

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

July 2026, Issue 347

Flip's Canvas #7—South, Part 1 of 2

A mid-80s day welcomed the almost fifty attendees of the July program, fortunately not having to face the 95 degrees predicted for the following day. Those attending: Bette Welter, Lew Knott, Stephanie Krasny, Cathie & George Stock, Eileen & Ed Volmar, John Earl, Stewart Wagner, Paul Augstein, Barbara Walter & Bob Reithner, Linda Ashe, Barbara & Flip Flach, Tom Sweeney, Anne Foster, Susan Cunningham, Gail NicholSEN, Dennis Mower, Roland Reissig, Doris Philipp,

Maryann Morrison, Ellen Huemmer, Kenneth Hilland, Rachel Ceasar, Richard Ceasar, Curt Cunningham, Margaret Donohue, A* Davis, Elaine & Toby Nevins, Mary Lou Nahas, Wayne Myhre, Linda Berger, Frank Potter, Stephanie Ingalls, Christine Mickelsen, Don Teator, and another handful that escaped detection for this newsletter! A thank you to the several volunteers for relaying fifteen chairs from and back to the small community room.

Flip's Greenville Canvas

The size of the audience may have had something to do with the program.

Flip Flach continued his memory trip: An Extended Village Canvas: a presentation of memories of "ex-buildings, ex-businesses, ex-entrepreneurs" that graced and inhabited the roadways a half-mile or more from the Four Corners of Greenville. It is an idea that has served him and the group so well.

Although we call it Flip's program, he has been gracious enough to invite any of us to add memories or to add sites and people to the discussion. Flip admitted to not knowing the south side of town as well as the others and thus the handful of volunteer contributors was most welcome. Just as we had Jack Ver Planck for Norton Hill, and Bill Quackenbush and Joyce Chase for east Main Street, it was these others who added more meaning to this evening. Those names will be mentioned as we come to their specialty.

I would remind the reader that a name I attach to a house can be different from your name for that house. Our life experiences leave indelible marks that can be impossible to replace cleanly. I will remind you of that when we get to Lake Barbara.

And so we started Flip Flach's Part VII of the Canvas series. After two programs for the west entrance to Greenville and two more from the north and two more from the east, the southward direction beckoned. Rt 32's time had come. The first issue for Flip to settle was where to start. Even Flip realized that unlike the other three directions, starting from the southern border of town was the longest piece of road. And Freehold lies in the way. Flip thought I should do Freehold in the near future. After I agreed, we looked for the program's starting point. The question was how far south would Flip claim is Greenville. We both agreed to start at Carlsen's Gallery even if it will be part of Freehold when Freehold is presented.



Except. Except that the first slide showed an array of buildings, looking much like a resort which the slide suggested was “Carlsen’s.” A recent calendar page showed this array, with a resort holding over 100 guests occupying this spot. The postcard photo in this newsletter shows the Nilsson House of the 1950s. Earlier history included the Oakwood, one of the largest hotels in town, and then Raffo Villa which advertised itself as the largest Italian American boarding house in the Catskills in the 1920s and into the 1940s.

The postcard showed the annex, now shielded by trees on the ridge and owned by Jim Tyrrell. Today, two athletic courts are still visible, and the swimming pool is filled

in. The main house burned more than a quarter century ago in an arson spree.

In the 1960s, a block building was built and utilized by the resort occupants – Conservative Baptist. Today, it houses Carlsen’s Galley (see the scan of the program slide, Russ and Abby shown.)

Continuing northward, on the left side, there is a long driveway that a few noted as the Mitchell driveway, with some friendly memories of the Mitchell family. On the right side are a couple houses straddling Birch Hill Rd, a short dead-end road whose name has meaning attached to the Birch Hill business but whose details are somewhat forgotten.



On the left is an advertising sign for generators, owned, I believe by Sandy Garden. That is followed two modulars, I believe. Just after that is the Wilber Cemetery, enclosed by a short stone wall and maintained by the Town of Greenville. Wilber is the surname of several in that cemetery.

