

Gilboa Historical Society

Dedicated to learning about, sharing, and preserving our history

Fall 2010

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THE PINOCHLE CLUB

Joan Hess Mullen

During the 1930s and 1940s, eight Gilboa area couples met at one another's homes and called themselves the Pinochle Club. They regularly enjoyed home-cooked meals followed by an evening of cards. Original members were Leland and Alice (Cole) Lewis, Prof. and June (Kemp) Peckham, and Harry and Ursuline (Dauner) Wyckoff (all from Gilboa); Will and Anna (VanDyke) Thorpe, Harry and Meda (Smith) Taylor, Avery and Stella (Richtmyer) Hinman; and Raymond and Florence (Hinman) Brandow (all from Manorkill and Conesville); and Franklin and Muriel (Gordon) Hess (from Broome Center).

Sometimes, when substitutes were needed, Paul and Nina Stryker or Lee and Kay Nodine joined the original group: there may have been others also. It must have been quite a feat getting all 16 together, considering the distances they had to travel to each other's homes, the problems of driving on winter roads, and the reality of gas rationing during the war.

To be sure, this was a different era. Blue jeans, tee shirts, sneakers, and women in slacks were unheard of back then. The men wore suits and ties; the ladies wore their good dresses, many handmade. Sometimes children came

too, but we were banished outside or upstairs. I remember spending a lot of time at our house peering down the registers to see what was going on below, and doing considerable running up and down the stairs. So we children stored up memories too.

And what fun they had! The food was always wonderful, and the menu might include venison or farm-grown meats and vegetables. The men talked crops and cattle and looked forward to ferocious games of pinochle. Many were Board of Education members, and the ladies belonged to church

Please turn to Pinochle Club on page 13



I know of no photos of the entire Pinochle Club, but here is a photo of some of the group. Left side of table: Prof. Peckham, Franklin Hess, Muriel Hess, Stella Hinman, Avery Hinman, Ursuline Wyckoff. Right side of table: June Peckham, Alice Lewis (?), Leland Lewis, and others unrecognized. Florence Brandow is on the end.

Please Bring a Friend or Drive a Senior to Our GHS Events

September 15, 7:00 P.M. Jim and Roberta Brooks, owners and operators of Catnap Books on Cobleskill's Main Street, will discuss book collecting—what to look for, how to identify first editions, types of books collected, etc. Please turn to Brooks Books on page 7.

October 20, 7:00 P.M. Chuck D'Imperio will discuss his latest book, *Upstate New York: History Happened Here!* that highlights twenty-five notable people, places, and events connected with upstate New York—hot off the press! Please turn to History Happened Here on page 8.

November 17, 7:00 P.M. Lynn Bissell has written two books on the one-room schoolhouse, and will be talking with us about learning in a small, interactive environment. Please see page 18.

December 15, 7:00 P.M. The Gilboa Historical Society's Annual Bottle Auction with Tony "Santa" VanGlad and elves Al, Kristen, Connie, et al. Good cheer, good fun.

65 STEPS

Gerry Stoner

We had a friend visiting in mid-July, and took her to see the new bridge on Route 30 over the Minekill, just south of the Blenheim town line.



Easily found on Route 30 just south of Blenheim, the Overlook parking lot was pleasant, shaded, and cool for a car on extremely hot day—and for its occupants who could relax at the tables (with grills) for picnicking pleasure. There is a clearly marked path leading to the overlook, and an easy hiking path leading to the historic Long Path or to the swimming hole at the lower falls.

To the right and below: 65 steps provide child-safe access to a very narrow, heavily forested spine of land that meanders to a scenic view of the reconstructed Minekill bridge. As you walk these steps, you are in the upper story of a nearly primeval forest, and at the end you see the bridge through these trees or look down upon the upper falls of the Minekill. This walk is suitable for children or adults and does not trigger one's fear of heights.



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

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

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

Please contact Gerry Stoner with feedback
or suggestions on the *Newsletter*
(607 652-5988, gerrys@gilboahome.com).



TRAIL BUILDING BASICS

Clarence Putman

Your own personal hiking trail can be easy to build, have minimal impact on the land, and have low maintenance. The purpose of this article is to give you a few ideas on the construction of hiking trails from the experience of the Long Path, and your reward will be spending more time enjoying your property and having a healthier lifestyle.

Why consider building a trail on your property? It is a great way to get some exercise while enjoying nature, and can be built to reflect your own interests. You can build a trail for walking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, snowmobiling and horseback riding, but I will concentrate on a walking trail that could also be used for snowshoeing or cross-country skiing in the winter.

Just a few acres of land are all that are necessary for an interesting trail—nearly every home in Conesville and Gilboa could have a personal trail when you consider that the median residence has about 20 acres!

While a long-distance trail is meant to go from one point to another in a fairly direct line, a short trail on your property should make use of loops and alternate paths to include all the points of interest you want to visit—a scenic view, a dead tree providing shelter for habitat, a cluster of phlox or other wildflowers, a place where wildlife gathers, a stream or waterfall, a geological formation, or just a quiet spot. You can also add points of interest—put a bluebird house up on the edge of a field, or take a bag of wildflower seeds on your first walk in the spring to enhance grassy areas with color. Put a ripped-up newspaper and a couple of handfuls of black oil sunflower seeds into a plastic baggie, add water, and put the resulting mash in a sunny spot on your walk—it will grow into a summer bouquet! And no trail is complete unless you have benches or a convenient log to sit on and take a break.

The length of your trail should be a comfortable walk for you and your family while still including all the points of interest. You might want to consider having branching trails to allow for walks of different lengths.

Planning Your Trail

With any trail, the first question to ask is: “Where should it start and end?” With this *personal* trail, however, the



A good spot to take a break is on a curve in the trail. Courtesy of the Minekill Falls Overlook, photo by Clarence Putman.

answer will probably be your house. The next question is “Where should it go?” You may already have an idea of the points of interest that you want to include, but an additional walk-through is suggested to get more familiar with terrain and with the steepness of ground. It will be helpful to have a compass, a topographic map, aerial photo, or hand-drawn map to help you keep track of your location on the ground as you start to lay out the path.

On your map, locate the spots that you want to *avoid*: wet areas tend to be weedy and will require more maintenance; noxious plants such as nettles, multiflora rose, and poison ivy are a real nuisance; and steep hills might be too stressful for seniors or children.

If there is a stream on the property that needs to be crossed, look for the best place to ford—a spot where the banks aren’t too steep and where stones are available to use as steps. Look for heavily shaded areas for the trail—they will be easier to maintain as they will not be as weedy or brushy, and they will be cooler on summer walks. If you have stone walls, plan to have your trail run parallel for a bit and look for an opening where your trail can easily pass through. You also might want to incorporate logging roads or deer paths into your trail.

Laying Out Your Trail

After the walk-through, you will know the areas you want to avoid, the sites you want to include, and an idea of how to route the trail. It is now time to start to lay out your trail, and temporary markers are useful for this purpose. Surveyor’s flagging (bright ribbon) and stake flags (such as utility companies use to locate underground wires) are both available inexpensively (less than \$10) at local hardware stores; and strips of cloth can be substituted as well.

As you start on your trail, mark it well enough so you can easily see it in the distance and follow it in subsequent walks. Keep on a slight grade so water will be able to drain; and following a ridge will also help with water drainage and provide more opportunities for views. It is best to avoid flat areas if possible—they are likely to remain wet after a rain. Turns in the trail are more interesting, as a hiker will wonder what is around the next curve. As you go along, keep looking back on the trail you have just flagged—you may spot a route that better suits your purpose. It should take several passes to determine the best location for your trail, so take your time on this step. And remember, your trail will be a continual work in progress—always keep your eyes open for improvements.

