

# Minerva Historical Society Quarterly Newsletter

VOLUME LVI NO. 4

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## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The Minerva Historical Society is immensely grateful for the generous support we receive from our members, donors, and supporters. Your generosity enables us to continue our crucial work of preserving and promoting the history of our community, and we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt appreciation.

Thanks to your generosity, the society has been able to

- *Establish a website*
- *Care for our physical plant*
- *Publish our quarterly newsletter*
- *Have a presence at community events such as; Minerva Day, Irish Day, and the Christmas Bazaar*
- *Offer programs to our membership and community including outreach to our local elementary students*

Your contributions have made a significant impact, creating positive change in the lives of our members, our students, and our community. Supporters like you provide the resources we need to continue to maintain and grow our mission and goals.



Our new website allows us to make the history of Minerva, Olmstedville, and Irishtown available to our community and beyond. We could not have accomplished this without the

*Thank you—continued on page 4*

## VANDERWHACKER FIRE TOWER

*By Michael Corey*



*July 12, 2003. During a work day to help clear the trail to the summit and make the old watcher's cabin more accessible by cutting back encroaching vegetation. Left to right: Noel Davis, Bill Brannon, Jack Freeman, Ken Brust. Jack Freeman of the Adirondack Mountain Club authored the 2001 ADK book "Views From on High: Fire Tower Trails in the Adirondacks and Catskills". He inspired the Friends of Vanderwhacker group to form.*

Dating back to early 2001, a group called the "Friends of Vanderwhacker" sought to devote time, energy and funds to rehabilitating the fire tower on the summit of Vanderwhacker Mountain, which lies in the western region of the Town of Minerva. The tower is currently in useable condition, thanks at least in part to the work done by the group, which was pretty active for several years following its inception.

*Vanderwhacker—continued on page 5*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>QUARTERLY EDITOR</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sharon Stone PO Box 81 Minerva, NY 12851 <a href="mailto:mhsquarterly@gmail.com">mhsquarterly@gmail.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">A friendly call to writers, photographers and local history admirers alike: Send us, photos of Minerva artifacts, family photos and writings of, yesteryear.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Quarterly Committee</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Heidi Kelly Kathy Halloran Geraldine Plumley Distribution: Ann Hornbeck</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Publications issued</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">January, April, July and October</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>FINANCIAL REPORTS</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>GF Operations Checking</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$20,631.21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Restricted</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$9,675.43</td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Unrestricted</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$10,955.78</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Custodial Accounts</b></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vanderwhacker Tower</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,804.71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Bi-centennial Committee</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$5,605.02</td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Switzer Building Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>\$2,265.70</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$9,675.43</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Investments</b></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  GF CD</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$30,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Vanguard</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$247,560.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Current Scholarship Liabilities</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$18,500.00</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Federal Flats Cemetery Checking</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$4,148.28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Federal Flast Cemetery Savings</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,638.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Value of all accounts</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$285,478.41</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>GF Operations Checking</b>	\$20,631.21	Restricted	\$9,675.43	Unrestricted	\$10,955.78	<b>Custodial Accounts</b>		Vanderwhacker Tower	\$1,804.71	Bi-centennial Committee	\$5,605.02	Switzer Building Fund	<u>\$2,265.70</u>	Total	\$9,675.43	<b>Investments</b>		GF CD	\$30,000.00	Vanguard	\$247,560.62	<b>Current Scholarship Liabilities</b>	<b>\$18,500.00</b>	Federal Flats Cemetery Checking	\$4,148.28	Federal Flast Cemetery Savings	\$1,638.30	<b>Total Value of all accounts</b>	<b>\$285,478.41</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>CHANGE OF ADDRESS</u></b></p> <p>If your email or mailing address has changed, please update the Society at <a href="mailto:hallorankathy8@gmail.com">hallorankathy8@gmail.com</a></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>BOARD</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">President: Nancy Shaw Vice President: Ronnie Silver Secretary: Sharon Stone Treasurer: Julie Milner</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>TRUSTEES</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Michael Corey Kathy Halloran Michael Lynn Kate McCormick Julie Milner Chair: Cynthia Perkins Teresa Brannon Strohmeier Ronnie Silver Joyce Tuffey</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>IN THIS ISSUE</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PRESIDENT'S COLUMN—COMMITTEE NEWS</b></p>																															
Thank You to Our Supporters	1,4	<p>Another year is upon us, out with the old and in with the new. As you know, many tasks ahead of us need our attention. Our two largest projects are painting the museum and installing fencing around the rest of Federal Flats Cemetery.</p> <p>The theme for Minerva Day, which will be held on July 6, 2024, this year, is "Quilts and Curiosities." You can read more about this on page six.</p> <p>This past year, the Society began the process of reviewing our mission and goals through a Vision Workshop with the help of Board Trustee Joyce Tuffey. We will be working throughout the year to complete this process with the ultimate goal of having a solid vision, mission, and goals going into 2025. Everyone is welcome at these meetings; please keep an eye out for date and time announcements.</p> <p>Our annual letter has been mailed out and includes updated information on our trustees and officers. I would like to welcome the new people. We are looking forward to working with you as well as having a productive year. Part of that productivity is to create job descriptions for trustees, officers, and committee members. This will help with recruiting members in the future. Also on our agenda is the creation of a new committee called the Helper Committee. This committee is for people who have a little bit of time to help on projects but not enough time to commit to a committee full-time.</p> <p>Our Program Committee is working on a schedule of programs for the upcoming year. If you have ideas or would like to request a program, please email the Society at <a href="mailto:mhsquarterly@gmail.com">mhsquarterly@gmail.com</a>.</p> <p>Treasurer Julie Milner has been working hard looking for additional funding streams for the Society. Thanks to her efforts, the Society can now accept donations and membership payments through Qgiv on our website. She and Secretary Sharon Stone have worked with Microsoft to get approved for their nonprofit program. This will provide access to the Microsoft 365 Office Suite for MHS work. We are also excited to announce that Julie has just let us know that NYS has approved us for a listing on CharitiesNYS.com. This allows possible donors to confirm that we are a Tax Deductible NYS Charity.</p> <p>It is looking to be an exciting year for the Historical Society.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Nancy Shaw</i></p>																														
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At the October 2024 General Membership Meeting, the following business items were accomplished.

