



Phelps Community Historical Society Newsletter

February 2021 Volume 29 Issue 248

Howe House Museum

66 Main Street
Phelps, NY 14532
(315) 548-4940

E-mail: histsoc2@gmail.com
Website: phelpsnyhistory.com
Find us on Facebook



Museum Hours:

Wednesday, Thursday and
Friday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
or by appointment



President

Mart VanKirk

Board of Trustees

Ron Grube, Vice President
Barbara Gillespie, Secretary
Tom Cheney, Treasurer
Marilyn DeRuyter, Trustee
Nicole Fess, Trustee
Gary Jones, Trustee
Len Kataskas, Trustee
Sarah Landschoot, Trustee
Ann Oaks, Trustee
Jane Pedersen, Trustee



Director

Diane Goodman



Country Lawyer's Office

MIDLAKES HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The opening of Midlakes High School had been planned for September of 1970, but was delayed due to a strike by construction workers. On February 7, 1971 the first Midlakes students attended classes in the new building.

Being in a different location was not the only adjustment students would have to make. With growing enrollments and dwindling space, the residents of Phelps and Clifton Springs had decided to merge and build a new high school. "I was in the very first class to graduate from Midlakes", said Stephen Tears, who now lives in Virginia Beach.

"We were not looking forward to it because we didn't know anyone from Phelps High School. Well, it went without a hitch .. we started to make lifelong friends."



The name "Midlakes" was selected by a 12-member student council due to its location between Canandaigua and Seneca lakes. The colors of black, white and blue are a combination of colors from the former schools.

Two schools were merged 50 years ago, creating one community by means of education, activities, sports and school spirit! Approximately 150 foreign exchange students have attended Midlakes High School from 1971-2021. Graduates became educators, athletes, musicians, philanthropists, and more.

(continued on page 3)

Source: Midlakes.org, Todd Clausen, PCSCSD Public Information Officer



PCHS BULLETIN BOARD

ELECTION RESULTS

President - Mart Van Kirk
(Second one year term)

Trustees returning for three year term :

Nicole Fess
Ann Oaks
Jane Pedersen

New Trustee for three year term:
Gary Jones

Revisions to the Constitution and By - Laws,
reflecting the current operations of the
society, have been approved.

**Thank you to everyone who
submitted a ballot.**

HAPPY 105th BIRTHDAY !

Mildred Parmelee

March 1st



VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

After numerous committee meetings
and countless volunteer hours;
researching, composing and editing;
the PCHS has launched its new website:

phelpsnyhistory.com

Check it out and let us know what you think!

SAVE THE DATE

Hello All Phelps Central School Alumni!

We want you to SAVE THE DATE for the first annual
Phelps Central School Alumni Banquet.

As we look forward to 2021, the Reunion Committee
has met and decided to reschedule our banquet
for **JULY 31st, 2021**

The venue is the same: the American Legion in
Phelps (upstairs, downstairs and outside are reserved).
Those who paid for dinner last year will already be
counted in for attending , unless we hear otherwise. The
Annual Sauerkraut Festival is scheduled for Thursday,
August 5 – Sunday, August 8, 2021 so you may want to
include that in your visit.

Your annual dues of \$5.00 (which guarantee you an
invitation to the Banquet event) are due for 2021 and
may be paid to :

John Polee (make payable to John Polee)
11 Church Street, Apt 3
Phelps, NY 14532

Additional info to follow - ***The Alumni Committee***

HOWE HOUSE REOPENS

The Howe House will reopen

Wednesday, March 3

and resume normal hours:

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

10am – 4pm or by appointment.

We will be accepting donations of items.

Due to space limitations the

Collections Committee has established

criteria for items to be considered.

Please call (315-548-4940) or

email (histsoc2@gmail.com) the

***PCHS office if you have an item/items you
would like to be considered for donation.***



Office Staff:

L to R: Mrs. Marlene Treese, Secretary to Business Manager; Mrs. Catherine Goodman, Purchasing and Switchboard; Mrs. Lois Allen, District Secretary; Mrs. Dorothy Peck, Treasurer and Receptionist.



