

Historical Society Newsletter

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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 7

This issue is sponsored by Mary Max in memory of her three brothers: Edward, Alfred, and Louis Eichorst.

Calendar

Tuesday, March 15th, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Regular meeting followed by program, Raymond Smith of the State Office of Parks, Recreation, & Historic Preservation will speak about the pros and cons of placing a building on the Historic Register.

Tuesday, April 19th, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Regular meeting followed by program, Todd DeGarmo will talk about his visit to the American Indian Museum in Washington.

Tuesday, May 17th, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Our last meeting of the year, and election of officers. Meeting followed by program, Ron Feulner will talk about his new novel, Adirondack Justice.

Corals's Calls

All seemed to agree among one of our record turnouts (close to 50) for Sandy Arnold's most successful debut performance regarding Mourning Lucinda & company (or lack thereof) that the organization had achieved another milestone in its 21-year history. A charming lady from Wilton asked, "How old is this group?" and was astounded to learn of its longevity since she hadn't known of us.

In spite of media "creativity" from time to time, it has been one of this 5th estate vet's goals to make the community more aware of what we are about in terms of preservation of such folk narratives (and their reality base) plus the buildings and landmarks (like Manvill Rock—for amateur geologists, this was a fun visual tour on video screen) that exist in the Town of Greenfield with its (at least) three distinct communities of Middle Grove, Porter Corners and Greenfield Center. There were historians and neighbors in the audience, most somewhat awed by Ms. Arnold's prodigious research, shedding light on recognition of the early PD Manvill work in its various editions, if now out of print and rare, its place among the writings of her peers, especially women, and the numerous genealogical links from Lucinda's family branchings in the late 18th/early 19th Century down to living descendants. Our speaker was also very modest about her accomplishments in tracking past what author Ron Feulner, referring to his account, *Lucinda or the Mountain Mourner*, had called impassable "dead ends". Her ability to capture us with just enough story weaving amid the names and "mystery" remaining to make us all wish for more was impressive... Town historian Mary DeMarco had arranged a display of artifacts from that area, supplied by Ray Peacock, and it proved a very competitive

attraction to the delicious confections prepared by Mary Max, Rosemary Smith and Margie Jones. Folk ably made the rounds between with an energetic accompaniment of neighborly chat and indispensable networking. A certain reticence to bring the evening to a close was overcome by yours truly starting to blink the lights around 9:20...

While I promised myself beforehand to run a sane & sober biz meeting prior to our presenter, I seemed to lack that deft touch... I was forced to recount how mortified I was to find, now reading my last year's diary as a day book, that *there* was where I recorded communications with the assessor's office regarding submission of tax-exempt forms for our newly-acquired property... asking them to contact me if anything else was required. Then I apologized for not at least doing a cover letter to accompany the forms although one would hardly create such an epistle to dress one's 1040 (at least one generally hopes to avoid that necessity.) Trustee Bob Roeckle has taken over that mission for us this year and we're looking forward to hearing more, maybe by our next issue.

The State chartering process is looking brighter with Dave Palmquist's assurance that he is prepared to make a recommendation concerning our petition for an "absolute" charter and is hopeful to schedule the necessary site visit prior to June 1 if travel funds permit. We eagerly await his inspection and guidance as he has much familiarity with similar as well as contrasting cultural organizations across the state.

Past president Ron Feulner generously offered to head the Daketown School committee for which I've suggested a two-pronged goal: to pursue the historic designation process and also plan activities opening the building to the public, perhaps in conjunction with Greenfield Elementary School; it was hard not to notice Ms. DeMarco smiling at this suggestion (she has education deep in her heart, bless her!) Several others volunteered to join Ron's

committee but I did not record all so shall save for next time. In a multi-tasking exercise for our spry group, I asked for refreshment volunteers while Ron was distributing Feb. newsletters to hand-raising members and guests... Fortunately, both aims were achieved.

Afterward, Janet Jones suggested, having become nostalgic over the slides from the Manvill Rock tour in the rain when participants all got soaked and bedraggled (restored subsequently by Alice Feulner's cookies—sure can believe that!) that it was time to schedule our *next* outing... I had to confess that, other than hunting on the ridge, once frequenting Lake Desolation (and the Sheep Dip) when the kids were still shorter than me, I had yet to "tour" many of Greenfield's splendors such as the Glass Factory, etc. She stipulated we should go after black fly season and before hunting season, dates TBA.

