



TOWN OF NEWFANE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S



Apple Blossom Times

Since 1975

Winter 2015

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Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

From the desk of our President

What a wonderful Autumn we've had! Many beautiful weather days have helped our members accomplish plenty of outside repairs and maintenance at both our Country Village and the Van Horn Mansion. As always, thanks to everyone who's worked endlessly to improve both sites.

The wonderful weather also helped us have a very successful Apple Harvest Festival in September, and Candlelight Tours at the mansion in October. We want to send many thanks to local businesses and groups who helped pull off both event, including Russell Farms, Sun Orchards, Bittner-Singer Orchards, Baehrs Farm, Lake View Farms, Buculo Cold Storage, Miller Hose Fire Co., Niagara County Auxiliary Police, Newfane Lions Club, Niagara County Legislature and more. As always the support of our community is outstanding.

We're currently busy decorating the Van Horn Mansion for Christmastime- we hope you stop by and see the beautiful decorations. The best day to come is Sunday, December 6 for our annual Carol Sing. The holiday music helps make the mansion even more memorable. If you've never attended before than this is the year!

One last note: many people have wondered when our next full tea will happen. We are currently looking at April, and plan to have details in our next newsletter. It's sure to be a wonderful afternoon and I hope you can join us.

Merry Christmas to everyone and have a wonderful New Year!

Rose Schaeffer

Minute History

In November of 1929 Douglas Patterson moved his family from Nova Scotia into the newly for sale Van Horn Mansion. The family would prove to be as beloved community members as the Van Horns had. Every winter Mr. Patterson constructed a hockey rink on their estate, filling it with water from help by the local fire companies. Everyone in the community was invited to skate there, young and old alike. Mrs. Patterson offered her hot cocoa to the visitors, and allowed them to walk through the mansion with guard-covered skates on, not worried in the least about soiling the carpets. Many locals were thrilled; this was the first chance for many to get a glimpse inside the well-known brick home.

Counting the Days to Christmas

A History of the Advent Calendar

Advent calendars are a timeless tradition for many each December, but do you know how they came to be?

The definition of advent means the arrival of an important person or event. In Christianity, Advent is the four week period between St. Andrew's Day and Christ's birth, which has been celebrated since the fourth century. It marked the time in which new converts to the faith prepared for baptism.

By the 1800's, German Lutherans had a tradition of marking their front doors with chalk lines each day during Advent. This tradition



slowly spread throughout Europe, altered by some people who chose to hang different religious pictures each day, while others lit candles. It was during...(continued on page 4)

Join the Historical Society's Annual Old Fashioned Carol Sing

Sunday, December 6th
1-4pm



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

Bring the whole family and join us for a wonderful holiday tradition. The afternoon features carol singing in the parlor, a performance by the Methodist Bell choir, and holiday treats in the dining room. The mansion is all decorated for the holidays and we want to share it with you!

This event is open to the public, and we ask visitors to please bring a canned good donation for the local food bank.



Community Holiday Events

Town of Newfane Holiday Light Up & Parade

Dec. 4th | 5:30pm-8pm; 5:30pm Parade

Main St. in Newfane

Enjoy our annual lighted parade, carriage rides, refreshments and a visit from Santa. Visit the Candy Cane Craft Show at the Newfane United Methodist Church.

Sounds of Christmas Concert

Dec. 4th & 5th | 7pm

Hess Road Wesleyan Church | 2514 Hess Rd. Appleton

An evening filled with wonderful Christmas songs performed by amazing local musicians.

Old Fashioned Carol Sing at the Van Horn Mansion

Dec. 6th | 1-4pm

(For details see the top of this page!)

The Living Nativity- ONE WEEKEND ONLY!

Dec. 4th-6th | 5:30pm-8:30pm

Grace Bible Church | 6023 Dutton Place, Newfane

Experience a guided walk through the Christmas story and beyond. Tours take place outside, so please dress warm. Free admission; 30 min. tours depart every half hour.

Victorian Festivities at The Babcock House Museum

Dec. 13th | 1-4pm

7449 Lower Lake Rd, Barker, NY 14012

Enjoy Christmas carols in the library, baking in the brick oven, butter churning, refreshments, wagon rides and more!



