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Gilboa Historical Society

Learning about, sharing, and preserving our history

FALL 2012, VOLUME 14.3

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Please check your address on the back of this newsletter and let us know of corrections or a temporary address.

Note: asterisk(s) or dagger(s) next to your name indicate that your membership is paid up. Neither? Please use the application on page 39 to join us as a member in the GHS.



Invitation to a One-Room Schoolhouse

To the Gilboa Historical Society from the Fulton Historical Society

The Town of Fulton Historical Society was formed on September 3, 2003, has published two books of town history, and moved the Vintonton 1848 one-room schoolhouse to the village of West Fulton. Located on the site of the West Fulton one-room school, it contains artifacts of the old days.

The Society has invited the Gilboa Historical Society to visit their 1848 one-room schoolhouse on Thursday, September 6, 2012 at 7 PM.

Directions from Gilboa: Take State Route 30 north past Breakabeen to County Route 4 (West Fulton Road). Take a left and go about 4 to 5 miles where you will see the fire department on left just before hamlet. The old white schoolhouse is on the right in a shady grove just a short distance further.

**Thursday, September 6, 2012 at 7:00
West Fulton Road, West Fulton, N.Y. 12194**

Published by the Gilboa Historical Society, Post Office Box 52, Gilboa, NY 12076
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**The Gilboa Historical Society meets at 7:00 P.M. at the Gilboa Town Hall
on the third Wednesday of the month, March–December.**

The **Gilboa Museum**, 122 Stryker Road, is open noon–4:30
Saturdays and Sundays, from July through Labor Day, on Columbus Day weekend,
and by appointment (607 588-9413). <http://www.gilboafossils.org>

The **Tourism Map, Newsletters**, and other items of general interest
are available online at <http://www.gilboahome.com>.

Send feedback or suggestions on the Newsletter to
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Gerry Stoner, 152 Starheim Road, Stamford, NY 12167

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GETTING ONTO THE SCHOHARIE RESERVOIR

Yolanda Trappenburg

As an avid (nicer word for manic) kayaker, it was music to my ears to hear that the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection opened the Schoharie Reservoir for recreational boaters this year. (I have to admit that I circled the reservoir in 2011 to see where I might launch, not knowing that it was off limits at the time.)

I immediately picked up one of the NYC DEP brochures/maps and yes, I can kayak the Schoharie as long as I have a permit and am “tagged.” My first thought was “here we go—I was going to be in for a ride before I even got into my kayak, so I better start soon.”

Actually, it couldn’t have been easier. You can Google “nyc dep kayaking” easier than remembering the URL. There is online access to the application . . . simple, easy questions . . . hit send. And then wait? No, no wait . . . your permit is electronically sent to you immediately along with a parking permit for your vehicle. I was amazed that the permit was valid for five years, expiring on my birthday in 2017! Print it out and you are almost ready to go. Permitting is done, now comes the “tagging.”

This is from the DEP brochure: “All boats are required to be steam-cleaned prior to being placed on the reservoir in order to help prevent the introduction



Kayaks in a secure area are chained to trees, and you can see local rowboats in the background. The round blue sticker on the kayak to the right is from DEP, and the sticker on the other kayak is from the NYPA. We needed to go through a Homeland Security check in order to kayak the Minekill, and that sticker needs to be renewed annually. Photo courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.

of zebra mussels and other invasive species.” Okay, that is an important reason. They give a list of steam cleaners, and Nickerson Park Campground in Gilboa and O’Hara’s Service in Prattsville are the closest. No answer at O’Hara’s (that was to be expected due to renovations after Irene), so off to Nickerson’s.

Do you want your “Recreational Boat Tag” for the day, week or season? The tag is free—well then, I’ll take the season pass—why not? The steam cleaning is approximately \$17.00, which for me meant storing the kayak at the launch for the season (or paying the steam cleaning fee every time you need to bring your kayak to the reservoir).

There are two launches for the reservoir, both newly built and absolutely beautifully done.

- Snyder’s Cove is on the reservoir itself and can be reached by either Road Seven east of Route 30 or Intake Road north of Route 23.
- Devasago Park on the south side of the Prattsville Bridge off Route 23 on Maple Lane.

We were lucky to have chosen Snyder’s Cove—due to the low water levels from the 2012 drought, access to the reservoir from Devasago Park is difficult.

One other point: the same procedure can be followed by fisher-folk: the recreational boat tag can also be used for fishing, although you will naturally also need a fishing license from your town clerk.



In August, we estimated that the water in the reservoir was down a good 12 feet since the middle of June. I don’t wish the drought on anyone, but I also must admit that exploring in these conditions leads to a lot of new and interesting sights. In places, the creek now has mud walls, a lot of new and different rocks are exposed, and we were able to walk right up to the Manor Kill falls—we had to walk: no water. Photograph courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.



Snyder's Cove. A beautiful area on a gorgeous site. Photo courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.

All I can say is a big thanks to NYC DEP for allowing access to one of the most beautiful areas in this region.



Yolanda Trappenburg

Gilboa Sings

A hundred years ago, Emelyn Gardner came to Gilboa and Conesville during the summers of 1912–1918 and collected legends, tales, songs, games, riddles, and superstitions. Gardner's study, *Folklore of the Schoharie Hills*, showed that our local culture was drawn from the same German, Dutch, English, Irish, Scots, and African-American influences that appear in Southern Appalachia.

Please come to our September meeting for a discussion of Gardner's study with Rena Kosersky (music supervisor for TV documentaries on PBS & HBO) and songs performed by folklorist and musician George Ward.

Carpool a Friend
Wednesday, September 19, 2012 at 7 PM
Gilboa Town Hall

KAYAKING AROUND THE RESERVOIR

Yolanda Trappenburg

Unfortunately, the *physical* edition of the Gilboa Historical Society Newsletter is only available as a black-and-white publication due to the cost of printing. However, it is also available online in full color and that version does justice to some of these pictures. Even in black and white, however, the reservoir today shows us the majesty, mystery, and history of our home.

Seeing scenery like this brings alive the history of the area—Gerry tells me that we will have an article on the Devasego Falls and its glorious Inn if readers are willing to share the pictures and recollections of your ancestors.



This cliff is on the east side as you leave the reservoir going upstream on Schoharie Creek. These stones definitely defy gravity and there is a terrific echo there—awesome as you paddle past.

Picture courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.



The Devasego Falls are in Prattville, upstream from the reservoir. These monoliths are the remains of the Devasego Inn, an elegant hostelry for 100 visitors owned by S. D. Mase. Picture courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.



