



Walworth Historical Society



Volume 45

March 2020

Number 4

Walworth Museum: 2257 Academy Street, P.O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568
WHS Website: www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org

2019 Calendar of Events		
March 16	7:00 PM	General Meeting "Lincoln Hamlet"
April 13	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees
April 20	7:00 PM	General Meeting "Kodakids"
May 9	9:00 AM	Museum Clean up - Scouts
May 18	6:15 PM	Annual Meeting Ginegaw Lodge
May 27	8:00 AM 6:30 PM	Letchworth Pk. Bus Trip
June 8	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees
July 21	6:30 PM	Decorate Float Keymels
July 24	7:00 PM	Festival in the Park Parade / Booth
July 25	3-8 PM	Festival in the Park Day 2 booth
Aug. 10	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees
Sept. 21	7:00 PM	General Meeting "Marion Vinegar Works"
Oct. 4	2-4 PM	Open House
Oct. 12	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees
Nov. 18	1:00 PM	General Meeting Ginegaw Park
Dec. 5	6:00 PM	"Light the Night" Ginegaw Park
Dec. 14	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees

"The Hamlet of Lincoln" at the March 16 WHS Meeting

By Bob Mogray



The first Walworth Historical Society meeting of 2020 will be all about the Hamlet of Lincoln. This meeting will be at our museum on 2257 Academy Street in Walworth on Monday, March 16 at 7:00 PM. WHS President Jessie Keymel will conduct a short business meeting and then we will present a slide program covering the Lincoln hamlet. The main intersection shown above will be the hub of our presentation. Some of the main businesses, families, buildings, and organizations of the present and past of this area (shown below) will be discussed.

As always, we really appreciate your support for these programs. Please invite a friend or two and join us at the museum for this presentation. We encourage your participation because we are always looking for new information from the experiences of our members and guests.

After the program, refreshments will be served and we hope to see you there.



(Color printing of this page courtesy of Reliant Community Federal Credit Union)

Editor's Note: The November 2019 issue featured a story about Gene's connection to many Walworth families. Below is Gene's life story.



Gene and Shirley: 1997

Gene Bassage was born in Rochester on February 19, 1927, to Homer and Josephine (Sherburne) Bassage. A sister, Barbara, died 15 years ago. His paternal grandparents were Velorous and Winifred (Henning) Bassage. His maternal grandparents were Ulysses (U. W.) William and Charlotte (Lottie Blythe) Sherburne.

His parents and their two children lived most of their lives in Palmyra. Gene graduated from Palmyra High School in 1945 and the next morning enlisted with the U. S. Navy, taking basic training at Sampson Naval Base near Geneva. While enroute to his Pacific assignment, word was received that the atom bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima. His ship turned around and returned to the United States.

Returning from the war and with help from the G. I. Bill, Gene enlisted in Syracuse University. He studied Business Administration and majored in Advertising, graduating in 1950. He married Shirley in 1947. They lived in Palmyra and became parents of two daughters, Sue and Jill. Gene proudly boasts that he has two daughters, two granddaughters, two great-granddaughters, and one great-grandson.

Gene fondly remembers the time spent in Sodus Point. He said his mother and Grandma Sherburne found a cottage near the Wignall's cottage on South Shore Road and purchased it. This is where Gene has spent his summer months since he was 12 years old. He remembers in 1940 when his mother and grandmother opened the cottage for the summer; he had to beat the rugs with a wire beater. The three of them lived there during the summer months and his father came on weekends.

As a youngster, Gene and U. W. fished from their dock. When he was 8 years old, U.W. had a 10 foot rowboat built for his grandson. Later U.W. had an electric motor put on the boat – one of the first electric motors.

In 1995 Gene and Shirley moved to Sodus Point and spent the winter months in Florida. The day after they left for Florida in November 2014 demolition began on the cottage and now a year-round home occupies the spot. Gene and Shirley were married for 70 years until her death April 8, 2018.

Today Gene keeps busy by enjoying his breath-taking view of Sodus Bay and building clocks in his spare-time when not watching a New York Yankees baseball game. A true Yankees fan, Gene had the hood of his car decorated with the team's logo. Lizzie, a two-year-old energetic kitty, keeps him company and entertained.



