



Historical Society Newsletter

OFFICERS: President, Mary Vetter; Vice President, Joan Rowland;
Secretary, Patti Veitch; Treasurer, JoAnn Rowland;

TRUSTEES: Ron Deutsch, Ron Feulner, John Greenwood, Mike Gymarthy,
Louise Okoniewski, Robert Roeckle, and Patty Schwartzbeck

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

Volume 21, Issue 10



501(c)(3)

email toghistsoc@gmail.com
www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

Dedicated in Memory of Harold Paul Joseph (1923–2021)

Loved friend and neighbor – a man of integrity, honesty, and kindness whose gentle manner encouraged us all to be the best we could be. – Sponsored by Tonya Yasenchak

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, June 12, 2021, STORYTELLING EVENT,
noon to 3 p.m., Middle Grove Town Park Pavilion
The theme will be Father's Day. Anyone who is interested in sharing a story about their father or a father figure is more than welcome to tell their story. *Joan Rowland and Mary Vetter are co-chairs of this event. (More info on page 3.)*

Saturday, July 10, 2021, MUSIC IN THE PARK!
4 to 7 p.m., Middle Grove Town Park. Join us for a late afternoon of music and fun. Bring along your friends, family, and folding chairs, sit back, and enjoy as our home-grown musicians display their talents. *Musicians interested in performing please contact Patti at pveitch@nycap.rr.com.*

Saturday, August 14, 2021, CABOOSE DAY AT KING'S STATION, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., corner of Route 9N and Porter Road. *Louise Okoniewski organizes this event for the town with the assistance of our society. For information, call Louise – Town Hall at 518-893-7432 or 518-796-4066.*

Saturday, September 11, 2021, ANTIQUE SALE, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Middle Grove Town Park.
John Greenwood is organizing this event. (See more information on page 3 of this newsletter.)

Anyone who is interested in helping with these events should email us and we will direct your offer of help to the people who are organizing the event.

toghistoc@gmail.com or mvetter@nycap.rr.com

Everyone is welcome, admission is free, and you don't have to be a member to attend.

Our membership year begins June 1 and ends May 31, dues are paid annually. (\$10 per household or \$100 for Lifetime Membership)

JUNE NOTES 2021

by Joan E. Rowland, Vice President

What – did you expect the column by our President, Mary Vetter? Actually, I asked if I could do this month since last month Mary featured her father, Wilbur.

Our Story Telling Event will be June 12, 2021 at Middle Grove Park Pavilion from noon until 3 p.m. We are looking for people to come and tell their story – of their Father, Grandfather or a male role model.

If you knew my dad, Myron, you would have known a quiet man. He may have been quiet because he lived with his mother and sister (upstairs in the house) and his wife and 2 daughter's downstairs. He was a creative man, could fix anything and what he couldn't fix he kind of reinvented it. We found on the farm after he passed a rototiller, he was creating instead of purchasing one. Some think it was so he could go to the shop and stay away from all the women in the house. He ran a small family farm of chickens, cows, 2 pigs, and planted a large vegetable garden plus worked at Ellsworth Ice Cream full time (which was 5½ days a week). He milked the black angus cows twice a day by hand – before and after work. He took his week of vacation to bail hay and fix things on the farm. He helped with 4-H functions and every child visiting the farm would get to drive the Ford 9N tractor from his lap. (They always thought they were doing all the driving).

He was a volunteer fireman for Porter Corners #2, a Greenfield Grange member and after his mom passed away, he started going to church at the local Methodist Church. He would fix things there also.

Myron could fix everything. But don't ask him to take care of your house plants while your gone – Oh, you want to hear that story? Well, come to the Story Telling Event.

The committees for the summer events have been very busy organizing June, July, August and September events. Check out the calendar of events and if you see something you would like to volunteer for, let the chairperson know.

COVID guidelines seem to change daily (for the good). Hope to see you soon at one or all of our events.

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

June 2021 — by Ron Feulner

Last month, I wrote about Stuart Early, the store merchant who leased Rowell's store in Middle Grove which was situated just east of present day Stewart's Shop. About a year after Stuart Early died, Moses D. Rowell also died in his home in Middle Grove in August of 1903 from a heart related illness. Moses had worked in the store up until about a year before his death, and he did live to see the trolley come to Middle Grove in 1902.

As I indicated in an earlier issue, the 1875 census listed Moses D. and Harriet as having three sons. The oldest son, Haven, struggled with epilepsy and lived with his parents in their new home on the corner across from the store. When his father died, Haven continued to live with his mother until his brother Moses B. and his family moved in with them. Later, after his mother had died also, Haven continued to live with his brother's family until he died in the same house after suffering an epileptic fit.

