



THE SENTINEL

Vol. 23, No. 1

The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Fall 2014

Thacher Park Celebrates 100 Years!

*John Boyd Thacher State Park
Centennial Celebration*

1914-2014



*Saturday, September 13, 2014
10am-7pm*

Despite the threatening weather large crowds turned out for the Centennial Celebration. There were Live Birds of Prey, Hikes to the Caves, Live Music, many Childrens Activities, Vendors, and informaton booths, etc. **The Park Staff and the Friends Group and others, certainly did an outstanding job organizing this event!!**



Right: The picture shows Jack McEneny reading the proclamation recognizing the 100th Anniversary of the park from the State Assembly and signed by Patricia Fahey, NYS Assembly Member.



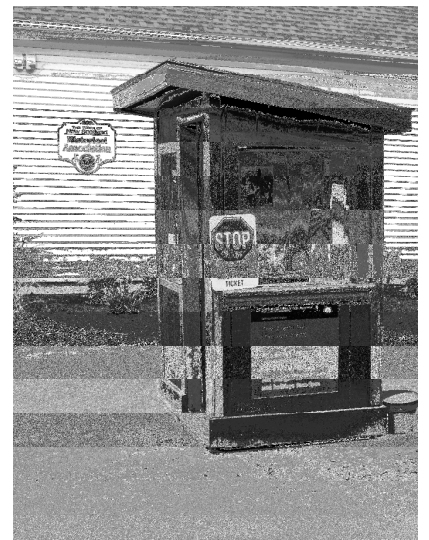
Tom Thacher, Great great nephew of John Boyd Thacher talked briefly about his family history and how this wonderful



Below: This ticket booth is on loan at the NSHA Museum for our Thacher Park Exhibit. Many artifacts, and scores of pictures of the park over the years are on exhibit. Do plan to visit the museum sometime this fall or winter.

Replacement Marker!

The Friends of Thacher Park had a new Historic Marker made to replace the long missing marker put up by the State Education Dept. in 1932. This long overdue marker was initiated by Bonnie and Jim Schaller of the Friends group. Tim Albright suggested the new marker be put at "Thacher Point," directly above the original Indian Ladder location.



**NEW
SCOTLAND
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

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President's Message

I hope everyone has had a wonderful summer. Although summer is usually a time to take a break, NSHA has been quite busy this summer and I have a number of things to report. First, the Association has a new website. With the help of Derek Cacciotti, a student of Clayton Bouton High School, we have migrated from our old website to a new one, which is built on a WIX platform. The new website will be much easier to manage and keep up-to-date. When visitors go to our old website they will be redirected to the new site. A lot of credit goes to Marie Hornick, chair of our website committee, who has managed our website for many years with very difficult tools.

NSHA now has a Historic Sites committee chair. Tim Albright, former NSHA President and long-term member, has kindly agreed to assume this position. Tim is an expert on the history of John Boyd Thacher Park and the Indian Ladder region and a font of knowledge on many other aspects of New Scotland History. We are thrilled to have him as a committee chair.

Now that we have a Historic Sites Chair, all NSHA leadership positions are filled for the first time in at least two years. The number of vacancies in committee chairs in recent years has been a major concern to me as NSHA president and I wish to personally thank all the new Board members and committee chairs who have come forward as well as longer-term ones who have stuck with the Association over the years.

During the summer we completed arrangements for our 2014-2015 program season. The programs will cover a wide range of topics that I think will be of great interest to our members. We will kick off the season on Oct. 7 with Clifford Oliver Mealy, historian/photographer and historical re-enactor, portraying Solomon Northrup, a 19th century Capital District native who was kidnaped and sold into slavery. Northrup was the subject of a recent Academy award winning movie **12 Years a Slave**. Our November program is designed to attract school age children and combines the fun pastime of geo-caching and history. In December Shelby Mattice, Curator at the Bronck Museum, will give us a fascinating look at the challenges of winter life on a Hudson Valley Dutch farmstead in the 1600s and the early winter holidays typically celebrated by Dutch families. Check out our full program schedule on page 7 and on our website.

I look forward to seeing you at our first program on October 7.

