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# Allegany Area Historical Association

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March 2009

Issue XXVIII Vol. 1

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Well, as usual we had a very successful Christmas Cookie Sale. Our thanks to Linda Kruppner, the owner of Nature's Remedy, for letting us use some of her store space, and thanks to the folks at Park and Shop for allowing us to sell the remainder of the cookies there. We netted \$1,263.50. Our annual Community Christmas service ran into a few snags. Rev. Gerry leFeber, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Allegany, was going to do the service for us. But on Saturday, his church secretary tracked me down to say that he was in the hospital with kidney stones and would be unable to do the service! What to do? I inveigled my husband to lead the service for us. Sunday turned out to have some of the worst weather of the winter. Very cold, a lot of blowing snow and bad roads. We discussed cancelling but decided to go ahead on the theory that perhaps a few might try to come. And some did come. We had Bob and I, our pianist Beth Deitz and her husband, and eight hardy members. Rather than do the service Gerry had prepared, we sang Christmas carols and enjoyed the refreshments. A very good time was had by all! And Gerry's service is all done for next year!!

I'm sure a lot of you remember the outside clock at the old First National Bank building, which is now the Allegany Public Library. It was taken down and is in the process of being brought back to life. We made a small donation to the library's clock fund, and it will be good to see a part of Allegany's history restored.

As we mentioned last year, Cark Monkhouse IV was doing work for us downstairs in order to earn his Eagle Scout ranking. A lot of painting, raising money for new shelving, moving out all our assorted accumulations, putting up the shelves and getting everything back in order. On October 28th of last year, Carl received his Eagle Scout Rank. Congratulations!!

I inherited my grandmother's button box. What a treasure trove! I remember some of the buttons as being on Grandma's fancy dresses. Over Thanksgiving when some of my grandchildren were here, I showed them how to make a spinning toy by taking a large button with two holes, threading heavy string through the holes, spinning the button around by the string and then pulling to make the button continue to spin. This simple toy always kept me amused for hours, and the old magic worked again, as the boys had a great time with their new "old" toys. Sometimes the old-fashioned toys are the best.

**FURNACE FUND** - As mentioned in the November newsletter, we had problems with our furnace, got it fixed for \$400 but have decided to get a new, more efficient furnace. We have received a quote of approximately \$4,000, and have started a "Furnace Fund". To date, with no advertising, we have received \$720, so we have a good start. If you wish to contribute to our fund, please send your checks, made out to AAHA, to AAHA, PO Box 162, Allegany, NY 14706. We want to have the money in hand before we start work, and hope to accomplish that by this summer.

Some sad news to pass on - long time member Jim Elling died January 29th. Jim was a very active member of the community, having been involved with politics, and also the school board. More recently he had been a volunteer for several organizations. Jim's wife, Marion, is AAHA's Corresponding Secretary. Jim will be sorely missed.

Another longtime member recently died - Mrs. Elsie Bosko. She was always very supportive of our fundraisers for Heritage Days and our annual Christmas Cookie Sale. Her brother is Earl Rowe of Bellingham, Washington who has written several amusing and informative articles for our newsletter about growing up in the Chipmonk area. Remember the story of the haunted house in Chipmonk-----?

Our main display for Heritage Days this year will be "Floods in Allegany". If you have pictures of floods in Allegany, particularly the 1942 and 1972 floods, that you would be willing to share with us, we would appreciate it. We will have copies made of your pictures at our expense. Also, if you have any memories of floods that you could share with us, please write them down and send them along.

**FRANCIE POTTER, PRESIDENT**

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*This is Part Two of Alfred Rehler's memoirs, from our newsletter of March, 1989, when Mr. Rehler celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.*

**FIVE MILE NEIGHBORS:** Wings, Hortons, Whitlocks, Lindermans, Yehls, Conhisers, Masons were old, old timers. And up the Five Mile were the Hitchcocks. There are not very many left now, though. We had barn raisings and they'd be there to help you put it up, too. Thrashing, the same way. The women would bring good food and they'd all put out a fine meal when thrashing and cutting ensilage. We had to cut the corn by hand; we didn't have any machinery. We all shared; that's the way we got the work done. One of the neighbors would help fill the silo. One would help thrash. We'd exchange work. There was one lady who lived on the Five Mile, Mrs. Masoner, who had six children. She never missed a time for milking four cows because she was having a baby.