Please turn to Trail Construction on page 13

THE FOURTH OF JULY ON FLAT CREEK

A Singular Event

Janette Reynolds

Singular: 1. of, relating to, or being a word form denoting one person, thing, or instance . . .
3. being out of the ordinary, unusual, departing from general usage or expectation

Merriam Webster's Eleventh Collegiate Dictionary

Flat Creek Church is the site of a singular celebration on the Fourth of July—singular as “being out of the ordinary.” The celebration is put on “of, by, and for the people” of the area celebrating “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” It’s also singular “denoting one . . .”—one fire department, one float, or one band—marching on a mile-long loop up Flat Creek Road, then onto Back Road and Back Road Spur to return to Flat Creek Road and the starting point—a half-hour parade followed by a potluck dinner.

It all started in 2003 when 9-year-old William Terry thought Flat Creek should have a parade on the 4th of July “to help celebrate America’s birthday.” With the help of Patrice Hallock and her daughters Catherine, Taye, and Stephanie, the tradition of the “Flat Creek Annual 4th of July Children’s Parade” began.

Children of all ages can be in the parade, or you can be a spectator anywhere along the 1-mile parade route. You can walk or ride your bicycle, motorcycle, 3 wheeler, lawn mower, tractor, dump truck, antique cars or convertibles. Or catch a ride on the hay wagon. Pull or push a stroller or a little red wagon. In past years, people have walked their cow, horse, dog, sheep, and rabbit in the parade. The Schoharie Valley Cloggers were also there! You will always find someone leading the parade by carrying the American Flag.

The Conesville Fire Department is great and supports this great community with their fire trucks and ambulance. Their Auxillary marches with their flag, and later we pass a hat for donations to the fire department.

In past years, people have come from as far away as Texas, California and South Carolina to see our great country parade! Whatever your tie is to the area, there is always something to bring you back again at 1:00 PM to the parade starting at the Flat Creek Church.

When the parade is over, there is a picnic. Dogs, burgers, and beverages are provided, and people bring a dish to pass. Patrice and David Hallock started having the picnic at their place; the last couple of years, Bill and Alicia Terry have hosted the picnic at their home.

Only one year it rained. Everyone got a little wet, even with umbrellas, but it did not dampen anyone’s spirits and the tent protected the food!

There is a sad ending to this story, however. On September 25, 2008, 2 days before he turned 14, William Terry’s life was finished. He had had a very busy and active life on his Flat Creek farm, enjoyed life on the farm, and hunting. At every Flat Creek 4th of July Parade, we know that William is there with us smiling down from Heaven.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

Brenda Weaver

In 1942, Pearl Harbor has become an integral part of the American consciousness. The country is at war, and the federal government is initiating programs to assure that all aspects of the American economy will be equal to the task of victory. In New York state, Schoharie was the first county to invite the USDA’s Soil Conservation Service assistance, and Cora Utter, a federal employee hired by the SCS, was sent to Schoharie to help our county’s farmers attain maximum sustainable agricultural productivity and to establish a cooperative service that could be applied throughout the state.

Come with us to those thrilling days of yesteryear when Ms. Utter discusses the implementation of New York’s Soil and Water Conservation District system with Brenda Weaver on the 70th anniversary of that program. This discussion is online as an audio file at www.gilboahome.com and covers the County Board of Supervisors who initiated the successful test, the early personnel who carried the word throughout the area, the progressive

farmers who adopted this new program, and the techniques that so improved agriculture in the mid-twentieth century.

Of local note, Gilboan Avery Hinman was the first farmer to sign on the soil and water conservation effort in the state of New York; the third and fourth endorsers were Conesville’s Townsend Losee and Grant Schermerhorn.



This montage of pictures comes from various parades to give you a feel for the spirit of the day.

Top left, Dottie Pickett in the role of Aunt Samantha (a.k.a. Auntie Sam).

Top right, an earlier Flat Creek Annual 4th of July Children's Parade returning to the Flat Creek Church, with William Terry and his heifer in the lead.



To the top right, Pastor George Kahl and family on their ATV with wife Jennie, Annalise, and baby Ephraim.

Also to the right and below the Kahl ATV is Zinia Reese and Billie Jo Spillane as Little Bo Peep returning after being able to find their sheep.



In the center is Brooke Koerner and her grandpa Bob Haskin.

Below Brooke is an evidently clock-driven Beetle driven by Ron Fancher of Greenville.

And to the bottom right, Louie Clark's draft team is pulling Bernie Castle in the wagon, and Louis' granddaughter Jessica and his great-granddaughter.



THEY LIVED IN THESE HILLS

Gerry Stoner

The following articles were submitted by folks who are familiar with the families and personalities described. These stories are short and are not meant to be an inclusive history of a person or time. Instead, they are meant to remind us of some of the personalities and events that occurred in Gilboa and Conesville over the past 300 years.

These stories come from the oral history of families who are living here now, and like all oral history, the stories may be completely true only to the people with the same oral tradition—these reminiscences may conflict with the oral history of other families. Should this be the case, please do not point out the fallacy of the stories as they are written, but instead tell us the variant of the oral history that is true in your family. There is no right or wrong here, but an expression of the glory of our differences.

They Lived in These Hills will be continued in sub-

sequent issues, but this can only occur if we have a continuing supply of anecdotes of local interest. I hope that readers will submit your oral histories so that we can all benefit from our common tradition. If you are a newcomer to the community (as I am), please talk to your more established neighbors and asked them if you could bring their families' oral tradition for the newsletter. Please email, write, or phone me with your thoughts and contributions to this effort.

Contact information is at the bottom of this page.

Peter Couchman

Peter Couchman (1831–1904) was a prominent man in this area in the 1800s, who studied law in New York City, was a prosperous farmer, served as Conesville's supervisor, postmaster, and a member of the New York State Assembly. He went west to Dakota Territory in the 1880s, was appointed the first sheriff of the area, and was a candidate for Governor of South Dakota when that state was newly formed. Couchman was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Cheyenne Agency. After about 20 years he resigned from the Indian Service and came home again to family and friends.

The *Golden Anniversary Historical Book of Shelby, South Dakota, 1950* tells that the Indians mourned his loss when they learned of his death. A traditional Indian funeral feast was held and Martin Charger spoke:

Far toward the rising sun
our friend sleeps the last sleep,
may his reward be great
in the hunting grounds of his Fathers.
May we remember his deeds
as long as the green grass springs
every year on the buffalo trails,
and may he live in our hearts forever.

Tonka Cola, Big Friend!

Peter Couchman was the great-grandfather of Bill Thorpe, also Neysa Stryker Reynolds, and great-great-grandfather of Gary and Paul Reynolds and others.

Joe and Sophie McGuire

Joe McGuire (1910–1967) was a very big man in size (6'4" and 245 lbs) and personality, while his petite wife, Sophie (1910–1964), was known for her warm, nurturing personality. The couple was childless, but opened up their home and hearts to young city boys who desperately needed guidance and a stable home. Joe gave these kids trade skills and a strong work ethic, while Sophie helped the kids live with humanity and passion. They worked with a dyslexic child to overcome that challenge before the word "dyslexic" was even used.

Joe and Sophie bought a hunting lodge in Manorkill and converted it over time into a year-round home for themselves and the boys they tended. Things never came easily to Joe and Sophie, but whatever they had was shared with their boys. This sharing included not only security, food, and shelter, but also work, rewards, and a deep feeling of accomplishment.

Joe was so honest that when he was given the opportunity to get electricity on their farm, he disqualified himself as not having enough livestock to qualify. Joe, a straight talker, tolerated no nonsense, yet was kind and understanding. Joe's honesty and character were his gifts to each of his charges.

Sophie was the nurturer as well as the homemaker. An accomplished hunter, she played a large role in getting food for the family, but also took the kids with her in the field and taught them the self-reliance that comes with being on your own in a potentially hostile environment. Sophie's gifts were self-reliance and a gregarious personality.

To contribute to *They Lived in These Hills*, please contact Gerry Stoner by email at gerrys@gilboahome.com; send physical materials to GHS Newsletter, 152 Starheim Road, Stamford, NY 12167; or phone 607 652-2665/866 652-2665

William A. Lewis Family

The second half of the 19th and start of the 20th century saw a rapid growth in the semi-frontier area of upstate New York. Emigration from more settled areas to the east and south was common, and the Rev. William A. Lewis (1859–1915) was typical of this time. He moved from the lower Hudson town of Milan in 1910 to the hometown of his second wife, Matie J. Wyckoff (1870–1954), bringing with them their children Frith (1894–1988), W. Earl (1896–1985), Florence (1903–1971), Mildred (1906–1997) and G. Harlan (1908–2007).



