

Historical Society Newsletter

**OFFICERS: President: Ron Feulner; Vice President: Louise Okoniewski;
Secretary: Patty Schwartzbeck; Treasurer: JoAnn Rowland;
Trustees: Skip Ballou, Coral Crosman, Ron Deutsch, Robert Roeckle, and Vince Walsh**

**Janet Jones, Editor
P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833**

Volume 11, Issue 1

www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

Calendar

September 21, 2010: Tuesday, *Bring-A-Dish-To-Pass Dinner* at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m., at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. *Program: Paul Post of The Saratogian will talk about his book, "Soldiers of Saratoga County: From Concord to Kabul."*

October 16, 2010: Saturday, 1 to 4 p.m., *Open House at IOOF Hall and Harvest Fest* at the hall in Middle Grove.

November 12, 2010: Friday, *True Colors CD Release Celebration: Songs About Greenfield.* The Nancy Walker Trio will perform starting at 7 p.m. at the Greenfield Grange, 17 Grange Rd., Greenfield Center. Free and open to the public.

November 16, 2010: Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. *Program: Bill Rockwell – "Skeletons in the Closet." All about our not-so-wonderful ancestors.*

IOOF Hall Visitation Hours

The IOOF Hall will be open for visitors from 10 a.m. to noon on Thursdays. Please call ahead to make sure we will be there.

Joyce Woodard – 893-7638 or Ann Michel – 893-7052

Reminder that our membership year began on June 1 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.

Ron's Ramblings

This summer has been the busiest yet for our organization. I keep remembering those past years when we took a little vacation in the summer before getting all fired up for the Fall season, but now it seems almost like a vacation to return to our normal schedule of monthly meetings.

For those members who live outside the immediate area, let me summarize some of what we have been doing. First, and foremost, is the farmer's market which has happened every Friday afternoon all summer under the direction of Ron Deutsch. For about 10 weeks during the summer, Ron is managing a small army of volunteers and vendors. It would take an entire newsletter to name all of them and describe what they have accomplished, so I will simply say a heartfelt thank you to all of them. They managed our food tent, helped with set up and tear down each day, manned the historic society's information and membership drive table, provided music, art, and literature, and kept track of the many small details that make the whole thing work. I was there each Friday and experienced the feedback from the community which was all positive and very appreciative of what their neighbors were providing. The nation wide return to local food and entertainment seems alive and well in the Town of Greenfield.

Our board met several times over the summer and made a decision to continue to move forward on our long range plans for the IOOF hall. We are still gathering information about the alarm systems that we must install to obtain our charter. We also decided to investigate installing a toilet for our volunteers who work each week at the hall sorting and filing our collection of documents, photos, and artifacts. In addition, we are investigating what it would take to turn the upstairs into a museum where we could display more of our collection, and, at the same time, adding minimal heat to the building which would protect our collection from mildew, etc.

The one sad thing that happened over the summer was the decision made by Harold Jones to discontinue as Building and Grounds Chairperson. I have worked closely with Harold for several years and grew to rely on his vast knowledge and ability to get things accomplished. I do

understand, however, that there is a limit to how much one individual can give to his community, and I think that Harold must have exceeded it at the expense of some of his own personal projects. He remains an active member and good friend to the organization. Mike Gyarmathy, a general contractor in the area, has accepted the position as Building and Grounds Chairman. Mike lives on Plank Road just outside Porter Corners.

One of the biggest single day events this summer was our Caboose Day. On Saturday, August 14, we held a joint venture with the Caboose Committee who had spent the last several years renovating the caboose that the Town of Greenfield had placed next to the old railroad station as focal points at the town's small park located on state highway 9N, just north of Greenfield Center. The committee was anxious to show-off their renovation project, and our historical society needed to do a fund-raiser to help support some of our many projects. The combination was a perfect marriage. Our vice-president, Louise Okoniewski, spearheaded the activity. She drew on her many years of experience when she and Tom Merrills ran Tinney's Restaurant at Lake Desolation. She and another army of volunteers organized a wonderful day during which even the weather man cooperated. Louise will describe the event in more detail in her piece in this newsletter.

If any of you happened to notice over the summer months how beautifully kept the lawns were at both the IOOF Hall and at the Daketown School, you were experiencing the efforts of Sabrina Carter and friend who did all the mowing. We reimburse Sabrina a little to cover gas and cost of equipment maintenance, but most of her labor is volunteered. Thank you Sabrina for making our properties look like park land.

My few words don't seem to do justice to the tremendous efforts of so many of our members. You know who you are and in many cases, you also know others who helped, so don't be afraid to give each other a handshake (or hug) and congratulate each other on a job well done. I'll see you at our September meeting.

