



# MARCELLUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 2, Issue No 2

March / April 1997

## THE HISTORIC MARCELLUS AMERICAN LEGION BUILDING . . . Bill Reagan

Anyone recently driving down East Main Street may have noticed a fundraising sign in front of the American Legion building. Our neighbors who care for the building are trying to raise money for a new roof. Why should the average Marcellian care? The building at 13 East Main Street is one of the most historic structures in the Village of Marcellus.

Built about 1840 for a store by Joseph Taylor and his son George, the building which presently houses American Legion Ralph Share Post # 297 is one of the most beautiful on Main Street. Its facade, constructed of bricks made in Marcellus and trimmed with ornate woodwork, has been well preserved for over a century and a half.

Before the store itself was completed, the building was used as the headquarters for the "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too" Whig campaign of 1840. Shortly after the store was opened, Joseph Taylor's son George died and Newton Giles Case became a partner in the business. (*Later, Case was one of the owners of what became the Martisco Paper Mill.*)

Joseph Taylor became quite well known in the area. He was the main local dealer in grain, pork and beef. His business made Marcellus a marketplace for surrounding towns. Taylor was also very popular as a pettifogger. In his later years he accepted the appointment of constable and became well known as a very successful collector of private debts.

During the mid-1800's, storekeepers like Taylor and Case would trade items for eggs, butter and other homemade goods brought in by local women. They would replenish their stock of dry goods, household items and medicine once a year, usually in the spring, traveling by stage to and from New York City. When the storekeepers returned they were greeted warmly by the townspeople who were excitedly waiting for the display of new merchandise and for news from New York City.

By the early 1900's Patrick Kelly and James Hogan were operating the store in the Legion building until Hogan became postmaster and Kelly teamed with John Thornton and moved the business to the village center. Soon after, the Coyne brothers opened a barber shop and poolroom in the Legion building and John Heenan operated a furniture and

undertaking business on the second floor.

In 1940 Arthur and Rose Waters opened the first self-service "cash and carry" grocery store in the Legion building. Under the name of "Little Giant Foods," it was the forerunner of the modern day supermarket. In 1943, the Ralph Share Post #297 of the American Legion purchased the building and remodeled it to provide for a meeting room and kitchen on the first floor and living quarters on the second floor. They also installed new windows across the front of the building.

Today the building houses the Ralph Share Post, is used as a meeting place and is available for functions such as wedding receptions. It is however in need of a new roof. If you wish to help preserve this historic Marcellus landmark, donations can be sent to the Ralph Share Post Treasurer: Wendell Piper, 34 West Main Street Marcellus, NY 13108. For more information call commander Tom Gilmour at 673-2890. ■ (Sources: Centennial History; Nine Mile Country)

## KATHRYN C. HEFFERNAN . . . Peg Nolan

Kathryn C. Heffernan worked as an educator for forty-one years. She came to Marcellus in 1944 and for twenty-six years was a teacher and administrator at Marcellus Central School.

She was a communicant and organist of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church, secretary of Marcellus Community Council, member of the Marcellus Community Chorale, Trustee of Marcellus Free Library and secretary of the Chester Driver Memorial Scholarship fund.

Among her many accomplishments, she wrote a history of the Saint Francis Xavier Church in 1973. She also authored, "*Nine Mile Country, The History Of The Town Of Marcellus, N.Y.*" which was published in 1978. This book took hundreds of hours to research and write and is the most comprehensive history of Marcellus to date.

The Kathryn C. Heffernan Elementary School, constructed in 1952, was named in her honor for the many years she dedicated to helping Marcellus students get the best education possible.

She was a wonderful, loyal person that gave so much to this community in so many ways. ■

## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT . . . Bill Reagan

Thank you to everyone who has donated historic items to our museum collection recently as well as those who have donated items on our wish lists. Your support is greatly appreciated and allows our museum collection to continue to grow and expand into one of the finest in C.N.Y.

The museum has seen considerable use recently. Combined, our open houses last July, October and December brought through over 700 visitors! In addition, a group of cub scouts toured the museum last November, the girl scouts on February 13th of this year and members of the Town of Onondaga Historical Society toured our museum in January. Over 20 of their history enthusiasts enjoyed examining our ever-expanding collection. They were impressed with how much space we have for our collection, but even more impressed with just how crowded that space is!

This brings up a good point. Many people enjoy visiting our museum, but as we receive more and more donated artifacts it becomes increasingly difficult to fit everything in and still have room for visitors! This is a great position to be in, but it also illustrates our true need for a new, larger museum. Progress is being made in this area, but it takes time. This is why your continued support is so very important.

