



# BRICK NOTES

## *Letter from the President*

Dear CHS Members,

We are in the middle of a pandemic; however, your Board of Directors has been hard at work trying to keep up our property and buildings and planning for future programs. In this issue you will read about repairs and updates to the Buell Tool Museum roof and the Main Street picket fence. There are beautiful Faerie Gardens on the property for you to visit at any time. CHS gives out two scholarships every year to two Morgan School seniors; read about them on Page 3.

April Godwin Shuman has researched and written about the effects of the 1918 Pandemic right here in Clinton. You will also read about the Smokehouse, just behind the Old Brick and how it has been used recently to fine-tune its operation for a future members-only program.



We did have to postpone our Annual Plant and Bake Sale held every Memorial Day due to this year's town parade being cancelled but, like the troopers they are, our Garden Committee was able to hold the plant sale portion on June 20th. They did better than last year!

We had a great deal of tree damage due to Hurricane Isaias. This, of course, was an unbudgeted expense. We are able to cover these events due to the great advance planning of our treasurers and auditors over the years. Years ago it was Bob Bischoff, Carl Bixby and Faith Fisher, today we have Jack Scherban and Bion Shepard. We can also thank all

of you for your continued financial support of CHS, without which we wouldn't be able to maintain our properties and do all that is needed to keep CHS up and running.

By this time you know we have cancelled our September Garden Party and October Ghost Walks. We just cannot take any chances with our Membership and Board of Directors. As seen in these photos, the CHS Board continued to meet monthly during the summer months, outdoors with masks and social distancing, a dedicated and hard-working group.

We are working hard to keep up and ready to go, as well as planning for future events. Next year we are all hopeful of reestablishing and returning to our normal schedule.

Thanks, again, for helping us preserve Clinton's history!

Christy

**Due to the current Covid-19 guidelines, all Clinton Historical Society events for 2020 have been cancelled. The George Flynn Library and the Museum Room are closed until further notice. Please watch for our emails with updates and date changes.**



## Properties and Grounds Update:



Even through a pandemic the CHS Building and Grounds force has been busy at work making much needed improvements to the Old Brick property. The fence running along the sidewalk was replaced and enhanced thanks to the fine work of MRF Fence of Clinton. Thanks to Dave Bautz, Christy Pontillo and Jack Scherban for planning and overseeing it all from start to finish. A very noticeable

improvement came in mid-July when the roof of the Buell Tool Museum was replaced and touch-up painting and repairs were made. Check out these before and after pictures taken by Dave Bautz. Thank you to Dave Rainey, Dave Bautz, and Christy Pontillo for getting this long hoped-for project complete.



Due to the Covid-19 shut-down, many CHS events had to be reimaged. Many thanks to Megan, Bill and Cody Stine for creating a virtual tour of all that CHS has to offer. Made to fill in for CT Open House Day and Pierson Days, the video can be found on the CHS website [www.clintoncthistory.org](http://www.clintoncthistory.org). Thanks, also, to Laraine Scherban who teamed up with the Joel School's Second Grade teachers to create a History Scavenger Hunt that was very popular with students and parents alike. Laraine also assisted Morgan's Math Department in creating applicable math lessons using statistics from Clinton's history. Once a teacher, always a teacher is Laraine's mantra and CHS and the community benefit from her efforts.

Our Garden Committee has been extremely busy this Spring and their hard work has made our gardens particularly lovely this year. The addition of a Faerie Garden has been a huge success. Created by board member Carrie Allen as well as Garden Chairperson Dianne Gustafson, the miniature houses are hidden among the blossoms and foliage, making a visit to the CHS gardens more magical than ever. A decorative stone walkway by the rose trellis has been woven through the garden and a new garden of native plants, donated by Sue Melchior, was established nearby.

The garden crew is to be commended and thanked for putting together this year's Plant Sale. Our usual bake/plant sale was put on hold when Clinton's Memorial Parade was cancelled due to Covid-19. This group was not going to let it stop them. Garden Co-chairs Dianne Gustafson and John Quinn and a host of volunteers gathered plants, set up tables, priced and oversaw a very successful sale on June 20th - all done with the appropriate social distancing and making sure that masks were worn by workers and buyers alike. Much forethought and planning, helped by great weather, offered the community an opportunity to support CHS. Our gardening and plant sale volunteers are: Dave Bautz, Carol Bell, Mary Bovich, Casey Breen, Ginny Casanova, Carrie Fallen, Dianne Gustafson, Liz Isaacson, Jan Klepachi, Sue Kelley, Maryjo Lanzillotta, Sue Melchior, Sandy Paradis, Winnie Suraci, Donna Snow, Mary Jane Thompson, John Quinn and Gail Webster.





