



## Historical Society Newsletter

### *Our 30th Anniversary Year*

**OFFICERS: President: Louise Okoniewski; Vice President: Robert Roeckle;**  
**Secretary: Patty Schwartzbeck; Treasurer: JoAnn Rowland;**  
**Trustees: Dan Chertok, Coral Crosman, Ron Deutsch, Katie Finnegan and Ron Feulner**

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

Volume 14, Issue 3

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

### WEEZIE'S WORDS

by Louise Okoniewski

I need to apologize for the November newsletter being so late. Time crept up on me and before I knew it ... October was gone and it's the second week of November. The good news is once you read this, another newsletter will soon be on the way.

October was the beginning and the end of different Historical Society events. Oct. 11 marked the end of our 5th annual Farmers Market at Middle Grove Park. We tried a new approach by having a 'market manager,' J'mae Shamrose, and a group of vendors (Ann Marie Johnson and Tom Seagrove), who could take care of the weekly operation of this event. This group had new vendors such as Adirondack Kettle Korn, Pa's Pistols Hickory Hot Dogs, aBe Card designs, Swiss Peelers, Custom Cedarhill Creations and Ledge Rock Hill Winery. Even though some of the new vendors were unable to attend every week, shoppers waited and enjoyed them when they did attend. There was new music such as a Blue Grass Band and local artists. Mother Nature was kind on most Fridays. It may have been hot, but no rain. Next year will be our 6th season and should bring some new surprises! We'd love to hear from anyone with ideas or suggestions for the market. You can contact Ron Deutsch at 469-6769.

We had a fantastic turnout for our Harvest Fest/Chili Cook-Off on Oct. 5. The day may have been overcast, but that didn't stop people shopping with their favorite Farmers Market vendors, trying one or all of the cook-off chilies, having Mike G's homemade French Fries and pairing those with Rob's famous burgers. (The chili made a great topping for the hot dogs!) New to this event was a preview of the Odd Fellows Hall Museum. A lot of hard work and dedication has gone into

### CALENDAR

**November 19:** Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** **Rachel Clothier, who is the Corinth Historian, will talk about the 1913 flood that devastated Albany and Troy, and lead to the flooding of the Sacandaga valley to create the reservoir.**

**December 21: Christmas Party, Saturday, 1 - 4 p.m.** Share your memories: **Where did you sit for Christmas dinner?** Please bring cookies to share and sell.

this project, from a lot of different people and sources over the years. There were times when it seemed you were swimming in an ocean storm, but everyone stayed with it and it paid off. We surprised ourselves! The week before the Fest, Rob Roeckle shrink wrapped the extra Mason chairs and other items that weren't needed at this time. Ron Deutsch, Ronnie Jr., and Tom Merrills moved everything to the barn. That really opened the inside of the hall. Glass display cases were moved and filled, furniture rearranged, picture frames were rebuilt and new ones purchased. Rob, Joyce Woodard and Ann Michel printed, framed and arranged new photos. Some of the most interesting are those that are on the back wall, visible when you walk into the Hall. They are some of Greenfield's first Masons, and some are Greenfield's first physicians, merchants, town clerks, business owners and a town supervisor or two. Joyce, Ann and Ron Feulner gave tours and answered questions from the many visitors. The upstairs' displays were not quite finished, so that was not opened to the public. A 1920s kitchen display at the top of the stairs was a big hit with those who did venture up to the top. (I'm sure Ron F. will have more in the Historian's Corner.) The museum project is not finished, but we have a great start.

The winner of the Chili Cook-Off was Ron Deutsch. We also had the raffles for our firewood and Larry Rutlands hand-blown glass pendant. The winner of the firewood was Colleen McIntyre and the pendant was Frank "Bud" Murphy, both live in Middle Grove. Thanks to Patty Schwartzbeck and Ida Gordon who watched over the garage sale. They sold some items and never left their post!

Oct. 12 was our wood cutting party. Rick and Patty Schwartzbeck, Vince Walsh, Ron Feulner, Dan Chertok, Tom Merrills, Rob Roeckle, Joan and JoAnn Rowland, and this years raffle winners, Dan and Colleen McIntyre were enthusiastic and ready to start the 'party.' It was a beautiful fall day, great for yard work, like cutting wood. Early spring, Vince Walsh, owner of Foothills Tree Service, limbed the maple trees that were on each side of Daketown School. We had the bright idea of using this for our wood raffle. The cutting began early with Vince, Ron F., Rick and Tom sawing away. Dan Chertok arrived in time to split the large chunks of maple. Rob made a ramp to roll the wood on the splitter, but Dan C. and Rick ate their "Wheaties" and lifted the wood onto the splitter. I must say, Dan was very impressive and kept going after smashing his hand. Once it was cut, another group stacked it on a trailer for last years raffle winner. As we were cutting, splitting, picking up and stacking wood, Vince used a "sling shot" to help cut down the

large trunks from the maple trees. Rob and Dan McIntyre held onto the guide rope as Vince fell the trees. Vince is a magician with his saw! By estimation, those trees were about 125 years old! Daketown School will fair better now that they are down. The sun can get in, it won't be damp and the large branches are not hanging over the roof. This group accomplished a lot that day. Thanks to you all!

