



The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

716-937-3700

www.alden.erie.gov

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

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On the Homefront During World War 1

With the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I fast approaching on November 11, 2018, it is appropriate that we look at what it was like in Alden during those war years. We must remember that, though the war raged in Europe from July 28, 1914, to November 11, 1918, America's direct involvement did not begin until April 6, 1917, with Congress's declaration of war after the sinking of seven US merchant ships.

The April 19, 1917 issue of the *Alden Advertiser* (Leo F. Whitney, Publisher) reported on a patriotic mass meeting held on April 12th at Liberal Hall (now Legion Hall). It said: "The people of Alden showed their interest in the National affairs by their presence and the hearty way in which they greeted the different parts of the program." There were a chorus, speeches and resolutions. One resolution was to form a Red Cross organization in Alden, another to form an association to be known as "Alden Patriotic Legion." Both passed unanimously.

In December of that year, the Alden branch of the Red Cross announced they had 395 members, had knitted 25 sweaters and 30 pairs of socks in the previous month and donated \$20 to the Patriotic Legion toward gifts for the Alden boys in service.

There was rationing, but the onus was put on the shop owners. They were to limit the amount sold per person. People were encouraged to have meatless meals on certain days, wheatless meals on other days to allow food stuffs to be sent to the soldiers in Europe.

To Retail Food Merchants

1. We are at war. Food will win it. Our armies and the Allies fighting for us in the field must be fed by America. Our surplus is not sufficient. We must save to win. Especially must we conserve wheat, meat, fats and sugar.

2. Congress has passed a food law which forbids any person to speculate, hoard or exact excessive prices for any necessary food. Every dealer, large or small, licensed or unlicensed, is subject to this law, and is also liable to the stoppage of his supplies if he violates it.

3. Wholesalers and manufacturers are required to sell to you at no more than a reasonable profit above cost. You also are required to sell to the consumer at no more than a reasonable profit above cost to you. Watch the selling prices published by the Federal Food Administrator of your State and see that your prices are not too high.

4. Hoarding is prohibited by law, whether by dealers or consumers. Warn your customers against purchases beyond their immediate needs, and refuse to sell those who attempt to accumulate foods.

5. All combination sales of food products are prohibited, except that you may, if you desire, sell two pounds of corn meal with each pound of sugar and such other combinations as may be hereafter authorized or required by the Food Administration. Protect small stocks not easily replenished by limitation of amount sold each customer according to his actual requirements.

6. The Food Administration is relying upon your patriotic cooperation. You have a great responsibility. We are confident that you will measure up to it. We must win the war.

UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

HANG THIS UP IN YOUR STORE

To Our Customers

In accordance with the ruling of Food Administrator Cusfield, we the undersigned business men of the village of Alden, will close our places of business on Monday afternoon for the next eight weeks, and trust our customers will do their trading accordingly:

H. L. Wright, Druggist
A. J. Thomas,
Wahl Brothers,
W. J. Ffeil,
T. B. Yager, Grocers
J. R. Dean,
U. F. Henry, Hardware
A. J. Roberts, Barber
A. Simme & Sons, Meat Market
A. E. Frantz, Furniture

Jan to March
1918

This little poem appeared in the January 24, 1918 *Advertiser*. The anonymous poet may have said it best:

*My Tuesdays are meatless, my
Wednesdays are wheatless,
I'm getting more eatless each day.
My home, it is heatless, my bed it
is sheetless,
They're sent to the Y.M.C.A.
The barrooms are treatless, my coffee
is sweetless,
Each day I grow poorer and wiser.
My stockings are feetless, my trousers
are seatless,
My God, but I do hate the Kaiser.*

Children took part in the war effort by pledging to earn and give not less than one dollar each to the War Fund Campaign to "Keep the Boys Smiling." Again from the *Advertiser*, "The patriotic manner in which boys and girls met this self-sacrificing appeal to back up the sacrifices of their older brothers 'Over There' is an inspiring indication of the fine spirit of real Americanism in the coming generation." From Alden, St. John's, Town Line and Crittenden, 121 boys pledged \$197; 102 girls from the same schools pledged \$138.50.

