

# WALWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

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Walworth Museum 2257 Academy Street, P.O. Box 142 Walworth, NY 14568  
Email Address: [www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org)

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President  
V.P. / Editor  
Secretary  
Treasurer

Jessie Keymel  
Robert Mogray  
Judy McMillan  
Mary Jane Devlin

(315) 524 - 9205  
(315) 986 - 1124  
(315) 524 - 4219  
(315) 986 - 1512

WHS Trustee  
WHS Trustee  
WHS Trustee  
WHS Trustee  
WHS Trustee  
WHS Trustee

Roger Keymel  
Joyce Finney  
Nancy Bel  
Dorothy French  
Becky Appleman  
Gene Bavis

(315) 524 - 9205  
(585) 377 - 9535  
(315) 986 - 1164  
(315) 986 - 1098  
(315) 524 - 3289  
(315) 986 - 1474

Town Historian  
Museum Curator

Gene Bavis  
Kay Scott

(315) 986 - 1474  
(315) 524 - 9528

Publicity  
Genealogy

Becky Appleman  
Joyce Smith

(315) 524 - 3289  
(315) 986 - 7417

**President's Message**    By Jessie Keymel

As we look back over 2007, it is amazing what we, a small historical society, have accomplished. None of this is possible without hard work and dedication on the part of our board, members, and other volunteers.

**Mary Jane Devlin:** Thanks to Mary Jane and her attention to details, our treasurer's reports are always up to date, as are our yearly reports to New York State. She also played an important role in applying for the grant we received from the Genesee Country Antique Dealers Association to copy and protect the original attendance records from the Walworth High School from 1907-1912. With the help of **Bob Mogray**, this project has been completed. A second grant (totaling \$800) has been received from the Hoffman Foundation to purchase a DLP projector so we can bring our story of Walworth's history to the public via a slide show and videos. In addition, **Mary Jane** has been responsible for getting our programs this year.

**Bob Mogray and Dorothy French:** They are the driving force behind our newsletter, with articles of interest contributed by members of our organization. Your suggestions or contributions are greatly appreciated. Thank you, **Bob**, for the great photos; you have the ability to make the ordinary interesting.

**Bob Mogray:** Bob also has spent hours making our website a very informative tool for us. Have you checked it yet? Our web site address is [www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org).

**Kay Scott:** Kay is constantly adding accessions to our collections. She has recruited **Joyce Van Haneghem's** help in getting a complete list into our computer. In addition, Kay asked **Mary and Kathie Earlandt** to help bring our archives up to date by filing many newspaper articles by year – a huge undertaking.

**Joyce Smith:** Joyce is gathering and cataloging any information we receive in the genealogy department, an important part of any historical society.

**Gene Bavis:** Gene mows our lawns and plows the snow. Others pitch in by weeding and helping with general clean up in the spring and when the need arises.

**Nancy Bel:** Nancy has been our hospitality hostess; she appreciates the members who take time to bake for our meetings.

**Judy McMillan:** Judy is a very able secretary. She has also taken on the job of keeping up the Memorial Book; her calligraphy is beautiful.

Thanks to **Bob, Mary Jane, Gene and Jessie** for their work on the driving tour for the Fall open house. We are still receiving information on buildings that were photographed by Bob for the tour.

**Doug Churchill:** Doug has completed his job of indexing all the scrapbooks in our collection. It has been a long, tedious, detailed work; thank you, Doug.

**Our Wonderful Volunteers:** Now we are up to community involvement. It takes many volunteers to build a float, take part in a parade, sit at the booth during the Festival in the Park, and man the Museum during the summer months. Thanks to all who help.

Volunteers are always available to open the museum by appointment, whether it is for out-of-town visitors or Scouts working on their local history badges.

It is impossible to thank everyone who contributes to our mission of collecting the history of our small corner of New York State. So a big THANK YOU to all of you.

## The Pacific Hotel      By Mary Jane Devlin

*Excerpts from "Walworth – From Douglas Corners to Gananda" by John Traas, with permission.*

The Pacific Hotel built in 1850 became a business center for many salesmen stopping to show their merchandise. A stage from the hotel met each train at the Walworth Station, three miles south of the village.

