

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

October 2020, Issue 289

COVID #4: Turner Table, Calendar, Reader Reactions

Good mid-October, Local Historians,

This newsletter is out a little sooner than usual. I often wait until the week before the next program before emailing. However, there is no program to worry about, and there was enough good material to get excited sharing with you.

This month:

- * Gail Banker: the Turner Table
- * reactions to Shaw article: Adinolfi, Flach, Stevens
- * requests to Town Historian
- * 2021 calendar

2021 Calendar

I have already sent notice of availability of the 2021 calendar.

Everyone, in the August newsletter, learned that the GLHG recognition has gone to Sue and Bill Von Atzingen.

In a separate email the first week of October, notice of availability and general calendar contents were emailed. A facsimile of the cover was included.

My apologies to the regular mail only recipients who did not see the email. I will keep it short and suggest that you enjoy the calendar by purchasing a copy at Kelly's, GNH, and/or Tops.



I will share one more photo from the calendar – a seemingly simple photo, with two area girls riding cow-back. I suspect most of you did not recognize Betty McAneny, at first, nor her sister Clarice. The charmingly simple aspect is the bucolic nature of a day gone by. But, in the background, some of us hear the sounds of farming and farm animals, remember the worries of weather and harvest and prices, have noted the encroaching large scale of economy that made profit margins smaller and smaller to the point that farming could not provide an independent lifestyle, recall the pattern of sun and rain and snow in the outdoor nature of farming, remember the constant dawn-to-dusk work day (and then some). Still, it was a life that not many gave up without some regret.

One of our local history topics that we have touched on before but begs to be treated much more fully and to the degree it deserves is the local history of the farming experience in Greenville. We have hosted Ted Hilscher before because he was, and is, writing his tome(s) on agriculture in Greene County. Still, someone in Greenville should capture that experience. I will confess that I probably will not be that person so the invitation is warmly, and a bit desperately, offered to any takers.

(A thank you goes to a third sister – Irene Elliott Williams – who provided the photograph.)

Turner Tables Notes from Gail Banker

One of the most intriguing pages of a copy of correspondence in my files gives information about a piece of furniture. It originated with Gail Banker who lived on the Medusa Road out of Norton Hill. She lived in a house her mother and maybe grandmother Mary Bell operated as a boarding house (at the top of the first hill, on the left as one is leaving Norton Hill).

I came to especially appreciate this letter that, even though it does not mention Debra's or mine name, explained the table we came to possess when we moved into our house in 1984. The table had sat for decades in the house across the street, Fanny Phinney's house, in the summer kitchen. The table had been stained badly by cat urine, somewhat necessitating Deb to commission a woodworking neighbor to replace the table top. One other adjustment was to put balls on the bottom of each leg so we could push our chairs under what was a very low table.

The photo shows the table with the two permanent halves, opened three more feet or so to show the infrastructure that Gail alludes to. We have, on rare occasions, opened the table to twelve feet to accommodate a dozen guests, and it still had room to grow.

After reading Gail's notes, we have grown quite proud to have a magnificent piece of local history in our kitchen, used every day.

Starting with the next section (Notes...), the wording is exactly from Gail's letter, except for those passages with brackets and my initials, usually used for explanation. The entire last three paragraphs is a [dt].



Notes I Collected About the Turner Table

In speaking with Phil Ellis about the tables, he informed me that not many were made – he thinks about 15-20. The tables were made in the mid-1800s, and the “trademark” is the box-like extender under the table which allows it to extend to an extra long table – many were used in boarding houses because they could seat so many people. Phil remembers playing ping pong on theirs. They were made by David Turner, who lived at the time on Maple Avenue (where the Augstein Farm is) in the town of Greenville. David Turner is Scott Ellis's great-grandfather, thus making him Phil's Great Great Grandfather. At this point they are said to be “quite valuable,” which one could understand. They have been known to extend to seat from 20 to 26 people,