The *Advertiser* published the names and addresses of the "boys who are serving their country," a tribute repeated by Joe Weisbeck did in WW II. The first list, published in 1917, consisted of nine names of those who had volunteered for service in the defense of our country. The next list had twenty-one names and addresses. By war's end, more than seventy-five men would have served for varying lengths of time.

Of those seventy-five, seven paid the supreme sacrifice, including Albert Chelius who stayed in France with his French wife, worked for the Red Cross and accidentally shot himself cleaning his pistol. The others were Sgt. Elmer Bass, who died of pneumonia stateside while helping to train troops; Pfc. Walter Hake who was killed in action in France; Pvt. Henry Hodge, who died of pneumonia in France after participating in several battles; John J. Phelan, who died of wounds in France; Capt. Lawrence Platt, who was killed in action in France; and Mech William J. Staebell, who died of wounds in France.

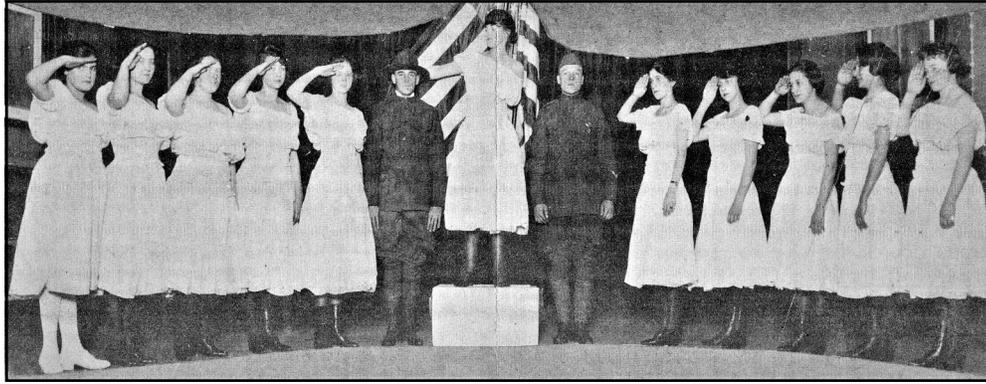
The Village of Alden celebrated the end of the war on November 11, 1918, with a huge bonfire at the intersection of brick-paved East Main Street and Exchange Street, between the two islands. As described by Martin L. Muchow, then a nine-year boy: "All day long people gathered wooden boxes, crates, cardboard cartons and excelsior, obtained from local merchants, to build a mound about 20 feet high and 30 feet in circumference. At dusk a torch was lit to set the mound on fire. As the flames leaped into the sky, great shouts were heard, church bells tolled, then singing broke out. This continued for several hours and then people started to drift to their homes, happy that the 'war to end all wars' had ended. A reminder of the fire was the blackened bricks that remained for several months."

ARMISTICE IS SIGNED
GERMANY SURRENDERS

By United Press
Washington, Nov. 11, 2:30 a. m.---
Government at Washington officially
announced the signing of the armistice
by Germany, which occurred at 5:00 a.m. Paris time.
Hostilities ceased at 11 a. m. News from Washington flashed to St. Paul 30
seconds after announcement was made.

OUR FLAG OUR FLAG

American Boys Delighted



Were You There?

A pageant was put on at Liberal Hall (American Legion Post) in the Spring of 1919. Harriet Swyers Eastland lent us this picture of the cast. They are, left to right, Frances Young Roberts, unknown, Marie Davison Hurry, Marian Van Arsdale Ulmer, Katherine Emery Fenner, Hubert Bernhardt, Lilah Hiller Lupton, Henry Bush, Kathryn Gipple DeWitt, Evelyn Gifford, Harriet Swyers Eastland, Marion Sturm O'Mara, and Constance Baldwin Strang.