Minutes from the July 2024 meeting were accepted.

A slate of Trustees and Officers was put forth and accepted

#### Trustees

Julie Milner (3-year term) Kate McCormick (3-year term) Cynthia Perkins (3-year term) Joyce Tuffey (1-year term)

#### Officers

Nancy Shaw—President, Vice President—Ronnie Silver, Treasurer—Julie Milner, Secretary—Sharon Stone

#### Budget

A suggestion was made to pass funds being held by the Society for the Vanderwhacker Fire Tower Cabin onto the NYS Chapter of the FFLA (Forest Fire Lookout Association) Laurie Rankin of the FFLA stated she would need permission from DEC to accept the funds and was given instructions on requesting the funds once that permission was received.

#### Gordon Bowie Funds

Discussion concerning the use of the Gordon Bowie Funds which are being held in the Society Scholarship Fund. A suggestion was put forth to reach out to the lawyer who wrote Gordon Bowie's will for clarification on any restrictions placed on the use of the funds.

**Motion to accept the proposed 2024 budget. Motion passed: all in favor**

#### Bylaws

*Motion to amend Articles V and X to read (wording in red reflects updates)*

***The Trustees and Officers, together, shall constitute the Board of Trustees.***

***There shall be nine (9) elected Trustees and four (4) elected Officers, all of whom shall be members in good standing of the Society. At the first annual meeting held on April 26, 1978, nine (9) Trustees were elected. Three (3) of such Trustees were elected for a term of one year, three (3) were elected for a term of two years, and three (3) were elected for a term of three years. Thereafter, at each annual meeting, Trustees shall be elected for a term of three (3) years, equal in number to the Trustees, whose terms expire. The Board of Trustees shall, as soon as practical following the annual meeting of the Society, elect one of its members as Chair.***

#### ARTICLE X—AMENDMENTS

*Amendments to these bylaws may be made at a regular or special meeting of the Society, upon a vote of two-thirds of the voting members present. Such proposed amendments must have been submitted in writing to the Trustees, and a copy of the same must have been mailed or emailed to all Society members at least seven days before the amendment is to be voted upon. Motion Passed: 1 abstention*

#### Committee Reports

##### Cemetery:

Four interments for 2023 with 2 more scheduled

Clarification that the Society owns the cemetery and is responsible for its care.

##### Membership

-282 current members

-2 new

-20 members not current with dues

##### Museum

-2023 Exhibit has been taken down

-166 visitors for the season

-Internet Service needs to be upgraded

-Quilt's and Curiosities is the theme for 2024

#### Scholarship

-Meeting date TBD

#### Quarterly

-October Quarterly went out on time.

#### President's Report

-Thank you to everyone who helped to paint the school-house

-Irish Day: Society had a table set up manned by Nancy Shaw, Cynthia Perkins and Joyce Tuffey

-Adirondack Historical Alliance: Sharon Stone gave a brief summary of the meeting hosted by the MHS and announced the next meeting will be on 10/28/23 in Chester-town.

-Job Description needed for Committee positions

#### Programs

-Five programs were held in 2023

Thank you—continued from page 1

generous support of the Town of Minerva. The Town of Minerva also provides printing services for our Quarterly Newsletter, keeping our membership current on Society, Museum, and Community happenings. The Town is also generous in helping us with cemetery care and being present at Town events.



The generosity of the [Community Fund for the Gore Mountain Region](#) [rough the Adirondack Foundation](#) allowed us to present a program From Professor Curt Stager on African American History in the Adirondacks and helped to fund our [2023 Exhibit “Woods and Water: 100 years of Camp Che-Na-Wah](#) and our educational outreach to [Minerva Central School](#) elementary students.



Thank you [Glens Falls Foundation](#) for providing capacity building funds to the society which allows the it to address items like postage and Internet access.



