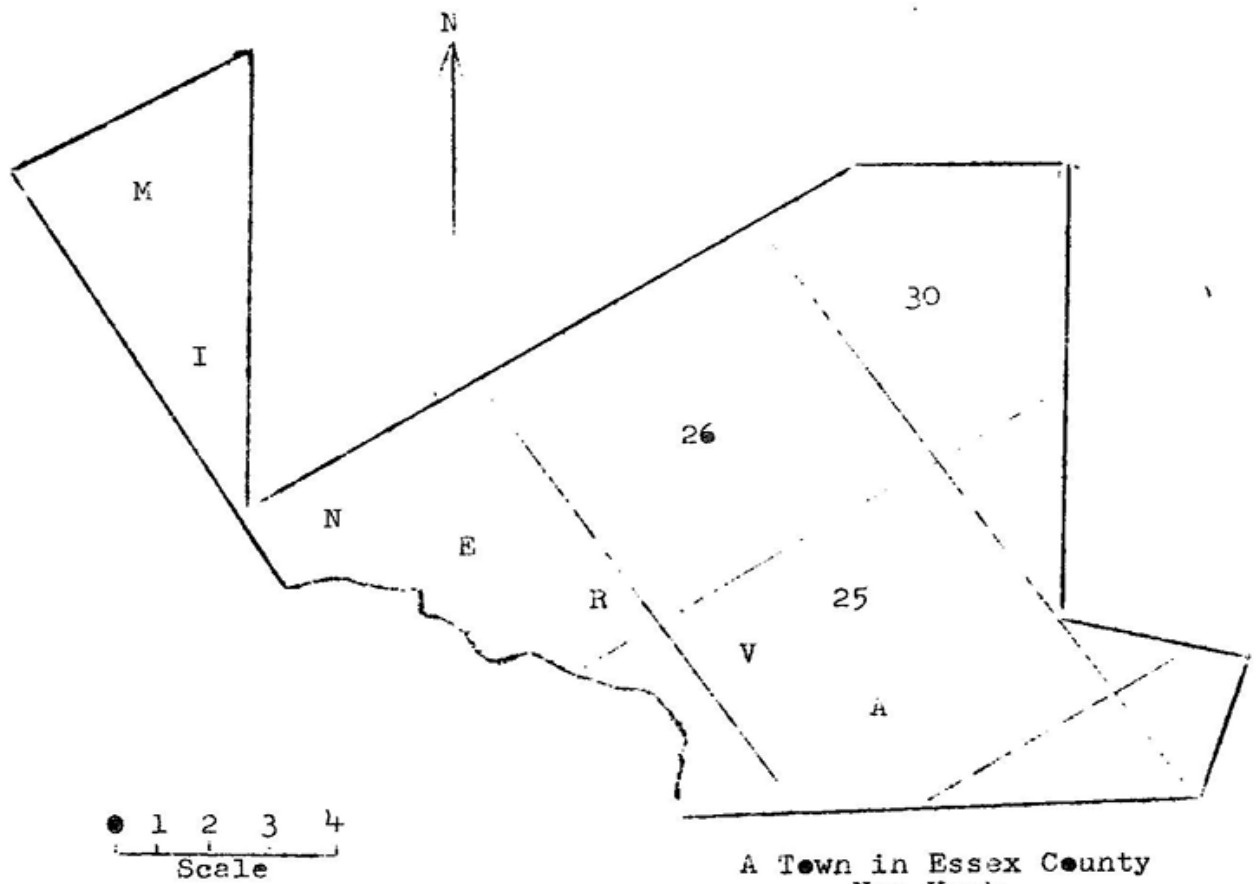


THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
THE TOWN OF MINERVA
QUARTERLY



A Town in Essex County
New York

The Town of Minerva Historical Society will meet at the Town Hall on January 29 at 7:30 P. M. Guests are invited. In addition to the business meeting, the program will consist of participation by those who come - that is, by all who wish to participate.

Each person is asked to bring a family treasure, in the line of a small antique, a book, an old Bible, etc. Then the individual will show what he or she brought and explain why it has been a cherished possession over the years.

