

Between the Lakes

A Newsletter of the
Interlaken Historical Society

Volume 41 No. 2 October 2015

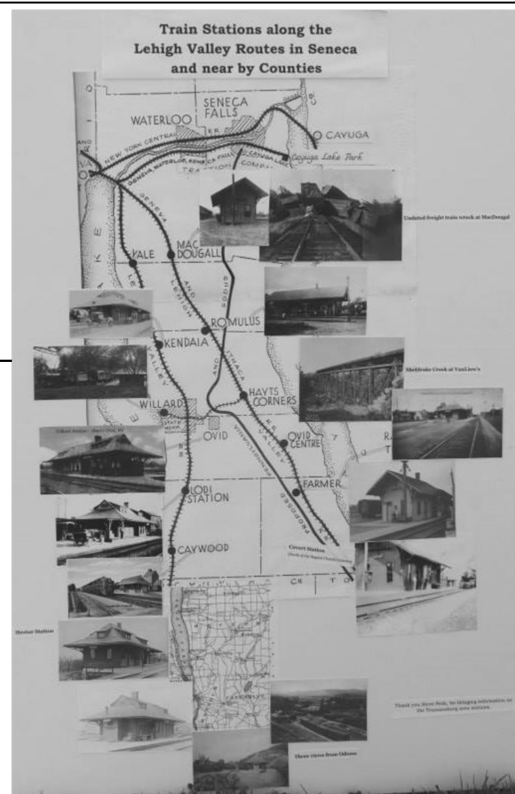
www.InterlakenHistory.org

Lehigh Valley Railroad Monday, October 26, 2015 7:00 p.m.

Danny Armitage grew up in Freeville, NY where two branches of the Lehigh Valley Railroad crossed. From the age of 5 he hung out at the freight station behind his house getting to know all of the trainmen. This led to an unusual childhood of literally growing up on the railroad. From 1963 until the mid-1980s he rode the locomotives and cabooses over 400 times and was accepted by the crews as one of their own. For 26 years Dan resided in the Ovid area and worked for 30 years at the Willard Psychiatric Center and Willard Drug Treatment Center. This afforded him time to study both the Willard Asylum and US Army Depot railroads. Dan now resides in Marathon, NY with his wife Joan Portzline. His program of lecture and slides is titled: "The Kid from Freeville /Growing up on the Railroad" and has been presented all over central NY, covering the people and operations of the Lehigh Valley Railroad from a very unique perspective.

Display of the Lehigh Valley Stations

in



Seneca County

The meeting will be held in the dining room of the Masonic Hall, 8396 Main Street, second floor at 7:00 pm. The meeting room is handicapped accessible. Refreshments will be served. For more information, please contact the society at 607-280-2099.

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President's Message

Fall is upon us, it's a relief as cooler temperatures and summer activities wind down. We have many people to be thankful for, docents and volunteers who manned the museums during the summer. Also thanks to those doing painting, helping with "Trains in the Village," helping with the fair exhibit and our float, and our summer picnic.

As these 2015 activities are winding down we need to start planning for 2016. Including another Plowing Day and Country Fair event for next September. Also our quarterly meetings, possibility something at the Firemen's Field. We would like to hear back on what you enjoyed taking part in and what would spike your interest in 2016.

It has been great to hear from people remarking about the upcoming 65th Anniversary book. In particular, their enjoyment in writing their stories.

As the Holidays approach we need to remember what our forefathers worked for and some died for. Let's be truly thankful for the blessings we have in this country and pass on to our children and grandchildren how fortunate we are. With the events in the middle east in mind, let's do our part to help and encourage the less fortunate.

Enjoy the Holidays.

John Hunt President

Recent Donations to the Society

From Scott Lowe, Placitas, NM 1930 Blueprints of the Lehigh Valley Railroad tracks and sidings in the Village of Interlaken.

From Walt and Mary Steesy of Interlaken, a streamer trunk with tags for Interlaken.

Recently two events brought to mind long-term friends of the Historical Society and especially the genealogy room.

Jean Grace, formerly of Lodi, died in September. She had done extensive research on her families; when preparing to move several years ago gave books and research documents to the Historical Society.

