

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

July 2008, Issue 184

Greenville Center

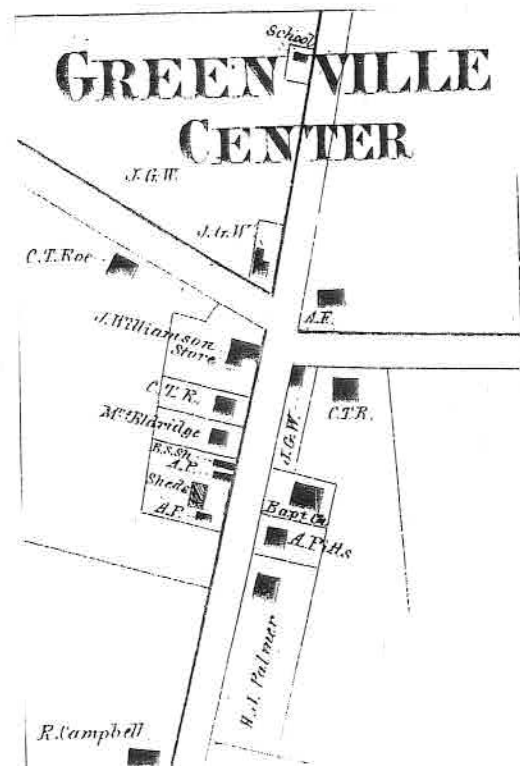
One of the more pleasant evenings of July – 75 degrees and lower humidity – welcomed this month's attendees: Dot & Larry Hesel, Mary & Allyn Shaw, Walter Ingalls, Marie & Bob Shaw, Stephanie Ingalls, Elsie Turon, Phyllis Beechert, Harriett Rasmussen, Judy & David Rundell, Dot Blenis, Christine Mickelsen, and Don Teator.

After Don distracted the group with a request of info about two potential calendar photos, we directed ourselves to the night's topic – Greenville Center. We rarely get to discuss Greenville Center, in large part, due to a lack of local "experts." With the leadership of Bob, Marie, and Christine, tonight was the night to tackle the topic.

We started with the 1884 Beers account (p. 303) from the History of Greene County, reproduced later. Also distributed was the Beers sub-article on the church (also reproduced later). Looked at a little more closely was the Beers 1867 map of Greenville Center, as well as the close-up of the hamlet center. Instead of isolating Greenville Center, I have reproduced the whole page given out that evening (next page).

One of our main points of the evening is the value and worth of even one small intersection within the whole

town (which is just a small town in the county, which is just... ok, I know you get the point). Generations of one family may stay while "newcomers" are part of the flow-through that happens to all places.



We picked on the four corners first. The southwest corner is shown in an old postcard with a blacksmith shop that has been gone longer than anyone

can remember. It was a store run by the Shaw family in the early-mid 1900s, while it also served as a post office before a 1960 fire forced it out. (Helen Gardiner was the last postmaster of Greenville Center, and Bob had the cancellation stamp set at the last date of business – July 30, 1960.) The Shaws had their own farm just down the road and ran the store business.

Christine narrated a romantic story about Leticia and Charles Palmer, which should be written up. Leticia is associated with this corner house, if I remember (please, Christine). They are buried in King Hill Cemetery. Christine had a metal plate with the name Leticia Williamson cut out.

Diagonally across the street is (was) the Charles and Allie Townsend house. It too operated as a small store, selling souvenirs, Cliquot soda, and Fink's ice cream. It too served as a post office at one time.

This, of course, necessitated the story of the double-mail-run, done by Homer Tuttle, who delivered mail at 9:30, carried freight to Coxsackie, and came back for the second delivery.

The northwest corner, across West Road from the Mickelsen house, may have been a hotel operated by Brownell, resided in by John G. Williamson, then Meade, and Grace Graham.

The southeast corner may have been a hotel site, but too long ago for anyone to remember. Bob remembered a wagon shed. The Beylegaards (sp?) had their house built their in 1947-1948 by Ad Showers (and Tallman was the well driller).

Then came the important buildings. The school house closed in the early 1930s, as did most of the one room school houses did when GCS

centralized. No one present ever attended school there but Bob remembers his aunt and father went there.

