



# THE SENTINEL

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The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Winter 2016

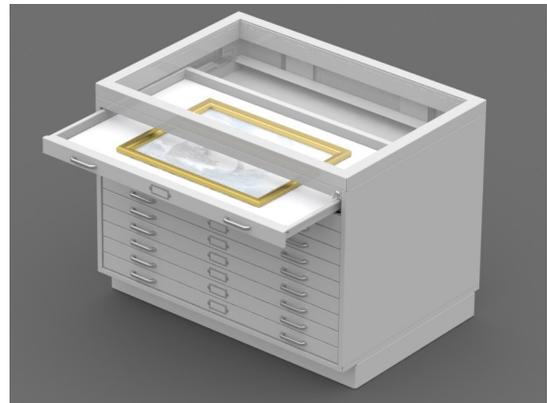
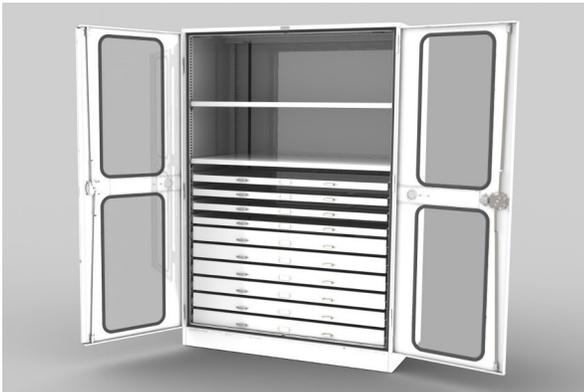
## A Big Thank You from the Collections Chair

By Lea Warden, Collections Committee Chairperson

On behalf of the volunteer officers, trustees and chairpersons of the New Scotland Historical Association I would like to thank those members who have made contributions towards new storage cabinets. I am excited to build upon the good work already completed in properly caring for the collections. Collection care, or preservation, involves organization, documentation, accessibility and environmental stability. The new, museum quality storage units will enhance the preservation of NSHA collections in each of those areas.

Currently the collections (archival, fine art and historical) are well organized however retrieving objects and accessing documentation is not readily achieved. This is due to overcrowding and the reliance of paper based finding aids, respectively. Furthermore the museum's inadequate temperature and humidity control subjects the collections as well as archival boxes to seasonal fluctuations. Excess humidity in the spring and summer promotes mold growth while dry winter months cause brittleness and cracking. Currently a portion of the collections is stored in large wooden boxes which also serve as display surfaces. Multiple items are stored together, often in layers, causing excess handling. Ideally an object would have its own box or tray and stored in such a way that a person would not have to touch the object itself to access it.

The new metal cabinets have both open shelves and roll out drawers making objects easy to view and retrieve. The cabinets will protect items from dust, theft and fluctuations in temperature and humidity. The new system will not only provide more storage space but will minimize object handling by reducing the number of multilayered storage boxes. Over time collection data will be digitized allowing objects and associated documentation to be easily located and studied by visitors and researchers.



Preserving NSHA's collections requires a significant amount of monetary and volunteer support. It will be an on-going responsibility. We are grateful to our members for supporting the association as we make these important improvements to the collections.

*Lea Warden holds a Masters degree in Museum Studies from The George Washington University. She has over a decade of experience working in museums large and small including: The National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C.; The Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, MT; and The Yager Museum of Art and Culture, Oneonta, NY.*

**NEW  
SCOTLAND  
HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION**

P. O. Box 541  
Voorheesville, NY 12186

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**Web Page**

www.newscotlandhistoricalassociation.org  
Email: newscotlandhistoricalassoc@gmail.com

**President's Letter**

Dear Members and Friends,

As we approach the end of another year, I would like to say thank-you to our many friends who have taken the time in so many ways this year to remember the New Scotland Historical Association.

We are so grateful for the monetary contributions that you made, and will continue working on improving our ability to preserve the many articles that are in our collection. We are also thankful for all of the letters, photos, artifacts and books that were donated to the museum.

Lea Warden, our Collections Chairperson, has worked tirelessly this past year, and we look forward to a new year of improvements in the museum for everyone to enjoy.

Wishing everyone a holiday season filled with peace and love

Debbie Mahan, President

**Mission Statement**

The Town of New Scotland Historical Association preserves, protects and promotes history in the Town of New Scotland through the stewardship of material culture directly related to the town. The purpose is to promote an appreciation of local history, heritage and culture. through research, publications and educational programs.

**MUSEUM CLOSED**

**December 25, 2016 (Christmas)  
January 1, 2017 (New Year's Day)**

If you would like to become a member,  
please do so!

