

# HISTORIC PITTSFORD

spring, 2011

NEWSLETTER

## WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THAT LITTLE RED HOUSE?

by Audrey Johnson

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Edited by Karen Hultz

[www.historicpittsford.com](http://www.historicpittsford.com)

### *Statement of Purpose*

*Historic Pittsford is a not-for-profit organization chartered and incorporated under the New York State Department of Education. Committed to the preservation of Pittsford's rich heritage of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture and the special character and sense of place it has provided, Historic Pittsford also faces the complexities of today.*

There were two little houses on Lincoln Ave (and, in fact there still are!) One is a double house numbered 6 & 8 and the other is #10. That little house has been transformed!

The houses were at one time owned by Mr. Royal Newcomb, a funeral director whose home was at 31 South Main Street, adjacent to Lincoln Ave. In fact the two small homes were on the Newcomb property until that street was set off in mid 19th century. It was, at one time, called Morningside Park.

When Mr. Newcomb died, he left both houses to his daughter, who, at her death, left them to her husband, Mr. Phil Schmidt. At Phil's death, they reverted to the Newcomb family who has owned the two houses on and off since the early 1900's. At one time they were sold to the Nothnagle organization who wanted to raze them and build a parking lot behind the offices they were using as a real estate company. When the neighbors and the Village refused permission to do that,

the houses were sold again to the Newcomb Associates.

Poor little Number 10 was left empty for many years and it fell into serious disrepair.

There was no heat, no electricity, the roof and the siding were all in very bad shape.

Newcomb Properties wanted to sell the red house, but a stipulation was that the new buyer would have to move it at least 10 feet in order for a driveway to be created for both houses. A buyer was found who agreed to move the house and rehab it into an extremely livable home, but the Village said it had to fit in and look like a Lincoln Ave. home – no macMansion!

It has been completely updated. A garage has been attached, as well as a small deck. A basement was dug and is finished into 3 rooms. There are 7 rooms on the first and second floors and approximately 1300 square feet.

It is vacant and looking for a new owner. It still

sits on its lot – just a few feet further west and it is still numbered 10 Lincoln Ave.



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ILLUMINATING CARL CRUMLEY

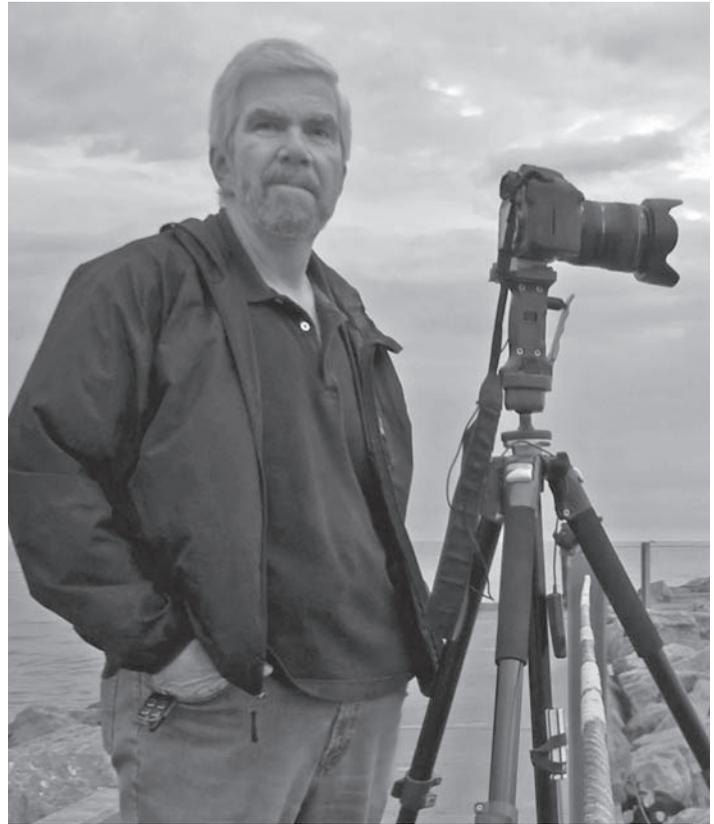
by Vicki Profitt

After spending thirty years traveling the country for his job in the airline industry, award-winning photographer and Historic Pittsford member Carl Crumley chose to settle down in Pittsford. His wife, Liz, is a long-time Pittsford resident. Photography has long been an important part of Carl's life since he received his first camera, a Kodak Brownie Starflash, for Christmas as a child.