OCTOBER MEETING

The Bicentennial Committee, headed by Mrs. Franklin Hewitt, presented the program for the October meeting an old-fashioned square dance with Halloween as the theme for decorations.

The old school house at Minerva, now the Town Hall, accommodated three sets at a time. There was no generation gap, young and old danced to the music of Mike Leddick, who called for some of the old-fashioned changes.

Decorations included the traditional ones of the season, corn stalks, pumpkins, baskets of apples, and bales of hay loaned by Floyd Perkins. Refreshments of cider and doughnuts made by Mrs. Frank Kellogg were served. A door prize of homemade preserves, jellies, and pickles with fresh fruit and vegetables was won by Mrs. William Dever.

Everyone thought it a delightful evening, with the participants making their own fun, reminiscent of the old days. Mrs. Hewitt's committee consisted of: Mrs. James Wells, Mrs. James Donahue, Miss Nancy Winch, Mrs. Harry Raymond, Mrs. Fenton West and Mrs. John Paradis.

The entertainment was preceded by a short business meeting of the society. At this time the questions about the Revolution which appeared in the October Quarterly, devised by Clarence Jones, were answered.

Answers to October Quiz - How many did you get right?

1. Along with the tax on tea was a monopoly granted to an English firm that in turn paid a royalty to King George's expense budget. No Colonial merchant could engage in the trade with China.
4. This question should probably have been next. Colonial governors were Englishmen appointed by the king - that is, business managers who were expected to turn a profit.
3. Soldiers were brought to Boston to protect the governor, prevent rioting, etc., and
2. Not for defense against the Indians.

5. Any business that encroached on or competed with highly paid industries in England was banned in the Colonies, but the woolen industry had exhausted the home supply of potash (potassium hydroxide). Howe she was desperate for a supply and in this England encouraged the Colonies their utmost. Beaver skins were in great demand for hats made in England. Rice from the Carolinas had become an important menu item in England.

JANUARY QUIZ

Who Said it?

1. "Taxation without representation is tyranny."
2. "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third - may well profit by their example" and then added as shouts of treason rumbled, "If this be treason, make the most of it."
3. "I'll raise a thousand men, subsist them at my own expense and march myself at their head for the relief of Boston."
4. "We must all hang together or assuredly we shall all hang separately."
5. "You don't dare hang me. You know very well that, if you do, there will be five Englishmen hanging on our side."

TODAYS NEWS - TOMORROWS HISTORY

Item 1 - Broadway Comes to Town

A musical program, "Broadway Comes to Town," was presented at the Minerva Central School on Friday and Saturday evenings, Nov. 9th and 10th, by the Community Chorus which is a part of the Adult Education program of the school. Under the able leadership of Mrs. John Switzer, the group worked very hard to make the affair the huge success that it was. The chorus consisted of 45 singers from North Creek, Pottersville, and Minerva.

Mr. Richard Kyrk of Pottersville and Mrs. Joseph LaRocque of North Creek were assistant directors. The beautiful backdrops were painted by Mrs. Franklin Hewitt of Minerva and Mrs. James Donahue of North Creek, formerly of Minerva. The program was taken from the musicals "The Sound of Music," "Fiddler on the Roof," and "Oklahoma." Performers ranged in age from 5 to 30.

Item 2 - Town Garage

The Town of Minerva has completed and is using a Town Garage as a place to store and repair all road machinery. It is located on land which is a part of the Bodle property, on what is known as Long's Road. The workers now have plenty of space for parking their cars while operating the machines which keep our town roads in repair and free from snow in the winter. The landfill operation that now takes the place of the town dump and burning area is also located there.

Item #3 - Snowmobiles

Charles Kaye of Olmstedville has the distinction of having owned the first snowmobile in the Town of Minerva. The Arctic Cat which he bought in 1961 from Austin Smith of Chestertown was the first such machine sold by Mr. Smith. Charlie kept it for several years. Jack Sheehan bought one a year or two later. The snowmobile industry has made great progress since that time. Don and Geraldine Plumbley have made a survey of the machines now owned in Minerva and they have come up with the surprising number of 84. Don tells us that the oldest person in town who owns a snowmobile is Orson Combs who is in his late 70's. Probably the youngest person who earned the money for his own machine is Patrick Hendrick, Jr. of Olmstedville, who worked all summer with that end in mind.

