Happy New Year! Here at the Fenton, January is a time for change. The holiday exhibit has started to be packed away until next year. This month we will be welcoming a new Executive Director, and gearing up for a year full of programs and exhibits, both virtual and in-person.

We are looking forward to the return of Doors Open Jamestown on January 22 where the Fenton Mansion will be open free of charge to the community. This event may be postponed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, please watch our Facebook page for announcements regarding potentially rescheduling this event.

We will be having another Virtual Paint Night on January 20th at 7pm to help break up the boring winter months. This time we will be painting a cute wintery scene on small wooden sleds, a photo of which can be seen in the poster later in this newsletter. Painting will be taught over zoom, kits are available at the Fenton History Center Gift Shop for just $20 and include the sled, paint and brushes and link to the Zoom session. Everything you need to make this fun piece of winter décor. Reservations can be made by stopping by the Fenton History Center Gift Shop to pick up materials or by calling 716-664-6256.

A Valentine themed painting is scheduled for early February as well, watch our Facebook page for more details.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING - The Annual Meeting of the Fenton Historical Society will be held Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Shawbucks for the purpose of electing Trustees and Officers for the 2022-2023 term.

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for years. Her outreach to Board members and employees for clarification on unfamiliar items was immediate and without ego. We anticipate that she will hand the Fenton over to the new Director in a seamless manner. Welcome Lisa.

by Lisa Goodell
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After graduating from Bowling Green State University with a BA degree in Child Development and Social Work I spent two years working as a Social Worker with young adults and children in Toledo, Ohio. When the opportunity to travel presented itself, I packed my bags and took off for the West Coast. After several months of traveling cross country, camping and grand adventures of sight, sound and majestic views, I landed in Lake Tahoe Nevada where our traveling funds ran out. We camped here for several more months enjoying the beauty of the area. I held positions as a Social Worker, Director of Development and Assistant Director for a school for special needs children while enjoying camping and hiking through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. After seven years in Nevada, I relocated to Santa Monica, CA and began what would become over 36 years of non-profit management, starting as the Director of Education and Programs at Sensory Integration International in Torrance California. While in California I went back to California State University and received my Master’s Degree in Public Administration. In 1986 I returned to Western New York where I spent ten years as the Assistant Executive Director of Programs for Friends of Cazenovia Manor in Buffalo. In 1996 I moved to Jamestown to become the Executive Director of the Girl Scouts of Western New York where I worked until they merged twelve years later with the Buffalo and Rochester Girl Scouts. I then became the Executive Director of the Chautauqua Blind Association where I stayed for another twelve years until my retirement in November 2020. I’m currently back in school studying to acquire certification in aromatherapy. When I’m not working or taking classes I enjoy creating mosaic art, gardening, hiking and family.
The Second Annual Chautauqua Regional Genealogical Conference

Saturday April 30, 2022
Fluvanna Community Church
3363 Fluvanna Ext.
Jamestown, NY 14701
9am-4pm

This one-day conference is an exciting opportunity for anyone interested in Genealogy, from novice to expert. Visit our website crgconference.com for information on speakers and topics. Registration opens March 15, 2022. Visit crgconference.com or call 716-664-6256 to register.
A Call for Board Members!

The Fenton History Center is governed by a Board of Trustees. We are a “working board,” meaning we discuss, plan, strategize, and work with staff to coordinate activities at the Fenton. **We currently have two open positions on the Board** and are always looking for new members, with diverse skills and backgrounds that can help aid in the Fenton’s mission.

If you are interested in joining the Board of Trustees, the only eligibility requirement is that you need to be a dues-paying member of the Fenton. Members of the Board of Trustees are elected at the annual meeting, usually held in February of each year. If you are interested, fill out the application on our website at the link below. Prospective Board Members have also been typically invited to meetings of the Board of Trustees to get a better idea of how the Board operates.

fentonhistorycenter.org/joinboard
We have a need for volunteers of all skills and talents. There is a need for people to photograph textiles, those who can type, those who are willing to file articles and clippings and those who can scan.

We also need volunteers to man the Gift Shop and generally assist at the mansion. Those willing to help put up displays are most welcome.

