

# THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

Published Quarterly

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

July 2015

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Alden Historical Society, founded in 1965, is a volunteer-supported organization whose mission is to preserve, promote and present the history of the Town of Alden and its people.

### *Wende Grove*

#### *In the Good Old Summer Time*

*In the good old summer time,  
In the good old summer time,  
Strolling thro' the shady lanes  
With your baby mine;  
You hold her hand and she holds yours,  
And that's a very good sign  
That she's your tootsie wootsie  
In the good old summer time.*

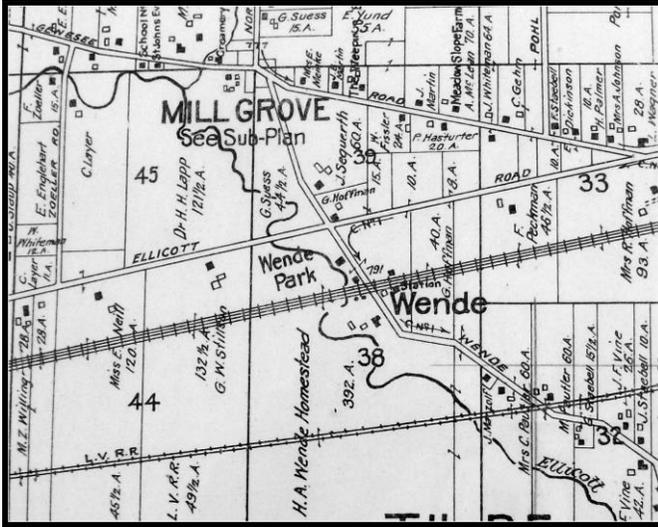
This chorus from the song of the same name, first published in 1902 with music by George Evans and lyrics by Ben Shields, speaks of a gentler time—a time before large amusement parks, Little League baseball, soccer camp, extensive road trips

and air conditioning. Where in Alden, in the late 1890s or early 1900s, could you find a place for quiet, often romantic walks and boat rides on “crystal” waters, a large swing, even an outdoor bowling lane?

Ralph D. Stowell (1887-1981) said this in one of his “Facts and Foolishness” columns: “In my boyhood, it was called Wende Picnic Grove or Wende Grove, where for years churches, Sunday Schools and other organizations held picnics in the summer. People would come out on the train and get off at Wende Station. There

was boating, bowling and other forms of amusement, and I believe this was all free to the public.” The Grove was the social center for young folks in the early 1900s. It is believed that there was a dance floor because some Millgrovites speak of going to dances there.

continue on page 2



Otto Wende (left end) Henre Wende (right end)

Wende Grove or Park was along Ellicott Creek in the vicinity of Walden Avenue (formerly Ellicott Rd.) and Old Wende Road on property owned by the Wende family (near center in map above.) A dam had been built to back up the waters and form a small lake. Ice was cut on this lake in the winter and the

waters were used for the large scoop pans for the steam engines on the Central tracks. A small cabin (photo above) stood on an island in the lake. This cabin is said to have been the seat of the Democratic Party when Otto Wende was County Clerk.



Buffalo newspapers tell of a July 11, 1898, picnic for clerk's office employees and their families held at the Park. A special train car was used to carry the people from Buffalo to Millgrove, although some chose to ride their bicycles. Another picnic for the Alden Edward Eels Post of the G.A.R. was held on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

continue on page 3

Perhaps the best description of an outing at the Grove comes from a 1901 *American Lawyer* publication:

“The Lawyers Club of Buffalo, held its annual outing at Wende’s Grove, a pleasant country spot near Alden, on September 1, and the fact that it was the hottest day of the year did not deter them from having ‘a hot time.’ The use of the grove had been tendered to the legal fraternity by County Clerk Wende, who accompanied the excursionists in the role of Mine Host—a part which he filled most acceptably.

The departure was made by special train over the New York Central, and on reaching Wende Station, the lawyers lined up in columns of fours, and preceded by the Como Band of Lancaster, marched to the grove.

While dinner was making ready, a game of baseball and various other sports were indulged in. The score of the ball game is still a matter of doubt, as the official score keeper gave up his job at a critical moment.

