



# Deerpark Diary

Town of Deerpark Museum, 1863 School House

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## Then and Now

Time changes many things and fortunately there are memories in the form of old photos and records to preserve events from the past. The Deerpark Historian's Office and the Museum Committee members are grateful for the extensive collections that have been preserved for posterity. This issue of Deerpark Diary uses these records to explore past events and provides current documents to record the changes that have taken place.

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### 1863 Huguenot School

#### Then

The Huguenot School was built next to the Delaware and Hudson Canal in 1863 in the midst of the American Civil War. In the building's lifetime it has had a number of different names: School District No. 3; Huguenot School; Upper Huguenot School.

On May 8, 1863, William

and Mary Cuddeback conveyed the school property to Peter B. Van Etten, Henry B. Swartwout and Peter D. Swartwout, trustees of School District No. 3.

The school was built of bricks made from clay found along the banks of the Neversink River. There was one room. Windows were shuttered from the inside. Students were called to class by a bell in the bell tower. Since there was no indoor plumbing, a pump at a neighbor's house supplied water which students had to carry to the school. An outhouse was located at the back of the school. A wood-burning stove supplied heat as needed. Nine blackboards mounted on the outer walls were necessary for students from the different grades to complete their studies. As was common in the 19th century, the school housed grades one through eight. One teacher taught all eight grades.

In the 1930s, a wall dividing the building into two separate



*Huguenot Schoolhouse ca 1930s*

classrooms was built. One side was for grades three and four. The other side was for grades five and six. Two teachers were hired to teach in each of the classrooms. Central heat and indoor bathrooms modernized the building.

#### Now

Today the building is known as the 1863 Schoolhouse, Town of Deerpark Museum.



*Town of Deerpark Museum*

In 1961, after school district consolidation, the school was closed. The building reverted to the Town of Deerpark and was used as a social hall for the Huguenot Fire Department for ten years.

Thereafter the building was boarded up until 1996.

At that time, members of the Deerpark Bicentennial Commission suggested to the Town Board that the building be restored and used as a community building in celebration of the Town's 1998 Bicentennial Celebration. With this approval, funding from grants secured through the offices of Senator Charles D. Cook, Senator John J. Bonacic and a Community Development Grant, the building was renovated.

Many volunteers worked to complete the interior restoration. The work took three years longer than originally planned. In 2001 the building which now houses both the Deerpark Historian's Office and the Town of Deerpark Museum was dedicated with a well-attended Open-House Celebration.

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### Huguenot Airport Then

The Huguenot Airport was located at latitude 41° 24' 26" N longitude 74° 38' 35" W with an elevation of approximately 460'. It opened ca 1931 with a 2000' unpaved NE/SW runway. Two hangars were built on the south-east side.

The first designation as a commercial/municipal airport is

depicted on the November 1938 New York Sectional Map.



*Air Field  
1940s-Early 1960s*

During World War II the Civil Air Patrol was actively involved with reports from this field. The purpose of the CAP was to mobilize the nation's civilian aviation for national defense service.

According to local pilots the field was still in use during the 1960s, however a 1968 aerial photo shows that houses were being built on the northern end of the runway. The hangars were still intact at that time. The exact date when the hangars were removed is unknown.

For additional airport history, please read the March 2011 issue of the Deerpark Diary.

*Aerial Photos courtesy of  
:Leonard Mercillott*

### Now

Once construction of homes began on this property, roads were built and a housing development expanded to over one hundred homes.

Streets have names such as Airport Road, Hangar Drive and Taxi Drive.

*Houses  
1960s-  
Present*



**Check us out on Face Book  
The Town of Deerpark  
1863 Schoolhouse Museum**



## Sparrowbush Engine Company Then

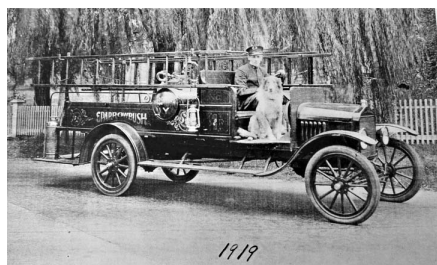
Excerpts from "A Short History of the Sparrowbush Engine Company, Inc."

"The Sparrowbush Engine Company, Inc. was organized April 24, 1917.



*Hand-Pulled Two Wheeled  
Chemical Truck*

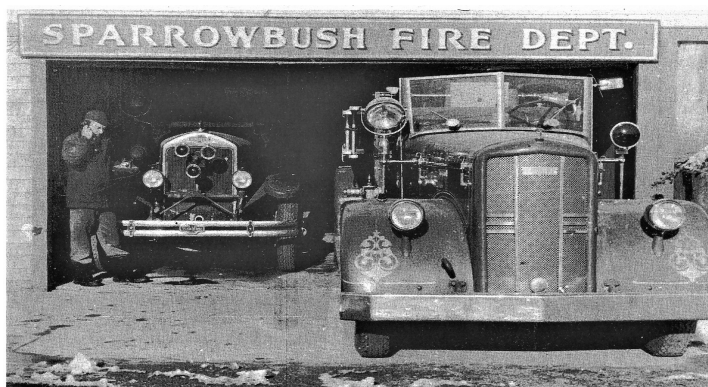
"The first fire-fighting equipment was a hand-pulled two wheeled chemical truck with a capacity of approximately 250 gallons. The water in the tank contained soda with a bottle of acid attached to the top of the tank. When needed at a fire, the acid was released by a lever and mixed with the soda and water.