Back row: W. Earl Lewis, George Harlan Lewis, Frith Lewis. Front row: Mildred Lewis Bailey, Florence Lewis Case.

A common occurrence at this time was family dislocation due to the early death of a partner—that happened to Mattie and the Lewis children in 1915. Mattie met and married Emory Lewis (no relation); sold her farm (located in the village that would soon be flooded); and Mattie and the children moved to South Gilboa where Emory was a merchant operating a sawmill and general store.

As with many families at that time, Frith, Earl, Florence, Harlan, and Mildred grew up in relative affluence but would then have to spend the majority of their mature lives surviving in the years of the Depression.

Frith worked with his stepfather in the mill and store, and later took them over for his stepfather. Janet Bailey Foote remembered working for her uncle in the prototypical country store on Route 23 south of the railroad station: her uncle would go to work in the mill or hardware section, leaving her in charge of the general store—including the Oxheart candies and other great cookies from Oswego. Frith sold this operation to the Buels in the 1950s.

The second son, Earl, farmed some property of the Wyckoffs and was able to purchase his homestead from his grandparents in the early years of the Depression. He spent 32 years as the Gilboa Town Justice of the Peace, and his first office was located in a commissary maintained for the workers constructing the reservoir. His son remembers him being on call 24/7: they would be milking cows or doing other farm chores and would be interrupted by the New York State Police with a miscreant. Earl would stop the milking, hear the case in his home office, render a judgment, and return to his chores.

Florence married Freeland Case in Conesville and became a farm wife and mother of four children. The Cases worked hard, but small farms were becoming so noneconomical that a friend remembers with nostalgia Florence's near-heroic effort to provide for her family.

Mildred Lewis married Howard Bailey (1898–1982), and taught in the one-room schoolhouse at the end of

From the *Mirror Recorder*:

Myron Dings, born in 1859 in Bramanville, near Howe Cave, died Jan. 22, 1932 at the age of 72 in Chicago.

Mr. Dings established the *Gilboa Monitor*, a weekly newspaper, in 1878. It was under various owners for 40 years until 1918. Myron married on Jan. 17, 1883 to Donnah Belle Buckingham of Gilboa.

Taylor Road in Jefferson (the earlier Beers' 1866 Schoharie County Atlas called it district 1). After the closing of that schoolhouse, she repaired antiques, stencilled and caned chairs, and raised chickens, supplying the New Grant House in Stamford with kosher fryers and eggs. She then went back to teaching for the rest of her career at the Stamford Central School. She was passionate about history and was the town historian in Jefferson. She wrote *A History of the Town of Jefferson, 1771–1976*, and was also the Schoharie County historian. She was instrumental in the effort to document all cemeteries in the county.

Harlan also became a teacher but was also very musical, playing the French horn and jamming in a group with Raymond Maybie on the trombone. Harlan then moved to Clinton, NY, taught in that school system, and served as town mayor.

Brooks Books Books & Book Collecting Jim and Roberta Brooks

Come to the September meeting of the GHS and discover a great deal about these two popular passions: books and book collecting! Jim and Roberta Brooks, owners and operators of Catnap Books on Cobleskill's Main Street, will discuss what to look for, how to identify first editions, types of books collected, etc.

During the second half of the talk they will discuss collecting local history and show samples from both their shop and their own collection.

Jim and Roberta will answer your questions and will do book evaluations of antiquarian books that are brought to their talk (e.g., bring your books in for this purpose).

It's all very casual—the goal is to help folks realize that book collecting is enjoyable and can reflect both your personality and your personal interests.

September 15, 7:00 P.M., at the Gilboa Town Hall

Prof. Vivian B. Peckham

Vivian B. Peckham (1903–1991) had two careers—one in education, and the other in the military.

His educational career started with a bachelor's degree from Syracuse, with further studies and degrees from Teachers College and New York University. He established the first central school district in Schoharie County at Sharon Springs, and then came to Gilboa in 1933. During his tenure here, he integrated eleven one-room school districts into the original district, doubled the size of the Gilboa-Conesville Central School, and expanded its educational services. In total, he spent 38 years in teaching the children of the county, including 30 years in Gilboa. While always attending to local matters, "Prof" was also active in educational affairs of the state: the first chairman of the central school section of the Association of Secondary School Principals, active in the formation of the Capital Area School Development Association, vice president of the eastern zone of the New York State Teachers Association, and he held various offices and committee appointments in local, county and state educational organizations.

During World War II, Prof served in the Army where he rose from captain to colonel, served as an instructor, committee chief, and director of instruction at the infantry school at Fort Benning, GA, and as a liaison officer with the Chinese Army in India, Burma, and China.

Following the war, he continued his work with the Army Reserve and was commandant of the 1157th U.S. Army Reserve School at Schenectady and chief of the advisement and guidance section at the U.S. Veteran Administration's Albany office, directing veterans in the use of educational benefits under the GI Bill. The colonel retired from the military in 1960.

Locally, Prof was active in leadership positions of the Gilboa Methodist Church, Gilboa Lodge No. 630 F & A M, Otsego-Schoharie Masonic District, Virgil E. Deyo Post No. 1327 American Legion, Schoharie County Public Health Association, and the Zadock Pratt Museum. He also worked closely with the Boy Scouts, Grange, Farm Bureau, and Agricultural Extension Service.

Katherine Harrington

Katherine Harrington (1893–1986) taught in Gilboa, and she and her husband Anton (1896–1971) ran a surveying business. Throughout her life, Katherine was an avid painter and she also wrote a book of poems on rural New York life (*Ballads of the Hard Hills*).

After Anton's death, Katherine continued the business, and was the town historian. Despite failing health, she celebrated the fact that "the old rocking chair had failed to stop" her, and continued to write stories and articles about Gilboa until her death.

William Cornell

William Cornell was born around 1748 and moved here with his wife, Eleanor Hunt, from Fishkill about 1795. He bought several hundred acres and farmed that land, and he erected a tannery and shaving mill that provided the area with hemlock bark for tanning skins. This first Cornell mill was located north of the creek where it crosses under the road to the west of my house.

William also erected a weaving mill on the south side of the creek at 436 Shew Hollow, and a gristmill that straddled at 889 Shew Hollow Road. The gristmill foundation and some of the spillway is still visible.

William was prosperous and prolific, fathering 6 boys and 3 girls who all survived to marriageable ages. The second, third, and fourth sons (Abe, Will, and Tom) moved to Owego or Oswego, leaving 5 children to populate Cornell Hollow.

William's oldest son, Daniel, was a weaver and may have worked in his father's weaving mill. He apparently left Cornell Hollow but returned to manage the gristmill for his father. He married Mary Morey (or Mooney) in 1812, was licensed to preach in 1814, and later was ordained as Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1818 or 1819, Daniel built a gristmill in Gilboa, but moved back to Cornell Hollow in 1821. He ran the family's gristmill until 1833, during which time he and Mary had 9 children.

They moved to Davenport, running the gristmill there for 5 years (and having 2 more children). They then moved to the gristmill in Rockdale, Chenango County, for 10 years; followed by short stints in Sidney and Mononville in Delaware County before returning once again to Cornell Hollow.

History Happened Here

Chuck D'Imperio is an author, broadcaster, and engaging raconteur who travels the byways of upstate New York in search of little-known treasures. His books are a full of local travelogue, extensive references, and trivia.

This native of Sidney will share stories from his new book, *Upstate New York: History Happened Here!* at the October GHS meeting. This book explores 25 notable people, places, and events connected with upstate New York, including some with a local area twist.

