

Almond Historical Society Newsletter

JAN/FEB/MAR 2002

DONNA B. RYAN, EDITOR, JEFF RYAN, ASST. EDITOR

Chartered in 1965

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2001:

NEXT MEETING:
SUNDAY,
APRIL 28, 2002
OPEN HOUSE
2 TO 5 P.M.
3 P.M. PROGRAM:
Bill and Patti Foster:
Civil War Days

SATURDAY,
MAY 18, 2002
**TRASH AND
TREASURES SALE-**
HAGADORN
HOUSE LAWN
10 A.M. TO 3 P.M.
WE NEED USED
ITEMS TO SELL
AS WELL AS
BAKED GOODS

MONDAY,
JUNE 24, 2002
**STRAWBERRY
FESTIVAL,**
HAGADORN
HOUSE LAWN
SERVING
5 P.M. TILL ???
NEEDED: CLEAN
KOOL WHIP CON-
TAINERS FOR
TAKE OUT
ORDERS

See 2002-2003
calendar enclosed
with this newsletter

FISHERS FUN FARM-ca 1932

Almond, NY . . . Fisher's Fun Farm, . . . 1932 . . . the place where famous big bands such as Guy Lombardo, Jack Teagarden, Lionel Hampton, Fats Waller, Fletcher Henderson, and Duke Ellington played and local folks danced the night away. . . Can this possibly be true?

This is the story that unfolds in an Evening Tribune article given to Ione Northup Miles by her neighbor, the late Martha Dealy, and which weaves an extraordinary narrative of an exciting Sunday night at the local dance hall seventy years ago. Martha and Ione had a special interest in the topic, since their husbands, "Hi" Dealy and "Shorty" Northup, were well-known musicians who played in local dance bands for decades.

Entitled "Fisher's Fun Farm Brings Big Bands", the Evening Tribune story begins: *"It's a Friday afternoon in 1932 and you're at your Hornell home when the evening paper arrives. You bring the paper inside and take it over to your customary seat by the window and open it automatically to the third page without so much as a cursory glance at the headlines.*

"The object of your search is a short one-column ad just above the one for the Majestic Theater. Half the young people in Hornell are looking for it at just about the same moment. 'Saturday, June 2,' the ad reads, 'Ted VanOrder and his Orchestra, with Billy Schu, Master of Ceremonies. Social Plan. Admission 50 cents. Tax 5 cents. Sunday, July 3rd. The Rajah of Rhythm Joe Haymes and his Victor Recording Ballroom, New York City, Direct from the Roseland Ballroom, New York City. Presenting his own Novelty Floor Show. 9-2. Ladies 10 cents, Fisher's Fun Farm, Almond, NY, Seven Miles West of Hornell.'

"Joe Haymes. Not quite up to some of the other Sunday spectaculars at Fisher's: Buddy Rich, Fred Waring and the Pennsylvaniaians, Count Basie, Louis Armstrong, Gene Krupa, just name a few. Still, there will be a good crowd. There's always a good crowd at Fisher's.

"You make up your mind to go almost without having to think about it. There really isn't anyplace else a young person in tune with the times would think of going on a Sunday evening. So Sunday night about 8:30 you roll the car out of the driveway and head for Almond. When you get there, you find several hundred cars in Fisher's lot on the Almond Road: you're lucky to find a spot and even luckier that you didn't wait until later.

"Then you might have had to park by the side of the road and walk a mile and a half to get there like you did the time Cab Calloway was there. You surrender a half dollar and a nickel at the door and walk into the large room. The place about the size of the dance hall at the Armory in Hornell, where they held dances in the winter.

"There are already people milling about the concession stand or purchasing their dance tickets at the booth next to it. It's not quite as

Sat., July 2 (1932)

Ted Van Order to
and his
Orchestra

with
"Billy Schu"
Master of Ceremonies
Social Plan

Admission 50c Tax 5c

Sunday, July 3rd
The Rajah of Rhythm

Joe Haymes
and his
**Victor Recording
Orchestra** is

Direct from the Roseland Ball-
room, New York City Present-
ing his own Novelty Floor
Show.

9-2 Ladies 10c

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Fisher's Fun Farm.—ca 1932...

