



Preble Today

Volume 3, Number 1

For the People of Preble

Spring, 2012

Preble Post Office - 200 Years Old

The post office in Preble has reached a milestone this year. The first post office in town was established in Baltimore in 1812. At that time, Baltimore was the most populated part of Preble. Prior to the establishment of a post office there, all mail came by horseback from Pompey. That was a great distance back in 1812.

Jabez Phelps was the first post master and he kept that job for a number of years before Joseph Crofoot took it over sometime prior to 1824. In 1832, the post office was moved to Preble Corners as that part of town became more prosperous. Phineas Burdick was the post master at the time of the move. In 1831, Matthias VanHoesen, kept the Post Office in the hotel. While it was in the hotel, Jabez Phelps was postmaster again. He was followed by Andrew Spence who was postmaster both before and after the hotel burnt and was rebuilt in 1840. Jabez Phelps held the office once more from 1848 until the beginning of Lincoln's administration in 1861. Chester Markham operated it until 1875 and was succeeded by



The Preble Post Office as it looked in the late 1800s.

John Out who maintained it out of his harness shop until after 1885.

Throughout the years, the post office was located in stores, hotels, and private homes. Hobart Cummings was the postmaster when the Post Office resided in W. Rofe's store at Preble Corners which

today, is the corner area near where Bessie Swayze lived for many years. Iva Hunt had it in her home for quite awhile. Mrs. Holly Sutton was postmaster when it was in the Greens' General Store on Preble Road at the end of Steger Road.

Continued - Page 2

Town of Preble
P.O. Box 234
Preble, NY 13141

Preble Today

Offices at Town Hall
Preble Road, Preble, New York 13141
Town Hall (607) 749-3199

Town Supervisor: - James Doring
Email jdoring@twcny.rr.com

Deputy Supervisor: Peter Knapp- 607-749-2336
Town Council: Debra Brock- 315-696-5549
Linda Riehlman - 607-749-3790
Dave Morse- 607-749-2856

Town Clerk and Tax Collector:
Jane Davenport - Phone 607-749-3199
Email prebletownclerk@centralny.twcbe.com

Deputy Town Clerk: Mary Ann McCloskey

Town Justice: Donna Doody - Phone 607-749-2377

Justice Clerk: Tina Goddard

Highway Supt.: Jeff Griswold - Phone 607-749-2710
Deputy Highway: Dale Mosher

Building Inspector and Code enforcement Officer:
W. Rick Fritz - Phone: 607-591-9898

Dog Control: Paul Burhans, Phone: 607-749-2734
Lindsay Anderson

Assessor: Nedra Griswold - Phone: 607-753-5322

Town Attorney: Donald Armstrong

Bookkeeper: Gina Nourse

County Legislator: Don Boyden
Phone: 607-749-8709

Planning Board: James Harris, Chairman
Barbara Albro
Tim Coyne
Maureen Knapp
Jim Seamon
Don Armstrong, Attorney
Mary Anne McCloskey, Secretary

Planning Board regular scheduled meeting:
4th Wednesday of each month at 7 pm

Zoning Board of Appeals: Daniel O'Shea, Chairman
Amy Bertini
Robert Lieber
Al Socha
Kay Vossler
Don Armstrong, Attorney
Mary Anne McCloskey, Secretary
Zoning Board of Appeals regular scheduled meeting:
1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm

Board of Assessment & Review:
Ann McLyman
William Underwood
Charles Dalley

Recreation Chairman: Babe Carroll
Phone 607-299-4474

Historian: Anne Henderson, Phone 607-749-2044

Population: 1,393 (2010 Census)
Registered Voters: 910

Town of Preble website: www.preble-ny.org
Cortland County website: www.cortland-co.org

Preble Today is a publication of the Preble Town Board.
Preble community members, friends and families are invited
to submit materials and ideas for future newsletters to:
Laura Doring
6785 Steger Rd.
Preble, New York 13141

Or email to: laura.doring@yahoo.com
Or jdoring@twcny.rr.com

Message From the Supervisor...



