



# Apple Blossom Times

Since 1975

Spring 2020

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## Hello Newfane and Beyond!

*From the desk of our President*

As temperatures rise and the blooms try to bud, anticipation for spring builds in the air. I am also full of anticipation as I'm stepping into a new role with the Newfane Historical Society! My involvement with the historical society started at a young age. I had grown up in Newfane and attended school in Newfane as well. My involvement with the society started around the age of 11 when my family and I started the hobby of civil war reenacting. From that, my interest in history, specifically local history, was ignited. I spent my teens into adult life making apple butter with my mother and sister at the apple butter stand, as well as volunteering at numerous events with the society.



future ahead. This new year we welcomed Rich to the board of trustees and Ginny to the position as vice president. In early April, the Van Horn Mansion will come out of hibernation and reopen for public tours on Sundays from 1 to 4. On May 17th, we will be having our 44th Apple Blossom Festival at the Country Village. If you're interested in volunteering, but are not sure where to start or what you may be interested in, come on by and check us out! Or if you would like to start simple, renew your membership! Membership sign up and event details are in the back of this newsletter and our website at [newfanehistoricalsociety.com](http://newfanehistoricalsociety.com). I'm very much looking forward to what the future brings for our society and our community!

Teamwork makes the dream work, and having known the trustees for some time, I'm positive the Newfane Historical Society has a very bright

Melissa Schaeffer

## Minute History

The idea of resetting clocks forward an hour in the spring, and back an hour in the fall, was first suggested by Benjamin Franklin during a stay in France. His satirical essay "An Economical Project for Diminishing the Cost of Light," was published in the Journal de Paris in April 1784. It was a humorous slant encouraging Parisians to change sleep schedules and use sunlight to save a fortune in candles. In 1907 Englishman William Willett penned a pamphlet called "The Waste of Daylight", leading to the creation of British Summer Time in 1908. Many other countries also began adjusting clocks for the summers. The U.S. adopted it during WWI to conserve energy. In 1919 state and local governments were allowed to decide whether to continue the practice (it was enforced again during WWII).



## Can You Help?

Newfane Historical Society trustees are looking for assistance in a few ways:

### Remodeling the Mansion Skylight Roof

The steel frame that holds the glass in the peak of the Van Horn Mansion roof is in need of repair. This is the skylight that protects the stained glass skylight from weather.

The glazing compound has to be installed on the peak skylight, while ensuring both skylights remain intact.

If you or someone you know may be able to assist in this project please call or text Bill Neidlinger at 716-697-2688.

### Gardening at the Van Horn Mansion

We're looking for volunteers to assist with the gardens at the Van Horn Mansion from spring to autumn. The work involves tending to the gardens and some bushes and shrubs around the mansion.

The work can be done on your own schedule, and there are supplies on site. Gardeners help design the flowering plan, handle weeds, watering, etc.

If you're interested in learning more, please contact Janet Capen at 716-778-8880.

### Become a Volunteer

Our small group of volunteers is always recruiting, seeking those interested in supporting community, discussing history, or looking for a fun way to socialize and give back.

Only a few hours in a year make a huge difference, and there are plenty of choices: tour guides, selling food, maintenance, working our events and fundraisers, etc.

Visit our website to learn more and sign up: [newfanehistoricalsociety.com](http://newfanehistoricalsociety.com).

# WE ♥ OUR MEMBERS

*This section is an ongoing record of our amazing members.*

## Special thanks to the following for their continued support:

Paul & Janet Capen  
 Anne Fanton  
 Judson H. & Jill Heck  
 R. Jeanette Hamminga  
 Rich Leader  
 Michael V. Miller  
 Mary Ann Miller  
 Rosemary Miller  
 Joseph & Nancy Miller  
 William Ott\*  
 John & Kathy Phillips  
 Suzanne Pilon  
 Keith and Sharon Rhodes  
 Mike Tomaino\*  
 Sharon Tomaino\*  
 George & Debbie Updegraph

*\*new lifetime members*

## Welcome to our newest members!

Niagara Frontier Pub  
 Virginia Womelsdorf

## Making A Difference

*You cannot do all the good that the world needs, but the world needs all the good that you can do - Shelbi Zlee, eco-minimalist*



Modern living creates an inescapably large amount of waste. Our lives are designed to regularly use items once and throw them away, or to over-use/over-buy products. In honor of Earth Day, see how many ways you can alter your lifestyle; some changes help you save money! Any little bit makes a difference, and may give you a positive boost to find other ways to help the environment.

