



Marcellus Historical Society News

Volume 15 Issue 1

Winter 2010

Our 50th Anniversary!



Marcellus Observer January 21, 1960

Historical Study Club First Meeting

The first meeting of the Historical Study Club will meet at the St. John's Parish House on Monday, January 25th at 8:00 p.m.

The speaker for the evening will be Frank Griffing, a life resident of Marcellus.

Everyone is invited to attend.

Marcellus Observer February 18, 1960

Marcellus Historical Society Has 1st Meeting

On the evening of Jan. 25th a group of 18 local residents interested in the history of Marcellus and vicinity met at St. John's Parish House and took part in an informal discussion, asking questions and contributing information about their knowledge of Marcellus. Not all of the questions were answered, but each person learned some facts and enjoyed the humorous stories of happenings of former years.

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Griffing were special guests and everyone enjoyed Mr. Griffing's vivid description of buildings & activities of Main St. as it was in the 1890's. Mr. Jack Withey, whose father came from England and settled in Clintonville, reminisced about events of that locality.

The evening closed with the sharing of a birthday cake presented to Frank Griffing in honor of his 81st birthday which he was observing that day.

At the request of those present it was decided to have a similar meeting and continue the discussion on February 24th. Other interested people of all ages are cordially invited to attend the meeting and share their knowledge.

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Those attending the first meeting on January 25, 1960 were: Wallace Campbell, Eva Crysler, Ethel Feeney, Frank & Ruth Griffing, Jack Haley, Robert Harrison Sr., Helen Hopkins, Emerson & Mary Paterson, Henry Phillips, Barbara Pittenger, Michael Plumpton, Joyce & Stephen Potucek, Lucy Sweet, Kate Webb and John Withey Sr.

Marcellus Observer February 18, 1960

Marcellus Historical Club Meeting

The second meeting of the Marcellus Historical Club will be at St. John's Parish House Wednesday, February 24th at 8:00 p.m. at which time there will be an election of officers. All are invited to come.

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Those attending the second meeting on February 24, 1960 were: Maynard & Amelia Clark, Mr. & Mrs. John Fishlock, Frank & Ruth Griffing, Jack Haley, Robert Harrison Sr., Helen Hopkins, Michael Plumpton, Marjorie Seeley, Amos & Hattie Spinks, Lucy Sweet, Alice Thompson and Carl & Jennie Wood.

Officers elected were: Michael Plumpton, President; Lucy Sweet, Secretary-Treasurer.

Marcellus Observer March 17, 1960

Historical Society Meeting

The Marcellus Historical Club will meet at the home of Mr. Steve Hunt, 17 E. Main St. on Monday, March 28th at 8 p.m. Mr. Richard Wright, president of the Onondaga County Historical Society will be the guest.

EVENTS SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule of events is as follows:

Sunday, February 14, 2010 **2 p.m.**
To Be Announced

Sunday, March 14, 2010 **2 p.m.**
At The Marcellus Library, 32 Maple Street
 "Traveling in the Late 1800's"

Sunday, April 11, 2010 **2 p.m.**
At The Marcellus Library, 32 Maple Street
 "The Erie Canal"

If you have a suggestion for a program, please
 contact Doug Nightingale.

*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 2010

President: Peg Nolan..... 673-1765
 E-mail: peganolan1@hotmail.com
 Vice President: Doug Nightingale..... 673-2539
 E-mail: djn0409@windstream.net
 Treasurer: Hollis Abbott..... 673-1753
 E-mail: habbott1@twcny.rr.com
 Secretary: Carriebeth Pottinger..... 673-3187
 E-mail: cb90009@aol.com

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 2010 Jamie Johnston..... 673-1160
 2011 Mary Jane Domurat..... 673-4896
 E-mail: mjdomurat@msn.com
 2011 Patricia Sanborn..... 488-3610
 2012 John Curtin 673-3660
 E-mail: jcurtin2@twcny.rr.com
 2012 Bob Wilson..... 673-2550
 E-mail: 89rw@twcny.rr.com

Correspondence Secretary: Joyce Murphy..673-2528

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.

Please direct comments or questions to Hollis Abbott.

From The President ...

A big thank you to the volunteers that made 2009 a great success. We had over 640 visitors come for research and tours at the Steadman House. We especially enjoy having the enthusiasm of the fourth grade classes that come in the spring. Olde Home Days brings back those who have moved away and our local residents for a walk through Marcellus history. Having Santa Claus at the house was a lot of fun for many children, parents and volunteers.