The celebration to welcome "the boys" home was held the following year. The headline states that "Thousands Gather For Welcome Home Celebration." Main Street and Buffalo Street (Broadway) were lined with flags, a large parade with bands, marchers and floats was held in the afternoon. The parade line was over a mile long and took about forty minutes to pass. About 1000 people watched a baseball game between Alden and Lancaster teams, with Alden winning 8 to 6. Veterans of all wars were served a "splendid supper" in Liberal Hall served by the ladies of the Liberal Club. A public meeting was held at eight o'clock in front of Liberal Hall. Col. Joseph Ewell gave a speech that "gripped the hearts" of the audience. He and Comrade Swain presented medals to the mothers of the soldiers. It was noted that the Allen family had had five sons in service. Then "the boys" were called to the front and "amid great cheering" were presented with "handsome medals, gifts of the town." The meeting ended with singing and the recitation of a poem written by Henry W. Allen and dedicated to the soldiers and sailors of Alden, which said in part:

*"Our millions answered duty's call,
Imbued with one great purpose all,
To keep our freedom, dearly bought,
The land for which our father's fought;"*

File photos and article by Karen Muchow

New Faces

Come meet our two new staff members as they wait to greet you in our Victorian parlor. The Alden Historical Society building is open for tours the first and third Sunday of the month, except January and February, from 1 – 3 pm. Our building is located at 13213 Broadway (Route 20) in the Village of Alden.



Photo courtesy Christopher Gust

Curator's Corner

New items in the Collection:

- Alden Rexalls hockey sweater
- Historic Route 20 book signed by the author
- 4H sewing kit
- 1911 First Communion candle
- 1945 Men's Wedding Attire
- Frantz and Son Funeral Fan
- Paper and bamboo fan from Japanese exchange student
- 1945 Wedding Veil and gloves
- 1881 Springfield Rifle and unidentified shotgun

As most of you know, our storage space is extremely limited. We cannot accept any more clothing unless it is unusual and has an Alden connection.

Upcoming Displays:

- ⇒ Making and Serving Butter
- ⇒ The many lives of the Alden Medical Supply Building

Message from the President

Your Alden Historical Society hopes that all of our members had an enjoyable summer season. After taking the months of July and August off, our monthly programs at the Community center resumed in September with a look at Western New York's worst environmental disaster, Love Canal. Conrad and Carol Borucki have an interesting schedule of programs planned for the coming months, and we hope that you will have the opportunity to attend some of them.



Despite the summer break from our monthly programs, the Society was quite busy with our annual participation in the themed display contest during the Erie County Fair. This year's display was quite challenging, "Our Community During the World Wars". But Society trustees Larry Kocher and Lynda Tucker, with Historian Karen Muchow and several other volunteers, worked diligently to produce an excellent display that focused on World War II and three aspects of communication; newspaper, US Mail and radio. While always striving for first place, we were pleased with our Honorable Mention ribbon award.

We also noted the beginning of the new school year by opening the Henskee Road one-room schoolhouse during the Alden-Lancaster Art Show. We welcomed several visitors and showed curious children how to make a simple, "old-time" toy – the button hummer. We also placed several Alden-themed landscape paintings from our collection on the walls of the schoolhouse for viewing.

We are also looking for anyone interested in the Society and our collection at the Historical Building to volunteer as docents while the building is open on the first and third Sunday of the month and special events. If you would like to help, please contact one of our trustees.

As always, we appreciate everyone who is a member of the Alden Historical Society and we welcome those who have joined us recently with a new paid membership. If you are reading this issue of the Gazette and are not a current member, please consider joining the Society. We also always appreciate current lifetime members who make donations in lieu of dues. Thank you!

We thank you for your interest and support.

Christopher Gust

Back-To-School At the Henskee Road Schoolhouse

The first of our Family Activity events was held at the Henskee Road Schoolhouse on Sunday, September 9th, during the Alden-Lancaster Art Show. The 1854 one-room schoolhouse, located next to the Community Center, was open to visitors. There were chalkboard games to play and the opportunity to make a button hummer. Several adults said they had always wanted to see the inside and commented on how small the building is, especially considering pupils from first grade to eighth grade were educated in that one room. The Historical Society had several of their Landmark paintings on display. The Society is planning other family events in the coming months.



