



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 11



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email toghistoc@gmail.com
www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 14, 2021, Saturday – CABOOSE DAY AND CAR SHOW AT KING'S STATION, 10 a.m. to 3 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.*

September 11, Saturday – ANTIQUE SALE, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Middle Grove Town Park. *John Greenwood is organizing this event. (See more information on page 4.)*

September 21, Tuesday – meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program:** *John Greenwood* will present a study group on *Forgotten Crossroads of Saratoga County History.*

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

November 16, Tuesday – meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. Program to be announced.

Anyone who is interested in helping with our 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)

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 – toghistoc@gmail.com

AUGUST NOTES 2021

by Joan Rowland, Acting President

One day it rains, the next it is high humidity and sunny. What my garden needs is someone to come in and take away all the extra water and the many weeds that are growing. My egg plants look water logged. If we didn't have the weather to complain about, we would have to find something else.

Thanks to everyone who have come to our Summer events.

- In June, we had Story Telling in the Middle Grove Park. The group was small, but we had a nice time telling about our fathers or father image persons.
- In July, we had Music in the Park. This crowd came and went as the three hours turned into four because we were enjoying the music of seven musical groups. Over 100 attended this event. Thanks to Patti Veitch for organizing this and thank you to Middle Grove United Methodist Church for providing the food for sale. This event allowed the towns people to gather and enjoy the day. I hope this will become an annual event.
- Next will be Caboose Day, Saturday, Aug. 14 at the caboose and train station on Rt. 9N from 10-3, along with the car show. This is the 11th annual and is always great fun.
- Saturday, Sept. 11 is Antiques for Sale at the Middle Grove Park. Hope to see the community come out for this event too.

I would like to thank Mary Vetter for all her hard work as president the past 5 years. Mary has asked to take a temporary resignation. I am looking forward to her returning to the society with more good ideas to build the group. In the meantime, I will be filling the position.

Within a week of finding out I was the acting president, our Carriage House was broken into. Robert Roeckle went by and thought something looks odd. He and I went down and called the Sheriff. Two doors were broken; the lawn mower, trailer for mower, some tents, and an ax were taken. We are not sure if other items were taken but after John Greenwood provided some leads, the mower was found and released back to us the next week. So, almost a month without the mower, John is now back mowing but had to mow twice to get it to look good, and it does look great. Robert has repaired the doors and secured the building

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again. The Sheriff gave us some suggestions to help eliminate this type of trouble.

Greenfield Farmers Market is back up and running. It has been revived by the Middle Grove United Methodist Church and is running every Friday night from 4-7 p.m. in their parking lot across from the park. Ron Deutsch met with Chuck Veeder and offered them all our supplies (all the signs and market feather) and support. This year, they are donating half of their profit to us and have offered us

a table. JoAnn and I are sitting most weeks and running a 50/50 that is pulled every 4 weeks. We also have information of events happening around the community. They are having very good attendance. Stop in to visit with the vendors, listen to the music, and have dinner. They had 16 vendors last week. The market runs through Sept. 10.

I hope to see you out and about this summer. Stop in and support the many events restarting after 18 months of being cooped up with the pandemic.

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

July 2021 — by Ron Feulner

In previous issues, I have talked about the Rowell store and the Rowell family in Middle Grove. This month, I will concentrate on Rowell's youngest son, Moses B., who worked with his father in the store and eventually became its owner.

Moses B. married a local girl, Jennie Emmalissa Smith Rowell, and they had children. When Moses B's father and mother, Moses D. and Harriet, built the new house on the corner (the one still standing diagonally across from present day Stewart's Shop) and moved there with their epileptic son, Haven, Moses B. and his wife and children moved into the living quarters attached to the back of the old store across the road.

Moses B's wife, Jennie Smith Rowell, was an intelligent, well-educated woman, and most of what we know about the store and family was written by her and appears in Ruth Donogh's book that I mentioned earlier.

A deed dated August 3, 1899, transferred the store property from Moses D. and Harriet to Moses B. Rowell, the youngest son. This transaction took place approximately three years before the old man's death.

According to his obituary, the old man, Moses Darius Rowell, was born about 1837, had taught school for several years before becoming a clerk in Oscar Granger's store at Mount Pleasant, site of the Glass factory, between Lake Desolation and Fox Hill. *"This experience set the stage for the rest of his life, which he spent in the mercantile business."* After working in the store at the Glass Factory, he later operated stores in Pages Corners, Porter Corners, and Rock City Falls as well as Middle Grove.