Marie read from her account book the history of the Greenville Center Baptist Church, with many facts from the Beers history but containing many others. Someone remembered the church have a men's side and a women's side. Electric lights arrived in 1933, and a "new" bell arriving in 1938, with the historian's files containing some of the installation photos. (The bell came from an East Durham church.) About 1940, the horse shed across the street was torn down and the church hall was erected. In 1980, Ruby Flansburgh left her house on Rt 26A to the church.

There was a creamery on East Road, with the names Hilda Werner and Ullstrom connected to the site.

Roads! There is no official East Road today but, according to Bob, the old-timers referred to road that went from the Center westward to Rt 32 as West Road, the road from the center going to Rt 81 as East Road, the road from the center going to north to Rt 81 as North Road, and the road going from the center to the south as, well, having no name!

Bob remembered the East Road consisting of a few farms. Annie Hallock (Art and Florence Palmer) came first, then Trum Waldron, John and Addie Rourke's farmhouse, the Johannesen place, Hilda Werner's, and Art Hallock's on the upper corner.

The West Road had the house in back of Mickelsen's, than midway out the road came Baron's (today, Lobb), and one more farm after that before hitting the state road.

The North Road had the school

house, then the Salvesen residence (about where the new church is), then Haukom (was Petersen, before that was Arthur Evans) on the right, and then Hauge at the end.

Before I get to the unnamed road, which I will unofficially title South Road, we noted one other road that no longer exists. On the map, halfway out West Road, you see a road, with two residences, that connects to a road that today we know as Fox Hill Road. Christine wondered if any foundations are still present, and how long ago that road was abandoned. (For those interested, one will note that no road is present that today is occupied by South Plattekill Road which connects Plattekill Road and Sunny Hill Road.)

Back to the unnamed "South" road. All the houses between the corner and the church have been there for a long time. Spence Plank lived next to the corner house. Then came the Gardiner house, then a Parks house. Past the church hall was a house built in 1939 by Shaw. The nursing home residence that closed about 1968 drew a lot of comment. The buildings on the same side as the church were noted by Bob but I did not take notes. Quite a few of these structures were built "recently."

Those are the four main roads, with only bottom of Fox Hill, and the corner that bends by the cemetery also noted this evening. Terplewitz, Fontaine, and Con Baumann were some names that came up. The last dirt road was West Road

Bob had brought some old photos and post cards, and Don had the photos of West Road and CR 41 available. The photo of the upended Linn tractor mired in the muddy road always attracts attention. The Linn tractor was bought by the town in 1920 and had a running speed of 5-6 mph.

There were more details, and I did not write them all. Thus, the challenge is for anyone who want to write down some

details about any buildings, or people, or social "stuff" that went on to do so and contribute them to the files.

A thank you goes to the Greenville Center people who came out this evening for a taste of a small hamlet of a time gone by – Bob and Marie, Christine, Allyn and Mary, and Elsie (who was a Greenville girl who would visit her friends).

Next month will be a share session. I know Harriett has some material to bring.

A few other notes:

I update my yearbook gaps. I have all the GCS yearbooks since 1939 except for **1952, 1984, 1992, and 1993**. If anyone can fill a hole, thank you for doing so. I also have some Middle School yearbooks.

Having looked at some of the assessment/tax roll booklets the town used to put out, I have the following years: 1889, 1891, 1892, 1894, 1897, 1898, 1900-1903, 1905, 1907-1911, 1913-1950.

We were saddened to hear of Shirley Ingalls' death. Our sympathy goes to the family; Walter, it was wonderful to see you at last meeting.

A quick note about subscriptions – my semi-annual reminder. If your envelope has an expiration date of Nov '08 or later, you are good until the next reminder. If earlier than Nov '08, you can renew by sending a check, made out to Don Teator, to 3979 Rt 67, Freehold, NY. The price is still \$5 for a year to cover postage and supplies.

Take care,



BAPTIST CHURCH AT GREENVILLE CENTRE.

This society was in existence as early as 1793, and included residents of New Baltimore and South Westerlo. It then worshipped in barns, school-houses, and private dwellings. Pride did not then demand, and poverty did not permit the erection of elegant and costly temples of worship, such as are seen in modern times. The people wended their way to their places of worship on foot, on horseback, or in rude vehicles drawn by oxen.

