



Historical Society Newsletter

OFFICERS: President: Louise Okoniewski; Vice President: Robert Roeckle;
Secretary: Patty Schwartzbeck; Treasurer: JoAnn Rowland;
Trustees: Dan Chertok, Coral Crosman, Ron Deutsch, Katie Finnegan and Ron Feulner

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

Volume 14, Issue 8



www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

CALENDAR

April 15, 2014: Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center.
Program: Gino DiCarlo, who wrote a book "Trolleys in the Capital District," will speak about his book and the Ballston Terminal Railroad which ran through Middle Grove.

May 20, 2014: Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center.
Program: Dave Fiske will talk about a book he has recently written about Solomon Northrup.

The May meeting is our annual election/ membership meeting.

August 9, 2014: Saturday, *Fifth Caboose Day at King's Station.* 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tour the caboose and station, vintage cars and buy lunch made by the Historical Society members. Located at the corner of Route 9N and Porter Road. For more information or if you'd like to help in any way (set up, cooking, clean up), call Louise at 587-6060.

COMING SOON

Town of Greenfield Historical Society's Seventh Annual FARMERS MARKET

June 13 - September 19, 2014

Fridays, 4 - 7 p.m. at MIDDLE GROVE PARK

New vendors,

plus those you have come to know and love!

Fresh veggies, local honey, maple syrup, flowers, baked goods, spices, wood workers, handmade jewelry, local produced wine, grass fed meats, eggs, jellies, music and much, much more!

To become a vendor, contact Ron at 469-6769, or amayhawk@yahoo.com or tom@fixurpcs.com.

SEE YA THERE!

WEEZIE'S WORDS

by Louise Okoniewski

Private George of the 134th New York Volunteer Infantry explained how he became a Civil War Soldier, fighting at Gettysburg. He was born in 1845 to a family of farmers in Guilderland. In 1860, when he was 16 years old, his father requested that he leave and go to work for the benefit of the family. He got a job at Cranes Mills in Schenectady. There he met three men and they became very good friends. Jobs were hard to come by, and he was lucky to have a good job in a mill. Alonzo VanArnam, Jacob Trask and Samuel Swales knew how fortunate they were to have jobs that would support their families. They had heard rumblings of a possible war with people from the South, secessionists who wanted to tear the Union apart. Private George recalled how he and his friends would fight the Rebs. No one would get them! In 1861, President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to fight the South. Well, how could the guys leave a job, when most did not have one? They continued to follow the conflict and would tell how they would win the war. 1861 turned to 1862, and President Lincoln called again for thousands of volunteers to save the Union.

Private George and his friends joined the 134th Infantry, based in Schenectady, but politics had them move to Schoharie. They were trained to become a soldier. They marched and trained, marched and trained. Sometimes they would use a stick instead of the 1861 Springfield rifles that would accompany them in battle. Private George informed us that one of the training camps is now Altamont fairgrounds. Some of the soldiers got sick at camp, sometimes it was homesickness, but mostly it was from the lack of proper sanitation. Private George and his buddies were anxious to prove that they were better than those Southern boys, and daily they would tell how they would fight and kill them all, but no one really knew what they were in for! Finally, they received the call to go to war. They marched to Albany, boarded a train for New York City and then to Washington, D.C., where they

trained and they marched! They headed to Virginia where they heard they could capture Stonewall Jackson, but he was not to be found, so they returned to D.C. where they trained and they marched. It was beginning to look like they would not face any battles at all. Finally, they got word to march to Gettysburg to help out Union troops. The 134th were to hold off the Confederates while other regiments got into place and ready to battle.

We all know the outcome of the Gettysburg battle. Private George explained how small towns had ceased to exist because of the loss of men due to the Civil War. The 154th Central New York regiment lost 82% of men at Gettysburg. The 134th New York Infantry from Schenectady and Schoharie had 50% casualties. Private George's friends returned together on July 27, 1862. Their funeral was the next day, July 28, at Cranes Grove in Mohawkville. A monument stands today in the memory of the three Civil war heroes.

