

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

July 1994

Share Session

Must have been the break in the torment of hot, hazy, humid weather this past week! Between 15-20 came out on a refreshingly cool evening to July's share session to prove that one night wasn't long enough to do all the things everyone was thinking of doing.

John Earl recounted his experience at the Blacksmith Days at Hancock Shaker Village which was noted in last newsletter. Several pieces were donated in his care for the Blacksmith Museum that he is associated with, and John had them mounted on a piece of plywood and discussed each of the nearly ten pieces.

Janet Halstead enlivened things with news of the Greenville Free Academy from the first and fourth issues of the student publication, *The Greenville Gargoyle*, from 1929-1930. Quite a few familiar names were writers or were mentioned - Gerry Ingalls, Edna Ingalls, John Zivelli, Carl Ratsch, Verona Brown, Dorothy Joy, and a dozen others. Janet also displayed the Freehold Church minutes of 1878-1916, which she is allowing to be xeroxed for the Historian's files.

Cris Ketcham brought excerpts of Orrin C. Stevens (grandfather to the present day Orrin Stevens) diary of 1900-1920's and read parts of the diary. In those twenty minutes, Cris gave a look of early 20th century life, noting weather, office work, travel and day-to-day details. She could have read with a straight face except that a reference to "keeping batteries warmed" sent Marguerite laughing which in turn sent Cris laughing in tears. Eventually, the account was finished, and Cris was going to try to see if she could get permission to have access to the whole diary. More later if that happens. In addition, Cris contributed a Class of '42 (written in 1981) reunion newsletter.

Harriet Rasmussen, of course, contributed her usual share. She has transcribed the Taylor diary into the mid-1880's and recounted a few details of those years. Since it was getting mildly late, Harriet promised she would give a fuller account at the next share session. In addition, Harriet read parts of a biographical sketch of Lyman Sanford, a Greenville boy who spent his adult life as a judge in Schoharie County. Then, after Harriet read about an onion - rye meal - vinegar poultice, guaranteed to keep pneumonia at bay, several stories of home remedies spread 'round the table. Harriet also brought a bill showing Roy Kelsey moving furniture for W. A. Tripp from Rhinecliff to Oak Hill in 1925.

Arlene Brown indicated she has resigned from the Greene County Historical Society's House Registry and that a volunteer from the Greenville area to replace her would be beneficial. Later on, Betty Vaughn volunteered to be that person. Arlene also noted that Ralph Winnie was back for his 50th year GCS reunion, and that she would try to get a copy of any booklet associated with it for the files.

Chris McDonald brought a thick envelope of goodies for the files. A 1974 GCS budget brought more than a few comments about taxes, what things cost, etc. Also, Chris had several voter registration lists for the Town of Greenville, a *No, No Nanette* flier from GCS, and an anti-loitering town ordinance from the 1970's.

Don brought notice to several items. One was a thank you from Dave Dively. "We are glad that we can work with your group to help spark an interest in local history with our young students." Although the quote is Dave's, those words reflect the GLHG's feelings also. A thank you goes to Dave and the other fourth

grade teachers. In the Historian's possession are copies of this year's interview projects, and copies of a few top essays will be included in future newsletters. A thank you especially goes to Harriet Rasmussen and Betty Vaughn for reading and judging the essays.

Also shown was *New York in the Revolution As Colony and State* (James Roberts, Comptroller; Albany, NY; 2nd edition, 1898), donated by Carol Bryant to be placed in the Historian's files. This book is a classic reference work for anyone trying to find documentation of an ancestor fighting in the American Revolution since it lists all the NY units and men who fought.

The new Greene County History was brought out. Don had bookmarked those sections that showed the five or six Greenville pictures and excerpts. Also brought was the 1884 Beers history for comparison's sake.

Taking about fifteen minutes, Don read the proposed captions for the pictures for the 1995 calendar, soon to go to the printer. Don pleaded for anyone recognizing a mistake to let him know before it gets into print. (A humorous aside, or not so humorous - every calendar so far has had at least one mistake, despite best intentions).

Another item brought to the group's attention was a suggestion for the GLHG's meeting schedule for 1995. Don proposed meeting April through November. John Earl suggested a dinner / social get-together mid-winter. Don suggested we think about it for the next meeting, or probably for the next share session.

Also shown were several brochures and handouts from Sunny Hill, a couple of which noted their 75th anniversary and the life of Arnold Nicholzen.

Quarter to ten was shouting from our wrist watches, so we called a truce until next time.

Reminders and other loose ends:

☞ Although most have renewed subscriptions, this will be the last reminder until the annual report. A 9407 (94 for the year, 07 for the number month for your last issue) on your mailing label means this is your last issue. A 9408, 9409, 9410 or 9411 means your subscrip-

tion will end before year's close. Those of you who have renewed, thank you.

☞ Next meeting will be August 8th with a program about the Town of Greenville Highway Department. Agreeing to come are George Allen, Gus Spinner, Dick Hempstead, Len Gardiner. Possible but not likely is Walt Cameron. Tales of experiences, changes, work details, etc., will be the focus of the program. Bring your own stories and questions.

☞ One area of interest for many of us is school. Of particular interest to me is the collecting of reunion information; if possible, "steal" an extra copy for the files. Any material relating to the details of school life, like the musical flier Chris brought, is welcome.

☞ A note earlier on was made above about reproducing student essays in the fall. Simply, my accessibility to a good copier improves in September. Till then, I'll keep the newsletters to a sheet over the summer.

☞ Arlene's suggestion for a program next year on WWII is one we should consider more seriously next share session. What type of program should it be?

☞ Cris' reading from the Stevens' diary should be a reminder for all of us to be aware of the existence of those documents that relate what life was like for the ordinary person. Of course, Harriet's work is testimony to that. Should you know of a diary whose long term safety is at stake, and the person responsible for it would be willing to have it copied or donated to the files, let me know if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Don