George D. Bidleman
Principal Midlakes High



Bus Drivers at Phelps:

L to R: Mrs. Alice Bremer, Clark Phillips, John Hayes, Raymond Potter, Bus Mechanic; Lee Adams; Bernard Des Camp; Earl Case.
Standing: Mrs. Jean Manzer, George Chase, Mrs. Ruth Des Camp, Dever Fisher.

Source: Photos and sponsor list from the 1971 Midlakes "Reflections" yearbook.

Phelps businesses from "Our Sponsors"

Avedisian Motor Co. Pleasant Street	Fisher Electronics Park Street	M & B Pizza Products So. Newark Street	Phelps Florist Franklin Street	Ruthven Bros. Texaco Main Street
Bev's Beauty Shop Ontario Street	Goodman's Grocery West Main Street	Margrove's Dairy Bar and Restaurant Main Street	Phelps Liquor Store Main Street	Sabin's Garage
Joel Caves, Inc Pearl St	Goodman's Gulf West Main Street	Maslyn Super Duper Routes 96 and 88	Phelps Machine Co. Church Street	Seneca Kraut & Pickling Co., Inc. So. Newark Street
Dale's Beauty Shop Flint Street	Hears Clothing Shop 47 E. Main Street	Ontario Telephone Co.* Main Street	Phelps Variety Store Milton C. Rathbun	Silver Floss Foods Eagle Street
DeRuyter's Snack Bar Main Street	Johnnie's Radio Shop Main Street	P & C Food Markets, Inc. Ontario Street	Doctor D. W. Pulver	Sullivan Electric, Inc Park Street
Dewey Funeral Home East Main Street	Judy's Restaurant Main Street	Pat's Beauty Salon Main Street	Quality Dry Cleaners Main Street	Bill Symonds Gas Town Route 96
Eacker Funeral Home 104 East Main Street	Dr. C.J. Kenfield Dr. Daniel L. Rosinski 12 S. Wayne Street	Phelps Agway Coop., Inc.* Ontario Street	Robert M. Quigley and John C. Britting Church Street	John G. Sweeney
Finger Lakes Painting Mfg. Co. Main Street		Phelps Cement Products** So. Newark Street	Ovid Randall & Son	Timberline Electric Main Street
			Richardson Insurance Agency 51 East Main Street	Whitson Pharmacy Inc.* D.B. Meath Pharmacist Main Street

*denotes business still in operation but with change of name or ownership. Ontario Telephone Co. is now OTTC (Ontario Trumansburg Telephone Company), Phelps Agway is now Phelps Mercantile, Inc., Whitson Pharmacy is now Phelps Hometown Pharmacy.

** Phelps Cement Products, Inc has been a Haers family business since 1946.

Early Phelps Newspaper Articles

by F. Lee Johnson 2021

As I was looking at early Phelps newspaper articles which appeared in different local papers, I thought that some of the articles were interesting and that you might also find them as such. I hope you will appreciate looking at some of our early history. There are many, and I picked out ones you might like.

The Expositor Geneva, NY Wednesday, 17th June 1807
Carding and Picking Machines: Those who wish to have their wool carded in the best manner, will please apply to the subscriber, who is now erecting in the town of Phelps, on the Canandaigua outlet, opposite the farm of J.D. Robison, a double machine of the best kind, also a picking machine. He has employed a man to superintend the machines who has been regularly bred to the business, and will carefully execute all orders in his line. It is expected that all coarsest of filth will be taken from the wool and the grease will be kept separately from the wool. The terms of carding will be usual. Wool may be left at F. Barnard's clothier's shop, Geneva.

The Expositor Geneva, New York 17 June 1807
Dissolution of partnership; Notice is hereby given, that the subscribers, by mutual agreement, have dissolved partnership. All persons indebted to them are requested to make settlement by the 1st of November next, to avoid the trouble of seeing a constable. It is thought a hint to the wise will be sufficient. Joel Prescott; Rob W. Ashley, Phelps.

