



Gilboa Historical Society

Learning about, sharing, and preserving our history

SPRING 2012, VOLUME 14.1

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Please check your address on the back of this newsletter and let us know of corrections or temporary addresses.



Asterisk(s) next to your name indicate that your membership is paid up (* = single annual membership; ** = family or couple's annual membership; *** = lifetime membership; **** = couple's lifetime membership).

No asterisks? Please use the application on page 39 to earn *your* star.

Gilboa Museum 2012 Summer Exhibit

The Gilboa Forest— New Discoveries, New Hypotheses!

See New Fossils from Hurricane Irene!

These recently discovered fossils force a revision of the theory and spur clarification of our understanding of our prehistoric past.

**That'll be the topic of the exhibit—
more to come in the June Newsletter**

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Linda Newerla, Vice President
Wilma Jones, Treasurer

Shirley Kutzscher, Recording Secretary

Irene Hess, Richard Lewis, Linda Stratigos, Kristin Wyckoff, Directors

**The Gilboa Historical Society meets at 7:00 P.M. at the Gilboa Town Hall
on the third Wednesday of the month, March–December.**

The **Gilboa Museum**, 122 Stryker Road, is open noon–4:30
Saturdays and Sundays, from July through Labor Day, on Columbus Day weekend,
and by appointment (607 588-9413). <http://www.gilboafossils.org>

The **Tourism Map, Newsletters**, and other items of general interest
are available online at <http://www.gilboahome.com>.

Send feedback or suggestions on the Newsletter to
gerrys@gilboahome.com

Gerry Stoner, 152 Starheim Road, Stamford, NY 12167

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MY OLD HOUSE

Terri Lahti

How on earth did Franklin Clapper remember so many names and the various people that have come and gone from our area?

In the mid-1940s, my parents, Herbert and Lillian Scutt, purchased the property previously owned by the Fastert family on Maybie Road. Franklin Clapper's article reminded me of those days, visiting John Schaefer; the Bremers, Klenows and Fastert brothers; the Mattices and Van Wormers; the Maces and also the Bendtsons. At that time, farmers helped each other—if one had a problem, others would come over and help, and I went along for the ride and met lots of folks. I enjoyed hearing the stories that Kitty and Tony Harrington told, and if I had a nature or historical question at school, Kitty was always willing to help me look for an answer.

Well, back to our homestead. At some point, the home on the Fastert farm burned down, the Fasterts moved away, and the property was eventually put up for sale—overgrown and kind of forgotten. The schoolhouse at the corner of the crossroad was moved and placed on the old home's former foundation and that is where we lived from sometime in the mid-'40s to mid-'60s when my folks sold the place to Florence and Eddie Mower and moved to Schoharie.

I know my dad was a customer of the store as I remember Franklin Sr. and Vashtie, and I remember roaming through the store. Although I was just a little squirt at the time, the smell of leather from the shoes and boots in the store was such a draw for me . . . little kids are such snoops.

Before he purchased his own farm, my dad worked for my grandfather, Burton Scutt. We were always going back and forth between farms helping each other until my grandfather sold and moved to Roxbury. We all worked very hard around there for years adding things like a new barn in the '50s and forever working on the land—removing stones, planting crops, and bringing in the hay.

I remember visiting and sharing chores at the Baileys (my dad's sister, Evelyn, Uncle George, and cousin Joyce), and got to thinking of others where Dad went over to another farm to help out for one reason or another. I remember one time he did milking chores for Stewart (I



Looking up the road in winter at Spike, home, and the old barn around 1960. Photo courtesy of Terri Lahti.

think he was sick and needed help) and taking hay over to Fritz Klenow a few times (he ran out and we had enough to share). And of course Dad did chores for my grandfather off and on. It was nice having this net when needed.

Later, my dad purchased part of the Zack property when the Zacks went to Durham before ultimately moving to Florida. We all stayed friends for years and visited back and forth both in Durham and in Florida. I believe it was their influence that gave my folks the idea of moving close to them in Florida during the winter months, and Gary Zack and I still stay in touch and visit when we can, as we both live in Florida.

I'm Teresa (Terri or Tess) Scutt and I was born in Conesville at my grandparents' (Ambrosino) home. We moved to our own farm on Maybie Road in the mid-'40s, and I graduated in 1958 from GCCS. I moved to Florida in 1979 and except for a few years have been in Florida with husband Ken (28 years), who recently passed away. I regret never having come back to show him the area where I grew up.

Historic Concerts in the Parlor

The Schoharie County Council on the Arts in conjunction with the historic societies of Sharon Springs and Cobleskill will sponsor two musicales and teas to be held in historic homes of Schoharie County. Each event will start at 3:00 PM, has seating for 40, with refreshments and period music plus a tour of the historic home.

I

Sunday, May 27, 2012
Stone House of Michelle Curran,
123 Pavillion Avenue,
Sharon Springs, NY

Program: Ann Marie Barker Schwartz (violin) and Sten Isachsen (classical guitar) performing the classic music of the era of this historic home.

2

Sunday, September 30, 2012
Residence of Dr. Jay Dewell and
Madeleine Hollenbach,
253 North Grand Street,
Cobleskill, NY

Program: Trio of Leo Milman (violin), Linda Magill (cello), and Michael Clements (piano) performing music of Beethoven and Mendelssohn.

Karen Cookson, Sharon Historical Society and Robert Gosselink, Grant Coordinators. For information and reservations, please call 518 234-2259.

THE MACKEY GENERAL STORE

Franklin C. Clapper

The building housing the Mackey General Store appears designed for use as a store, with maximum wall space and an open floor plan. There are two large windows across the front to attract people to the store, and the only other window faced west on Guinea Road allowing light and air into the office.

The interior walls were tall and without breaks or windows to facilitate the display of merchandise, so the building was rather dark due to the lack of windows. At the time, people didn't expect to have a bright, well-lit space, but my father also had a Delco battery system until electricity came to the area in mid-'30s. When electricity did come to the area, the store got a new Servel Electrolux refrigerator that was used for refrigerated foods, but the ice box was kept well-stocked for an endless supply of cold drinks.

My father lost his cows to the tuberculosis test, so when my grandfather had died and the store inventory had been appraised by Howard Kling (a long-time merchant from the Breakabeen store), my father took the store based on that appraisal. Some of the items took years and years to get rid of, though it all worked out in the end.

We had a little section for a pharmacy just to the left of the door as you came in—we didn't make up medicines, just sold over-the-counter products. The hardware section started in that front left corner—everything from screws, bolts, and nails through tools for a shop or farm—pretty much everything that a farmer or mechanic might generally need was there, with the exception of seed, feed, or outside machinery.

The space on the east wall next to hardwares was where we had canned groceries. Unlike modern stores, we did not have a huge selection of brands, but



My older sister, Geraldine, outside the Mackey General Store, ca. late 1930s. Note the newly installed electric service at the top left corner of the building.

Photo courtesy of Franklin Clapper.

we could supply nearly every vegetable or fruit—however, you had to take the brand that we carried. Packaged cereals, toilet paper, and coffee were above the canned goods as they were lighter and benefitted from the dryer, warmer air on top shelf. We carried very few baby products—mainly just condensed milk.

There was a shed running the length of the eastern side of the store. It had a raised dock on the front where grains and seed could be delivered or picked up; and a sliding barn door going into the feed room. From that back left corner of the store, you'd go through a door and then up or down three or four stairs. Upstairs led to the feed room that got a little bit of heat convected from the store and was out of the rain—the seeds and grains there were safe and organized there. The down stairs led to a dry and relatively cool basement where we stored rubber boots and other items that could not take heat. This basement and the feed room over it protected the east side of the store from winter winds.

There was also a door to the outside where we kept a small stock of farm equipment—not too much because you didn't sell great numbers of dump rakes, hay elevators, or sickle bars. For this area, however, we offered a full range of horse-drawn farm machinery from Massey-Harris. Customers came from all around the area—Gilboa, Guinea, Potter Hollow, Conesville, and beyond—to get a new implement for the farm. There was also a gas pump out front at the corner of Guinea and Mace Roads that attracted a growing number of customers.

Opposite the store on Guinea Road was a collection stand for the Prattsville Creamery. Area farmers would bring their cans of milk in the morning, and Everett Thancher, the driver, would load the milk, stocked the stand with ice blocks for the next day, and would leave the empties. Later, my father's milk was hauled to Manorkill Creamery, and the drivers changed a lot. Some drivers were Tommy Hughes (who later worked in Middleburgh), Joe Ambrosino, and Ed Waldron (who later bought the Mackey Smith farm in Middleburgh).

Back in the store: There was a counter running across the back of the store, with a checkout area at each end. The cash register was on the left side, and ninety percent of the business checked out in that "aisle." The checkout area to the right was rarely used unless someone had a major order or business was very brisk. In between these sales areas, we had deli, meat, and cheese sections that you would not recognize today. Preserved meats tended to be canned (Spam



Neighbors would come down Mace Road to gas up their cars and trucks. Photo courtesy of Franklin C. Clapper.

and the like) and sausage was often made locally and sold on a barter system between farms. We did carry a little bit of sausage, traditional types that would be favored by area newcomers: wurst, bologna, and salami.

