



The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

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Archivist

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Karen Muchow

Curator

Kris Rogers

Happy 150th Birthday, Village of Alden Part 2

The birthday of the Village of Alden is reckoned from its date of incorporation. According to newspaper accounts, the bill to incorporate the Village of Alden was introduced in the New York State Assembly on March 27, 1869. On May 5, 1869, the bill was ordered to a third reading as the State Senate had "refused to concur in the assembly amendments to the bill amendatory of the state excise law". The May 8, 1869 *Buffalo Courier* reported that the Senate had passed the act incorporating the Village of Alden.

The articles of incorporation provided for a Village Board of 5 Trustees, a Clerk, a Treasurer, an Assessor, a Street Commissioner and a Tax Collector, all to be elected yearly by the male citizens of the village. The election was held in May of 1869 and the newly elected officers met June 1, 1869 at the Alger Hotel for the first board meeting. They were:

Trustees:	Alonzo Farnsworth	Farmer
	Eleazer Hendee	Carpenter
	John B. Pride	Physician
	DeWitt Skeelee	Tanner
	(Dick & Jack Koelbl's great-great grandfather)	
	George Vandevort	Farmer
Clerk:	William E. Saunders	Merchant
Treasurer:	Henry R. Kidder	Farmer
Assessor:	Clark N. Fulton	Shoemaker
Street Commissioner:	Micajah Maxon	Farmer
Tax Collector:	Frederick Thatcher	Merchant

The Trustees elected Dr. John Pride as President of the Board, and of the Village. Other positions would be added as the need arose, such as a Water Commissioner, Police Justice and Police Constable.

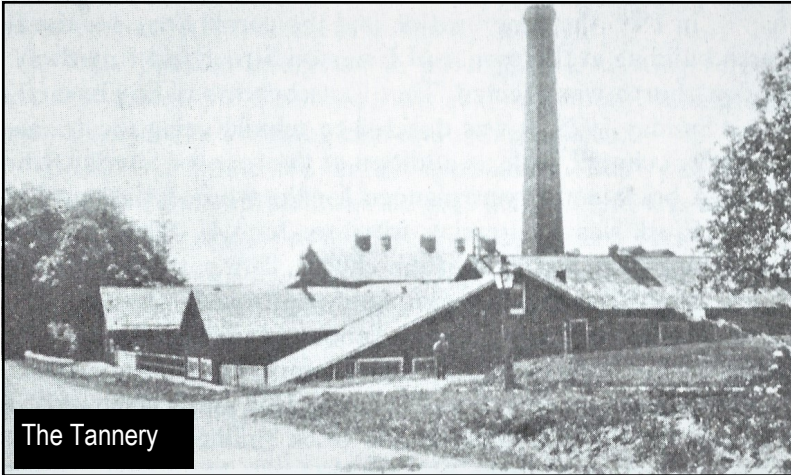


In April 1941, the Village Charter, last reviewed in 1902, was deemed by state auditors to be obsolete. The Village Board began to consider changes needed to function under the Village General Rule that most villages in New York followed. In March 1949 the village voters elected that form of government.

The head of the village government would no longer be the President of the Village Board, but a Mayor. In the March election of 1950, William L. Rusher, grandfather of our present mayor Michael Manicki, became the first Mayor of Alden.

continued

The Village continued to slowly grow. In 1869 there were only five streets in the Village—Main Street, State Street, Church Street, Depot Street, and Crittenden Street. The 1880 map of the village shows the addition of Railroad, Elm, and Mechanic Streets. In 1887, W.C. Tucker bought what was known as the Kellogg Farm, cut it up into village lots, and proposed a new street—Kellogg Street. John Man erected the first house on the new street. Spurred by fine November weather in 1889, six new houses were completed or were in the process of erection. In 1890, W.C. Tucker persuaded Joseph Ewell to sell his farm land north of Main Street. It was divided into lots of ¼ acre to five acres. Emerson Street, Irving Street, and Park Street were created out of the Ewell Farm. A 1909 map shows four more proposed streets north of Park Street that never came to fruition.



