



Clarence Historical Society Newsletter

Autumn 2025

A RANSOM NOTE

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

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

A RANSOM NOTE

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I don't know about you, but Summer seemed to fly by this Year! We are ready for Fall and have been diligently working on combining and organizing our reference materials to make it easier to look up information. The digitization process of the Clarence Press/Bees continues, and we are almost halfway through.

Our upcoming events include Programs: 09/09/25, Greg Kinal presenting: "Theodore Roosevelt", 10/14/25, Rick Falkowski presenting: "Spirit of Buffalo Women" and 11/11/25, John O'Hare presenting "Pioneer Cemeteries of Clarence". We also have a special event on 10/12/25, Fall Fest at the Museum and our Holiday Event on 11/30/25, which will be at the Town Park Clubhouse on Main Street this year.

We continue to be open on the 2nd and 4th Sunday afternoons from 1:00 to 3:00 and the First Saturday of each Month from 10:00 to 12:00. We thank you for your support in everything we do!

Fall Programs 2025

All programs are held at the Town Park Clubhouse

10405 Main Street—Doors Open at 6:30

Free and Open To the Public

Tuesday October 14th

Spirit of Buffalo Women—Rick Falkowski

Tuesday November 11th

Pioneer Cemeteries of Clarence—John O'Hare

Historian's Corner

By Joe McGreevy

Preserving History—A Family Affair

At a bend in Clarence Center Road near Thompson, almost to avoid the pre-1829 stone house, a Pennsylvania Deutsch four bay bank barn stands proudly for almost two hundred years (right). It's nestled just south of Ransom Creek and once had the Peanut Line Railroad train running through its back yard. The Martin farmstead, now the Metz family property, has a rich history that has taken much blood, sweat and tears to maintain and preserve. Recent restoration projects on the iconic barn have recently been completed.

I have recently noticed many homes, barn and porch improvements to old properties around town. It has emboldened me to reach out to property owners who have proudly been restoring or preserving their old homes and outbuildings. One such property was the iconic Pennsylvania Deutsch style barn on Clarence Center Road, just east of Thompson Road. I always admired the property when driving down Clarence Center Road, especially the beautiful barn. Last fall I noticed major work being done to the barn, so I stopped by and introduced myself.

A friendly gentleman with a beautiful fluffy Alaskan Malamute dog, Timber, walked up the paved driveway to meet me, having just been on a walk on his property. Bob Metz was very friendly and invited me to return and hear “the whole story” of the barn restoration and the history of the farmstead. A few weeks later I sat down in the stone house I had driven by my entire life, always wondering what it looked like inside. I entered at the back of the house, into a cozy kitchen area with a large table. There sat Bob's father, Roger Metz and daughter Tessa Metz. After standing for a friendly handshake and welcoming smile from Roger, we all sat down and the story began.

“My father, Arthur L. Metz bought just the barn in 1944 where he raised 23 Angus beef cattle,” Roger said. I had always thought the barn and the house had been owned by the same owner. But it wasn't until 1996, that Roger's son Bob bought the stone house, did the Metz family finally own both the barn and the house.

Cattle were raised there until 1972 when they just planted a variety of vegetables. Roger's love for the barn started at an early age. He grew up spending the summers under the Peanut Line Railroad bridge over Ransom Creek in a chick coop. “We would roll the coop down Thompson Road on poles and spend the summers under the bridge,” Roger said with a smile. He spent countless hours running around the vast farmstead and helping at the barn.

The opportunity arose in 1996 to purchase the house and reunite the properties as one. Bob Metz was all about it and purchased the home that same year. He has spent the last twenty nine years preserving and restoring the 1820's home. He removed the exterior white stucco to expose the original stone look. He also completely took down and rebuilt the western brick wall of the home in 2021.

Roger went on to tell other stories of the barn, working on it as a kid, then watching all the farm equipment be auctioned off in the 1970's, to the eventual deterioration of the structure, and the several preservation projects to keep the barn standing proud. I also heard about the long history the Metz family has in the Town of Clarence, starting with John Metz (1784-1860) who settled around 1850 on 6720 Main St., West of Transit Rd, which is now where William Mattar Law Office is located.