Alan Kowlowitz

Mission Statement

The Town of New Scotland Historical Association preserves, protects and promotes history in the Town of New Scotland through the stewardship of material culture directly related to the town. The purpose is to promote an appreciation of local history, heritage and culture through research, publications and educational programs.

Last winter the Sentinel received the following letter and article:

To Whom It May Concern,

My wife Bonnie and I are frequent readers of *The Sentinel*. Our time living in New Scotland was very special to us. I'd like to submit the enclosed essay for consideration for a future publication in the newsletter.

Thank you.

Vincent Perry, Sr.

Our Flight Path to Tranquility

by Vincent Perry, Sr.

If you are an Albany native "of a certain age," you should certainly remember March 3, 1972. That is the day Mohawk Airlines Flight 405 crashed in Albany, NY. At the time, my family lived on Melrose Avenue, about 100 yards away. We were in one of the flight paths for landing at Albany Airport, and it seemed there were always airplanes flying over our house. I had always found the noise annoying, and after the crash I'd had enough. "I want to escape these airplanes!" I announced.

The next day, a Saturday, was a very busy one at the hair salon I owned and operated in Loudonville. The place was abuzz with talk of the crash, and I complained to my customers about how much I wanted to move out of the city. One lady told me she had a friend with some land for sale in a town called New Scotland, but I only had a vague idea where that was.

The following day she met with me, and together we met with Tom Winn, the owner of the land. Without a second thought, I purchased two and a half acres on Picard Road. I built a home, and moved my family there the following year. That summer--the summer of 1973--a man rented an airplane and flew it into the escarpment just behind our new home, killing himself. And I thought I was escaping the airplanes! Fortunately, I lived happily in New Scotland for the next 26 years without further aeronautical incident. My wife Bonnie and I raised six children there.

Although I now live in Loudonville, our family has always held a special emotional attachment to our former home on Picard Road. It seems odd to me that although we now live in close proximity to many nice neighbors, we really aren't that close. In New Scotland, we considered people who lived one or two, even three miles away "neighbors" and we still see and keep in touch with many of them. The Town of New Scotland is a special place, and every time I hear a plane fly overhead I think of my quiet years in the Town of New Scotland.

In Memoriam

Marion Raymond, formerly of Unionville, passed away August 1st in Ithaca. She was an active member of NSHA for many years and served as Vice President, President, and Trustee during the time period between 1986 and 1993. There will be a memorial service for her at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 262 State St., in Albany, on Saturday, October 25th at 2 pm. Her daughter Dorothy wrote to us saying if any NSHA members remember her mother, she would like to meet them!

The Hilton Barn

By Catherine Le Vie Hammann

*Last winter we emailed Cathy to inquire about the Hilton Barn. She researched the deeds and records she had and wrote this wonderful article for us to share in the **Sentinel**. All of her own memories which she included make it even more special. The Summer issue of the **Sentinel** included 2 photo's of the Hilton home, which we Parmenter's came across—and then shared with Cathy. Cathy and her husband Matt are both Voorheesville graduates who have lived in Australia since 1978!*

I have been asked about the 'Le Vie Barn' and whether or not my family owned it at any time. The question prompted me to write what I know of the history. I have copies of deeds for the Le Vie family property since 1929, and they include references to earlier deeds, so here is the summary.

The 1880 Census shows the Hilton Family living in New Scotland on the Hilton Farm. According to references in a deed that I have, the property was part of an original lease of Stephen Van Rensselaer to Robert Hilton, possibly early 1880s. In 1880, the family included Joseph and Maria V. Hilton and their children James, Kate, Maria, Joseph, Henry, Mary (May), Robert, Frank and two servants. A map I have of the Hilton Farm surveyed in 1903 shows it as 377 acres and it covered an area both sides of 85A (Maple Road), either side of Hilton Road up to the D & H railway tracks and included land on the other side of the D & H tracks as well. Apparently it was bordered by the Bender Farm and the Joslin Farm.