The Tannery

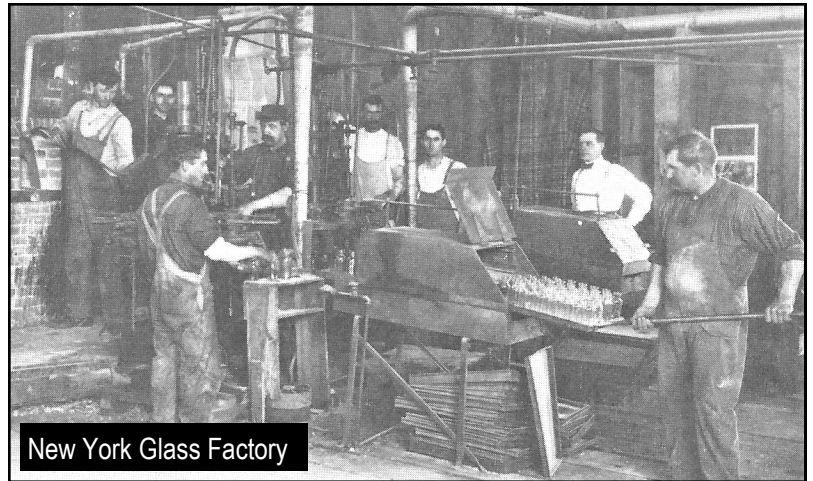
Industry also grew. The earliest industry in the village, other than agriculture, had been the tannery begun by Thomas Farnsworth in 1821 along Spring Creek in the northern part of the village. The tannery later moved to Tannery Creek on Main Street (Broadway).

A cheese factory was built in 1880. At one time, the Spring Creek Cheese Factory, owned by Benjamin Gifford, produced over 35,000 pounds of cheese a year.

In 1890, a natural gas prospector, Frank Westcott of Seneca Falls, came to Alden, began drilling and by 1894 had four good producing wells. His wells not only allowed the village to be piped for gas, enabling residents

to have gaslights in their homes and on the streets, but also drew two new industries to the village.

Vernon Pancoast of Olean came to Alden in 1900 and established the New York Glass Works on Railroad Street. The factory opened in January 1901 with two furnaces and employing as many as seventy-five glass men and boys. At one time over eight million hand-blown jars a year were produced, mainly canning jars, shoe polish and medicine bottles.



New York Glass Factory

A second industry lured by the abundance of natural gas was the Bennett Dash Factory, also located on Railroad Street. A.Y. Bennett established this metal working plant in 1906 for the manufacture of metal dashboards for horse-drawn buggies and carriages.



Bennett Bilt

When the demand for this product ceased, the company retooled and began making other products. Perhaps the best known is its square waste receptacle. Bennett Manufacturing Company, now 113 years old, continues to do metal fabricating for larger companies.

Frank Westcott and his natural gas wells are known for the establishment of another Alden industry, one that put Alden on the map, but that's a story for another time.

Happy Birthday, Village of Alden

We look forward to the 200th Birthday of the Town of Alden in 2023

File photos and article submitted by Archivist Karen Muchow



Message from the President

With a packed house for Bryan Farr's presentation on Historic US Route 20, your Alden Historical Society recently concluded its 2018-19 monthly program season at the Community Center and, 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, and hope that you found them interesting and educational. We thank Conrad and Carol Borucki for their efforts in again producing our program schedule, and Sandy Dussault for coordinating refreshments during the programs.

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 180th Erie County Fair, to be held August 7th through 18th. Please stop by the Fair's Historical Building to see our themed entry on "A Day That Changed Your Town's History". We are continuing to participate in events held for the year-long Village of Alden's Sesquicentennial celebration. Look for historic walking and bike tours to be held Tuesdays during the month of August. For the latest information on these and other coming activities, find and "like" our Facebook page, or check out the Alden Advertiser.