(Continued from page 1)

dusty in the room as it was the second week the place opened a few years before – the first week there wasn't too many people – but it's just as crowded and you have to squeeze your way through the crowd. 'Beg pardon, ma'am,' 'Sorry, sir,' until finally you make your way over to the ticket counter.

"The tickets are a dime apiece, and you buy a string of these so you won't have to fight to make your way back . . . You know two of the ticket-takers, Charlie Bradt from Hornell and Charlie Henderson who will later become an assemblyman, but who's just young and having a lot of fun right now . . .

"The band is way in the back of the room, one of the great 'Big Bands', the kind you listen to on the radio and the Victrola – LIVE right here in Almond, of all places. It is set up on the recessed stage that makes up the rear wall of the dance floor, and right about nine o'clock it starts to play. By this time you've found someone to dance with, and you walk out onto the floor with her, handing your ticket to the taker as you pass through the gate. It seems like the band has only played about five bars before they stop and they're ushering you off the floor again," the story continues.

"Some of the people you know are standing around trying to recall all the people from Hornell who have played here and one of them mentions Pres White and Al Costanzo, Sheff Davis, Weldon Greene, Carl Merriman, Charley Benson, Jimmy Jones and Hi Dealy. Another fellow throws in the names of Walt Bacon, Al Nemeth, Curlie Gardner, Don Saxton, Merl Sexsmith, Ken Pierce, Art Teugland, Cy Driscoll, his brother Murry, Wayne Potter and Joe Tolan, (who all played in big bands) and one of the girls mentions Hazel Hawkins and Ruth Judy.

"You can name a few yourself. There are Bill Schu, Saturday night's emcee who appears regularly with his own band, and Ray Hedges, who played off and on with King Hammond playing guitar in the band like he used to during the six or seven years he was on the Big Band circuit.

"And then there were Tony Koskie, Clyde Woodard, Dan Blecker, Glen McDermott, Joe Gratten, George Pratt, Andy Grillo, LaVerne Newton, Neil Collins, Harold McEvoy . . . the list is so long you could write a book just naming them all.

"After you get tired of this, you use up a couple more tickets, never get to dance more than half-way around the floor on any of them and you come back and try naming all the bands that have played in Fisher's. The names include the singers, Xavier Cugat, Mel Torme and Harriet Hilliard, who sings with Ozzie Nelson's band, and Ted Lewis who does the 'Me and My Shadow' bit with the little Negro dancing alone behind him and pretending he's the shadow.

"The big bands that appeared include Russ Columbo, Jimmy Lunceford, Louis Prima, Whispering Jack Smith, Hal McIntyre, Clyde McCoy, Lloyd Huntley, Jack Teagarden, Duke Ellington, Russ Morgan, Little Jack Little Jan Gerber, Erskine Hawkins, Glen Gray and the Casa Loma, Mel Hallett, Fats Waller, Dolly Dawn, Fletcher Henderson and the vibraphone player, Lionel Hampton," the article goes on.

A call to Charlie Henderson, an extremely keen gentleman with a quick wit who lives at Loon Lake, enthusiastically confirms the report. He describes Fisher's Fun Farm, located on the east side of Route 21 a short distance from the Alfred Almond Central School, as a favorite fun spot in the 1930's. "They had every big band that you could name in those days. Afton Fisher (son of owner, Alton) and I were very close friends. His father and my father were friends. His father ran a feed store and his son, Paul, had a little restaurant down near the Hornell Ice and Cold Storage," Charlie remembers. "He had a good business down there," he said as he explained that trains carrying livestock and chickens stopped in Hornell on their way to New York City, and Mr. Fisher's feed store was the last feeding stop before they reached the New York City market.

He went on: "Fisher's Fun Farm started with a small putt putt golf course in their front yard long before they built the dance place. They had the first one in the area, I think. Loads of people went up there to play golf and other games. Then they went from there to building this dance hall."

