

Between the Lakes

A Newsletter of the
Interlaken Historical Society
Volume 31, No 2 October 2005

*Interlaken
Grange
Hall #160*



IHS Fall Program
Monday, October 24, 2005 – 7:30 PM
Covert Grange Hall

***Fat White Boys and Black Valentines:
Bean History 101***

A solitary dried bean is a perfect whole, a self-contained universe. Both food and seed, it carries within it stories of transformed cultures and crisscrossed continents. Ashley Miller, the author of *The Bean Harvest Cookbook*, will give a presentation on the surprising history of New World beans, which are still being grown as crops in local fields.

Ashley Miller is the Curator of Exhibits at Mann Library, Cornell University where she creates displays that showcase Mann's collection of rare books. She has been involved in the book arts for over 25 years as a calligrapher, marbled paper maker, printer and graphic designer. Ms. Miller has also written books and articles on growing and cooking vegetables, as well as on the history of vegetables.

The program will be held at the Covert Grange Hall on West Covert Road and is co-sponsored by the Covert Grange and Interlaken Historical Society. Refreshments will be served. There is no admission and the public is invited to attend this interesting presentation.

Hamlet of Covert Tour Announced

The Interlaken and Ulysses Historical Societies will host a "Hamlet of Covert Tour" in Summer 2006. The public is invited to visit the historic homes and buildings, including the Covert Town Hall, built in 1848, the Covert Baptist Church founded in 1803 and still in weekly use, and the Grange Hall, that has been the site of many social activities over the years.

You will be able to visit the Pratt home now owned by Tom & Betsy Salm, or take a fascinating ramble in the old Covert Cemetery. Memorabilia, pictures and other information highlighting the history of the hamlet will be on display.

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President's Message

Here it is silo filling season again. Do you remember the excitement of trading work with neighbors to fill silo, out very early in the morning with the horses and the corn binder, then the arrival of the neighbors? They came with horses or tractors and wagons, pitch forks and as Mom used to say, "THEIR APPETITES". Don't tell the truant officer but my brother and I each were allowed to stay home from school one day during silo filling season. We either drove the wagons back and forth from the field to the barn or worked in the silo leveling and tromping down the ensilage as the old 10-20 powered the blower. We each had to decide which day. If it rained on the day we picked, and the work was postponed, you can't imagine the disappointment. These were early lessons in trying to forecast the weather.

All of the neighbors belonged to the Grange and only a few years ago I learned that if it wasn't for the Grange I might not be here to write this message. Seems that my "Mom to be" was staying at one of the silo filling neighbors and she and my "Dad to be" both found themselves at a Grange program. When the program was finished everyone went to the lake for a picnic. There was one more person than seats in the cars and my Mom sat on my Dad's lap. The rest is history.

My fondness for the Grange has continued. Until two years ago, we never missed the chicken and biscuit dinners at the Grange Hall in Covert on Election Day. As you have read, we are planning to return to the Grange Hall in Covert for our October Program featuring Ashley Miller and next year for a tour of several historic buildings in Covert.

At an open house on August 28, the Historical Society became the proud recipients of two volumes of detailed farm financial accounts kept by Wheeler Bassett from 1885 to 1915

In addition, the diaries of his son Wilmer for the years 1900 and 1901 were presented to the Society. The Trustees are so grateful for these significant contributions to the collection. They will provide an excellent source of information for anyone researching agriculture in that period. Please see the accompanying article by Marty Schlabach.

The search goes on for a new home for the Historical Society. As we talk with more and more people about the Society's future, we find growing interest in "living history".

Your input is welcome at any time. The new Website has an e-mail address and if you don't have a computer the old telephone still works at 607-532 4213. Thanks again for all of the support.

*To the Trustees of the Interlaken Historical
Society from the President of the
Friends of the 3-Bears.*

*Enclosed is our membership support statement
called "dues." I admire you for your sighted
dedication to the Society and your thoughtful
programs to excite the imagination of the young.
Please keep up the great work, we all need it.*

Dan Motel

Library News

Did you know the Interlaken Public Library started in a dentist office? There have been a lot of changes since Lewis Hinman gave his home to the Village for our present library. Our small village is very lucky to still have its library as so many of our great places are gone. Do come in and check us out.

Our summer reading program went well, although the attendance was down. Tom Knight and his Puppets brought out over 175 folks. It was a great ending to the summer program.

