

WALWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

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Walworth Museum 2257 Academy Street

**To schedule a visit please call:
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President's Message

There are times when each of us goes searching for our own history. In October I visited Scotland. I made the trip to the cemetery to search out the graves of my grandparents and others that I remember from my childhood. These trips bring to mind other more worldly events that played a role in my life and the life of my family.

On March 19, Marsha Smith will be talking about a similar trip she has made. In 1996 Marsha visited the Brittany American Military Cemetery in St. James, France, to visit the grave of her uncle, Staff Sergeant Benedict Smith, who was killed in action in Normandy in 1944. According to the Wayne County Mail, her visit to France was "the genesis of the Normandy Allies, Inc., an organization founded to promote a greater historical understanding of the 1944 liberation of Normandy".

World War II played an important part in the lives of many Walworth residents. The displays in the Museum this spring will be an attempt to understand Walworth's involvement in the history of the world.

We "Visited" the Market

On November 20, 2006, a standing-room-only crowd heard and watched Nancy Rosin present a program on the 100 year history of the Rochester Public Market. Her program was a power-point presentation of the earliest years from 1905 as a wholesale market for local farmers, right up to the present day as a bustling retail market. During and after the presentation many people in the audience shared memories of going to the market with parents and grandparents. Nancy has written a book "The Hands That Feed Us – One Hundred Years at the Rochester Public Market". The cost is \$20.00. Some copies will be available at our March 19 meeting but copies are also available at local book stores. Following the program, seasonal desserts were enjoyed by all.

Preservation Grant Received

Walworth Historical Society recently received a grant from the Genesee Country Antique Dealers Association. Each year the association makes grant money available to one of the six counties that surround the Rochester area. This year Wayne County was chosen to receive the grants. Anyone interested in historical preservation could apply. Grant applications were due by October 1, 2006.

The purpose of our grant is to help preserve registers of attendance for Walworth School District #1 from August 1, 1903, to July 31, 1912. These attendance records have recently been donated to us by Gordon Youngman. The registers consist of student names, birthdates, and parents' names, along with teachers' names, salaries, and certifications.

We are planning to send these registers to Brown's River Records Preservation Services in Essex, VT, for binding and treatment.

I Remember.....by Dick Roland

Editor's Note: Several years ago Gene Bavis published photos of local folks in the WHS newsletter, and asked if anyone would share information about them. Dick Roland, whose memory goes way back despite his youthful appearance, responded. From time to time we will publish his notes.

Frank Tuttle: Frank died two years before I was born, but I knew his brother, Dewitt, very well. We had an old saddle in the barn that belonged to my grandfather, Winfield Bavis. He used to say it had belonged to Frank Tuttle. It's not hard to think it might have been built at Henry Bean's Shop in Walworth. I have a couple of envelopes for Henry's business that say "Harness Making, Saddlery & Hardware". I rode many miles as a teenager in that saddle and still have it.

The Year Was 1977

Note: this information was compiled by Joyce Finney from Dorothy Petty's scrapbooks

January: It was the "Blizzard of 1977".

- It was the worst driving conditions in 10 years.
- Temperatures fell below zero.
- Governor Hugh Carey closed all gas-heated schools in the state for two weeks.
- Gas supply was falling at an alarming rate.

March:

- Ames Department Store opened in Macedon.
- Draves Food Mart opened in Walworth. Eggs sold for 69 cents a dozen; a gallon of ice cream cost \$1.79; a half gallon of milk was 59 cents; chuck roast was 79 cents a pound.

April:

- New York State celebrated its 200th birthday.
- Dairyman of the Year Award was accepted by Carlyle and Doris Darron for outstanding achievement in the dairy industry and community service.
- Announcement: New Life Bible Church on Atlantic Avenue will be open soon. Pastor Kenneth Birky is the pastor. (The dedication ceremony was held in July.)

June:

- New Walworth Town Hall opened on the Walworth-Marion Road. The facility will house the town assessor, building inspector, town court and soon the town clerk.
- Farewell open house held for Rev. Neil Arnold and family. Rev. Arnold pastored the Walworth Methodist Church, as well as the Zion United Methodist Church in West Walworth, since 1969.
- Oil pipeline opened in Alaska.

September:

- Joe and Lorraine Finley moved to South Carolina. They had resided in Walworth for some 60 years.

November:

- Walworth Historical Society will renovate the Walworth-Seely Library to house both library and WHS. WHS is conducting a fund drive to raise \$3000 to remodel the upper front room. *Note: this plan was changed due to handicap access requirements which would have been difficult to meet. Eventually we were able to construct our present museum.*
- Lois VanHoover, Clerk of Wayne County Supervisors, will seek nomination as Wayne County Treasurer.
- Routes 441 & 350 deemed a dangerous intersection. The most recent accident occurred when a school bus, driven by Patricia Suhr, and a truck collided. The bus overturned; fortunately no children were on the bus and Patricia was not seriously injured.

