



Historical Society Newsletter

OFFICERS: President: Louise Okoniewski; Vice President: Robert Roeckle;
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The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833

Volume 15, Issue 7



www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

YOU CAN NOW PAY YOUR DUES ONLINE AT OUR WEBSITE!

CALENDAR

March 17, 2015 – Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center.
Program: David Peck, a genealogist, will do a program called Graveyards and Greater Plots, the subtitle was “a summary of three years of searching for my ancestors in MA, RI, CT, NY and beyond.”

April 21, 2015 – Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center.
Program: Stuart Lehman, who is an assistant curator in the NYS Office of General Services, will speak about Lincoln’s and Grant’s funerals in commemoration of the 150th and 130th respectively anniversary of them, with an emphasis on the funeral procession in Albany.

May 19, 2015 – Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center.
Program: Marty Podskoch will discuss his book, “Adirondack 102 Club: Your Passport and Guide to the North Country.”

June 13, 2015 – Saturday, GRAND OPENING OF IOOF MUSEUM, noon to 3 p.m.
More information to follow.

June 26 - Sept. 4, 2015 – FARMER’S MARKET, Fridays, 4 - 7 p.m., Middle Grove Town Park.

July 21 - 26, 2015 – SARATOGA COUNTY FAIR, Tuesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. - 10 p.m., Ballston Spa Fairgrounds, Townley Building. Visit our display and info booth.

Aug. 8, 2015 – SIXTH CABOOSE DAY AND CAR SHOW at King’s Station, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Corner of 9N and Porter Road. Rain or Shine. For information, call 587-6060.

Oct. 3, 2015 – Saturday, HISTORICAL SOCIETY FUNDRAISING GALA AT BROOKHAVEN GOLF COURSE – The Haven Tee Room.
More information to follow.

WEEZIE’S WORDS

by Louise Okoniewski

Our February meeting brought 19 hardy members who braved below zero temperatures for our “Show and Tell” program. I wasn’t sure how many would attend as Katie (our program director) tries to set up the January and February meetings for local speakers in case we need to cancel due to winter storms. But the frigid temps were no match for our members. The “Show and Tell” programs are very interesting as you never know what you may see or what people may say. Leelah Cornell started the program with an old fashioned food grinder that her grandfather used for making sausage and chopping vegetables for other recipes. It was in excellent condition, with the original box.

Jim Smith spoke about a special pin that he wears on his hat – it’s represents the raising of the American Flag on Iwo Jima. Jim was a tank mechanic during WWII at Guadalcanal. He told how Detroit would send workers from the Detroit plant to Guadalcanal to teach the soldiers how to disassemble and put the tank engines back together. This way the mechanics would know everything about the motors, inside and out. Jim also reminded us that the 70th anniversary of Iwo Jima was Saturday, Feb. 21.

Katie Finnegan was next with a Ball Canning book from 1943. Aluminum was hard to get because of the war effort, so home canning was encouraged. Katie pointed out the very colorful art work in the book, as well as recipes that you don’t see everyday such as canning frog legs.

Pat Finnegan spoke about Henry Francisco – the oldest living soldier. Henry had been in many battles, but with a British Invasion in 1776 - 1777, he answered the call to arms at the age of 91! Born June 11, 1696, he fought over 100 years of different wars. He was born in

France, but his family eventually immigrated to England due to religious persecution from Louis XIV. He was a drummer in Queen Anne's Army, and made his way to continental New York. He fought in the French and Indian War (1755), and then while running a Tavern in Fort Edward, he enlisted in the American Revolution at the age of 91. Many of his stories are documented and proven. Henry married twice and had 21 children, the last born when he was 81 years old. Francisco's story was upheld by Benjamin Silliman, a Yale Scholar. A good read on Henry Francisco is "Old Soldiers Never Die" by Brendan Manley. Pat has tried to work with others to get some sort of recognition for Henry Francisco's military career, as well as being perhaps the oldest human, as he died in 1820, at the age of 134.

