

Historical Society Newsletter

Ron Feulner, Editor
PO 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.

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Calendar

Tuesday, November 15, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Our speaker will be Mary Cuffe-Perez presenting a program about Galway Public Library's poetry (memories of Galway) project.

Saturday Dec. 17, 2-4 p.m. a Holiday Open House (in place of a December meeting) will be held at the Odd Fellows Hall. We still need treat-makers/bakers, and someone to coordinate and decide a 'theme' for this year. Please let Coral or JoAnn Rowland know if you are willing to help.

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).

Coral's Calls

If all goes according to schedule, by the time you receive this newsletter I should be getting toward Shanghai after cruising a portion of the Yangtze River as part of my 19-day "China tour". This is a little further than China, Me., where I swam one

October 46 years ago during my college freshman year which seemed almost as warm as this one has... I am reminded of that walking across the Skidmore campus (a portion in Greenfield, after all!) where I have been privileged to audit Beginning Chinese taught by another Greenfield resident, Jinying Ye-Germond, an effervescent young lady who was gracious enough to look in on our well-attended Daketown School open house in September... Skidmore's community outreach via their remarkable senior auditing program, a bargain by any calculation, has afforded me an opportunity to rub elbows with a stunning array of undergraduates also curious to decipher "characters" (words, as opposed to stage ones) and recognize pinyin, their English alphabet equivalents... I like to think I return to my own (oft-postponed) editing activities with a clearer eye...

But who knows? I do know that the group assembled for William Schwerd's overview of the 4H (know *what* those 'H's stand for—*quick*... I got the heart and hands OK, sort of Shaker/Quaker-ish), forgot my Head which is nothing new but our enlightened and candid speaker who seemed to have just the right touch for informing and kindling our own recall treated me to a new Trivial Pursuit detail—what did "Health" replace in the lengthy history of the agriculture-related organization? *Hustle*. Schwerd, as Cornell county cooperative extension agent, is also a Greenfield resident (if a recent one, by his own admission) but informed us that the number of 4-H-ers in the county has remained about steady over the last decade or so

despite the forces of competition for the interests of young people and an increasing population, if not necessarily in the dairy industry. However, high on the list of what youth should be encouraged to know is how to complete a project, estimate how it will be judged by 'others' and gain confidence in one's own skills and abilities while networking with neighbors and fellow students. Special appreciation goes to not only our new trustee, JoAnn Rowland, for arranging this program (and sharing with us her scrapbook & other memorabilia) but also to Schwerd for doing such a fine job of refreshing personal recollections as well as historical fine points including the origin of the college land grant system (I would not quite have gone so far back as President Lincoln!) of which Cornell University is this state's prime example, combining the public and private within an inclusive mantle.

In other 'news', Helen Woods, currently of Greenwich (but formerly of old Daketown), checked in from her various autumn sojourns to assume duties as collections chairperson. While she was a bit surprised when Janet Jones handed her a *key*, I don't remotely think her 'duties' will intimidate her—she has too much p&v (i.e., *imagination & energy*) to let things bog her down. High on our list is that '06 Daketown School reunion of alumni, date & details TBA. Sooner than that will be Mary Cuffe-Perez as our Nov. 15 speaker, explaining how she has helped transform both characters and events of Galway memories to poetic vignettes and sketches with the assistance of able muses, editors and thespians, no small achievement...volunteers meeting at the Galway Public Library. And speaking of writers, past president & *novelist* Ron Feulner has been riding the circuit with *Adirondack Justice* which I expect to see on the *NY Times* bestseller list any day now. Our treasurer, Alice, is apparently keeping him in fresh ink and we have Nancy Homiak to thank for collecting dues at our October gathering. (But *gracias*, Alice, for forwarding your usual detailed financial report for September's treasury.)

Dot Rowland was looking for assistance with the Dec. 17 (Sat., 2-4 p.m.) holiday open house this year at the Odd Fellows Hall: treat-makers/bakers, someone to coordinate and a 'theme' to focus

member-supplied decorations are being sought... please let me or JoAnn Rowland (at the Nov. mtg.) know if you have any hidden talents along these lines (most of you have already & several times displayed capacities of ovens and attics... but don't quit just yet!) I caught up with the State Ed Department's chartering operation prior to our Oct. meeting—we're still on the charts, new state regs probably won't be approved before Dec. and our site visit would be sometime in '06—let's hope! We were also fortunate to be gifted items from the St. John's Temple, Masonic Lodge, moving from Greenfield Center, with photos and historic trove of this organization representing a depth of connection over the community's generations. We have some great speakers lined up for '06, if not exactly which will be available on one of our immovable 3rd Tuesday of the month evenings... but we'll let you know, as we do. Sure have missed Deb Dittner, our veep & program chair this fall, and that ever-fresh face of daughter, Kat... hope they'll be back with us soon! And, as our days shorten (with the promise that the cycle does reverse itself, if with colder weather!) may I wish you all a grateful Thanksgiving... anyone whose name I may have omitted (as I shouldn't Bob Roeckle, Janet, Patty Schwartzbeck and Audrey Crandall who brought Oct. refreshments), please be assured that I hold *you* in my heart—if not my *head*... Go, in peace...

