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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER  
LATE SUMMER 2020

## Highlights from the Naples Historical Society's Strategic Plan for 2020-2025

**What is our mission?** To promote an interest in the history of Naples and the surrounding area by maintaining and displaying historical collections and exhibits, and by providing educational programs.

### What are some of our objectives?

- ☛ Maintain a balanced budget
- ☛ Preservation and maintenance of our historic properties.
- ☛ Develop an accessibility and signage plan for all buildings; make all buildings ADA accessible.
- ☛ Implement standardized collections registration system and maintain ongoing storage procedures.
- ☛ Establish a process to make collections accessible to all audiences served.
- ☛ Develop and display exhibits on the history of Naples.
- ☛ Continue and broaden public programming and creative events in the community, develop annual programs.
- ☛ Continue to work with Naples Central School to provide programs for students.
- ☛ Continue to provide scholarships to Naples High School students.
- ☛ Attract new board members who are passionate about history and the society's mission and objectives.
- ☛ Increase volunteers & membership.

## NHS PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**T**he summer is nearly over. That is ok by me as it has been so hot working outdoors at the Inn and in the gardens. This will be a summer to remember – with our museum closed, no grape festival, no new garden tours. It does however seem that we are adapting to the new normal. I forget to bring my mask with me when I leave my car less often now.

As for the opening the Cleveland House Museum, we are discussing ways to open it later this season, or in the Fall, however, we will likely end up keeping the same displays that we had last year as many of us are busy with baby sitting (and teaching) our kids, running our businesses, and working under these very unusual conditions.

The next big projects on the horizon (in my daily thoughts) are to secure and preserve the wall stenciling in the Cleveland House Museum, emptying out the storage container in front of the Red Mill, deciding on what to do with the beams and posts from Lyons Corner store that burned last summer (I would like to use them to reconstruct the 1860's Naples Band Stand – but where?), turning the Red Mill into a Viticulture / Viniculture museum and opening it to the public, and thinking about how we will absorb the impact of not having the income from the Grape Festival.

The great news is that our NHS Board is staying healthy and dreaming about getting back to doing business again!

— Wayne Buchar

### Events on hold, and Cleveland House Museum remains closed, due to COVID-19 Precautions.

With the safety and health of both our visitors and volunteers in mind, the Cleveland House Museum (located at the corner of Rt. 245 & Main Street, Naples) will remain closed to the public at this time. We look forward to welcoming visitors again as soon as COVID-19 restrictions permit and our volunteers are comfortable. Visitation by small groups and special tours may be possible by special arrangement. Visit the NHS website for event calendar updates:

[www.naplesnyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.naplesnyhistoricalsociety.org)

### Help us write Naples history about our modern local businesses.

If you visit our Facebook page regularly, you may have noticed that for the past couple of months we have posted photos from albums which were made by past Naples Town Historian, Bill Vierhile. The albums were made in 1976 and 2000.

It occurred to us that it would be a good idea to collect information on Naples businesses today. To that end, you all could help us by sending us information about your own business, including a paragraph about the business, photos of owners and employees as well as of the building (if there is a building) inside and out. Please send the info to our email address

[NHSNYinfo@gmail.com](mailto:NHSNYinfo@gmail.com)

— Blanche Warner

Brothers  
Robert and  
Bill Vierhile,  
inside Vierhile  
Hardware on  
125 S. Main St.,  
Naples, now  
Skip's Custom  
Flooring. (from  
Bill Vierhile's  
2000 album)



# Beth Flory Park at the corner of Main St. & Mill St. The Naples Historical Society has dedicated this park to Beth for her significant contributions to the society and the community.



We were surprised and delighted to receive a notice in late July from one of Beth Flory's daughters that she would be travelling through Naples and would be excited to see the Beth Flory Park. A group of us met with Betsy and her husband, Jay Grant, and gave them a tour of the garden. We hope to be able to have a formal dedication of the park when Covid-19 allows.

position she held until 1987. From 1987 to 1990, she taught English at the Darrow School in New Lebanon, NY. Beth and Sheldon retired to her summer home (her grandfather's cabin) on Coye Point, Canandaigua Lake in 1990.

In retirement, Beth was active in the Naples Historical Society, where she served as its President for many years, and was instrumental in restoring the Morgan Hook and Ladder Company building. She also served as a board member of the South Bristol Historical Society, the Shaker Heritage Society, and the Nundawaga Society for History and Folklore. Beth was the author of many local history articles published in the *Crooked Lake Review* and was awarded a grant to support her writing by the New York State Council on the Arts. For many years she wrote the column "Glancing Backwards" for the *Naples Record* newspaper. In 2004 she was recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Naples Rotary Club for her many contributions to her community and the ways in which her life exemplified the humanitarian and educational objectives of the Rotary Foundation. Stephen Lewandowski reminds us that Beth was also a fine poet.

