

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

August 2013, Issue 228

Town of Greenville Photo History, Part 2

Happy End-of-Summer!
(or, is that an oxymoron?),

The August meeting was a humungously attended event, almost overflowing to the point that we used all the chairs in the large room and then all the folding chairs from the small community room!

I took almost no notes, and thus have no accurate list for attendees; my guess, confirmed by Barbara Flach, is that we were stretching the seventy mark! So, on the good probability that I will leave someone out, I will attempt to recognize as many as my brain's visual imagery can recall (let me know if I left you out and I will include you next month): Stephanie Ingalls, Christine Mickelsen, Bob & Marie Shaw, Walter Ingalls, Evelyn Jennings, Tim & Judy Adams, Mary Heisinger, Ron Golden, Phyllis Beechert, Bette Welter, Lee & Arlene Brown, Barbara Flach, Evelyn Jennings, Lew & Sue Knott, and Tim Broder. Other attendees included: Hardy & Jackie Menagh, Dave Battini, Ted Hilscher, Kevin Lewis, Bob & Ann Hallock, Ken Mabey, Elsie Turon, Kathy Kieffer, Barbara Valicenti, Ed & Ronnie Campbell, Mary Griffin, Brian Mulligan, Jack & Maureen Ver Planck, Peter O'Hara & John Garafolo, and gobs more that escape me. I told ya, it was big.

The program this evening was Greenville History in Old Photos, Part 2. Last year was an overview of Greenville history, with an emphasis on Greenville hamlet. This year gave a reminder about Greenville's formation when, in 1803, our current boundaries became Greenfield, changed to Freehold in 1808, and finally morphed into Greenville in 1809. Complicating researchers' efforts are the pre-1800 Albany County Town of Freehold and the 1800-1803 Greene County Town of Freehold, co-existing with the hamlet of Freehold and the temporary Town of Freehold. If you are confused, you should be. So, whenever someone writes me inquiring of someone who lived in Freehold in the late 1700s and very early 1800s, I try to convey the major-rolling-of-my-eyes over the phone. A series of maps showing this division has appeared in a newsletter a few years ago, as I recall. Perhaps, I should put it online.

Another set of pictures were from the 1867 Beers map, with close-ups of Greenville hamlet, West Greenville, East Greenville, Norton Hill and Freehold. These maps are widely used for genealogical purposes because the maps include dots where structures stood, along with the name of the owner of the property. Today, such a creation would be denounced as an invasion of privacy!

A photo of Greenville's northeast corner, the Game Farm, Carson City, the Catskill Mountain House, the Catskill Mountain Otis Railway, Point Lookout with its tower, and a few more was my way to: 1) remind people of the power of pictures to tell a story, and 2) to safeguard and label pictures in our photo albums. (How many times have you heard this?)

And then we started in Freehold, with a cluster of photos of the Country Inn and of the Store. Most the next sixty photos showed Main Street (today's Rt 67) before wending our way to the outskirts of Freehold.

The Norton Hill photos focused on John I's Store, the Stevens-Powell store, GNH, and Balsam Shade Retreat (Lee & Arlene Brown's house), with the rest of the forty photos showing Main Street (today's Rt 81) and a few other structures on the outskirts.

Those not present missed a good chance to see some of the old photos collected over the years.

If there is to be a Greenville History in Old Photos, Part 3, I already have the idea of showing the Town of Greenville beyond the hamlets of Greenville, Norton & Freehold. I'll let that idea percolate over the winter.

Other notes:

Kathy (Turon) Kieffer had contacted me in the early summer, expressing her interest in the goings-on of her hometown. She had accumulated an album of Greenville and boarding house post cards and, after perusing them with me on our GLHG meeting day, she donated the album for the Historian's files! A couple of the post cards are duplicated for this newsletter (in color in the email and website). Thank you, Kathy. (I suggested that she should start writing her memories of the area and of her boarding

house years at Ingalside; actually, that is good advice for all of us.)

During this past month, I have been in contact with Russell Lewis and his Eagle Scout project. (Older brother Tucker's project was the re-painting of signs. Russell's project will be the replacement of a marker that disappeared a long time ago, one that was situated at the bottom of the dip between Carlson's Auction and JP North on Rt 32, right where a small stream gathers enough force to need a culvert. Russell has agreed to introduce his project and explain his fundraising efforts at our October meeting. One of those efforts will be a dinner at Baumann's Brookside on October 23. Save the date and more details will be forthcoming next month. (The Local History Group has adopted Russell for this project!)

The next meeting, on September 9, will feature an interview with Roberta Roe Jennings who will talk about her Greenville days. A thank you goes to Phyllis for instigating and organizing this program. Roberta, the daughter of Elsie Roe, grew up in the house that is now the site of the Coxsackie Bank. So, come, listen, join in.

A thank you goes to Stephanie and Christine for organizing refreshments. (There's more to this story – later.)

The Civil War Round Table meets on September 11 (7:30, Large Community Room). Dr. Matt Farina, a retired pediatric cardiologist and Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at Albany Medical College, will present: Confederate General Thomas J. Jackson and Union General Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain.

