December: All month — Heritage Christmas Decoration Sale — museum book shop
December 3: 5:00 — 7:00 p.m. — OCHS Museum Holiday Open House
December 10: 1:00 p.m. — Holiday Children’s Event: “Polar Express Model Railroad and Story Hour”
December 24: Museum closes for the holidays — reopens January 3, 2017
December 25: “Happy Christmas to all; and to all a goodnight!”
January 1: New Year’s Day — celebrate 2017!
January 3: Museum reopens at 10:00 a.m.
January 18: “History Book Club Dinner” and Wrap-up
February 15: Museum Educator’s Talk — “The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Western New York”
March 14: “Pi Day” at the Museum 3.14 (Exact event day will be announced)
March 18: “National History Day Competition”

NOTICE: If your address changes seasonally, please let us know the alternate address and the effective dates.

OF CURRENT RESIDENT

__________________________________________
Canandaigua, New York 14424
25 North Main Street

__________________________________________
New York City, NY 10019

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Director’s Note:
The Christmas Tree is a universal symbol of the Christian holiday season. We want to share two stories on the tree’s mythical origin.

How the Fir Tree Became the Christmas Tree
by Aunt Hede, in “Kindergarten Magazine”, December 1903

This is the story of how the fir tree became the Christmas tree. At the time when the Christ Child was born all the people, the animals, and the trees, and plants were very happy. The Child was born to bring peace and happiness to the whole world. People came daily to see the little One, and they always brought gifts with them. There were three trees standing near the crypt which saw the people, and they wished that they, too, might give presents to the Christ Child.

The Palm said: "I will choose my most beautiful leaf, and place it as a fan over the Child."
"And I," said the Olive, "will sprinkle sweet-smelling oil upon His head."
"What can I give to the Child?" asked the Fir, who stood near.
"You!" cried the others. "You have nothing to offer Him. Your needles would prick Him, and your tears are sticky."
So the poor little Fir tree was very unhappy, and it said: "Yes, you are right. I have nothing to offer the Christ Child."

Now, quite near the trees stood the Christmas Angel, who had heard all that the trees had said. The Angel was sorry for the Fir tree who was so lowly and without envy of the other trees. So, when it was dark, and the stars came out, he begged a few of the little stars to come down and rest upon the branches of the Fir tree. They did as the Christmas Angel asked, and the Fir tree shone suddenly with a beautiful light. And, at that very moment, the Christ Child opened His eyes—for He had been asleep—and as the lovely light fell upon Him. He smiled.

Every year people keep the dear Christ Child's birthday by giving gifts to each other, and every year, in remembrance of His first birthday, the Christmas Angel places in every house a fir tree, also. Covered with starry candles it shines for the children as the stars shone for the Christ Child. The Fir tree was rewarded for its meekness, for to no other tree is it given to shine upon so many happy faces.

continued on page 3
End of the Year Update
December is upon us in the 16th year of the third millennium. It is a perfect time to look back and out to the future. History was made this year in a number of ways and there is plenty to look forward to in 2017. From a broad perspective, Donald Trump, The Chicago Cubs, Brexit and arguably the warmest winter and driest summer on record made 2016 an amazing year. We watched as leap year flew by us and the State of New York established and funded a commission to celebrate the state’s centennial of passing an amendment granting women the right to vote. In our Historical Society’s world, we were fortunate to receive three project grants that will produce some important documentation about our museum and our county’s past.

Building Condition Report
Preserve New York – formerly the Preservation League – awarded us a grant to study and document the condition of our 1914 museum landmark. Our museum building, designed by famed architect Claude Bragdon, is in need of some loving care to its roof, windows, portico, foundation and environmental controls. According to Preserve New York’s Director of Preservation, our building is a glorious and unique piece of Bragdon architecture and one of the most distinguished landmarks in Canandaigua. Parenthetically, she also told us that if we are to accomplish the work that is needed that the “stuff”, i.e., the collection and library materials needs to be removed and stored off site during the renovation. That is all understandable; and easier said than done. The report should be completed in the early spring. It will identify and prioritize needed work and provide preliminary budget costs.

