



THE SENTINEL

Vol. 17, No. 3

The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Spring 2009

The Cyclone!

The Greenville Local, a paper printed in Greenville, NY, had an article about a cyclone that struck the area on September 7th, 1887. The reporters spent several days following the path of destruction from Rensselaerville to Berne, South Berne, and Reidsville, all hamlets of the Town of Berne. Below the hill, there was much damage in Onesquethaw and Tarrytown also. The following is the description of the damage in the Town of New Scotland as printed in the paper.

It was a sad picture we gazed on from the bluff back of Levi Britton's once pleasant home, at the head of Dunbar Hollow. Years ago this place became notorious as the scene of a double murder but no one ever dreamed it would again be brought to public notice in the manner it has been. Peacefully nesting on a sunny plain, protected by a bank of rocks one hundred feet high, it seemed the last home that the ravages of a wind storm would desolate. But like all other points along the track of this cyclone that were protected by hills the power of the destructive elements seems to have been increased a hundred fold. How vividly it reminds us that man and his works are but the merest nothing in the hands of a mysterious Providence. At the time the storm struck Mr. Britton's premises no one was in the house, the family being in a neighbor's hop field. Mr. B., his youngest son, 5 years old, Peter Otto and Bennett Otto were in the hop house pressing hops. Peter was in the press treading down the hops, Mr. Britton was on the second story shoveling down hops, the little boy was with him and the elder Otto was sewing up a bale of hops on the lowest floor. Mr. B. heard hail falling on the roof and going downstairs said to the men there that it would wind up the picking of hops for that day. He told the elder Otto to close the door. He did so and turned to go to his work. The next instant they felt the building move and then came the crash. This was the last they remembered until they recovered from the shock. Mr. B. heard Otto saying Peter was dead. He found the old gentleman trying to pick up his son. Life was already extinct. Then Mr. B. heard his little boy calling "papa! papa!" He found him lying with a plank over both legs and the same held down by timbers. The little boy was cut about the head and face but the others escaped with mere scratches. Mr. B's barn, 40 x 60, with posts 24 feet, new four years ago and painted, shed 24 x 36, a good farmhouse, wagon house, new hop house, and a set of old farm buildings were

(Continued on page 4)



A view of the destruction on the farm of Levi Britton taken after the cyclone passed through on Sept. 7, 1887. This farm, located in Dunbar Hollow, is just over the New Scotland town line. The storm struck during hop harvest. Peter Otto, a 28 year old farm hand who was in the press treading down the hops was killed when the hop house collapsed. He is buried in the Onesquethaw Cemetery.

Last Chance!

Sunday, March 1, marks the Last Chance to view the World War I & II and the Korean War Exhibit. Both of these exhibits will be dismantled beginning late Sunday afternoon and the first week of March. Those of you who loaned us items for these exhibits will be getting calls to pick up the items as soon as we have them ready. Hopefully, we'll be ready beginning Tuesday, March 3. PLEASE wait for us to call, however! It is an enormous job to get everything sorted out, even though we have put names on every item as we did the exhibits. Thanks for your cooperation and patience. If you have questions, please contact Marion Parmenter at 765-4652. Leave a message!

Mark Your Calendar!

Sunday, March 1st

2:00 P.M.

Col. Cindy Gurney, U.S. Army Ret.

"Experiences of Army Nurses"

NEW SCOTLAND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box 541

Voorheesville, NY 12186

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members and Friends,

By the time you receive this edition of the *Sentinel*, spring won't be far from reality. My granddaughter said, "Papa will have to get my swing down when the grass comes back." Even the little ones are getting anxious. We were fortunate to have good weather on the days of our Sunday meetings. A large crowd attended each of these fine programs.

I am going to share some information with you about the work your NSHA Board has been doing over the course of the past 3 years. Some of our projects are more noticeable than others. During the year 2006, we received new rules from the New York Board of Regents. We were expected to complete these items in order to continue our Charter with the Board of Regents. Here is the list that we had to complete or review:

Have a Mission statement (This we already had.)

Have a Collections Management Policy (This was in place.)

Develop a Strategic Plan

Develop a Code of Ethics for Board Members

Establish an Audit Committee. (This committee has already completed its first audit.)

Keep our Tax Exempt Status up to date

Draw up a formal lease for the use of the building (The Town is our landlord.)

Have an alarm system installed.

Develop a disaster plan for any type of unforeseen disaster. (Let's hope we never have to use it.)

This work has been completed and we are in compliance with the rules of the Board of Regents. This was no small task, but we kept working away in small and large groups. Your historical association is quite a professional organization!!!

