



# CHARLTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Winter 2023

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[www.charltonnyhs.org](http://www.charltonnyhs.org)

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

### Shaker Medicinal Herb Industry

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> join us at 7pm in the Schoolhouse for light refreshments followed at 7:30pm by our program. **Shaker Medicinal Herb Industry**. Presented by Lorraine Weiss, education coordinator at the Shaker Heritage Society.

#### Program description:

#### **Gathered in Their Proper Season: The Shakers, Apothecaries to the World**

*The Shakers are a Utopian society whose beliefs on gender and racial equality and communal living date to the 1700s.*

You may know about Shaker furniture, have seen the distinct Shaker oval boxes, hummed the *Simple Gifts* song (*'Tis a gift to be simple, 'tis a gift to be free...*) and even worn a Shaker stitch sweater, but did you know that the Shakers' first permanent settlement was right here in Albany County?



The movement known as the Shakers originated in England in the 1750s. Having experienced persecution and rejection for their revolutionary beliefs and ecstatic form of worship, Mother Ann Lee and 11 other Shakers immigrated from Manchester, England and settled here in 1776. By the 1790s, the Shakers had begun the industries that would establish their reputation as innovative and skilled craftspeople and honest businesspeople. The Watervliet community, as the Albany Shakers were known, developed the process of packing seeds in small envelopes, invented the flat broom, and ran an herbal medicine industry that was selling almost 300 products by 1860.

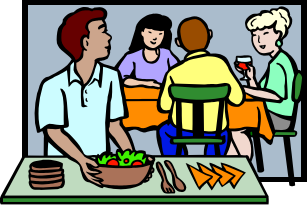
Today the Shaker Heritage Society site includes a complex of nine Shaker buildings, an educational herb garden with 150 plants labeled according to their use by the Shakers, an apple orchard, the Shaker Cemetery and the Ann Lee Pond Historic and Nature Preserve.

This presentation will explore the ways in which the Shakers' herbal medicine industry was a response to the changing medical practices in the early 19th century and how it was facilitated by their unique social structure.

## Moveable Feast

Saturday, April 22, 2023

April not only brings us Spring showers, but it also signals it's time for our annual Charlton Historical Society Moveable Feast. This popular event will be held on Saturday, April 22.



Volunteers are needed to host the dinner portions of the event. Remember, the hosts do not pay, but provide a salad and bread to compliment the dinner. To volunteer, Call Tracey Lyons at 518 357-8981, Alice Crotty at 518 399-4153, Sue York at 518 399-3797.

**Be on the lookout for more information to come.**

## All About Birds

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

On Wednesday, May 3 we will be hosting an exciting program just in time for warm weather bird watching! Again, join us at 7pm at the Schoolhouse for All About Birds. Presented by New York State bird expert, Joan Collins, of Adirondack Avian Expeditions.

We hope to see you at one or all of these coming events. Members and non-members are welcome to join us!



## Memorial Day Ceremony

May 29 –2:00 Gideon Hawley Park

This year's theme will be the recognition of Women in the Military and honoring Charlton veterans.

**Remember: Charlton Veterans are eligible to be added to the Board if they have been resident in Charlton for at least 8 years and have received an honorable discharge. Please send request to the Veterans Board Committee at the Charlton Town Hall, 758 Charlton Road, Charlton, NY 12019, or fax to (518) 384-0385. BY May 1<sup>st</sup>.**



## Founders Day Weekend

June 3 and 4

Museum Opening

Saturday, June 3 at 10:00 The Charlton Heritage 5K Race and Walk

At 5:00 Party in the Park

Sunday, June 4 at 11:00 – 4:00 Farmers Market/Dairy Council Ice Cream Social

At 2:00 Parade and Proclamation

## Post-Holiday Party

The Charlton Historical Society would like to thank everyone who came to the Holiday Party, and we hope that everyone enjoyed their meals, visiting with friends, and having a good time. We thank Marty Wilson for providing entertainment, with his jokes and trivia game. We hope that he will change his mind and agree to entertain us at our party this December. So many of you were very generous with your contributions to the raffle, for which we thank you. The raffle is part of the entertainment, and we thank Tracey and Erin for helping to make it run smoothly. We also thank Sue, Mike, Kevin, and the staff of the Charlton Tavern for great meals and a wonderful party.



