

Walworth Historical Society Newsletter

Sept. 2021

Volume 46 / Number 2



2257 Academy Street, P.O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568

Walworth to Install New Historic Marker / WHS Open House By Gene Bavis

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation has a grant program whereby they will fund new historic markers if the applicant can provide proper documentation. (To learn more, please see <https://www.wgpfoundation.org/history>).

Applications may be submitted by a non-profit organization or by municipal historians. Earlier this year, as Town Historian, I submitted an application for a marker commemorating the wedding of Theron G. Yeomans' two granddaughters on June 10, 1891. The interesting thing about this particular wedding is that it was attended by former/future President Grover Cleveland (**bottom right**). If you check his dates, he was between terms as President at the time.

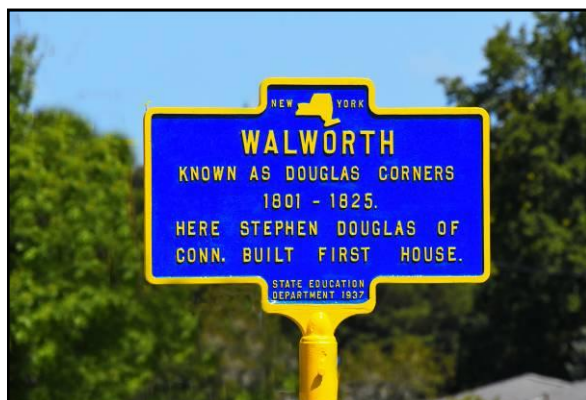


The marker was approved and has been received by the Town. It will be installed by the Walworth Highway Department soon and we'll be holding a dedication ceremony on Sunday, October 3 at 1:30 PM. This historic site is located at 3634 High Street in Walworth (**top left**), just around the corner from the Walworth Historical Society.

I'm not going to tell you the whole story about the wedding right now as that will be part of the dedication ceremony. In the next newsletter, there will be both ceremony and historic photos as well as the story of the wedding itself.

Following the ceremony at the site of the marker, we will return to the Walworth Historical Society museum for Open House and refreshments under a tent. Please join us for both events!

Speaking of historic markers, I would like to give a BIG SHOUT OUT and THANK YOU to Walworth Highway Superintendent Tim Vendel and his crew for repainting ALL of the historic markers in the Town of Walworth, two of which are seen below. As you know, we are less than 2 years away from Wayne County's 200th birthday and the Bicentennial Committee is encouraging all towns to get their historic markers looking good. Walworth took the lead on this project. Thanks, Tim!



