

# Kanestio Historical Society Times

23 Main St - P.O. Box 35 - Canisteo, NY 14823  
(607) 698-2086 Wed - Fri 1-3 PM Monthly Meetings - 3rd Tuesday 7:00 PM

Winter 2016 [kanestiohs@gmail.com](mailto:kanestiohs@gmail.com) Gail Davis, Editor

## Superior Register Company

Mike Casale of Liverpool, NY recently donated this "Cash Register" made in Canisteo. He purchased it several years ago at an Antique Store near Avon, NY and in the process of downsizing decided it belonged back in Canisteo. It was still in use in a store in 1957 (according to the sales slips in the register.) The following are from "The Canisteo Times" articles.

Jan. 26, 1910 - The Superior Register Company is commencing operations in the factory of the Canisteo Woodenware Co. J.F. Huber of Buffalo is holding the patents. (Depot Street in Canisteo)

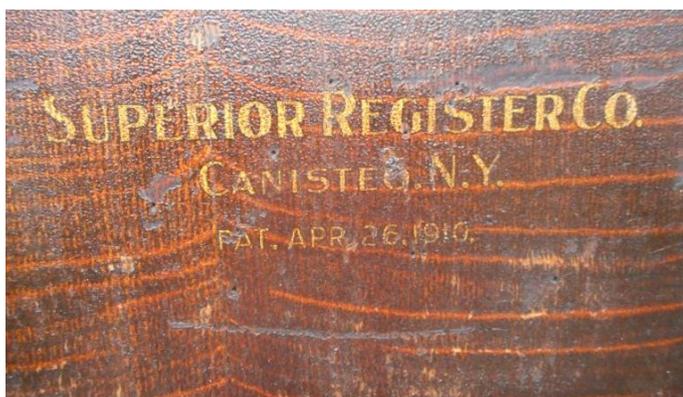
March 7, 1910 - Superior Register moved to Canisteo from Buffalo and was expanding with six salesmen on the road.

On Sept. 18, 1915 - Superior Register added a new department to its plant for the production of butter dishes. 5 machines were added and will make all size containers up to 5 lbs. Principal owner & manager is J.W. Powell *(Do any of our readers have one of these butter containers they could share with us?)*

Sept. 13, 1916 - A new office building, 32 x 60 feet will be erected at once on the Up to Date's new parcel of land, purchased from the Superior Register Co. across the street from the present main plant.



The Call Homestead Museum in Hartsville NY was recently acquired by the Steuben County Historical Society. The Call Museum housed a vast collection of local artifacts which are now being offered to the Historical Societies where an association can be established. Can you identify the item pictured below?



Most people guessed this was an early washing machine but the printing on the side and our research reveals it's actually a butter churn!

The printing reads:

Taylor Co. Agency's Canisteo, N.Y.  
Davis Swing Churn  
No. 4 - Pat. May 1 77 - Sept. 9, 79  
Manufactured by Vermont Farm Machine Co.  
Billows Falls, Vt.

## Wooden Egg Carriers



We were also the recipient of a couple wooden egg carriers. The inscription on the side of one of them reads:

Bring your eggs  
to the Canisteo Mercantile  
Canisteo, NY

The Canisteo Mercantile was in operation from 1902-1906 at the corner of Greenwood St. and the Main St. parking lot in the location most of us remember as Smith's Furniture Store. It is believed to be the oldest business structure in Canisteo originally built in the 1830's as N.C. Taylor Hardware. Many farmers sold chicken and eggs as well as rabbits and other produce to local stores well into the 1950's. On page 4 of the newsletter you will find an article about a ledger from this store in the 1830's.

## Cigar Store Indians



There were several Cigar Stores in Canisteo in the late 1800 and early 1900's. We believe these two Indian Statues were used for advertising in one of these stores. They were made from plaster and in pretty rough shape but have been restored by Jose Huerta. Jose was instrumental in the cleaning and restoration of our photographs after the fire and also the author of a book on the Canisteo Electric Railway Companies from 1891-1926 which can be purchased at the Historical Society.

