

NNHS NEWS LETTER

Northville Northampton Historical Society

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HERO

A person who is admired or idealized for courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities: By that definition, Northville has many hero's. The first ones we think of is our Firemen. They are definitely our hero's. For many years the Northville Fire Department has bravely fought to save lives, our homes, and all of our buildings. The story below is a good example of one of our Fire Chief's brave act of saving the life of a 3 year old boy from certain death. The story is told by the little boys sister, Mary Ann Rhodes Johnson, who is now grown up and recalls the terrifying event.

MUSEUM

The museum is closed until the summer 2022. Everything has been packed up in totes or taken inside the municipal building for the winter. See you next year.

1940

In the small village of Northville, NY on the first floor of an apartment on Second Street (behind what is now *Klippels Kozy Kafe*) lived the family of Arnold and Esther Rhodes. Their first born, daughter Shirley, was born on June 26, 1930, a child of the Great Depression era. She became the gate-keeper of the rest of the Rhodes children, Earl 7, John (Jack) 5, James (Jimmy) 3, and Mary Ann 1, all of which were born in the apartment on Second Street.



Mary Ann

Wednesday October 2, 1940 ended up being a very Depressing Day for Shirley as she began her 8 a.m. ritual of waking up her brothers and sisters for the day. Shirley noticed smoke coming out of one of the bedrooms. She called her mother who immediately got all the children, or so she thought, out of the house. Esther suffered smoke inhalation and heat problems. Once outside, someone noticed Jimmy was not to be found. By this time, Frank Langr, who owned a meat market adjoining the Rhodes house, had noticed the fire as it broke through one of the walls and had turned in the fire alarm. Later Fireman Langr also helped the Rhodes' recover from this devastating loss by providing groceries and support.



Jimmy

When the firemen arrived, the fire was very intense and Fire Chief Loren F. Crannell was informed there was a child missing so he immediately donned a smoke mask, ran into the burning building and found that Jimmy had buried himself in his bed blanket, probably to avoid the smoke, and had rolled out of his bed and was up against the wall where Fire Chief Crannell found him. Grabbing a blanket which he pulled over their heads, he crawled out of the house with little Jimmy. Jimmy suffered from smoke inhalation and shock. Fire Chief Crannell suffered cuts, bruises and inhaled smoke, which bothered his throat the rest of his life. Fire Chief Crannell was truly a hero and the Rhodes family was forever grateful to him



Loren F. Crannell

Years later, Jack Sands, Shirley's husband, purchased a memorial brick with "Fire Chief Loren Crannell Northville NY" engraved on the brick which was placed in the Brick Memorial Park at the Firemen's museum in Hudson, NY

Jimmy, frightened and damaged by the smoke, went to stay with his grandmother Alida Canfield, maybe because his Aunt Rachel Mills who lived next door to Alida, was a nurse. The rest of the family stayed with Bertha and Clarence Resseguie, their aunt and uncle, who had a big house that would hold all 5 of them. Patty, Bertha's daughter, an only child, asked her mother why Mary Ann couldn't live with them as Aunt Esther had a lot of other kids.

Living in the upstairs apartment were Mr. and Mrs. Leon Horton who made it safely out of the building but also lost all their belongings.

The Rhodes family moved to a house on Mechanic Street owned by Arch Dunham and lived there until the house was sold in the early 1960's. Arnold loved living there and said the best thing about it was not the house but the huge garden he could grow to feed his family. None of the kids were happy gardeners as we had to always weed the garden before we could go to the "doins" on the 4th of July. My job was to weed the carrots and if you know anything about carrots, you know that looking at a long row of them it would take forever to separate the weeds from the carrot tops. My solution was to just pull some of the carrots out with the weeds making sure Dad wasn't watching and then I had time to get to the "doins".

MORE HEROS

A Mechanic Street family that helped the Rhodes family recover from the loss of everything we had lost in the Second Street fire was the Chamberlain family. Oscar and his wife owned a grocery-general store on the corner of Mechanic and South Main Street. Whenever they had grocery or merchandise that didn't sell, they would give it to us. I usually got shoes that were too small but I wore them anyway and consequently got bumps on the toes that never went away and I see them everyday and am reminded of what hard times were like.

Dan and Emily Weaver were great neighbors on Mechanic Street and because we didn't have a car, they would always provide transportation to Dr. Durand's office when we had emergencies. One day I had fallen on a broken bottle while playing hide and seek and had a serious cut on my hand and was bleeding quite profusely. Dan took my Dad and me to the doctors in his brand new car in which I had left some blood samples on the new car carpet. He never complained, just said he'd clean it up and besides that, it matched the color of the new carpet, burgundy.

Other neighbors on Mechanic Street helped us get through a devastating and depressing time for us by caring, through contributions and kind words to heal the pain. Besides the Weavers and Chamberlains, there were the Masons, Sauves, Gardners, Rudds, Lados, Hopkins and the Hollearn families.

Arnold and Esther eventually moved back to the north section of Second Street when their Mechanic Street house, which they rented, was sold. They lived there for a few years before Arnold's passing in 1965. Esther remained in Northville for a short time and eventually moved to Groversville and then to Johnstown.

Esther's relatives who belonged to the fire department at the time of the fire, and probably helped with fighting the fire, were: Edward Mills and Gerald Mills. Her brother Clarence was a member of the Broadalbin Fire Dept for 38 years and fire chief for 7. He may have been there too.

Many thanks goes out to these firemen and all firemen who put their lives on the line each time they fight a fire.



10 year old Shirley, the gatekeeper for her siblings



Esther and Arnold with Shirley, Jack and Earl

Newspaper headlines

Mother Saves Four, Fire Chief 5th Child From Burning Northville Home

Mrs. Esther Rhodes fights way through smoke to save 4 of her children before firemen arrives; Fifth has narrow escape

Leader Herald



Esther and children that were home when the first broke out.



Mary Ann

Esther and Arnold had 2 more children;
Carol, and Joan

I'm proud to say that Fire Chief Loren Crannell was my father: Editor



Northville Firemen about 1940

Front row **Far left:** Walt Travis, **Middle:** Loren Crannell and Glenn Duncan. **1st row:** Ed Mills, Ed Mills Jr., Loren Weaver, Elmer Cole, Kenneth Warner, Sonny Hopkins, Orville Murphy. **2nd row:** Charles Duncan, Cab Savage, Bob Hancock, Fred Waver, Arthur Sands, Ted Simonds **3rd row:** John Willard, Howard Dunham, George Fryer, Frank Langr, John Poultney, Harry Groff, and Clark Jewell.

1907 Mail Delivery in Northville

The following schedule was in effect for many years with some seasonable modifications. The first mail left Northville at 6:45 a.m., the next at 1:15, the last at 4:45 p.m.. Incoming mails arrived at 11:40 a.m. and 6:10 p.m.. The post office windows were open for service from 8 in the morning until 8 at night. In the winter sometimes bad storms delayed the arrival of the 6:10 at night and the office remained open to receive and distribute the mail no matter how late the train was. For several years during the 20s, a Sunday mail was received at 12:10 p.m. and the office was open for the one hour after the mail was distributed.

Researched and recorded
by Herbert Corey former Northville Historian

Terry Warner's new book, "Gasoline Filling Stations" is now on sale. Contact Terry or Gail Cramer for your copy. It is a great Christmas gift. It is also being sold at the Northampton Diner.

Price \$15.00

Gasoline Filling Stations Northville, NY



The story of Gasoline Filling Stations, through the years, in and around the village of Northville, NY.
Almost 100% of them are gone, as are their owners.

By
Terry Warner

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN
Our local hunters will soon be "out there"

