



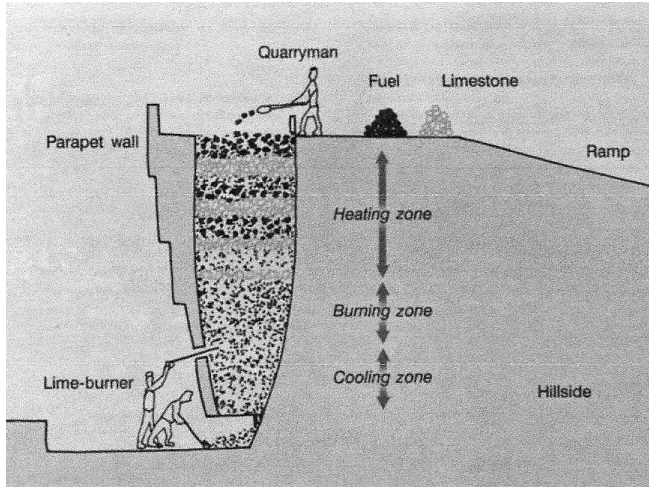
THE SENTINEL

Vol. 24, No. 4

The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Summer 2016

Lime Kilns in the Town of New Scotland By Debbie Mahan



On June 11, 2016, the New Scotland Historical Association will be erecting a historical marker honoring **Lime Kiln Farm** on Clipp Road, with grant money received from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. Rebecca Miller, who lives on the farm with her husband, Randy and son, Cameron, was instrumental in having an archeological inspection done on the property to determine the history and possible use of lime kilns. As is well-documented, the lime burning industry was very significant to the growth of this area and became the source of livelihood for many residents throughout the 1800s. Matthew Kirk, Principal Investigator for *Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc.*, made a brief site visit to the farm and was able to report that there were “several archeological features that suggest that lime-

stone quarrying and lime production was likely a part-time industry that supplemented the income of the farm throughout the 19th century.” He also reported that “the quarries and kiln all appear to be connected via a series of pathways or farm roads. It is likely that the farm contains a complex system of interrelated archeological features, such as roads, additional kilns, work areas for shaping and grading stone, waste piles, perhaps even charcoal kilns, as well as the foundation of buildings used to store processed lime, quarrying equipment and appurtenant tools.”

Mr. Kirk found three notable features as he inspected the property: a small lime kiln, a small rock quarry, and a more expansive quarry. The small lime kiln is located near the intersection of Clipp Road and Diamond Hill Road. It is mostly collapsed but was “situated along a small rock escarpment that would have allowed the kiln to be fed with quarried limestone block and fuel (presumably charcoal or wood) from the top, and the resulting burnt lime from the bottom,” according to Kirk. The above diagram is a typical, small-scale kiln in the early 19th century. (<http://uas.society.qub.ac.uk/fieldsurvey/pds/Lime%20Kiln%20Report.pdf>)

The small rock quarry appears to have been used to cut limestone building blocks. Cleavages in the rock enabled huge blocks to be quarried more easily, and it is possible that this quarry “may have been the source material for a number of nearby stone farmhouses, including the David Allen House,” according to Kirk.

Finally, a larger quarry was located on the property that “may have supplied both building stone and limestone for larger local production facilities.” As Kirk noted, “Once the local supply of wood was exhausted, larger kilns near the canal and rail lines became the dominant production centers of lime. As such, the kiln was likely used early in the farm’s history, perhaps the late 18th and into the first quarter of the 19th century.”

(Continued on Page 3)



Lime Kiln photo from old post card circa 1900

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SCOTLAND
HISTORICAL
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www.newscotlandhistoricalassociation.org

President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,

It seems like summer is finally here. By now, you should have received our annual membership drive letter along with our request for your help in funding some additional museum display cabinets. In the past, your generosity has enabled the organization to accomplish its mission and I want to thank everyone who is able to contribute to our current fund drive in any amount.

We had a beautiful day to unveil the Henry Crouse Historic Site Marker on May 21. Many of Henry's descendants were able to attend making the event very meaningful. Town Supervisor Doug La-Grange and Assemblyperson Patricia Fahy were able to attend and help us celebrate the life of Civil War soldier and farmer, Henry Crouse.

