

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

Published Quarterly

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

July 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.

Century House

13288 Irving Street
Alden, NY

The following account is provided by owners Bob and Elli DeFilippo



Growing up in a neighborhood of older homes, I have always had a fondness for them: winding staircases, odd-shaped closets, some tucked into niches creating sloped ceilings and cavernous depths, walk-up attics with room to store relics of the past, and basements sub-divided into coal bins and fruit cellars. These were the features that fueled my childhood imagination and still appeal to my adult sensibilities. When my husband and I moved into the upper flat of our home at 13288 Irving Street, we never expected to stay for long. Two years later in 1976, our landlady, who resided in the lower flat, passed away. We decided it would be easier to purchase the house than to look for new quarters, so we stayed.

Examining the abstract of title, we can trace the ownership of the property which was once part of the larger Holland Land Company tract owned by Wilhem Willink and passed to various owners, the first of which was The Farmers Loan & Trust Company, in 1838. The abstract shows that in 1844, the Farmers Loan & Trust Co. sold the parcel to James and Louisa Butler for \$427. Nineteen years later, the Butlers sold the property to Joseph and Carrie Ewell for \$4500. As the size of the parcel at these points is not clear, the reason for the hike in price is open to speculation. Subsequent owners included Herbert and Jennie Hewes (1907), John and Augusta Ferm (1909), Arthur and Ella Thomas (1914), Edward and Alice Taylor (1942), and Evelyn Loper (1945).

Our former landlady, Mrs. Verena Roth, acquired the home in 1963 from Mr. Loper, for whom she had worked as a housekeeper. The home was likely built around 1909. Originally constructed as a single family home, the house was later divided into two flats, possibly to accommodate boarders for the black water baths.



Info. on back of photo: "Home of Art and Ella Thomsa" with date "Nov. 22, 1913."

Many alterations enabled this conversion to take place, and we "undid" some of those alterations. Reconfiguring our living spaces, we took down some walls and doors and added others. We opened the front and rear stairwells which had been closed off from the apartments. Renting a wallpaper steamer from a hardware store on Railroad Street, we removed layers of ceiling and wallpaper. Over the years we have renovated pretty much everything, from re-roofing to siding to replacing windows. We have updated mechanicals, removed and rebuilt porches, and added-on. Sturdily constructed, the house has steadfastly withstood our modifications.

continued on back

Among the features I like best about this house are the four sets of stairways, all with landings. I like the nine foot ceilings, the five panel doors, and the eight inch baseboards. I like when the morning sun comes through the prism of glass in one of the leaded windows; it lays rainbows of light on

our living room floor. I like the wide front porch for sheltering us from glaring sun and gentle rains and for the summer hours our children idled away there on an old glider swing. I like living on a tree-lined street where some of the trees may actually be century trees.

Because we took an existing

house and renovated it to meet our needs, it is unique and not quite like any other. Not only did our home accommodate our needs and those of earlier families, but it also set the backdrop for the growth of our children, and it has provided ample space, with a full attic and basement, for storing memories.

Ellie De Filippo, Trustee

Historical Society Now On Facebook!

EXHIBIT TO BE DISPLAYED AT THE 174TH ERIE COUNTY FAIR



Graphic compliments of Erie County Fair

The theme for the fair this year is:

EXPERIENCE IT

August 7-18

When visiting the Erie County Fair be sure to stop by the historical building and view all the exhibits inside.

Alden Historical Society will be competing with other historical societies for best exhibit. Your vote will be very much appreciated.



1914 New 'Prairie Style' Original Black Water Baths building. Courtesy of Western NY Heritage, Spring, 2002

Committee Chairman Keith Stone along with committee members Karen Muchow, Mary Stone, Larry Kocher, Cassandra Stone, Sandra Dussault and Amy Stone have been working diligently on an exhibit for the fair. The subject of the exhibit is The Alden Black Water Baths.

