

# MEDINA BUGLE

A Publication of the Medina Historical Society

October 2018

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Whether you are a member of our organization or, in the words of that old Irish proverb, a friend we have not yet met, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a very happy upcoming holiday season, no matter which holidays you celebrate. I would also like to thank you for the support you have provided our organization during a very eventful and successful 2018.

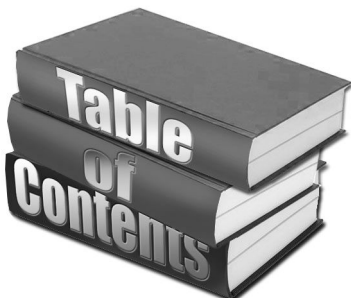
The mission of the Medina Historical Society is to preserve and share the past and present stories of our community. If you believe, as we do, that our efforts help make Medina, Ridgeway and Shelby more appealing places to live and work, support us with your membership. If you are already a member, please renew, and if you haven't yet joined, we invite you to become a member today for a contribution of \$20 Family or \$15 for Individual.

Once you join or renew your membership, please don't stop there. Follow us on Facebook and our Website, and try to attend as many of our events as you can. Forward our email messages to your friends, neighbors, former classmates, and anyone else you can think of, encouraging them to join us as well.

I look forward to meeting and greeting you often during the last few months of 2017 and in the upcoming New Year.

Thank you,

*Reinhard Rogowski*  
*President, Medina Historical Society*



Pages 2-3	<i>EARLY HOLLOWE'ENS</i> <i>By Russell J. Waldo</i> <i>Originally Published On October 30, 1941</i>
Page 4	<i>Medina Day at Shadigee</i> <i>Canal Surgeon</i>
Pages 5-6	<i>Gold Star Mother Pilgrimages</i>
Page 7	<i>Membership Form, Officers and Upcoming Events</i>

**EARLY HOLLOWE'ENS**  
**By Russell J. Waldo**  
**Originally Published On October 30, 1941**

*Contributed by Craig Lacy*

Hallowe'eners today should take time off to look back to pranks of those who have gone on before them in Medina. The night of "carryings on" is by no means limited to the lives of those now living. A sprinkling of records, diaries and by word of mouth has come to this columnist's attention, which are well worth passing along.

Beyond a doubt one of the earliest pranks upon a resident of the village area was directed toward Sylvanus Coon in 1826 or 27. A packet had unloaded a large shipment of merchandise upon that particular day. Uri Moore had overheard of the plans of several of the canallers and tipped him off. Sylvanus, not to be outdone, unpacked hastily the biggest boxes and replaced the contents with stones and returned the covers to the boxes. These were left upon the porch of the log store building along with an empty hogshead which had been filled with water.

As planned, the pranksters visited the porch late into the night and moved the boxes down to the present Manila Place. There they left them and returned to their beds and to work the next day wondering how "Syl" would take it when he discovered his merchandise had been moved. It was evening when they visited the store one by one. When they were all present, Proprietor Coon inquired how they enjoyed the night before carting his merchandise away.

Justin Ingersoll then Justice of the Peace was all rehearsed for the occasion and sternly rebuked the men by promising them a visit to the county jail. They promised to bring the boxes back and when they were back they were ordered opened only to find that they contained stones instead of merchandise.

Otis Turner, grocery man on the dock at one time, was in the habit of returning to his store before retiring. He did so upon Hallowe'en night only to find fierce groans coming from under the counter. He hastened out to fetch his gun thinking it was some animal but the prankster had disappeared when he returned. Upon one occasion Mr. Turner said that he was badly frightened as the room was dark.

Nathan Sawyer, one time lawyer, met with a vastly different experience. Practical pranksters had succeeded in getting a skunk. This they took to Mr. Sawyer's office after he had left at night. The plan, as developed, was an urgent request for some information, which would require Mr. Sawyer to return to his office late in the evening. It might be noted here that law business was very scarce those days and clients were served regardless of the hour.

He was startled by a terrible smell shortly after he entered the office, which announced the presence of unwelcome guests. He swore vengeance as only Nathan Sawyer could do but no record was ever made of the pranksters.

Alva Barrett shoe dealer on the east side of Shelby Street returned to his store the morning after Hallowe'en only to find his stock of shoes piled neatly up in the middle of the floor.

Uri Moore is said to have had a horse, which he kept, in a stable back of his tavern on Shelby Street.



