



The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

716-937-3700

www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org

www.facebook.com/aldenhistoricalsociety

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

Contents

Bicentennial Trivia	cover
President's Message	2
Curator's Corner	2
Open House	2
Volunteers Needed	2
Dues renewal time	3
Century Houses	3
Easter Eggs	3
Gift Ideas	3
Spring Programs	4
Newspaper Clips	4
Past programs	5
Dues and Donations	6
Town of Alden, A History	6
Available soon	6
Trivia answers	6
AHS Website information	6
Meeting Information/Committees	7
Membership Form	7
Business members	back
Mission Statement	back

2023 Officers

President

Susanne Galbraith

Vice President

Christopher Gust

Secretary

Elli DeFilippo

Treasurer

Sue DeWitt

2023 Trustees

Carol Battista

Jane Burke

Elouise DeFilippo

Sue DeWitt

Susanne Galbraith

Christopher Gust

Gregory Kent

Renée Nelson

Jennifer Strong

Lynda Tucker

Archivist

Town and Village Historian

Karen Muchow

Curator

Kris Rogers

Historical Society Historian

Bicentennial Trivia

A small, but mighty group gathered on March 9th for Trivia Night. Below are 20 of the questions asked by our panel of experts (they had the answers!). See how well you will do. The answers are elsewhere in the Gazette.

1. If you were standing in the geographic center of the town, in front of what building would you be standing?
2. What is the name of the creek that runs alongside Rite Aid?
3. In which hamlet of the town was Hoffman's Blacksmith shop located?
4. Which hamlet was named after President Millard Fillmore's Attorney General?
5. In which hamlet was Connie's Tavern located?
6. In which hamlet was the Golden Dollar located?
7. The Pink Cow building was originally this business?
8. What today's business is located in the building that once housed Country Crest Bakery?
9. What was the business owned by brothers Harley and Roy?
10. What business is in the building that was once Simme's Meat Market and Foley's Auto Parts?
11. At 117 years, what is the oldest business in Alden?
12. What man holds the record for the most years served as Town Supervisor?
13. John Harrington was the first on a list that includes Tyler, Bowman, Pride and Gipple. This is a list of what?
14. Who was the man who, for many years, wrote a column for the Advertiser called Facts and Foolishness.
15. Who was the barber who was the last owner of the house that is now the Alden Heritage Center?
16. How many railroads once passed through the Town?
17. US Route 20 connects a city on the east coast and a city on the west coast. What are these two cities?
18. What is the order of the Rod Roads from east to west?
19. Prior to blue and gold, what were the ACS colors?
20. What is the birth year of the Town of Alden?

ANSWERS
(on page 6)

Karen Muchow

Message from the President

Greetings,

My name is Susanne Weisbeck Galbraith and it is an honor to be the President of the Alden Historical Board of Trustees. Just a brief introduction, and I do mean brief (even though I am a Weisbeck). I am the 8th child of Leonard and Betty Weisbeck. My father was the Alden Historian for many years, a title he was very proud of. Our parents instilled in us a sense of dedication and pride in our community. They both were mentors and served in many volunteer/service organizations. Amid the shortage of volunteers seen in many organizations, we are very fortunate to have a great group of trustees, who are devoted to preserving the history of Alden. I am very thankful of all those who give of themselves for the society and make my job so much easier. We are very thankful also for the support we receive from our community. If you would like to become more involved or have suggestions, we would be more than welcome to listen. Thank you for your time, hope to see you at our presentations and open houses. End of rambling.

Sue Galbraith

Curator's Corner



In the late 1800's to the 1940's, Germany began to make candy containers from paper mache' in molds. These were especially common at Easter time. We have a lovely blue and gray rabbit in our collection. The head comes off and allows the body to be filled with candy for Easter morning. Paper mache' Easter eggs were also produced for the same purpose.

Because of their construction, not many of these early containers survived. They can be found in antique stores and on-line but we are extremely lucky to have one in good condition. It will be on display through the month of April.

Photos and article Kris Rogers



Starting April 1, 2023, the Heritage Center will be open to welcome visitors from 11 am to 1 pm on the first and third Saturday of each month. Stop by and view our collection while other activities, such as the Alden Farmers Market, are happening in the Village.



