



FENTON HISTORY CENTER

museum and research center



2011 Annual Report

67 Washington St., Jamestown, NY
716-664-6256 www.fentonhistorycenter.org

From the President of the Board of Trustees

January 11, 2012

Dear Friends and Members,

Happy New Year 2012! When I said that on New Year's Day and as I write it now I thought, "Where did the year go and better yet where did the decade go?" It seems like just yesterday that we were preparing for the computer meltdown of Y2K and yet it is now the twelfth year of the second millennium. We are also soon approaching the 50 year anniversary of the Fenton Historical Society and the 200th anniversary of Reuben Fenton's birth. With all this looking toward to the future, it is always good to look back at our past. As I have said before, "If we don't know where we have been, we won't know where we are going."

There was a lot of activity at the Fenton History Center this past year. We continued to be successful in conducting several large events. We held an annual dinner in May in which Sam Genco explained some of his memorable diving incidents. June brought us another opportunity to hear and record the stories of several WW II and Korean war veterans in Fighting for the Flag. In July we held our final year of Spoon River Anthologies performance at the Lakeview Cemetery. We successfully held our annual Old-fashioned Day event and assisted in the Lucille Ball 100th birthday events in the first weeks of August. We also conducted cemetery tours in October and brought out the horse and carriages to open the tour to those who wanted to see the tour in a different way. As always the mansion was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season and many came to see the exhibits on display.

All these events happened because of the hard work and dedication of the staff and volunteers at the Fenton History Center and as board president I want to thank all who gave of their time to these events. We have become a part of many people's social activities calendar. The community knows who we are and appreciate what we do because of these events. As a teacher of history I know the value of tying local history to textbook history and I believe that the Fenton History Center is working hard to accomplish this. We hope to be able to do this more and are working to improve and adjust our education department in order to better fit the needs of our schools and community. If you have ideas that may help in this regard please contact the mansion to discuss them. One of our main purposes for operating is educating students and adults about our area's rich and varied history.

This past year saw a slight increase in our membership and this is extremely important for the operation of the Center. We have a goal to try double our membership in 2012. To accomplish this goal we need the help of you our current members. You see the value in the museum and can explain to others why they should support the Fenton through membership. If you have friends or family who appreciate history please consider bringing them to the mansion or one of our events and show them the value of membership. As members you are the base of our existence and we appreciate you very much.

As we move into 2012 it is our hope that the mission of the Fenton will continue to be fulfilled and that we can find new and better ways to present to the area the rich history and interesting people of this county. So much happens and time goes by so quickly, that which we once thought of as recently happening is now history. Just consider that the 1980s are almost thirty years ago and that most young people today do not even remember September 11, 2001. Because of this the purpose of the Fenton History Center is so very important. Thank you for your continued support and involvement.

I believe that this completes my fifth year as board president and during this time I have seen much positive activity at the Fenton History Center. We have worked on capital improvements, sponsored new events, been involved in much research and book writing, and have worked hard to preserve the history and artifacts of this region. It is truly a privilege to hold this position and it is a true honor to be able to work with those on the museum staff and the board of trustees, and the many of you who so faithfully volunteer your time to help us conduct our mission. To me history is not just the past, to me it is alive and with us all the time. How we handle it through education, presentation, and preservation is so important to the future of our community and our country. Thank you for helping us do the job with excellence. May we be able to be even more excellent in the year to come.

Respectfully,

Michael T. Rohlin

Michael T. Rohlin, President, Fenton History Center Board of Trustees



From the Director

Dear Members and Friends,

Where does the preservation of our local history fall in the scope of the important work of our lives?

2010 was a year of making connections and continuing to move the Center's expansion plan forward. I noticed more members visiting the Fenton the past year, both during events and in general. I finally met members who have supported our work for years. It has inspired me meet all of the Fenton's members this year. The wide varieties of reasons why you support the Center are touching. The Fenton Board and staff, with significant leadership by Board member Juanita Flint, held the first membership drive since 2004. The drive served two purposes; to bring in new members and to build awareness of Fenton's value.



