



# CHARLTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

## Winter 2024

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<https://www.charltonnyhs.org>

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

*Join us for our monthly program meetings. Guests are welcome.*

## “Mayfield to Debar Pond”

**Date:** Wednesday, February 7, 2024

**Time:** 7:00 PM

**Place:** CHS Schoolhouse

**Presenter:** Dave Waite

**About the Presenter:** With a lifelong interest in upstate New York history, Dave Waite has researched and written about topics ranging from hermits in the Adirondacks to stage coaching in the Mohawk Valley. He has had over eighty articles published by a wide range of organizations including the New York State Archives, St. Lawrence County Historical Society, Saratoga County History Roundtable, and Warren County Historical Society. He has recently published *Thrilling Attractions and Weird Wonders*, a book that brings together 30 of his stories drawn from the history of Saratoga County and the Mohawk Valley.

#### **About the Program:**

Dave Waite's presentation, *Mayfield to Debar Pond*, will take you on a tour of some of his favorite places in the Adirondacks along Rte. 30. Using his Adirondack photographs and some early images of the region, this presentation combines a tour of the north country with a bit of the history from the stops along the route.



## “Katrina Trask’s Legacy in Saratoga Springs”

**Date:** Sunday, March 3, 2024. **Snow Date:** Sunday March 10, 2024

**Time:** 2:00 PM

**Place:** Freehold Presbyterian Church, Charlton Village

**Presenters:** Vocalist Eileen Egan Mack and Accompanist Michael Clement



**About the Presenters:** Eileen Egan Mack is a graduate of Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake CSD and SUNY Plattsburgh, a member of several music groups, singing jazz and classical music. As a singer and storyteller, she enjoys bringing to life the histories of women whose stories are worthy of our attention.



Michael Clement is a well-respected voice teacher and a sought-after accompanist. He has served as accompanist for Opera Saratoga, Skidmore College, the College of St. Rose, Glens Falls Symphony, Schenectady Symphony, and various Capital District choral organizations. He is Minister of Music at Albany's Emmanuel Baptist Church and is the accompanist for the Mendelssohn Club. He is often a featured pianist at the Sembrich Opera Museum where, last year, he performed with members of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

**About the Program:** When visitors come to Saratoga, they are often encouraged to visit the Yaddo. There a magnificent mansion overlooks a well-tended rose garden. Visitors are not, for the most part, welcome at the historic home, but the rose garden is open to the public, as that is how Katrina Trask meant it to be. The Yaddo was the home of Spencer and Katrina Trask, and the rose was Katrina's favorite flower. She wanted everyone to be able to come to her garden and experience her favorite flowers in a wonderful setting. The March 2 program sponsored by the Charlton Historical Society will open with "Come to the Garden" by Katrina Trask. Vocalist Eileen Egan Mack, and pianist Michael Clement will share lyrics and music that Katrina composed or collaborated on. The program is the result of research by Saratoga artist Rumania Jewett whose search of the archives made the rewarding discovery of Katrina's compositions.

**Eileen C. Egan Mack**



## Fall 2023 Programs in Review



We started fall with Charlton Talks, introduced by Program Chair Tracey Lyons, and proved to be great fun. Attendees spent 5 minutes talking about their lives growing up in Charlton or telling how they came to settle here. Many requested that we repeat this program. In November we met at the Charlton School to tour the school, learn about the building project, and the education program as well as the mission of the school. A few days later we joined forces with Harmony Community Center, Charlton Seniors, and Charlton Historical Society to sponsor a Potluck Supper with entertainment provided by the barber shop group Catalyst. Of course, we ended the year with our holiday party at the Charlton Tavern.



## 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 hope that you enjoyed Sue's corny elf jokes and trivia, although Marty's were better. We will come up with something else for you this year. Jill Hofmann has suggested a great new idea for the party that we think will interest and amuse everyone. 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 Jill, Gina, 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.

# CHUCK LATHAM'S CHARLTON HISTORY—FACTS and LEGEND

## The Maple Avenue Dairy Story

Written by Charles Clute in 2001

My parents, Jacob and Gertrude Clute came to Charlton about 1920, after purchasing a farm from Carey Decker, my father's cousin. The farm was located on Maple Avenue, contained 140 acres, a brick home, and a barn. The bricks used to build the farmhouse came from Albany and were transported to Charlton on ox carts.

At the time my father purchased the farm property, the house was estimated to be 170 years old. A good share of the town was farmland, and the population was small, although the town extended several miles in all directions. A few of the old farms exist today.

Being the only house on the west side of Maple Avenue between Main Street and Route 67 we had few neighbors.

After purchasing the farm property my father worked at the Watervliet Arsenal for several years. Since there was no transportation available, my father walked from Charlton to the trolley station in Ballston Lake, which was in the vicinity of where Carney's Restaurant is now. He then boarded the trolley and rode the rest of the way to work.