Historic Preservation Video Project
Our 2015 video project gave us a perfect springboard to apply and receive a foundation grant this year to fully fund and produce more history-related videos. We are excited to work with 1809 Studios again to preserve and promote our county’s past by documenting the 2016 state of five historic structures. They are the Bemis Block in Canandaigua, the Naples Memorial Town Hall, the Spa Apartments in Clifton Springs, the Farmington Quaker Meeting House and the Smith Opera House in Geneva. Each have been filmed inside and out. Narrative by local historians will relate the building’s significance and the condition of the structure. Our hopes and realities for future use will be assessed. Our county values its architecture which holds much of our history. The videos will have their home on our YouTube Channel and will air on our public access cable station FLTV. They should be released in late winter, if not sooner.

Suffrage Movement Research
With a vision grant from Humanities New York, we are in the middle of a countywide research project. Historians from virtually every municipality in the county are digging into their records looking for the names of people and organizations that worked to promote – or defeat – the New York State vote on women’s suffrage. The state’s humanities interests have recognized Ontario County’s suffrage project as a unique effort and urged other jurisdictions to emulate it. Our county’s historians have done a wonderful job at finding information and people forgotten by time. A written report and online database will help share our county’s role in the suffrage movement. The project is being overseen by Dr. Susan Goodier, who has authored several books on the suffrage movement.

Project grants are an important way to pursue the Historical Society’s mission. Digging into and documenting our county’s past is what we do. Unfortunately these project grants usually have no operation money associated with them. This is why we have our Annual Operations Appeal. It helps pay the costs of running and operating the Museum. This is why we ask the community to please be generous to the Historical Society in your holiday giving. Merry Christmas to all of our loyal members from the staff, volunteers and Board of the Ontario County Historical Society. Have a safe and happy time!
What’s in the Collection?
by Wilma Townsend, Curator

While I usually feature an artifact from the OCHS collection, I am tempted this time to rename this section “What’s NOT in the Collection.” The OCHS staff, town historians and volunteers are busily conducting research for our upcoming exhibit on the women’s suffrage movement in Ontario County. The year 2017 marks the 100th anniversary that New York State gave women the right to vote. While our research is turning up some very interesting information about the local women (and men) involved in the movement, very few items – programs, memorabilia, photos, etc. have surfaced for display in the exhibit. At present the OCHS collection holds only a few relevant programs and photos of individuals. Although we anticipate borrowing some items from other institutions for the exhibit, we need your help in locating local/regional/state even national items related to suffrage. Items could include posters, political buttons and ribbons, banners, postcards, photos, even souvenirs such as a tea set. We would love to borrow items like these from you to enhance our exhibit. If you have something of interest, please give me a call at (585) 394-4975 or email curator@ochs.org.

continued from page 1

The Legend of the Christmas Tree
by Lucy Wheelock (1914)

Two little children were sitting by the fire one cold winter's night. All at once they heard a timid knock at the door, and one ran to open it. There, outside in the cold and the darkness, stood a child with no shoes upon his feet and clad in thin, ragged garments. He was shivering with cold, and he asked to come in and warm himself.

"Yes, come," cried both the children; "you shall have our place by the fire. Come in!"

They drew the little stranger to their warm seat and shared their supper with him, and gave him their bed, while they slept on a hard bench. In the night they were awakened by strains of sweet music and, looking out, they saw a band of children in shining garments approaching the house. They were playing on golden harps, and the air was full of melody.

Suddenly the Stranger Child stood before them: no longer cold and ragged, but clad in silvery light. His soft voice said: "I was cold, and you took Me in. I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was tired, and you gave Me your bed. I am the Christ Child, wandering through the world to bring peace and happiness to all good children. As you have given to Me, so may this tree every year give rich fruit to you."

