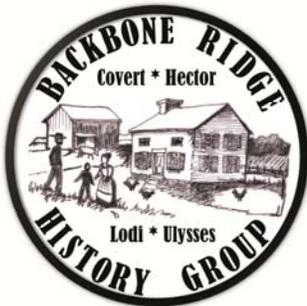


The Backbone

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

BECAUSE HISTORY MATTERS



THE PATH FROM REYNOLDSVILLE TO PEACH ORCHARD IN 1813*

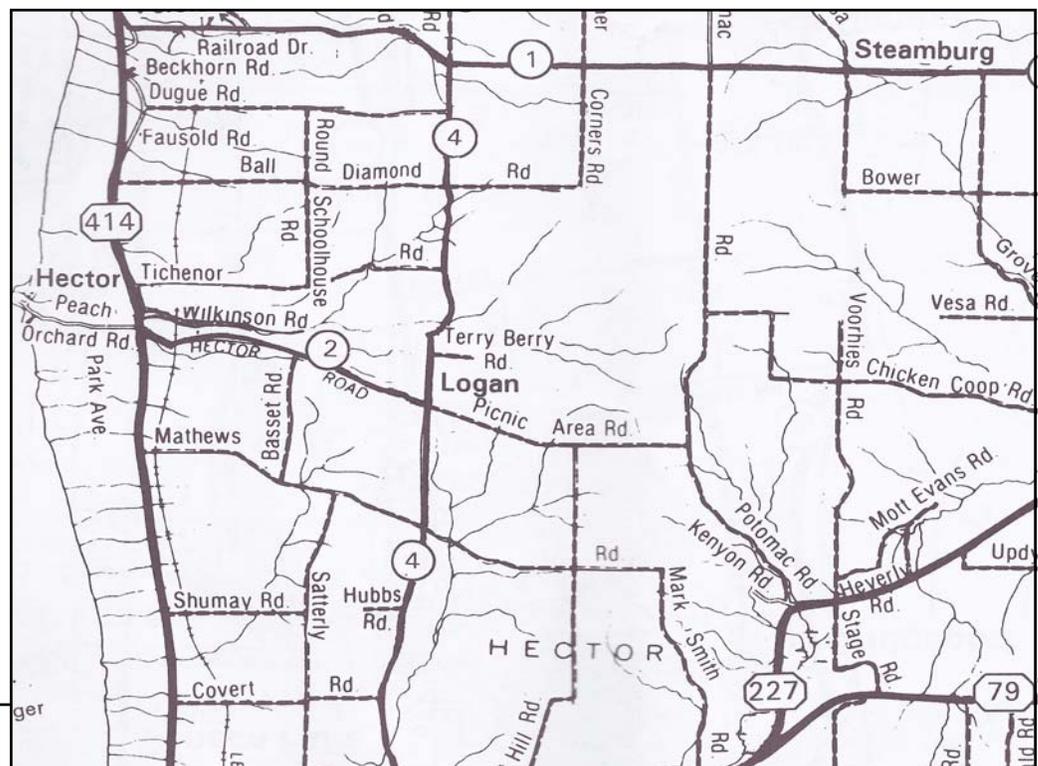
In 1813 there were little patches cleared at the following places, between Reynoldsville and Peach Orchard.

For the first mile and a half from Reynoldsville, the path followed the gully east of the present road, which was not opened until 1823.

The first clearing was that of Thomas Scovill. North of him was one Gillen. West of the "Backbone", Mr. Bjurroughs had a cabin, on the northeast part of Lot No. 43, where George Auble lives. North of him lived Simon Boardman. Then came the log house of Elias Case, a

few rods east of Logan, and just below the present residence of John Velie. Charles Everts, father of Alred Everts of the Reading House in Watkins, kept a tavern at Logan and Harmon Kingsley had just commenced blacksmithing and drumming in the same place.
(continued on page 3)

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PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

BY ALLAN BUDDLE

Without statistics to refer to, my sense from walking pastures and bringing in hay, is that this has been a very good summer in our area. How the Hector Backbone farm families must have looked forward to a year like this, neither too dry nor too wet and neither too hot nor too cool. Not only the field crops would have had good yields but the livestock would have thrived. The gardens would have produced an abundance of vegetables filling the root cellars and canning cupboards to overflowing. Most likely the farm families would have had renewed hope and maybe purchased a washing machine or some other labor saving device which we nowadays would consider a necessity. Since there would have been no electricity on the Hector Backbone, the washing machine would have probably been powered by a gas engine. For some interesting history on the washing machines and the engines that ran them, Google Antique Washing Machines and Motors. The results come with sound effects!

