



# THE SENTINEL

Vol. 22, No. 4

The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Summer 2014

## Scholarship Awarded

The New Scotland Historical Association Scholarship has become an annual event. For two years, it has been awarded to a current Junior residing in the Town and planning to attend college. The Scholarship from the Historical Association is provided by the Eberle Fund; the amount is \$1,000.00. The Association was originally started by a group of retired teachers, and others, with a great respect for local history.

This year's winner is John Bennett Mackay, a student at Clayton A. Bouton High School in Voorheesville. The Scholarship Committee was surprised to receive eight entries which met all the qualifications and the deadline. Each application was read by six people; if there were questions, there were discussions to be sure all understood the point of view of the candidate. When the group listed their top candidates, they had selected John Bennett Mackay as the winner.

John is currently considering engineering, economics or statistics as potential majors. Whichever is the chosen major, the career plans at this stage involve earning an advanced degree. John's high school years have reflected hours of study and preparation. An Honor student throughout three years of high school, John has also provided lead technical support for high school productions, setting and running lights. He was inducted into the National Honor Society as a sophomore. His volunteer service includes a trip to New Orleans, LA, to contribute Katrina-related relief in a youth service trip. An enthusiastic volunteer in the Town-wide Volunteer Day, John is also a student volunteer, and has assisted at Parson's Child and Family Center and John Boyd Thacher State Park.

Because the winner of the scholarship has one more year of high school to complete, the scholarship may be put in a bank account for that year, or used to visit colleges to help the student to choose one. It may be used by the student to buy books or supplies like blankets or a computer—it is up to the student and the family.

Marie Hornick, Scholarship Committee Chairman



Winner John Mackay with Scholarship Committee Chair Marie Hornick

## Meet the New NSHA Trustee

Peter Henner, newly elected NSHA Trustee, has been living in Clarksville since 1995, when he and his wife Nancy Lawson purchased 130 acres of land including the south part of Bennett Hill. Peter and Nancy built a house, with an attached office for Peter's law practice and constructed a dam to create a 7 acre lake on the property. Peter maintained a solo law practice from 1984 through 2013, primarily representing environmental organizations, labor unions and victims of employment discrimination. In 2011-12, he represented a large number of Clarksville residents and the Town of New Scotland in successful litigation to save the Clarksville Post Office. His regular chess column in the Altamont Enterprise has received national awards, and he is presently focused on becoming a chess master, writing, and training to run a marathon.

**NEW  
SCOTLAND  
HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION**

P. O. Box 541

Voorheesville, NY 12186

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**Web Page**

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Email: [newscotlandhistoricalassoc@gmail.com](mailto:newscotlandhistoricalassoc@gmail.com)

**President's Letter**

NSHA has had another successful year. Since last May, over 300 people visited our museum and over 400 have attended our programs. Our membership is at 219, with 42 being family memberships. Numbers, however, don't tell the whole story. The Association has been able to attract new people to its Board and to fill the long vacant Chair of the Collections Committee. Although we have yet to fill the Chair of the Historic Sites Committee, the NSHA Board has moved ahead with a program to rehabilitate existing historic markers in need of repair. NSHA's Exhibit Committee has launched a great new exhibit celebrating the centennial of the establishment of John Boyd Thacher Park that contains a number of magnificent and seldom seen images of the park. We have also started an innovative project in partnership with the Voorheesville Public Library (VPL) to describe the Association's manuscript and archival collections. James Corsaro, VPL's Archivist is working with the NSHA's collections chair to develop standard descriptions of collections so they can be included in statewide databases. Working with Old Songs, Inc., NSHA was able to host a special program last June featuring a folk music group from the Netherlands and we will be able to do the same on June 17 of this year.

This will be my last end of year letter as President and I would like to suggest a number of organizational goals for the coming year. First, I would like NSHA to work more closely with other cultural organizations in the town. Over the past year we have benefited from partnerships with the Voorheesville Public Library and Old Songs Inc. There are also other organizations in town that would benefit from working with us and we would benefit from working with them.

Lastly, I hope to see NSHA better use available information technology to promote the growth of our organization and its programs. We have already begun to do this with the establishment of a NSHA Facebook site. We will also be working with an intern from Clayton Bouton High School to move our website onto a new technology platform that will allow us to more easily manage and update the site. We would welcome anyone with a technology "green thumb" to join our Website Committee.

I hope to see everyone at our June 17 program. I also wish you all a wonderful summer.

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.