Our meeting on Oct. 15 featured a crowd of 20 people who enjoyed our own Bill Hinckley speaking of his book, "Bird Droppings." The book is a collection of family stories that Bill had written over the years. Starting with his early years, growing up on the West Side of Saratoga in the days when the rail road ran through the center of town, to stories of his parents, how he met his wife, Florence and may other short stories which not only cover the history of the Hinckley family, but history of the Saratoga area. At the end of his program, Bill spoke of the "Smile Train," a nonprofit organization that provides corrective surgery to children with severe disfiguration from a cleft palate. It is hard for these children to speak, eat and exist. In some third world countries, the kids are taken from their parents, never to be seen again. This group of surgeons provide assistance to these kids. Mr. Hinckley's Uncle Don was born with a cleft palate. His speech was hard to understand, but Uncle Don had surgery later in life. If you'd like to learn more about this group, contact Mr. Hinckley, it is a worthwhile organization.

Oct. 22, we did something a bit out of the ordinary. I was asked if the Historical Society would like to help sponsor a "Meet the Candidates" night. We've tried different things before, so I did some research as not to go against our 501 3C status. Ron Feulner, Town Historian, started the night with a little history on how Greenfield came to be. The English and French came to the area in search of furs. Rich Englishmen pooled their resources to buy land from the Native Americans in the area, the Mohawks. The Kayadrossera Patent consisted of 25 allotments. Old deeds may still have these allotments on them. The Mohawks gave a deed in 1704, but it was not until 1768 that the deed was confirmed. A lot of negotiations and blood shed took place in between. Ron went over the counties and local towns on how they were named. The County candidates that were in attendance were very interested in this piece of history. I don't want to give too much away, as this may be a future program.

Ron Deutsch was excellent as the moderator, in which we had 8 candidates and about 10 residents. He kept the program rolling and added humor. Rob Roeckle asked Susan Hayes-Masa, running for Saratoga County Coroner, questions on how certain procedures are done. Ron D. asked Rob if he had "plans" for someone. That received a good laugh from the group which included Michael Zurlo and Phil Lindsey, candidates for Saratoga County Sheriff. All the candidates spoke on what they would like to see for the future of Greenfield or Saratoga County. Most were running unopposed, but were very interested in meeting the Greenfield residents. It was a relaxed atmosphere, which I believe the candidates enjoyed for a change. The candidates in attendance were: Paul Lunde, Town Supervisor; Dan Pemrick, Town Council; Walter Chandler, Town Council; Deborah Hopkins, Town Justice; Michael Zurlo (R), Saratoga County Sheriff; Phil Lindsey (D), Saratoga County Sheriff; Craig Hayner, Saratoga County Clerk; and Susan Hayes-Masa, Saratoga County Coroner. At the end of the program, the candidates and residents spoke about various topics one-to-one, as they enjoyed the refreshments. We still have the Old Town charm!

## HISTORIAN'S CORNER

by Ron Feulner

Winter is coming; I can feel it in my bones. If that doesn't convince you, consider the fact that those of you who go to warmer places are already thinking about when you want to leave.

Work at the museum has slowed, but the project continues in my office in town hall. Volunteer, Lee Bishop, unpacked all the Stewart's and Dake artifacts and arranged them neatly in the new cabinets, but now we must print and label all the photos which will be part of the display. I have been spending long hours working on this phase of the project. Each photo has to be scanned into the computer, transferred to our photo-shop program, repairs made when necessary (such as removing cracks in the photo), and then a rectangle placed on the photo where a description can be typed in. When the photo is finally printed, it must be framed. All this takes a great deal of time.

In addition, I am still doing research for informational panels, so they can be written and displayed explaining the background for each of the display areas.

Speaking of research, I reached a dead-end trying to find more information about Robert M. Mc Mullen, a wealthy New York business man, who owned the mansion on the hill in Greenfield during the 1920s and 30s. He and his wife were very active in the summer Saratoga racing season social scene. He also was supposed to have donated the land for St. Joseph's Church in Greenfield. But trying to fill in the details of his life in the area was proving to be beyond my research capabilities. That's when I turned to my friend, Sandy Arnold, and she soon worked her magic and came up with much more than I had known.

