



Historical Society Newsletter

OFFICERS: President, Mary Vetter; Vice President, Joan Rowland;

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Louise Okoniewski, Jane Potter and Robert Roeckle

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

Volume 18, Issue 7



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email toghistsoc@gmail.com

www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

“Dedicated to all former and current members, volunteers and Board members. Thank you!”

“Newsletter Sponsor – anonymous donation of \$50”

CALENDAR

March 20, 2018 – Tuesday, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** *Marie Willard* will speak about growing up in Middle Grove in the 1950s and some of the older people and families she knew back then.

April 17, 2018 – Tuesday, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** *Mary Jane Pelzer* is the “soap lady” at the Saratoga Farmers’ Market. The program is “Good, Clean Fun: A short history and demonstration of heritage soap making.”

May 15, 2018 – Tuesday, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** *Greg Veitch*, Chief of Police for Saratoga Springs, will talk about his book – *All the Law in the World Won’t Stop Them*. It’s about crime, gambling and corruption in Saratoga Springs through 1921.

Everyone is welcome, admission is free, you don’t have to be a member to attend and refreshments are served after all programs.

Meetings 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

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

Thanks to the “save-the-day” refreshment volunteers for February, Mary Vetter, Katie Finnegan and Lelah Cornell took care of everything.

Janet Jones, Refreshment Chairperson

March Notes

by Mary Vetter

So, another winter and another wonderful program was bested by mother nature. Oh wait, didn’t I start with that line last month? I think we are all tired of the weather and of the flu. It was the flu that brought down our February speaker, Mary Cuffe Perez. We have since learned that she has recovered (Thank Goodness!) and Katie Finnegan will try to reschedule her for next year. The evening was complicated by the fact that Janet Jones couldn’t attend. Thankfully, she armed me with the refreshment bag and a container of snicker doodle cookies.

With our speaker down for the count, Katie sprang into action and between she and her husband, Pat, they devised Plan B for our meeting. Katie led the way by sharing a family photo and Pat followed up with an entertaining presentation on Katie’s family. Ron Feulner rounded out the evening with tales of his own family. We ended the meeting with lots of goodies. Katie and Lelah contributed pies and cupcakes and I added pumpkin bread to the cookies. I supplemented the beverages with a pot of terrible coffee. I hadn’t ever used the coffee maker at the Community Center and it showed. I never thought to get a lesson but will remedy that for future meetings.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the stories and the goodies. Katie was sure people needed a night out to stave off cabin fever and I believe she was right. We have the evening on video so if anyone is interested, they can contact the Town Historian’s office and request a CD or they can email the Historical Society at the email listed in this newsletter.

We are going to keep our fingers crossed and hope that the winter season shows us some mercy for our March meeting. Our next guest is Marie Willard. Come and walk down memory lane as she talks about growing up in Middle Grove in the 1950s.

Our Newest LIFETIME MEMBER

Mark H. Young

Shop at Amazon Smile

Help support our historical society when you shop at Amazon. Amazon Smile, the charitable arm of Amazon, will make a donation to us on qualifying purchases when you sign into your Amazon account at smile.amazon.com. The first time you do this, tap Accounts & Lists then tap Your Amazon Smile. On the right-hand side of the screen tap the change charity button and type in: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society.

Once you have saved us as your charity, start shopping. When you checkout, Amazon will let you know if any of your purchases qualify for a donation. Amazon then sends the donation to us. You do nothing more. Remember to sign in at smile.amazon.com on all your Amazon shopping trips to support us.

Thanks!

Second Mug Now Available

This year's mug features the IOOF Hall which is now The Town of Greenfield Historical Society's Chatfield Museum of Local History. The Baptist Church, which dates in the early 1900s, is seen before the IOOF Hall and the carriage house is not visible.

Cost again this year will be \$10. You can place your order by contacting Joan Rowland at 518-893-7786 or by mailing in your check and request to The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. If you are in need of the mug to be mailed to you, please add shipping cost of \$8.



HISTORIAN'S CORNER

by Ron Feulner

Spring is in the air if not on the ground. We are on the right side of winter as the old timers used to say. I have been thinking lately about the Town of Greenfield and wondering why I feel so much a part of it. I know there are a lot of you out there who feel the same way, but I wonder why.

I was born here but left when I was a teenager and did not permanently return until after retirement, but my parents always lived here. Some of you have spent your entire lives here, while others of you are relative new comers, but we all appear to feel the same about our town.

Is it the two mountain ridges, the Palmerton Range on one side and the Kayaderosseras Range on the other with our beloved trout stream, the Kayaderosseras, flowing nearly the length of the town down through the middle, or is it the rolling sand hills, and many wetlands, or beautiful Lake Desolation, or is it something else entirely.

Maybe it is the people of Greenfield. Those of us who were born here know that we come from rugged stock because our ancestors were woodsmen, farmers, or businessmen who served them. A hundred years ago, Greenfield was covered with small hundred acre farms each having a team of horses to do the heavy work, a few cows to provide milk, cheese, and meat, and a few chickens running around looking for bugs and other

scraps of food (free range, we would call them now).

And, I almost forgot the pigs that ate the daily table scraps and grew during the year until it was cool enough in the autumn to be butchered and rendered into smoked bacon, salt pork, and sausage that fed us for another year.