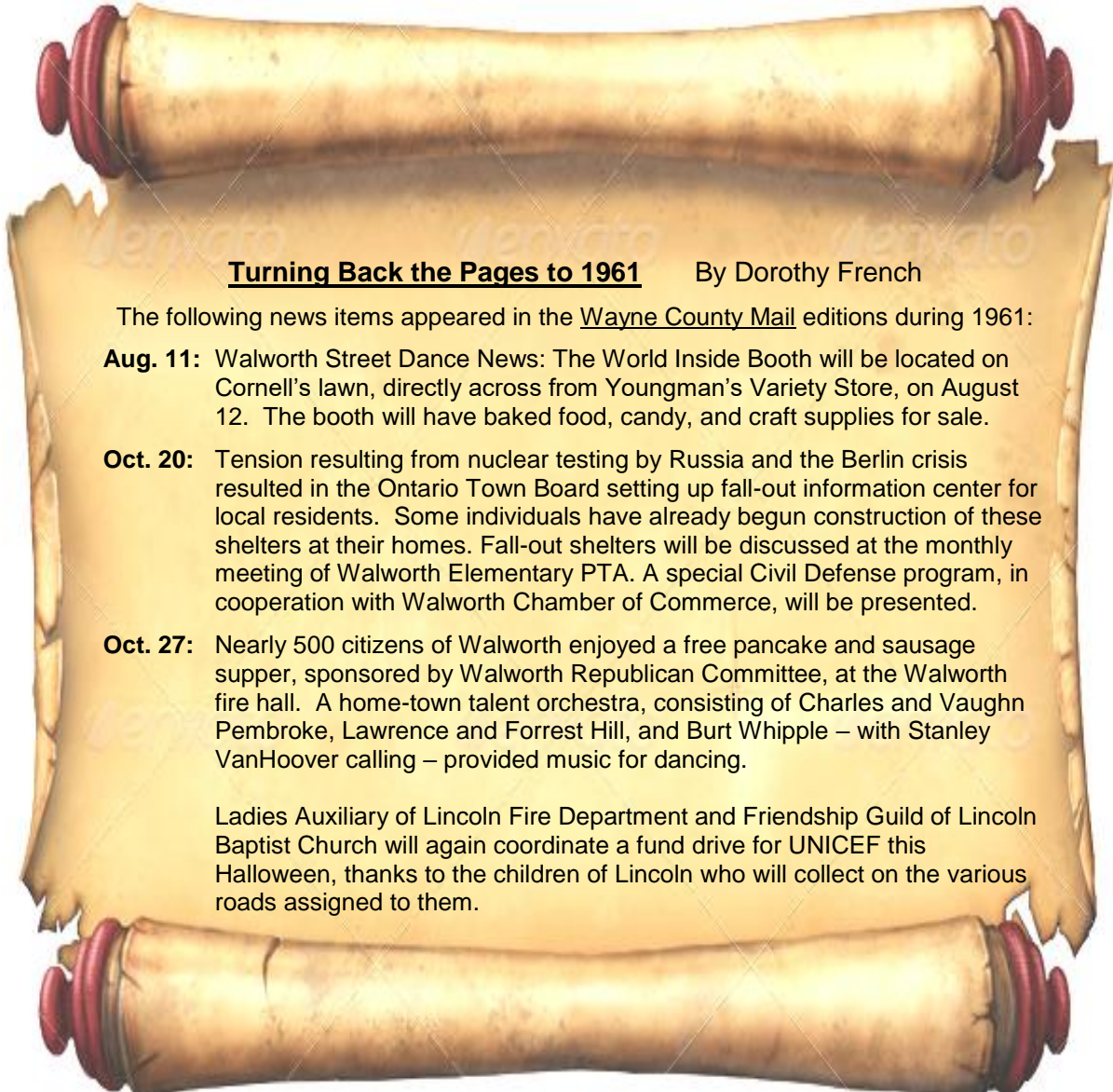
Color printing by: Reliant Credit Union



August and September Museum Hours By Dorothy French

Thanks to the relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions, our museum is officially open during the summer months on specified dates from 2 – 4 PM. The remaining open house Sunday dates are August 29 and September 26. We are also open the 1st and 2nd Wednesdays of August and September.

Appointments for other times can be scheduled by contacting one of the following board members: Becky Appleman 315-524-3289, Jessie Keymel 315-524-9205, or Gene Bavis 315-573-2768. The museum is located at 2257 Academy Street.



Turning Back the Pages to 1961 By Dorothy French

The following news items appeared in the Wayne County Mail editions during 1961:

- Aug. 11:** Walworth Street Dance News: The World Inside Booth will be located on Cornell's lawn, directly across from Youngman's Variety Store, on August 12. The booth will have baked food, candy, and craft supplies for sale.
- Oct. 20:** Tension resulting from nuclear testing by Russia and the Berlin crisis resulted in the Ontario Town Board setting up fall-out information center for local residents. Some individuals have already begun construction of these shelters at their homes. Fall-out shelters will be discussed at the monthly meeting of Walworth Elementary PTA. A special Civil Defense program, in cooperation with Walworth Chamber of Commerce, will be presented.
- Oct. 27:** Nearly 500 citizens of Walworth enjoyed a free pancake and sausage supper, sponsored by Walworth Republican Committee, at the Walworth fire hall. A home-town talent orchestra, consisting of Charles and Vaughn Pembroke, Lawrence and Forrest Hill, and Burt Whipple – with Stanley VanHoover calling – provided music for dancing.

Ladies Auxiliary of Lincoln Fire Department and Friendship Guild of Lincoln Baptist Church will again coordinate a fund drive for UNICEF this Halloween, thanks to the children of Lincoln who will collect on the various roads assigned to them.

