



THE SENTINEL

Vol. 28, No. 3

The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Spring 2020

WOMEN WIN THE RIGHT TO VOTE!

By Judy Kimes

By August 18, 1920, 36 states had ratified the 19th amendment allowing women the right to vote – enough to enable the amendment to become part of the U.S. Constitution. New York State women achieved the right in November of 1917, but in 1920 this became the law throughout the nation.

Women eagerly accepted their new freedom, not only by enrolling to vote, but also by running for political offices. In its “Back in Time – 100 Years Ago” column *The Altamont Enterprise* quoted a writer of 1919 who commented that two women had won seats in the state legislature and two had been defeated. The writer stated, “This was somewhat hard, but it all goes with the game and if women take part they will have to learn to lose.”

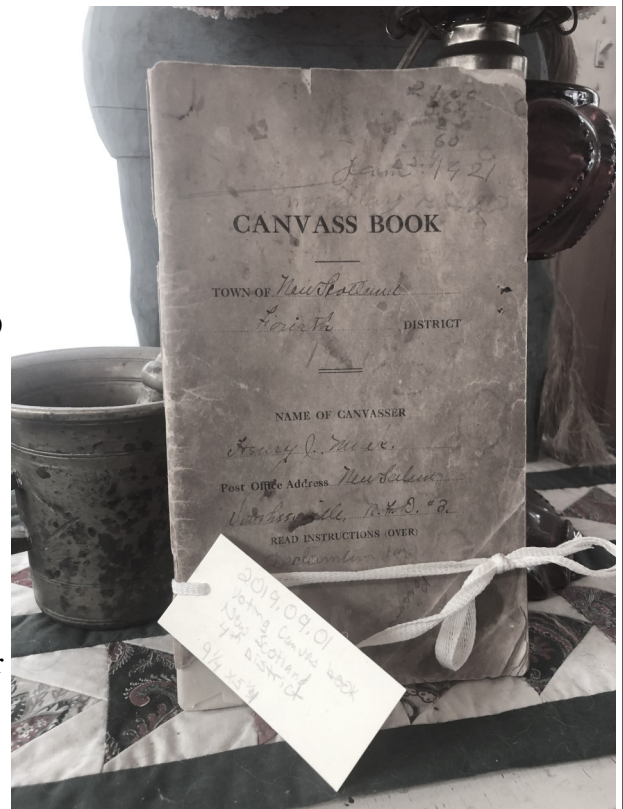
In the Town of New Scotland, the first woman to run for a Town office was Emily A. Ward. In 1919 she ran for Town Clerk as a member of the Prohibition Party and was defeated. Although many women ran in subsequent years, no woman was elected to a Town office until 1967 when Elizabeth (Betty) Feldman was elected Town Clerk. It is interesting to note that since then only women have been elected to the office of Town Clerk.

Found in Our Collection

Located in the NSHA Museum archives is a little *Canvass Book* for the Fourth District of the Town of New Scotland for the year 1921. Put out by the Republican County Committee, the instructions to the canvasser reads, “A complete canvass of each election district is required, giving the names and correct post office address of all women voters who are citizens and who are 21 years of age or older.” For this canvass of eligible women voters in the 4th district, 159 women are listed. Their addresses are mainly various R.F.D routes out of Voorheesville and appear to be concentrated in the New Salem area.

A Surprising Citizenship Requirement for Women

The *Canvass Book* lists the qualifications a 1921 woman must meet in order to be a citizen of the United States and therefore be eligible to vote. Most are what one would expect. However, one requirement was disconcerting. Number 7 states “A woman is a citizen and entitled to vote who was born in the United States and marries a citizen, but if married to an alien she loses her citizenship during the continuance of the marital relation.”



From NSHA archives/

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NEW SCOTLAND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box 541

Voorheesville, NY 12186

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Sarita Winchell 518-765-2133

Historic Sites

Chris Albright 518-765-2018

Electronic Communications

Alan Kowlowitz 518-765-4212

Town Historian

Robert Parmenter 518-765-4652

Voorheesville Historian

Dennis Sullivan 518-765-2468

Sentinel Committee

Sherry Burgoon 518-225-0797

Judy Kimes 518-768-2607

Mary Beth (Frohlich) Felice

Web Page

www.newscotlandhistoricalassociation.org
Email: newscotlandhistoricalassoc@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I certainly hope everyone has survived the winter. This winter has been quite busy for NSHA. During January both the Town of New Scotland and Village of Voorheesville passed the Historic Preservation Law that NSHA has been advocating for the past year. The law establishes a joint Town and Village Historic Preservation Commission to identify and advocate for the preservation of historic resources, and, to advise the decision-making bodies in Town and Village government on historic preservation issues.

