



Historical Society Newsletter

OFFICERS: President, Joan E Rowland; Vice President, Robert Roeckle;

Secretary, Patti Veitch; Treasurer, JoAnn Rowland

TRUSTEES: Ron Deutsch, John Greenwood, Patty Schwartzbeck,
Dan Smith, Mary Vetter, and Karl Zeh

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

Volume 24, Issue 9



501(c)(3)

email toghistsoc@gmail.com

www.GreenfieldHistoricalSociety.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, May 21 — Meeting 7 PM, Community Center, Greenfield Center. **Program:** This program is dedicated to and in memory of *Ron and Alice Feulner*, please come and share photos, stories, and memories.

Saturday, June 8 — *Daketown School #8 Open House*, 10 AM - 2 PM. Stop by with the family to spend a few minutes walking through an important piece of Greenfield history: the one-room Daketown Schoolhouse, that dates back to late 1800s. It's located at Old Daketown Road in Middle Grove. Historians will be on-site and you can view some original relics inside. Daketown Schoolhouse was the last one-room schoolhouse to close when the schools consolidated in 1956.

Thursdays, June 20 to Sept. 19 — *Farmers Market*, 4 - 7 PM, Middle Grove Park

Fridays, July 12 to August 30 — *Chatfield Museum Open House*, 4 - 6 PM, Middle Grove

Saturday, July 13 — *Car Show & Music in the Park*, Middle Grove Town Park, Cars: 10 AM - 3 PM; Music: 11 AM - 3 PM (\$10 to enter a car for show)

Saturday, August 10 — *14th Caboose Day*, Kings Station, Greenfield Center, 10 AM to 3 PM
Everyone is welcome. Admission is free and you don't have to be a member to attend our meetings, programs or events.

The Town of Greenfield Historical Society is looking for people/businesses to sponsor the "Trolley" for Caboose Day on Aug. 10, 2024. Your name or business will be posted on the Trolley and in our September newsletter. Please call JoAnn Rowland at 518-698-2902 or email jirene6@verizon.net

Joan's Jabbering — May 2024

by Joan E Rowland, President

The weatherman said that there would be another storm – snow, sleet, freezing rain. We said we have had enough but on April 4th, they were correct. Freezing rain here on the hill then wet snow which measured another 8". Total this season at my house 68".

Interesting thing was, our April meeting was on Ice Harvesting. (It was postponed from January.) Tom Ragosta and his wife Marylou, talked about ice harvesting during late 19th early 20th century. Tom took us to the lake and Erie Canal. Step by step we harvested ice with horse and manpower, moved ice to storage of various types, and taught us how to store for the summer. I remembered back about the stories of my grandfather harvesting on the corner of Ormsbee and Ballou Road. (That pond is no longer there but has a creek that runs through the revenue.) Tom is president of Watervliet Historical Society, and he invited us down to their museum.

I also attended the Revolutionary War soldiers sign being dedicated. See photos and Historian's article for details – was great to honor them after so many years have gone by.

Another long-time member has passed, Louis Okoniewski Jr. He was 99 years old. I have fond memories of him coming to the meeting with his daughter Louise and sitting in the front row. When he moved to Saratoga, he would drive up to the farmers market every Friday, sit at the Historical Society tent and chat with anyone who stopped by. In 2019 I had a survey – "What was the first vehicle you drove?" His story that he told me; he was 17 when he went in the service but did not have his driver's license. The guys in the service changed that – they took him out in one of the big old trucks and taught him to drive. He was 24 when he purchased his first car, 1941 Nash Ambassador (Black) and got his civilian driver's license.

Thanks to the group that helped clean the museum and repair the lawn. We are ready for guests in July and August.

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May is a busy meeting month – we have Election of Officers and Budget Votes (must have 11 members present for the votes to pass). We will also be honoring the memories of two long-time and very active members of our society: Ron and Alice Feulner. Bring your stories. I have Lemon Refreshments for Ron's memory and a story about his first bike. We found a photo of it in his desk drawer. Alice would have been so excited with the Eclipse on April 8th. I know she would have enjoyed looking at our photos of it. I used to stay up late to take photos of the moon for her. I also may even tell the story of Alice growing wine.

June 1st our dues are due for this coming year, if you pay by the year.

June 8th is the Daketown School #8 Open House. Stop in from 10 AM to 2 PM.

Then there is the Car Show and Live Music in Middle Grove Park, Caboose Day, Museum Open House, and a couple dates I may set up at the Farmers Market (Thursdays).

