she began collecting works by Matisse, he was so poor that Mary Elizabeth hired his wife to needlepoint the seat cushions of her dining room chairs. She was recognized for her exquisite taste, and was asked to serve on the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Though she insisted that she wasn't a serious collector, and only bought what she liked, many of the paintings from her collection now grace the galleries of famous art museums and U.S. Embassies around the world, thanks to her generosity, as well as that of her son, Hank.

Mary Elizabeth never forgot her hometown of Syracuse. She was a major contributor to Memorial Hospital, which eventually became Crouse Hospital, naming many gifts for her grandfather, Judge Reigel. She donated over 40 of her paintings, along with some rare pieces of china, to the Everson Museum of Art and the Onondaga Historical Association's collections contain several artifacts from her early candy making operations as well as her treasured oil portrait of her beloved mother, Fannie.

In 1969, the New York Times called Mary Elizabeth "the grande dame of Providence" and a 1973 Times article described her as a "Horatio Alger heroine who helped lift her genteel family from poverty by making and selling candy."

Mary Elizabeth's philosophy was "live on a green light."



*Mary Elizabeth's Candy Logo used by OHA and Lune Chocolat*

For her, there was no slowing down and certainly no stopping. That green light finally went out in 1985 when she was over 100 years old. In a coincidental twist of fate, that was also the year that the New York City restaurant she founded, the last shop to bear her name, finally closed for good. The legacy of Mary Elizabeth lives on, however, not only in her family, her good works and her compelling, inspirational story, but also in OHA's newest entrepreneurial venture.

Over the past couple of years OHA has been in touch with Hank Sharpe, Mary Elizabeth's son, and his wife, Peggy. They have been tremendously helpful in filling in the gaps that existed in OHA's historical file on Mary Elizabeth. Recently, Hank and Peggy have also graciously, and generously, provided OHA with access to, and the copyright to, Mary Elizabeth's secret candy recipes. OHA then contracted with a local company, *Lune Chocolat* of Manlius, to manufacture a line of Mary Elizabeth's candies the old fashioned way, exactly according to Mary Elizabeth's original recipes. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of every Mary Elizabeth's candy benefits OHA and with each sale, the consumer is provided with a brochure that details the story of Mary Elizabeth. The candy is available at OHA's museum store, the Gift Gallery as well as at Lune Chocolat's shop in Manlius. Following in the tradition of Mary Elizabeth, the candy is of the highest quality; hand made, all natural, with no preservatives, using local ingredients when possible. Every purchase of Mary Elizabeth's candy supports local industry, a local entrepreneurial business, and our local comprehensive general historical organization, OHA.

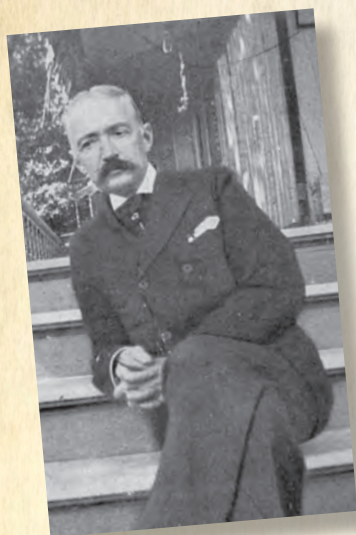
So now, for the first time in 80 years, people can, once again, enjoy the candy that saved a family, served a country, and sealed a legacy.



*Mary Elizabeth Evans Sharpe*

# Edward Noyes Westcott

By Dick Case



Edward Noyes Westcott



David Harum,  
1900 edition

Special edition of David  
Harum, #129 of 750

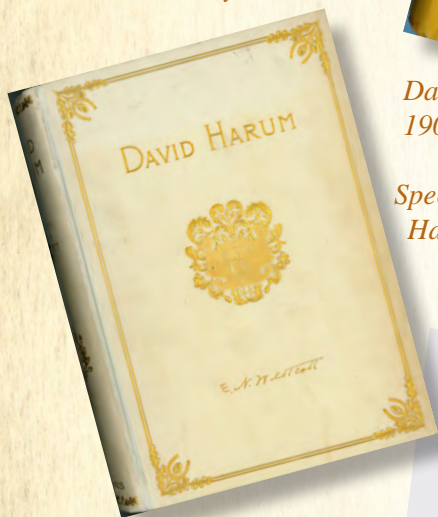


Illustration from page  
23 of 1900 edition of  
David Harum



When he died in March 1898 in Syracuse, an obituary writer for a Syracuse newspaper wrote of Edward Noyes Westcott: “Mr. Westcott was facile with a pen but never indulged himself in writing to any great extent.”

