



The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

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Down by the Old Mill Stream

In Alden, that “mill stream” would have been either Cayuga Creek or Eleven Mile (Ellicott) Creek, the two major creeks in the town; Cayuga in the southern portion, Ellicott in the central part.

Mills, especially saw mills as they were easier to build, were among the first industries in the new settlements after the purchase of land from the Holland Land Company. John C. Rogers is said to have built the first mill in the Town of Alden, a saw mill, on Ellicott Creek in 1814, and then in 1817, a grist mill at the intersection of what is now Sandridge Road and North Road. Nathan Willis and John Webster settled on the main road to Buffalo (Broadway) just east of the hamlet of Town Line about 1812 and both subsequently built saw mills on Cayuga Creek.

Moses Case moved from Onondaga County in 1817 and built the first house in Mill Grove. He is credited for naming the hamlet for the half dozen or so grist mills and saw mills in the area.

A close examination of the 1866 Stone and Stewart Atlas map of Alden shows several mills along Cayuga Creek. Nathan Chesebro operated a grist mill near the intersection of Cary Road and Three Rod Road. Further west along the creek, near Four Rod Road, was a saw mill operated by Festus Tenney (Town of Alden Supervisor in 1858). Near Two Rod Road was another saw mill, and then farther west, near Townline Road, were the sawmills of Willis and Webster.



Grist Mill South of West Alden, corner of Three Rod Road and Cary Road.

In Alden Center, along Ellicott Creek, was the grist mill built by John Rogers. It had been sold to Warren and Sylvester Earl, who subsequently sold it to Charles M. Platt in 1847. He ran it until his death in 1875, then his wife and son ran it.

A saw mill is shown further north along the creek and appears to be on the property of D. Suttle. This may have been John Rogers' first mill. Herman Wende built a saw mill along the creek in 1850 in the area known as Wende Station, a small settlement along the N.Y. Central tracks.

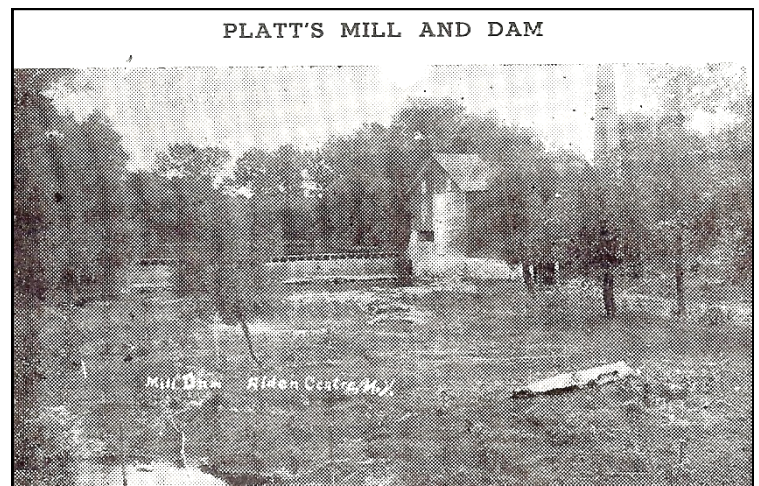
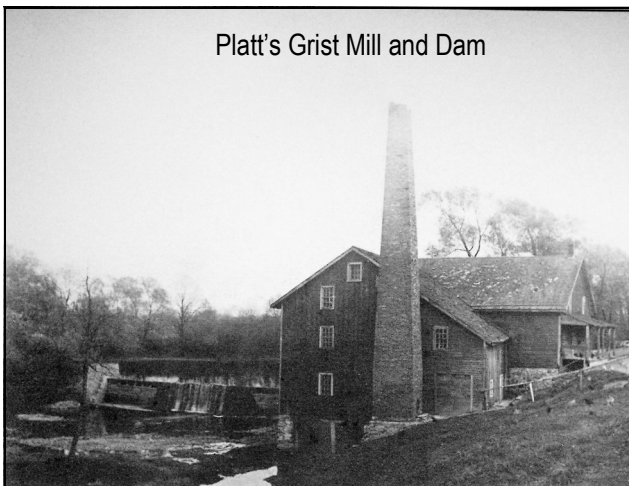
West of the hamlet of Millgrove, near the intersection of Zoeller Road and Genesee Street, was the grist mill owned by William Rearick. In the hamlet itself there appears to be two mills along a tributary of Ellicott Creek, just north of Genesee Street. Another saw mill is shown on Buckwheat Road.

