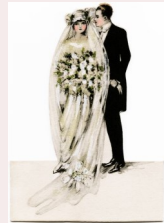




Sheldon Historical Society Schoolhouse Museum Newsletter



An update on our progress as a Society and a Chartered Museum "A New Look at Old News From our Town"

REMINDER: DON'T FORGET OUR LAST MEETING OF THE YEAR, OCT. 15! All are welcome. Thank you, everyone who sent in your membership renewals. Welcome to our newest member, Melissa Weisenburg! Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month through October, at 7:00 PM at the Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum, 3859 Main St., Strykersville, NY. At this time, we are open by appointment only, but we are available all year to answer your inquiries, and to open up the museum for you to tour or do research. To schedule a visit, Call 585-457-3061, 716-474-3156 or email: townofsheldonhistorian@gmail.com.

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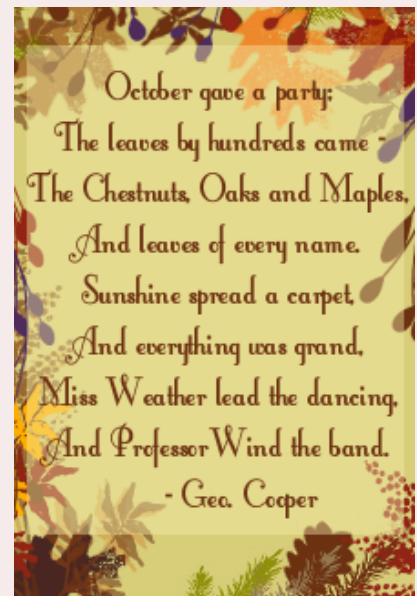
Mark Kehl demonstrates a communion bread iron from the 1880's. It resembles a waffle maker but with intricate patterns and long handles which were necessary to bake the bread over a fire or in a wood burning stove.

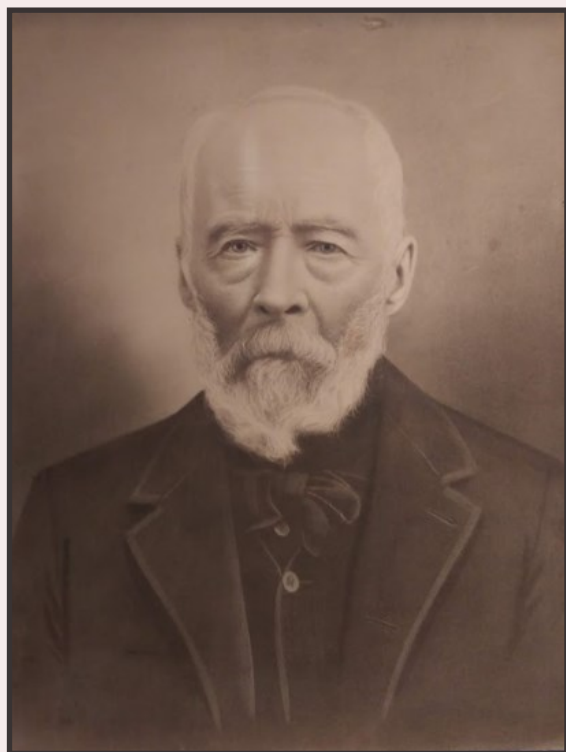
Thank you, Mark, for coming in and sharing some family history and memorabilia with us.

"The one who plants trees, knowing that he will never sit in their shade, has begun to understand the meaning of life."



Dutch Hollow Road in Autumn. Photo Courtesy of Alice Hamel.





MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS :

THE NICHOLAS AND ELIZABETH GEORGE BARTZ PORTRAITS

By Scott Barvian, Mesa, AZ

After my great-grandmother Ruth Smith Conrad died in 1988, a box arrived in the mail from home, containing two large portraits of an elderly couple that I did not recognize at all. My mother said that these had been saved for me from Ruth's belongings. No one had any idea who they were (evidently, Ruth had never displayed them) but perhaps someday, I might figure it out. (This was many years before my interest in genealogy began.)

The portraits are canvas on wood frames measuring 16 1/4 by 20 1/4 inches. They are not photographs, but are not paintings either. Marks on the canvas show that they were in frames at one time. They are completely unidentified, and have no studio name on them. Each has a 5-digit number written or painted on the top of the wooden frame. They have been in a box for over 30 years with me and could use a good cleaning, but the camera on my phone did a good job of correcting the faded grayish-brown background.

