

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

Published Quarterly.....January 2012

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.

Reflections of Alden



The long awaited book, *Reflections of Alden*, will be available at a book signing reception on Sunday, February 26, 2012, from 2-6 pm, at the Alden Historical Society, 13213 Broadway, Alden. The book is the result of a collaborative project of the Alden Middle School, the Alden Art Club and the Alden Historical Society. The project was funded by a grant from the E&WG Foundation. The book features colorful paintings done by students and local artists of various buildings and places, with corresponding articles written by Society members, that tell the story of

Alden. A special, very limited, hard cover edition will be available for \$45 and a soft-cover, spiral-bound edition will be available for \$25. You may reserve a copy of either edition by sending a check or money order, made out to the Alden Historical Society, to the Society at 13213 Broadway, Alden, New York 14004. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be used for the Society's educational programming. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to local charitable organizations.

In connection with the release of the book, there will be a special display featuring some of the paintings, along with relating artifacts and ephemera, at the Society building until April 30.

Grannytown Cookbook Recipes Needed

Red Raspberries and Cream
Fried Chicken
Scrambled Tomatoes
Warmed Potatoes
Tennessee Muffins
Toast
Coffee



This is the breakfast menu for Fourth of July at Dr. Clarence Tyler's house in 1905, as recorded by his wife, Georgia Stone Tyler, in one of her journals. This menu and others will be featured in *The Grannytown Cookbook* to be published by the Alden Historical Society in time for Christmas 2012.

We need your recipes—family favorites, ones handed down through the generations and others you especially like. You may mail them to the Society at 13213 Broadway, Alden, NY 14004 or send them to AldenHistSoc@gmail.com.

CENTURY HOUSE
13277 IRVING STREET
ALDEN, NY

The following account is by owners Tom and Jennifer Cantie.



Our home at 13277 Irving St. in the Village of Alden is an anomaly for a village full of Colonial and Victorian style architecture. The house is an English Tudor that was built in 1890; however, it was not originally designed in this style. We soon came to discover the reason for these differences because the house has a unique history.

When built, it was actually a smaller Victorian, but then Katherine Steinfeldt purchased the house and transformed it in 1930 into an English Tudor. Interestingly, the former

Mayor of Lancaster during that era and a later delegate to the New York State Senate (1896-1910), George A. Davis, owned a Tudor mansion in Lancaster on the corner of Broadway and Central Ave. By 1930, the mansion was being torn down to pave the way for Standard Oil to build the first gas station in Lancaster.

According to the Lancaster Historical Society, pieces of the mansion were auctioned off locally before its demolition, and it was Katherine Steinfeldt who purchased the red Medina sandstone, giant gothic doors, and dozens of leaded glass windows from Davis' home to create her Tudor here in Alden. It is rumored that this heavy load was actually pulled all the way down Broadway by horse-drawn carts. We do possess a copy of an old photo of the original Davis mansion. Not only has the house become a Century Home of Alden, but we are fascinated that it also preserves a piece of history that has vanished.

The Lives It Has Touched

We have met people over the years whose families had lived in the Tudor over the decades. The Stutzman family lived here with their seven children during the 1960s and put an addition on the back. One of the daughters stopped by one day in 2004 and we took her inside to see the house again. She broke down and cried as she relived her childhood memories and gave us some of the history behind its unusual features.

The House Today

Tom and I have always marveled at how the grandeur of this house has endured throughout the century. It is a real testament to the artistic vision and dedication that Katherine Steinfeldt possessed in creating a landmark that has withstood the test of time. In fact, her name appears on the back of the custom-made crown molding and baseboards throughout the house. This house preserves her legacy as well as the memories of all those families that have lived in it thereafter. For Tom and myself, it is a poignant notion to think that this home will outlive our own family, but we realize that it will always house the cherished times we have spent here.

