

WALWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

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"Nothing changes in Walworth....it is the same old thing". That is the usual answer that we give when a former resident inquires "What's happening in town"?

As I worked to put together the driving tour map project I became aware of the many changes. Sadly, the old school building remains empty. There are new roads with new housing developments on former orchard and farm lands. Gananda is now a very noticeable part of our community with two schools, a church, and a series of support businesses. We have two excellent golf courses and good restaurants. The old firemen's hall, known by many for the round and square dances, was an auction hall for a few years; most recently it housed a retail business. The old town barns are being resurrected as a retail nursery store. We have a new Highway Department building. All three fire departments have relatively new modern buildings. The structure of our schools is constantly changing. We have baseball diamonds and soccer fields galore, and a Recreation Department that makes full use of all our parks.

The changes are subtle but constant – as it should be in a thriving community.

Driving Around Walworth: October 14 Fall Festival

Our annual open house this year featured a self-guided driving tour of the Walworth township. Participants were provided a handout that included names and addresses of more than 70 homes, businesses, churches, schools, and cemeteries. Included were several area maps which contained numbers corresponding to locations in the handout.

This project is the result of many hours of work by committee members Gene Bavis, Mary Jane Devlin, Jessie Keymel, and Bob Mogray. We have Bob to thank for the excellent photos. In addition, Bob and his son Michael used their computer expertise to create the maps.

This handout is a work in progress, as little information is available about some of the sites. Anyone with knowledge about any of the locations should contact Town Historian Gene Bavis at 315-986-1474 or gbavis@rochester.rr.com. Copies of the handout are available at the museum or by calling president Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or curator Kay Scott at 315-524-9528. Our goal is to combine information from the walking tour of Walworth village and this year's driving tour into a brochure documenting the history and architecture of our township.

On display at the open house was a 50-60 year old embossing machine owned and operated by member Mike McEwen, who demonstrated how to make name tags. Mike reports the machine had been used to make tags at Kodak and for the Rochester lilacs at Highland Park. Numbered tags were also made so cows could be easily identified. Also on display was Roger Keymel's recently restored 2-door 1956 Chevy hardtop -- a real head turner.



Judi Benton and John Brankacz (left) and Betsy Morris (right) at the WHS Fall Festival Walworth Driving Tour.



Normandy and World War II Remembered: Legacy Campaign: June 6, 1944

By Rev. Verne Schattner

Editor's Note: As a young man, former resident Verne Schattner lived on a farm on Ontario Center Road in Macedon, just south of the Walworth town line. Rev. Schattner said his folks bought the farm from the Elton May family appx. 1920-21. The Schattner's mailing address was Walworth R.F.D., the school district was Macedon, and electricity came from Rochester Gas and Electric. He commented "We were on the border line for everything...kept us wondering where we were"!

Rev. Schattner recently shared with us his memories of the Normandy campaign. He was considered a Macedon resident because he resided in the Macedon school district. During the war, he reported to Lyons, as did most of Wayne County draft-eligible residents. He continues to be interested in Walworth, is a member of the Walworth Historical Society, and enjoys receiving our newsletter.

"How well I remember the Normandy landing. The noise began early in the morning when we heard the airplanes flying toward the area of Normandy. I had never heard so much noise nor seen so many planes flying above our station hospital, which was located in England. We knew then that the time had come when General Eisenhower and the other commanders had set the date for this campaign.

"We were the 305th Station Hospital. We had already been advised as to what our job would be when the casualties would begin arriving at the hospital. Within 24 hours they were being brought in and continued to arrive for several more days. The Protestant Chaplain was Captain Ernest G. Stolen, a Lutheran pastor from Wisconsin; I was his assistant. Father Kuhn administered to the Roman Catholics.