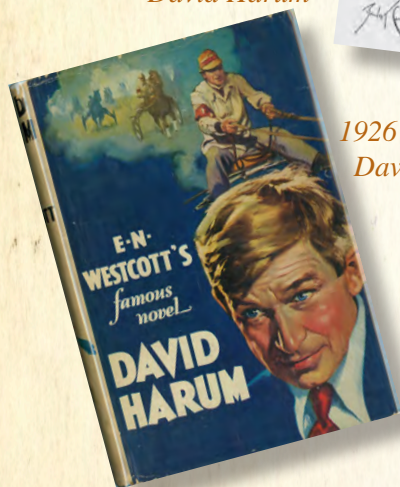
He referred to Westcott as a “clerk.”

Six months later, the memorialist had a reason to change his opinion of Westcott, the writer. His novel, “David Harum: A Story of American Life,” had been published by D. Appleton & Co. By almost any standard, it would be fair to call the book an American classic. It stands as one of the best-sellers of all time.

We know now that “David Harum” was Westcott’s deathbed novel, literally. He had been working on the story for at least three years, by friends’ accounts. Forbes Heermans, his helper at the end, wrote that Westcott began working on the book during a visit to the Adirondacks in 1895. He took the manuscript to Italy, where he stayed at a friend’s home.

He had pulmonary consumption, a disease that eventually killed him.

The last few months of his life were challenging for Edward Noyes Westcott, whose poor health forced him to resign from his last position as clerk of the Syracuse Water Commission at a time when the city water was developing a system for bringing water to Syracuse residents from Skaneateles Lake. He spent most of his time in bed on the second floor of his home at 826 James St. (later No. 990; the house was torn down in 1962 and was replaced by a



1926 edition of  
David Harum

William H. Crane as David  
Harum from *The Christmas  
Story* from David Harum



Westcott's Home at 826 (990) James Street

headquarters building for Channel 5 TV, a structure that now stands vacant.)

We have the later testimony of Albert Schweizer, who seems to have worked as valet for Westcott during his last days. Albert gave an interview to a Syracuse newspaper 30 years after publication of “David Harum,” when he described Westcott’s physical decline as he “labored feverishly” to complete his book.

Albert explained he sat by Westcott’s bed on afternoons the housekeeper had off and kept the writer’s cigarettes lighted and “poured his brandy, as, propped up in bed, the author worked.” Albert said “He didn’t do much talking. He was like a man at his desk with a job to do and he kept at it hour after hour. He would write and write and write, sometimes lying almost face down on the quilts with the paper in front of him, sprawled out as one sprawls on the grass.

“Once in a while, he would ask . . . what was going on downtown. Occasionally, he would have a coughing spell. But he was always cheerful and optimistic. He had only one thought in mind and that was finishing ‘David Harum.’”

He did finish the book before he died. His friend, and editor, Forbes Heermans, swore to that. In a biographical note written after Westcott’s death, Heermans, Westcott’s James Street neighbor and a published writer himself, said “Every line and word of the story are his own.”

Heermans described his friend’s method of composition as “first to prepare a rough sketch or outline of each chapter with a lead-pencil on ordinary copy-paper. He was unable to use a pen freely, as he suffered from scrivener’s palsy. These notes being finished, he rewrote them on a typewriter . . . .”

He said the whole process took Westcott about 15 months of actual time, with lapses for the days he couldn’t “write a line because of his physical prostration.” The story was completed about the end of 1896.

The manuscript of “David Harum” was sent to six publishers, who rejected the book. He told a friend, “When I am gone perhaps some of my affairs will turn up trumps but as long as I live luck is dead against everything I undertake.”

The seventh publisher, D. Appleton & Co., accepted “David Harum” in January 1898. It was being set in type when he died on March 31, 1898. It was published in September, with minor revisions and editing by Forbes Heermans.

It seems to have been a quick success. The first printing was of 1,500 copies. It went through six more editions in the next 12 weeks and continued to sell well for the next 35

years, passing the million and a half mark in 1911.

Forbes Heermans wrote this footnote about his friend: “He died without knowing, and perhaps without suspecting, the extraordinary welcome that was to be given to his book.”

The success of “David Harum” spawned many spin-offs. Editions were tried in other countries, including a German translation in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect. Actor William H. Crane starred in both a play (1900) and a silent film (1915). Will Rogers played David in a talking film in 1934 and “The True Tales of David Harum” was a radio serial in the 1940s.

The famed Kansas editor, William Allen White, claimed Rudyard Kipling wrote “David,” using a pen name. Asked to elaborate, White referred reporters to Lydia Pinkham, who was an iconic concocter and shrewd marketer of a commercially successful herbal-alcoholic “women’s tonic” in the 19th century.

