



MARCELLUS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 9, Issue 1

Winter 2004

Joanne M. Robinson Bequest



The Historical Society has received a substantial bequest from the estate of Joanne M. Robinson who was a resident of Bishop Hill Road, Marcellus. She died February 17, 2003.

Appropriate recognition of this generous gift will be placed in the museum.

~

Little Stories of Marcellus

The Marcellus Observer July 3, 1935

Travel and Turnpikes

If the modes of travel used in the dim, old days of Marcellus were now in use, trips about the country would be few. The stage, of course, was the principle method for long trips, although horse-back travel was largely employed. The stage driver was a hero in the neighborhood. An expert driver, he fought his way back and forth every time he made a trip. The roads were not good and the trip had to be made.

As the stages began to descend the great hills to the east and west of Marcellus, the driver would make the valley reverberate with the long drawn-out notes of the stage horns. With the horn to his lips he would send a note over the landscape and farmers would stop at their work and remark, "There is the stage." The object of this horn was to notify the hostlers at the stable (the Alvord House) to prepare a change of horses and to have food ready for the driver and his load of passengers.

In the days before the invention of brakes, stage riding was a thrilling and perilous experience. Many times the heavy stage, weighing 2,200 pounds, would get the best of the team and in order to save the outfit from a smashup, the driver would lash his team into a gallop and descend the steep hills into the village at

breakneck speed. So expert were these drivers that accidents were few and occurred only when a horse lost his footing and stumbled. Then it was serious. The young men who took up stage driving as a life work were natural lovers of horses and, as a result, became very skillful in the management of stage teams. Horses were changed every ten miles. Stage fare was 5 cents a mile. Stagecoaches began making regular trips, at first weekly, then twice a week, then daily and as time went on, several coaches daily came through, which naturally was beneficial to the community. With the building of the Seneca Turnpike and others, it was said that the Village of Marcellus became a beehive of activity. The days of the stagecoach would come to an end, however, with the arrival and expansion of the railroad after the Civil War.

...Submitted by John Curtin



EVENTS SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule of events is as follows:

Sunday, February 8, 2004 2 p.m.

Robert Piekieł
"Stories of the M&OL Railroad"

Sunday, March 14, 2004 2 p.m.

John Curtin
"The 1915 New York Census"

Sunday, April 18, 2004 2 p.m.

To be announced

Meetings are open to anyone and are held at the Marcellus Fire Station unless indicated otherwise. A short business meeting will precede each program.

Historical Society Officers for 2004/2005

President: Peg Nolan..... 673-1765
E-mail: pegnolan@hotmail.com
Vice President: Bruce Widger..... 673-9142
E-mail: drbwidger@alltel.net
Treasurer: Hollis Abbott..... 673-1753
E-mail: habbott1@twcny.rr.com
Secretary: Carrieth Pottinger... 673-3187
E-mail: cb90009@aol.com

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E-mail: djn0409@dreamscape.com
2005 Mary Jane Domurat..... 673-4896
E-mail: mjdomurat@msn.com
2005 Dick Smith..... 673-1532
2006 John Curtin..... 673-3660
E-mail: jcurtin2@twcny.rr.com
2006 Mary Tuthill..... 673-2990

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

In Remembrance

James F. Sawtell - December 18, 2003



Butler Academy of Traditional Irish Step Dancing

From The President ...

At the annual meeting in November, the proposed By-Laws were unanimously accepted.

Thirty-six members attended our Holiday Dinner and enjoyed plenty of good food and entertainment. We thank **Fran Randall** for making the dinner arrangements with Hill Top Restaurant and taking care of the door-prizes and **Bruce Widger** for setting up the entertainment with Peggy Reese and her 8 dancers from the Butler Academy of Traditional Irish Step Dancing.

The holidays brought to a close a successful year for the Society. Thank you to the Board and Volunteers for making this possible.

In June, we look forward to unveiling the restored buggy used by Dr. Parsons. Our goal for the year is to **complete the inventory of the museum**. Every artifact is being numbered and recorded with as much information as possible which will all then be entered into the computer.

We continue to add to our research section. The Parsons family records and Rev. Levi Parsons' church records have been transcribed. John Curtin has transcribed the 1915 Census for Marcellus and more obituaries and marriage records have been recorded. As part of your organization's meetings, consider a visit to the museum. We have **artifacts and records from Marcellus organizations** among our collection. The computer is available to access the many sites on the internet for research.

The museum will be open during the winter on **Thursdays from 1 to 4 pm (weather permitting)** and on an extended schedule in the spring. We will also open at any time by appointment (contact Hollis Abbott or Bruce Widger).

Happy New Year!

