

Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 11 Issue 4 Winter 2006

2006 Graveyard Walks

This was the sixth year of the historic Graveyard Walks and the second year of the Historical Society's sponsorship. Started in 2001 by Sandi Parisi and John Cleveland, with the support of the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce, the event has grown in popularity. Over the years twenty individuals have portrayed the lives of 34 of Warrensburg's historic figures.

This year's roster ranged from the earliest lays of Warrensburg, to recent times. Itchel Bishop arrived in town in the 1790s and Stephen Griffing born in 1796, arrived as a 4 year old. Abigail Woodward married Albert C. Emerson in the mid-nineteenth century. More recently, Grace Merrill Magee and Louise Tubbs both influenced Warrensburg's history during the 20th century, the first as a wealthy descendant of a Griffing, the latter as a WCS music teacher and daughter of a long-time Warrensburg News editor.

Attendance at the two nighttime tours this year totaled about eighty people. Our "Dinner with the Dead" drew the largest turnout ever, with 55 people attending.

Fourth grade students at WCS were given the tour during the school day. Two groups totaling about 60 kids appeared eager and interested in learning about Warrensburg's notables.

In This Issue: Graveyard Walk	
Kitchel Bishop	1
Society Page	2
Margaret Louise Tubbs	3
Colonel Stephen Griffing	3
race Magee & Abigail Woodward	4
Bubbles - A Good Dog	5
Thurman Road Collapses	6
Class of 1956	7
Wheeler Negative File	8
Then and Now Photos	8



Some of the students from the Warrensburg Central School 4th grade, listening to caretaker Ebenezer (aka Doug Goettsche) during one of the graveyard walks.

KITCHEL BISHOP

Portrayed by Steve Parisi

Kitchel Bishop is most known as the first postmaster of Warrensburgh. Actually it was of Thurman, Washington County, which is the name of the town and county in which present-day Warrensburg was located. It was in February, 1813 that the Town of Warrensburgh was carved out of the Town of Thurman and in March 1813 that the County of Warren was carved out of Washington County.

Kitchel Bishop was appointed postmaster in 1802, when Thomas Jefferson was president. He remained in the position until 1822, when he was succeeded by Nelson Warren. (The very same whose hair turned white when he witnessed, at the age of 10, his father,

James's drowning in the Hudson.

Bishop arrived in Warrensburgh in the mid to late 1790s, having already studied (or "read") law in his hometown of Stamford, Connecticut. He had already met and married, in 1792, his wife, Anna Warren, with whom he had nine children. Kitchel's brother, Jesse, also came north and settled in North Caldwell. (It was Jesse's grandson, Charles, who would marry a Hawaiian princess.)

Little is known about Kitchel's earliest years in town, except that he owned sizeable lands west of Hackensack Mountain, including what was to become the "King's Addition." Some of that he donated to the Methodist Church, although he was to help found, in 1804,

Continued on page 3

SOCIETY PAGE

President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,

I am pleased to report that it has been a very successful Fall for your Society.

The talk in September by Dick Nason on Adirondack Logging drew a crowd of more than 50 people to our meeting held at the Masonic Lodge. Dick apparently has a strong following, as people came from as far away as Indian Lake and South Glens Falls. We met some new people, including what one board member referred to as "the flannel shirt" crowd. Many had personal experience in the woods, or were related to those who did, and it was wonderful to hear their own stories. These are descendents of the people who came to the area when it was nothing but virgin forests and backbreaking labor, and who built the town.

October was Graveyard Walk month, culminating with the Dinner With the Dead at the Merrill Magee House. About 80 people attended the Walks and 55 more enjoyed the dinner, both recordbreaking numbers. Elsewhere in this issue are the stories of those who were portrayed. A hearty thanks to those who participated!

Artifacts in early November was fun 'tho sparsely attended. Sometimes there are just too many activities. Please think about your own personal or family history and how you might bring it to life, either at a show-and-tell night or for the Quarterly.

Keep in mind that election of directors comes up again at our Annual Meeting in February. In the event that you approve of the change to our Constitution increasing the Board to eleven members, there will be two extra vacant seats to fill.

We are developing a powerpoint presentation about the Society and the Museum for showing at community organizations. If you are a member of such an organization and would like us to do the program at your meeting call me at 623-2207.

With my best wishes for a happy holiday season and an enjoyable winter.

