

The Backbone

A publication of the Backbone Ridge History Group of Schuyler, Seneca, and Tompkins Counties

BECAUSE HISTORY MATTERS

WALKING THE MILITARY LOT LINE PROGRAM FALL 2019 HIKE ON THE EAST/WEST BOUNDARY OF HECTOR MILITARY LOTS 25 AND 26

BY JUNE SZABO

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On October 5th the Backbone Ridge History Group sponsored a walk in the Finger Lakes National Forest. We began with 32 people eager to explore the east/west boundary of Military Lots 25 & 26. Our walk along the Backbone Trail was an opportunity for time travel. In 1783, the Revolutionary War ended and payment was due to the soldiers who had served. In 1784, New York State set up a commission to distribute land for payment and surveyors were dispatched to partition central NY. Twenty-eight townships were established, and the towns were divided into 100 lots---each containing 600 acres. The surveyors of the military lots measured lines on the land by moving a chain, marking the corners of the invisible rectangles with stakes and tree blazes.

They also noted the physical features of the landscape they traveled. We followed the original surveyor's notes and measured 30 chains south from the NW corner of Lot 25. We found that the stream the surveyors had recorded at 30 chains, no longer crossed the line at that location. We were puzzled that they did not mention Hencoop Creek, its tributaries and "Saari's" gully, which crossed the line not far from the stream they had noted. Oiva Vesa pointed out the spot where his school bus turned around in the 1930's, just before the gully.



Photo: Judy Butterfield, hike co-leader, explains the origin of the Military Lot system

Judy Butterfield researched agriculture on the backbone and told us about the products that came off the ridge. Agricultural production in the mid-1800s was varied. Field crops consisted of hay and cereal grains, the most widely grown was barley. For vegetable crops, those grown in the largest quantities included beans and peas with potatoes leading the way. Some farmers planted orchards and apples were the winner in the fruit category. There were also cherries, peaches and grapes. Livestock was plentiful, cattle,

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BY HAROLD BUSH

"Over the River and Through the Woods," the song runs through my thoughts. Visions of Thanksgiving, and Christmas gatherings follow. Most years, Grandma, my mom, and her 4 sisters were in the kitchen making final preparations. The 21 grand kids were mostly outside playing yard games working up an appetite. The Dads were helping in and out or conversing about who knows what. The challenge was - enough table space for all. Table set ups would spread to all spaces, even the attached garage. Grandma gave an emotional, and heartfelt Grace. I wish all a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas.

As we head for a new year, we are making plans for events, and activities of 2020. Please let us know what events, and activities you want to help with as they come up. We will be sending updates using more e-mail, invitations, and other resources, so please check your contact information, and let us know your preference.

We are inviting members to consider helping as Trustees, and Officers for the new year also.

Welcome to our upcoming new year, and we look forward to new insights, and more historical discoveries connected to our Backbone Ridge.

Thank you.

Harold P. Bush, BRHG President

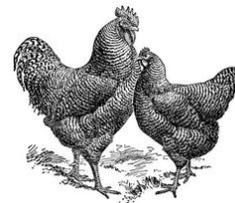


WALKING THE MILITARY LOT LINE PROGRAM

FALL 2019 HIKE ON THE EAST/WEST BOUNDARY OF HECTOR MILITARY LOTS 25 AND 26

BY JUNE SZABO

sheep, pigs and chickens were bought and sold. Their by-products weighed heavily in the lives of the ridge families. Butter, cheese and eggs were used by the families that produced them and sold or traded with neighbors. In addition, their products went to markets nearby or to more distant places, such as New York City and Philadelphia. In 1854, the assessed value of real estate in Hector was \$1,604,791. This was much more than any other town in Schuyler County.



We stopped at four cellar holes, now filled with the stones that once supported a house or a barn and shared information about the individuals who farmed along the east/west bounds. Some of the families that lived here prospered and we find their names on the roads in the Town of Hector --- Stilwell, Bower, Dean, Updike and Voorheis are among them. On several occasions, the land along this particular boundary line was inherited, transferred and sold from parent to child, or sibling to sibling. This family ownership caused some conflicts and court cases. Marriages also account for some of the swapping of properties between the neighbors. Sons, fathers and grandfathers had the same name, there were five William Deans listed as owners for various parcels in Lots 25 & 26. This required tracing back the lineage of the Dean, Stilwell and Swick families to clarify which generation was the owner. It was intriguing to note that for 100 years, a Dean or a Swick owned every piece of property along this line.

You know it when you feel it and the Hector Backbone produces a powerful sense of place. It is a sensation that is as diverse as we are, and hard to define. It is an experience rooted in history, culture and geography. We know that the lives of the individuals living along the east/west bounds of Lots 25 & 26 were interwoven by their lineage. We can only imagine how they interacted, supported and schemed with each other to stay on their land. They must have loved their place on the Hector Backbone, holding on to it generation after generation.

