

# WALWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

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[Walworth Museum: 2257 Academy Street, P.O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568](#)  
[WHS Website: www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org)

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**President's Message** By Jessie Keymel

The WHS recently received a package in the mail from former Walworth resident Bob Wignall of Colorado Springs, CO. The package contained the photo of the Walworth High School Class of 1948 and arrived in time for us to share it at the Alumni Banquet. Thank you, Bob. The museum does not have photos of the graduating classes of 1943 and 1944. Does anyone know if photos were taken during the war years?

This is not the first time Walworth memorabilia has come from out of state. Several years ago, when Electa Wilson was visiting family in Westfield, Mass., she was given 1907 surveyor's photos of Walworth. The pictures were found in an attic with surveys of other neighboring New York towns. The survey of our town was taken to decide on a possible route for the railroad. The railroad was never built, but the photos have become a centerpiece of information in our Museum.

We have used them in our walking and driving tours. We have used them to show the children what our town looked like at the turn of the century. We have used them to help us understand about the orchards and dry houses that were unique to our area. We have used them when people come to the museum to check the history of their homes in our township. Thanks to the people who had the foresight to save this great record of life as it was in 1907 and pass it on to us.

**May 19 Meeting** By Dorothy French

Monday, May 19, was our annual meeting, which included a pot luck supper, election of officers, a presentation by members of the Walworth Food Pantry, and recognition of the Food Pantry's service to the community. A separate story about the Community Service Award appears on page 4 of this newsletter. John Traas offered the blessing before the meal.

A slate of officers was presented by Becky Appleman. Re-elected were president Jessie Keymel, vice-president Bob Mogray, secretary Judy McMillan, and trustee Dorothy French. Larry Ruth was elected to replace retiring trustee Roger Keymel. They – along with trustees Gene Bavis, Becky Appleman, Nancy Bel, and Joyce Finney, treasurer Mary Jane Devlin, and curator Kay Scott - share responsibility for the operation of the Walworth Historical Society.

**Red Dot Alert** By Mary Jane Devlin

Dues are due. If your newsletter has a red dot on the mailing label, your dues expired on May 1, 2008. An electronic e-mail will be sent if you receive your newsletter via the internet. Time goes by so fast, it is hard to keep up with everything.

Our fiscal year runs from May 1 to April 30. The dues are as follows: Student \$5, Single \$10, family \$15, Supporting \$25, Corporate \$30, Sponsor \$50, Patron \$100, Life \$150, and Benefactor \$150.

Dues may be paid by mail to the address on the front of this newsletter. Thank you for your continued support of Walworth Historical Society. With your support we will continue to preserve the history of Walworth.

**Festival in the Park** By Bob Mogray

This year's Festival in the Park will be held on Friday and Saturday, August 22 and 23. The Walworth Historical Society will again participate in the parade which starts at 7:00 pm Friday. The theme for this year's parade will be Agriculture in Walworth. As usual, for anyone who would like to help, we will meet at President Jessie Keymel's house, 4836 Walworth-Ontario Road, to assemble the float, at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, August 19. We need as much help as possible, so if you are free, please stop in to assist.

It should be noted that this year's Festival in the Park will be only two days, Friday and Saturday. We will again have a display booth at Ginegaw Park and will share a tent with the Friends of the Walworth-Seely Public Library. If you have some free time on Friday night or Saturday and would like to help at our tent, please call President Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205.

## **We Need Help!** By Jessie Keymel

May 5 and 7 were the dates of our annual spring clean up at the museum. This year we moved the dates to the evening with the hope we would have more people come to help. Unfortunately, the time did not make any difference; we had more chores than people to do the work. Perhaps if there is a To Do list posted, allowing members to do some chores when it is convenient for them, we can spread the work out more evenly.

1. **Paint the back of the War Memorial sign.**
2. **Weed the base of the War Memorial.**
3. **The fence also needs painting.**
4. **Mulch the area around the ornamental trees.**
5. **The entrance area needs to be cleaned**
6. **Prime and paint the entrance area rail**

The windows and curtains have been washed, the inside walls and cabinets were cleaned, the bathrooms and floors were sterilized, the gardens were cleaned up, and hardware cloth and mulch were laid in the gardens. There is a promise to prune the trees and shrubs at the proper time, and Gene Bavis has had a couple of calls from people who will help him with the mowing.