*James Doring, Town
Supervisor*

Eighty degree weather in March and snow in April. This Spring weather could be telling us that there is a volatile year ahead of us on many fronts. We could all take a lesson from the Boy Scouts and be prepared for anything.

Our energy saving renovations for the Town Hall are moving forward. The first phase is sealing the building envelope, which will commence in May. We will then be installing the heat pumps and the final phase is mounting the photovoltaic panels to produce our own electricity to power the heat pumps and other electrical needs. When the project is complete, we will not be dependent upon heating oil any longer. However, please realize that it is the sum of the various grants and subsidies the town has qualified for that makes this project feasible.

We have included in this issue, a schedule of events for the Syracuse Astronomical Society at Darling Hill. Even though it is not in the town of Preble, we have a connection to the Society, as our faithful and long time Zoning Board chairman, Dan O'Shea has been on the board of directors for the Society for many years. Please take advantage of the public viewing dates at Darling Hill if you are interested in star gazing with some interesting people until the wee hours of the morning.

We now have a new corporate neighbor. We would like to welcome Suit-Kote to Preble

Post Office - Cont'd

The mail used to come by train to Preble where a star route carrier would pick it up and deliver the mail down through Otisco Valley by horse and buggy. There was a little store at the corner of Sawmill Road where a tiny post office was located. Another carrier would come up from Marietta and get the mail for Marietta that the Preble carrier had brought from the train in Preble.

The post office moved up the street from the store to Carl and Elizabeth Johnson's house (current home of Lyle and Esther Pierce) where it remained for the next 30 years. Carl and Elizabeth made the daily trip to the train to get the town mail. The train would grab the outgoing mail bag and toss out the mail destined for Preble. Sometimes the wind would blow the mail up the tracks and in the winter it would be hard to find in the snow.

The tiny post office out in the valley closed, but the star route from Preble continued to bring mail to the people of Otisco Valley.

as they have recently purchased the former Barden Homes complex to conduct their vehicle maintenance operations. We wish them the best as they move into their new facility.

Congratulations to Preble resident, Rhea Jezer of Song Lake Road, for having been honored on May 9th by the Syracuse Post Standard. She was one of nine individuals selected in CNY for the 2012 Post Standard Achievement Award. Thank you Rhea for helping make a difference in CNY!

As I review the schedule of interesting activities and events taking place this summer, I see there's a lot to do in Preble! Enjoy taking advantage of these opportunities and have a wonderful and productive summer. Should anyone have any questions or comments, please call or email me any time.

At Your Service,
Jim Doring
Supervisor

Editor - My Apologies

My sincere apologies to the people of Preble. This newsletter was supposed to have gone out well before Memorial Day. Unfortunately, I inadvertently clicked on the wrong file when it was sent to the printer. The printer, without creating a proof, checking the date or comparing with a hard copy that accompanied the CD, printed it and sent it to the Post Office. The Preble Post Office caught it but a couple of the other post offices that serve the Town didn't. So some people received the Spring, 2010 edition. Again, please accept my apologies.

David Blatchley, Editor

Town resident, Betty Banner, took over the carrier route when her Dad's contract expired. She was the carrier for the next 33 years. Betty said that you couldn't beat the beautiful drive from Preble to Otisco Lake, watching the seasons and seeing the wildlife. In 1999, Babe Carroll took the carrier route and in April of 2004, Tom Pitman became the carrier. Betty Ann Pitman and Babe Carroll are his substitutes.

When the Johnson's retired, the town had purchased the big red schoolhouse in the center of town. The Post Office relocated there and continues there today. Doris Preston, Sue Whiteman and Amy Swartz have been postmasters at this location. Marilyn Fink has been the relief postmaster for several years. Leah Cushing is the present postmaster.

The postal service in Preble has been going strong for 200 years, selling stamps, delivering the mail and serving Preble people and the general public. Hope they have another celebration in 100 years!

SUMMER FUN IN PREBLE



Entry way sign to Heiberg Forest.