Forbes Heermans wrote his reaction to the success: “It has been the theme of many poems and parodies; the text for homilies, the inspiration for cartoonists; the source of orator’s wit; and an astrologer has asked in all seriousness for full details of the history of the book and its author, so that he may cast the horoscopes of novels yet unpublished and thereby foretell success or failure.”

“David Harum” was meant to be humorous; it hardly reflects the tragedy in the life of the man who wrote it.

Edward’s father was Amos Westcott, the physician and dentist who was mayor of Syracuse during the Civil War (and the namesake of Westcott Street). He came to our city in 1841 and earned the honorific as the country’s “first dentist.” He improved dental tools and invented a new kind of butter churn. He was an investor, with six others, in the infamous “Cardiff Giant,” the “great Onondaga Hoax” that was “discovered” in a watery bog south of Syracuse. One morning in 1873, Amos put a pistol to his head and killed himself. It was explained he suffered from “hypochondria,” and had been treated for it at a Utica mental hospital.

Suicides haunt the Westcott family. Edward’s half-brother, Frank Nash Westcott, was an Episcopal priest and long-



*Postcard of “David Harum of Homer,” and “David Harum’s Residence”*

time rector of St. James Church in Skaneateles. Frank completed two novels: “Hepsey Burke” and “Dabney Todd.” He hanged himself with a bathrobe cord in a Wisconsin hotel in 1915. Some reviewers called “Hepsey Burke” “a female David Harum.”

Westcott left three children: Harold, Violet and Philip. His wife, Jane, died in 1890. The children were set for life, as long as they lived. (They shared an estate reportedly amounting to \$150,000 in book proceeds.) Harold seems to have been afflicted with the same disease that killed his father. He died of natural causes at Loon Lake, in the Adirondacks, in 1904 at the age of 29.

Violet, who married an older New York City lawyer, Victor Morawetz, died seven years after the wedding of acute arthritis. Westcott’s last surviving child, Philip Noyes Westcott, left Syracuse for San Francisco, where the handsome, Williams College-educated young man was described by local newspapers as following a “carefree and well-ordered life.” Philip was 42 when he shot himself to death at his room in the University Club in San Francisco in 1926.

It took a court in San Francisco a year to straighten out Philip’s estate. A judge ordered final distribution of the “David Harum” royalties to cousins in the East.

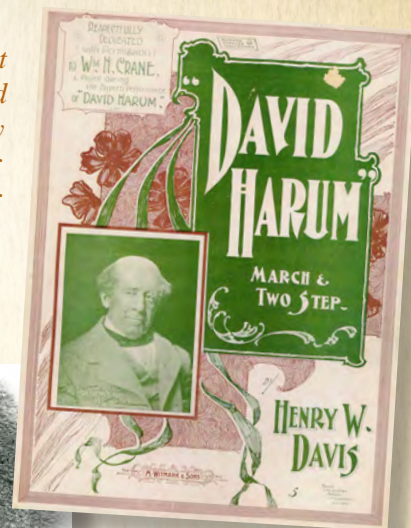
The folks of Homer, the Cortland County village south of Syracuse, liked to imagine “David Harum” was based on a real-life man who lived there, David Hannum. They’ve made something of a local industry of the book. There’s a David Harum House, David Harum Senior Center, David Harum baseball league, a street named Hannum and signs that read “Welcome to Friendly Homer. The Home of David Harum.”

Hannum was a friend of Westcott’s father, Amos, and the title character’s name is close to Hannum’s own. The author’s uncle, Owen Westcott, lived in Homer and his mother was a first cousin to David Hannum’s second wife. The place where the action takes place is called “Homeville.”

The best we can say about these similarities is that the book is a work of fiction and readers are left to draw their own conclusions about the originals. Prior to publication, Westcott himself remarked in a letter, “I have lived with and among the people I have written about. . . . A great many of David’s peculiar figures and sayings were constantly cropping up in my father’s diction.”

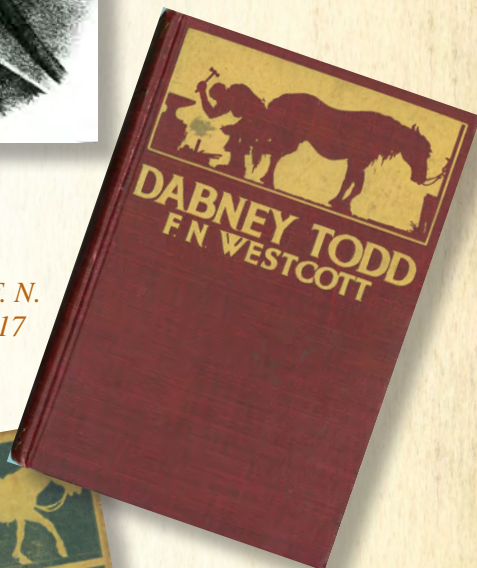
As for Forbes Heermans, he said any claims that certain people were the originals of “David Harum” characters, were “absolutely without foundation . . . . Each one is entirely the creation of the author’s imagination . . . .” Heermans said Westcott didn’t dare put real people into his book: “They’d spoil it.”

