

WALWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 33 Number 6 May 2009



Looking ahead to Flag Day
Sunday June 14, 2009
See page 3

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

March and April have been busy months at the WHS Museum.

Copper Beech Tree Care: The wind-damaged upper crown and affected branches have been removed from our tree. It was interesting to watch Jon Haak as he rose into the heart of the tree in his basket, balanced his chain saw, and skillfully remove the damaged parts from the tree. Jon said the carved initials near the top are easier to read than those carved on the main trunk; we will take his word for that. Yankees #1 can now be seen before the leaves come out, but we will never know who loves Beth unless one of you admits to the deed. The debris was quickly cleared away. Please see page 8 for photo.

Copper Beech Tree Feeding: Next, on Saturday, April 18, a work crew of eight met to feed the tree. It was recommended that 300 holes, 18 inches deep, circle the tree. Each hole was filled with a measured amount of fertilizer. So now the tree has been taken care of with 200 lbs. of fertilizer. We were advised not to do anything to the damaged area at the base of the tree, but watch for changes. Gene Bavis has documented and taken photos of all nine copper beech trees in the village. Thank you, Yeomans and Sons Nursery, for these unusual trees that beautify our homes. Please see page 8 for photo.

Records Management: We have another big project going on at the museum. Mary Jane, Cathy, Dorothy, Joyce, and Jessie have spent more than 100 hours cataloging and categorizing the contents of our files. It is our hope to make information easily accessible for genealogy and subject research. As we work on these files, we often reflect on the work that Kay Scott did collecting and sorting for many years by herself on our behalf. Thank you, Kay. Thank you also to Mary Earlandt for sorting many newspaper articles and information. When this is completed, we hope to start upstairs where most of our artifacts are stored.

Tiger Cubs' Visit: On March 24 the museum was visited by the Tiger Cubs from Troop #167, Den # 2. Liz Bavis did a great job introducing these young boys to many everyday aspects of daily life in the past and some Walworth history. It is always fun to look at history through the eyes of a child. We need something to give to the children who visit our museum. Does anyone have any ideas?

Photo Restoration: We have started restoring the class photos of Walworth High School. This promises to be a long, expensive project; we will progress as we can afford it. The most expensive restoration is \$200.00, and we have a total of six pictures to do. If you would like to donate to this project it will help speed up the results.

Yeomans Family Photo Album: What a great find! At a flea market in California a gentleman bought a family photo album, and - as was his habit - he put it on E-Bay. Ed, a member of the Walworth Historical Society, searches E-Bay regularly with our interests in mind. He came across the Yeomans family photo album and checked it out. Sure enough - it was the Walworth Yeomans. Ed brought it to our attention and negotiated a reduced price for our museum. We now own the family album from California. Included with many photos of individuals is a photo taken at the family reunion in Walworth in 1901. There are also photos of Walworth houses owned by members of the Yeomans family. Each photo is marked with the names of the people in the picture. Thank you, Ed, for your efforts. It is surprising at first that this album was found in California, but then we realized that Francis C. Yeomans, Lucien's brother and T.G.'s son, settled in California and raised his family there. This was indeed a great find.

Thank you to everyone for your efforts and dedication to the many projects and activities that make us a productive Historical Society.

Visit Our Museum This Summer



Spinning demonstration by Marcia Reybrouck

There's something for everyone at the Walworth Museum, and summer is the perfect time for a visit. Youngsters can check out toys that children played with 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.

Jessie in the Lions Den

by Bob Mogray

On April 7 WHS president Jessie Keymel and vice-president Bob Mogray attended one of the regular meetings of the Walworth Lions Club at Carey Lake. The Lions Club had asked for someone from the WHS to attend and put on a short presentation of the history of the Walworth area. Jessie Keymel bravely volunteered to do this.

After their meeting and dinner, Jessie talked for about 30 minutes to a very interested group. A slide show was shown as she narrated and explained each frame. Old photos from our collection were shown as well as some newer photos. Samples of slides from West Walworth, Lincoln, and Walworth were presented. Included in the show were churches, businesses, cemeteries, schools, and homes in the area. Jessie did a great job, the presentation was well received, and there was a lot of participation from the Lions Club members.