— Blanche Warner

## EXCLUSIVE BREAKING NEWS FOR EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS!!!

We have a super exciting announcement to share! It happened just after the printed newsletter went to press, so be sure to scroll to the last page of this newsletter to READ ALL ABOUT IT!

# Scholarships Awarded to NCS Class of 2020 graduates



Congratulations to the Naples Central School Class of 2020 students who were this year's recipients of Naples Historical Society Scholarships: **Kara Cusson** and **Phoebe Neubauer**. Best of luck to you both!

Each year the Naples Historical Society awards two \$500 scholarships to Naples students who have a lively interest in history. One scholarship is in memory of **Bill Vierhile**, former Naples Town Historian and an active member of the society; the other scholarship honors **Bill Cooper** for his ongoing involvement with the NHS, currently more than 25 years.

— Trish Lambiase

# The Naples Historical Society has recently been given these items:

- A "butterfly" quilt from **Unada Grieve**
- A laptop and two monitors from **Chip Weismiller**
- A Victorian chair from **Diane Reynolds**
- Papers from the Tobey Clothing Store from **Dierdre Stevenson**
- A Naples Schoolhouse bell from **David Wilkinson**
- *Naples Pennysavers* from **Joe Scardilla and Trish Aser**
- A business sign from **Greta Selin-Love**
- Barn siding from **Mary Martin**
- Four oak chairs from the **Naples Library**

— Blanche Warner



## GET TO KNOW OUR MEMBERS



### **John Murphy** Naples Town Historian

I love to travel and except for this year we have not made many trips. This year we have only traveled to our off the grid cabin near Raquette Lake. I've had some inquires about early family histories

for people from Illinois to parts of NY. People have contacted me by phone, mail, and e-mail. I miss the tours I usually give and hope they will be able to resume next year.

#### **Why did you join the Naples Historical Society (NHS)?**

I was always fascinated by history. I grew up in Fairport where my father would take me into the old buildings and explain the town's history. This love transferred to Naples when I moved here to teach in the high school. I enjoyed sitting and talking with Bill Vierhile and exploring Naples landmarks with him. The historical society have me the outlet to add to my knowledge.

#### **One of your favorite stories from Naples, NY history?**

It's hard to choose just one...

- "the first contact" or when the 1st settlers arrived and their interactions with the Senecas.

- Naples military history — from the well-regulated militia that marched off to the Niagara frontier during the War of 1812, to the over 200 men who fought in the Civil War later honored by the building of the Memorial Town Hall.

- Water power and the mills

Let's face it: much of Naples history is fascinating!

#### **What does history teach us about ourselves?**

History teaches us that we have a place. It gives us a sense that we are grounded (roots) and are part of a continuum.

#### **Why is history important in our modern world?**

Edmund Burke wrote "Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it." Our country's history is filled with incredible people and their achievements. The framework of our government is a model for progressive governments throughout the world. We also must not forget some dark and disturbing aspects of our nation's history. Some of these aspects are resurfacing today as people twist history to satisfy their biases.

#### **In 2119, what do you hope the Naples Historical Society will tell folks about what Naples was like in 2019?**

Naples in 2019 is a caring vibrant community. Many people take pride in their town. They work to preserve the look and feel of our historic town and village.

As Town Historian my most enjoyable times involve talking about Naples history. I like the school groups and their enthusiastic response to our history. Also I enjoy my various talks and meeting with tour groups.



### **Sara Slocombe-Almekinder** NHS Board Member

I live in the Italy Hills with my husband, Jason, and daughter, Clara. I enjoy gardening, singing, and taking long walks with our yellow lab, Otis.

I will celebrate my 18th anniversary at Paychex in October, where I am a manager responsible for Service Technology.

#### **Why did you join the NHS?**

I joined the Naples Historical Society because my friends invited me to go to a dinner at the Mill. The dinner was for NHS members, so I joined. I became more involved because I value Naples Historical Society programs and they are only possible because of volunteers. This is our place in the world and I want to contribute to keeping it a beautiful, welcoming place to live and visit.

#### **One of your favorite stories from Naples, NY history?**

A creation story is hard to beat! According to Seneca legend, Clark's Gully at the south end of Canandaigua Lake is the birthplace of the world.

#### **What does history teach us about ourselves?**

History IS us. We think of history as something that happened a long time ago to long ago people, but every moment that passes is history. Each stone in the Pioneer Cemetery represents the life of a Neapolitan who lived, loved, and died in our valley. They were modern people in a modern age until time marched on and left them behind. History reminds us that we too are in time.

#### **Why is history important in our modern world?**

Remembering history should make us humble and compassionate. The modern world needs more of both.

