

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

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Share Session

A first-in-a-week classic summer day greeted those who came out to this month's share session: Dot Blenis, Connie Teator, Mimi Weeks, Kathie Williams, David and Harriet Gumpert, Harriett Rasmussen, Stephanie Ingalls, David and Judy Rundell, Walter Ingalls, Krista Haushalter, and Don Teator. A welcome to Krista, whom we have not seen in a loong time.

This share session went all over the place, and, of course, the diverging stories took us even further afield.

Kathie brought in a wedding announcement of Carrie Ingalls and Ed Ingalls, dated November 30, 1911, at 12 noon. We have tossed around Ingalls' names so long and so frequently that I almost know Ed and Carrie. This led to discussion where the wedding was (I tried looking it up in Carrie's mother Carrie's diary but this was part of the 19 year break), which no one could verify. This led to general customs, which, to those present, indicated that weddings were not usually held at churches. Instead, they were held at residences, with smaller "receptions" than those we generally have today.

Kathie also had a late-1970 or early 1980s photo of Krista and Shotgun Kim, a local TV personality. This led to stories of Shotgun Kim, Phil Ellis, etc.

Father Crowley's name was mentioned indirectly, which led to a couple of stories about him, the Catholic Church in Greenville, etc.

Kathie also brought in an ash tray, a business memento from Clarence Ingalls.

David Gumpert brought in notes he made while reading a book by Harold Slosson about George Slawson, an early pioneer. One of his descendents, Jahiel, came from the Berkshire hilltowns to the Cox-sackie area by 1790. He, and his family, would move to the Greenville area, before moving on westward. The book is in the public library.

Harriett brought in a photo of the classes of the Academy, about 1918 or 1919. I'll reproduce the photo for a near-future newsletter. Of special note is that Harriett, with help from Elizabeth Griffin Burnett, has identified almost all of the 45 students in the photos. The names, as you might expect, are familiar to many of us.

Somewhere in here, I mentioned the desirability of having someone with the computer skills to enter names and dates and places of Greenville families that we have in our records into a computer database. Too many good stories and knowledge go by the wayside. If you know someone who has the interest and time to spend whatever little or much time he/she has, let me know.

David Rundell had a couple of photos that we had not seen before. One was of his house before it was moved across the street to its present site to make way for the new school. This led to discussions of who owned the land before the Rundells, who moved the house, what changes were

made, etc.

Bill Gedney's name came up, and we took off in a few different directions. Somehow, the Basic Reservoir tunnel was mentioned, its pathway to the Alcove, stories of water release, tunnel construction, etc.

David also had a photo of the Abrams' bee hives across the creek from him. The perspective is stunning for those who have not seen it before. I'll try to reproduce it for a newsletter sometime.

A couple of Greenville Dairy bottles were passed around, leading to memories of Bill Graf and the creamery itself (located close to west end of Scripture Bridge, which is the bridge that crosses the Basic Creek, between Greenville and West Greenville). Conjecture was made where the milk came from, the use of glass bottles, beginning and end dates, etc.

We then turned to discussion of the Talmadge – Hickok connection. Harriett brought some documentation of the Post line, which led to mention of the aforementioned names, as well as Wright, Hall, Kirtland, Ramsdell, Elliott, Fish, Atwater, and so on and so on.

As if this were not enough, a copy of the 1958 playbill for Life With Father, a fundraiser held at GCS by the Bergen County Players, presumably to help the Durham Center Museum, was passed around. The artwork on the gallery walls, again, is a worthy addition to Greenville culture. Clippings

from newspapers, recent and otherwise, were shared. Don pulled the June 8 and 15, 1966 Greenville Local to see what the headlines were (Jack Roosa is new supervising principal, National Bank of Coxsackie is under construction).

I think we had tired ourselves out by this time. The next meeting is July 10, when we will continue our discussion of the houses (and stories) along North Street (we got as far as the Knowlton last time) up to the county line, and will try to proceed "down" South Street as time will allow.

