



TOWN OF NEWFANE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S



Apple Blossom Times

Since 1975

Spring 2016

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Hello Enthusiasts of Newfane History

From the desk of our President

I am very excited to be the newest President of the Historical Society here in Newfane. I grew up in Newfane and have lived most of my adult life here. Many of you remember my late mother, Nancy Neidlinger Taylor, the longtime Town Clerk. My Uncle, "Jr." Neidlinger sold cars at Howell Motors when it was located in the Pow Collison building many years ago. I enjoy reading and listening to stories of our great town's past, and still have a lot to learn. I am relatively new to the society and have found the members hardworking and knowledgeable. We are always looking for new members that bring their talent to our society. At the February meeting we started reorganization into committees,

which include: Van Horn, Country Village, Publicity, Program, Genealogical and others.

I would like to welcome Bill Clark to his new position as our Town Historian. Bill brings a wide range of experience in town history, community service and government involvement.

My goals this year are to define and activate committees and encourage new members to join.

I am looking forward to working with our officers, trustees, members and the Town of Newfane.

Bill Neidlinger

Minute History

1825 saw the opening of the Erie Canal, a grand project that helped speed up shipments and improve the New York and U.S. economy. Surplus waters of the canal discharged into Lake Ontario by way of Eighteen Mile Creek. This was great news for local mills, which saw a great surge of energy coming through the expanded rushing waters. Even more mills began popping up between Ridge Road and Kempville (Olcott), helping Charlottesville's (Newfane) economy greatly. Local mills included William Collins' Flour Grist Mill, Tompkins Grist Mill and the Van Horns' Flour Grist Mill and Woolen Mill.



Uncle Sam: From Man to Symbol

The term Uncle Sam is a nickname for the United States, also known as a personification of the country through many popular ad campaigns. However the origins come from a real person: Samuel Wilson (Sept. 13, 1766 – July 31, 1854).

In February 1789, twenty-two year-old Sam Wilson and his older brother Ebenezer moved to Troy, NY and opened a successful brickyard. Four years later they established a meatpacking operation, E. and S. Wilson, which quickly became big business. Over the next decade many more of the Wilson's extended family moved to Troy to work for the brothers, helping the business to expand to their own docks, sloops and farm. For a short time they also had a distilling business and a grocery and dry goods store.

The Wilson brother's nieces and nephews appropriately called them both Uncle, and because of Sam's geniality and good humor, friends and business acquaintances also began calling him 'Uncle Sam'.

When the War of 1812 began, northern troops were located near Troy, NY. Elbert Anderson, from New York City, contracted with the secretary of war to supply rations to the troops in both New York and New Jersey. Anderson already supplied the federal government with beef, pork, whiskey and salt, but needed a larger supply. He subcontracted through the Wilson Brothers, and Sam Wilson was hired as an army meat inspector. *(continued on page 4)*



Samuel Wilson

American Apples

A historical look at the the fruit our society celebrates annually!



Apple varieties have existed all over the world, longer than many other fruits. Carbonized apples found by archeologists show they were eaten over 10,000 years ago, with the earliest written records around 2,000 years old. At that time farmers already had grasped the arts of budding and grafting fruit trees; this was happening all over the world in places such as China, Egypt and Babylon.

Nearly every continent has a native variety. North America's original apples were small, sour and hard- the ancestors of the modern crab apples. Although edible, they were typically eaten by animals (if at all). This changed with the arrival of Europeans in the 1600's, who brought fruit seed and seedlings with them, including their delicious and sweet apples. This was vital to the survival of the colonists who needed to grow their own food (and create drinks) within the wild jungle they were now living. Some of the earliest fruit trees brought were peaches, apples, apricots, and figs. Both cider and hard cider were also among the first common exports back to Europe.

As expected, some fruit varieties couldn't grow in America due to different climates, weather patterns, dirt, bugs and more. Fortunately others were hardy and thrived, including the 'May Duke' cherry, 'Calville Blanc d'Hiver' apple, and the 'Green Gage' plum- all which are still grown today by antique fruit collectors and connoisseurs. Another issue came from the small production amounts from the trees because of the lack of honey bees, which aren't native to North America. The earliest bee colonies arrived in Virginia in early 1622 from England, with more shipments coming steadily for the next decade. Native Americans called the honeybees "English flies" or "white man's flies". Thanks to the bees, harvests became plentiful.

It became commonplace for all landowners to own orchards and gardens, and by 1675 hundreds of thousands of fruit trees were planted up and down the eastern seaboard. Apple trees were the most popular choice for planting, in part due to the wide range of uses for apples

and their shelf life.

The first commercial apple tree nursery in America opened in 1737 in Flushing, NY: William Prince Nursery, owned and operated by the Prince family through the civil war. They were known worldwide for their quality trees and plants.