Did you know?

Jamestown has 50 miles of brick streets.

Your History, Your Story
www.fentonhistorycenter.org



I noticed more volunteers coming forward to do meaningful work this past year than ever before. The staff has nurtured and partnered with many talented member volunteers to tackle the big jobs of managing the collections, researching requests and staffing the events. Without these volunteers' time and talents we would be hard pressed to provide many of the services our visitors take for granted: the holiday exhibit, genealogy requests, local history requests, collections accessioning, collections finding aids, tour guides for the cemetery tours and event staffing. Volunteers are one of the most important aspects of a non-profit's success.

I haven't been here since I was a kid, but was heard many times this past year. Many local residents decided to visit the museum. They were surprised and pleased by the exhibits that sparked memories and taught them new facts about Jamestown. Many community groups toured the museum as part of their meeting, a few even held their meetings in our rustic education room.

The 1960 time capsule opening was a big event this year that grew out of a grassroots interest in Jamestown and those that remembered burying the Sesquicentennial time capsule. A great crowd was on hand for the unveiling. A 2010 time capsule has been buried in the same spot by the bridge on Jones & Gifford Ave. Thank you to all that were instrumental in making the event successful.



The Hall House is being prepared for its next life. The building has two unique spaces for commercial rent that will support the new research center and work areas. Once those renters are in place the Center will expand into the Hall House and free up portions of the Fenton Mansion to better tell our local and national story. The Fenton Mansion is about ready to get a face lift. The exterior of the building will be undergoing repointing and in some cases, rebuilding, over the next construction season. Funding for the project is from New York State, our members and the Lenna Foundation. More support is needed if you would like to help.

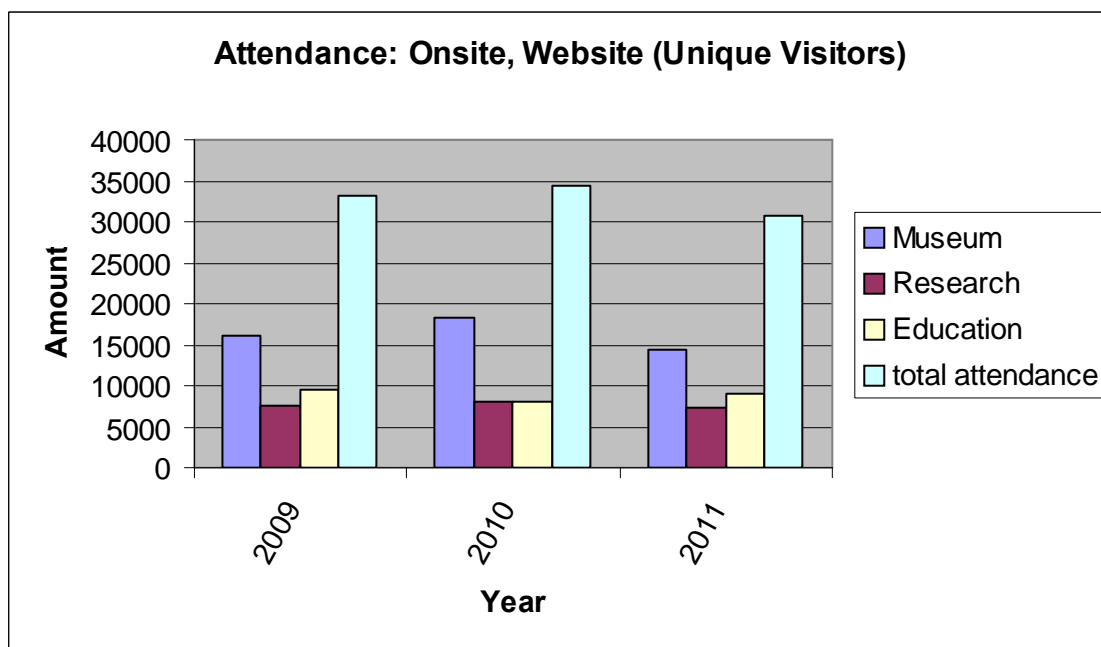
The Fenton is the community's resource and we are very happy to share it! The Fenton Trustees are continuing their plans to make the Fenton History Center a strong tourism destination and local history source; a place to experience living in a Victorian era home, a place to learn about everyday life 150 years ago, a place to use the latest technology to find a long ago family member, a place to see and learn about what makes Jamestown a great place to be.

