

Fly Creeker

NEWSLETTER of the FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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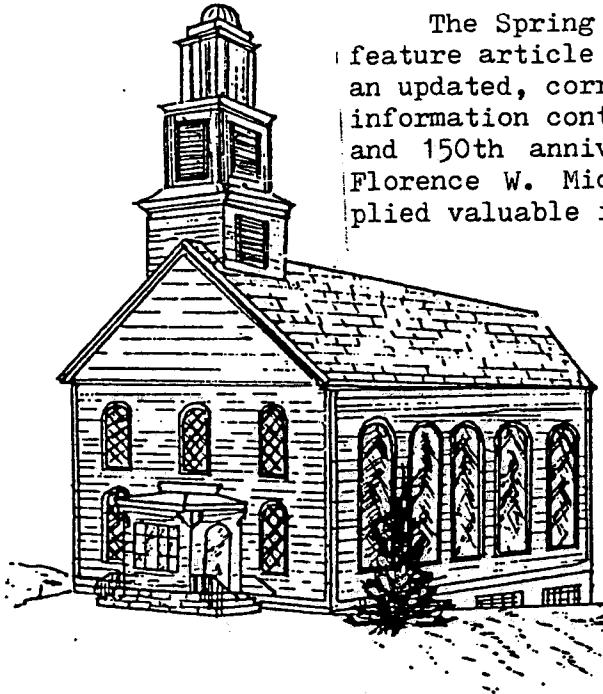
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NEWS BRIEFS

- This issue marks the 20th edition of the *Fly Creeker*. The first was published in July of 1989, and quarterly issues have followed ever since (back issues are still available). And, as you may have noticed, the editor has finally replaced his historical typewriter with a modern word processor.
- The Baseball Hall of Fame has in storage a baseball trophy, won by members of the Fly Creek Athletic Association (FCAA) as winners of the Cooperstown Twilight League championship in 1934. Also there is a heavy flannel uniform top, with "FCAA" on the front and "9" on the back, worn by a team member named Dulin. The items were donated by the player's husband, Mrs. Mary Dulin of Fly Creek, in 1975. However, old-time area baseball enthusiasts do not seem to remember any Fly Creek team. Does anybody know anything about this team: who was on it, when it played, (and, especially) where the home field was located? Please contact the editor with any information.
- Carolyn McLean recalls a well-known former Fly Creek resident, Elvira Pierce Bourne, who lived to the age of 105. Does anyone know of other area residents or natives who lived for a century or more? Or came close? Please contact the editor with any names and dates.
- Jim Atwell found a 9' by 4' sign, labeled "Smith's Feed Store", in the barn of his home on Allison Road, Fly Creek.
- The Fly Creek Area Historical Society (FCAHS) welcomes its newest members: David Eldridge, and Ward "Jim" & Merri Lynn Fish. Renewals were received from Rev. Kenneth Baldwin, Spike & Joyce Boyd, Jean Knapp, Adrian Kuzminski, Joseph & Roberta Morley, Stuart & Bonnie Sharpe, and Edward & Christina Stack, bringing our 1993-94 membership total to 142.
- Although the FCAHS meets in a church building, the meetings are non-denominational and non-religious. This is not to say they are *un*religious; religion does play an important role in history (see the article on pages 2-3). If anyone has an offer of or suggestion for a more-permanent meeting place, we'd love to hear from you!
- Mud Lake in Fly Creek was known as "Muddy Lake" until the early 1800s. The lake, which is really more of a swamp, is located on the south side of Route 28, between Fly Creek and Oaksville.
- Does anybody know the whereabouts of Wynne Byard Fooshee, John C. Marsh, or Marjorie Potts? These three people have each donated items to the Society, but their addresses are unknown to the Accessioning Committee (which needs them for record-keeping purposes). Please contact Dorothy Martin in care of the FCAHS with any leads.
- 1993-94 was the second-snowiest area winter on record. As of April 15, a total of 136.8 inches of snow had fallen on Cooperstown, according to National Weather Service observer Harold Hollis. The snowiest winter since 1869, when such records were first kept here, occurred in 1970-71, when 179.5 inches -- nearly 15 feet -- of the white stuff descended (see the Spring 1993 *Fly Creeker* for a list of the top ten snowfalls). The final 1992-93 total was 127.7 inches, which ranks fifth all time.

THE FLY CREEK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



The Spring 1990 issue of the Fly Creeker contained a feature article about the Fly Creek Church. Following is an updated, corrected, and expanded version. Most of the information contained herein was borrowed from the 125th and 150th anniversary booklets of the church, edited by Florence W. Michaels. Rev. Kenneth R. Baldwin also supplied valuable information.

The Fly Creek United Methodist Church, site of the monthly meetings of the FCAHS, has a history dating back more than 150 years. On June 9, 1838, the building--erected at a cost of \$1,500-- was dedicated by Dr. Elias Bowen. It stands as the last remaining church building in the village.

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Fly Creek, antecedent of the current church, was organized about 1812 by the Reverend Seth Mattison. His successors included Revs. Lanning and William Foljambe. Services were held in the old Episcopal Chapel.

The organizational meeting leading to the current edifice was held on April 23, 1835. On December 31 of that year the parsonage was completed, and the United Methodist Church was on its way.

The first church bell was purchased for \$173 on February 6, 1841. Seven years later it was decided to acquire a larger bell. Andrew Meneely of the West Troy Bell Foundry sold the 1,028-pound bell (still in use) to the church for \$307.83, allowing \$152.83 trade-in value on the old one for a net cost of \$155. The bell originally belonged to the entire village, but eventually became regarded as property of the Methodist Church by virtue of possession.