As the Library staff were preparing to move items from the older storage shed to their recently acquired building, they found two boxes of genealogy materials. Two books in particular have been added to their shelved collections. Both volumes dealt with Oneida County history and while the year given dates were different, both had the same inscription. *Merry Christmas Ferne — Pat* [Patterson]. Ferne grew up in Oneida County and wrote about her family history, no doubt referring to the volumes as she worked.

Do you have an interest in volunteering?

We are in need of volunteers who would be interested in cataloging or indexing items in the collections. Please contact one of the board members if you would like to assist.

New on the Book Shelf

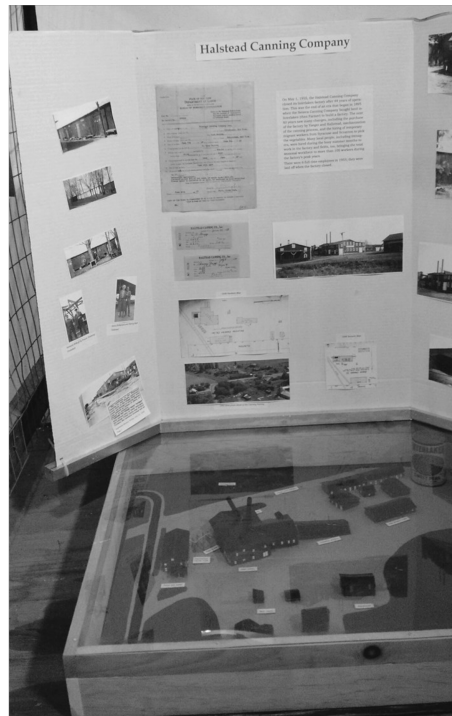
History of the Hayts Corners, Ovid & Willard Railroad, compiled by Peter Allen. Soft cover, \$45 with color photos. A perfect Christmas gift for the local history or railfan on your list.

train day and again at the Trumansburg Fair Display.

Dues Reminder No More Red Dots

Yearly dues are due beginning in July of each year. We thank all those who regularly send in their dues. This year we have added a field to the mailing labels which lists when your dues are paid through, ie 6/30/2015 means you owe dues this summer. Others may see 6/30/2016 or later, your dues are paid through June 2016 or as noted. This field will be on the mailing labels for each issue, and replaces the red dots.

Summer Social 2015. Thank you to all who attended and shared in the conversation and great food.



From the Archives: Many years ago Stephen Hiltbrand built a model of the Halstead Canning Factory. This summer it was one of the featured displays at the



The Farmers' Museum Journey: Route 89 to Main Street

While the Nivison Grain Cradle Factory has a story older than what's included with the Historical Society's current Covert update, what makes it relevant is its new role. It all started in 1985 when Howard Hunt offered to the society the building, standing on Route 89 near Bergen Beach Road, for a farmers' museum. The building had begun its life in about 1850, built for the manufacture of grain cradles by James R. Nivison. In the 100 years previous to the museum proposal, it had been purchased by John Thomas Hunt, Howard's grandfather, and used as a farm repair shop, for blacksmithing, for apple crate assembly, and for storage. Now, with the proposal for a totally new life, it would be moved to the village and there begins the interesting journey.

A two-story, 18' x 25' frame building with 8" x 8" beams and pinned corner braces, it was in excellent condition. The original proposal was to place it behind the library to house the farm tools the society had been collecting but for which there was no space.

To dismantle, move, reassemble, do all the necessary infrastructure, and develop a display plan were going to take significant time and dollars. And so it began, with contributions coming in from so many interested friends.

While a planning grant was gaining ap-

proval in 1986, the Goodman Hotel on Main Street was slated for demolition. Sad, but the possibilities for the site were fascinating! Would the society be interested in placing the Farmers' Museum there if the site could be given to the village? Valerie Bassett, a Covert Town Board member, agreed to work on getting the site from the county if the town, village, and society were in agreement. Residents were polled and 161 of 191 voted yes for the Goodman site. The town and village passed resolutions and Town Supervisor Don Kenyon made the official request to the Board of Supervisors. He also used his connections to Assemblyman Randy Kuhl (soon to be a state senator) and Assemblyman Mike Nozzolio to seek forgiveness of New York State tax liens. Seneca County also removed liens for property taxes owed.

