

Historical Society Newsletter

Janet Jones, Editor

P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833

OFFICERS: Ron Feulner, President; Tom Siragusa, Vice President; Patty Schwartzbeck, Secretary; Robert Roeckle, Treasurer; Coral Crossman, Trustee; Vince Walsh, Trustee; JoAnn Rowland, Trustee

Volume 8, Issue 2

Calendar

Vegetable Stand: Wing Road CSA farm will operate a roadside vegetable stand at the IOOF Hall every Monday from 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. during harvest season.

October 6: Field trip to Glass Factory led by Ron Feulner. Meet at IOOF Hall in Middle Grove at 1:00 p.m. weather permitting.

October 16: (Third Tuesday), meeting at 7:00 p.m. and program to follow on *Town of Greenfield Entrepreneurs – Past and Present*.

November 20: (Third Tuesday), meeting at 7:00 p.m. and program to follow.

Ron's Ramblings

Well, our year has officially started. Our treasurer, Robert Roeckle is busy accepting and recording all your membership dues. Some of you are including extra as a donation, which is greatly appreciated since we have many upcoming and costly projects, especially at the IOOF hall. I am writing this the morning after our first regular meeting and pot-luck dinner, and what an affair it was. Judging from the heaped plates and smiles, I think the dinner was an outstanding success. Later, we had 42 sign in at the business meeting which followed the dinner. In addition, Tom Siragusa, our vice-president who arrived late from another town meeting forgot to sign so that makes a grand total of 43 members attending the meeting. Mixed in with our old time regulars were many new faces.

Kat Paradis has been a regular for many years attending our meetings with her mother Deb Dittner (Deb was our former vice-president). Kat has just entered Maple Avenue Middle School this year after attending Greenfield Elementary for six years. Last night, during the dinner, I think I might have talked her into writing an article for our newsletter about her six-years at Greenfield Elementary. In the past, we have had several articles from members about their experiences in schools of the past, and I think it would be interesting to hear how Kat's compares. Since many people save our newsletters, it's entirely possible that someone may read Kat's article (if she writes it) one-hundred years from now and find it very interesting to compare to schools existing then.

The business meeting went well. I knew that it was going to be a good night when I arrived at the community center with my key and discovered that Fran Potter had already opened up and JoAnn Rowland was in the process of supervising the setting up of chairs and tables. They simply asked

Reminder that our year of meetings begins in September so everyone's membership renewal is due (unless you have recently paid). We have made it easy to renew your membership (or become a new member) by filling out our membership application contained in this newsletter and mailing it with your dues (if you prefer to keep your newsletter intact, you may copy the necessary information on another sheet and send it). We will also accept memberships at our meetings. The only requirement to become a member is an interest in local history (residency in the town is not required). We hope to have another good year, and we need you as a member to help it happen.

me how many people I was expecting. Fran Potter also graciously offered to set up the podium and microphone for me, but being the shouter that I am, I declined only to learn that my voice is fading along with everything else except my belt size. Next time, I think I will use the microphone.

The rest of the evening went smoothly except when my brain short circuited, and I called Louise McCormick, Louise Spalding. It always amazes me how my brain does things like that. When I looked at Louise with her hand up, my brain jumped to her late husband, Phil, and didn't stop there. Many years ago, I knew a Phil Spalding so what came out of my mouth was Louise Spalding. Go figure that circuit out. Anyway, my apology to Louise.

One of our younger and very energetic members, Vince Walsh, threw out a challenge to the group. He said that if each of us were to bring in one new member this year, we could double our membership. Mary DeMarco picked up on the idea and thought that it would be more interesting if each member who brought in a new member could enjoy some ice cream treat from Stewarts, and she volunteered to talk to the local Stewarts store about it.

After adjournment, Lynn Wochinger (our program chairperson) explained how our antique show and tell program would work. One after another, people came forward and shared their stories and treasures. When JoAnn Rowland's turn came, she showed us a metal box that had been used by a local family to ship eggs via the U.S. mail to NY City. (Talk about fresh eggs!) When she finished, she donated the box to our archive collection.