**NSHA Membership Form**

\_\_\_ \$10 Individual  
\_\_\_ \$15 Family  
\_\_\_ \$25 Sustaining  
\_\_\_ \$100.00 Life (per person)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to NSHA.**

Please send dues to:

Amy Heebner  
NSHA Membership Chair  
1403 Delaware Turnpike  
Delmar, NY 12054

“Adventures Of A U.S. Navy Seabee” is a collection of four original unedited typewriter manuscripts by Frank Coughtry, a long-time resident of the Town of New Scotland. It describes his experiences as a U.S Navy Seabee during World War II (1942-1945),

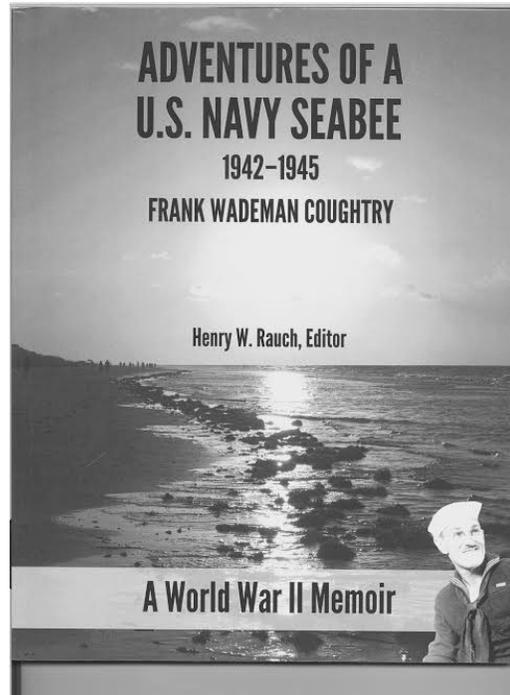
Parts 1 and 2 are in daily-type diary format.

Part 3 represents his experiences on the Island of Saipan during the Pacific war, including Frank’s tales of mundane Seabee living experiences, as well as tales of murder, rape, suicide, desecration and animal consumption of dead Japanese soldiers, inadequate nutrition, poor medical care, inadequate officers and other hardships.

A near-ship mutiny occurrence is described in Part 4.

Frank Wademan Coughtry was born in 1900 in the Town of New Scotland. He had a diversified life, being a farmer, merchant, adventurer and real estate business person. He is the author of much prose and poetry literature, still mostly unpublished.

Henry W. Rauch, a grandson of Frank, includes an introduction explanatory footnotes and a biography of his grandfather.



“Adventures Of A U.S. Navy Seabee” is available to purchase through the New Scotland Historical Association.

Copies of the book are available at the museum for \$10.00.

Please contact us at “newscotlandhistoricalassoc@gmail.com” to purchase a copy by mail.

### IN MEMORY OF

The New Scotland Historical Association was saddened to learn of the death of the following friends and members. We offer our condolences to their families.

**Dr. Clifford H, Casey** (1927-2016) Dr. Casey died on October 8, 2016

**Robert W. Fuglein** (1926-2016) Bob died on November 23, 2016

**Peter Henner** (1952-2016) Peter died on September 29, 2016

**Marvin C. LaGrange** (1931-2016) Marvin died on October 11, 2016

**Ethel Smith** (1918-2016) Ethel died on September 9, 2016

**Thomas R. Spohr** (1934-2016) Thomas died on June 25, 2016

‘Tis the Season  
By Judy Kimes

“It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas” – or it will when the butchering is done.

That’s the way it was on the farm. In my 1950s childhood, no Christmas decorations would be hung until the farm pigs were done in, cut up, canned, brined, salted, ground-up, cooked down, frozen, sold, or gifted away.

Then as in the decades before, butchering was a big event. Relatives and neighbors took turns going to each others’ farms to help out. In 1886, Agnes Slingerland noted in her diary:

Th. 25 Thanksgiving Day. Snowed. We baked pies and cake and prepared to butcher tomorrow.

F. 26 Nice day. We butchered today. Obbie (her brother) & his men, Van (LaGrange) & his man & Jimmie (Van’s son, 13) & Mr. & Mrs. Bouton (neighbors) here to help.

M. 29 Case (Agnes’ husband) to help Van butcher. Obbie and Ma butchered their hogs here and Jimmie his two. Nice day.

W. Dec 1 Case salted the meat.

Th. 2 We boiled the brine. Very cold.

The hams, shoulders, and what would become bacon were covered with brine and stored down in the cellar of the house. There they would soak until early March when they were hung upstairs in the stone smokehouse. A smoldering fire was built in the smokehouse fireplace, and the chimney was covered to force the smoke into the upstairs room. When they were sufficiently preserved, the smoked meat would be stored in the attic of the house and used as needed.