In 1874 John B. Hooker purchased a large hand-pumped organ and presented it to the Church. A Conn electric organ was purchased for \$1,378 and dedicated on January 11, 1959. It was replaced by the current organ in 1983.

The church building was renovated in 1874-75 at an expense of \$2,500. Electric lights were installed in 1917.

From April 1882 through April 1884, a monthly publication, the Pastoral Visitor, was published by Rev. Benjamin F. Ripley. This publication is on file at the Library of the New York State Historical Association.

A hubbub arose on October 4, 1925, when 14 members of the Ku Klux Klan sat in during Rev. W. H. Swope's sermon. No negative incident was reported.

The idea for the Fellowship Hall was conceived at a meeting in 1943, during which a small collection was raised. The idea incubated for eight years before volunteers began digging out the basement by pick, shovel, and wheelbarrow. A well and septic system were installed, and the Fellowship Hall was completed in 1958.

From 1927-73, the Fly Creek and Cooperstown Methodist Churches were united as the Cooperstown charge. From 1984-90, the Fly Creek church was yoked with the one in Schuyler Lake.

Following are the pastors who have served the Fly Creek United Methodist Church since 1851:

1851	Edwin Dennison	1901-02	Eugene L. Jeffrey
1852	J. H. Hall	1903-04	R. E. Wilson
1853-54	A. R. Wells	1904-05	W. D. Lathrop
1855-56	George Parsons	1906-10	H. N. VanDeusen
1856-58	D. L. Pendell	1911-12	S. A. Terry
1859-60	S. Comfort	1914-15	W. H. Horton
1861-62	H. F. Howe	1916-17	F. A. Mattison
1862-64	William Watson	1917-21	T. F. Hall
1865-67	William C. McDonald	1922-24	C. F. Newell
1868-69	H. V. Talbot	1925-26	W. H. Swope
1869-70	J. W. Rawlingson	1927-31	H. W. Thomas
1870-72	George Parsons	1932-33	F. W. Young
1873-74	Hiram A. Blanchard	1934-40	Wilber C. Dodge
1875-76	Ambrose J. Cook	1940-46	Frederick W. Connell
1876-78	James Ryder	1947-49	Clarence L. Andrews
1879-80	Henderson G. Harned	1949-55	Theodore J. Stone
1881-83	Benjamin F. Ripley	1955-58	Robert H. Sheehan
1884-85	Furlington Rial Tower	1958-63	William A. Highfield
1885-87	Abel Wrigley	1963-69	Albert Almsted
1888-89	Henry E. Wheeler	1969-73	Harold Saxton
1889-90	Joseph S. Southworth	1973-77	Robert Allen
1891-92	Hugh A. Williams	1977-84	Thomas Doyle
1892-93	John L. Thomas	1984-88	Michael K. Willis
1894-96	Andrew M. Colegrove	1988-90	Kenneth R. Baldwin
1897-1900	Elmer E. Pearce	1990-92	Michael Welsh
		1992-	Horace Brown King

Earlier churches in Fly Creek were the Universalist Church and the Presbyterian Church. The Universalist Church was organized in 1805, and said to be New York's first church of this denomination. The building was erected in 1820, adjacent to the south side of where the Grange Hall now stands. Across the road was the Presbyterian Church, organized March 20, 1828, with the edifice erected in 1840. It was razed in 1937, a few years before the Universalist Church.

FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL QUIZ

The first person answering all six of the following questions correctly (before July 1) will earn a year's free membership to the FCAHS. Hint: the questions were culled from a souvenir program of the first-mentioned event, and a 1952 Otsego Farmer article about the second.

During World War II, a Fly Creek Honor Roll for veterans was dedicated.

1. On what date?
2. Who gave the dedication speech?
3. Where did the parade begin and end?

Some time after the war, the Fly Creek Fire District was organized.

4. In what year?
5. What areas did it include?
6. As of 1952, how many residents could vote in the District?

(Questions submitted by Florence Michaels; answers in the next Fly Creeker)

MEETINGS

The next three FCAHS meetings are slated for April 27, May 25, and June 22, 1994. Meetings are held in the basement of the Fly Creek church, and begin at 7 P.M. The public is welcome, and refreshments are served.

The guest speaker for the April meeting will be Bob Murdock from Otsego Electric, on the topic of "The Old REA Line." In May, Richard Ranieri of Otego will speak on the area's old Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camps. In June -- weather permitting -- the Society will meet at the cemetery across from the Grange Hall on Cemetery Road, and Louis Grippe will discuss his restoration efforts there.

Recent FCAHS meetings were held on January 26, February 23, and March 23. In January, Pat Yourho delivered a rambling and entertaining account of his 78 years in this area. Among his recollections were the purchase of a 248-acre farm for \$7,500 (1945), and selling gas at the price of six gallons for a dollar. In February, Dr. Robert Mackie gave a brief but interesting presentation of "Medicine in Fly Creek in the Late Nineteenth Century". Borrowing from the 1893 book, *The Cottage Physician*, Dr. Mackie described the emphasis on bedside manner, common maladies (e.g., grippe, consumption, apoplexy), and strange treatments (leeches) and beliefs of the time. Also during this meeting, Bruce and Sue Andrews presented the Society with an inscribed copy of their new book, *Earth Wakes*, a compilation of epitaphs. And, in March, Craig Haney spoke on a "History of Maple Sugaring in America", from the Native Americans forward. He brought along various augers, bits and braces used for maple-tapping, and informed us that it takes about 40 gallons of sap to produce one gallon of maple syrup (or eight pounds of sugar). (Submitted by Paula Schaeffer and Elaine Harvey)

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