The museum office now has an updated networking system with new computers, printers, and software, allowing for the digital archiving of artifacts and simplifying the process of creating an exhibit. This technology upgrade was possible thanks to grant programs offered by the Museum Association of New York. [Museum Association of New York.](#)

The Society benefits greatly from an annual donation from the H. R. LaBar Family Foundation Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Fund as well.

And of course, our general membership. Without our members, where would we be. Thank you for your continued support which includes, but is not limited to membership dues, committee work, and meeting/program attendance.

We would like to extend a special thank you to everyone who has played a role in supporting The Minerva Historical Society. Your dedication and generosity inspire us to continue our important work, and we are honored to have you as a partner in our journey.

On behalf of everyone at The Minerva Historical Society, we extend our deepest gratitude to our incredible donors and supporters. Your belief in our mission fuels our work, and we look forward to achieving even greater milestones together.



**4-H'ers in the Spotlight**



Hayley Killion, Paige Warrington and Shelby Tuller participated in the 2nd Annual 'Huffin for the Stuffin' on November 23, 2023

**Membership Dues**

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/membershipdues>

**ONLINE PAYMENT AVAILABLE**



**Minerva Historical Society**

The Vanderwhacker (also variously called Vanderwalker or Vanderwacker) fire tower has been in place as a sturdy metal structure since 1918. It was originally constructed of wooden timbers in 1911. Once one climbs the tower (which is 60' high), one has a full and spectacular 360 degree of surrounding peaks. Getting to the top is worth the hike, which begins as a gentle grade leading to the old fire watcher's cabin, then becomes a steep hike to the summit.

In February of 2001, an informational meeting was held at the Minerva Town Hall, with the purpose of sparking interest in the rehab of the tower, which at that time had undergone some decay. A steering committee of "Friends of Vanderwhacker" was formed then, consisting of Noel Davis (Chair), Lorraine Plauth, John Paradis, Bill Brannon, John Eldridge, and Mike Corey.

It was decided to work closely with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) personnel, as the tower, trail, and old cabin were on State land within the Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest Area. With the help of Mike Curley and John Chambers of DEC, funding (\$10,000) was secured to help finance the rehabilitation effort; both joined the steering committee for the Friends group in 2003.

In July of 2003 and again in August of 2004, work was accomplished by members of Friends of Vanderwhacker, DEC, and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to fully paint the metal superstructure, upgrade the trail to the tower, remove old windows to be replaced by new, rebuild wooden tower steps, and fortify the concrete tower footings. In August of 2004, a helicopter on loan from the NYS Police was used to bring building materials for the rehab.

The Vanderwhacker facility was formally closed by DEC as a fire tower in 1988. The watcher's cabin at the base of the mountain has seen little upgrade since the facility's closure and is now in very poor shape. The DEC has continued to keep the trail up to the summit in good shape, as well as the tower.

The Friends of Vanderwhacker (Fire Tower) developed a mission statement in 2001: 'An organization of people dedicated to restoring, preserving, and promoting the stewardship of the Vanderwhacker Fire Tower, observer's cabin, and the public lands adjacent to it'

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

**from the Minerva Youth Commission**



**Be on the lookout for upcoming events!**

- Trips to local attractions**
- Annual Minerva Stream Regatta**
- Gore Mountain Ski Program**
- Minerva Youth Program**

**Consider becoming a member!**

**Meetings are held at The Minerva Town Hall  
(upper level)**

**Third Wednesday of the month at 6pm\***

**\*Next meeting will be January 10, 2024 at 6pm**





## MHS ESSAY CONTEST

### 2023 WINNERS

By Museum Director

Cynthia Perkins

Grades K-4 students from Minerva Central School visited the MHS museum on September 8th, 2023, and were tasked with drawing something that piqued their interest from this year's museum collection: Woods & Water or 100 Years at Camp Che-Na-Wah. The younger students drew pictures, and the older students submitted an essay along with their drawings. These works of art were then collected by their classroom teachers and handed over to the MHS Essay Contest Committee to be reviewed. First, second, and third-place winners were chosen, and at times, it was so challenging to choose that there were multiple winners for each place! As in the past, a winning student not only received a Certificate of Merit but also was awarded a monetary prize, depending on their ranking: 1st = \$15, 2nd = \$10, & 3rd = \$5. A celebration party was held in the Cafeteria of MCS on October 25th, 2023, and the following winners were announced:

<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>Grade 1</u>	<u>Grade 2</u>	<u>Grade 3</u>	<u>Grade 4</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> Ava Graves	1 <sup>st</sup> Lincoln Proctor	1 <sup>st</sup> Sophia Palmateer	1 <sup>st</sup> Elizabeth Smith	1 <sup>st</sup> Rosemary Clark
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thiago Azcona Garcia	2 <sup>nd</sup> Clara Poulton	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tristyn Gregory	2 <sup>nd</sup> Calvin Fish	2 <sup>nd</sup> Judith Ritson
3 <sup>rd</sup> Jack Halloran-Donaldson	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mason Barney	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tie—Gemma McNally & Piper O'Hara	3 <sup>rd</sup> Silas Proctor	3 <sup>rd</sup> Layne Winter