Son James Hilton married to Harriet Merle Aspinwall (Harriet MA Hilton) in 1901 and when James died in 1932, Harriet sold a large parcel of the Hilton Farm to my great grandfather James Alexander Levie, Sr. (nicknamed Cap Levie.) The deeds are from 3 August 1932. The boundary line for his land was between the old Hilton barn and where the Le Vie's Farm Market building still stands, a measurement taken off a Maple tree and the corner of the Hilton barn. Great Grandpa's property extended up towards Voorheesville on both sides of 85A from Hilton Rd to the D & H tracks on one side of the road and land that included the Le Vie farm and back into the area where the Colonie Country Club was eventually built on the other side of the road..

Cap Levie had four sons, three of whom eventual-

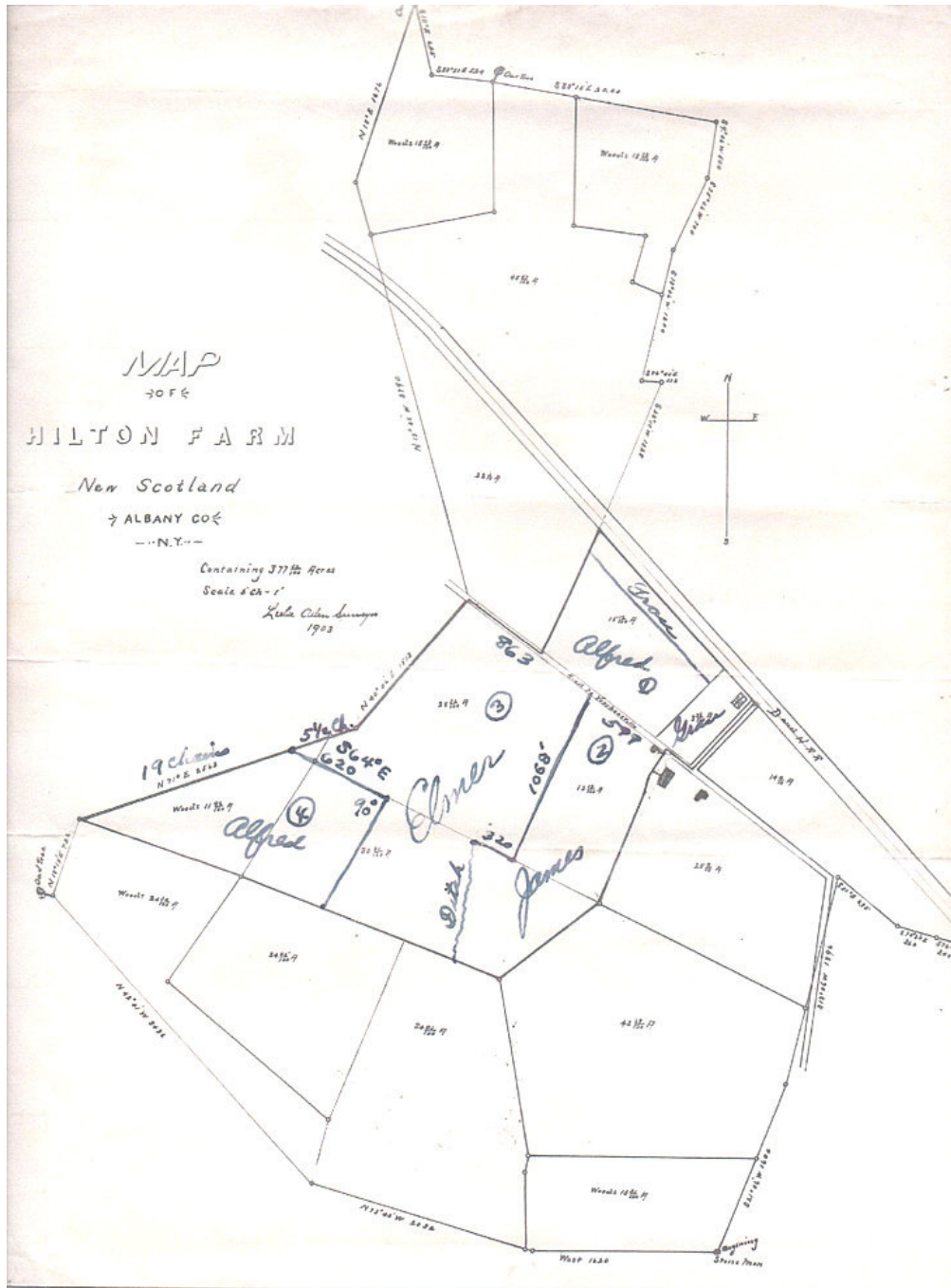


Le Vie Farm with Hilton barn in background—1953

ly settled along Maple Rd. Alfred Levie (known as Unc) and his wife Martha had purchased part of the Joslin Farm up the road from the Hilton Farm on 2 May 1929, and one week later, deeded the western portion of that to his brother James William Levie and his wife Henrietta, my grandparents. They each built similar homes there in 1929 and moved out from Hollywood Ave. Albany to live there. My grandparents then sold part of their property on the Voorheesville side to Charles and Annie Schlientz (a cousin of my grandmother) in 1938 and another parcel to John M. Schneider in 1955.

On the 30 September 1944, Cap sold 5.8 acres of his Hilton land, on the corner of Hilton and Maple Rd. to Charles and Lucille Grace. Mrs. Grace was an avid birdwatcher, as was my mother Shirley Le Vie and I remember spending afternoons over there watching for birds in the bushes when I was quite young. (I was born in 1952.) Later on, Mr. and Mrs. Grace must have acquired land along the D & H tracks according to the map that I have, and they eventually sold their land to the Buffa family. I believe that parcel of land is now for sale again.

