

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

Published Quarterly

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

April 2013

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.

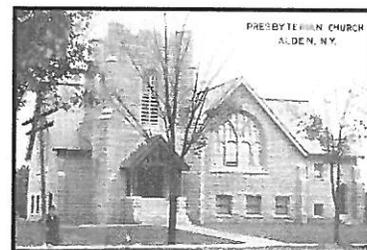
Happy 200th Birthday, Alden Presbyterian Church



First building, built 1833
on Church St.



Recent photo of Alden Presbyterian Church (photo by Clarke Burke)



Presbyterian Church taken about 1910
Dedicated on May 29, 1910

On July 17, 1813—three years after the first settlers in the village, two years before the first school, three years before the first store, and five months before the burning of Buffalo—twelve settlers of Alden and Darien met to form a religious society under the leadership of Rev. John Spencer. “Father” Spencer, as he was affectionately known, was a Congregational minister sent out to the west by the Connecticut Mission Society. He was responsible for starting several of the Congregational/Presbyterian churches in Western New York.

The twelve charter members, six men and six women from five families, all New Englanders, met at the home of Joseph Freeman. The twelve agreed to articles of faith and practice and wrote a Covenant. Nehemiah Estabrook was elected deacon, and Joseph Freeman, clerk. They met again the next day, the Lord’s Day. Communion was served and two children were baptized.

The church voted to change the form of government from Congregational to Presbyterian in 1817. Nehemiah Estabrook, Crara Graton, and William Humphrey were chosen elders, and the congregation was put under the watch and care of the Buffalo Presbytery.

The congregation continued to meet in members’ homes and in the village schoolhouse until 1833, when a frame building was constructed on Church Street (about where the ACTS parking lot is located) on property

formerly owned by Thomas Farnsworth, Jr. Church members volunteered trees from their own wood lots. Tradition has it that before the felling of each tree, the men knelt around the tree and offered prayer, dedicating the tree to its sacred use.

A driveway led to a carriage shed in the back. The shed, a series of stalls under one roof, enclosed on the west side, protected the carriages and horses from the weather. The worship services often lasted two to three hours. When there was second service in the afternoon, families ate their lunches in the church, or across the street in the “Grove” in good weather. One lad remembered leaving home at 10:30 in the morning and getting back home at three in the afternoon.

This building served the congregation until 1908. It was remodeled several times: pews became attached chairs in groups of four, the side galleries were removed, a platform was added on the western side with the choir sitting on the right, an organ was installed, and carpet laid.

A new building was needed, but the congregation was financially unable to assume a burden of debt. In 1905, the new pastor, Rev. William McGarvey, was urged by Frank Barnet, a lawyer and active member of the congregation, to approach Colonel and Mrs. Joseph Ewell for help in financing a new building.

continued on back

The Ewells had both been born in Alden. Their only child, Florence Josephine, had recently died. The Ewells donated the site of the present stone church and one-half of the cost of construction in memory of their daughter. Florence Josephine Ewell's face is seen in the south-facing stained glass window. The eastern window was given in memory of long-term members William and Virginia Slade by their three sons. The church was dedicated on May 29, 1910.

The old frame Church Street building was moved across what is now Alden Village Plaza to a site near the railroad on Exchange Street. It was used for storage until destroyed by fire.

The first resident minister was George Coan in 1836. The earlier ones came a couple of times a month, sharing their duties with other congregations. Until 1872, when a manse was built, resident ministers rented houses. The

first manse still stands at 11295 Broadway. It served as the manse until 1938, when the Arthur Hart house, standing between the stone church and the Ewell Free Library, was purchased. That house was replaced in 1974 by the present manse.

By the late 1940s, it became evident that more Sunday School space was needed. A new eight classroom addition was dedicated in June 1955. Some of that space has today become home to the Neat Repeats clothing ministry.

One wonders what those original twelve would think if they came back today. Not only has the surrounding wilderness been tamed, but a congregation of over 150 members worships and serves the community in a beautiful stone church in the middle of a village where there had been only a few scattered rustic log cabins.