Sincerely,

Joni Blackman

Joni Blackman

ATTENDANCE AND WEBSITE USAGE



- The museum had an 18% increase in visitation while the research center had a 23% decrease. However the revenue from research requests was up from last year partially due to a fee increase.
- Public school classroom visits dropped by 12% this year. Over the past three years that is a drop of 63%. A number of factors have caused the decrease, some within our control, others not. While the number of schools outside the City of Jamestown taking advantage of our programming has increased, it is not enough to make up the loss of the Jamestown classes.

THE FENTON HISTORY CENTER MISSION STATEMENT – WHAT WE DO

The mission of the Fenton History Center ó Museum & Research Center is to provide educational and cultural opportunities for the residents of Chautauqua County and its visitors through the collection, preservation and exhibition of artifacts and archival materials pertaining to Jamestown, New York and southern Chautauqua County.

THE FENTON HISTORY CENTER VISION STATEMENT – WHERE WE WANT TO BE

As a trusted steward of the community's heritage, the Fenton History Center ó Museum & Research Center will champion the preservation and interpretation of regional history by maintaining the foremost historical center of its kind in southwestern New York. Research based exhibits and innovative programming will inspire people of all ages to enjoy, appreciate, and understand the rich history of Jamestown and the surrounding area, as reflected by the FHC's extensive collection and library holdings. The dedicated staff, membership and Board of Trustees will work together to build a strong, dynamic organization and expand the reach and scope of the FHC's activities.

The Fenton History Center will ensure the preservation of the Fenton Mansion, while providing adequate facilities to meet the growing needs of the organization and the people it serves. A superior regional history and genealogy research center will accommodate local and visiting researchers. The facilities will also afford space for state-of-the-art storage, educational programs, collections management, exhibit preparation, and visitor orientation.

The staff and Board of Trustees will offer responsible and enthusiastic leadership for the future. Professionally trained, the staff will provide direction in the implementation of current best practices. To strengthen the FHC's ability to accomplish its mission, an informed Board of Trustees will provide additional guidance and strive to secure the fiscal health of the organization for years to come.

The Fenton History Center will also reach beyond the walls of the Fenton Mansion to engage area residents, students, visitors, and institutions with an increasing variety of activities. Off-site, traveling, and web-based exhibits will compliment multi-media in-house exhibits. Web-based technology will enhance the services offered by the library and research center. Whenever possible, the FHC will collaborate with other historical agencies, non-profit organizations, schools, and businesses. The FHC will be recognized as an indispensable asset to the intellectual and cultural life of the surrounding community.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2011**GENERAL OPERATING STATEMENT**

		2011	
		YTD Actual	YTD Budget
General Operating Income, unrestricted			
Municipal Assistance	\$	16,000.00	\$ 16,000.00
County Assistance	\$	7,176.00	\$ 6,000.00
Fundraising	\$	37,262.59	\$ 56,400.00
Donations	\$	7,288.96	\$ 10,200.00
Endowment Fund and interest	\$	12,199.51	\$ 4,789.00
Memberships	\$	16,270.00	\$ 20,000.00
Gift Shop sales	\$	6,099.37	\$ 5,000.00
Memorials	\$	1,130.00	\$ 400.00
Earned Income	\$	22,072.42	\$ 47,235.00
Subtotal	\$	125,498.85	\$ 166,024.00
General Operating Expenses, Unrestricted			
*Payroll Expenses, Administration	\$	70,351.99	\$ 69,700.00
Insurance	\$	5,716.51	\$ 3,529.00
Supplies	\$	1,076.72	\$ 1,030.00
Printing	\$	1,472.00	\$ 1,100.00
Telephone/Internet	\$	1,869.59	\$ 1,745.00
Postage	\$	1,343.92	\$ 1,500.00
Gift Shop	\$	4,581.36	\$ -
**Advertising & Fundraising	\$	18,032.77	\$ 19,900.00
Maintenance & Repairs	\$	5,538.70	\$ 6,100.00
Education Dept.	\$	16,067.16	\$ 19,430.00
Collections Dept.	\$	16,801.42	\$ 15,650.00
Exhibits Dept.	\$	569.47	\$ 350.00
Research Ctr.	\$	9,762.47	\$ 18,497.00
Miscellaneous	\$	5,630.24	\$ 7,493.00
General Operating Expense	\$	158,814.32	\$ 166,024.00
Gain/(Loss)	\$	(33,315.47)	