Geneva Courier 7 April 1858
Elijah Maffet (Phelps) own's 13 oxen who's aggregate weight is 24,700 lbs. The heaviest weighs 2239 lbs.

Geneve Courier 18 July 1858
William Hildreth Ontario elected Sheriff 1858.

Geneva Courier 17 July 1861
Mr. Enock Ottley of Phelps in this county, who has been quite a speculator in produce and cattle, has as near as can be ascertained, gathered together some 10 thousand dollars and slid out of the country, leaving his creditors in the suds.

Geneva Gazette 18 April 1862
The Phelps Star says there is a lady living in Plainville, only 4 miles from the village by the name of Jane Van Dyne familiarly known as Aunt Jennie, who is 115 years old and is as smart as a person at the age of 75. She is in good health and converses freely.

Geneva Gazette 22 August 1862

Fatal Camphene Explosion. We regret to learn that Mr. E. N. Phelps formerly publisher of the Phelps Democratic Star was fatally burned by the explosion of a camphene lamp in our neighboring village of Vienna last night. He was engaged in lighting lamps in one of the churches of that village, and as the explosion took place, the ignited liquid spread over his breast and arms, burning the skin to a crisp before succor reached him. At noon today he was barely alive, but scarcely a hope is entertained of his recovery. (My finding of Camphene – a dangerous "explosive" fluid mixture of turpentine, alcohol and camphor oil.)

Ontario Republican Times 17 September 1862

A farmer, Peter Van Dyne, residing in the village of Phelps was kicked in the forehead by one of his horses yesterday morning, and very seriously, if not fatally injured. Dr. Potter of Geneva and Dr. Carpenter of Phelps were called to attend him. Several pieces of bone were taken from the wound. The surgeons expressed strong hopes of his recovery, but his case must be a very critical one and to an unprofessional eye would seem as though nothing short of a miracle could save him.

Ontario Republican Times 31 December 1862

On Christmas Eve an affray occurred at the village of Phelps in which a blacksmith by the name of French was shot in the abdomen by a revolver, in the hands of one Thomas Van Dyne. There were 2 other shots fired but without other effect than passing through the coat sleeve of an Irishman, whose name we have not learned. We understand that one of the bullets passed through a room of the American Hotel, near the head of the landlady. There has been no arrest we believe. The man French is said to be in a fair way recovering. The ball is still in his body. It has been reported that the coroner held an inquest over the body of French, although he is still a live man. We do not, however, vouch for the truth of the report. Van Dyne and the wounded man were said to be friendly, and it is supposed that the design was to shoot another man. It has become a much to common practice to carry revolvers in the county, and no one is safe while lawless persons are allowed to carry them in their pockets. We know nothing of this affray, but presume it proceeded from a drunken brawl, as it occurred at 10 o'clock in the evening.

(continued on page 5)

Early Phelps Newspaper Articles

(continued from page 4)

Rochester, NY. Union & Advertiser 22 July 1867

Shocking Accident – Messrs. Editors; Our usually tranquil village of Phelps was the scene of a horrible and sudden death on the afternoon of Saturday last. Mr. Peter Van Dyne, while driving a team of fractious horses down a little incline, by their suddenly startling on passing over a jolt in the road was precipitated to the ground in front of the wagon, which was heavily laden with brick. Both wheels passed over his neck, dislocating it, and severing the veins and arteries. The maxillary bone was also crushed, which gave to the lower part of the face and neck a shockingly bloody and mutilated appearance.

(This is the same Peter that was kicked in the forehead. He was 57 years old. He leaves a wife and several adult children. From my Van Dyne/Duyne family genealogy)



Horse-drawn wagon similar to the one being used by Josiah Howe when he had his accident.

Source : Internet "Ontario County People in the News".
(Articles copied as written back then).

