What's News?

Fine tuning... careful resource management... quality, not quantity... these phrases explain some of the changes at Hanford Mills Museum...

Fine Tuning: the Millwork you are reading is not like the newsletters of the past. The experimental format we are testing this season will feature shorter newsletters which are published more often. Each newsletter will include calendars of upcoming events and activities, they lists no longer be mailed separately.

Careful Resource Management: the Museum will now open for the season in mid-May, and close in mid-October. Traditionally, the Museum has had very few visitors during the first few weeks of May and last few weeks of October. In 2006 Hanford Mills will also adopt the tradition of “Museum Mondays.” Monday is a day when many museums are closed, and our visitation on Mondays is generally low. The Museum will open on Mondays connected to holiday weekends: Memorial Day, July 3rd, Labor Day and Columbus Day. By opening a few weeks later and closing a few weeks earlier, the Museum will save several thousand dollars. And to increase revenue, the Museum has increased its admission fees for the first time in almost a decade. Admission fees for non-members are now $7 for adults and $3.50 for children. Members are still free and our memberships are still the best value in town!

Quality, Not Quantity: each year the Museum’s staff carefully evaluates every program and event, and we look at ways to improve them. Sometimes, the changes are dramatic. This year we’ve combined elements of two events to create "Saw It!" at Hanford Mills” and we’re holding "Saw It!" and "Miller's Harvest Festival" on Sundays. Please come and enjoy the fun!

Elizabeth Callahan
Executive Director

If you visit early this spring, you might notice the nice new coat of black paint on our waterwheel. The wheel was sand-blasted and painted over the winter to protect the metal.

We'd like to thank the following people for donating to the Museum’s collections in 2005:

Paul Agoglia
Keith Ballard
Elizabeth Callahan
Paul & Joyce DeVivo
Harrison & Audrey Dickson
George Freer
Patrick Grossi
Howard Hinkley
Tom Joyal
Kenneth Kellerhouse
Cynthia Kensey & Jay Hagar
Allyane Lange
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Harry Masion
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Heather Stevenson
Charles Stewart
Paul Stillman
Marjorie Sundfors
Robert Winn
Ingrid Zeman

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Temperance in East Meredith
by Caroline de Marrais

One of the great resources we have for historic research is the diaries kept by Elizabeth Hanford from 1864 to 1902. Elizabeth was the aunt of mill owner D.J. Hanford. She and her family also lived in East Meredith. Recently I've been using them to research the temperance movement in East Meredith.

Temperance, in general, means self-control in the way a person lives, but more specifically it refers to the movement started in the early 1800s which advocated abstinence from alcoholic beverages. People worried about the number of people who drank to excess, leaving families destitute, workers unable to do their jobs, and people dead in drinking related accidents and murders. A number of different organizations formed to promote temperance. At times, the movement was also linked to abolition and women's rights.

East Meredith was never a hotbed of drunken revelry. The only tavern in the village operated from 1869 to 1871. But in 1879 the citizens of East Meredith felt they needed a temperance lodge after listening to a lecture given by a Mr. Douglass of Oneonta, NY. So on March 28, 1879 they formed a lodge with fifteen members. According to Elizabeth's diary there were already similar lodges in Davenport, Bloomville, and West Davenport, with the county lodge located three miles down the road in Davenport Center.

These lodges were member of the Order of the Good Templars. This fraternal temperance organization was established in Syracuse, NY in 1852. In some ways it was similar to a Masonic organization with rituals, regalia, and degrees. It was also ahead of its time by allowing women to join and to be elected to leadership positions.

The temperance fever struck East Meredith hard. Once the lodge was formed its members met almost every Saturday evening. Elizabeth Hanford's family let the lodge use the rooms above their store for meetings. Elizabeth often recorded spending part of the day before a meeting sweeping and cleaning. After the first month, they even rewallpapered the walls.

Elizabeth's diary entries are sparse - listing happenings in incomplete sentences, but she gives a fairly good view of their lodge activities. Through the year the lodge was active, Elizabeth records that twenty five people were initiated into the organization. Women in the East Meredith were elected to offices. Elizabeth, herself, was elected Vice Templar (vice president) in the first elections. Members of the East Meredith lodge often visited other lodges, and vise versa. They raised funds through events such as an ice cream and strawberry social and an oyster supper. Elizabeth recorded that the first social made $24.

