

# 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

My thanks go out to the many members who continue to work for Walworth Historical Society, even in the summer months. This summer we have had some new faces in the museum during our June through September open houses. I hope you enjoyed your time in our building and took this opportunity to check out our growing collections.

One Wednesday afternoon a lady from Connecticut came looking for information on her brother who attended Walworth High School. The museum sitter called me and, thanks to the work of our filing committee, I could direct her to the file on the 1940's Walworth High School. Before she left we compared notes on her ancestors - the Benjamin Billings family who settled on the farm that we remember as the Coveney farm. We have a file on the Billings family that we were able to share with her and she will send us some of her research; this is how we grow and continue to fulfill our mission.

Thanks also to the members who helped build our prize-winning float for the Festival in the Park parade and to those who manned the booth at Ginegaw Park.

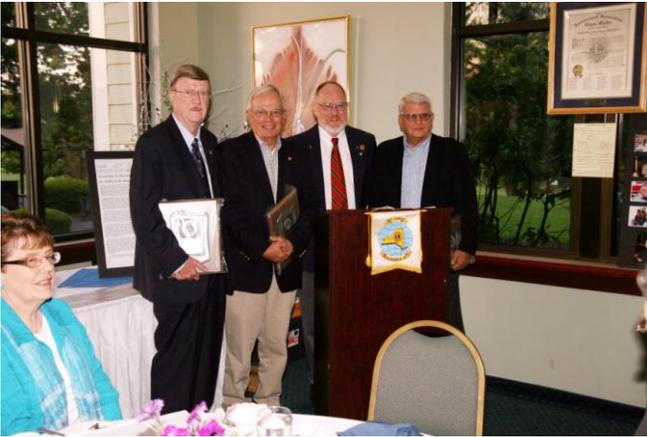
On the first weekend in June the Walworth High School Alumni Association members meet for their annual dinner. The last class graduated from Walworth in 1949. As the number of graduates gets smaller, the gathering continues to remain around 50 with friends and others who attended elementary school in Walworth. Did you attend Walworth School? If so, you are welcome to join an evening of memories and renewed friendship.

## Walworth Lions Celebrate 40 Years By Dorothy French

"To be the best possible provider of community service in the town of Walworth." This vision statement exemplifies the 40 years of service provided by members of the Walworth Lions Club.

During the past four decades the organization has spent money on eyeglasses and eye exams, scholarships, Guide Dog schools, Environmental Clean-Up Day, disaster relief, food pantry, senior citizens dinner, and other causes. To accomplish this, the members raised the necessary money via various means: Festival in the Park, tent rental, pasta dinner, Breakfast with Santa, Las Vegas Night, and other events. Each year the club donates about two tons of potatoes to five local food pantries and the Eastern Service Workers. The Walworth Lions Club received the Good Neighbor Award from the American Red Cross this year at the American Red Cross Annual Meeting.

A dinner was held May 15 at the Brookwoods Country Club in Ontario to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their charter. Recognition was given to charter members. Current president, secretary, and treasurer, respectively, are Lyn Boyd-Bauer, Craig Bauer, and Tony Sclamo. WHS newsletter editor Bob Mogray captured the festivities on his camera and a photo CD of the festivities was donated to the Walworth Historical Society by Lions member Lou Villanova.



The Walworth Historical Society has presented the Community Service Award to two members of the Walworth Lions Club. In 2006, Bill Boyd was honored for his many years of service to the Lions, Walworth Recreation, and Zion United Methodist Church of West Walworth. In 2012 Lions charter member John Baxter was presented the award; John's volunteer service also involves the Walworth Fire Department, Walworth Ambulance, and Walworth Recreation. We are grateful to this service organization for the volunteer work they do in and for our community and other areas.

**Left: Bill Boyd (3<sup>rd</sup> from right) was master of ceremonies at the Lions Club's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary banquet. Current charter members recognized were, left to right, John Baxter, Tom Stevens, and Frank Guelli.**

## Oct. 7 Open House at Museum By Judy McMillan

On Sunday, October 7, the Walworth Historical Society will host our annual Fall on the Farm Open House at our museum on Academy Street. This is a great time of year to bring the family and learn about Walworth. This year we will be treated to beautiful music performed by the Community Band. This band was started approximately 12 years ago and includes Wayne Central School students and/or parents, as well as other people from the community who enjoy music.