Recipe Rewind!

*This recipe was published in
the Newfane United Methodist
Church Cookbook, 2007*

Bacon and Egg Casserole

contributed by Bev DeVoe

5 slices buttered bread, cubed

3/4 lb. shredded cheese

1/2 lb. bacon, partially cooked and coarsely chopped

4 eggs, slightly beaten

2 c. milk

1 tsp. dry mustard

1/2 tsp. salt

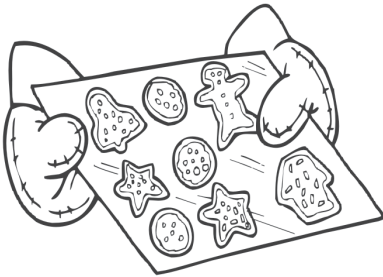
dash pepper

In a greased 9x13 baking dish, layer ingredients as follows - bread, cheese, then bacon. Mix together eggs, milk and spices - pour over layered ingredients. Refrigerate overnight. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. This is good for Christmas brunch - make the night before and bake in the morning.



Baked Goods Needed!

We are seeking Christmas cookies and other baked goods for our annual Carol Sing at the Van Horn Mansion (see page 2 for details). Consider donating a batch of your favorite cookies, brownies or other desserts. Make sure they are pre-wrapped and in disposable containers.



Please deliver your donation to the Van Horn Mansion on Dec. 6th between 12noon and 1pm OR contact Rose to arrange an earlier delivery (716-727-9816).

Thanks ahead of time!

For Sale Now: The ebook *Tidbits of Newfane History*

Former local Bud Taylor has spent the past year working on a collection of Newfane history, which is now available for sale. The ebook will benefit the Newfane Historical Society.

The eBook is a digital file on a flash drive, designed similar to a scrapbook. It contains a large variety of history from the Town of Newfane, largely focused on time prior to 1957. Some items include pdfs of other local history books and articles, personal family stories, photographs, newspaper clippings and more. As a bonus, each ebook includes a guide on how to do your own research on www.fultonhistory.com. This is invaluable for searching family news or community event items that happened anywhere in New York State.

Colonial Virginia Christmas Traditions

excerpt from Byers' Choice Ltd.



While most of the American colonies did not celebrate Christmas, Virginians held a fortnight of celebrations stretching from Christmas Eve to Twelfth Night on January 6th. "All over the colony, a universal hospitality reigns," reported one London Magazine in 1746, "and throughout the Twelve Days of Christmas, Virginians made the most of that spirit."

Time was spent visiting friends or receiving guests, and great parties were held filled with dancing, singing and partying well into the night. Homes were decked out with wreaths and

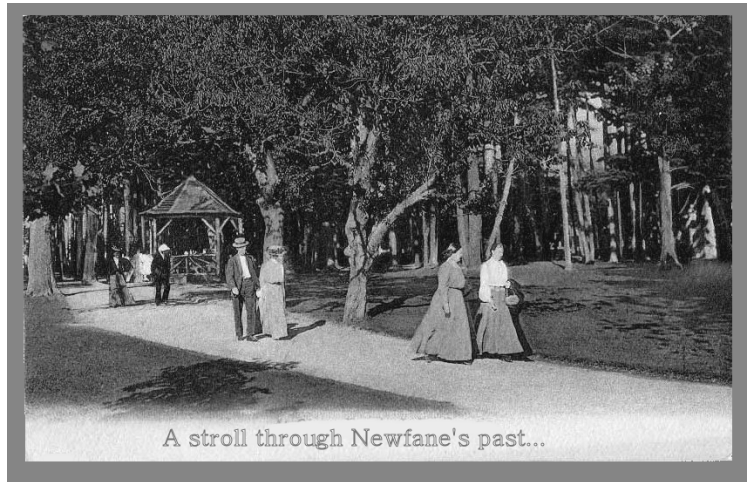
Newfane Historical Society's Christmas Dinner, Meeting and Officer's vote at the Van Horn Mansion

Fri. Dec. 18th

6pm dinner | 7pm meeting

Bring a dish to pass

Members Welcome. Looking forward to celebrating with everyone!



A stroll through Newfane's past...