On the other side of the road, a mobile home sits back off the road. Some remembered it as the year-round yard sale place. It was the impetus for the Town to enact a yard-sale ordinance.

A long slope downward leads to a small stream. Many of us remember the historical marker that used to sit there and then replaced by a Russell Lewis Eagle Scout project. Only a few years ago, Garth Bryant's research showed it was misplaced and it was relocated to its proper places. More on that when we get there (a mile away!). Climbing northward, on the left, are three houses close together. I have heard they were "sister" houses, built by the same family. If anyone can tell me more, please do so.

On the right is a long stretch of natural brush before one comes to the Plattekill Rd corner. However, a slide in the program show the house, a nice respectable small-medium country home, known by some as the Rose house (not Bob or Jeannette). It was torched in one of the recent arson spree (1990s?).

The second notable stop on today's journey is the business across from Plattekill Rd – Happy Days Resort, as some of us remember. More recently, it was JP North. Today, according to the sign – Green Mountain North Farm.

Its earliest incarnation I have on record is when it was Haut's Happy Days Bavarian Garden. It seemed it took guests as a resort would do but it also advertised as a restaurant and a bar (with a lengthy drink menu).

Between "Happy Days" and 32-West intersection are a dozen houses, most of which we

knew little about. Flip did point out Coach MacTavish's house, Coach being a visible element of the GCS Community. Flip remembered Mac yelling, at soccer games, Get To It, meaning to hustle and get to the ball. Mac's neighboring house seems to have been built at the same time by the same person, both houses looking so similar.

Just before Mac's house, on the east side of the road, is a driveway that no one would notice, except in the 1970s there was a photographer, Ben Koenig, who had many of his photos reproduced for the local papers. I still used them for local history programs and even calendars.

Finally, we arrived at the West Rd intersection. Note was made of the number of accidents usually caused by a car not stopping or not able to see the Rt 32 traffic from West Road, with a recent Facebook posing a good example. The house on the corner was noted as the one selling 55 gallon drums (or, burning barrels, as some might say).

An odd-shaped building, looking more like a façade, occupies the northeast corner of these four corners. According to one audience observation, it was meant to be a used car office. We agreed it was a less than ideal spot.

The next establishment, on the right, is now an empty looking house but in the latter part of the 20th century the Nugent family made excellent pizzas and some of the best marinara sauce at John's Pizzeria. Across the street is a lone building that was the garage for the Mary Pizzo house, that Mary of Mary's Restaurant fame.

A Biskupich house lies just past on the left. Across the street on the right, Wayne Myrhe, and me too, remembered that Hilda Bosch lived there after moving off the farm on West Rd (current Will Bardel farm).

Down the hill we go and cross the nameless creek, a tributary of the Basic Creek. However, it is the one that wanders through Green-



heads toward Greenville, almost touching the shadow of the large farm barn to the left. main photo courtesy of Bill Biskupich.

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As I am wont to say, I wish we had more time. Each of our past resorts deserve a newsletter article or even a chapter in a book.

Further up the road, on the left, is Bill

ville and plays footsies with Lake Barbara/Carelas Lake (more on that later).

Garth Bryant would discover this was the stream large enough to be able to be dammed and put a sawmill on, just like the historical marker says, now that it has been moved from its previous spot a mile down the road.

