

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

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aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

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MISSION STATEMENT

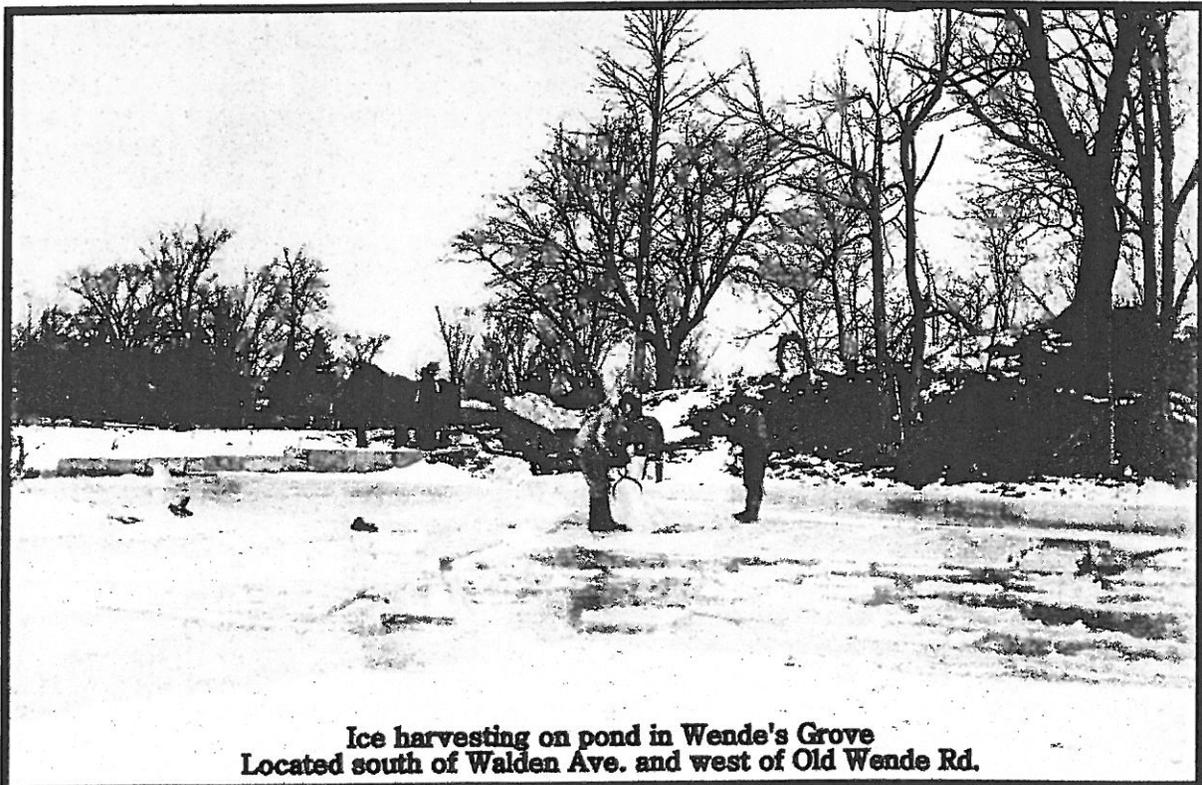
The Alden Historical Society, founded in 1965, is a volunteer-supported organization whose mission is to preserve, promote and present the history of the Town of Alden and its people.

Ice Harvesting

Where did Alden's early settlers keep their perishable foodstuffs? What could be dried, smoked or canned was preserved that way. Deep wells, springs and storage cellars were used to keep food cool.

In the early part of the 19th century, ice houses began popping up on family farms where ponds, lakes or rivers were present or nearby. Later, community ice houses were erected where not only families but also businesses could procure blocks of ice.

Unfortunately, our early maps do not show the locations of these ice houses. Residents on Old Wende Road have found the remains of an ice house on the west side of the road. Bill Dabb has spoken about the foundation of an ice house on his son's property in Crittenden, and Ralph Stowell wrote about getting ice from the ice house behind Wahl's Store (now Alden Medical Supply.) It is presumed that an ice house must have been in the Sandridge area, probably near the mill because the mill pond would have frozen in the winter.