We pride ourselves on our museum's appearance and – like any home – we need to maintain it. That's why the volunteers are so important.

## **Visit Our Museum This Summer** By Becky Appleman

There's something for everyone at the Walworth Museum, and summer is the perfect time for a visit. Youngsters can check out toys played with by children not so long ago. Adults interested in genealogy have access to scrapbooks donated by Dorothy Petty, Anna May, and the Walworth Chamber of Commerce. Local cemetery records have been catalogued by Doug Churchill for easy access, in addition to obituaries and wedding/engagement information. Our museum is located at 2257 Academy Street and is open on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons from 2 – 4 PM June through September. Appointments for other days can be made by contacting Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or Nancy Bel at 315-986-1164.

## **"Shop For a Cause"** By Becky Appleman

At the June 16 WHS Board meeting, the trustees voted to participate in the Macy's "Shop for a Cause" program on Saturday, September 20. This is a nation-wide program sponsored by Macy's department stores.

The program works as follows. Macy's gives an organization the coupons. The organization sells the coupons for \$5.00 each and keeps the money. This coupon then entitles the purchaser to a 20% shopping discount on September 20 on all men's, women's and kids' apparel, fine and fashion jewelry, bed and bath items, housewares, frames, luggage, china, crystal and silver, all kitchen and personal care electrics and technology items. Also there is a 10% discount on all regular and sale furniture, mattresses, and rugs. In addition, everyone who opens a Macy's charge account on September 20 receives an additional 20% off their purchases. This offer EXCLUDES cosmetics and fragrances as well as designer handbags and designer shoes. Please check with the store if in doubt before your purchase.

The Board felt this was a good method to earn \$5.00 donations for the Walworth Historical Society and a real shopping benefit for the coupon purchasers. Plan on starting your Christmas shopping early and helping the WHS at the same time. It would be great if every member would purchase at least one coupon or ask a friend or neighbor for support also.

Tickets can be purchased from any officer or trustee listed on page 1 . We will also be selling these at our WHS booth at the Walworth Festival in the Park on August 22 and 23. Please stop by and support the Walworth Historical Society.

## Walworth Food Pantry Recognized for Community Work

By Becky Appleman



***The WHS Community Service Award was recently presented to the Walworth Food Pantry – the first time in 18 years the award has been given to an organization. Receiving the award are – left to right – Becky Appleman, Bart Howard, and Debbie Hamel***

On May 19, 2008, at our regularly scheduled meeting, the Walworth Historical Society presented the Walworth Food Pantry with its 2008 Community Service Award. The food pantry was founded in 1992. Bart Howard has been chairman for the past 16 years and Debbie Hamel has been volunteer coordinator since 1995. A plaque was presented in appreciation for their many years of community service. Bart stated "Walworth is a close-knit community, and now we have become part of the history of Walworth".

Debbie Hamel did a computer presentation using the museum's new projector. Debbie stated she feels fortunate to live in a town with such a big heart and believes that sharing with others is the neighborly thing to do. Besides Debbie and Bart, there is a board of directors, a special program's coordinator, and a large volunteer staff that helps shop, pack and distribute food. Their main mission is to provide food to the people in Walworth when there is a need.

For 13 years the Food Pantry served the towns of both Ontario and Walworth prior to Ontario opening its food pantry. The Food Pantry is located in two rooms in the basement of the Second Baptist Church in Walworth. The program is designed to supplement the recipient's food budget.

A portion of the donations from the spring CROP Walk is donated to the Food Pantry. They also have a donation jar at the Walworth Hardware store and a donation box at the Walworth Town Hall for those wishing to donate larger food/toiletry items. Over the past 16 years, the Food Pantry has had a broad base of support from numerous civic and school groups, food drives, and many individuals. The real key to success is being a faith-based organization that is sustained purely by donations.

The meeting was very interesting as well as informative, and we learned more about this community-supported organization. Attendees also brought food and staples to be donated to the Walworth Food Pantry.

## There's A New Flag a Flyin'



The Walworth Historical Society has a new United States flag and flag pole – a gift to the museum from Gene Bavis and Liz Place in celebration of their July 5 wedding.

