



# The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

716-937-3700

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**Curator**  
Kris Rogers

## Early Automobile Trips

Georgia Stone Tyler, wife of Dr. Clarence Tyler, often mentioned in her journals the trials and tribulations of automobile travel in the early 1900s. The good doctor loved automobiles and changed makes and models often. He had several mishaps, one example recently found in a news article from September 17, 1908: "Dr. C.A. Tyler of Alden, is confined to the house from an accident, his automobile colliding with his son-in-law's at Cowlesville." There has to be a story there, but alas, we don't know the details.

It was not uncommon to have a flat tire on the drive into Lancaster, and another one on the way home. The condition of the road was certainly a factor, as well as the construction of the tires. But nothing can quite top the description of the following ill-fated automobile trip in July 1903 from the Alden news printed in the *Depew Herald*:

"Dr. and Mrs. Trowbridge and Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, of Buffalo, who were enroute to Cayuga Lake with their automobiles, were obliged to stay in Alden at the Kirk House (*Darrow's*) from Sunday evening until this morning (*Tuesday*) the delay being caused by Mr. Fisher's machine breaking down near Town Line. Mrs. Fisher was thrown out, but only received slight bruises and a serious shock. The machine was hauled into a farmer's barn and Mr. and Mrs. Fisher brought to Alden by team.



Monday, Mr. Fisher went to Buffalo for another machine which he secured and started for Alden. On reaching Town Line, the machine stopped at the very spot where the first one gave out. Mr. Fisher worked two or three hours and finally got the thing started for Alden, reaching here safely.

After supper the party got ready to continue their journey when Mr. Fisher discovered that again his vehicle refused to move. Nearly every man in town came to offer assistance and tried to find the difficulty with no avail. Mr. Fisher then decided to send for repairers from Buffalo. A tourist car came with the men late at night, and soon put the machine in order.

'This morning the party started after a heavy (*rain*) shower for their destination, but were still doomed. They got out as far as County Line Corners, where the roads had been lately worked, Mr. Fisher's machine still acted bad, slipped in the mud, and ran off at one side of the rough road. Mrs. Fisher decided to return to Alden. Both ladies were driven to Crittenden where they took the train for Batavia. The gentlemen, being more brave, started on with their automobiles. How many miles they have covered we have not learned but sincerely hope they have reached Batavia.'

*continued*

The members of the party were of cheerful disposition and patient. We hope they will reach their destination in safety and enjoy their planned vacation.”

We must remember that there were no service stations, few trained mechanics, no AAA in those early days of the automobile. Certainly planning a trip from Buffalo to Cayuga Lake, a distance of over 120 miles, in 1903, was not for the faint-hearted.

Note: *With help from Ancestry.com, Dr. Trowbridge has been identified. He was Dr. Grosvenor Trowbridge, son and grandson of doctors, and a graduate of the University of Buffalo School of Medicine. His great uncle was Seth Grosvenor, founder of the Grosvenor Library in Buffalo. He was born in 1864 and died five years after this trip on October 19, 1908 of heart disease and complications from influenza. At the time of his death, he was surgeon for the Delaware Lackawanna & Western and Lehigh Valley Railroads, where he was beloved as a sympathetic and painstaking surgeon.*

*Mrs. Trowbridge was the former Lucy Horton, only daughter of Col. Joseph and Abbie Horton. She and Grosvenor were married October 19 1893 in Rochester, where the Hortons then lived. Before that they had lived in Ithaca which may be the connection with Cayuga Lake. A sightseeing boat on Cayuga Lake was named after Colonel Horton. No trace can be found of Lucy after the 1920 US census. As for the Fishers, with no first names nor titles they are difficult to trace.*

*Karen Muchow*

## *Curator's Corner*

A former bedroom within the Heritage Center, contains a portion of our collection of military items. The citizens of Alden have performed military duty since the Revolutionary War until the present day. During the summer holidays of Memorial Day and the Fourth of July, the sacrifices of our citizens are especially poignant. The collection includes uniforms from various service branches and campaigns. There is a handmade wooden crutch from the Civil War, gas masks from WWI, rosters of casualties from all the wars and a modern Marine uniform worn in Afghanistan.

When children visit the Center, many of them are drawn to the Military Room. Their sense of time and history is often lacking but their interest is true. They have lots of questions about uniforms, guns, and war in general.

We have more uniforms than we can display, but our sense of pride, patriotism and gratitude is shown in this very special room of our building.

