

## MARCELLUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 4

Autumn 1999

## MUCH MORE THAN A TROUT STREAM...Bill Reagan

The scenic, winding creek through
Marcellus is said to have been named Nine Mile
as it was situated exactly nine miles west of the
settlement at Onondaga Hill. You can imagine
an early traveler in the eighteen hundreds being
given the directions; "Go west nine miles and
you'll cross a creek."

That creek turned out to be a perfect source of power for supporting mills of all types, and thus was born what is today referred to as a "Great place to live," the Town of Marcellus.

Whether you call it a creek or a crick, the influence of Nine Mile on the Town of Marcellus was tremendous. Flowing north from its source at Otisco Lake for about twenty miles to Onondaga Lake, the creek once supported dozens of mills and businesses along its banks within the borders of Marcellus.

The first mill was, appropriately enough for a new settlement, a saw mill. The Rice - Bradley Saw Mill was built in 1795, the year after the Town of Marcellus was founded. It was located at the base of East Hill, south of Main Street on the west side of the creek.

Many other mills followed, some of them becoming major employers in the town.

The first paper mill in New York State opened on Nine Mile Creek in 1806. It was located about a mile and a half north of the village center, just north of the present Martisco Paper Mill which itself began operating in 1852. Martisco Paper still runs a successful business today producing "bogus" for use in packaging.

In the year 1812, the first woolen mill was opened in Marcellus on the west bank of the creek near the intersection of Orange and Maple Streets. That wooden structure burned in 1847 and was replaced by a brick woolen mill in 1848. Called the "upper Crown Woolen Mill," it closed in 1955 and was torn down in 1986. At one time this mill produced wool for civil war uniforms.

Its sister mill, the "lower Crown Woolen Mill," was constructed next to the creek on North Street in 1880. Still standing today, it closed in 1961. Between them, the two mills at one time employed over 300 people.

And so it went. Over the decades, on about thirty-five different sites along Nine Mile Creek



in Marcellus, stood grist mills, a gun powder factory, linseed oil mill, barley mill, saw mill, clock factory, several

(Old Stone Grist Mill, Built 1827-28.)

paper mills, a plaster mill, a brewery and distillery and just about every other type of mill a small town would ever need.

As a result of these mills and the jobs which they provided, a small settlement grew into a town of 6,000. Nine Mile Creek proved to be extremely important element in the development of Marcellus. While only a handful of mills are still operating on the creek today, Nine Mile is still proving to be a source of jobs and growth through its excellent fishing and magnetic natural beauty. ~

#### FROM THE GAVEL

June 5, 1999 - No meeting, museum open house, story on page 4. -



#### July 14, 1999 - Field Trip

Members received a wonderful and personal tour of the Octagon House in Camillus. ~

#### August 11, 1999 - General Meeting

A formal New Museum Committee was formed. Members of the committee include Peg Nolan, Bruce Widger, Hollis Abbott, Michael Plumpton, Sidney Tuthill, Joyce Murphy and Bill Reagan. It was reported that seventy more members renewed their membership as a result of the mailing of renewal cards. A calling committee was formed to remind regular meeting attendees of meeting days. Mary Tuthill, Mary Murphy, Helen Hopkins, Flossie Pottinger and Leda Stopyro form the committee. ~

#### September 08, 1999 - General Meeting

Local architect Jerry Ferro has generously volunteered to design conceptual plans for our new museum building based on information supplied by the New Museum Committee. A motion to purchase a photocopy machine for the museum was passed authorizing the expenditure of up to \$500. No one volunteered to be on an election committee for our upcoming election. Folk artist James Parker spoke about the paintings he does of towns which organizations can then sell in many forms. Invited by Bill Reagan, Mr. Parker showed several examples of his work. Society members then voted to hire Mr. Parker to do a painting of Marcellus to be designed with the assistance of our members. ~

#### October 03, 1999 - General Meeting

A discussion took place on whether to have meetings on weeknights or Sundays. It was decided to hold meeting during Daylight Savings Time on weeknights and the rest on Sundays. A schedule will be devised so that all meetings will be during the same week of each month. Sidney and Mary Tuthill and Joyce Murphy volunteered to be on the holiday dinner committee and work to arrange the event (see related story on page 4). Members voted to purchase a color photocopy machine which is computer compatible for \$499. ~

### OUR ELECTION WILL BE HELD AT NOVEMBER MEETING

Our annual election of officers will be held at the November meeting. Positions up for election include president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and two trustees.

