

GREECE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2018 ANNUAL REPORT





Greece Historical Society P.O. Box 16249 Greece, NY 14616 (585)225-7221
Located at: 595 Long Pond Road, Greece, NY 14612
greecehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com
<http://www.greecehistoricalsociety.org>

GREECE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

The Greece Historical Society was organized in 1969 by Greece Town Historian Virginia Tomkiewicz, with the encouragement of Town Supervisor Fred J. Eckert who became a charter member. The Society received its absolute charter from the New York State Department of Education Board of Regents as a not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation on November 21, 1974.

The all-volunteer Society's purpose is to collect, preserve, research, and share local history with the community. Concerned and interested community volunteers of various backgrounds and education lend their talents to govern the organization as the Board of Trustees. We strive to provide the community with an awareness of the past, an appreciation of the present, and a vision for the future, giving a sense of "roots" and a greater feeling of belonging.

To accomplish its purpose the Society offers:

- public programs
- articles about local history
- group and school programs
- docent led tours of our museum, especially to school groups and scouts
- resource materials and books to area schools and libraries
- a resource library at our History Center
- special events
- a web site and Facebook page informing people of upcoming programs and events
- DVDs, videos and Power Point presentations of various history subjects, sites and architecture
- a museum shop selling a variety of local history books

Beginning in the mid-1970s, the Greece Historical Society shared space with the Town of Greece Historian in a Town-owned house on English Rd. In 1988, with the encouragement of then Town Supervisor Don Riley, the former home of Gordon Howe, Greece Town Supervisor for 26 years and former Monroe County Manager, was donated to the Society by Wegmans for our use and the office of the Town Historian.

The 1855 farm house was restored by the Society and sits on a one acre parcel of land leased from the Town of Greece on the **Greece Town Campus**. It was the first building on the campus, which now includes the Town Hall, Town Justice Court, Public Library, Community & Senior Center, Police Headquarters, and other recreational amenities.



The house, which is owned and maintained by the Society, contains the Society's administrative offices, research library, museum shop, an exhibit hall wing, and until 2016, the office of the Town Historian. The Society is not part of the Town government and receives no funds from the Town of Greece. The Town does cut the grass and plows the driveway.

Docent led tours are held Sunday afternoons from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. or by appointment. Office hours are Monday mornings from 10 a.m. to noon, or by appointment. Special events, exhibits, and programs are held throughout the year.

The following is a report of the activities of the Greece Historical Society for 2018:

MUSEUM EXHIBITS



Besides maintaining and updating the permanent exhibits in the Museum's Newcomb Hall, we restructured our schoolhouse exhibit to include a 1950s classroom. In June, a display highlighting Greece's one and two-room schoolhouses, originally created by the Greece Historic Preservation Commission, was updated and installed across from the schoolhouse exhibit.

An exhibit, "Winning the Vote: The Women of Greece Involved in the Woman's Suffrage Movement" began last year and ran through the end of May. That exhibit marked the 100th anniversary of women winning full suffrage in New York State. It celebrated some of the remarkable Greece women who supported the campaign to win the vote, particularly Jean Brooks Greenleaf, Georgia Bonesteel Raynsford, and the Charlotte Political Equality Club.



During the month June, we hosted a regional traveling exhibit on woman suffrage, sponsored by the Rochester Regional Library Council.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Tuesday Evening Lecture Series - Our eight monthly Tuesday evening lectures featuring local historians, authors, and humanities scholars have again proven to be very popular with the community. During 2018 we averaged 70 guests per evening. Our programs have earned a reputation throughout the region for providing high quality, professional and entertaining history lessons. Besides Greece residents, our guests regularly come from nearby towns and the City of Rochester. The monthly lectures are held at the Greece Public Library. We would like to thank library director Cassie Guthrie and her staff for being so supportive and accommodating to our needs.



Sunday Programs - During 2018, the Greece Historical Society hosted several informal programs on Sunday afternoons. These programs were varied with the intent to interest a wider range of people and ages. The programs included cleaning cemetery head stones, the story of the Erie Railroad, the history of magic, and the opportunities and challenges of Bosnian immigrants.

Scanning Day - For the third year in a row we hosted a free public scanning day. Several professional firms set up shop in our center and allowed the public to scan prints, negatives and slides. Photo restoration was also provided.



VISITORS

During 2018, approximately 900 visitors signed our museum guest book. We are sure that more than half the visitors did not sign in, so it can be assumed that we had well over 1,800 visitors, possibly 2,000.

Besides individuals and families, we conducted free tours for approximately 350 children from Greece public schools, private and home schools. Groups such as the Greece Athena History Club and scout groups also toured the museum.



