

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004
aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

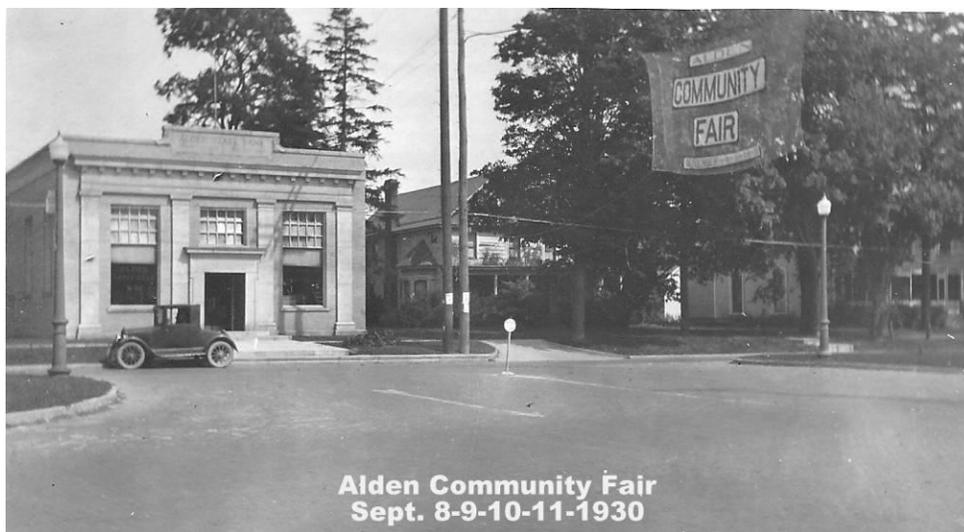
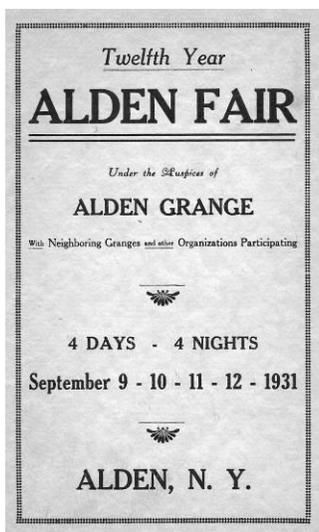
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MISSION STATEMENT

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.

Community Fairs 1920-1932

Autumn in Alden in the years 1920 to 1932 meant Fair Days. These community fairs were sponsored by the Alden Grange No. 1138 Patrons of Husbandry, along with neighboring granges, and were held on their property, which is now the Alden Town Park. The Alden Historical Society is privileged to own the fair booklets of eight of the thirteen fairs. The booklets not only detail the events of the fairs, but are also full of the sponsoring ads of the businesses of the day.



The first fair, held September 17th and 18th, 1920, was a very small fair, more like a bazaar. Prices and admissions were: Exhibitor's Ticket--\$.50, Single Admission--\$.25, Children--\$.15, Special Children's Friday--\$.05. There was judging for horses, eight different categories of cattle, four breeds of swine, sheep, poultry, grain, potatoes, vegetables, fancy work, canned goods, baked goods, fruit, flowers, sweets, plus a junior project division. First place prizes ranged from \$.25 to \$5.00.

The Friday program included aeroplane rides throughout the day; a plowing contest; two band concerts; speaking and community singing; meals served cafeteria style; races, games and contests, and a moving picture show at 8 pm.

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On Saturday, there were again aeroplane rides, a band concert featuring Father Baker's Boys' Band, a boy's cow judging contest, a "mammoth" street parade at 1:30, a baseball game between Clarence and Akron, another band concert, a moving picture show, and a street dance between the parks (medians) with music by Swyers' 8-Piece Orchestra.

By the mid 1920s the Fair had increased to four days and nights. There were fifteen different departments and a strong school presence. Admission prices had risen to \$1.00 for an Exhibitor's Ticket, \$.35 for a Single Admission and \$.75 for a Season Ticket. Children under 12 were admitted free. Prize premiums had also increased. The 1926 Fair booklet advertised a midway, athletic events, dancing in the pavilion from 8 to 12 with Fattey's Orchestra and a Spectacular Street Parade with not only bands, fire companies and fire apparatus, but also decorated automobiles and floats.