We are gearing up for our story times this fall. We are having three Pre-K classes coming from South Seneca School this year. Chris Carroll and all her puppets are looking forward to busy story times.

We are pleased to tell you about six volumes of the Strong Family Histories in our Genealogy Section. They were a gift from the Strong Association.

Some of our new books are: *Levi's Will* by Cramer; *Good Yarn* by Macomber; *Two Dollar Bill* by Woods; *Spice Box* by Temple; *At Knit's End* by McPhee (a fun book about knitters sayings); *Cold Service* by Parker; and *Serpent & the Crown* by Peters, just to name a few. Our Books-on-Tape are popular with folks going on trips. We have many new Books-on-Tape for you to enjoy.

Check out our wall hanging of the three Seneca County Quilt Blocks done by Sandi Ike Bassette and Alta Bullivant. It is a neat addition to our library.

We want to extend our sympathy to the family of Patricia O'Hagan; she was both a patron from our community, and at

one time a volunteer. We will be adding a gardening book to the collection in her memory.

Have a great Fall Season and keep reading!

New Members

Ray S. Bassett, Ocala, FL
Betty McKnight & Jean C. Smith
Trumansburg,
Kass & Marilyn Crooker, Trumansburg
Megan Chamberlain Mullins, Ovid
Dr. Christopher B. Kaiser, Holland, MI
Betty L. MacCheyne, Interlaken
Mrs. Norma Stuck, Interlaken
Mrs. Doris Coon, Ithaca
Paulette Likoudis, Hector
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald White, Anniston, AL

New LIFE Members

Jamie Brinkerhoff, Lodi, NY
Susan Olsson, Venice, FL
by her father Howard Slaght
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Wyckoff, Interlaken
Leila Menzies, Fred Hewston,
Long Beach, CA
Tina Minor Kolberg, Rochester, NY
Hope C. Bower, Trumansburg
Kerry & John Beck, Fredricksburg, VA
In honor of Kerry's grandfather,
Maurice Patterson.

**Some Revolutionary War
Patriot Ancestors
Of Michael Lewis Tunison**

On July 25, 2005 Michael Tunison treated a gathering of about 50 visitors in Interlaken to an energy packed and entertaining presentation of some of the area's patriot ancestors. Family names include Cole, Covert, Crisfield, Frisbie, Hall, King, Miller, Porter, Sawyer, Schooley, Sherwood and Tunison. The program was cosponsored by the Interlaken Historical Society, the Chief Taughannock Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the newly formed Finger Lakes Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Using an overhead projector to display family trees, Michael demonstrated the interconnections of his ancestor families in south Seneca County. Anecdotes about most of the families produced some laughs and also some sadness as we were reminded of the isolation and primitive conditions in which the early settlers lived.

Michael presented a collection of short biographies of twenty of his Patriot Ancestors to the Historical Society. The references documenting the biographies provide a resource for others researching their patriot ancestors. The Historical Society is grateful to Michael for sharing some of the information gathered during the seven years that he has been working on this project.

Michael graduated from Trumansburg High School and has degrees from Mohawk Valley Community College and the University of Rochester. He was a Quality Engineer and Manager for Kodak until retiring in 1998. He is a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, currently Vice-President of the Rochester Chapter.

Society President Allan Buddle introducing Michael Tunison at the July meeting.



News from our Neighbors

The Ovid Historical Society will have their "Antique Road Show" on Monday Oct. 17th at 7 pm. The museum is at 7203 So. Main Street, Ovid. Bring up to 3 items and have them appraised for only \$1 by antique dealers, Robert Hungerford and Sara Dawley. There will be a 50/50 raffle, and the drawing for our quilt raffle will be held at the end of the program. All are welcome. There is no admission and refreshments will be served. Any questions call 607-532-8800

Lodi Historical Society dates: **Sunday October 16** 4 pm: Historic Tracker Organ Concert, Justin Hartz, artist. Free admission. **Saturday October 29**, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Artisans' Show, lunch available. **Sunday December 4**, 4p.m.: The Swamp College 5 Christmas Concert. Free admission. These events are at the Lodi Historical Society building Main Street, Lodi.