School/Retirees:

- Mrs. Margaret Bebernitz: taught for 38 years, 22 of them in the English Department at Wayne Central School.
- Roger Pembroke: associated with Walworth High School and Wayne Central School for 50 years as a student, teacher, Board of Education member, and Principal.
- Evelyn Pembroke: noon hour monitor
- Ray DeFisher: custodian
- Harold Jesse: bus driver

Anniversaries:

50th: Mabel and Floyd Kier

52nd: Mr. and Mrs. George Hyman, Sr.

Weddings:

Mark Wyse and Linda Crane

Suellen Sherman and Rick Ertel

Lisa Joslyn and Glenn Roberts

Cindy Scott and Rick Ebert

Caryn Campbell and Mark Devlin

Donna Porterfield and Dale Hall

Deaths:

Hazel White

Ruth Gerlack

Carol Ann Collins

Florence Reed

Emma Kuttruff

LaVern Scott

Peter VanHanehem

Ernest Luke

Leanna Schlegel

Elton May

Brevort (Rube) Wilson

Jennie Johncox

The Pease House

By Christopher J. Pease

In 1854, the property at 2175 Church Street, Walworth, NY, was owned by Silas Jones and was originally bounded by Rochester Street (Penfield Road) to the north, Orchard Street to the west, Mechanic Street to the south, and neighboring properties to the east. It should be noted that Church Street did not exist in 1854 but was made up of Orchard and Mechanic Streets forming an L.

On August 26 of that year, Silas sold the land to Frederick Rabe and his wife, Maria. According to the town assessor the present house was then built about 20 years later circa 1874-75 in the middle of the property between Rochester and Mechanic Streets, and well east of Orchard Street, so there was plenty of land between the house and Orchard Street but not much between the east lot line and adjoining tracts. There is no mention of an earlier residence on the property in the deed or at the assessor's office. However, an 1874 map shows a home on the property.

No record of the house number has been found but the deed names the property as Lot #10 in all transactions over the years, including documentation in 1958 when the property was purchased by my parents, John and Winnie Pease.

The house in 1874 was a 1½ story wood frame and clapboard structure about 28x17 feet with lath and plaster walls and a stone foundation with dirt floor. A post and beam porch faced Rochester Street to the north, but the entrance to the porch faced Orchard Street on the west.

The next transfer was by Frederick Rabe's will to his wife Maria, probated May 29, 1893. In 1895 Maria had a carriage house with stall and hayloft built south of the house, with gravel drive and double doors facing west to Orchard Street. She owned the house for 12 years until her death in September 1905. Then the house again passed by will to their son, Frederick C. Rabe, who had changed the family name to Robie. The late Marjorie Esley, daughter of Dr. Ernest and Mabel Esley, told my parents she had been born in the "lean-to-shed of a kitchen" on May 24, 1904. One may presume the Esley's were renting from Mrs. Rabe and she was living with her son.

According to deed records, Fred C. died in testate. The property then went to his heir-at-law and only child, Mrs. Myrna Conant, on October 28, 1918, and she owned the house for 16 years.

Although records do not confirm this, at some point during the Robie/Conant ownership the first major addition to the house must have occurred. A complete 1½ story 37x16 wood-frame and clapboard addition was added to the entire east end off the dining room and lean-to kitchen.

A rainwater cistern was installed in the new basement under the east back parlor, while the pump and pressure tank were under the downstairs bathroom. This system was still in operation in 1958, and a few years into my childhood. The well was still in use, but for drinking water only. Somewhere during this time period the first furnace – probably coal fired - was installed by Fred C. or Myrna. It was still in the house when I was a child and looked to be turn-of-the-century or late teens. In 1958 it was oil fired.

In the first sale outside the family in 79 years, Myrna sold the property to Jay S. Seely on June 8, 1932. The next day, June 9, Jay granted an easement to Dr. Ernest and Mabel Esley to discharge surface water from the tile system on the north property. On July 2, after three weeks of ownership, Jay sold to Robert R. and Alice R. Bridges.

On June 20, 1933, the Bridges sold the north property to Dr. and Mrs. Esley, thereby legally changing the address from Rochester Street (now Penfield Road) to either Orchard or Church Streets. I do not know when Orchard and Mechanics Streets became Church Street and when the L became a hazardous curve. The house number was probably 8 as it was in 1958. During the mid-seventies, all homes were renumbered and #8 became #2175 Church Street. It must have been around this time circa early '30s that the last major addition was added. Jay Seely supposedly designed and built it. This consisted of a 10 foot wide x 34 foot long wood-frame and cedar shingle extension off the new southeast bedroom. The entire house was cedar-shaked at this time.