Manor Kill Bridge is 80 feet over the water level on the left, and the Intake Road Bridge over the Bear Kill is on the right. Pictures courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.



The picture above is not a modern example of the “snake tree” of the Devonian Period, but instead is an example of how the trees adapt and grow out of the edge of a cliff. Below is an aslant approach to where the Manor Kill enters the reservoir. Pictures courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.





The bridge here looks like the original Schoharie Bridge at Gilboa, but the land doesn't seem right because this is at Prattsville looking upstream. The village is to the left, and the bridge carries Route 23 over the Schoharie to Grand Gorge. Picture courtesy of Yolanda Trappenburg.



Yolanda Trappenburg

Flood Relief Organizations

- Blenheim:** { Rural Area Revitalization Effort, Inc., a non-profit at 125 Creamery Road, North Blenheim, NY 12131 (518 827-3166, rareny.org) and/or North Blenheim Presbyterian Church, Clauverwie Road, Middleburgh, NY 12122
- and Breakabeen:** {
- Middleburgh:** Village of Middleburgh Flood Relief, P.O. Box 789, Middleburgh, NY 12122
- Prattsville:** Prattsville Relief Fund, c/o NBT Bank, P.O. Box 380, Grand Gorge, NY 12434
- Schoharie:** Schoharie Recovery Fund, P.O. Box III, Schoharie, NY 12157

THE LIFE AND TIMES

Newell Miller's Life Leading Up to the Farm

Rose Miller Mace

News arrived early in 1915 that the dam for the reservoir would be built—right in the middle of the village of Gilboa. My father, Newell Miller, was a very good carpenter and applied for a job making the bunkhouses and other buildings that would be required over the next few years.

I don't think I am prejudiced on this—my father was a very good carpenter, manager of a site, and got on well with his men. As most of the dam carpentry had been completed by the early 1920s, my father was looking for the next job.

One property and two men were central to his situation.

The Gilboa Farm Property

There is a large hill that you have to climb when going south on Route 30 toward Grand Gorge—I have heard it called Pine Mountain, but I always called it Grand Gorge Hill.

Before you start climbing this hill, there is a driveway off to the right that passes through two stone pillars and winds around to a farmhouse and a number of outbuildings. My father bought this farm in 1931.

John M. Cronk

According to the U.S. Federal Census Non-Population Schedules of 1870, 23-year-old John Cronk started to farm 100 Conesville acres plus a 50-acre woodlot. The estimated value at that time was \$3500, plus \$565 in livestock (1 horse, 2 milch cows, 2 sheep, 4 swine, and 9 other cattle).

Fifty years later, the 73-year-old farmer lived on a large farm at the crossroads in Grand Gorge (the southeastern corner where the NBT is now located).

A 1912 postcard titled "Progress of a Delaware Co. Farmer. Farm of John M. Cronk, Grand Gorge, N. Y." and with an 1911 Abbot-Detroit automobile in the foreground. Postcard courtesy of Olive Cronk Van Aken.



J. O. Winston

Winston owned the Winston Farm in Saugerties—a large breeding/racing stable that survived to the end of the century and has since been eyed as a possible casino site, campus for a high-tech group of companies, or an outdoor venue for concerts. The 25th anniversary of the original Woodstock music festival (30 bands and an estimated 450,000 people) was held at the Winston Farm in 1994.

Winston was also an engineer involved with building the Ashokan Dam, and I was told he wanted to be involved with the dam construction around Gilboa.

My Understanding of the Situation Regarding the Gilboa Farm

I had been told that J. O. Winston had purchased the Gilboa farm on speculation that he would win a contract from the Board of Water Supply. He planned to build a spur from the railroad in Grand Gorge to Gilboa and economically bring materials to the dam site.

By the summer of 1919, he had not won the hoped-for contract and the major construction contracts had all been awarded. No construction work would be forthcoming to Winston.

However, the timing of this scenario does not work—Winston and Cronk came into the picture after the BWS contracts had been awarded.

The Reality of the Gilboa Farm Property

Olive Cronk Van Aken (John M. Cronk's granddaughter) brought to my attention an article in Margaretville's *Catskill Mountain News* of June 27, 1919:

Grand Gorge Citizen Buying Many Farms
John M. Cronk Arouses Curiosity of Community
by Numerous Purchases Within Week

A dispatch from Grande Gorge says: "During the past week, John M. Cronk of this village bought the farms of Ray Cronk and Cornelius F. Cain of Gilboa, and has negotiated with other owners of properties in the vicinity of the two above-mentioned farms. Much mystery seems to be attached to the purchases made by Mr. Cronk, as it is not thought by those who sell that he is buying these farms for himself. William Snyder of Gilboa has also been approached by Mr. Cronk with an offer for his large and well equipped farm. Rumor has it that the city of New York, which has been acquiring title to lands in this vicinity for the dam about to be constructed, has taken this method to obtain the property, rather than to do it by the slower and more costly method of condemnation proceedings. This, however, has been flatly denied by Mr. Cronk and the local Board of Water Supply. Still others say that the contractors who will build this reservoir in Gilboa want

My niece, Sheila Dent, was given a picture of three men and was told that they were “dam supervisors” and were in some way instrumental in the purchase of the farm.

However, Olive Cronk Van Aken has identified the man on the right as her grandfather, John M. Cronk, and believes he had also served as supervisor for the town of Roxbury.

The two men on the left who appear in this photograph also appear next to Newell Miller in the next article concerning the building of the barn. The man in the middle of this picture matches the description of J. O. Winston, and we are trying to confirm this identification.



these lands to run their tram car railroads over in order to get to certain sand banks in their vicinity. All these theories are mere conjectures, however, though rumor seems to place a good deal of confidence in some of them. The whole matter is still a mystery.

Hindsight is a powerful tool. I have the deed and title search for the Gilboa Farm property that says John and Mary Cronk obtained four parcels of land

totalling 879 acres of farm- and woodland over the summer and then sold this land to James O. Winston on August 12, 1919. The sale was recorded on November 13, 1920.

In other words, Cronk, acting on Winston's behalf, put together the property and flipped it to Winston after the contracts from the Board of Water Supply had already been awarded. Over the next few years, Cronk continued to act as Winston's agent for the property: on February 27, 1922, he hired my father to be a full-time tenant, handyman, and to build the large barn detailed in a separate article in this newsletter.

