



Historical Society Newsletter

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

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MAY NOTES

by Mary Vetter

On March 2nd I had my left knee replaced. Automatically I was in lockdown. There's not much you can do in the couple of weeks after a knee replacement except the exercises your PT person gives you. I did have one respite. My brother, who is from Queens, was in Rochester visiting a friend who had recently had surgery and he swung by Saratoga before he went back down to the city.

Down in the city they were already taking precautions to make sure they weren't getting infected. He was constantly making sure that he didn't have a temperature and that he didn't have any of the signs they were warning about at the time. In his brief three day visit, I did get out for lunch and a short stint at the grocery store where there was already a run on TP. He gave us our first lessons on social distancing when in public. Then an odd thing happened. I got a call from a medical provider.

It turns out there was a possible COVID-19 exposure that involved a member of their staff. They wasted no time alerting patients and staff. I had been in one of their offices just five days before my surgery. My brother, who had been doing his best to dodge the virus, in the hotspot that is his home, was now facing the fact that I had possibly been exposed. Was I infected? Could he be exposed? In those early days, we weren't sure but the speed with which my medical provider acted let us know that this virus was nothing to fool with. We had just been knocked on the head with the seriousness of the situation. A subsequent phone call to them clarified that I had could not have been in contact with the person in question. What a relief!

Now my quarantine began in earnest. I went nowhere. My only contact with the outside world was twice weekly visits from my physical therapist. We wore masks. She sanitized obsessively as did I. I nearly asphyxiated every living thing in the house with Lysol. Heidi suited up once or twice a week to get scripts or groceries. The hunt for TP was on in earnest. I learned to make no-sew masks from bandannas. When I got approval from my therapist, I walked with my neighbors practicing the appropriate social measures. FaceTime, texting and Facebook became my connection to family and friends. When I had made my social networking rounds, I filled my time with reading and cooking and light work in the yard. I haven't gained the full COVID-19 but eight pounds later, I learned to avoid the kitchen (for the most part).

By April 6th, I was stir crazy and suffering from a sciatic issue stemming from the surgery but two things happened that threw me headlong into the COVID-19 outside world. First, I started outpatient PT and chiropractic treatments to treat a bulging disc that caused the sciatic issue. Second, Heidi developed a sinus infection which meant that her days of shopping were over. Now it was my turn to learn how to navigate shopping. The rules had changed dramatically. Once or twice I found myself headed the wrong way down an aisle and I got a dressing down from a cashier for trying to use my own bags. The protocols for PT and the chiropractor were and are intense. There are no complaints from me. I am grateful that these services are available. In some places in this country they are not.

There is one clear lesson I have learned over the course of the last two months. We will survive. I've created an "outside world" routine that allows me to feel safe. When the virus dies down we will all have our safe routines that protect us, our families and our friends. The same will happen for business owners and employers. Social gatherings will look different but they will still have that the same joy of being together; of experiencing an event together. In fact, they will probably seem more valuable because we lost them for a time.

So stay safe and stay well. Start planning your safe routines so that you can get out and enjoy the beautiful weather this spring and summer will bring. For us in the north country it can be all to short. You don't want to miss much of it. We hope to plan some summer activities and will keep you posted as things develop. We miss our members, your love of local history is heart and soul of our Historical Society.

MAY 19, 2020 MEETING HAS BEEN CANCELLED

Election of officers has been postponed until September.

SHOP AT AMAZON SMILE

Help support our historical society when you shop at Amazon. Amazon Smile, the charitable arm of Amazon, will make a donation to us on qualifying purchases when you sign into your Amazon account at smile.amazon.com. The first time you do this, tap Accounts & Lists then tap Your Amazon Smile. On the right-hand side of the screen tap the change charity button and type in: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society.

Once you have saved us as your charity, start shopping. When you checkout, Amazon will let you know if any of your purchases qualify for a donation. Amazon then sends the donation to us. You do nothing more. Remember to sign in at smile.amazon.com on all your Amazon shopping trips to support us. Thanks!

