

Clinton County Historical Association and Museum

North Country Notes

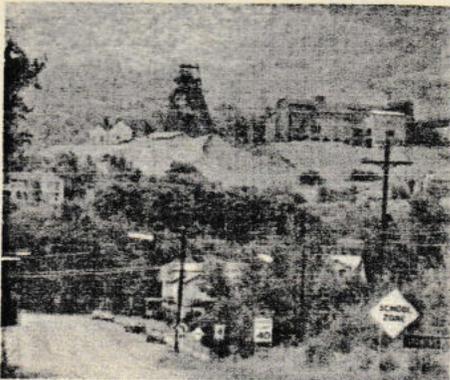
Summer 2005
Number 396

Museum on the Move (Again)

It hardly seems possible after last spring and summer's experience of moving our collection from the Museum's long-time home at 48 Court Street to the Saily Warren House at 3 Cumberland Avenue, but it appears that we are about to move again. During the past six months PARC President Dan Wieneke and his colleagues have been working diligently to gift the Four Chimney Building on the Old Plattsburgh Air Base to CCHA to serve as the permanent home of the Clinton County Historical Museum.

Our hope is to be able to accept the Four Chimney Building under license from PARC pending transfer of title and our goal is to have the museum operational and open to the public by next spring. Our desire is to transform the Four Chimney Building into a dynamic museum that will provide long-term benefits to our community, state, nation, and neighbors to the north by increasing tourism and promoting a greater appreciation and richer understanding of the heritage of Clinton County.

Working in concert with the Battle of Plattsburgh Association and the Champlain Valley Transportation Museum, CCHA will strive to create a destination museum complex on the grounds of the Old Base. Visit us at the Saily Warren House this summer and at the Four Chimney Building next summer.



June Program: Lorraine McIntosh
Lyon Mountain: Mines, Railroads,
and Immigrants

Monday, June 6

First floor meeting room
Clinton County Government Center
137 Margaret Street
Refreshments 7:00 p.m., Program 7:30 p.m.

Please join us Monday, June 6, at the Clinton County Government Center when Lorraine McIntosh, Town of Dannemora historian, will share fascinating stories about the mines, railroads, and immigrants of Lyon Mountain, "the town that refuses to die."

Clinton County Historical Association

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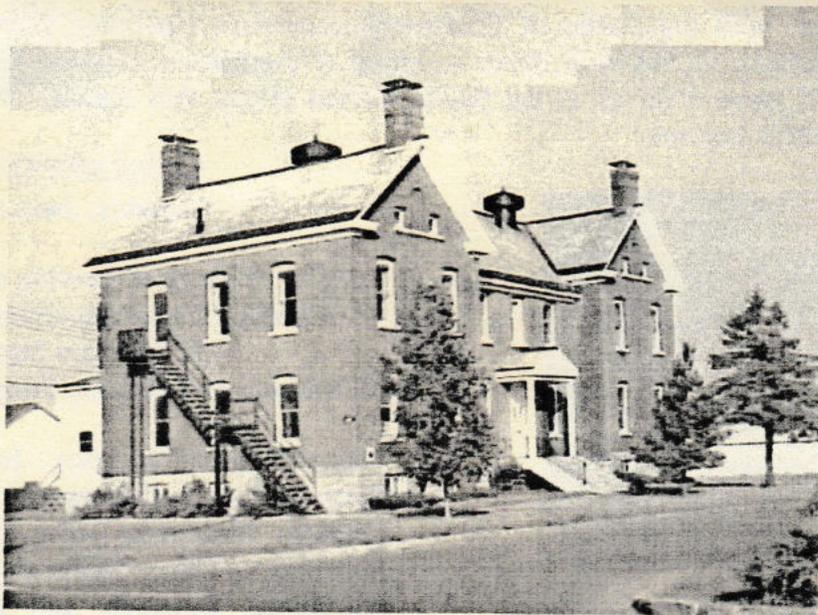
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The Four Chimney Building on the Old Base, Plattsburgh
Hopefully, soon to be the new, permanent home of the Clinton County Historical Museum.



The Adirondack Hickory Open, July 29-30, 2005

We are pleased to announce that our major fundraising event returns for its second year. Last year's Adirondack Hickory Open raised more than \$5,000, while generating national press in the process. This year we expect to triple that amount, all the while raising to prominence such a wonderful portion of our Clinton County history. Randy Jensen (the star hickory-shafted golf player who drove all the way from Nebraska to play last year) will be back heading up a field of hickory golfers from around the US and Canada. See the March/April issue of Travel & Leisure Golf magazine for a write up on Randy and a mention of our tournament as one of the seven most popular in the nation!



Tournament organizer Matthew Dodds presents trophy to Hotel Champlain Cup champion Randy Jensen.