On display will be the two Holstein paintings by the late Clara Billings Yeomans of Walworth. Thanks to several grants, these paintings have been restored and framed and are excellent examples of local folk art.

We will also host walking tours of the hamlet of Walworth. There will be lots of displays at the museum and home-made pie and coffee as well as cookies and cider. There will also be farm implements on display that will evoke memories of our past. It is from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. - rain or shine - and is free! Hope to see you there!

## **Our Collection Continues to Grow** By Jessie Keymel

In our files at the museum we have several files under the title "Walworth Organizations." The history of the many groups that have been part of our community over the years is readily available for your research. The latest addition to this section is a CD of the recent 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Walworth Lions Club, along with the program of that event. Many thanks to the Lions Club members for your many hours of volunteering in our community.

Our art collection has increased with the gift of a pastel (I think) drawing of four-year-old Emily Tuttle Huntley. Miss Emily traveled to Rochester for the sittings. This portrait was given to us by her granddaughter, Donna Huntley Stalker, along with an oil painting that hung in the Huntley homestead.

We have received a tin box with the message "A present from J. W. Baker, General Merchant, Walworth, N.Y." This box will compliment our eggs/chicks box that sits under our museum table with "Return to Walworth, J. W. Baker" written on it. Thank you, Mrs. Peter Oosterling of Ontario for thinking of us.

We also now have a large 1853 map of Wayne County, a gift from Gary Steinmiller of Gananda Insurance Agency. Often times other Wayne County historical societies share items with each other. Recently Chris Davis from Arcadia Historical Society gave us a letter he received from Betty Chase Pelow, written by her great-grandmother in 1875. The letter, from Sara Chase to her brother and sister, tells them of the death of her son Charles. The letterhead on the paper was from the "Walworth Barrel Manufactory, Gilmer Chase proprietor" - a business we have no information about in our files. Charles is buried in the Walworth Cemetery on Sherburne Road; he was 59.

The family of Norman Vane (Doris Darron's brother) has donated his WW II army uniform. Norm was a member of a tank unit at the close of the war, and was in Germany during the last days. The gift includes his uniform, newspapers announcing the end of the war, and a photo scrapbook of the men he served with along with a small swastika pennant. Again we are reminded that events of the world touch even Walworth residents.

## **Next Walworth Memories: Mother's Kitchen** By Bob Mogray

On Sunday, October 21, the Walworth Historical Society and the Walworth-Seely Public Library will co-host another in the continuing "Walworth Memories" programs. The topic for this will be "Mother's Kitchen" and it will be held at the museum on Academy Street. The time will be from 2:00 until 3:30 p.m. and will be all about getting together and sharing memories of your mother's kitchen when we were much younger and still at home.

This should be a great topic so please stop in and share your memories and experiences about food and meals prepared by Mom when you were a child. Bring your funny stories as well as recipes if you have them. Please tell us about some of your favorite meals that your mother made for you and also some of the ones that were not so excellent. I'll have a couple of my own stories to share and am looking forward to hearing some of yours.

In order for this to be a success we need as many attending as possible. The setting will be very informal and everyone is encouraged to participate. Your support is vital to the continuance and fun of these types of programs. If you need more information, please call any officer or board member (phone numbers are listed on the cover of this newsletter). We hope to see you and your family! Refreshments will be served.

## **WHS Museum Summer Schedule**

Our museum will be 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 315-986-2765. We are located at 2257 Academy Street.

Volunteers are needed on Sundays and Wednesdays to "museum sit." We have put together a binder of helpful information regarding the museum and its contents. We encourage our volunteers to bring their cell phone and a friend to share this opportunity of helping others learn about our past. Contact Judy McMillan at 315-524-4219 if you can give us a couple of hours.

Visitors are invited to spend an hour or two browsing through scrapbooks donated by Dorothy Petty, Anna May, and the Walworth Chamber of Commerce, or checking out the various displays depicting life from not so long ago. For the genealogists, local cemetery records have been catalogued by Doug Churchill for easy access, in addition to obituaries and wedding/engagement information.