The Whistle Stop Inn and Other Businesses Corner of Railroad and Exchange Streets



We met “on site” for the October 2011 program meeting, at the Whistle Stop Inn at 1338 Exchange Street. Kelly Cavanaugh, daughter of owners Doug and Terry Becker, presented the first part of the program detailing the history of the establishment. Kelly, with help from curator Karen Muchow, had researched the building for a Christmas present for her father. A hotel has been on that site since the Erie Railroad came through in 1843. It has changed names—Swyers Hotel, Kuhn’s Hotel, the Depot Hotel—and owners over the years. The building has burned and been rebuilt a couple of times. When it was rebuilt in 1934 after a fire, bowling alleys were added.

Another fire destroyed parts of the alleys. The remnants can still be seen in the floor of the dining room.

Kelly’s grandparents, Ona and Oliver Becker, purchased the Inn in 1964. Today, Kelly and her husband Patrick, along with her brother Jon, help Doug and Terry run and operate the restaurant and catering service.

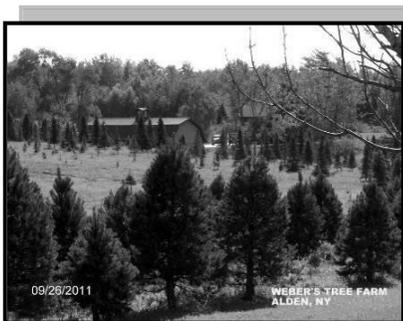
Karen then gave a brief history of other businesses in that area. The Erie Depot, across the tracks from the Whistle Stop, was once a busy place with a number of trains each day delivering not only goods, but also patrons of Alden’s famous Blackwater Baths. The depot closed in 1963. The building still stands, now being used as the Wood Depot. Next to the depot was Patterson’s Hotel and livery. A bathhouse was added to the hotel in 1908 to capture some of the Black Water Bath trade. The name was changed to the Alden Mineral Baths and Hotel. It was called the Empire Hotel in 1949 when it was destroyed by fire on Christmas Eve. It was never rebuilt. Today, located to the rear of the site, is the Blackwater Fitness Club.

On the southeast corner of the intersection stood a general store. One of Alden’s first pharmacists was located there. William Pfeil operated a store on the site and later built his Beanery behind the store. The Beanery stood empty for a number of years before it burned in 1992.

Back across the tracks, in what is now a private home, was Young’s Laundry. Behind the laundry was the Alden Veneer Manufacturing Co, operated by the Savage family. They made a variety of baskets.

Thank you Kelly and Karen for a very informative evening and thank you Doug and Terry for allowing us to meet at your restaurant and for the hospitality you provided us.

Christmas Tree Farm



Mr. Bill Weber; owner and operator of Weber’s Tree Farm, Alden, NY, presented the December 2011 program at the Alden Community Center. Mr. Weber gave a detailed account of what takes place from the time a seedling is planted in the ground to the time the tree is harvested some 10 to 12 years later. He brought in twig samples and cones of the various coniferous trees most commonly used as Christmas trees and explained many of the difficulties regarding tree farming. These include the effects that insects, deer, rabbits, mice, fungus and weather may have on the crop. Care for the trees requires “a labor of love” since the trees may require fertilizer, pesticides, pruning, staking and grass

mowing and the timing for doing many of these things is very important. This was a very informative presentation with many questions and answers that followed.

After the Christmas tree program, Mr. Conrad Borucki announced the results of his Christmas “favorite and least favorite” survey which was completed during the November program.

Thank you Bill for a very informative program. We wish you well for many more years of Christmas tree harvesting.

Also thank you Conrad for the Christmas “favorite and least favorite” survey with some very surprising results.

“Grannytown” Going Green

With increasing frequency, we all routinely receive requests to “go paperless” from various institutions, most notably banking institutions, utilities, and credit companies. In the interest of conserving paper and postage, the Historical Society is also offering paperless transmission of the newsletter, beginning with the April 2012 edition. If you wish to receive your copy of the newsletter electronically, please send your email address to aldenhistsoc@gmail.com and put **e-newsletter** in the subject line.



Historical Society Elects Officers and Committee Members

At its December board meeting, the Historical Society elected officers and appointed operating committees for the coming year. Officers remained the same for 2012 as they had been in 2011 (see page 7). Committee membership follows and requires that a trustee be a member of each.