Tour guides and actors can be used year-round but are especially needed at the time of the Cemetery tours.

If you are not sure of your skill level, training is offered for each position. If you would like to be a part of the volunteer brigade, call the Fenton at 716-664-6256.
It is customary to think about change at the new year so I’m departing once again from my usual discussion of collection items to remark about historic changes, particularly those I have observed in my lifetime. The observations and opinions are my own, not those of the Fenton History Center or anyone else.

On Christmas morning, I turned on my computer and watched the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope. It is designed to gather information from the farthest distances in the observable universe which are also the most remote moments of the past. When I was a child, from my home, I could see a maximum distance of five miles to the horizon. This was, however, a much larger world than that of a child living on a village or city lot. I remember learning that the world is round like a ball. I asked if we were on the inside or the outside of the ball. After I learned to read in a one room school, the main information available to me about the larger universe was material my step-grandmother hand copied from her encyclopaedia, then 20 years out of date. At that time the question was just being resolved about the “nebulae” outside the Milky Way. They were found to be far distant galaxies. Just like that, human understanding of the universe went from 100,000 light years to 46 billion. In my school days the Big Bang theory was just achieving dominance. We first realized that time and space, themselves, had beginnings. The questions of the far future and shape and finite or infinite nature of the universe were unknown but considered resolvable within what would be my lifetime. Many of those questions have been answered which I find wonderfully satisfying. But in my mature years “dark matter” and “dark energy,” unrecognized in my youth, have been discovered. They constitute over 95% of the universe and we have essentially no idea what they are. Some of the answers to other great questions of my childhood are not as simple as I expected and only imperfectly understood by me as an adult.

I first learned the basics of subatomic physics from George Gamow’s wonderful books. They were then ten years out of date. We had protons, neutrons, electrons, photons, and positrons. The rest of the Standard Model right down to the Higgs Boson has developed under my observation - neutrinos, muons, tau, bosons, gluons. I especially remember the discovery of quarks in 1968.

Plate tectonics that has shaped the geologic history of earth was accepted in my lifetime.

I think the moon landing was the most important event in my lifetime for long term historical significance; the invention of computers and the internet second, even though the victories in World War II and the Cold War, both of immense historical consequence, also took place in my lifetime. Such rankings may well be meaningless.

Between my father’s lifetime and mine, we saw the United States change from a heavily rural civ-
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I remember when the polio vaccines were invented. I had mumps, measles, and chicken-pox before there were vaccines. Now I’ve seen COVID come and the vaccines, to my dismay, rejected by many.

Some scholars have questioned how far reaching were the effects on Western Society of moving, in the 17th through the 19th centuries, from alcohol to caffeine as the most common drug, i.e. from a depressant to a stimulant. Now we are adopting marijuana, a strong motivation depressant. I wonder if this will have effects that compound over generations.

The Industrial Revolution and the urbanization it enabled dramatically reduced the participation of fathers in child rearing. Now we are marginalizing mothers as well, substituting institutions, chiefly government connected. It would be surprising if this did not result in generations with radically different attitudes, aspirations, and achievements.

The rise of Christianity in late antiquity institutionalized an ideology that preached standards of personal and public rectitude and actually organized people to help the poor and sick. Ever so gradually Christianity diminished the immense brutality and injustice of the ancient world. Christianity as a default belief has been displaced in my lifetime by a combination of inchoate New Age religion/superstition and Marxist derived political/ideological passions. Christian authorities desecrated and destroyed tangible manifestations of classical paganism. The new utopians are now systematically destroying the symbols (statues, art, myths, heroes, books) and the practices of the old system, often violently. People are being subjected to public shaming, vituperation, and mob violence for ex post facto speech offenses committed decades ago in private or in childhood. The consequences of the change will be as sweeping as the transformation from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages, or so its self appointed vanguard vows.

I’ve seen sex roles and rules for interaction between the sexes change more in my life time that they had in 6,000 years. Now the very concept of sex, itself, is redefined politically rather than biologically. Crazy plans for genocide and total destruction of civilization I first heard working under cover in the 1960’s are now seen in the New York Times.

