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Lessons in an Old Mill

A tingling blush of freight
Seems always, these days,
To be running through and 'round.

Can we make it...what if...But...
I don't know. We just don't know
Freaking out.

But, there in a dark corner
Of this old grist mill
I can sit among these ancient tools.

In their midst I can feel a calming,
Like a strong arm around me.

They say that others have
Made it.
Others have.

AAS



The Flood of 2011

September 16, 2011:

This is the Flood of 2011, another historic happening. We'll try to document the occasion in the newsletter, for the sake of people down the years who want something to refer to.

This was the first days of school, September 8 and on, and the time of year when everything starts back up. It was also the time of the 10th anniversary of the 911 atrocity for which special plans had been made all around the area.

The level of the interruption to our daily lives is seen quickest by the list of cancellations. First there were pieces of paper taped to a church door or store and the ever on-going crawl across the bottom of the TV screen, and, then after a while it just went without saying.

The half day workshop for non-profits, on topics related to volunteerism was canceled – the Riverwalk Hotel was closed along with the roads to get there, and most of the presenters and the attendees had more important things to do.

The First Annual NVHS Golf Tournament to be held on the Amesless Golf course could not happen.

The Fall Festival at the Country Wagon in Maine had to be canceled.

The Sunday afternoon open days for the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society buildings have been discontinued for the rest of the fall season.

The September program meeting has been canceled.

The poinsettia sale fund raiser, that would have taken place in late fall, has been canceled. This is because of the flood losses at Nanticoke Gardens, our supplier.

The Broome Country Arts Council replaced their weekly e-news letter of arts happenings with a page saying they would not be able to put out a news letter that week.

The cellar of the museum building was full of water, and there were 6 feet of it in the boiler room at the old J. Ralph Ingalls school building, which has been undergoing repairs. Many houses had a few feet too. The volunteer firemen are pumping out what they can, along with days of guarding dangerous intersections and cave-ins, and assisting people fleeing their homes.

School systems have had more “snow days” already, than they have planned-in for the year. They all had a variety of problems, ranging from actual water damage to the boxes of books, ready to be distributed the next day, to roads made unsafe to carry buses. Even the local colleges were crippled by the inability of people to get to them, but all that freed up many able bodied young people to do a tremendous amount of invaluable hard work.

The Cat Doctor in Endicott had to evacuate their resident cats and over night surgical patients. And then it was necessary to close for a few days to mop up and clean, before seeing patients.

BAE Systems in Westover has moved out of those quarters and into a former IBM (Huron) building in Endicott, because of it's flooding.

Many dental and doctor offices have moved into different quarters, either temporarily or permanently

Churches which have been damaged badly have moved in with another congregation or found some other temporary shelter. Those in good shape have become centers for the dispersal of cleaning supplies, drinking water, dry, clean clothes and a place to sit down. People with not so much damage are sorting through their own things for what ever might be a help to someone else. Who would have known of the camping lamps, and fishing waders and motor cycle rain suits just waiting for that day of need.

Addendum:

The Tioga County Historical Museum had five feet of water in its lower level, soaking many important items of local history and genealogy.

The Washingtonian Hall on River Road in Endwell had 27 inches of water on the first floor. Erected in 1799 by Amos and Ann Patterson the building was an inn, a stage stop, and a Temperance Inn during its early days. In 1995 Washingtonian Hall was added to the National Register of Historic Places, despite the moving of the home from another part of the property, when Rt 17 was built.

The old store in Tioga Center was damaged by the flood of 2006, after water a foot deep filled the first floor. This time there was six feet of water in the building, and serious structural damage. It has been one kind of a store or another for more than 160 years.

Thank You's

Thanks to people who have provided goods and services to the Historical Society and museums over the summer. And thank you also to all who have or will be doing what they can to catch the problems arising from the floods, and addressing them, before they become unfixable. That will be a long term project.

Clark Gardner gave us a generous donation towards the scanner and computer items that are now being used in the putting together of the book and will be used in the reforming of the archives. We still need \$450.00 toward those materials and will very happily accept any contributions.

Sally and Ron Meyers, of Maine, have given us five diaries of George Dudley. The dates on the diaries are 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1919. They are also giving us the records from the Curtis store, owned by Asa Curtis, which once stood at the corner of Rt. 26 and McGreger on what is now part of the Lisk property. It burned down on Dec. 6 of 1905.

In Shirley Woodward's green history book we read:

Early that morning Mr. Curtis had gone to the store to build the fire as usual. When he opened the door going into the feed and oil room, the lamp exploded, setting the whole room on fire. The fire took hold so quickly that Mr. Curtis had only time to secure some valuable papers and money. Help was summoned by church bells and telephone, with people coming three and four miles from town. The volunteer firemen gathered as many buckets as possible and through heroic efforts were able to save the nearby homes and stores. Had there been a fire company in town, possibly the Curtis Store could have been saved too."