D'Imperio's earlier book, *Great Graves of Upstate New York: The Final Resting Place of 70 True American Legends*, told about the end of the road for 70 famous people who are buried in upstate New York. That book was presented to a full house at the Gilboa Historical Society in 2008. Over the last two years, he has spoken to over fifty New York historical societies and is now introducing this "hot off the press" volume.

October 20, 7:00 P.M., at the Gilboa Town Hall

Imer Wyckoff's Pet Cemetery

Imer Clinton Wyckoff (1868–1925) lived at the farm on Wyckoff Road for his entire life. He was a horse dealer, and he also was a car dealer during the existence of the village of Gilboa. Married to Kate Mattice, they are the grandparents or great grandparents of the Wyckoffs scattered throughout our town.

Imer and Kate loved their animals. Not to be confused with Stephen King's *Pet Sematary*, they made their own pet cemetery with two grave markers at the farm on a



lovely knoll overlooking the northern Catskill Mountains. This is the resting spot of his favorite helpers with a marker for three horses and another for three dogs. His horses, led by Frank and Nell, are there with stallmate Hazel. Duke, a very large dog who ran the treadmill that churned the butter, is there with his pals Curly and Rover.

What is really special—the family also has pictures of Imer with his team or with Duke. One picture is of Duke making butter on the treadmill: the picture and the treadmill will be on display next year in the Gilboa Museum.



All Gilboa Historical Society Newsletters are available free at <http://www.gilboahome.com/>.
Email this address to friends & family.

GILBOA MUSEUM—2010

Kristen Wyckoff, Museum Committee Chair

The Gilboa Museum had a great season. Thanks to Mike Fleischman's photography and the art students of Gilboa-Conesville Central School, it has been a joy to walk into the museum this summer and see "The Beauty Around Us."

Our new addition—the Juried Memorial Barn—has definitely encouraged others in the community to donate, and we have gotten several calls and offers. Our acquisition committee is going to be very busy this fall checking into the various donations and whether we will be able to accept them all! We have a lot of room to work with in the barn and we fortunately have wall space to hang items as well.

The museum committee has worked hard to accomplish all that has taken place this season and now we are faced with keeping up our quaint little museum. We are in process of having the building painted this fall and some of the Gilboa Fossils signs need to be replaced.

Thank you all for the donations made at the museum and for the purchases you made at Gilboa Gifts. As always, we need any donations, and fund-raising will be discussed at our next museum meeting.

Thank you for all your support.

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

to Mother, Father, and Daniel Reed

Robert Morrissey

I found six letters written from November 28, 1862 through March 23, 1864 in the trash when moving into my home in Broome Center. The letters were written from the front by Jeremiah and David Reed to their parents and sibs Daniel and Ellis. These letters have appeared in the last few issues of the *Newsletter*.

The first letter was republished in the September 2009 *Newsletter*, with the second and third appearing in the March and June 2010 issues. This fourth letter dated December 23, 1863 follows here.

Since the earlier publications, I have received a tremendously exciting phone call from descendants of the Reed brothers. The family has many more diaries, letters, and updates on the later events in the lives of Jeremiah and David. The fall issue will not only continue with this series of letters, but will also feature an article on forthcoming documents from the Reeds.

Fort Reno. Washington, D C.
January 31st, 64

Dear Father.

Yours of Jan 23 is now before me. it came to hand the 28th. it found me well. I have been on dayly duty some four weeks. dont know how much longer I shall stick to that. till I get tired of it. then I will go on picket & guard again. I prefer dayly duty. I work just as I am a mind to & that aint very hard, you can bet your Boots on that. this Regt is most full, when the recruits get so they all do duty. I think it will be some easier for us go on guard & picket then bout once a week then I had rather do company duty. I think Ellis would of hit it if he had enlisted & come in this Regt. he could of got his little half a thousand besides 13 dollars a month & good clothes to weare Grub that would not give him the Despepsia. if he should make up his mind to enlist he had better come Rite here. then he could get in this Regt. for any one to enlist at Albany or any other place it would be uncertain about geting in this Regt as it is so near full. I dont believe this Regt will see any fighting, only now & then a fist fight. we may be sent off in Batteries to garrison differrent places in the spring. to keep the whole Regt here together is all nonsense. two Co. is enough to garrison any of these forts here on around Washington if a young man wants to get a start in the

Please turn to Fort Reno on page 18

Fort Reno. Washington,
D C.
January 31st, 64

Dear Father.

Yours of Jan 23rd is now before me. it came to hand the 28th. it found me well. I have been on dayly duty some four weeks. dont know how much longer I shall stick to that. till I get tired of it. then I will go on picket & guard again. I prefer dayly duty. I work just as I am a mind to & that aint very hard. you can bet your Boots on that. this Regt is most full. when the recruits get so they all do duty. I think it will be some easier for us go on guard & picket then bout once a week then I had rather do company duty. I think Ellis would of hit it if he had enlisted & come in this Regt.

JEREMIAH REED

Scott Reed

My forebears came from the northern Catskills, and several years ago I started to research my genealogy. I found that some of my forebears came from Broome Center, and I was doubly lucky in this quest.

In the first place, I was lucky in my selection of these forebears: they wrote a lot of letters, kept diaries, and had a number of photographs. In the second place, I was lucky in finding other subsequent relatives who cherished these artifacts and who willed them to the New York State archives. The bottom line of this is that I was able to access a large oral and documented history.

I was delighted, therefore, when I came across an issue of the Gilboa Historical Society Newsletter and found letters from the Reeds that I had not seen. I contacted the contributor, Bob Morrissey, and we have had some wonderful conversations.

The letter that Bob is sharing in this issue, for instance, is from Jeremiah Reed. We have 12 additional letters from Jeremiah that predate this one, and so I'm writing this in order to fill you in on some of his prior experiences and thoughts. In the next issue of the newsletter, Bob and I will tell you (in the words of Paul Harvey) "the rest of the story."

September 10, 1862: Jeremiah wrote to his family as if he were still in Broome Center and working the farm, haying, harvesting, fall plowing, and talking of the lack of rain.

He told them that he was working on the construction of a fort [Fort Pennsylvania in Washington D.C.], and then started to give brotherly advice to his brothers and fellow soldiers Ellis and David who had been sending money home. "... tell them to keep as much as thirty dollars with them, as they wont get more in a good while. And tell them to be saving of it. And not get everything they see. they may get yet to a place where if they had a few dollars it would be worth all the world to them.

"I have bean down to Washington and had my likeness taken after fashion. I will send it to you. It will be directed to Potters Hollow. I shall send Joseph one to."

Jeremiah was a good letter writer, and concluded with the latest activities on the front: "McClelland's army has been here. And Banks and Summers. . . . The story is that old [CSA Gen. Stonewall] Jackson is making his way in Penn. state. He wants to get to Baltimore. Then he knows that he can cut off our supplies. We would like to have him march that way very well. We would have him surrounded. No more at present."

We are missing some letters after September 10. Jeremiah had been sick, and on December 8, 1862, he updated his family that he was still in the hospital, but going to the camp every day. "I have no boots nor gloves yet. It will be

tough job to stand guard and go on picket with my old shoes. I cant hear anything about the box or boots. John Haskins says he had herd nothing of his boots either."

He talks of the weather (snowed all one day, then warm the next, the ground not quite frozen, and then more sun). "It seemed to me for the time a year I never see it so cold in Broome." He also talks of neighbors from the Schoharie Regiment that arrived: Scot Hays, John Hays son, Sgt. Wilsey, little Jake Hagadorne. . .

Jeremiah always asked about the farm: "what do you do with my part of the hay that you cut below the turnpike. I thought you could not have room in the barn on account of your own hay and grain there at home. Did you cut eney hay on the shares on the widow Hollenbecks place. Do you think there will be fodder enough to winter them stags of my part and what is in the old house. There will be none to spare to the Shoemaker barn. I don't spose, by what I understand in Josephs letter. The sheep will want it all. 70 or 75 sheep wants a big pile of fodder, the cattle iff I was at home and had enough to winter them on."