Earl Duttweiler, who at the age of 81 wrote a two-part article on "Millgrove Memories" for the *Alden Advertiser* in 1972, mentioned that there must have been a mill just north of the Millgrove Creamery that stood where Ward Hydraulics machine shop started, because there was a stone wall of a dam behind a bunch of trees and brush. That would have been one of the mills mentioned above and shown on an 1880 map of Millgrove.

Not all mills in Alden were by the old mill streams. In 1850, John Edson built a steam sawmill in Crittenden where he sawed a large portion of the plank to build the Buffalo & Batavia plank road, a toll road completed in 1852. The sawmill was destroyed by fire two or three years later.

H. Perry Smith in his 1884 History of Buffalo and Erie County lists a saw mill in the Village of Alden. The 1880 map of the Village shows a steam saw mill owned by Allen Eastwood on the north side of Railroad Street near Elm Street.

By 1914 the only mill standing was the one at Sandridge and North. The dam was washed out in 1915 but the mill had already been converted to steam power, and later to gasoline. Fred Sievenpiper of Millgrove remembered his father having grist ground there with stone mill wheels. The mill burned about 1922 in the biggest fire Fred said he had ever seen.



With the modern machinery of today, mills no longer need to be near a source of water power. No more old mill streams, just memories.

*Down by the old mill stream
Where I first met you
With your eyes of blue
Dressed in gingham, too.
And it was there I knew
That you loved me, too.*

Archivist Karen Muchow

President's Message

Happy Spring! As the calendar turns from February to March, many people start their “spring cleaning” to wash away the grime of winter and prepare for nicer (and warmer) days. The Alden Historical Society is no exception. Recently, a group of volunteers from our Society’s Board of Trustees and Archivist Karen Muchow spent several hours refreshing the displays in our main room, as well as dusting and vacuuming to get our building ready for a new season of public openings. You have a chance to see our new displays featuring vintage hats, the New York Glass Works on Railroad Street, and “Hotels, Motels, Cabins & Inns – The Tourism Industry in Alden”. The building will be open the first and third Sunday for the next several months from 1 to 3 pm. Do plan on stopping by. One of our Trustees will be on hand to guide you through the building and answer any questions you may have. We are also researching Revolutionary War veterans whose final resting place is Alden, with the hope of placing proper markers to note these patriots’ service to our country during its infancy. Additionally, we are planning some interesting programs at the Community Center in the coming months. We also look forward to hosting our local schoolchildren as we open the doors to the Henskee Road Schoolhouse and Society Building this Spring. And, yes, plans are already underway for our 2017 Erie County Fair display. So we have an ambitious year planned. Thank you for your membership and interest as we strive to continue our mission to protect, present and promote the history of Alden and its people. Best regards.



President Christopher Gust

New Spring Displays



One of Alden’s early industries was the New York Glass Works located at the eastern end of Railroad Street. Vernon A. Pancoast built the factory in the fall of 1900 to manufacture glass bottles. Our display has several of these antique bottles.

Photos courtesy Christopher Gust



Alden has had many hotels, motels, cabins and inns in our rich history. A map depicting the location of these various businesses is a new display for you to enjoy.



Everyone loves a new spring hat!

Thank you

to the Town of Alden for the purchase of the new railings, fabricated by CJR Machine of Alden, at the entrance to the Historical Building. Charles Roberts, owner of CJR Machine, is the grandson of Walden Roberts, who purchased and donated the house to the Historical Society. A special thanks to Andy Sojka and his crew for the installation of the railings. Nice job!



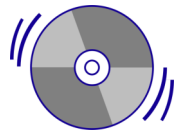
Winterfest 2017

As part of Alden Winterfest on Saturday February 4, the Alden Historical Society was pleased to open the Henskee Road Schoolhouse for public viewing. The circa 1834 schoolhouse, located at Alden Town Park, was open from 11 am until 2 pm. Docents were on hand to show visitors through this historic and educational resource within the Alden community.