**ROOSEVELT:** There was not much electricity through the country until the '30's, the time of Roosevelt. At that time, Roosevelt was considered one of the greatest persons who ever existed. He came in when there was nothing to help anybody. If you were sick, you were sick. And he did straighten it out, and put people to work. He's been a favorite president of mine. And I was here to see it. He started Social Security. If you didn't have anything to eat, you had somewhere to go and get it. There were soup kitchens and bread lines, and work. , CCC - everything - planting trees, fixing roads, building bridges. I had a good opinion of both Roosevelts. One was a Republican; one was a Democrat, so I'm not partial.

**CHURCH:** I went to church. Most of the kids up there that were friends of mine would go hunting and fishing on Sunday, but I went to church. And I thought to myself, if I could get out of there and get back there to fish, I'd be having a lot more fun that I was having in church. One of the priests down there would tell me about what I had to do in order to go to heaven. Thought to myself, Ha, there's no use of me trying to do anything like that because I haven't got a chance. I might as well go out and go fishing. Might as well put a little joke in here. One little church they had at the Seminary (St. Bonaventure College). There were just 25 of them sitting up front in church there; that's about all there was to the school. That's up where the church burned down, you know.

**LIFE TODAY:** Say there are things I like. After living as we did, we like everything we have today. It's marvelous! Life is better now, absolutely. But I don't think that people enjoy it any more than we did at that time. We didn't have anything; and we didn't expect anything. And we expected to put in a lot of labor for what we got, and did that. Now days, every generation expects more for less effort. The kids today are so much farther advanced that we were that there's no comparison at all. Why, a kid twelve years old sees more that we did when we were grown up and twenty-one years old. They know everything; there's nothing new for them. I'm not one of those people who thinks that everything's wrong with the young people today. I think about 99% of them are very fine, intelligent people. Wonderful! I think they do too much advertising about the ones that are living their own lives. I think they're wonderful, the young people. Sometimes somebody will ask me to explain what I did to live to be 100 years old. And I say, "I'd rather keep out of that," because if I explain what I did, they'd say, "I wonder how you ever lived to be 100."

**THE FUTURE:** I think they just found the tip of the iceberg. I think things that will be produced from now on, that we haven't even thought of, we can't believe it. Why, if anyone had told us, at the turn of the century , that we'd have what we've got today, they'd say, "That fellow should be shut up; he's dangerous." Walking on the moon, everything. We're going to have these planes that don't have to take a long run, that can pick right up straight and take off like a helicopter. And they're going to have it so people can fly

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through the air, and won't have to have anything, just their chair to go in. My eyes are very good, so I watch television. I listen to quite a lot of people. I'm a little hard to convince if I don't believe it.

**BASEBALL:** I played baseball when I was a kid - even when I grew up - twenty- one years old, when we lived on the Five Mile. We played again at the Granduskys. They were a little too much for us; they were a little bit better players. We didn't have too good a team. One time we got Dunc McRae to come up and pitch for us, and Father O'Meara to catch, and they were really big stuff. And we beat the other team because of them, the pitcher and the catcher. My brother and I got them to come up and play with us. They were way out in front of these others - farmer ball players. We used to have a lot of fun.

**PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION:** That was our first trip of any distance. Father took me and my older sister down on the Erie Railroad. We were there a week before McKinley was assassinated. I never went to any of the other expositions except that one in Buffalo.

**GARDENING:** I'm gardening very light now. I'm doing some fixing around here, around the yard, and I've been doing a little light fixing along the trees out there. And trying to keep the grass growing. I did the flowers up at Der Hut when Chuck Rehler had it.

**GRANDCHILDREN:** I've got two grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. We've got a picture of the five generations, taken at my 100th birthday party in Florida. This little Maggie (great-great-granddaughter) is quite a character; she is, in fact. She was down there (Florida), doing some of her stunts, you know, and Margaret (Mr. Rehler's daughter) said to me, "Did you ever see anyone like her?" I said, "Yes, I've seen somebody like her." "Well, who was it?" "You, only a lot worse." Maggie just turned five. Well, she is a little rascal. And I don't want to skip anything here; She (pointing to Margaret) was too, when she was little. She had red curly hair. So Maggie comes by it honestly.

