



# ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 153, FRANKLINVILLE, NEW YORK 14737  
HTTP://WWW.ISCHUAVALLEYHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

Spring 2026

Volume 15, Issue 2

## It's Maple Festival Time!

### DONATIONS RECEIVED

IOOB

Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Amitrano, Jr.



Twin-size Quilt Created and Donated by Kim Whitting  
Will be Raffled Off at the Maple Festival

### In This Issue

Coming Events .....	2
Searching for Revoutionary Soldiers .....	2
Growing Up in Franklinville .....	3
Update at the Miner's Cabin .....	3
Events Leading to the Declaration .....	4
Déjà Vu .....	5
Becoming Americans .....	5
The Watkins Legacy .....	7

### A NOTE TO THE READER

When I started publishing this issue of our newsletter, I believed I knew all about the American Revolution. I was surprised to learn there were important things I did not know. In proof-reading and embellishing the text with images and internet links, the depth of my knowledge and understand increased greatly.

While General George Washington and Benjamin Franklin saved our revolution, I now have a whole new respect for the colonists as well. They were farmers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, school teachers, and trades people; basically just regular folks who stood up against the tyranny of the British Empire, the most powerful government in the world at the time.

Thanks to these determined individuals, we have our freedoms today.

I hope you find this issue as inspiring as I have.

### VOLUNTEERS AND DONATIONS FOR THE MAPLE FESTIVAL

The Maple Festival is an important fundraiser for Ischua Valley Historical Society. We need gift baskets and gift certificates for the raffle. There will also be a "silent auction", and we are looking for items for this event. Monetary donations toward making gift baskets or purchasing gift certificates would also be appreciated. **Let your creativity shine!**

If you can volunteer for a two-hour shift on either Saturday, April 26th or Sunday, April 27th during the Maple Festival, please call 716-244-0930.



## COMING EVENTS

Wednesday, April 1st – IVHS will open the season with the **Annual Elections Dinner Meeting** at the VFW in Franklinville at 6:00 PM. The menu will feature beef on weck, side dishes and dessert. The price will be \$18. Please **make your reservation** by calling (252) 414-4823 **by March 23rd**. Our guest speaker will be Bob Wright who will discuss the maple syrup industry.

Saturday, April 25th and Sunday, April 26th – Join us at **The Maple Festival** for food and fun. IVHS will be at the school with a basket and gift certificate raffle. A quilt donated by Kim Whitling and another one by Suzanne Linderman will be raffled. We hope to have 3 Park Square and The Miner's Cabin open also.

Come on out and support The Maple Festival and the Ischua Valley Historical Society.

Wednesday, July 1st – Please join us for our **Annual July Picnic**. Please bring a dish to pass and your table service. Meat and beverages will be provided. Come help us celebrate the **250th Anniversary of The Declaration of Independence!**



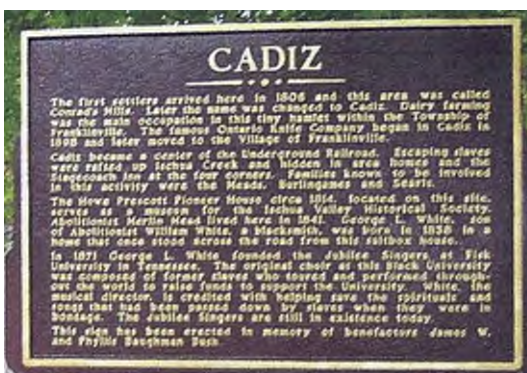
Details of any of our future events will be on our website: <https://www.ischuavalleyhistoricalsociety.org>.

## SEARCHING FOR REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS

We know that there were about 115 soldiers who served in The American Revolution who settled in Cattaraugus County, or whose families came here. There are 3 buried in [Cadiz Cemetery](#) and the possibility of a fourth.