*Kris Rogers*



## Message from the President

As I write this column, Governor Cuomo just announced that 70% of adult New Yorkers have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine shot and most restrictions have now been lifted. Certainly, good news as we continue to slowly move forward toward what we remember as normalcy. We now have the Alden Heritage Center open for its regular schedule of first and third Sundays of the month. We look forward to fully welcoming visitors once again and further look forward to offering monthly programs at the Alden Community Center, beginning in September. These are very positive steps forward.



This good news is tempered somewhat by the continued effects from the loss of our fellow Trustee and friend, Larry Kocher, who peacefully passed away the evening of April 30. Larry was a very giving human being and donated so much time and talent to the Alden Historical Society, as well as several other organizations. We relied on him heavily for maintenance issues and questions about the Heritage Center and Henskee Schoolhouse and his talents were always very important for our ribbon-winning Erie County Fair displays. I personally relied on Larry very heavily for Society matters and considered him my friend. He will be missed.

With the loss of Larry and the recent retirement of longtime Trustee, Gil Dussault, from our Board of Trustees, the Society finds itself a little short-handed. If you have any thoughts of taking your interest in Alden's history up to the level of assisting the Society as a docent at the Heritage Center or even joining our Board, please let us know. We would truly like to involve a new generation of residents from our community that share the same passion and interest in Alden's history and heritage, so that the Historical Society can continue to fulfill its mission for years to come.

Last, one final plug to be sure to pick up an Erie County Heritage Passport and take advantage of visiting as many of the wonderful historical buildings and museums as possible throughout the summer. I am proud to help represent Alden on this project that began with a simple idea and became a wonderful keepsake that is one of the centerpieces of the Erie County Bicentennial celebration.

Thank you for your interest and support.

*Christopher Gust*

## Heritage Center Now Open

The Alden Heritage Center reopened and welcomed visitors for the first time on Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Several guests were on hand to explore our many displays that tell the story of Alden and its people. We plan to have the Heritage Center open to the public throughout the remainder of the year, from 1 to 3 pm on the first and third Sunday of each month. Be sure to bring your Erie County Heritage Passport and search for a numbered lantern to have your passport stamped. We will continue to respectfully ask that unvaccinated guests wear a mask and practice social distancing.

*Christopher Gust*



## Thank You, Gil Dussault



The Society's Board of Trustees expresses its thanks and gratitude to Gil Dussault, who recently retired from his position on the Board. Gil joined the Board in 2010 and served as the Society's president for several years and, more recently, chaired our fundraising committee. Under Gil's guidance, our annual Bake Sale and Fund Appeal has been a great success and has helped the Society keep a balanced budget and cover the costs of projects for the benefit of the Alden community. We thank Gil for his dedicated service.

*Christopher Gust*

## *Erie County Heritage Passports Now Available*



Wrapping up a project the Alden Historical Society was prominently involved with, the EC200 Bicentennial Committee recently announced the release of the Erie County Heritage Passport, a handheld guide to 35 historical societies and museums across Erie County. Each institution is unique and commemorates the diverse nature and history of each town in the county, from the Town of Alden to the Town of West Seneca. The Passports are available at all Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries and will soon be available at all the 35 museums and historical societies listed inside. The Heritage Passport will also be available to view online and can be downloaded as a printable PDF at [www.erie.gov/EC200](http://www.erie.gov/EC200).

The EC200 Passport Committee, a group of local historians and historical societies, took the lead on developing the concept of a countywide passport and gathered information for inclusion from each town in the Passport. The result is a comprehensive, easy-to-use guide with hours of operation, items of interest, and contact information for all the 35 museums and historical societies listed.

“The Passport Committee did an outstanding job in putting together a user-friendly resource that’s packed with information and resources and the entire EC200 Committee thanks them for their hard work,” said Erie County Historian and EC200 Co-chair Doug Kohler. “Everyone who uses the Passport is encouraged to have it stamped in as many historical museums or societies as they can in order to be eligible for a special commemorative keepsake in the fall, with more details forthcoming.”

Members of the EC200 Passport Committee include:

Douglas Larkin, President of the Historical Society of Clarence  
Mark Woodward, Town of Clarence Historian  
Karen Sutton, President of the Lancaster Historical Society  
Christopher Gust, President of the Alden Historical Society  
Karen Muchow, Town & Village of Alden Historian  
Patricia Pearce, President of the Newstead Historical Society  
Donald Holmes, Town of Newstead Historian  
Marlene Baumgarten, President of the Elma Historical Society

The theme for the passport is “Shining a Light on the History of Erie County” (a phrase coined by Alden Historian, Karen Muchow), so each museum will have a numbered lantern (light) to look for, and record in your passport. Be sure to have your passport stamped at the end of your visit. Passports are available at the Alden Ewell Free Library and the Alden Heritage Center during opening hours.