Steve

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Contributors to this issue:

Rita Ferraro, Ruth Fruda, Filomena Riviello, Steve Parisi, Virginia Morey Pike, Lenore Smith, Charles Wheeler, Peter Wood

Sandi Parisi, Quarterly Editor

We welcome comments, corrections, articles, pictures, reminiscences, and letters to the editor. Send to:

Warrensburgh Historical Society c/o Sandi Parisi 115 Hickory Hill Rd, Warrensburg, NY 12885 or sandi@countryroadlodge.com

The next Quarterly Deadline is February 1st

MUSEUM UPDATE

The Museum Committee continues to plan its exhibits, floor plan, exhibit cases and display walls. Great fun but we need your help.

Conservator Gwen Spicer conducted her workshop on proper storage of the clothing collection. Now we know how dirty and infested the collection is! The Town has purchased a HEPA-filtered vacuum cleaner for the museum. we just need willing hands to perform the work. Pete Wood and helpers are building an appropriate hanging storage area.

Thanks go to John Hastings, Rosemary Maher, Aurelie Massimine and Donna Wood for scanning photos and cataloguing the Society's own collection. Rita Ferraro is determined to get our office organized. Paul Gilchrist, who has become a regular is especially aware of outside historical resources. New volunteer Barbara Whitford is proving herself very much at home with our Past Perfect Museum software.

In early December we expect the town

crew will return to build the handicap access bathroom and entrance ramp.

Interested in helping with any phase of museum work? We meet at the Museum most Tuesdays from 11 AM to 12:30 PM and Wednesdays from 1 to 4 PM. During those times you can also reach us at the museum at 623-2928. The hours are subject to change so please contact Steve Parisi at 623-2207 to verify.

Board of Directors

Steve Parisi- President
John Hastings – Vice President
Jackie Leonbruno - Treasurer
Rosemary Maher - Secretary
Rita Ferraro, Delbert Chamber, Jean
Hadden, Marilyn Haves, Peter Wood

The Board of Directors meet at the Senior Center, 3847 Main Street, at 6:30 PM on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Society members welcome. Call Steve to confirm at 623-2207.

New Members

Ellen Barber, Ernest & Janet DeMatties, John Higgins, James Morey, Joseph & Patrice Nelson, Maureen Maher, Charles and Anita Richards, Penny Salemme, Alice Smith and Ramona Thomas

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thurs., December 14. 6:45 PM Brief special membership meeting to vote on change to Constitution, increasing board from 9 to 11 members.

Thurs. Dec. 14. Holiday Dinner at the Merrill Magee House. Social hour from 6 PM, dinner at 7 PM. Call the MMH at 623-2449 for reservations. Dinner choices are: *Chicken Pomodoro, Rosemary Skewered Shrimp or New York Sirloin.*

February (Date and location to be set) Annual Meeting of the Society

Membership Information

Student \$8.00 Individual \$12.00 Family \$25.00 Senior (62+) \$8.00 Contributing \$50.00 Business \$50.00 Institutional \$100.00 Life (Individual only) \$250

Membership is on a calendar year basis.

If you would like to join and receive the Quarterly by mail, please send check for the amount of the membership classification, with name, address and phone number to:

Warrensburgh Historical Society, PO Box 441, Warrensburg, NY 12885.

NOTICE

The recording of history is an interpretive and ever changing study. Therefore, the Warrensburgh Historical Society or its Board of Directors or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy or authenticity of the material herein.

We welcome and encourage corrections, comments and additional information.

Graveyard walk - con't. from page 1

the Presbyterian Church of South hurman (later to become Warrensburgh's First Presbyterian Church) and remained a member of its governing body until 1822. (In 1830, at the age of 61 he was suspended from that community for "having frequently indulged in the too free use of ardent spirits..." This according to the minutes of the church.)

In 1810 he built Warrensburgh's first tannery, which was later to be developed greatly by Benjamin P. Burhans. In 1811 he was sent to Albany to represent the Eastern District in the State Senate, where he served four years. In 1813 he sat as a judge on Warren County's first Court of Common Pleas.

Kitchel Bishop died at the age of 75 in 1844. He is buried next to his wife Anna and with several of his children in Warrensburg Cemetery.

Margaret Louise Tubbs

Portrayed by Rita Ferraro

On March 20, 1947 Margaret Louise Tubbs made the headline news in the local paper, the Warrensburg News. In



large, bold, lettering it read: "Miss Tubbs to leave Warrensburg Central School...Music is Out." The article continues, "Howard E. Hull, chairman of he Board of Education of the Warrensburg Central School, has announced that in the interest of economy, the music department in the school will be substantially reduced. To

this end Miss M. Louise Tubbs, for 19 years music teacher in the school, has been informed that she will not be offered a contract for next year."

