

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

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.

Looking Back at the Civil War through the Eyes of an Alden Soldier

"I hope this cruel war will close this winter and we allowed to go home and have universal peace throughout our land"



These are the words of nineteen-year-old Samuel Young of Alden in a letter to his parents on December 10, 1863, from New Iberia, Louisiana.

Samuel had enlisted in the 116th Regiment of the New York Volunteers on August 7, 1862. He was the son of Luther and Philinda Young of Four Rod Road. He had been born in Freetown, Cortland County, on December 26, 1843, and came with his parents to Alden before 1850.

In his letters, which the Alden Historical Society has, thanks to the Gilmore family, he wrote of the tedium of camp life, the battles, and his opinion of the management of the war. He was wounded in the left ankle at the battle of Port Hudson, Louisiana, on May 27, 1863. A "slight wound" as he called it, but one which took until July to heal enough for him to go back to his regiment. During that time he was hospitalized in Baton Rouge. Henry Grimes of Alden was also badly wounded in the same battle and was hospitalized in New Orleans. Henry Grimes died of his wounds on August 14, 1863, after three inches of bone had been removed from his leg.

Samuel often reassured his parents, and asked them to send on the word that "the Alden boys" were doing well. The Alden boys included: Edward Eels; Garret Van Brocklin; William Bump; Frank Blackman; Norton Lougee; Joseph Traynor; George Bentley; Charles, Curtis, Horace and William Rose; Ed Bacon; Isaac and Elbridge Gary; John and Peter Swain; and Fred Schmeading. In one letter Samuel sent along a message from Fred Schmeading to Fred's wife, telling her to "write often, he has had but one letter in 4 months."

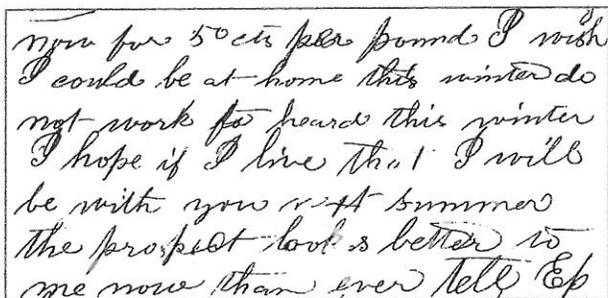
A death that hit Samuel especially hard was that of his friend Edward Eels of West Alden on July 23, 1863. As Samuel described it: ***"He came to camp on the 10th of this month but did not appear to be very sick until 2 or 3 days before he died. I saw he was failing and got him to go to the hospital and stayed with him most of the time. The day before he died he looked better and said he felt better...The wet and warm weather did not agree with him. The steward said there was no particular disease about him. Said he was worn out by fatigue."***

Continue on page 2

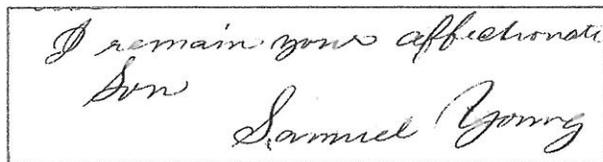
Samuel's last letter to his parents is dated March 27, 1864, from Alexandria, Louisiana. On April 8, 1864, he was hit by a spent ball (*bullet*) under the right eye and retired to the rear for a few moments but soon returned to help his comrades in their desperate struggle for victory. After firing two or three rounds he became faint and dizzy, and upon the advice of those near him, turned to leave the field. He fell pierced through the left chest by a rifle ball and was soon carried to the rear in a very weak and suffering condition. After this nothing definite could be learned about him.

He is listed on a headstone in the Alden Evergreen Cemetery, but is not buried there. Samuel Young was 20 years, 3 months and 14 days old when he died.

You may read Samuel's letters at the Alden Historical Society. We have the actual letters along with a small notebook of transcribed letters done by a relative. Below you may read a portion of his letter. His penmanship is legible and in the style of the day, but punctuation is lacking.



you for 50 cts per pound I wish
I could be at home this winter do
not work for board this winter
I hope if I live that I will
be with you next summer
The prospect look is better to
me now than ever Tell Ep



I remain your affectionate
Son
Samuel Young

Karen Muchow, Curator

3rd Annual Alden Historical Society Bake Sale



Our Third Annual Bake Sale will be held on Saturday, December 1, 2012, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Historical Society Building on Broadway across from the Alden State Bank. The sale will coincide with the Alden Chamber of Commerce premier community event—"Christmas in the Park" which traditionally draws many visitors to the Alden downtown area.