depending on the number of leaves you had. It has not been found in my questions to people owning the Turner Table that leaves were made for them by David or if the owners had made their own, or had some made. So far, there are none that have matching leaves. This is, to my knowledge, because they were used for butchering, cooking, and eating. There was usually a long linen tablecloth that covered them anyway. Thelma Rundell believes that "Ike" Turner was perhaps the brother of David, grandfather of Eva Roe Hoose, (Eva's father was Lanny Roe) and her table was refinished by Darius Rundell. The people listed below are the ones I have located that now have a Turner Table and I have a copy of the genealogy written by Scott Ellis. David Turner was born in 1811! I hope this will be of some value to you who own a Turner Table and will hold great memories!

[dt: underneath is a typed list of these names]

Tables I Located 1993

Len & Claribel Gardiner
Phillip Ellis
Wilhemina (Billie) Yeomans
Lewis and Thelma Bell
Gail Banker
Rev. Thomas and Mrs. Julie Carney
Doris Vadney
Leland and Arlene Brown
Randall and Cornelia Ingalls
Jerry Ingalls' daughters (3)
Ruth Elliott
Lamb's Corners Annex (Thrift & Gift Shoppe)

[dt: following this list of names was another list of names, hand-written, apparently, to me, an update of ownership as Gail Banker knew)
Billy Yeomans – Danielle Boyea has now (granddaughter)
Phil Ellis – not sure where is now
Doris – you have [dt: do not know who "you" is)
Ruth Elliott – not sure
Lamb's Corners Annex – think Jack and Mary how Fox house [dt: do not understand the "how"]

[dt: The genealogy referred is a typed page, on Greenville Central Rural School letterhead, addressed to Ramona Huelyn Ellis, for Philip's (Ellis) side.

[Listed are Grandfather Scott Merritt Ellis and Grandmother Elgirtha Ingalls Ellis, with a listing of both of their parents, with both of their parents, with both of their parents (for those doing the math: four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, and sixteen great-great-grandparents!)

[The letterhead lists Board of Education members: C. Howard Spalding, T. Merritt Elliott, Raymond Losee, James C. Stevens, and Reuben D. Waldron. Also listed are: Supt. of Schools R. M. McNaught; Principal Scott M. Ellis; Treasurer Robert H. Bennis; and Clerk Clarice H. Walker. These names suggest to me that this typed, carbon copy page of genealogy may have been written in the early-mid 1930s.]

Other Notes

A thank you goes to the contributors this month: Flip, Orrin, Jerry, and posthumously, Gail Banker.

Turner tables: I hope you enjoyed the article. Does anyone know of any others, or updates to my list?

GLHG November has a tradition of closing with Sylvia. I will see if I can squeeze some words of history and wisdom for next month.

The calendar deserves a couple thank you's: a thank you to 32 years of Town Boards who have supported my efforts; and to all of you who have loaned photos to duplicate and to those of you have contributed financially to support the calendar.

Reactions to Last Newsletter

I am sharing three worthy responses to the last newsletter.

from Jerry Adinolfi – GCS 1959

I noticed the article on Flack's Bakery and thought I would send a note related to it. I worked for Fred at the downtown bakery in the later part of my 1959 senior year at GCS. Following graduation, I figured I had a great summer job lined up there, only to find out that the Air Force Academy wanted me by late June 59. A grade school teacher, Mr Cerwonka, needed a summer job, so we switched and he took it. I like working for tall Fred. I remember once when there was a parade in town and I was in the bakery scrubbing pots and pans. Fred came in and told me to stop working and go out and watch the parade. I really liked delivering the fresh baked pies to the Boarding Houses in that jury-rigged pie truck of Fred's. I wondered if those pies would come crashing down on me after a quick stop. Until one day, Gerald Ingalls jumped all over me for driving too fast on Ingalside Road! It was great while it lasted... good pay and plenty to eat!

from Flip Flach

Bob Shaw's informative recollection of the Gas Station / Garage status in Greenville from the 50's to 70's during your interview for the Sept. Newsletter prompted me to recall some information / memories of my own—thought my trip down another family memory lane might be an additive of interest.