I think I've used up my quota of space (since my computer seems to have lost its fascination for printing digital pix of our gatherings) but maybe one *very* tiny request and one HUGE *gracias!* to all those who have helped set up chairs; when my back was bad I didn't figure it made much sense to tell my patient doctor I didn't know whether it was my usual shoveling, wood-hauling, coughing or...maybe resuming alpine skiing with my 28-year-old skis finally put to racing... anyway, it improved but I was thinking last night as I managed to get that 8th chair on the stack...*I never even suspected this...* For those who can't afford a gym or just feel richly good-hearted, we're usually setting up from 6:40 on...and welcome early-birds—one such of our regulars I was delighted to see (will be 93 on next b'day), I graciously excused from assisting. *Ciao!*

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. 11th, 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 Fourth's of July 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 eleven or twelve 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 31st. 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 seven o'clock in the morning. We arrived back home by bus at about four 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 fourteen 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).

My Memories of our Daketown Farm by Harold F. Jones

My sister, Helen (Jones) Woods, and I, Harold Jones, were raised on the farm, which surrounded the District # 8, Town of Greenfield schoolhouse. We are the remaining members of the Arthur L. and Nina E. (Hathaway) Jones family. Our other sisters were Neva (Jones) Thompson, Gladys Jones and Arlene (Jones) Butler.

We have enjoyed reading the Newsletter for the past three or four years. Each and every issue brings back memories for me as various names are mentioned. When those names relate to people who lived in the Middle Grove, Daketown, Chatfield Corners and even Porters Corners areas, I gradually remember who they are and something about them. Also, I will tend to think of the "Crik" road and the "Mountain" road as reference points from my youth.

Helen provided me with a copy of Ron Fuelner's book [King of the Mountain] about his family, especially about his father, Fred. Of course, I had only known Fred as Fritz, who along with the Marcellus boys were known as expert and competitively fast woodsmen. One of the first issues of the Newsletter, which I read, included an article by Ruth Johnson about Freeman Jones of Middle Grove. He was our grandfather (also Bob Dake's grandfather!). The last issue referred to Andrew Kubicka. The Kubicka farm bordered our farm on the north – I remember working with my Dad repairing the fences on those pasture fields, which bordered their farm so that our young cows would be contained.

Thus, I will recall herein names of people, which lived in our neighborhood, primarily in the 40's and 50's. Helen's recollections go back another 10 years into the 30's as well.

Our house and barns were 300-400 feet west of the District #8 schoolhouse. At that time,

Daketown Road, a dirt road, went along in front of the school, westward between our house and barn, down a steep hill, across the bridge (3 ton limit), and soon up a longer hill, past the Fred and Maude Carp place. The next house was the Charles V. Dake farm, and then next was the stone block house, which belonged to Percy Dake. Those were the only houses in that direction until one came to the "Mountain" or "Lake Desolation" road. Across the "hard" road was the Irving Lewis farm. North on the "Mountain" road was the Ord place. This was across from the Coy Road intersection. Mr. Ord had a combination gas station, convenience store and barbershop. Haircuts were 50 cents.

The fields on both sides of Daketown Road east of the school were the eastern most part of Dad's farm. Daketown Road continues east and goes past an area where the Dakes had set out a number of blue spruce trees. I believe that this may have been the original Stark Dake place. Near the northern end of the spruce trees was/is an old house foundation, perhaps of the Dake's home. Just west of the house, over in Dad's field, was a barn foundation (where we picked raspberries). This was the far right back corner of the field, which was northeast of the school. Dad called it the schoolhouse lot – and we recall that he had purchased this land from the Dakes. As other articles have indicated the schoolhouse had been established by the Dakes, on their farm.

Daketown Road continued southeast of the area where the blue spruce had been established, to a fork in the road, continuing to the right as Daketown Road or going left as Sand Hill Road. The Paul Vanna farm driveway also came out near this fork. Lizzie Dake lived in a house just east of the fork, on Sand Hill road. There was another house just east of that one, just before the road turned north to go up over the "sand hill". Just east of that point was a sometime beaver dam. Clarence and Pearl Jones lived in the first house over the sand hill. They are parents of Zelda Rhodes. Only recently have I learned that we were related, all being descendants of Phineas Addington Jones. Dad's farm included part of that sand hill, which was north of the blue spruce area. One of my 4-H projects in 1949-1950 was to set out 1000 pine trees on that sand hill.

South on Daketown Road, beyond the fork with Sand Hill Road, there were, in 1945, no more houses, just the bridge across the Kayderrosserus and up to that hard road, known as the Porters Corners Road or just as the "Crik" road. Arthur Perry lived south of there a little ways further up the dirt road. Going left on the hard road took you past the Potters, the Rhodeses and the Willseys.