"One of my main duties was to visit the men who were in the hospital, talk with them, and help them when they called upon me. Passing out the New Testaments to the wounded men who desired them or called for them was always a pleasure. I also helped carry many of the men from the ambulances to their hospital beds. Many of them had lost the use of their legs and had other injuries. We also provided Sunday morning services each week.

"At one time during my stay we had a group of German prisoners that we also served any of their needs. The chapel was always full whenever the services took place on Sunday morning. How they loved to sing! My eventual assignment in England began at Camp Pickett, Virginia, and then at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I left the United States from Fort Dix, New Jersey. Since being discharged from the service in 1945, I received my college degree and my graduate degree in Theology. I have been serving the United Methodist Church in North Cohocton and Cohocton as the minister for the last 50 years."

Sharing Farming Memories



On October 28 a near-capacity crowd shared stories of past and current farming activities at the Walworth Memories program at the museum. Subjects discussed included a variety of duties, including working on the muck farms, raising pigs, spraying carrots with kerosene to remove weeds, owning a cider mill for personal use ("had a lot of company until your barrel was empty"), and cleaning out a chicken coop.

This is the eighth Walworth Memories program co-sponsored by the Walworth Historical Society and the Walworth-Seely Public Library.

Genealogy Resource...A New Service

By Joyce Smith

In July we added a new information service – Genealogy. I am organizing a genealogy index on the computer to show where you can find information about a person or family who lived in the Walworth, West Walworth, and Lincoln area. This will be an ongoing information gathering project.

If you have a genealogy of your family who lived in these areas, we would like to add that information to our files. This can be in the form of a family chart or history/stories about your family.

During July we were able to help one person who visited the museum looking for genealogy information and answered one e-mail; there were 2 e-mails in August. During September two people visited the museum with genealogy questions and one e-mail was answered.

Walworth Highway Department and Other Info

By Joyce Smith

We have now, in our library at the museum, a book containing names of members of the Walworth Highway Department, Town Board, and Overseers of the Highways for the years 1855 through 2007.

According to Dottie DeMay, an employee of the town Highway Department, the Overseers were Walworth residents who took care of the roads because there was no highway department at that time. The early roads were not the paved streets we have today; some of them were barely dirt paths.

In 1855 the Town Board had the following officers: Joseph Peacock, Supervisor; Charles Thompson, Town Clerk; four Justices of the Peace: Joseph R. Jones, Harvey Miller, Nelson Strickland, and Theron G. Yeomans; and 27 Overseers of Highways.

In 1857, the Town Board consisted of Eliab Yeomans, Supervisor, and Andrew Simmons, Town Clerk. The four Justices were the same men as in 1855. This gives you insight to what you can find in this book.

Dottie reports this is an ongoing project and she currently has covered the years 1855 through 1928. She credits the detailed record keeping of former Town Clerk Marcia Englert for making her job easier. The project was initiated at the request of Highway Superintendent Mike Frederes, who asked Dottie if she would be willing to undertake this project on her own time. Thank you, Dottie, for doing this.



**Former Walworth Town Barns on Penfield Road
(photo 2007)**



**Current Walworth Town Barns on Canandaigua Road
(photo 2007)**

Where Did the Sign Go??

By Jessie Keymel

There are six blue and yellow New York State historical markers in Walworth; there should be seven. When did the seventh marker disappear?

The missing marker was on the southwest corner of Routes 441 and 350 intersection. It marked the site of the first church built in Walworth in 1809. I know the sign was there in the '50's when I waited for the school bus. Was it taken down when Penfield Road was improved or was it much later when extensive work was done on Route 350? When town historian John Traas wrote his book "Walworth...From Douglas Corners to Gananda", he tried to locate the sign but was not able to find it.

As often happens with landmarks that become so much a part of the landscape, we take them for granted and do not notice when they are gone until it is too late. Or do you pass by them without any thought or a reminder of the story they tell about the past?

Do you know where the missing sign is? Is it tucked away in a barn, has it patched a hole in a wall, or perhaps it is buried under the intersection - never to be seen again?