A Winter's Day in the Life of a Fifteen-Year-Old Farm Girl

By Mary Eichorst Max

As a fifteen-year-old living on a small farm near Middle Grove, I would wake up in a bedroom so cold that the ink in the ink-bottle would often freeze, get dressed in my work clothes, go down stairs, put on my boots and a heavy jacket, and make the morning journey outdoors to the outhouse. There I would have a choice of using the small, medium, or large holes. I would choose the medium, and Oh, was it cold and frosty. If you chose to linger there for a while, you could browse through the Montgomery Ward catalogue.

Next, it was off to the barn where I had to milk three or four cows. Then back to the house again to wash up in a basin of water warmed in the

reservoir on the side of the kitchen cookstove. Our cold water came from a hand-pump located near the kitchen sink.

I then went up to my cold bedroom and got dressed in my school clothes before coming down to breakfast. My mother usually prepared hot chocolate, oatmeal or scrambled eggs and toast. Mom also made a brown bag lunch for me to take to school. The school bus would arrive at about 7:30 A.M.

After school the bus would drop me off at home at about 4:30 P.M., and I would change back into my work clothes because my chores would be waiting for me. I had to pick up the eggs from the chicken coop, fill the wood box, then go down to the barn for the afternoon milking. Sometimes, I had to feed the cows before milking them. After the milking was done, it was time to wash up for dinner. After dinner, if I wasn't too tired, I would do my homework, but I tried to get most of it done in school during study hall. I sometimes compare my school days to those of children attending school now, and I think, "What a life they have, today."

Guard Duty

by Frank Max

I was one of the lucky ones because I was stationed near home during World War Two. I was drafted while living in Greenfield Center, and after basic training, I was sent to Portsmouth, N.H. where I was assigned to guard the submarine base there.

One moonlit night while I was on duty walking my post with the orders to challenge anyone that I saw in the area, I met my partner who was patrolling another area. We both turned around and headed back in the directions we had come from. I had walked but a few yards when I heard my partner fire a shot behind me, followed by his calling for the Sargent of the Guard. In minutes, floodlights came on, and a group of G.I's in full battle gear were all around us. We walked down to the water's edge and found that my partner had shot a log that was floating in the water. The log looked surprisingly like a man ready to come ashore in the rocky area. This all happened at about the same time that several Germans came ashore in Long Island.

We finished our tour of duty that night, and the next day we were both called into the office where my partner was commended for being so alert. They made him a Corporal right there on the spot. He told me on the way out, "That's it! I don't want to go any higher in rank. I want to follow, not lead." He never did go any higher in rank. He passed away just a few years ago.

My Ol' Cedar Chest

By Mary Max

Over sixty-years-ago, I bought a Lane cedar chest for thirty-nine-dollars and received five-dollars off because I made full payment. I was engaged then to a fellow who was in the service. When he was not on duty, or when he had a three-day pass, he would work at the Sheffield Steel plant in Kansas City to earn some extra money. It was wartime, and there was a shortage of workers so he was able to get the job of replacing bricks in the furnaces and other jobs. After finishing work, he would tell his boss, take a shower, and go to the USO to sleep.

He used his pay from these jobs to buy sheets, towels, washcloths, etc., and sent them back home to me. Well, I got so many that I had to buy that cedar chest to keep them in.

After a while, I got sick of sitting home all the time waiting for him to come home. I was young, and I wanted to go square dancing because I loved to dance. My mother wouldn't let me go because I was engaged to this young man so I decided to write him a "Dear John" letter and break off the engagement.

Eventually, I met another young fellow and we got married. We were married for forty-seven-years during which time I never had to buy any bed linen or bath towels because my cedar chest had been so full. As it turned out, I used the last wash cloth just before my husband, Richard, passed away.

Now, can you believe it, that first fellow is buying me sheets and towels again, but this time, he won't let me put them away in my cedar chest. He says, "Use them now!" That first fellow was Frank Max, and he is also my husband today.

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 Soc., PO Box 502, Greenfield Center, New York 12833. Make checks payable to: Greenfield Hist. Soc.

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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