

Calendar

October 7

GPS Meeting  
Galway Town Hall

7:00-7:30  
Social Half Hour

7:30 Business Meeting

8:00 Program

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## February GPS Update

Virginia Sawicki for Bonnie Donnan

THINK SPRING and a speedy recovery to all those suffering from the flu and upper respiratory infections! Both adverse weather and the illness of our speaker conspired to cause our January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting to be cancelled.

Please continue to keep President Bonnie Donnan in your thoughts and prayers. Bonnie continues to improve while undergoing physical therapy at a local rehabilitation facility.

Our book "*Galway 1900-1949: A Photographic History of Life in the Town of Galway, Saratoga County, New York*" continues to be a local best seller. As of this writing, approximately 350 copies have been sold. Books can be purchased for \$40 each at the Galway branch of the Ballston Spa National Bank, Galway and Providence Town Halls, Waterwheel Village and at future GPS meetings. They can also be ordered by mail using the order form on the GPS website.

We are grateful to the Albany Times Union and reporter Dennis Yusko for allowing us to reprint their article featuring the book in this newsletter. The article was originally published on the

front page of the newspaper's January 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

It will soon be time to appoint a Nominating Committee to fill slots for 2015-2016 officers. Please seriously consider running for office.

Please plan to attend our **next monthly meeting which will be held February 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Norm Bollen, Board President of the Fort Plain Museum, will present the program "George Washington on the Mohawk".

All members are invited to attend the **next quarterly meeting of the GPS Board of Trustees**. It will take place on Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> (alternate date April 8<sup>th</sup>) at 7 PM in Galway Town Hall.

Looking forward to seeing you at the February 2nd meeting.

Happy Valentine's Day to all!

This article is reprinted with permission from the Times Union newspaper. It was published Sunday, January 4, 2015.

“Community Effort Creates Book on Galway's History” by Dennis Yusko

A 15-year community effort concluded last month in Galway with the publication of a 300-page book that documents the history of the western Saratoga County town.

Members of the Galway Preservation Society researched, wrote and designed "Galway 1900-1949" with advice from dozens of families in the town. The book includes 380 photographs with captions and anecdotes that depict the town's people, farms, businesses and landmarks. The photos are organized by decade.

The pictures and words also tell how natural and world events shaped the community. They chronicle the Scottish settlement's transformation over the 20th century from summer resort to agricultural/mill town to rural, bedroom community.

"It was an agricultural community until World War II," said Allen Ray David, a project leader who has lived in Galway since the 1930s. "That kind of did it in."

The town of Galway was created in 1792, while its namesake village was incorporated in 1838. By the turn of the 19th century, the small village had grown into a resort destination for visitors from Amsterdam, Schenectady and even New York City. Some came to swim in Galway Lake. There were two hotels, boardinghouses, public transportation, water-powered mills that produced flour, vinegar and lumber, and one-room country schools.

"It was a beautiful, beautiful little village," said Arlene Rhodes, a retired English teacher and project leader.

Everything changed on Sept. 17, 1908, when eight large buildings, including the MacPherson and Galway hotels, burned in a sprawling, early morning fire that started in a hay barn, according to the book. The hotels were never rebuilt.

"The fire really changed the character of the town forever," David said. "It sort of destroyed it as a resort for out-of-town people."

Just before the fire, one of the town's landmarks, the watering trough, was built in the east end of the village by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The iron trough had different basins for humans, horses, cats and dogs. It was rededicated in 2008 after a truck backed into it.

Farming thrived in Galway in the early 20th century. In 1900, there were 1,350 town residents and 229 farms, Rhodes said. One of the volunteers who worked on the book, Bonnie Donnan, was born and raised in Galway on a family farm purchased in 1836 by her Scottish ancestors. The farm remains in the Donnan family and produces beef cattle, hogs and hay.

Other contributors to the book were Don Carpenter, who wrote about Galway farms, the village and more, town historian Phyllis Keeler, Tom Cwiakala, Herb Kopper and others. The group spent years soliciting grant money and donations for the project, organizing the material and checking facts.

"I would hope that people in our community will read from this a certain sense of pride in our community," Rhodes said. "More than 100 people contributed to it."

Starting in the 1920s, some of the mills in Galway moved to Ballston Lake for its railroad access, Rhodes said. The onset of World War II further changed Galway's economy because more residents dropped farming for manufacturing jobs and commuted to jobs at American Locomotive Co. and General Electric Co.

"When the war came along, there was no one to cut hay — everyone was at war or working for the war," David said. "Trees began to grow, and it would have been a major project to clear the fields."

By 1950, the mills had vanished and the number of farms dwindled to about 40. A central school district formed and camps lined the shores of Galway Lake, Rhodes said. The community now contains a mix of small businesses, a few farms and an increasing number of homes. There were 3,545 town residents counted in the 2010 U.S. Census.

"It's more of a bedroom community now," David said.

The Galway Preservation Society printed 1,000 copies of "Galway 1900-1949" and has sold about 200. The price is \$40; profits go toward building accessible storage for its archives. It is available from the society and at Galway Town Hall.

"People are amazed by it," David said. "I worked on it from the start, and I'm fascinated by it."

[Note: Since the article was published, the total number of books sold is almost 350 (one-third of the books published!) The book is also for sale at the Galway branch of the Ballston Spa National Bank, Providence Town Hall, and Waterwheel Village cheese store. Mail order forms are available on the GPS website: [galwaypreservationsociety.org](http://galwaypreservationsociety.org).]



The Visitor Cat  
By Don Carpenter

It was a clear cool day in the late fall of 1981 when I decided it was time to clean the chimney. Out with the ladder, a very large stout stick and plastic feed bags, scramble up the living room roof, climb up atop the main roof and perform the foul deed. Back down said roofs and put the stuff away. The ladder can wait—

Later that evening a faint, strange noise kept disturbing my reading. Never loud or constant, but never went away. No matter where I looked or checked, for two weeks this kept up before I discovered a cat had climbed the ladder and made it to the top of the chimney, fallen down the flue, and become trapped by the fireplace damper! I verified this from the roof with a flashlight. Back down the roof to open the damper. But the cat now refused to move, even after tempting it with a dish of milk, and eventually a can of tuna.

The only thing I could think of was to go back up the roof and drop small water bombs (cats do not like to get wet!) That did the trick. Said cat would not let anyone near it, so we set out food for a few days and then set it free. Being a cat, it never did send a thank you note or return for a social reunion. But I never was slow to move the ladder again.



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