

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

November 2020, Issue 290

COVID #5: Sylvia, Norton Hill, Turner Tables

Good early-mid November, Greenville Historians,

2020 is proving to be a full year, to put it mildly. Perhaps you journal-keepers might give us a retrospective in a couple months!

November has traditionally meant Sylvia Hasenkopf closing out our season with another fascinating program. Alas, the physical program cannot be held. Instead, Sylvia writes the front piece for this month, explaining her new project.

This month:

- *Sylvia - Porcupine Soup
- *more Turner Table
- *2021 calendar
- *Dave Dorpfeld retires
- *Claribel & Edna

In the News

Sylvia Hasenkopf

As a historian I have always been fascinated with newspapers. They are one of the few documents who help us gain a glimpse into the lives and times of those who have gone before us.

Newspapers in Greene County have changed dramatically since the publication of the Catskill Packet, Greene County's first newspaper. On August 6, 1792 the first edition of the Catskill Packet was printed by M. Croswell & Co. It was four pages long and was printed on rag paper with a yearly subscription of 10 shillings.

Rag paper, also known as cotton paper, is exactly what it implies. The paper was made using cotton from old clothing or cloth products as the primary material. Early newspapers often advertised for used rags which they wished to buy in order to make the paper for their publications.

Rags were cut into small bits and piec-



es and placed in a large water filled kettle. The rag water concoction was cooked until the pieces began to break apart, making a slurry of cellulose fibers. Wood-framed screens would be dipped into the slurry and lifted out with the water draining from the slurry. The wood screens were left to dry. As the cotton

slurry dried it left behind a rag paper, which would be used for letters, newspapers and documents of all kinds.

If you ever had the opportunity to look at a rag-made newspaper you will find a newspaper whose pages are still sturdy, with bright ink. Documents and newspapers made from rag paper have withstood the effects of time quite well.

By the mid-19th century the demand for paper outstripped the supply. An alternative source for cellulose fibers were sought and finally discovered. Wood pulp from trees became a plant-based source for cellulose fibers needed in the paper making process.

By the mid-19th century wood pulp supplanted cotton-based pulp as a source for paper. The wood pulp paper was not as sturdy as cotton-based paper, nor as easy to make. Mechanical, and later, chemical pulping was needed to separate the cellulose fibers in wood pulp from its wood casings.

The invention of paper making machines, which were vastly improved in the 1840s, ensured that wood pulp paper became the paper of choice for industry as well as households.

Today, newspapers are still made from wood pulp paper. However, technology is changing how people get their news, as large swathes of the reading public are switching to online versions of newspapers, magazines and books. Print newspapers are struggling to remain profitable as production and delivery costs soar.

Many readers of this column will recall that I was a weekly columnist for Andrea Macko's Greenville Pioneer newspaper from its very first issue in May 2009 until she sold the paper in the spring of 2019. I enjoyed writing for the paper and was sad to see Andrea exit the newspaper industry.

However, Andrea and I have decided to reenter the newspaper industry, this time as partners of a new, online only, newspaper, which would cover the towns of Cairo, Durham and Greenville. We named our paper Porcupine Soup.

Porcupine Soup is a community-based paper, which will report on news from our towns and of interest to our towns. It will be reporting news as it happens, rather than weekly or bi-weekly. It will also feature weekly columnists, such Dick Brooks (Whittling Away), Bob Beyfuss (Gardening Tips), Crystal Haring (Recipes from the Ranch) and yours truly. Sylvia Hasenkopf (Tracing your Roots in Greene County).

Other columnists will also be joining the paper – Jonathan Palmer, the archivist of the Vedder Research Library in Cox-sackie, NY will launch his weekly historical

column and columnists from the American Legion community will share issues important to our veterans in the Veterans Connection column.

We will cover school board meetings, town meetings, and planning board meetings, in our tri-towns all in an effort to keep our readers informed about decisions made in local government that will affect the lives of our families. We also have a Police Blotter Page, an Obituaries Page, a Community Calendar and an Old News Page.

This paper will be **FREE** to everyone. That's right, there are no subscription costs.

I find it very rewarding to not only write about history, but also to be a part of making history. Porcupine Soup will be Greene County's first online only newspaper. I invite you join us when we launch Greene County's newest community paper, Porcupine Soup, on Small Business Saturday, November 28, 2020.