**Buy reusable bags:** Keep the bags near your front door or a stock in your car, to ensure you always have some ready for shopping. They often hold 3-4 times than a plastic bag, making carrying and unloading much simpler. Once you're comfortable with reusable bags, look into reusable produce bags- washable and one more way to skip on single-use plastic.

**Say no to balloons and plastic straws:** Yes, we know they have been staples in your life. But are they necessary? No- there are plenty of non-plastic straws available, or try using a cup on its own. Balloons are not only single-use and wasteful, but helium is an extremely limited resource that can't be created, and the planet is running out. Helium is vital for many medical needs, so skip floating balloons and save it to help someone in need.

**Choose cans or glass:** Americans alone use nearly 22 billion plastic bottles per year, and less than 27% of those are recycled. Glass bottles and cans are recycled regularly, more are made from recycled materials (over 70%), and biodegrade much quicker than plastic- by hundreds of years. So pause before your next purchase, and turn away from plastic bottles.

**Alter clothing purchases:** The fashion industry is the second largest polluter in the world, flooding waterways with toxic dyes, fertilizers, cleaning supplies and more. Billions of pieces of clothing are produced and discarded annually, creating unimaginable amounts of waste, often clothing that are perfectly useable (even new) simply because they are no longer popular fashion. To combat this, aim to be more contentious about your clothing. Ignore trends and focus on quality clothing that can last. Buy from sustainable brands, or better yet buy second-hand to use something that already exists. Most importantly, avoid clothing you'll only wear once or twice.

*Remember, not everything will work for everyone, but anything you do makes a difference! ♦*

## Van Horn Mansion: Private Rentals & Public Tours

Sunday tours of the mansion return on April 5th, and run through November 29th. It's open from 1-4pm, and the public is welcome. 90+ minute tours include a journey from cellar to attic while learning history, architecture and many supernatural tales. Tours are \$5pp (free for society members). We look forward to seeing you visit soon!

The Van Horn Mansion is also available for private events, so consider renting the building for your next gathering. You'll have a wonderful and private setting, plus funds go directly towards maintenance and upkeep of the estate. Help us keep the mansion thriving by using it and sharing it with others.

Learn more at [NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com](http://NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com)



# Surgery...a Violent Profession

By Aurelia Clunie; hartfordstage.org

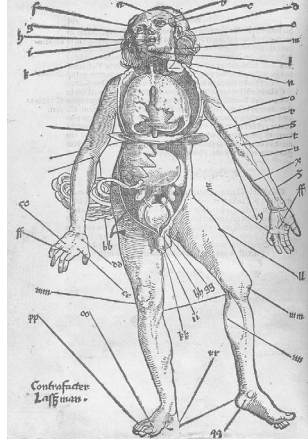
The prospect of undergoing surgery before anesthesia and antiseptics was a horror-filled one for patients. Cutting into the body to alleviate sickness brought the possibility of infection or even death, and promised excruciating pain. Before widespread understanding that microorganisms such as bacteria caused illness and infection, little care to cleanliness was taken. To operate, doctors wore black, unwashed overcoats stained with blood, pus, and matter from previous surgeries. The coats provided protection for the surgeons from getting a patient's bodily fluid on their clothes, but no precautions were taken for the sake of the patient. Doctors' instruments were any range of cleanliness. A patient would be strapped or held down on the operating table by strong men, but, throughout the procedure, surgeons could hear and sometimes feel the patient's screams and thrashing. Without the ability to "render the patient insensible," surgeons traditionally administered opium, liquor, or mesmerism (hypnosis) to alter the patient's mind, rather than alleviate pain in the body. These methods brought their own dangers—either a weak effect or death by overdose. In some cases, a tourniquet or ice was used to numb the area as much as possible. In any case, the patient had to decide how to handle the physical and mental trauma of watching their own operation.

