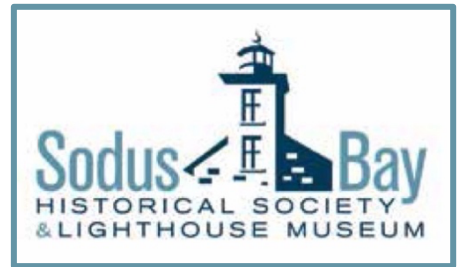


SBHS Newsletter

Winter 2024



Sodus Bay Lighthouse Museum tower windows get a fresh look!

Thank you to Brandon Fleishour of The Old House Company, Mount Morris, NY,
for his craftsmanship in the restoration of the 1871 windows.

Brandon began work on the tower window restoration project this past fall,
completing it in December. Dave and Sue Williamson initiated
a matching challenge and together with SBHS members raised \$24,000 for this project!

Photos courtesy Terry Clewell and Donna Stern

Letter from the President



Sodus Bay Historical Society & Lighthouse Museum

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nonprofit organization. In addition to
grants, SBHS funding comprises donations
and membership dues, which are tax
deductible as allowed by law.



Welcome Winter!

The lighthouse was officially put to bed for the season at the end of October. As we are in the midst of our quiet season, taking a step back, we evaluate our past season and look forward to what is ahead. In that process, the Lighthouse has been anything but quiet.

We are full steam ahead on planning our Total Solar Eclipse Gathering “Fun” Raiser. This is a once in lifetime event not to be missed since the next total solar eclipse won’t be in our area again until 2144! That is a true statement!

The Sodus Bay Lighthouse staff and SBHS directors are planning a fun afternoon for the Solar Eclipse on April 8, 2024! The museum will be open that day. There will be food trucks, some special surprises, and merchandise! Totality begins at Sodus Point at 3:21 PM. Totality will last 3 minutes and 22 seconds – being one of the longest lasting stretches of totality in all of Western New York.

Tickets went on sale 2 weeks ago, and we have sold tickets from as far away as North Carolina. We would love our members to be part of this experience.

The lighthouse tower windows have been completed, as seen from the photos on this newsletter’s cover. The windows, restored by local artisan, Brandon Fleishour of The Old House Company, Mount Morris, NY, are beautifully done and historically accurate.

A major effort is underway to increase our social media presence. Harrison VanDeWalle is heading this up. Harrison has reported that our Facebook and Instagram accounts have increased tenfold since he began posting during the last few weeks. It is important to us to keep our members and interested folks informed about what is happening at the Lighthouse Museum. The posts also include historical information about the lighthouse and the surrounding area. Please take a peek.

Keeping technology updated is very important to historical societies in archiving and keeping track of growing membership. We are preparing and looking forward to updating our computer system and website within the next few weeks.

For our “quiet season” - we have been busy!

I look forward to seeing many of you as we reopen for a new season and at the Total Solar Eclipse!

Sincerely,

Donna F. Stern

Donna F. Stern
President of the Board of Trustees

Letter from the Executive Director

Greetings,

Winter is lovely here at the Sodus Bay Lighthouse. I love to watch the way the color of the water changes on an hourly basis. It is such an inspiring place for me. I hope you all had a great holiday and are looking forward to another healthy and safe year.

We have a very exciting year coming up, starting with our Eclipse “Fun-Raiser” on April 8th here at the Lighthouse. As many of you know, it will be many years before we see another Total Solar Eclipse in this area. We are planning an extraordinary event, and we hope that you can join us.

July 7th begins our concert series, continuing each Sunday from 2-4 pm through September 1st. On Friday evening, July 5th, we will be hosting the Finger Lakes Symphony Orchestra on the lawn from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Our Sodus Bay Lighthouse 5k is scheduled for July 6th. We are also planning to bring back our Art Show on Saturday and Sunday, July 6th and 7th. All these events are happening here at the Sodus Bay Lighthouse. Our 2024 Golf Tournament will take place on Monday, August 12th.

Please follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information. Additionally, you will see stories and tidbits about our area's history on Facebook and Instagram. Thank you to SBHS board member, Harrison VanDeWalle, for taking on this social media extravaganza. It is much appreciated.