## Donating Items

We are always looking for artifacts of Canisteo History. If you have items that bear the name of a Canisteo factory or business and your children tell you they don't want your old stuff, please consider donating them to our museum. Our space is somewhat limited but we always have room for the unique and rare items from our history.

We are also interested in vintage clothing. Our members have attended workshops on the proper cleaning, care and storage of vintage clothing and fabrics and will give a good home to those items your family doesn't want and you're not quite sure what do with.

# 100th Year Anniversary 1916 Flood



(Excerpts from the June 21-22, 1916 issue of "The Times")

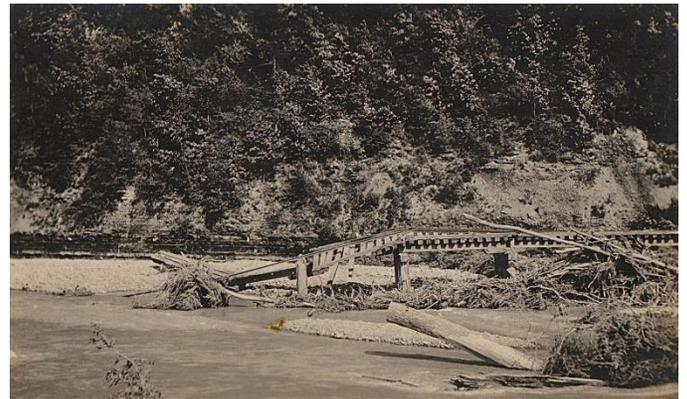
The highest flood ever recorded in Steuben history occurred on June 21, 1916. The entire Canisteo Valley beginning above Hornell and extending to Elmira, was swept by the highest flood it had ever known. The loss to property in Steuben County was estimated at a half a million dollars. Three lives were lost including Levi Maddison and Peter Head of Canisteo who drowned in the torrent. Immense property damage occurred and the Erie and New York & Pennsylvania (NYP) suffered enormous damage.

The flood waters rose quickly and Purdy Creek experienced an unbelievable flow of water. The flow of water down its valley forced people to head to the hills seeking safety. Bridges were washed out, crop lands devastated, roads and bridges washed away, cellars flooded, houses and barns along the creek floated away with the currents, local communications, mail, and utilities were interrupted.



In the Village of Canisteo the flood waters topped the big embankments which the Village had constructed to prevent floods. The greatest damage in Canisteo was to Travis Roller Mills and Flohr Bros. Tannery. Miles of the New York and Pennsylvania railroad tracks along Bennetts Creek were washed away. The destruction of the Canisteo - Jasper Road was immense. Long sections of the road were completely gone and it would be weeks and thousands of dollars later before traffic could once again use the road.

Piles of flood water trash of every description were deposited everywhere throughout the Village. Trees were uprooted, sidewalks undermined, and large washouts in the streets made road impassable. As the waters receded the flood left a thick, slimy mud cover over everything. Crops were buried under many feet of mud. Piles of debris were everywhere.



Writer's note: Canisteo was once again a target for flood waters in 1935 and 1972 that caused considerable damage and financial loss.

Article submitted by John Babbitt.

## New Members

Welcome to our newest members:

Ken Pratt, Canisteo, NY  
Doug Brown, Canisteo, NY  
David & Kathy Greenfield, Lockport, NY  
Gail Arno, Canisteo, NY  
Julie & Katie Karns, Hornell, NY  
Suzan Askins, Canisteo, NY  
Dorothy Lee Roe, Canisteo, NY  
Judy Kaminski, Naples, NY

## In Our Collection

by George Dickey

In doing the reorganizing after the fire I came across an item that had been in storage that looked interesting and laid it aside for further study. I finally found time this fall to take a closer look. It was a ledger from a store for the years 1837 and 38. I had never seen one from that early a period. What I found was fascinating, for me at least. There was the normal information; name of the people who used the store and what they bought, but more than that there was a look at the economy of Canisteo in the 1830. The store functioned much like a bank. Purchases were largely made on credit, their store account acting much like a bank account. They even went to the store to draw cash and repaid the account either with products from their farms and forest or with cash when it was available. There were records of payments to men for bringing items to and from Hammondsport and trips down the river in arks to market items traded at the store.

