

# NNHS NEWS LETTER

Northville Northampton Historical Society

Issue 57  
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Editor  
Gail M Cramer



## MUSEUM NEWS

The museum is ready for the season. It has been cleaned from top to bottom and inside all the cases. Many of the displays have been moved and added to.

The museum was open June 6th for Northville's 2nd annual celebration of The National Trail Days Festival. We had about 45 visitors to the museum. Our faithful guides, Linda and Skip Thompson, and Gloria Fulmer were on duty from 9:30 to 3 p.m. Gail sold books and greeted customers and helped lead the historic business walking tour.

The museum will officially open Saturday June 27 and every Wednesday and Saturday July and August, 10 to 2

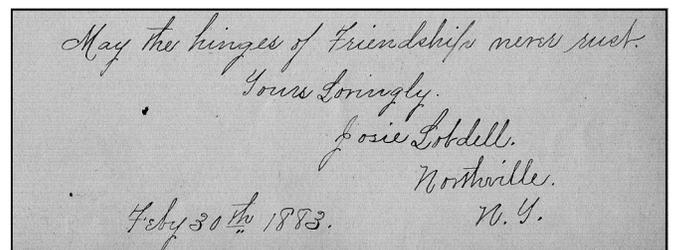
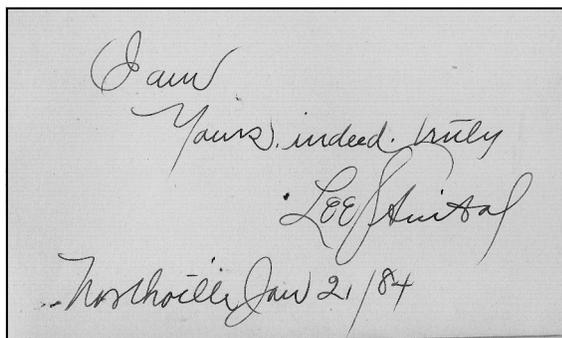
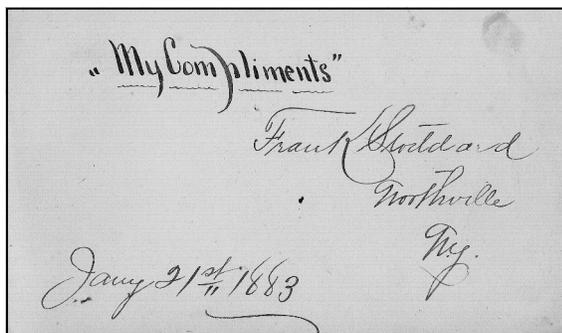
## AUTOGRAPH ALBUMS

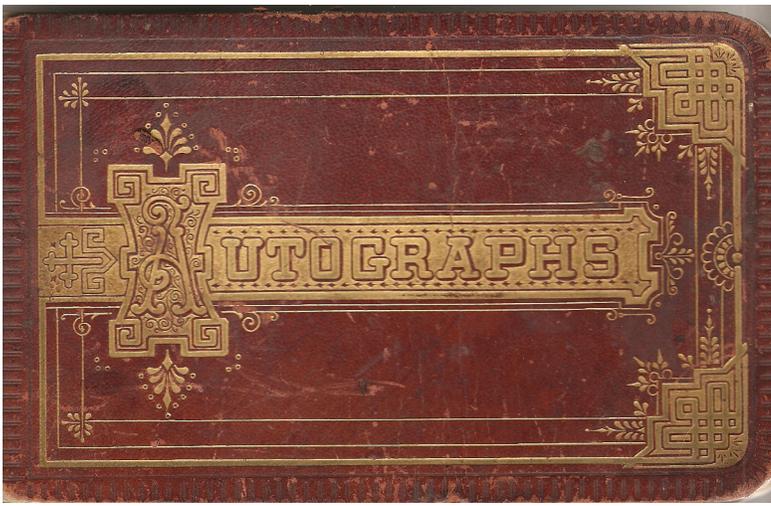
*Remember when they were popular? I still have the one I had in high school. I don't think anyone uses them any more. Actually they first became popular in the 15th century among university students, as mementos of friends. When university yearbooks came into existence the yearbooks were used for the same purpose. Their popularity continued on amongst non university students on into the 1940s.*

