



G·A·L·W·A·Y JOURNAL

PRESERVATION SOCIETY

↻ GPS Update

by Richard English

Winter has certainly provided us with plenty of variety this year, beginning with a rain-infused snowfall that froze fields and driveways for weeks, followed by a mild January that felt like late March or April, and then a record-breaking deep freeze after Super Bowl weekend. No wonder Punxsutawney Phil wasn't able to give us a clear forecast for the remainder of the season! Despite the ever-changing conditions outside our windows, many of us are surely finding enjoyment perusing the seed catalogs that have been arriving daily and dreaming of next year's vegetable garden with its (hopefully) bountiful harvest.

Our February program, entitled "George Washington and the Mohawk Frontier," was presented by Norm Bollen, the president of Fort Plain Museum and Historic Park. Mr. Bollen has conducted extensive primary research on President Washington's trips to Albany, the Hudson Valley, and settlements along the Mohawk River in the early 1780s. Contrary to assertions by many local tavern owners that "Washington slept here," Mr. Bollen found little evidence to support many of these claims. Some of Washington's trips were accompanied by such a large retinue of supporting personnel that it would have been very difficult to spend the night in smaller establishments that most likely provided only refreshments or service for the weary animals. Washington covered a lot of ground in our area, especially in 1783 when he proposed reparations for the Cherry Valley Massacre in Tryon County, inspected key forts and fortifications, and made the case that we must remain prepared for future conflict. Mr. Bollen is finishing a full-length book on Washington's forays to our area, which will surely be well-received when it is finally published.

Our next program is scheduled for Monday, March 7th, when Charlie Kuenzel and Dave Patterson will present "Saratoga Springs: It All Began with the Water." Charlie and Dave have presented to our group before, including a program on the life and times of Gideon Putnam and a program describing a walk down Broadway in Saratoga Springs in 1874. They are very engaging speakers and have access to excellent historical photographs and documents which they have collected over the years for their local company, Saratoga Tours. Come and learn the deep history of our neighboring community and see how its humble beginnings led to its eventual development and success.

Until then, think Spring and hope for clear, dry weather that will enable us to go an entire year without having to cancel a monthly meeting!

Upcoming Dates

Mar 7 – Next Member Meeting at Town Hall

7:00 pm Social Gathering

7:30 pm Business Meeting

7:45 pm Program

Apr 13 – Next Board Meeting at Town Hall

7:00 pm

Contact us at galwaypressociety@gmail.com or visit us at
<http://www.galwaypreservationsociety.org>

We are always seeking local history articles for our newsletter. Please get in touch if you have an article to submit or an idea for an article: mcuffeperez@gmail.com or call 944-5843. We reserve the right to edit submissions, with the author's approval.

🌀 In Memory of Mildred Hathaway

Mildred Hathaway, long time Galway resident and founding member of the Galway Preservation Society, passed away February 10 at the age of 103. A remarkable age, a remarkable woman. Unlike many GPS members, I did not know Mildred, and had no idea about the scope of her contributions to GPS and to Galway until I read Arlene Rhodes' article honoring Mildred on the occasion of her 100th birthday (October, 2012 Galway Preservation Society Journal).

How fortunate was Galway to have Mildred Hathaway's keen mind and abilities, creativity and energy working on behalf of the entire community. As a founding member of GPS, responsible for the formation of the organization in 1981, Mildred brought local history into the mainstream. What strikes me as her greatest gift to Galway was her ability to forge cooperative initiatives among GPS, the school, and other community organizations and to bring people together for the benefit of all.

As Arlene's article notes, under Mildred's leadership GPS received two awards within four years from the Federation of Historical Services – an exceptional achievement for a small town. As the executive director of the Federation stated at the award presentation: "There is a certain level of professionalism in their community, so that while they may not be museum professionals, they are able to tap into that in a real creative way. And they have an almost innate sense of how to do it right." Quite a compliment to Mildred Hathaway and the Galway Preservation Society. And quite a lot to live up to!



Mildred Hathaway enjoying her 100th birthday celebration
Photo credit: Arlene Rhodes

-Mary Cuffe Perez

And from a former student ... "Mildred Hathaway was a remarkable woman. I had her as a teacher for third grade when school was still fun, and she made it interesting. She gave us a chance to work on things individually, and helped to fan any creative spark we had. We each had a stick of modeling clay in our desk to use at will when we had finished our current assignment. A big stack of newsprint paper was available for drawing or any kind of non-disruptive activity we wanted. Early morning math assignments, pages in an arithmetic workbook that dogged me all throughout elementary school, became something to be completed quickly so I could get to the good stuff. Math was the latrine duty of education to me, and this made it seem less endless."

-Bonnie Donnan

✦ Everybody Gave Something: A Talk with Gloria Wheeler

Interviewers: Mary Cuffe Perez and Patty Kay



Gloria Wheeler and her daughter, Sandy. This photo is part of the "Who Are You Galway" exhibit, a photo exhibit by Patricia Kay, sponsored by the Saratoga Arts Council and the NYS Council on the Arts

Gloria Wheeler's roots run deep in Galway. Her father and mother, both born in the Ukraine, came to Galway from New York City in 1920 and bought a house in the village where they lived for a short time before buying the 50-acre farm on East Street, where Gloria was born in 1925.

Gloria can sit in the spacious living room of that same house, the winter sun pouring through the east-facing window, and see the barn where her father's team ("He only farmed with horses," Gloria says), Prince and Nellie, were stabled. Next to that was the hay barn filled with hay from the field, and the cow barn that once kept 12 – 14 cows.

