



MARCELLUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 1, Issue No 3

November/December 1996

MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE A GREAT SUCCESS!

The first open house in several years at the Marcellus Historical Society's existing museum was a great success with approximately 300 visitors touring the museum on Saturday October 5th. Many of those attending reported that they had never before seen the museum, and were impressed with the size and scope of the collection. Senator DeFrancisco and Congressman Walsh were among those who attended.

The entire museum had been rearranged and cleaned, and much of it re-labeled, over the summer. Visitors entered in a steady stream from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., many staying for over an hour, studying each of the 1,500 artifacts and hundreds of photographs from days gone by in Marcellus.

"...total membership to 350."

Museum displays included items from the early 1800's, such as a detailed pencil sketch of the village drawn in 1840 by Margaret F. Parsons at the age of 17, one of the first set of post office boxes used in town, and a carriage used by Dr. Israel Parsons. One of the more current displays honored Marcellus veterans killed in recent conflicts, including Patrick Kelly Connor, killed while serving in operation Desert Storm.

Historical society members were on hand at the museum to answer the many questions asked by visitors. The artifacts brought back many memories for some of those touring the museum, including Congressman Walsh, who said that he spent his earlier days dating Marcellus girls. The Congressman grew up in Marietta.

Twenty five more people joined the Marcellus Historical Society during the open house, bringing the total membership to 350. This makes the Marcellus Historical Society the largest of any town in Central New York. This will be very advantageous as the society pursues a new museum.

An historic walking tour of the village was held along with the open house. The tour was self-

guided and included open houses at each of the four historic village churches. Volunteers at the churches read a history of each church to the visitors every half hour. Jim Reagan was one of the volunteers at the Catholic Church, and he gave a tremendous presentation from his memories of attending the church all of his life. The walking tour guides are still available through the society, and will be available at the town and village halls. The museum is not open regular hours, but can be visited by appointment. Anyone who wishes to visit the museum can arrange to do so by calling historical society President Bill Reagan at 463-4160.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS TO BE HELD AT NOVEMBER MEETING

The Marcellus Historical Society election of officers will be held at the Sunday, November 3rd meeting. The meeting is at the Marcellus fire house at 2:00 p.m. The following people have been nominated for the positions listed.

President:	Bill Reagan
Vice President:	Sidney Tuthill
Treasurer:	Dick Smith
Secretary:	Joyce Murphy
Trustee:	John Curtin thru 1997
Trustee:	Don Kilcoyne thru 1999
Trustee:	Bruce Widger thru 1999

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

We wish to thank the following people for donating historic items to be added to our museum collection.

Florence Pottinger for donating scrapbooks and historic clothing. Joyce Siersma for a World War II book. George and Doris Hagget for donating scrapbooks. Bob Piekielek for copying and donating photographs of the M.&O.L. Railway. Cathy Mulroy for donating a crate used at Master Brothers Hardware and books. Dorothy Bartlett for donating medical books used by Dr. Lowell and Dr. Walsh. More acquisitions are listed on page eight of this newspaper.

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT — Bill Reagan

Beginning with this issue, our *MARCELLUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS* will be produced by Doug Whitman who operates DW Desktop Publishing in Marcellus. Doug has generously volunteered to produce the 'MHS NEWS' as a public service for the community. He has voluntarily produced the newsletter of the Centers for Nature Education at Baltimore Woods -- *The Overlook* -- for the past 10 years. Thanks, Doug!

I would like to thank everyone who helped make our museum open house a great success. A special thank you to Peg Nolan and Mike Plumpton, both of whom helped me arrange and set up the museum all summer. Thanks also to Hollis Abbott, Tom Leonard, Tom Reagan and Dan & Susan Reagan for their help with the final museum 'clean and polish' the week before the open house.

I would also like to thank Congressman James Walsh and Senator John DeFrancisco for taking time out of their busy schedules to stop by the museum open house and offer their support for our ongoing projects.

