



The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

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aldenhistoc@gmail.com

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Town and Village Historian

Karen Muchow

Curator

Kris Rogers

Erie County Bicentennial

Two hundred years ago, on April 2, 1821, Erie County was created from what had been the very large county of Niagara. By the census of 1820, the population of the whole of Niagara County was 23,313, of which 15,668 were in the present county of Erie. These numbers were considered sufficient to justify a division.

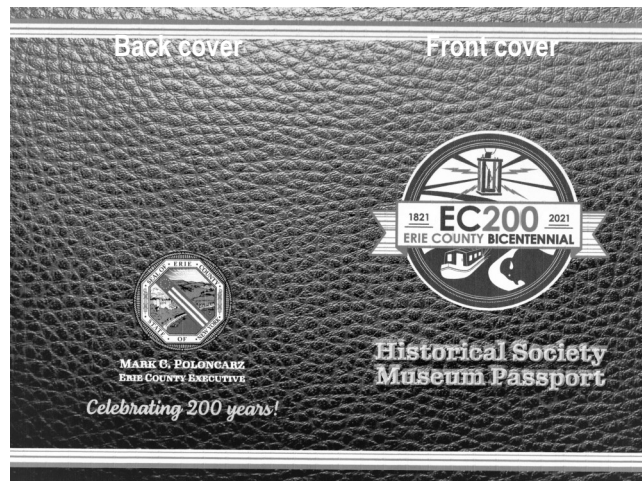
The celebration of Erie County's Bicentennial will last for a full year—April 2, 2021 to April 2, 2022. A whole year is needed to honor and reflect on our County and the area's history. The expanded window of time also offers a higher chance for in-person activities and foundations for on-going legacy projects.

The County Planning Committee has been meeting for more than two years and has come up with themes such as Arts & Culture, Agriculture, Industry, Education and Enjoy Winter for each month of the celebration year. Programming is being planned with the understanding of the current pandemic restrictions and guidelines established by New York Forward and the Erie County Department of Health. From self-guided tours to virtual programs, there will be opportunities for all to participate in the programs and activities.

Christopher Gust and I have been working with Clarence, Lancaster, Newstead and Elma Historical Societies on a passport program that will encourage Erie County residents to visit the historical societies and museums in the county from now until the end of the year. There are many interesting stories to be learned and enjoyed.

With "Shining a Light on the History of Erie County" as our theme, a suggestion I made, you will use your passport to guide you to the historical societies from the Tonawandas to Concord where you will search for a numbered lantern among the displays and have your passport stamped to verify your visit.

"Happy 200th Birthday Erie County"



Karen Muchow

Follow Erie County Bicentennial on the Web



On April 2, 1821, New York State officially recognized Erie County. The Alden Historical Society will be participating in Erie County's bicentennial programming throughout the course of the next 12 months. See our new web site at www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org, our Facebook page and the Alden Advertiser for information on upcoming bicentennial-themed events.

Erie County has launched several web and social media pages of its own for news on educational resources, community activities, and countywide initiatives that inform, inspire, and entertain during the bicentennial celebration. The web site dedicated to the bicentennial can be found at www.erie.gov/ec200. Facebook members can check out www.facebook.com/eriecounty200. A Twitter page at www.twitter.com/ErieCounty200

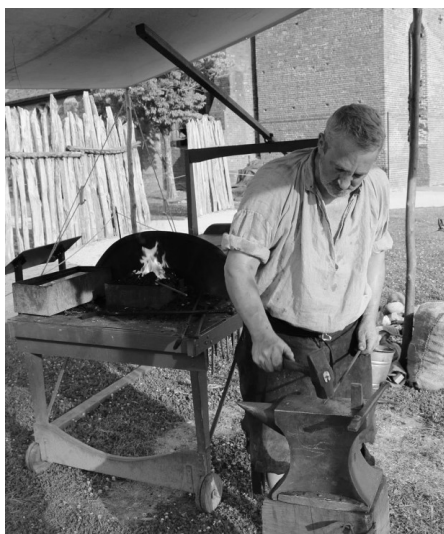
and an Instagram page at www.instagram.com/eriecounty200 have also been established. Be sure to have a look and stay informed during what is promising to be an event-filled year.

Christopher Gust

Annual Dues are Payable by April 1

We value your membership in our Historical Society, and we would like to thank you for your continued support. Your dues help to continue our mission of preserving Alden's rich history. Please remit your dues promptly. If you have already renewed, THANK YOU!

