



MARCELLUS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 8, Issue 1

Winter 2003



The Marcellus Observer April 28, 1894

BRIEF SKETCHES OF EARLY AND LATER TIMES IN MARCELLUS.

Water Power on Nine Mile Creek.

*(Continuing from the last Newsletter at the location of
Beebe's saw mill):*

Tracing down the stream we come to the saw and feed mill of Wm. Nightingale, then the saw and cider mill recently run by Henry Cornwell but now unoccupied. Then we come to the flax mill of William Russell, the only one in the town, originally built for a saw mill, and next is the feed and cider mill of Wm. Nightingale, Jr., on the site of which was formerly a large and flourishing tannery, built and run for many years by Lincoln Chapman and Walter Bradley. They did a large and lucrative business, as a firm, until from failing health Mr. Bradley retired in good circumstances, when Mr. Chapman continued the business until the tannery was burned. The site lay comparatively idle over thirty years. It was owned for several years by Jerome Johnson previous to his selling to Michael Mulroy, who sold it to Nightingale.

The property has been put in good repair and quite a

(Continued on page 3)

From The President ...

Members closed out the year 2002 with an enjoyable time at the Christmas Dinner and we look forward with anticipation to 2003 with many activities planned by our community.

The Village celebrates its 150th Birthday this year and a committee is busy working on activities beginning in May and continuing through September for all to enjoy.

The Society's horse watering trough given in memory of Hiram Clift will be permanently placed on Main St. and the buggy owned by Dr. Israel Parsons is being restored thanks to a grant from the Heritage Grant Fund sponsored by Senator John A. DeFrancisco.

Volunteers at the museum will be busy redoing displays, indexing pictures and inventorying the remaining artifacts. Many hands make the work load lighter and we welcome all volunteers to assist with these projects.

Beginning in May we will be expanding hours at the museum and in September, the Society will host a walking tour of the village. Marcellus holds wonderful memories for all so please plan to attend the celebrations and show your pride in our Home Town.

Happy New Year

Peg Nolan ~

Village of Marcellus Sesquicentennial

On Arbor Day, April 25th, as part of the celebration of its 150th Anniversary, the Village will contribute to the National Arbor Day Foundation, planting 150 trees in one of the national forests.

The May issue of the Newsletter will detail the many activities planned this year to commemorate the founding of the Village of Marcellus. ~

In Remembrance

John "Jack" C. Crysler - November 18, 2002

~

EVENTS SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule of events is as follows:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| Sunday February 9, 2003 | 2 p.m. |
| <u>Chris Fesko.</u>
"Agriculture in the Classroom" | |
| Sunday March 9, 2003 | 2 p.m. |
| <u>Carol Bailey, Lyons Town Historian</u>
"Cathedrals of the Land and Surrounding Edifices" | |
| Sunday, April 13, 2003 | 2 p.m. |
| To be announced | |
| Sunday, May 18, 2003 | 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 2003

- President: Peg Nolan.....673-1765
E-mail: pegnolan@hotmail.com
Vice President: Bruce Widger673-9142
E-mail: DrBWWidger@aol.com
Treasurer: Hollis Abbott.....673-1753
E-mail: habbott1@twcny.rr.com
Secretary: Joyce Murphy.....673-2528

Trustees and Term End

- John Curtin (2003).....673-3660
E-mail: jcurtin2@twcny.rr.com
Mary Tuthill (2003).....673-2990
Tom Leonard (2004).....673-4273
E-mail: TomLeonard35@msn.com
Doug Nightingale (2004).....673-2539
E-mail: djn0409@dreamscape.com
Mary Jane Domurat (2005).....673-4896
Dick Smith (2005).....673-1532

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

Web Site

The Historical Society web site is maintained by Bill Reagan and can be viewed at:

mhs.marcellusny.com

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Renewed Members

The following people have renewed their membership since our last newsletter :

Bill & Carol Abbott, Brian & Debi Abbott & Family, Hollis & Nancy Abbott, Mark & Lynn Abbott & Family, Margaret Abrahamson, Jacob E. Amidon, Dolores J. Austin, Anita D. Bedford-Catlin, Elizabeth & Ron Bond, Mike Brilbeck, Harold & Marge Chapman, Edward & Marilyn Copley, Lucille Culotti, Myron & Barbara Egtvedt, Linda Greenfield, Tyrone & Sylvia King, Elizabeth Lathrop, Tom & Sue Leonard, Robert & Alice Mahan, Pat Marcel, Helen Mohn, Pierre & Mary Montague, Jon Nicholson, Joe, Peg & Marni Nolan, Robert L. Post, Frances Randall, Carol B. Reagan, Jim & Jean Reagan, George & Bev Schmidt, Sheila Schweitzer, Richard & Frances Smith, Robert & Carol Stalker, Leda Stopyro, Mary Parsons Welch, Dr. Bruce & Mary Widger, Leona Wilcox, Bob & Kay Wilson, David & Linda Wilson, Joan R. Zukowski. ~