We sold very little fresh meat compared to modern stores: in the 1930s, fresh meat was not widely used—farms made their profits by keeping meat sources healthy and productive—every chop used for human consumption was at the cost of taking that animal out of production. Chicken was the most used animal protein due to its relatively short productive life. And yes, we did have locally produced eggs, honey, and maple syrup.

We sold a lot of cheese, but we didn't offer a wide selection (no brie for us). I remember seeing several wheels of hard cheese (especially cheddar) in the store, stacked one on top of another, and always cut to order. Local people might come in for a bread-and-cheese lunch.

As indicated by the news article to the right, the store was renovated so that there were display tables in the center of the store. One was a nice glass display case with higher ticket items (mainly watches), and the rest were open. Tables had work shirts and pants, while relatively slow moving items and boots were shelved on the west wall.

One table was our "in-store bakery" with our stock of Spaulding products: several breads (white, whole wheat, rye, cracked wheat, etc.), sugared krullers [Spaulding's spelling], jelly rolls, and cakes (we never did carry Debbie's). My recollection as a child early in the Depression was that Spaulding introduced sliced bread and the driver predicted that the price would be "down to 10¢ per loaf." At that price, it was cheaper to buy packaged bread than bake it at home.

MACKY CORNERS HAS FINE STORE Extensive Improvements— Increased Stocks

MACKY CORNERS Franklin Clapper has recently completed extensive improvements in his general store at Mackey Corners, which bring it into favorable comparison with any modern store. By removal and rearrangement of partitions the entire floor space is given over to display tables. New shelving has been added, and the whole place tastefully decorated in cream and green, while a modern Heatrola replaces the old "round stove" of country stores.

Mr. Clapper plans to add extensively to his stock, especially in dry goods. Lyle Blakesly has been doing the carpenter work and Harrison Reed the painting.

Mr. Clapper is the second member of his family to carry on a general store, his father, the late Franklin Clapper Sr., having kept store at Mackey for many years.

A couple of tables had candy. We had a dog called “Bingo” that everybody knew, especially after my sister gave him a haircut and shaved his name in the fur on one side of his body. During the winter, Bingo might go over to the candy table, sneak a lollypop, and lie down by the fire for an afternoon nosh and nap. During the summer, he would take it across the street under a tree).

Heavy items like 25-pound bags of flour were stacked in place of a table in the center of the store, but smaller bags of Pillsbury or Gold Medal flour and cans of Crisco were on the shelves to the east. Dean’s pancake products from Oak Hill, and salted butter and lard were on a table near the checkout counter.

One other area of the store that was important to the family was in the upstairs above the store. Generally, very slow-moving items and back-up stock was stored up there, but one part of the attic was my mother’s domain: sewing (including the Coats & Clark thread display and other manufacturer-supplied display cases) and especially the stocks of wallpaper—she loved helping people beautify their lives, and she always kept a large selection of colorful, lively wallpaper. While wallpaper sales did not improve the store’s bottom line much, it certainly enhanced quality of life for my mother and therefore for our family.

The time leading up to World War II was one of merchantile harmony—merchants in Breakabeen, Mackey, Broome Center, Gilboa—got along very well, and would discuss business with each other. “Gypsies” were defined as any group of strangers passing by in an automobile or wagon. They would come into a store in a cluster so that the merchant could not keep an eye on them all and a lot of product could disappear. When one of the area businesses saw the gypsies, the word was spread and a lot of doors were locked.

World War II brought the end to these small stores in rural areas. For a while, we conducted business as usual (except for paperwork from the use of rationing coupons). However, our suppliers cut off deliveries due to gas rationing, and so these local stores started to severely reduce store hours. With the Clappers, for instance, my father got a job in Schenectady at the military depot, and my mother, sister, and I might open the store for a regular client who had knocked on the front door of the house.

After the war, things were no longer the same.



Franklin Clapper was born on a Gilboa farm in 1928. His father took over the Mackey General Store in 1930 and they moved into the hamlet. The author graduated from Gilboa-Conesville in 1945 and became a farmer. He married Phyllis Dewell of North Blenheim in 1948 and had 3 sons and a daughter. He has been a farmer in Breakabeen, a merchant in Preston Hollow, and an insurance agent retiring in 1995. Phyllis died in 1966, and he and his second wife, Isabel, live in Middleburgh.

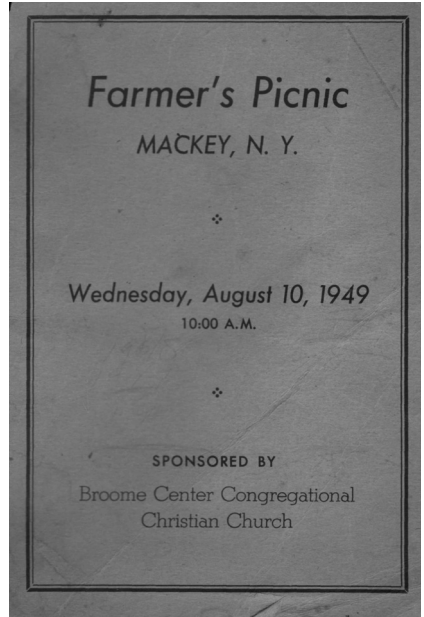
THE FARMER'S PICNIC

Mackey, N.Y. Wednesday, August 10, 1949

Chauncey Dent donated a brochure from the 1949 Mackey Picnic to the Gilboa Museum. The picnic attracted hundreds of people to relax from the chores of the summer, but the 1949 celebration was one of the last and was held in Mace's grove instead of Goodfellow's.

The brochure had a program (below) and a lot of gratis ads from supporters. It was obviously intended as a money-maker and the "best wishes" generally start "Compliments of." However, a few are charming entries like "Sam Henne & Sons, Bayonne, N. J., Direct Receivers of Schoharie County Eggs, Top Market Quotations Paid Daily, by Our Local Representative, John A. Serrie, Telephone 5f21 Breakabeen, N. Y."

A copy of the brochure is available at the Museum and on line at gilboahome.com.



PROGRAM

- 10:00 A.M. Music.
- 11:00 A.M. Foot Races.
- 11:15 A.M. Cake-baking Contest.
- 11:45 A.M. Watermelon-eating Contest.
- 12:00 Noon Address Hon. Sharon J. Mauhs, Schoharie County Assemblyman
- 1:00 P.M. Lunch.
- 2:00 P.M. Games.

We wish to take this means of expressing our sincere thanks to the many people who have made this book possible. Most of you know the story of the Broome Center Church. Four years ago the church was closed and had been so for a long period of time. After a great deal of effort on the part of a number of people, the church was reopened and to-day is serving the people of this area. The help the church has received from this book and the Mackey Picnic is greatly appreciated by everyone.

Sincerely, Rev. Laurence Starr

- A & P Store, Middleburgh
 Arco Oil Company, Grand Gorge
 Mr. & Mrs. George W. Bailey
 Bates Survey Service, A. S. Harrington,
 Representative, Gilboa
 Bel-Car Ranch, Broome Center
 Dr. & Mrs. Duncan L. Best, Middleburgh
 John B. Bingham, Middleburgh
 Borden's Creamery, Middleburgh
 Bliss & Bouck, Schoharie
 Roland O. Bouck, Middleburgh
 Bulson's Department Store, Middleburgh
 Bush & Snyder Lumber, Middleburgh
 L. R. Chase Building Materials
 Cobleskill Commission Sales, Charles
 Way, Prop., Cobleskill
 M. Cohn & Son, Cobleskill
 Cold Spring Dairy Farm, Mollie
 Chichester, Prop.
 Collins' Diner, Stamford
 Connor's Furniture Store, Middleburgh
 The Corner Restaurant, Middleburgh
 Joseph Cottone, Blenheim
 Floyd G. Cronk Dodge, Grand Gorge
 Daring & Turner Market, Middleburgh
 A. W. Demerest & Sons, Feeds, Stamford
 Dewitt Market, Central Bridge
 Doty & Almy Plumbing, Middleburgh
 J. Lewis DuMond Insurance, Cobleskill
 Ellis Radio Service, Middleburgh
 Elmore Stores, Inc., Stamford
 Empire Cooperative Fire Insurance Co.,
 Middleburgh
 Ferris Camp, Broome Center
 Field & Berdan Vet., Middleburgh
 The First National Bank, Middleburgh
 The First National Bank, Grand Gorge
 Five Star Beef, Oak Hill
 George Flower & Son Gas Service
 E. L. Foote & Son, Inc., Hobart
 J. A. Foote & Son, Hobart
 Mr. & Mrs. Herman Forsell and Sons,
 Broome Center
 Gilboa Garage, Raymond Brandow,
 Prop., Grand Gorge
 Golfetto's Studio, Stamford
 Dr. Allen Goss Veterinarian, Stamford
 Otto C. Gridley Richfield Gasoline,
 Middleburgh
 Donald L. Hagadorn Watch Repairing,
 Middleburgh
 Mr. & Mrs. Ivan Hallock, Gilboa
 Harmony Hills, Mr. & Mrs. C. W. Bailey,
 Broome Center
 Haynor Furniture Mart, Stamford
 Hendrickson's, Inc., Cobleskill
 Sam Henne & Sons, Bayonne, N. J.
 W. S. Hinkley Ford Sales and Service,
 Grand Gorge
 Hobart Poultry Farm, Walter S. Rich &
 Son, Hobart
 Robert Horan, Dealer, Middleburgh
 Hotel Augustan, Cobleskill
 E. A. Howard, Middleburgh G.L.F.,
 Middleburgh
 Mr. & Mrs. Merel Hubbard, Gilboa
 Humble Retreat, George & Jay Lucas &
 Sons, Gilboa
 Mr. & Mrs. Roy Kelsey, Cooksburg
 Kil-Mar Electric Shop, Central Bridge
 Kilts & Sidney, Schoharie
 Kniffen & Kniskern, Cobleskill
 Dr. & Mrs. Donald R. Lyon, Middleburgh
 Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Mace
 Main Street Garage, Schoharie
 Marvin Maxwell International Trucks,
 Middleburgh
 Maynard & Smith Hardware, Grand Gorge
 The Meadow Farm, Mr. & Mrs. Eugene
 Hallock, Gilboa
 The Middleburgh Bakery, Middleburgh
 Middleburgh Cleaners & Dyers, Bob
 Stevens, Prop.
 Middleburgh Motor Sales
 The Middleburgh News, Middleburgh
 Middleburgh Telephone Company,
 Middleburgh
 Mix's Greenhouses, Charles Mix, Prop.,
 Schoharie
 Monthie's Market, Central Bridge