Projects completed this year included: insulating the garage, erecting the Bell Tower, replacing the front porch railings, capping the chimneys, installing Historical markers for the Steadman House and the Plaster Mill, preserving several scrapbooks and purchasing new mannequins. Donations and volunteers made all this possible.

This year we are celebrating the **50th Anniversary** of the Historical Society and one goal will be raising money to have the final coating put on the driveway and parking lot. I am looking forward to new projects and visiting with and helping our guests at the house.

Happy New Year!

Peg Nolan ~

Our Thanks for Cash Donations from:

Chuck & Mary Jo Paul (for mannequin)

Roger & Joan Field

John P. Curtin (Book Royalties)

Hollis & Nancy Abbott

Lyn & Joe Duffy (Raffle Winners)

James & Laura Duncan

(In Memory of Jean Moir Miller)

James P. Reagan Agency

Joy L. Buffan

(In Memory of Sharon Yackel Winter)

Steadman House Wish List

- 1 - Top coating for the driveway & parking lot.
- 2 - New Gutters for east side of house (about \$600).
- 3 - New Folding Chairs.

Steadman House Hours:

Sundays 1 to 3 pm (except meeting Sundays)

Thursdays 1 to 4 pm

Or By Appointment:

John Curtin - 673-3660 Joy Buffan - 673-1832

In Remembrance

Ruth S. Jansen - December 26, 2009

Steadman House Contributions

Our thanks to the **Village Highway Department** for plowing the driveway and parking lot this winter.

Recent Acquisitions

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

Mary Tuthill for Boy Scout pins, Masonic pins, Girl Scout pin, jewelry box, Mercy Flight patch, American flag patch, Marcellus 1794-1996 book, slide projector, 1994 House Tour spindle, Village Cemetery memorial tablet program, Centennial History of Marcellus, porcelain insulator, wooden sled, Howlett Hill Church Christmas ornament, "Florence Brock" performance, Nine Mile Country book, A House Looks On book, Marcellus History 1794-1939, Gone But Not Forgotten Railroad History, Cemetery Tour 1994 video, Marcellus Village Cemetery 1980-85 record, cemetery notebook, Memories of MCS Class of 1939, 1800 census, Reuben E. Dorchester biography, Mrs. E. E. Moir article and obituary, Marcellus Walking Tour script, Interview Guidelines for oral histories, 2 dresses, Magician bank, hat, several slides, slide viewers, ice skates, badminton shuttlecock, timer, slide loader, carousel slide holder, binocular magnifier, organization pins, Kaster Kit, child's tea set, 2 hens & chickens, brass candlesticks, lady's fan, 7 vases, glass candle sticks, 5 dresses, slip, 6 hats, insured home sign, American flag & pole; **Heidi Randell** for Dr. Roth memorial clipping, Mrs. Buser Health Career photos, parade photos, 1960 photos, 1962 Memorial Day Parade, miscellaneous photos, 1963 Commencement program; **Joan Radway Shinnick** for Chi Alpha Mu Sorority pin, red/green pencil 1954-55; **Bruce Widger** for 2 Martisco Paper Co. files; **Jessica Wiers** for 2 winter rug runners; **Dave Bishop** for 1904 MHS Commencement program; **Debbie Gleason** for 2007/2008/2009 Commencement booklets; **Carol Abbott** for 1890 One-Book Course in English; **Peg Nolan** for Bell Tower construction photos, 2009 4th grade tour photos, Christmas ornament St. Francis/First Presbyterian/ Masonic Temple; **Henry B. Hoff** for Stephen Horton history; **Sam Murphy** for 1934 Marcellian; **Christopher Spencer** for Iraq War fatigues; **B.Koloski** for War of 1812 bayonet; **Pat Kinne** for 1935 stapler; **Helen Hopkins** for 4 lady's fans; **Mr. & Mrs. Leo Kelly** for 2 Tuscarora Golf Club scrapbooks; **Judy Gilchrist** for 2 horse blankets, 2 hay hooks, hand-woven blanket, meat saw