Here we are 102 years after the 1918 Spanish Flu Epidemic, dealing with similar circumstances in 2020. It had been named the Spanish Flu because the press in Spain, neutral in WWI, reported freely on the pandemic, unlike other countries. The diaries in our archives of Antionette Post Merrill from 1918 and 1919 give us a glimpse of Clinton at that time. She writes on Sept. 27, 1918 that Henry Kozlik had died of the Spanish flu. His obituary in the Clinton Recorder Oct. 3, 1918 notes that he was Clinton's first to die "in service to his country. In Boston after a short illness with the prevailing influenza, ending with pneumonia". This diagnosis becomes a common thread with Giles Stevens in Oct. 1918, Albert Carter in Nov. 1918, Edward Willard in Dec. of 1918 and Norma Hull in Jan. 1919. Antoinette writes on Oct. 20 1918, that the "influenza is developing into an epidemic". There is a great story in the March 20, 1919 issue of the Clinton Recorder with the headline "Eight Year Old Lad is Bold Traveler". William Bemis, an eight year old Winfield, Long Island lad, became possessed with the idea that there was "too much flu in the vicinity of his home." Young William took \$20 and left home to go to church. After church he

found a way to get to a train station. He took the N.Y., New Haven and Hartford Railway and then the Shoreline Electric Railway, with the goal of getting to Killingworth. William's family had visited the family of Frank Pavelka there for several summers. Upon his arrival in Clinton, he was helped in getting to Clinton House and then to the Clinton Garage. From there A.P. Fettig drove him to Killingworth. Needless to say Mr. Pavelka was rather surprised to see William. A note was "dispatched" to his parents who retrieved the boy and brought him back home to Long Island. The frantic parents wondered where the boy had gone and had notified police departments throughout the area, including Brooklyn, and were relieved, two days later, to learn of his whereabouts. "Dressed in a smart overcoat, wide cut knickerbockers, tan shoes, with a jaunty English military turban on which was a bronze medal, perched on one side of his head. William looked as if he were capable of following a globe trotter without serious embarassment as he boarded a trolley car for home" Quite the adventure for an eight year old to have such a concern that he took it upon himself to find a way to get away from the threat of getting the flu.

### Congratulations to the 2020 CHS Scholarship Winners

Morgan Senior Kaitlyn Tunney was awarded the Ernest C. Burnham Scholarship. This scholarship is given to a student who has shown genuince appreciation for history and has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the field. The Victor Mays Art Scholarship, awarded to a student who has shown exceptional talent as an artist and has demonstrated a commitment to pursue a career in the visual arts, was presented to Senior Vicky Hu. The awards ceremony was done virtually this year as the school has been closed due to the Covid-19; so, unfortunately, we were not able to have a photograph taken. We wish Kaitlyn and Vicky success in their years beyond Morgan.

### *News about CHS Holiday Lunches and Holiday Dinners*

One email blast was all it took to find folks willing to take on the task of our traditional Holiday Lunches and Dinners. CHS is pleased to announce that Marion Martinez agreed to chair both events with Faith Mangler assisting her. Jackie Blomberg was returning to prepare, not only the dinners, but also the lunches this year. Unfortunately, at the Sept. 8th Board of Directors meeting, it was decided to cancel both events due to Connecticut's Covid-19 restrictions.

## CHS Board of Directors

**President:** Christy Pontillo  
**Vice President:** E.C. Schroeder  
**Treasurer:** Jack Scherban  
**Recording Secretary:** Gail Webster  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Mary Jane Morelli  
**Auditor:** Bion Shepard  
**Building & Grounds:** Dave Bautz  
**Librarian:** Charlotte Neely  
**Museum Room Curator:** Anne Baker  
**Old Brick Curator:** Laraine Scherban

**Publicity/Website/Facebook:** Megan Stine  
**Newsletter:** April Shuman  
**Garden:** Dianne Gustafson & John Quinn  
**Hospitality:** Sue Schreck & Shora Rainey  
**Adam Stanton House Liason:** E.C. Schroeder  
**Membership:** Bion Shepard  
**Programs:** Carrie Allen  
**Curator of Collections:** David Perrelli  
**Buell Tool Museum:** Dave Rainey  
**Grants:** David Perrelli & Carrie Allen

**The Old Brick Smokehouse**

The Smokehouse, located nearby the side porch of the Old Brick, was originally located across the street on the property owned by St. Alexis Church. It was believed to have been originally owned by the family of Captain W. H. Williams. The smokehouse was built sometime between 1750 and 1800. In 2017, the church offered the building to the Clinton Historical Society. CHS provided the funds to have the structure dismantled, moved to its current location, and rebuilt. Stone artisan Andrew Pighills dismantled the building, piece by piece, and transported it across the street, where it was rebuilt with historical accuracy. David Townsend, who was on the CHS Board at the time, was instrumental in getting this project completed. Recently, Jim Barnett, retired Yale Dining Room Director, inquired about the possibility of putting the smokehouse to good use. Permission was granted and Jim built a hanging rack that he then used to smoke trout, salmon and vegetables. Wonderful to see this piece of history back in use. In the future, CHS hopes to host events with the smokehouse as a focal point. Welcome Jim!

## CHS Calendar of Events

**Members Garden Party/Annual Meeting**  
**POSTPONED**

**Ghost Walks**  
**CANCELLED**  
**RETURNING OCTOBER 2021**

**Holiday Luncheons in Old Brick**  
**CANCELLED**  
**RETURNING DECEMBER 2021**

**Holiday Dinners in Old Brick**  
**CANCELLED**  
**RETURNING DECEMBER 2021**

**Visit us on the web at:**  
[www.clintoncthistory.org](http://www.clintoncthistory.org)  
**for further information**

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