Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway



Remembering Ned Holmes

1935 - 2020

Edward “Ned” Holmes was President of the Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway from 2003 to 2013 and a champion of the Greenway both before and after this term of service. After Ned’s passing in 2020, the FOGVG Newsletter published a series of articles in remembrance. They are gathered here in one place for easy reference.

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Remembering Ned Holmes

Ned Holmes

1935-2020

By Fran Gotcsik

We are saddened to note the passing of Edward "Ned" Holmes, one of the Genesee Valley Greenway's long-time champions, first as the Natural Resources Supervisor at NYSDEC Region 8 and then, in retirement, as FOGVG President from 2003 to 2013.



Ned Holmes on his 80th birthday, April 2015. Taken by his daughter Elin Orman.

I think of Ned as the Greenway "seedsman." In the mid-1980s when greenways and multi-use trails were, for most, an unknown, he, along with members of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, planted the seed by suggesting that NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) use state 1986 Environmental Bond Act funds to purchase the remaining 80 miles of abandoned Pennsylvania rail corridor. Negotiations began with then landowner, RG&E, but did not progress far enough for a funding application to be submitted. (NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, or OPRHP, had purchased most of the 10 miles of rail corridor in Monroe County in 1984.)

However, Ned never gave up on his vision and was ready and willing "to nourish and tend the soil" when nonprofit Parks & Trails New York introduced the idea of a 90-mile multi-use trail again in 1991. Ned was an active member of the original steering committee that set in motion the Greenway's development.

In those early Greenway days, as DEC Natural Resource Supervisor for Region 8 and because of the respect he had at all levels of the agency, Ned ensured the greenway idea took root. I remember one instance when, early on, Real Property had said there could be no Greenway without a full metes and bounds survey of the whole 90 miles, which would take at least 20 years to complete. Ned worked to make sure we got beyond that impasse.

When the Friends of the Greenway was formed in 1993 and it then entered into a partnership with NYS DEC and OPRHP in 1994, Ned's inherent politeness, patience, fairness, and concern for others helped facilitate and nourish that relationship. In the early 1990s, a nonprofit partnering with two state agencies was a new concept, but Ned embraced the arrangement and gently taught the Friends much about working with state agencies, along with hunting, long-distance bicycling, being a good steward of wildlife and the land, and just how to be a better self.

The depth of Ned's commitment to the Greenway was evident when he retired and took the helm of the Friends. Ever committed to the success of the Greenway and of the Friends, as president of FOGVG Ned continued to work from the "outside" to advance the Greenway's progress. Not an easy task back then, but Ned and Jim Hutton biked the entire trail a half-dozen times so he could speak directly about the challenges that needed to be addressed.

Ned always believed we would achieve his long-held vision for the Greenway. He knew about the recent TAP and Wilson funding that is now helping to make many improvements. I am sad he will never be able to get on his bike and experience those wonderful changes, but I am grateful for all he did over more than 30 years to set the achievements of today in motion. We all owe him so much.

"We were all greatly saddened by Ned's passing and are planning ways to honor his commitment and service to the GVG."

Joan Schumaker, President, FOGVG

Remembering Ned Holmes continued...

Riding the Greenway with Ned

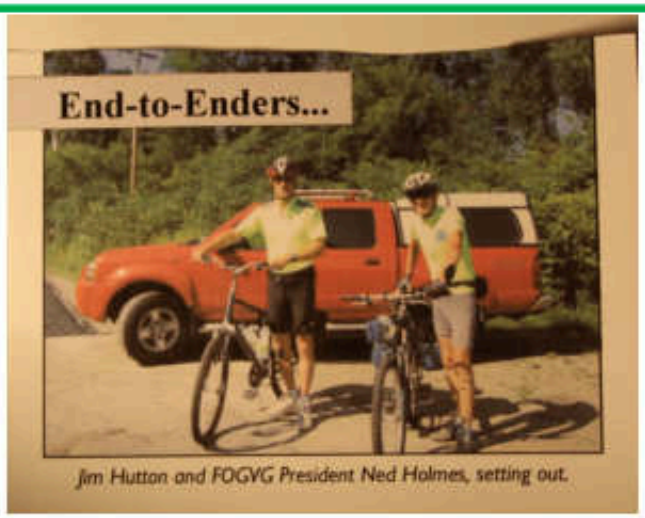
Jim Hutton

Between 2007 and 2012 Ned Holmes and I biked the Greenway end-to-end six times. Some of those rides were chronicled in the *Greenway News* at the time. With Ned's passing I want to remember him by retelling the experience I enjoyed with him on these annual rides. This the first of three articles telling that story.