The question which comes to mind, as it did to the Evening Tribune writer, is: "How did Alton Fisher and his wife, Lena, afford to pay to draw the bands here, since they usually asked from \$2500 to \$3000 a night and as much as 60 per cent of the gate?" These were the Depression years, according to Charlie, but Mr. Fisher apparently had funds he was willing to invest in the venture. He had had some experience with providing entertainment for the public, and decided to build a place to bring in the big bands that traveled between Chicago and New York along a regular route through this part of the state. "Maybe they would be in Ohio the night before, stop at Fisher's Fun Farm, then hit different spots like Binghamton, go into Pennsylvania, and on to New York City. That's the way the bands traveled. It would sometimes take them a couple of weeks to go from Chicago to NYC."

Charlie helped Mr. Fisher build the original building, and then worked at Fisher's, mostly as a "bouncer," he remembered. "Everybody was poor in those days. People were working all day long and maybe only got \$20 for the entire week. I think he gave us a dollar or \$1.50 a night for 'bouncing'.

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Fishers Fun Farm.—ca 1932...

(Continued from page 2)

There were three of us, one at each gate. These were Prohibition years, and there was no booze for sale in the hall. If someone had too much hard cider in their car or if someone brought any booze in or gave us any trouble, we would walk over to them, stick out our hand, and say: ‘Come on, we wouldn’t want any trouble. . .’ and then march them outside. We never had any trouble.”

Lois Bardeen also has great memories of the place: “Everybody used to go to hear these big bands. We didn’t go in couples: groups of kids from high school, girls and fellows, would go up together. It was a big deal. I remember several good dancers, including Charlie Henderson: he was a wonderful dancer! Girls would go and be praying that one of those guys would ask them to dance – they were such good dancers!”

She continues: “Today’s young folks are missing a lot. . .they don’t know what real fun is. We used to have fun -- and we didn’t have to have a \$50 bill to go out!!” She also remembers some of the bands providing vaudeville-type floorshows, with dancing men dressed in top hats and canes and chorus girls. “Two of the great bands that I remember hearing were Sammy Kaye – a great entertainer - and Les Brown and his Band of Renown, right from the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago. The people would stand up near the bandstand, or dance around in one spot, listening to them. They were always friendly with the crowd, too.”

Several other longtime residents also had fond memories of Fisher’s Fun Farm. According to Phyllis Ferry Washburn, “We’d get a bunch together and walk up from Almond. Someone would always bring us home.” She described the dance floor as “huge” with a railing around the outside edge surrounded by benches where people could sit. “We purchased little tickets for 10 cents, and after each dance, they cleared the floor and we all went outside the railing. When the band started to play another song, we showed another ticket and went back on the floor to dance again. It was packed on Saturday night, and it drew people from all over. Then we took it for granted – now I look back and see what an opportunity it was to hear all those big bands.”

Termed a “famous rendezvous for famous musicians” by Hornell businessman Ray Callahan, he explained that people followed the big bands, and knew who was playing where. He noted that there was a similar dance hall in Ceres, near Olean, and also the Palace at Loon Lake, and the bands worked in concert together on their touring schedule. “Duke Ellington, Fletch Henderson, Louis Armstrong – all of them had one-night stands at Fisher’s,” he stated.

Although younger and not old enough to go in and dance, Dorie Guthrie Johnson recalls: “A group of us would walk up there, and listen outside. I remember the outside being beautiful – all lit up with Japanese lanterns. Cars were parked all up and down the road, and it was real crowded inside. It was fabulous -- Guy Lombardo and all the big bands were there. It just does not seem possible to have happened here – no one really knew how they happened to get those bands to come.”

DeForest Angell, who played piano in local bands for fifty years, remembers big bands such as Cab Calloway, Jim Lunceford, Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, Earl “Father” Hines being at Fisher’s. “To go out dancing was a big thing then. There were many good dance bands and musicians in Hornell in those days, and you could find four-piece bands playing at Jimmy’s on the Almond Road, Benny’s at the Point, and at fifteen or twenty saloons around town. Sometimes I would get three calls in one day to go play. The Sherwood Hotel had a large dance floor, and we sometimes drew over 300 people on a weekend,” he said.

Ione Northup Miles concurred, noting that her husband, “Shorty” played five nights a week at various dances. “That was his job – his only income – when we got married,” she recalled. “And when he didn’t have a dance job, we went out to listen to another band play!”