William H. Jaeger, acting as caterer, had provided a most bountiful dinner, and when the gaze of the hungry lawyers fell upon the board, the chairman of the arrangement committee directed the band to play “I’d Leave My Happy House for You.”

After the banquet had been fully discussed, some songs were rendered by soloists Eugene Jerge and W.W. Saperston, the legal lights joining with a strong chorus.

One accident occurred to mar the beauty of the day, James P. Moore, stenographer to Surrogate Marcus, tripped over a mushroom and fell head first into the crystal stream which flows through the grove. Philip Stern lassoed him just as he was sinking for the third time, and hauled him safely to the bank, amid thundering plaudits of the assembled multitude.

Leaving the grove at 6 o’clock, the party stopped in front of Mr. Wende’s home and serenaded him and his family. Then the march to the station resumed, though not in columns of four, and the train was taken for home and Buffalo, where all arrived in good spirits just as the sun went down.”

*It appears as though it was not just the food that was bountiful!*

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Wende Grove  
Alden, NY



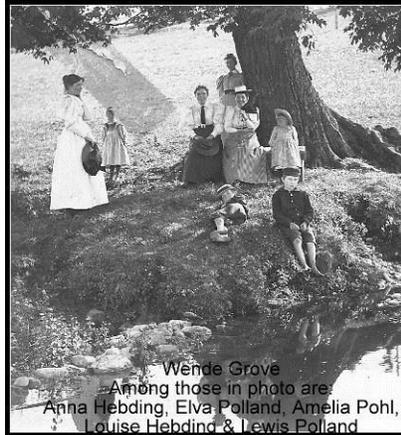
Anna Wende  
Wende Grove



Wende Grove, Alden, NY  
Ellicott Creek



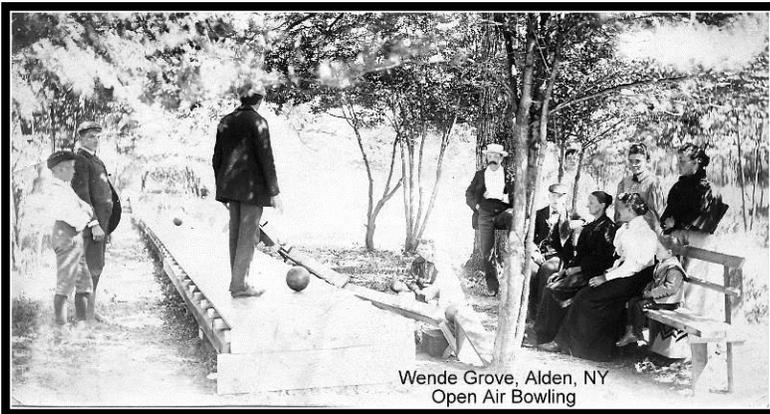
Wende Grove, Alden, NY  
circa 1890's



Wende Grove  
Among those in photo are:  
Anna Hebding, Elva Polland, Amelia Pohl,  
Louise Hebding & Lewis Polland



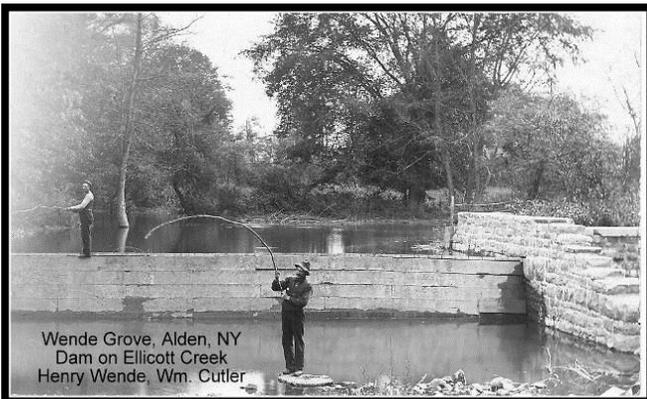
Wende Grove, Alden, NY  
circa 1890's



Wende Grove, Alden, NY  
Open Air Bowling



Henry & Anna Wende  
Wende Grove, Alden, NY  
Aug. 26, 1896



Wende Grove, Alden, NY  
Dam on Ellicott Creek  
Henry Wende, Wm. Cutler



Wende Grove  
Ice Harvesting on Frozen Pond  
Looking South at Railroad

continue on page 5

When Wende Grove ceased operation is unknown. We do know a farm was located in the area to feed the inmates in the Erie County Penitentiary in Buffalo before the decision was made to relocate the prison outside of Buffalo in 1920. The new Erie County Penitentiary opened in 1923 on what was formerly Wende property.

