



# HISTORICPITTSFORD

Fall 2015 NEWSLETTER

## PITTSFORD SCHOOLS CELEBRATE SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES



### Allen's Creek School turns 200!

On May 6, 1815, Allen's Creek School was voted into existence to serve the children of the area's early settlers. Sitting on top of a hill, Allen's Creek looks nothing like the rest of the Pittsford schools. Allen's Creek has had its own looks and personality, changing to fit the times and needs of the community.

Allen's Creek began as part of Brighton District #6 in 1815. A motion was passed to build a school house on Elezan Bingham's land. The school was in use by 1820 under the tutelage of its first teacher, Gliner Coles. Allen's Creek changed from a small, wooden structure to a stone building in 1841. In 1878, a new school was built on the old site, but by 1909, the building needed both renovations and additions. A final addition was made to the third Allen's Creek in 1920.

Plans for the current Allen's Creek school began in 1927 when the Board voted to purchase the Buck property which adjoined the school grounds. In 1929, the new brick school of Southern Colonial architecture was ready for use. This new building received additions in 1949 and 1954.

In 1958, Allen's Creek was annexed to the Pittsford Central School District for use as an elementary school.

*Source: "Allen Creek Elementary School Celebrates" by Jennifer Loviglio, Michelle Peartree & Rebecca Sumner c. 2005*



### Park Road School celebrates 50!

On August 26, 1965, the last touches were being made to Pittsford's new Park Road School.

Park Rd. is a one story brick building, many windowed with heavy Roman-like pillars supporting a concrete canopy that extends about 3/4s on the front. The school is bounded on three sides by houses and on the fourth by woods extending out from Powder Mills Park. The school was started in the form of an "x" and later redesigned to its present (1965) four wing construction resulting in four wings with the central core of the building housing the gym, auditorium, music suite and two cafeterias. Distance from all classrooms to the major sections of the buildings is minimized. The school was built to house 750 children.

*Source: Brighton-Pittsford Post, August 26, 1965*

Do you have a friend or neighbor who is interested in preservation and/or history? Share this newsletter with them. Invite them to one of Historic Pittsford's programs.

Tell them about our website: [www.historicpittsford.com](http://www.historicpittsford.com) or have them "friend us" on Facebook. Invite them to become a member.

# HISTORIC PITTSFORD CELEBRATES 50 YEARS!

by Karen Hultz

The year that Historic Pittsford was founded was a bustling, booming time for Pittsford. Here is a snapshot of the town in 1965:

- the village tax rate was \$23.57 per \$1,000 and the town tax rate was \$3.47 per \$1,000.
- the town tightened its zoning code on apartments.
- a sidewalk building program for the village and town was being debated.
- Pittsford Inn was being restored.
- public hearings were being held over the controversial plan to convert the house at 120 S. Main St., formerly owned by Caleb Hopkins, into a funeral home.
- Burdett's Food Market celebrated its 40th anniversary.
- Wegmans started planning one of its largest stores on a 13 acre site immediately to the west of Pittsford Plaza.
- voters in the Pittsford School district were asked to approve the cost of acquiring two school sites, not to exceed \$275,000. By the end of the year, plans were being made to build a combination elementary/junior high school on Barker Rd.
- Pittsford cleared the way for a new YMCA to be built on Jefferson Rd. near Mitchell Rd.
- Pittsford Kiwanis undertook the restoration and modernization of the old Mile Post schoolhouse for community use.
- Pittsford's farmland was disappearing as land that used to sell for \$100 an acre was now selling for \$5,000 an acre.
- Pittsford planning officials studied the establishment of an architectural review board to ensure the survival of the attractiveness and beauty for which the community was known.

Andy Wolfe had recently bought the Phoenix building and had a party to show off the new offices of the Brighton Pittsford Post.

## Day of the Dead

Sunday, November 1 2pm

Did you know that November 1 is officially the Day of the Dead? Historic Pittsford is offering any and all the opportunity to meet some of the earliest residents of Pittsford who will come "alive" to tell stories about their lives in the early days of our community. You will hear from Stephen and Sarah Lusk, William Thornell and our War of 1812 hero, Colonel Caleb Hopkins who named our town and many more.

The program is free and not scary. We invite youngsters to learn a little history they won't find in textbooks.

Located at the Pioneer Burying Ground, south of the village at the intersection of South Main St. and Mendon Rd. Dress warmly. This event will be held rain or shine.

"There was a lot of interest and this first open house, which was really a promotion for the newspaper, was the spark, it turned out, that led to organizing 'Historic Pittsford'. We served Fishhouse punch at that party – a rather lethal concoction of brandy, rum and strong tea – and everyone went home feeling good about the evening."<sup>1</sup>

By December of 1965, a community organization known as Historic Pittsford was formed to safeguard and promote the historic heritage and charm of Pittsford Village.

Incorporators of the organization were Michael Newcomb, Richard Turner, Mrs. Edward Hart, Mrs. William Weber and Marion Barry.

The principal objective of the organization was to designate an overall area in which efforts would be made to preserve the 19th century characteristics of the village. An inventory was to be made of all the older buildings with an appraisal of their architectural values and information on their historical background.

Pittsford was fortunate that 100 early buildings had survived the rapid growth of Pittsford. Historic Pittsford's mission was to coordinate a long range plan to save the charm of the village, preserving it as a living lesson in American history.

Fifty years later, Historic Pittsford continues the work of its predecessors with its current mission: "to promote the preservation and restoration of Pittsford's history and historic resources through community education and advocacy. Historic Pittsford recognizes and values the uniqueness of Pittsford's agricultural, culture, architectural and commercial heritage."

