

Old Presbyterian Cemetery

How many of you have driven down CR 109 to the lake and passed the old brick church? How many of you noticed a small cemetery on the left, next to the church? That cemetery has more than 60 graves and is over 200 years old. There are many original settlers from Fish House laid to rest there.

- * David Marvin - Revolutionary Soldier
- * Deacon Abraham Beecher- founder of the church
- * Truman Shew - cousin of Godfrey Shew Jr.
- * 6 children from Dr. Alvah Wood, one of Fish House's first doctors

The cemetery was associated with the Presbyterian Church. The first church on that site was built after a church revival in 1815. Isaac Noyes and Abram Beecher were the first deacons. In 1869 that church was taken down and in 1870, the present brick building was erected. The bricks were made at a local "brick" pond just up the road on CR 109. The church closed its doors around 1919. The steeple was taken down in 1947, believed to be unsafe. The church is now privately owned but the cemetery is the property of the town of Northampton.

It is a public space and it has fallen on hard times. Over the years the Detweiller's have tried to keep it mowed, but as the gravestones fall over from age, the job has become more difficult.

Rev. Kathy Reese, with the help of some neighbors, has been cleaning the cemetery. She would like to organize a group from Fish House that would maintain it. Many of the stones have fallen over and have been moved from their original location. Some have become buried under dirt and the ever growing weeds. There is an effort to try to locate a map of the original cemetery so the missing graves can be located and stones returned to the proper location. James Groff, Northampton Town Supervisor has been contacted and he is working on this issue.

If you are willing to help in the reclaiming of this treasure, please contact Kathy Reese at

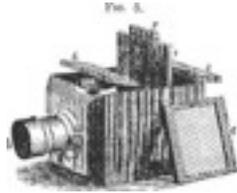
reesebo@nycp.rr.com

Fish House T Shirts & Sweatshirts for Sale!

Today is your last chance to buy a sweatshirt or T Shirt. We still have many sizes available. Or take your chances at our breakfast raffle! Who knows? You might win a shirt!

The Shew "Boys"

A cousin of Godfrey Shew Jr. was Godfrey I. Shew. He married Lydia Beecher and they had six sons. Two sons became doctors. The other four sons (Truman, Myron, Jacob and William) were trained in 1841 by Samuel T. B.



Morse (the telegraph inventor) in the art of daguerrotypy. It was the most popular type of photography from 1839-1859. Truman stayed in this area while his three brothers eventually ended up in San Francisco. Those three brothers became well known for their photographs. Much of their work was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire. You can still see some in history books. Below is a photo of their traveling studio. (From www.GodfreyShew.com)



Truman, who stayed on the east coast, died at the early age of 31. According to his doctor brother, Joel, it was due to their early exposure to the chemicals used in daguerreotypy. Truman B. Shew is buried in the old Presbyterian Church cemetery. (See next column)

DAGUERREOTYPY - French word - photographic process invented by Louis-Jaques-Mande, introduced world wide in 1839. For nearly twenty years, it was the most commonly used photographic process.

Bottle Drive 2015

The bottle drive has been very successful this summer. We will continue to accept bottles and cans until mid September.



Little Free Library

The Little Free Library will continue to be stocked with books until mid October.



1837 Letter Found!

In March, of this year, I received an email from a Karen Gottlieb. She has ties to Fish House and contacted me, as I am the historian of Fish House. Here is an excerpt from that email:

My mother's family, the Flickingers, was (I think) the third family to own the Godfrey Shew house in Fish House. My grandfather bought it sometime in the 1920s for his family of six children, it being difficult to travel and camp with them. My grandmother spent the summers there with the children and grandfather came up weekends from Schenectady, their home. The house was sold to the Floyds in the 1990s.

From time to time letters and other odd artifacts were discovered in the house and put in a little chimney cupboard ... They were taken out and read now and then, but always returned to the cupboard.

I am living in and clearing out my parents' house in Stowe, Vermont and last week found a letter that should have remained at camp in the cupboard. It was in with my grandfather's stamp collection. My mom was a member of the Stowe Historical Society, an avid amateur historian, and I know she would never knowingly have brought the letter to Stowe. But here it is.

The letter was addressed to S.M. Page, Northampton, New York and was sent from Schenectady on September 11, 1837. It's a business letter, referring to an account, and I'm trying to decipher it. The Page family owned Shew House at that time and it's possible my family bought it from them, but I don't recall for sure.

So, the letter belongs in the archives at Fish House.

Since March, we have worked together, via email, to try to decipher the letter.



Bouck, our 15th NY Governor

It turns out that the writer of the letter was the governor of New York from 1843-1845!

The Background & Substance of the Letter- Apparently Squire Page wrote to Wm C Bouck (who was in charge of delivering payment) complaining that he had not received payment from Alfred Barrett for work that he had done on the canal in Lockport. Bouck, in turn, contacted Alfred Barrett to find out why Page had not been scheduled to be paid. Barrett then told Bouck that he had not contracted Page for work done in Lockport, therefore no payment would be made. Wm C Bouck relayed this information to Page in this letter.

Background Information on the Letter

- The Recipient - Squire M Page -

He was born in 1813 and died in 1838. He was an engineer that at one time worked on the Erie Canal. He lived in the Shew house in Fish House. He wrote to Wm C Bouck regarding money that he thought he was owed due to work he did on the Erie Canal.

- The Sender - Wm C Bouck - He was a member of the Erie Canal Commission from 1821-1840. He was known as "white horse" Bouck because he was responsible for carrying the pay for the workers at the western end of the Canal. He carried full saddlebags of money, alone, riding a white horse and was never robbed.

- Mr. Barrett- mentioned in the letter- Alfred Barret started working on the the Erie Canal in 1818 and eventually became a chief engineer. In 1824 he was given the post of Resident Superintending Engineer of the Welland Canal in Canada, which would link Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. He must have still been involved with the Erie Canal as the letter was dated 1837.

Transcript of 1837 Letter

*S. M. Page
Northampton
Montgomery Co*

Schenectady, Sept. 2nd, 1837

D Sir:

Yours of the 28th letter was seen @ this morning. I enclose you a draft for the amount of the af.-.

You will please to execute the enclosed swiftly and forward them to me at Charlton.

Mr. Barrett stated to me at Lockport the question which had arisen in regard to your account. He stated that you had come to Albany, and also to Lockport on your own accord, and without his request; and also that he had told you when at Albany, that if he wanted your aid at Lockport, he would give you notice. I said to Mr. Barrett that you was only entitled to pay for such services as were performed at his request; that the account must be settled on his certificate, and that he must make such a certificate as he thought was equitable.

*Your friend
WmC Bouck*

The original letter is framed and hanging in the Fish House Community Center