*Cover of sheet music for David Harum, by Henry W. Davis Cover of sheet music for David Harum, by Henry W. Davis*



*Amos Westcott*

*Dabney Todd, by F. N. Westcott, 1917*



*Hepsey Burke, by F. N. Westcott, 1914*

*The Christmas Story from David Harum, by Edward Noyes Westcott, 1900*





# Yuletide Voices

By Scott Peal

The OHA Carolers: Brian Morey, Susan Barbour, Kate Huddleston, David Baker and Amanda Hebblewait joined together to spread the spirit of the Holidays through song. The group performed at M&T bank's Christmas party.

# Joan's Evening at the Museum Party

By Scott Peal

Joan Barrett wanted a different kind of party. After reading about OHA's **Evening At The Museum** she decided this special OHA program would be perfect. The entire party (catered by Parisa Restaurant) was held at OHA with close to 40 guests. The party began with wine and appetizers. The guests then accompanied night watchpersons, Herman Spivey and Marge Beagleman, on their rounds to bear witness to the strange events that had been recently taking place in the museum. On the tour, they soon realized that OHA was not your average quiet, staid museum. The exhibits were quite lively and had a lot on their minds! Afterwards the intrepid adventurers returned to the lobby for more food and drink, Joan labeled the evening "A SMASH HIT with our friends." Comments from the partygoers were "an exceptional evening," "very creative," "What a great idea!" "It was a fun, fun, fun party!" If you are interested in information on incorporating an **Evening at the Museum** as a part of your next event, please contact Scott Peal at 428 1864 x 317.



*The night watchman discovers the Franklin exhibit coming alive*



# OHA's Fall Ghostwalk, Lakeside Views

*By Scott Peal*

*Liverpool in autumn was the setting for OHA's Fall Ghostwalk, Lakeside Views.*

The path into the past began at the Liverpool First Methodist Church where the audience received a brief history of the church. There were warnings issued from the local constable about cattle roaming the streets, and nude swimming in the Oswego canal during daylight hours. The journey continued through the green of Johnson Park where famed 17th century explorer and fur trapper, Pierre Radisson, was encountered. At the Willow Basket Museum, young star crossed newlyweds,

the Hawleys, told their sad tale. Welcomed by Betsy, the Irish maid, at the Gleason Mansion, we learned the story of Liverpool's wealthiest family from spinster Martha Gleason. Across the street, the son of Frank Brown, a freed slave, told of the uncertain life of an African-American in the early days of Liverpool. Last, but not least groups found themselves at a revival meeting of Reverend Miller and his young follower, Gracie, who believed the end of the world was imminent. . . more than once.



OHA would like to thank: our volunteer guides who kept everyone on the right track; the Liverpool First Methodist Church for providing a starting point; the Village of Liverpool and Lucretia Hudzinski of the Chamber of Commerce, who invited "Ghostwalk" to Liverpool and served as liaison between OHA and the community. The Defendorf and the Brandt families provided shelter and comfort to our ghosts. A special thank you to Dorianne Gutierre, Village Historian, who served as "ghost sitter," and a resource of valuable research and guidance to help our talented actors provide an enriching experience for all who attended.

*Jon Anderson, Tallon Larham (top row)*

*Susan Barbour, Nancy Roberts, Maxwell Anderson, Jessie Navaugh (middle row)*

*Amanda Hebblethwaite, Brian Morey, Sarah Tucker (bottom row)*

- |                              |                               |                             |                              |                               |
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<b>\$101 - \$249</b>	Ms. Anne Maier	Mrs. Barbara Wanamaker	Mr. Adam Bruce	Ms. Elaine Dubroff
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	Michael and Joy Moss	Ms. Rae Rohfeld & Mr. Charles O. Trabold		
	Mr. and Mrs. John David Mura			

Onondaga County Bar Assoc.  
 Bellevue School  
 BOCES  
 Boys & Girls Club  
 Cannon Pool Co.  
 Cazenovia Senior Center  
 Center for Community Alternatives, Inc.  
 Century Club  
 Chittenango Central School District  
 CIP Retail  
 City of Syracuse  
 County of Onondaga  
 Dewitt Community Library  
 Eastwood Neighborhood Association  
 Elmwood School Afterschool Program  
 Everson Museum of Art  
 Expeditionary Learning School  
 Fayetteville YMCA Seniors