Lewis Moore's Garage, Middleburgh
 National Bank of Stamford, Stamford
 The Novelty News Room, Victor Smith,
 Prop., Middleburgh
 Ouderkirk Funeral Home, Grand Gorge
 Palmer & Shaylor, Middleburgh
 Parsons' Pharmacy, Middleburgh
 A. L. Parsons & Son, Inc., Central Bridge
 Pierce's Pharmacy, Cobleskill
 Alton Potter, Lumber, Preston Hollow
 J. Howard Proper, Schoharie
 Rich's Clothing, Cobleskill
 S & S Coffee Shop, Middleburgh
 Edward Scribner Philco
 Mr. & Mrs. Burton Scutt, Gilboa
 Selkirk Hardware, Cobleskill
 Shelmandine's Restaurant, Middleburgh
 Skinner Chevrolet, Middleburgh
 Abe Soffer, Grand Gorge
 Ralph E. Spoor Furnishings, Stamford

Stamford Bakery, Stamford
 H. & G. Steadman, Preston Hollow
 Steiner's Home Appliances, Grand Gorge
 Stevenson's Jewelers, Middleburgh
 Sullivan Hardware, Middleburgh
 Sunset Rest Dairy Farm, Mr. & Mrs.
 Raymond Brown, Props., Gilboa
 Earl A. Taylor, Grand Gorge
 Mr. & Mrs. J. Thamm
 Valley Pontiac, Middleburgh
 E. T. Van Buren & Sons, Hobart
 Walhalla Inn, G. Niederhauser, Prop.,
 Breakabeen
 West's Garage, Middleburgh
 Wohl's Department Store, Schoharie
 Wohl's Dress Shoppe, Middleburgh
 Wood's Service Station, Middleburgh
 Harry Wyckoff, Dealer in Horses, Gilboa
 Wyndyhyl Farm, Sharon J. Mauhs,
 Owner, Cobleskill

One-Room Schoolhouses in Schoharie County

Karen Cuccinello

I wrote this 140 page book about the 250+ one-room schoolhouses in Schoharie County New York. My book is useful/interesting to historians, educators and genealogists. The first section of the book is a chronological compilation of newspaper articles, the development of education in NYS starting in 1795, pictures of schoolhouses (old and current) and teachers, statistics, and memories of students that attended one-roomers. The second section lists every school alphabetically (Argusville to Zimmer Hill) and most or all of the following information: district number, location, opening and closing date, final disposition, teachers (about 930 of them indexed) and Tid-Bits. The Tid-Bits section includes an assortment of: teacher salaries, number of students in a school, class trips, school programs, holiday celebrations, amount of money that the state gave the schools, and interesting reasons that schools were closed.

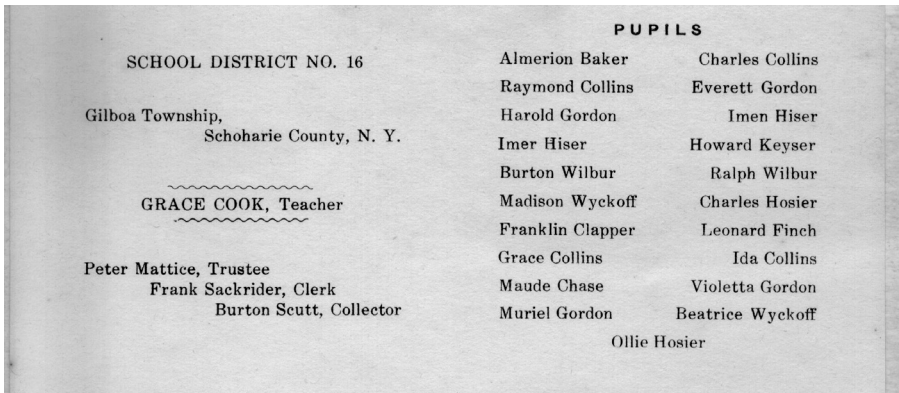
Carpool a Friend
Wednesday, March 12, 2012 at 7:00 PM
Gilboa Town Hall

REMEMBER WHEN?

Joan Hess Mullen

- When all school buses were not painted yellow?
When huge crowds gathered to see the Gilboa Dam flow over for the first time?
When Flat Creek was the scene of State Police shooting a New York City gangster?
When a free afternoon during Regents Week featured a walk across the dam and a climb down the ladders to the spillway below?
When some children brought lard sandwiches to school in their lunch pails?
When Blenheim had the longest single-span bridge in use in the world?
When after-school meant barn chores and homework rather than the Dr. Phil?
When girls never wore slacks, culottes, shorts, or baseball caps to school?
When blue jeans, tattoos, and earrings were unheard of for boys in school?
When a playground fight involved two boys rather than two girls?
When youngsters in Prattsville and Blenheim attended lower grades in their home village?
When Ma Wright and Pa Nodine had no problem keeping 45 junior-high students quiet?
When the Broome Center bus got stuck in blizzard conditions, and kids on the bus spent the night at a neighbor's house on Mace Road?
When World War II necessitated ration books for gas, sugar, coffee and shoes?
When teenagers washed the supper dishes instead of loading the dishwasher?
When boys could carry pocket knives without being expelled from school?
When there was always a jigsaw puzzle set up in the front room?
When children safely explored the fields and back roads with no fear of molestation?
When a dairy farmer put his foot down about buying margarine instead of butter?
When Mom said "Do you have a clean handkerchief?" not "Do you have your cell phone?"
When the males in the family churned Sunday dessert in an ice cream freezer?
When there was a playground rumor that someone on the swings went "over the top"?
When the Flat Creek Baptist Church held their annual donation for the dominie?

- When there was no such thing as a license for a dog?
- When dogs were working dogs rather than miniature house pets?
- When the steep bank between the old Gilboa post office & Valenti Road caved in right after the school bus had passed by?
- When funerals were held in homes not funeral parlors?
- When girls dressed for gym in blue blouses and bloomers?
- When tuberculosis x-rays were held not only for the school kids but for the entire community?
- When sneakers were always high-top?
- When Graduation Week featured Baccalaureate, Class Day, and Eighth Grade Graduation as well as High School Graduation?



- When teenagers did not drive to school in the family car?
- When mothers sewed dresses and snowsuits for their daughters, while grandmothers knitted the scarves, mittens, and wool socks?
- When Saturday night baths involved heating kettles of hot water for the huge tubs in the middle of the kitchen floor?
- When boys did their chores of milking and bringing in firewood before the school bus arrived?
- When fly stickers hung from kitchen and porch ceilings?
- When we anxiously awaited the arrival of “Monkey-Wards” and “Sears-Sawbucks” catalogs?
- When we thought all “city people” (summer boarders) walked in the middle of the road?
- When winter meant wearing “arctics”?
- When saying the Pledge of Allegiance, you actually saluted the flag, rather than placing your hand on your heart?

When women wore hats, white gloves, and “Sunday dresses” to church?

When daily showers were unheard of?

When telephone party lines were not for teenagers or idle chatter?

When was the last time you heard these expressions?

Pshaw	Jiminy Crickets	Gol-Darn	Judas Priest
Pish-Tush	Bees Knees	Balderdash	Heavens to Betsy
Palooka	City Slicker		

When your vocabulary did not include

Remote control	Pantihose	Miniskirt	Vinyl
Laundromat	iPad	iPhone	Facebook
DVD			



Joan Hess Mullen graduated from GCS in 1945, and went on to teach, marry a life-long partner, raise three children, and is working on being a grandma to two boys and a girl. She thought few Gilboans would remember her (“if so, they will remember red hair and freckles”), but she neglected to take into account her recent publication on Broome Center, available in our Museum. She can be reached at jcmullen@roadrunner.com

THE QUILT PROJECT Honoring Our Veterans

The nursing staff at the Stratton VA Medical Center in Albany has a program recognizing the sacrifice and heroism of the service men and women who go through their halls: they create quilts where each block shows a memory of a particular service member. The effort is collaborative with help from the veterans, their families and friends, and volunteers. The quilts have been shown locally (Gilboa-Conesville Central School) and nationally (Kansas City, West Point, and Arlington).