On August 2, 1938, the Bridges sold to Mrs. Blanche R. Finley, who cared for developmentally challenged clients (they were known as "Newark people" then because the state facility was based in Newark, NY). Females were housed upstairs and the men lived in the downstairs south wing.

On April 10, 1958, my parents, John N. and Winifred K. Pease, closed on the property from the estate of Blanche R. Finley. Between 1958 and 1962 my parents made many changes to the first floor. A new enclosed porch facing south was added in 1963. There are still bits and pieces of the old telephone system still in evidence; it can be dated anywhere from the late 1920's to the early World War II years.

Editor's Note: We are grateful to Chris for documenting the history of his family home. Perhaps this will encourage others to do the same. The mission of the Walworth Historical Society is to preserve and share information from our past. Can you help us by contributing a story, genealogy data, or family photos and records? We can copy these documents if you wish to retain the originals.



The Pease House on Church Street

Money, Money, Money!

By Gene Bavis, Town Historian and Board Member

As many of you know, I am involved in a number of different organizations. It seems that whatever one it is, I somehow get involved in worrying about money. For 8 years, I was District Chairman for the Boy Scouts. My district was Wayne County, and the big concern was to reach our goals for membership and **money**. I have a program job now, but still help with fundraising. I am currently the Executive Director for the Finger Lakes Trail Conference. Guess what...I am still dealing with membership and money! SO, I guess I was the logical choice to share some thoughts on the subject.

The Walworth Historical Society is a small organization with a mighty mission. Thanks to the Grange and many others, we were fortunate to have been able to build a building on a donated piece of property and not have a mortgage. Since our building is relatively new (1989), there has been little maintenance cost so far except for the roof which we had to replace prematurely this past year. Fortunately, many of our members kicked in a little extra (one member made a substantial donation) to help pay for it. We raised just over 1/2 of the cost through member donations. THANK YOU to all who donated money toward the project. Obviously, there will be additional maintenance costs as time goes on. The Board is considering ways to be prepared for them when they come, perhaps unexpectedly in the future.

Our current annual budget is around \$12,000. We do receive a stipend from the town each year which is greatly appreciated. The Walworth Historical Society provides office space for the Town Historian as a part of our partnership with the Town. We have less than 100 members (individual or family memberships). If you do the math, you can see that our modest dues don't produce a significant amount of revenue. As you know, we have done various projects to help cover costs. We have sold books, coverlets, Christmas ornaments, calendars, and a few other items to help cover the costs associated with keeping our doors open.

I would like to propose some things that can and should (in MY opinion) be done by the organization and/or the membership. If you feel strongly about our mission (as I do), then please donate according to your means. I suspect most of our members can afford to give more than \$10 or \$15 a year. The Board has adopted a new dues schedule to be ratified by the membership in May. It's only a modest increase, but we'd rather keep the basic cost low for those who don't have a lot of money, and then rely on those who can afford more to pay dues at one of the optional higher levels. **Please consider a \$25, \$50 or \$100 annual membership donation.** We have a number of Life Memberships, and we appreciate them. I am one of them, and so are all of the members of my family. Since I don't pay dues, I make sure I write a check to the organization once or twice a year. Life Members, please consider an annual donation!

Here is another way you can help. We need more members. You can do one of two things: get your friends and neighbors to join OR buy some gift memberships.

The Walworth Historical Society has an Endowment Fund. To date, the only money that has gone into that fund is the revenue from Life Memberships and the interest that has been earned on this money. I would like to propose that members make additional donations directly to this fund. If you are not a Life Member consider becoming one (and then of course also consider the annual donation mentioned above). The intention is that we will **never** draw on the principal, but perhaps someday the fund will be large enough that we can use some of the interest for operating expenses.

One of our Board Members (who shall remain nameless) says that getting constantly bombarded by organizations talking about "planned giving" is a big turn off. I appreciate the sentiment, but I also want to say to you that many people would not think of leaving money in their estate plans to the WHS or asking that donations in lieu of flowers be given to us if we don't "plant a seed." None of us is going to live forever. Even a modest amount left via a will or other method could help the long-term mission.

In summary, **WE need YOU** to help insure that the Walworth Historical Society will ALWAYS be here to collect, interpret, and share local history. I challenge you to give MORE than you must to maintain membership. Don't forget that the WHS is a 501(c)3 not for profit corporation, and donations are TAX DEDUCTIBLE! If you have questions, please contact me or one of the Officers or Board Members. Thanks for taking time to read this.

Walworth Memories: Local Business (part 2)

On Sunday, October 29, 2006, Walworth Memories was held at the Museum in Walworth. This was the second part of the local business theme meetings and was co-sponsored by the Walworth Historical Society and the Walworth-Seely Public Library. It was a continuance of the meeting held earlier in March of 2006. There were 17 people who attended, including many who were not at the original meeting.

