

## **April 2006**

### **The President's Message:**

The April meeting of the Springfield Historical Society will be Thursday, April 13th, 7:00pm at the L Room. We decided that we would need a good laugh by April, so Vice President Don Garlock has in topic is Yankee Humor. She was with us last year and presented a very popular program.

Thank you, Alice Nulsen for providing the refreshments at the January Meeting.

IF YOU HAVE A RED DOT ON YOUR NEWSLETTER, THAT WILL MEAN THAT WE DID NOT RECEIVE paid them in the meantime, please excuse the dot.

The Nominating Committee may be calling you. Please consider becoming an officer or board member new ideas. Help keep the Springfield Historical Society an active body and not follow the ways of o that no longer exist. Help keep us more than a bedroom community. It is not a difficult service to y past. We are pleased to report that the Springfield Historical Society now has 113 members. Thank

At the January meeting, the members voted to change the By-laws, Article III Sect 5 to give the B Nominating Committee rather than choose the new officers themselves. Our first Nominating Comr Alice Nulsen, and Keith Cutting.

Nancy Watkins is clipping out Springfield articles from the " Intertown Record". And also helping wi you, Nancy.

Muriel Tinkham, Nancy Watkins, and Patsy Caswell attended a meeting in January of a group repre towns of Sullivan County to see if there is a need for a genealogical society in the area. We met at and exchanged ideas. If you have a genealogy for your family, the Springfield Historical Society wo

As of January 2006, the Board decided that anyone becoming a life member in 2006 will get a free Springfield".

Some interesting people have lived in Springfield in the summer or year around. From time to time hope to give background on these people. Dr. Paul Abelson

The Abelson family summered in Springfield from the 1930s to around 1956, on the Bowman Road the Vartan Vartanian family. The farm of Deputy Bowman, one of Springfield's early settlers, was c Abelson period, the property extended down to Lake Kolelemook on the east side of Lake Kolelem Abelson's had a bath house located on their beach. It was a pretty sight for years, especially at nig the lake and see the lights of the Abelson summer home on the side of the hill.

In the 1940s, the Abelson family included Dr. and Mrs. Abelson, Helen,(Nellie); three daughters wh

(and later lived in Springfield for awhile), Mrs. Harold Seder, Mrs. Jack Barnett, and eight grandchildren. In the early 1940s, I was invited to play with one of the granddaughters. One of my best memories was treading water on the beach. Paul Abelson was born in Kovno, Lithuania in 1881. He came to the US with his parents when they were young. They lived on the East Side of New York City. He was a hard working young man with many interests. He graduated from the College of the City of New York in 1899. He was able to attend college without a fee and in many ways to the college with his service. Paul Abelson taught history for several years at DeWitt Clinton High School in New York City. While there, he had prepared an exhibit in the Grand Central Palace, showing what New Yorkers were trying to accomplish. He never forgot his roots and prepared "A Yiddish English Dictionary" to help immigrants in the United States.

Dr. Abelson's doctorate was granted from Columbia University in 1906 for graduate work in history. He wrote "The Seven Liberal Arts" which dealt with studies made in the Middle Ages by future priests. Dr. Abelson was known for his ability to open the minds of people whose religion was not his own. He got his LL.D. from New York Law School in 1911.

As a young man, he was interested in the Ethical Cultural Society and their lectures. He and friends would go on mornings, from their home on the East Side to Carnegie Hall to hear speakers such as Dr. Adler. He joined the Downtown Ethical Society and asked for recommendations from Dr. Adler as to how they could improve the East Side neighborhood. He later went on to become a trustee of the Ethical Society of NYC and was also involved in the East Side Settlement.

Dr. Abelson probably became best known for his work as the dean of Industrial Arbitration and was a leading figure in his field. For twenty years, he was the impartial chairman of the doll and soft toy industry of America. He was an arbitrator, mediator, counselor, and friend of both labor and management. He believed in "work and fair play for all working." Before mediating a dispute under collective bargaining, he would insist that the workers' demands be heard without pressure and he would give his decision. He preferred the role of moderator to that of a mediator. Dr. Abelson was also the impartial chairman of many other industries such as the fur, milliners, and hat industries. Dr. Abelson was a Renaissance man involved in many other activities to improve life and peoples' relations. He died when he died in November 1956.

Those of us who remember Dr. Abelson in Springfield, remember him not for his accomplishments but for his personality. He was a kindly man who loved to fish on Lake Kolelemook. He died in November, 1956. He did not use a motor boat but a swivel office chair attached in the stern of his boat where he could anchor and fish in comfort. So if you want to join him, go to the lake and fish.

(There was not much traffic on Lake Kolelemook in the late 1940s, early 1950s, but what a pain in the neck for the girls in the motor boat must have been, making and riding the waves while he was trying to fish....)

Patsy Heath Caswell

References: " Dr. Paul Abelson" A Tribute by David Rosenstein, President, National Association of Deans, 1953. and "Dr. Paul Abelson" by Dr. Henry Neumann Leader, Ethical Culture Society; the eulogy delivered at his funeral on November 6, 1953.

