

# Schenectady County Historical Society Newsletter

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32 Washington Avenue, Schenectady, New York 12305 (518) 374-0263 FAX: (208) 361 5305

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## CALENDAR

**Saturday, November 10, 2001**

**1:30: Refreshments**

**2:00: Program: Honoring William Seward**

**Presenter: Duncan Campbell Crary**

**Tuesday, November 20, 2001**

**7:30 PM**

**Board of Trustees**

**Saturday, December 8, 2001**

**1:30: Refreshments**

**Annual Christmas Party**

**(See related article)**

**Tuesday, December 18, 2001**

**7:30 PM**

**Board of Trustees**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Earlier this year my daughter acquired a sundial. Not one of those pedestal-mounted garden decorations, but a small cast-metal utilitarian thing. About the size of a dessert plate. She asked me to mount it on the railing of her deck. There were no instructions, but I figured if I located it to show the current time it had to be right. And when I checked it out later in the afternoon -- surprise, surprise -- it was off by about 15 minutes. Another blow to the ego.

The use of sundials goes way back. Sundials were used by the ancient Egyptians, who probably had lifted the idea from prior civilizations. An almanac is a reference source for data regarding the movement of the Earth and its moon, the Sun and other stars. The word almanac is derived from the Coptic language of ancient Egypt. The Egyptians may have used their sundials to know when it was time to stop work for their afternoon tea break. But more likely the sundials were used to predict the annual flooding of the Nile River. The shadow from the tip of the pointer can be used to indicate the change of seasons based on the inclination of the sun.

The concept of dividing the daylight and darkness into 12 hours each seems to have been derived from an ancient Babylonian arithmetic system to the base 12 rather than our decimal system to the base 10. The number 12 come about from the normal number of lunar months observed each year. The 360 degrees in a circle, and around the Earth's circumference, were the number of days in 12 lunar months. So they missed by a few days because they didn't like fractions. How can we justify the 60 minutes in an hour and 60 seconds in a minute? Here's a possible scenario. A clock has one hand to indicate hours and another to indicate minutes. And we have 5 fingers on each hand. Therefore 12 times 5 is 60! (Please, please, don't ever quote this as being a reference.) Even after the invention of clocks, the sundial was used by people to set their time.

There were at least a couple of things wrong with the sundial at my daughter's house. The most obvious problem was that the cast might not have had the correct angle for the pointer. The edge of the pointer must agree with the latitude of the site where it is used. That will position the edge so that it is parallel to the Earth's axis. For Schenectady this is  $42^{\circ} 49' 42''$ . In Miami it would be  $25^{\circ} 46' 37''$ . A casting probably tried for some angle in between. As the sun moves across our sky, the shadow moves clockwise around the dial. (In Australia it's counterclockwise.) With a little trigonometry the location of the lines for hours can be established for a given latitude. The sun papers to move  $15^{\circ}$  around the Earth each hour.

The other consideration is, as you may have already guessed, longitude. Time on the dial needs to be corrected based on the difference between the site and a reference center of the time zone. Before we had Standard Time Zones, each location established its own solar time. Solar time was established by the time when the sun was at its apex in the sky. Noon in Schenectady occurs about 12 minutes after noon in Boston. When it took a couple of days to travel between these two cities, what was another 12 minutes? With the industrial age came better time pieces and railroads. The railroads provided more rapid movement between sites.

The railroads tried to maintain schedules but were frustrated by each city having its own time reference. They established standard time zones for several cities. That is, each railroad had its own standard. By 1870 the country had over 50 time zones in addition to sites still using solar time. If a city was served by more than one railroad, there was more than one standard time. Pittsburgh had five different standard times posted on its railroad station. It wasn't until 1883 that the railroads agreed to agree. The following year our federal government went along with the concept. Again there was a local connection with the movement to have the government adopt standard time zones. He was Charles Dowd, principal of the Temple Grove Ladies' Seminary in Saratoga Springs. This institution is now Skidmore College.