As we look to the spring opening of the Sodus Bay Lighthouse & Museum, we are currently in the planning and realizing stages of some changes to our exhibits. Gearing up for all the events to come for the summer season and making the museum a fresh and interesting experience for visitors is a vital part of this time of year. I look forward to seeing you very soon!

Sincerely,

Elaine Comarella

Elaine Comarella
Sodus Bay Lighthouse Museum Executive Director



Mission of the Sodus Bay Historical Society

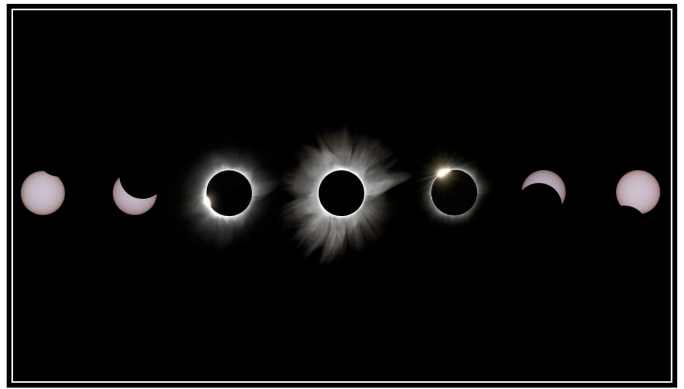
Founded in 1972, the mission of the Sodus Bay Historical Society is to:

- collect, preserve, and exhibit records, writings, historical items, and artifacts.
- preserve and disseminate information in the field of history connected with the Sodus Bay area.
- serve the educational and cultural needs of the Sodus Bay area.
- support the preservation of historic structures, sites, and monuments.
- maintain a museum in the historic lighthouse, with an emphasis on local maritime history.

A SAMPLING OF PAST TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSES

COMPILED BY ROSA FOX

Are You an Umbraphile? A person who chases eclipses - a shadow lover? Umbraphiles often travel to eclipse locations and use an assortment of tools such as solar viewers aka eclipse glasses, and telescopes to view the sun.



During a total solar eclipse, the Moon comes between the Earth and the Sun, blocking the view of the sun. This happens around the globe every year and a half – or so. Living within the eclipse path, a thin band of about 100 miles, pretty much assures folks of experiencing the total eclipse. If you don't live in that path and are an umbraphile, then you need to go to the eclipse. Many umbraphiles will be converging in Upstate NY to witness the total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024. And many umbraphiles will already be here – and ready.

What is so special about a total solar eclipse? First of all, though solar eclipses appear across the globe, every 18 months or so, it usually takes around 100 years for a total eclipse to return to the same region. The last total eclipse here along the south shore of Lake Ontario was January 24, 1925. The next one visible in this area will be 2079 (a partial solar eclipse for us) and in 2144, Sodus Bay will be at the edge of totality for that eclipse. Check the projection map out.

<https://eclipsewise.com/solar/SEprime/2101-2200/SE2144Oct26Tprime.html>

Having been viewed over history as omens of bad things to come, acts of gods, and sources of fear and wonderment, solar eclipses are really quite safe, as well as captivating. They have provided opportunity for scientific discovery, technological advances, and more. A few solar eclipses have been unique to American history. The following is just a small sampling for you of relatively local eclipse historical events.



Democrat & Chronicle 1/25/1925

99 Years ago - January 24, 1925. As noted in the heading, the Rochester vicinity on the day of the eclipse was overshadowed with clouds. However, the color spectacle viewed in the early morning hours was a show beyond words – “. . . those who were up early and those who stayed through the period when the transit of the sun and moon was taking place saw a spectacle of color and play. . . . The sun came up over the eastern horizon behind a bank of lilac gray clouds, that split under its rays and turned to cerise

along the edges. For half an hour at least, there was a kaleidoscopic change of color from purple grays, evening reds and their tints and combinations, to bright yellows and orange, an ever altering composition that would have made happy the heart of an artist.” [Democrat & Chronicle 1/25/1925]



Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa
 Wikimedia Commons
<https://bit.ly/3vA1N7A>

Tecumseh's Eclipse - June 16, 1806. Ohio had just become a state in 1803. Indiana was close to obtaining statehood. In this region, the Shawnee Nation was struggling with the US movement westward. Two Shawnee brothers, Chief Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa - known as "The Prophet," ran into conflict with William Henry Harrison (future US President) in trying to protect their homeland from the encroaching American colonists. Harrison challenged Tenskwatawa to prove his prophetic powers – in that he "cause the Sun to stand still or the Moon to alter its course, the rivers to cease to flow or the dead to rise from their graves."

