

Newsletter
of the
Fabius Historical Society

No. 22

February 2012

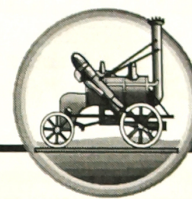


CHARLES SHEA
1917-2012

Pictured in "Dress Blues" in May, 1982

A Newsletter from the
Fabius Historical Society

PO Box 27 FABIUS, NY 13063



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Everyone,

What a nice fall we've had this year in the Fabius area, extending right through Christmas! The decent weather provided me with time to remove all of the vegetables from my garden, and the flower bulbs have been dug up and stored in my basement.

The "work" I do for the Fabius Historical Society brings me pleasure. I have enjoyed talking to or meeting people for the first time who have a connection to Fabius.

A resident of Skaneateles, Jim Dougherty, offered a genealogy packet of information on the Heffernan family to the FHS. Remembering that my classmate Pat Steves Bowen's mom was a Heffernan, I called Pat. Sure enough, after Jim and Pat talked, they realized that they are second cousins. A good meeting of the relatives was held in late July with more meetings following into the fall. It's so nice to see people sharing what they have researched.

Then there were phone calls and e-mails from Eric King in Tallahassee, Florida, who was researching a relative who had been a soldier in the Civil War. After looking at our website, he called to say that it was fantastic. It had so much more information than other historical societies' websites that he had viewed. (A big thank you goes to Bill and Joanne Casey for making the FHS website so exceptional.)

The FHS dance held on August 27th was enjoyable. A couple from Cortland stole the show. They were dressed elegantly, and they were the highlight of the evening. They danced almost every dance. When they quit for the evening, everyone else decided to leave, also.

The Election Day food sale was more successful than I thought it would be (\$287). Quite a few people came to vote. Many people stopped at our table, looked at our variety of foods, and either bought or donated money to our organization. Next year we hope to have more in our selection for people who are diabetic or can't have gluten. Thank you to all who volunteered to help in one way or another.

I want to thank everyone who has given me guidance or helpful information while I am president. I greatly appreciate all of the work that the other board members do to make our society a successful organization. We have another year of great programs scheduled by Chuck Kutscher and hope that you will join us at the Fabius Community Center and bring along a friend or two.

Sandy Beglinger

Check out websites: FHS www.fabiusny.org
Town of Fabius www.fabius-ny.gov

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Reminder: FHS Membership dues are due by Jan. 1st of each year. Membership contributions are the major source of income for the FHS. Unless you become a member, you will not receive future newsletters. Please complete the enclosed membership form. If you are current with your membership please pass on the enclosed membership application and encourage others to join. If you would like an email version of the newsletter, contact Bill5308@aol.com.

WANTED

The Fabius Historical Society is looking for a Webmaster to assist in our efforts to maintain a Web presence. Currently a shared effort, we are looking for a person to take on this responsibility. Web editing skills are a plus but on the job training is available. If interested contact Bill5308@aol.com.

YOUR TOSS IS OUR LOSS

With Spring Cleaning almost upon us, please keep in mind that the Fabius Historical Society is a great depository of valuable information and artifacts relating to our Fabius area. We are interested in old obituaries and photos of Fabius residents, photos of homes and homesteads, family genealogies from family collections or scrapbooks for FHS Collection. If you have such items and are willing to allow us to make photographic copies of them, please contact Bill Casey at Bill5308@aol.com or 683-5674 & leave message.

The FHS will also be set up to copy images again this year at the Memorial Day Observance at the Fabius Community Center.

FHS PROGRAM LINEUP

**All Meetings are at the Fabius Community Center
Main Street, Fabius, NY**

We try hard to bring you a variety of programs every year and this year is no exception. Please come and join us. The refreshments are great and people really enjoy talking with friends and neighbors. All programs are at the Fabius Community Center. We are always looking for new ideas and new people for future programs. We appreciate your support and your attendance. See you at the meetings.

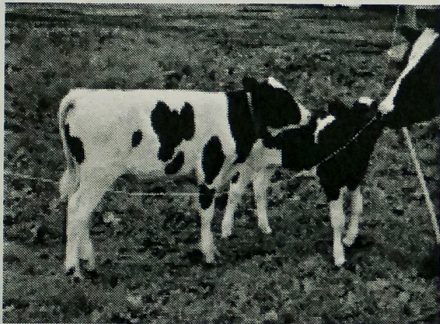
Chuck Kutscher kutscher@gatling.us 683-9480

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Here are our scheduled programs for the Fabius Historical Society for 2012. Please note that the Winter/Spring program schedules are for Saturdays at 1PM.