Twice a year yard goods salesmen arrived with material and patterns. A sales display was set up in a parlor of the hotel.

A good home cooked dinner was 25 cents, breakfast and lunch were 15 cents, and a night 's lodging could be had for 75 cents.

At one time the Grange owned the building. When it was sold to a private owner, the Grange donated some of the money to the Walworth Historical Society toward a new building.

At various times, the hotel has housed a meat market, a barber shop, a hair salon, the U. S. Post Office, a feed store, and presently a pool supply store.

There was a companion hotel built in Marion in approximately the same type of location, the southwest corner of the main intersection.

*From "Walworth Memories" sessions:*

- Sophia and Madison Reynolds, grandparents of Harold Reynolds, ran the hotel from 1888-1891.
- A 1911 photo shows a meat market underneath the north end of the hotel. A telephone switchboard office was located in the building at one time.
- Barber shops were operated by Paul Lansing, Ray Bavis, Ron Filmore, Frank Pignato, and Jake Koole. There have been several beauty parlors located in the building.
- Abe Almekinder and George Duell operated a feed store and a lawn mower business.
- The building was sold to David Kords in 1985. He presently operates his businesses from the building - American Pool Supply and American Hobby Shop.
- It has housed a Post Office, gift shop, school, and Assessor's office; meetings, social gatherings, and other activities were also held there.



**The Pacific Hotel in the mid 1930's**

**We Need Your Help** By Jessie Keymel

It is time to look into our community for a deserving recipient for our 2008 Community Service Award.

Each year we try to find someone who contributes more than his or her share to make life better in our community. Who would you like to nominate? If you have someone in mind, will you please send us your suggestion with reasons for your choice. We need this information before our next board meeting so we can take action on it.

Please send or call your suggestions to me at [rkeymel@rochester.rr.com](mailto:rkeymel@rochester.rr.com), call 524-9205, or mail it to the Walworth Historical Society at P. O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568 before February 15. Thank you for your suggestions.

**Membership Matters** By Mary Jane Devlin

**Red Dot:**

If you have a Red Dot on your address label, according to our records we have not received your dues that were due in May 2007. Please send your membership dues as soon as possible. We have included a membership form with this newsletter for your convenience.

**Life Memberships:**

Life memberships are available from the Walworth Historical Society. These dues go into our Endowment Fund. We have many lifetime members who have enjoyed the benefits for many years.

We would like to thank the following people who are life members:

Kathleen Aeckerle	Lorraine Finley
Rebecca Appleman	Gregory Ginegaw
Jean Bassage	George Mandery
Lyle Bassage	Janice Wignall Mitchell
Major Jeffrey Bavis	Bertha Pembroke
Eugene Bavis	Elizabeth Place
Leighton Bel	Donna Stalker
Nancy Bel	Ernest Symes
Christine Bray	Radah Wacenske
Angela Bavis Brecci	Ruth Wiegand
Nancy Brown	Robert Wignall
Douglas Churchill	Gail Wolfe
Monnie Churchill	Terry Wolfe
Dennis DeGroot	Gordon Youngman
Rodney DeGroot	
Marcia Englert	

**Gift Memberships:**

Gift memberships are available at several levels including single, family, supporting, sponsor, and life. We thank the people who gave gift memberships as Christmas gifts. We would encourage others to give gift memberships at any time. If you are interested in any of these, please contact me at the number on the front of this newsletter, or at any of the meetings.

## **Thanksgiving Traditions...Not All Pumpkin Pie**



Chris Bensch of the Strong National Museum of Play was guest speaker at our November 19 meeting. His 35-mm slide presentation was accompanied by informative dialogue. We learned that venison, not turkey, was the meat of choice because of the abundance of deer, and that this gathering originally was intended as thanks for a successful harvest.

Chris showed an extensive post card collection related to the holiday. Our display case was bountifully filled with Thanksgiving-themed decorations. And we were thankful for the companionship of those who attended and the delicious refreshments.

