

Fly Creeker

NEWSLETTER of the FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY (FCAHS)

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NEWS BRIEFS

- **Call for candidates ...** The offices of FCAHS President, Vice-President, Secretary, and one Trustee, will be up for election at the Annual Meeting on August 22. Those interested in serving should contact the Nominating Committee, which this year consists of Jim Atwell, George Badgley, Cynthia Ekeland, and Freida Snyder. Nominations from the floor are permissible, but would necessitate a paper ballot. An editorial related to the upcoming election appears on page 3.
- **Squaring Off ...** Square & Round Dances continue to be held at the FCAHS Building/Grange Hall on the first Saturday of each month from 7 to 10 PM. Remaining dances this year will be held on August 4, September 1, October 6, and November 3. Admission is free, and refreshments (including ice cream with all the toppings at the August dance) are available for purchase. Volunteers for help with refreshments are sought. The October dance will be preceded by a covered-dish dinner at 6 PM; bring a covered-dish to be shared.
- **Coming Events ...** Other happenings scheduled by the Social Events Committee this year include the second annual Community Day Yard Sale on Saturday, August 25 (see page 5), and a Pancake Breakfast from 8:30 AM to 1 PM on Sunday, September 9. During the Yard Sale, the FCAHS will be selling Brooks BBQ chicken dinners with all the fixings for \$6.50 each, children's hot dog meals for \$2.50 each, and individual franks for \$1 each.
- **Rummage Brings Cabbage ...** The recent rummage sale earned more than \$700 for the Society. This was yet another success for the Social Events Committee, which consists of MerriLynn Fish, Cynthia Ekeland, Elaine Harvey, Freida Snyder, and Yvette Ciampo. They deserve all the help and gratitude we can spare.
- **Sign here ...** The beautiful new sign, marking the "Fly Creek Area Historical Society and Museum," is the handiwork of Bill Preston (artwork) and Richie Carr (framing).
- **It's in the Genealogy ...** The new FCAHS Genealogy Committee sends the following report: "The ... committee has met twice and has scheduled another meeting (at the FCAHS Building, with anyone interested invited to attend) for Saturday, 21 July, at 1:00 PM. The meetings have been well-attended. We have begun to assemble a database. Anyone can contribute and we will be very grateful for any information. To contribute, just (1) jot down the names of a few relatives, (2) relate an anecdote about an ancestor, or (3) contribute all or part of a local family tree. All contributions may be sent to the Genealogy Committee in care of FCAHS."
- **Starting from Scratch ...** A computer catastrophe caused Anne Geddes-Atwell to lose her file with the FCAHS mailing label data, and have to create a new one from scratch. Please check your mailing label for spelling and accuracy, and report any corrections to the editor. Also, notify us if anyone you know didn't get a newsletter.

NEWS BRIEFS, Continued

- **A Growing Concern ...** A warm welcome to our newest members: Janice Eichler, Bill Gates & Roberta Reed, Barbara Murray, Ed Olsen, Peter Palmer, Russ Smith, and Tom & Kelly Steele. These, plus renewals from Homer & N. Leila Martin, and Bob & Helen Winne Mulligan, bring our 2001 membership total to 181.
- **Arrie Hecox, 1914-2001 ...** Fly Creek lost a local treasure with the death of Arrie "Pa" Hecox, 87, on April 22, 2001. Though Arrie never got around to joining the FCAHS, he was the friend or relative of many of our members and area citizens, and \$291 was donated to the Society in his memory. The donors were Michelle Adsit, James S. Atwell & Anne Geddes-Atwell, Barbara A. & Herbert W. Blanchard, the Cooperstown Nutrition Center, Jean E. & John D. Finch, Ramona G. & John G. Goddard, Sally Ann Goddard & Cynthia N. Bourgeois, Antoinette K. & Henry E. Ludlam, Dorothy J. & Peter L. Martin, Smith Cooperstown, Inc., Roger C. & Dorothy M. Smith, Frances H. Thayer, and Hilda Mader Wilcox. We extend our thanks to the donors Arrie inspired, and our condolences to all who loved him.
- **Building Hope ...** Jim Atwell reports that State Senator James Seward has assisted the Society in applying for a building renovation grant. While Senator Seward is enthusiastic and encouraging, no funds will be available before the state finally passes a budget.
- **Sharing a cell ...** The FCAHS has acquired a cellular phone for use in emergencies. The phone will be kept at the FCAHS Building. The number is 435-7850.
- **Everything But ...** Thanks go to the Crumhorn Mountain Boy Scout Camp, for their donation of a sink and gas grill to the Society.
- **Fish Float Finishes First on Fourth ...** Jim and MerriLynn Fish entered a float (on behalf of the FCAHS) in Springfield's Fourth of July parade. They created an 1870s kitchen, including a washing machine and butter churn made in Fly Creek. Jim drove the tractor, while MerriLynn, her daughter Elizabeth Kinsley, and grandsons Parker and Jason, stayed in the kitchen. The Fishes won first prize, and donated their \$100 winnings to the Society.