Can you name the location of the six remaining historical markers? The answers are on the last page.

1988 Info from Dorothy Petty's Scrapbook

By Joyce Finney

March 5....."The 25 Cent Stamp Is on the Way". A 3-penny increase will happen on April 3.

March 21....Clifford Huntley passes away at age 93.

April.....State Police open Walworth satellite office at 2269 Walworth-Marion Road.

June.....Rev. Gerald Harris retires from 1st Baptist Church in West Walworth where he has been pastor for 12 years.

June.....West Walworth Zion United Methodist Church and Walworth United Methodist Church welcome new pastor, Rev. Anne H. O'Connor, and family – husband Tom and daughters Megan and Katie. She assumes her position on July 1.

July.....25th Anniversary of ZIP (zone improvement program) Code marked by U.S. Postal Service.

July....."What's in a Name"? The top 5 most popular names in 1987 were: Boys - Michael, Matthew, Andrew, David and Daniel. Girls - Ashley, Jessica, Sarah/Sara, Amanda and Nicole.

July....."Groundbreaking Scheduled for Walworth Museum Building". On Sunday, July 10, 1988, at 3 pm the ground was broken at Yeomans Park, 2257 Academy Street, and construction will begin on Walworth's new museum. The land was donated to the WHS by Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Huntley.

Sept....."Gananda Opens New School". Gananda Central School District's newly-constructed Richard Mann Elementary School will open its doors on September 7 for K-3rd grade. This was the only new school building opened in the State this year. The dedication service will be held on October 2.

Nov 4....Cliff and Bernice Nortier celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. An open house was held at the 2nd Baptist Church fellowship hall.

Nov.....Mickey Mouse turns 60 years old.

Thank You!

Our limited budget thanks the many members who have agreed to receive this newsletter via e-mail. Postage and paper costs continue to increase. These savings enable us to use these funds for our chartered purpose of collecting, preserving, and displaying items and artifacts that are of historical importance to the people of the Town of Walworth.

If you are not receiving the newsletter via e-mail and would like to try it, contact Bob Mogray at rmogray@rochester.rr.com. As a bonus, newsletters sent electronically also include additional photos of interest.

Grant Update

By Mary Jane Devlin

In the spring of 2006, Genesee Country Antique Dealers Association announced they would be giving grants to Wayne County historical projects in need of funding. The Walworth Historical Society applied for and received a grant to preserve registers of attendance for Walworth School District #1 for the years from 1903 through 1912.

After research and discussion with Richard Randles, President of the Genesee Country Antique Dealers Association, we determined that the best way to preserve these records was to have them digitally copied. Patrick Printing of Rochester recently did this for us. We now have the digital copies at the museum and have the original records in acid-free containers.

We borrowed some other Walworth school attendance records from Wayne Central School District. The Board of Directors of our Society met and approved having these records copied the same way, with money that was also from the grant.

If anyone is interested in using these records, please contact us.

WHS Website Up and Running

By Bob Mogray

Thanks to the expert help of Heather Keenan, our WHS website is now up and running and available for use. The web address is www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org. This is new for our organization and will be a work in progress. The plan is to update it when necessary as to dates of events, recent newsletters, and other information that will be important for our members and others to see. There are already plans to include a "store" section where items provided by the WHS can be purchased.

Hopefully everyone will be able to access this new website without any difficulty. If anyone does have problems, questions, or suggestions as to how we can improve the website, please feel free to contact any officer or board member. We are looking for suggestions and will welcome them. Thank you for being patient. This took a little longer than we thought, but hopefully it will be useful for all of our members.

Kitchens of Yesteryear

By Bob Mogray

At the September 17 WHS meeting, members were entertained and informed by Laurel Wemett, owner of the Cat's in the Kitchen of Canandaigua, a store which features a variety of kitchen collectibles. Laurel presented a program for the WHS members that included a 35-mm slide show, old cookbooks, recipes, and a discussion of what some of the WHS members remembered about the kitchens in their homes when they were young.