Fort Drum  
 Friends of Fort Ontario  
 Friends of Susan B. Anthony House  
 Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways  
 Hamilton College  
 Health Science Center Foundation  
 Hiscock & Barclay  
 Hobart & William Smith College  
 Joan Bennett  
 Laurie Chase Consulting  
 M & T Bank  
 Manlius Library  
 Montessori School  
 Nancy S. Weiss  
 OCMBOCES  
 OnCare  
 OnCenter  
 Onondaga Community College

Onondaga County Clerk's Office  
 Onondaga County Retired Teachers Association  
 Pro Literacy  
 Quarry Questors  
 Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse  
 Seneca Federal Savings Bank  
 Seymour School  
 Split Rock School  
 St. Stephen's Church  
 Syracuse Auto Dealers Association  
 Syracuse University  
 The Folkus Project  
 The Rotary Club of Dewitt, Inc.  
 Town of Clay Senior Center  
 Women's Fund  
 YMCA

Advance Lighting Technologies  
 Bruce Harvey  
 Carrier Corporation  
 Chuck Hafner's Farmers Market, Inc.  
 Dannible & McKee  
 Daylight Blue Media Group  
 Dermody, Burke & Brown  
 DestiNY USA Holdings LLC  
 Dupli Envelope & Graphics Corporation  
 Experience Works  
 Face First Creative  
 Joe Glisson

Jerry Klineberg Photography, Inc.  
 JR Junction Train & Hobby  
 Karen Cooney  
 Kiefer Creative  
 Lisa Loftus  
 Liverpool Chamber of Commerce  
 Liverpool United Methodist Church  
 Lucie Wellner  
 Midtown Shoe and Leather and Tom Kembloski  
 National Grid  
 Oakwood Cemetery  
 OnCenter

Parisa's Restaurant  
 Paychex  
 Solvay Library  
 Sonic Brite  
 Syracuse New Times  
 Syracuse Stage and Gretchen Darrow-Catty  
 Damien Vallelonga  
 Village of Liverpool  
 Visual Technologies  
 WCNY  
 Wegmans  
 Colleen Woolpert



## Haudenosaunee Wooden Stick Lacrosse Game and Festival:

On September 28-29, 2013, the Skä-noñh – Great Law of Peace Center will initiate an annual Haudenosaunee Wooden Stick Lacrosse game and festival at Onondaga Lake Park. Lacrosse, which is called Deyhontsigwa'ehs (They Bump Hips) by the Onondaga, is a game that has been played at Onondaga Lake for thousands of years. It is part of the narrative of the formation of the Great Law of Peace.



### "Listening to the Wampum:"

On November 15-16, 2013, the Skä-noñh – Great Law of Peace Center with the Onondaga Historical Association, Syracuse University, and LeMoyne College, will host a conference title "Listening to the Wampum." The central focus of this event will be a reading of a wampum belt, which commemorates the coming of the Jesuits to Onondaga Lake in the 1650's.

For more information, go to [skanohcenter.org](http://skanohcenter.org)

**Signature Beer T-Shirts** OHA is Brewing up some new Beer Couture!

Back in stock are OHA's signature beer t-shirts! These super soft, vintage cut t-shirts are available in both men's and women's sizes and feature the historic breweries of Syracuse past. A perfect gift for the beer connoisseur!

*Men's and Women's sizes S-XXL 14.99 + Tax*



This just in, a new signature beer t-shirt design from OHA! This heathered red shirt features the logo for Congo produced by the Haberle Crystal Bottling Department during prohibition. Congo was a "near beer" or a non-alcoholic brew made and marketed in an attempt to keep the brewery profitable during the period in American history when the production of alcoholic beverages was illegal. Many people were reported to take "medicinally prescribed" whiskey or homemade spirits to mix with Congo in an attempt to replicate traditional beer.

*Men's and Women's sizes S-XXL 14.99+ Tax*



**Unique Up-cycled Lamps**

These unique up-cycled lamps are constructed from industrial style black iron piping and vintage brewery bottles. A low wattage bulb is used to illuminate the vintage amber bottle producing a warm ambient light. A rotating faucet handle serves as a switch to turn the light on and off. A retro style cloth covered lamp cord and plug complete this ensemble. A truly unique piece of home decor!

*Table and floor lamps available starting at just \$99.99*

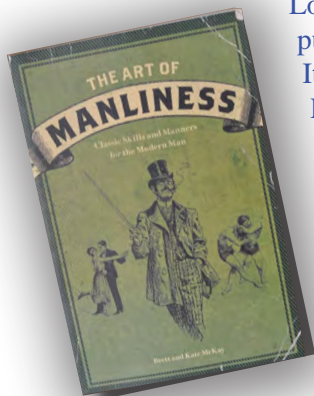


**Hot off the Press!**

Celebrate OHA's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary with this new publication on Vintage Spirits and Cocktails!