So saying, He broke a branch from the fir tree that grew near the door, and He planted it in the ground and disappeared. But the branch grew into a great tree, and every year it bore wonderful golden fruit for the kind children.
Technology Gifts for the Holidays: A Mirror of Our Changing Society

It seems like every day’s mail (and email) brings more catalogues and advertising with choices for holiday gift-giving. As usual, many of the offerings are what we might call technology gifts. It has been that way for generations, but as we focus on our own life journeys it is easy to assume that “high tech” gift giving is a feature of our own time alone. Technology gifts have always mirrored the technological advances of everyday life. And they have always been a part of growing up.

Like the first two decades of this century, the first few years of the 20th century brought life-changing technologies into the lives of our grandparents and great-grandparents. Telephone lines could be found throughout the area as early as the 1870s. The first automobiles showed up in Canandaigua in 1900. It was about the same time, give or take a year, when they appeared on streets and roads across the county. Electric lights and appliances took a bit longer in rural areas, but the Ontario Light and Traction Co. was generating electricity and putting it to work in the Canandaigua area in 1894. While the traditional ice houses remained in business near the lakes, electrical refrigeration became available by the 1920s and saw steady growth. Electric trolleys were running on the streets of Canandaigua in 1894, and the Rochester & Eastern trolley was running through Canandaigua, connecting Geneva and Rochester in 1903. The basis for technology gifts for children that mirrored real life experiences, and harnessed the technology creeping into our lives, was well laid a century ago.

I recently had a chance to leaf through two popular youth magazines of the time; *The Youth's Companion* (October, 1910) and *The American Boy* (December, 1912). Both of these publications were filled with advertisements for technology gifts for the holidays. Looking at them, you get a familiar feel — and yet the images are decidedly old. What did Yogi Berra call that feeling? “Déjà vu all over again!”

Rochester’s thriving young industry, Eastman Kodak, was twenty years old when they offered “real cameras” through *The American Boy* in 1912. They weren’t quite as convenient as digital cameras, but a real improvement over the huge boxes on tripods that used wet glass plates.

By 1910, picture postcards were all the rage in America. A new idea introduced at the 1893 World’s Fair, they could be projected on a “screen” (sheet, perhaps) — if you had electricity in your village home. This one advertised in *The Youth’s Companion* in 1910 brought optical technology to homes without electricity with a projector powered by acetylene gas.

The October 1910 issue of *The Youth’s Companion* featured an electric trolley model that could be run from a storage battery, much like those found in automobiles in later decades (after crank starts). Just seven years after the R&E rolled across Ontario County, children could play with a miniature version in their homes.

The Voltamp company (what an appropriate name!) was founded by Manes Fuld, a Baltimore pharmacist, who wanted to make an exciting toy for his son in 1897. He began making trains for sale in 1903. The company Fuld founded produced the first electric toy trains that ran on ordinary house current in 1907. Lionel and other more famous train makers used storage batteries at first, since many potential customers had continued on page 5
little access to electric current. This advertisement for Voltamp trains appeared in the December 1912 issue of The American Boy. Today, Voltamp trains are highly collectable and very expensive antiques.

Thomas Edison invented the phonograph in 1877, at first thinking that it would make a good office productivity tool. By the 1890s, recordings could be purchased for playback and young and old alike could enjoy John Philip Sousa’s Marine Band. Early records were cylinders, like the one you can see to the left of this machine in the Museum collection. Early phonographs could both record and play back. Sound familiar? Does it remind you of the invention of the CD and DVD for “serious” productivity, then converted to entertainment? Digital media record sounds, so why don’t we call them “records” as well? Just a thought to keep your mind busy while you digest your holiday dinner.

In December 1912, less than a year after the “Titanic” sank, in part because of a lack of reliable wireless (radio) communications, The American Boy was offering a wireless set to young men and their families. Marconi demonstrated the first practical long-distance “wireless telegraph” receivers in 1897. It would be a few years before Americans would begin to use the word, “radio.” Being on the leading edge of communications technology has always been important to young people who always seem quick to adopt a new technology. In 1912, it was a shame that more ships crews had not yet found a use for wireless.

