

WINTER 2017

ECHOS OF ELMA

Volume XVIII issue 3 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

December 2 Annual Tree Lighting and a visit
from Santa 1-3 pm

Entertainment by the Girl Scouts.

Hot Cocoa and cookies.

So bring your children or your grandchildren,
and take a picture!

December 11 Society Annual Christmas Party
at 6 pm. Please bring appetizer to share.

*Entertainment by Iroquois High School Choral
Group*

Come and see the Hurd House Museum
decorated in its Christmas finery!

Happy and Healthy Holidays,

Kathy Markowski

Museum Closed January & February

"Stuff" from the President's Desk

I cannot believe another year is almost over!
So much has happened these past months that
it's difficult to remember all that we did.

Our fund raisers were fantastic with over
\$9800 raised to date for the barn extension.
Please remember to support all and any
business or person who took the time to help us
with this project. No donation was, or is, too
small.

The Town's library let us put two displays up
of our artifacts. The military display in November
was very well received and a photo of it was in
the Elma Review.

Our annual Christmas party is open to ALL of
our members. Please join us on December 11th
at 6pm to enjoy the evening in our beautifully
decorated museum. Just bring a munchie to
pass.

The upstairs part of the museum will be
closed for much of the winter so we can
organize our artifacts in storage. Just like home,
things tend to be put away, and usually not
where they belong, and then you have a dickens
of a time trying to find them. So, we will work on
this. Each time we have done this, we found a
very important artifact that we didn't know we
had. Organizing the items is priority. It's work,
but it's fun to go through the artifacts too. And,
we will be setting up a special display on a
particular collection.

As 2017 comes to a close I want to thank all
of you for your help with the many things we do
to preserve Elma's history, your guidance when I
needed it, your prayers for the many times I
needed them both for myself and my family, and
most of all I wish each of you a very Happy and
Blessed Holiday Season.

Marlene Baumgartner, President

As we look forward to the holidays, let us not
forget to send a get well greeting to someone
who may enjoy a card. Please let me know if
someone you know could use a get well or
thinking of you message.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy
New Year.

Margaret Maciejewski, Sunshine

Building and Grounds

The property has been prepared for winter, the gutters have been cleaned, buntings taken down and mill pumps removed from the water. The pesky porch leak has been repaired by caulking the upper windows and porch roof connection. The storm door on the house once again has a latch thanks to the East Aurora lock smith who made a spring for the turn of the century mechanism. The repair of the rotted major beam under the mill is under way with a portion of the mill being supported by jacks, and Fred and I are well along in digging a hole for the new foundation. Fred also is doing a great job of preparing his Buffalo built 1800's stove that came from an Elma residence, getting it ready for its move into the museum.

*Thanks and happy holidays,
Chuck Facklam and Fred Streif*

From the Library: *Leita Reed*

Here's a story that was found in a local history book called "Talk Less, Listen More- Visiting with Aurora's Elders" published in 2003 by the Young Yorkers Club of Eggert Elementary School. It is a transcribed series of interviews with older citizens in East Aurora, many of whom worked at the Roycroft in its heyday.

This excerpt is about how the name Girdle Road came to be or at least one version of it. The narrator is Martha Schwartz, whose family name is attached to the north side of Girdle Road when it crosses Clinton Street:

Martha Swartz:

"These German people who lived along Schwartz Road, they had grain to be ground. There was no mill in Lancaster. The nearest mill was in East Aurora and they would have to walk over what is now Schwartz Road and it was an Indian trail. When they'd get to Clinton Street, there was nothing but a very small Indian trail from there to East Aurora. Some of the men got

mixed up, to the wrong trail and ended up in West Seneca. When they go back home they talked to the Indians, my great grandfather was very friendly with the Indians and they liked him. Grandfather spoke to the Indians and asked them if they could make some signs on the trees along the road, the trail that would lead from Clinton Street to East Aurora where the mill was located. The Indians agreed and so they girdled a number of trees from Clinton Street to East Aurora and that was shortened from Girdled Road to Girdle Road."

