

Marcellus Historical Society News

Volume 20 Issue 4

Fall 2015

Syracuse Post Standard February 27, 1954

John L. Sullivan Dies, 70 Years Track Athlete



A pall of sadness has fallen over the village of Marcellus and the world of athletic sports in America in the passing of John Lawrence Sullivan, famed distance runner who died at the age of 83, early yesterday morning.

Fearing no opponent in 70 years of track competition, the "Little Man of Steel" entered St. Joseph's Hospital Feb 12 where he made a valiant race against deadly leukemia which set in following his successful fight against pneumonia.

While never in the limelight of more spectacular sports, John L. Sullivan etched his name deep in the scroll as one of America's most remarkable athletes. In the number of continuous years of active competition it may stand alone.

LAST RACE IN 1951

His career on the track began at the age of 13 and continued for 70 years until 1951 when he ran his last race, a five-mile grind, as the main attraction at the annual July 4 and Old Home Day celebration in his home village.

He suffered an attack of pneumonia in the fall of that year and harkening to the pleas of members of his family reluctantly gave up track competition.

Younger residents of the county knew him best as a distance runner who defeated all comers at local meets, but elder followers or sports recall his victories over the best athletes in this country and Canada.

WIDELY APPLAUDED

His super strength, speed, stamina and will to win won him the plaudits of thousands who witnessed his performances. His physical makeup was a marvel to medical men who studied him.

Jumping the rope was one of his daily exercises in keeping in top physical condition. He was past three score and 10 when a physician watching him jump the rope, found that his pulse and respiration became normal on minute after he had jumped the rope 1,000 times

Every week for years, except in extremely bad weather he ran 9 to 12 miles. His most common run was from his home in Dublin St., Marcellus, to Camillus, then on Route 5 to Fairmount and back to his home over the same course.

BEAT DOCTOR'S HORSE

He is said to have been past the age of 35 when a Camillus physician laughed when John L. remarked that he could beat the doctor's horse to Marcellus, the doctor offering to bet him \$10 that Sullivan could not do it. Sullivan won, the horse collapsing and dying after the race.

Mr. Sullivan always maintained that his strenuous activity on foot accounted for the abounding health that he enjoyed throughout his life. He was a close friend of the late Tom Keane, track coach at Syracuse University. During the winter months Mr. Sullivan frequently substituted the university gymnasium track for the open road for training runs and his advise was eagerly sought by orange athletes.

PUT LEAD IN SHOES

In stepping up training for a race, Mr. Sullivan often used lead insoles weighing a pound each in his running shoes.

"When you take out the lead, your feet feel as light as a feather," he explained. Born in Newport, R.I., Mr. Sullivan resided there until he was 9, when his parents returned to Ireland. They resided there until he was 14 when they moved to Almonte, Ont., Canada, where he became famous as a runner and oarsman.

He became a resident of Marcellus in 1902, entering the employ of the Crown Woolen Mills where he worked as a weaver until his retirement four years ago.

He left his loom only when engaged in races, never permitting his training to interfere with his work.

(Continued on page 4)

EVENTS SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule of events is as follows:
Sunday, November 8, 2015 2 p.m

Annual Meeting & Election of Officers

Thursday, December 3, 2015 6:30-8 p.m. Santa Claus at the Steadman House

Next Meeting April 10, 2016

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 2015

President: Peg Nolan673-1765	
E-mail: peganolan1@hotmail.com	
Vice President: Kathy McLaughlin	
E-mail: mclaughlink@hotmail.com	
Treasurer: Patricia Sanborn488-3610	
E-mail: pasanborn@twcny.rr.com	
Secretary: Carriebeth Pottinger673-3187	
E-mail: cb90009@aol.com	
Trustees and Term End	
2015 John Curtin673-3660	
E-mail: jcurtin2@windstream.net	
2015 Bob Wilson673-2550	
2016 Jamie Johnston673-1160	
2016 Harvey Eysman673-3933	
E-mail: heysman@windstream.net	
2017 Doug Nightingale673-2539	
E-mail: djn0409@windstream.net	
2017 Jean Nightingale673-2539	
2017 Jean Nightingare073-2337	
E-mail: djn0409@windstream.net	

The Marcellus Historical Society, P.O. Box 165, 18 North St., Marcellus, NY 13108, publishes this newsletter and mails it quarterly to its members and advertisers.