Money from the Army is always a topic as well. "Iff Uncle Sam don't pay before long we fellows will grumble some. I have \$15.00 yet. I hide \$20.00 when I was taken sick. \$30.00 I had when I came here, so you can see how fast I spend money. Everything I need I got and that I did not need I went without. Some of our boys that I might mention, several have spent \$60.00 or \$70.00 in two or three months, then they had to go without untill they could barrow, now and then a shilling . . . I keep the gold dollar for you yet."

December 27, 1862: "... We should hope and pray in the new year coming we can crush Rebellion. The campaign of 1862 is ended and no signs of peace yet. We have been too Proud and Boasted of our Stregth and of our money, and that we could out do this aristocratic principle. You see the evasion is so wicked that God is pouring his rath upon them, and unless we become humble and humiliate ourself to the cause of Christ. We never shall prosper in these United States. It will be Rebellion and invasion while time last to settle and have a permanent Peace. I dont believe it can be done. These are my sentaments. We have apprpriated Seven Hundred Million of Dollars to carry on the War for the encoming year. You see, they calculate to fight some yet. Must kill a few more men, aint Blood enough been shed?

April 6, 1863: "... will soon be big enough to make a soldier. I suppose you will make a Union one. Not a sneeking,

Please turn to Jeremiah on page 12

Jeremiah, continued from page 11

cowardly, sniveling, cringing, whining soulless, copperhead. . . . The snow is quite deep here in the sunny South. The snow, foot deep, the 6th April. . . .”

April 25, 1863: “. . . It has rained 36 hours steady. Last night the wind got round in the west and it has cleared off. The wind blows brisk. The mud dries up very fast. Things aint got a very early start yet. The grass begins to show pretty green. The trees aint leaved out yet. The peach trees show the greenest of any. They are in bloom. The blooms seem to start before the leaves or bout the time the farmers are busy plowing for their oats and their corn ground when it aint too wet. It has been too wet to do anything in the line of farming. According to your letters you are ahead of us here. . . . Our armies is giving the Rebels Ellick. We have recaptured the Queen of the West again. I must close and get this in the post office, the mail is going right out. . . .”

June 6th, 1863: “. . . Every-other-day have to go on Picket and guard. I came of picket yesterday morning to day fatigue, diging in the ditches, to morrow on guard again, this is the way it goes all the while. I had rather a darn site go in front, where I could have revenge and wash my hands in the hearts Blood of Rebels, the theifing treacherous set. I mite be the first one to fall and again mite come out all Right. I sometimes think I had as liv die on the Battle field as any where else. I dont want any of you to mourn for me, or to keep awake thinking about me. I am no Better than tens of thousands that has been slagn in this war already. I am just the one to be a soldier, and I mean to be a soldier as long as this war last, if I was discharged to day I would reenlist again it makes me sick to hear and see so many Babies as there is here in the Regt.

September. 3rd, 1863: “. . . I attempt once more to write you a few more lines to let you know, I am yet in the land of living - enjoying the blessings of health, that I prize above every thing else in this world . . . I must content myself, a soldier I am and a soldier I remain till this wicked rebellion is crushed. I am glad that I enlisted when I did. that now if I was at home I should have the horrors and feers of being drafted, one thing I hope the draft will cetch every copperhead in the County, two Co. of this Regt. has come over on the Island west of Washington to guard conscripts they have to watch them as close as tho thy was prisoners of War. a good meny of them deserts it is shure death for them if caught, six of the drafted deserted men was shot a few days ago. serves them Right . . . since the war Broke out meny of a one has been sentenced to shot but the President refused them, there is a horror about uncle Abe and God bless him he is just . . . Wm Cain read a letter from Henry Haskin and Ruben Cain the Regt. is at Aukisander a guarding Conscripts. they say their regt. is going be filled up and going to the front again.

October 19, 1863: “. . . I dont hear much about ellis latley. whether he is going to get rid of the draft or whether he is coming back to get his discharge again. If I was in his place I would git out of it if I could, they shove the drafted men Rite in front, they show them no money, they are guarded like prisoners. If they desert and out they are shot, serves them Right . . . Mead and Lee has been giving each other a brushing again, we could hear the roaring of cannon verry plain, the news I get mead out genealed lee in every corner, repulsed him with heavy loss, we are on a close matter. Lee could march to Washington in a few hours if he dare undertake it. we are watching for him. we all feel as if we would like to play our artillery on lee and his army. I dont hear much about moveing away, we have got our Barracks bout finished 100 feet long 20 feet wide for each co. I like them verry well.

December 27, 1863 “. . . I have a better command over myself than when I left home. A man must govern himself here or go rite on Blackleying. You cant imagine how demonalizer men gets in the army. I have sometimes thought when I have been in the service two years I would reenlist for three years again, that would be five years to serve, instead of three, they must give me big bounties if they got me. Nothing short of a thousand dollars will fetch me. They offer most that now. I think the men wont last longer than uncle Abes administration, They cant stand much longer. . . . My hight is five feet five inches, heft, 140 lbs. I aint as fleshy as I was last winter I wayed 147 lbs. I am heavy enough for any boy you ever raised. I dont like to brag & so I will stop I dont verry often get on my muscle.

January 12, 1864: “. . . I have a few leisure moments now and I will improve them in writing a few lines to you, telling you I am well. I am to work now on detail duty chopping for the Quartermaster. It gives me a good appetite for the Butter that I seed the 7th, in it I found five roals of Butter, three pair of socks, they was just Bully-besides some dried fruit-it makes bread and Butter relish first rate . . . I am looking for the pay master again every day. and when he comes and gives me my due in greenbacks, those that have made me presents, I shall return in small greenbacks the same to them, you need not look for sawbucks on twenties, I aint sactly broke yet. I have over seven dollars now. money dont do some much good some of the New recruits has spent 40&50 dollars and now wants to Barrow . . . we have saw a good many recruits the last week tom Decker, R P Bates, Ed Wilber, John Walker they have gone in Co. E Abraham has not arived yet. Synthia is ahead of you in furnishing soldiers, she has five Boys in the army; from the oldest down to the youngest four in one Company. when Abe comes, a mother cant help but feel bad when all her boys has left their homes to fall an enemy. I think if the draft goes through old

Please turn to Jeremiah on page 18

Trail Construction, continued from page 3**Constructing Your Trail**

When you are satisfied with the layout, it's time to start clearing. Some hand tools that would be helpful are bow saws, clippers, lopping shears, and folding saws. Large saws or chain saws are not usually necessary as you can usually avoid cutting mature trees.

The Long Path uses a four-foot-wide corridor, but you can certainly make your own trail wider if you plan to have a family group regularly use the trail. Make it wide enough so that you won't be hit by branches, and remove branches eight feet overhead so that a person can walk even if there is some sagging due to rain or snow. Make sure the footing is clear, and remove roots and stones that might trip a hiker. Views along the trail can often be improved by cutting only a few branches or small trees. Branches cut during trail building can be stacked to the side as wildlife habitat.

Water on a trail is a real trial. Small low spots, boggy after a rain, can be filled in with small branches and wood chips, while slightly larger areas can be handled with flat rocks laid down as stepping stones.



Owen Nied of the Schoharie County Youth Bureau and the Cobleskill-Richmondville School working on a water diversion on the Minekill Falls Trail.

It is essential to keep water from running down the path eroding the surface. Water running parallel to the trail can be kept off by small dikes, and water occasionally coming across the trail can be handled by small dams at an angle across the trail. These dams are often called water bars or "thank-you ma'ams." If you have an area where water is regularly undermining the trail, bury a six-foot length of 8" corrugated culvert under the trail to route the water safely across to the other side. It is light enough to be carried into the woods, durable enough to give you years of wear, and strong enough to bear the traffic.

Trail Maintenance

Trail maintenance is best done in the spring and fall. This

Pinochle Club, continued from page 1

groups, Home Bureau, PTA, etc. In the summer, some of the group went to the Hinman/Brandow camp on Crystal Lake. Anniversaries and birthdays were celebrated too. I remember one summer night, after we moved to West Conesville, Pinochle Club members, neighbors and relatives gave my parents a "horning" to celebrate their wedding anniversary. The boarders across the street at the Waterfall House, hearing the cowbells, horns, and shotguns go off, thought they were in the midst of a serious gangland riot—New York City style.