*Christopher Gust*

## *Business Member Spotlight—Neill & Strong Attorneys*

*Neill & Strong Attorneys and Counselors P.C., located at 13166 Main Street, is a general law firm that practices in the areas of residential and commercial real estate; estate planning; probate matters; creating and advising businesses; and municipal law. We are MWBE Certified.*

We are committed to providing our clients with prompt, professional and friendly legal services at reasonable rates. Our office building is the former Kidder Homestead, built in approximately 1880. The main support beam in the basement is a hand sawn log and a portion of the basement is still has the original dirt floor basement.

Our owner, Jennifer L. Strong, Esq. is a lifelong Alden resident and currently serves as a Trustee for the Alden Historical Society.



*Individual Renewal*

Battista, Carol  
Daluisio, Angelo  
Dussault, Kristen  
Dussault, Michelle  
Galbraith, Sue  
Giczkowski, Helen  
Kavanagh, Kyle  
Kocher, Shirley  
Kotlowski, Marlene  
Kubiak, Monica  
Loehr, Laura  
Nebrich, Beverly  
Nelson, Gloria  
Nelson, Renée  
Reich, Edward  
Rickard, Nancy  
Satkowski, Charleen  
Schall, Donna  
Schmidt, Marion  
Staples, Florence  
Tucker, Lynda  
White, Eleanor

*Couple Renewals*

Becker, Rich & Marie  
Botucki, Conrad & Carol  
Butler, Gerald & Marian  
DeWitt, Mike & Sue  
Dussault, Brian & June  
Grenier, Gregory & Allegra  
Hoffman, Keith & Michelle  
Rice, Bob & Barb  
Rickard, Paul & Joanne  
Savage, Rick & Karen

*Business Renewals*

Alden Chamber of Commerce  
Alden Kiwanis Club  
Alden Pharmacy  
Alden State Bank  
Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys  
Elwood-Jordans Agency  
Law Offices of Michael W. Cole  
Neill & Strong, Attorneys

*Family Renewals*

Bowman, Ron & Judy  
Schmidt, Herbert & Shannon  
Stoltman, Adam & Kristen

*Donations*

Battista, Carol  
Elwood-Jordans Agency  
Reich, Edward

*New Members*

Hanson, Christopher  
Kent, Gregory



*Dear Century Home Owner*



In 2020 we sent out 100 letters and applications to our Century House owners on: Broadway, Cary, Cayuga Creek, Crittenden, Four Rod, Exchange, Old Wende, Pohl and Zoeller Roads. This year we just sent out letters to owners on: Genesee, Henskee, Keiffer, Lesswing, Main, North, North Millgrove, Peters Corners, Reinhardt, Rundal, South Newstead and Sullivan Roads. If you reside in a Century House in any of these locations and did not receive correspondence, please let us know.

Please contact Sue Galbraith at [mustangcov@aol.com](mailto:mustangcov@aol.com) for information and an application. There is no charge to be included in the book, and century house signs are available for \$47.

*Sue Galbraith*



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*Alden  
Historical Society*  
**Established 1965**

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## Programs to Resume in September



With the recent reopening of the Alden Community Center, the Alden Historical Society is making plans to resume our in-person monthly programs, beginning in September. Check out the Alden Advertiser and our Facebook page for the latest updates.

Editor's Note: Conrad & Carol Borucki have retired as Program Directors and Renée Nelson will now be planning programs. If you have a program idea you'd like to see presented, please send a message to us: phone 716-937-3700, post on Facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety, on our website contact page at [www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org) or email [aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com). Thank You Conrad and Carol for your many interesting programs!

## You're the Best

A shout-out to all who support the Historical Society by giving their time volunteering as officers, docents and attending our programs. Our newest docents are Sue DeWitt and Roberta Vincent. Only two hours on an occasional Sunday or two will help us. Training is available. Get to know your Historical Society and serve your community too!



## Will You Help?



The Historical Society is looking for members who may be interested in assisting as volunteer docents when our building is open on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month and during special events. If you can help, please contact one of our Trustees, call 937-3700 or email [aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com). Training is available for new docents. Thank you!