. . . the party of first part [Cronk] agrees to pay said Miller the sum of Eighty Dollars (\$80.00) per month, payable on or about the 15th day of each month during the term of this contract, and in further consideration said Miller to be furnished with House and Garden, also potatoes, apples, milk and wood for family use; said Miller agrees to perform such duties as may be required of him by the party of the first part such duties to consist principally of building and repairing also to help on the farm at such time or times when his time is not taken up with said building and repairing, said Miller also agrees to board such extra help as he conveniently can receiving therefor the sum of \$1.00 per day per man; said Miller not to be required to help milk nights while he engaged at carpenter work.

John Cronk died in 1925, so the first contract between Winston and my father was dated May 26, 1926. It renewed my father's tenancy in the house and caretaker for the property—"renewal if said Ray Cronk farm is not sold to other parties by April 1, 1927, and also that the party of the second part [my father] has first privilege of purchasing the said Ray Cronk farm." This lease was again extended on March 12, 1929.

Newell and Goldie Miller bought the farm from J. O. Winston on June 29, 1931 and the sale was recorded on July 6th.

The farm was sold by the Miller estate on February 27, 1974.



Rose Miller Mace.

BUILDING THE LARGE BARN

Rose Miller Mace

From September 10, 1922 to August 10, 1923, my father, Newell Miller, built a 120 × 30 foot barn on State Route 30 before Grand Gorge hill.

About 10 years ago, I met Ramona Tryon at the fire department bingo game in Livingstonville and learned she had been given a series of photographs about this barn from Alvin Manchester. The following pictures are his, taken while working with my father.



Above, the Cronk Farm in the summer of 1922. The farm still exists on the west side of State Route 30 just before the hill to Grand Gorge. As one of those twists of fate, my father later bought this farm and raised his many children here.

Below, the man on the left is my father, Newell Miller. He had built many of the bunkhouses used during the construction of the Gilboa reservoir and was then contracted to erect the barn. Newell Miller was a long-time supervisor for the Town of Gilboa. I was told that the two men next to my father were “supervisors” from the dam.





Above, the lumber had been cut on the farm and there were twenty different kinds of logs to be shaped by a steam-driven saw.

Below, the beams were measured and cut, and rectangular holes (mortises) were drilled by the laborer straddling the beam. Bottom, bracing beams with mortise holes and tenons cut on the ends were stacked and ready for use. The beams are assembled like tinker toys with mortise-and-tenon construction. When a rib is in place and plumb, holes are drilled through the mortise and tenon and wooden pegs are pounded in tightly to hold them in place.





Concrete for the footings and floor of the barn was mixed in a belt-driven mixer powered by a one-lung engine, above.

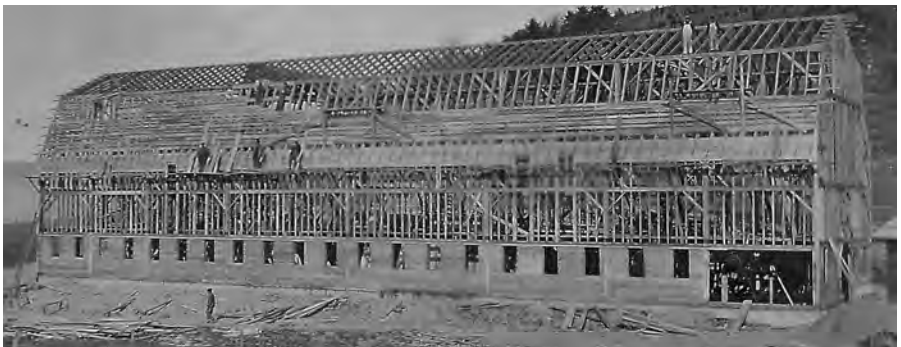
The walls were built on the footings, and the photo below shows the finished first story. Crossbeams (joists) were then laid on top of the walls, and planks seen in the foreground were nailed to form the ceiling of the milking parlor and the floor of the barn's upper story. The bottom picture shows the joists and deck in place, and the first structural beams for the upper story laid out to be raised. The barn was positioned roughly north to south—both of these pictures below show the west side.





Above left, the first rib of the hay mow being raised. Right, the crew poses after the barn's skeleton started to take shape.

The photo below shows the next-to-last set of beams being raised. The enlargement shows how each complete rib was anchored in place by mortise and tenon. The bottom photo shows the west side of the barn taking its final shape.





The beams and some of the 2 x 4s were in place for the second-floor walls when a windstorm came through on March 23, 1923. By late spring, the mess was cleaned up, more 2 x 4s and the roof were put in place, and shingles were being placed on both the west side (below) and east side (bottom). The east side had entrances for two bridges to allow hay wagons into the hay mow.





During the summer of 1923 the barn was fleshed out, including the placement of windows and doors and a coat of whitewash. Rose Mace's mother told her of the colorful flowerboxes placed under each of the windows on the west side that faced the house.

Below, the two barn bridges provided access to the hay loft from the driveway.



The barn was struck by lightning on April 10, 1925 and burned. It cost \$45,000 to build and was covered only by a \$10,000 insurance policy. The foundation and the right bridge to the barn are still visible at the farm.



Rose Miller Mace

Hand-Powered Mortiser



The mortiser is a portable drill press that is clamped to a large timber. The auger is typically about 2" in diameter, and the bed is shifted to bore 3 or more parallel holes that overlap. The rectangular hole is then easily squared up with a chisel. Photos above courtesy of Rose Mace and Alvin Manchester. To right: US Patent: 22,379, Machine for Boring Wood. Patentee: George F. Rice—Worcester, MA; Manufacturer: Snell Manufacturing Co.—Fiskedale, MA.

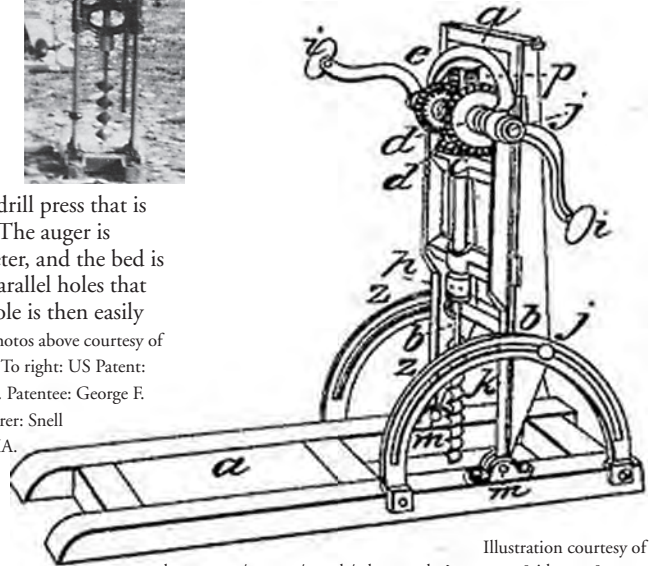


Illustration courtesy of www.datamp.org/patents/search/advance.php?pn=22379&cid=9471&set=3.