Caboose Day, August 14, 2010

by Louise Okoniewski

WOW!! OMG!! What a day! The Open House at the Caboose at the Station at King's on August 14 was beyond any of our expectations. Mother Nature gave us a beautiful day to show off the renovation of the caboose and station house. About 9:15 a.m., members of the historical society, and caboose committee started to arrive. Tents went up in the field. Stan Weeks and Ed Woodard put the finishing touches on the Caboose. Antique cars and trucks took their place in the corner field off 9N and Porter Road. Delicious goodies started arriving for the bake sale. Greenfield Fire Police put up cones and safety equipment as they were responsible for parking cars and traffic control. Tony Bucca arrived dressed as an engineer of the railroad. By 10:30 people were arriving and ready to take the tour of the Caboose. As an extra bonus they received a picture of themselves on the end of the caboose, compliments of Karyn Zanetti, head of the Greenfield Youth Committee.

Before long, additional cars were rolling into the parking field. People of all ages came to see the project. I didn't realize how many people are interested in the history of trains, and what it meant to the development of Greenfield. A steady line of people filed in and out of the caboose and station house all day. Stan Weeks (volunteer on the caboose committee) had a smile from ear-to-ear all day as he gave the caboose tour. The most fascinating part of the tour for most was the toilet that the caboose had; it was another good reason why mothers in the past discouraged their children from playing on the tracks. People also enjoyed the old cars and trucks which would have been in use near the station in it's day, and, of course, the bake sale was a big hit.

Some of the folks attending our event decided to head north afterward to the new Corinth train ride after becoming inspired by their visit to our caboose and station.

The renovation has taken a long time. Stan Weeks, Ed Woodard and Tony Bucca, committee chairmen, finished the project inside the caboose, but earlier there had been many others who helped when they could. If I try to mention them all, I will unintentionally leave someone out, and they were all a part of this wonderful project. Some committees would have given up, but this is a dedicated group, and Greenfield is proud of them.

During the day, I looked down from the upper field where the historical society's booth, food, and bake sale tables were, and I couldn't believe the number of people attending. The cars kept coming into the parking field, and people were everywhere having a great time. It was wonderful how well everyone worked together. A lot of the volunteers brought pop-up-tents, and we used them all. Joyce Woodard and the ladies who sat in the historical booth answering questions, Alice Feulner and Patty Schwartzbeck taking care of the baked goods, Dan Chertok and Robert Roeckle grilling the food, JoAnn Rowland acting as cashier – and the many other historical society members who answered people's questions and guided them to the various areas – what a heck of a team! And, I have to say those crazy car guys knew where to find shade. They whipped out their chairs on the north side of the station house in the patch of new stone landscaping and just smiled as they heard the many oohs and ahhs as people viewed their antique cars.

Some appeared to appreciate the event without stopping, for some eighteen wheelers and car drivers who were passing by on Route 9N, blew their horns when they passed. Compliments from those who attended, and those who didn't but blew their horns in support, made it all worth while. Maybe, just maybe, this will be an annual event.

I would like to give a special thank you to the Greenfield Fire Police, Jack Atwell, Joe Post, Bob and Peggy Roxbury and Tom Merrills for their great job. If we had to park all those cars and direct traffic without their help it could have been a disaster. The car guys, Tom Clute (who also helped with the cars), Stephanie Carrico, Greg Schwartz, Art and Caroline Holmwood, Tom Sadlon, Butch Duffney, Walt Chandler, Tom Merrills and Bill Richmond – you added extra excitement to a special day. Also, Karyn Zanetti, who stood in the hot sun all day to take the keepsake pictures, you all are greatly appreciated.

September School Time

by Marie Willard

I started school in the same building that was there in 1866. As you came in the front door you entered a cloak room where we hung our clothes. At the end of this room was a bathroom. I think it was a chemical but it could have been an inside outhouse. Both boys and girls used it. Then you entered the big room. There was a big round wood stove in the middle of the floor. This room held eight grades and one teacher. The wall toward the road housed our library books. The wall across the room held the chalk boards and a door that led to the woodshed. The wood was stacked in there. There was also a large door that led outside. This served to stock the wood and as an emergency door for the school. We had an hour lunch and two 15 minute recesses.

During our lunch hour we ate quickly and played hard. In the summer, we played summer games and sports or we could go home for lunch. During the winter, we could bring our sleds to school and we slid down the hill by the cemetery. The big kids helped the little ones with their winter clothes. Recesses were much like gym classes. We played touch tag, pom pom peter way, or kickball in the summer. In the winter, we just stretched our legs or did exercises.

We had no plumbing so the bigger kids worked in pairs to bring the water up from Wilbur Barney's hand pump. There were two pails of water. One was used to fill the porcelain water cooler and the other had a dipper in it to fill the washbasin for hand washing. Someone came in each day before we got there and started the fire in the big stove. The teacher kept it going all day.