I know of no photos of the Pinochle Club, for this was before most cameras could take pictures inside. Unfortunately some of the group died in their fifties and sixties. Florence Brandow outlived all of her fellow card-players, and died in 1906 at the age of 101. Descendants cherish their memories of the fabulous Gilboa Pinochle Club.



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

should not take long and can be accomplished on one of your walks. Maintenance consists of clearing blowdowns that are on the trail, cutting branches that have grown into the cleared trail, repairing water bars, and adding more stones or bark in wet areas.

Good luck! Remember, until you have your own trail you can make use of local trails. The Long Path North Hiking Club also leads hikes in the area. If you are interested in participating in one of these hikes, volunteering for maintenance work on a section of trail, or wish to have a map of a Long Path section, contact the LPNHC at P.O. Box 855, Schoharie, NY 12157. You can also contact this writer at: clput@wildblue.net, or at 607 538-9569.



Clarence Putman retired from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation in 2002 after 35 years of managing Schoharie County State Forests. He continues an involvement with the Long Path Hiking Trail that started while he was working at DEC. The club address is the Long Path North Hiking Club, P.O. Box 855, Schoharie, NY 12157, and his email address is clput@wildblue.net

Email the Gilboa Historical Society Museum Web Site to Family and Friends: <http://www.gilboafossils.org/>

TURKEY SHOTS

A Celebration of Fall

Carlton Lewis

After World War II, a popular pastime for returning vets as well as natives of the area was the turkey shoot—a target shooting contest with all sorts of weapons where the winners would take home a turkey (or bacon, ham, etc.). At that time, Gilboa, Conesville, and nearly every other town or village had a rod and gun club that would sponsor the turkey shoot as an annual money maker for the club.

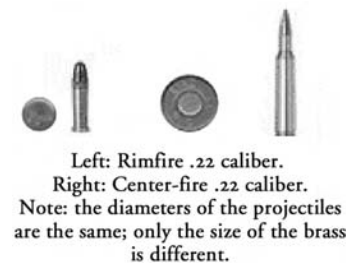
I remember participating in shoots in Stamford (where Archibald Field is now located), across from the school in South Kortright (until some marksman brought down a power line), adjacent to Nickerson's campground, on Blenheim Hill at the end of Quarry Road, and in hamlets and villages of Greene, Delaware, and Schoharie County.

A participant at a turkey shoot would arrive early and buy a number of tickets much like a child would buy tickets for rides at an amusement park. The shooter would then hand in a ticket to buy a single shot in a selected event, and could win a turkey if that shot was the most accurate. The club might well prepare for a single shoot by scheduling many events and buying a turkey for each.

The specific events would reflect the interests of the club members and people who had shot in past events. For instance, the most popular event used a 22 rimfire rifle on a target 50 feet away, and any one shoot might have 10–12 individual events like this using the 22 rimfire rifle.

Rifle events popular among deer hunters would allow the use of anything except the 22 rimfire (i.e., they could use their hunting rifles). Also appealing to this group was a contest called the “running deer.” You would fire from a standing position at a standard paper target placed on a paper picture of a deer. The picture was suspended on a wire slanting downhill at a range of 75'. The target would be released, gravity would pull it across the field, and the shooter would aim at this swiftly moving target.

There would always be at least one long-range contest where you could use a gun of your choice at 100 yards. Contestants generally used a center-fire rifle allowing more weight for the bullet and more powder for propulsion.



Left: Rimfire .22 caliber.

Right: Center-fire .22 caliber.

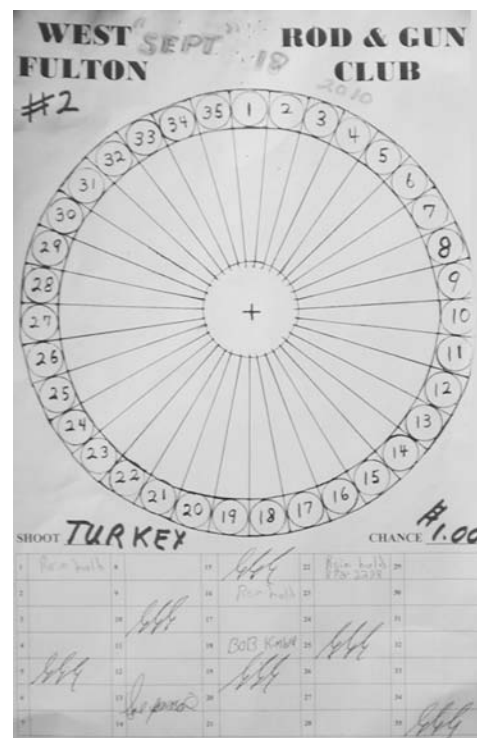
Note: the diameters of the projectiles are the same; only the size of the brass is different.

One of the more specialized contests called for the shooter to be sitting at a picnic table and using a support to steady the weapon for bench-rest shots at 100 yards. This contest appealed to shooters with very accurate (and expensive) weapons—contestants here were the “snipers” of the field.

Of course there would be shotgun contests, and there were always a few contests for specialized interests: pistol

contests allowing the shooter three shots; muzzle-loading guns shooting black powder; and skill-of-arms contests including archery (75' range), tomahawk throw, two-handed axe throw, and knife (25' range). In some larger meets, you might even see the contests for black powder weapons divided into separate heats for sidelock (cap-fired), flintlock, and matchlock guns.

Quite often, the posters advertising a turkey shoot would be printed on a traditional rifle target, but with the target marked up like a pizza or with scattered circles. Before the match, people would “buy” these circles or slices, and the target would then be used in a shotgun competition. The most accurate pattern would win a turkey for the shooter, and the slice/circle with the most birdshot hits would win a turkey for the person who had bought that slice/circle.



Rod and Gun Clubs promoted their shoots using a standard target, with sections of these targets marked in a random manner using slices or circles scattered over the target.

These targets would be posted in stores, people could buy chances for each circle or slice, and then the targets would be used in a shotgun event. To the left, the West Fulton Rod and Gun Club continues that tradition. This poster courtesy of the West Fulton Rod and Gun Club and Clark's Restaurant. Photo by Gerry Stoner.



Carlton Lewis, a dairyman for nearly 30 years, changed careers to become a master machinist in the early 1970s. At that time, the dairy industry in the Catskills had fallen on hard times, all creameries were cutting back, and the closing of Blenheim Creamery spelled the end for the 500 dairy farms that it served—including Carlton's.

LOCAL HISTORY

THROUGH THE RECOLLECTIONS OF OTHERS

Gerry Stoner

The March *Newsletter* listed four resources of local history available to us: people, pictures, artifacts, and documents. This article covers the first of these resources: people as a source for interpreting or confirming oral history.

Objective: To increase our knowledge or confirm specific points by conducting a quality interview and developing an essay on some aspect of local history.

The following scenario is about an imaginary interview with a local citizen, Timothy Murphy. I play the interviewer, but you can use these techniques with people in the community to create your own local history. My hope is that a lot of people—especially younger people—will interview seniors and relatives and share what they learn with the rest of us.

Step one: a first interview to explore possible subject areas

I generally use only a pen and paper for a first interview. I introduce myself and emphasize that the interview can be quick and easy, and might be very interesting to others. I hope this introduction will calm any nervousness, motivate the person I'm interviewing to agree to a second interview, and identify a topic so that the next interview will be focused and detailed.

I try to get mechanical aspects (spelling of names, preferred nicknames, contact information, and year of birth) out of the way first. I write these details down, and then try to make only occasional notes during the rest of this interview.