*The entrances into the pages of these old autograph books can be quite humorous, historical, artistic and cleverness. I have collected a number of them for our historical archives. I enjoy looking at the handwriting of some earlier Northville folks. They bring back memories of who these people were in our history.*



These are a few Northville albums, some were quite fancy and others plain. This autograph book belonged to "Lottie" maybe Lottie Cole? The dates are 1883 to 1884. I hope you recognize some of the entries. They are some of her friends and you'll note some are well known businessmen.

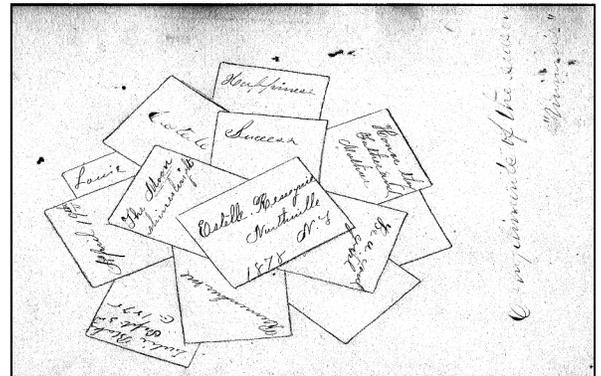




January 16<sup>th</sup> 1882  
Compliments of Yours Truly  
James R. Van Ness B&T  
Northville  
N. Y.  
U. C. 88

James was a local lawyer

Yours in friendship.  
Harry R. Fulton  
Geneville, New York  
August, 27, 1878.  
By the River  
June 1878



Here's an interesting one from Estelle Resseguie to her friend

**Here are a few more examples**

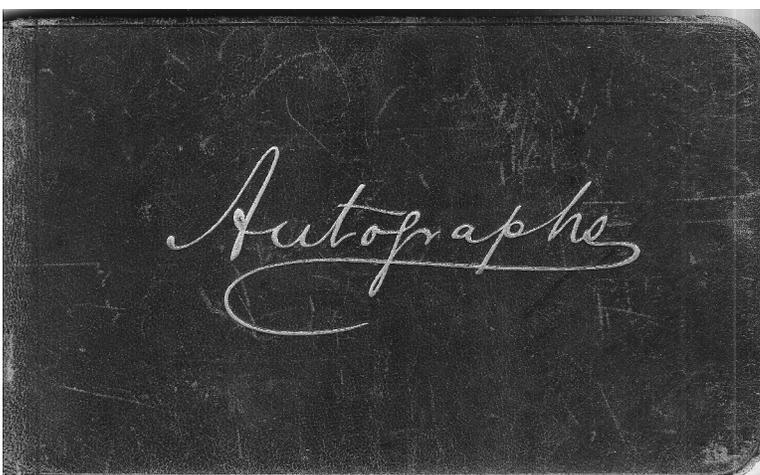
Yours till the ocean wears rubber pants to keep its bottom dry"

I love you, I love you, I love you divine. Please give me your bubblegum, you are sitting on mine.

When hills and vales divide us and you no more I see, pick up your pen and paper and write a line to me.

For something to write, I'm thinking in vain, so I'll give my best wishes and just sign my name.

May bad fortune follow you  
All your days,  
But never catch up with you.



Looking for playbills from the old Rustic theater. Call 863 2628 if you have one to share or to be copied.

Coming soon... historical marker for Sweets Crossing. More information in the next issue of the newsletter.

