

Fly Creeker

NEWSLETTER of the FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY (FCAHS)
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NEWS BRIEFS

- **Paying your dues...** Second reminder: 1996-97 FCAHS membership dues were payable August 1, 1996. If your name is not listed on the membership roster in this issue, please use the application on page five of this newsletter to renew. The 1996-97 membership period extends from August 1, 1996 through December 31, 1997, giving you 17 months' membership for your money.
- **Another week answer...** Sarah Deane, our youngest (12) active member, located another version of the old ditty requested by Elaine Harvey (Spring *Fly Creeker*): "Wash on Monday, Iron on Tuesday, Mend on Wednesday, Churn on Thursday, Clean on Friday, Bake on Saturday, Rest on Sunday." This was found on page 29 of the 1932 book *Little House in the Big Woods*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder.
- **Here's Mud in your Eye...** Elaine Harvey points out a recent magazine article pertinent to our area. The Summer, 1996 edition of *Kaatskill Life* (Volume 11, Number 2) includes "Susan Fenimore Cooper: Nature's Observer," written by Jessie Ravage about the daughter of famed novelist James Fenimore Cooper. Miss Cooper's 1850 book, *Rural Hours*, describes various Otsego sights, including "Pappoose Pool" -- a colloquial name for Fly Creek's Mud Lake. The magazine includes a photo of the pond.
- **Jonesie's: 1882-1996...** This has been a bad year for Fly Creek landmarks. In February, Aufmuth's Store closed its doors after decades of service, and on September 2, H. E. Jones' Sons Hardware did the same. The business was established in 1882 as Howard E. Jones Tin & Hardware Store (pictured). Although the Jones family sold to Ed Kuckenberger in 1982, locals still referred to it as "Jonesie's." The establishment had the look and feel of a nineteenth-century store, with some of its original equipment and supplies. Its remaining stock was auctioned off October 12.
- **Welcome aboard...** to our newest members: H. James Aufmuth, Mr. & Mrs. Harold Cheney, and Jerry & Cathie Ellsworth.



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"UNSOLVED MYSTERIES" IN NOVEMBER

The final two 1996 meetings of the FCAHS will be held on October 23 and November 20. Gatherings are held in the Fellowship Hall (basement) of the Fly Creek United Methodist Church beginning at 7 P.M., and are open to the public.

At the October meeting, the membership will meet at the church and then share cars for a ride up to Jim & Shirley Parmentier's studio for a tour and explanation of pottery making. The business meeting and refreshments will follow, back at the church. The November meeting will feature Jim Habener of Milford, speaking on the area's "Unsolved Historical Mysteries."

The Society's three most recent meetings were held on July 24, August 28, and September 25, 1996. The July gathering featured a fine talk by Gwen (not Glen, as previously reported) Miner, Supervisor of Domestic and Agricultural Programs at the Farmer's Museum. Gwen spoke about heirloom gardening and 19th-century techniques for preserving foods.

August brought the Society's Annual Meeting. After a covered-dish supper, President Martin called for annual reports. The Treasurer reported a combined balance of \$9,691.69 in two accounts. After the other committees had reported, George Badgley presented the Nominating Committee's proposed slate of officers for 1996-97: President, Jim Atwell; Vice-President, Jim Fish; Secretary, Florence Michaels; Treasurer, Alice Lavrinos. The slate was elected unanimously, and Peter Martin was warmly applauded for his five years as President.

At the September meeting, Mrs. Betty Russ spoke on "Harold Warp, a Pioneer." A wealthy inventor, Mr. Warp established a museum in Minden, Nebraska, similar to (but much larger than) the Farmer's Museum. During the business meeting, Maxine Potts was elected a Trustee for a three-year term. The membership also approved prudent spending of Society funds to buy artifacts made in Fly Creek, when such are available. (Submitted by Jim Atwell)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Elaine Harvey

(Editor's note: following are some fall-time historical tidbits collected during Elaine's continuing research of area history. The items are from the book, *History of Cooperstown*.)