Our Collection By Jessie Keymel

The filing committee has completed accessioning and filing all the items that have come into the museum this year. Now we need to get upstairs again and check many of the items, books, diaries, ledgers, and other materials that have been in our possession since before our cataloging system was initiated. We need to take time to examine, evaluate and gather information that will be of value to future residents interested in the history of the Walworth hamlets. There is much we can learn about Walworth and our early residents from items that have been gathered since 1975, when we organized.

Have you noticed that all the historical signs in our town have been sand blasted and painted in New York's gold and blue colors? We are ready for the Bicentennial Celebration. Thank you.

President's Report By Becky Appleman

I would like to thank our many volunteers who keep our museum grounds looking good, mowed and clear of snow and ice. The workers who made the float a reality for the Festival-in-the-Park parade also deserve a thank you. Thanks to the members who keep our displays up-to-date and interesting, not only at the museum but at the town hall as well. We need to be in the public eye so people know we are here to preserve history.

There are many corridors to go down to keep our museum going: intake of donations, filing, recording of minutes, our newsletters, our photos, web site, hospitality and our genealogy help to the public. We had begun to get back to normal with our filing, our meetings and our programs but now with another COVID outbreak, our future is unsure.

We all work hard to ensure the safety of our members and visitors and hope for some normalcy as we proceed through the coming months. Updates will be posted in our newsletter. In the meantime, if you need information you may contact any board member and we can arrange to meet in a private setting at the museum.

We're always looking for personal stories. We look forward to seeing you at our September 20 meeting about the Hamlet of Lincoln. This will be held at the Walworth Lodge at Ginegaw Park at 7:00 PM. Please also join us at the marker dedication at 1:30 PM and at our annual Open House at the museum directly after on October 3. Masks are suggested. Please don't let COVID keep you from visiting your museum!

In Memoriam: Larry Hill By Mary Jane Devlin



Larry Hill passed away on June 28 at age 90. He led a very active life. He worked at the car shops in East Rochester. When he left there, he was employed at Kodak for 36 years. After he retired from Kodak he worked for the Ontario Highway Department and the Walworth Highway Department. He retired at age 81.

He was involved with the Lincoln and West Walworth Little League baseball teams; he also played baseball for a Kodak team and other local teams. He and his wife Molly were participating members of the Walworth Historical Society.

Larry's father was a popular fiddle player and Larry had a band (Larry and the Music Makers) for over 40 years. They played at golf clubs, dances, banquets, Walworth street dances and private parties (including my Mom and Dad's 50th anniversary at the Ontario American Legion).

Our sympathy goes out to Molly and other family members.

In Memoriam: Grace Ruth By Mary Jane Devlin



The Walworth Historical Society extends sympathy to board member Larry Ruth, his wife Jacqueline and their family on the death of his mother, Grace Ruth.

In her younger days she did some painting, embroidery, crocheting, and was quite artistic. She also enjoyed tending her flower garden when she lived in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. She also played the accordion and loved her grandchildren.

She died July 21, one day shy of her 99th birthday, and is buried in Ambler, Pennsylvania with her husband Robert. A memorial service was held on August 21 at the West Walworth Zion United Methodist Church.

We Built a “Bennett” Home By Mary Jane Devlin

In 1964 we outgrew the two-bedroom home we rented from my dad and mother, Peter and Esther Cauwels. Arnold and I had friends who had built a “Bennett” home and were very happy with the results, so we looked into doing that too. The salesman was from Fairport and provided us with several books of floor plans. We chose a four-bedroom ranch plan, which we then revised.

The first thing we had to do was find a building lot. We purchased land from Stuart and Laura Huntley in Walworth. We used that as down payment for a one-year building permit. We had to have the house completed within one year of the date of the first draw on the construction loan. We received a draw on the construction loan as specific parts of the construction were completed.

The first jobs were to get a site map from the town about where to put the foundation of the house, where the septic tank should go, where we should drill for water (at that time there was no water line on Walworth-Marion Road) and where to put the driveway. We had to have all that completed plus the cellar walls up before Bennett Homes would send our first load of lumber. That load consisted of the plate which attaches to the top of the cellar walls to hold the house in place. It also included the floor joists and plywood for the subflooring, the roof joists, and all the wall studding, as well as the plywood for the outside walls and the roof.

