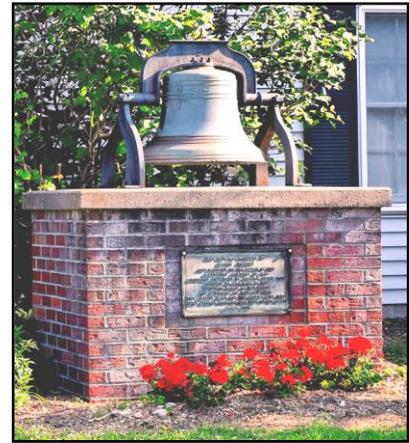


Walworth Historical Society

**May 2025
Newsletter**

Volume 49 / Number 5



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

WHS Annual Meeting Set For Monday, May 19 By Bob Mogray

The annual meeting of the Walworth Historical Society this year will be **on Monday, May 19 at 6:00 PM at the Lodge in Ginegaw Park in Walworth** (shown below). As always, it will begin with a dish-to-pass supper. The ham, rolls, butter and beverages will be provided. Attendees are asked to bring their own table service as well as a dish to pass.

Following dinner there will be a short meeting for nominations, elections, and a few announcements. This typically takes less than ten minutes. We will also be giving out our yearly Community Service Award. This is an award given to a person or small group of people who throughout their lives in the Walworth area have distinguished themselves by exhibiting a high level of volunteer effort which has been a positive impact on the local community.

This year's recipient is Mike Frederes. He has lived in Walworth his entire life and is the fourth generation to farm property as far back as the early 1800's. Mike has been an active member of the Lincoln Fire Department and was the Walworth Highway Superintendent for many years. He also volunteered as a town of Walworth planning board member, served on various Wayne County agricultural committees, and is a Life member of the WHS. He currently chairs the Walworth Republican Committee.

The list of past recipients contains many familiar names of people and groups who have volunteered their time and effort to making Walworth a better place to live. Just a few of them include Charlie Pembroke, Gordie Youngman, Hazel Bassage, Quilts for Kids, Bill Boyd and many more! The link is as follows:

<https://walworthhistoricalsociety.org/new/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/WHS-Community-Service-Award-list-update-2024.pdf>.

As we have done on several occasions in the past, a slide presentation will show some of the events that happened and were important 50 years ago in 1975. For many this will be a nostalgic trip into the past and for the younger attendees an interesting look about days gone by.

The Walworth Historical Society programs are ALWAYS open to the public, so please bring a friend or two and join us. The WHS needs and appreciates your support for all of our shows and programs.

We hope to see you there!



The Grange Hall By Dorothy French



Our March program featured the property at 3713 Main Street, known throughout the years as the Pacific Hotel, Grange Hall, American Pool Supply/American Hobby Shop, and now an apartment. For 56 years, the building was owned by Walworth Grange #289.

In January 1925 J. D. Kipp shared his memories about the Walworth area and called it "A Glimpse into the Past". He included this information about the Grange: *Fifty years ago this Grange was organized with 37 Charter members. But in spite of the fact that the founders have gone from among us, your numbers are increasing so that now you have about 200 members. You have accomplished a great deal in the past. It may be that there remains much to do in the future. If so, it depends wholly upon each and every one of you to strive with all your energy to build up your Grange. Do this and you will find that your Grange will become a power for good in this community and one of the strongest in the County of Wayne.*

For 117 years members of Walworth Grange #289 displayed this strong sense of community involvement by their huge presence in our town. When it organized on January 28, 1875, it was the ninth Grange in Wayne County to receive a charter. Meetings were held in various locations until 1877 when the Grangers rented the Walworth Academy and remodeled the second floor into meeting rooms.

In the spring of 1929 the school was demolished to make way for a new high school and the Grangers purchased the Pacific Hotel for \$2,800 from Ormand Franke. Once again they began a remodeling project and the second floor became their meeting room, dining room, and kitchen. The hall was dedicated February 1931. The first floor was rented to several businesses.

As the years passed, membership dwindled and the older members realized they could not afford the costly repairs to their building nor could many members climb the long flight of stairs to their meeting room. Sadly, in 1985 they agreed it was time to sell this landmark to David Kords, owner of American Pool Supply and American Hobby Shop.

Coincidentally, the Walworth Historical Society was hoping to erect a museum on land recently donated by Mr. and Mrs. Clifford (Emily) Huntley on Academy Street. The Grangers voted to donate \$25,000 towards a structure. In return they were assured they would be able to use the museum for their meetings.