Wende Grove was not the only railroad excursion park in the area. There was also Taylor Park on land leased by the Erie Railroad on the Darien side of County Line Road. A spur track on the south side provided sufficient siding for the entire excursion train. The 1887 Erie Route pamphlet calls it a "handsome grove containing 30 acres." The Park provided picnic ground and

several recreation areas for swings, croquet grounds, a 100 x 32 foot dance hall and a 100 x 50 foot outdoor dancing platform, half-a-dozen music stands, and arbors. An 1874 *Buffalo Morning Express* article noted that Dr. I.J. Crandall and Mr. Orville Dodge of Alden would have the general management of the place.

*Perhaps Taylor Park was the inspiration for Otto Wende to build Wende Grove. One can only speculate.*

*Karen Muchow, Archivist*

### *Magna Carta*

*800th Anniversary, 1215 - 2015*

*Alden Woman's Ancestor was Signatory*

The earliest seeds of democracy were planted when one of Mrs. Laura Airey's ancestors signed the Magna Carta. Mrs. Airey, resident of Alden, a life member of the Alden Historical Society, gives the following account:

A recent article (April 10<sup>th</sup>) in the Buffalo News tells of a two week long celebration of the signing in 1215.

Quoting from one of the Buffalo lawyers "If you were to choose one document that served as the basis for democracy and individual rights and people empowering government instead of the king dictating to the people, this would be it."

Thanks to the efforts of my grandmother, she had researched the lineage of our ancestors and found that we are descendants of one of the Barons who signed in 1215. His name was Richard DeClare, the Surety of the Magna Carta Barons. She had listed 30 generations.

*Laura Airey, Life Member*

### Inspiration for Americans

(excerpts from wikipedia.org)

On June 15, 1215, in a field at Runnymede, (England), King John affixed his seal to Magna Carta. Confronted by 40 rebellious barons, he consented to their demands in order to avert civil war.

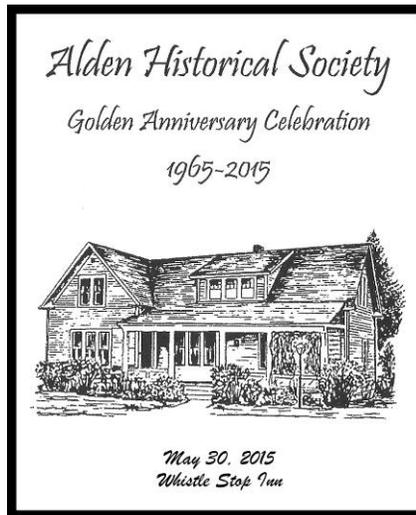
Magna Carta was written by a group of 13th-century barons to protect their rights and property against a tyrannical king. It is concerned with many practical matters and specific grievances relevant to the feudal system under which they lived.

During the American Revolution, Magna Carta served to inspire and justify action in liberty's defense. The colonists believed they were entitled to the same rights as Englishmen, rights guaranteed in Magna Carta. They embedded those rights into the laws of their states and later into the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

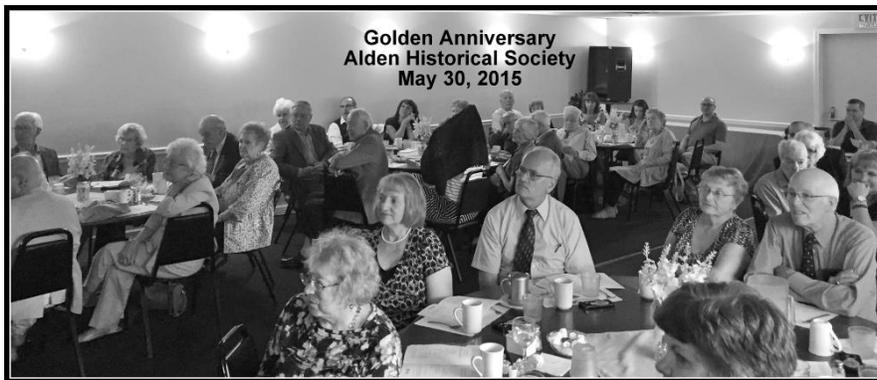
The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution ("no person shall . . . be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.") is a direct descendent of Magna Carta's guarantee of proceedings according to the "law of the land."

