I can’t believe that it is November! That also means that Christmas is just around the corner. We will be having Black Friday sales in our Gift Shop on November 25th. Also on Friday, November 25th will be a Family Photo Day at the mansion. Bring your family and have your photo taken in our historic Drawing Room. Dress up or wear your ugly Christmas sweaters! The cost is $25 per family, which includes museum admission and a digital photo. You will also have the option of purchasing prints from the photographer. Call 716-664-6256 for more information.

On Sunday, December 4th, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, we are offering visits with our Sensory Santa. If you have a child who can’t visit Santa in a conventional setting please consider coming to the Fenton History Center. Our Santa has been professionally trained and will see your child without bright lights, loud noises, etc.. Each family will visit Santa separately and each child will get a “goodie bag” to take home. This event is free and is handicapped accessible.

Many of you call or stop by with items that you want to donate to the museum. We have closed our intake of items for the year in order to give time to the staff to catch up with cataloging for 2022. We will begin taking items again, February 1, 2023. We ask that if you have items to donate to call first or send an email with a photo. The Curator will record the objects as a Temporary Custody and the Collections Committee will determine if the item fits our Mission Statement, its relevancy to the history of Jamestown and the vicinity, the condition it is in, may be easily stored when not on exhibit, and do we have duplicates in our collection. If we do not accession the item, we may suggest another museum where it might be more appropriate. Sometimes there is an item that we would love to have for our collection, but may be too large. We are limited in exhibit space and storage space. It is very important that we are able to maintain our collections in the best possible manner of Museum Standards of Practice.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving!
FENTON TO HOST
‘SENSORY FRIENDLY’ SANTA

by Janet Babinsky
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On Saturday, December 4, 2022, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., the Fenton History Center will be hosting a “sensory friendly” Santa Claus at the Fenton Mansion.

This event is geared towards children and families who might be uncomfortable, nervous, or anxious in the traditional Santa Claus encounter environments, which often feature bright lights, loud music, and large crowds. The Santa at our event has experience working with people with disabilities, and the room around him will be set up to be calming and straightforward, while maintaining festive elements where appropriate.

Children who attend the event must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver. This event is free, and open to any community members who wish to attend.

The Fenton is committed to making sure that all our visitors can have a safe, educational, and enjoyable experience. For more information about the event, or to request any special accommodations, please contact Jane Babinsky at the Fenton History Center by calling (716)-664-6256.

SENSORY SENSITIVE SANTA

Sat., December 4, 2022
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

at the Fenton History Center
67 Washington, Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
ONLINE STORE LAUNCHED

by Andrew Kolstee
OFFICE MANAGER

The Fenton Museum Store continues to undergo many changes and we are excited to announce the next phase.

In 2021, the Fenton launched a new website. Our old website had a store with some, but not all of our merchandise offerings and it was difficult to navigate. In a previous article, I announced that the Fenton upgraded to Shopify for our gift shop point of sale and inventory platform. As part of Shopify, we can create an online store to go along with our Museum Store at the Fenton Mansion. This online store has been in the works for over a year, and it is finally ready.

After months of preparation, the new online Fenton Museum Store has been launched! We currently have 20 books in the shop, but we will be rolling the rest of our gift shop merchandise online as time goes on--both books and other merchandise--including customized Fenton-branded products.

With the launch of our new online store, keep an eye out for our Cyber Monday special at the end of this month!

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Transcribed by Cindy Dustin
VOLUNTEER

The Fenton History Center has an extensive collection of local cookbooks in its archives. This recipe comes from the Diana Lodge #114 Favorite Recipes published around 1972.

SWEDISH APPLE PIE
Mrs. Ford Swanson

Beat 1 egg with ¾ cups of white sugar

Sift together:
½ cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/8 teaspoon of salt
Add to the egg and sugar mixture

Then stir in:
1 ½ cup diced apples
½ cup chopped nuts

Bake in a greased 8” square pan at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream.
Blackstone Washing machines, known as Vandergrift prior to 1903, were among the iconic products of Jamestown industry from 1880 to around 1980. A full length book could and should be written about the history of the Blackstone company, the product lines it ventured into, and the families behind it. We have at least five Blackstone washing machines in the collection. One of them is a recent donation. It is a very early example and in excellent condition.