The new laptop computer and digital video projector were used to aid in her show. These are becoming very valuable tools to use in demonstrating much of the information that the WHS has accumulated due to the hard work of its members. Now, not only can we show photos and slides, but we can present videos, written material, and scanned items also. We are always looking for new and old local photos and items to scan and save in our museum computer.

Flag Day at the WHS Museum

By Gene Bavis

On Sunday, June 14 (Flag Day), the Walworth Historical Society will hold an Open House at the Museum, 2257 Academy Street. This would have been just one of our regular Sunday Open Houses at the Walworth museum, but Flag Day is a special day, so we decided to make this a special open house.

As of this writing, the program is still a "work in progress," but I can tell you that we hope to make it memorable and educational. We are inviting Scout and Veterans groups. We plan to have various ceremonies associated with the Flag. There will be exhibits and handouts, and each attendee will be given a small flag to take home.

The program will begin at 2 PM with a Flag Raising Ceremony and will end at 4 PM with a Flag Retreat Ceremony. You are also invited to bring your tattered and worn-out flags to be "retired." Please join us. If you are a Scout or Veteran, you are invited to come in uniform. If not, please consider wearing "the colors" (something red, white and blue). Let's celebrate our Flag and all of its symbolism.

Membership Dues Are Due

By Mary Jane Devlin

The Walworth Historical Society operates on a May 1 to April 30 fiscal year. Your membership dues are due May 1 unless you are a Life Member. If you're not sure when your membership expires, please contact the treasurer at 986-1512, or check your membership card.

There are several categories of membership in WHS: Student \$5, Individual \$10, Joint or Family \$15, Supporting \$25, Corporate or Business \$30, Sponsor \$50, Patron \$100, Life \$150, and Benefactor \$150. By choosing to join at a higher level of membership, you will enable us to continue to expand our program presentations and add to our collection of historical items, as well as restore and preserve the items that are already in our collection.

Please pay dues at the May 18 annual meeting or send your check to the Walworth Historical Society at the address listed on the front of this newsletter. For your convenience, a membership renewal form is included in this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support.

Merchandizing in the Early 20th Century

By Ethel M. Henning

Editor's Note: The following information was written by Ethel M. Henning, who passed away in 1997. Although it does not have a date, the story gives a glimpse of how items were purchased prior to the appearance of shopping malls and supermarkets. Ethel graduated from Walworth High School and Brockport Normal School and taught in the Syracuse and Webster areas for many years. She was a charter/life member of the Walworth Historical Society, trustee/secretary of the Walworth-Seely Public Library, and lived at 1283 Plank Road, Lincoln. Excerpts from her story are printed below and will continue in future newsletters.

At the turn of the century, there were many men and some women who canvassed the countryside selling their wares and satisfying the needs of the area.

One such person was "Jew Jake". He had a small horse-drawn cart with a cupboard on the platform from which he dispensed kitchen utensils – good heavy enameled basins, pitchers, all sizes of kettles and other kitchen needs.

He had special places where he would spend the night and could buy sweet butter, for his way of life frowned upon salted food. After the evening meal, he put on a little black cap and his prayer shawl around his shoulders and said his prayers before retiring. He paid for this hospitality by giving the housewife something from the cupboard. The housewife could order any article that was not available, and he would deliver it on his next trip.

I remember his coming to my grandparents' farm when they lived on the Kelly farm on Downs Road. It was an experience I have never forgotten.

Then there was the rag man. Everyone had a rag bag into which were put discarded clothes and other such items. Regularly an aging man came through the area driving an old horse hitched to a small wagon. He called "Ragman, Ragman", and the residents exchanged the rag bag for which he paid according to the weight of the bag.

To Be Continued.....

Hometown Portraits: Videos and Slides by Bob Mogray

At the March 16 meeting of the WHS attendees were treated to an excellent program. The theme was "Hometown Portraits" and our speakers were our own Gene Bavis and Gordon Youngman. The idea was to present a program to stimulate conversation and stories of some of our Walworth past and present citizens. Attendance was very good and the presentations were excellent.

Gene Bavis opened the presentation by showing and commenting on an old 8mm film that had been converted to DVD format. It was a movie his father, Ray Bavis, had taken in the mid 1950's of many of the Walworth store owners and citizens of the time. It showed not only Gene as a young man of about 7 or 8 years of age, but also footage of Abe and Stanley Almekinder, Charlie Hack, George Duell, Elton and Anna May, Gordon and Katie Youngman, and many others.

