



Historical Society Newsletter

OFFICERS: President: Skip Ballou; Vice President: Louise Okoniewski;
Secretary: Patty Schwartzbeck; Treasurer: JoAnn Rowland; Trustees:
Coral Crosman, Ron Deutsch, Katie Finnegan, Ron Feulner and Robert Roeckle

Janet Jones, Editor, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833

Volume 12, Issue 9

www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

Calendar

May 15: Tuesday, meeting at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Greenfield Center. **Program: Caperton Tissot, the author of Adirondack Ice, A Cultural and Natural History, will speak about her book, which deals with all aspects of ice, from ice storms to harvesting ice.**

June 10: Sunday, noon - 4 p.m., **Greenfield Center Business Association Car Show**, Middle Grove Town Park. Our society will have an **Information Booth and Bake Sale** at the car show. If you would like to help at the booth or bake for the sale, contact Joyce Woodard at 893-7638.

June 29: Fridays through October, **Farmer's Market**, 4 - 7 p.m., Middle Grove Town Park. Volunteers needed for set up, help at the booth or clean up.

July 17 - 22: Saratoga County Fair, Ballston Spa. Visit our **Information and Display Booth** in the Townley Building (same as the Grange). If you'd like to help out at the fair, call Louise at 587-6060.

August 11: Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. **Caboose, Cruisin' and Cookout Day** – Tour the caboose and station, vintage cars and buy lunch made by the Historical Society members. Located at the corner of NYS Route 9N and Porter Road. For more information or if you'd like to help in any way (set up, cooking, clean up), call Louise at 587-6060.

Notice: A vote will be taken at both the April and May meetings on our revised Constitution. Also the revised Bylaws will be voted on at the May meeting. (The Bylaws only needs to be approved at one meeting.) Copies of both are posted at the IOOF Hall in Middle Grove and the Community Center in Greenfield.

If you have any questions/suggestions/comments on anything having to do with the Historical Society, please contact Skip Ballou at 518-378-5653 or email: emb0744@hotmail.com.

Coming soon – you'll be able to pay your dues online at our website – more information to follow.

WEEZIE'S WORDS

by Louise Okoniewski

I've been trying to remember how long I've been a member of the Greenfield historical society. I have to go back to when I met Ron Feulner in the 90s. Myself and Tom (Merrills) had "Tinney's Two" at Lake Desolation and offered breakfast, lunch and dinner. One morning Ron, Alice and his mother stopped in for breakfast. I believe the blueberry pancakes kept him and his family coming back. Ron enjoyed that spot as his Uncle Philip Feulner built and operated the Lakeview Hotel in the early 1900s, and Ron had just completed his book, *King of the Mountain*. Always looking for something family orientated, we had a book signing for Ron's new book. Plywood and dark blue velvet covered the pool table. Alvie Older and a few residents brought glass bottles and other artifacts from the glass factory and Middle Grove. The items were carefully arranged and stood out against the blue velvet. As this was something never tried before (at least not at the lake), we didn't know if it would be a success or a flop. Ron, Alice, Tom, employees and I were nervous and excited. The night was a huge success, Ron signed and sold many books, the kitchen was busy and a friendship was born.

After leaving the business in 1998, we kept in contact usually at Stewarts. A few years had passed and one day Ron asked me if I'd like to attend a historical society meeting. It took some prodding (over a period of time) but I finally made it to a meeting. Ron asked me to be on a committee to consider options for Odd Fellows Hall. The committee included Joyce Woodard, Vince Walsh and Harold Jones. After a few meetings and some brain storming, it was decided to keep the IOOF and eventually have a museum. We would need to let the public know what they had in their own backyard. The hall had items that were from the Odd Fellow membership, plus donations from Galway Fellows and Greenfield family items that were donated. Joyce Woodard and Ann Michel started the daunting task of sifting through the boxes and organizing the collections. One of the ideas was to sponsor a Farmers Market. That fall, Andy Fyfe, sold veggies from the back of his pickup on the IOOF lawn.