Interviews on CDs

Available for listening on compact disc at the Historical Society building are recordings of interviews with Aldenites who have willingly shared their recollections of days past in the town and village of Alden and the



The Historical Building Is open.
 Come and see us from 1—3 pm on the first and third Sunday each month.

OPEN

Find us on: facebook®

Don't forget
 Annual dues are payable by April 1

The Alden Historical Building **will not** be open Easter Sunday, April 16. We **will be** open the following Sunday, April 23 from 1—3 pm.

DATE CHANGE!
 Regional contests will be held early March



hamlet of Millgrove. The interviews are with Janet Koelbl, John (Jack) Wild, and Ruth Davis. Information and photos of Millgrove for an Alden Historical Society presentation early next year. We need memories of growing up in Millgrove, memories of places in Millgrove—especially stores, etc., school, the Erie County Home & Infirmary, the Correctional Facilities, activities. We have several photos of “old” Millgrove but need some from the 1930s on. We can scan the photos and return them or you could scan them and send them to aldenhistsoc@gmail.com. Your information and memories can be sent to the same e-mail address or to Alden Historical Society, 13213 Broadway, Alden, NY 14004.

Learning about Forest Lawn Cemetery



Interest in the memories and stories associated with Forest Lawn Cemetery is high, as indicated by the turnout for the January 12 Alden Historical Society program “Forest Lawn Cemetery and the Rural Cemetery Movement.” Sandy Starks, Interpretive Program Director of Forest Lawn, shared an abundance of facts and stories about many of the more than 165,000 persons interred in our regional, historic cemetery jewel. Established in 1849, Forest Lawn was part of the rural cemetery movement intended to prevent the spread of disease by locating burial grounds away from population centers. At the time of its development, Forest Lawn was located on farmland that was especially selected for the beauty of its landscape. Forest Lawn offers guided walking tours, trolley tours, concerts, lectures, and archives for genealogical exploration. Wildlife, picturesque landscape, art, architecture, and the performing arts all enhance the Forest Lawn experience.



Mystery Surrounds Amelia Earhart

Amelia Earhart's life and disappearance was the subject of the February 9 Alden Historical Society program presented by Greg Kinal, regional educator and speaker on historical topics. Mr. Kinal began by sharing background on Amelia's life and flying history leading up to her 1937 attempt to be the first female to circumnavigate the earth. Setting out from Miami in June, she and navigator Fred Noonan were more than 20,000 miles into their 29,000 mile journey when all contact with them ceased. Kinal shared two theories regarding the fate of Earhart and Noonan. Researchers Elgen Long's theory purports that Eleanor, out of fuel, crashed and sank her Lockheed Model 10E Electra when she attempted a water landing in three miles ocean depth and Ric Gillespie's theory posits that Earhart and Noonan, unable to locate Howland Island, the next destination on their journey, continued on an errant navigational line until landing at uninhabited Gardner Island, later renamed Nikumaroro, 350 nautical miles from Howland Island. There are varying bits of evidence, including radio transmissions, supporting the theory that they landed at Nikumaroro and survived as castaways for a few days, but there is no conclusive proof. For now, the mystery remains.



Vice President Elli DeFilippo

Come and Enjoy these New Programs

APRIL 13 RURAL ELECTRIFICATION—MARLIN GILLETTE, PhD Flip a switch or hit a button and magically it appears. Do we take anything more for granted than electric power? Aldenite, and authority in the field, Dr. Gillette will guide us from the days of candles and gaslights to the present and even the future. He will focus on the production and especially the transmission of electric power primarily in rural Western New York communities such as Alden. Join us for this most illuminating look at what we call our “electric grid”.

MAY 11 THE VIADUCT—PAUL HENRY In 1940, with the construction of the viaduct that we are so familiar with, Rt. 20 in the Village of Alden went underground. Longtime Historical Society member Paul Henry will discuss this significant local occurrence with photos, historical references, stories and personal recollections. Mr. Henry will also tell us the story of two little known, yet intriguing feature of village landscape and history—the “hill” and the “tubes”. Both are located just a few hundred yards from the viaduct and out of view, except for those who make a conscious effort to find them.

