



The Steadman House

Marcellus Historical Society News

Volume 29-3

Summer 2024

The History of Marcellus Schools

By John P. Curtin

In September, the school bells will ring once again for students and teachers in the Marcellus Central School District – the biggest employer in Marcellus – with 300 full-time and part-time faculty and staff members in a variety of positions. I mention this for several reasons. First, MCS is a company that pays no taxes to the local governments and secondly, the Marcellus community is largely a bedroom community – most of the people who live in Marcellus (and by extension, their children) do not work in Marcellus, but commute to another location. In fact, the next largest employer in the area today is Reagan Insurance. That employment picture was not always the case.

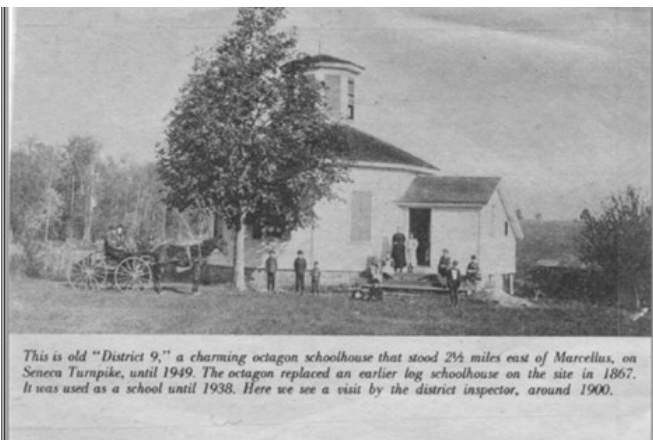
Marcellus used to be a mostly farming community and a mill town. There are still farms around, but not nearly as many as there used to be. Many of them have been turned into residential developments, or the land has been consolidated into much larger farms with far fewer farmers. The mills are gone for the most part, although the ruins of the old woolen mill on North Street are somewhat visible today – a reminder of when it was the biggest employer in the Village with over 300 workers. The last of the old mills, a paper

mill on the Gorge Road, was first established in 1812. It closed several years ago.

One thing that has remained constant, however, is the community’s firm belief in education, dating back to its very beginning after the Revolutionary War. The first settlers were farmers and their families, particularly from New England, were attracted to Marcellus because of its abundant resources – water and soil – and the first settlers were also educated themselves. Dan Bradley, for example, was a graduate of Yale and he helped set up the first school, initially in his home, and later in a building located behind the Presbyterian Church on North Street in 1808. Later a Village school was built on what was once known as Cherry Street. Today, it is the site of St. Francis Xavier Church’s parking lot on today’s South Street.

The first schools in the area were elementary schools – one-room schools that reflected the rural life that was Marcellus at the time. If young people wanted a secondary education, they traveled to the Onondaga Valley Academy or to the Munro Institute at El-

Continued on page 4



This is old "District 9," a charming octagon schoolhouse that stood 2½ miles east of Marcellus, on Seneca Turnpike, until 1949. The octagon replaced an earlier log schoolhouse on the site in 1867. It was used as a school until 1938. Here we see a visit by the district inspector, around 1900.



1890-Village School Children

EVENTS SCHEDULE

*The tentative schedule of events is as follows:
Our next official meeting is September 15.
Meetings are open to anyone and are held at the
Marcellus Free Library unless indicated otherwise.
A short business meeting will precede each program.*

Historical Society Officers for 2024

- President: Doug Nightingale315-673-2539
E-mail: djn0409@windstream.net
- Vice President: Chuck Paul315-673-4432
E-mail: cpaul@twcny.rr.com
- Treasurer: Patricia Sanborn315-488-3610
E-mail: pasanborn@twcny.rr.com
- Secretary: Karen Pollard.....315-673-1309
E-mail: karenpollard13@yahoo.com

Trustees and Term End

- 2026 Charlie Sanborn.....315-488-3610
- 2026 Mary Ellen Popyk.....407-494-9817
E-mail: me@maryellenpopyk.com
- 2024 Carol Armstrong.....315-673-3443
E-mail: carolart23@aol.com
- 2024 Maria Catanzaro.....315-447-0645
- 2025 John Curtin.....315-673-3660
E-mail: jcurtin2@windstream.net
- 2025 Linda Wilcox.....315-430-7693

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.