Our museum proudly displays a plaque, thanking the Grange for its generosity with these words: *In October 1987 the Walworth Grange gave to the Walworth Historical Society a very generous gift of money as a community service project. This money allowed the Walworth Historical Society to seriously consider building a museum.*

In 1989, after the framework of the structure had been finished, the Grange gave additional funds as a special tribute to the early members of their organization. Although the Grangers voted to disband in 1992, their commitment continues to live because of their generosity.



Above photos show the Pacific Hotel as the home of the Walworth Grange until 1985.

Qs and As About Walworth



Have you wondered how Walworth got its name? Is your relative buried in one of our cemeteries? What happened to the high school on High Street? Where were the Walworth street dances held?

If you have questions about Walworth's history contact Gene Bavis, town historian, at genebavis71@gmail.com, P.O. Box 71, Walworth, NY 14568, or 315-573-2768. We will select questions and include the answers in future newsletters. Personal questions will be handled individually.

Can You Help Us? By Christine Bray

The success of the Walworth Historical Society depends on volunteers – people who are dedicated about preserving the history of Walworth and sharing it with others. There are a myriad of jobs just waiting for volunteers in addition to the list below. Email cbray.n.lsnnyder@gmail.com or contact any of the board members listed in this newsletter if you can help.

- **May 14** Spring clean-up – inside and outside the museum at 6:00 PM.
- **May 19:** Annual meeting at the Lodge. Provide refreshments and set up room.
- **July 22:** Decorate float for Festival-in-the-Park parade.
- **July 25-26:** Volunteer at WHS booth at Ginegaw Park.
- **Sept. 15** WHS 50th anniversary at the Lodge in Ginegaw Park..
- **Oct. 5:** Fall open house at museum – provide refreshments and set up displays.
- **Nov. 17:** Provide refreshments and set up lodge for general meeting.
- **Winter:** Plow and shovel sidewalks at museum.

Reminder: we accept used ink/toner cartridges for recycling. They can be left at our museum door or brought to an event.

Melba Smith and Her 1920 Diary – Part 5 By Mary Jane Devlin

Editor's Note: Melba Smith was born in 1899. Melba and her parents lived on Canandaigua Road and she was a student at District #8 in 1904-05. The school was also known as Freewill and was located on the northeast corner of Atlantic Avenue and Downs Road. Melba taught at an area district school and was a faithful writer in her diary, which has been transcribed to give us a better understanding of life in 1918 - 1920. In later years she lived at 2179 Walworth-Penfield Road, the current home of Russ and Barb Kuelling. Melba died in 1971 and is buried in Baker Road Cemetery. Excerpts of her diary are printed below, thanks to Mary Jane Devlin who transcribed them.

1920

- Jan.:** I went to box social. Mr. Cressey bought my box. I got snowed in and had to stay at Monroe's. Several of my children passed their examinations and stood fairly good. I am teaching a Sunday School class composed of little folks.
- Mar. 1:** I taught Clara Yucker's class as well as my own.
- April 4-10:** Easter vacation, snowed every day of the week. We have been having Evangelistic services. I went each night and sang in chorus. There were over 50 converts. I am leader of a prayer group in Baptist Church. Drew \$20 from public money.
- I went to see the station school and was not satisfied - it was not good enough pay. Sent a girl to the spelling contest. I have a room at the VanSickle house.

It's That Time of Year Again

By Linda Pembroke



We thank our members and friends for their continued financial support of the Walworth Historical Society and museum. This support includes dues, donations, and memorials. As a result, we are able to present programs of historical interest, maintain and enlarge our collections, and preserve the history of our town. This is a gentle reminder that our fiscal year is May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026 and **annual dues are due**. Membership levels are noted below:

Student \$5; Senior Single 65+ \$15; Senior Couple 65+ \$20; Individual \$20; Family Household \$25; Supporter \$50; Patron \$100; Life Senior 65+ \$150; Life Senior Couple 65+ \$200; Life \$250; Business level 1 "Volunteer" \$100; Business level 2 "Curator" \$250, Business level 3 "Historian" \$500.

