

Fly Creeker

NEWSLETTER of the FLY CREEK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY (FCAHS)

Editor: Bill Deane, PO Box 47, Fly Creek, NY 13337; 607- 547-5786; Editor@FCAHS.org

Staff: Jim Atwell, Elaine Harvey, Tom Heitz, Kay Kantorowski,
Carolyn McLean, Sherlee Rathbone, Freida Snyder.

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\$10,000 REWARD!

Two of our members have offered a \$10,000 “challenge grant” to the Fly Creek Area Historical Society. The grantors, Carl and Inge Roemer, have asked that the FCAHS undertake fund-raising activities for the purpose of repairing the roof on the Society’s building. They have agreed to match up to \$10,000 in donations to the Society received by September 30, 2006.

As you know, the FCAHS owns the former Fly Creek Grange Hall on Cemetery Road in the hamlet. Fly Creek Grange #844 was established in 1898, and its building was erected the following year. The Grange was long used as a community center for the likes of socials and theatrical presentations, but by the end of the 20th century it had all but been abandoned. Fly Creek Grange was dissolved, with the Otsego County Pomona Grange taking custody of the building. On June 2, 1999, our Society purchased the Hall from the Pomona Grange.

Since then, the FCAHS has taken measures to repair and upgrade the building and restore its status as a community center. With the help of generous donations and grants, a new well was dug, windows and shutters were repaired, the building was painted, shelving was installed, a bathroom was added, and the electric system was upgraded. Besides the monthly meetings of the Society, the building has hosted dozens of dances, parties, and community functions over the past seven years. By 2004 the building had earned listing on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Now, the building’s huge roof is showing its age – and leaking. Obviously, without a good roof, the building could be rendered uninhabitable, undoing a century of progress. Estimates to repair the roof ran upwards of \$20,000, more than the Society had available. But with the generous “challenge grant,” the Society and community essentially have an opportunity to repair the building for half-price. (Snyder Construction of Burlington Flats agreed to do the job for \$12,595, and they should start work this month. Any funds raised in excess of that amount will go to general upkeep of the building.)

So far, more than \$4,400 has been donated to this cause. Donors, listed alphabetically, include the following: Jonathan & Lynn Bass, David & Samantha Bassler, Patricia Bell, Andrew M. Blum, Honey Bond (Rider House), Michael D. Bouton, Ronald & Carol Bouton, Phil & Ruth Bresee, James U. Brophy, Mona Buckley & Valerie Pineo, Grant Campbell, Richard D. Carr, Richard H. & Ann M. Carr, Barbara M. Chamberlain, Harold & Waltraut Cheney, Helen F. Chetner, Edwin & Judith Cook, Jim & Deb Dalton, Bill & Pam Deane, Paul & Margaret Deringer, James E. & Debra T. Dow, Lyn Edinger & Connie Plummer, Cynthia G. Ekeland, Gwendolyn C. Ermlich, Philip & Ann Fey, Dan Evans, John D. & Jean E. Finch, Henry & Frances Forster, G&S Construction, LLC, Patricia A. Gambitta, Lucille Gargiulo, Charles H. Goodspeed, Gary B. & Sally Goodwin, Susan J. Grummon, Robert P. Hage, Carol Goddard Hanlon, Katharine B. Hanor, Harmony House Café & Antiques, Bruce & Carolyn Harter, Eric P. Hill, Sam & Peg Hoskins, Charles B. Howarth, MD, Holly F. Hren (HollyDaze B&B), Vern & Jacqueline Huff, Rick & Christine Hulse, Tom & Paula Huntsman, Robert & Nancy Iversen, Robert L. & May-Britt Joyce, Robert & Barbara Kane, Claire A. Kepner, Arlene P. Knapp, Arthur & Natalie Laidlaw, Gene Lincourt, Lt. Col. Paul H. Lord, Bruce & Deborah Miller, Douglas Miller & Tracy Hegelson, Forrest Misner, Jr., Stephen & Vicki Newby, David L. Nilsen, Marty Otten Builder, Inc., Jim & Shirl Parmentier, Katherine T. Perkins, Don & Ina

