



A RANSOM NOTE

Clarence Historical Society Newsletter

Summer 2023

Board of Trustees

Douglas Larkin, President
Joan Woodward, Secretary
Sandra Larkin, Treasurer
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Yvonne Buyers Hicks
Jon Rothenmeyer
Sara Larkin
Joseph McGreevy
John O'Hare
Robert Lenz
Robert A. Geiger,
Clarence Town Board Liaison
Mark Woodward, Town Historian

Board Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of each month.

Meetings begin at 6:30 pm at the Clarence History Museum.

President's Comments

We are already into the summer of 2023. The museum continues to be open the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. At our May Trustees' meeting, Gabe McGreevy, a student at Clarence Center Elementary School, presented an idea for a Student Membership classification of membership. I am happy to say that the Board of Trustees has adopted this idea and added it to our application. This is open to students under 18 years of age for \$5.00 annually.

We will be at the Clarence Hollow Farmers Market once a month this year. The society also participated in the annual Bark in the Park event in early June.

Our three remaining 2023 programs are on September 12th, October 10th, and November 14th. As always we thank you, the members, for your continued support!

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Student Membership Program

By; Gabe McGreevy

My love for history started at a young age. I started loving it when I was in first grade, when I checked out "The Town of Clarence" book By Oneta Baker. I've been to the Clarence Museum helping out in any way I could, also having been to multiple historical talks. I've also been to many historical sites in western New York. This made me eager to introduce to the Board a youth program. The board agreed that it should be five dollars annually, for kids 18 and younger. This membership will include a quarterly Newsletter, access to the museum and its resources, and invitations to the historical guest speaker talks. So, If you know anyone that's interested please contact the Clarence Museum or The Clarence Historical Society.

History of the Clarence Press

By: Sara Larkin

As a young man, Herman Beers learned the printer's trade and from 1911 - 1916, worked for various newspapers. Along about this time, two events changed the course of the young newspaper man's career. He met and married Miss Marjorie Bussy and soon after this, he made the decision to enter the Gospel ministry. In 1920 the young couple enrolled in the Practical Bible Training School in Binghamton, NY. They graduated in 1923 and the next few years found them busy in their chosen work.

In 1937, Rev. Beers accepted the pastorate of the Fundamental Baptist Church in the Town of Newstead and moved his family to Akron, NY. The congregation of the little country church whose call he answered, sometimes found it hard to pay their pastor an adequate salary for the whole nation was just recovering from a depression. Finally, Rev Beers, who was the proud possessor of hand press, purchased for fifty dollars, requested from his congregation that he be permitted to supplement his salary by soliciting some job printing in the area. In due time, he also began printing a religious pamphlet for distribution among his congregation and friends.

On January 1, 1939, the Beers family moved to Clarence village while continuing to serve the church in nearby Newstead. To increase circulation of the little church paper he was printing, Mr. Beers solicited advertising from local merchants and businessmen and other families in the Clarence and Newstead areas began receiving copies of "To-Day." The little paper was published monthly, free of charge through the compliments of it's advertisers and contained bits of local news, notices of public meetings, Supervisor Krehbiel's monthly report on town affairs, names and addresses of men in service during WWII, etc.

These were days however, and paper shortages developed, greatly curtailed the planned expansion of the community paper. As a result, Mr. Beers gave up the newspaper temporarily and went into war work at Curtis Wright in Buffalo.

Nevertheless, his ambition to be a journalist and his desire to give the Town of Clarence a newspaper of its own, surmounted all obstacles, and in 1944, he again took up where he left off. While the publication remained monthly because of existing paper shortages, it now sold by subscription at one dollar per year. Thus, the Clarence Press was born.

The first edition under its new name was published in August 1944 and carried the headlines, "Fire Partially Destroys Old Landmark," a story of the Shimer Farm fire at Main and Shimmerville Roads. Four communities were represented by local news columns - Clarence was reported by Mrs. Bruce MacArthur, Clarence Center by Miss Alma Marzolf, Harris Hill by Mrs. Albert Buyers and East Amherst and Swormsville by Mrs. John Muscopf. Beers sold his own advertising. The paper was printed in Buffalo.

It soon became evident, however, that the people wanted news while it was news, and so, in January 1946, the paper began coming out every two weeks. On September 10, 1948, it became weekly. It was at this time that the Town Board of Clarence recognized the Clarence Press as the official newspaper of the town. This came about largely through the efforts of one of the paper's staunchest supporters, Mrs. Albert Buyers of Harris Hill. On October 1, 1948, the subscription price was raised to \$2 per year.

During the winter just before graduation from Parker High School in June 1950, Paul D. Beers, the editor's son, expressed a desire to his father of working with him in his business. He had a working knowledge of the business previous to his graduation and now his ambition was to pursue the printing business as a life work.

