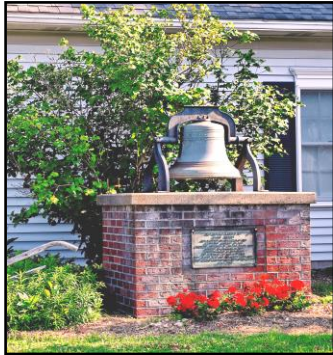




**NEWSLETTER**  
**Walworth Historical Society**  
**July 2023**  
**Volume 48 / Number 1**



**2257 Academy Street, P.O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568**  
**walworthhistoricalsociety.org 315-576-6037**

**May 15 WHS Annual Meeting** By Bob Mogray

On Monday, May 15 at 6:00 PM at the Lodge at Ginegaw Park, the Walworth Historical Society once again held our annual meeting. It began with a dish-to-pass supper and there was quite a variety of items from which to choose. There was then a short meeting and several announcements. As the Wayne County Bicentennial continues throughout this year, some of the events yet to happen were announced such as the Torch Relay, Family Fun Day at the Fair, and the Bicentennial Music Series.

**The yearly Community Service Award was then presented. I must say that I was both totally surprised and honored to receive the award this year. At this time I want to thank all of those who conspired behind my back to keep this such a secret. I greatly appreciate this honor!**

Then there was election of officers and board members. A special thank you to Dorothy French and Becky Appleman who have done so much and given many hours of their time to work on various projects. They are both stepping down from their offices of Trustee and President, respectively. For the next year, these will be the Officers and Trustees for the Walworth Historical Society.

**Officers**    President    Amber Linson  
                   Vice-Pres.    Bob Mogray  
                   Secretary    Judy McMillan  
                   Treasurer    Linda Pembroke

**Trustees**    Gene Bavis (Walworth Town Historian)  
                   Christine Kubida  
                   Alex Heinonen  
                   Jessie Keymel  
                   Judy Markowski  
                   Liz Bavis



As we have done on several occasions in the past, a slide presentation was shown about some of the things that happened and were important 50 years ago in 1973. Some of these include the invention of the MRI machine and fiber optics, the first use of air bags in cars, the Miami Dolphin's first and only perfect season, a 40-cent gallon of gas, and an 8-cent postage stamp to name a few!

There was very good attendance for this meeting and we really appreciate the support of our members and the general public for not only this annual meeting but for our other meetings, presentations, and events throughout the year.

**From left to right: Jessie Keymel, Bob Mogray, Gene Bavis**

**Our Copper Beech Tree: The Saga Continues** By Amber Linson

A few meetings ago it was decided to have the copper beech tree at the west end of the WHS museum property taken down because of old age and more dead limbs (**bottom left**). After this was done, some of the WHS board members met with “Texas Dave” about the copper beech tree trunk (**bottom right**) on Tuesday, May 30, and he has expressed ability to plank the trunk in about 6 weeks for an estimated cost of \$700. Additionally, there will be a cost to stack and space the planks for drying and potential additional costs if the blade breaks during processing (\$65 per blade).

Highway Superintendent Kevin Switzer has offered the services of the Highway Department to transfer the log to “Texas Dave” for planking. Additionally, the Sewer Superintendent, Adam Jozwiak, has allotted space inside one of the buildings at the sewer plant for the log to dry once it has been planked. The Highway Department will also transport the log to the Sewer Department. The log needs to dry for at least 2 years before it can be used.

The WHS Building and Grounds Committee should oversee the processing of the trunk when it is being planked in 6 weeks so that we know what exactly we are getting when the job is done. Hopefully we can turn this huge log from our copper beech tree into something to remind us of its history.



**Copper beech tree removal**



**Ellen Dietterick (left) and Becky Appleman (right)**

**Museum Cleanup: Many Hands Make Light Work** By Linda Pembroke

The annual outdoor cleanup at the museum happened on May 6 (**bottom photos**). We are so grateful for the Troop 113 Boy Scouts and their families who joined our members to complete this job. Like the old saying “Many hands make light work.” We finished in record time. The Boy Scouts enjoyed some refreshments after working hard and then had the energy to climb on the remains of the downed copper beech tree. The tree continued to provide entertainment for kids one last time as it did for over a hundred years.