However, we have, to date, been unable to find a photo of Mr. Mc Mullen. It seems as if a man who was in the local news so often for a couple of decades would have had photographs taken, but I have not found any. If anyone reading this can help me, I would appreciate the effort. I have a sizable amount of information concerning Mc Mullen's activities in Greenfield to display in the museum, and it would be nice to have a photo of him also. You can call me at home, 518-893-0620.

My volunteers at the office continue to work on their projects. Each time that we have a visitor using the scrapbook data base or the vital statistics data base to find information about their ancestors; I thank my lucky stars for having such a dedicated group of volunteers who have made these projects and others possible.



**Splitting wood for the raffles Last year's wood recipients**  
Photos provided by Joan Rowland



# Harvest Fest, Chili Cook-Off and Garage Sale – October 5, 2013



Chili Tasting



Bag Races



Potato Tossing



Farmers Market Vendors



The Cook



Our Youngest Member



## The Museum

*Kitchen photos provided by Lizz Frank*





# Harvest Fest and Museum – October 5, 2013

Photos provided by Louise Okoniewski



## Wood Splitting Party Oct. 11, 2013





# THE FIRST STEP

By John R. Greenwood

Life is a climb. Step by step we rise up from one place to another. It may take a lifetime of steps to realize a dream. This blog is the story of an average man reaching a point in his life where grey hair and bones that make noise are just speed bumps on the road to a fulfilling life.

I recently had an opportunity to visit the building that my aunt and uncle used to call their home.

When they retired many years ago the small town where I grew up purchased the home and converted the back half into a community center. The front of the home and its rooms have been closed off and used for storage. I had been visiting the town hall next door and I stopped at the community center and asked if I could look through the front half of the house. As I slowly opened a set of doors at the bottom of these stairs I was instantly transported back in time. It had been almost 40 years since I had walked up these steps. The stairway once immaculately



maintained was now worn and tired. Knowing what a meticulous housekeeper my aunt had been it broke my heart to see them this way. Even in this condition they possessed a certain regality. Left neglected and sealed off from the world, the front of the home emitted a sadness I couldn't shake. Although I am glad to see the home being used to serve the people of the town that surrounds it, I couldn't help but wish better things for its future. I am hopeful that one day there will be enough funds available for the town to restore the remainder of the home to its original beauty. I envision a mini-museum of a 1950's home, furnished to the time period, complete with vintage photos, music, and wallpaper.



These stairs are similar to the stairs of my life. Each step has a story. You travel up and down them day after day reliving and reviving events and memories. Each journey up and each journey down creates a life. How we embrace that life is up to the individual. I have chosen to share these steps in stories and photographs. I do it because it satisfies a craving.

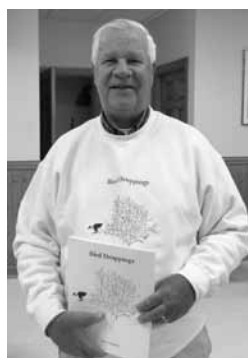
If you ignore those cravings and wait for another day or another opportunity it may never come. My suggestion is to open those doors at the bottom of the stairs and start climbing, you'll never know what's at the top if you don't take the first step.

## HERITAGE HUNTERS MEETINGS

The following Heritage Hunters meetings will be held on Saturdays at 1 p.m., Town of Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring St. [Route 29], Schuylerville. For information, email [melfrejo@aol.com](mailto:melfrejo@aol.com) or call 518-587-2978. Public is welcome.

**Nov. 16, Saturday, 1 p.m. – Kathleen Roe**, director of operations at the New York State Archives, will speak about "Finding Genealogical Treasures in the State Archives."

**January 18, Saturday, 1 p.m. – Tricia Shaw**, education coordinator for the Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site, will tell us about the 18th century artifacts that archaeologists found after the 2011 flooding.



**William Hinckley talking about his new book, *Bird Droppings*, at the October historical society meeting.**

October refreshment volunteers, Louise Okoniewski, Lelah Cornell and Patty Schwartzbeck, served pumpkin pie, pumpkin bread, chocolate chip cookies and brownies.

November refreshment volunteers are Alice Feulner and Joyce Woodard.

**Please send articles and/or photos for our future newsletters to**

**The Town of Greenfield Historical Society,  
P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 or  
email it to: [JJones18215@roadrunner.com](mailto:JJones18215@roadrunner.com).**

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

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 ONE YEARS DUES, 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.

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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 would like to write an article for the newsletter, send it to: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 or email it to: [JJones18215@roadrunner.com](mailto:JJones18215@roadrunner.com).**

## Updating Historic Sites Map in the Town of Greenfield

If you have any information, email Dan Chertok at [BMMSCHERTOK@gmail.com](mailto:BMMSCHERTOK@gmail.com).

You also may call (518-893-2268) or write him at: Dan Chertok, 58 Ormsbee Road, Porter Corners, NY 12859



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

