



Alleghany Area Historical Association

October 2008

Issue XXVII Vol. 3

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Another Heritage Days is in the books. They seem to come faster each year. We were fortunate to have one of the very few rain-free weekends of the summer for our celebration. But our attendance was down, both for the chicken BBQ on Friday and all the activities on Saturday. Everyone had a good time, there were just fewer people. We are not sure why, but in talking with other festival organizers in the area, we were not alone. Perhaps it was the price of gas at that time, perhaps people are cutting back - it could be any number of factors. Our profit on the chicken BBQ has been getting smaller each year, and this year we made \$47 on the BBQ. That, in addition to the smaller attendance, led us to consider its future. After much discussion we have decided not to have the chicken BBQ next year. Maybe someday in the future we might do it again, but as of now, it is off our schedule. We are looking at other possibilities for making some money to help pay the bills. Stay tuned.

One of the ways we publicize Heritage Days is with a 10-page flyer sent to everyone living in the Town of Alleghany. The front page is a reproduction of the *Alleghany Citizen* from 50 years ago. The inside has a list of the schedule of events, the 50-year class picture, and pictures from our feature exhibit, which this year was old appliances from approximately 100 years ago. Inside are also many, many items of interest from the 50-year issue of the *Citizen*. If any of our away members would like a copy of this flyer, please contact us and we would be delighted to send you one.

I just finished reading *Citizen Soldiers* by Stephen Ambrose, the story of the U. S. Army from Normandy to the Surrender of Germany, by the soldiers themselves. Mr. Ambrose interviewed hundreds of veterans and his son interviewed German soldiers, and the story is told in their own words. Mr. Ambrose founded the Eisenhower Center as a repository for veterans memoirs and all sorts of documents. I encourage any of our members who are veterans to send their stories to the Eisenhower Center, 923 Magazine Street, New Orleans. LA 70130, to be archived for use by future generations. I have sent them a copy of our publication, *Tales of War and Confinement in World War II*, for their archives.

We have received a marvelous addition to our collection from Nancy Kolivoski of Winston-Salem, N.C. It is a scrapbook with V-mails from World War II sent to her parents, Steven and Marie Geringer, by Edward Hanback, Stephen Lippert and Ralph Cavanaugh. The Cavanaugh name is not familiar to any of us - if you could shed some light on this we would appreciate hearing from you. As some of our older members may remember, to save valuable cargo space and weight during the war, V-mail was microfilmed before being sent on to the recipient. These V-mails are thus very small and will take some time to read, but we hope to put them in a future newsletter. There is an interesting article about this microfilm process on the internet from the National Postal Museum in Washington, D. C.

My mother was from Cynthiana, Kentucky. This spring I flew to Ann Arbor to meet my sister and we drove to Kentucky to hunt up relatives. We spent days tramping through cemeteries, leaving phone messages for suspected cousins, and discovering that we were related to half of the town. Every time we turned around we would bump into a relation. Of course, everyone was more than willing to help two "Yankees". The old homestead, built before the Civil War, was falling apart, which was sad to see. We did find a lot of cousins, first, second and kissin'. No wonder people search for their ancestors - it's a lot of fun!

FRANCIE POTTER, PRESIDENT

This is a reprint of an article from the March, 1988 issue of our newsletter. The original article was from the Allegany Citizen of July 23, 1942. It makes for interesting reading. We hope you think so also. If any of our members have stories about the flood, we would be glad to hear from you, and share them in future newsletters.

July 18, 1942

HIGHEST WATER IN HISTORY FLOODS ALLEGANY ON SUNDAY. RIVER RISES AT RATE OF FOOT AN HOUR SATURDAY AFTER ONE OF WORST ELECTRIC STORMS IN YEARS; MANY PERSONS HOMELESS FOR FEW DAYS; PROPERTY AND CROP DAMAGE IS HIGH.

The town of Allegany in common and Allegany county town and cities, experienced the worst flood on record last Saturday and Sunday. A gauge in the William N. Hall and Son lumber mill which was installed more than sixty years ago, showed that water early Monday morning was fourteen inches high(er) that the memorable Johnston flood in 1889.

Rain started to fall in Allegany late Friday night and continued almost incessantly until Saturday afternoon. One continuous round of lightening and thunder held forth from early Friday evening until Saturday noon. The river started to rise Saturday morning, and by noon had overflowed its banks, rising at the rate of more than a foot an hour. West Union Street was inundated before three o'clock in the afternoon and the rise continued steadily until Sunday afternoon. The crest was apparently reached Monday morning at two o'clock when the water remained at a standstill. By six-thirty o'clock, a four inch fall was noted.

Hundreds of persons were forced to leave their homes. Most families on Union Street left Sunday morning for high ground although a few houses on East Union Street between Fifth and Seventh were completely surrounded by water in depths up to six feet. About twenty houses on North First Street between Main and Pine were under water Saturday noon and by Sunday night some of them had water up to the top of the windows on the first story. All residents of South Seventh Street between the Erie railroad and Hall's lumber mill had to leave Saturday. Hall Lumber Company buildings were practically submerged by the raging torrent.

Traffic to the Olean city line was open until three o'clock Sunday afternoon when the Two Mile creek at Levin's junk yard flooded the highway to a depth of about a foot. Cars continued to ford the stream, however, until five-thirty o'clock when the water rose to eighteen inches. Two hours later, at seven-thirty o'clock, depths up to six feet covered the old highway at Colligan's to the Olean city line, a distance of about half a mile.

