

# THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

Published Quarterly ..... April 2012

## 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.

## Growing Up Along the Cayuga



*Painting of Cayuga Creek*  
*Artist: Susan Lauck*

A recent post on the “Memories of Alden” page on *Facebook* brought numerous comments from those who grew up on or near Cayuga Creek. They spoke of a childhood quite unlike that of many children today.

Cayuga Creek, one of the two large creeks in the Town of Alden, enters Alden from Marilla, runs a little northwest and passes into Lancaster near the southwest corner of the town. It was the site of several mills, and determined the course of an early road in the central part of the town. That road called Cayuga Road then became what we call Broadway now.

There were memories of swimming at the Iron Bridge (photos on next page) where Clinton Street crosses the Creek, and memories of the serious diving accidents. However, most of the memories came from those who lived near the Creek on one of the “Rod Roads” or on Blossom Lea or Creekside, Donna Ruhland Bonning wrote:

*“We used to make homemade little boats out of sticks and such and when the creek was almost bone dry in the summer, we’d float the boats down the little channels of water that were left. We went through lots of old sneakers—always smelled a little funky when we went home. We swam near the Three Rod Road bridge with our sneakers on—feet would get cut to shreds on the shale bottom if we didn’t.*

*I remember standing in the water in one of the deeper pools and watching as the minnows nipped our legs. Always lots of crabs in the rocks to catch for bait. Chubs and suckers as well. There were parts of the shale bottom that were smooth—those were the places to walk, and there were slimy algae covered areas. Step on those and you might go flying!”*

*Continue next page*

She went on:

*"We played in the sand and made castles and my brothers made bike jumps. They actually dammed up a little stream and flooded the entire area at one time."*

Others recalled picnics along the creek. Keith Kruse remembered a time he and a friend built a fire to cook their hotdogs and beans and forgot to open the can of beans. Just when they went to get the can out of the fire it exploded and sprayed their faces and shoulder with hot beans. He said they laughed for hours.

There were memories of winter on the creek when the boys would shovel off the ice to play hockey. One girl remembers ice skating on the creek as much as possible after school, pretending she was Peggy Fleming.

Barbara Bordonaro Sobczak remembered the sights and sounds of the ice breaking in the spring.

*"Some years when it broke, you would have thought there had been an explosion. Huge, huge pieces of ice were floating down and being pushed up over the banks."*

The ice would move downstream and scrape along the banks and carry old trees and giant rocks as it went. Barbara added,

*"The whole neighborhood would ban the kids from going anywhere near the creek."*

It may have been the ice that removed an old, hallowed out tree that some remembered. It was found on the bank after a massive rainstorm, so large they could climb in it and make a fort. It either was washed away in another rainstorm or moved by the ice. Memories are not clear. They wondered who got to play in the tree next.

Some remembered the fossils they found in the shale, bringing home pockets full. One scientific person identified the fossils as those of brachiopods. Coleen Bontrager Czechowski remembered the out-of-town school buses that brought students to hunt fossils along the creek.

Barbara remembered that

*"further down from my house on Creekside, the creek turned and we swam at what we called "The Big Rock." It was deeper there. I remember the neighborhood boys swinging from vines that hung from the trees and dropping in the water. There may have been a few Tarzan yells when swinging! Such fun and so many memories until someone built right on the bend and decided we couldn't swim in "His" creek anymore. I remember going down there with my son and seeing how small "The Big Rock" had become. Erosion or because I wasn't ten years old anymore?"*

Donna remembered going down to the creek with her children and for a moment

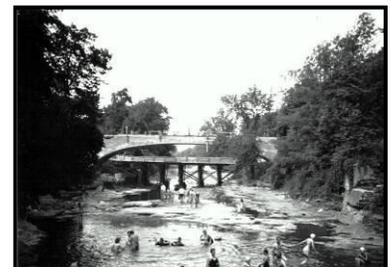
*"glancing off at a familiar bend in the creek and losing myself for a brief second and thinking a childhood friend would be coming around the bend at any second. Then my mind rushed forward and I was in the present and there were MY kids enjoying the creek as I did when I was a kid. The place hasn't changed a bit.*

*These memories may be best concluded by one closing remark in a post: "What a truly lovely childhood we all had!"*

*Karen Muchow* Curator



The original "Iron Bridge" is shown on the left. This bridge was replaced in the late 1940's with the concrete arch bridge as shown under construction on the right. Note the temporary bypass bridge in the back ground. This was a favorite swimming spot for many of the locals. Photo on right was taken by Alden resident Mr. Ralph Stoos whose longtime hobby was photography. View is looking North from where a dam once stood for the "Iron Bridge Mill".



