

# The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

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### Treasurer

Sue DeWitt

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### Town and Village Historian

Karen Muchow

### Curator

Kris Rogers

## Society Welcomes AES 4th Graders

Alden Intermediate fourth grade students visited the Alden Historical Society's Heritage Center and the Henskee Road Schoolhouse in early June. At the schoolhouse, they experienced what it would have been like to attend one of Alden's one-room schools in the late 1800s to the early 1900s. This included using slates for seat work, recitations, and a spelling bee. At the Heritage Center, the students reviewed a variety of topics from their social studies curriculum by coloring a nine-patch quilt block. A brief tour of the Heritage Center followed.



Photos: Alden Intermediate School

The Historical Society appreciates the fourth grade teachers and students for their interest and participation. The program would not be possible without the service of retired teachers Terri Retzlaff, Jean Weisbeck, Joanne Pletcher, Sandy Dussault, Kris Rogers, Elli DeFilippo and Karen Muchow.

~ Elli DeFilippo & Karen Muchow

## *Revising our Mission (and a New Logo)*

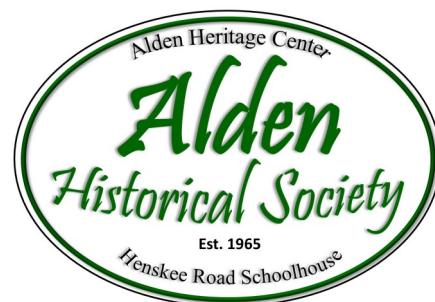
A few years ago, the Alden Historical Society adopted a new name for its building at 13213 Broadway. Gone is the sign "Alden Historical Museum". We are chartered by the New York State Department of Education as an historical society with a collection, not as a museum. That designation involves a different chartering process. The Board of Trustees decided on the name "Alden Heritage Center" for the building.

This year, the Board discussed its mission statement, and after much discussion settled on a revision:

**The Alden Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation, presentation and promotion of the rich heritage of the Town of Alden.**

**In fulfilling this mission, the Society will:**

- Identify, preserve, and display material including artifacts, photos and papers of historical significance to the cultural heritage of the Town of Alden. (*Cultural heritage implies a shared bond, our belonging to a community. It represents our history and our identity, our bond to our past, our present and our future.*)
- Preserve and open to the public historical buildings deeded to the Town of Alden. (Alden Heritage Center and the Henskee Road Schoolhouse.)
- Make its resources accessible to members, researchers, genealogists, and the general public.
- Hold meetings, create exhibits, sponsor programs and run special events for the education and enjoyment of its members, the Alden community, and the general public.



A new name and a revised mission called for a new logo. Vice-President Christopher Gust took on the task. After viewing several, the two logos included here were adopted by the Board and will appear on publications and correspondence.

~Karen Muchow, Alden Town & Village Historian

## *Curator's Corner*



When the 4th grades were visiting the Heritage Center in June, many of the children asked about the game of Mumblety-Peg. It involves jack-knives and was popular with 19th century boys even through WWII. The basics involve a boy standing with his feet shoulder width apart. He then throws his knife down as close to his foot as possible so that it sticks in the ground. The boy's partner then has a turn throwing the knife at his own foot. The one who gets closest to his foot wins. The winner then pounds a stick into the ground 2-3 inches. The loser then pulls the stick out with his teeth which often makes a mumble sound. There are many variations to this game which was played in school yards and army camps.

For further information, check [Wikipedia.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mumblety-Peg).

~Kris Rogers, Curator

## *From the President's Desk*

Are you looking for a fun (and FREE) activity to do with your children or grandchildren during summer vacation? Come visit the Alden Heritage Center, open on the first and third Saturday of the month from 11 am until 1 pm.

The Center contains more than 7,000 artifacts and archival items. Try the Bath Tub scavenger hunt. Can you find all of the bathtub stickers? Let the young explorers see if they can figure out how to use a typewriter, a rotary dial phone or play a tune on the xylophone. Show them what you looked like when you were younger through our complete collection of Alden School yearbooks. Step back in time to view our Village Century House book. Explore the history these homes hold. We are currently working on a Town Century House book. Does your home qualify as a Century Home?



All of this and so much more.... Hope to see you there!

We are always looking for additional Docents (tour guides) to assist on the Saturdays the Center is open. If you are interested in assisting, please let us know.

~Sue Galbraith, President

## *Neeland's Farm 100th Anniversary at Kopp's Greenhouses*

We were honored to be invited by Kopps Greenhouses on County Line Road to participate in their celebration of the founding of Neeland's Dairy which began on their property 100 years ago. We had a table with Neeland's artifacts from the Alden Heritage Center, Neeland's milk bottles for sale, and information about the Historical Society. Several members of the Neeland family stopped by to see the items that were on display. Thanks to everyone who stopped by to say hello.