# MAPLE GROVE

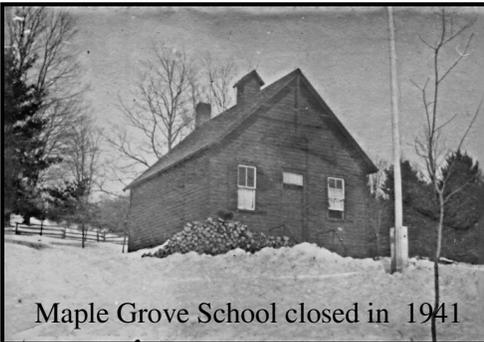
AKA HARDCRABBLE

## MEMORIES OF MATT GINTER AND LARRY CRAMER LIVING IN MAPLE GROVE

(Matt's great grandmother and Larry 's father were brother and sister, so, Matt and Larry are 1st cousins twice removed)

Chatting with Matt Ginter and Jim Groff a few days ago brought back many memories of the area of Maple Grove. I've also heard many stories from my husband about when he lived there. For those who aren't familiar with where Maple Grove is located, it is on route 143 going out of the village, up Northville Hill, past the cemetery, down Grist Mill Hill. Once you've crossed the little bridge over Hunter's Creek you will have arrived in Maple Grove. It is now a dead end road, but years ago it went up over a mountain to Hope Falls. Today, a 4 wheeler or a hiker can still follow the old road to Hope Falls.

There was a school for the local children that lived in the area up until 1941, but most all of Maple Grove was a "play ground"



Maple Grove School closed in 1941



Kids who lived in Maple Grove circa 1915  
Matt's great grandmother (Mae Cramer Olmsted) middle of first row

Unlike today where most kids are on their computers or smart phones, the kids from M. G. were outside all day playing, exploring, inventing things to do. There were many hills to ride down on sleds, homemade toboggans, hand made skippers or skip jacks, homemade skies, cardboard boxes or any other piece of equipment to ride on.



Matt and Larry remember making their own skippers out of half a ski or a barrel stave. You used your feet as out-riggers for balance and to steer. Instead of having a snowmobile, Larry and his cousins made trails and pushed old rocking chairs.

One thrilling ride was coming down Hardscrabble Hill on a toboggan or sled. You had to learn how to make the curves without hitting a tree, a rock, or go flying off into a snow bank. Matt tells of making ramps and racing some of the neighborhood kids down Hardscrabble Hill.

Larry remembers having to bank the first turn by the big rock with boards and snow to even make it on down past the spring where a jump had been built for a good 15 to 20 feet of 'air time'. Sad to say, an old 6 ft toboggan built by Uncle Russ King did not survive the winter.

Larry remembers sledding on the road from the top of Rim Hill up past the Hamilton county line all the way to (Corbett's) bridge at Hunter's Creek, a good 2 miles. The dirt roads (until the early 50s) weren't plowed clean, so hard-packed snow covered the roads and there was hardly any traffic. The Olmstead kids had a big bobsled which would carry 8 or 10 kids, and had a model T steering wheel.

There were many places to explore. The reservoir (water supply to Northville) was one. Kids would hide a paddle and 'borrow' the boat belonging to the village for a ride on the reservoir but never seemed to get caught.



Kids playing at the reservoir

# More Maple Grove Stories

There are ledges to climb on up on the mountain. There was a granite mine up behind Clint Cramer's, to explore, the deep water-filled isinglass mine up past Billy Rue's. where Homer Horton made a slight miscalculation and permanently dunked his car in the mine. It's still there.

Bicycles were a must for fun and transportation to the village. We learned to ride them to town backwards sitting on the handlebars.

As Matt Ginter recalls, he was outside all day, only came home for lunch and supper, there was always something to do. Back in those days if you didn't find something to do, Mom and Dad found something for you to do around the house, so out the door you went for the day.

A lot of camping /sleeping out all summer took place. Larry recalls hardly ever sleeping in his own bed all summer. He and his cousins slept under the trees, in homemade tents, shanties, tree house etc.

