



**[Nov. 20 1:00 PM Meeting: WHS Celebrates 150 Years of the National Grange](#)** By Bob Mogray

Many younger people in the Walworth area and beyond may not know about the history of the Grange, particularly the Walworth and Lincoln Granges. The Grange was formed as a fraternal organization in the United States and encouraged families to band together to promote the economic and political well-being of the community and [agriculture](#). Founded after the [Civil War](#) in 1867, it is the oldest American agricultural [advocacy group](#) with a national scope. The Grange actively lobbied state legislatures and Congress for political goals such as the [Granger Laws](#) to lower rates charged by railroads and [rural free mail delivery by the Post Office](#). In 2005 the membership was about 160,000 and the National Grange was headquartered in Washington, D.C.

The Walworth Grange #289 began in 1875. At one time there were 100 active members. The Honorable Lucien Theron Yeomans was the first master. Meetings were originally held at the homes of members. Then they met at the Masonic Temple and later at the Walworth Academy building. In 1929 The Grange purchased the Pacific Hotel (above right photo) and they held their meetings there. One of their projects was to set up the first local lending library and help in the formation of the first Walworth library. The Grange sponsored the construction of the WW II Honor Roll plaque which was located on their Main Street property near the four corners. When the Walworth Food Pantry formed, the Grange made a sizeable donation to get them started. They also sponsored seasonal suppers.



The Walworth Grange, after 117 years of service, disbanded in 1992 because of dwindling membership, the advanced age of active members, and the inability to recruit new members. At that time they donated a substantial amount to the Walworth Historical Society for the construction of our museum. Money was also given to the Walworth Fire Department and Dollars For Scholars.

There is still a Grange in Lincoln. One of the original meeting places is shown in the above left photo. However it is only one of five surviving Granges in Wayne County. At our November Walworth Historical Society meeting on [November 20 at 1:00 PM at our museum](#) on Academy Street, our program will be "Honoring the Grange" with Mary Earlandt, members of the Lincoln Grange, and Carol Bailey (Historian for the NYS Grange and Lyons Town Historian). Please note the 1:00 PM start time. This will prove to be a very informative meeting. Please help support the WHS with your attendance. Refreshments will be served after the meeting as always. If you have any questions, please call President Jessie Keymel at 315-524-9205 or Vice-President Bob Mogray at 585-576-4156. Hope to see you there!