I believe the first time I met Ned Holmes was when I became a member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway (FOGVG). I had been biking the Greenway by myself, and occasionally with my wife, for several years before that, and had attended a couple of the FOGVG events. Someone from the board obviously noticed me at these, and assumed I was interested in the Greenway. They must have introduced themselves to me at one of these events, because shortly thereafter I was invited to become a member of the Board.

I had ridden my bike on the open sections of the Greenway south of Rochester and had begun exploring the unopened sections as far south as Portageville. Of course, Ned was very interested in exploring the Greenway as well. Thereafter, we began exploring the Greenway together to its end by bike. The first few times we drove to a starting point, unloaded our bikes, rode 8 or 10 miles one way, and then returned to where we started. After a while we each began driving our vehicles. We parked one at the end of that day's ride, returned to the starting point with the other car and began the day's trip from there. This method effectively doubled the length of trail we could explore in one day.

Several memorable events occurred on these one-day rides. I remember carrying our bikes across the closed bridge north of Rossburg before it was removed and inadvertently getting on the Conrail right-of way south of Jackson Hill Road, and ending up a couple miles from the Greenway at the route 305 underpass, north of Cuba. Another time, when we returned to where we had parked our car at Whiskey Bridge, south of Portageville, there were several New York State Police cars and troopers there. One immediately came to us and asked where we had been, and whether we had seen any suspicious people



Jim Hutton and FOGVG President Ned Holmes, setting out.

Vintage photo taken by Louise Holmes, and published in the September 2007 issue of the Greenway News.

on the trail. They were investigating reports of someone using the Greenway to access corn fields, where they were allegedly growing marijuana. I guess we didn't look like the type of people who would be in that line of business. The worst thing that happened to us on one of these trips was arriving at our end point one day, and Ned discovering that he had left his car keys back at our starting point. Ned, being very gracious and a stronger biker than me, willingly volunteered to ride his bike all the way back to our starting point, and get my car, while I waited patiently for his return. Obviously, that turned out to be a very long day on the trail.

After a couple years of these daily bike rides exploring the Greenway, Ned and I decided to try an end-to-end ride. We made our first end-to-end ride in 2007, and then every year thereafter through 2012. I would have continued, but I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in January 2013. Ned asked me to go with him again, as my Parkinson's disease had not affected my biking as yet. However, I was mostly concerned about falling off my bike, as some of the unopened sections of the trail were pretty rough. Therefore, I had to decline his request. I know Ned was very disappointed, but I did not think it was prudent to attempt a 3-day bike trip at that time. However, Ned did ride it again in 2013, accompanied by Davies Nagle.

Riding the Greenway with Ned

Jim Hutton

Jim shares another installment with us of his bike trips on the Greenway with Ned Holmes, a recently departed wonderful contributor to our early history.

I began riding my bike on the Greenway with Ned Holmes shortly after joining the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Genesee Greenway in 2003. Initially, we did one-day rides exploring the Greenway section-by-section from Genesee Valley Park in Rochester to West Cuba Road. We did our first end-to-end ride in 2007. Ned and I biked the Greenway end-to-end a total of six times over the next five years. Some of those rides were chronicled in the *Greenway News* at the time.

With Ned's passing I am remembering him by retelling the experiences we enjoyed on these rides. The first of these articles appeared in the Fall 2020 edition of the *Greenway News*. In that article I told about some of our experiences on the one-day rides exploring the Greenway. I will now begin remembering our end-to-end rides.

According to the FOGVG 2009 trail map, it is 96 miles from the beginning of the Greenway in Rochester to its end point in Hinsdale. However, due to detours the length of our ride would be about 103 miles. We decided to ride from south to north, since the trail would be mostly downhill going on that direction (see Genesee Valley Canal profile following this

