

# CORTLAND BREAKFAST ROTARY

05.07.2025

Cortlandbreakfastrotary.org

Wednesday

## **“THE COLLECTION’S THE THING!”**

### **Director Tabitha Scoville Recounts Cortland County Historical Society’s First 100 Years**



[See upcoming CCHS events here!](#)



*Cortland County Historical Society rooms at the County Courthouse.*

*[Image from the CCHS collections]*

Tabitha Scoville, director of the Cortland County Historical Society since 2019, joined the Cortland Breakfast Rotary Club this week to share the history of CCHS which is celebrating its centennial this year! On May 13, 1925, Jeannette Benton Sherwood organized a meeting, at the suggestion of State Historian Dr. A.C. Flick, to kick off the establishment of a new historical society. The organization that formed set out to find, collect, and preserve objects and records of historical interest to the Cortland County community. These events were backdropped by a growing national interest in preserving local history spurred on by the upcoming U.S. Sesquicentennial in 1926, an increase in hobby genealogists, recovery from WWI, and an urgency to collect the stories from surviving Civil War veterans.

The newly formed Cortland County Historical Society immediately set out on a number of projects, many led by municipal historians, that included an inventory of cemetery markers, and gathering early records to be transcribed and made readily accessible for research. Eventually, CCHS found space in the Cortland Free Library to serve as headquarters but quickly outgrew these and moved into the County Courthouse. Over the next several decades, the CCHS collections grew, and by the 1960s there were complaints that there was hardly room to host researchers.

(Continued page 4).

**President:** Jackie Burke

**Front Desk:** Jim Dempsey,  
Doug Withey

**Thought of the day:**  
Mike Catalano

**Birthdays:**

Sandy Samson- May 3

Joann Sautter- May 4

Terry Cahill- May 9

**Anniversaries:**

Don Richards (5/1/1992)

**Attendance: 25**

**Zoom: 1**

**Guests:**

Tabitha Scoville

Tara Larrabee

Nishi Kadvani

**Raffle winner:**

Dianne Higgins

## Announcements:

- May 15-17- signups to help with the Red Dragon Reuse collecting event.
- June 1- Rotary Community Day; ride, run, or walk! Then gather at the Homer Community Building for food, music, and activities!
- June 19- McGruff Golf Tournament- accepting team sign-ups.
- June 25- Paul Harris Dinner \$35/person

## SEEKING FUTURE CHAIR FOR YOUTH EXCHANGE COMMITTEE



Contact Karen DeWitt:  
[kldewitt29@yahoo.com](mailto:kldewitt29@yahoo.com)

## Rotary Community Day

Sunday June 1st

Ride, run, or walk!



[More info here](#)

*The Cortland Breakfast Rotary Club Presents:*  
**34th McGruff Golf Tournament**

*June 19, 2025*



[Register to play here!](#)

## Happy Dollars



**Conrad Janke:** For our speaker, attended memorial for Pastor Pete, wife had comments about the dirty hoe award displayed on his mantle.

**Bob Martin:** Corn Ducky Derby a success, raised over \$40,000 for youth groups in the county, much of it raised by the groups themselves!

**Ed Finkbeiner:** Happy to be here; Homer Police Dept. zombie shoot-off.

**Mike May:** Kids loved the YWCA summer camp growing up.

**Matt Banazek:** Selling St. Anthony's Festival raffle tickets, \$10/tickets with multiple chances to win.

**Dianne Higgins:** Grandson undergoing surgery, hoping all goes well.

**Jackie Burke:** Went to a concert at the Landmark to see Jason Bonham's Led Zeppelin Experience.

## THE BIG CHECK GOES TO THE YWCA IN SUPPORT OF THE SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM!



"Running from June 30 to August 22, our summer camp is an eight-week program located at the YWCA. With many planned activities to fill the days, your child can explore new interests and make lasting memories with friends. We've been able to increase our licensing capacity this summer, offering more families and children a safe recreational experience at our main facility.

Campers will build community, go on adventures, make memories and play all summer long! This year, our campers will explore all of the local resources and treasures right here in our Cortland community like the library, the fire station, local parks, Splat Sumthin', and more. Counselors will lead the campers in scavenger hunts, mystery solving games, and get them involved in performing arts and we'll welcome a magician and Dan the Snake Man. Campers will also get to take two bus trips this summer to visit Chenango Valley State Park and Filmore Glen."



**CORTLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S FIRST 100 YEARS CONT'D**

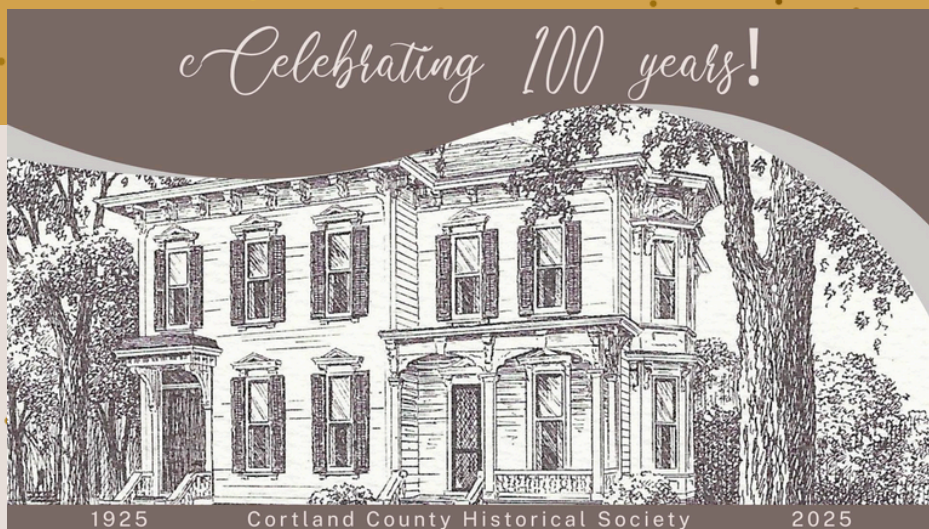
To remedy this need, John Chester Birdlebough made a gift of the home built by his great-grandparents, James & Jane Suggett, to the Society in 1964. The 1882 Italianate home was dedicated as the new headquarters for CCHS on April 8, 1967. Needing even more space for the expanding research collection, CCHS built a library addition completed in 1976. The Suggett House Museum & Kellogg Memorial Research Center continue to serve CCHS today.

From the beginning, the mission of CCHS has been the care and sharing of the collections entrusted to them. The research library contains genealogical and research resources perhaps not found anywhere else, and Scoville reminded the group that "Ancestry.com does not have everything." And yet, the collection is "more than just things," but is made up of pieces of the lives of those who lived, loved, and worked in Cortland County.

The collections seen in the museum (to which admission is free!) are just the tip of the iceberg, and CCHS has been striving to take advantage of all the various ways it can to share more of the stories of Cortland County- via social media, local news publications, etc.- all in ways that maximize preservation.

Thanks to the secret sauce of a clear mission and vision, enacted over the years by the enterprising volunteers, staff, membership, and board members, CCHS has remained a stable and steady resource to the community, and continues to innovate and grow!

The Society is celebrating its landmark birthday a variety of ways this year, so be sure to check out what's going on!



The Cortland County  
Historical Society is  
celebrating 100 years!



**What:** Centennial Spectacular Open House

**When:** Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup>, 12pm-5pm

**Where:** 25 Homer Avenue, Cortland  
(additional parking at Homer Ave. United Methodist  
Church parking lot)