



# Apple Blossom Times

Since 1975

Spring 2021

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## Minute History

Around 1930, Ruth Graves Wakefield and her husband started the Toll House Inn, located in Whitman, MA. One day in 1938, Ruth was making cookies for guests but had run out of baker's chocolate. She substituted pieces of a Nestle's semi-sweet chocolate bar, expecting it to melt and absorb into the dough. To her surprise, the chocolate only softened, but it made the cookies unique and delicious. Her 'Toll House Chocolate Crunch Cookies' became extremely popular among guests. After she included her recipe in an Inn advertisement for a Boston newspaper, sales of Nestle bars spiked. Andre Nestle and Ruth met, and she sold the recipe rights in exchange for a lifetime supply of Nestle chocolate and a promise to print the recipe on the back of Nestle packaging. Ruth's legendary 'Toll House' recipe is still printed by Nestle to this day, a great honor for the inventor of the Chocolate Chip Cookie.



## Heading into Springtime

*From the desk of our President*

*Greetings, all! With temperatures dipping lower and those white flakes flying, I bet you're pining after the blooms and chirps of spring just as much as I am. Spring promises renewal and a return of bright vibrant color to the earth. Although everyone will be excited to exit their winter hibernation, life will still be in a state of precaution considering the pandemic.*

*As I pen this letter, we have not scheduled any of our events or activities for this year, while we await*

*safer times. To keep updated on all our future plans, make sure to visit our website's event calender. We hope to see you all in the near future.*

*Be safe and hang in there, all!*

*Melissa Schaeffer*



## Cleaning Our Waters

*These excerpts are from the Town of Newfane's board meeting minutes. It's among the earliest printed records that recognizes and attempts to solve local environmental problems caused by humans. Further information on this issue was not recorded in later minutes, however extensive clean-up and protection of Eighteen Mile Creek and Lake Ontario has been ongoing for over a century.*



A special meeting of the Town Board of Health was held on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1901. On motion, the board took up the complaint concerning the water of Eighteen Mile Creek. Several members of the board reported that they had investigated the matter and had discovered that the water of the creek was so badly polluted and poisoned by mill refuse, consisting of sludge, coloring matter and acids discharged into it in the City of Lockport by the Lockport Pulp Co., The Traders Paper Co., The Niagara Paper Mills, and the Fiber Co. as to make the water thick, slimy, unfit for domestic purposes or for stock; that it had a vile odor and caused the death of so many fish that the board was compelled to cause the same to be gathered up and buried to prevent disease. That the water is badly contaminated and polluted from where the creek enters the Town, at the south, to where it flows into the Lake at Olcott, and it also pollutes the waters of the Lake for upwards of a half mile out from Olcott.

On motion, it was resolved that the pollution of the waters of said creek by the Mill refuse as aforesaid, is a nuisance, dangerous to the lives and health of the citizens of said Town. That the Board is without

power to abate said nuisance, and requests the Governor of the State, the State Board of Health, the Board of Health of the City of Lockport, and the Board of Health of the Town of Lockport to take such action as will speedily abate the same, and that the Clerk of this Board send a copy of the minutes of this meeting to all aforementioned groups.



At a meeting held on March 16, 1907, the following resolution was offered by James D. Martin and motion made for adoption.

Whereas the waters of the Eighteen Mile Creek are being continuously polluted with foul, nasty, unhealthy and poisonous matter by individuals, mills, factories, and other sources along said creek and mainly by those located within the City of Lockport. Therefore resolved that the Supervisor of the Town of Newfane be and he hereby is authorized and empowered to engage an Attorney at the expense of the Town of Newfane to take such steps as may be necessary to abate such pollution of said creek in such legal ways as said Attorney may deem proper. However, the Attorney so engaged by the Town Supervisor shall at times keep the Town Board acquainted with the various proceedings taken or intended to be taken by him in stopping the pollution of the water of said Eighteen Mile Creek, all of which shall at all times be subject to the approval of the Town Board of the Town of Newfane. Motion carried and resolution duly adopted. ♦



# We ♥ our MEMBERS!

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

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

Joseph & Theresa Bittner	Annette & Richard Komroy
David H. & Lori Caraco	Joanne Popp Lindemann
Daniel S. Cushman	The Marx Family
Angelo Delbalso, MD	Sheila McAtee
John Hedley	Michael Ryan
Martin and Brenda Horanburg	Jay & Linda Wopperer
Lynanne Kent	

## Welcome to our newest members!

Patricia Fitch\*  
Virginia Taylor

*\*new lifetime member*

## Amazing Facts about New York



The first humans in the region are believed to have arrived approximately 10,000 BCE.