A snowmobile club was organized in October, 1969 with the name Minerva Snow Travelers. Bob Foote was president and Larry Lanphear secretary-treasurer. The club was reorganized in September 1973 with 65 members, most of whom live in Minerva. There are, however, some members from North Creek, Glens Falls and even Lake George.

The officers for 1973-74 are John B. Sheehan, President; Bob Foote, 1st Vice-President; Don Plumbley, 2nd Vice-President; Geraldine Plumbley, Secretary; Patty Hewitt, Treasurer; and Franklin Hewitt, Club Representative to the Adirondack Recreation, Timber and Environmental Council.

President Sheehan appointed Bernard Lynn as membership committee chairman while Bob Foote is in charge of local trails.

Warrensburg News - July 23, 1891

Warfare against Northern Bears - At a special town meeting held in Minerva on July 10, it was voted to pay a town bounty of twenty dollars. This with the county bounty of ten dollars it is hoped will be an inducement for hunters and trappers to make the bears more scarce. The animals are getting more bold and coming out in the settlement, an older bear and two cubs having been seen last week near Wallace Plumley's place. (This would be the present Badgley home.)

Profile

Harry and Hazel Morse

Harry Morse was born June 24, 1889 in a little log house in lot 15, back from 14th Road. He was the third child of Orville and Mary Lincoln Morse, through whom he can claim a large number of ancestors who were very early settlers of Minerva.

Through Mary he is descended from the West and Gates families. The Wests are thought to have been the first settlers in Minerva in 1800 and Anna Gates came here from Hartford, N.Y. in 1812 when she married Lenox West.

Orville's grandfather was Absalom Pride Morse who came to Minerva in 1814 and was the first supervisor in 1817 when the town was set off from Schroon. He is probably the one who brought about the change and gave the town its name.

In 1892 Orville's mother, Jane Chambers Morse, died. Since this left her husband alone, Orville moved his family out to William and Jane's home where William Casey Morse died two years later at the age of 84. Orville and Mary continued to live in that home and it was there that they brought up their seven children. Harry is rather unusual in that he has lived in that same house since he was 3 years of age.

Orville Morse exemplified the "sustenance farmer" of the age just past, aiming to be as nearly self sustaining as possible. He gathered about him such modern equipment as the threshing machine and wood saws, both drag and circular, and still he used oxen for the farm work. It was before the gas engine had made its way into this area and Orville had a treadmill for power. It was in this atmosphere that Harry grew up. Some oxen might be unteachable, but that depended much on the teacher. Harry was adept at maneuvering them around whether at plowing or on the mowing machine or wherever.

Morse, Orville's father, was a cider maker by profession. His home-made rig had required an ability that would have made him a millwright of first magnitude, and Harry inherited much of that mechanical ability. When state roads were first being built he presented himself for work. Some discerning foreman soon had Harry making forms for culverts. Forms might be used repeatedly with some alterations to make them fit the locality. From this job Harry went to operating a steam roller. Many of the hard topped stretches of road hereabouts were pressed into place by Harry Morse.

Blacksmithing was Harry's next hobby. Nobody knows who taught Tubal Cain the art of working with iron nor can we say where Harry learned it. He built his own shop and acquired an anvil and bellows. Soon he was ironing sleighs, neck yokes, whippletrees, and shoeing horses. Could he shoe obstreperous horses? His kindly way just did not allow for them to be obstreperous.

Does a blacksmith copy have hands that will be suitable for violin playing? That other talent was not neglected and Harry could entertain himself and others very creditably after the day's work was done. Another Gates-West descendant proving that no matter how diluted that blood is, it is always musical.