~Christopher Gust



Photos: David Henry

## *Welcome New Trustee, Susan Schumacher*

At the Society's February meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Board voted Susan Schumacher to fill the remainder of Lynda Tucker's term until the next annual meeting in November 2024. Sue grew up and worked in Alden most of her life. She and husband Brian raised their two sons, Richard and John, in Alden, as well. Being of the third generation on both sides of her family to live in Alden has given her a strong interest in preserving its history. Sue will assist with our Membership Committee and be eligible to run for a full three-year term on our Board in November. Welcome, Sue!

~Christopher Gust

# Programs Recap

July 2024

## April program - History of Early Buffalo Entertainment

Guest speaker Rick Falkowski shared his extensive knowledge about the early history of Buffalo music and entertainment at the Alden Community Center on April 11. Among the many facts shared was that the world's first "talkie" motion picture, "The Jazz Singer," was shown in Buffalo at the Lafayette Theater, on the corner of Washington and Broadway. Additionally, the first theater built specifically for showing motion pictures, the Vitascope, was built in Buffalo in the basement of the Ellicott Square Building. A discussion on Buffalo music covered the early days of live performances in the seedy bars located at the original Canalside to jazz and swing and the birth of rock and roll.

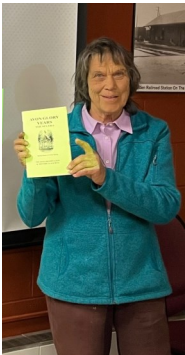
Mr. Falkowski is the author of several books about Buffalo history and influential people. More information about his books is available at [buffalomusichistory.com](http://buffalomusichistory.com).

~Elli DeFilippo.



Photo: Christopher Gust

## May program - WNY Healing Waters and Resorts



The Society welcomed Erica Joan Wanecski at the Alden Community Center on May 9. Ms. Wanecski identified several communities in Western New York, in addition to Alden, where in years past, hotels and resorts were built for the purpose of providing healing water baths and spas. Among the communities mentioned were Dansville, Mt. Morris, Castile, Warsaw, Alabama, and Bergen. She also mentioned Clifton Springs and Geneva in Central New York and Saratoga Springs in Eastern New York. Ms. Wanecski shared that in earlier times, information about taking mineral water baths as a treatment for healing aches and pains may have come from Native Americans who had used them for that purpose.

~Elli DeFilippo

## June program – Hometown Heroes

Alden Historical Society President and Village Clerk Sue Galbraith led a presentation on Alden's Hometown Hero banners, a program she helped to initiate, at the Society's June 13 program. Sue led off by sharing details about Alden's earliest settler, Moses Fenno, who died in the War of 1812. She went on to discuss Civil War casualty Samuel Young. Sue invited those present to share details about family members depicted on the banners. Jean Weisbeck, Robin Gilbert, and Elli DeFilippo shared details about their fathers. Sue concluded the program by sharing details about some of Alden's more recent veterans. Alden has more than 160 Hometown Hero banners. An updated booklet identifying the military personnel featured on the banners will be available soon.

~Elli DeFilippo



Photo: Christopher Gust

***Our monthly programs at the Alden Community Center will resume on September 12.***

## *Society Attends Federation Meetings*

On April 6, the Alden Historical Society was represented at the Wyoming County Federation of Historical Societies by Curator Kris Rogers and Archivist Karen Muchow. Hosted by the Java Historical Society, the sessions on genealogy were particularly interesting. The day ended with a tour of Holy Family Church in North Java.



Three weeks later, Trustees Elli DeFilippo and Christopher Gust attended the annual Erie County Historical Erie County Historical Federation meeting in Orchard Park. After several informative (and entertaining) sessions, the group was treated to lunch and tours of the restored B&O train depot and the beautiful Jolls House, home of the Orchard Park Historical Society.

*~Article & Photos, Christopher Gust*



## *Renewals & Donations Received - Thank You!*

### **Membership Renewals:**

Matt & Ann Shriver  
Shirley Kocher  
Michael & Diane Kingswell  
Donna Schall  
Larry & Donna Francis  
Catherine Cyrulik  
Greg Kent  
Sue & Brian Schumacher  
Carol Battista  
Renee Nelson  
Christopher Hanson  
Mike & Sue DeWitt  
Michael Nuwer  
Jennifer Gust  
Conrad & Carol Borucki  
Charlie Holcomb  
Laura Loehr  
Marlyn Casell  
Kerry & Vincent O'Hara and family  
Erin & Scott Redmond and family  
Dick & Betty Kegler and family  
Charleen Satkowski  
Frank & Judy Downhower  
Keith & Michelle Hoffman  
Ron & Judy Bowman  
Angelo Daluisio  
Barb Rice  
Beryl Small  
Kyle Kavanagh  
Brett & Dawn Sitzman

