



THE SENTINEL

Vol. 22, No. 2

The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Winter 2013

Old-Fashioned Christmas Party

Plans are nearly complete for the “**Old Fashioned Christmas Party**” that the New Scotland Historical Association will hold at the Osterhout Community Center on **Tuesday, December 3rd at 7:30 pm.** Many years ago the association held such a holiday party and it was decided to renew this practice. Now it has become one of the favorite events of the year. There will be both vocal and instrumental music by local musicians. The audience is encouraged to join in the singing of holiday songs also.



Very special refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the program.

Please bring a friend and join in this popular evening full of holiday cheer. We will all have a “jolly good time.”

Buggy Whips

The published report that more than \$300,000 worth of buggy whips or horsewhips are manufactured and sold in America yearly, with the average price of \$1 a whip, causes us to sit up and take notice. It also makes us hark back to olden times when there were two or more buggy whips in every barn, instead of two cars in every garage. There was the ordinary buggy whip, that had seen its best days, and there was the whip for Sundays or for time you washed the buggy and curried the horse very carefully and took your best girl out riding on a Sunday afternoon.

Time was when the buggy whip played a big part in our lives. Sometimes it even served for discipline, for there were fathers who considered it necessary to take the buggy whip to their sons occasionally, and it did those sons no little good and it did not hurt too much.

Buggy whips in those days were something to think about, something to long for. A good many of us old fellows can remember looking at the rack in the harness shop, or in the general store, which held a long array of whips of all kinds and prices, and occasionally an expert would show us which was the best whip and would snap several of them to our boyish envy and delight.

And a new whip certainly did dress up a buggy and make the prettiest girl in the village think you were some “punkins” in those days. And when you and your rival could get the family horses and buggies and have a race along the dirt road when the old man didn’t know it and you both snapped the whips, that was real sport. But, pshaw, how the times have degenerated! Now you sit in your car at the curb and honk for her to come out instead of calling respectfully at the door and helping her into that high buggy.

So some 300,000 buggy whips are sold each year. We think we shall go and buy one and snap it occasionally just for old times’ sake.

(I found this clipping in my great-grandmother's cookbook. She had written the date 1934 next to the title. I suspect it was an Albany paper because of the ads on the back of the clipping. MP)

NEW SCOTLAND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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Voorheesville, NY 12186

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President's Letter

Thanks to the Town of New Scotland, our Association, as well as the Senior Citizens and all those others who use the Community Center, have received an early Christmas gift this year. As many of you know, the Wyman Osterhout Community Center that houses our museum and is the site of our programs has suffered from multiple facility problems over the years. One of the most troubling has been the building's "historic" heating and cooling system, which frequently breaks down and is always noisy. This October the Town Board allocated funds for the immediate replacement of this antiquated system with a modern and quiet propane system. Bourque's Mechanical, a New Scotland-based firm, installed the system the same month.

The Town Board has also appointed Wayne LaChappelle as Public Works Commissioner to oversee the Town's buildings and grounds. Wayne informed us that he plans to have the outside lights at the center replaced and repair or replace outside steps and ramps at the Center. We wish Wayne well in his new and challenging position and appreciate the improvements in the Community Center.

Another gift is our new Board member, Lisa Boehlke, who has agreed to accept the Board seat vacated by Melanie Ernst. Lisa grew up in New Scotland, works at Town Hall and has been active in the Girl Scouts and school affairs. She will provide a new, fresh perspective and voice on our Association's Board.

Along with the season itself, I think we have a lot of reasons to celebrate. So I look forward to seeing everyone at our "An Old Fashioned Christmas Party" on December 3rd.

Alan Kowlowitz

Corporate Membership Drive

NSHA will begin its Corporate Membership Drive on December 1, 2013 with mailings to all current members. When shopping, please remember these companies who greatly help to support our organization.

Exhibit Report

Our grand opening exhibit for next year will feature the celebration of John Boyd Thacher State Park's 100th Birthday. The Indian Ladder Region will also be included.

We are also looking for family photos taken at the park that can be scanned into the computer and enlarged to use for display. The enlargements will be given to you after this exhibit closes in 2015.

The date has been chosen for Sunday, May 18, 2014 at the museum starting at 2:00 pm. Refreshments will be served.

Bring your families and friends!