She was 38 years old, unmarried, and jobless. Music was her life, her passion. What would she do, what could she do. She decided that she could teach elementary education, a job that would never be "substantially reduced. She moved to Yonkers, NY to live with her cousin Kathleen Halpin while attending New York University. She was an excellent student and loved to write. She earned her degree and taught elementary education at Stillwater Central School until she retired in 1965.

Her father, John L. Tubbs, was the editor of the Warrensburg News for many years. In the late 1940's she had a weekly column published, writing mostly about the history and culture of Warrensburg and its founders. She was dedicated to preserving all that was beautiful and unique in town. She also wrote poetry, essays and memoirs under the byline, "Musings" and signed it Margaret Mary! One of her poems, written shortly after leaving Warrensburg, is entitled Christmas 1948 and begins: "Christmas is not Christmas away from home. So, this year, I shall live in memory."....

She wrote about the Burhans mansion that once stood on the hill behind Emerson Town Hall. As a young child she was often invited there to play with her friend, Helen Burhans. Through the eyes of a child that house was like an enchanted castle. Its huge darkly wooded "secret" rooms nurtured their imaginations. They thought of themselves as potential Louisa May Alcotts writing in the attic. Very often Helen's brother Frederick became the hero of their stories...and sometimes, the victim. The Burhans had a grand piano and she was often invited to play. She had a gift of musical talent and at a young age was thought of as an accomplished concert pianist.

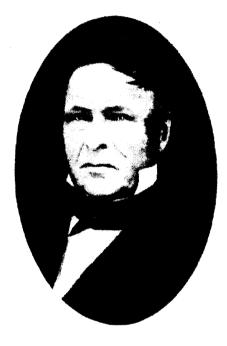
Her parent's apartment above the newspaper office on Elm Street was filled with intellectual, social and musical activities. It had been brand new when they moved to it from up the street where the "Corner Auto" repair

shop is now. The building has since burned down.

Colonel Stephen Griffing

Portrayed by Peter Wood

Colonel Stephen Griffing came to the Thurman township as a young boy with his family when his father, also named



Stephen, purchased a farm from John Backus in the year 1800. They had come from the Staatsburg, Dutchess County, NY area where Stephen's mother, Elizabeth Uhl's family was a very prominent part of their community.

Young Stephen resembled his father both in features and physical structure (height and frame). The Griffing family acquired a great deal of land (250 acres) over the years near the confluence of the Schroon and Hudson Rivers. At the age of 21, Stephen opened a store on his father's property and during the War of 1812 moved to Warrensburgh and opened a store at the south end of the bridge over the Schroon River.

'In 1819 he married Mary Coon of Ballston Spa. They had six children, two of which died at a very young age. He managed a hotel in the lower village for a short time after marrying and then built his homestead on the banks of the Schroon River near the Thurman Bridge (now called the Osborne Bridge), where he and Mary remained for the rest of their lives. He built a store and dwelling and owned several buildings in the

bridge area. His interests also included lumbering.

The Griffing family was very active politically on the local, county and state Stephen held several political positions as town supervisor (1836-37 and 1859-60), and was elected county sheriff in 1840. He was an old school Democrat and was a state delegate to the 1848 National Convention in Baltimore. Maryland. In 1836 he was one of the three commissioners appointed to build the first bridge across the Schroon at Thurman. He was a pathmaster, whose responsibilities included upkeep of the bridges, various types of roads and horse trails in the area. He was one of the two original wardens of the church of the Holy Cross in 1865. Stephen was very active in local military matters and was elected Colonel Commandant of the 122nd Regiment, New York Militia.

Mary Griffing died in 1879 and Colonel Griffing in 1885. They are buried in Warrensburg.

Grace Merrill Magee

Portrayed by Ruth Fruda

At an auction on the lawn of the Grace Merrill Magee property on Hudson Street in Warrensburg on July 21, 1979, all of the lovely things that she collected and cherished throughout her life were sold. Her beautiful black Packard touring car sold for \$65,000, and she had paid \$3,000 for it...brand new!