Ginny Gurley will speak at the Gilboa Historical Society’s April meeting. She is a volunteer with that project and will relate some of what was learned from the lives of those featured on the quilts. Fifty-six (56!) veterans memorialized are local to the Gilboa-Conesville area, and 25 are from her own family.

Be prepared for stories that get to you about what these men and women did for our country.

**Carpool a Friend
Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 7:00 PM
Gilboa Town Hall**

THE WW II SCRAPBOOK OF MS. HELEN KRIEGER

Jim Connington

I recently inherited the scrapbook of my second cousin, Helen Krieger Maybie. To protect this scrapbook, I had it scanned and now can leaf through it electronically with no fear of damaging the book.

The first half is largely devoted to the men and women who were in the service, while the second is more on life and times of the home front. But throughout, it is a potpourri of history during World War II—it does not present all of local history at that time, but instead offers little snippets on a wealth of topics.

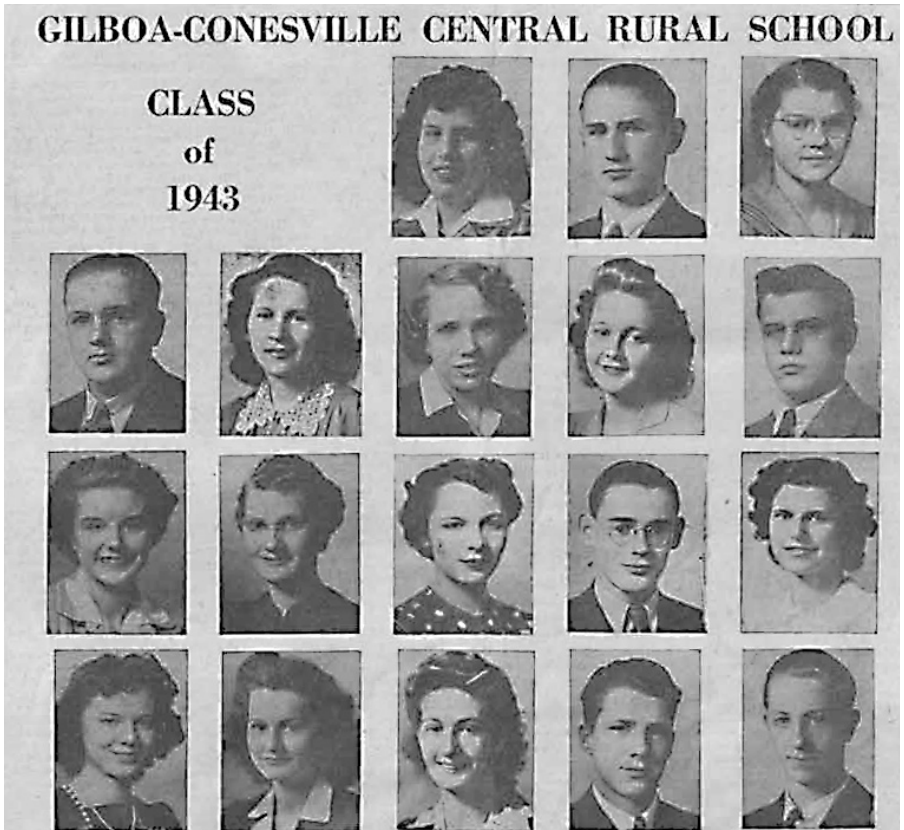
For instance, the picture in the top left-hand corner of the first page shows the return of a decorated pilot, Guy Hoagland Jr.; in the same position on page 2 is another picture of him going on his honeymoon. On page 4 is a picture of his brother, Sgt. Gene Hoagland who was serving in England; and on page 42 is a further article on the promoted S/Sgt. Gene Hoagland being awarded the Bronze Star for bravery in action in Germany. Page 38 has a picture of their sister in the class of 1943 graduating from Stamford Central School.

As a sample of the military information: the first half of the scrapbook is devoted to news photos and clips on people in the service—the first page alone tells of John Leger, Reginald Fowler, Robert Shaffer, Carlton Conro, Otto Vrooman, Richard Brandow, Raymond Pearsall, John Weir, Jarvis Cross, Richard Richtmyer, Lewis Kohler, Harold Chase, and Virgil Deyo. The caption under the picture of Sgt. Deyo CO says that he graduated from Gilboa Central school in 1942 and especially enjoyed playing baseball under coach Hubbard. He entered the service early in 1943 as an aerial gunner, and there is a handwritten note that he was missing in action in July 1944. A later article recounts the memorial service held for him on May 6, 1945.

There are photographs of women also going off to war, including a picture of Sgt. Deyo with his sister, Lt. Mary F. Deyo of the Army Nurse Corps. Other women mentioned were Minerva Stickels, Shirley Joslyn, Laura Lee, Lt. Mary Lou O'hara, Helen Johns, Helen and Constance Govern, and Miriam Govern. A picture honors Mrs. Elizabeth Conro as a grandmother of the six sailors and one cadet nurse.

The scrapbook is not just on the war, however, but reminds us that life was going on in some normal ways. There are historic pictures of the Grand Gorge

Hose Company and the Forks-in-the-Road Schoolhouse, and a picture of the largest class ever to graduate from Roxbury Central School, including Edward Hinkley, Richard Reed, Lloyd Eignor, Ellis Shultis (valedictorian), Forrest Archibald, Otis VanAken (salutatorian), John Feraci, Leonard Reed, Carl Davis, Elna Peck, Dorothy Whitney (class treasurer), Frances Hammond, Grace Shafer, Virginia Archibald, Wilma Mcintosh, Robert Mead, Prof. Samuel B. Denison (class advisor), Hazel Finch (vice president), Betty O'Hara, Virginia Jones, Beatrice O'Hara, Margaret Bouton (secretary), Evelyn Lawrence, and Genevieve Kuhl (president).



The news article celebrating the Gilboa-Conesville Central Rural School Class of 1943: left to right, top row: Emma Boschetti, Robert Buel, Hazel Carl. Second row: Louie Carman, Ruth Case, Doris Cook, Lavenia DeWitt, Edwin Fancher. Third row: Wilma Fancher Dorothy Haner, Barbara Hess (salutatorian), Robert Hinman, Dorothy Ryan. Fourth row: Betty Thorpe, Josephine Traver (valedictorian), Joanne Jennie Valenti, Clarence VanValkenburgh Jr., Harold VanWormer.

Gilboa's top scholar in 1940 was Miss Geraldine Clapper, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Clapper and valedictorian of the Central School's class of 1940 with an average of 91.12.

The paper used in scrapbooks from before 1980 is acidic and will break down very easily—the older the scrapbook, the harder it is to access the contents. I would recommend that everyone with a scrapbook have it responsibly scanned and put onto a CD.

What do I mean by responsible scanning? I don't understand the technology, but common-sense criteria include handling pages gently, clean hands and workspace, gently removing the binding, handling pages with care; and using an oversize scanner to accommodate the larger pages of the scrapbook. Gerry Stoner scanned this scrapbook, and his software worked quickly and produced a clear, searchable file. The scrapbook ended up in tighter, better condition with acid-free paper inserted between the pages, and the CD of its contents worked smoothly on the computer.

I have read this digitized version and have found that it is easier and more enjoyable to read than the original. You can search for individual names or events, and can move easily back and forth through the pages. The Gilboa Historical Society has a copy of the CD, and recommend you take it for a "test drive." It is superior than trying to be gentle with brittle pages, and the original is better off in a safe, dry location.

All Gilboa Historical Society Newsletters are available free at

<http://www.gilboahome.com/>.

Email this address to friends & family.

I read with pleasure Franklin Clapper's account of the roads and people that lived on them.

My family owned two parcels of land on Back Road that weren't mentioned—coming from the Wyckoff farm, the first farm was owned by Bruce Buell and the land covered both sides of the road. A large portion of this land is still owned by a member of the Buell family. The farm just below Ray Schermerhorn's was my grandfather's farm, Sidney Ellerson. The Ellerson family went back to the Revolutionary War, and David Ellerson has been recognized as a hero (Sons of the American Revolution Patriot).

Andy (Endwell) Buell

THOMAS AND BRIDGET McCABE

South Gilboa, NY. Circa 1800's

Ed McCabe

Thomas McCabe and Bridget Fitzpatrick were married in Shannonbridge in County Offaly, Ireland on February 26, 1838. Their first two children were also born in Shannonbridge. A son, Keren, was born and baptized on Christmas Day 1838 and a daughter, Mary, was baptized on May 24, 1840, according to parish records.

On April 24, 1842 the family left Liverpool, England to a new life in America aboard the sailing ship *Laurel*. The voyage took about six weeks to arrive in New York on the 20th of May.

Why the family left Ireland or how they came to settle in Gilboa remains a mystery. Family tradition holds that they knew the Peter Brady family of neighboring Jefferson, and were able to find work on his farm.