Interviewing Timothy Murphy, I ask for a brief overview of his life. It turned out to be varied: he was born in Pennsylvania, was illiterate and a troublemaker, and joined a local militia in 1775 just before a sheriff caught up with him. In his regiment, Timothy was deemed a marksman (able to hit a 7-inch target at 750 feet) and was sent to Boston with his regiment. The regiment, led by Daniel Morgan, fought at Québec and Saratoga (he played a critical role with his musket, bringing down British General Fraser). Sent to defend the Schoharie Valley, Timothy went AWOL to marry a local girl. He fought against Joseph Brant's Indians, was a hero at the battle of Middle Fort, and subsequently fought in the battles of Long Island, Trenton, Princeton, and Yorktown. He settled in Fulton and later the Charlotte Valley, where he was a successful farmer, businessman, and politician from 1783 until his death in 1818.

This remarkable history is true, but it also is an excellent example of how a person's life may have many different facets.

It is best to keep an interview specific and focused: "I see all sorts of topics for our interview—your time with

Daniel Morgan, the battle of Middle Fort, shooting Gen. Fraser at Saratoga, and how a Pennsylvania roustabout married the daughter of a loyalist farmer. What one topic would *you* choose to talk about in this interview?"

Timothy said that he would like to talk about his relationship with Peggy, although there were a couple of other topics that he also would like to share. I asked "what three points would you like to make about your life and marriage?" From what he said, I was able to summarize the topic for our next interview:

"Timothy, at the next interview, we'll discuss your life with Peggy: (1) your meeting her during your frequent scouting trips around the loyalist Feeck (Peggy's home) farm; (2) your eloping with Peggy to Duaneburg and threatening to take her to Pennsylvania if her Tory father remained hostile; and (3) Peggy's activities at the Middle Fort molding bullets, loading muskets, and swearing to take up a spear when the ammunition ran out. I'd also like to get a picture of your marriage license if you could dig it out for me—I'll bring the camera. And I hope you'll prepare a short biography to use at the end of the article."

After a first interview, I check my notes to make sure I have the important points, adding any ideas I might have missed. I also go online and search for topics that might come up in a second interview, and I print an extra copy of any documents that I would like to share. I also make an outline of the topics to be discussed, and then simplify it. For Timothy, I made the list extremely simple: (1) meeting Peggy; (2) marrying Peggy; and (3) Middle Fort.

Step two: a second interview to develop the article

Before the second interview, I checked my kit, including a digital camera and extra batteries, tape measure, paper, and an iPod for recording the interview (the iPod is an easy way to take notes of the interview and is capable of converting the file to an MP3 format for the Internet).

Timothy got right down to business at the kitchen table, and I introduced him to the iPod and the benefits of its use. Timothy had no problem having the iPod on the table and it quickly became just part of the background.

I turned on the recorder, gave him the outline while reinforcing the three points that we were to cover, and a

Please turn to Timothy Murphy on page 16

Timothy Murphy, continued from page 15

map of the area around Peggy's father's farm. Timothy produced the marriage certificate (I photographed it) and gave me a summary of his life for use at the bottom of the article. I took a couple of pictures to use in his bio.

With the mechanics out of the way, Timothy (who was a natural storyteller when he was given a structure) started to discuss the first point on our list: how he met and courted Peggy on his travels through northern Schoharie County. I wasn't quite able to follow him at one point, and asked him to clarify. Generally, however, Timothy did a wonderful job describing his experiences and used a minimum of "I means" and "ums." I found it best to simply let him talk and not interrupt him.

The second and third points of our outline were handled the same way. It was amazing that Timothy (who is not a "word person") could do such a wonderful job of talking about this aspect of his life.

As we ended this interview, I promised him I'd be in touch within a week with a version of the article similar to what would be used in the *Newsletter*.

Step three: organizing the article

I transcribe a tape as completely and quickly as possible while the memory of what was said is clear in my mind. I also run the spell-check utility, and then save the file and lock it so that I always have the original. I always use a *copy* of the file for editing.

First pass: read the file with no preconceptions.

I try to read the *transcribed* text as a casual reader with no knowledge of the topic or the source. I don't do any editing on this first pass, and I continually remind myself that the article is the author's work, not mine.

Second pass: fix only what may be broken.

My first question is, "does it flow well?" If you answer "yes" to this, do only the absolute minimum of editing. If the flow of ideas is choppy and disconnected, I will move some ideas around or add transitions. Other common

problems could involve word choice, grammar, or the lack of a clearly defined theme. Recommended solutions to these common problems follow:

If the flow of ideas is choppy:

1. I put a carriage return at the end of every sentence, to make each sentence a separate paragraph. I then rearrange these paragraphs to the most logical flow.
2. I read through this new text flow, to locate any gaps between the sentences. I create a new sentence or a question for the author to fill these gaps, underlining the text to indicate that this is my wording.
3. I then reread the sentences and recombine them into paragraphs. Each paragraph focuses on a single specific aspect of the interview.

Sometimes words are poorly chosen and a better idea or phrase is available. I usually can change a word or a phrase to solve the problem, and the editing is so minor that it is not noticeable. I don't highlight these minor edits, but I always show the author the revised version for approval. Always give your source a chance for final review.

If incorrect grammar is noticeable, try to eliminate grammatical errors.

When there is no clearly defined theme, create a topic sentence at the start of the article that includes the items in the outline you developed for the second interview. This topic sentence will help organize the details of your article.

Third pass: Is the quality of this article now acceptable?

If the article meets your standards, set up an appointment with the author for final approval.

This article is one of several to help you document local history. This and other articles at www.northerncatskillshistory.com will help you convert your interviews, documents, pictures, and artifacts into a form that can be shared with your community.

8th Annual Cauliflower Festival

**10-4, Saturday, September 25
Village Park, Margaretville**

History Displays, Entertainment,
Tractor Parade, Kids Activities,
Cooking Demonstrations,
Arts & Crafts, Farm Market.

Free Admission!

Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce
www.cauliflowerfestival.com

One-Room Schoolhouse

Lynn Bissell has written two books on the one-room schoolhouse, and has introduced many more people with his talks on what it was like to learn in such a small, interactive environment.

November 17, 7:00 P.M., at the Gilboa Town Hall

LIFE IN THE COAST GUARD

Edward Belinski

In 1939, much of the world was at war, but America (or at least my portion of our country) didn't really believe that it would be drawn into the war. At that time, I was a 17-year-old who had completed school, worked part-time for my father in the glass business, and was experienced in sailing, having spent all my free time on a 19-foot power boat.

Wanting to see more of the world, I convinced my parents to cosign with me in order to enlist in the military. Because of my interest in small, fast boats, I had focused on the Coast Guard, and joined it as soon as school was over in the spring of 1939.

The training for enlisted personnel in the Coast Guard was decentralized at bases throughout the country. My basic training therefore was on Ellis Island in New York, and advanced training was on boats ferrying VIPs around New York Harbor. The commander in the city was Captain John Baylis, who was responsible for New York Harbor and the waters off Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey.

I quickly fell in love with the Coast Guard when they assigned me to a 72-foot boat that had been captured from a rum runner a decade earlier and renamed 72005. It had four Liberty engines and could do in excess of 40 mph. A couple of years later, 72005 had a race with a slightly larger PT boat and handily won. This boat suited me to a "T." I am sure that my enthusiasm for 72005 helped, and I was promoted through seven ratings to bosun mate second class and executive officer by the time war broke out.

In July of 1942, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, her daughter, their grandchildren, and various members of their household visited the Roosevelts at Hyde Park. 72005 was the means of transit and guarded the river off the Roosevelt compound.

According to *My Day* by Eleanor Roosevelt, the Queen "made it a point to see every person who came out of Holland, particularly young boys. They told her what they had been through and what they were thinking about the future, and these things helped her to have a vision of what will need to be done in her country and in the post-war world . . ." (From "My Day," by Eleanor Roosevelt, July 16, 1942.)

I had a run-in with the president—literally. I had driven to the Hyde Park railroad station and was pulling out to return to the ship. BUMP. I had backed into the presidential limousine. Naturally, I got out to exchange information etc., and came face-to-face with FDR. I



Franklin D. Roosevelt and Queen Wilhelmina, 1942. Courtesy of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Hyde Park, New York.

apologized, and the president was extremely cordial: "Good morning, son, how are you?" He asked about my family, dreams, and generally appeared to be extremely interested in me personally. A great day!