Heiberg Memorial Forest

by Sue Wright

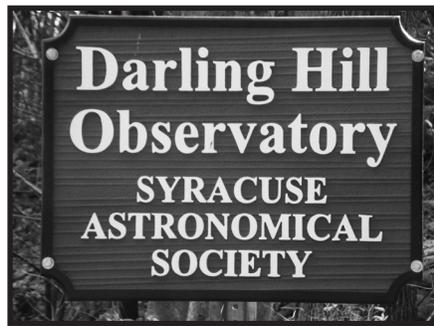
You may not be aware that Sven O. Heiberg Memorial Forest is almost exclusively located in the Town of Preble because you have to drive through the Village of Tully or Town of Truxton to get there. The approximately 3,500 acre property is owned by the State of New York and is used primarily as an educational and research center for SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF). Named after a world-renowned professor at the college, the property has been used as an experimental station since 1948 from our local DEC to NASA. Approximately 400 pre-grad and post-grad students annually are involved to conduct research at the forest with classroom facilities available year round. In addition to forest management and research, maple syrup and Christmas tree production have been long-time projects at the facility. Recently a wind turbine was erected to power the two classrooms and is similar to a turbine that would meet the needs of a rural residence.

Fortunately, the forest is made available by ESF to the general public for hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, birding, picnicking, and hunting. The interior roads are gated although walking is allowed on the trails. Robert Davis, the Director of Forest Properties for SUNY ESF, points out that of paramount concern is the safety of the students and faculty doing field research so some trails may not be available during these times and would be marked.

Hiking is the most popular activity for the general public with safety zones delin-

eated and maps of the trails available. Families with young children to skilled hikers take advantage of the trails which are open from dawn to dusk. The recently completed Skyline Trail connects Heiberg to Kettlebail State Forrest with Labrador Hollow and then to Morgan Hill State Forrest. If you do plan to hike, you may be sharing the trail with bear, bobcats, coyotes and fisher with population of these animals currently being monitored by SUNY ESF students. The forest is mostly in cell phone range with remote areas unavailable.

You can find directions to Heiberg Forest at our website, at www.preble-ny.org/recreation.htm.



Sign marking the entrance to the observatory.

Syracuse Astronomical Society

The SAS invites the public to watch the night skies at their Darling Hill Observatory on Strong Road. Public Viewing Sessions are held on the **Friday BEFORE** the New Moon (**with Saturday as the weather alternate**). Alternate dates are in Parentheses.

June 15 (16)	Oct. 5 (6)
July 13 (14)	Nov. 9 (10)
Sept 7 (8)	

Arrive just after sunset, dress for cold nights, bring your telescope or binoculars if you have them, turn your lights off and parking lights on at the top of the driveway, park on the grass, and enjoy the star studded night. For more information, directions, tips, and to confirm the dates, check out their website at: www.syracuse-astro.org

Preble Town Events

- **Community Volleyball**
in the Park 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Tuesday nights July & August.

Call Bill or Jill Sears at 749-4289 for more information.

- **Community Night**
August 11, 2012 5:00 PM 'till

Join your neighbors for a night of fun for all. There will be a Bounce House for the kids, Bon Fire after dark, Music by Jeremy Benedict, and Food served by the Preble Fire Dept.

Call Mike Compton for details at 749-4227.

Dwyer Memorial Park

In addition to the seasonal plays, the following events will also be held at Dwyer Park. Please bring the kids (grandkids) and come down to the park to enjoy the wading pool, a walk in the woods or have a picnic.

County Fireworks Show
July 3

The 40th Annual Bluegrass Ramble
August 5

The Cortland Celtic Festival
August 18-19

The United Way Triathlon
September 15

The Cortland-Onondaga Federation of Kettle Lake Associations

The Plants around Our Lakes
June 16, 2012 Saturday Afternoon
(Check website for time and place)

Guest Speaker: Dr. Donald Leopold is Professor of conservation biology and forest ecology at SUNY-ESF. We will begin with a walking field-trip around one of our kettle lakes, followed by a brief presentation. This is an exceptional opportunity to learn about the unique plants around our lakes.

