

Calendar

February 4

GPS Meeting
 Galway Town Hall.

7:00-7:30 Social Half Hour
 7:30 Business Meeting
 8:00 Program

Table of Contents

Page 1

February GPS Update

Page 2

Got Milk?
 By Tom Cwiakala

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February GPS Update

From Virginia Sawicki and Bonnie Donnan

Our January meeting was an interesting presentation by Reverend Wayne Brandow on the history of the Galway Bible Baptist Church, and the history of the Baptist church in America. His talk was supplemented by an exhibit of documents, photos, and items from the church.

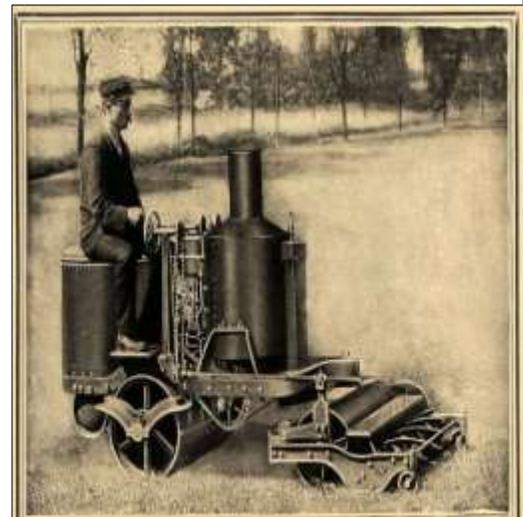
Thanks to Carol Schweitzer, Jeanne Frank, Margie Prasek, and Linda Bobar for our refreshments.

The February 6th meeting program will be “Soldiers of Saratoga County: From Concord to Kabul” presented by Paul Post, author and reporter for The Saratogian.

The display “Brookside Museum: A Galway Retrospective” will remain until summer thanks to an extension granted by Joy Houle, director of Brookside. If you haven’t seen the display, take a few minutes. Photos, vintage hats, documents, and an elegant pair of crocheted lace horse ear covers are among the items displayed in the lobby at Town Hall.

Linda Carpenter was appointed treasurer at the January 18th board meeting to complete Ann David’s term, ending June 2012. Ann continues to recuperate at Albany Medical Center from surgery. Please keep her in your thoughts and

prayers. Although she requests no visitors or phone calls at this time, we encourage cards and notes to be sent to her home address. This demonstration of our caring has gladdened her. Keep our editor Kurt Johnston in mind for articles for this newsletter.



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Got Milk? By Tom Cwiakala

Had I have been asked “Got Milk?” while I was being raised on one of the many small scale dairy farms here in the town of Galway I would have answered “Does rain make mud? Does Elmer Fudd hunt wabbits? Yes I’ve got milk BUT it wasn’t just a matter of reaching into the refrigerator to get it.” I dealt with those critters that produced this milk. I am aware that there are several kinds of milk i.e. goat milk, soy milk, rice milt, almond mild to name a few. Here, I’m talking about cow’s milk and being involved in the various tasks that go along with producing milk on a dairy farm. The dairy farm has milk producing cows, at least enough to fill two ten gallon cans in two milkings per day, a few heifers and a few calves. Back in the olden days, sometimes a bull for breeding. I don’t ever remember my dad keeping a bull. He took his cows to a neighbor who had one for breeding.

Some of the first things I recall learning to do was chasing cows, calling cows, bringing the cows in from pasture, watching cows, washing cows, milking cows, and feeding cows. When it was the time of day for evening milking, I would go out to the gateway of the pasture and call the cows. There were various cow calls to use and I used “come bess, come bess, come bess “as loud as I could. Amazingly, the cows stopped grazing and walked or ran to the gate. The gate was not the kind that swings on hinges-it was made of three wood poles supported on twin posts and ladder-like rungs on each side. Open, the gateway was at least eight feet wide and to open you slid each pole to one side and let the end drop onto the ground. To mention cow calling reminds me of my days at the Parkis Mills School. The school was situated near the Czartory farm and Mrs. Czartory would call her cows with “soo soo soo neh neh neh.” One of the students liked to mimic Mrs. Czartory with a loud “soo soo soo neh neh neh.” Do you think this annoyed Mrs. Czartory? Oh Yes!

Anyway, as soon as the gate was open, I got into the road and stopped any vehicles (in those days there were very few) and gave the cows the right of way.

We had tow pastures, one was across the road from the barnyard and the other about a quarter mile down the road. The cows would file into the barn and go into their respective stanchion where they would find cow feed in the manger that either my dad or I had placed there. If one cow should happen to get into the wrong stanchion, there follows a scene of utter chaos, or should I say udder chaos. All the cows must be chased out and back in for another try. Once they are in their proper place, preparation for milking comes next. That’s where the washing comes in. Most of the time the cows wallow in mud while grazing so the udders become smeared with mud and must be washed and dried. The tails are tied to their hind leg with binder twine to prevent a wet, sloppy tail being swished across your face while seated there milking. For the cows that tended to kick while being milked, we had handhuffs made for cows. These “cowcuffs” secured the hind legs together so they couldn’t kick. Milking was done while seated on a milking stool next to the udder, always on the right side of the cow as viewed from the rear of the cow.

