The Origins of East Bloomfield
by Edward Varno

Just as Ontario County was the mother county of western New York, so East Bloomfield was the parent township of several towns in Ontario County. Traversed by an Indian Trail that became a well-traveled stagecoach route, now New York State Routes 5 and 20, the original township was legally established in 1789 and settled rapidly. Farms were built along Mud Creek which flows north through the town. By 1812, the growth warranted the establishment of the new townships Mendon (Monroe County) and Victor (Ontario County). Eventually, West Bloomfield was partitioned away in 1833, leaving the town of East Bloomfield with its present boundaries.

The original, larger town of Bloomfield was settled by Deacon John Adams of Alford, Massachusetts. He held several ranks in the Revolutionary War including Captain in the quartermaster corps. During the war, he was responsible for driving cattle from Massachusetts to Fort Niagara and became familiar with the rich soils and beauty of what was known as Genesee Country.

When the lands became available for purchase from Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham, Adams invested in the Bloomfield Tract. In spring of 1789, Adams then led a party of 24 pioneers to the land and established the town’s first settlement. Elijah Hamlin followed with his wife in 1791 and took up residence in the southwest part of the town. Word of the beauty on the land and the productive soils spread back to New England and other pioneering families soon followed.

The early pioneers in Bloomfield learned to live in harmony with the Native Americans who regularly used their well-trodden east-west route and a north-south trail along Mud Creek. The two cultures had differing concepts of ownership; the Native Americans expected complete sharing of available necessities while the settlers believed that a man’s home is his impregnable castle. However, during times of adversity and severe weather, the settlers shared what they could with their Seneca friends.  

continued on page 5
The Educator’s Post
by Preston E. Pierce, Museum Educator

A Big Month for Airmail and Postal History

May 1938, was a big month for local postal history. On May 9th, the local post office building (now part of the YMCA) was re-opened for business. A third floor had been added to the building originally commissioned by Mary Clark Thompson and completed in 1911. That new structure gave the postal service a dedicated building, replacing temporary quarters it had occupied since 1908. It got the Post Office out of the Court House permanently. By 1938, additional room was needed for the federal courts that had also been using the Court House since 1857. On May 9th, 1938, the newly renovated and expanded Post Office opened its doors once again. For several weeks, three Canandaigua groups had been looking for ways to participate in the “National Airmail Week” celebration announced by Postmaster General, James A. Farley, on April 3rd, 1938. Indeed, the leaders of the Canandaigua Exchange Club (most of whose members chartered the Kiwanis Club in 1943); the Canandaigua Philatelic Society (including L. M. Campbell and other prominent business men); and the Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce were interconnected through many of their members.

The leadership of those three organizations eventually formulated a plan to have a special one-time airmail route sanctioned by the Postmaster General, just as many other towns were doing. They selected Maurice Estey, a resident of Hopewell and aviation enthusiast, to obtain the special postal license and fly the mail in his plane. The Exchange Club had an established airport committee that had been working on selecting ground for a local field. Shortly before Airmail Week (May 3rd) that club admitted Walter M. Fitch to membership. Fitch, one of Canandaigua’s pioneer aviators, learned to fly as a teenager. The Exchange Club Airport Committee sponsored a small rubber stamp cachet that was applied to mail actually flown out of Canandaigua on May 19th. The Chamber of Commerce also had a long interest in promoting aviation in Canandaigua. Since the 1920s, that group had also worked to promote tourism around the city. They also provided a rubber stamp cachet to be applied to mail flown from Canandaigua on May 19th. Stamp collecting was a booming hobby in the 1920s and 30s. Many local collectors had missed out on the opportunity to get “first flight” over of the Trans-Pacific Airmail flight known as the “China Clipper”. That was particularly unfortunate since Chauncy Wright, a Canandaigua resident, served as an assistant flight engineer on that first China Clipper.