A Study of the Kettle Lakes In Cortland & Onondaga Counties
August 20, 2012 Monday 7 PM
Tully Town Hall

Guest Speaker: Andrew Brainard is a Doctoral student at SUNY-ESF. His study conducted research on Song Lake, Crooked Lake, Tully Lake, Little York Lake, and Gatehouse Pond to investigate the impacts of boat traffic and development on the success of non-native species establishment. Please join us as he shares his findings from a year of research.

Annual Water Festival and Picnic
September - A Sunday Afternoon (Check website for time) Little York Lake Pavilion

Sponsored by C-OFOKLA - Join us for another wonderful afternoon of fun and food on the lake.

Watershed Issues: Shoreline Bacterial Source Tracking
October 16, 2012 Monday 7 PM
Tully Town Hall

Guest Speaker: Jim Cunningham is President of the New York State Federation of Lake Associations and the Madison County Federation of Lake Associations.

Check the website www.cofokla.org for the latest information.

Building Preble Family Park

by Babe Carroll and Laura Doring

I'd like to share a little history of the development of Preble Park. In the late 1960's the town of Preble purchased 13 acres of cow pasture from Pat and Dorothy Rofe to be developed into Preble Family



Part of the Preble Park.

Park. Many people donated their time and labor to build the park. Local farmers used their tractors to plow and drag the ball fields while others picked numerous stones to make a smooth playing field. The four backstops, as well as the two fences were put up by Preble volunteers. Dave Morse headed up the installation of the 2nd fence that went in three years ago. Holes for trees and footers for the backstop were dug by Fred Adams. The hedge separating the upper and lower recreations fields were bulldozed by Doug Brown.

The pavilion was erected by the Preble Fire Department. Later when the kitchen was added, the blocks were laid by Hank Carroll while the roof was put on by other volunteers. Plumbing and installation of a sink donated by Dennis Morgan was done by Tom Pitman. John Morgan did the painting. Paul Maher installed a cement dry well for the kitchen in memory of his grandparents, John and Lillian Simon (my mother and father). Electrical work was done by Dave Smith, Roger Avery, & Andy White. A long table was donated by Nancy Baldwin. Many other local people donated their skills, time and services including; Wes Swayze, Burd Swayze, Donna Swayze, Lynn Webb, Ralph Turtura, Jim Griswold, Jr., Pat Griswold, Don Wright, Claude Lajoie, The Morgan Family, Pitman Family, and the Sears Family.

The Red Building in the park was

built with free labor by BOCES under the guidance of their instructor, John MacDonald, who lived in Otisco Valley. The playground was purchased by the town and reassembled by local volunteers. The Pump House which was originally used as a 'look out' for planes during World War 2, was removed after the war to Strong Field where it was used for storage by the Preble Softball teams. It was then moved back to Preble Park for use as a pump house.

Preble businesses also donated equipment and services to help build the park. Barber & DeLine installed the well and pump, Song Mountain used their bulldozer and backhoe to help lay the underground electrical cables, Suit-Kote installed the basketball court, Paul Bunyan donated treated wood and wood chips, Ted McBride installed the septic system and Beck Equipment uses their roller to maintain the fields.

Recreation Department

by Babe Carroll

Preble Park is open for basketball, softball, games, etc. and the kitchen/pavilion will open in May after the committee, (Jill & Bill Sears, Babe Carroll, Connie Griswold, Donna Wheelock, Teena Griswold, Betty Ann Pitman, Theresa Pitman, Barb Bregard and Jane Davenport) has cleaned the appliances, tables and floor on May 21st.

Due to the County's ongoing fiscal problems, they reduced staff in the office and retired Manny Lann. There will be no trips, arts & crafts, etc. Therefore, I contacted John McNerney, City of Cortland Director, who gave me booklets listing the city parks that have arts & crafts and other events. Unfortunately, there would be a cost to Preble children of \$10.00 as a non-resident charge.

To reserve the pavilion or ball field, please call Babe Carroll at 607-299-4474

Interview with Preble Resident, John Steger

by Deb Brock

In John Steger's humble opinion, his Preble story is 'Hello. Enjoyed the great experience. Thanks'. However, there are a few details to be added to that story.

