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Come visit the **1747 Nellis Tavern** on Sunday afternoon this summer. We are open every Sunday, June—September, 1:00-4:00 P.M. \$3.00



7355 State Rt. 5, St. Johnsville, NY

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## Newsletter

### More Stenciling

by Sandy Nellis Lane

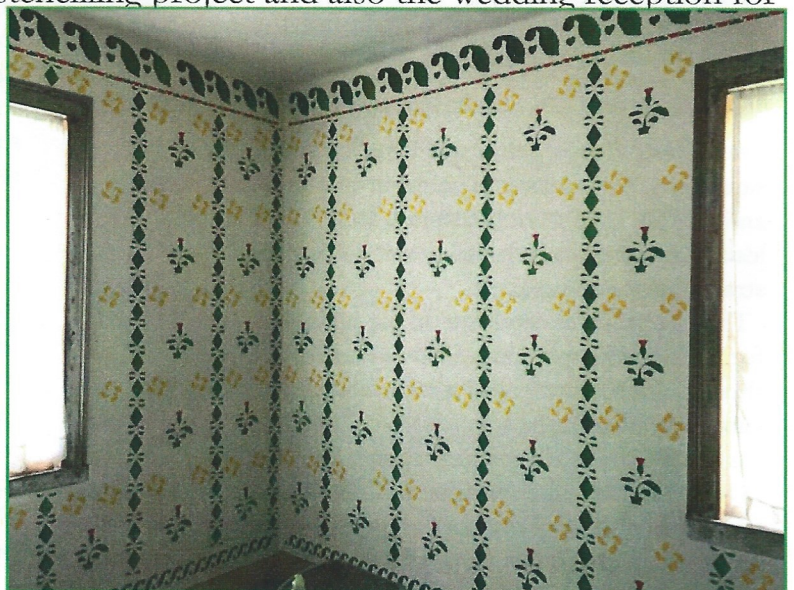
2018 saw the finishing stencilling applied to the two upstairs rooms of the early 1800 addition of the 1747 Nellis Tavern. The walls had been prepared in 2017 and Martha Brandow was the fine artist who carried out the project, finishing in July.



In the small bedroom, a 2' x 4' section, and in the master bedroom, a 4' x 4' section of the original stencilling were left uncovered by new wall-board. When the new stencilling was completed these sections were covered with Plexiglass so that the old and new can be viewed and compared at the same time.

Friends of Historic Central Mohawk Valley presented a \$2000 grant to the Palatine Settlement Society to help defray costs of this multi-year project which included stenciling of the first floor room in 2016. In addition the Board of Trustees also accepted a \$2500 grant from Mohawk Country toward the stencilling project and also the wedding reception for the "Drums Along the Mohawk" reenactment in July.

Although the stencilling is finished, the rest of these two rooms still need some work. The doors, woodwork and floors will be painted this year.



## Update on School #8

By John Case & Walt Lane

On a chilly day in February, 1971, John Case and his wife Pat moved with their three young children to a farm near St. Johnsville, NY, after purchasing the Ira John Nellis property from then owner C. Jay Settle. At the time, the Cases were just looking for a quiet home to raise their family.

As time passed, John realized they were in an historic area. His Dutch barn dated back to shortly following the burning of the valleys (Rev. War), as did a part of his house. Early in the 1800's, the barn was raised, and a dairy stable was built beneath it. Another small building in front of the barn was an ice house with a milk room attached. Mr. Nellis was kind enough to have signed his name on a beam in the barn. A one-room schoolhouse, visible from his kitchen window, had been built after the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on early Palatine land.



By 2011, having volunteered with several historical groups in the area, John and Pat became members of the Palatine Settlement Society (PSS), and he was elected to its Board of Trustees in 2017. That schoolhouse down the road was now owned by the PSS. In 2018, John's offer to restore the building and grounds was unanimously accepted by the Board.

During the spring and summer, John, with the help of David E. Byler and Bill Farber, set to work on his project. They rebuilt the front doorway and repaired the stone



foundation. A new gutter was installed across the south side above the doorway. The metal roofs on the school and storage shed were refastened and coated to end a few leaks. That shed, which had developed an aged "lean" was straightened and repaired.

The tall, graceful windows on the west side were covered for temporary protection. Plans were laid to build and attach shutters for the north and west windows to protect the natural lighting in the schoolroom. Those windows will need considerable TLC in the near future.

Over the years an enormous amount of brush and trees had taken root around the school and shed. Much of this was removed which greatly enhanced the view of the property.

Now the lilacs, lily of the valley and myrtle can be seen by spring visitors.

And last, but most definitely not least, a handsome sign was constructed identifying the school for all passersby, complete with hanging flower pots provided by Pat.