## *Alden Historical Society Golden Anniversary Celebration*

The Alden Historical Society's "Golden Anniversary Celebration" Dinner was held on Saturday, May 30th at the Whistle Stop Inn. After a Pledge to the Flag led by Gil Dussault and an Invocation given by Mark Casell, the 75 guests were treated to a delicious dinner and cake while viewing a video detailing the history of Alden, produced by the Historical Society back in 1994. Alden Town & Village Historian and Historical Society Archivist Karen Muchow next recounted the Society's history over the past 50 years.



Historical Society President Roberta Vincent then honored past presidents of the Society, as well as past and present trustees of the Society. Those presidents and trustees present were awarded commemorative coffee mugs. Proclamations from Congressman Chris Collins and the Town of Alden were also shared with the attendees to close the celebratory evening. Everyone who attended was given a keepsake key chain as a remembrance of a very nice event.



The Alden Historical Society would like to thank the following for their sponsorship of this memorable event:

Whistle Stop Inn  
Alden Advertiser  
Alden State Bank

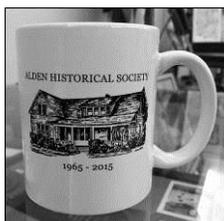
Creighton Optical  
Diane & Mark Casell  
Alden Family Dentistry

Neill & Strong, Attorneys  
Elwood-Jordans Agency, Inc.  
Alden Town Supervisor Bud Milligan

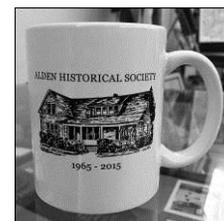
*Thank you to all for sharing the evening with us!*

*Christopher Gust, Trustee*

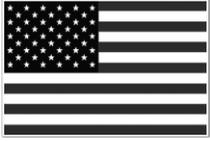
### *Golden Anniversary Commemorative Coffee Mugs*



Treat yourself to one or two of our very nicely commemorative coffee mugs. They are available at the Alden Historical Building for \$5.00 each. The building is opened as noted on page 10.



Pledge of Allegiance Address by Gil Dussault  
Alden Historical Society Golden Anniversary Dinner  
Sat. May 30, 2015



It can be a very emotional experience to see our beloved US Flag waving proudly in the breeze. Hearts seem to beat a bit faster, lumps grow in our throats and the welling of tears is a common

occurrence. When we consider what The Stars N Stripes, Old Glory, or the Star Spangled Banner stands for...we find that it has served for many in our nation as an inspiration for courage, duty, service and sacrifice.

In 1892 Rev. Francis Bellamy, a Baptist Minister, composed the original Pledge of Allegiance. Based on his personal beliefs, he gave us the great exclamation, declaration and affirmation of the loyalty and patriotism we hold for this great nation of ours. It is an expression of allegiance to the Flag of the United States and the Republic of the United States of America.

The Pledge was formally adopted by Congress in Wartime 1942 and the Official Name was adopted in 1945. Revised a few times.....the last change in language came about on Flag Day 1954 when the words "Under God" were added. For years it has been commonly recited in schools at the beginning of every school day. Congress opens with the Pledge, as do many government meetings at local levels, and meetings held

by private groups and organizations.

Our newest citizens from foreign lands must recite it when they become a US Citizen. It is done by them willingly, with reverence and commitment of purpose.



The phrase, "Freedom is not Free," has been prevalent since 1911. ~Former General and President Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirit of men and so it must be daily earned and refreshed---else like a flower cut from its life giving roots, it will wither and die."

Recently, we celebrated Memorial Day. It was a time of remembrance to honor those who have gone before us...many making the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that our freedom prevails. As we stand and recite the pledge this evening, please keep in your hearts, minds and prayers those men and women in uniform serving here and abroad...those who have served and sadly left us in service to our nation, and of course, our dedicated First Responders as they serve in our communities with distinction. They deserve our support and gratitude for all they do.

