



The Lyme Light

A publication of the Lyme Community Foundation,
to inform the people of the Town of Lyme

November 2018

www.lymecommunityfoundation.org

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The Remarkable lives of Rudolph and Lilly Haas

By Margaret Brennen

If you're over 50 and you grew up in Lyme or Cape Vincent, you probably have a story about Dr. Haas. There's a good chance he stitched you up, gave you a shot, or delivered you.

Seventy years ago my mother spent a cold day outside collecting maple sap. In the middle of the night she developed bronchitis and couldn't breathe. Her mother called Dr. Haas in a panic; he quickly drove down to the Cape and treated mom. As he left the farm, he scolded my grandmother for letting her daughter spend so much time in the cold in a dress. "Never with naked knees!" he said in his thick German accent.

Rudolph Haas was born 1898 in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The town of his birth is in the modern-day Czech Republic, near the border with Poland. As a teenager, he had to travel to school in the next town each day by stagecoach. However, his secondary education was cut short by the eruption of World War I; he finished his graduation exams early and was immediately drafted. By 1915 he was a rifleman in the trenches on the Russian front.

When Bolsheviks overthrew the Czar, Russia withdrew from the war, so Rudolph was transferred to the Italian front. As it became clear that the war was near its end, Rudolph decided that he'd better plan a career. **(cont'd on page 6)**



(Rudolph and Lilly Haas; Vienna, fall 1933. Photo: Steven Haas)

Fall & Winter Programs at the Copley House

By Lyme Light Committee

A number of new arts and craft programs have filled the Lyme Community Foundation calendar in November. The new programs cover painting, dance, crafts and will be held at the Copley House in the coming months. This comes after an increase in outreach by Programming Committee members Kathleen Carr and Julie Putam-Maitag. **(continued on page 9)**

From the President . . .

Wow we went from summer to fall so quickly and it reminds me that I am not quite ready for the cold temperatures to arrive. I have to admit that I do love putting on my PJ's as soon as I get home from work and cuddling up next to the fire and watching Hallmark movies. I feel like it is my time to escape and it forces me to slow down from the hustle and bustle of everyday. I know there are plenty of you out there that do the same thing but hate to admit it. Isn't it great?

The Lyme Community Foundation would like to take the time to thank each and every one of the volunteers who helped to make this year's haunted house such a success. We could not do it without all of the students at Lyme Central School. The students rock!! It is always so much work but being able to scare hundreds of people is so much fun and really does bring the entire community together. Now that the haunted house is over it is time to move on to our next large event, which is our annual Holiday House Tour. We hope you will all join us for a wonderful evening on December 8 to tour beautiful homes and get into the holiday spirit.

Hoping you and your family all have a wonderful Thanksgiving!!

Deanna Lothrop, LCF President

Christmas Food Pantry Program

By Joan O'Brien

Applications will be taken every Saturday from November 3rd to December 8th, 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. at the Chaumont Presbyterian Church.

NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE TAKEN on November 24th

Requests after December 8th will need to be made through CAPC in Watertown 315-782-4900 or the Salvation Army 315-782-4470.



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Your story lives on...

LYME LIGHT DUE DATES

Please send any articles, news items, events, etc to
lymelightnews@gmail.com,

December 2018 issue: by Wed Nov. 21
January 2019 issue: by Wed. Dec. 19



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315-649-2240
 Happy hour
 Specials 4-6 pm

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***Dance Lessons at
 the Copley House***

Dance World of Watertown has started classes at the Copley House, which include ballet, jazz and hip hop. Tap will be added if there is enough interest.

Classes are held Fridays at 4PM.

Elementary school children grades K-6 are welcome to attend. Ballet slippers are available for sale.

Cost is \$30 per month plus a \$5.00 registration fee. Please note that the next class will be held on **Friday November 30** to accommodate holiday and vacation time.

For more information contact Kathie Carr:
kacarr140@gmail.com, 315 778-3672

Lyme Free Library



Thank You Lyme Garden Club!

Thank you for your continued maintenance of the library garden. The club did an amazing job this year – the gardens have never looked better!
A special thanks to William Long at Oak Tree Farm Greenhouses at Doctore's Greenhouses in Dexter for the beautiful mums!