Sat. Mar. 3, 1 pm. Martin Sweeney, Homer Town Historian will chat about his book, A GIFT FROM HOMER, NEW YORK: A PAINTER, AN EDITOR AND A DETECTIVE. These three men formed a link between Abraham Lincoln and the the Homer area. This is a little-known relationship and will reveal some interesting stories about this area back in the mid-1800s time period.

Mon. Apr. 2, 7 pm. Harvey Skeeel will again lead a group of local farmers telling us about the challenges and opportunities of farming in our area over the years. Over time we have moved from rather small family farms to very large, what some might call factory farms, because of the changing conditions farmers had to respond to. This group of men will tell their stories.



Mon. May 7, 7 pm. Don Edwards is well known for his career in local radio and TV broadcasting, military service and university teaching. Now in "retirement" he keeps busy learning about local historical events and writing plays based on these events. The great wordsmith turns out some interesting plays which enlightens us on some local historical information. His latest play involves a teacher serving students well, but challenged by a curmudgeon superintendent who tries to dismiss her.

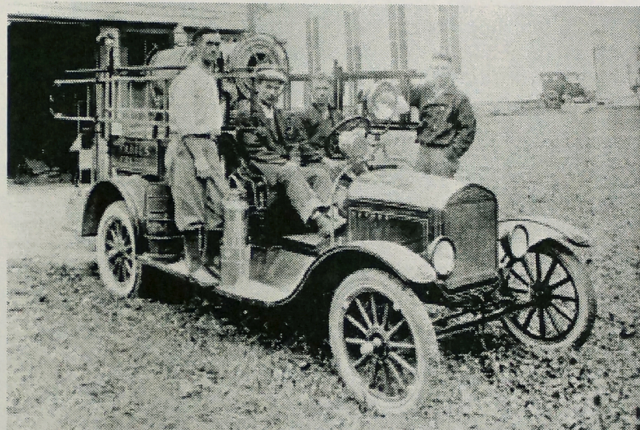
Mon. June 4, 7 pm. Open

Mon. July 2, 7 pm. Jane Tracy, Town of Onondaga historian, comes to tell us about an Onondaga county building to which we have not paid much attention -- the "poor house." There was a time when the county's most vulnerable citizens were given food and shelter in this structure. Come and learn the history of the Onondaga County Poor House, what happened to it and when.



Four stone buildings (left to right): Poorhouse addition (erected 1854), First Poor House building (erected 1827), first Insane Asylum (1860), Second Insane Asylum (1868).

Mon. Aug. 6, 7 pm. We are proud to announce the long-awaited presentation of the history of the Fabius Fire Department. We owe so much to these dedicated men and women who protect us so well. The Fire Department has worked to collect information and artifacts of this colorful history and someone from the department will present this program. Come to learn and to thank them for their service.



The Fabius Fire Department and their new truck. The firehouse was then located to the west of the Baptist Church and housed two jail cells above.

Mon. Sep. 10, 7 pm. Steve Jones of Cortland, NY and Naples, Florida will present a program on the history of music. During Steve's long career he has been a teacher, band director, performer and director of choral music. He has an excellent singing voice. Steve will share the history of music from the American Revolution through the 1900's with his vocals.

Mon. Oct. 1, 7 pm. Pat Finnegan will come to discuss her research on the linkage between Winston Churchill and this area. Churchill's grandfather was Leonard Jerome who moved to New York City and prospered. His daughter, born there, moved to England, married Randolph Churchill, Winston's father. Come and learn how all this happened.

Mon. Nov. 5, 7 pm. Open

Mon. Dec. 3, 6 pm. ***Please Note Time Change***
Our annual banquet and business meeting will be held at an early hour. Bring a table setting, a dish to share and come and enjoy the good company. A musical program is planned.

BY "GLENER," A VISIT TO FABIVS IN 1881

Entering Fabius village, formerly Franklinville, and incorporated more than a year ago, we drove up the back street and down Main, striving to let none of its characteristics escape our observation. The streets are good and well shaded, the dwellings nicely painted. Four churches are sustained in the place at the present, namely, Methodist Episcopal, Closed Communion and Free Will Baptist, and the Roman Catholic. The latter's edifice was formerly the Universalist Church. There is a good school building wherein three teachers in winter and two during the spring and summer train the young ideas. There are two hotels, three general dry goods stores and groceries combined, two groceries, a five cent store, a drug store, two hardware stores, two harness shops, one shoe shop, one wagon shop, three blacksmith shops, and over one hundred dwellings. We were creditably informed that there are three resident



clergymen, three physicians, one veterinary surgeon, three milliners and six dressmakers. The Little Warrior Mowing Machine Company has a repair factory at the east end of the hamlet, and at the west end a good cheese factory is sustained. The Royal Templars of Temperance have a lodge of about thirty members and the Grand Army of the Republic a post there.