The committee is looking for additional artifacts and photos regarding our black water theme. If you have any or know where we may borrow some please call Keith at 937-6050. All items will be returned.



Photo of Erie County Fair Historical Building by Tom Wolf Imaging

The Alden exhibit will be housed in the Erie County Fair Historical Building along with 18 other area exhibits. There are additional attractions both inside and on the grounds.

All exhibits will be judged and will compete for monetary awards ranging from \$100 to \$250.

The building is open from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM.

Keith Stone, Chairman

Alden Fireman's Parade



Alden Historical Society members and volunteers manned this antique truck, owned by Leo Wagner, to represent the Alden Historical Society in a "timely" fashion in the June 22, 2013 Alden Firemen's Parade. Our thanks to Leo for use of his truck and his dad Len (passenger on board) as well as Steve Schlabach for driving the truck.



For all you antique truck buffs, Leo's truck is a 1935 Chevrolet, 6 cylinder engine with provisions for a hand crank, a custom 12' bed and only 17,000 miles of travel. Original sticker price was just under \$800. Leo's dad, Leonard, of Wagner's Agway, purchased the truck in 1975 from Mr. John Schunk of Alden.

Curator's Report by Karen Muchow

Recent Acquisitions:

1. Marianne Gawelo: quilt top
2. Marianne Gawelo: bonnets and aprons
3. Greg Kent: US Marine full-dress blue uniform
4. Greg Kent: jungle camouflage Marine uniform
5. Susan Bagrowski Schumacher: a 1942 Alden High School yearbook
6. Susan Bagrowski Schumacher: Dorothy Wilson's Korean War army jacket
7. Assorted paper items from Bea Haehl estate
8. Wall-mounted coffee grinder, blue enamel pie tin, washing fork, ice spud, nail keg from Heist estate
9. The 2013 ACHS yearbook

Chamber of Commerce Honors Historical Society



Alden C of C Vice President Brooks Bowman presents check to AHS Curator Karen Muchow and President Gil Dussault.

The Alden Chamber of Commerce's recent wine tasting event, held on Saturday, April 13, at the Whistle Stop Restaurant, celebrated both the Alden Historical Society and the Alden Art Club with displays of their work. For the event, the Whistle Stop staff selected seven wines and paired them with food tastings. The Chamber of Commerce graciously donated \$200 from the event's proceeds to the Historical Society which greatly appreciates the generous donation.



Progressing With Historical Sign Project

You may have noticed a large rock perched between two trees on the south lawn of the Town Line Lutheran Church, adjacent to Broadway. If you have not noticed, take a glance, a fleeting one, in order to maintain safe driving attention! We are hoping to complete the process of placing a sign on the rock, commemorating Town Line's secession from and rejoining the Union of the United States, before the end of the summer.

Forget to Renew?



In our April newsletter we introduced some changes to our dues renewal structure. We later sent out a letter explaining the changes. We are eliminating the procedure of sending monthly reminders for renewal and are instead implementing a one-time annual renewal for all annually-renewing members. Those who have life memberships are grandfathered in and are exempt from this renewal, although, as of March 31, 2013, we are no longer offering lifetime memberships to new members. If you have not sent in your membership renewal, we would

appreciate your doing so. Renewal for individuals has increased from \$8 to \$12; renewal for families (consisting of two adults and minor children) has increased from \$12 to \$25; and annual business membership dues have increased from \$45 to \$50. We've made April 1 the annual renewal date hereafter. Questions regarding this change may be directed to Debbie Crist 937-9147, Clarke Burke 937-7055, or by leaving a message at the Historical Society 937-3700. Address for sending renewals is:

**Alden Historical Society
13213 Broadway,
Alden, NY 14004.**

REVIEW OF APRIL 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

Bicentennial of Alden Presbyterian Church

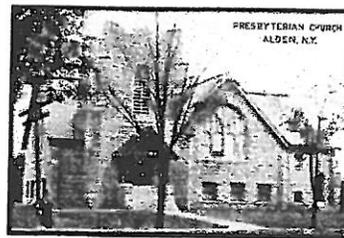


Built 1833 on Church St.