Teens from Almond High School, located where Mullen’s Carpets store operates today, loved to dance, too, according to Helen Preston Ross and Irene Hunt Glover. They told this story about spending their lunch hours at “The Inn” (now Muhleisen’s): “A whole bunch of us kids would eat our lunch real fast and practically run every step of the way up to the Inn to dance during our lunch hour. Then we would all have to tear back to school (old Almond High School) by 1 p.m. It was a teen-age hangout – no drinking ,” Irene remembers. Helen recalled the owner, Bernice Drumheller (“Aunt Binky”), who would

Sunday

Nov. 13 (1932)

MCA Presents

A Real Musical Cyclone

**Tommy Tucker
AND HIS ORIGINAL****Californians**

Natural Clowns Entertainers and Musicians

From the famous Hollywood Restaurant, New York City

Original Band — Not to Be Confused With Similar Names

Park Plan 9:30—1:30**Fisher’s****Fun Farm**

Almond, N.Y.

7 mis. West of Hornell

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The Almond Dam—Part 2

(Continued from page 3)

“push the jukebox button for us so that the music would play and we could dance.” “We didn’t have any money – and she was real good to us,” Irene agreed.

Unlimited opportunities for dancing existed in the 1930’s, as evidenced from the microfilm of Evening Tribunes at the Hornell Public Library. Every week there were advertisements for events in various locations:

“Double Holiday Dance Program, Coliseum, Ceres,
Saturday July 2 and Monday July 4: Two big nights”

“Palace Amusement Park,
Dancing every Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening.”

“Dance at Goodwin Hall, Almond, New York,
Wed July 13, Dancing 9-1,
Music by Tom’s Kittens, Gents 40 cents, Ladies 10 cents”

“Dance at Fireman’s Hall, Alfred, NY,
Saturday, July 23, Tom’s Kittens, Round and Square Dancing”

“Tom’s Kittens will play at the John Schaumberg Farm, Big Creek Road July 27
Why not dance? Nail driving contest for the ladies!”

A small article in the July 29 edition reads: “Hundreds frolicked at the Depression Dance at Demonte’s Pavilion at Stannards last night (Ed note: this was a Thursday night!) and forgot about business and other troubles for the evening. The event is the first in a series at which Bud Rose and his Buddies will be featured.”

Kenneth (“Pete”) Gridley, a graduate of Almond High School in 1929, describes the times this way: “Things were tough during the Depression. I took any jobs I could, and maybe got a dollar for working all day,” he said, noting that he always managed to find fifty cents to get to Fisher’s, which he termed a “high class place with a nice crowd and good entertainment.”

Located in what was known as the Whitney Valley, several former neighborhood “kids” had a variety of memories of the Fishers and their business. When the name Fisher’s Fun Farm was mentioned, they immediately spoke of the fun times that big bands like Tommy Dorsey, Kay Kaiser, Sammy Kaye, and Duke Ellington brought to this little town.

Ruth Sherwood Wilson and her sister, Louise Sherwood Giglio, lived in the just down the road from Fisher’s, and were frequent visitors. “The building wasn’t anything elegant, just a plain structure with no special decorations. But they had all the big bands there. When we were growing up, there was a magazine of about a dozen pages that told about the movie stars and musicians. We listened to the radio a lot and we knew what was going on. Mrs. Fisher had little hot dog stand inside the building and they did not sell booze there. But they always had a crowd and it was fun to watch them dance,” the girls concurred. Jean Whitaker Moses also agreed, saying, “Cars were parked way down where we live. People came from Buffalo, Rochester, and all around.”

Jim Thomas, who now lives in California, reminisced via phone: “I grew up just down the road from there. At one time there was an archery range on the south side, and the miniature golf course went on down past the skating rink toward the creek. It was a big layout. They had the top bands in the country. It was quite a place -- there were pictures up on the office wall of the big bands and singers. I used to, as a kid, go up there and peak in the door and watch the people dance.”

“I get goose pimples just thinking about it,” Irene Glover exclaimed. “We used to sneak up there and watch them dance – that used to thrill me to no end. We weren’t allowed in there – and I wanted to be in there dancing so badly! Talk about cars – the parking lot was jam-packed! I can remember that music – you better believe I can! I’d see everyone go in there to dance, and I think I used to feel envious . . . I thought it was so glamorous,” she mused. After Fisher’s became a skating rink, Irene worked there every night after school and weekends, earning \$7 a week as a ticket seller. Photographs of celebrities, reminders of the big band days, were fastened to the dance floor walls. “I can still see so very vividly the huge picture of Guy Lombardo out in the ballroom,” she said.

