

# A RANSOM NOTE

Historical Society of the Town of Clarence

Summer 2026

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Board Meetings are held the 1st  
Thursday of each month.

Meetings begin at 6:30 pm at the  
Clarence History Museum.

## **President's Comments**

Summer is finally here and we will be celebrating the 250 year Anniversary of our Country. We have many special events scheduled on our open Sundays, so please watch our Facebook Page and Website for more details on these. We are, in conjunction with Lancaster, Alden & Newstead Historical Societies, honoring Revolutionary War soldiers that are buried in our local Cemeteries. In the Clarence Cemeteries, which include the Pioneer Cemeteries, Clarence Fillmore, Clarence Center and Harris Hill and Hunts Corners, we are identifying the Revolution War Soldiers by marking their graves with red, white and blue Floreal arrangements and a name plate with information on them. A map of the various Cemeteries and reference material can be picked up at the Clarence Historical Museum. We hope you will take some time and visit these sites. Please visit us on our open hours and fill out a ticket for a chance to win a challenge coin. Our Tuesday night Programs will pick back up in September. Stay safe and have a great Summer.

## *A Ransom Note*

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## **Fall Programs**

September 8, 2026 Greg Kinal

Duty—Honor—Country

October 13, 2026 Linda Brigance

Hands That Rocked The Cradle

Mother of Presidents

November 10, 2026 Joe McGreevy

Celebrating The War Heroes Of The Revolutionary War  
Of Clarence

# Commemorating The 250th The Shope Cemetery By: Joe McGreevy

Recent research has led me to the oldest cemetery in the Town of Clarence, the Shope Cemetery (1814-1852). As part of the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, I have been exploring the connections Clarence had to the Declaration. While no direct connections to the Declaration of Independence can be found, I have found several connections to the Revolutionary War in the form of veterans who fought in the war and eventually ended up in Clarence. Two of these soldiers are buried in the Shope Cemetery - John Felton Sr. and Ephraim Derreck.

Located on Hillcrest Road, the Shope Cemetery is one of the older cemeteries in Western New York. The property was originally purchased from the Holland Land Company by Sylvanus Felton on April 19th, 1808. Abraham Shope eventually bought it and thus the name Shope Cemetery. The Parks Department has been doing a great job maintaining the cemetery for many years. However, time has taken its toll on the gravestones. Many are hard to read, falling over or completely down or buried. If you notice that not many of the gravestones stood up in the 1950's and it is worse today. One of my goals as historian is to repair and restore this cemetery and other pioneer cemeteries around town.

Just two months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence Ephraim fought at the Battle of Harlem Heights, at the age of 20. The battle was a significant early win for the Americans, and Ephraim was fighting alongside other men from the 1st Regiment of the Connecticut Troops under Col. John Durkee. A year later in 1777 he fought at the Battle of Germantown in Pennsylvania. The last battle before Washington wintered at Valley Forge. He fought again in 1778 at the Battle of Monmouth on June 28, 1778. He was discharged at Westfield, New Jersey in December, 1779. He will make his way west and eventually end up in Clarence thirty years after his last battle, settling in town in 1808. He served as the Postmaster for the Town in 1816. The Postmaster was a very important job for the town, helping to get the only form of communication with the outside world to the pioneers of Clarence.

John Felton Sr. is claimed to be buried at the Shope Cemetery. He fought at the Battle of Saratoga, the turning point in the American Revolution. The French decided they would join the American cause to assist in defeating the British. Unfortunately, the war would rage on for another six years after the Battle of Saratoga. His gravestone has yet to be discovered. Several other Felton's are buried in the Shope Cemetery. He may have been buried within the only iron fence at the cemetery. There is room for two gravestones within the fenced area, but no gravestones. More investigation needs to be done to see who was buried within the fenced area.

Other known local legends include family members of the Ransoms, Hulls, Spoons and Horner's. It is believed that between 21-41 (+-) individuals are buried at the cemetery. Since there are several family names in this cemetery it is believed that it was a church cemetery and not a family plot. When Oneta Baker, the town's first historian, assessed the cemetery in the 1950's many of the gravestones were unrecognizable. Today only a few stones are still legible. The pictures were taken in the 1950s. It might be noted that when Oneta Baker became Town Historian only a few "old-timers" even knew of the cemetery's existence.

**Other People of Note:** Rosanna Miles died in 1838 at the age of 26. She lies next to her infant son, who died in 1837. She was married to Reverend Milo N. Miles. Her story reminds us of the hardships of life during the early 1800's on the frontier. Elijah Leach was the deacon in the first Baptist Church at Hunts Corners, who died June 11, 1841. William Spoor built and ran the Spoor's Hotel at Salt and Main Street in the Hollow around 1810. Lieutenant Sylvanus Felton was the son of John and Persis Rogers Felton. He was born Aug. 22, 1785 in Marlboro N.H. who died at the Battle of Fort Erie, August 28th, 1814 during the War of 1812, at the age of 29.