On April 11, 2013, Alden Historical Society Curator Karen Muchow presented a program detailing the history of Alden Presbyterian Church, currently celebrating its bicentennial birthday. Curator Muchow relied on memories of congregation members in addition to conducting her own research when gathering information for the program.

Founded in 1813, Alden Presbyterian is the fourth oldest church in the Presbytery of Western New York, older even than the Town of Alden, established in 1823. Alden Presbyterian is governed by a "session," similar to a council, of nine church elders.

The current church building was dedicated in 1910 and cost about \$25,000 to construct. Its exterior is fashioned from hand-cut Warsaw blue stone; its interior is finished with southern pine, red oak, and beautiful stained glass windows dedicated in memory of loved ones by former church members.



Presbyterian Church taken about 1910
Dedicated on May 29, 1910

More details about the history of the church were included in the April 2013 Grannytown Gazette or may be obtained by visiting the Alden Historical Society on Saturdays between 10 AM and 2 PM.

Ellie DeFilippo, Trustee

REVIEW OF MAY 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

"The North Woods"



On May 9, guest speaker Mark Casell, a lifelong resident of Alden who has served as Village Planning Board Chairman, is a member of the Alden Environmental Conservation Commission, and was instrumental in the Alden Land Conservancy, hosted a program about the North Woods and Slate Banks.

Mark considers the North Woods, "The wild heart of Alden and a great local natural treasure." It is a large, somewhat indistinct area, which

begins roughly east of Crittenden and continues west along the north end of Alden to beyond the Town Park. The formation of the area began 390 million years ago in the Devonian period. Our beloved slate banks, technically shale banks, had its gradual start during this time. The Alden area had been a beach on the shore of a large ocean. Fine layers of silt and clay lay at the bottom, and over millions of years of accretion and pressure, shale formed. A wide variety of sea life was pressed into the layers of shale. Today, fossilized corals, shells, and impressive trilobites are commonly found. Many of the fossils have been pyritized, having a lovely appearance of gold ("fool's gold").

A mere 14 thousand years ago, Alden was covered by mile high glaciers. The glaciers progressed, then melted, leaving deposits of



Spring Creek and Slate Banks

sand, stone rubble, and salt and minerals underground. Sandridge Road is named after these deposits. During the 1930's, the North Woods hosted another form of entertainment - racing! There were two race tracks, used by both cars and motorcycles. Some old time Aldenites, such as Gabby Cronin, with his 1936 Pontiac, Charlie "Spike" Dabb, with his Model A, Bob Gillmore, with his 1927 Chevy, Ralph "Baldy" Clark, Lyle Newton, and Marty Muchow were said to have been involved in the racing.

continued on next page

Also in the 30's, high school agriculture teacher, BJ Cook had his students plant the now towering pines which can be seen along the Joe Panza Nature Trail at the north end of the Town Park.

In 1951, the Boy Scouts held a great "Camporee" in the pines. There were some 150 wet boys, (24 from Troop 68), when heavy storms hit, tents came down, and cars were stuck. The Scouts also built a signal

tower to practice communication. For a while in the 1970's, there was a private nature preserve where you and your family could fish and swim in small lakes in the woods.

Beyond being an aesthetically pleasing haven of nature, the woods are an important filter of water for the town and village area. In 1973, the Alden Conservation Commission was formed to protect the area. The Joe Panza trail resulted from the efforts of

this group. In 1998, the Alden Land Conservancy formed to protect the area and water aquifer.

After the Program, some attendees were treated the following day to an informative walk along the Joe Panza trail featuring commentary by Mr. Casell and our own Conrad Borucki, one of the creators of the trail.

