

Spring 2018

The Story Teller

MONTEZUMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**2018
Membership –
Please join us
today!**

If you have not renewed your 2018 membership, or if you would like to join, please use the form enclosed to send in your dues. THANK YOU!



RICHMOND AQUEDUCT - PHOTO ENHANCEMENT BY BILL HECHT

MHS Celebrates 12 Years

It's hard to believe it's been twelve years since the historical society was formed in Montezuma. As an amateur town historian I became interested in our Town's past combined with a desire to celebrate the significance, growth, and economic potential of our community. I helped form the organization in 2006, with a group that agreed to serve as trustees to focus a mission on preserving the legacy of our ancestors, and preserving the significance of Erie Canal history.

Our dedicated board of trustees have continued to give generously of their time providing a service that is relevant and significant for today's fast paced and changing society.

Our past is intertwined with the future, and therefore it is vital to the health of the community. If we don't know where we come from, how can we know what we want for our future.

We are immensely grateful to those of you who have supported MHS to be able to continue the work we do.

The sustainability of the organization is always a concern for the Board. As a non-profit 501c3 organization chartered with the NYS Education Department, MHS aims to partner and work closely with local government officials, without taxpayer funds to support the work we do. Your membership and fundraising is what enables us to invest in the Town, and we appreciate that!

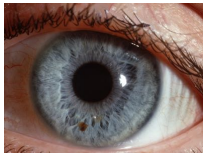
The Board has been busily planning the year ahead. Our Annual Meeting and election for the board of trustees will be on June 13th. You can read more about the program inside this issue. We have a very interesting speaker to share studies and a perspective of the Native American culture of the area. This a program you won't want to miss.

It is with sadness that Bob Melvin from Conquest is stepping down as a trustee this year. Bob has been dedicated to serving on the board since we started. He helped with many projects including the restoration and maintenance of the Mentz Church building and the Montezuma Heritage Park.

We are pleased Kathy Longyear from Montezuma is on our ballet as a new trustee. Kathy has been a volunteer with the 5-K Run/Walk and clean up in the Park.

In order to continue what we do, we also need volunteers who are willing to sustain the work that's been done thus far. Our youth are becoming more and more nature deprived, and its imperative to their health and well being, that they learn to enjoy and preserve our natural resources, and understand the importance of our history.

Who were the Wide Awakes?



In early March, 1860, Abraham Lincoln spoke in Hartford, Connecticut opposing the spread of **slavery** and advocating for the right of workers to **strike**. Five store clerks, who had started a Republican group called the Wide Awakes, decided to join a parade for Lincoln, who delighted in the torchlight escort provided for him after the speech back to his hotel. Over the next few weeks, Lincoln's campaign made plans to develop Wide Awake Clubs throughout the country and to use them to spearhead large voter registration drives, knowing new voters and young voters tend to embrace new and young parties.

Shaken by the instability of the 1850s, it offered young northerners a much-needed political identity. Members of the Wide Awakes were described by *The New York Times* as, "young men of character and energy, earnest in their Republican convictions and enthusiastic in prosecuting the canvass on which they have entered." By the midpoint of the 1860 campaign, Republicans boasted of Wide Awake chapters in every county of every Northern (**free**) state. By the day of Lincoln's election as president there were a reported 500,000 members.

Wide Awakes grassroots groups quickly sprung up locally from the area Towns and Villages participating in evening torch-lit parades and rallies held in support of Lincoln's platform. Newspapers reported on several local marches and one of the most

Auburn Daily Union
Oct. 9, 1860



enthusiastic was held in October 1860, in Port Byron. Governor William Seward made a surprise appearance giving a persuasive hour-long speech at the Masonic Temple. Wide Awakes from several local towns and Auburn marched at the rally. It was reported about fifty-men from the Montezuma Wide Awake



company joined the other marchers. The Montezuma group carried a black silk banner, inscribed with gilt letters, "**Lincoln and Hamlin,**" and on the opposite side "**Montezuma Wide Awakes Presented by the Ladies.**"

The Auburn Weekly Union also reported the same month a grand mass meeting and night parade

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held in Auburn with over 1300 marchers. Thirteen crowded wagons carried nearly sixty Wide Awakes from Montezuma into the city on Clark Street commanded by Colonel William Bell. Colonel Bell had been active in the militia and town and politics. He served over twenty years as Montezuma's Commissioner of Highways, Town Supervisor, Peace Justice and President of the Village.