Several years ago, a random internet search found these same pictures with the names "Nicholas Bartz" and "Elizabeth George Bartz" captioned over the computer images. I immediately took "my" pictures to a local museum and it was guessed that they are drawings of the faces made onto a premade template of the clothing. I told them that other copies apparently exist, and the museum folks had no thoughts there, since they are not photographs.

My theory is that Nicholas (1804-1897) and Elizabeth (1814-1895) sat for these portraits, and the artist drew multiple copies. Maybe as many as seven, so that each of their children would have a set. And that somehow, the copy given to her youngest child, Catherine Bartz Conrad, got passed to my great-grandfather Peter (the second of her eight sons) and his wife Ruth. But it's just a theory. What I do know for sure, is that at least one other copy exists, and that someone identified them as Nicholas and Elizabeth.

If you have a copy of these portraits or know more of their story, please contact the Sheldon Historical Society.

THE IMMIGRANT BARTZ FAMILY

Nicholas Bartz

Born April 2, 1804 in the Luxembourg province of Belgium, died June 17, 1897

Elizabeth George Bartz

Born August 18, 1814 in the Luxembourg province of Belgium, Died September 4, 1895

Their Children:

Michael 1838-1922 md Philomene Batlo 1844-1915

Peter 1843-1922

Nicholas 1846-1935 md Mary Redding 1861-1954

Mary Barbara 1849-1888 md Joseph Jacoby 1847-1928

Elizabeth 1852-1934 md John Nicholas Jacoby 1849-1921

John Peter 1854-1938

Catherine 1858-1942 md Joseph Conrad 1861-1951

The St. Cecilia's 1850 Parish Census says that Nicholas came to America in 1833, and Nicholas and Elizabeth were married in January 1837 in Offen, Luxembourg [province of modern-day Belgium]. They returned to America on the ship "Manchester" in August 1837, along with siblings on both sides. When they settled in Sheldon is not clear, as the parish census says that Michael (1838) and Peter (1844) were baptized in "New York" but Nicholas (1846) and Mary (1849) were baptized in Sheldon.

Nicholas/Elizabeth, Peter, Nicholas/Mary, John Peter, and Catherine/Joseph Conrad are all buried in the second St. Cecilia's Cemetery on Bartz Rd. which opened in about 1891 on land adjacent to the original Sheldon Mission site of the 1830's and 1840's which Nicholas and Elizabeth likely attended in their early years of marriage.

Michael and Philomene are buried in St. Vincent's in Attica.

Mary Barbara and Joseph Jacoby are buried in the older side of the St. Cecilia's Cemetery behind the church which opened with the first church building in about 1847.

Elizabeth and John Nicholas Jacoby are buried in the newer side of St. Cecilia's Cemetery behind the church, which opened in about 1910, perhaps on the back of a strip of land acquired in order to build the school building in 1903.

(Cont. on page 4)

To be ignorant of what occurred before you is to remain always a child. For what is the value of human life, unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history.

~Cicero

(Cont. from page 3)

BARTZ ANECDOTES

Unlike many of the early immigrants that we only know through church records and gravestones, we know a bit more about Nicholas and Elizabeth George Bartz.

From "Town of Sheldon, Historical Comments, Narratives and Summaries of Factual Events compiled by F. W. Kehl 1804-1946"

"Nicholas Bartz, Sr.

When we say Nicholas Bartz, Sr., we mean the senior of four generations ago. He had worked as laborer in New York City and came to Sheldon in 1835. On his way out of Buffalo he was in a party of eight men walking to Sheldon. The roads were bad and night overtook them at Willink. On the eastern outskirts (about the present village limits) a large house was burning full blast. They proceeded on their way eastward 'til nearly midnight when they calculated that they must be in Sheldon, where they stopped at a log house on the top of a short hill. There was no light and a deadly quiet prevailed. They rapped at the door, there was no response. Mr. Bartz had acquired a bit of English while working in New York, so he rapped again and called: "Where is Mr. George living?" Soon a candle was lit and a door opened. There were two ladies living there and they inquired about their way to Perie George's house. The lady faced to the west and waved her hand westward, then turned to the south and waved southward. They expressed their sincere thanks as best they could and departed. The place presently is the home of Roy Metz. Mr. Bartz's expedition arrived at its destination. We know that he married in the George family and prospered."

From the family tree of Father Norman George (1904-1979) published Nov. 8, 1978. Father Norman was a son of Frank Nicholas George and Elizabeth Mary Jacoby, who was a daughter of Mary Barbara Bartz and Joseph Jacoby. (Father Norman's parents were second cousins once removed in the large tree of Innocens George.)