*'Lee, Joseph "A Talk with Andy" December 1999*

*Sources: Issues of the Brighton Pittsford Post from 1965*

*Lee, Joseph "A Talk with Andy" c. December 1999*

## Candlelight Night

Tuesday, December 1

5:30-8:30 pm

Join us at the Little House, 18 Monroe Ave. on Candlelight night. The house will be aglow with Christmas lights and smiling faces as we welcome visitors in for treats, history and a special visit from Mrs. Claus.



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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER - PRESERVATION MATTERS

Throughout the year, Historic Pittsford (HP) has been celebrating its 50th anniversary. At the annual meeting at Monroe's in July, those in attendance honored Historic Pittsford's founders and the many committed members of the organization who so clearly understood the importance of preserving the architecture and historic resources in our special community. Incorporated in December 1965, a top priority for the Board of Trustees of Historic Pittsford was (and is) the protection of the village as an historic district. To that end, the Board and dozens of the membership embarked upon the daunting task of documenting and surveying the village's remarkably intact collection of historic buildings and housing stock. The goal was to work with the Village of Pittsford Board of Trustees to nominate the village to the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places. (The National Historic Preservation Act was signed into law on October 15, 1966 by Lyndon Baines Johnson. The main purpose is to provide a layer of protection to minimize potential harm and damage to historic properties or districts.) In 1971, the village Trustees passed an historic preservation ordinance which created and empowered an Architectural Preservation and Review Board (APRB).

Although many Historic Pittsford members worked tirelessly to achieve this outcome, in particular HP President Patricia Place, Jean France and the Board of Directors tenaciously stewarded the nomination throughout the decade from 1975 to 1985. After bureaucratic complications and changes at the state and federal level, a significant portion of the village was named to the National Register as an Historic District, but not all had been included in the nomination.

During this 50th year since our founding, Historic Pittsford continues to advocate for preservation, for example, supporting a village initiative that now picks up where Place and France, their many colleagues and the administration of village Mayor John Holzwarth left off.

A new survey was commissioned by the Village Trustees and a nomination for the remainder of qualified areas of the village will be submitted by December of this year. Historic Pittsford is not nearly as involved as it was first time around; consultants are now performing much of the detail work previously done by HP volunteers. But that is not to say we aren't equally as supportive of this proper extension of the Village Historic District to include many of the sites proposed previously but omitted, as well as others now 50 years older.

Early in the current nomination process, the Historic Pittsford Board of Trustees wrote a letter of support for the actions being taken by the Village Board of Trustees and Mayor Corby to expand (incorporate) appropriate properties previously not included in the historic district. We are in the process of reviewing progress on the application and look forward to the public sessions that will be forthcoming in the next few months through the village government.

A review of the records, files and newspaper articles regarding the National Register Nomination, the founding of Historic Pittsford and the people who have been committed to historic preservation over 50 years, only deepens one's understanding that, without the work of Historic Pittsford and the foresight of Village elected officials, there simply would be no Village as we know it. The threats to its historical integrity and sense of place were (and are) very real.

It is important that the Pittsford community take whatever steps are effective to protect our historic resources. The National Register Nomination for extending the village historic district is a wise and overdue next step.

Sincerely,  
Margaret Caraberis Brizee, **President**  
Historic Pittsford



**Little House Office and Museum**  
18 Monroe Ave., Pittsford, NY 14534 / 381-2941  
Open: Wednesday and Saturday 9am-12noon  
Dorothy Meusburger, Secretary

You may soon notice the Little House missing a column or two. The Historic Pittsford Board has voted to restore the damaged columns at the Little House one at a time. These columns are original to the building (c. 1819) and made of old growth white pine. Being true to our mission of preservation, HP is making sure these columns are restored as historically accurate as possible. More information on this project will be in the next newsletter.



# HISTORIC PITTSFORD'S ANNUAL MEETING

Historic Pittsford's annual meeting was held on Saturday, July 18 at Monroe's (formerly the Spring House) with a special menu to celebrate HP's 50th anniversary.

Attendees all received a hard copy of Paul Spiegel's Pittsford Scrapbook v. 4 as well as the pamphlet, "A Talk with Andy, a memoir of Andy Wolfe" written by Joseph Lee.

The business meeting started at 7pm with President Peggy Brizee giving an overview of Historic Pittsford's work over the last year. She then gave a brief overview of events in Pittsford in 1965, the year HP was founded. She acknowledged the founders of Historic Pittsford and introduced one of them, Michael Newcomb, who was in attendance.

Three new members were elected to the HP Board: Madeleine Reynolds, Mary Ann Clark and Peter Brizee.

The annual preservation award was presented by David Minor to David McNellis who wrote the book, The Big Spring about the history of Pittsford. Mr. McNellis was unable to make the trip from California to accept the award, but David read a letter from Mr. McNellis accepting the award.

The evening concluded with Peggy Brizee presenting Historic Pittsford's first Director's Legacy Award to Jean France in honor of her many years of devoted service to HP. The award is a scholarship in Jean's name to be presented to a local student who demonstrates an interest in preservation.



18 MONROE AVENUE  
PITTSFORD, NY 14534

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## HP Board of Directors

### **President:**

**Margaret Caraberis Brizee**

**Vice-President: David Minor**

**Secretary: JoAnne Shannon**

**Treasurer: Maryjane Link**

### **Members at Large:**

**Lanie Bittner, T.Peter Brizee,**

**Mary Ann Clark, Mark Greene, Karen Hultz, Audrey Johnson,**

**Alysa Plummer, Shelley O'Brien,  
Deborah Resch,**

**Madeleine Reynolds,**

**Bonnie Salem, Suzanne Shaw**