

WALWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 31 Number 5 May 2007



Lloyd Smith with his medal. For story please see page 3 of this newsletter

**To schedule a visit to the museum, please call:
Jessie Keymel (315) 524-9205 or Kay Scott (315) 524-9528**

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Lorraine Finley to Receive Award May 21



Lorraine Finley circa 1950's

A former resident, who advocated the establishment of a library in Walworth and volunteered countless hours serving the community and Wayne County, will be honored this month. This year's Community Service Award will be presented to Lorraine Finley of North Carolina by the Walworth Historical Society at the meeting of the Walworth Historical Society on **Monday, May 21, 2007 at the Walworth Town Hall, 3600 Lorraine Drive.**

The event begins with a potluck supper at 6:15 PM. WHS will provide a ham and beverages; attendees are asked to bring their own place settings and a dish to pass, including serving utensil. Election of officers will take place during a brief meeting. The program will include tributes from people who worked with Lorraine on community projects through the years. Guests will be transported back to August 19, 1962, and the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new library, thanks to a video from the Charlie Pembroke collection.

The award is being given to Lorraine for her volunteer work involving area organizations, notably the Walworth-Seely Public Library, Walworth Chamber of Commerce, Walworth Loan Closet, and Wayne Central School Board. In addition, she held memberships in numerous Wayne County organizations.

Lorraine was one of the founding organizers of the Walworth Reading Room, predecessor of Walworth-Seely Public Library, and served as the first president of the Library Board from 1961 – 1971. She was instrumental in securing funding from the Wayne Central School Board for appropriation for both Walworth and Ontario libraries and from the Wayne County Library System and other sources.

Because of her interest in education, she served six years on the Board of Education of Wayne Central School District. As president of the Wayne County School Boards Association, she appeared before the Wayne County Board of Supervisors and was successful in her request that 1% of sales tax revenues be donated to the public schools of Wayne County for education purposes, thereby benefiting everyone who pays school taxes.

Lorraine moved to Walworth following her marriage to Joe Finley in 1946 and became actively involved in local and area activities. In addition, she and Joe were partners in every sense from his early years as Supervisor of the Town of Walworth to his tenure as New York State Assemblyman in Albany.

The Community Service Award was presented to Joe in 1991. A recommendation was recently made to the WHS Board of Trustees that recognition should be given to Lorraine for her many contributions to our community. Lorraine and Joe retired to South Carolina in 1977 and moved to North Carolina in 1989, where Joe passed away in 1991. She continued her volunteer work in her retirement years, noting "I have received help from many people. Volunteer work is my way to pay back. I really wanted to do something that had lasting value."

President's Message

The other day, when I was at the County Seat in Lyons taking care of motor vehicle business, I took a side trip to the second floor of the building.

The tourism and historian's office are in a bright spacious room at the head of the stairs. There is a counter-high bookcase running the length of the room, dividing the room into an area for the public to do their research and for the office staff. This long book case holds all the census records for our county from 1790 until 1930 and all the Hoffman Foundation papers from the beginning in the 1950s until the present. Tables and chairs are set up so that you can do your research at your convenience. Much more information is available, such as naturalization records, wills, cemetery records, agricultural information, church histories, some building histories, military records, and even some family genealogy information.

It is a pleasant office to visit and a great source of information. I am sure my next visit will have a definite purpose and not just a side trip. Thanks to Peter Evans, County Historian, I was given a tour that was very impressive. Next time you are in Lyons visit the County Historian at his office on the second floor of 9 Pearl Street; you will be amazed at all the information available to you.



Lloyd Smith

“We Were the Eyes of Patton”

Lloyd Smith, Walworth resident, proudly displays the Jubilee of Liberty medal given by the French government in grateful recognition of his military service during WW II. Lloyd brought an impressive display of his photographs to the March 19 meeting and briefly talked about his role in the Normandy landing.

He said he is almost 85 years - going on 35. Yet his memory of the war and scenes of destruction has never faded. Lloyd mentioned the important role the military photographers played throughout the war by documenting before, during, and after photos of Normandy and other battlefields. Referring to one of the most deadly battles, he stated “We Were the Eyes of Patton”.