Gloria, an only child, grew up helping her father with tending to and milking the cows. She remembers Mr. Kalinkewicz picking up 40-gallon cans from the milk house to be delivered to Sealtest in Schenectady. Her father, like many farmers, had multiple talents. In the early days, he made his living as a tailor in New York City and Gloria remembers that, from time to time, a farmer would bring him some cloth and say, "Here Alec, how about making me a pair of pants."

Gloria continued to live on the farm after her father died, helping her mother and a cousin with the farm while also commuting every day to Schenectady, where she worked for the American Locomotive Company (ALCO). She met her future husband, George, at ALCO and the two were soon married.

After they wed, the couple lived at the farm, where

George took up farming and Gloria was busy morning to night doing house and farm chores and, when George got into construction, helping with the business, all while raising their two daughters.

For busy, it's hard to beat a farm wife, mother, business woman. Yet, when Gloria was approached by a representative of the American Cancer Society and asked to pass out pamphlets and solicit donations from her neighbors, she agreed. "I guess I'm a sucker for punishment," she laughs. When Gloria wasn't helping with the farm and business, chasing children and chickens, she was going door to door with her appeal. "Something you could do in those days," she says. "Money was not easy to come by," she adds, "but everybody gave something."

Besides collecting donations for the Cancer Society, Gloria was able to recruit many of her friends and neighbors as volunteers.

Gloria proved to be a gifted fundraiser, organizer and leader and she soon found herself climbing the ranks of the Cancer Society, reaching the position of Regional Director for Saratoga County, which required her to attend quarterly meetings at the state level in Syracuse. One of the fundraising events that Gloria spearheaded was the Daffodil Sale, a hugely successful fundraiser that was a part of Galway life for many years. The drive was the subject of a poem written by Mary Lynn Kopper for the Story Quilt project (re-printed here on Page 5).

As Mary Lynn recalls: “Every word in the poem is true -- I was on the Board of the Cancer Society in Saratoga County for a number of years and worked with Gloria as a volunteer on the Daffodil Drive.” But the drive ended when Gloria retired from the Cancer Society. “No one else was available to carry it on,” writes Mary Lynn, “nor could anyone else have done such a dedicated, creative and wonderful job.”

After 20 years with the Cancer Society, Gloria turned her energies to supporting the Galway Ambulance Corps. George was already a volunteer for the Corps. He was a member of the Board of Directors and constructed the ambulance building (now serving as the Food Pantry). For Gloria’s part, she put her considerable fund raising skills to work writing pledge letters and tracking donations. Through her efforts and that of other volunteers, the Corps was able to purchase a much needed second ambulance.

“I think we were so successful because Galway is a small town and we knew almost everyone we were asking for money from,” Gloria says.

After George passed away in 1981, Gloria took a seat on the Ambulance Corps’ Board and served for 35 years, continuing to raise money for this vital community service organization.

“The ambulance was always on call,” says Gloria, “and my philosophy is that if you live in a community you should support the organizations that help and support you. It’s the glue that holds a community together.”

As we were saying goodbye to Gloria, Patty noticed a plaque in the hallway. It read:

Galway Central School Hall of Fame,
Gloria Ruduk Wheeler,
Class of 1941, inducted June 1996.

Arlene Rhodes nominated Gloria for this honor, which recognizes the achievements of Galway graduates. This annual award from the school was in recognition of Gloria’s long commitment to the Galway Ambulance Corps and to the American Cancer Society. Gloria was the first woman to receive this honor.

“Galway is a wonderful community,” Gloria says. “I guess I’m proof of that – I’ve lived here 90 years.”

~ Daffodil Days

Story by Gloria Wheeler, poem by M.L. Kopper

Long before our Adirondack winter was over,
while walks still needed shoveling and boots
tracked water down the halls of offices and schools,
the Cancer Society planned the Spring Daffodil Sale.

Not just a few armfuls bought and paid for in advance
but truckloads full of yellow trumpets on pale
green stems, each bunch held together tightly
by a rubber band, a symbol of faith and hope
in our slow-coming spring.

They say daffodils have no scent, but I can smell them still
as I fall asleep at night, now twenty-some years later.
Their scent was in my car, the office, in my house.
Our goal was simple ... strong tall stems with golden petals
in each cut-glass vase, stoneware jug or
plastic cup in Saratoga County. Daffodils don't discriminate.
They are beautiful in any kind of jar.

As Chairman of the Drive for over 20 years, I worried most.
Ordered the flowers, scheduled volunteers, prayed that the truck
coming all the way from Washington State wasn't delayed in traffic.
Made phone calls and deliveries for days.
Placed pretty girls on street corners, selling Spring.

When it was over, cleaned out the office, the car,
totaled up accounts, and started planning for another year.
In that halfway place between sleep and my first morning coffee,
I live it all again.

When I die, I hope someone remembers,
even if there are red roses piled higher than the sky,
I'd like one bunch of rubber-banded daffodils
to send me on my way to yet another Spring.

From: *Story Quilt: Poems of a Place*
Used with permission of the Galway Public Library



*Drawing by Ralph Caparulo
from "Story Quilt: Poems of a
Place"*

🐾 Book Reminder

Galway 1900 – 1949, A Photographic History, is available for \$40 at the Galway branch of Ballston Spa National Bank, Galway Town Hall, Waterwheel Village, and Providence Town Hall. Books are also for sale at monthly GPS member meetings. A link to the order form is available on the home page of our website at galwaypreservationsociety.org. Please make checks payable to Galway Preservation Society.

🐾 From the Country Woman's Apothecary

Remedy for the common cold: Tea made from equal parts of crushed cinnamon, sage and bay leaves. Pour in hot water and mix with a little lemon juice before drinking.

Galway Preservation Society

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