On the road leading southeast from the east part of the village toward Keeney Settlement is where the Pettits once resided. Hon. George Pettit, the father, represented this district in the Assembly in 1824 and in '35 and '37. His son, John U. Pettit, graduated At Union College, studied law with Hon. Daniel Gott at Pompey Hill and settled in Wabash, Indiana. He served in the capacity of US Minister to Brazil for several years, and soon after his return was elected from the eleventh district of that state, Indiana, to the 34th, 35th and 36th Congress, discharging his duties with credit to himself and fidelity to his party, his principles and his constituents. Later in life he was elected to the office of Judge of the Circuit Court of his adopted state. Milton Pettit, his brother, was at the time of his death Lieut. Governor of Wisconsin. The late Orin Aylworth, Member of Assembly in '59, was a life-long resident of this village. Hon. T G Younglove, of Sarasota County, Member of Assembly in 1866, when he was Chairman of the Committee on Insurance Companies and a member of the Committee on Internal Affairs of Towns and Counties, and in '69 Speaker of the Assembly; was a resident of Fabius from the age of three to twenty-one years.

The main street of Fabius is part of what was long ago the Third Great Western [or Skaneateles-Hamilton Tpke.], as it was chartered in 1802 and finished in 1807. We left Fabius village at the west end, keeping on the turnpike. The sullen swamps on either side of the road and the slaughter house in the midst are so near the village that it is not at all surprising the place was fearfully ravaged by diphtheria three years ago. After emerging from the swamp lands, the beautiful hill stands clearly in view rising abruptly from the Truxton road at its base. One would never tire studying its graceful slopes, the exquisite cresting of the forest and the varied tints of its leaf garniture.

The first road at right angles with the turnpike is the Truxton road, leading from Chenango Forks, through Butler's Hill, now Pompey Hill, to Salt Point. There we turned toward home and after passing three farm houses the highway is most abominable, little traveled and the broken bridges render it really unsafe – not a redeemable trait in it until after passing the cross-road on which the saw mill is located, when travel is good again. This highway lies along the hill side for miles, the higher rise on the west obstructing the vision, but to the southeast and east the view is remarkably fine; the verdant grass with all its matchless blending of tint, the sky with its infinite shades of blue, the clouds of fleecy white, those grand hills, the village half revealed, half concealed at the base, the tranquil water of the mill-pond reflecting the azure heavens, forests and trees, shrubs and thickets scattered irregularly over all and large herds of cattle here and there added much to the pastoral scene.

After a time we passed the late Ira Jerome homestead, the birthplace of one of Michigan's eminent men. I refer to Hon. George H. Jerome, Superintendent of Michigan State Fisheries. The little red schoolhouse on the knoll at the foot of the hill has a decided advantage in location above most country schoolhouses of the kind and here are pleasant shade trees; in general, country schoolhouses stand unprotected alike from sunshine and shower on the bleakest most desolate corner. There Hon. G H Jerome and Rev. Hiram C Hayden, whose sermons are frequently published in religious weeklies, learned their a's and b's.

The John C Jerome homestead is near the opposite corner with the magnificent elm just outside the lawn which was described to you in the third part of 'One Afternoon in June' two years ago, likewise the scenery and history of the remainder of the way over which we drove on this more recent ride."

ADDITIONAL FACTS

Teachers (3)

The 1880 Fabius Census listed the following teachers: Milford Hamilton, Mary Persons, Lillian Clark, Orson Bugbee.

Hotels (2)

1. The Cushing Hotel, a historic Fabius hotel and tavern with its Doric columns and fancy gallery on top, was located on the northeast corner of Main and Smith Streets and was destroyed by fire in 1945. The upstairs contained a ballroom for parties and movies.
2. The Franklin House was operated by Albert Skeel in the 1850's and Charles Andrews in 1860. It went through a foreclosure sale as the Smith Hotel in Mar. 1878. This hotel may have been the one located on the present site of the Fabius Fire House.

