



# The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

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## World War 11 on the Home Front

America's entry into World War II following the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 meant changes for everyone, not only for those in the military but also for those at home. American factories stopped making peacetime goods in order to manufacture war materials. Even Alden's Bennett Manufacturing Company switched from making waste receptacles, medicine cabinets and kitchen cupboards to producing \$1 million worth of water-proof emergency field operating lamps for the Army and Navy and \$2 million worth of surgical cabinets, first aid boxes and airborne radar equipment.

As more and more men left for military service, women were recruited to take their places in factories. Bennett's advertised weekly in the *Alden Advertiser* for workers. Curtiss-Wright airplane manufacturer held a recruitment night at the Alden High School in early 1943 and specifically advertised for women workers in March 1943. The nature of their jobs in both factories necessitated the wearing of trousers, another change.



Martin Muchow, center, and Bill Airey, end, at Bennett Manufacturing titled "Marty and His Women".

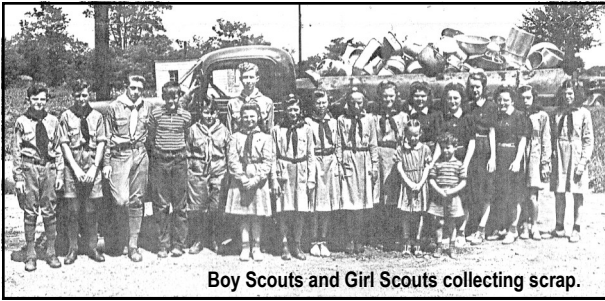
Residents of Alden, like the rest of America, quickly learned to put up with shortages of everyday items, including gasoline, meat, butter, sugar, shoes, boots, even dish soap and toothpaste. To make sure that scarce goods were shared fairly, the government issued ration books to everyone; the coupons in each person's book showed how much of each item that a person could buy. Newspapers and magazines printed recipes and the government printed recipe booklets to help the homemaker make substitutes for rationed food items. Meatless Tuesdays were suggested. One young girl wrote in her diary at war's end that she never wanted to see turnips in any form ever again.

As the war progressed, the rationing system became more complicated. Food items alone required two books of stamps for each person in a family—red for things like meat and butter and blue for prepared foods, including canned goods. Adding to the confusion was the fact that the number of stamps needed for any item was likely to change from week to week.

The US government asked people to plant "Victory Gardens" to enable the nation's farmers to raise more food for the armed forces and America's allies, and Americans did, in backyards, along driveways, in window boxes, anywhere with enough soil, sunlight and water. John Dean's Hardware on Railroad Street advertised supplies for Victory Gardens. People were encouraged to can their own fruits and vegetables in glass jars for use throughout the winter, allowing the metal to be used for the war effort.

Critics of the Victory Garden program predicted that the gardeners would lose interest when the novelty wore off. That didn't happen. In 1943, Americans planted almost 21 million Victory Gardens, and in 1944, the gardens supplied more than 40 percent of the nation's fresh vegetables.

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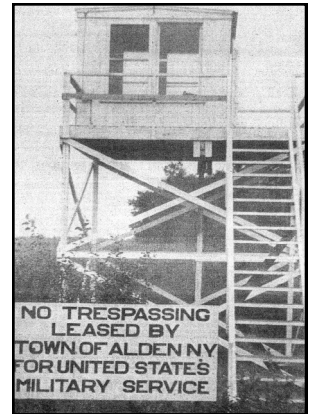
Scrap drives were held—for metal and rubber especially. Children and teenagers were especially helpful in this endeavor. The Alden Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts teamed together to gather metal. The Girl Scouts held a silk stocking drive; silk and nylon were used to make parachutes. (It took 2,300 pairs of stockings to make a parachute.) The Boy Scouts participated in a scrap paper drive; the funds derived to be used for the Soldier's Fund to provide food and entertainment for troops passing through the Alden-Lancaster-Depew area. Alden collected 5,400 pounds of paper. The Alden Mothers' Club handled fat salvage (a pound of kitchen fat contained enough glycerin for fifty bullets.) Milkweed was collected as the fibers were used in the making of "Mae West" life jackets. The Ewell Free Library collected books to be sent to members of the armed forces.