Gordon Youngman followed with a slide show presentation of more than 100 photos he took through the years of customers in his store. He commented on almost all of them and included in this presentation were photos of Warren and Betty Bell, the Bassage family, Charlie Pembroke, Don Huntley, and many more. Gordy told everyone these photos were only about half of his collection. Hopefully he can be persuaded to show us more at a later date.



Gordon Youngman

Both presentations were very well received by the members in attendance and there was a great deal of member participation. In the days that followed I have gotten several positive emails with rave comments about the presentations. Interesting shows like these are possible partly because of our new laptop computer and digital video projector that the WHS purchased with grant money from the Hoffman Foundation. As usual refreshments were expertly presented by Nancy Bel.

If anyone has any suggestions for topics that he or she would like to see, please send a note or call one of the officers or board members listed on the front of this newsletter. Also, please feel free to attend any or all of the regular meetings and bring a guest or two.



Gene Bavis

Annual Meeting May 18: A Glimpse of West Walworth

By Gene Bavis

On Monday, May 18, the Annual Meeting of the Walworth Historical Society will be held at the museum, 2257 Academy Street. It will begin at 6:15 PM with a pot luck dinner. Attendees are asked to bring a dish to pass and their own table service. Beverages will be provided.

Following dinner (around 7:15 PM), our annual meeting and election of officers and trustees will be held. Next on the agenda will be the presentation of the Community Service Award to Robert (Bob) Turcotte. If you know Bob, you know why he was selected as this year's honoree.

As a part of the ceremony some of the highlights of his contributions to our community will be shared. Following this ceremony, and in Bob's honor, Mary Jane Devlin will present a brief illustrated program called "A Glimpse of West Walworth." We hope you will join us. Bring a friend.

Town Supervisor Photos Project by Bob Mogray

A recent project of the Walworth Historical Society has been to scan and prepare an 8" x 10" black and white photo of former Walworth Supervisor U. W. Sherburne in order that it may be hung at the Walworth town hall. This is an old photo that was recently found as part of a group of Wayne County town supervisors' pictures in the basement of the town hall.

After the Sherburne project was completed, Walworth Town Supervisor Bob Plant asked me to see if we could find more of the past supervisors' portraits so they too could be displayed in the main meeting room at the Walworth town hall. This has taken a few weeks but these photos were obtained from the Wayne County Historian's files. We now have all of the portraits of previous Walworth town supervisors dating back to and including the year 1880.

There are still more photos to be located and this will probably be an ongoing project for some time. The pictures we have found have been presented to Bob with the promise that we will continue to search for the ones we do not yet have. The photos shown below are some of the Walworth town supervisors we have found as of this date. The WHS would like to thank Wayne County Historian Peter Evans and his staff for helping to locate many of the older photos included in this project.



George Frowley
1922 - 1929



U. W. Sherburne
1914 - 1921



Ruben T. Brown
1903 - 1913

Walworth Memories

By Gene Bavis

Another VERY successful Walworth Memories program was held on Sunday, April 19, at the Walworth Town Hall. Thirty-nine people attended the program that we called "Street Dances and Such." This was the eleventh session co-hosted by the Walworth-Seely Public Library and the Walworth Historical Society. As in previous sessions, detailed notes were taken by Dorothy French and photos by Bob Mogray. The notes from previous sessions have been organized and indexed. They are now a documentary history themselves.

Among the topics covered in this most recent session were the Walworth Street Dances that were first started by the Chamber of Commerce, dances that were held in various homes and halls around town, jam sessions by local musicians (including Larry Hill and Dick Roland, both of whom attended), carnivals, the Festival in the Park, and the Minstrel and Gay Nineties Shows. The Chamber of Commerce scrapbook was on display and helped stimulate fond memories of the past. Refreshments were provided by Friends of Walworth-Seely Public Library.

The next Walworth Memories will be on October 18 at the Walworth Historical Society. The topic will be "Births, Weddings and Deaths" (a cycle of life ceremonies). Please save the date.

Photographs Wanted!