As always we are grateful that Dr. LouAnn Wurst, her colleagues and students returned this summer for another round of archaeological excavations, an evening program at the Ulysses Historical Society and a Walk and Talk in the Finger Lakes National Forest. The program title, *Finishing with a Flourish: The Farmstead Archaeology's "Final Season"*, would lead one to believe that the field work, having continued since 2000, would be complete. Not so! LouAnn discovered a peculiar looking pile of stones that just has to be excavated to see what is underneath. Stay tuned for information on next summer's plans. Thank you to the Searsburg Grange for providing a place for the archaeologists to call home while they were here.

For those with a special interest in wildlife on and around the Finger Lakes National Forest, a two-part program focusing on the wild turkey and furbearing animals will be presented at the Lodi Rod and Gun Club. For more information, please see the poster elsewhere in this issue.

Cemetery restoration this fall will be at the Reynoldsville Cemetery. A much larger than typical project, it will be undertaken in stages and will require all the assistance that can be mustered. Cemetery work is planned for Friday and Saturday, October 11 and 12 and will start with some safety discussion at 9 AM at the Hector Town Hall in Reynoldsville. For more information, please contact Cemetery Committee Chair Dave Beckhorn at 607 546 6153.

I would like to point out a correction to the Summer 2013 issue of the *Backbone*. On page 9 a listing of those working on the Burge-Velie Cemetery did not include the name of one of our important cemetery volunteers- Brent Dugolinsky. We apologize for the omission.

The Annual Meeting of the Membership of the Backbone Ridge History Group occurs each year on the third Wednesday of October. At that meeting, October 16, 2013, trustees and officers are elected for the following calendar year. This year there are two trustee vacancies. Please let us know by October 12, 2013, if you or someone you know would be interested in serving as a trustee. The only requirements are an interest in the history of the Hector Backbone and a little time to devote to the various activities of the Group. Please contact any of the current trustees or officers for additional information or to nominate someone. You also may send an e-mail message to me at orchardland@zoom-dsl.com. Thank you for considering joining us.



**THE PATH FROM REYNOLDSVILLE TO PEACH
ORCHARD IN 1813***
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Three-fourths of a mile west Jonathan Slocum had commenced a clearing, where Harry Ely (2nd) now lives, and a half a mile farther on, one McCann was laying a foundation of the place long occupied by Samuel Pruden. Robert Armstrong, father of Annin, had a place on the north side of the road, just above the Lake Road. An excellent spring of water still attests to the wisdom of his location.

A building on the farm now occupied by George Howell, on Lot No. 32, was occupied by transient families. North of this a dense wilderness extended for two miles, to the block school-house. A man by the name of Bumpass had made a clearing at this point. He was followed by Adee, who settled south of him, and he by Deacon German, who settled farther south and west. South of Logan Daniel Everts was living on the

southeast part of Lot No. 32, where his widow still resides. Jacob Hager was located at the present residence of his son-in-law, A. C. Tracy. His brother, Peter Hager, had a house in the fields, east of the present road, and on the farm now occupied by C. D. Smead. Farther south were Jabez Smith, Brickley Monnell, Willcox Buckbee, and Mowbry Owens.

**History of Chemung, Tioga, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties, New York, 1879, Everts and Ensign, Page 623.*

DAIRY ON THE HECTOR BACKBONE

This year, the theme for our exhibit was *Dairy on the Hector Backbone*. A display board depicted bringing in the cows, milking, separating the cream and making butter. The focal point at the T-burg Fair exhibit was a Mc Cormick Deering No. 4 Cream Separator that has been donated by Mary Louise Swick Stilwell. Mary Louise grew up on Chicken Coop Hill and would have used this separator at her husband's farm in the Town of Covert. A photo of the set-up crew is shown below. Left to right- Allan Buddle, Arvine Pike, Doris Pike, Nancy Voorheis and Keith Voorheis. The Backbone Ridge History Group thanks the following for the loan of display items: Barzilla's Antique Barn (Karen King), Mary Louise Stilwell, Betty and John Brooks, The Pike Family, Paulina Usher and Arleeta Karz, The Interlaken Historical Society and Charles Batty. Thank you to Doris Pike for a photo of the display.