Summer 2005 at the Museums

Did you have an opportunity to see the displays at the Museums? Over 200 people viewed the items on display. Visitors came from Kentucky, Kansas, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, Utah, Michigan, and many points around NY: Binghamton, Brockport, Stony Point, Aurora, Buffalo, Watkins Glen, Long Island, Canton. Boy Scouts from Camp Barton visited the museum as part of the Indian Lore merit badge.

Thank you Docents

When you see the people listed below, please say *Thank you*, to them. Without our Docents we would not have the open hours and visitors to our museums.

Louise Akins
Virginia Baldwin
Barbara & Howard Barrows
Ginny Boyes
Betty & John Brooks
Allan & Ann Buddle
Oran Casebeer
Jack Crumb
Dare & Sally Daniels
Barbara & Tom Duffy
Betty & Ray Ferrand
Bill Gates
Sally Hubbard
Anne & John Knight
Ruth Lincoln
Diane Bassette Nelson
Jean & David Powell
Kitty Ritter
Mimi & Bill Schaffner
Barbara & Harold Stewart
Doug VanBenschoten
Wanda & Duane Waid
Roberta Ward
Mary Willers

Annual Volunteer Party

Our annual thank you to all volunteers will be held on Thursday December 8th from 3:00 to 5:00 at the Americana Vineyards in Covert. Please plan to join us in the 1820's English style barn on East Covert Road as we celebrate good fellowship and the start of the holiday season.

Our docents are our most visible volunteers but there are many "behind the scenes" individuals as well. There are those who help plan events as well as those who so smoothly execute the plans. The displays in our museums must be carefully done to reflect life in Interlaken and the town of Covert. There are those who deal with the volume of papers, photographs and materials that are so generously donated to the Society. The newsletter, the website, as well as special projects such as the 2006 Historical Calendar, require attention and plain old work. But quality is what the Society strives for and quality is what our volunteers deliver. Thank you so much.

We look forward to seeing this fine group of volunteers and their guests on December 8th. Light refreshments will be served and wine tastings will be available.

The Interlaken Historical Society wishes to preserve, celebrate and appreciate the past and present of our community in order to embrace the future.

Recent Donations

The Historical Society is fortunate to have a large collection of items representing the community's history. Monetary donations and donations of artifacts, books and other items continue to come in. The Trustees would like to acknowledge these recent donors.

Gifts in Memory of Pat and Ferne Patterson:

Marisa L. Huttenbach
William & Bernece Weitzel
Dave & Jean Powell
Mr. & Mrs. James Keilman

Clothing items and accessories for men, women and children given by: Jane Bower, Helen Gibson, Karen Madison, and Kitty Ritter.

Family History papers and bound volumes given by:

Jean Grace on the Austin, Ellis, Grace, Scofield, Veley and Voorhees families; and numerous bound reference works.

Preston Kellogg on the Kellogg families in America and locally.

Howard Slaght "Slaght Families in America" by Lawrence T. Slaght

Ray Bassett: 1900 & 1901 personal diaries of Wilmer W. Bassett; copies of Wheeler Bassett's 1873 personal diary and a CD with scanned images of Wheeler's Memoranda pages with other related materials.

Items of local interest have also been given by

Peter Caldwell: Town of Covet map

Helen Gibson & Ann Buddle: school items

Ottalie Day: framed NYS Senate bills

Jane Bower: gladstone bag and travel memorabilia

Ruth Lincoln: Wheeler National Bank bags

Don Warne: Farm and Blacksmith tools, spare parts for cradles and wooden forks, Agricultural history books, horse drawn potato planter and walking plow, wooden barrel with

wooden hoops, draft horse harnesses and 4-horse evener and a one-of-a-kind beehive.

Jayne Thompson: Framed statement of congratulations to Esquire and Mrs. Erastus C. Gregg on their 25th Anniversary August 28, 1882.



Cousin Hunting

Members are invited to submit one free Cousin Hunting item each year. A \$5.00 fee is requested for non-members or 2nd requests in one year. Submit your Cousin Hunting item to the Interlaken Historical Society at PO Box 270, Interlaken, NY 14847 or to information@InterlakenHistory.org

Houses, specifically a family home is the focus of one question for this issue of Cousin Hunting.

Mark Zaharis has recently purchased the "Bainbridge Farmstead" on CR 150 near the base of the hill. He is looking for information and/or pictures relating to the house and its occupants over the years. Please contact him at 128 Woolf Lane, Ithaca, NY 14850 or 607-279-8806.