While I'm at it, I can't say enough about all of the support and help I have received from Village Mayor Fred Eisenberg, Trustee John Curtin and Town Supervisor Frank Wilson. Their interest in, and support of the Marcellus Historical Society is greatly appreciated. It is so important to have the support of the local government when it comes to preserving the history of a town. We are very fortunate to have elected officials who truly care about preserving the history of Marcellus.

I, along with our elected officials, am working on different options for a museum site. Those of you who attended our open house were able to see what a tremendous collection we have. What you may not have known however is that we have many more artifacts in our collection which were not on display because of a lack of space. We have dozens of additional historic clothing pieces which are in boxes, and hundreds more historic Marcellus photographs than were shown at the open house. If we had the needed amount of wall space and display cases, we could properly display all of these treasures for everyone to see and appreciate. Many items have been donated to the museum this year, and I am confident that many more historic Marcellus artifacts will continue to be donated, all the more reason we need additional space.

At the open house I heard from quite a few people that a number of Marcellus residents could not attend because of the lack of handicapped accessibility. This is something which greatly

concerns me, and another strong reason why we need to find a new location. I will keep everyone informed about progress on the quest for a new museum as significant events unfold, and at the proper time to release such information. In the meantime, I want to thank everyone who has joined the society this year. By doing so, you have shown your support for our new museum project. Thank you! ■



A Tribute to Edward Moir 1846 - 1932

Edward Moir was born in Galashiels, Tillicoultry, Scotland, on October 16, 1846. Ten years later he came with his parents to Canada, where he was educated in Galt, Ontario. Before coming to Marcellus, he had received experience in the woolen industry in Galt and Waterloo, Ontario, and also in Sherbrooke, Quebec. He had purchased and enlarged the Auburn Mills in Peterboro, Ontario, and had operated woolen mills at Cornwall. Moir became a recognized authority on the processing of wool and manufacturing of woolens, as well as on tariff legislation. Shortly after coming to Marcellus, Moir gained ownership of the Crown Mills.

Under Moir's direction the Crown Mill's operations flourished. Meanwhile he recruited skilled workers from his native Scotland as well as many of the children of Irish immigrants from the great Irish migration. Moir constructed many homes for his employees on East Maple, Scotch Hill, Limerick and Orchard Streets, changing the face of the Marcellus village. He also gave donations to all four of the village churches and during the depression he kept his workers employed at his own expense. ■

THE INDEX FOR "NINE MILE COUNTRY" IS NOW AVAILABLE

An index of people, businesses and photographs in Kathryn C. Heffernan's *Nine Mile Country*, a history of Marcellus first published in 1978, is now available. The index, which includes the names of 1,300 people mentioned in *Nine Mile Country* and what pages they can be found on, was compiled by society President Bill Reagan, and printed as a joint project by the Marcellus Historical Society and the Marcellus Free Library. The index is available through either organization at a cost of \$5.00. ■

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING . . . Bob O'Neal

Rutherford Hayes succeeded Ulyses Grant as the party's nominee and by some fancy political maneuvers became the nation's Chief Executive. Three years later, 1879, Henry W. Post M.D. Physician and Surgeon practicing opposite the Methodist Church in Marcellus was admitted to the Onondaga Medical Society. Since we can't interview Dr. Post about practice in his day, let us look at some causes of death to see how different medicine was then compared with how we look at it today. For example: Anthony O'Brien died of apoplectic shock and William Lothridge died of Typhoid pneumonia. I have been told that these terms are similar to ones doctors use today. For me the terms seem picturesque.

Going from national politics, to membership in a medical society, to reasons for death, I turn next to honoring the dead. Mrs. Esther Sherman Northrup was an interesting example. Dwight Scovil, the Presbyterian pastor, wrote a memorial worthy of a celebrity.