The hall itself needed repairs. Trees were taken down, the building was raised and sill replaced, the kitchen became an office, insulated and the hall was painted outside. Ron Deutsch took the challenge of the Farmers Market, and we had 7 vendors at the IOOF. Add some garage sales from the carriage house, renovation work, the weekly market, the hall was open and it

was quite busy. Due to traffic concerns, we moved to the Middle Grove Park, this will be the 5th year of our Farmers Market. The goal of the museum was still in the works. Because of the generous donation from the Eugene Chatfield estate, the board came up with the Eugene Chatfield Museum. Improvements still needed to be made, such as a good quality of heat. And because we are limited on funds, we need to be frugal on how and where the money goes. IOOF hall reminds me of restoring an antique car. You can spend a lot of money and do it fast, or you can take your time as you have the money and do it right. Finally, all the hard work from MANY people was starting to show. Despite a setback after the wonderful Christmas Party 2011, Rob Roeckle and the board rolled up their sleeves and had an inspiring meeting on April 17. Mr. Bill Hinckley couldn't believe it when he walked through the upstairs. He has waited a long time for this dream of his to come true. Earl Jones' smile was ear to ear. That was enough for me! Bill and Earl started talking about Greenfield baseball (maybe a future display). Others were looking at the display area for the Odd Fellows and Masons. Far from being completed, the Chatfield Museum is starting to take shape.

How long have I been a member? I'm not sure, but when I see the dedication of the Newsletter, Refreshment, Archives, Program, Grounds, Market Committees, Thom S. and the website, Sandy and Facebook, members who bake or will man a booth or give a hand; those who kept it together in the early years; I'm glad to be a part of this organization.

Historian's Corner – by Ron Feulner

One of my volunteers, Ruth Ann Assmann, has been working at indexing our newsletters. Recently she finished the project, and I suggested that she might want to do the same with the few copies of "The Grist Mill" that we have. She has now finished that project also, but while she was still working on it, she called my attention to the feature article in the May 1984 issue which was called "Benjamin Grenell, Life Revealed as Middle Grove Shopkeeper."

Since I grew up in Middle Grove, the article was of considerable interest to me, as I recognized some of the places and people's names. The article is based on a set of store records that were kept between 1802 and 1810 by the store owner, Benjamin Grenell. The store ledger had been a gift to the Saratoga County Museum Society given in 1979 by Mr. and Mrs. Francis Harrington of Rock City Falls.

Benjamin Grenell was the fifth of ten children born to his parents in Salisbury, Connecticut. At the age of twenty-three, he came to New York and settled in a section of the Town of Greenfield which would one day become Middle Grove. In 1793, he married Phebe Dennison, and the couple had four children, but only two boys survived. The family lived in a small residence that also served as a general store which supplied most of the necessities to area residents. I remember the house that they lived in from my youth (the house is still standing, it is the fifth one down from Murray Road on the left) very well because my teacher, Mrs. Johnson, and her husband, Fred, lived in it when I was growing up in Middle Grove. Later the Fergusons lived there, and then I lost track and have no idea who owns the house now. The Grenells had a small family cemetery just below the house which can still be visited but is not very visible from the road.

The five store ledgers kept by Benjamin Grenell tell a fascinating story about life in that area during the early 1800s. Bounties were paid for animals killed that ranged from 3 cents for a crow to fifty dollars for a wolf. Bears were a nuisance and were regularly hunted by the community until William Williams was accidentally shot and killed on one such outing.

Grenell not only sold things that ranged from materials to build a coffin to spirits (liquor) sold by the glass full or gallon, but he also bartered for products produced by other members of the community. He also provided services to people for a fee. He wrote wills, deeds, and even surveyed property lines. The Grenells apparently offered rooms for rent and charged people fines for items that they broke such as a glass tumbler. He even lists fines for, "Pig killed by accident," and for "pissing the bed."

As I mentioned earlier, it wasn't all about selling products and services, but bartering was alive and well. People were given store credit for such diverse activities as "making a plough iron" and "digging a grave." Some things bartered must have ended up on Grenell's farm. Items listed included "a sow and pigs," "one pair of oxen," "a cow," and "a heifer." Services offered included such activities as "making ... two pair of shoes," and "pasturing oxen." He must have also boarded the schoolmaster for that is also listed along with "wood for the school."

