



# STEPHENTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January—2021

## The Babcock Family Restored

Like so many “lost arts”, gravestone repair and restoration seems to have fallen by the wayside. Sadly, many of our ancestors’ final resting spots have become harder and harder to locate, many times simply because their markers are illegible or have fallen into such total disrepair that they have all but disappeared. Stephentown is home to over 80 (some say 90) cemeteries, with many stones dating back to the 1800’s and even the 1700’s! Fortunately for us, there are still a few restoration artisans around like **Dave Cummings** who can (and do) step up when the occasion arises. This story is a case in point.

Back in July 2020, a gentleman from Minnesota —Tom Babcock—reached out to the Historical Society’s genealogist, Bill Zimmerman, with a request. Mr. Babcock was looking for someone to restore his family gravestones, which had fallen into severe disrepair. Bill sent the request on to the Town Historian, Patricia Flint, who in turn contacted Dave. Dave is well known to have vast knowledge of gravestone restoration and repair and has done quite a bit of it over the years. Dave reached out to Tom Babcock, and so it began.

There were four main stones requiring Dave’s attention at the Hillside Cemetery. They are Tom’s great-great-great grandparents, John and Almy (Maxson) Babcock; Charity (Tifft) Babcock (John & Almy’s daughter-in-law), married to their son Varnum M. Babcock Sr.); and her daughter Tacy Rowe. Problems ran the gamut: John’s stone had fallen over nearly horizontal, requiring an incredibly careful excavation and then a reset that is now sure and plumb. Charity’s wasn’t as bad—though it was leaning forward, requiring excavation, reset, and cleaning. Tacy Rowe’s stone—a lovely one (see photo) - was in the best shape of all—Dave had only to give it a good cleaning. The real challenge was that of Almy Babcock. Mother Nature had not been kind to Almy’s marker— it was broken into nine pieces scattered around the plot. Dave felt fortunate that he was able to locate all nine before taking them to his workshop at home. He reassembled the pieces and used a special 2-part epoxy for marble, clamping them together (see photo). Once the epoxy was set, the stone was cleaned and then returned to its spot in Hillside Cemetery.

Please see the “before” and “after” photos to really appreciate the scope of Dave’s hard work, dedication and expertise. Once this story is published and the word gets out, I have a feeling that he is going to be very popular and in demand!

## INSIDE

The President’s Annual Report  
Did you know.....?  
Town Historian’s Corner  
Babcock Marker Photos  
Monthly Program Message  
Welcome Package  
Car Wash! And Carrying On  
Facebook  
Refreshment Volunteers  
Dues are Due!  
Veterans!  
Board of Directors  
Support SHS! Become A Member!



### The President's Annual Report

The year 2020 started out normally, or so we thought, with the Board of Directors as follows:

President	-	Beverley McClave	Vice President	-	Arlene Longo
Secretary	-	Ellen Jennings	Treasurer	-	Bill Zimmerman
Corresponding Secretary	-	Laurenne Teachout	Jean Bolen	-	Kat Deen
Alex Haley	-	Isabel Krebs	Alan Stuart	-	Susan Demick

COVID 19 was in other countries and not too concerning. Our meetings continued until March when the world stopped. The seriousness of the pandemic hit everyone and everything was cancelled—the Railroad Exhibit, the Strawberry Festival, the July picnic, and the monthly meetings. We learned safety precaution, and, wearing masks and staying socially distanced, three of us cautiously resumed our work on Fridays. We and our few visitors wore masks and stayed apart. Our bi-monthly board meetings turned to Zoom. This long-distance format allowed us to continue meeting, but it also presented problems for members who had issues with the new technology or lacked the necessary equipment. During this time, the Vice President carried on with her Welcome Bag project for people new to town. The bags contain a box of scenic note cards of historic Stephentown buildings and landscapes; The SHS No. 5 Album; information regarding trades people, organizations, voter registration, town services—approximately 45-50 items in all. Ironically, with the COVID scare, people are moving from crowded cities to more open places like Stephentown. Four gift bags were distributed when we were able to identify the new home owners in town.

Our Town Historian worked tirelessly to honor the American Revolutionary Soldiers from Stephentown. At the annual Veterans Day program, sixteen soldiers were remembered with historic markers from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation that were eventually placed at the six cemeteries where they are interred.

