

Between the Lakes

A Newsletter of the
Interlaken Historical Society

Volume 36, No. 2 October 2010

www.InterlakenHistory.org



Interlaken Historical Society October Program

Bees and Honey in the Finger Lakes

Monday, October 25, 2010 7:30 pm
Town of Covert Municipal Building

Duane Waid will discuss the history of beekeeping at the October meeting of the Interlaken Historical Society. His presentation will give particular



emphasis to the early beekeepers of this area and their contributions to the craft.

Duane and Wanda founded Waid Apiaries as a family-owned and operated business in 1976. They produce varietal

honeys from the wide range of flora which flourish in the Finger Lakes area of New York State. The Waids have been active in the Ithaca Farmers' Market for over 30 years as well as the Trumansburg Farmers' Market, Watkins Glen Farmers' Market, and deliver regularly to area food markets, fruit stands and gift shops. Craig and Patricia Waid regularly display their products at special events.

Their "Lakes Country Candles" are pop-

Four barns and their owners were honored at the Plowing Day and Old Fashioned Fair. Shown above is the early 1800s Bank barn owned by Mark and Adrienne Zaharis. Also honored were Yvonne Williams for the Williams family Post and Beam barn, Karen King and Schuyler Madison for their 1840s Bank barn and John and Grace Hunt for the Brook Farm Wells barn. For pictures of all of the barns see www.interlakenhistory.org

ular throughout the area.

The program is free and open to the public; it will be held at the Town of Covert Municipal Building, 8469 South Main Street, (the former American Legion Building). We welcome visitors to this event, and refreshments will be served.

For more information please contact the Society at museum@interlakenhistory.org or Diane Bassette Nelson at 607-532-9227.

Table of Contents

October Program	Page 1
President's Message	Page 2
Society News	Page 3
News of Our Neighbors	Page 4
Library News	Page 4
Retrospection on Farmer Village	Page 5-9
Historic Images of Interlaken	Page 9
Plowing Day 2010	Page 10-11

President's Message

Preservation, Progress and Pictures

The Vision Statement for the Interlaken Historical Society notes that we preserve, celebrate and appreciate the past and the present in order to embrace the future. One of our mission items is "to collect and preserve items and books ..." When we think of preservation many topics and events come to mind.

Within our history we have preserved a building, moving the Nivison



Grain Cradle building from Route 89 to its current home on Main Street where it serves as our Farmers' Museum. We have also preserved samples and examples of the items that made up life in past years, as well as the images of people, places and events.

Last month, our preservation efforts were demonstrated many times during the Old Fashioned Fair and Plowing Day. As part of that event, four preservation certificates were awarded. If you were not able to be present that day see pages 10 and 11 for a variety of pictures and reports from the day.

Sometimes preservation involves retaining photographs from past events, or gathering the writings about a particular time in history. Hopefully many of you have enjoyed reading *So Good A Time: Life in the*

1870s as Documented in the Diary of Olive Evans Williams, which was published this summer. We also get a look at the past through articles written at the time of an event, or from a historical summary covering many years.

In this issue we feature an article written by Wheeler A. Bassett, the first historian for the town of Covert. His perspective of the past events as well as the more current events of the early 1900s gives us a closer look at life nearly 90 years ago. One of the comments that he makes in discussing the fires that occurred is "All of these were burned and later resulted in a benefit to the village, for out of the ashes arose ..."

October is associated with two designations, which in many ways can be tied together. October is Fire Prevention month and Archives month. We of course always want to prevent the devastation that a fire brings, but we also, as a body and as individuals, wish to help preserve what has gone before.

The three photographs shown with this article highlight two buildings. One, the Farmers' Museum in its original home (at left) and today as it stands on Main Street, the other is a picture of the Lakes' Theatre building.

The summer of 2010 has seen a lot of activity by the Main Street Revi-



talization Group. This resulted in a new community bulletin board on the lawn of the Farmers' Museum. They are also working with the village, county and others to improve the look of Main Street.

Sometimes progress has to mean change. We should appreciate the fact we have the pictures and the memories when a building itself may no longer remain.

The Historical Society is actively collecting artifacts, articles, especially photographs, that will help future generations to see and understand what life was like in times past. One area where we need to enlarge our collection is from the 1920s forward.

As you look at pictures and items that you have collected over the years, please consider donating items to the society. If you have photographs, we would be happy to make copies of them and return the originals to you.

