



Award Received

On May 5, Keith Bott went to Alexandria Bay, NY to accept a 1990 Private Sector Award for Hanford Mills Museum from the Preservation League of New York State. These annual awards recognize exemplary projects and organizations which have demonstrated committed action to preserve and protect New York State's irreplaceable historic resources. The Preservation League, an Albany based state wide membership organization, is dedicated to protecting the architectural heritage of New York State. We have hung our award in the Museum Gift Shop. Take a look at it next time you pass through.

Staff Notes

Two curatorial assistants, Cathy Bohls and Patrick Reynolds (who will also be working as an interpreter), have been funded by this year's NYSCLA collections management grant. They are joined by Ruth McVay, a volunteer student intern from the State University College at Oneonta. Together they will work on the collections this summer. Cleaning, storage and cataloging are their top priorities. The museum has a large and varied collection that needs constant care and organization.

Our Mill Foreman, Steve Eastman, will be leaving Hanford Mills by the end of June to return to his home state of Maine. Steve's experience and dedication will be missed. So will Tom and Jake, his team of Percherons.

By the time you receive this newsletter John Staicer and Caroline Meek will have attended this year's annual conference of the Association of Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums. John will be presenting a paper on mill interpretation, and Caroline will be participating in an historical cooking demonstration.

The next time you visit, say hello to our new interpreters Ken Winsor (our first lead interpreter in 1984) and Todd Pym. Ken Graig and Nancy Baldwin will also be returning, and Bill McNiven and Margaret Halpin will be substituting when needed.



MILLWORK is published by Hanford Mills Museum and distributed free to members.

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Ken Kelso Honored

May 20 was our Community Open House. Besides showing off the John Hanford House and some newly installed woodworking machines in the Mill, the highlight of the day was a plaque presentation honoring Kenneth S. Kelso for saving the Hanford Mills site for future generations.

Back in 1965, when the Pizza Brothers were having a going out of business auction, Ken Kelso saved a number of the original Hanford machines, including the water wheel. He couldn't bear to see the wheel turned into scrap metal. Soon after, he also bought the mill buildings and site, and for the next seven years he continued collecting for the mill. In 1973, recognizing that he could no longer run the site as a museum on his own, a non-profit corporation was formed founding Hanford Mills Museum. You can take a look at Ken's award which now hangs in the Museum Gift Shop next to the preservation award.

Hanford Furniture Donated

Grace and Ron Kent, who own the house that used to belong to Horace Hanford, have made a generous donation, and have given the museum Horace Hanford's five piece parlor suite and his upright piano. The parlor suite includes a sofa, rocker, arm chair, and 2 reception chairs. This set and the beautiful upright piano have been placed in the John Hanford house. The piano is especially useful in the house, since John Hanford also owned such an instrument.

Both the Mill and the John Hanford House were featured stops on this year's Delaware County Historical Association Historic House Tour on June 16th. Since the house has not yet been fully restored, it was presented as a work in progress.

The museum has a list of what was in the house in the 1920s and 1930s, including a cookstove, oil stove, morris chair, lamps, and other pieces of furniture. Please call if you think you might have something to donate for the house.



Keep on Trucking

Remember our 1947 Ford Truck donated by Virginia Hughes? Well, volunteers Don Lane and Bob Hunt have got it fired up and running. The brakes still need to be repaired, but the engine runs quite well now that a few important parts have been replaced and the gas tank has been sealed. Don and Bob have once again proven their talent for restoring aging engines. They were the volunteer team that restored the 1910 Fairbanks Engine and the E. G. Bernard Dynamo that was used by the Hanfords to light their mill and much of the village of East Meredith.

What's in a Name?

Today, D.J. Hanford is remembered as a mill owner, but in his day, he used many titles. In this census year it is informative to look at former censuses. Both the U.S. and state census records show an interesting history of D.J.'s various occupations.

The 1850 national census was the first to list each person's name and occupation. In it, at the age of 16, D.J. was listed as a farmer. He lived with his grandfather, Josiah Hanford. Five years later, the state census shows that D.J. had moved in with Andrew Brown. Local history says that D.J. apprenticed to Brown as a carpenter, and the census supports this. Andrew Brown named himself a cabinet maker, and D.J. is called a carpenter.

By the 1860 census, there had been major changes in D.J.'s life. He had married in 1858, his father had died in 1859, and in 1860 he bought the mill and a farm. That year D.J. called himself a "mechanic". A Webster's Dictionary from that era defines mechanic as "a person whose occupation is to construct ... goods, wares, instruments, and the like." D.J. had worked on farms most of his life, and his use of the term "mechanic" may point to the excitement of owning a mill. Perhaps this excitement was quickly tempered, for by the 1865 census D.J. called himself a carpenter and joiner, less lofty terms.

By 1870, and again in 1875, with a carpenter and sawyer boarding in his house, D.J. again called himself a farmer, a designation that he had not used for 20 years. With experienced employees, he had more time to spend improving his farm. At this time he started an orchard, chose his crops, and built up a dairy herd.

Unfortunately, the next census that lists occupations is nearly 20 years later. In the 1892 census (a replacement for the 1890 census destroyed in a fire) D.J. finally called himself a miller. By this time one of his children was old enough to run the farm, and D.J. could spend more time with his rapidly expanding mill business. There was no 1895 census, and then in January of 1899, D.J. died after being an invalid for at least two years.

What is in a name? D.J.'s choice of terms for the census seems to reflect his situation in life and the evolution of his farm and mill. His choice of title might also reveal how he viewed himself.

Is This Your Last?