I was in the Coast Guard for nearly 6 years, having joined before war was declared and been released after VJ Day. For the majority of that time, I was on the 72005 that was manned by four seamen and armed with a Lewis gun (machine gun) that we kept well oiled in the cabin and mounted on the bow in times of need. Our tasks included ferrying VIPs; taking shore duty opposite the estate when Roosevelt was at Hyde Park; and putting out a ship's fire at the New Jersey docks.

Inshore (smaller) boats designed by the Coast Guard included 34-foot, two-engine vessels with a crew of two for inshore work and without facilities for continuous operation (no bunks or heads). The smallest regular Coast Guard vessel used for *enforcement* operations over a longer duration was an 83-foot cutter that required a crew of six and was armed with two Lewis guns and a one-pounder (a cannon shooting a 1.46" projectile).

The mission of the Coast Guard in my mind has been the protection of shipping and lives of mariners. We recognized that we were at war and that our mission included the protection of the American homeland, but this aspect of our service became much more central after midnight on the morning of June 13, 1942. At that time, four men landed on a beach near Amagansett, at the eastern end of Long Island, from a German submarine. Clad in German uniforms and bringing ashore enough explosives, primers, and incendiaries to support an expected two-year career in the sabotage, the plan failed due to a combination of Nazi incompetence and a great deal of luck. The saboteurs were reported to Captain Baylis, who reported the information to the FBI.

The saboteurs were apprehended, but I was subsequently shifted to East Moriches on the south shore of Long Island almost out to the pine barrens, and later even further east to Shinnecock Reservation. This area of Long Island has a very jagged shoreline of coves, bays, and inlets, but the shore is separated from the ocean to the south by a nearly continuous length of barrier dunes and islands. The only passageway from the shore of Long Island to the open sea at East Moriches, for instance, was at Cupsoque—the

Please turn to Coast Guard on page 18

Jeremiah, continued from page 12

schoharrie . . . it may draw some of the Black hearted copper-heads to the racks that is the spot for them, they will stop a bullet as quick as a union man. . . . I hear the young folks around about there is no notion of sleeping alone this cold winter. Lib Gordon, I hear has got married. Ill bet you she has some warmth to her. the last time I saw her she was plump as a duck them is the ones in cold winter.

Coast Guard, continued from page 17

barrier dune allowed no other egress for several miles on each side of this one cut.

One morning, our 34-foot boat came out at Cupsoque and discovered a German U-boat that started sending 5" cannon shots at us. Needless to say, we used our speed and familiarity with the waters to retreat behind the barrier reef while reporting the encounter on our radio.

On a more mundane level, our unit also was responsible for interning the ships of enemy combatants, and I remember without fondness falling into the hold of a Danish ship on this mission. I also was stationed on the Triborough Bridge and directed water traffic using signal lights mounted on the bridge's superstructure until one color-blind pilot ran the red and collided with a ship going in the opposite direction.



Edward Bilinski returned to the glass business in the Smithtown (Long Island) area, and moved to Gilboa in 1967. He recently succumbed to prostate cancer at his Gilboa home.

Word for the Day: Allopathic

The Fall-Winter 2008 *Schoharie County Historical Review* reprinted an 1875 *Schenectady Gazette* article that referred to Dr. D. I. Leonard as an allopathic practitioner. The editors (Ken Jones of Esperance and Elaine Cooper of the Stone Fort) kindly footnoted this term: "Prior to a 1910 Carnegie Foundation study for the American Medical Association, known as the Flexner Report, several schools of medicine existed including homeopathic, osteopathic (manipulative), eclectic (herbal), and what was then called allopathic medicine, also called scientific medicine. The report was gradually accepted and the allopathic school became the standard in American medicine but without the name allopathic. In the 1890s, Schoharie County had both eclectic and allopathic medical societies."

Fort Reno, continued from page 10

world. let him except of the Big Bounties that is offered to Volunteers. Seymour Hulbert sais Daniel wanted to come. I wish you could spare him & let him come. I suppose if he should enlist & give you a couple a Hundred you would consent to his enlisting. I will not encourage him now. it may be against all of your wishes. he may be snatched with a draft yet. That spruce lumber is cheap at two dollars a hundred. if Bates did not want to pay what they was worth whi did he take them. Good clear Boards is worth 20 shillings a hundred. lumber is like evrything else. it has raised in prise. lumber that could been Bought one year & half ago for 20 shillings is three dollars & a half. I had rather kept them than to sold them for three dollars a hundred especially if they was good flore boards. if he grumbles a two dollars a hundred ask him for me if he wants to have them give to him. Lumber cant be got short of albany if a man wants to Build through that section, & it cant be got for two dollars a hundred either.

You sold your cattle for a good price & I hope you can spare one hundred of it to pay toward your place. You make money faster now than you used to when you managed the hole thing. Your oats will fetch you a good price to my colt. You can feed him one or two Quarts a day just as you think, dont measure out the oats & Book them how meny you feed him. I dont ask you to feed your oats for Nothing. he said a debt you spoke of I think can be got for Fifty dollars. By watching Palmer sais, he did not know what was asked for him. But shedrick wanted to sell him. You must ask your judgment. Buy as cheap as you can & sell for as much as you can get. I have not been paid yet. Three months. Pay is due again. we have had monthly inspection to day. it is thought we will not get paid before march. I don't care much when they pay me. it is all good if it was ten thousand times as much. our cuntry is rich, our resource is great, we have over in the 5 millions, 3 hundred thousand dollar ahead on this past year's expenses, so sais Secretary Chase & President Lincoln. they are the men that know. when you see Lyman ask him if he got the seven dollars I sent him on Dec. 3rd & 9th. By letter. I mite as well kept it. I may use X. i have only three dollars in my pocket since now dollar standing out cant X. I tried & must Borrow five dollars of some of the recruits. i shall send some X before XX can take a look at any XXX more.

Yours affectionally,

J W Reed

All Gilboa Historical Society Newsletters are available free at <http://www.gilboahome.com/>.
Email this address to friends & family.

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* Please specify any temporary addresses in effect for our mailings in early March, June, and September (there is no winter issue).

[†] 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.

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Gilboa Historical Society, Post Office Box 52, Gilboa, NY 12076

WINTER SOLSTICE EDITION OF THE GILBOA HISTORICAL SOCIETY *NEWSLETTER*

Gerry Stoner

This is not a firm promise, but there is a probability that we will have an additional issue of the *Newsletter* to be mailed early in December. But the timing is such that many of you may be at a winter retreat.

To receive this additional issue, please let us know your winter address!

Why should you want to see this edition specifically?

Because this issue will have a different slant and new features that I guarantee you'll enjoy. And moreover, these features will make other historical societies sit up even more and take notice.

At the very worst, updating your winter address will cost you a couple minutes of your time. At the very best, you will see a Newsletter that will warm the cockles of your heart!

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Current Resident or



Alice Hinman mentioned that she had a poison bottle with a noticeable pattern of embossing on its surface. The goal of the embossing was to make the bottle distinctive even in the middle of the night, in poor light, or to a person with visual disability. About a third of the surface was smooth, and the label would be attached showing the contents of the bottle.

It turns out that Alice's bottle (to the left) was extremely popular with chemical manufacturers of an earlier time, and was manufactured in sizes from a few ounces to a half gallon. The stopper for the bottle was also distinctive, having a key-shaped top with very sharp pyramids sticking out on the sides—it hurts if you hold the top too tightly in your fingers.

Alice's bottle was by no means universal. Another very popular shape (top right) for smaller bottles had relatively smooth sides with the distinctive bumps embossed on the edges that you would feel when you picked it up. Other larger poison bottles had a footprint that was curved on one side and a half a hexagon on the other, and again with bumps down the edges. Contents of these bottles included arsenic, copper sulfate, mercury, and strychnine sulfate.

Bottle on top left courtesy of Alice Hinman; bottles to right courtesy of Chris and Carl Alimonti; penny courtesy of Uncle Sam, photos by Gerry Stoner.