Members of the Philatelic Society did not want to miss this opportunity. The Canandaigua Philatelic Society, formed in 1934, designed and sponsored the best-remembered rubber stamped cachet (Gideon Ganger) applied to Canandaigua airmail during National Airmail Week. Among its leaders were L.M. Campbell; Lynn Ellis; and Charles Spengler. Campbell, well-known founder of Campbell’s Jewelry Store, was also a member of the Chamber of Commerce and a strong promoter of stamp collecting. The Philatelic Society cachet was applied to all outgoing airmail whether or not it was flown on Estey’s trip on May 19th. For that reason, envelopes can still be found that have the Gideon Granger cachet and postmarks of several dates. The Philatelic Society chose to focus on community postal history as well as the special festivities that week.

continued on page 3
**From the Director’s Desk**

*by Edward Varno*

**The Ordeal of Change**

Back in the 70s when I was in school, I read the 1950s writings of Eric Hoffer. Hoffer, was a social philosopher who worked as a longshoreman. My favorite book of his was, *The Ordeal of Change*. It was his observations on what creates change in society and what the manifestations of change are in society and in the individual. Hoffer dichotomized change as being either planned or unplanned. It is a simple way to look at something so complex and the concept stuck with me through the years.

In the 20 plus years I have sat behind the director’s desk here at the Historical Society, there has been a lot of changes. Since I am a people person, the most impactful that come to mind are those that deal with our staff. The planned change that brought Maureen Baker to the receptionist position was probably the easiest change to manage. Maureen fit into the position like a hand in a glove. Her attitude and approach to challenges makes people smile and that is good.

The sudden death of our information technician, Bruce Stewart, was the most difficult to deal with personally. Bruce was a friend and an integral part of our staff since the mid 1990s. He left an empty chair, but more importantly his death left a big void in our understanding of the Society’s computer system and internet presence. The staff as a team focused on the situation and we all became a little more knowledgeable about our computers and the big black box at Bruce’s desk we call the “server”. Bruce is gone, but we still call his vacant station “Bruce’s desk”. This was an unplanned change that shook us to our roots, but, with the help of Lee Drake at OS Cubed we survived the situation with a smile.

More recently we were faced with the retirement of our long time accountant, Ernie Maiorani. For years, spending invoices and all revenues we received went through his system of accounting. Like clockwork, his reports were ready for review by the Board of Trustees. I guess as an organization we took his work for granted. As his mother aged, he found himself more and more focused on her needs and in March of this year he announced that he would retire from the Historical Society to focus full time on caring for his mother.

This wasn’t so much an unplanned change as a sudden shift in focus. Ernie assisted in showing our new accountant his system of books and reporting. We were fortunate that the firm of Brassie and Parrish were able to take us on as a client. John Zappia, our treasurer, and Chris Hubler, our president, both jumped in to assure that the Society’s accounting system would run effectively. Now the director and treasurer are more involved. This is a good thing. So, change is inevitable. As a person we deal with it; as an organization we deal with it; and as a society we deal with it. One thing I have learned through all the change in my life and that we have experienced here at the Historical Society is that in times of change, attitude determines whether it becomes an ordeal or an adventure.

I prefer to make change an adventure.

*continued from page 2 — Educator’s Post*

As if to underscore the changes aviation brought to mail service, Maurice Estey’s flight to Rochester took about twenty minutes. In Gideon Granger’s day, the trip took a day or more. Looking back on the 1938 celebration from the perspective of 80 years, the special cacheted envelopes are a unique souvenir of a special event. Email has been available in Canandaigua since at least the 1980s. It takes milliseconds. What souvenir do we have to document that change?
From the Curator’s Loft
by Wilma Townsend, Curator

Our new exhibit “Over Here and Over There: Ontario County in World War I” is now open with many local items, photos, documents and posters illustrating this turning point in our history. As you can imagine, fleshing out the historical details of local people and artifacts can be both challenging and rewarding. In putting this exhibit together, we were fortunate to have a large historical collection with relevant resources here at the museum and from the community. In addition, the vast number of websites on WWI records helped tremendously to fill in gaps in the records.