The next delivery was the insulation, windows, siding, roofing, the entry doors and the paint for the outside. In the last load from Bennett Homes was all the inside trim, all the doors and casings, the hardwood flooring and the baseboards, the kitchen cabinets, trim and hardware, window and door locks, door knobs, and hinges.

We had to furnish all the electrical, plumbing and heating material, which included the wiring, piping, furnace, bathroom fixtures, kitchen sink, and electric fixtures. We also had to provide any ceramic tile, floor tile, and kitchen countertop as well as the dry wall. We installed the dry wall ourselves, but hired someone to seam and sand it. We also installed all the hardwood flooring, but hired someone to sand and seal the floors too.

We were very lucky that Arnold’s brothers had experience with the building trades and were willing to spend countless hours helping us. We also had friends who had experience with electric, heating, and plumbing and we hired them to come on their days off to work to install ours. Arnold’s brothers and my father worked for a free meal, and we really appreciated it. It took us a full year to complete our home. Wally Wyse, who had his own construction company, was a dear friend and a big help with advice and we hired him to build our cellar walls.

Building one of these homes was an economically smart decision, because the labor we did was our down payment for our mortgage. It took a year and the only social activity we had was when people came to help us. Even with all the help, it took us a full year to complete the home. We started in May 1965 and moved in during May 1966. I wasn’t working during that time and I spent many days painting, staining, shopping for supplies and being a go-fer.

When we were finished, someone told us that if we did two more, the last one would be ours free and clear. We declined the offer. I did things for the house that I would never do again, but under the same circumstances I wouldn’t hesitate to do them the first time. The **bottom left photo** shows this home today.

There are several other “Bennett” homes in the Walworth area and I am sure throughout Wayne County. Some of the homes in Walworth are at 2447 Walworth-Marion Road (ours); 2400 Walworth-Marion Road (Vern and Fay English); 265 Bills Road (Wallace and Irma Wyse), 3746 Walworth-Ontario Road (Claire and Joyce VanHaneghem), and 3560 Walworth-Palmyra Road (Marvin and Jean Scott) **bottom right photo**. I believe two of the Allen brothers built “Bennett” homes on Walworth-Palmyra Road and Roger Keymel says there is one on Downs Road. There are probably more in the area because it was a popular way to get a new home during the 1960’s.



Welcome Back: Walworth Festival in the Park By Bob Mogray

On July 23 and 24 the Walworth Lions Club and the Town of Walworth sponsored the 31st annual Festival in the Park in Ginegaw Park after cancelling last year due to COVID concerns. On Friday night there was a Main Street and Walworth-Penfield Road parade with many participants. The theme of this parade was "Tales/Mythology/Fantasy". The winning float for this event was the Wayne County Bicentennial Committee float.

The festival featured games, displays, community booths, vendors, craft sales, demonstrations, car show and much more. The Walworth Historical Society shared a tent with the Walworth-Seely Public Library and the Wayne County Bicentennial Committee. In this tent we featured a photo booth where people of the community could be photographed for free for our records. A digital copy of this photo was sent to those who participated. Almost 200 individuals had their photos taken that day. This was the first time we had tried such a project and it turned out to be very successful. Thanks to all those who helped with this endeavor.

Also at the festival on Saturday were a bounce house for the kids, fire truck displays, an outdoor movie, fireworks and many more events too numerous to list here.

Thanks to all those who participated and visited this year's 2021 Festival in the Park and our photo booth - a great success!



The WHS "Johnny Appleseed" theme float



The Walworth Lions Club

Everybody Loves a Sale – Free Is Better! By Dorothy French



Our stockpile of retail items for sale has increased to the point we need to find new homes for them. These items will be available at the farmers market and WHS events, or you can contact a WHS board member listed on page 8 of this newsletter.

Items include: Christmas ornaments free; Academy plates \$5.00 each; Wayne County books "Remembering Wayne" and "Gathering of Memories" \$20 each; Charlie Pembroke music CD \$5 each; and packages of note cards with pictures of churches \$2 each.