By Gene Bavis

Technology is a blessing! For the past couple of centuries, we have been recording images of people, places and events. We now take it for granted that a picture will be available, BUT...guess what! There is a lot of Walworth History for which we need pictures.

The Walworth Historical Society has undertaken an on-going project to collect as many photographs of Walworth as possible. When a genealogical researcher comes to us, we want to be able to show them a photo of the person who once lived here in Walworth, OR if someone is researching one of the churches, we'd love to be able to show them a picture of all of the pastors of that church. What about the students who attended (or the teachers who taught in) that district schoolhouse? It is important for us to document our history, and the photograph is a wonderful tool. "A picture is worth 1000 words" is a very true statement.

Here is how YOU can HELP: Gather up your photographs and bring them to us. We have a scanner that will allow us to copy and keep an electronic image of your photograph. You can then take your precious memory home with you, and hopefully pass it on to your children and grandchildren. We invite you to bring us these photographs at ANY of our meetings or other events, OR make an appointment to come in at a time that will work for both you and us by contacting any of the members listed on the front page of this newsletter.

In addition to regular photos (black and white or color, any size), we can also scan slides and negatives. VHS tapes can be converted to DVD. The possibilities are nearly endless. Become part of Walworth's history by sharing your images with us.

Bring Back the Elm

We are exploring the possibility of purchasing a disease-resistant American elm tree to be planted on the museum grounds during Arbor Day in April 2010. Contact Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 for more information.



American Elm tree

Once one of America's most popular trees, Dutch Elm disease in the 1930's wiped out most of the population of American Elm trees. Now, newer strains of more disease resistant American Elm trees are available in nurseries and are making a comeback.

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Membership Information for Fiscal Year May 1, 2009 – April 30, 2010

Check the appropriate category:

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$ 5.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$ 50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$ 100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Joint or Family	\$ 15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership	\$ 150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$ 25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$ 150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate or Business	\$ 30.00		

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

Walworth Historical Society 2009 Events Calendar

Save this schedule and mark your calendar for meetings and activities planned during the remainder of 2009. All events will be held at the museum, 2257 Academy Street, unless otherwise specified. All programs are free, although donations are gratefully accepted.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Mon., May 18	6:15 PM	Pot luck supper, annual meeting, election of officers, Community Service Award presentation to Bob Turcotte. Program: "A Glimpse of West Walworth".
Sun., June 14	2 – 4 PM	Flag Day celebration & open house at the museum
Fri., July 24	7:00 PM	Festival in the Park parade; booth at Ginegaw Park
Sat., July 25	3 PM – 8 PM	Booth at Ginegaw Park
Mon., Sept. 21	7:30 PM	General Meeting. Program: "Rosie the Riveter" by Bob Marcotte, <u>Democrat and Chronicle</u> columnist. Museum's 20 th anniversary party.
Sun., Oct. 4	2-5 PM	Open House
Sun., Oct. 18	2-3:30	Walworth Memories, co-sponsor with library. Location: museum. Theme: "Births, Weddings, and Funerals".
Mon., Nov. 16	7:30 PM	General Meeting; program to be announced.

Board of Trustee Meetings, 7:00 PM: June 15, Aug. 17, and Oct. 19.

Open House Hours: The museum is open during June, July, August, and September on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 4 PM. Contact Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 for an appointment for other times. We are seeking additional volunteers to staff our summer open house hours. Please call Jessie if you are interested.

Museum beech tree photos from story on page 2.



Trimming the beech tree



Fertilizing the beech tree

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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: _____
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 City, State, Zip Code: _____
 E-Mail: _____

May 2009 WHS Newsletter Bonus e-mail Photos



Left: Members and volunteers fertilize the copper beech tree next to the museum.



Above: Photo from “Walworth Memories” on April 19.



Above: The museum beech tree gets trimmed



Left: Photo from “Walworth Memories” on April 19.



Above photo from Gordon Youngman's slide show at the "Hometown Portraits" WHS meeting



Above photo from Gordon Youngman's slide show at the "Hometown Portraits" WHS meeting



Above photo from Gordon Youngman's slide show at the "Hometown Portraits" WHS meeting



Above scene from Gene Bavis' video presentation at "Hometown Portraits" WHS meeting



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