**WHS website: [walworthhistoricalsociety.org](http://walworthhistoricalsociety.org)**



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**WHS July 2023 Newsletter**

## Our Collection Continues to Grow By Jessie Keymel

There are many United States flags in our collection.

The flag that is currently flying at our museum was presented to the Walworth Historical Society on the occasion of the dedication of our new building by Congressman Frank Horton. The flag was flown over the Capitol of the United States on July 4, 1989.



We have the flag which was raised from atop of the United States Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan on May 10, 2014. It was presented to our historical society by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey R. Bavis on his return to Walworth. Please take time to read the story of this flag; this information is in a frame which is hanging in our meeting room.

The largest flag in our collection is 12 ft. by 24 ft. It was displayed on the front of the Pacific Hotel to welcome former President Grover Cleveland when he came to Walworth for his nieces' double wedding on June 10, 1891. There are 40 stars on this flag.

When a veteran of the United States Armed Forces dies, there is often a flag draped on his coffin. This flag is given to the family in appreciation of the veteran's time spent serving our nation. We have the flag that draped World War I veteran George Frowley's coffin, when he died in 1935. The family of Howard Barmaster, WWII veteran, donated his casket flag and his Army uniform to our collection.

We also have a flag that was left at the town hall in 2004. Sadly, there was no information about who left it or owned it.

The question is often asked what to do with an old or damaged flag. The local American Legion Posts have made it easy. They will dispose of flags properly. You can leave your flag at the American Legion Post #428 at their building at 6180 Knickerbocker Road, Ontario. There is a filing cabinet at the back door that has a drawer dedicated for old flags. The American Legion Post 1430, located at 4141 Witherden Road, Marion, has a red, white and blue mailbox located outside their building to collect old flags. When the Posts schedule a ceremony for the disposal of flags, all flags donated will be included in the ceremony.

## Roadside Tribute Banners By Christine Kubida

Walworth HomeTown Heroes Committee is excited to announce that as of Spring 2023 we now have 41 Roadside Tribute Banners flanking the street sides of the Walworth community.

Represented are servicemembers from the United States Army Air Corps, United States Army, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, Cold War, Persian Gulf, Global War on Terror, Korea, United States Colored Troops, Vietnam, United States Coast Guard, and United States Army National Guard. Servicemembers from our area include: Lincoln 4; Walworth 31; and West Walworth 6.

If you are Interested in sponsoring a banner for your much-loved servicemember reach out to committee member Mike Kunzer for more information via email at [hthwalworth.kunzer@gmail.com](mailto:hthwalworth.kunzer@gmail.com) or by phone at (585) 355-3158.



## **Benefits and Perks Night**    By Christine Kubida

On Tuesday, May 23, 2023 the Walworth HomeTown Heroes Committee held a Veteran and Veteran Families Benefits and Perks Information Night at the Town of Walworth's Ginegaw Park Lodge. The evening was a great success. The committee received many positive remarks and messages in regards to the evening having been of great benefit to the veteran community. Guests from a variety of service agencies from the state, county and non-profit/profit sector attended and spoke. Great giveaways were presented during the evening and all in attendance were able to enjoy some amazing eats sponsored by local restaurants.

As the age old saying goes, "*It takes a village...*" and the WHTH village for this event consisted of many restaurants, supporters and organizations. We owe a tremendous amount of gratitude and appreciation to them for their role in making the night a success and enjoyable for all of the attendees.

## **Memorial Day Parade in Walworth**    By Bob Mogray

On Memorial Day, May 29 this year, at 11:00 AM there was a short parade that began at the Walworth Fire Department area and proceeded down Walworth-Penfield Road and into Ginegaw Park. The purpose of this parade was not to present a large production with floats etc., but to honor and mourn the United States military men and women who gave their lives while serving in the armed services.

