

Spafford Area Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Volume 16, No. Q1 (Issue 157)

January/February/March 2008

PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL *By Lauri Clark*

Well! 2007 was a very busy year for SAHS. I would like to thank all the people who helped us get through the year and finish Phase One of Restoration.

First of all, Vic Sayko for his work as Chairman of the Restoration Committee. I don't think anyone realizes how much time Vic put into this project in 2006-2007. Without him, it wouldn't have happened. We also thank his family for sharing Vic with us.

Second, we want to thank Carol & Peter Payntar, Marilyn & Walter Hannig and Deb Sawtell for sharing their beautiful homes for The Holiday House Tour, Liz Rogalia and Marge Myers for decorating and making Borodino Hall festive for the season, Johanna Frittelli for her Wassail and Ginger Bread cookies for Holiday House, Sandra Weigel and Mary Bean and all the other volunteers for that special time of the year.

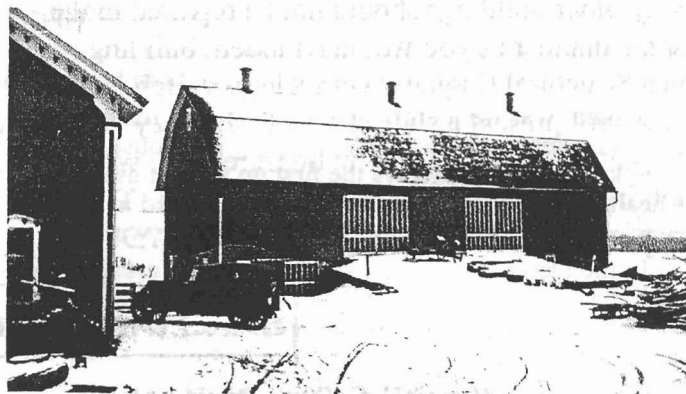
Of course, the successful "Stars Over Skaneateles Lake/Dinner Dance" wouldn't have been possible without Anne and Charlie McElroy's generous offer of their home to host it. In addition, we want to recognize Joyce Barnett and Ted Lavery for their Grant writing expertise, Anne McElroy for being Chair of the Events Committee and doing a superior job, Gloria Woolson and all her volunteer teachers for keeping our educational Living History Program going, Mary Lou Osborne and her crew for keeping the Side Hill School house clean, the refreshment volunteers for providing the goodies for all our meetings and the buildings and grounds committee for keeping our properties in tip top shape.

A special thank you to Frank Moran for trimming our trees and brush as part of his remarkable restoration of the Harris House next door. Thank you to all the folks who stepped up to the plate when asked to help with an event or other project; to Mary Bean for being the Chairman of the Board for 2007; and don't forget the GIRO Bike Race volunteers who helped bring in \$3,000 toward the School Bell Tower repairs.

We also appreciate the efforts of the Town Fathers who provided a solution to our septic system problem plus an area for handicapped accessible parking.

And probably most important, all the wonderful Foundations and Individual Donors who contributed financially to our successful Restoration Projects at Borodino Hall and the Side Hill School House.

We also want to thank Franklin Couch for successfully guiding us through the maze of architectural and contractual requirements related to our Federal Grant through Onondaga County Community Development



This month's Historical Photograph is from 1922. A winter scene of the barns and yard of Hoyt Ackles farm on Rose Hill Road. Photo courtesy of Homer & Ida Ackles, from SAHS Archives. -E. Rogalia-

and the Town of Spafford. Incidentally, Frank has retired from his practice and the Board has voted to retain Crawford and Stearns as our Restoration Architects for the duration of the Borodino Hall project.

2008 will be another very busy year for SAHS. Our prime concerns are insulating Borodino Hall to substantially reduce our heating costs, rebuilding the back wall, adding outdoor lighting improvements, completion of the drainage system to protect the foundations. Kitchen improvements and lower floor repair are on the list after masonry work on our foundations. A motorized handicapped transport to the main floor that fits in with our historic building status will be a real challenge to our Restoration Architects.

COMING PROGRAMS

March 12th: Richard Applebaum, P.E.

"Historic Masonry & Portland Cement don't mix!"

April 9th: Isabel Wolseley Torrey "Things that have happened in my lifetime...How I've coped in the computer age when my mind is still in the typewriter era"

May thru November will be listed as scheduled. They are on the second Wednesday of the month

COMING EVENTS

- GIRO Bike Race - June 28th
 - Harp Concert - July
 - Field Trip to Rose Hill Mansion near Geneva.
 - Craft Fair and Bake Sale
 - Holiday House and Christmas at Borodino Hall
- We are looking for three houses for this event
Call Liz Rogalia 685-7122 for details.