Many of the sons of these soldiers also came here. On July 4th we will be celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. This event was possible because of the brave men and women who were willing to fight for freedom and liberty from Great Britain. It would be wonderful to honor their heroic efforts.

If you are a descendent of a Revolutionary veteran, please let us know. You may not be aware that you are related to one of these heroes. Here are a few of the last names that we know who either came to Cattaraugus County, or their children did: WASHBURN, HOWARD, SILLIMAN, CAMPBELL, FORBUSH, CARR, SAUNDERS and ROGERS. If you know of others, please email me at [MaidLynn@aol.com](mailto:MaidLynn@aol.com) or call 716-353-0290. This year the newsletter will dedicate articles to **The American Revolution** to keep our history alive. Our next newsletter will deal with **The Declaration of Independence Anniversary** this coming July 4th.



### GROWING UP IN FRANKLINVILLE, NY

We grew up free-range kids in Franklinville, when "helicopter parenting" was yet to be coined, seat belts were unknown, turn signals were optional equipment, and an ashtray was always in sight. We knew few restrictions beyond the golden rule and expectations of honesty and respect for authority. Mother, who blew a very loud whistle, would call us with one, two or three blasts, depending on which kid was supposed to show up **now**. We roamed within that broad, flexible framework.

We lived beside the run-out from Cemetery Hill and on a good day our sleds would carry us all the way to Cherry Street. In all seasons, the graveyard excelled as a place for hiding, tag or slalom runs. With time, our home ranges expanded through the streets of town and the surrounding hills and, as we and friends drove, neighboring communities.



In the decades since moving from Franklinville, we have pursued dreams elsewhere, but the magic of growing up in that community has never dimmed. During a recent discussion, the question was posed to one of us: "What would you have done if, as a child, your parents had died?" Although never having given it much thought, the response came quickly: "While it would have been a terrible event, any one of us would have known with certainty that we would be OK." The people of Franklinville knew us and would have found ways to fold us into the community. We would be loved and we would be OK.

We have not returned to Franklinville often, but remember fondly and with gratitude, the freedom and security of growing up there. Now, many decades later, we send our best wishes for a bountiful and satisfying new year to the readers of this newsletter and, through you, to your neighbors.



Kay [Metzgar] Broyles - TBA Class of 1957  
Lee Metzgar - TBA Class of 1958  
Dean Metzgar - TBA Class of 1962

 Article submitted by Lee Metzgar.



### UPDATE AT THE MINER'S CABIN

We had the asbestos-ridden dark brown floors in the upstairs hallway remediated, refinished and painted a lighter shade to brighten the area.

This year it is hoped that we can finally be rid of the bees. While the situation is much better, it is not completely resolved going forward.

If you, your family, and friends would like to start collecting tax right-offs for the 2026 tax year, remember ALL donations to IVHS are **tax deductible**.

This is a "Win-Win" for donors and the IVHS.

## EVENTS LEADING TO THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The road to The American Revolution was paved with protests, rage, vandalism and defiance. At this point in history, the American colonists were controlled by the British Empire. The English monarch, [King George III](#), suffered from physical and mental problems. Unfortunately, he sometimes followed poor advice.

The problems began when the colonists wanted to expand westward into the Ohio River Valley. But so did the French. The colonists appealed to the King, and what resulted was [The French and Indian War](#). The British were victorious, but the war had proved costly. In addition, King George also had expenses due to the [Seven Year's War](#) in Europe. The treasury was suffering.

King George decided that the colonists should be required to help with the expenses, since they had profited from the war. So, [The Stamp Act](#) was introduced. It put a tax on all colonial commercial and legal papers, newspapers, pamphlets, cards, almanacs and dice. The colonists were enraged, and refused to cooperate. The tax was ended.

The [Townshend Acts](#) were put into effect to favor The [East India Company](#). This company was competing with the Dutch who were smuggling tea into the colonies, and it was cheaper to buy then from the British company. This led to anger, violence and hostility. Once again, the Acts were repealed.