The men were probably dressed in the standard Wide Awake uniform consisting of a full robe or cape, a black glazed hat, and a long torch to which a large, flaming, pivoting whale-oil container would have been mounted.

By enlivening the tone of the campaign, the Wide Awakes had a major impact on how Americans interpreted Lincoln's victory in the days and weeks between election and secession. By the end of 1860, the nation was WIDE AWAKE. Many of the clubs dissolved after Lincoln's election yet others continued to meet and were among the first to enlist as volunteers in the Union army.

References:

- The Journal of American History
- Abraham Lincoln at 200 Special issue, September 2009
- civilwarlibrarian.blogspot.com
- How we Came To Be Here, The Bell Family in America by Gary William Bell, 2009

Images' Sources:

- Wide Awake America 1860



2018 Canal Clean Sweep A Sweet Success!

This year marked the 13th year of the Annual Canal Clean Sweep weekend event promoted by the New York State Canal Corporation and Parks & Trails, New York on the weekend of April 20-22. There were over 100 registered cleanup and beautification events held along the Canal System and Canalway Trail.



CommUNITY Volunteers at working together

We all worked up a hearty appetite and enjoyed homemade soup made by Bunny Baker and delicious cookies by Shirley Gillmore.

In Montezuma, Friends of the Park celebrated Earth Day and participated in the event on a beautiful spring day, Saturday, April 21. Sixteen volunteers worked on several different projects.

Ten additional Norway Spruce trees were purchased by the Montezuma Historical Society and planted thanks to generous donations received for the Park. This now completes a very nice borderline for the park at the High Street Trailhead entrance of 18 new trees.

Preparing the flower bed, edging and mulching was completed at the Butterfly Garden; trimming bushes and mulching was also done along the towpath trail bridge abutment at the Byron Lapp Memorial Trailhead; and several other volunteers raked and walked the trails to pick up trash.

Tom Fitzsimmons, Carol and John Fordyce, Pat and Joel Glimpse, Stan Longyear, Dan Randolph and Mason Spears.

Our youngest volunteer was eight-year old, Mason Spears who did a great job carrying the mulch!

Many thanks to the volunteers who came out to help: Paul and Bunny Baker, David and Ellen Colvin, Joseph Cook, Jeff Dawson, Jim Decker,



Butterfly Garden Walkway Grows

Plans are being made this year to extend the brick walkway out from the Butterfly Garden. When the walkway is completed it will make the walkway handicap accessible from the parking area.



Forty bricks have been ordered in honor of loved ones for the walkway. We are now taking orders for another section. The cost for a 4 x 8 inch brick is \$50, and is tax-deductible. You may request order form(s) be sent to you on Page 7.

2018 Upcoming Programs

SAVE THE DATE

**CANAL SPLASH
AUGUST 11TH - 9 AM**



Plans are being made for a historic walking tour in Montezuma Heritage Park. Mike Riley will lead the tour highlighting

the 200 years of NYS's Canal System as told through Montezuma's unique four canals and historic sites story.

2018 Upcoming Programs

Wildlife Festival



**SATURDAY,
MAY 5TH
10 AM - 3 PM**

**MONTEZUMA
AUDUBON
CENTER**

Montezuma Historical Society will have a display table at the 12th Annual Wildlife Festival at the Montezuma Audubon Center, 2295 State Route 89 in Savannah.

KrittrKris and Feathered Friends, Kindred Kingdoms Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, and Wildlife Defenders will deliver animal programs throughout the day featuring owls,

hawks, falcons and mammals. Festival goers can get up close to these amazing animals, learn about their wild characteristics, and take a selfie! Another highlight of the festival will be the Family Theater Tent featuring the professional magician and good-natured dean of green, Professor GreenPockets, who will perform the "Bug Show" and "Magic of

the Forest," fun, family-oriented shows that promote ecology, habitat conservation and the protection of endangered species. A new feature this year will be a 24-foot high rock wall to get a birds eye view of Montezuma! Children will also enjoy the huge bounce house, local products with artisans and vendors, and a native plant sale. Admission is \$5/person or \$20/family.