Make your check payable to Walworth Historical Society and mail to: Walworth Historical Society, P.O. Box 142, Walworth, NY 14568. **Contact me at 585-455-7595 if you have questions.**

Editor's note: *If this information looks familiar, it is! It was included in our last newsletter. We just wanted to remind everyone to please pay your dues. We use these dues to fund various projects and purchase supplies, etc. Thank you for your consideration. It is greatly appreciated.*

March WHS Pacific Hotel Meeting

By Bob Mograv

We would like to thank all of those who attended the Walworth Historical Society meeting on March 17 which was all about the Pacific Hotel on Main Street in Walworth. Most of the research for this program was done by Dorothy French with contributions by a few others. We really appreciate and depend on those who support us by their attendance to these meetings and shows.

That being said, disaster struck when our laptop failed and we were unable to run the program as we had planned! We ended up narrating the subject matter with no visual aids. Not only are we planning to purchase a new laptop but also a new video projector as well. Both of these items were outdated and in order to present our programs to our members and guests we want to have the most reliable equipment as possible. We appreciate the patience and support that we were shown in the face of these problems. **This Pacific Hotel program will be shown again in the future and we will post the date and time in several social media.**



Above photos show the Pacific Hotel at various stages of its development.



Thank You, Jessie

By Dorothy French

Roger and Jessie Keymel became charter members when they joined the newly organized Walworth Historical Society in 1975. Through the years they have actively supported WHS and will continue to do so. Jessie's knowledge of Walworth is legendary, occasionally blended with her Scottish brogue.

She has decided it is time to retire from her long-time tenure on the board of trustees, 25 of them as president (1996 – 2021). Under her leadership we acquired many artifacts related to the Walworth area so that our local history can be preserved for generations. Jessie will continue to be the go-to person when questions arise regarding the contents of our museum. Thank you, Jessie, for sharing your talents and knowledge with us.

President's Message By Amber Linson

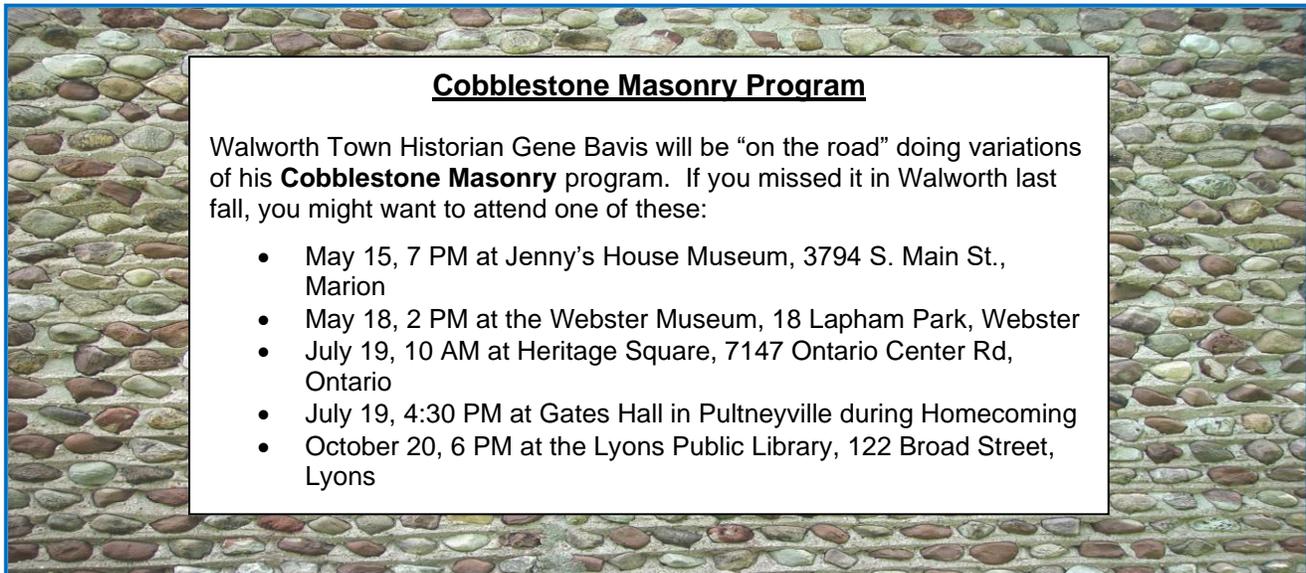
Happy spring, everyone. The historical society members are very busy with various projects and it is hard to keep up with everything. I will do my best to update you fully, but first a quick reminder that volunteers make everything we do possible! We still have much to do with organizing our collection. New and old accessions are still being processed and yard work is upon us. If you want to help, please reach out to one of our trustees.