Looking to learn more about local history?



What better way to learn more about the history of your community than by helping others learn about it? Such is the goal of the Historical Society trustees and officials who volunteer their time as docents at the Heritage Center during open house hours. By escorting visitors through the building and answering questions, docents become better acquainted with the history of Alden and its hamlets. Training for docents will be provided and self-guided tour instructions are also available to assist visitors.

The Historical Society is hoping to find volunteers willing to serve along with trustees at the open house hours the Society hosts at the Heritage Center, 13213 Broadway, on the **first and third Saturdays of the month from 11 am – 1 pm**. Alden Town and Village.

If you are interested, please leave a phone message at (716) 937-3700 or send an email to www.aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

April 13—The electric chair



Maria Blair, owner of No Illusions Tours, will give a presentation on William Kemmler and the brutal crime he committed that led him to be the first person to die in the electric chair. You'll also learn about the invention itself by Alfred P. Souhwick. Ironically, both tales are entirely Buffalo-based as Southwick was a Buffalo native who researched and created the electric chair here and Kemmler committed his crime in the city as well. The presentation will take you through the development of the invention and the process of New York state's move to the electric chair as the new form of capital punishment, to the details of the crime, arrest and trial. The execution in Auburn State prison east of Buffalo and its reception will also be covered.

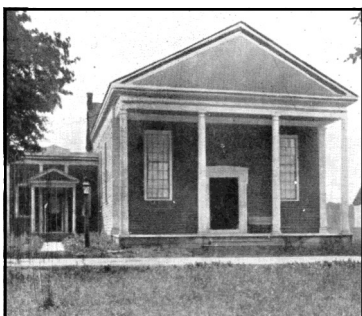
P
R
O
G
R
A
M
S

May 11—Railroads



Our program will at held at 1352 Exchange Street, Alden, this evening. Mark Casell will host a presentation about the Exchange Street Depot located there, and owned by he and his wife Diane. Alden at one point had four railroads passing through Alden, all important to Alden's early economic growth and development. The Exchange Street Depot was once a busy stop for passengers and cargo alike.

June 8—Legion Hall (Liberal Hall)



The Historical Society will be dedicating an historical marker to designate the Hall's rich history during tonight's program, being held at the Legion Hall, 13143 Broadway, Alden. The Hall had its beginnings as a Baptist Church during the mid 19th century and became a popular center for cultural events. Marlene Roll will talk on flag etiquette and Roger Erny will give background information about the Legion. Town and Village Historian Karen Muchow will also present a history of the building.

Newspaper Clips

Buffalo Courier March 18, 1900

There has been a good deal of thieving going on of late at the school building in Alden. Not only have lunches been taken but money, mittens, and many small articles that were left in the cloak room. Some of the teachers are among the losers.

Buffalo Evening News October 9, 1896

Alden, N.Y.—(Special)—J. W. Wolcott (*Railroad Street*) had 21 ducks and 36 chickens stolen last night. It will be possible to discover the thief if proper efforts are made, for the fowl had a private mark and the horse driven by the thieves had a peculiar kind of shoe.

Past Programs



At its January 12 program, the Historical Society hosted Mark Casell presenting “A Bicentennial Tale of Trilobites and Aldenites.” Mark began his presentation by sharing the geological history of the north woods and slate banks that line Spring Creek east of Crittenden Rd. near the northern edge of the village. He identified various fossils and passed out samples that he had discovered following along the creek.

He then spoke of various activities that have taken place there through the years. He displayed a map showing three former racetracks that drew crowds of spectators in the mid 1900’s. The woods had been the location for boy scout outings or “camporees.” Some of the land in that area is privately owned while a portion is village owned and will hopefully remain undeveloped.

Article Elli DeFilippo Photo Christopher Gust

At the Historical Society’s February 9 program, Alden Town and Village Historian Karen Muchow described the origin of Alden’s black water industry. The first to discover Alden’s black water was NYC resident Frank H. Westcott, who struck black water in the area now known as Alden Town Park when he was searching for natural gas in 1891. Continuing his search for natural gas, he purchased land on West Main Street where St. Aidan’s Episcopal Church currently stands and in 1903, drilled and struck black water there.