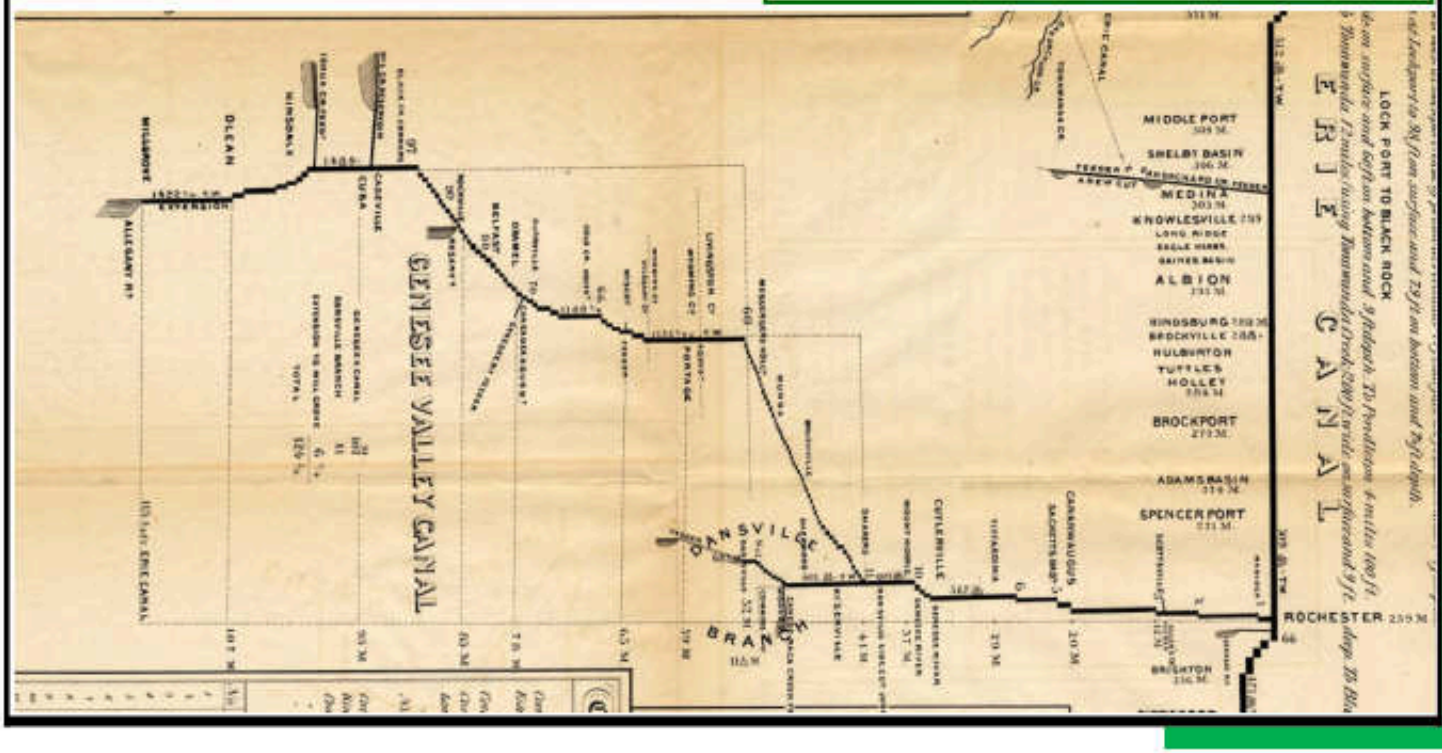
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Canal Elevation

A scale profile of the old Genesee Valley Canal (below) shows the major change in elevation our canal travelled, from a couple hundred feet above sea level at Rochester to 1489 feet at the summit near its south end. While the profile of the Erie Canal made sense, since the canal followed a natural level route across the state, many of the feeder canals from the south had to climb and descend major changes in elevation inland from the Erie's relatively level route. This is why travel on the Genesee Valley Canal included 90 locks over a short distance, and forced users to spend hours passing only a mile or so in the steeper sections. Filling and emptying each lock took time!

In other words, it's easy to see that many of the north-south feeder canals should never have been built, since their topography didn't permit efficient travel, but the fever to get such attractive transportation to fairly isolated villages drove the brief flurry of canal-building after the Erie proved so successful. This elevation profile is from an old poster that showed the Erie across the wide top; you can see a sliver of it to the right of our canal.

— Irene Szabo



Riding with Ned continued from page 3 ...



Jim, left, and Ned. Photo by Louise Holmes

story, which has a remarkable rise for a canal). Our starting point would be at the end of the short trail section off North Main Street in the village of Hinsdale. We decided to make the ride over three days, spending the first night at the Inn at Houghton Creek, and the second at the Country Inn & Suites in Mt. Morris.

My wife Ann and I moved to Connecticut in 2005. Therefore, I had to travel back to the Rochester area to ride the Greenway with Ned. The schedule typically was to drive to Rochester on Saturday, stay at a friend's house over the weekend, and bike the Greenway from Monday through Wednesday. Some years Ann came with me, but many times I made the trip alone. Louise Holmes was usually the one who drove us to Hinsdale with our bikes and saddle bags early Monday morning. Ann drove us a couple times also.