My Maternal Grandfather, Philip Schwebler, was quite a Gas Station / Garage entrepreneur in Greenville from the mid-forties to the mid-sixties. He first purchased the Tydol Station (today's Post Office site) and the Victorian house next to it (just to its west on Rt.81) in the mid-forties upon moving here from New Jersey. He also purchased the little building and lot right across the road (the one most of us remember as Mary's Restaurant) and acquired a Mobil franchise to open there. He operated both

businesses simultaneously—he as the Gas Jockey / Mechanic at the Tydol and a hired person at the Mobil to do the same.

An interesting tid-bit is that in those days there were no electric/hydraulic lifts at either place—the Tydol had an indoor "below ground level pit" for the mechanic work, and the Mobil had an "outdoor manual lift" only. The tiny building housed only a cash register and a few display products. (I spent many hours as a little guy, maybe 5/6 years old, with my Grandparents in that beautiful house, and thought going down in that garage pit was so cool.)

In 1948, my Dad decided he wanted to attempt a barber business in Greenville—that is when Grandpa built on the addition to the west end of the garage building to house the shop for him. It was a win-win for both—folks would get a haircut while their car was being serviced, or they would get their car serviced while they got a haircut.

In the mid-fifties, Grandpa sold the Tydol to Virgil Clow, and the Mobil spot to Carl Barkman. Virgil carried on the business for many years. I don't really know how, when, and with who, the Mobil moved over to the corner spot. Carl ran a used car sales lot at the Rt.81 spot until he became a manager at Orange Motors Ford in Albany. I believe the little building then housed the National Bank of Coxsackie until they built on the Roe site, then it became Mary's (if that timeline/usage is not correct, please adjust - I'm not 100% positive). My Dad ran the Barber Shop at the Tydol site until '63 when he moved over to his own building on Rt.32 north.

Upon selling the two stations, Grandpa also sold the house next door and bought the property on Rt.32 south where he built the brick Sunoco Station and the small house to its left. He lived there and ran the Sunoco until selling to Frank Tiberi in the mid-sixties when he retired.

Continue next page, with two photos

So, another fun trip down family memory lane -- Phil Schwebler -- Greenville Gas Station Tycoon.

-- Respectfully Submitted.....Flip

from Orrin Stevens:

Couple of comments. 1st... great to see Bob Shaw's "history".

We became friends (through GLHG). He and Marie, shy as she was, would stay in the truck as we all talked under the catalpa tree at our back door. Knew a little of his life's path, but is really nice to know the whole story!

The big white house on the N.E. of the four corners. Believe it was standing in June of 1946 when we moved away. Not sure but believe it was still standing summer of '47. After that not sure. Once I ran alongside that house's picket fence with stick-in-hand and felt very brave as I clickity-clicked my way to 5th grade with Gordon Simpson Jr.! There was a girl a few years older (maybe 11-12) who lived there and walked to school, also. Don't recall the family's name.

Meal Times: Dinner was NOON and Supper was well, supper at end of the day! In summer on the farm my cousin Phil and I vied for the chance to ring the big Dinner bell on the roof of the farm house (mom's birth place) south of Rochester) to signal Noon Time and tell the berry pickers to stop for their mid-day break. I started picking berries at 6 or 7yrs. old. as I recall, I ate and/or threw (at my sister n' cousin) more than I put in the basket. So, at about 10

was promoted to "patch boy" and carried the trays of 8 quarts to the shade tree, punched the pay-tickets of the pickers to tally their daily efforts.

Bells: We had a "school house bell" as pictured in issue 288 on a table near the back door in the Homestead for the 42 years I lived there. It was there from my earliest memory of that great old house! Would love to think it came from the Greenville Academy ...but have no knowledge of its origin....sad to say. Just know Uncle Jim collected antiques from all over the area.

God Bless one and all.



