

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

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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.

Who Is Moses Fenno?

**The Historical Society's Board of Trustees
is in the midst of preparations for their third historical marker.
This new marker will honor Moses Fenno.
Moses Fenno? Who was he?**

Two hundred six years ago, in September 1809, Moses Fenno purchased property in Lot 17, Township 11, Range 5 of the Holland Land Survey. That township would later be named Alden. There were earlier purchasers of property in the northwestern corner of the township, but there is no record of them settling in the town. Moses Fenno and his family did settle in what is now the village the following spring, and planted the first crops. Tradition has it that the Fenno property was in the vicinity of the old Erie Railroad depot and Whistle Stop Inn on Exchange Street.

The early histories of Erie County (Smith, 1884; White, 1898) name Moses Fenno as "a native of Ireland." In fact, Moses's third great grandfather came to Massachusetts before 1629, having been born in England. "Our" Moses was born January 15, 1773, in Milton, Massachusetts, the son of Moses Fenno (1745-1775) and Mary Pitcher (1741-?). He married Sarah Springsteen prior to 1803 and moved to Vermont where two of their children were born, Rebecca in 1803 and

Joseph in 1807. The Fenno family appears on the 1810 census for Clarence (prior to 1823 Alden was part of Clarence in Niagara County; Erie County being formed in 1821). They had five children—a boy under the age of 10 (Joseph) and two girls under the age of 10 (Rebecca-1803, Margaret-1808), plus a boy and a girl ages 10-15. Who the two older children were is not known. A third known daughter, Susan Maria, was born in 1812, supposedly in Rhinebeck Flats, NY.

In 1812, rumors of war were spreading--the Federalists strenuously opposing it, while the Democrats favored retaliation against Great Britain for her unjust acts, even to the taking up of arms. Up to that time, Niagara County had been decidedly Federalist. A law was passed in April of 1812 calling for an organization of an army of 25,000 men. The Federal Republicans as they were then being called formed a committee of representatives from each of the towns; the Democrats did the same. Moses Fenno was one of the representatives from Clarence.

War did come to Western New York. Moses Fenno was a member of Hopkins Regiment of the New York Militia and took part in the Battle of Black Rock on December 30, 1813. By the middle of the afternoon all of Buffalo, save six or eight buildings, was a smoldering ruin. The few homes that had been left in Black Rock were then burned and the British retired across the Niagara River, taking with them about ninety prisoners. Forty or fifty men had been killed. "Most of these lay on the field of battle, but some were scattered through the upper part of the village. They were stripped of their clothing, and lay all ghastly and white on the snow. On most of them the tomahawk and scalping knife had supplemented the work of the bullet." (H. Perry Smith, 1884) Among the dead was Moses Fenno of Alden.

Sarah, widow of Moses, remarried in October, 1814. A widow with five young children would have had to have a man to support her. She married Daniel Gates, who is believed to have been the father of Ira and Justus Gates who, as young men, built a sawmill in Marilla in 1829. Daniel appears in the 1820 census with seven children. There is a boy under the age of 10 who may have been a child of Sarah and Daniel. In 1840, Daniel is living in Alden with only a male child age 15-19. The date of death and burial place for Sarah Fenno Gates is not known. Daniel Gates appears in the 1850 and 1860 censuses living with son Justus in Illinois. He died in 1862.

Moses and Sarah's daughter Rebecca was born August 18, 1803. She married Nathan Clark of Darien on February 4, 1823. They moved to Michigan in 1836 with three children; two more children were born in Michigan. Nathan died September 14, 1844 in Hanover, Michigan. The 1850 census lists Rebecca age 47 living with her youngest daughter, Mary, age 9. In 1855 Rebecca married John L. Rowe. She died June 15, 1875, and is buried in Hanover, Michigan.

Joseph Fenno, the only son of Moses and Sarah, was born in September 1807. He married Betsy Dye in 1841. They were still living in Alden in 1850, but by 1855 had moved to Pennsylvania. They had seven children—an unnamed girl (1840-1850), William (1842-1863) died of typhus in the Civil War, James (1846-1892) was killed by

lightning, Charles (1848-?), Henry (1849-?), Weston (1853-1889) born in Pennsylvania, and Ida (1857-1948). Betsy died in 1896. Joseph died February 7, 1889, and is buried in Beaver Dam, PA.

Margaret Hannah Fenno was born December 5, 1808, in Vermont. She married Amos Rathburn in 1837 in Fulton, Ohio. They had seven children—4 daughters and 3 sons. Margaret died November 13, 1906, in Ohio and is buried in Michigan.