The colonists resented the British soldiers stationed in America, and Boston became a hotbed of defiance. One night they stormed the British barracks, but were unsuccessful. Then they pelted the barracks with snowballs. The soldiers were ordered to remain in the barracks.

One single sentry had been posted outside the Customs House. He felt endangered and seven British soldiers with bayonets moved through the crowd. The crowd shouted out "Go ahead, shoot us!" They knew that this wouldn't happen because there had to be warnings issued before that kind of action.

It's believed that a nervous soldier accidentally fired a shot. Thinking an order to shoot had been given, the other soldiers fired and 5 men died. The colonists demanded justice. There was a trial, but no one paid the price.

The British withdrew from Boston and repealed many of the taxes, except for the tax on tea. This tax would help The East India Company, giving them favorable treatment to sell tea at a price that undercut American merchants who preferred to trade with the Dutch. American didn't want anyone to tell them who they could deal with. The [Sons of Liberty](#), considered a radical group, disguised themselves as Indians boarded three British ships and dumped 92,000 pounds of British tea into Boston Harbor. They didn't hurt the crew or vandalize the ships. This became known as The [Boston Tea Party](#).

Now the British government was angry, because many of the members of the Parliament were shareholders in The East India Company. In order to be a shareholder in this company, an equivalent of one million dollars had to be paid. They lost their profit.

The British government thought it was time to tame the colonial protestors. They decided to replace the colonists governing body with a British official until restitution was made for the spilt tea. These were called The [Coercive Acts](#).

The [Quartering Act](#) allowed accommodations for British troops in unoccupied buildings and houses, and the colonists were forced to pay for the expense of housing and feeding of soldiers.

Protests continued and [General Gage](#) was sent to Lexington to capture "The Radicals" named [Sam Adams](#) and John Howard. They were then to continue to Concord where they believed the colonists had stored their ammunition. There were 77 militiamen waiting for the British. The skirmish left 49 colonists dead, 39 wounded, and 5 missing. The British had 73 dead, 174 wounded and 26 missing.

[Paul Revere](#) and [Dr. Samuel Prescott](#) rode through the countryside to warn that "The British are Coming!"

The British moved on to Concord. This marked the beginning of The American Revolution.

*In our next newsletter we will move on to The Declaration of Independence. It is important to know that July 4<sup>th</sup> is not only about picnics and fireworks. It's the story of how we became free and American.*

## DÉJÀ VU

Déjà vu is a French term that describes the feeling that you have already seen something when you know you haven't. That's exactly how Bruce and I felt that morning. Easter was late that year so we planned a trip to Boston over the school break. We visited all the historic sights, walked [The Freedom Trail](#) and visited my college room-mate who lived in Acton, Massachusetts. We decided that on Monday morning we would visit [Concord](#) and [Lexington](#).

It was a beautiful spring day, warm and full of sunshine. The route between Acton and Concord was seven miles. Bruce and I were just beginning to become involved in genealogy and never realized the significance of the road we were taking.

We stood hand-in-hand at the site of The Concord Bridge, now long gone. Suddenly we realized it was April 19th, the day remembered as [The Shot Heard Round the World](#). It was one hundred ninety-five years to the date of the actual encounter. It was 8:50 A.M. Amazing! The Battle at Concord Bridge took place between 8:00 and 9:00 in the morning.

Both of us tried to imagine what it must have been like for a group of men who called themselves [Minutemen](#) standing across from the British soldiers, the greatest army in the world. No one ran; they stood their ground.

That incredible feeling of déjà vu is imbedded in our memory. It wasn't until a year later that we realized what had happened to us that day. It can best be explained by the story that follows entitled BECOMING AMERICANS. This story appeared in the newsletter years ago, but I believe that it is relevant to the celebration of our 250th year of Independence.



