

FLY CREEKER



NEWSLETTER OF THE

FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 124, Fly Creek, NY 13337

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2 * AUTUMN, 1989

EDITOR: Bill Deane. ASSOCIATES: Musa Gumone, Florence Michaels, Freida Snyder.

FCAHS MEETINGS SLATED FOR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER

As provided in the Constitution and By-Laws, meetings of the Fly Creek Area Historical Society (FCAHS) will be scheduled on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except when in conflict with holidays, etc. The November meeting has thus been postponed by a week, so as not to infringe upon Thanksgiving Eve; and the December meeting, otherwise stuck between Christmas and New Year's Day, has been cancelled. Meetings will be held at 7:00 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall (basement) of the Fly Creek United Methodist Church. Thus, the FCAHS has two remaining meetings scheduled for 1989:

Wednesday, October 25, 7 P.M.
Wednesday, November 29, 7 P.M.

PLAN AHEAD

The October meeting will feature Anita Harrison, of the Town of Hartwick's historical society, as guest speaker. Tentative plans for the November meeting's program include a presentation and slide show about the old trolley system in Fly Creek. Meetings of the FCAHS are open to the public.

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER MEETINGS RECAPPED

The FCAHS has held three meetings since the publication of the Summer newsletter: on July 26, August 23, and September 27, 1989.

During the July meeting, the proposed Constitution and By-Laws of the FCAHS were reviewed, corrected, and accepted by the membership. Also, formal elections of officers were held, with the following results:

President: Florence Michaels
Vice-President: Peter Martin
Secretary: Irwin W. Curlis
Treasurer: Maxine Potts
Trustees: Bill Deane (1-year term)
Ruth Bresee (2-year term)
Margaret Jensen (3-year term)

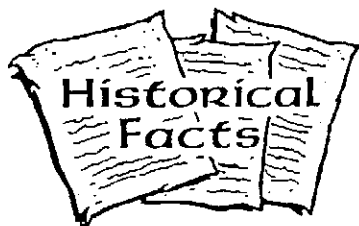
During the August meeting, it was announced by our Treasurer that the 1898 "Friendship Quilt", being purchased by the Society, was virtually paid for. It was decided that additional donations earmarked for the quilt would go toward its preservation. The guest speaker at this meeting was Irene Dusenbery, who gave a fascinating account of life in the Fly Creek area during the nineteenth century.

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER MEETINGS RECAPPED (Continued)

The name of this newsletter was voted on during the September meeting. "Fly Creeker", submitted by Rev. Kenneth Baldwin, beat out "Fly Paper", "Flying Through the Past", and four other suggestions, earning Rev. Baldwin a \$5 credit toward his 1990 dues. Also during this meeting, Bob Brown of Richfield Springs spoke about Henry Cheney, a Fly Creek native who invented the world-famous Cheney hammer. The guest speaker for the evening was Wendell Tripp, of the New York State Historical Association, who spoke about research techniques and experiences.

Items discussed during these meetings included: the application for a grant, through the New York State Council on the Arts, toward a book of Fly Creek area post cards; the posting of "Fly Creek" highway signs on roads leading into the village; the possibility of a 1990 commemorative cancellation at the U.S. Post Office, to mark what is believed to be the bicentennial anniversary of the settling of Fly Creek; and the prospects of securing a permanent building for the FCAHS. Work continues on these projects.

ORIGINS OF "FLY CREEK", "CAT TOWN", AND "BEDBUG HILL"



During the July meeting, Florence Michaels discussed the origins of the names of our town and two of its neighboring hamlets. Following are the explanations:

FLY CREEK-- owes its origin to the Dutch word "vlie", which means "swampy area". Dutch settlers in the area were probably referring either to the source of the creek which runs through our village, located in a marshy area about eight miles north of Route 28; or to the boggy area on the way between Cooperstown and what is now Fly Creek (going over the "vlie" to the creek). "Vlie Creek" evolved into "Fly Creek". For a time early in this century, "Flycreek" was written as one word, before "Fly Creek" again prevailed. At one time, it was suggested that the village be renamed "West Cooperstown".

CAT TOWN-- is a part of Oaksville which was originally known as Johnson's Mills. According to James Douglas Johnson, who was 87 when he penned the following for the September 10, 1951 edition of the Oneonta Star: "Women of the community formed a Literary Society, and devoted much time to lengthy meetings, much to the displeasure of the men. One such meeting in a spacious living room dragged on for hours. There was no sign that it would break up, and the men were getting hungry and disgusted. One man climbed the roof and dropped a cat down the chimney. The half wild, frightened cat, covered with soot, dashed from the fireplace and tore around the room, upsetting dishes and yowling horribly. That broke up the meeting. Since then Johnson's Mills has been Cat Town." (Note: another version states that the meeting was of the Masonic Blue Lodge.)