As radios became popular, changes and improvements were quickly adopted by children in particular. Can you recall crystal sets in the 1920s? Transistor radios in the 1950s? The use of FM receivers in the 1970s? Do you know younger people who love audio and video streaming now? What other changes in communications technology do you remember being “the next best thing?” How about home movies that were replaced by video tapes — and now DVDs?

The tradition of holiday gift giving has always turned our attention to new technology both as givers and receivers. Will you make gift-giving history this year?

New Board Members

Welcome!

The membership of the Historical Society elected two new board members in October.

David Hewson and Carole Lillis. They will serve a three-year term that will expire in October 2019.
In addition to the exhibit on women’s suffrage, we are pleased to be working with two dedicated volunteers, Dave Hayden and Greg Russell on a special exhibit on Canandaigua in 1964. In the following our two guest curators describe their exhibit vision which will open in 2017.

**1964: Gone But Not Forgotten**

In 1964, the average cost of a new home was $13,000. The average yearly income was about $6000. A gallon of gas was 30 cents and a loaf of bread, 21 cents. It cost a nickel to send a letter across the country and a new car would set you back $3,500. You played with your GI Joe, Rock ‘Em Sock ‘Em Robots, Barbie and Skipper, and everybody had some item related to the Beatles. The Cleveland Browns were NFL Champions and the Buffalo Bills were AFL Champions!

In 1964, “Does she or doesn’t she?” was about a hair product called Clairol and “Please don’t squeeze the Charmin” was a well-worn admonition. The Righteous Brothers introduced, “You’ve Lost that Lovin’ Feelin’ and if you were lucky, your father brought home one of those new Ford Mustangs introduced that year.

In 2017, OCHS will present a tribute to the year 1964 in Canandaigua in the north gallery of the museum. This will be in conjunction with the *Daily Messenger*, the downtown Business Improvement District, the Wireless Museum in Bloomfield, the Canandaigua Fire Department, various merchants and, hopefully…..YOU!

Based on a spectacular 1964 aerial photo of downtown Canandaigua found at the *Daily Messenger*, we will present a “gone but not forgotten” exhibit of the 50 plus buildings that no longer exist in that photo with pictorial scenes and histories of the largest and most memorable of these. Using a drone, we have actually replicated the 1964 image for comparison. But it can’t be a 1964 exhibit without those objects and ephemera that defined the times. We need what we know you have….that scrapbook with pictures of you dancing at Arrowhead Lanes, or a picture or trophy from your mother’s bowling team, a gift box or wrap from Monesano’s, a transistor radio (whether bought at Rice’s TV & Appliances or not). How about a Sunday bulletin or hymn book from the Wesleyan Methodist Church on Bristol Street, a book of matches or menu from the Pickering/Webster Hotel or the Canandaigua Inn? Maybe you have a cleaner bag or ticket from the Mercury Cleaners, a White Swan Menu, an old Canandaigua Fishing Tackle Catalogue, a record player from Rice’s, a special gift or memento from Winship Pharmacy, a playbill or poster from the Playhouse on Chapin Street, anything from Thompson Lumber, the Mill Shoppe or Bernis Square.

You get the idea. If you have “stuff” from downtown in the mid-1960s, we’d love to add it to the exhibit and give you credit for it. We’d also love your input. And we’d love to borrow any of the 1964 era “stuff” that’s in your attic. (You know there’s a Princess Dial Phone up there somewhere!)

We’re adding multimedia presentations to this as well. It wouldn’t be Arrowhead Lanes without the sounds of Wilmer and the Dukes, and we’ve got ‘em! You have 8 mm movies of some of these places? We’ll digitize them if they fit the bill. There’ll also be a big surprise for the Canandaigua Class of ‘64.

Bottom line: We want you to bring your kids and grandkids to this exhibit next year and show them what a great time and place this was. Next year will be 1964 in Canandaigua! This history is all about YOU! For any input or offers to loan us your cool, mid 60’s stuff, please call Wilma at the museum: (585) 394 4975 or email: curator@ochs.org. So put a “Tiger in your Tank” and help us out!