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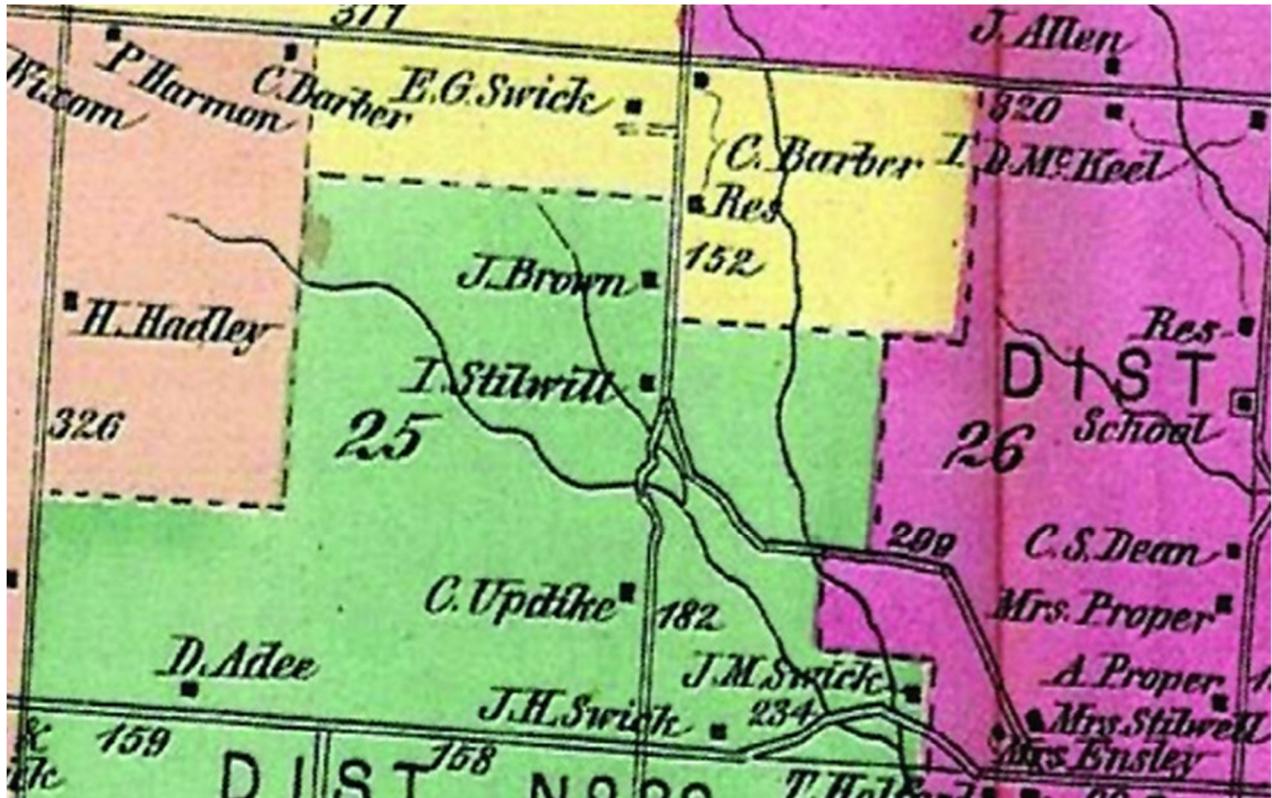
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FALL 2019 HIKE ON THE EAST/WEST BOUNDARY OF HECTOR MILITARY LOTS 25 AND 26

BY JUNE SZABO

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This 1874 map is marked with numbers at the approximate location of each parcel along the east/west bounds. By 1940, most landowners had sold their property to the U S Government and it is now a part of the Finger Lakes National Forest. The Hector Grazing Association (the oldest one in the country) cares for pastures and fence lines. Many of the abstracts and deeds for these lands are located at the FLNF ranger station.



June Szabo, hike co-leader, demonstrates the chain and link survey tool used in the late 1790's. Photos courtesy of Will Wickham

Hike participants walk the east/west boundary of Hector Lots 25 & 26.



WALKING THE MILITARY LOT LINE PROGRAM

FALL 2019 HIKE ON THE EAST/WEST BOUNDARY OF HECTOR MILITARY LOTS 25 AND 26

BY JUNE SZABO

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

The information on the following pages lists the owners of each parcel on the map. They are in order, numbers 1- 6 are moving from the north to the south on the Backbone Trail in Lot 25. Parcel number 7 begins at the southwest corner of Lot 26; 7 -12 are moving from south to north. The land-owners for each parcel are in chronological order. The first generation in a family to own land along this line is **highlighted**, their children's names are in **bold** (the same color), the grandchildren in *italics* and great grandchildren in *plain text*.

More detailed information about the owners is available upon request.
 Email backboneridgehg@gmail.com or write to our PO address.