Mrs. Magee loved this town! Even as a world traveler who had dined with royalty...her dear friend, Russian Tsar Nicholas and his family (before they were eliminated). She rode camels in Egypt, took afternoon tea at the finest castles in England, but never forgot her roots here. Warrensburg is where she learned to develop a penchant for anything out of doors. Even though money was not an object, she especially loved "roughing" it in the wilds of the Adirondacks...She hiked many trails, went canoeing on many lakes, and, of course, rode horses. As a young child, she accompanied her father on a "golden opportunity" when they set out for the Yukon. The Klondike Gold Rush of 1896! It only lasted until 1899, but how fascinated she was with the discovery of gold. That trip sparked a great spirit of



adventure which continued the rest of her life.

Her childhood was of the privileged kind. Her father, Dr. Cyrus Merrill, was one of the most prominently respected and successful surgeons in the north country. They were fortunate to have several homes, including her father's home in Vermont. That home is now owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution. Growing up, she acquired several homes. Her Park Avenue home in New York City was sacrificed in the 1940's to assist in the war effort and she acquired instead a suite at the Hotel Carlisle in New York City.

Her father was born in Middlebury, Vermont. He met and married her mother, Mary Griffing when he was a young doctor, practicing medicine in Albany. She was the daughter of Stephen Griffing II, decendant of one of the earliest settlers of this area. He owned extensive mill properties and timber lands and acquired great wealth. He was a member of the New York State Legislature and twice held office of Warrensburg town supervisor. Not one to stand still, he also took title and possession of the Adirondack House.

Grace was married, twice. She met her first husband, James Lown, a lawyer, when she was attending finishing school in New York City. After two years of marriage he died. She was 70 years old in 1955 when she married the handsome and suave Mr. Edward Magee of River Street, with whom she had been friends for many years. Upon their marriage, she endowed Mr. Magee with a small fortune. He was the organist at Holy Cross Episcopal Church in town. After accepting his proposal, she insisted that they get married in England. She sent a postcard to her friend back in Warrensburg, Jennie Cameron, with a photograph showing the monumental event. Her marriage to Mr. Magee was short lived. He died in 1962, and she was again a widow. Upon Mr. Magee's demise she inherited what was left of his estate, and then had to pay inheritance taxes on the money that was originally hers!

Grace enjoyed summers here in her Warrensburg home. Her grandfather had purchased a small family home when she was just a young girl and many improvements were made over the years. In the 1920's she made many improvements such as enlarging the house, and a swimming pool. When it was built in 1928, it was reported to be the very first private, heated outdoor pool in New York. Once, on the very next day after recovering from surgery, she swam two whole laps in the hopes of hastening her recovery. She lived to the age of 94 years.

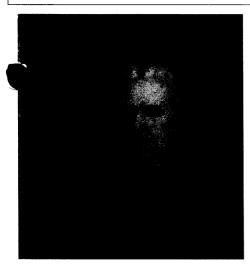
Abigail Woodward

Portraved by Filomena Riviello

Abigail Woodward Emerson was born in the year of our lord 1829. She was the daughter of the Honorable Joseph Woodward and Julia Gunn. Her mother was the first of her father's four wives. Joseph had a roving eye and a keen desire to marry the right woman. He was persistent in his endeavors.

Her great grandfather Josiah Woodward settled in what was to become Warrensburgh in 1787, moving his family from their home in Connecticut. Josiah was one of the original seven that would settle here. Unfortunately, the ancestral home burned to the ground in 1969.

She married Albert C. Emerson in 1855. Originally from New Hampshire, Albert



came to Warrensburg when only 8 years of age. He met with unbounded success in all his endeavors. He became a merchant and had holdings in the lumber industry, leather tanning and founded the Emerson Bank in Warrensburgh. He believed in free education and lobbied to have a free school built in Warrensburg. The school would be built after Albert's death. Albert died just a few days after the town voted for the construction in 1888, the meeting held during the great now storm of that year.

Albert and Abigail had two sons. The first was Louis (b. 1858), who would follow in her father's and then in his father's footsteps working in the lumber industry, in the bank and eventually becoming a state senator and later U. S. Congressman.

Their younger son, James (b. 1865) would work in his father's bank and in the pulp and paper industry and later join his brother Louis in the political arena. As a long term and very well respected State Senator he lobbied for improved roads and through his efforts the state trunk highway system was developed. He was also a staunch supporter of woman's suffrage.

As was a woman's place in those days,
Abigail ran the household and supported
her husband and sons in their pursuits
and was most proud of their many
accomplishments. Albert died in 1888
and she would follow him a year later.
Their only grandson, Albert Lewis
Emerson, son of James, would be born
one year after her death.