M Y S T E R Y P H O T O

Can anyone identify this house? Be the first to identify it by writing in to :
orchardland@zoom-dsl.com

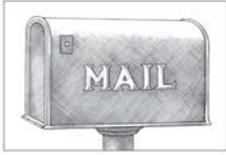
No one wrote in to identify last months mystery photo. The owner was told that it was a ticket box from a train station.



A B R I E F H I S T O R Y O F T H E N E W T O W N R O A D A R E A (C O N T I N U E D F R O M P A G E 1 0)

Site #5- This house site has been added onto several times through the years. To the west of the house sat a small barn. There was also a barn north of the house on the lane by the corner coming up out of the ravine. Several Ukranian Pear trees with round fruit are located to the south of the house site. The small depression to rear of the house was possibly a frost pit for food storage.

“To keep things from freezing over the winter, we dug a hole in the garden and put in straw and lay turnips, potatoes, cabbages, vegetable oysters and apples. They would taste so fresh after everything was layed on the straw and another layer , leaving space for a door to reach I to get things. A lot of dirt was piled on top of the straw and on top of that would be scrapings from the barn, which would not freeze.” My Life On Hector Hill, Catherine Townsend Mulford, Schuyler County Historical Society Journal, Vol. 26, No. 1.



MAIL CALL
COMMENTS AND LETTERS AND
PICTURES FROM OUR READERS

Editor's Note: "Mail Call" will become a new regular article in all future issues. Let us hear from you! We welcome letters and pictures from our readers. Please include name, address, and phone number with your submission. You can email us at orchardland@zoom-dsl.com or write us at Backbone Ridge History Group, PO Box 64, Trumansburg, NY 14886. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity.

A letter was received from Sharon Ricci, of Burton Ohio. Some excerpts from the letter:

My great-grandfather, George N. Dates, fought in the Civil War for the Union. He is buried in the Reynoldsville cemetery. No one seems to know any other name for the cemetery as it has been abandoned for years. When the association caring for the grounds disbanded, it appears no records were turned over to the Town of Hector Offices. The Hector Town Clerk could not assist me in finding burial lots or numbers.

I know the location of the grave as my family has cared for the grave for years. I am currently driving from Ohio annually to clean the lot and place flags at the grave. This past year, a couple trees fell on the lot. Someone did come by and cut the trees up and toss some of the remains off to the side. My husband and I managed to remove branches and logs that we could lift. Would your group consider caring for this site? I'm not sure how many more years I will be able to continue my visits. I would like to feel secure in knowing that someone is respecting and honoring our Veterans no matter which war they fought in and that their bravery will never be forgotten.

I am currently trying to contact a local group of the Sons of Union Veterans (SUV) to see if they will continue the flag distribution. I know there is a SUV group in Ovid, N.Y. but do not know of any closer groups. I have been told that Mr. Robert Simpson of the V.F.W. in Watkins Glen has been coordinating flag placements currently of known graves.

The Reynoldsville Cemetery is historic in that several veterans are buried there. My husband came across a grave of a soldier from the War of 1812. I know that 4 other "DATES" also fought in the Civil War and I am currently trying to find their graves. I am not sure if all are buried in this cemetery or not.

The Dates grave that I tend is located very close to Rte 227 on the curve in Reynoldsville. We park at the house on the curve, walk thru their yard to the left of the garage and enter the cemetery. My family plot is very near their yard, just up a rise. My great-grandparents and a young daughter are the only graves that I know exist on this plot.



TALKING TURKEY

Saturday, September 14, 2013

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Lodi Rod and Gun Club
9382 Lodi Center Rd (County Rd. 137)
Lodi, New York



Join Mr. Scott R. Smith, Wildlife Biologist with the New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Region 8 from Bath, NY and Mr. Jonathon S. Olin, New York State Certified Trapper Instructor who also is a New York State Certified Nuisance Trapper from Beaver Dams, NY as they discuss:

- *This year's wet spring conditions and other environmental issues.*
- *The stress on upland game birds that has been particularly harsh, especially with hatch and brood losses.*
- *Wild Turkey and Ruffed Grouse problems facing upland small game hunters this Season.*
- *Furbearer situation in the fields, streams and forests of Central and Southern Tier New York including the Backbone Ridge and the Finger Lakes National Forest.*



For more information, contact Gerry Messmer
Phone: 607-387-9669; Email: mandg9669@zoom-dsl.com



FARMSTEAD ARCHAEOLOGY WALK AND TALK

On July 13th, 2013, Dr. LouAnn Wurst led a tour for about 20 community members through the historic farmsteads that she has researched as part of the Farmstead Archaeology Project. She has been excavating the farms at the southern end of Burnt Hill Road since 2000.