You can email your photos to dxslinge@gmail.com or bring them to the museum on Sundays from 2-4 or mail them to Sandy Slingerland, PO Box 185, Clarksville, NY 12041.

Winter Program Schedule

All programs begin at 7:30 pm
Museum opens at 7 pm
Wyman Osterhout Community Center
New Salem

- Dec 3, 2013 An Old Fashioned Christmas Party:** NSHA will once again host its popular Old Fashioned Christmas Party with seasonal treats and music from the past.
- Feb 4, 2014 Five Rivers: History of a Special Place:** Local author and educator RoseAnn Fogarty provides a glimpse of the natural and human history of Five Rivers from the exposed ancient rock along the Vlomankill trail, to the remains of a Civilian Conservation Corps encampment, to a new state-of-the-art green building.
- March 4, 2014 Wicked Albany: Lawlessness and Liquor in the Prohibition Era:** Criminal Justice Professor and author Dr. Frankie Bailey will paint a vivid picture of crime, violence, and law enforcement in Albany during the Prohibition-era (1919-1932), placing it in a national context of changes during that turbulent period.

New Trustee!

The NSHA board approved the appointment of **Lisa Boehlke** to fill Melanie Ernst's position on the Board of Trustees. Lisa gave us the following bio about herself.

I was born and raised in Voorheesville and attended and graduated from the Voorheesville public schools.

I have an Associate Degree in computer science and a BBA from Siena. I live in Voorheesville with my husband and two children, ages 11 and 9. I work part time in local government, which allows me to spend time raising my family. We spend a great deal of time enjoying outdoor activities such as hiking and geocaching.

I received an annual membership to NSHA as a gift a few years back and have enjoyed the programs I/we have attended. I was honored to be considered to join the Board. I have much to learn and I hope to contribute as well. I look forward to learning more about town history, meeting people and finding ways to encourage more families and youngsters to become involved with the association.

College Scholarship Offered!

The New Scotland Historical Association is once again planning to offer an opportunity to high school Juniors who live in the Town of New Scotland to win a \$1,000.00 award to help with college expenses. The award is for serious students who plan to further their education, and it is given through the Eberle Foundation in the New Scotland Historical Association. The award is offered to encourage 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. The winner will receive his or her check at the May 2014 program meeting.

It will then be the choice of the winner how the check will be used to further the person's education. Some of the suggestions have been: use the money to visit several colleges to learn more about their programs, purchase necessary equipment, bank the check while completing high school, and earn interest on the amount; put the money toward travel expenses when it is time to attend college.

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

Applications will be **available beginning January 6, 2014** at local public schools attended by New Scotland Juniors, also at the New Scotland Community Center in New Salem, the New Scotland Town Hall, the Voorheesville Public Library, and the Bethlehem Public Library. **All completed applications must be postmarked no later than Friday, March 14, 2014.**

Archaeologist of the Local: Tim Albright

By Dennis Sullivan

Local Historian and Past President of the Town of New Scotland Historical Association, Tim Albright is his own version of the television show “American Pickers,” a program documenting two antique collectors traveling the United States in search of “picks” for their Iowa and Tennessee stores called Antique Archaeology.

When not working as orchard manager of Indian Ladder Farms beneath the overseeing eye of the Helderbergs, Tim spends much of his “free” time searching for historical artifacts related to the Town of New Scotland and Albany County but especially the Helderbergs.

Last month on one of his jaunts, he discovered in Voorheesville a shoemaker’s box filled with cobbler lasts and tools which he donated to the Historical Association, one of a number of such artifacts he has donated to the Association over the years.

What drew Tim’s attention to the lasts, ranging from children’s to adult sizes, were the letters MALLEABLE embossed on the sides of the feet. Because the man Tim bought them from lived in Voorheesville and had bought them years before from another man in Voorheesville, Tim suspected the castings were the handiwork of the founders at the Albany Malleable Iron Company in Voorheesville, a foundry established in the village in the fall of 1908 by Frederick Griesman. Those in the Association responsible for documenting new accessions now have their hands full making the critical connection.



Tim’s immersion in local history has been well-documented since he won a contest for the best design of the Town of New Scotland’s official seal as a 13-year old. He was encouraged to enter by his piano teacher and Julliard School of Music graduate Ruth Baumbach who lived on Crow Ridge Road looking up to the “clear mountain.” Tim attributes his initial interest in local history to the many fond conversations he had with Mrs. Baumbach after lessons with the piano were done.