Karen Muchow,

Curator-Alden Historical Society,
Chairperson-APC 200th Anniversary

Historical Society Now On Facebook!

The Alden Historical Society is pleased to enter the world of social media with the establishment of our very own Facebook page. Our intent is to share with our membership and the public up-to-the-minute notifications of Historical Society events, programs and future activities, pictures from our archives and displays, recaps of our programs and other historical tidbits.



Find us at:

www.facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety

or once logged in to Facebook, search for "Alden Historical Society".

"Like" our page to then receive notifications every time we post content to our page.

Christopher Gust, Trustee

Not a member of Facebook? Then share this information with your family and friends who are. We would like to utilize new opportunities through social media to bring more awareness to the public of the Alden Historical Society and what we do for our community, as well as better communicate with our membership. Check out our page today and thank you for your support and interest.

WINE TASTING BY CHAMBER

Save the Date:

The Alden Chamber of Commerce
Wine Tasting Event
Saturday, April 13th
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
The Whistle Stop Restaurant
1338 Exchange Street
Alden, New York



Seven Wine and Food Tastings
Chinese Auction
Pre-sale Tickets are
\$25/person
At the door Tickets are
\$28/person

Portion of Proceeds to benefit the Alden Historical Society

Displays from the Alden Art Club & Alden Historical Society

Also available for purchase **Reflections of Alden** pictorial collection and **Hometown Favorites** cookbook

Tickets available from a Chamber Director or at the Alden Chamber of Commerce
13500 Broadway or call (716) 937-6177 for reservations.

Letter from the Board

For nearly fifty years the Alden Historical Society has worked to preserve, present and promote the history of the Town of Alden and its people by:

- Caring for the artifacts and documents donated to us, to the best of our ability
- Providing programs for school children, Scout groups and other community groups
- Opening the building to visitors every Saturday from March to December
- Presenting monthly programs of historical interest to the public
- Publishing a quarterly newsletter
- Submitting articles of historical interest to the *Alden Advertiser*
- Assisting with genealogical research
- Participating in the Chamber of Commerce's Christmas-in-the-Park, the Firemen's Parade and the Erie County Fair

We are very grateful to the Town of Alden for continuing to maintain the building donated to the town for our use by Walden Roberts in 1967. We are also very grateful to the many supporters who have answered the call to help fund special projects like the 1995 addition and the recent historical sign project.

We have found that to stay relevant in today's world we must utilize modern communications like the telephone, computer and the internet. A website is in the planning stages so we can reach more people. All these "modern conveniences" increase our expenses.

After a careful review of the budget, the Society's Board of Trustees has determined that an increase in membership dues is necessary in order to meet increased expenses. Effective April 1, 2013, annual individual dues will increase from \$8 to \$12, annual family dues from \$12 to \$25 (a family consists of two adults and minor children) and an annual business membership will increase from \$45 to \$50. A new category of

membership will be established, that of a couple. The annual couple dues will be \$20. Additionally, the category of lifetime membership will no longer be available. However, current lifetime members will retain their lifetime status.

Beginning in 2014, April 1 will become the annual renewal date for all members. As we are fast approaching April 1, 2013, we are making May 1 the renewal date for 2013. Anyone who has already paid membership dues this year, January 1 thru March 31, 2013, will not have to renew until April 1, 2014.

We hope that you will continue to be a member of the Society so that we can work together to fulfill our stated mission. We have a strong group of core volunteers who will continue to work very hard for that purpose. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to leave a message at 716-937-3700 and a member of the Board will get in contact with you.

Historical Society Audit Complete

On January 28, 2013, the audit committee, consisting of Chris Gust, trustee, Dr. Ralph Davis, member, and Elli DeFilippo, 2012 treasurer, met at the Historical Society building. All debits and credits posted on the bank statements and recorded in check registers, passbook, and interest books for the fiscal year January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2012, were examined and reconciled to the Historical Society's records. The records were found to be accurate and in good order. Trustee Clarke Burke has agreed to take on the role of treasurer for the fiscal year 2013.