Susan Maria Fenno was born in 1812. She married Jonas Pixley in 1829 and lived in Niagara County for several years before moving to Michigan after 1847. They had 8 children—3 daughters and 5 sons. Two of the sons, Adonijah (1839-1904) and James (1847-?) fought in the Civil War. One daughter, Naoma, had 18 children. Susan died in Michigan in 1907.

An interesting twist to the Fenno story has turned up recently. A man named Kranska contacted the Historical Society seeking information about Moses Fenno. His ancestor is John Carl Kranske (Cransaky), a Hessian soldier defector in the Revolutionary War, who was given permission to go at large in Albany, NY. He was first married to Arabella Kossuth and had a son Jason, born around 1777 in Massachusetts. He then married the widow Mary Pitcher Fenno (mother of our Moses) in 1780. They had three daughters—Rebecca (1780), Polly (1781) and Miriam (1783). Miriam married Jonas Stickney and is buried in the Darien Cemetery on Broadway. Polly Cransaky is known in Alden's history as the first death of a resident in the township; but, she is usually listed as being 18 years old. With a birth year of 1781 and death date of 1812, she would have lived to age to 30 or 31.

As the story goes, it was the death of Polly and her subsequent burial on a forest-covered knoll on what is now the Strate property that prompted her father to ask Judge Joseph Freeman to purchase property for a public cemetery. Freeman bought an acre of land from Aaron Bunce for \$5 and thus began the Alden Village Cemetery, the forerunner of the Alden Evergreen Cemetery. Mr. Cransaky's burial the following autumn was supposedly the first in the new cemetery.

continue on page 3

MOSES and SARAH "Family Tree"

Moses Fenno Jan. 15, 1773 - Dec. 30, 1813 Born : Milton, MA	Married prior to 1803	Sarah Springsteen Date of death and burial place unknown.
Moses and Sarah moved to Vermont where 2 of their 5 children were born. Moses purchased property (in what became Alden) in Sept. 1809. Sarah, widowed when Moses was killed in battle, remarried in Oct. 1814 to Daniel Gates. There may have been a male child of Sarah and Daniel.		

KNOWN CHILDREN of MOSES and SARAH:

Rebecca Fenno Born in Vermont Aug. 18, 1803 - June 15, 1875 Buried: Hanover, MI	Married Feb. 4, 1823	Nathan Clark from Darien Died: Sept. 14, 1844
Move to Michigan 1836 with 3 children, two more born in MI Married John L. Rowe in 1855		

Joseph Fenno Born in Vermont Sept. 1807 - Feb. 7, 1889 Buried: Beaver Dan, PA	Married 1841	Betsy Dye Died 1896
Were still living in Alden in 1850, by 1855 moved to PA. Seven children, one died in Civil War from typhus.		

Margaret Hannah Fenno Dec. 5, 1808 - Nov. 13, 1906 Died in OH - Buried in MI	Married 1837 in Fulton, OH	Amos Rathburn
Seven children		

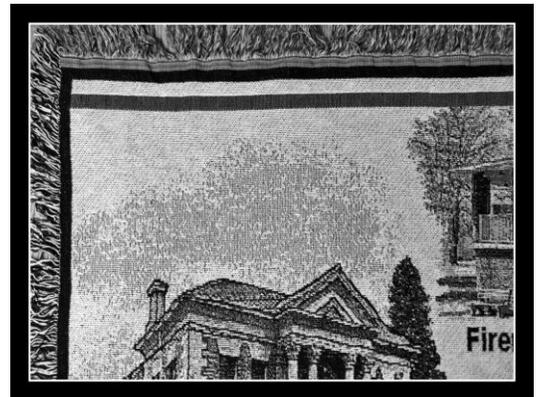
Susan Maria Fenno 1812 - 1907 Died in MI	Married 1829	Jonas Pixley
Lived in Niagara Co. several years, moved to MI after 1847. Had 8 children, 2 fought in Civil War		

***Why a marker honoring Moses Fenno?
He was the first known settler in Alden and Alden's only War of 1812 casualty.***

Karen Muchow, Archivist

Tapestry

Coming in November... The Alden Historical Society will have available for purchase a beautiful 54" X 70" tapestry throw with images from Alden's historical past. Made of 100% cotton, the throw will make a great gift for Aldenites or for those who have moved away and are proud of their home town's history. The throw can be a soft blanket for cold winter nights or would look great mounted on a wall for display. More details on pricing and how you can purchase a throw will be in the next Grannytown Gazette.



Congratulations to the Alden Historical Society
1st Place Overall and 1st Place Best Theme
at the 176th ERIE COUNTY FAIR



Alden Historical Society's Blue Ribbon Effort

Many hours of planning and execution paid off this year for the Alden Historical Society at the 176th Erie County Fair. Competing with more than twenty other Erie County communities, the Alden display was awarded not just one, but two, first place ribbons for its depiction of this year's theme "Our Town 100 Years Ago." One ribbon was for "Best Execution of the Theme," while the other was for "Best Overall Display." (See page 5 for presentation of ribbons.) Although participating for close to twenty years, Alden Historical Society apparently was never chosen as first in either category.