* includes all payroll expenses for administrative positions, maintenance staff and payroll taxes

** \$8,673 paid to partners for Spoon River Anthology event

The **loss** at the end of the year is due to:

- a 50% decrease in the local school programming, a loss of \$15,000.
- a shortfall in funding for the \$5,000 match needed for the IMLS Archive Management Grant.
- a shortfall in memberships (\$4,000) and decrease in endowment returns (\$1,300).

Donations by the general public and membership were the best they have been in years.

The **restricted funds** grew because of strong support for the brick restoration project and the archive management project.

RESTRICTED INCOME AND EXPENSES 2011

Grant Income, Restricted	YTD Actual	Annual Budget
Administration*	\$ 17,830.00	\$ 25,500.00
Collections	\$ 0	\$ 0
Education	\$ 300.00	\$ 0
Exhibits	\$ 17,730.65	\$ 17,500.00
Research Ctr.	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Brick Restoration, EPF grant**	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
Subtotal	\$ 56,260.65	\$ 88,400.00
Grant Expenses, Restricted		
Travel & Conference	\$ 1,056.29	\$ 1,100.00
Exhibits, Collections	\$ 5804.44	\$ 5,000.00
Brick restoration project, EPF grant	\$ 3,861.65	\$ 82,000.00
Education	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Subtotal	\$ 11,022.38	\$ 88,400.00
Gain/(Loss)	\$ 45,238.27	

* for two grants to be completed in 2012.

** \$25,000 additional dollars granted, funds will be given to the Fenton when the project begins.

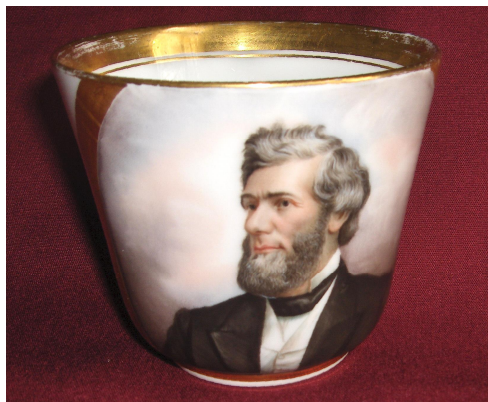
FENTON HISTORY CENTER STAFF

Joni Blackman, Director
 Paula Bechmann, Office Manager & Housekeeping
 Norman Carlson, Collections Manager
 Barbara Cessna, Researcher
 Frances Fair, Education Director
 Karen Livsey, Librarian/Archivist
 Jeanne Oag, Event Coordinator

Staff and volunteer picnic



Thank you to all of our members!! Your support is our future.
PRESERVING THE COMMUNITY'S PAST



The Fenton Cup

- Caring for a collection that is the community's cultural heritage.
- 160 separate donations were accessioned and processed in 2010. These collections included approximately 1,400 separate artifacts. 29 collections from previous years were also accessioned.
- 3 loans in and 7 loans out of the collections department were processed.
- On-going physical maintenance of the Fenton Mansion is a fundamental activity.
- 4 requests for photograph reproductions from the FHC collection with 9 photographs processed.
- 3 items were deaccessioned.