Dues Are Due

Dues for 2007-2008 are due. Walworth Historical Society's fiscal year is from May 1 to April 30. Therefore, your 2007-2008 dues are due. At the March meeting the membership voted to raise annual dues. The new prices are: Student \$5; Individual \$10; Family \$15; Supporting \$25; Corporate \$30; Sponsor \$50; Patron \$100; Life \$150; Benefactor \$150.

In addition, if this newsletter has a red dot on the address label, your dues for 2006-2007 are past due. Time goes so fast, it is hard to keep track! Dues before May 1 are: Student \$3; Individual \$6; Family \$10; Supporting or Corporate \$25; Sponsor \$40; Life Membership \$100; Patron \$100; Benefactor \$150.

Dues may be paid at our annual meeting on Monday, May 21, or by mail to the address on the front of this newsletter. Thank you for your continued support of Walworth Historical Society. Without your support we cannot exist

Here Comes the Bride(s)

Mixed in among the scrapbooks and information at the museum are many announcements and newspaper articles about weddings that have taken place in our township over the years. Maybe even your wedding information is included in our collection, and you will go down in history. Check it out sometime.

Perhaps the wedding that got the most publicity happened in June 1891..... “The Two Brides were Beautiful---But Guests Watched the Fat Man.” Those words headlined a newspaper story written by Arch Merrill in 1947. On June 10, 1891, former President Grover Cleveland came to Walworth to participate in a wedding. President Cleveland's sister, Susan Cleveland Yeomans, was the principal of the Walworth Academy.

Susan's daughters, Nellie (a school teacher in Beatrice, Nebraska) and Anna (an art student in Toledo, Ohio), planned a double wedding at their parents' home on High Street, Walworth. At high noon, Nellie was escorted by her father, Lucien Theron Yeomans, and her sister Anna was escorted by her uncle, former President Grover Cleveland. President Cleveland came by New York Central train to Walworth Station south of Walworth, then by the Yeoman's horse and buggy on the three miles of dirt highway leading to the village.

Do you have any wedding stories you would like to share?

WHS Website Update

Work is continuing on the WHS website. If everything works out the way we intend, the website will have past newsletters, photos, history of the WHS, information on the officers and board of trustees, and many other topics. Soon after the May meeting, the remaining information will be given to Heather Keenan to include in our website. She is the person actually setting this up for us. As soon as this site is ready for use, there will be a notice in the WHS newsletter to inform everyone.

War Memories from the Past (See photos on page 8)

On March 25 the seventh and latest chapter of Walworth Memories was held at the town hall. As always, it was co-sponsored by the Walworth-Seely Public Library and the Walworth Historical Society. The get together began with the Pledge of Allegiance – a fitting patriotic tribute to our country and its citizens. With Walworth Town Historian Gene Bavis as moderator and the lightning-fast fingers of Dorothy French typing all of the information as it was happening, the meeting was off to a very successful start. This event was very well attended, with many veterans and family members of veterans on hand to offer their memories of World War II and of events at home during the war.

Several in attendance such as Gene VanDeWalle and Gordon Youngman served in the Korean War and offered stories and memories from their wartime experiences. Many at the meeting were WW II veterans like Herb Bedette and Lloyd Smith. They shared some very personal and emotional moments in the wartime events of their past. Lloyd Smith is the brother of WHS member Doris Traas. He also was one of the featured guests at the March 19 meeting of the Walworth Historical Society. At this Walworth Memories meeting, Lloyd told of his experiences as a WW II aerial war photographer and of the medal awarded to him by the people of France.

Library Director Mary Zingerella spoke of her father, James Carney of Mt. Morris, who was awarded the Purple Heart medal in WW II, and her husband, Tony, who served in Vietnam. Jane Burkhart and Leighton Bel, both of the WHS, were also in attendance. Jane told of her husband's and brothers' wartime experiences and Leighton related his own WW II memories.

Stories were told about events happening on the home front as well. Nancy Bel said her mother, Bernice Nortier, knitted items for the Army and Navy. Husband Leighton's dad, Ernest Bel, worked at Garlock making seals for airplanes and tanks. Humorous stories evolved as attendees talked about "the awful margarine with colored spots", underwear with no elastic, and a pencil line on the back of a woman's legs to simulate nylon stockings (elastic and nylon were rationed items). Lloyd Smith said he and other local servicemen and women were grateful for the packages and correspondence sent by a club organized by Mrs. Elton (Anna) May and other Walworth women. He commented that onionskin paper was used for letters because it was thin, allowing more mail to be transported to the troops.