Board of Trustees

General Fund Donors

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

Tom and Melissa Miklinski

Carolyn C. Tenney

Please be advised that donations to the Alden Historical Society are not tax deductible since it is not a 501© 3 orgainztion.

REVIEW OF JANUARY 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

“Lost Middlemen of Alden Cuisine” Brings Back Tasty Memories

On Jan. 10 the Alden Historical Society held a program about the many food suppliers of Alden which are now only in our memories. Conrad Borucki lead the program by alphabetically recalling a list of roughly 90 beloved businesses from Alden's past. Curator Karen Muchow had prepared the list complete with information on each. Unfortunately

Karen was unable to attend the evening due to sickness, so Conrad saved the evening in true Borucki style! The program was presented as a memory teaser kind of game where the first letter of the name was read then followed by some distinguishing characteristic. Those attending nearly always came up with the answers and added some

additional fun facts and memories. Ranging in dates from the 1910's to the 90's, every age group attending was challenged. How many early businesses do you remember?

A complete (to the best of our recollection) list of former businesses is available at the Historical Society Building.

REVIEW OF FEBRUARY 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

“HOLIDAY OF LOVE” EXPLORED



Carol Borucki tells early history of Valentine's Day



Ed and Ann Mosman
Shirley and Larry Kocher
Sylvia and Florian Buczek



Ruth and Ralph Davis



Sue Muench

The February 14 program “A Tribute to Love” generated laughter, fond memories, and historical data. Organized by program directors Conrad and Carol Borucki, the evening moved at a fast, interactive pace. Carol Borucki got the festivities moving by recounting the early history of Valentine's Day dating back to the third century when a Roman priest, later canonized as St. Valentine, was beheaded for marrying Roman soldiers to their loved ones against the orders of the Roman

emperor who believed that marriage would render the soldiers less effective fighters. Carol later related that the exchange of valentines originated in 1500's Milan, Italy, gaining headway in the U.S. when Esther Holland, the daughter of a Massachusetts stationer, asked her brother to sell ten valentines she had created. He returned with orders for 5,000 more! Within a few years, Esther was making \$100,000 annually in her valentine business.

The program then turned to the traditional gifts distributed for Valentine's Day, with the three most popular gifts being flowers, candy, and stuffed animals. Paul Henry was invited to describe the history of his chocolate-making business. He mentioned numerous local tradesmen and women who had

assisted him and his late wife Nancy (whose idea it was to begin the business), in creating the machinery and conditions that enabled them to launch their chocolate-making efforts from their home in 1959.

Further enhancing the mood of the evening were Bill and Thelma Dabb's extensive collection of valentines dating back over 100 years and Sue Muench's skilled piano accompaniment

playing numerous old-time love tunes and inviting the audience to *name that tune*.

The highlight of the evening were the love stories so graciously shared by the seven couples who agreed to record the details of their initial meeting and attraction. Conrad read their stories, and the audience guessed which story matched which couple. Many interesting details were shared, only a few of which follow.

continued on next page

A. Couple A was married in a church located on the same street on which they both grew up.

B. Couple B said the "seeds of their relationship sprouted" thanks to their chance meeting on a horticultural trip.

C. When a cousin asked the male in Couple C whether he planned to give his girl a ring, the male presented his girl with a Dick Tracy ring he had pulled from a Wheaties box.

D. The male in Couple D presented his girl with an engagement ring placed on the hand of a ballerina in a musical jewelry box he gave to her.

E. Couple E shared that their honeymoon was interrupted by a hurricane, an event they concluded was their *destiny*.

F. Couple F met while bowling at the Whistle Stop and later spent many evenings square dancing at the Town Line Fire Hall.

G. Couple G shared an interest in music, with his taste favoring Johnny Cash and hers, Elvis Presley. She has never forgiven him for refusing to take her to see Elvis in person when he appeared in Buffalo.

