

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

August 2021, Issue 298

Audrey Matott—1980s

The Greenville Local History Group gathered on a muggy August evening to hold its first meeting since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020: Leigh Van Swall, Ed and Ronnie Campbell, Bette Welter, Kathy Smith, Rachel Ceasar, Richard Ceasar, Gail Nichol森, Al Hulick, Flip Flach, William F. Matott III, Johanna Titus and Robert Titus.

The topic of the evening was a look back at 1980s Greenville through a presentation of digital clippings compiled from *The Greenville Local*, the town newspaper of the time.

The presentation was organized chronologically and showed the 1980s to be a decade of considerable change in the town.

We saw businesses in decline that had been prominent in the previous decades while new businesses set up shop. Meanwhile, a number of businesses flourished throughout the decade.

We also looked at prominent people from the time as well, and again saw a similar shift from one generation to another.

Businesses like Gus Baker's Store, the Vanderbilt Theater, Von's Department Store, The Cabin and Jesse's Elm Shade came to an end during the 1980s.

Businesses such as Mary's Restaurant, the Hot Dog truck, GNH, Heidi's Inn, Greenville Pharmacy, Bohne's Florist and The Kilcar were popular with locals during the 1980s.

Bill's Service Station was another long-standing and popular business that was fondly remembered but it closed in 1989.

Among some of the other businesses and organizations that came along in 1980s Greenville included the town Recycling Cen-

GCS Band Plays A "Thank You"

On Sunday, July 9, a crowd of about 150 to 200 gathered at Veterans Memorial Park in Greenville to hear the Greenville High School Concert Band in concert. It was a beautiful day, the natural setting was inspiring as the crowd surrounded the newly erected gazebo and enjoyed the program. The free concert was the Band's way of saying "thank you" to the community for its support, which made the trip to Paris as representatives of New York State possible, and a success - and we all say "thank you" to Ted Stedman, and his G.C.S. Concert Band for a most excellent and enjoyable program.



Ted Stedman, Band Conductor, is shown above as he sincerely thanks the many organizations and individuals who made their trip to Paris possible. A CSH Photo

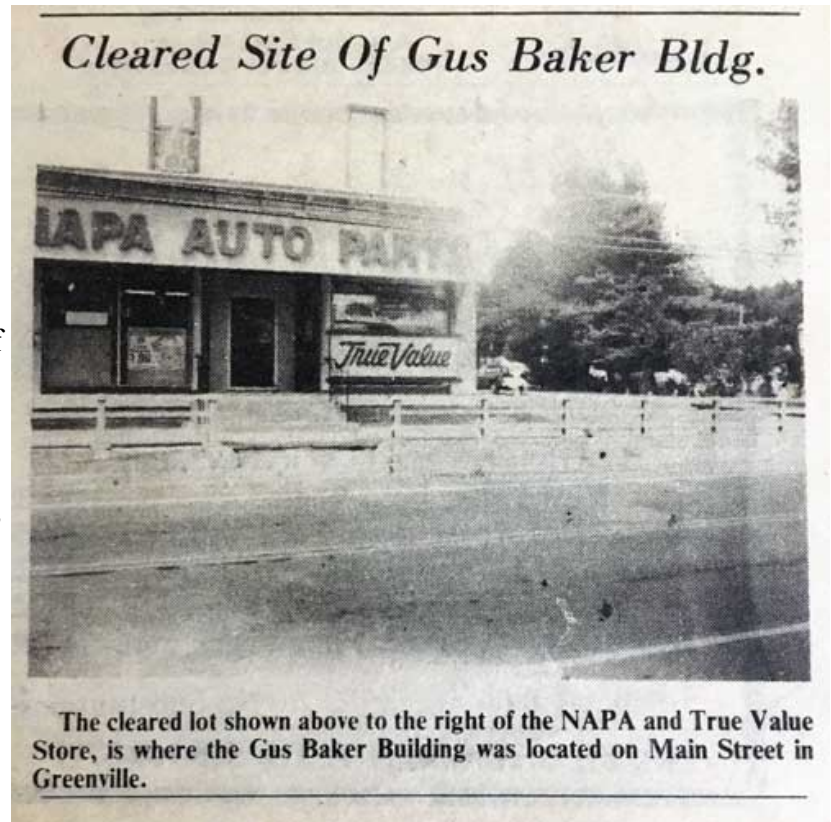
In 1989 the gazebo in Veterans Memorial Park was built by the Greenville High School Band and volunteers who assisted them. The gazebo was a "thank you" gift to the community for sponsoring their trip to Paris, France.

ter, Variety Video, Greenville Post Office, State Trooper Satellite Outpost, Mario's Glassworks, Wrap-n-Ship, Body Guard Physical Fitness Club, Willow Tree Gift Shop, Christian Life Church, Cumberland Farms and Ames.