REVIEW OF JUNE 2013 PROGRAM MEETING

Alden's Civil War Veterans



In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of our country's Civil War years, the Alden Historical Society presented a program

about Alden's Civil War veterans. Curator Karen Muchow presented the program at the Alden Community Center on June 13. Resources Curator Muchow cited as the basis for her research included the 1890 *Veterans Census* and letters from veterans Samuel Young and Lyman Stilson, in addition to diary entries from Julia Butler Scofield. Curator Muchow compiled and distributed a list identifying 111 Civil War veterans who had at one time resided in Alden. They did not all enlist in Western New York, nor are they all interred here. The remains of veterans killed in action were often



laid to rest in mass graves where they died. In some cases, although the remains are not interred locally, headstones were placed at local cemeteries honoring the fallen vets.

The regiments in which the majority of local men enlisted include the 116th NY Infantry, the 100th NY Infantry, the 49th NY Infantry, and the 21st NY Infantry. Records show that in many cases units lost as many men to disease as in battle. Local cemeteries where headstones commemorating Alden Civil War veterans may be found include Alden Evergreen Cemetery, Broadway; Union Free Cemetery, County Line Rd., St. Patrick's Cemetery, Crittenden Rd.; Crittenden Rural Cemetery, Crittenden Rd.; Alden



Town Cemetery, Sandridge Rd.; St. John's Cemetery, Sandridge Rd.; and Town Line Lutheran Cemetery, Town Line Rd.

Curator Muchow shared such information as birth and death dates, regiments and companies, causes of death, and burial places about all of the vets with only a few gaps where she was unable to locate information. Additionally, she supplied assorted interesting facts about many of the vets whose names might be familiar to us or who may have contemporary descendants. More information may be obtained by visiting the Historical Society between the hours of 10 AM and 2PM on Saturdays.

SICK COMPUTER CURED!



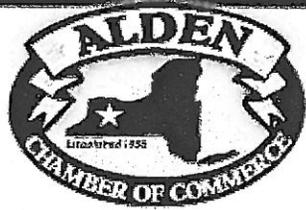
We wish to express our deep gratitude to Dan Carder of **DC Computers**, who rescued our beloved Grannytown Gazette. His dedication and passion in searching out and neutralizing the gremlin that had slowed poor Granny's computer was truly impressive and much appreciated.



Notes from the President

I regret to inform our membership that Bill Dabb has chosen to resign from the Board of Trustees. He has been on the board for a few years and has served faithfully with dedication and great insight. Bill served on the Collection Committee, and both he and his wife Thelma were extremely helpful in manning our society building on Saturdays and other special events. We wish him well and thank him for his service.

Due to a donation from a generous benefactor the Alden Historical Society is now a member of the Alden Chamber of Commerce. For quite some time we have sought to link some of our activities to the special events the Chamber sponsors throughout the year. They are strongly community minded and serve Alden well. We look forward to our future association.



I must also express our appreciation to the Alden Chamber of Commerce for their recent donation of some of the proceeds from their Wine Tasting Event at the Whistle Stop Inn. It was kind of them to consider us worthy to be a recipient. The gift will help us financially get through the year. That is a good thing! *Photo: see page 3*



It is with sincere gratitude that I express our appreciation to Alden Town Supervisor Bud Milligan, Councilwoman Mary Riddoch, Councilman Bill Weber and other town officials for the beautiful new roof on our society building.



The leaks have stopped and the greenish/slate color shingles are outstanding. We are grateful for their long standing commitment to supporting the historical educational programs we provide to the Alden community. I have long said that our building is as much a valuable artifact as the artifacts we house in the building. If you are in the neighborhood stop in and take a look.

We have been pleased with the community reception of the *Reflections of Alden* pictorial/biographical book. We did order a small reprint some time ago and now have an ample supply for your Christmas shopping needs. Former residents have particularly enjoyed the book, as it brings a meaningful recollection of Alden days to the reader. For your information, besides being able to purchase the book at our building on Saturdays from 10AM till 2PM, we have accepted the generous offer by the Smith Family to display and offer the book for sale at the Alden Pharmacy, next door, during their regular business hours. We appreciate their kind offer to help us in this endeavor.