John was born in Preble in 1937, attended Preble School until the 7th grade, and enjoyed the agricultural life style of the Preble community throughout his childhood. The environment was great for children, filled with baseball, basketball and many community events with suppers at the Fire Department and gatherings at church and Grange creating social times for neighbors to share. There was no television or any of today's many other technologies. Most of life's requirements were met by the community. Preble had many small businesses then, including three gas stations, a grocery store, sawmill, lumber yard, and the sauerkraut plants. For the most part, people worked hard and enjoyed their spare times within Preble's boundaries.

As a student at Homer Central High School, John was on the school baseball team. John was an FFA member and was chosen to attend an FFA National Convention in Kansas City. It was a trip across country by train, with others from Homer and Tully, that he considers an important experience in his young life.

John's family owned a farm on the Preble road named after the Steger family. His father, two brothers, and John had a dairy which grew from a herd of sixty cows to a herd of nearly one hundred cows plus young stock. They also had a cash crop (25 acres of cabbage) and did custom harvest of oats, wheat, and corn in the Preble area. The family employed progressive farming methods such as intensive grazing and use of bunk feeders in the 1950's. In the 1960's, they built a new home on the farm. According to John, 'It was a good life - kept us out of trouble'.

John continued his experience off the farm by working for General Crushed Stone and then, for 27 years, at Saulsbury Fire Rescue. He began his career at Saulsbury with the construction work of the

Marathon facility, advanced to metal fabrication, then to the service department, and later was a part of the start up of the service center. In that capacity, John worked in sales and repairs and in customer relations. While in the service center, he saw the staff grow from nine to thirty two, and the scope of the department grew to include development of new products. He was part of the creation of a full stainless steel body with plastic water tank concept that cut paint cost for the equipment and was very suc-



John and Cindy Steger

cessful. The concept of putting new bodies on existing chassis was also used, which shortened the time equipment was out of service and made the update affordable for fire departments.

John first entered public service as a member of the Preble Town Board, a position he held from 1981 until 1997. He then served as the Town of Preble Supervisor until 1999. He was Cortland County Legislator for the towns of Preble and Scott for ten years, retiring in 2011.

Public service for John also included participating with the Preble Fire Department for fifty years. He began as a volunteer, took required training, and found that his continued involvement unfolded one level after the other. He held Chief ranks for twelve of the fifty years, was a Fire Commissioner for four years, named Fire Fighter of the Year in 1980 and held the position of President of the Cortland County Burn Fund until he retired in 2011. As chairman of the Town Park Pavilion Project, he organized the Fire Department volunteer labor, procured materials and

oversaw the successful completion of the structure which is still in service today for the Town of Preble residents.

As a member of the Pastoral Committee of the Preble Congressional Church, the recent task of confirming Reverend Becky West brings John a great deal of satisfaction. Reverend West brings much to the community.

John and Cindy Steger have been married thirty five years this year. Their children, two daughters and a son, were raised in Preble. Their families, now including seven grandsons, live close by in Central New York. Looking forward, John's plan is to travel, paint, landscape at home, garden, and spend time with the grandchildren, some of it on the golf course.

Some of the thoughts that John shares is that life in Preble is great. Preble Valley is a wonderful place to live. After traveling to other places and seeing what those places have to offer, coming home to Preble brings a realization of all that we have to be grateful for. In particular, the land and climate here sustain agriculture, without fear of crop failures experienced in many other areas of the country.

As to public service in general, John believes it is more difficult to recruit volunteers. The experience needed to do a job is different today than it was fifteen years ago. Regulations and requirements of public service volunteers are changing all of the time and it's not easy keeping up with the changes. Yet, even with the turmoil, ninety five percent of the time John spent in public service has been fulfilling. It is the duty of those in politics to protect the safety and welfare of our citizens and he encourages those of us who are concerned about the community to step forward.

His parting comments are that he is grateful for the support he has had from his wife and family through the years, and appreciates the support of the Preble and Scott communities. John is comfortable with his accomplishments and thankful for the opportunity to serve his community.

