



THE SENTINEL

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The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Winter 2018

NEW EXHIBIT ON DISPLAY by Sarita Winchell

The museum for the New Scotland Historical Association opened its new exhibit, **“History Lost, History Preserved,”** on October 2, 2018. The exhibit highlights four themes: old hotels that once operated in New Scotland township; a charming collection of postcards, the “tweets” of the past; memorabilia from the Helderberg Ski Club, which originally operated in the Helderbergs starting in 1934; and a collection of milk bottles and ephemera from New Scotland township farms that bottled their own milk and sold it under their own names.

The “Once Ubiquitous Milk Bottle” display is a prime example of “History Lost, History Preserved.” Using a collection of milk bottles, this display required research to fill in the information about these farms: their location, when they operated, who were the owners, why they went out of business. Many of us still remember milk deliveries to our homes, but now only **Meadow Brook Farms**, operated by the Van Wie family, still delivers milk from a New Scotland Farm. The younger generations may never have had a glass of milk poured from a glass bottle straight from the farm, let alone know anything about this rich history. Besides the bottles, the display includes pictures and a short write-up of each farm featured in a scrapbook format.

Indian Ladder Farms is now well known for its orchards; but until the cow barn burned down in the summer of 1949, it had one of the largest dairy herds in New Scotland. Well known for its purebred Guernsey cows, it operated with a milking herd of 100 cows. Luckily, the herd was out to pasture when the fire occurred. The museum was able to add to its collection a picture of the massive cow barn before the fire. Tim Stanton’s **Feura Farm** on Onesquethaw Creek Road is now well known for vegetable and fruit production; but when it was owned by Dan Heller, it had a large herd of Guernsey cows and bottled milk under the Feura Farm name. **Youmans Farm**, operated by Lester Youmans, Sr. and Jr., was in business until 1954. Located on Youmans Road in New Scotland, they bottled milk from their own herd, but also for other farmers including **Severson Farm** in Voorheesville (now the site of Salem Hills), owned by Philip and then his son Clifford Severson, **Udell Farm** on Stove Pipe and Upper Flat Rock Road owned by Russell Udell, and **Three Farms Dairy** in the Town of Bethlehem. The museum has wonderful pictures of Youmans Farm including an aerial photograph clearly showing the farm buildings in its heyday.



(Continued on Page 3)

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President's Letter

This time of year is always bitter sweet. Winter is approaching but so is the Holiday Season. It is a busy season for all of us including NSHA.

Both the Town of New Scotland and Village of Voorheesville Master Plans released during the last few months recognize the importance of historic preservation to our communities' identity and character. This bodes well for the future of historic preservation in our Town. In the last *Sentinel* I wrote about the expanded NSHA Committee to develop a proposed historic preservation law for the Town and Village that would establish a joint Historic Preservation Commission. At this writing, a first draft of the proposed joint Town and Village Historic Preservation Law and Commission is out for review by our Committee. Hopefully, we will have a final draft proposal that we can convey to the Town and Village Boards by the end of the year. We plan to post the proposed law on NSHA's website and Facebook page once the Committee finishes its work so you all can take a look at it. We hope our members will engage constructively in the Town and Village legislative processes that will follow so this law to can be put on the books.

We have completed the reconfiguration of the Museum's space and now have a comfortable research area, better storage space, and a new exhibit "History Lost, History Preserved," which is featured on the front page of this issue of the *Sentinel*.

In the fall *Sentinel* due to sloppy proof-reading on my part, NSHA's program schedule was published with the correct descriptions but with last year's dates. I apologize for this mistake and any confusion it caused. The corrected schedule is published on page 7 of this issue and posted on the Calendar page of the NSHA website.

Alan Kowlowitz, President

Mission Statement

The Town of New Scotland Historical Association preserves, protects and promotes history in the Town of New Scotland through the stewardship of material culture directly related to the town. The purpose is to promote an appreciation of local history, heritage and culture. through research, publications and educational programs.

