

# Kanestio Historical Society Times

23 Main St - P.O. Box 35 - Canistota, NY 14823  
(607) 698-2086 - Thursday & Friday 1-3 - Monthly Meetings - 3rd Tuesday 7:00 PM  
[www.kanestiohistoricalsociety.com](http://www.kanestiohistoricalsociety.com)

2023- Summer [kanestiohs@gmail.com](mailto:kanestiohs@gmail.com) Gail Davis, Editor

## Meet and Greet Book Signing



On June 4th, the Historical Society, Wimodaughsian Library and the Steuben County Historical Society jointly sponsored a program introducing our community to Cynthia Neale. Cynthia, a Montour Falls native currently living in New Hampshire, is launching her latest Historical Novel, *Catharine, Queen of the Tumbling Waters*, based on the life of Catharine Montour.

Catharine Montour was an Iroquois and French woman who lived in Pennsylvania, Canistota, and Montour Falls, New York during the French and Indian War and American Revolution. Juxtaposed between her powerful grandmother and colonial interpreter, Madame Montour, and her uncle, Andrew Montour, a colonial diplomat and interpreter, Catharine only desired a simple life. However, as she is thrust into the conflicts and violence of the times, she becomes a woman of valor who

leads her people to safety during General John Sullivan's campaign to destroy all Iroquois villages and later becomes a quiet, yet powerful voice in the construction of a new country.

Very little is known about what life might have been like in the Kanestio Valley before the Indian villages were burned in 1764. Through her extensive research for this novel Cynthia found some very interesting references to this period that were worked into the novel. This paragraph, after Catharine has moved back to her beloved Eagle Cliff Falls, is a touching tribute to the place we now call home.

*"My life is at peace here, but news continues to come like hail on a summer day that threatens to destroy our crops. A few months pass quietly and I receive news that my uncle, Captain Montour, along with 140 Indians and Rangers, attack Kah-ni-sti-oh. Sixty houses and many cattle are destroyed and this place of refuge that had once been mine is now no more. My uncle has done Sir William Johnson's bidding to bring the murderers and outlaws, Indian and white, to justice. Kah-ni-sti-oh did not only shelter murderers and outlaws, it sheltered me and other of all tribes and skin colors. They were people who hadn't been able to live with hypocrisy and lies who had committed crimes they were sorry for and could not find a place among their own clan or kin. I had once been one of them who lived in Kah-ni-sti-oh. And now I seek to find those that fled from my uncle's righteous rampage and bring them to live in my paradise."*

## Future Historians....

We are thrilled to be able to share some of the research from Christopher Romanchock's 10th grade college level Global History Classes in our newsletters. Following is a comment that accompanied the latest article.

*"Four students from CG went to New York State History Day in Oneonta with the projects they began at the KHS last fall and placed fourth in their category. We are super proud of them, thank you for the help inspiring them- they chose to work on a local topic and mentioned their visit to KHS in their process paper."*

### Oscar Allison



Authors: Sophia Herrera, Sophia Mullen and Autumn Adams.

Oscar Allison was born in the year 1832, on November sixth. His gravestone appears to have come out of the Sears Catalog. The 'stone' is made out of zinc, but the oxidation makes it look very much like a stone. It lies next to a family member's monument but has few details other than his name and dates of life and death written on it. He died, unmarried, at the age of 56 on January eleventh, 1889 in Canisteo. Oscar's family came from English

ancestors. Not much is known about Oscar's childhood or birth, but his parents' names were William Allison and Levena Ferguson. He was born in Hartsville to a big family, of five brothers and four sisters. His brothers' names were Mortimer, Isaac, Lawrence of Canisteo, Richard F. Allison of Hartsville, and, Charles W. Allison of Iowa. His sisters' names were Charlotte, Phebe Ann, Sally Ann, and, Adaline, they all lived somewhere out west. Oscar was apparently the most well-known of his brothers. Once he was eighteen in the year 1850, he moved to Canisteo with his parents. At the age of twenty-two he went under the wing of William Mosher to learn to be a miller. After learning his trade, he remained a miller for the rest of his life in Canisteo, finally working at Flohr's mill. Sadly, this is where he fell ill. Thursday at 4 o'clock in the afternoon he left work, and survived until 4 o'clock the next morning. His cause of death was determined to be heart disease. Oscar Allison died unmarried with no children, but six of his siblings were married and able to pass on his family name, keeping his family alive locally, but into the state of Iowa too.

### *From a reader:*

*I live in North Carolina but our family roots are in the Canisteo/ Hornell area. Our cousin passed along the article about William R. Laine from the winter 2023 issue of your paper. My mother was told by her grandmother that they had a relative who had died in the battle of Cold Harbor but that's all she knew. She knew his last name but no other details. So I'm writing to thank you for publishing this and to thank the students who researched and wrote this article. My mother, who will be 90 this summer, was so touched and appreciative of learning more about our relative and so was the rest of our family. It was emotional to learn the details of his short life. Please pass on our appreciation to Cassidy Gardner, Alison Mills and Mya Rexford for this gift of knowing more about our roots. We are so thankful to them and you.*

*Gratefully,  
Anne Sharrar and Jacqueline Loohn Stempfle*



## Canisteo Boy Scout Troop 83 Visit



## Imago Dei Homeschool Co-op Corning, NY



This group from Corning visited the Railroad Museum in Hornell followed by a visit to our museum. This old perm machine is always a favorite among young visitors.