## Carol Bailey Returns for Sept. 17 Program

By Mary Jane Devlin

Carol Bailey of Lyons presented a program on barns a couple of years ago. She now returns to our museum with a program about vintage clothing styles for men and women. Carol's interest in history goes back to her high school days and her father's influence. She is currently a member of three historical societies. Carol has written a book about her childhood and is currently composing a history of the Bailey Family Reunion which will celebrate 100 years in 2013.

As part of her responsibilities as historian for New York State Grange, Carol is updating the history of the Grange in New York. She is a board member of the New York State Grange Museum in Cortland and has been involved since its beginnings in the late 1990s.

She has an extensive collection of vintage clothing and enjoys talking about her collection. She will bring some clothing as well as other memorabilia pertaining to her subject.

Hope to see you on Monday, September 17. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. at the WHS museum, 2257 Academy Street, corner of High Street. Refreshments will be served following Carol's program. Contact President Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 if you need additional information.

## School Daze: Freewill District #8

By Dorothy French

At the northeast corner of Atlantic Avenue and Lewis Road is a home owned by the David Rutan family. The remodeled building bears no resemblance to Freewill District #8 which occupied that site for many years. It was there that several Walworth women - including Sara Arnold Taber, Hazel Pembroke Bassage and Dorothy Yuker Petty - taught area students in grades K - 8.

How did the school get its name? In the 1800's Freewill Baptist Church was located on Atlantic Avenue, near the future site of District #8. WHS recently received a book containing the minutes of the trustees - from the first meeting to organize the school in 1851 until it closed in 1947. The book also includes the names of teachers and the number of students. This was donated to us by Stanley and Mary Frederes, who were given this for safekeeping by Ed Stigel, a trustee.

The October 6, 1851 meeting minutes approved the payment of salaries for a librarian, collector and trustee, in addition to \$7.50 fuel for the remainder of the year. At the February 28, 1857 meeting, attendees voted to "build a school on the corner where the old school stood;" the previous building was sold. Thus it seems probable the school was named Freewill because of its proximity to the nearby church. When the new Freewill Elementary School was built in 1969 on Canandaigua Road, a contest was held to determine the school's name. The winning name was suggested by former teacher Hazel Pembroke Bassage.



The school closed in 1947 and the students were bused to District #1, Walworth High School. A series of letters from school principals to Freewill representatives included a September 1945 letter from Thomas C. Armstrong, Principal of Walworth High School, to Raymond Yuker, acknowledging the receipt of 9 large desks and 12 small desks. A teacher's desk was removed in September 1947, according to an Armstrong memo to Yuker. In August 1949 Lewis S. Markham, Supervising Principal of Wayne Central School, wrote to trustee Edward Stigel that the following items had been removed from Freewill: 5 kindergarten chairs, 8 arm-pad chairs, 1 two-door cupboard, 1 two-door cabinet, and 1 case of toilet paper.

In May 1949 the district "voted to close the school due to centralization and to hold an auction to sell the contents of the school to the highest bidder on the first day of June on school house grounds." The property was sold at auction to Arthur Johncox for \$1,250. Several undated photos of the school were recently purchased on E-Bay from Anaheim, California. This photo of someone's Aunt Gladys (**seen in the photo above**) was taken in 1949 as she stood near the front door which faced Atlantic Avenue. The sign on the school wall to the left of the door states the property will be sold at auction.

Three daughters of Jay and Margaret Lewis have shared memories and photos of District #8. Mabel Lewis Risley of Walworth visited her sister, Martha Lewis Michener, at her home in Oklahoma City, OK, in 2010. Martha remembered walking to District #8 in the winter time, bundling up to stay warm, from the family homestead on Lewis Road near Plank Road.

We have been gifted with two photos taken in June 1946 of the students, several youngsters, and a dog. One photo was donated by Mabel Lewis Risley; photo identification was provided by her sister, Nancy Lewis Isbell, and by Mary Verkey Ragland, who is pictured in the second row wearing a hair ribbon. The teacher, Miss Marjorie Warren, is standing in the back row. Miss Warren does not appear in the other photo, which was donated by Raymond and Wilberta (Arnold) Yuker.