Featured in the exhibit were nine large mounted black and white photos, borrowed with permission, from the Alden Town Hall, Village Hall and Community Center. These photographs

depicted historic locations within the town and village as they appeared one century ago. (Included was a new original painting by Conrad Borucki of the Original Black Water Bath House, simulating an old black & white photo.) Complementing each photo were smaller color photos of these same locations as they appear today. Written descriptions as well as artifacts from each scene helped enrich the display, as did a large old-time map of Alden that pinpointed each location. The challenge of arranging all this material in the assigned 72 square feet of space was met with specially constructed large easels.

The Alden Historical Society hopes to display a scaled-down version of the exhibit, along with the two first place ribbons, in the near future.

Trustees and volunteers responsible were:

**Conrad and Carol Borucki, Larry Kocher, Kyle Kavanagh, Michelle and Sandy Dussault,
and Alden Town & Village Historian Karen Muchow.**

Conrad Borucki & Christopher Gust, Trustees



Alden Historical Society's Erie County Fair Chairman, Conrad Borucki accepts the First Place Award from Deanna (Dee) Zeigel, Town of Wales Historian and Historical Building Superintendent, Erie County Fair and Sally Davis, President of the Erie County Historical Federation during the awards dinner at the fair grounds, on September 23rd. The dinner was open to societies who had exhibits in the historical building. Seventy two guests were in

attendance enjoying a great dinner and slide show presentation of the exhibits at the Historical Building.

In attendance from Alden was Conrad & Carol Borucki, Gil & Sandy Dussault, Michelle Dussault and Kyle Kavanagh.

Photo by: Kyle Kavanagh, Alden Historical Society

Made in America



The Alden Historical Society thanks Dorothy Furtney, Director of Business Development for the Made in America Store, for speaking about the importance of purchasing products "Made in America" and the positive impact on the local, regional and national economies. Dorothy made her presentation at the Society's program on September 10th before a full room at the Community Center. She also had several products that the Made in America Store carries available for purchase.

Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Supper



The Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Supper of the Alden Historical Society, always held in November, includes three components: (1) a pot luck supper, to which attendees bring some of their tastiest dishes, (2) the annual meeting, where reports are read and trustees are elected, and (3) a brief program honoring Veterans Day. This year's meeting will be held at 6 PM on Thursday, November 12, at the Community Center.



The annual meeting portion of the program will begin following the supper and will include reports from the officers and various committees as well as elections for trustees whose terms have expired. There are four openings on the board. Roberta Vincent, who has served as trustee and as president for several years, is not running for reelection. Of the three trustees whose terms have expired, Debbie Crist, Elli DeFilippo, and Christopher Gust, two have agreed to run for reelection. Nominations for the open trustee positions will be accepted from the floor. Terms are for three years.

If you are planning to attend, and we encourage members and guests to attend, please see page 7 for more details about the event.

With Deepest Sympathy



Ralph Davis, Jr., DDS, local dentist, Alden High School grad, and longtime member of the Alden Presbyterian Church, Alden Hook & Ladder Fire Company, Alden Historical Society, and Alden Community Scholarship Foundation, passed away on August 5, 2015, at the age of 90.

Dr. Davis, known around town as "Doc," gave generously of his time, talent, and resources to the many organizations of which he was a member. He served as treasurer of all of the aforementioned organizations in addition to serving as a trustee of the Dr. Raymond F. May Scholarship Fund and as a former Boy Scout leader.

An Air Force veteran of WW II, Doc is survived by his wife, Ruth Layer Davis, former curator of the Historical Society, and four children and their families.

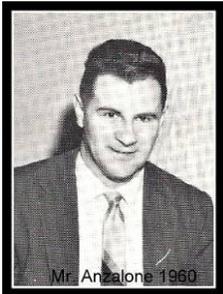


Joe Anzalone The Alden Historical Society lost a dear friend and member with the passing of Joseph Anzalone on June 26, 2015 after a short illness. Joe served as President of the Society for two terms. He volunteered to "house-sit" once or twice a month on Saturdays and loved to take people on tours of the building. Visitors were always quizzed on whether they had attended Alden High School where Joe was the librarian for 27 years, retiring in 1980. His memory of students was amazing and he usually had an anecdote or two about them.

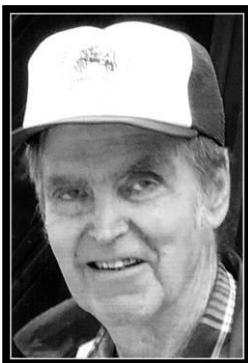
Joe grew up on a farm near Lima, NY and often spoke about attending a one-room schoolhouse. He always said he was the smartest seventh grader there, and the only seventh grader.