The barn was close to the canal. Pranksters coaxed the horse out of the barn and down along the canal en rout to Oak Orchard Creek. The horse awoke Uri Moore late in the night with its whinny and was put back in the stable by sleepy Uri. There was a lot of sly kidding about getting dunked in the canal for some time after that centering around one prankster indicating that a few knew who took the horse out.

Then we come along to the later years, when every house of importance had its gate at the sidewalk and often a rear gate. It was not difficult to remove these and on Hallowe'en night a young army of boys moved swiftly along the streets removing gates from their hinges.

These gates were taken to a vacant spot along the canal at the foot of West Avenue. Some were taken out to the woods on Mill street (Park Avenue). To say it modestly residents were greatly perturbed the next morning to find the gates removed. Guilty sons sat at breakfast as their fathers declared that the pranksters would be brought to light and punished by being required to return all gates. Fathers sought out their gates and returned them to their homes. A few of those pranksters are among us today. It is believed that they can remember the incident.

Some of those boys should be able to recall another Hallowe'en night when they had worked industriously for nearly three hours putting Mr. Pitt's carriage, harness and sleigh upon the roof of his barn. They thought they were not being watched but as the last work was done and the boys started down from the roof they found themselves facing the Honorable Mr. Pitts. "His Honor" held the boys together while he urged them to return everything to its original place quietly so as not to awaken the neighbors. There was no hesitation in this and when every item had been returned they were invited to the kitchen where Mrs. Pitts served cookies and sweet cider.



Bowen and Rourk chartered steamer "Edward Hanlon" in 1882 to carry their men to the quarry at Culvert Road. Hallowe'en night pranksters visited the boat and hid the engineer's shovel and late into the night put out the fire and emptied the water tank. The boat was only an hour late at the quarry the next morning. Bowen and Rourk were both good fellows and the hour's delay was alright with them. They said Hallowe'en only came once a year and they had memories themselves.

Henry Childs had laid a new flagstone sidewalk in 1882. This was the object of one Hallowe'en excursion. These flagstones were carefully lifted from their places and otherwise displayed. He spread the news around the next day that the pranksters would have the pleasure of returning the stones to their places the next night at the same time. Failure to do so would be signal for him to call with his carriage in person the next night at their homes and escort them to the scene of the sidewalk relaying. The flagstones were relayed by the same pranksters who upset them. After the job was finished Mr. Childs served each with a large size sandwich and a glass of milk and they parted good friends.

**Few Hallowe'ens about that time would have been a success if it had not been for the skill and direction of Willie Fairman, a clerk in the law office of Childs and Pitts and Jay Dayton porter at the Hart House. Every Hallowe'en they had new tricks ready to spring and they enjoyed it immensely.**

## Medina Day at Shadigee

*Contributed by Catherine Cooper*

*This looks like it must have been so much fun!  
Could this event be re-organized today?*

**From the Medina Daily Journal, August 23, 1923**

“The first annual Medina Day at Shadigee yesterday was largely attended, it being estimated that nearly two thousand of our citizens and those from surrounding sections availed themselves of the day to go to Shadigee and join in making the day the success it was from every point.

The General Committee to whom the success of the day is due, were F.W. Neff, Chairman, W.B. MacClew, John Cobb, A.F. Quinlan, Raymond Cooper, Walter Reimer and Sidney Allen.



The baseball game between the East and the West side was the premier event of the day and resulted in the Eastenders skinning their opponents by a score of four to nineteen. The star play of the game was a one-hand catch on first by Dan Cleary. Clyde Porter officiated at the plate and both sides agreed that he knew as much about the game as they did and that was nil, so everything was satisfactory”

In addition to the baseball game, there were many other challenging competitions:

Women’s Box Building,  
Men’s Box Building,  
Women’s Guessing Contest,  
Men’s Guessing Contest,

Marshmallow Race, Potato Race,  
Clothes Pin Race,  
Bun Eating Contest and  
The Fat Man’s Race

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## Canal Sturgeon

*Article contributed by Craig Lacy*

The Erie Canal was a grand place for fishing back in the 1870’s, especially in the Spring when the big pike and sturgeon came in from Lake Erie. Lots of times the captain wouldn’t let the boys drop a line in the Canal unless the boat was tied up.

I remember once I had a blacksmith make me a hook out of a crowbar, and I put it on a length of old tow rope and baited it with a young pig and dropped it in the Canal up near Medina. We were headed for Rochester with a load of barley. One of those Lake Erie sturgeon grabbed the hook and hauled us back nearly to Lockport before we could get a rope out and snub it around the ‘butment of a bridge. Nearly pulled three mules into the Canal and, for weeks after that we had to harness those mules with their heads facing the boat, they was so used to going backwards.