This was printed in the *Alden Advertiser*:

**Turn In Your Scrap**  
**1 tire =12 rubber gas masks    1 shovel=4 hand grenades**

"Patch It Up, Wear It Out, Make It Do, or Do Without" became the slogan. Those collected silk and nylon stockings? Women used leg-makeup and drew on the seam. Women remade old clothes into new styles. There were patterns published for turning a tablecloth into a new dress. Hems on girls' skirts were let down, and let down again. Patches were sewn on pants and overalls. Old blouses were cut down with just the collar and a bit of the front and back saved to make "dickies" that could be worn under sweaters. Before the war, Girl Scout uniforms had long metal zippers down the front. Since metal was needed for the war effort, the uniform was redesigned with buttons.

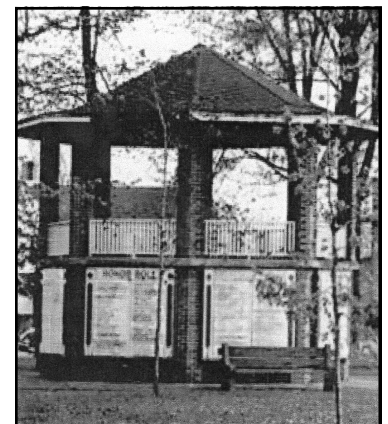
An aircraft observation station was built in West Alden. There observers would identify, and report every airplane they saw to the Army Filter Center as part of the nation's warning system to guard against a surprise enemy air attack. The stations were to be manned 24/7 and there were constant pleas for more volunteers in the *Advertiser*. With so many men and women working in defense factories, or in military service, those volunteers were primarily older Aldenites, or older teenagers.



Air Raid and Black Out drills were held, at first announced ones, and later, surprise drills. Air Raid Wardens were appointed to patrol the streets to see that black-out drapes and curtains were being drawn so as to not let any light peek out.

Nationwide gasoline rationing went into effect on December 1, 1942 and Aldenites soon found that travel was going to be difficult. Most families received enough fuel points for necessary travel, but not for pleasure. New tires were almost impossible to get—the rubber needed for the war effort. Tires were patched, re-patched, and re-patched again. To further reduce gasoline consumption, a "Victory Speed" was set at 35 mph. The travel difficulties had a strong impact on the Black Water Bath business in Alden. Patients were unable to get here. Even though many people turned to the trains for travel, the trains were crowded and military personnel had travel priority.

In early 1943, it was decided that some sort of Honor Roll needed to be erected to honor those serving in the various military branches. The Village and Town Boards worked together to come up with a plan. Various places were discussed and it was decided that the octagonal Village Bandstand would be the best place, using the sides for the lists of names. The names, painted in red or blue on white strips, were attached to wooden panels in the niches. At the time of the dedication on Memorial Day 1943, 200 names were listed, with 30 more added after the dedication. By the end of the war nearly 300 had served, including four women: Esther Dudziak (SPAR), Jean Heist (Army nurse), Betty Neufang (Army nurse) and Elsie Snyder (WAVES).



Sons, bothers, husbands, fathers—heroes all, on land and sea, and in the air.  
 Men, women, children, teenagers—heroes all, waiting at home, making do, working for victory.

**Of those nearly 300 names serving, twenty-five made the ultimate sacrifice:**

<b>1942</b>		
Edward Swain	POW Philippines	1 May
Howard Heist	Drowned	8 July
<b>1943</b>		
Henry Heist	KIA Curacao	1 Mar
Edward Pych	Airplane Accident	16 May
Anthony Jacewski	KIA Pacific	15 June
Calvin Almquist	Destroyer Hit & Sunk	10 July
Francis Malay	KIA Italy	14 Oct
<b>1944</b>		
Allen Savage	Aircraft Training Accident	7 Jan
Arthur Carroll	KIA	29 Mar
Walter Heist	KIA over France	27 Apr
Chester Malinowski	KIA Germany	2 June
Robert Hahn	KIA France	14 Aug
Robert Balling	KIA Italy	12 Nov