LOOKING FOR A UNIQUE CHRISTMAS GIFT?

Support our gift shop

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15% reduction for Veterans



Christmas special on books:

"It is for your Country" Local Civil War book

Reg. \$30 on sale for \$20

"History of Elma" Warren Jackman, sale \$20

"Building the Sawmill" DVD \$10

Box of Elma Note cards \$5

Commemorative plates reg \$25 each now on
sale for \$15 each:

1982 green, 1957 blue, 2007 red

14K gold elm tree charm \$80

Sterling silver elm tree charm \$55

Wooden replica of the Hurd House \$15

MEMBERSHIP

Your membership, support, and donations are very much appreciated. All dues money goes to support the many programs we hold throughout the year, and your tax free donations are helping us add an extension to the barn museum to better protect the farm equipment from the elements. Happy Holidays to all.

Betty Braun 683-5258

Historians Notes

A few weeks ago, I met Mike and Jan Sheridan, owners of a historic home referred to as the Hatch House located on Hemstreet in East Elma. Their Hemstreet home was built in 1825 and has a Historic marker from the Erie County Sesquicentennial Committee indicating the historic significance of the homestead. My conversation with the Sheridan's quickly turned to the history of their home and barn which resulted in an invitation to visit their home for a tour.

The very next week, I met with Mike Sheridan for a walk-through of his home. Carpentry of the post and beam design was absolutely impeccable. Scarf joints were incorporated in the tie beams since the beams required were too long for a normal tree trunk's length, thus requiring two beams to be joined together at their ends to produce one extra-long beam. Also, extra time was taken to bevel ridge beams so that roof rafters would be joined at a 90-degree angle making the joinery quite unique and new to me. Being a bank barn meant that the structure was built into the side of a hill which afforded easy access to the first floor by animals and also afforded easy storage of animal food stuffs on the upper floors. Mr. Sherman then showed me an outstanding piece of history in the barn. It is the faded initials Z.A.H. carved into the side of an outbuilding that no doubt stood for "Zina A. Hemstreet" the builder and first owner.

Next was a trip to the house equally unique in history as the barns. The interior of the home is restored to early 1800's style. The high point to me was a trip to the cellar that was dry and very neat. On one wall is a stone table approximately 10 inches thick. Mike explained that spring water from a nearby hill was diverted to the basement and onto the table area to cool milk.

The barn obviously was built to accommodate the dairy industry back in the day, housing horses and cows. Currently, the Sheridan's raise Llamas for their wool.

The house and barns are precious reminders of the past. My thanks go to the Sheridan's for sharing the history of their home.

Frank Maciejewski, Town Historian



HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- New Membership
 Renewal Membership

Individual annual membership \$10 (minimum donation): _____

Family annual membership \$15 (minimum donation): _____
(Father, mother, children in same household)

Lifetime membership \$150
(minimum donation): _____

Name: _____

Telephone _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

Mail to: Elma Historical Society Membership
P.O. Box 84
Elma, NY 14059-0084

ELMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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HELP US EXTEND THE BARN TO BETTER HOUSE AND DISPLAY OUR DAIRY AND AGRICULTURAL ARTIFACTS WHICH, IN SOME CASES, DATE BACK TO THE 1830s.

ANY TAX DEDUCTIBLE AMOUNT YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH WILL HELP SUPPORT OUR ENDEAVORS AND IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

YOUR NAME WILL BE LOGGED IN A SPECIAL BOOK THAT WILL BE PLACED IN THE BARN WHEN IT IS COMPLETED.

DONOR _____
ADDRESS _____
EMAIL ADDRESS (OPTIONAL) _____
PHONE (OPTIONAL) _____

PLEASE FORWARD YOUR TAX FREE DONATION TO

Elma Historical Society
PO Box 84
Elma, New York 14059



THANK YOU FOR HELPING US PRESERVE ELMA'S PAST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

