



Historical Society Newsletter

OFFICERS: Interim President and Vice President, Robert Roeckle;
Secretary, Patty Schwartzbeck; Treasurer, JoAnn Rowland;
Trustees: Dan Chertok, Ron Deutsch, Ron Feulner, Katie Finnegan and Aida Gordon

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

Volume 16, Issue 6



www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

CALENDAR

Feb. 16, 2016 – Tuesday, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. Program: **Ellen Steinberger** will speak about “*Down in the Valley: Exploring the Gut.*” This area in Saratoga Springs, east of Broadway, has been home to multi-ethnic working class families for over two centuries and also was important to the evolution of the Jewish community.

March 15, 2016 – Tuesday, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. Program: Author **Ray O’Conor** will be speaking about his book, “*She Called Him Raymond.*” This man searched for the story of his namesake, a B-17 pilot in WWII.

April 19, 2016 – Tuesday, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. Program to be announced.

May 17, 2016 – Tuesday, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. Program to be announced.

**Everyone is welcome;
you don’t have to be a member to attend.**

January refreshment volunteers Joan Rowland and Patty Schwartzbeck, served “Maple” Walnut Cake, Snickerdoodles and Chocolate Chip Cookies.

February refreshment volunteers are Nancy Homiak and Jane Potter.

Janet Jones, Refreshment Chairperson

Where does it all come from, and where will it go?

by Robert Roeckle

Having to write something for the newsletter each month is something new for me. Reflecting on recent events in my life have made me think about the things we have in our lives. Since my partner’s car accident on December 8, I have had to do all of those household things I never gave much thought to, since they all magically were done by Jim. I have and will be doing the cooking, the laundry, the dishes and the house cleaning until he comes home. It was the house cleaning that really got me thinking about where all the stuff in our house came from, and where it will end up someday. We have all of the normal things everyone has but, there are those special items from family and friends or those things which we have purchased over the last 20 some odd years that have caused me to think. Will anyone know the stories behind all of our stuff? Will anyone care? Will anyone want it?

While dusting in the living room I wondered if the rest of my family would know that the music box and stand were purchased by my grandfather from Mr. Stinger in Middle Grove, for \$25 along with a rug, Morris chair and other items listed on the receipt kept under the metal discs. That the large Japanese vase sitting on top of the music box was from Jim’s grandmother’s house, and as the story goes; brought home from the 2nd World War by his uncle, taken out of a house in Japan. Sometimes it is the small items that mean the most and have the best stories. Like the small wooden plate in our back hall, hand painted in Japan and sent to my mother by one of her school friends while she was doing missionary work in Japan. To most people it is just a wooden plate with a girl on a sled with the paint flaking off. But I always remember it in my parents’ home hanging on the wall. Although I know the story, I have long since forgotten the name of the woman that sent it to my mother, even though I vaguely remember her picture from a newspaper article.

How many of us have items in our homes that mean so much to us that no one knows why we have all of that old junk? Does anyone actually know the story behind the

items that we have chosen to keep with us? I know when my siblings and I had to clean out my parents' house when we were selling it there were many things we would have liked to keep. But unfortunately, unless we each wanted to build additional rooms on our houses or just keep things in storage, lots of things had to be let go. Like my mother's china that she was so proud of, but was not any of our taste at the time. My father's childhood bedroom furniture consisting of a maple bed and dresser did not match and a mirror that was a completely different shade. My brother used that bedroom set all while he was growing up, but none of us had any room for it, all of us already having complete homes filled with furniture. So it was sold at a tag sale to a woman who said it was for her young son. I only hope it is appreciated, not so much because it was my father's, but because they are well made pieces of furniture that will last several more generations. Of course, when cleaning out any house there are those items that you just wonder – 'what were they thinking or why did they keep that?' I know I need to do a better job of letting my family

and friends know the history and stories of the stuff in the house. Maybe just knowing why it was important to us and why it should be important to them will help to keep things from ending up in a tag sale, thrift store or a dumpster.

I remember coming home several years ago while Jim was doing some spring cleaning in the house and rearranging the dining room furniture. He commented to me that when he was cleaning out the china cabinet he had set everything out on the dining room table. At some point during the day, he walked into the dining room and got a little sad. Looking at all of the china and glassware on the table he thought it looked like a house sale. Knowing that one day either we would not be around or that we would have to move out of our home and much of our stuff would have been sold at a house sale because no one wanted it or there was no place for it in the 'home' was a little depressing. Of course in his typical fashion of turning a sad moment into something happy, he said that at least it would be a really nice house sale filled with a lot of good stuff that people want to buy. A sale we would want to go to.