It was on May 7, 1916 that Harry married Hazel Warren, daughter of Arthur and Bessie Raymond Warren, proprietors of Bailey Pond Inn, located in Hoffman Township in the Town of Schroon. Hazel was born Dec. 12, 1889. Her grandmother, Paschal Poornia Warren, also grew up there. He was present at the wedding of Hazel and Harry which took place at the inn and was followed by a supper for all the guests. Officiating clergyman was the Rev. Bert Van Vleet, pastor of the Minerva and North Chester Baptist churches.

Nothing has been said yet about stone work, bricklaying and concrete work, but many of the chimneys, fireplaces and sidewalks of the area are Harry's handiwork. He also worked as a carpenter at the camps on Balfour Lake and at "Crows' Nest" on Schroon Lake.

Besides all of those things, Harry was a farmer who raised practically all of the food for his family. Hazel has been a wonderful helpmeet to him, assisting in the planting and harvesting as well as laying up for the winter by canning and preserving. Being a good seamstress, she made much of the clothing for her family and now enjoys sewing for her grandchildren. She pieces beautiful quilts and enjoys crocheting and knitting. She is a fast worker and is always busy with something.

Hazel and Harry are very thoughtful about others who may be lonely or in need of help, and they often make calls upon those whom they can help to cheer. They have raised a family of seven children, all of whom love to come back to the home nest for visits. They are Ada (Mrs. Leonard Foote), Marion (Mrs. Curtis Smith), Bertha (Mrs. William McNally), Morton who married Carol Davis, Frederick who married Rosemary Sheehan, Douglas who married Janice Curtis Scribner, and Effie Jane (Mrs. Leo Mortally). There are 20 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

Warrensburg News, July 24, 1890

The Fair Committee has sent out invitations to enter a band contest held in conjunction with the Warrensburg Fair.

Chestertown, August 7th - The band of this place is talking of entering the band contest, but they wish the conditions to be that the music be handed to the leader only one hour before the playing of it, which would be a just test of the musical qualities of the respective bands.

NEGRO BORN IN MINERVA - 1808

We do not know how or why there happened to be a Negro family living in Minerva in 1808, but such must have been the case, as a Negro by the name of Solomon Northup later reported that he was born in Minerva in July of that year.

A number of years ago the late Leslie Rist of Newcomb loaned us his copy of *Twelve Years a Slave*, which is the autobiography of Solomon Northup. This book has now been reprinted by the Louisiana State University Press with added notes and was written up in the Glens Falls paper.

The Northup family moved from Minerva to Granville and later to Hudson Falls (Sandy Hill) and Fort Edward. In the latter place Solomon married Ann Hampton on Dec. 25, 1829. After a few years they moved to Saratoga where he encountered two strangers who invited him to join their circus troupe as a violinist. He went with them to Washington, D.C. where he was drugged and sold into slavery. He was shipped to New Orleans and there was bought by a planter from the Red River region of Louisiana and he spent the next twelve years as a chattel slave.

Northup was finally rescued through the persevering efforts of Henry B. Northup of Hudson Falls who was a lawyer and a relative of the family in which Solomon's forefathers were held in servitude.

Solomon returned to Hudson Falls and wrote the story of his life. A Whitehall lawyer, David Wilson, edited the volume and assisted in its publication.

Solomon Northup is perhaps the only Negro who had 32 years of freedom before becoming a slave and consequently was uniquely fitted to understand and tell about the conditions under which the southern slaves lived.

WEATHER AND THE MAIL
1901-1905

The following information was kept by Andrew Gates who carried the mail from Minerva to North Creek in the years 1901-1905:

1901

July 1 - Commenced carrying mail
Dec. 26 - First trip with sleighs

1902

Feb. 3 - Blizzard. Mail did not go.
Feb. 4 - Went to Creek with mail. Did not come back till the 5th. Wed. Next day made the regular trip.
Feb. 18 - Mail did not go - only to Olmstedville.
Mar. 1 - Went as far as Woods' woods and had to turn back for high water.
Mar. 15 - First trip with wagon.
Dec. 10 - First trip with sleighs.

1903

Feb. 9 - Mail did not go for blizzard.