Upstate New York in 100 Words or Less

Chuck D'Imperio

Chuck D'Imperio is one of the area's most in-demand public speakers and has been a regular favorite of the Gilboa Historical Society. Over the years, he has told us of significant and insignificant people, places, and events that have made upstate a place where history happened; the lives (and deaths) of 70 legendary Americans who ended up being buried in Upstate New York; and in October he'll take us on another journey around upstate with TONS of interesting facts, factoids, trivia, and photos with his latest book, *Upstate New York in 100 Words or Less*

Be here for lively, thoughtful, and fascinating insights into our area.

Carpool a Friend

Wednesday, September 19, 2012 at 7 PM

Gilboa Town Hall

STRYKER ROAD LEARNING CENTER

LaVerne Hubbard

The schoolhouse in the village of Gilboa was torn down while the dam was being built in the early 1920s, so a new building was erected on Stryker Road next to the Methodist Church as a temporary schoolhouse until the opening of the new Gilboa-Conesville Central School (projected for the 1929–1930 school year).

After the G-CCS opening, the Stryker Road Schoolhouse became Gilboa's Town Hall, but its use was limited to meetings of the town and planning boards, the town court, and as a voting place.

The school had a resurgence of use in the fall of 1948— Gilboa-Conesville Central School had an enrollment of over 530 students, and 53 students were enrolled in the eighth grade. Why so many? Most of my class was born in 1934, the first year in a decade that the U.S. birth rate had grown. It was also the first year that the economic effects of the New Deal were felt—the U.S. Gross Domestic Product rose 17% after 4 years of falling at 14% annually.

The class was split, and in order to accommodate the “extra” class, Stanley Banker was assigned as both bus driver and teacher of the group assigned to the town hall. The class would meet at the high school in the morning, take Mr. Banker's smaller bus to the remote classroom, and learn how to pass the New York State eighth-grade Regents exam in one semester.



Today's Stryker Road Learning Center, a.k.a. the Gilboa Museum, 122 Stryker Road, Gilboa, NY is open noon–4:30 Saturdays and Sundays from July through Labor Day; on Columbus Day weekend; and by appointment (607 588-9413). <http://www.gilboafossils.org>

The 20± students included Margaret Becker Wilkins, Franklin Brown, Glenn Case, Norma Cross Ellis, Shirley Dunham Doroski, June Fuller Richardson, Elizabeth Gramby, Russell Germond, Glenn Hallock, Fred Haverly, LaVerne Hubbard, Victor Mace, Coralie Sickler Barlow, James Traver, and Fred Wickert—all with a special bond with each other and this classroom. It was a great experience. At the end of the semester, the class took the Regents exam and I believe everyone passed.

Following the flood of 1996, the buildings in the floodplain of old Stryker Road were condemned. The town had already made plans to house the Post Office in a new building at the junction of 990v and Flat Creek, so bids were requested on a combination building to house both the Town Hall and the Post Office. Bids were evaluated on September 10, 1996 and this new municipal center was inaugurated in June 1998. Subsequently, the Methodist church was moved up to high ground on 990v and the schoolhouse to a new location behind the Gilboa Highway Department building on the new Stryker Road.

It's nice to see this building being used as a classroom or learning center as the home of the Gilboa Historical Society Museum. There is an abundance of information available to anyone searching for knowledge about the Gilboa fossils, the town, and its people. The old schoolhouse is again a true "learning center."



Clifton LaVerne Hubbard was born February 23, 1934 in Gilboa, and the family moved to the farm on Hubbard Hill in 1938. He attended Gilboa-Conesville Central School, graduating in 1953 and served two years in the US military from December 1956 to December 1958 as a launch control operator on a Nike Missile base in Needham, Mass. He was employed by industry from 1961 until 1976 and was an insurance broker with a Securities and Exchange License until retirement in 1995. Roberta Renz, his first wife, died in 1979. He and his current wife, Flora Del, live in Middleburgh, NY. He has two sons and three stepdaughters.

Membership

- Asterisk(s) or dagger(s) next to your name on the back cover of this issue indicate that your membership is paid up.
- No asterisks or daggers? Please join using the application on page 39 and earn your star.
- Please check your address on this newsletter and let us have corrections.
- Going south for the winter? Let us know and we'll send your newsletter(s) wherever you'll be.
- Let us have your email address and we can keep you in touch with Gilboa happenings even when you are on the road.

THE IMPACT MUSIC HAD ON ME

While Growing Up on Hubbard Hill

Susan Hubbard Reynolds Ciacci

I know the words of songs that were popular in the early 1950s—I was born in 1952—and even some from the 1940s. I think, “How can I know that song? I was only a few years old when it was popular.”

At a very early age, music became a part of me. It must have been playing on the radios in our home, in my brothers’ cars, or on the television—with shows like *Lawrence Welk*, *Mitch Miller*, *Ed Sullivan*. At home, Mom played piano and Dad sang. As my brothers, sisters, and I grew, we would sing along. Dad’s family was quite musical—with Dad playing the trumpet (although I don’t remember that) and a few chords on the piano by ear, and his sisters visiting and playing the piano with the family singing together.

I started harmonizing when I was eight—starting out just singing an octave higher or lower than the melody, and soon progressing to alto or high soprano as harmony, which I believe stemmed from the beautiful gospel music at church. Mom always took me to a little Baptist church a few miles from home, week after week, sometimes three services a week, and the deep harmony and beautifully inspired compositions of gospel music touched me to my very soul. My sister Carol and I sang our first song together at Flat Creek Baptist Church, in Gilboa, when Carol was about eight and I was about six. Dad wanted us to sing “We’ll Girdle the Globe with Salvation,” which, even at that early age, I thought was a strange song for two little girls to sing, especially with the word *girdle* in it! But we sang it anyway.



These pictures are not from my youth, but show how the Hubbard kids seemed to grow up with music. On the left, Summer and Andrew Gerken (as a Lion) with Susan in 2003. On the right is David G. Hubbard and Steven Reynolds in 1984. Photos courtesy of Susan Ciacci.

Carol and I sang quite often at Flat Creek and, on occasion, we would get the giggles. Carol would look at me, or I would look at her, and we would start giggling, and a time or two we could not finish our song and had to sit down. (Actually it was our nerves getting the best of us!) I remember that before we would go to church on a particular Sunday when Carol and I were going to sing, Mom would say “Now, don’t get laughing!” That’s about as far as the scolding and discipline would go.

