



The Elm Tree

Coming Soon.... 2:10 twice-a-day!

After nearly twenty years, the clock on Loudon Green has finally crashed. The interior, after all, is a computer! If you sit at the light and check the time, it will read 2:10 - all day long.

Thanks to Ken Raymond of Coldwell Banker, our clock should be ticking away again soon. The parts have been delivered and by mid-March the clock should only read 2:10 twice-a-day!



district 11 Schoolhouse

Written by Carol LaBatte, edited by Carolyn Martel



Back in those dear old golden schooldays, fifty-eight noisy children spanning eight grades learned their reading, writing and 'rithmetic in the one-room schoolhouse that is now 381 Loudon Road. They shared the space with a potbellied stove, perhaps several copies of the *Early New England Primer* and *The Schoolmaster's Assistant*, one pail of drinking water and one harried schoolmaster. Placed nearby, possibly, were the dunce block and fool's cap, two necessities for discipline in schools of that era.

Public schools in the Albany area were established around the beginning of the nineteenth century. Prior to that most children were educated at home, where farming took priority, or they were taught in the home of the domineer or minister. The Patroon Act, c. 1795, required a schoolteacher to be placed on each estate.

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Changing of the Guard

The GLA would like to acknowledge and thank Paula Mahan, who as Town Supervisor and fellow resident, has supported our organization for the past fourteen years. We wish her well in her retirement!



We also congratulate Peter Crummey, Colonie's newly-elected Supervisor, also a neighbor, who has been very active with GLA. Peter has been a mainstay each 4th of July as he delivers the Declaration of Independence with finesse.

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Have You Been to Little's Lake?

The Weare C. Little Memorial Park, or Little's Lake, located at the intersection of Van Rensselaer Blvd and Menand Rd is a little-known gem in our midst....pardon the pun. This cozy wildlife sanctuary includes the lake on which to boat and fish, trails to explore and a lodge/museum, for science education, all free and open to the public.

Little's Lake has a problem. Its aging septic system is at the end of its life, and need for an updated sanitation system is imminent. The GLA has written a letter to our Congressman in hopes that Little's Lake can procure infrastructure funding it needs to connect to the Town's sewage system, which is critical to the environmental health of the lake and surrounding waterways.

This upgrade would not only keep the lake safe, but would allow for greater community access and usage by school groups and families.

We are hopeful state and local funding will come through, and in the meantime, check out Little's Lake website and become a member! www.littleslake.org



Welcome New Members!

Timothy and Eileen Kelleher
W. Randolph Franklin
Ed and Rebekah Kennedy



Holiday Party 2021

After a year of social isolation, it was an extraordinary pleasure to get together in December to celebrate the holiday season with friends and neighbors. Schuyler Meadows' Winter Wonderland décor provided the perfect backdrop to the GLA's 2021 Holiday Party. The December 10th event was attended by over 85 individuals, both long-time members as well as many fresh new faces. This year, more than ever, we appreciated the camaraderie and fellowship of our unique community.

Since this is the GLA's biggest fundraiser of the year, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our generous sponsors, listed on page 8.

Tree Lighting on Loudon Green



Continued from page 1

In 1812 Gov. George Clinton was instrumental in starting a common school system, although the community that would become Loudonville already supported a school which stood at the foot of present-day Crumitie Rd. In 1813, at John Schuyler's home, there was a Commissioner of Schools meeting, where the 12 school districts of Watervliet (then including Colonie) were laid out. Attending that meeting were Schuyler, John van Zandt and Dr. Michael Releigh. The building at 381 Loudon Rd was to serve district 11, one of the oldest school districts in the state. It included a portion of North Albany, which continued up Shaker Rd within a mile or so of the Shaker settlement, and proceeded up Old Niskayuna and the Plank Road (currently Loudon Road.) The commissioner decided that \$800 was to be used to recondition the school, that the school should remain where it stood, and that parents sending scholars were to deliver one sufficient load of firewood.