**Chris Bensch of the Strong National Museum of Play.**

### **Barney's Diaries** By Jessie Keymel

If you have lived in Walworth more than 40 years you must remember Louis and Gertie Duell. They lived on Walworth-Penfield Road across from Charlie and Bertha Pembroke. Charlie often refers to them in his book, Walworth, As I Remember It.

The Duells had three children, Burnice (Tyler), Eleanor (Sawyer) and Arlene (Suwijn). Burnice and her daughters have copied the diaries of their grandfather, Bernard (Barney) Bel, and have given them to our Walworth Historical Society Museum. Barney and his wife Nellie had a farm on the Ontario Center Road, where they raised six children.

There are more than 20 diaries starting in 1909 and ending in 1945. A small notebook, with copies of photos of Barney and his family, accompanies the diaries. The photos bring to life the people who shared in the chores on the farm.

The diaries are housed in eight 10" x 12" gray boxes, and are ready for anyone who wishes to take a peek at the life of a farmer in Walworth during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Memories of My Grandparents' Farm** By Nancy Nortier Bel

The picture on the left below is of the original Nortier farm house which belonged to my grandparents, Edward and Florence Nortier. The photo was taken about the time their first son, William Roy, was born in 1912. Five other children - Lester, Clifford (my father), Mildred, Robert, and Arthur - were born there. The farm was located at 1128 Rt. 441/Penfield Road, the first farm west of Canandaigua Road. Four different pieces of property were added through the years.

I am the oldest of 13 grandchildren. I spent many hours in this old house learning to bake from my grandmother. I gathered eggs from the hen house, and brought them in wire baskets to the cellar where Grandma cleaned, candled, weighed, and put them into cartons ready for sale. Many regular customers stopped to buy their eggs daily. They returned empty cartons and picked up full ones. Most of the eggs were sold at the Public Market and on a special route my Uncle Bob followed each week. Summertime I used to go with him as a kid. It was fun but you got up early, before 4 A.M. The truck was packed the night before.

There was a large porch added to the house on the east side after the picture was taken. It was there until the house burned on September 7, 1956 – the night before Leighton and I were married. Leighton and his father, Ernest, heard the fire siren and discovered the farm house was on fire. They rushed back to the village to tell my parents, Clifford and Bernice. A ranch-type home was built on the site and an open house was held on September 6 and 7, 1957.

My grandmother died in the fall of 1949 when I was 10 years old. My Grandfather died soon afterwards of stomach cancer in the old Lyons Hospital; I think Dr. Bovet of Marion was his doctor.

My grandparents were the first to have electricity on Rt. 441/Penfield Road. According to a newspaper clipping, the farm was the “first all electrical farm in the world”. They also had a phone very early on. It was a big wooden box hanging on the wall. There was a speaker on the front and an earpiece hanging on the right side with a handle to crank after you picked up the earpiece to get the operator. I don't ever remember them giving the operator a number. They just told her who they wanted and she got them on the line. I don't remember it ringing very often as not many people had phones.

The property has remained in the family and is currently owned by Bob and Edna Nortier's sons, Kenneth, Donald, and Richard.



**Early 1900's photo of the Nortier home which burned on September 7, 1956**



**2007 photo of the Nortier home built on the same site in 1957**

## Bowing to the Wind



The January 9 windstorm caused significant damage to the old copper beech tree on our museum property, resulting in the loss of a limb more than two feet in diameter. We will be having an arborist look at the tree and hope we can save it as it's been on the property since the 1850-1860 timeframe. It is one of several surviving area trees that were planted more than 150 years ago by Yeoman's Nursery.

**Walworth Museum Copper Beech Tree just after the wind damage**

## WHS Gets Grant from Hoffman Foundation

By Gene Bavis

The Walworth Historical Society was one of several historical societies in Wayne County that received a year-end grant from the Hoffman Foundation. We asked for and received \$800 to purchase a DLP projector. For those who are unfamiliar with the term, it is a projector that will allow anything you can display on a computer screen to be projected on a larger screen like we do with a slide projector. So, if we have a PowerPoint show on a computer, we can present it. It is smaller than a traditional slide projector, so it's very portable. When hooked to a laptop projector with a DVD drive, it can show videos. We will be able to use this for many of our programs, as well as having displays of pictures automatically rotating during open houses or other events.