Seen in the photo to the right: From left to right: Jill and Sue Bassage standing in front of Sodus Point lighthouse: 2019

Community Service Award Nominations Needed

By Bob Mogray

Since 1990, the Walworth Historical Society has chosen to honor an individual or group of people to receive its Community Service Award. This award is given at our annual business meeting in May. Every year we ask you for help and a chance to express your opinion as to which person or group may deserve this award. If you know of a deserving person or group who has stood out in the Walworth area with a reputation of giving and serving our community, please submit your suggestion in writing to Jessie Keymel, WHS President, P. O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568 by April 1. This year the award will be given at our meeting on Monday, May 18, at the Lodge at Ginegaw Park. We welcome your help and suggestions.

Editor's Note: Our tour of the east side of Main Street continues from our November 2019 issue. Thank you to Gordon Youngman for sharing his memories about their home adjacent to Walworth Hardware.



**Late 1800's before porch was enclosed.
Photo courtesy of Gordon Youngman**



Recent photo of 3706 Main Street

The house at #3706 Main Street was home to many people. Most of them also owned the store to the south which, through the years, had several names: J. W. Baker, Clark, Salyerd, Finley's Variety Store, Walworth Hardware and (currently) New York State Sitepower.

1855: According to Gordon Youngman, the first record he found for this property was the transfer of a lot from Nathan Hackett to John W. Baker on October 29, 1855, for \$1,200. The store John built eventually became Walworth Hardware. The purchase price also included the house to the north of the lot. Following John's death in 1899, the properties were owned by his widow, Lucy, and later by their children.

1915: The Baker children sold the home and business to Charles W. Clark on April 21, 1915.

1925: Properties sold to Irvin and Anna Salyerds on April 8, 1925.

1944: Joe and Lorraine Finley purchased the store; ownership of the house to the north was separated from the store property. The house was sold to Milton and Charlotte Bradshaw who moved from 2200 Walworth-Penfield Road where they operated a greenhouse.

1955: Bradshaws sold to Elton and Anna May who moved from 2200 Walworth-Penfield Road and the greenhouse.

1958: Mays sold to Gordon and Katie Youngman, who had purchased the variety store from the Finleys in 1963. The two properties were now under the same owners.

1978: Steve and Marlene (the Youngman's daughter) Hall purchased the house after Gordon and Katie moved into the apartment above Walworth Hardware, which had been combined with the variety store.

2009: Dan Hall, Steve and Marlene's son, purchased the house and business and established New York State Sitepower business in the south portion of Walworth Hardware.

(Next issue: #3712 Main Street)

How Kodakids Ended Up in Rochester Area By Judy Markowski



Join us at our April meeting for an informative talk on a little known or often forgotten WWII event. Mary Jo Lanphear, the Town of Brighton Historian, will tell us how the Kodakids ended up in the Rochester area. Learn about Kodak's program to send children of its employees in England to live in the Rochester area during the war. Come and tell us of your memories of this event or come and learn about a particularly Rochester response to a WWII crisis.

Meeting Information: Monday, April 20, 2020, 7:00 pm, Walworth Historical Society Museum, 2257 Academy Street, Walworth. Refreshments served and conversations guaranteed!

May 27 Trip to Letchworth State Park By Gene Bavis

In September 2019 my wife Liz and I attended the annual conference weekend for the CCC Legacy organization in Mt. Morris, New York. It consisted of an outstanding PowerPoint program by Tom Cook about the CCC in Letchworth, 1933-1941, and several tours. We were amazed by the work of the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps). They built much of the infrastructure of Letchworth as well as thousands of other national, state and local parks across the nation. They also planted 3 billion (with a "B") trees. This program was a cooperative effort of the Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture and the United States Army to put unemployed young men (ages 18-25) to work during the Great Depression. Workers were paid \$30 per month, but only got \$5. The other \$25 was sent home to their parents. This obviously helped to stimulate the economy.

