

Walworth Historical Society Newsletter

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Clocks

Our program for November will be clocks, and our featured speaker will be Ruth Townson of TT Clocks. She and her husband had a business in Newark for 20 years. Now they have moved the business to Clyde. They have been restoring old clocks and watches for 25 years. She will speak on the history of time and the importance of time on navigation, etc. She will bring some antique clocks and timepieces, and explain how they work. If anyone would like to bring old clocks to be assessed or for an estimate of repair they can do that.

The meeting will be held at the Walworth Museum on Monday, November beginning at 7:30. And, as usual, delicious refreshments will be served.

Postcards

Postcards will be our topic on March 17, 2003. Pam Heald will be our featured speaker and she invites you to bring along your favorite postcards, so start digging.



Trustee Gordon Youngman and President Jessie Keymel were among those present to receive a gift from the Walworth Masons.

A GENEROUS GIFT

On October 9th, board members, Gordon Youngman, Dorothy French and I (Jessie Keymel) attended a ceremony at the Masonic Lodge in Palmyra; there we received a gift of \$5,000:00 from the Walworth Masonic Lodge 254. Presented by Past Master, Eugene Reynolds, a most generous gift that will greatly help us in our efforts to preserve the history of Walworth Township.

“A Masonic Lodge existed in Walworth as early as 1819. A fire in 1852 destroyed all records of those early days. The present Lodge was formed in 1852. With declining membership in the 21st Century a consolidation of Palmyra #248, Walworth #254 and Macedon #665 was approved on December 6th, 2001. The new name is Drumlin Square Lodge #1180.”

The Walworth Masons, assisted by the Order of the Eastern Star have contributed much to our little community in their more than 150 years, most recently by hosting regular American Red Cross blood drives. Their organization will be sadly missed, but their gift to Walworth Historical Society will ensure their continued contribution to our town.

The quotes in this article are from the history compiled by Howard M. Bassage, Past Master and historian of the Walworth Masonic Lodge and William Youngman. A short history and photos were also given to Walworth Historical Society.

All in the Line of Duty

When planning an event involving local firefighters, it's important to realize things don't always go as planned.

Such was the case on October 20, when members of the Walworth, West Walworth, and Lincoln Fire Departments were recognized by the Walworth Historical Society for their years of service to the community. When the fire siren sounded at 2:30 P.M., the trucks that had been on display left the museum grounds as firefighters answered a call involving an ATV accident injury. They returned later in the afternoon, having completed another call for assistance.

Inside the museum were fire-related displays of memorabilia and clothing from the three departments and the Ladies Auxiliary of the Walworth Fire Department. Memories were shared and stories told. The homemade desserts were delicious, as usual.



Elaine Leasure, president of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Walworth Fire Department, models a blouse that was included in a display of past uniforms worn by auxiliary members.

In memory of Dorothy A. Welker

Dorothy and her late husband Ray, were regular attendees and supporters of the WHS when they lived in West Walworth. She passed away on October 15 at the age of 86. Our sympathy goes out to the family.

Do you remember?

Does anyone remember the pea vinery? There used to be one on the northeast corner of Canandaigua Rd. and Penfield Rd. Can anyone describe it for us? Does anyone have a photo?

History of the Bean-Taber House By Jay Taber

When I was a kid walking to school, I was fascinated by the house at what is now 2203 Penfield Road, mostly because it was a cobblestone. I considered it an old house, but the earliest record showed it to be less than one hundred years old at that time.

A Sarah Moore conveyed to Jonas Findley for \$311.11 seventy acres of land on the north west corner of lot # 15, bordered by highway on the south and the east.

On April 1, 1842, Findley sold the half acre of the present property to Charles Drake for \$200.00.

In October 1848 Drake sold the property for \$800.00, the building to be used as a parsonage for the M.E. Church of the Ontario Circuit, including Walworth, Macedon Center and the Hall settlement. This is the first mention of a building on the site, and the style of the cobblestones indicates that it was probably erected in the 1840's. At this time it was a story and a half structure with five rooms and a pantry on the first floor: a kitchen, two small bedrooms to the east, a living room, a parlor bedroom.. Upstairs were a bedroom, a small hall, and a closet.