Peg Dorgan

Brief Announcement

Every year at this time, we need to find volunteers from our membership to help run the organization. As you can see from our list of committees and officers listed in the *Sentinel*, it takes a number of people to help serve our membership. Even though the officers serve two-year terms, every committee post needs to be filled every year. Those are all one year terms. If you feel you can serve on one of those committees or serve as a committee chairperson, please let Marie Hornick (768-2933) know as soon as possible. Volunteers are always welcome, and on-the-job-training is happily provided.

Bits and Pieces

The following were found in old issues of the *Altamont Enterprise*.

Sept. 30, 1932

For Sale: Registered Guernsey new milker, with calf by side, three years old; four to select from; accredited herd. HERBER, Sombrok Farm, Feura Bush, NY

For Sale: On the trees, 50 bu. Spies, 30 Snow, Baldwins, MacIntosh, etc. Wesley Albright, Clipp Road, Voorheesville R.D.3. Inquire Sunday forenoon, Oct. 9th, only.

For Sale: Six weeks old pig. Peter Croes, Voorheesville

In Memoriam

With deep sympathy, we note the passing of NSHA member Peter VanZetten.

Collections Committee Report

We are delighted to announce that three old indentures have returned from conservator Gwen Spicer and will be on display soon.

The committee is in the process of accessioning all of the barber equipment recently given to us by the Otto & Esther Schultz family. Next we must process all of the World War II items which this family also has donated.

In addition, we have made a list of all the possible items in our collection which could be used in the new General Store Exhibit. Once the Exhibits committee decides what it wants, we will get them out for them.

Our next large project will be to dismantle and return all of the items from the veterans' exhibits, followed by rebuilding some of the former displays.

Marion Parmenter, Chairman

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.

Raffle Winners

Our raffle was very successful again this year. The proceeds were used to have 3 very old indentures restored. They will soon be on exhibit in the museum. The winners were: First Prize of \$300, Joy O'Day; Second Prize of \$200, Jen Crawford; and Third Prize of \$100, Cathy Purrego. We want to thank everyone who helped make this endeavor a success.

Senior Award

As it has done for the past two years, the New Scotland Historical Association is offering an award to a high school senior residing in the Town of New Scotland and planning to further his or her education in some field related to history or museum work. The students competing for the award would be required to submit transcripts and references and write a 250-word response to a given task. Any student who will complete high school studies in June of 2009 is eligible to enter the competition, whether he/she attends a public school, parochial school, private school or is home-schooled.

The requirement of furthering one's education in the fields of history or museum work can be met by studying, for example, American History, Political Science, International Relations, Archaeology, Anthropology, or museum courses of study for museum curators, conservators, archivists, museum technicians or specialists. These are just examples of potential college majors or concentrations of study.

The award is provided through the generosity of the Don and Ann Eberle Fund, established by Todd Slingerland, principal managing partner for Capital Financial Planning, from which Don retired in October, 2006. The Fund was established to honor Don's thirty-five years as a financial advisor, and, in addition, to further honor the years of volunteering both Don and Ann have given to the New Scotland Historical Association. It is the wish of the Eberles that the funds be used for the Historical Association's missions of preservation and education.

Applications for the award are available in local school Guidance Offices, the Bethlehem and Voorheesville Libraries, New Scotland Town Hall, and the Wyman Osterhout Community Center in New Salem. Additional applications may be obtained by calling Marie Hornick, 768-2933, and leaving your name, address, and phone number.

All completed applications must be postmarked no later than Wednesday, April 8, 2009.



**What
is
it?**

*Hope Griffiths,
Thank you for the
Delicious muffins!
Marion, Bob and Jim (who got 2!!)*



(Continued from page 1)

strewn along the track of the monster and slivered into fragments. A thrashing mower and a rye beater, a drill, two seated pleasure sleigh, 3 seated market wagon and mowing machine were in the barn and escaped except the latter was a wreck. A pair of horses and yoke of oxen that were tied in the barn escaped, but a horse and cow outdoors were killed. The furniture in the house was all ruined except an organ that escaped total destruction. One peculiar incident was that a pair of ladies shoes and child's overshoes were standing on the floor in one of the rooms. Afterwards, the floor was found carried 70 feet to one side, and the strangest thing was that both pair shoes were still standing where they had been. A pair of gents overshoes that were also in the house were afterwards found in a woods ¼ mile distant and within one foot of each other. A good top wagon and new cutter were swept out of the hop house and carried 1/8 mile and almost powdered. Orchard was demolished and some forest trees were blown over. The entire loss cannot be less than \$5,000.