Buildings & Grounds	Fred Blowers, <u>Trustee</u> ; Larry Kocher, Kris Rogers
Membership	Judy Hotchkin, <u>Trustee</u> ; Laura Loehr
Program	Conrad Borucki, <u>Trustee</u> ; Carol Borucki, Sue Muench, Sal Sardella, Roberta Vincent
Publicity	
<i>Announcements/News Articles</i>	Judy Hotchkin, <u>Trustee</u> ; Laura Loehr
<i>Newsletter</i>	Elli DeFilippo, <u>Trustee</u> ; Carl Matthies, Clarke Burke
Collections	Keith Stone, <u>Trustee</u> ; Karen Muchow, <u>Curator/Archivist</u> ; Bill Dabb, Thelma Dabb, Sandy Dussault
Fund Raising	Gil Dussault, <u>Trustee</u> ; Kris Rogers, Roberta Vincent
Audit 2012	Clarke Burke, <u>Trustee</u> ; Laura Loehr
Nominating	pending
Special Committees:	
<i>Alden Historical Cookbook</i>	Kris Rogers, <u>Trustee</u>
<i>Alden Fireman Parade Float, June 2012</i>	Kris Rogers, <u>Trustee</u>
<i>Erie County Fair, Aug 2012</i>	pending

Volunteers are always welcome and encouraged to assist.

Wanted: Housekeepers



The Building and Grounds Committee needs help with the housekeeping tasks at the Alden Historical building. The monthly tasks include dusting, cleaning the glass on the display cases, vacuuming, sweeping the upstairs floors, sweeping and washing the bathroom and workroom floors and cleaning the bathroom. The work may be done on Saturdays, beginning in March, before we open at 10 am or after we close at 2 pm, or at other times as arranged with Karen at 937-6400. Sign up for a month by calling Karen at the above number or leaving a message at 937-3700.

Winterfest in Alden



The village of Alden will hold its annual Winterfest on February 3-4, 2012. This two day celebration will be packed with events for all ages. The Henskee Road Schoolhouse will be opened on February 4 from 1 to 3 PM as part of the festivities. Also note that the Alden Historical Society Building will be opened that same day from 10 AM to 2 PM.



Recent Acquisitions

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

Civil War letters Laura Airey
AFA jacket and sign Kelly Wilson
Len Weisbeck painting Randy Rogers
Lunch pail and bootjack..... Jane Burke
3 carved wooden camels..... Jo Kipfer
Book: Grandpa Came to Stay Linda Lewis
Meat scale from Simme's Market Eleanor White
Advertising items from Alden businesses..... Bill & Thelma Dabb
Hoe, spud and corn planter from Art Heist farm Jane & Clarke Burke
Photographs & documents from Bea Haehl's estate Bill & Thelma Dabb
1934 Alden High School Commencement program & diploma Debbie Crist

Karen Muchow Curator

Alden Historical Society Building



There will be no open house Saturday or Thursday hours during January and February 2012, **except for Winterfest** on February 4 from 10 AM to 2 PM. We will be doing some necessary maintenance tasks and setting up new displays. Regular Saturday hours (10 AM to 2 PM) will begin again on March 3rd.

INTERESTING TRIVIA

Q: Why do men's clothes have buttons on the right while women's clothes have buttons on the left?

A: When buttons were invented, they were very expensive and worn primarily by the rich. Since most people are right-handed, it is easier to push buttons on the right through holes on the left. Because wealthy women were dressed by maids, dressmakers put the buttons on the maid's right! And that's where women's buttons have remained since.

Notes from the President

Congratulations

TRUSTEES

Congratulations to our two newest elected Trustees, Clarke Burke and Larry Kocher. Both were elected at our Annual Meeting in November and we are looking forward to working with them in the future on society business.

I would be remiss to not mention our sincere gratitude to Paul Werner and Keith Stone who are not continuing on as trustees. Over the years they have both given much of their time and effort in many ways to help the society. We appreciate their dedication and service.

2011 Annual Report



At our Annual Meeting in November we verbally presented a 2011 Annual Report to the society members in attendance. If anyone would like a copy of that report please write me at the society building, call me at 716 937-6246 or email me at gildussault@aol.com. I would be happy to forward a copy to you.

