Historian's Report, September 2026

Upcoming Event: On Friday Oct 2nd there will be a family-friendly evening of Irish heritage, 7:00-8:00 pm at the Morgan Opera House: readings by author Cynthia Neale from her "Norah" novels on the tragedies and triumphs of an Irish immigrant during the Great Hunger, and her humorous cookbook "Laughter in the Kitchen;" The Crane Irish Dancers will perform interludes. Sponsored by the Aurora Ledyard Historical Society, on behalf of whom I am doing arrangements.

Publication in Press: Part 2 of "Paine's Creek: The Man Behind the Name," covering Edward Paine's Aurora homestead on the site of Gateway Park as it appears in the 1795 drawing by Benjamin Ledyard, will appear in the upcoming issue of *The Southern Cayuga Tribune*. In addition to his homestead businesses, including an interesting mechanism for grinding grain and a still, Paine served the new community in a number of capacities.

Research: In connection to the above work on Paine, I am researching his intriguing connections with the Native American trading network. This includes evidence of evading British tariffs on furs levied at Oswego, which remained held by the British after the Revolution until 1796.

A query regarding the Fifth Avenue 'Bus has become a research project, based on photographic evidence I obtained. This omnibus was a gift of Henry Wells to the College in the fall of 1868, most likely a custom order from the premier manufacturer, John Stephenson & Co. of New York (Jane Marsh Dieckmann's description of the omnibus as a "replica" is incorrect). Its frequent (and later ceremonial) use for students made it a well-known feature of the Village.

Preservation: A viable proposal for preservation of Chimney Corner, a critical element in the Integrity (per Secretary of the Interior's criteria) of Aurora's National Historic District, is in preparation.

Queries: Correspondence on Capt. John Burnham, ransomed from pirates for "his weight in solver," whose house was replaced by Robert Zabriskie (later Shakelton's Funeral Home, now Zabriskie House). Correspondence with the great-niece of Lucy Bowness. Assisting a resident doing research on a ca. 1900 store ledger.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Schwab, PhD
Village Historian