<p>North Bounds 1829 – James Monk & Wife 1859 – Cyrus Barber 18?? - Christopher J. Dean 1937 – USG \$550 – 50 acres</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Parcel #1 - Northeast Corner Lot 25</p> <p>1790 – Garrett Tunnison (surgeon in NY artillery) 350 acres 17?? – William Harrison (lawyer/ speculator) 350 acres 1803 – Joshua Foreman (speculator) 18?? – William Dean (came to Hector 1815 – b. 1793 d. 1857) purchased an unknown number of acres in lot 25 18?? – James C & J. Monk (here in 1853) 1863? – John Totten 1864 – Dewitt C. & Matilda Swick – sold to his son for \$5000 1874 – Elmer Swick married Eugenia Sherwood in 1872 1897 – Eugenia (wife), daughters - <i>Nina Covert, Estella Swick</i> 1901 – <i>Estelle Swick</i> - paid \$1000 - married Glen Hawes 1901 1935 – C. Earle Hager Co. Treasure tax deed owed \$82.75 1935 - Glen D & wife # 2 Carrie Hawes, son <i>Elmer</i> & Marie Hawes 1936 – U.S. Government - \$776</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Northwest Corner Lot 26 Parcel #12 --- Cellar Hole #4</p> <p>1790 - Designated for Gospel 1829 - James Monk & his wife 118 acres corner lot 1859 - Cyrus Barber 1875 - Wm & Adelia (Fletcher) Smith 18?? - <i>Eva Dean & (Freemont Dean)</i> 1907 - <i>Freemont Dean</i> by executor's deed 1935 – Frank Auble \$1, from heirs of Eva Dean 1935 - James & Sybil Woodward - long time tenant who purchased by land contract for \$1210. 1937 – US Government paid \$1800 – 118 acres</p>	<p>1874 - <i>Isaac D. McKeel</i> 1901 - <i>Fremont Dean</i> 1930 - Floyd Grove</p>
<p>Part of parcel above</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Parcel #2 ---- Cellar Hole #1</p> <p>1853 – Abram and Jane McKeel – 50 acres 1864 – Peter Totten 1870 – John & Lydia Brown 1870 – Lydia Charles, Hattie & Albert Brown 1894 – Ira Swick (son of Dewitt) 1903 – Tunis (son of Dewitt) & niece <i>Estella Swick</i> 1905 – Frank & <i>Bertie M (Dean)</i> Auble 1936 – U.S. Government</p>	<p>1840? - William & Margaret/ Harnet Swick Dean Wm. Dean was living on Newtown/ Vesa Road in 1853. He died in 1857 & left no will. Seven heirs divided his land up into 7 parcels. 1859 – Abram & Moses Dean - (brothers) 1862 – Moses sold to Abram Dean - for \$1 1909? – <i>William G Dean</i> – son of Abram (inherited) 1926 – <i>Anna Dean</i> – daughter of Wm G. (inherited) 1939 – Arvo Saari renting the land from the Deans for 9 years purchased land in 1939 1940 – US Government \$3000 for 190.4 acres #11</p>	<p>1840? – William Dean 1852 – Christopher S Dean purchased 25 acres for \$4000 1886 – <i>Wm. L. Dean</i> 1939 – Lizzie Woodward 1940- USG</p>
<p>1834 – Dr. Eastman – 129.5 acres 185? – Heirs of Dr. Eastman 1853 - Abram & Jane McKeel 1864 - Ira & Deborah Stilwell - paid \$4000 - Ira died in 1877, left no will and the land was divided between 15 Heirs. He owned about 1000 acres and his estate = \$200,000 in 1864 dollars. Ira's heirs went to court and the guardian of Ira's grandchildren, John Stilwell (Ira's son) sold this parcel to Eliza Dean. 1882 – Eliza B. Secord Dean -- paid \$4,535.50 (wife of Abram Dean) 1903 – William G. & Mary Dean (Anna, Earl) -William G. Dean the son of Abram & Eliza Dean - Abram was never on the deed Wm. died without a will in 1923 1924 – <i>Mary</i> (wife) and children <i>Anna & Earl Dean</i> sold by quitclaim for \$1 1925 – <i>Anna E. Dean</i> - \$1 may not represent what the new owner actually paid 1936 – U.S. Government - paid \$1200</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Parcel #3 – Cellar hole #2</p> <p>1834 – Dr. Eastman – 129.5 acres 185? – Heirs of Dr. Eastman 1853 - Abram & Jane McKeel 1864 - Ira & Deborah Stilwell - paid \$4000 - Ira died in 1877, left no will and the land was divided between 15 Heirs. He owned about 1000 acres and his estate = \$200,000 in 1864 dollars. Ira's heirs went to court and the guardian of Ira's grandchildren, John Stilwell (Ira's son) sold this parcel to Eliza Dean. 1882 – Eliza B. Secord Dean -- paid \$4,535.50 (wife of Abram Dean) 1903 – William G. & Mary Dean (Anna, Earl) -William G. Dean the son of Abram & Eliza Dean - Abram was never on the deed Wm. died without a will in 1923 1924 – <i>Mary</i> (wife) and children <i>Anna & Earl Dean</i> sold by quitclaim for \$1 1925 – <i>Anna E. Dean</i> - \$1 may not represent what the new owner actually paid 1936 – U.S. Government - paid \$1200</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Parcel #11</p> <p>18?? – William Dean & wife 1859 – Harvey & Cordelia Dean by Quitclaim \$1 1862 – Moses & Abram S. Dean 1864 – Abram Dean - paid \$1200 18?? – Christopher S. Dean 1911 – <i>William L. sold to William G. Dean</i> - Cousins 1925 – <i>Anna Dean</i> (inherited) 1939 – Arvo Saari --- 1940 - US Government</p>	<p>1859 – John & Mary (Dean) Smith</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Parcel #10</p> <p>18 ?? - Noah Phelps to Lewis Cooper 1859 – Rowland & Saffronia Secord 1864 - Abram Dean \$1000 - 28.5 acres 1909 – <i>William G. Dean</i> (inherited) 1926 – <i>Anna Dean</i> (inherited) 1939 – Arvo Saari --- 1940 - US Government</p>	<p>1859 – John & Mary (Dean) Smith</p>	

