

World War II Impact On GCS Students

It was the early forties; the European Continent, North Africa and the Far East were ablaze. World War II found its way to our shores. German U-Boats brazenly paraded our coastline and sank merchant vessels at will. So confident were the U-Boat captains that at night they surfaced, charging their batteries while listening to music from the beaches and watching the lights of auto traffic. On the West Coast, a Japanese submarine surfaced and shelled a large warehouse in broad daylight. From Japan, balloons carrying incendiary bombs were launched, one killing a young boyscout hiking in the northwest.

Until Pearl Harbor, Greenville and the surrounding area was totally tranquil. We survived the Great Depression. Clear streams danced with trout, ponds yielded bullheads, and farm grain fields sustained pheasants, partridge and other wildlife. Bees, wild flowers, berries, fruit, milk and honey were in abundance. Deans Mill at Oak Hill serviced the farmer and each hamlet had a general store, some delivering goods to the front door. Boarding houses gave recreation and rest to summer vacationers. There was ample summer employment for GCS students. It was a very rural scene, with narrow back roads of dirt and shale, county roads of oil and stone, and State roads of concrete with small "Walk Facing Traffic" signs placed on the shoulders. Traffic was extra light. GCS had less than ten school buses and the on-schedule U.S. rural carriers; local home delivery services and independent milk truck drivers tended their routes. June Abrams, living in Medusa and a GCS graduate, obtained a milk truck route. She could double clutch her large truck and move full heavy milk cans with the best of them. It was a very friendly time; everyone knew each other and was eager to wave to the passerby. For GCS students, it was a super good life.

But, the war escalated greatly and took a serious turn for the worse. The Japanese devastated our Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor and began ravaging the Far East and capturing many strategic islands in the Pacific. The news from Europe was no better. The feared Wolf Packs were sinking tons of allied shipping. The German battleship, Bismarck, using night radar, sank the HMS Hood, with over 1700 hands on board. There were only a few survivors. Most of Europe had fallen.

The fear and anxiety of the war became real, as the military aged men and women left home to serve. GCS students witnessed fathers, brothers, sisters, friends, neighbors and fellow students leave home. GCS was well represented in the military by students who joined up before and soon after graduation. Younger students living on the many farms throughout the GCS district had their chores greatly increased. Never before was the Greenville FFA called upon to play such an important role. The demand for beef, poultry, eggs, milk, corn and other grains was greatly increased. Not only did America have to feed our armies; we were called upon to be the breadbasket of the world.

At school, a strenuous obstacle course was erected, including an eight-foot wall, which presented a challenge to the shorter students. The Physical Education Department gave heavy emphasis to calisthenics, in preparation of possible military service. Supporting the war effort, students collected milkweed pods for use in making synthetics. Walking farm stone walls, they gathered worn plowshares for their fine steel. Also, refuse dumps were cleansed of old rubber tires and scrap metals. Scarcity of rubber left many students without sneakers. Mr. Ellis, the school principal, secured a large number of army surplus sneakers, which had olive green (OD) canvas tops and black synthetic soles.

Students were happy to receive them, but there was a catch. The black soles marked the gym floors so badly that, after every gym class or game, students were handed a large cloth to rub out the marks mostly accomplished under the watchful eye of Mr. Ellis. Also, students could not wear the sneakers in the hallways or classrooms.

Geography became a very important subject to the student body. As many relatives and friends were serving in the far reaches of the world, it was understandable that students wanted to know where they were. Formosa, Chungking, Burma, Luzon, Corregidor, Tarawa, Anzio, Dunkirk, Malta, Crete, Kesselring Pass, were some of the many places in the news on a daily basis. Through their own experience, students learned the art of conserving and sharing. Ration stamps were issued for food items, tires and gasoline. Students living in a rural area were fortunate as most had large gardens and raised livestock. A few farmers donated a quart or two of gasoline, allowing some boys and girls to attend square dances at Potter Hollow or Livingstonville.

The war produced many chance meetings in far away places for so many men and women who had never left the area before. A trip to Albany or Catskill was a special occasion in those days. Except for the essential farmers, the school district was emptied of young marriage aged men. The young women at home jokingly sang the then popular song, "They're Either Too Young or Too Old". With the remembrances of Charles Abrams, Leonard Gardiner, Jr., Harold Kaiser, and Russell Jennings, following are two examples of chance meetings.

Lenny and Russ served in the European Theater while Charlie and Hal served in the Pacific Theater. Russell's sister, Billie Yeomans, used a family letter (V-mail) writing code to alert Russ that Lenny was stationed at Lucera, Italy. Russ, stationed at Cerignola, Italy, realized he was about forty miles from Lucera. Both Lucera and Cerignola are near the larger Foggia on the Adriatic side of the Italian boot. Russ got a pass and hitchhiked the forty miles. He walked into Lenny's barracks and, with great surprise, both enjoyed the visit, talking over their duties and, of course, home.

As the war in the Pacific ended, Hal Kaiser was assigned to a Marine communications unit in Japan. Hal learned that Charlie Abrams was aboard the Puget Sound, the first all marine aircraft carrier. The ship was at anchor in Tokyo Bay. Hal requested a visitor pass and was ferried out to the carrier. Once there, he was granted permission to board ship. Charlie was found playing basketball with his buddies. After identifying himself to the marine in charge, Hal was told to sit in the background. Without Charlie's being aware, the referee was directed to substitute Charlie. When Charlie reached the sidelines, up popped Hal. After a few choice greetings, both settled down in deep conversation covering their experiences and sharing dreams about going home.

Many Greenville area residents served well during World War II, leaving the tranquillity of rural life to embark upon adventures in foreign lands. Their strength and courage were tested and their stories remain a testament to their fundamental fortitude. The following brief remembrances served to illustrate the changes in the lives of veterans from the Greenville area and to underline the impact that the war had on the lives of its citizens and the community.