Phillips, John & Alison Phillips, Bob & Kay Pierro, Thomas Pullyblank & Kristin Loos, Dominick & Anna Montesano, Francis & Linda Novko, Paul & Sally Rezen, Victor Salvatore & Martha McGowan, John A. Sansevere, Jerry E. & Phyllis Selan, Sen. James L. & Cynthia M. Seward, Bonnie L. Sharpe, Edward “Ben” Snyder, Mayo & Elizabeth Snyder, Gillian G. Spencer, Donald & Shirley Spraker, Edward & Christina Stack, Lyle & Elsie Steere, Mardon B. Sullivan, Suzanne Summers, William & Evelyn Talbot, George & Shirley Tucker, Bill & Karen Ubner, Bernd Ulken & Esther Nelson, Charles & Josephine Van Horn, Ronald & Eleanor Vibbard, Wilma Weigel, Frank & Martha Wenner, Tim & Marie Wiles, Susan J. Winter, Jim & Margaret Wolff, and James A. Yourno.

The Fly Creek Area Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization chartered by the State of New York; therefore, donations to the Society are tax-deductible. Donations may be mailed to the Fly Creek Area Historical Society, PO Box 87, Fly Creek, NY 13337. Thanks for your continued support!

MEETINGS

The next three FCAHS meetings are scheduled for April 26, May 24, and June 28, 2006. Society meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month beginning at 7 PM, and are open to the public. Now that winter is (hopefully!) behind us, they are staged at the FCAHS Building/Grange Hall on Cemetery Road, Fly Creek, one-tenth of a mile from the blinker light.

The April meeting will feature member discussion about the Society’s recent strategic planning activities. The FCAHS was awarded a “Get Ready” planning grant by the Upstate History Alliance last year, and Bruce Moseley was appointed our facilitator for the process. Several FCAHS and community representatives met with Moseley on January 14, discussing the Society’s vision and mission. Moseley wrote a report based on this, and the group met again on February 25 and March 11 to review it, and identify the Society’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Now, the group seeks input from the rest of the membership, so come prepared to discuss the future of our organization.

The tentative speaker for May is Kathleen LaFrank, reporting on Fly Creek’s Historic District progress. And in June, Tom Grace of the Oneonta *Daily Star* will speak on a topic to be announced.

The most recent Society meetings were held on January 25, February 22, and March 22, 2006. In January, Dr. John Leahy – just a few days shy of his 90th birthday – presented “The Transition in Agriculture and Farming in Otsego County.” Dr. Leahy came to Otsego County in 1949 and opened a veterinary practice serving both farm and domestic animals until retiring in 2000. He brought along many displays and props, illustrating the changes in our area’s agriculture over the years. For example, in 1932 there were 3,300 herds totaling 75,000 cows in Otsego County, as compared to just 400 and 20,000, respectively, in 2005. Consequently, the cows have to work more than three times as hard, with the annual output per cow increasing from 6,000 to 20,000 pounds. Meanwhile, the farm price per 100 pounds leaped from 95¢ to \$17.

In February, Ann Vickary spoke on “Spinning and Weaving of Historic Textiles.” Ann, a Fly Creek resident, has worked at the Farmers’ Museum for 18 years spinning and weaving historic textiles. She was accompanied by her apprentice weaver, Chuck Newman, on the loom. While the two demonstrated their skills, Ann gave a historical perspective on what she called “probably the oldest art known to man,” dating back at least 5,000 years.

And, in March, the Reverend Doug Burleigh presented “Advanced Directives: Living Wills, Health Care Proxies, and Planning for Life as You Would Like it to Be.” Rev. Burleigh, also a Fly Creek resident, is the Chaplain at Bassett Healthcare. His discussion of advance care planning included step-by-step instruction on completing a health care proxy. The topic was of much interest to the attendees, as evidenced by their many questions.