(Continued from page 1)

There was competition among the farms. In the 1940's and early 1950's **Severson Farm** had a milk route in Voorheesville, but so did **Shufelt Dairy**, owned by Ray and Merle Shufelt. Shufelt Dairy processed milk behind Merle's house at 55 Maple Avenue in Voorheesville. They kept cows on a farm on Rt. 85 just west of the King farm. In the 1930's the **Myndert Crouse** farm, on the western border of Voorheesville, competed with H. L. Boyle's **Athol Farm**, a completely forgotten dairy located on Country Lane near Voorheesville Central School District's satellite fields. Their milk bottles are the only testament left of these long lost businesses. There was **Helderberg Dairy**, located on the corner of Clipp Road and Rt. 85, owned by Steve O'Hagan. It became more profitable for him to sell his "Ho-Maid" ice cream. After a short time in the milk business, he gave it up to concentrate on ice cream. The museum has a very large sign from his ice cream business on display.

A great deal of information for the back story to this display came from Chuck Van Wie, senior member of the Van Wie family of **Meadow Brook Farms**. Talking with Chuck was fascinating. In his mid-eighties now, he still does milk deliveries. He says Meadow Brook has a niche market, and they have adjusted their business right along with changing times. Chuck's father, Charles Van Wie, Sr., developed the dairy business starting with bottling at a dairy in Albany in 1922-23. His father bought a used milk plant in 1944, and that is when they started bottling right on the farm. Chuck is a life-long dairy farmer. He was licensed when he was 11 years old (!) to run the milk processing plant but worked on the farm even before. Chuck explains their business model: "Always try to produce only what you can sell. Never get too big," and, as he says, "There is a difference in how things are done when you peddle your own milk" as opposed to selling it to a wholesaler. Unlike many current dairies whose herds are all Holsteins, their herd is close to 50% Swiss cows which gives their milk a distinct flavor.

A big thank you is in order for the contributors of information for the milk bottle display. Most of the bottles used in the display were donated to the museum several years ago by Tim Albright. Although



Sam Youmans was still a young man when the Youmans farm was sold, he provided quite a bit of information for the display, especially about the smaller dairy farms. The following people also provided information: Peter G. Ten Eyck III, owner of Indian Ladder Farms; Joy O'Day, Clifford Severson's daughter; Don and Martha Slingerland who helped locate some of the farms; Craig Shufelt, grandson of Ray Shufelt; Brad Pivar, who now lives at the site of Athol Farm; Tim Stanton, who now owns Feura Farm....and me, granddaughter of Myndert Crouse.

We are still looking for more material and information!

Udell Farm: we especially want a picture of it.
Shufelt Dairy: we do not have an actual milk bottle, just a picture.

Any other material or pictures from these farms that we can add to the museum's collection.

Sam Youmans visiting the NSHA museum recently

Whalen house again on display

Included in the exhibit room is an exact replica of the Whalen House, a 19th century Greek Revival home in New Salem lovingly constructed and decorated by Don and Loretta Whalen. It was originally highlighted in the Spring 2015 "Sentinel," and now is a center feature in the exhibit room.



The “New Scot”, Defined: What It Means to Be New Scottish at This Moment in Time and Space

By Jesse Sommer

I’m a bona fide “K through 12” alumnus of the Voorheesville Central School District. And so it might have been in Ms. Burgoon’s seventh-grade English class that, while looking out the classroom window one afternoon in the fall of 1995, I first “noticed” the Helderberg Escarpment.

To be clear, I’d been to Thacher Park countless times by my adolescence, and had spent most summers ambling about the embracing paths of Helderberg Workshop (where even in my youth I endlessly contemplated the confusing titular omission of the “R”). So while I was certainly familiar with that little mountain range, it had never before occurred to me that “the Helderbergs” existed outside my personal awareness as their own timeless entity. But sitting in what was then the seventh-grade wing of an entirely new school with a soaring new landscape jutting out over the soccer fields, I distinctly remember wondering for the first time what lay beyond those wooded cliffs... and then almost immediately deciding that I actually didn’t much care. For everything I knew, sought, and cherished existed between the base of those mountains and where I sat at my desk; that was more than enough for me. I quickly returned to taking for granted the Helderberg Mountains—and my entire community, generally—for most of the next ten years.

In the intervening two-plus decades since that fall of ‘95, I’ve lived in Connecticut, New York City, the District of Columbia, and in military towns across North Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida. Between school and Army service, I’ve seen much of the world and even more of my country; my travels have exposed me to a broad array of cultures and their inhabitants, to cities of all sizes and to the identities which develop within them. I’ve been exposed to new belief systems reflective of the environments in which they arise, and have enjoyed immensely the accents and idiosyncrasies I’ve encountered across America and Planet Earth. But now, just a few years shy of my 20-year high school reunion, I’m prepared to unwaveringly declare as follows: people out there are *different*.