In preparation for that, I have included the appropriate parts of the copy of the notes Harriett made when she drove with her uncle Burdett Griffin in April 1990. I'll bring out the photo albums with the notes from the houses, and perhaps we can tie in more information. Please feel free to send me info we don't seem to have – stories about people who lived in them, construction, events, etc.

Of course, anyone else who would like to record memories of this type, the invitation has been, and will be, a long-standing one!

Take care,



**As I Remember Greenville
Memories of Burdett Griffin
Written by Harriett Rasmussen**

On a sunny morning in April of 1990, my husband Cas and I picked up my eighty-four year old uncle, Burdett Griffin and we set out to put down in writing what he could remember about where people lived during his boyhood and into early manhood - approximately 1913 to the early 1920's. His memory of people and places amazed us.

With Cas driving, me writing, and Uncle Bud reminiscing,... [looking down South Street - dt]

On the corner where the Pioneer Insurance building stands, there was a hotel run by Lorenzo Coonley. There was a big barn across the creek. Charlie Fancher took care of the horse there.

Next was John and Edgar Hart's store. Stevens Insurance office was in one side and over the office was an apartment where Uncle John Griffin and his wife Lydia (Palmer) lived. (John was a brother of Burdett, Sr.)

Just past the store was a building with a switchboard for telephone. Ren Gardiner (Harrison's brother) was the switchboard operator. He and his wife lived there. The small house just before the Greenville Arms (now Laura Stevens) was the home of Gerard and Lizzie Vanderbilt Hegeman.

Greenville Arms belonged to William Vanderbilt. He had it built about 1914.

The house where Bob Randall lives was the home of Henry Barker. In earlier years when his daughter Laura was small, they lived on North Street in the stone house on the now Vanderbilt Farm (originally Sherrill place).

The home of Phil Ellis was the place where John Sanford lived then. These last two houses were said to be identical and built by the same man (a Story or an Earl.).

Staying on the right side, next came the Methodist Church built in 1873 after the one across the street burned. Beyond that was the home of Spees (Mildred Reinhardt now).

Just south of the Spees home was the home of Frank Wickes (now Virano).

Daniel Fish lived in the big house which sits below the hill leading into Greenville. Then it was called Fish's Hill (now Carelas' Hill)

Coming back toward town, on the other side of South Street we came to the corner of Hill Street. In the first house on that corner lived the Stevens' sisters, Hattie and Zillah (Van Hecht House).

Still on South Street but on the opposite corner of Hill Street was the home of James and Elizabeth Evans. These were the maternal grandparents of Burdett who were burned out of their home on Ingal-side Road when Burdett was 7 years old. In one half of the house lived a Mr. and Mrs. Meddaugh. Burdett remembers having to cut the lawn there and that it was a very heavy mower for a small boy.

On the other side of the Evans home was a livery stable. Jim Evans was the stage driver and had horses and a stagecoach. (It was told to me by my grandmother Rhue Griffin that these two corner houses were built by her grandfather David Evans and were also identical houses.)

(We did not complete South Street - to be completed later.)... [looking up North Street - dt]

On the corner was a big house with a picket fence all around it. At that time, the Thomas sisters lived there. They had a millinery shop at their home. Pearl Roe was their niece. Burdett remembers, "When I was a small boy, I helped move Ford and Pearl Roe from Schenectady back to Greenville. I can remember that I went to Henry Barker's house and stayed all night. The next morning early, Henry Barker and I took a truck to Schenectady to get their belongings." Pearl was also the sister of Henry Barker's sec-

ond wife Etta. Both were the daughters of Enoch Walters of Cairo.

Turning the corner, we headed up North Street. On the site where Flach's barbershop now stands was Wessel's Garage, run by Lynn Wessel. Cliff Thorne (husband of Bea Griffin) worked there.

Then came the house of Fan (Sanford) Day (now the home and jewelry shop of Felix Perkowski). The bungalow where Mitchell Sanford (Fan's brother) and wife lived was right behind Fan Sanfords on the road to the cemetery.

After the cemetery (in the vacant place beside the Episcopal Church) was the home of Sylvester Story. He had a daughter Charlotte who taught school.