This exhibit features six World War I military uniforms worn by local soldiers. By gleaning information from both our collection and various military and historical websites, we put together brief biographies of these men. The uniforms that these men actually wore take on far greater historical and emotional meaning when we know more about their lives.

Below are brief biographies of these six men. Please take some time this summer or fall to come in to the museum and learn more about Ontario County’s role in World War I.

**George L. More** (1894-1960)
Born in Stamford, NY, George More moved with his family to Canandaigua where his father established the More Granite Co. selling cemetery memorials. George was living in Youngstown, Ohio as a memorial salesman when he was called to active duty. He served with the Medical Department Base Hospital 31 in Contrexeville, France as a Sergeant 1st Class, A.E.F. He later returned to Canandaigua and took over the family business upon his father’s death in 1921. He is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

**Gerald Lynch** (1898-1977)
Born in Canandaigua, Gerald Lynch served in Co. H, 3rd Infantry National Guard and later Co. H, 108 Infantry. After serving for six months, he was wounded in action October 14, 1918 when he was gassed. Upon his return to Canandaigua, he worked for the Lisk Manufacturing Co. and later married Bernadine Farrell. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery, Canandaigua.

**Benjamin H. Merry** (1895-1984)
Benjamin Merry was born in Geneva, NY. He first served in the New York National Guard as a private in Co. B, 3rd Infantry and later as a corporal in Co. B, 108th Infantry in France. Wounded in action, he was discharged as a sergeant. After returning to Geneva he worked as a shipping clerk at the U.S. Radiator Corp. and then as a patrolman for the Geneva Police Department. He married Ethel Archer and they had three children.

**Claude Ritchie Hicks** (1897-1919)
Claude Hicks of Hall, NY, enlisted in the 3rd NY Infantry, Co. M, New York National Guard and served on the Mexican border in the summer of 1916. After the U.S. entered World War I, he enlisted in the 77th Coast Artillery Regiment and went overseas. In October 1918, during the smashing of the Hindenburg Line, he was gassed and spent several weeks in an army hospital in France. He returned to the U.S., but in March 1919 he died of pneumonia after riding in a military parade in New York City. He is buried in the Seneca No. 9 Cemetery.

continued on page 5
continued from page 1 — The Origins of East Bloomfield

The natives to the area were, in turn, willing to share their food and medicine with the new inhabitants during winters. Patience prevailed and the relationships between two groups seldom went foul. Being on a major east-west road resulted in town’s rapid growth. With several centers of commerce, many believed the town was destined to become a regional center of economic activity in Ontario County. But when the Erie Canal opened in 1825, commerce shifted to the north, activity in the town dwindled and growth slowed dramatically.

Revival came in 1853 when the Canandaigua and Niagara Falls Railroad built a line through the town south of the settlement. The location became known as Bloomfield Station. Around this rail stop inns, retail businesses, mills, a tannery and a blacksmith shop were established. Thus, two population centers emerged, the original East Bloomfield and the new rail stop that became known as Holcomb. The railroads attracted commerce and once again the town grew and prospered. Another station stop was established in town, Wheeler Station, which served farmers east of the villages. In the late 20th century, the two villages merged into a single corporate entity now simply named, Bloomfield.

