

News from The Upper Schoolhouse

Spring 2019

The Grindstone Island Research and Heritage Center

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Dear Friends of the Upper (Red) Schoolhouse:

Hello, Spring! I am sure everyone is looking forward to another beautiful season on our beloved Grindstone Island at The River. At the Heritage Center we are very excited to start a new season with friends and family and a fabulous new opportunity! (See below.) We hope our newsletter will get you in the mood for our events and programs.

Most of you are aware of the offer by the Rusho Family to have the Heritage Center purchase the Lower Schoolhouse District #1. We entered into a purchase agreement with the family last summer, and we expect to finalize the purchase this summer. We are indeed grateful to the Rusho family for their wonderful generosity and commitment to saving this important property for its historic value.

We are very excited about this new development and are looking forward to creating a community-based Heritage Museum at the Lower Schoolhouse with artifacts, photos, videos, and programs that are important to the history of Grindstone Island. We invite the entire island to engage with us in shaping the future of this historic site.

We are anticipating an event-filled summer at the Heritage Center. We will kick off the season with the July 4th Mule Parade and family picnic. Decorate your vehicles and yourselves and join us to celebrate our country's history! On July 2nd we will begin our summer program for children that takes place at the Upper Schoolhouse Monday-Thursday, 10-12. All children are welcome, and we recommend a family membership so all can participate.

Last summer the Heritage Center sponsored a successful co-ed coffee at the Upper Schoolhouse, which included many exhibits and photos from the past. We will be scheduling another this summer. Be sure to come check out our oral histories of Grindstone elders, historic slide show and albums of historic news. We now have a digitized list of all the deed transactions on Grindstone from approximately 1840 to 1940! Check out who owned your property going back 100+ years.

And of course we invite you to our annual picnic and auction, our one and only fundraiser, which helps to support our historical work, programming and scholarships. With your support, we offer a fun and educational children's program, provide scholarships for young people with a generational connection to the island, and continue to collect and archive historical items of interest to Grindstoners.

Like many small organizations, our membership donations are the backbone of our funding. We are so grateful to all of you who have included membership in GIRHC as part of your island experience. It continues to be critical to our efforts to preserve island history and share it with the public, so please send back the enclosed envelope with your membership right away!

Thanks to all of you who support our programs, help volunteer when needed, and are committed to assisting us by recognizing the importance of our island's history.

Warm Regards,
Roxane C. Pratten
Board Chair, GIRHC

GIRHC 2019 Calendar of Activities at the Schoolhouse

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| June 29 | 9:00 am-5:30 pm | Boaters' Safety Course Upper Schoolhouse |
| July 1 | 10:00 am-12:00 pm | Children's Program Begins |
| July 4 | 11:30 am | Mule Parade and Picnic, Upper Schoolhouse |
| July 25 | 9:00 am | Co-Ed Coffee Upper and Lower Schoolhouse TBA |
| August 11 | 11:30 am | Picnic/Auction, Upper Schoolhouse |
| Sept 14 | 10:00 am | Board Annual Meeting, Upper Schoolhouse-Public Welcome |



July 4 Parade

Gather your tinsel, flags, and costumes! Join us for the annual 4th of July Parade, starting at 11:30 am followed by a picnic at the Upper (Red) Schoolhouse. Bring your picnic and enjoy island fellowship on Independence Day.



In Gratitude

Ken Deedy: After being welcomed to the GIRHC Board in 2018, Ken Deedy passed away during the summer. Ken may not have been able to work with the Heritage Center for long, but as with every other board he was on, his enduring love for the island rings through all that we continue to do. We will miss his vast knowledge of island history, its families and homesteads, as well as his incomparable spirit.

Cindy Rusho Hagemann: We declare Cindy Extraordinary Volunteer of the Year! Cindy has spent countless hours unassisted this fall and winter bringing GIRHC into the 21st century of social media. She has been the brains and driver of our Facebook page, posting GIRHC news and historic tidbits regularly all winter, boosting our contacts to over 500. Cindy has also updated our web page and set up a Paypal account for us. While that sounds simple, Cindy encountered a major obstacle course, which she overcame with Rusho grit and tenacity. You can now go to our website and pay for memberships, pavers, and make donations through your Paypal account or with a credit card. We also thank Chris Bogenschutz, our web master, who merged Paypal with our website. Be sure to check out our Facebook page at [Grindstone Island Research and Heritage Center](#).

Cindy's mother, Marylou Dunn Rusho, was one of the founders of GIRHC and devoted to the island's history. It was Mary Lou's inspiration that brought the lower schoolhouse into the Rusho family years ago. GIRHC has created a post high-school scholarship in Marylou's name, which is available to children from multi-generational summer families. Now Cindy and her sisters Susan and Cathy, along with their dad Manley, are offering their treasure, District #1 Lower Schoolhouse, to GIRHC to purchase and hold in the public trust in perpetuity.

We are extremely grateful to Cindy Hagemann, who has brought her energy and expertise to the Heritage Center in ways that will help us expand our presence in the greater Grindstone community for years to come. For your vision and tenacity we thank you, Cindy.

Social Media

We are excited to share news about our new social media presence on Facebook. GIRHC is now reaching people through this platform who are perhaps not on the island but have generational ties to it and their families. We are reaching over 500 people on FB, many of whom are now aware of news on the island and are once again tied in to the history of their families and this special place. It has been inspiring to see new people enjoying pictures of their families and homesteads once again. To see what's going on simply search for Grindstone Island Research and Heritage Center and join the group.