The Hudson River is named after the sailor Henry Hudson, who sailed into the state in 1609, on his ship the Half Moon.

Bronx, one of the five boroughs of NY city, takes its name from its first European settler: Jonas Bronck. In 1639, he moved to America from Sweden.

On April 30, 1789, George Washington was sworn in as the president of the United States at Federal Hall in NYC.

A majority of NYC skyscrapers were built by hands from the Mohawk Tribe. These amazing people are extremely hard workers, have a fearless attitude, and are able to withstand high stress and pressure while working at great heights. We owe alot to the countless Mohawk ironworkers that helped the great city to soar.

New York stands second after Vermont for maple syrup production.

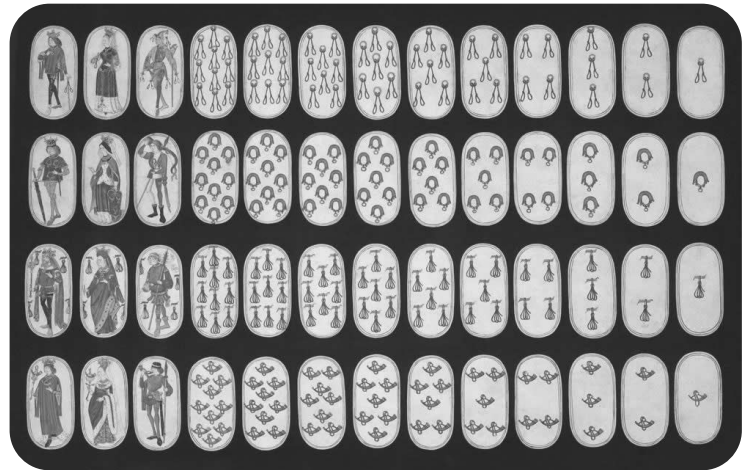
## The myths, legends and (possible) truths of the history of playing cards

### Origin theories

How and where playing cards were developed is lost to time. There is little mention of them in records or art, and since paper and wood disintegrate with time, there aren't relics that have been found or survived. Many scholars believe their origins are likely from Asia (China, India, Korea, Persia), anywhere between 800 CE and 1100 CE, a time when games were common for socialization and leisure; dominoes and mahjong were also invented. There is evidence that during the Tang Dynasty men played drinking games involving cards (or possibly painted leaves) decorated with icons that represented coins. Some believe the coin cards were simply 'play money' to be used in gambling games. Cards were easy to carry, and thus traveled with gypsies, crusaders, monks, and traders to spread in Africa and Europe by the 1300s. Early playing cards are also believed to be the inspiration for the development of tarot cards.

### Exploding into the mainstream

It's unknown when cards went from a simple tool used for betting, into a game all their own thanks to their designs. There also aren't any records of early card games, rules or guidelines. Cards did not have language printed on them at this time, which helped them to be used by people of many countries and backgrounds. Most historians believe playing cards were introduced to the fringes of European



*The oldest preserved full deck of playing cards known; circa 1470-1480. Photo from The Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

society by way of the Middle East. As trade was picking up steam, Egyptian merchants could make a good profit off the game. They had to be hand carved and painted, and had exotic dyes and beautiful designs. The 'fine art' was sold for high prices – encouraging their use by elites. Designs now expanded beyond coins to include goblets, swords and sticks, and the sets often ranged from 20-40 cards.

Some card legends say the current card counts in each deck have meanings. 4 suits represent the 4 seasons, 52 cards represent 52 weeks in a year, 12 royals represent 12 months, and 13 cards per suit represent 13 weeks in each lunar cycle. Since the cards developed for a long time in the Arabic world, a...(continued on page 3)

...(continued from page 2) culture which was proficient in Astronomy, there may be a kernel of truth to the counts.

**Standardizing decks**

With the advent of the Gutenberg printing press in 1440, cards could be produced in larger scale and offer more standardized decks that many could afford. As card decks were easy to print, store, carry, and offered endless playing potential, they're considered an original "trend" of popular culture.