## BECOMING AMERICANS

The "Fourth of July" is a national holiday honoring the day that the [Declaration of Independence](#) was adopted. On that day the colonists informed the King of England that they were no longer under British control. There is another very important date in American history and that day is April 19th. Some historians believe that on that date in 1775 the British colonists changed their nationality and became Americans.

Tensions were running high in the Colonies, especially in Massachusetts. The British troops were alerted that weapons and ammunition were being stored in the area of Concord and set out to destroy them. [Paul Revere](#), [Samuel Prescott](#), and several other riders set out to warn the colonists.

The towns in the area were alerted and the signal was given for the militia to gather. Each town had their own group and they referred to themselves as [Minutemen](#) since they were to gather within minutes.

In the town of Acton, Captain [Isaac Davis](#) assembled his men. The militia consisted of farmers, shopkeepers and even the schoolmaster. They were especially proud of the fact that each man in Acton had not only a musket, but also a bayonet. This was because Captain Davis was a blacksmith and gunsmith. He made sure all his men were prepared.

They marched to Concord to meet with the militia from other towns. At the Concord line, Davis told his men if they wanted to leave, now was the time. Not one man left and they marched the seven miles to the tune of the [White Cockade](#) (Fife and Drum) (MP3). Sergeant [David Forbush](#), [Josiah Hayward](#), and [James Hayward](#) (the teacher), were among the men in the group.

They gathered at the North Bridge in Concord and faced the British who had the greatest army in the world. When the order to step up was given, the Acton group moved in first. No one knows who fired the first shot, but a British bullet pierced the heart of Captain Davis killing him instantly. History records that David Forbush, who was standing ten feet away was covered by the blood of Davis who became the first American officer killed in the American Revolution. The British retreated back to Boston. [Abner Hosmer](#) and [James Hayward](#) also died at Concord.

When the men of Acton and the other militia fired on the British army it was also an attack on their King George III. The morning the militias set out they were British subjects. By noon they had surrendered their loyalty to the King and became Americans. Historians often point to this day as the birth of American nationality.

Forbushs and the [Haywards](#) were related by marriage. A number of years after the Revolution, the [Forbush family](#) left Acton, Massachusetts and moved to Chautauqua County. His children and other relatives moved to Cattaraugus County. Today his descendants live in Franklinville, Gowanda and Cattaraugus.

There were at least 115 soldiers who fought in the American Revolution who lived in Cattaraugus County or are buried here. In the first line of the Cadiz Cemetery there is a stone for [Theophilus Howard III](#). His father, [Theophilus Howard II](#), was one of the men who dressed up as an Indian and dumped tea into Boston Harbor. This became known as the Boston Tea Party.

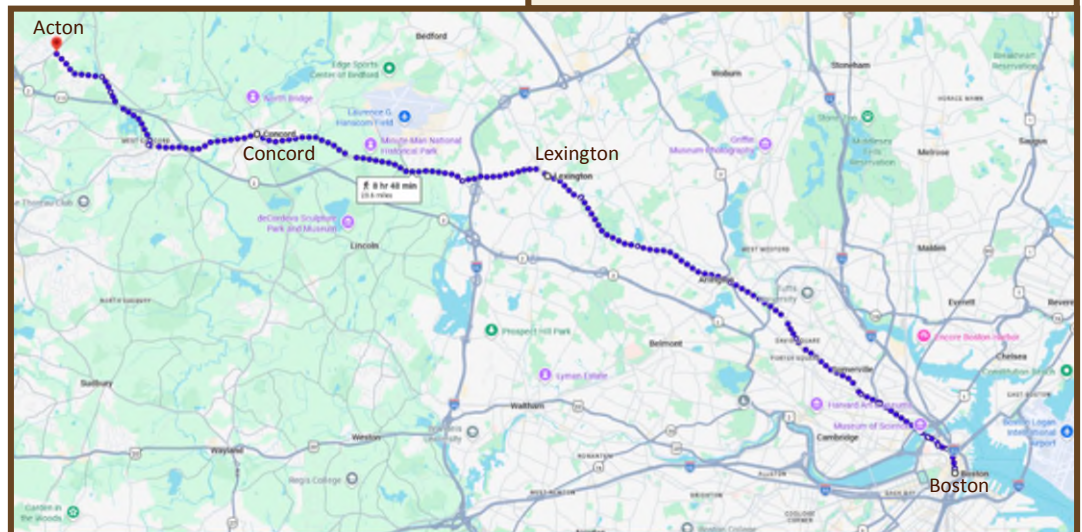
The last known soldier of the American Revolution died at the age of 109 years, 5 months and 21 days on April 5, 1869. His name was [Daniel Frederick Bakeman](#) and coincidentally, he died in the Town of Freedom in Cattaraugus County.