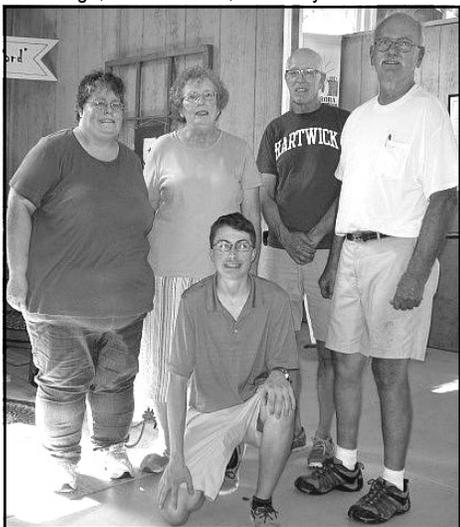
Photo courtesy Christopher Gust

Village to Celebrate 150 Year Sesquicentennial in 2019

Although Alden has had a church since 1813, a post office since 1823, a small log house used as a school, and an Erie County depot since 1843, the Village of Alden was not incorporated until May 7, 1869. The Village and Historical Sesquicentennial committees are working together to plan events throughout 2019, such as an historical dedication marker, time capsule, old fashioned carnival and so much more. Everyone is welcome to attend our planning meetings. The next meeting is Wednesday, October 3, at 6 pm in the Village Hall. Please visit and 'like' our Facebook page: [Facebook.com/Alden Village Sesquicentennial](https://www.facebook.com/AldenVillageSesquicentennial) for updates and to submit your ideas. Thank you.

Alden Historical Society Erie County Fair Display 2018—Evolution of a Display:

Michelle Dussault, Sandy Dussault, Kyle Kavanagh, Clarke Burke, and Larry Kocher



At our first meeting, discussion revolved around the theme announced by the county Historical Society –“World War I and World War II in Our Town”. It was first decided to focus on the impact the Wars had on those remaining at home in Alden. That led to several possible scenes – a living room, post office, newspaper office or honor role of those in the military as it was displayed in the bandstand park during World War II. We had difficulty deciding which scene to depict and finally decided to incorporate all of them. Some initial thoughts on what could be used for each scene were soon developed.

At the next meeting we began formulating the scenes in more detail. It was decided not to use the bandstand as this was a dominant feature just two years ago in our display at the fair. A simple posting of the names, 272 in all, as standalone posters would suffice. Many items from our collection were identified to present the individual scenes. A more specific theme of “Waiting for Word”, meaning our display would depict the importance of communication during the Wars, was adopted. The living room scene would use the antique radio as one source for getting information about the war; the Post Office obviously noted the mail and letters, and the newspaper office for published news.



With a limited floor plan of eight foot deep by nine foot wide, we found incorporating all that we had in mind difficult in such a small space. The living room scene was limited to the radio, rocking chair, table, lamp and a few smaller items. The post office included the Town Line boxes and table with an original post office sign from our collection, plus a couple posters from our military collection. The main element of the newspaper office was an old printing press loaned to us by the Alden Advertiser. The Advertiser also supplied a large sign with correct logo, font and heading from 1943. A large number of Advertiser publications were placed around the press and table.

At our final meeting, a partial setup was completed at the Museum Building. Panels with a “barn-board” pattern were used as the floor and a rag rug set apart the living room. There was a great deal of discussion on how to arrange the positioning of the scenes. All of the items used for the display were gathered. A special sign was painted to present our “Waiting for Word” theme. Signage could not be hung at this time, but possible locations were identified. A nine panel window frame with the traditional Service Flag was to be displayed as well. A schedule for packing materials for transport and setup at the fair was set. The basis for a brochure to be made available at the fair to further explain our display and events in Alden had also been developed.

Upon arrival at the fair grounds on August 5th, items were brought into the historical building and setup begun. Supports were placed above the booth walls from which to hang signage. The main elements were put in place. At this point, it became clear that the predetermined arrangement of the scenes was not going to work. Once placed within the walls of the booth, it was necessary to rearrange things to allow for better viewing of each element. A small sign was placed to further clarify our sub-theme of “Communication during the World Wars”.