Hope to see you all at our many activities this summer. *We can always use an extra helping hand at the summer events.*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR HISTORIAN *Duane Cornell*

It was a warm Sunday morning in April with just enough of a breeze to keep most of the black flies at bay and the sun had taken a high position in the late morning sky. They had traveled quite a distance to reach this place to carry out their duties on this field. With their uniforms donned, their muskets checked and loaded, they waited for the inevitable order to fire. The officer called for the troops to shoulder arms and march forward. The column marched single file behind their colors to a position at the edge of the field on a knoll over-looking the road. The long downward sloping field bordered by a dense forest lay behind them framed by the distant mountains visible in the clear blue sky. The order soon came to shoulder arms ... make ready ... Fire!! As they stood shoulder to shoulder a thunderous roar echoed in the mountains and smoke and the smell of gunpowder filled the morning air. This time it was not to fight for our country's independence but to honor two veterans that did.

The color guard of the Saratoga Battle Chapter of The Sons of the American Revolution gave a musket salute to open the Ormsbee Cemetery historical marker dedication followed by the pledge of allegiance. The marker honors Isaac Ormsbee and Ambrose Cole who were from Rhode Island and served in the American Revolutionary War. They are interred in the sloping field behind Mark Young's residence on Ormsbee Road, in Porter Corners. Isaac and Ambrose traveled here from Rhode Island in 1796 and cleared and farmed the land and raised their families. Many of their descendants are buried nearby or living in Greenfield today. Some of them were present at the ceremony on Sunday.

At the Rowland Cemetery down the road, I do believe we have a Revolutionary War Veteran, but we did not have it researched. If the sign goes up, then I must let everyone through the fields to the cemetery. Based on Greenfield Glimpses "Joseph was a teamster in the American Revolution at the age of 12 years." Joseph L. Rowland was the 12th child of Garradus and Lydia Rowland. This is also the son that is my blood line.



*Earth Day
Museum Clean Up –
Duane Cornell and
Stan Zeh doing
yard work*



*Patti Veitch and Dan Smith
vacuuming, dusting;
upstairs and down. Camera
shy are Robert Roeckle,
JoAnn and Joan Rowland.*

The marker was supplied and funded by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation whose mission is to promote historical and cultural tourism through historic research and preservation. The foundation began the roadside historic marker program in 2006 in Onondaga County. They now have funded over 2,000 markers in 48 states.

Town supervisor Kevin Veitch gave opening remarks followed by a brief thank you by myself to the Saratoga Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the Saratoga Battle Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and the Saratoga 250 Commission for their diligent work that made this dedication possible. County Historian Lauren Roberts gave the history of Isaac and Ambrose and their military service. She read a letter from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation and a letter from the Secretary of State of Rhode Island Gregg Amore who is also the chair of the Rhode Island 250 Commission for their service while living there. Heather Mabee, the DAR regent and Diane Davison, the DAR chaplain led a dedication service and then the marker was unveiled by Lauren Roberts, Kevin Veitch and myself. Wreaths from the DAR, SAR and the Saratoga 250 Commission were laid at the base of the marker followed by another musket salute.

I found the dedication moving and a fitting way to honor these patriots for their service so many years ago. This Historic marker will show the final resting place of these men for future generations.

I would like to see many more of these markers in the future to highlight the many places and people of historical significance in our town. I will have to do some research on how to accomplish this but it is on my wish list as Town Historian.

Ormsbee Cemetery Patriot Burials



Lauren Roberts, Mary Brill VanVranken, Paul Young, Mark Young, Clifford Young, Duane Cornell, Margaret Brill Barcomb, Kevin Veitch, Teddy Brill and Howard Brill



Headstones of Revolutionary War Veterans
Ambrose Cole and Isaac Ormsbee

TOGHS Program April 16, 2024 “Ice Harvesting”



Tom Ragosta, president of the Watervliet Historical Society and Watervliet City Historian



Saw for harvesting ice during the late 19th early 20th century pulled by horse and manpower

Books for Sale



We have three books for sale: *Saratoga County Stories* (\$18), *More Saratoga County Stories* (\$20), and *Follow My Moccasin's Tracks* by Ira Gray (\$15.95).

Pick your copy up at the next meeting or order from the Town of Greenfield Historical Society, PO Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833, with an additional \$3.50 postage and handling.

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

T-SHIRTS FOR SALE



Our T-shirts are still available for purchase. Front has a left chest logo. Back of shirt has a Caboose Day advertisement which was designed by Conductor Carey Ward of the Saratoga Corinth & Hudson Railway. Shirts are available for purchase for \$20 each. Sizes still available are Small, Medium, Large, X Large and a limited supply of 2X Large shirts. If you need to have your shirt mailed to you, please send a check to our PO Box 502, Greenfield Center, NY 12833. Please indicate size and include an additional \$8 for postage and handling. \$28 total.