In early 1987, with all tax liens removed, the Board of Supervisors transferred ownership of the Goodman site to the Village of Interlaken. The society immediately formed an advisory committee made up of Clesson Turner, Howard Barrows, Nelson Delavan, Valerie Bassett, Richard Chesley, and Pat Patterson. The committee met several times during 1987 and outlined steps that needed to be taken. George Bowditch completed a display plan and submitted it to NYS Council on the Arts for funding.

By mid-1987, Covert Town Highway Superintendent Mike Kinsey and his highway crew had cleaned out the building and

the artifacts to be saved were stored in Pat Patterson's barn. About this time, vandals set fire to the rear of the building but the fire was confined to the outside wall.

The building was finally moved in sections in the spring of 1988. The town highway crew did the move and cleaned up the Nivison site. Walter Steesy did the electrical work, and Richard Chesley and Ron Porter finished the first floor. Jim Wilkins donated lumber for the siding, and Village Highway Crew Dewey Albro and Joe Lincoln, who had cleaned up the Goodman site, now laid the sidewalk. Janet Griffin, Bill Willson, Clesson Turner, and Philip Hull primed and painted 11 double-hung windows. Bill also built shelves for the second floor storage area.

By the summer of 1989, the Farmers' Museum was open, with 270 visitors enjoying the new building and exhibits. The displays included preparing the soil, harvesting the crops, processing the crops, various farm tools, and clay tiles that told Seneca County's story as the place where drainage tile was first used in America. Much of the script for the museum came from the 1890 to 1910 day books and diary of Wheeler Bassett, offering a detailed record of farming here during those years.

The museum's sign, as painted by Anne Knight, was installed by Clesson Turner and Pat Patterson for the summer of 1990. The stepping stone at the rear entrance was originally the cornerstone of the local high school built in 1900. The school building

was torn down in 1937 and its cornerstone had been stored in various places. The 200-pound stone finally settled into its new home at the Farmers' Museum.

In October of 1991, at the society's quarterly meeting, the story of the Farmers' Museum's journey to its new home was told by Howard Hunt, Pat Patterson, Clesson Turner, and Valerie Bassett, with a tour as part of the meeting.

The Farmers' Museum continues as a popular destination along with the original museum, now housed in what many remember as the Trumansburg Home Telephone Company building on Main Street, two buildings south of the library.

--Valerie Bassett, September, 2015

*June 1986
Taking
down The
Goodman*





Trains in the Village 2015



Unloading the train



Raffle for the wooden train;
Finger Lakes Railroad Safety
at the Crossings, Clear
Springs publishing

Opposite
Enjoying the Model Railroad

Baggage Cart with streamer
trunk and milk can



October 2015 6



Thank you...

- to the Trustees of the Interlaken Historical Society for all of their work and support since **Trains in the Village** was proposed a year ago.
- to the Interlaken Volunteer Fire Department for the use of their field and buildings, and the preservation of the Pennsylvania & So-dus Bay rail-bed over all these years.
- to the people, organizations, and vendors who joined to make the event happen: Up-state Model Railroad Club, Steve Peck, Paul Shinal, Finger Lakes Railroad, Clear Springs Publishing, Route 96 Diner, Cayuga Lake Creamery, Silver Street Kettlecorn...
- to the volunteers who took the idea of a train and turned it into a real train for all to enjoy and took the train to parades to promote the train event
- to the historians past and present who saved the stories and artifacts of the community so they can be highlighted and not forgotten
- to our families and friends who have supported the Historical Society and its mission to share and educate others about events from our past
- **To Each of You** who attended, we hope you learned, enjoyed and will share with others. Please join us in 2016 as we will again celebrate our agrarian heritage with another Plowing Day and Country Fair.
- *On behalf of the Interlaken Historical Society*
Thank you each and everyone!