Recent Acquisitions

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

Janet Warner for 7 Marcellus yearbooks; **Michael Plumpton** for St. John's Episcopal Church 1950 cookbook and ruler from Foxes Electrical; **Marcellus Post Office and Mary Jane Domurat** for 2 postal stampers from Marcellus Falls; **Jack Church** for 2 Marcellus Fire Dept. jackets; **John Weeks** for cash register from Bob Burns Gas Station; **Harold & Marjorie Chapman** for arm chair covers made by Mabel Austin; **Jack Priest** for pictures of Priest Chevrolet back to Pilot Blacksmith Shop; **Sam Murphy** for Vietnam Army uniform; **Ed Murphy** for 15 Hardy Boy books, school desk, cradle used by Linda Nightingale Perry in her shop; **Jim Hamilton** for picture of Slate Hill School with identified students; **Bruce Widger** for single & double Marcellus Grange chairs. ~

No Memory of Car 220 as a Marcellus diner

No one seems to remember the trolley-car-turned-diner that was pictured in the last Newsletter. The only comment we heard was that it was not located in Marcellus as indicated in the book. ~

Museum Hours

Call for appointment to visit the Museum:

Hollis Abbott.....673-1753

Bruce Widger.....673-9142

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large feed business is carried on and in the fall a large quantity of cider is made there. We come along to the village and we find that the early sites of the first saw mill and grist mill and the later furniture factory of Charles Hooper are unoccupied, save that the furniture building, the machinery of which was moved to Fort Edward, is in good repair and now owned and used by Gallup Brothers to store teasels in. On the opposite side of the creek Robert Baker has a saw and feed mill which also does quite a large business, more especially in the winter, or when logs are plenty.

The Marcellus Observer May 5, 1894

History of the Old Stone Mill, Early Distilleries, the Upper Woolen Factory etc..

The old stone grist mill now in ruins, was built in 1827-8 by Edward Talbot and Joseph Taylor. It was one of the finest structures in the village in its day and was run by this firm for a while and then passed into the hands of Edward Talbot, father-in-law of N. G. Case, who had charge of it something like twenty years. He sold it to Beach Brothers of Rochester, N. Y., who did not hold it long but sold it back to Talbot. It was successively owned after him by several different parties by N. G. Case and Jonathan Rowling, "California" Baker, Deacon Beach, William J. Machan, Sprague and Burton, Hezekiah Shepard, Causten Platt, Captain John Sanford, Amos Jackson, Jephthae Hunt and Hiram Bronson, Hiram Bronson, S. M. Bronson, and by N. R. Shephard until it burned in May 1889. It was a great loss to the village and the surrounding community. The site is now owned by W. H. Gallup and P. V. C. Amidon and it is to be hoped that it may be utilized ere long for some manufacturing purpose.

Just below the bridge on the east side of the creek was once a distillery built by Daniel Hutchinson, probably the first on the stream. This was succeeded by another, larger, on the same site built by John R. Kellogg. On the opposite side of the creek from this, or west side, was another distillery and also a brewery, both built a little after the Hutchinson distillery and run by William Machan. In this distillery Isaac Benham was for a score or more years the principal manager. The brewery was managed by other parties. They had a large cellar near the stone mill for storing beer. Machan had a yard and sheds for feeding cattle and hogs (near where the) present Dunn house now stands.