The store was probably that of Ira Davenport, the largest merchant in the county at that time. Davenport had started with a store in Hornell and expanded to a number of other towns in the area. I had suspected the store was Davenports because of the apparent size of the operation, then I found several references to Martin Adsit who ran the Hornell store. I believe the store was the building that housed Smith's Furniture. The first owners that we have a record of were the Taylor Brothers and Nathan Taylor had worked for Adsit in Hornell before coming to Canisteo about the time that Davenport was selling his stores to concentrate on his banking business.

What did the store carry? A little of everything. The most frequently sold item was tea, but other than that very little in the way of food. Mainly exotic items, sugar and spices, rice, molasses, and salted fish. Surprising to me at least, very little coffee and lots of liquor, brandy, rum, wine and whisky. It apparently came in barrels and you supplied your own bottle. If you didn't have one and had to buy a container- it often cost more than what you put in it. Most foods were home grown or purchased from your neighbors rather than bought at the store. Besides foods the store carried a variety of tools. Dishes were a big item being purchased as it appears that the people of Canisteo had reached a point where they were replacing their wooden and tin dishes with china based on the amounts being purchased. There was little in the way

of ready-made clothing available at this time but a wide variety of fabrics and sewing supplies were available to housewives to make their families' clothing. There also appears to have been a tailor by the name of Ira Robinson making some men's clothing.

A few of the items traded at the store were butter, eggs, hides, lumber, shingles, and ashes - bushels and bushels of ashes. I knew that potash, potassium carbonate, was a frequent byproduct of land clearing and a desirable trade item but it was normally processed by the land owner. In Canisteo it was the store that processed the ashes into potash. The ledger contains records of payments for making potashes and transporting barrels of it to Hammondsport to be loaded on boats and shipped north to the Erie Canal. The wagons brought loads of manufactured goods back to Canisteo.

Besides shipments to Hammondsport goods were still being sent down the river on arks. In the spring of 1838 the store pays \$50 apiece for 4 arks, one is sent to Addison and the other 3 loaded at Canisteo. It takes 8 men 2 days to load the arks. The trip down the river take 7 ½ days and the crews are paid for the 4 ½ days it takes them to return to Canisteo.

Any reader who had ancestors in Canisteo in the late 1830's, may find it interesting to see if they appear in the ledger and what they were purchasing at the store. We encourage you to visit the Historical Society and browse this ledger and the numerous other items in our collection.

## 2017 Dues

January is just around the corner which means it will be time to pay your 2017 dues. Dues are the primary source of income to pay for our quarterly newsletters. Many of you have signed up for e-mail delivery which is a major time and resource savings for the Society and you have the benefit of color photographs. We still mail over 70 copies quarterly to over half our membership. Please check the date above your address label. If it does not read 2016 your name will be dropped from our mailing list the next cycle. A big thank you to Jack Cole for the donation of a new computer and dual print laser printer for printing newsletters. If you receive you newsletter by e-mail and dues are delinquent you will receive an e-mail notification, and then if dues are not paid, we have to assume you no longer wish to receive the newsletter and your name will be dropped from our list.

## Our Members Give Back to the Community



### Watercolor Painting Class

Betty Merring will offer a class in watercolor painting for beginners and advanced painters.