In addition, we recently welcomed 5th grade students from Alden Central School for informative walking tours of the Village and 4th grade students from St. John's for a lesson in the Henskee Road Schoolhouse. It is rewarding for our Historical Society to be able to provide educational opportunities for the young people in our community. We hope the students and teachers found the experience worthwhile and fun.

A continuing goal of the Society is to increase community involvement by inviting interested members of our community to assist our Trustees by volunteering as additional docents when the building is open on Sundays and special events. If you have an interest in Alden's history and would like to help, contact one of our trustees, call us at 937-3700, or email us at AldenHistSoc@gmail.com.

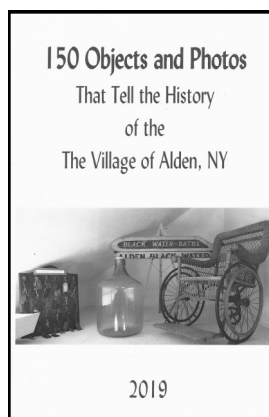
We also appreciate everyone who has renewed their Alden Historical Society paid membership and we welcome several recent new members. If you are reading this issue of the Gazette and are not a member, please consider joining the Society. We also always appreciate current lifetime members who make donations in lieu of dues. Thank you!

Have a safe and enjoyable summer. As always, we thank you for your interest and support.

Photo and article submitted by President Christopher Gust

Easter Promenade and Book Signing April 20

The dictionary defines a promenade as "a leisurely public walk, ride or drive so as to meet or be seen by others." The Village of Alden held an Easter promenade 50 years ago as an opening event to the Centennial Year. A small but hearty group, many in vintage clothing, met at the Society building on April 20 for an Easter promenade to recreate the spirit of the walk from 1969. After the chilly walk, led by Mayor Michael Manicki, the Society hosted a reception and book signing event for the newly published 150 Objects & Photos That Tell the History of the Village of Alden, NY. Authors Karen Muchow and Lynda Tucker were present to sign copies. The book sells for \$10 and will be available at various locations and special events throughout the Village's Sesquicentennial year.



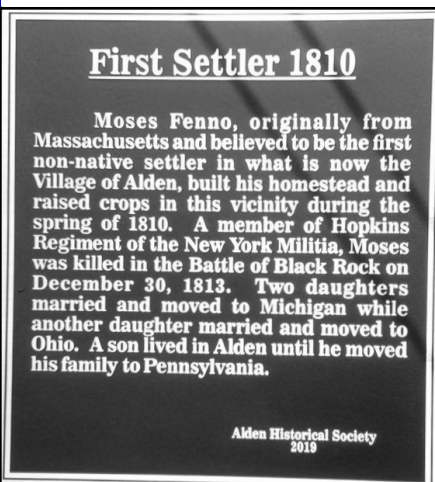
Photos and article courtesy Christopher Gust

Historical Society at ECHF Annual Meeting

The Alden Historical Society was well-represented at the Erie County Historical Federation's Annual Meeting, which was held on April 27 at Magruder's in Depew. President Christopher Gust, Vice President Elli DeFilippo, Curator Kris Rogers and Archivist/Historian Karen Muchow heard several presentations from a representative of Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY) and networked among representatives of the other historical societies from across Western New York. For information on the Federation, see their web site at www.echfwny.com.

First Settler Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony

As rain clouds gathered during the early evening of May 9th, the Society held its First Settler Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony, commemorating the Village of Alden's first non-native settler, Moses Fenno. In the fall of 1809, Fenno purchased land from the Holland Land Company and began raising crops and planted an orchard in the spring of 1810. The land he purchased is in the vicinity of the Whistle Stop Inn at 1338 Exchange.



