

Save The Past; Save The Future

The burgeoning interest in things past, as evinced by the many people who braved sweltering heat to have their new Greene County history books signed last Saturday, bodes well for the future.

A community that does not revere its past is not likely to have much of a future, for the things that matter will be destroyed or left to ruin.

Consider that in recent weeks:

- Volunteers restored the fallen soldier's statue in the Thompson Street Cemetery in Catskill;
- A number of Columbia County residents relinquished cherished privacy and opened their gardens to visitors, for the benefit of the Hudson Opera House restoration fund;
- Catskill residents likewise opened their homes this past weekend to raise money for the county Historical Society's coffers;
- A local woman has been busy in nursing homes interviewing residents, compiling what

will be a fascinating oral history of the area;

• And local folks even turned out on a buggy spring Saturday to tour historic cemeteries in the area. We know of at least one youth group that is learning how to make gravestone rubbings.

People these days are becoming more sensitive to, and sensible of, their historic treasures and less willing to lose them. The senseless demolition of the old armory several decades ago would probably not have occurred today.

But vigilance is still necessary. One need only look at historic buildings in Catskill — supposedly under care by preservationists but with overgrown lawns and fading paint — to know how quickly structures of historical importance can be lost.

The people who have been working for local historical societies, for the Vedder Library Fund and for the Hudson Opera House deserve everyone's support, for they are preserving everyone's treasures. *Daily Worker 6/25/84*

Greene County Gleanings by Raymond Beecher

The year was 1924, the month was January. The Cocksackie Girls' Friendly Society and the Men's Club connected with Christ Episcopal Church were busy rehearsing. On the 17th they were scheduled to present the stage play "Not a Man in the House" at the Dolan Opera building. The stage action centered around an eccentric widow, Mrs. Bings, who decided to run her home without letting a man enter it. However, after a number of surprising incidents her plan was doomed to failure and the male sex was accepted as a "necessary evil around the house." Verla G. PenDell took the part of Mrs. Bings, while Katie the servant was acted by Ann Schoonmaker. Other roles were Dorothy Lattrell as Lucy Steele (an old maid sister of Mrs. Bing), the niece's part played by Edith Dowsett, and Aunt Belinda's by Lillian Carter.

Banjo selections, solo and chorus singing, clog and other dances were additional aspects of the evening's entertainment performed

by the Men's Club. They included Charles D. Pendell, Edmund J. Walenta Jr., James Isles, Frank C. Kinns, Lannie Hallock, Homer Grotz, Edward Grotz, Arthur Dowsett, Alyward Martin, Harold Walenta and Edmund J. Walenta Jr.

One of the original cast, Mrs. Edith Dowsett Matter, has lately unearthed one of the programs for the performance and has contributed it to the Vedder Research Library at the Bronck Museum. The advertisers are also interesting and included The Kaksakee Inn, Tremmel Hardware, the Cocksackie and Albany Auto Bus Corporation, Felbin Bros., John T. Hulburt (dry goods and notions), Thomas & Flansburg (coal), A. Bertolami's Jewelry Store, W.C. Brady's Sons, Martin W. Haas (Buick cars), Cobblestone Inn (W.F. Farrell), A. Sbarboro (Samoset Chocolates), and Corey's Grocery.

Other advertisers, both at the Landing and at the West End, included J.H. Goodwin (lumber),

Webb Bros. (groceries), John Fritzpatrick (electrical work), Jordan-Marsh (the Rexall Drugstore), Griffin's Variety, Bailey's Lunch Room, W.R. Church & Son (hardware), Miller & Wilson (shirt factory), Isle's Opera Lunch, Harold L. Cole (express), Jackson & Boome (garage), Harry L. Hamilton (Ford sales/service at 52 South River), the Cocksackie Bakery (Louis Weiss), and Noeth & Dombrowe (meats). The Cocksackie Theater was advertising its forthcoming attractions every Friday and Saturday. Among the coming films were George Arliss in "Ruling Passion," Douglas Fairbanks in "The Three Musketeers," and "Ashes of Vengeance" with Norma Talmadge.

Edith Dowsett Matter reports they usually played to a packed house and frequently took the evening's entertainment out of town to Greenville, Medusa and other halls. Even Mr. Goodwin acted in one play, "The Brideless Wedding." The printed program is a trip back in time — more local history.

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