



HISTORIC PITTSFORD

spring, 2012

NEWSLETTER

200 YEARS AT THE HOPKINS FARM

by Audrey Johnson

Caleb Hopkins came to our area around 1799 as a young surveyor. He worked for and with Mr. Maybe and soon married his daughter, Dorothea. Caleb became very involved with community life and entered the politics of the town of Boyle. Eventually he was elected Supervisor.

When the War of 1812 erupted, he was put in charge of a small unit and eventually he was sent to the shores of Lake Ontario to defend the port of Charlotte against a British/Canadian invasion. He was promoted to Colonel and later on in his career, he was made a Brigadier General.

When that conflict was over, Caleb purchased a farm consisting of 164 acres of land and built a substantial house for his wife and family. That house, built in 1812, still stands at 3151 Clover Street in the town of Pittsford.

The Hopkins house is a two and one-half story, gable roof, hewn timber frame home built in a variation of the Federal style. It was centered around a massive center chimney and the main gable is almost as broad as it is long.

In addition to the original acreage, the Hopkins purchased a Barker farm consisting of 150 acres and a cluster of building, as well as 50 acres of the close neighbors, the Nye family - giving them a total of 370 acres. All of the properties are considered part of the national Registry, although not all of the outbuildings are included.

For over 200 years there have been only four generations on this property. The farm passed from father to youngest son three times. Marvin, the youngest son inherited the management of the farm, then his youngest son, Jared, when old enough took over. Jared married Lettie Maie Nye, which is how the Nye property came to be part of the Hopkins farm. Phelps Hopkins, the younger of Jared's two sons became manager when his older brother purchased another farm on the Mendon



Center Road. Phelps oldest son, John with the partnership of his nephew, Mark Greene, have continued the farming tradition that began 200 years ago.

We, in the town of Pittsford, are fortunate to have those acres worked and tilled with the care and expertise of the capable descendants of Col. Caleb Hopkins who was chosen to name our town after his hometown of Pittsford, VT.

In this issue

200 Years at the Hopkins Farm

Pittsford Pioneers: Sarah Hinch Davis Lusk

President's Corner

Architectural Consultant Program in its 28th Year

William B. Webber - 1919 - 2012

Homeowner Educational Forum

Upcoming Events

Edited by Karen Hultz

PITTSFORD PIONEERS: SARAH HINCHER DAVIS LUSK

by Vicki Profitt

Many Pittsford residents are aware that Stephen Lusk was an early pioneer of our community. However, Stephen's wife, Sarah Hinchler, was also a pioneer in her own right who lived a fascinating life fraught with hardships.

Sarah Hinchler was born August 25, 1777 in Massachusetts to William Hinchler and his wife, Mehitable Moffat. By 1786, the Hinchler family was composed of seven daughters and one son, with Sarah being the third child and third daughter. William Hinchler decided to move his large family to New York about 1789. They settled for three years in a place they called Hinchler Flats. Today, that area is more commonly known as Big Flats, New York. From there, the Hinchlers traveled to the shores of Lake Ontario at the Genesee River where William purchased 627 acres of land. It was there that Sarah and her siblings were raised. After William Hinchler's death in 1817, his widow sold nearly four acres of their land to the United States government for \$400. It was on this land, in 1822, that the Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse was erected.

During this time, the Hinchler children grew up and began to raise families of their own. Sarah Hinchler wed Franklin Davis, who died shortly after their marriage. In 1801, Sarah met and married Stephen Lusk, a widower who worked as a tanner. Stephen and his father, John Lusk, had come to New York from Massachusetts in the early 1790s. By 1807, they had settled in the Pittsford area. Sarah and Stephen had six children together. One of their four sons, Harvey, died as a toddler. The remaining five children lived to adulthood and raised their own families in the Pittsford area.

After his marriage to Sarah, Stephen continued his tanning business, and also worked the family farm. The 1850

Non-Population Census show that the Lusks had 100 acres of improved land and 40 acres of unimproved land, worth a cash value of \$8,400. They also had over \$1,100 invested in 6 horses, 7 milk cows, 2 working oxen, 9 othecattle, 170 sheep and 14 swine. Besides the animals, the Lusk farm produced wheat, Indian corn and oats. Stephen and Sarah built their home at what is now 1 Mendon Center Road, at the corner of Stone Road and Mendon Center Road.

Sarah Hinchler Davis Lusk survived the hardships of pioneer life, the loss of her first husband and the death of her child. She worked on the farm and was ably supported by her husband, Stephen. At the age of 78, Sarah passed away and was interred at the Pioneer Burying Ground adjacent to the home she had shared with her husband for so many years. Stephen followed her in death in 1860. Although they have long been deceased, the memories of Stephen and Sarah Hinchler Davis Lusk live on in their descendants, some of whom still live in Pittsford. The Lusks are also remembered every October when Audrey Johnson and I give our annual cemetery tour at the Pioneer Burying Ground.

Photos from: [History of Monroe County](#) by W.H. McIntosh, 1877



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy Spring! The new fresh smells and the glorious colors have overtaken the remnants of winter.

Take a walk or drive through Pittsford and note the attractive homes, nicely maintained properties, and beautiful gardens. It's this way because we are proud of our town and want it to continue. Historic Pittsford's goal is to create interest in its preservation through education and informational programs.

Beauty and ambiance are hard to describe, but Pittsford has it! Town and Village government influenced by preservation advocacy of Historic Pittsford are responsible. I like it, let's keep it.

This newsletter is being distributed to all the residents of the Village in the interest of increasing our membership. I would like everyone in town to understand our role in making Pittsford the desirable place it is to live and enjoy. If you are not yet a member of Historic Pittsford, please join. Visit the website www.HistoricPittsford.com or call the "Little House" 381-2941.