The first day of our end-to-end rides took us from Hinsdale to Houghton. There were very few open sections of the Greenway in this area at first. We usually stopped in Cuba to buy something for lunch. One year we bought our lunch at the Subway shop. I got my sandwich first and went outside to wait for Ned. However, when he didn't come out for several minutes, I looked inside to see him sitting at a table eating his sandwich. I said, "I thought we were going to wait until we reached the trail before eating our lunch." He said he was hungry and couldn't wait. I sat down and enjoyed an early lunch with him.

During the first several of our end-to-end rides none of the bridges over Black Creek south and north of Route 305, or the Rockville Lake outlet, had been replaced yet. Therefore, the first section of officially open trail in 2007 started at the Rockville Bridge over Black Creek, which had been installed in 2002 at the north end of Rockville Lake. We ate our lunch there several times. One time there was a group of young people who were having lunch also. After eating lunch they were lying on the ground resting before setting out again. A young woman approached and presented me with a four-leaf clover, and immediately turned around and left. Ned said, "What does that mean?" I replied that I had no idea. I still have that clover, and periodically wonder "what it meant," if anything.

From the Rockville Bridge the trail was open to north of the Village of Oramel. However, there was no bridge over the unnamed creek just south of Gleason Hill Road in the first years of our end-to-end rides . We had to carry our bikes, with their load of saddlebags down a fairly steep slope across

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Rockville Bridge

Rockville Bridge was installed December 17, 2002, on a below zero morning. The steel framework was supplied by the Allegany County Dept. of Public Works, fabricated in two halves and then assembled at the site. They brought in a crane to set the bridge in place. Much credit to the county for their support, and in particular Dick Young, who was the Superintendent of Public Works.

The bridge decking came from the Seneca Trail Resource Conservation and Development Council in Ellicottville. The decking was originally intended for a pedestrian bridge elsewhere, which never happened, so the decking ended up being stored until it was offered to the Greenway.

We held a ribbon cutting there on National Trails Day 2003.

— Ron Abraham



Rod Carpenter, then President of the Friends, at the Rockville Bridge before the June 2003 official opening, during which it rained, of course.
Photo by Joan Schumaker

Riding with Ned continued ...



Ned at Tibbetts Hill. Tibbetts Hill is a trailhead north of Cuba, the start of an especially nice wooded swampy section of several miles. Photo by Jim Hutton.

the creek and up the slope on the other side. You had to be pretty dedicated to the Greenway, and much younger and stronger than I am now, to do this. At some point we discovered an ice-cream shop on Route 19 not far from the Greenway, down Crawford Creek Road. It became a regular stop for us every year after that. North of Oramel we had to take Route 19, except for a short section of open trail north of Caneadea, the rest of the way to Houghton.

We arrived at the Inn at Houghton Creek each year sweaty, dirty, and tired. We had gotten up pretty early (at least for me, not Ned), had an 80 mile, one and one-half hour car ride, and biked and man-handled our bikes almost 30 miles for over five and one-half hours. And we learned that Houghton was a dry town. I solved that problem the second year by stowing four cans of beer in my saddle bags. I can still see Ned's surprised look when shown those cans. After that I think we took turns bringing beer for our stay in Houghton. Dinner in Houghton, other than the college, was limited to the China Star Restaurant. The same woman owned it the entire six years of my end-to-end rides with Ned. I do not remember staying up very late before going to bed, although Ned always beat me to sleep.

I will tell the story of the second day of our rides in the next edition of the *Greenway News*.

News from the Cuba Trail Town Committee

Michelle Conklin, Manager of the Palmer Opera House

The Cuba Greenway Trail Committee, along with the Palmer Opera House and the Cuba Memorial Library, is planning events for Earth Day and I Love Our Parks Day. Earth Day is April 22nd and we are planning on a walk and a children's activity that will be provided by the Library. Please stay tuned as more details are forthcoming. The first weekend in May has been dedicated to the I Love My Parks Observance. This year we will be doing a work bee. Items that we will be working on will include painting of the gates, removal of graffiti and general maintenance of the Trail to prepare for the 2021 season. For further details please go to www.palmeroperahouse.com, www.cubafriends.us and www.parks.ny.gov.

The Cuba Trail Town Committee is ready to announce that we are going to utilize Cuba's Genesee Valley Canal Railroad Freight Station for our Trail Town Gateway. The station is owned by The Cuba Friends of Architecture and is currently placed at Empire City Farms which is owned by Bonnie Blair.

