

Historical Society Newsletter

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

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

Volume 6, Issue 5

Calendar

Tuesday, January 17, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Meeting followed by program **Joe Bruchac** talking about his new novel *At the End of Ridge Road*.

Tuesday, February 21, 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield. Meeting followed by program to be determined.

Coral's Calls

The sun slanted low through the west windows of the 1878 former Odd Fellows Hall where nearly 40 people dropped by to wish each other 'merry' and celebrate the closing/dawning of another year in mid-December. The place had that mellow, festive touch with bright plaid tablecloths on recently acquired (from the Masonic Lodge, Greenfield Center) wooden (card) tables and the lit tree was festooned with paper snowpeople accenting this year's theme while there were more goodies than any one person could devour... There were the familiar faces and a few 'new,' some 'under the weather and absent' because of this time-of-year bugs we promise ourselves we will not catch...

For me, I was pleased to note the new, framed photos (courtesy of the Masons of Greenfield Center, to combine with one in Ballston Spa) of Greenfield citizens which Rob Roeckle had been able to affix to the east wall, making a museum-like welcome while I alerted Helen Woods, this year's

archivist, that there were new things to catalogue; she was eager to set dates for Daketown School activities (alumni reunion, classroom re-enactment in conjunction with Greenfield Elementary School) while in our cozy and warm surroundings at the Middle Grove site, the little, shaded school on the hill I could only imagine as distant, dark, cold and silent – not that it won't all be revived by spring! There are names too numerous to mention but special thanks to Joyce Woodard for coordinating the holiday open house this year (about 10 hours before I was trying to locate my car in that big new airport economy lot after flights from Shanghai, LAX and Chicago where tornadoes in Kansas delayed departure...) Dot and Henry Rowland's mulled cider and festive touches always augment the occasion as I dashed in late from "simultaneous" participation in my hubby's Christmas party in Ft. Edward. Rob Roeckle and I did a bit of spiffing the place up the Thursday evening prior and I was especially grateful for all his efforts on this occasion which so closely followed the passing of his Dad, well-known Middle Grove resident, Richard Roeckle, who long ran the hamlet's general store, was active with the volunteer fire department and worked for the post office. He died on December 8 and will be missed by those for whom he set an amazing example, not letting an oxygen tank's dependence prevent him from mowing or plowing the lot adjacent to the Odd Fellows building.

Meanwhile, work on the carriage sheds behind and the building itself is on hold til spring; Rob hopes to

have the bids and funding in place by then. At a (100%-attendance) meeting of the officers and trustees at the 'Pvt. Benedict House' in late November, discussion of dropping the 'Town of-' lead-in to our society's title was explored on the advisement of David Palmquist of the State Education Department. While at one time, the same agency encouraged a number of organizations to use the town's name, it now appears to contradict other state law that states independent, non-profit organizations should not use names that could be confused with being part of any governmental branch. It is expected this will be discussed at the January 17 meeting at the Community Center (7 p.m.) where we are thrilled to have famed local author Joe Bruchac to talk about his new novel, *At The End of Ridge Road...* Joe contributes to the *National Geographic* and has authored more books and volumes of poetry than I can name, offhand, not to mention his astute and sensitive work as an editor, gifted storyteller and more... Even if you're not excited about the name of our organization and how it flows, you'll not want to miss Joe, in any event!

My Toboggan Days *by Frank Max*

Two buddies of mine, George Hodges and George Morrison, took me on some bobsled rides on Broadway in Saratoga and on some toboggan rides one of which I will always remember. The day after a big snowstorm they drove up to my house and asked me to go tobogganing with them. I was looking for an excuse to get out of the house so off we go looking for a good hill. We ended up on Ormsbee Road. We had made it down the hill several times when on the final trip, George Morrison's leg got caught in the snow, and over we went all laughing as we went tumbling through the snow. When we finally stopped, George was laying there in the snow still making a lot of noise so we went over to him. He said his leg hurt so we put him on the toboggan and pulled him back to the car. It still hurt so we drove him home. It was some time later that we learned that he had broken his kneecap and was in a cast. The rest of the winter, we played

a lot of cards with George and washed down some of the wine that we had made that fall.

Haying in the Old Days *by Mary Max*

I remember a day on the farm when Dad had mowed down some hay, and we were supposed to get it in the barn while he was at work. We had an old model T Ford that we used to pull the hay rake. First we raked it into windrows so that we could pull the wagon alongside them and pitch the hay on using forks. My brother and I took turns riding on the rake while the other one drove the car. When on the rake, you had to rake for a short distance then dump the hay lining it up with the windrow. Once when I was driving the car, my brother suddenly yelled, "Stop," and I slammed on the brake. I stopped so suddenly that the tongue on the rake (a long pole that you pulled the rake by) came right through the back of the car and went just over my shoulder. As long as nobody got hurt, we thought it was funny, but we worried about what Dad would say when he got home. After we finished raking the hay, we decided to put it in the barn without being asked to do so. We thought that might make Dad feel better about the raking accident. To do this, we pulled the wagon alongside the windrows, and my brother forked it up on the load. My job was to stomp it down so that we could get more on. Then we pulled the wagon to the barn where a set of big forks pulled by the tractor lifted the hay off the wagon and moved it along a set of tracks that ran in the top of the barn and dumped it in the haymow. The empty forks then returned and dropped onto the hay on the wagon piercing it to grip another load. You had to be careful that the forks didn't stick into your foot. I never got hit with one of those forks, but I did get stuck once with a pitchfork in my leg and another time in my arm. My arm swelled up, but all I did was soak it in warm water with a little lysol. In those days you didn't go to a doctor for something like that. Anywise, it all turned out O.K.

When Dad got home that day, he didn't think the whole thing was funny one bit, and he had a few choice words for us.

This page could have told your story!

I am low on stories.
If you would like to have your
Town of Greenfield story told,
send it to the address on the back.

Be sure to include who, what, when, where.

If you don't feel comfortable writing the whole story,
send me the facts and as much information as you can,
and I will attempt to write it for you.

Editor

To join the Historical Society 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.

To sponsor a newsletter send \$50 along with your name and address and the wording (please print) describing whom you would like the newsletter dedicated to.

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 _____ (\$6 individual or \$10 household) Date _____

Areas of interest to you _____

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