(Note: the 1880 Fabius Census listed the following hotel keepers: William Keeney & Ira Smith)



Cushing Hotel on right and Elmore Wheaton Store (MG Shea's) to its left.

General Dry Goods Stores & Groceries (3)

1. *Elmore Wheaton operated the store which would become the M G Shea store on the corner of Main and Smith Streets.*
2. *William Bush operated a general store next to the Shea home at corner of Main and Keeney Rd. He extended the front out to the sidewalk, adding on a large hall and upstairs rooms that were used for social purposes ("Citizen Club" reading room, pool tables and party rooms) and named his building "Bush's Block." This store would eventually become the Carleton Hamilton IGA Store.*
3. *Edgar Thomas operated his store, later known as Rudd's Store, at the corner of Main & Pompey Streets.*

Groceries (2)

1. *Delos Johnson operated a store to the west of the MG Shea Store where Robert DeMore had his law practice.*
2. *Alfonso Brown operated a grocery store on the corner of Main and Mill Streets, later operated by Sam Gallinger, Mr. Haller, Mr. Lahey, Mrs. Elizabeth Demong (Fred Demong's mother), then the Fabius Grill.*

Drug Store (1) *The Thayer Drug Store was a small building that was located between the present Fabius Fire House and the old Baptist parsonage on Main Street.*

Hardware Stores (2)

1. *Lewis & John Bramer (son) operated out of the later "Fabius Hardware" to the west of the Shea home, Main Street.*

Harness Shops (2) *The 1880 Census lists as harnessmakers: John Stewart and Wolcott Justice*

1. *The 1874 Fabius Village map shows a harness shop to the west of Robert DeMore's house on Main Street.*
2. *To the west of the Wolcott Justice home (east of the CW monument, formerly the Thompson home) was located the second harness shop.*

Shoe Shop (1) *John Gilbertson employed 2-3 workers and made 180 pairs of boots and 96 pairs of shoes in 1880. A skilled craftsman earned \$1/day and a regular laborer earned \$.75/day. (William Gilbertson, Daniel Monfort, David Porter, Allen Spafford were listed as shoemakers in the 1880 Fabius Census).*

Wagon Shop (1) *Ansel Ellis (Ela Boss, Oscar Barnes & Benjamin Bramer, workers)*

Blacksmith Shops (3) *The 1880 Fabius Census listed the following as blacksmiths: William Estes, George Way, Ezra Goodrich, David Cheeseboro, and Sylvester Couch (Fabius tinsmiths: Lewis Bramer and Thomas McEllegott).*

1. *One shop was located behind the M G Shea Store, west side of Smith Street.*
2. *A second shop was located on the southwest corner of Main and Mill Streets where the new "Blacksmith Shop" is now located.*
3. *The third shop was located on the present Elementary School property "two lots west" of the ME Church.*

Resident Clergymen (3) *ME: Horatio Gates; Bap.: Milton Negus; Ira Day*

Physicians (3) *Dr. Lorenzo Heffron, Dr. Milford Pine and Dr. Joseph Ferry*

Veterinary Surgeons (1) *Dr. Samuel Crowhurst*

Milliners (3) *Clara Mason (bonnetmaker), Harriet Ellis and Mary Hulburt (bonnet trimmers)*

Dressmakers (6) *Ellen Fox, Beulah Billings, Mary Brown, Kate Ryan, Mary Ryan, Abigail Nye, Mary Justice*

Repair Factory (1) *Little Warrior Mowing Machine Co. (Bennett & Bramer employed 5 hands, year round, in their agricultural machine shop, powered by one steam boiler engine producing 10 horsepower). The factory was located to the east of the June house.*

Cheese Factory (1) *is located on the west end of town.*

Saw Mill (1) *William Johnson's, located NW of Knapp's farm, used water-power from the creek with 8 foot "height of fall" to drive his three 8ft center-discharge wheels for power to run his sawmill at 200 revolutions/minute, and reaching 20 horsepower. At one time broomsticks were made at this mill.*

Slaughter house: *Frank Partridge, owner, slaughtered 7 hogs, 49 sheep, 94 beef during 1880 with the labor of 1 worker. This operation was located on the west end of town, just to the east of the cedar swamp on the north side of the present Rte. 80. (Butchers in the village included: Schubel Brown, Charles Wright, Deforest Stockham and William Brown, with no known connection to the slaughterhouse.)*