Jean Nightingale.....673-2539

Email address: **histsoc@windstream.net**Telephone: 315-673-4839

Please direct comments or questions about the newsletter to Hollis Abbott at the above address or email: habbott1@twcny.rr.com

Newsletters are sent via e-mail rather than regular mail to members who have given us their e-mail address. If you have not yet advised us of your e-mail address, please do so at: *histsoc@windstream.net*. We do not publish or sell member information. ~

From The President ...

Election of officers and trustees is coming up this month. I will not be running for office this year.

It has been an honor and pleasure to have served as President of the Historical Society since 2000. Thank you to the Steadmans for donating their beautiful house to display our history and to all the people that have supported me through the years. Marcellus has a gem here on North Street to preserve its history.

Marcellus is my home, I was born here and with my husband Joe raised our family here. Two of our six children still live in the area. I love Marcellus and its history and I hope to continue as Historian for Marcellus.

Marcellus is and always has been a great place to live!

Peg Nolan

Steadman House Hours (Weather Permitting): Sundays 1 to 3 pm (except meeting Sundays)

Thursdays 1 to 4 pm Or By Appointment: Peg Nolan - 673-1765 John Curtin - 673-3660

Meeting Times

Regular meetings of the Marcellus Historical Society will be at 2 pm on the 2nd Sunday of the months of April, May, September, October and November except when Easter or Mother's Day occurs on the 2nd Sunday - in which case, the meeting will be on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

Current Membership: 353 Not renewed from 2014: 22

New: 10

Business Members: 28 Not renewed from 2014: 5

Remember: this is a non-profit organization supported by dues and donations!

Yearly dues cover the *calendar year* and if your dues are not paid by the *end of March*, we must drop you from the membership list.

\$5. a year is a small price to pay to help preserve our history!

In Remembrance

Earl A. Hudson - August 26, 2015 Mary G. Murphy - September 15, 2015 Myrtle L. Crysler - September 27, 2015 Henry W. "Bud" Flitcroft—October 10, 2015

Our Thanks for Cash Donations from:

Bob Dearmoie MCS Class of 1965 Kristen Keegan (research) MCS Class of 1964 MCS Class of 1960 ~

Steadman House Contributions

We are grateful to the following people for their donations of time, labor and materials at the Steadman House: Pat & Charlie Sanborn and Jean & Doug Nightingale for keeping the Steadman House open during scheduled hours; Bruce & Mary Widger for Newsletter mailing; and the Village of Marcellus for lawn maintenance. ~

Recent Acquisitions

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



Ron Annable for pictures of 1976 winter storm on Gypsy Road; **Henry & Peg Flitcroft** for picture of house at 4394 Dublin Road; Gloria McDonald Weeks for Marietta school pictures T.King Golden River book; Jan Chauncey projector and overlays; St. Francis **Church** for bowling pins from St. Francis

alleys; Estate of J. Kevin Mulroy for framed

document of 1781 purchase of American Army supplies (above); **Donna Lea** for letters to John Hemenway 1700-1800; **Family of Shirley Hinchman** for pitcher & bowl set from Cummings house sale (right); **James Dyer** for K. B. Hackford postcard



& letter from Gallup Bros. Teasels. ~

Renewed Members

Since our last newsletter with **Sustaining members in bold print** and <u>New members underlined</u>:

Burt & Shirley Anthony, Luise N. Hoffman. ~

Annual Meeting, November 8th at 2 p.m.

The annual meeting and election of officers of the Marcellus Historical Society will take place at the regular November meeting. *Nominations will be accepted from the floor for the following positions:* President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

(Two year term ending 12/31/17).

Two Trustees (three year term ending 12/31/18). Candidates must be a member of the Society for at least one year and over the age of 18 years.

We urge all members to attend.

Wanted:

Member(s) of the Historical Society to produce the **Quarterly Newsletter**. An interest in researching appropriate articles and a knowledge of Microsoft Office programs helpful. The Society files and computer at the Steadman House are available for researching and compiling the newsletter (Microsoft Publisher software is presently used). Contact Hollis Abbott at 315-673-1753 or email habbott1@twcny.rr.com. ~

AVAILABLE AT THE STEADMAN HOUSE

Have you visited the Steadman House recently? Our indexed collection (at last count) consists of:

3.475 Artifacts

826 Clothing articles

743 Books

13 Clocks

6,921 Photographs

68 Scrapbooks with **55,427** referenced items

Family files and genealogies

Gift shop with Afghans, Books, Prints, Cards, etc. ~

Marcellus Observer April 14, 1950

Sheep Needed To Pasture in Village Cemetery

The past few summers sheep have been put to graze in the Village Cemetery. The effectiveness has been proven by the many compliments arising on the neatness of the grounds. Through the use of the sheep the cemetery was put in better condition than it has been for many years.