After the awards ceremony, the students were treated to drinks and snacks provided by Kathy Halloran, Heidi Kelly, Joyce Tuffey & Cynthia Perkins. Each student also received some Halloween party favors. (photos on page 6) Photos of the museum visit can be found on our website as well as [www.minervahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.minervahistoricalsociety.org)

### 2024 MUSEUM THEME:

### QUILTS & CURIOSITIES

by Museum Director

Cynthia Perkins

Part I of this year's museum theme will spotlight area quilts, both old and new, made by or handed down by local townspeople. The idea came from Nancy W. Shaw and was also inspired by Martha Galusha, my mother and former museum director, who loved making quilts!! As far back as I can remember, she designed and made quilts for every family wedding or birth of a baby, which I have cataloged into a

"Memory Album" that will also be on display at the museum this summer. One of Martha's most pre-



Example of Galusha Family quilt made by Martha Galusha (middle), being held by Alison Galusha (L) and Laurie (Mrs. Daniel Galusha) on (R).

vious quilts, "Silhouettes," was even chosen to be displayed at the Adirondack Museum (now called "The Adirondack Experience") in Blue Mountain Lake, NY.

Part II of the display will be for people curious about old antique items, tools, family heirlooms, whatnots, or thing-a-ma-jigs discovered in our attic storage area. Some items still need to be identified!

Do you have an unknown or "curious" item that you would like to have displayed? Please send me an email at [mhsmuseumdirector@gmail.com](mailto:mhsmuseumdirector@gmail.com) so we can add your curious item to our display.

### MHS ESSAY CONTEST 2023 WINNERS



**Row 1:** Mason Barney, Ava Graves, Thiago Azona Garcia Lincoln Proctor, Jack Halloran Donaldson, Piper O'Hara **Row 2:** Tristyn Gregory, Sophia Palmateer, Clara Poulton, Layne Winter, Elizabeth Smith, Calvin Fish, Silas Proctor **Row 3:** Gemma McNally, Rosemary Clark, Judith Ritson,



Thiago Azona Garcia  
Jack Halloran Donaldson  
Ava Graves

Mason Barney  
Clara Poulton  
Lincoln Proctor  
Museum Director and  
Trustee:  
Cynthia Perkins



Tristyn Gregory  
Sophia Plamateer  
Gemma McNally  
Piper O'Hara

Silas Proctor  
Calvin Fish  
Elizabeth Smith



Thank you to The Community Fund for the Gore Mountain Region through the Adirondack Foundation for their generous donation to the MHS which helped fund this program.



Layne Winter  
Judith Ritson  
Rosemary Clark



## MINERVA CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWS

### Merger News

The merger study process began by selecting committee representatives from both communities. To date, those committees have met three times. All meetings are open to the public. Please note that while these are open meetings, attendees must submit questions on provided index cards. These question will be answered at the next meeting. Questions may also be submitted via the form at <https://bit.ly/mergerquestions>.

If you were unable to attend the Focus Group meetings on Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> and have a question, please use the above form to submit your question. Meeting summaries and recordings are posted on the merger website at <https://bit.ly/mergerwebsite>.

### Upcoming meeting dates are;

January 31<sup>st</sup> at JCS: 6 :30 pm                      February 15, at MCS: 6:30 pm

### Representatives for Minerva are

Staff:	Ken Smith	Melanie Galusha
Faculty:	Bruce Hodgson	Chris Fink
Community:	Sharon Stone	Trish Gardner
Parents:	Billie Jo Pratt	Jessica Nichols
Students:	Gemma Raymond	Kali Hayes

Once the study is complete, the findings will be submitted to both Boards of Education. Each Board will then decide whether or not to hold a straw vote in their respective communities. If either Board decides that the study does not support a merger and chooses to not hold a straw vote, the process ends at that point. If both communities hold a straw vote, the results are sent to the Commissioner of Education who looks at the results and determines if there is enough interest in both communities to hold a formal vote. In order for the merger to move forward the vote must pass in both communities. If this does not occur, the districts must wait one year to revisit a merger option.

In other Merger News, MCS Superintendent Candice Husson and JCS Superintendent Michael Markwica were both interview by North Country Public Radio concerning the news. The interview can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/possiblemergerinterview>

### 2024 – 2025 Budget

The budget process for the 2024 school year has begun. Budget workshops are held prior to regularly scheduled Board meetings which are held every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 6:30 in the school library. All Board and Budget meetings are open to the public.

### Academic Honors

The following students were honored for Academics at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marking Period.

#### **Emerald List**

Michelle Ordway	Kara Tucker	Shelby Tuller	Caitlin Wamsley
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#### **Honor List**

Jacobie Bentley	James Fish	Jonathan Hodges	Addison McCall	Nathan McNally
Liakai Secor	Logan Taylor	Nathan Vanderwarker	Giovanna Villasante Sartoni	

#### **Merit List**

Camran Cavanaugh	Claire Fish	Abygail Goldsmith	Teyah Graves	Blake Hayes
Izumi Kirako	Landyn Jenks	Katelin McNally	Carter Pratt	Courtney Scott



**Students of the Quarter:** Thomas Ball                      Jacobie Bentley

### Athletics

Congratulations Kara Tucker, Nate Vanderwarker for being named MVAC Fall Scholar Athletes.