**RAFTING:** I don't remember shipping lumber down the river on rafts to Pittsburgh. My older brother saw one raft go down the river, but I was just a little too late for that. But my father went down the river on a raft before he was married. I had an uncle, Fred Forness. He was a great, big, six foot seven man - weighed about 250-260 pounds. On the raft, they had two men on an oar, but he'd take an oar all by himself. And he got two men's pay for going down the river. That was Fred Forness, Jr.s father; he stood up for me when I was baptised.

**REHLER FAMILY:** I had 84 cousins in Allegany at one time - the Carls, the Fornesses, the Felts. Brothers (from one family) married sisters (from another family), you know. We have a Rehler reunion - started ten years ago up at Chuck Rehler's . If we had everyone there, there'd be about 150-175. But not anymore. The most that we had would be in California eight years ago - 68. If we had all the Rehlers and all their relatives, there'd be a mess of them.

**WINTERS:** I spend the winters in Ozona, Florida, on the west coast, ten miles north of Clearwater. I don't want to spend winter up here now. I've been over the United States several different times, and if you can find a place that's any prettier than this in the U.S., I want you to show me.

*This ends the memoirs of Alfred Rehler. We hope you have enjoyed them.*

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## WE GET MAIL

*This is a Christmas letter we received from our former presidents, Steve and Betty Eaton, and we think you'll enjoy it.*

Dear Friends:

As you may remember, last year at this time we had been told that it would be three years before we'd be put on the "ready" list for the lifetime-care residential community of our choice, just southwest of Philadelphia. So we decided to move into a large apartment in Olean during the waiting years.

But in January we received word that a number of vacancies were unexpectedly available at Crosslands. So we drove down to look them over (and to be looked over), and in March received word that #163, our first choice, would be ready for us by mid-May. All new appliances, carpeting, cabinet hardware, etc. Previous residents had built-in bookcases around the fireplace wall of the den and special rods and shelves in all the closets. Would we like to have them removed? No way!

The glass-enclosed 9' x 19' patio (thanks to our Ten Mile timber sale to Potter Lumber) looks out on a large meadow that slopes down to an artificial pond and then up again to the Center which houses the dining room, cafe, activities rooms, offices and individual rooms for assisted living residents. At night, the two long floors of lighted picture windows and dining room chandeliers look like a festive cruise ship passing by, sailing beneath the crescent moon, Venus and Jupiter.

Steve has already listed 34 species of birds seen from the patio windows, many of them eating the flowering dogwood berries in four neighboring trees. We watch them as we eat breakfast and lunch at our "old camp" table on the patio. He's still working on the book about his Dad - does that in the den - and has a hive of bees ready to move onto the campus here next spring near the residents' garden area where he has a plot where he raised tomatoes, zucchini, lettuce and basil from May to October.

Betty has done a bit of volunteer work but doesn't plan to sign up for any specific activities until she gets the cottage better organized. Our cottage is one of four units in a one story building. They're arranged in a widely spaced horseshoe fashion around the Center, spread over 248 acres. (Kendal, which adjoins, has 144 acres.)

We've met about half the 433 residents so far. As you go into the dining room for dinner you have a choice of table for 2, start a 4, or complete an already started four. So it's easy to meet people. You can reserve a table for 6, inviting other residents to meet you in the lobby or to join you earlier in your home for a '5-o'clock". (No alcohol in the public rooms as Crosslands is Quaker affiliated.)

Fr. Michael Tyson, OFM, comes from Wilmington once a month to say Mass. He's a Franciscan and reminds me of our late pastor, Tim Quinn, OFM. A nice guy!

We went on a bird trip to Chincoteague Island in mid-November with Crosslands Nature Conservancy birders. Wonderful place! Got back to New York State twice, for a family wedding in Owego, and for the NYSOA (birders) meeting in Rochester. But otherwise have stayed close to home. Traffic here is a change

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from Olean, so Betty hasn't even tried to drive yet. She's the navigator.