The Rev. Edward A. Perry, pastor of the Universalist Church here and at Fly Creek for thirteen years, died at Thanksgiving Hospital. (December 15, 1907)

A number of Cooperstown sportsmen formed the Cooperstown Sportsman's Association, and purchased of the Phillip A. H. Brown estate the property on the Fly Creek Road known as Potts Farm. The house on the farm will be used as the clubhouse of the Cooperstown Fish and Game Club. (November 19, 1943)

Harry Kaye has purchased the interest of Sampson Bowers in Sportsman's Tavern in Fly Creek, which the two have operated in partnership for 4½ years. (November 28, 1951)

Howard J. Aufmuth, Jr., a partner with his brother Jack in Aufmuth's General Store in Fly Creek, was elected president of the First National Bank in Cooperstown. (October 9, 1958)

Jean Splitstone of Fly Creek won the \$50,000 second prize in the New York State Lottery for November. It was the largest amount won by an area resident in the history of the lottery. (December 18, 1968)

THINGS THAT GO BUMP

(Editor's note: With Halloween approaching, we thought it might be fun to share some Fly Creek area ghost stories. Most of our local experts were unable to think of any, but we are pleased to present the following two tales.)

A long time ago, on one of the hills surrounding Fly Creek Valley, a man was killed in a logging accident. Only his brother was with him in those woods when the tree fell, crushing out his life.

As there have always been gossips, some whispered that this was not entirely an accident. These whispers became louder when the surviving brother promptly married the new widow. Soon there were reports that on windy nights, groans and sobs could be heard in those woods. It was said that many came to listen for those eerie, lonely cries. Gradually, people lost interest in the legend, and this tragedy was all but forgotten.

Over the years in the Fly Creek area, as in any area, there surely have been other questionable deaths, some unnoticed or unreported, others whose stories have faded to a mere ghostly whisper. The next time you go past some woods on a breezy night and hear the wind moaning through the trees, listen closely. It might be more than the wind. (Submitted by Carolyn McLean)

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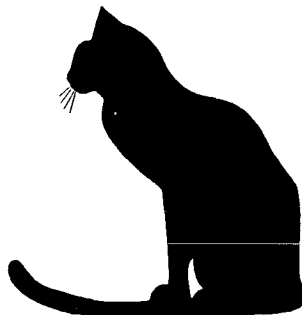
My grandfather, James Potts, used to tell us this story when we lived on the farm now called "Llama Farm." There were remains of a house just west of our home, on the west side of a brook.

John and Mary Ryan lived in a very small house there. John died one summer. It was the custom in those days to keep the casket at home, so John's body was displayed in the parlor under an open window.

John had worked hard all his life. He was so bent-over at the time of his death, the undertaker had to find a resourceful way to straighten him out. He put a board under John's chin, extending to the foot of the casket.

The wake was in full swing when, all of a sudden, John sat bolt upright. The people were stiff with fright. The wake ended!

The family cat had jumped through the open window into the casket, knocking the board away. (Submitted by Zoe Smith)



**FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1996-97 Roll of Membership**

Listed below are the 99 current FCAHS members, as of October 3, 1996. Included are 24 who have had continuous membership since the Society's founding in July, 1989.

*ATWELL, Dr. James
AUFMUTH, H. James
AUFMUTH, Jayne
*BADGLEY, Mr. & Mrs. George
*BAKER, David & Scottie

BARNOWSKY, Dr. & Mrs. Laurence
*BERTINO, Dr. Joseph
BOUTON, Ronald & Carol
BOYD, Louie & Dorothy
BOYD, Spike & Joyce

*BRESEE, Philip & Ruth
BULLARD, Albert & Sandra
*BURNHAM, Garfield & Catherine
BURNS, John & Agnes
CARR, Richard D.

CHENEY, Mr. & Mrs. Harold, Jr.
CLARK, Mr. & Mrs. Francis
CLAYTON, Robert E.
CRESWELL, Marion S.
*DEANE, Bill & Pam

DODGE, Martha
DRUMM, Suzanne
*ELDRIDGE, Margaret
ELKAN, Margaret
ELLSWORTH, Jerry & Cathe

FARMER, Dr. Edward & Mary
FISH, Jim & MerriLynn
FOUTCH, Maud
GOODSPEED, Charles & Ann
HANEY, Craig

HANOR, Katherine
*HARVEY, Merritt & Elaine
HECOX, Mr. & Mrs. Eugene
JENKINS, Arthur & Ruby
*JENSEN, Margaret

KEATING, William & Evelyn
KNAPP, Jean
*LAUT, Dorothy
*LAVRINOS, Nicholas & Alice
LEVINE, Harry & Ellen

LUDLAM, Henry & Toni
MacDOUGALL, Hugh & Eleanor
MARTIN, Homer & Leila
*MARTIN, Peter & Dorothy
MICHAELS, Charles & Barbara

*MICHAELS, Florence
NAFZIGER, Dr. Anne
*NORRIS, Robert & Patricia
OSTAPECK, Lady
*POTTS, Maxine

REILLY, Edward
REZEN, Paul & Sally
SMALE, Capt. Gordon F.
SMITH, Zoe
*SNYDER, Art & Freida

STACK, Edward & Christina
TALBOT, William & Evelyn
THORNE, Edwin & Judy
TILLAPAUGH, Marjorie
WINNE, Helen

*WINNIE, Ernest & Gerda
YOURNO, Albert, Ann & James
ZYSKOWSKI, Dr. Lawrence

*Charter Member.