Email address: histsoc@windstream.net

Telephone: 315-673-4839

Please direct comments or questions about the newsletter
to Doug Nightingale at the above address or email:
djn0409@windstream.net

Wanted:

Member(s) of the Historical Society to help
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 Doug Nightingale at 315-673-2539 or email
djn0409@windstream.net ~

From The President

The Steadman House had many visitors through out
the summer. We also received many artifacts as well
as photos and scrap books. We are in need of new
members. All the volunteers at the Steadman House
are in their mid to late 70's. I have been involved
with the historical society for the last 25 years, as a
trustee, vice-president or president. We need young-
er volunteers to carry on the historical society.
The more volunteers we have the less time we will
have to volunteer of our time at the Steadman House.
The artifacts we have collected over the years need
to be preserved and our CD's, slides, tapes, and films
need to be updated to our new technologies of today.
Any help would be appreciated.

Have a great fall.
Doug Nightingale

Steadman House Hours (Weather Permitting):
Sundays 1 to 3 pm (except meeting Sundays)
Thursdays 1 to 4 pm
Or By Appointment:
Doug Nightingale-673-2539
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: 130

New: 0
Business Members: 15

**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.

**\$10. a year is a small price to pay
to help preserve our history!**

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. ~

Our Thanks for Cash Donations

Recent Acquisitions

We wish to thank these people for donating the following:

Margaret Delaney donated a vintage baseball jersey (see below)

Marie Hickman Banky's daughter Kathy donated four scrapbooks



Woolen baseball jersey

Vintage Baseball Jersey

We were delighted to look over this old baseball jersey that was recently donated, to find out it was 100% wool. We assume it was made at the woolen mill, although the stamped manufacturer information was too faded to be read.



Consider a Historical Society membership as a gift. Members receive our quarterly newsletter, and it supports the society and museum for generations to come.

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, Doug Nightingale, Linda Wilcox, and Chuck Paul for keeping the Steadman House open during scheduled hours.

AVAILABLE AT THE STEADMAN HOUSE

Have you visited the Steadman House recently? Our indexed collection (at last count) consists of:
3,475 Artifacts
887 Clothing articles
814 Books
13 Clocks
7,010 Photographs
68 Scrapbooks with **55,427** referenced items
 Family files and genealogies
Gift shop with Books, Prints, Cards, etc. ~

History of Marcellus Schools, continued

bridge.

This changed in 1891 when the Marcellus Union Free School District was formed and a big brick building was erected on West Main Street in the Village (27 West Main Street at present). This school served all grades and its first class graduated six women in 1893. With the completion of the M. & O. L. Railroad and the Marcellus Trolley, students from the surrounding area were able (but not required because school attendance was not compulsory) to join those from the Village and Town of Marcellus to become one student body. When the school colors, red and green, were adopted is uncertain, but they had been the colors of the old high school as is evidenced by the Old Home Week celebration of 1914. At an alumni dinner that year, E. O. Baker of the class of 1904 offered as a toast, "Still we fight for dear Marcellus and the Holly Red and Green."

My father went to this school and, my mother, after graduating from college, got her first teaching job there. When they married, she lost her job since married female teachers were not allowed, at the time, to teach in the high school. In addition, this was during the Depression, and men were given preference when it came to hiring. Times have certainly changed.

This Marcellus High School served the community very well, and even became the first such school in Onondaga County to become accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This building lasted until the 1930's, when New York State made available financial assistance for districts, which would vote to unite and build a central school large enough to offer students a more comprehensive program of studies, health services and activities.

In 1935, voters in six townships agreed to centralization. Ten acres of land were purchased from the Stone farm at the northwest side of the Village and ground was broken for a new school to accommodate students from the whole of Marcellus and from parts of five surrounding towns of Skaneateles, Camillus, Onondaga, Otisco and Spafford. Using federal funds under the Public Works Administration, a spacious new edifice was completed in 1937 at the end of First Street, just outside the Village, and the first classes were held there in September of that year. The supervising principal was Chester S. Driver and he would remain at the helm until he died in 1963. In 1970 the building, not far from his First Street home, was renamed in his honor. During his 26-year tenure, as employment on the farms and in the mills remained steady (even during the depression), school enrollment increased steadily and student activities began to add to the social life of the community as