He apparently bought many of his supplies that couldn't be manufactured locally in Albany, as he often gave credit to local farmers for using their horses and wagons for transporting goods from that city along with fewer trips to Stillwater and Troy.

It was mostly men's names listed in the ledger with only a few women who may have been widows. It is possible that when women bought goods it was charged to their father or husband, but all we know for certain is that the vast majority of names are men's.

This store was more like an early trading post than like the stores that we know today who specialize in one line of products such as food or building materials. In those days, the local store provided everything a family needed to survive.

If you are not familiar with these little newsletters which were published quarterly by the Saratoga County Museum, I would recommend that you visit our office some Wednesday and spend a few hours reading them, for they are fascinating. Brookside Museum in Ballston Spa may have a more complete set of these than we do, but I don't know that for a fact.

On a completely different subject, Rick Bishop brought his Garmin GPS to the April meeting held at the IOOF hall in Middle Grove. He wanted to show me how it could be used to find the latitude and longitude of our cemeteries, which you might remember me writing about in an earlier newsletter. I was so impressed that I went out and got my Garmin from the car, and we both stood outside the hall in the lawn area and checked both instruments, and they gave almost identical readings. This means that if someone wanted to help map the location of our cemeteries in Greenfield, we wouldn't need any special equipment other than the common GPS systems that many of us have in our cars. Give me a call at 518-893-0620 if you would be interested in helping out with such a project. Thanks, Rick for calling my attention to this.

This will be my last Historian's Corner entry until next September, so I hope you all have a great summer.

The Rocking Chair

by Fran Lambert 10/08/2008

Introduction: Just a little novelty story to get ones' mind thinking about what we really value in life. History is very important. It is one of the building blocks of wisdom.

Ah! supper's all done!

Paw jest put 'nother log in the fire, and now maybe I kin git down to finishin' this shawl.

Now where'd that crochet hook number nine go to this time?

Ah! there it is! Gotta git this dun afore the light gits too dim! Lands sakes alive! Its bin eight months since I started this 'ere shawl.

I shure hope Sonnies new wife likes it. She seems to like green and yaller, along with some sky blue. I bin tryin' to make her happy, poor lil' thing. She shore is a purty gal, and Sonny did fine marryin' her up.

So nice that paw an me finally git to have more family, We bin livin' way out here so long, and not seein' many folk come by fer visitin'.

It was real good when I was younger, I managed to walk into town every so often, and visit the town folk. But then as I gitted older, the trail seemed longer, or was it that these ole' bones were gittin' shorter?

Naw, I think the rocks and boulders jes' got bigger, an I had to work harder to git around them. I reckymember the past few years we had so much rain fall that it washed most of the sand from around the boulders, and they actually did look bigger!

Oops! I dropped a stitch, I better do it over agin. This 'ere shawls got to be purfect for Sonnies new gal. I luv sittin' in this 'ole rockin' chair ... me maw put many a lil' youngin' asleep rockin' them in this 'ere chair.

I wonder if I'll have a chance to rock a new youngin' in the family chair? Thet's why I want this to be so purfect for her, I want to do this shawl up proud!

Dear me! the lights gittin' dimmer, an' I can't see good enough to do the stitches. Hey Paw! the fireplace needs more wood.

Thanks fer doin' that! Yes, I'm almost finished with this; last row. There! done! Ah! it's good to sit back an' feel the warmth of the fire and rock.

Well I'll be! I dun fell asleep in this chair all night. I better git to fixin' breakfast before Paw and Sonny and his wife git here.

Least it's a sunshine day, an' I don't have to worry about finishin' the shawl. It's done!

I better hide it in the cedar chest paw made for me. It's to be a surprise for her. There!

Breakfast is ready. Everybody sit down, The eggs are done, and I warmed up the bread I made yesterday in the oven, and there's some slabs of bacon I jes' fried up good an' brown. Paw got some honey last week from the nest out in the back forty. I didn't git all the comb out of it, but it will make the bread taste crunchy and sweeter. Hope ya'll like it.