On the 8 May 1948, my great grandfather James (Cap) Levie, deeded the rest of his purchase from the Hilton family to his three sons—Alfred (Unc), Elmer and James Jr., my grandfather. Unc got the portion from Maple Rd to the D & H tracks and he eventually subdivided it as eight building blocks. Our neigh-



Hilton Farm, Leslie Allen, surveyor, 1903

hours that lived there during my childhood included the families of Mudar, Hood, Denman, Youmans, Eberle, Manss, Ross, Miller and Leonard and probably others I can't recall. As well, Unc received the portion on the other side of the road where the orchard was (now where the Colonie Country Club Clubhouse stands.) Elmer had a large parcel from Maple Rd back into the current Country Club property and James had the parcel between Elmer's land and the old Hilton barn, also extending well back into current Country Club property. The Levie brothers grew crops for the wholesale markets, selling to local grocery stores, Beechnut Baby Food and the cider mill.

(This article will continue in the December issue of *The Sentinel*.)

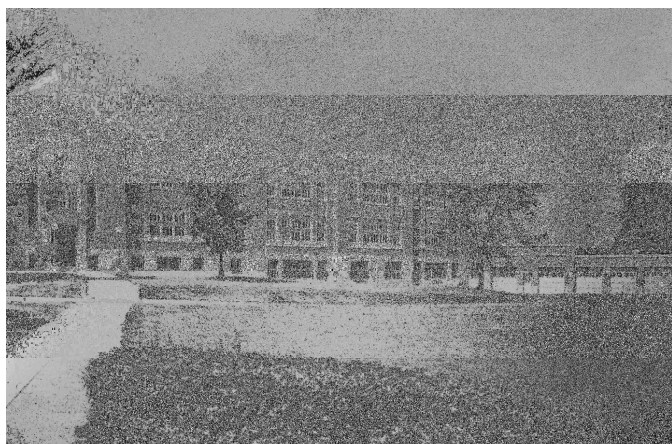
Graduation!

Graduation can mean many things to many different people. I would like to tell you what it meant to a 12 year old boy graduating from the 6th grade in a two-room schoolhouse in New Salem. Up to that point I had only been in two classrooms and had only two teachers, Mrs. Sisson, grades 1-3, and Mrs. Chaffee, grades 4-6. They taught all subjects to all grades. What a concept!

