

2024 Programs & Events

See Schedule on page 3 for upcoming 2024 Programs



Historic Nunda

Volume 13 Issue 1

Spring 2024

Uncovering Lock 45

The NHS has recently uncovered an important piece of history, thanks to a grant and the hard work of a Hark Homes crew. Lock 45 of the old Genesee Valley Canal is once again visible to those traveling on Route 436 near the village line!

The lock was one of four in or very near the village of Nunda. Each of these locks were 90 feet long and 15 feet wide. Built from local bluestone, they were composite locks which were lined with horizontal wooden planks attached to vertical posts or risers. The average lift of the locks on the canal was 10 feet, but Lock 45 was a bit lower, only 9 feet. The four locks allowed boats to navigate the roughly forty feet of elevation change between Lock 42 (near the car wash on State Street) and Lock 45 on the western edge of the village. Lock 43 was located halfway between North and Second Street under the present Seating Inc (old Foote) Factory. Lock 44 was at the west end of First Street. The four village locks were used from 1851 through 1878. At the close of the 1878 season the canal was abandoned and drained. The two locks in the middle of the village were soon erased,

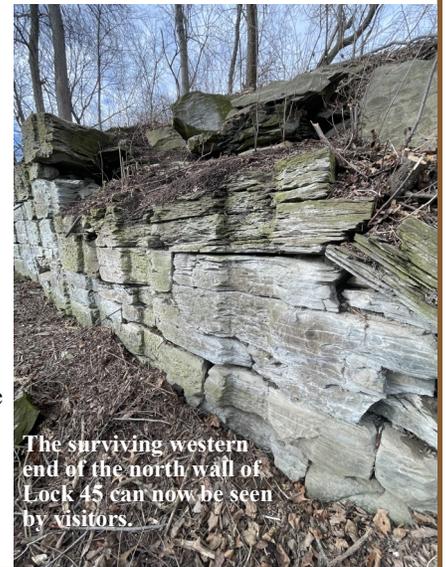
with the upper stones carried away and the remainder filled in. But Locks 42 and 45 did not suffer the same fate. Probably because of their out of the way location, these two locks were not filled in, although many of their bluestone blocks were carried away to be used for foundations, sidewalks, and fill. Over the next century and a half, Lock 45, along the road to Oakland, was filled with debris and hidden by thick brush.

In 1940 the State of New York placed the familiar historical marker (that was restored by NHS members in 2017) near the lock on Route 436. The old lock and the canal bed remained mostly hidden from view.

The Society applied for a small grant through the Morris Ridge Solar Energy Center's Historic Resources Mitigation Project in April of 2021. Last fall we received notice of the grant's approval. Favorable weather conditions in February allowed Hark Homes to carry out the tree and brush removal at Lock 45 and part of the nearby canal bed. Great care was taken not to damage or endanger the surviving lock and canal prism and to assure the safety of visitors. Additionally, some repair was needed on the historical marker nearby, leading to the decision that the sign be moved closer to the lock and further from the roadway. This will help to better interpret the site and protect the sign from road spray and other damage. The sign will be reset in the summer and the NHS and the Town Historian's Office will schedule a rededication of the marker and a guided historical tour of the site at that time.

The Nunda Historical Society thanks the Morris Ridge Solar Energy Center for the mitigation grant, Vinny and Phil Hark and the rest of the Hark Homes crew for the work, and property owners Jeff and Sue Long and Bob and Jill Michielsen for their cooperation in the project.

