

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

Winter 2014, Issue 232

Annual Report

Good mid-winter to all,

I trust mid-winter is finding all in good health. I have forgotten now what the groundhog prognosticated for the rest of winter but I vote that we no longer consult the 2014 groundhog, not after our spells of snow and cold weather, prompting more than one of us to hearken back to winters past.

This annual report—a look back at 2013 and a look ahead to 2014—is emailed to those who have shared email addresses. Otherwise, everyone else is receiving the “hard” copy. More about electronic vs paper later.

We started the year with a share session, finished with a half of a share session, and snuck in a few sharing minutes during a couple meetings in between. For the second year in a row, we generally hewed to a program schedule—a trend that is likely to continue unless we have a few researchers whose findings must be heard more regularly. Otherwise, I will try to organize a program that might assimilate what might have been a “normal” share topic. So, I have now shared my waffling about what to do with share sessions.

The 2013 programs included: a trip to Baumann’s Brookside for boarding house history (May); Chuck D’Imperio regaling us with upstate history (June); a combined meeting with the Civil War Round Table to meet General and Mrs. Grant (July); the second Greenville history slide show (August); an interview of Roberta Roe (September); the

2014 GLHG Calendar presentation (October); and selection of our calendar recognition (November).

Included in the newsletter were several other significant pieces: Mary and Allyn Shaw’s showing of antique appliances (a crowd favorite); Harriett Rasmussen’s list of genealogy folders; Con Baumann’s history of Baumann’s Brookside; Kathy Kieffer’s donation of postcards to the files; our support of Russell Lewis’s Eagle Scout project (re-establishing a long lost historical marker); the Jessie Van Vechten Vedder award; and Phyllis Beechert’s regular contribution of brochures, flyers, etc., to the files. And a whole list of smaller topics could fill a half page.

Again, feedback about last year’s programs seemed overwhelmingly positive and worthy of replication. I have used some of your ideas for programs, and am always appreciative of your sharing of program ideas.

And, certainly worth repeating, a thank you goes to Stephanie and Christine for undertaking the refreshments.

A highlight of 2013 was the production of the 2014 calendar. After a calendar-less 2013, I promised to dedicate the 50-70 hours needed, an effort made worthwhile by the final product. The 2014 calendar shows a range of hamlets, of time periods, of new and old acquisitions, of seasons, and of buildings and people; another dozen topics that show off Greenville are now part of our public collection.

The 2014 calendar sales was satisfying. After the final tally in mid-January, and

with a contribution earlier in the year, we finally broke even for the calendar's printing cost. Whew. I think this was the first time in a long time. A thank you goes to the community spots who hosted calendars—Tops, GNH, Town Clerk (a first, and thanks, Jackie), Kelly's Pharmacy (a first time there, and the best-selling spot by far), the Library (the anchor of dependable sales), Read and Read Again (another first time), and Hilltown Agway (thank you, Stephanie, for taking care of the northern end). All the help was most appreciated.

The 2015 calendar is in the works, with the photo selection mostly done, and a good chunk of the research started. If you have an idea of a photo we should use, let me know.

Our November voting for the 2015 recognition settled unexpectedly, again—the second consecutive vote ending in a tie. Thus, the calendar will recognize both choices. And, drumroll...., the selections for 2015 are Pat and Dave Elsbree, and Richard Ferriolo. Thank you all for your help in this choice.

The boarding house project has loomed large in my local history work. A link to my website (www.dteator.com) and then to (Greenville Boarding Houses) will show a page listing all the "resorts" I can find evidence for; almost all have a separate link—a couple pages reasonably full, several pages beginning to blossom, and a whole bunch with boilerplate info. If you have info for any of them, feel free to pass it along. I'll be taking time at one meeting to show off the overview and the new work. (I could devote this year's efforts to this topic and probably make a dent; however, too many other pesky but worthwhile topics are grabbing my attention.)

My scanner was busy this past year, with several hundred pictures added to the archives. I need to find an efficient way to meld the old negative numbers with a system that keeps track of electronic photos. And this is also a lesson about preservation, one that might be worth a program.

Also available on my website are all of last year's local history group newsletters.

And online, but not specifically intended for GLHG attention, is a project I took on in Dec 2012. The GCS After-School Enrichment program invited me to contribute, and I led a Local History class, once a month, an hour long, for six months for about eight students. Some of the content is on my home page.

And, of course, keeping track of the paper documents while knowing where the photos is a constant challenge.

(A repeat idea from last year's newsletter.) One hope is that the long stretch of winter has allowed, and allows, for some work on local history projects to be shared during the coming year, and there are many ways to contribute. One useful way is to preserve some piece of Greenville's history. This may happen by the saving of an artifact or knick-knack; however, the part that is tougher to save is the collection of memories and stories.