MEETINGS

The next three FCAHS meetings are scheduled for July 25, August 22, and September 26, 2001 (the fourth Wednesday of each month). In July, we'll meet at the Old Chapel Burying Ground, at the corner of County Route 26 and Hoke Road, where Pete Martin will share a history of the cemetery; from there we will proceed to the normal meeting place, the FCAHS Building/Grange Hall on Cemetery Road. In August, Lady Ostapeck will show and tell about "vintage clothing" (she asks members to bring in items of their own). The September program had not been finalized at press time. Gatherings are held at beginning at 7 PM, and everyone is welcome. The Annual Meeting in August will also feature annual officer elections and committee reports, and will be preceded by a covered dish dinner at 6 PM.

The three most recent monthly meetings were held on April 25, May 23, and June 27, 2001. The April meeting featured State Senator Jim Seward speaking on the history of the Erie Canal, built at a cost of \$7 million in 1825. In May, Esther Hutchinson outlined the "history of buttons," showing thousands from her own collection. And in June we heard National History Day entries (about area businesses) from the Society-sponsored local history contest. They were written by Cooperstown Central School students Thomas Adsit, Nina Schwartzman, and Ariel Baker; Thomas and Nina did the reading. Also during that meeting, it was decided (by vote) to create a replica of Fly Creek's former World War II memorial, to be part of a military history display in the FCAHS Building. [Submitted by Carolyn McLean]

FROM THE EDITOR

As mentioned in the first "news brief" on page 1, several important FCAHS offices are up for grabs at the August 22 meeting. This could be a turning point in the history of the Society.

A few members have been critical about leadership and/or procedures over the past year. Maybe "disruptive" would be a better word, for it's hard to figure out what the actual criticisms are. Many meetings have been characterized by angry exchanges and a general bad atmosphere. A long-time member, one of the Society's most generous donors, attended her first meeting last year and was witness to one of these flare-ups. Eyebrows raised, she remarked on her way out "Well, *that* was very interesting." She hasn't returned since.

This set of circumstances isn't just embarrassing, it's saddening. Over his twelve years of membership, your Editor has invested hundreds of hours of painstaking work and hundreds of dollars of hard-earned money into the Society, and it breaks his heart to see it being torn apart like this. Many others, including the critics and the ones they are criticizing, have contributed a great deal, too. It's a shame that people who have done so many positive things for the Society are now infusing it with so much negative energy. One wonders what Florence Michaels would think. Can't we all just get along?

As for the elections, this is everyone's chance to be part of the solution, instead of the problem. And after they are over, it is hoped that everyone will respect and support whomever is left at the helm. As a famous baseball manager said, "Lead, follow, or get the hell out of the way."

Let's put the petty internal squabbling behind us, and get on with our mission: to record and preserve local history.

The picture below is from the Society's 1990 post card booklet, *Fly Creek Area Yesteryear*



Otsego House was a temperance hotel. Later known as the Fly Creek Hotel, the building stands on the northeast corner of Route 28 and Schoolhouse Road. Dances were held on the first floor dance hall and, at one time, meals were served here daily.

“MADE IN FLY CREEK” – WHERE ARE THEY?

When was the last time you looked in the bottom of that old trunk or suitcase or box of letters? Do you know everything that is hanging on the walls or stored undisturbed in a corner of the barn? Fly Creek – with about 80% of its 1856 buildings still standing – should have a few surprises, in the way of artifacts and documents, left to be discovered.

Our Fly Creek Area Historical Society is interested in adding such things to our collection. The Society's Constitution and By-laws call for the collection, preservation, and display of historical material pertinent to the Fly Creek area. For years we did not have room to store such artifacts, but the purchase of the Grange Hall has solved that problem.

Certain items have been purchased by our Society within its budgetary limitations. But, artifacts relating to Fly Creek area life and/or business may be donated, lent, or photographed. Letters, diaries, advertisements, bills of sale, and other documents, may be donated, lent, or photocopied. And don't forget, since we are recognized by the federal government as a non-profit organization, all donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The following lists of occupations and those involved with them were taken from Childs's *Otsego County Directory, 1872-73*; *Biographical Review of Otsego County (1893)*; and Arnold's *History of Cooperstown (186)*, p. 212-14. Any artifacts or evidence of objects “made in Fly Creek” by these or other people would be welcome additions to our collection.

Cheney Hammer – Henry Cheney & Silas Lerow.

Clocks – ?

Clothing – William E. Lewis, tailor.

Fanning Mill – John Post. We have one in our collection.

Forks – for gardens, hay and manure, made by Ceylon North & Elon Denio, Forkshop.

Harnesses – Colonel A. Potter.