Gene made a great selection and did an excellent job with the installation. The flag has been installed to the left side of the museum as it is viewed from the sidewalk. Now we can still have the United States flag displayed outside of the museum and still have the "open" flag up at the same time. This new flag really looks great. If you get a chance, stop by and check it out!

## **Marlene Slocum's Home** Story by Bob Mogray

One of the more unique homes in the area is owned by Marlene Slocum, a long-time resident and WHS member. The address of this house is 5103 Lincoln Road, just around the corner from the Lincoln Fire Department. It is a two-story early 1800's style farmhouse. On the property are also a large barn, garage, and a wood shed. The estate now totals 25 acres.

The house was built in 1806 by Theron Gould and family, the cost of which was a whopping \$4,000.00. This was probably quite a large sum in those days. It was originally 36 acres and has been reduced over the years to the 25 acres that it is today. The next owners were the Collier family. Mr. Ellis Collier was born there in 1900 and sold it to Marlene Slocum in 1980. The photos below show how the home looked in the early 1900's and how it looks now. The Amsler family rented part of the land even into the 1970's and 1980's from Ellis Collier and then from Marlene.

On the property is an old chimney, the only remains of an old barrel-making factory. Ellis Collier told Marlene that an old building stood there in which the metal hoops for wooden barrels were manufactured. The old chimney and a few bricks are all that remain of this business from the 1800's. Also on the property are old wagon wheels, a wooden bench, an old outhouse, and a new deck added to the house several years ago.

Marlene and her husband Lee raised 5 children in this house. It had the original cupboards, lathe and plaster walls, and old wooden floors when they bought it from Ellis Collier. Almost nothing in the way of renovations had been done since it was built in 1806. Over recent years, the floors were restored and the cupboards replaced with refinished wood from the Chapman barn in Palmyra. A sitting room area was converted to a bedroom area and is now a sewing room.

There are many antiques and collectables throughout the home. The entire house is completely furnished with items collected over the years by Marlene and her family. There are memories in every corner as evidenced by the many personal family items. A friendship quilt belonging to Marlene's grandmother hangs over the second floor railing, a child's Mickey Mouse rocker is on the second floor landing, an old wooden playpen and cradle sit in one of the bedrooms against the wall, and many framed photos of her family hang in almost every room.

This was a great opportunity to see a very interesting home that was furnished with many items from the 1800's and early 1900's. The Walworth Historical Society wishes to thank Marlene Slocum for opening up her home to us, sharing its history, and allowing us to share it with you in this newsletter.



**Marlene Slocum's house  
photo taken around 1900**



**Marlene Slocum's house  
photo taken in 2006**



**Old chimney on Marlene  
Slocum's property**

**Next Meeting: Civil War and a Local Author** By Dorothy French

Our next general meeting will be Monday, September 15, at 7:30 PM. Ron Matteson of Lewis Road will present a slide show on "Civil War Campaigns of the 10<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry". It will include descriptions of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry's battle campaigns, location maps, and photos.

There is a large glass-enclosed display case at our museum which is used to feature items relating to the current program offering. If anyone has Civil War-related memorabilia they could loan us for the case, contact president Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205.

September 15 is Part I of Ron's two-part program. Part II will be held on Sunday, October 26, from 1:30 – 2:30 PM at the town hall meeting room and is entitled "Why Write Another Civil War Book?" Included will be details of his finding letters written between his great-grandfather, Justus Matteson, and his future wife, Mary Hatch, which prompted the book-writing idea. Ron's book will be available at each presentation for a special price of \$22.00.

The Mattesons have lived in Walworth since 1976 when they purchased a cobblestone house on Lewis Road. Dr. Matteson has worked in the engineering field at General Dynamics and Xerox Corporation, later joining the faculty of the Computer Engineering Department at Rochester Institute of Technology. He received a PhD in electrical engineering from Syracuse University, majoring in Computer Systems.

**Grant Honor** By Mary Jane Devlin

The Carol M. Baldwin Breast Cancer Research Fund of Central New York sponsors several annual grants of \$50,000 each to investigators conducting breast cancer research at SUNY Syracuse and Syracuse Medical Center. This year, one of the grants was presented in loving memory of Irma Barmaster Wyse of West Walworth, who survived breast cancer for 7 years but succumbed to it in 2006.