Looking ahead even farther, we will use October to unveil the 2014 Local History Calendar. More details next month.



Freehold Inn (Parks', Freehold Country Inn, etc.)
The tall front columns of today not yet built



Lacy's Store Freehold N. J.

A view westward from Freehold's corners to bridge and today's Ruby's
Note the hanging light, presumably between the two poles



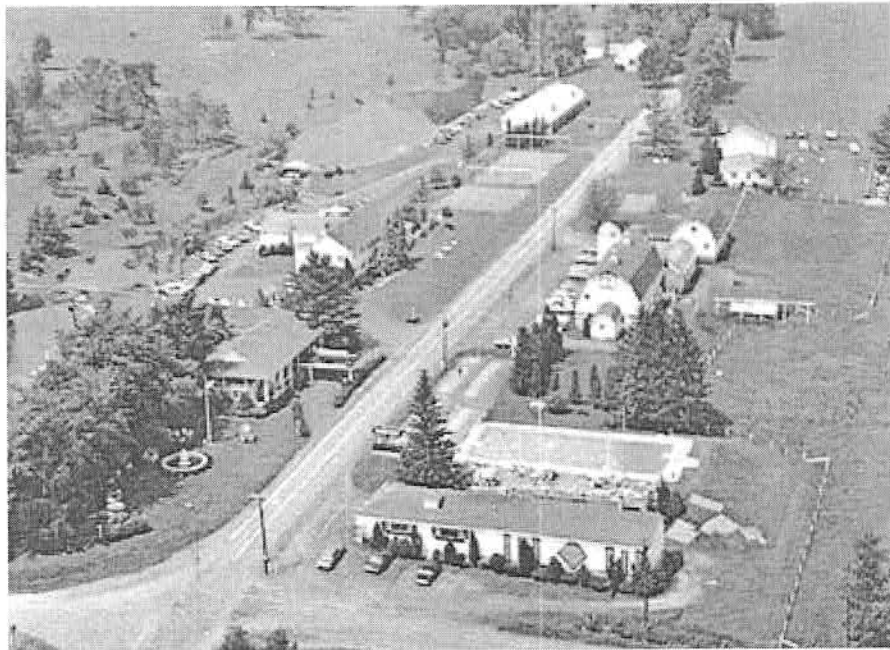
1928 at John I's
The state road appears not to be paved yet.



Stevens-Powell store on right, view westward



Rainbow Lodge dining room
Postcard courtesy Kathy Turon Kieffer



Aerial of Shepard's during better days—Rt. 32
Postcard courtesy of Kathy Turon Kieffer

Oh, yeah, I almost forgot. There was an award part of the meeting!

To anyone who was in on this, CONGRATULATIONS! As you witnessed, I had not an iota of a clue that I was the object of the surprise! And some of you had to contain yourselves for a couple of months. Someone even confessed to avoiding talking to me the past few weeks in fear of leaking the secret.

So, the headlines:

Greene County Historical Society awarded the 2013 Jessie Van Vechten Vedder Award to Greenville Town Historian Don Teator.

Yup, me!

The award was “created for a person who has helped preserve Greene County history through their restoration efforts or through their actions to preserve local history.” Created in 2012, the award first went to Justine Hommel of the Mountain Top Historical Society; I am the second recipient.

After the shock wore off, first, for being deemed worthy of the award, and, then, second, for all the efforts for a surprise announcement, I must admit how humble and proud I feel at the same time.

The pride, of course, is receiving such a prestigious award. To be cast among some of the giants of local history is indeed gratifying and, as I thought about it later, there are a number of contemporaries who are also deserving. I realize I have instigated and maintained some worthwhile projects, and it is an honor to be recognized.

The humbleness comes from my recognition that many of you have helped me be the historian I am today, with pictures, stories, reminders of the humanity of small town life, and the importance of the strands of local history that run through all our lives.

At the meeting’s beginning, I started to thank people – the Town Board for their financial support for my projects; my wife Debra for sharing twenty five years of adventures; and to the dozens of people who have shared their photos along the way and who

continue to make local history an important element of our lives.

And I cannot help but think of the people who I have known, now deceased, who have inspired and were fellow contributors to local history – former Town Historian Edna Ingalls Adams; Greenville-raised former County Historian Ray Beecher; long-time member and history re-creator Harriett Rasmussen. These stand out but there are a string of more people who I miss and respected who fill out that list.

And there is the list of you who share local experiences in a number of ways. Some of you have been my local history friends for decades now, with stories that pre-date me by decades also; some have recently felt the local history bug; some have been part of the GLHG for a long time and keep re-telling the right story at the right time. Our crossing of paths has bettered me.

The point is, ... well, one point is.... that I know I have my own ideas of projects to do but so many of you have pitched in so many more good ideas that being Town Historian of Greenville is a labor of love. So, on behalf of all of us interested in local history, especially Greenville area local history, I proudly accept this award. Thank you, and thank you to the Greene County Historical Society for bringing these efforts to the forefront.

The refreshment story, as noted before. It came to my attention that Johanna Titus had a cake ready, with some “champagne” for the celebration. To all on the refreshment committee this evening, thank you.

Take care,