Learn how to make your very own Golden Dawn, named for the 1927 Rodgers and Hammerstein operetta and named "the world's finest cocktail" by the United Kingdom Bartenders Association in 1930.

Looking for a drink with a bit of a quirk? Try this new publication on Steampunk culture entitled Steamdrunks. It features recipes for unique drinks such as Victorian Lavender Lemonade and our personal favorite, Artillery Punch, a very special drink that has a kick just like the Raw Hide Cannon invented by Frederick La Tulip of Syracuse in 1895.



Need a lesson in Manliness? Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man just might do it for you. Need to know how to start a car without cables? The proper way to write a thank you note? How about landing a plane in an emergency? This new book is full of great information and advice for any modern man, or woman!



# THE OHA MEDAL AWARDS CEREMONY



Since 1945, the Onondaga Historical Association Medal Award has recognized distinguished contributions to the cause of preserving and interpreting Onondaga County history. The award itself is a historical medallion originally struck in commemoration of Onondaga County's 1894 Centennial.

This year, the OHA Medal will be awarded in a breakfast ceremony on Thursday, June 20th from 8 to 9 AM at the Genesee Grande Hotel on Genesee Street in Syracuse. Honorees are the Town of Onondaga Historical Society, the Erie Canal Museum, and Kristine Delaney, Crouse Hospital Librarian. The ceremony is a wonderful opportunity for the community to learn more about the history of our region through the stories of the Medal Honorees.

## *The Erie Canal Museum*

Established fifty years, in the only weighlock building in the world, the Erie Canal Museum has preserved the fascinating history of the innovation, construction, and maintenance of one of the country's most important works projects.



## *The Town of Onondaga Historical Society*

The Town of Onondaga Historical Society has worked diligently to establish a museum in the Town Hall, create a historic markers program in conjunction with the Pomeroy Foundation, and, with the dedicated work of Jane Tracy, to preserve and document the history of the County Poor House and its records.



## *Kristine Delaney, MLS, Crouse Hospital Librarian*

Kristine Delaney joined Crouse Hospital in 1990 after earning an MLS from Syracuse University's School of Information Studies. Kris enjoys combining her experience in museum archives to share Crouse's rich heritage with the community and her library training to develop information tailored to the special needs of physicians, nurses, patients and families. Recently, Kris collaborated with OHA to create the Crouse 120th anniversary exhibit, which included a booklet and video.

Tickets to the event are \$50 each and include a full breakfast. Tables and sponsorships are also available. For information and reservations, call Lynne Pascale, Director of Development, at 428-1864, ext. 314.

# HISTORY MINUTES

## OHA'S NEWEST COLLABORATION WITH WCNY AND LEMOYNE COLLEGE

By Gregg A. Tripoli

Under the generous sponsorship of LeMoyne College, I am happy to announce that OHA and WCNY have developed a new series of sixty-second vignette productions that highlight fascinating people and events from our local history. OHA has termed these vignettes "documericals" to denote their documentary nature in commercial format and time frame. They are currently being aired in-between PBS programming on WCNY at the rate of eight times per week in rotation on all WCNY channels 24.1, 24.2, 24.3, 24.4, and on cable channel 854 over the course of six months. Each *History Minute* will reach 128,000 television-viewing households per week during that time.



*Mary Elizabeth Evans*

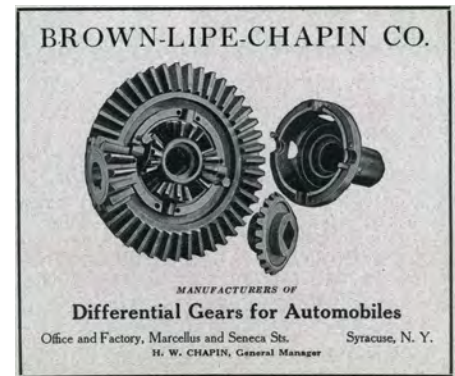
of millionaire Edgar Crouse and his secret family, the fascinating inventor and entrepreneur Alexander T. Brown, and the early silent film "A Clouded Name".

Students from LeMoyne College assisted OHA staff in the research and writing as well as in the selection of images and film clips from OHA's archives that are used in the productions. Additional LeMoyne College students worked with WCNY production staff in bringing all aspects together to produce the final results.