Charlie Abrams received his GCS elementary education in the small building adjacent to the 1932 building's south driveway. The building was used as a schoolhouse in those days. Charlie and his schoolmates were moved to the new building upon its

completion. He graduated with the Class of 1942. As a marine in World War II, Charlie visited many Pacific Islands the hard way. Included were, the Marshalls, American Samoa, Pango Pango, New Hebrides, Efate, Bougainville and Guam.



(Charlie Abrams, on right, pictured with fellow Marine on R & R-- rest and relaxation)

Leonard Gardiner, Jr. attended the Greenville Center Little Red Schoolhouse and then the Greenville Free Academy on North Street. After centralization, Lenny graduated high school from the GCS new building with the Class of 1935. Serving in World War II, he was nicknamed “Pop”, as he was older than most in his unit. After his enlistment in the US Army Air Corp in 1942 and his training at a number of colleges and bases around the nation, now Pilot Gardiner was assigned a crew of nine.



(Pilot Len Gardiner in flight – B17)

Lenny, and their B-17 bomber, boarded the USS Sea Quail, which set a sailing record of eight days to Naples, Italy. When the war ended, this B-17 and its crew were credited with thirty-nine missions, including two sorties over Berlin.

Russell A. Jennings attended elementary classes at the Little Red Schoolhouse on Lampman Hill Road (now McCafferty Road). He then attended the 1932 new GCS building upon its opening, graduating with the Class of 1940. After his induction in 1942, Russ, was assigned to the US Army Air Corp. He was stationed at several stateside training bases and colleges. Russ then joined a B-24 liberator bomber crew at Pueblo, Colorado. At Pueblo, he was trained as a Toggilier, (nose-gunner). Russ received a pass for a home visit before attending college training at Amherst, Massachusetts. His life long friend, Roy McCafferty, volunteered to drive him to Amherst. Also along for the ride were Albert “Lou” Hulick and the under-signed. The three GCS graduates and one 8th grader had to barter for extra gasoline ration stamps and an extra spare tire since tire blow-outs were frequent in those days. Although not distant in mileage, the trip was long and tiring. There were no thruways and almost all roads were dangerous and two lanes. On the trip to Amherst laughter filled the car, but, after many good-byes and good lucks, the return trip was spent mostly in silence. Russ was off to war! Crossing a very cold, stormy Atlantic on a liberty ship was a ride of a lifetime. The ship screws breached the water countless times and seasickness was par for the course. While in Italy, Russ flew ten combat missions. He reports with a smile that his crew was among the first ten crews to fly home after V.E. Day.

B-24 Liberator Bomber and Crew
Pilot – Harris Poy, 1st in top row.
Russell Jennings is
4th from left in front row.



Harold Kaiser attended the little Red School House on Willowbrook Road in Surprise. He and his classmates were moved to the new 1932 building upon its completion. Hal graduated GCS with the Class of 1942. Joining the US Marine Corp in WW II, he was trained as a pilot. Stationed in North Carolina, Hal was riding in the back seat of a two seat Marine aircraft. While over Bogue Sound, the engine stalled. At first Hal thought the pilot was trying to scare him. When he saw the pilot frantically trying to re-start the engine, Hal knew it was no fooling matter. The plane dove into the water and cracked in half. The pilot 2nd Lieutenant George B. Pruett was killed. Surviving the crash, Hal was assigned to the Pacific Theater for the rest of the war. While in harms way, he viewed thousands of miles of ocean and visited numerous South Pacific Islands. With an exuberant voice, Hal mentions he also became a Marine boxer, winning several titles and trophies.



(Crash Scene in Bogue Sound, North Carolina)



(Harold Kaiser being helped from water after Bogue Sound, North Carolina Crash)

During World War II the GCS Class of 1942 was well represented in the USA military. The class boasted a very young sixteen year old graduate. Having attended the Rensselaerville Academy from the third through the eleventh grade, J. Robert Lansing, completed his senior year at GCS.

Eager to serve the nation, Bob, at eighteen received his US Army Air Corp, Air Cadet training at Chatham Field, located in Savannah, Georgia. Seeking rapid assignment to a flight crew he volunteered to become a tail gunner on a B-29 bomber. Before he saw action the war ended as the famous B-29, Enola Gay accomplished its mission in the far off Pacific.

In later life, Bob became a long time GCS Business Manager. He is shown in the back row, on the right side.



The GCS Alumni Association booklet, page 5, discloses, “there were 118 Alumni in service during World War II”. On page 6 are listed the names of four graduates who gave their lives during WWII. They were: HAROLD SCHERMER – Class of 1937
DONALD ABRAMS – Class of 1938
EARL LOUNSBURY – Class of 1939
GERALD BROWN – Class of 1940

Yes, that terrible period of World War II had a great impact on the Greenville Central School District. GCS served our Nation well....

Richard Ferriolo
Scribe

Reflections of a World War II Graduate

I was a child of the 20's and was growing up in a class that would be graduating from high school during World War II.

My life leading up to my transfer to Greenville Central School found me in a little one-room school house in Cooksburg for the first five grades of my education. In the fall of 1938, I moved into Grade 8 and attended Greenville Central School.

That same year marked the beginning of Tom Blaisdell's employment in Greenville and my class was fortunate to have had him as our homeroom teacher. He was a fine man and many of us were able to call him "friend" for many years following.

That same year, a new boy had arrived in the Greenville area and began his attendance at the Greenville School. We became "just good friends" throughout the next five years. Little did we imagine that following our graduation from school we would eventually marry.

Coming from my little one room school, GCS was quite a big change for me but I soon learned that being in a large class was lots of fun and probably did not take my classes as seriously as I should have at times; however, being only eleven years of age and going into the ninth grade, I guess that I was a little immature. (At least Mr. Ellis seemed to think along those lines).