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BY JUNE SZABO

According to the original surveyor's map, the southeast corner of Lot 25 was reserved for the states hundreds. The abstract for this lot says the patent went to Jared Sanford in 1812. He must have divided his parcel and sold to Baker, Lyon, Brewer & Foster.

1812 – Jared Sanford
1812 – Judah & Lydia Baker 50 acres

1826 – **Rubin Davis**
\$325 to Heirs of Ruben Davis

1876 – **Abram Dean**
\$2250 When Abram died (1907) he owned 190 acres valued at \$3500 and the Dean estate = \$18,926.
1909 – **William G. Dean** son of Abram
1926 – **Anna Dean** daughter of Wm G.
1939 – **Arvo Saari**
Part of 190.4 acres

1940 – US Government

Parcel #4 --- Cellar Hole #3
1812? - James & Asenath Lyon 25 acres
1834 – **John & Anna Perdun** \$360 d. 1844
1844 – **Jonathan Perdun** for love and affection 25 + 5 acres →
1853 – **Christopher S. Dean & Harvey Dean** (brothers)
1864 – **Harvey N** (d. 1867) & **Cordelia Dean**
1870 – Clark & Ellen Updike 8 acres + 39 acres in Lot 26 → for \$3000
1879 – **Abram Dean** \$2350 (remaining mortgage?)
1909 – **William G. Dean** - (inherited)
1925 – **Anna Dean** - (inherited)
1939 – **Arvo & Kyllikki (Regina) Saari** - part of 190.4 acres
1940 – US Government

Parcel #5
1812? – Orin & Ann Brewer - 25 acres
1836 – **John & Anna Perdun** \$450
1844 – **Heirs of John Perdun** – divided into thirds and one third divided into fourths. Case settled in court 30 years later divided north 8 acres to **Eli Soule** sold in 1880 to **Abram Dean**
1844 – **David Perdun** – to his mother Anna Perdun
1865 – **Anna Perdun** – Quitclaim for \$100 to daughter
1873 – **Charity Perdun Pease** – sold to son for \$1
1893 – **Israel Pease** - d. 1899 - his heirs settled and sold
1900 – **John H. Swick**
1903 – **William Swick, Cora Lovell, Nellie Ford** (inherited)
1911 – **Charles & Agnes Wright** – Quitclaim \$1
1940 – U S Government

Parcel #6
1812? - David Foster & wife 25 acres
1834 – **John & Anna Perdun** - \$500
1844 - **Heirs of John Perdun**
1868 – **Anna Perdun** was declared a lunatic in 1868 and her land was sold to **Israel Pease** to pay her debts - \$1040.
1893 - **Israel Pease**
1900 – **John H. Swick** d. 1903 land to grandchildren
1903 – **William Swick, Cora Lovell, Nellie Ford**
1911 – **Charles & Agnes Wright** - by Quitclaim \$1
1934 – Land lost to Schuyler Co for payment of taxes 36 acres to Belmont Quadrangle Drilling deed not recorded.
1939 - Land returned to **Agnes Wright**
1940 – US Government

Parcel #9
18?? **John & Anna Perdun?**
1844 **Jonathan Perdun** – A 5-acre section of a larger parcel divided many times, early ownership unclear.
1879 - **Abram Dean** to **Wm** then **Anna** (inherited)
1939 – **Arvo Saari** ---- 1940 - US Government

Parcel #8
The first Wm Dean and his heirs owned a portion of this property and the parcels above at various times.
John & Hannah /Harvey & Cordelia/William & Mary Proper Mary & John Smith / Christopher & Cynthia/Abraham (Abram) & Eliza B. Dean/ Moses Dean - his children **William & Caroline** went to Michigan. Divided & united many times early ownership of this parcel and the 3 above is unclear until Abram Dean.
18?? – Caleb Dewitt
18?? - **Ira Stilwell** 47 acres?
1876 – **Abram Dean**
1909 - **William G. Dean** (inherited)
1926 – **Anna Dean** (inherited)
1939 - **Arvo & Regina Saari** – tenants who purchased 190 acres
1940 – US Government