I should also update you on the building and grounds committee's progress. On September 15, the Town of Greenfield had a town wide garage sale. Joyce Woodard, Louise Okoniewski, and Chad Jorgenson decided to have a sale at our carriage house behind the IOOF hall. Most of the stuff came from the carriage shed with a few items donated by members. They did well selling more than a hundred dollars worth. Sebrina Carter, a member who lives near the IOOF hall mowed the lawn for us which was greatly appreciated. Stan Zeh painted the railing at the Daketown School and repaired the hole in the siding. He also sorted the old tires stored in the carriage house behind the IOOF hall. About a dozen of them are still on rims. The Town of Greenfield has agreed to get rid of the tires for us, but doesn't want any on rims. Our vice-president, Tom Siragusa contacted Baldwin's Garage (across the road from the IOOF hall in Middle Grove) and Mr. Baldwin said that he would remove the rims free of charge for us. After the tires are gone, we just have a substantial amount of loose junk left, which we can either truck to the landfill or rent a dumpster. A signup sheet was

passed around at our general meeting and everyone interested in participating in a work day at the IOOF hall signed. If any of you who were unable to attend the meeting but might like to help work or prepare some food for hungry workers at the IOOF hall some Saturday this fall, you can call me (Ron) at 518 893-0620. If you leave a message, give me your name and phone number. The Building and Grounds Committee will meet next on October 15 at 6 p.m. at the town hall in Greenfield. All interested historical society members are welcome to join us.

The Town of Greenfield has been helpful to us in several ways. Louise Okoniewski works with our town clerk, MaryAnn Johnson. The two of them found our IRS and NYS taxation numbers and also came up with a copy of a temporary charter that we had received from the state in 1986. All were on file in the town clerk's office. These documents are going to be important as we apply for financial help in the future.

In my last newsletter, I mentioned that Patty Schwartzbeck, our secretary, donated a computer and monitor for the archive committee to use at the IOOF hall, and included a wish list that someone might donate \$100 so we could purchase a printer/copier to go with the computer. At last night's meeting, Bob Dake, long time member and past president, gave us a check for that amount. Thank you Patty and Bob. (We still don't have power at the IOOF hall, but as soon as we do, we will install the hardware.)

Dorothy Rowland (our Daketown School coordinator) is having a busy week at the school. I took time out from writing this to ride down and see how she was doing with the entire fourth grade class coming on a field trip today (September 26). Later, in the day, Dorothy left a message on my telephone saying that the day was extremely successful. The fourth grade class had been divided into three groups and then rotated by visiting the school, the IOOF hall, and the town park in Middle Grove. Helen Woods (who also attended the Daketown School) helped Dorothy at the school site while Henry Rowland and Joyce Woodard covered the classes at the IOOF hall. Dorothy sounded excited with the results and said that she and Helen were already talking about ideas for next year.

On Saturday (September 29), Dorothy will be hosting an open house at the school. She expects many, including some former students, to stop in.

Let me finish by saying that Janet Jones and her sister, Nancy Homiak, have some ideas they want us to try at our next meeting (I think they have to do with name tags and officer seating). Since their ideas are usually pretty good ones, I told them to, "have at it," so we'll just have to wait and see. I told them, "Stand me up where you want me and point me in the right direction, and I'll take it from there."

Depression Days

By Mary Max

During the depression we never went hungry. I can remember my mother canned and preserved everything. When Dad butchered a cow, Mom canned the meat as we had no freezers in those days. She made sausage and smoked it in the smoke house. I remember watching her clean the pig innards and soaking them over night. She then scraped them clean on the outside and inside using a wooden board with a flat piece of wood. She scraped them until they were very thin. She had a sausage press and the skins or casings fit over a tube on the press. You pumped the sausage into the casings, and every once in awhile, you gave it a twist to make it into links. Her recipe was all in her head as she didn't read English. We thought it was fun to pump the machine while she managed the strips of sausage and doing the twists. Later the sausage was hung in the smokehouse with the hams and bacon she had curing. After they were smoked for several days, she took two chairs and placed them back to back about three feet apart and put a broom across the top. She then hung the sausage, hams, and bacon over the broom handle to cure. We loved that because it was hung up stairs in the hall with cheese cloth over it, and we could sneak a piece before we went to bed.

I remember my brother killed a pig one day while Dad was at work. We got a 50 gallon drum half full of water and started a fire under it. It was on a slant half tipped over and propped up with rocks and planks. When the water was hot, we carefully used ropes to put the pig in the hot water. We then pulled it out of the water onto the back of the truck platform so we could scrape the skin to get all the hair off. When my dad got home from work, the pig was raised up with block and falls, and Dad cut it up. Mom took care of the rest: canning, pickling, and making sausage, etc.. She also rendered out all those quarts of lard. In addition, she also made head cheese. Days were very hard on Mom in those times.