Once the parade reached Ginegaw Park there was a short ceremony in honor of those fallen military personnel. Several local agencies participated in the parade. Those included the Wayne County Sheriff's Department; the Wayne Central High School Marching Band; the Walworth, Lincoln, and West Walworth Fire Departments; the Wayne County Bicentennial Committee; and a few others.

Thank you to all of those who participated in, helped to organize, and came to see this parade. The photos below show some of the participants.



**Wayne Central High School Marching Band**



**Town of Walworth Highway Department truck**

## **Vice-President's Message**    By Bob Mogray

Well, we are into the summer weather and the WHS has many events for our involvement! The Festival in the Park is just around the corner and we will have a float as always and also a booth at Ginegaw Park. There will be WHS-sponsored shows/meetings in September and November, as well as our October Open House at the WHS Museum on Academy Street. Please check the Calendar of Events on page 8 for the times and dates of our activities.

Because this year is the Wayne County Bicentennial, there are many county-wide events throughout the remainder of 2023. Walworth Town Historian and Wayne County Bicentennial co-chair Gene Bavis has a very detailed article on pages 6 and 7 with this information. The Walworth Historical Society is also involved with the HomeTown Heroes program and the Farmers Market on Tuesdays at Ginegaw Park. We also designed a 44-page information and historical booklet that was mailed to all Walworth area residents.

This is turning out to be the busiest year since I joined the WHS in 2006. I hope everyone enjoys the summer and will consider getting involved in some of our shows and programs.

**Memories: Ronald Bruce Russell:** By his sister Dawn Russell

Ronald Russell was born on January 17, 1952 at Rochester General Hospital to his parents, Bruce and Bernice Russell. Ronnie grew up in Walworth, living at his parents' home on Walworth-Ontario Road. He had four siblings: Dawn, Carol, Gary and Krisanne. Ronnie was the oldest of the five children. When younger, Ronnie would go with our parents on trips to Lake Eaton and the St. Lawrence River, where he learned how to swim.



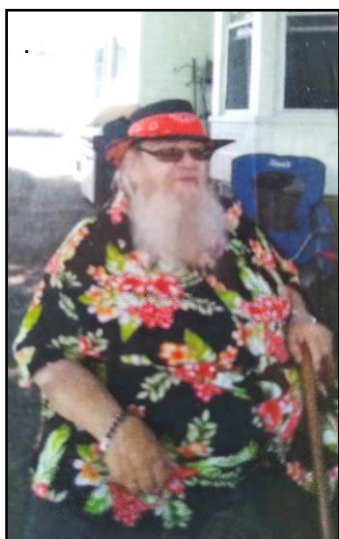
Ron Russell—Sound the sirens, close the school, and let's leave.

Ronnie started school at Walworth Elementary in 1957. His kindergarten teacher was Mrs. Johnson, and his first grade teacher was Miss Fuller. He had many friends. For his 7<sup>th</sup> birthday party he invited eight of his classmates/friends, one of them being Vaughn Pembroke. While in high school, Ronnie was involved in projector club and also enjoyed mechanical drawing. He kept his drawings of a house he had drawn all those years ago. He loved listening to music such as the Beatles, Beach Boys, Jan & Dean to name a few.

**Left: Ron Russell's high school yearbook picture**

Bob Mogray was in the same gym class in middle school as Ronnie. He remembers when Ronnie was called up front of the class to lead and demonstrate 30-pound weight lifting which was like a barbell. Everyone was issued the same weight, and when Ronnie led the class, being a big strong guy, the others would groan and complain. His exercises were so intense the kids were sweating profusely, arms shaking, and dropping like flies, as Bob remembers. Gym teachers would stop to watch whenever Ronnie would lead class. Bob says "Looking back now, it was really kind of comical but at the time, we thought we were doomed."