It appears that a school existed prior to 1813 on property owned by Stephen van Rensselaer, but complete information does not exist. Records do show that Sara Ireland presided over school meetings in the year 1819. Early in the 1800s the building was insured for the first time, at a replacement cost of \$200. In 1857 the assessed value was \$165. Total expenditures that year were \$228.15 with coal costing \$9 and the insurance premium \$2.50. A narrow white-pined fence, which consisted of eleven panels and two gates, was erected around the property in 1864. In 1874 George Stedman, a trustee, realized that the land did not have a deed due to an earlier dispute between the Van Rensselaer heirs. He proceeded to obtain one, though it required redrawing several property boundaries in the neighborhood. The school also housed, from 1840 to 1888, the first library in its section of Albany County: James Westervelt was the first librarian.

The students varied in age from five to eighteen. Young men were less likely to attend because their physical prowess was needed for planting or harvesting, ice-cutting or timber-chopping. Some men would be twenty-one years old before completing the eighth grade. Instructors were chosen more for their strength than for their academic abilities. From 1813 to the early 1870's only male teachers were employed, as they had to chop wood

and discipline the older boys. Tales exist of how larger boys would literally throw the teacher out of the school. One instructor by the name of Shears used to have a couple of willow switches stuck in the back of his coat. These he would use to scratch his neck or keep in line the more troublesome students.

Seven of the first students were the children of the patron Stephen van Rensselaer. Later students included Catherine Bacon and her brother, Allen, Emma Emerich, Eleanor Hewig, and Mabel Winchester. The schoolhouse had two doors, as girls and boys were required to use separate entrances. Enoch Colburn was the first schoolmaster, beginning work on April 18, 1814. Her was paid \$40 for three months' work.

The first financial report indicates cash received was \$91.78, school expenses totaled \$72.37, leaving a balance of \$19.41. Expenses, aside from the teacher's wages, included nails, shingles, paper and hinges. Income to meet those expenses came from van Rensselaer, John Ruby, Thomas Ireland, John Waterman, Benjamin Herrington, Henry Waterman and the Widow Shelley. Nicholas Freleigh was the commissioner of the district.

In 1926 the building ceased being a school and became a tea room, operated by Laura and Helen Weaver. Their brother lived next door in the Aspinwall home (formerly Cottage Farms.) Marcia Bates Smith purchased the home in 1973, and used it as her home and successful real estate business.

The interior during Marcia Bates Smith reign - with slate floor, beehive-shaped fireplace and white walls of Spanish influence



Continued page 5

GLA Annual Meeting

May 10th at 6pm

Pruyn House

All members of GLA invited.

Recipient of Les Couch



Award for volunteerism

presented to a high school senior who resides in the town of Colonie

Tiptoe through the Triangle

On a chilly November morning each year, a stalwart group arrives at the triangle to plant three beds of tulip bulbs.

Many thanks to these neighbors of ours who add some Dutch beauty and color to our area!



Lonnie Clar, Mary Marsh, Teresa Rossi, Suzanne Perry and David Goldberg



The Schoolhouse as it looks today.

Schoolhouse continued

One of the most striking aspects of the house is that the original blackboard slates are part of the foyer floor. The former classroom Smith used as a living room, which extends the entire front of the house and, with 18-foot ceilings, appears large enough to have held classes comfortably. The wood of the recessed pine mantel, the pine floors and the thirty-five wood ceiling beams lent an air of warmth that contrast with the coolness of the two oval archways and white plaster walls. Nine large windows allowed for light in the living room. The kitchen, former cloakroom and the cupboard area complete the original wood-frame building which stands on nearly 2/3 of an acre.

Unfortunately today the schoolhouse is in great disrepair. Marcia Bates Smith sold it in 2005 to a new owner who never lived there, instead he used it mostly for furniture storage. He has since passed away, as did his brother just recently, to whom he left it. There has been no activity in roughly a year, and the dear schoolhouse continues to decline.

With any luck, someday soon an intrepid new owner with a love of restoration will come along and save our schoolhouse. This would be a worthy effort, and one that residents of Loudonville should enthusiastically support. When Smith lived there, the brass school bell rested in the house. Perhaps it's still there, waiting to ring in a new neighbor!