The following people were nominated at a special executive meeting on October 18th at which an election committee was formed:

President, Peg Nolan Vice-president, Bruce Widger Treasurer, Hollis Abbott Secretary, Joyce Murphy

After four years of very dedicated service, Bill Reagan, Sidney Tuthill and Dick Smith have decided to step down and take a much needed break.

The election will take place at our November 7th meeting and additional nominations will be accepted from the floor. ~



## NEW MUSEUM COMMITTEE MEETS FOR FIRST TIME

Our newly formed "New Museum Committee" met on August 24th for the first time. Committee members Peg Nolan, Hollis Abbott, Bruce Widger, Mike Plumpton, Sidney Tuthill and Joyce Murphy attended along with Bill Reagan.

The members discussed the needs of the current museum and decided on what rooms and facilities will be needed in the new museum, including the required square footage for each area.

Needed rooms include the main museum showroom, storage, a cedar closet, a climate controlled storage room, a research and records room, a lobby and gift shop as well as restrooms and office. More information will be published in upcoming newsletters. ~

#### NOTES FORM THE PRESIDENT



In July some of our members enjoyed a wonderful field trip to the Camillus Octagon House where they were treated to a guided tour.

In August, Ralph Sims, the
Camillus Historical Society President, treated us to a
superb presentation on the history of Camillus,
which just celebrated its 200th birthday. He covered
everything from the schools to the trains.

In September, Chris Fesko provided us with an absolutely amusing presentation on her award winning "On The Farm" video series. She told about how the videos came to be, what it took to make them and even showed us a blooper tape.

Fantastic job by all, and great job by Sidney Tuthill for arranging such fine programs.

But what do each of these programs have in common? Each of them were attended by less than thirty of our 550 members. What a shame!

A lot of work went in to creating these presentations which was easily seen in the high quality of the end product. It's too bad that so few of our members come to see them.

Granted, some people work late and others are on vacation, but the fact is that our programs are announced in our newsletter which every member receives. I would like to encourage our members to post the meeting schedule on your 'fridge and try to attend these great presentations. ~

On a personal note, myself, our Vice-president Sidney Tuthill and our Treasurer Dick Smith, have decided to resign after four years of very dedicated service.

I have immensely enjoyed working with Sid, Dick and our secretary, Joyce, on society matters. Their humor, dedication and attention to details in their elected positions will be sorely missed by many, but I especially will miss working with these dedicated volunteers. Thanks Sid, Dick and Joyce for all of your hard work and assistance and here's to many happy times!

As for the Society, I'm totally confident that it will flourish under new leadership with new ideas and energy. Four years is a long time for anyone to voluntarily run an organization as large as ours. I would like to encourage more members to consider becoming officers in the future and I ask all of our members to renew their membership for next year. As for me, I will continue to write our newsletter. It has been a pleasure serving as your president. ~

#### IN MEMORIAM

Marcellus Historical Society members Don Kilcoyne, Lois Locke, John Mulroy and George Stapleton passed away recently.

Don was a devoted member of the Society and a Trustee for the past four years. Hollis Abbott was elected to fill the remainder of Don's term. ~



#### RECENT ACQUISITIONS

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

Ron Annable for donating a Jones and Uttley Funeral Home sign which he found in the barn behind 34 East Main Street. Marie Banky for historic photographs. Suzanne Leach Taylor for photographs of 1910 Marcellus Falls students and the Marcellus District 8 school house which was on Old Seneca Turnpike.



The estate of Joe Norman for the bell from the Marcellus Falls School. Flossie Pottinger for wool from the Crown Woolen Mill, 1930s woman's hats

and other items. Hollis Abbott for woman's hats from the 1920s-40s which were worn by his aunt. Carl Wood for an old photograph showing teasel barn workers and for newspaper clippings. Robert Post for a Sloan's Liniment bottle. Edna Hercsha for Mabel Henderson eyeglasses.

The Village of Marcellus for the stop light which has been at the intersection of North & Main Streets for many years. Mike Plumpton for a collection of old telephones. The Marcellus Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary for an auxiliary uniform. Nancy Stopyro for a "Leg-O'Mutton"

blouse. The Marcellus Park for an old hand tool found in a shed at the park. We greatly appreciate the donation of these items and encourage anyone with historic Marcellus items to donate them to our museum. (More acquisitions next issue.) ~

#### THANK YOU!

We wish to thank Mr. & Mrs. Donald Pelchy, Mrs. Lucille Culotti, Mr. & Mrs. Ty King and Mr. & Mrs. John Knowlton for their generosity in donating cedar chests to our museum. The chests were sorely needed for the storage of historic clothing and are now all in use. And thank you to Rev. Tom and Kay Brown for donating a large trunk.