April refreshment volunteers, Paula Shappy and Robert Roeckel, served Apple Pecan Cake and Tres Leches Cake.
May refreshment volunteers: Joan Rowland and Robert Roeckel.

Ron Feulner

by John Greenwood

I thought I was prepared when I saw Kelly's name pop up in my emails. I knew it would come. It took two seconds for tears arrive followed by an emptiness I hadn't felt since my own father passed. I can't recall exactly where or when I first met Ron but I do remember an instant connection that continued to grow to the day he called me from Gateway House of Peace. That call meant more to me than you can imagine. It gave me a chance to tell Ron how much he meant to me and how much I appreciated all he'd done to help preserve Greenfield's history.

There are several memories that stand out when I think of Ron. One of them was the Sunday afternoon the two of us decided to dig out one of the maple stumps at the Daketown School. The challenge turned into more than either of us expected. Neither would admit defeat. Ron was perched on his beloved Kubota while I was yielding my battery powered reciprocating saw. Ron would dig around the roots and I would cut them with the saw. The deeper we got the more stubborn the three of us became. The stump was winning the battle. Every time Ron and I thought we were minutes from going home to watch the ballgame the stump would reveal a larger, deeper, more determined root. With my saw-battery blinking on empty and Ron doing his best to hide his frustration, we finally saw the tiniest bit of movement. Minutes later Ron and the Kubota yanked the stump to the surface. Once the hole was refilled and raked smooth I think we both wished we'd brought a frosty beverage to celebrate with.

On another day Ron took me on an educational/nostalgic roadtrip to Lake Desolation and beyond.

I learned more about the area in that ride than I did in the previous 65 years of living here. Every name he mentioned brought back a memory of someone I'd crossed paths with in my youth. Friends of my father that I'd met in his hunting and fishing travels over the years. Names like Hoffman, Older, and Kilmer. Every road or body of water we passed brought back a nostalgic nod. Places like Mulleville, Archer's Fly, Hans Creek, and Fox Hill all revived a long forgotten story or scene I'd crossed paths with as a kid. Ron was filling in the blanks of things I heard a half-century ago. That day gave me a renewed appreciation for all those childhood memories and the faces that went with them.

Another more recent memory was the day I traveled to Elizabethtown with some furniture for Ron's house renovation. He'd light up every time I'd ask how it was coming along. I finally made the time to get up there for a visit. I was astounded at the amount of work this man a few years my elder had taken on. Ron was undeterred. He took me through the home and yard pointing out and detailing everything he planned to do. He reminded me of a first-time home owner bursting at the seams with ideas and energy. I was even more amazed just a few months later when he told me the project was complete and that he already had an offer on the place. I was not the least bit surprised when he said he had his eye on a new project out in Cherry Valley.

I could go on and I will, privately. I know every person here has a thick volume of similar stories to share. My only regret is not having met Ron and Alice decades earlier. My greatest joy is having known them at all.

May they both rest in peace.

Memorial Notes for Ron Feulner

We were very sorry to read of Ron's passing. Bill knew Ron since teenage years, and since he and Alice had retired, we would often stop in for a short visit when we visited family in Saratoga. – *Liz & Bill Older*

I hope all is well in Middle Grove and Porter Corners. I really miss where I had my best memories as a kid. I am so glad that I do have some cherished memories of the people that I was acquainted with. I have been lucky in that sense. Unfortunately, I did miss out knowing some really interesting people such as Ron Feulner. My regards to anyone and everyone up there. – *Frank Goyette*

In memory of Ron Feulner. We were blessed to have known him. – *Katie & Pat Finnegan*



Ron and Alice Feulner

Ron

by Alice Feulner

(12-25-1994 AUF)

He loves to read

He loves to write

He never stays up late at night

He loves to bulldoze up the yard

He likes a problem, if it is hard

He's always searching for a snack

And then he gets a fat attack

He likes to talk and tell a tale

His mother helps him without fail

He's always right

He's never wrong

You ought to hear him sing a song

He knows a lot about the earth

And how our planet did give birth

He's thankful for a lot of things

And all the joy his grandkids bring

It keeps him smiling more than not

For all the blessings that he's got

The years ahead will always be

A happy time – if he's with me

Olympian Henry Laskau

by John R. Greenwood

I was going through one of my grandfather Elmer Greenwood's scrapbooks recently when I discovered an interesting photograph from the August 2, 1949 Saratogian. It pictured six well-dressed men surrounding what appeared to be a long distance runner. I recognized my grandfather on the far left and Bob Walton Sr. (Walton's Sport Shop) in the back. The men appeared to be congratulating the man in the running shorts. I soon found out he was Olympic speed walker Helmut "Henry" Laskau.* He'd just won a 38 mile speed walking marathon from Warrensburg to Saratoga Springs. He accomplished the feat in an incredible 5 hours, 58 minutes and 1 second. The photo was taken in front of the Grand Union Hotel on Broadway. A FultonHistory.com search revealed an August 1, 1949 article detailing the event.

