

# Walworth Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 28

Number 4

May, 2004

April 6: Learn and Share About the Past

## May 17 Program Walworth History, Part I

Our May meeting is our **Annual Pot Luck Dinner** and **election of Officers and Trustees**. It is also when we present our **Community Service Award**.

The Dinner starts promptly at 6:30, so please try to arrive by 6:15. Bring your own table service and a dish to pass. Beverages will be provided.

The business meeting/elections begin at 7:30, followed by the community service award and then the early history of Walworth. The next three programs will be presented by members of the Walworth Historical Society who have agreed to research a certain aspect of Walworth history (schools, religion, everyday life, government, people, etc.) and share their findings at the meeting.

## Our Calendar Project

The Walworth Historical Society will be producing a 2005 Calendar. Thanks to the leadership of Dorothy French, this project is well underway. We have selected most of the pictures (& you probably haven't seen them before) and are now digging out dates from history to put an interesting fact for every day of the year. We will start taking orders for this calendar this summer, and delivery is expected in October. This will be a great keepsake. Not only will it have interesting pictures, but the "tidbits" of history will be worth reading each year. We hope to make this a yearly project with new pictures and events each year. If you'd like to help, contact Gene or Dorothy.

## Dues were Due on May 1

The Walworth Historical Society operates on a May 1- April 30 fiscal year. Your dues are therefore due on 5/1/04 (unless you are a Life Member).

Dues categories are as follows:

Individual \$6, Joint or Family \$10, Student \$3, Corporate/Business \$25, Life \$100, Supporter \$25-39, Sponsor \$40-99, Patron \$100-149, Benefactor \$150 or more

Please pay at the meeting or send your check to the Walworth Historical Society at PO Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568.

Can you afford to be a Supporter, Sponsor, Patron or Benefactor? Please consider it.

Have you paid your dues yet?

If not, please send them in; or better yet, bring them to the meeting on May 17.

## Our 175<sup>th</sup> Birthday!

The Town of Walworth celebrated its birthday on April 20, 2004. It's been 175 years since the Town was established. The Walworth Birthday Party was the first of a series of programs where we will highlight Walworth's history. Our regular meetings throughout the year will each cover a certain era of Walworth's past. Save the dates:

May 17 – Pot Luck Dinner/Program

July 23 – The BIG Festival Parade

July 24 – Festival in the Park (visit our booth)

September 20 – Program

October 17 – WHS Fall Festival

November 15 – Program

**Watch Future Newsletters for Details**

## Memories of Walworth

by Arlene Duell Suwijn

My father, Louis Duell, was a wise and enterprising man. His father, Arthur Duell, was killed in 1908 by a train while walking on the rails between Walworth Station and Macedon, following up on leads for a job. He left behind a widow, Jennie Daansen Duell, and six children: Ernest, Louis, Frank, Loren, Grace, and Pearl.

My Dad (age 12) and Uncle Ernest (age 14) became the men of the family and, with the help of their grandfather, Adrian Daansen, did some farming to survive until the boys figured out how they were going to manage. This was in the teen years until they were able to get on their own.

They developed a series of jobs over the years when times were tough, calling their businesses Duell Brothers. Dad and Uncle Ernest threshed wheat, oats, beans, clover seed and buckwheat in the fall. They also ran a sawmill on Church Street between Uncle Ernest's house on Church Street and our house on Penfield Road.

My dad and uncle got logs from farmers and sawed them into bushel crate materials for use on muck land crops. Some were nailed together and others went to the farmers in bundles to be nailed. Each summer there was a large sawdust pile. What fun for us kids! We would play in the sawdust, getting it in our clothes and our hair and "re-arranging" the piles – much to our parents' dismay. In the winter, the brothers did the ice cutting at the nearby Mill Pond, but that's a story for another newsletter.

Dad married Gertrude Bel in 1919 and they had three children – Burnice, Eleanor, and Arlene - all born in Walworth. When my husband, Bill Suwijn and I bought an old farmhouse on Walworth-Palmyra Rd in 1949

it was very crude and through the years we restored it. When we took off a baseboard to work on electrical lines, we would first have to shovel sawdust (from Dad's sawmill) which had been used for insulation. The ceiling over the kitchen had also been insulated with sawdust. There were times when we didn't appreciate the old sawmill, but it was a sign of the period of struggle in the '30s.

*Editor's Note: Arlene and Bill Suwijn lived in Walworth until 14 years ago, when they moved to Ontario. Bill recently passed away, but Arlene has many memories to share of her life in Walworth. Look for her story about ice cutting on the Mill Pond in a future newsletter.*



The photo above was taken at our birthday party on April 20, 2004. Jessie Keymel, our President is holding the proclamation by the Wayne County Board of Supervisors that was presented by Supervisor Frank Guelli. Council –man Frank Maciuska and Councilwoman Patti Marini presented recognitions from the NYS Assembly and NYS Senate provided by Assemblyman Oaks and Senator Nozzolio.

Website Coming Soon:

[www.walworthhistoricalsocietv.org](http://www.walworthhistoricalsocietv.org)