So impressed by the event we experienced, we wanted to share it, so I approached Jackie VanLare, Walworth Recreation Department Director, and told her that I'd like to organize a mini-version of the trip we experienced. She agreed and there will be a bus trip to Letchworth hosted by Walworth Recreation on May 27. Cost is \$65 and will include lunch at the historic Glen Iris Inn. At the time of this writing, 46 of the 52 bus seats have been sold. I am sure the trip will sell out, but I'm not sure when. Jackie has said that she will have a waiting list after 52 people have signed up in case someone has to cancel. Hopefully, you have heard of this earlier and have already signed up.

If anyone has questions about the trip, please feel free to contact me. If you would like to learn more about the CCC, please visit the CCC Legacy website: <http://www.ccclegacy.org>. There is a section that has an excellent history of the CCC.

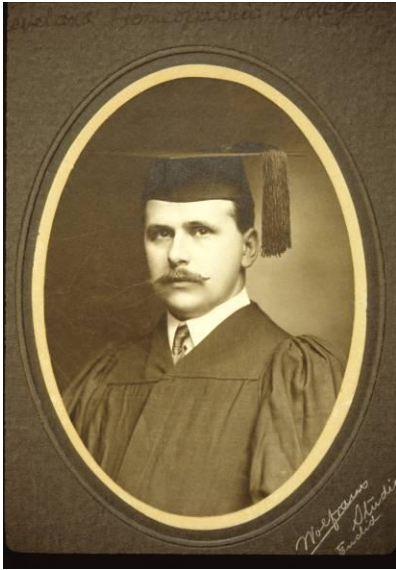
Light the Night By Becky Appleman



Walworth Recreation Department's Light the Night celebration was held December 7 from 6 – 8 PM at Ginegaw Park. Many trees were decorated by civic groups, churches, fire departments and several local businesses.

It was a very chilly night but festival goers were invited inside the lodge for hot chocolate and homemade cookies. Mrs. Claus was there to welcome children and the Walworth-Seely Public Library staff provided coloring projects and crafts for the kids.

A long line of guests awaited the hay wagon that was decorated to resemble Santa's sleigh. The Walworth Historical Society's beautiful tree had hand-made wooden ornaments representing decorations from the past. Even though we didn't win the tree decorating competition, it was a fun-filled night for all.



Editor's Note: Our series of country doctors continues with some interesting facts about Dr. Ernest E. Esley who served this area for 44 years.

Personal Information: Dr. Esley was born in Walworth on December 12, 1869, the third of ten children of Jonas and Elizabeth Esley. He married Mabel Peacock in 1900. They are parents of five children: Elizabeth, George, Marjorie, Mabel, and Ernest A. Marjorie was an artist, illustrator and writer; her works were published under the name Joan Esley. She and close friend Eloise Wilkin co-produced many Little Golden Books for Children. Marjorie used local children as her models for the books.

Education: After receiving a high school diploma from Walworth Academy, he enrolled in Cleveland Ohio Homeopathic College, graduating in 1901 after 3 years of study. He completed his internship at Highland Hospital in Rochester.

Left: College Graduation: 1901

Dr. Esley “Wore Many Hats”

Ambulance Driver: Using the family's vehicle, Dr. Esley transported patients to a Rochester hospital. His wife, Mabel, managed the office while he was gone.

Doctor: When Bill Youngman was 18 or 19 years old he hurt his eye while changing a car tire. The wound was bleeding and had dirty cobwebs in it. Dr. Esley sewed it up without giving Bill any pain killer. Nancy Bel mentioned that her father, Cliff Nortier, was born on October 31, but Dr. Esley said no kid should be born on Halloween so he changed Cliff's birth date to November 1. His medical bag always went with him – to ball games, church, and on trips.

Dentist: Dr. Esley mainly pulled out the troublesome teeth. Gordon Youngman said Dr. Esley gave him a shot of Novocain and immediately pulled his tooth with pliers; the Novocain didn't take effect until Gordon returned home. Harold Ginegaw said Dr. Esley pulled the wrong tooth and Harold had to return to have the aching tooth pulled; the cost was \$2 per tooth.

Obstetrician: Dr. Esley delivered over 2,500 babies. Mabel sometimes went with him and assisted him with the deliveries. Often improvising, he would bring lights into the kitchen, have boiling water available and deliver the baby on the kitchen table.

Optician: Using an eye chart, he made glass prescriptions to correct ordinary vision problems.