During an April 2008 Walworth Memories program featuring area district schools, Carlyle Darron said he attended District #8 for the two early grades when Hazel Pembroke was the teacher. Every morning either Hazel or Carlyle's Mom (Eva Darron) would drive him to school. Another teacher, Dorothy Yuker, drove her car to school and during inclement weather it frequently got stuck in the mud on Downs Road. Carlyle and his horse would pull out the car, but Carlyle admitted he sometimes carried water to make mud so he would get paid for getting Dorothy's car unstuck. Jay Taber said he donated to the museum a contract which showed his mother, Sara Arnold (later Taber), earned \$10 a week teaching at the Alderman Road and Freewill Schools.



If anyone has additional information about District #8, please contact Dorothy French at 315-986-1098.



**Photo (left):** taken June 1946 of Freewell's last class: *Front row, left to right:* Nancy Lewis and \_\_\_\_\_ Kersey\*. *2<sup>nd</sup> row:* \_\_\_\_\_ Kersey\*, \_\_\_\_\_ Kersey\*, Larry Johncox, \_\_\_\_\_, Mary Verkey, Bob Yuker, \_\_\_\_\_ Kersey\*, and Robert Lewis. *3<sup>rd</sup> row:* Raymond Herold, Robert Johncox, and Jerry Verkey. *Back row:* Martha Lewis, Richard Herold, Miss Marjorie Warren (teacher), Mildred Lewis, Barbara Johncox, and Rita Herold \* Could possibly be spelled Cursey.

**Photo (right):** Current photo of home at 4480 Lewis Road, facing south

### Scrapbook Memories: 1991

By Joyce Finney

These news items were published 21 years ago and noted in a scrapbook compiled by Walworth native and school teacher Dorothy Petty. More than 25 of her scrapbooks were donated to the museum following her passing.

- February 3** - Higher cost for U.S. mail starts today. First class charge to mail a letter weighing one ounce increases from 25 cents to 29 cents.
- February 6** - Humorist Danny Thomas, 79, dies of heart attack.
- March 3** - Ice storm clobbers area. Power knocked out by ice and falling tree limbs. This ice storm is being called the worst of the century.
- May 1991** - Shawcross sentenced in Wayne County Court. Convicted serial killer Arthur Shawcross was sentenced to 25 years to life.
- May 1991** - "No slowing down for 50-year Walworth Firefighter." For 72-year old Stuart Huntley, his golden anniversary with the Walworth Volunteer Fire Department is business as usual.
- June 1991** - Traas' celebrate 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, June 15. The children of John and Doris hosted an open house in celebration of the couple's 50th anniversary.
- July 1991** - Lincoln Baptist Church marks 175 years in Walworth. There was a Baptist Church (Lincoln Baptist) in Walworth long before there was a Walworth or even a Wayne County.
- October 1991** - Walworth Town Hall work under way. Walworth officials hope structure will be finished by September.
- November 1991** - "Old Farmer's" Almanac turns 200 years old.

## The Roads of Lincoln: Part 8 By Mary Jane Devlin

Join us as we travel throughout the Lincoln area on the many roads leading to and from the hamlet. This project was originally started by Ethel Henning. In 1973, house numbers were changed county-wide; the new numbers and Ethel's information were combined in 2009. The \* indicates the name of residents as of 1973. If you can provide more information, please contact me at 315-986-1512.