JUNE 8 A TRIBUTE TO FLAG DAY—GEORGE MCGAUGHEY In September 2013, former Aldenite and Social Studies teacher George McGaughey entertained and informed our Historical Society audience with his program on Gettysburg. He returns with :”The American Flag, the History, the Facts and the Myths”. No, Betsy Ross did not design the first American flag. Like the story of Washington and the cherry tree, the quaint old story of the flag is a myth. Come and join us and hear the true story of our flag and its evolution.

Our Condolences



Hans W. Jordans, of Alden, NY passed away February 3, 2017, with his wife of 73 years, Edith Annette, and his family by his side. Hans was the father of Warren (Roberta), and Leslie Ann, and was preceded in death by sister Erna Reith. He is also survived by five grandchildren, nine great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. Hans was co-founder of the Elwood-Jordans Insurance Company in Alden.



Savage-Ronald L. of Akron, NY formerly of Alden, NY March 26, 2017. Beloved husband of Violet (Phillips) Savage; dear father of Dixie (David) Lilleck, Rick (Karen) Savage, Brenda (Tony Down) Savage and the late Russel (JoAnne) Savage; grandfather nine; also survived by 9 great-grandchildren; predeceased by 10 brothers and sisters.

Donations Gratefully Received From:

★ Sheila Metzger in memory of Mildred and Endell Strong, Christopher Gust/Jennifer Strong, and Maria Rautenstrauch,

Donations in Lieu of Dues:

★ Clarke & Jane Burke, Elli DeFilippo, Betty Eastwood, and Sally Genco,

Membership Renewals:

★ Rich Becker/Marie Shattuck, Brian & June Dussault, Michelle Dussault, Kristen & Ron Kavanagh, Kyle Kavanagh, Carl & Ann Matthies, Sheila Metzger, Josephine Michaud, Beverly Nebrich, Kerry & Vincent O'Hara, Erin & Scott Redmond, MaryAnn Sardella, Lynda Tucker and Antoinette Wiltberger

Welcome New Members:

★ June Beyers and Carol Freemam

Revolutionary War Veterans

Alden Town and Village Historian Karen Muchow has brought to the attention of the Historical Society the interment of several Revolutionary War veterans in local cemeteries: five vets in the Evergreen Cemetery and two in the Town Cemetery on Sandridge Road. Historical Society Secretary Jennifer Strong has contacted the local DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) and SAR (Sons of the American Revolution) for assistance with obtaining replacement grave markers identifying the vets' Revolutionary War service. The DAR could assist us, but the bulk of the cost for the markers would have to be borne by our organization. The markers could be attached to the gravestones to discourage theft. However, some of the gravestones are in poor condition and may not be capable of supporting a marker. Secretary Strong reported that two of the graves have no headstones. The Veterans Administration would provide headstones, but the Historical Society would have to pick up the cost of their installation.

Donations toward these expenses would be greatly appreciated. Should you wish to make a donation, please indicate Rev. War vets in the check memo line.

Vice President Elli DeFilippo

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

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

Publicity/Newsletter—Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke, Elouise 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

Erie County Fair—Gilbert Dussault, Elouise DeFilippo, Sandy Dussault, Susanne Galbraith, Kyle Kavanagh, Larry Kocher

Historical Society members are invited to join the standing committees

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.....

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

Please make checks payable to Alden Historical Society

Mail to:

Lynda Tucker, Membership Secretary

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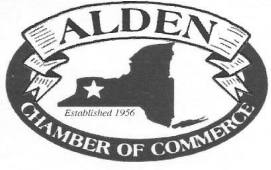
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community, Attorney **JENNIFER STRONG**
is your neighbor and is here to help.

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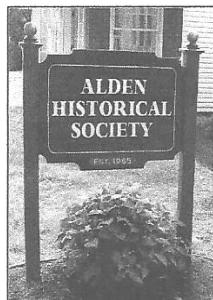
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MISSION STATEMENT

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.



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

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