Cousin Hunting continued

Looking for information on Samuel B. Slaght (son of Jacob) b 1812 died October 1857. He married Jane Eggleston. Children of Samuel & Jane:

Mary b 1845 died 1931, married Benjamin Yard seeking information on Mary's children,

Jacob born 1846, no other information known, when or where did he die, were there children?

Oliver born 1848 died 1929 in Lodi, looking for information on his grandsons Oliver Williams born 1893 and Maynard Williams born 1895

Albert born 1850 presumed to be the son buried in Lodi Cemetery who died 1864

Rachel born 1852 died 1863/64 buried in Lodi Cemetery,

Ovid born 1854 died 1928 this line is complete, willing to share information.

Louisa Helen (Ella) born 1857, died 1930 married Ditmars LaMoreaux, this line complete.

Also looking for information on Samuel's siblings, all children of Matthias & Ruth Slaght: Isaac born 1804-1810 no other family information known. Jane M married William W STRIKER/STRYKER, when and where did she die? Rebecca Ann (1822 – 1864) she married Nelson TILLYER looking for children/grandchildren. Sally S (1825 – 1897) married Abraham Hurd EVERTS. Jacob born ca 1810- no other information known. Rynear C. (b 1830 – d 1848) buried McNeil Cemetery. Mary Elizabeth born ca 1830, no records found of marriage, death or children. John born ca 1820-1830, no records found.

Please reply to information@interlakenhistory.org or Interlaken Historical Society, PO Box 270, Interlaken, NY 14847



August 28, 2005, Frank Bassett, Lois Keller, and Betty Calhoun (far right) presented the Historical Society with Wheeler A. Bassett's 1885-1915 Farm Ledgers, receiving the Ledgers for the historical society is Diane Bassette-Nelson, Trustee and Town Historian.

**Life During the Turn of the Century:
Wheeler A. Bassett
Farm Ledgers, 1885-1915**

An afternoon spent with Frank Bassett, Lois Bassett Keller and Betty Bassett Calhoun, grandchildren of Wheeler A. Bassett, brought me greater familiarity with how deeply rooted the Bassett families are in the history of the Interlaken area and the connections these three siblings continue to feel to the community, even though they do not live here. Frank, Lois and Betty's great, great-grandfather, Lemuel Bassett settled in what is now known as Covert between 1800 and 1805, being among the earliest settlers.

Two generations later, Wheeler Bassett was well established on the Bassett farm and had a wide variety of interests and endeavors. He maintained a diverse agricultural operation, raising most of the food the family ate and he had a number of cash crops. Perhaps most notable was the fruit sold, but the Wheelers also saw income from wheat, beans, timothy seed, barley, alsike clover, corn, buckwheat flour, oats,

butter, eggs, lard, maple sugar & syrup, as well as lumber from basswood, maple, beech and elm.

We can find detailed accounts of produce raised and sold as well as purchases made in Wheeler's two farm ledgers, which were recently donated to the Interlaken Historical Society by Wheeler's grandson Frank Bassett. Passed down through the family, Frank has been the custodian of these wonderful records of life from 1885-1915 in the Interlaken area and he chose to share them with the community through this donation, celebrated during a public event at the Historical Society on August 28.

Frank noted that the ledgers reflect his grandfather's spending in great detail, except for the weekly amount that went to his grandmother, for which there is no record of how she spent it. Expenses were broken down in the ledgers into categories including dry goods, groceries, farm implements, repairs, fertilizers, sundries, labor and taxes. His income was divided into grain, fruit & vegetable, produce, sundry and stock accounts. At the end of the year, he totaled his expenses and income and showed a small profit, usually ranging from \$200-300.

Groceries the Bassetts purchased included coffee, tea, baking powder, pepper, molasses, oysters & crackers, vanilla and raisins. Given how much food they grew themselves, it is perhaps surprising to see they also purchased beef steak, sweet potatoes, cheese and turkey, which they could have produced on the farm.

Fly nets, door rollers, horse collars, plowshare & landside, pump handle and drain tile are mentioned as farm implement expenses. The shoeing of Ned, Dan and Fannie was the most frequently listed repair. In 1888, their 15-year-old horse Fanny was

sold to Mrs. Flagg for \$90, a substantial amount of money for the time. Family and business names are mentioned throughout the ledgers, providing as well a wealth of information about others in the community.