Mr. Bailey was the Cheerleading Coach during that time and those of us who were athletically inclined with a lot of energy wanted to be cheerleaders. I was really proud when Mr. Bailey invited me to practice with the high school girls.

In 1938-39-40 and 41 the Greenville Basketball, Volley Ball and Ping Pong teams kept a busy Interscholastic schedule and much of the student body was cheering them on at home and away.

December 7, 1941, the declaration of WW II brought an abrupt end to traveling for sports games. For the next few years we were to satisfy our enthusiasm for sports by participating in Intramural games within the school.

During those years, we watched and waited as some of our relatives, friends and neighbors left to serve their country, some of them never to return.

Former students were granted leaves to come home at times and we all felt proud to welcome them back to GCS for visits with former teachers and under-classmen.

In the Spring of 1943, we Seniors were anticipating graduation in June. The State Education Department made the decision to allow Agricultural students to leave school and go to work on farms. (Many of the young men who were serving their country had lived and worked on farms). These boys would return to school in June to take their Regents exams and participate in their graduation exercises on June 23, 1943.

The country remained at war until 1945 and during those years, Senior Classes were not to experience a Senior Trip and a few other activities that other classes had looked forward to. I do not remember a lot of complaining and compared to the sacrifices many had made, what did we have to complain about?

Phyllis Beechert

Scribe

Pioneer Farms

The Stannard family farm originated in 1785. In later years, Solon and Evelyn (Stannard) Mackey became responsible for the farms operation. During WW II, Mr. Mackey and son, Stannard, provided the labor and know-how. Stannard attended the one room school house on Wright Street in the Town of Durham. Badly over-crowded, the students were awaiting the opening of the newly built Durham Central building in 1939. Durham accommodated students up to the eighth grade. Stannard then attended GCS, graduating in 1948. Always supporting the FFA, he still operates the farm.



Solon Mackey on hay tedder powered by horse team Doll and Ted.



Stannard and Solon on top of hay bale load (1950s). Truck was a trusty 1935 Ford.

The Woodhull farm was taken from the Coeymans Patent in 1793 by Jonathan and Lydia Miller. The original grant contained 1,700 acres. After a marriage of a Miller and Woodhull, the farm was handed down to Miller Woodhull. Lanier “Skip” Woodhull was an excellent example of many GCS students called upon to assume farm family responsibilities. A 1948 graduate of GCS, “Skip” was a top student and friend to all who knew him. He held class and FFA offices. After graduation became a highly respected GCS Board of Education member. “Skip” was passionate about his family farm and FFA Advisory Committee duties. The farm still operates.



Members of the Woodhull family and their team of white mules.



Lanier “Skip” Woodhull pouring the results of a long day’s effort into the farm milk cooler.

50 Years in the Extension Family

Irving Smith, a popular GCS student and active FFA supporter. During the war years “Irv” elected to leave GCS before graduation. His help working the family farm was critical. The Smiths still operate the farm. (1966 photo).

Floyd and Irving Smith, New Baltimore. Milan Smith, Floyd’s father, purchased part of the farm where the dairy is housed in 1909. He was a charter member of Extension in 1917. Floyd joined his father in 1923, and son, Irving, joined the farm partnership in 1945. The section of the farm where Irving lives first came into the Smith family in 1792. Son, Todd, twelve years old, represents the 7th generation on the farm.



Shirley E. Abrams

When you walk the halls of the Scott M. Ellis Elementary School, outside the Principal's

Office is a plaque that reads:

IN MEMORY OF
SHIRLEY E. ABRAMS
July 4, 1933-Sept. 27, 1991
38 years of dedicated services as
Secretary to Superintendent
Greenville Central School
Retired Sept. 24, 1991

The new generation of employees, students and parents may ask who was Shirley Abrams? For those of us who knew her we can tell you about her sweet spirit and her dedicated years of service to Greenville Central School. Miss Abrams began her days working for the Greenville Central School on July 1, 1953, four days shy of her 20th birthday. Through the years she worked for nine permanent and two Interim Supervising Principals/Superintendents of Schools. They were Mr. Scott M. Ellis, Mr. Paul Daley, Dr. Jack Roosa, Mr. Donald Kearns, Mr. Orris Babcock (Interim), Mr. Vincent Ganci, Dr. Ruth Kellogg, Mr. John Lynch (Interim), Mr. Henry Bartosik, Dr. John Thero, and Ms. Debbie Pepin.

Some interesting facts on the way things were in 1953:

- The starting salary for Miss Abrams for the 1953-54 school year was \$2,100.
- She worked 40 hours per week plus every other Saturday for two hours during the months of September through June.
- Benefits included two weeks vacation in July or August and five days allowed for sick leave, cumulative to 30 days.

Shirley is remembered by many students as that nice lady in the office they went to when they needed help. She is remembered by the teachers and staff as the efficient and confidential secretary that she was. On a personal note Shirley was a devoted daughter caring for her mother for many years.

Quotes:

It was my good fortune to have Shirley Abrams and Betty Becker as secretaries to the Superintendent during my initial service at Greenville. They were excellent ambassadors for the school district in dealing with the public, staff, administration, and Board of Education.

Dr. John J. Thero
Past Superintendent of Schools (1984/85-1988/89)

I remember Shirley Abrams as a true professional with a friendly warm smile.

JoAnn Morse
Principal, Scott M. Ellis Elem. School

It was my pleasure to write this article. As a co-worker Shirley was a team player; as a person she was a friend who always put others before herself. It has been eight years since she died but her memory and legacy lives on.

Tammy J. Mathes Sutherland
Business Administrator

Miss Muriel H. Wooster

How appropriate to remember the service and loyalty of Miss Muriel Wooster in this year 2001, the hundredth anniversary of the year of her birth.