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

by *Ron Feulner*

We are making history with this coronavirus. These times will take their place in history along with the Spanish flu or the small pox epidemic that nearly wiped out many of the Native American families when the first white men brought the disease from Europe.

I believe that it was the vice-president of our town's historical society, Joan Rowland, who first thought of the idea of preserving our local reaction to the present crisis by sharing how the virus is affecting each of our lives. As town historian, I think this would be a grand idea, and I believe that the historical society will share any information they gather with my town office, so we can both help to preserve it. One-hundred years from now, when the Town of Greenfield is experiencing problems that we can't even imagine, people will turn back to the experiences we had and how we handled them.

As historian, I would like to share my experiences during this trying time, but as I sit here in front of the computer, nothing immediately comes to mind. My first thought is that no one is going to be interested in what I am doing because they are doing the same, so I will structure this for future generations.

My second thought is that the standard for reporting anything is to describe who, what, when and where the event occurred. That approach doesn't really fit this circumstance, so I am going to have to improvise.

Let me begin with a few basic facts, as I understand them. This virus evolved from an animal to humans, and because it is new to humans, we have no natural defense. It is like the boa constrictors that someone dropped off in the Everglades and now are over populating the region and wreaking havoc with the native wildlife because these snakes have no natural enemies to keep them under control. This new virus has no natural enemies to keep it under control in the human population, and until we develop something that will put the brakes on it, it will continue to spread.

It is believed to have originated in China (but that is not known for certain) and spread quickly to Europe. Two waves of it are thought to have come to America, one from China to our west coast and another from Europe to our east coast, namely New York City. Cities in both these regions were hit hard by it.

The virus produces a range of symptoms which seems to have something to do with age and physical condition, but there are many exceptions to this. The elderly seem to be hit the hardest while some younger people don't experience any symptoms.

Most people that I know have placed their hope in science for a cure, or, at least an effective treatment, while at the same time looking to spiritualism to help them cope. There are exceptions like the man in Texas who painted a sign on his pickup truck that read, "Jesus is my vaccine."

While some cities, like NY City, have been particularly hard hit as well as some rural nursing homes with high death counts, most of us in the Town of Greenfield have had little actual contact with the virus except by watching our television or other media. I, thankfully, at this point in time,

can say that I don't know anyone who has been aware that they had the virus.

Part of the reason that I can say this is because there has been a very coordinated effort to curtail the spread of the virus both in the city areas and in rural areas like the Town of Greenfield. This approach seems to have worked well in slowing the spread which otherwise, one could assume, would advance across the nation in an exponential fashion.

Now the question, how has it changed my life. To begin, my wife, Alice, and I were already living a rather isolated life. I have been retired from teaching and she from social work for many years. We live on three and one-half acres in rural Town of Greenfield with several neighbors within sight of our home. I, as town historian, had been going into my office at town hall every Wednesday and otherwise taking calls at home. We have six children scattered across the country from Arizona to Baltimore and many grandchildren and great grandchildren whom we stay in contact with and occasionally they come to visit us, as we don't travel any more.

In normal times, I usually have some kind of project that I'm working on which necessitates me going to a lumber yard or hardware store, and we generally go grocery shopping once per week in Saratoga Springs or Ballston Spa. Other than this, our lives are reasonably quiet and peaceful.

When this virus first struck and we began to hear about it on the news, we quickly realized that because of our age group and Alice's congestive heart failure, we were both in a high risk group. If we did not realize this, our daughter who lives near the New Rochelle (just outside NY City) hot spot that suffered one of the first serious outbreaks of the disease, made us aware. She immediately told us to isolate ourselves, and she agreed to take care of our food needs. She and her husband were doing the same at their home.

The last social function that Alice and I attended was the funeral of our dear friend, Tom Merrills. We went early thinking we could pay our respects and leave before many others came, but when we arrived, we realized that because it was a large funeral, many others had the same intentions, but we tried to keep our distance and not touch anything. When we left, we immediately used a hand sanitizer.

I did go into town hall and work that Wednesday, but after discussing it with my volunteers, we decided not to come in again until further notice. That same afternoon, I was told that the town board met and decided that all non-essential workers should stay at home. I took a cardboard box of work home with me that day, enough to keep me busy for a long time researching and writing about local history — projects that I had wanted to work on but had never found the time to.