The call is going out again this year for sheep and anyone who has any that they would like to put to pasture are asked to get in touch with either George Harris or Raymond Paul.

The sheep themselves have been weighed the first part of the summer and again at the end, and it has been found every one has gained weight. Both the farmer and the Village has prospered from it. ~

(Continued from page 1)

An enthusiastic boxing fan throughout his life, Mr. Sullivan was an ardent admirer of the "Great John L." whose name he bore. He was a literal encyclopedia on the sport of boxing and could relate the place, dates and outcome of important contests that took place since he was a boy. He possessed a remarkably keen mind and memory until his last illness.

He Is survived, by his wife, Mrs. Bridget Coyne Sullivan; two daughters, Mrs. Frank Discenza and Miss Veronica Sullivan of Marcellus; two sons, Lawrence Sullivan of Marcellus, and Clarence Sullivan, a state trooper of New City; three sisters. Miss Emily Sullivan and Miss Kathleen Sullivan, both of Toronto, and Mrs. William McGraw of Almonte, Canada; one brother, Thomas residing in California.

Funeral services will be conducted at the Norris-Uttley Funeral Home in Marcellus at 9 a.m. Monday. Funeral mass will be offered at St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church at 9:30 a.m. Burial will be in St. Francis Cemetery. ~

Marcellus Observer August 20, 1936

VETERAN MARCELLUS RUNNER DEFEATS ONONDAGA INDIAN

John L. Sullivan, Well-known Marcellus Runner, in Easy Win over 18-Year Old Onondaga Indian. Issues Challenge to All Professionals in Central New York.



Last Sunday John L. Sullivan outran the "pride of the Onondagas", Percy Smoke, in an 8-mile run, covering the distance in 46 minutes and 20 seconds.

Despite his 64 years, John L. took the race with ease and wasn't forced anywhere through the race although the Indian ran what would be considered a good race.

Mr. Sullivan is well known for his running and at 64 is in perfect physical condition. He trains regularly, making a run from his home in Marcellus and returning once each week.

To prove that he is still up among the best marathoners in Central New York, Mr. Sullivan has formally issued a challenge to any pro for a race of from 5 to 10 miles. This challenge appears in another section of the paper. ~



"Sky Watchers"

The first Ground Observer Corps was a civil defense program of the US Army Air Force in World War II to watch the sky for enemy planes. The 14,000 coastal observation posts were manned by 1.5 million civilian observers using binoculars and the naked eye from 1942 until May 1944.

The program was re-established during the Cold War in the 1950's and one was right here at Rosehill. In January 1953 meetings were held at Otisco, Borodino and Marcellus to recruit volunteers to man the post and Borodino Grange took this program on as a project. A building was built by Harry Jones of Skaneateles and Steve Karlik of Rosehill. Merchants and volunteers from surrounding towns installed electricity and telephones. Highway departments did the work to put the quarter mile roadway in repair and filled with gravel. A sign topped by a model bomber was placed stating the "Rosehill Observation Post" and a flag pole was installed to fly the American flag.

Inside the building was an electric heater, telephone, lights, desk and chairs. Pictures of airplanes and instructions for the volunteers lined the walls. Volunteers were given training and worked two hours at a time. After volunteering for a number of hours they were given wings - Anna Salway still has hers. They also had pins as volunteers.

At a later date the building was remodeled, or replaced, with one that had a second floor reached by stairs inside the building so they no longer had to go out in bad weather. Windows were placed all around so they could observe the planes. The Rosehill Post building was dedicated June 30th, 1953. In 1955 Mrs. Stephen Karlik and Mrs. J. D. Hoyt were appointed chief observers. The Post's volunteers came from Rosehill, Borodino, Marcellus, Otisco and Skaneateles and perhaps other hamlets. The Witheys, Cummings and Salways were among the many families that volunteered.

The program ended in 1958 with the advent of the automated 1959 USAF radar network SAGE and the US Army networks "Missile Master". Information for this article came from newspapers and talking with Mrs. Anna Salway, Bob Cummings and Shelia Schweitzer. Anyone who might have pictures or more information please contact Peg Nolan. ~

Marcellus Observer October 19, 1945

Editor Makes Trip to Charming Domain of Famous "Lonesome Tree" Tree Planted By Buffalo Minister 55 Years Ago



residents of this community for more than a half century. Observer Photo "Woodman, spare that tree, Touch not a single bough; In youth it sheltered me, And I'll protect it now."