**Ice harvesting on pond in Wende's Grove
Located south of Walden Ave. and west of Old Wende Rd.**

continued on back



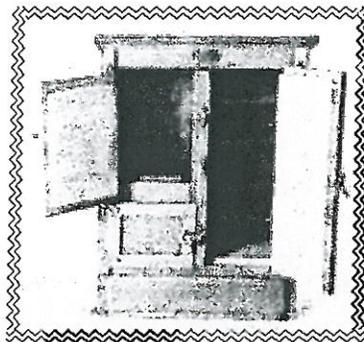
Author Laura Ingalls Wilder described the ice house in Farmer Boy, the story of her husband's childhood near Malone, NY: "The ice house was built of boards with wide cracks between. It was set high from the ground on wooden blocks, and looked like a big cage. Only the floor and roof were solid. On the floor was a huge mound of sawdust, which Father had hauled from the lumber mill." A three-inch layer of sawdust was spread on the floor, on which were laid the blocks of ice three inches apart. The spaces between the blocks were filled with sawdust and tamped down tightly; then the blocks were covered with a three-inch layer of sawdust, ready for the next layer of ice cubes. This process continued until the ice house was filled—a three to four day task.

But where did the ice blocks or cubes come from? In January or February, when the temperatures were the coldest, men would harvest ice from the frozen ponds and creeks. The ice had to be thick enough to support a team of horses (ideally 14-16 inches thick.) This would be determined by chopping a hole in the ice. The area had to be cleared of snow, either by horse drawn scraper or hand shoveling. The ice field was marked with grooves one-half inch deep with a hand plow, first lengthwise and then crosswise. In Farmer Boy, Almanzo's father determined that if the ice was twenty inches thick, then the lines should be twenty inches apart.



Two-handed saws were used to cut a long strip of ice, which would float up and could be dragged onto the ice using a grapple hook to be cut into blocks. Using large ice-tongs, the blocks would be loaded onto a sled or wagon and taken to the ice house.

In the early 1900s, before the invention of electric refrigerators and the advent of electricity in Alden (Village-1921, rural areas 1930s), homes and businesses had ice boxes. These large insulated boxes, with at least two interconnected compartments, had space for a block of ice in the top. The cold air would keep milk and meats at temperatures between 32 and 40 degrees.



Ice had to be added every few days to replace the ice that had melted. It is said that a home required about 300 blocks of ice to cool the icebox all summer. Of course, by this time, the ice was being manufactured in plants and delivered door-to-door by the iceman.

Karen Muchow, Archivist
Daughter of an iceman

With Deepest Sympathy



The Alden Historical Society extends heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends and relatives of *William (Bill) P. Weber, Jr.* who passed away suddenly on October 9, 2013 at age 62. Bill was a life member of the Alden Historical Society and Alden Town Board Liaison, retired ACS teacher, Alden Town Councilman, owner/operator of Weber's Tree Farm. He had many friends, was very well liked and will be sadly missed by all of us at the historical society. Bill was the beloved husband of Rebecca A. (nee Bieger).

Fourth Annual Bake Sale

December 7, 2013



What better way to ring in the holiday season than by preparing traditional favorite family treats? Our members once again shared their traditions and talents, enabling us to host our fourth annual holiday bake sale. Held at

the Historical Society Building, in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce's *Christmas in the Park* celebration, the profit from this sale funds critical operating expenses of the society.

We extend our gratitude to those who made the event possible: to Sandy Dussault for organizing the sale, to our members who made calls soliciting baked goods, to the donors who provided us with baked goods or monetary donations, to those members who worked at the sale, and to those who supported us by purchasing the variety of goods available. A special thank you is extended to Joe Anzalone for graciously escorting visitors through the building during the sale.

CURATOR WANTED

We are looking for someone to serve as Curator. If you are interested, contact Gil Dussault at 937-6246, or any trustee.

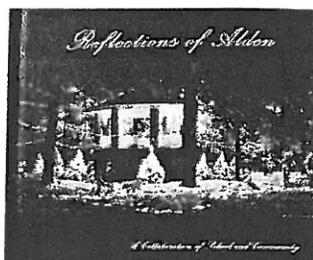
Notes from the President



I must reiterate our gratitude to our members and public who supported our 4th Annual Bake Sale on December 7th. With their help we were able to raise about 20 percent of our annual budget towards expenses, and that is very

meaningful. Kudos to everyone who had a hand in our success.

I must also express gratitude to our docent Mr. Joe Anzalone, who spent some of the day escorting visitors through the building explaining and answering questions about Alden history. He is a real treasure, and I could see how much the visitors enjoyed speaking with him. THANKS, JOE, FOR ALL YOU DO!



We are very grateful to the Smith Family at the Alden Pharmacy for allowing us to place some of the Reflections books in their store. Over the last couple weeks they

sold 5 books by displaying them for sale. The additional outlet proved to be a great suggestion by Karen Smith. At this point, we have placed more of the books at the pharmacy in addition to a few of our Alden Historical Cook Books. Stop in at the pharmacy and check it out....they have many neat things.....and they are nice too!