We are also working on other events so get your dues updated so we can keep you informed. -Lauri Clark-

I remember Aunt Rosie...

By
Edwin W. Lukens

When I came into the world, Aunt Rosie was there, for I was born in grandmother's house, with its white columns and sharp-peaked roof, situated on the crown of a hill over a sweep of rolling fields and wooded hillsides.

Aunt Rosie, my great, great aunt, lived with grandmother for almost 40 years. But, the distance being less than a mile to our home, she lived at the heart of both households.

Mother was frequently bedridden and on many occasions Aunt Rosie took over, keeping our house on an even keel. She was always the first up to start us off with a healthy breakfast and a warm smile. Housed in her hazel eyes was a constant gleam reflecting the fire within.

In the Depression years, she lifted spirits creating culinary magic, seemingly out of the air. Also, there were little treats that originated in her change purse. Her income was derived from small gifts tendered by relatives. Mother tried to convince her to spend the money on her own needs, but was told, "I will spend it as I see fit." She smiled but mother knew she meant it, so her unselfish acts continued.

Aunt Rosie was a thread over 5 feet - thin, wiry and only 88 pounds. Her back was hunched with a permanent set, yet she carried great pride and dignity.

How she remained so kind and cheerful over the years is still a mystery to me. It was more surprising, considering her early life. At the age of 12, she was working long hours six days a week in a factory; a better name would be "sweat shop." She tried marriage, but her husband entered into the world of the bottle and wandered off. There were no children. Possibly that is why she loved children all the more.

Many years passed before Aunt Rosie joined grandmother in a small town in New Jersey, soon after her husband died. My mother and her younger sister and brother were still small. It was years before grandmother married again, and during that time

Aunt Rosie's artistry with the needle created most of the clothing. She also cooked for the family and several boarders. The attic of the large wood frame house was fixed to accommodate the children, and boarders had most of the five upstairs bedrooms.

She never told me of the heartbreak in her earlier years. When I did hear, it came from mother. We were living in upstate New York then. I was in my teens, and Aunt Rosie was near the end of her days. As I looked back, my admiration grew. She believed life was wonderful and lived it that way, immersed in others, enjoying every moment and attacking each task with an evenness of performance.

When my brother and I had petty differences or hurts to heal, she responded quickly and we were the better for it. A very special understanding was hers. Discipline was tendered with warmth. You soon realized that to disobey Aunt Rosie only shamed yourself. Usually, her crooked forefinger shaking in your face and a "We shan't do that again" was enough.

Many times, she said to me, "Even in you there is some good. I am not sure what it is, but we will find it." Then, she would smile, place a hand on my head and muss up my hair.

Another statement often directed to me was: "You are full of the devil, boy, but I am going to see to it that you come out all right." Sometimes, I think that was the only task she undertook that failed.

One day, with the housework done at grandmother's, she struck out for our house. Directly in the line of flight was a reservoir. It had a sidewalk around the top and a steep, high terrace that had to be surmounted.

On arriving, I was astounded to see her drop on all fours. I offered help, but to no avail. She scrambled up and stood at the top, triumphant. Her body seemed to straighten, and she looked all the more imposing, with her abundant white hair piled high on her head. She was 91 at the time, and what an independent lady. I asked why, with all the cooking and housework at grandmother's, she came to help us. I am not certain I understood her answer then, but I do now.

"Well," she said, "I don't have much money, a little change in my purse, no trinkets of value, but I am rich in people to do things for."

She was grateful for a roof over her head, a warm bed, meals and friends.

Deeply etched in my mind is a story told me one beautiful summer day, while we sat on the roadside bank in front of grandmother's house, the breeze rustling leaves of the giant maple above us. It was of Abraham Lincoln. In her youth she heard him speak, and when he finished she had pressed forward and conversed with him. I thought of the history encompassed in her years and how young the country was. Aunt Rosie spoke to Abraham Lincoln. . . and I to her.

Like most youngsters, I had restless periods when body and soul were not occupied. If Aunt Rosie figured she could spare the time, we went on safaris, as she called them, little sojourn to the field across the way, or beyond to a pond in the fold of the hills, where cattails nodded and water spiders skittered on the surface. She also lectured on the development of the frog, pointing out with a stick the various stages from egg through tadpole to maturity.

In her 94th year, Aunt Rosie passed on. She was doing what she had always done, helping with the tasks of the day. She started for the cellar, tripped on her long skirt and fell headlong down the stairs, breaking several ribs and her collarbone.