Mr. Hall brought us fresh milk every day. We didn't have refrigeration. I think we paid 3 cents for the half pint. We could order chocolate milk on Fridays, if we wanted. Being that there were never 30 students in the whole school, means he made less than \$5 a week for his work. Mrs. Hennessey came once a week to teach us the Palmer method of writing. I loved making those circles and up and down lines. This was my favorite class. Mrs. Kilmer, our school nurse, came once a week to check our finger nails to make sure we had washed our hands. She checked our ears and took a pencil to check our heads to see if we had head lice. I remember our spelling bees. I remember only because I was very good at spelling and got to compete with Greenfield in a competition. I lost, but it was fun.

During my stay, we lost the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. For those, we would be sent to Greenfield Center. I remember three teachers at Middle Grove. They were Mrs. Ruth Johnson, Mr. Arthur Jones, and Miss Catherine Corcoran.

Mrs. Johnson lived in Middle Grove with her husband, Fred, and son, Kenneth. She was from Middle Grove prior to her marriage. She brought her dog, Brownie, to school with her every day. He slept in front of the big wood stove. We played with him during recess.

Mr. Jones was my first male teacher. I later found out that his family was born and raised in Greenfield. I am ashamed to say I was at a strange age and got together with three other friends, whom I will not name, and did

something I am ashamed of. Mr. Jones handled it so well. One Friday after school, we decided to write poetry on the road. It started out Art, Art, and ended blew the schoolhouse all apart. We thought we were so funny. Early Saturday morning, Mr. Jones appeared at our door and spoke to my mother. He had a pail and a scrub brush. He did this at the other three houses and took us with him. He watched for traffic while we scrubbed the road from the school house to the intersection of Lake Desolation Road. Then we had to face our parents. I know I had to write a letter of apology. From that day forward we only wrote on the road to make hop scotch squares.

Miss Corcoran lived on Greenfield Avenue in Ballston on the Corcoran farm. I remember she taught us how to make corn cob dolls among other crafts. She had taught at Factory Village School at one time. She was a good teacher and I learned a lot from her. She vowed she would quit teaching when there were no more small country schools to teach in. She kept her word.

Greenfield School was much more modern than ours. I believe they had two rooms and two teachers. My teacher was Mrs. Woodside. I remember my first time on a stage. The school presented an operetta called Burgamaster Grumpy Growl at the Greenfield Grange. Mom made me the white cap and apron. That Dutch cap was starched so many times it stood alone. We sang a song about the windmills of Holland and some other songs. Jan Scott tap-danced. The whole school participated. We thought we were Broadway stars.

We went to Saratoga High School on Lake Avenue for grades 8-12. I graduated in 1957. In 2007, we had our 50th class reunion. In our class picture, we had 57 classmates. They came from all over the U.S. and from England, Germany and Canada. We combined with the students from St. Peters as they had a very small class. There probably were a dozen students plus their spouses. In all, there were close to 150 people there. It was great to see the classmates I had from Middle Grove, Greenfield, and high school again.



*District #7 Middle Grove, NY, about 1946/1947, left to right:
Back row – Raymond Reynolds, Jeanne Older, Susan Mattison,
Dotty Jones, Mary Elizabeth Mattison, Jackie Worth, Jimmy Older.
Middle row – Phil Baugh, Ronnie Feulner, Jimmy Worth, Evamae
Older, Ruth Thibodeau, Billy Reynolds, Marie Barnes, Mrs. Ruth
Johnson. Front row – Butch Bunnell, Shirley Parrish, Judy Baugh,
David Worth, Margaret Older, Billy Older.*

Updating Historic Sites Map in the Town of Greenfield

If you have any information, e-mail Dan Chertok at bmmschertok@gmail.com or dgclawoffices@csdsl.net.

You may also call (518-893-2268) or write him at:

Dan Chertok
58 Ormsbee Road
Porter Corners, NY 12859

FACEBOOK – If you have a site on Facebook, log in, go to the search bar at the top of the page and type in Town of Greenfield Historical Society.

I would like to thank the May refreshment volunteers: Alice Feulner and Patty Schwartzbeck. They served apricot bars, pudding cake, and cookies.

*September is the Pot Luck Dinner at 6 p.m.
Please bring a dish to pass and your own place setting.
Janet Jones, Refreshment Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Become a member of the Town of Greenfield Historical Society and receive our newsletter. Send \$10 per **household** along with your name and address to the address shown below. If you send more it will be considered a donation. Other types of memberships are also available (lifetime, corporate, etc.), just call and ask (518-893-0620). Our membership year begins June 1, 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.

Please Print – Please indicate how many persons 10-years-old or older are in your household). _____

Name _____

Address _____

Areas of interest to you _____

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

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 _____

Address _____

If you would like to write an article for the newsletter, send it to: Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 or if you type it using Microsoft Word, e-mail it to: aliron@nycap.rr.com.

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