



Cayuga County Historian's  
**CAYUGA GAZETTE**

August 2010

## Millard Fillmore Awards Banquet

### Mark the Date—September 11th

Hallie Sweeting, Joseph H. O'Hearn, and Timothy Quill will be given the Millard Fillmore Local History Award in recognition of their contributions to local history. Special Event awards will be given to Florence Landsdowne, Roger Phillips and Dawn Roe at the 6:30 p.m. Cayuga County Historian's banquet Saturday, September 11th at the Sunset Restaurant, 93 North Division Street in Auburn.

Anthony Gero, will give a power-point presentation on "Cayuga County in the War of 1812." Gero has authored and co-authored four books and over 150 articles on military history, primarily concentrating on the New York State's militia, national guard and African-American soldiers. He is an elected Fellow of the Company of Military Historians and holder of its Distinguished Service Award. Gero is currently an adjunct history instructor at Cayuga County Community College and in the mid-1960s and early 70s was a part-time employee at Fort Ontario, one of the sites that our local militia defended during the War of 1812. He is a former trustee and vice president of the Cayuga Museum in Auburn and former Owasco Historian.

The late Hallie Sweeting will be recognized for the outstanding contributions that she made to local history as the Town of Sterling historian.

### Hallie Arden DeMass Sweeting remembered.....



The photo at the at left was taken at the Civil War Re-enactment at the Fillmore Pavilion in June. This was the last time that I saw Hallie who passed away on July 8. Hallie served as the Town of Sterling Historian for 32 years and was a prolific researcher and writer of local history. *Pierre Dumas, Parting of the Ways, Sleeping Around in Sterling, Pioneers of Sterling, Sterling Connection, Down to Pelham, Sterling Valley Station, and Horse Droppings* are among her works. She was part of the dynamic trio—Sweeting, Fineout, and Richardson who created our county's largest historical society. I shall miss her wit, dedication, and enthusiasm. I am glad that she knew she was going to be honored this year. Sheila Tucker, Cayuga County Historian

## AWARDS BANQUET CONTINUED

Joseph H. O'Hearn is being recognized for creating and publishing *O'Hearn's Histories*, which each month features articles and photos on Auburn history. The publication is free and distributed throughout Auburn. It is supported by ads which often have an historical context. Joe is also known for freely assisting family researchers and those trying to track down some item from the past. Joe said that he has been interested in local history all of his life because of his father's interest in the subject. His daughter Katie assisted him in the beginning by obtaining ads. The publication is a favorite in Auburn and it rapidly disappears from the store counters.

Timothy Quill has served as the director of the Cayuga County Ward O'Hara Agricultural Museum for three years and has already made his mark. He created the successful "Friends of the Museum" volunteer group and is being recognized for his initiative in creating the coalition of museums and historical societies. The various county historical societies and museums of the county meet monthly, co-ordinate activities and advertise together. Quill is a retired history teacher and his interest in history is reflected in the new exhibit at the museum that features the history and products of the various industries that existed in Auburn.

Special event awards will be presented to Florence Landsdowne, the Summerhill historian, for her Civil War Re-enactment event held at the Fillmore Pavilion. Roger Phillips will be recognized for his efforts in organizing the Federal Fillmore Coin Pouring event which had a standing room only crowd in Moravia. Port Byron and Town of Mentz historian, Dawn Roe will be recognized for her Lincoln Bible event held at the Port Byron High School.

The War of 1812 will not officially be celebrated in New York State because of budget cuts. We, in Cayuga County, have several historical markers to remind us of the event. There was an encampment near the present St. Peter and John Church on West Genesee as well as one in Cayuga Village. The Auburn prison was created on ground that formerly housed a prisoner camp of that war and Copper John which has stood vigil on the top of the prison is supposedly a soldier of that war. The Town of Fleming's George Fleming led the Cayuga Indians into battle during that war and was reprimanded because they were not kept under control. His uniform consisted of a knee-length frock coat of green silk, scarlet sash, heavy gilt epaulettes and a high scrolled cockaded hat with an ostrich feather—quite a departure from the warrior uniforms of today. The historian's office is compiling a list of the soldiers who served from this county which will be given to the municipal historians. The list will be available at the banquet.

The banquet will feature a \$17 beef and chicken buffet. Reservations must be received by September 3 and may be made by calling 253-1300 between 8-4.

## Historian's Corner

I have been compiling an inventory of the inventors of Cayuga County for a future exhibit and am amazed and overwhelmed by the numbers. Jacob Brinkerhoff so far is one of the most prolific inventors of the county. He had his hand in corn shellers, barbed wire, wringers, washing machines, plows, ice tongs—you name it. Edgar M. Birdsall holds 32 patents mostly in the area of steam engines and farm machines. Cyrenus Wheeler, Jr. also has that number of patents. The fascinating part of this research has been the fact that ten or more inventors would be working on the same item at the same time. The most unusual invention so far is the rotating gun turret which was invented by Theodore R. Timby for the Civil War era sub—the Monitor. I have gathered the invention data on over 600 inventions so far and plan to create posters for a rotating exhibit on the more prominent ones.

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I attended a fantastic Harriet Tubman Conference on the Eastern Shore of Maryland—the area from which she fled and which together with the Auburn Tubman site hopefully will become part of the U.S. Park Service. We had the opportunity to visit significant Tubman sites. It was a first for them and hopefully not the last conference.

It is official—Route #34 is now the Harriet Tubman Memorial Highway—thanks to Arcuri and Finch who sponsored the bill.

## Victorian Girls Take Up Golf

The days of the young women of South Street were filled with luncheons, charity and club work. In the early 1900s, they traveled to New York on the train for \$6. There were balls held in some of the homes. The third floor of what is today the warden's house and the third floor of what is today Queen's Court had ballrooms. There was also the annual Charity Ball. It wasn't until the Owasco Country Club was formed in 1896 that the young women began to "escape" from their ever present chaperones. The club established six holes on land rented from W. C. Beardsley—land which is today part of Fort Hill Cemetery. By 1901, the club moved to its present site on East Lake Road. "It was a great gathering place for the young people home from school or college, who thought nothing of making as many as three trips a day by trolley as far as White Bridge with the resultant 1/2 mile walk, or by taking the trolley to Hinton's boat livery on the outlet and going the rest of the way by canoe. Dinner at the club was at 6:30 and the last trolley left White Bridge at 10:30."

In 1910, an addition with a fire place was created as a men's room with women being allowed only on dance nights. There were tennis courts and a bath house which became the "Pro-Shop". Additional property was added in 1916 and eventually the course was expanded to 18 holes.



**Cayuga County Historian's Office**

**157 Genesee Street**

**Auburn, New York 13021**

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**Honorees: Hallie Sweeting, Joseph H. O'Hearn, Timothy Quill**

**Special Event Award Recipients: Florence Landsdowne,  
Roger Phillips, and Dawn Roe**

**Call in your reservations by September 3rd: 253-1300**