Irma lived in Walworth nearly her whole life. She grew up on Bills Road, attended West Walworth grade school and Walworth High School, and graduated from Wayne Central School. She married Wallace Wyse and they built a home next to her Mom and Dad, Helen and William Barmaster, on Bills Road. They had three children and one of them also built a home on the former Barmaster property on Bills Road.

Irma served as Walworth Town Clerk during the 1960's. She conducted the town business from her home. I remember a Saturday night when my husband and I were there visiting and someone came to the door and wanted a marriage license, so she took them into the office and issued it. Irma also was a food service worker at Freewill Elementary School and delighted in interacting with the children. She had many cute stories to tell about their antics.

A gala and fund raiser was held at Turning Stone Casino in May, where the honorees were announced. Sixteen family members and friends were there in memory of Irma.



**Thank You, Roger** By WHS Trustees

Thank you, Roger Keymel, for your service as trustee of the Walworth Historical Society. Your presence will be missed at our Board meetings. You were always there to help when something needed to be built, fixed, or moved at the museum. We always depend on you and your Farmall H tractor to pull our float in the Festival in the Park parade. Although your term of office has been completed, we are glad you will still be available to help us.

**Roger Keymel**

## **Looking for Your Roots?** By Joyce Hyman Smith

Are you just starting to have interest in your family genealogy or have you been researching it for a few years? I started my genealogy charts in 1995 when I bought my first computer. I used Family Tree Marker to organize my research. In 2000, I went on-line and used [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com) and [www.Genealogy.com](http://www.Genealogy.com) for a couple of years to help me find more information.

Now, in 2008, we have many resources we can use. One of these resources can be the Walworth Historical Society's museum. If you have relatives who have lived in the Walworth, West Walworth or Lincoln areas, we might have information about them. Plus, if you have records you could share with us, we would like to add them to our files.

We currently have genealogy information about the following families: Baker, Barmaster, Bassage, Bavis, Bean, Bendschneider, Billings, Blyth, Boynton, Bradshaw, Burroughs, Carter, Clark, DeGroote, Downs, Eaton, Esley, Finley, Franke, Frowley, Ginegaw, Haak, Hackett, Henning, Hewitt, Huntley, Nortier, Peacock, Pembroke, Perrin, Petty, Seely, Suhr, Taber, Tuttle, Walworth, Wignall, Wolfe, Yeomans, Youngs, and Yuker.

Please take time and stop by and see if we have information about your family who lived in this area.

## **WHS New Projector** By Mary Jane Devlin and Bob Mogray

In December of 2007 the Walworth Historical Society was awarded a grant from the Augustus and Jennie Hoffman Foundation. Putting the money from this grant to good use, the WHS has purchased a new DLP (Digital Light Processing) Projector for use in shows and presentations.

This projector may be used with a laptop or any other computer, as well as DVD player or VCR, to project photos, movies, charts, and graphs to our screen in the museum meeting room. We are hoping that this will be a great aid in making meetings and presentations more interesting and more easily seen by members in attendance. We can now put together programs and shows from the museum or home computer so that photos and video clips can be shared with other members.

The new Optima EP 728 Digital Projector cost about \$900.00 and, for you technological people, it has 1024 x 768 resolution, 2700 lumens of brightness, 2200:1 contrast ratio, a built in speaker, and can be accessed by USB, SVHS, and VGA inputs. It is extremely quiet while running. Already it has been used at the May meeting for the presentation by the Walworth Food Pantry. It worked very well, projecting a very excellent picture for all to see. There are plans to use it at the September meeting and in many more presentations.

The next step is to apply for another grant so that we can have a dedicated laptop computer that can remain permanently attached to the projector or could be quickly connected. The WHS Board is already moving forward with these plans. It will be beneficial to have such a modern device that can help to display the hard work of many members who contribute to museum projects such as genealogy, museum inventory, donations of items and information, and work done on the museum itself. So, probably at the next meeting you attend and for many more in the future, the new projector will be part of the show.