Joyce Bailey was the pianist for many years at Flat Creek and was a very good accompanist. She would follow us as we sang, instead of us having to follow the piano—that gave us the freedom to put more feeling into a song with pauses and emphasis on certain notes, that perhaps weren’t written into the music. I grew to truly appreciate Joyce over the many years she played piano at church. Even as an adult I would go to Joyce and her mother’s, Evelyn’s, house and practice for the upcoming special music the following Sunday.

When I was seven or eight, I took a few piano lessons from Mrs. Wickert, but I wouldn’t practice and soon dropped the lessons. Later, when I was around twelve, I actually *wanted* to take piano lessons. I had a few more months of lessons until, again, the lack of practice kept me from progressing. Again, as an adult, I took further piano lessons in Stamford from an excellent teacher, Mrs. Varnerwick, who played the harp. That’s when I learned the most, but to play the piano with any proficiency takes *years* and I still couldn’t stick to it. I envy people like Lavilla Kingsley who have the ability to play the piano by ear without ever having to take a single lesson.

Carol, Wayne, and I sang at the local school in Grand Gorge when it began to have local talent shows. We sang for four or five years, and we would be positioned toward the end of the program—as the better talent was held until the end. We sang a few times at other talent shows, maybe at Roxbury and Gilboa.

Singing at the World’s Fair in New York City in the summer of 1964 was the opportunity of a lifetime, and it *was* pretty exciting. Dad heard that there were auditions being held in Cobleskill for groups from Schoharie County—each county had a slot of time during the year to present local talent at the New York State Pavilion, so Carol, Wayne, and I practiced, meeting with the local school music teacher, Bob Dowitsch, to get a few pointers. Several groups auditioned— young people, adults who seemed quite professional to me, a twelve-year-old farm girl harmonizing with her family without accompaniment. We sang “Cotton Fields,” “This Land Is Your Land,” “The Wings of a Dove,” and, I think, “Galvay Bay.” I remember a judge who really liked our performance.

The judge wanted us to perform at the fair and told Dad that “The Wings of a Dove,” being a religious song, might be a problem. Mom, who was quite reli-



Carol, Wayne, and Susan Hubbard at the World's Fair in New York City 1964.

Photos courtesy of Susan Ciacci.

gious, was a little indignant about her comment. I'm not sure what role the other judges played, but she seemed to have the clout, and we were accepted.

I will always feel fortunate to have had this privilege. The experience gave me pride and I felt a little special. I think Carol and Wayne felt the same. Mom, Dad, Carol, Wayne, Laura Koerner—Wayne's girlfriend at the time, who later became his wife—and I all rode in one car (six of us, which was standard for a vehicle at that time) to New York City to spend the day and sing at the New York State Pavilion. We went backstage before our performance and, at the appointed time, walked out through a dark curtain onto the empty stage—just the three of us, with a music stand and a microphone. Mom had sewn Carol and me navy-colored vests with red buttons that we wore with white pleated skirts. Wayne wore a dark suit. I thought we looked pretty sharp.

I wish now we had a tape recording of our performance because I've wondered since how we really sounded. Wayne did quite well, as did Carol, I think, but my voice was a little weak. I remember Wayne urging us to pick up the tempo and the volume. I have never been so nervous in my *life*. My knees were actually shaking! But we picked up the pace and volume and sang to the audience in the open pavilion, as they watched the people from Schoharie County perform. I remember looking out into the crowd, where I saw Otis and Myrtle Wright. They were a

welcomed sight. (Otis was a friend and co-worker of Dad's as school bus drivers in prior years, and Myrtle was our junior high history teacher.)

I can't remember if we performed more than once during that day, but I do remember some of the other acts—some dance groups and superb adult singers who had accompaniment. At the time it seemed our performance lacked by not having background music, but now I think that our voices probably stood out as true talent—at least I hope so. Mom and Dad never said a whole lot about it afterwards. We walked around the fairgrounds and saw the huge metal sphere of the world—I thought it was one of the coolest things I had ever seen, and still think so to this day. Before we knew it, the day was over, and we drove back to Gilboa.

As we grew up, my brothers always had music playing and would sing along. My brother Gerry was out of the house by the time I was about four, but he picked up playing the guitar some time later and David bought a guitar when he was maybe eighteen and taught me the three chords that were in so many songs—C, G, and F. For my sixteenth birthday, Mom and Dad bought me my first guitar (acoustical, with nylon strings) that David had picked out for me. After that, I would play and sing for hours in front of the mirror in my bedroom—song after song after song, knowing all the words, to my wonderment. Folk songs from The Kingston Trio and Joan Baez, country music from Hank Williams, and later John Denver were some of my favorites. Being basically melancholy, I sang some songs that were very sad, and the melodies and words would make me cry. A classmate and friend of mine, Sheila Dent, also played guitar and sang, as it was by then the 1960s and everyone had a guitar. The local school choir gave me another opportunity to sing and learn harmony and music, and I went to All State choir one year.

My husband, Paul Reynolds, and I would sing at Flat Creek Baptist Church. Paul's father, Leonard, played guitar, sang, and wrote his own songs—some religious. "From the Manger to the Cross" was excellent. He wrote words about riding snowmobiles to the tune of "When the Red, Red Robin Comes Bob, Bob, Bobbin' Along." He even recorded a few songs in Nashville.

Our family's next generation of minstrels—my son Steven and nephews David, Craig, Todd, Jeff, Tim, Terry, and niece Tara—all play guitar and sing, but the music and the songs changed with this generation.

I wake up every day with a song running through my head. Occasionally I sing in my dreams—a song that is so familiar while asleep, but unknown upon awakening. And I sometimes play the piano in my dreams—beautiful music, with ease and perfection. Sometimes in the night I write a new song but never put it down on paper, and soon, that too is gone.

There's a song I heard Karen, Kathy, and Kim Tompkins (my sister-in-law FloraDel Hubbard's daughters) sing once in church, which I will never forget. It goes like this:

You ask me why I go on singing // Day after day, the song goes on // But since I found the source of music // I just can't help it // God gave me the song.

Some of us are born with an ability to hear, sing, or create music, and we appreciate it to our very core. For me, I haven't experienced one day of my life without music. It brings enjoyment and satisfaction and is a gift that cannot be measured. I am blessed.



Susan Hubbard (Reynolds) Ciacci was born and raised in Gilboa, a part of that family's fourth generation to live on Hubbard Road. She worked at the Stamford Hospital, and for the past fourteen years has lived in Charlotte, NC with her husband, Larry. She is a legal assistant and office manager for the Hamel Law Firm.