Albert L. had no children and so this
illustrious family line ended. But look

Left to right – Ebenizer (Doug Goettsche), Grace Merrill Magee (Ruth Fruda), Kitchel Bishop (Steve Parisi), Stephen Griffing (Peter Wood), Margaret Louise Tubbs (Rita Ferraro) and Abigail Woodward (Filomena Riviello).

carefully at the old bank building on Main Street and you'll see that name "Emerson" lives on, etched in stone.



FROM THE HISTORIAN'S FILES

Warrensburgh News August 16, 1962

The old timers can tell you about Bubbles. They knew her story, from beginning to end.

It was a typically snowy Adirondack Christmas, back in 1918. Like most



"Bubbles" Smith - 18 years, 6 months

fathers who have children, Frank W. Smith, a Warrensburg banker, was thinking about "something different" for his young girl Hilda. Remembering that Hilda loved animals, he decided to give her a puppy.

"I can so well remember that Christmas morning," reminisces Miss Smith, today chairman of the board of the Lake George National Bank. "Dad came in the living room with a bundle in his pocket. I put my hand in to find a wet nose."

And so Bubbles, all of three months old, made her first appearance at the Smith household.

As Bubbles grew older, she grew fonder of her home and even developed what seemed a dog's-eye interest in community affairs.

"Bubbles had a regular seat at our town councils," Miss Smith recalls. "She would sit patiently at the table and watch the proceedings with avid interest."

But Bubbles was not always patient. When she thought her master had been in the council room too long she, left in the car, would demand his presence by standing on her hind legs and incessantly honking the automobile horn. If her master did not come, she would replace

the short blasts by a continuous drone produced by resting her chest on the steering wheel.

Bubbles' middle age was marked by all the pleasantries a dog can claim: trips in the family auto, walks on country roads and town streets, laugh-filled minutes in the family parlor during parties.

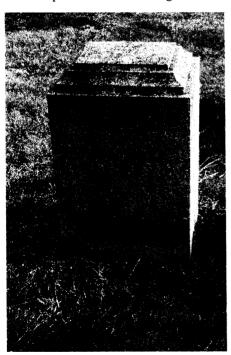
As the months turned into years, the Boston bulldog's eyesight began to fail.

One day, on a routine amble across the street, the usually alert Bubbles did not see the oncoming car. When it was too late, a brown body lay on the highway.

The driver sprang from the vehicle and gently lifted the dog in his car. Within minutes Bubbles, who had miraculously escaped death, was under the care of a local veterinarian.

Optimistically, he notified the Smiths, assuring them that, with necessary treatment, their dog would soon be perfectly well again.

But the Smiths sensed differently. They knew that never again would they play and romp with their fun-loving Bubbles.



The funeral was a tribute to the animal. She rested in her own casket in the Smith home. Flowers came from the many Warrensburgians, even from out-of-town. She was buried in the Smith family lot at Warrensburg Cemetery, giving her the distinction of being the only animal

ever buried in the public cemetery.

Her tombstone may be seen there today. A small, granite slab, its inscription reads, "Bubbles, a good dog, 18 years, 8 months, 1937." Bubbles' life wasn't spectacular. She never rescued anyone or warned of a fire. But to those who knew and loved her, she would always be the pert, pointed eared old Bubbles; always ready for fun, always ready for a friend.



Condensed from a news item dated December 1943:

LARGE SECTION OF STATE HIGHWAY SLIDES INTO RIVER NEAR THURMAN BRIDGE

Water Undermines 500 Feet – Road Crew Working On By-Pass

A 500 foot section of macadam highway on the Warrensburg-Thurman road, about two and one-half miles from Warrensburg, slid suddenly into the Schroon River at 6:30 yesterday evening. A strip of road about eight feet wide is all that remains.

According to State Engineer Frank L. Bisbee, the cave-in was caused by seepage from a lake located about 200 feet back from the top of the upper bank on the Rex Stone property. The lake was thought to be an artificial lake but it is a real lake with no apparent inlet or outlet.

Another theory is that it was brought about by a pocket formed under the road by a subterranean spring. This view is held by Mr. and Mrs. Rex Stone who claim that the surface of the lake has not fallen perceptibly. Mr. Bisbee believes this is due to the fact that the lake is filling up with soil.

Rex Stone Jr., who was an eyewitness to the slide, at once called his mother, who described the sudden spurt of a big stream of water which projected about 75 feet inot the flats of the river with terrific force for about five minutes.....