In the center of East Bloomfield on the north side of NYS Routes 5 and 20 is probably the most prominent Civil War Monument in Ontario County. This 45 feet tall granite and limestone obelisk is engraved with the names of 39 men from Bloomfield who gave their lives to save the Union. The monument is topped with a Union soldier at attention facing south toward the enemy. It sits proudly and prominently in the village square surrounded by the community church, the old school (now the Bloomfield Historical Society). The square was planned in the New England tradition by the town’s founder, Deacon John Adams. If you are driving down NYS Routes 5 and 20, stop in the Bloomfield Historical Society on the square. It is full of friendly people and a wonderful place to learn more about Bloomfield’s heritage.

continued from page 4 — Curator’s Loft

Dr. Samuel W. Bradstreet (1882-1965)
Samuel W. Bradstreet was a medical doctor in Rochester, with a residence in Irondequoit. He enlisted in August 1918 in the U.S. Army Medical Corps with a commission as a Captain, trained at Camp Devens and served overseas. He was married to Nellie Grace Van Horn and had five children. His family had a summer cottage in Fallbrook Park, Canandaigua Lake where his uniform was found by subsequent owners.

Frederick Eberle (1896-1964)
Born in New York City, the son of German immigrants, Fred Eberle lived in Phelps. He served as Seaman 1st Class in the Navy. Like many other service members, he spent time in a naval hospital in Brest, France recovering from the Spanish Influenza. His name is on the WWI monument in Phelps. He later moved to Shortsville to work on the Lehigh Valley Railroad. He married Edith Cochrane of Canandaigua, they had one daughter.

Dr. Samuel Bradstreet

Frederick Eberle
Your Historical Society

Honor Guard from the Geneva American Legion prepare to post colors at the WW I exhibit opening May 19

Hands on - Ed Varno preparing the walls of the trench for the WWI exhibit

Curator Wilma Townsend

County historians met at Historical Society on April 18 for their monthly gathering

OCHS mini exhibit by Preston Pierce featured at regional ROPEX Stamp Show May 18-19

Students at our March 24 History Day Competition are questioned by Judges Carole Lillis and David White
OCHS is home to thousands of photographs bringing to life over two centuries of memories. Recently I drove by the old Lisk Manufacturing Plant in Canandaigua. This company formed in 1882 and produced enamelware, galvanized tin buckets, self-basting roasters, and more. Lisk employed hundreds, both men and women until it ceased operations during the 1960s. I sat there gazing at the windows, now covered with cement blocks and wondered how many of our facebook followers remembered Lisk, or perhaps had a family member that worked there.

We reached out to our Facebook family asking that question and anxiously waited for a response. The rapid response exceeded our expectations. Every comment was of a positive nature, many wishing it was still in operation. Here are a few I selected to share with you.

“Established c.1882, by the early 1900s they were fully operational employing hundreds, many who immigrated from Italy specifically to work there. These families established their own “little Italy” in the city's 2nd Ward, bringing the flavors of home to Canandaigua, including Macri's Deli and the Green Front who continue to serve it up good! My mom was a secretary for this company.”

“My dad and brothers worked there and my mom would make fried doughnuts and my sisters and I would take them up to the folks that worked there.”

“We lived right down the street and I still can remember going up to meet my dad and walking home with him. What a memory, thank you.”

“Have the second enamel teapot made at the Lisk.”

“The sound the noon whistle. Lots of good memories.”

“I remember looking through the windows on Gorham Street and watching the workers.”

“A friend of my parents in Farmington, N.H. was a salesman for Lisk.”

“What an amazing post! I can indeed hear the clatter and laughter….and trains….ahhhhh the trains.”

“My grandfather moved to Canandaigua from Kentucky pre-1920 because he heard of jobs at Lisk. He married the boss’s daughter and here I am.”

The noisy machines and smoke stacks have shut down, the noon whistle and trains now silent, but the memories are loud and clear. Sharing these memories with our friends, both near and far, resulted in an overwhelming response reaching well over 9000 followers. We connect people with their past…and it’s a lot of fun!
News and Announcements

• We are congratulating our long time accountant, Ernie Maiorani, on his retirement. Ernie took care of the Historical Society’s accounting matters for 15 years. He will be missed.

• The Historical Museum will have lots to see this summer. Plan a visit. Bring a friend or a visiting guest.