The Board of Trustees will be meeting shortly to further discuss the vacant Curator position we have. Our hope is to find someone strong in Alden history knowledge, who has great organizational and people skills and has a willingness to spend some time serving the Alden Community in the valuable position. I am confident we will find the right person to fill the slot.

Gilbert Dussault Jr., President

Newly Elected Trustees for term 2013 - 2015



Carl Matthies, a graduate of Alden Central, has resided in Alden for most of his life. He is retired from ATSI, a consulting engineering firm in Amherst, is an active parishioner of St. John the Baptist Church, a former

trustee of the historical society and an 11 year member of the Grannytown Gazette staff. Carl and his wife, Ann, have been married 45 years, and have two children, Kevin and Lisa.



Diane Casell is a life-long Alden resident. Her father's family (Walter Seitz) has lived in Alden for over 100 years. Diane is a graduate of Alden Central. She has been the Administrative Assistant of Town Line Lutheran

Church for 25 years. She serves the community as a Director of the Alden Chamber of Commerce and Co-Chair of the Alden Winterfest Committee. Diane is married to Mark Casell, has 2 children and 1 granddaughter.

Note of Thanks

Your Hometown Paper since 1914

**ALDEN
ADVERTISER**

The Alden Historical Society expresses their sincere appreciation to the Alden Advertiser for their willingness to print our monthly program announcements and summaries, as well as for their ongoing cooperation in assisting us with mailing our quarterly newsletter, THE Grannytown Gazette.

Dues Reminder

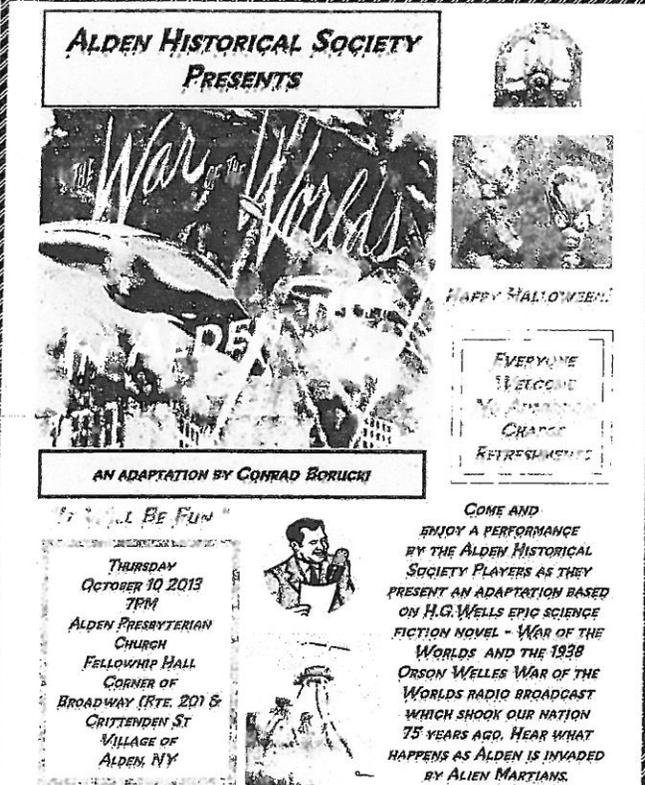
In 2013, we launched our new dues policy. We are asking all members to remit their dues by the annual renewal date of April 1, 2014. We are hoping to eliminate the need for sending out individual reminders. Lifetime members are exempt from annual dues, although some have elected to make donations in lieu of dues, for which we are grateful. Our address is Alden Historical Society, 13213 Broadway, Alden, NY 14004.

Building Closure

Please note that the Alden Historical Society Building will be closed during the months of January and February 2014, except on Saturday, February 1 from 10 am to 2 pm, during the annual Winterfest celebration. The society apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause. If the need arises, you may leave a message on the phone at 937 3700.

REVIEW OF OCTOBER 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

"War of the Worlds"



ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

War of the Worlds

AN ADAPTATION BY CONRAD BORUCKI

EVERYONE WELCOME

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

COME AND ENJOY A PERFORMANCE BY THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLAYERS AS THEY PRESENT AN ADAPTATION BASED ON H.G. WELLS EPIC SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL - WAR OF THE WORLDS AND THE 1938 ORSON WELLES WAR OF THE WORLDS RADIO BROADCAST WHICH SHOOK OUR NATION 75 YEARS AGO. HEAR WHAT HAPPENS AS ALDEN IS INVADED BY ALIEN MARTIANS.