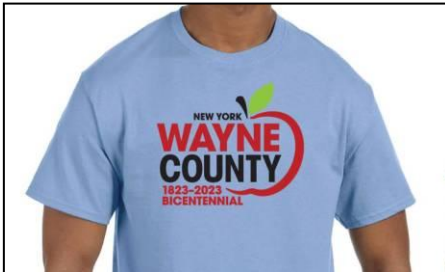
In-stock clothing includes: 2 caps \$10 each; T-shirts (lime green 2XL, pink small, red small, blue large, bronze XL, and brown XL) \$10 each. Golf shirts (green medium, brown large, yellow medium) are \$15 each. All clothing items are embroidered with the 1829 Walworth logo. All prices include the tax.

The Wayne County Bicentennial Committee and subcommittees continue to move forward with our plans for the 2023 celebration of Wayne County's History and Heritage. I have made reports in previous WHS newsletters that can be found on the Walworth Historical Society's website: www.walworthhistoricalsociety.org AND all of the "Bicentennial Bytes" newsletters are available on the Wayne County site: www.waynecounty200.com. (Please explore other information there as well.)

Some of the more recent happenings are:

The Wayne County Bicentennial T-Shirts are now available (top photo)!

The Walworth Historical Society/Walworth Committee for the Bicentennial will have them at the Walworth Farmers Market during the rest of the market season. They are \$15 each for sizes Small through XL and \$20 each for sizes XXL and XXXL (tax included). While the sale profit helps support the Bicentennial projects, a portion also goes to the WHS.



Commemorative Calendar

The Wayne County Bicentennial Calendar committee did the FINAL proofing of the calendar on August 17. It is now at the printers. While we don't (at the time of this writing) have an exact release date, it will be available by September. It, too, will be at the Walworth Farmers Market as soon as it is available. The cost is ONLY \$10 for this awesome 2022-2023 calendar full of interesting local history. It will make a GREAT gift, so you can start your Christmas shopping early.

Bicentennial Float (bottom photo) WINS the trophy!

The Wayne County Bicentennial Float was in the Walworth parade on July 23 and on display in the park on July 24. It won "Best Float" in the parade.



By now, you surely have noticed that we are relying heavily on websites and social media. We know that not everyone uses these tools, so if you don't, please contact me another way. My phone number is 315-573-2768, my email is genebavis71@gmail.com, and my mailing address is PO Box 71, Walworth, NY 14568. If you DO use the internet, please visit our website at www.waynecounty200.com

New Headstone for Abram Gregor, Civil War Veteran

By Dorothy French

In the 1860's a Walworth family contributed to the cause to preserve the Union by sending six sons to fight in the Civil War. Only three sons returned. This is the story of Abram Gregor, the youngest son of James and Almira Gregor and a Negro laborer on the Gould family farm on Atlantic Avenue.

Abram enlisted August 27, 1864 in the United States Colored Troops as a paid substitute for William E. Gould who had been drafted into the army. This type of substitution was common during the Civil War. Abram was assigned to Co. A of the 43rd USCT and saw action in the Petersburg, Virginia area. He became sick on May 12, 1865, was sent to the General Hospital at Fort Monroe for several months, mustered out with his unit in October 1865, and discharged December 1865.

Returning home to Walworth in 1865 a sick man, Abram died on March 9, 1866. Because of his race, he was buried in the rear of the family's cemetery and a headstone was erected. According to Gould descendants, the family felt obligated to bury him in the family cemetery but - because he was black - his burial and headstone were located a distance from the rest of the cemetery plots. Through the years the stone became broken and illegible.

Thanks to the efforts of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, a new headstone was ordered. According to Bob Pugsley of Lincoln, a member of the Sgt. Judson Hicks Camp #111, there will be a ceremony on Saturday, September 25, at 10 AM to dedicate the stone. The ceremony will be held at the Town of Walworth's park on Sherburne Road. This location was chosen due to the unsafe parking situation at Gould Cemetery. The headstone will be on display at the park before it is placed in the cemetery.

Slide Show All About Lincoln: Sept. 20 at the Lodge in Ginegaw Park By Bob Mogray



The four corners in Lincoln looking south

On Monday, September 20, the Walworth Historical Society will present a program about the people, businesses, and buildings of the hamlet of Lincoln, New York. The show will begin at 7:00 PM at the Lodge in Ginegaw Park. This will be a virtual tour of the Lincoln area and is free to the public. Please invite a friend or two and join us for this program. Note that a future program will include a virtual tour of the farms in Lincoln.