## Looking Back



*By Will Osterhout*

I know that all of us at one time or another have sat back and closed our eyes and let our mind's eye take us back to a particularly memorable time in our youth. I did that the other day and thought about a time in my past that I am sure I share with many of you—Red Cross swimming lessons at Pangburn's Beach on Warner Lake.

They were shortly after school ended and ran for two weeks, from 9 A.M.—11 A.M., Monday through Friday. There were certain designated spots for children to be picked up by the school bus. I was still living at Osterhout's Restaurant at the time and that was a pickup spot. Parents would drop their children off to wait for the bus which would arrive shortly after 8 A.M. We would get on and join all the other children who had been picked up along the way. There was a lot of excitement as the bus started through Thacher Park on the way to the lake. Almost on a daily basis one of the passengers would start singing that famous traveling song "99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall" and we would all join in and continue singing until we reached our destination. Much to the dismay of the bus driver I'm sure! We all know that it is 10 degrees colder upon the knob and it seemed that it was cloudy and breezy every morning when we would arrive at the lake. The bus would get there about 8:30 and we would go down to the check room to get our wire baskets for our clothes and proceed to a changing room.

Now the changing rooms are a story in themselves. As you may recall the walls were made of plywood which would have many knot holes. Now for some unknown reason some of those smaller knot holes were missing along with a few other holes that looked like they had been made by a burrowing insect! What red blooded young lad could resist a quick peek to see what was going on in the adjoining room? Part of the folk lore of the Hill Towns is that there should be a lot more one eyed men walking around who lost their eye by being poked by the pencil while sneaking a quick peak through a knot hole. Fortunately I still have both eyes!

Once we were in our bathing suits we would turn in our clothes and go out to the beach to meet our instructors. The leader of this group was none other than that infamous scoundrel Ken George, who I believe took great pleasure in causing us as much discomfort as humanly possible. Regardless of the weather or tempera-

(cont. from page 3)

ture of the air or water, he insisted we enter that cold dark abyss known as Warner Lake. I swear it felt like the ice had just gone out the day before. The next two hours were spent learning the Crawl, Back Stroke, Breast Stroke, Side Stroke, Diving and whatever else might be required of us. After two hours and near Hypothermia, we were allowed to leave the water to retrieve our clothes and head back to the changing rooms to change. No thoughts now of sneaking a peek, we were in too much of a hurry to dress and get warm.

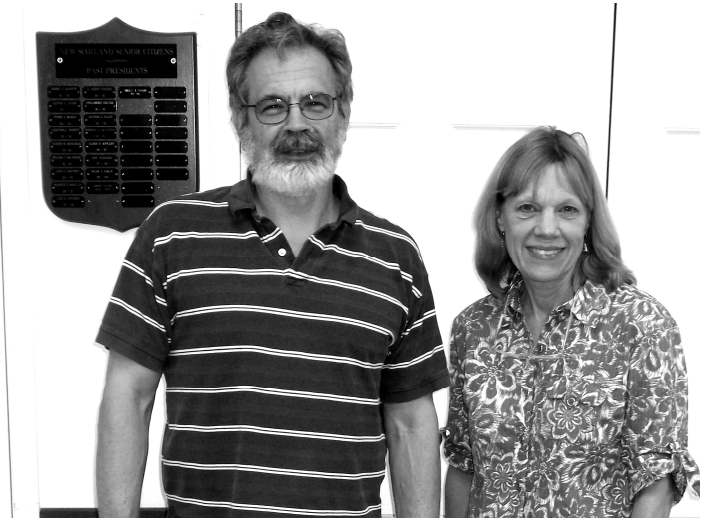
After we were dressed, we had a few minutes before we had to get back on the bus, so we all headed for the snack bar upstairs. If you were lucky enough to have some money, you might order a quick hotdog or hamburger, stop at the candy counter for a bit of chocolate or get a soda or ice cream for the ride home. On our way out we could stop and examine all the souvenirs that were for sale, Wooden Tomahawks, Headdresses, Pendants, Post Cards and various other items that had Warner Lake printed on them. Once everyone was back on the bus and accounted for, we would start the trip back home, and sure enough someone would start singing "99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall!"