<b>Old #</b>	<b>New #</b>	<b>Lincoln Road – Going North from Plank Road (continued from May 2012)</b>
141	5297	* Alvin & Dorothy VanWykehouse, Barbara. He was a professional painter, many jobs in large buildings in Rochester and area.
146	5312	* Frank & Olive Luke. No kids.
178	5376	* David Dinse. Albert & Mabel Dinse, Merle
202	5422	* John & Lucille Steffen
209	5433	* Ronald & Nancy Brown, Neil. William & Charlotte Hulbert, Milton, Rose, Betty. Charles Webb 1920's
216	5448	Resident
225	5469	* John & Mary Doyle, Jim, John, Robert, George, William, Gertrude, Jane & Ruth
251	5519	* Robert & Irene Hennessey Doyle, Bob Jr. & George
267	5555	Howard & Vera Klow, Garth. * James & Doris Cole. Ruth Bushwood in the 1940's.
287	5585	* Garth & Vera Clow
	5668	John & Isabel Raymor
	5833	Alzono & Helen Hicks

<b>Old #</b>	<b>New #</b>	<b>Plank Road East from County Line Road</b>
	156	
2900	187	The Walz family had a large dairy for many years. Now operated by Donald Walz. Will & _____ Walz, Margory. * Irving & Ochle Walz, Donald, Margory
2910	209	Walz tenant house: Carl Grandin. * Knight residence
2984	355	John & _____ DeYoung, Peter. * Lester & Mary Jane White
2983	360	* Alvin & Lucille Merzke
2996	379	* Frank & Marie Moque
3015	404	* Frank & Vera Fugmann
3017	416	* David & Catherine Cummings
3019	424	* Floyd & Mabel Kier; operated the little store which later became "Cook's Country Store", Larry, Audrey Pugsley, Carl Grandin
	428	* Goodwin's Grocery Store
	448	John Eddie, recluse, came to store once a week.
3032	449	* Lewis & Martha Wahl, Robert, Virginia Brush
3023	452	* Kenneth & Jeanne Wasmuth
3035	456	Luther & Florence Read, Darwin, John, Arlene Youngman. * Glenn Barnsdale
3041	466	* Leland & Barbara Sharrow
3055	480	* Vratislav & Maria Pernica
3057	488	* Raymond & Janet Hinkel
3059	496	* Richard & Sandra Wirth
3061	504	* Stephen & Nancy Duval
3065	512	* Nizam & Linda Mohammed Ali
3066	519	Fred & Estelle Kerner. Leo & Hazel Berna, Donald, Albert, Amy. * Richard & Janice Dunlop
3067	520	* Richard & Alice Anselm
3073	530	* Florence Read
3074	533	* Walter & Judith Martin
3079	544	* John & Doris Read
3080	545	* Avis Morgan
3084	551	Howard Anderson, Viola, Gladys. Wolcott "Todd" & Avis Morgan; Todd was supervisor at Eastman Kodak, Rodney, Melissa, Nancy. *Gerald & Catherine Appleby
	553	Bob & Sally Amsler. Bob was excellent carpenter; remodeled Ethel Henning's kitchen inc. new windows, cabinets and counter; sons Dale and Dean. Bob con-structed cow barn at Amsler's Dairy, Lincoln Road; his name is on sign above dairy.

## Festival in the Park By Gene Bavis

Each year the Walworth Lions Club coordinates the Festival in the Park and the parade. This is a wonderful opportunity for community organizations to showcase themselves, so the Walworth Historical Society always participates with both a float in the parade and with a booth at the Festival. The WHS Board of Trustees would like to thank all of our members who participated by working on the float or staffing our booth.

This year's parade theme was "Christmas in July." Our float was "engineered" by the Keymels and our art advisor, Larry Ruth. Several members joined to put it all together at Keymel's barn on July 24. As you will see in the photo, we had a large sleigh loaned to us by Jim and Marilyn Hamman, as well as a Christmas tree donated by Roger and Jessie and several smaller sleds and stuffed animals. We all thought it was quite impressive, and the parade judges agreed by awarding us the "Best Float" trophy as seen on the cover of this newsletter.

At the Festival, we displayed some of our photo books that Bob Mogray has made for us and we had our shirts, hats, coverlets, ornaments and books for sale. We also promoted membership in the WHS. While all of this takes a little work, it's great fun to visit with friends and neighbors and promote our organization.



