



Volume 31, Issue 2

THE TIMES *of Old Austerlitz*

the quarterly newsletter of the Austerlitz Historical Society

“A Prayer in Spring”

by Robert Frost

Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers
today;
And give us not to think so far away
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
All simply in the springing of the year.

Oh give us pleasure in the orchard
white,
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by
night;
And make us happy in the happy bees,
The swarm dilating round the perfect
trees.



April 18th - My view of the Morey Devereaux House
as I arrived for work.
Let us rejoice for the gifts to come !

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Michelle Lagonia

Presidents Message Spring 2018

Austerlitz will soon be celebrating its Bicentennial. A celebration has been planned to mark this event that all are welcome to attend or participate in. If you have a great idea for a float or would like to volunteer in some capacity, the Bicentennial Committee would love to hear from you. Please be sure to come out on the weekend of June 9th and 10th. There will be a parade, food, a dedication of the new town hall, house tours in both Spencertown and Austerlitz and a vintage car show.

Tom Moreland’s much anticipated book on the old houses of Austerlitz will be available for purchase that weekend. We are eagerly awaiting delivery. We look forward to seeing you there.

We are also gearing up for our busy season. The Blueberry Committee is meeting to plan for this year’s Festival. Last year’s was a huge success and we are hoping for a repeat performance. As always, volunteers are welcome.



THE VIEW FROM OLD AUSTERLITZ

Anne Cipkowski, Director

In our endeavor to reach out into our community, The Austerlitz Historical Society is inviting appropriate groups to meet and work on our site. We have some exciting activities planned in the Morey Devereaux House. The Berkshire Hills and Dales Spinning Guild will be coming together to spin and work with yarn on May 1st in the Morey Devereaux building. Future dates will be advertised and open to the public.

Also in the works: Fly tying at the Austerlitz Historical Society -when a group of local fly fishermen will meet here and work on the craft of fly tying. Dates and times will be advertised . The public is welcome to observe.

Do you have any ideas? We’d love to hear them. Please don’t hesitate to call Anne at 518-392-0062 or e-mail me at admin@oldausterlitz.org.



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OFFICERS & TRUSEES

Michelle Lagonia	<i>President</i>
Tony Cashen	<i>Vice President</i>
Margaret Hover	<i>Secretary</i>
Kristin Davis	<i>Treasurer</i>
Royson Carney	Tom Moreland
Denise Dunne	Lynne O’Connell
Rupert Fennell	Phil Palladino
Robert Herron	Donna Peterson
Nancy Kern	Michael Rebic
Jane Magee	Jere Wrightsman
Connie Mondel	
<i>Robert Herron</i>	<i>Special Advisor</i>
<i>Anne Cipkowski</i>	<i>Director & Editor</i>

AUSTERLITZ HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to preserve, protect and interpret the history of Austerlitz. Our efforts will be devoted to safeguarding our heritage, fostering civic pride, and promoting the Town’s historic resources.



UPCOMING EVENTS

★QUARTERLY PRESENTATIONS★

2-4pm in the Harvey House unless otherwise noted

February 18th- Austerlitz in 2018 & Plans for the 2018 Bicentennial Celebration

May 6th - "Bells, Bells, Bells: An Enduring Legacy from the Greater Troy Area, 1808-1952"

August 19th - Presentation Topic and Location TBD

All AHS Membership meetings are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change. Refreshments served.

Bicentennial Celebration

By Jere Wrightsman

Plans are nearly complete for the June 9-10 Town of Austerlitz Bicentennial Celebration!

Saturday activities will kick off with a bell ringing before the parade. The parade will form along Route 7 and begin at noon with marchers moving down Route 203, around the green to the new town hall. The new town hall will be dedicated and short speeches will be offered. The parade will have fire trucks, bands, floats, unicyclists, wagons, and other entertainment. The Spencertown Academy and St. Peter's Presbyterian Church will be open with historical displays. There will be hot dogs, and burgers at the Town Park as well as music. A recognition of Revolutionary War veterans is also planned.

Mugs and T-shirts emblazoned with the new town seal will be available for purchase. Be sure and bring a stamped envelope and get a cancellation recognizing 1818-2018 Bicentennial.

The newly published book-*Old Houses of Austerlitz* will be available for purchase. Other activities include house tours of homes from the book- *Old Houses of Austerlitz* and recognition of the descendants of early settlers. Tours will be held in Spencertown on Saturday and Austerlitz on Sunday.

Sunday will have historic exhibits at Old Austerlitz and an old car show at the Austerlitz Fire House along with hamburgers and hot dogs provided by the fire company.

Mud Season

Austerlitz clay soil plus water
makes Austerlitz mud!



Historical but not Austerlitz

It's that time of year when driving unpaved roads coats cars and no matter how many times we wash them or how careful we are, the mud can get on us too. People may not believe this; it used to be much worse. My grandfather, Frank Wambach, was born in Austerlitz in 1885 and told me that in horse and buggy days the mud could suck the iron shoes right off the horses' hooves. I can attest to this happening to our saddle horses which was an expensive occurrence even 50 years ago.