I do not remember her going to church during my time. The household got religion while she took care of it. Aunt Rosie's religion was a permanent affair, constant as her reading of the Bible - daily. If there is a heaven and hell, Aunt Rosie is not sweating unless she is doing some work for the Lord.

In my mind's eye, I see her once again, a little white-haired pixie with smiling countenance and dancing eyes, peeking over gold-rimmed glasses. I remember her for what is honest, unselfish, kind - for all that is bright, cheerful, yes, good in the world.

When she died, a little light departed from my days...

oOo

Edwin W. Lukens, a long time SAHS member, is a retired schoolteacher in Onondaga County schools, has lived most of his life in Syracuse and writes for personal enjoyment.

March 12, 2008 Program

Anne McElroy has been busy rounding up some very interesting people for our monthly programs.

The first is Richard Applebaum P.E. who will talk to us on March 12 about the problems involved with the repair & restoration of "Historic Masonry" and why older buildings should not be repaired in the same manner as you would a modern building. Rich is a Structural Engineer with Klepper, Hahn & Hyatt who will present a slide show of what they have done to preserve various historic treasures. He will also be talking about wood and timber buildings. The meeting will be at the Spafford Town Hall at 7:30 P.M.

April 9, 2008 Program

Anne has convinced the delightful local newspaper columnist Isabel Wolseley Torrey to visit with us and tell us all about the "things that have happened in her life" which she must consider "historical"... We are most interested in her suggestions on how to cope in the computer age with a mind that is still in the typewriter era. (That shoe sure fits...) She even threatens to give out a test at the end of the session to see who has been listening and who remembers what...

You really don't want to miss this one.

(Location to be announced) *Philip B. Clark*

SAHS Officers and Trustees for 2008

(Lauri) E. C. Clark, President (2008)
315-636-8300 pbclark@syr.edu

Joyce Barnett, Past President (2007)
315-685-0125 joyce@allthebarnetts.net

Anne McElroy, Vice President (2009)
315-673-2558 anne.mcelroy@adelphia.net

Cheryl Maier, Treasurer (2011)
315-636-9504 wmaier1@peoplepc.com

Ted Lavery, Recording Secretary (2010)
315-673-4735 lavtrav@aol.com

Johanna Frittelli, Corresponding Secretary (2009)
315-673-4996 gfritt@alltel.net

Victor Sayko, 3-year Trustee (2008)
315-673-4636 (work) thevsgroup@alltel.net

Elizabeth Rogalia, 3 year Trustee (2010)
+Board Chair
315-685-7122

Philip B. Clark, 3 year Trustee (2010)
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Mary Lou Osborne, 2 year Trustee (2009)
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Phyllis Clark, 1-year Trustee (2008)
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Suanne Hopkins, 1-year Trustee (2008)
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Frank Moran, 1-year Trustee (2008)
315-673-3916

Marge Myers, 1-year Trustee (2008)
607-749-6739 myersdpm@juno.com

Peter Payntar, 1-year Trustee (2008)
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Sal Strods, Jr., 1-year Trustee (2008)
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Sandra Weigel, 1-year Trustee (2008)
315-636-9511 sdweigel@dishmail.net

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Spafford Area Historical Society
Mark: DUES or DONATION
P. O. Box 250
Marietta, NY 13110-0250

.....Individual.....\$ 10.00
.....Senior (60 or more)..6.00
.....Youth (18 or less)....6.00
.....Family.....20.00
.....Patron.....50.00
.....Sustaining.....100.00
.....**Donation**.....\$ _____ ----->

- School Program
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name.....
Address.....
City.....
State/Zip.....
Telephone.....

Please indicate if you prefer your donation be used to support a specific program. Thank you.

Membership Dues are payable by March 31, 2008

NEXT MEETING

March 12, 2008 @ 7:30 P.M.

**Spafford Town Hall
1984 Rose Hill Road
Borodino, NY**

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

April 9, 2008 @ 7:30 P.M.

Location to be announced

**Richard Applebaum, P.E.
Klepper, Hahn & Hyatt**

**“Historic Masonry & Portland Cement
Don’t Mix!”**

Isabel Wolseley Torrey

**"Things that have happened in my lifetime..."
"How I've coped in the computer age when
my mind is still in the typewriter era"**

Membership Dues are payable by March 31, 2008

This and back issues of the SAHS Newsletter can be found at:
<http://borodinobullett.com/SAHS/newsletter.htm>