We close with another "I didn't know that." Because the Earth's path around the sun is elliptical rather than circular, the length of time from the noon on one day to the next is not a constant 24 hours. 24 hours is an average. The length of time varies with the location of the Earth in its orbit. This results in the need to "correct" the apparent time indicated by the sundial depending on the date. There are only four days a year when the sundial displays the correct time: approximately April 19, June 14, September 1, and December 25. In between the time may be off, plus or minus, by up to 16 minutes.

My advice is if you want to align a sundial is to move to Utica, NY, which is near the center of the Eastern Time Zone and do the alignment on or about one of the above dates. If you need to reset your watch, base it upon the Weather Channel rather than your sundial.

–Bill Dimpelfeld

## NOVEMBER PROGRAM

Since November is officially designated by the governor and the legislature as New York State History Month, the Schenectady County Historical Society will participate with a program about William H. Seward who was not only secretary of state under Abraham Lincoln, but also a graduate of Union college in the class of 1820. Duncan C. Crary will talk about the Seward Memorial Project which is dedicated to improving civic pride and will add to the revitalization efforts in the neighborhood of Union College.

## DECEMBER PROGRAM

Hear ye! Hear ye! The December 8th program, CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD, will feature some society members telling stories of family Christmases, ethnic traditional foods and toys and costumes celebrating our diversity. THIS MEANS YOU!! Please give thought to your own childhood experience with Christmas and come prepared to tell us about it. Refreshments will be served at 1:30. Come and join us in our ethnic Christmas at 32 Washington Avenue in the Stockade. And if you did not celebrate Christmas, come and tell us about that too.

## **IN MEMORIAM: JAMES PONTIUS**

**"James Pontius, served on Niskayuna School Board." That's what the headline in the Gazette said. Sort of like saying Thomas Edison wintered in Florida. To us at the Schenectady County Historical Society, Jim Pontius was much, much more than that. He was indeed one of the members of the Society who made it his business to help the Society gain in strength and prestige in Schenectady County. Most notably he was one of the Society leaders who guided us through the precarious project, the building of the Grems-Doolittle library. As the original chairman of the fund raising effort to build the library, he not only had valuable advice but also the expertise which enabled the Society to raise the funds which made the library a possibility. He, along with Mandy Grems and later Bill Broughton, made it possible for that dream to come true. Through his position with the Broughton Fund, we have continued to receive grants for the enhancement of the library. Memorial contributions may be made to the Rotary Club of Schenectady Foundation Inc., P.O. Box 346, Schenectady 12301, or the William Gundry Broughton Charitable Private Foundation, 133 Saratoga Road, Scotia 12302.**

### **AND THERE ARE GIFTS . . .**

**We are deeply grateful for the thoughtfulness of Esther C. Wheeler who, upon her death, left us a legacy of \$30,000. This will be added to our endowment fund, which in turn will provide income for the continued growth of the Society. As many people have observed, we have been able, through such generosity, to have ongoing maintenance of the buildings, and have begun to refurbish our substantial collection of paintings.**

### **LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGY COURSES OFFERED IN 2002**

**Interested in learning more about Local Archaeology? Then check out these two non-credit courses starting in January 2002 at Schenectady County Community College. For registration materials and costs, contact Continuing Education at 381-1423.**

**"Pre-Colonial Archaeology and Field Study," a hands-on course that explores current ideas about Native American ways of life prior to European settlement in the Capital District through research, interpretation and artifact investigation. Offered by Louise Basa, Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM, January 24 through April 4.**

**"Researching and Interpreting Documents in Archaeology". This course examines primary and secondary documents used in archaeology. Sources, methods, locations, and interpretations of a variety of documents used for research, proposals, and publications in archaeology are addressed. Visits to repositories, discussions, lectures and hands-on activities are among the methods employed. Offered by Dr. Ronald Kingsley, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 to 9 PM, January 23 through March 12.**

### **AMONG OURSELVES**

**On the 4th of September we received membership dues from Mr. Edward A. DeGraff of Mount Morris, NY. Mr. DeGraff appended the following message: "I am 99 years old and live alone." We are in awe and admiration. The spirit of the De Graffs lives on into the 21st Century. We wish Mr. DeGraff the best of health and may he enjoy many more years of membership with us.**