Although no one knows when the decks began displaying 4 unique suits, once standard the designs became wide-ranging and reflected the local culture of the time or region. Suits included animals, tools, weapons, nature, holy icons, etc. Designs also began including face (or court) cards, which could include Kings, Queens, Princes, Knaves, etc. As decks became more standardized to encourage widespread gameplay, the 4 suits also became more consistent. A popular set included the Chalice, Sword, Money and Baton – a design still used today in Italy and Spain known as "Latin Decks". Germany introduced their version reflecting rural life by using Hearts, Acorns, Hawk-Bells and Leaves. There are also unique decks developed and still used today in India, China, Japan and by Jewish communities, among others.

France and England chose the 4 icons of Hearts, Spades, Diamonds, and Clubs, a deck which became known as "French playing cards". Scholars believe the non-standard shapes of clubs and spades were influenced from the German acorns and leaves, respectively. The French cards also introduced splitting the deck into red and black halves, and used clear and simple symbols. The French deck was designed so well that it encouraged the development of countless games, helping to cement it as the standard deck of cards used worldwide today.



In the late 1500s French manufacturers began naming the court cards after famous royalty and characters. Today's French deck is largely thought to represent the four empires of Jews, Greeks, Franks, and Romans. The deck's kings are assumed to represent King David of Israel as the King of Spades, Alexander the Great as the King of Clubs, Charlemagne as the King of Hearts, and either Augustus or

Ace comes from the Old French word for 'as', meaning 'a unit'; in early games with dice it was the name given to the side of a die with only one mark, and later adapted into playing cards.



In early card games the aces were always low cards, but by the 15th century some games change their value to mean more. Some people now consider Aces to be the highest card of all, which may come from the French Revolution when peasants successfully pulled off an uprising and trumped royalty.

Erroneously called princes, the 3rd ranked face cards are 'Knaves', named after young royal servants. They earned the card position as they were considered dutiful servants to the king.



But having 2 face cards using the letter 'K' was confusing to the lower class who couldn't read. So they began calling the card 'Jack' after a term used in the game 'All Fours'. Both Knave and Jack are still used today.

Julius Caesar as the King of Diamonds. These historical connections are also why modern decks often have court cards which retain the appearance of ancient clothing, postures and accessories.

Americans' innovation to the French deck was the addition of Jokers, hence the reason there are only two and are not included in the greater count of 52 cards. They were developed beginning by colonials to use in the game of Euchre; some believe the game's name may be an early ancestor to the naming of the Joker cards.

A variation of poker around 1875 also included the Jokers, the first time they were thought of as 'wild cards'.



**Enter de la Rue**

The French deck did have some variety in design for a few centuries, until an 1800s printer from Guernsey, England, decided to get into the card manufacturing game. Thomas

de la Rue developed ways to reduce the prices of his cards thanks to increased output and productivity. He dominated the industry in the 1830s, which allowed his designs to become the common standards we still use. They include 3 one-eyed-jacks, no mustache on the King of Hearts, and only the King of Diamonds has an axe (the other kings have swords). His most important design update created double-ended court cards; prior to this, players would need to turn the cards around to see what they had, helping to reveal to an opponent they held court cards. Later, all card would develop the double-ended designs.

Due to their patterns, colors, math, faces, and number counts, playing cards around the world have been adapted for thousands of games, more forgotten with time than have been passed down generations. The ones that last are usually simple to learn but difficult to master, adding replay value full of fun and challenges. Some games...(continued on page 4)



...(continued from page 3) use all the cards, while others only select cards to make the rules work. The ingeniousness of the French deck is an evolution that happened over a thousand years and by countless people. They perfected it from a tool to play a few games, into a precise set of cards that are incredibly versatile

and adaptable for use in any way the current player/s see fit. This includes new games being created to this day, offering the possibility the deck's development may not be over just yet. ♦

An old legend states the French Deck suits represent natural elements: hearts/ water, clubs/fire, diamonds/earth, spades/air. Another says they're the 4 pillars of Middle Ages economy: hearts/ church, spades/military, clubs/agriculture, diamonds/merchant class. Research has shown likely neither are true; instead they're two of many attempts to assign meanings to the icons. The designs could have been based on symbols of life at the time, or chosen because the artist simply liked their look. The truth has been lost with time.