These people came to Greenfield from many different places, but basically they came because of the land and the freedom to live and work on it. That is not so different from the new comers: the people who are tied to the city because of their work, but they want to live in the open green space that is Greenfield, and they want their children to grow here.

Or maybe it is the excellent school system that attracts some families to Greenfield. That was less important a hundred years ago because schools back then had a simpler mission. Most students only learned to read and write and do simple arithmetic before becoming a farmer or marrying a farmer. Another mission of those early schools was to take students whose parents spoke different languages and came from different backgrounds and turn them into Americans.

Whatever the reason that we now find ourselves in Greenfield, I think that we all have that common bond with each other and the land that makes us call ourselves Greenfielders.

**Both of these articles were published in our
March 2005 Newsletter**

Life in Middle Grove

by Mary Max

On a cold winter's day, the wind blowing and snow drifting, mom was doing the dishes when I suddenly decided that it was time to come into this world. On Dec. 11, 1922, the snow was too deep for Dr. Kingsbury to come to the house so Mrs. Chatfield, who lived across the street, became the midwife for my birth. So there I was before suppertime. Mom was even able to get supper on for dad and my brothers, Ed, Alfred, Lou and my sister, Helen, that day. I was the fifth child. Mom and the boys worked the farm while dad worked in the Pioneer Mill in Rock City Falls.

I remember riding the trolley in Middle Grove to Ballston fairgrounds where I rode the Merry-Go-Round. I remember going on the 4th of July to see the fireworks. We all rode in a Model-T Ford. One night the lights went out in the car and one of us had to sit on the hood of the car with a lantern so that we could see to get home.

I also remember other 4th of July's, when we would all climb up on the roof of the hen house with blankets and pillows and watch the fireworks go off in Saratoga. Boy, were we thrilled by those events.

I was about 11 or 12 when Alfred had the janitor's job at the one-room school by the cemetery in Middle Grove. I sometimes went with him to sweep the oiled floor, carry firewood in for the pot-bellied stove, get water for the drinking water tank for the day, and wash the blackboards unless the teacher had written the lessons for the next day on it. In the winter, we also had to shovel a path for the teacher to get into the school, and we also shoveled a spot to park her car in.

In addition to the school, we had chores to do at home. The older boys had to feed and milk the cows. We girls carried firewood into the house, gathered eggs from the hen house, and fed and watered the chickens and pigs. In the summer time, we had to weed the garden and do other chores around the house and farm. Mom and dad both worked hard to make a living and bring up us kids. Four years after me, my mother had another boy, then came Alice and Dorothy. Dorothy was the last child, and she was born on the first child's birthday, January 31. Later, Alice caught pneumonia and died.

I went to all eight grades in the little one-room school near the cemetery in Middle Grove. There are now grave markers right where the school once stood. For high school, I went to Saratoga by bus where I graduated in 1942. While I was attending high school, I still had my chores to do at home. I had to help milk the cows and feed the chickens before I caught the bus at 7 o'clock

in the morning. We arrived back home by bus at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and started right in with the afternoon chores. During the summer, we also had to do the haying. I can remember driving our Model-T car with the hay rake behind it and dumping the hay in windrows. On other days, we would have to keep track of the cows in the pasture because some of the fields had no fences.

I can remember driving the truck with a load of grain over to McChesney's in Galway where the grain was ground and bagged for the cows and horses. I didn't have my driver's license yet when I did this but Dad would tell me, "What you got to lose, they can't take your license away from you."

If I wanted to take a walk or go swimming with my friends, I had to weed a couple of rows in the garden or do other chores first. Life wasn't that easy on the farm. We didn't have running water in the house nor did we have a bathroom. Sears Roebuck catalogs did double duty in those days; they were there to look at and served as toilet paper in the outhouse. In 1936, we finally got a bathroom installed in the house, I was 14 years old. Up until then, we all took our baths in the kitchen in a galvanized tub. We sure all loved the indoor bathroom when winter came that year.

My Favorite Doll

by Florence Breitback

[Florence was unable to attend our last meeting when favorite toys were presented so she wanted to share her memories of her favorite dolls.]

My favorite doll was Betty, probably because Mother arranged to have it purchased for me when she went into a Washington hospital for the last time. On the Antique Road Show, they said anything made by Shoenhut was valuable today.

Mother's doll, Fidelia, had a porcelain head and her black hair was molded in. I have a magazine article that says she is now worth \$1,100. I sold both dolls for \$25 each when I moved to Coy Road as my space there was limited (no attic or cellar).

**HERITAGE HUNTERS
Genealogy and Local History**

Heritage Hunters of Saratoga County will meet on the third Saturday of the month, for March. Programs will be held at 1 p.m. at the Town of Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring St. [Route 29], Schuylerville.

March 17 – Grant Cottage site coordinator, Ben Kemp, will tell us about late president and union general, Ulysses S. Grant, and his relationship with the Irish.

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, 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.** Email toghistsoc@gmail.com for more information. **Click on STORE, ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP – HOUSEHOLD or LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP and follow the instructions.**

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.**

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 proof read 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 Chertok@LCYLAW.com or write him at: Dan Chertok, 58 Ormsbee Road, Porter Corners, NY 12859



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Historical Society
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