MAIL CALL COMMENTS AND LETTERS AND PICTURES FROM OUR READERS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

Another reader , Patt Dietlin from MA writes:

Seeking information about a cold case! Trying to find information on a possible business partnership between a Gentleman in Hector/Peach Orchard Point and a fellow named Sutton in Reading on the west side of Seneca Lake, at Sutton' s Point. Time Period 1820 – 1835ish. (Possible last name for the Hector Gentleman: Shannon). In 1820 there was a sloop making runs from Sutton ' s Point in Reading up to Geneva.

I saw a reference to a possible Sutton ' s Point – Peach Orchard Point – Geneva Loop in a *History of Shipping on Seneca Lake* column in a 1960 ' s Watkins Glen newspaper. No source was given for this snippet of information and the writers of the article are gone. Hence.....cold case. This info had to come from somewhere! Does this ring any bells with any of the Backbone Ridge History people?

QUOTES FROM AN OLD DAY BOOK
SUBMITTED BY MARSHA SMITH

In 1935, my grandfather, Herman Smith wrote a story for the Interlaken Review, quoting from his father's day book. Herman Smith was the son of John Towne Smith and Margaret Gilmore Smith. John T. Smith was married twice. His first wife was Emeline Cole, daughter of David and Rachel Townsend Cole. She was also the sister of Cornelius Cole and George Washington Cole, the subject of my last article. She died in 1848 and John married Margaret Gilmore, who was the daughter of John and Rachel Quigley Gilmore. John Gilmore was a blacksmith and lived in Hector, on the Potomac Road, for a while.

My grandfather really never knew his father as he died in 1865, when Herman was only 7 months old. Margaret, with the help of the Cole family and the Smith family, managed to raise her four children and her younger step-children. Interestingly, she seems to have had very strong ties with the Coles, as did her children, despite the fact that there were no blood ties between them. It is a testament to the community

bonds that existed in the Townsendville area at the time.

I have had a fascination with the Cole Family even though I do not share any blood ties with them as well. I have admired them for their commitment to the children of John T. Smith-- including my grandfather and his full siblings. In the story below, Herman takes some entries from his father's Day Book or Account Book. He discusses how the family moved from Newfield to Butcher Hill. [John T. Smith was actually born outside of Trumansburg on the farm, just over the county line on Congress Extension.] Herman discusses who lived in both Newfield and on Butcher Hill. He also gives us some insight on wages in the 1840's, gleaned from that old book-- including how much his father paid the future senator, Cornelius Cole, to work for him. I was especially interested to read about Cornelius Cole's trunk. My father had told me about the trunk and how it had accompanied them to Florida in 1922.

The Interlaken Review
20 December 1935

Smith Writes More About Early Days

In 1843, father moved from Newfield and purchased a farm on the northern slope of Butcher Hill, afterward known as the Daniel Shannon property, and of late acquired by the state as a reforestation experiment.

In his dealings with Newfield residents we find the names of Edwin Sherwood, Harry Hill, John Carol, Hiram Hallock, Cornelius Green, Chester Benedict, Henry Hill, Samuel Johnson, Simeon Cotton, Philip Millspaw, Lewis Horton, William Armstrong, and Joseph Dickerson.

Upon locating in Lodi we find more familiar names such as David, Elijah, and Cornelius Cole, William Kinch, Thomas Havings, George Hardenbrook, James Horton, E. S. Linderman, Samuel and Richard Sebring, and David Wamsby.

In 1859 father traded farms with Garrett Voorhees and moved to Covert, one and one half miles west of Hall's Corners, which is the birthplace of yours truly. At this time the names of Covert and Rynear Tunison, Alvah Cole, and Jefferson Sniffin are recorded.

Here are some facts illustrative of the early life of Cornelius Cole, who became U. S. Senator from California: Between September 1st, 1843, and August 2nd, 1845, he worked for father 50 days and earned \$43.98, and average of 88 cents per day.