THE COUPLES PARTICIPATING WERE:

Bill and Thelma Dabb
Ann and Carl Matthies

Florian and Sylvia Buczek
Larry and Shirley Kocher

Chris and Jennifer Gust
Ralph and Ruth Davis

Ann and Ed Mosman.

You may wish to try your luck at matching the clues to participants. The answers are on the bottom of page 6.

REVIEW OF MARCH 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

1950's REVIVED

by Mr. Greg Kinal



Pictured l to r: Joan Poremba, Joyce Frantz Munn, Greg Kinal, Jenna Kavanagh, Bonnie Luderman, Judy Hotchkin, Kyle Kavanagh, and Sandy Dussault.



Pictured in foreground, Marge Pohl, who recently celebrated her 95th birthday.



Mr. Greg Kinal presenting to the group.

On March 13, we revisited the 1950's in a program presented by guest speaker Greg Kinal, a Genesee County history teacher. Many in the crowd were dressed in their best 1950's attire. The room in the Alden Community Center was surrounded with 50's memorabilia, pictures, albums, magazines and, of course, Alden Central yearbooks from the decade. Mr. Kinal began by remembering a tragic aspect of the 50's, the Korean War 1950 – 1953. He described the Korean War Memorial in Washington as being very powerful, with 19 statues of soldiers in ponchos, and a plaque which states, " Our nation honors her sons and daughters who answered a call to defend a nation they never knew, and a people they never met." In the memories of most, however, the 50's were largely a happy, carefree

era. Mr. Kinal supplied a great collection of 50's music, the beginning of Rock and Roll. Elvis took the nation by storm. Marilyn Monroe stole the hearts of millions of young men, including a young Mr. Kinal, while James Dean fascinated the young ladies. American Bandstand was a show no respectable teenager would miss! Mr. Kinal presented a slide collection of some of the top stars of the decade, bringing back memories to many.

The 50's had many firsts: the first credit cards, the first "Peanuts" cartoon, color TV, seat belts (use optional), polio vaccine, Disneyland and McDonald's, just to name a few. With so many young people all over town, cruising in an auto back and forth on the main street became the thing to do. Hula hoops became a rage, along with Westerns,

and all the boys had coonskin caps. Mr. Kinal recalled having made his own as a boy, and having learned, too late, the necessity of tanning the pelt. Beatnik poetry became popular among certain groups, and Mr. Kinal recalled having met Alan Ginsberg in a less than ideal situation.

Returning to the serious, the civil rights era began in the 50's; people such as Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson and a young Martin Luther King began the path to equal rights. The cold war began, McCarthyism destroyed many innocents, and fear of nuclear holocaust led some to build bomb shelters. Nevertheless, for the most part, and certainly in memory, the 50's were a wonderful time to be young.

Judy Hotchkin, Elli De Filippis, Clarke Burke, Publicity

Notes from the President

I am perplexed by the low visitation to our Historical Building by our membership and the public. Our curator, Karen Muchow, does a wonderful job of putting together displays and exhibits that showcase our Alden heritage. For most, every visit opens up a new vista of the Alden experience and proves to be very enjoyable. I would encourage you to take the time and visit us on Saturday from 10AM to 2PM. We are also available for special appointment visits if special scheduling is needed. I would very much like to hear from our members on what your experience has been when visiting our facility. Please feel free to call me at 716 937-6246 to share your thoughts.

There are many tasks at the building that are necessary on a weekly or monthly basis. If you have

a few hours you can give us, the Building and Grounds Committee could use your help. Give us a call if you are willing to help.

I am very pleased with the programs put forth by our Program Committee. They have been a nice mix of Alden/Historical subjects that appear to be very interesting to the public. The time and effort put forth by the group has been outstanding, and it really shows. Nice job everyone!!! Following every program I hear very favorable comments and how enjoyable the evening was for the attendee. It is most gratifying to see a high level of interaction and socialization by our attendees. It is almost like they do not want the evening to end. We do advertise the events pretty well, so be sure to get the dates on your calendar. Hope to see you at the next one.