We will also be unveiling the historic site marker for the Lime Kiln Farm on Saturday, June 11, at 10 a.m. I hope you will be able to attend as we celebrate this very important industry that helped the area grow and was a source of income for many farmers during the 1800s.

Both of the historic site markers were purchased through funds from grants given by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. This foundation strongly believes that historic markers play an important role in local historic preservation by serving a dual purpose. "They educate the public and foster historic tourism, which in turn can provide much needed economic benefits to the town and village where the markers are placed."

As you drive around the town this summer, take note of the many historic site markers that we have. It is certainly an area rich in history; and as we grow, it makes sense to remember those who have lived and worked in the town, as well the businesses, churches, schools and organizations that have thrived providing the basis for the town we know today.

Debbie Mahan, President

Museum Exhibit Opening

Please join us for the opening of this year's exhibit, called
"Treasures of Our Collections"
Sunday, June 12, 1-4 p.m.

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.

Lime Kilns in the Town of New Scotland (Continued from page 1)

The Miller family has been farming the land since 1905; and most likely by this time, the lime kiln operation had been abandoned. However, conversations about the lime kilns were passed down from generation to generation; and today, we are happy to be able to recognize this important aspect of our local history. The uses for lime during the 1800s were many, including its use in the manufacturing of glass, whitewash and bleach as well as being used in mortar, plaster and chinking between logs in log buildings. It was also used for agricultural purposes; and as Martha Slingerland noted, it was used in privies to reduce the populations of maggots!

In 1869, Harper's New Monthly Magazine published a 16 page article on The Helderbergs.

Below is a small portion of the article

"Frequently, upon the brow of the mountain, you will see a ruined tower perched; surprised, you draw near. The door is low and narrow, and seems to be almost closed by the debris; it has a very ancient look, and resembles some old feudal watch-tower you may have seen in Europe. The slope below is white with rubbish, and covered with fallen stone—the tower itself blackened with fire. It is a Helderberg lime-kiln. The lime made here is the best known; many of the poorer farmers burn lime in the winter. It replaces the charcoal burning of other regions, and though quite as laborious and scorching, is more remunerative. The fuel used is wood, and the great heaps of ashes thus obtained are greedily sought by agriculturists and potash makers. The kilns are of refractory rock; blocks of clay slate are preferred; and they are generally built near the quarry where the limestone is blasted out. The lime-burners will tell you curious stories of the "animals" they have seen in the rocks; some of them have singular collections of the fossils. The limestone, when blasted, breaks into large, regular blocks, well suited for building purposes. This is generally owing to the cleavage, but frequently huge blocks are quarried which are perfectly loose and need no blasting. These owe their origin to "shrinkage clefts," which, as another singular feature of Helderberg scenery, is worth explanation."

Of historical interest to many might be Kirk's final words, "Additional historical research may also reveal ties to Stephen Van Rensselaer, the Patroon, who owned the land throughout the beginning of the 19th century. Van Rensselaer took a keen interest in developing industries on manor lands. He was also a major proponent of the Erie Canal, which utilized limestone blocks and hydraulic cement in the construction of various locks, aqueducts, and culverts. He retained Amos Eaton, a scientist of local note, to develop an engineering school that later became Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). Eaton is noted for his work in creating the modern science of geology, and is known to have travelled extensively throughout the New Scotland area to study the various exposed strata of rock in the vicinity."

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE UNVEILING OF THE
LIME KILN FARM HISTORIC SITE MARKER
SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2016
10 a.m.
277 Clipp Road, Delmar, NY**

SUNSHINE'S CORNER

By Mary Beth (Frohlich) Felice

Summer – my favorite season. By the end of June, school would be out, and until I was a teenager and had to work, summer meant freedom and play. Willow Brook Farm was then outside the village limits, and there were only two other houses between us and the school, and no kids to play with. But there was an easy solution – my lovely Schwinn bicycle resting against the barn wall. No, not a fancy 10-speed that was popular many years later, but a sturdy one-speed! Pedal-power was my mode of transportation.