His dream was to operate a dairy farm. He labored many hours getting the barn in shape to house a herd of cows. Finally, in about 1929 or 1930, he left the Arsenal and started purchasing cows. By 1932 he had enough cows to start his dairy, he chose to have Guernsey cows because of their high content of butterfat in their milk.

In order to be a true dairy, he bought a pasteurizer, a bottler, bottles and caps, an aerator, and sterilizing equipment. To have a good supply of milk to bottle and sell, he bought milk from several other farmers. He named his business, "Maple Avenue Dairy, J.H. Clute and Sons". This logo was imprinted on the bottles and was the slogan, "Baby's Guernsey Milk".

He sold his milk throughout the towns of Charlton, Schenectady, Scotia, Niskayuna, and South Schenectady. While the dairy was in full operation, my mother took care of the bookkeeping part of the business. Once a week she drove her Model A Ford to each house on the delivery routes and collected the payment for the milk.

His herd grew to about 45 head of Guernsey cows. With the milk his cows produced and the milk he bought, he was able to bottle about 440 quarts of milk daily, including chocolate milk.

In time, he bought 300 acres of property on Jockey Street in Charlton on which he planted crops to be used for feed for his cows.

During our growing up years, my brother, John, my sister, Barbara, and I had chores to do before and after school to help our parents with the dairy operation. I went to school at the one room schoolhouse on Maple Avenue and then attended the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School.

While growing up I can remember only a couple of businesses that were in the town of Charlton. One was the John Sanders General Store that is now the furniture store and Milton Meyers Feed Store located in the building that now houses the Charlton House Restaurant. After John Sanders went out of business, Meyers Feed Store became the General Store. I can only remember two churches in town which were St. Paul's and the Presbyterian Church. The Knights

of Columbus met in a building which was in the vicinity of the existing firehouse. The Charlton Academy was also located in town.

When my father became ill in about 1953, my older brother John took over the dairy business. It remained in operation for another 1 1/2 years. John left the dairy business, my father passed away shortly after the business was sold. My mother remained living in the farmhouse for a short time. She then moved to a log cabin house which is located on Maple Avenue. In the meantime, I purchased the farm property from my mother. I bought my own herd of cows, milked them, and sold the milk wholesale. I did this for about 3 years, after which I sold the farm property. The 300 acres of land on Jockey Street was also sold.

I have a son, Robert, and a daughter, Beth, residing in Charlton with their families. My wife and I try to visit them during the summer months. While there, I try to visit a couple of my old neighbors and I like to ride around town to see any changes that have been made.

Today, many homes dot the landscape on Maple Avenue and on Jockey Street where once plowed and planted fields yielded feed crops for the cows on the family farm.

Note: Charles wrote his story after a summer visit to Charlton from his home in Dell City, TX at the urging of his Maple Avenue neighbor Mike Pokrzywka.

His wife wrote:

Hi Mike,

When we saw you this past summer, you asked Charlie to write a story about his family's farm to be printed in the Charlton Post. It took a while, but here it is. Hopefully, the Charlton Post is still in existence, and if they print his story would you please send us a copy of the little paper. Thanks.

Hope you and Barbara are well.

Charlie and Mary Ann

The digital recording of historical documents, papers, photo, etc. found at the Historical Society will begin within the next few weeks. If you have some time to help, it will be greatly appreciated.

Founders' Day will be here before we know it! Brighten up your winter by joining one of our event planning committees. The Charlton Heritage 5K Run and Walk Committee begins meeting monthly in January. This is our biggest fundraiser and could use a few more hands. Our Annual Founders' Day Parade, the Charlton Market, and Moveable Feast are other fun committees you can join. Lots of ways you can help your Historical Society while using your talents and enjoying time with other members! Give us a call or email us.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS

- You will be alerted by email about important information concerning CHS.
- We will be working on digital document preservation and have purchased the necessary equipment to successfully complete this work. Help is needed.
- Another position that is needed is that of librarian.
- If you have an interest in helping, call/email Sue York – 518 399-3797  
[YorkMM474@aol.com](mailto:YorkMM474@aol.com) or Alice Crotty --518 399-4153 [crottyao@aol.com](mailto:crottyao@aol.com)
- Don't forget to mark your calendar with the information about our programs and events.

## 2024 OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

President	Alice Crotty		518 399-4153
Vice-President	Pat Parker		518 882-9099
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	Buildings/Grounds/Web Site	518 399-4153
Trustee	Don Davis	CHS Historian/Managed Fund	518 831-2344
Trustee	Erin Miller	Publicity/Newsletter	518 882-9502
Trustee	Jason Nemec	Computer advisor/Artist	518 256-1816
Trustee	Chuck Latham	Genealogy Buff	518 384-0130
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