Marcellus Union Free School, on what's now Academy Lane



The first Marcellus central school, now Driver Middle School

well. In the years after World War II, as the GI Bill made loans more available, increased home building in Marcellus and the post-war baby boom combined to make overcrowding a serious problem, and necessitated the building of additional schools. A survey revealed that no one section had enough children to warrant the building of an elementary school in an outlying area. Therefore, it was decided to build a primary school adjacent to the original high school. It opened in the fall of 1954 and later was named after a former and long-time elementary teacher and administrator in the district, Kathryn C. Heffernan. School enrollment continued to increase, and by the late 1950's necessitated the construction of another elementary school on Kasson Road. That school opened its doors in 1961. These elementary pupils eventually became high school students and this created the need for another new building. Voters approved the purchase of additional land from the Stone farm, and a new high school was constructed next to the elementary school. It opened in the fall of 1966 and the former high school became a middle school.

Over 9,000 students have graduated from Marcellus since that first group of six women in 1893. In 1938, the first graduating class from the new centralized school numbered 28, and last year's (2024) graduates numbered 109. Enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year numbers 1,400, with 300 full-time and part-time faculty and staff members in a variety of positions.

I urge you to visit The Steadman House at 18 North Street in the Village. This museum of the Marcellus Historical Society has many interesting displays, including an entire room dedicated to Marcellus schools.



Marcellus High School



Heffernan Elementary



ADMINISTRATION
 Theodore E. Davey, Vice-Principal Kathryn C. Heffernan, Elementary Supervisor
 Chester S. Driver, Supervising Principal

75 Years Ago

It's a Boy for the Don Pauls

For three weeks we have been asked to print it, and for three weeks after the edition has hit the streets we were asked what happened. Now that we have all the data on the case, which the father failed to provide, we will announce the birth of a baby boy at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Paul. Their new son at birth weighed 6 pounds and 6 ounces and will be known in the future as Charles Edwin Paul. Mr. Paul said the child is full of the devil like him, intelligent like his wife and wonderful like his mother.

It does seem nice to add a new member to the already growing town of Marcellus. I am only writing this to make up for all the weeks Don has picked up his favorite paper and not seen this announcement. Good luck to both Mr. and Mrs. Don Paul.

Memories of Marcellus

Birth announcement for our Chuck Paul, left Marcellus Observer May 13, 1949

YOUR
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4
9
MARCELLIAN



Back row: Coach Arthur, Jack Cummings, Richard Austin, Rollin Wilson, Edward Bailey, Fred Sheridan, Ronald Annable.
Middle row: Robert Campion, George Snyder, James Graham,

Teall Spaulding, Philip Stonger. Front row: Fred Scharer, William Allan, Leon McLaren, Frank Wilson, Stanley Sherman, Ray Smith.

Business Member Directory
Please Patronize These Businesses

AUTOMOTIVE

FARRELL'S AUTO SERVICE, INC.
 #7106043 - Dave Farrell, Owner
 State Inspections, General Auto Repairs, Oil Changes, Brakes
 3021 W. Seneca Tpke., Marcellus, 13108315-673-7333

Books

That's What She Read Bookshop & Boutique
 16 East Main Street
 Marcellus 13108
 Thatswhatshereadbooks.com315-494-1075

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

BELLOWS CONSTRUCTION SPECIALTIES, LLC
 Email:Karen@BellowsConst.com
 213 West Adams St., Syracuse 13202 (FAX-315-476-6552).....315-476-4719

VAN DERHOOF ROOFING CO., INC.
 Roofing, Siding, Gutters, Windows, Trim and now SOLAR
 Over 75 years in business "Since 1939" www.vanderhooffroofing.com
 145 Ainsley Dr., Syracuse 13210.....315-475-9541

CONSULTING

OPTIMAN CONSULTING ASSOCIATES
 5711 W. Genesee St.
 Camillus 13031.....315-314-7382
 Jamie@optimumca.com

DENTAL SERVICE

Marcellus Smiles Family Dentistry
 Jennifer Merry, DMD
 Taryn Jirousek, DMD
 www.marcellusmiles.com
 info@MarcellusSmiles.com
 19 South St., Marcellus 13108.....315-673-1013