Surgeons, too, were subjected to the horrors of the operating theater. In his book *Etherization With Surgical Remarks*, Dr. John Warren of Massachusetts General Hospital remarks, "What surgeon is there, who has not felt, while witnessing the distress of long painful operations, a sinking of the heart, to which no habit could render him insensible! What surgeon has not in these times been inspired with a wish to find some means of lessening the sufferings he was obliged to inflict!" (pg.1). By the mid-19th Century, speed in the operating room was prized. A leg amputation could be completed in less than three minutes. To the patient who was awake, the physician who could complete a procedure in as little time as possible offered the least amount of suffering. Yet this speed came at the expense of accuracy. Physicians had little time to lend the care of a healing hand. Insufficient anesthetic agents, coupled with the lack of sanitary conditions, made surgery a terrifying prospect. Some patients chose to die from their conditions or commit suicide rather than go under the surgeon's knife. Nevertheless, surgery as a practice goes back thousands of years.

## Ancient Surgery

The history of dental and surgical procedures reaches back to the Neolithic and pre-Classical ages. The first evidence of a surgical procedure is that of trephining, or cutting a small hole in the head. This procedure was practiced as early as 3000 BCE and continued through the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. The initial purpose of trephining in ancient cultures is unknown, although some hypothesize it may have been used to rid the body of spirits. The practice was widespread throughout Europe, Africa, and South America. Evidence of healed skulls suggests

some patients survived the procedure. Trephining continued in Ancient Egypt as a method of treating migraines. In South America, ancient Mayans practiced dental surgery by filling cavities with precious stones including jadeite, turquoise, quartz, and hematite, among others. It is supposed that these procedures were for ritual or religious purposes, rather than health or cosmetic reasons.



Points for blood-letting;  
Hans von Gersdorff (surgeon),  
Field book of wound medicine,  
1517

Ancient Greeks also performed some surgical procedures including setting broken bones, bloodletting, draining lungs of patients with pneumonia, and amputations. The Greeks had new, iron tools at their disposal, yet the risk of infection or death was still high. Hippocrates' theory of four humors influenced medicine for hundreds of years. He claimed that the humors (black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood which coincided with the elements earth, fire, water, and air, respectively) exist in the body, and bloodletting (or the draining of blood), among other procedures, balanced them. Ancient Roman physician Galen was heavily influenced by the Greeks. He served for three years as doctor to Roman gladiators and as the Emperor's surgeon, gaining hands-on surgical experience. Romans continued with trephining, amputations, and eye surgery. Beginning in 900 AD, Al-Zahrawi, a famous Islamic surgeon, wrote books focused on orthopedics, military surgery, and ear, nose, and throat surgery, further influencing Islamic and Western medical practitioners.

## The Middle Ages and Renaissance

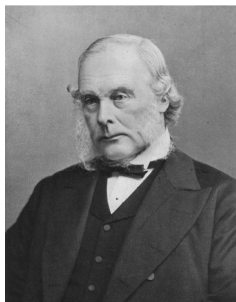
Surgeons of the middle ages through the 18th century were often barber-surgeons who would travel and perform minor procedures including tooth extraction, bloodletting, and treating war wounds. Rather than studying at universities like physicians, surgeons learned through apprenticeship and observation, as a blacksmith would. Surgery, without adequate anesthetics and antiseptics, remained dangerous and was seen as "a lesser profession." Some women performed surgical operations until the 1700s when surgical study landed squarely within university training....(continued on page 4)



Surgeon performing a leg amputation in the 17th century. Oil painting, c. early 1800s; credit: Wellcome Collection

(continued from page 3)...Andreas Vesalius, one of the founding fathers of modern surgery and a professor in Padua in the 16th century, completely shifted how human anatomy was understood. Prior to this point, much anatomical knowledge was based on animal dissection—the prevailing method. When dissection of human cadavers was done, physicians observed while servants cut. Vesalius was the first to suggest the hands-on approach of human dissection by physicians and surgeons. His study of human anatomy corrected ideas held from Greek and Roman misconceptions based on dissection of animals. In 1543, he wrote the ground-breaking *De Humani Corporis Fabrica Libri Septem*, which became the most comprehensive anatomy text at the time and the basis for 200 years of anatomical study.