If you have a new address or phone number, please notify us so we may keep our membership roster current. Thank you.



Curator's Corner

A few weeks ago, a package arrived at the Heritage Center. It contained an extremely cute football jersey from Alden Junior Football. Steve Mankowski sent it to us. The package contained a letter from him that told of his early involvement with the Historical Society courtesy of Henrietta Henskee. At one time, he was our youngest member. Henrietta also was responsible for getting him to work at the Genesee County museum in 1981. It was there that he learned the art of blacksmithing from Jeff Gulenvilla. Steve says that 40 years later, he is still at that craft. He spent 30 years as a blacksmith at Colonial Williamsburg and is presently working with



the archeologists at Historic Jamestown Island. He also blacksmiths at Preservation Virginia. Steve has his own forge called Pine Tree Forge.

I understand that Steve returned to Alden some time ago to give a presentation on blacksmithing to the Society.

Steve ends his letter by thanking the Alden Historical Society for "giving him the spark back in 1976 to pursue his life in teaching history." For anyone interested, he is a member of Facebook. 2

Kris Rogers

Message from the President

Hope Springs Eternal. As I write this column, the sun is shining and while it is still cold outside, a few crocus flowers are starting to poke out of the ground. Spring is only a few days away and with it, a feeling of renewal. We are in the midst of emerging from this terrible pandemic and a feeling of hope is spreading with it. A return to some semblance of normalcy may not be too far away. We plan on welcoming visitors again to the Alden Heritage Center in mid-April and plans are also being made to offer programs to the public some-time in the months to come, both positive steps forward.



I have been working with Alden Historian, Karen Muchow, with a group representing the historical societies of Clarence, Lancaster, Alden, Newstead and Elma on a passport program that ties into this year's Erie County Bicentennial celebration. The passport, designed to encourage people to visit all the town historical societies/museums throughout the county, is detailed in Karen's feature column in this issue of the Gazette. It has been a pleasure to work with this wonderful group during the past year. I sense that the spirit of collaboration will continue with our new friends well into the future.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who made contributions to our "no bake" fund appeal in December. The response was beyond what we hoped for and a testament to our terrific membership and the Alden community. We pledge that the funds received will be put to good use, not only for our monthly expenses, but for future projects to further tell the story of the history of Alden and its people.

A call goes out once again to our membership for volunteer docents at the Heritage Center. If you are interested in helping, please reach out to us. Thank you for your continued interest and support. Stay safe, stay healthy and get vaccinated. We hope to see you soon.

Christopher Gust

Alden Heritage Center to Reopen April 18



After extending the annual winter closure of the Alden Heritage Center through March while we continue to organize and inventory our collection, we are happy to announce that we are planning to reopen our doors to visitors on Sunday, April 18. All safety protocols will be followed for the health and safety of our volunteer docents and visitors. Please see our Facebook page, web site at www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org and the Alden Advertiser for updates. We look forward to sharing again our collection and displays that tell the story of the people and places that make Alden, New York the community it is today.

Christopher Gust

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 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month and during special events. If you can help, please contact one of our Trustees, call 937-3700 or email aldenhistsoc@gmail.com. Training is available for new docents. Thank you!



April 2021

Individual Renewal

Marlyn Casell
Helen Creighton
Catherine Cyrulik
Sheila Metzger
Audrey Senecal
Rhonda Wieder

Couple Renewals

Douglas and Cornelia Cartwright
Francis and Judith Downhower
Larry and Donna Francis
Dick and Betty Kegler
Mike and Diane Kingswell
Carl and Ann Matthies
Matthew and Antoinette Shriver

Donations in Lieu of Dues

Clarke and Jane Burke
Elli DeFilippo

Donations

Marlyn Casell in memory of Robert Casell
Marlyn Casell in honor of Mark and Diane Casell
Francis and Judith Downhower

Family Renewals

Vincent and Kerry O'Hara
Scott and Erin Redmond

Thank you!



Our no-bake bake sale fundraiser was held because of COVID-19 restrictions and you responded by giving generously. We missed the yummy treats, but the successful fundraiser will provide us with the funding for upcoming programs and future events. We are so grateful for your continued support!