"Nicholas Bartz, my great grandfather, told by my mother, Elizabeth Jacoby, crossed the ocean twice of course by sailing. He was a tailor and as a young man set up a business in New York City. He was unable to find a bride here, so he returned to Belgium and married Elizabeth George. She apparently was a farmer's daughter or liked the farm. She urged him to move away from the city - some relatives were already in Western New York - so they left the city. Almost in the heart of Buffalo, land was available for \$6.00 to \$10.00 per acre, but Elizabeth thought it was too swampy - so they settled in the hills of Sheldon. They had a large farm, over 200 acres, cows, sheep, etc. They had a large family and hired many men. Every week a load (wagon load) of produce, butter, eggs, cheese, etc. was taken to Buffalo.

Elizabeth George managed the farm. Nicholas Bartz did not go near the cattle or farm; he was kept busy making shirts and overalls for his sons and hired help. They had four boys and three girls. Among them was my grandmother, Mary Bartz Jacoby.

Elizabeth George Bartz used to say, "If there is a patch of blue in the sky big enough to mend a pair of overalls, it will be a nice day." She was very capable - another thing mother told me, she would put her hand at her neck and say "Lord you take care of me from here up" then put a hand at her knee, and say "From here down and I'll take care of the rest of me."

And from the 1966 article "Reminiscing... With Mr. and Mrs. George Bartz, Sr." (George Bartz 1886-1967, son of Nicholas Bartz and Mary Redding /Veronica Fugle 1890-1980, daughter of Michael Fugle and Helen Schwab).

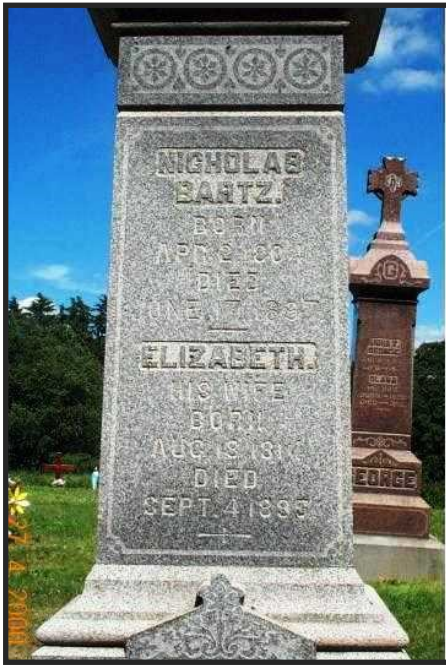
"George has many memories of his grandparents. Their cows were the sole responsibility of his grandmother, who had a cheese house across the road where she worked daily, making and shaping round cheeses which were wrapped and taken about twice a week to Buffalo via team and wagon. The sons helped with the milking and other chores because George's grandfather, a tailor, was always busy making clothes. George was among the small grandchildren who used to come over and carry wood for their grandmother to heat the boiler in the cheese house. She stood stirring the contents of the vat with a huge wooden paddle and as the tempting curds

(Cont. on next page)

came to the top, the boys often tried to snatch some. She would scold them and angrily chase them out, after which they would go and visit their grandfather, who enjoyed having the children around. Occasionally the old bearded gentleman would give them all a dime and this made him all the more popular with the youngsters."

Thank you, Scott Barvian, for these articles on the Bartz family history. Hopefully we can find some answers!

Headstone of Nicholas and Elizabeth Bartz at St. Cecilia's South Cemetery on Bartz Rd.



WEATHER PROVERBS

As November 1, so the following March.

If on November 11 the geese stand on ice, they will walk in mud at Christmas.

If the leaves of the trees and grapevine do not fall before November 11, a cold winter may be expected.

If there be ice in November to bear up a duck, there will be nothing thereafter but sleet and muck.

Flowers in bloom late in autumn indicate a bad winter.

Thunder in November indicates a fertile year to come.

When beech acorns thrive well, and oak trees hang full, a hard winter will follow with much snow.

Much fog in autumn, much snow in winter.

After a warm autumn, a long winter.

An early winter is a surly winter.

When the winter does not come early, it will not continue late.

If on November 11 it is fair dry and cold, winter will not last long.

As on November 25, foul or fair, so will be the next February.