David Peck (who will speak on genealogy at our March meeting), spoke of his Aunt Mildred Peck who lived in Bacon Hill. When she passed he ended up with what he thought was a nice pocket watch, but turned out to be a locket that held three photos. Some time later in his genealogy research, he found a picture that turned out to be the same as one in the locket. He traced the date to 1858, and had the name of Reid from Argyle. You never know what you will find in an old dresser.

JoAnn Rowland brought an old toaster that belonged to her grandmother, Florence Rowland. In very good condition, one slice of bread would be placed on each side of the toaster. When that side was done, you would open the compartment and flip the slice over. The toaster was a Sun Chef made in Connecticut.

Bill Hinckley had something in mind for the program from his workshop, but shoveling to his workshop was not allowed by his doctor! So Bill told of how he and Flo "hatched" a plan to teach the kids how food gets to the supermarket. The kids were questioning chicken wrapped in the meat dept. So, Bill ordered 100 chicks from Montgomery Wards so they could raise and process the chickens. When the last day came for the birds, the kids were set up with different jobs to do. They tried to 'take care' of the chickens, but most of them ended up at Peppers Turkey Farm on Route 9 for processing. That was the end of raising chickens. Next, they showed the family the process of making their own maple syrup. Bill designed and made his own taps, and had a nice photo album that showed the kids making the syrup when they were small. This is something they still do today.

Florence Hinckley was born in Iowa, and when she was a young girl her father was offered a government job in Greenfield, New York. So the family moved and her father and family ran a Fur Farm. They raised fox, martin and mink. The purpose was to make sure of the quality of the furs for coats. They would "pelt" the animals in the fall, and her father would travel to New York City to meet with furriers who would grade the pelts. The Odd Fellows Hall Museum has a display on the Fur Farm, with a lot

of information and pictures, thanks to Florence and her family.

Bill Hinckley Jr. showed a beautiful door harp that his father had made. I don't remember the date but it was in very good condition and had a beautiful sound. You could tell he was very proud and uses it today.

Earl Jones showed us his prized pocket knife. While most of us have a knife that we keep handy for small tasks, Earl's was found in France in 1944. The blade shows the wear and tear of being well used. He needed one in France to pull corks out of bottles! The knife is still in use today.

Joan Rowland displayed her home made quilt top from Florence Rowland. Each of the grand kids had a home-made quilt but it took Aunt Ruth to show Joan where hers was kept. Made from leftover material, it was beautiful and quite the heirloom.

Joyce Woodard showed her Great-grandmother Marie Besemer's emerald and pearl ring. Marie was married to Richard Menshausen and this was their engagement ring. Approximately 135 years old, the ring is handed down to granddaughters with a May birthday.

Rick Bishop discovered an interesting photo while at the Winterfest at Brookhaven Park. Next to the fireplace in the Haven Tee room is a picture that says "Earl Towers with bear on back." Rick took a picture of that picture and began to investigate. He spoke to Earl Towers Jr., now 92 years old, who said that the bear was shot in Indian Lake. In the photo, Earl is standing with the bear wrapped around his back, like a coat. The front paws are wrapped around his shoulders and the body of the bear reaches all the way to Earl's feet. The Towers farm was known as the Bingo Farm in 1953. It is a very interesting picture and quite the conversation piece.

It was a good night of interesting stories and pictures. After some hot coffee, goodies and more stories, no one cared that it was 10 below zero!

**PLEASE SEND 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 to: JJones18215@roadrunner.com.**

February refreshment volunteers, Katie Finnegan and JoAnn Rowland, served banana blueberry muffins, chocolate cupcakes, steamed brown bread and cherry buckle.

March refreshment volunteers are Louise Okoniewski and Joyce Woodard.

Janet Jones, Refreshment Chairperson

SHOW AND TELL – Feb. 17, 2015



Leelah Cornell showing a food grinder; Jim Smith talking about his hat pin (WWII); Katie Finnegan telling about a Ball Canning Book.



Pat Finnegan talking about a relative of Katie's, Henry Francisco; Dave Peck showing a locket with relatives pictures in it.



JoAnn Rowland showing an old electric toaster; Joan Rowland telling us about her quilt top and Rick Bishop showing old photos.



Bill Hinckley telling about raising roosters and making maple syrup; Florence Hinckley talking about the Fox Farm where she grew up; William Hinckley Jr. showing his wooden door harp that his father made for him.