The most I do now is make some jerky from store bought hamburger with a hand turned meat grinder fastened to the kitchen table. Back in the old days, all us kids took our turn grinding the beef. After a cow was butchered, I can remember helping can the meat with my mother. We put the jars of meat into a big copper kettle on the stove which we used for the hot water bath. The jars had to cook for hours to seal them and also cook the meat. God bless my Mom, Anna Eichorst, who worked so hard all her life and raised seven children. She passed away at the age of 91.



Pig Scraper – used to scrape hair off pigs.



Pig Scraper



The Pig?

Photos supplied by Mary Max

Editor's Correction

In September's newsletter, Greenfield Country Medical, should have been **Greenfield Country Medicine**. Also, the photo credit for cleaning out the Carriage Shed was left off. *The photo was taken by Vince Walsh.*

My High School Principal

By Joseph Goyette

During one of the last conversations I had with my mother, she told me to be sure I finished school because an education was so important for improving ones life and no one could take it from you. My father had passed away a few years before and now my mother went to join him. My brother, two sisters and I became wards of New York state. Due to various circumstances at the time, my little sister and I were placed by the state in the Rodgers' foster home in Porter Corners. Unfortunately, the state and my social worker did not share my mother's view on finishing school. The state's policy was to have me drop out of high school and join the military as soon as I turned 17. The state would save money and I would not be a burden or threat to society if I "aged out" of the system at age 18 in the military.

I was 16 when school started in September 1958, and the "conspiracy" began when I was called to the principal's office. Mr. Sexton, the principal of Saratoga Springs High, was not the average student's friend by virtue of just being the principal. After all, he was the authority figure, the man that made the rules that were not necessarily favorable to the student population. Anyway, my social worker was there in his office with an Army recruiter. The social worker explained that I was to join the military when I turned 17 because when I turned 18 I would no longer be a ward of the state and would have no means of support. I took the military entrance exams right there in Mr. Sexton's office and qualified for the Army. My social worker thought she was home free but I told her I wanted to see what the Navy had to offer. In a few weeks, the social worker brought in a Navy recruiter and I went through the motions with him. I told the social worker that this was such an important decision that I wanted to check out the Air Force too. I vaguely remember that she was not too happy. In a few weeks, repeat the above, then ditto for the Marines. My social worker was not happy and accused me of stalling when I said I wanted to check out the Coast Guard. This was the only time she was ever right about me. Each time she showed up with a recruiter I would be pulled out of a class. Rumors were that I was quitting school because I was failing. I was not an "A" student but I was not failing. I wonder if I might have been a better student if the threat of having to leave school was not being pushed on me by the state and my social worker.

Anyway, a few weeks go by and I am again called to Mr. Sexton's office. The social worker is there with the Coast Guard recruiter. We go through the routine, and I tell the recruiter thank you very much but I want to stay in school. At this point, the social worker starts yelling at me that there are no other branches of the service to join and I will join one of them. The recruiter excused himself and left in a hurry. I repeated that I want to finish school first. When I told her that I needed to sign the papers and that was not going to happen, she actually started stamping her feet and yelling and screaming that I was going to join something before I turned 18. At this point, Mr. Sexton said, and I remember it exactly: "Ms. (name withheld), – you are out of order, get out of my office." She said something else but I don't remember what it was and all Mr. Sexton said was "now" in a very clear and commanding voice. She didn't say another word and left. I was shocked at this turn of events and I will never forget that moment. He then had a heart to heart talk with me and was very encouraging about my prospects for finishing school. He made me believe it was possible. He presented a personality that was caring and sympathetic. I had been so wrong about him. He became my hero and I defended him against the usual student ridicule from that day on.

Things did seem to get easier. People in the community seemed more aware of my plight. Over the next two summers, jobs came easy and I was able put away enough money to cover the cost of room and board at the foster home for my senior year. In the summer of 1960, Mrs. Bolduc opened her home to me, room and board free and I moved to Middle Grove. It was not easy to leave my little sister but I was close enough to visit which I did. The move allowed me to use my savings for school rather than room and board at the foster home.

Thanks to my mother's advice, the encouragement of Mr. Sexton and the help of many people to numerous to mention here, I did finish high school and managed to graduate from Hudson Valley Community College. I have had a career with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the U.S. Army Reserves and have retired from both those organizations. I wonder how many other poor kids were intimidated by the state as they "aged out" of the system and were forced out of school and into the military. I am grateful to all that have helped me and especially my principal.

Sentimental Thoughts

By Jim Smith

After reading the March 2007 issue of the Historical Society newsletter, I noted that Ron was running out of local history. So I decided to try and fill in the gap just a little.