We also looked at digital clippings that conveyed who some of the prominent local community members were during the 1980s. To name just a few: Rev. Tom Carney, Kenneth Huemmer (Town Supervisor) Frank Tiberi (Town Supervisor), Bill Maxwell (owner of Bill's Service Station also served as Town Supervisor), Lou and Theresa Spinelli (owners of Mary's Restaurant), Bill and Sue VonAtzingen (owners of Von's Department Store), Anne Lafferty (owner of Lafferty Realty), Edna Ingalls Adams (Town Historian, 1980-1988) and Don Teator (Town Historian, 1989-present).

As the 1980s came to a close, we saw the formation of the Greenville Local History Group (this is part of local history!) and the construction of Greenville's gazebo in Veterans Memorial Park. The construction of the gazebo was orchestrated by the Greenville High School Band as a "thank you" to the community for helping to sponsor their trip to Paris, France where they played in a bicentennial celebration of the French Revolution. Over thirty years later, both the gazebo and the GLHG are testaments of the town's devotion to its community.

Overall, the 1980s brought about considerable change and modernization of the town. From the establishment of the town Recycling Center to underground phone lines



Gus Baker's building on Main Street was demolished in 1987 due to its significant deterioration. In its place, Country True Value Hardware Store was constructed. Today the building is home to Kelly's Pharmacy.

and larger corporations setting up shops like Ames and Cumberland Farms, all of these changes contributed to the community that Greenville is today.

-Audrey Matott

***The presentation can be viewed online through Google Slides:
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1-YHORKY8pG2t6g0BT1-ycrF3eyYY8Xk-5ahkhk68CF4/edit>

Another Angle of August

Don Teator

I am profusely appreciative of Audrey's presentation.

Some of you have played key roles in GLHG presentations over the years. Seldom, though, have I asked anyone to run the show, something that Audrey has accepted to do at least three times.

In the past, I would cancel a month whenever I was out of state or country, something that seemed to average once a year. I regretted doing so but many of you know mine and Debra's enjoyment of travel. So, when Audrey offered, or was it, accepted, to run a meeting, I was most pleased to have such help.

This time, I asked Audrey if she would once again take charge, with the knowledge that it would be the first presentation since Covid closed us down. Our last meeting had been November of 2019! No pressure! I found her response amusing. "Of course! I want to get to the 1990s!"

Originally meant to run in 2020, Audrey's program took a life of its own on her Facebook page – The Greenville Local History Group. If you have not seen it, and are on Facebook, I urge you to take a look and even join. Audrey has posted/shared dozens, maybe hundreds, of clip-pings from the 1980s Greenville Locals she had gathered in her preparation for this program. Dozens of people, as you Facebookers know, responded to those posts.

It is time, Audrey, to move on to the 1990s. And as I have humorously reminded you before, I am tickled to listen to someone born in the 1980s to tell me what living in the 1980s was like.

Audrey, it has been a delight, thank you, and kudos for an excellent job. Your work and preparation is most appreciated.

On to the 1990s and your teen years..

First Across New Bridge



THANKS NATE

A bit of history shown above, as Annella and Jerry Ingalls and Edna Adams, (shown above from left to right) get ready to climb in Jerry's pick-up truck to be the first ones to drive across the new bridge on Route 81, Greenville, near Ingalside Corners.

The old bridge being replaced was built by Edna's father, and Jerry's uncle, Stanley Ingalls, back in 1926 when he was Superintendent of Highways for the Town of Greenville.

Methods, procedures and costs have changed drastically since then, but the end result is the same -- "to get us across the creek."

A CSH Photo

During the 1980s, considerable road work was done on State Route 81 near the intersection of Ingalside Road in order to improve the notoriously dangerous stretch of road. In 1987, during one of the larger road repair projects, the Scripture Bridge that crosses over the Basic Creek on Route 81 was replaced.

Upon its completion, the first to cross were Anella and Jerry Ingalls along with Edna Ingalls Adams (Town Historian at the time). Edna's father and Jerry's uncle, Stanley Ingalls had built the bridge in 1926 when he served as Greenville's Superintendent of Highways. Thus, it was a historical and sentimental moment for them to be the first to cross the new bridge.

It is a Small World

Don Teator

I received an email from Silke, from CA.

She first requested a photo of Hilde Werner's gravestone. Done. Then she requested an obit. After some hunting in the Greenville Local, done.

I happened to mention that I had been a neighbor of Hilde's when I lived on West Rd from 1974-1977. I had lived at Mountain Breeze Farm, now David Walker's house and Hilde lived halfway up the series of three speed bumps as one goes east on West Rd. Silke was intrigued but disappointed I had so few memories of Hilde. I promised I would check around for others' memories.

First, though, I asked what her interest was. Her reply, in part:

Thank you so much for locating Hilda's obit and reaching out to Carol.

I would love to talk to her and learn more about Hilda.