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

by Ron Feulner

Sitting here this morning waiting for my laptop to go through its long list of Windows updates, my mind began to wander back to the days when I was a child in the Town of Greenfield. Now I grow impatient with my laptop because I have become even more dependent on my iPad that my daughter gave me. It sits on the bookshelf at ear level, right next to my favorite chair, and I wouldn't even hazard a guess how many times a day I reach for it. I know, some of you are going to think me old fashioned because you find your phone even more convenient, but I haven't quite got there yet.

My mind wanders back to my grandparents who built an almost self-sufficient life for themselves on a homestead between Lake Desolation and the Great Sacandaga Lake (on Fox Hill Road). They were not actually on the road, but at the end of a half mile driveway on the west side of the road just outside the northern boundary of the Town of Greenfield. The site was and still is today surrounded by many miles of forest in every direction. My grandfather, William Feulner, was born on the homestead and when old enough to marry, brought Sylvia Bills from the other side of the mountain to be his wife and raise their family in the new house that he had sawed lumber in his mill to build for that purpose.

Last evening, after the news on TV, my wife, Alice, asked me who the actor was that we liked and who committed suicide a year or two ago was. Of course, I knew who she was talking about and could even picture him in a number of movie roles, but I could not come up with his name. A man in the checkout aisle at the supermarket had told her about an older movie that he had watched and really liked, and Alice had tried but failed to remember it long enough for me to order it on Netflix.

I immediately reached for my little iPad, as I so often do when these memory problems crop up, and within moments, I had Robin Williams' name and the movie Alice wanted, which I placed on our Queue at Netflix.

I tried to imagine how my grandparents survived without a source of information like this. I don't believe they had any encyclopedias in their house, and I doubt if they even had a dictionary. They did have a family Bible, but it wouldn't have been of much use for this purpose. They did have a large family, and I can picture them asking one child after another as they returned from working in the woods or on the farm, but I can't imagine that approach being very successful because none of them had ever seen a movie. The children sometimes attended a one-room school at Fox Hill (several miles north) when the weather was appropriate, and they were not needed at home, but this was sporadic. My father managed to finish 4th grade, but didn't learn to read until old age (after he retired), so I doubt that school mates would have been a very good source of information. (Most rural districts only offered schooling through the 8th grade, which was considered a good education at the time.)

Before you begin to think that my father didn't have a very good education, I would like to remind you that he was working as a man on the farm and in the woods by age 12, and he had already learned the necessary skills to hold his own in such a work force. In his world of work horses, axes, pevees, and mill races, he had a much superior education to any modern 12 year old.

But, back to the question, how would they have found an actor's name and the name of the movie he was in? Well, on weekends, family and friends often came to visit and stay for dinner. On one occasion, my mother counted 60 people that my grandmother, Sylvia, and her daughters fed on a Sunday afternoon. The homestead was a gathering place for people who came from miles around in their buggies and early automobiles to spend an afternoon together. I can picture a lively discussion around the dinner table, and am quite certain that someone would have been able to provide the information.

We talk about living in the information age, but I sometimes wonder if we have not given up a part of the social age to get there.

MAPLE VALLEY'S OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND

APRIL 2 AND 3, 2016 – 10 A.M. - 4 P.M.

84 HARRIS ROAD, CORINTH, N.Y.

FREE HAYRIDE AND TOUR OF THE SUGAR HOUSE
KIDS PLAY AREA
HONEY BEE DISPLAY
BOY SCOUTS
DAN DAN THE MOUNTAIN MAN

\$ BREAKFAST AND LUNCH – PANCAKES AND
SAUSAGE W/WARM MAPLE SYRUP \$
\$ MAPLE PRODUCTS AND MAPLE COTTON CANDY \$
\$ HONEY PRODUCTS \$
\$ DREAM CATCHER FARM PONY RIDES \$

DIRECTIONS: FROM CORINTH, GO NORTH ON 9N FOR ABOUT
TWO MILES AND TURN LEFT ON ANTONE MOUNTAIN ROAD.
GO ABOUT ONE-HALF MILE AND TURN RIGHT ON HARRIS ROAD.
THE FARM WILL BE ABOUT TWO MILES DOWN THE ROAD.