The McCabes first appear on record in the *1850 Non-Population Schedule of Gilboa* that states the farm totaled 50 acres, 5 milk cows, 1 working oxen, 1 other cattle, and 4 pigs. Crops included rye, Indian corn, and oats. The house is believed to have been located on present-day Todd Road in the area of South Gilboa known as "Spook Woods." In this home, four more children were born: Ellen (1844), John (1847), Thomas A. (1852), and William (1855). Thomas was naturalized on November 5, 1860 according to Delaware County records. By 1870, the Thomas McCabe farm had grown to 172 acres, according to the Gilboa town directory.

About 1862, Keren McCabe married Mary Ann Brady of Jefferson (Peter Brady's daughter). By



Sailing packet "Laurel." Photo courtesy Ancestry.com.

1870, he had his own farm of 144 acres off of present-day Bund Road, not far from his father. The house is gone today; however, the foundation still exists.

Keren had been naturalized in 1861 and drafted into the Union Army in the first Civil War draft of Schoharie County on October 16, 1863. Keren never went to war and there could be several reasons why. Draftees could pay a commutation, find someone to go in their place, or be excused if the ranks had been filled by volunteers. The exact reason, in Keren's case, is unknown.

Keren and Mary Ann McCabe had seven children while they lived in South Gilboa: Alice (1863), Bridget Anna (1865), Julia (1868), Keren Jr. (1870), Peter (1871), Edward James (1873), and Thomas W. (1875). Keren was active in town government and was instrumental in the opening of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Stamford in 1870. Other Gilboans listed as founders of that church were Keren's neighbors, John Gray and Michael Govern, who was in charge of Gilboa's Catholic Cemetery.

Records show that a previous Catholic church had existed in South Gilboa, in the area of South Gilboa Road and Spook Woods, but the exact location is unknown to this author. Around 1875 Keren moved his family to Worcester, where they stayed.

It is assumed that Thomas and Bridget stayed in South Gilboa. Bridget died in 1878 and is buried in the McCabe plot at Sacred Heart Cemetery in Stamford. Thomas died in 1895 at the home of his son, John, in Oneonta. According to his death announcement in the *Oneonta Star* of August 25th, Thomas had moved to Oneonta four months prior to his death. It does not say from where he moved, and a bigger mystery is where Thomas was laid to rest. His obituary in the Stamford *Mirror-Recorder* stated that he was buried in South Gilboa; we have not yet located his stone.

Descendants of Thomas and Bridget McCabe have spread far from the first McCabe farm in South Gilboa. A few direct descendants, however, are living in the vicinity, residing in Andes and Worcester.

I would appreciate anyone who has further information or is a descendant of the McCabes of South Gilboa to contact me at ed.mccabe@ymail.com.



Edward James McCabe III is the great-great-great-grandson of Thomas and Bridget McCabe of South Gilboa. He lives in Norwalk, Connecticut with his wife, Anna, and four children. Edward is a captain in the Norwalk Fire Department, where he has worked for the last seventeen years. Although Edward has never lived in upstate New York, his family roots run deep in Gilboa, Stamford, and Worcester. He has enjoyed trips to "the country" to visit family since his childhood, and returns every summer to camp and explore historical family sites with his father, brothers, and McCabe and Murphy cousins.

A USEFUL GENEALOGICAL SOURCE

Gerry Stoner

Some of the McCabe information was found using an online database at ancestry.com: *1850 Non-Population Schedules, New York 1850-1880*. A database is a way of organizing digital records so that searches are quick and easy. This database is proprietary: it was created by, and therefore is the intellectual property of, ancestry.com despite the fact that the basic information itself was compiled from the New York State Library collection.

To access this type of information for your genealogy, you can work with the raw data at the State Library or you can use ancestry.com. The hooker is that proprietary databases from ancestry.com are fee-based services—available only to members. You can join ancestry.com for a month or a year at a time, and some larger libraries have memberships for their patrons.

About this database specifically

Ancestry.com has a number of specialized databases—let's use this one as a case in point. This database draws on information (schedules) from a broad base: agriculture, industry, social statistics, and others; and the original information gathered on any one schedule changed over the years—you may not find equivalent information on schedules for different years.

Agricultural schedules recorded statistics on farm owners, agents, managers or sharecroppers. The type of statistics recorded includes the total acreage of land, the value of the farm, machinery and livestock, amount of staples (wool, cotton, grain, etc.) produced, and the value of animals slaughtered, etc.

Industry schedules has information on manufacturing, mining, fishing, wholesale, retail, and trading businesses with an annual gross product of \$500 or more. For a particular operation (corporation, company, or individual), you may find a description of the organization, the amount of capital invested, the quantity and value of resources used, the quantity of yearly production, and the number of individuals employed.

Social statistics and supplemental schedules from 1850 to 1880 contains information on cemeteries, trade societies, lodges, clubs, churches, property value, taxes, schools, colleges, academies, libraries, newspaper, periodicals, the number of paupers, criminals, convicts in jail, etc. In 1880, a supplemental schedule listed the insane, idiots, deaf mutes, blind, paupers, indigent persons, homeless children, and prisoners.

Around The Neighborhood

Gilboa Museum: Open by appointment, 607 588-9413

Stone Fort: The physical store, group tours for students, and genealogical work are generally available on a Wednesday (please confirm with Laura at 518 295-7192), and special schedules are possible. Old Stone Fort Museum, 145 Fort Road, Schoharie, NY 12157. www.TheOldStoneFort.org

Zadock Pratt Museum: Open by appointment, 518-299-3395

Hobart Book Village Winter Respite Series

3:00 PM, Adams Bookstore, 602 Main Street, Hobart, NY 13788. 607 538-9080

March 18, 2012: Barbara Balliet—Art, Commerce, Independence: Women Artists in 19th Century New York.

April 29, 2012: Robert & Johanna Titus on the Glaciers of the Hudson Valley.

Flood Relief Organizations

**Blenheim:
and
Breakabeen:** { Rural Area Revitalization Effort, Inc., a non-profit at 125 Creamery Road, North Blenheim, NY 12131 (518 827-3166, rareny.org) and/or North Blenheim Presbyterian Church, Clauverwie Road, Middleburgh, NY 12122

Middleburgh: Village of Middleburgh Flood Relief, P.O. Box 789, Middleburgh, NY 12122

Prattsville: Prattsville Relief Fund, c/o NBT Bank, P.O. Box 380, Grand Gorge, NY 12434

Schoharie: Schoharie Recovery Fund, P.O. Box 111, Schoharie, NY 12157

Gilboa Historical Society Donations

We are making plans to provide shade for the new fossils, plant more memorial trees this fall, and work on a structure to protect additional farm equipment that has been donated to the museum.

If you want to donate to these (or other) activities, please get in touch with a GHS board member or send us a note with the membership application form on page 39 of this newsletter.

THEY LIVED IN THESE HILLS

These anecdotes were submitted by folks who are familiar with the families and personalities described. They are not meant to be an inclusive history of a person or time: instead, they remind us of some of the personalities and events that occurred in Gilboa and Conesville over the past 200 years.

You can help harvest these memories: please suggest people and events that should be included, and send your written experiences to be published anonymously in this series. We are also interested in reproducing photographs showing the lifestyles of earlier times. Let us borrow your photos to scan, and we will return them promptly with digital files that you can then have printed at local stores like RiteAid or Walmart.

Please send (email, write, or phone) your comments and contributions to gerrys@gilboahome.com; GHS Newsletter, 152 Starheim Road, Stamford, NY 12167; fax 815 346-5272; or phone 607 652-2665/866 652-2665.

* * *

Youngsters always think of themselves as immortal, but to my mind, people of all ages were pretty optimistic about their survival before WWII.

A farmer on Bull Hill Road had to get his car to a repair shop, and so he asked me to steer the car while he towed it with his truck, and brake it so it wouldn't run up and hit the truck on the downhills.

At this point in time, Bull Hill Road was a narrow dirt road with a lot of trees near the edge of the road, and the truck was loaded with a horse-drawn mowing machine and its long wooden tongue sticking up in the air. As you can imagine, the tongue caught a tree limb, and the jolt broke the rope that kept the mower on the truck—as quick as a blink of the eye, the mower was off the truck and headed straight for my windshield. Thankfully, we were on a slight downhill and I was keeping pressure on the brakes—I was able to quickly stop the car, breaking the long tow rope and allowing me to stop in time.

A narrow escape, thanks to our concern for safety by not using a chain!

Charlie Case

As a schoolboy, I worked around the neighborhood for various area farmers on my free time.

Charley Case was a dairy farmer who lived on what is now called Bohlen Road in the house now owned by the Pryor family. At the time, I was helping Charlie “buzz” firewood. He had taken the rear fender off an old car, had the

rear end up on blocks so that the wheels could spin freely. He used a wide belt over one of the rear tires, and that powered a large circular saw. At that time, this process was widely used both with cars and tractors to provide power—I even heard of a tractor set up this way, powering a rope tow up a winter hill to pull the kids up so they could sled down.

Well, back to buzzing firewood: with the engine running at speed, the rear wheels were turning and the belt connecting the car to the saw was making the tool buzz merrily. All of a sudden, however, the car shook itself off the blocks, the wheels connected with the ground, and the car took off down the hill.