Marble work – Colonel A. Potter. The name of the maker of a tombstone was typically engraved in the lower left corner.

Pails – metal and wood, made by Lucien Hinds, John Badger, E. & H. Cory, H. E. Jones, and Horace Hooker. We have one metal pail in our collection.

It would be great to have some history or clues as to what buildings the following people worked on:

Cabinet maker – William Jarvis.

Carpenters – Charles Babbitt, Theodore N. Doubleday, Oscar Niles, Daniel Williams, and Edward C. Parmelee.

Masons – Daniel Carpenter, Horace Hooker, Joel Clinton.

Some of the larger items or handiwork can be represented only by pictures or sales slips:

Agricultural implement dealers – Thomas T. Higby, Morris Olendorf, Theodore Marvin.

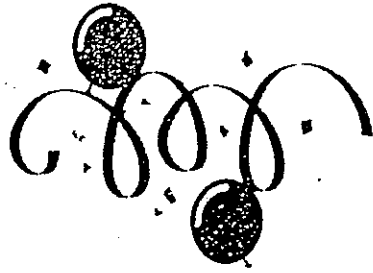
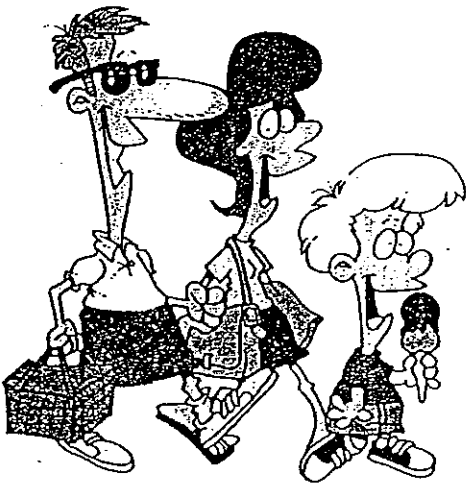
Blacksmiths – Jerome Veber, Abel Brooks.

Machinists – Rufus C. Doubleday, Simon Pearsall, Leonard Baldwin, James E. Shepard.

Mill workers (saw, grist, shingle) – Richard Davidson, Daniel B. Randall, Robert Blair, Irving D. Hull, Francis Taylor, Daniel & Silas Williams, Asel & William Jarvis, Abraham, Aaron & David Marvin, Johnson.

Wagon and carriage makers – Silas Alger, Delos Brooks.

(Continued on back page)



YARD SALES!

GARAGE SALES!

BREAKFAST!

PORCH SALES!

FOOD!

BAKE SALES!

We wish to sign up for the **2001 Fly Creek Area Historical Society Community Yard Sale** to be held on Saturday, August 25th.

Enclosed is our \$5.00 donation to FCAHS which will place our Sale location on the map and direct visitors to our sale.

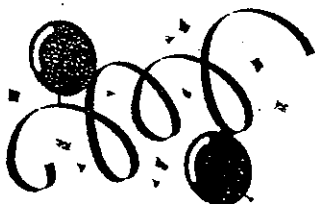
Mail this form to P O Box 148, Fly Creek, NY 13337 by August 15, 2001. Call 607-547-8321 for information.

Name (please print) _____

Address (location of sale) _____

Tel: _____

I understand that there is table space available at the Historical Society (tables not provided) I will / will not (circle one) have my sale at the FCAHS Building.



"MADE IN FLY CREEK" (Continued from page 4)

One foundry, "Otsego Iron Works," was located on present-day State Highway 28. It was started in 1812 by Asahel Jarvis, sold to Metcalf and Bliss, then resold to William Shepard. A second foundry, "Badger Horse Power Works," was on County Highway 26. It was also started by Asahel Jarvis, transferred to Chester & Kent Jarvis, and sold to Orestes Badger in 1828. When Badger died in 1850, the foundry was taken over by his son, Ezra, who later sold to George Gross, who renamed it "Otsego Agricultural Works." The business was later known as "Novelty Works." Products manufactured at these foundries included threshers, cleaners, horse power (including the "endless chain" version), circular saws, churns, fanning mills, portable and standing steam engines, flour mills, castings of all kinds, water wheels, spinning wheels, hydrostatic presses, chimney safes, and guns. Our Society has little information on these items, so any facts or artifacts would be helpful.

The farm silo is a ripe topic for area research. The Society has a receipt from the Unadilla Silo Co. to Horace Hooker for an 8x20 spruce silo. Dated July 9, 1917, the slip shows a price of \$85. The Marietta silo on my farm is said to be one of the first concrete stone silos erected in this area, but I do not know the date it was built.

I have not explored what was "Made in Fly Creek" after 1900, nor who worked at the various occupations in the 20th century. There is always the opportunity and challenge of further research as we receive, document, correct, and add to the story of our predecessors in Fly Creek. [Submitted by Peter L. Martin.]

FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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