We had a wonderful program planned for March about the Pacific Hotel, thanks to former trustee Dorothy French. However, our laptop and projector simultaneously quit working, and we were unable to present the program's pictures. This was unfortunate, but Vice President Bob Mogray did a wonderful job providing the narration without images. From here we decided we need to replace our electronics so that we can continue sharing Walworth's history with anyone who is interested. So, the historical society is searching for a projector and laptop to replace our old equipment. We will be doing a rerun of this program once we have the new equipment. So, you will have a second opportunity to see this program!

Additionally, this year is our 50th anniversary! We have a fun project planned that involves historical figure Theron Yeomans and his introduction of Holstein cattle to Walworth and Wayne County. Holstein milk has a high fat content and therefore was great for butter and cheese making endeavors here in Walworth. We will be rolling out our plans at our annual meeting in May and can't wait to celebrate with you all in September at our 50th anniversary banquet. Lots of planning goes into both projects and there are yet more opportunities for you to volunteer!

Don't forget to join us May 19 at our annual meeting. As I said, we will announce our project for the Holstein History, elect trustees, secretary, vice president, and president; present our community service award, and watch a program by Bob Mogray on Walworth's past.

See you in May!



Cobblestone Masonry Program

Walworth Town Historian Gene Bavis will be "on the road" doing variations of his **Cobblestone Masonry** program. If you missed it in Walworth last fall, you might want to attend one of these:

- May 15, 7 PM at Jenny's House Museum, 3794 S. Main St., Marion
- May 18, 2 PM at the Webster Museum, 18 Lapham Park, Webster
- July 19, 10 AM at Heritage Square, 7147 Ontario Center Rd, Ontario
- July 19, 4:30 PM at Gates Hall in Pultneyville during Homecoming
- October 20, 6 PM at the Lyons Public Library, 122 Broad Street, Lyons



In Memoriam: John Scott By Bob Mogray

While searching for something on Google, I accidentally stumbled upon this information; a funeral announcement for John Scott. He evidently passed away in April of last year! The Scotts were long time WHS members. John is shown here with his wife Kay, who also served as President and curator. John was 92 years old.

Journey On the Erie By Gene Bavis

Since 2025 is the Bicentennial of the Opening of the Erie Canal, we invited Bob Stopper of Lyons to give us some history of this amazing project. Many programs will take place here in Wayne County during this Erie Canal bicentennial celebration.

On April 14 sixty-eight members and guests were assembled at the Lodge in Ginegaw Park and “traveled” three Erie Canals through Wayne County and a little bit beyond with Bob Stopper. We visited Macedon, Palmyra, Port Gibson, Newark, Lyons, Lock Berlin, Clyde, Lockpit, and Port Byron. Bob used images taken from airplanes, drones and boats and also by walking near the canal.

He also announced the upcoming series of Erie Canal Cruises being sponsored by the Wayne County Historical Society. The cruises that have been conducted in the past sold out, so if you are interested we urge you to purchase your tickets sooner than later. Here is the link to WCHS events (including the cruises): <https://www.waynehistory.org/events>.

Bob is also scheduled to present an Erie Canal program at the Town of Sodus Historical Society on Thursday, May 8 (for more information: <https://townofsodushistoricalsociety.org/>). Bob indicated that they asked him to also include information about the Sodus Canal that was never built so that presentation will be somewhat different.



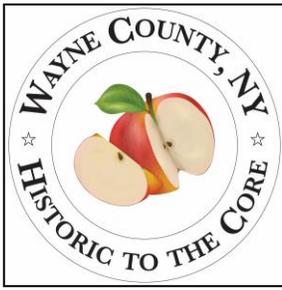
Above photos are from Bob Stopper’s Erie Canal presentation on April 14.

WHS Officers and Trustees

President	Amber Linson	(585) 402 - 3393	amberlinson@gmail.com
Vice-President	Bob Mogray	(585) 576 - 4156	robert.mogray@gmail.com
Secretary	Chris Bray	(315) 576 - 5002	cbray.n.lsnnyder@gmail.com
Treasurer	Linda Pembroke	(585) 455 - 7595	l.pembroke585@gmail.com
WHS Trustee	Jessie Keymel	(315) 524 - 9205	makeymel@gmail.com
WHS Trustee	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768	genebavis71@gmail.com
WHS Trustee	Liz Bavis	(585) 802 - 0380	liz.bavis48gmail.com
WHS Trustee	Christine Kubida	(315) 455 - 4359	hthwalworth@gmail.com
WHS Trustee	Judy Markowski	(585) 755 - 2889	judym27@aol.com
WHS Trustee	Vaughn Pembroke	(585) 781 - 4317	thepembrokes@gmail.com