From that day until now, we have pretty much been isolated. (There are two terms that have gained popular usage during this period, they are isolation and quarantine. Isolation means that you live as carefully as you can with minimal contact with others, while quarantined means no contact. When quarantined, you essentially live in a bubble, and you usually do not practice this unless you have been exposed to the virus.)

Alice and I discussed the risks and decided to discontinue our regular visits to our doctors. We are both feeling OK and unless we experience symptoms that need to be addressed, we do not go for doctor visits, blood work, etc. We no longer

go grocery shopping (our daughter has arranged home deliveries). I no longer go shopping at hardware or lumber stores. We still send and receive postal mail in our rural delivery mail box, but I handle the mail with rubber gloves and throw away junk mail in the recycling container, so it never enters the house. I wipe down our personal mail with a sanitized wipe before bringing it in. The same with our grocery deliveries, which are left by the garage door by a private company, I wipe everything down with a Clorox wipe before bringing it into the house.

On a few occasions, we have visited family and friends by sitting 30 or 40 feet apart in the back yard on a sunny day. I have talked to neighbors in their back yard, but at the same distance.

There have been a couple of lapses, when my lawn mower repairman brought the machine back, I handed him cash payment, but was careful not to touch him. I should have put the money down and let him pick it up, but I did not think quickly enough. A few lapses have occurred that way, when an exposure happened quickly, and I didn't think but just reacted.

Some people may think that we are over reacting, but Alice and I both view this as a potential death threat. If one of us get the disease, it is likely that we both would get it, and the consequences are just too serious. We both know that we are in the down-hill stage of our lives, but neither of us want to end it on a respirator isolated from our family.

How has this isolation affected us? Very little, because we are retired and have an ideal place to live. We have a large back yard and even a walking trail through our woods that we can enjoy on nice days. We stay in telephone contact with family and friends. We do email and our daughter has taught us how to do Facetime on our ipads, so we have considerable contact with others. I have a close friend who is an expert on-line researcher who has been helping me to research local history projects, and I have been doing a considerable amount of writing. Alice stays busy writing letters to grandchildren and friends and when she is not writing, she has been working on her doll making projects or reading books. Our daughter even got us connected to internet streaming, so we can watch movies on Netflix and Amazon Prime.

Life is good for us, but we constantly think about the people who live in city apartments or have to worry about being laid-off from their jobs and wondering where the next car payment will come from. These are the people who are suffering, our only discomfort is not being able to hug our children and grandchildren, or as our grand-daughter says, "It is difficult to talk on the phone to friends and family because there is nothing new happening in our lives. Every day seems like a repeat of the day before, so if you talked to someone yesterday, what do you tell them today."

I would encourage all of you (regardless of where you live) to write down your personal experiences with this virus and share them with us for safe keeping so that future generations will have some idea what we are experiencing. You can send them to me or the historical society, and we will share them with each other. My email address is thistorian@nycap.rr.com or my mailing address is: Historian, PO Box 10, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. Thank you for sharing and stay well.

SUPERSTAR OF THE WEEK

Town of Greenfield's *SUPERSTAR OF THE WEEK* is **PATTY SCHWARTZBECK!** We are so grateful for her dedication and commitment to The Greenfield Food Pantry. For many, many years she has ordered the food, stocked the shelves, organized the volunteers, provided groceries for those in need, and so much more! *THANK YOU Patty!* We appreciate you!

If you would like to nominate a Greenfield resident for Super Star of the week, send a pic and short story of their "amazingness" to Rebecca Sewell at 518-428-2267.



SARATOGA SPRINGS —

Charles Thomas Blodgett passed away peacefully on Thursday, April 16, 2020. He was born on June 11, 1931, the oldest of Joseph and Jennie (Barss) Blodgett's five children. Charles served in the Army, for two years and in June of 1954, he married the love of his life, Beverly (Gorham).

He served in the Army Reserve until May 1960.