We have entered Better Days territory and the caption in the 2026 calendar, offering insight to a b&w photo which I have replaced with the color photo in this newsletter:

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According to a 1937 booklet, the Soltys family operated a farm and inn that was located on SR 32 about a mile south of Greenville's Four Corners. In 1945, Paul and Eleanor Biskupich, with sons Joe, Paul Jr, and Bill in tow, bought the farm, changing the name to Better Days Farm. They continued the farm, restaurant, bar, and grill. A capacity of 35 guests soon grew to 75 with the addition of a motel unit. A new filtered pool, seen in the aerial photo, also enhanced accommodations. Paul died in 1963, leaving Eleanor to continue the business. In 1986, the resort was sold, with a long tenure as Hollowbrook Lodge with the Kelliher family. In 2005, current owners Jim and Sharon Molloy (inset) purchased the property and have operated the Hollowbrook Inn and Restaurant for the past twenty years. The aerial (taken before the motel units were built) shows the resort grounds, all east (rightward, in the photo) of State Rt 32. In the lower left of the aerial, a single car

Biskupich's house. I discovered a few years ago that a small cemetery lies a couple hundred feet behind the house, a cemetery I had not known about before.

Another house past brought memories of the Lee family in the 1960s.

And then we entered the Pete Carelas realm. Offering good material this evening was Mary Ann Morrison and especially Pete's granddaughter Ellen Huemmer. I asked Ellen later if she could gather the forces to write the Pete Carelas book.

Pete Carelas was responsible for or had a hand in: the slaughterhouse, the meatcutter shop, Carelas' Resort, Carelas' Restaurant, the drive-in, Carelas Lake, and few other fillers. Shame to say, many people in Greenville have never heard of Pete Carelas. And I barely make a dent here.

Just past the Lee house is a driveway, with a sign: Greenville Meat Packing. This was a Pete creation sixty years ago or so, with a slaughterhouse back there, with a farm that wound behind the hill.

Up the road a little was a white block building, the one I used on Facebook to tease old memories. That was the meat cutting store, with memories told by Mary Ann Morrison of her dad Gene Morrison when he ran it. Then there was Steve's that took over and then it sat vacant until Mountain View Brasserie took over under the enterprising eye of Terry and Ben Buel, and that is another chapter of a book that will have to be told some year to come.

Top of "Carelas Lake", 1930s perhaps; Google map of Lake Barbara



see Lake
discussion below

Next door is the Greene County Horseshoe Supply that began as Pete Carelas' restaurant and bar, used often for community functions. It has been Fireside, it has been Marandy's, it has been a few other incarnations. Part of Pete's book, I hope.

Up the road a few hundred feet was a resort – Carelas Farm, or Carelas Lake Hotel, or, still in the family, Youngs' Worldtop Acres. My notes say it started off able to hold 75 guests and later up to 175 guests. Like all the other resorts in town, it was its own little world. One photo showed guests standing on the edge of Carelas Lake looking up to the hill where Rt 32 ran.

First, the main house sat vacant too long and was either burned or razed. The kitchen/dining room area that had been built into apartments recently burned and now sits in a pile of ashes.

Across the street sits an icon of Greenville – the Drive-In. And it should be another chapter in the Carelas book. (Am I applying enough pressure yet?) A May 2025 calendar caption says: "The Drive-In first opened in 1959 under the ownership of Pete Carelas and family. In 1988, a group of eleven community members assumed control and kept the Drive-In open into the new century."

Bordering the drive-in northern edge is its ticket booth. Beside that sits another building,

like a shed, with a driveway between them. Those in the know know it is Barbara and Bob's driveway back to their house in the cup of the U shape of the lake, now known as Lake Barbara.

A map and a discussion ensued about the creation of the lake and its water supply. Flip, and I too, had heard from many sources that the water sources that come into that area do NOT empty into the lake. This includes the stream that comes from town. The maps seem to contradict that. Lucky for us, Barbara Walter and Bob Reithner were present and Bob explained how the old-timers were telling the truth.

The short answer: the lake is filled by several springs, with all other water sources flowing around the pond. Eventually, the outflow from the Lake and the streams flowing around the lake curve around Hollowbrook, past the historical marker, through the sawmill pond and meet up in the Basic just above the former Spohler's Elm Grove (another resort now out of existence for over forty years; I worked there for its last fourteen years.)