We thank you in advance, Dave Hayden and Greg Russell.
Ontario County’s Original Orphanage

For about 80 years a city orphanage kept the area’s poor and parentless children. The story is told that 11 persons sat in the chapel of the Congregational Church one summer evening in 1863 with a list of 16 men who were casualties of the Gettysburg’s battle. A notebook contained the names of 450 other Ontario County war dead. The 11 people decided it was time someone did something for the children left behind and they took the initiative.

By the following summer enough money was raised to purchase the Main Street property. Soon after, a 5-storey brick building was erected at the intersection of North Main Street and County Road 28 in Canandaigua. The Ontario County Children’s Home was established. “We will save them from want and ignorance, and that worst curse of poverty, evil companionship, and make good men and women of them, if that is possible.” Those words were noted in the minutes from the 1872 meeting of the orphanage’s board of directors.

The county’s orphanage cared for 547 children in the first 20 years of operation, and continued to thrive for another 60 years with the financial support of Ontario County’s upper class. Several cottages and a nursery were added. During that time more than 3,000 children lived in the home or were placed in foster homes by the organization.

In the early 1930s, the results of the depression and changing thoughts on child care made it impracticable for the county to maintain the home. By 1936, according to the records, all the children were placed in foster homes and the original building was used for offices, eventually being destroyed by fire.

A few years ago OCHS received some photos donated by a woman whose mother and siblings lived there. She recalled her mother saying that the community took great pride in helping out at the orphanage and there were parties, trips, and gifts for the children at Christmas. Her mother also said that she could not remember a time she, or her siblings, felt mistreated.

Today Eric’s Office Restaurant is the only building that remains of the Children’s Home as this was part of the original nursery.

Note: Additional information on The Ontario County Children’s Home is located in the OCHS archives, and available for members to view.
News and Announcements

- We want to wish all our members and their families the merriest of holidays. The Museum will be closed between Christmas and New Year’s Day to give our staff a chance to spend quality time with their families.

- A big “thank you” goes out to all who contributed to our Annual Operations Appeal. If you haven’t sent in your donation, please do so. The appeal helps to keep the Museum Operations in the black each year.

- Our popular long-term exhibition on the Early History of Western New York, entitled “Desires, Opportunities, Change” will have a new home next year. The Niagara Arts and Cultural Center requested that they have it for their visitor’s center. We agreed. Opening in 2012, the exhibit taught our visitors how our region progresses from 1640 to the signing of the Treaty of Big Tree in 1797. It is scheduled to be moved in February.

- Progress on our Building Condition Report funded by Preserve New York is moving ahead. The Museum building designed by architect Claude Bragdon needs some capital improvements. This study will identify, prioritize and offer budget estimates for the work. In 2017, work is planned on the museum’s slate roof and on its HVAC system.

- You can expect to see our new series of videos the first of the year. This project funded by the Kyrias Foundation will present video documentation on five different historic buildings in Ontario County and showcase the work, or lack of work that has been done on preserving our county’s architectural heritage. The videos will be placed on the Historical Society’s YouTube Channel and promoted on social media. FLTV will also play them on air along with the 12 other videos we produced in 2015.

- Humanities New York for the is the lead agency for the celebration of the “New York State Suffrage Centennial”. In 1917 the state will celebrate the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote and has established a commission to oversee and coordinate the celebration. Historians across our county are searching their records to reveal suffragists who were active here. Preston Pierce, our Museum Educator, has developed research techniques that he is sharing with the historians. Wilma Townsend, our Curator, is developing a new exhibit on suffrage that will open on Mother’s Day next year.

- Brush up on your baking, we will once again have “Pi Day” next year. It will celebrate the non-repeating mathematical symbol Pi (3.12415…). We will have a pie baking contest, tastings and great coffees. Mark your calendars for March 14th. We will have the event for all to enjoy. Remember – nobody doesn’t like pie.

- We held our “Volunteer Appreciation Dinner” this year in the Captain’s Quarters at the Canandaigua Wegman’s. The lasagna, salad and cannolis made for a delicious meal. It is our way of saying thanks to those who provide a valuable service here at the Museum and keep our operations cost lower.