16th Century French army surgeon Ambrose Paré also greatly influenced the development of surgery. Paré developed an emollient of egg yolk, rose oil, and turpentine for gunshot wounds, which was better than the previous practice of cauterizing (burning shut) wounds with boiling oil. Paré also brought the resurgence of ligating, or tying off, blood vessels during amputation to stop hemorrhage more effectively. While he made strides in the medical field, his motto, “I treated him. God cured him,” reflected the common medical perspective that doctors can only do so much.



Sir Joseph Lister (1827-1912), a British surgeon and medical scientist, was the founder of antiseptic medicine and a pioneer in preventive medicine.

## Modern Surgery

While shifts in anatomical knowledge empowered surgeons, many procedures remained out of reach. Physicians could not attempt complex internal surgery or prolonged operations. With the widespread use of anesthesia in the late 1800s, patients no longer had to fear the pain of an operation. However, the threat of infection still meant death for some. In 1865, Joseph Lister, who believed microorganisms could cause disease, developed his method of “listerism.” Lister recommended antiseptics, or the removal of bacteria from instruments, wounds, and the air above the patient. His process consisted of using carbolic acid as a sterilizing agent, but it was cumbersome and many surgeons who did not accept germ theory refused it. By the 20th Century, asepsis, or the prevention of bacteria from entering a wound or sterile environment, gained prominence. Through methods such as boiling, using autoclaves, and chemical antiseptics, sterile operating environments could be achieved. Physicians began wearing white coats, and clean linens dressed beds and operating tables. This final shift allowed for advancements in internal surgery and success in the surgical procedures we see today. ♦

## Reviving an Apple Peeler

By Bill Neidlinger

During September of 2019, Sam Clogston, Bruce Genewich and I found two antique apple peeler/ corers in the white barn at the Country Village. Chuck Manhardt, Sr. had acquired them many years ago from Bewley Canning Factory in Lockport. It was located across the street from Wyndham Lawn Home, where Nice and Easy is now located. Chuck brought two machines and many extra parts to Newfane.

Sam, Bruce and I were very excited to discover turn of the century apple peeler/ corers, and wanted to get one operational for display at the society's apple festivals. We were able to determine that the F.B. Pease Company, of Rochester, NY was the manufacturer of this machine. This led to a road trip where we visited the factory to buy several needed parts, as well as find answers to our many questions. These machines were sold all over the world and there are still many in operation.

A couple of years ago the Gary Fitch family donated a hand crank apple peeler/ corer to the society, which was used by their family for several generations. It's been very interesting to find its similarities to the older styles, along with seeing first-hand advances in the technology of apple processing.

We used oven cleaner and a power washer to clean the many mechanisms that make up these machines. After a thorough cleaning, we painted the machines in their original color, then carefully reassembled them using food-grade oil and grease.

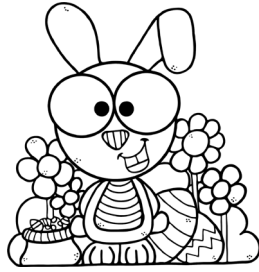
The machines were originally powered by an overhead belt and pulley system, called a line shaft, which was used extensively during the early Industrial Revolution.