The last Grange Fair was held August 18th, 19th and 20th, 1932. Erie County had been contributing money for prizes, but had to withdraw this support; without it the Grange had to discontinue the Fair. There were seventeen different departments, including antiques and conservation. Al G. Emerson's Celebrated 1-Ring Circus was advertised with high-diving dogs, clowns, wire-walking and flying trapezes.

The Street Parade held Saturday afternoon was advertised as surpassing any that had ever been held in Alden. The best decorated float and car received prizes of \$15.00. Dances were held each evening and baseball games between the "fastest semiprofessional teams in Western New York" were scheduled.

The demise of the Grange Fairs brought the end of an era. No longer would agriculture play such an important part in the community.

Karen Muchow, Curator

Alden Historical Society Display Places 4th at Erie County Fair



In addition to Alden Historical Society's September program about the secession of Town Line, the Society also used the 150th anniversary of the Civil War as the springboard for its 2011 display at the Erie County Fair.

The display featured the genuine desk at which the hamlet of Town Line counted their votes when seceding from the Union in 1861 and at which they again counted their votes when rejoining the union in 1946.

Historical Society member Mary Stone, with assistance from daughters Amy and Cassandra, can be credited with development of the display, along with contributions from Keith Stone, Gil and Sandy Dussault, Karen Muchow, Kris Rogers, and Conrad Borucki.

The display placed fourth out of nine displays. Also included in the display were US and Confederate flags, period dress, and lists of Alden-area residents who died in conflicts involving the United States from the Civil War through World War II. The Society thanks all who lent their support to this project.

Keith Stone

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK:



Secretary Kris Rogers is putting out a call for family recipes that have been handed down through the generations for the upcoming Historical Society cookbook fundraiser. Recipes may be dropped off at the Alden Ewell Library, Alden Historical Society Bldg, or emailed to aldenshistsoc@gmail.com.

Kris Rogers, Secretary

The Secession of Town Line (1861) And Their Return to the Union (1946)



Civil War Re-enactors 9/8/11
Town Line Lutheran Church

Pictured left to right:

Mike Thore, Kyle Kavanaugh, Pat Petree, David Kreutz, Jenna Kavanaugh, Rick Macdonald, Brandon Atkins, and Butch Malchow.

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, the Alden Historical Society presented a program, on the evening of September 8, 2011, about the secession of the hamlet of Town Line from the Union in 1861 and its return to the Union in 1946. Assisting in the presentation of the program were Town Line Lutheran Church, the Blair family of Town Line, and the Lancaster Historical Society. The program, held at Town Line Lutheran Church, proved to be a huge success, with an overflow crowd. Sadly, some had to be turned away.



As Guests entered the Fellowship Hall at the Town Line Lutheran church, they were greeted by a collection of Civil War tunes, skillfully played by Society member Sue Muench.

The program began when Historical Society Trustee Conrad Borucki, moderator for the evening, introduced all participants, beginning with Society President Gil Dussault, who welcomed all members and guests of the standing-room-only crowd. Next, Curator Karen Muchow began the program by offering many interesting facts about the times and the locality. Lancaster Historical Society Vice-president Teresa Wolfe then talked about the Under Ground Railroad in Lancaster, Town Line, and Alden.

Town Line resident Lisa Blair followed Teresa with her extensive research regarding Town Line's secession from and return to the Union. Lisa gave a detailed accounting of the festivities on Oct. 27, 1946, when Town Line voted 90 to 23 to rejoin the Union; she even showed movies of the event. Bill Blair (Lisa's father-in-law), a resident of Town Line since Town Line was a rebel hamlet, then spoke on the progression of the various Confederate flags. Mr. Blair had pictures of many of the flags as well as detailed history and meaning of each.