After graduating from the Greenville Free Academy in 1919, Miss Wooster went on to William Smith College where she earned a B.S. degree. She taught for six years in private schools before attending the New York State Teachers College in Albany where she earned an M.S. in history. She was one of the first teachers hired to work in the new Greenville Central Rural School. She actually taught in the Academy Building until the new Central School was completed.

Miss Wooster always recognized the need of students for a basic understanding of their nation's history. She constantly strove to maintain high scholastic standards and to develop each student into the best citizen possible. She made sure the students were aware of current events as well as past history. The following is a comment from the State Education Department of Miss Wooster's marking of Greenville's Regents papers: "The rating on the papers sampled was generally careful and accurate. The answers on the paper read indicated that the pupils had an understanding of concepts and practice in writing answers documented by pertinent basic information." This shows that she at that time met one of the aims of the State Education Department for today's students.

In the late 40's, the principal, Mr. Ellis asked Miss Wooster and Mr. Ford, high school mathematics teacher, to start a Greenville Chapter of the National Honor Society. They worked diligently to establish an induction ceremony and a method for selecting students for membership. The first induction ceremony and subsequent ones as well, were performed perfectly and with dignity.

There was another side to Miss Wooster as well—she had a flair for dramatics. In the late 50's, the Greenville Faculty Association decided to present a play to raise money to establish a fund to grant interest-free loans to Greenville students wishing to attend schools of higher learning. Under the direction of Mr. Ruben Garcia, they performed a musical entitled "He Done Her Wrong." Miss Wooster willingly volunteered to act in it. She and Leigh Falkey, music teacher, surprised many of the students and members of the community with their rendition of the song, Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend. It proved to be quite a hit of the show.

Miss Wooster often said with great pride that she had taught every graduate of Greenville Central from its beginning until her retirement at the end of June 1969. As a dedicated teacher for 38 years in GCS, her pride in that fact was well deserved.

Leigh and Muriel Falkey
Scribes

Miss F. May Shaw

June 1970 marked the end of an era in the history of Greenville Central School, that was the time that Miss F. May Shaw retired. She was the last of the faculty to teach continuously at Greenville from the time of centralization in 1930.

Although she was born in Jersey City, Miss Shaw's parents moved to Greenville Center when she was a small child and she lived in that area for the rest of her life. Her elementary and high school education was in the Greenville Center Rural School and the Greenville Free Academy. In 1924 she attended the Catskill Training Class. She always strove for self-improvement and took additional courses including those at New Paltz Normal in 1928 and 1929. Her teaching career began in 1925 at the Gayhead Rural School. She then transferred to the King Hill Rural School in 1927 where she remained until the Greenville Central Rural School was organized. In Greenville, she began teaching 7th and 8th grade mathematics and social studies. Later when the school population grew and more classes were needed, she taught mathematics to the students of the middle grades.

Miss Shaw was deeply religious and was active in her church in Greenville Center. She exemplified her high moral and ethical standards by her daily life in school and the community. She believed that math homework should be done perfectly. Her students knew that their homework had to be completed and any assignments that were not done perfectly had to be corrected. Many a student had six or more corrections to be completed before the end of the marking period if they were going to pass. However, Miss Shaw was always available for help when needed. She kept accurate records and always knew what the students owed in homework and corrections. Today's computers would have been a great help to her.

Miss Shaw had a nice sense of humor and was game to try anything. At the age of 49, she joined the Falkeys in her first camping experience. They went to Cape Breton Island and the Gaspe. She enjoyed the camping and travels so much that the following summer they went to the Rockies and the year after, they took the southern route to California. These trips whetted her appetite to see more of our great nation.

The Greenville Alumni Association has honored Miss Shaw, in addition to Mrs. Margaret Bogardus, Miss Ruby Flansburgh, Mrs. Goldie White, and Miss Muriel Wooster. She was a fair, patient, excellent teacher who loved her chosen vocation and her students. She was respected, admired, and loved by all who knew her.

Leigh and Muriel Falkey
Scribes

First Day of School

The first day of school is always a memorable experience, but one very rainy opening morning stands out above the rest.

Associating names with faces of twenty-plus Kindergarten children while they busy themselves in a classroom equipped to accommodate their interests is a valid expectation of each child. There are always little blue-eyed blondes that look alike but don't answer to the same name! Sorry! Or the son of a child who was in your class years ago who looks at you strangely when he hears his father's name! This is part of the process of adjusting to being together in a new environment away from home.

At last, everyone had drawn a picture to take home, participated in different degrees in finger plays, songs and chatter along with necessary routines, and now to plan their return home.

Being responsible for Kindergarten children boarding the right bus for their safe return home is always a priority. The transportation people who share this responsibility had cooperated by identifying each bus with the picture of an animal for the little child who might be insecure about recognizing numerals.

Following the parking lot diagram, chairs became buses for practice within the classroom. All children going on the "kangaroo" bus had a nametag with a picture of a kangaroo, etc. All kangaroo bus children held onto a piece of rope to keep them together.

All of this preparation having been accomplished, the hour for departure arrived and we started out the door.

The kindergartens were housed in a red mobile unit behind the elementary building. In many ways this was great. However, Donald Kearns, the new superintendent in the "paneled classroom", (converted to an office) had forgotten that the public address system was not heard in the little red building!

A window of the office was quickly raised and the large body of the superintendent with arms waving told us to STOP! (If the children felt panic, so did their teachers, Mrs. Helen Rundell and Mrs. Kathryn Von Schenk Baker).

The rain, resulting from a hurricane, was threatening flooding in some areas of the district causing the emergency closing. Emergency closing meant that the morning kindergarten classes would not be going home on the buses we expected them to board! Emergency closing lists were being prepared. Notes from parents detailing where a working parent wished the child to go in case of an emergency had to be followed.

We returned to our room to wait for the later dismissal time and to try to accomplish the return home without too much trauma.

A parking lot full of big yellow buses is confusing to a little child and to a teacher with a long “tail” of anxious children it is a challenge!

