

WALWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 32 Number 5 May 2008



WHS members at a recent meeting. Many of these members also attended the "Memories" meeting in April and discussed district schools such as the Alderman Road (stop 28) school, shown above.

Walworth Museum: 2257 Academy Street, P.O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568

WHS Website: www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org

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President's Message By Jessie Keymel

We need your help! Now that our museum is 20 years old it takes a little more effort to maintain it. We have already replaced the roof and done some repair of door jams. This Spring we will be adding a screen door.

Like any building or home, keeping ahead with little repairs as needed is the best method of maintenance. It is our hope that we can get 4 or 5 members to commit to helping to make sure our building and yard do not fall into disrepair. The Historical Society has depended on Gene Bavis to mow the lawn and plow the snow; is there someone who would be willing to share this responsibility with him?

This year we have moved the annual spring clean-up to 6:00 in the evenings of May 5 and 7 to make it convenient for more members to give a helping hand. If you cannot come at that time but are willing to take on a chore, please contact a board member. Someone has already taken the curtains to be washed. Many hands make light work.

Staples of Yesterday's Kitchens

Replicas of items found in kitchens of several decades ago are currently in the rotating display case at the Walworth Historical Society's museum. The items have been loaned by Carolyn Adriaansen, Marion Town Historian.

School Photos and Yearbooks By Jessie Keymel

In another article in this newsletter you learned about the experience of going to a district school. We have several photos of the area schools in our collection at the museum and some class photos. Recently we received a group photo of the children who attended District #8 Freewill School, located at the corner of Lewis Road and Atlantic Avenue. The photo was taken in June of 1944, the last year the school was open. It is a great example of education before centralization.

Dennis DeGroot has donated a photo album with photos he took of fellow students at Walworth Elementary in the early 1950's. There is a good collection of class photos from Walworth Elementary during the 1960's and 1970's. Our collection of yearbooks and photos of graduating classes from Walworth High School is quite lacking. We are missing the graduating class photos of **1943, 1944 and 1948**. Do you have any school pictures that we can scan and add to our collection?

For your information, the Walworth High School Alumni Banquet is June 7 this year. If you would like more information on this event, call Mary Jane (Cauwels) Devlin at 315-986-1512. Anyone interested in the Walworth High School is welcome to join us for an evening of renewing old acquaintances.

It's Spring Clean-Up Time at the Museum

Our museum is similar to your home. There are repetitive chores that need to be done frequently. And then there are tasks requiring extra assistance - this is where we ask for help from our membership.

We have scheduled our annual spring clean-up at the museum for two nights: Monday, May 5, and Wednesday, May 7, beginning at 6:00 PM. In the past, we held clean-up day on a Saturday but discovered that many of our volunteers had other weekend commitments. By changing the date, we're hoping for a good turnout because many hands make light work. There is both inside and outside work to be done, everything from washing windows to doing yard work.

Our museum is a busy place. Meetings and programs are held here, as well as the fall open house. During June through September we are open on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 4 PM. All of this activity requires good housekeeping practices, and we want to show our museum at its sparkling best.

More Info about the Pacific Hotel By Bob Wignall

Editor's Note: After reading the story in our January newsletter about the Pacific Hotel, former Walworth resident Bob Wignall sent us the following information. Bob and his family reside in Colorado Springs, as does his sister, Janice Wignall Mitchell.

"According to my late mother, Mrs. Robert W. (Bertha) Wignall, her father -- John Henry Franke -- at one time owned and operated the hotel. He died a number of years before I was born, so I never knew him. All I know is my grandparents, John and Carrie Franke, moved from the Lake Road in North Ontario to the Huddle, south of Walworth, in November 1912; they lived in the big old house that in my days was occupied by the Ralph Allen family.

John Franke died in January 1924, so his ownership of the hotel would have been somewhere between 1912 and 1924. Whether he owned it when he died (suddenly), I have no idea. Also, my mother said he operated a "store" on the ground floor of the hotel -- my assumption is a grocery store, but I do not remember the details. She said he shared operation of the store with his youngest son, Orman Franke, who was born in 1898.

I never bothered to research property records back when I lived in Walworth, but I presume they must be on file somewhere, either in Walworth or Lyons. Those should clearly establish years of ownership, if anyone was interested. It's a shame I never asked my mother more about it, but isn't that the case with all of us -- we wait until folks are gone and then wonder about their past!"

Can You Help Us?



Our photo archives include this picture of four Walworth residents: left to right - Stanley VanHoover, Lorraine Finley, Elton May, and Don Brockman. Does anyone know when this was taken? Perhaps this was a Chamber of Commerce event, as Stanley owned the gas station at the Four Corners, Lorraine had a gift shop in Joe Finley's store, Elton had a greenhouse and florist shop, and Don owned the IGA store.