There is no better place in the Fenton museum to educate people about the contrast between present and past than our basement laundry room. Some readers may have read or heard the story of the invention of the Blackstone washer by William Blackstone in Indiana in 1874 as a birthday present for his wife. How many have wondered how the wife laundered the clothes before that? The answer involves a washboard. Modern people most often encounter galvanized metal washboards in antique stores and hanging on home or restaurant walls for decoration. In the 1960's and 70's as well as the 1920's, we occasionally saw them used as percussion instruments in folk or jug bands.

Fenton used to feature a Home-spun unit in its education program. Children could learn how women on Mondays, the traditional laundry day of the work week, washed, dried, and often ironed the clothes they made and for which they had spun and woven the fabric other days of the week. With sleeves rolled up to the elbows of their strong arms, they kneaded and wrestled the clothes or worked them with plungers in a wash tub filled with water they had carried from the well and heated on a wood burning stove. For especially heavy or difficult dirt, they scrubbed them on the washboard at the side of the tub. Then they would dump the water from the tub, refill it with clean water and wrestle the clothes around for the rinse, then dump the water again, wring out the clothes by hand and hang them on an outdoor clothes line to dry.

The natural fabrics: cotton, wool, and linen, made the work much harder than we might otherwise imagine. Before World War II, women used specially formulate laundry soap, not synthetic detergents. Soap was less effective and it created a troublesome scum (calcium stearate) that interfered with cleaning and built up on the equipment surfaces. In pioneer times, women didn’t even have access to sodium hypochlorite bleach. One of the uses of pearl ashes, one of Chautauqua County’s first export products, was for washing soda. The ear-
liest pioneer women didn’t even have washboards. They went to the creek and pounded clothes with rocks.

From all of this maybe we can appreciate how Mrs. Blackstone and other 19th century women, despite having to power the mechanism of the washing machine with their arms, found the invention a great blessing. Just after the turn of the 20th century, manufacturers began to install electric motors (in cities where electricity was available) or quirky, dirty, and noisy little gasoline engines under the washing machine tubs to provide the power. It wasn’t until after World War II that automatic washing machines were introduced by Blackstone and other makers. They had the fill water and the drain water plumbed directly to and from the washer. Little motors, cams, and relays took care of the whole wash, rinse, and dry sequence. Wow!

Our new acquisition bears patent dates of 1883 and 1892 and is probably earlier than any other washer in our collection. It is the model that was often pictured as the earliest example of a Blackstone in their advertising.

My mother grew up in a home with no plumbing. I remember her making her own soap in World War II. She had a keen appreciation for both laundry detergents and automatic washing machines. Our Amish neighbors today with their huge laundry burdens have to manually fill and drain their non-automatic machines powered by gasoline engines. Many parts of the world still do not have the full complement of pressurized running water, electricity, and automatic washing machines. The modern woman, like the modern man and even the modern child is filled with dissatisfactions and politics, passions and protests often to the point of foolishness for lack of historical perspective. We live in luxury and ease our grandparents could not have imagined and kings a few centuries ago could not afford. And we assume it is natural and inevitable if we think about it at all.

Caring for our exhibits and artifacts requires constant temperatures and levels of humidity. Our basement area can get quite damp in the summer and requires that we run a dehumidifier continuously. We would welcome a new one if you are able to help us out.
At a recent staff meeting, we discussed the many wonderful resources that we have in the Research Center for genealogy research. It was decided that when there wasn’t a blazing topic that needed to be covered, an underused but amazing resource could be highlighted.

So, I want to introduce you to a set of books published by the Chautauqua County Genealogical Society in 1996, titled School Trustees Annual Reports. The information was extracted from several boxes of Trustee Reports for Chautauqua County District Schools, held in the collection of the McClurg Museum in Westfield. Lois Barris painstakingly compiled the records of each year and town between 1892 and 1906.