## **Gordie's Birthday Party**

On Sunday afternoon, June 22, Gordie Youngman was treated to a surprise 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party. His close family and friends were the architects of this grand scheme.

**The problem:** How to somehow keep a party - to which an entire community and all of his relatives were invited - a secret from him.

**The set-up:** Gordie was told he was invited to his daughter's home for a combination 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party and belated Father's Day cook out.

**The method:** Not only were many newspapers kept out of his reach, but he was kept out of town, kept away from many friends and relatives, was not allowed to make many phone calls, was misdirected and fibbed to, and kept totally in the dark about the events that were soon to take place.

**The surprise:** Gordie thought he was on his way to a cook out when he was asked to drive by the fire hall to see what all the cars were doing there. As they drove by the sign announcing his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and then entered the fire hall and saw all of his friends and relatives, he was indeed totally surprised!

They had somehow pulled it off! The fire hall was packed with many of Gordie's friends and family members who were very grateful for all he has done for them and for the town of Walworth. There were many guests, a ton of food prepared by family and friends, cards and letters, cakes, a video from family members who could not make it to the party, a slide show that depicted photos from his life, and an award given to him by the WHS in appreciation of his being our first president and for all he has done for us. It just wouldn't have been the same without him!



**Gordie and Betty Brown**



**Gordie and Jessie Keymel**



**Gordie and his cakes**

### 2008 WHS Events Calendar

Save this schedule and mark your calendar for meetings and activities planned during 2008. All events will be held at the museum, 2257 Academy Street, unless otherwise specified. Note these dates on your calendar and plan to attend. All programs are free, although donations are gratefully accepted.

| <u>Date</u>    | <u>Time</u> | <u>Subject</u>  |
|----------------|-------------|---|
| Tues., Aug. 19 | 6:30 PM     | Keymel's, 4836 Walworth-Ontario Rd: Decorate float for parade.  |
| Fri., Aug. 22  | 7:00 PM     | Festival in the Park Parade. Theme: Agriculture in Walworth   |
| Sat., Aug. 23  | 12 – 6      | Ginegaw Park: Visit our booth during Festival in the Park festivities.  |
| Mon., Sept. 15 | 7:30 PM     | General Meeting: Speaker: Ron Matteson of Walworth. Subject: Part I (Civil War Campaigns of the 10 <sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry). Part II (Why Write Another Civil War Book?) will be Sun., Oct. 26, at the town hall meeting room. |
| Sun., Sept. 28 | 2-3:30      | Walworth Memories, co-sponsor with library. Subject: Weather. Location: Museum  |
| Sun., Oct. 5   | 2-5 PM      | Open House  |
| Mon., Nov. 17  | 7:30 PM     | General Meeting   |

The Board of Trustees will meet on, Aug. 18, Sept. 15, and Nov. 10. Meetings are held on Mondays and begin at 7 PM at the museum. The museum is open during June, July, August, and September on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 4 PM. It is open other times by appointment by contacting Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or Kay Scott at 315-524-9528.



## July 2008 WHS Newsletter Bonus e-mail Photos



Quilt made for the WHS by Gwyn Bassage and the Reverse Curves Quilt Club. It shows some of the various aspects of the town of Walworth. Included are:

- Local buildings and churches
- Agriculture
- Town markers



This is the former West Walworth Fire Hall. It is also the former Dunn building. Purchased in 1947, it was used until 1979.



This photo of dignified Walworth gentlemen was taken a few years ago in front of the Walworth United Methodist Church. Included from left to right are Bernie Porray, Jake Pembroke, Al Brown, Stanley Van Hoover, and Carlyle Darron. In the background from left to right are Herland Wray, his wife Nellie, and Sara Taber.





**WHS member Roger Keymel and one of his alpacas at a WHS open house. He and wife Jessie Keymel, WHS president, raise alpacas and sell the fur which is processed to make clothing and blankets, etc.**



**Curbs are installed in the town of Walworth as well as some road paving. This photo was taken in July of 1981. Some of the people include Johnny Kent, Dan Keyes, and Don Huntley.**



**The last day in 1987 of the Walworth Post Office on the corner of Main St. and Walworth-Marion Roads. From left to right are Gene Bavis, Bob Henry, and Stanley Van Hoover.**