Notes:

***Thank you to contributors: Sylvia, Dave, Turner Table connections

***Congratulations, Sylvia & Andrea, on a project that holds so much promise.

***Mail subscribers to the newsletter never saw a April or May edition because of canceled meetings. And I was dithering trying to make sense of the year's prospects. Thus, the 'Covid' newsletter was born. And because I do not need programs to run a newsletter, I wish to continue newsletters into December and January, something usually not done. And it **fixes a problem** for me: the two missed issues will be made up by these two new issues. So, for you mail subscribers, the expiration date on your mailing address is still accurate.

***A recent phone call with John Earl ended with John promising to attempt to do a Shepard's project. More details as they unfold.

One Door Closes and...

Don Teator

One of my small pleasures of life is to have shared Greene County local history with the Greene County Historian. As a younger historian, I treasured my time with Ray Beecher. And for the last eleven years, I have had the pleasure and privilege of knowing and sharing with Dave Dorpfeld. He had presented a few times for the GLHG group, and I have enjoyed Dave's weekly columns in the Daily Mail. And posting on Facebook. And regional historians' meetings. Thank you, Dave, for being a worthy companion in the local history world.

Dave has announced his retirement and I asked Dave for one last piece for the Greenville Local History Group....

Calendar Notes

The GLHG 2021 calendar is available for another month, two at the most. Thank you if you have helped nudge us closer to breaking even.

The calendars are available at Kelly's, GNH, and Tops. Despite the disadvantage of having no meetings to sell or publicize, we seem to be on course to break even—our usual goal. Kelly's, with Quinn and Marty providing their services, is the lightning rod of sales. Although every sale counts, over half the sales have come at Kelly's. And a thank you, Quinn and Marty.

And if you can, when you stop by any or all of these establishments, please thank the owner, manager, or service counter for collaborating with GLHG. It means a lot for them to know their efforts are useful and appreciated.

I recently looked over the 30+ years of calendars (26 calendars) to assess what we show, what themes are addressed, and, of course, how well each calendar stands as a historical document. I cannot help but notice a drift from the early calendars that show mostly older photos to the current alignment of blending new and old. I think that is an attempt to recognize that we, too, are local history and to acknowledge it as it happens.

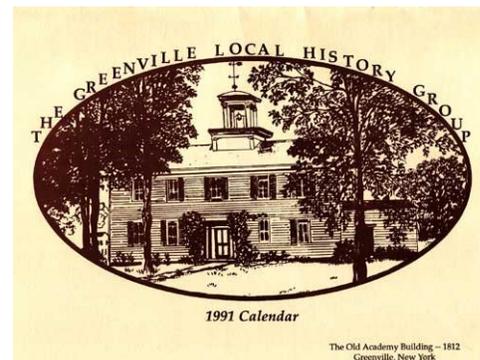
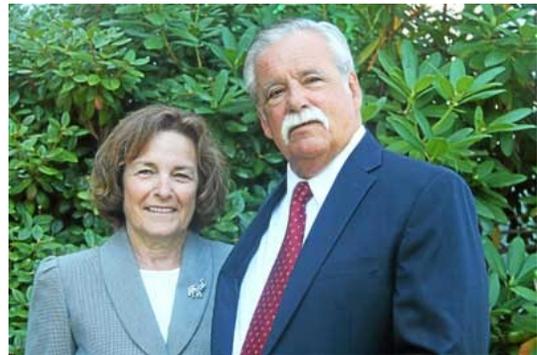
Creating the calendar has a method to its madness. The calendar often has a church, a school photo, a renovation project, a mixing of areas of town (more successful in earlier

Dear Members of the GLHG:

As Kenny Rogers sang "You gotta know when to hold'em, know when to fold'em, know when when to walk away and know when to run." After eleven years as Greene County Historian, I have decided to step aside and give someone else the opportunity to fill the position. I have really enjoyed the job, but there are other things I want to do now. I have recommended someone else for the position and I hope the legislature will approve. I will continue to stay involved with the local history community and mentor my successor. I will also keep abreast of the activities of the GLHG and hope to join you folks when I can.