Several older photos sparked conversation about the meat market in the hotel, a dry house on High Street, a WW II metal collection site where the museum is located, and a fire in the Macabee building on Main Street. Several attendees brought high school band pictures, wedding pictures, and other older photos for discussion.

There was also information provided about the old mill that was located one mile south of town on the Walworth-Palmyra Road in an area called "The Huddle". Not only did the conversation include historical items such as adult care facilities in the area, Youngman's Ice Cream Store, local farms and parks, old homes, and slaughter houses, but also included sightings of ghosts in haunted houses in town and illegal operation of stills.

No matter what the topic of these Walworth Memories meetings, everyone is invited and encouraged to share what knowledge you might have with us. In particular, there is a great interest in information on house history and family genealogy. Town Historian Gene Bavis spoke for everyone when he said much valuable information from this type of meeting has been obtained and added to the museum's collection of documentation, but we need to collect as much data as we can about the history of the area before it is lost forever. That's why it is so important to attend these meetings.

The next Walworth Memories meeting will be Sunday, March 25, 2 – 3:30 PM at the town hall meeting room. The topic will be World War II. Attendees are welcome to bring military memorabilia for display and conversation.

Upcoming Website for the Historical Society

One of the topics for awhile at the WHS Board meetings has been the organization and installation of a website on the internet. This will allow anyone with internet access to go to our website and learn about us. It will include several areas of interest, including:

History of the WHS
Photo gallery
Newsletters

WHS officers and Board members
WHS projects
How to contact us

The yearly calendar
Membership information
Links to other Walworth sites

Heather Keenan of Gananda will be helping us set this up. She is a local person who has helped several other groups set up websites and has agreed to help us also. If all goes well, the site should be up and running by the end of March. The new website address will be www.walworthhistoricalsociety.com.

This will be a giant step forward in allowing members or anyone to learn about the WHS and check our schedule of upcoming events. There will be an update in the March newsletter.

Final Roof Report

Clint Osterhout of Hearth and Home Builders was hired to remove the museum's old roof and put on a new one, because many of the shingles were cracking and pieces were breaking off. When the new roof was put on, we saved some of the old (still-under-warranty) shingles to send to Certainteed Roofing Company. WHS members Gene Bavis, Becky Appleman, and Kathy Aeckerle had discussed this long before we had even contracted to have a new roof put on.

We sent some samples to Certainteed and, after more correspondence, they sent us a check for \$238. After donations of \$3,185 and warranty coverage for the old shingles of \$238, the final out-of-pocket cost for the Society is \$2,516.

Curator's Corner

As you will remember, Anna May's (Mrs. Elton May) scrapbooks dating back to the early 1940's were given to the museum by Gordon Youngman. Now Doug Churchill has recorded them on computer and there are printouts in the front of each scrapbook. He has compiled the information into two bound booklets: one of Engagements & Weddings which date back to the early 1940's and one of Obituaries which date back to 1874. These are in alphabetical order which make it easy for someone doing research.

Doug will start working on Dorothy Petty's scrapbooks soon. This is a great thing Doug has done for Walworth and anyone who is searching for family records. These books, plus all of his cemetery records, certainly put our little museum into the 21st century and beyond. The entire township owes him a vote of thanks.

We were recently given two World War II posters. One is a copy of the painting by C. C. Beall of Joe Rosenthal's historic photo of the gallant Marines raising Old Glory on Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima. The original painting was presented to the Marine Corps as a memorial to the heroic men who lost their lives during the bloody battle for this Japanese stronghold. The second is a copy of Douglas MacArthur in full dress uniform circa 1943.

It is strange how some items come to the museum. I happened to be at an elderly friend's home the day before Christmas (2006). She had recently moved and had stuff all over. She was going to discard these posters, which she had owned since the 1940's. As they will fit in with our an upcoming program, I of course said I would take them. She was very happy to give them to us. So please don't throw things away, especially anything that has a West Walworth, Lincoln or Walworth history.

2007 Calendar Dates

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.

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Time</i> | <i>Subject</i> |
|----------------|-------------|---|
| Mon. Mar. 19 | 7:30 PM | General Meeting: Marsha Smith's visit to Normandy |
| Sun., Mar. 25 | 2 – 3:30 PM | Walworth Memories, co-sponsored with library; at town hall meeting room; subject: WW II |
| Sat., May 5 | 9 AM – 12 | Spring Clean Up Day |
| Mon., May 21 | 6:15 PM | Pot luck supper, annual meeting, election of officers. Program: TBD |
| Mon., Sept. 17 | 7:30 PM | General Meeting: Program TBD |
| Sun., Oct. 7 | 2-5 PM | Fall Festival |
| Mon., Nov. 19 | 7:30 PM | General Meeting: Program TBD |

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.