

Newsletter

Historical Society of Shawangunk & Gardiner

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Fall 2008

GARDINER'S AQUEDUCTS

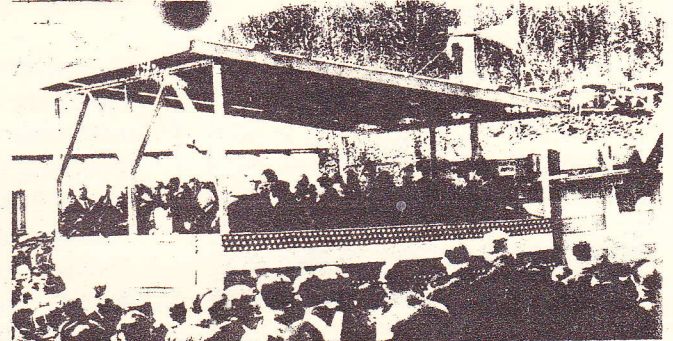
by Carleton Mabee

A feature of Gardiner's history was the building of two aqueduct lines through it, aqueducts that brought Catskill Mountain water to New York City. The first line, the Catskill Aqueduct, was built from 1909 to 1915, and the second line, the Delaware Aqueduct, was built from 1937 to 1945.

The earlier Catskill Aqueduct was built with lots of labor, little machinery. The later Delaware Aqueduct was built with less labor, more machinery. While both aqueducts were built deep in the ground under such major obstacles as the Shawangunk Ridge and the Wallkill River, in much of Gardiner the earlier Catskill Aqueduct was often built near the surface of the ground and was covered with only a thin layer of soil; it is often visible today, as on Rt. 44-55 close to Ireland Corners, and along Rt. 208 south of Ireland Corners. However, the later Delaware Aqueduct, which consisted of much larger tunnels, was built deep into the ground, and is not visible today. Evidence of its existence, however, such as the accumulation of shale dug out of the tunnel, is apparent at the points from which the tunneling was done, one point being in western Gardiner at Shaft 3, in the eastern side of the Shawangunk Ridge, near Shaft Road (named for the shaft), and another being at Shaft 4 in southeastern Gardiner, south of Ireland Corners, just off Route 208, where it passes under the Catskill Aqueduct.

Working directly in the aqueduct tunnels was dangerous. While many of the workers were immigrants with what long-term Gardinerites considered to be "jaw-breaking" names, among the Gardinerites who themselves were employed directly on the first aqueduct tunneling was Walter Hoppenstedt, the father of the future Gardiner veterinarian, Clifford Hoppenstedt. He operated a small work train which ran through the tunnel. Among Gardinerites employed directly on the second aqueduct tunneling were three Majestic brothers, George (later prominent as a Gardiner supervisor), Frank, and Charles. They did such work as compressed-air

drilling, drilling holes in the rock in which to place dynamite, and then wiring the dynamite caps for blasting.



Construction of the Delaware Aqueduct, the second of NYC's aqueducts to pass through Gardiner, opened with a ceremony in Gardiner, March 24, 1937. It was held near the aqueduct's Shaft 3, off Shaft Road. New York's Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia spoke, explaining his city's desperate need for water. (Photo courtesy of NYC's Department of Environmental Protection)

For the construction of the second aqueduct, a major concrete mixing plant was built in the Gardiner hamlet, just north of the Wallkill Valley Railroad station, on the west side of the rail line. Trainman Clark Bonesteel, of Port Ewen, recalled that he crewed on trains carrying supplies for that plant. He brought cars loaded with sand and gravel from New Windsor north up the West Shore line to Kingston, and then south down the Wallkill line to Gardiner. He also brought cement in smaller cars, hopper cars, from Alsen, north of Saugerties, down the West Shore line to Kingston, and then on down the Wallkill line to Gardiner.

A youth who grew up in Gardiner at that time, Frank P. Morgan, Jr., recently recalled that the materials which the trains brought to Gardiner were made into cement mix right next to his father's lumber yard, north of the Gardiner railroad station. He also recalled that aqueduct engineers wanted the mixing to continue even in winter. *(continued on page 3)*

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Letter from the President

Dear Members and Friends,

This issue focuses on Gardiner's history, in line with changes to by-laws of the Historical Society that reach out to Gardiner and Walker Valley members. Our lead story tells of two aqueducts that have played a vital role in transferring water from the Catskills to New York City, for which we thank **Carleton Mabee**, Town Historian of Gardiner. He will also speak on "Features of Gardiner History," Monday, November 3, in the Gardiner Town Hall, a program co-sponsored with the Gardiner Historical Society. **Jack Weed** will speak on Wednesday, October 1 in the Walker Valley Fire station on "How to get a Book Published." We are also seeking nominations for board members from both Walker Valley and Gardiner.

Everyone who had the pleasure of participating in this year's **Borden Day** (see story and pictures below) will join me in thanking the many people who made it possible, including **Al Smiley, the Hoyt Family, the School of Practical Philosophy, the Wallkill Middle School, Rodney Thompson, Freda Fenn, Bob Mooney, Bucky Andrews, Stewart Crowell, Ann Smiley, Ed Smedes, Wm. Frucht, Hatti Langsford, Carol Felton, Jen Parker, John Ross, Barbara Bouffard, Mark Fried, Hank Wilke, Vera Edsall, Sandy Nelson, Mary Thompson, Corky Vandemark, Bob Dolan's Orchard, First Student Bus Company, Wes Lake, Jeff Pfaff, Al Valk, Rich Walsh, Mary Wright, Sue Wiand, Iris Bellarosa, Rosie Schoonmaker, Doris Callan, Toni Gagan, Gil McCord, Bernie Redder, Tom Conroy, Bill Wixon, Town of Shawangunk, Wallkill Public Library, and Pat Countryman.**

Thank you also for your continued support of the Society. **Libby Ross**

Recent EVENTS

On-site tour of Blue Chip Horse Farm. On May 7, **Jeanne Brown** welcomed a large crowd of Historical Society members and visitors to the well-known thoroughbred horse farm located in Wallkill. She related the history of the farm that had its beginnings in 1969. A highlight of the tour was the appearance of the farm's most important stallion, Credit Winner.

