"FROM THE HISTORIAN’S FILE"

"Post Mark — North Greece, N.Y."

After turning the corner at Latta Road to go south on North Greece Road, one might quickly pass a plain red brick building at the rear of a small parking lot. Across the right front of the building are the letters, United States Post Office. If you aren’t from the area you might not know you are in the hamlet of North Greece. This area was one of the earlier settlements in Greece. It has had a Post Office since 1850 (from the government records, a few say earlier). Over the last 163 year period the mail operation has occupied at least six known locations, never more than a block away from each other. The first location was a small space in the store of Alfred Phelps at the South west corner Latta and North Greece Roads.

For a short period of time in the early 1870s the location moved across North Greece Road to a store operated by William T. Filer. By 1880 it was back again, operating out of the Phelps store by Alfred’s son Henry. For the next sixty-five years it was to share space with the ever expanding general merchandise. Changing times in the early 1900s saw the gradual demise of the pickle and cracker barrels. Molasses was no longer dispensed into a jug. Kerosene found fewer uses as Greece gradually saw the extension of electrical service to North Greece and beyond.

Nineteen forty-five saw the end of World War II and the Post Office found it necessary to relocate again and building material was in short supply then. A small building was found on a nearby farm and moved on a flatbed truck to the rear of the original North Greece Fire Station on the Northwest corner of Latta Road at North Greece Road. Remembered by older local residents was Mrs. Melinda Germeroth, the post mistress from the opening of the small office in August 1945 to her retirement in December 1967.

A major remodeling and addition to the fire station made room for the post office to lease a much larger space from the fire department in 1964. As a second class contract post office it could offer all the amenities of a first class post office. Mail delivery was not offered in this type of office, except to the rented post office boxes on the premises. It also was not necessary for the U.S. Post Office Service to own the building.

Another twelve years and the fire station was bursting at the seams. However, no remodeling was done this time. The entire old building was demolished and a new fire station erected. There was no small, used building for the post office this time. It was decided to move the post office in to a temporary, cramped 12’ by 50’ trailer....until a new permanent building was built. The trailer was put on rented property down North Greece Road, barely a block south of the fire station. The postal service put out a call for bids on a building that would have 1,056 sq. ft. of space. George and Florence Germeroth Jr. were the successful bidders and the Post Office would lease the building from the Germeroths. Florence had taken the place of her mother-in-law (Melinda) on her retirement in 1967.

The present facility is a one person operation, except during busy seasonal and special times. Numerous postal clerks served there and at the other earlier locations. A more recent clerk with many years of service was Doris Cutter, who is fondly remembered. Doris retired in early 2004 with many years of faithful service. Another is Ann Piazza who worked with Mrs. Cutter for many years.

Though only a mile and a half west of the main Greece Post Office, it is a much slower paced operation. It closes for an hour at lunch time; the outer lobby has a bank of private mail boxes with a special Zip Code of 14515 for those only.

If you are still writing by “snail-mail” or sending cards, a North Greece cancellation mark is available by dropping your correspondence in a special slot. North Greece is the only location that has a Greece cancellation. A visit there recently found I was in a friendly, un hurried flow of patrons in what seemed to be a flash back to another time. With the postal service running up red ink more every year, will North Greece eventually cease to have its own post office...?