This Walworth Memories meeting was very successful because of those who took time from their schedules to be there and give of themselves. Speaking to several of the attendees after the meeting, it became very evident that WW II was a very emotional time for all involved. Everyone who survived was very grateful and felt they were very lucky. It was so very generous of these brave people to share not only their serious experiences but also a little of their humor and personal stories of WW II as well. Everyone who enjoys freedom today certainly owes a great debt to these courageous veterans.

Volunteer Genealogist Wanted

One of the major categories of historical interest is genealogy. We get frequent inquiries from people who are tracing their ancestry. We have some genealogical information in our files, but it's not indexed or even very well organized. Also, we know that there is a LOT more information available about local families if we just had the time to track it down. We don't necessarily need to have a copy of every genealogy of every local family, BUT it would be extremely helpful if we knew who had what so that we could say something like "Mrs. Smith has an extensive genealogy of the Jones family who lived in Walworth in the 1870's, and she can be reached at 315-555-5555."

So, we are looking for a person to be our "genealogist." The job description goes something like this:
Is responsible for:

- maintaining the Walworth Historical Society's genealogical files
- indexing said files
- keeping a record (index) of known genealogies related to Walworth families (and their locations)
- corresponding with individuals who inquire about genealogy matters and maintain a log related to such correspondence
- helping us collect photographs and documents (or copies) of Walworth people which would be of interest to family researchers

This person need not be a genealogy "expert" but should have a basic understanding of what genealogy is and the methods used. It would be VERY helpful if they had internet access and some computer skills. As you may know, we have a state-of-the-art computer system with scanner at the WHS. Most important is an interest in this project and a willingness to devote some time to it. Filling this position will be a HUGE step forward for the Walworth Historical Society.

Are YOU interested? If so, please contact Gene Bavis at 315-986-1474 or gbavis@rochester.rr.com.

The Year Was 1975

By Joyce Finney

The following was taken from Dorothy Petty's scrapbook containing information from 1975.

- July 1975: Town-wide re-numbering of house numbers gets underway. This was part of the county-wide re-numbering system. Walworth was the first town to implement the numbering system. Lyle Bassage was the first in Walworth and the county to get the new number.
- August 1975: Social Security is 40 years old today (8/14/75).
August 1975: Gov. Hugh Carey signed legislation designating the beaver as New York's official state animal.
- September 1975: On September 11, the Walworth Historical Society was duly organized. The meeting was held at the Walworth Elementary School. By-laws and constitution were adopted. The first officers were:
- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| President: | Gordon Youngman |
| Vice President: | Faith Reynolds |
| Secretary: | Anne Walczyk |
| Treasurer: | Hazel Bassage |
| Directors: | Eugene Bavis, Richard Roland, Joseph Finley |
| Fee Schedule: | Individuals \$2.00, students \$1.00, family \$5.00, life \$50.00 |
- September 1975: On September 21 Charles Hack, Town Supervisor of 14 years, dies at age 59, following a heart attack at his home. He was preparing to attend church when he was stricken.
- October 1975: Postmistress Pearl Scott retires from the Walworth Post Office after 28 years of service.
October 1975: Continental Theatre Company presents "1776" at the Wayne Central High School.
- December 1975: Irondequoit-Wayne County Line Expressway to open on December 11. This will run from North Avenue in Webster to Five Mile Line Road. The remainder of the expressway to the Wayne County line will be completed in two additional phases.
- December 1975: On December 28 Mrs. Cora Bavis celebrated her 90th birthday.
December 1975: On December 31 postage stamps will be increased from \$.10 to \$.13 cents.

My Memories of Anna (Seen) and Elton May

By Gordon Youngman



Anna and Elton May

Elton May was born in 1902 to parents William and Jennie May. He also had a younger sister Blanche. The family lived on Route 350 near Eddy Road. Anna Seen was born in 1903, the eldest of eleven children, to parents Abram and Diana Seen. Anna and Elton married in 1923 and moved to Walworth on Rochester Road, which is now 2200 Penfield-Walworth Road. Their daughter Esther was born in 1928.