Mar. 13 - First trip with wagon.

Dec. 10 - First trip with sleighs.

1904

April 6 - First trip with wagon.

Had 118 days of sleighing.

Dec. 13 - One trip with sleighs and then with wagon again.

1905

March 27 - First trip with wagon.

Editor's Note - Back in these years the mail trip was made with what was called a "string wagon" drawn by horses, similar to the one shown on page 79 in the *Minerva History*. In the picture the wagon has three seats, but any one or all of these could be removed and the space used for baggage. In the winter time the trip was made with sleighs. The mail carrier supplemented his government pay by doing errands for people and occasionally carrying passengers.

Bessie Sullivan sent us the following:

MIDNIGHT MASS
OF LONG AGO

'Tis Christmas eve.
And all around is still
Except for sleigh bells
Jingling up the hill.
The church aglow with mellow
light
Beckons the faithful to their
yearly tryst.
The candles flicker - send a
lovely light
Upon the snow outside -
a golden mist.
Quietly the people come
And kneel before the Christ
child in his bed.
It seems to them this is his
earthly home,
And silently they pray with
bowed head.

The sermon's done.
The songs are sung.
Back down the hill they go
To buy the oysters and the
crackers too
And bring them home to have
Their midnight stew.
Then off to bed they go,
Each sleepy mom and dad and
child,
To rise again on Christmas morn,
For feast and fun and games
and such.
Too bad they're gone,
Those days they loved so much.
Bessie Sullivan

LETTER WRITTEN IN 1877

The following is a letter written by Richard K. Evans of Dover, Minn., to Byron Jones of Minerva. More about Richard Evans is to be found in our April 1972 Quarterly.

Office of EVANS BROTHERS
Dealers in
LUMBER AND HARD WOOD
Dover, Minn., Oct. 6, 1877

Dear Friend,

I thought I would write you about the timber on lot 19. Can you get enough for logs this fall so as to pay me 25 cents per log for spruce? Please let me hear from you what the prospects are.

Everything is favorable here in Minnesota. We have had a big crop of wheat and had a splendid fall for harvesting and threshing it and the price has been good. It is worth 92¢, oats 25¢, corn 35¢, butter 20¢, eggs 10¢. Lumber has raised \$2 per thousand this fall.

Cortice Gates and his brother were in here a few days ago. They are running a threshing machine. Lonca Lamb is working here in town at carpenter work. He is working for James Keller. Keller is a Long Lake man. I saw Leo Kellogg and Jud West the other day. They said their families are all well. All of the eastern folks are well as far as I know and doing well.

Please let me know soon about the logs.

Respectfully yours,
R. K. Evans

Leoline Kellogg, mentioned above, was a son of Valentine Kellogg who came to Minerva from Elizabethtown about 1852. In Minerva, Leo married Mary Riley West, daughter of Leander and Alta Davis West. Leo and Mary moved to Minnesota and later to South Dakota and Illinois.

Their daughter Alta Luena, who was born in Minerva in 1866, married in South Dakota George Moore. Their son Harold Moore is now living in Stanwood, Washington and his wife is one of our "friends by correspondence," one of those whom we have been able to help in her search for ancestors.

Judson West was a son of Leander and brother of Leo Kellogg's wife. He was the grandfather of Genevieve Harris of Portland, Oregon, another one of our ancestor-hunting friends.

Cortice (Cortes) Gates was a son of Aaron Gates who, with his family, went from Minerva to Iowa and later to Wisconsin about 1861. A portion of a letter written by him in 1857 is to be found in our October 1972 Quarterly.

Gene Porter has given us a copy of *The Saturday Evening Post* for December 31, 1831. Instead of being in the form of a magazine, it is done on regular newsprint and in the style of a newspaper, but smaller than were most of the newspapers of that day. The subscription price was two dollars a year and it was said to be "the oldest literary and family paper in the U.S., founded A.D. 1821."