The seven different volumes contain these records by Town, with the names of the head of household in alphabetical order. At the end of each Town is an index of students who lived in a household other than their actual residence for various reasons. Students often worked for other families and sometimes they lived much further away from their own District School, but closer to another. Harsh winter weather made a long walk on a nice day into a miserable experience, back when snow was piled high till spring.

Notice that on the first page of the Arkwright School Census Schedule, listed alphabetically and possibly misspelled by the Trustee, are the names of the heads of household, and four other columns of amazing information that sometimes leads to huge breakthroughs. The years of 1892 – 1906 are perfect to fill in some of the black hole left by the demise of the 1890 census (a fire in 1921). The very abbreviated 1892 census was an attempt to replace the 1890, but each household was run together and the relationship of each person to the head of household was not included. That being said, it is useful since the 1900 census was still eight years away.

Although each Town has its own index, there is another volume that we will soon order, which is an every name index for all volumes. This will be very helpful in following families as they moved or those young farm hands moving from farm to farm as they were needed.
The Fenton Christmas Market

A Christmas Craft Show throughout the Historic Victorian Mansion

Saturday, November 12th, 2022   10am-4pm
67 Washington St Jamestown NY

Admission $2

A selection of vintage Christmas items and handmade holiday and gift items will be available for sale throughout the festively decorated historic Fenton Mansion 67 Washington Street Jamestown NY, 14701

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 open positions on the Board. We 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. 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
For many legitimate reasons, Vets Finding Vets, as with most organizations, programs, businesses, and families had to rework social activities drastically to keep our Veterans safe during COVID. We made good use of our time, and waited impatiently for things to become normal again. Although things have become more normal, thankfully, we still continue to be cautious to some extent.

The Honor Flights are up and going again, and the third flight since COVID was held on Oct 22nd! I continue to help local Vets with the needed paperwork/travel arrangements at no charge to them. This works out perfectly, as this way they get to know other area Vets that they will share these wonderful memories with.

Fenton Canteen has been “back home” in the Fenton Mansion since July 2022, although Canteen will gather at the Research Center in November because the ever-popular Holiday Christmas Mart will have crafters set up all over the Mansion. I’ll take advantage of having the Vets at the Research Center where I can expound on the many genealogical, local history, and Veteran resources that are available to Chautauqua County Veterans at no cost to them. New veterans are always welcome.

Quilts of Valor has been a wonderful addition as periodic special ceremonies which honor War Veterans individually, no matter the number of recipients per event. It is especially heart-warming that the ladies who present the ceremonies and quilts are happy to go to residential homes or nursing homes to bestow the honors. Some quilt guilds and individuals have stepped up to help as they know how richly blessed we are with Veterans in Chautauqua County.

We, as the Fenton History Center, were very excited to present the first-ever Soldier’s Friend Scholarship for $1000 to Brianna Rosequist. She left to begin her National Guard training very shortly after her “debut” on the Fenton History Center float during the Fourth of July Parade in Mayville. We wish her well in her endeavors, both in the National Guard and college after training. This is heartening to us as it highlights our favorite New York State Governor and his involvement with Soldiers and Veterans.
This summer, we became a Blue Star Museum, which honors the serving members of the military and their families by giving free admission when visiting the Museum. The service member may be stationed or deployed out of the area when the family is visiting the area, and they need not be Chautauqua County Veterans. We are beginning a Blue Star Memorial Garden this fall, and in the spring when the City will help us with hearty floral additions we will have a heavy duty weather resistant bench for seating in the garden. The bench will be the result of our involvement in the NexTrex Recycling Program. We are gathering soft plastic and only need 500 lbs of it! We have a large container in each building and welcome public participation to help us reach our goal.

Our summer exhibit highlighting the 100th Anniversary of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church was a marvelous opportunity for me to document their Veteran members past and present. Liz Frederick was a very dedicated co-worker in that endeavor, and has become a dear friend.