Diane Bassette Nelson



New Members

Ben Guthrie, Interlaken
Linda Clasby & John DeWane,
Trumansburg
Patricia Thompson, Rochester

New Life Members

Muriel Akers, Interlaken

Financial Gifts:

Ben Guthrie, Interlaken NY
Margaret Lorenz, Falls Church, VA
Tom and Betsy Salm, Interlaken, NY
Thomas & Carol Hilberg, Medina, Ohio
Margaret McGraw Hartfield, VA

Donations to the Society

Tools and ice skates
Charles Bassett, Delmar, NY.
Medicine bottle, John Hunt, Interlaken

Dues are now due.

Is there a red dot on your label?

If there is a red dot, your dues are due!

Individual or families are only \$10 per year
or

Consider a life membership at \$100

Please see the insert for details.

Help Preserve the Memories

Plans are already underway for Olde Home Day 2011. The categories for the Photography contest are
Our Beautiful Community
Animals: Farm, Friend, Free
Save the date: June 11, 2010

News of Our Neighbors

Lodi Historical Society

Music in Lodi Concerts series supported by a Delevan foundation grant.

October 17th Annette Richards, the Cornell organist, will perform on the 1852 Hook organ.

December 5th Swamp College Brass will present their 6th annual Christmas concert.

Each of these concerts begins at 4pm at the Lodi Historical Society Building



Mary Jean Welser and Marty Schlabach, with a team of oxen at the Old Fashioned Fair and Plowing Day.

Oxen are bovine animals trained as draft animals. Oxen are commonly adult male cattle, but cows (adult females) or bulls may also be used in some areas. Oxen are used for plowing, transport (pulling carts or wagons or sometimes for riding). Oxen may be used to skid logs in forests, particularly in low-impact select-cut logging.

See page 10-11 for more on the animals and equipment at the 2010 Plowing Day.

Library News

The Interlaken Public Library has a new board. Recently they elected Co-Presidents Joan Getman and Kim Foxx; and Secretary Holly Covert. The others on the board are Kate Hunt, Marianne Schaffner, Jayne Thompson and Andy Herrala. Andy serves as Treasurer. A thank you to Barb Stewart who is the liaison between the Board and the Village Trustees for helping to recruit our new board members.

The Board is working on some new programs for this fall and into the winter.

Our Summer reading program went very well, with stories, crafts and refreshments. Thank you to all our volunteers and “Mimi” our great story reader. Mr. Beau, The Clown, was great! We had 40 people. It was a rainy day so our new children’s room was used and was a great hit! Each child and adult got an animal balloon and clown coloring pages to take home. Refreshments of homemade chocolate chip cookies (by Kate Hunt) and lemonade (by Mimi Schaffner) were enjoyed by all. What a great and fun ending for our *Splash & Read* Summer Reading Program.

We are looking forward to the Pre-K classes coming back this fall. The Even Start Literacy kids and families will be coming for story times as well.

The south end of Seneca County got a literacy grant to help get families to our libraries. There are story times twice a month for all. Another great thing is 44 new books for ages birth to 5 years for each library. For more information check our local library, and watch for information in the Seneca County Shopper and local newspapers.

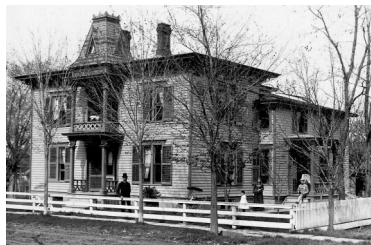
Retrospection - Or Farmer Village as it Was Ffty Years Ago

Written February 1918 by Wheeler A. Bassett

In the year 1873, a young lady student in the Union School wrote a history of Farmer Village extending back to the first settlers. She closed the essay in the following words: "In closing, let me express a wish that the coming generations may show an improvement in ratio to the past, and that in the coming time, some school girl given the task now allotted us will compare the time then with the past as we have been able to do with the past."

Forty-five years have elapsed, and as we look about us and compare the old Farmer Village with the now Interlaken, the wish is indeed fulfilled, although the task given the historian this time falls to an old school boy, instead of a school girl of the present. The old picture of Farmer Village is still in our mind. Let us record some of those old scenes and then pass on to the newer ones of today.

East side: Main Street, beginning south, business houses were about as follows: Almy and Ryno, foundry, L. Hinman, store, (where now lives Mr. Detro) Postoffice, G. Benjamin, grocer, A. W. Porter, Photographer, S. P. Stone, Market, J. Bergen, Undertaker, Gregg & Mann, Hardware (where now stands the new garage) American House, D. Christopher, Prop, Peck's Grocery, (Now Morris Maxon's store) F. Holton, grocer, C. Riley, Blacksmith, Amos Leet, Carriages, "Bee-hive." apartment house, J.R. Wheeler, (now H.P.



