

# 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.

## *Julia Butler Scofield*

At a recent pre-spring cleaning by some ladies at the Alden Presbyterian Church, a silver communion chalice was found tucked in the corner of a cupboard. It was inscribed "In Memory of Julia Butler Scofield." I was asked if I knew who she was, and I remembered some letters in our files from Reuben Scofield written during the Civil War. Thus began a search to find out more about Julia and Reuben.

Julia Ann Butler, born December 15, 1844, was the daughter of Samuel Marsh Butler (born 1804) and his second wife, Julia Ann Ingersoll (born 1810). She had two older half brothers, Ralph Norton Butler born in 1832 and Samuel Brainard Butler born in 1835. Their mother, Merza Ann Persons, died May 30, 1839. Their father, Samuel M, returned to his home state of Connecticut and married Julia Ann Ingersoll on November 18, 1839. To this marriage were born six children—Merza Ann (1840-1847), twin boys, Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren, born in April of 1843 but dying in September of the same year, Julia Ann, George M (1848-1883), and Mary L. (1851-1923). Samuel M. is listed as a merchant in the 1850 Alden census and the 1866 map shows a building on Broadway owned by his son George M.

Dan and Laurie Moultrup now live in the Butler home on Exchange Street. Their deed shows that Samuel M. Butler purchased the property in 1850 from George Holland and his wife Sarah. Tax rolls from 1851 show that Samuel M. also owned other property in Alden. After Samuel M.'s death on September 2, 1852, his wife and children continued to live on the property. Laurie Moultrup gave the Society letters written by Reuben Scofield to Julia Butler and notes from Julia's 1863 diary.

Julia's diary chronicles the daily activities of a 19-year old girl in 1863. She mentions whom she visited, who visited her (many familiar Alden names), going to singing school, knitting a hood for her mother, giving drawing lessons and spending time with Porter (I assume Porter Parkhurst). The first mention of Reuben Scofield is on January 31 when she began a letter to him. From Reuben's letters we can assume they had been students together at Alden Seminary (Dr. Panek's office) or had met when he attended there. The only mention of the Civil War is on May 11<sup>th</sup> when she "went up to the depot in the afternoon to see the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment (*Reuben's regiment*) pass in the cars." Reuben spent time with her that week as he had been mustered out. (He rejoined in 1864 and served until 1866.) There appears to have been a falling out with Porter in May—"he was a very naughty boy," but she was back going with him to activities in June.

The letters we have of Reuben's are from 1863 and 1866. In his March 11, 1866, letter to Julia he wrote: " Before I close this letter, Julia, I must introduce a subject I intended to have spoken to you about when I was in Alden but for reasons—I know not—I did not. I wish to know, Julia, whether you can ever think any more of me than a friend. I have loved you, Julia, for years."

Julia and Reuben were married June 26, 1866. She died September 30, 1869, in Washington, DC.

Reuben went on to own the *Penn Yan Express* newspaper for over 50 years until his death in 1923. He remarried and had one child, a daughter named Julia.

The graves of Samuel M.; Merza, wife of Samuel; Julia, wife of Samuel; daughters Merza and Julia; sons Andrew J, Martin V. and George M. are in Alden's Evergreen Cemetery. Ralph N. Butler died in Battle Creek, Michigan, and Samuel B is buried in Buffalo. Reuben Scofield is buried in Penn Yan.

*Karen Muchow, Curator*

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### **A Call For Volunteers**

If you are interested in the history of Alden, like meeting people, and want to help your Society, please consider becoming a Saturday house sitter. The Society building is open every Saturday from 10 am to 2 pm, and you may volunteer for a two hour period. There will be a short training session for house sitters on Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm.

The Society's own "Green Team" keeps the grounds attractive. They are always looking for helpers. Expertise in gardening appreciated, but not necessary.

Help is needed computerizing the collections records. We have a computer program to input the information.

Housekeeping gives our historic building tender loving care from dusting and vacuuming to washing windows and curtains.

For more information or to volunteer, leave a message at 937-3700 or e-mail [aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com).

*Karen Muchow, Curator*

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### **From the Collections Committee**

The Collections Committee will meet the third Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM at the Historical Society Building. Volunteers are needed to research the Masonic picture at the Society. Contact Karen Muchow or Keith Stone or leave a message on the Historical Society's answering machine.

The Committee thanks Nancy Schueler for making calls, Betty and Lester Eastwood and Ralph and Ruth Davis for helping with Saturday house sitting.