PUBLIC LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS



During 2018, member-volunteers of the Greece Historical Society presented programs at the Gates Historical Society, Atria Senior Living facility, Charlotte Public Library and Rochester Genealogy Society. We also had an information table at the Dewey Avenue Neighborhood Festival.

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS



During 2018, three board members attended the Museum Association of New York's annual conference. Some board members attended a class on the responsibilities of nonprofit board members conducted by board member Gregg Redmond. One member also attended the Association of Public Historians of New York (APHNYS) annual conference,



In March, our volunteers had the privilege of a private tour of the Rochester Historical Society conducted by Collections Manager and Registrar, Daniel D. Cody.

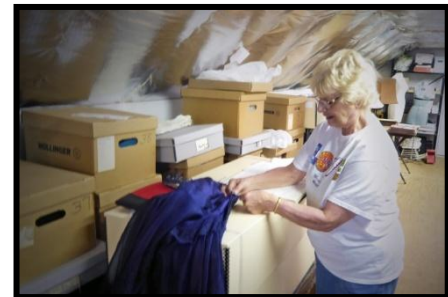
In April, we hosted a webinar on Collections Management produced by the Greater Hudson Heritage Network. Several of our volunteers and members of other historical societies attended.



In October, a number of our members attended the Rochester Area Archives Fair hosted by the Rochester Museum & Science Center. It was an opportunity to explore many different archives that are located around the Rochester area.

COLLECTIONS

This past year, in keeping with the Collection Management Policy, Greece Historical Society volunteers continued to organize the museum's collections, photographing and cataloguing them in our museum database using PastPerfect. We have also been evaluating the clothing collection with plans to de-accession some items that are in poor condition, items that we cannot properly store, or items that do not meet our current mission. In April, we transferred some old hats to two other local historical societies.



Over the years many pieces of clothing have been donated to the museum. Because many of these treasures have not been part of exhibits, members don't know what treasures we have. This past Spring we started a project to catalog and sort the clothing and each month or two display one of these treasures.

COLLECTING & PRESERVING OUR HISTORY



During the past few years we have made a serious effort to only collect items and artifacts that do meet our mission and for which we have adequate space or a proper way to store them. We have, however, had the good fortune to obtain from the estate of one of our long time members, a group of 18 archival binders dealing with the Town of Greece, Genesee River and the Village of Charlotte, etc. Perhaps the most significant item is a framed photograph from the early 1900s of a Ruggles rotary track cleaner. The inventor, Capt. George W. Ruggles, is standing beside the twin, electric

motor behemoth. The Ruggles Rotary Plow was used on Western New York Trolley and Interurban lines. We also acquired a large photograph of an Odenbach World War II Y boat, built at the Dewey Avenue facility.

CONNECTING FAMILIES



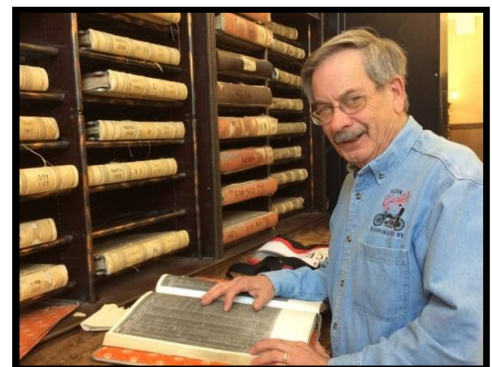
In the past year we acquired an old family bible unrelated to the Town of Greece. Through research, we were able locate the family it was related to in York, New York and presented the bible to them. We were also able to connect a family now living in California and other states with family records and stories while they were visiting their home town.

RESEARCH

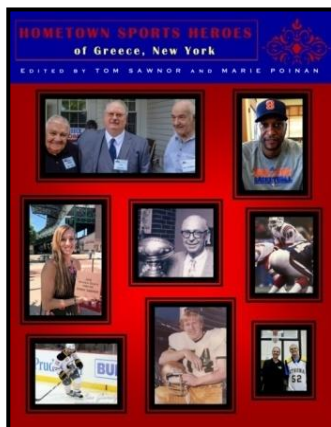


In anticipation of the 200th anniversary of Our Mother of Sorrows Church, GHS volunteers, Joe Vitello and Judith Chefel have been researching and cataloging available information about that parish.

President Bill Sauers made a trip to the Monroe County Clerk's Office to gather a last bit of primary source documentation to help in preparing the application for a Pomeroy Foundation grant for a historic roadside marker honoring suffragist Jean Brooks Greenleaf.