Minor) Mercantile store. West side Main, Exchange Hotel, S Deyo, Prop, J. C. Knight store, Kinnan & Wintersteen, store, E. Covert harness shop Mrs. Mundy, Millinery, old bank building, W V. Bruyn, law office, (now Dowdle barber shop), J. B. Peterson, Grocer, (now Homer Case block, Wheeler Bros, store W.W. Wheeler, Physician (now Dr. Gould), C. Chandler, harness shop, Compton & Hill drug store.

But one of these buildings stands today unaltered. Most of the others have burned. There were but five streets other than Main, namely Orchard, Lodi, Back, (now Seneca), Mechanic, Cayuga.

Of the old dwelling houses many still remain. The oldest one is probably the A. Crise house. Mr. Crise has lived there for 50 years.

Among others are the Eylenburg house, J H Wheeler res, J. C. Knight res, T.W. Rappleye house and others. The oldest building is undoubtedly the "Old Beehive." This was erected as a hotel in 1824 by E S Collver. It remains still unaltered outwardly, a monument to its builder, and is good for 100 years more.

Of the old businessmen but six are still living: O.G.

Wheeler, S.P. Stone, A. V. Minor. A. E. Shank, Adam Crise. Mr. Crise is the only one still in active business, having been a meat man for 50. years. S. P. Stone is another veteran meat man, who was in business about 50 years. Stone & Shank were in partnership about thirty-five years. Oscar

G. Wheeler's name is still retained in the banking firm which he founded 53 years ago. Today the Banking House of O. G. & D. C. Wheeler stands as a monument to his integrity. His son, James K. Wheeler is now its honored president and Myron W. Bassette cashier. The businessmen of Interlaken today are all of a younger generation. W. E. Peterson has been the longest in business. He began as a clerk for John B Peterson 35 years ago. The coming of the railroad in 1873 marked an epoch in the history of the village. Heretofore communication with the outside world was by stagecoach or the lake



steamers. In the winter it was a half day's journey to and from Lodi Landing.

August 9th, 1873, the first loco-

motive reached Farmer Village. I remember the construction train was up south of where the Canning Factory now stands, and the men were busily laying the track coming north. The church bells were ringing and some men were in a field nearby firing an anvil. The younger generation will want to know what is meant by "firing an anvil." How many daddies can tell? By fall two regular trains were running. As a result of the railroad, two new streets were added, Prospect and Railroad as far as Prospect.

A general building boom followed. The first ticket office was conducted by Ira C. Hall where now stands the Will Kerns office.

The first important fire came February 21, 1876. Four buildings were burned. Fir-

man Holton's blacksmith shop, C.P. Collver grocery, Peck's grocery and the Christopher hotel barns. These barns stood where now stands the Crise block on Railroad Street. It is recorded that the firemen had the old engine out and saved the hotel. This was probably the old pumping engine and we wonder if anyone is living today who helped pump the engine that night. The present brick block resulted from this fire and D. P. Collver built where Morris Maxon now is. J. K. Torbert built the W. E. Peterson store, and L LaTourette the Bennett Bros. Store.

The next fire occurred December 30, 1880. The thermometer was 12 below zero and blowing a gale, according to record in my diary. This was the most disastrous in the history of the village. Beginning at the southwest corner of Main Street it swept both sides the street, down to where now stands the Wiggins restaurant. On West side of Main Street buildings burned were: Exchange Hotel, occupied by W. D. Truesdell, J. C. Knight store, S. Carman Hardware, E. Covert neck-yoke factory, Carman sisters residence, P.R. Shafer, Jeweler. On East side of Main Street: Post-office, G. Benjamin, A. W. Porter, Tailor and Photographer, S.P. Stone, Meat Market.

Total loss about \$30,000. Insurance \$19,000.

The public in general was the gainer by this fire, for handsome new buildings were soon erected. All of these are now standing. J. B. Peterson, who had kept a store in the old Homer Case stand, joined in with Frank

C. Case and built on the site of the old hotel.

James C. Knight built where now is the Wickes store, and E. Covert finished the block as a neck-yoke factory. On the east side Hotel Robinson was erected on site of the old postoffice. A. C. Peterson, who had started a dry-goods business in his house on Seneca street, joined with S. P. Stone and built the present brick block, now owned by C.F. Leonard, Eugene Creque and John Wiggins.

Eleven years elapsed and February 11th, 1891, came the Gambee House fire. This was the old American Hotel and conducted by Martin Gambee. South of the Gambee House, George Mosher kept a harness shop in the old Sayre Drug Store. Running east of here was a long row of old buildings used for various purposes, and a veritable old fire trap they were. All of these were burned and later resulted in a benefit to the village, for out of the ashes arose the handsome new hotel, now the Goodman. S.A. Drake was the architect and builder.