Victorian Holiday Dinner Fundraiser at The Library

'Tis the season for Mirth & Merriment! You are cordially invited to a Victorian Holiday Dinner presented by Cathy Gallagher owner of the Cottage Bakery & Desserts By Design. Held the second of December at five o'clock in the evening at The Lyme Free Library in Chaumont. Hors d'oeuvres, Hot Wassail and Iced Cranberry Punch will be served, followed by a buffet dinner to include Roasted Loin of Pork with Sauces, Glazed Carrots with Walnuts, Roasted Potatoes, Various Festive Side Dishes, Breads, and Muffins & Rolls with Savory Butters. After dinner, guests will enjoy a Holiday-Inspired Mini-Dessert Buffet. Tickets are available at the library - \$40 per person or \$75 per couple. Snow date is the ninth of December.

Feel free to bring your own holiday cheer!
Please join us in celebrating this Joyous Christmas Season.



Story Time every
Wednesday at 11am.
Stories, crafts & fun!



Journey Into Outer Space Introduction to the Solar System

For children in grades 2 to 6. Take a journey into outer space where you can learn about our solar system, sun, planets & constellations. Weather permitting, we will conclude the class with a viewing through a telescope.

Presented by John & Judy Rusho.
Please call the library at 315-649-5454 to register.
Friday, November 16th at 6:30. Free.



Holiday Canvas Painting Party For Kids

November 14th at 6pm
Limited number of spots.
Free.
Please call the library at
315-649-5454 to register.



Holiday Books For Children

Each year the library collects new children's books for children ages 1 to 16 to be distributed through the food pantry during the holiday season. All books must be new and dropped off at the library before December 8th. Over 2500 books have been distributed in the past due to the generosity of community members. We appreciate your support of this worthwhile program.



Lyme Garden Club Notes

November comes

*And November goes,
With the last red berries
And the first white snows.*

*With night coming early,
And dawn coming late,
And ice in the bucket
And frost by the gate.*

*The fires burn
And the kettles sing,
And earth sinks to rest
Until next spring.*

~Elizabeth Coatsworth (1893–1986)

Hopefully by now your gardens are put to bed for the winter. It's time to turn your attention to your indoor plants. I know my houseplants get seriously neglected over the summer. Like outdoor plants, houseplants require the proper care to stay healthy and keep a steady growth. Not sure if your houseplants need repotting? Check the root systems. If the roots are circling the inside of the container, it may be time to repot the plant. If the plant has outgrown its pot you can transplant it into a slightly larger container with fresh soil. All houseplants look better with regular grooming. Dust collects on leaves, so wash them

with a gentle shower of room-temperature water or dust them with a soft brush if the plants have hairy leaves. This improves the plant's appearance and keeps the leaf pores unobstructed so that the plant gets more light. Also remove any dead or diseased leaves. All houseplants have slightly different watering requirements depending on how they are grown and changes in plant growth through the seasons. Therefore, it's best to water on an as-needed basis. Overwatering is one of the most common causes of houseplant death. If you're not sure how much to water, it's better to err on the dry side than to give your plants too much moisture. Most houseplants put on a growth spurt in spring and summer. This is the best time to fertilize them. During the short days of fall and winter, most houseplants need little, if any, fertilizer. (www.bhg.com)

If you're new to the area and are interested in gardening, please join us in May for our first Lyme Garden Club meeting for 2019 (watch the Lyme Light for dates). If you have any questions or ideas for activities next summer, contact our lymegardenclub@earthlink.net (our steering committee). Lastly, mark your calendars for the Lyme Garden Tour, June 29, 2019.

