



Allegany Area Historical Association

June 2015

www.allegany.org

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In March, I received a nice phone call from Betty Eaton. She and Steve live in a retirement village in Pennsylvania and both are in good health. She said to say hello to all their friends up here. Steve and Betty were the ones who bought our two 1856 maps of Cattaraugus County, that we had conserved into one map. They purchased the maps in 1969 at the Olean Antique Show in the Olean Armory from L. D. Potter of Fredonia. (Ed. Note – no relation to me). They paid \$25 for the two maps, which are a real treasure for our group. Be sure to stop in and see our map if you can. I'm sure you'll agree with me that it's a wonderful item for us to have.

After George Hall passed away, his niece, Susan Putt, has been cleaning out his house. She donated several books of George's to us. One is a little pamphlet on the rules and regulations of the village of Allegany. Once we get everything sorted out, we will have a display of these items. Thanks, Susan, for thinking of us.

We have also received a lovely little fur muff from Lana Zink, that belonged to her mother, Betty Jane Zink, who died in 1978. This is a great addition to our clothing collection. Thanks, Lana.

In the late winter I got a phone call from Melanie Giamanco, an English teacher at the high school. She was assigning a 3-page research paper to her students and wondered if I would talk to her students about the history of Allegany, and make the files at the Heritage Center available to any of them who wanted to write about Allegany. I spoke to four of her classes, and had two students come to the center to do research. This spring I was invited to come to her classes to hear the results. I was very impressed – they all had Power Point presentations and had obviously done their research. Many of the students had gone on line and had papers on such things as oil production in the area and the old trolley lines, as well as Allegany history.

A reminder to our members that we only have 4 newsletters a year, which come out prior to our meetings in October, November, March and May. Occasionally a meeting is delayed due to the speaker's schedule, such as the March meeting this year which was in April so the newsletter was sent out two weeks before the meeting. We have been getting notes from our members in January and February asking where their newsletters are. I'm pleased to know that so many are pleased with the newsletters and look forward to reading it – thanks for your interest!

We received a nice thank-you note from Genesis House, the homeless shelter in Olean, for our gift of cash, cookies and paper products that we collected at our annual Community Christmas Service. It's always a pleasure to be able to help them out.

FRANCIE POTTER, PRESIDENT

RAWLINGS GREENHOUSE HISTORY

The greenhouse, on the west side of Fifth Street, was started by John Hamm at the turn of the century. John Hamm was the great-uncle of Marie Bump of Second Street. John's son, Fred, had TB and John thought having the greenhouse at the higher elevation on top of Fifth Street hill would provide some fresher air for Fred.

Elmer and Blanche Rawlings bought the greenhouse about 1909. There were 2 ½ acres under glass, and at one time Rawlings Greenhouse was considered to be the largest grower and shipper of geraniums in the Western New York area. During the season, shipments were made every day by Railway Express to both retail and wholesale customers.

Kenneth Putt of Olean worked for Mr. Rawlings until 1946. He said the geraniums would grow to a height of 3 feet at which time cuttings would be taken. After the cuttings were rooted, they were planted in 2 inch pots and shipped in lettuce crates to customers throughout Western New York.

All the vegetable plants were started from seed and then transplanted, a very labor-intensive job, where Mrs. Rawlings worked right along with the rest of the crew. Rawlings was the biggest greenhouse in the area. Mr. Rawlings also owned all the land on the west side of the street from the greenhouse to the corner of Maple Avenue, where he stored topsoil for use in the greenhouse.

There were always 2 or 3 German Shepherd dogs tied up around the greenhouse, as well as several cats running loose underfoot, and you might see a big toad or two under the benches.



Rawlings Greenhouse, circa 1960.

But the sight to see were the alligators Mr. Rawlings kept in a 3 foot by 6 foot water box. People would bring the alligators home from Florida and would give them to Mr. Rawlings when they became too big to keep in a house. They were 12 inches to 18 inches long, and Mr. Rawlings fed them raw meat. There is no word what he did with them when they got too big for him to keep!

Ken Putt remembers working 84 hours a week for \$35. He said that around Memorial Day orders would come in for over 300 cemetery urns to be filled by the greenhouse crew, including Ken and his uncle, Ervin Putt, and then taken to the cemeteries by wagon or truck and placed on the proper grave sites.

Sonny Williams of Allegany said that Mr. Rawlings was a very generous person, and always gave \$5.00, a large sum of money for the time, to his neighbors when a family member died.

He would sell coal for 25 cents a bucket, but if the person did not have the money, he would give the coal free of charge. It was the same way for tomato plants or other vegetable plants in the greenhouse. Mr. Rawlings would also make up geranium wreaths for funerals. Bob Potter of Allegany said Mr. Rawlings always donated geraniums to the First Presbyterian Church Sunday School for the children to give to their mothers on Mothers Day.

The greenhouse was heated by steam heat, generated by coal fired boilers. The coal yard was by the Scarlato house at 113 North Fifth Street. Neighbors began to complain about the coal smoke, so Mr. Rawlings converted the greenhouse to gas. But after a period of time, he could not pay his gas bills and the gas was shut off in 1966, which caused everything to freeze, putting the Rawlings Greenhouse out of business. The Fitzmaurice Company tore down the greenhouse buildings in 1967-68.

Mrs. Rawlings died in 1964 and Mr. Rawlings died in 1966, closing a chapter in Allegany history.

Information furnished by Marie Bump, Bob Potter, Ken Putt, Sonny Williams

This article first appeared in our newsletter of November, 1999.