The Walworth Historical Society appreciates everyone's support for our meetings and programs as we continue to present topics of local historic interest. Please bring your thoughts and memories to the meeting because we welcome your experiences and recollections of the people and businesses of Lincoln. We always look forward to gaining new information from our guests and members in order to update our records.

Masks and social distancing are recommended.

Summer Reading of the Past By Linda Pembroke

If you haven't seen it yet, check out the new display in the showcase by the library doors at the town hall. To coordinate with the library's summer reading theme, our display is "Summer Reading of the Past" featuring authors and illustrators with local ties.

Marjorie (AKA Joan) Esley (1904-2000) was the daughter of Dr. Ernest and Mabel Esley and grew up at 2188 Walworth-Penfield Road, corner of Church Street. In college, she studied art and, after graduation for a short time in the 1920's, ran an illustration studio in Rochester with her good friend, Eloise Wilkin. She left Walworth for a time, teaching drawing at a girls' boarding school in Virginia during the Depression. Returning to Walworth in 1946, she set up a studio in her father's old office. Joan worked as a free-lance artist illustrating textbooks and magazines. She also authored and illustrated several of her own children's books using local children as models, sometimes working with long-time friend Eloise. Joan is buried in the Walworth Cemetery on Sherburne Road.

Eloise Burns Wilkin (1904-1987) was best known as an illustrator of more than 100 books, 47 of them were Little Golden Books which she worked on from her home in Canandaigua. Several of these were written by her sister, Esther Burns Wilkin (the sisters married brothers). The models for her illustrations were often her children, grandchildren, and their friends. Her Golden Books illustrations have appeared on calendars, puzzles, china plates, magazines, and Hallmark Cards. She also designed baby dolls for Vogue and Madame Alexander. The Esley and Wilkin books are part of the museum's collection.



Archie Hayes Merrill (1894-1974) worked for the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle for many years as a journalist and editor. He was born in Sandusky, NY, attended area schools and served during WWI in France in 1916. He wrote 23 books on regional history and folklore; some of them were based on his newspaper columns. In 1939 he began writing 1,650 stories and columns about the Finger Lakes area. According to a contemporary, "If someone said they were not interested in history, (Merrill) could catch their attention." As a result, he has been called the "Poet Laureate of Upstate New York." He is buried in Brighton Cemetery in Rochester.

This collection of Arch Merrill books is on loan from Vaughn and Linda Pembroke. They belonged to her grandmother, Wanda Cooman.

Remembering.....The Johncox Family of Lincoln By Dorothy French

Arthur and Jennie Johncox, long-time Lincoln residents, were married November 1, 1905 in Palmyra. Fifty years later, on October 31, 1955, they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary surrounded by their children (Carl, Ralph, Mildred, and Wilson) and their spouses. Before entering the trucking business, Arthur was a farmer who owned 265 acres of farm land and 50 head of cattle, in addition to renting 250 acres. Arthur recalled that many times prior to diesel-powered tractor trailers he rented his horse and wagon to local farmers and delivered their crops to Rochester markets. At that time a round trip to the city took over 12 hours.

Arthur and Jennie previously lived on Lincoln Road in Ontario before moving to a house on Plank Road across from their family's trucking company. Arthur was the founder of A. Johncox and Son Trucking Company at 787 Plank Road, Lincoln. The building's history included 1914 ownership by J. Wesley. The facility housed Lincoln Fire Department's 1936 Stewart truck in the late 1940's. In 1940 Arthur and his son, Wilson, went into commercial trucking with two tractor-trailer rigs. In 1950 they had 17 trailers and 8 tractors transporting frozen foods and canned goods into almost every state in the nation. Current building owner is Raymond Zientara.

Arthur was born in 1888 in Ontario - one of 15 children of Lewis and Emma (White) Johncox. His wife, the former Jennie Malone, was one of 5 children of Michael and Sara Malone of Ontario and was born in 1882. Arthur passed away in 1966 and Jennie in 1977. They are buried in the Union Hill Cemetery on Ridge Road.

Editor's Note: Thank you to Wilson's daughter, Joanne Johncox Mortimer, for sharing these photos and information about her grandparents.