Charlie, running after it, yelling “whoa, whoa!”

Very funny at the time!

“Wild Bill” Schermerhorn

One winter, I cut timber with a gentleman aptly named “Wild Bill” Schermerhorn. The Gormley sawmill was on Bull Hill Road just above West Conesville, and we logged that big hill north of the village and took the wood to Gormley’s.

There were really large hemlocks there, and sometimes one would hang up on a neighboring tree rather than falling as it should. Bill was very good at cutting another tree so that it would knock down the “hanger”—kinda like picking up a split with a bowling ball.

This one time, I said, “Bill, that hanger is going to slide back when we free it,” but he ignored my warning—and sure enough, the butt of the hanging tree kicked back toward us.

I was able to duck off to the side, but Bill tried to outrun the tree. At the very end of its slide, the tree gave a final jump into the air and butt met butt. Bill was bruised up some, but nothing like what it could’ve been and “Wild Bill” kept right on working.

A tough man.

Clifton Hubbard

Clifton Hubbard was superintendent of highways and helping to rebuild the surface of the ballfield at the Gilboa-Conesville Central School. My job was to bring gravel from a bank near South Gilboa to the ball field, and Clifton would level it off with the town grader. I had taken the muffler off the truck and used just a straight pipe—I enjoyed the rumble, but even I’ll admit it was loud.

On this one trip, heavily loaded with gravel and roaring along, I found my brakes had gone straight to the floor. No brakes in a heavily loaded truck coming into the village of Grand Gorge! By downshifting, I was able to make it through Grand Gorge, then left and over the hill to Gilboa and the dam. Made it to the school, unloaded the truck, and immediately worked on the brakes.

I am sure that making the trip down the hill north of Grand Gorge without a muffler and with no brakes must've sounded like German dive bombers. I never told Clifton I had lost the brakes, and he probably thought I was just showing off! He was a man who seldom lost his cool.

As a senior who was there said, "Safety back then was something to be dealt with each day. I think these reflect that period."

**Dr. C. S. Best House and Medical Exhibit
— Open House —**

10 AM–3 PM every Thursday, May through October

1568 Clauverwie, Middleburgh, NY 12122
(Just to the east of the Middleburgh School)

518 827-4504 518 827-5142

Also Open by Appointment

**Discovery of Complete Crown at South Mountain
New Findings from Riverbank Quarry**



Discoveries Shed New Light on Old Theories

William Stein was raised in New Mexico, received a Pomona College BA in botany/molecular biology and earned a University of Michigan Ph.D. in botany. Since then, the Associate Professor of Biology at Binghamton University has researched the ecology of early land plants, and is an authority on the Devonian Sea and forests along the shores that we now call home—Gilboa!

Dr. Stein will talk to the May meeting of the Gilboa Historical Society about the emergence of this huge new habitat and the immense number of life forms it supported. But—**MOST EXCITING**—he'll also tell of how new local discoveries have changed international scientific theory and how local people have contributed to the vibrancy of science itself.

**Carpool a Friend
Wednesday, May 16, 2012 at 7:00 PM
Gilboa Town Hall**

THE COMFORT OF HOME

John Burroughs of Roxbury

Diane Galusha

The image is a familiar one: an elderly man with a mustache and long white beard that all but obscures his mouth. His hairline has retreated well beyond a high, creased forehead. A web of wrinkles radiates from the corners of his kind, sad eyes.

Most photographs of John Burroughs were taken in the last 20 years of his long life and so we see him as an aging sage, a grandfather, a hale though slightly stooped man of nature who has spent the better part of his days out of doors.

It's hard to imagine him as a child. But this celebrated writer—whose magazine essays were read by millions; who was sought out by students, politicians, and powerful men of wealth and influence; who was so revered that his death in 1921 commanded most of the front page of the *New York Times*—started life as so many other Catskill Mountain farm boys.

Born 175 years ago this spring—on April 3, 1837—John was the seventh of eight children of Chauncey and Amy Kelly Burroughs who raised their brood on a 320-acre farm on the outskirts of the hamlet of Roxbury. The Burroughs homestead hugged the side of Old Clump, a modest mountain that had been stripped of its timber to provide building materials, winter warmth, and clear pastures for the sheep and dairy cattle that sustained local families.

Like their farming neighbors, the Burroughs clan toiled through daylight and dark. As he grew, John joined his siblings in sowing rye, mowing hay, building stone walls, milking cows, churning butter, and cutting wood. Clothes were handmade from sheep's wool and home-grown flax. Pigs were raised and slaughtered. Cider was pressed from apples from the orchard. Syrup, produced by boiling sap from the maple trees, sweetened cakes and coffee. Hand-churned butter was the only cash crop, aside from berries collected by Amy and the children.

Recalled John years later, "About the first money I remember earning I got for four quarts of (straw)berries gathered (in the meadow)—25 cents. I sold them to Elihu Meeker, the carpenter. He was shingling our barn at the time. I can see just where he sat on the roof when he made the offer for my pail of berries."

The children slept two to a bed, and walked a mile or two to attend one-room schools. John's love of books and learning was indulged there. His curious

meanderings through hills and hollows on Sunday, the traditional day of rest, launched a lifelong quest for knowledge of flora, fauna, and geology. Many favorite hours were spent observing nature from a huge boulder—later dubbed Boyhood Rock—with a glorious view of the East Branch valley.

John was the only member of his family to pursue a life off the farm. He left Old Clump when he was 17, taught at a succession of one-room schools for ten years, and worked a government job in Washington, D.C. before settling with wife Ursula in the Hudson Valley in a house they called Riverby. There, with son Julian, he grew grapes and celery (once a farmer, always a farmer) and took to writing in earnest.

His detailed, compelling musings about nature near-at-hand appealed to readers of all ages. John Burroughs' name became a household word. But fame and a fair bit of fortune failed to diminish the pull of his old home in the Catskills. In 1910, he wrote in his journal from Riverby, "It seems as if my whole life here has been all foreground—no background as my life on the farm had . . . Oh for the background of Father and Mother and brothers and sisters and all the old life on the farm! My thirty-six years here seem so unimportant. I have simply been away from home on a camping or fishing expedition and must hurry back to where my real life is."

And that is what John Burroughs did. He returned to the home farm, purchased a simple little house that had been built by brother Curtis, and named it Woodchuck Lodge for the chubby rodents that proliferated there.

Burroughs spent ten happy summers in his boyhood domain, writing, welcoming visitors, and reflecting on the course and meaning of his life. When he was 74, he penned a letter, at the request of the New York City Superintendent of Public Schools, which was read on his birthday to more than 600,000 students:

As the years pass, I think my interest in this huge globe upon which we live, and in the life which it holds, deepens. An active interest in life keeps the currents going and keeps them strong . . . the secret of my youth in age is the simple life—simple food, sound sleep, the open air, daily work, kind



John Burroughs' grave at Roxbury, NY. Photo courtesy of New York State's Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, <http://nysparks.com/historic-sites/3/details.aspx>

thoughts, love of nature, and joy and contentment in the world in which I live. . . . I have had a happy life. I have gathered my grapes with the bloom upon them. May you all do the same.

At the end of John Burroughs' final summer at Woodchuck Lodge, he seemed to know he would never return, writing on the gray porch siding "October 26, 1920. Leave today." He died five months later, on March 29, 1921, while on a train headed east after a winter in California. His last words were, "How far are we from home?"

John Burroughs was buried on April 3, his 84th birthday, beside his Boyhood Rock.

Home. At last. Forever.



Diane Galusha is president of the Board of Trustees of Woodchuck Lodge Inc., the non-profit organization responsible for maintaining the 1862 house and for promoting John Burroughs' legacy. She is the author of several books of local and regional history, and is also founding president of the Historical Society of the Town of Middletown, Delaware County.

John Burroughs' Woodchuck Lodge

1633 Burroughs Memorial Road
Roxbury, NY 12474

(just north of Roxbury off of Route 30)

For more information about Burroughs and updates on Woodchuck Lodge programs, find johnburroughsofwoodchucklodge on Facebook

Lodge open for tours first Saturday & Sunday weekend of the month, May–October, 11–3.

Donations encouraged

Burroughs Memorial Field State Historic Site

Boyhood Rock is ¼ mile past Woodchuck Lodge and is open daily, dawn to dusk

Sunday, May 3 at 1 P.M.

Ceremonial tree planting, readings from Burroughs' work, and tree identification walk, 1 P.M., Burroughs Memorial Field

Saturday, June 9 from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M.

John Burroughs Community Day at Woodchuck Lodge, nature and art activities for the whole family

All Gilboa Historical Society Newsletters are available free at

<http://www.gilboahome.com/>.

Email this address to friends & family.

