



HISTORIC PITTSFORD

Summer 2015 NEWSLETTER

THE GRAND LADY OF PITTSFORD DISTRICT NUMBER TWO

by Audrey Johnson

There is a white house, close to the side of Pittsford Mendon Road, at the foot of Armstrong Hill (no – it is now called Goodenough Hill) that the grounds around it in the Springtime turned into an amazing garden with daffodils, tulips, lilacs and strawberries. In that old house behind the front gate, lived Etta and Alfred Startup. They epitomized a couple who loved life right where they were – didn't need world- wide travels or big houses – just a garden and a shop that could hold all kinds of tools for fixing things and a teaching job right next door. And a large bucket to carry water up the hill to the schoolhouse with Pittsford District No.2 above the door. That schoolhouse was built in 1860 and was the second school in the community. And it was Etta Startup's first and only job.

Etta Startup was born in near-by Honeoye Falls as Etta Norton, a member of a significantly important pioneer family. She attended a District School in the town of Mendon, and then back into the village for high school and a year of training class. She was offered the teaching position at District No. 2 for the annual salary of \$327 in 1912 and she continued for 35 years until the District schools became centralized in 1947.



Etta was very organized and kept careful records of each of her students – all 680 of them. She outlasted eight Trustees of the District. She recalls the days when there were as many as 34 students in the little white schoolhouse. When it closed in June of 1947, there were six. The influx of children in some of those years was due to the abundance of the crops being grown by the local farmers who hired migrant families to harvest them. Those families would bring their children and they were cheerfully incorporated into the

school life and Etta Startup taught them just as she did the local children.

The school, its grounds, and utilities changed from the amenities of 1860. No more did Al Startup have to carry water in a bucket up the hill after a well was dug right next to the school. Swings and slides and teeter totters were erected by parents in the district. Electric lights, a phonograph and radio also were added. The children could happily enjoy their recess time using these additions.

Mrs. Startup received many letters and notes from former students as they went on from their graduation from high school. Some entered the armed services for it was a time of war. One letter was received by the teacher after the young pilot had been shot down

Grand Lady (continued from previous page)

in his airplane. It was well known that the students from District 2 were better prepared for high school than from some other districts.

Students at District No. 2 had many pleasant times as well as studying. There were picnics, and Halloween parties, Christmas pageants when older siblings and parents would come and be thrilled to watch their child be a Shepherd or Wise Man. And Mrs. Startup directed and oversaw every one and proclaimed this program was the best ever!

Gone are the days of District Schools, walking to and from school, - days of everyone eating lunch at school and perhaps sitting around the pot-bellied stove that cooked potatoes that some of the students brought for lunch, pick-up games of Red Rover when the snow was gone and catching polliwogs in the creek. Hard to say if ipads and smart phones and laptops make education better or easier. The students still have too much homework and too many outside activities.

HOW TO SAVE A BARN

1. Read the public notices and discover that a historic barn is about to be demolished
2. Bring the matter to Historic Pittsford to see if they might be able to save the barn
3. Members of HP enter into discussions with the owner of the barn and discover he is willing to donate the barn to the Town if it can be removed quickly
4. More discussions take place between Mayor Corby, Supervisor Smith, HP members and the barn's owner and it is discovered that the town has a potential spot to relocate the barn and grant money to cover costs
5. Find someone versed in disassembling and reassembling barns and locate a place to store the barn pieces until it can be rebuilt
6. Have HP make a presentation to the Town Board with all the reasons that saving this barn makes sense and the Town Board votes to save the barn.

The above mentioned barn is the Cass-Smith-Snyder barn, formerly at 1733 Calkins Rd. The barn is a 40x60 gable barn over 150 years old (circa 1850-60). It was once part of a large horse farm operation and is a prime example of barn architecture of that period in time.

This property was recently acquired by Mr. Bivone who needed to remove the barn from his property and was willing to donate it to Historic Pittsford or the town if they had a use for the barn.

Concurrently, the Town had recently received a \$175,000 state grant to plan and develop a nature park, complete with buildings, on the west side of the canal, adjacent to the DPW.