A cat and kitten gave life to the living room scene. Our display was competitive and received an “Honorable Mention” and recognition for following the theme as a result of formal judging. Our Society and the Alden Community were presented very well. We are proud of the message we put forth to all those who viewed our display. Dismantling and return of artifacts took place on August 20th. An awards dinner by the Erie County Historical Society was held at the fairgrounds on September 12th.

There were many contributors for our display for research, ideas, suggestions and physical work. They included Archivist Karen Muchow, President Christopher Gust, Larry Kocher, Clarke Burke, Carl Matthies, Lynda Tucker, Sandy Dussault, Michele Dussault, Gil Dussault, Kyle Kavanagh, Shelby Kocher, and Lee Weisbeck (Alden Advertiser). A special thank you to all those that helped in any way.

Article by Larry Kocher

Photo credits Gil Dussault, Larry Kocher, and Christopher Gust

Thank You

We would like to extend a huge thank you for all the helpful ways Lee Weisbeck and his staff assisted us in preparing for our Erie County Fair display. In addition to granting researching privileges, and providing copies of many WW II year's 'tidbits' found in their archives, the Alden Advertiser also provided a printing press to use in our display. The Advertiser also donated a sign using the font and heading found on the masthead from the Alden Advertiser in the 1940s. We truly appreciate all your assistance and we are proud of our hometown newspaper.

Photo supplied



Alden Historical Society Invites Community Participation to Preserve Personal Histories

The Alden Historical Society is excited to announce the launch of a new project this fall titled "Video Diaries: Alden." The project's mission is to preserve the town's history by recording interviews with local residents.

Who are we looking for? Veterans. Local heroes. Immigrants. Sports legends. Civic and business leaders. Long-time residents. Did you serve our country in the armed forces? Were you a member of one of the high school's legendary sports teams? Did you come from another country and make Alden your home? Has your family-run business been serving Aldenites for decades? Did you survive the Blizzard of '77? If you have an interesting story we want to hear it.



How will this work? Starting this fall, members of the production team will conduct video-taped interviews with participants. These interviews will then be edited into "video diaries," mini-movies that will tell the individual's story. The Historical Society will store copies of the videos, thus safeguarding Alden's history for future generations. Also, those participating will receive a copy of their individual video, as a way to help preserve their own family history.

Working with the Historical Society and spearheading the project will be Alden High School alumnus Scott Miller (Class of '87). As an Executive Producer, Scott has run television specials and series for such networks as History Channel, Discovery, National Geographic and A&E. We also plan to enlist the assistance of Alden High School students in this venture.

We encourage anyone who thinks they may have a story to tell to please contact us by leaving a phone message at the Alden Historical Society, (716) 937-3700, or Elli DeFilippo, at (716) 937-7953, or email us at aldenhistsoc@gmail.com. Even if you are uncertain, please give us an opportunity to discuss the project with you.

Article by Scott Miller

We Were Gifted

At the September 12 Alden Senior Citizens member meeting, annual charitable donations were given to four Alden non-profits, including the Alden Historical Society. Society President Christopher Gust was on hand to receive, with appreciation, the donation from Senior Citizen Club President, Ron Mayer. Thank you very much to the Alden Senior Citizens for their generosity.

Article by Christopher Gust

Photo supplied



Donations Gratefully Received From:

Gilbert and Sandra Dussault in memory of Janet Koelbl

Will You Help?

The Historical Society is looking for members who may be interested in assisting as volunteer docents when our building is open on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month and during special events. If you can help, please contact one of our Trustees or call 937-3700 or email aldenhistsoc@gmail.com. Thank you!

please
Join Us!

November 8

6 PM

Please bring a dish to pass, place settings and your appetite!



POTLUCK DINNER

Renewing Family Member

Herbert and Shannon Schmidt Family

Renewing Business Member

Reserve Gas Company, Inc.