Those words run through the mind of Rev. George S. G. Hares, pastor of the Woodside Methodist church of Buffalo, every time he comes home and sees the "Lonesome Tree," situated on the Masters farm, south of Marcellus.

This outstanding tree, visible as it stands alone on a ridge a few miles south of the village was planted by Rev. Hares and his father,

when they lived on that farm back about 1890, when the minister was a small boy.

"The tree was planted in the spring of 1890," Rev. Hares tells this paper. "I expect I could find the exact date in father's diary. It is a hard sugar maple, and when it was planted it was about three inches through. Now it is ten or more inches through and stands about forty feet high."

Always intrigued by the tree as it stood out by itself on the landscape, sometimes waving in the summer breeze and again bracing itself against the icy blasts of winter, this writer recently made his way to the tree to obtain a close-up picture. From the distant roads the tree always seemed small, and in the twenty years that we have watched it come into foliage and then become naked in the fall winds, it hasn't seemed to change in stature.

A quarter of a mile behind the barns on the Masters farm we saw the tree. Up to that time that

was the nearest we had ever approached it. Then we walked toward it, and it loomed larger as we came nearer. It seemed a bit thrilling to be approaching the tree that each of our children had hailed from afar during their young lives, and had wondered what it looked like "near-to."

Beautiful Panorama

Soon we reached the summit of the hill and stood near the tree. There, below us, was spread the valley of Marcellus, dotted with tiny homes, clumps of autumn-colored woods and lazy, winding roads. Off in the silent distance lay the Mulroy farm, and near it the Murphy farm, their silos standing out white and clear on the landscape. Further on, the Presbyterian steeple pointed toward the heavens. It was a beautiful Saturday afternoon and the landscape was bathed in the autumn sunshine, and here we were in the quiet domain of the "Lonesome Tree." Standing near us was the famous tree itself, much like a king overlooking his kingdom. For over a half century this monarch had braved the elements to guard the peaceful valley below. Many mortals who had gazed upon the tree as it stood in lonely vigil were now, themselves sleeping in that valley.

"My father was a great lover of trees," said Rev. Hares. "He would not cut a tree if he could avoid it. Father bought the farm about 1877 and planted an orchard. Some of these trees are still alive along the roadside. Just south of the 'Lonesome Tree' was a wonderful cherry tree, now long since gone."

Rev. and Mrs. Hares spend their summers at Otisco Lake in the Syratisco Colony. They have two sons in the service, and each summer the family drives through the valley so they can look at the famous tree.

The tree has become well known to local people. It's inaccessibility has added to it's mystery and glamour, and although many have seen it, few have made their way to the summit to touch this patriarch of a thousand storms.

Submitted by Peg Nolan



Note: This 1945 Observer photo taken from the Freeman farm looking south shows the tree (in oval). The line across the middle is the Syracuse-Auburn trolley right-of-way which became the Lee Mulroy highway in 1961. The building at the left of center was the barn on the east side of Bishop Hill Road (and south of the present Lee Mulroy highway).

One Hundred Years Ago in Marcellus

Marcellus Observer December 3, 1915 **OBITUARY** (Henry Sylvester Jones died November 23, 1915)

Henry Sylvester Jones was born Oct. 18, 1844, on West Hill, Marcellus, son of Henry Jones and Ann Rich. He was fifth son of ten children, 8 sons and 2 daughters. It is of local interest to state that the house in which he was born stood just west of the present George D. Share place, the house later moved on farther west, and his son and daughter, Charles E. and Addie, were both born in the same house. His parents came from Ubley, England, where they were married, and they came here March 13, 1831, locating on West Hill. ...

Mr. Jones was employed by Charles Hooper as foreman in the finishing room in the furniture shop many years, and he later became worker with and later member of the firm with S. C. Hooper in the furniture and undertaking business, located where the laundry is now. His long experience in undertaking began in 1887, nearly 30 years ago, and he has been actively engaged since. He attended the Methodist church ... and united with the church in 1878. Since then he has been among the most influential and aggressive members, honored with office holding, as trustee, etc. Readily a musician, he led the church choir many years. He was united in marriage to Emma Woodbridge July 15, 1868, in Marcellus, by Rev. Thomas Youngman of the Methodist church.

Deceased was among the early members of Morning Star Lodge, F. & A. M., No. 524 of Marcellus. He has long held membership in both the Onondaga County Undertaker's association and the New York State Embalmers' association. He was first to recommend and agitate for the establishment of the now beautiful Highland cemetery, located on West Hill, Marcellus, foreseeing the need, which is true today, with the fast filling of the limited space of the old village cemetery back of the Presbyterian church. He had long been secretary and trustee of Highland Cemetery association and had ever held it among his greatest activities, personally working for the improvement and advancement of this much-prized local institution.