Last, but certainly not least, were the two post-covid adventures we were so eager to take part in. The first took place on July 15, when we enjoyed (to the max) a bus trip to the World War II Museum in Eldred, PA. This was a joint event with Dwyer Chautauqua Vets and Cindy Reidy, the Dwyer Project Coordinator. We have gone several times over the years and learn new and amazing things each time we go. Steve Appleby, the Museum Director, was very happy to see the big bus roll up with so many Veterans of all ages.

The second adventure took place (after 2 years) on the Chautauqua Belle for a Veteran Cruise of the Chadakoin. It was wonderful and a lot of fun on this joint voyage with Dwyer Chautauqua. Hats off to Cindy and to the Patriotic Bingo players and supporters who funded this trip. PS- Patriotic Bingo is not gambling and we’ll probably bring it back the next time we fundraise for events.

You might suspect that I love my job – and you would be right!

Thank you for your support as well!!

Go to the Fenton History Center website to donate!
GENEALOGY SUPPORT GROUP
TO INTRODUCE RESEARCH NIGHTS

by Janet Wahlberg
PRESIDENT

It is hard to believe that we have been meeting for seven years. Having said that we plan to continue going forward with some of the same programs while we look for new ideas.

One of our oldest traditions is the January Lock-In, a great 12 hour time working with old friends and new friends. This year it will be held on January 14th from 10AM to 10PM. Plan to come and work with others to solve some of your challenges.

Our November meeting is always Solving Your Brick Walls so plan to join us with your Brick Wall Challenge or bring us your solution for the Brick Wall that you broke in 2022.

We have some innovative ideas for 2023 in both format and times for our meetings. We plan to hold our meetings in the winter months from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. as many of us do not like being out late on the dark snowy evenings. February, April, and June will be open research. Plan to bring a friend who wants to get started or to get back to their research for one of those evenings. In July we plan to visit the Warren County Genealogy Library, details to be worked out. As our August Open House was such a great success last year, we plan to hold it again this year.

The schedule will be posted each month in the Walnut Grove Press as to topic and times so keep a close eye on that. If you are not currently on our Support Group mailing list, just let us know and we can add you. wjanet1946@gmail.com.

The Fenton History Center’s Genealogy Support Group serves to support to 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 6:00 p.m., 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

Wednesday, November 30, 2022 @ 6:30 PM
Brick Walls - Open Forum

Wednesday, December 28, 2022 @ 6:30 PM
Christmas Party

Saturday, January 14, 2023
10th Annual Library Lock-In

Wednesday, January 25, 2023
Research Night 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Program - Beginning Research @ 6:30 PM
CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE
at the Gov. Reuben Fenton Mansion
67 Washington St., Jamestown, NY 14701

Saturday, December 17, 2022
10 AM - 4 PM

Admission: $10 (adults)
FREE (members and under 18)

Refreshments will be available. Santa Claus will be here for the children from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

(716) 664-6256  FentonHistoryCenter.org
Recycle your household bags and wrap! The Fenton is collecting 500 pounds of plastic in order to get a heavy duty, weather-resistant bench for seating in our Blue Star Memorial Garden! We have a box inside the Fenton Mansion and at the Hall House Research Center!

**FROM THE STORE**
- **✓** Produce bags
- **✓** Store bags
- **✓** Ice bags

**FROM YOUR PANTRY**
- **✓** Ziploc® & other reclosable bags
- **✓** Cereal box liners
- **✓** Case overwrap
- **✓** Bread bags

**FROM YOUR FRONT DOOR**
- **✓** Newspaper sleeves
- **✓** Dry cleaning bags
- **✓** Bubble wrap
- **✓** Plastic e-commerce mailers
The lobby at the Governor Reuben Fenton Mansion has a new bench. But not just any bench—this one was built out of the wood from Jamestown’s iconic Third Street oak trees that were cut down two years ago. Ray Hofgren and Steve Tedquist built the bench for the Fenton as a donation, to carry on the legacy of those trees in a custom-made bench from local woodworkers.

Dan Stone, Jamestown City Arborist and Parks Manager was present for the presentation of the bench, noting the history of the oak trees and the unfortunate circumstances that led to their removal.