Next was the Episcopal Church. The stone to build that church was drawn from John Sanford's farm on the top of Main Street Hill (George Turon's farm). Burdett remembers Rev. Sillman being a pastor.

The house where Dave Rundell lives was, at that time, across the street on the present Elementary School site. It belonged to Ford Rundell and Stanley Ingalls lived on one side and Ransom Ingalls on the other. When the school was built, that house was moved across the street to its present location.

At the time indicated in this account, the next house was the home of Edgar Hartt (later Thurm Vaughn's and now Wilbur Baumann's apartment house). Edgar's daughter was Clara.

Dr. Wasson and family lived in the house now occupied by Ella and Waldo Powell. He had a daughter Alice who married John Sanford. Ruth Hook, wife of Homer Hook, was Dr. Wasson's granddaughter.

Next was the Presbyterian Manse, occupied by the pastor, Rev. Van Dyke and family. Burdett's sister, Estella, was married there on September 25, 1921.

Beside the Manse was the Conklin's home. They were the parents of Madelaine (Conklin) Rundell, wife of Ford Rundell. The

Conklins had a colored servant who lived there with them until she died. (Now the Episcopal ministers home, for many years Rev. Richard Clark). Conklins sold it to Bill the Barber.

The house now owned by Mary Abrams and daughter Shirley was the home of Peter Winne who was the Local Editor. He had a print shop on Main Street.

Next was the house now known as the Talmadge - Atwater house. It is presently the home of Ron and Edie Baumann. At that time, Maruice Atwater and his sister Louise lived there. Then there were no more buildings until you reached of what is now Irving Road. On the South corner was the place of David Irving. (In later years, the home of Charles and Dorothy Rebman). David Irving ran a Blacksmith shop where Jim and Jane Byrnes live. David had five children: Bill and Anne by his first marriage and George and Harriet and Muriel by his second.

On the opposite corner of Irving Road lived the Chattertons who were related to the Spees. They were the parents of Robert Chatterton whose widow Barbara presently lives there.

Next was the home of Cornelius Atwater who had sons Dave, Ken and Robert and Elnathan (now the home of Mulligan).

After Atwater was the farm of Addison Hickok. He had a daughter Mary who married Rod Talmadge and lived on Ingalside Road. (Ray and Hattie Wickes lived there in the 1950's, then Hattie until she died. More recently it was a natural food place.)

Then there were no houses until you get to the farm last lived in by Marie and Edwin Brown (Willig and Brown Golf Carts). In the time frame we are talking about, Grace Gardner lived there and raised a niece and nephew - Marie and Chris Vogel. They were the children of her sister Kitty (Shaw) Vogel). Burdett remembers that Kitty was a good friend of his mother. "Aunt Grace", as she was known took the children when her sister died.

Upon the death of Marie (Vogel) Brown, the house became the property of Chris Vogel's children. They are the present owners although the property has been for sale for some time.

Then it was all the way up to the place owned by the Kanes. (There were only the barns of Balsam Shade and Shepards on that side of the road). This home was then the home of David Dyer. Then we turned around and headed back toward Greenville noting the places on the right hand side of the road.

The house which was made into the first annex for Shepards Farm was the home of Charlie Newman, who was a mailman.

Next of course was Shepard's Farms then run by Frank Shepard who was the father of Augustus (Gus) who later operated the business until his death.

Looking up to the House on the Hill (now known as the SRV Retreat), Burdett recalled that that was where Darius and Irma (Cleveland) Rundell lived. They had children Horace, Ruth and Martha (Turon).

Then came the place which is now Balsam Shade operated by Jyl and Len DeGiovine (Jyl is Burdett's granddaughter). At that time, it was owned by Henry Lorenz, whose wife was Louella Bryant. They had daughters Mabel (Jackson) and Helen (Knowles). Henry's father was Adam Lorenz who lived over on Johnny Cake Lane (once Ziller's home). In 1935 Burdett and Vangie Griffin bought the Lorenz place and built it up over the years with the place being operated by his oldest son and daughter-in-law Edward and Mary Griffin.