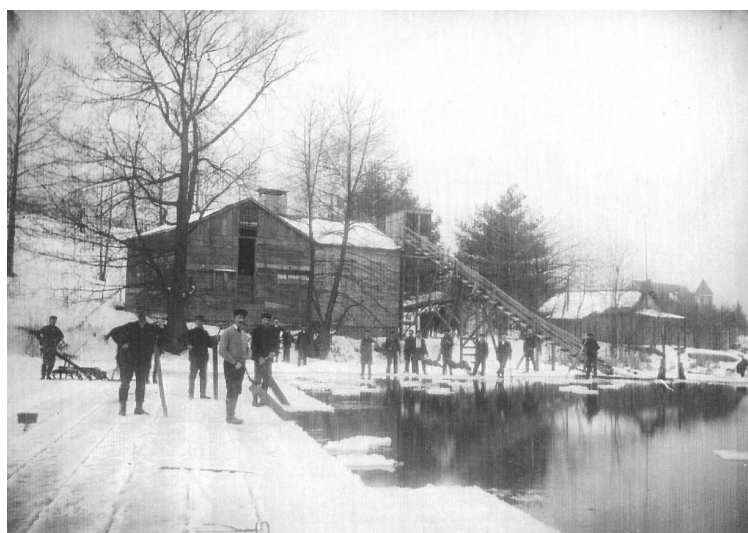
## Olcott's 1916 Ice Harvest

by Bill Neidlinger

Pictured is the Ice House, owned by T.L. Ball, which was located on the west side of Eighteen Mile Creek, near the present Rte. 18 Bridge in Olcott. The Ice Harvest during the winter of 1916 was a large one. Considerable difficulty was experienced due to the amount of snow which repeatedly covered the ice fields, keeping the men busy having to constantly draw it away. Several of the local ice cutters often took their "annual winter swim."

Generally, 25 pounds of ice were delivered to homes four times per week, costing about \$2.00 a month. Methods of harvesting ice changed over time. In the late 1700's, men used axes to chop ice from ponds; later the hand ice saw was implemented. Around 1825, horse-drawn ice-cutting tools were used in large operations. Sometime in January, when the ice reached the desired thickness of 14-16 inches, enough to support a team, snow was cleared from the area to be harvested. Usually a clearing scraper was used, made of a plank about 8-feet wide, and pulled by a horse. The next job was to mark the ice field. To create a base line, men drove two stakes, about 200 feet apart, at the edge of the field to be cut. They then placed a long plank fitted with sights in line with the stakes, and ran a hand plow close to its edge to cut a groove ½-inch deep. When the line was complete, they scribed the first cross line in the same manner. These first grooves, at right angles to each other, served as guides for the ice marker, which had a row of teeth and a swing guide. The teeth were placed in the previously scribed groove and pulled along its entire length, deepening the groove to two inches. The swing guide was then placed in the groove, gauging the distance for the next groove. The process was repeated until the entire field was marked out like a checkerboard.

After the field was marked, it was grooved by a horse drawn ice plow. Multiple trips deepened the grooves to seven inches, good for 12-inch ice, most commonly used by customers. The "cakes" would then be split off with a breaking bar. Next, a float was created by men using handsaws, usually 5-foot-long with a wooden handle. Following the grooves made by the ice plow, they sawed a strip across the end of the field to be harvested, this strip was one cake wide and sawed on both sides. These strips of ice cakes were then pushed toward the barring bridge, using pike poles or float hooks. The barring bridge, located close to the icehouse was where the "barmen" stood and jabbed breaking bars down into the ice strips breaking off storage sized cakes.



The cakes were then directed to the conveyor, and just before they entered the ice house the cakes were run through a planer. This tool planed off the top of the cakes, leaving them clean and of a uniform thickness.

In the 1920's, ice houses were common throughout the northeast, of different sizes but similar in construction. There was usually a 10-inch layer of sand on the bottom of the ice house, topped with a layer of straw. The floor, made of wood planks, was high enough above ground to allow the air to circulate, and slanted enough to drain off water. There were double walls, between which bark, charcoal, sawdust, hay, wood shavings, straw or some other insulating material was put. When the ice was brought into the ice house, a layer of sawdust was thrown between layers of cakes for insulation and to make the cakes easier to separate later on. Small ice houses were usually wood structures, and the average farm family found 10 x 10 feet to be adequate. Larger ice houses were about 30 x 40 feet and 30 feet high, holding 600 tons of ice.