Trustee/Member Volunteers will be asked to donate baked goods for the sale and assist the sales process at our building that day.

Cash donations are always welcome and appreciated. More details will be available at our October and November Program Meeting and in the Alden Advertiser. Last year's sale was a great success raising over \$800 towards operating expenses.



Also note that the Alden Historical Society Cookbook may be available for sale, in addition to Reflections of Alden, the pictorial collection of historical Alden Buildings. You may wish to consider giving either of the books as holiday gifts.

Many thanks to those of you who have been kind enough to submit recipes for the Grannytown Cookbook, planned for Christmas 2012 publication.
Thank You

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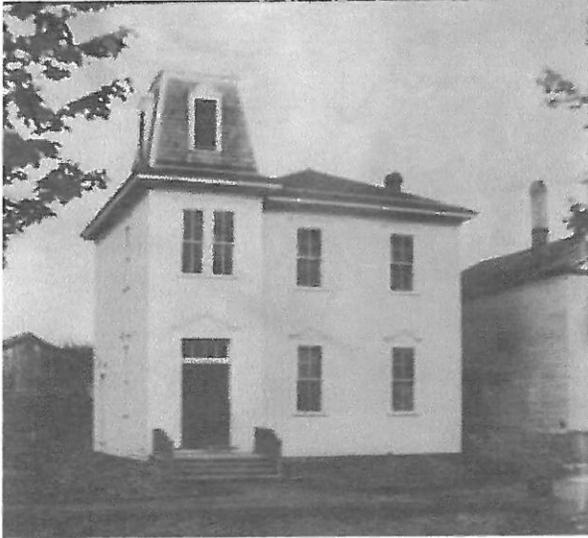
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We are very grateful to the Weisbeck Family and the Alden Advertiser for their support of the Alden Historical Society and other organizations for many years. Their unselfish dedication and service is a special blessing to our community We truly appreciate their contribution to making Alden a better place to live, work and play.

Gil Dussault, President

ALDEN DISTRICT No. 10 SCHOOLHOUSE

Union Grade School



Alden District No. 10 Schoolhouse

Note the Presbyterian Church to the right of the schoolhouse and thus the name "Church Street." The church has long since been removed and is currently a parking lot.

The building located at 1470 Church St., that is now home to the Alden Christian Theater Society was built in 1879 as the schoolhouse for School District #10. District #10 encompassed the Village of Alden. This school replaced a school on the same site that is shown on an 1866 map of the Village. That one-room schoolhouse is believed to have been moved up and across Buffalo Road (Broadway) and remodeled into a home at what is now 13173 Broadway. Mrs. Emogene Baker Ray of Holland was the last teacher of the school.

The new school on Church Street was two stories high with one main room for the primary grades on the first floor and one main room on the second

floor for the upper grades. Adjoining each main room was a small recitation room.

The school was originally heated by a large wood stove for which the boys carried wood. The well and pump for the school was across Church Street in the Grove, as the park was called then. A report of the school said there was a 5½ foot fence separating the boys and girls privies in the back yard.

The 1894-95 Catalog for the school indicates there had been some modernization of the building for it is said that it "is heated and lighted by natural gas, and is furnished with electric bells." Tuition was charged, in addition to the property taxes paid by the district residents. There were three 13-week terms that year with those in the Academic Department (grades 10+) paying \$5.00 per term, Grades 7-9 paying \$4.00, Grades 2-6 paying \$3.00. There was no tuition charge for first grade. An 1898-99 catalogue lists only two terms with the Academic Department paying \$6.00 tuition per term and all other departments paying \$4.50 per term.

"Foreign" students (those residing outside District #10) could obtain room and board in private homes for \$2.00 to \$3.50 per week. It was also noted that School Railroad tickets could be "procured by those living along the line" and that "trains run conveniently for school."

The building was declared unsuitable for educational purposes in 1901 and a new, larger school was built on the corner of Crittenden and Park Streets. The old building was sold in 1903 to Alden Masonic Lodge #594 and after extensive remodeling and rebuilding was dedicated to Masonic purposes on February 22, 1905.