The framework of a society rests in the rules of what you mustn’t think and what you must think, what you have to say and what you can’t say, what you are required to notice and what you are forbidden to notice. These have turned upside down in my life: good and bad, legal and illegal, mandatory and prohibited, normal and deviant have been in many instances completely inverted.

Plastics have come into general use in my lifetime, comparable to the transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. I remember the last pathetic remnants of chestnuts and I’ve seen the effective extinction of elms and ash. I’ve seen the face fly become an inescapable tormenter of all animals domestic and wild (1958).

The corn rootworm (ca. 1982), Japanese beetle (1990’s), wild roses (ca. 1950), and countless other pests have come to local prominence in my lifetime incurring enormous cost. People, themselves, have become conspicuously larger in both size and weight.

I’ve seen popular music transform completely from jazz based to rock based. I’ve seen an enormous diminution of inhibitions, manners, and formality in all fields of endeavor. The first time I saw grown men wearing shorts was 1956. The first old woman wearing pants was 1967. Girls were allowed to wear Bermuda shorts to school just one day in 1960. I’ve seen hardball tactics, previously used mostly by labor unions and criminal organizations, mastered by more and more interest groups giving zealots tremendous leverage to change society. We never heard of “activists” before the late 1960’s.

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For $20 we provide everything you need to paint this, including the 8" wooden sled. Call the Fenton or stop in to reserve your spot!

Call 716-664-6256 to register and stop by the Fenton Gift Shop to pick up your kit!
The Fenton History Center’s Genealogy Support Group serves to support both experienced and amateur researchers. Meetings feature invaluable lectures, discussions and are an excellent way to become familiar with the Fenton History Center’s impressive collection of resources.

The Support Group typically meets on the last Wednesday of each month at the Fenton History Center in the historic Hall House building, located at 73 Forest Avenue in Jamestown, New York. Doors open at 6, and the meeting begins at 6:30 with a brief business meeting followed by a program. Program topics and speakers are subject to change. Meetings are also often held via Zoom.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, January 8, 2022
9th Annual Library Lock-In

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 @ 6:30 PM
Introduction to the 1950 U.S. Federal Census
presented by Andrew Kolstee

Wednesday, March 30, 2022 @ 6:30 PM
News and Updates Regarding the 1950 U.S. Federal Census
presented by Andrew Kolstee

Saturday, April 30, 2022
Chautauqua Regional Genealogical Conference
A few days before Christmas I had the good fortune to be asked by a Veteran family member to represent the family in a presentation to their WWII father. Months ago, the family member had nominated her father to receive a patriotic quilt from an organization called Quilts of Honor Foundation.

The Veteran is Paul Arnone, 97 years young, who I have come to know very well since 2015. His daughter Peggy lives in North Carolina and wasn’t able to be here for the presentation. The QOHF representative, Mary Lou Zerby, was going to stop in Jamestown on her way to a family Christmas celebration in Hamburg. She called Paul to ask if he would like to receive a quilt made especially for a Veteran in honor of his service to our country. Of course he said “YES!” Peggy called me to see if I would meet Mary Lou and take photos and of course I said “Yes!”

She performed a nice ceremony, explaining how the Quilts of Valor Foundation came about and why he was being honored. She talked with Paul for a few minutes about his scary job as a 19 year old Navy signalman on LST 44 in the second wave at Normandy, France. A model of an LST made for him by Peg...
gy’s son was the perfect accessory as he explained his duty, and where the troops, tanks, jeeps, and equipment were placed in the hull.

Mary Lou and I conversed later about how many Veterans would be perfect to nominate for the list, and how few quilters there are to fulfill that need. If any of our members have a Veteran family member they would like to nominate, or if they enjoy quilting and would like to learn more about QOVF, follow this link (www.qovf.org).

What a great winter project this would be!

Although this is a nationwide organization, the quilts that are made in Chautauqua County will be awarded to Veterans in Chautauqua County. Call Barb at 716-664-6256 if you have questions!
One of the ways you can support the Fenton History Center is through our Amazon Wishlist. Of course we accept gifts purchased in other places, or monetary donations too!

www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1PU3BVS0HQ5E0