NEWS BRIEFS

- **We Keep Growing and Growing ...** Welcome (and in one case, welcome back) to our newest members: Helen F. Chetner, James & Debra Dow, G&S Construction, LLC, Sam & Peg Hoskins, Rick & Christine Hulse, Robert & Nancy Iversen, Eugene Lincourt, Bruce & Deborah Miller, Steve & Vicki Newby, John & Alison Phillips, Bernd Ulken & Esther Nelson, and Frank & Martha Wenner. We also received renewals from Michael Ainslie, Jim Atwell* & Anne Geddes-Atwell, Rev. Kenneth* & Nancy Baldwin, Grant Campbell, Catherine D. Christiansen, Christopher & Joann Christmann, Wesley & Evette Ciampo, Lyn Edinger & Corinne Plummer, Jennifer Evans, Dorothy B. Famulare, John & Jean Finch, Jim & MerriLynn Fish, Richard & Alene Foutch, Ralph E. Hall, Jr., Esq., Carol Hanlon, Katharine Hanor, Bruce & Caroline Harter, MaryAnn Hartmann, Margaret Jensen*, Ted & Kay Kantorowski, Bill & Evelyn Keating, Claire Kepner, Bill & Ruth Kitchen, Harry & Ellen Levine, Tom & Ellen Lieber, Barbara Lyon, Peter & Dorothy Martin*, Kevin, Patricia, William & MaryKate Murphy, Jean Neff, Paul Poulos & Rochelle Semel, Paul & Sally Rezen, Gail Rogers, Paula Schaeffer*, Lester Sittler, Esq., Sue-Ellen Spence, Edward & Christina Stack, Mike & Betty Staffin, Suzanne Summers, Edwin & Judy Thorne, Chuck & Jo Van Horn, Ernest & Gerda Winnie*, James & Margaret Wolff, and James Yourno (*charter members are denoted with an asterisk). This makes our membership total 204, giving us a chance to break last year's record of 231.
- **Committing to the Committee ...** The Publications Committee will hold its annual meeting 45 minutes prior to the next FCAHS meeting – thus, at the FCAHS/Grange building on Wednesday, April 26, at 6:15 PM. Anyone interested in helping with the *Fly Creeker* and other potential Society publications is invited to attend.
- **April 30 Pancake Breakfast ...** On Sunday, April 30 (not May 14, as originally planned), we will be holding a family style pancake breakfast to benefit the roof repair fund. It will be at the FCAHS/Grange building from 8 AM until noon. The menu includes pancakes, of course, and sausage, scrambled eggs, applesauce, home fries, and real maple syrup. The cost is \$5.50 for adults, and \$3 for children aged 5-12.
- **Dancing with the Stars ...** Sherlee Rathbone is making plans to continue the tradition, started by Elaine Harvey, of holding monthly square and round dances at the FCAHS/Grange building. In previous years, they were held on the first Saturday of each month, May through November, from 7-10 PM. Please contact Sherlee (547-9334) for further information.
- **Refreshed ...** Those supplying refreshments at the next three meetings are Elaine Harvey & Freida Snyder (April), Judy Thorne & Anna Montesano (May), and Ann Carr & Genevieve Licci (June). Please contact refreshments Committee Chairperson Anna Montesano (965-9809) to volunteer for future meetings, or use the sign-up sheet available during the meetings.
- **Fly Creek Community Association ...** The Fly Creek Community Association was founded on November 10, 2005. Its purposes are to preserve and enrich the hamlet's way of life; ensure that the hamlet remains a safe and attractive place to live; enhance Fly Creekers' "sense of place" by supporting its public and private institutions and its businesses; initiate and cooperate with hamlet projects that beautify or otherwise improve its public lands; offer annual recognition for the greatest improvements in business and residential properties; and keep regular liaison with the Town, County, and Fly Creek Fire District boards through representatives attending their meetings. Contact Jim Atwell (547-5895) for further information.
- **Archives Exhibit ...** This summer the FCAHS will be displaying an archives exhibit, on loan from the Upstate History Alliance. The attractive exhibit consists of four lightweight foam core panels, each measuring approximately 26x52 inches. Its purpose is to acquaint people with the importance of maintaining archives, and preserving the past.