The sympathetic brothers and sisters were a great help as they claimed their siblings and the remaining children were finally settled with the help of many friends.

It was too bad to disappoint the children at home who were waiting for the bus. Their afternoon session was canceled.

Part of growing up is to expect the unexpected!

Our thanks to Mrs. Kathryn Von Schenk Baker for sharing this remembrance.

Scott M. Ellis

Back in 1951 as a kindergartner in Mrs. Harrington's class at Greenville Central School when we were all in one building, the school principal was a concept that didn't mean much to a five-year-old. And, later on as an elementary student who wanted to do well (and whose parents would expect nothing less), "the principal" was a threat used by our teachers to keep everyone on their toes.

However, as this student grew into the high school years, the principal became someone now known by name –Mr. Ellis- and was recognized as the quiet, stern man seen in the hallways. One could tell by his demeanor that he expected excellence in behavior and achievement.

His office was most certainly viewed as a rather "sacred off-limits" kind of place. You did not want to be sent there for an indiscretion and the counter in the outer office kept anyone from accidentally wandering in. If one actually went into his office, you knew it was about a serious matter.

The first time I would enter that office would be 13 years later. Mr. Ellis was retiring as the Class of 1964 was graduating. As we prepared our yearbook dedication, we finally found out more about Mr. Ellis than we, as students, had ever known. In a speech I had the privilege to make as a senior at graduation, I had the opportunity to give recognition to his years of dedication to Greenville. It was following that graduation ceremony that I walked into his office for the first time to have my picture taken with Mr. Ellis. I felt awed, proud and a little scared.

It would be 10 years later, after completing college, teaching in another district, and starting a family before I returned to Greenville as a teacher. During those years and the next 12 that followed I would work for a number of principals most of whom were outstanding. But, none of them seemed "larger than life" as Mr. Ellis had. One would assume it was because I was now seeing principals through the eyes of a grown up.

However, Mr. Ellis was in fact a "larger than life" individual. That became apparent when I was given the honor of serving as Elementary Principal at Scott M. Ellis Elementary School. When I assumed my responsibilities in July of 1986 the elementary building was undergoing major asbestos removal and we set up temporary offices in the high school. When it was time to finally move into the elementary office, I was overwhelmed that I would be sitting where "my principal, Mr. Ellis" had sat. I felt presumptuous and wondered how I thought I could ever walk in such big shoes. No matter that the furniture had undoubtedly changed over the last 20 years, I felt awed, proud and a little scared again. It took me one full week of working at a table in the office before I finally gathered the courage to move to working at the "principal's desk."

As the times and Greenville School constantly change, I hope that as Mr. Ellis looks down at us, he smiles as we strive for the same excellence he made us all feel was expected of us when he was here.

Our thanks to JoAnn J. Morse – GCS Elementary Principal for providing the above remembrance.

Sports in the Greenville Central School District

Prior to centralization of the Greenville Central School District and the building of the Greenville Central School in 1932, opportunities for participation in sports' programs were limited. Area youngsters played basketball in church halls, local barns and on occasion, in the Vanderbilt Hall which once stood on the West side of the creek across from the Greenville Pond. Baseball was played on area hayfields and more often on the field behind where Ted DeLaVergne's garage once stood. Presently, the ball field is part of the Greenville Cemetery. Since there were no gymnasiums available, basketball hoops were hung wherever possible so that youngsters could enjoy the thrill of the sport.

The importance of the playing of sports in the life of young area people could be illustrated by the request of one early sport participant, John Zivelli, a member of the Class of 1932, who loved all sports and who was an accomplished athlete. John requested that upon his demise, he be buried in a plot as near to the former home plate as possible. His dream was fulfilled.

During the 1920's, aware of the need for area youngsters to have a place to play, members of the Dormansville United Methodist Church, motivated by the efforts of Mr. & Mrs. Albert (Bert) and Mate Gibbons, built a sizeable church hall and invited youth to use it to play basketball. The general public was invited to attend. After games were completed, hot dogs and soda were sold at five cents each to defray the cost of running the hall and games.

The building of the Greenville Central School in 1932 provided the use of modern facilities for Greenville students for sports participation and the sports program quickly became the center of community activity. This can be illustrated by the following news article from the News-Herald printed on December 30, 1932:

“The Annual Alumni – Varsity Basketball Games will be played on Friday, December 30, first game beginning at 8:00 p.m. Alumni playing on ladies' team are: Annella Dinnel, Clarice Palmer, Marion Lockwood, Natalie Hull, Gladys Beecher, Dorothy Joy, Helen Potter, Thelma Boomhower Baumann, Beulah Rugg. Alumni of the men's team are: Gerald Ingalls, John Zivelli, Kenneth Lawyer, Erwin Yeomans, Leland Cunningham, Harold Worth, Joseph Slater, Roland Young, Russell Baumann, Edward Boomhower.”

In 1932, a sports league, comprising of teams from Greenville, Cairo, Hunter-Tannersville and Windham-Ashland-Jewett was begun and Greenville quickly developed teams in many sports. Under the guidance of Greenville's first athletic director, Don Mabee, who served from 1932 until 1955, introduced soccer and in addition Greenville had teams in basketball, baseball, track, tennis, cross-country, ping-pong and volleyball. Over the years, students participated in almost all sport teams except football and wrestling.

During these early years, after the basketball season was completed, the four school districts hosted their local teams and their communities to a very popular evening of a basketball Round Robin. Three games were played to decide placement in ranking from one to four. Games were well attended and all four communities came together, joined in communal spirit, the singing of “The Star Spangled Banner”, the respective school Alma Maters, and cheering for their local heroes. Prior to the games, the host school provided varsity players, officials and cheerleaders, with a festive dinner.

Each year the much sought after sportsmanship award was given to a deserving school, as sportsmanship was greatly emphasized and honored.