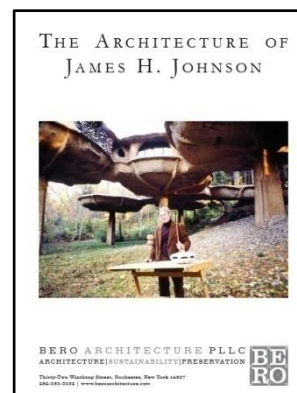


PUBLICATIONS



In 2016, the Greece Historical Society received two grants and a generous donation totaling more than \$19,000 to conduct a cultural resource survey of existing buildings designed by Rochester architect James H. Johnson. The final report was completed in 2018 and at this time we are pursuing publication options.

One of our trustees, Tom Sawnor, along with volunteer Marie Poinan edited and published a book on sports heroes from the Town of Greece.



SHARING INFORMATION

During 2018, the Greece Historical Society supplied requested photos and/or information to the *Democrat & Chronicle*, 13WHAM TV, the Landmark Society of Western New York, Mark's Pizzeria, Dell's Market and several freelance writers, and helped identify historic photographs for the Town of Greece Historian. The Society also continues to provide free local history information to museum visitors, and researchers.

PUBLIC TOURS

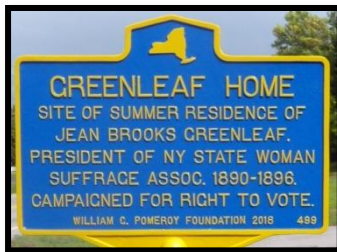


In September, Maureen Whalen conducted a public tour of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, highlighting the lives and stories of many of its residents.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

This year we provided historical information to a local developer on a recently demolished building. The information may someday be used to commemorate and preserve the history of the site.

HISTORIC ROADSIDE MARKER



On Monday, October 8, the Greece Historical Society dedicated the Town's newest historic marker honoring Jean Brooks Greenleaf.

From 1890-1896, Jean Brooks Greenleaf was the president of the New York State Woman Suffrage Association and helped form the Charlotte Political Equality Club.



The sign was funded by a grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation secured by GHS volunteer Maureen Whalen. This was the second marker secured by the Greece Historical Society that was funded by the Pomeroy G. Foundation. The first one, located at the Paddy Hill School was installed in 2014.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION



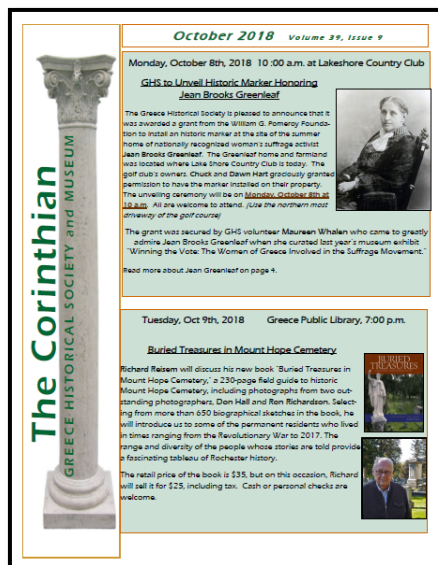
History Award - GHS president, Bill Sauers was honored with the Greece Chamber of Commerce's 2018 "History" award. This was the fourth History recognition award given to a G.H.S. member by the Greece Chamber in the past four years. Others recipients were, Alan Mueller in 2015, Marie Poinan, in 2016 and Gina DiBella in 2017.

COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION



Public Media - The Rochester *Democrat & Chronicle*, the *Greece, Chili, Gates Post*, *City Newspaper* and *GreeceNewsNY.com* magazine featured the Greece Historical Society in several articles, calendar items and columns during the year. In June, *GreeceNewsNY.com* magazine featured Bill Sauers and in October, Maureen Whalen was interviewed on WXXI radio.





Society Newsletter - In 2018 the Greece Historical Society's newsletter "The Corinthian" was published monthly except for a combined July/August edition. Each issue, averaging eight pages, contained Society information and photographs about events and activities and a local history story. It was mailed to all the members and emailed to local elected officials and other historical societies. It is also available on our web site and distributed at the museum and at our monthly programs. For the third year, we have sold ad space to help defray the cost of this newsletter.



Social Media - We regularly add content to our Facebook page, which has over 810 "friends." A monthly e-mail blast is sent to over 790 people, and we have an active web site: <http://www.greecehistoricalsociety.org>



BUILDING MAINTENANCE



Like any property, there is always something to fix, update or replace. This past year we replaced several fire extinguishers and replaced some sensing units in our security system. Maintenance was also done on our HVAC system.

TREASURERS REPORT

Society revenue for 2018 was almost \$26,000. This was \$8,000 over expectations due to three large donations, three new life time memberships, and two grants received that were not expected in 2018. Gift shop sales were also 17% over expectations for the year due to a donation of items from an estate to be sold in the shop. As a percentage of total revenue for the Society, the gift shop represents 8% of the total, special events 28%, donations 26% and membership 27%. All other sources of revenue represent 11% of the total revenue.