Parcel #7
1840 - **John Hall Swick** (b. 1816 - d. 1903) & **Anna Secord Swick** d. 1835. John remarried **Susan Smith**- d. 1899. He was a successful farmer, owning 500 acres in Hector, land in Genesee County and in Michigan near Flint. This land went to daughters.
1904 – **Carrie & Dewitt Swick** (married a distant cousin)
1940 - **Heirs of Carrie Swick**
1991 – Landis & Sunday
19?? – Patty Preston

Parcel #7
1840 – **John Hall Swick** to **Ida and Carrie Swick** then divided
1904 – **Ida Swick Voorheis** - 44 acres
1943 – Theresa (**Swick**) Voorheis (inherited)
1970 – J. Harold (**Swick**) & Gladys Voorheis (inherited)
1974 – Kathy Koken

Southwest Corner Lot 26

June Szabo explains the trials and tribulations of tracing lot ownership lineage.



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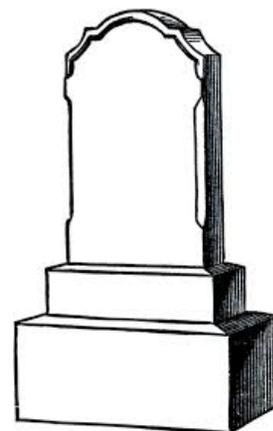
CLEANING GRAVESTONES

BY DALE AND TINA UTTER

We are often asked how to clean gravestones. Many people, not knowing who to turn to, usually find themselves talking to a monument dealer. They may be very knowledgeable on what to do with granite headstones but their expertise, when it comes to historical markers made of sandstone or marble, is very limited. In fact, the information they may give you may permanently damage the stone if it is a cleaning or if it is a repair it may not last. They usually don't have the specific training to answer these questions and would tackle the issues the same way they would for granite markers, with disastrous results.

So why clean a gravestone you ask? Over the years an accumulation of dirt, lichen, algae, moss, mold, pollution, etc. have dirtied the stones so badly that many can barely be read, if at all. Family members, wanting to be able to read their loved one's stones, want them cleaned. People doing genealogy research want to read them as well. We, who love the artwork that can be found, want other people to see and appreciate the stones as we do.

The first thing to consider when cleaning gravestones is safety, both your personal safety and that of the stone. Our cemeteries have suffered from years of neglect. We have seen stones leaning so badly that we fear the next gust of wind will blow them over. Others seem perfectly stable, but the slightest bump or nudge could send them toppling. Children should never play in cemeteries or climb on the stones. Every year people are killed from falling stones. So, before you start cleaning check the gravestone very thoroughly.



The first thing you want to see is if it is leaning excessively. Multi-piece monuments may not have anything holding the pieces together so they may slide right off each other. Is the stone broken or cracked anywhere? If it is a multi-piece monument be sure to check every level of stone. We know of one monument that has four different tiers and three of them are cracked or broken. We cringe every time we walk by it. If all looks well stand to one side and push on the stone just a little for one final assurance it is safe. Sometimes a stone is broken below ground level and there is not much holding it in place.

Once you are satisfied that your safety is not in jeopardy then take a closer look at the condition of the stone. Both marble and sandstone are suffering from delamination issues or just splitting apart. So, check the edges and see if this is taking place. If it is then the pressure from cleaning could literally make the front or back, fall off or at least parts of it. Sandstone has other problems as well. Sometimes part of the front is separating like a blister or bubble. Check the back part of the lettering. Is there a gap? The stone could be rotting from the inside out. Tap the front. Does it sound hollow? This is not a good sound. If there are any doubts or concerns for yourself or the stone then you should not clean it.

We like to visit a Dollar Store to obtain many of our cleaning supplies. Plastic or natural bristled brushes, plastic putty knives, plastic trowels, or wooden skewers can be found there. A plastic bristled grout brush works great for those tough spots but shouldn't be used to clean the whole stone. A garden pump sprayer comes in real handy but never if you have used it previously for any kind of chemical spraying.

When cleaning gravestones you never want to use any metal tools such as wire brushes or scrapers. Also do not use any mechanical means such as attachments to a drill. We do not recommend the use of pressure washers especially on marble or sandstone markers. Using tools like these can

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Atlas Preservation

Atlas Preservation is the recommended source for D/2 Biologic Solution for cleaning gravestones.

D/2 Biological Solution is a biodegradable, easy to use liquid that removes stains from mold, algae, mildew, lichens and air pollutants. It is effective on marble, granite, limestone, brownstone, travertine, masonry, terra cotta, concrete, stucco, wood, and other architectural surfaces including monuments, sculpture and headstones. A contact time of only 10 to 15 minutes followed by scrubbing with a soft nylon or natural bristle brush will loosen most biological and air pollutant staining.

D/2 Biological Solution is effective for removing harmful biological and air pollutant staining from many building materials including masonry, marble, granite, limestone, brownstone, travertine, terra cotta, concrete, stucco, wood, canvas and vinyl & aluminum siding.