When school started in the fall it meant I was going to be picked up by bus and taken to the big High School in Voorheesville. (This building also housed elementary grades). A small bus would pick up the "Mountain Kids" --- Osterhouts, Gutheries, Thorsens, Luscombs, Bakers, Salisburys, Smiths, Abbots, LaQuires, and Kohls. In the winter when the days were short, it would barely be daylight when I was picked up because I was the first stop and nearly dark when I got home because I was the last stop at night. The small bus would bring us to New Salem where we would wait for the big bus to arrive so we could transfer to it and continue on to school. In later years we would have our very own bus. This whole experience was made easier for me because my cousin Marilyn who was a Junior rode the bus with me and helped me through the first few days.

Starting the 7th grade was to be a whole new experience. Most of my classmates were new kids I had never met except for the few who had graduated with me in New Salem. Lots of new girls to peak the interest of a young boy from the mountain. I was assigned a locker-- some of which had a key and others required a combination lock like mine. Each subject was taught in a different room with a different teacher. The start and end of each class was indicated by the ringing of a bell and all movement in the halls was monitored by the "Traffic Squad." The High School consisted of three floors not counting Mr. Brayden's little office above the third floor, which I had cause to visit a few times, although I never could understand why! It certainly was interesting to say the least, just learning the layout of the whole place and where I was supposed to be and at what time. In my next article I will share more memories of my high school years.

Enjoy the trip down memory lane
Will Osterhout



Where Willard went to school for Grades 7—12,
and graduated from in 1957!

Museum Hours
Sundays: 2:00-4:00 P.M.

Open Election Day
8:00 A.M.—9:00 P.M.

If you would like to become a member,
please do so!

NSHA Membership Form

___ \$10 Individual
___ \$15 Family
___ \$25 Sustaining
___ \$100.00 Life (per person)

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

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Make checks payable to NSHA.

Please send dues to:

Sarita Winchell
NSHA Membership Chair
279 Helderberg Pkwy
Voorheesville, NY 12186

NSHA Program Schedule 2014—15

Oct. 7, 2014 (7:30 pm) The Life and Times of Solomon Northrup

Clifford Oliver Mealy, Historian/photographer and historical re-enactor, will portray Solomon Northrup, giving a vivid account of how slavery haunted the world and life of this 19th century Capital District native.

Nov. 2, 2014 (2:00-4:00pm, Sunday) Kids Program on Geo-caching with a Historical Twist

Geo-caching! What is it, and who is doing it? Children of All Ages (kids, adults and seniors) will have an opportunity to enjoy the fun pastime of geo-caching and learn about local history at the same time. Please join us for the special Sunday afternoon program.

Dec. 2, 2014 (7:30 pm) Chilly Willy Winter's Eve

Shelby Mattice, Curator at the Bronck Museum, will explore the challenges of winter life on a Hudson Valley Dutch farmstead in the 1600s, as well as the late fall and early winter holidays typically celebrated by Dutch families.

Feb. 3, 2015 (7:30 pm) Dairying in New Scotland—Doug LaGrange

New Scotland's own Doug LaGrange, dairy farmer and Town Councilman, will talk about the past, present and future of dairying in New Scotland.

Mar. 3, 2015 (7:30 pm) Kate Mullany National Historic Site: National significance of a Laundry Workers' Strike

Dr. P. Thomas Carroll, Senior Scholar of the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway, will discuss the Capital District's famed labor pioneer, Irish immigrant Kate Mullany and her struggle to organize the Troy women collar laundry workers in 1864.

April 7, 2015 (7:30 pm) "Victory Turned into Mourning," Farewell to Lincoln and Grant at the New York State Capitol

150 years ago Abraham Lincoln's body lay in state at the NYS Capitol. Just 20 years later Ulysses S. Grant also lay in state in Albany. Stuart W. Lehman, Education Coordinator for the NYS Capitol, will tell the story of both of these sad events.

May 5, 2015 (7:30 pm) "Down with the Rent!" The Anti-Rent War of New York

Local Musicians will tell the story of the Anti-Rent Wars (1839-1951), when local tenant farmers struggled against the powerful Van Rensselaer Patroons to win the right to own their farms.

All programs will be held at the Wyman Osterhout Community Center, New Salem, beginning at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted.

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Museum Hours

The museum is
open year-round
on Sunday
from

2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

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THE SENTINEL

New Scotland Historical Association

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Voorheesville, New York 12186