Helen & Jim Giczkowski  
Cynthia Hopkins  
Rhonda Wieder  
Beverly Nebrich  
Helen Creighton  
Rich & Marie Becker  
Monica Kubiak  
Joanne & Paul Rickard  
Nancy Rickard  
Michael Manicki  
Audrey Senecal  
Marion Schmidt  
Connie DeVita  
Ann & Carl Matthies  
Adam & Kristen Stoltman and family

### **Business Membership Renewals:**

Elwood-Jordans Agency  
Neill and Strong Attorneys  
Cooke and Steffan Attorneys  
Alden State Bank  
Alden Pharmacy  
Alden Chamber of Commerce  
Terra Et Spiritus  
Alden Kiwanis  
Law Offices of Micheal W. Cole

### **Donations:**

Marlyn Casell  
Catherine Cyrulik  
Michael Nuwer  
Jane Burke  
Marlyn Casell in memory of Robert A. Casell  
Marlyn Casell in honor of Mark and Diane Casell  
Frank & Judy Downhower  
Keith & Michelle Hoffman  
Ron & Judy Bowman  
Roberta Vincent  
Elwood-Jordans Insurance Agency



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.

*~Sue DeWitt*

## *Alden's History in a Nine-Patch Quilt Block*

When the seven sections of Alden Central's fourth grade visited the Heritage Center in June, one of the activities was the coloring of a nine-patch quilt block as a review of Alden's history. After a brief discussion of how quilts were made and an examination of a couple of quilt blocks, each student chose two different colored crayons and was given a paper outline of a nine-patch block.



Photo: Alden Intermediate School

On each "patch" was written one of the following words: Agriculture, Alden, Black Water Baths, Education, Geological History, Haudenosaunee, Immigrants, Manufacturing, Railroads. Then the students took turns taking an object out of a bag, and they all decided to which "patch" it belonged. They colored in that patch as they listed to a brief explanation of that part of Alden's history.

The objects in the bag were: an arrowhead, a trilobite fossil, a ceramic figure of a Pilgrim man, a metal bathtub soap dish from The Village's sesquicentennial, a little red schoolhouse, a Bennett Manufacturing salesman's miniature trash can, an ear of corn, a model steam engine, a Polish flag and a German flag. How do you think they match up with the categories above? How would you explain each category?

~Karen Muchow

## *Coming Soon... Erie County Fair Display*

A committee of the Alden Historical Society is hard at work planning its display for this year's Erie County Fair, to be held from August 7th through the 18th. This year's theme is "Festivals and Celebrations" and the Society plans to pay tribute to the Alden Grange Fairs that were held annually during the 1920s and 1930s. Stop by the Historical Building on the Fairgrounds and have a look at our display.

~Christopher Gust



## *Lastly - Congrats to Sue Galbraith, 2024 Citizen of the Year*



On May 7, 2024, the President of our Board of Trustees, Susanne Galbraith, was honored by the Alden Chamber of Commerce as the 2024 Citizen of the Year. Presenting the award is Chamber Director, Rick Kohl. Congratulations, Sue. Well deserved. Thank you for everything you do for the Alden community.

~Christopher Gust

Photo: Alyssa Cooper, Alden Chamber of Commerce

## Alden Heritage Center

July 2024

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. Monthly programs for 2024 will resume on September 12.

**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.

### *Grannytown Gazette*, July 2024

Christopher Gust, Editor & Layouts  
Contributors:

- Elli DeFilippo
- Sue Galbraith
- Christopher Gust
- David Henry
- Karen Muchow
- Kris Rogers

Special Thanks to Carl Matthies

### *Alden Historical Society 2024 Committees*

- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • <b>Membership</b>              | • <b>Buildings &amp; Grounds</b>    |
| • <b>Collections</b>             | • <b>Fundraising</b>                |
| • <b>Publicity / Newsletter</b>  | • <b>Nominating</b>                 |
| • <b>Programs / Refreshments</b> | • <b>Budget</b>                     |
| • <b>Audit</b>                   | • <b>Historical Markers / Signs</b> |

Members are welcome to serve on any of our committees  
Contact us at 716-937-3700 or aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

### 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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Phone.....Email.....

Please make checks payable to Alden Historical Society

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DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

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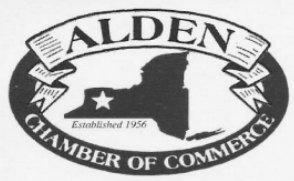
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**Melanie Rimkus**  
Psychic Medium  
Certified Reiki Practitioner

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Alden Historical Society, founded in 1965, is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to the preservation, presentation, and promotion of the rich heritage of the Town of Alden.



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

13213 Broadway St.  
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Find us on: Facebook.com/AldenHistoricalSociety  
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*The Alden Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the support of our membership, the Town of Alden, the Alden community and Erie County.*