### College Credits

In other news, the MCS Business Department has added Business Medical Terminology for three college credits. Students can now earn up to 16 college credits in the Business Department. MCS students can earn college credits through in-house classes in partnership with North Country Community College. Credits are available in Art, English, Math, Spanish and Business.

Students also have access to credits through the following programs.

- Early College High School Program, a partnership between SUNY Adirondack and WSWHE BOCES
- College in the High School Program through Hudson Valley Community College.
- New Visions through WSWHE BOCES
- Career and Technical Education through WSWHE BOCES

Eighth grade students attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual CTE Works event on November 8<sup>th</sup> at the Saratoga Convention Center. This program is sponsored by WSWHE BOCES and introduces students to CTE programs and possibilities.

A group of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade girls attended the Women in Trades event at the BOCES Meyers campus in Saratoga. The girls were introduced to trades that are traditionally male dominated.



## Looking for ways to give back to your community?

**Please consider joining the Minerva Service Organization.**  
The MSO provides support in a variety of ways to members of the Minerva community.

#### Some of our service projects include:

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Goodwill assistance to people in need | Back to school sneakers and supplies to MCS students |
| Minerva Backpack Program              | Minerva Food Pantry                                  |
| Minerva Youth Commission              | Dolly Parton Imagination Library                     |

Additionally, The MSO hosts the annual Spring Garden Workshop, the Harvest Soup and Pie Sale and delivers welcome baskets to new community members.

#### Past projects include:

- |   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| The Minerva Bicentennial Quilt                                      | The Minerva Veterans Memorial |
| The Memorial Adirondack Chairs at Courtney Park and Donnelly Beach. |                               |

The work we do is extremely important and very gratifying, but to continue our efforts, we need new members. Please consider joining. Our next meeting will be held on Monday, January 22 at 7:00pm at the Minerva Community Center.

**Come and find out more, bring a friend! We hope to see you there.**

**MINERVA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**PO Box 1, Olmstedville, NY**  
**12857**

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP**

**Please note the increase to \$20  
for annual dues**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email (s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES,

I wish to receive the Quarterly  
by Email.

Please make checks payable to:  
**Minerva Historical Society**

*Memberships expire December 31<sup>st</sup> of  
each year and are tax deductible to  
the extent allowed by law.*

**Historical Society Dues**

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual & Couple An-  
nual Membership \$20.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to pay annu-  
al dues for more than one year:

\$20 x \_\_\_\_\_ years = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to my dues, I would  
like to make a donation of:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ Other

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 LIFE Membership

**Thank you for supporting our  
local history!**

**WHEN MINERVA LAKE WAS NEW IN THE WINTER OF 1932**  
**FAST RACES ON MINERVA LAKE**

(The following article was contributed by **Mrs. Mary Jenkins** of Olmstedville and was taken from some old newspaper clippings.) [The North Creek News—April 19, 1972, page 6](#)  
Thank you Joy Healy for finding and providing this snippet of our past.

Minerva inaugurated its horse racing on the ice at the new Minerva Lake Sunday afternoon with four races, in which local and vicinity horses participated and furnished about two hours of fine sport. Nearly 800 persons attended, a much larger crowd than had been anticipated. They made the trip in autos, about 175 cars being parked on the ice, and a large bus loaded with fans made the trip from North Creek, while from a wide radius people journeyed on foot. The day was ideal, only a few snow flurries occurring but not of sufficient intensity to mar the fun. Four races were held. In one three heats took place, and two heats in each of the others. Some excellent time was recorded. A half-mile straight-away track was laid out on the ice, and along almost the entire distance the crowd surged to get a view of the fast steppers.

In the first event, Nathan Drake, of North Creek, won the first two heats with his pacer, and Michael Flynn, of Minerva, was second. The time of the two heats was 1:15 and 1:10.

The third heat went to Mr. Flynn, with the surprisingly fast time of fifty-nine seconds. This approached the world's record for pacing. According to records available, Directum I, pacing against time at Syracuse on September 14, 1916 made the half mile in fifty-five and three-quarters seconds.

John Kelley, of Minerva, and Archie Belden, of North Creek, participated in the second race. Belden took the first heat in 1:15 and Kelley the second in 1:11.

Because of a change in the shoeing of one of the horses, the third heat had to be cancelled.

Walter Kellogg drove a horse owned by William Dougherty, and Edward Brannon a horse owned by Mr. Flynn in the third race. Brannon took both heats, the time being 1:25 and 1:29-1/2.

The fourth race was for runners and created a great deal of entertainment, the riders being garbed in ridiculous costumes. Ben Owens won the two heats. Dan Cronin finished third in the first heat and second in the third, while Harry Raymond was second in the first and third in the second. The time was fifty-seven and forty-seven seconds.