Greenville's sports programs continued to develop and prosper under the able leadership of subsequent athletic directors. After the retirement of Don Mabee, Bob Randall served as athletic director from 1956 to 1958, James MacTavish from 1959 to 1986, James Hotaling from 1986 to 2000, Matthew Boucher from 2000 to 2001 and Pat Kenna from 2001. During the 1968-1969 school year, Greenville joined the Schoharie League and continued as a member until 2001, participating in many sports leagues and providing opportunities for students in the district. In 1982, a basketball tournament called the "Turkey Tournament" was started by the Pep Club and became immensely popular in the school community. Also in the 1989-1990 school year a Modified Sports Program was initiated for the 7th and 8th grade students. Greenville currently is a member of the Patroon League and anticipates a challenge that will spur more participation and successes in the future.

With the advent of Title IX, the sports program for female students was given a tremendous boost and female teams were quickly incorporated in the sports program with teams in basketball, softball, tennis and soccer. Prior to 1972, girls participated in sports through an intra-mural program and in participation in occasional play days. Girl's teams grew in participation and popularity and a viable program for both male and female students emphasized the important role that sports have played in the life of the Greenville school community. From its modest and early beginnings in local barns, church halls and hayfields to its growth in modern gymnasiums and field facilities, sports in the Greenville Central School District have grown in sophistication, but remains at the heart of the young athletes and their connection to the Greenville community.

Many thanks to Don Mabee, James MacTavish, Patrick Kenna, Frances Swart, Curt and Lee Cunningham, Lawrence and Gerry Applebee for their help in the above.

Anna Acconi and Richard A. Ferriolo
Scribes

A Sports Moment

Sand Lot Baseball was a term often used to describe the earliest games. On Lampman Hill Road a more appropriate term might have been Hay Field Ball. One such game was played in the late thirties at the Benjamin Ben Place. The field was and still is behind the sheep barn. The summer hay was cut and in the barn, bases were flat field stone and the pitcher's mound was marked with a wood board. Never with enough players to fill all positions, some were asked to play on both teams. Roy McCafferty was a favorite for this dual job, as he was an excellent, natural ball player that everyone wanted on their side. Roy, could throw a soft ball from deep left field all the way to first base on the fly. With a hard ball he had the ability to pitch with tireless control at ninety (90) plus miles. The ball would sizzle and had a life of its own. Roy never pursued sports at GCS as his dedication to farm life was paramount.

It must be noted that Lampman Hill ladies were welcome as players. Partly due to need, partly because no one was ever refused, and in all honesty some were darn good players. In fact Lampman Hill can boast they beat Title IX requirements by a half century.

This particular game was easy to remember due to a foul tip and catcher Arthur McCulloch. The previous fall the McCaffertys built an extension to the Ben Place barn for newly born lambs. Some remaining lumber was still stacked behind the barn. Someone hit a foul tip and the ball rolled under the lumber. Art proceeded to move some of the boards to fetch the ball. To his complete astonishment he intruded on a mother skunk and her young. She let him have it, both barrels! To no avail, Art tried to use his Wilson pure cowhide glove to ward off the spray. In sports, when a team fails to score; it is said, "they got skunked", in this game it was the real thing. Art was a total mess, clothes and all. The odor was horrific, bringing tears to one's eyes. At the time, Art was staying with Aunt Grace McCulloch. Here he made his second bad move of the day! He went into the house and started to remove his clothing. Aunt Grace got one whiff and without fanfare tossed Art out of the house. She had him bury his clothes and take a bath in the near-by pond. He survived a long period of ribbing through his usual good nature and humor. One thing that did not survive was the Wilson glove. All efforts to rid the glove of the odor, failed badly.

Arthur McCulloch was a member of the all boys class at the Lampman Hill one room school house. He went on to join the U.S. Army Air Corp during World War II, serving as a gunner on a B-17 bomber. After the war he took up farming in the Town of Rensselaerville. His sons, Kenneth and Arthur, Jr., presently reside at the farm.

No one can forget Art's good nature and his willingness to take youngsters fishing and swimming in his 1930's Ford Roadster with a rumble seat. Thanks to Art, there were lots of laughter and good times along the Eight Mile and Ten Mile Creeks of Medusa.

Richard A. Ferriolo
Scribe

First Woman on the GCS Board of Education and the Gentlemen's Agreement

Until the 1960's, a woman on the GCS Board of Education was unheard of. Mr. Merritt Elliott, who represented Zone # 5, the Norton Hill area was retiring. George Story and Mr. Elliott stopped by my home in Norton Hill and asked me to consider running for election to the school board. After much discussion with my husband and two young sons, I did consent and was elected.

During my nine-year tenure as a board member, our school district, as it had for many years operated under a Gentlemen's Agreement. The seven-zone agreement was designed to fully cover our large district with representation by a board member residing in each zone. Each representative not only was aware of the feelings of the residents of the zone, but also truly represented the whole district; working as one body on the Board for the good of the entire school. Attached is the full description of the seven zone Gentlemen's Agreement.

Oddly enough, one year after my election to the Board, my family moved to South Street in Greenville, thus breaking the Gentlemen's Agreement. There was much publicity and arguments erupted, so I offered to resign. Mr. Robert O'Keefe representing the Greenville zone decided to retire, preserving the agreement. Walter Ingalls later filled the Norton Hill board seat.

During my years on the Board, we had many major events to resolve. We hired and dismissed several Superintendents and high school principals. Our Board was confronted with a student walk-out protesting board policy. We established a citizen committee to help formulate plans for the new high school building and to encourage community support. During the build-construction, we performed on-site inspections and selected equipment. It rained a lot that fall and spring, forming a pond in the orchestra area. The contractors were kidded about raising fish to gain revenue. Much time was spent selecting seating for the auditorium. The old seating at the elementary building, although durable, were not comfortable, we wished to do better.