Collections Manager

Norman P. Carlson

Housekeeping

Paula Bechmann

Textiles

Phoebe Forbes

Volunteers

Brittany Beckstrom, Amanda Brainard, Don Lauger, Sylvia Lobb, Jennifer Mazzu, Tony Merchant, and Chelsea Yergens

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH EDUCATION



Museum Teacher Julie Hull

- Helping schools meet curriculum goals and providing resources for lifelong learning.
- 6,774 members and non-members took part in various educational programs for all ages; bus tours, Fenton Institute, History Detectives Club, student summer camps, and community events.
- 122 programs were presented to area school students, community groups and special programming for all ages.
- This year the summer campers traveled through time. They learned about Jamestown from its beginning to today. They ended the

week with a cruise on the Chautauqua Belle.

- This past school year, the Fenton Education Department was involved in three of Chautauqua Opportunities after-school programs teaching their local history.
- The Fenton Education department taught in 8 of the 16 public school districts in Chautauqua County and at JCC.
- Over 2,000 members and friends participated in the Fenton events: *Doors Open 2010*, *Fighting for the Flag*, *Spoon River Project Old-Fashion Day*, *Saints and Sinners Lake View Cemetery Tours* and *Midnight Mausoleum Tours*, *The Victorian Holiday Tea*, *Blue & Gray 2010*.
- Approximately 80 members and non-members participated in the *Fenton Institute* workshops and lecture supported by the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation. The four sessions ranged from how to take care of your family textile treasures to learning about the local suffrage movement.



Campers on the Chautauqua Belle

Education Director Frances Fair

Museum Teachers Gesele Koehler, Dolores Parsons, Michael Rohlin, Julie Hull, Norman P. Carlson, Frances Wolinsky

SERVING THROUGH INFORMATION



- Your story is our community's story: a center for inquiry, investigation and scholarly research where you can explore your family history and discover how it is a part of this community's history.
- 645 people used the library and archives for genealogical and historical research
- Researchers responded to 17 written/faxed, 53 e-mail, and 1,982 phone research requests from around the world
- 5,223 unique visits to the library/archive website pages
- 14 Archive requests

Librarian/Archivist

Karen E. Livsey

Researcher

Barb Cessna

Volunteer Researchers

Sharon Terwilliger

Kathy Barber

Del Mee

TELLING THE COMMUNITY'S STORY

- **Exhibits** serve as a bridge to awareness and knowledge of our unique local history by presenting a personal understanding of the collection



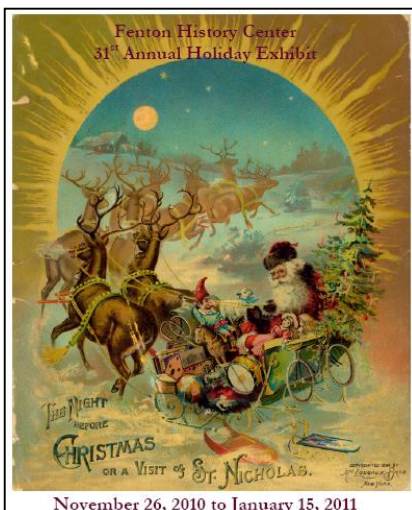
The exhibits this year were well attended and brought in many donations of artifacts and archival materials to add to the collections as well as more stories for future reference.

"Quilt Stories" was a Mansion-wide exhibit of the many quilts in the collection, concentrating on Crazy Quilts and Signature Quilts.

"We Made Do: Jamestown and the Great Depression" is a snapshot of a number of interesting facts and stories about what happened in Jamestown during the worst years of the Depression, 1930-1935. Looking to the 1930s can help us understand how we have arrived where we are today.

"Twas the Night Before Christmas" brought the beauty of the season and the wonder of reading together. Over twenty children and youth's holiday books were featured.

3569 on-sight visitors 14,694 website visitors



Thank You for Your Support

PLANNED GIVING

Winslow T. Shearman & purchase of a life insurance policy which will contribute the sum of at least \$50,000 in unrestricted funds.