2nd Annual Alden Historical Society Bake Sale



Many thanks to all who made our 2nd annual bake sale during "Christmas in the Park" on December 3rd a huge success. Our volunteer/member committee of callers, bakers and workers worked many hours to help us raise over \$800 dollars in sales and cash donations this year. We appreciate them and our donors of cash and baked goods very much.

Also, many thanks to those who came to the bake sale and generously supported it with loads of goody purchases. Many commented on the amount and variety of the baked goods for sale.

Our traffic in the building was up greatly and we were pleased to see so many take the time to tour the facility. There were many return visits but this time we had a lot of young families with children---some of which had never been through the building.

As expected, Joe Anzalone was a work horse tour guide through the whole day and we appreciate his contribution.

Society Website



The Board of Trustees has approved the formation of our own website in the near future. There are plans in the works and a committee forming to work on the project. Keith Stone will be setting the site up and we are hoping to make many of our activities available. Things are still in the baby stage but we are excited about the prospect of better communication with the public. Keep an eye peeled for this event.

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, except noted below.



There will be no open house Saturday or Thursday hours during January and February, 2012 **except for Winterfest** on February 4 from 10 AM to 2 PM. We will be doing some necessary maintenance tasks and setting up new displays. Regular Saturday hours (10 AM to 2 PM) will begin again on March 3rd.

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

<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
<i>Treasurer</i>Elli DeFilippo	
<i>Curator</i>Karen Muchow	<i>Publicity</i>Judy Hotchkin
<i>Archivist</i>Karen Muchow	

TRUSTEES

Fred Blowers	Judy Hotchkin
Conrad Borucki	Larry Kocher
Clarke Burke	Kris Rogers
Bill Dabb	Sal Sardella
Elli DeFilippo	Roberta Vincent
Gil Dussault	

We wish to welcome **Councilman William Weber** as our new **Alden Town Board Liaison** and look forward to working closely with him as our representative at town board meetings.

Welcome New & Renewed Members

RENEWED MEMBERS:

Howard Erenheim
Marge Matuszewski
Doris Brade
June Beyers
Laura Loehr
Anna Walters
Audrey Senecal

NEW MEMBERS:

Dr. Roy Reed
Richard Jablonski
Lorraine Marciniak

BUSINESS MEMBERS:

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

RENEWED FAMILY MEMBERS:

Richard & Karen Savage
Norm & Natalie Taylor

NEW FAMILY MEMBERS:

Ron & Sharon Peebles
Bob and Barb Rice

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

JAN. 12, 2012What Do You Know About Alden?
7 PM, Community Center

**ALDEN
TRIVIA**

Back by popular demand. "What do you know about Alden?" An evening of trivia with moderator Conrad Borucki. Test your knowledge of our hometown as a participant or as an audience observer-either way it's a fun-filled evening.

FEBURARY 26, 2012Reflections of Alden
2-6 PM, Alden Historical Society Building



The Alden Historical Society will be hosting the artists and authors of the long-awaited and greatly anticipated book. Books will be available for purchase this evening, and with the book's contributors on hand, there will be an opportunity to have your copy signed, if so desired. Sales of the book will profit the Alden Historical Society educational programs so our members and friends should be most supportive.

MARCH 8, 2012 100th Anniversary of Girl Scouts
7 PM, Community Center



The year 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the Girl Scouts of America. Tonight's program will be celebrating the premier organization for girls. It promises to be a highly informative and entertaining evening with Scout leaders, memorabilia and of course, Girl Scouts on hand.



ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY DATES TO REMEMBER WINTER 2012

PROGRAM MEETINGS	TRUSTEE MEETINGS
JAN.12.....<u>Alden Trivia</u> What do you know about Alden? Alden Community Center 7 PM	
FEB. 26.....<u>Reflections of Alden</u> The New Book Unveiled Alden Historical Society Building 2-6 PM	FEB. 2..... Historical Society Bldg. 8 PM Members Invited
MAR 8.....<u>Girl Scouts 100th Anniversary</u> Alden Community Center 7 PM	

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

Prst Stad A
Postage Paid
Alden, NY 14004
Permit No. 6