Team Schmidt won the Hickory Scramble Division (from left to right: Jim Caron, Pat Schmidt, and Scott & Todd Aley)

Mark your calendars and keep an eye out for a pamphlet with an application in your mail box coming your way soon. Don't golf? That's OK. There are plenty of ways to support the effort, including attending Friday night's banquet and our talk on the Hotel Champlain, volunteering to distribute posters, helping with arrangements on tournament day, and soliciting local businesses for sponsorship funds. If you would like to lend a hand, please call Matt Dodds at 802-862-2400, x109. We promise it will be the most fun you have had working for such an excellent cause. So come out this summer and "make a bold stroke for local history."

Clinton County Personality: Asahel Lynde Powers 1813 - 1843

One Monday afternoon this spring, the Museum received a surprise visit from Ben Wever of Willsboro. Ben presented us with a beautiful portrait of his ancestor, Peter Weaver, painted by Asahel Powers. A month later, Ben returned with the companion portrait of Peter's wife, Susan, also painted by Powers. Thanks to the generosity of Ben Wever, Asahel Powers our Clinton County personality.

Itinerant portrait painter Asahel Lynde Powers was born in Springfield, Vermont in 1813. His grandfather, also named Asahel, was a prominent Springfield citizen who was regarded as a "shrewd pettifogger." Asahel's father, Asahel Jr., owned a farm in Springfield where he raised a large family.

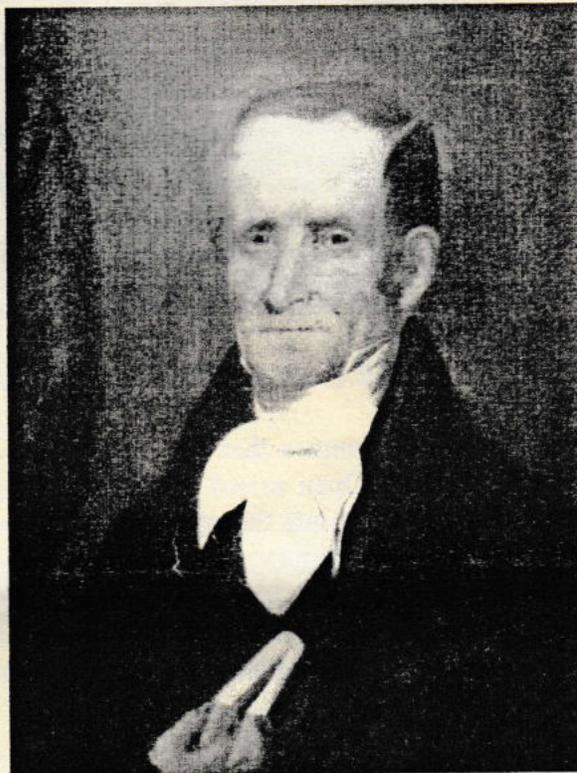
Asahel L. Powers began his career as a traveling artist early in life. He seems to have received little or no formal training. The first portrait attributable to him is of a Rutland man dated 1831. Powers and his work centered in Vermont for most of his relatively brief career. In 1832 he painted four portraits of the Chase (or Chace) family of Springfield, three of which were signed *Asahel Powers*. After 1835 he appears to have used the signature *A. L. Powers*.

Powers had an extraordinary ability to project the personality of his sitters. Like many folk artists, he delighted in painting costumes and interior details. The sequence of Powers' pictures found in Vermont appears to end in 1839.

The Clinton County Historical Museum is the proud possessor of six portraits painted by Powers. Each work is dated 1840 and can be documented to have originated here in the area.

Powers provided the first art instruction for the landscapist Daniel F. Bigelow of Peru.

Powers had relatives living in this area. His wife, Elizabeth, remained in Plattsburgh when Asahel moved on to Illinois. Asahel Powers died in Olney, Illinois, on August 20, 1843.



Peter Weaver, 1782-1882

The pioneering scholarly essay on Powers, "Asahel Powers, painter of Vermont faces," by Nina Fletcher Little in The Magazine Antiques (November 1973), credits the artist with "having left to posterity a memorable pictorial record of more than fifty upcountry faces." Here are six of those upcountry faces.

Peter Weaver was born in Somerset, Massachusetts on December 20, 1782. In the spring of 1798 Peter and his parents moved to Clarendon, Vermont.

Two years later, the family moved again, this time to Peru. His father engaged in

farming and Peter spent his early adulthood on the farm. In 1807, at the age of 25, Peter married Sally Ketchum and the following year built a home on land two miles from the Salmon River in the town of Plattsburgh – since set off in 1848 as the town of Schuyler Falls.