Upon his father's death (in 1903), Moses B. Rowell inherited the rest of his father's estate. The September 15, 1903 Daily Saratogian stated that, *"The goods, chattels, and credits of Moses D. Rowell, late of the Town of Greenfield, issued to his son, Moses B. Rowell — the deceased left \$3,500 in real estate and \$1,000 personal estate."* The real estate must have been the house that his mother and brother were now living in and the surrounding farm land that stretched eastward to the IOOF Hall and is now (in 2021) a mobile home park owned by Charles Pita.

I don't pretend to understand the above slices of these men's lives. It is as if I get a snapshot every few months (or years) in the form of a news snippet, and from that, I have tried to piece together what history has otherwise denied us. It appears that Moses D. Rowell purchased the store in Middle Grove, ran it for a while and then leased it to Stuart Early (initially for a period of three years). Finally, he may have returned to run the store for a period before his death in 1903.

Apparently, prospects were good for the mercantile business in booming Middle Grove, and the Rowell Store with no competitors was doing well. So well, in fact, others wanted to buy a piece of the action. Luther Cady had been apparently interested in getting involved, but John W. Wait made the first big move by building a brand new store in April 1882, right next door (on the west side) to the Rowell/Early store.

Then Luther Cady followed by buying into a partnership with Stuart Early in the leased Rowell store. Now that he was a partner in the Rowell/Early store, Luther Cady apparently continued his talks with Moses D. Rowell about buying the store as indicated by his son's letters from college. The Rowell store appears to have had a good year in 1882, and the letters indicate that the Rowell family was thinking the store worth even more than \$4,500 — maybe as much as \$5,000.

However, on May 17, 1883, the partnership between Luther Cady and Stuart Early dissolved. Perhaps Cady had other ideas: other than trying to purchase the high priced Rowell store.

About two months after leaving the partnership with Early, on July 5, 1883, Luther Cady joined with his son, Clifford Cady, and a local investor named Kilmer, and bought the newly constructed Wait store next door to Rowell's store. Cady was now in direct competition with the Rowell/Early store. By 1887, Early, suffering poor health, was advertising the sale of goods in his store and was facing retirement in poor health.

My assumption is that the aging Moses D. Rowell left his other stores and returned to Middle Grove to try and save that store. Approximately 10 years later, Moses D. deeded the aging store over to his youngest son, Moses B. Rowell. Moses B. moved his growing family into the living quarters attached to the old structure and worked long hours trying to make a go of it, but it appears that it was a down-hill battle, and, in the meantime, his health began to deteriorate.

The youngest son, Moses B. Rowell, now owned the store, but he was finding it increasingly difficult to run it as his health deteriorated. He, like his brother Fenton before him, found that he had a spot on his lung which was thought to be caused by tuberculosis. Moses B's wife, Jennie Smith Rowell, writes about her husband, *"...when B. developed a spot on his lung. We thought he was doomed as nothing helped his brother, Fenton. But B. sold the store, got a traveling salesman job, with horse and buggy mainly, and the spot healed and he recovered of that to die of a streptococci infection."*

I shall write more about the Rowell family and store in future issues.



ELEVENTH CABOOSE DAY AND CAR SHOW AT KING'S STATION

**Saturday, August 14, 2021
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

Cars, Trucks, Motorcycles and Imports Welcome

THE CABOOSE AT KING'S STATION

Corner of Route 9N and Porter Road, Porter Corners, N.Y.

Tour King's Station and the Restored Caboose

FREE PICTURE ON THE CABOOSE

Vendors, Bake Sale, Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, French Fries and Drinks
to benefit The Town of Greenfield Historical Society.

*Rain or Shine. For information, call Tom Clute at 518-580-0655,
Louise Okoniewski at the Town Hall at 518-893-7432 or 518-796-4066.*



GOT ANTIQUES?

I want to remind everyone that we will be collecting items this summer for our *Antique Sale Fundraiser on Saturday, September 11, 2021 at the Middle Grove Town Park, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.* 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.

Our goal is to ask town residents to donate an antique item of value that can then be sold at our booth. The entire proceed of the sale item would benefit the Historical Society. We thought it might be easier for people to part with items from their home, barn, attic, or shed rather than a monetary donation. We have an entire summer to assemble items for the sale. Once the items are collected they would become the property of the Historical Society. The value of the items would be discussed with the donor, but ultimately the sale price would be determined by the society member in charge at the time of the sale. Any items not sold at the end of the event could be sold at a later date or event.