Ronnie graduated from Wayne Central in 1971. Ronnie had a great enthusiasm for cars. He owned several throughout his life. He loved his 1969 red and white Firebird (right), Sweet Innocence. He also collected many model cars. He probably got his love of cars from our dad, who was an excellent car repair and body frame specialist. Ronnie always made sure his most recent car would look pristine, and would visit his siblings' homes whenever he got a new one, feeling so proud. His good friend Danny Teske remembers many fun times with Ronnie racing their cars. One time when they were racing their cars, with Ronnie in the lead, Ronnie was stopped by the cops but wouldn't give up his friends to the cops as his friends drove by.



Another good friend of Ronnie's was Terry Spencer. Ronnie was best man in Terry's wedding and godfather to his children. He had great times with many other friends such as: Guy Carr, Kevin Rowell, Vaughn Pembroke, Grant Bradshaw, and Harlin Hilton to name a few. While growing up Ronnie was a Boy Scout, and had many memories of the Boy Scout Camp Babcock Hovey. He would talk about climbing the ravines while there and all the good times. Ronnie enjoyed family picnics. He would always show up with a Pepsi and chair in hand.

Ronnie worked for Lollypop Farm for 43 years, serving as law enforcement officer and several other capacities in his tenure. He had a love for dogs, and owned several throughout his life. His first dog was a collie named Sleepie.

Ronnie (left) loved living in the town of Walworth, and later in life would come back to visit. Sadly, Ronnie passed on April 9, 2023. He was the best older brother a sister could have.

### Downs Road and the Phillips Family: Part 3 By Dorothy French

*Editor's Note: The story continues with information about the Phillips family. Thank you to WHS Genealogist Ellen Dietterick for her extensive research.*

According to an undated copy of "A History of the Town of Walworth" written by an unknown person, about 1855 the author's Grandpa Phillips settled on Downs Road. He came on the canal with his family from Dutchess County. It is probable that this "History" was written by a descendant of either Maude or Mabel, daughters of David Phillips.

The Phillips family house was a large cut stone home located at 4371 Downs Road. It was a meeting place for all the young people. Current owners are Joel and Danielle Hoose. More info about this beautiful home and previous owners will be published in a future issue.

David Phillips (born 1776, died 1850) and Lucy Stone were parents of David and Oliver. David and Lucy were married in Windsor, Massachusetts. Their son (also named David) was born Feb. 28, 1818. Following the death of his first wife, Phoebe, David (the son) married Martha Sarah Case. They were parents of two daughters: Maude Martha and Mabel (born 1878 and 1880). When Maude was born her father was 58 and her mother was 32. David died Apr. 25, 1898 and is buried in Freewill Cemetery.

David was a farmer and also raised sheep which they sold for wool. Twice a year at sheering time they would drive the sheep four miles each way to the mill pond at Walworth to wash them. They made their own maple syrup, going to the woods with the bob sleigh and horses to gather the sap. The sap was boiled down in large kettles on the kitchen range. They took their milk to the Lincoln cheese factory. They also went to the mill in West Walworth and for other shopping.

Maude Martha Phillips (born Feb. 18, 1877 in Walworth, died Jan. 6, 1974) married Frank George Freer (1874-1934) on Mar. 24, 1897. They were parents of at least five sons and seven daughters: Agatha, John David, Mabel, Harland, Harley Wellington, Mina, Floyd George, Florence May, Frances M., Eva A., Russell, and Helen. In 1930 Maude lived in nearby Palmyra.

Mabel Phillips married James J. Downs (Jan. 2, 1879-Apr. 18, 1953) a grandson of Michael Downs. Mabel and James had three children: 1) Robert J. Downs (born Oct. 16, 1915, died June 1, 1984 in Macedon). 2) Doris Arlene Downs (born Sept. 25, 1918, died Dec. 14, 2001). Married Brayton Dygert Gardner. 3) Mary Lillis Downs (born Jan. 17, 1921, died March 16, 2017 age 96. Mary married Joseph J. Remmel and they had five children: Shirley Cicero, Joseph S. Remmel, Delores Schlicker, Mabel Farrow and James Remmel.

Buried in St. Anne's Roman Catholic Cemetery in Palmyra are James and Mabel and their children: Beth (died 1914), Robert, Doris, and Mary.

