

Historical Society Newsletter

Ron Feulner, Editor
P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833

OFFICERS: Coral Crosman, President; Deb Dittner, Vice President; Patty Swartzbeck, Secretary; Alice Feulner, Treasurer; Robert Roeckle, Trustee; Ron Feulner, Trustee; JoAnn Rowland, Trustee.

Volume 6, Issue 1

This issue is sponsored by Ruth Donogh. Ruth asked me (the editor) to dedicate this issue to the persons whom I think have made a significant recent contribution to the historical society. I chose Coral Crosman (President) and Robert Roeckle (Chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee). Coral because she has worked tirelessly over the past two years and especially over this past summer while the rest of us were taking a much needed break. She has filled out forms, organized people, contacted reporters (for our one-room school publicity), and put up signs so people could find the school. She has kept our organization moving forward. Robert almost single-handedly painted the interior of the one-room school, and he and Coral set up the stove and desks in time for publicity photos. Thanks to both of these dedicated officers.

Calendar

Tuesday, September 20, potluck dinner at 6 p.m. and meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Program will be a sharing of one-room school stories (any school) so bring your favorite stories to share.

Tuesday, October 18, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Program to be arranged.

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.

Coral's Calls

What a summer we are having—but by the time this reaches you, we'll be closer to 3rd of a trio of open houses at the newly-refurbished Daketown School (with much attendant publicity in our local newspapers) and our first official meeting of the 2005-06 year, program TBA but at least (tho' my notes on this acct. are sketchy), a pot luck at the Community Center at 6 p.m., Sept. 20. As you might conclude (if you happened not to be at our very large gathering to hear author/past president Ron Feulner describe his excellent new novel, *Adirondack Justice*) I have assumed the presidency (despite strident to nagging command) for just one more year but am eagerly looking for leadership material in our midst—in more than one category! As of this writing, I have not heard from the state chartering office which hinted at a visit this season as part of fulfilling "last" requirement for absolute charter but State Parks & Rec has been keeping buildings & grounds chair Bob Roeckle and me on our toes in terms of meeting final details for our \$5,000 grant (from Sen. Farley's office) announced

in May re: conditions to be met for carriage shed funding this cycle. All going on while this prexy keeps wondering if it is presumptuous to order brass plate for my own gradually rejuvenated Georgian farmhouse over here in Middle Grove... I certainly have enough primer dabs and specks of Mayflower blue on my paint togs...

Ron Feulner gave an excellent talk (with slides) in May on his intriguing recent work to a packed community center. Sales of Ron's books appeared brisk among a congenial gathering (with tasty refreshments!) afterward. Copies may still be obtained at the Porter Corners' store (where our new secretary, Patty Schwartzbeck, may be found part-time in family biz) or by contacting Ron at P.O. Box 174, Greenfield Center NY 12833. Others elected or re-elected in May included Deb Dittner, vice-president; Alice Feulner, treasurer; Bob Roeckle, Ron Feulner and JoAnn Rowland, trustees. Earlier in the season, on May 14, Ron led an enlightened tour of the old Glass Factory site on Lake Desolation Road with a stop at the grave (Middle Grove) of the famous "James" of once Jamesville as well as a scenic side trek into the Archer Vly, all accompanied by a goodly number of historic fresh air enthusiasts.

I'd like to say a few words about the rejuvenated but in many regards pristine one-room schoolhouse that, owing to the assistance of William Dake in 1991, came into the possession of the Historical Society and is recently "showing off" its fresh paint and a few more critical structural aspects (replacing of a sillbeam, grading to improve drainage, etc.) with special thanks to volunteers and Munter Enterprises, Ron Feulner frequently serving as liaison with John Munter and others. I have become acquainted with this modest building this summer where even on a HOT day, a south breeze and shaded roof made a welcome setting for returning grads and others in July—Eddy Wardell was fortunate to find his Merrill workbook still reposing on the desktop from his 3rd grade there in 1956 before the school closed and he went on to Porters.