Mr. Bisbee recalls that in 1911 a serious washout [at the site] swept a vehicle over the bank into the river....

School buses have been running in two sections, one bringing the pupils for the Warrensburg central school to the west side of the washout. After walking around the hole they are picked up by another bus which takes them into Warrensburg.



Speaking of Rex Stone and his lake – a January 20, 1916 item in the Personal Section of the Warrensburgh News noted that "Lewisville ice houses are being filled by a fine crop of ice from the Rex Stone pond. The ice averages 15 inches in thickness, about 10 inches being clear water ice."



December 1943

Photo courtesy of Lenore Smith

Revisiting the Class of 1956

Virginia Morey Pike



Left to right: Anne Bosse Salemme, Janet Tracy DeMatties, Ellen Walsh Barber, Judson Smith, Susan Alger, Raymond Gibouleau, Phyllis Terlizzi Sippel, Dawn Moon Jucket, Edrie Baker Griffin, Virginia Morey Pike, Elizabeth Combs Sheridan, Gretchen Countryman Conaway, Ann Whitacre Foster, Joan Tracy Higgins. (Missing from photo, Carl Thomas.)

Photo courtesy Virginia Morey Pike

Fifteen members of the Warrensburg Central School Class of 1956 attended the 50th Class Reunion at the Alumni Banquet, August 25, 2006, held at Echo Lake Lodge. The class had a mixer the night before the banquet and a breakfast following the banquet, both held at the Hometown Skillet.

anet Tracy DeMatties read a statement of what has happened in her family over the past fifty years and Phyllis Terlizzi Sippel also shared special memories of how the community of Warrensburg welcomed her in her Junior year with open arms. Janet Tracy DeMatties read a printout at the banquet of what life was like for us fifty years ago. It gave every one a chuckle.

Next year, the Alumni Banquet will be held August 25th, a Saturday night, at Thousand Acres. So mark your calendars, it's sure to be a good time.



Photo taken November 21, 2006 at same location

Warrensburgh News

March 14, 1918

A drama of absorbing interest to the active participants is being enacted in The News office today. Ordinary troubles should be cheerfully faced and not thrust upon others, but in this case we wish our readers to know why The News will probably be delayed in reaching them this week. By the freakish and cantankerous behavior of our gasoline engine - worse than a balking mule - we are deprived of power to run our machinery press, typesetting machine, etc. We ask the indulgence of our readers under the circumstances." [Editor's note: Oh that I could use that

[Editor's note: Oh that I could use that as an excuse.]

Letter to the Editor

I received my calendar with the Quarterly a few days ago. Very impressive! Too good for [just] a calendar. It will go in to my collection.

The street car with plow, the high rock, the hotels, stores, etc., and especially the Burhan's place with local stone and mason and very distinctive stonework. Great.

Here is an item that may be of interest. The oversize touring car in front of the Grand Army House is an oversize Stanley Steamer Tourer, 1910 vintage. Dick Kline told me years ago, that the building he rebuilt for a home on Hackensack was originally a garage used to house Stanley Steamer Tourers and probably kept busy with hotel guests, etc.

The Society is on firm ground now with contributors like Del Chambers and John Hastings who do great research work, and also all the others. With many new residents coming to live in town with interest in town history the future [of the Historical Society] looks very good

Ed Kreinheder



1956-1970 F.K. Wheeler, Warrensburg Negative File "Guess Who"

Call Sandi at 623-2207 with your answers or e-mail sandi@countryroadlodge.com







The photos in the last Quarterly were: 7. Lynn Smith, 8. Bud Olden., 9. James Riley The first four correct callers in the Fall issue were: Alice Damp, Sharon Tar, Sarah Farrar and Bev Ross

Warrensburgh
Historical Society
2007 Calendar
\$8.00
available at the following
locations in Warrensburg:
Hometown Skillet
Jacobs and Toney
Maren Dunn Book Store
Miller Art & Frame
Richards Library
Riverside Gallery

Mail order single copy \$10.00
includes tax and postage,
additional copies
to same address \$9.20
Mail check to:
WHS – PO Box 441
Warrensburg, NY 12885

Then

Sept. 10, 1954 – But what was there before the gas station?.

. . . . and Now



Nov. 20, 2006 - TD BankNorth



The Thomas House - c. 1890



Jan. 2006 - Senior Citizen Center/Chamber of Commerce