Standing majestically on 102 acres in Cuba are the McKinney Stables of Empire City Farms, more commonly referred to as the "Block Barn." Nicknamed for its unique concrete construction, this fire-resistant stable measures 347 feet long, fifty feet wide, and is supported by an 8 foot solid concrete foundation. The immense roof is covered in terra-cotta tile manufactured in Alfred.

Completed in 1909 and financed by New York City pawnbroker, William Simpson, Jr., the Block Barn was once home to world famous trotters, McKinney and Axworthy. In addition to Mr. Simpson's passion for breeding and racing horses, he also introduced Shetland ponies to America, electricity to Cuba, and offered printing services through his family paper, the Boulton Press.

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Riding the Greenway with Ned, Part III

Jim Hutton

Jim shares another installment with us of his bike trips on the Greenway with Ned Holmes, a recently departed wonderful contributor to our early history.

END-TO-END RIDES (DAY 2)

Ned Holmes and I biked the Genesee Valley Greenway from end-to-end six times between 2007 and 2012. Ned passed away on July 31, 2020. I enjoyed greatly the time we spent together on these bike rides. I am telling the story of these end-to-end rides through a series of articles in this newsletter as my way of remembering and honoring Ned.

The first of my articles appeared in the Fall 2020 edition of the Greenway News. It told about the one-day rides Ned and I did while exploring the Greenway for several years prior to making our first end-to-end ride in 2007. The story of a typical first day of our annual, three-day, end-to end rides was the subject of my second article. It was in the Spring 2021 Greenway News. This article picks up where that one ended, by telling about a typical second day.

We had gone to bed early, since we were very tired from traveling by car from Ned and Louise Holmes' home south of Hemlock to the end of the trail in Hinsdale, followed by riding our bikes about 30 miles to Houghton. Ned always went to sleep first and was the first one of us up in the morning. He was always up and ready to go before me. However, an early start was necessary if we were going reach our destination in Mt. Morris, almost 40 miles from Houghton, before dinner time.

There wasn't any place to get breakfast in Houghton. That meant we had to ride the four miles to Fillmore, the next town up the trail, on empty stomachs. We rode on Route 19, since there was no open section of the Greenway between Houghton and Fillmore back then. My memory is that it was almost always cold, and sometimes raining at that early hour. It was not a very pleasant part of our day.

There was a short section of trail that was rideable from where it crossed Route 19, just south of the village of Fillmore, to Cold Creek. For the first few years, we rode this short section, since Ned always wanted to check out as much of the trail as possible. Since there was no bridge over Cold Creek, we rode the short distance back to Route 19 (South Genesee Street). We stopped at the Mini Mart (now Hanson Farms) in the center of Fillmore for "breakfast" and also purchased sandwiches and drinks to take with us for lunch.

After doing this for several years we decided to ride directly into Fillmore on South Genesee Street to the Mini Mart. Much to our surprise we came to what is now Shannon's Riverside Restaurant, where we could get a real breakfast. We enjoyed good breakfasts of pancakes, bacon, and freshly brewed coffee there. Unfortunately, the restaurant closed after a couple years, and we had to revert to getting our "breakfast" at the Mini Mart.

From the Mini Mart it was a short distance up West Main Street to where there was another rideable section of the Greenway. It went about one and one-half miles north to the intersection of Dugway Road and Route 19A on the north side of Fillmore. It was then back onto Route 19A. We turned off Route 19A onto West River Road and followed it along the Genesee River, through the little village of Rossburg, and back onto Route 19A. Now all of this is open trail.

We only had one flat tire during all of our end-to-end rides. Ned had a flat tire one year shortly after starting on West River Road. Of course, Ned had all the tools and a spare tube with him to fix it … or so he thought. Unfortunately, the spare tube he had with him was the wrong one for the tire on the bike he was riding. Luckily, my spare tube was exactly the size he needed to repair his tire. I readily gave him my spare, but kiddingly told him that he would have to pay me the equivalent of the cost to call a repair shop and have them deliver a tube for it. He quickly realized that I was not serious, proceeded to install the new tube, and we were back going again.