In February the Village and Town boards appointed the Commission members. The Village appointees are Debbie Mahan, our past President, and me. The Town appointees are Chris Albright, our Historic Sites chair, Gwen Spicer, a professional conservator in town, and Andrea Lain, a professional archeologist with the New York State Museum. Bob Parmenter, New Scotland Town Historian, and Dennis Sullivan, Voorheesville Village Historian, are ex officio members of the Commission. I am sure the Commission will be an asset to our citizens and communities it serves.

NHSA has also continued to improve the management and access to its collections. Our Collections Committee is completing a massive project to inventory and input information about all of our collections into Past Perfect, a collections management and access system.

In April the New Scotland Museum will reopen after its winter hiatus with new exhibits on the New Scotland men and women who served in World War II.

We also have some exciting programs in the spring. On Tuesday April 14 archeologist Walter Wheeler will present **"Getting the Job Done: Construction, Builders, and Building Materials in the Upper Hudson and Mohawk Valleys, 1755-1765"** and on Tuesday May 5, after our annual membership meeting, staff from the Ten Broeck Mansion will present **The Ten Broeck Family and its Mansion 1798-1947.**

Mission Statement

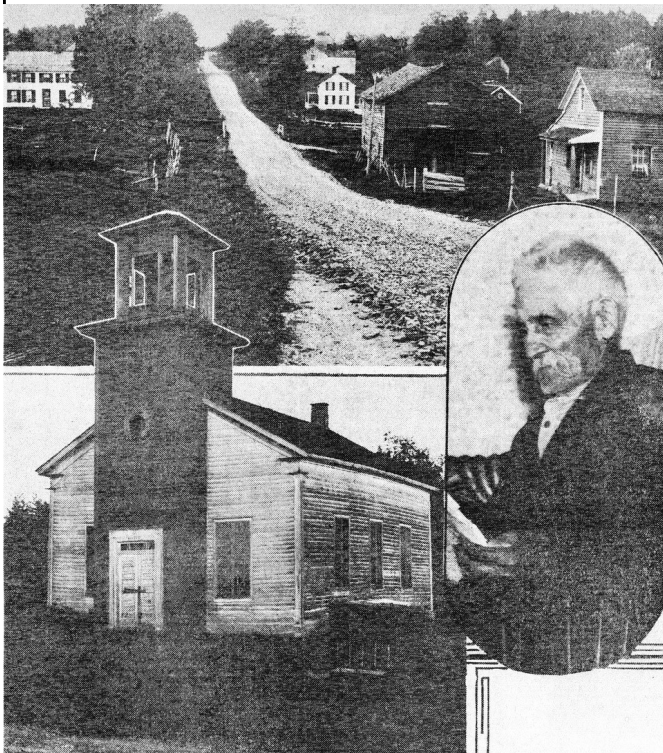
The Town of New Scotland Historical Association preserves, protects and promotes history in the Town of New Scotland through the stewardship of material culture directly related to the town. The purpose is to promote an appreciation of local history, heritage and culture through research, publications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

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A bit of research revealed this requirement is a result of the Expatriation Act of 1907 that states women who married non-Americans were no longer citizens. If the husband became a naturalized citizen, the woman could then go through the naturalization process as well and regain citizenship. This act was reversed by the Cable of Act of 1922, but one wonders how many women had to go through the red tape of reclaiming her citizenship and her right to vote.

The Canvasser

Henry J. Moak was the canvasser and as such he compiled for the Republican party a list of all the women in the 4th district who were eligible to vote. Political party affiliations were not noted. However, in the Albany County 1918 Enrollment List of women in the 4th district 90% were Republican, 6% Prohibition Party, and 3% Democratic.



Scenes of Reidsville with Wilkins Crawford, prominent citizen and June Albert's great-grandfather. *Knickerbocker News* 1933.