<b>1944</b>		
Theodore Kowalow	MIA China	10 Dec
Robert Willis	KIA Panama	12 Dec
John Malay	KIA Belgium	25 Dec
Melvin Ulrich	KIA Belgium	26 Dec
<b>1945</b>		
Laverne Harfman	KIA Germany	10 Jan
Samuel McMurray	MIA Belgium	26 Jan
Richard Winegar	KIA Over Iwo Jima	26 Feb
Henry Jerozal	KIA	4 Mar
Homer Ochs	KIA Germany	6 Mar
Gordon Dickinson	KIA Italy	10 Apr
Elmer "Dutch" Koehler	KIA Germany	16 Apr



Photos and articles by Karen Muchow

*Erie County Fair Historical Display*

The theme for this year's historical displays at the Erie County Fair is "Your Hometown During the World Wars", a very appropriate theme with the centennial of the signing of the armistice with Germany at the close of WWI coming in November. The Alden Historical Society has been at work designing a display showing three ways Alden was "Waiting for Word", using artifacts from our collection and relying on scrapbooks kept by Joe Weisbeck, publisher of the Alden Advertiser, and Carroll Johnson, principal of Alden High School. Joe's grandson, Lee, has been a great help. Even though the Gazette's editor Lynda Tucker and I have barely made it through two years of WWII Advertisers, we have learned that the men, women and children of Alden fought very hard for victory. The Fair Committee, chaired by Larry Kocher, includes Clarke Burke, Elli DeFilippo, Michelle Dussault, Sandy Dussault, Christopher Gust, Kyle Kavanagh, Carl Matthies, Karen Muchow, Kris Rogers, and Lynda Tucker.

Karen Muchow and Lynda Tucker

*Curator's Corner*

We acquired the 2018 Yearbook from ACS to continue our collection. ACS fifth grades attended tours of the building in June and participated in classes at the Henske Road schoolhouse as 19<sup>th</sup> century students. All of the children seemed to enjoy learning about their hometown history.

Beating the Heat before AC is a new display in the Davis room. Our collection of fans is quite interesting. There is also a new display of kitchen tools from great grandma's house. Visitors are encouraged to guess the purpose of the items. Wende Grove is featured in another display case.

## Message from the President

The summer season is upon us, and the Society has recently concluded our 2017-18 monthly program season at the Community Center. After a break for the summer months, we will resume in September. We thank everyone who attended one (or all) of our programs. We covered a wide range of material, including a walk through the Pan-Am Exposition, the Alden Beanery Fire, the Millgrove hamlet, The Alamo, Alden Town Baseball, the Buffalo Mafia and more. We thank Conrad and Carol Borucki for producing our program schedule, and Sandy Dussault for coordinating refreshments. While our programs are on break for the summer, the Society remains very busy. We have a committee hard at work creating our display for the 179<sup>th</sup> Erie County Fair, to be held August 8<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>. Please stop by the Historical Building to see our themed entry on "Our Home Town During the World Wars." We are also planning an event in September at the Henskee Road Schoolhouse in conjunction with the annual Art Show. For the latest information on these and other coming activities, find and "like" our Facebook page or check the Alden Advertiser.

In addition, we recently welcomed 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes from Alden Central School (and for the first time, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders from St. John's School), with whom lessons were conducted by Historical Society volunteers at the Henskee Road Schoolhouse and at the Society building, to provide educational opportunities for the youth in our community. We hope the students and teachers found the experience worthwhile and fun.

We also appreciate everyone who has joined or renewed their membership with the Historical Society. If you are reading the Gazette and are not yet a member, please consider joining the Society. We also appreciate current lifetime members who make donations in lieu of dues. Thank you! Have a safe and enjoyable summer. As always, we thank you for your interest and support.