and instructions, knife hone, Linsey-Woolsey coverlet, 2 piano shawls, "shift" gown, lace collar, jewelry, pins, cuff links, watch, change purse, slate, binoculars, curling iron, leather suitcase, chamber pot, tote, soap, tailor's iron, horse hitching weight, stereoscope viewer and pictures, electric iron, 2 hen on nest, pictures, ice cream maker, picture of Clara Ellen Amidon Jackson, molasses jug, picture of Euretta Jackson & James Mortimer Jackson, Geddes NY crock, milk separator, cook books, James Bartlett building agreement, Clara Amidon notebook, school photos; **Joy Buffan** for Buffan Family Tree, Baltimore Woods bandana; **Buffan Family** for First Trust & Deposit key chain, Norris Funeral Home pen, US Military currency issued during WW II; **MCS Administration & Board of Education** for small locker from Driver Middle School, scale from MCS nurse's office, MCS baseball jersey, MCS basketball jersey, MCS H.S. Literary plaque with Lew Steadman's name. ~

Gifts for the Gift Shop

During the past decade, we have been offered many items for our Gift Shop to benefit the Society:

John P. Curtin's "Pucker Street" (2003)

Leslie Church Kraus' "Around Marcellus" (2006)

James C. Quinn's

"The Town He Loved So Well" (2007)

John P. Curtin's "The New Pucker Street" (2008)

Richard Hart Phillips' "Bindweed" and

"Ground Hog Song" given by Doris Phillips

Prints of Ruth Ann Reagan's paintings

Prints of Ruth Reed Cummings' paintings

given by Jane Amidon

Prints of John Drummond's "Dried Weeds".

Renewed Members

Since our last newsletter with Sustaining members in bold print and New members underlined:

Brian & Debi Abbott & Family, Mark & Lynn Abbott & Family, **Terry Ballantine**, **Doug & Bev Blanchard**, Mike Brilbeck, Edgar N. Buffan, Kay D. Buffan, William & Martha Cole, William & Marsha Connor, Kathy Coyne, Tim Coyne, Jamie L. Johnston, Tyrone & Sylvia King, Tom Leonard, James Lozott, Jon Nicholson, Doug & Jean Nightingale, Joe & Peg Nolan, Marni Nolan, **Michael Plumpton**, **William J. Randall**, Patricia & Charles Sanborn, Sheila Schweitzer, Nancy Seeley, Richard & Frances Smith, Garth & Gerry Snyder, Leda Stopyro, Lyle & Millicent Welker, **Midge Woods**.

Current membership: 423 ~

THE CREATION OF OUR SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

By Michael Plumpton

Reprinted from the Marcellus Historical Society Newsletter, Volume 5, Issue 3, August 2000, during our Fortieth Anniversary.

In the Summer of 1947, when I was ten years old, my family and I went to Cooperstown. We saw the Farmer's Museum and the James Fenimore Cooper House. From that time on I dreamed about the day I could start a museum in Marcellus, NY.

In the Fall of 1959, some twelve years later, I called Lucy Sweet, the town of Marcellus Historian, and talked to her about starting a Marcellus Historical Club, that's what it was first called. She wasn't sure that there would be that many people interested. I went ahead, and made arrangements for the new group to meet at St. John's Parish Hall in January of 1960.

The Marcellus Historical Club was born. I asked Frank Griffing, a renowned senior citizen, to come and share his memories of Marcellus. It was also his birthday and we had a cake for him.

The first official meeting was on January 25, 1960. Eighteen people attended (see page 1). On November 28, 1960, our name became the Marcellus Historical Society.

After creating the Marcellus Historical Society in 1960, people began to offer us artifacts for a museum. As we had no place to store or display the items, a search was started for a museum building. The Marcellus & Otisco Lake Railway station was no longer in use, so an effort was made to acquire the building. Unfortunately it could not be done at the time and the historic building was purchased by someone else and torn down.

In 1963, a well known Marcellus business man by the name of Stephen Hunt passed away. Mr. Hunt had a passion for local history and had collected many Marcellus artifacts. He displayed them in his own makeshift museum which was in the basement of his building at 19 East Main Street, what was then known as the Hunt building. He had made no provisions in his will as to what was to be done with the collection.

Lester Norris, the executor of Hunt's estate, had spoken to Steve several times about the collection and Steve had verbally indicated to him that he wanted the collection to go to the Historical Society. Thanks to Lester, the bulk of the collection

came to us in early 1964.