The first clergyman who is known to have ministered to this society was Elder William Stewart, who, while discharging his pastoral duties, supported himself by cultivating the soil. It is said, however, that he received for one year's pastoral services three pecks of buckwheat; a gift from Deacon Jerard Reynolds. Mr. Stewart lived to the age of 90, but was blind during the latter years of his life.

In 1822 the Westerlo branch of this church was set off with 10 members, and in 1825 the New Baltimore branch with 22.

The Gayhead branch was set off as a separate society September 26th 1868, with the following members: Cyrastus Betts, Jacob Losee, Levi Finch, Betsy Thorn, Mary M. Weekes, Eunice Finch, Rhoda A. Whitbeck, Mary C. Hill, William Thorn, Cyrus L. Betts, Perry Roe, Roxana Losee, Margaret Palmer, Aaron Whitbeck, Sarah Thorn, Mariah Betts.

In 1817 the first meeting house of the Greenville Centre church was built, on land donated to the society by William Pitts. After a number of years it was repaired,

the entrance was changed from the west to the south side, and galleries were added.

In 1854 it was turned so that the south became the west side and fronted the road that passes north and south through the village, and was remodeled and a spire was added to it. The rebuilding was done by Stephen Thorn, and the painting, graining, and frescoing by Joseph Thompson. The building committee consisted of, Russell Townsend, David Losee, William Stevens, and Silas Hunt.

The present trustees of the church are Russell Townsend, Sherman Sanford, and George E. Williamson. George Townsend is the clerk and the superintendent of the Sunday-school.

The following is a list of the pastors of this church, with the dates of the commencement of their pastorates:

Rev. Willam Stewart, first pastor, 1817; Rev. Mr. Adams, February 5th 1825; Rev. Richard Shimoniel, November 5th 1825, same time ordained; Rev. M. Jones, 1831; Rev. Thomas Stokes, April 1st 1834; Rev. Alfred Osgood, April 1st 1835; Rev. William M. Doolittle, May 23d 1836, ordained July 13th 1836; Rev. Egbert Penney, March 24th 1839, ordained same time; Rev. E. R. King, February 22d 1841, ordained April 24th 1839; Rev. M. Stickney, July 3d 1842; Rev. Mr. Prink, May 4th 1844; Rev. Hiram Lord, October 7th 1847, ordained same time; Rev. Jacob Gesner, July 22d 1849; Rev. Lyman M. Purrington, March 22d 1851; Rev. Charles Ferguson, May 21st 1853; Rev. Harvey Cornwall, May 1st 1855; Rev. Mr. Hartwell, December 25th 1858; Rev. Nelson Palmer, February 25th 1859; Rev. Jacob Hoppey, March 1st 1866, ordained June 20th 1866; Rev. Jacob N. Van Hoesen, January 29th 1867; Rev. Hiram Hayms, March 27th 1868; Rev. Mr. Peck, 1874; Rev. Mr. Bronk, revivalist, 1874; Rev. Mr. Allen, 1876; Rev. Joseph Slaton, 1878; Rev. A. M. Cole, the present pastor.

