

# Town of Canandaigua News

December 2018

[www.TownofCanandaigua.org](http://www.TownofCanandaigua.org)



## From Deputy Town Supervisor, Tina Bloom

As I was driving home from an out-of-state meeting earlier this month, I began noticing all of the scenery between where I had traveled and here at home in Canandaigua. It was snowing and on this rare occasion, the sun was actually shining. As I began to enter the Finger Lakes corridor of my trip, I found myself really taking in and appreciating the landscape and charm of our area. Although we hear numerous grumblings this time of year about the misery of winter in Upstate NY (I include myself in the category to

often denounce the cold weather) I found that there was a serene beauty in the rolling hills, dormant vineyards and vast snow-blanketed fields that I passed as I grew closer to home. I realize that I am biased, but the nearer I came to the Town, the more beautiful the trip became. I was reminded of one of my favorite holiday movies, "It's a Wonderful Life," where it took the character George Bailey to have his environment completely changed for him to look objectively at the appeal and greatness of his hometown. I hope that each of us can experience one of these moments this season, where we step back and realize why we decided to settle here in Canandaigua in the first place. I wish all of our residents a Merry Christmas and safe, healthy, and happy holiday season!

## Local History Notes

### The William Gorham House

The following excerpts about Canandaigua's beautiful and historic William Gorham House were gathered by Town Historian Ray Henry. Story excerpts are quoted from a 1973 article by longtime City of Canandaigua Historian, Herbert J. Ellis and also from a 2010 RIT University News article titled: *Storybook house connects professor, alumna*, by RIT Associate Director of University

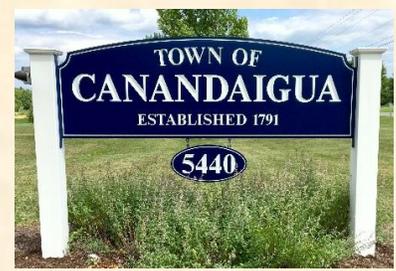


The William Gorham House Today. Image Credit: Ray Henry

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Communications, Mindy Mozer. See the end of this story for a link to her original article.

"The stone house at 5266 Parrish Street Extension was built in 1832 by William Gorham, Son of Nathaniel Gorham II. Nathaniel Gorham the first was a prominent citizen of New England during the Revolutionary period of our country. He was one of the signers of the Constitution and had much to do with its creation. He, in company with Oliver Phelps the first, purchased 2.6 million acres of land between the Pre-Emption line (crossing near Geneva), and the Genesee River, known as the Phelps and Gorham Purchase. At that time, Ontario County extended to Lake Erie. Gorham the first never came to Canandaigua, but sent his son, Nathaniel Gorham II, a young man of 25 years, to represent him in the handling of his affairs."

"History says that Nathaniel Gorham II was a tall, handsome man with much ability. He married Ruthy Wood, sister of William Wood, a noted citizen of those days (Wood Library is named after him). Nathaniel Gorham II was president of a bank and one of the founders and planners of early Canandaigua. "

"He had five children, one of whom was William Wood Gorham who married Betsey, daughter of Jasper Parrish, noted Indian interpreter of Pickering Treaty fame, and builder of the house where he lived on the corner of Parrish Street and South Main Street which was torn down for a gas station. The house was the McElwee Funeral Home for many years. The funeral business was sold to Fuller Funeral Home and moved to Buffalo Street opposite North Pearl Street."

"William and Betsey had five children: William, who married Georgia, daughter of the Rev. Ansel D. Eddy, fifth minister of the Congregational Church of Canandaigua; Margaret, who married Robert M. Benedict, who owned the cobblestone house on the West Lake Road, now owned by Kathleen

Connor. (The cobblestone house was built by Isaac Parrish, son of Jasper Parrish); another son, Dr. Henry Clay Gorham; also Edward Parrish Gorham; and Caroline Townsend Gorham, who married the jeweler Edward C. Williams, whose daughter was Margaret Williams."

"This house on Parrish Street Extension has the layout and general plan of the Gorham house in Barnstable, Mass., even though William Gorham had never been there."

-Herbert J. Ellis, 1973  
City of Canandaigua Historian

"The house in Canandaigua is now the home of College of Applied Science and Technology professor Jennifer Schneider, who lives there with her husband and two daughters."

"The house, which was featured in many Little Golden Books, was the home of illustrator Eloise Wilkin, a 1923 graduate of the Rochester Athenaeum and Mechanics Institute, now RIT.