Continuing down the stream we next come to the

upper Marcellus Woolen mill. The first factory built on this site was erected by the brothers, Robert and Thomas Dyer, about the time of the war of 1812. It was built for the manufacturing of woolen cloth, and carding and cloth dressing was also carried on in the same building. In that day and for many years after, or till near 1850, there was a great deal of hand carding done, and spinning in the homes was very common after the wool was made into rolls at the carding mill, and when spun it was either woven in the home or taken to the weaver and cloth dresser and finished ready to be made into garments both for every day and Sunday wear. Four yards, one yard wide, of pressed flannel made a lady a nice dress. The men wore what was called sheep's gray cloth or white mixed with butternut color, where they had not black sheep's wool to give the color, some of the farmers were particular to keep black sheep for this purpose and some of the best families wore such cloth. The Dyer Bros. run the factory about four years and then sold out to John Rhodes, father of Thomas Rhodes of our village, and Bishop N. Parsons. Thomas Dyer moved to Canada and his brother Robert to Dryden, N.Y., and subsequently to Canada. Rhodes and Parsons continued the business about two years when through the treachery of a friend the mill was sold on foreclosure and bought in by Samuel Godard who held a mortgage on the site being the original owner of the water power before the mill was built and sold it to Austin Godard and Ansel Kellogg. Austin Godard sold his part to the late William J Machan and Kellogg his part to Joseph Taylor. Machan and Taylor run the mill as a firm awhile and succeeded by Machan and Parsons until it was burnt in 1847. After it was burnt Machan rebuilt the brick or west part of the present building in 1848, and run a woolen factory awhile longer when a Linen Company of quite prominent men, including in number, Horace Greeley, Wm. H. Seward, Chester Moses and one Leavitt and others, was formed, and bought out Machan for the purpose of turning the mill into a linen factory.

Expensive machinery was bought in the old country, and also one invented by Leavitt was put in, to manufacture flax cotton, that is, to work flax as cotton, but the undertaking proved an entire failure. After this Chester Moses, father of

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Lucius Moses now of Syracuse, bought the mill of this Linen Company at a very low figure and reconverted it into a woolen factory somewhere along in the fifties.

The Marcellus Observer May 12, 1894

History of the Upper Woolen Mill Continued.

The expensive machinery of the Linen Company was removed, and was considered so worthless that most of it was sold for old iron. It was along in the fall of 1855 when Chester Moses, a man of energy, of honor and integrity, who had succeeded in refitting and refurbishing the building as a woolen factory, started it up again. He soon employed James Fitten of Skaneateles as head superintendent, and everything went along apparently quite satisfactory for some two years or more when by treachery of his superintendent he became suddenly quite heavily embarrassed. While he was away in Ohio buying wool, Fitten, who was directed to proceed to New York and draw money and send to him, drew out a large sum and absconded to England. Detectives were put on his track and he was brought back to this country but he so managed his case that very little was recovered from him. His daguerreotype is still kept in the mill as a memento of his perfidy. Mr. Moses in his embarrassment, arranged as best he could with his creditors, and after awhile by the aid of his son, Lucius, who came home from Minnesota and went into business with him, he was enabled to pay up the last debt. James Ainsworth, who had been assistant, succeeded Fitten as superintendent and J. C. Sayre succeeded Ainsworth, and after a time became a member of the firm and for many years the firm name was Moses & Co.

During the war the factory did a large and paying business and for several years after, and was doing a flourishing business at the time of Mr. Moses' death May 13, 1870. The factory was continued after this for several years under the name of Moses & Co., or until Lucius Moses bought out Mr. Sayre. Lucius Moses was then sole proprietor for several years, during which time there were some additions and improvements made to the buildings. In 1886 the property was turned over into a Stock Company, consisting of Lucius Moses, President, H. Soule of Syracuse, Vice President, Joseph Willetts of Skaneateles, Secretary, C. N. Case, Treasurer, Simon Dodd, Superintendent, and James Dodd, and was called the Marcellus Woolen Mills Company. They continued it with varying success for a few years

more until they sold to the Crown Mills Company in 1890, Mr. Moses still retaining a share of the stock. The officers of this company are S. W. Barker, President, Lucius Moses, Vice President, Arthur T. Sullivan, Treasurer, and E. Moir, Superintendent.

Under the name, Crown Mills, reincorporated in 1890, the Marcellus Woolen Mill has been run in connection with the lower mill. The upper mill has undergone considerable repairs and improvements. Electric lights have been introduced, a new water wheel, a new steam engine and boiler put in, and considerable new and improved modern machinery added, and the mill has been run with an increased force of help and has turned out a larger variety of fabrics. This mill is now quite complete and capable of turning out the very best goods. It consumes about 400,000 lbs of wool annually, and the output of cloths is from 125,000 to 160,000 yards per year, according to the times and demand.

...Submitted by John Curtin

(More about the mills of Marcellus in later issues.)

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 Permit Number 18

Web Site: mhs.marcellusny.com

Next Meeting:
Sunday, February 9th at 2 p.m.

INSIDE:

- * *Village Sesquicentennial*
- * *More about the Mills on
Nine Mile Creek*
- * *Car 220 - Where are you?*

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