Special thanks go out to Alan Stuart, whose generosity allowed us to hold a fund raiser at the NEW SCRUB BOARD Car Wash. This event was a rousing success and a welcome break from COVID tedium.

Along with the discouraging year of COVID, when it came time to present a slate of officers for the new year, both the office of President and Treasurer could not be filled. At the November board meeting it was voted to keep the current officers in place until June when, hopefully, things will open up and the Nominating Committee can continue its search.

Many protocols had to be overlooked this year because of the extenuating circumstances, but we look forward to a new, healthier, and safer year when we can resume our meetings and gatherings.

Did you know.....??? **CREW BAILS OUT OVER STEPHENTOWN** *Submitted by Bev McClave)*

Shortly after 8 o'clock on the night of February 10, 1945 the crew of an Army AT-11 transport plane bailed out over Stephentown and landed safely except for one broken ankle.

The four man crew was enroute from the Army Air Base in Sioux City, Iowa, to Westover Field, MA. Their radio went out, and the pilot had virtually been lost for three hours, until the gas was nearly gone. With only five minutes of fuel left, and at an altitude of 8,000 ft., the crew parachuted into the Stephentown/Garfield area.

First word of the incident was when the pilot, Lt. Raymond Egan of Holyoke, MA, who landed in a tree, reached the home of Harold Wemple. Pilot Egan walked about two miles to reach the Wemple home. One of the crew landed near the home of Roderick Calder on upper West Street and the other two came down in the vicinity of Harold Rathbun's home. Trooper Earl Hanchett of New Lebanon was the first to reach the Wemple home, accompanied by Gus Johnson of Stephentown. They picked up pilot Egan and drove to the Calder place where they found Lt. Irwin who was the only one injured. The other two crew members were Capt. Winfield Scoville and Lt. Walter Givan. All four of the crew were finally reunited at Doctor Greene's.



