



Historical Society Newsletter

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

Volume 18, Issue 5



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email toghistsoc@gmail.com

www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

CALENDAR

- Jan. 16, 2018 – Tuesday**, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** *Greg Veitch*, Chief of Police for Saratoga Springs, will talk about his book – *All the Law in the World Won't Stop Them*. It's about crime, gambling and corruption in Saratoga Springs through 1921.
- Feb. 20, 2018 – Tuesday**, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** Author *Mary Cuffe Perez* will talk about her new book – *Barn Stories*.
- March 20, 2018 – Tuesday**, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** *Marie Willard* will speak about growing up in Middle Grove in the 1950s and some of the older people and families she knew back then.
- April 17, 2018 – Tuesday**, meeting 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** *Mary Jane Pelzer* is the “soap lady” at the Saratoga Farmers’ Market. The program is “Good, Clean Fun: A short history and demonstration of heritage soap making.”
- Everyone is welcome, admission is free, you don't have to be a member to attend and refreshments are served after all programs.**

Meetings Cancellations

If schools are closed due to weather, our meeting will be canceled. A message also will be posted on our website and on our Facebook page.

www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

[www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=town of greenfield historical society](https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=town%20of%20greenfield%20historical%20society)

*January refreshments volunteers are
Katie Finnegan and Patty Schwartzbeck.*

January Notes

by Mary Vetter

I hope that each and every one of you had a very happy and healthy holiday season. We started our holidays with a party at the IOOF Hall on December 9. For Dan Chertok and his wife Lynn, Joan Rowland, and Marion Gyarmathy and sons (Jordon and Joseph) the festivities started with a 3-hour session of latke (potato pancake) making. I think the women of yore would have approved of the way we got busy and pumped out the latkes.

It reminded me of being home with my mom and my sisters cranking out a huge Christmas feast. Five sisters can bicker, let me tell you, but when it was crunch time and getting out the food for our guests was on the line, the bickering stopped. Without a thought, we each took on a kitchen chore and soon the house smelled wonderful and so it was at the Chertok's (sans the bickering). Thank you, Lynn, for letting us invade your kitchen just before the holidays.

The gathering at the museum was festive. Dan Chertok and Valarie Hope from Lake Luzerne helped us to understand the origins of the holiday. They explained the events that led the Jews back to their temple and how they used one day's holy oil to light the temple for 8 days. Valarie shared some of her unique Menorahs with us and Pat Finnegan gave a delightful explanation of the origins of the Dreidel and how the game is played.

Then it was time to eat. We enjoyed the fruits of our labors. So many came with delicious deserts and cookies to cap off the latke feast. The Rowland sisters once again provided wonderful mulled cider, and thanks to Louise and Tom, we could also warm ourselves with hot coffee.

So, a new year begins and thanks to Katie Finnegan, we have another wonderful program on tap. Please make sure to set aside January 16 when Greg Veitch talks about his book on crime in Saratoga through 1921. The title of the book is *All the Law in the World Won't Stop Them*. As usual, we meet at the Community Center at 7 p.m.

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

by Ron Feulner

One of the areas in this region that has intrigued me since becoming town historian is Granite Lake on Braim Road. Since I grew up in the Middle Grove area, I knew little about the eastern end of the town, so when I heard about Granite Lake, I decided to investigate.

Granite Lake is a small body of water with its axis running east and west while Braim Road runs north and south splitting the lake into two segments with water on both sides of the road divided by a large culvert bridge. I was disappointed by the small size of the body of water. With such a grand name, I guess that I was expecting more. However, for such a small feature, it does have a significant history.

In the 1870s, John Boll ran the Granite Lake Brewery. He made news when his Newfoundland dog, who he had invested one-hundred dollars in, was shot by Edward Trim of Greenfield. Boll appeared before Justice B.S. Robinson of Greenfield and swore out a warrant for the arrest of Trim for shooting the dog. Trim's trial went on for more than a day with much testimony about the dog's character. Some testifying that the dog was gentle while others said, "The infernal thing was as savage as a bear." Trim testified that the dog had attacked him and that is why he shot it. The case was still unresolved when the Saratogian article was written.