Although the only woman board member at the time, the gentlemen serving with me were all diligent, hardworking and community minded. The hours were long and tiring, but most gratifying.

Harriet Gumport
Scribe

COMMITTEE NOTE: The Gentleman's Agreement was more permanently broken during the Board of Education election of 1976

Gentleman's Agreement

Districts grouped in zones and represented on the Board of Education

Zone # 1	Greenville West Greenville
Zone # 2	South Westerlo Tan Hollow Stanton District Lockwood District Dormansville Stone School House
Zone # 3	Surprise King Hill East Greenville Newry Pleasant Valley
Zone # 4	Freehold Coonley Greenville Center Place Corners Abner Alden
Zone # 5	Norton Hill Maple Avenue Lampman Medusa Lambs Corners
Zone # 6	Grapeville Medway Reservoir Staco
Zone # 7	Smith's Corners Bailey Rensselaerville Former District # 2

GROUND BREAKING CEREMONIES FOR THE NEW
JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
3:00 P.M. June 8, 1967

Benediction: The Reverend Richard Clark,
Minister, Greenville Episcopal Church

PROGRAM

Invocation: The Reverend Duncan MacKenzie, Minister
Greenville Methodist Church

Welcome: Jack L. Rossa, Supervising Principal

Pledge to the Flag, followed by "America" – led by
Robert J. Tyrrell,
Director of Music

Remarks: Harriet Gumport,
Vice Pres. Of Board of Education

Remarks: Leslie Bender, Architect,
Hartheimer Associates

Trumpet Duet: David Gumport and Kevin Ingalls

Ground Breaking Ceremony: Board Members
Building Committee Members
Architect
Contractors
Administrators
Students

Song: "America The Beautiful" – led by
Robert J. Tyrell



Junior/Senior High School Ground Breaking



Groundbreaking Ceremony

NEW GREENVILLE JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL IS DEDICATED TODAY
MARCH 2, 1969

GREENVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL

Board of Education

Mrs. Harriet Gumport, President

Curtis Applebee	J. Eugene Morrison	Ralph Schmollinger
Walter Ingalls	Thomas Pottenburgh	Lanier Woodhull

. . . .

Mrs. Kathleen Bennett, Clerk
David Elsbree, Treasurer

Citizens' Building Committee

Lawrence Smith, Chairman
Porter Wright, Assistant Chairman
Orris Babcock, Secretary

Edmond Baron.	Wilbur Baumann	Edwin Beechert
Bobette Bensen	William Burmeister	Frank Cleary
Ronald Cornell	Michael Heller	George Hood
Randall Ingalls	Andrew Macko	James MacTavish
Arnold Nichol森	Leo Pettit	Dr. Michael Salerno
Evalyn Simpson	Douglas Stanton	Robert Tyrrell
Edward Waldron	Ernest Young	

CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS OF
THIS BUILDING PROJECT WERE:

William G. Forrest, Inc	General Construction
J. N. Futia Co., Inc.	Heating Contract
J. N. Futia Co., Inc.	Plumbing Contract
H. J. Noord & Son, Inc.	Plumbing Contract
Callanan Road Improvement Co.	Site Development
W. K. Sauer Co.	Cabinet Work
Empire Educational Equipment, Inc.	Science & Library Cabinets
American Seating Co.	Auditorium Seating
Lewis Equipment Co.	Kitchen Equipment
Fowler Equipment Co.	Language Lab. Equipment
Brodhead-Garrett Co.	Industrial Arts Equipment
Olesen Seating Co.	Bleachers

ARCHITECTS FOR THIS PROJECT ARE:

Hartheimer Associates - Albert Hartheimer and Leslie

Bender

Dedication Program

Opening RemarksMrs. Harriet Gumport, President
Board of Education

Invocation.....The Reverend Richard Clark

Flag SaluteMr. Robert Tyrrell
Music Director

National AnthemThe School Band

Introduction:Mrs. Harriet Gumport
Board Members and Supervising Principal
Citizens' Building Committee
Other Guests

Musical Selections.....The School Band

Introduction of SpeakerDr. Jack L. Roosa
Supervising Principal

RemarksMr. William B. Haessig, Director
Division of Educational Facilities
State Education
Department

Presentation of Building.....Mrs. Harriet Gumport

Administrative Response..... Dr. Michael Salerno
Junior-Senior High
School Principal

Statement of Dedication Read in unison by entire assembly

“We the people of the Greenville Central School District, dedicate the Greenville Junior-Senior High School to the service of the entire community . In doing so, we reaffirm our faith in public education as the safeguard of American Democracy; and pledge our individual and cooperative vigilance and devotion to the schools of this community as they serve all citizens of every nationality, color and creed.”

Benediction.....The Reverend Richard Clark
America.....Entire Assembly

THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, July 25, 1961

Critic at Large

School in Upstate Farm Area Provides Contrasts With Conditions in New York

By Brooks Atkinson

Greenville, N.Y.

In view of the squalid news about the schools of New York City, here are some facts and comments about a school – probably a typical school – in a farming area in Greene County.

Most of the 6,000 people in the Greenville district would not consciously think of their central school as the major enterprise in the community. But statistics seem to indicate that it is. Nothing else employs so many people to look after the needs of so many, and nothing else has such a huge plant. The Georgian style, well groomed building is the most imposing structure in the town. During the school term it is also the busiest.

It is appraised at \$1,267,068, and the equipment at \$182,999 – colossal figures for a small town. Next year the budget is estimated at \$701,699.54, of which \$212,000 will come directly from the taxpayers. Fifty-four teachers, most of them established members of the community, look after the education of 1,000 students in the elementary and high school grades.

If Greenville were a wealthy town, this modern school would not seem like such an extraordinary institution. In fact, the economic resources of the district are limited. But every school day the children and young people participate in a civilized environment. Their scholastic achievements rank a little above average if measured by the Regents examinations and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development.