Tenskwatawa relayed that the Great Spirit was angry at Harrison stating, "Fifty days from this day there will be no cloud in the sky. Yet, when the Sun has reached its highest point, at that moment will the Great Spirit take it into her hand and hide it from us. The darkness of night will thereupon cover us, and the stars will shine round about us. The birds will roost, and the night creatures will awaken and stir."

There was an eclipse on Tenskwatawa's projected day. Harrison's attempt to interfere with the Shawnee failed – that day. Tenskwatawa's prediction gained the Prophet and Tecumseh many Native America followers. In 1808, the brothers and their disciples moved to Indiana, founding a settlement - Prophetstown. Harrison continued his path of encroachment across Ohio and into Indiana. Eventually, at an encounter in Prophetstown, Harrison and his troops destroyed the settlement.

During the Revolutionary War - October 27, 1780. Harvard professor of mathematics and natural philosophy, Samuel Williams, led an expedition to observe a total eclipse at Penobscot Bay, Maine. A special agreement was secured with the British to allow the expedition to work without fear of attack, as the observation point was located behind enemy lines. Due to reasons, still unclear to this day - be it miscalculation or eclipse anomaly, Williams and his team did not find themselves in the path of totality. They were slightly east of the path, which did cross the mainland. This event was, interestingly, the beginning of Solar Eclipse Chasing in America! The first umbraphiles!

Haudenosaunee Peace Treaty – 1142. The founding of one of the oldest democracies, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, may have occurred during a year in which a total (or near total) eclipse occurred - dating possibly as far back as an eclipse in August 1142. The thought of many researchers is that this eclipse would have been in totality in the area of the peace treaty, the ratification council meeting for the treaty, held at Ganondagan in Victor.

Will you be an umbraphile – at least for a day?

2024 Eclipse Local Resource:

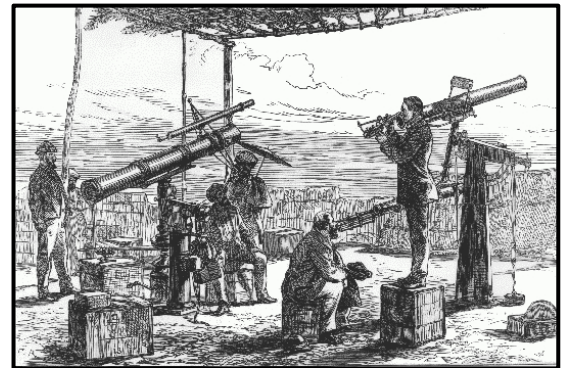
<https://rochestereclipse2024.org/nys-facts/>

Solar Eclipses in History:

<https://www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/solar-eclipse-history.html>

Check for Wayne County Solar Events:

<https://www.waynecountytourism.com/solar-eclipse-event-directory/>



Astronomers Waiting for the Eclipse
 The Illustrated London News,
 Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Post-Civil War Local Reflections Across the Waters

Part II – Setting the Stage for Local Encampments

Rosa Fox

Post-Civil War Local Reflections, Part I, published in the SBHS Summer 2023 Newsletter, recognized the dedication of a historic marker honoring General Gordon Granger in the Sodus hamlet of Joy. The article noted the contributions of Sodus-born General Granger, who on June 19, 1865, delivered General Order No. 3 to the people of Galveston, Texas, stating, *“The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.”*

Included in Part I was an introduction to the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), a fraternal organization, originating in Illinois following the close of the Civil War. Posts were established across the northern states - New York State hosting 672 GAR posts, including nearly twenty posts in Wayne County. GAR members were responsible for the decoration of veterans' grave and memorial sites and public programs for Memorial Day observances. In addition to the GAR's mission to remember and honor the soldiers lost, the GAR founded veterans' care homes and was active in relief work and pension legislation for their living veteran members, their spouses, and children. [Note – Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic and The Women's Relief Corps, established in 1879 were two women's organizations dedicated to aiding the GAR in these efforts.]