Boll and Trim's spat was not the only disagreement going on during the 1870s concerning Granite Lake environs. A group of businessmen petitioned the State of New York to form a company called the Granite Lake Company. The capital stock was set at fifty thousand dollars with one thousand shares sold at fifty dollars each. It included the option to increase the capital stock to one-hundred thousand in the future.

The purpose of the company was stated to construct a large reservoir of water ... for public and private use. It gave the company the right to "purchase and hold, any real estate necessary ... and may enter upon any lands necessary ... and may take the water from any streams and ponds ... and may make dams and construct reservoirs and lay pipe upon making adequate compensation to the owners of said lands."

You can imagine how this was received by local property owners and citizens of Saratoga Springs. A Saratogian article on August 7, 1873, summed up the discontent. The article describes the endeavor as, "... a scheme which met the emphatic disapproval of our citizens. In one respect Granite Lake is a myth, because it is a lake without any water in it. It is a place for a lake instead of a lake. Certain gentleman own the place and they want to turn it into a lake, and when they have made it into a lake, they want Saratogians to drink it. ... they don't need any Granite Lake now, but in the course of time, when the city grows to the dimensions of a city of 25,000 or 30,000 inhabitants [the population in 2010 was 26,586], the waters of Granite Lake or some other Lake may be needed ... and in accordance with the provisions of a law passed last winter, certain gentleman, residents of Saratoga and Greenfield, have taken ... steps for the organization of ... the Granite Lake Water Company of Greenfield." Their petition was apparently passed by the Greenfield Town Board.

In March, 1871, the Saratogian was calling upon the governor of New York to veto the Granite Lake Water Company for the following reasons:

1. The village of Saratoga should have the right to supply itself with water.
2. The Granite Lake Water Company is a scheme concocted by a few individuals to appropriate and control for their

own use and benefit a privilege which belongs now to the entire village.

3. It gives a private company the right to seize and appropriate lands ... for private speculation.
4. The bill authorizes the Granite Lake Company to take creeks and water and land anywhere ... they might even drain Loughberry Lake, so far as the bill is concerned.

Apparently the protest was successful for Granite Lake is not the water supply for Saratoga Springs, however, the exact story of what happened to the company is unknown by me. Perhaps some of our readers can fill in the rest of the story. You can contact me by email at RFeulner@greenfieldny.

Later, on July 19, 1927, the Saratogian described another event that occurred at Granite Lake. This time it was a tragedy when Louise Margaret Braim, a thirty-one year old school teacher and daughter of Henry G. Braim of Greenfield, drowned in the lake. Her brother, Edward, had wandered into deep water while swimming in the lake and when Louise Margaret noticed his struggles, she went to his rescue, and she managed to push him to shallow water thus saving his life. Although she was an excellent swimmer, she had swallowed a large amount of water and went under after the rescue of her brother. Her body was dragged to shore by an older brother who lived nearby, but they were unable to revive her.

This last tragic event that happened to the family whose name now identifies the road past Granite Lake was the last of the historic events that I could find. If you as readers have any other stories about Braim Road and Granite Lake that you would like to share, please send them to me at the above email address.

Letter to the Editor From Joe Frank Goyette

December 2, 2017 – I have been a little busy lately. This past Wednesday, I was in the Yale Cardiac unit to get a hole in my heart plugged. Hopefully, this operation will stop the strokes I have had. I have been lucky in that I only lost my speech during the strokes. Some of my friends here considered that to be a blessing for them because I am so vocal about all things they thought it was nice to see me quiet for once. Anyway, I appear to be fine and will be out and about in a week or so. I wish you all and your families the best of health forever.