If you would like information regarding opportunities for Planned Giving or the benefits of a gift of appreciated securities or other property please contact Joni Blackman, Director.

MEMORIALS are a meaningful way to show the family you care and to support the work of the Fenton History Center.

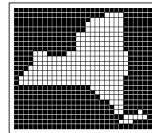


GRANTS

Operating and Programming Grants:

Chautauqua Region Community Foundation \$4,581 Samø Club \$500
Upstate History Alliance \$256 NYSCA Regrant Program \$2,400
Johnson Foundation \$7,500 Lenna Foundation \$20,000

State of the Arts



NYSCA

GOVERNOR'S CIRCLE \$1000+

City of Jamestown	Chautauqua County	George C. Fowler Fund
Gebbie Foundation Directorø Fund	Carl Hagberg	
Chautauqua Region Community Foundation, Reg & Betty Lenna Fund		

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Peter F. Risafi

Helen Ebersole
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Gibbon

GOODS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Media One Group, WDOE/WKIX, The Post-Journal, The Dunkirk Observer, The Warren Times, Westfield Republican, The Chautauqua Star, The Word, Time Warner Cable 8 News, The Coffee Exchange, Axiom Business Machines, Dan Gates at the Frame & Glass Shoppe, Julie Hull, Jack Ericson, Sonny Anderson, Bill Lucas, Jim and Ann Buffone, Streetwise Creative Group, Doug Hoisington for Earth Spark, Tops Markets, Harrington Sandberg Architecture & Engineering, Adrienne Ploss, Ludwig Auctions, Frito-Lay, Inc., The City of Jamestown Parks Department, Steve & Chuck at Farm Fresh Foods, Ecklof's Bakery, Lake View Cemetery Association, Downtown Jamestown Development Corporation, Gary Lynn, Stephen J. Wright of Wright, Wright, & Hampton, Community Helping Hands, BOCES, Jamestown Public Schools, John Hitchcock, Jones 212 Bakery, Cooper's Café and Deli, Walgreen's, Wegmans.

THANK YOU— WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!**ACTIVE MEMBERS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2009**

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 Mr. Stephen Wright

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2010 Time Capsule



Old Fashion Day 2010



SERVING THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM

- For every paid staff member 20 people volunteer their time and services.

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Sally Martinez, Vice President
Sam Genco, Secretary
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Julie Hull, Lillian Carlson

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Delbert Mee, Joan Shevory
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Gene Smith
Christopher Brown
Jason Rodriguez
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Chelsea Yergens
Tony Merchant
Sylva Lobb
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Josef Genco
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David Anderson
Donna Bloomquist
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Sara Reale
Herbert Lydell
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Cemetery Tour Actors

Spoon River Anthology Actors/Staff

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Emily Blackwood
Lance Clark
Skip Anderson, Ralph Walton
Mary Hoover, Ann Thorpe
Karen Waterman, Sam Genco
Adam Hughes, Deacon Pearce
Mike Nichols, Merle Szydlo
Kristy Woodfield, Kate Armbruster
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Sue Schifano
Anne Eklund
Musicians:
Eric Grundstrom, Carol Svenson, and
Adam McKillip

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Fenton History Center
67 Washington St.
Jamestown, NY 14701

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Return Service Requested

Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting of the Fenton History Center will be held at 7 pm on Wednesday, February 2, 2011 at the Fenton Mansion, 67 Washington St. Jamestown. All current members of the Fenton Historical Society are invited to attend. The membership will be electing Officers to serve the 2011-2012 term.



The Museum Shop

Valentine's Day Cards Valentine's Day gifts

Local History Books - Wooden Toys

Children's Books - "Celoron Park" by T. Goodwill

"Along Chautauqua Lake" by Karen Livsey and Dorothy Levin

"Historic Chautauqua County, a Bicentennial History" by Doug Houck

"The Lost Neighborhood" by June Cusimano Lindquist

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Members receive a 10% discount!