Kudos to our Curator, Karen Muchow, for conducting another successful Alden 5th Grade program at the historical building, as well as to our school teachers, Sandy Dussault, Kris Rogers, Roberta Vincent, and Carl Matthies, at the Henskee Rd School House next to the Community Center in the Village.



It is a huge time and effort commitment for our people who give the endeavor 100 Percent. We know the kids really enjoy the historical experience. Thanks everyone for your contribution this year.

Lastly, if you have not been in our building for some time, I would encourage you to come and visit. Our Curator, Karen Muchow, has done a marvelous job of putting together new outstanding displays of Alden history. You will not be disappointed. Recently, I was wowed by the changes on the second floor that were very interesting. Come and visit the building on Saturdays from 10AM to 2PM or schedule a special visit at a mutually convenient time. We look forward to seeing you.

Gilbert Dussault Jr., President

With Deepest Sympathy

The Alden Historical Society extends its heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of Historical Society member:

Daniel Stone, 31 years of age, son of Keith and Mary Stone.

Daniel enjoyed writing and singing songs and witnessing of Jesus Christ.

He was a graduate of God's New Covenant Academy.

WELCOME MEMBERS

NEW FAMILY MEMBERS:

Allegra & Gregory Grenier
Kerry, Vincent, Ava & Vivienne O'Hara
Erin, Scott & Mikayla Redmond

NEW COUPLE MEMBERS:

Jeanette & Thomas Dickinson

NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Bill Weber

RENEWED BUSINESS MEMBERS:

Alden State Bank

NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS:

Alden Pharmacy
Alternative Care Services of WNY
Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys at Law
Law Offices of Michael Cole

RENEWED COUPLES:

Carol & Conrad Borucki
Thelma & William Dabb
Michelle & Keith Hoffman
Steve & Marlene Kotlowski
Carl & Ann Matthies
Barb & Bob Rice
Matthew & Antoinette Schriver

RENEWED MEMBERS:

June Beyers
Charleen Bontrager-Satkowski
Carolyn Burger
Helen Creighton
Ardith Edenhofer
Sue Galbraith
Florence Kegler
Beverly Nebrich
Edward Reich
Sharon Schmitz
Audrey Senecal
Wayne Weinsheimer

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:

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

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 AM 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...Roberta Vincent</i>		<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
Elli DeFilippo	Roberta Vincent

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY DATES TO REMEMBER SUMMER 2013

PROGRAM MEETINGS 7 PM	TRUSTEE MEETINGS Alden Historical Society Building at 7 PM
JULY..... <u>Summer Break</u>	
AUGUST..... <u>Summer Break</u>	AUGUST 1..... <u>Members Invited</u>
SEPTEMBER 12..... <u>Myths of Gettysburg</u>	

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

JULY 2013 SUMMER BREAK

AUGUST 2013 SUMMER BREAK

SEPTEMBER 12, 2013 THE MYTHS OF GETTYSBURG
7 PM, Community Center



Former Aldenite George McGaughey will kick off the Historical Society's 2013-2014 program season with his presentation, "The Myths of Gettysburg." McGaughey, a retired high school social studies teacher, has visited the Gettysburg battlefield many times, both individually and with groups. He will offer an audio-visual presentation focusing on many commonly held beliefs, now known to be myths, concerning those three tumultuous days in early July one hundred fifty years ago. Enjoy your summer, then join us for what is sure to be an informative and enlightening evening.

Conrad and Carol Borucki, Program Committee

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 members:

Ardith Edenhofer
Christopher Gust

~~~~~  
A generous gift to the educational fund was made by:

Patricia & Todd Mooney

~~~~~  
Donations in lieu of Dues were made by the following Life Members:

Elli DeFilippo
Roberta Vincent
Jane & Clarke Burke

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

BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Application on Page 7

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