



# The Grannytown Gazette

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society

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Christopher Gust

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**Curator**  
Kris Rogers

## Society Welcomes ACS 4th Graders

Alden Intermediate fourth grade students visited the Alden Historical Society's Heritage Center and the Henskee Road Schoolhouse in early June. At the schoolhouse, they experienced what it would have been like to attend one of Alden's one-room schools in the late 1800s to the early 1900s. This included using slates for seat work, recitations, and a spelling bee. At the Heritage Center, the students reviewed a variety of topics from their social studies curriculum by coloring a nine-patch quilt block. A brief tour of the Heritage Center followed.



Photos: Alden Intermediate School

The Historical Society appreciates the fourth grade teachers and students for their interest and participation. The program would not be possible without the service of retired teachers Terri Retzlaff, Jean Weisbeck, Joanne Pletcher, Sandy Dussault, Kris Rogers, Elli DeFilippo and Karen Muchow.

~ Elli DeFilippo & Karen Muchow

## *Revising our Mission (and a New Logo)*

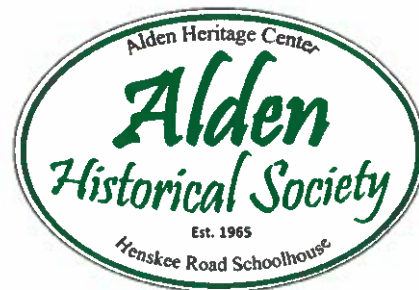
A few years ago, the Alden Historical Society adopted a new name for its building at 13213 Broadway. Gone is the sign "Alden Historical Museum". We are chartered by the New York State Department of Education as an historical society with a collection, not as a museum. That designation involves a different chartering process. The Board of Trustees decided on the name "Alden Heritage Center" for the building.

This year, the Board discussed its mission statement, and after much discussion settled on a revision:

**The Alden Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation, presentation and promotion of the rich heritage of the Town of Alden.**

**In fulfilling this mission, the Society will:**

- **Identify, preserve, and display material including artifacts, photos and papers of historical significance to the cultural heritage of the Town of Alden. (*Cultural heritage implies a shared bond, our belonging to a community. It represents our history and our identity, our bond to our past, our present and our future.*)**
- **Preserve and open to the public historical buildings deeded to the Town of Alden. (Alden Heritage Center and the Henskee Road Schoolhouse.)**
- **Make its resources accessible to members, researchers, genealogists, and the general public.**
- **Hold meetings, create exhibits, sponsor programs and run special events for the education and enjoyment of its members, the Alden community, and the general public.**



A new name and a revised mission called for a new logo. Vice-President Christopher Gust took on the task. After viewing several, the two logos included here were adopted by the Board and will appear on publications and correspondence.

~Karen Muchow, Alden Town & Village Historian

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## *Curator's Corner*



When the 4th grades were visiting the Heritage Center in June, many of the children asked about the game of Mumblety-Peg. It involves jack-knives and was popular with 19th century boys even through WWII. The basics involve a boy standing with his feet shoulder width apart. He then throws his knife down as close to his foot as possible so that it sticks in the ground. The boy's partner then has a turn throwing the knife at his own foot. The one who gets closest to his foot wins. The winner then pounds a stick into the ground 2-3 inches. The loser then pulls the stick out with his teeth which often makes a mumble sound. There are many variations to this game which was played in school yards and army camps.

For further information, check [Wikipedia.com](https://www.wikipedia.com).

~Kris Rogers, Curator



Are you looking for a fun (and FREE) activity to do with your children or grandchildren during summer vacation? Come visit the Alden Heritage Center, open on the first and third Saturday of the month from 11 am until 1 pm.

The Center contains more than 7,000 artifacts and archival items. Try the Bath Tub scavenger hunt. Can you find all of the bathtub stickers? Let the young explorers see if they can figure out how to use a typewriter, a rotary dial phone or play a tune on the xylophone. Show them what you looked like when you were younger through our complete collection of Alden School yearbooks. Step back in time to view our Village Century House book. Explore the history these homes hold. We are currently working on a Town Century House book. Does your home qualify as a Century Home?



All of this and so much more.... Hope to see you there!

We are always looking for additional Docents (tour guides) to assist on the Saturdays the Center is open. If you are interested in assisting, please let us know.

~Sue Galbraith, President

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## *Neeland's Farm 100th Anniversary at Kopp's Greenhouses*

We were honored to be invited by Kopp's Greenhouses on County Line Road to participate in their celebration of the founding of Neeland's Dairy which began on their property 100 years ago. We had a table with Neeland's artifacts from the Alden Heritage Center, Neeland's milk bottles for sale, and information about the Historical Society. Several members of the Neeland family stopped by to see the items that were on display. Thanks to everyone who stopped by to say hello.

~Christopher Gust



Photos: David Henry

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## *Welcome New Trustee, Susan Schumacher*

At the Society's February meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Board voted Susan Schumacher to fill the remainder of Lynda Tucker's term until the next annual meeting in November 2024. Sue grew up and worked in Alden most of her life. She and husband Brian raised their two sons, Richard and John, in Alden, as well. Being of the third generation on both sides of her family to live in Alden has given her a strong interest in preserving its history. Sue will assist with our Membership Committee and be eligible to run for a full three-year term on our Board in November. Welcome, Sue!

~Christopher Gust

## *Programs Recap*

July 2024

### **April program - History of Early Buffalo Entertainment**

Guest speaker Rick Falkowski shared his extensive knowledge about the early history of Buffalo music and entertainment at the Alden Community Center on April 11. Among the many facts shared was that the world's first "talkie" motion picture, "The Jazz Singer," was shown in Buffalo at the Lafayette Theater, on the corner of Washington and Broadway. Additionally, the first theater built specifically for showing motion pictures, the Vitascope, was built in Buffalo in the basement of the Ellicott Square Building. A discussion on Buffalo music covered the early days of live performances in the seedy bars located at the original Canalside to jazz and swing and the birth of rock and roll.

Mr. Falkowski is the author of several books about Buffalo history and influential people. More information about his books is available at [buffalomusichistory.com](http://buffalomusichistory.com).

~Elli DeFilippo.



Photo: Christopher Gust

### **May program - WNY Healing Waters and Resorts**



The Society welcomed Erica Joan Wanecski at the Alden Community Center on May 9. Ms. Wanecski identified several communities in Western New York, in addition to Alden, where in years past, hotels and resorts were built for the purpose of providing healing water baths and spas. Among the communities mentioned were Dansville, Mt. Morris, Castile, Warsaw, Alabama, and Bergen. She also mentioned Clifton Springs and Geneva in Central New York and Saratoga Springs in Eastern New York. Ms. Wanecski shared that in earlier times, information about taking mineral water baths as a treatment for healing aches and pains may have come from Native Americans who had used them for that purpose.

~Elli DeFilippo

### **June program – Hometown Heroes**

Alden Historical Society President and Village Clerk Sue Galbraith led a presentation on Alden's Hometown Hero banners, a program she helped to initiate, at the Society's June 13 program. Sue led off by sharing details about Alden's earliest settler, Moses Fenno, who died in the War of 1812. She went on to discuss Civil War casualty Samuel Young. Sue invited those present to share details about family members depicted on the banners. Jean Weisbeck, Robin Gilbert, and Elli DeFilippo shared details about their fathers. Sue concluded the program by sharing details about some of Alden's more recent veterans. Alden has more than 160 Hometown Hero banners. An updated booklet identifying the military personnel featured on the banners will be available soon.

~Elli DeFilippo



Photo: Christopher Gust

***Our monthly programs at the Alden Community Center will resume on September 12.***