

FALL 2017

# ECHOS OF ELMA

Volume XVII issue 2 quarterly newsletter of the Elma Historical Society, Inc.

A 501(c)3 corporation under the auspices of the New York State Board of Regents

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## SOCIETY EVENTS

### 2017 - 2018 Schedule of Events

September 12, 2017 Society tour –  
Holland Land Company tour at 5:30 p.m.  
Dessert at Town & Country Restaurant in Alden  
after program. Limit 20 people for tour. **Call  
Kathy at 652-1911 to reserve your spot.**

October 7, 2017 Apple Pressing at the sawmill  
during the Pumpkin Festival 1 - 3 PM

Oct 9, 2017 member meeting 7PM Sr. Center  
JoAnn Schaaf will present a program on the  
Chair Factory in Elma.

November 13, 2017 Theme basket / dinner fund  
raiser

December 2, 2017 Annual Tree Lighting and  
Santa

December 11, 2017 Society Christmas party

## DEDICATION

Support your Society by attending the  
dedication of a historic marker on Saturday,  
September 9th at 1PM. The marker will be  
placed at the corner of Creek Rd and Jamison  
Rd and will display Elma's history in East Elma,  
also known as Frog Pond.

## HISTORIC MARKERS ARE AVAILABLE



We have provided 7 of these signs to homes  
around town. Have you seen any of them? They  
would make a wonderful addition to your home  
with your home's ca date, and are worth the  
cost. Call Frank at 652-6256 if you would like to  
order one.

## Theme Baskets and Dinner

On Monday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, the Elma Historical  
Society will hold their Annual Basket Raffle and  
Dinner at the Elma Senior Center. Doors will  
open at 5:00 with dinner at 6:00 p.m.  
It is hoped that each member can donate a  
basket or gift card.

I am happy to answer any questions you may  
have regarding the baskets. I can also assemble  
your items into a basket for you.  
Baskets or donations may be dropped off at the  
museum or at my home.

I will be taking dinner reservations for this  
event. Please call 652-0648 *after October 1st.*  
Thank You, Eileen Holden

## Historian's Notes

### Mill Saw Blade

We've had many desirable historical artifacts donated to the Elma Historical Society throughout the years but sometimes we get a real "gem." One of those times happened recently when Don & Becky Wilson visited us during the Elma Days festivities and came to the sawmill to see it run. They mentioned to us that they have an old sawblade in their barn on Bowen Road near the museum. We went over to look at the sawblade a few days later and it was quick to determine that it is very old as the teeth were crudely made by hand and the patina is very thick and crusty. Also, the blade is six and a half feet long and somewhat thicker than the ones available to buy today. At first, we thought it was an ordinary vintage saw blade from the 1800's, but then Becky told us that the Briggs family lived on that farm. After close examination, we all agreed that there is a very strong likelihood that this saw blade is the original blade from the Briggs and Hurd Saw Mill that once stood on the museum property. The sawblade is now on display in the Hurd & Briggs Saw Mill at the Elma Town Museum Complex on Bowen Road. It was generously donated to us by the Wilson family.

The original Mill was a double mill built in 1846 by Hurd and Briggs. Each had his own saw; Hurd had the south mill and Briggs had the north mill. In the 1880's Briggs took his saw and relocated in a new mill on the west side of Bowen Road. The Briggs saw blade has now returned to its original location from 1846.

For anyone who has not had a chance to visit our Mill, it is open on Thursday afternoons, by appointment, or at special events.

Frank Maciejewski 8/24/17

## ERIE COUNTY FAIR FIRST PLACE



The Society won a blue ribbon (our first) at the Erie County Fair display at the Historical Building depicting a 1910 Christmas. Thanks to Mike Ternullo, coordinator, and all who made this possible. A special thank you to Cathy Kraynik for painting the lovely winter landscape.

### **In our Native American display**

We recently acquired an 1875 diary from Jean Newton that belonged to Rev. Asher Wright. The Reverend lived in our area at the time Mary Jamison lived here. Below are sample entries from the diary.