Lyme Heritage Center Books

The Lyme Heritage Center has some suggestions from our large selection of locally themed books that would serve nicely as Christmas gifts for anyone interested in local history. We suggest:

1. Ernest Cook book 6 in which he records interviews with local elders who talk about the Copley family and events in Chaumont and Point Peninsula (\$10)
2. Point Salubrious 1802 - 2006 by Clara Van Doren (\$25),
3. The Historical Journal of John Bedford (\$25),
4. Schermerhorn Park Memories by Frank Schermerhorn Silver (\$15)
5. The Founding of the Schools in Lyme and the Pioneers who built them by Joyce Lance (\$15)
6. Follow the North Shore by Joyce Lance (\$15)
7. The Stone and Brick Houses of the Town of Lyme by Clara Van Doren (\$20)
8. The Rome, Watertown and Cape Vincent Railroad, parts 1 and 2 by Suzann Cornell (\$20) each
9. Calendars 2017, 2018 and 2019. (\$10) each
10. Postcards with eleven different views of the Town of Lyme, (\$.50 each or 11 for \$5)

These items are available at Citizens Bank of Cape Vincent, Chaumont Branch, or by calling Shirley at 315 - 649 - 5780.

We appreciate the support of the community.

Rudolph and Lilly Haas

(continued from page 1)

While he loved writing and desperately wanted to be a journalist, he felt that would mean a life of poverty, so he settled on going to medical school instead. To begin the enrollment process, he needed a furlough to go to Vienna. To get permission for the short leave, he had to wait until his commanding officer was quite drunk and in a more pliable mood.

After the war, he completed medical school at the University of Vienna. He opened a practice in Vienna in 1923. He advertised for an office assistant, and hired the 19-year-old Maria Josefa Karolina Tobler, who went by the nickname “Lilly.”

Lilly Tobler had lived her entire life in Vienna. Her father was in the Austro-Hungarian diplomatic corps. When he was stationed in Russia, Lilly’s parents moved to St. Petersburg with their younger children, but opted to leave Lilly in Vienna with her grandmother.

The family’s separation turned out to be longer than anyone could have anticipated. After the outbreak of World War I, the Russians saw Lilly’s parents as potential spies who knew too much about the coast of Russia and the port of St. Petersburg. They weren’t held as prisoners, but they were not allowed to leave the country; they were removed to Siberia.

In 1918 the worldwide flu epidemic reached even the most remote corners of the globe. Lilly’s father, and a newborn brother she’d never met, died in the epidemic. Her mother, desperate to return to Vienna, escaped with her surviving children through China and by boat around the Cape of Good Hope to return to Western Europe. When she reached Vienna, her daughter Lilly had already grown to a young woman.

Lilly Tobler and Rudolph Haas were married in 1932. Like other Viennese, they enjoyed the conversation and wide circles of friends in the city’s famous coffeehouses. Rudolph’s best friend

had married a girl whose father ran a movie production studio. In the early 1930s this friend recommended beautiful Lilly for work as an extra in a film starring the Viennese actress Hedy Lamarr. The name and the exact date of the film have been lost (perhaps no copies of the film survived World War II), but in that movie Lilly was in a nightclub scene alongside Lamarr.

In 1934 Lilly gave birth to a girl. Rudolph, who greatly admired American writer Dorothy Parker, wanted to name their daughter “Dorothy,” but Austria’s Christian naming laws required that all children be given saint’s names. Lilly’s grandmother stepped in to assist; she and the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna were old friends from Bohemia; she asked him for special permission to give the child this English name and the Bishop consented.

In 1938 Nazi Germany annexed Austria in what was known as the “Anschluss.” Rudolph was Jewish, and it was clear that the little family needed to flee. Rudolph had an aunt who lived in Buffalo, NY; she’d gone to the US years earlier to work as an au pair, had married, and became an American citizen. She was able to sponsor the Haas family to come to Buffalo as refugees in 1939. Dorothy, then only four years old, picked up English very quickly. Rudolph knew a bit of English, but Lilly knew none when they arrived.

Rudolph’s family in Europe was scattered. His step-mother and one sister died in concentration camps, while one brother survived the entire war in a concentration camp. Another brother was able to slip away and join the Czech resistance, in which he fought until the war was over. A sister escaped to England. (His mother died when he was very young and his father, a baker, had died before the war.)

Unfortunately, Rudolph’s European medical license was not recognized in the US. He had to spend years re-doing his residency and internship to be able to practice here. After completing his American medical training, Rudolph tried to enlist in the US Army, but he was rejected for being too

(continued on page 7)

Rudolph and Lilly Haas

(continued from page 6)

old (he was already in his 40s) and for the ulcer he'd developed during World War I. Then in 1942 he heard of two opportunities for doctors in Jefferson County – one was as a mill doctor in Dexter, and the other was the sale of a deceased doctor's practice in Chaumont.