The men in the photo from left to right: Elmer Greenwood, Denis Mansfield, Robert W. Walton, George H. Maines, Henry Laskau, unidentified man, and W. Ernst Spencer.

The article stated that my grandfather Elmer Greenwood, Robert Walton, W. Ernst Spencer, and the photographer Joseph P. Duval all of Saratoga were judges at the finish line. Denis Mansfield the man seen shaking Laskau's hand was the President of the Saratoga Springs Chamber of Commerce. George H. Maines was director of activities for the Adirondack Chamber of Commerce, who promoted and sponsored the race. Greenwood, Walton, Duval, and Spencer all had an affiliation with the Saratoga Winter Club and the Amateur Athletic Union. George Maines was Lake George Chief Judge.

A Google search revealed an eye-opening history of Henry Laskau. Born in Germany September 12, 1916, Henry became one of his country's top runners, but because of his Jewish heritage he was repeatedly passed over for international competition. In 1938 he was sent to a German labor camp. With the help of a sympathetic guard Henry escaped to France. He eventually found his way to the US and became naturalized in 1943. He joined the Army and became an interpreter in Europe. Laskau later learned that most of his family had died in Hitler's concentration camps.

Henry had been a distance runner when he was young but was encouraged to try race walking after the war. Laskau became one of America's premier race



WINNER OF 38-MILE MARATHON WALK – Henry Laskau, New York, is congratulated by Denis A. Mansfield, president of the Saratoga Springs Chamber of Commerce as he crosses the finish line to win the Warrensburg to Saratoga walking race Sunday. Other men are judges. Left to right, they are: Elmer Greenwood, Saratoga; Mansfield; Robert W. Walton, Saratoga; George H. Maines, Lake George, chief judge; Laskau; unidentified man and W. Ernst Spencer, Saratoga

Photo by Joe Duval, The Saratogian, August 2, 1949

walkers. He represented the US in three Olympic Games (1948-1956) and won the 10km walk in the 1951 Pan American Games.

Laskau was haunted by a disqualification in the London Olympic Games in 1948. In 1984 he received a letter from an international statistician who'd researched the race and discovered that Henry had finished seventh and was never actually disqualified. The new information provided some vindication after 36 years.

In his advanced years Henry continued to enjoy long walks near his home in Coconut Creek, Florida. Acquaintances stated that his pace far surpassed younger peers right until the end. He died of Alzheimer's in 2000 at the age of 83.

The discovery and research of this 73 year old article is one more example of the simple stories that exist right beneath our noses. That scrapbook has been in my home for almost 20 years and I never looked close enough to appreciate the significance of that one random photograph. The point of sharing it here is two-fold. One is to pass on an interesting piece of local history. The other is to encourage others to take a close look at your own family's history, you might just uncover some Olympic Gold.

**Speed walking or race walking has been an Olympic event since 1904. In speed walking, one foot must be touching the ground at all times. The 50km race was last run in Tokyo 2021 and has been eliminated from the 2024 Paris Olympics.*

Recycle Box Greenfield Lions Club

The Greenfield Lions Club has a recycle box in the entry way of the Town's Community Center. (Box is on right between entry doors).

What can you leave in this box? All things plastic. Store plastic bags, ice bags (dried), reclosable bags, cereal box liners, bread bags, newspaper sleeves, dry cleaning bags, bubble wrap, and plastic e-commerce mailers. All items must be clean and dry.

Later we will see a bench made from the recycled plastics.





