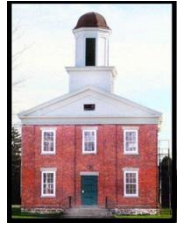


NEWSLETTER
CLARKSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
August-September 2026



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear CHS Members and Friends: School is starting and summer is over. I hope you were able to visit us at our booth at Good Neighbor Days and The Jubilee Church Family Fun Day. It was fun to meet new people!

Thanks to Bonnie Howlett, Leanna Hale, Chris Graham and Charles Edwards for their help. It takes many hands to make this work, so if you are interested in history, please consider becoming a member. And please look for our membership letter which will be posted soon.

Anita Obrien, President

CHS "History Under Our Feet", by Chris Graham: It's been a whirlwind summer for our team as we work on new projects, research upcoming ones and seek new opportunities to uncover the colorful history of the Town of Clarkson and its neighboring areas. Here's a summary of what's on our plate. It is pretty full -- but we're hungry for more!

1. **WW2 POW Camp: Did you know that part of what is now Hamlin Beach State Park served as a POW camp during World War Two?** We are seeking permits for a collaborative project between CHS, NYS Dept. of Parks and SUNY Brockport's Archaeology and Geology teams to conduct a detailed survey of the Camp site on the easternmost grounds of the park. If approved, our work will include ground mapping with GPS, a landscape archaeology survey, underground feature mapping using GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar), metal detecting and drone imaging work. Hopefully, this survey will pave the way next Summer for a full archaeological "field school" excavation led by Dr. Alex Smith and his SUNY Brockport students and local volunteers.
2. **1830's Pioneer Log Cabin:** In Fall our team hopes to determine the location of a very old log cabin near an 1850's cobblestone farmhouse in Holley. Our metal detecting expert Matt Bacchetta will assist us. So stay tuned for further updates!
3. **1890's Blacksmith & Carriage-Maker's Shop and an 1870's Farmhouse:** We conducted an extensive metal detecting sweep of several properties near the corner of Ridge and Redman Roads which yielded a multitude of very old iron objects, an entire frying pan -- and 100+ year-old pocket watch! We are in the process of securing permission from adjacent property owners to expand the scope of our search around that same intersection, shown on old maps as West Clarkson.
4. **St. Mary's Cemetery:** We also completed our walk-through of the original Roman Catholic burial grounds, in use from 1847 to 1891. This is an intriguing mystery: Were all of the original burials disinterred when the cemetery was cleared, and reinterred in the newer Mount Olivet Cemetery? Or were some burials left behind? This nagging question has lingered for years with some local families. Perhaps we can put their fears to rest with a non-invasive approach combining research of Parish records, GPR and metal detecting on this ground that was long ago returned to "secular" use and now belongs to the Town of Clarkson. The outcome of this project could make for a very interesting future Lecture!

5. **A Previously-Unknown Blacksmith Shop?:** We just received an invite to explore the backyard of a house on East Ave where, rumor has it, a blacksmith shop was located. It's very overgrown, so we'll wait until some of the vegetation dies down this Fall before we grab our machetes to investigate further. Adding to the mystery, this property abuts the old St. Mary's burial ground...and has a "stray" tombstone lying face down in the grass!

The Academy School Bell:

Following our annual safety inspection, the inspector shared photos and information on the history of our bell. Markings tell us that it was made in 1857 by the Meneely Bell Foundry in West Troy, NY (Estb. 1825). In 1857 Lewis Roth Rathbone dedicated it to the Clarkson Academy. Just imagine all that this bell has witnessed over the past 169 years! Generations of students, teachers, and members of the community have heard its sound. It is wonderful to know that this historic bell is still part of the Academy today—a small but meaningful reminder of our past. 169 years and still ringing!



IN MEMORIAM: Suzanne Hullfish passed away August 23, 2026. Suzanne was well known in our community, and the Clarkson Historical Society would like to extend our sympathy.

Thanks to our sponsors:

Sara's Garden Center.

Fall planting season is still here, so shop at Sara's for your garden needs. And, if you are a CHS member, use your member's discount card.

Graham Global

Logistics 13 Water Street
Suite 1 Brockport NY
14420

University of Rochester

Medicine Strong West,
156 West Ave, Brockport
NY

Upcoming events:

LECTURE SERIES: (Please note we have changed a few of the dates.) We have coordinated with the Morgan Manning House and the Triangle Tract for our lecture series. If you were able to make the last lecture our guest speaker was Ben DiMatteo and he did an excellent job.

Tuesday Oct 6 7PM Celebrate 250 years with "The Sons of The American Revolution."

Sunday Nov 8, 2PM "Mary Jane Holmes, "The Most Famous Writer You've Never Heard Of."

Sunday Dec 6, 2-4pm "Make and take an Old- Fashioned Holiday Card and Wrapping Paper." Free Family Fun! ll of

All events will be at the Historic Clarkson Academy 8343 Ridge Rd. Brockport NY

See our Facebook page for info, news and events.

Questions, comments or suggestions? Contact us at TheClarksonhistorical@gmail.com

Clarksonhistoricalsociety.org

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