The surviving relatives are his mourning widow, one son, Charles E. Jones, one daughter, Mrs. Fred J. Uttley, and three granddaughters, Misses Amy and Frances Jones and Helen Uttley, all of Marcellus. ...

The funeral was held Friday, Nov. 26, at 2:30 p.m. Rev. W. Scott Tompkins of the Marcellus Methodist church officiated. ... ~

Marcellus Observer October 8, 1915

MOVING PICTURES SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE PARISH HOUSE.

"Neal of the Navy" sixth episode. "The Cavern of Death."

"The Isolated House." a Sherlock Holmes detective story by Sir Conan Doyle, in three parts.

Pathe News, showing the subway disaster in New York City and other current events.

"Jacko, the Lovesick Monk." a one reel comedy.

Show starts at 7:30. Admission 10c. ~

Marcellus Observer September 17, 1915

WE NEEDED A NOAH TO FORETELL THE FLOOD

Onondaga and Cayuga counties were visited by severe storms in early morning, late afternoon and early evening of Monday. ... torrential rains, the total fall in less than twenty hours aggregating about 2 1/2 inches. The floods of water caused great havoc ... to manufacturing plants, dwellings, railroad tracks and highways, the damage running into big figures. ...

The floods caused great damage throughout the Marcellus valley, Nine Mile creek overflowing. Manufacturing plants in Marcellus were damaged to a considerable extent and the lower Crown mills were obliged to shut down. ... All along Nine Mile creek bridges were washed away and highways torn up. ...

Marcellus township suffers ruined roads, sluices and bridges. Supervisor Kelly stating that \$10,000 will hardly put them back. The Iron bridge at Russell's is down at one end, the abutment washed out, and the same of the iron bridge at Slate Hill. ... Many spots were undermined, great holes gouged beneath the road surface, as was true at the foot of East Hill, Marcellus. ... and a river flowed down Reed street and covered the lowland, almost an acre of it. ... It is generally conceded by many who have lived here 30 to 40 years that Nine Mile Creek was two feet or more higher than ever before.

Crown Mills in Marcellus had water over the floors on the weave and dye room of lower mill and the dye and fuller rooms of upper mill. The cost to them will be great in cleaning up, and this is true also of the Bye and Lawless paper mills, both having flooded floors, and they are handicapped by the closed road to Martisco station.

Next to this comes the greatest damage of all, the Morgan bridge at Town Line near Martisco, loss to the Town of Camillus and to Mr. Morgan. He suffers the greatest personal loss of any one known. ... Mr. Morgan is like a man ruined and starting life anew. ... ~

Business Member Directory Please Patronize These Businesses

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Marcellus Historical Society P.O. Box 165, 18 North St. Marcellus, NY 13108-0165

*****NEW Website Address:*****

www.marcellushistoricalsociety.org

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization

U. S. Postage Paid

Marcellus, NY 13108

Permit Number 165

<u>NEXT MEETING (Annual Meeting):</u> Sunday, November 8th, 2 p.m.

Sunday, November 6th, 2 p.

INSIDE:

- * John L. Sullivan
- * Sky Watchers
- * Lonesome Tree
- * Henry Sylvester Jones
- * 100 Years Ago in Marcellus

(Your dues are paid through Dec. 31st of the year on the label.)

Postal Customer Local

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Join Our Society Today!	Name:
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Available Collectibles	
The New Pucker Street, Since 1953 by John Curtin \$28	Phone:
Pucker Street by John Curtin	
The Town He Loved So Well by James Quinn \$20	E-mail:
Around Marcellus by Leslie Church Kraus\$20	
Nine Mile Country by Kathryn Heffernan\$20	<u>Oty Item Description</u> <u>Cost Ea Total</u>
Centennial History of the Town of Marcellus\$15	
Olden Day Stories by Lawrence F. Mahoney\$10	
Otisco Lake Community by Roger Trendowski \$23	
Otisco Lake Map 1868\$13	
Farewell Old Girl by J. Michael Kelly\$15	
Ruth Anne Reagan Prints of Marcellus\$20	
Ruth Reed Cummings Prints	
Jan Debevic Prints\$10-\$13	
Official Marcellus Afghans: blue, green\$45	
Marcellus, When Wool Was King, Pictorial\$ 5	Make Checks Payable to: Total \$
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