Fires which have occurred since are: the Davis evaporator, Torbert's bean elevator (formerly the Universalist church building), A. K. Yates elevator, L. B. Weager Cold storage, Boyer Opera House, the Wager Mill, (formerly the Ryno foundry), Ben Hewlett's barn and last "the coop" or jail. It is a remarkable fact in the fire history of the village, but two or three dwelling houses have burned in the past 50 years.

What proved to be of far reaching benefit to the village was the founding of the *Saturday Morning Review* by Mr. T. P.

Hause. Mr. Hause was an apprentice in the office of the *Ovid Independent* and came here in the summer of 1887 and started a printing office in the house opposite the Reformed Church. The first paper came out July 23 1887, as the *Saturday Morning Review*, afterward changed to the *Farmer Village Review*, then when the name of the place changed, it became *The Interlaken Review*. Ever since then the *Review* has been identified with every forward movement for the betterment of the Village and community, and today stands second to none in the County. Unstinted praise should be accorded Mr. Hause for the influential part he took in championing incorporation, good roads, fire department, electric lights, etc.

The old hand engine and pumper hose cart, which have done such efficient work at fires in this village was purchased from the city of Rochester in 1863, being succeeded there by steam fire engines. They were brought by canal boat to Kidder's Ferry, and were drawn up to the village by hand. Patrick Mathews is the only living member of the Fire Department of 1863. He says that fully 300 men, women and children went down to Kidders and walked up, pulling by hand the engine and hose cart. It was a gala day. Later, the company visited other places and paraded. On the 4th of July B.B. DuMont with his team hauled the engine to Lodi Landing where it was placed on the boat and taken to Watkins and in a great parade. A trial of engines was had and the Farmer Village engine beat all the others, throwing a stream over the flag-pole on the Jefferson Hotel. The engine is still in good condition but has been set aside for a 60 H P gasoline driven motor pump, a motor chemical, and soon a motor driven hose wagon

will be added.

As a result of the Gambee House fire, Railroad Street was extended to Main and several new buildings were erected, including the Review office.

Previous to this, in 1884, Mr. E. M. Knight gave land to the village for a new street. Knight street was formed, and Mechanic street was extended to Knight, and afterward Lodi street was re-named West Avenue.

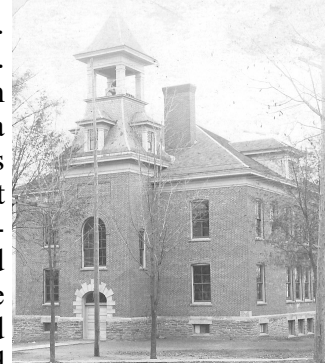
In 1895 the old Wyckoff Rappleye farm was purchased by Mr. L. C. Bradley. He soon opened Lake View, Leroy and Clinton streets. These new streets soon became lined with buildings. As the village grew and the population increased, the old school building became inadequate for school purposes. Farmer Village became an educational center and attracted pupils from the surrounding country. In the summer as 1900 a new building was dedicated and the present high school building was erected. Prof Isaac H.



Stout made the principal address at the laying of the cornerstone. During the 70's Prof Stout was the efficient teacher of the Union school for nearly ten years, and later held a high position in State educational work.

My pen fails me when I try to do justice to this beloved teacher. How fitting it is today that our High School banner is inscribed with the letters I.H.S. For these initials still bring inspiration to the old scholars, and we try to think they have something to do with our old teacher, I. H Stout.

The later history of the Village is for the most familiar to the reader and we pass it on to some future writer. Interlaken has been blessed with many names. In pioneer days it was called McCall's Tavern, afterward Farmerville, then Farmer Village. The R.R. Co. named the station Farmer. When a new depot was about to be built the railroad company announced that a new name would be applied to the station and



asked that a name fitting to its location near the lake be proposed. To Miss Georgiana H. Wheeler, of New Brighton, N. Y. befell the honor and it was called Interlaken. The post office name of the village was changed to Interlaken on July 1, 1904, but the incorporate name of the village was not changed until its first annual election, held March 21, 1905, the day its first village clerk, Charles D. Crise, was laid to rest in Lake View cemetery

The new Lehigh Valley depot was opened June 13, 1910.