- It is important that we mention the passing of Bruce Stewart, our Computer Operations Manager. Bruce pioneered information technology at the Historical Society back in the late 1990s. He stayed on to be the go-to guy for all our computer problems (and there were many). Bruce was very responsible person and expected the same of our staff. It was his counsel and knowledge that helped bring the Museum into the Information Age. He also served as the Chairman of the Treaty Day Committee. Before Bruce retired, he was a pilot for Eastern Airlines and flew many dignitaries including Richard Nixon. Bruce also loved horses and at one time owned a ranch. His college degree was in music. He loved a good martini and telling stories. He was a good volunteer and a friend. We will miss him. Bruce was 72.
A Gift for the Future

by Tom Walter, Past President OCHS Board of Trustees

You know what Ontario County Historical Society does for the community. Keeping our history alive is so important for the education and well-being of future generations. So often these days we see the same mistakes made over and over again. One wonders if people were more aware of their history would the same mistakes be made again and again?

What can you do for OCHS and for future generations? You can consider making a gift. Of course, cash contributions are always welcome and OCHS is most appreciative. But consider a gift other than cash that will benefit OCHS in the future. Consider planned giving which includes gifts of appreciated securities, a charitable remainder trust, a gift annuity or a bequest through your will.

Gifting appreciated securities allows you to receive a charitable contribution deduction equal to the fair market value of the securities which maybe much more than your cost basis. Gifting appreciated securities can also shield you from the recognition of capital gains and can reduce your estate.

Charitable remainder trusts and gift annuities are mechanisms that provide you a stream of income, a charitable contribution deduction and a benefit to OCHS now and in the future. If you would like to discuss the various planned giving options that may be available to you, please contact the OCHS office and we will arrange an appointment. Thanks for considering OCHS in your charitable plans.

The Oliver Phelps Fund

Thank you to the following donors:

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**In Memory Of:**
- Wally O'Connell
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We Welcome These New Members

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- Jim Kinney
- Bob Mincer
- Yvonne Saner
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*Volunteer

We wish to extend a special thanks to all of the volunteers who donate so many countless hours in support of the Historical Society.

Address correspondence to:
Ontario County Historical Society
55 North Main Street
Canandaigua, New York  14424

We are open Tuesday through Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.,
Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  Closed on major holidays.

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Webpage:  www.ochs.org
Email:  museum@ochs.org
Please “Like” us on Facebook! Just go to www.facebook.com and search for the Ontario County Historical Museum.

Business Members

We wish to thank the business members listed below for their continued support. Please consider them when purchasing goods and services. In addition to these business members, we also appreciate the small donations we receive from dozens of local businesses in Ontario County each year.

1840 Inn On The Main
Aberle Eye Care
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Mail Box

Dear Preston and Ed:

On behalf of the Ontario County Fair Society, we would like to extend our heart-felt thanks for partnering with us; making our county fair successful year after year.

Sincerely,
Casey Kunes, President

Dear Ed, Wilma and Maureen:

Thank you for the wonderful experience for the Interrogation Club. Everyone was truly excited and interested in the exhibits! You are all true ambassadors to history.

Best,
Peggy Kane

Ed,

I want to thank you, your staff and members of the Board for honoring me with the Ellis Award. I love my “part time” job as Victor Historian and I hope I can contribute to its history for a few more years.

Sincerely,
Babette Huber

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Membership Benefits in the Ontario County Historical Society

Receive Regular Museum Mailings — Keep Up-to-date on all Society Activities

Reduced Admission to Society Events and Fund Raisers, including Tour of Homes

(Admission to the Museum is always free)

Free assistance in the Museum’s Rare Documents/Genealogy Library

Membership in Time Travelers, a National Museum Benefit Program

10% savings on Museum Books Shop purchases

Subscription to our quarterly newsletter, CHRONICLES

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Ontario County Historical Society

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General Membership Support:

_____ Sr. Citizen $30; _____ Individual $35; _____ Family $50; _____ Friend $75

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_____ Please accept my additional gift of $ __________

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Canandaigua, NY 14424