Rudolph, Lilly, and Dorothy traveled north to see about these prospects. While strolling around Chaumont, the family saw tombstones for another Haas family (unrelated) in Cedar Grove Cemetery. They thought it was an auspicious sign, and Rudolph bought the doctor's office next door to the Catholic rectory. Rudolph and Lilly lived in that home for the rest of their lives. As they settled into their lives as Americans, they welcomed a son, Steven, in 1945. And they began several decades of service to the community.

Rudolph's practice covered all of Lyme and Cape Vincent, as well as parts of Brownville and Clayton. Dr. Haas did not take appointments; if you needed him, you could either just show up at his office (in his house), or call and ask him to come to your home. A typical day for him would run like this: he would spend the morning making rounds at the hospitals in Watertown; from 1-3 he would have walk-in office hours at home; from 3:00 until supper time he would make home visits; and from 7:00-9:00 pm he would take walk-in patients at his home again.

He always kept two medical bags in his car: one with his regular instruments and one with obstetric supplies. Dr. Haas particularly loved delivering babies, and he often did so with midwife Nellie Wallace of Point Salubrious. He estimated that he'd delivered thousands of children over his career -- some in their homes, some in the hospital, and a few in cars. Once a man drove a horse-drawn cutter across the ice from Point Peninsula because his wife was in labor and he was desperately trying to find Dr. Haas. Another time Dr. Haas was called to deliver a baby at a farm, only to find that his car

couldn't make it down the long snow-covered driveway. The baby's father had to drive down in his tractor and carry the doctor and Nellie back in the manure spreader.

The sailors and fishermen of the lake and the river kept the doctor quite busy as well. When asked if he had a specialty, Dr. Haas said it was the removal of hooks from fishermen, an art he'd mastered around Chaumont Bay. Once he was called to Cape Vincent in the night to attend to a Korean sailor on the Seaway. To get into the ship, Dr. Haas had to climb the rope ladder on the side of the freighter in the dark of night.

He was a terrible driver during his early years in the United States (he hadn't been a car owner in Vienna). At one point, the Lyme Highway Superintendent asked Dr. Haas to let him know



(Clockwise from top: Dr. Rudolph Haas, Lilly Haas, Steven Haas & Dorothy Haas. Photo: Steven Haas)

when he was going out on snowy nights so he could have a man on stand-by to pull the doctor out of the ditch.

Lilly also devoted herself to community service. She was her husband's office assistant, and ad hoc nurse. During World War II she was one of the border's volunteer airplane spotters (and probably the only person in Chaumont who'd witnessed a German airplane in action). She was also a member of the Northern Choral Society, the North Country Artists Guild, the Northern New York Duplicate Bridge Club, the Chaumont Presbyterian Church and its choir, and Lyme Free Library Board of Trustees. She also was a grand officer of the Order of the Eastern Star and a Cub Scout den mother.

In their early years in the North Country the Haases tried to offer medical services for free to the very poor, however they found that patients became angry and embarrassed when their money was refused. Thereafter, Dr. Haas decided that he would simply charge as little as possible, to satisfy the patients' pride and his desire to take as little as possible from them. At the end of his career he was still charging only \$3 for each office visit. (Teachers were only charged \$2 per visit, because he held their work in such high esteem.)

Dr. and Mrs. Haas were beloved in the community for their devotion to the well-being of all. Rudolph, the town's health officer and the school's doctor, was very concerned about the quality of Chaumont's drinking water. For decades he'd seen waste freely dumped into Chaumont Bay. Also, drinking water was still being pumped from neighborhood wells next to rudimentary septic systems. In 1963 Dr. Haas took his concerns to the town board. He then led the push to create a municipal water system that would ensure treated, untainted drinking water for all.

In addition to serving our little town, Dr. Haas was also the president of the Jefferson County Medical Society, president of the medical staff of both the House of the Good Samaritan and Mercy Hospital medical staff, and president of the Jefferson County Academy of General Practice.