If anyone has a group which would like to tour our museum please contact us and we will be happy to accommodate you. I am working to have school children tour the museum this spring and our next open house is scheduled for June 7th during Olde Home Days. I hope to see you there! One last thing, keep those historic Marcellus artifacts coming! ■

*Bill Reagan*

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

*We wish to thank following people for donating historic items to be added to our museum collection:*

**Chris Christensen** for architectural plans for the Pilot and Priest Chevrolet garage, the Lawless Paper Mill and the Presbyterian Church addition. **Florence Pottinger** for historic papers and photographs of the inside of Matteson's Tin Shop and Hardware. **Hollis Abbott** for a Strand Theater program from 1940, a ticket to the six town picnic of 1936 and for a framed painting and site survey of the Marcellus Falls Plaster Mill. **Betty Henderson** for Marcellus Chorale materials. **Henry and Maria Palmowski** for donating the glass display case which was used in Bob Burn's Gas Station. **Chris Hofman** for donating a children's reading table and benches, manufactured by Stickley, which were used in the Marcellus Free Library during the mid-1900's. ■

## MEETING SCHEDULE

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

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

**April 6th** ..... 2:00 p.m.  
Helen Ionta, Skaneateles Historian will speak on her *Memories of Growing Up in Marcellus*.

**May 4th** ..... 2:00 p.m.  
To be announced.

**June 7th** ..... 10:00 a.m.  
We will be hosting an open house at our museum on the second floor of the village hall on Slocombe Ave. from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**NOTE:** All meetings are held at the Marcellus Fire Station. July through October meetings will be on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m.



## Marcellus Historical Society

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<b>President:</b>	Bill Reagan	463-4160
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<b>Treasurer:</b>	Richard Smith	673-1532
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John Curtin	(1997)
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The Marcellus Historical Society, P.O. Box 165, Marcellus, N.Y. 13108 publishes and mails this newspaper bimonthly to the homes of everyone in Postal Zip Code 13108, to its advertisers and to all members elsewhere. Design, layout & masters - DW Desktop Publishing - 315/673-4091. Bill Reagan, Editor - 315/463-4160.

## THANK YOU!

*We wish to thank the following people for donating items on our last wish list:* **Harold and Phyllis Fenner** for donating a slide projector. **Dick and Eunice Tabor** for donating a large glass and wood display case. **Bonnie Wilson** for a curio cabinet. **Dan Abbott** for a book sales rack and **Babette Yuhas** for donating a used office copier. ■

## WHAT'S A "HACHEL?" ... Doug Whitman

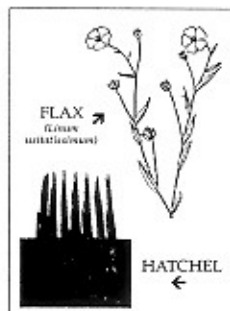
Among the many tools and implements in the back room at the historical society museum are three sinister-looking, "bed-of-nails" devices that attracted considerable attention during the holiday open house. Visitors asked, "What are those things?" ...to which we replied, "They are 'Hatchels!'"

Hatchels were used for separating the coarse and fine plant fibers from the stems of flax (*Linum usitatissimum*). The soft fibers were spun into the linen thread, rope, or cord used in making various textiles.

The coarse, dried, flax stems were hurled onto the hatchel's points, and drawn through them breaking and removing the coarse fibers...leaving the fine, soft fibers intact for spinning and weaving.

Flax mills were operated briefly by Elijah Manley in Tyler Hollow (circa 1850) — south of U.S. Rte. 20 between Rte. 174 and Sevier Road, and by William Russell, just north of the current Nightingale Mills on South Street (circa 1861).

Linseed oil, another important flax product, was made by brothers John Seba and David Bonta (circa 1825) at the former Marcellus Powder Company site — just north of the lower Crown Mill. Linseed oil is made from flax (*Linum*) seed, as the name implies. Flax seed is also used as a poultice. ■



## MARCELLUS AFGHANS AVAILABLE



The Official Marcellus Afghans are once again available. They made their debut in 1994 for the Bicentennial and were sold-out in a very short time. Because many people have requested one since the first offering, we have decided to produce them again as a fundraiser for our new museum.