David Dorpfeld

Greene County Historian



years). Recent years will note the significance of an ordinary event that we think might be more significant at a later date. And, of course, the recognition on the inside back cover has become the town's most consistent recognizer of people in town who have made a difference.

I am curious. Does anyone have all the calendars? If you do, you have 1991-2005, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014-2021. And congratulations.

The 1991 calendar cover is shown.

Norton Hill at the Bicentennial

One of the seldom seen gems in the Historian's Files is a 1976 Bicentennial project.

As I was told, sisters Edna Ingalls Adams and Claribel Ingalls Gardiner (siblings to Walter & Buddy), opining that the Town of Greenville seemed to be doing not enough for the Bicentennial in 1976, created their own project.

Sketching a map of the Norton Hill area, they filled in symbols marking houses, numbering them. They created a corresponding list, linking the numbers to the owner or resident of 1976. Photos are attached.

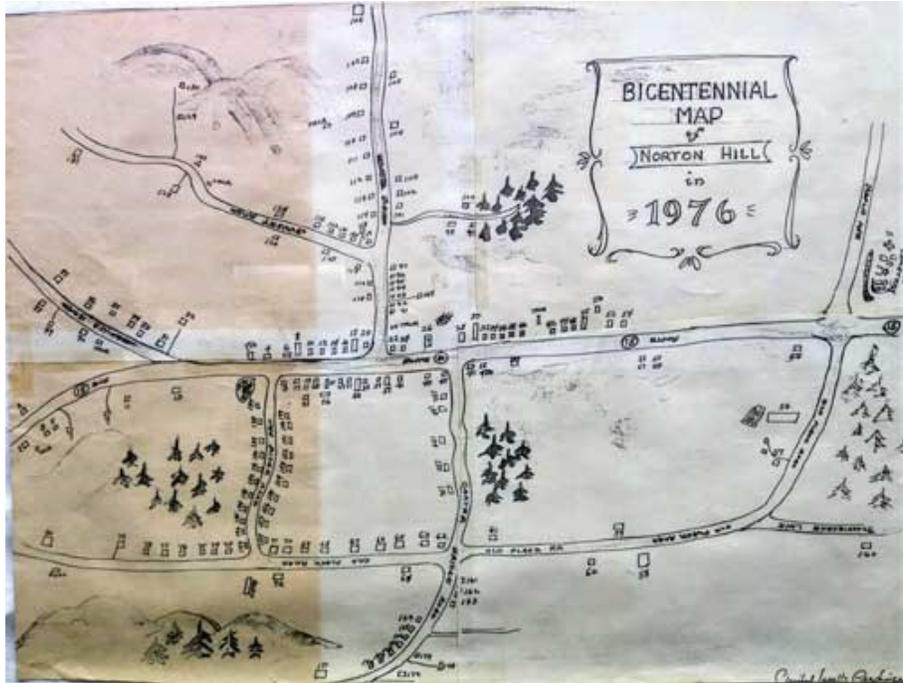
This would have been quite a satisfactory project if it had stopped there.

Next, Claribel and Edna hired a local youngster (Don Naughton, I believe) to take black and white photos of the 20-30 structures they indicated. Then, they did their own research, usually asking the owners or asking others who knew information about the house and then printing their findings on a half-sheet of paper to accompany the photo. Placed in a black binder, it immediately became a local history resource for future use.

With the passing of the two of them, Claribel's husband Len contributed the project in 2002 to the Historian's Files.

The map and list survive on a framed 2' x 3' poster board. The photo album was taken apart to fit the Norton Hill street-by-street photo albums I had created. Their pages are credited.

Perhaps this might be an inspiration to anyone else to attempt a similar project for some part of the town.



Turner Table Reaction

The October newsletter featured a locally crafted table that was produced in the mid-1800s. Gail Banker had detailed the whereabouts of about twenty of them but the list was almost thirty years old, with a minor handwritten update.

So, left with that list, I hoped that traces of knowledge and memory would confirm her letter.

Wow!