IT WILL BE FUN

**THURSDAY
OCTOBER 10 2013
7PM
ALDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FELLOWSHIP HALL
CORNER OF
BROADWAY (RTE. 201) &
CRITTENDEN ST.
VILLAGE OF
ALDEN, NY**

In keeping with the eerie sights and sounds traditionally associated with autumn, October's program commemorated the seventy-fifth anniversary of Orson Wells' 1938 "War of the Worlds" radio broadcast with a performance of Conrad Borucki's instant classic interpretation of the infamous performance. The script was altered to fit modern day Alden, rather than 1938 Grovers Mill, New Jersey. Loosely following the original story line, Alden's particular assets, both human and geological (slate banks and black water) were woven into strategies for combatting the invaders.

Amid much laughter and audience appreciation, the program transported those in attendance to the North Woods section of the village for much of the action. Characters featured in the play were all based on local residents, both past and present. Among those featured were CBS news correspondent Leo Weisbecker, Alden Historical Curator Sharon Koko, Alden resident and renowned cryptographer Roberta Vinci, world famous astrophysicist Moses Von Fenno, Alden bank official Rich Goebel, NYS Militia Brigadier General Gerhart Overhoff, and Alden town official Lester Vitt.

A highlight was the cliché infested politician's non-talk by Alden Supervisor Studs Gilligan (played to great acclaim by the real item, Bud Milligan). Invasion survivors are already clamoring for a reenactment to mark the seventy-sixth anniversary.

We gratefully acknowledge the Alden Presbyterian Church for the use of their fellowship hall for the performance and the refreshments that followed.

REVIEW OF NOVEMBER 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

**Veterans Memorial Presentation,
Potluck Supper & Annual Meeting**

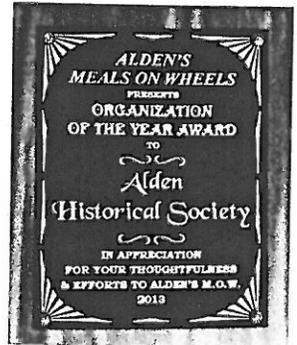


Marlean Roll, Jr. Vice Commander New York State VFW
Bud Milligan, Alden Town Supervisor and VFW member

Prior to the annual meeting, we were given a presentation by Marlean Roll, Jr. Vice Commander of the New York State VFW and Bud Milligan, Alden Town Supervisor and VFW member, concerning the planned Alden Veteran's Memorial wall and walkway. Aldenites who lost their lives in military service will be memorialized on dogtags attached to the memorial wall. Other veterans may be honored with inscribed bricks which will make up the walkway. Bricks may be purchased in two sizes: 4x8 for \$100; 8x8 for \$150. All US military service is eligible. More information may be obtained by phoning (716) 901-0773. A Memorial Day groundbreaking is planned. The VFW is looking for committee member volunteers.

After enjoying a run of good luck during the potluck supper, we commenced the annual meeting with President Gil Dussault leading the presentation of various committee reports. Highlights of the year in review included installation of the secession/reunion historical marker in Town Line, adoption of a new budget system, Erie County Fair honorable mention, Joseph Weisbeck display at the museum, ten outstanding and well attended programs organized by the program committee, continuation of Alden Elementary School's fifth grade visitation program to the museum and Henskee Road schoolhouse, the Society's Facebook presence,

Alden's Meals on Wheels' selection of Alden Historical Society as Organization of the Year, (award shown at right), and the installation of a new roof on the Historical Society building. The Society regretfully accepted the resignations of Trustee Bill Dabb and Curator Karen Muchow. Karen will remain as Archivist. A new curator is being sought. Two new trustees, Diane Casell and Carl Matthies, were elected, and Roberta Vincent was re-elected, all to three year terms.



DECEMBER 2013 PROGRAM MEETING - POSTPONED

In accordance with our standard practice of following the decision of Alden HS after-school programs, the December program, **HOBBIES**, was postponed due to weather conditions. Watch for a coming opportunity to show off your hobby and enjoy those of others.

Judy Hatcher, Elli DeFilippo and Clarke Burke

WELCOME MEMBERS

NEW BUSINESS MEMBER:

Reserve Gas Company, Inc.