### **DON'T MISS A GOOD LECTURE**

**This just in. The following lecture is scheduled by the Van Epps Hartley Chapter of the NYS Archaeological Association.**

**Title: "Harbors at the Headwaters of Prosperity: Albany's Late 18th Century Waterfront." Saturday, October 27 at 1 PM, Schenectady County Public Library Speaker: Christopher Kilkenny, Hartgen Archeological Associates.**

**"The natural Hudson River shore and the earliest episodes of waterfront expansion were excavated down at the State University Construction Fund Site in down town Albany in the summer of 1999. Major features that were exposed include the 1750's stockade and two continuous waterfront wharves that span the entire 300 foot length**

of the site. Various construction techniques used in these features demonstrate an increase in engineering knowledge and technology. In addition, the development of the site reflects a shift of focus in Albany from defense to transportation and trade in the late 18th century."

## **MUSEUM NEWS**

**Jo Mordecai**  
Coordinator of Exhibits

## **CHRISTMAS**

The December theme in the Vrooman Room is "Christmas Around the World," showing different ways of celebrating the season in other countries. The Vrooman Room is generally for children; the rest of the house as always will be an 1895 Christmas. With the help of the Hugh Platt Garden Club, we always find our house warm, cheery and old fashioned at this time of year. Hopefully as Dora Jackson would have liked it.

Please members! Does any of you have a Santa Claus Suit we could borrow? Or Christmas decorations or toys from England, France, Italy, Holland, Poland, etc.??? We'd love to include them in the exhibit. Please call Jo Mordecai, 374-0263. And let's hope winter will be kind to us this season.

-- Jo Mordecai --

## **WALKABOUT**

The "Touch of Dutch" exhibit drew delighted attention at the Walkabout. Many people came to admire and ask questions. The exhibit will run through early November. Thanks are due the following people who generously lent many of the Dutch treasures which gave so much color and authenticity to the exhibit: Johanna Woldring, Anneke Bull, Tecla Hever and Barbara Oswald. During the Walkabout Johanna, Tecla and Anneke performed with the Dutch Dancers in their decorative Dutch costumes. I would also like to thank the following people who served at docents in the Dora Jackson house during the Walkabout: John van Schaick, Ed Reilly, Neela Heaney, Yvonne Matthews, Pat Campbell, Jeff Parry, Irma Mastrean, Steve Hever, Frank Taormina, Richard Matthews, Bill Massoth, Ann Ross, Jason Nemic, Wilma Corcoran, Beryl Grant, Dana Nemic, Stephanie Albers, Sally van Schaick, Elsie Maddaus, Ann Christman, Olive Berner, Larry Rainey, Ann Siddons, Chris Hunter, David Richstone, Jo Mordecai, Mallory Richstone and John Berdy. Also thanks to the servers, Dorothy White and Rose Dixon; the kitchen helpers, Anastasia Berdy, Ann Karl and Carolyn Veeder. And of course, the cookie providers: Ann Ross, Ann Karl, Sally van Schaick, Neela Heaney, Beryl Grant, Elsie Maddaus, Anastasia Berdy and Dorothy White. Finally a special Thank You to the Hugh Platt Garden Club for the floral decorations in each room: Wilma Corcoran, Jean Mastrianni, Pat Campbell, Helen Murray, Mary Reagan, Janet Kristel and Edna Scheper.