It wasn't long before new apple varieties were born in America, including 'Father Abraham', 'Monstrous Pippin', 'Roxbury Russet', and 'Maiden's Blush'. They were so popular that Europe stopped exporting their apples and began importing American ones! England purchased the most, especially after people wanted to be like Queen Victoria, who'd expressed her preference of the apples. In the mid-1780s, Thomas Jefferson sent a letter from Paris to Reverend James Madison, boasting that "they have no apples here to compare with our Newtown Pippin."



...apples came in all shapes and guises, some with rough, sandpapery skin, others as misshapen as potatoes, and ranging from the size of a cherry to bigger than a grapefruit.

Apples gained a folk hero in the early 1800's: Johnny Appleseed. Known in his life as John Chapman, he dreamed of owning enough land to grow so many apples no one would ever grow hungry. He began collecting apple seeds from cider mills, dried them, put them up in little bags, and gave them to everyone he met who was headed West. For forty years he traveled through Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, planting seeds every place he considered to be likely spots, while also leasing land and developing apple tree nurseries. By 1825 the first apple trees had arrived on the west coast.

As apple harvest continued to grow, so did the experiments with creating new varieties by Americans. Thousands of new apple variations were created, although many had mixed results- including fruits with unusual tastes, shapes and shades. As the science of grafting improved, so did the quality of apples. Cooking with new apples also helped chefs create and improve many of our modern beloved recipes.

The number of distinct apple varieties grown by Americans in the 19th century was somewhere around 14,000. During this time apples came in all shapes and guises, some with rough, sandpapery skin, others as misshapen as potatoes, and ranging from the size of a cherry to bigger than a grapefruit. Colors ran the entire spectrum with a wonderful impressionistic array of



Victorian Tea

A benefit for the Newfane Historical Society

*Saturday, April 16th
12-4pm*

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

Enter our Basket Raffle
(donations currently being accepted)

*Victorian era (1837-1901) attire
& accessories encouraged,
but not required.*

\$15 adult | \$10 for 12 & Under
includes full tea

Limited Seats- Sold Out Last Year!

Reservations Required: Please call Rose at 716-727-9816 (if needed, leave a message).

patterning—flushes, stripes, splashes, and dots. There was an apple for every community, taste, purpose, and season, with winter varieties especially prized. Apple variety numbers have dropped dramatically in recent decades due to the discontinuation of bad and redundant versions, along with the introduction of commercial orchards growing only the most popular and hardiest types, including Red Delicious, Golden Delicious and Granny Smith.

Modern apple growers have begun an effort to increase the amount of unique varieties. Some focus on heritage apples-popular apples that fell out of favor in the last 100 hundred years- which are the ancestors of today's common apples. Other farmers and scientists continue grafting and introducing brand new 'baby' apples, created

from current favorites such as Braeburn, McIntosh, Jonagold and Gala, to name a few. Over 160 new apples were released around the world from 2007-2013. Two of the newest New York creations are Ruby Frost and SnapDragon, both 'babies' of the enormously popular Honey Crisp.

Apple production in the U.S. today comes from 36 states harvesting 48,000 tons annually and shipped around the world. New York State is America's second largest apple grower, after Washington. Most Americans consume around 16 pounds of apples each year, and they continue to be eaten raw or used in drinks, meals, desserts, as livestock feed, in crafts and countless other ways.



From their history to their diversity...and of course popularity, apples have rightly earned their place as one of the most popular fruits ever! ♦



(continued from page 1) To both identify his barrels passed inspection and they should head to the United States army by way of Elbert Anderson, they were stamped with the shorthand "US/EA". However at the time the usual shorthand for the country was U. States, his new stamp caused confusion.



"Marching on its Stomach" Diet and Messing of the Army in Upper Canada in 1812 by Robert Henderson

Wilson's workers knew what E.A stood for, and so joked the U.S. stood for a name as well, their boss Uncle Sam. A few of these men later joined the troops, helping to pass the joke around while calling themselves "Uncle Sam's Soldiers". This also spread among the Troy townspeople and beyond until Uncle Sam and the United States became synonymous. In 1813 various New York newspapers used the term Uncle Sam, further dispersing the name.

Sam Wilson enjoyed a prosperous life following the War of 1812. The Wilson brickyard and meatpacking enterprises, including a second slaughterhouse at Catskill, NY, employed as many as two hundred workers. Wilson was also a popular Troy citizen, whose services with clubs, civic organizations, and public meetings were in constant demand. During the 1830s he became an ardent Democrat and outspoken supporter of Andrew Jackson. Wilson's health deteriorated during the 1840s, and at 88 he died at his home in Troy during a cholera epidemic in 1854. Wilson was buried in Mount Ida Cemetery and later was reinterred at Troy's Oakwood Cemetery next to his wife Betsey Mann, marked with a brass plaque.