Please stand and boldly recite our nation's "Pledge of Allegiance"

*Gil Dussault, Trustee*

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## *Strawberry Social and 1965 in Review*

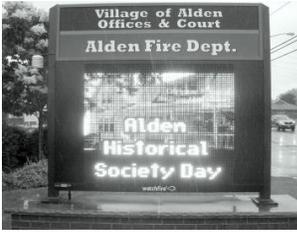
How well do you remember the year 1965? Whether your memories are vivid or fading, they would have been welcome and enriched at the Historical Society's June 11 program meeting and strawberry social when the Society reviewed the year 1965, the year of its origin. Program directors Conrad and Carol Borucki reviewed national and international events, movies, and popular music from the year 1965, as well as showing a clip from a DVD highlighting events of that year.

They further researched the "Nothing Ever Happens in Alden" column from the 1966 New Year edition of the Alden Advertiser, sharing events unique to Alden from the year 1965. Attendees were asked to sign a card to be kept on file for at least the next 50 years. Throughout the evening, prizes were randomly distributed to those in attendance. The evening culminated with the serving of scrumptious strawberry shortcake in celebration of that most eventful year.



The Historical Society wishes to thank Conrad and Carol Borucki and area merchants Subway, Tops, John & Mary's, and Henry's Candy for donating gifts for prizes. Thanks, too, to those providing refreshments: Sandy Dussault, Ruth Davis, Roberta Vincent, Barb Rice, Jane Burke, and Judy Hotchkin.

## ***Alden Historical Society Day***



In honor and recognition of the organization's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, June 12, 2015 was proclaimed Alden Historical Society Day in the Village of Alden. Village trustees noted the efforts of society volunteers since 1965 in preserving Alden's heritage and educating the public on its history through regular programs, speakers, and displays of artifacts at the museum on Broadway.



**A**lden Chamber of Commerce President Christopher Gust (left) presents Richard "Skip" Jablonski the 2015 Distinguished Citizen Award at the Chamber's annual Spring Membership & Election Dinner on May 19, 2015.

**S**kip is recognized for his volunteer community service. Among his volunteer efforts are the many roles he has played through his membership in the Alden Chamber of Commerce and Town Line Lutheran Church. Skip has served as Chamber liaison to the Alden Village and on the Citizens Advisory Committee to the Alden Schools under former Superintendent Don Raw. Skip is a US Army veteran, having served in the occupation forces in Germany following WW II (where he met his late wife Elfriede) and in the army reserves following his active duty.

## ***With Deepest Sympathy***



***Marjorie Rohl*** who celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 8, 2014, died May 26, 2015. Marge taught home economics at Alden Central School for 20 years. She is survived by her children, Beverly (David), Kay, Richard (Mary Lou) and Carol (Jack). Marge moved to Oklahoma in 2006 to be closer to her daughter, Kay.

The Alden Historical Society offers sympathy to family and friends of Marge. She was an active life member of the society and will be sadly missed.

About 14 years ago Marge donated a toy carousel to the Alden Historical Society. The carousel is over 100 years old and has been completely restored by the Art Conservation Dept. of Buffalo State College. This a valuable and prized artifact among the many kept by the society.



***Natalie "Nancy" Taylor*** a long time member of the Alden Historical Society, died April 30, 2015. Nancy was married to Norman for over seventy years, dear mother of Pamela (James) Saupe and Marsha (Nelson) Farber. Nancy was very active at the Erie County Homes' Wende Guild, Boy Scout Troop 82, (sponsored by the Home), 60 year member of New Horizons Chapter Order of the Eastern Star, member of the Presbyterian Church of Alden for over sixty years.

She and her husband Norman were awarded Citizen of the Year by the Alden Chamber of Commerce in 1998. In 2004 Nancy was awarded the DeWitt Clinton Award for Community Service from the Masonic Fraternity. Also, Nancy was awarded citations from the Niagara Frontier Recreation and Parks and the Western New York Service for the Aging.

The Alden Historical Society offers sympathy to family and friends of Nancy. Nancy will be sadly missed by the Alden Historical Society.