In the past, I have urged you to audiotape or write your memories of Greenville people, events, and places. Although daunting at first, this recording becomes more and more useful with the continual adding of sources. And, whatever method you choose to share our local history, it is appreciated here. Below, I have listed, by example, possible topics.

write up your own family history, dates, stories, related material
write about a person in the community (even better, write on a regular basis, for yourself, our newsletter, or community newspaper)
write up a community event that is just a memory, or write up a community event that is current but worth noting now while the information is there. Examples:

- Greene County Firemen Parades;
- the Hot Air Balloon fest;
- the snow drags at Balsam Shade;
- the Greenville Drive-In;
- GCS musicals; GCS graduation programs;
- a GCS class history;
- Memorial Day parades;

- Eagle Scouts in Greenville;
 - winter storms;
 - floods;
 - an organization (Kiwanis, C of C, Rotary, IOOF, Knights of Pythias, etc.)
 - a genealogy of a Greenville family
 - a house history
 - a street history (who lived where, during a certain time)
 - last of the dirt roads
 - technological changes
 - the pond area, and dredgings
 - mom & pop stores
 - indexing obituaries – loose/in newspaper
 - indexing main stories in Greenville Locals on file
 - re-reading a year, or two, or decade of the Greenville Local and present an overview
 - make a photo album – you choose the topic
 - history of a school house
 - a waterway in the Town
 - politics of a selected era
 - budgets (of town, or school)
- and I could keep adding another twenty quite easily but I will spare you for now.

Our membership numbers, well..., I used to add meeting attendees with newsletter subscribers and come up with a number. That result usually numbered in the 65-75 range. However, the availability to view the newsletter on line, or to receive them by email, is increasing that number, and I cannot really tell to what degree. Increasing the “member” number further still are the attendees who came out for one or two of the summer programs. My best guess, for now, is we have nearly seventy-five of you “hard core” followers of the GLHG while another seventy-five check us out occasionally.

Attendance varied greatly, with about ten in April, to nearly seventy in August, with an average of 30-35 from May to August.

This year’s schedule is almost set, with only a couple half-months available (and I still had three or four more good ideas that will have to wait until 2015). If you think of

other ideas, or think we should be trying other things, let me know.

For now, the tentative (and some not so tentative) schedule is:

April: Town of Greenville Aviation (Freehold Airport)

May: Mary & Allyn’s Mysteries, St. Patrick’s Day Parades

June: Pine Lake Manor (meet there)

July: Chuck D’Imperio (Presentation #2)

August: Greenville slide show #3 (Gr. Library)

September: John I’s store, and other area general stores

October: calendar presentation (room for a short topic, perhaps Rotary)

November: 2015 recognitions (room for a short topic)

I am not used to having the whole year laid out in front of me. As usual, your feedback helps my planning.

We will continue our second Monday of the month, Large Community Room, 7:30 schedule (I heard nothing about starting a half-hour earlier. If you like the idea, let me know, and we could consider that for next year.)

A few notes about subscriptions.

Email newsletters: **No cost.** And forward as you desire.

Web site viewing: **No cost.**

Mailed newsletters: To cover postage, envelopes, and paper, **ten dollars (\$10)** will keep a paper copy of the newsletter coming to your address for a year (usually April – November, plus the annual report). On the address label, the four digit number above your name gives expiration info. The first two digits is the year, the next two digits is the month. (So, 1406 means your paid subscription expires in June 2014.)

Anyone wanting to start or to renew a mailed subscription should send \$10 for a year (if by check, made out to Don Teator): 3979 Rt 67, Freehold NY 12431.

Also, if your address label needs changing, let me know. In addition to my address, I can be reached at 518-634-2397, and,

for the computer literate, I can be emailed at dteator@gmail.com.

Although I am not espousing any one of these methods of keeping up to date, I will not be offended if you choose the electronic route, especially if it is easier, better, and/or more economical for you; and the content will be the same. (I will continue to print a paper copy for my records.)

Other quick notes:

Ed Volmar recently gave me a tour of the **Potter Hollow Schoolhouse** and the work that has been done to make it a community resource. Foundations have been bolstered, siding has been painted, windows have been protected, some landscaping has made access easier, and Ed is acting as a facilitator for the project. Richard Ferriolo has shepherded this project for years, and finally progress is visible with the efforts of the Greenville Education Foundation and with the assistance of area businesses and able volunteers. This project could use more help; if interested, let me know.

A sewer in Greenville, mentioned in last year's annual report, is a year closer to reality. When it happens, a wise historian will note the near-future changes that are bound to happen.

And last year, I mentioned the new zoning ordinance was taking shape. For a while a half-year ago, it appeared a quite radical ordinance was going to be rammed down our throats. It still might be but wiser heads have hesitated and may be looking for a more intelligent solution. The proposed document was so poorly drafted that a different town is mentioned a dozen times where Greenville's name should have been. The Gang of Six (self-selected, no public input) that was going to foist this ill-advised "improvement" upon Greenville knew how to copy and paste but

forgot to edit, and, in my mind, forgot about what is good for all of Greenville. (Excuse my open opposition but seldom have I seen such a lack of public input and poor leadership on a major Greenville issue as this one.)

On a much more pleasant note, there is the prospect of the former gasoline station property on the four corners blossoming into an aesthetically pleasing business. I believe Brian Wickes and Tom Briggs are responsible for this new venture, and I wish it, and them, the best. Brian has contacted me about the use of some historic photos for the interior, and it finally seems that one focal point for travelers entering Greenville will be commendably upgraded (and will likely be one of our 2015 Calendar pages).

One more note: The **Civil War Round Table**, under Mary Heisinger's leadership, meets the second Wednesday of every month. The March 12 meeting features Harrison Hunt who will talk about the Company C 74th NY Volunteers. And on April 9th, Steve Trimm, a guide at Grant Cottage, will portray General Grant and talk about the Cottage.

I hope to see you at the April 14th share session (2nd Monday of April; 7:30 pm). Instead of opening with a share session, we will host Clem Hoovler who will talk about the Freehold Airport and aviation in general in Greene County.

Until then, take care.