## Canisteo Sesquicentennial Crazee Daze Celebration

photos by Jeremy Iannucci



## Yard Sales



## Parade





Anticipation



Bands



Firetrucks



Little League Teams





## Tractors & Trucks - Big & Small



## Food



## Horses





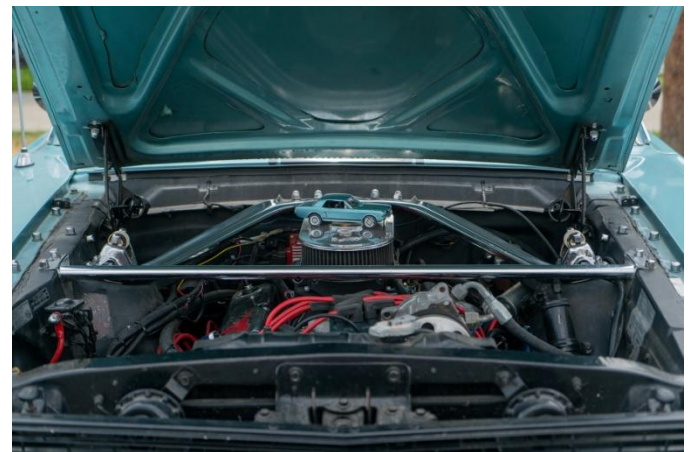
## Beard & Mullet Contest



## Car Show



## Upcoming Events:



July 18 - 6PM - Dish to Pass Picnic at Rotary Park. Bring table service & drink.

August 8th - Field Trip to Prattsburg Historical Society & Narcissa Prentiss House

Sept. 19 - 7PM - Craig Braack - Washington, DC's Air Force & Pentagon Memorials

## The Spotlight Is On...

by Suzanne Babbitt



**Madeleine Seaman**, a longtime Canisteo businesswoman, was born in Havana, Cuba. She and her mother emigrated from Cuba through Jamaica then to Florida in 1961. Soon after, her father was able to join them, and he finally found work in Brooklyn, NY, so the small family of Jose, Clara and Madeleine Huerta settled in the big city.

When she was 13, they relocated to Long Island where she completed high school, went to University and met Grant Seaman.

From college she then moved to Ithaca where Grant attended veterinary school. In 1983 they married just as Grant was finishing his veterinary degree. Within a few years the couple came here to take over Dr. Don Davidson's practice in Canisteo and settle into small town life. The family grew with the addition of sons Christian, then Tyler and Eric, followed a few years later with the adoption of Troy and Lauretta. Today the family circle includes 13 grandchildren....so far!

The working life of Madeleine has varied over the years. Early on she obtained a real estate license, and then during the early years of the practice she did the bookkeeping plus many smaller tasks. As the business grew and added staff, she was approached by Anita Welles to see if she had any interest in taking over the dress shop.

Once Anita retired, Madeleine took it over and in 1995 moved it to the downtown business block, where Acme Grocery/ Market Basket/ and most recently Country Hearts gift shop had been, and it then became Elegance Bridals and Formals for the next 24 years. Another venture was added when she purchased a second shop in Sayre, PA, making trips there several times a week to oversee this additional business for a few years. As the formal dress business went more to online retailers, she sold to a woman that moved the shop to Greenwood.

John and I became well acquainted with Madeleine during those years as he did a lot of wedding photography and would get referrals from her of brides looking for a photographer. I was always impressed when she appeared at the wedding venue with her calm manner in the midst of occasional chaos and was amazed at her carryall of emergency supplies that often "saved the day" for a bride with a broken, forgotten or missing something. Madeleine to the rescue!

In the last 10 years or so Madeleine has transitioned to local public office. She is the Canisteo Village Justice, Greenwood Justice, plus she is the court clerk for both Hornellsville Town Court justices. Not able to completely put aside her love of formal wear she still does alterations.

While still doing the Veterinary Hospital books, being active in her church (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints), and enjoying her family, Madeleine says she likes staying busy and involved in her community.

## From our Readers

*Hi, Gail*

*The spring issue of your newsletter is very well done and most interesting. I liked reading the history pieces and learned a lot! It was amusing and ironic that the Centennial Lockup and the Kanestio Keystone Kops correlated so well with early Village history. So, Happy Birthday!*

*Dorothy Dunham, Arkport,  
Canisteo Valley Historical Society*



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# 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

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.*

### 2023 Officers

Sue Babbitt	President
Toni Stevens-Oliver	Vice President
Gail Davis	Secretary/Treasurer

### Directors

Jerry Bush	2023
Sue Babbitt	2024
Betty Merring	2025
Toni Stevens-Oliver	2026
Gail Davis	2027