## Alden Trivia Game

Back by popular demand the program on January 12, 2012 was all about Alden Trivia. Conrad Borucki was our quiz master setting up three competing teams for prizes and glory. It was a very close game ending up with it going into "overtime" to break a tie. Here is a sampling of the questions:

1. This area within the town is now spelled as one word, but at one time it was spelled with two separate words.
2. Panza Nature Trail was named for a former chairman of the AECC. What does AECC stand for?
3. On Christmas Eve 1949 a great fire in the village destroyed this landmark. Name the landmark.
4. In what year was the Village of Alden incorporated?
5. Ellicott Creek's old name was \_\_\_\_\_ mile creek.

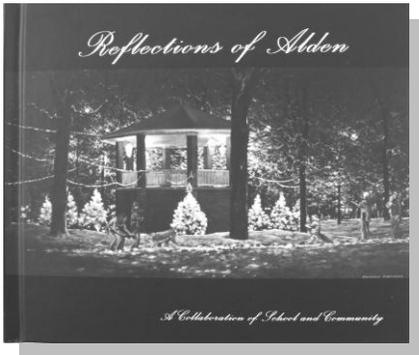
### Answers:

- 1) Millgrove
- 2) Alden Environmental Conservation Commission
- 3) Empire Hotel
- 4) 1869
- 5) Eleven Mile Creek

*As usual we are very appreciative for the efforts of Conrad and Carol Borucki and Karen Muchow for planning, presenting and/or researching questions/answers for this fun-filled program.*

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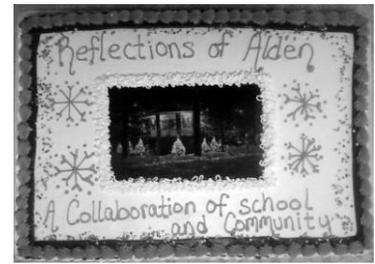
## Reflections of Alden Book Signing



On February 26, The Alden Historical Society hosted the artists and authors of the greatly anticipated Reflections of Alden. The book was a collaborative project created by the Alden Middle School Art Department, Alden Art Club, and Alden Historical Society. Artists were available to sign purchased copies on that day.

We'd like to especially thank Project Coordinator Andrea Kersten of the Alden Middle School Art Department, Alden Art Club President Conrad Borucki, and Alden Historical Society Curator Karen Muchow. Additionally, we'd like to thank the many students and art club artists, members of the Alden Middle School faculty and Alden Historical Society who conducted the research and wrote the descriptions depicting the historical sites featured in the book, and the Alden School District administration for their support of the project.

Copies of the soft cover, spiral-bound Reflections of Alden, are available at the Historical Society Bldg. from 10 to 2 on Saturdays. The price is \$25. Shipping is available for an additional \$5.



*A big thank you to Alden Tops market for the large and delicious sheet cake (shown at right) and to Henry's Candy & Gifts, for the plates of chocolate candies, Darrows for the macaroni and cheese and McGavins for the chicken salad sandwiches.*

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## 100th Anniversary of the Girl Scouts of America



The Alden Community Center was the setting for our March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012, meeting in celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Girl Scouts of America. Our guest speaker was Mrs. Ruth Phillips from Girl Scout Troop 1233, Lancaster, which is part of the Como Lake Service Unit (composed of troops from Alden, Lancaster and Depew). With Mrs. Phillips were several girl scouts from this unit ranging from Brownies, to Junior Scouts to Cadets.



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Girl Scouts of America began on March 12, 1912, then known as Girl Guides of America. The Girl Guides were very popular in England and Scotland at the time. It was Juliette Gordon Low from Savannah, Georgia (born there in 1860), who founded the Girl Guides in America. In 1913 the name was changed to Girl Scouts of America with headquarters in Washington, D.C. Juliette Gordon Low completely supported the organization financially. She was the president from 1915 to 1920.

In addition to preparing girls for traditional homemaking, she also encouraged them to pursue professional involvement in the arts, sciences and business.

Juliette died in 1927, leaving behind an organization that has grown from the original 18 girls to over 3.7 million members, the largest education organization for girls in the world. In 1979 she was installed in the Woman's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York.