Between 1870 and 1929, Wayne County was home to a growing roster of GAR posts. The earliest post being Lyons Post #44, established in 1870. Next was the Wolcott William Dutton Post #55, established in 1875 (renamed Kessler Post #55 in 1879). Traditionally, posts were named after deceased soldiers, but not exclusively. For example, the Dwight Post #109 in Sodus, established in 1879, was named for Colonel Charles C. Dwight who was elected in 1862 to serve as a Cayuga County judge. During the war, Dwight served as Commissioner of the Prisoner Exchange for the Department of the Gulf in 1864. Col. Dwight was discharged in May of 1865. Dwight was a leader in NY State's judicial system. The Sodus Dwight Post #109 was one of the longest acting GAR posts in Wayne County, being one of the last to disband in 1929. [See Wayne County GAR posts on page 9.]



Three Cardinal Principles of the GAR
Library of Congress <https://lccn.loc.gov/2003670397>

Evolving beyond the Memorial Day activities and relief work efforts, it was not long before the idea of assuring that, in addition to honoring and caring for the war veterans and their families, the GAR began organizing encampments/reunions, this being part of their mission to “*revive the incidents of camp and fields.*” [Newark Union, 10/11/1879]. These encampments provided a venue for men and women to reflect upon the many aspects of their service, as well as provide a place to educate the general public about the history of the civil conflict.



James A. Hard, Rochester

Photo Source:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12689/james-albert-hard>

The first National Encampment was held in November 1866 at Indianapolis - the last being held 83 years later in Indianapolis, in August of 1949. Following that first national gathering, encampments were held in Philadelphia, PA (1868) and Cincinnati, OH (1869), and continued to be held across the nation for the next 80 years through 1949. The final National Encampment (83rd) came full circle - held in Indianapolis. In attendance were six of the nation's 16 surviving GAR members. All six veterans ranged in age from 100 to 105 years. One of those six was James A. Hard (left) from Rochester, NY. The oldest of two surviving Civil War veterans, Hard passed away in March 1953 – at 111 years of age. He is buried in Mount Hope Cemetery.

The first National Encampment held in New York State was in 1879 at Albany. Local veterans were drawn to these gatherings and wanted to provide an opportunity to bring the encampments closer to home. The local encampments/reunions provided a savings in travel expenses and allowed veterans' who may have been unable to travel an opportunity to join in the festivities. Veterans' could more easily invite local guests and presenters to attend – and serve to expand a better knowledge of the war and understanding of those who fought in the Civil War.

For several years during the 1870s, Wayne, Cayuga, and Seneca counties worked together to present what they called “Re-unions” [sic]. At the August 1881 tri-county reunion, the group decided to disband and form their own individual county organizations. The Wayne County Veteran Soldiers' and Sailors' Association held its first meeting on August 12, 1881, electing a slate of officers and directors from across the county: President, Captain G. B. Curtis, Vice President, S. E. Bullock, and Secretary, James A. Merrill – all of Wolcott; Treasurer, T. M. Brown, Sodus; Chaplin, J. P. Foster, Newark; Surgeon, A. F. Sheldon, Lyons; Board members, E. H. Sentell, Sodus Point; E. K. Burnham, Newark; John Tremper, Clyde; and Captain Holmes, Lyons. “All old soldiers may become members of the Association by the payment of one dollar to T. M. Brown, Sodus, who will issue certificates of membership.” [Lake Shore News, 8/25/1881]. (continued on next page)

*United States Postage Stamp Commemorating the last Grand Army of the Republic Encampment in 1949.
Issued September 1948.
Source - Wikimedia Commons.*



The first Wayne County Veteran Soldiers' and Sailors' Association Encampment was held in Lyons August 22-25, 1882. "A regular military street was laid out with a large headquarter tent . . . About 40 tents were pitched. . . A dancing platform was arranged . . . and close by was the bandstand, which was designed for the occupancy of Schuyler's brass and string band of Lyons, which together with the drum corps from Syracuse, furnished excellent music throughout the encampments and plenty of it. . . ."