The following week Mr. Scovil exchanged his pulpit with R.A. Bachman. The same week the Presbyterian bell tower was declared unsafe and the bell could not be rung.

In the Methodist society T.R. Green had received a valuable horse from friends in Marcellus Falls. After attending a conference in Liverpool, N.Y. he would be serving the Marcellus congregation. Let us not forget that A.W. Emmons was laboring for temperance in Central New York.

Local Catholics spent an additional forty hours in devotions and their Episcopal brethren elected wardens and junior wardens and rehearsed for a public "entertainment."

A Syracuse cleric Dr. Fuller had a bible disappear. Messrs. White and Matheson, dealers in tin ware, recovered his bible.

The connection between Marcellus and Syracuse was provided by Express Wagon on Thursday by J.H. Powell. You could leave goods with Michael Shehan or Bernard Powell. The Syracuse headquarters for the Express Wagon was the Kingsley House.

When our *Observer* stated that in Thorn Hill sugar making goes slow, I doubt it meant sugar beets. It is true (if you accept the authority of an Encyclopedia Britannica with an 1893 copyright) that in 1872 Europe produced 1,025,000 tons of sugar and 250,000 tons of molasses from beets.

In the twentieth century, sugar beets were cultivated in Central New York. But our traditional sugar from (*Acer saccharum*) or sugar maple is most likely for 1879. Remember it takes 50 quarts

of sap to produce 1 quart of syrup. Even more dehydration to go from syrup to solid sugar. The question is why did it go slow?

One answer might be in the last issue of the newsletter where I mentioned that the nights that spring were rather warm. A friend with maple trees said you need warm days and cool nights for a good sugar crop.

We covered a variety of items. If you have any ideas for me to tackle, write me at the Marcellus Historical Society. ■

Test Your Knowledge of Marcellus History

- A) The first paper mill in New York State opened in Marcellus in 1806, 1826, or 1846?
- B) The mill which now operates as the Martisco Paper Company opened in 1852, 1882, or 1922?
- C) The first train ran through Martisco Station in 1818, 1838, or 1858?
- D) The Marcellus Library was first organized in 1893, 1913, or 1923?
- E) Jack Priest purchased the Marcellus Chevrolet franchise in 1938, 1948, or 1958?
- F) Dorchester and Armstrong opened their Corner Store in 1921, 1931, or 1941?



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A HOLIDAY DINNER'S COMING – RESERVE YOUR PLACE



The Marcellus Historical Society's holiday dinner party is on track for Sunday, December 1, at 1:30 p.m. A traditional dinner featuring turkey or ham with all of the trimmings will be catered by Kirby Bartholomew at the Marcellus fire house on Slate Hill Rd. The dinner includes an appetizer, coffee and dessert, all for \$10.50 per person, including the tip. A presentation on the history of the Marcellus Fire Department will be given after the dinner. Reservations are required by November 16th. Call Tom & Kathy Reagan at 673-3365. ■

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

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THANK YOU!

The Marcellus Historical Society would like to thank each of the businesses that support our organization by advertising in this newspaper, the Marcellus Post Office for their assistance and hard work, Michael Plumpton for his efforts in obtaining advertisers, and the Marcellus village and town hall employees for their support, encouragement and help, which is always granted with a smile. We would also like to thank everyone who loaned us items to be displayed at our recent open house, including Mrs. Muriel Haines, Dick Case, Marsha & William Connor, Sarah Welsh, Joyce Poteuck and Hugh Norris. And, last but not least, Helen MacDonald of the *Marcellus Observer* for her continued interest and support. Hope we didn't forget anyone! ■

WISH LIST

These items will assist the historical society in its on-going projects and preservation efforts. If you can help us obtain any of these items, new or used, please call Bill Reagan at 463-4160.

- Photocopy Machine
- Book Cases
- Light Stand (*for copying photographs*)
- Glass Display Cases
- Cedar Closet or Chest (*for clothing storage*)
- Slide & Negative Film
- Antique Picture Frames (*8" X 10" & smaller*)

HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S NEWEST MEMBER COMING SOON!