The extent of the crowds attending the dances was confirmed in the Evening Tribune narrative: “But you look around at the crowd and you can tell what is keeping Fisher’s going and keeps the people coming. They come through weather that at times has been so bad that one February night the whole

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The Almond Dam—Part 2

(Continued from page 4)

place got snowed in and people couldn't make it home. They wound up sleeping on the floor or out in their cars in the lot for a couple of nights. When you leave and you see the frustrated state policeman trying to unjam the traffic snarl as the crowd heads home, it seems as though Fisher's Fun Farm will last forever.

"If someone had said that in a few years after Alton Fisher dies, his sons will struggle with the place for only a short while before Afton gives up and goes to Corning to start a movie house and Paul moves out to the Midwest, you wouldn't believe him," the article continues.

But it was true, and sorry to say, the wonder and delight of the big bands at Fisher's Fun Farm did not last forever. Charlie Henderson, while happily recalling dancing the foxtrot and Charleston to some of the big names such as Cab Calloway, Glen Gray, Fats Waller, also regretfully spoke of its demise. What happened? "Changes . . . it is just one of those things," he reflected.

A major change occurred when the 1935 flood hit the valley in July and "washed just about everything away and destroyed the miniature golf course," Jim Thomas vividly remembers. Jean Moses recalls that Mrs. Fisher gave her the golf clubs and she, Jim and Jean Thomas, and Louis and Louise Sherwood dug holes in the lawn, put the cans in for "holes" and set up their own putt putt course for the kids. That was fun, she said, until one day she reported: "My mother caught her heel in one of our cans and she made us cover up all the holes!"

It is unknown just how long the big bands continued to come to the hall, but eventually the place became a popular roller-skating rink with parties held every weekend. Toward the end, Mrs. Fisher was running it by herself, Jim explained. "I ran around with their grandson, Paul Fisher, Jr., who helped his grandmother run the skating rink. Sometime in the late 30's Paul Sr. showed up and took Paul Jr. to live with him. She could barely walk, so I would help her down to the rink and put skates on the kids and try to keep order. I don't know what happened to all the skates. I was one of the skate boys (we put the skates on the ones that rented the skates). There were many, the type that clamped on using a skate key. We clamped on the skates, put leather straps across the toes and on real nice shoes or those that requested them, we put felt pads under the straps. Seems so long ago . . . almost 65 years," he went on.

Leland Mosher states that his family's band, "The Tune Twisters" played at Fisher's on New Year's Eve, 1941, for a round and square dance. "Bill Harding and Bernice Kaple Harding were operating the dance hall at that time. We had 1000 paid couples that night – the largest we ever had. They paid seventy-five cents a couple, and they all wanted to win the door prizes: five pound bags of sugar! It was wartime, and because of rationing, people were eager to obtain sugar. My brother worked for a local grocery store, and we offered the sugar instead of money for the door prizes. It worked!"

Sometime in the early 40's Cleon Goodwin purchased the property, according to an e-mail received from his son, Don. "They ran a dance hall for several years. I think Dad got the idea from his father, Harley, who earlier had owned the Almond Hotel. This was a pool hall, ice cream parlor plus dance hall on the third floor. This building later became Al Palmer's. Several years after Dad operated the dance hall, Cleon and Otto became partners in Goodwin Brothers Garage," he writes via e-mail. The February 18, 1973 Evening Tribune article, the author of which is unknown and which was quoted at the beginning of this story, concludes with this nostalgic thought: "In 1973, the place would be nothing but a barn where a fellow named Amiya Goswami is using it for an auction center across the street from the Alfred Almond Central School building. That would all still be in the future, and on a warm July night in 1932, inconceivable. Right now, during the heyday of the Big Bands, Fisher's Fun Farm is the only place to be on a Sunday night." One might think that there is nothing left of those fun-filled dance years except a shell of the old dance hall. But Ronnie Coleman, via a phone call from Florida, was anxious to share this information: "Fisher's Fun Farm -- I remember hearing that Ozzie Nelson and Harriet Hilliard and Glen Gray appeared there. But by the time I got around, they were having square dances with Claude Lewis and his band. But the most significant thing for me is that around 1948 John Gorton and I tore the dance floor up with crowbars. It was a nice maple tongue and groove floor, and we took it down to the new Beacon Inn where it was put down for the dance floor there. You can see in front of the jukebox where people stood and shuffled around that the floor is worn down to the nails," he recalled.

