

Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian
11-3-83



Vol. IV

No. 44

MEET DELIA (DEE) ROBINSON DEPUTY HISTORIAN, TOWN OF GAINES

Dee Robinson, Deputy Historian for the Town of Gaines grew up in North East, Pa. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Lake are currently residents of Spencerport, N.Y. Dee graduated from North East High School in 1965 and Clarion State Teachers College at Clarion, Pa. in 1969. It was during that year in which she traveled extensively throughout Europe, visiting eleven different countries as well as taking four courses at the University of Salzburg in Austria. She has also traveled around the United States and Mexico. Dee took her graduate work at Geneseo and is certified as a media specialist. Her first job was working as a high school librarian for the Wayne Central School District at Ontario Center, New York from 1969-1974.

In 1973 she married William Robinson of Gouverneur, N.Y. who is employed at Eastman Kodak as an assistant conveyance technician. Their four children are: Bill, Christine, and twins Aaron and Alex. In 1976 the Robinsons moved to Childs upon buying a cobblestone house located on Ridge Road. Immediately Dee became interested in the history of the house and started checking the deeds, census and old maps for information. She said, "In order to find out about one piece of property, you had to find out about the one next door." This led her to converse with older residents and very soon she became fascinated in not just the history of their cobblestone homes, but the history of Childs. Before she knew it she began assembling historical data which had never before been collected. With the Cobblestone Museum in the neighborhood, Dee found people of like interests and soon became a valuable volunteer. In December 1981 she was appointed to the Cobblestone Board of Directors to fill the unexpired term of a resignee. It was her immediate feeling that the Cobblestone Society should perform some sort of service in line of information for cobblestone home owners. As a result, in early 1982 the Cobblestone Resource Center was established with Dee Robinson being appointed resource director. This Resource Center at the Cobblestone Church is the only one of its kind where information is collected and disseminated about cobblestone architecture in general as well as specific buildings. In fact, a file exists for almost every one of the 700 or so cobblestone buildings in the United States and Canada.

Simultaneously with this, Dee was also appointed Deputy Town Historian by the Gaines Town Board in January 1982. It is the first and only such position created by a township in Orleans County. In fulfilling this job, Dee assists the Town Historian J. Howard Pratt with whom she had voluntarily worked prior to her appointment. This past summer they have updated a listing of burials in Gaines cemeteries and Dee has indexed the Holland Laid Company Sales in Gaines. Through her efforts a showcase displaying Gaines memorabilia is now located at the Town Hall. She also hopes to develop a repository for Gaines archival material. Along with this, Dee is co-chairman for the 1984 Historical Gaines Jubilee. Much of her research of Childs and Gaines will be published at that time. She is currently seeking more information on Eagle Harbor, Five Corners and the eastern part of the Town of Gaines.

Aside from her official duties, Dee is a member of the Orleans County Historical Association and the Municipal Historians District 8. Recently she attended a Municipal Historians meeting in Rome, N.Y. Dee says that if it were not for her husband's aunt, Phyline Gilbow who assists with many household duties, she would otherwise be unable to involve herself in as many community projects.