Thank you also to Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mahan for donating a bookshelf with a glass front and to Margaret Aherin for providing us with a list of the Marcellus Class of 1920 which will be added to the Marcellus web site. ~

#### PHOTO SEARCH

We are looking for photos 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 to copy, please call or write.

- \* Firemen in action.
- \* Town or village work crews.
- \* Past Marcellus politicians.
- \* School buses.
- \* Past school teams.

#### ANNUAL HOLIDAY DINNER

Our annual Holiday Dinner for members will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday December 5th at the West Side Gardens Family Restaurant, 4727 Onondaga Boulevard, in the former "Ponderosa" building. The cost will be \$9.50 per person and checks must be sent in to us by November 20th.



The menu will include a salad bar, coffee or tea, dessert, tip and your choice of a ham steak, chicken & biscuits or meat-loaf entree. To reserve your space, mail your payment of \$9.50 per

person to us at PO Box 165, Marcellus, NY 13108 by November 20th., or bring it to our November meeting. Please indicate your main course selections with your reservation. ~

#### MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE NEWS

Our Olde Home Days Museum Open House went very well again this year, although attendance was down. About 100 people attended.

Peg Nolan, Hollis Abbott and Michael Plumpton did a terrific job getting the museum ready for the open house. A new display on girl and boy scouts memorabilia was enjoyed by all of our visitors.

A special thanks to the volunteers who worked at the museum during the open house, including Peg, Hollis, Mike and Joyce Murphy, Delores Austin, Bruce Widger, Bill Reagan, Vince and Mary Murphy, Tom and Kathleen Reagan and Nancy Abbott. Also, a job well done goes to those members who marched in the annual parade: Peg Nolan, Mike Plumpton, Sidney and Mary Tuthill, Ryann Overhiser, Vince and Mary Murphy and David Hoeldtke. ~

#### GRANT PROJECT UPDATE

As we announced previously, we received a grant from Senator John Defrancisco and the Onondaga Historical Association for the preservation of our museum's historic photograph collection.

The grant, for \$2,000, has been used thus far for the purchase of enough mylar sleeves and albums to provide safe storage of our more than 3,000 photographs.

More work is underway including the framing of important historic photographs. ~

#### THIS 'N THAT'S

We have recently completed another step in our historic marker restoration program.

The distance markers which are mounted at the intersections of North and Main Street and South and Main Street, have been fully restored.

We thank the Village of Marcellus for their work in removing and reinstalling the markers, and Spadato Construction for sandblasting the markers.

We also thank Tom and Bill Reagan for painting the markers and posts their original colors of white and black. ~

To be filed under "useless facts:" This newsletter contains 4,235 words. ~

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#### ANNIVERSARY COMING!

This coming January marks the 40th anniversary of the Marcellus Historical Society.

Plans are underway to recognize and celebrate this achievement in the new year.



Michael Plumpton founded the Society in 1960. The first meeting was on January 25th.

The first officers were Michael Plumpton, President and Lucy Sweet, Secretary/ Treasurer.

Jack Haley became the first Vice-president in 1961.

Ideas being discussed include a special museum open house and a dinner as well as producing some commemorative items. Look for more details in our next newsletter.

#### VOLUNTEERS HELP OUT IN MUSEUM EVERY TUESDAY

Every Tuesday afternoon and evening our museum is open for volunteers to work on various projects and for visitors to stop by.



Volunteer members have been working many hours recently on organizing and preserving our substantial historic clothing collection. Various articles are being washed and cleaned and most importantly labeled as to

their origins. Where appropriate, the labels are being sewn into the clothing. Helping out have been Peg Nolan, Hollis Abbott, Sidney and Mary Tuthill, Flossie Pottinger, Vince Murphy and Mike Plumpton.

Anyone interested in assisting them or in working on other projects at the museum can just stop by any Tuesday. The museum is above the Marcellus Village Hall at 6 Slocombe Ave.