Greening, Baldwin and King apples seem to be the prominent varieties of apples produced in the Bassett orchards. But the list of apple varieties was longer, including Yellow Transparent, Maiden Blush, Peck's Pheasant, Hubbardston, English Streak, Seek-No-Further, Rome Beauty, Bellflower, Wolf River, Snow, Wagner and Northern Spy. Some apples were sent to the cider mill and others, drops and culls, went to the evaporator, to become dried apples. Bartlett, Seckel, Bosc, Anjou, Flemish Beauty and Doyenne pears also found their way to the market from the Bassett farm.

Wheeler Bassett also recorded significant events or memoranda for each year. In February 1885 he noted "Cayuga Lake frozen over, skated across Feb 21". On February 13, 1912 he wrote "Earl and I skated across Cayuga Lake. ... Seneca Lake is also frozen over. 27 years ago I skated across Cayuga - Feb 20th. Also skated on Cayuga winter of 1875." Then on February 17, "Skated today from Kidders to Kings Ferry, on to Atwaters and back. Hundreds skating." Continued on page 9

What other questions about our region's past might be answered by Wheeler Bassett's meticulous record-keeping? Can we determine what he was reading by discovering what books were purchased or to what farming or other magazines he subscribed? How much did he donate to the church or other local organizations? How often did the chil-

dren get new shoes? How early were household and agricultural innovations adopted, i.e. purchased, by this member of the Covert community?

These ledgers, combined with other Bassett family records already in the Interlaken Historical Society collections, add significantly to our understanding of life 100 years ago. This material is engaging and accessible to the casual student of local history as well as the scholar interested in this period of upstate New York social and agricultural history. The Interlaken community is extremely fortunate and grateful to be the recipients of this detailed account of Interlaken and Bassett family history.

***1905 Memoranda
as recorded by Wheeler A. Bassett***

January 2 A steady, severe winter. Plenty of sleighing up to middle of March.
 March 15 Mercury at zero.
 March 15 Cayuga Lake frozen over.
 March 21 8" snow, Chas Crise buried
 March 29 Spay lime & sulphur. Unusually warm.
 March 30 80 in shade
 April 1 Spray lime & sulphur. April 3 Plant hot bed. Roads all dry.
 April 7 Sow clover seed. Neighbors plowing

[April] 9 Take off 17 chickens.
 April 10 Plant peas, beets & onions.
 April 24 Commence plowing. Apr 26 Transplant tomatoes
 April 29 Set apples and peaches in orchard 28 Plant potatoes in garden
 May 1 Sow oats Very cold wind.
 May 4 Spray plums and cherries.
 May 5 Set 2000 Dunlap strawberry plants.
 May 7 Cherries and Japan plums in blossom
 May 9 Spray pears, quinces and strawberries
 May 11 Begin spraying apples. 10th Plant potatoes
 May 13 Drill corn. May 15 Apples & peaches in full bloom.
 May 27 & 29 Spray apple orchard.
 June 3 Sow beans. Picked first Sample strawberries
 June 22, last ones July 11
 July 7 Sow cow peas
 September 19 Sow wheat
 September 23-25 Sow rye in orchard
 November 14 Telephones put in farm & town residences
 December 25 Had a turkey dinner, guests: Benj. Franklin & family, W. S. Wilson & sister, Chas. Franklin, J. Thomas & daughter.
 December 30 We gathered and burned brush today. Winter has been quite open thus far.
 Two days sleighing in December. Snow all went off, some even plowed Jan 1, '06.
 Have trimmed half in apple orchard and burned the brush.



Frank Bassett and Marty Schlabach look through Wheeler Bassett's Farm Ledgers.

*Interlaken Historical Society
2006 Calendar*



Just a small sample of the pictures that you will see in the 2006 Interlaken Historical Society Calendar.

Over 100 photographs and memorabilia have been used to create this unique calendar with plenty of room to add your notes for all of the days of the year.

The Winter of ...



