

MARCELLUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 9, Issue 2

Spring 2004



Parsons Carriage

The carriage used by Dr. Israel Parsons (1821-1904) and his son, Dr. John Parsons (1861-1932) will be on display during the **Olde Home Days Open House on June 5th**. The carriage was donated by the Parsons family and has been restored by Sherman Hollow Coach of Penn Yan and Bob and Janet Warner of Warner's Auto Body in Marcellus.

The restoration was made possible with Funds from NYSOPRHP secured by Senator John DeFrancisco's 2003 Heritage Grant Program, administered by the Cultural Resources Council. ~





2004 Heritage Grant Awarded

The Historical Society has been notified that our application for a grant of \$1500 to purchase a slide projector and microfilm reader or reader/printer has been approved. This grant is made possible with Funds from NYSOPRHP secured by Senator John DeFrancisco's 2004 Heritage Grant Program, administered by the Cultural Resources Council.

The funds will be disbursed at a grant ceremony in May. The slide projector has been purchased and we are looking at the options for displaying the microfilm images of the 125 years of the Marcellus Observer. ~







Clock Book

A new book "AN EMPIRE IN TIME" by G.
Russell Oechsle and Helen Boyce is now available. It is a detailed and beautifully illustrated book about the history of clock making in Upstate New York and includes a large section about Philip L. Smith who made clocks in Amber and Marcellus Falls (three of his clocks from our Museum are pictured above).

Russ Oechsle presented a program about clocks for the Historical Society in January of 2001. He has also produced a video about Upstate clocks which can be borrowed from the Museum.

The book is \$27.50 including shipping. Contact Hollis Abbott for more information. ~

The Marcellus Observer June 9, 1894

Brief History of the Old Clock Factory Near the Falls. TWELVTH PAPER

As we proceed down Nine Mile Creek and write up the history of the mills and factories of former days and those of the present time, in consecutive order, it does not give the history chronologically but the dates along will generally show about their relative age. The first building on the east side of the road just north of Sherman's paper mill is now called the old boarding house. It was once a part of the old clock factory building, and the barn and store house now standing endwise to the road just north of Lawless' brick paper mill is the other part. It was originally 100 feet long 40 feet wide and three stories high, including basement.

(Continued on page 3)

EVENTS SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule of events is as follows:

Sunday, May 16, 2004

2 p.m.

Kay Wilson

"Marcellus Garden Club: History & Activities"

Saturday, June 5, 2004

10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Museum Open House

Sunday, June 13, 2004

2 p.m.

Michael W. Greenfield "History of Pottery"

No Meetings during July and August

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

Trustees and Term End

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

Marjorie E. Chapman - April 4, 2004 ~

From The President ...

With the winter past, we now look forward to continuing on with the work at the museum. Our main goal will be completing the inventory and having everything cataloged. Volunteers are needed Tuesday Evenings from 7 to 9 p.m.

We are looking forward to the completion and unveiling of the Parsons Buggy on June 5th during the Olde Home Days Open House. The slide projector purchased as part of the 2004 Heritage Grant will also be on display and we are working on the method to be used to view the microfilm images of 125 years of the Marcellus Observer.

For many years of dedication to the society, **Joyce Murphy** was presented with a framed Ruth Anne Reagan Print of Marcellus and a life membership to the Historical Society.

Thank you to the Board members. The Society is very fortunate to have such dedicated people.

Peg Nolan ~

Recent Acquisitions

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

Bob Post for WW II memorabilia including part of a survival kit issued to airmen consisting of a silk map of France and a compass, picture of B-19 bomber and flak, canteen with cup, leaflet dropped by Allies; J. Roy Dodge for school desk & chair bought by Robert & Mabel Cates; Hollis Abbott for business card from Gillett's Garage; Dick Tabor for 2 pictures of Kathryn Heffernan visiting his class at MCS; Bob Mahan for book of the History of The First Eighty Years of the First Presbyterian Church of Marcellus N.Y. 1801 - 1881 and a J. Brill & Son card; Charlene Woods for 5 Marcellians; Harold Chapman for 1937 MCS Class Ring owned by his wife, Marjory Austin Chapman; Zilpha Lambert for newspaper clipping of 1910 3rd grade class at West Hill School. And our thanks to the following people for cash donations:

Joy L. Buffan in honor of Lawrence C. Buffan. ~

Museum Hours

Tuesday Evenings 7 to 9 p.m.
Thursday Afternoons 1 to 4 p.m.
Sunday Afternoons 1 to 3 p.m. (starting June 20)
Access the Internet at the Museum

(Continued from page 1)

About the year 1833 Philip L. Smith, formerly of Amber, bought of John Herring the water privilege next below Sherman's and built this building for a clock factory, which first stood on the east side of the road, nearly opposite the brick mill and a little north of the present lime house. The water to run it was conducted to the factory by a raceway which ran across and under the road, and again crossing the road discharged into John Herring's paper mill pond. The dam for Smith's pond was of logs and built by the late Stephen Cobb, and was several rods above the present dam.

