



## Historical Society Newsletter

**OFFICERS:** President, Joan E. Rowland; Vice President, Robert Roeckle;  
Secretary, Patti Veitch; Treasurer, JoAnn Rowland  
**TRUSTEES:** Ron Deutsch, Ron Feulner, John Greenwood, Mike Gymarthy,  
Patty Schwartzbeck, Dan Smith, and Mary Vetter

The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833

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[www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com](http://www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Saturday, December 17, 2022 — IOOF Hall/Chatfield Museum Holiday Party Open House and Cookie Exchange, 1 to 3 p.m.** This year's theme will be *Holiday Greeting Cards*. Please bring cookies/desserts to share.

**Tuesday, January 17, 2023 — Meeting 7 p.m.** at the Community Center, 25 Wilton Road, Greenfield Center. **Program:** *The Pen is Mightier than the Sword: The Lasting Power of the Written Word* by Patricia Nugent.

**Tuesday, February 21, 2023 — Meeting 7 p.m.** at the Community Center, 25 Wilton Road, Greenfield Center. **Program:** *"Peace, Love, & Chocolate" Sundaes Best Hot Fudge Sauce* began in Greenfield in 2001 and is going strong today. Owner Katie Camarro will share highlights of the company's 20+ year journey making our world a sweeter place. Rumor has it that refreshments will be provided by Sundaes Best. Yes, Sundaes Best Hot Fudge Sauce will be available for purchase. You don't want to miss this meeting!

Everyone is welcome, admission is free, and you don't have to be a member to attend.

**Our membership year begins June 1 and ends May 31, dues are paid annually. (\$10 per household or \$100 for Lifetime Membership)**

### Meeting Cancellations

*If schools are closed due to weather, our meeting will be canceled. A message also will be posted on our website and on our Facebook page.*

[www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com](http://www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com)  
[www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=town of greenfield historical society](https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=town%20of%20greenfield%20historical%20society)

*Refreshment volunteers for November were Joan and JoAnn Rowland and John Greenwood. They served apple crisp, ice cream and egg nog. Please bring cookies/desserts for the cookie exchange in December.*

### Joan's Jabbering — December 2022

*by Joan E. Rowland, President*

November's meeting 11/15/22 delivered an interesting program of the Middle Grove High School but it also delivered us the first snow of the season. Mr. Weatherman said that the snow would come around 10 p.m. so we go off to the meeting hoping they were correct. He was correct on snow coming but it came for some on their way there and they turned back. Others stayed home knowing that the first snow is always tough to drive in. We ended up with around 4 inches when all was done and got a couple the next day to remind us that the warm weather we have been having is not going to last.

For the nine of us that attended the meeting, it was a nice program. Corinth Town Historian, Rachel Clothier told how she discovered the Middle Grove High School flier at Antiques at Packer's Pond at 7206 Barkersville Road, Middle Grove. Owners Bob and Sue Wemple, being history buffs themselves, were gracious enough to share a copy and additional history involving the Packer family and the school. Bob has created a museum in his Antiques shop (it was in the house when the Packer Family lived there.) It was so nice to meet Bob and Sue Wemple at the meeting.

Rachel's husband Brian Clothier's great grandmother, Miss Ophelia James was the Vocal Music teacher at the school but when she got married, she stopped teaching as all women did back in 1880s. This school specialized in Vocal and Instrumental Music, but also included reading, writing, math, and rhetoric just to name a few lessons. It was for the more well-off families as most would not be able to afford \$10 per semester, with each semester lasting 13 weeks.

The school ran from 1880 to 1883, then there was no more mention of it in any of the research that Rachel did.

The elves have decorated the Museum for the Annual Open House on December 17.

Please stop in from 1 to 3 p.m. to sample some Christmas Cookies and the traditional Hot Wassel. The theme this year is "Holiday Greeting Cards."

Hope you have a wonderful Holiday Season.

## HISTORIAN'S CORNER

December 2022

by Ron Feulner

In past issues, I have talked about the Rowell Store (known by this name, but then owned by Cady) in Middle Grove being the building where the 1907 fire started.

The old structure with its ancient bone dry wood must have ignited and burned at a fierce rate with the stiff April wind fanning the flames. As the old store structure became fully engaged, the flames leapt across the narrow alley and the wood frame hotel next door to the east caught fire. Roxanne (AKA Roxy) Fulton, age 68, and co-owner with her husband, George, must have been on duty in the hotel, and in her attempt to either fight the fire or rescue some of their belongings, her dress caught fire, and she reportedly suffered burns as her dress burned, but she survived.

As the wind-fanned flames of these two structures reached their peak, the house tens of feet east of the hotel occupied by the Humphries family also caught fire. Guy Humphries was 19 and had been married only since February. Guy's father, George Humphries had operated the grist mill near the lower bridge until his death in 1903.