Reflections of Alden



The informative 'Reflections of Alden' features many Century Homes and businesses of Alden. These reproductions of paintings by local artists are a wonderful way to remember our hometown. They are available at the Alden Historical Building and the Alden Pharmacy for just \$25.00. Pictured is the Tyler Home/Grange at 13140 Main Street, painted in acrylics by award winning Conrad Borucki. A short history accompanies each photograph.

Love Canal Revisited

John Spagnoli, retired professor from UB's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, discussed Love Canal and the lessons learned at the Alden Historical Society's Sept. 13 program. The infamous Love Canal is an area covering roughly 36 blocks located within the southeastern area of the City of Niagara Falls. The canal was never completed, but was used as a municipal dumpsite by the City of Niagara Falls. The crisis did not become evident until the late 1970's when homeowners in the area began complaining of contaminated sump water, strong chemical odors in basements, a high incidence of health issues, and extensive areas of sterile soil. Contamination is still there, but is not spreading.

The Love Canal crisis was integral in the development of more stringent government oversight and enforcement of environmental protections. It also led to the creation of the Superfund, a tax imposed on oil that generated federal remediation funds used to help remediate Love Canal.

Article by Elli DeFilippo

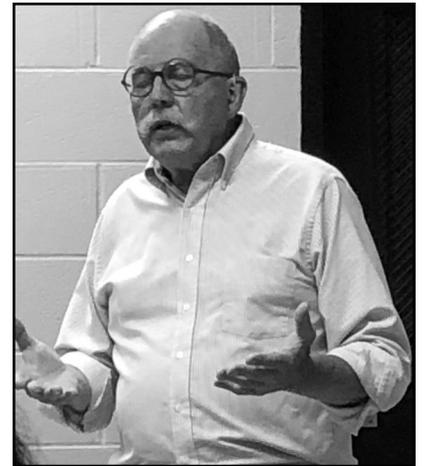
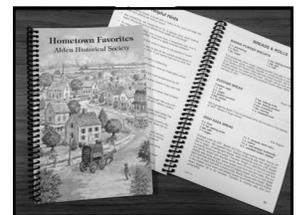


Photo credit Christopher Gust

Historical Items Available at Alden Pharmacy



By popular request, the Historical Society's "Reflections of Alden" and the "Hometown Favorites" community cookbook are now available for purchase at the Alden Pharmacy. The 'Reflections' book is \$25 and the cookbook is \$10. They make nice gifts for Alden residents and transplants, alike. We thank the Alden Pharmacy for their support!



October 11, 2018

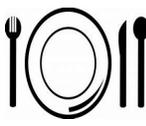
Pearl Harbor—the Day of Infamy



Popular WNY Historian and speaker, Greg Kinal, looks back on this world changing day – the attack on Pearl Harbor and America’s entry into World War II.

November 8, 2018

Pot Luck Dinner/Annual Business Meeting and Mr. Charles Zoerb*



Join us for our annual dinner and membership meeting. Dinner will begin at 6 pm with the acceptance of annual reports and election of trustees to follow. A special guest will speak at 7:30 pm. Alden’s own Charles Zoerb will share his experiences as a ‘legal counterfeiter’ during the Vietnam War.

**Note: You do not have to attend the dinner and business meeting in order to hear Mr. Zoerb’s presentation.*

December 13, 2018

Christmas Shopping in Buffalo



Debra Hall-Stanish, of Buffalo’s *Explore & More*, will look back on the wonderful stores, decorations, window displays and great retailers that made Buffalo their home. In addition, we hope to look at where Aldenites did their shopping here in Alden.



Alden Historical Society’s 9th Annual Bake Sale

Celebrating “Christmas in the Park”

Saturday, December 1, 2018

11 am—4 pm

13213 Broadway, Alden, NY (across from Alden State Bank)



Baked goods may be dropped off at the Historical Society building at 10 am the day of the sale. Please support our bake sale offering goodies donated by our members and friends of the Society. Cash donations in lieu of purchases and donations are also greatly appreciated. The museum will be open for public visitation during the sale, with docents available for guided tours. Call Chairwoman Sandy Dussault, at 716-937-6246 for more information.

Merry Christmas



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 State 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 or 937-6400.