#### **In 2119, what do you hope the Naples Historical Society will tell folks about what Naples was like in 2019?**

In 2119, I hope Neapolitans will hear about the origins of the Cleveland House museum and marvel that it's still intact 225 years after the home was constructed. I hope they'll see photos from when we broke ground for the water treatment plant and appreciate that it's still keeping their water clean after 100 years. I hope there are stories about how we celebrated when the Historic Naples Hotel re-opened after a brief hiatus in the summer of 2019. I hope we're remembered for keeping Naples's streets tree-lined, quiet, and free of McDonald's, Starbucks and stoplights. I hope we're remembered as a community that respected and cared for all its citizens and that we lived life fully.

Note: Parts of the interviews above originally appeared in 'The Neapolitan Record' Issue 47, Sept/October 2019 (reprinted here with permission).



# WHAT ELSE HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?



Above: Paul Lambiase;  
At right: Blanche Warner,  
Trish Lambiase

Stop by the new Caruso's Cafe to see our seasonal displays of photos & artifacts! Jodi Simons Caruso, owner of the newly opened Caruso's Cafe at 110 Main St., Naples, has invited the Naples Historical Society to share some of our collection of local treasures with the customers. We have our own wall there and we will be rotating the items periodically. Current displays feature the Grape Festival and Naples businesses of the past. Thanks to Jodi and Mark for the opportunity!



A big thank you to the volunteers (Oli and Chris Abraham, Marnie Lersch, Mike Joseph, Betsy Mehlrose, Amie Levine, and Wayne Buchar) who helped to clean out and move the contents of the Tin Shop on Monday, August 10th. The Historical Society owns the Tin Shop which is between the Morgan Hose building and Beth Flory Park. Contents included old signs and several other items and ephemera. The beautiful weather cooperated perfectly to allow items to be set out on the lawn in the sunshine, sorted into boxes of "like with like", and then moved in to the basement level of the Red Mill. The NHS now has more options for how to utilize the Tin Shop's central location just off of Main Street.



WHERE TO FIND US!



1. The Morgan Hose Building
2. The Cleveland House
3. The Red Mill
4. The "Tin Shop" & Beth Flory Park

on Facebook: "Naples NY Historical Society" @naplesnyhistory — interesting photos & stories from the NHS archives. Chime in with what you know about the photos & facts!

on Instagram: @naples\_ny\_historical\_society

on YouTube: "Naples Historical Society Naples, NY" — Follow our videos for a Walking Tour of Historic Naples, narrated by Naples Historian John Murphy

# Naples Historical Society receives grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation

(NAPLES, NY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2020)

The Naples Historical Society has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation. This grant, which is funded by the Lloyd E. Klos Historical Fund at the Community Foundation, will support the Naples National Register Historic District Initiative. The Naples Historical Society is partnering with the Village of Naples Historic District Committee, and the Landmark Society of Western New York as consultant, to develop final National Register of Historic Places nominations for three Historic Districts and one individual property (Fairview Cemetery) identified in the 2019 Naples Historic Resources Survey performed by the Landmark Society.

National Register designation is good for home and business owners giving them access to the New York State Homeownership Rehabilitation Tax Credit program. A historic district can also be an excellent marketing tool and can help build neighborhood pride. According to **Naples Mayor Brian Schenk**, “the nomination to and establishment of these districts on the National Register is an integral part of implementing the long term strategic plan goals for the Village of Naples. Recognition of these districts will assist in accomplishing these goals by raising awareness of their cultural and economic importance within the community, and by enabling potential tax credits and grant funding. Established National Register districts will strength-

en the tourism base by maintaining local authenticity while helping to ensure that proper planning, zoning, and resource development standards are adhered to in order to maintain an inviting atmosphere and quality experience for both visitors and residents.”

The three distinct National Register-eligible historic districts within the village are associated with the village's development as a regional milling, viniculture, and commerce center in the 19th and early to mid-20th centuries. The old Fairview Cemetery is associated with the area's early settlement. The State Historic Preservation Office, a division of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, concurred with the Historic Resources Survey results and determined that all are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Landmark Society of Western New York has been identified as the consultant to coordinate the detailed efforts necessary to proceed with the National Register application process which will take several years to complete. Chairperson **Paul Lambiase** says, “This grant will enable the community to go forward in hiring the Landmark Society of Western NY to complete the National Register nomination which involves extensive research, writing and documentation of more than 250 structures in the proposed districts.”



Figure 14. General map of three proposed NR-eligible districts

The three distinct National Register-eligible historic districts within the village are associated with the village's development as a regional milling, viniculture, and commerce center in the 19th and early to mid-20th centuries. The old Fairview Cemetery is associated with the area's early settlement. (Image above, courtesy of Naples Historic Resources Survey by the Landmark Society of Western New York)

The complete, final Historic Resources Survey can be accessed at:  
<http://www.naplesny.us/documents/HistoricSurveyReportfinalcopy.pdf>