Curator's Corner By Kay Scott

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Gordon Youngman a very happy 80th birthday on June 18 from all of us at the Walworth Historical Society. We owe Gordon a great debt of gratitude for all his years of collecting and saving Walworth history. He has given us pictures, brochures, records, and items too numerous to mention. They are such a wonderful addition to the museum and are entered in the computer with back-up.

Thanks from all of us in the Historical Society as well as from all of the towns in our area. Happy Birthday and may you have many more!

Walworth Food Pantry to Receive WHS Community Service Award

By Becky Appleman Food Pantry Volunteer and WHS Trustee

The Walworth Historical Society will host its annual meeting and pot luck dinner on Monday, May 19, at 6:15 P.M. at the museum, 2257 Academy Street. Attendees are asked to bring a dish to pass and their own place setting. Beverages will be provided. Following dinner there will be a short business meeting and election of officers. Save the date, come join us, and visit with old friends and meet new friends.

Each year WHS presents a Community Service Award to a deserving citizen. For the first time in 18 years the award will be presented to an organization rather than an individual. This year the award will be presented to the Walworth Food Pantry. Everyone is asked to bring a non-perishable item to donate to the Food Pantry. This may be in the form of canned goods, cereal, tuna, laundry soap, shampoo, sugar, coffee, pasta, etc. All donations are appreciated.

The Walworth Food Pantry began in 1992 as a group of concerned citizens caring for the needs of the town. Arlyce Kretschman, who was the pastor at the Second Baptist Church in Walworth, invited a representative from each church, fire department, and civic organization to gather and discuss the need for a food pantry in Walworth. At this meeting, it was decided there was a need and our first volunteer coordinator, Gwyn Bassage, along with several others, began the task of finding a place to house the Food Pantry and organizing for the task ahead.

The Food Pantry was founded in February of 1992 and we served our first client in May of 1992. The Food Pantry still remains in the place where we started, the Second Baptist Church. We filed for and received our 501(C)3 tax exempt status. For over ten years, the Walworth Food Pantry served the towns of Walworth and Ontario. In 2004, Ontario opened its own food pantry. This opening has allowed us to care and share even more with our Walworth clients.

Since our inception in 1992 we have been able to have our Thanksgiving and Christmas sharing programs which allow us to give extra at these special holidays. In 2004 we were able to add Easter to our share programs. The Food Pantry is not affiliated with any parent organization (such as Foodlink) and we have never had to ask for town, state or federal money. The Food Pantry is supported by the community and maintains an all-volunteer staff and an independent Board of Directors. We use donations to purchase stamps and envelopes. We network with other food pantries and may receive and pass on different supplies.

We are blessed to receive food from the Letter Carriers Food Drive and the Boy Scouts Food Drive and also money from the Walworth CROP Walk. Our local supermarkets have been very supportive with donations of supplies or gift cards for special times. We also receive much support from the Walworth Lions Club. Our clients must be residents and must have a referral. We currently have a volunteer staff of about 45; this number changes from time to time. The volunteers shop, pack and distribute food. Without them, this Food Pantry could not remain in service. We have only two people who receive and review referrals and our volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement stating Food Pantry business stays at the Food Pantry; our client lists are never discussed outside the Food Pantry.



We have never run out of food and have always been blessed with enough staff and funds when needed. We keep food as our main focus and other items such as clothing is handled by other groups. Our volunteers are the backbone of our operation and without them this Food Pantry would not be possible.

Left to right: Bart Howard, Debbie Hamel, and Becky Appleman, board members of the Walworth Food Pantry.

Maple Sugaring Update By Bob Wignall

Editor's Note: Bob is a former Walworth resident who read the story in our March newsletter about maple syrup. He has hands-on experience of the maple sugaring process to share with us.

I wanted to pass along information regarding maple sugaring. There were once maple trees all along the north side of the street (Penfield-Walworth Road) by our farm - both down the hill and on the top of the hill.

Before the sugaring was done down at the foot of the hill, we produced our own syrup/sugar in the main farm complex. There was a hedgerow that used to run between George and Carrie Wignall's house and our house, all the way back to the end of our vegetable garden. Just past the north end of the hedge, there was a large water tank up on stilts, where they filled the spray rigs for spraying the orchards (the tank was periodically refilled by a large tank truck which came by from somewhere).

Next to the tank were two large, cast-iron vats, set in stone on concrete bases, with room underneath to build a fire. I don't believe I have a picture of them, but they looked a little bit like the outdoor ovens used by the Pueblo Indians. We poured maple sap into the vats, lighted the fires, and periodically stirred the contents with wide, long-handled wooden paddles, one in each vat.