Aficionados of recent local history will be more familiar with Tim’s work on the *Helderbergs through his Indian Ladder and Thacher Park in Historic Photographs* (Arcadia, 2011) which he wrote and edited with neighbor Laura TenEyck. His interest in the park as an adult dates to when he was a member of the Town of New Scotland Historical Preservation Commission in the early 1990s and worked incessantly to secure a National Natural Landmark Designation for the park.

While “the times” militated against a successful outcome then and his scholarly documentation was shelved, several current members of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation have resurrected those files and are making a move to have Thacher Park designated a national landmark, this to honor the park’s hundredth anniversary in 2014. The land for the park, named after Albany mayor John Boyd Thacher (1847-1909), was donated to New York State in 1914 by Thacher’s widow, Emma Treadwell Thacher.

These days Tim is not simply a collector of things Helderberg—postcards, milk bottles, photographs, ephemera, sculpted artifacts—but remains an assiduous student of literary works of those who wrote about the mountain and its environs.

He has read the non-fiction and poetic works of former New Scotland resident, noted literary figure, and Sixth State Historian (1940-1946), Arthur Pound. He is especially fond of Dr. Pound’s wistful book of poems *Mountain Morning* (1932) of which he has a signed limited edition.

Tim is fond, as well, of the poetic efforts of local resident Magdelene LaGrange Merritt published at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of which he has scarce copies. He often muses about the ways in which these people and their literary works affected the cultural DNA of the town of New Scotland.

And so enthralled has Tim been to see “his” Helderbergs from every vantage point over the years, that in the early 1980’s, he, his wife Susan, and their son Jacob rented a plane at South Albany Airport and toured the mountain from the air; “A small price to pay for beauty,” he has said many times.

Today when he looks up at the mountain from the vantage of the trees in the orchard, he worries that without some preservation protections, the Helderbergs will one day be “tainted by development.” He means be destroyed as we know them.

But Tim’s involvement in local history has not been an exercise in kitsch sentimentality. He practices what he preaches when it comes to preservation—of things and people alike.

In 1990 he and his wife Susan bought the nineteenth-century Locust Vale School (New Scotland School #11) which is situated on the corner of Meadowdale Road and the Altamont Road and “did it over” to make it habitable for their family.

The school, originally situated on Tygert Road closer to the mountain, had been moved to its current location in 1948. Waiting for Tim. It too has now been preserved as a part of the history of the Helderbergs. There is a blue and gold historic marker out front.

But Tim Albright also remains concerned about preserving the lives of those who have gone before us. He says his continuing work in that direction has helped him “find his own identity.”

He says that when he comes across a horseshoe in the soil while making the rounds of the farm on his tractor he is quickly brought to ponder the work of the people who farmed those lands previously and by a different sweat of the brow.

“Nobody remembers the farmers who labored and toiled on the farms here,” he pined recently, “they don’t remember their names, they don’t remember what they looked like. I don’t want them to be forgotten.”

He says it’s probably part of his own desire not to be forgotten and adds that he knows where he is going to be buried—on a hill below the Helderbergs—and he’ll tell you where.

In *Mountain Morning* Arthur Pound has a poem titled “This Way Have Passed the Oxen and the Plow.” We shall remember some day: and this way passed Tim Albright, too.



Restoration of Historical Signs

The New Scotland Historical Association made a decision to repaint and repair some of the historical signs in the Town instead of purchasing a new one this year. Our first project was to restore the sign on the David Allen property on Clipp Road. (see picture). Weather has taken its toll and rust and cracked paint had made it difficult to read.

The Rt. 85 Bodyworks and Collision Center, Inc. did the repairs and painting. Employees of the New Scotland Department of Transportation were kind to transport the heavy sign to and from the site.

Plans are being made for the restoration of one more sign before the 2013-2014 year is over.



The Blizzard of October 1987 Part 2

As I mentioned in part one, this was a very strange and destructive storm in more ways than one! The “Fonz” and I worked until it became too dark and dangerous to continue, which I believe was around 8 pm. There were a couple of funny incidents that happened during that day which I would like to relate to you.