Earl Jones holding a Swiss Army knife that he found in Germany during WWII; Joyce Woodard showing and telling about her great-grandmother's ring that was passed down to her.

HERITAGE HUNTERS MEETINGS

March 21 – Saturday, 1 p.m. – Lisa Potocar, author and teacher, will talk about her research on women involved in the Civil War. Her award winning novel, **Sweet Glory**, follows the experiences of a 16-year-old girl who dresses as a young man and serves in the Union Army.

April 17 – Saturday, 1 p.m. – Jane Meader Nye will focus on the Quaker families of Saratoga and Washington Counties during the period prior to the Civil War. Her presentation will include a general overview of what brought the Quakers here and the beliefs that guided their lives.

May 16 – Saturday, **10 a.m. - 3 p.m. History Faire** – Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library. 475 Moe Road, Clifton Park, N.Y. A family event with activities for children. Many historical societies, museums and groups will be at the 4th annual History Faire, hosted by Heritage Hunters, a genealogy and local history organization. JOIN US! (It's free!). For info, call 518-587-2978. **Note: Location – Clifton Park.**

June 20 – Saturday, 1 p.m. – David R. Starbuck will present a review of the archeological digs he has supervised in our area over the past 30 years. The sites include; the Saratoga National Historic Park, Mount Independence on Lake Champlain, Rogers Island and other Fort Edward sites, Fort William Henry, and his current project, Lake George Battlefield Park. Dr. Starbuck is the author of many books and articles, has taught at over 40 summer field schools in archaeology, and is a Professor of Anthropology at Plymouth State University in New Hampshire.

Note: All Heritage Hunters program meetings are held at the Town of Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring St. [Route 29], Schuylerville. Meetings begin at 1 p.m. with announcements, followed by the program. Social time with refreshments precedes and follows the meeting. Guests are always welcome! For information, call 518-587-2978.

If you'd like to dedicate and/or sponsor a newsletter, send \$50 to The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833, include your name, address and the wording describing who you would like it dedicated to and/or sponsored by.

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

Greenfield's WINTERFEST at Brookhaven Golf Course Feb. 7, 2015



Sliding on Snow Mountain



Cooking hamburgers and hot dogs, serving chili and soups



Making and eating S'mores



Warming up inside The Haven Tee Room



Horse-drawn sleigh rides



Olaf and the Town of Greenfield "Dog Control" Mascot

All photos supplied by Louise and Janet.

SURPRISE IN THE KAYADEROSS

by Greg Schwartz

Published in the May 2006 TOGHS Newsletter.

Back in the '50s, nobody in Greenfield had a swimming pool except for the Duke's up on the hill. Therefore, during the hot days of summer if one wanted to cool off, options were limited. The simplest was donning your suit and spraying off with the hose outside the house. This cooled you off ... for a minute. But during that minute, the 33 degree water temperature initiated heart failure, hypothermia and acne. Another option was bothering Mom (if she drove) or if you were really brave, bothering Dad to take you to a nearby swimming hole like the Sheep Dip or better yet ... someplace like Round Pond. Lake George was NOT the place to go swimming as the water was just as cold as aforementioned hose water. Also asking Dad, while he was in the middle of fixing something he wasn't particularly joyous about fixing, was down right hazardous to your health. Remember those were days before children's advocates, Child Protective Services, and lawyers. So about the only real viable option was getting on your bike and pedaling the couple miles up Route 9N and over Bockes Road to the Kayadeross Creek.

Once you parked your bike, you had another 1/4-mile or so walk to get to the "Hole."

The "Hole" had most of the things that a good swimming hole should have plus a couple more. Yea, the water was cold (about 34 degrees but it felt like 84 degrees once you got wet). Also years before some benevolent souls had placed a couple lengths of railroad track across the creek. We he-man 12-year-olds had no problem catwalking out to the middle and then diving headlong into the deepest part which was all of five feet. That was how you got wet without contracting heart failure, hypothermia and acne. Had to be that one degree water temperature between the water hose at home and the creek.