I don't remember how long the process took, but it was not quick! Once the sap had turned to syrup it was ladled out. If you wanted sugar, that could be made by further boiling it down on the kitchen stove (or in the case of our house we had the old wood-burning range in the cellar, after we had acquired a modern electric stove).

As I think back on it, the process certainly wouldn't have passed any of our modern food safety rules. but then, neither would the unpasteurized milk I drank for 18 years! When we started buying pasteurized milk in the store, I hated it....and still don't like to drink it by itself. The unpasteurized version had a much nicer, almost sweeter, flavor. Oh well, memories from the distant past!!

The photo to the right shows maple trees that have been tapped in the early spring to catch the sap to make maple sugar and maple syrup. This photo was donated by the Amsler family.



Dues Are Due By Mary Jane Devlin

Dues for 2008-2009 are due. Walworth Historical Society's fiscal year is from May 1 to April 30. Therefore, your 2008-2009 dues are due, unless you are a Life Member or have paid your 2008-2009 dues in advance. The prices for membership are: Student \$5, Individual \$10, Family \$15; Supporting \$25; Corporate \$30; Sponsor \$50; Patron \$100; Life \$150; and Benefactor \$150.

Dues may be paid at our annual meeting on Monday, May 19, 2008, 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 could not exist.

Back to School We Went By Dorothy French

The school bell rang April 6, and did we ever share memories of the district school houses that dotted our countryside not so long ago! Former students came from as far away as Cohocton to reminisce about the schools they attended as youths. The occasion was the 9th Walworth Memories program co-sponsored by the Walworth-Seely Public Library and the Walworth Historical Society. The “school session” appropriately began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Fond memories were shared of two beloved teachers, the late Hazel Pembroke Bassage and Dorothy Yuker Petty. As it wasn’t considered proper for teachers to be married, Dorothy Yuker succeeded Hazel when she wed Howard Bassage. They taught at District #8/Old Freewill School at the corner of Atlantic Ave. and Lewis Road; it is now a private residence. Several attendees showed photos of their homes which once were school houses. Jane and Kimber Burkhart live in District #10 school, located on Lincoln Road near the Lincoln Baptist Church. It was one of the newer schools, as it has a full basement and garage for the teacher’s car. Jane displayed a photo taken in 1915 of the school.

Michael and Sue Herrman bought the District #12 school house located at the corner of County Line and Mildahn Roads in 1985. Sue commented their children (a boy and a girl) took the respective cloak rooms for their bedrooms. She noted it is exciting to be preserving a piece of history. Vern Schattner attended District #3 School on Eddy Road, Macedon. Because of its location to the Walworth/Macedon border, some of the area children went to a Walworth school and some to Macedon. Other schools mentioned were located on Smith Hill and Arbor Roads, Hall Center Road, Downs Road, Baker Road, Macedon Center Road, District #6 on Finley Road, West Walworth Road, and the Walworth Academy.

Many of the attendees remembered walking several miles to school each day, and noted almost every school was near a boundary line of the surrounding towns. Because the main industry in the Walworth area was farming, many students could only attend during the winter months because they were needed to help on the farm. The program closed with a rousing vocal rendition of the round, “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” led by Teacher of the Day Joyce Hyman Smith. Refreshments were provided by Friends of the Walworth-Seely Public Library.

The next Walworth Memories will be held on Sunday, September 28, at the museum; the theme will be weather.



Above are photos from the Walworth Memories meeting held on April 6, 2008

Tidbits from the Past – The Year Was 1989 By Joyce Finney (Dorothy Petty's Scrapbook)

January: Wayne County Supervisors proclaimed 1989 the Bicentennial Year. Settlement of Wayne County began in May of 1789 with the arrival of the Stansill & Featherly families in Lyons. Also in 1789 John Swift family settled in Palmyra and in Macedon Webb Harwood and Ebenezer Reed settled. Settlement occurred in the following towns:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1791 - Arcadia | 1800 - Galen |
| 1794 - Williamson | 1805 - Rose and Butler |
| 1795 - Marion | 1806 - Ontario and Wolcott |
| 1796 - Huron | 1808 - Savannah |
| 1799 - Walworth | |

(Titbits from the past (continued).....)

January 20: Inauguration Day for President-elect George H. W. Bush.

April: Gananda High School student Beth Ann Savage of Walworth was crowned Miss New York Teen - USA. In July she was among the top 10 finalists of the Miss Teen USA contest.

April 26: Lucille Ball dies after suffering a heart attack on April 18. She was 77.