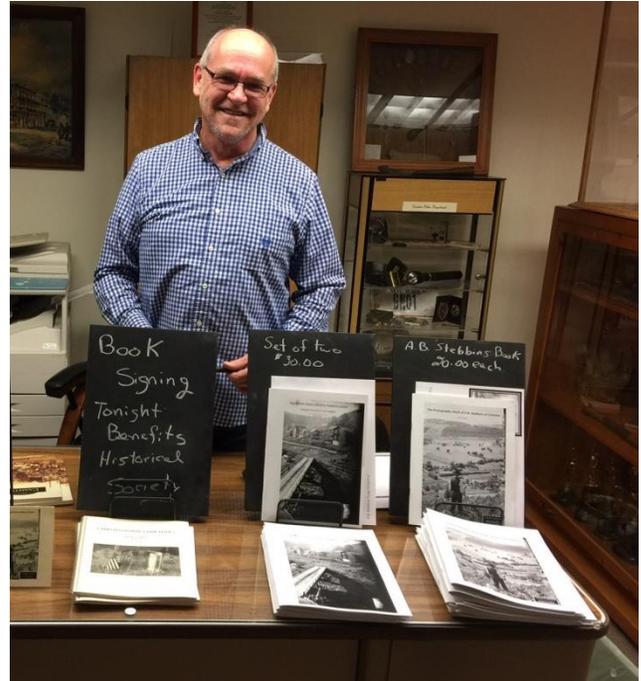
When: Tuesdays 2-4 p.m.  
January 10 to February 28, 2017  
Where: Kanestio Historical Society  
23 Main St., Canistota  
Limit: 15 students  
Cost: \$10 per session

No experience is necessary. We will begin with some drawing lessons, then progress to basic watercolor techniques. Students must bring their own supplies. Call Betty Merring for a list of suggested supplies.

Betty has been teaching art for over 30 years; first in public high schools; more recently privately and in small groups, and in senior centers and retirement centers.

If you attended our summer gardens tours you would have seen Betty painting in the Carlton and Gramley Gardens. These paintings are on display at the Historical Society.

Questions or registration: Call Betty Merring 698-4454



**NEW CANISTEO BOOK** can be purchased through the Kanestio Historical Society. "The Photographic Work of A.B. Stebbins of Canistota," authored by Steve Cotton, provides a look into the local photographer's career which spanned close to 60 years in Canistota.

Mr. Stebbins was the father of three children and besides his photography business ran a bicycle repair shop, he holds two patents for bicycle gearing, designed an airplane, and contributed to the Canistota community. Included in this writing is also some Stebbins family history, early photographs of Stony Brook and Letchworth State parks. Many other area photographs are included in this book demonstrating the artist behind the camera.

Printed by Mansfield University's Print Shop all images were taken from original glass negatives providing a clear quality. The book also includes a short chapter on Hartsville. Steve has also published a second Stebbins book titled; "Southern Tioga County, Pennsylvania, through the Lens of A.B. Stebbins. You can contact Steve or the society about purchasing either release.

Kanestio Historical Society  
23 Main St., P.O. Box 35  
Canisteo, NY 14823

## The Back Page

*This newsletter is written in tribute to Virginia Dickey whose dream was a Historical Society to preserve and display local history for future generations.*

### Application for Membership 2017

Do you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter - perhaps an old classmate or out of town relative? For the low cost of \$10 (annual dues) you receive 4 issues per year of our newsletter.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: \$10.00 Individual \*\*    \$15.00 Family\*\*  
\$150.00 Life

Make check payable to:  
Kanestio Historical Society  
P.O. Box 35  
Canisteo, NY 14823

### *Donations gratefully accepted toward operating expenses.*

#### 2017 Officers

Larry Stephens	Co- President
Sue Babbitt	Co - President
Jeanne Gore	Secretary
Gail Davis	Treasurer
Margaret Stephens-	Corresponding Secretary

#### Directors

Sally Florence	2017
Russell Pierce	2018
Sue Babbitt	2019
Stan Arthur	2020
Jose Huerta	2021