**Known Names Buried:** The town Assessor's office reports that 41 graves are located at the Shope Cemetery, but only around 20-30 gravestones exist. The list below is from several different accounts and lists found in the Historian's Office. This is by no means a complete or accurate list. Several names and dates may be miss-spelled or wrong. Please contact the Town Historian for any corrections. Joe McGreevy - [jmgreevy@clarence.ny.us](mailto:jmgreevy@clarence.ny.us)

## List of Buried At Shope:

- **Bell, Tiehita:** Wife of William. SM
- **Derrick, Ephraim:** b. Apr. 21, 1756. d. Sept 9(28), 1832, age 77(6) yrs. Revolutionary War Veteran, joining Dec. 1776 at the age of 19. Postmaster of Clarence 1816, married Elizabeth Gustine.

- **Felton, Jedidiah:** Feb. 2(2), 1773, d. Dec. 27, 1824, age 51 yrs. Had 2 daughters w/ 1st wife and 7 daughters with 2nd wife.
- **Felton, John Sr.:** b. Nov. 9, 1741, d. 1820 Revolutionary War Veteran
- **Felton, Levi:** b. Jul 22, 1776, d. Jun 16, 1813. Lt. Sylvanus, Fell at Fort Erie, Aug 28, 1814, age 29 yrs

**Felton, Lieut. Sylvanus:** b. Aug. 22, 1785, d. Aug. 27, 1814, age 28 yrs. Died serving his country in the War of 1812

- **Esan, Ben\*** - d. June 21, 1834, age 5 yrs, 38 ds., Son of George & Sarah Hoener

- **Felton, Sara Cole** - d. May 19, 1820, age 31 yrs, wife of Levi Felton

- **Gauner, George** - d. May 5, 18[58]

- **Guisse, Mary A.** - b. Mar. 6, 1835, d. Sept 14, 1836

- **Heiney, M/Henno Simon** - d. Aug 31, 1835, age 15 yrs 2 days

- **Horner, George** - d. May 5, 1832, age 42 yrs 88 days.

- **Horner, John** - d. Jan. 13/5, 1836

- \_\_\_\_\_, son of George, who d. Jan. 15, 1836

- **Hull, Eliza A.** - d. Feb 7, 1843, age 35 yrs., 8 months, 15 days.

- **Hull, Edmund Sq.** - d. Sept 16, 1852. Age 58 yrs

- **Hull, Laura** - d. Aug 28, 1834/7. Age 15/8 mos

- **Leach, Elijah** - d. June 11, 1841, age 57 yrs

- **McKelip, Jane** - d. Jan 10, 1836, age 38 yrs

- **Miles, Rosanna** - d. July 16, 1838, age 26 yrs

- **Miles, William Stanley** - d. Aug. 1837, 6 mos

- **Mall(tt)eson, Harriet Amelia\***, d. Mar 21(4), 1841, 1(7) year

- **Osgood\*** - b. Dec 2[9], 1810

- **Parker, Washburn** - d. June 23, 1830, age 33 yrs

- **Ransom, Archibald S.** - b. Aug. 31, 1828, d. Mar. 14, 1829

- **Ransom, Catherine, May** - 1836 14 mons.

- **Rascio, Joanna\*** - b. Dec 19, 1810, b. again 1830, d. 2 May, 183(4)9,

- **Sanb., Francis Emory\*** - d. Jun 20, 1839

- **Simon, Mayo** - d. 1825, age 15 yrs.

- **Simon, Sarah Steab\*** - b. 1823, 7 yrs

- **Stevens, Sarah** - d. Feb 8, 1830, age 7 wks.

- **Spors, William** - d. Sept 22, 1828, age 60 yrs



# **America 250 Events**

We are getting into full swing with our America 250 plans!

First, any monetary donations that come into the Museum for 2026 will go to Clarence American Legion Post 838 and also to another great local organization, WNY Heroes. We kicked this off at our March Program and we are overwhelmed already with the amount we collected!

Second, is a fun raffle! All you have to do is visit the Museum...and we all know, our visitors do not pay to come in - always free and open to the public...so yes, this is a free raffle! Come visit us on open hours, fill out a ticket with your name and phone number and drop it in the box. Each month we will pick four names to win the America250 challenge coins. You can enter as much as you want!

In November, we will take all the raffle tickets we have collected and pick 5 names to win an official White House Historical Association Christmas Ornament!