"This store was also the Central for both the Bell and York State telephone companies. The building valued at

\$2,500.00 was only insured for \$600.00.” Sue Lisk wonders if it was Mary Delano who sold him that insurance policy, as she had read in Mary Delano’s diary that she did sell him some insurance.

The quilt pieces done for a Susquecentennial Quilt, in 1996, were put together this summer by Irene Sepalak. She donated her talent and time to do this much appreciated project.

Carla Sullivan tells us that we can now be as proud of the appearance and condition of the out house as of the rest of our museums, Thanks to Tomas Meschter, Tom Kostack, and the Meschter family. Tomas Meschter spearheaded the resurrection of the Out House as part of the requirements of an Eagle Scout project. (Tomas’s name is pronounced toe-mas, it is spelled with no H)

Lil Ames just donated a sign from the collection on her barn. It is the Nanticoke Valley Grange sign. According to the green book compiled by Shirley Woodward, the grange began in this area with the creation of Union Center Grange No. 1153, in 1908. After a number of changes, it moved to Maine and became the Nanticoke Valley Grange, in 1940.

Lil and Clarence have donated many items over the years. Thank You!



Things Coming Up

Tom Kotasek says that the water rising under the museum lifted the treads right off the stairs to the cellar and floated them around. He thinks that it would be real nice if someone would screw them down.

There will be a Trustee meeting on Sunday the 16th of Oct. at 3:00, at the museum.

The regular October meeting is a go. The program will be the history of our local American Legion. It will be Monday, October 17, at the museum. The report of the nominating committee will be presented. Dress warm.

Jimmy Dimitro has agreed to do a turkey dinner at his place, Friends’ Diner, on November 3. It will be eat in or take out, 5-7 PM. We’ll sell tickets ahead.

The November meeting, 3rd Monday – the 21st, will include the election of officers and a discussion of new fund raisers. Dress warm for this one too, though perhaps we’ll have a working furnace by then. The program will be a show and tell of objects and stories, so be thinking about what you can talk about.

Clothing and hot food and cleaning supplies continue to be given away at many churches and other sites. You are what it is for. Do not feel funny about taking what you can use. The hardest thing for anyone working one of those give-aways is having a slow day with nothing to do but wait. They would be much happier helping you find what you need.

It will be getting colder, and cellars will still be damp.....go get some warm stuff!!

Places and Things

A lovely place for a quiet stroll with a baby stroller or dog or wheeled walker, a month ago, was the river walk in Owego. It had been certainly open and finished to the point of having many places to sit and even a pooper bag dispenser, for any dog who “didn’t go before he left home”. We do not have up to date information since the flood. It is a good place to check on. It passes under the bridge and comes up at the little park with the big rock on it, on one end, and on the other across from the Parkview Restaurant, where there was always a tiny park with bench.

I've run into several books by local authors just lately that are wonderful. Just read is “a Binghamton NY Novella,” according to its cover. *Mystery on South Mountain* is a short novel in paper binding that could easily go to camp in somebody's pocket, and it would fulfill all the requirements of rainy day occupation and for scaring the bejeebers out of anyone needing that. I was part way into it when I woke up in the night and thought I'd read a few more pages. I didn't lay it down until the story was finished and the rest of the house was up.

There is a lot of 50s local information that all comes back to the reader, when it shows up in the story, and references to earlier happenings that would interest any reader but really catches the eye of any historically inclined. I started out skeptical. 25 pages in I was pleased to keep reading, and soon couldn't put it down. At one point I decided I wouldn't be recommending it to the squeamish, but by the last page I was grinning with delight at the masterful twists and turns. It didn't turn out exactly like I thought it would!

It is published by "Front Street Press a unique publishing house" in Owego. Mine came from the River Row Book Store in Owego at \$12.00

Ann Lewis passes on this information. “Google Map is a terrific tool for navigation. It’s also fun to look at the satellite photos. You can get up to date information on how an area looks. Take a look at the satellite view of our flooded landscape.

What if you don't want the current information, though? It might be fun to see what an area looked like decades ago. You can remember how things were when you were growing up. That's where **www.historypin.com** comes in handy. It lets you view old photographs by geographic region. The photos are overlaid on the map using **street view**. It's like a window to the past.

Of course the site isn't complete. There are already over 50,000 photos. But that's a drop in the bucket. Why not add your own photos? You just need a Google Account to join. Upload old pictures of your hometown. Maybe you have some interesting old shots of famous landmarks. You can even post stories about the pictures you add. Adding new content makes the site more interesting for everyone.”

The mourning wreathes hanging on the Museum buildings are in memory of Paul Reike. He was a member of the historical society who had attended a one room school himself, and he was one of the people who helped visitors to the one room school learn about them.