Figure 23-L to r: Rowell Store, Hotel, George Humphries Home

By this time, all three structures must have been fully engaged and producing swirling whirlwinds of glowing embers being whipped about by strong gusts of wind. The updrafts from the burning buildings interacting with the exceptionally strong westerly to northwesterly flow of April wind must have been showering all areas east and southeast from the fire with burning embers, however, with no structures as close together as the three that were burning, a report went out that the spread of the fire was thought to be temporarily under control, but that report was wrong.

In addition to the fire continuing to burn easterly on the north side of the road, the embers had jumped to the south side of the road and a house occupied by James Young, burned to the ground as well as an outbuilding (this would have been about where the north-west corner of the trailer park is now located).

On the northern side of the road where three structures were still burning, the flying embers had caught another home on fire. This home was owned by Henry H. Rowland.

With five structures now fully engaged, someone had apparently telephoned the mills along the trolley route between Rock City Falls and Ballston Spa where many of the Middle Grove men were at work, and at 1:15 the trolley arrived with a load of Ballstonians to help, including fire chief, Fred Wheeler, and foreman, Fred Rooney, of the Eagle Fire Company. In addition, the mills along the Trolley line including Brown's Mill, Pioneer Mill, and Eagle Mill all sent men to help. Many of the men were carrying pails to fight the fire.

## Tuesday, January 17, 2022 Program

*The Pen is Mightier than the Sword:*

*The Lasting Power of the Written Word*

Patricia Nugent is a retired school administrator and adjunct communication professor who now writes to give voice to those who might otherwise be silenced. She's the author of the book *They Live On:*

*Saying Goodbye to*

*Mom and Dad*, and editor of the anthology *Before*

*They Were Our Mothers: Voices of Women Born Before*

*Rosie Started Riveting*. Her latest book is *Healing with*

*Dolly Lama: Finding God in Dog*. She's been published

numerous times in professional and literary journals, as

well as in anthologies. She believes in using the power

of "the pen" to change ourselves and our world, and will share with us how and why it makes a difference.



Patricia Nugent

## TOGHS Program November 2022



Corinth Town Historian and Director of the Corinth Museum, Rachel Clothier, talking about the 1880s Middle Grove High School. The school once occupied the current Greenfield Historical Society's Chatfield Museum.



## HOLIDAY ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE AT THE MUSEUM

Date: Saturday, December 17, 2022 • Time: 1 to 3 p.m.

Place: Museum — 440 Middle Grove Road, Middle Grove, NY

by Joan E. Rowland

The elves have decorated the Museum for the Annual Open House on December 17.

Please stop in from 1 to 3 p.m. to sample some Christmas Cookies and the traditional Hot Wassel.

Bring some holiday cookies to share (and at the end of the time, all cookies left over become take home items – for a donation).

The theme this year is “Holiday Greeting Cards.”

Do you send greeting cards during the Christmas / Hanukkah / Kwanza season?

In our family we celebrate Christmas. Mom always sent box Christmas cards to our family, friends, and Dad’s Army buddies. Anyone who lived away from here would get a handwritten note in it to inform them of events that happened this year. Sometimes it was even a letter tucked inside the card.

When I was in college, I had more friends to send cards to that were not family friends, so I started sending them. I had 4-H people I had met in many different states too. To this day I still write to Ms. Watford in NC, from the week exchange as a 4-H teen back in 1976. There is Joe from CA, who I met at the National 4-H Congress in Chicago, IL in 1977. There is Gina from Denver, CO, who I met on my first cruise (1980s) after starting a real job. Back then I used to write a letter for each, personalized to

each of them, but then as time got tighter, I started to type a letter and copy it that many times. These letters got the nickname of “lie letters” by my sister, JoAnn. She said that the truth had been stretched a little. I just told it like I saw it, as I do today.

Now, we send the photo card. The 4x8 photo with a written message on it. We are to pick out the card together and take a nice photo of something on the farm or of us and talk about it in the Christmas Letter. We also tell of all the places we have gone, events we helped with, and all the volunteering we do. Since it is from both of us, they are no longer “lie letters.” I will bring a selection of these cards with me on December 17.

I love the very old cards that were 3-D or could stand on display. I love to receive beautiful nativity cards, the funny ones where the chickens are singing, cow cards, scenic snow scenes, a family’s photos on vacation, but I wish glitter was never invented. We love to have a note written in the card or a nice long Christmas letter updating us on how all the family is and what they have been up to.

If you have a nice card you would like to share or a Holiday Greeting Card tradition you would like to share, please bring it along. We can have them on display, and we usually take some time to discuss the theme as a group.

Hope to see you on Saturday, December 17.