I’d had have my teeth wrapped around my ears sure if it hadn’t been that we sold the sturgeon to a boatman that was headed west. He just put the mules in their stalls and let the sturgeon haul him. The only trouble was that he was just figuring on going to Buffalo, but the sturgeon wouldn’t stop there and he ended up in Detroit.

He sold the sturgeon for five cents a pound and got enough to hire a sidewheeler tug to take him back to the Buffalo breakwater. How’s that? Well, that’s one thing I always forgot to ask him. I never did find out how he got his boat and the sturgeon through the locks at Lockport.

*Source: Logan, Nancy. “Look for a Post” (Captain Link, “Spike Galloway’s Saloon”)  
NYFO Vol. XII, No.4 (Winter, 1956)*

# Gold Star Mother Pilgrimages

We are familiar with the term “Gold Star Mother” as a reference to those mothers whose son or daughter died or became missing in action while serving with the United States Armed Forces. The name came from the flags hung by servicemen’s families in the windows of their homes. Each living family member in the Armed Forces was represented by a blue star. A gold star represented a son or daughter who had died in combat.

Grace Darling Seibold is credited with establishing the national organization, American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. which holds a congressional charter under Title 36 #211 of the United States Code. The last Sunday in September is designated as Gold Star Mother’s Day.

The World War I Gold Star Mother Pilgrimages are less well known. According to the National Archives:

“In 1929, Congress enacted legislation that authorized the secretary of war to arrange for pilgrimages to the European cemeteries "by mothers and widows of members of military and naval forces of the United States who died in the service at any time between April 5, 1917, and July 1, 1921, and whose remains are now interred in such cemeteries." Congress later extended eligibility for pilgrimages to mothers and widows of men who died and were buried at sea or who died at sea or overseas and whose places of burial were unknown. The Office of the Quartermaster General determined that 17,389 women were eligible. By October 31, 1933, when the project ended, 6,693 women had made the pilgrimage. Once the quartermaster determined a woman was eligible, she was sent a questionnaire.”



The pilgrimages were to be under the supervision of Major-General Cheatham, retiring quarter-general of the army. The women were to be allowed two weeks for the trip, at government expense. An amount of \$840 was allocated for each mother.

An article in the Medina Daily Journal indicated that seven Gold Star Mothers from Orleans County were deemed eligible:

*Mrs. Virginia Arnett* of Millville, whose son, Dr. John Arnett, was a first lieutenant with the Medical Reserve Corps and who was buried in Flanders Field.

*Mrs. Orrin Butts* of Medina, whose son, Revenue James, was a private with Company B of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Engineers and who was buried at Oisne-Aisne.

*Mrs. Effa Stevens* of Albion, whose son, John H., was a second lieutenant with the 147<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron and who was buried at Oisne-Aisne.

*Mrs. Lillian A. Brooks*, whose son, Jesse, was a private with Company E of the 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry and who was buried at Somme.

*Mrs. Grace Mott*, of Medina, whose son, Dewey Graydon was a private in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Company of the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment, United States Marine Corps and who was buried at Oisne-Aisne.

*Mrs. Ester Kuramski*, of Albion, whose son, John, was a private in the 51<sup>st</sup> Company of the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the United States Marine Corps and who was buried at Oisne-Aisne.

Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Arnett availed of the offer. Upon their return, they reported in the Medina Daily

Journal of July 27, 1931, that every consideration had been shown them on their trip. They set sail from New York on June 25 on the liner President Roosevelt and enjoyed a calm voyage along with ninety-nine other Gold Star Mothers.