OHA is extremely excited about the potential of *History Minutes* to reach



*Ecker's Flying Boat*



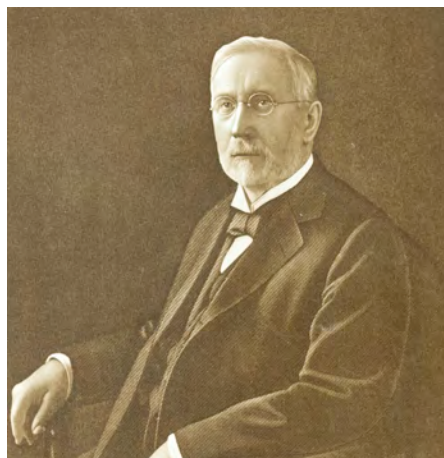
*Brown-Lipe Chapin Co. Gear Advertisement*

an exceptionally large audience with these compelling stories. We hope that these engaging productions, though short, will peak the interest of the viewing public and heighten the desire to learn more about our remarkable history. We are also thrilled at the opportunity to team up with two of our most collaborative, and supportive, educational partners – LeMoyne College and WCNY in an effort to engage and entertain, as well as educate, our community in the name of history.

For more information go to [wcny.org/education/history-minutes](http://wcny.org/education/history-minutes)



*A Clouded Name movie advertisement*



*Alexander T. Brown portrait*

This project fits nicely into OHA's outreach strategic plan to bring the great stories of our community's history to more people through an expansion in television programming. The five productions currently airing cover the stories of Mary Elizabeth Evans and her candy empire, Herman Ecker and his flying boat, the story

# Onondaga Historical Association's Sesquicentennial Celebrations

To our members: Thank you for 150 years of helping OHA bring the stories of our community to past, present, and future generations of Central New Yorkers.

Come celebrate with us in 2013 at one of our regular or special anniversary gatherings.

OHA's History in the House Party – *Special Anniversary Event* – May 9, 2013

Noon – 8 PM Onondaga Historical Association, 321 Montgomery St., Syracuse, NY

Refreshments will be served all day. See schedule on the right of in-house events.

Tickets: \$10 for members, \$15 non-members.  
Call 428-1864, ext. 312. Also available at the door.



## House Party Events Schedule May 9, 2013

- Noon-12:30 Ribbon cutting and opening ceremony for the Marsellus Gallery.
- 12:30-1:00 OHA 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cake cutting in the second-floor Gambrinus Gallery.
- 1:00-1:30 *Mary Elizabeth Evans: The Sweet Taste of Success* - presentation by Gregg Tripoli in the auditorium.
- 2:00-2:30 Time capsule opening with Dan Cochran and Don Lemp on 5<sup>th</sup> floor.
- 2:30-4:30 Book signing: *Tipp Hill Litanies* with author Paul Kocak in the Gift Gallery.
- 4:30-5:00 *Bridges* exhibit gallery talk with Dennis Connors, 1<sup>st</sup> floor gallery.
- 5:00-5:30 Excelsior Coronet Band and the 122<sup>nd</sup> Civil War living historians, 1<sup>st</sup> floor gallery.
- 5:30-6:00 Civil war presentation featuring the character of veteran Col. Gere. Auditorium.
- 6:00-6:30 Opening of the Jean Daugherty Memorial Magic Toy Shop Room, 5<sup>th</sup> floor.
- 6:00-8:00 *Syracuse Television* book signing with authors Christie Casciano Burns, Tim Fox, and Lou Gulino in the Magic Toy Shop Room, 5<sup>th</sup> floor.

## *Raising the Roof on History: The OHA Sesquicentennial Awards*

*Special Anniversary Event* – September 5, 2013

5:30 – 9:30 PM • Merchants Commons Building, 220 South Warren St., Syracuse

OHA is proud to honor three 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary award recipients for outstanding commitment to community service and their special consideration for the preservation of local history:

Individual - Nancy Bottar • Family Heritage - The Marsellus Family • Company Heritage - Stickleby Audi & Co.

The Sesquicentennial Awards evening will take place on the elegant rooftop terrace of the newly renovated Merchants Commons Building, corner of South Warren and East Fayette Streets in Syracuse. From this vantage point, guests can view the historic OHA building as well as the downtown cityscape.

Food stations by Parisa, classic cocktails, American Songbook music.

Tickets - \$100 per person. Price includes 2 drink tickets. • RSVP by August 27 to 428-1864, ext. 312.

## DIRECTIONS TO OHA:

*Getting to OHA is easy – just follow the directions and map, below:*

### From 690 Westbound:

Take Townsend St. exit. Turn left at bottom of ramp. Go to 4<sup>th</sup> light (Fayette St.) and turn right onto Fayette St. Go to 2<sup>nd</sup> light (Montgomery St.) and turn left onto Montgomery St. OHA is halfway down the block on the left at 321 Montgomery St..

### From 690 Eastbound:

Take West St. exit. At first light after off-ramp (intersection with Fayette St.) turn left onto Fayette St. Go to 5<sup>th</sup> light (intersection with Montgomery St.) and turn right onto Montgomery St. OHA is halfway down the block on the left at 321 Montgomery St.