Roger grew up spending the summers in a cabin made from the old chicken coop, located just Northeast of the Peanut Line railroad bridge over Ransom Creek. "We pulled the coop that my father obtained from the Seyfang farm on Roll Road to this location on logs, acting as skids, with two tractors down Thompson Road to the farm crossing the Peanut Line," Roger said with a smile.

Property history

Abraham Martin arrived at Vantine's Corners in 1829, shortly after David built on the southeast corner of Goodrich and Clarence Center Roads. Abraham saw the "...fine level farm lands, the rich timber, and the water supply..." and knew this is where he wanted to live. He purchased the property from Abraham Carmer, who had purchased the property from Wilhelm Willink. Carmer had built the stone house, barn, smoke house, chicken coop and creamery on the property prior to 1829. After purchasing the house and acreage, he returned to retrieve his family.

Abraham returned the 300 miles with his family in a Conestoga wagon (Photo above) and all the necessary tools and supplies needed for the treacherous journey, through Indian territory and obstacles, having poor road, or path, conditions. Abraham's farmstead thrived for many decades, producing all kinds of fruits from the orchards, vegetables from the ground and animals, sheep, goats and cattle.

Preservation Project

The Metz family has been taking care of the barn since 1948 with several preservation projects over the years. In 2004 a barn grant program paid to have the walls shored up and foundation work done. A metal roof was then put on to protect the bones of the structure.

The most recent preservation project involved digging a large trench, pouring a long footer and installing eleven posts to support the overhang on the east side of the barn (above). This was necessary to support the sagging southeast portion of the barn. A trench was also dug on the western side of the barn exposing the foundation to shore up the stone foundation wall (left).

The freezing and thawing of the soil on the west side foundation has had its cost. The foundation had to be dug out and portions replaced in 2004. Since the foundation is quite deep the damage was extensive, additional work had to be done in 2024. The foundation was re-excavated (Left), a drainpipe put in and loads of gravel were dumped next to the foundation to prevent further damage. The ramp to the second floor of the barn was modified and fixed as well.

Conclusion

At the end of the interview, I finally fulfilled a childhood dream, stepping into the Martin/Metz barn. When the large west door rolled open it was like stepping back in time, to a different era. The smells, sounds and feeling were different. The sound of the breeze blowing through the gaps in the plank walls, the sunlight beaming through the same gaps lit up the dust floating in the air. Looking up at the massive barn-scape, with long hand-hewn beams holding the structure up for all these years. It was magical!

As one of the few remaining Pennsylvania Deutsch four bay bank barns in the region, the Metz's barn offers a tangible link to the agricultural roots and stories of Clarence's early settlers. The sparkle in Roger's eye when telling stories of the barn were unforgettable, and I thank the Metz family for being so kind and welcoming. I also thank three generations of Metz's who have preserved a special landmark in town and preserved it for generations to come. The Barn will celebrate its 200th Birthday in four years, because of the Metz's it will still be standing strong and proud, just as it did the day it was built.

Photos courtesy of Bob & Roger Metz

Property History from Oneta Baker, History of Clarence (1983)



Fall Back Into History



FALL BACK IN TIME—FALL FEST

Sunday October 12th, 1-3PM

10465 Main St. Clarence (Next to Town Park) - On Museum Grounds

FREE EVENT

Trivia • Scavenger Hunt • Fabulous Prizes

PLUS • Music • Facepainting/Tattoos
• Refreshments • Pumpkin Decorating

COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF THE TOWN OF CLARENCE**

The poster features a purple background with a decorative border of bats. It includes illustrations of pumpkins, a black cat, a ghost, and four cartoon characters in costumes (a princess, a devil, a ghost, and a witch). The text is in a mix of bold and regular fonts, with some words in orange.

Christmas in November



The Historical Society of the
Town of Clarence
Welcomes You To Our
Annual Holiday Party
Sunday November 30th 1-3pm

Entertainment Provided By:
Corfu-Pembroke Community Band
Town Park Clubhouse
10405 Main Street, Clarence NY 14031



Membership Corner

Time to Renew for 2026!

You can renew your membership in person or by mail.

Simply download the application from our website and send it in!