We Hear From Our Members...

Pat and Ann Quackenbush wrote this note: “Now we can’t imagine starting the holiday season without the wonderful program sponsored by the Almond Historical Society,” and went on to specifically thank those responsible for the musical program at AUC.

George Lewis writes from Mt. Joy, PA: “I’ve been meaning to do this for some time, but never did it. The kids and grandkids get a big kick out of reading about ‘Old Almond’ so I’m sending a check to cover the cost and shipping of your notebook and all the back issues of the Society newsletter.” Thanks, George, for your generous monetary gift as well.

Joan Berry Lindeman requested that we issue a clarification about her brothers, Donald and Paul, who were mentioned in the World War II story in the November newsletter. “I lost two brothers in the service. Capt. Donald Berry, was in the infantry and was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. My brother, 1st Lt. Paul Berry, was in the Air Force and got through WW II safely. But he missed flying so much that he reenlisted so he could fly again. He was killed in the Korean War,” she explained. Our apologies to Joan for the error, and we extend our sincere appreciation to the Berry family for their extreme sacrifice made to secure our freedom.

Betty Ranger Lemen sent a letter and enclosed a picture of a handsome WW II soldier, Stephen Grennell, who died not too long after his discharge in 1946. “He was the first man (at least from our 4L class at Almond Union of Churches) whose number was drawn from the fish bowl in Almond. He worked for Sadie Karr on the Karr farm and when Sadie moved to Almond and rented to teachers, he stayed with her,” she writes. She requested that the photo be put in the archives.

Heidi Ryan Lindley sends these comments via e-mail from Anderson, IN: “Another great job on that newsletter. I felt like I was reading Brokaw just with names I was very familiar with. It was really amazing to see the attitudes of the people of the 40’s with their renewed faith and trust in God when times were tough. We see and hear so much of that even now during these troubled times. I think one of the quotes from the newsletter said, ‘If ever there was a time we needed to trust in God, it’s now,’ and that is what people are saying now. The one difference now is that some may say that we need to trust in ‘a god’ rather than the One true and living God.

She went on to comment on some of the WWII vets, and closed with this comment: “Maybe in some way you can let these men and women of my beloved hometown know how much I appreciate knowing what they did for me as a fellow American all those years ago. Who knew that the butcher (Ron Rawleigh) fought for my freedom! Keep up the great work you do for the newsletter, and thanks for helping us have great insight into what makes Almond so special.

Ben Reynolds, in a phone call from Tallahassee, Florida, thanked us for the WWII story. He noted that his mother, Blanche, had three gold stars in her window during WWII, and explained that all the homes with children in the service were indicated by these stars hung in the windows of the family homes. He also remembered his dad, John Reynolds, serving as a civil air warden during the war, taking his turn watching for enemy aircraft in a tower located somewhere near the water tower in Almond – anyone else remember that?

Thank you to all of you who call, write, or e-mail comments to us. We love to hear from you!!

We Send our Condolences to the Families of...

VIOLET BELL SHARRETT, who died October 15, 2001 at the age of 83. A graduate of Buffalo State, she was the widow of Charles T. Sharrett, and taught home economics at AACS and Keshequa. She was active at Almond Union of Churches, 20th Century Club, Almond Sr. Citizens, and the election board. She will be remembered by many as an accomplished seamstress, who created many of the AACS cheerleading uniforms.

MARTHA DEALY, who died October 22, 2001 at the age of 86. A graduate of Hornell High School, she worked at various places in Hornell, including Harvey and Carey's, the Majestic, the Big Elms, and in the graphic arts department at St. James. She was a longtime AHS member, as well as 20th Century Club, Almond Sr. Citizens, and St. Jude's and St. Brendan's church,

BONNY RIGBY LEWIS, 65, died on November 3, 2001, in Whitefish, Montana, while visiting her daughter. Both she and her husband, Bob Lewis, were graduates of Alfred Almond Central School, and they lived in Arkport. Bob has been a tremendous help in gathering information and anecdotes for several issues of the AHS newsletter.