Updates will be available for free to eBook owners in the future. The eBook flash drive has plenty of space for all updates and any personal research or items you'd like to add.

The ebook/ flash drive costs \$16, which includes shipping via US mail. Contact rytaylorii@aol.com OR (585) 889-7514. They are also available locally through Jill Heck (716-390-9679) or at the Newfane Public Library. ♦

garlands of holly & ivy, balls of mistletoe and scented clusters of lavender, rosemary, and spices. Christmas Dinner consisted of 7-8 courses in wealthy households, and included oysters, crab, and other fish; roast beef, smoked ham, roast turkey, venison, and a wealth of game, all alongside stuffing, roast vegetables, biscuits and cornbread. Desserts were a delightful assortment of pies, tarts, puddings, cakes and sweets.

Completely unknown to early American colonists were two of our most cherished traditions: Santa Claus and the Christmas tree, both of which only grew popular the U.S. in the nineteenth century. Gifts were given at Christmastime, but usually only from masters to their servants and apprentices. Over the centuries, colonial Christmas traditions melded with those of new immigrants to make Christmas in America what we know it as today. ♦

(continued from page 1)...this time that the holiday transitioned to a month-long celebration leading into Christmas, making everyone's calendars dates start at December 1st and go through the 24th.

Now that the calendars had firm dates, families crafted longer lasting homemade Advent calendars out of cloth, wood and paper. They were simple, flat decorations to hang on the wall in December. Sometime after 1890 various retail shops in Germany and Switzerland began selling these basic Advent decorations. A few newspapers are known to have printed versions in their Sunday editions.

German printer Gerhard Lang is credited with inventing the modern version of the Advent Calendar. As a child his mother would make one each year, and she attached little candies for him to each date on the cardboard decoration. As an adult he became a printer, co-owning the printing office Reichhold & Lang. In 1908 he decided to honor his mother and Christmas with a new product: a beautifully printed cardboard Christmas Calendar which came with 24 separate little colored pictures, one to hang up on each day of Advent. He sold them to his clients, which included a German newspaper who inserted them in a late November edition as a gift to their customers.



By the following year Lang modified his calendars by gluing two pieces of cardboard together which now formed little doors that could be opened to view a surprise for each day: unique and pretty Christmas pictures. His new Advent Calendars were a commercial success, and Reichhold & Lang became known throughout Germany. Not long after, the Sankt

Johannis Printing Company started producing religious Advent Calendars, with Bible verses instead of pictures behind the doors.

These modern Advent calendars remained popular and spread throughout Europe for the next two decades. During this time Lang created over 30 different versions. Unfortunately World War II halted the calendar printing due to a cardboard shortage, and later a law in Germany which stopped the production of calendars with pictures. Reichhold & Lang were forced to close forever in the late 1930's.

The tradition quickly returned after the war, newly designed and printed by Richard Sellmer beginning in 1946. His first calendar was called "The Little Town". Richard Sellmer Advent Calendars are still produced today, including reprints of the original "The Little Town". Sellmers has some very sought after designs, including original vintage calendars and 3D standing versions. You can visit their website and see many of their classic

designs on display: www.sellmer-verlag.de.

By the 1950's Advent Calendars were popular throughout Europe. All were designed with 24 little numbered doors to be opened each day from Dec. 1st through Christmas Eve. Inside children might find a Christmas picture, a religious picture, a bible verse, or - starting in 1958 - a small piece of candy (in honor of Lang and his mother).

A copy of Sellmer's "The Little Town" Advent Calendar was given to President Dwight D. Eisenhower in the mid 1950's. Several newspapers printed a photo of Eisenhower opening the calendar with his grandchildren. They were an instant hit with readers, establishing the popular tradition in the United States.

Paper versions of the Advent Calendar became standard decorations for the next fifty years and were must have items with families who weren't very religious. They were important for some to teach about the birth of Christ, while in other homes it is the countdown to the arrival of Santa Claus. Some calendars even have a 25th door to be opened on Christmas Day.



Occasionally families in America and Europe preferred to create their own. It was a popular craft for young children to build, including paper chains, hanging decorations, little envelopes and more. In the 1960's some families began creating or buying permanent calendars to use each year, such as a little wooden Christmas trees with a new ornament to hang each day. However the paper versions sold in stores remained the most popular type until the 21st century.