# WELCOME MEMBERS

**NEW MEMBERS**

Amy Froebel  
Rose Dziedzic  
Janet Seitz

**RENEWED MEMBERS**

Doris Brade  
Carolyn Burger  
Helen Creighton  
Jeanette & Thomas  
Dickinson  
Judy & Francis Downhower  
Allegra & Gregory  
Grenier  
Michelle & Keith Hoffman  
Barb & Ed Huestis

**RENEWED MEMBERS**

Beverly Nebrich  
Richard Jablonski  
Florence Kegler  
Monica Kubiak  
Laura Loehr  
Ann & Carl Matthies  
Josephine Michaud  
Kerry & Vincent O'Hara  
Family  
Erin & Scott Redmond  
Family  
Leita Reed  
Edward Reich  
Barb & Bob Rice  
Mary Ann Sardella  
Cathleen Satkowski

**RENEWED MEMBERS**

Karen & Rick Savage  
Violet & Ronald Savage  
Sharon Schmitz  
Audrey Senecal  
Sherry Sojka  
Antoinette & Matthew  
Shriver  
Lynda Tucker  
Anna Walters  
Wayne Weinsheimer  
Rhonda Wieder

**NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS**

Alden Kiwanis Club

**RENEWED BUSINESS MEMBERS**

Alden State Bank  
Alden Pharmacy, Inc.  
Alternative Care Services  
of WNY, Inc.  
Law Offices of Michael Cole  
Neill & Strong, Attorneys  
Reserve Gas Co., Inc.

**DONATIONS IN LIEU OF DUES**

Jane & Clarke Burke  
Diane & Mark Casell  
Elli DeFilippo  
Helen Merle

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:**

New members are always welcome. Your support will ensure that the Alden Historical Society will continue to grow and prosper for years to come. Please make check payable as noted below.

**Please note that the membership year runs from April 1 through March 31, with annual payment due by April 1.**

Thank you for your support.

**DUES**

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Single .....\$12.00  | Name.....            |
| Couple .....\$20.00  | Address .....        |
| Family.....\$25.00   | .....                |
| Business.....\$50.00 | Phone.....Email..... |

A check payable to: *ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY* may be mailed to:

Debbie Crist, Membership Secretary  
Alden Historical Society  
13213 Broadway  
Alden, NY 14004

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

*Please remember the Alden Historical Society in your estate plans.*

*A bequest in your memory or in memory of someone you love can help preserve the heritage of our community.*

[aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com)

Phone 937-3700

**General Fund and Other Donors**

Recently the Alden Historical Society has received generous donations from the following:

**Laura Airey      Alden Middle School      Judy & Francis Downhower**

Please be advised that donations to the Alden Historical Society are not tax deductible since it is not a 501(c)(3) organization.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING

The ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S many exhibits are located in the village at the Alden Historical Society Building, 13213 Broadway, across from Alden Sate Bank. The mission of the historical society is to preserve, promote and present the history of Alden and its people.

### HOURS:

The Alden Historical Society Building is open to the public from 1 PM to 3 PM the first and third Sunday of each month except during January and February. Tours for individuals and groups may be arranged by calling 937-3700, 937-6400.

### MEETINGS:

**Program meetings** are generally held at the Alden Community Center on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm. Notices will be published in the Alden Advertiser in advance of the program. Open to the public, these programs are both informative and interesting. Many times a guest speaker is present. You are very welcome to come, share your memories and experiences about the evening's program, and enjoy an informal social complete with homemade refreshments. In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the lead of the Alden school system, postponing when after school programs are closed.

**Trustee meetings** are normally held at the Alden Historical Building at 7:00 pm. **Please note:** Trustee meetings are temporarily being held on the **second Tuesday of the month** in February, April, June, August, October, and December (even months). Trustee meetings are open to the membership.

### 2015 Officers

**President** – Roberta Vincent  
**Vice President** – Chris Gust  
**Secretary** - Diane Casell  
**Treasurer**- Clarke Burke

### Ex-Officio Appointments

**Curator** - vacant  
**Archivist** - Karen Muchow

### Committee Chairs and members

**Membership** - Debbie Crist  
**Collections** - Larry Kocher

**Publicity/Newsletter** - Elli DeFilippo; Chris Gust, Carl Matthies, and Clarke Burke  
**Program/Refreshments** – Conrad & Carol Borucki / Sandy Dussault  
**Building and Ground** - Larry Kocher / Chris Gust  
**Fundraising**- Gil Dussault  
**Nominating** - Elli DeFilippo and Jane Burke  
**Audit** - Chris Gust ; Clarke Burke and Larry Kocher  
**Budget** - Clarke Burke; Larry Kocher and Chris Gust  
**Historical Marker/Signs** - Gil Dussault  
**Erie County Fair** - Conrad Borucki