*Keith Stone, Chairman*

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### **Mrs. Ruth Davis, Former Archivist and Curator Retires**

We regret to announce that Mrs. Ruth Davis has recently relinquished her position as archivist. We applaud Ruth for her long time commitment as both archivist and curator. For the past 22 years she served as archivist and 19 of those years she was both archivist and curator. Ruth spent endless hours categorizing and documenting all the artifacts and documents that were donated to the historical society. Thank you, Ruth, for the many years of your selfless dedication to the Alden Historical Society. Ruth's life membership ensures us that she will remain an active member of the society.

Note that Karen Muchow is currently curator, a position that she accepted about 4 years ago. Karen has been doing an excellent job and we are very grateful for her dedication to the Alden Historical Society as well.

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***CENTURY HOUSE***  
***1561 EMERSON STREET***  
***ALDEN, NY***

The house at 1561 Emerson Street was built in 1907 or 1908. It had been designed by architect Herbert Swain. Mr. Swain was born in Alden in 1887 and graduated from Alden High School. In 1907, he graduated from the Syracuse University School of Architecture. He had offices and a home in Buffalo. He drew up the plans for the 1902 Alden school which was located at the corner of Crittenden and Park Streets. About 1916 he was the architect for the Wright Block --the present Alden Pharmacy. During his career, he designed many area homes and business buildings. He also did the plans for churches in Lewiston and Buffalo. In 1954 he designed the addition to the Alden Presbyterian Church. It was at the dedication of that building that we met Mr. Swain and he told us about our home, which he said he had designed in 1907 as his senior project to be used by his sister and her husband, Fred Bock. The house is shown on the 1910 Erie County map for the Village of Alden, even indicating the pantry which jutted out at the back.

At some point, the Bock home was sold to Christian and Jennie Simme. Christian had worked with his brothers in the Simme meat market. He later became Alden Village Clerk. Jennie Webb Simme had grown up in Alden. She became an elementary school teacher. The Simmes had one son who died while in his teens. In the 1930's when Jennie was teaching primary grades, Ralph Davis was one of her pupils. By the 1950's when I was teaching in Alden, she was teaching kindergarten. Shortly after Christian died in 1952, Jennie stopped Ralph while he was on his way home from his office and asked if he and I would be willing to buy the house. So much for dealing through real estate agents.

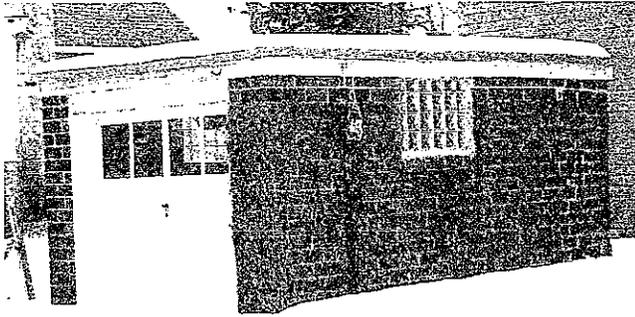


Davis residence 1963



North side prior to rear addition 1963

When we moved into the house in July 1952, we had one son. With the arrival of two more sons and a daughter, the house became a very busy household. By 1963 the kitchen did not seem adequate for the family. As designed by Mr. Swain, the kitchen was a sort of corridor with four doors and a window, so there was no space for cupboards or kitchen counters. The pantry provided cupboards, but no work area. The solution was to tear off the pantry and build a whole new kitchen.



While that was being planned, it was decided to add an attached garage. The garage was also a necessity. While most of the homes on the block had small barns, originally built to accommodate a horse and buggy, Mr. Bock built a garage for an automobile. The original garage was a tile building at the back of the lot. It showed evidence of two enlargements to accommodate ever-longer automobiles. By the time we needed a station wagon for our family,

the old garage was a tight fit. A new garage was most welcome. The old garage works well as a storage spot for outdoor equipment. So while the outline of the house has greatly changed, we are still living with Mr. Swain's basic design. We have the original woodwork, the living room, dining room, foyer and the four bedrooms. The original kitchen has become our office.

We have lived here for a longer time than either of the previous owners. The location of the property has made it especially convenient for us. It is a block from school and with a few blocks of our church, Ralph's office, the library, the post office, the bank and it was a delight at one time to be so near to Neelands' Dairy. I suppose many village residents have enjoyed having those facilities near-by. Village living can have many advantages, conveniences and services. We are truly happy to be in our home in Alden.



1987 photo, with addition

*Ruth Davis*

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### **Ellen Schenkler, Our Former Society Historian and Trustee**

The Board of Trustees sadly announces that Ellen Schenkler, former society historian and trustee, has had to resign her positions due to increased family demands. We thank Ellen for her dedicated service to our organization as society historian and for her work on our display for the Erie County Fair.