Karen Muchow, Curator



Alden Christian Theatre Society

Celebrating 22 Seasons of Live Performances in Alden.

Kathy Sutter, founder and Operations Manager of the Alden Christian Theatre Society (ACTS), hosted our September meeting in the venerable (built in 1879), versatile ACTS building, a former school house, Masonic Temple, and coffee house, which has functioned as Alden's playhouse since 2001. Surprisingly, although thought of by many Aldenites as the old school, the building actually served the Masons much longer than it served as a school (1879-1903). ACTS formed in 1990 and performed in St. John's School.

ALDEN MASONIC LODGE No. 594



Alden Masonic Lodge #594

Kathy pointed out that the Masons' near century of occupation (1903–2001) is evident throughout the building. Mysterious reminders are the double doors (inner and outer doors in one frame), including a peephole, that protected

the Temple's large meeting room on the second floor, and were meant to symbolize Solomon's Temple's doors; and, a single bright light in the center of the meeting room's ceiling, representing the Masonic Eastern Star. The west end of the room features an alcove with a painted sky scene above a raised floor, while the east end has a railed-in, raised area where an organ was apparently located.

More prosaically, the Masons added a kitchen to the former school, setting the stage for the future coffee house. Kathy told us that the meeting room alone was reported at one time to have hosted an estimated 150 Masons. We were fortunate that among attendees was Historical Society member Dr. Ralph Davis, a 65 year Mason, who shared some of his knowledge of the building's interesting past.

ALDEN CHRISTIAN THEATRE



Alden Christian Theatre (current photo)

In 2001, the building was purchased by Russell and Audrey Fuller, who operated the coffee house, and hosted ACTS as a resident theatre company. Eventually, the "Bean

Counter" coffee house faded, and ACTS purchased the building, financed by a mortgage which presents an ongoing challenge. The Fullers brought the aging structure up to code, and ACTS has made many improvements, including the first floor stage, featuring an impressive curtain made possible by a Greatbatch grant, and conversion of the meeting room into a costume and prop area, helped by a Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo grant.

Among striking aspects of the building's current function are, the sheer volume and fascinating variety of costumes and props (Kathy noted that a former barn in the rear is also stuffed with such materials, which are often rented out to other local theatre companies), and the "Green Room," which is actually orange, but follows a theatre tradition of calling the actors' pre-performance waiting area the green room. A local tradition has actors signing their names onto the orange walls.

The highlight of the evening was a very entertaining and professional performance of a scene from ACTS's recently completed presentation of "Barefoot in the Park." We want to express our gratitude to Kathy Sutter and ACTS for a greatly informative and enjoyable evening. It became clear to us that ACTS is a community resource providing a high level of entertainment and opportunity to Alden. They also have THE BEST CHAI LATTE TEA ever!

Clarke Burke, Trustee, Editor

Newest Addition to Landscaping



Has anyone noticed the newest addition to our landscaping? On the northeast corner of the property, stands a dwarf Alberta spruce. The tree was donated by the family of Gil and Sandy Dussault in memory of their good friend Jean Sarah Moritz, of Town Line. The addition of this tree adds balance to the tree that was planted on the northwest corner last year. You may expect to see them both decorated for the Christmas holidays. Memorials of all types are graciously accepted and always appreciated. We thank Fred and Sandy Blowers for their service in planting this tree and the grounds crew for maintaining the grounds.

Elli De Filippo, Trustee, Editor

Notes from the President

Gil Dussault

Special thanks to the **Alden Art Club** who allowed us to display and sell the **Reflections of Alden** book at the Art Show in September. We were able to answer questions about the Historical Society and sold six books to the public. Thank you Kris Rogers, Elli DeFilippo, Judy Hotchkin, Larry Kocher, Gil & Sandy Dussault for manning the table at the show.

Congratulations to our Erie County Fair Committee for receiving an Honorable Mention for the Fair exhibit in August. We did not get a ribbon this year but I thought they did a wonderful job in showcasing the theme and our community of Alden. Nice work folks!!

Annual Officer and Committee Chairman **reports** for our Annual Potluck/Trustee Election Meeting in November are due to me by November 1, 2012.

The porch at our society building has been refinished by the Town of Alden and they did a great job. The wood is rich in color and very attractive. We are grateful for their support. Stop in and take a look.