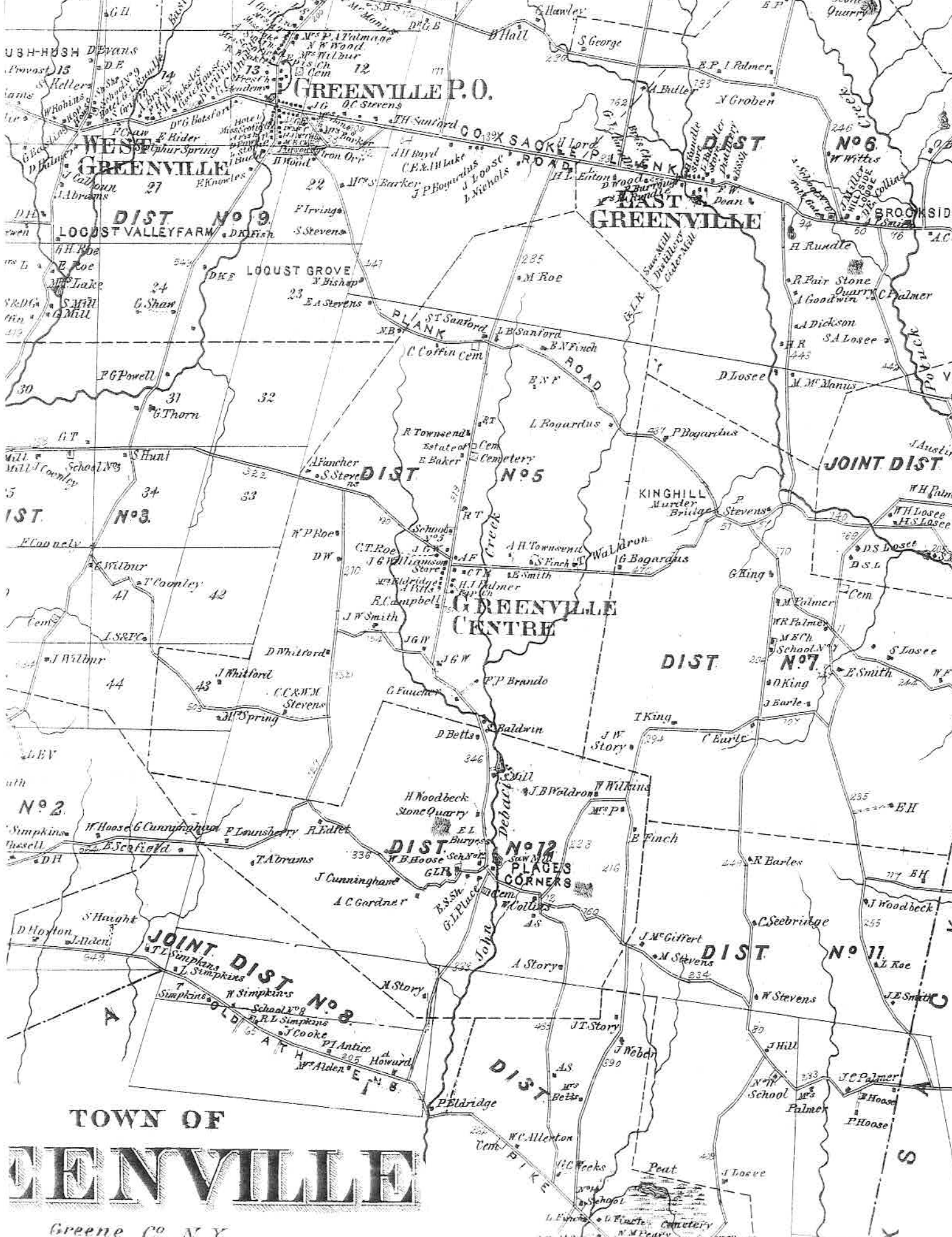
GREENVILLE CENTRE.

Greenville Centre, formerly known as the Hemlocks, is a small hamlet near the center of the town. It contains 12 dwelling-houses, one church, a public school, and one store. The first merchant to establish himself here, as far as can be learned, was John P. Snider, who commenced about 1825. He was succeeded by Gurdon Secor and Jeremiah Place. Soon after 1835, the business was turned over to Bemsley Hunt, who in turn sold to John G. Williamson in 1841. Mr. Williamson enlarged the business, and carried it on successfully till his death, in 1882, when he was succeeded by his son-in-law, Charles M. Palmer, who is now conducting it.

In 1812, Nathaniel Fancher kept a hotel on the corner where the residence of N. Brownell now stands. It is

not known how long he continued the business, but the same place was run as a hotel in 1831 and 1832 by Jacob N. Bogardus. A hotel was also kept for several years before and after 1835, on the corner east of the store where the wagon shop now stands. John Green conducted it in 1835, and Henry Townsend came after.

The usual trades, such as blacksmithing, wagon making, shoemaking, etc., have been carried on at different periods, but none of these are in operation at the present time. Among the early blacksmiths was Henry Townsend, who is still remembered for his kind heart and social qualities. S. Stevens was an early wheelwright, and some of the wagons he made 40 years ago are still doing service.



GREENVILLE P.O.

WEST GREENVILLE

EAST GREENVILLE

GREENVILLE CENTRE

TOWN OF GREENVILLE

Greene Co. N. Y.

Map of Greenville, N.Y.

On quiet flights of fancy

No engine, no gas, no problem for glider pilots after "pure" experience



Learn how a glider pilot stays up. <http://timesunion.com>.