The complete canvass took only 28 pages of the book, so Henry's wife, Georgia, put the remaining pages to thrifty use by using them as a diary for 1921- July 1922, making this little booklet even more valuable.

Georgia's name appears on the Albany County 1918 Enrollment List and also in the 1921 *Canvass Book*. Both the diary and the January 28, 1921 issue of *The Altamont Enterprise* records that Georgia Moak traveled to Albany to attend "the conference of Republican Women at the Republican headquarters."

So, the 19th Amendment turns 100! From the national to the personal level a right worthy of the struggle and worthy of defending.

(As a side note, at the time of this diary, Henry Moak was 57 years old. He was the owner of the New Salem Hotel. In this diary, Georgia writes that Henry sold the hotel and the attached barn to Ezra Crabill. In its February 2, 1921 issue, *The Altamont Enterprise* reported that Mr. Crabill planned to convert the barn into a garage. In her October 1 entry Georgia

writes. "Ezra took over hotel. Jim Winne tends bar." On October 8, "Henry sold Ezra 10 glasses, 2 rolls towels, 45 cups \$2.40." The book, *New Scotland Township*, features several photos of the New Salem Hotel. Henry J. Moak died in 1926 at 62 years of age. Georgia in 1959, at 91. They are both buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery.)

Sources:

Knickerbocker News article circa 1930
The Altamont Enterprise (then and now),
AnnMarie Hess, Bob Parmenter, and Don Slingerland for their knowledge and help.

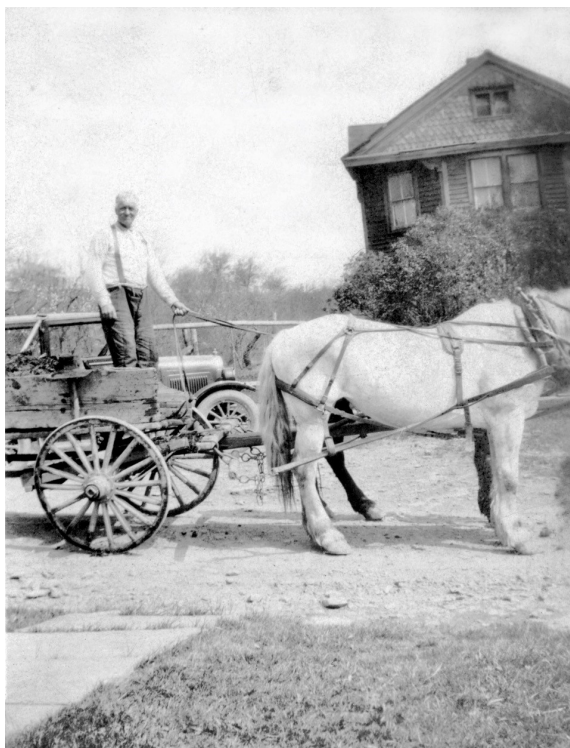
HERE COMES THE U.S. CENSUS

By Judith Kimes

April 1, 2020 is U.S. Census Day! Required by Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, this will be the 24th decennial census.

The first Census Day was August 2, 1790. Federal Marshalls carried it out, along with 650 assistants who were hired and sent door-to-door. The population of the United States was determined to be 3,934,214. It is said that founding fathers George Washington and Thomas Jefferson doubted the accuracy of the count because people feared the information would be used to charge taxes. (1)

To allay the fears of the people, the U.S. Census Bureau guarantees confidentiality. Responses to questions are not released for 72 years, the thought being most respondents would not care by then or would have passed on. In newspapers announcing the coming of the census many, including *The Altamont Enterprise*, assured their readers that the census was not to be feared. The April 15, 1910 issue of the *Enterprise* reports, "The President has issued a proclamation calling on all citizens to cooperate in the Census and assuring them that it has nothing to do 'with taxation, army or jury service, compulsory school attendance, regulation of immigration, or enforcement of any law, and that no one can be injured by answering the inquiries.'" Prior to the 1900 Census, the *Enterprise* (June 1, 1900) reported, "The strictest secrecy is enjoined upon the enumerators to keep answers to themselves and a \$500 penalty (about \$15,000 today) for divulging the same."



"Nicholas Crawford of Reidsville and his horse. Both would have been counted in the 1920 Census."