An element I'd like to add would be to have the donor include a three by five card to be placed with the item. That card would include some historical information about the item. It could be as simple as where it originated to a more detailed story about its significance to the person donating it. This gives the sale and the item a historical trail that promotes the mission of the Historical Society.

We use the term antique loosely. We encourage any item with an attachment to local history, regardless of its exact age. We will consider any type of antique furniture, historic memorabilia, framed artwork, or vintage photographs of local significance. Even books of local history might be considered. To promote the sale, we could share pictures on Facebook of items being collected. This gives residents the opportunity to see what we will be selling and what type of donations we are seeking. This is a first for me. I welcome any suggestions that might help with the success of this event.

Thank you all in advance for your generosity.

John Greenwood

email jgreenwood3@nycap.rr.com — cell 518-832-0122

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?

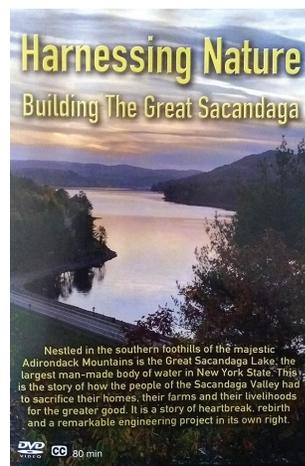
We need your ideas and skills.

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 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.

STORY TELLING EVENT

Saturday, June 12, 2021 at Middle Grove Town Park Pavilion

Co-chaired by *Mary Vetter and Joan Rowland*



Vice President: Joan Rowland, Trustee: Mike Gymarthy, Secretary: Patti Veitch, Trustee: Patty Schwartzbeck, Treasurer: JoAnn Rowland, President: Mary Vetter, and Trustee: Robert Roeckle

Photos supplied by Joan Rowland and Janet Jones



Martha Fitzer (friend of Mary Vetter), Patty Schwartzbeck, Patti Veitch, and Mary Vetter



Joan Rowland talking about her dad, Myron Rowland



JoAnn Rowland talking about her dad, Myron Rowland



Patty Schwartzbeck talking about her dad, Andy Mousin



Mary Vetter talking about her dad, Bill



Robert Roeckle (griller), Trustee: Louise Okoniewski, and Mike Gymarthy (French fry maker)



Marion Gymarthy and Beth Ballester



Janet Jones talking about her dad, Earl Jones

MUSIC IN THE PARK

Saturday, July 10, 2021 at Middle Grove Town Park Pavilion

Chaired by Patti Veitch

Photos supplied by Joan Rowland



Marcotte Mountain Music – Bob Marcotte (playing fiddle)



Happenstance – Rob Przedwiecki, Jessica Erisci, and Ben Early



The Remnants – Lisa Biss and Steve Paige



Bonnie Greco



Elizabeth Conant



Middle Grove Church Group –
Lisa Biss, Chuck Veeder, Bryce North, and Larry Couville



Larry Rutland donated a glass blown Fish in a display case for a raffle this year at the Farmers Market.

Tickets are 1 for \$1.00 or 8 for \$5.00. Stop at the Greenfield Farmers Market any Friday from 4-7 p.m. at the Middle Grove United Methodist Church Parking Lot to get a chance.

We will also be selling tickets at the Sept. 21 meeting.



New American Cuisine – Bryce North, Henry McCabe, and Jordon Gyatmathy



JoAnn Rowland presents \$32.50 to the 50/50 raffle winner, Chuck Veeder.



Cooks: Kelly and Bill Duket, and Sue Veeder, Middle Grove United Methodist Church

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Our IOOF/Chatfield Museum will be open Sept. 25-26, 2021, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to participate in the Brookside Small Museums Open House. The Saratoga County History Center at Brookside in Ballston Spa has proposed that all small museums in the county be open at the same time so people can travel to all the museums within one weekend. (Times have not been announced by the center as of yet.)

To make it a fun event, each museum will have a unique item to find as part of the “digital scavenger hunt.”

Flyers will be posted on our website, Facebook page, and at the Farmers Market table when more details are available. If you are interested in helping at the museum those days, please drop Joan an email at jrowland25@verizon.net.



ROY L. ROGNER, age 89, passed away on Saturday, July 17, 2021 at Wesley Health Care Center. He was born on October 2, 1931 in New York, NY, the son of the late Leon Rogner and Frieda Kaiser Rogner.