Don't let this be your last MILLWORK! May 1st is the start of our membership year, but we still haven't heard from all our past members. There is still time for you to renew your membership, just check the category of your choice and return this coupon to the museum.

___ Student	\$ 5
___ Individual	\$10
___ Joint (2 persons)	\$15
___ Family	\$20

Memberships run from May 1st to the next May 1st. Please make your check payable to Hanford Mills Museum and mail to: P.O. Box 99, East Meredith, NY 13757. For more membership information call (607) 278-5744.

Interpreters at the museum often tell visitors, "D.J. Hanford bought the mill and a farm in 1860." The mill is described in detail, but the farm remains in the shadowy background. For many years the mill has been our main focus, but the farm was under Hanford family ownership for just as many years as the mill, both being sold in 1945. In recent years, research has taught us much about the Hanfords as farmers.

D.J. bought his farm in 1860, but our first detailed record of it under his ownership comes from the 1865 State Census. It is listed as a farm of \$1000 value, with 6 improved acres and 10 bushels of potatoes harvested. Not the most impressive of farms, but its size is understandable considering D.J. also owned a mill, and the Civil War had just ended. A mere five years later, the 1870 census shows a dramatic change; the cash value of the farm had tripled. This is not surprising since D.J. increased the improved acreage to 30 acres. It also looks as if he was experimenting with what his farm could best produce. In 1865 he only grew potatoes, but by 1870 he grew Indian corn, oats, buckwheat, potatoes, hay, and his two cows produced 200 pounds of butter.

The 1875 census shows that D.J.'s farm had stabilized. The improved acreage stayed about the same, but the number of plowed acres decreased. This indicates that while D.J. was not adding acreage, he was improving the output of the farmland he did own, choosing one or two crops that were best suited for his farm. D.J.'s apple orchard had also begun to produce, and he increased his dairy herd by two.

In 1874, when D.J. had three cows, he produced 400 pounds of butter. An 1898 history of the county states that a good cow could produce 100 pounds in a season, so he seems to have been doing well. Through the 1880s and 90s, D.J. bought more parcels of land, some of which were used for woodlots and grazing. D.J.'s 1895 account book for butter sales shows that between 50 and 100 pounds of butter were being sold each week, indicating that his herd size had increased, and possibly that his stock had been improved. His farm illustrates the shift from general farm production to the dairy production Delaware County is known for.

By the 1890s, D.J. let one of his sons run the farm. There is some confusion as to which son, though. The 1892 census lists D.J. and his son, Horace, as millers. John is not listed with any occupation (though he is 20), and Will is listed as a farmer. Other than this census, John is most often associated with the farm. In 1896, John bought the meat market in town, an ideal business to run in conjunction with a dairy farm, and in 1897 he is known to have had a barn built.



The first demonstrations of the latest agricultural machinery usually drew a crowd of interested bystanders. Horace Hanford was often on hand to record the scene with his camera.

When D.J. died in 1899, his will left the use of his home to his wife, money to John, and everything else to Horace and Will. John sold his meat market, borrowed money from his stepmother, and bought the Hanford farm from the estate's executors in 1900.

From 1900 to his death in 1938, John Hanford remained a farmer. Records centering on John are scant, but those few tell us a bit about his farm. John owned a relatively small farm of about 68 acres. By 1925, 55% of New York state farms were between 101 and 180 acres. The only record of his herd size comes from his 1938 probate inventory. At that time, he had 16 cows which produced milk to sell. The average herd size for a 100 acres or less was 14.6 cows. That same inventory also tells us he owned a team of horses and a bull. While John sometimes had a part-time hired hand, he probably never had full-time help. John used labor-saving machinery to help him get the work done. At his death, he had a milking machine (purchased in 1921), a half interest in a grain drill, an ensilage cutter, a sulky plow, a hay rake, a mowing machine, two cultivators, a harrow and a walking plow. The inventory also suggests that he grew potatoes and corn and harvested hay. The ground floor of his wagon house is fitted out as a piggery. The farm also has a chicken coop and a smoke house for preserving meat.

The John Hanford House is another interesting part of the farm and tells us more about the Hanford farm life. From 1900 to around 1909, John and his family lived in his father's home, which he had purchased along with the farm. Sarah Hanford, his stepmother, was living in a house on another of D.J.'s properties. In 1909-10 John had his father's old house

moved 100 feet to the north and built a new home just south of it. John rented the old house and moved into his modern house (presently owned by the Museum). While John's house is plain, it is larger than his father's and is built of quality material. It is based on the pattern books of the period, not on the building traditions of earlier East Meredith houses. John was the third Hanford to build a new home, starting with Horace in 1897 and his sister, Libbie in 1900. John's house was similar to many new houses in the village but unlike the average farm house of the period. Though John's family had an outside privy, the house did have a bathroom (a room with a bath but no toilet), running water in the kitchen, central heating and electricity - all of which were unusual for a New York farm house at that time. John's home was larger and much better equipped than the average farm house. It is an excellent example of the middle class farmer's house after the turn-of-the-century.

After John died in 1938, his wife, Lizzie, hired a dairyman who ran the farm for her. John's only surviving son, Ferris, was a professional and not interested in the farm. Our last record of the farm, a 1940 dairy farm inspection report, tells us that she owned 14 cows. After its sale in 1945, it is unlikely that the land was farmed to any great extent.

In 1860, D.J. Hanford bought a mill and a farm. While he expanded the mill, he was also expanding the farm. When two of his sons took over the mill business, the third son took over the farm business. Then in 1945, both the mill and the farm were sold. For 85 years the Hanfords were supported by a mill and a farm.

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