Louis Okoniewski Jr. passed away peacefully at home April 4, 2024, with his loving family by his side and in his heart. Louis was born Sept. 12, 1924 in Buffalo to Louis L. Okoniewski and Helen F. (Zielinski) Okoniewski. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps as a B-17 Radio Operator and Gunner in Nov. 1942. He participated in the Rhineland Central Europe Campaigns, where he flew 31 Combat Missions over Germany. He was discharged in Oct. 1945 and reenlisted in the US Air Force in 1948. He served on the Combat Crew B-50 in the Philippines where he flew over Korea mapping islands during the Korean War. He was transferred to Hunter Field AFB in Savannah, GA, where he cross-trained to in-flight re-fueling on the KC-97. There he met and married Barbara Ann Clark in 1954. They had 3 children. In 1963, the family was transferred to Ernest Harmon AFB, Stephenville, NFLD. In 1966, the family was transferred to Plattsburgh, AFB, Strategic Air Command (SAC), 380th Air Re-Fueling Squadron. Louis flew over 100 refueling missions over Southeast Asia during “Young Tiger” missions. He was commended for his part in a rescue operation, Cherry-46, for a downed F-4 aircraft, where he alerted Air Rescue and helped plot the downed plane’s position and rescued the crew. He also refueled fighter aircraft over Cuba during the Cold War.

Louis loved to take the family on trips to the Adirondacks when he was home from overseas missions, maybe to Land of Make Believe, Santa’s Workshop, Lake Placid or picnics. He loved sports and anything Buffalo – he was hoping to see a Super Bowl Ring! Louis officially retired Jan. 1975 as Master Sargent in the USAF. After retirement, Louis and Barbara moved to Orlando, FL,

then to Stone Mountain, Ga., where Louis worked for Superfoods. After many years down south, they moved to Middle Grove. After Barbara passed, Louis moved to Woodlawn Commons in 2018 where he made many friends who became family and miss him dearly. Louis was a member of the Town of Greenfield Historical Society; he was a charter member of VFW Post 6251, Private Leonard Post Jr., Lancaster, and a Charter member of VFW Post 309, Peru. He loved to have a beer and burger, spend time with family and a ride to anywhere was always welcomed.

In addition to his parents and loving wife Barbara, Louis was predeceased by his sisters, Adele Smith and Marge Olson, Buffalo; nephews, Leslie Smith and Clayton Smith.

He is survived by his children, Louise Okoniewski, (John Biss) of Wilton; Helen Lum, Sanford, FL and Louis Okoniewski (Charles Harris), Atlanta, Ga. Grandchildren, Gera (Stacie) Kittman; Angela (Nate) Stickney and Amanda Lum. Great grandchildren; Jaxon Kittman; Ryliegh, Liam and Olive Stickney; nephew Ron (Karen) Olson, Buffalo and niece Sheryl (Bob) Imbs, Williamsville, NY.

Louis will be missed by many who knew him, his friends and family at Woodlawn Commons; his friends at the Commissary, who liked to talk to him and looked out for him, friends he met at Greenfield Town Hall and places in between!

There will be no calling hours. A celebration of life was held on Sunday, April 28 at VFW Post #420, Saratoga Springs. Burial will be held at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Louis’ name can be made to St. Joseph’s Church, 3159 Route 9N, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 or Community Hospice of Saratoga, 179 Lawrence St., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Town of Greenfield Historical Society Daketown School #8 Open House

Saturday, June 8, 2024

10 AM to 2 PM

24 Old Daketown Road, Middle Grove, NY
Free Admission

Donations are greatly appreciated as they help us
“Keep Greenfield’s History Alive for Our Future Generations!”

Rain or Shine





Town of Greenfield Historical Society CAR SHOW AND LIVE MUSIC IN THE PARK *MIDDLE GROVE TOWN PARK*

428 Middle Grove Road

Saturday, July 13, 2024

Cars: 10 AM to 3 PM – Music: 11 AM to 3 PM

Car Show Registration: \$10, Top 15 Trophies announced at 2:30 PM

Vendors, Food and Drinks available for purchase

*Rain or Shine. Free Public Admission. For information, call
Car Show, Tom Clute – 518-580-0655 or Music, Patti Veitch – 518-428-9343*

Town of Greenfield Historical Society

14TH CABOOSE DAY AT KINGS STATION

Saturday, August 10, 2024 – 10 AM to 3 PM

Tour Kings Station and Caboose

4000 State Highway 9N, Greenfield Center, NY 12833
(Corner of Route 9N and Porter Road)



Vendors, Bake Sale, T-shirts, Food and Drinks available for purchase

*Train rides from Saratoga Corinth & Hudson Railway,
9 Railroad Place, Corinth to Kings Station and Special
“Greenfield Flyer” from Kings Station to LaMothe Landing
and back. Book your ride now at CorinthTrain.com*

Trolley will bring you to Kings Station and back to train.

*Rain or Shine. For information, call
Louise Okoniewski at 518-796-4066*



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
P.O. Box 502
Greenfield Center, NY 12833