

The Town History Corner
(by: Harry L.D. Weldon,
Town Historian)

It is a pleasantry to announce that this Town of Dryden's officially-appointed Town Historian is actively in pursuit of collecting and preserving all sort of materials relative to our Town's political subdivision, as mandated by New York State law (NYS Arts and Cultural Affairs Law, Chapter 57.13) that created the Historians system in New York State; which states that the historians duties are in part, as follows:

- To collect and preserve, materials relating to the political subdivision for which he or she is appointed.
- To file such material in fireproof safes or vaults in the...town...offices.
- To examine into the condition, classification and safety from fire of public records.
- To call to the attention of local authorities...any material of local historic value which should be acquired for preservation.

As such, all duly appointed historians, are Officers of their local government. Since the inception of municipal historians in 1917, every devoted historian have availed themselves to be a historical resource person in each and every local (state, county, town, city and village) government jurisdiction in the state. Local historians research and make available in various methods the history of their responsible community.

It is a fact that many local municipal government historians are not only involved to have, at one time or another, been advocates for historic preservation of historically significant documents, records, structures, and objects that detail their community's heritage, but also to assist in the promotion of their community through various activities. Such activities as: civic and patriotic functions, historical anniversaries and celebrations—the list is virtually endless of any historians engagements.

And, if this isn't enough?—Many historians across the State in the last year for which statistical figures are available researched and wrote 2,478 newspaper and magazines articles about the history of their 1,627 jurisdictions. And they wrote, researched and published 1,318 historical pamphlets and brochures; presented 37 academic scholarly papers and published 96 books, produced 617 newsletters, radio scripts and historical plays.

Wait, there's more!—Local historians often prepare cultural resource surveys, identify historic buildings and structures, sites and districts, develop and manage historic roadside markers worthy of historical recognition. Again, in the last year that figures were made available, local government historians engaged in 756 individual historic preservation projects and placed 425 historic markers in their respective communities; and that's factual for sure, that's for sure!

To these objectives: The Town of Dryden Board. has authorized the creation of a Town History Committee composed of up to five persons of the town community, one of whom shall be the Historian, as Chair, and one a Board Legislature. The three others are to be town residents, at large! If you think you might be interested, please contact the Town Offices at 844-8888 or historian@dryden.ny.us

Perhaps, you will recognize me as being at one time (i.e. 1983-92) Historian for the Village of Dryden; a charter member (in 1981) and a longtime (twenty-three years) Trustee of the Dryden Town Historical Society, a weekly columnist (Anecdotes and Brevities) since the year 2000 with the Finger Lakes Community Newspapers and a resident-owner for the 53rd consecutive year.

This Town was first surveyed in 1789 and 1790, for settlement by Pensioners/Veterans of the American Revolution, with the first to arrive in 1797. A university history professor once told me, "It is impossible to know what lies ahead, if you don't know about what's behind." You and I have almost 220 years of recorded history to be aware!