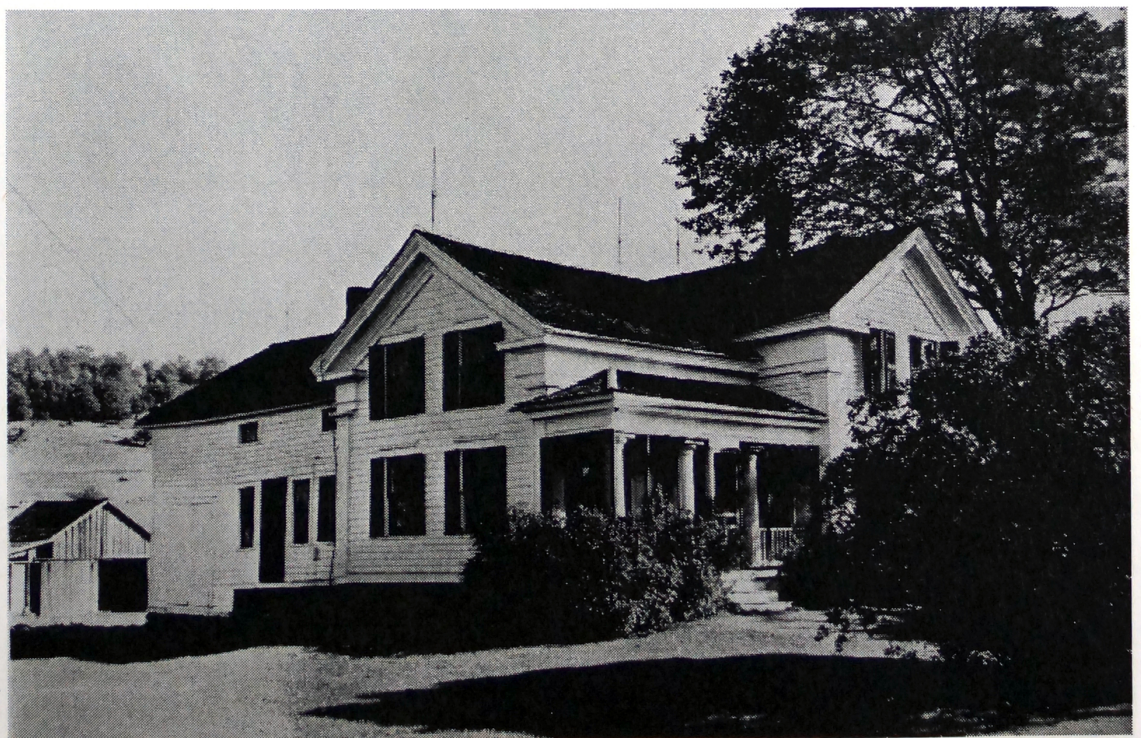


The above photo is of the home that we now refer to as the Michael Shea/Mary and Fred Demong residence. In the above photo, members of the Johnson family are posed in front of the home, which they later sold to Mike Shea about 1910. The original image of this photo was restored by Denise Demong, duplicated and shared among family members. This photo was donated to the FHS by Charles Shea.

WANTED: PHOTOS OF OLD FABIUS HOMES

The farmstead home of Edmund and Ann Quinlan Shea on Vincent Corners Road. This farm is presently owned by Chip Engst.