Sincerely,

Rusty Likly, **President**

ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANT PROGRAM IN ITS 28TH YEAR

by Mary Menzie

Since its inception, 210 property owners (homes, churches, businesses), have taken advantage of this program underwritten by Historic Pittsford at a total cost of approximately \$38,000.

Initiated in 1984 as a one-year pilot project, the program was started to encourage village property owners who were contemplating exterior structural work and architectural changes to seek professional help during the early planning stages of their projects. Historic Pittsford pays for up to three hours of an architect's services which include an on-site visit/consultation and written recommendations. Through the program, HP provides education and guidance in the proper methods of structural maintenance of older homes, and with additions and other projects which may change the building's exterior appearance. The architect strives to address the modern needs of the owner while protecting the historic character of the building and its context.

John Bero, an architect with expertise in preservation, consented to be HP's consultant that first year and has remained in that capacity. Throughout the years he has dealt with problems ranging from deteriorating foundations to leaking roofs, including paint colors, siding,

porches, windows, chimneys and additions. His written reports have been invaluable to owners in developing plans to bring before the Village and Town preservation boards for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness required for structural changes viewed from a public way.

Encouraged by enthusiastic community response, Historic Pittsford expanded the program outside the village to structures shown on the 1902 Town of Pittsford map, and the later to newer structures if listed on the Town's survey of Historical and Architectural designees. However, the vast majority of those utilizing this program have been villagers, since all structures in the village, regardless of building date, lie within the village's local historic district.

Obviously, membership dues alone come nowhere near covering the cost of such a program. However, the proceeds from the sale of a generous gift of land from Louise and Paul Miller some years ago have enabled HP to continue this program which received an award in 1988 from the NYS Commissioner, Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. A recent bestowal from the estate of Beryl Haas will help to ensure the program's future.

Contact Mary Menzie at 381-3799 for further information about applying for this service.

WILLIAM B. WEBBER 1919-2012

Historic Pittsford and the Rochester/Pittsford community has lost another of its longtime friends and champions.

During his 93 years, Bill impacted the existence of a number of organizations including The Genesee Country Museum, The University of Rochester, Pittsford government, Cornell University, the Pittsford Fire Hall, Historic Pittsford and many more.

Historic Pittsford had a unique relationship with Bill. After his wife, Jackie, passed away, Bill and Historic Pittsford joined efforts to memorialize her life. It was decided that a fountain to be placed in the garden of the new library would be the perfect tribute. Bill, Jean France and I spent many hours with Bill searching out the "right" memorial. Those hours with Bill were a source of

enjoyment for me. His pride was evident. He often mentioned the recent lecture he had attended or the Rochester Philharmonic concert he enjoyed. One could never underestimate his memory, sense of humor or mental acuity.

I called Bill in late December to wish him a Happy Birthday and he called me a week later to thank me for the card I sent him. We didn't talk long on either occasion, but both calls were important to each of us.

I enjoyed Bill and the vigor with which he lived his life. I miss him and the pride he took in his independence. We are far better off because of what Bill Webber has done during his lifetime.

Joe Maxey

Historic Pittsford Statement of Purpose

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

Visit us on Facebook!

COMING MARCH 29TH

**A HOMEOWNER EDUCATIONAL
FORUM ON WINDOWS**

**SAVE THE DATE:
THURSDAY, MARCH 29th!**

(details to follow)

With the increasing emphasis on energy conservation and “going green”, homeowners are being inundated with ads encouraging the replacement of old windows. Two experienced professionals will present information on the design styles and energy value of old windows when properly cared for. Steve Jordan, author of *Rehab Rochester: a Sensible Guide for Old-House Maintenance, Repair and Rehabilitation* and contributing editor to the *Old-House Journal*, will show the attendees materials and demonstrate the various methods used to make windows energy efficient and will answer any questions that directly relate to the attendee’s properties. Virginia Searl, engineer and architect of Bero Architects, will explain rationals behind retaining old windows in several of the firm’s restoration projects.



**We Want Your
Vintage Photos!**

Do you have photos of Pittsford’s people and places languishing in the attic? Think about sharing them for everyone to enjoy! Pittsford Town Historian Audrey Johnson and Illuminated History genealogist Vicki Profitt are co-authoring an Arcadia Publishing Company pictorial book about Pittsford, but we need your help! We are looking for pre-1950s photos of Pittsford’s people, places, buildings and businesses. Photos will be scanned in at your home, or borrowed and returned. If you have photos you would like to share, please contact Vicki Profitt at 585-381-2232 or vprofitt@rochester.rr.com.

Arcadia has printed over 7,500 books about small towns and cities throughout the United States. The company has three separate types of books. Our book, entitled “Pittsford”, is for Arcadia’s “Images of America” series. The book will contain between 180-240 images, and each photo will have a credit line. Additional information about Arcadia Publishing Company can be found on their website, <http://www.arcadiapublishing.com>.

The Annual HP Preservation Achievement Award has been put on hold for 2012. Please hold on to any nominations you may have for the award until next year.



Little House Office and Museum

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

Open: Wednesday and Saturday 9am-12noon

Dorothy Meusburger, Secretary

www.historicpittsford.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 21, 2012

2012 Landmark Society Preservation Conference: “It’s About Now”. Check the website for more details: www.landmarksociety.org.

HP Spring Program: Thursday, May 3

The tale of Henry Clay’s ascendance from decades of lying in the basement of the LeRoy Historical Society (how did it get there?) to the hollowed halls of the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. Lynne Belluscio, curator at the Society, relates the involved story and how he was “spruced back up” before being properly hung.