518-654-9752 OR 518 796-4721

EMAIL DCMONICA@ROADRUNNER.COM

FACEBOOK MAPLE VALLEY FARM-MONICA'S

CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

PLEASE WEAR BOOTS



MAPLE SUGARING PROGRAM

reviewed by Joan E. Rowland

The January meeting of the Historical Society got us ready for Sap Season (Maple Syrup and all the extra products of Maple Syrup).

Don Monica was our guest speaker (along with his wife, Sue). Don told the history of the business which started with his family (parents and grandparents) in Canada and later moving south. Don has been making maple syrup for 54 years. He is now the 4th generation at their Maple Valley Farm on Harris Road in Corinth. Their two sons (5th generation) are working with them and their 16-year-old granddaughter (6th generation) is currently learning the art. She lives on North Greenfield Road and you will see their sap lines running down to the road side.

Don talked about how Maple Sugaring is done now with the same size drill as in yesteryear but instead of hanging a small loosely covered pail, they now insert a different type tap and special connectors to run hose from tree to tree and then to a large barrel or drum. This way they can go to one place and collect and pump onto a truck to take back to their farm. He said that when you see the pails, along the road side, it's really for show.

Around 2,200+ taps are inserted every year. They harvest sap and boil down almost every day during the short two to three week season. Last year they made 500 gallons of syrup.

Don's program was enjoyed by 20 people and we sampled Maple Candy and Maple Cotton Candy.

Don has been collecting from maples in the Town of Greenfield. One location can be found on the corner of Brigham Road and 9N, next to the Catholic church. See ad for an upcoming open house at Don and Sue Monica's farm in April.



Ice Skating on Latham's Pond, Porter Road, Porter Corners, 1939 or 1940. My aunt, Stell McLaren, told us that they usually skated after dark (no photos), but she did find this one taken during the day. She said when they heard a train coming, they would skate under the trestle. Sometimes, the ice wasn't always frozen under there, but she never fell through. (Notice that there isn't any snow and only a few trees.)

Photo provided by Estella (Jones) McLaren

Medbery Cemetery

by Dan Chertok

With crusty snowcover keeping the evil tics down, the dogs and I are glad to be out of the meadow and hiking again in the woods out back of our Porter Corners home, enjoying the trails and interesting places in the forest that lies within the lines of Ormsbee Road, Plank Road and Ridge Road.

One interesting and special place is a quiet little cemetery lying on a hilltop, hundreds of feet from the nearest road, bearing witness to as many as sixty souls whom, we may assume, once lived in this part of Porter Corners. There is some mystery about the place, as all cemeteries have, holding as they do the histories of its permanent occupants which in most cases will never again be fully told.

I got to thinking about the lives of the individuals buried there, and wondering how each of them had an effect in their own way on life in our town. I would like to be able, in a sense, to resurrect the memories of these forebears to ourselves as residents of our excellent town.

Some quick research shows that there is some dispute about the proper name of this graveyard. It is referred to as Stevenson Cemetery in our seminal historical collection from 1976 *Greenfield Glimpses*. The author of that important book (which he described as being a “plethora of unrelated incidents”) was Town Historian (and otherwise important member of our community) Clayton H. Brown, who described the site as being located 1 1/4 miles northwest of Porter Corners, on the Sky Ranch Road. That coincides, but a quick survey of the grave markers within reveals that there are no Stevensons resting therein at all, which would make the name seem unusual.

Others have referred to this as Medbery Cemetery, and this makes more logic since there are at least 20 members of the Medbery family resting there. The helpful website “Find a Grave” calls it that. Most recently in the 2012 publication “Town of Greenfield Cemeteries” by Rick Bishop (with help from Nancy Homiak and Ron Feulner) the same name is used to name the site. However, that book states that “Medbery” family members lie within. I have seen stones there with the Medbery spelling but have not found any spelled the same as the road. That too is ironic since the road took the spelling at variance with most (or all) of the local family members for whom it was likely named.

