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Many thanks to Valley Mechanical for much needed plumbing work at the Cleveland House!
Tim and Joe worked tirelessly in the June heat & humidity to ensure that we had plumbing for this summer's museum opening.
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(photo by Trish Lambiase)

Naples Memorial Town Hall 150th Anniversary!

Editor's Note: Below, excerpts from a 2010 article by Past President **Priscilla Crawford**, highlighting the building's construction and previous uses. Reprinted here with her permission; edits made for space considerations. Read the complete article in its original form, including updated history, on our web blog at <https://www.naplesnyhistoricalsociety.org/post/a-history-of-naples-memorial-town-hall>

The Naples Memorial Town Hall is one of only two buildings in New York state built as a memorial to those who served in the Civil War.

It has been used in recent years during the Grape Festival and as the focal point of the Memorial Day Speeches and Light Up Naples night (during the winter holiday season), but it has a rich history.

The people of Naples went all out to support the Union effort during the Civil War. Before the war ended, 225 men had served in the armed forces.

At the end of the war, town meetings were held. By a vote of 250 to 30, residents of Naples approved to raise tax funds to build a Memorial Town Hall. At first \$8,000 was raised; then \$5,500 was raised through taxes to cover unforeseen expenses.

The site: James and Margaret Monier sold their "circus lot" to the town for \$5,000. Seymour H. Sutton, a Naples grocer and justice of the peace, made the building design. E.W. Buck of Naples was awarded the building contract. Fred P. Byington of Naples dug the cellar. Charles Dunton of Naples made the bricks at his yard



"Old Home Week" illustration by artist Anna Warren (Source: Naples Bicentennial Calendar, 1989)

on the Middlesex Road. The roof slates were brought by [steam] boat from Canandaigua to [Woodville]. Progress on the memorial hall was rapid considering the lack of modern construction material in 1872. Buck had the cellar dug by May 4th and the masons were putting up the brick on June 1st. The [joists and] window frames were installed in the second story on June 29th; the roof was started on September 4th; the bell was installed and ringing on September 29th.

It didn't take long to put the hall to use. The Naples Fair and Grape Festival held its annual show there on October 10th and 11th, 1872. Formal dedication of the building

took place on November 16, 1872. After its completion and until World War II, the hall was the center of social and recreational activity in Naples:

- July 4, 1873 - first recorded dance (given by Myron H. Sutton, C.S. Jaqua, and E.M. Benson); admission set at \$2 per couple.
- Visiting performers included Jack Carner, a comedian, Mose Case, a guitarist and Fred Helcker, a pianist.
- 1889 - June and Julia Lyon and Mrs. Carrie Gross presented a cantata
- 1910 - DeRue Brothers Minstrels
- Early 1900's - band concerts, Naples High School basketball games and school activities. (There was no gym then in the High School.)

The building of the new centralized school in the late 1930's doomed the recreational era of the memorial hall. After 1942, it was seldom used.

In 1947, the Naples Chamber of Commerce was formed to improve the business activity in Naples, with a principal goal to convert the seldom-used memorial hall into an industrial site. After much controversy, a public vote on April 2, 1947 resulted with approval (501 to 69), to sell the building to the Naples Chamber of Commerce for \$1,500. The chamber formed a group called Neapolitan, Inc., and leased the building to the Carpenter Shoe Company, which operated less than a year. Memorial Hall then traveled through a maze of ownerships. Bristol Cabinet Corporation made cherry furniture there for a while.

When the firm ran into money problems, Security Trust purchased the building in 1958 for \$5,000. Since 1950, owners of the building have included Widmer's Wine Cellars and the Naples Central School District. A trust was set up by Widmer's in 1947 and Walter L. and George L. Todd, controlling stockholders in Widmer's, gave it to the school in 1963. The building was used for storage, containing an estimated 8,000 square feet of space.

The Town of Naples reacquired the building in 1972. In 1994, an application was sent to the NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Memorial Town Hall was awarded historic site status in 1995.

Our Mission: The mission of the Naples Historical Society is to promote an interest in the history of Naples, New York and the surrounding area by maintaining and displaying historical collections and exhibits, and by providing educational programs.

Our Vision: The vision of the Naples Historical Society is to spread a love of the Naples community by preserving our local history, discovering new knowledge together, and sharing our resources with all.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness that we share the news that Honorary Director **Merrillan Thomas** passed away in December 2021. A memorial service was held on April 23rd, 2022. We are grateful for all of Merrillan's contributions to the Naples Historical Society, and extend our condolences to the family.

SPRING PHOTO REVIEW



April 13th - Naples Library Teen Services Coordinator, Danielle Tcholakian, and several members of the Naples Library's Teen Advisory Board, visited the Cleveland House Museum to see our current displays about local history, and to hear former Historical Society President, Wayne Buchar, talk about the Underground Railroad in Naples. We enjoyed hearing their questions and interests, and hope that they return again soon!



