

-1Smithfield Community Association, Inc.

PO Box 42, New York 13134

June 30, 1999

Hello everyone, I hope this summer finds you well. As we have done for the past several years, we present here some of the neat goings on in Peterboro since our last letter. Please remember to send in you membership so that the SCA may continue it's work of preserving Peterboro's unique and wonderful history.

The hamlet of Peterboro was honored in being one of three sites to have a stamp unveiled of Stephen Vincent Benet on July 23rd. About 35 people attended the unveiling at the Gerrit Smith estate. A representative from Albany spoke on Stephen Vincent Benet. He was a poet who wrote John Brown's Body and won a Pulitzer prize for it. Norm Dann spoke on the connection of John Brown and his connection to Peterboro through Gerrit Smith. We were presented a framed picture of the new stamp and a plaque dedicated to the Smithfield Community Association for our community involvement.

In July, Gary Van Voorhis began restoring the brick work on the Land Office, he finished the work in September. Fenton Groves did some woodwork around the windows. John Salka did the chimney work, so it's all ready for a small pot belly stove, if anyone has one they would like to donate let us know.

In August and September, the wrought iron fence in front of the Gerrit Estate was primed and painted. The total volunteer hours were 104 hours. Thanks! Great job! hopefully it lasts another 100 years.

Most of you know, Peterboro was hit pretty badly by the Labor Day storm, the Community Center lost half of it's roof, there was wood on the clock tower that was damaged, and one of the clock hands was broken in the process. We did lots of mopping upstairs every time it rained, before the roof was fixed. In the process of leaking the wood ceiling in the gym was damaged. Luckily the town's insurance covered the cost of the repairs, so you could say that the storm got us a new roof. The Gerrit Smith Estate lost some of it's trees, the big silver maple on road side had so much damage, it had to be cut down. We counted the rings, it was 130 years old, that tree had seen a lot of history.

Jim Stokes donated stone for around the new Smithfield Community Center sign. The wall is finished and flowers are planted.

In September, our group was picked by the Key Bank for their half day of community service. They painted a first coat of paint in the kitchen.

Also in September, one of the Land Office windows was taken as a model and new windows were made.

In October, the Gerrit Smith Estate was once again the site of an archeology open house to celebrate Archeology week in NY. It was sponsored by Syracuse University and the Beauchamp Chapter. Syracuse University brought a couple of plates and a bowl that they had found all the pieces too in their previous dig.

On October 28th, there was a dedication to Elizabeth Smith Miller (Gerrit Smith 's daughter). She was picked as an important woman of Madison County. This was in celebration of the Sesquicentennial of the Women's Rights Convention in 1848 in Seneca Falls, NY, the Governor's Commission Honoring the Achievements of Women. The speakers were a representative from Albany George Meany(NY State Historian), David Brooks, Steve Joeckel, Tom Kernan and Beth Spokowsky. George Meany presented the hamlet of Peterboro a NY State historical marker for Elizabeth Smith Miller which says, "Introduced the Bloomer costume Bloomerism became the most important dress reform of the 19th century."

During the winter, major renovations were started at the Community Center. Chuck Clark was the contractor, walls were taken down, insulation was put in the ceiling and walls and electrical work was done. It is almost finished, all the painting is being finished up now. The Smithfield Community Association paid for half of the work. When it is all finished, it will be great space to rent out.

The Smithfield Community Association now has it's very own web page. Visit the S.C.A. web site at <http://welcome.to/Peterboro> or e-mail us at sca-peterboro@geocities.com. I will be adding to it as I find some spare time.

In the spring, panes of restoration glass were ordered for the new windows for the Land Office. Each sheet of glass is handmade by craftsmen. The glass is blown in one of Europe's oldest glass factories. Each pane of glass has distortions just like glass of the 18 century would be. Stop by and see them, they really make the building. Each one of these panes of glass cost \$22.00. Please help us pay for this glass by donating \$22.00 to 'buy' a pane. We will put the names of the people who donate on a plaque in the Land Office. A few days before the Civil War weekend Fenton Groves put the finished windows in the Land Office. The same day the building got a stain over

the finished brick work.

We had a beautiful, but hot seventh annual Civil War Weekend. Thanks to 197 volunteers we were able to put this weekend on. The volunteers include people who baked for the General Store, a donation of all the hay from Terry Fanning, people who donated wood, horse drivers, storytellers, Bill Magee donated his tent for the weekend, Jim Stokes let us use his great building for our General Store, Anomie Denison donated a wonderful quilt for a raffle, which was very successful, and finally all the people who gave up their time on the weekend to help us out. We couldn't have done it without any of you, it is a real community effort. Thank You!

On July 22nd, our annual meeting will be held at 7:00 PM, at the Community Center. This is our meeting in which we elect half our board members for the next two years. All members are encouraged to come out and vote. We welcome and encourage any members to help out by holding a board position. We meet once a month, on the fourth Thursday. Join us if you can.

An upcoming Peterboro Historical Society program, will be presented by Dick Ingerson, a bottle collector. The program will be on Tuesday July 20th at 7:00 PM, at the Peterboro Area Museum. Bring a bottle and find out how to tell how old it is.

On September 17th, at 7:30 PM, back by popular demand, Gwendolyn Briley-Strand will be performing her one woman show, Harriet Tubman: "The Chosen One". Also this year to round out the program, The Syracuse Community Choir Ensemble will be performing Civil War era songs before Gwendolyn's performance. This will all take place at the Morrisville-Eaton H.S. Tickets will be sold in advance at Dougherty's Pharmacy and the Morrisville Library or call 684-9428. Gwendolyn Briley-Strand gives a riveting performance, don't miss it.

Watch for a new documentary by Ken Burns(Civil War documentary), it is on Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was Gerrit Smith's cousin and she spent her summers in Peterboro. Our very own town historian, Donna Dorrance Burdick has conferred with Ken Burns assistant and gave a lot of info on Elizabeth's connection to Peterboro. Watch on November 7 & 8, on PBS, and Peterboro will be mentioned.

There are spaces open on our second memorial plaque to remember a loved one with a donation of \$25.00 to help preserve the Smithfield Community Center. The plaques are located in the foyer of the Community Center.

Peterboro items are available, there are Snippets: Pieces of Peterboro history written by our Town Historian Donna Burdick, Vol. 1-6(#6 is new this year), the Smith family booklet on members of the Smith Family. These items are available for \$1.00 each and may be ordered along with your membership contribution. Please help by including .50 cents for postage.

Please remember to send in your membership contribution. Still only \$10. Thanks!!!!

Your contribution is tax deductible.

For additional information on anything in the letter, call Beth Spokowsky 684-9022 or Linda and Steve Joeckel 684-9428 or e-mail us at "sca-peterboro@geocities.com".

Sincerely,

Steve Joeckel
President, Smithfield Community Association, Inc.