Back on Route 19A we crossed over Wiscoy Creek, crossed the Allegheny/Wyoming County Line, and passed the Blue Stone House. We took different routes over the years through or around Portageville to Letchworth State Park. There was (1) an unopened but rideable section of the Greenway starting at River Road and going under Whiskey Bridge to Route 436 (Main Street in the Village of Portageville, (2) an official Greenway detour that went across Whiskey Bridge to Bolton Road, left onto Pennycook Road to Route 436, and (3) continuing on Route 19A into Portageville where we turned onto Route 436. None of these routes was great for biking due to the hills we had to climb, but now there are level sections of Greenway for you to ride or walk.

The last few years of our rides we settled on the third option. I always dreaded the thought of peddling my bike up the steep hill going out of Portageville. I think it is about an 8% grade, which is about the limit of my climbing ability on a bike. Of course, Ned went up it with little problem, while I

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Riding with Ned…

(Continued from page 6)

always struggled to make it to the top. I think I made it every time, finding Ned at the park entrance waiting for me. The good news is that it proved I was fully recovered from the heart attack and open-heart surgery I had several years earlier.

We entered Letchworth State Park at the Parade Grounds entrance. It is downhill from there on the Parade Grounds Road to the Greenway entrance. At the time of our end-to-end rides this was the first officially open section of the Greenway since we had left Houghton. It goes over two miles through a mature forest on a ridge high above the Genesee River. It ends at the next trail detour on Williams Road. The trail detour was necessitated due to flooding of the right-away from beaver dams. It is about one-half mile up a slight grade on the gravel surface of Williams Road to Short Tract Road, where the trail begins again. Again, this is all good trail by now.

From this point to Route 408 north of Nunda is one of the easiest sections of trail to ride (if you are headed north). The trail goes down a steady grade along the Oakland locks. We usually ate our lunch on a bench there. Continuing on after lunch we made a short detour to a convenience store on Route 408 north of Nunda. We then followed the trail through the Triple Creek Golf Course, carefully walking our bikes around the practice putting green under the watchful eyes of some golfers. Emerging from the Triple Creek golf course we came to the next detour onto Pentagass and Creek Roads.

Further up Creek Road the trail is open again from there to Dudley Road before the next detour. This detour goes around the Keshequa Creek Gorge, where the Greenway right-of-way has been washed out. It used Dudley Road back to Creek Road, and then right onto Barron Road into the Village of Tuscarora. There is a steep hill going down into Tuscarora. Ned not only was good at riding a bike up hills, but down as well. I chickened out and applied my brakes at about 30 miles per hour. Ned never used his brakes going down this hill and, therefore, was waiting for me in Tuscarora. My memory is that his speed was as high as 40 miles per hour.

The detour turned left onto Main Street in Tuscarora, which becomes Dutch Street north of the village. Of course, what goes down must go up on a trail. There is a very steep hill coming out of Tuscarora. I never even attempted to ride my bike up it, and I don't think Ned ever succeeded in riding his bike all the way to the top. The detour took us north on Dutch Street, right on Moyer Road, to Ridge Road, and Route 36 just north of Sonyea, whereas now the trail goes by road to Sonyea State Forest, over a pleasant dirt road ride, and then into Groveland Correctional Facility. We experienced a somewhat severe thunderstorm while biking on Moyer Road in our last year. Moyer Road is at the highest point for miles around and is nowhere to be during a thunderstorm. We found a farmer's barn that was open and sat out the storm inside. We stopped a couple times along the lower end of Moyer Road to read the historical signs for the former Groveland Shaker Colony and Craig Colony for Epileptics.

We picked up the trail again along Route 36 just north of Sonyea. The trail was pretty rough until it got to the Village of Mt. Morris. It was very good through Mt. Morris, ending at the Genesee River. We always spent the second night at the Country Inn & Suites in Mt. Morris. It was always good to see it as we had biked for eight hours over 40 miles on our second day. The desk clerk to the Inn frequently told us about their exercise room and pool. Needless to say, we weren't interested in the exercise room, but I did use the pool a couple times.

After showering and resting we always went to the Genesee River Restaurant next door for drinks and dinner. I always carried a pair of loafers, slacks, and golf shirt with me in my saddle bags. Ned, however, being a much more experienced biker, travelled as light as possible. He went to dinner in his biking shorts and shoes, but no one seemed to notice.

I always looked forward to that night, with the opportunity of conversation with Ned over drinks and dinner. Needless to say, we were in bed very soon after returning from dinner.



A lovely picture of the Genesee River where it leaves the Letchworth gorge and drops over an abutment to flow beneath NY 36 in downtown Mt. Morris. Now there is a wonderful pedestrian bridge for our trail that crosses the river here, atop the old stone abutment rising from the river in this shot.