Ladies and gentlemen, of this I am surer than ever—that I am now what I have always been: a New Scot. No matter where I go, I recognize the New Scots I encounter not *only* because I’ve seen them routinely at the gas station, or the library, or the town park, or the village supermarket, or in the halls of Clayton A. Bouton. Rather, I recognize them because of those shared and essential characteristics that define a people who grew up together in a rural yet close-knit community on the edges of a little city mere hours away from America’s largest. To be New Scottish is to be familiar with the pace of travel controlled by just a couple sets of traffic lights, and the lumbering passage of a freight train. It’s to be not just welcoming, but *eager* to welcome neighbors into the folds of discussion on the sidelines of the baseball fields. It’s to be proud of a playground erected arm-in-arm with fellow “Voorheesvillagers,” or of an old barn salvaged, relocated, and restored. It is to be *digitally* connected to humanity’s vast expanse while *personally* connected to the intimacy of a place fundamentally unchanged since the mid-twentieth century. To be a New Scot is to know who you are *because* of where you grew up, to claim firsthand experience living in an idealized version of America that still exists in the woods behind the quiet cul-de-sacs and on either bank of the Vly Creek. To be New Scottish is to bear a soul nurtured by a community’s unquestioning integration of different colors, creeds, and characters into the promise of an American Dream forged and fought for at the ballot box, in World Wars, and despite mistakes made along the route to freedom, independence, and an extended family the size of town.

The New Scottish experience celebrates summers around a neighbor’s pool, but greets a snow-filled driveway with gratitude that the shovel in the shed finally has a purpose again. It’s about excitedly donning T-shirts on springtime’s first 50-degree day while knowing there’s yet one more storm on the horizon, and about donning the costume your mum made for you on Halloween while dad rakes together the biggest leaf pile, since no technology has yet replicated the joyful majesty of jumping into that crackling collage of fall’s most vibrant upstate colors.

Because to be a New Scot is to write an article for the New Scotland Historical Association's quarterly publication, only to find out that your seventh-grade English teacher will once again be the one editing your work, which suddenly makes you worry about what she'll think of all those sentences beginning with "because", "but", and "and". Some things change, of course; Ms. Burgoon will likely have retired her red pen when she reviews this submission, in favor of the "track changes" feature on the word processing software. Yet some things are indeed forever, and among those things are the Helderberg Mountains.

I'm looking ahead to the next chapter of my life. While the specifics are yet sketchy, I at least know I'm coming home. Because I've been around, folks, and while there's a lot to see in this great big world of ours, everything that's dear to me turns out to be back where I left it, at home, just as that younger me long ago suspected. I dutifully discovered what lay beyond the mountains that once constituted the furthest edges of my world, but with the benefit of twenty years I'm now able to support with evidence the instinct I felt so many years ago, in that classroom where I shrugged off interest in whatever else was out there.

I served my country out of an almost sheepish sense of duty because, growing up in New Scotland, I lived the very best that the United States had to offer. Even today I feel undeserving of the friendships and security my hometown afforded me. If you're a New Scot, then I don't care how you vote, I don't care what Ancestry.com says about you, I don't care where or if or what God you worship. What I care about is *you*, just as I know you care about me. We're bound together by the shared sense of what it means to be home, and by the hope that someday our sense of community will expand to include all humankind. Life is slower back home. It's richer. And despite all its oddities, it's the one place that just makes sense.

To be New Scottish is to anticipate the future by learning from the past, to see in history the contours of the way ahead. When the aliens arrive, when the computers overtake us, when the archeologists of the future sift through the wreckage of a society that disappeared beneath the waves of melted ice caps or the blackened skies of nuclear winter, they will yet detect the love that tightly bound together the New Scots each year as they cheered the youthful energy of aging war veterans and the enthusiastic discipline of the student marching band in the Memorial Day Parade's determined procession to the park. Or, as Dennis Sullivan more succinctly stated: "There was a railroad town here once...." Indeed there was.