My best friend, Anne (for an unknown reason my grandfather called her “little Aun”), lived on the other side of the village of Voorheesville. She had three brothers and lived in an actual neighborhood with yard and street lights and everything! There were always lots of activities going on. In the cool of the evenings, we played outside, traveling from yard to yard. Of course, there was “kick-the-can”, “capture-the flag”, and many other games that involved running, jumping and yelling. Thankfully, the neighbors never complained. As was pre-arranged, I would stay over at the Senning’s house, and we would settle down with cool breezes wafting through open windows. My “guest bed” was right next to one of the windows, and I would often move my pillow right onto the sill, placing my head atop it, and drift off. The sounds of crickets and peepers; of wind dancing through the branches and even an occasional car were my lullaby.

Morning brought another day of play. Our preference was to go down to the creek that meandered behind the houses and cool off in the spring-fed water. Some areas of the bottom were delightful clay, and we could scoop it up by the handful to make all manner of pots and plates, etc. They would dry and harden in the sunshine; our marvelous works of art.

Too soon it was time to return to the farm. My bedroom there was quite different from Anne’s. On the south side, second floor of our home, the summer sun created quite a little “hot house.” There were no air conditioners and few fans. The best thing to do was to close the window shutters early in the day. They would be opened in the evening as the sun slipped away, and prayers were said for a breeze. Many a summer night, my brother Richard and I would grab some sheets and pillows and bed down on the big screened front porch. You could hear the babbling of Vly Creek across the road, and of course, the songs of the night bugs. Traffic in the ‘50’s being so much less than today, a peaceful sleep so close to the road was just taken for granted. Today, the family hardly uses that porch, but instead retreats to the back side of the house and the tree-lined fields. Life ever changing.



CONGRATULATIONS, ABBY!

Abby Goldfarb, a junior at Clayton A. Bouton High School, is the recipient of the \$1000 New Scotland Historical Association High School Junior Award.

Not only is Abby an exemplary scholar, she also participates in numerous extracurricular activities while volunteering with a variety of organizations throughout the year. In 2014, Abby was selected to participate at the STOP Conference at Siena College, hosted by the Anti-Defamation League. Recently, she attended the Students Inside Albany Conference, hosted by the League of Women Voters. Her interest in civics is evident in her winning essay, which appears below.

Essay by Abby Goldfarb

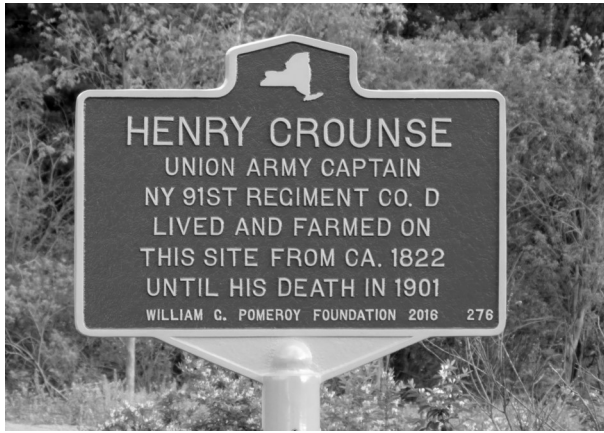
New Scotland is a relatively small town with an exceptionally rich history. The region itself has undergone tremendous changes and has been impacted by countless historical events both before and after the town's establishment in 1832. For centuries, New Scotland has faced innumerable challenges, presented by wars, national economic upheavals, societal changes throughout the country, and more. But the greatest challenge that presently confronts inhabitants of the Town of New Scotland comes from the increased commercialization of our society and the spread of private enterprises that often overlook the preservation of both the natural world and the small-town mentality. How can the people of the Town of New Scotland preserve the small-town values and the historic nature of our town as we move forward in the twenty-first century, as commercial and materialistic interests grow increasingly powerful?