D2 is used at many important sites including: The White House, The Veterans Administration, and the Congressional Cemetery.

Note: Make sure you sign up for Atlas Preservation's Reward Program.

Copy the following link into your web browser to get 10% off when you join and to provide the Backbone Ridge History Group with 300 loyalty points towards the future purchase of D/2 which will be used in cemeteries across the Backbone.

<https://a.marsello.com//5caf709b811f9e02b477d1cf>

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JULIA CLAWSON

With sadness, we remember a wonderful woman. Julia C. "Julie" Clawson passed away peacefully on May 6, 2019. Julie was born in Ithaca on April 24, 1945, a daughter of the late William J. and Elizabeth (Updike) Simmons. She was a 1963 graduate of Trumansburg High School. Julie was married to Theodore Clawson on November 9, 1963 and in 1979, they made their family home in Lodi. Julie was the office manager for Dr. Shern Hart's medical practice in Trumansburg for over 33 years. Julie was actively involved in the Lodi Historical Society, Backbone Ridge Historical Group and had served as the Lodi Town Historian, and did extensive research of family history and genealogy. Photo courtesy of Robin Updike.



Julie is survived by her husband of 56 years, Ted Clawson of Lodi, her sons; Jay Clawson of Ithaca and Kyle (Meredith) Clawson of Hector; grandchildren, Gillian and Broden Clawson; siblings, Charles "Ed" (Sue) Simmons of Tennessee, Hester Covert of Ithaca, Robin Updike of Interlaken, and Noel, Ina Jo, Lylia Lee of her husband's family.

In July, we received this lovely letter of remembrance from Sue Magnosi about her lifelong friendship with Julie Clawson. We are grateful to Sue for letting us share her memories.

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CLEANING GRAVESTONES

BY DALE AND TINA UTTER
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

permanently scratch and damage the stone. Be very careful when using metal shovels and bars as well. Plastic trowels can be very handy when working close to the stone.

Usually 60%-70% of the stone will come clean with just water. So many years of pollution accumulation may never come completely off. NEVER use any household cleaners like Comet or vinegar or chemicals on the stones as this may cause permanent damage. Bleach will react with marble and literally eat the stone away. It may leave a yellowish color and ages the stone as well as making it feel rough to the touch.

My technique for cleaning a stone is to first take a brush or plastic putty knife and remove all loose material. Some sources say to clean from the bottom and go up but if the whole stone will be cleaned at that time we always go from the top down. Next, I wet down the whole stone using our sprayer so it can be soaking. If you don't have a sprayer, wet down the side you will be cleaning from a gallon jug. I then like to use the putty knife again which will remove a lot more material once it is wet. With that done you are now ready for your scrub brush.

I like to keep dipping my scrub brush into a bucket of water, as the extra water helps to wash the dirt down the stone. Scrub gently in a circular motion or up and down and then right and left so you clean all areas of the stone. Use the putty knife or grout brush for hard to remove areas. Popsicle sticks, tongue depressors or wooden shims work well also. We use wooden skewers to remove material from the lettering when brushes aren't getting it. Rinse the stone often so you aren't grinding the dirt back into the stone. Rinse the whole side when you are all done before proceeding to the next side.



When you think you are all done check all sides and edges to be sure you haven't missed anywhere. Now it is time for one final rinse. The last thing we do is to spray the stone with D/2 Biological Solution.

This is a biocide and will kill any plant or animal growth and will also work on the areas that initially did not come clean. We suggest that it be used at full strength. You must be patient with this product to see its results. Rain reactivates its action so it will continue to work, and the rain washes off the old growth and stains. If there is a lot of growth on the stone it may turn a marble stone orange - don't panic, it will wash off in time.

This is an expensive product, so we do not suggest to use it as cleaner as the directions suggest. A little also goes a long way. It can be bought on-line and Atlas Preservation.com is as reasonable a price as we have found. It is a very good product tested by the National Park Service and used by the Veterans Administration to clean over 3.5 million gravestones. Again, it may take a month or more to see the full results. Not all stains will come off easily or at all so another spraying could be done at a later date.

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ASK OUR READERS:**ANSWER TO: "DO YOU KNOW HOW TEXAS HOLLOW GOT ITS NAME?"**

BY JUNE SZABO

A big thank you to Bob Crippen and Carol Fagnan who both replied! They each advised us to look in The History of the Town of Catharine by Mary Louise Catlin Cleaver, the author writes: "The origin of the name is a mystery, but one of the oldest residents of Odessa believes that he has heard that a man called "Texas Eagle" lived there at one time."

A search of all the census books at the Schuyler County Historical Society (1810 – 1930) found no one with the name Texas Eagle, Eagles, Eagel, Egle or Igle. In the file cabinet, there is a folder titled Eagles with a receipt from 1886 for Keystone gelatin dry plates. The plates were purchased by Joseph Dunlap Eagles. He was a photographer who also printed local landscapes for stereoscopic viewers. He was born in 1837 and died in 1907, but never lived in Schuyler County.