At about the same time, the Marcellus Town Board offered the Historical Society use of the two rooms on the second floor of the town hall, which at that time was in the White Memorial Building at 18 E. Main Street. We voted to accept the town's offer and with some help, our first museum became a reality.

Those who helped included: Maynard Clark, Les Shaw, Bob Masters, Robert Harrison, myself and some others I can't recall at the moment. We constructed shelves in the new museum with lumber from the upper Crown Mill which was given by the Moir family. We had a good time getting ready to move in.

Maynard Clark built a storage closet to hold items which we did not wish to display at that time, but as any man knows, the women in the group had the last word. Mabel Hollenbeck and some of the other ladies found some pictures which we had placed in the closet and they made us hang them up.

After opening the new museum, people began donating artifacts to us on a regular basis. It wasn't long before we outgrew the two rooms. In 1968, the Village Board offered to allow us to use the much larger second floor of the village hall at 6 Slocombe Ave. On April 21, 1968; we voted to move our museum to that location and that is where the museum remains today.

Men such as my father, John Plumpton, Roy Bennett and Dick Pollard among others, built tables for the few display cases we had at the time. Mary Bennett and Doris Matteson scrubbed the whole floor on their hands and knees just before the opening day.

At the time, many of us thought that we had more space than we could ever fill. How wrong we were! Our collection has once again outgrown its allotted space and we are hoping to move into a larger building.

Over the years, many other people have helped with the museum. During Stan Impson's term of office, he painted all of the walls in the museum. Stan passed the gavel to Bill Reagan in 1996 and supported the updates and changes in museum displays that Bill spent many hours doing in his first year as President. Stan passed away last year and we still miss him. ~

REVIEWING THE PAST DECADE

By Hollis A. Abbott

Peg Nolan replaced Bill Reagan as president of the Society in 2000 and we continued to receive many additions to our collection and make improvements to the museum.

The Scrapbook Project, which was underway prior to 2000, consisted of covering individual pages of each scrapbook with mylar and indexing every article or name. Today we have 63 scrapbooks preserved with a computerized master index of 51,793 references. In addition, all of Mary Jane Domurat's "Marcellus Memories" in the Marcellus Observer from 1996 to the present have been indexed by Peg Nolan and are available for research with over 32,000 references.

Prior to 2000, Bill Reagan had ordered photo albums for the hundreds of photos held by the Society and this has become an ongoing effort along with indexing each photo to enable faster retrieval. The number of photos has now reached 7,000.

Bringing the inventory listing up to date and putting it on the computer was another large undertaking and requires continuing attention to keep up with the items that are donated. All of the books have also been covered with mylar and the clothing that is not displayed is stored in acid-free boxes.

In March of 2002, the museum at 6 Slocombe Avenue was rewired and new lighting was added along with insulation - Peg and Joe Nolan did the back room. John Curtin installed new windows and blinds were put on all the windows. That June, three air conditioners were purchased with a grant from the Town and Bob and Kay Wilson donated an additional two for the back room. This was a great improvement for the preservation of artifacts as well as added comfort for visitors and volunteers during the summer. In addition, a stair-chair was purchased to make the museum handicap-accessible.

In 2003, the Parsons carriage was restored by Sherman Hollow Coach of Penn Yan and Warner's Auto Body of Marcellus. It is now in the Parsons Room at the Steadman House. In that year, we also received a large bequest from the estate of Joanne M. Robinson and established the "Joanne M. Robinson Research Room".

In 2004, a new sign was placed on the entrance to the building at 6 Slocombe Avenue and we purchased a new computer and slide projector.

The Historical Society donated one of the new street lights for Main Street in 2005 - it is located near

Nojaims.

All of the Marcellus Observers that we have on microfilm were converted to CDs in 2006 so that they can be searched and articles printed from the computer. We also added a television and VCR/DVD that year.

The building committee that was in place under Bill Reagan continued to look for a permanent home for the Society and its growing collection. Plans for a new building were discussed and also the possible purchase of available village property. In the end, the projected cost proved to be more than we were able to raise at the time but in 2006, Lewis and Alma Steadman approached us about the possibility of using their historic 1830's house at 18 North Street for the Historical Society Home. It seemed a perfect solution: to provide the Society with a home and to ensure the preservation of one of the oldest structures in the village.