May 20th & 21st - Yard Sale! In addition to raising over \$1,500 for the Naples Historical Society, we had a great time visiting with all the familiar and new faces! Thank you to everyone who donated items, to all the lucky patrons who found treasure, and to all of our volunteers. Above, L to R: Paul, the happy bartender at our Thursday Night Preview Party for donors & members; Board members Nancy Linehan & Cindy Scoda.



Our **Spring Barn Quilt Raffle winner** was Teresa Gray from Spencerport NY. She was delighted to be the winner, and has gifted the vibrant barn quilt (made and donated by Deb and Frank Lindboom) to Hospice House here in Naples for everyone to see!

At left: Former President Wayne Buchar presented Deb & Frank with a booklet about the history of their own studio property, as a thank you for their contribution to the NHS barn quilt fundraiser in 2021 & 2022.



May 11th - Clean-up Day at the Mill - Thank you, Volunteers! The container has been moved from the front to behind the Mill; the grounds were cleaned, seeded & made tidy for summer! Thank you to John & Jan Murphy, Jun Liu, Bill Trude, Trish Lambiase and Tony & Holly Deussenbery.



...And the Tin Shop has been brightened up, too! Thank you to Judi Cermak, artist, teacher and President of the Ontario County Arts Council for creating a panoramic landscape mural to enhance the front windows of the historical society's tin shop on Mill Street (right next to Morgan Hose Building). Her daughter Jan Cermak did the installation (shown at left). Jan is owner of Finger Lakes Wild Goods, a new shop at 19 Mill Street across the street from the tin shop. The shop offers healing gifts of the Natural World, jewelry, clothing, antiques and much more. When Jan's shop is open Thursday - Sunday, she gets to view and enjoy her mother's art work.



June 4th - Civil War Medals, Monuments, and Markers in Ontario County presentation by Ontario County historian Preston Pierce, well attended at the Morgan Hose Building.



Cleveland House Museum

Located at the corner of Rt. 245 & Main St, Naples

Open 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. every Saturday during July & August (July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, August 6, 13, 20, 27)

SPECIAL BONUS: July 9 & August 6
Naples Town Historian **John Murphy** on site – come with your questions!

Did you know that Naples once had its own movie theater, during the “Golden Age of Hollywood”? Or that during the Civil War era, Neapolitans assisted formerly enslaved people as they moved northward? Current displays answer these questions & more... The Cleveland House itself includes notable details as well: Previous damage to the chimney reveals the distinctive Rumford Fireplace design, “cutting edge” technology during the time it was built — True to the innovative & progressive spirit of Neapolitans! Oooo & aaaah at the bed chamber stencils, considered the jewel of the Cleveland House! The elaborate stencilling is attributed to Stephen W. Clark, the son of Major Joseph Clark and grandson of Col. William Clark. Stephen was Naples’ first college graduate and was the author of the widely used *Clark’s Grammar*.

- **NEW THIS YEAR:** a children’s corner with activities!
- Recommendations regarding masks & appropriate social distancing will be required by all.
- Restroom closed to public.

Summer Artisan Series

during Saturdays @ the Cleveland House Museum

Saturday, July 16th – Mac’s Woods Homegrown in Naples, NY produces tables, benches, frames and much more. Each piece is unique. **Tom MacAllister** will be on site to answer all your wood questions.

Saturday, July 23rd – Local artist **Barbara LeVasseur** is enjoying her retirement doing oil painting, watercolor, gouache and ink art work. Over 40 new gouache paintings depicting nature, florals, scenic landscapes, animals and fantasy will be on display for sale. These are all originals offered at under \$100 apiece.

Saturday, July 30th – See artist **Tim Williams** melt glass in his microwave kiln to make his “recycle-ware”. He will cut, forge and create rings and pendants from old silverware and melted glass.

Saturday, August 6th – Dahlia Mandala – Elizabeth Wist is a Finger Lakes Artisan located in Geneva, NY. She will be selling magnets, cards and 8.5"x11" prints of her photography and artwork. Original abstract paintings and mixed media postcard collages will be available for sale, as well as beaded and enamel jewelry and charms.

Saturday, August 27th – Jan Cermak, owner of Finger Lakes Wild Goods, will take you back to your wild soul by connecting with the healing gifts of the Natural World; wild crafted herbal products to pamper body & spirit; earthy jewelry and art pieces made with ethically sourced bones, stones, feathers, bits and bobs; and delicious edible treats from the plant kingdom to nourish and delight. Jan will give a talk at 1:00 about her creations. There will be a unique and lovely selection of offerings to purchase.

NAPLES & THE CIVIL WAR Program Series

Celebrate
Memorial Town Hall's
150th anniversary!

