

**Backbone Ridge History Group  
of  
Schuyler, Seneca and Tompkins Counties**

P. O. Box 64  
Trumansburg, New York 14886  
January 23, 2016

RE: Nelson B. Delavan Foundation

J. P. Morgan Chase Bank N. A.  
One Chase Square, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Rochester, New York 14643

Attention: Mary Ellen Gotham

Dear Ms. Gotham;

My purpose for writing is to ask your assistance in thanking the Nelson B. Delavan Foundation for supporting the activities of the Backbone Ridge History Group during 2015. The Group has conducted public educational programs, published newsletters and a Historical Booklet, (copy enclosed), prepared and staffed stationary and mobile exhibits (floats), at several venues and continued with research, restoration and public information in local cemeteries. All of these activities are designed to share the constantly growing body of historical information about the people, lands and communities that once made up the Backbone Ridge area.

With Foundation assistance the Group was able to contract with an expert woodworker to create a permanent cemetery marker for the Reynoldsville Cemetery where two-hundred forty nine documented burials are located beginning in 1819. This cemetery was very severely vandalized about thirty years ago and left virtually unmaintained for all that time. Interest and restoration work by the Group has rekindled some interest in the cemetery by descendants of those buried there, a-who's who of the Backbone Ridge population. One local resident called and asked that a cemetery headstone which was part of her stone sidewalk, be returned to the cemetery.

Although not supported with Nelson B. Delavan Foundation Grants, the Group's Research Center, a former small law office in the Village of Lodi, is being restored and will soon be a home for the archives and small artifacts being gathered by the Group. Many of these archives are being discovered in people's homes where they may never be available for public information. As items are discovered, copies are made, including scans of photos. As soon as the building is ready, which will be in 2016, the copies will be indexed. The indexes will be placed on the Group's website along with much more historical information so those who may want to conduct research can visit. Last Monday the STEPS Program (Southern Towns Engaging People for Solutions) arranged for six volunteers to spend a half-day painting interior walls. This was a community service project on Martin Luther King Day.

I could go on and on, but again my purpose in writing is to express our appreciation to The Nelson B. Delavan Foundation for supporting our mission of preserving and celebrating the history of the Backbone Ridge, an area that once was home to one hundred farm families.

Sincerely,

Allan Buddle  
President