The entree for butchering day dinner was tenderloin. The remaining tenderloins were preserved by canning. The ribs were popular. The head would be boiled, and its meat made into headcheese. Odd pieces of meat were ground and seasoned to make sausage. The fat was cooked down, the highest quality providing the “leaf lard” to be used as the shortening in baking and cooking. Some of the lard would be used to make soap. Very little of the pig was discarded. Martha Slingerland remembers that even the pig’s tail was used to grease frying pans. As the saying goes, “Everything was used except the oink!”

Such a lot to get done before starting Christmas festivities! Of course, in reading the diaries of 100+ years ago, Christmas sounded much quieter. In Agnes’ diaries, a few days before Christmas, a group of young people would ride into Albany and buy presents for the tree at the church. These “presents” were probably small boxes of assorted candies and an orange for each child. On Christmas Eve folks gathered at the church for “the Christmas tree, singing, and entertainment.” On Christmas Day, 1886, Agnes writes:

Cold. The roads are very icy. They have all been here to dinner (noontime). Ma,

Garrie’s family, Van’s family, Tune’s family, Jake’s family. Willie (her son) went to the post office.

*\*\*\*Editor’s Note: Judy Kimes (nee Slingerland) grew up on the Slingerland family farm located between Unionville and Clarksville. She attended Clarksville Elementary, Bethlehem Junior and Bethlehem Senior High Schools. After graduating, Judy went on to NYS University college at Oneonta, receiving her degree in elementary education. She taught for 13 years at Clayton Elementary in the Smyrna (Delaware) School District, and while there, obtained her masters degree in reading through the University of Delaware. Judy returned to the Clarksville area and one of her fondest dreams was realized when she was hired to teach at her old alma mater, Clarksville Elementary., where her mother Martha Slingerland had also taught. Judy taught in Clarksville for 25 years, retiring one year before Clarksville was closed.*

*One of the features of The Sentinel which Judy has most enjoyed through the years are the personal reflections and reminiscences written by present and past residents of the Town of New Scotland. These articles are not only entertaining, but also inform us of the heritage we share. She enjoys continuing The Sentinel’s practice of publishing the irreplaceable memories of New Scotland’s town fold,*

**DIARY OF HATTIE FLANSBURG O'BRIEN (1892)**  
Submitted by Mary Beth (Frohlich) Felice, Hattie's great-granddaughter

**Nov. 24, 1892**

Thanksgiving Day!

I have been with ma most of the day. She is very miserable, has not been able to lie down & sleep for a good while. I will stay with her tonight. Received a letter from Mrs. Flouton.

**Saturday, Dec. 24, 1892** Very cold.

Can hardly keep house warm, wind blows so cold. I done up baking and C (?cooking). Churned a little butter. Only get about 3 qts of milk a day. I do not feel very much like working because I am awake so much nights with ma. It's four weeks now today since she has been so bad. David called. John LaBeouf died.

**Sunday, October 15, 1893** Nice.

Attended church as usual. After that walked with Mrs. Flagler and others up to Brownell's to a memorial funeral for their children who died from diphtheria. Brother Quinlan preached good read a letter by Charlie to his parents and sisters.

**Wednesday, Dec. 21, 1898**

Made a small head cheese, baked pie and cake and served some. John and Mrs. Miller sawing hard wood.

Photos from  
the Collection  
of  
Don  
Slingerland



Photos submitted by  
Judy Kimes

Christmas tree at the Slingerland homestead, 1940



The Smokehouse around 1964.



Butchering Day, 1940

## SUNSHINE'S CORNER

By MaryBeth Gorke-Felice

Speaking of pigs – well, I was speaking of them in the last issue. Anyway, these porcine critters seemed to keep appearing in my life.

Being new to farm life, I admit we were all novices. One day my dad decided we should raise some pigs. The two piglets arrived and were aptly named Ham & Bacon. A usual, I was the “chore person,” so I got the opportunity to serve them their chow and watch them grow. Over the months they grew into porkers, and believe me, they liked to push their weight around! When the time was right, dad prepared to take them to market in Albany, where “magically” they would turn into breakfast fare. Here was the problem – we had no truck. “Easy stuff,” dad proclaimed, “we’ll just back the car to their outside barn door and push them into the trunk.” Sounded like a reasonable plan, but apparently the pigs didn’t think so. They squealed and struggled and gave us a heck of a time till we finally wrestled them in and slammed the trunk lid. I was “off duty” at that point and happily left the barn for a clean, odor-free house.

Dad did not return a happy man, for it seems that pigs don’t particularly like to be locked in a car trunk for a ride to Albany. At the market, when dad opened the trunk lid, the sight and smell were enough to make him give up pork forever!