Marcellus Historical Society President Bill Reagan and his wife Joanne announce that they are expecting their first child. Joanne's due date is May 28th. Bill and Joanne were married on September 15, 1990. Joanne (Costello) is a Fayetteville native. They are both excited and pleased. ■

ELSIE MCDONALD REMEMBERED

Marcellus Historical Society member Elsie McDonald passed away September 20, 1996. Elsie was a member for many years and a good friend. She will be missed. ■

MEETING SCHEDULE

The tentative speaker and presentation schedule for our upcoming meetings is as follows:

November 3rd..... 2:00 p.m.
Jane Tracy, Onondaga Town Historian. *The Onondaga County Poor House*. At the Marcellus Fire House, Slate Hill Road.

December 1st 1:30 p.m.
Annual Holiday Dinner. Featuring the *History of the Marcellus Fire Department*. At the Marcellus Fire House, Slate Hill Road. *Reservations required by November 16th*. Cost \$10.50 per person. Advance payment is required. Call 673-3365.

January 5th 2:00 p.m.
Nancy Shelley, town of Otisco Historian. Presentation relating to *Otisco*. Location TBA.



February 2nd 2:00 p.m.
Jack Priest of Marcellus on *Priest Chevrolet and Marcellus Memories*. Location to be announced.

March 2nd 2:00 p.m.
Bill Reagan with a *Past and Present* slide show on Marcellus landmarks and views. Location to be announced.

April 6th 2:00 p.m.
Helen Ionta, Skaneateles Historian on her *Memories of Growing Up In Marcellus*. Location to be announced.

Marcellus Historical Society

Officers

President:	Bill Reagan	.....	463-4160
Vice Pres:	Sidney Tuthill	.....	673-2990
Treasurer:	Richard Smith	.....	673-1532
Secretary:	Joyce Murphy	.....	673-2528
Secretary:	Doris Hagget	.....	673-3567

Trustees & Term End

Don Kilcoyne	.....	(1996)
Bruce Widger	.....	(1996)
Peg Nolan	.....	(1997)
Bob Negus	.....	(1997)
Tom Reagan	.....	(1998)
Mike Plumpton	.....	(1998)

The Marcellus Historical Society, P.O. Box 165, Marcellus, N.Y. 13108 publishes and mails this newsletter bimonthly to the homes of everyone in Postal Zip Code 13108, to its advertisers and to all members elsewhere. Bill Reagan, Editor. 315/463-4160.

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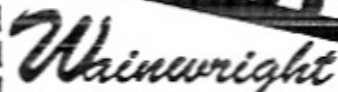


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INSIDE ...

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MORE RECENT ACQUISITIONS

We wish to thank the following people for donating historic items to be added to our museum collection.

Patricia Knapp and Carl Burgess for donating a mid-1800's cabinet-making machine from Marcellus Falls. Alice T. Mahan for photographs. Jean Stone Hughes for submitting her family history. Leona Wilcox for donating horse stirrups which belonged to Laura Nightingale and an embroidery done at the Rose Hill Boarding House. Bob Waters for donating mint condition Onondaga Centennial books and Doug Whitman for submitting a photo and information on the history of his home on First Street. More will be listed in our next paper. ■

Membership Form

Please include me as a member. If I join now my dues are good through December 31, 1997.

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The Old Crown Mill

Sarah Welsh

The old mill stands forsaken and forlorn
Where once a noble edifice held sway,
A silent token of a happy past,
A memory of a longed-for bygone day.

Here was the last lifeblood of the town
Where men might come to earn their daily bread,
Now nothing but an empty shell remains,
All vestiges of labour's toil have fled.

Here, stealthily, crept progress on the scene,
The old, perforce, must give way to the new,
It left men thinking of what might have been
And pondering what was left for them to do.