Christopher Gust



## The Erie County Historical Federation Annual Meeting

The Alden Historical Society was well-represented at the Erie County Historical Federation's Annual Meeting, which was held on April 28 at the Holland Willows Restaurant. President Christopher Gust, Vice President Elli DeFilippo, Curator Kris Rogers and Archivist/Historian Karen Muchow heard several presentations and participated in a round-table discussion on current issues, ideas and practices among the attending historical societies from across Western New York. For information on the Federation, see their web site at [www.echfwny.com](http://www.echfwny.com). We look forward to next year's meeting.

Christopher Gust

## 5th Grade Schoolhouse Days



Photos supplied



Retired teachers Conrad Borucki, Elli DeFilippo, Sandy Dussault, Sandie Karpie, Kris Rogers, and Marcia Spitzer volunteered to teach the classes. Alden and St. John's teachers and teaching assistants Ms. Au, Ms. Cannon, Ms. Devine, Ms. Ferrentino, Ms Genco, Ms. Hetey, Ms. Kopack, Ms. Mattheus, Ms. Mooney, Mr. Neidel, and Mr. Schall. coordinated and oversaw the students during their experience: St. John's parents Heather Taylor, Maria Lavarney, Denise Beal, Cheryle Ertel, and Katleen Dethier also assisted: Alden Town and Village Historian and Historical Society Archivist Karen Muchow developed the lessons and activities that comprised the program. At the schoolhouse they were exposed to the 3 r's – reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic, using slates and chalk.



Article by Elli DeFilippo



## Our Past Programs

### Al Parker Discusses Ancestor Ely Parker April 12

Alvin Parker, fourth generation descendant of the family of Native American Ely S. Parker, provided background on his famous ancestor. Ely was born in 1828 at Indian Falls, NY, part of what was the Tonawanda Reservation. Ely's family, members of the Seneca Indian Nation, adopted the family name of Parker. Ely was bilingual, speaking English as well as his native language. Ely tried to enlist in the Union forces at the outset of the Civil War, as did many Native Americans, but they were refused, only to be recruited later after the combating forces were losing manpower and were in need of reinforcements. Ely contacted Ulysses Grant, who had him commissioned as a captain and chief engineer. Ely became an adjutant to Grant and became his military secretary. He accompanied Grant to Appomatox, where he helped to draft the surrender documents. After Grant was elected U.S. President, he appointed Parker as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He died in 1895 and is buried at Forest Lawn Cemetery, near Red Jacket.



Photo credit Clarke Burke

### Lee Coppola Presents "the Mafia in WNY" May 10



Photo credit Christopher Gust

Former TV and newspaper investigative reporter Lee Coppola shared the history of the Mafia in Buffalo and surrounding area. Growing up on the west side of Buffalo, Mr. Coppola witnessed tactics used by "the Arm," the name by which organized crime came to be known in Buffalo. The Mafia, originating in 14<sup>th</sup> century Sicily, was created as an organization intended to offer protection to fellow citizens from invading ravagers. The mafia organizations relied on three tenets for strength: loyalty to the mafia family, "omerta," - a code of silence to protect the mafia family, and violence as a means to enforce their objectives. The Mafia considered themselves men of honor, as their foremost objective was always loyalty to the family. The Mafia in Buffalo began in the early 1900's under the leadership of Joseph Di-Carlo. The Mafia grew in strength and assets following the enactment of the 1919 Volstead Act prohibiting alcoholic beverages. With Buffalo's position close to Canada, alcohol could be readily smuggled in. It was during the 1920's that Stefano Magaddino came to head the Buffalo Mafia family, including Ohio

and Pennsylvania to Southern Ontario and Montreal.

### Western NY Garden Railway Society presents "Trains for Life" June 14

Charles Bartel, president; Gary Tebo, secretary; Rob Bond, past president; and Mike Leonard, co-chair of Christmas and Botanical Garden railway displays, displayed their favorite trains and layouts. President Bartel related a wealth of information about the history of railroading in the US, beginning with carts pulled by animals along rails. Charles went on to describe the significant role railroads have played in American history. Charles also shared improvements railroads made in efficiency and safety, including improved railcars (the original were modified stagecoaches); improved track materials and standardized track width; pilot cars, airbrakes, and improved couplers. Secretary Gary Tebo shared information on how to create a garden model railroad. He showed images of model railroads and model buildings society members have built. Individual society members will be hosting open houses at their homes on July 14, and July 22, where visitors may view their garden railroads. Information regarding the times and places for the open houses is available at their website, [www.wnygrs.com](http://www.wnygrs.com).