I sat down and jogged my memory and came up with some memorable thoughts that may be of some interest to some of our older members. And believe me, it is not because I was directly involved. I am fully aware of the fact that there are some people including myself who are still around and will remember what I am going to write about. I'm sure that it will jog their memory a bit, and they will relive some of those happy nights of relaxation and carefree fun.

One of the first dances that I attended was at Stubby Rhodes home that was located on what is now named, North Creek Road. It was there that I was introduced to Square Dancing. I'm not just sure who the musicians were. Perhaps it was just a fiddle player. But, as I remember they rolled back the carpet and moved furniture out of the way. The musicians could have been Charlie Reynolds and his brother, Clayten. Clayt, as we used to call him, played the banjo and called, and I mean called. Charlie played fiddle, the old fashion way, that I learned to really love. I found out a little later on, that his grandfather, Hud Dingman, had taught him to play.

I really can't recall just how I began playing with the fellows, but play I did. Now let's get to the Greenfield Center Grange. It was there that I really played my heart out.

Whenever Charlie and Clayt were going to play for a dance, they would let me know. I then realized that I had become a member of the band. Well I have to tell you that I felt pretty important after that. I was around 14 at the time, and sometimes I made a couple of dollars on Saturday night playing my old beat up guitar. It was split all the way around the side of the guitar, and when I really got to strummin', it would pinch my arm, and I would let out a yell every time it pinched me. Sometimes our pay was much less than two dollars. Our pay was determined by the amount of money that was collected by passing the hat. Sometimes some people just, "passed the hat." If you know what I mean. I use to say, "perhaps they didn't have the money." Those were tough times in the early 30s. Recovery from the "Depression" was very slow.

Now let's get back to a night of old fashioned square dancing. Now, Clayt was a very experienced caller. No matter where you were in that hall, you could hear ole Clayt beller loud and clear. One night as we were playing, I was kinda dreaming away with the shuffling of the dancers feet. Clayt let out with a beller that I'm sure could be heard clear up into the center of town. The dancers had gotten ahead of Clayt's call. He stopped the music with a roar, and he bared the one tooth that he had in his upper jaw, and he said, "Where do you people think you're going???" He said, "if you don't need a caller, I'll come down and dance with you. Now get back where you people left me, and let's begin again." Everybody would snicker a little bit and go back laughing. After that I paid closer attention as they shuffled along.

Town of Greenfield Historical Society Member List

Town of Greenfield – 85	Hadley	1	Maine	1	
Greenfield Center	48	Lindley	1	Massachusetts	1
Middle Grove	19	Little Falls	1	North Carolina	1
Porter Corners	18	Pattersonville	1	Ohio	1
New York – 49	Saratoga Springs	28	Pennsylvania	1	
Ballston Spa	3	Schaghticoke	1	Tennessee	1
Bronxville	1	Ticonderoga	1	Texas	1
Clifton Park	1	Walcot	1	Virginia	1
Corinth	2	Out of State – 19	Washington	1	
Deposit	1	Arizona	2	Total	153
Galway	2	California	1	Lifetime Members	8
Gansevoort	3	Connecticut	2	Free (newspapers, libraries,	
Greenwich	1	Florida	5	schools, town hall)	18

If your newsletter has an incorrect name or address, please call Nancy Homiak at 518 893-7770.
(If she doesn't answer, please leave a message.)

A member of our Historical Society, Marge Erickson, is researching her family history. Her mother was Clara Estella Dake. She would like any information anyone has on the Dake, Lewis, Harris, Shepard, Craig and Moorehouse families, all from Greenfield.

Marge Erickson
P.O. Box 293
Lisbon Falls, ME 04252-0293

We still need articles for the 2007-08 year. If you would like to write an article for the newsletter, send it to the address below or if you write it using Microsoft Word, you can e-mail it to: aliron@localnet.com. Please type in upper and lower case, NOT ALL CAPS.

Become a member of the Town of Greenfield Historical Society and receive our newsletter. Send \$10 along with your name and address to the address shown below. If you send more it will be considered a donation. Other types of memberships are also available (lifetime, corporate, etc.), just call and ask (518 893-0620). Our membership year begins in September and dues are paid annually. You may also join at one of our meetings.

Send this application form and fee to Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. Make checks payable to: Town of Greenfield Historical Society.

Please indicate how many persons 10-years-old or older are in your household). _____

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

Areas of interest to you _____

To sponsor a newsletter send \$50 along with your name and address and the wording (please print) describing whom you would like the newsletter 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 free copy of our newsletter along with information on how they can join.

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

**Town of Greenfield Historical Society
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Greenfield Center, NY 12833**