Stone also talked about the importance of preserving the legacy of the trees through the use of the wood from the trees, which have been used by local artisans in many creative ways.

The Fenton History Center is committed to preserving the history of the area, and a bench made from the iconic Third Street Oaks is fitting for our lobby.
Sharon Matson is on the Board of Trustees at the Fenton. She also serves on the Hall House Management Team bringing fresh ideas to our programming. She has been a member of the Fenton for over 30 years. This year she volunteered to do some of the research for one of the characters on the Saints and Sinners Tour. In addition, she was at the main tent helping out where needed.

Sharon has been helping with some much-needed sorting and cleaning in some of our work rooms. She was a great help in helping to finish decorating for our Halloween Open House and then showed up as Raggedy Ann to hand our candy during the Trick or Treat time. Then bright and early Tuesday morning after Halloween she showed up to take down and pack away all of the decorations. I heard via the grapevine that she will be showing up to start decorating for Christmas. It seems wherever there is a need Sharon is there to help. And now let's hear a bit about Sharon from Sharon.

I arrived in Chautauqua County in 1971 with my husband and two children. I have a Master’s Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from Mercyhurst College, PA, and I recently retired from the Chautauqua County Office of Probation after 30 years. I have been a member of the Fenton since 1983.

I am selfish with my time because I enjoy visiting my families who don’t live in this area and some not even in NY State! Thank you for having me on the Board! No, we the Fenton thank you for serving so generously on the Board.

VIP: SHARON MATSON

by Janet Wahlberg
PRESIDENT

Fri., November 25, 2022
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
at the Fenton History Center
67 Washington Street, Jamestown, NY 14701

Come to the historic Fenton Mansion and have your holiday family photo taken in the Drawing Room. Each family will receive a digital copy of the photo and may make arrangements with the photographer to have prints made. Cost is $25.00, which includes museum admission.

For more information, call (716) 664-6256
FENTON HISTORY CENTER
MEMBERSHIPS

GENERAL INFORMATION
• Your membership is vital for keeping the museum and research center running!
• Memberships run January - December. Memberships purchased after Sept. 1 are good through Dec. of the following year.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS
• Unlimited complimentary admission to the Governor Reuben Fenton Mansion.
• Unlimited access to the Hall House Research Library.
• Reduced fee for Fenton events and programs unless specified.
• A discount to the museum gift shop.
• Members only e-mail updates.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP LEVELS
• Student $15
• Senior (age 62+) $30
• Educator $30
• Individual (under age 62) $40
• Family $75. Includes 2 adults and up to 3 children.

SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP LEVELS
• Supporting $120, can be paid monthly ($10). Includes 4 complimentary admission passes for guests.
• Friend of Fenton $250, can be paid monthly ($20.83). Includes 6 complimentary admission passes for guests.
• Representative’s Circle $360, can be paid monthly ($30). Includes 8 complimentary admission passes for guests.
• Senator’s Circle $500, can be paid monthly ($41.67). Includes 16 complimentary admissions for guests, lunch with Executive Director, and a behind the scenes tour of the Gov. Reuben Fenton Mansion for up to four people.
• Governor’s Circle $1,000, can be paid monthly ($83.33). Includes unlimited complimentary admissions for guests, lunch with Executive Director, a behind the scenes tour of Gov. Reuben Fenton Mansion for up to four people, and a behind the scenes tour of Hall House Research Center for four people.

FENTONHISTORYCENTER.ORG/MEMBERSHIP

NOVEMBER 2022  15
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!

Fenton History Center's Amazon Wishlist
www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1PU3BVS0HQ5E0

Fenton History Center Museum
67 Washington Street
Jamestown, New York 14701
Hours: Mon. - Sat. 10 AM - 4 PM

Hall House Research Center
73 Forest Avenue
Jamestown, NY 14701
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 10 AM - 4 PM

(716) 664-6256
www.fentonhistorycenter.com

50% OFF Museum Admission for Seniors (65+)
FIRST TUESDAY EACH MONTH

Patreon
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