I have a personal connection to the clash that often occurs between large commercial entities and the small-town frame of mind. This conflict was apparent in New Scotland in 2008, when the Syracuse-based Sphere Development Group proposed the construction of a 750,000 square-foot retail development at the intersection of Routes 85 and 85A. Living on Route 85, just a couple of miles down the road from this location, my family and I took a special interest in this situation. As an eight year-old, this was the first time I took an active part in my civic duty: I wrote a letter to the town board encouraging them to vote against the shopping center, I attended the town board meeting at the high school, and I went door-to-door with my mom campaigning against the "big box" shopping center. I didn't want a large shopping center destroying the scenic land that was once the Bender melon farm and altering the entire dynamic of our beautiful town. After a three hour town board meeting attended by roughly 750 town residents, a six-month moratorium was passed. Ultimately, the project was shut down and the citizens fighting against the proposed shopping center triumphed.

To meet the challenge presented by commercial growth as we move forward in the twenty-first century, the people of New Scotland must maintain their strong sense of morality and defined set of values, and come together as one united voice to protect these interests: just as the town citizens did in 2008. I am confident that our town will face similar challenges in the coming years; but I am also confident that, once again, the people of New Scotland will be able to fight for the town's best interests by writing letters, attending meetings, and developing a strong, unified voice to combat institutions that undermine our values.



Right: Abby Goldfarb is awarded a \$1000 Scholarship from Sherry Burgoon of the NSHA at the annual meeting on May 3, 2016



Henry Crouse Historic Site Marker Unveiling

The unveiling of the Henry Crouse historic site marker occurred on Saturday, May 21. The marker is located on Picard Road on the site that was the home of Henry and his family. The house that he once lived in is set back off the road, and the current owners operate the Sunshine Farm vegetable stand.

Many local political leaders, neighbors and historical association members, as well as Crouse descendants were there to celebrate the newest historical site marker in the town.



Many thanks to Bob and Lorraine Felter for their years of volunteer service to the NSHA as hospitality chairpersons. Bob and Lorraine were honored recently at the annual meeting.

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 _____
 Email _____

Make checks payable to NSHA.

Please send dues to:

Amy Heebner
 NSHA Membership Chair
 1403 Delaware Turnpike
 Delmar, NY 12054

What Future Do YOU See for the Hilton Barn?

Sitting perched on columns of cribbing, the Hilton Barn awaits plans for its next life. At a recent forum of interested community members led by Town Board member Patricia Snyder, those in attendance could feel the energy and excitement as a myriad of ideas was shared. A bike shop for Rail Trail users...a wedding venue...a rock climbing wall...an interactive agricultural learning center for children. The variety of ideas presented opened my mind to the creative uses for this historic building.

At present immediate structural issues are being addressed. The forms are being poured for the foundation so the barn can be lowered on to its permanent site. Additionally, deteriorated sills need to be replaced, the condition of the slate roof requires costly repairs, and plumbing and electricity must be put into place. All of this work is necessary before any future usage can be determined.

Funding will be an integral part of the planning process. Numerous grants are available but restrictions may be applied depending on whether the building is used for not-for-profit or commercial usage. Partnerships between private and public funding should be investigated. "Perhaps solar panels on the roof could generate funds for electric usage on site" was an idea introduced by Town Board member Adam Greenberg.

Sustainability of the building should not be left to the taxpayer was voiced by a community member. It appeared that most in attendance shared the same sentiment. Personally, I had not considered this issue but the discussion which followed intrigued me. Not realizing there was a second floor in this enormous space, I quickly changed my mind about entertaining the inclusion of commercial space to offset the up-keep costs. Wanting the integrity of the original barn preserved, the idea of "stalls" for small businesses like a craft shop or a café or a florist would provide needed revenue. The expansive main floor space could attract small concerts, weddings, or perhaps antique shows requiring usage fees. As a town owned property, Hilton Barn would be available for large public events.

"Good ideas attract \$\$\$." Create it as a destination will bring in higher rents," opened my mind to embracing the endless opportunities our town has for developing the Hilton Barn's future. As the meeting came to a close, Town Supervisor Doug LaGrange encouraged all community members to share their vision. With increased knowledge and enthusiasm, I look forward to the development phase.

By Sherry Burgoon

The Hilton Barn in its new home. Work has begun on the foundation.



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Museum Hours

**The museum is
open year-round
on Sunday**

from

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

Handicap Accessible

THE SENTINEL

New Scotland Historical Association

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