"When the Schneiders purchased the house on Parrish Street Extension in 2006, they had no idea that a previous owner had RIT connections or was a renowned children's book illustrator.

"The Schneiders had been living in a townhouse built in 1974 in the Rochester suburb of Brighton. The antique lovers were looking for an older home..."

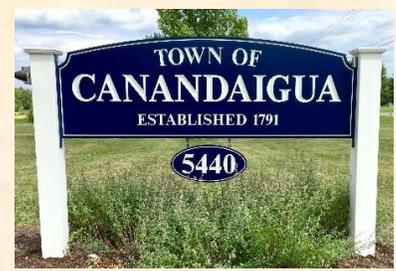
"In 2004, after being owned by one family for more than 40 years, the house went up for sale. In May 2006, the Schneiders moved in."

"They learned about the Wilkin connection after closing on their Brighton home." "If you look through her books, a lot of the details in them were everything she had in that house in Canandaigua," says Wilkin's son, Sidney C. Wilkin, who lives just outside Rochester in the suburb of Pittsford."

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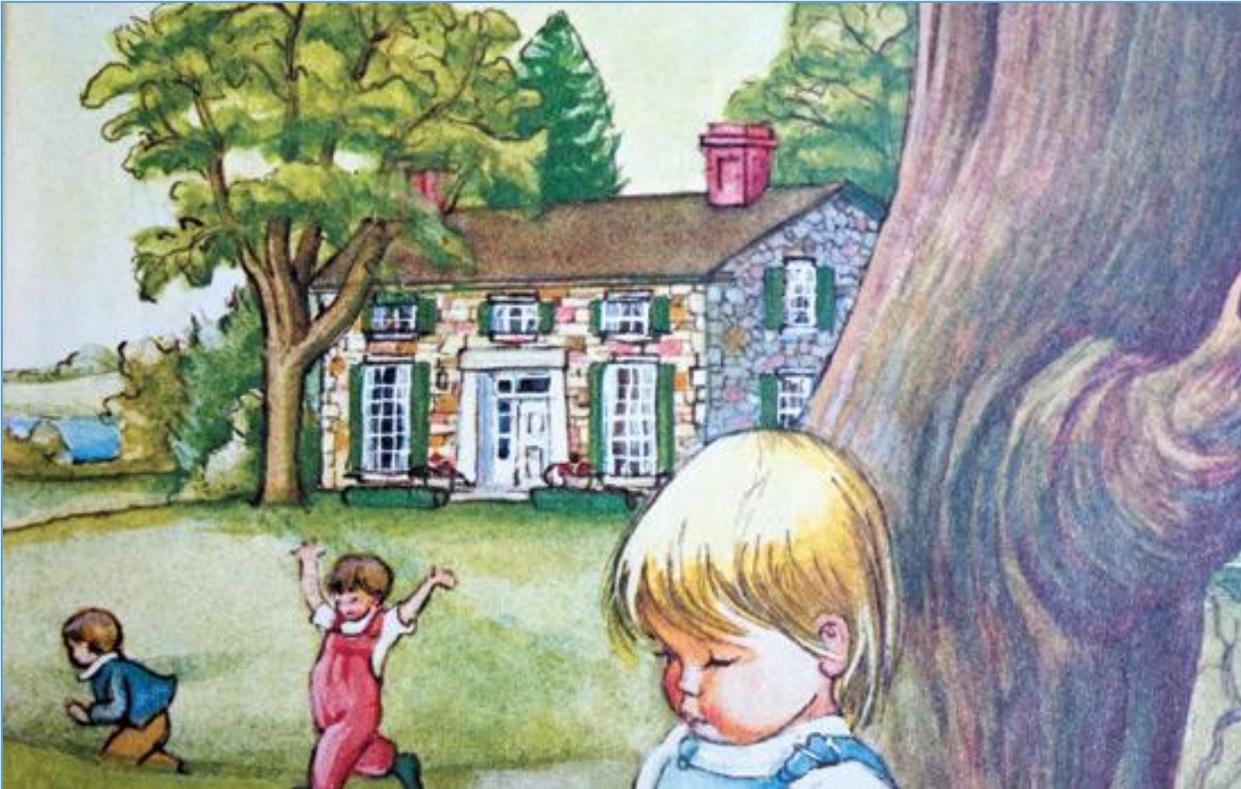


"The Wilkin family lived in the house between 1945 and 1961. Sidney Wilkin says his mother and father were also antique lovers. They saw an ad in the paper, drove by the house and knew they had to buy it."