Aldinger, Harriet
Becker, Richard & Marie
Borucki, Conrad & Carol
Burke, Clarke & Jane
Creighton, Helen
Crist, Randal & Debra
Cyrulik, Catherine
DeFilippo, Eloise
DeWitt, Michael & Susan
Fitcher, Ronald & Antoinette

Hoffman, Keith & Michelle
Judy Hotchkin in memory of
Gordon & Eileen Weisbeck
Kingswell, Michael & Diane
Kipfer, Joseph & Josephine
Kubiak, Daniel & Monica
Loehr, Laura
Matthies, Carl & Ann
Metzger, Sheila
Nebrich, Beverly

O'Neill, Patrick & Judy
Overton, Stephen
Penfold, Richard & Karen
Roberts, Martha
Ruffo, Sandra
Schall, Donna
Skowron, Paul
Vincent, Roberta
Werner, Paul & Mary Ellen
Wieder, Rhonda



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Historical Society*
Established 1965

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www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org

Nostalgia



All the girls had ugly gym uniforms



They threatened to keep kids back a grade if they failed...and they did it!



And with all our progress, don't you just wish, just once, you could slip back in time and savor the slower pace, and share it with the children of today



It took 3 minutes for the TV to warm up



When a 57 Chevy was everyone's dream car...to cruise, peel out, lay rubber or watch submarine races, and people went steady



When being sent to the principal's office was nothing compared to the fate that awaited the student at home



Nobody owned a purebred dog



No one ever asked where the car keys were because they were always in the car, in the ignition, and the doors were never locked



Basically we were in fear for our lives, but it wasn't because of drive-by shootings, drugs, gangs, etc. Our parents and grandparents were a much bigger threat! But we survived because their love was greater than the threat



When a quarter was a decent allowance



You'd reach into a muddy gutter for a penny



Lying on your back in the grass with your friends and saying things like, 'That cloud looks like a...'



...as well as summers filled with bike rides, Hula Hoops, and visits to the pool, and eating Kool-Aid powder with sugar



You got your windshield cleaned, oil checked, and gas pumped, without asking, all for free, every time. And you didn't pay for air. Plus, you got trading stamps



Playing baseball with no adults to help kids with the rules of the game

Didn't that feel good, just to go back and say, 'Yeah, I remember that'?



Laundry detergent had free glasses, dishes or towels hidden inside the box



Stuff from the store came without safety caps and hermetic seals because no one had yet tried to poison a perfect stranger

A smile - is a sign of joy
A hug - is a sign of love
A laugh - is a sign of happiness

Alden Heritage Center

The **Alden Historical Society's** many exhibits are located in the village at the Alden Heritage Center, 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 Heritage Center** 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 392-4295.

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 Heritage Center** 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, Renée Nelson, Kris Rogers

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

Program/Refreshments—Conrad and Carol Borucki, Sandy Dussault, Elli DeFilippo

Building and Grounds—Larry Kocher, Conrad Borucki, Christopher Gust

Fundraising—Jane and Clarke Burke, Gilbert Dussault

Nominating—Jane Burke, Elouise DeFilippo, Sue Galbraith

Audit—Lynda Tucker, Carl Matthies

Budget—Clarke Burke, Christopher Gust, Larry Kocher,

Historical Marker/Signs—Christopher Gust, Clarke Burke,

Gilbert Dussault, Larry Kocher, Karen Muchow, Jennifer Strong

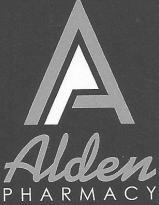
Members are welcome to serve on any of the committees. Contact us at 937-3700 or at aldenhistsoc@gmail.com.

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 \$47. Sue Galbraith





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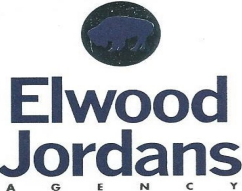
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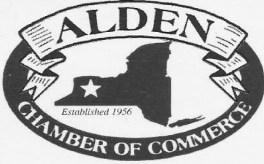
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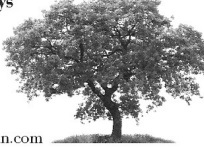
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KAWAII ILLUMINATION



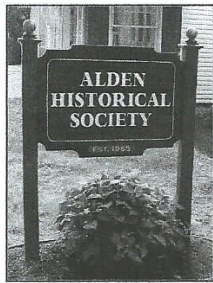
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MISSION STATEMENT

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.



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

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Find us on Facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety

and on the web at www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org

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

Thank you.

www.alden.erie.gov