Remembering Ned Holmes
Greenway End-to-End Rides Part IV

By James C. Hutton



Jim Hutton, left, Ned Holmes, right. Photo by Louise Holmes.

Ned Holmes and I biked the Genesee Valley Greenway from end-to-end six times between 2007 and 2012. Ned passed away on July 31, 2020. I enjoyed greatly the time we spent together on these bike rides. I wrote a series of three articles describing our first end-to-end ride in 2007. They appeared in the Greenway News in late 2007 and early 2008. I am honoring my memory of Ned by writing this series of articles about our end-to-end rides.

The first, or Part I, of these articles, appeared in the Fall 2020 edition of the Greenway News. It told about the one-day rides we did while exploring the Greenway over several years, prior to making our first end-to-end ride in 2007. Part II was the story of a typical first day of our annual, three-day, end-to end rides. It was in the Spring 2021 Greenway News. Part III, telling about a typical second day, appeared in the Fall 2021 Greenway News. My original intention had been to write Part IV, the story of a typical third day of our annual rides, immediately following the publication of Part III. Unfortunately, that did not happen for a variety of reasons. Now, with some prodding from Joan Schumaker, I am finally getting around to writing Part IV.

Day 3 always started at the Genesee Country Inn and Suites in Mt. Morris, where we had spent another night sleeping with our bikes beside our beds. As usual, Ned was up and dressed at what I thought was an ungodly hour (about 6:00 a.m.). His dressing and showering normally woke me up. And, when he saw I was awake I remember him telling me we had to get going because there was a long bike ride ahead of us. The good news was the Country Inn and Suites always had an excellent buffet breakfast. There was everything from cold cereal to waffles. There were also fresh apples and cookies we could take for consumption during the ride ahead.

The Greenway is essentially flat from Mt. Morris to Genesee Valley Park in Rochester; and by 2007 there were only two detours in this section of the Greenway Trail. Therefore, it was unlike the first two days, from Hinsdale to Mt. Morris, where we had several significant detours onto roads, and a couple of steep hills to climb. In other words, it was a relatively easy bike ride, although on unpaved surfaces, of about 33 miles.*

We would always be on our bikes and on the road by 7:30 a.m. From 2007 to 2011 our ride from Mt. Morris started by turning right onto the Route 36 bridge across the Genesee River. Since November 2011, a crossing has allowed bikers and hikers to

Continued on next page.

**As of 2022, the GVGSP trail between Rochester and Route 5 in Avon/Caledonia has been replaced with a stone dust surface.*

cross without joining automobile traffic on Route 36. We then turned right onto Route 37, River Road, and after passing under the railroad underpass, we would turn right onto a farm crossing which intersected the Greenway Trail. The trail goes straight north from there along route 37, for about 2.5 miles to Route 20 in Cuylerville. It was often dark and misty in the early morning along this stretch of the rial. Every rabbit in Livingston County always seemed to be out nibling on the grass along here.

One year, Ned wanted to check the benches that had been placed along the Greenway, starting in this section. Ned was very conscientious in that he wanted to assure that all the planned benches were in place, and in good condition. But believe it or not, it was easy to miss a bench, even though we had a map showing the location for all of them. I remember Ned's frustration when we would come, for example, to Bench No. 8, even though the last one we had seen was No. 6. Ned dutifully made notes on every bench in a little notebook.

It was during one of the last years of our rides that a new Information Kiosk was being constructed on the north side of Route 20A in Cuylerville. Of course, this necessitated a stop for another inspection by Ned, and noting the results in his little notebook. The trail passes through some woods, but mostly farmland north of Cuylerville. We stopped one year to examine a section of the trail that had been flooded. I believe the flooding was at what was called Tracy's Basin. If I correctly remember, the section of the trail south of Chandler Road used to be closed when there were planes flying during the Geneseo Air Show. There is a farm at the Chandler Road crossing where the annual Greenway Horse Ride started from for several years. It is a relatively short distance from Chandler Road to Piffard. The Yard of Ale restaurant is on the west side of the Greenway at Piffard, at the crossing of Route 63. Several FOGVG Board members met there several times for planning meetings one winter. However, Ned and I always arrived there on our end-to-end rides much too early for lunch.

North of Route 63 we passed by the Arkema's Geneseo Production plant on the right side of the trail. About one and one-quarter mile north of Piffard we saw where the Genesee and Wyoming Railroad crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad (now the Genesee Valley Greenway). Also, we saw an original Pennsylvania Railroad Milepost 27 south of York Landing. One year there was a detour after leaving Piffard, due to a large wash-out of the trail just south of York Landing. The detour took us west on Caledonia Road for a short distance, and then turned right onto River Road. It went by the Abbey of the Genesee before turning right into York Landing and back onto the Greenway.