At the regular meeting of the Historical Society on November 12, 2006, the Steadmans presented their proposal to gift the house at 18 North Street to the Society and the members unanimously voted to accept. On November 22, 2006, the transaction was completed under the guidance of Bernie Reagan. Unfortunately former Mayor Fred Eisenberg, who had been instrumental in coordinating the transfer of the property, died in January of 2007 and the Olde Home Days Committee of 2007 honored the Eisenbergs and the Steadmans for their "Commitment to the Community" and selected Lewis and Alma Steadman and Pat Eisenberg as Grand Marshals for the 2007 Olde Home Days Parade.

In January of 2007, we honored Leda Stopyro for her volunteer work and in the spring, we undertook the task of moving the museum's contents to the Steadman House. All of the windows were covered with a film to protect from ultraviolet damage, the floors were given a protective coating and a security system was installed by Doyle Security Systems. To make the house handicap-accessible, we needed to replace the bathroom on the lower floor and build a new stairway to accommodate a wheelchair lift which was donated by Barbara Parsons Hildreth. Architect Guy Donahoe drew up the plans and Mike O'Brien completed the transformation for the September 16, 2007 Grand Opening. David & Nellie Peatfield gave us several file cabinets and Doris Phillips provided a large map case for the Research Room. An impressive sign for the front yard was donated and

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Bob and Kay Wilson gave the flagpole and also flags for the entry.

The list is long of the volunteers that gave of their time, energy, material and money to make the move to the Steadman House a memorable one (see Newsletter Volume 12, Issue 3). Peg Nolan arranged the exhibits assisted by Jean Nightingale and Joy Buffan, and many volunteers were on hand for the Grand Opening. In October 2007, the house was added to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

In 2008, Tom and Marilyn Schneider provided the lighting for the sign and the flagpole. Van Derhoof Roofing Co. gave us a discount on the roof replacement and Sen. John DeFrancisco obtained a state grant to have the driveway and parking lot paved. A donation helped pay for the removal of a large tree in the back yard and we had a new floor laid in the Tefft room. John Curtin and Dick Smith spent many hours painting as they had done the previous year.

More repairs and updates were required in 2009: the front porch railings and spindles were replaced with labor provided by John Curtin and Charlie Sanborn; John repaired the side porch and painted both porches; Peg and Joe Nolan completed the garage insulation and Charlie and Pat Sanborn put up the sheetrock; Mary Tuhill donated the funds to have Tom Schneider cap all of the chimneys. David & Nellie Peatfield gave the Society a large copying machine which enabled us to print our own newsletters (saving over \$400 a year). A donation from the Buffan Family provided the "Bell Tower" to display our collection of Marcellus bells.

Peg Nolan has spent many hours working on the displays, transcribing old letters, doing family research, giving tours and recording acquisitions with the help of Pat and Charlie Sanborn, Joy Buffan, and Jean and Doug Nightingale. Bruce Widger, our former VP, lends a helping hand whenever needed and Joyce Murphy has for several years compiled scrapbooks of newspaper clippings relating to Marcellus that are available at the Steadman House.

The Town of Marcellus has given us a yearly grant to help with the utility and insurance expenses and the Village of Marcellus provides lawn maintenance, snow plowing, trash disposal and sewer service.

We have many loyal members who regularly donate money and services for which we are extremely grateful. ~

Our membership has remained at over 400 every year of the past decade.

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

**Bill Reagan maintains the Historical Society
website at: mhs.marcellusny.com.**

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

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NEXT MEETING :
Sunday, February 14th, 2 p.m.

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

- INSIDE:**
- * *Our 50th Anniversary*
 - * *The Creation of our Society*
 - * *Reviewing the Past Decade*

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Please use this form or a copy of it to join the society and to order our historic collectibles.																																													
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<p><u>Available Collectibles</u></p> <p>The New Pucker Street, Since 1953 by John Curtin. \$28 Pucker Street by John Curtin..... \$26 The Town He Loved So Well by James Quinn..... \$20 Around Marcellus by Leslie Church Kraus..... \$20 Ruth Anne Reagan Prints of Marcellus..... \$20 Ruth Reed Cummings Prints..... \$10 John Drummond "Dried Weeds" Print..... \$10 Official Marcellus Afghans: cranberry, blue, green.... \$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 <i>Shipping: \$3 per book, \$4 other.</i></p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Qty</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Item Description</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Cost Ea</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Total</u></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>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Item Description</u>	<u>Cost Ea</u>	<u>Total</u>																																								
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