December 13, 2017 – I am doing fine since they plugged the hole in my heart. I appear fine at this time and this Friday the doctors at Yale will check to see if this plug is leaking. It should be fine because I didn't hear any "oops" during the surgery so I assume all is well. I considered this a manufacture's defect and the patch a "recall" repair. I am just glad I didn't need to be returned to the manufacture. If I were a poet maybe I could work this "hole in the heart" thing into a country-western song! I was at the neurologist yesterday and I am glad I was in pretty good shape other than the heart thing because at my age they just give people blood thinners and hope for the best. The doctor said I am the oldest patient that Yale has ever done this patch on. I like science but I never thought I would be the experiment! I have lost some words or it might just be old age. I am lucky that I yammer a lot because there are plenty more words back there.

I was busy doing a lot of stuff around here when I read in the newsletter that there was a book on the Fire Towers in the area. Brian Hendrie and I made a couple of visits to the Spruce Mountain Tower on our bikes probably when we were in 8th grade. On the second trip, we brought the ranger candy bars and potato chips and other junk food. I guess we thought he was a prisoner there. I remember him as a real nice guy. He showed us how he located fires on the map by triangulating with other towers.

Published in the January 2008 Newsletter

(Ron Feulner – historical society president 2008.)

Ron's Ramblings

Well, it's the day after our annual Christmas party, and I'm feeling bloated and lethargic like I do the day after I make a fool of myself eating too many sweets. But, let me tell you, this year the bakers in our group outdid themselves. No one could have resisted the table full of sweet things that occupied the space right next to the gas heater, which also served to keep Dorothy Rowland's spicy sweet cider mix hot. To add to the overall holiday environment, JoAnn Rowland (who by the way coordinated this year's event and bought many of the paper products), and I spilled some of the hot cider down into the heater so the aroma of evaporating sweet cider filled the room for the rest of the day. Speaking of heat, Robert Roeckle went down early Saturday and started the gas space heater so the building would warm up by party time. Twenty-eight people stopped in, and still they couldn't make much of a dent in the sweets, so at the end, many of us filled a paper plate to take home and left a donation, which accumulated to twenty-eight dollars worth.

We also received a donation from Audrey Crandall to be used toward buying paint for the kitchen area renovation. Audrey's donation was a kind of pay-it-forward situation. It all began when Audrey gave Nancy Homiak an artificial Christmas tree that was too large for Audrey's house but just right for Nancy's. Next, Nancy sent Audrey twenty-five dollars (even though Audrey had said she didn't want anything) for the tree. Then Audrey decided to add another twenty-five dollars and donate fifty to us toward paint. So, a big "thanks" to both Nancy and Audrey for helping with our project.

Winnie O'Connell arrived at the party with her pick-up-truck and a couple of more bales of blow-in insulation. That makes five or six bales that she has donated. She told me that she bought them on sale when they were insulating a house that they own. She said, "I guess I got carried away because I bought more than we needed, so I'm happy to donate it." Harold and I have finished insulating the floor. (Harold had to take up a substantial part of the floor in order to install rigid board insulation between the joist.) The next step in our project will be the rental of a machine to blow the insulation into the walls and ceiling. Harold has already done the prep work of removing clapboards on the outside of the building and cutting holes in the sheathing.

Well, back to the party. This year's theme was antique Christmas ornaments, and a number of people brought theirs to share. Each took a turn at describing them to the group. It always amazes me how these small, and in many cases, delicate ornaments can take on such human meaning. One after another, the people who brought them described how the small ornament(s) were left to them by family or in one case represented a purchase during his first year of marriage many years ago. In each case the ornament(s) meant much more than their surface beauty, as a piece of glass, would have suggested.

It had snowed several inches a couple of days before our party, and I had difficulty finding someone to plow. For a while, I thought we might have to move the party back to the Community Center in Greenfield where we hold most of our meetings. But, at last, I connected with Dave Wardell, and he did a superb job of cleaning out the snow just a few hours before the party began. I should also note that the week before the party, Nancy Homiak, Harold Jones, Alice Feulner, and I went down and spent the morning cleaning the hall. Since we have been doing construction work in the kitchen area, cleaning was a little more intense this year than usual.