The second son, Fenton, was born in 1866 or 67, and was a bright young man. When Fenton was in his teens, a Baptist minister, Mr. Wyman, came to the Middle Grove church to preach and being interested in young people, arranged to have a high school or private academy started in the lower floor of the IOOF hall next door to the Baptist church. Misses Cadman from Galway opened the school and charged fifty-cents per week tuition. The last teacher to conduct business there was Miss Laura Manchester who weighed 300 pounds. During her tenure, she maintained discipline by threatening to sit on any student who misbehaved. (From Ruth Donogh's book "The Stories of the Smith-Rowell Family of Saratoga County, New York".)

Fenton attended this academy, and it was discovered that he had a brilliant mind, so his father sent him on to a prep school near Hamilton College in Colgate, NY.

After finishing prep school, he entered Hamilton College and completed a four year degree program in three years graduating with honors.

During his years at Hamilton College, he frequently wrote to his father in Middle Grove. In those letters, he sometimes mentioned the store and the fact that Mr. Cady was apparently trying to buy it. His letter of October 29, 1882 states, "Does Cady want to buy the store very bad, and if so how bad? Does he want to buy it \$4,500 worth?"

On January 28, 1883, Fenton wrote to his father and again mentioned the store. He said, "I was exceedingly glad to hear the inventory showed such a large profit. The old store is after all, as profitable a concern as a farm would be. \$5,000 would be cheap for it now. "... You write that the trade is decreasing some. Was it because some have stopped trading or because of the season of the year? Is Wait and Son [the store next door to the west where Stewart's Shop is now located] prospering?" (In July of that year, the Wait and Son store would be sold to Cady and others.)

Fenton after graduating from Hamilton College had suffered the ups and down of a long courtship with a young woman from a wealthy family who lived near Middle Grove. The frustration and interference of her mother caused him to finally give up on any thoughts of marriage to this young woman, and later, he married one of the younger sisters of his first teacher, Misses Cadman. He eventually became a teacher too, and was known as Professor Rowell.

Unfortunately, Fenton's wife was tubercular, and he too came down with the disease. There was no cure at the time and after struggling with the symptoms for years, he died in 1896, and his passing nearly broke his father's heart.

The third son, Moses B, eventually took over the store and was the last to run it. I will write more about him in a future issue.

The Town of Greenfield Historical Society is still looking for a few good bodies (and minds)!

Are you good at planning social events?

Are you good at working with people?

Do you have carpentry skills?

Are you good at organizing collections?

Do you have computer skills?

Do you like lawn and landscaping work?

We need your ideas and skills.

Please contact us at 518-322-5675 or email us at toghistsoc@gmail.com

"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 heart-break, 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 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.)



UPDATING OUR RECORDS — We're asking every one that uses email to send us your email address in case we are unable to do a complete mailing in coming years. We will mail to members that don't use email or still want a hard copy. Thank you — toghistsoc@gmail.com

STORY TELLING EVENT

Co-chaired by Mary Vetter and Joan Rowland

**Saturday, June 12, 2021 from noon until 3 p.m.
at Middle Grove Town Park Pavilion**

The Town of Greenfield Historical Society would like to invite you to join us with a story of a Father. (This topic was selected by the board because it is close to Father's Day). Your story could be about your father, grandfather, or a male role model.

So many are of the opinion that storytelling is for children, while adults read books. However, stories of centuries past, tell us something different. In fact, almost every culture has storytelling in its long-ago history. It was the way, long before books were available, that custom, culture, and morality passed from one generation to the next. Listening to stories connects us to our history, and to each other.

Different people appreciate the words of a story in different ways. Adults comprehend the sociology and history while children understand the action. The child and adult may laugh at the same words; however, they did not hear the same story. Nevertheless, both experience extreme pleasure from the occasion.

When you arrive, you will sign in to tell your story. We will go down the list of names so everyone gets a chance to tell their story. If you are not one to talk in a group setting, please come and listen to other. Hopefully we will all learn about the fathers in our town both past and present.

If you have been in Greenfield School's 3rd Grade and heard our Town Historian, Ron Feulner tell the story of his father who saw a man in the woods running in circles because he was frightened and lost, you heard the magic of story telling. If we are lucky, he will tell this story again.

Question was asked — How old do you have to be? No age limits for those who want to go up to the mic. Just come, have a nice time with the folks in your town.

Please bring a lawn chair. COVID-19 social distancing rules will be followed. Masks are required to be worn unless enjoying items to eat that will be for sale.

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!

FIRE COMPANY PROJECT

Our hardworking Town Historian, Ron Feulner, has been busy putting together a book about the fire companies in our town. With the help of many people, he has collected a great deal of material and we are eager to create an exhibit at our museum. Dan Chertok has agreed to help with this project, but we need many hands to help with the design of the exhibit and its implementation. We want to open it by the middle of June. Please let us know if you can lend your talent to this project. Email: toghistsoc@gmail.com.

MUSIC IN THE PARK!