Most of the space is given over to stories, some continued and some not. However, there are items of a scientific nature such as the following:

"Electric Locomotives - It is expected that the municipal commission appointed by the authorities of Paris to report on the practicality of electricity as a motor for passenger trains in cities will recommend the experiment of an elevated railroad with electric locomotives in some part of the French capital."

"Secondary Batteries - An English electrician has been working a sewing machine with secondary batteries and has become enthusiastic about the future of that source of stored energy. In a recent address he held that it is only a matter of time when the secondary battery will be employed for traction purposes. He made a calculation showing that the cost of propelling a street car by a battery is one third less than if the same work were done by horses, and he did not take into consideration the \$200 of capital sunk in the purchase of each horse."

This copy of the *Post* also contains a black and white print of a painting called "Presenting the Bride" which was being offered as a premium with each subscription to the *Post*.

One page is taken up with three columns - one labeled "Grains of Gold," one "Femininities," and the other "News Notes." Here are a few of the Grains of Gold:

"We give advice by the buckets but take it by the grain."

"The evening of life brings with it its lamps if we will but light them."

"Prosperity is no just scale. Adversity is the only balance to weigh friends."

"Be calm in arguing, for fierceness makes error a fault and truth discourtesy."

"He is rich whose income is more than his expenses, and he is poor whose expenses exceed his income."

Here are a few of the femininities:

"A society without ladies would be a year without spring."

"Mrs. Collins of Troy has been seriously poisoned by wearing scarlet-dyed stockings."

"Some Washington ladies who have seen all of the Presidents for the last thirty years say that Millard Fillmore was the handsomest of the number."

"A certain economical woman boasts that she has made one pair of stockings last fifteen years by simply knitting new feet to them every winter and new legs to them every other winter."

Among the news items are these:

"Washington left more money than any president we ever had."

"There are still on the rolls about 8000 pensioners of the War of 1812."

"Satin and plush muffs take the place of fur ones in all but the severest weather."

"Numbers of English barristers now wear mustaches. Quite a modern innovation this."

"A physician in the town of Sturgeon, Mo., makes his rounds in a buggy drawn by a pair of elks."

"A herd of 11,000 sheep has just reached Nebraska from Washington Territory. They have been on the road two years."

Gene Porter has also given us two of the more recent copies of *The Saturday Evening Post* which was revived in 1970 after going out of business when the cost of publication became prohibitive and their list of subscribers dwindled because of TV. The *Post* now comes out quarterly and costs six dollars a year. Published in Indianapolis instead of Philadelphia, the editors are keeping up the high standards of former years.

Godey's Lady's Work

Another interesting gift from Eugene Porter is a copy of *Godey's Lady's Book* for April 1864. The editors were Mrs. Sarah J. Hale and Louis A. Godey of Philadelphia. One would not guess from the magazine that the U.S. had been at war for four years, as the dresses pictured are of the most elaborate kind and the house plan shown is suitable for "a gentleman of fortune." There are also several stories, recipes, advice about housekeeping, patterns for embroidery and crochet work, poetry, suggestions for games to be played at a party, and advice about hair styling.

Hoops were in style in 1864 and all the dresses pictured have very wide skirts, very small waists, and much decoration. The dresses sweep the floor. They remind one of the dress that Scarlett O'Hara made for herself from the draperies in *Gone With the Wind*.

Fortunately, there came along with this book a fashion plate from the *Godey's* magazine of January 1883 and we are thus able to compare fashions of the two periods. In 1883 hoops had gone out, the skirts, which were still of floor length, were rather narrow at the bottom. However, the bustle had come in and this necessitated a great deal of draping of the skirt and many flounces and pleats. Waist lines were still very small.

The 1864 magazine also contains "Hints About Health," and in that section we find this:

"Keep your mouth shut when you read, when you write, when you eat, when you are in pain, when you are walking, when you are running, when you are riding, and by all means, when you are angry. There is no person in society but who will find knowledge, improvement in health and enjoyment from even temporary attention to this advice."

The back of the magazine is given over to advertising farm land in Illinois. It is said to be equal to any in the world at from \$8 to \$12 per acre.