Much of the year one could see all these houses when standing in front of the school, though they were nearly a mile away. One could also easily see the Paul Vanna farm, it was just across our pasture field and their pasture field. This farm was sold to the Tom Cochran family in about 1948 after Mr. Vanna had died. The Cochrans were from Beaver Falls, Pa. They stayed only a few years before Percy Dake bought the farm and had a fish pond there. Dad purchased a Ford 9N tractor from the Cochrans about 1950.

The farmhouse in which we lived was old, perhaps built in the 1800's. I recall that it had been owned by the Morehouse family, but I am not sure. Perhaps there had also been a gristmill down by the creek, down the hill from the house. A hydraulic ram was also in that location which provided running water to our house and barn. Our Uncle Raymond was involved in establishing that water system, including the dam across the creek just upstream from the bridge. I recall that electricity was added in about 1939-1940. I remember collecting the "coins" as the electricians punched out the knockouts from the junction boxes. Our first electric appliance was a refrigerator. Our Zenith radio was powered by a car battery (6V!). We used that same battery with our saw rig. Thus on August days, when we were sawing wood to fill the wood shed, no radio broadcasts. The saw rig was powered by a Fairbanks-Morse single cylinder engine, perhaps a 6-inch diameter piston. The engine had to be hand cranked! Our first telephone came after WW II, perhaps in 1946-1947. There were 12 homes on one party line. Number Please! Our number was 798 M2! Indoor plumbing was added in about 1950. Well water and central heating were added in the mid 60's.

Our father was born in 1889. At that time the Freeman and Mary Jones family was living on the Coy Road in a place, which I have known as the Arbib place. In 1910, the family moved to the farm

on Daketown Road. Our parents were married in 1920. Freeman and Mary moved out going to the place in Middle Grove, nearly across the road from Stedmans Post Office. They lived there until 1939 when our grandfather died at the age of about 88. Remaining at the Daketown Road location in 1920 was our Uncle Raymond and Mary's brother, Daniel Randall. Our father lived in the house from 1910 until he died in 1968.

Our mother, Nina, was from the Town of Easton in Washington County. She came to Town of Greenfield sometime between 1915 and 1920. She was the schoolteacher at Chatfield Corners. She roomed in the house owned by Truman and Irene Kilmer, atop the hill, on the dirt road directly south of Chatfield Corners. She came from a Quaker family that can trace their ancestors back to arriving in the Tauton, Mass area in 1635.



Arthur and Nina Jones, August 8, 1920 (wedding photo)

More about the Freeman Jones family. Their children were Clarence (who lived near Round Lake), Clara (married Eugene McNight and lived in Porters Corners), Eva (married Will Loomis and lived in Victory Mills), Eunice (married Avard Dake and lived in Middle Grove, later in Saratoga, and is the mother of Bob Dake), Harry (who lived in Middle Grove, Mountain Road and later in Rock City Falls), Dad, and Walter Raymond (who lived in Scotia).

Freeman Jones was the son of Joseph Stafford Jones – who was the son of Phineas Addington Jones – who was the son of Phineas Thomas Jones – who was the son of Captain Thomas Jones. Captain Jones was killed in the first day of the Battle of Saratoga, 9/17/1777, fighting as a Tory or Loyalist in Burgoyne's Army. The Saratoga Battlefield Exhibit describes the scene! Most of the Thomas Jones family escaped to Canada.

We know only a little about Phineas Thomas Jones except that he was a teenager in 1777 and did not need to go to Canada. We know more about Phineas Addington Jones. He came to Corinth area from Vermont and was married to Nancy Rhodes on July 6, 1806. We have recently obtained papers, which relate to his application for pension from War of 1812. He served 6 months in the Army at Sackett's Harbor. He received 2 land grants as a pension and later an \$8 per month pension. We do know that he lived in the Town of Greenfield. Clayton Brown's book shows Phineas Jones as the oldest living resident in the Town of Greenfield in 188? We also know that he and Nancy are buried in Hutchings Cemetery on the Coy Road. Question, did he live his later years with Freeman Jones? Were the land grants at all connected with land along the Coy Road?

We do know that another son is the grandfather of Clarence Jones of the Sand Hill Road. And another son was the grandfather of Harry Lewis of Middle Grove, the father of Alonzo Lewis. Among other things this means that Zelda Rhodes has the same great-great-grandfather as Helen and me!

Our farm and home was occupied by the Freeman Jones family in about 1910. Our father, Arthur, would have been about 20 years old at that time.

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

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