During the afternoon, the runners and their drivers acted as police in keeping the crowds back so that a track could be kept open for the other races.

Fred Butler, Howard Callahan and William Caulkins, all of Minerva, officiated as starters. Dick Baker of Bakers Mills, Fred Gotier, of North Creek, and Walter Bibby of Olmstedville, were the judges and William Ratigan, of North Creek, the timer.

Half of the gate receipts went to the fastest horse in any race and consequently Mr. Flynn was the winner because of the excellent showing of his horse in the first race. Prizes of oats went to the other winners.

Willie Flynn and John Gallagher, in their cutter behind the flying heels of their small donkey, added to the entertainment during the afternoon.

The enthusiasm over the races increased rapidly as the time for the event last Sunday approached, and now plans for other meets are being made. At press time, we are unable to ascertain the date of the next meet, but it is said efforts are being made to prepare a program for next Sunday.

## TOWN OF MINERVA NEWS

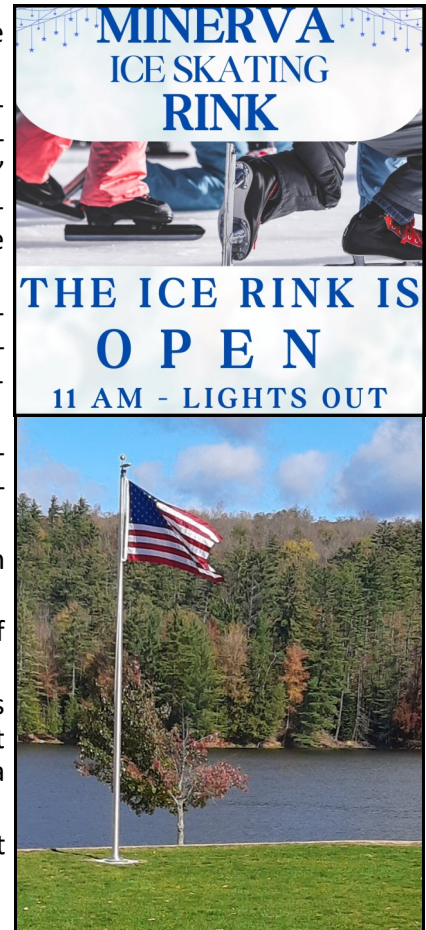
While reviewing the Town Board packets and minutes for this quarter, a recurring theme emerged. Whether discussing the Minerva Youth Program, the Minerva Snow Traveler's Club, the warming hut, various non-profit organizations in town, or the utilization of community facilities, it is evident that our Town Board supports our community.

Between October and December of 2023, the following items were on the agenda:

- The Minerva Youth Program gained a new bus driver for the summer program and year-round events as well as money for a DJ for the annual Halloween Party and a new venture this year called "Santa's Workshop." Santa's Workshop was held at the school and allowed students to purchase gifts for family and friends at extremely affordable prices. The workshop was a huge success and we hope it becomes an annual event.
- The Minerva Snow Traveler's Club received \$4000 to be used on materials to be used to clean up our local trails. The Snow Traveler's Club reciprocates the support by grooming the sledding hill and the trails throughout the campsites which are used for hiking and cross-country skiing.
- The Board amended Resolution 4 to read the pricing for the use of community facilities by residents and non-profits to be at no charge. A deposit will be required for everyone including residents.
- The Minerva Volunteer Fire and Rescue received funding to repave in front of the firehouse.
- The Minerva Historical Society received funding to help offset the cost of mowing the Federal Flats Cemetery.
- The ice rink and the warming hut came up many times. The Board wants both of those facilities safe and ready for the winter season. The first sledding party was held on Saturday, January 13, and by all accounts, a great time was had by all.
- Donnelly Beach received a new flagpole with a built-in solar light so that the flag is lit up at night.

### In other Board news

- The preliminary 2024 budget was accepted after the Board was able to pass a resolution overriding the tax cap levy.
- A key drop-off box was requested for the community center
- A new digital sign is being discussed as the sign at the Town Hall needs repair.
- Minerva Day will be held on July 6th, 2024.
- Stacie McNally will be taking over managing the food pantry with the retirement of Kathleen DeGuilme. Thank you to Kathleen, Stacie and all of the volunteers who work hard to make this service available to our community members.
- The Town of Minerva Received \$1.5 million in funding for the replacement of nearly 6,000 linear feet of water main across two drinking water project areas from Governor Hochul. Minerva Veterans were celebrated with a ceremony on November 11th at the Veteran's Memorial in front of the Community Center. Veterans Michael Lynn, Army, Vietnam War; Edward Healy, Air Force/Air National Guard, Vietnam War; Donald Plumley, Army, Vietnam War; Philip Johnson, Marines, Korean War; Robert Lee, Army, Vietnam War; and Larry Lanphear, Army, Vietnam War were present.
- The town is currently awaiting approval for the placement of a cell tower from the APA. The tower will be placed on Church Road where the water tower sits. If approved, the town will receive \$15,000 per year for leasing the land from Verizon. This will improve cell coverage in the Olmstedville area as well as along Pottersville Road.
- The town now has a source for recycling E-waste which means TVs and other E-waste can be dropped off at the Transfer Station at no cost to Minerva Residents.