This factory was a live place about sixty years ago, and here Mr. Smith did a prosperous business for several years, making wooden and brass clocks, and metal and horn buttons. The clocks were good time keepers and very durable. G. A. Eggleston has now in his possession one of the wooden clocks made there in 1836, which has been going ever since, and is still ticking away and likely to for years to come. How many of these clocks are still extant in this vicinity we know not. Some of the more highly finished ones sold as high as thirty dollars. The factory gave employment to a large number of hands.

After a few years there came hard times, about 1837, similar to what we are now passing through, when business of all kinds was panic stricken, so that Mr. Smith became involved, and by force of circumstances was compelled to succumb and give up the business, losing all he had invested. The property passed into the hands of Sanford E. Parker, a lawyer in Marcellus, and from him it passed to Payne Bigelow of Baldwinsville.

While the property was owned by Parker and Bigelow there was an interval of twelve or more years during which time the building was occupied by various parties for various purposes. One Gay P. Barber occupied it some time and made some hand rakes, and some have thought buttons also, as a sort of blind to cover up some more questionable products that it was not very certain where they did originate, or where they were made. At least at one time the reputation of the place was not the best. After a time the building was vacated and remained idle for a few years, or until George Reed and Sanford Dalliba bought the site and property of Bigelow, which was about 1852.

Here we may introduce a singular episode. It will be remembered by some of the older inhabitants that the old factory building was surmounted by a large bell tower, in which was a large bell, which in size and power equaled any of the church bells then in Marcellus. During the interval that the building remained unoccupied, it mysteriously disappeared. Some persons unknown stole it from the tower and removed it to parts unknown. At least it has never come to light where it went to, and no one hereabouts seems to have known what became of it. ~ ...Submitted by John Curtin

<u>Renewed Members</u> (since our last newsletter) (Sustaining members in bold print, <u>New members</u> underlined):

Bill & Carol Abbott, Dorothy C. Aitchison, Robert C. Atkinson, Bruce & Helen Baker, David & Donna Ball & Family, Timothy & Kathryn Barstow & Family, Joyce Beak, Elaine Becker, John & Gerry Bednarski, Bill & Peg Bell, Dorothy Baker Blair, Harold Brinkerhoff, Louis & Phyllis Budell, Michael & Tobey Casler, Harold & Marge Chapman, Victoria Clark, Phillip & Helen Clarke, Lois Clay, Peter & Ethel Cole, William T. Cook, James & Vera Costello, Jeff & Lisa Crysler, Lucille Culotti, Andrew & Louise Dawson, John F. & Regina Dillon, Bob & Anne Dingman, Mary Drexler, Joseph & Lyn Duffy, Francis Eibert, Fred & Pat Eisenberg, William H. & June Frawley, Shirley Gallinger, Alan & Phyllis Gammon, Pat Gascon, Sharon Gibbons, Ellen M. Hall Guptill, Hubert & Earline Hall, James Hamilton, Donald Hayes, Sterling & Ruth Jansen, Gary & Judy Kavney, Steve & Carol Keeler & Family, Frank & Doris Kelly, Francis & Mary Kishman, Janet Linderman, Pat Marcel, James & Grace Maynard, Henry & Gene McCarthy & Family, Kathy McLaughlin, Agnes Meiers, James & Arlene Milne, Helen Mohn, Pierre & Mary Montague, Paul Jr. & Hazel Morgan, Evan & Joanne Murdock, Vincent & Mary Murphy, Sam Murphy, Robert Negus, Doug & Jean Nightingale, Raymond Paul, Donald W. & Anne Pelchy, Richard & Kathleen Powell, Frances Randall, Patrick Reagan, Bill & Donna Renner, Robert & Pauline Reynolds, Margaret Ryan, C. Albert & Victoria Sabin, Patricia A. Sanborn, Isabel Sawtell, William & Eleanor Schneider, Phyllis G. Schofield, Gayle Scroggs & Guy Swenson, Lewis L. & Elizabeth C. Selover, Martin & Dorothy Sennett, Donald & Betty Sherman, Helen Sherman, Lucinda W. Skinner, Jeffrey & Mary Beth Smith & Family, Raymond & Janet Smith, Charles & Nancy Snyder, Garth Snyder, Patricia Sposato, Laurel Springstead, Robert & Carol Stalker, Lewis T. & Alma Steadman, Russell & Nancy Striffler, Carolyn M. Terrill, Richard Tuttle, Evelyn Van Camp, Bill & Ruth Vinzant, John & Esther Weeks, Roberta M. Welsh, Frank Wicks, Dr. Bruce & Mary Widger, Leona Wilcox, Ben & Sharon Wiles & Family, Bob & Kay Wilson, David & Linda Wilson, Sally Wilson, Bonnie Wilson, David & Marla Winkworth & Family, Midge Woods, Marion Hall Zink. ~