### From 81 Southbound:

Take Clinton St. exit. Travel south on Clinton Street until 6<sup>th</sup> light at Fayette St. Turn left onto Fayette St. Go to the 3<sup>rd</sup> light and turn right onto Montgomery St. OHA is halfway down the block on the left at 321 Montgomery St..

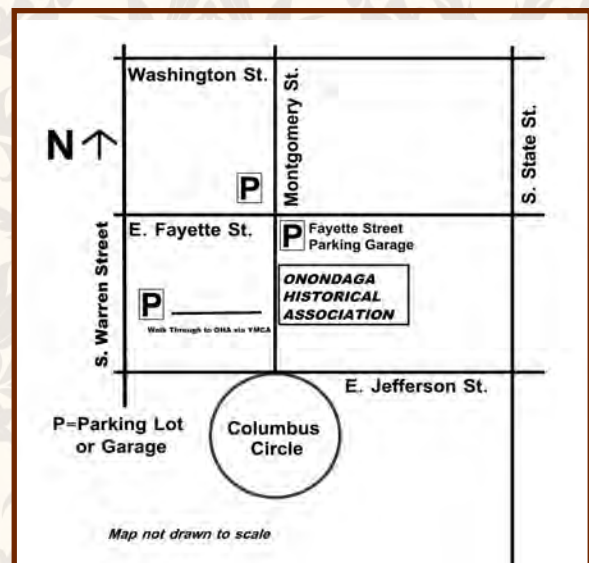
### From 81 Northbound:

Take Adams St. exit. Travel north on Almond Street until 5<sup>th</sup> light at Fayette St. Turn left onto Fayette St. Go to the 4<sup>th</sup> light and turn left onto Montgomery St. OHA is halfway down the block on the left at 321 Montgomery St.

## PARKING NEAR OHA:

We recommend parking in the garage on the corner of Fayette Street and Montgomery Street. The entrance is on Fayette Street, between State Street and Montgomery Street. **The price is lower than street parking** for 2 hours – just \$1/hour for the first 2 hours, and it is closer to OHA than the majority of street parking available (including many of those on Montgomery Street) and you won't get an expensive parking ticket just because your meter time ran out!

Other parking facilities are marked on the map, and there is, of course, metered parking available on surface streets.



Several of our members have chosen to receive their issues of History Highlights via e-mail in order to help us cut down on mailing costs. If you would also like to receive your copy of the OHA newsletter via your e-mail please let us know. Just call 428-1864 X 312 or by e-mailing Karen Cooney at [Karen.Cooney@cnyhistory.org](mailto:Karen.Cooney@cnyhistory.org).

ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION'S  
**HISTORY**  
HIGHLIGHTS



www.cnyhistory.org

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321 Montgomery Street  
Syracuse, New York 13202-2098  
315.428.1864

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

### OHA Hours

#### History Museum and Gift Gallery



Wed-Fri 10am-4pm  
Sat-Sun 11am-4pm

#### Research Center

Wed-Fri 10am-2pm  
Sat 11am-3:30pm

Find Onondaga  
Historical  
Association on:



Raise money for the Onondaga Historical Association by using GoodSearch and GoodShop.



GoodSearch.com is a Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue (approximately a penny per search) to the charities its users designate. GoodShop.com donates up to 37 percent of each purchase to the Onondaga Historical Association.

Go to [goodsearch.com](http://goodsearch.com) and enter Onondaga Historical Association (Syracuse, NY) as the charity you want to support.

### OHA Wish List

- Flat screen TV's (32" or larger)
- Flat screen computer monitors
- Computers or laptops with Windows XP Professional or newer
- New or used power or hand tools

We are looking for new or used items with current or recent technology. For used items we ask that they have a reasonable useful life remaining. Donations of items themselves or contributions toward the purchase of these items will be appreciated.

### Volunteers Appeal

**Gift Gallery Volunteers Needed!** We're looking for great volunteers or "staff" to run our gift shop for a few hours or more each week from 10-4 W-F and 11-4 Sat-Sun.

**Archives Volunteers Needed!** We're looking for great volunteers, who know how to type, to help with our archival processing. If you're interested in volunteering, please let us know! 315-428-1864 ext 324. To download our volunteer application, please visit our website at [cnyhistory.org](http://cnyhistory.org).

### E-Mail Addresses Needed!

In order to keep up to date with OHA's current events, please send us your email address and we will add you to our distribution lists. We do not inundate our members with emails. Periodically you will receive an update when we add items to our calendar of events. We love to see our members at all of our events!

All images in this newsletter are from OHA collections, unless otherwise noted.