Matt George, aka "Private George" gave a wonderful program to the 25 members in attendance at our March 28 meeting. After his program, in which he was dressed in a Union Soldiers uniform, he answered questions and gave further insight on war and demonstrated how to load the black powder rifle, food that was carried, wounds that the soldiers encountered and why, and many other interesting facts. He spoke and dressed as that Union soldier, Private George, who was fictitious, however his friends actually did exist and are buried as Civil War heroes. Matt also gives a toned down program for young students at local schools. He is a member and past president of the Capital District Civil War Round Table, in Albany.



Private George of the 134th New York Volunteer Infantry

MEET YOUR FRIENDS FOR BREAKFAST

**at the Porter Corners Firehouse
Bockes Road in Porter Corners
Sunday, May 4, 2014, 7 - 11 a.m.**

Adults \$6, Seniors \$5

Kids (5 - 12) \$4, 5 and under FREE

Menu includes: Eggs, Bacon, Sausage, Home Fries, Pancakes, French Toast, Hash, Juice, Coffee, Tea and Milk

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

by Ron Feulner

This has been an old-fashioned winter. I had more wood in the woodshed than I have ever had, and it is now emptier than ever. As I write this, the frost has not yet gone out of the ground, and it has been raining for several days which means that there are pools of water everywhere. I can't wait for warmer weather to arrive.

We have tabled the museum project for the winter because it has been so cold at the IOOF Hall. It doesn't make any sense to go down there and crank up the heat for a few hours at a time when our budget is already stretched to the limit, so we are waiting for warmer weather.

At the office in town hall, we are continuing with our big projects of digitizing all our photo collection and adding information to our searchable data base. These are slow projects and the fact that we only work on them one day a week makes it even slower, but we are making surprisingly good progress.

I have room for one more volunteer who has a good working knowledge of computers and likes challenging projects and problem solving. If you know anyone with these qualifications who would like to join our volunteer team on Wednesdays, please have them give me a call at home, 518-893-0620, and, by the way, they do not have to live in Greenfield. Several of my volunteers are from other townships. We work from around 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesdays, and everything is flexible. Volunteers come and go as their schedules permit, but most enjoy the work and the comradery enough that they try to come most Wednesdays. You do not have to make any commitments, just come and check us out, and if you enjoy it, you may want to join our little group of six or seven people. Oh, by the way, bring your own bag lunch, but we furnish the decaf. coffee.

OPEN HOUSE at HISTORIC BROOKHAVEN PARK and GOLF COURSE

333 ALPINE MEADOWS ROAD

SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2014, 1 - 5 p.m.

*See the newly remodeled Clubhouse and
THE HAVEN TEE ROOM. ENJOY samples from
the new menu, live entertainment, drink specials.*

OPEN to EVERYONE! (not just for the golfers)

Take advantage of Open House Only Packages!

For more information, call 893-7432, ext. 300.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saratoga County Fair Display – July 22 - 27,

**Tuesday - Sunday, Ballston Spa Fair Grounds
Odd Fellows Hall Grand Opening, Middle Grove
October Harvest Fest – Odd Fellows Hall**

This article (written by one of our members, Jim Smith), was first published in our April 2005 newsletter.

Muddy Bucket Pond

By Jim Smith

Sometimes I relive (in my head) one dark and warm night on Bucket Pond. I know that some of our members know about Bucket Pond, but for those who don't, it's an old favorite mountain pond near Porter Corners, N.Y. It's one-third mud and two-thirds water and filled with old croakin' frogs and little peepers.

My good friend, Charlie Reynolds, and my neighbor, Bob Baker, and I, decided to go bullhead fishing up there one warm night. We got there before sundown so we decided to fish for pickerel until nightfall. The pickerel were active in the late-day sun and seemed most interested in our Red Devil spoon lures. We figured, if we were lucky and got one, we could slice off the white under belly and use it as slap bait to catch more pickerel.

As we fished that afternoon, I thought about my first fishing experience with Charlie and Bob; it was a disaster. They had asked me if I could row a rowboat, and I had told them that I could, even though I had never been in one. I spent most of the day rowing in circles while they worked at getting their lures untangled from the shoreline brush. It seemed like I was always in too close or too far out. They did a lot of muttering under their breath that day.