Third Annual Delaware County Historic Home Tour *Featuring the Village of Walton*

Saturday, September 29 from 10 AM–3 PM: Tour nine beautifully appointed homes from the 19th and early 20th centuries, plus three historic civic buildings and two churches in the Village of Walton. Enjoy a glimpse into the past as local residents open their homes to display their beautiful woodwork, period antiques, stained-glass windows, family histories, and private collections (including over 300 hats). Refreshments and entertainment at select stops along the way will enhance your memories of this special day.

The tour begins at the Historic Walton Theatre, 31 Gardiner Place, with registration from 10 AM until 12 PM and ends with a reception at the historic Walton Armory, 139 Stockton Avenue (The Castle). The reception will feature entertainment, refreshments and over 30 door prizes.

Sponsors: Walton Big M, Haggerty Ace Hardware, D&D NAPA, Kraft Foods, National Bank of Delaware County, and Historic Walton Armory.

Advance tickets: \$12 adults, \$10 seniors (65 and up), and \$15 at the gate.

For folks out of the Walton area, tickets may be most conveniently available at the Delaware County Historical Association, 46599 State Highway 10, Delhi, NY 13753, 607 467-4422, dcha@delhi.net

*Reprinted from New York Magazine News & Features
<http://nymag.com/news/features/prattsville-hurricane-irene-2012-8/>*

PLEASE GOD, STOP THE RAIN

*The Day, One Year Ago, that Hurricane Irene
Nearly Drowned Prattsville, New York, Population 700*

Josh Dean

Dave Rikard woke up with a start at the sound of the Prattsville Hose Company's alarm. It was 8 AM, and he was still a little groggy from the previous day's Fire Department clambake. Rikard, 53, shared a yellow-and-blue Victorian with his 6-year-old son, Jamison, who'd spent the night with Grandma outside of town, and his 22-year-old daughter, Anastasia, who was still sleeping in her room.

It was pouring outside, but the forecast had called for only an indirect hit, so Rikard—Prattsville's resident lawyer and the vice-president of the Hose Company—expected to spend the day pumping water out of basements, as he had in previous floods.

He went to the station and checked in with the chief, and when he heard that members of the company had been sent to urge people to move to higher ground, Rikard decided it was probably wise to go home, wake his daughter, and move the car. When Anastasia dropped him back at the station, it was with the understanding that she was only going to make a quick stop back at the house to pick up some things before heading to her grandmother's.

Starting at 8:30, the station's phone and radio went berserk as calls came in from all over town. Chief Tommy Olson thought the tanker truck might be stable enough to drive through the water without getting swept away, but just as Dave pushed the button to raise the bay door of the station so his



Dave Rikard and his daughter, Anastasia.

Photo by Miller Mobley, Courtesy of New York Magazine and Miller Mobley.

nephew Sam could move the truck out, the driveway behind it peeled up in one piece and keeled over backward. Dave looked at Sam, then closed the door. The Prattsville Hose Company, the town's only rescue squad, was now as trapped as everyone else.

For the next several hours, Rikard watched the water swallow Main Street, rising up steps and over windows. From the firehouse, he could see his chimney and white picket

fence. He was shocked when Anastasia called to say that she'd been stuck in the house and that their neighbors, the Carrs, were practically clinging to their collapsing house. Rikard paced the firehouse floor, telling Anastasia to look for ropes or flotation devices or anything she could toss over to the Carrs, but before she could, she screamed. Dad, the house is moving!

Rikard ran back to the window. He could no longer see his chimney.



Dave Rikard's home, a day after the storm.

Photo by Noah S. Rosenberg/The New York Times/Redux).

Courtesy of New York Magazine and Noah S. Rosenberg.

NEW YORK

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This excerpt is one of several accounts of the impact of Hurricane Irene on Prattsville. For the entire article, please visit nymag.com, the official website for New York Magazine.

<http://nymag.com/news/features/prattsville-hurricane-irene-2012-8/>

Zadock Pratt Museum

P.O. Box 333, Main Street, Prattsville NY 12468

Open for Colonel George W. Pratt Heritage Day

Saturday, September 15, 2012 11 AM–4 PM

(last tour through the museum at 4 PM)

Reopens Memorial Day Weekend, 2013

Visit us on www.prattmuseum.com

Join us on Facebook at Zadock Pratt Museum

Email us at prattmuseum@hotmail.com

or call us at 518 947-4153

THEY LIVED IN THESE HILLS

These articles were contributed anonymously by folks who are familiar with the families and personalities described. These short essays are not meant to be an inclusive history of a person or time, but to remind us of some of the personalities and events that occurred in Gilboa and Conesville over the past 200 years.

Please email, write, or phone with your comments and contributions to this effort: gerrys@gilboahome.com; GHS Newsletter, 152 Starheim Road, Stamford, NY 12167; or phone 607 652-2665/866 652-2665.

Recollections and Incidents of a Lifetime: or, Men and Things I Have Seen. In a Series of Familiar Letters to a Friend—Historical, Autobiographical, Anecdotal, and Descriptive, by Philander Stevens, Brooklyn, N. Y., 1896.

Courtesy of http://www.archive.org/stream/recollectionsincoostevrich/recollectionsincoostevrich_djvu.txt and the California Digital Library

Gershom Stevens

My grandfather, Gershom Stevens, sen., was born in Stratford, Fairfield County, Connecticut, in 1741, and his wife, my grandmother, Phebe Henry, at the same place, in 1744. I have not been able to trace the genealogy of my grandparents back more than two hundred years. It is well known, however, that their ancestors came from England, if not with the Pilgrims very soon thereafter; they were thoroughly New England people.

My grandfather was one of the heroes of the Revolution. He was a blacksmith by trade and carrying on a successful business when the war broke out. He left his shop and joined the little band of patriots when the trouble first began.

There was a scarcity of blacksmiths to do the army work, repair locks, shoe horses, and other army work, and he was assigned to this work as an artisan with commission and pay of a major. Among the duties which he performed was overseeing and helping to make the big chain across the Hudson River at West Point. Was often on expeditions with the army, was in many of the battles and vicissitudes of the war, and was one of the sufferers of that terrible winter at Valley Forge. He lived at Danbury, Conn. at least his home was there and his family resided there during the war. When the British and Tories burned that place, his house and shop were burned with all their contents. I have often listened to my grandmother's narratives of these events, until I felt I could go out and thrash some Briton or Tory, no matter how big he was.

I have but a faint recollection of my grandfather who died in 1825, but my grandmother (and she was a grand old lady) lived in my father's family after my grandfather died, until her death in 1831.