## **Spring Volunteers Needed**

As we reminded you in the last Newsletter, the founding and lasting success of the Charlton Historical Society has been totally dependent on our volunteers. Every aspect of the success is at the hands of those who spend a few hours. or those who spend many hours for many years. Here's where volunteers are needed.

### **Museum and Schoolhouse**

- Periodic cleaning: Dusting, Vacuuming, Glass Cleaning, Program Set Up and Clean Up
- Helping Curator with displays and documents
- Museum Volunteers: Be a docent during Founders Day Weekend and/or Saturday/Sunday Summer hours (2 hr. Commitment)

### **Programs**

- Moveable Feast – Dinner Hosts are needed
- Holiday Party – Raffle, entertainment
- Memorial Day Ceremony – Set Up, Refreshments, Handing Out Programs
- Children Programs
- Fund Raisers

### **Charlton Heritage 5K Run and Walk (Major Fund Raiser that keeps CHS going.)**

- Course Set Up and Monitoring
- Marshalls
- Course Safety Team
- Tent set-up and take down
- Stuffing Goodie Bags
- Food Table Workers
- Event Clean-up
- Announcers/race starter
- Singer of National Anthem
- Registration
- Photographers

### **Publicity and Marketing**

#### **Recording History**

- Research and record the lives of people of our town.
- Do a supplement to "Stories and Pictures of Charlton" published in 1959 on happenings since 1959 to the present.
- Seek to publish an Arcadia Book about Charlton.

#### **Maintenance tasks as they arise.**

#### **Parade**

- Recruiting parade participants
- Requesting road closure from county
- Invite politicians to march and take part in the proclamation
- Recruit marching band(s)

#### **Librarian**

# CHUCK LATHAM'S CHARLTON HISTORY – FACTS and LEGEND

## John Taylor: New York's "Only" Speaker of the House

Submitted by Rick Reynolds Sept 21, 2022

Rick Reynolds has been the Ballston Town Historian since 2004. He is a retired social studies teacher at BHBL Middle school and is the author of the book "From Wilderness to Community: The Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School District. Rick can be reached at [rreynolds@townofballstonny.org](mailto:rreynolds@townofballstonny.org).

What do you suppose history will say about politicians of current times? Hindsight is often different from what was presumed by contemporaries. But for John Taylor, who became New York's first Speaker of the House of Representatives, that does not seem to be true. He was always seen as a man of high standards, even if those high standards irked some people in his own political party.

Many years ago, it was said by an unknown author that "Mr. Taylor was a gentleman of the old school polite and courteous, an eloquent and forcible speaker, and delivered frequent oration on literary and national topics....in private life he was retiring, fond of cultivating his own garden and generous in distributing its fruits and flowers. He hated corruption in politics and spurned the use of money for political personal success, and his constituency always returned unwavering confidence in his sterling integrity." John Taylor (1784-1854), whose house still stands on West High Street in Ballston Spa, was a highly respected gentleman and a man who gave a great deal of his life in service to our country.

Taylor was born in what would become Charlton, lived in Ballston Spa, and then for a time in Corinth. He was a graduate of Union College, the valedictorian of his class at the age of 19, and, soon thereafter, was admitted to the bar to practice law. He was elected to State Assembly (1812-1813) where he was known for his efforts to combat corruption especially in relation to banks who were exercising more power and influence than they should at the time. After that short stint, he was elected to the US House of Representatives where he served for 20 years, from 1813-1833. It was during that time that he was Speaker of the House twice, making him fourth in line in succession to the Presidency, should anything happen to the President, Vice-President, President pro-tem of the Senate. (In later years, the positions of President pro-tem and Speaker of the House were reversed and the Presidential succession order.)

His goal as Speaker was to be totally impartial, not favoring either party's agenda but doing what he felt was best for the country. That did not set well with some of his colleagues, thus ensuring that his two terms as Speaker were split, as he lost an intervening term. Then, after losing the election of 1832 because the party leaders were again dismayed with his non-partisan performance, he resumed the practice of law in Ballston Spa. Later he became a member of the State Senate.