We have different tiers to choose from:

Student Under 18—\$5

Individual—\$15

Couples—\$25

Family—\$30

Business—\$50

Individual Life Member—\$150

Thank you all for joining!

We 
our
MEMBERS!

WORDSEARCH

Name: _____

Date: _____



Fall Word Search

The leaves are falling, and so are these words! Hidden among the puzzle are words all about fall, scattered in every direction—forward, backward, up, down, and diagonal. Can you find them all and bring the season into order by circling each one and crossing it off the list? Dive into the cozy challenge!

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

ACORN
APPLES
AUTUMN
BONFIRE
CHESTNUT
CIDER
CORNUCOPIA
COZY
CRANBERRY
CRISP
FESTIVAL
FOLIAGE
GOULD
HARVEST
HAYRIDE
LANTERN
LEAVES
MAPLE
MIGRATING
MOONLIGHT
ORCHARD
PINECONE



SQUIRREL
SWEATER
THANKSGIVING
WINDY



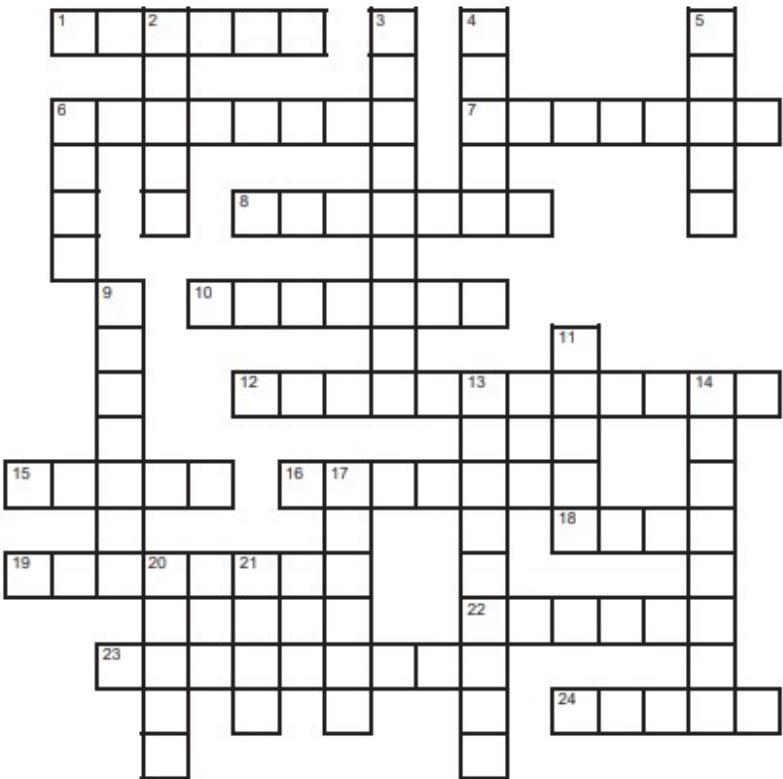
PUMPKIN
RAKE
SCARECROW
SPICE

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CROSSWORD

I LOVE FALL

Acorn
Apple
Autumn
Chestnut
Cider
Cobweb
Fall
Football
Gourd
Halloween
Harvest
Hay Bale
Hayride
Leaves
Maize
November
Nuts
October
Pumpkin
Quilt
Rake
Scarecrow
September
Sleet
Thanksgiving



ACROSS

- They fall from trees.
- Popular autumn sport.
- Jack-o-lantern gourd.
- The 10th month of the year.
- The gathering of crops.
- The fourth Thursday in November.
- Might be patchwork.
- Seat at a square dance (two words).
- Leaf gathering yard tool.
- They are roasted on an open fire.
- Halloween decoration made by a spider.
- The 9th month of the year.
- Decorative squash.



DOWN

- Oak tree's fruit.
- October 31st.
- Honeycrisp.
- Also known as corn.
- The season that follows summer.
- Fun activity on a farm.
- Drink made from apples.
- Used to keep birds off of crops.
- The 11th month of the year.
- Another word for the fall season.
- Semi-frozen rain.
- What squirrels often gather.

70 Years • 1954 - 2024



**HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF THE TOWN OF CLARENCE**

Founded in 1954

10465 Main Street
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www.clarencehistory.org

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.