Interlaken was incorporated as a village March 2, 1904. John B. Moore was its first president, C. K. Yates and T. P. Hause trustees, D. T. Bennett treasurer, Charles D. Crise clerk. Of the changes wrought since then the village speaks for itself. Instead of the volunteer lamp post we have the beautiful electric light. In place of muddy streets and board walks we have paved streets and cement walks. Instead of the old hand engine and volunteer fire company we have a motor engine with motor chemical and a wide

awake organized fire department.

The old Farmer Village had six streets and less than 100 buildings. Interlaken has 13 streets and 180 houses other than its stores and public buildings. 115 of the houses are entirely new. We have a new bank, a new theatre, a public library, a large canning factory, and three well sustained churches.

In speaking of the old Farmer Village, the former historian said: "In all, we see a change so great as to be hardly realized." What would the old timers say could they see our village now? With pardonable pride our forefathers pointed to the iron horse as annihilating time and distances. Today we bid defiance to the iron horse and speed across the country in our own motor cars, while we watch our more daring brother sailing aloft in an aeroplane. Shall we continue to on in the same ratio as we have done in the past? That we will leave for future generations to decide and a future writer to record.

Pictures:

Page 5 Bergen (now the Post Office) and Elyenburg homes (corner of Mechanic and Seneca Street (both were torn down).

Page 6 Wheeler bank ca 1917. Main Street west side to West Ave.

Page 7 A.C.Peterson store, next to the Robinson Hotel

Page 8 Looking west toward Knight Street from the Baptist Church tower. The early 1900s High School, torn down after the new school was built in the 1930s.

Images Of Interlaken

The Historical Society is pleased to announce the publication of our first coloring book. Nicole Nelson worked from photographs of buildings familiar to all and created easy to color drawings. On sale now for \$3.50 plus postage. Included are the Nivison Grain Cradle, 1900s post office, 1917 bank building, Brooks Barn, Kellogg Barn, 1890s school, the three village churches, the original railroad depot, Goodman Hotel and the old fire house. See the insert to order copies for holiday giving.

Old Fashioned Fair and Plowing Day 2010

Three draft horses in
the parade.



Jim Wilkins plowing with his
Percherons Kitty and Oliver

A restored 1939 Allis Chalmers B
driven by Darrell Wiggins.



A special thank you to all the people involved in planning, and making this event happen. Special thanks to John and Grace Hunt for use of the Brook Farm barn and Jack and Jennifer Persoon for allowing us to plow their field.

For more pictures of the animals, exhibits, tractors and plowing see www.interlakenhistory.org and click on Plowing Day 2010.

Farmall
tractors





Don Betzler helping direct traffic at the start of the parade.

There was something for everyone, even playing in the straw bales in the barn.



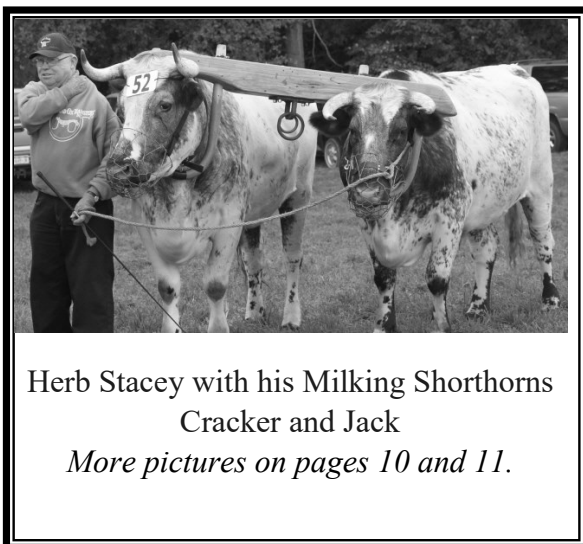
Hanging the quilts as part of the displays in the barn



Curtis Thompson with a display of toy John Deere tractors.



A few of the John Deere tractors.



Herb Stacey with his Milking Shorthorns
Cracker and Jack
More pictures on pages 10 and 11.

The Historical Society

Board of Trustees

Diane Bassette Nelson, President

Bill Schaffner, Vice President

Ann Buddle, Secretary

Karen King, Treasurer

Trustees

John Hunt

Nancy Radloff

Philip Stannard

Harold Stewart

Mary Jean Welser

Newsletter Editors & Staff

Diane Bassette Nelson

Bill Schaffner

Peggy Kopsa

Nancy Radloff

Mimi Schaffner

Barb Stewart

Interlaken Historical Society

PO Box 270

Interlaken, NY 14847-0270

www.InterlakenHistory.org

Mark your calendar

October 25 Beekeeping with Duane Waid

January 24, 2011 To be announced

*This newsletter supported by a grant from the
Nelson B. Delavan Foundation.*