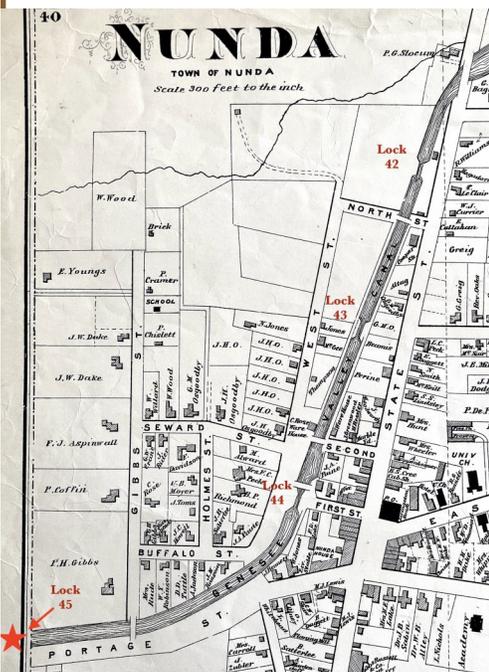
We hope you will stop and explore this important piece of Nunda history!



The surviving western end of the north wall of Lock 45 can now be seen by visitors.



NHS members Gary Ludwig and Jeff and Sue Long pose by the newly restored historical marker near Lock 45. Behind them, hidden in the brush, are the remains of the canal and lock.



This 1872 Map of the Village of Nunda shows the route of the Canal through Nunda. Locks 42, 43, 44 labeled in red. Lock 45 is just off the map to the left.

The President's Corner

From the President

Happy Spring to all!

Although it might appear the Society has been in hibernation over the past two winter months, as you will see through the pages of this newsletter we have been quite busy preparing for our 41st year of collecting, preserving, presenting and promoting our local history!

Over the past two months our volunteers have been busy with general cleaning, maintenance, and planning for the new year. The NHS Board continued its monthly meetings and our library crew has been busy finishing the accessioning of last year's donations. We have also been working on new exhibits, research requests, publication projects, and our daily facebook posts. We have also moved forward in our capital building and canal cleaning projects - updates on both are found in this newsletter.

You will also find in these pages our schedule for this year's programs and activities as well as an updated membership list. Members should check to make sure they are listed - remember we have adjusted our membership year to run from January through December. If there is a problem, please let us know!

We hope you get a chance to visit us this year!



Tom Cook

Dalton History Room Update

In our last newsletter we introduced the NHS Dalton History Adventure Room. Last month KCS Superintendent Lesley Powers informed us that we had been chosen for a 2024 Excellence in Student Service Award from the Genesee Valley School Board Association. Mrs. Powers, who submitted the nomination, described the project as "a collaborative partnership between the Nunda Historical Society and the Keshequa Central School." She goes on to state that: "The development of the History Adventure Room has created more than just the opportunity for students to learn more about local history. It supports teachers with their instruction by offering lessons and professional development. It provides an opportunity for parents and community members to learn about local history. It has promoted community participation in local organizations and brings the community together."

In our last newsletter we introduced the NHS Dalton History Adventure Room. Last month KCS Superintendent Lesley Powers informed us that we had



Tom Cook and Superintendent Powers with the award plaque

The NHS is pleased to partner with Keshequa Central School in the Dalton History Adventure Room and, along with Superintendent Powers, looks forward to what she described as "a long lasting partnership into the future!"

NHS Volunteer Karla Gordinier talks with second graders in the History Room about immigration in her family's history.



Our Mission

The Nunda Historical Society collects, researches, preserves, interprets, and promotes the history, heritage, and culture of the area of western New York in and around the Town of Nunda and educates the public through its collections and programming.

Wednesday March 13, 7 PM “Ran Away With the Circus!” by Jane Oakes. Oh, the excitement of seeing a poster announcing that a circus was coming to your town! Many a young person dreamed of running away with the circus, and some from our area even did. New York State has many interesting connections with American circus history. From “Yankee” Robinson, who gave the Ringling Brothers their start, to P.T. Barnum’s “Ossian Giant,” you’ll meet some New Yorkers who followed the lure of the sawdust circle.

Wednesday April 10, 7 PM - “Women as Family Documentarians, from the Family Bible to Home Movies” by Corinne Elsie Hooker. Corinne will be sharing her research and findings on the role women played in documenting their families, communities, and themselves over time with a focus on the home movies they took in the mid 20th century. The program will include some digitized movies from the 1950s and 60s. Local residents are encouraged to share their own family home movies made before 1980 for possible inclusion in the program and to be entered into the NHS archives.