Giving back to the community was part of his character, so it was only natural that he would be a volunteer fireman for the Town of Greenfield. He retired from Skidmore College where he worked in the mail department. A member of the Sara Spa Rod & Gun Club, he enjoyed camping, hunting, fishing, gardening, outings with the Greenfield Seniors, and all of his four-legged friends. With a soft-spoken light-hearted sense of humor, he always made you happy that you had the opportunity to visit with him. Charles was a special human being and will be sorely missed by all who had the privilege to know him.

In addition to his parents, he is predeceased by his wife, Beverly, who passed away after a short illness in Dec. 2016, he missed her so; as well as his brothers Paul, Donald, and David.

He is survived by his sister, Marjorie Burbine; sisters-in-laws, Joan and Dolores; nieces, nephews, and cousins; his special neighbors, the Pratt family, Joseph, Maureen, and daughter's, Vivian and Julia who became the children and grandchildren that he and Bev never had. We would like to thank Nurse Ben for his great care of our sweet Charles during the last hours he spent on earth.

Burial was held at the Saratoga National Cemetery, Duell Rd., Schuylerville. Arrangements are under the direction of the William J. Burke & Sons/Bussing & Cunniff Funeral Home, 628 North Broadway Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Online remembrances may be made at www.burkefuneralhome.com www.lastingmemories.com/charles-t-blodgett

Published in The Saratogian on April 21, 2020

CHANGES I HAVE SEEN SINCE THE PANDEMIC STARTED!

by JoAnn I. Rowland – 05-04-2020

- More dogs in TV Ads.
- I have to run the dishwasher two or three times a week because the two of us are eating three meals a day at home.
- More walkers, joggers, runners, bicycles, and dog walkers going by the house. Yes, even up the big hill on Ormsbee Rd.
- Before all this started, I planned to semi-retire as of July 1. I planned to work only three days a week. I didn't think after all those years of getting up and leaving the house, I could stay home every day. And YES, be home with my sister. But now that I have, I wonder if "full" retirement is in the cards? The extra money from working part time would be good but I don't want to catch the corona virus.
- It is a very strange sight to drive around the mall and see no cars parked in the lots.
- I do miss that row of tree all budded out in white flower in front of Target, Staples, etc. I could see them from my window at work.
- While at home, I have been busy sewing masks for the Greenfield Lions project. Joan and I have made 386 so far (they need 10,000).
- What I really miss is **GOING** to church. Pastor Jason Proctor is doing Sunday morning worship on Facebook Live at 10 a.m. He is also doing Wednesday Bible Study Live on Zoom at 7 p.m. It works, but we all miss the hugs and just plain old fashion visiting.

- I miss The Town of Greenfield Historical Society meetings and speakers. Katie had some really good speakers lined up. But on the other hand, I haven't had to do a treasurer report since February.
- Then there is 4-H. Yes, the Porter Corners Melody Workers 4-H Club is still going strong. I work with the 5 to 7-year-olds, the Clover Buds. We had given the parents a list of material to purchase to make "fleece no sew pillows," and I had gotten a good buy on the pillow forms. Just \$3 for a 12" form. This was going to be their sewing project for Saratoga County Textile Expo, (Fashion Review) and an entry for the Saratoga County Fair. Joan and I also teach sewing to the 8 to 19-year-olds, in the spring. We just finished PJ pants with one child and two others had started there sewing project. Then the pandemic hit. We were notified by Saratoga County 4-H office that there was to be **NO meetings** of any kind until further notice. What a bummer! By next year, their project won't fit them. Well, just this week Saratoga County Fair is canceled for this year. Only second time it has ever been canceled. The first time was because of the Civil War.
- On a good note, the family unit is pulling together. Mothers and fathers and children are spending more quality time together. Since they must stay home there is more time of family meals, good old fashion board games, walking the neighborhood, with or without a dog, and movie nights. Who knows maybe even spending time as a family with God will once again become the normal?

As the old songs says "till we meet again."

GREENFIELD LIONS MAKING MASK

The Town of Greenfield Lions Club is heading up an effort to sew masks to address the COVID-19 Virus.