Elton started a garage business in the building just west of the home. I believe this was in the 1920's. In the early 1930's, they opened an ice cream parlor in the front room of the building. At that time my family lived across the street so this was handy for my brother Bill and me to sneak across the street with our pennies or, if lucky, a nickel to get our candy or ice cream. Little did I realize that in less than 20 years Anna and sometimes Elton would be working for me in my store.

I'm not sure of the date but probably in the late 1930's that Anna and Elton started May's Greenhouse and Florist Shop. They soon had a flourishing business selling plants to the local farmers and gardeners as well as flowers for all occasions. Sadly, around 1954 Elton had a heart attack and was forced to give up the business. At that time, Milt and Charlotte Bradshaw were interested in the business and, having houses of same value, they exchanged homes and

purchased the greenhouse. Through this deal, Anna and Elton became our neighbors, as the house was right next door to our store. Katie and I felt blessed as Anna was always showering us with home-baked goods, homemade cooking, and canned goods. Elton always had a wonderful garden and kept us well-supplied with fresh fruit and vegetables. One day Elton asked our daughter what she would like him to plant in the garden for her and at the age of four she replied "I would like a row of succotash", this being her favorite vegetable. Another perk of having Anna and Elton so close was having them as handy baby sitters. Marlene and Kathy always looked forward to going to Aunt Anna and Uncle Elton's.

Anna worked, sometimes part-time and other times full time, in our variety store from 1949 to 1974. After their business was sold, Elton helped at the store doing carpenter work along with other handyman jobs. He built many display stands and put up a lot of shelving when we added to the store in 1965. Elton was on the road a lot selling supplies and giftware to other greenhouses around New York State. After a few years of traveling, Elton decided to leave his job and started an antique shop in the little store that was next to the old Masonic Hall. Elton stayed there until the building was torn down in 1968. After that he moved the business to his garage at 3574 South Main Street. Anna and Elton moved to that location in 1958 and we purchased their home next to the store.

Through their lifetime, Anna and Elton were very active in many of the town organizations. They were lifetime members of the Walworth Baptist Church and Walworth Chamber of Commerce. They were not just members, as they always did much more than their share of work. Anna was very active in the Boys in Service Club during WW II and the Korean War. Elton was a deacon of the church, served many years as town tax assessor, and served as a fire commissioner as well. Anna spent countless hours keeping scrapbooks and photo albums of Walworth. These are now displayed at the Walworth Historical Society museum for everyone to enjoy.

One last thing I would like to mention before I close. I knew Anna and Elton for over 40 years and worked and socialized with them almost on a daily basis. In all this time I never heard them raise their voices or show any disrespect to each other or to anyone else. They were great friends and mentors to Katie and me, as well as to many others. Anna passed away in 1974 and Elton in 1977.

WW II Remembered By Marsha Smith



Marsha Smith and Pat Stark

Normandy has called me to its beaches and byways since I was a very small child. On March 19 I shared my journeys with members of the Walworth Historical Society, and I was very honored to meet Lloyd Smith of Walworth. We are no relation, and yet we are deeply related in our connection to Normandy. Lloyd Smith was a military photographer whose reconnaissance work included Normandy. My uncle, S/Sgt Benedict Smith, was killed in action and is buried in Normandy. Although I never met my uncle, I grew up hearing about him and always felt that I knew him—and loved him.

In 1996, I finally made my first journey to Normandy where I visited my uncle's grave and learned of the Normans' continuing gratitude and their dedication to honoring all who served in that fateful summer of 1944. I returned with a deep desire to hand this story on to students here in America, and Normandy Allies, Inc. is the fruit of that desire. Many wonderful people on both sides of the Atlantic now collaborate on an annual 10-11 day trip to remember and honor—we call this the International Experience. We go each July and welcome students of all ages—from 16 to 80+—as well as World War II veterans.

The International Experience begins in Bayeux, with visits to the British and Canadian sectors. Our visits include: Caen Memorial to the Peace, Canadian Center at Juno, Abbaye d'Ardenne, Pegasus Bridge, Arromanches Circular Theater and Mulberry Museum, Longues s/mer Battery, and more.

