

# Between the Lakes

A Newsletter of the  
**Interlaken Historical Society**

Volume 45 No. 1 July 2019

[www.InterlakenHistory.org](http://www.InterlakenHistory.org)

Gary Hunt  
2019 Citizen of  
the Year

More Olde Home  
Day photos on  
page 4



## 12th Annual Society Social Sunday, July 21, 2019 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

The trustees of the Interlaken Historical Society would like to invite the community to join us on Sunday, July 29th for our 11th annual Old Fashioned Social. This dish-to-pass event will be held on the Interlaken Public Library front lawn.

The Historical Society, and other community organizations, will provide the grilled hot dogs with rolls and fixings, lemonade and ice tea and of course ice cream and toppings for dessert. The ice cream comes from Trimmers, so you don't want to miss this opportunity to build your own sundae.

Serving starts at 4 pm and we usually wind down around 6 pm so arrive when you can and enjoy a time of good food and fellowship. The museums will be open.

In case of rain we will move indoors. For more information, please contact the society at 607-592-3224.



Interlaken, and really all of Seneca County and the whole Finger Lakes region, has long been a stronghold for upstate New York dairy farms. With several dairy farms around the Interlaken community, for many years Cronks helped those local dairy farmers bring their milk to market.

Cronks had a milk processing plant that included cottage cheese packaging. However, it had much more than that. It also offered International truck sales and service as well as a Greyhound bus stop. It featured a soda fountain with ice cream and dining and banquet facilities. There was also Minor's hardware store at the corner of Main and Cayuga streets.

Mr. Cronk bought Brook Farm from the Ushers around 1950, and Howard and Helen Bassett rented the land to farm.

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### President's Report

Greetings from a beautiful late spring day. As I write this at the Farmers Museum on Olde Home Days, the sun is bright and temperature very comfortable. A pleasant change from a late, wet, cold spring.

My first item to share is an apology to the Buddle family. I got my facts out of line; Alan worked for years with the Dept. of DEC with flood control design and hydro hydraulics. Sorry for the mistake, and we are missing Alan.

Our April program meeting with Tim Mullen was well attended. It was interesting to hear about the conditions (below zero) they worked in the summer season to prepare for the coming winter. Tim made two round trips to the South Pole from base - a thousand-mile trek with a fleet of rubber tracked tractors towing fuel totes. Thanks again, Tim.

Olde Home Days was well attended. We filled 3 pages in the guest book, took lots of questions about our displays, and many people asked what a grain cradle was.

By the way, the air conditioners have been replaced by the phone company, so the Community Life Museum is a comfortable place to be. Also, we need docents for Saturdays in July and August. If interested in volunteering or observing, contact Gary Hunt at 607 279-4667.

Trust you all have a great summer. See you at the Summer Social, July 21<sup>st</sup>!!

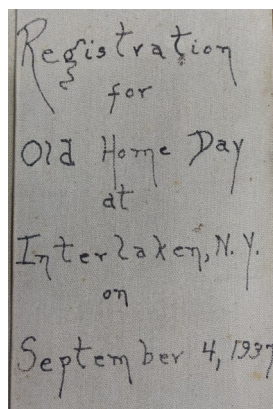
*John Hunt*  
*Chairman*

### New Life Members

Denice & David Button, Canton, NY

### Sneek Peak at the Displays

The Museums are open Saturdays in July and August 11 am to 2 pm or by appointment. This year the theme Celebrating Community Celebrations



Be sure to check in the 1937 Old Home Day registration and see how many names your recognize, or if your relative was there.

**Dues are due:** please check the date on your mailing label. Dues for 2019-2020 are now due. If your label has a date prior to 2019 please consider bringing your membership up to date. If you feel there this an error in the date shown, please contact the society.

Cronk's Dairy continued from page 1

Cronk built buildings on the south side of Lively Run for his business. Chester, a man who worked for Cronks, had geese in the barnyard and would bring leftover vegetables to feed them. The deep well pump used to blow fuses, so pennies were used instead, which melted them.