Unfortunately, lodge meetings didn’t always see smooth sailing. In May at the installation of the first officers, Elizabeth recorded that Mrs. Every “offended” and lost her office. Later, in September, Harm Holmes and James Mitchell had “charges preferred against” them. Presumably, they fell off the wagon. Then in November things began to come to a head. Elizabeth recorded another election of officers, where her son, Charlie was elected Worthy Chief (president). At the next meeting on November 2, the officers were installed, but Charlie resigned. He and the whole family continued as members, attending all meetings until November 29, 1879. On that

Continued on page 4
Up-Coming Special Events

Opening Day - Saturday, May 13
The museum opens for the season. Come see the mill at work!

Mothers' Day - Sunday, May 14
Bring Mom to visit & tour the museum site. Moms admitted free.

SAW it! at Hanford Mills - Sunday, May 28
See ad at left → → → → → → → →

Meredith Dairy Fest - Sat. & Sun., June 10-11
Visit Hanford Mills Museum’s booth at the festival.

Fathers' Day - Sunday, June 19
Bring Dad to visit and tour the museum site. Dads admitted free.

Independence Day Celebration - Tues., July 4
Old-fashioned fun! Visit with President Teddy Roosevelt, enjoy tours, kids' fishing derby, frog jumping contests, games, ice cream and live music.

Summer Apprentice Workshop - July 17-20
A summer history day camp for children ages 8 to 13. 9:00-3:00 daily. $85 per child for non-members, or $70 per child for members. Pre-registration required. Call for application.

Spring-Summer Workshops

Blacksmiting I (for beginners)
[Al21]-June 10-11 - 9 am to 5 pm each day
ALSO: [Al22] - July 17-19, [Al23] or August 19-20
Learn the basics of blacksmithing — how to set up a shop, start fires and perform simple metal working techniques. Fee: $90 non-members, $81 museum members, materials & lunch included.

Upcoming Workshops:
Timber Framing ~ Date June 30-July 2, Appliqué Quilting ~ Saturday, Sept. 25, Tatting ~ Date TBA, Wood Carving ~ Date TBA (A brochure with dates will come out soon.)

2006 Spring-Summer Registrations

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Workshop Number Fee

Phone

E-Mail

*Don’t forget your member’s discount! TOTAL FEE*

Phone: 1-800-295-4992 or E-Mail: hanford2@hanfordmills.org

Send in the form at right and the registration fee to reserve a space today.

Return registration & fee to:
Hanford Mills Museum, P.O. Box 99, East Meredith, NY 13757

For more information: Call 1-800-295-4992 or E-Mail hanford2@hanfordmills.org
Temperance - Con't from page 2
date Elizabeth wrote, "I sent
in a withdrawal to the Lodge
tonight." And she records no
further information about
meetings until January 31,
1880 when she wrote, "Our
good Templar Lodge Dis-
banded tonight & sold off
their goods."

It is a mystery as to what
cause the demise of the East
Meredith Good Templar
Lodge. It seems unlikely that
it was an excess of drinking in
East Meredith. More likely it
was a clash of personalities.
Another mystery is Elizabeth
Hanford's March 19, 1880
entry where she wrote, "A
temperance lecture in
evening. They formed a new
Lodge." That is all she ever
says about this second lodge,
so we know nothing about it.
The East Meredith excite-
ment over temperance ref-
lects a national trend in the
1870s and 80s which saw an
increase in temperance pub-
ications. The East Meredith
lodge was probably more
important as a fraternal
organization rather than a
means to keep the village
population sober. In the end
something happened to tear
the organization apart. The
same cannot be said for the
national organization. On a
final note, you might be inter-
ested to know that the Inter-
national Organization of Good
Templars United States of
America is still in existence
today. And if you are inter-
ested in taking the pledge you
might want to visit their
website at www.iogt.us.

An Addition to the Hanford Mills Family

Hanford Mills Museum is
happy to announce the birth
of Aiden James to curator,
Suzanne Soden. He was born
on April 9, 2006. We guess we
must have teased Suzanne too
much about having her baby
during our open season in
May, so she had him a month
early.
All joking aside, Aiden's
arrival was a surprise. He
weighed 4 pounds, 11 ounces
at birth, but he's a healthy
little boy. Hopefully he'll
attend a special event or two
this summer so you can meet
him.

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