Third, are our great folders we have put together providing information on our Museum, The 200 year old Log Cabin, Mr. Greatbatch, our town, and some fun coloring sheets and puzzles - fun for any age!

## **Save the Dates**

Sunday June 14th  
Flag Day

Sunday July 12th  
Hot Dog Day

Sunday July 26th  
Weavers Guild of Buffalo

Sunday August 23rd  
WNY Heroes

## Membership Corner

*You can renew your membership in person or by mail!  
Simply download the application from our website and  
send it in!*

*We have different tiers to choose from:*

*Student Under 18—\$5*

*Individual—\$15*

*Couples—\$25*

*Family—\$30*

*Business—\$50*

*Individual Life Member—\$150*

*Membership renewal forms will be mailed in January  
each year!*

**We  
our  
MEMBERS!** 

# Wordsearch

## *Founding Fathers* Word Search

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid.  
Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

A	M	O	X	L	K	Y	M	E	E	W	D	B	E	O	Z	H	C	S	K	Z
N	K	R	O	U	A	B	Z	Y	E	B	K	P	M	Z	C	O	Z	M	O	A
U	D	S	R	W	U	A	N	Y	N	A	O	O	E	B	U	R	R	G	G	U
R	U	Z	T	T	F	H	Q	D	H	V	V	Y	J	N	M	E	S	N	M	E
M	M	X	E	M	H	R	N	J	U	T	Y	Z	Y	R	N	E	H	I	O	C
X	D	O	I	A	Z	A	N	Q	N	I	L	K	N	A	R	F	A	K	R	H
V	V	M	R	Z	M	I	O	P	A	D	N	E	S	N	B	V	A	R	R	A
N	B	R	U	R	Y	F	T	G	B	G	X	D	K	Q	A	S	U	G	I	S
Q	M	O	E	W	I	O	G	Y	B	W	U	N	R	K	D	S	S	F	S	E
D	B	H	I	U	J	S	N	D	H	K	L	P	O	R	H	D	Q	E	A	S
T	S	Q	I	I	E	L	I	P	S	A	D	A	M	S	B	W	Y	T	H	E
M	O	N	R	O	E	L	H	A	A	M	G	K	I	T	I	H	R	Z	A	Z
Y	G	B	N	N	L	A	S	A	P	R	Z	C	Z	B	I	D	Q	V	U	S
D	T	Y	B	O	H	P	A	B	L	M	D	O	J	T	A	E	A	K	F	D
O	I	K	R	K	R	J	W	F	V	R	C	C	D	X	Q	E	P	M	X	B
L	C	R	O	U	S	R	B	Q	V	O	T	N	G	J	P	A	I	N	E	D
Y	A	J	M	P	H	V	R	T	V	D	E	A	B	T	A	I	G	B	I	V
C	H	A	M	I	L	T	O	N	V	N	V	H	N	A	F	D	Y	F	M	Y
B	N	O	S	R	E	F	F	E	J	E	U	Z	C	D	X	D	A	V	D	R
C	K	H	D	H	X	L	J	S	K	Y	H	C	E	Y	E	N	F	M	K	S
E	E	L	L	F	A	L	W	I	T	H	E	R	S	P	O	O	N	G	S	E

BURR  
CARROLL  
CHASE  
FL LEE  
FRANKLIN  
G MORRIS  
HAMILTON  
HANCOCK  
HENRY

J ADAMS  
JAY  
JEFFERSON  
KING  
MADISON  
MONROE  
PAINE  
PENN  
R MORRIS

RH LEE  
RODNEY  
RUSH  
S ADAMS  
SHERMAN  
WASHINGTON  
WITHERSPOON  
WYTHE

# Crossword

## Us Constitution

### ACROSS →

- Confederate General
- Northern states that remained loyal
- Institution abolished by the Thirteenth Amendment
- Site of the first battle of the Civil War

### DOWN ↓

- Southern states that seceded
- First major battle of the Civil War
- Site of Confederate General Lee's surrender
- Union General and 18th President of the United States
- Western theater battle of the Civil War



72 YEARS • 1954 - 2026



## HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE TOWN OF CLARENCE

**Founded in 1954**

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Facebook: [Historical Society of the Town of Clarence](#)

Instagram: [clarencehistorymuseum](#)

### **“To collect, preserve, and share the history and heritage of the Town of Clarence”**

The Historical Society of the Town of Clarence Inc is formed for the following purposes:

- To identify, preserve, and display materials of historical significance of Clarence
- To encourage historical research, analysis, and study for the publication of historical papers, articles
- To educate the community through lectures, tours, online resources, school field trips and research opportunities



The Historical Society of the Town of Clarence deeply appreciates the support of the County of Erie, the Town of Clarence, our members and the community as a whole.