The next farm (now Steve and Barbara Lauria) was then owned by Pierce Stevens. At that time Walt and Martha Pierce were living there. (In the 1930's) the place was bought by Paul Willig, Sr. and remained in the Willig family until about 1982.

He couldn't remember who lived on the next adjoining farm. That farm was bought by Burdett Griffin from William But-

ler probably in the 1940's. In 1953, he sold two building lots facing the highway to Harriett and Cas Rasmussen and Phyllis and Ed Beechert. Ad Showers built homes on these lots for both couples. Most of the rest of the farm was later sold to Lily and Eugene Morfesi. They had the farmhouse razed and built a new brick house as their residence.

The next house was all the way down to the place now known as Bryants Greenwood Apartments. At that time there was a large house known as the Spees house. Lester and Elizabeth Cunningham the parents of Leland, Dorothy and Earl, lived there. Later this was a boarding house run by John and Vida Lowe. Later it was know as Jesse's Elm Shade. The big house was torn down in 1988 or 1989.

Then came the large farm and stone house known as the Vanderbilt Farm. It was originally the Lewis Sherrill Place. William Vanderbilt married a Sherrill Daughter.

Next was the place known as "The Knowlton" (now Hlocky). That was the home of the Henry and Mary Hedges family. There were children Alice, Marietta and Maurice.. (Alice Hedges married Russell Moore and they built and lived all their married lives in the house across the street (now the home of Phyllis and Ronald Magee.)

The house which is now the home of Bill Irving and the Westerner, was at that time, the home of Sam Williamson and his wife Rose Brown. (She was a sister of Grover.)

The next house was the home of Will Irving who had an ice cream shop on Main Street. There were four children: Marion, Ruth, Gerard and Bill. (Marion lives in that house at the present time and Bill lives next door at the Westerner.)

The now Stanger residence was then the home of George Cook who was the Principal of the school. He had a daughter Dorothy.

The next house (now Angie and Eunice Powell) was then also a two family

house. Charles Horton Lived on one side and Theodore and Julia Roe lived on the other. They were the parents of Mary (Roe) Abrams who lives nearly across the street. Theodore also had a son, George Roe.

In the house where Moody now lives, there lived then a man called Herc Rivenburgh. His wife worked at the Insurance office (Hercules was the son of Minnie Spalding and Edwin Rivenburgh.) Burdett remembered that Emeline McCabe lived in one of those houses before the school driveway. He thinks it is the house where Mrs. Minutella lives. Miss Rider, the teacher who taught in the Legion Hall building, lived there earlier.

Next was the house previously mentioned as belonging to Ford Rundell and occupied by the two Ingalls families (now the site of Scott M. Ellis Elementary).

Adjoining this land was the property of the Presbyterian Church on which stood the building now known as the Legion Building (used by the Boy Scouts) and the present church.

Then there was the Academy Building (now the home of the Greenville Library and Town Offices, Justice Court, Community Room, etc. On this land is the Veterans' Park with its pond and newly constructed gazebo....

An addendum – August 1996

after calls from Barbara Chatterton and Ella Powell

Barbara: The parents of Robert Chatterton did not live in the house. It was Robert's grandparents, German and Anna (Spees) Chatterton.

Ella: 1. Rosemary Gifford married Dow Haskins.

2. The home where Phil Ellis lives was built by Richard (Dick) Earl.

3. Between that house and the church was the home of a man named Bogardus (David?) and next was the Poli place. (At one time Doris & Bud Vadney lived there.)

4. The house where Rulands live on Rt 81 was once the home of Elmer, Min & Gladys Gransbury. Gladys was married to Earl Halstead. At one time, Principal Carrol Kearney & wife Hester lived there.

5. The house where Bill Vaughn lives was built by Warren Utter for Walt Stevens.

6. In the field across from the Sherrill house was a house where Bill Crow lived. At one time the Kudlacks lived there – Steven, Charles, Bill, Raymond & ?

7. Next there was a house (in the 60s, Ed Davis). At one time, William Vaughn (Bill's grandfather. Later Frank & Alice & Freddie Breiner lived there.