



THE SENTINEL

Vol. 23, No. 3

The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Spring 2015

Historical House replica donated to the Historical Association

Thanks to the generous donation by Loretta Whalen, the New Scotland Museum is now the proud owner of the replica of the house located at 2680 New Scotland Road, New Salem. Visitors to the museum will be able to enjoy Don and Loretta's hard work that took almost ten years to complete. Don and Loretta owned the house between 1959 and 1989, and with the architectural drawings of the house plan made by their son, Dean Whalen, Don's skill as a wood worker and Loretta's creative abilities in sewing and crafting miniatures, the intricate house with scale replicas of the rooms, furniture and accessories was completed. It is an amazing work of art.

Deeds on file with Albany County show that the house had many owners, with the earliest records found from 1882 showing a sale by Conrad Matthias to Nicholas and Margaret Fowler for \$1000.00. Records prior to 1882 were discovered, but written in Dutch.

Debbie Mahan



The front of the replica house



Loretta showing how to attach the porch to the back



Architectural drawing of the house



Scale replica of the Dining Room

NEW
SCOTLAND
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

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Voorheesville, NY 12186

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President's Letter

I hope everyone has made it through the long cold winter in good health and good cheer. Early spring is the time that the NSHA nominating committee is looking for candidates for NSHA officers and committee chairs. As I noted in my winter letter, we are looking for volunteers for all our committees and especially need members to participate in our Exhibits and *Sentinel* committees. So if you have any interest in volunteering in any capacity, please feel free to contact me or anyone on NSHA's Executive Board. Contact information can be found in the *Sentinel*.

I have a number of things to report to you. The Association has been actively encouraging the National Park Service to designate John Boyd Thacher State Park as a National Natural Landmark (NNL). Many of our Board members and I have written to our U.S. and local State legislative representatives in support of Thacher Park receiving this designation. Special thanks goes to Tim Albright for urging NSHA to take an active role in this effort and to Tim and Peter Henner for drafting model letters. Responding to a request from our friends and neighbors in the Clarksville Historical Society, NSHA has donated \$1000 to help fund security lighting and/or other security features at the Woodside School outside of Clarksville, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

We have changed our program schedule for the spring. On May 5, local historian Daniel A. Driscoll will present "History of a One-room Schoolhouse in Knox, NY." Please see the article on NSHA's spring programs for a brief description of this interesting program. The originally scheduled, musical and dramatic program "**Down with the Rent!**" **The Anti-Rent Rebellion of New York State** has been rescheduled for June 2. It will be performed at Old Songs at 37 South Main St., Voorheesville, NY, and will also serve as a fundraiser for the Association.

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.

NSHA High School Junior Award

The New Scotland Historical Association is again offering the opportunity for high school Juniors who live in the Town of New Scotland to apply for a \$1000.00 scholarship. The award is for serious students who plan to further their education. The award encourages the study and enjoyment of history in any of its aspects. Applicants should have a strong interest in some area of history or museum studies or the field of education.

Last year, the association received eight applications from four schools in the town. The committee enjoyed the variety of topics the students chose to write about based on the suggestions which were presented on the application form. It is very encouraging that several calls have come in requesting applications. This generous award will allow the winner to determine how it could be best used as they plan post-graduate study. Perhaps the money could be used to visit colleges to learn more about their programs, pay college application fees, purchase necessary items for a dorm room, or invest in a new lap top or other piece of equipment.

Each applicant is required to submit a completed application form, along with a copy of his/her resume and high school transcript, and a 250-word essay from a list of five questions provided on the form. All New Scotland Juniors are invited to compete for the award whether they are public high school, private school, parochial school or home-schooled students.

Applications are presently available at local public schools attended by New Scotland Juniors, at the New Scotland Community Center in New Salem, the New Scotland Town Hall, as well as local libraries. All completed applications must be postmarked by Wednesday, April 1, 2015.

The winner will be announced at our Annual Meeting in May.

Sherry Burgoon

New Membership Cards!

NSHA is switching to postcards for a membership card when you renew your membership. Late Spring is the time for NSHA's membership drive, and we will be sending out the postcards as soon as you renew (instead of sending them with the Fall *Sentinel*.) Just cut out the Membership Card from the postcard and add it to your wallet collection. It should fit perfectly!

Sarita Winchell
Membership Chair

Shared Ideas!

The Albany County Historical Association has sponsored several meetings open to town historical societies in our county to help us better publicize our activities, and possibly to coordinate some activities, as well as share ideas. To date we have met in Guilderland, and Watervliet, as well as at the Osterhout Community Center and NSHA Museum. Debbie Mahan, Alan Kowlowitz, in addition to myself, have attended one or more of these, to date. The next meeting is April 11, if any of you would like to attend.