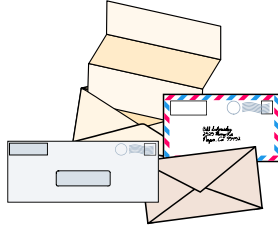
- **Cleaning Up Our Acts ...** It's time to get our building ready for the season – and we need help. On Saturday, April 22, we will be having a building clean-up day at the FCAHS/Grange building. Please stop by to lend a hand.
- **Genealogy Help ...** The research library of the New York State Historical Association (NYSHA) recently created on-line bibliographies of materials in its collection on the local history of several New York counties, including Otsego. These can be accessed at www.nysha.org/library.
- **Finding Photos ...** Peter Martin has prepared a two-page list, itemizing where the photos used in our 1990 publication, *Fly Creek Area Yesteryear*, can be found. Most are in our own archives, but some were from the NYSHA Library, and a few are of unknown origin.
- **Historic District ...** The New York State Department of Historic Preservation will soon be holding a public meeting on the Fly Creek historic district project. It is tentatively scheduled for May 24 at the FCAHS/Grange Building.
- **Home Sweet Home ...** The FCAHS and the Heartworks Quilts & Fabrics shop in Fly Creek are planning a fun-filled, "Home Sweet Home" weekend, at the FCAHS/Grange building on July 22-23, 2006. It will feature a quilt show, classes, speakers, a 2007 American Quilt Society Art Quilt calendar signing by award-winning quilter Molly Waddell (Sunday), and two meals each day: breakfast will be served from 9-10:30 AM, and lunch from 11:30 AM-2 PM. Baby lock educator Margaret Tully will teach a serger class upstairs from 10 AM to 3 PM on Saturday (sign-up required), and Textile designer Kathy Hall will speak on Sunday at 1:30. There will be spinners and weavers from the Farmers' Museum both days, and wagon rides from the Grange to the Fire Hall and around the Historic district with George Cade, his horses and wagon. Tickets are available for the speaker and quilt show for \$10, or for the quilt show only for \$5. There will also be special events throughout the day at Heartworks. Proceeds of the ticket sales, donations, and food sales will benefit the FCAHS roof repair fund.
- **Help Make it Sweet ...** Heartworks staff and friends will be working with FCAHS members to sell tickets to the event and plan food sales to the above event. If you are able to donate food, help serve, be a host or hostess, sell tickets, set up tables and chairs, haul trash, park cars, clean up, or help in any way to make this a successful fund-raising weekend for the FCAHS, please call Margaret Wolff at Heartworks at 547-2501, or Ann Carr at 547-2384.
- **Summer Hours ...** MerriLynn Fish is again planning to open up and man the FCAHS/Grange building for regular visiting hours this summer. For further details, contact MerriLynn at 547-9335.

ELAINE HARVEY STEPS DOWN

In a surprise decision in February, Elaine Harvey stepped down from her various roles within the Society, including Trustee and chairperson of the Fund-Raising and Sunshine Committees.

Over the 17 years of the Society's existence, nobody has done more than Elaine in getting the organization off the ground and keeping it alive and vibrant. It might take a whole issue to list all she has done, but here are some highlights. Elaine is a charter member of the Society, and it is safe to say she has attended more meetings than anyone else, including a streak of 70 straight from 1992-98. She co-chaired the Programs Committee from 1989-2002 (giving a half-dozen presentations herself during that period), and organized all the dances held at the Grange Hall since 2000. She served as Trustee from 1991-94 and 1999-2006. She has contributed countless tidbits to the *Fly Creeker*. As Elaine wrote in her resignation letter, she has "served the Society well."

Fortunately for us, Elaine plans to remain a member of the Society, and of its Publications Committee. We will miss her other contributions dearly, and we owe her not only thanks for all she has done, but apologies for taking her for granted.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The *Fly Creeker* will print letters of general interest about area history, the Society, or the newsletter itself. The Editor reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, space, etc. Address correspondence to Bill Deane, at P.O. Box 47, Fly Creek, NY 13337; or e-mail to DizDeane@USAdatanet.net.

I am in search of some information on my great-great-great-grandfather and grandmother, James Henry and Sophia Caroline Quackenbush. I have traced my family back to one of their sons, Granville James Quackenbush, his first wife Susan, and his second wife Minnie. They along with my grandfather George are buried in the Hartwick Seminary cemetery in a family plot that has a four-sided monument. I feel that James and Sophia might be buried in that cemetery also, but no one in my family can remember even seeing any stone other than that monument.