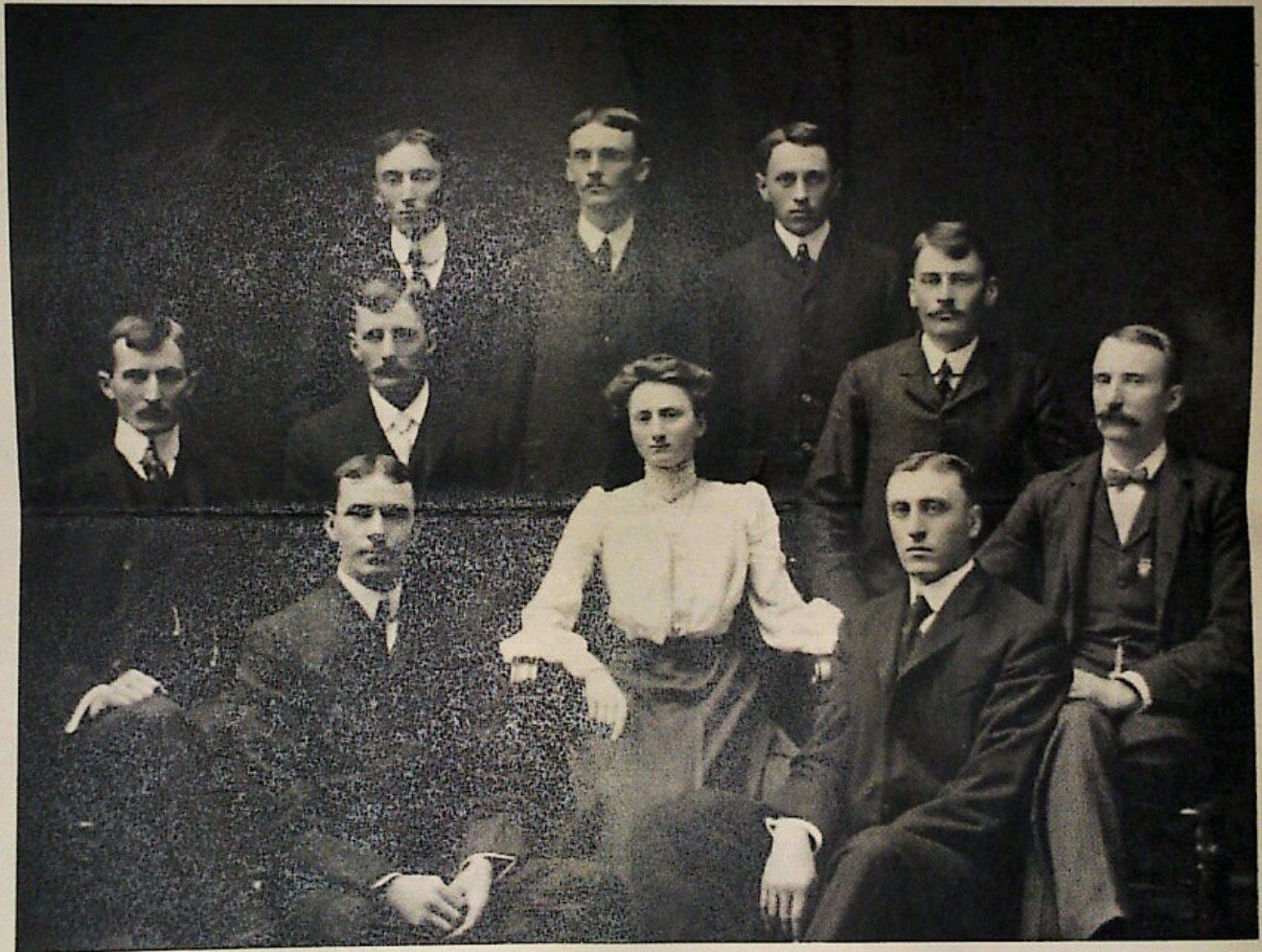
This photo courtesy of Harry Hale of Pompey.



THE SHEA FAMILY

With the passing of Charles Frances Shea on 6 January 2012, the Fabius community is witnessing the last of the Shea family.

"Shea" has been a prominent name in Fabius, as at one time three different unrelated families of Sheas lived here. Edmond, the grandfather of Charles Shea, was born in County Tipperary, Ireland on 1 Nov. 1832 (death certificate) or 1834 (tombstone). He arrived in America and was offered employment placing logs in the roadbed for the Hamilton-Skaneateles Turnpike. He later purchased the Shea farm on Shea Road, which is the present Engst farm on Vincent Corners Road. Edmond married Annie Quinlan and they had twelve children. The photo below was shared by Leo Demong and shows the ten Shea children who survived to maturity.



Steven, farmer	Joseph, farmer/carpenter	John, lawyer	Robert Emmet, school teacher	
	Dennis, farmer	Mary	Michael George, grocer, supervisor, etc.	Thomas, farmer
	James A., educator		Edward F., lawyer	

The two girls, Julia (who died at about age 12) and Annie, are not pictured.

Michael George Shea, the 9th child, was raised on the Shea farm and attended public school, later teaching a year or two in the area schools, one of which was at Cowles Settlement. He worked on the family farm until leaving to operate a retail store within the village of Fabius. He married Jessie Saunders and they had three children, Florence Agnes b. 1911, Mary Lucille b. 1914, and Charles Frances b. 1916.

Mike was active in local politics, the school systems, Onondaga County government, and a principal proponent in the establishment of Highland Forest. Charlie would tell that his father toured fellow town supervisors through what was to become the Park, and they responded that "if Mike could get them out of this wildness, they would support his Highland Park." A tall, handsome man, Mike was also a philosopher, realtor, auctioneer, notary public, and town supervisor.