BEDBUG HILL-- the locale west of County Road 26, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Fly Creek, was once an extensive hops growing area. According to Frank Bouton, workers from New York City were brought by train to help with harvesting, and the farmers had to furnish them with room and board. Sleeping conditions were far from ideal. One worker, asked whether he would return the following autumn, replied negatively, saying the bedbugs there were "as big as squirrels"!

MEMBERSHIP GROWS BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS

Starting with a modest gathering of 13 people just five months ago, the membership of the FCAHS has increased by 546%! As of September 27, there were a total of 84 paid members, including 26 married couples and 32 individual memberships. 55 of the members, having paid their dues in time for the first annual meeting, are categorized as "charter members".

Below is the list of paid members of the FCAHS as of September 27, 1989. New members will be announced in future newsletters. We are all a part of history!

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| *ATWELL, Dr. James | *MARTIN, Peter & Dorothy |
| *BADGELEY, George | *MAYBERGER, Robert & Diane |
| *BAKER, David & Scottie | McLEAN, Mrs. Carolyn |
| *BALDWIN, Rev. Kenneth | *METZGER, Carol |
| *BERTINO, Dr. Joseph | *MICHAELS, Florence |
| BERTINO, Laurie | *MICHAELS, Howard & Jane |
| BLANCHARD, Sally | MILLER, Bruce & Susan |
| BOUTON, Ronald & Carol | *MORRIS, Robert & Pat |
| *BRESEE, Philip & Ruth | OLIN, Frank & Beatrice |
| *BURNHAM, Catherine | PARMENTIER, James & Shirley |
| CLARK, Mr. & Mrs. F. A. | *PLATT, Alice |
| *CURLIS, Irwin & Virginia | *POTTS, Maxine |
| *DAY, Mr. & Mrs. Irving M., III | *PRESTON, Mrs. Robert E. |
| *DEANE, Bill & Pam | *SCHAEFFER, William & Paula |
| DERINGER, Dr. & Mrs. Paul | *SELAN, Inabelle |
| *DEVENPECK, Hattie | *SHAW, Ethel |
| *DUSENBERY, Walter & Irene | *SHEPARD, Jean |
| *DYMOTT, Marie | SINNOTT, Mr. & Mrs. Victor |
| *ELDRIDGE, Margaret | SMITH, Zoe |
| *FINCH, John & Jean | *SNYDER, Arthur & Freida |
| FOUTCH, Maude | STACK, Mr. & Mrs. Edward |
| *GUMONE, Musa | *TALBOT, Hazel B. |
| *HARVEY, Elaine | VAN WOERT, Mrs. James W. |
| HECOX, Mr. & Mrs. Eugene | *WALKER, Mildred |
| HOLDEN, Mrs. Jeannette | *WINNIE, Ernest & Gerda |
| *JENSEN, Margaret | *WOOD, Betty C. |
| JONES, Robert L. | *WYCKOFF, George & June |
| *LAUT, Dorothy P. | YULE, Ruth L. |
| *LAVRINOS, Nicholas & Alice | |
| MACKIE, Dr. & Mrs. | *Charter member. |

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

c/o Maxine Potts, P.O. Box 124, Fly Creek, NY 13337

Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

Check applicable box(es):

- Please register me as a member of the FCAHS. Enclosed is a check for \$5.00.
- Please register my spouse and me to a family membership.
- Please accept my enclosed donation, in the amount of \$ ____.

THE FLY CREEK CIDER MILL



The best-known business establishment in this area is undoubtedly the Fly Creek Cider Mill on Goose Street. Hundreds come each Fall from miles around to buy apples, cider, and various other products, as well as to see the 19th-century mill in action.

The mill was built in 1856. Hosea Williams bought it in 1875 and operated it for many years thereafter, before selling it to the Kane family. Linn Kane purchased the cider mill from his father in 1944, and ran it until 1956. The mill was then dormant until 1964, when Barbara and Charlie Michaels purchased and reopened it. They are now celebrating their silver anniversary as owners of the Fly Creek Cider Mill.

The method used to press the apples has hardly changed over the past century. The cast iron turbine water wheel, which draws the water from the pond under the mill, was built in 1872. The old press, purchased in 1886 in Syracuse and brought to Fly Creek by horse and wagon, is still in perfect running order. An 1889 hydraulic Dunning & Boscher press squeezes the apples, and a 1924 John Deere Waterloo Boy tractor engine runs the elevator and grinder.

An 1897 newspaper article about the Cider Mill mentioned the price of the cider at that time: one cent per gallon!

FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Post Office Box # 124

Fly Creek, New York 13337