In the State legislature, he was actively involved in the conduct of the War of 1812 and, while in the Assembly, he became highly respected and known as an excellent debater. In the Congress, he aligned himself with James Tallmadge and Fugus King, both from New York who strongly believed that slavery should not be extended into the territories. With that belief, he disagreed with Henry Clay, the "Great Compromiser" of the time.

Despite those differences with the very influential Clay, the two men maintained a healthy respect for each other. Clay visited Ballston Spa at one point and made quite a scene with his praise for the integrity of Taylor. Taylor also knew Dolly Madison, the President's wife, who remarked once that there was always something wanting at a dinner or a party if Mr. Taylor was absent." Her respect for him was exemplified by the fact that she gave him a small piece of Martha Washington's wedding dress as a memento. In addition, he accompanied General Lafayette of France, famous in our Revolution, around the New England states while Lafayette was visiting in the country in 1824.

It was from his State Senate position that he resigned in 1841 because of a crippling stroke. He moved to Cleveland, Ohio to live with his daughter where he died on September 18, 1854. He is buried in Ballston Spa Village Cemetery.

But, besides the esteem, his fame truly lies in the fact that he was the only New Yorker to ever be Speaker of the House of Representatives....sort of. In reality there was one other person from New York who was Speaker of the House, but for a very short period of time. His name was Theodore M. Pomeroy, born in Elbridge, NY and later moving to Auburn, NY. Schuyler Colfax, who was Speaker from 1863-1869, was elected Vice-President with Ulysses S. Grant. In order to be sworn in at noon on March 4, 1869, inauguration day at that time, Colfax resigned his speakership at 11AM that day before. Within about an hour, Theodore M. Pomeroy was sworn in as the new Speaker. Since that 40<sup>th</sup> Congress ended at noon the following day, so did Pomeroy's term as Speaker, the total length of his term approximately 24 hours. It was the shortest term of office for a Speaker in our history and since his term is often forgotten. Taylor usually gets the credit for being the only New Yorker to be Speaker of the House of Representatives.

## Announcements and Reminders

- **Welcome New Members** - The Charlton Historical Society would like to welcome our latest new members. Mark and Denise Lansing have just joined. The Lansings are good neighbors of the CHS, living next door to our schoolhouse. They own and operate Jumpin' Jack's in Scotia and are generous sponsors of our 5K race. We also welcome back Kevin and Elizabeth Keelan, who had been members for many years before. Lastly, welcome to Robert S. Davis, past donor, and new member. Thank you for your support.
- **We welcome our newly elected Board of Trustees** TJ Lyons, Jill Hofmann and Jason Nemec. Bob Fenton and Mary Jane Breedlove joined the Board earlier in the year. Thank you for your commitment to Charlton Historical Society.
- Last fall the Schoolhouse kerosene tank was replaced.
- The Historical Society is looking for Charlton Photos from the past and significant Photos from the present.
- The Charlton Garden Club plans to place a bench in memory of Stacey Fenton in the Gideon Hawley Park. If you wish to donate, contact Laurie and Tim Kruppenbacher, 138 Crane Street, 12302 or call 518 399-7034.
- Jason will be building bookshelves under the Schoolhouse chalk board in an effort to organize our library and make it more accessible for research.

### Charlton Historical Society Board of Trustees

Co-Presidents	Alice Crotty	518 399-4153
Co-President	Tracey Lyons	518 357-8981
Vice President	Pat Parker	518 822-9099
Secretary	Nancy Bellamy	518 399-8508
Cor. Secretary	Jill Hofmann	518 378-6865
Treasurer	Susan York	518 399-3797
Financial Fund	Bob Fenton	518 882-6009
Curator	Mary Jane Breedlove	518 495-1441
Trustee	Ken Crotty – Website/Building & Grounds	518 764-5210
Trustee	Don Davis - CHS Historian	518 831-2344
Trustee	Chuck Latham – Genealogy Buff	518 384-0130
Trustee	TJ Lyons	518 357-8981
Trustee	Erin Miller – Newsletter, social media Publicity	518 882-9502
Trustee	Jason Nemec	518 256-1816
Trustee	Marv Schorr – Publicity	518 518-4161

**If you have questions call Alice Crotty at 518 399-4153, Tracey Lyons at 518 357-8981, Sue York at 518-399-3797, or any other Trustee.**