Memorial Donations Received

*In Memory of Luella LeMieux,
by Robin LeMieux and Melissa Weisenburg*

*In Memory of Mary E. Lakas,
by Debbie Spink*

Memorial Donations to the Sheldon Historical Society can be sent to:
Donna Kirsch, 4458 Richardson Rd., Arcade, NY 14009

FROM THE HISTORIAN AND SHELDON SCHOOLHOUSE:

Thank you, Scott Barvian, for your article. Stories are always welcome and we look forward to hearing more soon from Warren Zahler, Laury Lakas, and others. It has been a pleasure to have some visitors. Please keep us in mind if you are teaching children at home and would like them to come and see what school was like years ago. Research inquiries continue; some names of interest lately are Bartz, Shuler, Kehl, Hamm, Fugle, Herrmann and Persons. Please let us know if you have photos, family trees or other info on these or any other families so we can add them to our files and be able to help more people.

Thank you, Jeanne Mest

GAD CHARLES PARKER

We received an artifact in a historic collection from Ceal McCoy, just a simple man's pocket watch, and learned it had belonged to Gad Parker, a friend of Ceal's father. Since we had never heard of him, we decided to do a little research.

Gad Charles Parker was born in Onondaga County, on Sept. 21, 1826, to Charles and Sally Libolt Parker. They came to Sheldon in 1827 and settled on a farm in Varysburg.

On the census of 1850, Gad was 23 years old, living with his family. Their next-door neighbors were Hiram and Mary Peck and their daughter Emily. We only know about Emily because her autograph book ended up with an antique dealer in another state who called us, and then we learned her story. (See March 2018, The Autograph Book of Emily Peck.) Now we only know about Gad because an item from him was donated to us.

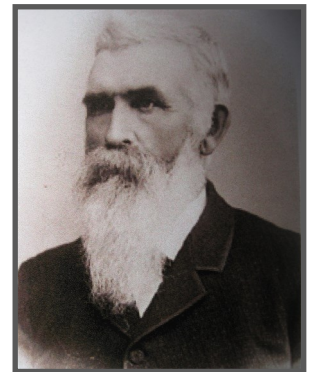
History is made up of not just the famous, but the everyday people who sometimes end up forgotten. We make it our mission here at the Sheldon Historical Society to try to remember all the people and stories we can. That is why Gad and Emily were so interesting, previously unknown to us, but now their names seem to pop up often.

It turned out that Gad Parker had an impressive military record during the Civil War. Gad enlisted in the Union Army, 136th Reg., NY Infantry, Co. H., on September 6, 1862. He was promoted to 1st Lieutenant in Co. E, in December 1863 and served to the end of the war when he was mustered out in June 1865. Gad never married. He was active with the GAR and continued to farm in Varysburg until his death on Jan. 2, 1908.

We hope to learn more about his life, so please let us know if you can help!



Gad Parker, 1860's



Gad Parker, About 1900

Death of Gad C. Parker, Old Resident of Varysburg—Action of Wyoming Gun Club.

Special to The Commercial:

Warsaw, Jan. 20.—Gad C. Parker, an old and respected resident of Wyoming county, died the past week at his home in Varysburg, aged 82 years. He was born at Marcellus, Onondaga county, N. Y., and came with his father, Charles Parker in 1827 to the town of Sheldon, which originally was a part of the Holland Purchase. He was the first-born of three children of Charles and Sally (Libolt) Parker. In September, 1862, he enlisted in the One Hundred and Thirty-sixth New York Volunteer Infantry, company H, and returned in 1865 as first lieutenant, having served with his company from November, 1863, to the close of the war. Lieutenant Parker was in twenty-two engagements, and skirmishes innumerable, never having lost a day's service, and came out in perfect condition, merely having been hit by a spent bullet at Gettysburg. He was a model farmer with three hundred and twenty-five acres of land devoted largely to blooded stock purposes. He was a comrade for five years of Gibbs Post, Warsaw, and later organized Buford Post of which he was first commander. He had traveled extensively in this country, having visited seventeen states in the Union. His funeral was held in Varysburg with burial in the Varysburg cemetery.

The Wyoming Gun Club has just passed

Buffalo EVENING REPUBLIC
SEPT. 3, 1884

A COMBINATION PICNIC.

The second grand combination picnic, given by Emanuel church, East Aurora, and St. Johns, Sheldon N. Y., will be held at Aurora to morrow. The affair promises to be one of the most enjoyable of the kind held this year. All who are desirous of having a day of pure, unadulterated pleasure in Fillmore park should not fail to take advantage of this opportunity. As return tickets cost but forty cents, doubtless the attendance will be very large

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

VARYSBURG

SCHOOL NEWS

Sheldon No. 5

Pupils not absent during the month of October.