Granville was born in 1837 in Hartwick Seminary. He had a sister, Adaline Marie, born in 1844 in Milford, and I think a second sister named Jane Ann who was born around 1848. Granville and his wife Minnie and his son Albert are mentioned in the booklet *Recollections of an Early Mill Town, Toddsville*. Granville moved there after serving in the Civil War (121st Infantry Company E), and became the Superintendent of the Union Cotton Mill. I have his obituary, but there is no mention of his parents; the one sister mentioned as Mrs. Frank Avery is Adaline Marie.

I have a copy of Gail Richard Quackenbush's *The Quackenbush Family in America*, and the book *The Quackenbush Family in America and Holland* by Adriana Suydam. Neither of these has even one mention of any of my family members. I have also tried Ancestry.com with little success.

So my problem is trying to find out when James and Sophia came to the Hartwick Seminary/Milford area, where and when they were born, and when they died. I have a feeling they were both born around 1805-10 (possibly as late as 1820). I think James may have died between 1850-60, and Sophia between 1861-69. Sophia and Adeline (Marie Avery) were both living with Granville during the 1860 census (Sophia was 53 then so would have been born about 1807).

There is an old cemetery known as the Quackenbush Cemetery in the Town of Otego, located on the Black River Road between Otego and Oneonta on the land of the Stuart Hurlburt farm (may be an old name now). But I understand that the headstones are down and somewhat scattered. Someday I would like to look that area over.

My grandmother (on my father's side) and her third husband, Amber and Fred Chapman, lived in Fly Creek in a house on the main road just above the old cider mill (my grandmother moved out of the house in the late 1960s after Fred died). My mother's family on both sides lived in the Burlington, New Lisbon, Hinman Hollow (where her father and mother William and Ana Clark had a farm) area. I have my mother's family traced back to Elisha Parker (fought in the Revolutionary War). That family is featured in the book *The Parker Homestead*, and the book *History of Otsego County(1740-1878)*. His son Alexander settled in West Burlington in 1790, followed by Elisha and his wife Mary in the early 1800s from Coventry, RI. My mother is a member of the DAR. I was born in Cooperstown in 1940. So you can see that we have our roots in Otsego County. Unfortunately I live in Florida now and it is not easy to access records in New York.

Again, any help on James Henry and Sophia Caroline Quackenbush would be gratefully received. If there is any other information that I might have that would help, or that I might find, I am at your service.

Roger Quackenbush
2930 Banyan Hill Lane,
Land O Lakes, FL 34639-6785
(813) 929-9198

Back before Route 28 was paved, I was among a group of people who walked from Cooperstown to Fly Creek. My memory of it is very spotty, but there are a few things I can remember. It was a beautiful, sunshiny New Year's Day, probably about 1927, '28 or '29. I can remember Rowan D. Spraker, Sr., in a long overcoat and with a walking stick, walking with his wife and another couple just ahead of my group. Arriving in Fly Creek, we were served a delicious dinner by the Grange, after which we danced in the large room. I danced a few times with a boy named Roman Lawrence, who was extra-tall and who lived on Glimmerglan Road and attended District School with me. Later in the day, cars arrived to take us all home.

Do you suppose there is a *Freeman's Journal* article on file somewhere about this walk? I'd love to have my mind refreshed.

Katharine Hanor
Cooperstown, NY

Mrs. Hanor is referring to community "hikes" organized by a man whose name I believe was Cap Smith. In one of my past *Freeman's Journal* columns, last year I think, I ran an item from 1930, in which a group of folks hiked over the hill from Cooperstown on New Year's Day to Fly Creek, where they had a meal at the Grange Hall. Smith organized and led many outings for groups – churches, businessmen, the Rotary club, etc. The hikes typically featured a meal prepared and eaten outdoors. Most of the outings seem to have taken place in the wintertime. The period, I believe, dates to World War I and continued until the 1950s. I will try to find some references.

Tom Heitz, Town of Otsego Historian
Fly Creek, NY

In the article about Harmony House (Winter, 2006 *Fly Creeker*), it is stated that one previous owner, Thomas Donlon, used it as a glove factory. He was my uncle, married to Susan Van Horn Donlon, sister of my father Lynn Van Horn, sister to Alvin Van Horn, who resided in Oaksville and was the father-in-law of Carolyn McLean. Tom Donlon also operated various other glove factories, including the largest one in Herkimer. Keep up the good work, as the articles are very informative and interesting.

Chuck Van Horn
Sprague River, OR