Library News

What's new at the Interlaken Public Library? Well, first of all...me! For those of you who haven't met me, my name is Sandy VanEtten and I am the new Director for the library. These past several months have been busy ones for me, but they have also been extremely enjoyable. I've had the opportunity to meet many of our patrons as well as learning their interests not only for books and other reading materials, but also for what new programs and services we could provide for members of our community in the future.

The past months have been busy ones for the library. Our annual book sale during Interlaken's Old Home Day was again a success and we thank everyone for their generous donations toward the purchases of our gently used books. Our parade float featuring Superman driving the tractor garnered many compliments and comments from young and old alike. Our Summer Reading program "Every Hero Has a Story" during the month of July was a great success, with participation for "Dan the Snake-man" garnering a library filled with youngsters and their parents. This program was funded by the Tompkins County Community Foundation. In August we offered two watercolor painting classes by local artist Norma Luther, this popular class was sponsored thru a grant from the Delevan Foundation. We hope to see many of you on Tuesday evening September 22 at 6 p.m. when we will be hosting a solar energy pro-

gram "What to Plug into the Sun" by local resident Tony DelPlato. I am currently in the process of setting up more events for the fall and winter months and would welcome suggestions for programs that you are interested in having us offer.

Plan a visit to the library soon and pick up one, or more, of our many new books, audio books and movies; cooler fall evenings are a great time to catch up on your reading. I am also in the process of ordering new books and would like suggestions of what you would like to see in our library. Don't have a library card? Stop in and sign up for one, they are free!

I hope to see you at the library soon, but in the meantime check out our new website and facebook page to see what is new at the library, as well as for information on upcoming programs and events.

Join Us Monday Mornings for Story Time at 10:00am!

The Interlaken Public Library is the place to be on Monday mornings! Children from birth to 5 years of age are enjoying stories, rhymes, songs, crafts and snacks from 10 AM - 11 AM each week.

History Unfolding 2015

On Sunday, September 20th a bit of history left Interlaken as the bright red rescue truck (known to many as IFD 541) left the fire house for the last time. For over three years the members of the Interlaken Fire Department have worked on gathering ideas, getting specifications and bids for their new Rescue Pumper. The bid for the new truck was awarded to Four Guys of Locke last Spring.



The new truck (IFD 504), has seating for five, storage for necessary equipment for both medical and rescue calls: jaws, lights, extra air bottles, EMS supplies and typical well as a 750 gallon water tank, and on-board pumps for those flooded basement calls, or when water is needed from a pond or the lake.

To assist the Village with the purchase, the members voted to trade 541 in (\$10,000 credit) and provided an additional \$50,000 towards the purchase. The Department noted their appreciation to the community for the support of their fund raising activities.

Congratulations to the officers and members, and the Village on the arrival of the new truck. As always, thank you for all your volunteers do within our communities.



Above: Mayor Bill Larsen, Chief Jim Borden and former Chief Dale Stannard.

Back row: Chris Percy, Bill McGuire (Village Fire Commissioner), Chief Jim Borden, Dale Stannard, Jim Mead
Front row: Karen and Dani Nelson, James Finch, Keith Jay, Ralph Bailey



The Brokaw Homestead Grampa and Gramma's House

I've been told that my grandfather's grandfather's grandfather lived in this very place. Many generation later, I am privileged to call the homestead my home. The original house burned down in 1870, but the "new house" was built on the same laid stone foundation. In the cellar and the attic, and all through the house are relics of all shapes and sizes, left by those who've gone before me. When I first moved here I found a little wooden recipe box on a kitchen shelf; when I opened it to see what was inside, the very first recipe, written in my dear grandmother's flowery script, was for the double layer white cake with coconut icing that she made for my birthday every year. It felt like she was smiling down on my move to this beloved place.

I remember Sunday dinners, holiday celebrations, and birthdays here, fires in the stone fireplace and stocking hanging from the mantel, and always wonderful things to eat. My Gramma sewed lovely thing for me to wear on her old treadle machine, and allowed us kids to decorate her molasses cookies with raisin faces. This was a place of love and nurturing and creativity. We made kites out of brown paper bags, and Christmas tree chains out of horse chestnuts with holes drilled in them. We heard family stories and acted out skits, "helped" in the kitchen, and sometimes got to ride on the tractor with Grampa. This place is a treasure trove of happy childhood memories.