MY ASSOCIATION WITH JOHN BURROUGHS

Linda VanAller Hernick

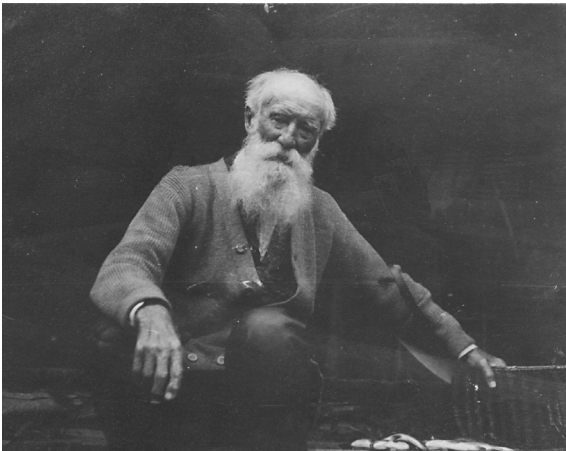
There is no accounting for what will or will not impress itself on a child's mind. A shape, a color, the intensity of a moment—these are the elements. But the memory that is ultimately retained is a small archive, the particulars of an experience significant enough to be filed, saved, and locked away—for what future use one cannot immediately foretell.

Until the age of twenty-nine I had a memory of a house. The image, a little blurry, would surface frequently in dreams. A dark house. A dark house with shutters. I had no conscious association with a building of this sort so the memory remained a mystery.

One day in April of 1981 I desperately needed to take a drive. From Albany I headed west to the Schoharie valley and then south on Route 30. In Roxbury I passed a sign: "John Burroughs Memorial Field." Having a deep interest in natural history, I was aware of John Burroughs as an essayist but had no knowledge of his life. Up Hardscrabble Road I went. *Suddenly*, there was the dark house with shutters—Woodchuck Lodge! The realization put my mind in a whirl! The weather-darkened clapboards and shutters of the place were as familiar to me as if they were my own home. Apparently I had been there as a small child. While the image of the house had been seared into my memory the occasion for the visit was lost over time.

As I approached the house for a closer look a silver-haired gentleman with a large dog came down the porch steps. My first thought was, "Uh oh, I'm trespassing!" But the man's smile was so kind and his voice so gentle that I needn't

have worried. The gentleman, E. Wilson Burroughs (1912–1996), his dog "Star," and I became friends at once. The great-nephew of naturalist John Burroughs, Wilson was a frequent tenant of

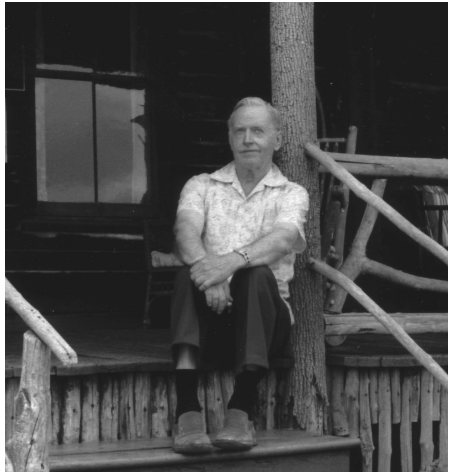


An old photo of John Burroughs (no date) given to me by Wilson Burroughs in 1992. Photo courtesy of Wilson Burroughs.

Woodchuck Lodge; I would visit him one day each May and October for the next twelve years.

During my biannual visits to Woodchuck Lodge Wilson and I would walk up Hardscrabble Road to the old Burroughs farm, through all the pastures and surrounding woods, and always stop at John Burroughs's gravesite where we dutifully wrote our names in the visitor ledger kept in a metal box. Throughout these rambles he talked enthusiastically about his great-uncle "JB." He was well-versed in all of JB's writings and he was particularly proud of JB's support of, and friendship with, Walt Whitman. His favorite poem was Whitman's 1865 tribute to Abraham Lincoln, portions of which he would often recite for me.

In addition to picnics at Woodchuck Lodge with Wilson, his wife Harriet, and Elizabeth Burroughs Kelley (John Burroughs's granddaughter), my husband and I were invited to West Park, New York. We were given a tour of Burroughs's gabled stone house called "Riverby," and spent hours listening to Mrs. Kelley reminisce about her grandfather while sitting on the porch at nearby "Slabsides."



E. Wilson Burroughs on the steps of Woodchuck Lodge, 1981. Photo courtesy of Linda Hernick.



John Hernick, Elizabeth Burroughs Kelley, E. Wilson Burroughs on the porch of Slabsides, 1982. Photo courtesy of Linda Hernick.

Through the generosity of Wilson Burroughs and Elizabeth Kelley I was privileged to get close to John Burroughs's life. I came to know him as the gentle and humorous family man, camping companion of some of the rich and famous, and one who was also personally vulnerable. But it was through his *writing* that I really got to know him. As an observer of nature he was as dedicated and thorough as Thoreau but without Thoreau's acerbic social comment. His style was warm, his subjects familiar, his love of life all-embracing. "Joy in the universe, and keen curiosity about it all—that has been my religion." This February 18, 1910 journal quote defines John Burroughs; it is the essence of why his writing will *always* be relevant.



Linda VanAller Hernick is the paleobotany collections manager at the New York State Museum in Albany. She lives with her husband John and several kitties in Rensselaerville, NY.

Gilboa Museum 2011

The Gilboa Museum had a wonderful season in 2011. We had such a great time at the open house listening to old time music with Hilt Kelly and the Sidekicks. We showed off our new fossil donations from the DEP Riverside Quarry that is just across the road from us. We're delighted to have them on display at the museum.

The year's attendance at the museum was around 1000 people, and Gilboa Gifts (the museum gift shop) also did well considering the recession. It's nice to have a shop at the museum for folks to buy unique local books and gifts. We are getting new fossil jewelry in for next year—can't wait!

We have received several donations towards the maintenance and upkeep of our museum and grounds. Thank you to the Juried Family Foundation, the Lomonaco family, and the Irwin E. Smith, Jr. family for helping toward the longevity of our Gilboa Museum.

Thanks to these people and others, we are making some serious inroads in our to-do list: we needed to replace all the memorial tree plaques in bronze to last for generations, and construct a shelter for another rare fossil that needed protection from sunlight. Some landscaping will be planted around the DEP fossil display this coming spring, and we will evaluate all the trees and shrubs at this time and if any need replacing. We now have the fund to do all this, and more!

SHANDAKEN TUNNEL INSPECTION

Additional Pictures from Karen Murphy and the DEP Archives

Gerry Stoner

I have discovered a wonderful resource thanks to John Vickers, the Division Chief west of the Hudson. He forwarded me to Karen Murphy of the DEP Archives, who provided summary information on the dam and comments on the working conditions in Gilboa in the 1920s.

Statistics regarding the dam:

Elevation at bottom of foundation: 949 feet

Elevation at top of lowest step: 1099 feet

Elevation at top of dam: 1130 feet

Maximum height of the dam is 181 feet

Masonry spillway length: 1,234 feet

Length of earthen berm with concrete core: 709 feet

Readers have asked about labor practices, the numbers of people involved in the dam, safety records of the time, standard work week (hrs/wk), etc.

Karen Murphy, the Archive Manager at DEP, pointed out that the DEP does not have Gilboa-specific summary information; it would require trying to piece the information together from various reports, contract documentation, etc. The DEP Archives is foremost an *agency* repository and not a public research facility. However, serious research can be done by appointment.

Summary highlights: for the entire Catskill Water Supply System, the total lost time due to accidents was 12,162 man-days and the total number of accidental fatalities was 371; various contractors were granted exemption to the 8-hour/day labor law because they couldn't compete with other projects in the area—the workers cared more about take-home pay than the hours worked.

September's *Newsletter* told of Ford motor cars going through the tunnel for the final inspection. Karen provided their publicity shots that can be seen on the next pages.

Thank you, Karen!
Gerry Stoner



Unfortunately the photo caption doesn't name the VIPs in the car, however I know that the inspection included the Board of Water Supply Commissioners George J. Gillespie (President), James P. Sinnot, and Philip F. Donohue. It is likely that the Chief Engineer, Thaddeus Merriman, was also part of the trip but we haven't been able to verify that. January 6, 1924, courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection.



At Shaft 5, the cars were hoisted on end, pivoted, and their direction reversed. January 6, 1924, courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection.

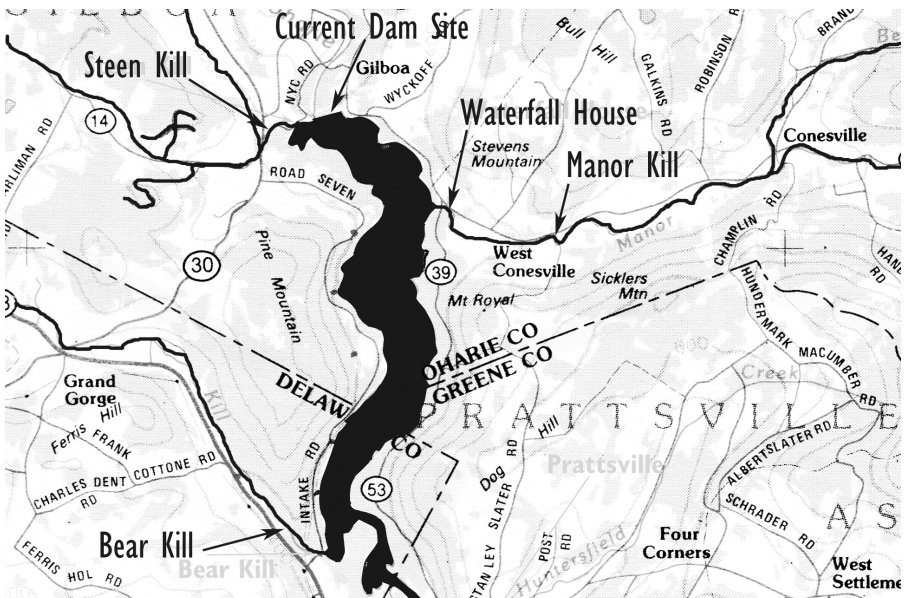
SELECTION AND PREPARATION OF THE DAM SITE

Excerpted by Gerry Stoner

Any complex project takes an inordinate amount of planning time, and the Gilboa dam was no exception.