This article is an excerpt from *Loudonville: Traveling the Loudon Plank Road* (Greater Loudonville Assoc.: Loudonville, NY 1997), which was published with the assistance of Diana S. Waite, Mount Ida Press, 111 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210



Greater Loudonville Association

Neighbors Dedicated to Protecting and Improving the Character of our Historic and Ever Changing Residential Community

www.GreaterLoudonville.org

Annual Dues:

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Member Spotlight



Meet Kelly Mateja

How did you find out about GLA?

When I first started working for the Town, I became acquainted with the GLA. Back then, as it is now, it was the biggest of the

neighborhood associations. When I worked on the Town's first Comprehensive Plan, the GLA was a wonderful partner in helping get the word out on community planning meetings (pre-social media.)

What motivated you to become a member?

The decision to become GLA members was due to a confluence of a few factors but primarily stimulated by the pandemic. With all of our kids' numerous school and sports commitments severely curtailed, our family's attention turned inward to the neighborhood. We got to know so many more neighbors during the pandemic, as everyone in the neighborhood spent every evening out walking. And as a planner, the GLA's mission and values line up with that of our family: community building and community service.

Tell us a bit about you, your family, your work and what you do in your free time.

Rob and I met at Clemson University when we were graduate students in the Masters of City and Regional Planning Program. While we had initially planned to stay down South, we realized just how much we missed our families when we were getting ready to start a family of our own. In 2000 we moved back to the Capital Region, where his family and my sister live. We both were hired by the Town of Colonie, and over the subsequent years, we had three kids in two years, now teenagers. We moved to the same Loudonville neighborhood where Rob grew up and now live within a stone's throw of his parents, as well as his sister's family.

Rob has stayed at the town, but I transitioned from planning into aging services. Over the past 12 years, I've also been fortunate to be a part of the leadership team of every PTA in each school my kids attended. Ten years ago, I started the Morning of Kindness (www.morningofkindness.org); a one-day event held every Christmas Eve that connects over a thousand Capital Region neighbors with dozens of hardworking nonprofits that make our community safer, healthier, and kinder.

For the past 12 years, we've been completely consumed by work, PTA, and youth sports - but now, with our children becoming drivers, our schedule is opening up, and we're looking forward to pouring our energy into whatever comes next.

What's your favorite thing about living in Loudonville?

I love our neighborhood - my kids can bike to their cousins, their friends, Frank's and Scoups for ice cream, Inferno for a slice, and our amazing library. I love the sense of community. It feels like we're all looking out for each others' kids and for neighbors.

What do you hope to receive and contribute from being a GLA member?

I'm looking forward to getting to know more of our GL neighbors - especially those who live outside our immediate WeLo (West Loudonville) neighborhood. I hope many of our GLA neighbors will learn more about and embrace the Morning of Kindness, an event that helps so many people and organizations in our community.

Meet Anita Morin



What motivated you to become a member of GLA?

I received a kind invitation from Camille Hoheb to participate in an online GLA-sponsored wine tasting during the pandemic shutdown, and that led to a discussion with Camille about membership.

Tell us a little bit about yourself, your family, your work and what you like to do in your free time.

Born in Kansas, educated in the Midwest; then lived in California, Iowa, France and Switzerland before relocating to the Albany area. My daughter attended Emma Willard, and I established a business in this area in the mid-1990s. Presently, my daughter lives in Seattle, my son lives in Wisconsin, and I am pleased that this area now feels like home to me. My work as a financial advisor and insurance broker is most engaging; I like helping people achieve financial confidence with both personal and business matters. In my free time I love to read, garden, cook, practice yoga, and travel to spend time with my family.

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Anita Continued

What do you hope to gain from your participation in the GLA?

I am impressed by the warm welcome from GLA members and look forward to becoming better acquainted with neighbors in our Loudonville community.

What's your favorite thing about living in Loudonville?

There are so many things that I like about living in Loudonville! Of course, the beauty and safety of the community is top-of-mind. There is a general attitude of courtesy and purposeful action in both the commercial and the service sectors, and for that I am grateful. To quote Mr. Rogers ... "It's nice to be your neighbor!"