

ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CADIZ HISTORICAL MONUMENT - HOWE-PRESCOTT HOUSE

On Saturday, May 18th the Ischua Valley Historical Society gathered at the Howe-Prescott Pioneer House on Route 98 South to celebrate the 200th anniversary of this hamlet. The historical sign donated from the Bush family estate was unveiled at this event.

State Senator Catharine Young sent a representative, Bill Heaney, who read a letter praising Cadiz and the important part it played in history. Congressman Tom Reed's representative, Lee James, presented us with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition.

Maggie Fredrickson gave a brief talk on the Underground Railroad and Della Moore from the African American Educational and Cultural Center spoke on Cattaraugus County's efforts to promote historical tourism.

The sign, located in front of the Howe-Prescott House, plays tribute to this area's history. Mrs. Phyllis Baughman Bush left part of her estate to the Society as a tribute and memorial to her husband James Bush who was raised in Cadiz. Some of the funds were used to purchase this sign.

Tours were given of the Pioneer House and barn. Cemetery records were distributed to visitors who were interested in exploring the Cadiz Cemetery, the resting place of soldiers from the American Revolution, War of 1812 and Civil War. Several families who were involved in the Underground Railroad are also buried there.

Bill Buckner, the owner of The Stagecoach Inn, a stop on the Underground Railroad, permitted visitors to go down into the basement to see where the tunnel used by escaping slaves was located before being filled in.



To cellar at the Stagecoach Inn.
Ted Zendarski, Photographer



Sealed up tunnel in the cellar.
Ted Zendarski, Photographer

A wonderful picnic followed with hot dogs, beans and salads. A delicious chocolate cake was served for dessert.

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Christa and Dan Heckathorn presented the Society with a series of old Cadiz pictures that they had discovered and framed. They will be on view at the Howe-Prescott house on the first Sunday of June, July and August from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. Later they will be kept at the Miner's Cabin.

Bill Watkins, the Deputy Historian of Machias, has been working on a book on Cadiz. When completed, it will be available for research at the Cattaraugus County Museum at Lime Lake and the Miner's Cabin in Franklinville.

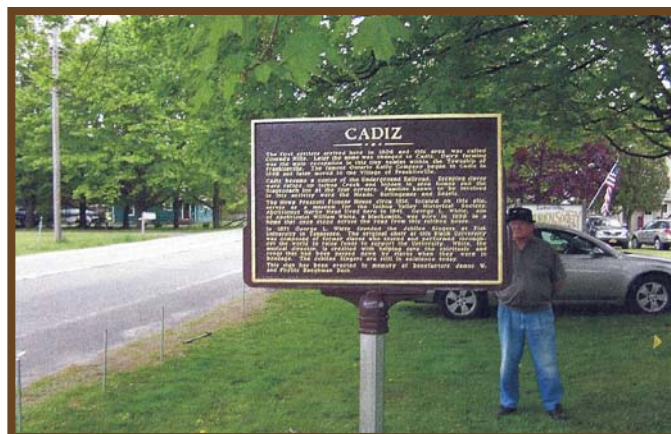
"The first settlers arrived here in 1806 and this area was called Conrad's Mills. Later the name was changed to Cadiz. Dairy farming was the main occupation in this tiny hamlet within the Township of Franklinville. The famous Ontario Knife Company began in Cadiz in 1898 and later moved to the Village of Franklinville.

Cadiz became a center of the Underground Railroad. Escaping slaves were rafted up Ischua Creek and hidden in area homes and the Stagecoach Inn at the four corners. Families known to be involved in this activity were the Meads, Burlingames and Searls.

The Howe Prescott Pioneer House circa 1814, located on this site, serves as a museum for the Ischua Valley Historical Society. Abolitionist Merlin Mead lived here in 1841. George L. White, son of Abolitionist William White a blacksmith, was born in 1838 in a home that once stood across the road from this saltbox house.

In 1871 George L. White founded the Jubilee Singers at Fisk University in Tennessee. The original choir at this Black University was composed of former slaves who toured and performed throughout the world to raise funds to support the University. White, the musical director, is credited with helping save the spirituals and songs that had been passed down by slaves when they were in bondage. The Jubilee Singers are still in existence today.

This sign has been erected in memory of benefactors James W. and Phyllis Baughman Bush."



Ted Zendarski, Photographer