## **FROM YOUR HOUSE TO OUR HOUSE**

- Donor**     **The Colangelo Family**     **Three large floor plants now in the Vrooman Room**
- Donor**     **Elsie Maddaus**     **Two cut glass dishes that once belonged to Elsie's mother, Minnie Raymond**
- Donor**     **Rose Fetter**     **Nine Chinese paintings; nine prints of Chinese watercolors; a book of Children's sketches; four Chinese magazines; one packet Chinese Folk Paper cuts; all obtained during her visit to China**
- Donor:**     **Frank Belrose**     **A Collection of Badges (The Redman) given in memory of his wife, Norma**

## **LIBRARY DOINGS**     -Virginia LaGoy, Librarian

**New!!** 2002 calendars with photos of Schenectady past from our files. Buy early--\$6.00 each.

**Republished:** The Story of the Schenectady Massacre Available for \$3.00.

**We are looking for:**

**Heritage Hunters newsletters from Saratoga County**

**Chair mats**

**Pencils (for our patrons' use)**

**Volunteers**

**Schenectady County yearbooks /elementary school photo albums**

**Telephone books from the 1970s**

**Help--Excellent typist for a special project using Word 97.**

**Thank you . . . To Mrs. Ruth Hand for her recent contribution of 600+ mostly family files. These are still in the process of being filed with our existing files. We are pleased to have received these materials from her many years of research.**

**To other donors . . .**

**John B. Johnson, Jr. Photograph of Circulation Managers, August 22, 1917-NY state**

**Ruth G. Fitzsimmons Cadwallader Colden papers, Vol. IX**

**Steve Dunn Video--Iron Horse in Schenectady (ALCO)**

**Chemung Hist. Soc. Menu-Little Jack Horner's, Schenectady**

**Jack Mabee Van Patten Genealogy, corrected copy**

**Hartgen Assoc. Phase IA Report Proposed Western Gateway Transportation Center**

**Mr. Kazmar Documents relating to property on North Street**

**2 Wills--Kazmarczik family**

**Elsa Church Various books and pamphlets Church family records**

**Betty Wemple Various education documents, Schenectady schools Terracian, 1937-8**

**Marie Webb Yearbook, Montaneer--June 1943, January 1944 Class Night, Central Park, June 1940**

**Horton, Malcolm Directory of Scottish Settlers in North America, 1625-1825, by David Dobson**

**Mary Drake Various booklets on Glenville**

**Ron Ratchford Videotape of SCHS monthly meeting, March 10, 2001**

**Edith Adams photos and material written by and about Corinne Conde**

**Norman Collins Union College: an unfinished history by Dixon Fox**

**Wayne Harvey Various books and pamphlets**

**Frank Pochabradsky "Motorgram" Oct. and Nov. 1938; GE Works News**

**Bette Geci Packet of letters to Fannie Fisk of Schenectady**

**Acquisitions:**

**CDs: 1910 New York State Census index-Upstate**

**1870 New York State Census index**

**City Directories: New York 1886-1894**

**The Erie Canal in Schenectady County, PowerPoint presentation by Frank Taormina**

**Western European Vital Records Index**

**Books: Nineteenth-and Early Twentieth-Century Domestic Site Archaeology in New York State, edited by John P. Hart and Charles L. Fisher**

**Catalogue of Historical and Genealogical Material, Montgomery County**

**Department of History and Archives**

**SCHENECTADY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS**

**Ona Curran has focused on the 50 paintings in the Society's collection, three-quarters of which need professional help. There are also two important early 19th century needlework pictures. Conservation of these works could**

run into the tens of thousands of dollars. Ms. Curran points out that there are foundation grants that should be explored to help the Society begin to take on its responsibility in preserving these treasures. In addition she recommends that we create an Art Restoration fund and that we join the Williamstown Conservation Center. This groups requires an initial fee of \$750. and spending \$1,000 per year (amount depends on annual budget). In view of the work that has to be done, it will not be difficult to spend \$1000 a year and the society will get a reduced rate per hour (\$78 to \$68).

#### **RESTORATION OF MAJOR PAINTING IN SOCIETY'S COLLECTION -Ona Curran**

Thanks to the Kindls, one of the Society's earliest paintings has been cleaned and restored to its original state. The painting, The Annunciation, is thought to have been based on an engraving in a Dutch 18th century Bible, and dates about 1740. It was customary in the early 18th century for artists of "limners," as they were often called, to use Bible illustrations as source material for their craft. The artist is unknown but may possibly be John Heaton who is said to have married "Dutch". Other paintings attributed to John Heaton are in the Albany Institute of History and Art. This painting is on view at the Schenectady County Historical Society, and the public is most welcome to visit the Society and see one of its major holdings and earliest treasures. The Society is grateful to Katie and Fred Kindl for their continued support of the Society's endeavors.