**To be continued: Life on the Phillips Family Farm**



### Wayne County Bicentennial Update

By Gene Bavis

The Wayne County Bicentennial Committee has planned and held two MAJOR EVENTS so far, but we aren't done yet! The April 11 **Founders Day Ceremonies in Lyons** and the Bicentennial Gala were both a HUGE success thanks to the hard work of our various committees and sponsors.



**The Gala** held at the Ballroom at Carey Lake was attended by nearly 500 people. Thanks to the sponsorship of over 30 Wayne County businesses, we were able to offer tickets for about half of the actual cost. The Committee, headed by Patti Holdraker, did an outstanding job of arranging for every detail and creating an elegant experience for our guests. The evening concluded with fireworks.

Our most recent event was held at the Ohmann Theater on June 15. Professor Jim Kimball and Folklorist Karen Canning (**left**) helped kick off the **Bicentennial Heritage Music Series**. Their program entitled "Tunes, Dances and Stories: A Sampling from Central and Western New York History" was a concert with a history lesson. They performed tunes in traditional manner and read from period diaries, news sources and interviews with old timers. Over 100 people attended including a good representation by Walworth Historical Society members.



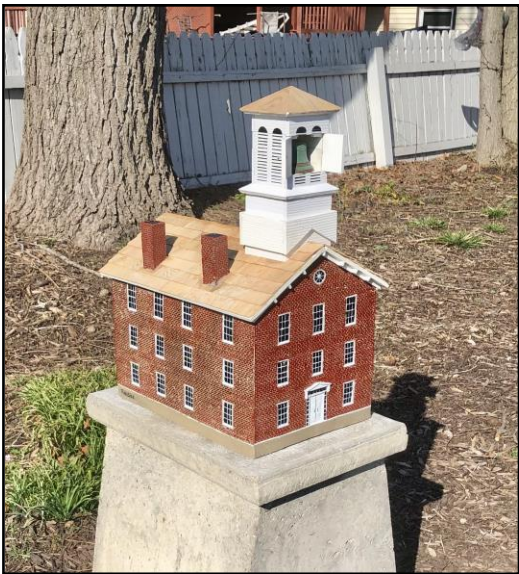
Jim Wood as Gen. Granger

While it was not an official Bicentennial project, a ceremony was held in the Hamlet of Joy in the Town of Sodus on June 19, 2023 (the 158th anniversary of the original Juneteenth). A **historic marker** was dedicated commemorating the childhood home of General Gordon Granger. As you may know, it was he who delivered General Order #3 in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865 informing the enslaved people of Texas that they were free. This was about 2 ½ years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. News travels slowly!



Granger Historic Marker

The **Bicentennial Torch Relay** Committee is **LOOKING FOR RUNNERS**. The Torch Relay will pass through ALL 15 Towns in Wayne County between August 14 and 18. This 200-mile event begins and ends at the Wayne County Fair. On the evening of August 15, as part of the relay, kids ages 5 to 15 will be invited to participate at the Sodus High School track. The relay will pass through Walworth on August 14. Watch for more details as to times and locations. We would like people to come out and cheer them on as they pass by. DETAILS can always be found on the Bicentennial website: <https://web.co.wayne.ny.us/681/Bicentennial-Torch-Relay>.



This year at the **Wayne County Fair** the theme will be the Wayne County Bicentennial. Many displays and activities will be in support of that. Four different music events (part of the Heritage Music Series) will be at the Fair AND on Saturday, August 19, **FAMILY FUN DAY** will focus on history. It includes music, historic re-enactors, Civil War encampments, Iroquois stories and culture, historic crafts, and programs from the Genesee Country Village and Museum. Kids are **FREE** that day and Adults will be able to get a coupon for free admission between 10 AM and 2 PM. Check the website.

