

Historical Society Newsletter

Ron Feulner, Editor
PO Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833

OFFICERS: Coral Crosman, President; Deb Dittner, Vice President; Karl Zeh, Secretary; Alice Feulner, Treasurer; Robert Roeckle, Trustee; Ron Feulner, Trustee; Jud Kilmer, Trustee.

Volume 5, Issue 6

This issue is sponsored by Jud and Sandy Kilmer in memory of Guy and Thelma Kilmer.

Calendar

Tuesday, February 15th, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Regular meeting followed by program **Lucinda: the Mountain Mourner** presented by Sandy Arnold.

Tuesday, March 15th, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Regular meeting followed by program.

Note from Treasurer

Thanks to all who purchased one of our Historic Photos CDs. To date we have sold \$228 worth, which helps us meet our annual budget. We still have more available at \$15 each plus \$2 mailing charge. Call (518) 893 0620 to order.

Coral's Calls

It was a "full house" for our recent toy-sharing session, with happy memories of less tangible games we played (as demonstrated by Jim Smith and Karl Zeh) and while I'm hard-pressed to evoke our evening as well as *Daily Gazette* reporter Lee Coleman was able to do with the assistance of photographer Meredith Kaiser, one is nevertheless grateful for the "extra" publicity that we all got. (The article appeared on p. B2 of the Jan. 19 *Gazette*). Our veteran members are not the type to blush or

assume shyness in the face of the media, that's for sure! Barbie Dolls and sock monkeys, spool on a string and an old-fashioned metal train that brought Bob Dake his moment of fame as captured by the newspaper photographer. Jim Smith and his wife used the occasion to describe the kinds of games that were invented from the simplest of materials when he was growing up in New Jersey—it was quite apparent with all these reminiscences that "cost" had very little to do with the pleasures reaped from invented games and rudimentary toys, many of which were hand crafted.

During the business portion of the meeting, a motion was made by Karl Zeh and seconded by Jim Smith to pursue an historic designation for the Daketown School which is at last nearly ready for visitation—once the weather warms up a bit. Historic status of buildings was a topic of discussion at the Dec. 7 officers & trustees meeting where it was suggested that the school might be a good place to start in terms of launching the process. Yours truly sent a letter to Sen. Hugh Farley's office about potential grants to support the work of our organization as I continue to try to nudge the charter office in the State Ed Department to see if, after 21 years of existence, we can't nail down our permanent charter at long last.

My Childhood Memories

By Evelyn Marcellus Feulner

(Continued from January issue)



Evelyn at age sixteen (circa 1927)

My parents had six children and none of us had a lot of toys and things like children have today. At Christmas, we each got a sleigh or skis or something that we had asked for and some fruit and candy, but that was pretty much it for the year. Of course, we always had apples, and on one farm we had plums. Ma would can them so we could enjoy them all through the year. Not only did she can fruit, but also meat. My favorite was the pork that she canned after Pa butchered the pig.

When we lived on the Kessler place, our farm occupied land in four different townships. Because of this, the school authorities decided to send me to a different school each year. I started in the Daniel's School, then switched to the Antioch School for a while, then East Galway, and finally back to the Daniel's School. This all happened during the four or five years that we lived on the Kessler place.

After that, Pa got a job running a winter logging camp up on Glass Factory Mountain. Since my mother had to go and cook for the men in the

camp, I had to stay with my grandparents and go to yet another school. My younger brothers and sister could go with my parents because they were not yet old enough to attend school, but I had to be where I could continue my schooling. My grandmother had two children still living at home. One was a boy one-year older than me, and the other was a girl younger than I was. That was the unhappiest time of my childhood. I only saw my immediate family at Christmas time that winter. The rest of the time, I was with my grandparents and their two children. My grandparents were good to me, but their two children (my uncle and aunt) treated me like an outsider. The winter finally ended, and my parents returned from the logging camp. This time we moved to a farm on Young's Road. Pa worked the farm for the owner, Mr. Gammons. They were a nice family, and we liked it there, but then Mr. Gammons became ill and died so we had to move again. This time Pa bought a farm on Lake Desolation Road [just above the intersection with Barney Road on the opposite side of the road. The place was later known as the Foy Place]. I was now thirteen years old so I finished my grade school at Chatfield Corners one-room School [the school is still there but converted to a residence]. By now I had two brothers and a sister, but because I was the oldest, I had to help Pa with the chores. In the summer, I helped him with the haying. I had a gray horse called Dixie that I liked a lot, and we used her to rake hay during haying season, which pleased me. Pa also had a large strawberry patch, which the whole family helped to pick when they were ripe. I remember that we would pick several crates of strawberries at a time.

By now, my brothers, Leland and Donald, were getting old enough so that they could take my place helping with the chores.

My childhood wasn't all work; there were fun times too. We had a great hill behind the farmhouse on Lake Desolation Road that we skied and rode down hill on. During some evenings, Pa would get his violin out and play for us. He was a skilled fiddler and often played for square dances and house dances.