Several local people remember working at Cronks as well as spending time there. Jayne Thompson worked with Mrs. Cronk and learned the proper way to butter bread. Ed Compton worked the ice cream stand in the summer, and things got really busy when the Greyhound bus pulled in. Sandy Reynolds recalled the soda fountain being a teen hangout after school and sports games. On December 29, 1956, the dining room hosted its first wedding reception for Wanda Beardslee Flood. Various wedding receptions were held in the dining room.

Duane Waid helped out with the advertising for the business, and Jim Close played the piano inside the dining room. Pearl Grant and another waitress, Hazel Dew, would get a five-cent tip for a cup of coffee from a schoolteacher customer and they would swap back and forth for the tip. Roberta Ward worked at the soda fountain and was instructed not to be out front when busloads of Air Force recruits would stop in. Stanley Brown was a mechanic for the International truck sales.

The local dairymen would bring the ten

-gallon milk cans to the south side of the plant, where the milk was pasteurized and cottage cheese cultured. Roger Ward worked with the manufacturing of the cottage cheese. Two or three trucks would take glass-bottled milk, cottage cheese in cardboard containers, eggs, and ice cream for delivery to Interlaken, Trumansburg, Lodi, and Romulus. Later, the route expanded to include Sheldrake and Kidders. Residential deliveries were made to a metal box on peoples' porches. They exchanged full bottles for empties. Bills and coupons were left in the metal boxes. Deliveries were made even when payments were owed. It was said that Cronk had a kind heart for people in need. Some debts never got paid.

Cronk died in the 1960s from major health problems. We are thankful for his many endeavors that enriched our community.



Research by: John Hunt  
Written by: Jonathan Monfiletto  
Edited by: Kim Monfiletto and Grace Hunt  
*Thank you to all the Hunt Family members.*

## Gary Hunt 2019 Citizen of the Year

The Interlaken Community Action Group is proud to have Gary Hunt as our 2019 Citizen of the Year.

Gary served for many years as a member of the Town of Covert Board, both while a village resident and after he moved to his tree farm.

Gary served on the Library board for many years. Do you remember the Green Hulk driving the tractor pulling the library float for Old Home Day a few years ago?

Gary is currently the longest serving member of the Lake View Cemetery Board, and the newest member of the Interlaken Historical Society Board of Trustees. He has volunteered for many of the activities of both groups over the years.

He has been very active with the South Seneca Falcon Players, working closely with directors and students to build the sets.

Gary has assisted the fire department in recent years with their annual Christmas Tree Sale, and since retirement has been active with Interlaken Community Action Group events.

Thank you, Gary for all the community involvement over the years.

It is these many activities as well as your ready smile and wit that makes us pleased to name you the 2019 Citizen of the Year.

## Olde Home Day 2019

Photos by Grace Hunt and used by permission.  
Thank you Grace.



## **My memories of Cronks Dairy Plant**

By Naomi Craft Brewer

My father, Carl Craft of Sheldrake worked as a carpenter in building The Seneca Ordnance Depot. This was early 1940s and when that job was finished, he went to work for Leslie Cronk driving the milk delivery trucks. He delivered in Sheldrake, Kidders, Interlaken and Lodi at one time or another.

Mr. Cronk had bought land at the north end of the village of Interlaken. He and wife, Beulah, bought and lived in the house across the road (Route 96). That house was a tavern and Post Office in the early days before it became a residence. And that was where they lived.

At the front of the dairy plant was an office then a long room with a counter and equipment for a restaurant. These were the years of Sampson Naval Base, then Sampson Air Force Base. The Greyhound Bus traveled through and made their stop at Cronks. It made for a busy place with travelers all wanting something to eat in a hurry and lines for the restrooms.

In the north end of the building was the dining room. It was very nice and many banquets were held there. Showers for weddings and Babies and Graduates and more. A cook and waitresses.

Among the other employees was Stanley

Brown who was the mechanic and other drivers who delivered milk, cream and cottage cheese to Ovid and Romulus. There may have been other areas that I have forgotten.

There was Hobart (Hobby) Stapleton who was Mr Cronk's handyman. He ran errands and helped look after Mrs. Cronk who wasn't well. There was also a lady who came to live with them and take care of Mrs. Cronk who had suffered a stroke.

Carl Craft was promoted to manager of the milk plant. One could go in and sit at the counter and look through a big long window and watch how they processed the milk that farmers brought there. Many times he caught me sitting at the counter having a milkshake!