In *The Altamont Enterprise* the Census enumerator's name and his arrival were often announced by a community's local correspondent. In the January 16, 1920 issue, the New Salem reporter stated, "The census enumerator, Mr. Brady of Voorheesville, was making his calls in the North End on Friday and Saturday."

For Reidsville (a small neighborhood on Cass Hill above Clarksville known for its stone quarry) its correspondent wrote, "Hugh Conger, our census enumerator, started on his job January 2nd in the farthest part of the districts on the West Mountain returning home for Sunday with his family. He started out Monday again this week. This weather will be apt to hurry him along from house to house if this cold continues."

The job of census enumerator is short-lived though interesting, one would imagine. At the NSHA December 2019 program a U.S. Census employee was in attendance, looking for people willing to sign on as enumerators for the 2020 Census. Those positions are probably filled by now. According to its website, households should receive the materials for the 2020 Census around March 12th. So, be prepared. The census enumerator cometh and we, the 2020 population of the United States, will enter the permanent record books.

Greenspan, Jesse. "10 Things You May Not Know about the U.S. Census." <https://www.history.com/news>. Various issues of *The Altamont Enterprise*.

With thanks to June Alberts and Don Slingerland for their help in providing the photos.

1920-2020: AN EVOLUTION OF WOMEN'S ROLES

By: Sherry Burgoon, Editor

Women winning the right to vote in 1920, brought about social, political and new economic opportunities for women. In the early 20th C., women were beginning to attend college and train to be professionals in the fields of law, medicine and corporate positions predominantly held by men. Three generations of women in the Ricci family of Voorheesville, Rose, Corinne and Roselyn, epitomize how the roles of women transformed over the past 100 years.

Rose Ricci was born in Italy and moved to Mechanicville in 1917. She and her husband Charles moved to Voorheesville in 1925, eventually opening Ricci's Market on Main Street. There is no doubt that Mrs. Ricci's warm personality as she greeted each customer contributed to the store's longevity in the community. Rose may have worked at the family store on a regular basis, but she was quite involved in the community as well; she was a member of the Voorheesville Fire Department and American Legion auxiliaries, past president of the New Scotland Women's Republican Club, Voorheesville PTA, and St. Matthew's Altar Rosary Society. It seems she could do it all. Her homemade baked beans were a good-selling item in the market. She was well-known for her spaghetti dinners at the church and still had time to be the chairman of the community Christmas party. Rose was not your stereotypic housewife of previous generations keeping the house and raising two children, daughter Corinne and son Michael.

Her granddaughter Roselyn shared her memories of Rose:

Grandma Rose was a strong woman and ruled the roost in her family and her family business. Both men and women would seek out her financial and business advice. Definitely a ground breaker in that way. She was clearly a role model for my mom, sisters and other women in Voorheesville. I think having the store and daily access to the community opened the door for her. And she was fiercely independent. No one (man or woman) was going to tell her what to do. I think it was hard for some of her peers to accept that from a woman; but it didn't stop her.

Daughter Corinne Cossac, like her mother Rose, had many roles in the community as well. After attending Syracuse University studying art and political science, Corinne had "a lot of irons in the fire" according to her daughter Annie Brill. (*Altamont Enterprise Milestones*, Thursday, 12/29/2016) Admired for her cooking like her mom Rose, Corinne catered weddings and anniversaries, managed the cafeteria at Bethlehem Middle School and made pizzas at Smitty's Tavern. Raising four daughters, Annie recalls her mom holding three jobs at one time as the family breadwinner.

"But the job she held the longest and perhaps loved best was town clerk, a position to which she was elected more than once. She worked through many pairs of shoes knocking on every door in her campaigns. She enjoyed talking to people so much," recalls Annie. First elected in 1976 as Town Clerk, Corinne had a multitude of duties which she recounted in the letter she sent to a student requesting information for a research project.