Report on the buildings and special people of the Historical Society:

The mill of course was designed to have water running underneath, but nothing like this. If it was still sporting the water wheel and applied all the regulating gates and flumes, it would have been, none the less, in a catastrophic situation. The miller would probably have done what many affected businesses seem to be doing in our time – walked away.

No wheel to bust, no dams to go out, the old mill didn't fare too bad. As it was, under the mill was fast flowing water that broke windows and shifted amazingly heavy things. Chris Underwood gathered a bunch of other rugged young fellows and following Tom Kotasek's guidance, hauled away sodden silt, moved things back where they had been and tidied the place to a recognizable state. They'd like to power wash some of the rest off, before it dries in too much, but though they have access to a power washer, they don't have access to water there. As hard as it is to believe anyone would be short of water, they'll have to haul it in some how.

The museum building had no problem with the electrical box, as it is behind the Men's Exhibit on the main floor. The cellar was however filled with mud and water within a couple of inches of the first floor joists. Had it got much higher we would have certainly suffered much damage to displays. Tom has hauled out boiler, pump and water heater in hopes of salvaging some. Though this was not the horrible sludge coming out of the river, it is a lot of mud. And it is still there. There is a great need for cleaners. Though the cellar stairs we are most familiar with are the indoor ones, there is a bulkhead on the back of the building leading down concrete steps. That would make clearing muck out more feasible. One whole window is still missing – perhaps under the muck.

Volunteer Firemen from here and from all over the state were around pumping out cellars, including the museum's. And of course there were sanitation supplies brought in and just handed out to all needing them. Some of them were saying people had come to help when they needed it, so....., and others came just because we needed it.

The wagon factory buildings suffered a little damage.

Contact Tom Kotasek to see what you can do, but call after dark, because until then he is probably over to his brother's house on Old Vestal Road, where they are having to strip everything down to the studs.

Mike McKilligan says there was 6 feet of water in the boiler room of the old J. Ralph Ingalls School, but not everywhere.

The sturdy little one room school with no cellar and no electricity had little to be hurt.

The Board of Trustees for the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

- Each voting board position has a three year term. Three board positions are to be refilled each year, providing an ever changing but on-going board coverage.
- Board Members Nancy Berry, Betty Welch, and Sue Hoskins will serve through 2011.
- Board members Stan Lisk, Yancy Moore, and Diane Chianis will serve through 2012.
- Board members Chris Underwood, Janice McKittrick, and Pat Krzyzewski will serve through 2013.

Officers

President: Sandy Rozek
 Vice President: Alice Hopkins
 Secretary: Carla Sullivan
 Treasurer: Sandy Halliday

2011 Dues Are now due.

Check the address label to verify that your dues are up to date.

Please use the dues return slip below. On the top of your address label is printed your dues Paid/Due status for years 2009 and 2010. Your dues may either be mailed to the Treasurer at the address on the Slip or given to the Treasurer at meetings (in an envelope with your name on it and the dues slip enclosed). **Please note that the dues have increased effective January 2009.**

2011 Committees	
Membership	Dottie Winans, Sandy Halliday
Finance	Dottie Winans, Sandy Halliday
Buildings & Grounds	Tom Kotasek, Stan Lisk
Ways & Means	Nancy Berry, Todd Rose, Sue Lisk
Curator - Museum & School-house #4	Sue Lisk
Curator - Mill & Norton Wagon Shops	Tom Kotasek
Education	Sandy Rozek
By-Laws	Sandy Rozek, Charles Hathorn, Anita Shipway
Video / Audio	Betty and Leo Welch
Town Historian	Nancy Rutkowski
Endowment	Carla Sullivan, Mike McKilligan, Henry Barnaby, Dottie Winans
Special Projects	Stan Lisk, Nancy Berry
Newsletter Editors	Anita & Dick Shipway

Dues Return Slip - Please Circle Year(s): 2010 2011



Note: See address label for your Dues Status.

Please mail returns to: Nanticoke Valley Historical Society
 Attn: Treasurer
 P. O Box 75
 Maine, New York 13802

Is this name or address a change from your address label?
 Yes ___ No ___

Name: _____

Amount Enclosed

Street Address: _____

\$ _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Dues: \$15.00 Single \$20.00 Family \$50.00 Patron \$100.00 Business

Watch for:

Samples of a new sweat shirt we'll be selling should be available at the next two meetings. Something new and unique! Kim Hayden is developing the design.

The next musical will be December 11th. This one will be a variety show, and they want anyone interested in participating, either with a group or as a soloist, to call Nancy Berry (862-4527) or Hilary Squier (239-87020. It will be in memory of Carol Sienko, with proceeds being divided between the Historical Society and Wide Horizons Nursery School.

Note: The "Country Wagon Produce" has reopened as of Wednesday, September 28th.

Fall 2011 Newsletter

**NANTICOKE VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
PO Box 75
Maine, NY 13802