The Marcellus Observer May 19, 1894

A Brief History of the Lower or Crown Mills (Continued from Volume 9 Issue 1)

Strange as it may seem, while there were several who made bids on the property, it was struck off to James Fitten, mentioned in our last article, for \$24,000. Through some misunderstanding as to payment or the bonds turned over for it, he surrendered his purchase and it was again sold, later, to S. W. Barker for \$16,000, he assuming some incumbrance with it.

Through him the first Crown Mills Company was formed with S. W. Barker as President. Robert Waugh became the first General Superintendent in October, 1881. The mill now took on new life and prosperity. During Mr. Waugh's term of two years and one month, (for he only lived till November, 1883) he built the house on the point where the Superintendents have successively lived, and the three cottage houses above. In January, 1884, Edward Moir succeeded Mr. Waugh as general Superintendent, and now has oversight over both upper and lower mills, now under one corporation.

The lower mill has undergone several additions since Mr. Moir came, and considerable new machinery has been added and various improvements made. The north brick wing built by contractor John Shultz, enlarged the capacity of several departments of the mill, the wood part built by W. H. Wright, added a new dye house, and other conveniences for wool washing. The wool house has also been enlarged, and the office transferred into a new and more commodious one on the southeast of the main building.

In the place of gas, electric lights have been introduced, two new Westinghouse engines and an extra boiler added. All modern improvements put in the card room, a Platt garnet machine and four Bolettes automatic wool washers. Now there are eight sets of cards and six 320 spindle Davis & Thurber mules, three 200 spindle Fales and Jenks twister, twenty nine looms and finishing machinery for eight sets of cards and capacity accordingly. At present something over a hundred persons are employed in connection with the mill. A few are employed more or less in both mills.

Robert Welsh is assistant superintendent and designer, Thomas Welsh, patter weaver, John E. Griffin, wool buyer and sorter, and Nelson H. Gaunt, assistant wool sorter, Wm. Rutherford, overseer of the dyeing department and six hands with him, Frank

Sarr, overseer of the carding department, with twelve hands, A. J. Anderson, overseer of the spinning department, with nine hands, John Henderson, overseer of the twisting, with eight hands. Hugh Morton, overseer of the warping, with four hands, L. J. Avery, overseer of the weaving department, with twenty-seven hands, Peter Dunlap overseer of the finishing department with twenty hands, John W. Scott, machinist, Thomas Kennedy, engineer, Wm. Gibbons and Patrick Welch, watchmen, Edward Eagan and James Reagan, teamsters. L. N. Mogg is bookkeeper and has been in the employ of the mill ever since the Crown Mills company assumed control and he shipped the first case of goods for this company, and has handled over a half million dollars in cash since December 3, 1881, the day of the first pay roll.

Frank Sarr, Hugh Morton and Robert Stewart are the only employees left that were on the first pay roll. Frank Sarr has probably served the longest in the mill of anyone as he served during Sayre's term.

This mill is in good condition, well officered and turns out a fine quality of goods. It consumes some 500,000 to 600,000 lbs. of wool annually and the output of fine cloths is from 150,000 to 175,000 yards per year according to the force employed which largely depends on the times and demand. These mills constitute a great part of the life of our village. ~ ...Submitted by John Curtin



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Check out the Guestbook on MHS Web Site: mhs.marcellusny.com

Call Hollis Abbott at 673-1753 to include your Ad in our Business Member Directory.

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Marcellus Historical Society P.O. Box 165 Marcellus, NY 13108 Non-Profit Organization U. S. Postage Paid Marcellus, NY 13108 Permit Number 18

Web Site: mhs.marcellusny.com

Next Meeting:

Sunday, May 16th at 2 p.m.

Museum Open House:

Saturday, June 5th: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Postal Customer Local

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(The date on the label is the Year your dues are paid through.)

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