MEETINGS:

Program meetings are generally held at the Alden Community Center on the second Thursday of the month at 7 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, often featuring a guest speaker. You are very welcome to come and share your memories and experiences about the evening's program, followed by an informal social complete with homemade refreshments. In the event of inclement weather, we will postpone when Alden school activities are closed.

Trustee meetings are held at the **Alden Historical Society Building** at 7 PM. Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December. Trustee meetings are open to the membership.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New members are always welcome. Your support will assure that the Alden Historical Society will continue to grow and prosper for years to come.

Please note: The membership year is April 1 through March 31, with the annual renewal due by April 1.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!

ANNUAL DUES

Single \$12.00

Couple \$20.00

Family \$25.00

Business \$50.00

Please include your
Business card

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Phone.....Email.....

Please make checks payable to Alden Historical Society

Mail to:

Lynda Tucker, Membership Secretary

Alden Historical Society

13213 Broadway

Alden, NY 14004

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Membership—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke, Susanne Galbraith, Jennifer Strong

Collections—Jane Burke, Sandy Dussault, Larry Kocher, Karen Muchow

Publicity/Newsletter—Lynda Tucker - Editor, Clarke Burke, Elli DeFilippo, Gilbert Dussault, Susanne Galbraith, Christopher Gust, Carl Matthies,

Program/Refreshments—Conrad and Carol Borucki, Sandy Dussault

Building and Grounds—Larry Kocher, Conrad Borucki, Doris Brade, Christopher Gust

Fundraising—Gilbert Dussault, Jane and Clarke Burke

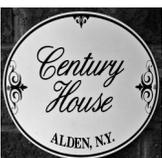
Nominating—Jane Burke, Elouise DeFilippo

Audit—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke

Budget—Clarke Burke, Christopher Gust, Larry Kocher,

Historical Marker/Signs—Christopher Gust, Clarke Burke, Gilbert Dussault, Larry Kocher, Karen Muchow, Jennifer Strong

Century Homes



Although we accept information on any century house, we are now focusing on the 100+ yr old houses located in the town. If you are interested, please email us at: AldenHistSoc@gmail.com. We have Century House signs for sale for \$45. Sue Galbraith



BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RESERVE GAS COMPANY, INC.
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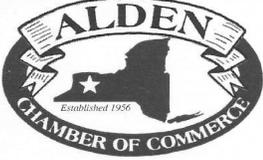
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13500 Broadway
 Alden
 New York 14004

716-937-6177

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LAW OFFICES OF
MICHAEL W. COLE, PLLC

Michael W. Cole
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13349 Broadway Street
 Alden, New York 14004
 (716) 937-9150
 Fax (716) 937-9580
mcole@michaelcolelaw.com

Born, raised, lives and practices in our community, Attorney JENNIFER STRONG is your neighbor and is here to help.

Neill & Strong, Attorneys at Law
 13166 Main Street
 Village of Alden
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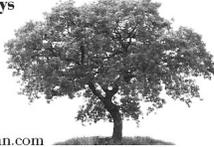

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Alden PHARMACY

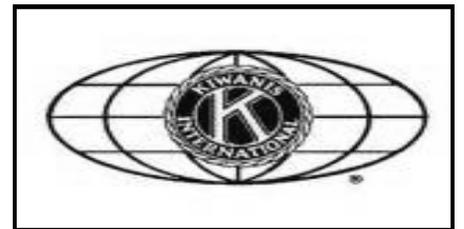


Thomas A. Steffan
 Attorney at Law

Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys

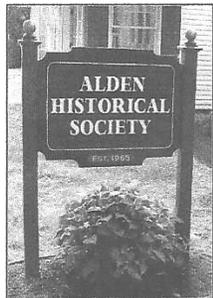


13132 Main Street
 Alden, NY 14004
 Ph: (716) 937-9111
 Fax: (716) 937-4508
[Email: tsteffan@cookeandsteffan.com](mailto:tsteffan@cookeandsteffan.com)



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.



Alden Historical Society
 13213 Broadway
 Alden, NY 14004

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