Expenses in almost all categories were under budget for 2018, with the exception of \$4,000 for the completion of the Johnson study and \$400 for special events. The Johnson study was planned for completion in 2017, but did not actually complete until this year. Special events are over budget because we already paid a deposit on the 50th Anniversary dinner planned for October next year.

As a result of the above, the Society's cash flow was a positive \$1,700 in 2018, thus adding to our bank accounts and concluding another financially successful year for the Society.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a necessary part of every non-profit organization. Our income comes from fundraising events, membership dues, donations, an occasional grant and sales in our museum shop. We receive no monetary funds from local government.



Strawberry Festival – Our annual Strawberry and Dessert Tasting Festival included five area vendors offering samples of their dessert products. Entertainment was also provide along with information displays from several local non-profit organizations.

Pasta Dinners - We hosted two successful pasta dinners in 2018. Each was attended by nearly 150 of our members, friends and neighbors.



Craft Sale - On November 17, the Greece Historical Society held a craft sale with eight vendors selling their handmade crafts. Each vendor paid us a fee to display their wares. Over 50 people came and purchased goods from the vendors and our museum shop.

Museum Shop - Our museum gift shop continues to sell local history books and other items to museum visitors. This past year we were donated a large collection of jewelry, which we were able to sell at a substantial profit.

A selection of our books is also offered for sale in the Friends of the Greece Public Library book store, "Second Hand Prose" and at Lift Bridge bookstore in Brockport.



Donations - In November, we were pleased to receive a generous gift of \$500.00 from Canandaigua National Bank & Trust as part of its philanthropic giving plan for 2018. We also received several large personal donations.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Reception



On October 29, we held a volunteer luncheon and treated everyone to a catered lunch. As entertainment, we gave a brief history of One Room School Houses and how the changing times and increased population progressed to individual classrooms. The theme for the day concentrated on comparing math and word problems from early days of learning to today's style. We also had a short spelling test! A great time was had by all who attended.

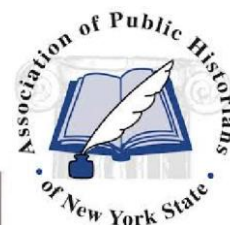
Volunteer of the Year - During the volunteer luncheon held on October 29, longtime volunteer Wendy Peeck was awarded our 2018 Volunteer of the Year. Wendy has been volunteering with GHS for over 20 years. For the past several years she has managed the museum shop and organized the annual Craft Sale.



PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

It is imperative that the Greece Historical Society maintains a relationship with professional and community organizations. The following are the organizations that the Society is a member of: The Association for Public Historians of New York State, Greece Chamber of Commerce, The Landmark Society of Western New York, Museum Association of New York, Western New York Association of Historical Agencies and the Rochester Regional Library Council.

We also meet regularly with local historians and maintain a close co-operation with local historical societies, especially the Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse, the Parma-Hilton Historical Society, and the Rochester Genealogical Society.



Thank You! - It takes countless volunteers to run our organization. Some may loan us a treasured heirloom, repair a broken light fixture, help with a single event, or guide visitors through our museum on Sunday afternoons. Still others of our loyal volunteers spend hundreds of hours during the year to keep the place going. With so many volunteers, it is just impossible to list everyone, especially with all the help we received in 2018.

The monthly newsletter, exhibits, events and projects each took many hours of volunteer time; the exhibit teams spent countless hours researching and installing new exhibits; several retired teachers from our education committee conducted many school and scout tours. Then there were our Sunday docents, the program presenters, the museum shop, finance, marketing and governance committees, the regular Monday morning group, and the people helping to photograph, scan and inventory our collections.

We also can't forget the **Lakeview** and **Shorewood** Garden Clubs who maintain our gardens, and the local businesses who sponsor our events and advertise in our newsletter.



Vital to any not-for-profit organization is the tireless dedication, energy and support of its volunteer board of trustees. Our nomination committee is always on the lookout to fill vacant positions with individuals interested in joining this dedicated team.

Thank you to our supporters from the business community, our volunteers, members, and friends for their continued commitment to preserving the past for the future!

2018 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

William M. Sauers (*President*)
Tom Sawnor (*Vice President*)
Paula Smith (*Secretary*)
Bill Peeck (*Treasurer*)
Cynthia Shevlin (*Newsletter Editor*)
Ruth Curchoe
Jack Wallenhorst
Gregg Redmond, Esq.
Pam O'Sullivan
Sandy Peck
Deborah Whitt
Gretchen Kozlowski
Donald C. Newcomb (*Honorary Trustee*)



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "William M. Sauers". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

William M. Sauers
President

This 2018 Annual Report was published January 17, 2019