#### DO YOU KNOW ...

Do you know that Marcellus has had its share of famous and successful natives. One was Nathan Kelsey, born about 1808. He was appointed Post Master General by President Millard Fillmore and later became Judge of The Supreme Court for the Northern District, a position which Kelsey held until his death. ~

#### NEW MEETING SCHEDULE SET

We have arranged a new meeting schedule for next year to try and make meetings easier to remember and attend.

Meetings during Daylight Savings Time (April through October) will be on the second Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. and those during the rest of the year will be on the second Sunday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. This schedule doesn't conflict with any holidays. If anyone needs a ride to the evening meetings they can call any of our officers to have this arranged.

Anyone with ideas or desires for speakers they wish to see at one of our meetings is asked to submit them to us. ~

#### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF MARCELLUS HISTORY

- a) The first saw mill in Marcellus was built in 1785, 1795 or 1805?
- b) The first grinding mill opened in 1800, 1810 or 1820?
- c) The first general store opened its doors in 1796, 1806 or 1816?
- d) The first tavern in town poured its first drink in 1796, 1806 or 1816?
- e) The first woolen mill opened in 1802, 1812 or 1822?

Answers can be found in our '
Member Business Directory in this newsletter.

#### MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE TO BE HELD IN DECEMBER

We will be holding a winter open house in our museum this December. The date had not yet been set as of press time. Watch for details in local papers as December approaches and be sure to stop in and bring a friend or two! ~

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!



#### EVENTS SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule of meetings, speakers and events is as follows:

Sunday, January 09......2 p.m.

General meeting. Marcellus Historian Michael
Plumpton will talk on the Underground Rail Road.

Sunday, February 13......2 p.m. General meeting. Speaker to be announced.

Meetings are open to anyone and are held at the Marcellus Fire Station unless indicated otherwise.

#### **Historical Society Officers**

President:	Bill Reagan	673-4929
Vice-president:	Sidney Tuthill	673-2990
Treasurer:	Richard Smith	673-1532
Secretary:	Joyce Murphy	673-2528
Cor. Secretary:	Kathleen Reagan.	673-3365

#### Trustees and Term End

Hollis Abbott	1999
Bruce Widger	1999
John Curtin	2000
Peg Nolan	2000
Michael Plumpton	
Tom Reagan	2001

The Marcellus Historical Society, P.O. Box 165, Marcellus, NY 13108, publishes and mails this newsletter quarterly to all of its members and advertisers.

Editor: Bill Reagan, 315 / 673-4929.

#### NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS

Since our last issue, 83 more people joined our society, bringing our total membership to 550.

The following people are new members or have renewed or extended their membership:

Dave, Donna & Alexa Ball; Christel B. Bauer; Barbara S. Bishop; Charles Bliss; Kathleen Boudreau and family;



Kathleen M. Campbell; Michael & Tobey Casler & family; Paul W. Costello; Mary & Pat Dailey & family; Andrew & Louise Dawson: Frank & Janis DeBevic: Dr. Louis DePaull; Lauren DuBeau; Suzanne Durgee; Barbara Fero; Mrs. Pat Gascon; Fred Gallinger; Patty, Steve & Samantha Head; Art & Nancy Hudson; Sterling & Ruth Jansen & family; Steve & Carol Keeler & family; Kenneth & Rosemary Klug; Henry & Gene McCarthy & family; James & Arlene Milne; Jack & Ann Mitchell; Francis P. Murphy; Marie Newell; Alice Palen; Henry & Maria Palmowski; Len Paradise & family: the Plochocki family; Clifford Pursey; Carol B. Reagan; Bill & Donna Renner & family; Lew & Martha Robinson; Phyllis G. Schofield; Don & Betty Sherman; Don & Val Shoudy & family; Matt Shuff; Linda Stock; Doug Whitman; Chris & Rene'e Wiles & family; Kim & Gerald R. Winter; Mary S. Woods. ~

#### Marcellus Historical Society Member Business Directory

Our member businesses help support this newsletter. Please support them!