Originally a large log house, according to family tradition, Peter enclosed the home in brick in 1818 and in mid-century added a new section to the front of the house. The Weaver homestead on Route 22B remained in the family until 1953. After Sally died, Peter married Ruth Baker. Susan Butler was Peter's third and final wife. They were married for 68 years.

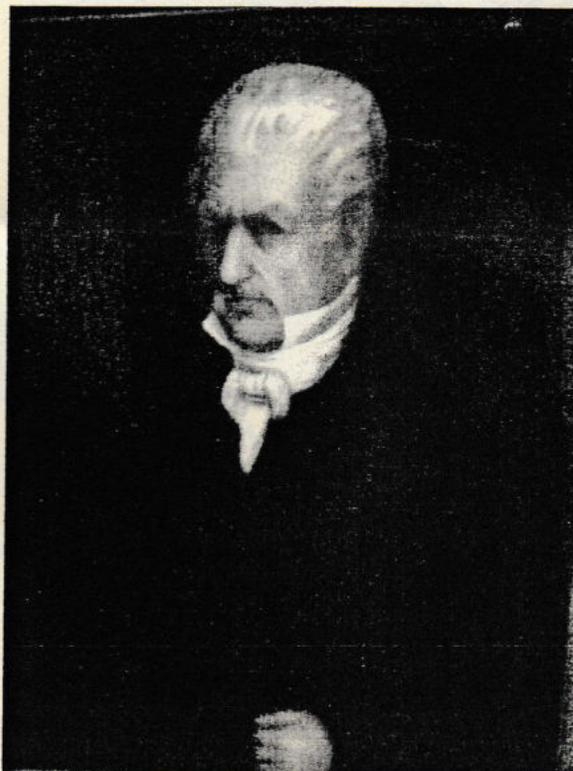


Susan Butler Weaver, 1796-1888

Duane Hamilton Hurd's History of Clinton and Franklin Counties, New York, published in 1880, describes Peter Weaver as follows: "In politics Mr. Weaver has been an advocate of freedom and of the principles inculcated by

Gerrit Smith, William Lloyd Garrison, and others, and has always taken an active interest in the politics of the country and of his own town....Mr. Weaver is still living, at the ripe age of ninety-six; has been blind for the past few years, and is slightly deaf. With these exceptions, his faculties are unimpaired, and his physical health almost perfect." Peter Weaver died on August 20, 1882 at the age of 99.

Susan Butler of North Hero, Vermont, was born on October 29, 1796. Susan married Peter Weaver on February 2, 1820 and bore him nine children. She died on March 12, 1888 at the age of 91. Susan and Peter are buried in the Schuyler Falls Cemetery.



Elisha Arnold, 1768-1851

In the mid-1790s, Elisha Arnold of Rutland County, Vermont, moved to Peru, where he arrived with all his worldly good wrapped in a handkerchief. Elisha soon became the owner of a large farm two miles north of the

village. He was a member of the legislature in 1808, state senator from 1812-1815, and first judge of the county from 1818-1823.

An astute Quaker businessman, Elisha purchased 407 acres of land containing rich iron ore deposits in 1807. For many years the mine at Arnold's Hill produced excellent revenue for Elisha and his heirs.

At the time of the property's sale in 1864, the amount of iron ore raised was more than 150,000, with a total value of approximately \$700,000. Elisha Arnold died on February 22, 1851 at the age of 83.

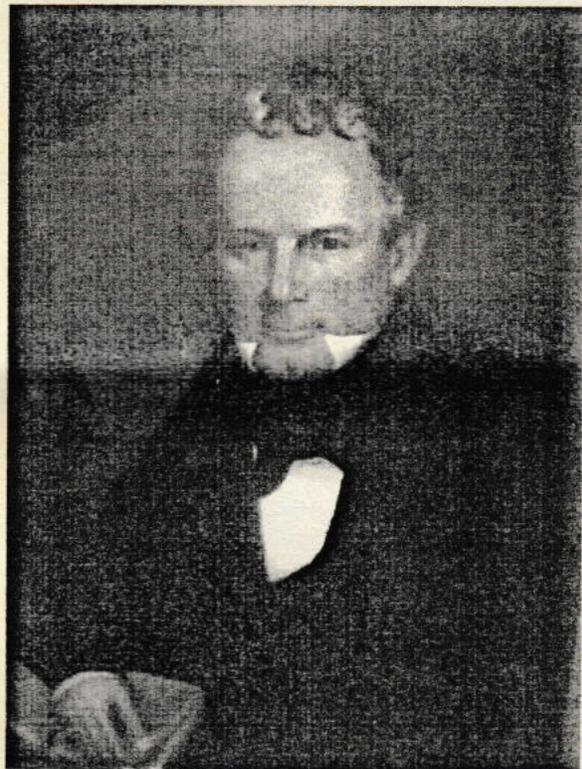


Mary Griffith Arnold, 1780-1859

Mary Griffith, born in 1780 in Vermont, married her neighbor Elisha Arnold. In this portrait, Mary wears the plain white bonnet and kerchief of a Quaker lady. She died on February 28, 1859 at the age of 79.