The earliest images of Uncle Sam began appearing in newspapers during the 1830s, but the iconography varied with the artists.

During the Civil War, Uncle Sam began to take on the features of Abraham Lincoln, including his tall, lean figure and beard. This version became standard moving forward, with the most famous design appearing on army recruitment posters and during World War I. Pointing his finger directly at the onlooker, Uncle Sam declared "I WANT YOU" in an effort to encourage army enlistment. Many subsequent artists have chosen to represent Uncle Sam in this same commanding pose on such diverse items as weathervanes, toy banks, mailbox holders, children's books and other examples of folk art.

In 1961 Congress passed a resolution saluting "Uncle Sam Wilson of Troy, New York, as the progenitor of America's National symbol of Uncle Sam". Today the city of Troy calls itself 'The Home of Uncle Sam'. It has a monument of his likeness, and holds an annual celebration every September on his birthday, with a parade and other festivities. A fitting honor for the man who inspired our nation's Uncle. ♦



Recipe Rewind!

This recipe was published in the Newfane Health Facility's Cookbook, 1986.



Violet Jelly

contributed by Judy Naylor

- violet blossoms 1 pkg. Certo (fruit pectin)
- 1 Tbs. lemon juice 1 cup sugar

Fill quart jar with blossoms, cover with boiling water. Let stand for 24 hours. Strain, save 2 cups of juice. Add lemon juice and Certo to violet juice. Bring to a boil for 1 minute. Pour into jars and seal.

Congratulations to

Bill Clark

for being named

Newfane Town Historian

We look forward to many wonderful collaborations and historical discoveries!

From Everyone in the Newfane Historical Society



Save the Date!



Apple Blossom Festival

May 15th, 10am-5pm

Country Village

2685 West Creek Rd. (corner at Ide Rd.)
Newfane, NY 14108

Check out our Summer (May) newsletter for details, or visit our website now:
NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com

Join the Festival Fun!

We're already looking forward to our annual Apple Blossom Festival! This year it will be held on Sunday, May 15th from 10am-5pm.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining our Flea Market & Craft Show, let us know! Vendor Spaces are 20x20 and cost (if paid ahead): \$25 Market/ \$50 Food. Contact Rosemary for details: 716-433-3065 or rosie311@roadrunner.com.



We also love new volunteers! Tasks include set-up and tear down, working in our various museum buildings, helping guests, donating baked goods, promoting the event and much more. Volunteers can be ages 14+, and we accept help from school groups and students who need volunteer hours. For information on volunteering, please visit our website or contact Jill Heck: 716-390-9679 | jill@newfane-historicalsociety.com.

NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com

Membership Application

For new members and renewals

Today's Date: _____

Name (Please Print) _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Select One:

Renewal New Member

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

Our membership year begins on January 1st and ends on December 31st.

Annual Membership Dues (Check one):

- Family Membership \$10.00
- Individual Membership \$10.00
- Life Member \$100.00

Tear off this portion and mail with a check to: Newfane Historical Society c/o Rosemary M. Miller 3531 Ewings Rd. Lockport, NY 14094

Please make all checks payable to (or to the order of):
Newfane Historical Society

Or visit our website and join online: www.NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com

Calendar

For more details, please visit our website.

March 13th- Daylight Savings Time

March 15th- Trustees Meeting

March 17th- St. Patrick's Day

March 19th- Ghost Hunt at the Van Horn Mansion with Beyond Ghosts- Sold Out!

March 25th- Good Friday

March 27th- Easter Sunday

April 3rd- Tours at the Van Horn Mansion Begin (every Sunday through Dec. 11th)

April 16th- Victorian Tea at the Van Horn Mansion

April 19th- Trustees Meeting

May 8th- Mother's Day

May 15th- Apple Blossom Festival

2016 Officers & Trustees

President: Bill Neidlinger

Vice President: Kevin Luckman

Recording Secretary: Janet Capen

Corresponding Secretary: Melissa Schaeffer

Financial Secretary: Rosemary Miller

Treasurer: David Steggles

Trustees:

Vicki Banks

Bill Clark

Steve Goodman

Jill Heck

Chuck Manhardt

Terry Manhardt

Bill Ott

Pat Ryan

Craig Schaeffer

Mindi Schaeffer

Rose Schaeffer

George Updegraph

Contact Information

Town of Newfane Historical Society

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Country Village Museum

2685 West Creek Rd.
Newfane, NY 14108

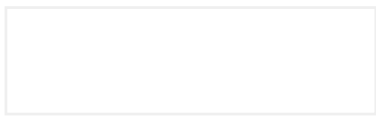
Van Horn Mansion

2165 Lockport-Olcott Rd.
Burt, NY 14028

www.NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com

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