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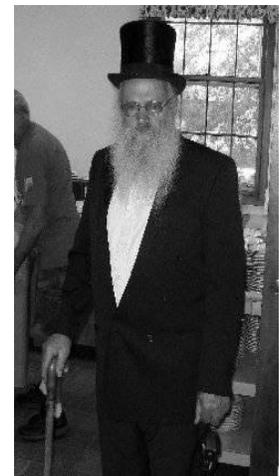
A question/answer session preceded the reading of the Gettysburg Address by President Lincoln, portrayed by David Kreutz, a period re-enactor. Refreshments and social followed.



On January 23rd 1946, the Hamlet of Town Line was decorated for a feast of roast beef and an official vote to re-join the Union. The crossroads (Broadway and Townline Rd.) were named "Truman Square" (for the day of celebration) in honor of President Truman. Picture here is "President Lincoln and son Willy" under the actual sign that was posted at the crossroads.

Beckoning from the rear of the hall, was a wide variety of artifacts collected by the Blair family and other Town Line residents.

Adding authenticity to the evening, were several Civil War re-enactors, representing both the North and the South. President Abe Lincoln (David Kreutz), along with wife Mary Todd Lincoln (Pat Petree), and son Willy Lincoln (Kyle Kavanaugh), made an appearance. Several ladies and one gentleman, Mr. Bill Dabb (photo at right), attired in period dress, also attended.



The evening's program was coordinated by the Society Program Committee, led by Co-Chair Conrad Borucki, with great assistance from Committee member Carol Borucki and presenter Lisa Blair. Supporting this event were Alden Pharmacy, Alden State Bank and Tops of Alden, for which we offer a big THANK YOU !

Carl Matthies

Alden Book

Just a update on the Alden book being illustrated and written by Middle School art students, members of the Alden Art Club and members of the Alden Historical Society. The book is in the process of being laid out—all paintings are finished and photographed, and all writing pieces are finished. Hopefully it will go to press in October. We are still looking at a December release date.

Recent Acquisitions

We thank the following people for their donations to our collections:

1960 Alden Directory William Elliott
 Irene Munn's photo album Carol Dombrowski
 Millgrove Elementary T-shirt Bill and Thelma Dabb
 Telegraph training key, switchboard operator's head set..... Faith Wendling
 Letters from Luther Young to parents during the Civil War Judy Frantz Hogan
 Autograph book, photos, genealogy of the Ira Hawthorne family Mrs. Roy Johnson

Karen Muchow Curator

Setting the Scene—Alden 1861

Size of Town:

34 $\frac{3}{4}$ sq miles, having been 48 sq miles from 1842-1853 when the formation of the Town of Marilla annexed all the Buffalo Creek Reservation land that had previously been in Alden

Population:

1860 population—2442 people in Township
Majority of the males were involved in farming
Heavy German ancestry or recent emigration from Germany

Railroads:

1843—Buffalo & Attica RR, later called the Erie—central part of the Town, southern edge of village
1853—Buffalo & Rochester, later called NY Central—northern part of the Town

Population Centers (Hamlets):

Village, not incorporated until 1869, Erie RR station, several stores, tannery, 3 hotels, a school, 2 churches—Presbyterian-1813, building erected on Church St; Baptist—1833 (1852 --building in village) Local lore: Dr. Cornwall went to the Alden Village Cemetery and copied names from the gravestones so as to have enough names for the incorporation.

Alden Center—Sandridge—almost exactly in the center of the town and near where the first mills in the town were built by John C. Rogers on Ellicott Creek—1817. Had a church—St John's frame church building built in 1850, first resident pastor in 1854; 2 schools—the Catholic grade school built in 1852 and a district school, 2 hotels, a few stores

West Alden—originally known as Alden Center; first settler B.F. Peck—1835, one church—Methodist (1850), a school—district #1—wagon shop, blacksmith shop, a hotel, several stores, & about 18 homes.

Crittenden—first home—1848; steam-powered saw mill-1850, made planks for the Buffalo-Batavia Plank Road; Railroad—New York Central -1852, Post Office—1852—named after John J Crittenden, US Att Gen under Millard Fillmore, 2 hotels, stores, a school in 1852, St. Patrick's Church erected in 1860 as a mission church, parishioners used railroad hand cars to reach Crittenden in the winter when the roads were impassable.