Peg Nolan ~

Life Memberships Awarded to**John and Maureen Curtin**

and

Bernard and Ruth Anne ReaganIn recognition of their generous contributions
to the Marcellus Historical Society**Renewed Members** (since our last newsletter)
(Sustaining members in bold print, New members
underlined):

Hollis & Nancy Abbott, Brian & Debi Abbott & Family, Mark & Lynn Abbott & Family, Blanche Adkins, Margaret Aherin, Timothy Aherin, Dolores J. Austin, Joel Bellows, Mike Brilbeck, Helen Clark, Lois Clay, William & Martha Cole, Paul & Rita Costello, Kathy Coyne, Catherine D'Angelo, Mary Jane L. Domurat, Sara H. Fogarty, Judy Gilchrist, James & Cheryl Gonzalez & Family, Doris Hagggett, Helen Hopkins, Phyllis Huckle, Eileen B. Kennedy, Tyrone & Sylvia King, William Kolceski, Elizabeth Lathrop, Tom & Sue Leonard, **Mary McGreal**, Jim & Peg McNally, Dorothy C. McRobbie, Jodell Z. McVey, Jack & Ann Mitchell, Francis P. Murphy Jr., Jon Nicholson, Marni Nolan, Joe & Peg Nolan, Florence M. Odell, Ruth B. Oliver, Elizabeth L. Olley, Mary Orzesek, Julia Pepperman, John & Rose Phillips, Robert L. Post, Carrieth Pottinger, Florence Pottinger, Robert & Manuela & Caroline Reagan, Gretchen Rusk, James Jr. & Betsy Shake & Family, Sheila Schweitzer, **Dr. Margaret Sennett**, Joy Siersma, Mark Siersma, Robert Siersma, William Siersma, Dale & Joyce Sims, Kathy P. Smiley, Richard & Frances Smith, Leda Stopyro, Don & Jan Thornton, **Harriette Waldburger**, Kathy Whitehead, **Janet C. Whyland**. ~

Recent Acquisitions

We wish to thank the following people for donating items to the museum collection:

Joy Howard and **Pat Blackler** for picture of Mary Ann Stevens Lukins; **Edie & Steve Brown** for child's book, Comet baking powder can, clothes pins, cuff link; **Jim Thorpe** for postcards of Marcellus Park and West Main Street; **Robert and Emily Koon** for 150th Anniversary Wall Hanging made by **Emily Koon**; **Village of Marcellus** for shovel used to bury the Time Capsule on June 4th, 2003. ~

And our thanks to the following people for cash donations:

James & Laura Duncan, **Roger & Joan Field**, **Robert & Alice Mahan**, **Joy Siersma**. ~

The Marcellus Observer May 12, 1894

BRIEF SKETCHES OF EARLY AND LATER TIMES IN MARCELLUS.

History of the Upper Woolen Mill
(Continued from Volume 8, Issue 1)

At present ninety or more persons are employed in this upper mill. There are six regular departments of labor, each with an overseer, besides several others are employed outside of these departments. Edward Moir is general superintendent, John Daye, assistant superintendent and designer, James Goode, pattern weaver, John E. Griffin, wool buyer and sorter with two assistant wool sorters, Wm. Julia and Harry Griffin. Mr. Julia is the oldest employee of the mill, having been here since 1855. John Malcolm, overseer of the dyeing department and five hands with him, James Armstrong, overseer of the carding department with ten hands, Peter Stalker, overseer of the spinning department with nine hands, Fred O'Brien, overseer of twisting and warping department with fifteen hands, T. J. Porteous, overseer of the weaving department with twenty hands, C. H. Baker, overseer of the finishing department with sixteen hands. I. A. Share, machinist with Frank VanHousen as assistant, Charles N. Case, book keeper, James Curtin and William George, watchmen, George S. Gilson, Engineer, Edward Eagan, teamster, M. Kennedy, yard man and Martin Hackett, coachman. The above force varies according to trade conditions.

Below this mill there is another valuable site which might be utilized but has never been improved. It is on what was known for many years as the Betsinger place, now owned by Rev. J. G. Brooks. Quite early, and not long after he built his distillery above, John R. Kellogg bought this land with a view of building a gristmill. He gathered some material and commenced breaking ground for the foundation where the barn now stand, but for some reason abandoned it. The land has passed through the hands of several owners since.

The Marcellus Observer May 19, 1894

A Brief History of the Lower or Crown Mills

On the site where the Crown Mills now stands there was formerly a saw mill, which was built quite early when the country was new some seventy or more years ago. As near as we can learn it was built by a man by the name of Demming who ran it a few years and it then passed into the hands of Myron L. Mills Esq. who held the property awhile and transferred it

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

to Jesse Harroun who lived on the place and carried on the farm now owned by Rev. W. R. Cobb, and also ran the mill property at the same time. After a few years he exchanged properties with the late Deacon Lauren Beach and he became possessor of this mill property and carried on the lumber business quite extensively for many years. Many will remember the huge piles of logs on either side of the road by the mill and above it from time to time indicating the large business done in the mill from year to year.

While he owned the mill he also owned the farm and built the large dwelling that Mr. Cobb now occupies, about 1847. Previous to this the Deacon lived in an old house considerably south of the present dwelling, on the west side of the driveway, and now converted into a horse barn.