Just uphill is a parking lot for Rich's Floor Covering (as it was known when it started) and today houses one or two offices depending on the year. Some fondly remembered Bohne's Florist. It seems Bob Walenta has been there a long time. And I regret not recording every time a business moved out and

Winter View on Rt 32 from front of Felter house looking toward Hill Street intersection



then another replaced.

Just uphill lies Greene County Power Equipment, with many of us doing business with them (with the former John Bensen Greenville Saw, now Town Line). One of Deb's aerial photos showed the building under construction. That is interesting in its own right but even more interesting was the display of buildings across the street, as we tried to figure out what was what.

At the top of the hill (excuse me, but I can hear Professor Titus interjecting that it is a drumlin, as he has explained to us in past programs) lies a piece of road with about ten house, a section of Rt 32 that deserves more attention but our old-timer hats have looked past the "newcomers." I will leave it at that and hope someone can tell more in an article for the newsletter.

Sliding down Carelas Hill, one can see the south edge of Greenville hamlet. The first driveway to the right, with the house lying almost directly under the peak of the hill, is the "Carelas" house although many of us have known other families. The Pete Connection is that son Billy's wife ran a resort,

Birch Hollow, for some years, and some of us knew the daughters who attended GCS in the 1960s (me, being one of them). Some year, Birch Hollow will be the resort on one of our calendar pages. For the record, Pete never lived there.

Across the street is a stately house that sits supremely on a rise with a nice view across the wetland area. Knowles is the name associated with the house, some remembered Powell, and a few others popped up.

On the same side of the road are two more houses/modular; no one seemed to know much about them. Then came the Virano house, and it still is from what we knew this evening. Don showed a brochure that advertised staying at the Delafield House, operated by Mrs H. Virano. Why Delafield was not recalled.

And then we got into Lew Knott territory. Lew's grandfather Millard Felter moved into the house in the 1930s and was active in the community. Photos/views of/from this house have graced a few local history calendars. Today's occupants were not mentioned but they have kept a tidy property and sheep field

that abuts the creek coming from the pond before crossing under the road toward, but not in, Lake Barbara. Lew will have to tell more sometime.

On the other side of the road, just to catch up, continuing past the Carelas house is the Sunoco Service Station that Flip's grandfather Schwebler operated. Frank Tiberi was there, Jerry Smith (not our Jerry!) was there, and it has sat semi-vacant for years although I hear there is activity coming.

Next to the garage was the residence for the garage owners, a smallish house. Just past is another building of similar size and use. I think we remember that as Frank Tiberi's liquor store back more than a half-century. Past this house are two long units, a history of which should be written down. Finally, there is the last house before the stream crosses under Rt 32

Practically imperceptible to many motorists but a bridge/culvert crosses over the stream that has come from the Greenville pond and before that in back of the shopping mall. The first house on the left is the Reinhardt house, recently sold several years ago to the proprietors of the second-hand shop that occupies the garage.

The former Methodist Church is next but we will save that for Flip's continuation into town come October. Instead, the corner of Hill Street beckons.

Standing on Rt 32, we face Hill Street. Six houses line the left, six line the right. I will number them accordingly – 1-6 going up, 7-12 coming back down. Again, Flip confessed to knowing little, as did I until I talked to some good sources. First is George (and Cathie Wolf) Stock who live in #6, the top of Hill Street, north side. Another good source was Carol Adriance Barger who lived near the top of Hill Street on the south side (house #8). And others pitched in, like Lew Knott, Wayne Myhre, and a couple others.

I will jot names that were mentioned by my notes, George, and/or Carol.

1. bottom of hill, left (north side)

Dan Elsasser now, although the garage seems to be active, the house not so much.

Other names:

Todd & Jack Mcguire – involved horses, and with Harry Adriance. probably renters, not owners.

2. A hundred feet past #1. Carol remembers Joan "Kanshaw", a friend, cannot remember parents. On current tax map – Lynn Norbury. A marshy stream flows between this house and the next house as the hill starts climbing.