The afghans measure 68-inches high by 50-inches wide, are available in cranberry or green and make wonderful gifts. The price is the same as in 1994...\$45 each, including tax. You can order them now on page ten of this newspaper. ■

## Test Your Knowledge of Marcellus History

- A) The Kathryn C. Heffernan Elementary School was built in 1952, 1962 or 1972?
- B) The Marcellus International Airport opened in 1957, 1967 or 1977?
- C) Daniel Bradley became the first settler in the Marcellus Village in 1794, 1795 or 1796?
- D) Electricity was first run to Glover and Limeledge Roads in 1917, 1927 or 1937?
- E) Patrick Mulroy purchased the first Mulroy Farm in Marcellus in 1860, 1890 or 1920?
- F) The Red & White grocery store opened in 1947, 1957 or 1967?

Answers: A) 1952 B) 1967 C) 1795 D) 1937 E) 1860 F) 1947

## CAN ANYONE HELP ... ?

The MHS has received a Monroe model RL717Z office copier which needs cleaning and maintenance. Is there a reader who knows how to maintain this particular machine — and who would be willing to donate his or her services? (The MHS will pay for parts.) If so, please call Bill Reagan at 436-4160.

An office copier is very important item to us since we receive many, many requests for copies of archived documents. Until now, we've had to purchase copies from local services. ■

## MARCELLUS HISTORY CONTEST

Mr. Lawrence C. Buffan of Dublin Road solved our last riddle. His name was drawn at random from the correct answers of "The Crown Woolen Mill." He received a gift certificate from Brian's Creekside Inn.

**How to win:** Read the riddle printed below. If you can solve it, mail your answer to the Marcellus Historical Society, P.O. Box 165, Marcellus, NY 13108. Entries must be postmarked by March 31, 1997. The winner will be drawn at random from all correct entries and will receive a gift certificate compliments of Brian's Creekside Inn.

### THIS ISSUE'S RIDDLE:

The first in the State...at Marcellus Falls.  
The early 1800's is when it was bought.  
Carefully installed within the brick walls,  
Its quality product was very highly sought.

HINT: The answer can be found in "Marcellus Through The Years," our newest book.





## MARCELLUS HISTORIC HOMES REGISTRY

### Why register your home?

The Marcellus Historic Homes Registry is an effort to build a repository of historical information for future generations. Perhaps you own a relatively new home--and think it currently has no historic significance. But think about it . . . wouldn't it have been great if Edward Moir had written down a few details about 8 Orange Street during the time he lived there? What architect and/or construction company designed and built the house? What year was it built? How did Moir change it, and when? Were there ever additional buildings on the property? What major events in the village or township relate to this house? Are there photos of the house or property?

These are just some of the questions for which the Historic Homes Registry seeks answers for ALL current houses in the Town of Marcellus. If you haven't requested the Homes Registry Guidelines and Questionnaire, you can get them from Doug Whitman — call 673-4091. There is a \$2 charge for the packet (*not \$3 as indicated in the last issue of the Historical Society News*). ■

### AN INTERESTING ASIDE TO HISTORY

Having an interest in one tidbit of history can lead you to related history — perhaps preceeding, perhaps succeeding the original information you sought. Having asked (*or answered*) just one small question, you'll discover there are "zillions" of bits of interesting information surrounding it . . . and on history goes like ripples on the water from a single tossed stone. ■

### OLDE HOME DAYS 1997

The 1997 Marcellus Olde Home Days celebration will be held June 6-8. Planned events include fireworks, the Stan Collela Orchestra, rides and games at the Marcellus Park, Market Day and an open house at the Marcellus Historical Society museum. Planning meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Marcellus Village Hall. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend. Sponsors for the fireworks are still being sought. ■

## COLLECTION WISH LIST

The Historical Society hopes to locate the following items and arrange to have them added to its collection. If you can help please call.

- Artifacts from the Crown Woolen Mills, such as tools and cloth.
- Desks and other furniture from the old high school on West Hill.
- Pencils, key chains and other advertising items given out by local businesses over the years.
- Any artifacts used in local mills such as the paper and grist mills.

## CENTENNIAL HISTORY AVAILABLE

The Centennial History of the Town of Marcellus, 1878, is being reprinted by the Historical Society. This is the third printing of the book which details the first one hundred years of Marcellus. We are very fortunate that this book was written in 1876 and it is available through our gift shop on page 10. ■

## MARCELLUS HISTORIC HOMES TOUR

We are looking for houses to be included on the Society's Marcellus Historic Homes Tour tentatively scheduled for 12 to 5 p.m. Saturday, September 20th (or 27th). Of the houses considered five will be chosen. So far, Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Steadman have signed up their home, the historic Tefft-North house at 18 North Street. All proceeds from the tour will benefit the new museum fund. The Historical Society will assist in researching homes on the tour. To have your house considered call Bill Reagan. ■

## SOCIETY TO SPONSOR FREE TOUR OF DRIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL



Constructed in 1936-7, the Chester S. Driver Middle School in Marcellus is one of the finest school buildings of its era. In honor of its 60th anniversary, the Marcellus Historical Society is sponsoring a historic tour of the building on Saturday April 26th. at 1:00 p.m. Those wishing to take the tour should enter through the (*west*) Reed Parkway entrance. The tour will begin in the auditorium with a presentation about the history of the building, including home movies which show it under construction. ■

## MARCELLUS HOMES IN RESTORATION

We are delighted to see restorations underway on two important Marcellus Village landmarks!