Carl's love of photography has fostered his interest in history. "I've become quite an upstate New York history buff while out taking photographs and coming across historical things like the Erie Canal, the Pittsford pioneer cemetery, the 1793 Hathaway barn in Farmington, and the cobblestone railroad building in Fishers. Researching and learning about these things has stimulated my interest in history. I've read a few books about the Erie Canal, and I'm currently thoroughly enjoying *Reflections on Big Spring – A History of Pittsford, NY And The Genesee River Valley* by David McNellis" (now available for sale at The Little House).

"I think my underlying reason for joining Historic Pittsford was my interest in old Lock 62 and the several hundred yards of the original Clinton's Ditch that remains pretty much undisturbed behind Pittsford Plaza shopping center. With the 200th anniversary of the canal approaching I think that would be a great project for restoration and preservation of this important piece of history. Perhaps there are others in Historic Pittsford that share my dream of a restored canal section with a lock that visitors could enjoy and learn from," says Carl.

Although he is primarily a landscape and nature photographer, Carl counts Pittsford's grain tower and flour mill and the Erie Canal at the Great Embankment among his favorite subjects to photograph. "I'm particularly fond of historic structures, and especially in wintertime with our snow, and the wonderful, low angle sunlight we have all



Pictured: **Carl Crumley**

winter in these northern latitudes. We're very fortunate in upstate New York to have beautiful scenery, interesting subjects and the best lighting around."

A winner of numerous photography contests, among them contests held by the Honeoye Falls – Mendon Chamber of Commerce, Camera Rochester, the Kim Komando Computer Show, and the Rochester Nature Photography Meetup, Carl was recently awarded First Place in the "Buildings, Bridges & Locks" category by The Erie Canalway Organization for his photograph of the Springdale Guard Lock in Pittsford.

Carl Crumley's photography can be seen on his website, [www.CarlCrumley.Zenfolio.com](http://www.CarlCrumley.Zenfolio.com).



## BARN TOUR CELEBRATED

by Liz Jackson-Renner

Saturday, October 16, 2010 was a beautiful Fall day – perfect for a barn tour. About 80 children and adults jumped into their cars with "map" in hand and toured selected barns south of the village.

The farmers enjoyed talking about their barns and/or selling produce. Refreshments at one barn were served and Historic Pittsford raised \$700 for Little House upkeep and projects. Let us know if you'd like to experience another tour. Call 381-2941 or stop by the "Little House".

## THE WELCOME LADY

by Joe Maxey

Most everyone who has moved into the Town or Village of Pittsford has been greeted by the Welcome Wagon Lady. If there hasn't been a face to face meeting, there was the familiar bag of goodies left on the door knob as a token of good cheer and welcome to the neighborhood. Well, that lady of endless energy and charm has decided to retire after 30 plus years of being an ambassador of good will. The diminutive, silver haired dynamo is our beloved Virginia "Ginny" Vesty.

Several years ago, Ginny agreed to partner with Historic Pittsford by including our literature in her Welcome Wagon greeting bag. She also kept us up to date on new arrivals in the Town and the Village.

I had the good fortune to talk with Ginny as she was preparing to leave this area and move to be near one of her four sons in NJ. We could have spent the afternoon enjoying recollections of her life in upstate NY. Ginny was a graduate of Nazareth College, majoring in Sociology and trained as a social worker. As circumstances would play out, she never took the job offered her as a social worker. Instead she worked in the family's coal and feed business until she married. It is interesting to note that her early training in college adequately prepared her to be the welcoming person new residents would meet.

Ginny has made a major contribution to our community. On behalf of Historic Pittsford, and the new residents I thank you Ginny and wish you many wonderful years enjoying your family. I hope they can keep up with you.

## A 'BIG SPRING' IS NOT JUST THE WEATHER

by Joe Maxey

It is understood that many are looking forward to the end of winter. The 'Big Spring' referred to here is the recently published book by David McNellis; "*Reflections on Big Spring, a History of Pittsford, NY and the Genesee River Valley*".

David McNellis is a former resident of Pittsford and a current member of Historic Pittsford. Although he has retired and lives in San Carlos California, he has spent the last five years researching the history of Pittsford and Western NY. The result of his interest in this area is a wonderfully fascinating account of how the Native Americans and early pioneers helped shape what we now enjoy as our home. The natural spring of fresh water in Pittsford has been a major influence in the development of the area and its people.

For more information on the author and background on the book, go to <http://www.sites.google.com/site/bigspringnewyork/home>.