New York City knew that it would be tapping the Schoharie watershed around 1905, but it did not know that the dam would be located in Gilboa until 1915. By that time, the Catskill Aqueduct and Ashokan Reservoir had been completed, and the engineers knew that they needed to capture 200,000,000 gallons of Schoharie water daily to maximize the system's full capacity.

Measurements of the Schoharie's volume taken at Prattsville indicated that there was insufficient volume there—the dam would have to be located further downstream so that the reservoir could collect the water from the Bear Kill, the Manor Kill, and the Steen Kill.



Map of today's reservoir and the locations of the Manor Kill, Bear Kill, and Steen Kill. The Manor Kill has a tributary creek called Bear Kill that joins it at Conesville to together deliver the watersheds of lower Albany County, northwestern Greene County, and most of Conesville. However, the creek that DEP was talking about is a different stream, starting at Mahan Pond and draining the Route 23 valley in northern Delaware County. Finally, the Steen Kill drains the area of South Gilboa Road up to Parlman Road and the adjacent valley along Route 30. Map courtesy of Schoharie County, adapted by Gerry Stoner.

The location for the dam was confirmed in late 1915; 1916 saw the start of engineering, planning that would last for five years and result in construction of the Gilboa dam. The plans for the Shandaken Tunnel had to be completed even faster—the tunnel had to be in place and the Schoharie waters diverted before construction of the major portion of the dam could be undertaken.

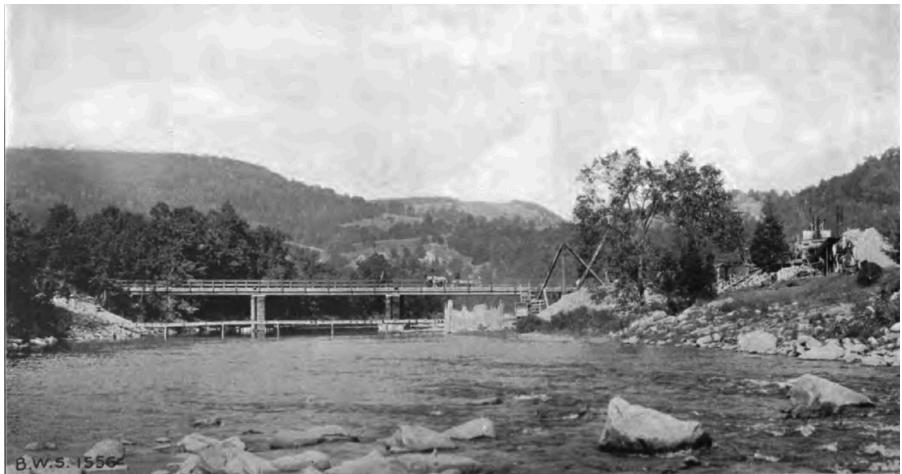
Comparison of Schedule for the Tunnel Compared to that for the Dam

	Contract Awarded	Contract Completed
Contract 200 Shandakan Tunnel	November 1917	December 1924
Contract 203 Gilboa Dam	June 1919	October 1927

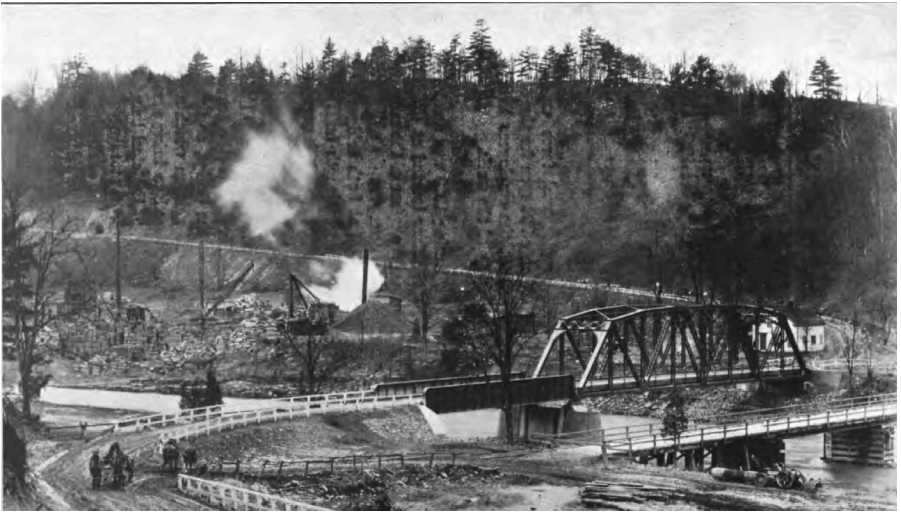
In the field, these years were not wasted time: before the heavy construction of dam and tunnel could start, roads and highways had to be put in place, necessary properties obtained, housing and support buildings for the construction and the workers built, and sources for materials developed. The goal was to have a completely self-contained worksite with most materials locally produced.

Bridges

Two bridges would be needed to route traffic around the construction area in the village of Gilboa: one would be over the Schoharie Creek and the other over the Manor Kill.



Schoharie Creek looking downstream, showing the temporary bridge built across the creek and the site of the permanent Schoharie bridge. The sheeting in center of picture is for the pier of the Schoharie bridge and the stonecrushing plant at right is for use in its construction. The small bridge was used for transporting clay from the excavation for the westerly abutment to fill around the sheeting of the pier. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1920.



Above: looking southwesterly from the hill approaching the present day town hall, the new Schoharie steel highway bridge and the temporary bridge across the Schoharie Creek are in the right foreground with the Riverside quarry in left background. Road 8 (a construction access road) can be seen on the far side of the stream. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1921.



Site of the Manor Kill bridge looking easterly, with wooden falsework (frames) for the bridge in place. The floor of the bridge will be about 80 feet above the bed of the stream. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1920.

B.W.S. 1545



The Manor Kill bridge looking westerly. Details of the bridge seat on the west abutment can be seen in this view. The deck of the bridge consists of an 8-inch concrete slab carrying the 2-inch asphalt-block pavement. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1921.

Roads

The roads built by the Board of Water Supply were called by number: Road 1, Road 2, etc. Roads 1 through 5 were east of the Schoharie Creek, while 6 through 9 were on the west. Roads 1 and 9 circled the construction, while the other roads were meant to allow workers and equipment access to the site. Roads 1 and 9 are what we now call 990V.

The top picture on the preceding page shows both Road 9 going across the Schoharie bridge and Road 8 coming down the hill by the Riverside quarry. With the exception of the bridge, the construction for Roads 1 and 9 was straightforward. The same was not true for some of the construction roads, especially Roads 2 and 8.



Looking easterly along Road 1. In left background can be seen the Stevens Mountain quarry, crusher plant, and tramway for conveying crushed stone to the site of the Gilboa dam. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1921.



Transporting concrete materials by mule to the sites of culverts on Road 8: these methods were necessary because of the rugged country. The church in the background is on the site of the Gilboa dam. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1919.

Road 2 wending up Stevens Mountain to the quarry site. Rock from the ledge at left is processed by a portable crusher, and the gasoline-operated concrete mixer trails for concreting culverts. Courtesy of the Department of Environmental Protection Annual Report, 1920.



Road 7 has been used by DEP since its construction, and goes from the Route 30 storage areas where the Ron de Voo was, east to the reservoir, and then south parallel to the shore. Just south of the Schoharie/Delaware county line, it passes the reservoir's gatehouse and becomes Intake Road, coming out on Route 23 near the stone tollhouse.

The construction of roads serving the Gilboa dam construction site was the first step in transporting Schoharie water to New York City water taps. The next issues of the GHS Newsletter will describe other events that also had to be completed before the dam itself could become operational: producing materials for the dam at local quarries, rerouting stream around the dam construction site, preparing worksites in the village, reinterring our early settlers, and remunerating property owners.

The Annual Report of the Board of Water Supply of the City of New York for the years 1907–1927 are now available as searchable .pdf files at http://www.northerncatskillshistory.com/Writing_History/200_Documents/BWSAnnualReports/

The name and address that we have for you appears on the reverse of this application. Please check to make sure that the information is correct, and let us know of alterations or scheduled alternative addresses.

Our membership year is the calendar year. One asterisk next to your name indicates that your individual membership is paid up for the current year; two asterisks signifies a couples/family membership; three asterisks indicates a lifetime membership.

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† The Board is developing a wish list of memorial gifts; please inquire of a board member, and provide the wording of the dedication, your name and address, and the name and address of a next-of-kin who should be notified.

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