Modern Advent Calendars come in all shapes, sizes and themes, and many paper versions are still sold each year- most now include little chocolates. However permanent Advent Calendars are quickly becoming the most commonly owned variety. There are wooden trains, trees and houses, all with little drawers that contain small candies or gifts. There are wall calendars with pockets, fridge magnet designs, hanging garlands, felt kits, clocks and far too many other types than we could ever list! Of course we have to mention one more: the most expensive Advent Calendar ever made. It was carved from elm and walnut wood, shaped like a Christmas tree with...(continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)...24 compartments holding organic chocolates from Green & Black. They were sold in 2007 at London's famous Harrods Department Store for \$50,000, with proceeds going to support cocoa farmers.



While they may look completely different than a century ago, their goal of counting the days until Christmas hasn't. Of course some people dislike the new versions with daily gift-giving, believing this detracts from the message of Christ or the true reason for the calendar's creation. Yet the massive variety of Advent Calendars today ensures every family can celebrate the tradition in whatever way suits them best. After all, wonderful family memories are the most important holiday gift anyone could ever give or receive- and that may be the best reason of all for the long lasting life of the Advent Calendar. ♦

Christmas, the merry and kindly
 Is dawning again on the earth
 How cheery and sweet are its pleasures
 How sunny and peaceful its mirth
 A season of gladness unclouded may
 This Christmastide bring to your hearth.



One Final Message:
 Renew your membership today for 2016-
 plus give one as a gift to a loved one! You'll be
 supporting a local non-profit and learn plenty
 about local events, the wonderful history of
 Newfane and more!

Membership Application

For new members and renewals

Today's Date: _____

Name (Please Print) _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

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

Select One:

Renewal New Member

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

Calendar

For more details, please visit our website.

Nov. 26th- Thanksgiving Day

Nov. 29th- Advent Begins

Dec. 6th- Old Fashioned Carol Sing at the Van Horn Mansion, Hanukkah Begins & St. Nicholas Day

Dec. 18th- Trustees Christmas Meeting (details inside this newsletter!)

Dec. 24th & Dec. 25th- Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Dec. 31st & Jan. 1st- New Year's Eve & Day

Jan. 18th- Martin Luther King Day

Jan. 19th- Trustees Meeting

Feb. 14th- Valentine's Day

Feb. 15th- President's Day

Feb. 16th- Trustees Meeting

2015 Officers & Trustees

President: Rose Schaeffer

Vice President: Bill Neidlinger

Secretary: Janet Capen

Corresponding Secretary: Melissa Schaeffer

Financial Secretary: Rosemary Miller

Treasurer: David Steggles

Trustees:

Vicki Banks

Steve Goodman

Jill Heck

Kevin Luckman

Chuck Manhardt

Terry Manhardt

Bill Ott

Pat Ryan

Craig Schaeffer

Mindi Schaeffer

George Updegraph

Contact Information

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Newfane, NY 14108

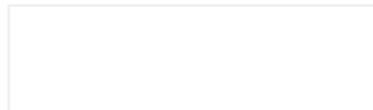
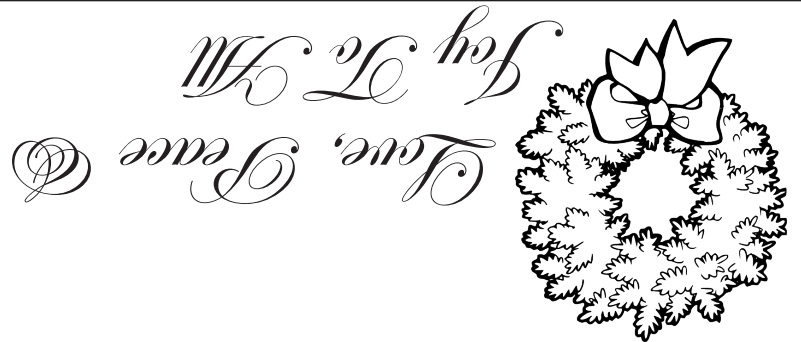
Country Village Museum
2685 West Creek Rd.
Newfane, NY 14108

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

www.NewfaneHistoricalSociety.com

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

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