3. Carol remembers the parents of Aunt Ella Powell, maiden name Tryon. George remembered Keith Smith and John Wienlich (a chef)

4. Halfway up the hill on the left: a person named Clark. Current tax map: David & Amber Rich.

5. Near the top, just before George's house: Carol remembered Helen Brown's mother-in-law; George remembered Larry & Minnie Barnes, a George (Irish name), and Dean Talarico.

6. top of Hill Street north side

George and Cathie Stock have lived here since 1984. They remember Marie Runge, an aunt of George; and Dennis Statham; and Curt Cunningham. Carol remember a Luella Elsbury.

top of Hill Street south side, working our way down the hill

7. This is either a replacement or a major upgrade to the house that was there. Carol remembers Ernest & Minnie Gardner, and then Irene (Gardner) & Ed Tompkins with daughter Cindy. Carol remembered a Reinecke and a Paula Geel. Carol mentioned this house is accessed from Rt 81 and not a true Hill Street house! (point taken!)

8. Carol grew up in the house “under” the corner house. Harry & Mildred (Powell) Adriance lived there from at least 1941 (Carol’s birth) until 2020. Today, Stephanie Krasny (present at meeting) lives there.

9. The next small-ish house, Carol remembers, was that of Rocio Velie & wife, and then their daughter. George remembered the Scanlon family of Tony & Mary and four girls, and then Hilland.

On the side of the house is a long driveway that goes back to a residence (Dillen?) and a large storage building allegedly housing sporty cars. (Not counted as one of the Hill Street numbered house.)

10 A nice Victorian house sits on the upper middle of the hill. Carol remembered the Randall Cutler family. Known better as Cutty, he ran the post office and Stevens Store. Carol was friends with daughter Linda. The distance for bus pick-up ran between their house, Linda could use the bus, Carol was too far, so Linda would walk to Carol’s and be driven to school with Carol! George remembered the Olmsteads.

11. The next to last house on the right side coming down the hill was remembered as Mahoney – Dan & Mary. And I thought someone in the audience (Wayne? might have mentioned the Klobs; that or the next house up)

Between this house and the corner house, just when the hill has flattened, there is a new structure, part deck, part engine. Some of you know it is the Town of Greenville’s pumping station for sewage to run uphill to the sewage treatment center. Not pretty but darn important.

bottom of Hill Street, south side

12. Today, the house has been lived in by Angie Mauriello (Elsasser) for a number of years. Carol remembered sisters Hattie & Zillah Stevens, with uncle Nip Burgess renting a room. George & Cathie remembered Benigno.

As much as was remembered, I am struck by how little we remember about our street co-inhabitants. Each house, whether on Hill Street, or elsewhere in the Town of Greenville, could stand a bunch more documentation.

When asked about memories about Hill Street, Carol mentioned sleigh riding, that their street was not plowed often and they had a great sleigh riding hill. The goal was to ride into South Street (Rt 32) but it never happened from what she remembered.

And thus concluded this segment of Flip’s memory trip, even if most of it were others’ memories.

Flip, thank you for providing another chance to share memories.

Notes:

++Thank you, Stephanie and Christine for yet another worthy round of light refreshments.

++Remember: Music in the Park, Tuesday evenings, 6-7:30. Classic small town America.

Two passings happened this past month

**Jack VerPlanck was the holder of so many Norton Hill memories. His obit tells more of his story. So long, Jack.

**Ruth Tompkins was never a recipient of the GLHG newsletter but she cared so much about our community, and any community she was part of. Again, her obit tells more of her story.

Lillian Joy Scrapbooks

August 10 meeting: Joyce Chase and I will share parts of the story of the Lillian Joy Scrapbooks, a fifteen volume collection given to the Town Historian before I became the historian. Joyce is a granddaughter Lillian and will share the personal side. I will take the historian’s perspective about the meaning of her collection.