After a brief introduction by Society Trustee, Conrad Borucki, Historian Karen Muchow shared with the crowd what is known about the Fenno settlement and family as the marker was un-



veiled. The historical marker was placed near the southeastern border of the Whistle Stop property. We thank everyone who attended the ceremony, including Erie County Legislator, John Brusso. Special thanks to Doug & Terry Becker, on whose land the marker has been placed. Also, thank you to the Alden Village Sesquicentennial committee, the Village of Alden and the Village DPW for their cooperation and assistance to make the dedication happen. The marker was produced by Garland Graphics.

Photos courtesy Larry Kocher

Submitted by Christopher Gust

HOME BUREAU CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

The New York State Federation of Home Bureau was born on May 29, 1919, becoming the first state organization of homemakers with the Extension Service at Cornell University. On January 1, 1956, Home Bureau was separated from Cornell University and was incorporated. The Home Bureau is a non-profit, non-commercial, non-sectarian, and non-political organization. All officers and leaders are volunteers. Various programs were founded to assist women in obtaining a higher standard of living in the home and community.

The Home Bureau engages in many projects: **Community Service** ranging from the donation of handiwork for those in need to monetary gifts to local charities; **Consumer Education** to become better informed on today's issues; **Health and Safety** to improve our health; **International Relations** to help underprivileged women around the world; **Legislation** to keep informed about laws and regulations; **Scholarship** awarded for financial need; and **Crafts** to preserve Heritage Crafts and develop appreciation of quality handwork.

After being known as an Evening Unit, a Home Demonstration Unit and a Food, Fashion and Fun Club, in 1969 the Alden Chapter became known as the Alden Home Bureau. In the 1970's membership peaked with 122 members.

The organization recently displayed many of their craft projects at the Alden State Bank in honor of their achievements during their 100 year celebration. Today, Home Bureau continues to be a sisterhood of friends coming together for the betterment of ladies in



From the Village Sesquicentennial Committee



Pease join us as we celebrate the Village of Alden's 150th Anniversary. **July 10**, 7-9 pm listen to Barbershop quartets, in Bandstand Park. **July 11** is Taste of Alden and 5K race. **July 12 -13** join us for a carnival with rides, old fashion carnival games, contests (pie baking, scavenger hunt, trivia challenge, facial hair), bands, a giant parade, and fireworks. **July 28** is the annual car show to benefit Mercy Flight. **Tuesdays in August** at 6 pm enjoy bike, walking tours. **Aug. 6** – Businesses on Broadway, **Aug. 13** – Rolling Down Railroad. **Aug. 20** – Village Iconic buildings. **Aug. 27** – Village Century Houses. Visit the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/aldenvillagesesquicentennial and Village website at www2.erie.gov/village_alden for more information.

Submitted by Sue Galbraith

Our Past Programs



Lt. Col. Matt Urban, was born and raised in the Broadway-Fillmore area of Buffalo. He went on to become the most highly decorated U.S. soldier to serve in WWII, earning 29 medals, all for service in combat. Included in the medals he earned are the Medal of Honor, a Bronze Star, a Silver Star, and seven Purple Hearts. Urban's legacy was the subject of the April 11 program presented by veterans from the Lt. Col. Matt Urban VFW Post 7275 in Lancaster: Walter Buechi, Mike Zalikowski, Lance Becker, and former local radio host, Norm Skulski, shared their proud knowledge Urban died in 1995, and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. A monument to his memory stands outside the Edward A. Rath Building in Buffalo.

On June 13, the Society welcomed Bryan Farr, president and founder of Historic Route 20, an organization Farr started to preserve and promote the "sites, business, and culture" to be discovered along Route 20, the longest highway in the United States. Historic Route 20 extends 3,365 miles from its origin in Boston, Massachusetts, across twelve states to its end point in Newport, Oregon. Aside from Albany, Route 20 does not run through any of the major cities in New York State. The Historic Route 20 organization hopes to encourage travelers to get off the interstates, visit the historic sites, and discover the diverse and inspiring beauty along Route 20. A paperback book is available, entitled Historic US Route 20, filled with color photographs, history, and anecdotes.