Which brings me to my main purpose: I see no Medbury, or Medbery, family members in our phone book, and know of none within my own sphere of acquaintances. I am hoping to bring the past current, and put down as part of our Historical Map Project (which is back in gear after a couple of years’ hiatus!) some history of this family which clearly was a large presence within this part of our town.

Other names within the cemetery which I have found do not connect to any current town residents are Town, Lapham, Carpenter, Williams and Ferris.

If any of our membership knows anybody with these names who were somehow connected to these families, I would appreciate the chance to speak with them about these departed souls. Perhaps my contact information could be given to them, or I can reach out directly if that would not be an imposition.

I look forward to writing more about this place and its permanent residents, should further information become available. But for now, here are some interesting facts about the cemetery’s occupants which might be of interest (information per Find a Grave):

The first person known to be buried there was William Wassen, born 1751 and who died in 1804.

Nathan Medbery was born in 1817, and died in 1918, at the ripe age of 101 – clean living and Greenfield water apparently kept him vibrant and healthy.

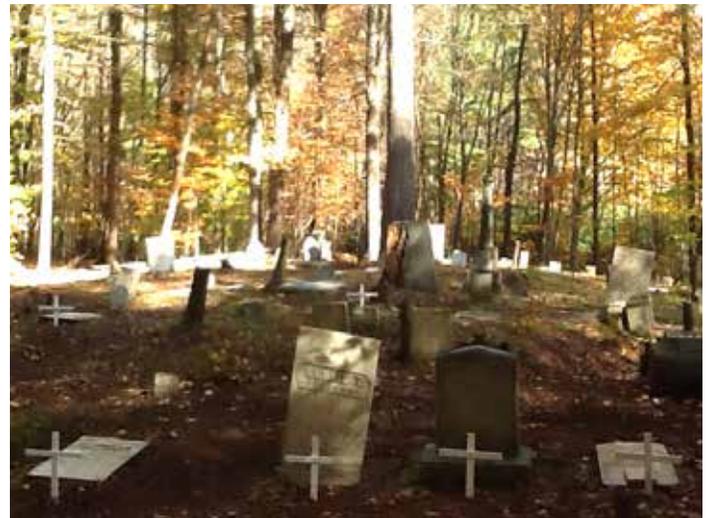
Morris Carpenter, obviously the patriarch of his family, died in 1854 at 73 years, and is buried next to his daughter-in-law (whom, we might speculate, he liked more than he did his son who married her). Morris’ grave stone bears the hopeful send-off “Gone Home”!

Many of the gravestones no longer contain legible engraving, so it is possible these dates could be off as setting the limits of time during which this section of town was “settled.” But it is instructive that not many lived in Greenfield (besides perhaps nomadic native Americans) until 1786, when for the first time several important parts of town (at least four) sprung into being within a single year.

ALL submissions regarding the Medbery Cemetery (or for the Map in general) will be greatly appreciated, whether same be factual information about a person, place or structure within the town, or a story from the past, or any other ideas our membership and readers might have which would lend itself to preserving the rich fabric of our town’s history!

I can be emailed at BMMSCHERTOK@GMAIL.COM or called at 518-321-0330.

I thank you all kindly for your interest in gathering, recording and preserving our Local History!



Medbery Cemetery Grave Markers Porter Corners, N.Y.

