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# MARCELLUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

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ISSUE NO. 02

SEPTEMBER 1996

PAGE 01

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## **SOCIETY TO HOST MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE AND HISTORIC TOUR OF VILLAGE**

Get ready to put on your walking shoes and come out and enjoy a beautiful Autumn day in Marcellus. The Marcellus Historical Society is hosting a Village of Marcellus historic walking (or driving) tour in conjunction with an open house at our museum on Saturday October 5th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Our museum, which is located on the second floor of the Marcellus Village Hall on Slocombe Ave., houses what we believe is the largest collection of historical artifacts of any town in Central New York. The 2000 square foot space contains some 1500 artifacts, over 800 photographs and thousands of historical documents, all from days gone by in the Village and Town of Marcellus.

The museum has been completely rearranged over the past few months for the open house. The collection has been reorganized, and completely re-labeled and features new expanded displays on the Crown Woolen Mills, churches, businesses and people of Marcellus - all to give members of the community the most comprehensive look at our town's past that is currently possible. We have discovered that many people are not aware that we have such a museum above the village hall. Included in the collection is the actual bell from the top of the upper Crown Woolen Mill and furniture, which was made in the Marcellus Furniture Factory in the late 1800's and thousands of other artifacts. If you have never seen this collection, the open house is a must for young and old alike. If you have seen the collection, there are so many changes it's worth revisiting.

The Historic walking Tour includes open houses at the Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian and Episcopal churches from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. We are planning to have a speaker at each church who will provide a verbal history of the church at the top and bottom of every hour. A guide for the entire tour will be available at the museum beginning at 10:00 a.m. The guide points out historic structures and sights within the Village of Marcellus, and provides historic information about each sight. Hopefully the weather will cooperate and people of all ages can enjoy a beautiful Autumn walk through our village. If it rains we hope that you will still come and see our museum. By the way, the open house and tour are both free of charge! If you are a senior citizen and need a ride to the museum, call 673-3365 before October 1st.

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## **ABOUT THE MARCELLUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Marcellus Historical Society was formed in 1960 and has grown this year to over 200 members. The purpose of the organization is to preserve the history of Marcellus, which was created in 1794. The society accomplishes this in many ways, from collecting artifacts pertaining to the history of Marcellus in our museum, to writing books on the 202-year history of Marcellus.

The main goal of the society right now, aside from the continued collection and preservation of the history of Marcellus, is to obtain a new museum building in which to house and display our collection. A museum building, which can be open to the public on a regular basis, and handicapped accessible. We are asking members of the community to show their support for a new museum building by joining the Marcellus Historical Society as supporting members. With a large membership we will be able to get the political support and grants necessary to obtain a new museum building. A membership form can be found on the last page of this newsletter. Please consider supporting this great community project by joining today.

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**HISTORICAL NOTES -- by Bob O'Neal**

Thanks to Edmund Reed's fine newspaper "The Observer" we have the answer to our question in issue number one (of our newsletter) and other interesting facts. As of April 24, 1879, Michael Shehan had a place of business at "the willow tree" where he has dry goods, boots, and shoes for sale and takes orders for laundry. On the same date an article told about the Cornet Band having played at the new Shehan store the last Saturday evening. On May 8 it was reported that the store had received a coat of paint and new plank walk in front. The new Cornet Band was mentioned in an advertisement as the sponsor for a grand social ball at Alvord's Hall, May 16. The Springstead Orchestra will perform.

From the May 1, 1879 edition:

"Our streets are full of people these warm evenings. Remember the May party (Alvord's Hall Grand Social Ball May 16, 1879, Springstead Orchestra, Dancing tickets 50 cents) to be given by (Cornet) band. The man with his hand organ has put in an appearance. (I assume there was no monkey.)

Thinking about the competition there was Mr. Sarr. Someone papered and repaired James Sarr's Store. The store made this offer in the Observer: DRY GOODS, GROCERIES, NOTIONS, BUTTER AND EGGS TAKEN IN EXCHANGE. Another note from the past- you didn't always need money you could barter. Sarr's store was not located by a tree but at the corner of Main and Cherry Streets.

The first issue of the Observer complained that there was no library or reading room in Marcellus. "Young gents lounge around stores and annoy customers." A club at the White building for young gents was supposed to remedy this. W.J. D'Aran was President, E.C. Moses, Vice President, E.T. VanVranken, Secretary, and J.F. Decoundres, Treasurer. Marcellus has always had an intellectual side. This has not changed. In 1996 we have a fine village library with the Observer on microfilm in their history room and the Marcellus Historical Society is very active.

Our museum has information on M.J. Lawless, R.A. Julia and Samuel Hooper, each of whom were discussed in the Observer.

An item of interest from the Observer:

"Disappointment is medicine for the soul. It is a good deal like castor oil -- It may be wholesome, It certainly is disagreeable."

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**DID YOU KNOW THAT...**

The first business in Marcellus was the Rice-Bradley Sawmill established in 1795.

The first woolen mill in Marcellus opened in 1812.

The original Alvord House Restaurant was constructed in 1815.

Marcellus first got electricity in 1899.

The last trolley ran through Marcellus in 1930.

The last woolen mill in Marcellus closed in 1961.

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**HOLIDAY DINNER SET**

The annual Marcellus Historical Society holiday dinner for members has been scheduled for Sunday December 1st, 1996. The event will be held at the Marcellus Fire House at 1:30 p.m. A short meeting will be followed by a traditional holiday dinner being served at 2:00 p.m. A presentation on the history of the Marcellus Fire Department will follow the dinner. The price should be under \$10 and will be announced in October. Reservations will be taken through November 15, 1996. Call 673-3365 to reserve your dinner.