*1905 Main Street
Interlaken, Post
Office & Banking
House*



*Main Street looking
South*



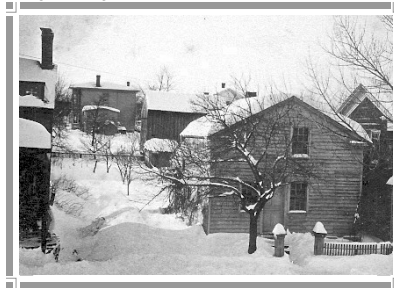
*1945 January 21, Snow drifts Lodi
Road at Peabody's.*



1952 Snow Plow coming through



*1944
November
North
Main
Street*



Carmon House, site of the Masonic Hall

Holiday Gift Ideas

2006 Historical Society Calendar

The Society is excited to offer for sale a 2006 Historical Calendar featuring many wonderful photographs from our large collection. It has truly been a joy to go through our family snapshots, portraits, postcards and professional pictures as we choose examples to be displayed on the calendar.

As volunteers perused piles of material, it was virtually impossible not to interrupt one another with cries of "Look at this!" This does not make for a time efficient operation but it certainly makes for a lot of fun. Then there were the decisions. "Tough...just can't fit this one in. Too bad." Or "it says on the back of this photograph of gypsies wintering in the Gates' wood lot that they were all chewing tobacco when this photograph was taken. Even the children! Should we include that?" Sadly we didn't! Decisions, decisions!

The elaborate and beautiful attire of the ladies, and gentlemen too, was admired – as all the volunteers stood in jeans and sneakers, grateful for our contemporary comfortable clothes. The magnificent hotels of the bygone era are shown looking much more interesting than the current day Holiday Inns.

There are peddler's wagons, ice harvesting in the village of Interlaken, lake boats, parades and all the richness of life in the town of Covert in years past.

We hope you will purchase calendars for yourself and your family. We expect you will thoroughly enjoy what

makes Farmer or Interlaken and the town of Covert so special, pictured as you turn each page of the Historical Calendar. They are available for \$5.00 at many local establishments or by mail. See the insert for information. You may also speak to any trustee or call 607-532-4213. They will be "hot off the presses" at the fall program at the Grange.

Many of the photographs, particularly of individuals, have information written on the back. If you're curious if that really is Uncle Fred and Aunt Myrtle, just ask. We'd be happy to check.

As you enjoy the photographs, please think about your own collection. Is there something you would like to share with the Historical Society? We have the capability of scanning your photo and returning the original to you.

For all the depth of our collection, there are certainly gaps which you may be able to fill. Thank you for your help and we hope you are pleased with the calendar!

Books and Videos

The Historical Society has a wide collection of books and videos which are just right for gift giving.

Local history, family history and educational videos to name a few. See the Gift Shop order form insert to order books.

Patrons of Husbandry The Grange

Contributed by Allan Buddle

As a prelude to the 2006 summer's tour of historic buildings in the Hamlet of Covert, the next few newsletters will provide some background information. Since the Fall Program will be at the Interlaken Grange Hall in Covert, it seems appropriate to start there. The following information was gleaned from a number of sources including wonderful articles by Barbara Bell reporting in the Ithaca Journal on the 100th Anniversary of the Interlaken Grange in 1974 and by Andrew Baugnet in Volume 28 of The Journal of New York Folklore in 2002.

Andrew begins his article with a statement that is close to home. Mention the words "Grange Hall" to anyone familiar with rural communities and chances are the first thing that comes to mind is food. Pancake breakfasts or chicken-and-biscuit dinners, are a long standing tradition with the Grange. The word *grange*, Andrew points out, is derived from the Latin word *granum*, meaning grain, and is historically associated with the granges, or large farming estates of England and Ireland. From the Grange's inception, members would share a meal together before business of the evening was attended to, since after all, with food comes fellowship. The Grange became an important foundation of rural social life and sought to change legislative and political policies for the betterment of farmers and their families and communities.

In 1856, Andrew continues, after a grasshopper infestation destroyed his farm in Minnesota, Oliver H. Kelley took a position in Washington as a clerk in the Department of Agriculture. He later was selected by the Commissioner of Agriculture to

make a trip to the southern United States in the sections recently ravaged by the Civil War to investigate agricultural conditions. Kelley, already a member of the Masonic fraternity saw a need for some type of farming fraternity to aid in bringing together the rural community both economically and socially.

Fredonia #1 located in Chautauqua County, New York, was the first dues paying Grange in the world. It was established on April 16, 1868 and it still functions today. The New York State Grange was formally organized six years later on November 6, 1873. The first annual meeting of the New York State Grange took place on the third Wednesday in March 1874 with an already astounding statewide membership of 164 Granges.