*I had to laugh when I typed this tonight. Today I had the pleasure of carrying the water line into the lake at our family camp in the Adirondacks—somehow it is always my job. Yesterday we had 4 1/2 inches of very cold rain and a lot of hail, so the water was especially deep and cold today. All I could think of was Warner's Lake at 8 am in the morning! Tonight I open my folder and I find Will's article! Those lessons were fun though—about the only chance kids in Voorheesville had for real swim lessons in those days! I still swim—but I prefer warm afternoons!*

*We would love to hear some other memories of those Red Cross Swim lessons at Pangburn's Beach. Please email any to [rmp8288@gmail.com](mailto:rmp8288@gmail.com) to be included in the fall issue!*

*Marion Parmenter*

**Museum Hours**  
**Sundays: 2:00-4:00 P.M.**  
  
**Closed:**  
**Father's Day**  
**4th of July Week-end**  
**Labor Day Week-end**



The NSHA Board welcomes new Trustee Peter Henner of Clarksville and Collections Chair, Debbie Mahan of Voorheesville.

**Membership Drive!**

The 2014-2015 membership drive for the New Scotland Historical Association begins in early June. NSHA is run by volunteers, and your membership contribution is what funds a large part of our programing. Check your mailbox for your renewal letter, and as always, your prompt response is greatly appreciated.

Sarita Winchell, Membership Chair

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

*Some elementary students at the Voorheesville Elementary School wanted to find out about what Voorheesville was like years ago. They contacted NSHA to see if they could interview some members of the organization to gather information. This article, written by these students following the interviews, was published December 2013 in the school newsletter, YVNN, Your Voorheesville News Now, Vol. 1, Edition 1. Enjoy!*

## **Long, Long Ago in a place called Voorheesville.....**

By Anthony Achille, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade and Hannah Lewis, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Imagine a village with a few scattered houses, long stretches of farmland, children playing all over and ice skating up the Vly Creek with their friends. There were no iPads, no computers, and no touch screens. A small three-room school house is school for all the children in the village. Voorheesville has an interesting history filled with old facts that may be new to you.

### **When Voorheesville wasn't called Voorheesville...**

Voorheesville's founder was Alonzo Voorhees and he lived here in the late 1880's. However, our town wasn't always called Voorheesville. Way before it was Voorheesville, the Dutch people were the first settlers in the area. When the railroads were built, Voorheesville became a town. "When the railroads came here is when Voorheesville really grew and when it really became a known place. It was just farms and a few scattered houses before that in the mid-1800s," says Mrs. Sarita Winchell, a member of the New Scotland Historical Association (NSHA).

### **From One Room to Two Buildings...**

The first school in Voorheesville was a one-room school house. It was in the place you know as the bus parking lot in front of the present day elementary school. Two rooms were added later. The three-room school house was knocked down when the present day elementary school building was complete.

In the 1920s, the principal of the three-room schoolhouse was Mr. Clayton A. Bouton. Another member of the NSHA, Miss Sherry Burgoon, grew up in Voorheesville and knew Mr. Bouton. They lived on the same street. "He had already retired from being superintendent here at Voorheesville, but he lived about seven houses up the street so I would see Mr. Bouton quite often," says Burgoon. "He was a very friendly man, and of course we all knew who Mr. Bouton was." When the high school was built, it was named after Bouton.

There was no high school in Voorheesville before the 1940s. "Before that, for high school you went either to Altamont, to Bethlehem, or to Albany High to finish your high school," says Winchell.

Two more members of the NSHA, Mr. Don Meacham and Mrs. Marion Parmenter, were students attending Voorheesville elementary school when an addition was being added. The construction was going on next to Parmenter's classroom one day. "We had a piece of concrete fall down into our classroom, says Parmenter. "Fortunately nobody was hit in the head with it."

Meacham says school was different back then. "There are a lot more kids in school now, and a lot more teachers," he says. "When I was in elementary school, computers were not in existence, at least not in schools."



Built in 1930, students often called it the "Brookview Academy."

### **Some Things Change...Some Stay the Same**

There's no hotel in Voorheesville now, however back then there was. The Old Grove Hotel was a vacation spot in Voorheesville, especially in the summer, because it would be hot in the city," says Winchell. People would come here because there was so much going on in this little village. There were ice cream socials, a Fourth of July Parade, and Memorial Day fun.

Today, there is still a Memorial Day parade. People come from all over to experience Voorheesville Memorial Day fun. "I remember marching in the parade when I was in elementary school," says Burgoon. "I think most people who grew up in Voorheesville come back Memorial Day weekend and say it's the best weekend of the year."

The building of Salem Hills was another important event, but unsettling for most of the people who lived in the village then. There was a big, beautiful orchard where Salem Hills is now and they had to get rid of it. Burgoon was in middle school when Salem Hills was being built. "When we saw them taking down the big, beau-

*(cont. on page 6)*

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tiful orchard, and they took down a big barn to put the roadway in, we were so unsettled about them putting in this big, big community with all the houses,” says Burgoon.