We would normally stop at York Landing to inspect the Greenway information kiosk. There are normally some people at York Landing, and we would chat briefly with them. North of York Landing there is a stock farm where the trail comes out of the woods. North of York Landing we passed over Brown's Creek, where there had been a very large washout that cost about $300,000 to repair. About one and one-half miles north of Fowlerville Road we usually stopped to inspect the remains of Genesee Valley Canal Lock 5. The next major road crossing is Route 20, west of Avon. I think it is here Ned found the last of the benches, hidden among the weeds. Between Routes 20 and the next road, Route 5, the Valley Sand & Gravel Company is adjacent to the Greenway for much of the way.



Ned at Tibbetts Hill. Tibbetts Hill is a trailhead north of Cuba, the start of an especially nice wooded swampy section of several miles. Photo by Jim Hutton.

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Continued from "Pauline Burnes."

Bottom middle: Pauline Burnes' "selfie" with Becky Lewis and Martha Edmonds, members of the York Trail Town Committee, exploring a trail in the Little Italy Nature Preserve in the Town of York on a cold and windy May 4 day along with Davies Nagel (not pictured).

The group was discussing future trail linkages from the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park to the Little Italy Preserve Trail and other trails in York. The Little Italy Trail, for example, could be extended to link the GVGSP to the Groveland Secondary Trail, also known as the "Phoebe Snow Trail," which presently extends from Rte. 63 in York to Rte. 20 in the Genesee County town of Alexander.

Bottom Right: On June 6th, Corrin Strong (Landowner) led Pauline (far right) along the northern section of the new Geneseo Loop Trail with some members of the Geneseo Genesee Valley Trail Town Team.

(L-R); Jennifer Apple (Assoc. Professor of Biology, SUNY-Geneseo), Dan DeZarn (Director of Sustainability, SUNY-Geneseo), Louise Wadsworth (Geneseo Downtown Coordinator), and Keith Walters (Village Trustee and Owner, Gallery in the Valley). A Parks & Trails New York Trail Towns grant will allow the team to erect new signage this year. Photo Credit: Meg Reitz (Geneseo GVTT Member and Assoc. Director of Resident Life, SUNY Geneseo).

The Trail Town Coordinator's efforts are supported with funding awarded to Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway from the New York State Park and Trail Partnership Grants and New York's Environmental Protection Fund. The Park and Trail Partnership Grants are administered by Parks & Trails New York, in partnership with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. A profile of Pauline and summary of the GVTT Initiative appears on p.4 of the FOGVG Spring 2023 Newsletter

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Continued from "Remembering Ned Holmes."

We had to go up and down earthen ramps to cross Route 5. After crossing Route 5, we continued our ride on the Greenway towards Scottsville. About one mile past Route 5, we saw the former bridge abutments where the Erie Railroad crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad. The Erie Railroad right-of-way east into Avon has been developed into a rail trail. About 4 miles further on we saw the bridge abutments where the New York Central Railroad had crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad. Of course, the major crossing was the Lehigh Valley Railroad, at what was called Wadsworth Junction. There is an interpretative sign there with pictures of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, and particularly the large trestle to the east side.

We continued our ride northward on the Greenway across Route 251 to Canawaugus Park on the south side of Scottsville. For several years we ate a picnic lunch at one of the tables in the park. However, we discovered it was a short ride up onto Main Street in Scottsville. We bought our lunch, and refilled our water bottles, at Salvatore's Old-Fashioned Pizzeria. From there it is a short way back onto the Greenway for the final part of our ride to the Genesee Valley Park in Rochester.

I had planned on this being the last article in my series on Ned and my end-to-end bike rides on the Genesee Valley Greenway. However, given the amount of detail I have included, and wanting to do justice to our final ride in 2012, I am now planning on finishing the story in a Part V. My goal is to complete it in time for inclusion in the next issue of the Greenway News.



Current Greenway Volunteer Opportunities

Contact: trail@fogvg.org

Gate Painting:

Volunteers are currently working in Mt. Morris and Nunda. There are also gates in Rochester, Caledonia, Piffard, Portage, Belfast, Black Creek and Hinsdale in need of painting.

Flower Planting:

Scottsville Greenway volunteers are welcome to plant flowers in GVGSP planters on the trail between Scottsville and Genesee Valley Park.