From Pat Patterson's *Between the Lakes*, we are reminded that two Grange organizations were active in the Town of Covert at one point. The Farmer Grange #160 was organized on April 2, 1874. The Covert Grange #1227 set up shop on April 1, 1911 and continued for six decades until merging with Interlaken in 1970. An article provided by Philip Stannard, Master of the Interlaken Grange for many years, provides information on the merger. "Interlaken and Covert, feeling the effects of dwindling membership and the former in need of housing began to discuss merger in 1969. The printed program for April 25, 1970 was labeled as Covert Grange's Last Will and Testament. The Covert Grange disbanded and its members turned to the Interlaken Grange presenting the Covert Grange Hall in so doing."

Barbara Bell's article provides some interesting history at the the time of

the 100 Year Celebration of the Interlaken Grange. Charles Ditmars, a former Covert Granger, explained that the building housing the former Covert and current Interlaken Grange was once a church at Steamburg in the Town of Hector. Built in 1857 it was known in its early days as Yellow Church. After a major renovation, it was called the "Little Gem". At some point prior to its purchase from Celina Pearsall, a big wind had blown the old church apart without disturbing the pulpit, Bible and one lamp. The building was dismantled and moved piece by piece to its present location in Covert on land purchased from Abram Wightman.

The 100-Year Anniversary in 1974 provided opportunity for reflection on the contributions that the Grange had made to rural society nationally and locally. The continuing importance of its goals was discussed by Theodore Day, Assistant State Commissioner of Agriculture. He stated that farmers must compete with ecology, energy and other issues for



“interest, funds, understanding and sympathy of the Public. Alone, the farmer doesn’t have the political clout he once had, because of the decrease in numbers, but through such organizations as the Grange, he (or she) can get the message

across to both the government and the public.” (Editor’s Note-In 2005, nationally, only 2% of the population is actively involved in production agriculture or supporting businesses. In New York State there are now fewer farmers than prison inmates.)

Many records demonstrate that during the late 1800’s and first half of the 20th Century, rural social life centered on the Grange. In cold weather there were candy pulls and oyster suppers, and in late winter a maple sugar “sociable”. As days grew warmer, Grangers held clambakes on the lake shore, went on picnics and had parties. Square dances were a popular activity.

In the last years of the 19th Century there began a series of educational programs called Farmers’ Institutes. These were dropped after local schools began to teach home economics and agricultural courses and Cornell University began to sponsor Farm and Home Week annually.

In 1903, the Interlaken Grange had its own choir and orchestra. In 1905 there was a special celebration to honor charter members with seven of the ten survivors present. In 1907, members made a study concerning the need for better roads and in 1908, there was a resolution condemning the types of sideshows which were part of the Trumansburg Fair.

Other events during the early 1900’s included spelling bees, Grange Fairs and harvest exhibits, a two-cent supper, speakers on a variety of current events and new literature and there were debates.. The subject of one of the latter was “which is harder to steer, a tractor or a mule?”

In 1912, Grangers studied parcel post service and how it might be made available in rural areas. Someone brought in a couple of new-fangled

Continued on page 14

machines – a phonograph and a magic lantern with slides. In 1915, the Interlaken senior class presented its play at the Grange meeting. The late Ed Eastman was very active in Interlaken Grange during this era.

During World War I, local Grangers did what all farmers did for agricultural support of the war effort. They also sewed for Red Cross, bought bonds and collected money and New Testaments to give area men going into service. There was also a contribution for an ambulance to be used in Europe.

Interest in Juvenile Grange (Junior Grange) was first noted in 1922. Interlaken's own Susan Freestone achieved national recognition as an early national Juvenile Superintendent. Her husband Fred, through the decades served not only locally as she did but in State Grange posts as president of National Grange Mutual Liability Insurance Company.

Those who believe electricity has been around forever, should note that the proposal for electrification of rural Seneca County was the subject of one Grange program in 1935. Grangers played an important role when the village had an old home day observance in 1938.

Although the Grange is not as active today as it was when everyone stayed closer to home, its philosophy is alive and well in a multitude of other groups.