Roy was a graduate of Saratoga Springs High School, class of 1949. Roy worked at General Electric, in the Apprentice Program. He proudly

served his country in the Air National Guard, Jet Fighter Division. After his father passed away, he took care of the family farm. While continuing to farm, he became a mechanic, and eventually the parts manager at Pettit’s Farm Machinery in Ballston Spa. Roy was also a parts manager for KC Canary in Clifton Park for many years. He enjoyed gardening, reading, and traveling. He is a member and past President of the Greenfield Center Seniors. His greatest joy was polka, square and line dancing, he had a great sense of humor and there was never a dull moment with him. He will be remembered for his humble spirit and unconditional love for his family.

Roy is survived by his beloved wife of 65 years, Alice (Struneski) Rogner; sons, Jeff Rogner (Karen), Stephen Rogner; sister, Elizabeth Older (William); grandchildren, Jaimie Rogner, Gregory Rogner; many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends who will miss him dearly.

A funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. on Monday, July 26, 2021 at Compassionate Funeral Care, 402 Maple Ave. (Route 9 and/or Marion Ave.), Saratoga Springs, NY with Deacon John Barone officiating. Family and friends may call from 11 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. prior to the service at the funeral home. A Graveside service will be held at North Milton Cemetery, Milton, NY following the service at the funeral home. In lieu of flowers donations in memory of Roy can be made to Community Hospice, 179 Lawrence Street, Saratoga Springs, NY or a charity of your choice. For online condolences, please visit www.compassionatefuneralcare.com or www.lastingmemories.com/roy-l-rogner

BRUCE HISCOCK, 80, award-winning children’s book author and illustrator, died on July 11, 2021, in the house he built by hand using the rocks and trees on his property in Porter Corners, New York, what he called “the edge of the wild.” Bruce was well known both for his books and for his programs in schools and libraries, teaching children about the natural world and how to draw it. Local schoolchildren visited his studio and the woods around his home to see the real “big rock” - the subject of one of his books. His murals greet people as they enter the Children’s Floor of the Saratoga Springs Public Library.

Bruce grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, save for the nearly two years he spent with his family on Shemya, a remote Alaskan Island. Throughout his childhood, Bruce spent time outside, where he honed his observation skills, knowledge of animals and plants, and his love of nature and science – especially snowstorms. This all fed his later work as a nature writer and illustrator.

Bruce attended the University of Michigan and then Cornell University where he earned a Ph.D. in chemistry. He used his scientific training as a researcher, a professor at Utica College and in Saratoga Springs, New York where he ran a drug-testing lab for racehorses for nine years. A self-taught artist, he left the chemistry field and turned full-time to his real passion of writing and illustrating science-based picture books.

Since 1986 he wrote and published nine books and illustrated another four. Most of them are non-fiction and research based. His “Big” books; *The Big Rock*, *The Big Tree*, *The Big Storm* and *The Big Rivers* were designed to inform children and their adults about the natural world while also providing an historical perspective. During his writing career Bruce traveled extensively, often to do research. On one trip to northeastern Alaska, he found himself hiking in the middle of a huge caribou herd which resulted in *The Big Caribou Herd: Life in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge*.

Bruce’s books were named Outstanding Science Trade Books by the Children’s Book Council. *The Big Storm* won the 1993 John Burroughs Award for best children’s book featuring natural history. *Ookpik: The Travels of a Snowy Owl*, was a finalist for the Charlotte Award of New York State and *Coyote and Badger: Desert Hunters of the Southwest* was a winner in the Children’s Category of the National Outdoor Book Awards.

Also, a self-taught musician, Bruce often sang and played his guitar with friends, as well as in various venues, such as nursing homes, and spontaneously whenever he was inspired by the acoustics. Every year, as Head Elf, he hosted a Christmas party, which included lighting candles on an outdoor evergreen and singing carols.

Bruce is survived by his wife Helen Dickerson, sister Sue (Bill) Rohrer, two children Julia (Mark) Morrissey and Fred (Nancy) Hiscock, three grandchildren Max, Finn and Tempest Morrissey, nephews Will (Kim) Rohrer and Tom (Megan) Rohrer, and many cousins.

In Bruce’s final letter to friends and family, he wrote: “I want my remains to be scattered to the winds, so I am more a part of everything on this beautiful planet. Perhaps you will think of me when the seasons change, and how I loved the first snowfall, the delicate spring woodland flowers, the small leaves on the trees, that will fill the woods, and the color they will display when the frost comes.”

Donations can be made in his name to Community Hospice, or please donate to a local children’s library in memory of him.

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.



The Town of Greenfield
Historical Society
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