

# *Fly Creeker*

NEWSLETTER of the FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY (FCAHS)

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## NEWS BRIEFS

- **New millennium ...** Despite all this talk about the new millennium, us historical-types realize that the third millennium of the Julian Calendar actually begins January 1, 2001. On the other hand, *Webster's* defines millennium simply as "A period of 1,000 years." Therefore, we *are* beginning a new millennium this month: the millennium of four-digit years whose first digit is two. So, feel free to celebrate!
- **Four score and ten ...** George Badgley celebrated his 90th birthday ten days early with a celebration at the Grange Hall on October 16. George shared some of his poetry (or "rhymes," as he modestly calls them) during this occasion; an example appears on page 6 of this newsletter. This was one of a number of community-related events held at our new home during recent months. There was a "Goose Street Gathering," uniting residents of that road; a highly-successful Halloween Brunch (which raised \$ for the FCAHS); and even a couple of Fly Creek United Methodist Church services. The building is well on its way to re-establishing itself as a community center.
- **Be Y2K-Compliant ...** Final reminder: annual dues for the year 2000 were due January 1. According to our records, approximately half of our 1999 members have not yet renewed. A list of paid-up members appears on page 3; if your name isn't on it, and you're sure it should be, please contact us; otherwise, please use the application on page 5 to renew your membership. Thanks! And, welcome to our newest members: Harvey & Catherine Christiansen, Craig & Pat Fautot, Anita A. Graham, Rick & Christine Halse, Jean Neff, Susan Rodd, and Margaret Winnie.
- **Lightning strikes ...** Sally Rezen shares a *Freeman's Journal* article from August 12, 1822: "A barn, belonging to Mr. Roger Bailey of Otsego was struck by lightning on Friday the 2nd inst. Loss \$400. This is a heavy draft upon a worthy, industrious young man." Sally, the great-great-granddaughter of Mr. Bailey, notes that he was one of the family that Bailey Road was named after. Roger was the son of Charles Bailey, who came from England to Fly Creek in 1805, settling where Dr. Robert Mackie now lives. An article about the Bailey family appeared in the Summer, 1993 *Fly Creeker*.
- **Past Times Passes ...** A four-alarm fire destroyed Jim Anderson's Past Times Antiques store on November 13. The barn, located on the north side of Route 28, two-tenths of a mile from the blinker light, contained an estimated \$40,000 of uninsured antiques. Ernie Winnie, Fly Creek's first fire chief and a village resident since 1932, called it the worst fire he had ever seen in our village. The editor recorded the fire on his camcorder, with footage -- along with his bumbling attempts to put the tragedy into historical perspective -- appearing on Utica's WKTV news. The video will be shown during the February meeting.
- **Join the Newsletter Staff ...** The Publications Committee will hold its annual meeting prior to the March FCAHS meeting, at 6:30 on March 22. If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact the editor or any of the members listed on the masthead above. Or, just show up!

## NEWS BRIEFS, Continued

- **Mills ...** The December 6, 1999 issue of the Oneonta *Daily Star* had an article about our county's early cotton mills. According to author Mark Simonson, Oneonta's City Historian, "The first mill in Otsego County opened in Toddsville in 1809. The Union Manufactory's power came from Oaks Creek, which also ran another mill in Oaksville." The article further informs us that "The largest employer was in Index, with 80 employees," and that "The plant at Phoenix Mills was the last to manufacture cotton, changing over to wool in 1875. The plant finally closed in 1912. It was torn down, but the stone was reused in the building of Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown."
- **Tree Cheers ...** The maple tree in front of the FCAHS building lot was planted by Sarah Deane on November 28, 1999, as part of a school project. Sarah was assisted by her parents, Pam and Bill, and by Jim Fish.
- **Silver Anniversary ...** This month marks the 25th anniversary of the Town building in Fly Creek. The Town of Otsego held its first meeting there on January 8, 1975.

## MEETINGS

Mark your year 2000 calendar with the dates of this year's FCAHS meetings: January 26, February 23, March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28, July 26, August 23 (Annual Meeting, preceded at 6 PM by a covered-dish dinner), September 27, October 25, and November 15. Gatherings begin at 7 PM at the building formerly known as the Grange Hall on Cemetery Road, and are open to the public.