I bin thinkin' ... how are you fixed for a sittin' place in yer new home? Iffin' y'all got town folk come visitin', y'all need a place fer them to sit.

Ole' Missus Cravitz from the general store gave you her set she bought two years ago? Thet was mighty nice of her! She

has a new set now I reckon. You wish your's was new too? Oh! I see! you only like new things in yer home. Ain't thet nice!

Stop by again sometime soon. Glad to have you over anytime.

Paw, its' bin three months since we seen Sonny and his new wife, I wonder iffen they be alright? I was planning on surprisin' them with this new shawl, and I was goin to drape it over the back of the rockin' chair, 'cause they go together so fine! I am mighty proud to share the family chair with them, D'ya think they'll like it and the shawl?

It's as fine a piece of furniture as ever bin made, all hand carved and turned by great grandpaw, and it rocked many a youngin'. Why it's history!

You think they'll like it fine! That's good to hear. I hear somebody comin' up the trail, lookit paw, it's Sonny and his wife!

Now I can give them their surprise! I've shined up the chair with the fresh polish you jest made, and it looks grand. I've draped the shawl over the back and it looks beautiful.

Yes Paw, I'll miss rocking in the old chair, but I want to share the history of our family with them two youngins. You can git the other ole' chair out in the shed and give 'er a good fixin' up, and I'll have 'nuther one to rock in.

Here they come. C'mon in, git warm by the fire. Ain't seen y'all in quite a spell. Everthing fine? That's good.

Yer havin a youngin'? Well, ain't that grand. I'm so happy fer y'all. Come have a bite to eat. I've got a surprise fer ya.

Come in the sittin' room. Look under thet blanket. Here, I'll lift it off! This is yer surprise. I crocheted this 'ere shawl fer ya. Now you can use it when it comes time to rock the baby in the family rocking chair. That's yers to keep also. Hope ya like it. Yes, it's about one hundred twenty seven years old. Shes in good shape and still has plenty of good wood fer rockin' a new youngin'.

Glad ya came over, be careful goin' roun the boulder carryin' that rocker, and enjoy the shawl! Paw and me will be over to see ya next week.

Time goes by so fast, here it is, an we're halfway to their house already! My, what a beautiful house! We're so happy for ya'll. Oh! is this the lovely set ya were tellin us about from ole Missus Cravitz? It's very nice!

Thank ya'll for the cake ya made fer Paw and me, that was so thoughtful! We'd best be goin' before it gets too dark. Keep happy!

Paw, did you notice something in their house? Ya didn't? Where is the rockin' chair I was so proud to give them and rock their youngin' in?

It was hangin' where? In the shed? I wonder why?

Oh! now I understand, they don't want anything that old in their house, and even Missus Cravitz's old set is not new enough.

What a shame – family history ... hangin in the shed.

April refreshment volunteers, Joan Rowland and Louise Okoniewski, served pineapple angel food cake and peanut butter bars. May refreshment volunteers are Alice Feulner and Nancy Homiak.

Janet Jones, Refreshment Committee

The Town of Greenfield Historical Society

Wish List

Needs for the IOOF Hall

- Paper Towels
- Bottled Water
- Cleaning Supplies
- Kitchen Garbage Bags
- Trash Bags
- Toilet Paper
- 150 Watt CLF Bulbs (6)

Contact Skip Ballou
emb0744@hotmail.com or 518-378-5653

Wanted For

The Town of Greenfield Historical Society
IOOF Hall, Middle Grove, New York
We are expanding our Collections.

We are looking for Donations of

- Old Photographs up to the Present
- Vintage Clothing
- Farm Implements
- Tools, etc.

Call Us Before You Throw It Out.

Contact Skip Ballou
emb0744@hotmail.com or 518-378-5653

IOOF Hall Visitation Hours

The IOOF Hall will be open for visitors,
please call ahead to make an appointment.

Joyce Woodard – 893-7638 or Ann Michel – 306-6632

BOTTLE DRIVE: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society will be collecting bottles to benefit the future IOOF Hall Museum, which will be located upstairs. We'll need supplies to get this project going and your donations will help. Please call or email Skip Ballou at 518-378-5653 or emb0744@hotmail.com, for more information.