May 7: "Spring Snow" - At the Rochester Airport snow measured 10 inches. The downtown festival tent that was set up for the Lilac Festival collapsed under the weight of the snow.

August 15: First issue of the Gananda Times was printed.

September 17: Walworth Historical Society held a dedication ceremony for the new museum building at 2257 Academy Street. The dedication ceremony was held at the Second Baptist Church with over 100 people in attendance. Cookies and punch were served and then the guests went to the museum.

Huddle Update

Editor's Note: The story in our March newsletter about the Huddle prompted several readers to send us additional information. We thank them for sharing their memories, allowing us to update our records.

Bob Wignall, former resident now living in Colorado Springs, Colorado: "I enjoyed the info on The Huddle. As I mentioned in my earlier message about the Pacific Hotel, my grandparents (John and Carrie Franke) moved to the Huddle in November 1912 to the Ralph Allen house. I assume they purchased it, rather than rented. They lived there until he died in January 1924. Probably it was sold shortly thereafter, because I believe my grandmother went to live with her eldest daughter in Caledonia. I guess you would have to look at land records for exact dates.

The interesting info from your article was that the house had once been a stagecoach stop and tavern. I never knew that. You also confirmed for me the township line. I had always assumed The Huddle was in Walworth, but when I went to check the census records for my grandparents, I found of course they were listed under Macedon, not Walworth. That was a real surprise to me."

Richard Donovan:

"The school house did not burn down (as previously indicated). My parents, Richard and Myrtle Donovan, bought the property in 1946 with hopes of turning the school house into a private residence. Due to its deteriorating condition, it could not be saved and I had it torn down. It was located in front of a metal pole barn, which is still on the property. Greg Reybrouck bought the property in 1990, according to my Mom."

Vaughn Pembroke:

"Louie Duell and his brother Ernest cut and hauled ice from the mill pond near the Huddle. The Huddle was a place for Walworth folks to stop at a tavern and get a beverage as Walworth was a dry town."



Photo of the old mill at the Huddle (April 2008)

Bootlegging, Booze, and Prohibition By Mary Jane Devlin

Sharon Libitow, who is active in the preservation of Wayne County history, gave an interesting and informative presentation at our March 17 meeting.

After the 18th Amendment to the United States Constitution was enacted in 1919, prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages, speakeasies were started. Speakeasies were clubs where illegal alcoholic drinks were served. Many people started manufacturing their own alcoholic beverages (hooch). Stills were a hidden part of many farms in our area and even in some of the better neighborhoods in cities. Some of the well known stills around Walworth were located at 4496 Walworth-Ontario Road; 3976 Walworth-Ontario Road at Frank Vander Mullen's; 4551 Walworth-Ontario Road; and on Atlantic Avenue.

Boats from Canada, where there was no prohibition, would bring loads of booze to within a mile of the Wayne County shoreline of Lake Ontario, then signal the shore. Boats from here would go out and bring the whiskey back to be sold at speakeasies and to bootleggers. Illegal booze, made in Wayne County, would be transported to Rochester in loads of junk going to the junk man, shoe boxes, luggage and any other means of hiding it in legitimate-looking boxes or even loads of food headed for the Public Market.

Some enterprising people made extra money during Prohibition by hosting dances in their homes and selling prohibited drinks to their guests. Hosts would serve homemade liquor and roll the rugs back so guests could dance. Many people think that some of the most notorious organized crime gangs got started by selling illegal booze. Prohibition ended in 1933.



Sharon Libitow

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, but donations are gratefully accepted.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Mon. May 5 & Wed. May 7	6 PM 6 PM	Spring Clean-Up (volunteers needed for inside and outside work)
Mon., May 19	6:15 PM	Pot luck supper, annual meeting, election of officers, Community Service Award to Walworth Food Pantry
Tues., Aug. 19	6:30 PM	Keymel's: Decorate float for parade. (New Date)
Fri., Aug. 22	7:00 PM	Festival in the Park Parade. Theme: Agriculture in Walworth (New Date)
Sat., Aug. 23	12 – 6	Ginegaw Park: Festival in the Park (New Date)
Mon., Sept. 15	7:30 PM	General Meeting
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 Jan. 21, Feb. 18, Apr. 21, June 16, 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.

May 2008 WHS Newsletter Bonus e-mail Photos



Elsie and Lloyd Ginegaw; Harold and Virginia Ginegaw. Photo was taken in 1987.

The bell outside of the Walworth Museum.



The Walworth Fire Department marching in a local parade sometime around 1978.



Cindy and Lois VanHoover in Youngman's store, 1989.



Civil War re-enactors at the 2006 Festival in the Park.

Minstrel Show sign in the winter of 1956.