• August 23rd will be our “2018 Mystery Drive”. It will feature a driving tour through Seneca Township and will end with a dinner and a speaker at Belhurst Castle. The drive begins at the Historical Society at 3:00 p.m. Dinner will be at 5:00 p.m. The $50 fee includes the keepsake tour booklet and dinner including gratuity. Call the Historical Society to reserve your spot.

• Our “Benefactor’s Reception” on May 19th was a well-attended event. It marked the opening of our new local history exhibit celebrating the centennial of the United States’ involvement in World War I. “Over Here, Over There: Ontario County in World War I”, runs in our south gallery until April of next year. Stop in and bring a friend and experience the “trench entrance”.

• Our new friends at the Ontario County Arts Council had a wonderful opening for their first exhibit, “Arts in Bloom” on April 7th. Over 100 people attended. It is located in our north gallery and features colorful pieces by artists from across the county. Art sales have been brisk and that helps the Historical Society’s bottom line. The exhibit runs until Saturday, July 7th. There are many fine pieces still available for sale.

• The Francis Clax “MotoMeter” exhibit continues through the summer. It presents the world’s largest collection of these early automotive heat detection devices. Francis entertained visitors with a series of four talks on antique automotive technology this spring. Interested in early autos? This is a must-see exhibit. It runs through the summer and closes Labor Day. Francis Clax lives in Canandaigua and travels the world making presentations on his unique collection.

• Our Museum Educator, Preston Pierce, commemorated the 80th anniversary of National Airmail Week which was May 15th – 21st, 1938. The Museum had a mini exhibit at the ROPEX stamp show held at the Canandaigua Civic Center on May 18th and 19th. We also participated in a reception held by the Granger Homestead for stamp collectors who were in town for the show. Director, Ed Varno, made a short speech on air mail history to those gathered.

• The Board of Trustees are working on a couple of important projects. Dr. Bob Ward is getting proposed amendments to our constitution and by-laws put together for presentation to the Board. He is also developing criteria for finding new members of the board. Interested in a 3-year stint? Finally, the board will be reviewing proposed changes to our strategic plan that expires in 2020.

• Geoff Astles and the Building Preservation Committee following up on our “2017 Building Condition Report”, are reviewing proposals from architectural firms that will develop and cost-out ideas on how to better utilize space in the Museum. Be forewarned…. the board anticipates a capital project in the not-too-distant future. Donations are being accepted to our restricted fund for building preservation.

• Got any artwork you are just storing in the attic? We will be asking the public to donate it to the Museum for a new fundraiser, called “Art Out of the Attic”. It will offer donated works of art for sale. The event is planned for October 19th—20th. Collection points and more detail on the event will be sent to our members by U.S. mail. See if you have any items to donate and give us a call.

• Last, but not least, we have completed the upgrade of the basement restrooms in the museum. The facilities needed attention. They now look clean and bright. Special thanks to board member, Nancy Hayden, who spearheaded the project.
National History Day Donations

The following dedicated donations were made to the student awards at the 2018 National History Day Finger Lakes Region Competition. Thank you to our donors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carol M. Cimino</td>
<td>Carlo Cimino</td>
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<td>Judy Johnson</td>
<td>Kirk Moore</td>
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<td>John V. Mundy</td>
<td>J. Mundy Sr</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Rhode Family</td>
<td>Jim Peer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyn and Don Varno</td>
<td>Peg and Vern Varno</td>
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Mail Box

Dear Ed,

We wanted to take a moment to thank you for being part of our successful event (Iconic Art and History of Ontario County)! We had between 60 and 70 people attend, many of which were new faces. We are extremely grateful for your help and hope that we were able to give you the promotion you deserve.

Thank you again,

Icon Salon & Spa
Canandaigua

Dear Ed,

I am enclosing a donation to the Ontario County Historical Society. I appreciate you opening the Museum for the Current Events Club and giving us your time. Your presentation was excellent.