**Florence B. Savarie**, 91 of Olmstedville, passed away peacefully at her home Monday, November 27, 2023.

Affectionately known to her friends and family as Floss, she was born to Ed and Grace West Brannon on July 31, 1932. She was the oldest of three children. She was predeceased by her parents, her brothers Jim and Bill, and her husband Robert Savarie whom she married on August 30, 1952.

Floss and Bob owned and operated Board-n-Batten Antiques out of their home in Olmstedville and also were member dealers at Glenwood Manor in Queensbury and the Stagecoach in Potteryville. They were active in community functions and were members of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Olmstedville.

Floss is survived by her 6 children, Mary (Savarie) Hall, Beth (Savarie) Allen, Chris Savarie, (Patty), Joseph Savarie (Patti), Ruth (Savarie) Olbert (David), and Thomas Savarie (Mandy), several grandchildren, great-grandchildren nieces, and nephews.

One life lesson Floss would want us all to remember is to keep the faith & love with all your heart, better days are coming.



**Tammy Geopfert** passed away peacefully by her husband's side early Friday morning November 3, 2023, after a lengthy battle with Leukemia. Tammy was a fighter and held on as long as possible for her husband, children, and grandchildren. Tammy was born in Glens Falls, NY on March 6, 1971. She was a resident of Minerva, NY for many years before settling down in the mountains of Maine. Tammy belonged to the Church of Latter-Day Saints and had many friends

within the church's community. Tammy lived for her husband Tony, children, grandchildren, and her hobbies. She enjoyed a simple existence, which included being a "mamma bear & Mimi ", walks to the park, going to church, playing games, coloring Thomas Kincaid works of art, scrapbooking collecting photos of family and friends, and FaceTiming with her grandbabies and family. Tammy enjoyed jokes with her family especially when it came to her "strong hand". Tammy would like to be remembered by this quote "Let go of the idea of perfection — you are not perfect, you are real. Let yourself be flawed and allow yourself to make mistakes. Recognize that you're not always going to have it all together. Sometimes your heart is going to break, you are going to get hurt, you are going to feel pain. Don't apologize for being broken — every time you break you become a little more alive. You become more open with yourself. You become exposed to your sensibility. Every crack tells you a little more about yourself - your strength, your courage, your tenacity — what you're made of. Do not hide these pieces from the world, they are a part of who you are. You see, the most beautiful people are beautifully broken". Tammy is predeceased by her mother, Sharon Stuart of Olmstedville, NY, her father Rexford Baker of Brant Lake, NY, her sister Sandy Gereau of Newcomb, NY. Tammy is survived by her husband Tony Geopfert of Fairfield, ME, her children Bennjamin Hall of the 126th Chemical BN (US Army) and his partner Eric Hasse of Bellevue, NE, daughter Kassandra Whittier of Kentucky, sister Judie Baker of Indian Lake, and Matthew Cooper of Malone, NY.



**Cassie Hunter Foote**, 18, of Elmer, MO passed away on Saturday, October 21, 2023, as a result of an auto accident.

Cassie was born on August 8, 2005 in Columbia, MO, the daughter of Barry and Brenda (Shatzer) Foote. She attended Atlanta High School where she had played softball and received numerous awards for art along with a scholarship from Truman. Cassie was energetic, enthusiastic, loving and kind. She enjoyed art and graphic design, singing, hunting, playing xbox games, and spending time with her boyfriend, many friends and especially her family. Cassie touched many lives and brought peace with those that needed it.

Cassie is survived by her parents, Barry and Brenda Foote of Elmer, MO; maternal grandmother, Gloria Wade of Plattsburg, NY; paternal grandfather, Robert Foote of Minerva, NY; maternal grandparents, Ronald and Brenda Janes of Anabel, MO; siblings, Easton Foote, Jennabeth Simons, Beccalynn Hayden, Jessie Foote and her fiancé Tyler; one nephew, Bentley; her boyfriend, Jason Kane and his parents, Brad and Addie Lattin; and other extended family members. She was preceded in death by her paternal grandmother, Vivian Foote.



**Corinna Leigh Russell:** OLMSTEDVILLE — It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Corinna Leigh Russell of Olmstedville, New York, born in Glens Falls, New York, who passed away on December 13, 2023, at the age of 54, leaving to mourn family and friends. Leave a sympathy message to the family on the memorial page of Corinna Leigh Russell to pay them a last tribute.

She was predeceased by : her daughter Chelsea Lynn Britton; and the father of her child Gary L. Smith. She is survived by : her mother Roxanne Smith (Jones); her partner Kyle Hitchcock of Olmstedville; her daughters, Crystal, Cassandra and Cheyenne; her sister Sky Smith (Badger K. Holleway) of Indiana; her pet Mischief; and also Boo. She is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins.



### **Richard V. Villeneuve Jr.**

North Creek

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the death of Richard V. Villeneuve Jr. of North Creek, New York, who passed away on October 28, 2023, leaving to mourn family and friends. Leave a sympathy message to the family in the guestbook on this memorial page of Richard V. Villeneuve Jr. to show support.