- Custodian of all records
- Attend all Town Board meetings; keep records of the proceedings
 - Issue licenses and permits (too numerous to list)
- Submit monthly and annual financial reports to the Town Board and State agencies for which fees are collected
 - Maintain a journal of all daily sales and bank deposits
- Prepare and maintain monthly abstracts of bills to be paid by the town
 - Collect payment of usage fees for all water districts
- Post and prepare all legal notices of Special Meetings and Public Hearings



Corinne Cossac

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(continued from page 5)

Roz Robinson, Corinne's daughter, also a lifelong resident, attended Binghamton University after her graduation from high school in 1975. She attributes her BA in Political Science to her mom's interest in politics and her running for office. Roz went on to Albany Law School graduating in 1982. As a female law student at that time, she experienced women being treated the same as her male classmates, but she admitted that earlier female students had to pave the way for equality. She first worked for a lobbyist right out of law school drafting legislation for professional organizations. After the birth of her sons, she opened her private law practice. Like her grandmother and mom, Roz has been an active member of the Voorheesville School community: vice-president of the PTA, Dollars for Scholars, a booster club officer for football, basketball, and wrestling as well as a drama program volunteer to name a few. In 1986, she joined the New Scotland Republican Committee and has been a member of the New Scotland Board of Assessment and Review. Currently, she is also a greeter and a member of the Finance Committee at St. Matthews Church.

The Town of New Scotland has benefitted from the changes in roles of women since the passing of the 19th amendment. Rose, Corinne, and Roz have shown the advancements provided for women which has enriched our society over the past 100 years.

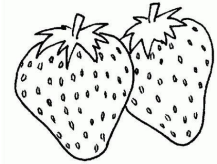
Sources:

The Altamont Enterprise Milestones. Thursday, December 29, 2016

The Altamont Enterprise. March 25, 1977, p. 7.



Sunshine's Corner
MY MOTHER'S GIFT
By MaryBeth (Frohlich) Felice



I grew up on a farm in the village of Voorheesville with one thousand people. That sounds like a lot, but it isn't. Our farm had thirty-six acres in all, but the neighboring farms were all over one hundred acres. My mom was born in the farm house; she grew up there and was married there. At the end of her life, she was buried there.

Mom loved the land. She would take me for walks through the fields and orchards and woods. She would point out the wild strawberries, yummy for jelly; the bloodroot with its stark white flowers, wild violet and running pine. I didn't understand how the land or these walks in solitude (or with me) touched her heart. I didn't understand.

But now I do. When I had my own place with fields and woods and trails and pasture....then I understood. I walked the horses down the wood's path in the evening and it all came back...the smell of the forest floor; the evening call of the oriole; the cool damp feel of the woods on my skin. There was a connection there. It was my heart connection to the earth; to my own essence. It was peace and beauty and nature. It was myself at home in my body. I felt so truly blessed.

I hope that my mom knows this, as she soars with the angels. I hope she knows that she has given me the gift of appreciation of nature and all its beauty. So simple.....so powerful.

It is my hope that my grandchildren, one and all, will find such a place of beauty in their own lives.

Dedicated to my mom, Harriett Hallenbeck Frohlich.

NOTE: April Date Changes Below
New Scotland Historical Association's Draft Program Schedule 2020
(Titles are tentative and subject to change)

April 7, 2019 (7:00pm) Board Meeting
(NOTE: CHANGE OF DATE (was April 14th, now April 7th))

April 14, 2020 (7:30pm) "Getting the Job Done: Construction, Builders, and Building Materials in the Upper Hudson and Mohawk Valleys, 1755-1765."
(NOTE: CHANGE OF DATE (was April 7th, now April 14th))

The French and Indian War transformed Albany and its surrounding area. The growth in the region included the construction of a number of large residences that followed the model of English "country seats." Archeologist Walter Wheeler will examine construction practices, materials acquisition, and labor sources used to construct these buildings.

May 5, 2020 (7:30pm) The Ten Broeck Family and its Mansion 1798-1947 - Ten Broeck Mansion staff will present a virtual tour of the Mansion and discuss the members of this prominent Albany family who lived there.

All Programs will be held at the Wyman Osterhout Community Center

MUSEUM RE-OPENS

On April 5, 2020 at 2:00 P.M. the museum will re-open with a new exhibit dedicated to World War II. Note, the museum will be closed on Easter Sunday. The museum will continue to be open on Sundays 2:00 P. M. through 4:00 P.M. through December. We hope that you stop by to browse and try researching using the Past Perfect program on the computer. A great deal of time has been spent organizing and cataloging our accessions online.

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Museum Hours

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

(April Through December)

Handicap Accessible

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New Scotland Historical Association
P. O. Box 541
Voorheesville, New York 12186