## TOWN HISTORIAN'S CORNER

Patricia Flint

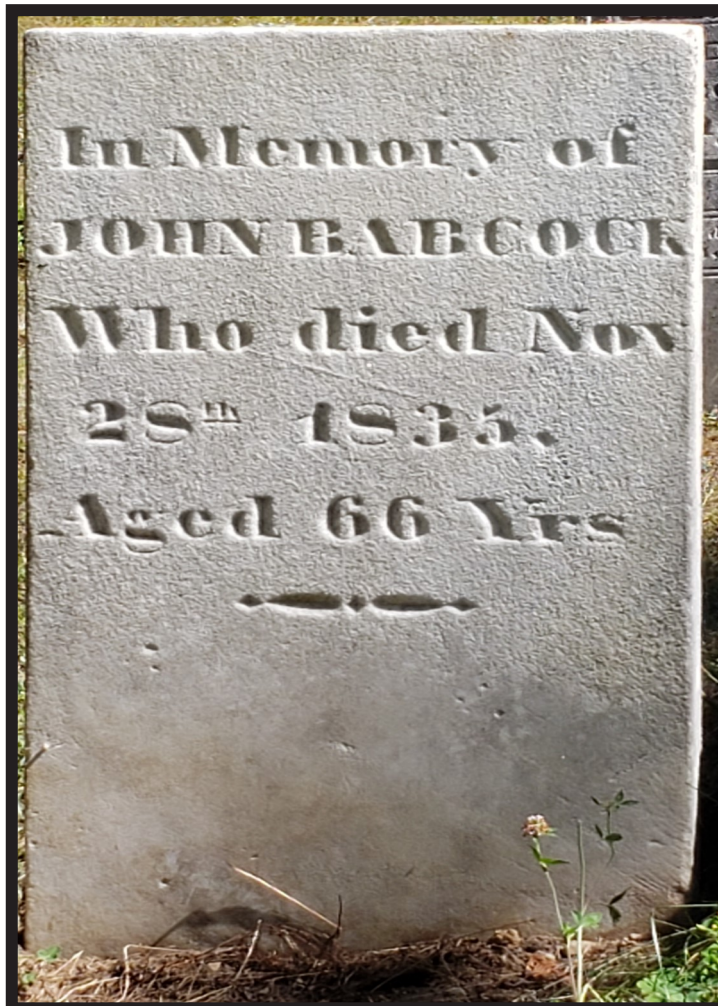
*ROADSIDE MARKERS DEDICATION*

It was an unusually beautiful fall afternoon (72 degrees!) on November 7, 2020 —just perfect for a very special day of celebration. The program began with a Veterans Day commemoration as befitting our local heroes—speeches by town and local officials, veterans, and other dignitaries; the Presentation of Colors and Wreaths by Elizabeth Goodermote (president of DAR) and David Flint (treasurer of SAR) (see photo) to remember our fallen soldiers, as well as veterans past and present; and gun salutes by the Color Guard of the Saratoga Battle Chapter SAR. Once “the smoke cleared”, our Town Historian, Patricia Flint, was introduced. Pat told everyone about a grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation which allowed the town to receive six markers honoring sixteen Revolutionary War Patriots who are interred in six cemeteries throughout Stephentown. The markers were unveiled by Veterans and members of the SHS cemetery committee during the day’s festivities and later placed in their spots. Many thanks to Pat for all of her hard work and dedication that made this happen. We would also like to thank all the others who organized and participated, and attended as well. A special thanks to “Dave’s Market”, who provided the cider and donuts!





## The Babcock Family Restored (continued)





## 2021 Monthly Programs

*Due to COVID-19 we do not have any programs scheduled at this time. As soon as this changes, we will let you know!*

**WELCOME PACKAGES**— Update — We Need Your Help! As you know, letters went out to as many local businesses as we could find, as well as Stephentown groups such as the Fire Department, Library, Boy & Girl Scouts, and Veterans, asking for informational handouts, flyers, coupons, etc. to comprise a “Welcome to Stephentown” package for people new to our town. New folks need to know where to send their kids to school, or where to find someone to fix their plumbing or electrical, or drill a well. Or maybe they want to get involved and meet people—we’ve included all the groups listed above, as well as local churches and groups such as the Heavenly Quilters in town. We’d like to be able to offer menus from local restaurants too, maybe with coupons or discounts for new residents. Information from the Town Hall and our board has been included as well. It’s been a formidable task and we’ve tried hard to include everyone. Unfortunately, we have not been able to include some very important, vital information — that of **contractors, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, excavators and the like**. If you know of anyone who would like to be included or who would benefit from this exposure, please ask them to contact Arlene Longo at [shs@fairpoint.net](mailto:shs@fairpoint.net) or call us at 518-733-6070 and leave a message so we can get back to you. Thank you!

### Carrying On in Difficult Times..... and a Car Wash too!

Due to the pandemic, meeting in person was impossible. Thanks to “Zoom”, the Board of Directors was able to meet every other month and carry on the business of the Heritage Center almost like normal. Granted, there wasn’t much to report, but everyone was kept “in the loop” regarding finances, genealogy, and so forth. The Strawberry Festival had to be cancelled (first time ever!) but, thanks to Trustee Alan Stuart, we were able to hold a fund raiser after all! Alan offered the NEW SCRUB BOARD Car Wash for an event in August—for \$10 you got a squeaky clean—and dry—car (see the satisfied customer below!) and 6 raffle tickets for a 50/50 drawing! Alan and his band of workers were fantastic—they even provided the pop-up tents as well as tables & chairs for the volunteers’ use. Mother Nature held off the rain until the end, so the day was a big success. Many thanks to all involved!!





Did you know that we're on Facebook? If you haven't already, why not check us out? It's a good place to see what's new at the Heritage Center, as well find out the latest on meetings, programs, and other happenings. Also, we like to post old pictures—people, homes, and places—and sometimes we need your help identifying those folks or places. If you have any old photos or interesting stories that you would like to share, give us a call at 518-733-6070 or email us at [shs@fairpoint.net](mailto:shs@fairpoint.net). Be sure to give us a “like”, and we definitely don't mind if you share.

### Refreshments for Programs

The Society is looking for people who would like to help out by bringing a dessert or cheese and crackers to our programs. We do have a few dedicated people who always come through, but we would like to expand this list—that way it's only someone's turn once in a while! AND we'd get to sample everyone's baking skills! Let us know if you can help out.