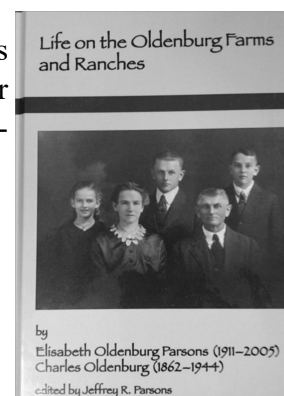
We got to know lots of Brokaw relatives and family friends here over the years; there were many visitors, all welcomed and well fed! We still have family reunions here in August every year. One newly discovered cousin wrote in the guest book in 2007... "so wonderful to meet you...in the homestead that brings our memories together!" Another cousin wrote, "We've been given a beautiful gift of family heritage, thanks for making it possible to get together where our ancestors did." I feel so lucky to live here, but the homestead is not really mine to own, I am just the keeper of keys for those who also hold memories of this place, and come back from time to time to make some more.

Grandpa was Herbert Brokaw (1897 - 1991), Gramma was Ruth Parish Brokaw (1901-1970).

Anne James 2015

A recent donation to the Historical Society about another local homestead and family, the Oldenburgs.

The Society welcomes manuscripts and other writings about our local families.



**INTERLAKEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
GIFT SHOP ORDER FORM**

_____	<i>The Seneca Army Depot</i> , Walter Gable & Carolyn Zogg	\$21.95
_____	<i>Seneca County in the Civil War</i> Walter Gable (Summer 2014).....	\$21.95
_____	<i>So Good A Time, Life in the 1870s as Documented in the Diary of Olive Williams 1873 to 1878</i> , 2010 Nancy Saultz Radloff Softcover.....	\$12.95
_____	<i>Historical Images of Interlaken</i> a coloring book based on historical photographs 12 full page drawings of historical buildings with descriptive text.	\$3.50
_____	<i>Town of Covert</i> , 1976 Wayne Morrison	Hardcover \$35.00*
_____		Softcover \$25.00*
_____	Index to the Interlaken and Ovid Newspapers 1822-1994	\$55.00*
_____	<i>The Covert Family</i> , 1989 Carl W. Fischer, Wm. V Covert	\$35.00*
_____	M. L. Patterson	
_____	<i>Between the Lakes</i> , 1976 Maurice L. Patterson	Hardcover \$25.00
_____		Softcover \$15.00
_____	<i>And Let My Memory Cherished Be</i> , Remembering the	\$18.00
_____	Families of the Old Covert Cemetery, Diane Bassette Nelson	
_____	<i>Interlaken Oral History: Life & Times of the Area</i>	\$10.00
_____	1900-1950 including the History of the Halstead Canning Co	
_____	<i>Descendants of Thomas Horton of Springfield</i>	\$35.00
_____	<i>& Descendants of Phineus Pratt</i> , Carl W. Fischer	
_____	<i>Silas Halsey, Pioneer Settler of Lodi, N.Y., A Chronology of</i>	\$15.00
_____	<i>His Life and Times 1743 – 1832</i> , Alta E. Boyer	
_____	<i>The Diary of Herman T. Smith, 1884-1893</i>	\$10.00
_____	<i>The Geology of Seneca County</i> , John W. Wells	\$10.00
_____	<i>Landmarks of Seneca County</i> , Edith Delavan 2004	\$25.00

Order total _____

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Please add \$8.00 if your order total is \$25 to \$49
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PO Box 270, Interlaken NY 14847
DUES are due beginning July 1, Still only \$10 a year!

Interlaken Historical Society
PO Box 270
Interlaken, NY 14847-0270

www.InterlakenHistory.org

Mark your calendar

Monday, October 26 7:00 pm
Lehigh Valley Railroad with Dan Armitage
8396 Main St, 2nd Floor

For more information on these events
contact 607-280-2099

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