"The Illinois Central Railroad traverses the whole length of the state, from the banks of the Mississippi and Lake Michigan to the Ohio. As its name implies, the railroad runs through the center of the state, and on either side of the road along its whole length lie the lands offered for sale. Illinois has a population of 1,722,666 and a soil capable of supporting 20,000,000."




ROAD MAP OF 1927

We wish to say thank you to our school principal, Mr. Fengine, for loaning us a road map for copying. It was given out in 1927, "Compliments of Pereau's Garage, George W. Saunders, Mgr., North Creek, New York." The map shows all macadam roads in dark red, improved dirt roads in light red and unimproved dirt roads in white.

The road from North Creek through Minerva was macadamized as far as Aiden Lair, while the road to Pottersville was still a dirt road, even though it was a part of the original "Chester to Canton" road laid out in 1808. Many of us can remember that road when it was much like an old fashioned wash board.

We are told that the first macadam roads in New York State were put in in 1908, short strips being laid in different parts of the state as experiment. The road from the Minerva line on the south to the cross-road in front of the Jennie Jones home was one of these strips. The present road beyond the southern town line had not even been laid out except for a strip from the present Moses home to Horse Haven. The rest of the road was not laid out, graded and macadamized until 1911.

The old road followed higher ground, going past the old Baroudi farm and coming out at what was until recent years Pierson's Tavern.

|  Index of People Jan 1974 |  Index of Places Jan 1974 |  Subject Index Jan 1974 |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Combs, Orson → 3 Dever, William → 1 Donahue, James → 1-2 Evans, Richard K. → 8 Foote, Bob → 3 Gates, Andrew → 6-7 Gates, Cortice (Cortes) → 8 Hendrick, Patrick Jr. → 3 Hewitt, Franklin → 1, 3 Hewitt, Patty → 3 Hewitt, Mrs. Franklin → 1-2 Jones, Clarence → 1 Kaye, Charles → 3 Kellogg, Frank → 1 Kellogg, Leo → 8 Kyrk, Richard → 2 LaRocque, Joseph → 2 Leddick, Mike → 1 Moore, George → 8 Moore, Harold → 8 Morse, Harry → 4-5 Morse, Hazel → 4-5 Northup, Henry B. → 6 Northup, Solomon → 6 Paradis, John → 1-2 Perkins, Floyd → 1 Plumbley, Don → 3 Plumbley, Geraldine → 3 Porter, Gene → 9-10 Raymond, Harry → 1-2 Sheehan, Jack → 3 Sheehan, John B. → 3 Smith, Austin → 3 Sullivan, Bessie → 7 Switzer, John → 2 Van Vleet, Bert → 5 West, Fenton → 1-2</p> | <p>Adirondack Recreation, Timber and Environmental Council → 3 Bailey Pond Inn (Schroon) → 5 Baroudi Farm → 11 Chestertown → 3 Dover, Minnesota → 8 Elizabethtown → 8 Fort Edward → 6 Glens Falls → 6 Granville → 6 Hudson Falls (Sandy Hill) → 6 Illinois → 11 Iowa → 8 Lake George → 3 Long Lake → 8 Long's Road → 3 Louisiana → 6 Minerva Central School → 2 Minerva, New York → 1-11 New Orleans → 6 North Creek → 2-3, 6-7 Olmstedville → 3 Paris (France) → 9 Philadelphia → 10 Pottersville → 2 Schroon Lake → 5 South Dakota → 8 Stanwood, Washington → 8 Troy → 9 Washington, D.C. → 6 Wisconsin → 8</p> | <p>Adult Education program → 2 (Community Chorus) Bicentennial Committee → 1-2 Community events → 1-2 Genealogy and family history → 8 Historical newspapers → 5, 9-10 Mail service → 6-7 Weather and mail records → 6-7 Minerva Snow Travelers → 3 (snowmobile club) Snowmobiles → 3 Morse family history → 4-5 (Profile) Northup, Solomon) → 6 (slavery narrative) Roads and transportation → 11 Road map (1927) → 11 Town Garage → 3 Those Were the Days → 5 (historical excerpts)</p> |