Coincidentally, this property used to be home to a barn. The Snyder barn could become a centerpiece property for program use in the Town's new nature park. At their January 2015 meeting, the Town Board voted to save and eventually reuse the Snyder barn.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER - (50 Years of) PRESERVATION MATTERS

Fifty years ago a visionary group of Pittsford residents officially organized Historic Pittsford. This year we are celebrating the myriad of accomplishments made not only through our current membership but by the important steps our predecessors took to assure that Historic Preservation became a Core Value for our community. Indebted and grateful to that farsighted group, we feel an equal responsibility to build upon their contribution by thoughtfully carrying on the important work that has helped to preserve the history of our community and make Pittsford an exceptional place in so many ways..

Since 1965, Historic Pittsford has strongly advocated for preservation of historic resources including, among many other actions:

- Formation of Historic Pittsford as a 'historical preservation society'; first directors were: Michael Newcomb, Richard Turner, and William Reinhard. Other subscribers were: Jacqueline Webber and Marion Barry. Judge Jacob Ark (father of local Supreme Court Judge John Ark) approved the Certificate of Incorporation 1965. Many others were involved...
- Commissioned Architecture of Pittsford Village survey (Paul Malo) via NYS Council on the Arts (1965) and funded Architecture of Town of Pittsford (1966), the basis for much of the historic preservation work to date.
- Strongly involved in the development and nurture of a model town historic preservation ordinance (1989) and advocacy for an effective historic preservation board...
- Documented (surveyed) important historic structures throughout community
- Persistent support for the town 'Greenprint' which preserved 5 historic family farms and other important lands (1999) through purchase of development rights
- Advocated for a strong preservation code in the village and for designation of the village as a local, state, and

national historic district

- Underwrote dozens of architectural consultations for owners of historic properties; ongoing service
- Commissioned survey of barn structures performed by Paul Knickerbocker in 1989.
- Produced dozens of programs related to preservation and relevant history
- Co-sponsored Harvest Festivals with the Greenbelt Association
- Conducted historic house / garden tours
- Established the Webber outdoor reading garden at the Pittsford library
- Arranged for historic metal plaques for homes and other structures

Now, 50 years later, we continue to encourage historic preservation as a core value. Most recently the board of directors has worked with public officials and private property owners to:

- Preserve the former Senator Rodney Janes estate, advocating designation of the residence (Janes Library) as a local landmark and the majority of the estate as town parkland
- Save from demolition the Cass - Smith - Snyder - Filer horse barn at 1733 Calkins Road, brokering an arrangement between the owner and the town to disassemble, store and eventually re-erect the barn on land in the village along the canal.

On Saturday July 18 2015 we will be celebrating our 50th year at Monroe's (the former Spring House) to which all of our members are invited. This will be a very special annual meeting...

Sincerely,
Margaret Caraberis Brizee, **President**
Historic Pittsford



Little House Office and Museum

18 Monroe Ave., Pittsford, NY 14534 / 381-2941

Open: Wednesday and Saturday 9am-12noon

Dorothy Meusburger, Secretary

Save the Date!

The Annual meeting of Historic Pittsford will be held on Saturday, July 18 at Monroe's (formerly the Spring House). Details will follow.

"Like" us on Facebook!

ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTATION PROGRAM - 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Since 1984, Historic Pittsford and Bero Architecture have partnered to provide an Architectural Consultation Program that makes expert advice available free to homeowners wishing to maintain the architectural and historic integrity of their property. Owners of any property in the Village and owners of properties in the Town that are either designated landmarks, inventoried, or built before 1902 have benefited from this program. Here are some highlights from the past 30 years:

- More than 200 consultations have taken place – approximately 155 in the Village and 50 in the Town.
- Consultations have covered issues as straightforward as selecting appropriate paint colors and as complex as determining structural integrity, solving structural and

maintenance problems, and providing guidance on the design and feasibility of significant restorations and additions.

- Most consultations were requested by owners of residential properties, however churches, commercial buildings and barns have also been the focus of requests.

Historic Pittsford and Bero Architecture are committed to continuing this important program. The service includes an on-site consultation and follow up written report and does not obligate homeowners for any future services.

For additional information or to request an architectural consultation, please contact Bonnie Salem, Historic Pittsford Board Member, at 586-2764 or bsalem@rochester.rr.com

HISTORIC BIRTHDAYS IN 2015

Historic Pittsford is 50 years old * Hopkins Farm is 200 years old * Pittsford Farms Dairy is 200 years old



18 MONROE AVENUE
PITTSFORD, NY 14534

Historic Pittsford 2014-2015 Board of Directors:

**President - Margaret
Caraberis Brizee**

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