The January meeting will feature Warren Ainslie, showing us the art of "Making Colonial Corn & Besom Brooms." In February, Bill Deane will share some "Historic Videos," chronicling three unusual 1990s events recorded by his camcorder. This meeting will be preceded by a covered-dish supper at 6 PM. The guest speaker in March will be George Rutler, discussing "Old & New Soap-Making."

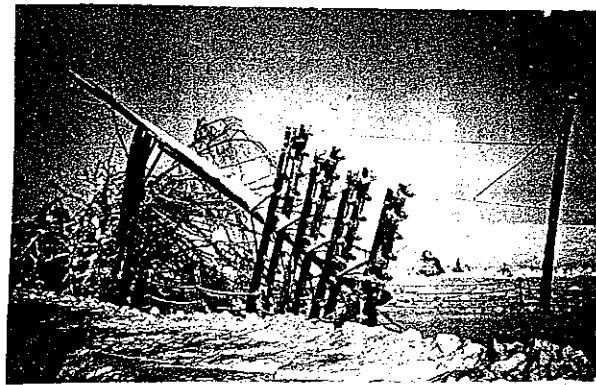
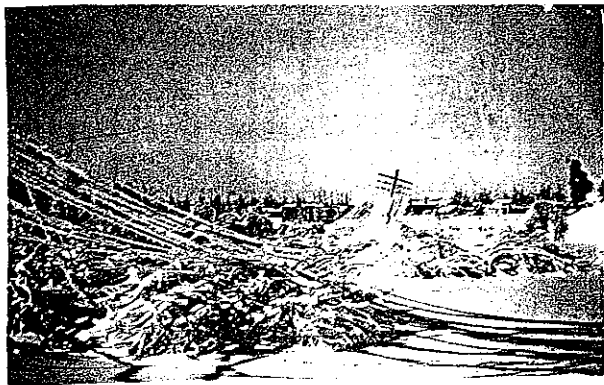
The final two FCAHS meetings for 1999 were held on October 27 and November 17. In October, we held a round-table discussion, seeking ideas for the Society's building and activities, particularly in fund-raising. A feature was the availability of a new ramp on the south side of the building, built by Ed Thorne and Jim Fish, and providing safer access for anyone having difficulty using steps. Also during this meeting, a washing machine, ice saw, and hops plow were donated to the Society by Peter Martin.

In November, in honor of Veterans Day, Len Price and Elaine Harvey (AKA Senior Renditions) presented a musical "History of Patriotic Songs." Included were songs from the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and both World Wars. Veterans in attendance were recognized, and Carolyn McLean shared a scrapbook of news clippings about area residents in World War II. [Submitted by George Badgley]

## THE ICEMAN COMETH

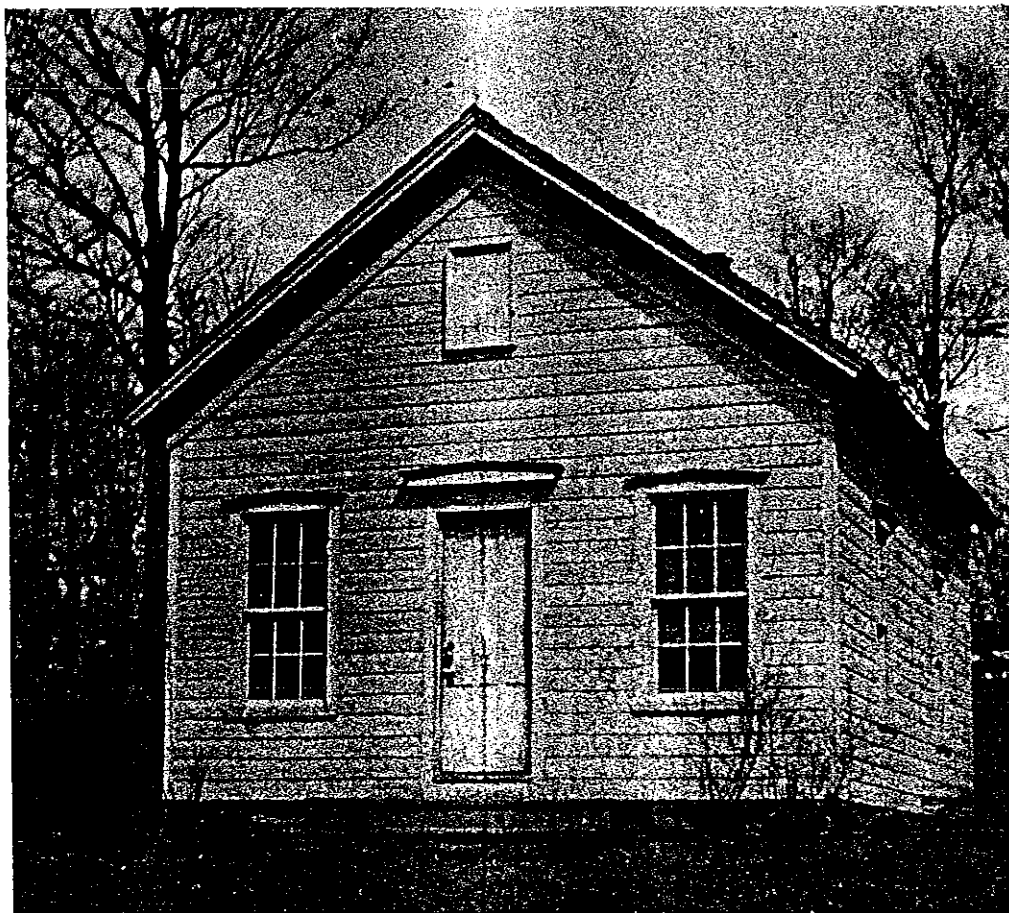
Though we're enjoying a mild winter so far, bad weather can strike at any moment, as the photos on the next page show. These were taken in upper Fly Creek Valley by Leo McLean, after a three-day ice storm which began December 28, 1942. Richfield Springs and Cherry Valley were hit the hardest, while Cooperstown and Fly Creek proper were spared.