Johnson and Van Dine/ Dyne/Duyne Family Genealogies

Ontario Repository and Messenger 26 August 1868

We were informed that a distressing accident occurred in the town of Phelps, last Wednesday afternoon, on the occasion of the annual picnic of the Unionville School. A four-horse team, carrying about thirty of the scholars, in crossing a small bridge which spans the creek near the residence of Cooper Sayer Esq. it gave way. The wagon upset and precipitated the load into the bed of the creek. All of the party were more or less injured, Among the most seriously injured were Mrs. Ann Lane, bad scalp wound; Miss Cartwright, arm broken above the elbow and Mrs. J. Spoor badly injured about the head.

Ontario County Times 16 August 1871

Josiah Howe, son of Dr. J.Q. Howe, came near receiving a fatal injury on Thursday of this week. He was engaged in drawing timber to the Snyder mill, and had a heavy oak stick thirty feet in length on a wagon, and while he was crossing the bridge, near said mill, at the point where there is no rail or guards on the side of the bridge, the reach of the wagon, which held the wheels to the timber, became disconnected and allowed the wheels to cut off one side of the bridge, overturning the wagon, by which his leg, near the knee, was caught between the stake and the timber and cutting a fearful gash in the flesh by the stake, and holding him so firmly, that several persons had to make great effort to extricate him. He is confined to the house and doing as well as the nature of the case would allow.

The Book of Lost Friends by Lisa Wingate

Book review by Marcia Maslyn

This is a wonderful story based on true facts and records. A lot of humanity and history with each chapter beginning with an ad from the original "Lost Friends" newspaper columns

We follow three young women looking to build a life after the Civil War in 1875 Louisiana: Hannie who is a freed slave, her mistress Lavinia and Juneau, illegitimate freeborn Creole half-sister to Lavinia. They travel together west into Texas, looking for the plantation master, and Lavinia's father. Travel is dangerous in these unsettled times, and we learn why. Interesting travel on a riverboat, getting to meet other travelers plus why they are traveling. A train ride as they see and learn about the wide open spaces and unusual animals of Texas. Juneau can read and noticed some newspaper ads titled "Lost Friends". It was the SOUTHWESTERN paper and asked all pastors to read the requests from their pulpit, as a way for people to try and find each other after having been separated after being sold to another plantation owner or gone off to war and not returned.

As these three women traveled, they found other travelers looking for family and willing to pay whatever they could afford to have their message added to the papers. This helped the women pay their way, while helping others. Juneau spends one night putting all the names they have collected in alphabetical order in a book.

1897 Augustine, LA: Benny Silva is a recent college graduate with a Master's Degree in Education. She came to Augustine to teach for 5 years as a way to have her federal student loans forgiven. Benny quickly learns that the south is not as racially equal as other places she has lived. It was interesting to read about how as she walks down a "tree tunnel" lane towards the former Plantation home, and wonders 'Who walked here before her and what they might have talked about? Were there battles fought here? Are there still bullets in trees and in the ground? Benny is also a firm believer that if there is magic in this world, it is contained in books. A major problem was the lack of books to interest the students and keep them involved. With the help of some townspeople and a lot of research of her own, will she manage to spark her students' curiosity and learn along with them some great local history. As a person raised in another state, Benny can scarcely comprehend the lives of her poverty-stricken students. But, amid the gnarled oaks and run-down plantation homes, lies the century old history of three young women, a long ago journey and a hidden book that could change everything.

Lisa Wingate has written a captivating and intelligent historical novel which teaches while taking a hold of the readers heart. She makes history come alive as if you are right there with the characters.

Thank you to the following for their membership, contributions & continued support of the Phelps Community Historical Society

Welcome New Members!