The Greek-revival Tefft-North-Clark house built by Dr. Lake I. Tefft in 1827 at 18 North Street, now owned by Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Steadman, is having its front steps, columns and portico restored to original configurations. Dr. Tefft was a local physician who also had interests in a local powder mill. Wesley C. Clark was a Dean of the Journalism School at Syracuse University and a former owner of the Marcellus Observer/Skaneateles Press.



The Edward Moir house at 8 Orange street, now owned by Patricia Tucker. Pat and her husband are restoring it — *inside and out* — to its original appearance. Edward Moir had the Gothic-revival house built circa 1900. Moir was one of the owners of the Crown Woolen Mills in Marcellus.

The Marcellus Historical Society continues to encourage restoration of homes and buildings within the township and offers help with old photos and information archived at the museum. (*...more reasons why it is important to register what you know about your home in our Historic Homes Registry — see article page 4*). ■



## PHOTO SEARCH

We are looking for photographs of the following historic events or scenes in Marcellus to add to our collection. If you have any which you can donate or loan to us for copying, please call Bill Reagan.

### We're Seeking Photographs of:

- Old businesses in the town or village (*for possible use in future publications*.)
- The Marcellus and Otisco Lake Railway.
- The Diver Middle School being built.
- Color photos showing the 1950's era Marcellus High School Marching Band uniforms.
- Homes within the Township of Marcellus.

## NEW BY-LAWS READY

Our newly revised Constitution and by-laws are ready and available for inspection by any member. They have been approved by the Executive Committee and a final discussion on them will take place in the half-hour preceeding our March 2nd meeting, from 1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ■

## PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Just a reminder... If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 1997, please do so now. Your membership is very important. If you are not sure if you owe dues, call our treasurer Dick Smith at 673-1532. Renewal dues must be paid by March 31st. Our membership form, now combined with our gift shop form (*on page 10*), has an area for membership renewals. ■

## SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH . . . Bill Reagan

The first Episcopal Church services were held in 1824 in the village schoolhouse which is now part of the back of the present day Presbyterian Church. Under the direction of Rev. Augustus Converse of Skaneateles, Saint John's Episcopal Church of Marcellus was incorporated with Harvey Andrews and Caleb Cowles as church wardens. Vestrymen included Dr. Richard Davis, Leonard Blanchard, John Herring, Gad Curtis, Zabina Moses, David Earll, Zera Shepard and Austin Godard. John Bixby was chosen as clerk of the vestry.

In 1833, a church was built on the northwest corner of Main and North Streets to serve the congregation. The first building, however, was destroyed by fire in 1866 and a new building was completed in February of 1870.

This second building was also destroyed by fire in 1879, in the worst fire in the history of the village. A third church was erected on Orange Street in 1881. This building was located where the rear portion of Nojaim's grocery store is today. By the 1920's this third building was in need of repair. In 1924 the church made arrangements to purchase from Edward Moir the land at the southwest corner of Orange and Maple Streets.

The church opened its parish house on the Maple Street side of this parcel. Now a decision had to be made whether to build a new church next door or move the old church to the site and renovate it. It was decided to move the old church and to restore the building. The church was moved by team and wagon the length of Orange Street and work was completed in six months. The Pilot Memorial Hall was added to the rear of the church in 1959. In 1961 the adjacent John Moir home was purchased for a rectory. ■



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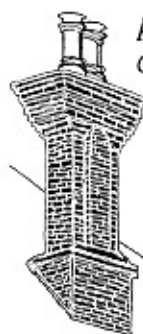
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RICHARD NOJAIM



## HERE'S A LIST OF OUR 457 CURRENT MEMBERS! (As of 2/14/97)

If you aren't a member yet, maybe you'll see a friend who is, and join them in supporting the Historical Society and our drive for a new museum building. If you are a member, please try to get one person to join, perhaps a neighbor, an old classmate or former Marcellus native. Gift memberships are also available. (See page 10)

(If you think you are a current member and your name is not on this list, call our Treasurer, Dick Smith.)