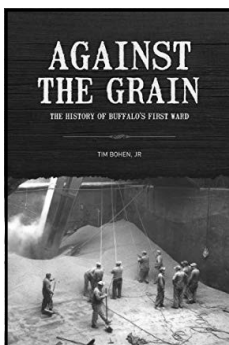
Photos courtesy Christopher Gust

Articles submitted by Elli DeFilippo



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

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September 12, 2019 Timothy Bohen Against the Grain—The History of the First Ward

Author Timothy Bohen tells the story of the newly arrived famine immigrants, predominately of Irish descent, who settled in Buffalo's first waterfront neighborhood. The past is brought to life highlighting this economically struggling area, yet one having produced an array of historically important figures: Figgy Connors, Michael Shea, Jimmy Slattery, Jimmy Griffin—even Rick James, to cite a few. The program promises an in-depth look at a fascinating people and an area which today is still a way of life and a state of mind.

Submitted by Conrad and Carol Borucki

New Members

Carol Battista (Individual)
Timothy Reed (Individual)
Ron & Judy Bowman (couple)
Mike & Susan DeWitt (couple)
Mike & Diane Kingswell (couple)

Couple Renewals

Rich & Marie Becker
Conrad & Carol Borucki
Thomas & Jeanette Dickinson
Francis, Jr. & Judith Downhower
Gregory & Allegra Grenier
Keith & Michelle Hoffman
Dick & Betty Kegler
Carl & Ann Matthies
Bob & Barb Rice
Rick & Karen Savage

Family Renewals

Adam & Kristen Stoltman

Business Renewals

Alden Kiwanis
Cooke & Steffan. Attorneys
Law Offices of Michael Cole
Reserve Gas

Donations

Marlyn Casell in memory of Robert A. Casell
Marlyn Casell in honor of Mark & Diane Casell
Patricia Mooney on behalf of 5th grade students

Donations in Lieu of Dues

Catherine Cyrulik
Elli DeFilippo
Betty Eastwood
Roberta Vincent

Individual Renewals

Marlyn Casell
Angelo Daluisio
Rosemary Dziedzic
Amy Froebel
Sue Galbraith
Robert George
Helen Giczkowski
Daniel Giras
Charles Holcomb
Shirley Kocher
Monica Kubiak
Laura Loehr
Beverly Nebrich
Gloria Nelson
Leita Reed
Edward Reich
Charleen Satkowski
Lynda Tucker
Anna Walters

Curator's Corner

Until I began helping at the Historical building, I had no idea how artifacts were processed into the collection. I am sure that our membership also does not realize how we acquire new objects. In the interest of education, I will describe the process. First of all, the donor fills out a transmission card that gives the history of the item and, most importantly, gives ownership to the Society. Then, an accession card is filled out listing the history, condition and description of the item. A number is assigned to the object, beginning with the year acquired. That number is then inscribed on the object with archival solvent and ink if it is a solid; or if it is clothing, a cotton label is sewn into the neck of the garment. There is a book that lists each and every item in the collection with its number and donor. It was begun in 1965. Also, each donor has a file card that shows all of that person's donations with its number and date of donation. Some very generous patrons have multiple cards now. Finally, the artifact is stored or displayed within the building. As you can see, all the paperwork and labeling can be time intensive. Careful record keeping is invaluable to the future of our collection.

Curator Kris Rogers

2019 Erie County Fair Display



The theme for this year is "A Day That Changed Your Town History". We have chosen the day the first bath house opened on November 21, 1904 as our focus. The Black Water Bath business thrived in Alden for fifty years, affecting the number of jobs created, the need for a hometown bank, a weekly newspaper, a laundry, hotels, boarding houses, food supplies, etc. Even real estate got involved resulting in enhanced property values.

The fair is open from August 7th through August 18th. Our display will be in the Historical building.