Elizabeth Barvian, Cecelia Firestine, Marian West, Hazel Metzger, Hazel Stanley, Harold Fenz, Louise Karmazyn, Walter Karmazyn, Henry James Kelver, Charles Meyer, Irene Karmazyn, Ira Stanley.

The following pupils have attained an average of 90 or above during the first school quarter.

Marion Fenz 99, Leo Meyer 98, Cecilia Firestine 98, Edith Gowan 97, Augustus Keem 97, Raymond Zynda 97, Donald Keem 96, Margaret Barvian 95, Elizabeth Barvian 95, Charles Meyer 95, Louise West 95, Harold Fenz, 94, Louise Karmazyn 93, Hazel Stanley 92, Walter Karmazyn 92, Ira Stanley 90, William West 90, Henry James Kelver 90.

SCHOOL CLOSED

By an order from the Health Officer, Dr. C. M. Smith, our school was closed Wednesday noon for the balance of this week and all of next week. At that time if there is no epidemic of influenza in the vicinity school will start, but if conditions warrant it will keep closed longer.

There are no cases of the influenza in the village, but a number of cases on Dutch Flats, in Sheldon and Bennington. If the proper caution is taken there will be no need for alarm here. As soon as symptoms manifest call a physician and follow his instructions. The main thing is to keep the patient warm, and to avoid fatality, do not let them out to soon and suffer a relapse.

HAPPY 60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY!

1960 was quite the year for weddings in Sheldon! This fall marked the 60th Wedding Anniversary for several of our members; Paul J. and Jeanie Almeter, Norman and Mary Ann Metzger, Norman and Grace Daniel and Robert and Jane Pingrey.

Congratulations! Are there any more? Please let us know!



Paul J. and Jeanie Almeter



Norman and Grace Daniel

Arcade herald., October 06, 1960

A double wedding took place at St. Mary's Church Saturday morning when Jane and Mary Ann Schiltz became the brides of Robert Pingrey and Norman Metzger respectively. A dinner and reception followed at St. Patrick's Hall in Java Center.



Norman and Mary Ann Metzger



Robert and Jane Pingrey

Sheldon Historical Society Schoolhouse Museum
3859 Main Street, PO Box 122
Strykersville, NY 14145



Andrew Jackson's first official act was to buy 20 spittoons for the White House, at a price of \$12.50.

William Henry Harrison was another rustic type, and when he landed in the White House, he asked, "Where's the cow?" He was told that there wasn't any, so he went down to the market, bought a cow and led it back personally. It was his first and only recorded official act as President — he died shortly after inauguration.

Millard Fillmore may not have been a red-hot President, but he did install the first iron stove in the White House. It so puzzled the kitchen help that Mr. Fillmore himself had to come padding down every morning in his bed-slippers and get it started.

WE WISH TO EXTEND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE SHELDON TOWN BOARD, FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!

Newsletter compiled by Jeanne Mest, with the assistance of creator/consultant Mary Ann Metzger, Scott Barvian and many volunteers. Submissions welcome. Email or send articles & inquiries to: Jeanne Mest, 470 Route 20A, Strykersville, NY 14145

*Newsletters can be emailed if you prefer. Also, we have some large print versions available if needed. Previous newsletters can be seen at <http://www.townofsheldon.com> or on FB: *History of the Town of Sheldon, NY**

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(laurylakas@gmail.com)

Town of Sheldon Historian/Archival

Curator/Newsletter Editor - Jeanne Mest

(townofsheldonhistorian@gmail.com)

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Hilltop Printshop
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Sheldon Historical Society Membership

Being a member of the Sheldon Historical Society means being part of preserving history. Dues and donations support the maintenance of our museum and historical artifacts. As a member you have voting privileges, and newsletters are sent to you at no cost. The membership year runs from June through the following July. Please remember to renew yearly, and let us know of any address changes. If you are currently a member, thank you for your support! For an appointment or assistance, call (585)457-3061, (716)474-3156, (585)457-3444, or email: townofsheldonhistorian@gmail.com

Membership Application or Renewal

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

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_____ **\$10 New Annual Membership**

_____ **\$10 Membership Renewal**

_____ **\$75 Lifetime Membership**

_____ **Wish to make a Donation**

Please send a check payable to the Sheldon Historical Society
Mail To: Donna Kirsch, Financial Secretary, 4458 Richardson Rd., Arcade,
NY 14009.