Please call me at 765-4652 for location and details if you are interested in attending.

Bob Parmenter

Remembering my school memories at VCHS.....



One of the major responsibilities of the Senior Class was the traffic squad. Under the direction of Mr. George and Captain Carl Williams, the squad members kept order in the school corridors.

In a discussion with NSHA member Joy O'Day, she remembered dance lessons in the gym and her instructor was Mr. Anderson. She also reminded me of the fact that as seniors we all had to learn public speaking and at the conclusion of the course we each had to go up on the stage, front and center, and make a speech before the entire class. She told me she was terrified to do that.

Leaving the gym, our next stop will be the music room and Mr. Baker. I was never very musically inclined, but I did belong to Mixed Chorus. More than 50 years after high school I saw Mr. Baker at the Home Front Café in Altamont. I hesitantly inquired, "Mr. Baker?" He replied, "Willard Osterhout!" He remembered me after more than 50 years! I was sure I had done some dastardly deed which allowed him to recall me after such a long time, but he said it was my voice. What a relief that was.

Now at the end of the hall was the shop, ruled over with an iron hand by Mr. Mac McCartney. I had to take a course in printing which meant learning how to set type both upper and lower case type and how to put it all together to be able to print something. Now this was in the late 1950s, so I thought this was one of the most useless courses I'd ever taken. There was a gas furnace in the back room for melting different kinds of metals to pour into forms we had made. I was little slow in lighting it one day and it blew back and singed my eye lashes and eye brows and you could smell burnt hair for the rest of class.



Front Row, left to right: Hammann; Jackson; Mader; Bayly; Carl; Seyboth; Crabill; Connors; Second Row:

Around Table: Furman; Senning; LaDuke; Dunstan; DeLorenzo; Moran; Smith; Amsler; Rockenstyre.

CHEFS CLUB

(cont. from page four)

Opposite the music room was the cafeteria. It had an elevated section on one end where the teachers ate and provided them the ability to watch over us to prevent food fights and various other sorts of devilishness. One trick they never caught on to was putting red Jello in the ketchup bottle. We would cut it into small squares and gently shove it down the bottle so the person to use it next had lumps coming out. That was always good for a laugh.

How many of you remember taking Chef's Club? I wish I had paid more attention so when I moved out on my own, I would have had a better idea of what I was doing and didn't have to live out of a can!

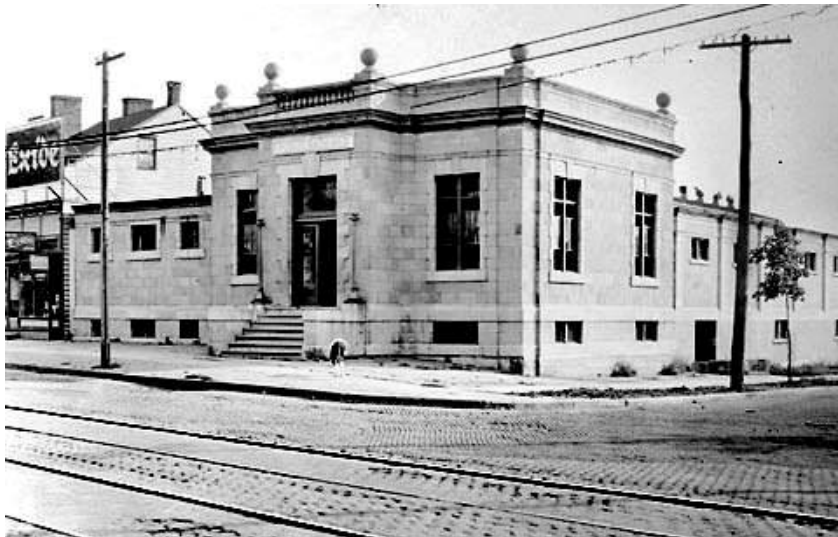
Last, but certainly not least, was the notorious Traffic Squad. I was never a member. I had more fun seeing what I could get away with. I wonder if they have that sort of thing today? I know in some of the more notorious schools they have policemen patrolling the halls. A far cry from what I remember. So there you have it. I am sure I've forgotten many other interesting events but perhaps another time.