Further reunion notes: "Lyons had on her best clothes . . . a hearty welcome to the Veterans of the war. . . . Flags everywhere – stores and places of business were finely decorated . . . many say they never saw a larger crowd in Lyons . . . not less than 5000 people were on the grounds Thursday afternoon . . . Picket fences are a nuisance when a man is trying to get away from the Provost Guard!" [Lake Shore News August 31, 1882] [Note: the Driving Park Association (news clipping right) would have been for the Lyons Race Track, located between the Clyde River and Montezuma Street.]

And so began the Wayne County Veterans Soldiers and Sailors Encampments that ran for some 30 years between 1882 and 1912 – most encampments held on Sodus Bay at Margareta Grove or Bonnie Castle. Stay tuned for **Part III**

Wayne County Veterans Soldiers' And Sailors' Association Encampments – Reflections Across the Waters.

Notes on James A. Hard:

Read about Hard from his voice about growing up and his early military memories - <https://nysvvcw.org/history/nycgar-commanders/james-a-hard>

Hard's Obituary: <http://www.nycivilwar.us/jahard.html>

Hard's age: Research in 2006 found that though Hard noted his birth years as 1841, census records indicated it was 1843. However, census records have been known to be incorrect.

Closing Note: If you have additional information on local GAR Posts of Wayne County Veteran Soldiers and Sailors Association, please contact the author at fox@townofhuron.org. Thank you!

THE VETERANS' RE-UNION.

*A Four Days' Encampment at Lyons—
The Programme Fully Carried Out—
The First Meeting of the Association a
Grand Success—Election of Officers, &c.*

Last week Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Aug. 22d, 23d, 24th and 25th, the veteran soldiers and sailors of Wayne county assembled in camp at Lyons, to enjoy the first reunion of the association organized one year ago at Fair Haven. The grounds selected by the committee of arrangements for the encampment were those of the Lyons Driving Park Association and were fine. We think we may safely say they were the finest, everything taken into consideration, that could have been obtained for an encampment.

Lake Shore News. August 31, 1882



Wayne County GAR Posts 1870-1929

No.	Name	Town	Date	Additional Info
44	- No namesake	- Lyons	- 1870 to January 1875.	
55	- Colonel William Dutton	- Wolcott	- 7-16-1875 to 1879.	
55	- Adam Keeslar,	1879 to 1927.	Keeslar, who was not a soldier. He was the father of five sons who lost their lives during the Civil War.	
56	- Lape	- Clyde	- 11-6-1867 to 1872.	Named for the five sons and one nephew of Dedrick & Elisabeth Lape (Dedrick himself a War of 1812 veteran).
99	- Surgeon William B Vosburgh	- Newark	- 7-5-1879 to 1929.	
109	- Colonel Charles C. Dwight	- Sodus	- 8-6-1879 to 1929.	
153	- Colonel Alexander Duncan Adams	- Lyons	- 4-15-1880 to 1929.	
173	- Arastus Snedaker	- Clyde	- 7-23-1880 to 1924.	Snedaker's two sons, members of the Company D 111 th NYV Infantry both died during their service.
186	- Colonel Albert Duane Shaw	- Alton	- 9-15-1902 to 1918.	
193	- President James A Garfield	- Palmyra	- This post was chartered as the "John H Starin Post" on 9-15-1881. The name was disapproved and changed to "James A Garfield" 9-20-1881 in honor of the assassinated President, who died 9-19-1881. Disbanded 1923.	
251	- 2nd Lieutenant Daniel D Becker	- Red Creek	- 2-13-1897 to 1928.	
291	- 2nd Lieutenant Volney H Sweeting	- South Butler	- 6-30-1900 to 1924.	
320	- Hance Brothers	- Williamson	- 1-19-1886 to 1921.	
401	- Private John E Sherman	- Rose	- 9-20-1883 to 1917.	
406	- Private Myron M Fish	- Ontario	- 10-11-1883 to 1921.	
444	- Captain John B Burrud	- Marion	- 1-19-1884 to 1923.	
450	- Private George S Bradley	- Macedon	- 3-12-1884 to 1919.	
501	- Private Charles A Remington	- South Butler/Savannah	- 7-22-1884 to 1927.	
509	- Wormoth	- Savannah	- 8-19-1884 to 1885.	Named in honor of three brothers.