Town Line—first settled in 1812 by Nathan Willis and John Webster who both built mills on Cayuga Creek. In 1861 there was a hotel, one store, a harness shop, a wagon shop and two blacksmiths. The Town Line Lutheran Church had been organized in 1853 and a brick building erected in the same year. The school stood at the corner of Townline Rd. and what is now Broadway. The Town Line station on the Erie Railroad was at Erie St and Ransom Rd in the Town of Lancaster, where a hotel and a few houses were also located. There was also a station on the Central Railroad at Looneyville on Townline Rd.

Millgrove—named by Moses Case—first store 1848, post office 1849. In 1861, 3 stores, 2 hotels—the American and the Union, about 20 houses, a school (1856), Millgrove Bible Church not organized until 1867. Wende Station on the New York Central about a mile southeast of the hamlet. A store there, also a mill.

Newspaper: None...*Oddagraphic* not founded until 1876, lasted six months. Followed by Alden *Trumpet* (1880-1881), and Alden *Gazette* Jan 1882-June 1883

Land was \$3 to \$5 an acre.

Laborer's wages w/o board were 90 cents/day.

Wheat flour was \$7.14 a barrel

Granulated sugar--8 cents a lb.

Cheese—13 cents a lb.

Eggs—20 cents a dozen

Hard Wood--\$6.49 a cord

Rent for 4 rooms--\$4.45 a month

Room & Board—men--\$2.79 a month

Women--\$1.79 a month

Karen Muchow, Curator

Notes from the President



A big thank you to our members who responded with a contribution following our last mini appeal for financial help. Your donation has helped us get through a bit of a crunch and we sincerely appreciate your help. There is still a need though... so if any of our members have the ability to help us financially we would be very grateful. We can't do it without you. Thank you.



Our new security system has been in place for a few months now and except for a few glitches...it appears to be working well. I believe it was a necessity to protect our precious historical Alden artifacts from intruders and potential fire hazards. The new system should help us achieve that goal. We are most grateful to the Town of Alden for their assistance in the project.



The Town Line Secession and Union Re-entry program was a rousing success. We are very grateful to the Program Committee who worked so very hard for many months preparing for the big event. Judging from the public response we not only presented a program of great interest but were able to draw a huge number of attendees to learn more about our local history. We are deeply sorry that a number of people were turned away because we reached full capacity in the meeting room and could not take any more due to the fire code.

2nd Annual Alden Historical Society Bake Sale



Our Second Annual Bake Sale will be held on Saturday, December 3, 2011 from 10:00 AM til 3:00 PM at the Historical Society Building on Broadway across from the Alden State Bank. The sale will coincide with the Alden Chamber of Commerce premier community event---"Christmas in the Park" which traditionally draws many visitors to the Alden downtown area. Trustee/Member Volunteers will be asked not only to donate baked goods for the sale but to assist the sale process at our building that day. More details will be available in the future at our October and November Program Meetings. Last year's sale was a wonderful success. It is hoped that this year we can do better.

Thank You

Gil Dussault, President

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 and the first and third Thursdays from 6-8 pm from March to December.

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 held at the Alden Historical Building at 8:00 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

President..... Gil Dussault
V. President Roberta Vincent
Secretary..... ...Kris Rogers
*Treasurer.....*Elli DeFilippo
*Curator.....*Karen Muchow
*Archivist.....*Karen Muchow

TRUSTEES

Society Historian Fred Blowers
Alden Town Historian Kris Rogers
Alden Town Board Liaison Leonard Weisbeck
Bill Dabb
Sal Sardella
Ronald Snyder
Elli DeFilippo
Keith Stone
*Editors.....*Elli DeFilippo/Carl Matthies
Gil Dussault
Roberta Vincent
*Publicity.....*Judy Hotchkin
Judy Hotchkin
Paul Werner