But, let's get back to this fishing trip. We fished pickerel until the sun started to set, and the water turned from a dark green to inky black. It was time to get out to our favorite night fishing spot where an old limb from a sunken tree stuck out of the water a few feet. The water there was about three feet deep with a couple of feet of

black gooey mud underneath. As we settled in for the night, we heard voices and someone making a clatter on shore as they dragged a metal boat to the water's edge. We knew we had some unwanted company. It was very dark, and every once-in-the-while, someone would shine a flashlight beam across the water toward us. Our eyes had adjusted to the darkness, and the bright light hurt them. By the time the other party had found their spot, the big bull frogs and peepers had all come alive making a chorus of night sounds made up by Mother Nature herself.

Then abruptly a strong beam of light came on again from the other boat, and the chorus stopped. Somebody in their boat yelled, "Put that light out!" It went out, but about 15 minutes later, it came on again, and someone in the other boat yelled, "Turn that light off ... and the next time it comes on you'll be wading to shore." The light went off again, but we heard somebody chuckle and say, "That'll be the day!"

It was quiet again, and the fish were biting, when, without warning, the light came on again. "Okay, that's it!" says somebody in the other boat, and we hear a loud kerplunk as the offender was thrown out of the boat with his gear, and he sank into two feet of thick gooey mud. We could see him wading toward shore with his hands full of gear and his lit flashlight in his mouth. Then, as he tried to pull his feet out of another deep mud pocket his flashlight fell into the water, flickered and went out. We could hear him make his way the rest of the way to shore in darkness. As far as I know, that flashlight is still somewhere on the bottom of Bucket Pond.



Bucket's Pond in 1982 (not the date when Jim was fishing there), taken by a member of the Earl and Margie Jones family. Our whole family skated on the pond for many years. This was one of those winter days when it was cold, but no snow. We didn't have to shovel before we skated. Pictured is Nancy (Jones) Homiak and her family on the ice.

HERITAGE HUNTERS MEETINGS

Regular program meetings are on Saturdays at 1 p.m. at the Town of Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring St. [corner of Rt. 29] in Schuylerville. For more information, email melfrejo@aol.com or call 518-587-2978. Public is welcome.

April 19, Saturday, 1 p.m. – Bette Innes Bradway will speak about "Documenting Research," particularly in applying to lineage societies.

May 17, Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. – History Faire – Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library, 475 Moe Road, Clifton Park – More than 17 Saratoga County historical societies, museums and groups will be at the History Faire, hosted by Heritage Hunters. Come and see the displays and interact with the folks manning them. This is a family event with activities for children.

June 21, Saturday, 1 p.m. – Melissa Tacke, Librarian/Archivist, Grems-Doolittle Library, Schenectady County Historical Society, will speak about "Preserving Photographs and Documents."

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Become a member of The Town of Greenfield Historical Society and receive our newsletter. **Our membership year begins June 1 and ends May 31, dues are paid annually. Send \$10 per household (or \$100 for Lifetime Membership)** along with your name and address to the address shown below. **IF YOU SEND MORE THAN ONE YEARS DUES (\$10), THE BALANCE WILL BE CONSIDERED A DONATION.** You also may join at one of our meetings. Send this application form and fee to The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. Make checks payable to: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society.

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

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone number _____

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 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: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 or email it to: JJones18215@roadrunner.com.

Updating Historic Sites Map in the Town of Greenfield

If you have any information, email Dan Chertok at BMMSCHERTOK@gmail.com.

You also may call (518-893-2268) or write him at: Dan Chertok, 58 Ormsbee Road, Porter Corners, NY 12859

I NEED ARTICLES AND/OR PHOTOS FOR OUR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS.

**Mail to: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society,
P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833
or email it to: JJones18215@roadrunner.com.**

*March refreshment volunteers, Joan Rowland and
Lelah Cornell, served Irish Soda Bread, Bailey's Irish Cream
Fudge Cake, Rootbeer Cake and Coconut Bars.*

*April refreshment volunteers are Katie Finnegan and
Nancy Homiak.*

Janet Jones, Refreshment Chairperson



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