Submitted by Larry Kocher

The Fourth of July Celebrated In 1919



The "Glorious Fourth" was celebrated under the leadership of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and Hotel Alden. The Hotel Alden, on the south side of the village near the depot, held dancing afternoon and evening on a platform built at one side of the hotel for the occasion.

The speaker for the day, George Kennedy of Buffalo, was met at the depot by the officers of the W.C.T.U., the Alden Cornet Band, and young ladies and gentlemen on horseback and bicycles. The procession moved up Exchange Street and down Main Street to the Grove.

The exercises began with singing under the direction of Mr. William Slade. Prayer was offered by Rev. C.L. Taylor. Miss Mary Patrell read the Declaration of Independence. An exceedingly interesting part of the program was the singing and flag drill by fifteen little girls under the direction of Mrs. Webb and Mrs. Benedict. The oration by Mr. Kennedy was intensely interesting being not only an eloquent flow of words, but showing deep thought as well, and a thorough knowledge of the subject in hand.

In the afternoon, the raising of the liberty pole, which was presented to the W.C.T.U. by Mr. E.A. Milliman, took place. A white ribbon was fastened to the top of the pole which stood eighty-eight feet tall. After the raising of the pole, three cheers were given for the flag and three cheers for Mr. Milliman. Refreshments in the Grove were served by the ladies of the Union.

An illuminated bicycle parade and a good display of fireworks in the evening ended one of the best Fourth of July celebrations in Alden.

Submitted by Archivist Karen Muchow

Students Learn About Alden's History

Students from Alden Intermediate and St. John's schools recently spent time learning about the history of Alden by engaging in activities led by docents for the Alden Historical Society. Among the activities were walk-about tours of the village where students heard about the history of buildings, businesses, and industries from the past; sessions at the Historical Society building where students viewed artifacts and displays related to Alden's history; and classes at the Henskee Road Schoolhouse, located at Alden Town Park,

where students experienced conditions simulating those of a one room schoolhouse from the early 1900's.



At the conclusion of the classes, students were provided with copies of the booklet created to celebrate the Village of Alden's Silver Centennial in 1994. Students were also informed about the village's sesquicentennial anniversary being celebrated this year.



The Historical Society would like to thank the teachers and assistants for their participation and help coordinating the program. Additionally, the Society

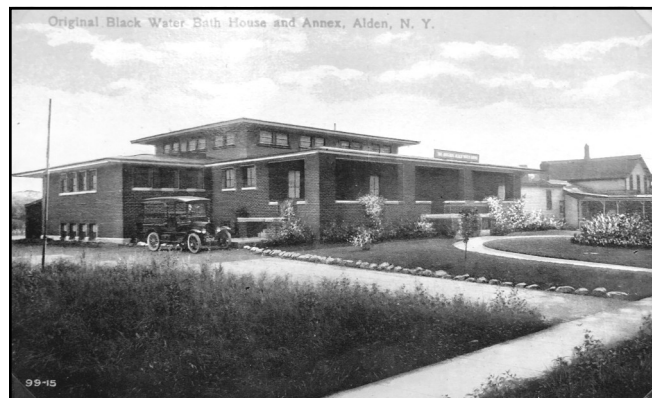
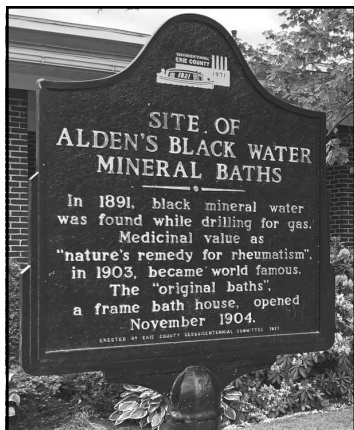
thanks the docents who volunteered their time to teach the lessons: Conrad Borucki, Elli DeFilippo,

Sandy Dussault, Kris Rogers, and Marcia Spitler. Thanks also to Karen Muchow, who created the curriculum used in the classes.