Pharmacist: His office served as a drug store with an enormous pill collection. He didn't write prescriptions and ordered his supplies from travelling drug agencies that came through town. Drugs were sent by express to Walworth Station where he would pick them up.

Psychologist: Counseled many.



Family Home: 2188 Penfield-Walworth Road



Esley Family

Esley Home and Office: Dr. Esley purchased the home formerly occupied by Dr. Rodenburger at 2188 Walworth-Penfield Road, southeast corner of Church Street. Patients walked in the front door and waited, if necessary, in the small room to their right. The office was a small room south of the waiting room. No appointments were required but most seemed to come during meal times. An office call was \$1.00, including the medicine. House calls were \$2.00; he charged \$15.00 to deliver a baby.

The Doctor's Life: His patients came from Lincoln, Walworth, West Walworth, Ontario, Macedon, and Marion. Prior to owning an automobile, he depended on horses to reach his patients, usually keeping two horses of his own. During winter months he travelled in a horse-drawn cutter as the roads were not plowed. Even after automobiles were available, he preferred to use the buggy in the spring because the roads were too muddy for car wheels. His daughter Marjorie helped him with the driving on his big circuits and would wait out in the car while he made his calls. He realized the plight of the farmers and often took produce as payment; his family was well fed. During his home visits he was known to bring extra groceries to those who didn't have much money or gave them a minimal bill for his services.

Telephone service in Walworth made life easier for his patients. Previously, farmers had to drive many miles into town to tell the doctor that he was needed. Local telephone operators kept track of where he was at all times. There were two telephones installed at his house.

(To be continued)

We Were On Display! By Gene Bavis

There is a display case in the Walworth Town Hall that is available for local groups to display information and artifacts of interest to local residents. Since the demand for using it is minimal, the Walworth Historical Society has a standing offer with the Town Clerk. If nobody else wants to use it, we will be happy to put something in the case rather than have it be empty.



In November, the month of Veterans Day, Larry Ruth and I put in the display case a couple of uniforms from the WHS collection and a few other artifacts related to the military. One of the uniforms was a WWII Army uniform worn by Howard Barmaster who had grown up on Jacobs Road. It was recently donated to the WHS by his daughter, Martha. The other one was David Stalker's Coast Guard uniform.

Among the other artifacts was a letter loaned to us by Liz Bavis. It was a "V-mail" letter from her father, Sgt. Thomas Morris, to his mother, Ella Morris, around 1944. Also displayed were some ration stamps from the WHS collection. A copy of the newsletter article of the Ebert Brothers was displayed.

In December, the display was changed to some historic photos of Walworth taken around 1907 by a company proposing to build a railroad spur to Walworth. Their idea never materialized, but the photographs are priceless.

WHS Photos on the Town Hall Monitor By Bob Mogray

Developing from a conversation I had with Walworth Town Historian Gene Bavis and Walworth Recreation Director Jackie VanLare, many of our recent and historic photos are now being shown on the monitor located above the display case at the Walworth Town Hall. Not only does this monitor show slides that are concerned with town announcements but many photos from museum files are now being shown in slide show style for visitors to view. By the way, the items in the display case are the handiwork of WHS members Gene Bavis and Judy McMillan and show some of the old photos of Walworth from 1907. If you are at the town hall, please check out the photos on the monitor and in the display case.

Soup and Spiritualism Program By Gene Bavis

In 2018 we decided to have our daytime November meeting become a luncheon meeting. We had arranged to have a program on Women's Suffrage, so we called it "Soup and Suffrage." In 2019 we kept the alliteration going. Our speaker was Tracy Murphy. She spoke about the Fox Sisters and the beginnings of Modern Spiritualism, so we called this one "Soup and Spiritualism." I think we may have to become creative for next year...standby for the title.



Tracy Murphy has lived in the Hydesville (Newark) area for most of her life and was fascinated by the history that developed there. As a young person, she often visited the site and spoke with the gentleman who had built a replica of the original Fox cottage on the site of the old one. The original home had been moved to Lillydale, NY. In the 1990's the cottage burned and only the foundation was left. In recent years a pavilion was built over it to preserve it. Also a New York State Historic Marker provided by the Pomeroy Foundation has been erected to commemorate the importance of the site.