We then move on to lodge in Grandcamp-Maisy and visit the American sector for 5 days that take us from Omaha Beach and Utah Beach through the hedgerow country to Saint Lo. This is truly the heart of our journey as Americans, and difficult to convey how moving these days are for us. Historians and Normans who lived through the landings and the liberation share their experiences with us. Our visits include: Pointe du Hoc, Omaha Beach and the Normandy American Military Cemetery at Colleville s/mer, Utah Beach and Museum, Ste Mere Eglise and the Airborne Museum, Saint Lo, Le Carillon and other bocage areas, Chateau Colombieres and the marshes, rue Captain Carter, Wall of Remembrance, Trevières, and more.

During this time, the high school students who are with us spend 4-5 nights with a Norman family, an experience that adds a unique aspect to their travel. I love to hear the stories they share about their host families.

Finally our journey takes us to Paris for an afternoon and evening. The following morning we return home—with lasting memories! Our American team and our Norman friends prepare all year long for these days, and it is truly a labor of love and an honor.

I shared with the WHS members a special dream that I have now. Many students from across the United States have traveled with Normandy Allies, Inc. Our donors have subsidized the basic cost and provided additional grants so that, though the actual price is approximately \$3300 for land and air, the average student this year will pay approximately \$1600-\$1700. We are happy about that, and we are working to reduce the student cost even further. Normandy Allies, Inc. is a 501(c)3 charitable organization, run entirely by volunteers so that all funds raised go to support what is needed for the programs.

I hope that we, here in Wayne County, may begin to send students to Normandy. In the coming months, I hope to hear from anyone who has connections with the schools or with high school students and their parents. We have excellent students here—many who will become history teachers. Normandy Allies offers a way for students to more deeply explore and learn a significant part of world history. I can be reached at (315) 986-3773 or (585) 748-2357 or normandyallies@worldnet.att.net Our mailing address is PO Box 1332 Pittsford NY 14534, and our website is www.normandyallies.org

Finally, a very special thanks to Pat Stark of Walworth who arranged for my March 19 presentation at the Walworth Historical Society. Pat went with us in 2005, and is going again this summer—much to the delight of the team who greatly enjoyed his company.

Resignation

We are all saddened to hear that Marcia Englert has resigned from the WHS Board of Trustees because of increased personal responsibilities. President Jesse Keymel has commented that: “It is with deep regret that I accept her resignation as a trustee of the Walworth Historical Society. Thanks for all her efforts on our behalf. It is my hope that she will still keep an active interest in our Society.”

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Membership Information for Fiscal Year beginning May 1, 2007

Check the appropriate category:

_____ Student	\$ 5.00	_____ Sponsor	\$ 50.00
_____ Individual	\$ 10.00	_____ Patron	\$100.00
_____ Joint or Family	\$ 15.00	_____ Life Membership	\$150.00
_____ Supporting	\$ 25.00	_____ Benefactor	\$150.00
_____ Corporate or Business	\$ 30.00		

*Thank you for helping us to continue our mission of preserving history for the future.
(see reverse side)*

2007 Events Calendar

Save this schedule and mark your calendar for meetings and activities planned during 2007. All events will be held at the museum, 2257 Academy Street, unless otherwise noted. The public is welcome.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Sat., May 5	9 AM – 12	Spring Clean Up Day
Mon., May 21	6:15 PM	Pot luck supper, annual meeting, election of officers, Community Service Award presentation to Lorraine Finley at WALWORTH TOWN HALL
Fri., July 20	7 PM	Festival in the Park Parade; parade ends at Ginegaw Park. Theme: Walworth and the Civil War
Sat., July 21	12 – 8	Ginegaw Park: visit our booth
Mon., Sept. 17	7:30 PM	General Meeting: Laurel Wemett and old cookbooks
Sun., Oct. 7	2-5 PM	Fall Festival: driving tour of Walworth
Mon., Nov. 19	7:30 PM	General Meeting: Program TBD

Board of Trustee meetings for the remainder of the year will be Jun. 18, Aug. 20, Sept. 24, and Nov. 26, 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; other times by appointment. Contact Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or Kay Scott at 315-524-9528.



Above photos are from the March 7, 2007 Walworth Memories meeting (see story on page 4)

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Amount enclosed: \$ _____. Make check payable to: Walworth Historical Society and mail to P. O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568

Name: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City, State, Zip Code: _____
 E-Mail: _____