Edward A. Milliman and his family moved to Alden in 1895. Likely influenced by the popularity of mineral spas at that time, Milliman became interested in the prospects for black water bathing. He offered baths in his own home for a time and in 1903, he joined with Westcott in purchasing property on the north side of West Main St. By 1906, Milliman became the sole owner of that property and developed a bath house and hotel there, completed in 1912. During those same years, Milliman became involved with the Empire Hotel and bath house on Exchange Street.

Frank Westcott’s son, Henry P. Westcott, moved to Alden with his father and family in 1897. Henry oversaw the development of Frank’s property on the south side of West Main St. which became known as the Original Black Water Bath House. In 1920, Henry sold his shares and pursued other interests, principally in the natural gas and oil industries. All three men contributed to Alden’s growth and development through their leadership in developing the black water bath industry which provided a variety of jobs for local residents and contributed to Alden’s prosperity through the early to mid-1900’s. Elli DeFilippo



For its March 9 program, the Historical Society hosted a trivia night, inviting participants to form teams and compete in a competition testing their knowledge of Alden history. Teams were allowed to select questions from six different categories of information: businesses, hamlets, geography, people, roads & railroads, and potpourri. Some of the questions were worth more points than others, but the participants had no prior knowledge of their worth. The winning team consisted of David Henry, captain, joined by fellow team members Karen Fix, Bud Milligan, Randy and Debbie Crist, and Laura Loehr. Following the competition, it seemed appar-



ent to those who have read Alden Town and Village Historian Karen Muchow’s bicentennial publication Town of Alden, NY: A History, that reading it may have been good preparation for the competition. The winning team was treated to a prize of chocolates, courtesy of Henry’s Candy and Gifts

Article Elli DeFilippo Photos Reneé Nelson

Individual Renewals

Dussault, Michelle
Hudson, Kristen
Kavanagh, Kyle
Rice, Barbara

New Members

Schumacher, Brian & Susan (couple)

Donations

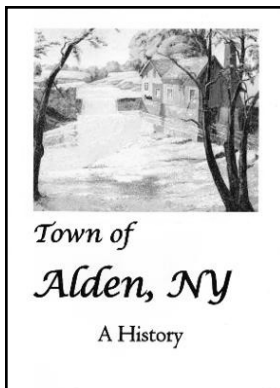
Bowman, Ron & Judy
Merle, Helen
Overton, Stephen & Sandra

THANK YOU!
We are grateful.

Couple Renewals

Bowman, Ron & Judy
Dussault, Brian & June

New Book



This book covers the 200+ years of Alden's history in honor of the Town's Bicentennial. The cost is \$20 and can be picked up at the Town Hall, the Village offices and the Alden Pharmacy.

- For our out-of-town Aldenites, the History books may be ordered by contacting the Historian at aldenhistorian1@gmail.com. A \$5 shipping and handling charge will be added to the price of the book. Checks should be made out to the Town of Alden and sent to the Town & Village Historian, 13213 Broadway, Alden, NY 14004.

Available soon



Alden Hometown Heroes, is a guide to the hometown heroes banners that will be hung again along Broadway in the spring. Using information given by the sponsors, Town and Village Historian Karen Muchow gives information about the Heroes so you can learn more about them as you walk along. The names are arranged alphabetically.

A 2023 addendum will be added for the new banners being ordered. If you want to order a guide, call the Village of Alden at (716)937-9216 and talk to Village Clerk Sue Galbraith to have your name put on the waiting list.

Answers to Trivia Questions: 1. St. John's Church 2. Tannery Creek 3. Millgrove 4. Crittenden 5. Alden Center or Sandridge
6. West Alden 7. Picture Island 8. Gillen's Expert Auto 9. Neeland's Dairy 10. Henry's Candy and Gifts 11. Bennett Manufacturing
Company 12. Otto Wendt 13. Doctors 14. Ralph Stowell 15. Art Roberts 16. 4 17. Boston, MA & Newport, OR 18. Three, Four, Two
19. Orange & black 20. 1823

PLEASE!
Visit our Website



Alden
Historical Society
Established 1965

Welcome About Us ▾ Events ▾ Features ▾ Join Us Newsletter Gifts Contact Us Help Us

www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org

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 11 AM to 1 PM the first and third Saturday of each month, **EXCEPT during January and February and March.** Tours for individuals and groups may be arranged by calling 716-937-3700 or 716-392-4295.