On the inside front cover he wrote "Telegraph to Laura M. Wright Versailles Catt. Co., N.Y. in case of my death or accident away from home. A.W." Jan. 19, 1875. "John Jameson left for me at the Asylum ½ cord of 4 ft. wood – 1.50 on acct." Note the spelling of his last name. Very often names were spelled differently. John would have been the son of Mary Jemison born 1766 and died 1817. The diary began on Jan 6, 1875 and the final entry re Rev. Wright was entered on Tuesday, April 13, 1875 "this day Rev. Wright dies." Mrs. Wright continued with a few notes such as another entry that was made on May 5, 1875 "potatoes of Elijah Jimerson.60." Our museum has no record of Elijah Jimerson on Mary Jemison's family tree.

## PLEASE STEP UP AND HELP.

We will need help for the Pumpkin Festival on October 7th. This event is open only from 1 to 4 PM and we need help in all three buildings. Over 2000 people visit the park that day and over 500 guests visit our complex to watch Sonny make sauerkraut and volunteers making apple cider in the saw mill.



Sonny Schultz demonstrating how to make sauerkraut at the Pumpkin Festival.

### **From the President's desk**

Due to the lack of volunteers to staff and help with the artifacts and the library, your Society Board voted to be open only on Thursdays or by appointment. We have a jewel in our town, and we need more volunteers to step up to help keep it polished. Please say "yes" if we give you a call to staff the museum for special events. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to "fight" the building of patio homes, clusters etc. in Elma. Developers in our town insist the millennials do not want homes with a yard with grass to mow and a driveway with snow to shovel. That is not totally true. Every time a house with a yard and a driveway in Elma goes on the market, it is sold in just a few days to young people with or without families. Yes, some may want a patio home, but there are a great many young people moving in our area who also want a home with a yard and driveway for two or more cars. We need to continue to let the developers know that we do not want our town to look like the towns around us, where there are 20 or more homes clustered together making our town look like Lancaster or Amherst.

*Marlene Baumgartner, President*



Member Diana Miller set up this lovely fairy garden next to the porch at the museum. We want to thank her and the unknown person who added a fairy on the swing. We also wish to thank the couple who placed a birdhouse in the garden and another in front of the house. Thanks too, goes to Elma's garden club for keeping the herb garden looking so great during such a rainy period.

### **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS**

This summer has certainly been a test for water problems. The gutters on the house required considerable maintenance and there is still a leak on the porch to be resolved before winter. We are also working on a backup sump pump and raising the air conditioning unit. The mill has undergone some needed foundation work. Linseed oil has been applied to the outer beams for protection and the big deal has been the installation of an additional support beam under the saw. The floor had sunk considerably in that area causing the saw to bind. Two concrete filled 8" plastic pipe pilings were set in top holes dug to bedrock and are now supporting an 8" by 8" beam under the center of the saw head. The floor has now been jacked back into position and is much sturdier.

*Chuck Facklam, Buildings & Grounds*

### **SUNSHINE**

Because of the eclipse, there was a momentary interruption in the "Sunshine Club" this week. Please be advised, we are back full strength. As usual if you hear of a need for a card, please call *Margaret Maciejewski* at 652-6256.

## SPRING BROOK REVITALIZATION NEEDS OUR HELP

The Seneca Street corridor in Spring Brook is trying very hard to make a comeback and our help is needed to make it happen. This is a melding of our resident's quest to maintain the character of the town that we all love, while building new and/or restoring our historic properties.

Two examples of saving our historic structures, while also moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, are the Spring Brook Hotel and the Fischer store on Seneca Street. These are before and **a promise** of after pictures of these buildings.



As the hotel looked in the 1980s.



Proposed restoration under construction



Fischer Store, Seneca St., ca1900



Proposed renovation

Looking at this sketch, the only remnant of the old building that is being kept, other than the shell of the building, are two columns in the front of the store. Does it fit our vision of bringing back Spring Brook?

Please give the town hall a call at 716-652-3260 X7 to let them know we care about the revitalization of Spring Brook and ask that the town board assist the developers in any way they can to save our historic structures.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Thank you to those that renewed their membership or joined. If you have not paid your dues for this year there will be a red dot on your envelope. An application is enclosed for your convenience.

*Betty Braun, Membership*