And now, for the rest of the story . . .

Working on Bruce’s genealogy, we discovered that David Forbush, the man covered in the blood of the first American officer killed in the American Revolution, was his several times great grandfather. Bruce was also related to the teacher, [James Hayward](#) and [Abner Hosmer](#) who also died that day. We stood in their footsteps 195 years later marking the anniversary of the start of The American Revolution. Maybe that explains the déjà vu.



Walking Distances Today	
Boston to Lexington	11.5 miles
Lexington to Concord	6.6 miles
Concord to Acton	5.5 miles



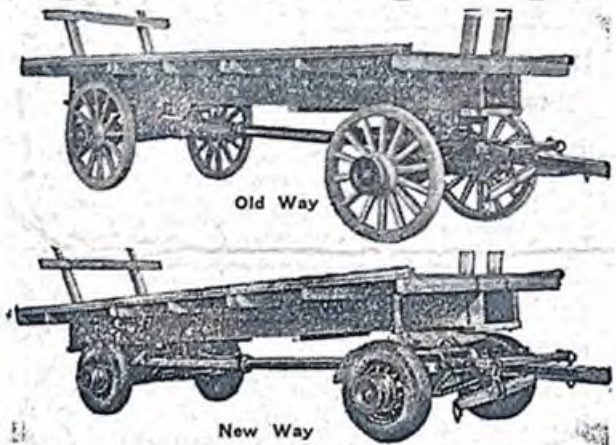
### THE WATKINS LEGACY

IVHS is grateful to Don Watkins for his wonderful contribution to Franklinville’s historical data. He recently shared pictures of the businesses that Edwin H. Watkins, his grandfather, operated in our village.

Originally, he made dynamite bowls in Adamsville (*a section in Franklinville*) for a dynamite factory in Eldred, PA. He later began a body shop on 23 Mill Street. We have a picture of an ad from approximately 1940.

Later he worked on body work for trucks. We have several pictures these trucks which include a vegetable truck, a horse truck, a bread truck and a school bus. These pictures are enlarged and will be on display at our Annual Dinner in April and The Maple Festival. Anyone interested in trucks from the 1940s and pictures of the dynamite bowl and Mr. Watkins business site will enjoy this exhibition.