*Along with Girl Scout Cookies Mrs. Ruth Phillips brought with her several Girl Scout artifacts for viewing. We wish to thank Mrs. Ruth Phillips for this very informative program as well as all the Girl Scouts that were present.*

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### *Interesting Trivia*

“TYPEWRITER” is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the keyboard.

The average person's left hand does 56% of the typing.

“Stewardesses” is the longest word typed with only the left hand.

“Lollipop” is the longest word typed with your right hand.

The sentence: “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog” uses every letter of the alphabet.

The words “racecar,” “kayak,” and “level” are the same whether they are read left to right or right to left (palindromes).

There are only four words in the English language which end in “dous”: tremendous, horrendous, stupendous and hazardous.

There are two words in the English language that have all five vowels in order: “abstemious” and “facetious.”

No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver or purple.

“Dreamt” is the only English word that ends in the letters “mt”.

Antarctica is the only continent where owls are not found.

Many species of owls have special flight feathers adapted for silent flight.

The field of view for an owl is about 110 degrees, with about 70 degrees being binocular vision.

A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.

An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

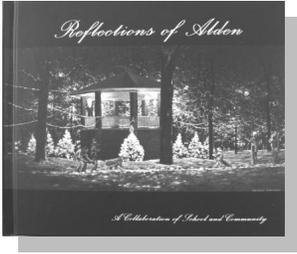
A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.

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## *Notes from the President*



The response to Reflections of Alden, a pictorial and biographical book of places in Alden has been wonderful. I have heard from many individuals both locally and out of town that they are extremely pleased with the work which is comprised of artistic talent, extensive historic research and interesting writing. We are very grateful to those individuals who worked so hard and so very long to produce the Alden treasure. Their gift of time and effort has provided the Alden community a time everlasting remembrance of Alden history that deserves a place in every home in Alden.

I would encourage our membership and others who value our Alden experience to add this book to their library before our supply of books are gone.



Attendance at many of our special programs has increased the past few years. Our Program Committee has done an outstanding job of putting together interesting and pertinent presentations that represent your Historical Society very well to the public. We are pleased to see many new faces coming to the meetings with regularity. Our members should take the time to attend the special programs which frequently highlight Alden and WNY history. You will not be sorry.



Many displays at the Society building on Broadway have changed recently and are very well done. Our Curator, Karen Muchow, works very hard to present Alden history in an interesting light for the new and frequent visitor. There is always something new to see and learn about. Please take the time to visit us and enjoy.

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### Curator's Report

We have received several donations in the new year:

1. Susan Bush donated some Girl Scout items that are in the new Girl Scout display.
2. Sheila Strong Metzger donated a box of doilies, a suitcase, a doll dress and doll quilt.
3. Pauline Bress donated metal hair curlers and finger wave clips from her mother's, Edith Sturm Munn, beauty shop.
4. Perhaps one of the more interesting items is the published transcript of the case "US vs. Douglas Cartwright" before the US Supreme Court. Doug was the executor of his grandmother's estate, his grandmother being Ethel B. Bennett, wife of Arthur Y. Bennett, founder of Bennett Manufacturing Co. He protested the paying of estate tax on the public offering price of mutual funds rather than on the redemption price. The Supreme Court ruled in his favor.

Copies of the soft cover, spiral-bound *Reflections of Alden*, are available at the Historical Society. In connection with the release of the book, there will be a special display featuring some of the paintings, along with relating artifacts and ephemera, at the Society building until April 30.

*Karen Muchow* Curator

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*With Deepest Sympathy*

The Alden Historical Society extends heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends and relatives of *Agnes M. Weisbeck*, who passed away on March 8, 2012. Agnes was a life member of the Alden Historical Society where she had many friends and will be sadly missed. Agnes was the beloved wife of the late Mark Weisbeck.

**Welcome New & Renewed Members**

**RENEWED MEMBERS:**

Michelle Dussault  
Amy Froebel  
Margaret Gornewicz  
Maryann Sardella

**NEW MEMBERS:**

Thomas Dickinson

**BUSINESS MEMBERS:**

Alden Advertiser  
Alden Community Scholarship  
Foundation  
Alden State Bank  
Elwood-Jordans Agency, Inc  
Neill & Strong, Attorneys

**RENEWED FAMILY MEMBERS:**

Carol & Conrad Borucki Brian & June  
Brian & June Dussault family  
Kristen & Ron Kavanagh  
Carl & Ann Matthies

**NEW FAMILY MEMBERS:**

John Randazzo family

**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. Thank you for your support.

**DUES**

Single .....	\$8.00	Name.....	.....
Family ... ..	\$12.00	Address .....	.....
Lifetime.....	\$75.00	.....	.....
Business....	\$45.00	Phone.....	Email.....