The property was sold by the M. E. Church to George Trumbull in 1871 for \$1150, then in 1877 to John Pratt, and from Pratt to Mary Payne in 1885 for \$1400. I was told that Mary Payne was the mother of Libbie Payne Bean who got the house in 1918. I was also told that Mr. Payne said that he would expand the second story for living quarters for her and her husband if they would come here to live.

kitchen was added to the back. One side was a rather crude cobblestone, the other two sides clapboard. And later another room was added, perhaps another summer kitchen, converting the first to a dining room.

The upstairs remodeling added a living room, dining room, kitchen, two small bedrooms and two private stairways.

Eventually when the Paynes died, the Beans moved to the first floor and Mr. Bean's sister, Carrie Carter, moved upstairs. Mr. Bean died in the 1930's and Libbie Bean and Carrie Carter died in the late 40's. The Beans had no children, but Mrs. Carter,, who inherited the house, had three, and one, Mrs. Peet, spent a couple of summers here. Marvin Sharp also lived here for a short time.

Then Helen Bennett's parents bought the house and Vern and Helen and family lived here about five years before we purchased it in 1955. The Bennetts wanted to sell because Vern could see no end to the labor involved. But they had done some very basic work – tearing off the privy, tearing down the barn and using the lumber to build the attached garage, putting in a modern bath on the first floor and a functioning bath with used – much used – fixtures on the second.

Arline and I first looked at the house in July 1955. The rooms were light, bright, and cheerful. The bathroom was new. And then we came to the kitchen. An old pump with a gray sink occupied one corner. The only heat came from a combination gas/wood stove, and cupboards were non-existent.

From the expression on my wife's face, I knew that we would never live in this house. However, my uncle, Herland Wray, offered to lend us the money to remodel the kitchen if we were interested. We paid the exorbitant price of \$8500 for the house, and I lay awake the night we had signed the papers,

wondering how I would pay off the \$6800 mortgage at \$57.00 per month, including principal, interest, taxes, and insurance. Interest at that time on a G.I. loan was 4½ per cent.

Over the 47 years we have lived here, we have “done over” all the rooms, rewired everything, put in new plumbing, new furnaces, etc. AND added onto the downstairs. Between the dining room and the garage was an open space with a dirt floor and the remnants of an old porch. Arline wanted a closet so that the kids could store snow suits and boots there as they entered the back door. So we made the area into a very pleasant den with a large closet which soon filled up with vacuum cleaners, card tables, board games, and so forth. And the girls never did put their coats in there. Today we use it as a TV and computer room.

When we first lived here, we did rent the upstairs apartment. Bill, Hennie, and Bunny Underhill first lived there. Nancy and Leighton Bel lived there for several years. In 1962 my father-in-law died, and my mother-in-law, Cora Wolf, moved into the apartment, which by that time consisted of a kitchen, living room, bedroom, and bath. Our daughters used the two front bedrooms.

So the house has changed considerably on the inside. The outside has not changed significantly since the early 1900's, but the town has changed. The neighborhood in the 50's consisted of names that were typically Walworth: Wignall, Curran, Ebert, Esley, Pembroke, Duell, Bel, Clark, Conant. All those families have gone, and we are certainly no longer the “new kids on the block.”



Gift Ideas from Walworth Historical Society

Looking for gifts that have a hometown theme? The Walworth Historical Society is offering several commemorative items.

This year's Christmas tree ornament recognizes the fire departments from Walworth, West Walworth, and Lincoln. In addition, there are a few remaining 2000 commemorative ornaments, which depict the Walworth Academy bell and recognize the 25th anniversary of WHS. Both limited edition ornaments are available at \$7.50 each, including sales tax.

A coverlet is available in cranberry or Williamsburg blue, and pictures scenes from the Walworth, West Walworth, and Lincoln areas; the cost is \$45, including sales tax.

For the history readers on your gift list, consider a book. Charlie Pembroke's book, "Walworth As I Remember It" sells for \$5.35; the John Traas book, "Walworth – From Douglas Corners to Gananda" sells for \$4.28.

What to give those who have everything? Gift certificates are available for membership or renewal in the WHS.