The book can be obtained at the Little House, 18 Monroe Avenue in Pittsford. Soft cover books are: \$18.00 and are in stock. Hard cover books are: \$25.00 and must be ordered. Copies may be reserved by calling 381-2941. Business hours of the Little House are Wednesdays and Saturdays 9 AM to 12 noon. You are invited to visit our website at [www.historicpittsford.com](http://www.historicpittsford.com).

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As I sit down to write this report, I'm looking out the window at lots of snow and thinking it's a little bleak. And as I walk and drive through the Village, I'm aware of all the vacant properties. Is it economic times that are catching up with Pittsford or is it something else? Maybe the cost of properties have necessitated raising rents to unrealistic levels or are we missing what people really want? I know we travel to "the mall" to get our necessities, but do we want to? I don't think so. We have "lost" our grocery, pharmacy, hardware and basic clothing stores. Is it no longer important to have these conveniences in a village? Maybe not, but I miss them.

As some of you may remember, several years ago, I had one of those stores that closed. The combination of "big box" competition and raising rents influenced my decision to concentrate on bicycles and close the hardware store. I apologize to those who miss the

convenience of Pittsford Hardware. I miss it too.

I'm feeling a little like Andy Rooney today, showing my age and commiserating on the past, but I'll try to remain optimistic. Spring is here and as you read this, the empty buildings will be filled with new fresh merchandise and redecorated store fronts will be attracting us. I'll support local merchants and businesses and hope you do too.

As we reminisce, enjoy our community. We still have one of the nicest villages in the world. And no small part of this, is without Historic Pittsford's contribution. We are keeping it alive and well. Thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely,  
Rusty Likly, **President**  
Historic Pittsford

## 2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Vice President** - Joe Maxey

**Secretary** - Jo Anne Shannon

**Treasurer** - John Parker

**Assistant Treasure** - Peter Webster

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Margaret Brizee, Bob Corby, Jean France, Karen Hultz,

Liz Jackson-Renner, Audrey Johnson, Mary Menzie,

David Minor, Nancy Swett, Vicki Profitt, Deborah

Resch, Bonnie Salem



***Little House Office and Museum***

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

Open: Wednesday and Saturday 9am-12noon

Dorothy Meusburger, Secretary

## EMAIL ADDRESSES

Historic Pittsford would like to start building a database of member email addresses, so that we can improve our methods of communication. When you renew your membership, please note your email address at the bottom of the renewal card. This information will be used solely by Historic Pittsford.

### FREE ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTATION SERVICE

If you are experiencing basic structural problems or contemplating exterior architectural changes to your home, consider asking for the services of Historic Pittsford's Architectural Consultation program.

This program offers on-site consultation and a follow up report by preservation architect John Bero. Any property located in Pittsford Village, regardless of age, or any town property built prior to 1902 or listed on the Town's list of buildings worth of historic designation qualifies. To request this service, contact Mary Menzie at 381-3799.

### PRESERVATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Historic Pittsford is once again accepting nominations for its Preservation Achievement Award. HP encourages both its members and non-members from throughout the community to nominate those whose outstanding contributions to the preservation of the history and character of the Village and/or Town of Pittsford are worthy of recognition.

Eligible candidates include individual groups, organizations, businesses, students, scouts, public and governmental bodies, etc. If you know of anyone worthy of this award, please contact John Parker at 586-1439.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday, March 17 – 7:30pm**

**“Lost Architects of Rochester: a Selection of 19th and 20th century Names”**

Cynthia Howk of the Landmark Society shines a light on local architects who, once recognized in their field, have become “unknown” to our generation.

**Thursday, April 14 – 7:30pm**

**“Illuminated History: the Civil War Soldiers of Pittsford”**

HP Board member and historian, Vicki Profitt, recounts stories of local residents who served in this North/South conflict. It is an opportunity to observe, in an up close and personal way, the sesqui-centennial of our nation's sad but epic event.

**Saturday, April 30 – 8 am – 5pm**

Landmark Society Annual Preservation Conference

**“Repair, Rehabilitate, Reuse”**

Details available at [www.landmarksociety.org](http://www.landmarksociety.org)

**Thursday, May 12 – 7:30 pm**

**“A Case Study: Historic Renovation and Revitalization on Avon's Main Street”**

Learn how public participation, architects and contractor worked together to rescue the neglected 1870's 'Opera Block': lynch pin of the Village's business sector.

**Sunday, July 10 – 5:00 pm**

Annual meeting and picnic, Pittsford Farms Dairy Tour the Dairy's new store and processing facility.