AN INDOOR BATHROOM

By Gertrude Schnell

It would seem that each generation likes to have a better life than the generation before them. On my Grandmother Delia Rehler Schnell's farm on the Lower Birch Run Road the outhouse was the way of life. However, as the six children grew and experienced indoor bathrooms in Allegany and Olean, the desire for one in their home became evident. In the 1920's there was no running water in the house and the rooms in the house were not built for an indoor bathroom. Off the dining room was a pantry with a door leading down cellar.

With all the children pooling their money, it was decided to use this pantry for the bathroom. The shelves had to come out and new places found to store dishes, pots and pans, daily food and some canned goods. The door to the cellar was left intact. Since water was a necessity, Arthur and Sam Quattrone dug a trench from the spring on the hill, laid pipe and let gravity push water into the house.

This was 1924 and bathroom fixtures of tub, sink and toilet were purchased from Sears Roebuck in Olean. A hot water tank was needed and since there was no electric or propane at that time, I assume it was fueled with kerosene or fuel oil.

The spring continued to provide water for the indoor plumbing, cooking, cleaning and cooling milk. In later years an electric hot water tank was added and the outhouse was a remembrance of the past.

SPECIAL MEETING IN AUGUST

On Sunday, August 2 at 2 p.m. noted Civil War historian Mark Dunkelman will speak to our group about Civil War General Patrick Henry Jones of the 154th New York. Mark will also have copies of his latest book, Patrick Henry Jones, Irish American, Civil War General, and Gilded Age Politician, available for sale at a discount.

The 30th annual reunion of descendants of the 154th New York is set for Saturday, August 1 at St. Bonaventure. The reunion will mark the establishment at the university of the Dunkelman and Winey Collection on the 154th. There will also be a special exhibit of regimental artifacts from the collection at the Quick Center.

When I contacted Mark to see if he would be able to work out a talk to our group while he was in town, he said, "I'd love to do something for the Allegany Area Historical Association – a group that has special meaning to me. It was an appearance at the AAHA back in 1984 that inspired me to begin the series of descendants' reunions that have totaled 29 so far."

So check the Times Herald for further information as the date gets closer for Mark's talk, which will be at our Heritage Center on Second Street.

AAHA member Clyde Johnson of Port Allegany, Pennsylvania sent in a memorial for Flossie Martiny, along with an interesting story we thought you would enjoy.

Flossie was a wonderful person and a great friend of our family. A story that comes to mind when Red tried to buy the farm on Maple Avenue Ext. – The old gentleman (who owned it) told Red it wasn't for sale at any price. Red bugged the farm owner until he finally put a price on it that was so high nobody could afford to buy it. Wrong! Red and Flossie had sold the Model T Inn and the Schreiber farm for development, so they had some money. When Red came to the owner of the farm with the money, he had no choice but to sell it to them. He didn't want to, but it got good owners who fixed up the barn and house. Work was needed on the brick and on the barn. It was neat the way they made the house room dividers out of used bricks – it looked great! They enjoyed this home!

Red had taken the Model T from the roof of the Model T Inn and had it put onto the roof of the Model T Inn in Derrick City.

My memory is getting bad, so I hope the story is close to accurate.

UNFINISHED HISTORY

In March of 2014, we published an oral history interview with Don Bergreen, done by Wes and Judy Martin. In speaking with Don recently, I learned "the rest of the story." Don attended Alfred Tech but never got his diploma because of his entering the service in 1943. So on Sunday, May 17 of this year, Alfred Tech corrected a wrong and invited Don to the graduation ceremony where he got to walk across the stage with the rest of the graduates. Don said he was very touched by the thoughtfulness of everyone at Alfred Tech, and appreciated the honor. Congratulations, Don!

Memorials



For: Richard J. Riehler
From: John and Jill Walsh

For: Teresa Simms
From: Maggie and Tom Nuss

For: Flossie Martiny
From: Clyde Johnson, Virginia Johnson, Mary Chew

For: Shirley Russell
From: Al Frisina

For: Kath Buffington
From: Francie Potter

For: Erica Lamberson
From: Maggie and Tom Nuss
Carol and Betsy Livingston

For: Cheryl Bizzaro
From: Francie Potter

THANK YOU, THANK YOU.



We want to thank Dave Swatt and his wife Gail for keeping our Heritage Center looking so great. Dave and Gail have donated plants and flowers for our flower bed in front of the building, and they also put flags in for Memorial Day. Dave also does the edging and mowing for us. So if you drive by and think the building looks good, be sure and thank them for their hard work and thoughtfulness.

Another person we have to thank is Pete Forness, who voluntarily does all the snow shoveling in the winter time. He says it's good exercise for him. If he didn't do it, I would have to so I really appreciate his hard work.

It's thanks to friends like this that we are able to keep going.
Thank you, Dave, Gail and Pete!!



WE GET MAIL



As our members have been renewing their memberships, they have been sending along nice notes. Many echo the sentiment of Julie McCully of California who said the newsletter is a little piece of "back home". Thanks also to James Simmons, Judy Wilson, Al Frisnia, Bill Ryan, Karen Streit, Margaret Nutt Sutherland, Shirley Toohey, Gary Forness, Elaine Spencer George, Sr. and Mary Farrell Price for their warm wishes.

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

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INSIDE SPECIAL ISSUE:

Presidents Report

Indoor Facilities

Toads Under the Benches

OPEN HOUSE

Visit our Open House on Saturday, June 20 from 1 to 3 p.m. at our
Heritage Center, 25 North Second Street, Allegany.

View our newly restored 1856 map of Cattaraugus County – learn how to access
the Allegany Citizen on line – see all the genealogy materials we have to help you
in your search for ancestors – see the many, many items we have in our collection.

**We want to show off what we have and what we can do for you.
We are YOUR historical association – come visit us!**

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