(continued on next page)

QUOTES FROM AN OLD DAY BOOK
SUBMITTED BY MARSHA SMITH
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

In haying and harvest he received \$1.00 per day. For chopping wood, drawing manure, planting and hoeing corn, sowing plaster by hand, and hauling stone, 62-½ cents; threshing 75 cents, and digging potatoes 60 cents. To reimburse the future Senator for these fifty days of labor, father gave 24 bushels of wheat, drew 67 loads of wood at 20 cents per load, balance paid in team work. In 1849 Mr. Cole contracted gold fever and joined the rush to California.

In the winter of '22, while in Florida, we met a party from Los Angeles, who lived just around the corner from the ex-Senator, and was well acquainted with him. He said he was reputed to be worth a million, lived in a palatial home, and acquired much of his wealth in investing in Los Angeles real estate.

We have in our possession the trunk in which he carried his earthly possessions on his overland trip to California in '49. It was presented to our half brother Wilbur, who, in 1875, paid us a visit, coming by steamer around Cape Horn, and in returning to California, left the trunk with us. In 1922, brother John carried it on his car to Florida and return, so you see this trunk has seen some service and whenever our eyes rest upon this relic of bygone days, it seems to say: "I've been used and misused, bruised and abused, accused and excused, enthused and amused, been wrapped and strapped, bounced and trounced, checked and double checked, locked and unlocked, crossed oceans and continents, mountain and foothill, desert and plain, rivers and rills, been ballooning and been to Old Davy, listened to the distant war whoop of the Indian and the cow boy's yell. I have finished my work and am entitled to a more prominent position than I now occupy. I should be mounted on a pedestal in some hall for famous relics and be preserved for future generations to gaze upon."

H.T. Smith

This photograph was taken during the 1922 Florida trip by Herman T. Smith. Pictured in Frank T. Smith, standing, seated on the Cornelius Cole's old trunk is Alfred J. Smith, with their mother Eva Taylor Smith. Note the rope tied to the spare tire; my father, Alfred told me that his Uncle John worried that someone would try to steal the car or the tire so he tied the rope to



the spare and to his cot when they bedded down for the night. My father also told me that this was the trunk which had belonged to Cornelius Cole long before I found this story to confirm his tale.-- Marsha E. Smith

**A BRIEF HISTORY
OF THE NEWTOWN ROAD AREA
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)**

Site #3- This farm contained 129 acres in 1936, but was in the 1860's part of a 1,000 acres belonging to Ira Stilwell, born in the Town of Hector in 1807. His lands were divided among his seven living children, and their children. Sites 3, 4 and 5 were all part of his estate and were all owned by his descendants until the time of sale to the government.

The house site sets a short distance off the road and is ringed by Maple trees. South of the house and across a small stream is the foundation of the barn, the concrete gutters are still visible.

"Crops raised were mostly oats and buckwheat. Oats were fed to the horses and the buckwheat was thrashed by the men who came in, and we would make a good dinner for them. Some grain went to the mill to ground into flour. Hay was baled and hauled to the hay buyer. It sold for \$10.00 a ton and from that we could buy our clothes. In the woods and swamps were Sasafra trees, Slippery Elm, Pines and Birch. My father sold lumber for ties on the railroad." My Life on Hector Hill Catherine Townsend Mulford, Schuyler County Historical Society Journal, Vol. 26, No. 1.

Site #4- A house appears here on Maps in 1850 and then is gone by 1870. A second house was probably built on the same site. The hose foundation is very long and narrow with the remains of a large center fireplace. There are three wells at this site and plantings of Lilac, Myrtle and Daffodils. The barn and several outbuildings were to the north of the house. This was one of the last houses to come down in the forest, the Hector Grazing Association used it to house some of their employees.

On the opposite side of the road heading east was a large steam bath, which several diaries note was used by many of the neighbors.

"On winter evenings many of us young people would go up the Sarri Place by sleigh to steam bath. Clayton Grove would drive his father's stallion, Elridge. It was always very cold and very dark and lots of fun. We had lots of good times in those days." Alice Allan Boyer, July 4th Picnic, 1991." (continued on page 4)

E . B . S M I T H

We finally got a hold of a photograph of the "famous" E.B. Smith, the stonecutter that prepared so many of our local intricate headstones. His great, great, grandson, David L. Holly provided this photo to Patt Dietlin,



who in turn, sent this photograph in. Many thanks to Patt and hopefully we can uncover more information about this stonecutter that left behind a legacy of beautifully adorned headstones in many of our local cemeteries.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NEWTOWN ROAD AREA

The following article is from a handwritten, well documented presentation about, and maybe even a field trip to, five sites along Newtown Road currently shown on road maps as Voorheis and Vesa Roads, some of which is located on the Finger Lakes National Forest. If anyone can identify the author or has information to add we would be especially pleased to hear from you as we continue to discover and share previously documented information and information that may not have been documented in the past. Please refer to the map on page 1 of this newsletter.