Deacon Beach let the mill property go to Joel Dunbar, Father of Mrs. C. L. Rich, who owned it some ten years and ran the mill more or less during the time or until by age it became somewhat dilapidated and finally when there was high water, which was quite common before the state dam was built above Marietta, the foundation washed out and the mill fell to pieces and was carried down stream. The site not long after, or sometime in 1877, was bought by J. C. Sayre, and in the following spring J. C. Sayre & Co. commenced the clearing away and preparing the foundation for the main building as it now stands, for a woolen factory. Freeman and Henry Amidon of South Onondaga had charge of the stone and brick-work and James Sarr of the wood-work. The building was completed and ready for the machinery by the fall of 1878.

During the next winter but little was done, Mr. Oatman withdrew from the firm, and Mr. Sayre formed a partnership with one Francis Bacon of Pittsfield, Mass., and they soon commenced putting in the machinery some where along in the fall of 1879, and started up the mill in the early part of 1880 and continued to run with more or less of embarrassment for about fourteen months when they became heavily involved in debt so that their creditors were unwilling to carry them longer. Their largest creditors were S. W. Barker of Troy, who furnished a large part of the wool, and Sullivan Vail & Co., commission merchants of New York, who advanced money on the goods. An assignment was made to F. A. Lyman of Syracuse who sold the property at public auction, on the 17th day of May, 1881. This property consisted of the real estate and machinery and was described as

follows:

The building is brick, entirely new, with three stories and attic and stone basement, new stone dam and unfailling water power, capacity of water wheel about fifty-five horsepower.

The machinery is all modern and first class; nearly all new; been in operation about one year only.

There are three sets of cards; three 320 spindle Davis & Thurbur Mules, one 200 spindle Fales & Jenks Twister, 16 Knowles Broad Fancy Looms, one Narrow Crampton Loom and finishing machinery for four sets of cards.

The building is of sufficient capacity for six sets of woolen machinery, is heated by steam and lighted by gas.

...Submitted by John Curtin

(Series to be continued in later issues.) ~

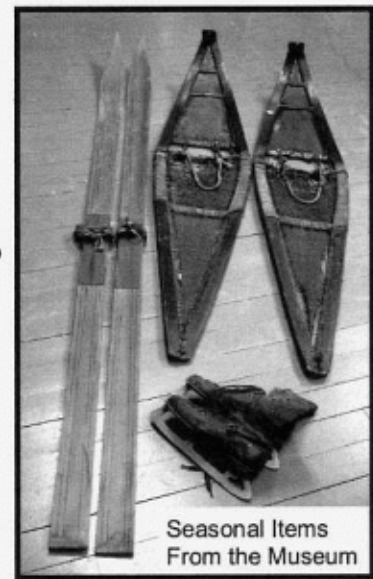
Video-Taping The Museum

Bruce Widger has suggested that we produce a video of the museum. Let us know if you are aware of anyone who can assist with this project. ~

Check out the MHS Web Site

Record some of your memories of Marcellus.

mhs.marcellusny.com. ~



Seasonal Items
From the Museum

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Marcellus Historical Society
P.O. Box 165
Marcellus, NY 13108

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Web Site: mhs.marcellusny.com

Next Meeting:
Sunday, February 8th at 2 p.m.

INSIDE:

- * *Joanne M. Robinson Bequest*
- * *Travel and Turnpikes*
- * *Mills of Marcellus (Continued)*

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~ GIFT SHOP & MEMBERSHIP ORDER FORM ~

Please use this form or a copy of it to join the society and to order our historic collectibles.

<p style="text-align: center;">Join Our Society Today!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$5/Person ~ \$9/Couple ~ \$12/Family (includes children under 18) Basic Membership = 1 yr.. ~ Sustaining = 5 yr. (Multiply dues by 5 for sustaining membership) Number Joining? ____ New Members? ____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Addr: _____</p> <p>City: _____ Zip: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p>																																												
<p style="text-align: center;">Available Collectibles</p> <p>Pucker Street—The first 100 years.....\$26 Ruth Anne Reagan Prints of Marcellus.....\$20 Official Marcellus Afghans: cranberry, blue. \$45 Centennial History of the Town of Marcellus \$15 Otisco Lake Map 1868.....\$10 Marcellus, When Wool Was King, Pictorial \$ 5 Marcellus Through the Years; Chronology, photos \$ 5 Index to Nine Mile Country; Names and more..... \$ 5 New Colored Postcards of Marcellus \$ 1 Postcards(5), 1960's B&W, 4 churches, post office \$ 1 Package of 10 note-cards picturing Marcellus..... \$ 5 T-Shirts: Child, \$6; Adult, \$7 (2X, \$9) Specify Size Sweatshirts: Adult; S,M,L, \$11 (2X, \$13) Specify Size Hats, \$7; Tote Bags, \$8 Shipping: \$2 per book, \$4 other</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Order Form</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Quantity</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Item Description</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Cost Ea</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td><td>_____</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Make Checks Payable to: Total \$ _____ Marcellus Historical Society Shipping \$ _____ PO Box 165 Dues \$ _____ Marcellus, NY 13108 Total Enclosed \$ _____</p>	Quantity	Item Description	Cost Ea	Total	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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