Aldrich, Huldah Camberlain b. Jun. 9, 1770 d. Nov. 18, 1857	Medbery, Abner b. Nov. 20, 1774 d. Jun. 25, 1845	Town, Amos b. Feb. 25, 1774 d. Jan. 27, 1865
Allcott, Juliann Medbery b. Dec. 10, 1804 d. unknown	Medbery, Allen M. b. 1803 d. Apr. 19, 1893	Town, Arthur F. b. Dec. 8, 1874 d. Feb. 15, 1896
Allcott, Levi B. b. 1804 d. Jun. 9, 1864	Medbery, Andrew B. b. Jul. 18, 1839 d. Mar. 20, 1842	Town, George F. b. Dec. 13, 1856 d. Sep. 21, 1860
Angell, Helen A. b. Jun. 2, 1844 d. Sep. 2, 1845	Medbery, Chauncey D. b. 1812 d. Oct. 27, 1845	Town, Rhoda Medbery b. Feb. 24, 1782 d. Nov. 22, 1860
Austin, Alonzo S. b. Aug. 16, 1826 d. Jun. 23, 1829	Medbery, Eunice Adelia Bentley b. Mar. 28, 1822 d. Sep. 9, 1905	Town, Sarah A. b. unknown d. Feb. 26, 1896
Austin, Emily b. Jan. 24, 1827 d. Sep. 24, 1828	Medbery, Infant Daughter b. Oct. 31, 1842 d. Nov. 21, 1842	Town, William E. b. unknown d. unknown
Austin, Emily b. Apr. 4, 1829 d. Mar. 31, 1832	Medbery, Lydia Martin b. Sep. 13, 1781 d. Oct. 23, 1880	Wasson, William b. Aug. 9, 1751 d. Aug. 11, 1803
Austin, Seth b. Sep. 8, 1828 d. Sep. 3, 1829	Medbery, Lydia Ann b. May 16, 1826 d. Sep. 25, 1902	Weed, Sally b. Feb. 11, 1797 d. Dec. 21, 1823
Biddell, Maria b. 1799 d. Oct. 26, 1831	Medbery, Martin Blackmar b. May 12, 1838 d. Aug. 22, 1838	Whipple, Amy Town b. Oct. 18, 1804 d. Jul. 11, 1832
Blackmar, Martin b. May 15, 1773 d. Sep. 29, 1812	Medbery, Nathan b. Jul. 26, 1817 d. Jan. 17, 1918	Whipple, Betsey b. 1811 d. Nov. 27, 1849
Carpenter, Morris T. b. 1780 d. Dec. 3, 1854	Medbery, Pamela b. Feb. 7, 1808 d. unknown	Williams, Alanson P. b. May 30, 1823 d. Nov. 19, 1847
Carpenter, Nathan M. b. Jun. 28, 1813 d. Feb. 20, 1882	Medbery, Rhoda M. Blackmar b. Sep. 17, 1776 d. Jan. 29, 1849	Williams, Betsey Medbery b. Aug. 30, 1787 d. Apr. 12, 1807
Carpenter, Rachel Blackmar b. Jan. 21, 1783 d. Jan. 15, 1853	Medbery, Sarah b. Jan. 20, 1811 d. Jul. 10, 1852	Williams, Chloe Payne b. May 26, 1792 d. Aug. 10, 1851
Carpenter, Sally Ann Bentley b. 1818 d. 1889	Medbery, Stephen b. Aug. 3, 1777 d. May 27, 1845	Williams, Cynthia M. b. Sep. 7, 1827 d. Jan. 10, 1846
Easterbrooks, Betsey M. b. Apr. 16, 1808 d. May 14, 1850	Medbery, William A. b. Oct. 22, 1813 d. Aug. 1, 1905	Williams, Elmira A. Potter b. Apr. 18, 1803 d. Feb. 20, 1894
Ferris, George D. b. 1829 d. 1891	Medbery, William E. b. Feb. 18, 1862 d. Jul. 16, 1901	Williams, Harris M. b. Feb. 12, 1806 d. Jun. 5, 1825
Holbrook, Polly b. Nov. 26, 1800 d. Dec. 7, 1809	Peacock, Lovinna Medbery b. 1811 d. Mar. 29, 1836	Williams, Capt Nelson b. 1810 d. Apr. 1, 1892
Lapham, Celindia E. Williams b. 1820 d. May 10, 1845	Prior, Nathaniel b. 1762 d. Jan. 1, 1820	Williams, Theophilus b. Sep. 28, 1782 d. Dec. 9, 1856
Lapham, Hannah Mann b. Jan. 30, 1767 d. Jul. 5, 1831	Swan, Infant Son b. May 22, 1827 d. May 23, 1827	Williams, Theophilus, Jr. b. Mar. 18, 1813 d. Jun. 13, 1813
Lapham, Jonathan b. Jan. 22, 1768 d. Jan. 9, 1845	Swan, Nathan A. b. Apr. 22, 1816 d. Feb. 26, 1826	Williams, Uriah b. Sep. 30, 1830 d. Feb. 17, 1831
Lapham, Stafford b. Jul. 19, 1795 d. Oct. 27, 1857	Swan, Prudence M. b. Jan. 7, 1819 d. Feb. 28, 1826	

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL 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 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 _____

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.**

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 (518-321-0330) or write him at: Dan Chertok, 58 Ormsbee Road, Porter Corners, NY 12859



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