The Allegany fire department did heroic work with boats, rescuing dozens of stranded persons near the city line and on North First Street who had waited too long before leaving for higher ground. Most of the volunteers worked incessantly for forty-eight hours. The new squad car proved its great value in carrying the firemen, a large row boat and outboard motor to isolated areas.

On the Four Mile, the creek bridge at the New York Transit pump station was washed out Saturday night, cutting off the entire Four Mile and West Branch roads. A chicken coop containing one thousand hens on the Henry F. Carls farm was swept away Saturday afternoon with a loss of about \$2,000.

A miniature Niagara rapids swept across South First Street between the railroad and the Allegany River bridge, reaching a depth of about three feet and cutting off the disposal plant. However, the plant is on higher ground and the pumps which are automatic continued to operate perfectly during the whole flood stage.

Water stood to a depth of about a foot in front of the old A. C. Edwards home on North Second Street while Maple Avenue at First was inundated to depths of about five feet. There were no trains on either the Erie or Pennsylvania until Sunday morning when Pennsylvania trains were routed over Erie tracks. By Monday morning, however, temporary repairs had been made along the line so that several Erie trains went through, although at a speed of only twenty miles per hour.

The Two Mile was completely flooded by Saturday afternoon so that families on low ground were moved by boat. The main pump station of the Reclamation Supply Corporation stood in four feet of swirling water by Sunday night. Most telephone lines were down and very little communication was possible except in the village itself. Electric power went out completely when the transmitter at Fourteenth Street in Olean was inundated. The Vacuum Oil Company in Olean came to the rescue with a limited supply of power beginning at three o'clock Sunday afternoon. The voltage was so low, however, that lamps burned at about half capacity and refrigerator motors barely turned over.

In the CITIZEN office, presses stood still because of insufficient power to run the 220 volt motors. Difficulty was also experienced with the 2,000 watt electric pot on the linotype composing machine. By working day and night with a large crew, the Niagara, Lockport and Ontario Power Company was able to restore full electric power to the Town of Allegany Tuesday night at seven o'clock after a limited supply from the Socony Vacuum for 57 hours.

By Tuesday morning the river had dropped about four feet and continued to descend another five feet during the day so that by evening all of Union Street was dry. Practically all inundated homes in the township were clear of water yesterday morning, although the cleaning up process will take days and even weeks in some cases. South First Street from the railroad to the river bridge was dry Tuesday morning but will need some repairing to the black top. Traffic is being maintained across the river. Clayton's Dairy was able to resume operations late Tuesday after being closed down since Sunday by four feet of water. The equipment suffered heavy damage, however.

In spite of the thousands of dollars of property damage and hardship experienced by many persons, Allegany can consider itself fortunate indeed that there was no loss of life. Everywhere around us several deaths by drowning were recorded.



Five Mile Creek Bridge - Rt. 17

July 1942



Union Street, Allegany

ITEMS FOR SALE

In addition to our history book, we have many more items for sale. These make good birthday presents, or just anytime presents. Here's what we have:

POST CARDS - 4 different Allegany scenes -
75 cents each, plus shipping.

ALLEGANY HISTORY VIDEOS - \$10, plus \$5
shipping

ALLEGANY HISTORY DVD'S - \$18, plus
shipping

TALES OF WAR AND CONFINEMENT - \$6,
plus \$3 shipping

October is the month to **pay your dues**. A single membership is \$10, family is \$15, and a patron membership is \$20 or more. Make your check to AAHA and mail it to PO Box 162, Allegany, New York 14706. **Don't forget - do it today.** We do not send out reminders to members since each one gets the newsletter - we take this method of telling you to renew your membership. If you don't renew your membership, we will take you off the mailing list and I know you don't want to miss our always interesting articles. **RENEW TODAY.**

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, October 12 at the Heritage Center at 2 p.m. Our presenters will be four Confederate Civil War re-enactors, David Peglau and his wife, Dottie Hickok, along with Dale Turner and his son, Dylan. David Peglau has been a re-enactor for 24 years. Dottie Hickok re-enacts as a female soldier. Dottie's family have fought in every war from the French and Indian War up to Iraqi Freedom. Her father was a Colonel in the Army for 33 years. Her daughter graduated from West Point in 1991, and their son-in-law currently commands an Artillery Battalion at Fort Bragg. So there is a long history of military involvement. Dottie joins David in the field on the mortar cannon, and they will bring some to show us.

Dale Turner re-enacts as a Mortar Battery Commander. He and Dylan, re-enactors for 12 years, will bring mortars and show us how they are fired. They will also discuss Confederate and Union paper money, flags, uniforms, weapons, why the same battles have different names, and much, much more.

**COME JOIN US ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12 AT 2:00 P.M.
TO LEARN ABOUT BOTH SIDES OF THE CIVIL WAR!**

Memorials



For: Charles E. Williams

From: John and Jillian Walsh

For: Pat McGrath

From: Bob and Francie Potter

For: Steve Gollaher

From: Ronald and Eileen Welch

Jim and Marcia McAndrew

Donna, Bob and Melissa Eberle

Robert and Cynthia Mountain

Donald and Margaret Bergreen

William and Catherine Fraser

Town of Allegany Employees

Mel and Paulette Duggan

Joseph and Teresa Quinlan

Mary K. Kohnen

Linda McNeilly

Wayne and Mary Rhodes, Michelle Rhodes

For: Charles Hinton

From: Bob and Francie Potter

For: Harold and Irene Brunner

From: Carol and Betsy Livingston

For: Steve and Bea Lippert

From: Carol and Betsy Livingston

For: Tommy Rado

From: Mrs. Betty Smith

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

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INSIDE SPECIAL ISSUE:

Presidents Report

Flood of '42

Civil War History