The **Bicentennial Geocache Trail** is becoming very popular. Thirty geocaches have been put out around Wayne County (2 in each town). Those who find at least half of them and send in the form will be eligible for a drawing for prizes. The passport can be found on line, but printed copies are available from public libraries and town clerk offices in Wayne County as well at the Walworth Historical Society. The **MOST UNIQUE** geocache, a model of the former Walworth Academy, is at the Walworth Historical Society (**left**). It is easy to find, BUT in order to access it, you must find the bell (the original bell is located here in front of the museum) to put in the belfry, thus opening the cache. This is a **GREAT** project for families. <https://web.co.wayne.ny.us/694/Bicentennial-Geocache-Passport>.

The Walworth Committee for the Bicentennial in cooperation with the Walworth Parks Department planted a **Bicentennial Tree** on Arbor Day (April 28) (**right**).

Don't forget that ALL 52 of the Bicentennial Minutes (2-5 minute videos) are still available on the Bicentennial website: <https://web.co.wayne.ny.us/547/Bicentennial-Minutes>. The most up-to-date source of information is the Bicentennial website: [www.waynecounty200.com](http://www.waynecounty200.com). Information is also shared at press releases, email blasts, social media and print media. If anyone has questions about Bicentennial activities, contact Gene Bavis ([genebavis71@gmail.com](mailto:genebavis71@gmail.com) or 315-573-2768).



**Announcement:** A historic marker commemorating the founding of the Town of Walworth will be dedicated on Thursday, August 3 at 6:15 PM just prior to the Walworth Town Board Meeting (6:30 PM). This will take place near the entrance to the Walworth Town Hall. We invite you to attend this brief ceremony.

**Honoring Bob** By Dorothy French

At a recent planning meeting Bob Mogray volunteered to write the story about the WHS annual meeting. His well-written story appears elsewhere in this newsletter. Ever modest, Bob thanked everyone for surprising him with the Community Service Award but neglected to mention the reasons he was chosen.

In response to our request for nominations of an individual or group of people worthy of this award, Vaughn Pembroke submitted Bob's name, noting that "Bob has unselfishly volunteered his time and talent to help others in our community." According to Vaughn, Bob shares his photographic and technical knowledge with many organizations and events, including the Walworth Historical Society, Walworth Fire Department, and the Wayne County Bicentennial.

Bob is WHS vice-president and editor of our newsletter. He enjoys writing stories and providing the required photos. Bob's photographs are the highlight of numerous programs we have presented throughout the years. He is responsible for many of the photos in the fire department's meeting room. Last year he spent untold hours traveling through the towns of Wayne County to provide a multitude of photos for a quilt that was commissioned to celebrate the county's 2023 bicentennial. His latest accomplishment was providing a huge number of photographs for our recently-published town-wide magazine.

Vaughn concluded the nomination by stating "Bob is a role model for sharing his time and talent." We heartily agree.

*Editor's Note: Thank you for your kind words, Dorothy and thank you Vaughn for the nomination. I am proud to be part of such a great organization with such excellent members!*

**2023 WHS Calendar of Events**

July 17	6:30 PM	Decorate the parade float Keymel's
July 21	7:00 PM	Festival-in-the-Park parade WHS booth after parade Ginegaw Park
July 22	2-9 PM	Festival-in-the-Park booth Ginegaw Park
Aug. 3	6:15 PM	Walworth marker dedication Walworth Town Hall
Aug 14	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees WHS Museum
Sept 18	7:00 PM	General Meeting Gordon Granger Program Ginegaw Park Lodge
Oct 1	2-4 PM	WHS Open House Cattle & Dairy Farming WHS Museum
Oct 9	2:00 PM	Board of Trustees WHS Museum
Nov 20	1:00 PM	General Meeting Soup with Dick & Jane Cindy Russell Ginegaw Park Lodge
Dec 2	6-8 PM	Light the Night Ginegaw Park Lodge
Dec 11	2:00PM	Board of Trustees WHS Museum

**Thank you to  
Reliant Credit Union for printing this newsletter**



**Officers and Trustees**

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Bylaws & Policy	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768
Genealogy	Ellen Dietterick	(585) 200 - 4685
HomeTown Heroes	Christine Kubida	(585) 455 - 4359
Town Historian	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768