Welcome New & Renewed Members

RENEWED MEMBERS:

Ardith Edenhofer
Antoinette Wiltberger
Wayne Weinsheimer
Florence Kegler

NEW MEMBERS:

Thomas Darcy
Laura J. Hacker
Lisa Blair

BUSINESS MEMBERS:

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

RENEWED FAMILY MEMBERS:

Francis & Judith Downhower
Bill & Thelma Dabb

NEW FAMILY MEMBERS:

Bryce & Lisa Blair

LIFETIME MEMBER:

Catherine Cyrulik

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

New members are always welcome. Your support will ensure that the Alden Historical Society will continue to grow and prosper for years to come. Please make check payable as noted below. Thank you for your support.

DUES

| | | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------|------------|
| Single | \$8.00 | Name..... | |
| Family | \$12.00 | Address | |
| Lifetime..... | \$75.00 | | |
| Business.... | \$45.00 | Phone..... | Email..... |

A check payable to: *ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY* may be mailed to:

Judy Hotchkin, Membership Secretary
Alden Historical Society
13213 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Please remember

The Alden Historical Society in your Estate Plans
A bequest in your memory or in memory of someone you love
can help preserve the heritage of our community

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

Phone 937 3700

A special thank you to the ALDEN ADVERTISER for donating membership cards to the Alden Historical Society.

Judy Hotchkin, Membership

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

OCT. 13, 2011 Historical Facts-Corner of Railroad & Exchange Sts.
7pm, Whistle Stop Inn



Kelly Cavanagh of the Whistle Stop Inn will be on hand to speak about the history of this very popular restaurant that has been around for many, many years (come and find out just how many)..

Curator Karen Muchow will then talk about many of the other establishments that were located near the railroad and the corner of Railroad and Exchange Streets. This should prove to be a very interesting and informative program, especially for our seniors who may remember some of the businesses that are no longer around.

Please note that this meeting will take place at the Whistle Stop Inn.

NOVEMBER 10, 2011 Annual Meeting
7 pm, Community Center



The evening will begin with a potluck dinner starting at 6 PM. Please bring a dish to pass in the form of a hot casserole, salad, or dessert and your own table setting. Rolls and butter, and beverages (coffee, tea, and cold drinks) will be provided.

The annual meeting will begin immediately following dinner. At this time all members will have an opportunity to vote for trustees. Officers and committees will read and submit their annual reports.



Besides dinner and voting we will discuss some of our patriotic songs such as our National Anthem, God Bless America, America the Beautiful, My Country, 'Tis Of Thee, and others. Our very own Sue Muench will play many of these patriotic tunes on the piano for us to enjoy.

DECEMBER 8, 2011..... Growing Christmas Trees
7 PM, Community Center



Bill Weber, owner and operator of Weber's Tree Farm will give a talk on the life cycle of Christmas trees from planting to harvesting. Mr. Weber has been growing trees since he was 13 years old. He purchased his current acreage for tree farming in 1979 and by 1990 his first plantings had grown large enough for harvesting and sale.

Afterwards Conrad Borucki will lead a general discussion on Christmas traditions...those you like, those you don't like; also about Christmas gifts...favorites and least favorites. All this should bring out a little nostalgia of Christmas's past.

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DATES TO REMEMBER

FALL 2011

| PROGRAM MEETINGS 7 PM (except noted) | TRUSTEE MEETINGS 8 PM, Historical Society Bldg |
|---|---|
| OCT. 13.....Historical Facts Whistle Stop Inn, Railroad & Exchange Sts. <i>To be held at Whistle Stop Inn</i> | OCT. 6Historical Society Bldg. Members Invited |
| NOV. 10.....Annual Meeting Pot Luck Dinner starts at 6 PM Alden Community Center | |
| DEC. 8Growing Christmas Trees Alden Community Center | DEC. 1.....Historical Society Bldg. Members Invited |

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
13213 BROADWAY
ALDEN, NY 14004

www.alden.erie.gov



ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Chartered by the Board of Regents
New York State Education Department
aldenhistsoc@gmail.com
716 937 3700

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