Best Regards,

Dee Looney

We Welcome These New Members

Icon Salon and Spa — Daisie Nichols
Ontario County Arts Council
Paychex — Martin Mucci
Stargazer Property Group
Nancy Blackwell
Carol Henshaw
Mary Miller
Kathy Ann Morris
Doug and Denise VanDeroef

The Oliver Phelps Fund

Thank you to the following donors:

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We wish to extend a special thanks to all of the volunteers who donate so many countless hours in support of the Historical Society.

Address correspondence to:
Ontario County Historical Society
55 North Main Street
Canandaigua, New York  14424

We are open Tuesday through Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.,
Wednesdays until 9:00 p.m.; Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Closed on major holidays.

Business Members

We wish to thank the business members listed below for their continued support. Please consider them when purchasing goods and services. In addition to these business members, we also appreciate the small donations we receive from dozens of local businesses in Ontario County each year.

1840 Inn On The Main
Aberle Eye Care
Allen County Public Library
B & E Electric
Bella Rose Bed and Breakfast
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Canandaigua Carpets Inc.
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Arts Council

A "Growing" Symbiotic Relationship
What a pleasure it has been to work with the Ontario County Historical Society staff as we installed the first exhibit, "Art in Bloom." The north gallery in the Museum is a beautiful space with great lighting that complements the work of our member artists. This show is open through July 7th if you have not stopped by as yet. Two future exhibits are planned for the remainder of 2018: "Our Lakes" opening July 21st and "Rock, Paper, Scissors" opening October 27th.

During each exhibit we will offer a mini shoppe, art talks, workshops and other fun events. Join us as we nurture this new relationship in the humanities. As Curt Rice of “Science in Balance” states, "The humanities help us to understand others, to reason about being human, and to ask questions about our world. They develop informed and critical citizens and without the humanities, democracy could not flourish." (http://curt-rice.com/2014/02/25/here-are-9-reasons-why-humanities-matter-whats-your-number-10/)

Membership Benefits in the Ontario County Historical Society
Receive Regular Museum Mailings — Keep Up-to Date on all Society Activities
Reduced Admission to Society Events and Fundraisers, including Tour of Homes (admission to the museum is always free)
Free assistance in the Museum’s Rare Documents/Genealogy Library
Membership in Time Travelers, a National Museum Benefit Program
10% savings on Museum Books Shop purchases
Subscription to our quarterly newsletter, CHRONICLES

Ontario County Historical Society Membership Application Form
Name(s) __________________________ Email __________________________ Phone __________________________

Exactly as it will appear on the Membership Card
Address __________________________ ZIP ________
Optional Alternate Winter Address from ___/___ to ___/___ __________________________ ZIP ________

General Membership Support:
___ Sr. Citizen $30; ___ Individual $35; ___ Family $50; ___ Friend $75

Centennial Club Level
___ Centennial $100; ___ Benefactor $150; ___ Heritage Circle $250; ___ Director $500+
___ Please accept my additional gift of $ _________
___ I am interested in making an endowment gift; please contact me.

Total Membership: $ __________ + Additional gift: $ _________ = Total $ __________

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**The Chronicles**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>2:00 – 5:00 p.m. – Art Exhibit Reception; art work by Grace Bates and Andrea Cornett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9</td>
<td>1:00 – 3:00 p.m. – Wayne Drumlins Antique Car Club; tour of “MotoMeter” Exhibit</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 21</td>
<td>International Make Music Day – worldwide celebration; join us on the portico</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>Closed in observance of Independence Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>6:30 – 7:30 p.m. – OCAC Artists Gathering</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 8</td>
<td>6:30 – 8:30 p.m. – OCAC Pebble Art Workshop; reservations required; $25 for supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 23</td>
<td>Annual Mystery Ride; Town of Seneca; call OCHS for details</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. – John North Willys Bike Rally; Outhouse Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. – “MotoMeter” exhibit closes Aug 8th; Workshop</td>
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**NOTICE:** If your address changes seasonally, please let us know the alternative address and the effective date.

**OC Current Resident**

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