

NEWSLETTER

LANSINGBURGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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October 2013

ACTING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We hope all of you will come out and enjoy another evening at our GALA Fund Raising Dinner and Silent Auction, on October 17, 2013, at the Veterans of Lansingburgh Hall on First Avenue north of 121st Street. This year we ask that you pay for reservations at the time you make them and the closing date for us to receive your reservation is October 8th. Details and reservation form are included in this newsletter.

We are grateful to Jim Norton, Kay DeRosa and other Burgher Kids who work with the online bulletin board, "We Were Burghers Once and Young". They held a clam steam at the Veterans of Lansingburgh Pavilion on August 10th, and donated much of the proceeds to the Lansingburgh Historical Society. It brought \$663 to the Society. It was a beautiful late summer day. Everyone who attended had a wonderful time reacquainting with others who live or have lived in the Burgh. Kathleen Tivnan, who held many hats in the historical society over the years, was Guest of Honor and enjoyed seeing many of her former students. "We Were Burghers Once" publishes a variety of historical accounts and photographs, contemporary Burgh news, graphic and other trivia of interests for people who have a Lansingburgh connection. There is something for everyone. Come check it out! We thank them for their generosity.

Your historical society is again asking for volunteers willing to serve the society in various capacities. We have vacancies to fill on the Board of Trustees. We often need help with things in and around Melville House, the grounds and the park. We could use someone to write for and take over compiling, editing and distributing the newsletter. The cemetery project needs helpers. People with word processing and other computer skills are especially needed. We still hope to find people who can give us legal and accounting advice. Contact any trustee or send us an email.

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2013 ~ *our meeting will be held at 7:30 PM at the Melville House. Marvin Bubie of Averill Park will speak about municipal seals of Hudson Valley local governments. Each seal is a mini-history lesson and a collection, all relating to a common heritage, which tell of a reverence for that heritage. Signed copies of his newly published book on the subject will be available for purchase at the meeting.*

THURSDAY OCTOBER 17, 2013 ~ *GALA DINNER & SILENT AUCTION 5:30 PM – 10:00 PM (see reservation form in this newsletter)*

THURSDAY OCTOBER 31, 2013 ~ *we will have a small Halloween party at the Herman Melville House at 6:00 PM. Warren Broderick will discuss some "Urban Legend" ghost stories of the Lansingburgh area. There will be a door prize for best costume.*

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2013 ~ *our meeting will be held at 7:30 PM at the Melville House. Gary Robusto, President of the Tri-City Paranormal Society will present a lecture on "All Things*

Paranormal.” He will explain the various areas of paranormal research, his organization studies, far more diverse than merely the so-called “ghost hunting” that many people come to expect.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2013 ~ *Our ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY will be held at 7:30 PM at the Melville House. We will auction a number of items that are suitable for holiday gift giving: small antiques, collectibles, Christmas books, and holiday ornaments.*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2013 ~ *our HOLIDAY DECORATION SALE will be held from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM RAIN OR SHINE at the Melville House. Sale is held inside & under cover; literally hundreds of reasonably priced old and new holiday decorations: artificial wreaths, glass, satin, metal & plastic ornaments, ceramic trees, candles and figurines, mugs, glasses and plates, tinsel and plastic garlands. A one-time sale never to be repeated! Proceeds benefit the restoration of our historic 1786 Herman Melville house.*

THE FOLLOWING STORY BY WARREN BRODERICK BEGAN IN THE AUGUST EDITION AND CONTINUES HERE.....

**Truth Stranger Than Fiction: The Tragedy and Triumph of
Lany Wager Rose (Part 2)
WARREN F. BRODERICK**

It seems that her father, William Wager, had filed a civil suit against the perpetrators to recover the \$11 he had paid them. Once his money had been repaid by the doctors they were granted bail of \$250 each by Judge Ira Harris of Albany, apparently unaware that they had been remanded without bail for the criminal trial as being flight risks. The so-called “Indian doctors” fled, never to return. In the interim Justice Ransom had received a number of communications from other parts of the state concerning their dastardly activities. A gentleman in Bainbridge, Chenango County, claimed they absconded with his teenage daughter, May/Avery professing she wished to become his bride. Complaints from other victims locally who received their unique treatments for female medical issues abounded, but the doctors were nowhere to be found. No one has yet determined if the doctors were really from Arkansas or if they even used their real names. The veracity of any of their claims is highly unlikely.

The local press condemned the actions of Judge Harris and their attorney, Samuel Stover, and branded the doctors as fiends incarnate. But in a few weeks news about this notorious case had disappeared from their newspapers. William J. Lamb, Editor of the *Lansingburgh Democrat*, determined to memorialize the crimes by publishing a small 15-page pamphlet entitled *Truth Stranger than Fiction* . . . The pamphlet sold for 12 ½ cents and the Lansingburgh Historical Society owns a copy. The only other known copies are held by the New York Historical Society and the American Antiquarian Society.

