



## *September 2024*

*~Carol Schweizer*

Welcome back to Galway Preservation Society as we begin a new program year. Please join us for the September meeting at 7:00PM on September 9<sup>th</sup>, second Monday because of Labor Day. We will begin with a brief meeting to vote on the yearly budget, followed by a film, "Forgotten Crossroads-Vischer Ferry" by James Richmond.

You will find a membership renewal form attached to this newsletter. You may mail your \$10 per household to Galway Preservation Society, PO Box 276, Galway, NY 12074, or bring it to the meeting. The trustees of GPS voted to offer a new, optional category of membership. You may choose to become a Lifetime Member for \$150 and not pay dues again. In addition, the Board is offering a one-month sponsorship of the newsletter for \$50. This may be made in honor of or in memory of a person of the donor's choice.

In keeping with our GPS goal to help preserve local history, I encourage anyone to write a memory of life in Galway or the area to share in future newsletters. We love to read of other's memories of days gone by. You may recall school days, forms of recreation or play, jobs held, or reflections of people who played an important role in your life. Let your imagination guide you to a topic of your choice. Do not be afraid. Give us a heads up if you want us to include an article from you.

Hope to see you on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00PM, Galway Town Hall.

## *Are You Ready for School?*

*~Bonnie Donnan*

Are you ready for Back to School? The title of the email made me want to edit this sentence that treated the phrase "back to school" like it was a holiday. The email was an ad to sell pencils, crayons, note paper, folders, and the latest design of sneakers.

My own beginning experience with school was in the brick building, now gone, on East Street in Galway Village. Mrs. Follett, my teacher, had a corner room on the east side of the building, while Mrs. Irwin had another kindergarten class in what used to be the gym.

Our room felt huge to me. We had tables, rather than desks, and sat in small groups. In one corner a wall of brick-printed cardboard building blocks corralled a few toys and a tricycle. The floor was a lighter color with a darker tile framing a box pattern on the floor. The corners of the box had simple geometric shapes, a circle, a triangle, examples for simple lessons.

One feature, my favorite, was an elevated sandbox, built into a table. All the fun of a sandbox at standing height! We molded imaginary landscapes, roads, valleys. We did not get to take the big cover off the table very often, and it was a treat when we saw the table being cleared of books, papers, toys, to transform it from utilitarian to delightful with the lifting of the lid.

My least favorite kindergarten activity was nap time. We had little dark blue, metal framed, cots. All kinds of great stuff to do, and a compulsory nap! Mrs. Follett took advantage of this quiet time to put her chair among us and do paperwork. As she wrote in her book, she kept looking up and checking on us. I pretended to be asleep because I thought it counted in our grade.

When we went outside for recess, we could see other kids down the hill behind the Galway Town Hall and garage, where the Lions building/pantry and Galway Emergency Medical buildings are now. Classes were also being held in the Methodist church in the village. I stayed in the East Street building through first and second grades with Mrs. Cumminings, and third grade with Mrs. Hathaway. Fourth grade was in a wing of what is now the high school with Mrs. Capasso. Fifth grade was in the brand-new Joseph Henry Elementary with Mrs. Pilon, as was sixth grade with Mrs. Booth.

When the old East Street school was being torn down, I walked over to look at what was left. The walls had been knocked down toward the back of the building, exposing the floors. I recognized the pattern of the linoleum tiles, the black square with the simple shapes in the corners. The room was so small! What had seemed generous enough for tricycle riding was tiny!