Formed in the early 1950's with the proceeds of the estates of Augustus and Jennie Hoffman of Newark, the Hoffman Foundation's purpose is to preserve and promote Wayne County history. For many years, part of the program was to conduct an annual essay contest for high school students with a \$4,000 scholarship as first prize. Many excellent essays were written over the years. We have copies of some of them at the Museum. The Hoffmans also had a large collection of clocks which are now housed in the Newark Public Library in a section known as the Hoffman Clock Museum. I urge you to visit sometime. If you go on a Tuesday, you will likely get to meet the curator.

I serve as one of the Trustees of the Hoffman Foundation. We have budgeted for another series of grants for 2008. Of course, this is dependent upon the economy and the status of the Foundation's investments, so we won't know until the end of 2008 how much we can give to historical societies. Nonetheless, the Walworth Historical Society will be working on a grant application sometime this summer.

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### Membership Information for Fiscal Year May 1, 2007 – May 1, 2008

#### 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)*

## 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.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Mon. Mar. 17	7:30 PM	General Meeting. Speaker: Richard Evangelist. Subject: Bootlegging, Booze, and the Prohibition
Sun., Apr. 6	2 – 3:30	Walworth Memories, co-sponsor with library. Subject: District School Houses. Location: town hall meeting room.
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.
Tues., July 22	6:30 PM	Decorate float for parade at Keymel's
Fri., July 25	7:00 PM	Festival in the Park Parade
Sat., July 26	12 – 6	Ginegaw Park: Festival in the Park
Mon., Sept. 15	7:30 PM	General Meeting
Sun., Sept. 28	2-3:30	Walworth Memories, co-sponsor with library. Subject: Weather
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. These meetings are 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. Other times for an appointment, contact Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or Kay Scott at 315-524-9528.

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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: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**November 2007 WHS Newsletter Bonus e-mail Photos**

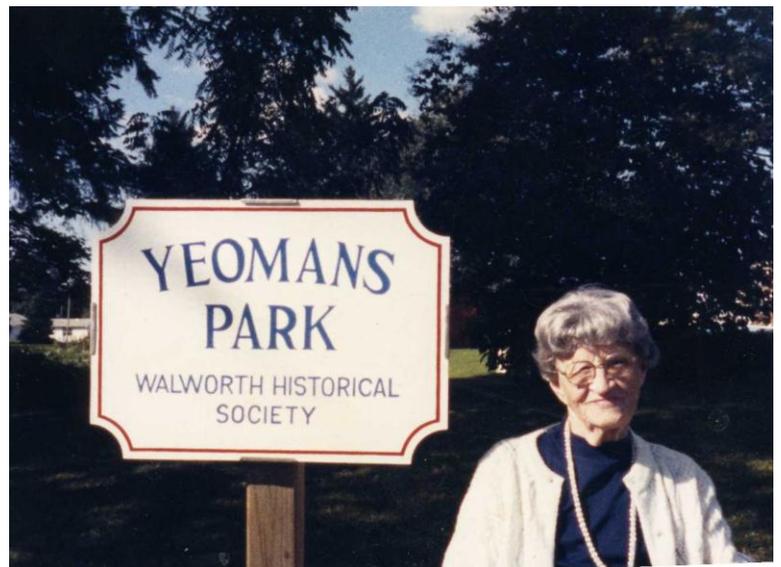


**Bill and Arlene Youngman at Youngman's Variety Store in Walworth, photographed by Gordon Youngman in April of 1989.**



**The famous Fried Cake Band is shown here at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They played music at local events and were paid in fried cakes instead of money.**

**Emily Huntley standing next to the sign where the Walworth Historical Society Museum stands today. She donated the land which was then known as Yeomans Park.**





**Larry McMillan (left) and Roger Keymel (right) at the Walworth Historical Society Museum enjoying one of the regular meeting programs sponsored by the WHS.**



**The old Walworth Post Office mail slots that were part of the former location on Main Street. This is on display at the museum. Also pictured are many other items from Walworth history.**

**Warren Bell's service station as it appeared in the 1980's. It was located on the corner of Main Street and Penfield Road in the center of Walworth.**