We are grateful that John chose to serve so well for these many years.

Preble Town Hall Energy Upgrade Project

Through the Climate Change Innovation Program

The Preble Town Board approved three contracts for work to be done for the Energy Upgrade Project at the Preble Town Hall.

Rick Fritz, Town of Preble Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer will oversee the three phase project. Contractors will be issued building permits for the required work.

Contract 1. Energy efficiencies for the building envelope. Bill Johnston from Comfort Windows will begin the air sealing and insulation portion of the project on Monday May 7, 2012. The basement window installation is planned for the week of May 21, 2012. June 4, 2012 is the target date to begin the first floor windows installation.

Contract 2. Energy efficient heating system. Ellis Giles from TAG Mechanicals will install heat pumps using a ducted distribution system to heat and cool the Town Hall. Start date is expected to be July 1, 2012.

Contract 3. Installation of photovoltaic system on the Preble Town Hall. Taitem Engineering, with lead Nick Kirk, will add additional areas to the existing Records Room roof. Solar PV panels will be installed on the existing and new areas of the Records Room roof and a portion of the panels will be installed on the upper roof on the rear of the building. That work is proposed to begin on August 1, 2012.

Preble Garden Club

The Preble Garden Club meets the second Tuesday of the month from April through November with demonstrations and gardening-related projects being offered. The Club plants and waters the flower bed at the Preble Elmwood Cemetery and in front of the Preble Town Hall. In December, the Club decorates the out-

side of the Town Hall and Fire Station with seasonal greenery. Last fall, flowering shrubs and trees were planted around the memorial stone on Preble Road. The Club will have flowers available for the children taking part in the Memorial Day Parade to place at the cross in the cemetery during the ceremony. For more information, contact Sue Wright at (607) 749-4431 or Pat Griswold at (607) 749-3678.

Historian Notes

By Anne Henderson

In 2011, the town of Preble received grant money from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation in Syracuse in the amount of \$1,064. The grant was to replace the historical marker that had stood for many years on East Hill Road at the site of Preble's very first school. The new marker was dedicated in Mid-May of this year.

The early residents of Preble were very interested in education. As soon as a part of town was settled, a school was established. The first school was

situated in the area of East Hill Road. Today, if you drive up East Homer-Baltimore Road, the marker is in place as you turn onto East Hill Road.

The school was established in 1801 with Miss Ruth Thorpe as it's first teacher. At that time, Preble was a part of Tully so students attending this school came from as far North as Tully, as far East as East Homer, and as far South as Homer. The school only operated for a few years until 1808 when Preble separated from Tully and became a town in the newly formed Cortland County.

For a long time there were many school districts in Preble but over time and after many consolidations only the big red schoolhouse remained. When it closed around 1950, children from Preble went to either, Tully schools or Homer schools. The building, which is now home to the Town Hall and the Post Office, remains painted red and is a reminder of our past and to many of us, is a part of our childhood.

I'm still working on the barn project. Linda Underwood will help in taking barn pictures. The information forms will be available soon.

Town of Preble Building Permits Spring 2012 Report

<u>Date</u>	<u>Property Owner</u>	<u>Notes</u>
11/14/2011	Kenneth Morgan	Demo
11/17/2011	Daniel Sweeney Jr.	Building pole barn
12/05/2011	Kenneth Morgan	Pole barn 24 by 45
12/28/2011	Gayle Gleason	Replace part of barn
01/09/2012	Ken and Debbie Brock	Shed for solar panels
02/27/2012	Benjamin Bushaw	24 by 32 pole barn
04/02/2012	Brian Bartholomew	Addition 20 by 30
04/09/2012	Geraldine Compton	Coal stove
04/16/2012	Empire Construction	Replace porch
04/16/2012	David Vormwald	Addition and shed
04/16/2012	Shane P. Hoch	Pavilion

Code Enforcement Officer Rick Fritz holds office hours in the Preble Town Hall each Monday afternoon from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M., and can also be reached by phone at 607-591-9898.