The meeting was very well attended. Laurel started with a 35-mm slide show of the history of American kitchens from the time of Fanny Farmer, who used standardized measurements for more dependable results and founded a cooking school. Her show included a discussion of Betty Crocker who was never a real person but a brand name made up by General Mills in 1921. Laurel concluded with modern kitchens of microwave ovens and computers. She had many interesting old cookbooks to show, as well as other kitchen items from the past.

Laurel did a great job with her presentation, which really gave an appreciation of modern kitchens, after seeing what women had to work with in early kitchens. It was a very informative evening for everyone.

At the end of the presentation, which featured discussions of favorite recipes, attendees were hungry and everyone was ready for the excellent refreshments, served once again by Nancy Bel.



Cook books and kitchen items



Laurel Wemett

Curator's Corner

By Kay Scott

We have received a satin wedding dress and a man's tuxedo from the 1940's to add to our collection of vintage clothing.

We are also the recipients of a genealogy which traces the Verduyn family back to the year 1550. What a monumental work it is!

Also, a family is copying a relative's diaries and supplying us with copies for our files. We do have other diaries and they provide a great deal of really interesting historical reading.

Mary and Kathie Earlandt have filed many, many newspaper articles by year and we cannot thank them enough.

History of Thanksgiving: November 19 Program

By Dorothy French

Did you know that some of our Thanksgiving traditions precede even the Pilgrims who landed in New England? This and other interesting facts will be explained by Chris Bensch of the Strong National Museum of Play on Monday, November 19, at our museum.

The meeting begins at 7:30 PM, and will be followed by a 35-mm slide presentation by Chris entitled "Pilgrims, Pumpkin Pie, and Politics: The True Story of Thanksgiving". We'll learn that Thanksgiving isn't all turkey dinner, football games, lobbyists, pumpkin pie, and cranberries. Attendees will be invited to share some of their Thanksgiving traditions – especially the unique ones.

Chris became one of the curators at Rochester's Strong National Museum of Play in March 1989, and since that time has been responsible for numerous exhibits including the National Toy Hall of Fame, the Radio in American Family Life, and Reading Adventureland. In addition, he has been a regular guest on the Discovery Channel's "Home Matters" program and hula hooped on the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno". He has also been featured on several radio programs. His current title is Vice-President for Collections.

The museum is located at 2257 Academy Street, corner of High Street. For additional information contact president Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or curator Kay Scott at 315-524-9528.

Historical Markers: Answers

The six remaining historical markers and their locations: (see story elsewhere in this issue)

- #1: Douglas Corners marker at the four corners Walworth village (Walworth-Penfield Road, Walworth-Ontario Road, Walworth-Marion Road, and Walworth-Palmyra Road)
- #2: Tannery marker opposite 3825 Walworth-Ontario Road
- #3: First school house on Center Street (near tennis courts)
- #4: First academy on Academy Street (corner High Street)
- #5: Craggs Roller Mill in the Huddle (Walworth-Palmyra Road, 2 mile south of the village)
- #6: Freewill Baptist Church on Atlantic Ave. (west of Downs Road)

2007 Events Calendar

Save this schedule and mark your calendar for meetings and activities planned during the remainder of 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>
Mon., Nov. 19	7:30 PM	General Meeting: Chris Bensch and "Thanksgiving..The True Story"

The next Board of Trustee meeting will be Mon., 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.

November 2007 WHS Newsletter Bonus e-mail Photos

(Many of these are photos from the Fall Festival Driving Tour of Walworth)



Second Baptist Church of Walworth



Lincoln Baptist Church



State marker: Walworth Tannery



The McKee home



The McMillan home



The Neil Smith home



Mike McEwen and his embosser



First Baptist Church of West Walworth



The New WHS color logo



Town of Walworth about 1950