The reaction emails were quick, personal, and confirmative. I will share some of the results. One finding I enjoyed was the common practice of tacking a note underneath the table explaining its history and/or origin. (see Mike Knott below)

from **Barbara Stevens**

... I am excited to say that I have a Turner table with six leaves. ... So fun to see the locations of the others! Mom (like Jerry Ingalls) really appreciated the local connection and she collected four. ... Just recently I asked Anita if she could remember the story of the maker of the tables. I thought I remembered that it was Grandpa Ellis's father but Phil clarifies that it was his grandfather! I have forwarded your letter to Adrienne

Sparks, daughter of Sharon Daly Carr. Sharon was Laura's best friend and we think that she had a Turner Table. ... We have so many memories that involve life with these tables. Meals, games, cards...I use mine every day now as a desk.

.... Marla, Anita and I will put our heads together about where they came from. The Durham Auction might have been a source. Something rings a really distant bell about a connection between Mrs. Adriance's antiques shop in Greenville (before the move to the Blue Churn in SW) and Sharon's table. We'll work on it. I'll clear off my table tomorrow and take a picture. It's the best work space ever.

from **Ramona Ellis Fawkes**

I have my dad's Turner table - ...

from **Melinda Mullen**

When I married, my grandparents gave me their Turner Table. They were Lewis and Thelma Rundell (you may have listed them as Bell). Lewis's parents ran the boarding house Mirror View Farm. I remember they had theirs in the basement and had built in a cabinet under a shelf to store the leaves. I have a photo of it being used for Christmas dinner at the farm house I grew up



in. It took up most of the living room. I keep mine as a side table in my dining room and pull it out for big family dinners.

from **Lew Knott**

(paraphrased from interview) Grandparents Felter [big white farmhouse, Rt 32 south of Hill Street, just past creek passing under road, west side] had it in wood house, eight leaves; did not realize importance of it then; it went to sister Ralene; currently, my son Mike has it

from **Mike Knott**

[dt: Mike sent several photos, including two that were handwritten notes attached to table, possibly from Felter time] Text on one note reads:

David Turner - he was Roy Ellis grandfather - Scott Ellis's great-great-grandfather - Phil Ellis's great-great-great-grandfather - he made 170 tables - of black walnut wood

--text on second note:

This table was built by David Turner about a hundred years ago. He lived on Maple Avenue in a home that he built now occupied by Augustine - according to Roy Ellis he built about 170 extension tables. He was a grandfather of Leroy Ellis, the great-grandfather of Scott M Ellis and the great-great-grandfather of Philip T Ellis. This table was refinished by Darius Rundell.

from **Marla Stevens**

... Isn't it amazing to consider how we are all connected by this table?! How many of us have shared meals with many or few. Family, friends, holidays, celebrations. Played games, put puzzles together. Done our income taxes, joined zoom groups. I have 5 1/2 leaves. Not sure how that partial leaf got in the mix. My mother treasured history. Stories.

from **Paige Ingalls**

[Paige's lengthy response is heavily condensed for this issue; perhaps it can be used in its entirety in the next issue]

... When I was growing up,... my parents, Gerald and Annella Ingalls, my sisters, Edna and Stephanie, and I had supper together every night. We ate at the big oblong Turner table in our dining room ... when it was completely opened up, it accommodated from twelve to fourteen people... 2. We believe our mother purchased the Turner table that now sits in our dining room sometime in the 1970s... This table is smaller, oval in shape, more to scale for the room, and "fancier," or at least less utilitarian appearing, than the table described above... 3. The third Turner table our family possesses was given to me by my great uncle Scott M. Ellis.

[dt: a note reads: This table was built by David Turner who built and lived in a large home on Maple Avenue, now occupied by Augstein. According to his grandson, Le Roy Ellis, he built about 170 extension tables of various lengths. This table is probably 100 years old. This table is given to Paige Ingalls by Philip T. Ellis, a great, great grandson of David Turner. December 21, 1974.

from **Denise Rose Presby**

I *MAY* have one of the Turner tables. This table came from Alberta Lodge. It was probably part of the furniture that was left with the house when my grandparents bought Alberta. The table was last used in the Hay Loft and would comfortably seat 8 people. When my grandparents sold the place this was some of the furniture that was retained by my family. When this table is opened (with leaves made by my husband out of plywood) I can seat 20 at the table. We too have had casters put under the legs so we can fit our legs under the table. [dt: Denise has another table that might be a Turner table.]