#### **Is there a Wemple out There?**

Is there a Wemple or two who would like to see two portraits of their ancestors cleaned and restored to their former glory? The portraits are of Myndert and Elizabeth Vosburgh Wemple and were painted about 1830. The portraits are good examples of folk art by an unknown artist who worked in a primitive manner. Restoration will cost approximately \$3,500 - \$4,000. You do not have to be a Wemple or a Vosburgh, nor do you have to contribute the entire amount unless you want to (it is tax deductible). The only requirement is that you like folk art and wish to help the society maintain its collections.

#### **STROLLING THOUGH THE ARCHIVES ON A RAINY AFTERNOON . . .**

Working on the "Legal Matters" archives can be sleep-producing on some days. Then along comes an item or so that sends us scurrying to the copy machine. Recently we encountered three documents that really captured attention: the disposition of small, poor children who may have become public charges.

**1. THIS INDENTURE, Made the Fifth day of March in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and thirty WITNESSETH, that Christopher C. Peek and Cornelius T.V Santvoord, Overseers of the poor of the city of Schenectady, by and with the consent of Isaac M. Schermerhorn, Mayor of said City have, and by these presents do put out Robert Simmons a Colored poor boy of the said city, of the age of Ten years Six months and . . . days as a servant to Jacob Hogeland Amsterdam County of Montgomery until he shall accomplish the age of twenty one year, according to the statute in that case made and provided: during which time he shall faithfully serve his said Master as a servant in his family, in and about the domestic concerns. And the said Mater shall, during said term, find and provide him good and sufficient meat, drink, apparel, medical aid when sick, lodging, washing, and all other things necessary for a servant, and shall, at the expiration of his service, give him one new bible, and a double suit of apparel, one suit to be new and shall also during his service, instruct, or cause him to be instructed in reading and writing.**

**Witness the hands and seals of the parties, the day and year aforesaid.**

**[signatures}**

**2. This one, dated December 7, 1825 is similar in style and stipulations to the above. This time the child is "Benjamin Hoeway, a poor boy of the said city, of the age of four years Eleven months and one day " to serve "as a servant to James Thomson."**

**3. Albany, the Fourth Day of November, 1721**

**Wee underWriting Johannis Halenbeck and Nellie his Wif do hereBy acknowledge to have received of Evert**

Wendell full Satisfaction Pay Seventeen pounds Six Shillings being Just ... for our negro Child aged between four and five years Called Siera and wee Do faithfully promise to Deliver the Said Child as Soon as pofsible as witnefs our hand in Albany This Day and Year first above writing  
[signatures were by mark]

## **MABEE FARM PROJECT**

September was a lively month for the Mabee Farm. Scores of people joined us for a rousing Fall Festival, and 401 people traveled by trolley or by car to visit us on the day of the Walkabout, September 29. By the time you read this we shall have had the Historic Foliage Tour on October 14th. Thanks to the many stalwart volunteers who kept things flowing.

The Education committee in concert with the Mabee Farm Project mounted a display at the Mohawk Pathways Girl Scout Riverwalk in early October. The afternoon weather was punctuated by mini-tornadoes which made it almost impossible to maintain a display of our offerings. However we were able to distribute leaflets describing the Mabee farm, and, in particular, calling attention to our program now in process for enhancing the study of Colonial history in this region for fourth grade students. Once again, we are grateful to the volunteers who helped in every imaginable way to make it a memorable afternoon. We definitely need more volunteer help.

Ned Pratt is the consultant who is working on displays for the barn which will provide ancillary experiences for fourth grade students. In concert with the Education Committee he has also prepared a workbook based on the requirements of the State Education Department and the rich discoveries of the New Netherland project which is translating thousands of documents that have been languishing in the State Library waiting for translation from Middle Dutch.