Join us on *July 10 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Middle Grove Town Park* for a late afternoon of music and fun! Bring along your friends, family, and folding chairs, sit back, and enjoy as our home-grown musicians display their talents. Musicians interested in performing please contact *Patti Veitch* at pveitch@nycap.rr.com.

Got Antiques?



I wanted to remind everyone that we will be collecting items this summer for our September 11, 2021 Antique Sale Fundraiser. If you have items to donate please contact me by email or phone. We would love you to include a story with your item. Pre-pricing your donation or providing an estimated value will be helpful. Historic memorabilia will be especially welcome. We also need to sell these items so remind your friends and neighbors to plan a visit.

Thank you all in advance for your generosity.

John Greenwood
Email jgreenwood3@nycap.rr.com
Cell 518-832-0122

Old Campsite Sign Donated to Museum

by Joan E. Rowland

The Town of Greenfield Highway Department has a three-year plan to replace all the road signs in the town. Here is what the new sign looks like, 16 have been put in place this year.



While the employees were putting up signs, they came across this sign directing people to the “Ballston Center Presbyterian Church Campsite” on the corner of Coy Road and abandoned Ridge Road. After talking to others in town they found out, this was the campsite that burnt years ago. This sign has been donated to the Town of Greenfield Historical Society’s Museum.



So, the questions are – when was this campsite in use and when did the camp burn? Many years were suggested but here are the researched answers.

My first question was – where is Ballston Center Presbyterian Church? It is the big white church on the corner of Middle Line Road and #58 Charlton Road, Ballston Spa, NY.

Research from *FultonHistory.com* shows news articles regarding the Ballston Center Presbyterian Church Campsite.

THE SARATOGIAN, THURSDAY, AUG. 1, 1962 – SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK:

*Camps, 35-Acre Site Dedicated for Church Use
Ballston Center — A special service was held Sunday*

night at the Ballston Center campsite, west of Middle Grove near the old graphite mines, to dedicate the camp for church use. The camps with 35 acres of land were presented to the church by Mr. and Mrs. Gerald McLaren. The Rev. David Faris, pastor of the church, presided at the dedication. Hymns were sung and prayers offered.

Carleton Cronin, secretary of the board of church trustees, spoke of the gift and the use to which the camp will be put in furtherance of work among the young people of the church and community. The Rev. Mr. Faris gave a talk and closed the meeting with prayer. There were 40 present from Ballston Center and Malta Presbyterian Churches.

Ballston Journal in 1963: *George Oliver and Rev. Mr. Gorden W. Johnson were directors of the camp. Stated that 14 girls from the church attended the camp. The boys attended the previous week.*

The Saratogian July 27, 1965: *Rev. Mr. Gorden W. Johnson Pastor announced a work bee at the church camp at Middle Grove. Contact Ross Cunningham, Chairman.*

When I told Ron Feulner, Greenfield Town Historian, about the sign, I asked him what he knew about the camps and he directed me to his book about the Graphite Mine where on page 67 it talks about Jimmy McLaren and the accident that killed him near the camps. He lived in NYC but came to his camp on weekends. He died March 28, 1947 and his service was at Ballston Center Presbyterian Church. Could this be how this camp came about? Ron gave me another lead – look at the Saratoga County Deeds.

Saratoga County Deeds: *(Two parcels of interest were found)*

1) *From the Patent of Kayaderosseras formally owned by Asa C. Barnes. A portion of the premises conveyed by David Shaw to William John Jennings by deed dated April 7, 1906.*

This parcel was found in Bargain and Sale Deed dated July 24, 1947, and recorded at Saratoga County Clerk’s office. Being the same premises described in an Executor’s Deed from Harry E. Hansen and Gerald J. McLaren as executors of the Estate of Peter J. McLaren to Gerald J. McLaren dated August 30, 1960.

2) *States 35 acres: (just to the south of Towne Family Property)
Edward Eichorst dated February 18, 1943
Edward Eichorst to Peter J. McLaren July 1943
From Gerald J. McLaren to First Presbyterian Society of Ballston commonly known as Ballston Center Presbyterian Church Nov. 23, 1960*

No where could I find where the camps burnt but both deeds were transferred to Mountain View Evangelical Fellowship Inc. on October 18, 1968 and October 9, 1972, respectfully.

Story Telling Event

**Saturday, June 12, 2021
from noon until 3 p.m.**

**at Middle Grove Town Park
Pavilion**

Story topic is **Father's**. Your story could be about your father, grandfather, or a male role model.

We will take as young or old as wants to go up to the mike. No age limits. Just come, have a nice time with the folks in your town.

COVID-19 social distancing rules will be followed.

Masks are required to be worn unless enjoying items to eat that will be for sale.

Bring your family and a lawn chair.



Sponsored by the

Town of Greenfield Historical Society

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



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