POETS WORKSHOP

Sponsored by author/publisher
CORAL CROSMAN
at Daketown School

Wednesdays, 4 - 5 p.m.

For more information call Coral at
587-9809 or email porpress@aol.com.

Coral is an active member of The Town of Greenfield Historical Society which owns and maintains this historic building on Old Daketown Road.

Concert at the Greenfield Grange

Sunday, May 20, 2012

Home on the Grange Concerts Presents

*“THREE GALS AND THEIR
BUDDY LARRY”*

with special guest Sam Zucchini

at the Greenfield Grange
17 Grange Rd.
Greenfield Center, NY 12833



Please join us for an afternoon of live acoustic music with three of the region's top songwriters including Rosanne Raneri, Kate McDonnell and Nancy Walker.

Tickets are cash only \$8 per person or two for \$15.

Music starts at 3 p.m.

For more information, feel free to contact
Nancy@nrwalk@gmail.com

Special thanks to the Rowland family.

Upcoming Events Sponsored by Heritage Hunters Do You Know Who Your Ancestors Are?

Heritage Hunters, a genealogy and local history group, is now receiving dues for 2012. Yearly membership is \$15 and includes monthly program meetings, a bi-monthly 24 page newsletter, a surname exchange index and a reduced fee for the yearly Genealogy Conference. Heritage Hunters holds program meetings at 1 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month at the Town of Saratoga Town Hall, 10 Spring St. (Route 29), Schuylerville (the old brick school). Public welcome. Contact cwald36709@aol.com or 587-2978 for membership information.

Saturday, May 19 – Lance Ingmire will talk about *“How to Research Your Civil War Ancestor”* – 1 p.m. at Town of Saratoga Town Hall.

Saturday, June 16 – Erica Wolfe Burke of the Folklife Center at the Crandall Library will offer tips and instructions for exploring the 1940 U.S. census – 1 p.m. at Town of Saratoga Town Hall.

Saturday, October 20 – *Genealogy Conference*, 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., at Town of Saratoga Town Hall in Schuylerville. Dick Eastman, well known genealogist and producer of “Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter,” will be the presenter.

It's Back! Better and Bigger than Ever!

Town of Greenfield Historical Society proudly presents:

**Greenfield Farmers Market
Middle Grove Park, Middle Grove Road
Every Friday from 4 to 7 p.m.
June 29 – October 2012**

Save the World – Shop at the Market

- Locally grown vegetables/plants
- Locally made crafts
- Yummy baked goods
- Locally raised/free range meats
- Local musicians
- Local maple syrup, honey, eggs, jams and more ...
- Plenty of parking, bathrooms and places for the kids to play while you shop and meet your neighbors and friends

Sponsored by:

THE TOWN OF GREENFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Supported by:



TOWN OF GREENFIELD



To become a vendor or for more information, please call Ron Deutsch at 469-6769 or go to our website and click on Farmers Market for a weekly update on new produce and products.

www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Become a member of The Town of Greenfield Historical Society and receive our newsletter. Send \$10 per **household** along with your name and address to the address shown below. If you send more it will be considered a donation. Other types of memberships are also available (lifetime, corporate, etc.), just ask (518-378-5653 or emb0744@hotmail.com). Our membership year begins June 1, and dues are paid annually. You may also 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.

Coming soon – you'll be able to pay your dues online at our website – more information to come.

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

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone number _____

Areas of interest to you _____

To sponsor a newsletter send \$50 along with your name and address and the wording describing whom you would like it dedicated to.

If you know someone whom you think might want to become a member, send us their name and address, and we will send them a copy of our newsletter along with information on how they can join.

Name _____

Address _____

If you would like to write an article for the newsletter, send it to: The Town of Greenfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 or Janet Jones, 213 Ash St., Corinth, NY 12822 or email it to: JJones18215@roadrunner.com.

Updating Historic Sites Map in the Town of Greenfield

If you have any information, e-mail Dan Chertok at bmmschertok@gmail.com or dgclawoffices@csdsl.net.
You may also call (518-893-2268) or write him at: Dan Chertok, 58 Ormsbee Road, Porter Corners, NY 12859

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