During the early summer of 1950, Mr. Beers purchased printing equipment of his own and on July 28th of that year, the first edition of the local paper to be printed in the Town of Clarence came off the press shortly after.

On September 25th, 1951, the Clarence Press was incorporated with Herman C. Beers as President and Treasurer and Mrs. Beers as Vice President and Secretary. On June, 26, 1953, while serving overseas with the United States Army, their son, Paul D. Beers came of age and was elected Vice President of the incorporation.

During its years of publication, the Clarence Press has strived as a newspaper to serve the best interests of the town. It has carried community news, notices of public meetings, and such legal notices as are necessary in carrying out an efficient town government and affairs of the school. It has given prominence to church and school news and for almost 2 years carried the history of the Town of Clarence in serial form, affording much pleasure to its readers. Through its "Letters to the Editor" column, it has provided an opportunity for the townspeople to express their opinions on local affairs - and still true to this day!



Did You Know?

From Elaine Dinola

Winston Churchill loved paraprosdokians, a figure of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected:

1. Where there's a will, I want to be in it
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you, but it's still on my list
3. Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright
4. War does not determine who is right—only who is left
5. They begin the evening news with “Good Evening,” then proceed to tell you why it isn't
6. I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not so sure.

Clarence Historical Society Oneta M. Baker

Memorial Award Winner

This years Oneta M Baker scholarship winner is Michael Schmitt!

Mike is attending Niagara University to study childhood education and a minor in history. Mike is passionate about all different periods in history, but is currently working on a final project on the impact of the Civil War on Western New York families. He is very interested in local history and really enjoyed the fieldtrip to the Clarence Museum! “My experience at the Clarence History Museum was amazing!

It was so enriching to be in a museum and learn about the town I grew up in. As someone who has loved history my entire life, being in the museum and looking at old maps and records was very fulfilling. I felt like I could build the history of the town around me in my head. “

Congrats Michael! We enjoyed having you and your classmates in the museum!



MEMBERSHIP CORNER

We would like to welcome our new life member, Peter Hens. You can renew your membership or become a new member on our website or in person.

We have different tiers to choose from:

Student Under 18—\$5

Individual—\$15

Couples—\$25

Family—\$30

Business—\$50

Individual Life Member—\$150

You can also notate if you would like to volunteer by helping during open hours, giving tours, working on exhibits, and office help! We can always use an extra pair of hands!

**We
our
MEMBERS!**



Word Search

Independence Day

T	B	S	T	A	O	C	D	E	R	T	M	G	D
M	A	I	I	A	O	M	M	N	T	O	R	Y	E
I	I	A	N	R	R	D	F	A	R	T	R	L	C
N	S	J	D	E	F	R	E	E	D	O	M	U	L
U	E	O	E	S	B	N	E	P	E	C	H	J	A
T	D	H	P	I	I	R	C	T	O	S	D	H	R
E	A	N	E	E	T	D	I	T	E	R	N	T	A
M	R	A	N	F	O	A	N	T	J	L	D	R	T
E	A	D	D	H	I	F	I	J	A	E	P	U	I
N	P	A	E	N	R	R	N	E	P	I	O	O	O
G	R	M	N	B	T	R	P	R	H	W	N	F	N
E	R	S	C	E	A	L	L	G	L	O	R	Y	A
Y	E	R	E	J	P	I	T	C	W	I	D	I	E
O	O	I	E	F	I	R	E	W	O	R	K	S	T

PARADES
FOURTH JULY
FREEDOM
PATRIOT
INDEPENDENCE
BRITAIN
FIREWORKS
DECLARATION
JOHN ADAMS
MINUTEMEN
REDCOATS
GLORY

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2219/>

2023 Program Schedule

Free and Open to the Public

All programs are held at the Town Park

Clubhouse - 10405 Main Street, Clarence

Doors Open at 630pm—Program starts at 7pm

Tuesday September 12, 2023

“The Erie Canal”

Presented by Greg Kinal

Tuesday October 10, 2023

“The Historic & Influential People from
Buffalo and WNY—The Early 1800’s”

Presented by Rick Falkowski

Tuesday November 14, 2023

“Post Erie Canal In Clarence”

Presented by John O’Hare P.E.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE TOWN OF CLARENCE

Founded in 1954

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Facebook: Historical Society of the Town
of Clarence

“To collect, preserve, and share the history and heritage of the Town of Clarence”

The Historical Society of the Town of Clarence Inc is formed for the following purposes:

- To identify, preserve, and display materials of historical significance of Clarence
- To encourage historical research, analysis, and study for the publication of historical papers, articles
- To educate the community through lectures, tours, online resources, school field trips and research opportunities



The Historical Society of the Town of Clarence deeply appreciates the support of the County of Erie, the Town of Clarence, our members and the community as a whole.