To explore the New Scot identity is to examine the uniquely intimate attributes that yet persist in town, where our communal traditions bestow on all New Scots an essential outlook, a recognizable personality, an imperative to raise one another from cradle to grave. To be a New Scot is to know where you come from, just as surely as you know that Ms. Burgoon is about to strikethrough the first part of this compound sentence and write in little red lettering "to know from where you come". Such is New Scotland. Or, as I like to call it: Home.

Captain Jesse Sommer is a paratrooper and Judge Advocate with the U.S. Army's 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne).



Captain Jesse Sommer met with his former Teacher, Sherry Burgoon, recently below the Beautiful Helderberg Mountains

SUNSHINE'S CORNER

By Mary Beth (Frohlich) Felice

Fall began the chilly times at Willow Brook Farm. That thing called central heat had not made it to our farm, located just outside the village limits in the 50's. As an 1800's house it grew with the family and ended up with 2 living rooms, 2 kitchens, back and front porches and shared dining room. The "modern" heat was an oil burning stove in each living room with stove pipes passing through to an upstairs bedroom. That's it! I guess we were TOUGH is those days. I do confess to loving a thermostat nowadays.

I think what made winter bearable were all the church and school activities. Football games, basketball games, pep rallies, school music events. Also many church based activities from hay rides to roller skating parties to ice skating on the frozen school parking lot. Somehow we kept warm and kept busy.

Thanksgiving continues to be a family affair with various cousins and "married ins" at the table. The players vary from year to year depending on who's home, gone to college, out visiting, etc. I know this year the celebration is at our home in State College, PA. So—all the Voorheesvillians will be heading our way for the usual feast and festivities. Fortunately, Orchard Park is only ½ mile away, so I know we'll be doing the "mince-meat/pumpkin walk" over there after the repast.

One of the best things about Thanksgiving these days is that I know we'll be off to Florida very shortly! Ah, the life of a true "Snow Bird."

So life goes on, but it sure is great living



Diaries of Hattie O'Brien

Oct 5, 1892 – Weather cold and windy tonight

We have cleaned and blacked and moved our kitchen stove in today, arranged pantry for winter. Talk of moving clothes room made off the office and putting a bed up for the children.

Nov 20, 1893

Hattie sewed for Grace, plaid dress. Smith went to Albany and back. I sewed and done work. Mrs. Wright called.

Nov 25, 1898

We could not have our supper last night at the church on account of snow storm.



New Scotland Historical Association's Program Schedule 2018-19

(Titles are tentative and subject to change)

REVISED PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Dec. 4, 2018 (7:30-9:30pm) – Red Scare on Main Street! The Post World War I “Red Scare” had a major impact on immigrant communities and labor activists in major American cities but it also affected smaller cities and town. Dr Gerald Zahavi will discuss how the Red Scare affected smaller upstate communities.

Feb. 3, 2019 (2:00-4:00pm) – Businesswomen in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Albany We think of 19th century women as housewives and mothers. However, Mid-19th Century Albany was home to over 2,000 women running a wide variety of businesses including groceries, saloons and liquor stores, piano stores, hotels, and even a plumbing business. Dr. Susan Lewis will discuss general trends and individual businesswomen and reveal evidence of such supposedly recent phenomena as home-based employment, dual-income marriages, working mothers, single parenthood, and the juggling of domestic and professional priorities.

March 3, 2019 (2:00-4:00pm) – An Old Fashion Musical Afternoon with Tamarack Join us for an afternoon of traditional Celtic, early American, Old-Time, French-Canadian and International tunes — melodies handed down through the years with the local musicians of Tamarack.

April 2, 2019 (7:30-9:30pm) – Early Dutch Houses from the Mohawk and Hudson Valleys Historian Marilyn Sassi will guide us on a virtual tour of the exteriors and interiors of the most significant Dutch houses in the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys. She will include both rural and urban examples that copied homes in the Netherlands.

May 7, 2019 (7:30-9:30pm) – History of the Local American Legion and Its Local Posts (tentative) 2019 is the American Legion's Centenary year. Representatives of our local Voorheesville Legion Post will present a history of the Legion and local veteran organizations as we celebrate this event.

All Programs will be held at the Wyman Osterhout Community Center

NSHA Membership Form

- ___ \$15 Basic
___ \$30 Sustaining
___ \$50 Patron
___ \$150.00 Life (per person)

Name _____

Street _____ City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please send dues to:

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Museum Hours

**The museum is
open year-round
on Sunday
from
2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Handicap Accessible**

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