In November 1973 Rudolph died of a heart attack. He'd been planning to retire, but hadn't yet. Larry Comins, then mayor of Chaumont, led a campaign to collect private donations for a monument in his honor. The obelisk still stands near the Chaumont tennis courts. Lilly, who was nine years younger than her husband, lived until 2004. They are buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery, where over 70 years ago the refugee family decided to make Chaumont their permanent home.

Thank you very much to Steven and Carla Haas for sharing their family's stories! Thanks also to Kent "Fud" Horton for suggesting the story.



Town Supervisor's Musical Talent on Display

By Sue Cornell, Lyme Heritage Center

Town of Lyme Supervisor Scott Aubertine has many talents and the Lyme Heritage Center wants to thank him for a wonderful interactive performance on the porch of the Heritage Center, Sunday afternoon October 7th.

Although a tad chilly, (in the 50's with brisk winds), and with cold fingers, he played guitar, harmonica, and sang many folk songs that the hardy audience joined him in singing.

He also gave some history about the songs and information about the artist who sang them. He put a lot of work into his presentation which was tremendously appreciated. The Heritage Center's strawberry shortcake was a hit as well.

Fall & Winter Programs

(cont'd from page 1)

The following programs were presented this fall: Pottery Painting with Rhonda Allen, Sept. 29th; Sip and Paint with Lynette Lundy-Beck, on November 1st; Pre-K to 6th Dance Classes by Dance World of Watertown on November 9th; and Naughty or Nice List Chalkboard Art with Lynette Lundy-Beck on November 11th.

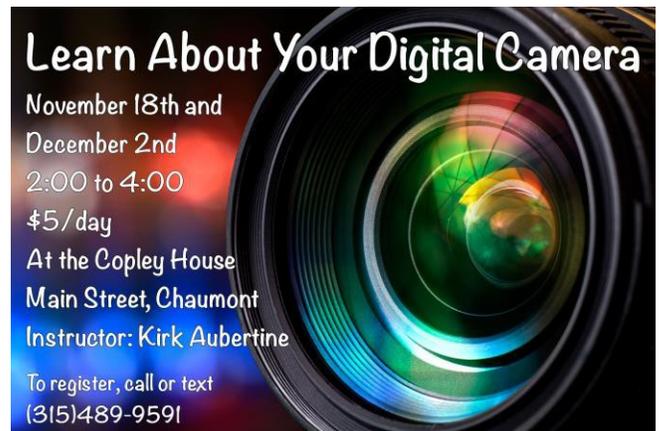


“Naughty or Nice List” program participants with their finished artwork.

Upcoming programs include:



- Fall Flower Arrangement on November 14, 2018, 6pm



- Learn About Your Digital Camera (first class), Sunday, November 18, 2018, 2pm.
- Learn About Your Digital Camera (second class), Sunday December 2, 2018, 2pm.

For More Information contact kacar140@gmail.com, (315)778-3672

Happy Sailors Day Care will present four "Copley Kids' Crafty Saturdays from November 27 to December 18, 10 am to 12 pm in the Copley House Art Studio.



A fee of \$15 for each session (or \$50 for all four), covers supplies and instruction. Each session should result in a completed Christmas-themed project. Great to give away as Christmas presents.

Pre- registration required. Contact Christine Sharlow
happysailorsdaycare@gmail.com

Jefferson Abstract Corp. Presents

Chaumont Holiday House Tour

6PM-9PM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8



Tour five homes beautifully decorated for the holidays.
With your ticket, enjoy a reception at the historic Alexander
Copley House with gourmet appetizers, drinks and festive music
by Phil Dumond.

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The Crescent Restaurant and Bar, Lake Ontario Realty



Proceeds to benefit the Lyme Community Foundation

Haunted House Update

This year's theme "80s House of Horror" proved to be a popular draw and raised nearly as much as last year. Thank you again to our sponsors: FX Caprara, Steve Hall Construction, Jesmore & Associates, Duck Out/Duck Away, Wise Guys, Watertown Savings Bank, Home Depot, Citizen's Bank of Cape Vincent, Bearup Marina and Wimpy's Station. And thank you to the hundreds of community members who attended and supported the Lyme Community Foundation.

And last but not least...



See you next year!

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