Thanks to the Lally Foundation, we have funding for this project which is a pioneer in the area. Needless to say we are trying to get information about this activity out to as many teachers as possible. Normally we would do this through the Teacher Center in this region, but the Teacher Center has not been funded yet, owing to the lack of a supplemental budget.

Thanks, Mary! On another note: Thanks to Mary Kuykendall who donated a pair of antique andirons for use in a jamb-less fireplace. These are a unique find and come just at the time we were looking to mock-up the fireplace feature in the farm's living room.

**Project Completion Report:** President Bill Dimpelfeld presented the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation with a final Request for Payment on our contract with the State. Accompanying the request was a Project Completion Report which spelled out the various preservation tasks that the State had agreed to help fund. These included repair to the front wall of the "brick building" or "slave quarters," repair to leaks in the roof of the Main House, spraying for insect control, repair to the chimney and other repairs. Difficulties included the extra expense of necessary archaeological study, and such arcana as replacing bricks in the brick house with new bricks especially made to meet the size of nearly 300-year-old bricks.

## **CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT**

**Wanted!**

Someone to do filing in the library. Our librarian can never catch up.

Great opening for volunteer with unsatisfied clerical lust! Call librarian at 374-0263

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**Wanted!**

Someone to do data entry on one of our wonderful computers. You do not have to be a computer geek; you just need enthusiasm for the work of the society plus the ability to follow directions. Call librarian at 374-0263

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**Wanted!**

**A real extrovert to organize boat and bus trips. There are wonderful places to go around here, but all the board members are maxed out and we need fresh blood, verve, muscle and know-how to plan trips. Call office at 374-0263**

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**Wanted!**

**A grant writer. We know the grants are out there; we just need that certain person with the time to ferret out where the grants are hidden so we can continue to enhance the work of the Society. Call President or office manager at 374-0263**

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**Wanted!**

**Docents. A docent is a tour guide. We're running out of docents and we want fresh troops. Come now: you know that you've always secretly wanted to show people around the Museum. Follow Jo or Sally or Wayne or Ann a time or two and you'll get the hang of it. Call Jo Mordecai at 374-926 for further information.**

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### **POSTCARD OF THE MOMENT**

**This picture of the First Reformed Church was taken in 1907, which means it is the church immediately preceding the one now on the corner of Church and Union. If you buy this card you'll see the touch of autumn in the tree at the right. [See main pages for all postcards for sale]**

### **THE ODYSSEY OF MOSES VINEY**

**Part Four: Exile and Redemption by Neil Yetwin**

**In which our hero has a sudden twist of fate as Congress passes the Fugitive Slave Law**

**Congress's passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in September, 1850, suddenly threatened Moses Viney's hard-won security. At slave catchers headed North to earn substantial bounties, abolitionists just as quickly broke into courtrooms to free captured slaves. Moses was driving Nott's three wheeled carriage past the popular Givens Hotel at the corner of State and Broadway when he suddenly spotted Richard Murphy, his former master. Viney rushed to the Union campus to inform Nott, who recruited Judge Douglass Campbell and Attorney James Brown to review the situation.**

**When it became clear that Murphy was well within his rights to reclaim his "property," Nott sent his grandson Clarkson N. Potter to Maryland to negotiate with the slaveowner, who had returned home when it became clear that his would not be an easy task. Murphy demanded an exorbitant \$1600 for the former slave, and the decision was made to send Moses to Canada in case slave catchers were sent to Schenectady to bring him back in shackles.**

**Canada had been a haven for runaway slaves since blacks who had fought in the War of 1812 became familiar with the country. As slavery in Upper Canada had already begun a sharp decline, slaves began trickling across the border. By 1830 a black convention had met in Philadelphia "to devise ways and means for the bettering our condition." One of the topics discussed was how to encourage black slaves to migrate to Canada.**

**From 1819 until 1830, slaveholders had pressured Congress to arrange for escaped slaves in Canada to be returned to the United States. But in 1826 the Canadian government stated that they would never agree to surrender them. Despite American threats to sever relations, the Executive Council of Lower Canada issued an 1829 statement that reads in part, "The state of slavery is not recognized by the law of Canada, nor does the law admit that any man can be the proprietor of another. Every slave therefore who comes into the province is immediately free whether he has been brought in by violence or entered it of his own accord."**