GEORGE M. RAWLEIGH, who died in Zephyrhills, FL, on November 28, 2001 at the age of 75. He was married to the former Geraldine Drumm, and was one of the WWII veterans featured in the November AHS newsletter. We were sorry to learn that he had not seen the story before he died, and we want to once again thank him for his service to us and our country.

Announcements...

Hazel Bracken, chairman of the Strawberry Festival, is requesting clean 8 oz. Whipped topping containers to be used for take-out orders. They can be left at the Hagadorn House, or you may call Hazel at 276-2673. Please note: we are not able to use cottage cheese containers. Thanks!

President Kitty Baker wants to thank everyone who participated in the Christmas Open House. A large crowd attended the musical program held at Almond Union Church at 3 p.m., and also enjoyed the refreshments and decorations at the Hagadorn House. A special thank you to **Mary Ellen Westlake** for transforming the House with her wonderful Christmas decorations, the **AACS fourth grade** classes for

Announcements...

Unless you are a LIFE member, your dues are payable this month. In this newsletter, you will find a payment request – please complete it and mail it back to us promptly. We keep our dues at a minimal amount to cover the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter. We trust that some of you may be able to send an extra donation to assist with the increasing expenses of maintaining the Hagadorn House. Thank you to those of you who have done so in the past year. Your board of directors is very conservative, and they make every attempt to keep expenses as low as possible. Also please remember: **IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS, YOU MUST NOTIFY US. NEWSLETTERS ARE SENT VIA BULK MAIL, AND AS SUCH ARE NOT FORWARDED BY THE US POST OFFICE.** Address changes may be sent to Doris Montgomery, Angelica Street, Almond, New York 14804, or e-mailed to her at domo@infoblvd.net.

Ebay Comes to Almond...

A favorite pastime of some local E-bay enthusiasts is regular check-in at the auction site for items with an Almond, NY, connection. The last month has provided some interesting listings, including old postcards and advertising items.

One postcard, described "c.1940, Greetings from Almond, NY," features a colored photo of a body of water of somewhat questionable location. It possibly could be Almond Lake, but the date would more like 1948 . . . This divided back, unused postcard, sold for \$5 after only one bid was placed during the week-long auction.



Another postcard apparently did not sell, after a minimum bid of \$9.50 set by the seller was not met. Listed as "A terrific real 1908 photo postcard," the print is a view of Chapel Street looking North, with an unidentified home in the trees up on a bank on the West side of the street. The back of the card, complete with one penny cancelled postage, shows the recipient as Myrtle Monahan, RFD1, Hornell, New York, with the simple message: "from W.F." Possibly the Bayless home??

Currently at auction is another postcard listed by a different seller, with a minimum required bid of \$14. This features the title, "Dixson Block in Almond, NY - 1907 - Real photo", with additional comments drawing bidders' attention to the feed and grocery stores and old time street lamp. This picture is similar to one of the thirty photos of "old Almond" included in the item we are offering for sale as a storage notebook for newsletters for only \$13!

Among two other unique items sold recently, was a coin from H. Dartt Dry Goods and Groceries, Almond, NY. The seller, from Lakeland, FL, described the coin as "bold strike - should bring \$115 or more. . ." The front of the coin is dated 1864, and the AHS website's 1850 census information confirms the existence of "Horace Dart, merchant, age 26." A conversation with Glenn Leathersich indicated that these coins were produced to solve the problem of shortage of currency during the Civil War, and they were legal tender in the merchant's store. Last check of the auction showed the bid at \$40.09.

A seller from Marin County, CA., listed a very unique item described thus: "Offered here is an interesting oblong shaped gold advertising for the 14th Annual World's Horse Traders' Convention, Almond, NY August 11-16, 1941. Over 10,000 horses last year. Unused, Excellent condition, 2 5/8" x 1 1/4". Buy now: \$12."

ALMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Donna B. Ryan, Editor 54 Main Street, Almond, NY 14804 (607) 276 6760

leeryan@myexcel.com (PLEASE NOTE NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS)

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