## Speed Up Your Slow Moving, Hard Pulling Wagon

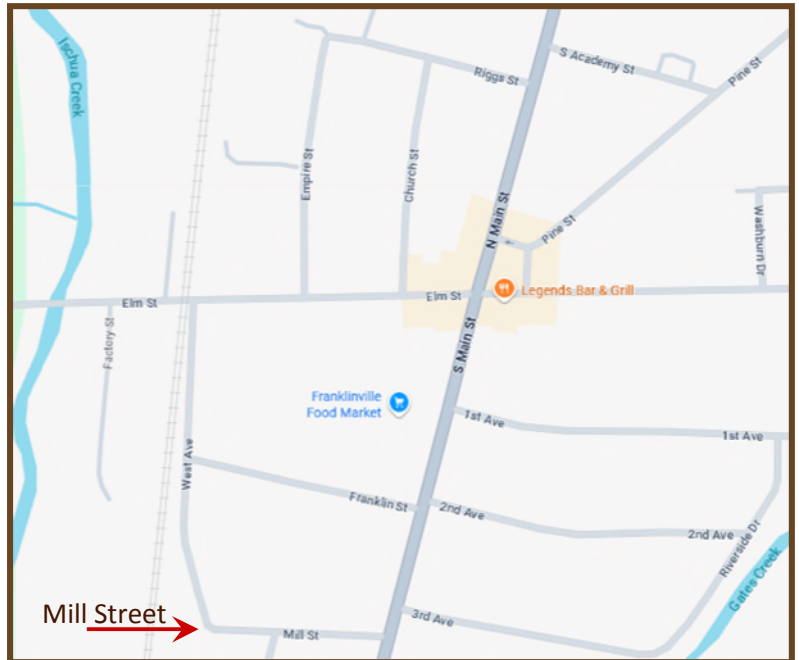


Now you can equip your wood-wheel wagon with pneumatic tires at an amazing new low cost of

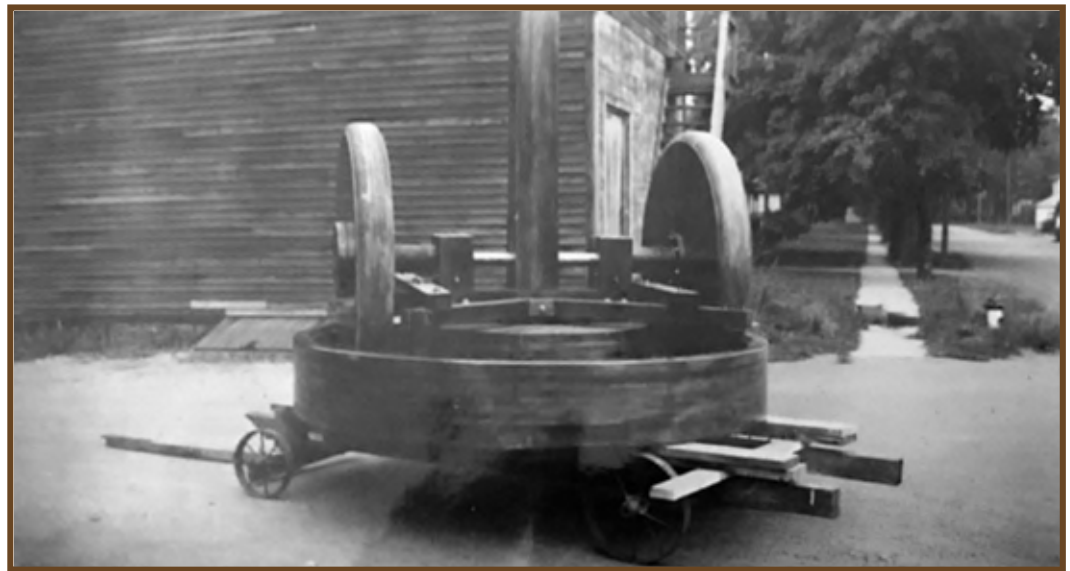
**\$1400** Less Rubber

## WATKINS BODY SHOP

23 Mill Street Phone 13  
FRANKLINVILLE, N. Y. 1940



Dynamite Mixing Bowl made by Edwin H. Watkins



MORE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM DON WATKINS



The Miner's Cabin is located at 9 Pine Street in Franklinville, NY.

- President: Al Fish
- Vice President: Bruce Fredrickson
- Secretary: Peter Molyneaux
- Treasurer: Carol Merkle
- Newsletter Editor: Maggie Fredrickson

- Board Members:
- Liz Conner
- Terry Hahn
- David Linderman
- Mark Werwinski
- Terri Werwinski
- Holly Zendarski



You may submit related historical articles, photos, news, and corrections to the editor at [newsletter@ischuavalleyhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:newsletter@ischuavalleyhistoricalsociety.org).