

Smithfield Community Association

P.O. Box 42, Peterboro NY 13134

July 2001

Hello and happy summer from Peterboro. It's time again for the annual SCA letter, to fill you in on what we have been doing in Peterboro over the past year.

Back in August '00, we had a booth at the Madison County Historical Society's Hop Festival. The Hops festival is a great event for sharing Peterboro's history. This year's Sixth Annual Madison County Hops Festival will be on October 6th from 12 to 5, at SUNY Morrisville. The SCA and the Peterboro Area Museum will have exhibits. Look for more details in your local papers later in the summer.

Last fall, Syracuse University returned to Peterboro for their annual Archeological Open House. A new site was excavated on the Gerrit Smith Estate. Hadley Kruczek-Aaron organizes the events, and there were lots of students digging. Hadley also gave tours of the estate. That same weekend the SCA participated in a county wide museum tour. The Peterboro Area Museum and the Land Office were open. We will participate in the fall museum tour again this year.

The next time you visit the museum, make sure you check out the two new exhibits. One is a display of the pottery that was found on the Gerrit Smith Estate. It includes dishes that the Smith family would have used in the mansion. The other is an exhibit of Peterboro in Print. A collection of books and video tapes in which Peterboro and Gerrit Smith were included.

Last fall, the Land Office had some additional patching of mortar around the windows, and continuing painting of the new windows. We still need donations to cover the cost of the restoration glass, \$22 for each pane. A "Thank You" plaque has been put up inside of the Land Office with the names of people who gave an extra donation for the glass. Thanks!

In January, the SCA had some exciting news! The Gerrit Smith Estate is now designated as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. This is a great honor bestowed on the Gerrit Smith's Estate, and as I'm sure you know, the designation is well deserved. Everyone is invited to join us on Sunday, September 15th at 4:00 p.m. in the Smithfield Community Center for a dedication ceremony by the SCA and the Town of Smithfield. We will be honoring the people involved who helped us achieve the designation, a process that was started back in 1995. Sherwood L. Boehlert, Rep., U.S. House of Representatives will speak on the national recognition to this area. A National Historic Landmark plaque will be presented by the United State Department of Interior. There will also be refreshments too. So, mark your calendars and join us for this celebration for Peterboro.

In April, the Smithfield Community Association and the Town of Smithfield were honored by the Preservation Association of Central New York. The award was a Preservation Merit Award given to the Smithfield Community Association and the Town of Smithfield in recognition of outstanding Preservation of Central New York. Norm Dann and Beth Spokowsky accepted this plaque at the PACNY annual dinner.

Take a look at the SCA web site, there are some new Civil War Weekend pictures added.
(<http://welcome.to/peterboro>)

When we left you last year, we were still deciding if we should continue to hold the Civil war weekend. After giving it much thought, our decision was to continue the weekend, but with some changes. We set up a series of sub-committees for the various jobs, so the workload would be split up. Well, it worked beautifully, and the C.W.W. was very successful. There were a lot of new changes. Dot Willsey found people who would be willing to be on the sub-committees and mentor them. Dot worked with Sue Snyder who took over the big job of calling volunteers and admissions. Beth Spokowsky acted as the chair of the committees. Beth also did the program and acted as the PR person - maybe you saw her interviewed on the TV or radio. The grounds committee was headed by Norm Dann and David Brooks. Provisions of hay and wood were taken care of by Leland Fanning and Jim Stokes. Steve Moore handled signs. The publicity was taken care of by Dot Willsey. I'm sure you read some of Dot's press releases, great job! Thanks also to Bill Fredericks for publicity and sponsors. Trish Stokes designed the poster. Lucy Brooks, Marianne Kincaid, and Trish Stokes did a great job in running the store. Thanks to all who baked for the store, the selection was great, and there was nothing left by the end of Sunday! Special thanks also to Jim and Trish Stokes for the use of their store, with it's new paint job. The Blue and Gray Ball was held downstairs at the Community Center this year and was organized by Eric and Anna Howard. The Children's Area was organized by

Sydney Loftus, the director of the Madison County Historical Society. Sue Greenhagen handled the Civil War Round Tables. The Town was very generous in their support of the event. Thanks to Hugh Humphreys who was the honorary chair of the C.W.W. At the opening ceremony, Hugh donated two original Civil War letters to the Peterboro Area Museum. Then the opening shot to start the weekend was fired by Nancy Douglas, whose great great etc uncle had fired the first shot of the real Civil War. The SCA would also like to thank the many volunteers who helped out during the weekend and others who baked or donated in some way. So many people working together made it a great success. And to top things off, the weather for the weekend was glorious. I think it's been the only weekend of the summer with two days of sunshine.

The one thing that C.W.W. really showed was how much easier things can get done when more people share the work. Well, the SCA still has a lot of work to do, and other than the Civil War Weekend, our active members list is quite small. If you love your local history, or just want to feel good by helping out in your community, please think about joining us for our regular meetings. We have several open positions on our board.

Don't forget these events coming up:

- July 22nd - Sunday- Peterboro Home Town Day- Village Green
- July 24th Tuesday S.C.A. annual meeting 7:00 p.m. Community Center
- September 15th - Sunday 4:00 p.m. -Smithfield Community Center- Celebration Dedication for Gerrit Smith Estate National Historic Landmark
- September 29th & 30 - Madison County Fall Festival Weekend
- October 6th - 12-5 - Madison County Hops Festival - SUNY Morrisville
- May 25th - October 14th 2001- "Dreaming of Timbuctoo," Exhibition - Adirondack Museum, Blue Mountain Lake. Gerrit Smith's farming plan to give land to black New Yorkers so they could vote. (see www.johnbrownlives.org)

We have these Peterboro items available for sale:

- "Snippets", pieces of Peterboro area history written by Donna Dorrance Burdick, our town historian. This year Donna has written #7, Vol. 1-7. These are available for \$1.00 each, plus 50 cents for postage if you would like to order with your membership form.
- T-shirts and mugs with an drawing of the Land office - available at Hometown days and other events.

And we always appreciate any extra donations:

- Help cover the cost of the period glass for the Land Office, \$22 per pane.
- There are spaces available on our second memorial plaque to remember a loved one with a donation of \$25.00. The plaques are located in the foyer of the Community Center.

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.

To help us continue our restoration work, please remember to send in your membership contribution. All donations are tax deductible, and besides, they make you feel good. On behalf of the Smithfield Community association; Thank You, and have a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Steve Joeckel