Gilbert Dussault Jr., President

Past Aldenite Celebrates 97th Birthday



Mrs. Margaret Grenier, from Alden to DuBois, PA.

Mrs. Margaret Grenier, a former resident and assistant librarian at Alden Ewell Free Library and now a resident of DuBois, PA, celebrated her 97th birthday on August 11, 2012. A birthday dinner was held at son Greg and Allegra Grenier's home in Puxatawney, PA, with son Phil and his wife Sandy from Cameron, Missouri, and son Francis of Big Run, PA, in attendance. Friends Gil and Sandy Dussault of Alden were able to surprise her on the special day. She was delighted they had come so far to share the event with the family. The Dussaults presented Mrs. Grenier with the Alden Historical Society Reflections of Alden book as a special birthday gift. She immediately began inquiring about the many friends and loved ones from Alden she remembered.

Mrs. Grenier lived in Alden from 1945 until 1979. In 1976 her husband Leo passed away, and she retired from our library in 1979 after 25 years of service. She moved to Middleport, NY, and worked at the library there from 1981 until 1994. In October of 2011, she moved to DuBois to be closer to family. Although she has difficulty walking, her sharp wit and memory are refreshing, and she enjoys reminiscing about her years in Alden. Her current address is: Mrs. Margaret Grenier, Christ the King Manor PC, PO Box 448, Dubois, PA 15801.



Volunteers Needed and Appreciated

Sunshine Volunteer - Sylvia Buczek has kindly volunteered to assist with sunshine duties for the coming year. Sylvia will send cards on behalf of the Society. Members and trustees are asked to please keep her informed about member illnesses or deaths. Sylvia may be reached at 937-3792.

Answers to "HOLIDAY OF LOVE" EXPLORED article on top of page 5

Couple A – Larry and Shirley Kocher; Couple B – Florian and Sylvia Buczek; Couple C – Ralph and Ruth Davis;
Couple D – Bill and Thelma Dabb; Couple E – Chris and Jennifer Gust; Couple F – Ed and Ann Mosman; Couple G – Ann and Carl Matthies.

Welcome New & Renewed Members

NEW LIFETIME MEMBER:

Colleen Rogers

RENEWED MEMBERS:

Doris Brade Margaret Matuszewski
Richard Jablonski Karen & Richard Savage
Laura Loehr Anna Walters

With Deepest Sympathy

The Alden Historical Society extends heartfelt sympathy to the families, relatives and friends of two members of the Alden Historical Society:



Christian Koelbl, Jr., Chairman and former President of the Alden State Bank, passed away on Feb. 18, 2013, at the age of 90. Mr. Koelbl was a World War II Marine Corps veteran, member and former trustee of the Alden Presbyterian Church, longtime trustee of the Ewell Free Library, and member of Alden Lodge 594 F & AM. He enjoyed the family farm, visiting the Adirondacks and Vinalhaven, Maine. He, along with his wife, Janet Stowell Koelbl, was a life member of the Historical Society.



Raymond Crist, past-president of the Lancaster Flying Club, passed away on Feb. 14, 2013, at the age of 83. Mr. Crist was very active at St. John the Baptist Church, both as an usher and member of the Holy Name Society. After retiring as a supervisor from Norfolk Southern Railroad, he and his wife Norine traveled extensively throughout the country. He was an avid golfer, bowler, and sportsman. Ray piloted his own plane and often attended car shows, proudly showing his 1930 Model A.

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\$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:

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

Debbie Crist, Membership Secretary
Alden Historical Society
13213 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004

Phone 937 3700

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Debbie Crist, Membership

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 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.