Old Time Hymn Singing



**HISTORIC
MENTZ CHURCH**

**SATURDAY,
MAY 12TH,
2 PM**

Historic Mentz Church building now owned by the Town of Montezuma is a registered historic site on the National Register of Historic Places.

It recognized for its significance as one of the earliest churches formed in Cayuga County in May of 1825, incorporated as the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Mentz. At the time it was formed Montezuma was a part of the Town of Mentz. Montezuma and Throop separated from Mentz in 1859,

with the boundary line just east of Mentz Church Road. The congregation formed and built the church from the first early pioneers who settled here looking for a better life in this country. It was a close-knit community church with families supporting one another during the early years of settlement. Church services were an integral part of the family and their connected community life.

They joined together

at their weekly Sunday services which would have included singing many of their favorite early hymn songs.

On May 12th, at 2 PM. Kathy Wilt will lead in singing many of these favorite hymns which would have been part of worship services 193 years ago when the church first began.

Refreshments will be served following the program.

* * *

Annual Meeting and Guest Speaker

KURT A. JORDAN, PH.D.
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
OF ANTHROPOLOGY
AND AMERICAN INDIAN
AND INDIGENOUS
STUDIES AT CORNELL
UNIVERSITY

“The Indigenous History of the Cayuga Lake Drainage: An Archaeological Prospective”

**WEDNESDAY,
JUNE 13TH**

**BRENDA'S
RESTAURANT,
RT 31, PORT BYRON**

ALL ABOARD....

Along the Erie Canal Bus Trip & Boat Cruise

JULY 25TH

LOCKPORT, NY

We are excited to host this year's speaker at our annual meeting to share his experience and research done on *“The Indigenous History of the Cayuga Lake Drainage: An Archaeological Prospective.”*

Professor Jordan's talk will review archaeological evidence for over thirteen thousand years of local indigenous lifeways, ranging from Paleoindian hunter-gatherers at the end of the last Ice Age to the historically-known Cayuga Nation. The presentation will be

MHS is sponsoring a bus trip and Canal Cruise to Lockport, NY. We will meet the bus at Giardina Park, 8102 Dock Street (Town Hall) leaving at 8:15 AM on July 25th. It includes lunch at the Canal Side Lockport Restaurant followed by a unique narrated two-hour boat trip past many historic sites and the “Flight of Five.” Lockport's staircase of five locks, ascends a

illustrated with maps, images of artifacts and site plans, and pictures of archaeologists at work.

Kurt A. Jordan is currently the director of the Cornell Institute of Archaeology and Material Studies (CIAMS). He has conducted field, museum, and archival research on Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) archaeology, history, and place names in collaboration with members of the Seneca and Cayuga Nations since 1995. His book *The Seneca*

height of 60 feet within a distance of only 550 feet, and is one of the best-preserved structures remaining from the Enlarged Erie era.

Lockport utilized \$2.6 million in funding to restore Locks 69 and 70, and install one set of wooden lock gates and balance beams, enabling the demonstration of the manual operation of weir gates.

Restoration, 1715-1754 was published by the University of Florida in 2008.

A short business meeting to elect officers and Board of Trustees will be held at 5:00 PM; Dinner will be at 5:30 and the talk begins at 6:30 PM.

Reservations are required. Please mail the enclosed form by June 4th or call Cheryl at 315-776-4656.

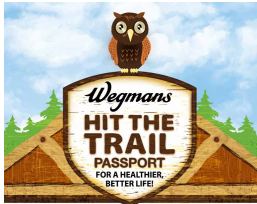
Dinner will be your cost ordered from the menu, and the program is free.

On our way home we'll make a stop at the Becker Farm for pie and a wagon ride returning to Montezuma approximately 7:30 PM.

Cost is \$103-\$109/per person (includes \$5 donation to MHS) depending on the number of signups.

For more information contact Mellony Carner at (315) 776-5390. Final payment due **by July 2nd.**

Richmond Aqueduct Trail joins



Wegmans
Hit The Trail
Passport
Program

Montezuma's Richmond Aqueduct Trail is now a part of a new expanded 30-trail passport program sponsored by Wegmans. It is coordinated by a partnership with Wayne County Trails Works, Inc. villages and towns, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension Service Eat Well Play Hard Coalition

You are invited to explore the region and the diverse outdoor adventures in your own backyard!