In 1813 twenty-year-old Isaac Patchin started to study medicine with a doctor at North Hero, Vermont, for 50 cents a day. Four years later, he began his practice in Schuyler Falls, where he may have tended to Peter and Susan Weaver. Peter and Isaac were trustees of the Methodist Church on Beckwith Street.

Dr. Patchin also served as school inspector, postmaster, and county judge. He married Abigail Hillyard on April 4, 1820. Isaac Patchin died in 1859 at the age of 66.



Isaac Patchin, 1793-1859

Abigail Hillyard of West Plattsburgh married Isaac Patchin when she was 16 years old. They had 14 children.

Abigail died in 1868 at the age of 64 and is buried with her husband in the Schuyler Falls cemetery.

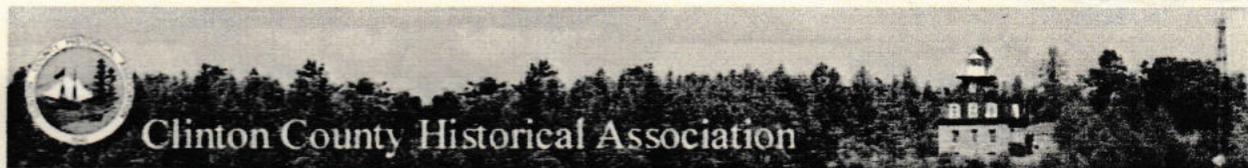


Abigail Hillyard Patchin, 1804-1868

Art scholar Nina Fletcher Little describes Asahel Powers as “innovative, imaginative, and experimental. He tried various backgrounds and color effects and his compositions reveal a definite progression away from the extremely naïve manner exemplified in his earliest work.”

Powers’ portraits are distinguished by their richness of color and detail. “Characterizations are penetrating, facial modeling and highlighting quite assured, color and composition extremely pleasing to the eye.”

Our six Clinton County canvases display Powers’ ability at a point that he must have considered the peak of his brief, decade-long painting career. Each is inscribed on the back *A L Powers/ Painter/ 1840*; each is approximately 30 by 25 inches.



Bluff Point Lighthouse Relighting Ceremony: June 11

The Bluff Point Lighthouse is the only Lake Champlain lighthouse on the National Register of Historic Places. Last November, after an absence of 74 years, a Coast Guard crew officially restored the light. Join us Saturday, June 11 when we will celebrate the relighting. Details will be forthcoming in the media.

We hope to open the Bluff Point Lighthouse to the public on the Sunday before Memorial Day and every Sunday from July 4 weekend through Labor Day weekend. You can get more information about visiting or volunteering by calling the Museum at 518-561-0340.

New Members

James & Rachelle Armstrong; Jim Avery; Judy Cavanaugh; Joan Clark; David & Maureen Dame; John Dee; Heidi Dennis; Paul & Janet Dingman; Steele & Teresa

Griswold; Tim & Joanne Gowett; Henry Hale; Caroline Hamel; Mark Jerry; Keith Johnson; Roger Kennedy; Carol Klepper; Tom Konda & June Foley; Chris & Kathryn

Lanigan; Andrea Light; Charles McGee; John & Lee Meyer; Alan & Bruni Michaud; Lynn Neale; Kristina Parker; William Price; Christopher & Jill Riley; Sara Rowden; Craig & Christal Russell; Herb Ryder & MaryAnne

Bukolt; Theodore & Lynne Sherwood; Martha Strack; Forrest Studebaker; George & Marsha Wagner; Irwin & Marlene Waite; Joshua Wingler.

Renewed Members

Derek & Helen Allan; Ara Asadourian; Jim & Ann Bailey; Linda Bedard; Bob & Helen Booth; Russ & Ann Bordeau; Joseph & Joan Burke; Walter & Nancy Church; Ralph Clark; Conrad & Vreni de Beaufort; Harvey & Joan Duchin; Gerald & Margaret Garrand; Maurica Gilbert; Bill Glidden; Philip & Shirley Gordon; Roger & Linda Harwood; June Heming; Hector Kaufman; Richard & Susan Kelley; Bob & Arlene Krueger; John Krueger; Larry Kudrle; Mike Kulik & Jennifer Colver; Daniel Ladue; Greg

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Current to April 15, 2005.



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www.clintoncountyhistorical.org

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