*Ford Truck*

"A Ford truck was purchased in 1919 to replace the chemical truck.

"In the early 1920s, the Town Hall, as it was then called, was acquired from the Hammond Estate and transferred to the fire district. The basement was excavated under the building for a truck house and meeting room.



RECEIVING END: Fireman Robert Jenner takes Pete's call at Sparrowbush Firehouse, 1958

"The first alarm system consisted of two railroad engine rims or tires. The rims were suspended between two posts and struck with a large hammer in the event of a fire. In later years, an electric siren was installed.

"The Company's Ladies Auxiliary was organized in 1928.

"The department was known as the Hammond Chemical Company (1920 to 1947). It changed to the Sparrowbush Fire Company and incorporated under the name of the Sparrowbush Engine Company, Inc (1965)."

## Now

"In 1967, land was purchased for the construction of a new firehouse on Main St.; completed and accepted by the Board of Fire Commissioners in May 1970 and dedicated in May, 1971.

"A sub-station was built in 1990 on Route 42, three and a half miles north of the Main St. firehouse.



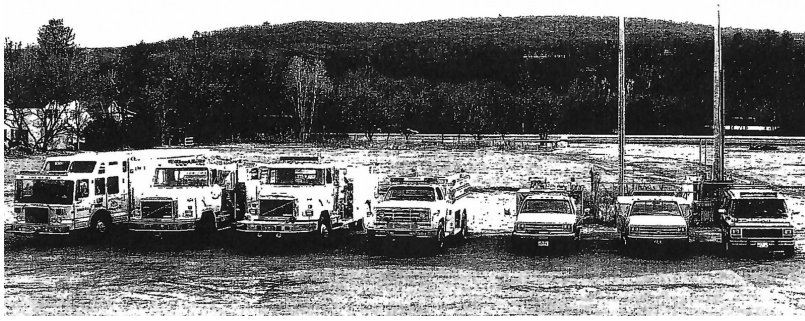
*Route 42*

"An addition was added to the rear of the Main St. firehouse in 1992 to furnish offices for the Fire Commissioners and Chief. Another addition was added to the east end of the building in 1995 to enlarge the dining room and kitchen and provide handicap accessible restrooms.

"Today the residents of the Fire District are protected by six pieces of fully equipped mobile equipment: a 1989 Pumper/Tanker; 1990 Tanker; 1991 Rescue Truck; 1993 Mini-pumper;



*Main Street*



*Present-day Fire Fighting Equipment*

1993 Fire Police van and a 1995 Pumper. For river rescues, there is a utility truck that pulls a fully equipped rescue boat accompanied by fully trained and qualified divers. A trailer equipped with special fire-fighting equipment is available for brush fires.

"The Fire Company is staffed with several fully qualified EMTs. Member spend many hours training and attending State mandated schools every year to stay active in the emergency response world of today."

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### **Elks Club Then**



*Elks Lodge 1908*

The Benevolent Protective Order of Elks is a fraternal organization which provides programs aimed at raising funds for public service, charities, and youth activities. The first order was established February 16, 1868. There were appeals to establish additional lodges. In response the Elks asked the New York State legislature for a charter with the power to establish local Lodges anywhere in the United States. This request was approved and the Grand Lodge Charter was issued as New York Lodge No. 1 on March 10, 1871.

On January 3, 1901 the Deer Park Elks Lodge #645 was chartered and sixty-five men were initiated. This event took place at the Odd Fellows Hall, Port Jervis and was followed by a celebratory feast at the Delaware House. The lodge was known as the Deer Park Elks Lodge from Jan 3rd to September 9th 1901. On September 16th, the records changed over to the Port Jervis Elks, meeting at the Odd Fellows Hall from 1901-1908. In 1907 a building committee was formed. During April 1908 funds were raised for a new building. The corner stone was laid and expenses approved in September. In October furnishings for the new building were purchased.

## **Now**

In 1992, having outgrown the original Pike Street building, the Elks Lodge bought Karsten's Inn on Route 6 in the Town of Deerpark.



*Karsten's Inn*

Women were permitted to join the organization in 1992. The larger facilities provide a well-maintained venue for special occasions, a pavilion, a lake, as well as plenty of parking.



*Elks Lodge Former Karsten's Inn*

An interesting observation is that the organization was chartered as the Deer Park Elks lodge in Port Jervis in 1901. The same organization is the Port Jervis Elks lodge now located in the Town of Deerpark.



*Former Elks  
Lodge  
Building  
Now  
Port Jervis  
Community  
Center*