There was the old dump across the flats from the Charles Groff/Cramer farm, to find treasures, That's where the kids found old wheels, wood etc to build their skippers, buggys etc.

There was even an airport on "the flats" where Elwin Cramer flew his airplane. There was always a lot of blackberries that they munched on and filled pails for their mothers to make pies



**Here's Larry riding down on one of his home-made buggys.  
And he can still ride a bicycle backwards**

In the summer, go carts to ride on, were made from old odds and end pieces of wood and baby buggy wheels. The kids would ride them down the many hills, very often behind the Cramer grandparent's house. This was steep and strewn with large rocks from blasting the ledge years ago to get granite for tomb-stones and foundations. It was a challenge just to make it to the bottom with buggy and/or body in one piece.

In the summer time they wore out tinkertoys, building cars and trucks and pulling them all over the neighborhood. String from a stick would steer them, One time Larry and Don Olmstead made a cable car with tinkertoys and string from one house across the road to the other house, using the tinkertoy cranks to wind notes back and forth, which took about 5 minutes. Larry tired of cranking, hooked up an old electric fan to it, thereupon turning Don's crank into a blur, and making the crossing in a few seconds.

The kids found it was fun to jump from the loft in Perry's barn into the hay until he threatened to 'horse whip' them. The code word for raiding his strawberry patch was 'pipe'. Monopoly games would go for a week, keeping IOUs and continuing the next night. Cops and robbers was fun in and around Vick Brownell's sawmill. Pieces of wood became 'ships' to be guided down Hunters creek (crick) for half a mile or more. Yes, there were wet feet!

You learned to ice skate on the edges of a running stream, swam in the 'deep hole' back of the mill. We walked around on stilts, some 4 feet from the ground that had to be mounted from the porch railing. Don had one stilt made from a hard maple and the other from a soft maple that bent with every step.

Sounds to me that these kids were never bored and learned to be creative. They may not have had lots of store bought toys, but with a lot of creativity they managed to enjoy being kids. I almost feel sorry for the kids that have so many toys today that has no creativity in them. "Push a button and watch it do whatever".

# SELF GUIDED TOUR OF HISTORICAL BUSINESS BUILDINGS

Many hours and much research has gone into making historical signs for 20 historic buildings. Each sign gives the history of the building with pictures and text. The historic sign is posted on the building or in the window. The tour is sponsored by the NNHS and was conceived through the Community Collaboration Council. Temporary brochures made by NCS students are available while we are waiting for the permanent ones to be completed. Below is an example of one of the historical signs which can be viewed on Main and Bridge Streets.

## LEE ANIBAL'S LAW OFFICE

### Circa 1925



Circa 1925 ..... Prairie Style Building

1925 - 1928 Levi "Lee" Anibal  
Law Office and Insurance

1929 - 1945 Mable Anibal (Lee's daughter)  
Insurance

1945 - 1965 Tracy H. Howard  
Insurance

1965 - 1979 Robert J. Morrison  
R. J. Morrison Complete Insurance

1979 Robert L. & David Morrison  
R. J. Morrison Complete Insurance



Lee Anibal



Lee Anibal's first secretary in his office



Robert J. Morrison



Robert L. "Robin" Morrison  
and  
David "Dave" Morrison



Tracy

Robert J. Morrison, born in Northville, graduated from NCS and Syracuse University, married Imogene Thomas, had 3 sons, was a bomber pilot in the Air Force during WW 2. He was former Mayor of Northville, Commander of the Northville VFW Post and member of the Presbyterian Church and an Insurance agent.



Tracy H. Howard

Tracy H. Howard born in 1888, moved to Northville in 1924. He was a real estate and insurance agent, a World War I veteran, married Julia Partridge. Well respected and active in the community

Tell the World  
about Everything in It

TRACY H. HOWARD

Real Estate and Insurance

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Compiled by Historian G.M.Cramer 2015