Coral Crosman and Harold Jones continue to work on our state grants and Ron Deutsch is working at getting our IRS designation as a non-profit organization.

I thought it might be interesting this month to say a few words about how your newsletter gets put together and delivered to your door. First, of course, we rely on many of you to write the wonderful articles that we are becoming famous for. (Our supply is getting low. After the holidays many of us begin to suffer from cabin fever – a good time to write an article.) When we receive your articles, I forward them to Janet Jones who types them (if needed) and then sends them (via e-mail) back to me to edit. When the first editing is completed, I send them along with my "Ramblings" back to Janet. She then roughs in the whole newsletter and sends it back to me for final editing. I send it back to her, and she prints it. In the meantime, Alice Feulner gets money from Robert Roeckle (our treasurer) for stamps and picks them up at the post office. Nancy Homiak contacts Robert for updates to her member mailing list, then prints the address labels. Next, Janet delivers a box of printed newsletters to one of our houses, and some combination of the three of them get together for an evening to fold, tab, stamp, and place address labels on them. [Editor's note: sometimes we get extra help from Margie and Earl Jones.] Finally, Alice makes another trip to the post office to mail them and a day or so later they arrive in your mail box.



Alice Feulner and Nancy Homiak getting the one-hundred-and-sixty-something newsletters ready for mailing.

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Thanks!

TOGHS HOLIDAY PARTY • Saturday, December 9, 2017



Dan Chertok, Mary Vetter, Marion Gyarmathy and Lynn Chertok



Dan Chertok attacking the Cookies Table (and other goodies) for the Cookie Exchange.



Joan Rowland, Mary Vetter, Marion Gyarmathy and Lynn Chertok



Valarie Hope



Joan Rowland



Dan Chertok



The desserts



Latkes (potato pancakes)



Dreidel



Valarie's Menorahs



Jordon Gyarmathy, Marion Gyarmathy and Lynn Chertok



Dan Chertok and Valarie Hope



Joseph Gyarmathy, Jordon Gyarmathy (playing Dreidel) and Lynn Chertok



Pat Finnegan, Tom Merrills and Louis Okoniewski



Jordon Gyarmathy playing the organ from the Porter Corners Methodist Church. (It still works.)

(Photo credits: Joan Rowland and Janet Jones)



Patty Schwartzbeck, Ron Feulner, Earl Jones, Joyce Woodard and Alice Feulner



JoAnn Rowland, Patty Schwartzbeck, Ron Feulner, Arden Blunt and Alice Feulner



Jane Potter, Lelah Cornell, Mary Vetter, Katie Finnegan, Dan Chertok, Linda Davin, Patty Schwartzbeck and Ron Feulner



Marion Gyarmathy, Louise Okinowski, Tom Merrills and Louis Okinowski



Patty Schwartzbeck, Joyce Woodard and Louise Okinowski



JoAnn Rowland, Ron Deutsch and Marion Gyarmathy



Ron Feulner, Arden Blunt, Ron Deutsch, Patty Schwartzbeck and Joyce Woodard



Fran Lambert, Linda Davin and Katie Finnegan

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 \$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. **YOU CAN PAY YOUR DUES ONLINE AT OUR WEBSITE! www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com.** Email toghistsoc@gmail.com for more information.

CLICK ON:



AND FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS.

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

Name _____ I am interested in volunteering.

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'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. Please send articles and/or photos to: JJones18215@roadrunner.com.

Updating Historic Sites Map in the Town of Greenfield

We invite our membership and readers of this newsletter to share with Dan any historical information about an interesting person, place, structure or event within our town. Dan reserves the right to proof read and edit submissions, but he will be very happy to add your information to our map. We are always looking for historical information to add to and enhance the map, which we consider to be an ongoing work in progress. Please email Dan Chertok at Chertok@LCYLAW.com or write him at: Dan Chertok, 58 Ormsbee Road, Porter Corners, NY 12859



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