Committees and Chairpersons

Newsletter	Bob Mogray	(585) 576 - 4156	robert.mogray@gmail.com
Genealogy	Ellen Dietterick	(585) 200 - 4685	ellenmarried@yahoo.com
HomeTown Heroes	Christine Kubida	(585) 455 - 4359	hthwalworth@gmail.com
Town Historian	Gene Bavis	(315) 573 - 2768	genebavis71@gmail.com



Bicentennial News By Gene Bavis

The Wayne County Bicentennial Mural will be dedicated on Sunday, June 29 at 2 PM at the First Baptist Church of Williamson, 4212 Ridge Road, Williamson. During the program the full color Commemorative Book about the Mural and the 2023 Bicentennial will be unveiled and offered for sale to the public. Each library in Wayne County will be given a copy of the book. If you don't get your copy on that day, you will be able to order it online. Details about ordering are not yet available.

For more information, please contact either of the Bicentennial Co-Chairs:

Gene Bavis
Rosa Fox

genebavis71@gmail.com
rfox@townofhuron.org

315-573-2768
315-573-4493

The Wayne County NY Bicentennial 2023 Facebook page that was started in November of 2021 has changed its name to "Wayne County, NY – Historic to the Core." The URL is still the same: <https://www.facebook.com/waynecounty200>. The page has over 6,300 followers and something new is posted EACH day. The postings include interesting tidbits of local history from across the county AND announcements of local history programs and projects. We urge YOU to follow it.



Above photo: The Wayne County Bicentennial Mural in Williamson, NY

Walworth Historical Society is 50 Years Old! By Gene Bavis

It was September 1975 when a large crowd gathered in the auditorium/gym of Walworth Elementary School to see a slide show about Walworth history. From that event, the decision was made to pursue the formation of the Walworth Historical Society. Sadly, most of the people in attendance that night are no longer with us.

We will be gathering as much information as possible about the history of our organization including a review of the old minutes, newsletters, founding documents, photographs, newspaper articles, and some of our collections of artifacts over the years. From there a presentation will be created to share with you on Monday, September 15 at the Lodge in Ginegaw Park. This will follow a celebratory catered meal.



We are currently looking for two things:

- If you attended that first meeting, please let us know. AND, we hope you'll be with us on September 15 so that we can recognize you.
- If you would like to help with the task of researching and gathering information for our slide show, please volunteer by contacting Gene Bavis at genebavis71@gmail.com or 315-573-2768. I'm thinking there should be a 50th Anniversary Book, too.

Left photo: our museum under construction

2025 WHS Calendar of Events

May 12	6:30 PM	Board Workshop WHS Museum
May 14	6:00 PM	Museum clean-up WHS Museum
May 19	6:00 PM	Annual Meeting Pot luck dinner Community Service Award Ginegaw Park Lodge
June 9	6:30 PM	Board of Trustees WHS Museum
July 14	6:30 PM	Board Workshop WHS Museum
July 22	6:00 PM	FIP float prep Keymel's barn
July 25-26		Festival in the Park
Aug. 11	6:30 PM	Board of Trustees WHS Museum
Sept. 8	6:30 PM	Board Workshop WHS Museum
Sept. 15	6:00 PM	WHS 50 th Banquet Lodge at Ginegaw Park
Oct. 5	2:00 PM	Fall Open House WHS Museum
Oct. 13	6:30 PM	Board of Trustees WHS Museum
Nov. 10	6:30 PM	Board Workshop WHS Museum
Nov. 17	Noon	<u>Program:</u> TBD Soup and Show Ginegaw Park Lodge
Dec. 8	6:30 PM	Board of Trustees WHS Museum

The WHS Museum Spring Clean-Up on May 14

By Bob Mogray

This year we thought that we would try a little something different. Instead of holding the spring clean-up on a Saturday, we are going to try to do it on a Wednesday evening at 6:00 PM at the museum on Academy Street.

There will be plenty of daylight to get in at least a couple of hours of inside and outside work and if we get enough volunteers, we should get a lot of work done. **We really need your help to volunteer with this project, even if you can stop in for an hour.**

Below are some photos of past museum spring clean-ups.



**The Walworth Historical Society
would like to thank our sponsors:**

**Walworth Wine and Spirits
John M. Bodak Snowplows
The Walworth Lions Club (tent)**

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