An online search for the name Texas Eagle turned up two individuals. A baseball player, Tristram Speaker (1888 – 1958) and a congressional representative from Texas, Joe Henry Eagle (1870 – 1963). Both were from Texas and had been given the nickname Texas Eagle. However, Bob Kibbee found the name Texas Hollow on a Beers map dated 1857 eliminating these two individuals and adding another clue. Texas declared independence from Mexico in 1836 and became a state, December 29, 1845. The origin of the word Texas is believed to have come from a Caddo word for friends or allies. The Caddo are a confederacy of Southeastern Native American tribes.

In New York State, there are two other State Forests with Texas in their names ---Texas School House in Otsego County and Texas Hill in Chenango County. There is also a village in the Town of Mexico with the name Texas; it is near the mouth of the Little Salmon River. It was originally called Vera Cruz, named by George Scriba, a NYC merchant who purchased the land in 1790. After a series of disasters--- a tragic drowning of seven people in 1799, an embargo by the British, the War of 1812 and a massive fire in 1820 the village changed its name. Sometime between 1820 and 1860, it became Texas after the new territory, a possible inspiration for the Hollow. At this time, the man called Texas Eagle and the origin of the name Texas Hollow are still unsolved mysteries.

What do you call the streams that run north and south from the middle of the hollow?

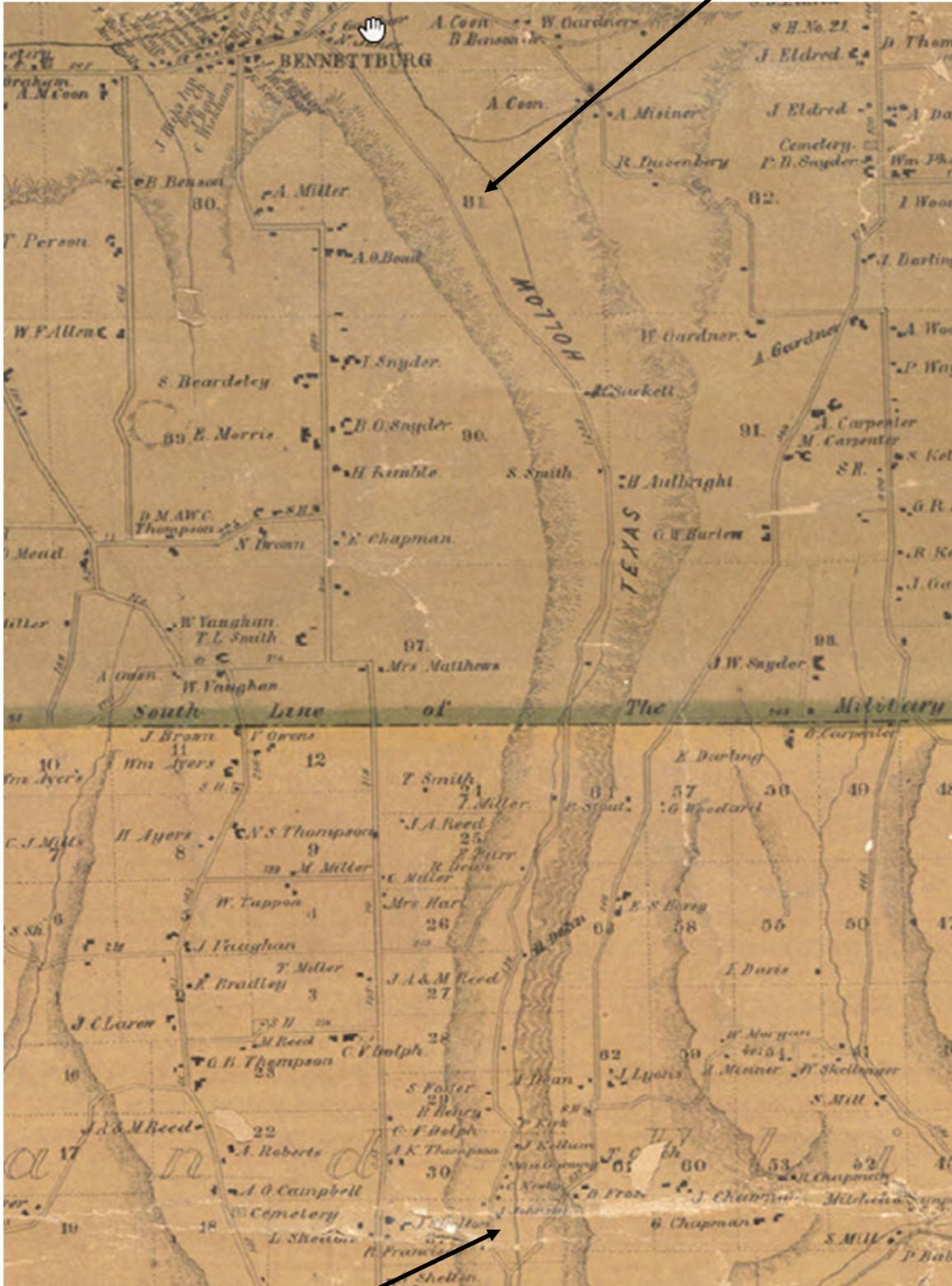
It appears that the USGS labeled the wrong stream Cranberry Creek. The History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties, published by Everts and Ensign in 1897 mentions Cranberry Creek on two occasions. In describing the Town of Hector, the authors write, "The town is drained by many creeks, one of which, Cranberry Creek, rises in the center of the town, flows in a southwesterly direction, and empties into Seneca Lake. Bennetsbury (sic) and Burdett are situated on this stream. Hector Falls is also on this stream."