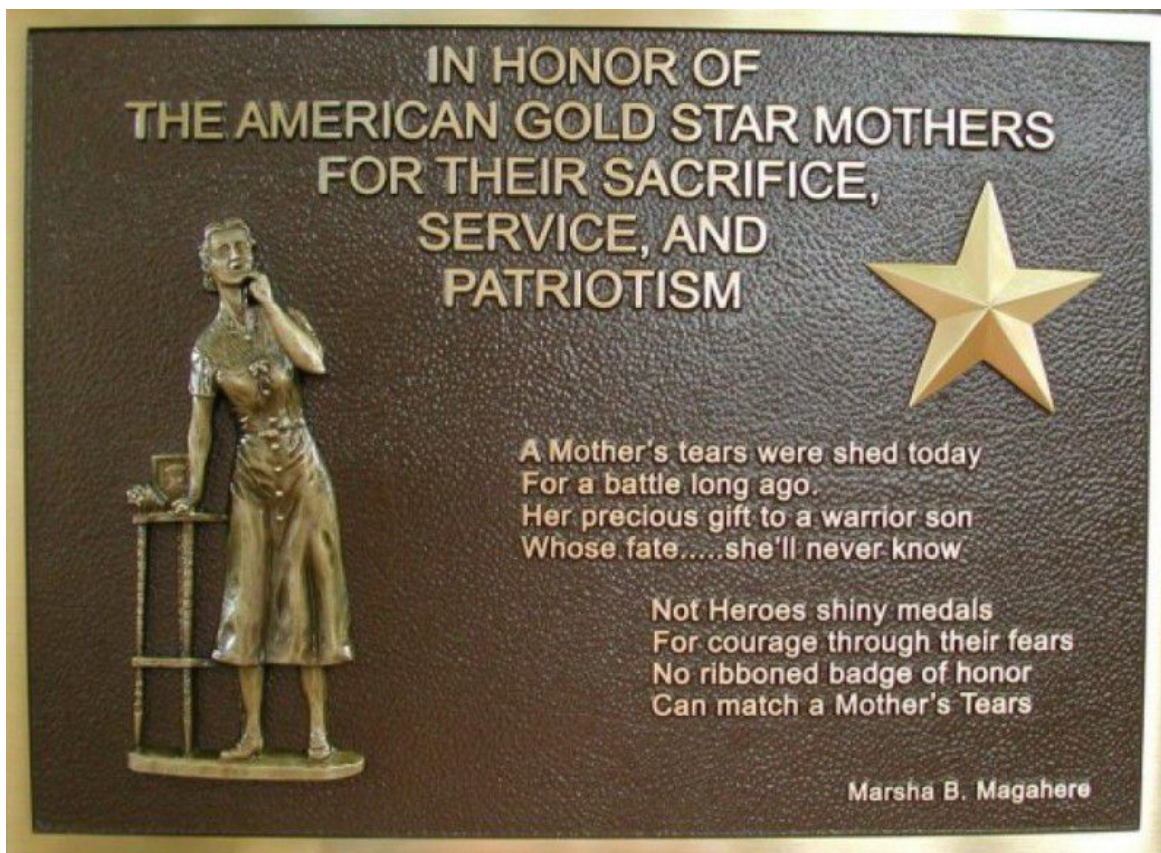
Two of the mothers had lost sons at sea and memorial services for these men were held on the journey over. The group spent several days in Paris and then divided into groups of 25 for the visits to the cemeteries. Each group had a doctor, two nurses and a lieutenant in attendance. Mrs. Clark recounted that there was an American caretaker at each cemetery, and that the white marble headstones were polished to a glittering brightness. Flowers could not be planted on the graves and the grass was close trimmed.

Each mother was given a large bouquet of cut flowers and a large wreath to place on the grave. Care had to be taken that the flowers not touch the headstones for fear of stains if it should rain.

The ladies enjoyed a few days sightseeing in Paris and returned on the President Washington. They encountered rough seas which lasted for four days but arrived safely home.

Between 1930 and 1933, almost 6,700 women took advantage of the offer and made the trip. Records of the pilgrimages are available at the National Archives and on [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com)

*Contributed by Catherine Cooper*



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

FAMILY (\$20.00/YR)  
INDIVIDUAL (\$15.00/YR)

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

ADDITIONAL DONATION: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT: \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: MEDINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION AND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO:

MEDINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ATTN: MEMBERSHIP CHAIR  
406 WEST AVENUE  
MEDINA, NY 14103



### MEDINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

#### Officers 2018

President: Reinhard Rogowski  
Vice President/Treasurer: Craig Lacy  
Secretary: Shane Sia  
Membership: Gail Miller  
Newsletter: Georgia Thomas

#### Other Board Members

Catherine Cooper  
Barb Filipiak  
Cindy Robinson  
Kay VanNostrand

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 29 at 7:00 p.m.  
**William Fargo: Mayor of Buffalo, founder of Wells Fargo and American Express**  
Presented by Tom Schobert
- November 26 at 7:00 p.m.  
**Shelby residents and scenes, 1900-1910: the Dunlap photographs**  
Presented by Catherine Cooper & Alice Zacher