**WORCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

**144 Main Street, Worcester, New York 12197-0186**

**2013 in Retrospect**

A Report to the Membership

Your Society officers and trustees extend their best wishes for a happy and prosperous holiday season, and they want to report to you on the organization's activities during the past year -- the forty-third since its founding in 1970. The year featured all of the customary events for which it has become known. Monthly public programs took place from May through November, interwoven with four open-air concerts at the Heritage Park gazebo, and there were several other activities of note.

On May 23, Dr. Cynthia Falk, a professor at the Cooperstown Graduate Program and author of several publications on early American architecture, made a PowerPoint presentation on the history and design of dairy barns in Upstate New York. This was the first of several well-attended events that followed. June saw a discussion of “Seven Prominent Women in the Town of Worcester’s Past,” including short biographies of Madame Jumel, Agnes Smith, Hellen Wilder Wieting and Harriet Babcock.

In July, Society Vice-President Larry DeLong spoke on the Mohawk war chief Joseph Brant, whom he called “the man who invaded Worcester” for his feats in the Charlotte Valley during the Revolutionary War. Trustee Marilyn Dufresne entertained the audience in August with the Legend of Chief Schenevus, a purported Native American power in the Upper Susquehanna region before the Revolution.

The following month saw Dennis Dedek address the Society and the public on the management of a convenience store. Mr. Dedek has been the owner of The Center in the east end of the Worcester hamlet since 1981, and he described the history of the convenience store phenomenon nationally and factors involved in operating an individual store. In October, another prominent local personality, former Judge “Jack” Nagle, talked about the role of the Town Justice, both in history and as the office operates in the Town of Worcester. That presentation preceded the local election in which two Justice positions were filled.

The final 2013 program took place on Veterans Day, as is the tradition, and included a reading of an Honor Roll of World War II men and women service veterans from the Towns of Worcester, Decatur and Westford. In many cases, a summary of their military experiences followed.

As in 2012, the Society sponsored a number of Summer Concerts at the Gazebo, in the vest-pocket park adjacent to the historical museum. These were exceptional performances by the Worcester Community Band, composed of local high school alumni and students; the Leatherstocking Jazz Band, with music teachers from area schools; the Oneonta Concert Band; and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Trio.

In addition to the public opening of the museum for summer hours, a number of original window displays, creative refreshments following programs, and the receipt of a variety of artifacts, the Society printed a large number of photographs from early twentieth-century glass plates that it had obtained from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. These are available for inspection at the Society rooms. Another new and remarkable work of art is a copper weathervane on display in the museum's front window. The piece is in the image of Worcester’s “Old Mill” and is topped by a facsimile of Seth Flint's Civil War bugle. Jason Stroosnyder created the vane, and Dick and Betsy Weidman contributed the bugle.

Of note, the integrity of the museum and its storage areas was threatened by severe water leakage through the 18-year-old rubber roof coating. The Society was forced to expend a significant amount to replace the roof cover in the midst of recurring and heavy summer rain storms. It has applied for grant funds to recover at least a part of these emergency costs.

The Society is grateful for the creativity and hard work of its officers and trustees, and for the continuing support of the public as it goes about its tasks of service to the region. It also seeks new members who can eventually carry on these tasks in future years.

Thank you for your interest and support in the past, and always. Your comments and suggestions regarding the Society's organization, activities and programs are always welcome. Please remember that it is time to renew or establish your membership by sending the annual $5 dues to the Treasurer, Mary Teller, at 1144 County Highway 39, Worcester, New York 12197.

Again, Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Gynger O'Connor

President