**Note: if your name is not listed above,
please use the application on page 5 to
renew your membership. Thank you all for
your continued support!**

REPUBLICANS of FLY CREEK ENTHUSIASTIC
The Blaine Club of the Town Organized

Local interest in the political campaign of 1896 was formally proclaimed last Saturday night at Alger's Hall, this place, through the organization of a sound money club, which will be a permanent affair and which will be known as the "James G. Blaine Club of the Town of Otsego." The preliminaries to the organization were in charge of the temporary Chairman, Thomas Laidler of Oaksville. A Committee on Resolution presented an elaborate constitution, to which nearly every person present at the meeting affixed his signature, thus starting the club with a very satisfactory membership roll. As stated in the constitution, the object of the club is "to assist in the election of the Republican standard-bearers, McKinley and Hobart; and to aid in the dissemination of the principles of genuine Republicanism; and to advocate such legislation as will tend to restore confidence in financial and industrial circles, preserve our national honor, and defend the Constitution of the United States against the assaults of socialism and anarchy." The officers of the club, who will serve four years are as follow: President, George H. Wedderspoon; vice presidents, J. B. Hooker, Jr., H. E. Ingalls, S. H. Elderkin, T. N. Doubleday, George Lathrop and D. C. Lindsay; recording secretary, E. J. Irish; Corresponding secretary, Napoleon Prosser; treasurer, A. W. Cheney; executive committee, S. Wilson Cheney, Francis Hecox, Thomas Laidler, Alexander H. Clark and Charles A. Babbitt. It is the determination of the members of the club to make the local campaign spirited, even though it be brief. Accordingly, the next meeting has been appointed for Friday evening, Oct. 9th, at 8 o'clock sharp, at Alger's Hall, when rousing 15-minute addresses will be made by six or more local speakers. It is expected that a goodly share of enthusiasm and some music will be furnished by a branch of "Hayne's Novelty Corps," recently established here. Everybody, regardless of previous political affiliations, will be cordially welcomed to the meeting. BILL NYE.

(Editor's notes: the above century-old article, source unknown, was copied from a scrapbook and submitted by Florence Michaels. Blaine, 1830-93, was a political leader from 1858 until his death, and was the Republican presidential candidate in 1884. William McKinley and Garret Hobart went on to election as President and Vice President in 1896, defeating William Jennings Bryan and Arthur Sewall.)

The Programs Committee is running short of ideas for guest speakers and programs for FCAHS meetings. Please jot down any suggestions you might have on the following lines, and either mail them to the FCAHS, or bring them to the next meeting. Thanks!

1996-97 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY * P.O. Box 87, Fly Creek, NY 13337

Name(s): _____ Renewal ___ New Membership ___

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Check applicable box(es):

- Please register me as a member of the FCAHS. Enclosed is a check for \$10.
- Please register us to a family FCAHS membership. Enclosed is a check for \$15.
- Please accept the enclosed donation, in the amount of \$ _____ (minimum \$20), and enroll me/us as a contributing/sustaining member(s).

FCAHS PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 1995-96 Annual Report

(Following is the text of the Publications Committee's annual report, as delivered by the editor during the August 28, 1996 FCAHS meeting.)

The Publications Committee consists of Jim Atwell, George Badgley, Carolyn McLean, and myself. We held our annual meeting at the Fly Creek Church's Fellowship Hall on March 27, 1996.

The Committee put out another four newsletters over the past year, making a grand total of 29 issues and 118 pages since 1989. That includes our second six-page edition, published last fall. The Autumn, 1996 *Fly Creeker* is expected out in October.

The Committee has also taken over publicity work for the Society, including posters and news articles about our monthly meetings and special events, and mass-mailing letters on various subjects.

Besides the committee members, FCAHS members who have been particularly helpful to us over the past year include Elaine Harvey, Alice Lavrinos, Florence Michaels, Zoe Smith, Dot and Peter Martin.

As we have indicated year after year, we need more support from other members. It is nice to hear that we are doing a good job with the newsletter, but it would be even nicer to receive articles, suggestions, and/or constructive input.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Deane, Chairman, Publications Committee

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