"In 1944, a year before moving to the house, Wilkin signed a contract with Simon and Schuster to illustrate three Little Golden Books a year."

"Sidney C. Wilkin remembers his mother working from 8:30 in

the morning until 9 at night when a deadline was approaching. 'We would run in and out of the house by her studio and she would stop us, show us something and ask if we liked it, he says'."



One of Wilkin's illustrations from a Little Golden Book; Image Credit: Mindy Mozer, RIT University News.

"The house, which the Wilkin family and previous owners called Oak Hill, also became a gathering spot for Wilkin's former classmates, who would meet in

Canandaigua every

"After graduation, Eloise Wilkin opened an art studio in Rochester with her former classmate Joan Esley. But, according to an introduction in a collection of Wilkin's work written by Wilkin's daughter, Deborah Wilkin Springett, they couldn't get enough work so they moved to New York City."

summer to critique each other's work. One classmate and Erie Canal artist, J. Erwin Porter, painted a picture of the house, which now is on Sidney Wilkin's wall."

"Eloise Wilkin died Oct. 4, 1987, but today is one of the most collectible Golden Book illustrators, Springett writes.

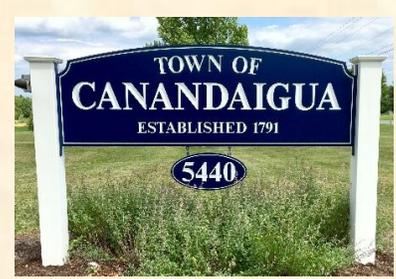
"A week later, Eloise Wilkin was hired to illustrate *The Shining Hours* for Century Company. In 1930, Wilkin put her career on hold and married Sidney J. Wilkin. They had four children.

"The Schneiders, who are the sixth owners of the home, know they are living in a special place and appreciate that previous owners preserved Wilkin's stencils on the mantels."

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More about Eloise Wilkin:

"Eloise Wilkin...illustrated more than 110 books, including 50 Little Golden Books published between 1946 and 1975. Wilkin also designed dolls and is known for the Vogue Baby Dear doll. In 1990, the Wilkin family established the Eloise B. Wilkin Illustrator's Scholarship in recognition of their mother's creativity and contribution to the field of illustration and

children's literature. The scholarship is awarded annually to an illustration or medical illustration student at RIT."

*[-Storybook house connects professor, alumna](#)*

Mindy Mozer

Associate Director of University Communications

Nov. 22, 2010, University News

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*Stay tuned for information on new volunteer opportunities:*

*Several Town committees and project teams will have upcoming openings in the new year.*

*More information will be available in January's newsletter.*

## January Meeting Dates

- 1 – New Year's Day, Town Hall Closed
- 2 – Environmental Committee, 4:30 pm
- 3 – Local History Team, 8:30 am
- 3 – Environmental Conservation Board, 4:30 pm
- 3 – Agricultural Advisory Committee, 6:00 pm
- 7 – Town Board, 6:00 pm
- 8 – Economic Development Committee, 12:00 pm
- 8 – Drainage Committee, 11:00 am
- 8 – Planning Board, 6:00 pm
- 10 – Finance Committee, 8:00 am
- 11 – Application Deadline, 12:00 pm
- 14 – Planning Review Committee, 9:00 am
- 15 – CIC, 9:00 am
- 15 – Zoning Board of Appeals, 6:00 pm
- 17 – Finance Committee, 8:00 am
- 17 – Ordinance Committee, 9:00 am
- 21 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Town Hall Closed



### Town Hall Address

5440 Routes 5 & 20 West  
Canandaigua, NY 14424  
(585) 394-1120

### Email

[Info@TownofCanandaigua.org](mailto:Info@TownofCanandaigua.org)

### Town Hall Hours

Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

### Town Clerk's Office Hours

Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 4:00 pm  
Wed- Open until 7:00 pm

### Court Clerk's Office Hours

Mon, Tue, Wed, and Fri  
9:00 am to 12:00 pm  
Thu 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

### Town Board

Gary Davis  
Linda Dworaczyk  
Terry Fennelly  
Kevin Reynolds

### Town Manager

Doug Finch

### Deputy Town Supervisor

Tina Bloom

### Highway and Water Superintendent

James Fletcher

### Town Assessor

Christopher Lyon, IAO

### Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer

Chris Jensen, P.E., MCP, CFM

### Director of Parks and Recreation

Dennis Brewer

### Town Clerk

Jean Chrisman

### Town Historian

Ray Henry



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