News from the Island

Upper Schoolhouse Restoration

The restoration of the Upper Schoolhouse continues as the Town of Clayton and the Heritage Center switches its focus on the exterior of the building. Last spring the installation of the traditional rail fence was started. The next project will be painting the trim and installing gutters and downspouts. Some work on the grounds is also planned.

Genealogy Update

Under the guidance of the History Committee, an interested group of board members met to discuss updating and expanding the genealogy of the Island. Anyone wishing to make corrections or add their family history, please visit our web site at www.grindstoneisland.org and click on genealogy. A printable ancestry chart is now available for your convenience. Upon completion please email to kmotel@verizon.net or send to: Linda Brown, 1075 State St., Clayton, NY 13624. If you have any questions Linda can be reached at either the above email or phone at 315 686 3380.

Cemetery Care

The Town of Clayton is in the process of mapping and identifying individuals buried in the Grindstone Island Upper Cemetery. This project is being managed by Alicia M. Dewey, Clerk to the Supervisor. If anyone has information on unmarked graves in either the Grindstone Island Upper (Thurso) or Lower (Civil War) Cemeteries, please contact Alicia at amdewey@townofclayton.com, phone 315-686-3512 Ext. 20 or Linda at kmotel@verizon.net, phone 315-686-3380. New signs for both the Upper and Lower cemeteries will be installed in the spring through the generosity of the Clayton American Legion, Colon-Couch Post #821, the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion.

Paypal

In an effort to enhance our fundraising efforts GIRHC signed on with PayPal over the winter. You can now go to our website: www.grindstoneisland.org and pay for memberships, pavers, and make donations through your Paypal account or with a credit card. If you still use checks, we welcome them as Paypal does cost us a little money, but we are already seeing extensive interest in using this easy way to donate. We are also hoping to be able to take credit cards at our summer picnic/auction fundraiser so you don't have to remember cash!

Summer Fun



A summer of island exploration awaits Grindstone children ages three and up in July. Teachers Lindsay Bogacz and Jane Riff are returning to lead the children's program at the upper schoolhouse beginning July 1 with plans for a program of fun and learning. This summer the teachers are inviting special guests to explore island history, ecology and culture with the children: Penny Joel will teach about moths and butterflies, Zell Steever will teach about island ecosystems, and Debbie Donaldson will teach square dancing at Dodge Hall, among others.



Cast Your Family in Stone!

The Heritage Center is offering a wonderful way to remember your family or a favorite spot on the island--the Paver Project. We are replacing the worn cement entry at the Upper Schoolhouse with new pavers engraved with names and places that have a special meaning to everyone who buys a paver. Check the website: www.grindstoneisland.org for details and purchase options. \$40 for a 6"x6" and \$60 for a 6x9. We will be closing this offer out at the end of August, and installation should begin fall 2019.

Schoolhouse Scholarship

GIRHC offers scholarships every year to high school graduates who are going on to higher education through college or technical school and who have significant ancestral roots in Grindstone. The scholarships are administered by the Thousand Islands Foundation, an affiliate of the Northern New York Community Foundation. Students may apply through the counseling offices of northern New York high schools, or they can access the information at our web site: www.grindstoneisland.org. For more information contact Brenda Patch, chairperson of the Scholarship Committee at 315-523-0672.

2018 Scholarship Recipients

The Traditional Heritage Scholarship:

Recipient: Connor Jeffers, Graduate of LaFargeville Center School

Attending SUNY Plattsburgh: Studying Global Supply-Chain Management

Direct lineage descendent of a full-time resident (past or present) of Grindstone Island

Father: Jamie Jeffers,

Grandparents: Robert and Bonnie Garnsey Jeffers

Great Grandparents: Harold and Mary Brown Garnsey

Great Great Grandparents: Ernest and Frances Carnegie Brown, Earl and Ina Lindsay Garnsey

Recipient: Owen Ingerson, Graduate of Thousand Islands Central School

Attending LeMoyne College: Studying Biological and Environmental Sciences

Direct lineage descendent of a full-time resident (past or present) of Grindstone Island

Parents: Michael and Lisa Wood Ingerson

Grandparents: Gary and Ellen Aubertine Wood, Larry and Kathy Reinbeck Ingerson

Great Grandparents: Walton and Genevieve Delaney Aubertine, Richard and Mary Dodge Ingerson

Great Great Grandparents: John and Sarah Hanscombe Delaney, Emmet and Nellie Cummings Dodge



The Mary Lou Nunn Rusho Memorial Scholarship:

Recipient: Cortney Evans-Eppolito, Graduate of Thousand Islands Central School

Attending Syracuse University: Studying Exercise Science

Direct Lineage descendent of a multi-generational summer family

Recipient: Cortney Evans-Eppolito

Parents: Paul Eppolito and Jill Evans

Grandparents: John and Betsy Eppolito

Cortney Evans-Eppolito (center) with Roxane Pratten and her mother, Jill Evans

From the Past: *Grindstone Island Upper School, March 4, 1948*

Correspondents - Leonard Garnsey, William Couch, Clyde Garnsey

We are glad to hear that Donald Dano's little brother, Earl, is better and home from the hospital.

There were five on the spelling honor list this week: Leonard Garnsey, William Couch, Erma Slate, Leota Garnsey and Norma Couch.

We have two birthdays to celebrate in school this month: Erma and Marie Slate. We have planned our birthday dinner for Monday, March 8

The deep snow on the ice made traveling to and from Clayton for the high school children and the returning teachers very difficult on Sunday. It was necessary to walk, and follow the men who made new trails, on account of poor spots in the ice.

We have begun a new "Clean Hands" health campaign this week.



Miss Manna's Class, Upper Schoolhouse, circa 1968