In another paragraph, "Bennettsburg is situated on Cranberry Creek, south and west from the center of the town, and takes its name from Phineas Bennett, who purchased three hundred acres in 1828 and built a grist and saw mill on the creek." This source contradicts the USGS map that labels the south flowing stream Cranberry Creek, and gives no name to the other one. Beginning in a shared bog, flowing in opposite directions, but reaching the same destination, it would be confusing, but fitting that they both be designated Cranberry Creek.

(Continued on page 10)

ASK OUR READERS:
ANSWER TO: "DO YOU KNOW HOW TEXAS HOLLOW GOT ITS NAME?"
BY JUNE SZABO

BEERS MAP OF TEXAS HOLLOW & CRANBERRY CREEK 1857



CRANBERRY CREEK

CLEANING GRAVESTONES

BY DALE AND TINA UTTER
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

Our cemeteries are in bad shape and in need of attention, so we applaud the efforts of those seeking to make some improvements. Taking a stone that you have no idea what it says and cleaning it so it can now be read is very gratifying. You should give it a try. We would like to say a big THANK YOU to all out there who are doing work in our cemeteries. Your efforts are appreciated.

Tina and Dale Utter reside in Mt Upton, NY. Their mission is to create an awareness of our neglected cemeteries that will increase volunteer efforts and ultimately lead to preservation for future generations to enjoy and appreciate.

They were 2019 recipients of the *Fred and Rosalee Oakley Certificate of Merit* presented by the Association for Gravestone Studies to individuals and groups that have helped to further the study and conservation of gravestones.



The Uppers are founding members of the **Central New York State Cemetery Network**, a sub-chapter of the New York State Archaeological Association. This brand-new organization will cover cemeteries across central NY-including those of the Backbone Ridge area. More information is to follow in the Spring Newsletter.

To contact Tina and Dale or for information about the CNYS Cemetery Network, email Tina at stonecroft@citolink.net or send a letter to our PO Box and we'll forward it on!

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JULIA CLAWSON

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

Julie and I met in 4th grade and have been friends since. Growing up in Trumansburg area, we did things together. Camping was big in summers. Many times we would walk home from school instead of busing. Once we dallied too long and got chewed out for scaring everyone! Julie taught me how to swim in the creek next to her house and ride a bike. She was always helping others. We went fishing with her grandfather and put our fish pail in the creek while we had lunch. I went to the creek and brought up the pail to start cleaning the fish. When we opened the top, I screamed! There was this big black snake in the pail and no fish. Julie's grandfather killed the snake and I never offered to clean fish again.

One time Julie and I had gotten our blouses dirty and tried to clean them. Julie said her mother used bleach so we must have put in at least a quart of bleach to a gallon of water. We soaked the blouses for a while. When we started to wring them out, the material started to shed-way too much bleach! I still remember and tell my kids about that.

My family moved to Ithaca where I graduated high school. Julie had called me to be in her and Ted's wedding. I was thrilled. They moved to Bloomfield, NY while Ted was in college.

I was getting married in 1964 and asked if she could be in my wedding, but it was impossible for her. She did come to my wedding though. Over the years we kept in touch with our new families etc.

(continued on page 12)

**Backbone Ridge History Group
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WWW.BACKBONERIDGEHISTORYGROUP.COM

We hope that information contained in the Backbone continues to be of interest and we welcome suggestions for content related to the history of the Backbone Ridge and surrounding communities. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or contributions of articles by mail at the address above or through the website.

For new or renewal memberships, for an individual or household please send \$10 to BRHG, PO Box 62, Trumansburg, NY 14886

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JULIA CLAWSON

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

When they moved back to the area, my siblings live in the Trumansburg area and told me Julie was working for a local doctor. So we met up a few times. Ted and Julie's son, Gary, happens to live in Lansing, where I live and has stopped in many times to keep me informed and family and health issues. Even though I have 5 siblings, Julie has always been like a sister. I do miss her, but still chuckle over some of our exploits.

Susan Houseworth Magnosi, written July 2019

Thank you to those who sent donations to the Backbone Ridge History Group in Julie's memory.

Robin Updike

Ina Clawson

Maryann & Joe Dendis

Marjorie & Howard Hall, Jr.

Ted Clawson

Sue Magnosi

Ann Buddle

Ruth Wagner