Coupled with the harshness of the Fugitive Slave Law and the organization of the Underground Railroad, the Canadian policy case a huge black migration over the border after 1830. When slavery was officially ended in Lower Canada by the Imperial Act of 1833, this migration increased tenfold. Three thousand blacks entered Canada within three months: nearly all of the black waiters in Pittsburgh left for Canada armed with pistols and Bowie knives; seventy fugitive slaves from Tennessee crossed the border in just one day; John Fairfield, a white conductor on the Underground Railroad, got 28 slaves across the border by organizing them into a funeral procession. Harriet Tubman proclaimed that she "could not trust Uncle Same with her people any longer" and proceeded to help escaped slaves enter Canada. Fugitives who arrived destitute were greeted by the Canada Mission, the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, and churches and benevolent societies which stood ready to help with food, clothing, money and shelter. Like Moses Viney just a few years before, the fugitives were all "determined to die rather than be recaptured." At the same time, slaveholders back in the United States began intensive manhunts for escaped slaves. Jerry McHenry, a prominent African-American citizen of Syracuse, New York, was seized by slave catchers, but members of the Liberty Party rescued him and got him into Canada. A Boston slave named Shadrach was take from a U. S. Marshal and sent to Canada as well. In both word and deed, radical abolitionists let the South know that they would never conform to the Compromise of 1850 and its Fugitive Slave Law.

Eliphalet Nott thus provided his coachman-messenger with the following signed affidavit, dated December 5, 1850, to carry with him into Canada and use until his freedom could be secured: "This certifies that Moses Viney, a colored man, has been in my employment for eight years. He leaves the United States on account of the late fugitive slave law. He is a man of great integrity, and great industry and capability. He is a moral and religious man in whom entire confidence can be placed. Should the funds he has taken not be sufficient for his support till he gets employment, he is hereby authorized to draw on me at sight at the Mohawk Bank at Schenectady, State of New York, for any sum not exceeding one hundred dollars, and I will honor the draft." Moses remained in Canada in the employ of a family named Palement until 1852. When Richard Murphy was informed that his former slave was well out of reach, he reluctantly agreed to accept Nott's offer of \$250 for Mosses' emancipation. Viney returned to Schenectady a free man and resumed his duties at Union College, having narrowly escaped slavery for the second time in his life.

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The most definitive history of Schenectady, surpassing the Nineteenth Century efforts of Jonathan Pearson, is nearing completion. Much of the exhaustive research has been done, using the primary sources in the Grems Doolittle Library of the Schenectady County Historical Society. Replete with an authoritative narrative, maps and charts, this book promises to be the ultimate work on Schenectady for the foreseeable future. BUT the final stages of completion take time and money. Grants have run low; much meticulous final work needs to be done -- and this costs money: money for transportation; money for duplication of documents; money for preparing the index; and money to get the manuscript camera-ready for printing Here's where you come in. For a Gift of \$1,000 you become a Patron of the Humanities. Your name will be included on a special page in the final volume, where you will be listed as a Patron. Checks should be made payable to the Colonial Schenectady Project (a 501 (c)(3) organization), 1127 Avon Road, Schenectady, NY 12308.

#### **FUNDS NEEDED!**

Renew your Status as a Patron of the Arts Our extensive art collection is suffering from Deferred Maintenance! Our beautiful paintings need cleaning, restoring and frame enhancing.

Want to help? Contributions to this fund are tax deductible and can be made in your name, or in memory of a deceased relative or friend , or even to celebrate and honor the accomplishment of someone you admire.

**CONTRIBUTORS DURING AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER, 2001**

**WITHOUT YOU WE ARE NOTHING!**

**FOUNDATIONS**

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**The Walter S Quinlan Foundation**  
**Rotary Club of Schenectady, Inc.**  
**Schenectady Foundation**  
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