These lands were the hunting grounds of the Indians of the Iroquois Confederacy, when the first Europeans landed here. During the Revolutionary War the Iroquois sided with the British, prompting the Colonists to send General Sullivan in to lead a campaign [sic] through this area, to destroy their villages thus the way for settlement. After the War, veterans were paid for their service in 600 acre lots. They cleared the land, and found a ready market for their hays and grains in New York City, where horses were the main transportation. With the coming of motor vehicles their market dwindled and also their farms' soil was beginning to fail. Over 100 farms were acquired between 1936 and 1941 near Hector, through the Bankhead-Jones Act and the Emergency Relief Act. The Hector Land Use Area was created in 1941 and in 1985 became the Finger Lakes National Forest.

This lane was called Newtown Road as early as 1836 and ran between Reynoldsville and East Steamburg, both of which were stagecoach stops, with mail and passengers dropped there. The first settlers came to the Reynoldsville area in 1799.

Site#1- This farm contained 97 acres in 1936, when the owners sold and moved to Ottumwa, Iowa to become wheat farmers there. Prior to 1850, site #2 was also part of this farm owned by J. C. Monk. It was later divided between family members.

The home and barns were set back from the road, with the house on the north of the drive, and the barn and outbuildings on the south. The remains of the orchard is south of the barn.

"To horsemen: Professor S. D. Hulbert, of the firm of Rockwell & Hulbert, Horse Trainers, is now at the residence of J. C. Monk training the Morgan Stallion, Tiger, to drive without reins. He will remain at the residence of Mr. Monk about two months, and during that time will be prepared to break and train colts and old horses of bad habits, upon reasonable terms. Those who have wild and vicious horses, can place them in his hands with the assurance that they will be kindly treated and thoroughly subdued."

Watkins Democrat, February 8, 1866

Site #2- Two houses are located on this site. The first, a modest five room house, was on the corner of Bower and Newtown Road. The second, a ten room house with an elaborately planted dooryard of Maples, Spruces, Cedars and Horse Chestnut trees, with trailing Myrtle beneath them. The orchard was east of the house, and there are still several varieties of pear trees between the house and barns moving south. The barn was very large 74' by 40' and the base of the silo can be seen on the west side of the barn site.

In 1864, the Overseer of the Poor for the Town of Hector notes show that 15 of the town's paupers were housed here at the residence of Cyrus Barber. Some were orphans, widows and elderly, but many were listed as fool, idiot or insane. Each town took care of their own unfortunates until New York State built the Willard Asylum in 1869.

(continued on page 10)

Backbone Ridge History Group
PO Box 64
Trumansburg, NY 14886

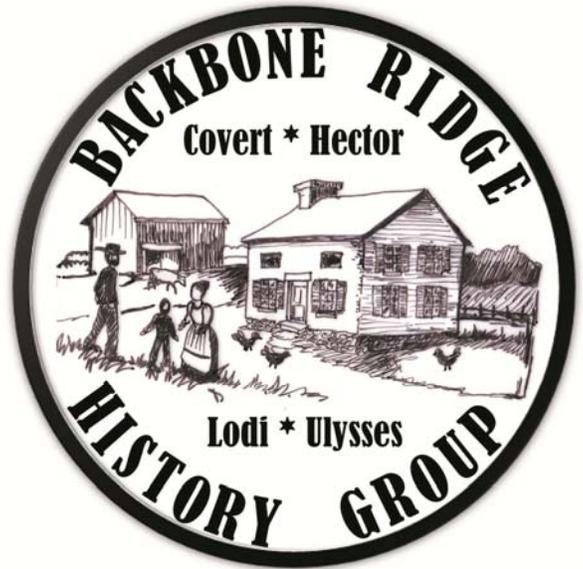
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Check your mailing label below, to see if you have a red rectangle (need to pay dues in 2013), or a red "P" (2013 dues are paid), or a red "C" (yours is a complimentary copy) For new and renewal memberships, please send \$10 to Membership Chair, Rose Smith, at PO Box 64, Trumansburg, NY 14886.

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