

# MEDINA BUGLE

A Publication of the Medina Historical Society

June 2009

## President's Message

Greetings all! As you know, the Museum is now open to the public, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, on the first and third Sundays of the month, June to October. We are in need of volunteers for several of these dates. It's a very restful afternoon and a great excuse for avoiding lawn mowing or a dreaded social engagement! Please contact me at 798-5145 and I will be happy to oblige.

Please remember the Museum if you have out-of-town visitors. Or just stop by, there's such a wealth of treasures, you are sure to discover something new.

We hope you will be able to join us at the Museum on August 8<sup>th</sup> for the Medina Canal Heritage event. Bill Lattin will lead another walking tour of Medina. A host of activities are being planned to celebrate this joint venture.

Several other events are in the planning stages....a ghostly lantern walk through the village around Halloween, another Tour of Homes in December. Come to the monthly meetings for additional details!

In the meantime, have a safe and happy summer.

Catherine

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THE BERGER'S

BRING A DISH TO PASS

## Old Home Visitors, 1906 By Catherine Cooper

A quiet Sunday afternoon volunteering at a Museum Open House gave me a delightful opportunity to delve into the past and also provided me with valuable details for family history research.

Several items on display pertain to the first Old Home event which was held August 19-25, 1906. Family and friends who had moved away were "cordially invited to renew your acquaintance with beautiful Medina and friends of other days".

This event was meticulously planned and hugely successful. There are two registers on display. The "A Register of Old Home Week" lists the names and addresses of those who were invited, or summoned "home". A separate column lists the name of the person who

requested the invitation. A "Register of Homecomers" was signed by the visitors. Many listed where they stayed. Both registers are invaluable sources of family information and fascinating to look through.

I could see that Mrs. M. Griffin (Maria Cooper) rounded up her clan – and that they came. She invited her brothers, Patrick and James from Rochester. Patrick came and stayed with his nephew John Cooper at our current home, 216 West Center. Patrick Cooper would then have been 72, and older brother of Michael Cooper, the family patriarch.

She invited her son and his wife, Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Griffin from Batavia. She also invited her daughter, Mrs. T.A. Kirby from Albion. They came and stayed with her at 237 West Center Street. It is so amazing to see family history and connections come to life through these registers. But additionally, the entries list street addresses, golden information for family researchers. We knew of the Batavia connection and here was an address – 109 Main St.! I also found street addresses for the Sutters in Chicago, another branch of the family.

One can imagine the excitement as all of these family members and friends came back to visit, the planning and preparations, picnics, parties and gatherings. A random page from the register yields guests from the following locales: Buffalo, Bowling Green, IL, Providence, RI, Chicago, IL, Lincoln, NE, and Fort Dodge, IA. The "old" Medina names leap from the pages: Acer, Newell, Downs, Shattuck. It seems that every street hosted visitors. Business was booming for the Hart Hotel and the Walsh House as many guests stayed at those establishments. And, no doubt business was booming for the local

stores as all of the visitors had to be fed. "Old Home Week" was a capital idea indeed!

### **Tidbits** **By Jack Wasnock**

The following information I found on the internet. No one claimed to write it.

How long have you lived in Orleans County? Too long, huh, and I bet you did not know all of this.

1. In 1937, resident Charlie Howard established a world famous Santa Claus School at his Albion farm house, the first school of its kind. He was considered the Dean of Santa Clause School with a worldwide reputation for turning out top-notch St. Nicks.

2. In 1953, resident Santa Claus, Charlie Howard opened a Christmas Park at his farmhouse in Albion. It remained a popular year round destination until it's closing in 1965. A grass roots effort to restore his legacy by collecting memorabilia is being done by a local "Elf".

3. Albion resident, Charlie Howard was the first nationally televised Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade Santa Claus and held that gig for 17 years.

4. In 19146, resident Santa Claus, Charlie Howard was the technical advisor for the original motion picture, "Miracle on 34th Street."