The Northeast Association of the Blind in Albany (NABA) is a provider of eye and sight services to which many Lion's club in our area donate. They also provide jobs for blind and sight impaired people in a workshop at their location in Albany. NABA has a contract for 10,000 masks for the Office of Children and Family Services, but due to distancing and not being able to ramp up productions, they asked Lions Clubs to help cut out and sew mask so they can meet this contract.

Lion Elizabeth Stano is chairing the Greenfield Lion's Committee. She is handling support of raw materials and transporting of finished product. By the end of April, our local club along with other in the area, we had reached the 4,000 masks mark.

Each Friday the finished masks are picked up by the regions courier. Local sewers leave their finished mask and pick up the next packet from Elizabeth. (She also delivers). The packet contains 100 precut mask material, which is cut by local volunteers. In addition, there are precut 1/8 inch elastics. Sewers turn the sides over on the long edges and sew 1/4 inch. Then pin in three, 1/2 inch pleats on each side. This is sewn in place with the elastic inserted, and this is turned over again for a clean finish. While the sewers are sewing, the cutters prepare the next packet of precuts. To date, we have had 15 volunteers working on this project from the Town of Greenfield (2 of those from Wilton/Saratoga area). 100 masks at a time.

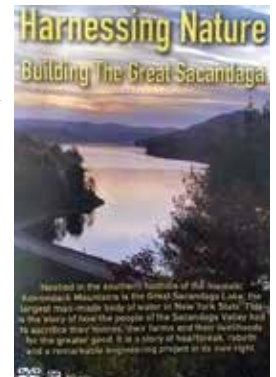
The Lion's Club is very thankful that many non-lions in our community have stepped up to help in this effort. It is real proof of the caring and step up to help attitude, in the Town of Greenfield.

The Motto of Lion's Clubs International is "We Serve." Whether they are officially Lions or not, everyone is welcome, they have the heart of a Lion.

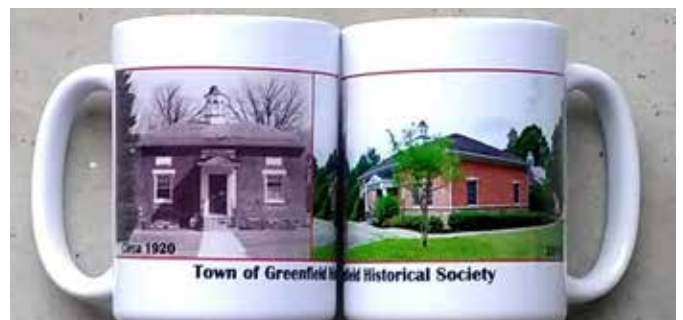
"HARNESSING NATURE: BUILDING THE GREAT SACANDAGA"

This DVD is an 80-minute documentary telling the story of how the people of the Sacandaga Valley had to sacrifice their homes, their farms and their livelihoods for the greater good. It is a story of heartbreak, rebirth and a remarkable engineering project in its own right. This is the story of how the Great Sacandaga Lake, the largest man-made body of water in New York state, was made.

DVDs are available for \$20. They are at the Greenfield Town Hall, or by contacting the Historical Society at P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. (Please add \$3 if you want one mailed.)



GREENFIELD TOWN HALL MUG



Cost again this year is \$10. You can place your order by contacting Joan Rowland at 518-893-7786 or by mailing in your check and request to The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. If you are in need of the mug to be mailed to you, please add shipping cost of \$8.

LIFE DURING PANDEMIC

by Joan Rowland

Before March 2020, my life was scheduled out – every day something was listed on the calendar to go to – meetings to attend, meeting to prepare for, doctor appointments, lunch with friends, dinner with friends, “working” one day a week for the Town Historian, fitting in working around the house, cleaning, gardening, food prep when the left overs from going out were gone. I would actually schedule in working on a quilt project so I had time to sew on it.

Now – the calendar has a doctor visit that was scheduled but may or may not happen. My dentist cleaning appointment has been rescheduled four times. I did go for blood work and to the doctor’s office for a well visit.