## Blast from the Past—PSS Newsletter Spring 1988

### HAYWARDS, PATHMASTERS, AND OTHER OFFICIALS

By Unknown

Perhaps one of your ancestors was a hayward. In some communities, the hayward was known as the poundmaster. But no matter which title he had, his duties were the same: to take charge of stray farm animals until they were claimed by their rightful owners. In earlier days when many homesteads were unfenced, cows or sheep or pigs could and did freely roam the highways and streets. The hayward's job was a really necessary and important one.

Of course, some people did build fences. Fences can cause arguments. So an official called a fence viewer was appointed to settle disputes about fences between adjoining landowners.

Another official in early America was the pathmaster. He was the road overseer, charged with seeing that a particular section of a road was kept in condition and that landowners along that section of road worked the number of days assigned to them on the road.

A constable was a very important official, actually a high sheriff whose duty was to keep the peace and perform minor judicial duties. He was at one and the same time a policeman and a justice of the peace.

The overseer of the poor was the official charged with arranging for the care of the aged, the widowed, the orphaned, and the other poor people who had no one to take care of them.

Wonder what titles we use today that will seem as strange to our descendants as these seem to us!

## Wattle & Daub

By Sandy Nellis Lane

The 1747 Nellis Tavern is one of the few wooden structures still standing in the Mohawk Valley after the Revolution.

Christian Nellis, Sr. built a log home by the river south of the present house around 1725. Twenty years later he had become a prosperous farmer and had a new house built north, up off of the river facing south and the King's Highway. It was always a farm house and sometimes, until the late 1840's, was a tavern.

Photo by Barabara Voelkle

We date the Nellis Tavern back to about 1747 because of the wattle and daub construction which was not used in the Mohawk Valley much after 1750. This was a lattice-work of wooden stakes called wattle,



daubed with a wet mixture of mud, clay, animal dung, etc. and straw. These vertical timbers (wattle) in the framed wall were grooved and large branches or small limbs with ends tapered, were slid horizontally into place. The daub was added between the wooden sections and on the inside and outside of the wall. The inside wall was scored and then plastered over. Clapboards were attached to the outside wall. This was a well insulated home.

## Cemeteries

By Sandy Nellis Lane



Shelley A. J. Arduini works with a group of St. Johnsville volunteers who are cleaning and restoring local cemeteries.

We knew that Christian Nellis Sr. and Jr. were buried in the Klock cemetery on the hill across the road to the west of the Nellis Tavern. The volunteers have rebuilt the wall around the Nellis cemetery and straightened some of the

## Dues Are Due

It is once again time to renew your membership, if you are not a Lifetime Member. Look at your address label on the outside of this Newsletter to see the date of your last membership application.

Example:

Jane Doe 17 (2018, or earlier, time to renew)

or

John Doe L (Lifetime)

Jim Smith PR (Public Relations)

Our Membership year is January 1 through December 31.

## Pears

By Sandy Nellis Lane

Although the Nellis pear trees and fruit are not beautiful, the flowers are quite lovely in May. The bees love them.

We have two types of pear trees so that cross pollination can occur and fruit will be produced. There were a few dozen pears growing on the two Nellis and one seckel pear trees by early summer. They were almost ripe the last time I saw them in late fall; the next time I visited there were none around anywhere!



stones. On Memorial Day or Veterans Day, they place flags on the appropriate graves.

The group recently found the resting place for Jacob C. Nellis in his family cemetery to the east of the Tavern at the top of the first hill on Vedder Rd., on the right. They have partially cleaned the site where several of his family members are buried.



# PALATINE SETTLEMENT SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2019

*For those interested in restoring the 1747 Nellis Tavern and preserving local history!*

**( ) Pioneer – Individual membership**

- participate in events
- share in decision-making
- receive newsletter

Annual dues \$20

**( ) Apprentice – Student membership**

Annual dues \$5

**( ) Homesteaders – Family membership**

- participate in events
- share in decision-making
- receive newsletter

Annual dues \$35

**( ) Mercantile – Professional or Business**

- participate in events
- share in decision-making
- receive newsletter
- public acknowledgement of support

Annual dues \$50

**( ) Hearth Keeper – Individual membership making a considerable donation to the Tavern**

- participate in events
- share in decision-making
- receive newsletter
- public acknowledgement of your financial support in newsletter

Annual donation \$250

**( ) Founding Father/Mother – Contributor of a substantial donation to the tavern, which can be directed to a specific restoration project**

- participate in events
- share in decision-making
- receive newsletter
- public acknowledgement of your financial support in newsletter

Annual donation \$1,000

**Complete this whole page and MAIL with your check to:**

**Palatine Settlement Society, PO Box 183, St. Johnsville, NY 13452**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ Our membership year is January 1 through December 31.