There were two basic methods for milking by hand that I recall. The best was using the entire hand and intermittently squeezing the milk out to two teats into the pail, which is held tightly between the knees. The squeezing must be done by first the thumb and forefinger, then the next finger, then the next finger, and finally the little finger, the hand then forming a fist each time. This action forces the milk from the bag down the teat and out of the end and into the pail. If you were a good shot you could squirt one into the mouth of one of the barn cats sitting in the walkway behind the cow. When the milk stops flowing from those two teats, you had to “strip” them by using your thumb and forefinger, starting up next to the bag, squeeze and pull down, which forces out the remaining milk. The same procedure is done with the other two teats and when those are milked out you should have a pail of milk between your knees. If you were old enough to milk you were most likely strong enough to lug the pail of milk to the milk house and pour it into the strainer on top of the milk can. What next? Go back into the barn and milk another cow. Oh yes, the other method of milking is stripping from start to finish. I believe that the entire hand method is easier on the cow if you can get the hang of it.

The one thing left to cover regarding the things that I recall learning to do is the 'watching' cows. After a non-fenced field of hay had been harvested, my dad would like to let the cows graze on it. Now, if the field has no fence, someone has to watch that they don't wander off the field and this is where a little cow chasing comes in. When I reminisce of those days, I can only think oooooohh! If I only had a mini-bike. Time dragged while watching cows. I would get out my trusty jack knife, cut a limb off of a poplar sapling and whittle out a whistle, careful to keep an eye on the herd. I guess you could say that I whittled away the time.

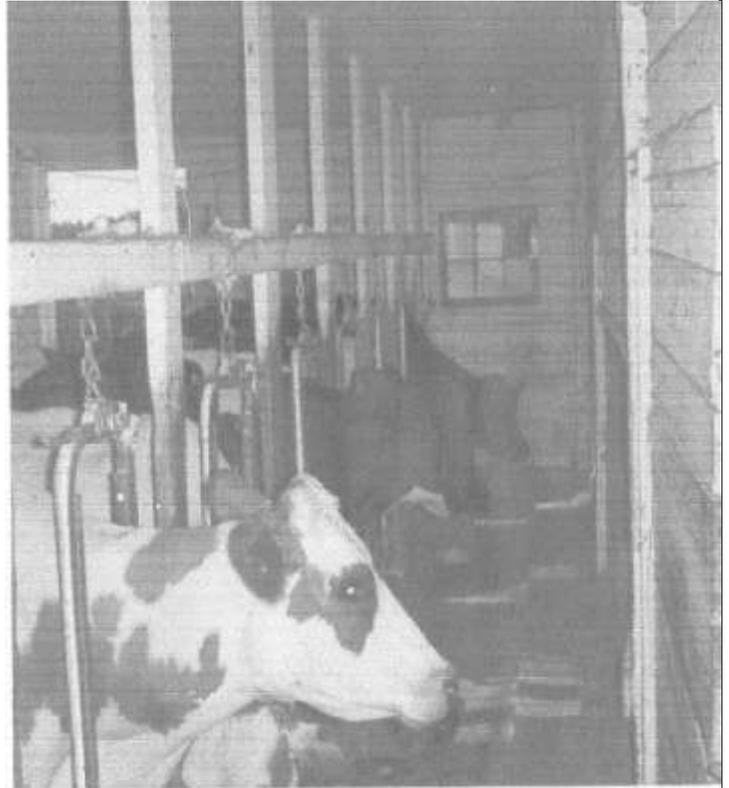
At first the cans of milk were kept cool in concrete vats of ice and water. In the mid forties all dairy farms were required to purchase an electric milk cooler. I recall my dad breaking up the concrete vats and preparing a base for the milk cooler below floor level in the milk house. Our household milk container was kept in the ice and water vats, then the milk cooler and finally in the refrigerator when my parents eventually bought one.

There was also the job of cleaning the manure out of the cow stable and putting down fresh bedding, usually straw. A ditch formed in the concrete floor behind the cows had a downward slope in the bottom, both ways from the center to accommodate the urine and manure. The manure was shoveled into a wheelbarrow, wheeled out the back cow stable door and dumped onto a pile, later to be spread on a field and plowed under.

Other jobs on the farm were; helping with the haying, helping with corn planting, picking stones after harrowing, picking mustard weeds out of the oats, cutting corn, shelling corn, planting and digging potatoes, helping to cut firewood, carrying firewood into the woodshed and stacking it, helping to mend and install barb wire fencing, and just helping my dad with whatever he was working on .

The photo is of cows in their stanchions, typical of a small scale dairy barn. The stanchions are the newer factory made type. Before these were installed, the stanchions were made of wood boards in which the cow's head went between two vertical boards

then were brought together on the cow's neck and locked in place.





I can't really call this a photo contest since I have no idea where this is.
Galway Lake, Butterfield Lake, Private? the bottom right only says *Galway N.Y.*

Galway Preservation Society
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