Remember memories are food for the soul
Will

Historical Trivia

In the late 1700s, many houses consisted of a large room with only one chair. Commonly, a long wide board folded down from the wall, and was used for dining. The 'head of the household' always sat in the chair while everyone else ate sitting on the floor. Occasionally a guest, who was usually a man, would be invited to sit in this chair during a meal. To sit in the chair meant you were important and in charge. They called the one sitting in the chair the 'chair man.' Today in business, we use the expression or title 'Chairman' or 'Chairman of the Board.'

Anyone looking for a chair to sit in?????



Albany Public Bath #3

Corner of Central Ave. and Ontario St., Albany
(Notice the trolley tracks!)

How many remember swimming in Bath #3 in the early to mid 50's?

Swimming lessons were offered here—including the American Red Cross Life Saving Course. My parents along with several others from Voorheesville took the life saving class.

My parents rented the pool for a birthday party for me—probably when I was in Junior High?

It was a cold snowy night, but several parents drove and we all went swimming and had a ball. I remember my Dad yet—he insisted upon wearing his grandfathers bear skin coat and hat! Rather embarrassing at the time!

M. Parmenter

Tuesday, March 3rd. at 7:30 pm

Kate Mullany and the National Significance of a Laundry Workers' Strike

Spring Programs

NSHA will be offering the following interesting and diverse programs this spring. All Programs will be held at the Wyman Osterhout Community Center and scheduled from 7:30-9:30 pm unless otherwise indicated.

March 3, 2015 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 "Victory Turned to 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 "History of a One-room Schoolhouse in Knox, NY" Local historian Daniel A Driscoll will discuss the history of the schoolhouse on the grounds of the Emma Thacher Nature Center that was restored by the Helderberg Kiwanis Club. This school was a joint Knox/N. Scotland school district. The talk includes information about the restoration, interviews with former students, and the records of the school board meetings from 1824-1905.

June 2, 2015 "Down with the Rent!" The Anti-Rent War of New York—Local musicians will tell the story of the Anti-Rent Wars (1839-1851), when local tenant farmers struggled against the powerful Van Rensselaer Patroons to win the right to own their farms. The performance will include period costumes and authentic songs and stories written by Anti-Rent protestors in the 1840s. **This special program will be held at Old Songs at 37 South Main St., Voorheesville, NY, and will also serve as a fundraiser for the Association.**

Inclement Weather? (We hope not!)

In the event of stormy weather on a meeting night, if you are unsure whether the meeting has been cancelled, please call Alan Kowlowitz, 765-4212, or Peg Dorgan, 768-2852. Emails will be sent to those on the email list.

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

Closed:
April 5: Easter
May 10: Mother's Day
May 24: Memorial Day Week-end

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:

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

Restoration of Knox School #5 is Complete

The Kiwanis Club of the Helderbergs has completed restoration of a one-room schoolhouse (School #5) in Knox, NY. Located on the grounds of the Emma Thacher Nature Center, the schoolhouse was built in the late 1890s. The Schoolhouse is owned by New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and was restored under the guidance of Parks' Historic Sites Restoration Office. The building is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

Although the schoolhouse is in Knox, School District #5 was a joint district with New Scotland. John McWilliams, a resident of New Scotland, was a trustee of the School district between 1835 and 1852; he served as clerk of the School Board in 1846. The McWilliams home was near where the Thacher Park office stands today.

Susie (Secor) Livingston, attended the school in the 1930s. Her recollections, during an interview in her New Salem home in 2003, and those of several other former School #5 students,



provided details about the school that were helpful during the restoration. For example, she explained that on entering the classroom, the teacher's desk was on the right and the blackboard was on the other side of the doorway. The photo shows another former student (and Kiwanis member), Pauline Williman. She is standing in the restored schoolhouse with Fred Schroeder. Fred was a member of the Friends of Thacher State Park and a resident of Slingerlands.

Fred called attention to the schoolhouse and urged that it be restored.

The restored Knox School #5 is available for visits. It is a particularly valuable experience for elementary school classes, for them to see how their great-grandparents were educated. It has also been used for reenactments. The photo shows re-enactor (schoolmarm) Tony Lasher with her son Glenn and his (embarrassed) wife Mariah.



To complete the project, I have now published a book about the schoolhouse. The book, *History of a One-room Schoolhouse in Knox, NY*, includes information about the restoration, and a summary of the interviews with former students. The book, with a forward by Jack McEneny, also includes a transcript of School Board minutes for School District #5 from 1824 thru 1905 along with a description of contemporary historic events (such as the Anti-ent Wars) to provide context. The original School Board minutes are held by the New Scotland Historical Association. Copies of the book can be purchased at the New Scotland Historical Association Museum.

Dan Driscoll

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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

P. O. Box 541

Voorheesville, New York 12186