Photo credit Christopher Gust

Articles by Elli DeFilippo

## Condolences



**Huestis-Barbara A.** of Alden, NY April 1, 2018. Beloved wife of Edmund Huestis, Jr.; dear mother of Linda (John) Bruso and Eric (JoAnna) Huestis; grandmother of Megan (Kyle) Donovan and Sean Bruso. Barbara graduated from Buffalo State College and taught at Cleveland Hill Elementary School for 30 years until she retired. She was active at St. Luke's Church as a former Sunday school teacher and Superintendent. She was a member of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and the Alden Lions Club. She was a volunteer for Families Touched by MS.



**Koelbl – Janet Stowell** of Alden, June 11, 2018. She married Christian G. Koelbl, Jr. on April 29, 1944. Mrs. Koelbl was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Alden for over 80 years, a member of Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority, a member of the Alden Historical Society, and a substitute teacher in the Alden Central School District. Mrs. Koelbl was predeceased by her husband and three siblings. She is survived by her three sons, Christian III (Gwendolyn), Richard (Lynelle), and John (Melinda); her nine grandchildren, and her seven great-grandchildren.



## *Membership Cards*

Membership cards were sent this year with no expiration date. Please continue to proudly carry your card as a valued member.

### *Donations Gratefully Received From:*

Catherine Cyrulik in memory of her family  
Gilbert & Sandra Dussault in memory of Hans & Edith Jordans  
Edward Reich  
Marlyn Casell in memory of Robert A. Casell  
Marlyn Casell in honor of Mark and Diane Casell  
Karen Muchow  
Gilbert & Sandra Dussault in memory of Doug Henry  
James Cornwall thanking Karen Muchow for her work  
Elli DeFilippo in memory of Richard & Elfrieda Jablonski  
5th Grade Teachers in thanks for the Schoolhouse lessons

### *Donations in Lieu of Dues*

Catherine Cyrulik

### *Renewing Couple Members*

Douglas & Comelia Cartwright  
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Judith & Francis Downhower  
Keith & Michelle Hoffman  
Marlene & Steve Kotlowski  
Bob & Barb Rice  
Richard & Karen Savage  
Rich Becker & Marie Shattuck  
Antoinette & Matthew Shriver

### *Renewing Individual Members*

June Beyers  
Doris Brade  
Carolyn Burger  
Marlyn Casell  
Angelo Dalusio  
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Anna Walters  
Rhonda Wieder

### *Renewing Family Members*

Adam & Kristen Stoltman

### *Renewing Business Members*

Alden Chamber of Commerce  
Alden Kiwanis  
Alden Pharmacy  
Alden State Bank  
Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys  
Elwood-Jordans Agency  
Law Office of Michael Cole  
Neill & Strong, Attorneys

### *New Members*

Gloria Reich Nelson  
J. Sheldon Weil



**PLEASE NOTE: PROGRAMS WILL BE ON SUMMER BREAK DURING JULY AND AUGUST**



### **September 13, 2018 The Love Canal Revisited**

In 1979, nearly 22,000 tons of dangerous chemicals were found at Love Canal in Niagara Falls, NY. The site was deemed to be highly hazardous, and thereby uninhabitable, prompting President Jimmy Carter to order the evacuation of all its residents. Today the words "Love Canal" are still synonymous with an environmental catastrophe.

John Spagnoli is a respected ecologist and authority in the field of hazardous and solid waste. Mr. Spagnoli will review the notorious waste site, and its health, environmental, and social issues while focusing on today's remediation of the canal and its contents.

## *Will You Help?*

The Historical Society is looking for members who may be interested in assisting as volunteer docents when our building is open on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month and during special events. If you can help, please contact one of our Trustees or call 937-3700 or email [aldenhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:aldenhistsoc@gmail.com). Thank you!