Thursday, July 14th 7:00 p.m.
Finger Lakes Community Band Concert — Patriotic favorites! Bring your lawn chairs for this special concert, sponsored by the Town of Naples. @ the grounds of Memorial Town Hall, 135 N. Main Street, Naples

July 17th 1:00 p.m. “The **Small Flag at the Bottom of the Trunk**” The story of a Confederate flag taken as a war trophy by Ira Nelson Deyo. Presented by NHS member **Michael Nighan**, Great Grandson of a Naples Union Soldier.
@ Morgan Hose Bldg, 22 Mill St, Naples

August 14th 1:00 p.m. “Naples **Memorial Town Hall - 150 years of history**” Program presented by **John Murphy**, Naples Town Historian. Bring lawn chairs & questions. @ the grounds of Memorial Town Hall, 135 N. Main St, Naples (rain location: Morgan Hose Building, 22 Mill St, Naples)

Saturdays during July & August 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. “The **Underground Railroad**” display features Naples furniture maker and undertaker **William “Billy” Marks** and his wife **Emily**, their involvement in the Underground Railroad, and the time they invited and hosted renowned abolitionist **Frederick Douglass** to come speak in Naples. @ Cleveland House Museum, corner of Rt. 245 & Main St., Naples

Now on Display: View a framed **roster of Naples Soldiers and their fates**, Memorial Town Hall and Civil War ephemera.
@ Caruso's Cafe, 110 S. Main St., Naples

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Left: Naples Town Supervisor, Tammie Hicks, Naples Historical Society President, Trish Lambiase, and NHS Vice President Blanche Warner

took a road trip to the **West Hollow (Schoolhouse) Cemetery** to do a little exploring of the condition of the stones and the general condition of the grounds. We are discussing what can be done to improve the appearance and accessibility of this historic burial ground. We found information about most of the people who are buried here at www.findagrave.com!



Oral History Interview: On June 14th (Flag Day), Blanche Warner interviewed **Bill Cooper** at his and Kit Corti's home. Bill talked about his service in the Navy during WWII and the Korean Conflict. Bill is 98 years old now and still able to recall the events as if it were yesterday. Kim Torpey handled the recording and editing. The interview will be available on our YouTube channel soon.

DONATE

Stories from Naples history help us to understand where we came from and what has been

important to our community as it has grown & continues to grow. Your donations assist the preservation and sharing of these stories through our collections, exhibits & programs.

To make your tax-deductible gift online or by mail, visit the **DONATE** button at NaplesNYHistoricalSociety.org



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Naples Historical Society Naples, NY

Naples Historic District Committee Update - June 2022

GOOD NEWS! The New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) announced that the *Central Naples Historic District*, *Naples South Main Historic District* and the *Fairview Cemetery* were all reviewed by the State Review Board at their meeting on June 9th, and have all been listed in the State Register of Historic Places. SHPO is now preparing these nominations to send to the National Park Service (NPS) for final review with a recommendation for listing in the National Register.

SHPO has also sent the *Fairview Cemetery* nomination

to the State Tribal Preservation Office for review at the request of the State Review Board. The cemetery has early history as a Native American burial ground and SHPO wants to be sure that the Tribal Office is aware of the listing and has the opportunity to provide feedback. It will then be sent on to the NPS.

The Viniculture District is slated for review by SHPO at their fall 2022 meeting. The State Review Board has looked at the *Viniculture Historic District* nomination and suggested some edits based on additional information found and information provided by Blanche Warner to the Land-

mark Society of Western New York. As a result, a few properties are being added to this district along N. Main Street.

VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING with SHPO for Viniculture District Wed., August 3rd @6p.m.

Look for a flyer announcing this, with registration link:

- on the Landmark Society website at <https://www.landmarksociety.org/naples/>
- on the Historical Society website
- Notification letters to be sent to property owners in the Viniculture District

— Paul J. Lambiase, Chairperson, Naples Historic District Initiative



Naples Grape Festival 2022

Bringing Families & Friends Together

September 24-25, 2022

Visit <https://naplesgrapefest.org/>

to learn about this year's **Community Events**,
the Grape Country Gala & more!

~ Returning by popular demand ~

Grape Pie Workshop!

**Saturday, September 17th
12:00-3:00 p.m.**

@ Trinity Federated Church,
123 N. Main St., Naples

- * Participants: Please bring a pie plate and rolling pin. Ingredients will be provided.
- * Class will be taught by former Grape Pie Contest winner Meghanne Freivald!
- * \$15/person to cover cost of ingredients
- * Register at NaplesNYHistoricalSociety.org

2022 Wish List

- ✓ Gift cards for office products
- ✓ iPad Pro for showing 360° video of the Cleveland House Bedchamber stencil work
- ✓ Rolls of stamps

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our efforts! If you are interested in contributing towards this wish list, please contact NHSNYinfo@gmail.com

Thank You

*The printing of our Summer 2022 newsletter is sponsored in memory of Past Naples Historical Society President **Beth Flory** by her family.*

STOP, DON'T RECYCLE THIS PAPER! (*yet*) Please share this newsletter with a neighbor and urge them to join NHS. By gaining more members, NHS will become stronger and able to preserve more of our past!