By **SCOTT WALDMAN**
Staffwriter *Albany Times Union*

FREEHOLD — There is only one way for man to truly soar like a bird: in a glider.

Clouds become streets and a vulture circling in the blue sky is a guide to the best ride. To a glider pilot, the Catskills are green-tipped waves waiting to be surfed.

In an era in which \$4-a-gallon gas is becoming a bargain, members of the Nutmeg Soaring Association are as fuel-efficient as they come; no engine and no gas.

The local group is part of the Soaring Society of America, which has grown to 12,000 members who fly the "green" way.

Well, there's a little gas used

since gliders need a 5-minute tow from a plane to get to the heavens. But the former crop-dusting airplane used by the 42-member Freehold-based group uses a mere eight gallons of automobile gas in an hour and can tow up to four gliders in that time.

The length of a flight depends primarily on weather conditions and the pilot's ability to read air currents.

"For a glider pilot, altitude is just like gas in your car," club member **GLIDER A5** ▶

Please see **GLIDER A5** ▶

▶ **CONTINUED FROM A1**
Pete Whitbeck said.

Glider pilots fly after they are towed to about 3,000 feet with a 200-foot nylon rope. The principle is fairly simple: look for a thermal, for lift, and get in it. The sun heats the ground, which causes hot air to rise.

A glider pilot wants to be in the middle of that, Nutmeg member Bill Kenyon said, circling at approximately 70 miles an hour and rising at about 500 feet a minute to as high as 10,000 feet. Kenyon's flights have ranged from 13 minutes to just over seven hours.

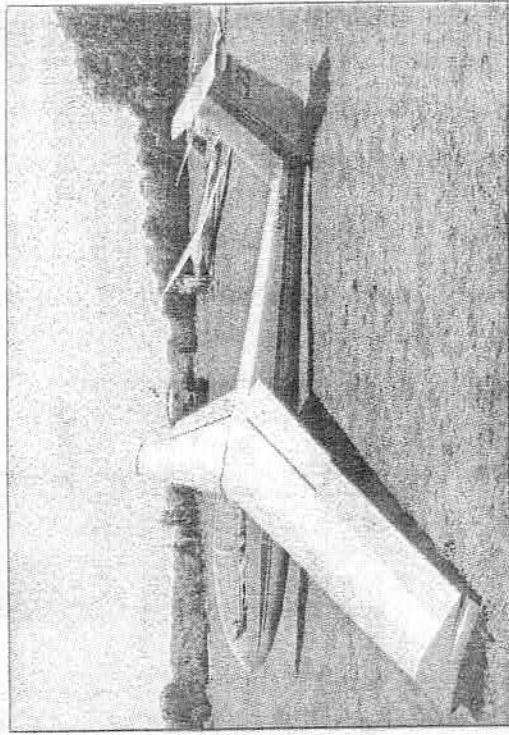
Kenyon on a recent day enviously watched a hawk rise up underneath a cloud with barely a flap.

Moments before, he had been up in the air, climbing to 6,500

feet before leveling off and looking at Windham Mountain Ski Resort from above. He let a passenger take the controls as the glider soared toward Westerlo, which looked like a series of white blocks set on a wrinkled green blanket.

Glider pilots compare the experience to being in a sailboat, when they can feel the wind and get close enough to mountains to see the leaves on trees. Whitbeck said it is a more "pure" experience than in a plane.

The use of gliders for sporting gained popularity after World War I, though humankind's first efforts at flight were in primitive models that never got too far off the ground. They were arguably first successful in the early 19th century, though some scholars contend that a glider appeared in



SCOTT WALDMAN/TIMES UNION

A TWO-PERSON GLIDER sits at the airport before being moved to the runway where it will be towed into the air by another plane.

China sometime in the 5th century B.C.

Modern gliders are sleek and slim and cost from about \$10,000 to well over \$60,000.

Nutmeg is looking for more members. The group owns six gliders and two tow planes, as well as the Freehold Airport. An annual membership costs \$800, with each tow priced at \$35, and trial memberships are \$140. No experience is necessary, as the club's experienced members are certified to train rookies.

More information on Nutmeg, including how to join the association, can be found at <http://www.nutmegsoaring.org>.

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