FUNERAL SERVICES

BURANICH FUNERAL HOME, INC.
 Visit us at our website: www.buranichfuneralhome.com.
 5431 W. Genesee St., Camillus 13031.....315-487-2412

PLIS FUNERAL HOME INC.
 James M. Plis Jr.
 Pre-Need, SSI and Medicaid Planning. www.plisfuneralhome.com
 33 North St., Marcellus 13108.....315-673-2017

RYAN FUNERAL HOME
 Mary Ryan Carlton Helping Families since 1955.
 Serving all faiths ~ Pre-Arrangements ~ Locally owned.
 44 East Main St., Marcellus 13108.....315-673-2345

Gift Shop

The Wren's Den
 2756 West Seneca Turnpike
 Marcellus 13108
 Unique Electric Gift Shop.....315-952-5954

HARDWARE

CALLEY'S HARDWARE
 From hand and power tools to paint, rakes and shovels -
 Your hometown hardware store has it. www.calleyshardware.com
 15 North St., Marcellus 13108.....315-673-2121

NIGHTINGALE MILLS ACE HARDWARE
 www.truevalue.com/nightingale
 4068 South Street Rd., Marcellus 13108.....315-673-2001

INSURANCE & INVESTMENT SERVICES

REAGAN COMPANIES
 Risk Management and Investment Services
 www.ReaganCompanies.com (FAX 673-1121)
 8 East Main St., PO Box 191, Marcellus 13108.....315-673-2094

LEGAL SERVICES

REAGAN & DAILEY, ATTORNEYS AT LAW
 Bernard L. Reagan & Mary Reagan Dailey (FAX 673-3438)
 Estate Planning and Probate
 marydailey@reagananddailey.com
 18 East Main St., PO Box 196, Marcellus 13108.....315-673-4864

PHYSICAL THERAPY

REBOUND SPORTS & ORTHOPEDIC PHYSICL THERAPY, PC
 E-mail: go2reboundpt@gmail.com
 Hours: Mon, Wed 7 am -7 pm, Tue, Thu 8 am - 8 pm, Fri 7 am - 6 pm
 37 South St., Marcellus 13108 (FAX 673-2008).....315-673-1007

RESTAURANTS/TAVERNS

THE MARIETTA HOUSE
 We are History! Same name business and site since 1830. Weddings -
 Banquets - Friday, Saturday Dining 5 pm. www.MariettaHouse.com
 2819 Marietta Rd. (Route 174), Marietta 13110.....315-636-829

Sand & Gravel

Smith Sand & Gravel, Inc.
 2650 Otisco Valley Rd.
 Marietta 13110.....315-636-2010

**Become a Business Member of the Historical Society
 for \$25 a year and have your business listed in our
 quarterly newsletter.**

~ GIFT SHOP & MEMBERSHIP ORDER FORM~

Join Our Society Today !

\$10/ Person per year—\$15/Couple per year
 \$15/Family per year (includes children under 18)
 Sustaining membership = 5 years (dues x 5)
 Number joining? ____ New Members? ____

Available Collectibles

- 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
- Nine Mile Country by Katherine Heffernan.....\$20
- 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 (Autobiography).....\$15
- Ruth Anne Reagan Prints of Marcellus.....\$20
- Ruth Anne Reagan Prints Framed.....\$28
- Ruth Reed Cummings Prints.....\$8
- Jan Debevic Prints.....\$10- \$13

- Marcellus, When Wool was King, Pictorial.....\$ 5
- Marcellus Through the Years; Chronology, Photos...\$ 5
- Index to Nile Mile Country; Names and more.....\$ 5
- Package of 10 note-cards picturing Marcellus.....\$ 5
- Shipping: \$10

Name: _____

Addr.: _____

City: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

<u>Qty</u>	<u>Item Description</u>	<u>Cost Ea.</u>	<u>Total</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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Make Checks Payable To: Total \$ _____
Marcellus Historical Society Shipping \$ _____
PO Box 165 Dues \$ _____
Marcellus N.Y. 13108 Total Enclosed \$ _____

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

*******NEW Website Address:*******
www.marcellushistoricalsociety.org

NEXT MEETING :

- INSIDE:**
- *History of Marcellus Schools**
 - *Marcellus Memories**
 - *75 Years Ago**

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