Wednesday, May 8, 7 PM “Camp 23; The CCC at Big Bend in Letchworth Park.” By Tom Cook In the spring of 1933 the first of four Civilian Conservation Camps in Letchworth Park was established on the Genesee River at Big Bend. NHS member Tom Cook will share the history of the camp and examine the important relationship between Camp 23 and the Towns of Nunda and Portage. The daily life and work projects of the Big Bend Camp will also be discussed. The talk will feature CCC photographs from the NHS’s Roy Gath Collection and material from Letchworth Park’s archives. The program will include information on how families can re-search and share their own CCC connections. The Society will also have available autographed copies of Tom Cook’s 2014 Images of America book “The Conservation Corps in Letchworth State Park”.

Sunday, May 18, 2 PM NHS Annual Meeting will be held in the Museum area. Members are invited to attend in person or join us via Zoom. The meeting will include a brief review of the Society’s activities and achievements over the past year and a look forward into 2025. Annual election of board members will also take place. Watch for details as to accessing the zoom meeting.

Friday, May 31 - Saturday June 1; Be sure to stop by the NHS Booth at Nunda Fun Days!

Wednesday, June 12. The NHS Annual Tour and Picnic

4:30- 5:45 PM- Join us for a members only history tour of one of our area historic houses or buildings. (Watch for details of this year’s tour location.)

6:00 - 7 PM. - Annual picnic at the NHS Pavilion (Watch for details)

7 PM - 8 PM Musician and storyteller Don Dwyer returns to the NHS with a new program - “The Music of the Women of the American Civil War”.

Saturday, July 6 Nunda Americana Day - This celebration of Nunda’s history is a community wide event. We are pleased to join the Village of Nunda and other local organizations in hosting a variety of activities for people of all ages. The NHS schedule will include a local history walk, a variety of presenters and activities during the day and then our popular guided history wagon rides in the afternoon. Be sure to watch for details!

Saturday, August 17 Town- Wide Yard Sales The NHS will be holding our annual garage sale and bake sale in our annex and pavilion. Watch for times and details!

Wednesday, September 11, “The Mindset and Background of the Erie Canal and Genesee Valley Canal” by Craig Braack. Allegany County Historian Craig Braack will explore the origins of New York State’s great 19th century’s engineering projects with a focus on the famous Erie Canal and our local Genesee Valley Canal. Those who are familiar with Craig’s program know the enthusiasm and insight he brings to his topics and this program will not disappoint as he examines the “can do” spirit that made the projects possible and the lessons they hold for our modern day.

Wednesday, October 9. “The Perry Gang, Ossian Train Robbers” by William D. Burt The Perry Gang rampaged through western New York from 1905 to 1929, robbing trains at gunpoint, looting moving freight cars, breaking into cars sitting in yards, and blowing safes in railroad stations. Though they started out in Niagara Falls and haunted the New York Central Falls Road and Hojack, some of their most memorable heists were on the Erie between Hornell and Portage and the Lackawanna between Atlanta and Wayland. The burglary that sent Bert Perry to state prison in 1929 was at the Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern station in Birdsall.

Wednesday, November 13th, 7 PM. “We Were There, Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times.” by The Geriators. This theatre troupe who call themselves “mature actors” will be presenting a series of short true plays about the effect of wars from the Napoleonic Wars to WWII on ordinary people, leavened with songs. The Geriators have been performing at Rochester area venues for over 20 years including local colleges, festivals, and nonprofit organizations.

Sunday, November 24th, 2:30 PM., “Music in Miniature”, a program by Dennis James, a concert featuring miniature musical instruments throughout music history. The program will be hosted by Trinity Church. Watch for more details!

Saturday, December 7th, Be sure to stop by the Nunda Historical Society during **Christmas in Nunda!** Enjoy our traditional Christmas decorations and special holiday displays and pick up some local history holiday gifts! Watch for more details!

Tuesday, December 17th 10 AM Members are invited to join our Tuesday Morning museum crew for our Christmas party! Watch for details.