He served in WWII as an Italian interpreter for POWs in the Philippines. He also worked for the Central Library in Buffalo and the Lackawanna Library before coming to Alden.

An avid traveler, Joe, wife Louise and daughter Janice traveled in the 48 contiguous states, Canada, Europe, Africa and Mexico. Joe was also an avid reader devouring books, and always had, as he called it, "useless" information to share on Saturdays at the building. He will be missed.



Mr. Anzalone 1960



Jim Roberts died unexpectedly on Sunday, July 5th in Wellsville, NY. Jim and his wife Martha were Life Members of the Alden Historical Society.

It was Jim's father, the late Walden Roberts, who purchased the Roberts home from his aunt and gave it to the Town of Alden to be used by the Historical Society as a museum in memory of Jim's mother Frances Young Roberts.

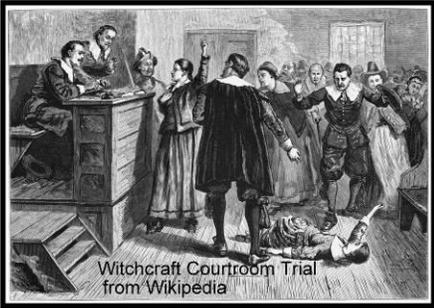
Growing up in Alden, Jim helped his father at Young's Feed Mill. As a student in shop class at Alden Central he built a tree planter and planted many thousand trees in the Alden vicinity.

Jim graduated from Alden Central School, Alfred State College, served in the Army, was transportation supervisor at Alden Central bus garage, and became motor vehicle inspector for New York State, working mostly with school busses.

Jim had two sons, Donald of Scio and Charles of Alden and four grandchildren. An avid reader, he shared his knowledge and expertise with everyone, most of all, his wife, two sons and grandchildren-a legacy for all.

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

October 8, 2015.....THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS



In January 1692 in Salem Village, Massachusetts, two young girls began to suffer from unexplained fits and bouts of hysteria. Seventeen months later, after twenty people were put to death for “witchcraft” and legal action was taken against 144 people, the terrifying, and now infamous Salem witch trials came to an end. Popular speaker and local historian, Greg Kinal returns to examine the traumatic events at Salem and, with his insightful presentation, attempts to help us understand this horrifying, yet fascinating historical event.

November 12, 2015.....POTLUCK SUPPER & ANNUAL MEETING

6 PM, Community Center



It’s time once again for our annual potluck supper and business meeting. Dinner will start at 6 P.M. Please bring a dish to pass in the form of a hot casserole, salad, or dessert and your place setting. Rolls, butter, and beverages will be provided. The annual meeting will begin following dinner. Officers and committees will submit and read their annual reports.



In keeping with our traditional Veterans Day theme, there will be a very brief mention of “Several Hollywood Heroes,” who, despite being stars, braved death to help the allies win World War II. For example: Do you know what famous TV cook was a junior research assistant in the Office of Strategic Services (forerunner to the CIA), married an OSS operative, and devised a new secret spy coding system for the war?

That would be – Julia Childs.

December 10, 2015.....WHO AM I? TRIVIA



Relax. Take a break from the pressures of the holiday season and join us for a trivia game called, “Who Am I?” Actors, athletes, scientists, politicians, musicians, authors, etc. International, national, even local personalities – historical, contemporary...(you get the idea) will be represented. Each person to be identified will have four clues, each clue becoming increasingly specific. The faster you identify the person, the more points you or your team will accumulate.

EXAMPLES:

CLUES

- American actress and singer
- Academy, Tony, Grammy & Golden Globe
- Nine Films with Mickey Rooney
- Over the Rainbow

Who am I? Judy Garland

CLUES

- American Inventor
- Camping with Henry Ford
- Wizard of Menlo Park
- Developed phonograph & lightbulb

Who am I? Thomas Edison

Cowrad and Carol Borucki, Program Committee

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 WINTER 2015

PROGRAM MEETINGS Alden Community Center 7 PM, Except Noted	TRUSTEE MEETINGS Alden Historical Society Building at 7 PM
Oct. 8.....The Salem Witch Trials	Oct. 13..... <u>Members Invited</u>
Nov. 12...Potluck Supper & Annual Meeting 6 PM	
Dec. 10.....Who Am I? Trivia	Dec. 10..... <u>Members Invited</u>

BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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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.



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In the interest of conserving paper and postage, the Alden Historical Society offers paperless transmission of the newsletter. If members wish to receive the newsletter electronically, please notify any officer or trustee or leave a message at 716-937-3700.