OFFICERS

<i>President</i>Gil Dussault	<i>Society Historian</i> <i>Alden Town Historian</i> ...Leonard Weisbeck
<i>V. President</i> ...Roberta Vincent	<i>Alden Town Board Liaison</i>Bill Weber
<i>Secretary</i>Kris Rogers	<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>Karen Muchow	
<i>Archivist</i>Karen Muchow	

TRUSTEES

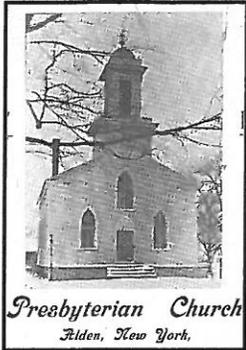
Fred Blowers	Gil Dussault
Conrad Borucki	Chris Gust
Clarke Burke	Larry Kocher
Debbie Crist	Kris Rogers
Bill Dabb	Roberta Vincent
Elli DeFilippo	

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY DATES TO REMEMBER SPRING 2013

PROGRAM MEETINGS 7 PM	TRUSTEE MEETINGS Alden Historical Society Building at 7 PM
APRIL 11.....Bicentennial Pres. Church Presbyterian Church Sanctuary	APRIL 4.....Members Invited
MAY 09.....North Woods Alden Community Center	
JUNE 13.....Alden Civil War Veterans Alden Evergreen Cemetery	JUNE 4.....Members Invited

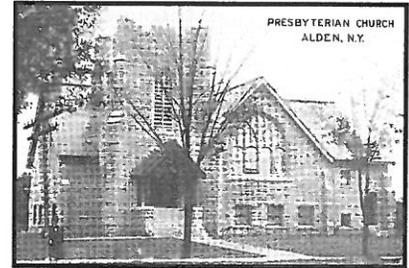
MONTHLY PROGRAMS

APRIL 11, 2013 **BICENTENNIAL OF ALDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
 7 PM, Presbyterian Church Sanctuary



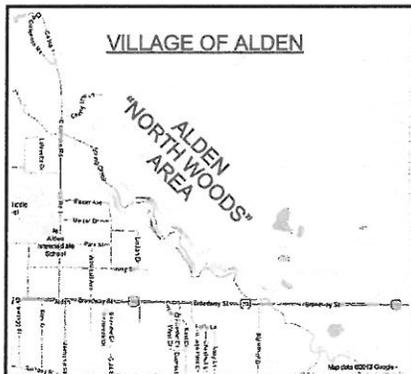
*Presbyterian Church
Alden, New York*
First building, built 1833
on Church St.

In honor of Alden's oldest institution's 200th anniversary, we will meet at the Alden Presbyterian Church, 13298 Broadway at 7 pm. We will meet in the sanctuary to hear about the history of this religious society and the history of the beautiful stone church building. There is handicap parking along the driveway off Broadway and an elevator to take you to the sanctuary and down to the Fellowship Hall, where refreshments will be served after the presentation. More general parking is available off Crittenden Street.



Presbyterian Church taken about 1910
Dedicated on May 29, 1910

MAY 09, 2013 **NORTH WOODS: A NATURAL ASSET**
 7 PM, Community Center



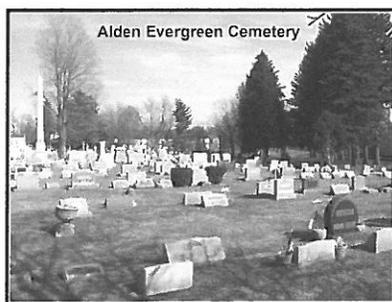
Village of Alden N.E. Quadrant

Mark Casell will discuss the past, present, and future of the North Woods section of the Village of Alden. He will present the history of this unique area, especially as it relates to agriculture, the essential aquifer, and the recreational past. He will also touch upon the fossil deposits found along Spring Creek. Mark will relate his own experiences in the area, as well as those of others who lived or visited there.



Spring Creek and Slate Banks

JUNE 13, 2013 **ALDEN'S CIVIL WAR VETERANS**
 7 PM, Alden Evergreen Cemetery



As the United States continues to observe the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, we will meet at the Alden Evergreen Cemetery to learn about the more than a dozen boys and men who left Alden to fight in that war, some who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Parking is limited, but you may park at Alden Village Plaza Lot and walk the short distance to the cemetery. In the event of rain, the program will be held in the Community Center on W. Main St.

Conrad and Carol Borucki, Program Committee and Karen Muchow, Curator

BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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 Application on Page 7



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