No doubt there are equally fine schools throughout the state and country. There is a fine one for the lower grades in near-by Durham. But the Greenville Central School, of which Scott Ellis has been supervising principal for many years, is the one with which I am acquainted; and it stands in the center of the town, surrounded by manicured lawns, as a silent rebuke to many of the schools in New York City.

Although the Greenville taxpayers are modest people, they would be outraged if their central school were infested by rats and roaches, if the classrooms were vandalized, if the windows were broken, if the floors were uncared for and if plaster had fallen out of the ceilings.

By and large the Greenville school is taken for granted as a reputable part of the town's activities. If it were not, the seven elected members of the school board would hear about it in no unmistakable terms and so would the school administrators. The homes from which the students come vary. But it is agreed that at school all of them are entitled to the best.

None of the members of the school board is an educator. They are representative citizens – a summer hotel proprietor, three farmers, a truck gardener, the manager of a fertilizer plant and a lawyer. Personally dissimilar, they are united in believing that the school must be kept at a decent standard and that the money it costs must be spent thriftily. Unpaid, serving terms of five years each, they accept great responsibilities, which they discharge in the interests of the community.

Since the school buys thousands of dollars worth of supplies every year, the local merchants might assume that they were entitled to special consideration. Apparently, they do not think so. The low bids for the large items – like buses, gasoline, fuel oil, meats, canned goods, bread, and ice cream – come from wholesalers outside the district, who, accordingly, get the bulk of the business.

Maintaining professional and ethical standards in the operation of a public school out to be standard practice. To judge by the news from New York City it is not. In the country town of Greenville the school children have a finer preparation for adult life than many of the school children in New York.

GCS Membership in the Greene County School Boards Association

In February of 1967, school administrators in Greene County recognized the need for more communication among the schools. Thus, the Greene County School Boards Association was organized. Meeting three times a year in the spring, fall and winter, the goal of the association was to share ideas and problems, seek remedies and, whenever possible, to support Greene County schools. Greenville Central remains a very active member of the Greene County School Board Association.

Meetings of the association rotate from school to school, with the host school presenting informative educational programs open to discussion, many times with the inclusion of students and faculty. At times, New York State senators, assemblymen and county legislators are guest speakers. Superintendents of Greene County Schools and *BOCES/QUESTAR* representatives offer their guidance and regularly attend meetings. The NYS School Boards Association personnel are often part of the program. Subjects discussed cover a wide range of topics including Regents requirements, education law, state and federal mandates, state aid, school and state budgetary problems, transportation, dress code, discipline, student clubs, resident volunteer programs, local radio station student announcements and substance abuse. In addition, educational sharing among schools is accomplished through the use of telecommunication towers, satellites and the Internet.

More often than not, meetings are held in cafeterias of the host school. Volunteers and staff members provide dinner, artistic programs and informational agendas. Sometimes meetings are held in local restaurants in the host district. Having meetings in a host school provides the opportunity for schools to highlight their programs and accomplishments. Meetings, in general, provide a worthwhile experience for board members, giving them the opportunity to expand their knowledge of educational programs and the chance to see how neighboring school districts address common problems.

The GCSBA membership approved an official logo with the image of an owl complete with eyeglasses, manual, and graduation cap and gown, including cap tassel. This logo was placed on quality stationery for association correspondence. For special occasions, plaques acknowledging an individual's or organization's dedication to the advancement of education are produced and distributed. Plaques have been presented to GCSBA members and NYS legislature members and even to a local radio station WCKL.

During the 1980's, the GCSBA sponsored an Annual Day at the NYS Legislature. Open to all Greene County schools, the trip was attended by Board of Education members, teachers and students. In the morning, the group usually visited the NYS School Boards Association headquarters where NYSSBA staff gave insight into their involvement in education. Topics discussed included the responsibility of school boardsmanship. Lunch is usually provided by the GCSBA at a local restaurant followed by a tour of the NYS Legislature and Capitol.

On one occasion, tour arrangements were provided by the offices of Assemblyman C.D. "Larry" Lane and Senator Charles Cook. The tour included meeting the legislative representatives, viewing the legislative buildings and the legislature in action. On one of the trips the group met with Senator James H. Donovan, then Chairman of the powerful Senate Education Committee. In a Capitol meeting room, Senator Donovan graciously took almost an hour explaining his duties and that of the legislature, allowing ample time for questions and answers. At a later date, the Senator provided everyone in attendance with a group photo taken on a

Capitol stairway.

The development of the Greene County School Boards Association has provided local school board members with a unique opportunity to become better educated concerning the educational process. The many informational sessions broaden the vision of members concerning existent problems in education and provide for them opportunities for problem solving. Certainly, the GCSBA has been an asset for board members in Greene County.

(SEE PHOTO AND NAMES)

Greene County School Boards Association “Annual Day At The NYS Legislature”.

May, 1987.

- ROW 1: Heather Byrne, H-T; Danny Cashman, H-T; Tim Goode, GCS; Cheryl Wood, C-D; William Lawrence, teacher C-D; James H. Donovan, NYS Senator, Chairman Education Committee.
- ROW 2: Bobbi-Jo Yager, H-T; Joe Greco, H-T; Glenna Teator, GCS; William Bergman, GCS.
- ROW 3: Richard A. Ferriolo, President Greene County School Boards Association; Gary Siatkowski, H-T; Eleanor Licata, GCS; Marilyn Noonan, Catskill Board of Education.
- ROW 4: Amanda Schnare, GCS; Megan DiBello, GCS; Matt Nash, GCS; Walter Hubicki, GCS; John Noonan, CHS.
- ROW 5: Amy Palmer, GCS; Dawn Theiss, GCS; Doug Jenes, CHS; Michael Riordon, CHS.
- ROW 6: Brian Byrne, teacher, H-T; Arthur Thorman, teacher, GCS; Aaron VanDyke, CHS.