How it works:

Pick up a **Passport book** located in one of the kiosk sign-in boxes located in Montezuma Heritage Park at the trailheads on Chapman Road or High Street.

Hit the Trail #2 to the Richmond Aqueduct where the marker is located. Rub the trail marker in your passport book. Then head out to visit the other 29 trails in Wayne County.

The program runs continuously. In order to enter for a chance to win a \$250 Wegmans gift card, you need to complete 15 of the 30 trails in the booklet, and bring it to Cornell Cooperative Extension on Rt 88 in Newark. If you complete all 30 trails, you will have two entries in the drawing held annually in the Fall, and your entry remains in the pool.

For more information visit:

<http://trailworks.org/passport-trails/>

Family Research Resources



Why not start a family tree research project today?

There is not any shortage of resources in Cayuga County thanks to the work being done to assist with researching family histories.

Kathy Decker continues to update Montezuma's genealogy database. It can be located on our website or directly at <http://montezumagen.com>

Kathy has also done an amazing job of transcribing early Latin church records and sharing them with everyone.

A transcription of Marriage Records from Holy Family Catholic Church in Auburn for the years 1871-1873 can now be viewed on the Internet at:

http://cayugagenealogy.org/church/holy_family/marriages/1871_1873.html

Recently Bernie Cocoran has returned the Cayuga County Gen Web Project site to the Internet at:

<http://cayugagenealogy.org/>

Another project being undertaken has been initiated by the recently newly appointed County Historian, Ruth Bradley to collect over 3000 family names for Cayuga County through contacting Town Historians and Historical Societies.

The Cayuga County Historian's office maintain an extensive on- site resource library and historical compilations relating to all aspects of Cayuga County history.

<http://cayugacounty.us/Community/Historian>

2018 Membership

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____ New or Renewing Membership

Our mailing and printing costs keep increasing. Newsletters can now be received via email and posted on our website. We would appreciate adding \$2 to your dues if you would like a copy mailed. Yes, please mail the newsletter:

General Membership:

- \$10 Individual \$25 Business Basic
- \$15 Family \$50 Business Supporter
- \$50 Supporter Other Donation

Friends of the Montezuma Heritage Park:

- \$10 Ditch Digger \$25 Hoggee
- \$50 Sal the Mule \$100 Lock Tender
- \$500 Canaller

Yes, I'm interested in Volunteer Opportunities with MHS; please contact me!

The Montezuma Historical Society is a Private 501(c)(3) organization, and your donations and contributions are tax deductible.

Yes, I would like to order brick(s) in honor of a living or deceased loved one. Please send me order form(s).

Yes, please reserve (number attending) for the Jun. 13th Annual Dinner at Brenda's (Reservations due by Mon., Jun. 2nd - or call Cheryl Longyear at 315-776-4656).

Yes, please reserve (number attending) for the July 25th trip to Lockport. (An itinerary will be sent upon receipt of your reservation, or call Mellony Carner at (315-776-5390; final payment is due July 2nd).

No, I cannot attend the above programs, but enclosed is my ballot for the 2018 election of officers and board of trustees listed below.



2018 - 2019 Montezuma Historical Society Election Ballot (Vote for one of each officer position and eight trustees. Return by June 2nd.)

- | | | |
|----------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| President | <input type="checkbox"/> Mellony Carner | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Vice President | <input type="checkbox"/> Barbara Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Treasurer | <input type="checkbox"/> Kathleen Decker | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Secretary | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheryl Longyear | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Baker | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> Roberta Baker | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> James Decker | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> Shirley Gillmore | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> Cynthia Laraway | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> Edward Laraway | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> Kathleen Longyear | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Trustee | <input type="checkbox"/> Stanley Longyear | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

The Story Teller

MONTEZUMA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO Box 476
Montezuma, NY 13117

PHONE:
315-776-4656

E-MAIL:
cml115@tds.net
[http://www.
montezumahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montezumahistoricalsociety.org)

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Montezuma-Historical-Society-
Friends-of-Montezuma-
Heritage-Park](https://www.facebook.com/Montezuma-Historical-Society-Friends-of-Montezuma-Heritage-Park)

**Newsletter Editor
Cheryl Longyear
Town Historian**