Hilda is my "adopted" ancestor. It all started with me buying a 1931 postcard that was sent to her from my Grandpa's hometown of Schmottseiffen in Lower Silesia (then Germany).

Initially I bought it for the two crisp and clean "Schmottseiffen" stamps but quickly started wondering about the recipient in faraway Brooklyn. Thinking that probably not many people from Schmottseiffen knew somebody in the US, I began researching Hilda with the help of the address stated on the postcard.

I first found her in the 1930 and 1940 censuses, then noted that she was in the process of becoming a US citizen, found her naturalization index card and from there her petition, declaration, certificate of arrival and passenger list.

Being a passionate genealogist, I couldn't stop just there and turned to Find A Grave. And that's how my research led me to Greenville, Greene County, NY.

By the way, thanks to you finding her obit, I was able to identify the sender of the postcard, Liesel, as her sister.

...If you or Carol know any descendants of Hilda's relatives, I would be more than happy to share my findings with them.

I had called Carol Lamb who related that Hilde was like a second mom to her (after Annie Hallock!) and told me a few stories. Carol promised to connect with Silke and, based on a Silke email, fulfilled Silke's dream of knowing the person of Hilde.

In the meantime, I called Christine Mickelsen, who had done some sleuthing on her own.

I know where Hilda, as she was known, lived and that she had a little pond with ducks, and that my parents liked her, but that's really all. If we were driving by, we would almost always see her doing something outside. I remember her white hair, but no direct interaction comes to mind. So, I reached out to Bob Shaw (who is 86 and a Greenville Center native!). Also, my mother's first cousin, Jeanne who is now in her late 80's, would stay the weekend with us frequently during the 70's, and I remembered she would walk down to Hilda's occasionally.

Bob says she was a private person, but was liked and respected in Greenville Center generally, and that is my feeling, too. Bob said his family would get milk from her. As he remembered it, she had 3 or 4 cows. For a time, she also raised chickens and ducks and the ducks looked so pretty on the pond. There'd usually be geese, too. Bob still sounded in awe of her when he described how she would do her own haying by hand - no tractor, no help, just her. And, he emphasized - she was not a "big" lady! She was not afraid of hard work. Bob remembers meeting her siblings (Hans, Herman, a sister?) when they first came over from Germany. Hilda spoke with an accent. He thinks the sister ended up living on Scutt Rd and Hermann ended up living fairly close by. Bob said that Hilda was good friends

with a neighbor couple, John and Addy Rourke. The wife, Addy, died first and at some point John went blind. Hilda took him in to live in her home and watched out for him until he eventually died. Your person may know that Hilda was diabetic, but apparently, it was known in the community, too.

Once when Jeanne was out walking she saw Hilda outside and struck up a conversation. They enjoyed conversing so Jeanne made a point of looking for Hilda and stopping by if she was out. Jeanne remembers she had a beautiful garden, and gardening and nature was what their conversations would revolve around. Hilda showed her where to look for wild, edible mushrooms and identified some herbs for Jeanne. By the time Jeanne became acquainted with her, she remembers only one cow. Jeanne says Hilda was concerned about what would happen to her cow when she died. She didn't want it to be lonely or to be uncared for. Jeanne said Hilda talked matter-of-factly about dying and as if she "knew" she would go before the cow. It was a long time ago Jeanne said, but she remembers she enjoyed the time she spent with Hilda in her yard.

I'm including a few pictures of Hilda's house and property I took from my car. I don't know the people who live there now. Her house and property was always neat as a pin as I remember it. This might seem odd, but it had a very serene aura about it. I was not living in Greenville Center during her last years here, so I can't attest to how well that held true during her last years. I'm not sure that deck and addition were there when Hilda lived there. Her pond is out of view to the left in the picture that shows the driveway and is atop a little hill. There was nothing growing around it when she was living, and it could be seen a bit from the road (as I remember it), but now it is hard to discern.

Glad to have taken this little trip down memory lane!

A final thought (dt): I am glad Silke contacted me while Bob and Carol could connect. The loss of memory of a person, after a few decades pass by, is so human. It is a reminder to take a photo and write a story. And Silke was darn lucky to have all these connections made. Thank you, Carol, Christine, Bob, Jeanne.



Baumann's Brookside Turns 100

Our September 13 meeting will take place at Baumann's Brookside, at the corner of Red Mill Road and Johnnycake Lane, at 7:30 pm. Park in the lots just "up" from the office. There is some space on the road, if need be. Entry will be through the canopied front entrance.

The GLHG celebrates BB's centennial—quite a benchmark, even made more special with 2020 seeing a year the resort had never seen before.

The story of family, events, day-to-day operation, benchmarks, and other tales will fill the evening.

Those of you who have worked in a resort can relive some of your experiences; those who wonder what a local resort is will have an excellent chance to find out.

Our "refreshment committee" will be collaborating with the hospitality of Baumann's Brookside. It promises to be local history at its best.

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