They were both buried in the old burying ground in Gilboa, with some of their oldest children beside them.

For some reason or through carelessness or without any reason, these graves were neglected for half a century, until the old brown stones had crumbled and the letters nearly obliterated.

Some eight or ten years ago, my cousin D. T. Stevens and myself resolved to erect a monument on the spot, and now at the head of the plot, near the entrance to the old cemetery, is a granite monument, the base of which has in large deep-cut letters "Stevens" and on the monument inscribed:

Sacred to the Memory of
Gershom Stevens, Sen., A Hero of the
Revolution, 1741-1825.
and his wife, PHEBE HENRY,
1744-1831.

Here also rest the
remains of their children:

Ozias Stevens, Sen.

Levi Stevens, Sen.

Lois, wife of John Decker

Charity, wife of Rev. Charles Tucker.

Anna, wife of Woodhull Helm.

Sally, wife of Isaac Parker.



Gilboa Historical Society Donations

We are always making plans to improve the grounds and to better protect the artifacts of the museum.

If you want to donate to these (or other) activities, please get in touch with a GHS board member or send us a note with the membership application form on page 39 of this newsletter. Please let us know if you want to make a capital improvement to the museum as well.

HORNIN', OR HORN IN

Gerry Hubbard

Halloween—there was no such thing as trick or treating for us kids on the hill. The distances between the houses was too great and our folks were not the greatest supporters of this “pagan” holiday. However, there were Halloween parties at the parsonage where we dunked for apples, had pumpkin pie and played some games.

Along the line of tricks and devilry, there were also “horn ins” where a newly married couple were subjected to a late night visit by a group of their friends with all sorts of noisemakers, shotguns, firecrackers and car and truck horns. The horn in usually started with several shotgun blasts under the couple’s bedroom window and after they were appropriately wakened, they’d invite the whole bunch in for refreshments. In the meantime, some of the revelers were stringing toilet paper through the trees or other rather minor acts of vandalism. Most of the acts were not serious and were supposed to be humorous.

Not so for a horning described by Socrates Hubbard (1825–1888) for his brother Lorenzo. [I can’t help thinking that these incidents involved something



<http://wordsmith.org/words/charivari.html>. Photo © courtesy of Dan Junot, 719 President Street, Thibodaux, LA 70301. To see more of Dan’s Paintings, visit www.danjunot.com

other than a simple wedding custom: these events seem particularly violent and vindictive with the household literally being under siege.]

. . . I am nine years old or nearly nine—Lorenzo is married and is expected home. He dos not come when expected but a lot of riaters calling themselves horners came and the first thing I know in the ded of night was the defning discharge of musketrey and the blowing of hornes the rateling of pans the ringing of bells with all the diabolicle noises that could be am-agoned. Paul grabed his cloths and ran to Fathers and mothers room I followed in my night shirt half frightened to death. The whole family dressed and sat about the fire Father would go down and throw water on them when they came up to fire. After a while they with drew to get dry and then on they came again. they were led by one Dock Norwood. I got so sleepy that during the last salley I slipt. These hornings at wedings were common in that countrey at that time. I have known them to tare or breake every glass out of a house.

A few weeks after Lorenzo did come with his wife and the Diabolical crew gathered again there names was got this time and they were prossicuted. And each one was fined. Sometime the next summer Lorenzo came down on a visit that night this same vile crew went into a field of rye that had just been cut and put in shocks they thrashed out every shiefe on the ground and then unbound it and scattered it. from there they went into our garden pull up corne and everything they could get at. from there they went into the corne field pulled a wide road to the midel of the field then tore up an half acre or more and made a road out the other side of the feald. They also tore down a large amount of fence. It took a long time to write things up agane.

*Reprint courtesy of Craig Hubbard, and located on the Internet at
<http://gerryhubbard.blogspot.com/2011/10/thursday-october-31-1963-frances.html>*

GHS Calendar for Fall Meetings

September 19, 2012: Gilboa Sings, Rena Kosersky and George Ward
 October 17, 2012: Upstate New York in 100 Words or Less, Chuck D'Imperio
 November 20, 2012: Speaker to be announced
 December 19, 2012: Annual Bottle Auction

The Third Wednesday of the month at 7 PM

EXCEPTION: NOVEMBER'S MEETING WILL BE TUESDAY THE 20TH

Put it on your calendar.

Bring the kids, carpool a neighbor!

REBIRTH

Stamford Village Library History Room

Karen Cuccinello, SVL Archival Clerk

The Stamford Village Library History Room has a new index which allows historians and genealogists smooth access to local information. The library history room is not particularly large but it is packed with history galore. There are almost 60 family history books from Akin to West, Stamford and surrounding area books, microfilm, newspapers, picture postcards, scrapbooks, documents, yearbooks, and maps. All of the above is available during regular library hours for in-library use.

The books are shelved by the following categories: family histories, Stamford, Delaware County, Schoharie County, Greene County, Otsego County, military, New York State, and miscellaneous. There are 60 reels of assorted years of newspapers, from the 1850s–1987, available on microfilm. Newspapers available on microfilm are the *Delaware Republican*, *Hobart Independent*, *Stamford and Bloomville Mirror*, and *Stamford Mirror-Recorder*. Assorted hardcopies of newspapers range in years from the 1850s Bloomville

This Indenture, made the ^{14th}fourteenth
and in the Year of our LORD, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy
the ^{17th}seventeenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord the Third
Franco, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c.
BETWEEN LAWRENCE KORTRIGHT, of the City of New
York, one Part, and John Howard of the County of
Tryon of the other Part, WITNESSETH, That
RIGHT, for and in Consideration of the Sum of Five Shillings, lawful Moneys of
to him in Hand paid, by the said Party of the second Part, at or before the End
Present, the Receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, HATH granted, bargain
enfeoffed and confirmed, and by these presents DOth grant, bargain, sell
and confirm unto the said John Howard his
forever (in actual and peaceable Possession and Seizen now being) all that cert
situate, lying, and being in the County of Tryon (formerly the County of Al
Number Eighty seven as the same was surveyed by William Cockburn,
made and signed by him, bearing Date in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Se
three; being Part of a large Tract of Twenty-three Thousand, and One Hunder
said County of Tryon, surveyed by the said William Cockburn, and known by th
of KORTRIGHT, which Township was granted to the said LAW
RIGHT, and twenty-one other Persons in Fee, by his present Majesty, by

The oldest document (so far) in the historical collection of the SVL is the mortgage with Lawrence Kortright and John Howard dated 1770. Photo courtesy of the Stamford Village Library.

