

# Colchester History Connections Newsletter

July 1, 2013 *Colchester Historical Society*, Box 112, Downsville, New York 13755  
Volume 3, Issue 2 Preserving the history of Downsville, Corbett, Shinhopple, Gregorytown, Horton and  
Cooks Falls

Website: [www.colchesterhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.colchesterhistoricalsociety.org)

Historical Society Room is open the third Saturday of each month 11 A.M.-3 P.M. and by  
appointment, please call Kay Parisi-Hampel, Town Historian at 607-363-7303.

## Displays

**Colchester Interpretive Signs** will be on display as a group in the Colchester Town Hall from June 1 to July 31<sup>st</sup>. Please stop by to see the sign samples and pick up a walking/driving tour map to tour all sign locations in Colchester Township. You can also purchase our Historic Interpretive Sign Booklet for \$5 which contains detailed driving directions and a copy of each of the signs.

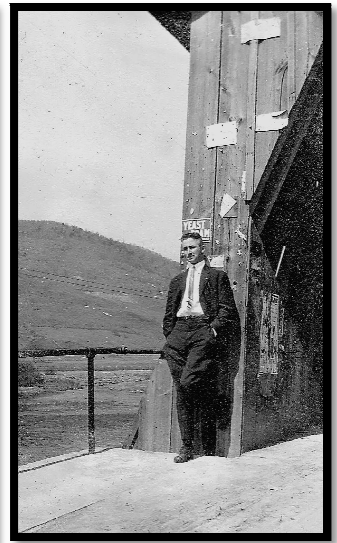
**Views from Under, On and Near the Downsville Covered Bridge** will be on display in the Colchester Town Hall from August 1 to September 30<sup>th</sup>. This is a fun and interesting mix of photographs from around the Downsville Covered Bridge from the 1890's until the turn of the century. The display will also include photographs of the other covered bridges that used to be in Colchester. The majority of the photographs has not been displayed or published by CHS, so stop by and reminisce about when you took a dip or went fishing under the Covered Bridge when you were a kid.



Early Bathers 1890's



A walk by the bridge 1913



John Oles, 1914

## Programs and Projects

### Historic Interpretive Sign Project

We are pleased that all twelve Interpretive Signs for the Colchester's Historical Driving Tour of the Towns that make up Colchester: Downsville, Colchester, Corbett, Shinhopple, Gregorytown, Horton and Cooks Falls have been installed! Please download our PDF version of the driving map from our website or you can pick up a map at the Colchester Town Hall, 72 Tannery Road, Downsville, NY or at the Colchester Chamber of Commerce Visitors Booth on River Street (Route 30) in Downsville, New York. Map boxes are also attached to the signs at the Colchester Visitors Booth, Covered Bridge Park in Downsville, at the Corbett Chimney Park in Corbett, at the Shinhopple Memorial Center in Shinhopple and on the Cooks Falls sign across from the Cooks Falls Fire Department on Cooks Falls Road. Please take the tour and visit all twelve signs to learn more about Colchester's rich heritage.



Driving time approximately 2 ½ hours.

Please email your feedback on this driving tour and our interpretive signs to:  
[info@colchesterhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@colchesterhistoricalsociety.org)

These historical interpretive signs were researched by Kay H. Parisi-Hampel, Colchester Township Historian and the sign boards were designed and based on the information and historic photographs in the Colchester Historical Society collection and with the assistance of the Historical Signage Committee: Anne Hood, Angela Walker, Arthur Merrill, Betty Vernold and Betty Watson. Travis Kinch Woodworx designed the sign frames and installed the signs.

Thank you to all the project was funders: the Colchester Historical Society, the O'Connor Foundation, Colchester Township, the Downsville Women's Club, Downsville Lions Club, Travis Kinch Woodworx and many individual donors.

## Fundraisers

### 2014 CHS Calendar

Our new 2014 calendar will go on sale on July 13<sup>th</sup> for \$15. This striking black and white calendar is 8 ½ x 11 inches with a spiral binding and tab for hanging; it contains fifteen pages with 58 photographs and postcards of Colchester Township. Many of the photographs have not been published before and it will be a wonderful souvenir or holiday gift. Copies will be available at the Colchester Town Hall, at the Downsville Diner and through mail order. Please check our website's Publication Page for an order form.

#### Colchester Historical Society 2014 Calendar



Boating under the Downsville Covered Bridge, 1890's

#### Pepacton Park Pop Up Market

Visit our table at the July 13<sup>th</sup> Market, 9 AM to 2 PM at the site of the old Town Garage. We will be selling our Bicentennial Book, Postcards, Interpretive Driving Tour Booklets, and chances on a beautiful hand crocheted 52" x 80" afghan made by CHS member Betty Vernold.

Come and see the variety of produce, flowers, food, craft items and information from local vendors.

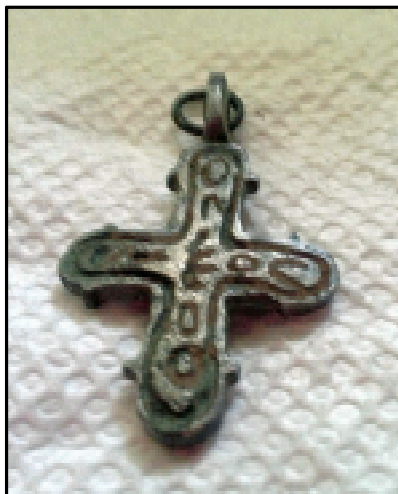
## History Mysteries

### Underwater Plank Bridges

We are looking for information on the old underwater plank bridges that cross the East Branch of the Delaware River in Colchester. Local lore says that farmers built and submerged them in order to move hay and lumber wagons, and livestock across the river without sinking into the mud. There are two of these plank bridges still in the river, one about five miles below Downsville at the Mattson farm and one that crosses from the Back River Road to Faber's Island in Shinhopple. We've been told they were made out of hemlock; there are spaces between the planks (we don't know if this is from age or if they were made that way), and we're not sure how they are secured to the bottom of the river. These underwater bridges have survived all our floods and they seem to be laid out diagonally across the river bed in the direction of the current. Have you ever heard of these underwater plank bridges?

### Campbell Mountain Find

The cross pictured below was found in an old house foundation on Campbell Mountain Road. It appears to be made of pewter and we haven't been able to identify the symbols or date the cross.



If you know anything about these mysteries please call Kay Parisi-Hampel at 607-363-7303.

**Please come and celebrate Colchester's history by joining us at our meetings:**

#### Meeting Dates for 2013

|                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Date change for July:</b>      | <b>July 23, 2013 at 10 A.M.</b>      |
| <b>August 27, 2013 at 7 P.M</b>   | <b>September 24, 2013 at 10 A.M.</b> |
| <b>October 29, 2013 at 7 P.M.</b> | <b>November 26, 2013 at 10 A.M.</b>  |
|                                   | <b>December 17, 2013 at 10 A.M.</b>  |