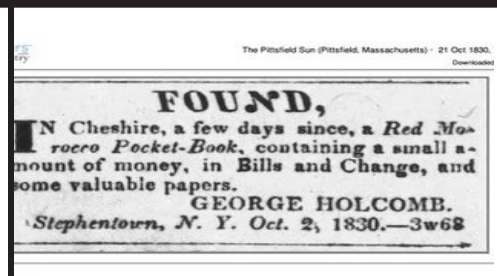


### MEMBERSHIP—Dues Are Due!!

This past year our President, Bev McClave, sent out the annual fund drive letter. This year, however, there was one major difference from past years—this year we did not ask for donations. Instead, Bev recognized that the pandemic has made life difficult for everyone. This year the emphasis was on thanking our members and supporters. Instead of monetary support, Bev asked people to continue to contribute their bottles and cans to our bins at the Stephentown Transfer Station and to keep their membership current. As you are probably aware, the Historical Society is a non-profit entity, completely dependent on its wonderful group of volunteers and supporters. We rely almost entirely on membership dues and donations to “keep the lights on”, pay our bills, and continue with our monthly informative programs and events. Is your membership current? **Watch for the renewal letter! It will be coming out this month. Or—Not a member? — why not consider joining? We've included an order form on the last page for your convenience.** Thank you for your support!!

### LOST AND FOUND!!

Please see the notice on the left! It appears that someone has lost “a Red Morocco Pocket-Book”, and it has been found by George Holcomb. The purse contains a small amount of money, as well as important papers, and as far as we know, the owner has not come forward yet!



**ATTENTION VETERANS!**

For the month of November, the display case at the Stephentown Post Office contained photos of local Veterans. What we discovered was that we were missing a few and that made us wonder who else we were missing. Do we have your photo and information (including branch of the military, the war you served in, and years served) for our Veteran's book? If not, please contact us at 518-733-6070 or email us at [shs@fairpoint.net](mailto:shs@fairpoint.net). Thank you!

**Stephentown Historical  
Society**

4 Staples Road—PO Box 11  
Stephentown, NY 12168

**Email:** [shs@fairpoint.net](mailto:shs@fairpoint.net)

**Website:** [www.stephentown-historical.org](http://www.stephentown-historical.org)

**Phone:** 518-733-6070

Fridays 1pm—4 pm

First Saturday of the Month—10am—2 pm

**Board of Directors**

Beverley McClave

***President***

Arlene Longo

***Vice President***

William Zimmerman

***Treasurer***

Ellen Jennings

***Recording Secretary***

Laurenne Teachout

***Corresponding Secretary***

Pat Flint

***Town Historian*****Trustees**

Kat Deen

Isabel Krebs

Alex Haley

Jean Bolen

**LOOKING TO THE FUTURE!**

Now that 2020 is in the rearview mirror (and good riddance!), we look forward to the return of some sense of normalcy. We want to resume our monthly Sunday programs, we anticipate lots of visitors to the Heritage Center on Fridays and the first Saturday of each month. We can't wait for the Strawberry Festival in the summer, and maybe (hopefully!) we'll be able to offer another car wash, The Antiques Appraisal that we had to forego last year will (again, hopefully) become a reality in 2021. We also anticipate a return to in-person board meetings and so much more. Of course, all of this depends on what happens with COVID-19 and the vaccine rollout. As soon as we know more, we'll let you know.

**DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL  
ADDRESS?**

The easiest and quickest way for us to reach out to our members is by email. If you are a member, have an email address and have not been receiving the SHS newsletters in your inbox, please consider providing us with your information. We promise not to inundate you with a lot of annoying emails—and you can opt out any time you want. We'll be able to keep you up to date on our monthly programs as well, and we can notify you as to cancellations or postponements.

Thank you!

**Genealogy buff?**

If so, check out

[www.stephentowngenealogy.com](http://www.stephentowngenealogy.com)

This site is maintained by Jeanette Otis and contains a lot of interesting information!

And don't forget the SHS website! Visit us at

[www.stephentown-historical.org](http://www.stephentown-historical.org)



**Stephentown Historical Society  
Membership**

**(If you are a current member, a renewal notice will be sent to you.)**

**NEW MEMBERS**

Please complete the form below and return it to:

(Check made out to:)

**Stephentown Historical Society  
PO Box 11  
Stephentown, NY 12168**

**Membership Categories**

Please check one:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Member — \$10.00  | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Member — \$50.00      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership — \$25.00  | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime (Individual) — \$200.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate — \$60.00 |   |

**(Annual Membership is January—December)**

Dues enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Deductible Donation \_\_\_\_\_

**I'd like to volunteer—please contact me: YES [ ]**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