Bill & Carol Abbott; Brian & Debi Abbott; Hollis & Nancy Abbott; Mark & Lynn Abbott; Margaret & Larry Abrahamson; Blanche Adkins; Margaret Aherin; Jake Amidon; Mr. & Mrs. Richard Anderson; William & Gladys Andre; Robert C. Atkinson; Richard H. & Ruth S. Avery; Dave & Sally Baily; Dave, Donna & Alexa Ball; Frederick & Gail Banks; Tim, Cathy & Mathew Barstow; Izora Bartlett; Sandy & Judy Battaglia; Joyce Beak; Bette Bednarski; John & Gerry Bednarski; Dr. & Mrs. Gary Belcher; Louise Berry; Barbara S. Bishop; Noreen Bishop; Doug & Beverly Blanchard; Randal & Pat Bleakley; Charles Bliss; John, Kathy & Joyce Boudreau; Russ Briggs & Family; Harold Brinkerhoff; Louis & Phyllis Budell; Joy L. Buffan; Lawrence C. Buffan; Will Buffan; Dr. & Mrs. John F. Calvert; Kathleen Campbell; Joan Carter; Mable Cates; Helen Chester; Charles & Mary Ann Clement; Phil & Kathleen Coccia; William & Marsha Connor; Michelle E. Cook; Mr. & Mrs. Edward Copley; James P. & Vera Costello; Shirley Criswell; Patty Crocker; Jack Crysler; Lucille Culotti; John & Maureen Curtin; Mary & Pat Dailey & Family; Hugh C. Dawson; William & Elizabeth DeDell; Gary & Kate Demers; E. Joyce Doig; Mary Jane L. Domurat; Karl Dungey & Family; Catherine D'Angelo; Myron & Barbara Egtvedt; Lillian P. Epp; Helen Fenlon; Harold & Phyllis Fenner; Barbara A. Fero; Rita Foster; Don & Shirley Gallinger; Tom & Barbara Galloway; Pat Gascon; Dr. Peggy Girard; Joyce Glover; James & Cheryl Gonzalez & Family; Edward & Colleen Guerin & Family; Doris Haggett; Mrs. Muriel S. Haines; Hubert B. Hall & Family; Tom Hall; Mr. & Mrs. Harold Haney; James L. Hartigan; Gary & Brenda Hildman; Lee & Theresa Holmes; Phyllis Huckle; Jean S. Hughes; Bert & Phillis Hunt; Marjorie A. Hunt; Stanley & Ruby Impson; Harriet Jameson; Sterling & Ruth Jansen; Steve & Lori Kankus; Frank & Doris Kelly; Katie Kelly; Winnie Kelly; Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Kennedy; Rita Kershaw; Don & Jean Kilcoyne; Kevin Kiniry & Family; Francis J. & Mary Kishman; Robert Kissane; Kenneth & Rosemary Klug; Patricia Knapp & Carl Burgess; Pat, Mary Ellen & Sean Koloski; Rich & Molly Landerkin; Edward Lawson; Tom & Sue Leonard; Joseph & Ann Ligmil; Richard & Serena Linck; Rev. Ralph & Nancy Locke; Robert & Judith Lockwood; John & Carolyn Longuil; Mary Losky; Ellen MacClure; Alice MacDonald; Alice T. Mahan; Robert & Alice Mahan; Sue March; Dave, Betty & Jane Marsden; Cathy & Paul Marsden; Fred & Virginia Marty; Violet Marsh Masters; Jim & Grace Maynard; Henry & Gene McCarthy; Timothy & Janice McCarthy; Carol Nightingale McElmurray; Duane McNett;

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## — GIFT SHOP / MEMBERSHIP / ORDER FORM —

The following items are for sale by the Marcellus Historical Society. Some are available at local merchants. For information on how to obtain items from the museum directly, call Bill Reagan at 463-4160. For mail orders, use the form below.

- Official Marcellus Afghans; green or cranberry, \$45 each.
- Marcellus Through The Years, 1794 - 1996; a chronological history with photos, \$6 each.
- Marcellus 1794 - 1994, When Wool Was King; a collection of photos, \$5 each.
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- Centennial History of the Town of Marcellus, 1878; \$15 each.
- Nine Mile Country, The History of the Town of Marcellus, NY, 1978; \$17 each.
- Index to Nine Mile Country; \$5 each.
- 1960's black & white postcards; featuring the four churches and post office, \$1 /set.
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- Marcellus Bicentennial Mugs; \$3 each.
- Official Marcellus Pins; \$5 each.

(Prices include Tax. Shipping add \$3.50/Afghan; \$1.50/mug;  
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