

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

October 2021, Issue 300

2022 Calendar

Enjoying the encroaching late dusk of a pleasant October evening were: Joe Trupiano, Stephanie Ingalls, Michelle Clark, Ginny & Bob Mangold, Jeff Mangold, Terry & Garth Bryant, Charlene & Curt Ellis & daughter Sophia Ellis, Ramona & Turner Fawkes, the three Thompson “girls” – Barbara Tolley, Marianne Goettsche, Roberta Christman –

Claudia Lane, Judy Rundell, Flip Flach, Al Hulick, Christine Mickelsen, Bob Shaw, Debra & Don Teator, and maybe a couple more who eluded signing in and/or my attention.

October has become the traditional time to unveil the new local history calendar, and the



Caption from 1991 calendar: Taken at the intersection of today's Rts 32 and 81, another Madison Stevens photo shows the Greenville House, also known as the Coonley Hotel, on the southwest corner now occupied by Pioneer Insurance Co. The building beyond the hotel is Hartt's Store, also torn down for the 1929 construction of the Pioneer. The memorial to Tommy Knowles, lower right, still stands, its use having changed from horse watering trough to today's flower planter.

— 2021 Note: Time passes. The Pioneer is now Town Hall

tradition carried through one more time. Don confessed this was his first time in the Community Room since November 2019.

Preceding the unveiling was a slide show of 40 photos from calendars past. The theme this year was “Wow.” These were the 40 photos, of the 500 that comprise calendar history, that have caused Don to think or mutter “Wow” when first seeing them or first realizing what they showed.

Disclaimer: “Wow” does not mean these photos are the most important, or the ones that best tell Greenville’s story, or even the ones that the slide show crafter likes the most. These photos are more of the visual wonders, not the understated picture with a caption needed to capture the nuances. The

first dozen calendars did more the former; the last dozen more of the latter. Still, if I have to wow a crowd of people new to Greenville history, these are often the ones I utilize and enjoy showing off.

The list of 40 slides was dominated by Greenville, with almost half the slides of the hamlet. And even within that number, the Four Corners was most represented.

Comprising the remainder were: school – 6, Freehold – 1, Norton Hill – 2, Red Mill – 3, and Greenville Center 1 (2, if the mud photo counts). And then the miscellaneous grouping includes: the mud photo, stage-coach, well-drilling, boarding house (Sunny Hill), drawing in hay, Dr McCabe, Stanley Ingalls & 1920s truck, Victorian interior on



From the 1998 calendar: This February 1940 scene of Greenville’s four corners evokes the reality of an eastern New York winter. This photo was probably taken from the upper floor of the Pioneer building and looks down east Main Street. A road sign on the telephone pole indicates Route 32 is the crossroad while the solitary person seems to have no reason to fear any traffic. The building on the right is the corner restaurant building (see Nov ‘97) that was razed in the early 1960s. On the left is a family residence, surrounded by a picket fence, which was torn down in the mid-1940s to make way for the gas station. Beyond the home is the Baumann building and the Steven store, on which one can make out the figures of two snow shovelers. (courtesy of Curt Cunningham)

— 2021 Note: Time passes. Pioneer building is now Town Hall. Gas station is now Tiny Diner. Stevens Store is now Tasting Lab. (Nothing changes, does it?)

— Personal note: I found this photo one of the most challenging to accept. I had never seen another photo showing the stair case climbing to the second story.

South Street, earmarks of 1803, and Jerry Ingalls on a tractor.

Included in this newsletter are two or three of the photos that Don still marvels at. And the link here allows a viewer to see the photos, and the caption that accompanied it, if you use Google.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1luju7YSXHSo3BuMWgcsihrBtUr619gYmMI34itRpEME/edit?usp=sharing>

After forty minutes, we turned to the 2022 calendar. Don thanked all who had enabled him to craft another calendar, the twenty-seventh one since 1991.

Here is a listing of the main idea of each page. For those of you who have bought and scoured already, you should find this familiar.

- Cover: a Mildred Reinhardt black ink sketch of North Street
- January: accomplishments of Zan Bryant
- February: Freehold's two centenarians
- March: Library staff
- April: the renovation page: the Johnsons in Newry
- May: the Mamas (without the Papas)
- June: 1967 groundbreaking for new school building
- July: Turner table



From 1993 calendar: The construction of the central school in 1931 necessitated the moving of the Ford Rundell house (today owned by son David) across the street to its present location on North Street (Rt. 32). Moving was suspended one moving day with the house partially on Rt. 32. To allow the house to sit where it does today, Ford shot off an offending locust branch. The house sits one-quarter turn clockwise from its original orientation.

— personal note: I still think “Wow” every time I see this photo and imagine what those two days were like.

- August: CJC of Latter Day Saints
- September: GCS string group
- October: test of Greenville's first pumper
- November: map of GCS
- December: interior shot during a production at Opera House
- Recognitions: posthumous: Beecher, Brown, Ellis, Stevens

The recognition part of the meeting was another make-the-heart-feel-good event, somehow more so than usual it seemed to this writer.

Receiving the recognition for Helen Brown was Don Teator, a former student and friend, with a few highlights about Helen.

For Ray Beecher, Ted Hilscher (Town of New Baltimore historian, CGCC professor, amongst other positions) accepted on Ray's behalf. Ted had spent many an hour with Ray over the years, especially at Greene County Historical Society and Vedder Library, with a story or two told.

For Phil Ellis, daughter Ramona (and spouse Turner) and Curt (and spouse Charlene and daughter Sophia) expressed their appreciation of the Group's honoring their Dad's accomplishments. Ramona was the ringleader but teenager-granddaughter Sophia stole the show!