## Our Sympathy



**Kocher-Lawrence S.**, Age 74 of Alden, NY went home to the Lord on Friday, April 30, 2021. Beloved husband of 47 years to Shirley (Walter) Kocher, loving father of Karen (Ernest) Belzile, Kevin and Kathleen (Brian) Oliver; dear grandfather of Shelby Kocher, Tyler and Victoria Belzile, Aurelia, Portia and Atticus Oliver and the late Ched Oliver; brother of Barbara (Paul) Astri, Christine (Keith Rose), Charles (Lydia), David (Darlene), Deborah (Gilbert) Maue and Cynthia Krolick; step-brother of John (Kitty) Bicheler, Thomas (Judy) Bicheler and Linda (Mark) Nelson; son of the late Glenn and Frances Kocher; step-son of the late Theresa (Kiener, Bicheler).



**Kotlowski - Stephen C.** Age 89, May 18, 2021 of Alden, NY. Beloved husband of 62 years to Marlene (nee Nowicki) Kotlowski; dearest father of Steven (Somkuan) Kotlowski and Maryrose (Christopher) Gregoire; loving grandfather of JoAnne and Christopher Kotlowski, Roy Hansen and Erin Gregoire; great-grandfather of Wyatt Kotlowski; predeceased by his sisters, Dorothy Klein, Jane Brauner and Frances Domanowski; also survived by nieces and nephews.

## Alden Heritage Center

The **Alden Historical Society's** many exhibits are located in the village at the Alden Heritage Center, 13213 Broadway, across from Alden State Bank. The mission of the historical society is to preserve, promote and present the history of Alden and its people.

### HOURS:

The **Alden Heritage Center** is open to the public from 1 PM to 3 PM the first and third Sunday of each month, **EXCEPT during January and February.** Tours for individuals and groups may be arranged by calling 937-3700 or 392-4295.

### MEETINGS:

**Program meetings** are generally held at the Alden Community Center on the second Thursday of the month at 7 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, often featuring a guest speaker. You are very welcome to come and share your memories and experiences about the evening's program, followed by an informal social complete with homemade refreshments. In the event of inclement weather, we will postpone when Alden school activities are closed.

**Trustee meetings** are held at the **Alden Heritage Center** at 7 PM. Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December. Trustee meetings are open to the membership.

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New members are always welcome. Your support will assure that the Alden Historical Society will continue to grow and prosper for years to come.

**Please note:** The membership year is April 1 through March 31, with the annual renewal due by April 1.

#### WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!

#### ANNUAL DUES

Single \$12.00

Couple \$20.00

Family \$25.00

Business \$50.00

Please include your Business card

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Lynda Tucker, Membership Secretary

Alden Historical Society

13213 Broadway

Alden, NY 14004

**DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED**

**NOTE: Donations are not tax deductible**

**Membership**—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke, Susanne Galbraith,

Jennifer Strong

**Collections**—Jane Burke, Sandy Dussault, Kyle Kavanagh, Karen Muchow,

Renée Nelson, Kris Rogers

**Publicity/Newsletter**—Lynda Tucker - Editor, Clarke Burke, Elli DeFilippo,

Susanne Galbraith, Christopher Gust, Carl Matthies, Renée Nelson

**Program/Refreshments**—Renée Nelson, Sandy Dussault, Elli DeFilippo

**Building and Grounds**— Christopher Gust, Conrad Borucki, Jennifer Strong

**Fundraising**—Jane and Clarke Burke

**Nominating**—Jane Burke, Elli DeFilippo, Sue Galbraith

**Audit**—Lynda Tucker, Carl Matthies

**Budget**—Clarke Burke, Christopher Gust

**Historical Marker/Signs**—Christopher Gust, Clarke Burke, Karen Muchow,

Jennifer Strong

Members are welcome to serve on any of the committees. Contact us at 937-3700 or at [aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com).

## Century Homes



Although we accept information on any century house, we are now focusing on the 100+ yr old houses located in the town. If you are interested, please email us at: [AldenHistSoc@gmail.com](mailto:AldenHistSoc@gmail.com). We have Century House signs for sale for \$47. Sue Galbraith





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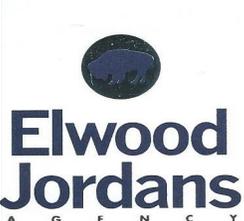
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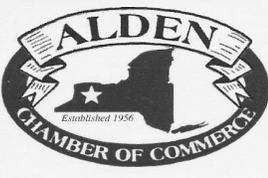
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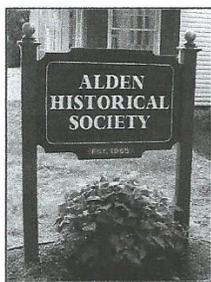
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**MISSION STATEMENT**

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.



*Alden Historical Society*  
13213 Broadway  
Alden, NY 14004

*Find us on Facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety*

*and on the web at www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org*

*We appreciate the support we receive from the Town of Alden.*

*Thank you.*

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