**Left: Judy McMillan, Jacque Ruth, and Jessie Keymel work on building the 2012 WHS float for the Festival in the Park parade.**

**Right: Roger Keymel pulls the 2012 WHS Festival in the Park float**

## Shirt-Tail Bend By Robert W. Wignall

*Editor's Note: An 1874 map of the Walworth hamlet in Beer's Atlas shows a connecting road between Main Street and Rochester Street (now known as Walworth-Penfield Road.) The east-west street was called Mechanic Street; the north-south street was Orchard Street. It's not known when the two roads became Church Street, but there has been much speculation how the junction got the nickname of "Shirt-Tail Bend." The comments below by Bob Wignall - as told to his sister, Janice Wignall Mitichell - are a possible explanation.*



"Shirt-Tail Bend" is the name given to the curve in the road leading from the churches west and around by our sweet cherry orchard to Walworth-Penfield Rd. I think it originated at the time when Fred Boynton owned the west part of our farm and used to drive back and forth from his home on Main Street. He drove a fast horse on an open buggy and usually had his shirttail flying in the wind, making the corner on two wheels.

**The Walworth Street Dance Returns**    By Bob Mogray

For many years in the 1950's through the 1970's, the town of Walworth had a Street Dance. Main Street was blocked off and neighbors and friends gathered together for food, games, music, dancing, and other activities. Eventually, for a variety of reasons, this tradition was discontinued and was replaced by the Festival in the Park. In the summer of 2010, in order to raise funds for a local family in need, a street dance was held as a one-time event. To the surprise and delight of everyone, this was an enormous success. This indicated to many that the town might be ready to reinstate the Walworth Street Dance as a regular yearly feature. This summer it became a reality.

On August 11, 2012, the Walworth Street Dance was once again held. As before, Main Street was blocked off and for one afternoon and evening, the town was the setting for a local get-together for food, music, and visiting with your neighbors. The chairperson was Kelli Craig, but many other volunteers worked very hard to make this idea a reality. Local business people and private individuals also pitched in to help. Hundreds of hours of planning and hard work went into getting ready for this street dance. The layout for local vendors had to be planned, donations were sought, food and entertainment had to be set up, and advertising was needed. There were so many details that needed to be addressed for a town-wide event such as this.

Some of the features of this year's Walworth Street Dance were: pizza, hot dogs and hamburgers, a lumberjack demonstration, face painting, cupcake sales, sausages and salt potatoes, a wild adult pie-eating contest, a bounce house, dart toss game, two bands, and many others. Thanks to all of those who spent time, effort, and funds in the planning of the 2012 Walworth Street Dance. I was there and had a great time. The date is set for Saturday, August 10, 2013 for the next Walworth Street Dance and we hope to see you there!



**Scenes from this year's Walworth Street Dance.**

**Left: The winner of the ever popular pie-eating contest.**

**Right: Kids with balloons.**



**In Memoriam**    By Mary Jane Devlin

Radah Wing Wacenske passed away on July 29, 2012. Radah first joined the Walworth Historical Society in 1987. She became a life member in 2004. Radah lived in Walworth during her early years. She attended Walworth schools and was very proud of the history of the Walworth High School.

She was corresponding secretary of the Walworth Alumni Association for many years. Failing health prevented her from continuing as secretary; however, she continued to participate in the annual meetings.

She will be missed by her family and friends. Our sympathies are extended to her family.

**Walworth Historical Society  
2012 Events Calendar**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Location</b>
Mon., Sept. 17	7:30 PM	General Meeting. Program: Carol Bailey and "Vintage Clothing"	Museum
Sun., Oct. 7	2-4 PM	Open House. Subject: Fall on the Farm	Museum
Sun., Oct. 21	2-3:30 PM	Walworth Memories. Subject: "Memories of Mother's Kitchen." Co-sponsored with Walworth-Seely Public Library	Museum
Mon., Nov. 19	<b>1:00 PM Note time</b>	General Meeting. Program: Rev. Jake Denny and the "War of 1812"	Museum

**Next Board of Trustees Meeting:** Monday: 7:00 PM at the Museum. November 5.

**Open House Hours:** The museum is located at 2257 Academy Street and is open June, July, August, and September on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 4 PM. Contact Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or Nancy Bel at 315-986-2765 for an appointment for other times.

## September 2012 WHS Newsletter Bonus Photos

All photos on this page are from the 2012 Festival in the Park Parade



All photos on this page are from the 2012 Walworth Street Dance