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

Judy Hotchkin, 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

A special thank you to the ALDEN ADVERTISER for donating membership cards to the Alden Historical Society.

*Judy Hotchkin, Membership*

## Display for Erie County Fair

August 8-19



Committee Chairman Keith Stone is asking for volunteers to assist in planning and setting up a display at the Erie County Fair Historical Building. The theme for the fair this year is

**WILD ABOUT THE FAIR.** If you have some ideas for a display Keith would like to hear from you. Also if you would like to take part in sharing the honor of setting up an award winning display give Keith a call at 937-6050.

Graphic compliments of Erie County Fair



Photo of Erie County Fair Historical Building by Tom Wolf Imaging

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## Refreshments for Program Meetings



We are always in need for volunteers to provide refreshments at our program meetings. Some members team up with others in preparation of this honorable duty. Your reward is the smiles on others as they enjoy the fruits (or desserts) of your labor. You'll find it to be very satisfying, especially for those of us who get to satisfy our palettes. All you have to do is dial **937-9256** and let Roberta know you welcome this culinary opportunity with open arms. Now go dial that number!



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## Wanted: Housekeepers



The Building and Grounds Committee needs help with the housekeeping tasks at the Alden Historical building. The monthly tasks include dusting, cleaning the glass on the display cases, vacuuming, sweeping the upstairs floors, sweeping and washing the bathroom and workroom floors and cleaning the bathroom. The work may be done on Saturdays, before we open at 10 am or after we close at 2 pm, or at other times as arranged with Karen at 937-6400. Sign up for a month by calling Karen at the above number or leaving a message at 937-3700.

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## Grannytown Cookbook Recipes Still Needed



Many thanks to those of you who have been kind enough to submit recipes for the Grannytown Cookbook, planned for Christmas 2012 publication. We are still in need of many more submissions and would like to include your recipe(s)—family favorites, those handed down through the generations, and others you especially like. You may mail them to the Society at 13213 Broadway, Alden, NY 14004 or send them to [AldenHistSoc@gmail.com](mailto:AldenHistSoc@gmail.com).

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## “Grannytown” Going Green

With increasing frequency, we all routinely receive requests to “go paperless” from various institutions, most notably banking institutions, utilities, and credit companies. In the interest of conserving paper and postage, the Historical Society is also offering paperless transmission of the newsletter, beginning with the current edition. If you wish to receive your copy of the newsletter electronically, please send your email address to [aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com) and put **e-newsletter** in the subject line.



## HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING

The ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S many exhibits are located in the Alden Historical Society Building at 13213 Broadway, in the village, across from the 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. 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.

**Trustee meetings** are held at the Alden Historical Building at 8:00 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.

<u>OFFICERS</u>		<u>TRUSTEES</u>	
<i>President</i> .....Gil Dussault	<i>Society Historian</i> <i>Alden Town Historian</i> ...Leonard Weisbeck	Fred Blowers	Judy Hotchkin
<i>V. President</i> ...Roberta Vincent	<i>Alden Town Board Liaison</i> .....Bill Weber	Conrad Borucki	Larry Kocher
<i>Secretary</i> .....Kris Rogers	<i>Editors</i> .....Elli DeFilippo/Carl Matthies/ Clarke Burke	Clarke Burke	Kris Rogers
<i>Treasurer</i> .....Elli DeFilippo		Bill Dabb	Sal Sardella
<i>Curator</i> .....Karen Muchow	<i>Publicity</i> .....Judy Hotchkin	Elli DeFilippo	Roberta Vincent
<i>Archivist</i> .....Karen Muchow		Gil Dussault	