There was as much as five inches of ice on some wires. Twenty-five carloads of poles, 16½ miles of cable, and 1,000 miles of wire were required to replace those destroyed by the storm, which an 80-year-old Richfield Springs resident called the worst he had ever seen. Three hundred repairmen from five states were called to the area. Due to insufficient lodging in the area, workers slept on cots set up in hallways, or even on floors. [Submitted by Carolyn McLean]



**Above and left:**  
The 1942 ice storm  
(see page 2)

**Below:**  
The Sprague School  
(see page 4)



**FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY: 2000 Roll of Membership**

AINSLIE-HAMBLIN family	LYONS, Harry "Skip" & Lola
*ATWELL, Dr. James & Anne Geddes	<u>MacDOUGALL, Hugh &amp; Eleanor</u>
AUFMUTH, H. James	MACKIE, Dr. Robert
AUFMUTH, Jayne	*MARTIN, Peter & Dorothy
<u>*BADGLEY, Mr. &amp; Mrs. George</u>	McRORIE, Nancy
*BAKER, David & Scottie	MEYERS, Virginia Platt
BARTHOLD, Dr. Joseph & Mrs. Joyce	<u>MIHALKO, Carole</u>
BOYD, Louie & Dorothy	NEFF, Jean
BOYD, Spike & Joyce	*NORRIS, Robert & Patricia
<u>*BRESEE, Philip &amp; Ruth</u>	OPDERBECK, Dr. Carl & Mrs. Cynthia
CARR, Richard D.	O'NEILL, Bernard & Jeannette
CARR, Richard & Ann	<u>OSTAPECK, Lady</u>
CHAMBERLAIN, Ellen	PERNAT, Mary
CHRISTIANSEN, Harvey & Catherine	REILLY, Edward
<u>CLAYTON, Robert E.</u>	REILLY, James R.
COE, Linda, Jason & Eric	RODD, Susan
*CURLIS, Irwin	<u>SCARZAFAVA, John &amp; Jean</u>
*DAY, Irving III & Kathleen	*SCHAEFFER, William & Paula
*DEANE, Bill, Pam & Sarah	SHARPE, Stuart & Bonnie
<u>EKELAND, Cynthia G.</u>	SMALE, Capt. Gordon F.
ELLSWORTH, Catherine Lake	SMITH, Zoe Potts
FAUROT, Craig & Pat	<u>SNYDER, Ben &amp; Juliana</u>
FOUTCH, Maude	SPENCE, Sue-Ellen
GOODSPEED, Charles & Ann	STACK, Edward & Christina
<u>GRAHAM, Anita A.</u>	THORNE, Edwin & Joyce
HALSE, Rick & Christine	TIPPLE, Edwin S.
HAMDY, Elizabeth	<u>WEIGEL, Fred &amp; Wilma</u>
HANOR, Katherine B.	*WINNIE, Ernest & Gerda
HARRINGTON, Angela	WINNIE, Margaret
<u>*HARVEY, Merritt &amp; Elaine</u>	*WYCKOFF, George & June
HELFAND, Elliot & Martha	<u>*YOURNO, Albert, Ann &amp; James</u>
HICKEY, Jim	
HOSKINS, Sam, Peg, Matt & Andy	
KEATING, William & Evelyn	
<u>KNAPP, Jean T.</u>	
LANE, Timothy & Alison	
*LAUT, Dorothy Potts	
*LAVRINOS, Nicholas & Alice	

\*Charter Member.