If any of the information provided here has peaked an interest in learning more about the Grange, there is an abundance of material available for research. We also sincerely hope that some of you Grangers have memories and stories of your Grange experiences that you would be willing to share with our readers.

References:

Picturing the Grange: 130 Years, by Andrew Bagnat, *The Journal of New York Folklore*, Vol. 28, Spring-Summer 2002.

Interlaken Grange – 100 Years, by Barbara Bell, *Ithaca Journal*, March 23, 1974, Paper Files of the Interlaken Historical Society

Between the Lakes, The History of South Seneca County, Maurice L. Patterson, 1976.

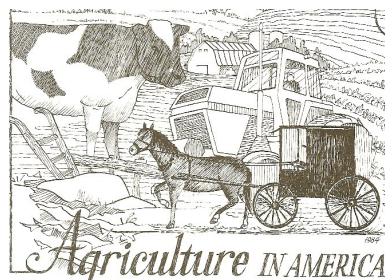
Manual of Subordinate Granges of the Patrons of Husbandry, 1940.

From the Collections

The Interlaken Historical Society has in its collections a little hard covered booklet copyrighted in 1940 by the National Grange Patrons of Husbandry. The 104 page Manual for Subordinate Granges provides detailed information on the requirements and the ritual as members move from the entry level 1st Degree to the 4th Degree. The following few words from the Manual paint an interesting and thought provoking picture of rural life.

FIRST DEGREE	Preparation
Candidates	Laborers and Maids
The Lesson	Faith
Symbols	Spring – Childhood – The Seed
Emblems	Ax, Plow, Harrow and Spade
Scene	A Farm in the Spring

SECOND DEGREE	Culture
Candidates	Cultivators and Shepherdesses
The Lesson	Hope



The Grange From My Point of View

Contributed by Charolotte Swanson

The Grange is basically a social organization. I joined the Grange in 1941 when I was fourteen years old. When I married my husband John, I found that he also belonged to the same Grange as I did. He was then in the Submarine Service and had not been attending meetings, so I did not know that he was a member. When he was discharged we attended the meetings together.

We moved from Bolton, Connecticut to Interlaken on May 30, 1959. Our farm was three and half times larger than our Connecticut Farm. I could find no time for Grange and I missed it. Some ten or eleven years later, we joined our local Grange in Covert. We went on to join Pamona (5th Degree), State (6th Degree) and National (7th Degree) Granges. We have both recently received our 25-year pins.

Until recently, our Grange tradition has been to meet 24 times a year. Twelve meetings are business meetings at which we enact the Grange Ritual. The other twelve are supper meetings. At each meeting the Lecturn provides a program. We bring food and friends. After each meeting we share in refreshments and conversation. Visiting with my neighbors is always the best part for me.

Symbols

Summer – Youth – Fruit Blossoms – The Plant

Emblems Hoe and Pruning Knife

Scene A Farm in the Early Summer

THIRD DEGREE Harvest

Candidates Harvesters and Gleaners

The Lesson Charity

Symbols

Autumn – Manhood – Flowers – The Fruit

– The Ripened Grain

Emblem The Sickle

Scene A Farm in the Harvest Season

FOURTH DEGREE

A Farm Home in the Winter Season

Candidates Husbandmen and Matrons

The Lesson Fidelity

Symbols Winter – Old Age – The Feast

Emblem The Agate

Scene A Farm Home in Winter Season

Left: This pen & ink sketch by Anne Knight represents the many ages of agriculture in America and the Grange. The sketch is featured on one of the Finger Lakes Area Landmarks Note Paper.

RED DOTS!

Not spots in front of your eyes, but a red dot on the mailing label of this issue of the newsletter. If there is a red dot, your dues for 2005-2006 are due.

Dues are \$10 per year for a Family, or \$100 for an Interlaken Historical Society Life Membership. Your support through a Life Membership insures that Society activities will continue for many years to come.

Do you need a holiday gift that will be appreciated year round? A gift membership to the Society is always welcome. Share with others your enjoyment of the Historical Features included in each issue to *Between the Lakes*, the Newsletter of the Interlaken Historical Society. See the insert for details.

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Interlaken, NY 14847-0270

Mark Your Calendar

January Newsletter Deadline:

November 23, 2005

January Meeting:

January 23, 2006

Better yet, purchase the 2006 Historical Society Calendar and add your dates to ours. See page 11 for details.