

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

February 1997, Issue #84

Annual Report

Winter's greetings from the suburbs of Greenville! I trust winter, easy so far, finds you in good health, and ready to face cabin fever.

This annual newsletter goes out to everyone on my list, even to non-subscribers. I believe it is important to remind ourselves what we did this past year and to have the goal of achieving during the coming year as much as we did this past year. Anyone wanting to subscribe can follow the directions below; anyone wishing to be taken off my list can let me know by writing or calling me.

First, a reminder about subscription dates. Your mailing address label's top line is a number representing an expiration date. The first two digits of the four digit number represents the year of expiration; the last two digits represent the month. Thus, any number less than 9701 means your subscription has run out. Many of you have subscriptions that will run out this summer (9707, 9708) and I will put out another reminder in July. Anyone wishing to renew a yearly subscription can send a check (made out to Don Teator) for five dollars to: Don Teator, RD1, Box 147, Freehold, NY 12431.

On to the regular part.

A look back at 1996, I think, will be judged a productive year. Our overall membership is consistently in the 75-85 range, as it has been for the past few years. Of this number, the regular newsletter reaches about 65. Attendance at our meetings tends to average about fifteen, occasionally edging near twenty, and, if the weather threatens, occasionally dropping to single digits. I tend to see 10 - 15 as our "critical mass" number, the number at which a meeting really feels like a meeting.

We continued to meet the second Mon-

day of April through November. Thus, the winter months represent a good chance to gather information and material for our share sessions. Again, these share sessions alternate with programs, especially if the program chair (me) has his act together. If any of you have ideas for programs, share the idea.

This would be a good time to announce that we will have a pot luck get-together at the hall beside the Presbyterian Church on Monday, March 10, at about 5:45. Bring a dish or dessert. If you want to coordinate what you're bringing, call Betty Vaughn (966-8518). Any ideas for an activity?

I suspect the most visible part of the GLHG is the local history calendar. The sixth edition (1996) was produced during the summer and distributed by individuals and to some of the key retail areas. A thank you goes to Bryant's, the Pharmacy, the Library, the Freehold Country Store, and At The Crossroads for taking calendars to sell. We recognize the calendar as a key way to share a small piece of our local history, and hope it makes our community more aware of our history. This year's calendar was printed at the Altamont Enterprise, resulting in about 350 calendars to be sold. Our second year of recognition of a community member focused on the accomplishments of Orlie and Jeanne Bear.

The key part of the GLHG are the programs. This year, the programs were Orlie and Jeanne Bear (May), the Havens' nature slides (July), and the Ingalls Diary (October). Missing this year was our artist program, mostly because the one I thought I had lined up kept cancelling or not responding on three separate occasions.

In between, the share sessions are our excuse to show-and-tell, swap stories (even if they are sometimes true), remind ourselves of a history both distant and near, etc. Brochures,

programs, a few small artifacts, clippings, etc., typically are brought in, shown, sometimes given to the Historian's files, discussed, digressions made, and whatever else we can do for such items.

However, there were a few major strands that kept showing up most of the year. The most noticeable one is Harriet Rasmussen's transcribing of the Taylor diary and the regular write-up of certain years. Subscribers in 1996 were treated to Harriet's account of 1894, as portrayed in the diary. Harriet finished transcribing the 45 years of the diary in June and summarized 1858, initiating the next phase of her project — the retelling of the Taylor story from the beginning. In addition, Harriet wrote up her Uncle Bud Griffin's memories of the town. A year without Harriet would leave a big hole.

Meanwhile, I was steadily working on the Carrie Ingalls diary and made that a whole program, and members were given the "summary" of the 1920's. Finally produced was an account that Edna Adams had taped on three different tapes which I "spliced", resulting in Bill Gedney's account of Greenville when he was a young man.

And, of course, there are others, without mentioning by name, who contributed semi-regularly throughout our season.

Dave Dively, representing the 4th grade teachers, updated us on the local history projects.

Just a reminder. People contribute in many different ways. One of the most useful is to preserve some piece of Greenville's history. This may happen by the saving of an artifact. However, the part that is tougher to save is the collection of memories and stories. And thus, I urge you to audiotape or write your memories of Greenville people, events, and places. Daunting at first, this recording becomes more and more useful with the continual adding of sources.

I hope to see you at the April share meeting (2nd Monday). I have bunches of things to copy but I'll save them for the regular newsletter.

Until then, take care,



PS

One project that is doable by everyone is our house history project. Whether new or old, each house has a history, both of people who have lived in it, and of changes made upon the structure by someone. The goal of this project is to record both types of changes. A two column approach would be sufficient — one of date, the other of the change. This record could be placed with the pictures in the photo albums.

For example, Harriet Rasmussen's house is relatively new (actually, it's probably middle aged compared to most houses in the town).

The Rasmussen house - Rt. 32, west side -
about 1/4 mile north of Bryant's

1954 house is built - six rooms & one car garage, land sold from Burdette and Vangie Griffin, once orchard land. Cas & Harriet Rasmussen moved in July 31, 1954
carpenters - Ad Showers, Bill Winans, Russell Moore
excavation - Clarence Ingalls, Richard Brown
plumbing - Wilbur Baumann
electrical - Roland Jones
1972 addition of garage and shop on south side, Bill Winans - carpenter
1994 re-siding of house (white)

I could envision a report that might not have all the details as the one above. Or, if one someone knows and wants to include more details, that would be great also. Someone else could know something about the house and contribute their knowledge; this is likely to happen for a building that has been lived in for decades and changed hands a few times.

Even a partial list would be fine. On the other hand, for the more ambitious who would like to try to report on a road, roads, or section of a road, feel free to start such a record and give it for the files. Or, your report could be the record of a family, or an event. Each of us have knowledge that others would like to read some time.