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

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

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

*\* The Nellis Tavern is in need of individuals, couples and families who are willing to help prepare for and staff tavern events, assist with maintenance and chores, distribute flyers and assist the Board of Trustees in completing the mission of the Palatine Settlement Society. If you can offer a few hours of your time, please **check all** that may interest you:*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bake pies for Rhubarb Festival<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spring Building clean-up<br><input type="checkbox"/> Gardening (weeding, watering, etc.)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Fall Building closing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Historical research | <input type="checkbox"/> Help at fundraiser event<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spring Grounds clean up<br><input type="checkbox"/> Scraping and/or painting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to newsletter<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
|--|--|

**Donation:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Membership:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to: Palatine Settlement Society*

## Thank You

We gratefully thank those who have donated toward the maintenance and restoration of the 1747 Nellis Tavern and grounds and the District # 8 Schoolhouse.

### Corporate:

- Stewart's Shops restoration grant - \$200
- Stewart's Shops Holiday Match - \$300
- Friends of Historic Central Mohawk Valley - \$2000
- Mohawk Country - \$2500

### Business:

- James Dempsey—flower arrangements by Studio Herbage
- George Heigel—Antique Appraisals

### Monetary Donations:

- G. Saatman      - M. & C. Konicki      - J. Lein
- M. Schmidt      - W. Berdan                      - S. Thomson
- K. Nabors        - M. Nellis                        - N. Nellis
- T. Persse        - J. Reston                        - H. Polgreen

- S. N. Davis

- and the many people who leave donations and no name

### Special Donations:

- J. Button
- M. Schutze
- Dr. D. Clement
- N. N. Hodgson
- J. N. Mendler
- F. Tosto
- R. & M. A.w Van Gorder—in honor of Judith Mihal
- M. & M. Dieter
- Margaret Nellis—Kees Nelis tulips
- J. & P. Case
- S. Kuehl
- R. Burch
- R. Vinyard
- A. & J. Matis - chairs
- Dr. J. Reston—rental of tent for Rhubarb Festival
- Food donors for all events

## 2019 Future Events for 1747 Nellis Tavern

**March 2 Saturday—14th Annual Antique Show**, Arkell Museum, Canajoharie 10:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.; Admission \$5.00

**Open Sundays** 1:00-4:00 P.M. June thru September (October); tours \$3.00 (Also by appointment)

**June 2 Sunday—23rd Annual Rhubarb Festival**, Tavern, 11:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.; pie baking contest (please sign up 315.866.2619); rhubarb treats and lunch available; entertainment; food donations accepted.

**June 6 or 7 Thursday or Friday—Tour** in conjunction with **Ft. Plain Museum Revolutionary War Conference**, June 6-9, to be held at Canajoharie School.

**August 17 Saturday —“Evening at the Tavern,”** 4:00-7:00 P.M.; beer and soup.

(Sunday **July 21—Annual Nellis Association Reunion** at John Nellis Farm, Fort Plain, NY. Lunch at 12 noon; bring a dish to pass and your own table service—Information: 518.993.2978)

## Mercantile Members

We would like to thank the following Mercantile Members of the Palatine Settlement Society for being supporters of the restoration of the 1747 Nellis Tavern:

**Heritage Meadows Farm**  
B & B




510 County Hwy 140  
St. Johnsville, NY  
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HeritageMeadowsFarm@FrontierNet.net  
www.HeritageMeadowsFarm.com

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Stephen & Judith Mihal



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Tom Persse

Manager



**1747 Nellis Tavern in Spring**

Palatine Settlement Society  
PO Box 183  
Saint Johnsville, NY 13452

FaceBook: 1747 Nellis Tavern  
[www.PalatineSettlementSociety.org](http://www.PalatineSettlementSociety.org)

*2019 Newsletter*

## Our Antique Show & Sale at Arkell Museum

by Joan Draus

The 14th Annual Antique Show & Sale, to benefit the 1747 Nellis Tavern will be held **Saturday, March 2, 2019, 10:00AM to 4:00PM** at the Arkell Museum at 2 Erie Blvd. Canajoharie, NY. Easily accessible from NYS Thruway Exit 29, the Arkell is a 'jewel' of a museum that contains major examples of American art, most donated many years ago by the founder of Beechnut, Bartlett Arkell. The Museum's Great Hall, one location we will utilize for the show, boasts a fabulous painted floor depicting the historic map of the Mohawk Valley.

Our knowledgeable and friendly dealers offer a range of antique and vintage merchandise including

china & glassware, jewelry, books, tools, ephemera, paintings, furniture and other items. We will also provide an appraisal booth staffed by Mr. George Heigel; verbal appraisals will be given for a \$5.00 donation per item.

A variety of homemade soups, sandwiches and desserts will also be available for purchase. Admission to the show remains \$5.00 and we look forward to having you join us this year! **Joan Draus, Show Manager.** For more information please text or leave a message (518-894-7807).

2017 Show