He was predeceased by : his parents, Richard Villeneuve and Dorothy Villeneuve (Bateman). He is survived by : his daughter Jennifer Villeneuve; his granddaughter Elizabeth Dague; his wife Peg Jugon; his sister Vicki Smith; his nephew Danny Phillips (Tammy); his great-nephew Richard; his nephew Scott Phillips (Emma); his in-law Antoinette Corkery (Dennis); his nephews, Dennis Corkery and Michael Corkery (Emily Kauff); and his great-nieces and great-nephews, Julia and Thomas.



### **Margaret (Kelly) Strohmeyer**

OLMSTEDVILLE - Margaret (Kelly) Strohmeyer, 93, of Olmstedville, NY, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, at Elderwood at North Creek, NY.

Born in Brooklyn, NY on November 18, 1930, to Michael and Helen (Bowersmith) Kelly, she was one of

six children.

She is predeceased by her parents, brothers: Bill and Rich; sisters: Helen and Betty and her beloved husband, Jim, whom she married on September 5, 1959.

Marge graduated from Prospect Heights Hospital School of Nursing and later furthered her education to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist, working in hospitals on Long Island. Her nurse's training roommate, Margie Mohan Gowdie, introduced her to Jim and the rest is history.

Marge "kept the books" and assisted Jim in running Strohmeyer Brother's Store along with her brother-in-law Paul.

She contributed so much to her community. Marge was a member of the St. Joseph's Altar Rosary Society for many years. She helped to form the Minerva Youth Program's Winter Ski Program "Old Gore".

While her children were students at Minerva Central School, she served as a school board member. She volunteered at Minerva Central School's Library and right up until COVID, you could find her at the Minerva Food Pantry completing intake.

After the store was sold in 1978, she returned to nursing, ending her career at Tri-County Nursing Home in North Creek as a Charge Nurse.

She is survived by a brother, Frank (Gill) Kelly; three daughters: Nancy (Warren Harr) Strohmeyer, Lisa (Joey) Fabin, Katy (Brian) Carroll; and god-daughter, Pam Butler; her grandchildren: Maddie Harr, Tim (Brittany Smith) Fabin, Murphy (Brendan) Sibilio, Maggie, Luke, and Sara Carroll; and great-grandson, Cillian Sibilio; and several nieces, nephews and friends.

## **ADIRONDACK HISTORICAL ALLIANCE**

**OCTOBER 28, 2024**

### **MEETING NOTES**

The third meeting of the newly formed Adirondack Historical Alliance was held on October 28, 2024 at the Town of Chester Museum.

Topics discussed were

#### **Curators:**

The Town of Chester Museum has hired a curator who will come in once per week to catalog the museums artifacts.

#### **Brochure:**

- Each member group will write up a short description of its services including location information. Sharon Stone of the Minerva Society and Laura Moore of the Warrensburgh-Thurman Historical Society will work on creating the brochure.
- Letterboxing: Can a similar program be created which will generate visits between member museums and societies.

#### **Member Recruitment**

##### **Communication:**

- Each member group needs to appoint one person who is responsible for communication information.
- Shared calendar possibilities

#### **Professional Development Training**

##### **Other**

- Discussion about what other groups provide their members.
- Discussion about grant possibilities

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- Corey, Sue Montgomery  
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- Gonyo, Joseph Marvin  
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- Hewitt, Franklin Armstrong  
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- Kellogg, John J.  
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- Meehan, Geraldine Joan (Kelly)  
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- Morehouse, Jessica-Jo (Cavanaugh)  
-January 17, 2023
- Pugliese, Charles J. "Chase"  
April 23, 1942— July 18, 2023
- Sharrow, Edward H.  
June 4, 1941—August 8, 2023
- Simmons, Madeline  
1932—November 8, 2022
- Smith, Dolores M.

September 18,1945—October 29, 2022

- Smith, Marion H.  
...-October 8, 2022
- Sylvester, Helen Rose (Croniser)  
March 29, 1922—September 18, 2023
- Thul, Andrew B.  
January 7, 1932—December 12, 2022
- Warnecke, Robert "Bob" D.  
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- Whipple, Elmer "Butch"  
January 29, 1946—May 9th, 2023
- Wortman, Ruth A.  
December 17, 1928—January 14, 2023




Thank You  
Laurie Rankin  
of the  
New York State  
Forest Fire  
Lookout  
Association  
For a wonderful pro-  
gram on the history of  
Vanderwhacker Fire  
Tower.

*Firetower table map*

**Laurie Rankin**      **NATIONAL FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT  
ASSOCIATION NYS CHAPTER DIRECTOR**

# THE HISTORY OF VANDERWHACKER FIRE TOWER



**MINERVA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
24 OCTOBER, 2023  
6:15 PM  
MINERVA COMMUNITY CENTER  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING TO FOLLOW PROGRAM

Minerva Historical Society  
PO Box 1  
Olmstedville, NY 12851