

Palatine Settlement Society

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2004 / Winter 2005

HISTORY BUFFS WANTED!

NEW MEMBERS INVITED!

The Palatine Settlement Society wants YOU! . . . to join us!

One of the GOALS established for this year is to increase our Membership . . . and we'd LOVE to have you join us! We have a number of wonderful projects planned for the coming years and want you to be a part of this exciting time!

A *Membership Application* is included in this mailing - just fill it out and send it in with your dues for 2005. YOU select the membership level as well as a committee, if you so choose. Committees include Buildings, Gardens and Grounds, and Activities/Special Events.

The Nellis Tavern, because so much of it is in original condition, is worthy of your support. Help support this treasure and promote the heritage of the early settlers in our local area.

**You CAN make a difference . . .
.. we Need YOU!**



I am pleased to announce that our Trustees have completed and missed in the application for our Permanent Charter. This paperwork required our officers, and especially Walt Lane, our treasurer, to research information from several past years. This entailed many hours of work and careful study of old records. And, with perseverance, this high-priority task was completed!

- Joan Orsini

For several years now, we have held theme dinners depicting various periods in history... the Titanic, Erie Canal era and Colonial times.

Held at the historic Union Hall Inn, in Johnstown, many who attended wore period clothing while enjoying the sumptuous meals.

SAVE the DATE!

Theme Dinner on April 10th

This year, we hope to commemorate the 225th Anniversary of the Burning of the Valley.

Palatines to America

October 2, 2004

An outreach program was held at St. Paul's Universalist Church in Little Falls. Mary Nellis Davis, Sandra Nellis Lane, and Walt Lane gave a talk to the New York Chapter of Palatines to America on the Nellis Tavern: its history and improvements accomplished in the past 20 years. Mary gave the talk on history, Walt presented slides that coincided with the talk, and Sandy discussed the stenciling in the tavern. Many members of the Palatine group visited the tavern that afternoon and a nice donation was received which will go towards the upkeep of the tavern.

RESTORATION 2004

by Donna Reston

This summer contractor Peter Kruppenbacher and crew returned to replace the missing soffit under the south roof and put flashing over the window tops. All new wood was primed and the whole south front painted red per evidence on existing original clapboards.

Interior work focused on the east first-floor room. This included rebuilding the over-mantle area, replacing the missing chair rail and inserting a new clay-tile to accept the stove pipe. Since we liberally use our small antique stove for heat, these improvements addressed the safety concerns and appearance of this area. With the woodwork painted and the addition of an antique rag rug, the room has come alive.

The Roof

We have recently established a roofing fund. The slate which has been on the building since the 19th century, is badly deteriorating. According to our historic building report, the slate is too heavy for the structure. We are looking to replacing the roof and have solicited several bids as well as cash donations.

An Evening at the Tavern

Sunday August 8, 2004

This was the first event held to benefit the Nellis Tavern roof fund. Music was provided by Mark Greco of Schenectady. A wide variety of her'dourees were provided with cookies, punch, and wine. Visitors were found dancing to the music and sitting on the porch enjoying the writing sun. A relaxing evening was enjoyed by all.

Your Trustees for 2005

Joan Draus, President
Amsterdam, NY

Mary Nellis Davis, Vice-President
Little Falls, NY

Walt Lane, Treasurer
Johnstown, NY

Sandy Nellis Lane, Co-Secretary
Johnstown, NY

Ray Draus, Co-Secretary
Amsterdam, NY

Donna Reston
Amsterdam, NY

Sue Ellen Harrington
Johnstown, NY

Ron Burch
Gen, NY

Gary Harrington
Johnstown, NY

Ken Johnson
Fl. Plain, NY

Herb Garden

by Sue Ellen Harrington

Herbs have played an important part in man's life for countless years. Early settlers brought herbs to America for use as remedies for illnesses, flavoring, storing with liners, strewing on floors, or burning for their pleasant fragrances. Some herbs were used to improve the taste of meats in the days before preservation techniques were developed. Other herbs were used to dye homespun fabrics.

Herb gardens were almost an essential feature of pioneer homes. They were placed in sunny corners near the house to be readily available to the busy homemaker. As the population of the new country grew, people from many nations brought herbs with them. This resulted in an exchange of slips, seeds, and plants. Many herbs familiar to settlers from other countries were found growing wild in the new country. These included pansley,

anise, pennyroyal, sorrel, watercress, liverwort, wild leeks, and lavender. American Indians knew uses for almost every wild, nonpoisonous plant, but they used the plants chiefly for domestic purposes – tanning and dyeing leather and eating.

Early herb gardens were the major source for food seasoning. The need for homegrown herbs, however, declined with the advent of modern stores. Today, many gardeners are rediscovering the joy and pleasure of producing their own herbs.

We would like to plan an Herb Garden Day at the Nellis Tavern in the Spring. Anyone wishing to volunteer their time or perhaps donate some herbs from their gardens are more than welcome. Stay tuned for date and time!

Harvest Festival
October 17, 2004

Once again another event was held to benefit the upkeep of the tavern and the new roof fund. The fires were lit and a warm glow from them helped chase away some of the cold drafts. Gary Aney instructed contra dancing in the upstairs ballroom. Cookies, warm spiced cider, donuts, and coffee were served. Visitors sat in front of the fire in the tavern room trying to vision how it must have been 200 years ago. There was a game table set up in the kitchen where one could guess how many candy corns were in the jar, pick the apple out of the bowl that had a toothpick sticking out of it, and a corn cob grab bag in which the player had to find the ear of Indian corn. In the stove room, or parlor was the ongoing stenciling exhibit. Bud Minor displayed and talked of his search for Dutch Barns in the Mohawk Valley. He showed many slides of his finds. Also on display was the "Lucy Nellis Quilt" 1854 Herkimer. This quilt was loaned to the society by Mary Brusoe of Whitesboro. The point of interest in the quilt was that most of the squares of the quilt were signed by ladies of the Herkimer area. More than 25 signatures including the names of Nellis, Harter, Bellinger, Snell, Petrie, Dygert, and so on, were on the quilt. We hope to display it again next year.

*Our THANKS to
George Mattas
of Little Falls, NY
for donating his student
school desk that came
from our very own school
house on Route 67!*

MEMBERSHIP Application

"YOU can make a difference"

*Help support the historic 1747 Nellis Tavern
and promote the heritage of the Palatine
German settlers in our local area by joining!*

(Check one)

() Active Membership

Show in decision-making and participate in the work of a committee: events, buildings, gardens & grounds. Receive newsletter, mailings. Annual dues: \$10

() Supporting Membership

Support the activities and planned events with your participation. Receive mailings and newsletter. Annual dues: \$20

() Organization/Business Member

Help support the work of the group. Annual dues \$25

() Youth Membership

Discount rate for students interested in the historical endeavors of our group! Annual dues \$1

() Life Membership

Support the restoration and preservation of our buildings and the history of the Palatine settlers financially with a large donation of \$200 or more.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Area(s) of interest _____

Annual Dues \$ _____

(Check payable to Palatine Settlement Society)

Here is my donation of \$ _____

_____ for Roof Fund

_____ for restoration & operating expenses

Mail completed form with check to:

Palatine Settlement Society

PO Box 183

St. Johnsville, NY 13452