David Bloom Canandaigua, NY

Meri Grube Buffalo, NY

Daniel & Jocelyn McConnon Phelps, NY

Andy & Carole Oaks Oaks Corners, NY

Membership Renewals

Benefits include the PCHS monthly newsletter and a 10% discount in our Gift Shoppe

Cynthia Atkinson	Minerva Milliman
Carl E. Carlson	Dianne Prentice
Charles Conklin	Michael Preibe
Otis & Vivian Davis	Paul & Jeanne
Barbara DeCook	Salisbury
Marilyn DeRuyter	Marcia Scherbyn
Julie Files	Sharon Scherbyn
Barb Gillespie	Jeff Silver
Gary & Karen Jones	Barbara Van Kirk
Dennis E King	Mart VanKirk
Sarah Landschoot	Donna Webb
Roberta Leu	Robert & Marie
Richard & Jo Marek	Westfall
	Roger & Shirley
	Westfall

Time and Talent

Thank you **Gary Fisher** for your service as PCHS Trustee

Barb Brennessel	Lee Johnson
Tom Cheney	Len Kataskas
Carol Conklin	Sarah Landschoot
Bonnie Dixon	Barry Lee
Nicole Fess	Dana Mark
Wendy Gaylord	Marcia Maslyn
Loren Gifford	Ann Oaks
Scott Gifford	Curt Pudzdolt
Barb Gillespie	Bob Quigley
Ron Grube	Mart Van Kirk

Monetary Donations

Tom Cheney
 Paul and Jeanne Salisbury
 Town of Phelps
 Government Funding
 Mart VanKirk

Memorials

Cynthia Atkinson
 in memory of
Eldon W. Clement
Rena Ruthven

Cheryl Chester and Marilyn DeRuyter
 in memory of
Carl W. Fenner

Charles Conklin
 in memory of
Arthur and Alma Conklin

Marilyn DeRuyter
 in memory of
Carlton R Beechler, Sr
Richard Detro

Jack and Bette J. Hicks
 in memory of
Linda Burns

Marcia Scherbyn
 in memory of
Arthur and Mildred Adams

Barbara Van Kirk
 in memory of
Bill Filiatreau
Shirley Filiatreau
Francis Van Kirk



MEMBERSHIP and DONATION FORM

*If "Reminder" is highlighted please renew your membership.
If "Final Notice" is highlighted this will be your last newsletter if dues are not paid.*

Application: New _____ Renewal _____ Gift _____ Send membership card _____ For Office use:
Individual: \$20.00 _____ Family: \$30.00 _____ Business: \$50.00 _____ Member #: _____
Name: _____ Date Rcvd: _____
Address: _____ Check #: _____
Summer/Winter Address: _____ Amt. Rcvd: _____
(If different from above) Exp. Date: _____
Dates in effect: _____ Computer: _____
Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____ Index Card: _____
Member Card: _____

DONATION: Amount _____

_____ In memory of (Optional): _____

_____ In honor of (Optional): _____

In Memoriam

John F. "Jack" DeBoover Jr.

PCHS Member

March 6, 1930 - January 26, 2021

Carl W. Fenner

PCHS Member

January 2, 1926 - January 29, 2021

Rev. Shirley H. Filiatreau

Past PCHS Trustee

July 8, 1932 - January 22, 2021

Michael P. Waters

PCHS Member

July 8, 1946 - December 3, 2020

Donald E. Wilkes

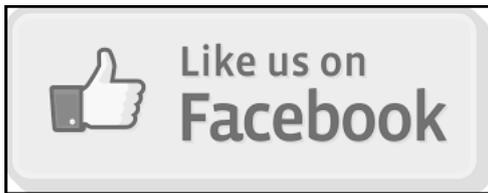
PCHS Member

April 26, 1943 - January 23, 2021

PHELPS COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

66 Main Street
Phelps, NY 14532

NON-PROFIT ORG
PRST STD
US Postage
PAID
Permit No 31
Newark, NY 14513



JUST FOR FUN

The past year has found everyone staying at home more, with playing games a way to spend family time and be active. Stop in to see our display of games from the late 1800s and early 1900s. The board game pictured below, District Messenger Boy, was donated by Herbert Bengel in 1982 and is from 1886.