I am very grateful to all our member volunteers for the tireless help they give us every year. We have many needs as you might expect. If you have a special talent or just an interest in being part of the process...please let us know. Young or old....I am sure there is a place for you.....and it will be very much appreciated.

Historical Sign Fund Appeal a Huge Success



We are pleased to report that our Summer Fund Appeal has raised over \$2,800 in just two months. Donations have come from local and out of state contributors -most of them from members but interestingly, non members who have embraced our idea of using historical signs to call attention to places and events of historical significance in our community.

We are very grateful for the generous support we have received relative to this appeal. Many have mentioned this is a great thing to do and we have received a great deal of encouragement to stay the course.



A special thank you to all who participated. A complete list of donors is on page 6.

The Town Line Sign Project is the first of our endeavors and we await final approval from the good folks at Town Line Lutheran Church sometime in October. With their approval we will put into motion the placement of the boulder and make arrangements for the completion of the plaque that will highlight the Secession and Reunion story in Town Line. We will advise the public of our presentation and dedication plans as soon as possible.

Historical Sign Fund Appeal

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Douglas and Cornelia Cartwright
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 Catherine Cyrulik
 Charles and Judith Daucher
 Francis, Jr., and Judith Downhower
 Ardith Edenhofer
 Harriet Eggleston
 Wilbur and Rosemary Freed
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Jennifer Strong
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 Supervisor John H. Cooke

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 and Johanna Jablonski
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 Michael and Sue Galbraith.....Elizabeth Weisbeck
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IN MEMORY OF

Gil Dussault, President & Elli De Filippo, Trustee, Editor

Welcome New & Renewed Members

NEW MEMBERS:

Gregory Grenier

RENEWED MEMBERS:

Catherine Cyruk
Florence Kegler
Sharon Schmitz
Wayne Weinsheimer
Antoinette Wiltberger

BUSINESS MEMBERS:

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

RENEWED FAMILY MEMBERS:

Francis, Jr. and Judith Downhower
Keith and Michele Hoffman
William and Thelma Dabb
Michael and Susan Galbraith

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.*

Please be advised that donations to the Alden Historical Society are not tax deductible.

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

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 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

<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

OCTOBER 11, 2012.....THE PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION 1901
 7 PM, Community Center



Pan American Exposition "Farewell Day November 2" (1901) Souvenir Ticket (Original on file at Alden Historical Society)

In 1901, the City of Buffalo prepared to welcome visitors from around the world to the Pan-American Exposition, to be held that summer. It was Buffalo's opportunity to glow in the limelight, demonstrating itself to be a city growing in wealth, prosperity, and status.

Relive Buffalo's glorious Pan-American Exposition – its achievements; its tragedies (notably President McKinley's assassination); its successes; its failures.

Noted Western New York Historian C Douglas Kohler will present a program on "The Pan-American Exposition," an event which impacted the region, the nation, and the world.

NOVEMBER 8, 2012.....POTLUCK SUPPER & BUSINESS MEETING
 6 PM, Community Center



It's time for our annual potluck supper and business meeting. Dinner will start at 6 PM. 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 immediately following dinner. Officers and committees will submit and read their annual reports.



In keeping with our traditional November Veterans' Day theme, there will be a brief discussion of various military terms and structures, such as medals awarded for valor, military ranking, military ground structure sizes, etc. We would like to know your definition of a "true hero."



DECEMBER 13, 2012.....CHRISTMAS TRIVIA
 7 PM, Community Center



The holidays are such a busy and hectic time. Take a break – relax and join us for a game of Christmas Trivia. Learn all about Christmas and Yuletide lore through the years, from St. Nicholas and Ebenezer Scrooge to Frosty the Snow-man and The Three Kings. Test your knowledge of traditions, carols, movies, and the North Pole. 'Tis the Season to engage in a little fun!

Conrad and Carol Borucki, Program Committee

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

PROGRAM MEETINGS Community Center at 7 PM (except noted)	TRUSTEE MEETINGS Alden Historical Society Building at 7 PM
OCT 11.....The Pan-American Exposition	OCTOBER 4.....Members Invited
NOV 8.....Potluck Supper & Annual Meeting <u>6 PM</u>	
DEC 13.....Christmas Trivia	DECEMBER 6.....Members Invited

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
13213 BROADWAY
ALDEN, NY 14004

www.alden.erie.gov



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