The Four Corners: above - before gas station: large residence on corner; Wessel's Garage to left; Below: in full swing, maybe 1990s



Incoming Requests

I receive, as do most Town Historians, requests for local history information or for genealogy. The range of needed knowledge extends from tip-of-the-tongue to details I have never heard of. I often tell people that I have a lot of local history info in my head but there are 500 people in town who know a whole bunch also, and many of them (you) know pieces that I simply do not. Often, my answer is to refer that request to someone else, and some of you have been on the receiving end of my referral. (and thank you so much)

The most frustrating request I get is the request for information about a house, especially a recently purchased house that the newcomer earnestly wishes to learn about. And I have to tell them that unless they are real lucky, and if someone wrote something down, that one of the biggest holes of local history is house histories. Surprising (or not if you have done this research), deeds are descriptions of boundaries, not the buildings and possessions being bought and sold. And until building permits were required, a house has no record. Zoning in Greenville does not happen until 1987. So, my advice often is to talk to the old-timers. And once upon a time, I used to know a whole bunch of them (old-timers). Thirty-five years playing Town Historian is now making me, and you, those old-timers. (sorry for alerting you!).

Still, once in a while, maybe once a month, I get a request that stands out and the ability to find the answer almost throws my right arm out of joint for patting myself on the back. On this request, I had help from Audrey Matott.

So...

I get a call from HeirSearch.com in California. Yessss....? The rep says that a family in England is trying to locate all the heirs to an estate. Family knowledge from England said there was a relative in the US. New York, in fact. The rep had found a head stone on the Find-a-Grave website with what looked like a matching name. Oak Hill Cemetery. Could I please find Frederick William Bath.

& Hoe Co. in the Adirondack Mountains in NY from 1940 until 1960. He moved to Pittsfield in 1961 and was employed by Kelly Hardwood Corp. until 1965, when he formed his own business. He moved to Washington in 1965.

His wife, Margaret E. Washburn, whom he married in 1950, died in April 1973.

He leaves a stepson, Robert J. Bennett, of Northville, NY; a sister, Mrs. Ruth Palmer of South Westerlo; a brother, Robert J. Slater of Schenectady and five grandchildren.

A brother, Bradley, Jacksonville, Texas pre-deceased him.

FREDERICK W. BATH

Frederick W. Bath, 87 years of Durham, New York passed away at the Columbia-Greene Medical Center in Catskill, N.Y. on July 17, 1988. He was born in Fareham, England on August 11, 1900. He was a former Maitre 'D at the Down

town Athletic Club in New York City and the Sky club at the Pan American Building also in New York City.

Funeral service with the Rev. David Bugler of Christ Episcopal Church in Greenville, New York officiating will be Thursday, July 21, 1988 at the Cunningham Funeral Home in Greenville, New York. Friends may call at the Funeral Home Tues. and Wed. 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Interment will be in the Oak Hill Cemetery.

Surviving are his wife the former Amy Charles two daughters Mrs. John (Juanita) Connor of Astoria, Queens, Arlene Crawford of Candlepark, New Jersey, 3 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

NEWS BRIEFS

Chris McDonald

TRIP TO ARKVILLE ON
JULY 22ND

Was an obituary or death certificate possible? I thought sarcastically to myself "why not" but I replied out loud that if luck held out, maybe I could locate an obit; death certificates, however, were not my area of authority.

The headstone said 1988 for death. I called Charlene Hull who referred me to sister-in-law Janet. Before I called her, insight flashed. Audrey was continuing her "Greenville in the 1980s according to the Locals," and I remembered she might have the 1988 box at home. Having a month date to go by, I asked Audrey to look through two months of Locals for a possible obit.

A couple hours later, Eureka! Audrey photographed and emailed the obit about the gentleman who lived in Durham, was serviced by Cunningham's Funeral Home, and was interred in Oak Hill, with the predeceased and survivors mentioned as most obits list. The English connection was made, I reported back, got a warm thank you from the company for helping them do their job, and Audrey and I were part of another request with a happy ending.

Now, about that house you just bought.... ha.