5. In 1860, Albion resident, Grace Bedell (1846-1936) wrote Abraham Lincoln suggesting he would look better with a beard. He responded and took her advice.

6. Journalist and former hostage, Terry Anderson grew up in Albion during the 1950's.

7. George Pullman (1831-1897), noted industrialist, was once a resident of Albion and later became the manufacturer of Pullman Railroad Cars. One of his local legacies is the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church in Albion, which he built in 1894 to honor his parents' memory.

8. Medina Sandstone was formed during the Silurian Period by streams depositing sand which solidified under pressure from water and increasing sand.

9. Medina Sandstone was shipped via the Erie Canal in the 1800's and early 1900's and used for paving blocks, walks, curbs and significant 19th century historical architectural around the world.

10. Medina Sandstone has been used worldwide, including building the steps of the New York State Capital Building and significant architectural structures in New York City & London.

11. As stated in Ripley's Believe it or Not, a road runs under the Erie Canal in Medina, NY...the only place where that happens (on the Erie Canal). It's located on appropriately named Culvert Road.

12. As stated in Ripley's Believe it or Not, a church stands in the middle of the street in Medina, NY. Erected in 1832, St John's Episcopal Church is located on (appropriately named) Church Street.

13. While living with her grandmother in Medina in the mid-1870's, Frances Folsom was a student at Medina High School. In 1886, she married President Grover Cleveland.

14. Holley was named after Myron Holley, one of the principal promoters and champions of the Erie Canal, as well as a NY State legislator, canal commissioner & construction supervisor.

15. Albion boasts an impressive 65 structures listed in the New York State & National Register of Historical Places.

16. Eagle Harbor received its name when the Erie Canal route was being surveyed. A large bird's nest, built mostly by eagles, was found in a large tree there.

17. Can you imagine this? During the days of quarrying for Medina Sandstone, a frog jumped out of a massive rock while the rock was being split. The quarrymen surmised that the frog, at a very early stage of its life, traveled through the tiny water crevices and became trapped inside.

18. An authentically decorated grove of "Shoe Tree" is growing in the Town of Yates, at the intersection of Lake Shore and Foss Roads. Local custom encourages one to make a wish as they toss their favorite footwear onto a tree.

19. Ridge Road, a principal east-west route extending from Oswego to Niagara Falls, opened in 1809 and was once the beach of ancient Lake Iroquois (Ontario) before receding 100,000 years ago.

20. The only lighthouse in Orleans County, the Oak Orchard Harbor Lighthouse, was built in 1871 on a wooden pier 1,600 feet from the mouth of the Oak Orchard River. In December 1916, it was swept away by a violent storm. A grassroots effort is in place to build a replica of the Oak Orchard Lighthouse on firmer ground in Point Breeze. Only in Orleans County &

other fun facts revised September 2005  
page 2 of 2.

21. State Highway Rt. 98, extending from Batavia, NY, to the mouth of the Oak Orchard River at Point Breeze is a historic Native American trail and was known by pioneers as the Oak Orchard Trail.

22. The composer of "Kum Ba Yah" and other spiritual music was written by Rev. Marvin V. Frey (1918-1992). His grave site is at the West Barre Cemetery.

23. The completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 spurred the buildings along its route and the growth of Orleans County's agricultural and masonry commerce. Orleans County was also established in 1825 with the county seat in Albion.

24. Ridge Road is often referred to as the "Road of the Cobblestone Houses," for there are more such buildings along its 25 miles from Rochester than on any highway in America.

25. The Cobblestone Museum in Childs, NY is the only cobblestone museum in the world. It shows cases the unique masonry construction method using stones rounded and polished into cobble by glacial action.

26. The northern-most point on the Erie Canal is in the Town of Gaines.

27. Orleans County boasts over 100 unique cobblestone structures built by early settlers between the years 1825-1860.

28. In the heart of the county seat in Albion, stands the 1858 Greek Revival style dome County Court House and the 1882 County Clerk's Building surrounded by 34 architecturally

significant structures, 7 of which are churches facing the square.