## Historical Society Building

The Alden Historical Society's many exhibits are located in the village at the Alden Historical Society Building, 13213 Broadway, across from Alden State Bank. The mission of the historical society is to preserve, promote and present the history of Alden and its people.

### HOURS:

The Alden Historical Society Building is open to the public from 1 PM to 3 PM the first and third Sunday of each month, except during January and February. Tours for individuals and groups may be arranged by calling 937-3700 or 937-6400.

### MEETINGS:

**Program meetings** are generally held at the Alden Community Center on the second Thursday of the month at 7 PM. Notices will be published in the Alden Advertiser in advance of the program. Open to the public, these programs are both informative and interesting, often featuring a guest speaker. You are very welcome to come and share your memories and experiences about the evening's program, followed by an informal social complete with homemade refreshments. In the event of inclement weather, we will postpone when Alden school activities are closed.

**Trustee meetings** are held at the Alden Historical Society Building at 7 PM. Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December. Trustee meetings are open to the membership.

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New members are always welcome. Your support will assure that the Alden Historical Society will continue to grow and prosper for years to come.

Please note: The membership year is April 1 through March 31, with the annual renewal due by April 1.

### WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!

#### ANNUAL DUES

Single \$12.00

Couple \$20.00

Family \$25.00

Business \$50.00

Please include your Business card

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Please make checks payable to Alden Historical Society

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Lynda Tucker, Membership Secretary

Alden Historical Society

13213 Broadway

Alden, NY 14004

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

**Membership**—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke, Susanne Galbraith, Jennifer Strong

**Collections**—Jane Burke, Sandy Dussault, Larry Kocher, Karen Muchow

**Publicity/Newsletter**—Lynda Tucker - Editor, Clarke Burke, Elli DeFilippo, Gilbert Dussault, Susanne Galbraith, Christopher Gust, Carl Matthies,

**Program/Refreshments**—Conrad and Carol Borucki, Sandy Dussault

**Building and Grounds**—Larry Kocher, Conrad Borucki, Doris Brade, Christopher Gust

**Fundraising**—Gilbert Dussault, Jane and Clarke Burke

**Nominating**—Jane Burke, Elouise DeFilippo

**Audit**—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke

**Budget**—Clarke Burke, Christopher Gust, Larry Kocher,

**Historical Marker/Signs**—Christopher Gust, Clarke Burke, Gilbert Dussault, Larry Kocher, Karen Muchow, Jennifer Strong

## Century Homes



Although we accept information on any century house, we are now focusing on the 100+ yr old houses located in the town. If you are interested, please email us at: AldenHistSoc@gmail.com. We have Century House signs for sale for \$45. Sue Galbraith



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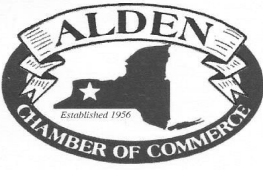
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**Born, raised, lives and practices in our community, Attorney JENNIFER STRONG is your neighbor and is here to help.**

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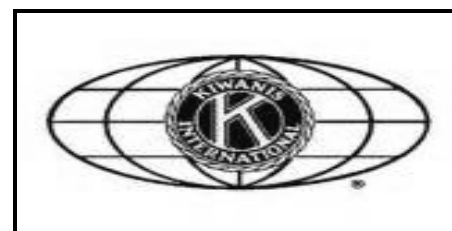


**Thomas A. Steffan**  
 Attorney at Law

Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys

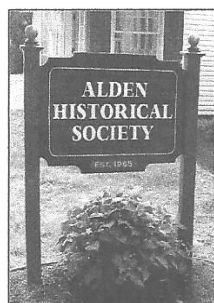


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**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Alden Historical Society, founded in 1965, is a volunteer supported organization whose mission is to preserve, promote, and present the history of the Town of Alden and its people.



*Alden Historical Society*  
 13213 Broadway  
 Alden, NY 14004

*Find us on Facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety*

*Chartered by the Board of Regents  
 New York State Education Department*

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