Christopher Michel, one-half mile east, had the corner of the barn torn off, roof from a shed and buildings racked. A barn on another place had part of the roof torn off and the building shoved off its foundation. Mr. Michel was passing with a team and hay wagon and was caught in the wild rush. He was carried a distance through the air and team and wagon tumbled about promiscuously, but not seriously damaged except the rigging. Loss \$500.

James Winne, on the Esquire Hotaling farm [now Hoagland], lost the roof from the barn and the shed leveled. Lot of woodland and an entire orchard destroyed. Loss \$1,000.

At Isaac Winston's, Tarrytown, [across from the Onesquethaw Cemetery] the top of his house was taken off and the wood house and kitchen displaced. The wagon house and shed were blown to atoms and his large red barn is so badly shattered that it will probably have to be rebuilt. Also hop house blown down, market wagon, two-seated spring wagon, carriage, two pair bob sleighs and other farming implements destroyed. Apples, pears, plum and peach orchard, are torn up. Loss estimated at \$5,000.

The Onesquethaw Church shed was blown over. Loss \$500.

James H. McCulloch lost some timber valued at \$100.

Cornelius A. Slingerland also lost wood. \$200 [corner of Grosbeck Rd. and Flat Rock Rd.]

Wm. H. Creble had an orchard uprooted. \$250.

T. Slingerland lost an acre of timber. \$50 [now Brenda Winne farm]

John B. Van Atten [former Dryden place on Dryden Lane] had his large new red barn almost completely wrecked, wagon house, hog pen, cider and tool house,



The former home of Issac Winston as it appears today. The right side (stone) is believed to be the original part of the house.

mowing machine, carriages, sleighs swept off and broken. The roof from his large stone dwelling, two sheds and hen house, all new and neatly painted, were also wrecked. A large lot of choice fruit trees torn up, 4 or 5 acres of wood smashed, fences prostrated, etc. Mr. Van Atten's loss is \$7,000. [See diary entry below] At Mr. Van Atten's the cyclone seems to have made almost its last desperate struggle. Further east an occasional tree was uprooted, one old house was damaged and at the river an ice house is reported to have been injured to the extent of about \$10,000, but it was evidently the result of heavy wind and not the work of the rolling, twisting, fearful power that had torn up, broken and crushed everything in its track.

The line of destruction is only about 12 or 15 rods wide, although in a few places it widened out considerable and at one point to about 40 rods. On both sides of its track fences, buckwheat, corn, etc., were more or less damaged. The effect produced on them is as if a monster body had been rolled along with lightning velocity and a powerful current of air had shot out from it in each direction.

We have attempted to identify some of these farms for you, to the best of our ability! Martha Slingerland found the following account in her husband's grandmother Agnes Slingerland's diary:

Sept. 7 "heavy thunder shower—almost like a cyclone where it passed through. Mr. Vincents and Mr. John VanAtten's —it tore the roof off their houses and barns, took away their fences and almost all their fruit trees, killed a hog, tore the hog pen all away, killed a great many of their hens, a limb of a tree pinned a lamb fast to the ground."

Sept. 8 [I was} to Ma's [next door] and Aunt Hester's [LaGrange farm]. They have all been to see the ruins. (Unfortunately that is all she said!)

VanderZee LaGrange who lived on top of Unionville Hill entered the following in his diary: "A cyclone passed through Tarrytown."

The newspaper article was found by Willard Osterhout while he was doing other research. He thought our readers would like to see it!

Thanks to Martha Slingerlands for helping to identify the places mentioned and the diary entries.

Some time ago, NSHA member Margaret Westervelt, who has supplied us with many recollections of her growing up in Clarksville and the New Salem area, wrote to us from her home in Boca Raton, FL. She was looking for copies of pictures of the old Clarksville and New Salem Schools for a special "One Room School" program they were doing where she now lives. After the program, she wrote to say that it had been very successful. She said one person had attended a one room school in Germany, another had attended a one room school and then taught in one. She said three of them, including herself, were from New York State.

She included the Fall 2008 Edition of the Boca Raton Historical Society Newsletter, which had an article about the first school in Boca Raton. We found it fascinating and since a number of our members are in Florida right now, we thought perhaps others would think it interesting also. It is reprinted with permission of the BRHS curator, Susan Gillis.