Editor Lamb published the “horrid details” with “considerable reluctance” in order that “their perusal will place the public upon their guard against all traveling [sic] pretenders and prevent their successful practicing of such horrid impositions in the future.” He added that the case “was without parallel in the criminal history of this country.” Research conducted to date has revealed any additional information on the Indian doctors and their activity. Of course no one knows what other names they used in their felonious masquerade.

On their way to jail following the initial committal May/Avery remarked that they had accomplished their intended purpose, and that “the girl was a d—m fool to tell, for who would marry her now?” But Lany Wager would survive and prove the perpetrators so very wrong.

Most have assumed that Lany Wager did not live much longer and remained a “spinster” because of her health problems and the stigma held by many rape victims in America in this era. She remained at home until the late 1850s when she moved to Troy to board with her cousin, Francis Wager, and his family on North Fourth Street. By 1868 she had returned to Pittstown and was now the wife of Mynard (or Minard) Rose. They resided on Brundage Road in the same house as the family of a cousin, Charles F. Wager, in

1870. Mynard Rose, born in 1807, appears to not have been previously married before meeting Lany. Lany's younger sister, Nancy, born in 1842, had previously married Mynard Rose, Jr., a son of Edward Rose, a nephew of Lany's husband.

Mynard Rose Sr. and Lany had a daughter, Minnie, born in 1868. Minnie Rose married Merritt Haviland (1863-1951) and died on February 24, 1900; Merritt afterwards remarried Harriet Roberts. Merritt and Minnie Haviland had a son, Walter, born February 25, 1895, and a two daughters, Colista May, born in 1893 and Emma, born in 1896. Colista May married Frank H. Reed and Emma married Frederick Wier. It is not known with absolute certainty if any descendants survive today but I have spoken with a possible great-great-great granddaughter.

Lany Wager Rose died March 16, 1901 in Pittstown. She and her husband, Mynard, who had predeceased her in 1874, are interred in the Methodist Episcopal Cemetery in Tomhannock. The Pittstown Town Clerk, Jessie A. Pruyn, recorded her occupation as a "lady" possibly suggestive of her laudatory character, since she certainly was not a wealthy woman. One wonders, 50 years after suffering an unspeakable crime, if local residents remembered her ordeal and how she triumphed over it. Her father, William Wager, died in 1877, and his estate reveals that in 1863 he had set aside a legacy of \$300 for Lany "if not paid before his decease." Had he finally regretted paying the "Indian doctors" the \$11 to unwittingly allow her to be subjected to a sexual assault under the pretences of giving her medical treatment?

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2013 Gala Dinner Honoring Gordon W. Brown

We are pleased to announce that the Lansingburgh Historical Society (LHS) is hosting its annual fundraiser Gala Dinner to honor the memory of the late Gordon W. Brown for his extensive service to the LHS. It will be held at the Veterans of Lansingburgh Hall, First Ave. north of 121st St. in Lansingburgh on Thursday, October 17, 2013

Last year's event was a huge success and we look forward to sharing another festive evening with you! Fundraisers such as this make it possible for the LHS to continue restoration on the Herman Melville house, educational programs, tours and other community events. This engaging evening will include:

Cocktail Hour: 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

- ~ Socialize before dinner, browse, & place bids on silent auction items
- ~ Includes Hors d'oeuvres & coffee or tea. Alcoholic drinks & soda are available for purchase.
- ~ Honoring the late Gordon W. Brown.
- ~ Michael Barrett, of the Hudson Mohawk Gateway, will be the Guest Speaker

Silent Auction begins at 5:30pm & will conclude at 7:00 pm. Dinner will follow.

Items for auction include original art, prints, gift cards, gift certificates, books, quality antiques & collectables, and Burgh memorabilia.

Dinner menu options will be beef, chicken, or fish. Please indicate your preference below. Vegetarian & gluten-free options may be requested.

If you are unable to attend the dinner, but would like to help our society, you may mail your tax-deductible donation using the order form below.

Please return this reservation form along with payment to Lansingburgh Historical Society. P.O. Box 219, Lansingburgh, NY 12182-0219 by Tuesday, October 8, 2013. Cancellations must also be received by this date.

Name: _____

Phone # _____

Email address _____

Number of attendees: _____ @ \$35.00 per person

Roast Beef _____

Baked Haddock _____

Stuffed Chicken _____

Special requirements _____

I am unable to attend the dinner, but enclosed is my tax deductible donation of \$ _____