We're currently fabricating a series of belts and pulleys powered by an electric motor to operate the peeler/corer. We plan on hosting demonstrations during our Apple festivals in May and September. At this time we're not sure where the apple processing equipment is going to be displayed, but it should be an excellent addition to show off our Newfane 'apple' history. ♦



Apple Peeler/ Corer on site at the Country Village

## Historical Fun Facts: Easter Edition!



- Scholars believe Easter was named after a festival celebrating the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre, known for springtime celebrations and fertility. Her sacred symbols are thought to have been the hare and the egg. These combined symbols are likely the origins for a bunny that lays eggs.
- The Easter Hare originated in Germany during the Middle Ages, a small critter who delivered candies and eggs to children. Dutch settlers brought the tradition to the United States in the 1700s, where it adopted its common name: Easter Bunny.
- The largest ever Easter egg hunt was in Florida, where 9,753 children searched for 501,000 eggs.
- Early egg dyes were made out of natural items: onion peels, tree bark, flower petals, and juices.
- Pretzels were once a common part of Easter. Crafted by a monk, their twist was meant to look like arms crossed in a prayer. Made of flour and water, they could be eaten during Lent, when Christians were forbidden from eating certain foods. Children used to hunt for both eggs and pretzels on Easter morning.
- During the 1800s people developed the tradition that wearing new clothes on Easter would bring good luck for the rest of the year.



Newfane Historical Society's  
**44<sup>th</sup>**  
**Apple Blossom Festival**

**Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**10am-4pm**

*Celebrate spring during our Sunday gathering!  
Join us rain or shine and enjoy everything  
planting season offers.*

Local Products | Food & Drink | Great Hands-on Fun  
Historical Demos | Tractor & Farm Equipment Show  
Crafts | Flea Market | Attractions | Live Performances

*Fun for the Entire Family!*

**Held at our Country Village**  
2685 West Creek Rd. Newfane, NY 14108

**Free Admission & Parking**  
*\*no pets please\**

**NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com**

## Membership Application

*For new members and renewals. Membership includes our quarterly printed newsletters.*



Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Select:

Renewal     New Member

Would you be interested in learning about or becoming a volunteer?  Yes     No

*Our membership year runs January 1st through December 31st.*

Annual Membership Dues (Check one):

- Family Membership \$10.00
- Individual Membership \$10.00
- Life Member \$100.00 (per person)

Please make all checks payable to (or to the order of):  
'Newfane Historical Society'. Tear off this form and mail with payment to: Newfane Historical Society, c/o Rosemary M. Miller 3531 Ewings Rd. Lockport, NY 14094

**Or visit our website and join online: [www.NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com](http://www.NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com)**

# Calendar

For more details, please visit our website.

Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>- Trustees Meeting

March 8<sup>th</sup>- Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 17<sup>th</sup>- St. Patrick's Day

March 17<sup>th</sup>- Trustees Meeting

April 5<sup>th</sup>- Sunday Tours at the Van Horn Mansion return; run through November

April 12<sup>th</sup>- Easter Sunday

April 21<sup>st</sup>- Trustees Meeting

April 22<sup>nd</sup>- Earth Day

May 10<sup>th</sup>- Mother's Day

May 17<sup>th</sup>- Apple Blossom Festival

May 19<sup>th</sup>- Trustees Meeting

May 25<sup>th</sup>- Memorial Day

# 2020 Officers & Trustees

**President:** Melissa Schaeffer

**Vice President:** Virginia Womelsdorf

**Recording Secretary:** Jill Heck

**Corresponding Secretary:** Janet Capen

**Financial Secretary:** Rosemary Miller

**Treasurer:** David Steggles

**Trustees:**

Victoria Banks

Rich Leader

Bill Neidlinger

Bill Clark

Kevin Luckman

Mindi Schaeffer

Keegan Connolly

Chuck Manhardt

Rose Schaeffer

Steve Goodman

Sheila McAtee

George Updegraph

# Contact Information

**Town of Newfane  
Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 115  
Newfane, NY 14108

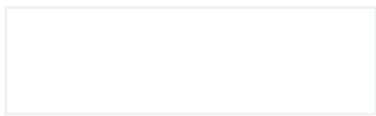
**Country Village**  
2685 West Creek Rd.  
Newfane, NY 14108

**Van Horn Mansion**  
2165 Lockport-Olcott Rd.  
Burt, NY 14028

[www.NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com](http://www.NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com)

Phone: (716) 778-7197 | [info@newfanehistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@newfanehistoricalsociety.com)

Moving? Remember to update your address with us so you keep receiving newsletters!



Address Service Requested

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