Boca Raton's First School Celebrates Centennial

The students and teacher of the first class in Boca Raton assembled in one of George Long's packing houses in 1908. By December of that year, the one-room wood framed school was built. It stood west of the FEC railroad tracks near the site of the present day police station. The events that led to Boca Raton's first school are recorded in one of Boca Raton's pioneer Frank Chesebro's many diaries:

"The first school was taught in 1908 in a packing house. We had applied to the County School Board to build us a school house. They were hard up as usual same as they are now. They told us we could build the school house and they would furnish a teacher. Guess they thought that would put a quietus on us for a while. But we did and they did."



The school initially included a few Japanese children from the Yamato Colony with the Boca Raton white children. (Later the Yamato Colony had its own school with an American teacher.) The schoolhouse was used until 1920 when a new masonry structure was completed at the site of today's Boca Raton Elementary School.

Because of segregation, the school-aged children of Boca Raton's African American subdivision, Pearl City, had no school to attend. In 1923 Alex Hughes petitioned the Board of Public Instruction (BPI) to provide a teacher for this population of Boca Raton. When Alex Hughes secured a teacher, Frank Chesebro moved the former 1908 schoolhouse up Dixie Highway. It took him eleven days, but he delivered the schoolhouse to Pearl City. The school sat on the south side of Eleventh Street and Dixie Highway.

As part of celebrating Boca Raton's Centennial School Year, the Boca Raton Historical society presented a framed photo of Boca Raton's first schoolhouse to all of the Boca Raton Schools.

Thank you Boca Raton Historical Society for sharing this wonderful story with our membership!

We get Letters!

I really enjoyed the article on the construction of the Voorheesville Depot during the early part of World War II. My recollection is that my father also worked there for a short time.

In later years, while I worked for the D & H RR (now CP RR) I was in charge of the layout and construction of the connecting line for the D & H Albany Main to the [Industrial] Park Property.

I think the track from Delanson to Voorheesville is still in place. Voorheesville to Albany was abandoned and removed.

Bill Lloyd

Thanks so much for forwarding the **Sentinel** to us. Having lived here in Australia for 34 years, it's great to catch up with the history of our childhood "stomping ground" in New Scotland. We also enjoyed the WWII display at the museum while we were visiting family earlier this year. It was a superb presentation, and refreshed my memory about so many people and things related to New Scotland and my Dad's (Fredrick) military service. My parents moved to Voorheesville in 1947, and Cathy's parents and relatives (LeVie) had been farmers in the area for generations.

Matt & Cathy Hammann

Since they sent this letter, Cathy's mom, Shirley LeVie, has passed away. Although she was not a member of NSHA, Shirley was certainly loyal to the museum with both donations of artifacts and many loans for our exhibits, as well as much information.

Recollections of Down Town

As a young boy, before the creation of shopping centers and malls, I can remember my mother talking about going “**Down Town**” to go shopping. Just what did that mean?

My mother would have to be taken to a bus stop so she could get a ride into Albany. She would get off the bus at the corner of State and North Pearl Sts. Depending on which corner she got off at, she might be in front of Walgreen’s Drug Store in the lower part of the Ten Eyck hotel or be talking to Mr. Peanut in front of the Planter’s Peanut Store.

If she were shopping for herself, she had a variety of stores in which to shop: Flah’s, Muhlfelder’s, Lerner’s, David’s, Whitney’s and Myers. Whitney’s and Myers were department stores which also carried general household goods along with men’s, women’s and children’s clothing. Who can forget the front windows of both stores during the Christmas holiday? Everyone had to go down town to see their animated displays! I believe it was in Whitney’s that you could ride the train through Toyland and get off and get in line to see Santa Claus. I can still hear the plastic vacuum tubes they used to send orders from one floor to another or purchase orders to the office. The dime stores, Kresge’s and Woolworth’s, offered a variety of items. Men’s clothing could also be found at McManus and Riley’s and Lodge’s.

After all of her shopping, perhaps a movie might be in order to rest and relax. There were 3 theatres on North Pearl St., The Strand, The Grand and The Palace. I can remember the Palace so vividly, with all the draperies and wide staircases and the ushers in their uniforms showing you to a seat using their little flashlights. I believe I saw my first 3D movie there, “Bwana Devil,” with lions jumping off the screen and native spears flying at me. My wife also recalls going there with her parents to see “Dumbo.” This was the first movie her father had ever seen. This was quite an experience for a little country boy.

After all this shopping and entertainment, perhaps now was the time to think about a bite to eat. If you were down by the Palace, you could stop in the White Tower for a burger and fries. There was a lunch counter at Walgreen’s, Kresge’s and Woolworth’s, a restaurant at Peters and a Tea Room at Myers. I believe it was Kresge’s that had a donut making machine in the front window that you could stop and look at the donuts being made. The ladies working the lunch counter were dressed in their black and white uniforms and wearing their hair nets.