One special time for me when I was young was when Pa took just me to Ballston Spa on a shopping trip. He bought me a beautiful pink dress with a pleated skirt and coat and hat to match. Just

the two of us went, and I can still remember everything he got for me in great detail.

When I was about fifteen, there was another girl about my age who lived nearby. My family would take her and me to a dance on one weekend, and the next weekend her parents would take us.

When I was eighteen, I met a wonderful young man, Fred Feulner. When I was twenty, and he was twenty-four, we got married. The first year, we rented a house just above my parent's. In 1932, my mom gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Shirley. Because I lived next door, I could help her with the baby. Ma was forty and in poor health so I helped her and was so happy to take care of my new baby sister. In 1934, my mom had a baby boy, Gordon. We had, by then, moved further away from my parents, but because Ma's health was getting so bad, Fred and I moved back into my parent's house so I could help Ma with the baby. We continued to live with them until my oldest brother, Leland, got married, and he and his new wife, Sophie, moved in with Ma and Pa to help until Ma got better. Later, Pa gave up farming, and they moved to Schaghticoke where Pa became a wood buyer for West Virginia Pulp and Paper Co.

I am now ninety-three years old and live with my daughter, Joan, and her husband, Sonny Peacock. When I was nearing my ninetieth birthday, I was still living in the house that my husband and I had purchased in Middle Grove. We lived there about sixty-five years. I lost my husband in 1993 but continued to live in the house by myself for nine more years. After I broke my hip, I moved in with my daughter where I live now. I have a large cozy room that I spend time in if I am tired or don't feel well; however, I take my meals with my daughter and her husband. Sometimes, when I am having breakfast at their dining room table, I can look out and see the school buses filled with children, and it brings back memories of when I was a child going to school. Of course, we had no buses in those days.

Gersham [sic] Morehouse

from **The History of Middle Grove** an unpublished document written by Edith Ellsworth 1959

Early in the spring of 1786, twenty-year old Gersham Morehouse, a millwright by trade, came

from Greenfield, Connecticut and secured wilderness land along an old east west Indian cross trail, in the northern part of Albany County, now Saratoga County. And it was here on the west bank of the Kayaderosseras Creek, just above the lower bridge in Middle Grove, he built the first sawmill in the Town of Greenfield. Two years later, he returned to Connecticut and returned with his bride to the Morehouse Mill hamlet. In 1792, he built the first gristmill in the town just across the creek. And since one mill pond supplied both mills, it was definitely understood that the sawmill's operator must never draw water when it was needed to run the gristmill.

Letter to the Editor from the Wozniaks

We have enjoyed reading the articles about the history of the Daketown School and look forward to its reopening after many restoration efforts. Over the past 30 + years we have lived in and restored the farmhouse next to the schoolhouse (as described in Helen (Jones) Woods article "Living on the Farm Adjacent to the Daketown School," November, 2004 Historical Society Newsletter). Several school trustee meetings were held in our house, and we have copies of the records from those meetings. These took place in the 1870's while George Bishop owned the house.

We would like to address Larry Frank's question concerning the district number change from 18 to 8. We believe the original schoolhouse #18 burned down on December 10, 1876. Special meetings were held on January 1, 1877, January 27, 1877, and April 10, 1877 in our house. The trustees at these meetings decided to build a new schoolhouse on the site of the old one. The new schoolhouse was completed in October of 1877 for use during the winter term. The schoolhouse remained district #18 until 1932 when it became district #8. Dr. A. M. Hollister, the district superintendent from 1916-1936, consolidated several school districts in 1932. He renumbered the former nineteen districts into fourteen districts.

We are still researching the history of our house, but one interesting discovery is that Gershorn [sic] Morehouse, a millwright and one of

the first settlers of Greenfield, sold his mills in Middle Grove and moved to our house in 1792. He lived here until 1850 when he left the farm and lived with his children until his death in 1857.

We have discovered many antiques while restoring our house and will describe them in another article for a future newsletter.

*Sincerely,
Keith and Mary (Mitch) Wozniak*

A Note from Philly Dake

Kindly find enclosed a check for \$300 to cover a few issues [of the newsletter].

You have been great to the Dakes.

Philly Dake

Excerpt from a letter received from Helen Woods

Enjoyed article Evelyn wrote in this [last] months news letter. Also saw Andrew Kubica has been in touch. His family farm was on Coy Road back to back with our farm.

Helen Woods 1/14/05



Photo of members and their childhood toys

Taken by Coral Crozman 1/18/05

***l. to r. back row: Janet Jones, Bill Hinckley,
JoAnn Rowland, Frank Max, Mary Max. Front
row l. to r: Joan Rowland, Earl Jones, Margie
Jones, Nancy Homiak, and Bob Dake.***

**To join our society and receive our newsletter,
send \$6 (individual) or \$10 (family) along with
your name and address.**

***Town of Greenfield Historical Society
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