For Ruth Stevens, three sisters: Roberta Christman, Marianna Goettsche, Barbara Tolley, and niece Claudia Lane were present to fondly recall so many of Ruth's sterling qualities. It should be noted that the sisters are near or in their nineties.

Although GLHG finds it especially rewarding to honor living members of our community, which we do most years, it is also rewarding to posthumously recognize those people who meant so much to us while they were living. And the people standing in for the recognized person gave their heartfelt appreciation for our efforts. And it felt wonderful to do it.

Although unintended at the time, GLHG recognitions have come to represent a community honor that is cherished beyond the local history world. Although other groups do recognize members of their own

group, GLHG has taken an area view, whether members of GLHG or not. And, thus, a half dozen times a year, situations arise when I am reminded of the community service and honor GLHG confers.

Before the meeting, I had received an email from Ruth Steven's youngest daughter, Barbara, who shared this story that relates to her mother. Thank you for sharing, Barbara.

From Barbara Stevens:

Two weeks ago, I was in a gathering of women and the conversation turned to parenting and certain things each of us would do differently, as mothers, if we could have a second chance. After sharing some regrets and some hard-earned wisdom, one person said, "Well, after all, none of us had perfect parents." There were head nods and a reflective moment and then I said, "I did." My friends just looked at me. So I repeated, "I really did." The woman next to me said, "Both of them?!" "Yes." This came from a grateful heart and is the simple truth. What a pair Ruth and Pierce Stevens were.

Dad died when I was very young, even so I have vivid and wonderful memories of him. I was lucky to have Mom much longer and got to observe and appreciate her with the eyes of an adult. She modeled the values that I still aspire to.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 20, Jesus is asked, "What is the greatest commandment in the law?" His response: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind...And you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Mom lived this scripture more fully, more joyfully, and more naturally than anyone I've ever known.

Thank you again for remembering her and recognizing her in this year's calendar.



Accepting the posthumous recognition

Back row:

Don Teator (for Helen Brown); Curt Ellis, Charlene Ellis, Sophia Ellis, Ramona Ellis Fawkes, Turner Fawkes (for Phil Ellis); Ted Hilscher (for Ray Beecher)

Front row:

Barbara Tolley, Roberta Christman, Marianna Goettsche,
Claudia Lane (for Ruth Stevens)

—Ruth was the oldest of the five Thompson “girls.”

Three of the sisters are Barbara, Roberta, & Marianna. Claudia is a niece.

Gifts to GLHG / Finances

We do not often talk GLHG finances but a recent sizable donation has got me thinking, and I want to enlist your help how to use this gift productively.

First, a thank you goes to Bob Snyder, a recent member, who gave generously to GLHG, strings unattached.

GLHG is definitely a low finance, low maintenance organization – no dues, no expenses, nothing. Fifteen members do choose to pay for postage and handling for a mailed newsletter (\$10 a year).

Otherwise, our “big” money ticket is the calendar. I recall the first year that I asked for loans from members to pay the bill for printing, to be paid back at the end of the sales season. It was certainly a leap of faith for those loaners but their faith was paid back.

At some point, I found it easier to pay the printing bill out of pocket, hoping the sales season would cover my personal debt. And for twenty years, this practice continued, with a break-even bottom line.

Then, in 2014-2015, two things happened to change that. First, when my mother Connie Teator died, memorial contributions were made to GLHG, totaling about \$500. And then Russell Lewis’s Eagle Scout project donated unused fundraising to GLHG, adding another \$500. These two events provided almost enough money to pay for one year’s calendar. Even though the calendar is still largely a break-even proposition, the calendar bill is now paid in full when I pick up the calendars.

An annual donation from the Bryant family, first Carol, and then Garth and Terry, has complemented calendar costs and a little extra. A thank you, Garth and Terry, for your continued generosity and a bit of breathing room.

And then there were the last two calendar years, each being a sell-out, only the second and third time that has happened in thirty years, finally providing a cushion of several hundred dollars.

So, recent donations offer an opportunity that I want to ponder over the winter,

and for you to help me ponder and offer suggestions.

Is there a project whose expense, that might not have been financially feasible in the past, is now a worthy possibility? Or is there some other use that would promote Greenville local history?

Please feel free to make suggestions, and I will announce our findings this coming spring.

Notes:

** 300 newsletters! I pride myself on writing a quality issue, one at a time. 300 is almost more than my brain can handle.

** Calendar sales are off to a good start. They are available at Kelly’s Pharmacy, GNH, Tops, and the Library. Feel free to comment. I take your comments as guides to future ones.

** In the late summer – early fall, Greenville lost two of its stalwarts. Stanley Ingalls graced the January page of this year’s calendar. And Red Sutton was one of recognized teachers in the 2019 calendar. Farewell, old friends.

** Some of you grammarians catch this former English teacher switching between first person and third person every issue. Keeping to one is not a trick I have learned well enough yet. You will have to endure it but, yes, I am aware I do it.

** A flurry of activity involving three of our historical markers is coming to a head. It is too early to give much detail presently; perhaps the next newsletter will present it more fully.

** No meeting in November? A trip to Egypt was the initial reason. After a late postponement, I was not comfortable with squeezing in a program on such short notice. So, April it will be. And I will have a Nov/Dec newsletter, as well as the usual Annual Report in March. And I have intentions of an additional newsletter – a Jan/Feb issue. So, if anyone has a topic they wish to contribute or have me think about, please do so.