Find us on Facebook! @nundahistoricalsociety

From our Head Librarian, Gail Diemoz: Do you know what’s hidden in your walls?

It’s always surprising what pops out of the walls when Nunda people start home remodeling! We in the museum are always happy to look at these items, clean them up and decide what to keep. This photograph shows part of a collection recently brought to us from the walls of the house at 4 Buffalo Street.

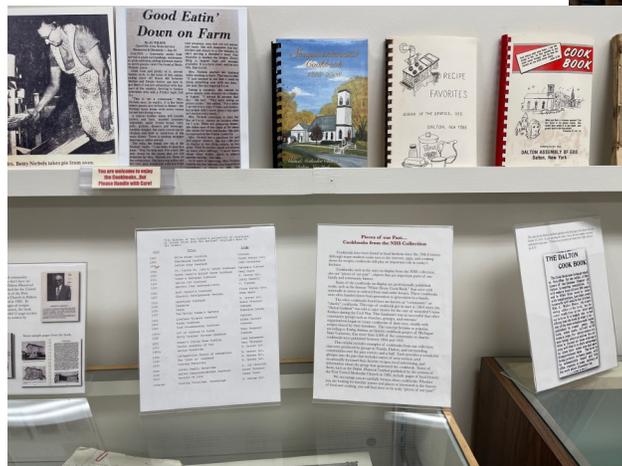


There are liquor bottles, medicine bottles, a canning jar with lids, a porcelain door knob, a large key, an unusual rock with a hole in it, a tin cup, and cans from the kitchen once containing pepper, baby milk and baking powder.

New Cookbook Display

By Tom Cook

Be sure to visit our new rotating display in the NHS Meeting Room: *“Cookbooks from the NHS Collection”*! The exhibit includes cookbooks from the kitchens of local families from 1887 to 2017, including both published and “community” or “charity” cookbooks. The latter group are the most interesting for they contain both the recipes contributed by local families and examples of area business advertising. The community cookbooks on display include those from Nunda, Dalton, Fillmore, Mount Morris and other neighboring towns. Visitors are welcome to carefully browse through most of the cookbooks and make copies of the old fashioned recipes you would like to try! The exhibit will be available through June.



Did you know?

NHS has a YouTube channel! Many of our programs can be viewed on our channel which is called Nunda History

2024 Members

John & Stacey Alioto
Jeremiah & Susie Axtell
Michael Bauer
Duane & Rosemary Bennett
Audrey Blakely
Sandra Bonadonna
Ethan Boss
Rich Boylan & Donna Moore
Patricia Brady
Jo Anne Brocklehurst
Alberta Brown
William Burt
Thomas & Barbara Byrnes
Jeryl Clark
Diana Congdon
Tom & Anne Cook
Philip Cox
Eric & Wendy Curry
Gail Diemoz
Patricia Dieter
Joseph DiPasquale
Robert & Michele Donovan
Pam Ells
Robert & Peggy Ellsworth
Luke Faulds
Frank & Linda Foley
Marge Foose

Theron Foote
Doug & Judith Galbraith
Paul & Nancy Gebauer
Cathie Gehrig
Ira & Nancy Gelser
James Gelser
Robert Gelser
Maureen Goho
Ray & Joanne Goll
Vicki Goll
John & Karla Gordinier
Mary Ellen Graves
Carol Griffen
Don & Valerie Griffing
Margaret Grosse
Jim & Melissa Hassan
Alex & Debra Heinonen
Sue & Ray Hengelsberg
Frank Howe
Vera Hurd
Byron Jefferies
Valerie Jessen
Geraldine Kennedy
Lonnie & Bonnie Kratts
Anne Lawson
Lynne & Clair Lawson
Marjorie Lehman
Jeff & Sue Long
Terry & Connie Lowell