### Blown Glass Pendent Raffle

Larry Rutland of North Creek Studio donated this beautiful blown glass, double drop, pendent to us for a raffle. We started selling tickets this past summer at the Greenfield Farmers Market.

We will be drawing the winner on Saturday,

December 17, 2022 at the

Holiday Open House at the Museum.

Tickets will be sold up until the drawing at 2:50 p.m.

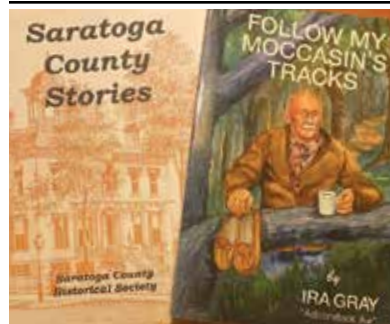
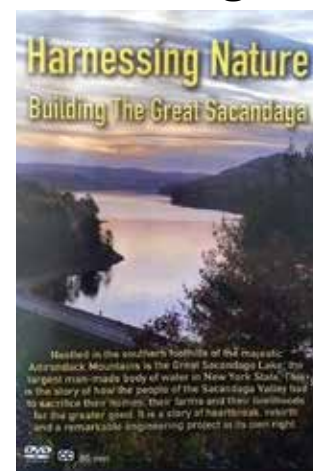
Tickets are 1 for \$1 or 8 for \$5.

If you win, you could have a beautiful Christmas Gift to give (or keep for yourself).



### “Harnessing Nature: Building the Great Sacandaga”

This DVD is an 80-minute documentary telling the story of how the people of the Sacandaga Valley had to sacrifice their homes, their farms and their livelihoods for the greater good. It is a story of heart-break, rebirth and a remarkable engineering project in its own right. This is the story of how the Great Sacandaga Lake, the largest man-made body of water in New York state, was made. DVDs are available for \$20 at the Greenfield Town Hall, or by contacting the Historical Society at P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. (Please add \$3 if you want one mailed.)



### BOOKS FOR SALE

We will have both the *Saratoga County Stories* (\$18) and *Follow My Moccasin's Tracks* by Ira Gray (\$15.95) for sale at the December Annual Open House.

Thanks to the generosity Ira Gray's niece, Sandra Gray Loychik, we have

several copies of Ira Gray's (Adirondack Ike) *Follow My Moccasin's Tracks*. These were printed in 2002 and have become a rare keepsake for anyone who enjoys old stories of life in the Adirondacks.

Pick your copy up at the December Open House or order through our P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 with an additional \$3.50 postage and handling.

Shop at [smile.amazon.com/ch/14-1766805](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/14-1766805) and AmazonSmile donates to “The Town of Greenfield Historical Society.” Please check our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/Town-of-Greenfield-Historical-Society/](https://www.facebook.com/Town-of-Greenfield-Historical-Society/) for up to date information regarding future meetings and events. You can also find us on Twitter: @TOGHistory

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL AVAILABLE ONLINE

Become a member of The Town of Greenfield Historical Society and receive our newsletter. **Our membership year begins June 1 and ends May 31, dues are paid annually. Send \$10 per household (or \$100 for Lifetime Membership)** along with your name and address to the address shown below. **If you send more than \$10 for your household, the balance will be considered a donation.** You also may join at one of our meetings. Send this application form and fee to The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. Make checks payable to: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society. **YOU CAN PAY YOUR DUES ONLINE AT OUR WEBSITE! [www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com](http://www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com).** Email [toghistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:toghistsoc@gmail.com) for more information.

Click on “Store,” “Membership” then click either “Annual Membership – Household” or “Lifetime Membership.”

**Please Print** – Please indicate how many persons 10-years-old or older are in your household). \_\_\_\_\_  New  Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_  I am interested in volunteering.

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of interest to you \_\_\_\_\_

To sponsor a newsletter send \$50 along with your name and address and the wording describing whom you would like it dedicated to.

If you know someone whom you think might want to become a member, send us their name and address, and we will send them a copy of our newsletter along with information on how they can join.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**If you'd like to dedicate and/or sponsor a newsletter, send \$50 to *The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833*, include your name, address and the wording describing who you would like it dedicated to and/or sponsored by. Please send articles and/or photos to: [JJones18215@roadrunner.com](mailto:JJones18215@roadrunner.com).**

### Updating Historic Sites Map in the Town of Greenfield

We invite our membership and readers of this newsletter to share with Dan any historical information about an interesting person, place, structure, or event within our town. Dan reserves the right to proofread and edit submissions, but he will be very happy to add your information to our map. We are always looking for historical information to add to and enhance the map, which we consider to be an ongoing work in progress. Please email Dan Chertok at [Dgchertok@gmail.com](mailto:Dgchertok@gmail.com), call his cell phone (518-321-0330), or text him.



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