Note: To read more about the individuals these GAR Posts were named in honor of, please visit:
<https://civilwar.nygenweb.net/gar1.html> - wayne

Seeking Descendants . . . Finding Ancestors . . . 111th NY Volunteer Infantry . . .

Did you Know?

A Civil War Military Unit, composed of men from Wayne and Cayuga Counties is the subject of a local research project through the Wayne County Historical Society (WCHS) and Wayne County Historians Organization (WHO).

The research includes building an online database of soldiers, locating descendants, and telling the stories of the soldiers from the 111th NY Volunteer Infantry.

Research has led to 25 articles in the Wayne County Times telling the story of the men from 1862 to when they returned home June 1865.

How can YOU help?

If you have information about an ancestor who was part of this infantry, please contact via email - info@waynehistory.org. Please type "111th NY Volunteer Infantry" in the subject line.

More information will be forthcoming about this important research work.

Annual Appeal Donations

Gene and Liz Bavis
Corrine Bentley
Bill and Sandra Bishop
John and Harriet Bonin
Gary and Sheryl Boughter
Jeanne Buell
Gerald and Ellen Burns
Clara Clark
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In Memory of Larry Williamson

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In Memory of Joseph Sina

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In Memory of John Nesbitt

Michael and Donna Stern

Sodus Bay Lighthouse Museum Events



ECLIPSE 2024

COME WATCH THE ECLIPSE ON **APRIL 8**
ON THE LAWN OF THE SODUS POINT
LIGHTHOUSE ~ ELEVATION 280 FT

\$25
Includes Admission to the grounds and the Lighthouse, and 1 pair of Eclipse glasses.

Only 400 tickets available!
NO door sales!


No Refunds!!

Noon – 5 pm
Food Trucks for Doughnuts BBQ Hot Chocolate Beer

It's a "FUN-RAISER" for the Lighthouse Museum

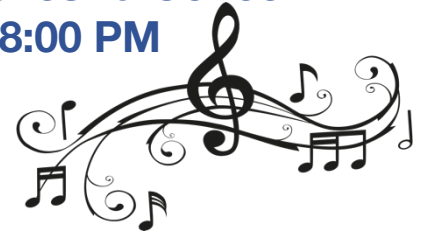
One **SPECIAL** ticket:*
View the event from the top of the lighthouse at el 350ft:
Room for 5 occupants!
Silent Auction starts at \$500
email bid by March 15 to eclipselighthouse2024@gmail.com

Click [Here](#) or SCAN to purchase now



7606 North Ontario Street, Sodus Point, NY 14555 info@sodusbaylighthouse.org
* Find contest rules on our website www.sodusbaylighthouse.org (Admission tickets will be available)

**July 5 (Friday) – Finger Lakes
Symphony Orchestra Concert**
6:30-8:00 PM



**July 6 (Saturday)
5K Race**

**July 6 & 7
– Art Show**



2024 Sunday Summer Concert Series Schedule

July 7 – Midnight Storm *Classic Oldies Rock & Country*

July 14 – Don Griffin & Friends *Classic Rock/Popular*

July 21 – Dady Brothers *Irish Music*

July 28 – Brass, Inc. *Horn Driven Rock, Rhythm & Blues, Top Hits*

August 4 – Johnny Bauer *Pop Country*

August 11 – Little Anne & Hot Cayenne *High Energy Cajun*

August 18 – 47 South *Classic Rock/Popular*

August 25 – Flint Creek *High Energy Modern Country*

September 1 – Chris Wilson *Soulful Folk & Gospel*

Concerts are **Free** - Sundays at **2 PM**

THANK YOU!

TO THESE

SODUS BAY LIGHTHOUSE SPONSORS

In addition to our loyal members, the Sodus Bay Historical Society appreciates the generous support from area businesses and foundations. Their ongoing contributions help the Sodus Bay Historical Society and Lighthouse Museum move forward with the summer concert series, student activities, exhibits, and other programming. Please be sure to show your support by visiting these local establishments and let them know how important their support of Sodus Bay history is to you!

THANK YOU!

Bay View Bed & Breakfast
Robert G. Boehmler Community Foundation
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