Every Thanksgiving, the Hallenbeck clan (my mother’s brother and kids) would join us for the festivities. Believe it or not, the men would go hunting pheasants on the back 15 acres. (We were not in the village limits in the 50’s.) There was lots of hiking around and occasional shots, but I don’t remember any pheasants ever hanging in the barn. Dinner was a big affair with the 4 of us Frohlichs, 7 Hallenbecks and often assorted others. Adults and older kids sat at the dining room table while various card tables accommodated the younger ones.

One year my uncle, Rudy Frohlich, joined us for the festivities. Rudy and my dad acted like they were still kids, and I vividly remember turkey bones being flung into coffee cups. My mom was not pleased.

December rolled in cold and snowy. Richard and I built snow forts and careened down embankments on sleds or on our bottoms.

Christmas was always a special time. Rich and I loved to shake packages to see if we could figure out what lay inside for us. To confuse matters, mom decided not to label any presents, but rather number them all. We could shake and rattle and guess, but you never knew if it was yours until late Christmas Eve when the actual names appeared.

Christmas Eve was a delight. Mom would host an open house before the Christmas Eve church service. We had punch and eggnog – “unspiked” for kids. For that special event we actually used an antique hot chocolate set from Prussia. I feel now that it was pretty risky to give us those little, delicate (Limoges?) cups filled with that Christmas drink, but fortunately we never had a mishap.

After that it was off to the village where our Methodist Church had an 11 p.m. candlelight service. It was so moving; I remember it fondly today.

Back at the farm, we crawled between the flannel sheets, pulled up the down quilts, and waited for that wonderful day called – Christmas.



## **In Memory of Peter Henner**

By Alan Kowlowitz

On the evening of Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016 Peter Henner died at his Clarksville home after a struggle with cancer. Peter was a noted local lawyer who fought for labor and environmental causes throughout his career. His full and active life was reviewed in obituaries published in the Altamont *Enterprise* and the *Times Union*. What was not mentioned in these obituaries was that during the last few years of his life Peter was a member of NSHA's Executive Board.

Peg Dorgan convinced Peter to join the NSHA Board in 2014 as he was winding down his law practice and contemplating retirement. We owe Peg a debt of gratitude. Peter was a real asset to the Association. He had a keen interest in history and applied his legal expertise to a number of issues faced by NSHA. Peter assisted in amending our organization's by-laws to create the Association's Electronic Communication Committee. He also conducted a full review of our by-laws and developed a set of proposals for revamping them. Peter also provided advice and editorial assistance on many of the Association's sensitive correspondence including those to our congressional and state representatives supporting the designation of John Boyd Thacher State Park as a National Natural Landmark (NNL).

Peter did not shy away from involvement in other NSHA activities that were more distant from his work as an attorney. He served as a reviewer for NSHA's High School Juniors' Essay Contest. He helped set up for NSHA programs. He was supportive of NSHA's partnership with Old Songs. At Board meetings his comments were always thoughtful and insightful.

Peter had a strong personal interest and commitment to historic preservation. This interest extended beyond his work on NSHA's Executive Board. This interest is illustrated by the fact that while dealing with a difficult elder care issue, he took the time and made the effort to seek guidance an appropriate repository for family papers and memorabilia of historical importance. Peter was a team player who was respected and liked by all NSHA Board members. It was a privilege to know him if even for a short time. He will be sorely missed.

### **DON'T MISS OUR UPCOMING WINTER PROGRAMS...**

**Feb. 5, 2017 (2:00-4:00pm) World War I Impact on the Capital District German-American Community** – The Capital District was home to a vibrant German-American community supported by a network of German language clubs, businesses, and institutions. The Great War had a devastating impact on this community, changing it forever. Historian Christopher White will provide a vivid picture of the Capital Districts German American community and its sad fate.

**March 5, 2017 (2:00-4:00pm) -"Riot in Greenbush -The Anti Rent War Renewed!"** – Historian Jill Knapp will relate the fascinating story of the murder of Rensselaer County Deputy Sherriff Willard Griggs, a former anti-renter, by William Witbeck during an eviction at the tail end of the anti-rent movement in 1869. This 'affray' as it was often called in the local newspapers and subsequent trial, was one of the major news stories of the time.

### **PROGRAMS ARE FREE TO THE PUBLIC**

**All Programs will be held at the Wyman Osterhout Community Center**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE PROGRAMS WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAYS FROM 2—4 P.M.**

# **Please Support our Corporate Sponsors!**

## **Museum Hours**

**The museum is  
open year-round  
on Sunday  
from  
2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.  
Handicap Accessible**

## **THE SENTINEL**

New Scotland Historical Association  
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