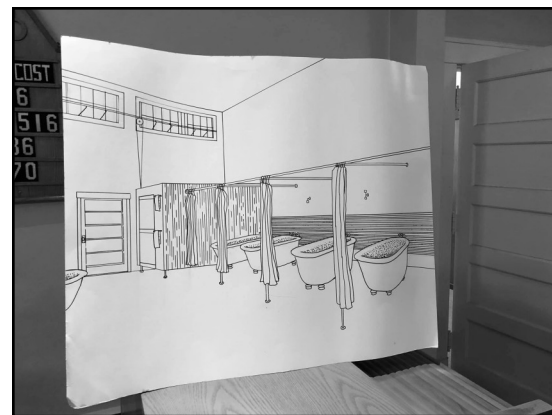
Photos and article submitted by Vice President Elli DeFilippo



Black Water Bath House Bus Tours a Big Hit



The Alden Village Sesquicentennial Committee, in conjunction with the Alden Historical Society, presented Black Water Bus Tours on June 15th. The tours began and ended at the site of the last remaining bath house building, now St. Aidan's Episcopal Church on West Main St., which was open for viewing. The half-hour tour, conducted by Village Historian Karen Muchow, noted the sites of the other two bath houses, the hotels and the boarding houses, and gave a little history about the industry in general. This was a unique opportunity for an in-depth look at a key era in the Village's history and was very well received with all four tours fully booked. Special thanks to the volunteers at St. Aidan's for opening the church and helping visualize how the building was originally configured as a bath house.

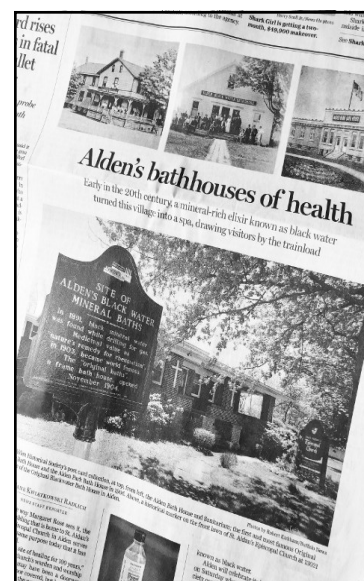


Black Water Baths in the Buffalo News

On June 11, the Buffalo News published a feature article in the City & Region section highlighting the Black Water Bath industry and its history in Alden. Thank you to reporter Jane Kwiatkowski Radlich and photographer Robert Kirkham for visiting the Historical Society building to look at photos and artifacts from our collection while researching this article.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Because the Black Water Bath bus tours were so popular, the Sesquicentennial Committee has planned another Black Water Bath bus tour day in early September. Watch for more details.



Photos and articles submitted by Christopher Gust

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

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Phone.....Email.....

Please make checks payable to Alden Historical Society

Mail to:

Lynda Tucker, Membership Secretary

Alden Historical Society

13213 Broadway

Alden, NY 14004

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

NOTE: Donations are not tax deductible

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

Collections—Jane Burke, Sandy Dussault, Kyle Kavanagh, Larry Kocher, Karen Muchow, Kris Rogers

Publicity/Newsletter—Lynda Tucker - Editor, Clarke Burke, Elli De-Filippo, 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

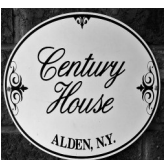
Nominating—Jane Burke, Elouise DeFilippo

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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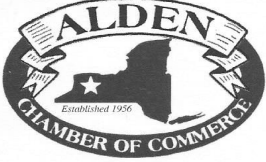
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Thomas A. Steffan
 Attorney at Law

Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys

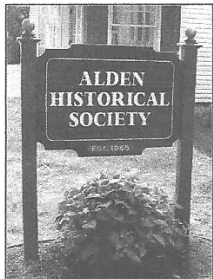


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MISSION STATEMENT

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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We appreciate the support we receive from the Town of Alden.

Thank you.