29. At the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, over 10,000 acres of wooded swamp, marshland and meadows provide a stopping point for an estimated 80,000 Canada geese during their spring & fall migrations.

30. Resident Santa Claus, Charlie Howard listened to more than 2.5 million children tell him their Christmas wishes. His popularity was both local and worldwide, including England & Australia.

31. Orleans County, NY, established April 1825, is 396 square miles, with 24 miles bordering the Lake Ontario shoreline. The elevation ranges from 247 to 737 feet above sea level, the highest point at Pine Hill.

32. While a member of the 60's California rock band, the "Safaris," Kendall native Larry Weed wrote the popular hit song "Wipe Out".

33. In Medina, the Erie Canal runs through an aqueduct so when you look over the edge you may see fishing boats below on the Oak Orchard River.

34. Donald Duck's original creator, Henry L Porter (1901-1951) was born in Albion. He joined Disney Studios as an artist in 1936 and was a contributing animator of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

35. Horace Greeley, (1811-1872), editor, politician and founder of the New York Tribune, owned a cobblestone parsonage in Childs, at the current site of the Cobblestone Museum. Greeley is best known for the quote "Go west, Young man, go west."

36. The oldest church building in Orleans County is the Christ Episcopal Church (since 1844) located in Court House Square in Albion. It was erected in 1830 by Presbyterians, and is still being used for worship services today.

37. The first Free Methodist Church in the denomination was founded in 1859 by Rev. Loren Stiles, Dedicated in 1860, the Norman revival styled structure is located in the Courthouse Square.

38. Erected in 1874, the First Presbyterian Church is the tallest building in Orleans County. According to legend, the mason who finished the work on the finial stood on his head a top it and shouted "Hurray for Grant".

39. In 1993, The Church, Ward House, and the School, all historical structures at the Cobblestone Society Museum, were designated National Historic Landmarks under the title "Cobblestone Historic District", by the National Park Service through the U.S. Dept. of Interior.

40. Ridge Road Station claims to fly the largest American Flag in New York State. Located on Ridge Road, Holley. The 1,800 Square feet (30x60), 100 pound flag hoisted on a 130' high, 12,500 pound, metal pole. The pole extends another 13' under ground and is secured by 60,000 pounds of concrete.

### **Local Generosity – Part 2** **Submitted by Catherine Cooper**

*Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the Medina Tribune, March 4, 1909.*

"Of course it doesn't follow," she continued, "that matters of the table are

confined to groceries and provisions. The meat question is equally important. To locate the firm which carries constantly on hand choice meats, juicy steaks, poultry and game in season, is quite an undertaking, but I can heartily recommend George Huber. His prices are right, he handles nothing but the choicest and best conditioned meats and makes a strong point of considering quality with quantity for the money."

At this point, somewhat to Jack's confusion, his aunt indulged in a little half serious criticism of his personal appearance. "You are decidedly off style for a man of the importance you are to advance in this town," said she. "We had better go to J. & G.W. Murdock's clothing house," where Jack was not long in picking out an up-to-date, perfect fitting business suit of the latest style from the immense stock. "Now you look like a newly married man," Aunt Hester declared. Before leaving, having found goods and prices irresistible, Jack, at his Aunt's suggestion, invested in a complete outfit of gent's furnishing goods from a latest style hat, gloves, etc., to a dozen shirts. This dealer just now is showing an unusually fine assortment of gent's furnishing goods.