(left) Pre 1955: Wilson in front of trucking company business at 787 Plank Road



(Above) 1955: Johncox family members left to right: Doris and Carl Johncox, parents Jennie and Arthur, Elinor and Ralph Johncox, Mildred and Frank Brewster, and Eleanor and Wilson Johncox

2021 WHS Calendar of Events

Sept. 20	7:00 PM	General Meeting "Hamlet of Lincoln" Ginegaw Lodge
Oct. 3	1:30 PM	Marker Dedication 3634 High Street
Oct. 3	2-4 PM	Open House WHS museum
Oct. 11	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees WHS museum
Nov. 15	1:00 PM	General Meeting "Kodakids" Mary Jo Lamphear Ginegaw Lodge
Dec. 4	6:00 PM	"Light the Night" Ginegaw Park
Dec. 13	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees WHS museum

Officers and Trustees

President	Becky Appleman	(315) 524 - 3289
Vice-President	Robert Mogray	(585) 576 - 4156
Secretary	Judy McMillan	(315) 524 - 4219
Treasurer	Linda Pembroke	(585) 455 - 7595
WHS Trustee	Jessie Keymel	(315) 524 - 9205
WHS Trustee	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768
WHS Trustee	Ellen Dieterick	(585) 200 - 4685
WHS Trustee	Dorothy French	(315) 986 - 1098
WHS Trustee	Judy Markowski	(315) 524 - 8649
WHS Trustee	Larry Ruth	(315) 524 - 7936

Committees and Chairpersons

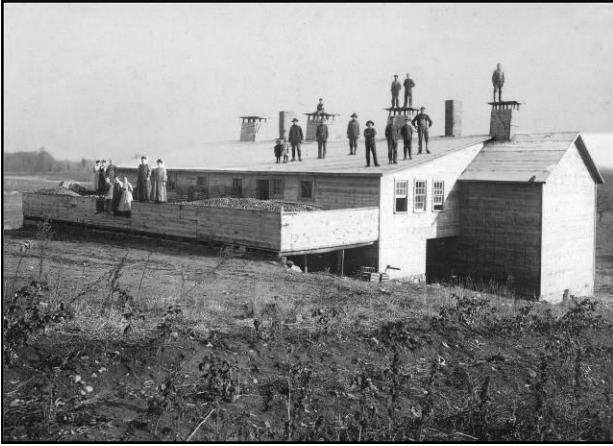
Bldg. Maint.	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768
Collections	Jessie Keymel	(315) 524 - 9205
Displays-Museum	Judy Markowski	(315) 524 - 8649
Displays-Town Hall	Judy McMillan	(315) 524 - 4219
Grounds	Becky Appleman	(315) 524 - 3289
Hospitality	Liz Bavis	(585) 802 - 0380
Membership	Linda Pembroke	(585) 455 - 7595
Newsletter	Bob Mogray	(585) 576 - 4156
Publicity	Becky/Dorothy	See above
Town Historian	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768

September 2021 Email Newsletter Extra Photos

Recently there has been much talk about the old Pacific Hotel being sold. Here are a few photos from the past and at the bottom a current one to show how it has changed throughout the years!



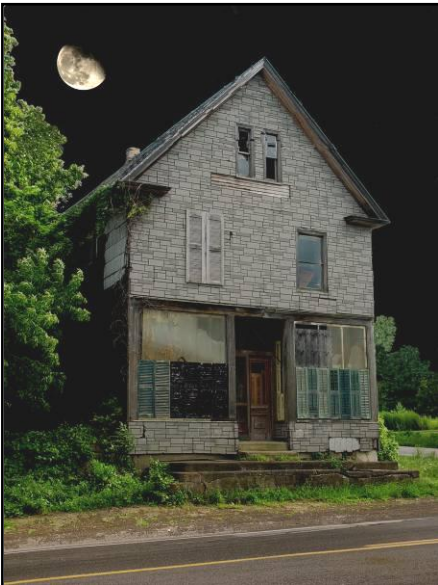
On September 20, the Walworth Historical Society will present a program "The Hamlet of Lincoln" at the Lodge in Ginegaw Park. The photos below are from the Lincoln area.



George Baker fruit dry house in Lincoln



Main Street Lincoln looking north



White's General Store



The Lincoln Cheese Factory many years ago



Plank Road store/gas station in Lincoln



The Lincoln Cheese Factory in 2018