When I was a child of about 5, we were warned not to play in deep mud. Naturally, as the oldest child, I convinced my two younger sisters that nothing would happen and to just follow me. We put on our little rubber boots and off we went just east of the barn and into the muddy farm road. The mud was about 10 in. We went up to nearly the tops of our boots and we got stuck. We tried and tried to no avail, and it was too cold to pull out our feet and go home barefoot. Finally we started yelling as loud as we could and our father came out of the barn and pulled us out. He was pretty upset and as the ringleader I remember getting spanked, a perfectly reasonable punishment back then.

My riding on local roads started about that time too. My father had to take ours and several other neighboring farms' cans of milk up to the Borden Plant just south of Chatham. He often took me with him and the spring trips could be wild. We would slow down while he looked at the quagmire ahead, and taught me his strategies to get the loaded truck through. We rode the tops of ruts, went to either side of the road, sometimes off the road, sometimes speeding up and always got through. Thankfully our roads are now ditched, raised, and maintained, even if they still get a light coating of mud. The good part of growing up here is that I now know how to drive through almost anything, and will never wade into the mud in rubber boots.

The Society's New Book: "The Old Houses of Austerlitz"

Coincident with the bicentennial weekend, the Society will be releasing its new book.

The Old Houses of Austerlitz The History and Early Architecture of a Rural New York Town

This is a big book about a small town. Six years in the making, it is 396 pages, in color, and includes:

a 40 page history of the town, from the 1750s to the present, by Town Historian Tom Moreland;

a 25 page monograph on the architectural styles of the town's historic houses, by Society trustee and architectural historian Michael Rebic;

individual histories of each of the 168 buildings (157 of them houses) in the town that date from 1760 to 1888, tracing ownership, with deed and mortgage citations and other available evidence, from the earliest record to the present;

over 70 historical photographs, in addition to contemporary photos of all 168 buildings profiled, including many interiors;

20 short articles on various local history topics, e.g.: the old roads of Austerlitz; one-room schools; African Americans in Austerlitz; Edna St. Vincent Millay; Ellsworth Kelly; Oscar Beckwith (a/k/a the "Austerlitz Cannibal"); Kinneville; the Brown store.

The book has been funded by a grant from Furthermore, a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund, and donations from fourteen town residents, so all sales proceeds will benefit the Society.

The price for this hard cover book will be \$35, but only \$25 for paid-up members of the Society.

It will be available during the June 9-10 bicentennial weekend, and thereafter from the Society.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Contributing/Business
 Deborah Bowen/Inn at Green River
 Scott & Meredith Bowman
 Thalia Cassuto
 Naomi Gauntlett
 Carl & Lauri Quinn

Family/Household
 William Cooke
 Kristin Davis & Family
 Gordon Forbes & Daniel Handley
 Sharon Koomler & Jerry Grant
 Robert & Carolyn Leather
 Erlyn & Richard Madonia
 Gerard & Theresa Michney
 Amy & Brian Muncaster
 Bob Newman
 Ernest Rubenstein & Tova Usdan
 Robert Schmitt & Alise TenVoorde
 George & Agnes Tebolt
 Eva Telesnick & Sal Ledda
 George H Vollmuth
 Sandra Williams & Jack Arnold

Individual
 Frances Culley
 Jerry DeBona
 Ruth Herron Horak
 Nancy Wilson

Supporting
 Steve & Kathy Bluestone
 Phyllis Howard
 Ellen & Kord Lagemann
 Rob & Michelle Lagonia
 Barbara Saltzman
 Tracy & Samuel Tassinari
 Lee & Diane Tilden
 Edward Wachsberger
 Jere Wrightsman

Sustaining
 Paul Bernstein & Jane Magee
 Anthony & Gail Cashen

The above list reflects renewals and new memberships received since the Winter 2018 Newsletter through March 30, 2018. This is not a full membership list.

Save the Date

The 19th Annual Blueberry Festival

Sunday July 29th, 9-4pm

To be kept informed of everything that's going on at the Society, PLEASE MAKE SURE WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT E-MAIL ADDRESS. Notify Anne Cipkowski at admin@oldausterlitz.org or call her at (518) 392-0062. Activities come up between newsletter issues and we want to be sure you know about them. Watch your e-mail and visit our website www.oldausterlitz.org for

Correction: In the last issue of the newsletter, Tom Moreland's article had a statement saying that President Trump won by a landslide. This was a miss-print. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

JOIN AHS NOW!

New or Renewal

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

- Individual \$15
- Family/Household \$25
- Contributing/Business \$50
- Supporting \$100
- Sustaining \$250
- Additional Donation _____

Please check the level you prefer, and mail this form, along with check or money order payable to:

Austerlitz Historical Society
 P.O. Box 144, Austerlitz, NY 12017

Name(s) _____

Mailing address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Can we email your newsletters -Y___N___

Email _____

Phone _____

The Austerlitz Historical Society is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization.

Low-fee and no-fee educational workshops and presentations are subsidized by the Phyllis O'Shea Palladino Fund for Educational Programs

Donations made to the Society in honor of Phyllis Palladino will be directed to the Fund, enabling the Austerlitz Historical Society to provide creative, educational workshops and presentations for our community at little or no cost. The Society welcomes any financial gift, but most especially those that help further its goal of engaging children and families in the history and culture of Austerlitz. Checks may be mailed