"Now we will go to Brainard's Bakery," said Aunt Hester. "I always buy my baked goods there, in fact Helen, you mother and I used to quarrel over who would go to the bakery, for Mr. Seymour Brainard was always so pleasant that it was a pleasure to see him, and we children always managed to coax him into giving us a friedcake or cooky [sic] to eat on the way home." "Children," exclaimed Helen, "do you really mean, Aunt Hester, that you went to the same bakery when you were a child?" "Oh yes," said her aunt, "You see, Mr. Brainard established this business way

back in – let me see – why yes, it was 1852, the year after your mother, (who is as you know my youngest sister), was born. It is remarkable that this business has been conducted under the same management, all these years. Mr. Brainard's sons have for years been connected with their father in the management of the business, and they seem to have inherited his ability. They operate one of the best, modern equipped bakeries, and have adopted all the latest facilities and exercise the utmost care to preserve the purity and cleanliness of their bakery and its product. They make all kinds of bread, the most appetizing cakes and cookies, and have a most enviable reputation on their fried-cakes, of which they turn out every day, more than any of the large city bakeries. I would not think of being without some of them in the house." They called at the bakery, where Mr. Brainard was very glad to meet his old friend and after she had introduced her nephews [sic] and they had made the acquaintance of his sons, a trip of inspection was made through the plant, where Jack particularly, being of a practical turn of mind, was greatly interested and they found everything their Aunt had told them to be facts.

"There, by the way," Aunt Hester exclaimed as they reached the street, "I must go and get another check cashed at the Union Bank. Come with me and I will introduce you to George A. Newell, the president, and Mr. Harry Welton, the cashier, for of course, you will deal with them and it is always better to be personally acquainted with the men with whom you deal. You will find them very ready to extend any and every accommodation compatible with sound business principles."

"Where had we better buy fuel?" asked Jack, whose mind was constantly turning to the practical. "Why, of course," said Aunt Hester. "I ought to have thought of that. Watson F. Barry is the oldest dealer in town, and from a long acquaintance with him in a business way, I can positively guarantee that you may depend on getting courteous treatment. He sells Lehigh coal exclusively. He prides himself on his established reputation. You will find him a perfectly reliable dealer."

"The matter of insurance," Aunt Hester continued, "is one of importance. Now Jack that you are married, you should have a policy on your life and also a builder's risk on your new home and fire insurance on both your farm and village property. My, friends, R.W. and G.A. Nichol, have not only the agencies of the best and most solid companies, but they are expert and trustworthy underwriters and last but not least, they always save you money. They represent the Aetna Life and Accident Insurance Co., also six of the leading fire insurance companies and have special facilities and are making a specialty of Automobile, Fire, Liability, and Accident insurance.

"Oh," exclaimed Helen as they stopped in front of a show window. "What a perfectly lovely pair of slippers!" "Yes," said Aunt Hester, Mr. John P. Chapman's new boot and shoe stock cannot be equaled for styles and prices in this town. Let's go in and look it over." It might have been policy not to have extended this invitation had not Aunt Hester known how wise economy it is to trade at this popular store, for Helen found goods and prices so seductive that she purchased an outfit, from a dainty pair of slippers to wear with her morning gown, to a pair of La

France shoes. Jack invested in a pair of Mr. Chapman's celebrated "Korreet Shape" guaranteed shoes, while Aunt Hester indulged in a pair of those comfortable Grover's Easy shoes, of which Mr. Chapman carries a full line. "No one needing footwear," said Aunt Hester, "can resist the styles and prices at Chapman's."

"What a beautiful view?" exclaimed Helen as she caught a glimpse of Oak Orchard Creek. "Yes, indeed," replied Jack, "and more than that. If I am not mistaken, there is something that appeals to me even more strongly. Isn't that an electric light plant over there, Aunt Hester?" "Yes," she replied, "and it is one of the best and most complete systems in the country and is excelled only in size by the Niagara Falls plants, of which you have doubtless heard. Their facilities for supplying any demands that may be made upon them, in the electric line, are unsurpassed. They have a well-equipped station at each end of Glenwood Lake, a sheet of water nearly two miles long and fifty feet deep, besides a substation about half way between, and in addition to an [????????] horse-power Corliss engine held constantly in reserve, they are able to guarantee permanency in their supply in a direct connection with the Niagara power. You must be sure to equip your new house for electric lights and I will introduce you to Mr. A.L. Swett, who is not only the head of this and other local enterprises, but one of our most prominent citizens. He will be glad to tell you more about the company and their facilities than I can, and advise you regarding the use of electricity, both for light and power."