### Committee Members

**Buildings & Grounds**..... Fred Blowers, Trustee; Larry Kocher, Kris Rogers

**Membership**..... Judy Hotchkin, Trustee; Laura Loehr

**Program**..... Conrad Borucki, Trustee; Carol Borucki, Sue Muench,  
Sal Sardella, Roberta Vincent

#### **Publicity**

*Announcements/News Articles*..... Judy Hotchkin, Trustee; Laura Loehr

*Newsletter*..... Elli DeFilippo, Trustee; Carl Matthies, Clarke Burke

**Collections** ..... Keith Stone, Karen Muchow, Curator/Archivist,  
Bill Dabb, Trustee; Thelma Dabb, Sandy Dussault

**Fund Raising**..... Gil Dussault, Trustee; Kris Rogers, Roberta Vincent

**Audit 2012**..... Clarke Burke, Trustee; Laura Loehr

**Nominating**..... Roberta Vincent, Trustee; Sue Galbraith

#### **Special Committees:**

*Alden Historical Cookbook* ..... Kris Rogers, Trustee

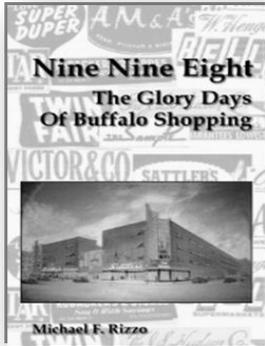
*Alden Fireman Parade Float, June 2012*..... Kris Rogers, Trustee

*Erie County Fair, Aug 2012* ..... Keith Stone

Volunteers are always welcome and encouraged to assist

# MONTHLY PROGRAMS

APRIL 12, 2012 ..... 998 The Glory Days Of Buffalo Shopping  
7 PM, Community Center



Western New York author, Michael Rizzo, will discuss his highly popular book **Nine Nine Eight-The Glory Days Of Buffalo Shopping**. This book takes a nostalgic look at Buffalo area stores, businesses and institutions no longer in existence. This book, as well as other books authored by Mr. Rizzo will be available for purchase at this meeting.



*The program will conclude with a "walk down memory lane" as guests reminisce about stores and businesses now gone from the Alden landscape.*

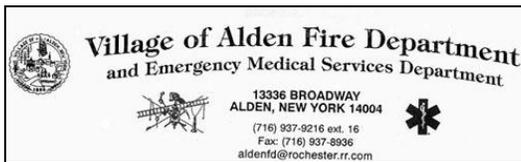
MAY 10, 2012 ..... Civil War Field Music  
7 PM, Community Center



Hull House Civil War Encampment, 2011.  
Photo courtesy Gary Howel

Jim Pace and Brian Seibel from the **Union Volunteer Fife and Drum Corps** will present an in-depth and detailed discussion of Civil War field music, musicians and instruments with an accompanying power point slide show showing historical images. Dressed in historically accurate musicians' uniforms of the Union Army, the presenters will demonstrate the fife and drum-playing various tunes used for marching, camp duty, tactical command and entertainment. Civil War field music was an often overlooked yet essential part of that dramatic conflict.

JUNE 14, 2012 ..... Emergencies of Alden's Past  
7 PM, Community Center



Longtime Alden Hook & Ladder Fire Co. volunteer, Bob Iggulden, will offer a program on calamities, challenges and catastrophes in the history of Alden. Bob has a treasure trove of stories and anecdotes. Learn from these or share your own personal experiences. Bob will also give a brief history of the Alden Fire Department.

**BONUS:**     JUNE 16, 2012 ..... Buffalo Fire Historical Museum  
2 PM, 1850 William St., Buffalo



Historical Society members have been invited to go on a guided tour of the Buffalo Fire Historical Museum located at 1850 William Street (corner of N. Ogden St.) We will meet at 2 PM on Saturday June 16 at 1850

William Street. At the Museum you will see equipment dating back to the mid 1800's. The museum also features a unique visual simulator that personally recreates that childhood dream of what it would be like to steer the back of the fire truck.

**ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
DATES TO REMEMBER  
SPRING 2012**

<b>PROGRAM MEETINGS</b> Alden Community Center at 7 PM <u>except noted</u>	<b>TRUSTEE MEETINGS</b> Alden Historical Society Building at 8 PM
<b>APRIL 12.....<u>Nine Nine Eight</u> Glory Days of Buffalo Shopping</b>	
<b>MAY 10.....<u>Civil War Field Music</u> Music, Musicians and Instruments</b>	<b>APRIL 5.....Members Invited</b>
<b>JUNE 14.....<u>Emergencies of Alden's Past</u> Review of Alden Hook &amp; Ladder</b> <b>JUNE 16..<u>Buffalo Fire Historical Museum</u> Guided tour; self-drive 1850 William St., Buffalo, Sunday 2PM</b>	

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
13213 BROADWAY  
ALDEN, NY 14004

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



ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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New York State Education Department  
[aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com)  
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