**Town Historian** – Karen Muchow

### 2015 Trustees

Conrad Borucki  
 Clarke Burke  
 Diane Casell  
 Debbie Crist  
 Elli DeFilippo  
 Gil Dussault  
 Christopher Gust  
 Larry Kocher  
 Carl Matthies  
 Jennifer Strong  
 Roberta Vincent

## ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY DATES TO REMEMBER SUMMER 2015

| PROGRAM MEETINGS<br>Alden Community Center 7 PM | TRUSTEE MEETINGS<br>Alden Historical Society Building at 7 PM |
|---|---|
| JULY 9.....Summer Break                         |   |
| AUGUST 14.....Summer Break                      | AUGUST 11..... <u>Members Invited</u>                         |
| SEPT. 10.....Made In America Store              | OCTOBER 12..... <u>Members Invited</u>                        |

# MONTHLY PROGRAMS

July 9, 2015.....SUMMER BREAK

August 13, 2015.....SUMMER BREAK

September 10, 2015.....MADE IN AMERICA STORE



In 2010, owner Mark Andol, with much persistence and against many “naysayers,” launched his first Made in America Store. Today, five years and five stores later, the Made in America Store deals with over 7,000 products, all entirely “100%” American. Join us as Dorothy Furtney, an integral member of the Made in America team, discusses the concept and realization of a store dealing entirely with American-made products. Further, Mrs. Furtney will present future goals and plans for the organization.

**The Made in America Store has inspired many Americans and made us ponder several principles, because, as the store’s brochure states, “China is a long way to drive to work.”**

*Conrad and Carol Borucki, Program Committee*

## ALDEN EXHIBIT TO BE DISPLAYED AT THE ERIE COUNTY FAIR



Graphic compliments of Erie County Fair

**August 12-23**

**The subject of the exhibit is**  
**Our Town 100 Years Ago.**

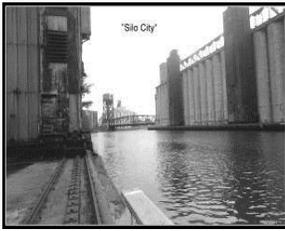
Committee Chairman Conrad Borucki along with committee members Karen Muchow, Larry Kocher, and Sandra Dussault have been working diligently on an exhibit for the fair.



Photo by Tom Wolf Imaging

The Alden exhibit will be housed in the Erie County Fair Historical Building along with several other area exhibits. There are additional attractions both inside and on the grounds. All exhibits will be judged and will compete for monetary awards.

## *Sortie to Silo City*



On June 8, about twenty intrepid Aldenites and friends took advantage of June Justice Crawford’s gracious offer to conduct a tour of Buffalo’s iconic grain elevators, “Silo City.” Guided by pathfinder Conrad Borucki, we explorers navigated the maze of Old First Ward streets, ultimately spying the deviously renamed Childs Street (granted, the new name, Silo City Way, was a bit of a clue), to find ourselves dwarfed by the magnificently hulking relics, the silos and their accompanying elevators.



We were overwhelmed by both the monumental industrial architecture and the contemporary art that now appears throughout, all presented and explained by June. An unscheduled treat was meeting Rick Smith, owner of the “City,” who gave us an impromptu talk. We thank June Crawford and Carol and Conrad Borucki for this unforgettable visit to Western New York’s past.

*Clarke Burke Trustee*

# BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**Thomas A. Steffan**  
 Attorney at Law

**Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys**

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 Ph: (716) 937-9111  
 Email: tsteffan@cookeandstefan.com



**LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL W. COLE, PLLC**

**Michael W. Cole**  
 Attorney and Counselor at Law

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 Alden, NY 14004  
 Tel: (716) 937-0020 Fax: (716) 937-8953  
 croberts@cjrmachine.com / www.cjrmachine.com

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[www.facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety](http://www.facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety)

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 13213 BROADWAY  
 ALDEN, NY 14004

[www.alden.erie.gov](http://www.alden.erie.gov)



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