The Cronks had no children but I remember he had an Uncle Myron from Trumansburg who came to visit at the plant.

Mr. and Mrs. Cronk were good friends of my Father and Mother and we had good times with them. Early in 1959 Carl Craft had a heart attack and passed away. Not long after that Leslie Cronk passed away.

Lots of good memories and workers there. I, by then I was working as a Telephone operator. The office was on Main Street, across from the Bank.

That's another story

### **Library News**

Summer is bustling at the Interlaken Public Library! Our summer reading program has begun and will continue thru August 31, 2019. If you haven't done so already, stop into the library and fill out our short enrollment form. Enrollment is quick and easy and most importantly - shows you are using your library! As an added bonus, every time you check an item out of the library now thru the end of August, you'll be entered to win a prize.

There are loads of programs and activities happening at the library every week. We have special presenters for adult and teen programs, as well as our regularly scheduled weekly programs like Monday Storytime and Chair Yoga. Monthly Kids Krafts activities are hands-on, free, and require no enrollment. Monthly family nights are for all ages, are free and require no enrollment, just drop in! Friday, July 12<sup>th</sup> and Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup> will see more movies on the Elementary School lawn. These are great family fun and free popcorn is provided. Bring a blanket and a friend for the 9pm showing. Details for all of our upcoming programs can be found on our website – [www.interlakenpubliclibrary.org](http://www.interlakenpubliclibrary.org).

Chelsea Hastings  
Interlaken Library Director  
607-532-4341



Thank you to everyone who stopped in for the book sale and all the volunteers who helped throughout the day.

### **Library Hours**

Effective April 1, 2017  
Monday & Wednesday 9 am to 1 pm  
Tuesday & Thursday 1 pm to 7 pm  
Saturday 9 am to noon

**INTERLAKEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
GIFT SHOP ORDER FORM**

<i>Covert Memories 1950-2015</i> , Interlaken Historical Society .....	\$12.50	_____
<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 .....	Softcover \$25.00*	_____
.....	Hardcover \$35.00*	_____
<i>Index to the Interlaken and Ovid Newspapers 1822-1994</i> .....	\$55.00*	_____
<i>The Covert Family</i> , 1989 C W. Fischer, Wm. V Covert, M. L. Patterson...	\$35.00*	_____
<i>Between the Lakes</i> , 1976 Maurice L. Patterson .....	Hardcover \$25.00	_____
.....	Softcover \$15.00	_____
<i>And Let My Memory Cherished Be, Remembering the Families of the Old Covert Cemetery</i> , 2006, Diane Bassette Nelson.....	\$18.00	_____
<i>Interlaken Oral History: Life &amp; Times of the Area 1900-1950</i> including the History of the Halstead Canning Co .....	\$10.00	_____
<i>The Diary of Herman T. Smith, 1884-1893</i> .....	\$10.00	_____
<i>Descendants of Thomas Horton of Springfield &amp; Descendants of Phineus Pratt, Carl W. Fischer</i> .....	\$35.00	_____
<i>Silas Halsey, Pioneer Settler of Lodi, N.Y., A Chronology of His Life and Times 1743 – 1832</i> , Alta E. Boyer.....	\$15.00	_____
<i>The Geology of Seneca County</i> , John W. Wells .....	\$10.00	_____
Order total		_____

Postage and Handling: Please add \$13.00 if your order total is over \$50  
Please add \$8.50 if your order total is \$25 to \$50  
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*Please Mail Order Form or DUES to:* INTERLAKEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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

For more information on these events  
contact 607-592-3224

**Summer Social** Sunday, July 21st 4 to 6  
pm on the library lawn

**Museums** are open Saturdays 11 to 2 and  
by appointment.

*All events are free and open to the public*

\* \* \* \* \*

**2019 Interlaken Fire Department Car Show,**  
Sunday, August 11th at the Firemen's Field,  
Knight and Mechanic. Contact Chief Jim Bor-  
den (607-279-7198) for information on registra-  
tion and fee; gates open at 8. Bar-B-Q at noon.  
General admission still only \$2 per person.

**The Historical Society**  
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