Garden Tour. The Garden Tour held on June 21 was chaired by **Board-member Freda Fenn** and featured a variety of exquisite local private gardens. Thanks go to the talented gardeners who opened their gardens to the public. Proceeds from the flower sale and raffle will benefit the Restoration Fund of the Andries DuBois House. Raffle winners: **June Simpson, Diana Smith, Rosie Schoonmaker, Marion Whitford, Doris Callan, Cathy Scully, Mary Wright, Mary Scaringe, and Vic Work.**

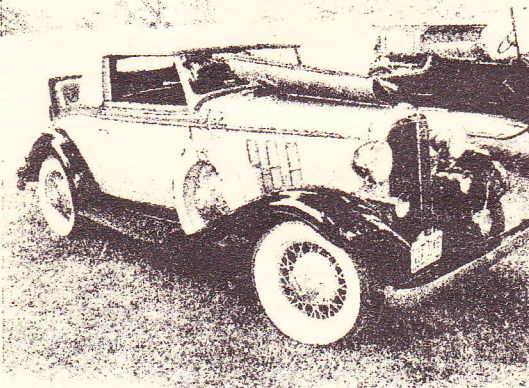
Community Yard Sale. A special thanks to **Board-member Doris Callan** who organized a successful day on August 23 that coordinated private yard sales throughout the community with the community sale at Popp's Park, resulting in a generous contribution to the Andries DuBois Restoration Fund.

Borden Day 2008

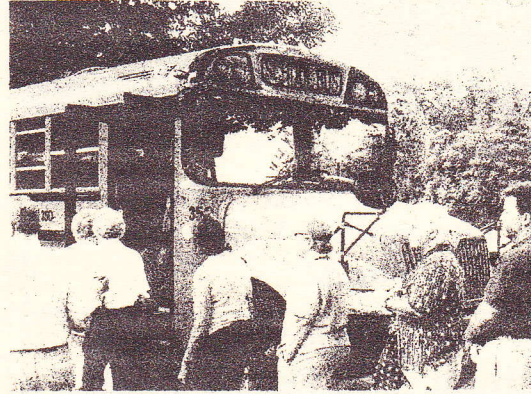
After a cloudy start, the day turned gorgeous on August 30 for the 5th annual **Borden Day** in the Hamlet of Wallkill. Hourly bus tours left from the John G. Borden Middle School to the properties owned by the School of Practical Philosophy and the Hoyt family. Visitors viewed the Hoyts' 1771 Hasbrouck Stone House and visited the 1880s brick office of the Borden Home Farm. They viewed the Marion Borden Mansion and heard Rodney Thompson speak about the visionary John G. Borden and his family. Later they walked to the long barn to view photos of historic buildings, local children in early 20th century classrooms, Camp Wendy displays, Borden memorabilia, and much more. Children especially loved the displays of old farm equipment, the antique cars and wagon rides through glen and around the working farm. Others simply enjoyed walks on the beautiful grounds, past fountains and the Borden family gravesite.



Rich Hoyt on his John Deere tractor



1933 Chevrolet on display



Returning home at the end of Borden Day

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(continued from page 1) Water for the mixing came from a stream which ran alongside Farmer's Turnpike, just south of the railroad station, Moran recalled, and was drawn up from the stream and stored there, close to the station, in a big tank. If the cement mixing was to continue in the winter, it was necessary for that water to be heated. For this purpose, Frank Moran's grandfather, John H. Lucy, who lived in Gardiner but operated a saw mill in Modena, brought a boiler from his mill to Gardiner, and set it up near the water tank, beside the rail tracks. Aqueduct contractors tried to persuade Lucy to let them operate the boiler, but Lucy would not let them. It was his boiler, he said. He wanted to operate it himself, and he did. Trucks moved the water he heated to the nearby cement plant, north of the station, and while it still hot, mixed it with cement, sand, and gravel.

Then trucks picked up the cement mix while it was still warm, Moran recalled, and delivered it to construction sites. They probably delivered it only nearby, to construction sites in Gardiner, so as not to give the mix time to cool and freeze. They delivered the mix to the two tunneling sites in Gardiner which were open to the air, Shaft 3 near Shaft Road and Shaft 4, near Route 208. Inside the tunnels, the cement mix was used to build giant concrete conduits.

Some 70 years later, both aqueducts still run through Gardiner. Though they are no longer in good shape--they leak--they still bring water from the Catskill mountains to New York City.

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**Historical Society of
Shawangunk & Gardiner
Fall Programs**

Wednesday, Oct. 1 - 7:30

**"Publishing your genealogy research" by
Jack Weed. Fire Station, Walker Valley,
Route 52**

**Monday, Nov. 3 - 7:30 "Features of
Gardiner History" by Carlton Mabee.
Gardiner Town Hall (co-sponsored with
Gardiner Historical Society)**

**Wednesday, Dec. 3 - 6 p.m. "Christmas
Pot Luck" Music. Wallkill Reformed
Church**



**Board-member Stewart Crowell offered
rides on his 1929 Doodlebug on Borden Day**

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Historical Society of Shawangunk and Gardiner

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