Ice was a crop, and like any other crop, it was subjected to the whims of weather. A thaw or rain storm could ruin an ice crop. If the weather wasn't cold enough for long enough, ice did not get thick enough to harvest. Many ice men considered they'd had a good "run" if they had two good harvests in a row. ♦

Resources: Bill Clark, Newfane Town Historian; Lockport Union Sun & Journal; Historic Sodus Point; Sam Clogston, Member Newfane Historical Society; Stella Tothill Wilson

# Recipe Rewind

*These tips are from The Metropolitan Life Cook Book, printed and distributed by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; 1924*

## Cereals

**Cereals are Valuable and Inexpensive Food.** – Cereal mush or other cereal dishes with milk for breakfast furnishes a meal of excellent food value. It is a good plan to have several different kinds of cereal preparations on hand so that there may be a change from day to day. Corn and oat preparations furnish particularly good winter foods. Corn meal, oatmeal, rice and hominy grits are cheaper than the ready to eat breakfast foods. Cereals are rich in starches and should be thoroughly cooked.







**Cereal With Fruit.** – For variety, cereal may be cooked with well washed dates, raisins or dried apricots or peaches. Slices or sections of fresh apples, peaches and pears may be added during the last 30 minutes of cooking.

Stewed cereal may be served with any fruit previously stewed, or fresh fruits, or the cereal may be cooked in strained fruit juice or milk instead of water.

**Cereal as a Vegetable.** – Left-over cereal may be sliced when cold and fried for luncheon or supper. Cereal cooked in soup stock or with meat and seasoned with salt and pepper and butter may be used as a potato substitute.

**Cereal as a Dessert.** – It may also be molded in cups or individual molds and served with fruit and whipped cream or a pudding sauce for a simple dessert. ♦

**Compare These Costs**

 <b>Quaker Oats</b> costs 1 cent per big dish, or 5¢ cents per 1,000 calories.	 <b>Meats</b> 1 cent per bite, or 45 cents per 1,000 calories.	 <b>Eggs</b> 70 cents per 1,000 calories
 <b>Muffins</b> 1 cent each	 <b>Potatoes</b> 1 cent each	 <b>Custard</b> 4 cents per serving

Note that meats, eggs, fish, etc., average nine times Quaker Oats cost for the same calory value. Yet the oat is the supreme food. It is almost a complete food. It costs but one cent for a big dish. And folks who eat it are not underfed.  
We don't urge living on Quaker Oats alone, but make it your basic breakfast.

# Quaker Oats

**Support our Historical Society**

**How Can You Help?**

- Membership Dues
  - Renew your annual membersh
  - Gift memberships to loved ones
  - Become a lifetime member to make a substantial difference
- Contribute a one-time financial donation, on our website or send to our mailing address.
- Book one of our properties for a small, private event. Details on our website.
- Sign up to volunteer your time and help us keep growing! Learn more on our website.

**Visit [NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com](http://NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com)**



**Is it time to renew your membership? Not sure?**

Check your address label on the back of this newsletter. If your name is followed by an \* then your membership has expired prior to Jan. 2021. Please renew today to support local history, and to keep enjoying these newsletters!

## Membership Application

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

Or join online at  
[NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com](http://NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com)

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):

Individual Membership \$10.00

Family 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

# Calendar

For more details, please visit our website.

March 14- Daylight Savings Time Starts

March 17- St. Patrick's Day

April 2- Good Friday

April 4- Easter Sunday

April 15- Tax Day

April 22- Earth Day

May 5- Cinco De Mayo

May 9- Mother's Day

May 31- Memorial Day

June 19- Juneteenth

June 20- Father's Day

# 2021 Officers & Trustees

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# Contact Information

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

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

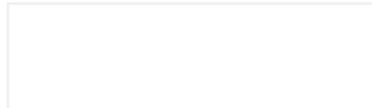
**Van Horn Mansion**  
2165 Lockport-Olcott Rd.  
Burt, NY 14028

[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!

*Drip, Drip, Drip...  
little April showers...*



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