They next went to the Wright & Ross drug store and purchased a variety of toilet articles and a quantity of fine

stationery. Helen was delighted with the bright, up-to-date appearance of the store and the immense stock of post cards which they carried, and after selecting some fine confections from the excellent stock, the party left the store. Wright & Ross have an established reputation for honesty and accuracy, especially in compounding prescriptions, and have added another customer to their already long list. They are pharmacists of experience and enjoy a large patronage.

"Now, my dear," said Aunt Hester to Helen, "I am willing to honor any draft you may make for dry goods. The popular place in this town is the Medina Dry Goods Co., and we will drop in there. In extent, quality, and low prices their stock is unsurpassed. This store has been established for 26 years and is always to the front with superior goods and low prices and you will always receive the most polite attention from an efficient corps of clerks. One of the secrets of the success of this firm is buy for cash and are constantly in the market for the latest and freshest styles and novelties and they seem to have a very genius for buying at remarkably low figures and their invariably policy of their bargains is the reason of their popularity." Helen purchased what few things they needed for the present and promised to return later for a supply of staple goods. Just now they are showing an unusually fine line of new Spring dress goods. You can save money by trading there.

*The final installment in this saga will appear in the September Bugle.*

## **A Monster Flag** **By Adam Tabelski**

This photograph [see next page] captures a moment in time during Medina's "Preparedness Day" parade of June 26, 1916. More than a hundred members of the Knights of Columbus are seen carrying a 40' x 90' American flag, one of the largest in the country, down Main Street. The banner was so big the contingent had to steer around a nearby lamppost. For any group—not just for the Catholic men's fraternal organization chartered in Medina fourteen years earlier—this was a stunning show of patriotism and community pride.

The parade was an impromptu affair, organized with only twenty-four hours notice, yet it ranks among the biggest assemblies witnessed in our village. Company F of the New York National Guard, headquartered at the Pearl Street armory, had just received orders to report to Camp Whitman in Beekman, New York, where they would be trained and then shipped to the Mexican border to help ward off the forces of Pancho Villa. As for the grand send-off, the throng of thousands snaked its way through the heart of the village, met the waiting soldiers at the armory, and escorted them to the railroad depot amidst cheers, tears, and fanfare. A roster of Company F soldiers who responded to the Mexican border incursion of 1916 is affixed to the new sandstone monument in front of the armory.

Company F's mobilization and deployment occurred in the larger context of President Woodrow Wilson's military preparedness campaign of 1916 (which neatly coincided with his re-election campaign that year). Although the nation would soon be drawn into the

Great War then being waged in Europe, our military readiness and nationalist spirit were then in need of encouragement. So preparedness parades were held in towns and cities across the continent, drawing more attention to the flag as our unifying national symbol. Less than two weeks before Medina's parade, the first official Flag Day (June 14) came into being at President Wilson's order.

It was estimated that there were 4,000 people marching in the parade and another 4,000 watching along its route. They had rushed in from all the surrounding towns—mayors, marching bands, veterans, fire companies, fraternal groups. Yet with all of the demonstrations and hoopla, it was the Knights of Columbus' flag that was remembered as 'the crowning feature of the day.'

The marchers, striding past the storefronts draped in red, white, and blue, formed 'a glittering fantasia of colors.' When better than those heady days to parade 'a monster flag,' as the *Medina Daily Journal* called it, down the middle of Main Street, USA? No doubt this black and white photograph is only a pale reflection of the stirring scene.





MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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INDIVIDUAL (\$15.00/YR)

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MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER  
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MEDINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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AND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER  
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406 WEST AVENUE  
MEDINA, NY 14103

MEMBERSHIP DUES: \_\_\_\_\_

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