The pool itself wasn't all that big either. A couple strokes from those powerful pipestem arms easily propelled one from one side to the other. Of course, that got one cooled off ... and bored. Just downstream from the pool along the west side of the stream bank was a pit of some of the blackest, slimiest mud. Wonderful for a mud fight!!!!!! Again, strictly for the boys. Once in a while, one of the girls would get "accidentally" hit with a mud glob the size of a dime. This would elicit foul looks from the offended young lady. Nowadays same "young lady" would spend good wages for a whole faceful of the same mud. Go figure.

But even mud fights don't hold the attention of young knuckleheads for very long. Cooled off and skin properly conditioned, a little exploring was in order. For unknown reasons, creek exploring always started by going upstream. Until now, going upstream was never even questioned. One could easily go downstream. Maybe walking in the creek was easier; less rocks. Maybe less overhanging tree limbs and brush. But it seems we always went upstream.

This day was no different. Creek exploring involved looking around for "things." Cool things. Fishing lures caught in trees, live fish, dead fish, live animals, dead animals, old tires, car parts, anything. Anything also included beer cans. Dad probably picked some night crawlers the night before, stopped at Atwell's General Store for a six pack of brew and proceeded to the creek for a meeting with some rogue 10-inch trout. The empty simply got pitched into the creek. Our forefathers were

not the ecologically sensitive beings of today. Back then, you would have been chastising a WWII veteran still keen of mind in the art of warfare including Springfield Rifles, hand grenades and bare knuckle fighting. Best that the beer can got pitched in the creek and Dad kept happy in the art of angling.

Empty beer cans kicked by a sneakered foot underwater act in a certain predictable manner. They feel dead, worthless, empty. On this particular exploration, I kicked a submerged beer can and received feedback of a whole different nature. This can felt live, clean and FULL!!!!!! Picking it up revealed a new, untapped can of Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. Remember ... hot summer day ... he-man 12-year-olds ... this beer is going to be drunk. Of course, none of us had a "church key." They had a lot of them in a box under the counter in Harry Atwell's store but none in our pockets. A small rock and rusted spike from a nearby fence post rendered the beer available for consumption. This was before Beaver Fever and other diseases existed. Besides, the alcohol in the beer would kill the bad germs, right??

After that beer was shared by about three or four thirsty explorers, the trip upstream continued until another, then another, then a whole bunch of full beers were found loose in the creek bottom. All cooled and available. The rock and fencepost spike were again produced. This time each knucklehead had his own PBR. If one is good, then another is better. In about 15 minutes, thirsts were quenched and the foreign effects of the alcohol had taken full effect. Back to the mud pit!!!

By the time we had finished our second mud treatment in the creek, it was time to be getting on home for supper. The bike ride home as I remember was a whole lot more "uphill" than other days. Also at the supper table, a mention was made about a "look" on my face but rapidly scoffed off to my normal 12-year-old bewilderment.

The next day consisted of NOT going swimming. Too much work, still not feeling up to going all that way to cool off. I did find a couple quarters and proceeded up to the General Store for a popsicle or two. After making my confectioned purchases, it was out to the carved bench on the porch to watch the corner happenings. Just then, Vin Smero arrived in his mint green Jeep truck. Three bounds and he was inside buying whatever Vin bought. However, 12-year-old ears heard his tale of woe to whoever would listen about the rotten individual(s) who had proceeded the previous day to sneak into the creek by his camp and steal two six packs of Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer put in the creek that morning. I also heard about what he would do if he found out who the rascals were.

Remembering that Vin probably knew about bare knuckle fighting, I decided that maybe going anyplace other than the General Store was a good idea.

On other occasions, we did go "exploring up the creek" but never found the beer bonanza we found that day. A couple years later, cars, jobs, pool tables and other interests took the place of creek exploring.

One of these days I might find myself with my son and grandson up on the Kayadeross angling for the still-rogue trout that hide in the creek. To successfully catch those trout, minds must focus on bait and technique. But if the water isn't that cold and there isn't too much brush, a little "exploring" upstream might be in order for a 50-year-old Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

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, 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. **YOU CAN NOW PAY YOUR DUES ONLINE AT OUR WEBSITE!** www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

CLICK ON:



AND FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS.

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 _____



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