These are just a few of the stores and some of the events that I recall, but I hope they will trigger your very own memories.



Ten Eyck Hotel at the corner of State Street and Pearl Street.

Will



1880 photo of W. M. Whitney & Co. Department Store

How Times have Changed!

The following is a bill, dated January 16, 1949, sent to the Voorheesville School District by one of our NSHA Life Members! We wonder if he remembers it?

Dear Sirs:

For removing ashes from the New Salem school house for the winter of 1948-49 I wish to submit this bill for twenty dollars. (\$20.00) Also for the removal of stoves and rubbish (5.00) five dollars.

Reprinted from the *Altamont Enterprise* August 2, 1922

(Voorheesville) Charles Ricci has opened up a meat market in the store formerly occupied by the Shaffer Company, Inc., who recently moved into new quarters in Upper Main Street.

We recently received many old sales receipts from the **Charles Ricci Meat & Groceries** made out to the Voorheesville Central School Cafeteria, dated **January 1950**. Some of the items and prices are listed below.

8 lb. rice	\$1.05	2 Spic & Span	\$.46
13 bread	1.95	15 lbs. hamburg	7.50
4 lbs. crackers	.94	10 lbs. sugar	.94
28 dz. Rolls	5.60	5 lbs. flour	.53
40 lbs. franks	20.00	20 lbs. elbow macaroni	3.00
case Beets	3.50		

Exhibits Committee Requests

At the January meeting of the Exhibits Committee, it was decided to create a display featuring a General Store of the early twentieth century. The Association had recently been given a barber's chair and barbering supplies and tools, and, although it is from a later time in the century than the planned exhibit, it will also have its own exhibit next to the larger one for the store. A number of members have pointed out that some of the early general stores had such things as barber chairs, shoe repair benches, auto repair divisions, etc.

We are asking for help in putting together this exhibit; our first step is to explain some of the things we would like to have for the display and find out if there are members who might have such things and be willing to loan them for the duration of the exhibit. Please note: the current exhibits, "World War I & II," and "Korea: the Forgotten War," will end on Sunday, March 1. Fittingly, our program features Col. Cindy Gurney, U.S. Army Ret., speaking on the experiences of Army Nurses, as shared through their diaries, memoirs and letters.

Until the artifacts borrowed for the current exhibits are returned to their owners, we will not be able to accept any donations because of space limitations. We need to assure the security of any items loaned to us, and can't take more than we have room to store.

If you have any of the items below, you may bring them in on Sunday, March 15, from 1-4 P.M. If you have an item we have not requested, please check with us before bringing it, since we might already have it. The Museum already has a large number of potential items for such a display, and since storage space is at a premium, we will be looking for things we do not have or do not have enough for a display shelf.

We are looking specifically for information, pictures, etc. about stores located in the Town of New Scotland. Items: old advertising posters for things like medicines, foods, drinks, tobacco and smoking paraphernalia, pictures of insides and outsides of general stores, along with locations and names of the families who ran them, sacks or bags for feed or flour or other products, objects for sale, dry goods, calendars, canned goods or canning equipment from the early 1900s, information about/from relatives who might have worked in a general store—duties, hours, pay, etc., information about barbers, barber shops, locations, names of barbers, pictures of barbering supplies, striped barber poles, ads from old newspapers about sales at General Stores, prices for different goods of the time.

Spring Programs

Tuesday, April 7, 2009

Stuart Lehman: "Light on the Past - The Great Hudson-Fulton Celebration of 1909 and Its Legacy"

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

The Friendship Singers will present their Spring Program for a musical finale to our meetings for this season.

All programs take place in the Wyman Osterhout Community Center off Route 85 in New Salem. Evening programs begin at 7:30 P.M. The Museum is open for half an hour before the programs. Programs are free and open to the public.

Please support our Corporate Sponsors!

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Smith's Tavern

Stanton's Feura Farm

Stewart's Shops

Voorheesville Hannaford

Thanks to all of our Corporate Sponsors for their continued support!

Answer to "What is it?"
Electric lather dispensing machine from Otto
Schultz Barber Shop Collection recently donated
to the Museum.

**If you would like to become a member,
please fill out the form and mail!**

___ \$10 Individual

___ \$15 Family

___ \$25 Sustaining

___ \$100 Life (per person)

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

**Please send dues to: Robert Parmenter
Membership Chair
82 Badgley Lane
Voorheesville, NY 12186**

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