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

**THE SPRAGUE SCHOOL**

On the back of this page is an early 1900s picture of the Sprague School, Otsego District No. 12. It was situated in upper Fly Creek Valley, on the property now owned by Clyde Yakos, next to and north of the Sprague Cemetery. It was built in 1791 on Jonah Sprague's farm, and was one of the Town of Otsego's first schools outside of Cooperstown. Ephraim Skinner was the first teacher.

Sprague School was modernized in the 1930s, with windows installed on the building's west side, toilets moved indoors from the woodshed, and cloak rooms added. The school was closed in 1946, and absorbed by Cooperstown Central School. In 1949, the building was sold at an auction to Joseph Lever, who moved it to Fly Creek. It is now the main part of Lynn Johnson's home on County Route 26.

At least five past and present FCAHS members attended Sprague School: Vera Ainslie, Ann Lulek Goodspeed, Charles Goodspeed, Sally Rezen, and Ed Selan. [Submitted by Sally Rezen]

**FCAHS BUILDING PROJECT BENEFACTORS**

*The Fly Creeker* will regularly list the generous individuals who have supported and are supporting our acquisition and renovation of the Society's home, the Fly Creek Grange Hall. If we have omitted anyone, please bring it to our attention and accept our apologies.

**BUILDING PURCHASE**

James and Bunny Wolff  
Carl Roemer

**MAJOR CASH CONTRIBUTIONS**

Albert Yourno Family  
Bill Deane Family  
James Atwell and Anne Geddes-Atwell

**GOODS and SERVICES**

American Homes	Portable Steps
Andy Baugnet	Building Photographs
George Cade	Appraisal
Richie Carr	Archives Shelving
Wayne Clinton	Accounting Services
Hans deWaal, P.E.	Structural Survey
Craig Faurot	Window Repair
Jim Fish	Grounds and Building Maintenance
Irv Lyons	Shutter Repair and Painting
Michaels Family	Fund-raising
Otsego American Construction	Well-Digging Services and Materials
Bill Preston	Re-painting of Grange sign
Lester Sittler, Esq.	Legal Services
Syracuse Pottery / Jim Wolff	200 place-settings of china

**DONATIONS TO MUSEUM**

Marc Fleishman	Series of large-format prints of photos of area buildings
Skip Lyons	Horse-drawn road scraper manufactured at Fly Creek Foundry
Pomona Grange	Fly Creek Grange #844 artifacts

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**2000 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 tax-deductible donation, in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (minimum \$20), and enroll me/us as a contributing/sustaining member(s).

## THE GARDEN

By George A. Badgley

We thought we'd make a garden in the ole pertater patch,  
So we started out one morning to dig and hoe and scratch.  
After the ground was ready, we planted some cabbage and kale;  
With all the caution and care we took, we knew that they'd never fail.

Next day we got up early; by nine o'clock that morn,  
We'd planted a lot of lettuce, besides some squash and corn.

Then we planted some other things, and last of all some beets.  
That night, as we left the garden, we thought of the summer treats.  
The garden was far from a failure: the cabbage and lettuce and kale

Kept the jackrabbits, all summer, hearty and healthy and hale.  
The corn was good, we're sure of that, 'cause no sooner than out of the earth,  
The crows came along and pulled it up, then ate it for all they were worth.

The beets and squash were lovely, too; we concluded at last to that,  
'Cause the bugs and worms that ate them up grew most exceedingly fat!  
It's the greatest pleasure to feed the jacks, and keep 'em as busy as bees,  
So they'll be in shape when winter comes, to eat the young apple trees.

The garden, of course, was a great joy to us; we didn't care at all  
'Cause the animals came and ate everything up, 'twas a matter very small.

But, my wife and I just want to say, we've already got it planned,  
That our corn and squash and beets next year will come from the store all canned!



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