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The Marcellus Historical Society News is published and mailed bi-monthly to the homes of everyone in Marcellus, and all of our members outside of Marcellus, by the Marcellus Historical Society, P.O. Box 165, Marcellus, N.Y. 13108. (315)-463-4160

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**NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

The Marcellus Historical Society is the fastest growing historical association in the State of New York. At our current growth rate we may soon be the largest as well. I have been overwhelmed by the incredible interest Marcellus residents share in the history of our town and village. Having such a large supporting membership will enable us to receive the political support we need to be able to construct and open a new Marcellus History Museum. I invite you to join the society as a supporting member today. I also encourage you to become involved in our many preservation projects. With your support we will obtain a fine museum complex, which the community can be proud of. I wish to extend my personal thanks to the over 200 people who have already joined the society this year. I would also like to thank the local business owners who have made it possible for us to mail this newsletter to all Marcellus residents on a bi-monthly basis.

Sincerely, Bill Reagan

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**SOCIETY PUBLISHING TWO NEW BOOKS**

The historical society has compiled a complete index to people, businesses and photographs for Kathryn C. Heffernan's "Nine Mile Country", the history of Marcellus, NY. The book contains the names of over 1,300 Marcellus people and hundreds of businesses which were in Marcellus. The index is being printed as a joint project by the Marcellus Historical Society and the Marcellus Free Library.

The second book is "Marcellus Through The Years". It is a chronological history of Marcellus from 1776 to 1996 listing everything from how the town was created to when it got telephone service. The book contains many previously unpublished historic Marcellus photographs as well. The index will be available at our open house October 5th, "Marcellus Through The Years" may also be available by then.

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**GEORGE HAGGET WILL BE MISSED**

Marcellus Historical Society Trustee George Hagget passed away in July. George was a member of the society for some 20 years along with his wife Doris. George was well liked and always very cheerful at meetings. He was always willing to help out when asked. His good nature will be missed by all that knew him.

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**FOUR NEW TRUSTEES ELECTED**

Recently the society voted to add three more trustees to its board of directors, bringing the number of trustees to six. Bruce Widger, Tom Reagan and Peg Nolan were elected to fill the positions. A trustee oversees business matters, as well as the overall direction of the society. At the August meeting, Don Kilcoyne was elected to take the place of George Hagget as a trustee. Thanks to all four for their willingness to participate.

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**PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED**

We are asking anyone who has photographs with historic significance to Marcellus to please contact us. We would like to have the photos donated to our collection or we can copy them at our own expense. These would include photos of buildings, businesses, scenic views, or people. We are looking for photos from the 1960's and back, or any photos which are of buildings or scenes which no longer exist. If you have any please call Bill Reagan at 463-4160.

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**LOOKING FOR YOUR FAMILY HISTORY**

We are looking for any family histories that have Marcellus ties to add to our collection at the museum. We wish to save as much information about Marcellus people as possible. This helps when people from out of town call to trace their family history. If you have a family history which you would like to supply us a copy of, or if you need assistance compiling one, call John Curtin, 673-3660, or Peg Nolan, 673-1765.

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**THANK YOU**

The historical society would like to thank each of the businesses that supported our organization by advertising in this newsletter, as well as the Marcellus Pharmacy for the donation of film for society projects, and Advanced Color Technologies of Syracuse for their generous donation of signs.

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Marcellus Historical Society  
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Marcellus, NY 13108

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**Special Announcement Inside!**

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PAGE 04

**MEETING SCHEDULE**

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

September 10th	7:00 pm:	Jan DeBevic & Bonniebelle O'Neal. The society's historical clothing collection. At the Masonic Temple, 46 E. Main St., Marcellus.
October 6th	2:00 pm:	Rev. David Olcott. History and tour of Rose Hill Baptist Church & cemetery. At the Rose Hill Baptist Church.
November 3rd	2:00 pm:	Jane Tracy, Onondaga Town Historian. The Onondaga County Poor House. At the Marcellus Fire House, Slate Hill Road.
December 1st	1:30 pm:	Annual Holiday Dinner. Featuring the history of the Marcellus Fire Department. At the Marcellus Fire House, Slate Hill Road.
January 5th	2:00 pm	TBA

**The Marcellus Historical Society Officers**

President:	Bill Reagan	463-4160
Vice Pres:	Sidney Tuthill	673-2990
Treasurer:	Richard Smith	673-1532
Secretary:	Joyce Murphy	673-2528
Secretary:	Doris Hagget	673-3567
Trustee:	George Hagget	673-3567
Trustee:	Robert Negus	689-7861
Trustee:	Mike Plumpton	673-3453

**General Meeting Schedule**

November Thru April: 1st Sunday 2:00 pm  
May Thru October: 2nd Tuesday 7:00 pm

At The Marcellus Fire House  
Slate Hill Road, Marcellus, NY  
(location subject to change)

**Membership Form- Pass on to a Friend**

Please include me as a member of the  
Marcellus Historical Society

Check one:  Single \$3.00  
 Any couple \$5.00  
 Family with children \$7.00

(Join now and your dues count for 1997.)

Payable To: Marcellus Historical Society

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Addr: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and Mail to:  
Mr. Richard Smith  
3 Meadow St.  
Marcellus, NY 13108