Bob and Ann Werrlein have been up from Forest Hill, MD twice and, weather permitting, we'll go there for Christmas to meet their eight grandchildren.

We apologize for being so incommunicado since May 23 when we left Olean but it has taken a good deal more time, energy, paperwork, etc. to make the move to a completely new area and community. And we still have stacks and cartons of stuff to put in proper, accessible places. If you come this way, let us know. Our address is 163 Crosslands Drive, Kennett Square, PA 19348, and our phone is 610-388-1988.

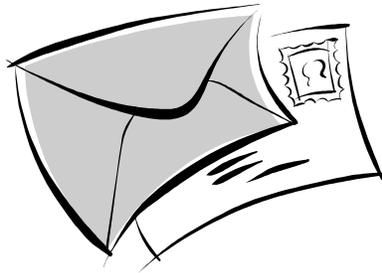
Longwood Gardens is right across Route 52 from us though the entrance to it is on Route #1. There is a guest house here - the former manor/farmhouse - \$50/night and share a bath, several motels in the area, and we have our old sofa bed in the den with adjacent 1/2 bath.

Forgot to say we sold the Perch to a lovely young couple, Scott and Christi Hughes. He is a landscape architect working out of Groton, N.Y. and she grew up in Limestone and has family in the area.

The farm has not yet sold but for now it's probably as good an asset as anything else. The timber should keep growing until the market comes back.

Love and best wishes for 2009 - Steve and Betty

*It certainly sounds as if they have found the perfect place to retire to - we wish them all the best in the coming years.*



*We received a letter from William R. Wing of Dewitt, Michigan, who is the son of Mrs. Charles Wing, also of Dewitt. He is not a member but reads his mother's newsletter. He sent us a lovely calendar for 2009, featuring pictures from the Erie Lackawanna Railroad.*

I am a big railroad fan. I belong to the Salamanca Rail Museum and the Ann Arbor Railroad Club in Michigan. The Ann Arbor Railroad ran between Toledo, Ohio and Frankfort, Michigan where the Ann Arbor Railroad had four car ferries which took railroad cars in the late 1890's from Frankfort (across Lake Michigan) to Kewaunee, Wisconsin, and then added automobiles to the car ferry service in the early 1920's. Car ferry service stopped in April 1982 because of a decline in railroad use, like so many railroads at that time. My favorite railroad is the Erie. If you would like an Erie Railroad calendar for your building, I would be happy to send you one in December of future years like the one enclosed. Our family enjoys returning to Allegany for vacations.

*I assured Mr. Wing we would be most appreciative of a railroad calendar each year. The Erie Railroad was a big part of the history of the Southern Tier and Allegany in particular. Since Ann Arbor is my home town, I very much enjoyed reading of a bit of its railroad history.*

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*Bill Howden wrote an article for us in the March, 2008 newsletter about defunct post offices in the Township of Allegany. He has sent in another fascinating article for us to enjoy.*

## **A LOVE OF HISTORY PROVIDES A GLIMPSE INTO 19th CENTURY LIFE ON A FARM IN THE TOWN OF CUBA, N.Y. by BILL HOWDEN**

I love history. Give me a book about George Washington, Daniel Boone, mountain men, any tribe of Native Americans, archaeology, American history, or even ancient Egypt, and I am lost in the past. I am also involved in local history, as my hobby is collecting the 19th century Postal History of Allegany County. I have also attempted writing several articles about my travels throughout the county looking for places once having a post office that no longer exists - except to the people still living there! Places such as Utopia, Seymour, East Caneadea, Hiltonville and Aristotle; as well as finding and traveling a section of the original old Turnpike, and pioneer settler Philip Church's personal toll road, were exhilarating experiences that I treasure. And anyone can find them - if they know where to look. I found Aristotle and East Caneadea on a 2004 Allegany County map!

Nearly a year ago, a friend, who knew my interest in the area, gave me a box of mostly 19th century papers of Allegany County. After sorting into three piles - Allegany County - Too good to throw away - and, Of no interest - I again sorted through the Allegany County pile and ended up with a number of papers from Cuba, New York. From this pile I noticed a number of related papers, all dealing with a single family, and covering a period of basically the last twenty years of the 19th century. After reading over the material and getting excited about the possibilities, I decided to write up the material by translating the manuscript hand-writing and trying to collate the material by adding information to form a cohesive story.