The Board has asked Gil Dussault to fill in as trustee for Ellen, and he has accepted. We welcome Gil to this position.

**FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK:**



Since the Secretary holds responsibility for maintaining good records for the Historical Society, please remember to contact the Society when you have a change of address or other contact information. At the end of each meeting, we like to enjoy refreshments while we talk about the programs we have just heard. Hosts and hostesses in charge of refreshments are still needed for May through December this year. Please contact us if you are willing to share your hosting talents!

*Laura Loehr, Secretary*

**From the PROGRAM COMMITTEE:**

On July 8, we will take a field trip to the Steam Show Grounds in Alexander, to view some of the steam engines which were significant in Alden, years ago. We will start with a potluck supper, on the grounds there. Mark your calendar and start planning what dish to share!

**ALDEN 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 each 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 7:00 pm. Meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December (even-numbered months). The trustee meetings are open to the membership.

**OFFICERS**

President.....Roberta Vincent  
Vice President.....Sal Sardella  
Secretary.....Laura Loehr  
Treasurer.....Ralph Davis  
Curator.....Karen Muchow  
Archivist.....Ruth Davis

Society Historian  
Alden Town Historian  
Leonard Weisbeck  
Alden Town Board Liaison  
Arlene Cooke  
Editor.....Elli DeFilippo  
Publicity.....Judy Hotchkin

**TRUSTEES**

Fred Blowers      Carl Matthies  
Ralph Davis      Sal Sardella  
Elli DeFilippo      Keith Stone  
Gil Dussault      Roberta Vincent  
Judy Hotchkin      Paul Werner  
Laura Loehr

## WELCOME NEW & RENEWED MEMBERS

### NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS:

Matthew & Antoinette Shriver  
Raymond & Norine Crist  
Merritt Family: Kirk, Dawn, Jack & Luke  
Stephen and Jeanne Malovich  
Family  
Robert W. Partell Family

### BUSINESS MEMBERS:

Alden State Bank  
Neill & Strong Attorney LLC  
The Elwood-Jordans Agency Inc.  
Alden Advertiser

### RENEWED MEMBERS:

Helen Giczkowski  
Helen Creighton  
Carl and Ann Matthies  
Family  
Carol and Conrad Borucki  
Family

### *With Deepest Sympathy*

The Alden Historical Society extends heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends and relatives of *Warren "Willard" Eastwood*, former Alden Historical Society member and lifelong Alden resident, who passed away on February 10, 2010, at the age of 91. He died in his home on Broadway, next to the Evergreen Cemetery, where he was sexton.

### 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

[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.

# MONTHLY PROGRAMS

APRIL 1, 2010 ..... Trustee Meeting  
7 pm, Historical Society Building  
Open to the Membership

APRIL 8, 2010 ..... Farming in Alden, Past and Present  
7 pm, Community Center



Farming in Alden, Past and Present. In March we noted the 200th anniversary of the first documented settler in Alden, Moses Fenno, who cleared land and planted crops in 1810 near what we now know as the Whistle Stop. Because it has often been requested by members of the Historical Society, join us for an informal talk with Alden farmers Gerald Aldinger and Dan Oles (and perhaps others) who will share stories about farms in Alden, past and present. They'll also discuss how farming has changed since they started farming themselves. What's the future of farming in our town? Come join in the discussion.

MAY 13, 2010 ..... Alden Cemeteries  
7 pm, Community Center



This is a program also by request from Society members. Our own Sal Sardella has been spending much time and effort lately gathering information about the cemeteries in Alden--when they were founded, where they are, who of note is interred there. Please join us for a very informative presentation about an often unpleasant topic, but it will be one that many will find fascinating.

JUNE 3, 2010 ..... Trustee Meeting  
7 pm, Historical Society Building  
Open to the Membership

JUNE 10, 2010 ..... 50 Years at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church  
7 pm, Community Center



Members of the congregation at St. Aidan's are celebrating 50 years as a church, in one of Alden's most famous buildings. They are working with the Historical Society to put together a program which will highlight their many years as members of Alden's church community. Won't you join us to help them commemorate their significant anniversary?

# ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### SPRING 2010

PROGRAM MEETINGS 7 pm, Community Center	TRUSTEE MEETINGS 7 pm, Historical Society Bldg
April 8..... Farming in Alden, Past and Present	April 1 ..... Historical Society Bldg. Members Invited
May 13 ..... Alden Cemeteries	
June 10 ..... St. Aidan's 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	June 3 ..... Historical Society Bldg. Members Invited

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
13213 BROADWAY  
ALDEN, NY 14004

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



ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Chartered by the Board of Regents  
New York State Education Department  
[aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com)  
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