George & Karen Lucas
Gary & Fran Ludwig
Kathy & Ron Macomber
Rennay Maker
Melissa Mallaber
Nancy Mann
Bob & Doris Marsh
Rachael & John Mc Allister
Mary Pat McKeown
Than & Debra Mehlenbacher
Donna Miceli
Bob & Jill Michielsen
Douglas Morgan
Janice Morris Pirrello
Rich & Ginny NiCastle
Marlene Noden
Julie Osborn
Phil & Amy Osika
R. Parker
Alex & Becky Pierce
Julie Piraino
Carolyn Pollock
Jerry Rease
Diane Ryan
Sherman Sanford
Joan Schumaker
Jane Schryver
Gretchen Sepik
Patricia Serafine

Richard & Mina Sinsabaugh
Patricia Simpson
Nedra Smith
Sue Smith
Maxine Snelgrove
Ron & Charlene Strain
Ted & Karen Gibson Strang
Charles Strickland
Anne Theders
Alice Thompson
Barbara Thompson
Tom & Laura Thornton
Beverly & Dennis Van Camp
Jennifer Van Houton
Earl Veley
Lynn & Erica Waite
Steve & Linda Walker
Karen Ward
Carl & Carol Weber
Isabelle Weir
Jean Weiss
Norman Wetterau
Jessica & Colin Wilcox
Fred & Sharon Willis
LeRoy & Theresa Wood
Charles Woolever
Eleanor Wright

Almost There - Our Building Fund Update:

On February 1, 2023 we started our Capital Building Fund Drive with \$70K for the project. Now, a year later, we have over \$143K, thanks to the generosity of our members, local businesses and the general public! That means we are less that \$20K from reaching the full \$160K to complete the entire project! The Society is currently reaching out to regional businesses and foundations in the hopes of raising the rest of the funds.

We received the architectural plans needed to complete the building permit process early this winter and hope to receive the permit by the end of March. The plan is to break ground in April or May! At the present time we will be able to complete the 42'X 20' addition, install the HVAC system, furnish the two rooms (archives and classroom/research rooms) and side the addition and the whole west side of the NHS building. If we can get the final \$17K we will be able to finish siding the entire building and complete the landscaping!

Thanks to all who have contributed to the project! We sent donation letters out in January; please contact us if you didn't receive one. We are still accepting donations. Forms are available on our website and some local locations. We will be posting updates on our Facebook page and website, www.nundahistory.org.



See www.nundahistory.org for updates:
everything happening at the Society, our Gift Shop, and
the History Room with ways to explore Nunda's history, and more.
Visit Often! This is Your Historical Society

NUNDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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2023 - 2024 Board of Directors

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Corresponding Secretary
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& Kathleen Macomber -
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Newsletter Committee
Tom Cook
Gail Diemoz
Karla Gordinier
Laura Thornton

Photographs by
Tom Cook

Visit www.nundahistory.org for more
items from our Gift Shop:



Book I includes: Gary Ayers, Bill Donovan, Deborah Essler, Karl Essler, Julie Long Finley, Chandra Foot, Robert Gelser, Don Hooker, Harold "Bud" Long, Gus Marano, Tom Moran, Larry Russell, Barbara Ryan, Robert Rymer, Joan Schumaker, Don Thompson, Jeff Thompson, Rachel Mastin Wood

"Notable Nundaiaans"

Book I and II

By Pete Piraino

These two books highlight the lives of over two dozen individuals who Nunda can be proud to call our own! These life stories, as told by the author, will serve as a source of local pride and inspiration for many years to come.

\$12 per book (plus postage)



Book II includes: Edmond Gormel Jr., Diane Stemper, Michelle Mann, Trisha Buchinger Snyder, Mary Jo Dudley, Sandra Bonadonna, George & Beverly Westacott, Reginald Grosse, Alan Willett, Joanne Livingston Small, Jason Perry, Richard Downs and Rhea Reed

*Nunda Historical Society Museum & Rose Shave
Gallery are open 10 am - noon on Tuesdays,
2-4 pm, on 1st and 3rd Sundays
March through November,
and at other times by arrangement.
Call : (585) 465-0971 or (585)490-3302*