What I ended up with was a glimpse into 19th century life on a farm in the Town of Cuba, as seen through the life of Catharine Morgan. It covers the period from her husband's death in 1886 until her death in 1904, as seen through hand-written lists, vouchers, bills, legal documents, prices, checks, letter-heads and bill-heads of many Cuba businesses no longer in existence. They include hardware, livery, dairy products and work, as well as some taxes that were paid, or worked off (i.e. a road tax!). All of which is fascinating material and forgotten information.

I ended the material with an envelope addressed to a son who gained Power of Attorney over his mother and signed all her checks with "By S. H. Morgan." That is all that was mentioned of him, except that the envelope had a return address of a gold mining company in the State of Washington! Now is that interesting, or what!

Another culling of the remaining Cuba papers produced several papers showing S. H. Morgan's involvement in the gold mining company dating from ca. 1909-1911 (including two maps of the mine shafts) which I included to not only give life to him, but also because they were so interesting in themselves, showing the problems involved in such a risky endeavor.

I thought that would be the end of my project, but there are so many unanswered questions: plus, I have found a map that appears to show the location of the farm, but no listing of their burial in the Cuba Cemetery, even though I have the documents showing that they were, so I have decided to continue my quest into the farm-life of this family. Where to go for further information is my next project, plus I have read the article (*I have written*) so many times and have found so many mistakes that a re-write is necessary, so I have much to do. History is so much fun, but it is also a lot of work to try to bring our past to life; and my hope is that my writings spark an interest in the fascination history of our area in someone who will continue the quest.

What we do today is dependent on memories of the past which helps determine our future.

*Bill has written a synopsis of a number of the papers he has translated, and has offered to give us a copy. We will put that, and any further information he has gathered, into a future newsletter. It will be interesting to see what he has found about the Morgan family. Thanks, Bill, for sharing this with us.*

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# Memorials



*For: Elizabeth Hesse  
From: Mary Lennon*

*For: Jean Schultz  
From: Donald and Margaret Bergreen*

*For: Peggy Elling  
From: Jim and Marion Elling*

*For: Paul Livingston  
From: Bob and Francie Potter*

*For: Kathleen Eaton  
From: Harold and Marjorie Geise  
Francis J. Hirt and Family  
Bob and Francie Potter  
Loretta Eaton  
Families of:  
Dan Eaton, Jr.  
Kathryn Childs  
Michael Eaton  
Patrick Eaton  
Margaret Eaton  
Elaine Freeborn*

*For: Jim Elling  
From: Orin and Margaret Parker  
Kathleen Karl  
Bob and Francie Potter  
Pat and Chuck Dominessy  
Alice Altenburg  
Glenn and Ruth Lowe  
Harold and Marjorie Geise  
Carol Livingston and Family*

*To Honor Don Benson  
From: Bob and Francie Potter*

*To Honor Francie Potter  
From: Stephen and Kim Potter  
David and Eva Potter  
Linda Potter and Rev. Michael Catanzaro  
Don and Lucy Benson  
Mary and Peter Pendl*

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### **NEXT MEETING**

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, March 15 at 2 p.m. at the Heritage Center, 25 North Second Street, Allegany. Our speaker will be Greg Kinal, a Social Studies teacher for 39 years at Pembroke Central School in Genesee County.

Mr. Kinal's topic is "Arriving at Ellis Island: European Immigration at the Turn of the 20th Century". The ancestors of many Allegany families came to this country from the 1850's through the 1920's. Ellis Island opened as an immigration center in 1892, so perhaps some of your ancestors entered the United States through there. Ellis Island itself has a long, interesting history. It was known as Oyster Island in Colonial times, and was privately owned by Samuel Ellis in the 1770's.

Come hear the **story** of **Immigration** and **Ellis Island** on **Sunday, March 15** at **2 p.m.** at the **Heritage Center**.

**Allegany Area Historical Association**  
**P.O. BOX 162**  
**Allegany, NY 14706**

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### INSIDE SPECIAL ISSUE:

Presidents Report

Alfred Rehler's Memories

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