Tracy shared the highlights of the Fox family's trials and tribulations and the rise of the Spiritualism movement. The audience of over 40 people, comprised of members and numerous guests from all over the area, found her program to be quite interesting. There is a blog on the Walworth Historical Society's website under "Past Programs" and also some photos by Bob Mogray under "Photos/Recent Events" related to this program.

From Your President By Jessie Keymel

Thank you all for your support of our programs and your time spent hosting our open hours during the summer months. In 2019 we recorded just under 500 visitors. Not everyone signs the book when we have events but this is a close estimate.

A special thank you to Stan Weller and Fred Switzer for repairing and updating the railing at our entrance, Thanks also to Clint Osterhout for repairing the vinyl siding on the west end of the roof. It is with the help of these craftsmen that our building continues to look great. Thanks also to Sonny French who pinch hits for Gene Bavis for snowplowing and mowing the lawn.

There has been a lot of activity at the museum already this year as we plan for our March 16 meeting about the Lincoln hamlet. Mike Frederes, Bill Boyd, Marge Place, Mary Earlandt, Anita Amsler, Marlene Slocum, and Bob Pugsley have given us more information about the area than we can share with you at our March meeting. There is so much history that we are considering a program next year on farms, past and present, so get your thinking caps on and write down your memories. Help us keep our history alive.

Our Many Collections – Help Needed By Jessie Keymel

As each item comes into our museum it is given an accession number with a description and the name of the donor and recorded on the computer. All of these items are available for display and information. When we built the museum, the historical items and information were gathered from members' attics, barns and homes and are available for displays and research.

The display cases in the town hall have been an excellent way for us to share some of these items. Our collection of uniforms is a good example; they are stored in a walk-in cedar closet upstairs at the museum. We need help organizing this closet to make the items stored there more accessible. This includes baby clothes, wedding dresses, quilts, flags and clothing items that we have been collecting since the historical society was formed. There are many other collections in our upstairs storage: diaries; old records from farms, stores, and organizations; family Bibles; greeting cards; maps and other documents that record our history. We need a volunteer who could take on the task of gathering like items together to make them more manageable. Please note many of these items are upstairs and will involve several trips up and down the stairs. Thanks in advance for your help!

Ethel's Memories – Merchandizing in the Early 20th Century: Part 1 By Dorothy French

Editor's Note: Prior to her death in 1997, Ethel Henning's life was dedicated to her parents, her career, and the Walworth community. A graduate of Walworth High School and Brockport Normal School, she taught in Syracuse for many years before returning to live with her parents, Frank and Lillian Henning, in their home at 1283 Plank Road and teach English at Webster High School. She was active in the Lincoln Baptist Church and at the Walworth-Seely-Public Library as a long-time trustee. In an undated report, she wrote about merchandizing in the early 20th century. Excerpts are below:



There were women who canvassed the community selling much the same kind of merchandise as David Levi sold. In 1905 there were two women who stopped regularly at our home on Route 350 where the gun club is now located. One had her wares in a telescope-type suitcase. It was made like a candy box; the top section was put over the bottom and then strapped together. She was very pleasant and sat and visited with those to whom she hoped to sell some of her merchandise and was usually rewarded.

The other woman carried her merchandise in an old baby carriage. I was three years old when my mother saw her coming down the long driveway to our house. Mother locked both doors and took me to a room upstairs where we could watch her. The peddler was very angry for she knew someone must be there. After much talking and swearing, she left. If one did not buy as much as she expected, she was very abusive.

(To be continued)

The Walworth Historical Society wishes to thank the following Corporate Sponsors for supporting our programs and events held throughout the year.



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Grounds	Judy McMillan	(315) 524 - 4219
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Membership	Linda Pembroke	(585) 455 - 7595
Newsletter	Robert Mogray	(585) 576 - 4156
Publicity	Becky Appleman	(315) 524 - 3289
Town Historian	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768

Mission Statement: The Walworth Historical Society is a volunteer organization established in 1975. Our chartered purpose is to collect, preserve, and display items and artifacts of historical interest and importance to the Town of Walworth and its environs. We are a not-for-profit organization with 501(C)(3) status; donations are tax deductible.

March 2020 WHS email edition extra photos

All photos on these next two pages are from last summer and autumn in the Walworth area.