#### ANTIQUES

#### AUTOMOTIVE

WARNER'S AUTO BODY, 2650 Pleasant Valley Road, Marcellus. 24-hour towing. Bob Warner, Owner .......673-3521

#### AUTOMOTIVE ELECTRONICS, Two locations:

#### BAKERY

THE PASTRY PALACE, 14 W. Main Street, Marcellus.......673-9941

#### BEAUTY / FITNESS

FIRST IMPRESSION, 2 East Main Street, Marcellus.
Paul Mitchell products, Sherri Wagner, owner.......685-7733

HOME, GARDEN & LAROBS APPING CHIMNEY SERVICES ADVANCED CHINNEY SERVICES. Chimney lining. gas logs. cleanings. inspections. repairs. Full service, instituted.  673-3669 CONSTRUCTION SERVICES. CONSTRUCTION SERVICES. DB AR FOLVADATIONS, P.O. Box 574, Cazenovia, NY 13035. Poured walls, fully insured. Bob Barrows.  662-7318 JOBS UNLIMITED, I. Maple Street. Marcellus. Appliance repair and more. Mike Johnson, owner.  673-247 W. F. SAUNDERS & SONS, P.O. Box A. Nedrow, NY 13120 Over 100 years of service. All types of street. Services of the service of the found is serviced. Marcellus. Flowers and gifts. Anta Williams, owner.  673-486 Over 100 years of service to the families of Marcellus. FLORIST TYX & LACE, I. North Street, Marcellus. Flowers and gifts. Anta Williams, owner.  673-4923 FUNERAL SERVICES GOVERY SYSTEMS, INC., Cleanup after any type of insured property loss. Estimates reparred and work preformed by saff personnel. CEO, Leonard. J. Paradise. Member MFD.  451-9111 FLORIST TYX & LACE, I. North Street, Marcellus. Flowers and gifts. Anta Williams, owner.  673-4923 FUNERAL SERVICES COVERY SYSTEMS, INC., Cleanup after any type of insured property loss. Estimates reparred and work preformed by saff personnel. CEO, Leonard. J. Paradise. Member MFD.  451-9111 FLORIST TYX & LACE, I. North Street, Marcellus. Flowers and gifts. Anta Williams, owner.  673-4923 FUNERAL HOME, KALL, STATE, S	BOOK BINDING  JAMES MEYER, THE BOOK BINDER, 26 East Genesee Street Rd., Auburn, NY 13021, Commercial and private book binding and restoration, FAX and Phone	SKANEATELES FOOT & ANKLE CENTER, 27 Fennell Street. Skaneateles. NY 13152. Sebastian Bentivegna, DPM. Hours by appointment. FAX685-6076, Phone
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#### INSIDE...

- \* New meeting schedule.
- \* Election of officers in November
- \* New Museum Committee formed
- \* Holiday Dinner December 5th
- \* Much, much more ...

Postal Customer Local

#### ~ GIFT SHOP ~ MEMBERSHIP ~ ORDER FORM ~

Please use this form, or a copy of it, to join the Marcellus Historical Society and to order society collectibles. Some collectibles are also available at society events and at the Marcellus Village Hall during business hours.

Name:

# \$5 per person / \$4 per senior citizen \$12 per family / \$25 Patron Basic Membership = 1 yr. / Sustaining membership = 5 yrs. (Multiply dues by 5 for sustaining membership.) Number joining? \_\_\_\_\_ New member? \_\_\_\_\_ Collectibles: ~ Official Marcellus afghans; green, cranberry or blue; \$45

Join The Society Today!

Images of America, Otisco Lake Community; \$17	
Centennial History of the Town of Marcellus, 1878; \$15	
Marcellus Through The Years, 1794 - 1996;	
Chronological history with photos; \$5	
Marcellus 1794 - 1994, When Wool Was King;	
A collection of photographs; \$5	
A Pictorial History of Early Marcellus; 53 photos; \$5	
Index to Nine Mile Country; \$5	
Marcellus bicentennial mugs; \$4	
1960s black & white postcards; set of four; \$1	
Color postcard of the Talbot-Case home on Main Street; \$	1
	Centennial History of the Town of Marcellus, 1878; \$15  Marcellus Through The Years, 1794 - 1996; Chronological history with photos; \$5  Marcellus 1794 - 1994, When Wool Was King; A collection of photographs; \$5  A Pictorial History of Early Marcellus; 53 photos; \$5  Index to Nine Mile Country; \$5  Marcellus bicentennial mugs; \$4  1960s black & white postcards; set of four; \$1

Prices include tax. Shipping add \$4.00 per afghan; \$2.00 per mug; \$2 first book, \$1 each additional; 50 cents per postcard set.

City:	Sta	ite: Zip	
Phone:			
Quantity	<u>Item</u>	Cost Each	Total
	yable to and mail to:	Total:	\$
	listorical Society	Shipping:	
PO Box 165		Dues:	
Marcellus, N	IY 13108	Enclosed:	\$