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

Debbie Crist, Membership

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

Phone 937 3700

General Fund and Other Donors

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

***Alden Chamber of Commerce
Cornelia & Douglas Cartwright
Ruth & Ralph Davis
Sue & Richard Davis***

***Elli DeFilippo
Marianna Rhodes
Charleen & Joseph Satkowski
Carolyn Tenney***

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

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

JANUARY 9, 2014 OLD FASHIONED HOME REMEDIES
7 PM, Community Center



For centuries, plants have been used to cure a wide variety of human ills. Even such familiar “weeds” as the dandelion have their curative uses. In his highly informative audio-visual presentation, popular botanical authority David Kieber will take us on a fascinating tour of the world of “Herbs and Medical Plants.” How familiar are you with the healing properties of certain plants? Do you have any tried and true remedies for various ailments? If so, come and share your old-fashioned remedies and expand our medical expertise. If not, come and join us in learning how friendly plants can be.



FEBRUARY 13, 2014 AMERICAN CORN
7 PM, Community Center



Remember a day when someone's word was his bond? Remember a time when the “Greatest Generation” demonstrated family values and family togetherness? Local author and talented storyteller Ted Malinowski recalls with fondness this wonderful era – the “Greatest Generation” as it has become known. From his book, American Corn, Mr. Malinowski will share stories reflecting on his own life, and bringing to mind days gone by. If you enjoy the Chicken Soup for the Soul books, you will truly enjoy this program.



MARCH 13, 2014 HOW THE ROADS GOT THEIR NAMES
7 PM, Community Center

Roads and Streets
in the Town and Village
of Alden, NY

Have you ever wondered why some of the roads and streets within our community got their names? Sure – some like Railroad Street, Creekside Drive, and County Line Road are obvious – but what about the others? Who or what were Kellogg, Baxter, Emerson, Lindan, Mercer, Slade, Westcott, and Irving?

There's no street sign for Savage Road – So where is it, and why is it named Savage? Why is Four Rod between Two Rod and Three Rod?

Is it West Main Street, or just Main Street? Have Broadway and Exchange Streets always been named that? Are there streets and roads that can be found on maps and yet were never built? Join us in March as local historian and Alden Historical Society archivist Karen Muchow tells us the story of how the roads got their names.

Conrad 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 every Saturday from 10 to 2 pm. **Please note that the building will not be open during January and February, except on Feb. 1 from 10 am to 2 pm, during the annual Winterfest celebration.**

Tours for individuals and groups may be arranged by calling 937-3700, 937-6400 or email aldenhistsoc@gmail.com.

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 and share your memories and experiences about the evening's program. Afterwards 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. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December (even months). Trustee meetings are open to membership.

OFFICERS

<i>President</i> Gil Dussault	<i>Alden Town Historian</i> ... Leonard Weisbeck
<i>V. President</i> ... Roberta Vincent	<i>Alden Town Board Liaison</i> vacant
<i>Secretary</i> vacant	<i>Editors</i> Elli DeFilippo/Carl Matthies/ Clarke Burke/Chris Gust
<i>Treasurer</i> Clarke Burke	<i>Publicity</i> Elli DeFilippo/Chris Gust/ Judy Hotchkin
<i>Curator</i> vacant	
<i>Archivist</i> Karen Muchow	

TRUSTEES

Fred Blowers	Gil Dussault
Conrad Borucki	Chris Gust
Clarke Burke	Larry Kocher
Diane Casell	Carl Matthies
Debbie Crist	Roberta Vincent
Elli DeFilippo	

2014 Officers

President - Gil Dussault
Vice President - Roberta Vincent
Secretary - vacant
Treasurer - Clarke Burke
Ex-Officio Appointments
Curator - vacant
Archivist - Karen Muchow
Town Historian - Len Weisbeck

2014 Committee Chairs and members

Membership - Debbie Crist
Collections - Larry Kocher
Publicity/Newsletter - Elli DeFilippo; Chris Gust, Carl Matthies, and Clarke Burke
Program/Refreshments - Conrad and Carol Borucki / Roberta Vincent
Building and Grounds - Larry Kocher; Fred Blowers

Fundraising - Gil Dussault
Nominating - Elli DeFilippo and Jane Burke
Audit - Chris Gust ; Clarke Burke, and Larry Kocher
Budget - Clarke Burke; Larry Kocher, Chris Gust
Historical Marker/Signs - Gil Dussault
Erie County Fair - Conrad Borucki

BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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 Email: steffan@cookandteffan.com

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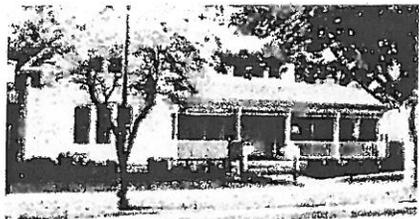
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www.facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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 and put e-newsletter in the subject line. Thank you.