I have been making masks for friends who don’t sew. JoAnn and I have been sewing for Greenfield Lions Mask project. I pin in the three pleats while I watch TV and she does all the sewing.

I have made two baby quilts now and have another one all planned out – ready to cut out and sew and need one more by end of May for the baby shower that may or may not happen.

I have been out in the garden/yard cutting the pricker bushes from the perennials. Something that I have not had time to do for years.

I hired out some raking and tree cutting – I sat on my porch and read a book I found that I had started over a year ago. Actually, finished the book.

We used Zoom for our 4-H golf meeting. It would have been our 20th year fundraiser but how can you ask businesses to donate to this fundraiser when they are closed down for the pandemic? We decided to cancel this year and celebrate the 20th year when golfers can ride in carts, eat in the restaurant, and volunteers can socialize with the players.

And I think about how I miss being with people. I am a people person. I used to go to the grocery store and talk to people – now I rush in, try to get my groceries and back out in a short amount of time. I have not gotten the arrows on the floor correctly – I look up to see if this is the correct aisle for an item, I don’t look down to see if I can go down this aisle. I find out I am going the wrong way when I meet people coming toward me. I just assume I am in the wrong (and usually, I am). OOPS.

JoAnn and I have done a couple birthday drive-by’s where you go past the house and honk the horn. We also have been in birthday parades for some other Greenfield residents with fire trucks in the lineup.

We sometimes see where something has happened in town and have to take the drive to check it out. Our parents used to go on those Sunday Drives – which I hated because I was bored. Now, I am the driver.

I asked my 4-H families if they could give me an idea of how life is now that they are working from home and expected to also teach their kids. One said that there is an email from each teacher at least two a day for each child. Some moms will get upwards of 14 emails a day, per child, just from the school. Then their work emails too. She is about ready to shut down on email. Most kids just miss their friends so much. Adults call and talk to their friends, but kids play with their friends, so they are not able to connect.

One of the seniors in my club had this to say: “Life is wack now because we’ve been doing a lot of outside projects at home and we haven’t been able to go to places or do things that we’d normally go to or do.”

His sister, also a senior, tells me that it’s okay, she gets to do school work and not be bothered by all the other stuff – people bothering her. She is sad that they will not be able to walk for their graduation.

I very much miss the 4-H families. I have been trying to figure out how we can clean our road in the town. Each family can do a section/side but the photo at our sign will need to be by

family, not the group because they can not fit under it and still be 6 foot apart.

Speaking of 6 foot apart, I went to my friends to deliver quilt backing because we purchased material together to avoid paying shipping fee. We said, we can do this – I went in her house, we sat 6 foot apart, then we took the quilt to her dining room table and laid it out, one of us on each side of table – still 6 foot apart. We decided to go back to the blue material box to change out some material – next thing you know, we are both in the box, side by side, looking for what we think would work best. We looked at each other and just laughed. We are not good at this 6 foot thing.

Life is very different now – JoAnn rides with me everywhere I go because she needs out of the house but should not be going into stores. It’s very different for me since I drove 2 hours a day to/from work all alone and am used to also having house to myself for most of the day. Truly a learning curve here.

Please stay safe.

ANOTHER MASK MAKER

Zac Carrico has been making 3D masks (the plastic top with the see thru shield) and donating them to St Mary’s Hospital. Printer is from his work at BOCES in Fulton Montgomery.



Parade of Red Cross Nurses Down Fifth Avenue. New York, NY, Oct. 4, 1917. New York State Archives. WWI veterans’ service data and photographs, 1917-1938. Visit New York State Archives Digital Collections to see more of this series and many others.

Louise Okoniewski provided this picture which was taken not only when the war was on but when the world was facing the first wave of flu in the summer of 1917. A second more deadly wave came through in 1918.



Saratoga Hospital Nurses Christmas Party – 1913

Photo provided by Robert Roeckle

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 for your household, 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 “Store,” “Membership” then click either “Annual Membership – Household” or “Lifetime Membership.”

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 proofread 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@lcyllaw.com, call his cell phone (518-321-0330), or text him.



The Town of Greenfield
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