The number of Voorheesville students grew by about a 1,000 when Salem Hills was built. Now, Salem Hills is home of a lot of people.

### In Five Days, The Playground Is Built

It’s hard to imagine the elementary school without the playground we have now. It was a very big event when the playground was built. People worked 24 hours a day for five days to finish the playground. “It was an amazing five days,” says Burgoon. “The whole community seemed to want to jump in and come work on the playground and do whatever they could.” They worked very hard throughout the five days. With big, bright lights they worked through the night. People donated food to the people building the playground. They did a great job designing it because the kids love it.

### The Good Old Days

Burgoon, Winchell, Parmenter, and Meacham all had fun memories from when they were little kids. So does Mr. Matthew Schultz, a truck driver and a volunteer fire fighter who has lived in Voorheesville since he was little. Schultz’s father worked in an appliance store that is where Jaycee’s Pizza is now. His family lived in the apartments attached to the store. Also, Schultz’s father was the mayor of Voorheesville from 1962-1964!

Schultz and all the people from NSHA had an enjoyable childhood in Voorheesville. Burgoon says, “Voorheesville was a great place. There was a lot more freedom, you were able to move around the community without your parents because there wasn’t the traffic we have now. She also says, “One of my favorite memories was wintertime because we would ice skate on the Vly Creek out here. We would get our shovels and we would shovel off the ice, and we would skate all the way down into the village.” Winchell says she would play in her grandfather’s fields when she was little. Parmenter and Meacham say they grew up on farms and had a lot of fun there.

**June 17th, 7:30 PM**

Community Center, New Salem

Dutch folk music group will present **Old Silver Leg: Pieter Stuyvesant in the New World.**

Folk singers from the Netherlands: Ankie, Nanne, Tseard will be performing traditional Dutch folk songs, telling the story of New Netherland with humor and wit but with respect for actual history.

This program was made possible thru cooperation with Old Songs, Inc., of Voorheesville.

## Thacher Park Exhibit 100th Birthday



Alan Kowlowitz, Sandy Slingerland, (Exhibits Chairperson), and Tim Albright celebrate the opening of the exhibit.



Mike Vincent, former park employee, and Chris Fallon, Thacher Park Superintendent share stories about the park.



Martha Slingerland cuts the birthday cake for Thacher Park’s 100th Birthday!

## Carrols Hamburgers?

Some of us remember this: 15 cent hamburgers and you had to eat in your car. This one was on Western Avenue almost across from the end of Church Road around 1957-8.

Will Osterhout

*Our **Sentinel** proofreader, Marie Hornick, remembers her family driving all the way to this Carrols from Glens Falls on some Sunday afternoons for a treat! Before the Northway was built!*



## Hilton House

In the process of our downsizing last winter, Bob and I found these 2 pictures in the cabinet where Bob has kept many old photos for over 40 years. On the back they are both labelled “Hilton House, 85A, New Scotland, NY—1964”. I have a picture of the Hilton house I took in 1963 similar to the first one. The second one was a mystery to us. We showed it to several old timers around the Voorheesville area, but no one recognized it.

I emailed Cathy Le Vie Hammann, whose husband Matt is also from Voorheesville and is a NSHA member. They have lived in Australia for many, many years. They had visited the NSHA museum with her mom, Shirley Le Vie several years ago, when they were in the states visiting. Cathy was the only person I could think of who may know the answer to the house question—since she grew up almost next to it!!

We emailed her the photos and asked her about the “mystery” house. Cathy has been doing family genealogy on the Le Vie family and sent us a wonderful history of her family and the Le Vie property she has gathered from many old deeds and other papers. She sent us a 1903 survey map which has the Hilton Barn and also the Hilton house located next to it. The house is shown on the map as L-shaped. Looking at the picture again, it looks like the “mystery” house is perpendicular to the main house on the back. The right hand side of the mystery house picture could be the back of the main house. We think we have our answer!

Our September issue of the *Sentinel* will feature an article entitled ‘The Hilton Barn’ by Catherine Le Vie Hammann. We found it very interesting—more valuable local family history to add to the NSHA archives.

Marion Parmenter



Hilton home, facing Rte. 85A. Hilton barn would be located to the right if it were in this picture.



The “mystery” house is really a rear extension on the Hilton house. You can see the road side part of the Hilton house in this photo on the right in this picture.

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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