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, as protocols allow. 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 tax deductible

Membership—Lynda Tucker, Susanne Galbraith, Jennifer Strong

Collections—Jane Burke, Carol Battista, Sandy Dussault, Kyle Kavanagh, Karen Muchow, Renée Nelson, Kris Rogers

Publicity/Newsletter—Lynda Tucker - Editor, Elli DeFilippo, Susanne Galbraith, Christopher Gust, Carl Matthies, Karen Muchow

Program/Refreshments— Sue Galbraith, Jennifer Strong, Elli DeFilippo, Sandy Dussault, Greg Kent **Refreshments**—Renée Nelson

Audit—Elli DeFilippo, Jennifer Strong, Christopher Gust, Carl Matthies

Building and Grounds— Christopher Gust, Carol Battista, Greg Kent, Jennifer Strong

Fundraising—Sue DeWitt, Jane Burke, Elli DeFilippo, Sandy Dussault

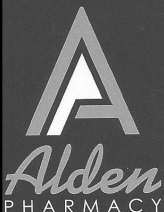
Nominating—Jane Burke, Elli DeFilippo, Kris Rogers

Budget—Sue DeWitt, Christopher Gust

Historical Marker/Signs— Sue Galbraith, Greg Kent, Karen Muchow, Jennifer Strong

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






**Alden Pharmacy
& Gift Gallery**

LOCAL 716.937.9818
TOLL FREE 1.877.384.4762
FAX 716.937.4073

AldenPharmacy@AldenRX.com
www.AldenPharmacy.com


13203 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004

Member FDIC



Alden
STATE BANK
GIVING BACK SINCE 1916

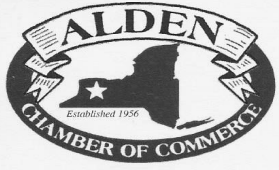
13216 BROADWAY ST., ALDEN
5802 BROADWAY ST., LANCASTER
6545 TRANSIT RD., CLARENCE - Now Open
ALDENSTATE.COM



**Elwood
Jordans**
INSURANCE

Brooks D. Bowman
President


13361 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004
ph (716) 937-9196
fax (716) 937-9552
bbowman@elwoodjordans.com
www.elwoodjordans.com



ALDEN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Established 1956

13500 Broadway
Alden
New York 14004
716-937-6177

www.aldenny.org
email: secretary@aldenny.org
www.facebook.com/aldenchamber



LAW OFFICES OF
MICHAEL W. COLE, PLLC

Michael W. Cole
Attorney and Counselor at Law

13349 Broadway Street
Alden, New York 14004
(716) 937-9150
Fax (716) 937-9580
mcole@michaelcolelaw.com



NS
NEILL & STRONG

JENNIFER L. STRONG, ESQ.

NEILL & STRONG ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS P.C.


office 716.937.3353
jstrong@neillstrong.com
13166 Main Street, Alden, NY 14004
www.neillstrong.com



Thomas A. Steffan
Attorney at Law

Cooke & Steffan, Attorneys

13132 Main Street
Alden, NY 14004
Ph: (716) 937-9111
Fax: (716) 937-4508
Email: tsteffan@cookeandsteffan.com

RESERVE GAS COMPANY, INC.
Serving the Community Since 1937

13441 Railroad Street, PO Box 207
Alden, NY 14004-0207
Phone: 716-937-9484
Fax: 716-937-9488
www.reservegascompany.com



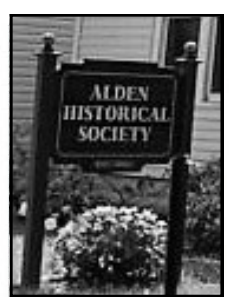
Terra Et Spiritus

13295 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004
716-706-8156
www.melanierimkus.com

Melanie Rimkus
Psychic Medium
Certified Reiki Practitioner

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*

*Alden Historical Society
13213 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004*

*Find us on Facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety
on the web at www.aldenhistoricalsociety.org
and by email at aldenhistoc@gmail.com*

*We appreciate the support we receive from the Town of Alden.
Thank you.
www.alden.erie.gov*