More and more trees kept falling and many times we would have to go back over a road to reopen it. We had just passed Appleby’s on the Clarksville end of Stove Pipe Rd. heading towards New Salem when we encountered a large number of trees across the road. This was rather disappointing, as we had cleared this road earlier in the day. While we were observing the situation, we noticed a pair of headlights weaving their way towards us through the tree tops, with a gentleman with a snow shovel leading the way. They had to stop as they reached us because we were in the middle of the road. We inquired as to where they thought they were going in such dangerous conditions and they replied they had to get to the airport. The power was out in many places, so I assumed they had not heard of all the roads that were closed and that the airport itself was shut down. After informing them of this fact, it was suggested that they turn around and go back the way they came and remain home. We followed a safe distance, plowing everything we could off the road as we headed back towards New Salem.

Earlier in the day we had been down on Olive St. and around the school and were now headed up 443 towards the center of town. We had observed throughout the day the number of phone and power poles that were sagging across the road. At one point the power line in front of us was sagging very low and I got way over on the left side of the road to see if we could get under it. I must mention here that the plow had a wing post that sticks up higher than the cab. I proceeded very slowly with my wingman the incomparable “Fonz” keeping a close eye on the situation. Suddenly he screamed in my ear “stop, stop, stop!” After my nerves settled down, I inquired what the problem was. It seems our wing post had snagged that phone line which went across the street to a house on the other side. When they put siding on this home, they put it over the phone line. So when we pulled that line, it started popping siding off that house like kernels off an ear of corn! As I looked up I noticed an Albany County Sheriff on the other side of the road. As he walked over to my truck, I figured I was in some serious trouble. His words to me “Keep on going, that’s what they pay home owners for.” We found a long 2 x 4 to hold up the line while we eased past that line and proceeded to get out of there as fast as possible. We finished up that day over on the Albany end of Krumkill Rd. cutting up a large tree and plowing it off the road. This was certainly a storm that will remain etched in my mind for a very long time.

Until next time
Will

Christmas Gift Ideas?

Times of Our Lives—New Scotland Memories
Voorheesville, New York: a Sketch of the Begin-
nings of a Nineteenth Century Railroad Town, by
Dennis Sullivan

New Scotland Township—NSHA

All available at the NSHA Museum, New Scotland Town Hall and Voorheesville Public Library. The Voorheesville History book is available at the Voorheesville Village Hall also.

Phillips Hardware on Main St. in Voorheesville also agreed to sell the Voorheesville books this year as they did last year—available every day!
Or call Peg Dorgan at 768-2852!

The NSHA Board
wishes everyone
a wonderful
holiday!



Camp near Culpepper Va 8th 1863

Dear Wife

I now take my pencil in hand to let you know that I am well at present hoping this letter finds you all the same I am in the 44th Regt I came here yesterday and I shall hold the same position that I did before but I wont stay with them long for I mean to have my discharge if there is such a thing as to get it I doubt they will do any thing with me but take pay from me for my arrest and transportation that will be all I have wrote you a letter when I was at Castle William but have had no answer yet if you had went to work right away you could of got me out of the service for about 2 hundred Frank Bicher got out without much trouble and he said that he would try and get me out if there was any such a thing but I shall have to work for myself now and do the best I can I want you to write and let me know who is drafted and I want you to send me some money for I have got no tobacco and nothing to buy it with you must keep up good courage and all things will come out right yet I should like to have enough money to buy a shirt for I have only this one and I cant draw one for there is none to draw and they charge from 4 to 5 dollars for one at the sutters and if you send any money send green backs for no other money will go here and send it as soon as possible for I am getting as lousy as I can be and I cant get a change so that I can wash this and let me know how you are all getting along no more at present I remain your ever faithfull

John L Houck

Direct John L Houck
Co G 44th Regt New York S V
Washington D C
and it will come safe *a Fifer*

Probably was the month of June



To email or not to email?

A few years ago we offered the opportunity to receive your *Sentinels* via email rather than a hard copy. The first year we had 8 folks elect to receive an email version. Last year the number increased to 28. This year many of those folks changed to have them sent in the mail again. We are now down to 7. Changing the addresses on this ever-changing list takes a lot of time on our part, as well as the membership secretary's part. We asked the Board if we could go back to mailing copies to all members. They readily agreed with us. It will continue to be available on the NSHA website also.

We hope you understand!

Bob and Marion Parmenter, Editors

Museum Hours
Sundays
2:00—4:00 P M

Inclement Weather?

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.

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Stewart's Shops

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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.

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: NSHA

Sarita Winchell, Membership Chair

P.O. Box 541

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