He animated our small gathering with his sharp recollections as he walked through the door—while this sometime school m'arm was extremely relieved she had not whisked the workbooks off the teacher's desk as she had Jane Potter's (and others) achievement tests. Special thanks to Arden Blunt who helped host the event along with Bill Hinckley (whose great idea it was to make the school available on specific dates) and Flo Hinckley, plus the inimitable and ever faithful Bob Dake. We are blessed that the chalkboard along the west wall has remained intact and that such features as the coffin stove, a large waterjug with spigot at base (rumored to be original) and a number of books have found their place in the building along with desks representing earlier and later periods of its 79-year history. Dot Rowland was able to round up a number of alumni for the *Post-Star* photo op and it was a swell reunion, this shutterbug only regretting not bringing her camera along. Other newspapers providing superb coverage were Ken Crowe's article in the *Times-Union* (Saratoga tabloid section on July 14); Lee Coleman's feature in the *Daily Gazette*, July 25, as well as reduced-rate (for non-profit) ad space in the Aug. 12 *Pennysaver* out of Corinth. I found myself becoming especially fond of this little school on the quiet knoll that didn't remotely resemble anyplace I'd ever studied but I could imagine sneaking up there one pastoral day to pen a few lines in solitude, away from Pages Corners tumult...

Just a note in passing in regard to Historical Society member "Linc" (Lincoln) H. Goodman who lived just across the border in Milton, a face that will be missed in the community as he was an avid hiker, often covering roadsides of this town and that adjacent, retrieving items that fly from others' passing windows all too carelessly...John Munter, in celebrating his eulogy at the Middle Grove church, said that many along his routes looked forward to his smile, his unobtrusive presence, and a word or two to cheer them on their way. At the age of 67, he passed away, too unexpectedly for many of us, on July 5.

In celebration of our re-opening the one-room Daketown school, I (the editor) thought the following article by Pat Morovich that I found in a small newspaper called the "Route 20 Pulse" might be interesting. It is based on a set of rules found posted in an old school near Esperance, NY.

School Teaching

by Pat Morovich

The requirements to teach in New York State are constantly undergoing change. This is to make sure the state's teachers are of the highest caliber possible. It was no different a hundred years ago or so, as a trip to the Esperance Historical Society's Old School House recently has shown.

Posted on one of the old desks at the school is a list of those things that were expected of a teacher who taught the students of Esperance way back then. They included the teacher's responsibility to keep the school room neat and clean at all times, plus:

- a. Sweeping floors at least once a day.
- b. Scrubbing the floors once a week, with hot water and Lye soap.
- c. Cleaning the blackboards daily.
- d. Starting the fire at 7 a.m. so the school will be warm by 8 a.m.
- e. Teachers will not dress in light colors.
- f. Dresses must not be more than two inches above the ankles.
- g. Two petticoats must be worn.
- h. Petticoats must be dried in pillowcases.
- i. Teachers will not marry, or keep company with men during the term of the year.
- j. She will not get into a carriage or automobile with any man except her brother or father.
- k. Teachers will not loiter at ice cream stores.
- l. Teachers are expected to be at home between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., unless in attendance at a school function.
- m. It is understood that teachers will attend church each Sunday, and either teach a class in Sunday school or sing in the church choir.
- n. The teacher will not leave town at anytime without the permission of the school board.

And this was all on top of teaching the children the three Rs.

This Esperance Historical Society document is undated.

Broken Axles

by Frank Max

I never had heard about broken axles before I was fifteen and living on the farm on Peacock Road in the Town of Greenfield. I was sitting alone that rainy day when Steve Sabesta came by and asked me if I would like to ride along on his egg route. All the roads were muddy and full of ruts because of the rain. After bouncing around through some particularly bad ruts and washouts, the truck came to a stop even though the motor was still running and the truck was in gear. After Steve said a few words that I shouldn't repeat, he told me that we had broken the axle. I got the job of working in the mud where I had to put the jack under the car and remove the wheel. After removing four bolts, we were able to get the broken axle out, and to my surprise, Steve had another axle in the truck. He told me that this wasn't the first time that he had broken one so he came prepared. Eventually, we were able to continue on with the egg route. Steve was well known in the area for his egg route. He bought the eggs from area families paying them cash or a loaf of bread or cans of fruit. He later sold the eggs to hotels and restaurants. Later that day, Steve dropped me off at my house again with a loaf of bread for my efforts. Some time later, I ended up having to change an axle in my '33 Plymouth, and I was thankful that I knew how to do it.

Become a member of the Town of Greenfield Historical Society and receive our newsletter. Fill out this form and enclose \$6.00 for individual membership or \$10.00 for household. **If you send more it will be considered a donation.** Other types of memberships are also available (lifetime, corporate, etc.) just call and ask (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.

Type of membership: Individual _____ Household _____ (please indicate how many persons ten-years-old or older are in the household). _____

Name (please print) _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Amount enclosed _____ Date _____

Areas of interest to you _____

Note: 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 _____

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