Mirror to 1990s *Daily Star*. There are scrapbooks, mostly of newspaper clippings, that have been donated to the library by patrons, dating from the 1880s through 1960s. The oldest document that I have found so far is a mortgage between Lawrence Kortright & John Howard dated 1770. There are almost complete sets of yearbooks from Stamford Central School (1937 to the present), Stamford Seminary (S.S. Camera) 1914–36, and Northern Catskills Occupational Center 1977–91. Maps date from the 1860s to the 1960s, and my favorites are the Beers 1860s maps, which are also a census of the inhabitants. The library also has a postcard collection posted on the newyorkheritage.org website.

Some of my favorite Stamford specific items are: fire department minutes and miscellanea pertaining to the three fire companies 1889 to 1970s, assorted Seminary documents and catalogues 1849–1930s, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) minutes and annual event booklets 1918–1960, the 20 Don McPherson scrapbooks compiled in the 1930s, and the Griffin collection that includes handwritten death and marriage records from the mid-1800s. My favorite Schoharie County items are Eugene Bouton (born 1850 in Jefferson, NY) scrapbooks, genealogy, snippets from the *Jeffersonian* and *Jefferson Courier* newspapers dating 1872–1918, and cemetery records.

The library is located at 117 Main Street in historic Stamford, NY. The hours are Monday through Friday, 12–5 PM, and Saturday, 10 AM–3 PM. Some of the areas in the history room are still a work-in-progress so please call in advance (607 652-5001) if there is something specific that you are looking for. If possible I can work out a time to meet you at the library if you would like some help in your research.



Karen Cuccinello is the Historian for the Town of Summit, is a frequent volunteer at the Stone Fort, and is on the board of the Schoharie County Historical Society. She has worked on family genealogies for over 25 years, has written 2 books on local history: Schoharie County One-Room Schoolhouses and Schoharie Alps in the News: the History of Summit. She is an EMT and has been a member of the Summit Rescue Squad for 25 years.

All Gilboa Historical Society Newsletters are available free at
<http://www.gilboahome.com/>

Email this address to friends & family.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE BERM

Gerry Stoner

The edges of a reservoir are defined by the contour of the land surrounding it—water fills valleys and low spots, leaving an irregular edge as the shape of the reservoir. This works as long as the natural landform is higher than the level of the water.

As with any man-made reservoir, the land downstream from Gilboa's reservoir is lower than reservoir water level, so a barricade has to withstand immense pressure to hold the water back. Two structures are used to do this.

The Berm

Given the planned height of the Gilboa dam, there is a considerable expanse to be closed in. A dam stretching across that entire distance would be exorbitantly expensive, so engineers also use a dike, called a berm, as a permanent wall.

At Gilboa, the core of the berm is a reinforced concrete wall about 4 feet thick. The top of this wall is horizontal and the wall itself was built so that the top of the wall would be 16 feet above the top of the dam.

The foundation of the berm forms a smooth convex curve with one end solidly buried into a preexisting hillside and the other end anchored in the buttress of the dam. This convex surface makes the best use of the compressive strength of dirt and concrete—water pushes against a wall that in turn transfers the pressure to the land at one end and the buttress at the other.

Once in place, the concrete wall is buried under tons of dirt forming a dike: the concrete provides internal strength and is impervious to water, and the dirt spreads the water pressure so that the concrete wall cannot not crack. The





At the start of 1920, the excavation for the berms and buttresses was begun. Note also the towers that would be used for overhead tramways bringing in crushed stone from Stevens Mountain and bagged cement from Conro's flats. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1920.



A year later, the ends of the buttresses facing the berm had been raised to their final height, the concrete core was fully embedded, and the top of that wall was up and acting as a rail bed for moving materials and equipment onto the construction site. The protective dirt was being put into place and packed down. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1922.



A sneak preview from 1925—a close-up of the berm just before the final backfill of dirt. Photo courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection. Schoharie Reservoir. Gilboa Dam. Contract 203. Gilboa Division. Please do not distribute, reproduce or use these images for any other purpose without permission from DEP.

height of the berm means that it would take 16 feet of floodwater pouring over the dam before the berm itself could overflow. Hurricane Irene topped out at 8 feet of floodwater going over the dam.

In the photos in this article, note the narrow-gauge railroad that was run on the top of the berm. It carried materials and equipment to the buttress and carted in the dirt that would slope away from the concrete core.

The berm on the east end of the dam is very short—the buttress itself is built directly into the side of the mountain, and the berm protects against overflow only at the very top of the dam.

The Gilboa Dam and Spillway

Through 1921, the dam and spillway could not be built because other construction had to be completed first: The roads and bridges, the quarries and sand pits, the coffer dams and tunnel, and the berms all had to be completed so the dam could then be erected and put into use.

The next issue will cover 1922–1926 and the construction of the dam itself.

Hobart Book Village

Main Street, Hobart, NY 13788. 607 538-9080

The 10th Annual **Winter Respite Lecture Series** at Adams' Antiquarian Book Shop begins **Sunday, November 11** at 3 PM with Deirdre Sinnott speaking on the founding of the NY Anti-Slavery Society, Utica 1835.

The Hobart Book Village **Semi-Annual Book Sale** will take place at the five Main Street Book Shops in Hobart on Thanksgiving weekend, **November 23–25** from 10 to 6. Books will be discounted between 30–50%.

The name and address that we have for you appears on the reverse of this application. Please check to make sure that the information is correct, and let us know of alterations or scheduled alternative addresses.

Our membership year is the calendar year. An asterisk* next to your name indicates that your individual membership is paid up for the current year; likewise, ** indicates a paid-up couple and *** indicates a paid-up family. A dagger† indicates a single lifetime membership; and †† indicates a couple's lifetime membership.

Membership Application Form

Name: _____

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Address:* _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

* Please specify temporary addresses in effect for our mailings in early March, June, September, and December.

† The Board is developing a wish list of memorial gifts; please inquire of a board member, and provide the wording of the dedication, your name and address, and the name and address of a next-of-kin who should be notified.

- () Lifetime membership (\$100.00) \$ _____
 - () Family membership (\$25.00) \$ _____
 - () Couples membership (\$15.00) \$ _____
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 - () Senior or student membership (\$7.00) \$ _____
 - () Scholarship fund \$ _____
 - () Gilboa Historical Society *Newsletter* \$ _____
 - () Gilboa Historical Society Museum \$ _____
 - () *Old Gilboa* DVD (\$19.70 total) \$ _____
 - () *Family Letters* by N. Juried (\$8.40 total) \$ _____
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 - () Memorial gifts† \$ _____
 - () _____ \$ _____
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